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Late in September 1748, Spanish ships sailed twelve miles into the Cape Fear River and attacked the little town of Brunswick, taking possession of all the vessels in the harbor and plundering the town for three days before being driven away by townspeople under the leadership of William Dry. During the rout of the invaders from the town, the Spanish ship Fortune blew up and sank in the harbor, killing Captain Vincent Lopez and all of his officers.¹

Probably as a result of this dramatic incident at Port Brunswick, His Majesty's Sloop Scorpion was stationed there by 1751 under the command of Captain John Russell. On October 31 of that year, William Moore of Orton Plantation, near Brunswick, sold 55 acres of land adjoining the northern boundary of Brunswick Town to Captain Russell for one pound per acre. It was on this land that Russell began to build his home.² By April of 1753 the home was still incomplete, but Russell had died and the ownership of the property returned to William Moore. The following year Moore too was dead, and his executors, including William Dry, took over the property,² now known as Russellborough, though it had likely not been occupied by Russell, being just the shell of a house.³

During these years there was no fixed seat of government in North Carolina, the records and assemblymen moving from place to place as each town competed to become the center of government. The executors of William Moore's will were interested in further development of Brunswick Town, not only as an official port of entry, but as the seat of royal government in North Carolina. With this in mind, they approached Royal Governor Arthur Dobbs, who was living in New Bern at the time, and offered him the 55 acres of Russellborough with its unfinished house for the sum of 5 shillings and one peppercorn, the latter to be delivered at the end of one year of residency on the property.⁴ This arrangement with the peppercorn was apparently an attempt on the part of the executors to retain some degree of control over the property for one year, and in doing so, insuring that Brunswick Town would be the seat of Colonial North Carolina Government for at least that period of time, and hopefully longer.

Governor Dobbs was approached at an opportune time by the gentlemen from Brunswick. His health was bad and he attributed this to the "augish" climate of New Bern. He wished for a healthier climate. Dobbs was also concerned over the high rent he was paying and so the offer of 55 acres plus the shell of a fine house at Brunswick looked good to him. Consequently he moved to Russellborough in 1758.⁵ Although New Bern and Brunswick were both coastal towns, equally subject to fevers and "ague", Dobbs felt that the move helped his health, and indeed it must have, for in 1762, when he was 73 years old, he married Miss Justina Davis, a fifteen year old maiden.⁶
With the move of Dobbs to Russellborough, the building was completed and several outbuildings were added. This home would be the residence of two royal governors for the next twelve years, resulting in a great increase in the political activity for the little town of Brunswick. During the years that Dobbs and his teen-age bride were living at Brunswick their residence was known as "Castle Dobbs" in reference to the Governor's ancestral home in Ireland.

In 1765 Dobbs died and "Castle Dobbs" went to his son, Edward Brice Dobbs, who sold it in 1767 to Royal Governor William Tryon for 300 pounds sterling, quite an increase over the 5 shillings and a peppercorn paid by his father for the property.

Within a month following the death of Dobbs in March of 1765, the new governor William Tryon moved into the home Dobbs had occupied. The first days were occupied by the governor and his. Tryon in renovating the house that was to be their home for the next five years. Tryon wrote a friend telling of his new situation and giving a description of his home, called "Castle Tryon" by a contemporary, the only such description of a Brunswick Town home yet found:

As you are acquainted with Mrs. Tryon's neatness you will not wonder that we have been pestered with scouring of Chambers, white washing of Ceilings, Flaisiers work and Painting of the House inside and out. Such is the sickness and indolence of the Workmen in this hot climate that I shall not, I am persuaded, get rid of these Nuisances this month.

This House which has so many assistance is of an oblong square, built of wood. It measured on the outside faces forty five by thirty five feet and is divided into two Stories exclusive of the Cellars; the parlor is about five feet above the surface of the earth. Each Story has four Rooms and three light closets. The parlor below and the Drawing Room are 20 x 15 feet each: Ceilings low. There is a Piaza runs around the House both stories of ten feet wide with a Ballustrade of four feet high, which is a great security for my little Girl. There is a good Stable and Coach Houses, and some other Out Houses. If I continue in this House, which will depend on Captain Dobb's Resolution in the manner he disposes of his effects here, I shall and must build a good kitchen, which I can do for forty pounds sterling of 30f X 40f. The Garden has nothing to boast of except Fruit Trees, Peaches, Nectars, Figgs and Plumbs are in perfection and of good sorts. I cut a Husk Melon this week which weighed 17f 1/2 pounds.

In November of 1765 and again in 1766, the Lower Cape Fear area was the scene of violence as citizens arose in arms to protest the Stamp Act. Tryon's home was surrounded by five hundred "citizens in arms" as he called them and he was placed in virtual house arrest. These incidents were among the first in which armed resistance was used against the officers of the King by American colonists.
In April, 1769, C.J. Sauthier drew a detailed map of Brunswick Town showing "His Excellency Governor Tryon's House and Plantation. This map shows the main house at Russellborough and reveals that in 1769 there were eleven outbuildings associated with it. These buildings would include the stable and coach houses mentioned by Tryon in his description, and the kitchen he planned to build. The garden is shown with walks and the position of individual trees; to the south of the house a flag is flying on a flagpole. The low marsh area between the house and the river is extensively cut with canals to enable the growing of rice. This map will continue to be a valuable aid in the interpretation of this site.

In 1770 William Tryon moved to New Bern into the controversial "Tryon's Palace" and in January, 1771, he sold "Castle Tryon" to William Dry for 600 pounds.

William Dry, the port collector for Brunswick, was a man of some means. He called his house "Bellfont", and entertained men such asJosiah Quincy who said: "Col. Dry's mansion is justly called the house of universal hospitality." Although Dry was employed in the King's business, his politics was such that one visitor, after listening to Dry's views said: "He is deeply engaged in the new system of politics, in which they are all more or less, tho Mr. Dry, the collector of customs, is the most zealous and talks treason by the hour." His views eventually resulted in his being removed from his official duties for the King, and he continued to devote his energies to the cause of the Revolution.

On April 5, 1776, the Virginia Gazette reported:

Captain Collett has lately committed divers acts of piracy and robbery. Amongst others he set fire to the elegant house of Col. Dry...destroying therein all the valuable furniture, liquors, etc....

With the burning of the house, its eighteen year period of occupation was sealed in the earth and fortunately, the site was never again occupied and this ruin, along with those of the town of Brunswick, was sold to Orton Plantation by the State of North Carolina in 1842 for $4.25.

During the Civil War, earthworks of Fort Anderson were built nearby but the area of the ruin of Russellborough was not disturbed. By the late nineteenth century the fields to the west of the area of the ruins of Russellborough were known as "governor's fields" but by then the site of the house had been lost in a dense jungle-like growth. James Sprunt, owner of Orton Plantation and historian of the Cape Fear area at that time inquired of an old slave as to the location of the home of Governor Dobbs or Governor Tryon. The old man answered that he did not know of those governors, but that he did know the location of the ruin of the house of "governor palace" and the old slave took Mr. Sprunt to the site of Russellborough.

By 1909, through the interest of Mr. Sprunt, and the North Carolina Society of the Colonial Dames of America, the site of Russellborough was marked by a monument faced with small yellow Dutch bricks dug from the floor of one of the cellar rooms of the ruin. An access road was constructed to the monument across two corners of the ruin. A laborer involved in this work remembered seeing the mouth of a tunnel being revealed and that some of the workmen wanted to dig into the tunnel to look for treasure but Mr. Sprunt ordered that the tunnel be covered, explaining that some day someone might want to come and uncover the ruin to learn about the governors who
lived there, reflecting a most admirable attitude of the historian. Fifty years after seeing the tunnel, the laborer predicted to the archaeologist that a brick tunnel would be found when the excavation was carried out at the site of Russellborough.

When the excavation of Russellborough began in May, 1966, a number of pits dug by treasure and relic hunters could be seen, indicating that some disturbance of the context of the ruin could be expected. As excavation progressed however, it became apparent that these holes seldom reached sufficient depth to disturb the cellar floors or the plaster layer lying over them.

Removal of the brick and stone rubble from the area revealed a stone foundation wall two feet thick, measuring 36 by 44 feet with a central stone wall paralleling the long axis of the house. These two halves were bisected by a partition wall of yellow Dutch brick on one side and the charcoal remains of a wooden partition wall on the other side. These partitions resulted in the division of the ruin into four rooms. Ten feet from this central ruin and extending around it was a brick wall with engaged footings for columns, obviously the support for the "piazza" mentioned by Governor Tryon. With this porch foundation, the ruin measured 56 by 65 feet.

Excavation of the area between the porch wall and the foundation wall of the house yielded no artifacts of any kind except along the north side where thousands of fragments of wine bottles revealed the apparent location of the wine storage area beneath this part of the porch. In this deposit were 158 bottle seals impressed with "W.Dry Cape Fear 1766" providing dramatic evidence for the reference in the Virginia Gazette of April 5, 1766 which bemoaned the loss by fire of "the elegant house of Col. Dry... destroying therein all the valuable...liquors, etc...." By weighing a whole bottle and dividing this figure into the weight of all the bottle fragments recovered from this deposit, it was determined that at least 300 bottles were stored in this area of the cellar when the house was burned.

The floor of the northeast room of the cellar was found 18 inches below the surface of the ground and was paved with yellow Dutch bricks placed on edge. Extending into the room three feet from the north wall were two brick arms sixteen feet apart, probably representing supports for a wooden framework for the storage of barrels lying on their sides. The arms of a central chimney extended into the room from the south wall, in front of which was found the fragments of a very large storage jar that had been sitting beside the fireplace when the burning house fell. This jar has been restored, revealing the letters "IF" in a relief seal on opposite sides of the vessel. Similar jars have been recovered in Williamsburg, are known in the West Indies, and it is assumed that they are Iberian in origin. Also found beside this fireplace was an amphora shaped bottle, another rare type at Brunswick. The presence of a fireplace in this room would indicate that this cellar room was once probably used as a servant's quarters, although at the time of the fire it was not likely used for this purpose.

The adjoining room to the south also had a Dutch brick floor over most of the room. Many of the artifacts were recovered from this room in the layer of plaster from the walls that covered the floor in a thick white deposit. The fragments of a marble mantelpiece were lying with a flintlock musket and bayonet on the hearth in front of the arms of the fireplace.
The bricks forming the back of the fireplace were laid in a herringbone pattern, providing a clue to the quality of workmanship that went into the construction of the house.

Lying on the floor where they had fallen was a mess of wine bottle fragments, indicating that wine was stored here also. Lying together were two William Dry bottles, a pair of brass dividers, broken medicine bottles, one still containing medicine whose primary ingredient was lead, a whole porcelain teacup, and several straight razors. With these objects were cabinet hinges and cabinet door locks, indicating that these objects had been stored together in some type of enclosed cabinet. Nearby was a copper teakettle and the remains of four fire damaged grindstones. This room too, had apparently been originally designed as a servant's quarters and may have been used as such at the time of the burning of the house.

The adjoining room to the west was floored with sand and also had two brick arms extending into the room as did the northeast room; probably also for the support of barrels of rum or wine placed on a wooden platform between these arms. Between these brick supports, the charcoal remains of what may have been this platform was found. In the northwest corner of the room a number of crucibles of varying sizes were found. Each will nest inside the other to make a set. Just why William Dry would have so many of these little vessels stored in his home provides food for conjecture. We know he was interested in copper mines in the western part of the state, and copper ore and metallic copper were also found in the ruin. Perhaps Dry was testing various ore samples. Also found in the room with these crucibles was a flintlock pistol.

The northwest room of the ruin was of particular interest because it was covered with a plaster floor whose surface was quite irregular. Several whole wine bottles were recovered here. Two feet from the north central part of the room a brick well was found. This well proved to be five feet deep with a two foot stand of water. Inside this well, an iron ring slightly smaller than the diameter of the well was found. It had hooks mounted around the ring at regular intervals; obviously a device for suspending objects inside the well for cooling, and the wine bottles found in the well might indicate that this was one of the items being cooled there. In the corner of this room, barrel bands of iron were found lying, one inside the other, indicating that barrels were present here also. This room was probably connected with the wine storage area beneath the porch through an opening in the stone foundation wall at one time, but this opening was later sealed with small stones, using clay instead of cement as mortar. This room probably served also as the dairy for Russellborough.

As the northeast corner of the brick foundation for the porch support was being excavated, an arched row of bricks was seen forming part of the foundation wall. As more of this arch was revealed the mouth of a tunnel was seen. Immediately in front of the tunnel opening was a tabby object, twenty inches square at one end with a round, tapering hole throughout its 18 inch length. Just what this object was used for is unknown, though it might have been a liner for a water closet associated with the tunnel and the porch.
The area immediately in front of the mouth of the tunnel had been disturbed to a depth of the bottom of the mouth of the tunnel, and was filled with bricks and sections of the brick wall support for the porch. A fragment of modern red glass indicated that the mouth of the tunnel must have been exposed sometime during the 20th century but was re-covered. This fact correlated with the information provided by the old man who had seen the mouth of a tunnel at Russellborough in the early years of the 20th century. The tunnel mouth was located directly beneath the access road to the 1909 monument, and this fact would indicate that in order to construct this road over the edge of the ruin, parts of the brick wall had to be leveled to make room for the road, accounting for the disturbance of the soil near the tunnel mouth.

As excavation of the tunnel was carried out it was determined that the lower half was filled with quantities of artifacts such as wine glasses, plates, teacups, saucers, bottles, and a whole earthenware, olla shaped jar. The tunnel proved to be thirty feet long, sloping downhill toward the river, and resolving into an open brick-sided ditch at its opposite end. The floor of the tunnel was bricked and unmortared, whereas the arched overhead was constructed with lime-mortared bricks. Obviously this tunnel constituted some sort of drainage system from the cellar to the river, most likely a sewer for a privy located on the porch.

Forty feet north of the ruin of Russellborough a stone foundation wall could be seen standing two feet above the surface of the ground. Excavation of this ruin revealed a foundation of a building 32 by 52 feet, constructed of stone and brick, with an "L" on the south end. This building was shown on the 1769 map of Russellborough, and may represent the kitchen Governor Tryon said he planned to build sometime after 1765. Its interpretation as a kitchen is based on the fact that a foundation for a bake oven was found attached to a seven foot wide fireplace. An interesting feature of this fireplace was a bricked storage box at the left side of the hearth containing soot and ashes, apparently having fallen from higher up, from the level of the hearth itself, some distance above the excavation level. The function of this separate "soot box" beneath the hearth is not known. The kitchen was divided into three rooms, the central room having a small hearth, likely for supplying heat for the servants, whose quarters were probably located here. The northernmost room, with a brick foundation, was probably a storage room for supplies for the kitchen. A small section of Dutch brick flooring was found in the "servants quarters" room of this building.

Few artifacts were found in the area of the ruin itself, but directly to the east, on the downhill slope, a round pit outline was seen when the topsoil was removed from this area. This pit was only three feet across and one foot deep, but it contained an incredible amount of broken dishes and bottles. Fragments of broken china were so tightly packed into this pit that sand had not been able to sift between the broken fragments, leaving hollow spaces between the fragments. A total of 2,320 fragments of china were recovered, from which over 40 ceramic vessels were completely restored including teacups, saucers, sauce boats, chamber pots, bowls, plates, platters, pitchers, and jugs. Besides this unusual collection of objects there were two William Dry bottle seals, and 9 "Pyrront Water" bottle seals, and 163 pounds of bottle fragments. Using a whole bottle weight of 1.5 pounds, the total number of bottles in this pit would be 108. This compared
favorably with the count of 103 bottle necks, and 112 bottle bases determined from fragments of these parts present.

Of the ceramic types recovered from this pit 55% were of white salt-glazed stoneware, 20% were of creamware, and 7% were Oriental porcelain. A surprising fact is that there were no fragments of mottled-glazed creamware present, as one might have expected from a pit of this date. From the presence of the 1766 bottle seals, and the fact that the site was sealed in 1776, we know this group of artifacts dates during the ten year period from 1766 to 1776. The fact that the objects were closely packed into the pit in a solid mass of fragments would tend to indicate that this deposit is the result of a mass breakage of china and bottles during the occupation of the site, and that they were disposed of by throwing them into the open hole at one moment in time. One restored teacup was of blue transfer-printed ware with the "C" mark of the Worcester pottery, the earliest transfer-printed ware yet found at Brunswick Town.

The contents of this pit, along with the artifacts recovered from the tunnel and the ruin of the house and kitchen at Russellborough are still being cataloged, processed and restored. The final results of this excavation should prove of considerable value to archaeologists and historians interested in this most significant ruin yet recovered at Brunswick Town.

NOTES

1. South Carolina Gazette (Charlestown), October 31, 1748.
11. Copy of a letter from Tryon to Sewallis Shirley in the Bruce Cotten Collection in the University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.
13. Sauthier, Plan of the Town and Port of Brunswick...1769 (a map) on file at the Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.
14. Dill, Governor Tryon and His Palace, p. 117.
16. Ibid.
17. Dill, Governor Tryon and His Palace, p. 119.
20. Virginia Gazette (Williamsburg), April 5, 1776.
23. Virginia Gazette (Williamsburg), April 5, 1776.
EXCAVATING THE ROYAL GOVERNOR'S MANSION AT BRUNSWICK TOWN

In May 1966 excavation began on the ruin of the once elegant home, which was for twelve years the residence of the Royal Governors of North Carolina. Built by Captain John Russell in the 1750's, and completed by Governor Arthur Dobbs in 1758, the home was known as Russellborough, Castle Dobbs, Castle Tryon, and Bellfont. After the death of Dobbs in 1765, Governor William Tryon resided here for five years until he moved to the more elegant Tryon Palace in New Bern. William Dry, collector for Port Brunswick made his home here from 1770 until it was burned in December 1775 or during the early days of 1776, a casualty of the Revolution. Dry's home, known as Bellfont, was said to be a house of universal hospitality, containing fine wines and elegant furnishings when it was burned.

Excavation revealed that the ground floor cellar was divided into rooms with floors made of Dutch bricks laid on edge. Lying on the floor of one room were the fragments of a vessel, broken when the flaming house collapsed. These were carefully uncovered and have been glued together to make a large jar, apparently of Iberian origin, with a raised seal on each side with the letters "1 F". In the adjoining room on the floor in front of the fireplace the remains of a flintlock musket were found. Also in this room were large hinges and a massive lock for the door, with the brass key still in the keyhole. In the third room a large number of crucibles were recovered, five will nest to make a graduated set. These were used for melting metals by silversmiths, and why so many were in William Dry's home when it burned is not known. In another area of the cellar a mass of broken and melted bottles with numerous bottle seals marked "W Dry Cape Fear 1766" was found. Obviously the collection of wines and liquors of William Dry had been stored in this area.

Beyond these exciting finds a more interesting one was discovered in the corner of the foundation wall for the porch. This was the mouth of a tunnel leading in the direction of the river and filled with a wealth of wine bottles, plates and wine goblets, as well as a complete pottery jar, bone handled knives, and other fine museum objects dating from the period prior to the burning of the house. This deposit of artifacts is one of the most important ever discovered at Brunswick Town, promising to reveal many more pieces for the soon to be completed visitor center museum. As excavation continues during the summer the ruin will reveal more of its secrets locked for two centuries in the soil of Brunswick.
RUSSELLBOROUGH EXCAVATION COMPLETED

During the summer the excavation of the ruin of the mansion known as Russellborough, Castle Dobbs, Castle Tryon and Bellfont, was completed at Brunswick Town. One of the interesting features of the ruin, besides the Dutchbrick floors and the tunnel to the river from the cellar, was a brick-lined well inside one of the rooms of the cellar. During excavation of the well a number of restorable bottles were found, but most interesting of all was a large iron band with an eye for suspension, with a number of hooks attached to the rim. This band was apparently used to hang bottles of wine, buckets of butter, or other items inside the cool well before serving. When completely excavated the well was only six feet deep, and stood almost half full of water, revealing the high water table beneath the house, and supplying a clue to the function of the tunnel as a drain.

In the southeast room of the cellar the remains of a burned cabinet were found. As the fire consumed the house and its contents the cabinet burned, leaving only the hinges and locks to reveal its position, along with its contents. Two wine bottles with "W Dry, Cape Fear, 1766" were lying side by side. Near-by were a group of straight razor blades, a pair of brass dividers, and a whole earthenware teacup, fragments of a patched porcelain teacup, a copper tea-kettle, and a medicine bottle with its contents still inside, objects once held inside the destroyed cabinet.

In the adjoining room a flintlock pistol was lying among the fallen plaster and charcoal and ashes from the burned West Indies style mansion, the first complete pistol yet recovered from the Brunswick Town ruins. As excavation progressed inside the northwest room, a whole bottle was found against the foundation wall of the house. This was the first whole bottle recovered at Brunswick, but this discovery was soon followed by the finding of several more whole bottles that had been thrown against the outside of the brick-lined well.

These objects and others recovered during the Russellborough excavation will be on exhibit in the visitor center-museum soon to be completed.

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Figure 2
EXCAVATION OF THE KITCHEN AT RUSSELLBOROUGH

When William Tryon became royal governor of North Carolina in 1765, and moved into Russellborough, the governor's mansion at Brunswick Town, he wrote a friend telling of his plan to build a kitchen. Apparently the cooking for the mansion had not been done in a separate kitchen until this time. Tryon stated that "...I shall and must build a good kitchen, which I can do for forty Pounds sterling of 30f x 40f."

Forty feet north of the ruin of Russellborough a stone foundation wall could be seen standing two feet above the surface of the ground. Excavation of this ruin revealed a foundation of a building 32 by 52 feet, constructed of stone and brick, with an "L" on the south end. This building was shown on the 1769 Sauthier map of Russellborough, and may represent the kitchen Governor Tryon said he planned to build sometime after 1765. Its interpretation as a kitchen is based on the fact that a foundation for a bake oven was found attached to a seven foot wide fireplace.

The kitchen was divided into three rooms, the cooking and baking area, the quarters for the servants, and a storage room. Few artifacts were found in the area of the ruin itself, but directly to the east, on the downhill slope of the hill, a round pit outline was seen when the topsoil was removed from this area. This pit was only three feet across and one foot deep, but it contained an incredible amount of broken dishes and bottles. Fragments of broken china were so tightly packed into this pit that sand had not been able to pack between the broken fragments, leaving hollow spaces. A total of 2,320 fragments of china were recovered, from which over 40 ceramic vessels were completely restored, including teacups, saucers, sauce boats, chamber pots, bowls, plates, platters, pitchers and jugs. Besides this unusual collection of objects there were two William Dry bottle seals, and nine "Pyrmonti Water" bottle seals, and 163 pounds of bottle fragments. Using a whole bottle weight of 1.5 pounds, the total number of broken bottles represented would be 108.

In restoring objects from a pit such as this the fragments are first carefully washed, then the catalog number is written on each piece. They are then separated into piles according to types based on color, hardness, texture, design, etc., and then from these groups individual dish fragments are separated whenever possible. These selected fragments are then glued together. If pieces are missing when all gluing is completed these areas are filled with water putty. The restored sections are then painted to match the original color of the dish, and designs are completed whenever possible. The restored vessel is then ready for exhibit in the Brunswick Town Visitor Center-Museum.
INTERPRETING THE RUIN OF RUSSELLBOROUGH

During the summer of 1966 the ruin of the home of Royal Governors Arthur Dobbs and William Tryon was excavated at Brunswick Town. There is no known description of how the houses of Brunswick appeared in the eighteenth century, therefore the interpretation of the buildings has been carried out on the basis of archaeological information. At Russellborough, however, we have a description of the house from a letter Governor Tryon wrote to Sewallis Shirley on July 26, 1765. With this account and the archaeological floor plan, a most complete interpretation is possible. The foundation of the building measured 56 by 65 feet including a brick foundation wall for a ten foot wide porch on all sides of the house. The 1769 Southier map of Brunswick shows the steps for the porch on the north and the south side of the house. The Tryon letter, however, was valuable in that it revealed details as to the height of the porch and balustrade, and the fact that there was a porch around both floors of the house above the cellar. Tryon described Russellborough as follows:

This House which has so many assistances is of an oblong square, built of wood. It measured on the outside faces forty five feet by thirty five feet and is divided into two Stories exclusive of the Cellars; the parlour is about five feet above the surface of the Earth. Each Story has four Rooms and three light Closets. The Parlour below and Drawing Room are 20 x 15 feet each: Ceilings low. There is a Piazza runs around the House both stories of ten feet wide with a Balustrade of four feet high, which is a great security for my little Girl. There is a good Stable and Coach Houses, and some other Out Houses.

By combining this description with the archaeological foundation plan, plus what is known of the details of similar houses of the period, a model could be constructed that would be a close approximation of what the building looked like from 1753 to its destruction by fire in 1776. Such a model would be an aid in creating a conjectural drawing of the appearance of the building. With this in mind archaeologist George Demmy built a model utilizing the historical and archaeological information combined with knowledge of the evolution of the West Indies house style in the area. Included with the model was the kitchen, the ruins of which were also excavated in 1966.

Before sunrise the little model was placed on the bank of the Cape Fear River where the full-scale Russellborough stood two hundred years ago, and as the sun appeared over the horizon photographs were made by the archaeologists. These reveal a scene familiar to Governor Dobbs and his teen-age bride and later to William Tryon and his little daughter, as on an early morning they watched the same sun as its dawn rays reflected in the Cape Fear and cast an amber glow on the porches of Russellborough, their home.

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George Demmy with the study model of Russelborough

Russellborough, home of royal governors on the Cape Fear
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