



Chowning's TAVERN

WILLIAMSBURG, *October 10, 1766.*

I HEREBY acquaint the publick that I have opened tavern . . . where all who please to favour me with their custom may depend upon the best of entertainment for themselves, servants, and horses, and good pasturage.

JOSIAH CHOWNING.

THE “publick” that Chowning hoped to attract to his tavern with this notice in the *Virginia Gazette* was made up mostly of local residents—artisans, shoppers, farmers who sold produce at the market, individuals with business at the Courthouse, idle bystanders—and an occasional traveler.

In size, clientele, and services, Chowning’s resembled rural Virginia taverns located at ferries, crossroads, and courthouses or small English alehouses. Despite Chowning’s boast of the “best of entertainment,” he served plain fare and his drink selection was limited to rum, local beer, and cider. He may also have offered wine, brandy, and bowls of punch on demand. The few travelers who spent the night probably lodged together in a room upstairs.

Tavern keeping was often a precarious trade for modest operators like Chowning, who rented the tavern. Many keepers of small taverns lived on the premises with their families, who

helped with the work of waiting on customers, cooking, cleaning, and laundering. Little is known about Josiah Chowning. When the tavern was reconstructed, Colonial Williamsburg believed it was located on this site, but we now know that a store and dwelling were here and that the tavern was somewhere nearby. Chowning’s business lasted less than two years, but its twentieth-century counterpart has accommodated travelers and locals for over fifty years.

Chairs, benches, and tables represent the sturdy furniture found in colonial taverns catering to the middling sort. Excavated fragments show that the blue and yellow peacock on the dinnerware was one of several colorful bird motifs used by early Williamsburg residents. Utilitarian stoneware tablewares, plain tin sconces, and simply framed maps and prints accentuate the informality of Chowning’s Tavern.

All income from Chowning’s Tavern is used for the purposes of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, which operates the Historic Area, and to carry forward its educational programs. Colonial Williamsburg welcomes private contributions. Friends interested in discussing gifts to the Foundation are invited to contact the Director of Development, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Post Office Box 1776, Williamsburg, Virginia 23187-1776.

The print reproduced on the cover, “DOCTOR SYNTAX in the Middle of a smocking hor Political squabble, wishes to Whet his Whistle,” was drawn by Thomas Rowlandson and was published in London by Thomas Tegg sometime between 1807 to 1821. Courtesy, Library of Congress.

The illustrations used inside the menu are reproduced from catchpenny prints, popular eighteenth-century English engravings.

Chowning's TAVERN

All Day Fare



1766

MODERN-DAY travelers and locals who congregate informally at Chowning's Tavern for plain fare and drink continue a tradition begun more than two hundred years ago when *Jofiah Chowning* opened his tavern on *Market Square* in October 1766.

1766

Jofiah Chowning's Brunswick Stew

A traditional dish from Young Fowl & Beef cooked with Sliced Onion, Tomatoes, Limas, Grated Corn and Irish Potatoes seasoned to taste and served up hot with good bread served up daily by the cup \$6.95 by the bowl \$10.95

To Butter Shrimp--good bread browned, sauce of wine & garlic butter, herbs \$11.95

Caesar Salet--heart of romaine, shaved parmesan, garlic croûton, Caesar dressing \$6.95
Addition of Herb Grilled Chicken Breast \$5

Grilled Sweet Corn--smoked, shucked and spiced with bbq butter, corn bread crust parmesan & pimento aioli \$4.95

SAVOURIES



Welsh Rarebit--a savoury made of Cheddar Cheese and Mustard-Spiced Ale poured over good bread and broiled bubbly with Smithfield Ham \$8.95

Ploughman's --tavern meats cured & smoked in the Virginia Fashion, daily cheese, pickled root cellar vegetables seasonal grain mustard \$16.95

Slow Cooked Ox Tail--East India curry root vegetable, good bread, currant jelly \$12.95

Salet of Snipped Greens--cucumber, tomato cheddar cheese, hard boiled egg, crouton choice dressing \$7.95

Savory Pastry--An 18th-century savory of both meat and vegetable pasties, served with mango chutney \$7.95

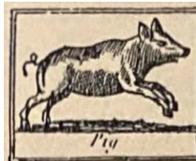
MAIN DISHES

Grid Iron Beef Steak--well-nigh a half pound of the finest beef, aged cheddar butter lettuce, tomato, apple-smoked bacon served up on a potato bun \$14.95



Spice-rubbed Roasted Breast of Yard Bird Apple-smoked bacon, bitter lettuce tomato caramelized onion sweet n' spicy bbq sauce \$14.95

All Smokehouse Beef Hot Dog--Frankfurters, originating in Germany were well known since the 13th century served with chili, rarebit, onion \$10.95



A Tasty Meatless Patty--Organic mix of legumes, grains and vegetables from the griddle with aged cheddar cheese, olive oil crushed avocado, pickled black bean & tomato relish potato bun \$13.95

A Trencher of Beef--slow smoked brisket of beef, caramelized onion, rarebit, horseradish sauce served upon hearth flat bread \$14.95



Low Country Shrimp Boil--Carolina Shrimp, fingerling potatoes, sweet corn surry sausage, spiced drawn butter charred good bread \$15.95

Virginia Pork BBQ --slow smoked boston butt of pulled pork, potato bun tavern slaw \$13.95

Shepard's Pye--savory stew of lamb aromatic vegetables, colcannon potato \$16.95

All Sandwiches Include Choice of: House Chips, Fruit Cup, Suet Fries \$2 upcharge

Seasonal Vegetable Pithivier--seasonal melange of vegetables & potato baked beneath flaky tender crust, spring greens salet of pickled vegetables dijon vinaigrette \$13.95

These items are cooked to order and may be served raw or undercooked. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, beef, pork, lamb, seafood, shellfish or eggs increases your risk of food-borne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions.

Peanut Pie \$6.95

Eggs are beaten very light and blended with the proper measures of Sugar and Butter . Poured upon a Flaky Pie Crust and covered with Virginia's Finest Roasted Peanuts and baked nicely with Vanilla Ice Cream \$8.95

Chowning's Seasonal Ice Cream

Served with Gingersnaps \$4.95

SWEETS



Cider Cake \$6.95

Pressed Cider, Applesauce and Nuts enrich an early American recipe in place of the ordinary liquid with Vanilla Ice Cream \$8.95

American Heritage Chocolate Cobbler \$6.95

A rich dish of Baked Custard and Chocolate with a Crisp Crumb Topping served warm with Vanilla Ice Cream \$8.95

All Sweets are homemade by Colonial Williamsburg Pastry Chefs