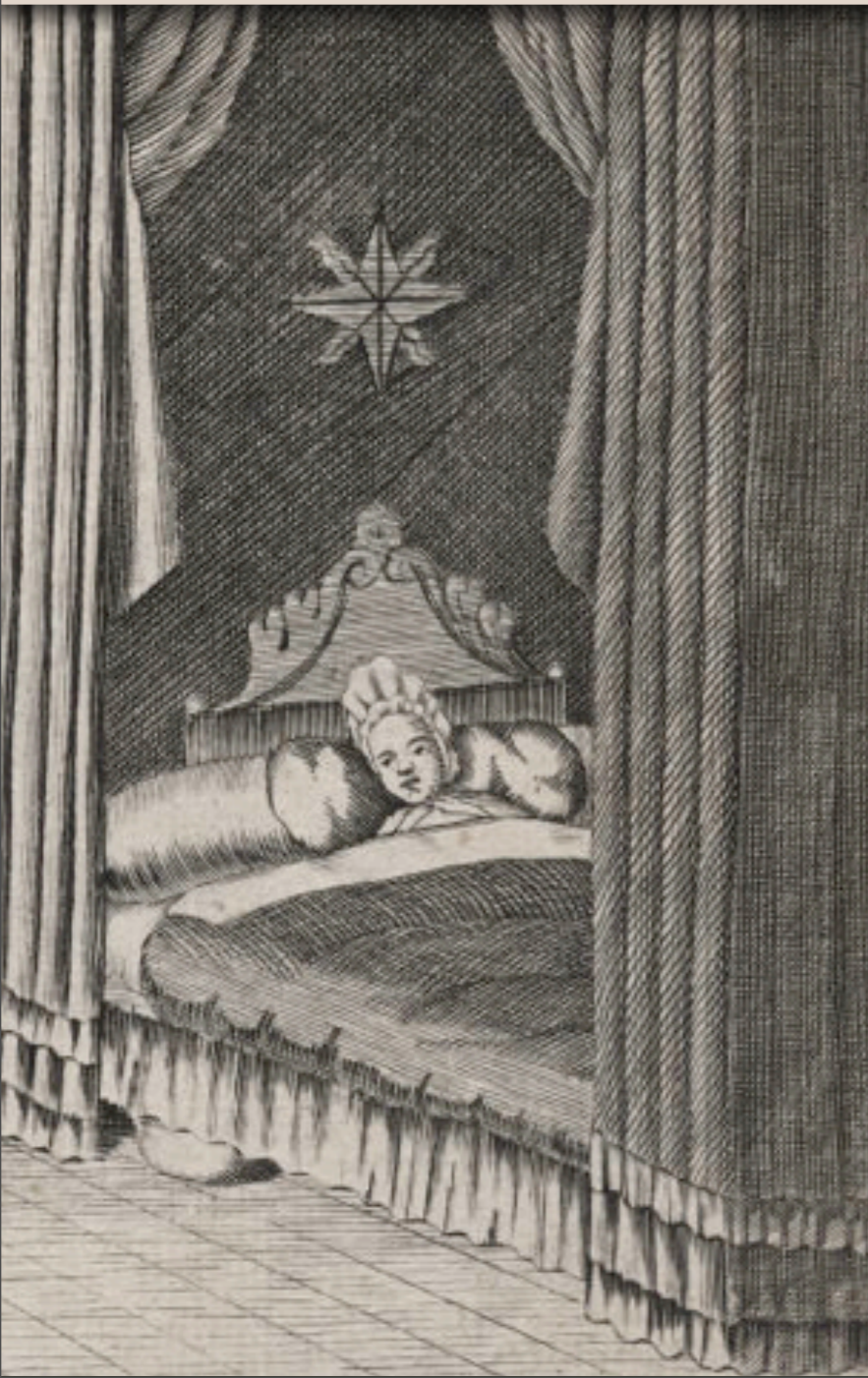


# 18th Century Material Culture

## Bolsters, Pillows, & Sheets



# Bolsters & Pillows

Text From: Gunston Hall  
ROOM USE STUDY  
( [www.GunstonHall.com](http://www.GunstonHall.com) )

*Gunston Hall Plantation*

Bolsters are defined as “*a long pillow or cushion, used to support the head of persons lying on a bed; generally laid under the pillows.*” Generally long enough to reach across the entire head of the bed, bolsters provided a firm support to help the sleeper achieve the desired semi-sitting posture preferred in the eighteenth century. Bolsters, like beds, could either be made at home or purchased ready made. In 1761, Thomas Jones purchased “*bolster tyck*” and the 1767 order of Charles Carroll, Barrister, included a request not only for “*best fine thick flanders Bed ticks*” but also for bolsters and pillows.

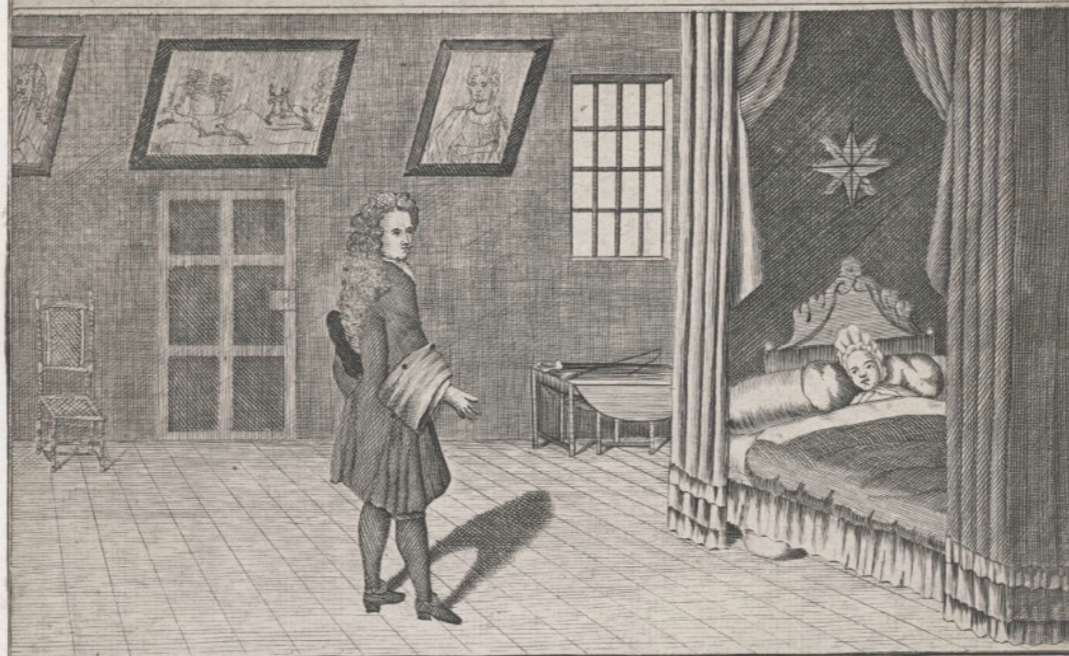
**Pillows**, like bolsters were ticking sacks filled with a variety of stuffing materials. Generally square in shape during the period, they could be made at home or purchased ready-made. Two “*Spittle field best Bed Tick, boulder & pillows*” were among the goods ordered by the Jones family in the 1760s. Other examples of imported pillows include George Washington's July 1767 order for “. . . *ticks with Boulders & Pillows,*” and that of John Galloway's invoice from Palmer & Company in England for pillows.

BOLSTER PILLOW



Detail: "The Progress of a Rake, or, the Templar's Exit"  
Published by John Brindley 1732  
(The British Museum)

THE CURTAIN LECTURE. The Words by M<sup>r</sup>. Durfey.



I

he. Off all Comforts I miscarried  
 When I Play'd the Lot and married,  
 To a trap there's none need doubt on't,  
 Those that are in't would fain get out on't,  
 she. By my dear pray come to bed,  
 That napkin take and bind your head,  
 Too much Drink your brain has do'd,  
 You'd be quite alter'd when repes'd,

II

he. From your Arms my self divorcing,  
 I this morn must ride a Courting,  
 Sport that far excels a Madam,  
 Or all wives have been since Adam,  
 she. I when thus I've lost my Due,  
 That hug my Pillow wanting you,  
 And whilst you type all the day  
 Regale in Cups of harmful Tea.

III

he. Ere I be from Rambling hundred,  
 He renounce my Spouse and hundred,  
 To be sober I have no leisure,  
 Whats a man without his pleasure,  
 she. To my grief then I must see,  
 Strong Ale and Nails my rivals be,  
 Whilst you type it with your blades,  
 Peer I sitt stitching with my maids,

he. Come tis all one if I'm up or Lye down,  
 For as soon as the cock Crows He be gone,  
 she. To to grieve me, thus you leave me,  
 Was I was I made a wife to lye a lone.

he. To what care I drink your steps till you dye,  
 Yonders brandy will keep me a month from home,  
 she. If thus parted I'm broken hearted,  
 When I when I send for y<sup>e</sup> my dear pray come

he. Come you may go to your gossips you know,  
 And there if you can meet a friend pray do,  
 she. Go you Tokeer go provoker,  
 Never, never shall I meet a man like you.

L-A  
 Not in BM



“THE CURTAIN LECTURE The Words by Mr. Durfey”  
 by Thomas D’Urfey c. 1690  
 (Lewis Walpole Library)



"THE CURTAIN LECTURE The Words by Mr. Durfey"  
by Thomas D'Urfey c. 1690  
(Lewis Walpole Library)



Lady Undressing for a Bath  
Attributed to Gerardus Duyckinc c. 1730 - 1739



*But three Days past— Oh! Needles, poynts of Pins,  
My Back—My Head—My XXXX Oh! my Shinns,  
Lets see my Shirt Oh! Spots of Green and Yellow  
What will my Father say— A Pretty Fellow.*

“The Progress of a Rake, or, the Templar’s Exit”  
Published by John Brindley 1732  
(The British Museum)



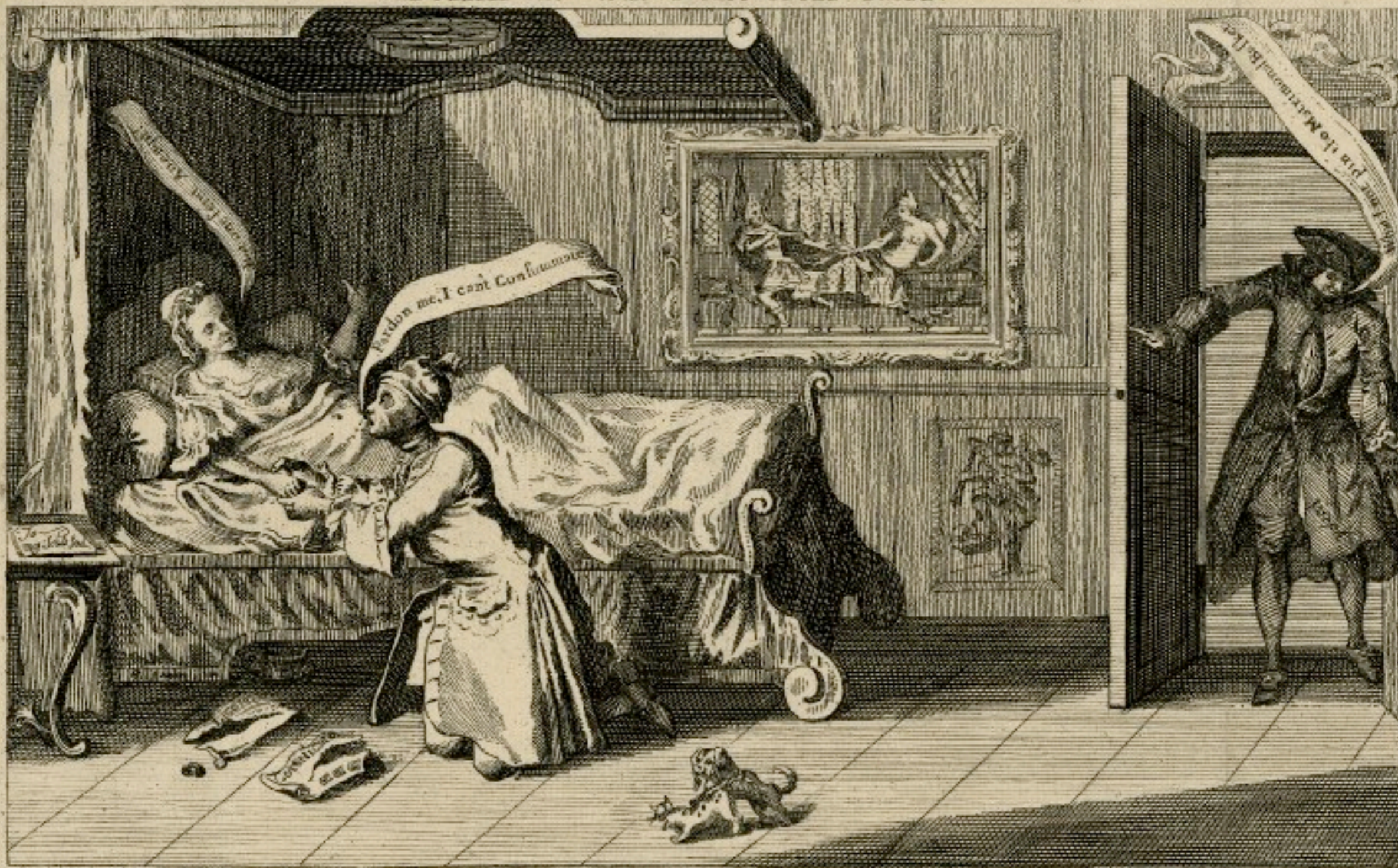
MOLLY'S FIRST CORRECTION

“Molly’s First Correction”  
by Gravelot 1739  
(The British Museum)



*"Molly's First Correction"*  
by Gravelot 1739  
(The British Museum)

THE FEEBLE Bart or the DISAPPOINTED BRIDE.



This Impudence of Age, Whence can it Spring?  
All they expect, and yet they Nothing bring:

Eager to Ask, when they are past a Grant,  
Nice in providing what they cannot Want.

“The Feeble Bart or the Disappointed Bride”  
by George Bickman the Younger c. 1749  
(The British Museum)



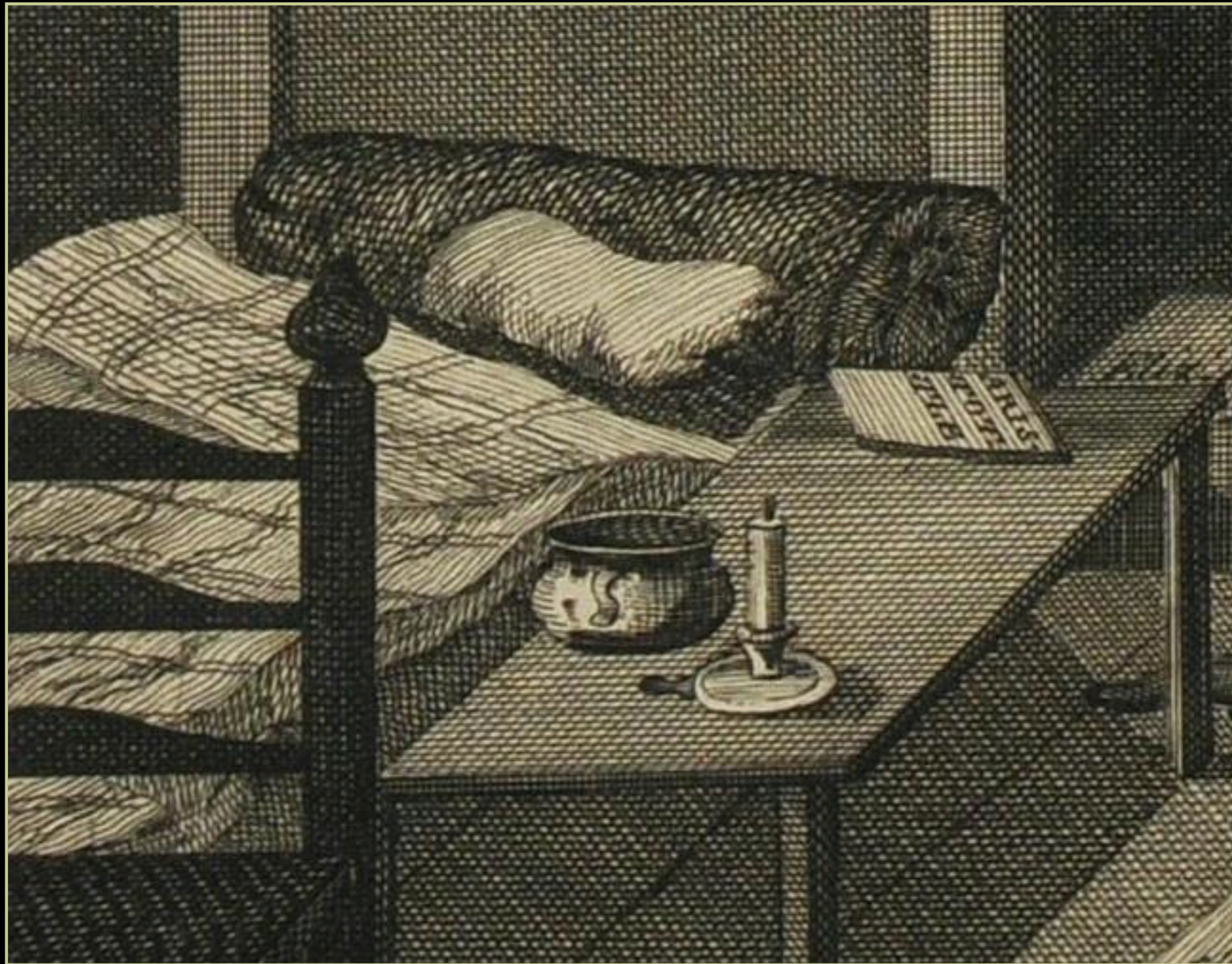
Detail: "Filial Piety"  
by Jean Baptiste Greuze 1763  
(The Hermitage, St. Petersburg)



*The Methodist Taylor caught in Adultery*  
London, Printed for Robt. Sayer, Map & Printseller, N. 53 in Fleet Street.

*Colbidge sculpit*  
Published as the Act directs July 26. 1768.

“The Methodist Taylor caught in Adultery”  
by Robert Sayer 1768  
(Lewis Walpole Library)



Detail: "The Methodist Taylor caught in Adultery"  
by Robert Sayer 1768  
(Lewis Walpole Library)



*A late Scene at BARNET.*

“A late SCENE at BARNET.”  
London c. 1770  
(Lewis Walpole Library)



The CITIZEN RETIRED, or BUSINESS at an END till MONDAY.

*Printed for Carington Bowles, Map & Printseller, N° 69 in S<sup>t</sup> Pauls Church Yard, London. Published as the Act directs July 2<sup>d</sup> 1772.*

“The CITIZEN RETIRED, or, BUSINESS at and END till MONDAY”  
by Carington Bowles 1772  
(Lewis Walpole Library)



The CITIZEN RETIRED, or BUSINESS at an END till MONDAY.

*Printed for Bowles & Carver, Map & Printers, No. 69 in St. Pauls Church Yard, London.*

No. 4519

No. 1. 20

“The CITIZEN RETIRED, or, BUSINESS at and END till MONDAY”  
by Carington Bowles 1772  
(The British Museum)



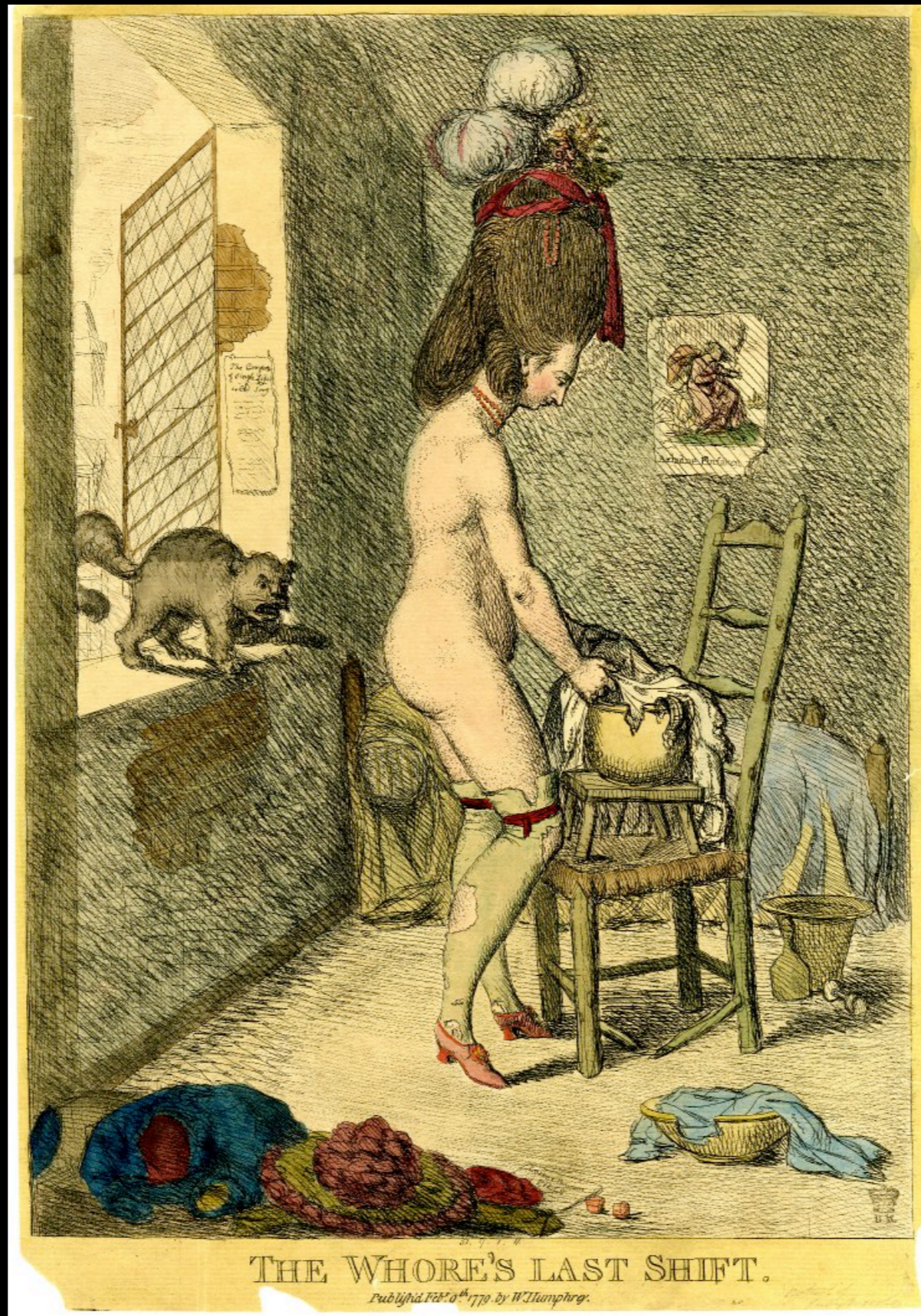
“Lydia”  
by William Dickinson after Rev Mathew William Peters 1776  
(The British Museum)



A Bagnio Scene  
Published by Sayer & Bennett 1778  
(The British Museum)



A Bagnio Scene  
Published by Sayer & Bennett 1778  
(The British Museum)

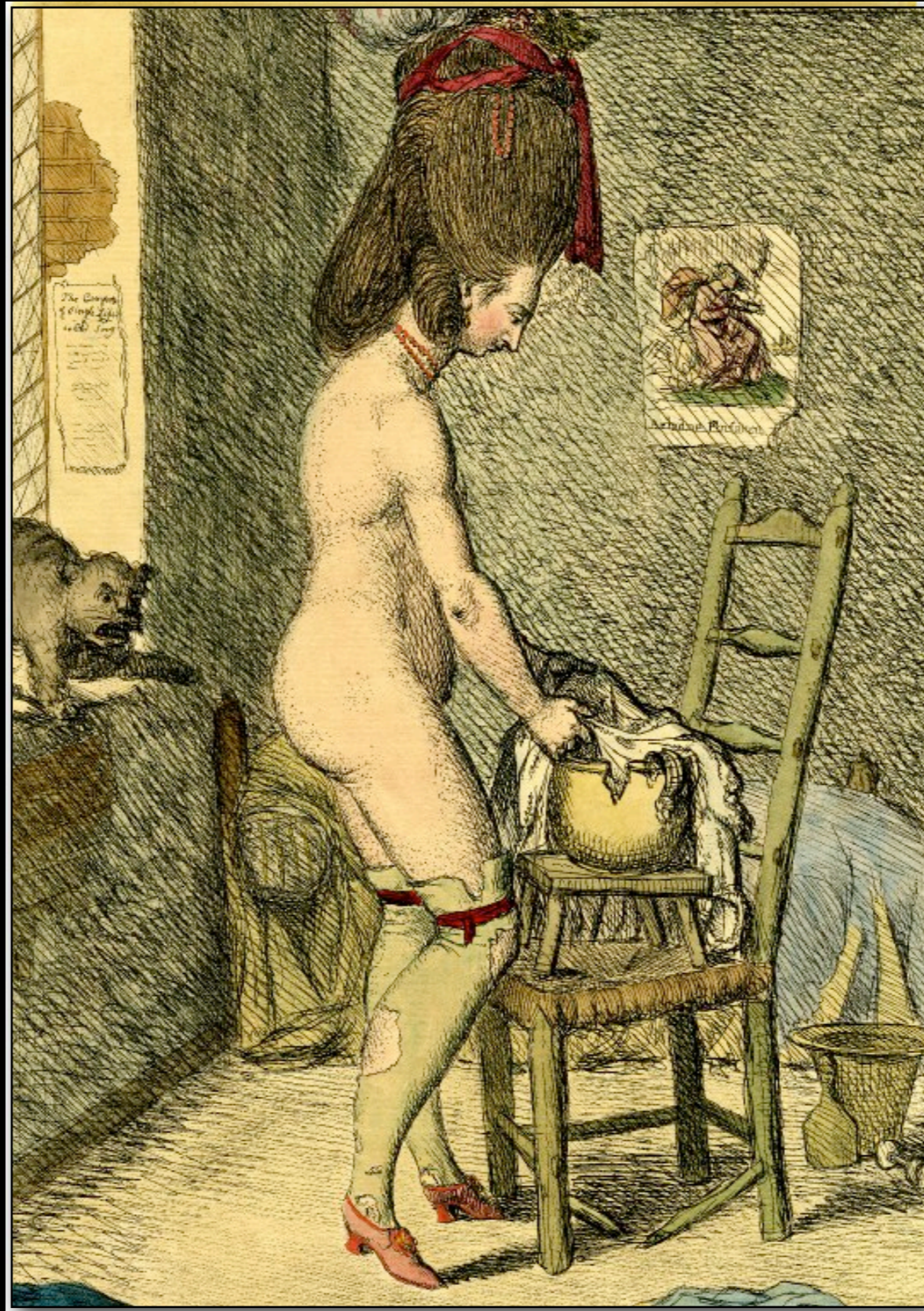


THE WHORE'S LAST SHIFT.

*Published Feb 10<sup>th</sup> 1779. by W. Humphrey.*

“THE WHORE’S LAST SHIFT”

by James Gillray, Produced by William Humphrey 1779  
(The British Museum)



**“THE WHORE’S LAST SHIFT”**

by James Gillray, Produced by William Humphrey 1779  
(The British Museum)



THE WHORE'S LAST SHIFT.

*Published Feb 9<sup>th</sup> 1779, by W. Humphrey.*

**"THE WHORE'S LAST SHIFT"**

by James Gillray, Produced by William Humphrey 1779  
(The British Museum)



Sleeping Child  
by William Doghty after Sir Joshua Reynolds 1780  
(The British Museum)



Girl with a Birdcage  
by Jean-Frédéric Schall (1752-1825) - Late 18th Century  
(Victoria & Albert)



Bolster  
Date Unknown  
(Blickling Hall, Norfolk (Accredited Museum))



*"The Death of Voltaire"*  
by Samuel Percy (1750 - 1820) c. Late 18th - Early 19th Century  
(Victoria & Albert Museum)



Bolster  
Date Unknown  
(Erddig, Wrexham (Accredited Museum))



Bolster  
Date Unknown  
(Erddig, Wrexham (Accredited Museum))

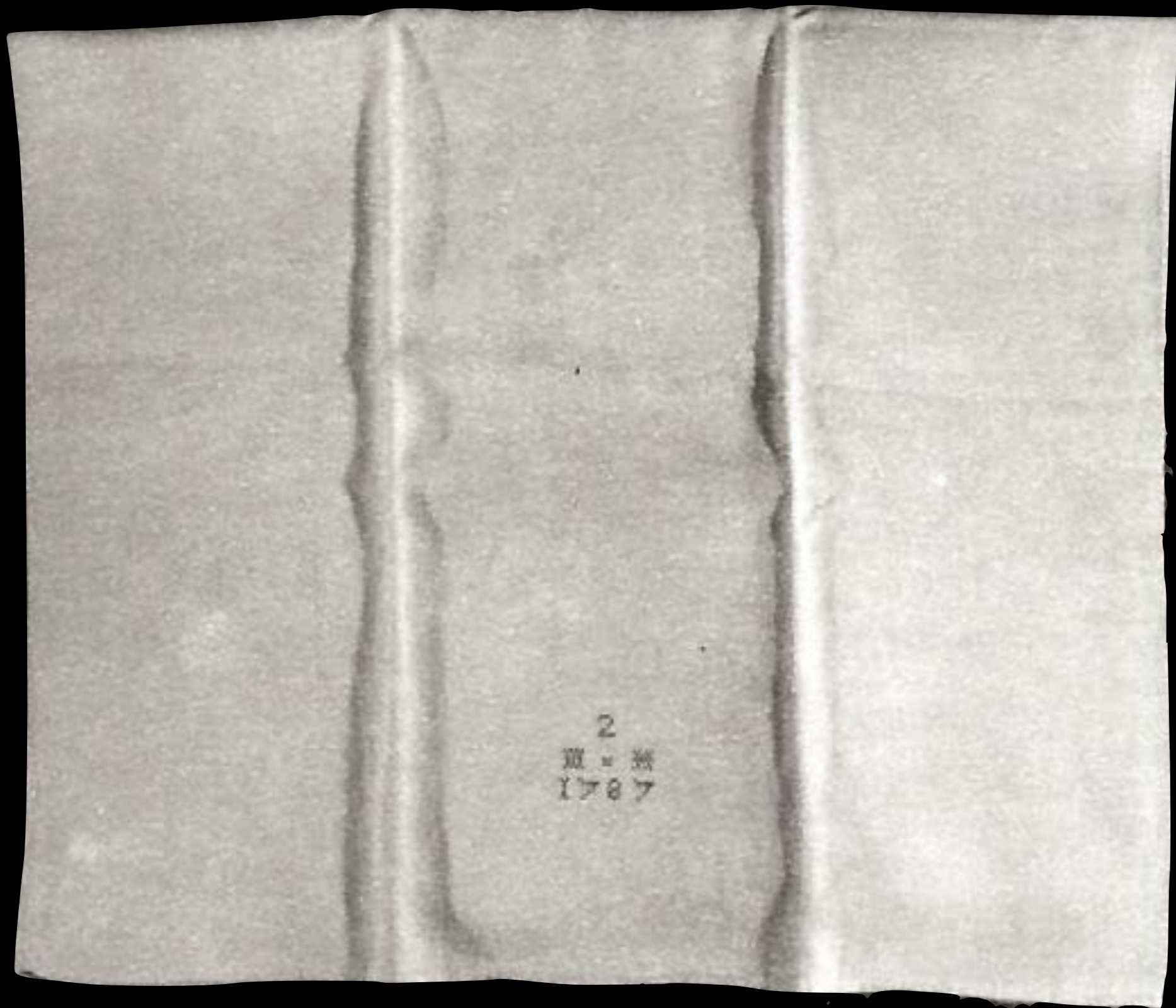


"THE ROYAL BED AND STAR"

18th Century

(Lewis Walpole Library)

# Pillowcases



American Linen Pillowcases with Silk Embroidery  
Pennsylvania 1787  
(Colonial Williamsburg)



American Linen Pillowcases with Silk Embroidery  
Pennsylvania 1787  
(Colonial Williamsburg)



American Linen Pillowcases with Silk Embroidery  
Pennsylvania 1787  
(Colonial Williamsburg)



American Linen Pillowcases with Silk Embroidery  
New York c. 1790 - 1820  
(Colonial Williamsburg)

# Sheets



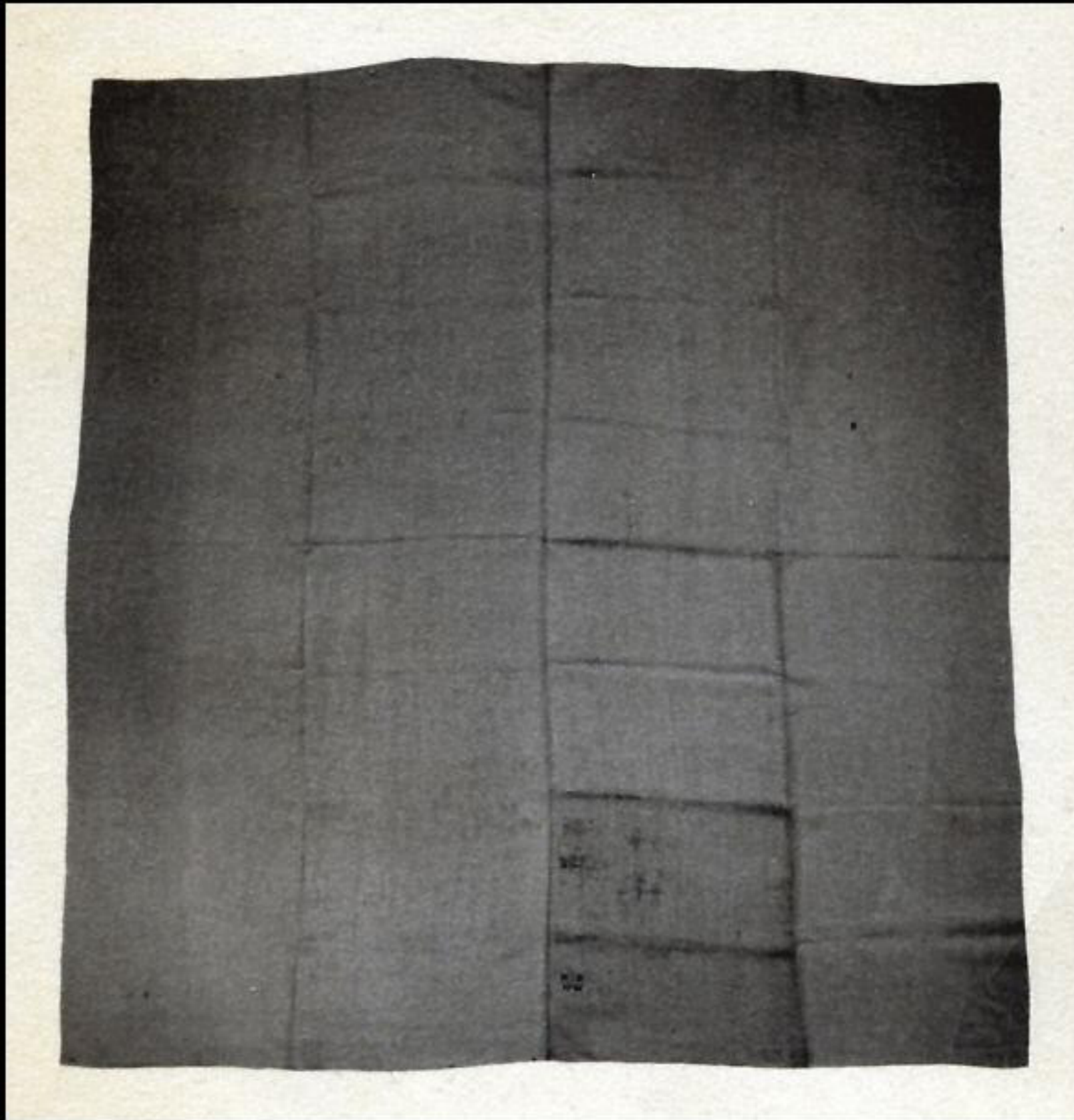
English or Irish Linen Bed Sheet with 1/4" Hem Marked "CK"  
c. 1770  
(Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)



English or Irish Linen Bed Sheet with 1/4" Hem Marked "CK"

c. 1770

(Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)



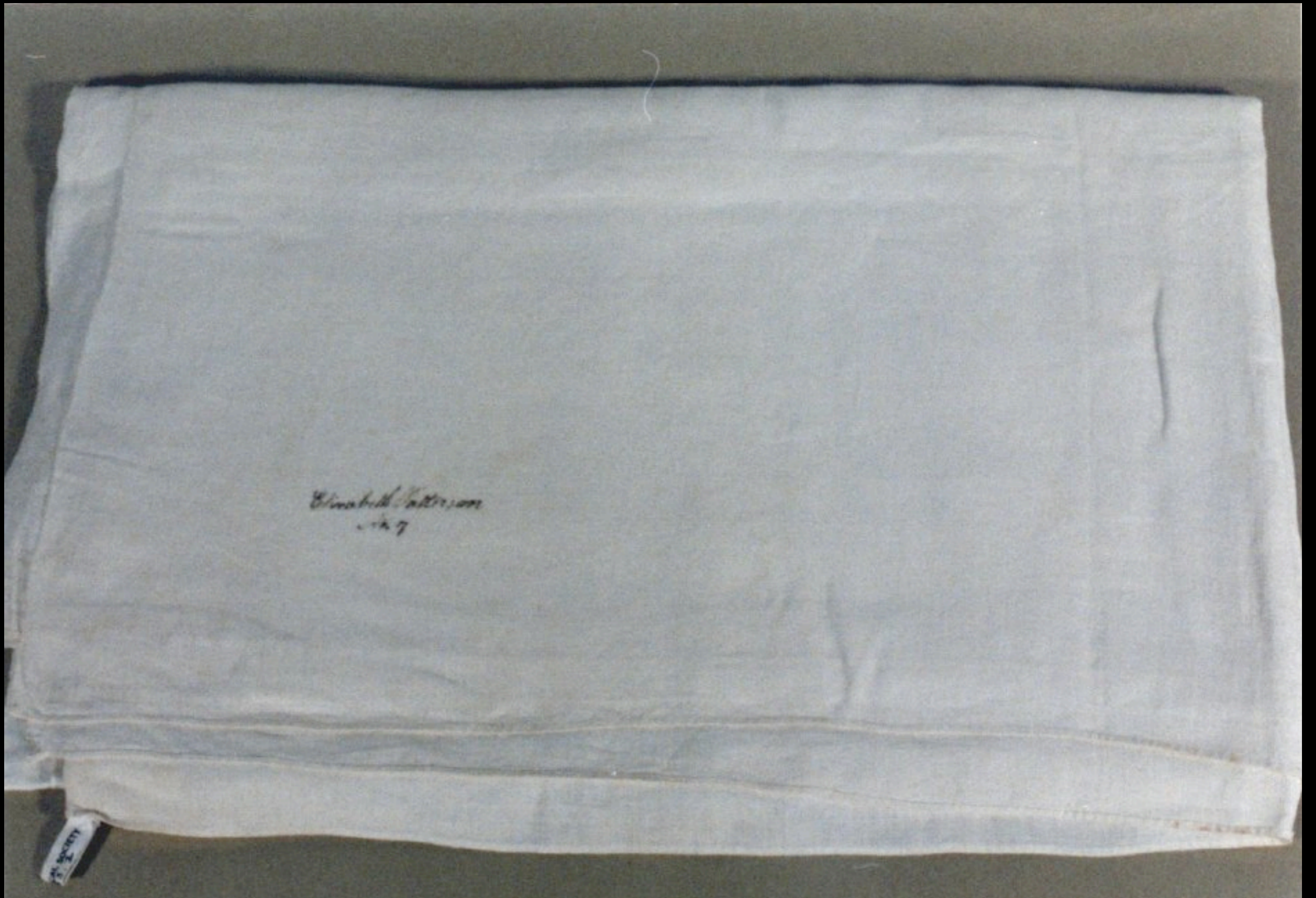
American Linen Bed Sheet with  $\frac{1}{4}$ " Hem Marked "AM" from Pennsylvania  
by A. Mitchell 1745  
(Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)



American Linen Bed Sheet with 1/4" Hem Marked "AM" from Pennsylvania  
by A. Mitchell 1745  
(Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)



American Linen Bed Sheet with 1/4" Hem Marked "AM" from Pennsylvania  
by A. Mitchell 1745  
(Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)



American Linen Bed Sheet  
by Mary Wallace of Londonderry, New Hampshire 18th Century  
(New Hampshire Historical Society)

# Acknowledgements

The 18th Century Material Culture Resource Center is once again indebted to Steve Rayner for his many contributions to this slideshow.

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# Acknowledgements

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Thank you!

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