18th Century Material Culture
Shoemakers & Cobblers



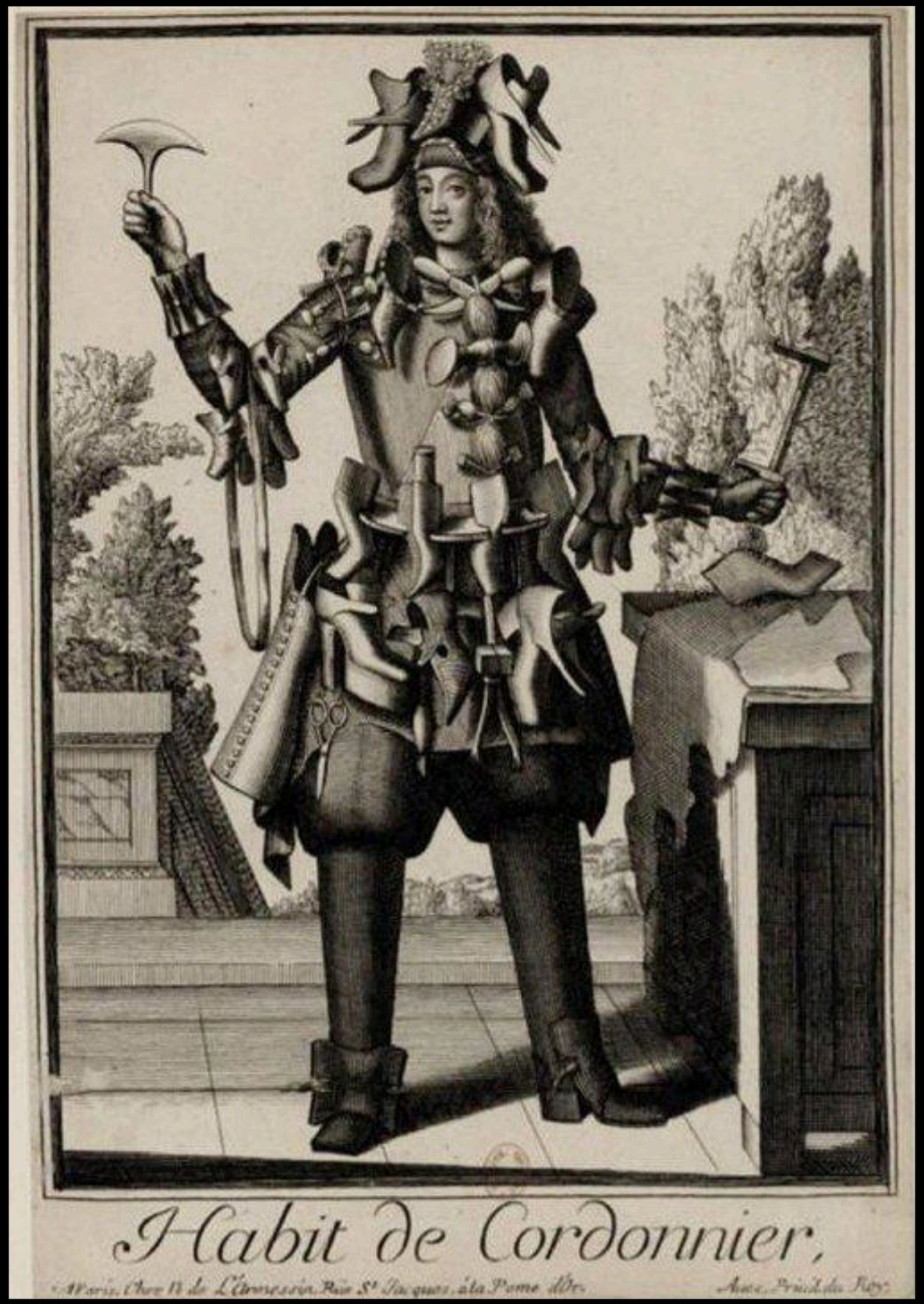
Shoemakers, Cobblers, & Cordwainers

Shoemakers, Cobblers & Cordwainers

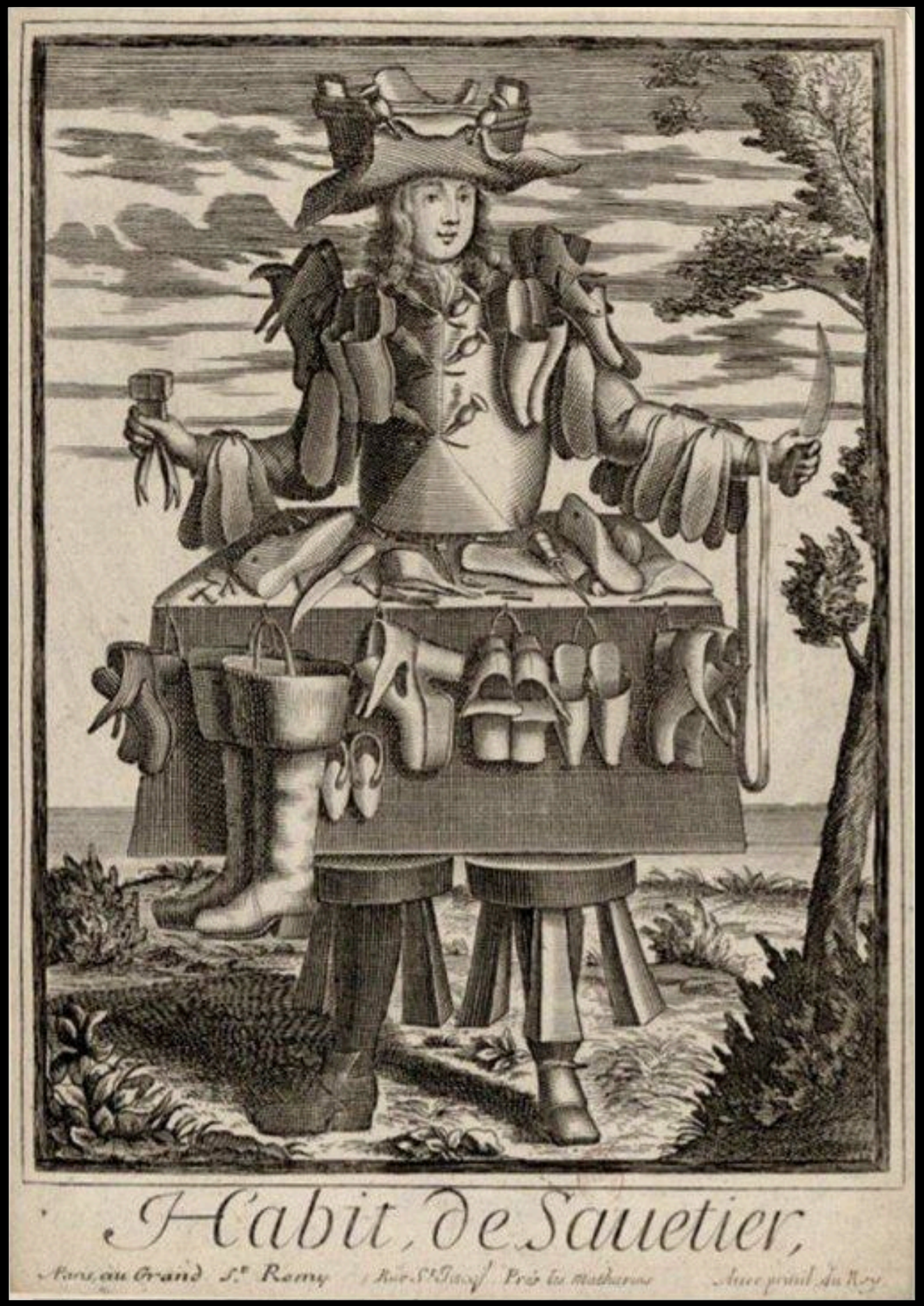
From The Shoemakers' Shop of Colonial Williamsburg:

There is an old saying, "Shoemakers work with new leather, and cobblers with old." The shoemaker will make the shoe and the cobbler will repair the shoe. Cordwainer is an older term referring to shoemakers who were working in Cordovan leather, from Cordoba, Spain. We are including the definiton of cordwainer from the O.E.D., which you may find interesting.

"cordwainer, n. A worker in cordwain or cordovan leather; a shoemaker. Now obs. as the ordinary name, but often persisting as the name of the trade-guild or company of shoemakers, and sometimes used by modern trades unions to include all branches of the trade. (In Scotland in the 18th c. distinguished from ‘shoemaker’: see 1722 in β.) β. 1722 Annals of Hawick (1850) , The cordiners petition the council to be incorporated and separated from the shoe˜makers ‘or those who make single-soled shoes’."



"Habit de Cordonnier"
by Nicolas Larmessin c. 1700



"Habit de Sauetier."
by Nicolas Larmessin c. 1700



The Shoemaker & His Apprentice
by Peter Angelis c. 1725
(Philip Mould)



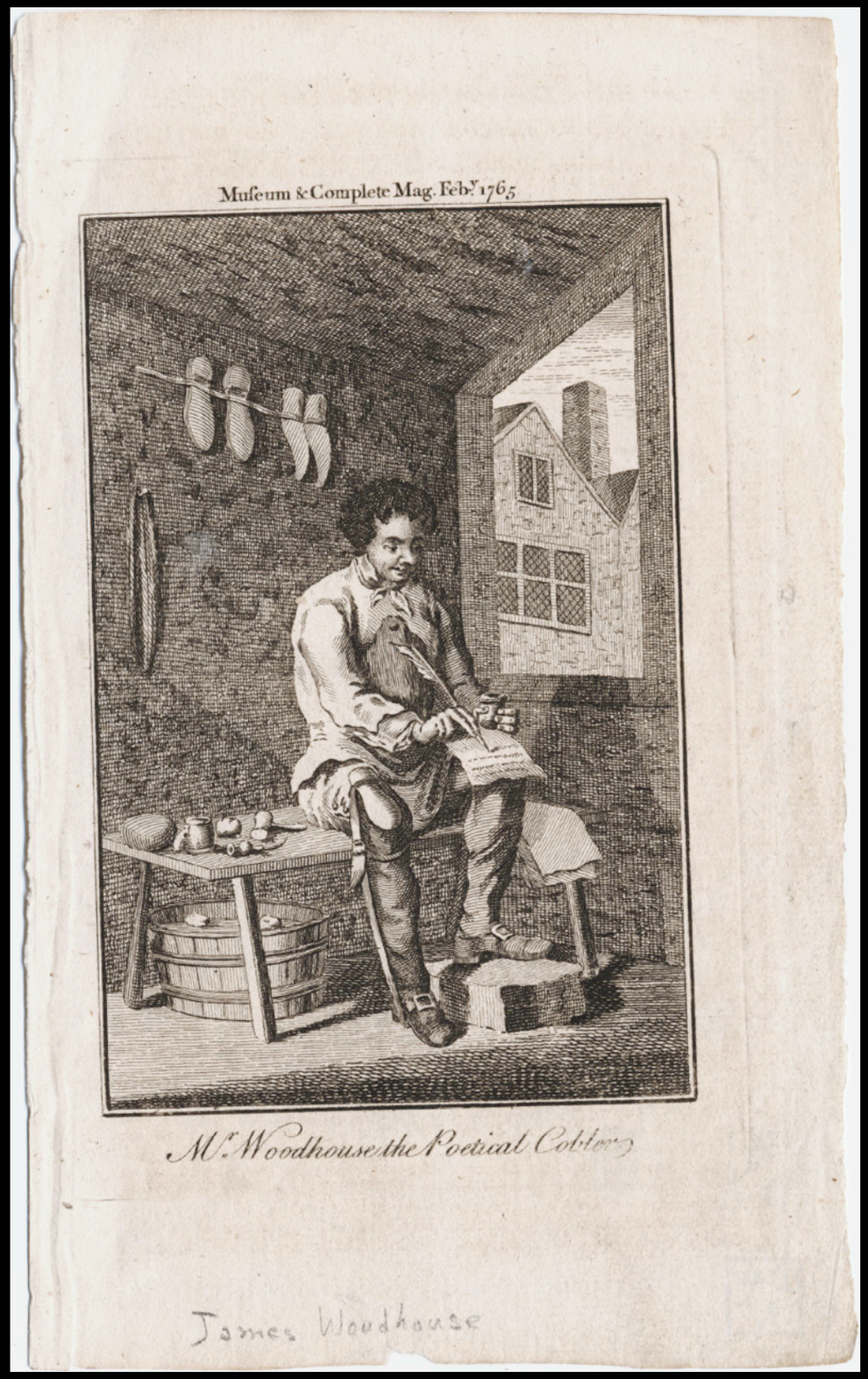
The Shoemaker & His Apprentice
by Peter Angelis c. 1725
(Philip Mould)



The Shoemaker
by Aert Schouman 1735



Cries of Dublin: "A Rambling Cobler & his Boy"
by Douglas Hamilton c. 1760s





"Mr. Woodhouse, the Poetical Cobler"
1765
(Lewis Walpole Library)



Dutch Spinner & Cobler
by Barend Hendrik Thier 1765
(Atlas Van Stolk)



Dutch Cobler
by Barend Hendrik Thier 1765
(Atlas Van Stolk)



Dutch Cobler
by Barend Hendrik Thier 1765
(Atlas Van Stolk)



"The MACARONI SHOE MAKER, taking his Mundy's Ride."
by M. Darey 1772
(Library of Congress)



The MACARONI SHOE MAKER, *taking his* Mundy's Ride.

"The MACARONI SHOE MAKER, taking his Mundy's Ride."
by M. Darey 1772
(Grosvenor Prints)



"GOOD NEWS"
(Lewis Walpole Library)



"GOOD NEWS"
(Lewis Walpole Library)



"The TAYLOR and COBLER"
by Carington Bowles c. 1768 - 1772
(Lewis Walpole Library)



"THE CONTENTED COBLER"
by James Wilson 1772
(Lewis Walpole Library)



"THE CONTENTED COBLER"
by James Wilson 1772
(Lewis Walpole Library)

V 4

10



The ELECTED COBLER.

Publish'd according to Act Aug.st 27 1772 by M Darly 39 Strand.

"THE ELECTED COBLER"
by M. Darley 1772
(British Museum)



"COBLER'S HALL"
by Carington Bowles 1775
(Lewis Walpole Library)



"COBLER'S HALL"
by Carington Bowles 1775
(Lewis Walpole Library)



TIGHT LACING, or the COBLER'S WIFE in the FASHION.

The Hoity *head &* Toighty *waist,*
As now they're all the ton,
Ma'am Nell *the cobler's wife, in taste*
By none will be outdone,

But, ah! when set aloft her cap,
Her Boddice while she's bracing,
Jobſon *comes in, & with his strap,*
Gives her a good tight lacing.

Publish'd Nov.r 4th 1777 by Wm. Hitchcock N.o 5 Birchin Lane

"TIGHT LACING or the COBLER'S WIFE in the FASHION"
by William Hitchcock 1777
(Lewis Walpole Library)



"TIGHT LACING or the COBLER'S WIFE in the FASHION"
by William Hitchcock 1777
(Lewis Walpole Library)



"The ENRAGED CUCKOLD"
by Carington Bowles c. 1766 - 1784
(Lewis Walpole Library)



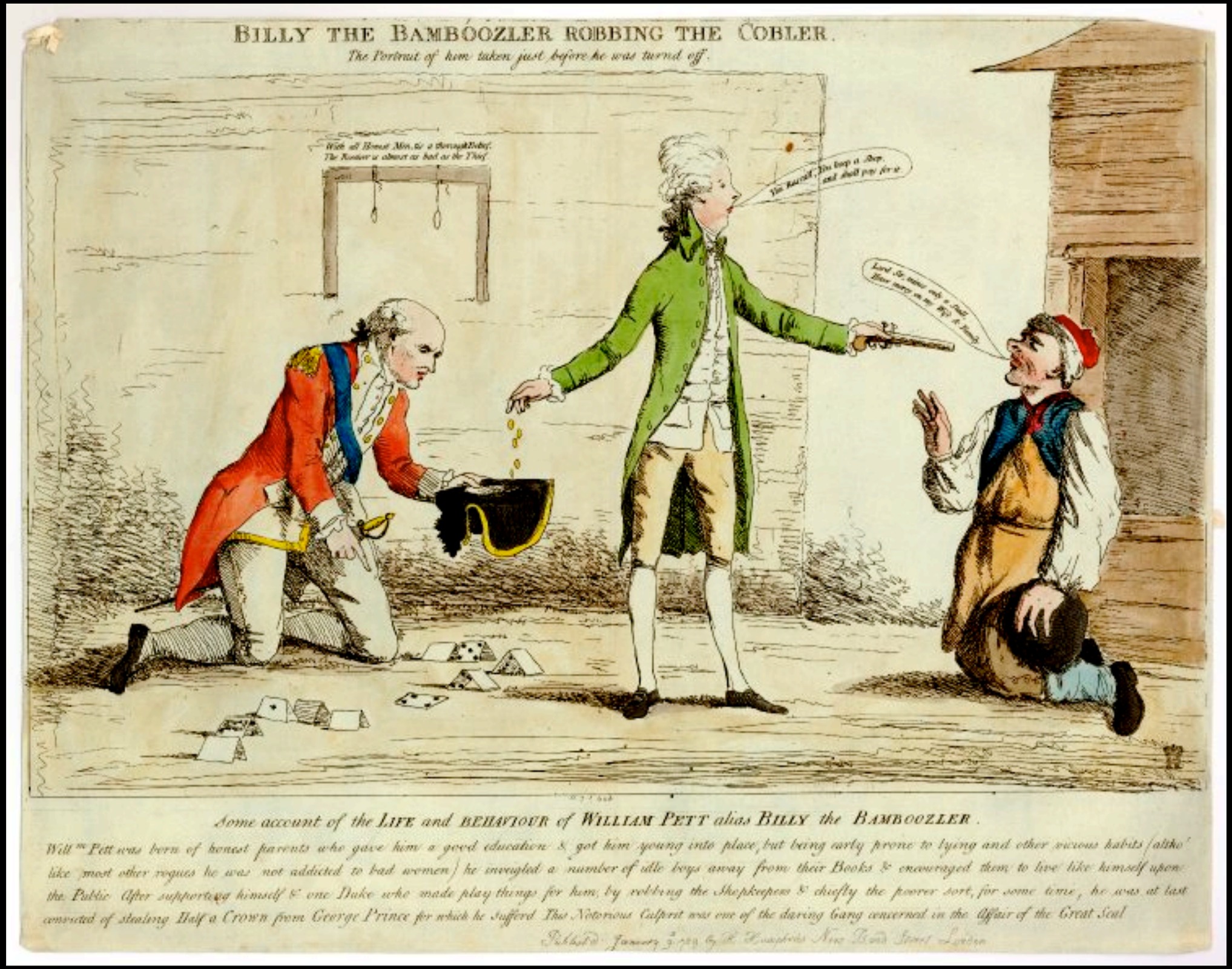
"The MODERN BEAU in DISTRESS"
(Yale Center for British Art)



"The MODERN BEAU in DISTRESS"
(Yale Center for British Art)



"The Friendly Society of Cordwainers of England"
1784



"BILLY THE BAMBOOZLER ROBBING THE COBLER"
by Hannah Humphrey 1789

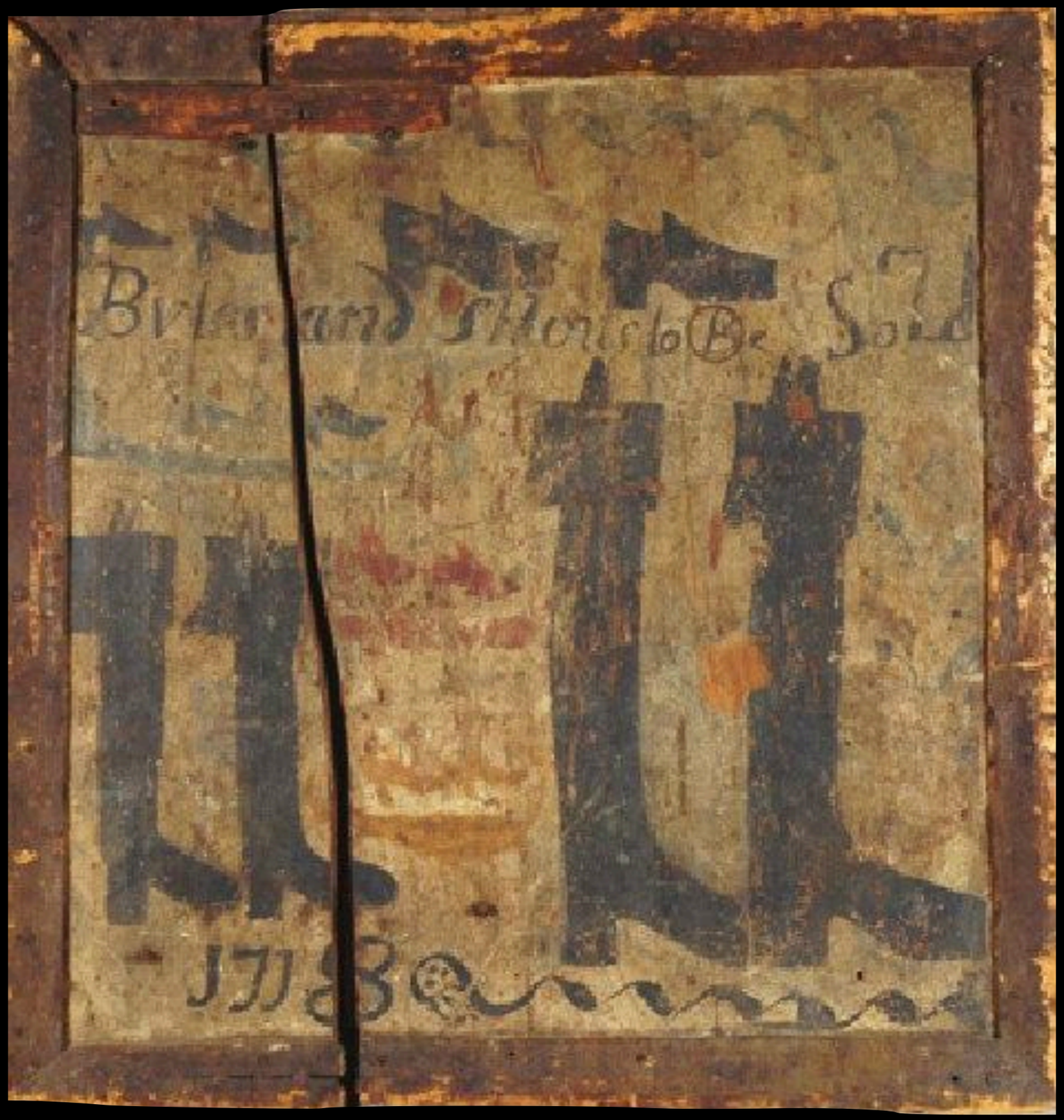


English Figure of a Cobbler
by John Astbury, English (Staffordshire c. 1740 - 1745)
(Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)



English Figure of a Cobbler
by the Chelsea Manufactory c. 1755
(Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

Trade Signs



"Bvtes and Shous to be Sold"
Providence, Rhode Island, 1718

Trade Cards



A
5483
50
406

"Habit de Sauetier."
by Nicolas Larmessin c. 1700

Mr Didsbury is desired to make — 7. Sept. 1767

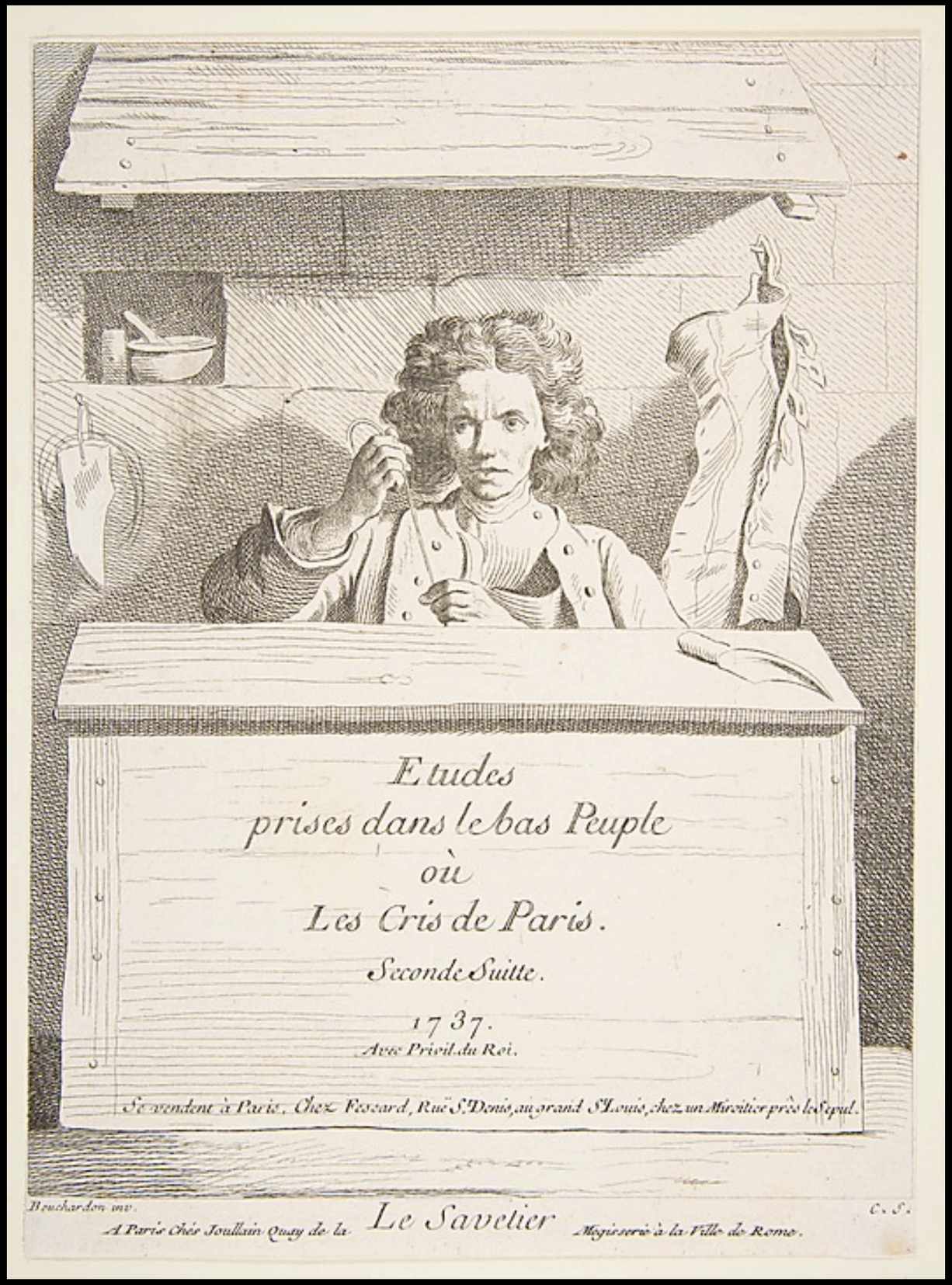
For Edward Shippen of Philadelphia

A Pair of light Boots
a pair of neat dress Shoes with stickled Heels
4 pair of stronger Shoes, with common Heels
2 pair of very ~~stout~~ Shoes, with thick Soals for Winter

Measure of Leg & foot taken according to Mr Didsbury's Direction

N°1. The length of the Leg ~~from the bottom of the Heel with half an Inch of the knee bone~~, is 17 inches -

2. Height of the Calf ~~from the bottom of the Heel~~, is 14 inches -
3. Round the Calf is 17 Inches and an half -
4. Round the Heel & Instep 14 inches & 1/10th ~~of an inch~~
5. Length of the Foot, 11 Inches -
6. Round the Instep, 11 Inches
7. Round the middle of the foot acrofs the great Joynt, is 10 inches



The Cobbler
by Anne Claude Philippe de Tubières, Comte de Caylus after Edme Bouchardon 1737
(Metropolitan Museum of Art)

MICHAEL ELLIS,

SHOEMAKER,

At the Sign of the Boot, *in* Cannon-ſtreet,

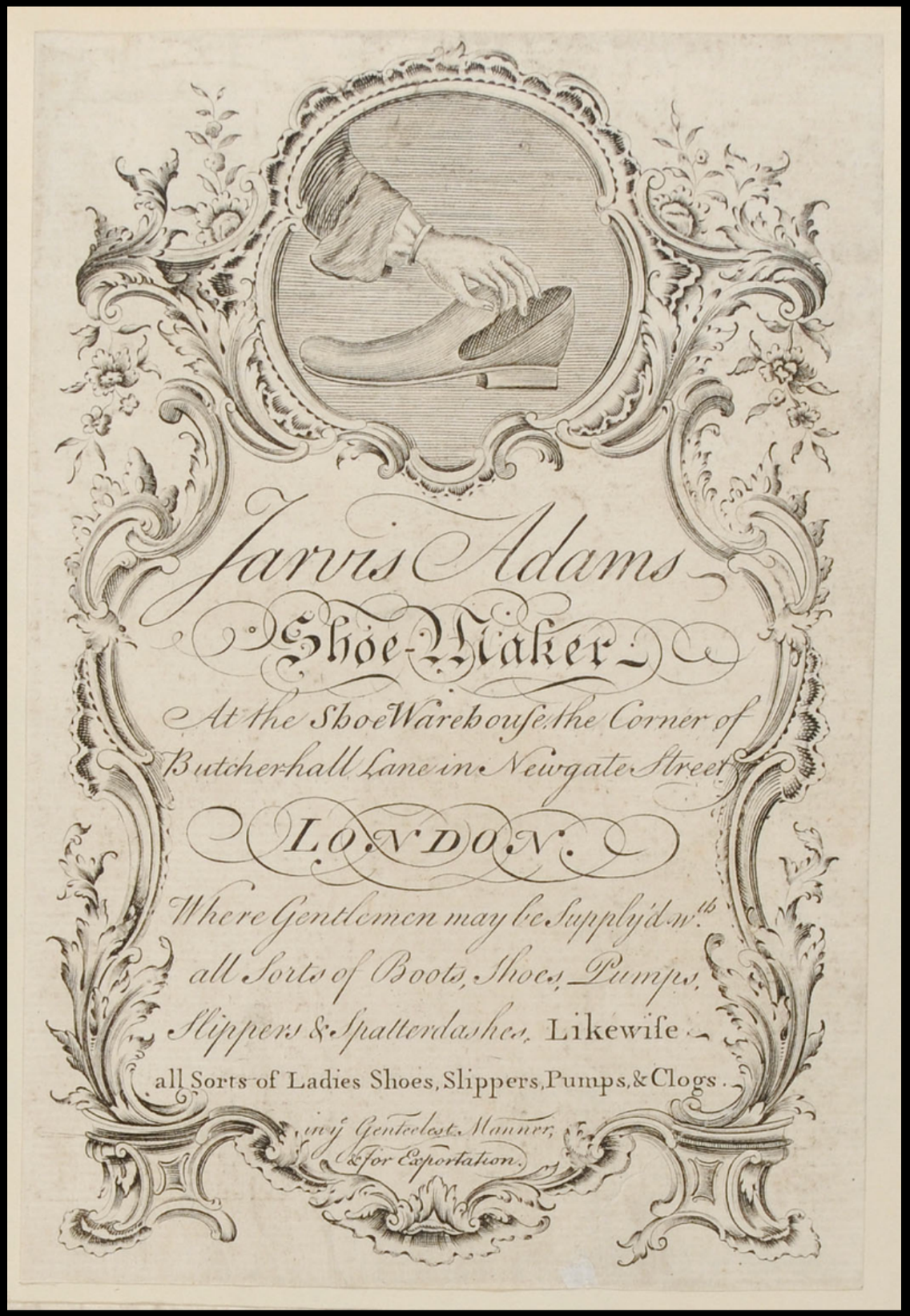
Succeſſor to the late Mr. EDDIS,

MAKES and SELLS all Sorts of Mens and Boys Shoes and Boots; likewiſe all Sorts of Ladies Silk and Stuff Shoes and Pumps, Slippers and Clogs, in the neateſt Manner, and at the loweſt Prices.

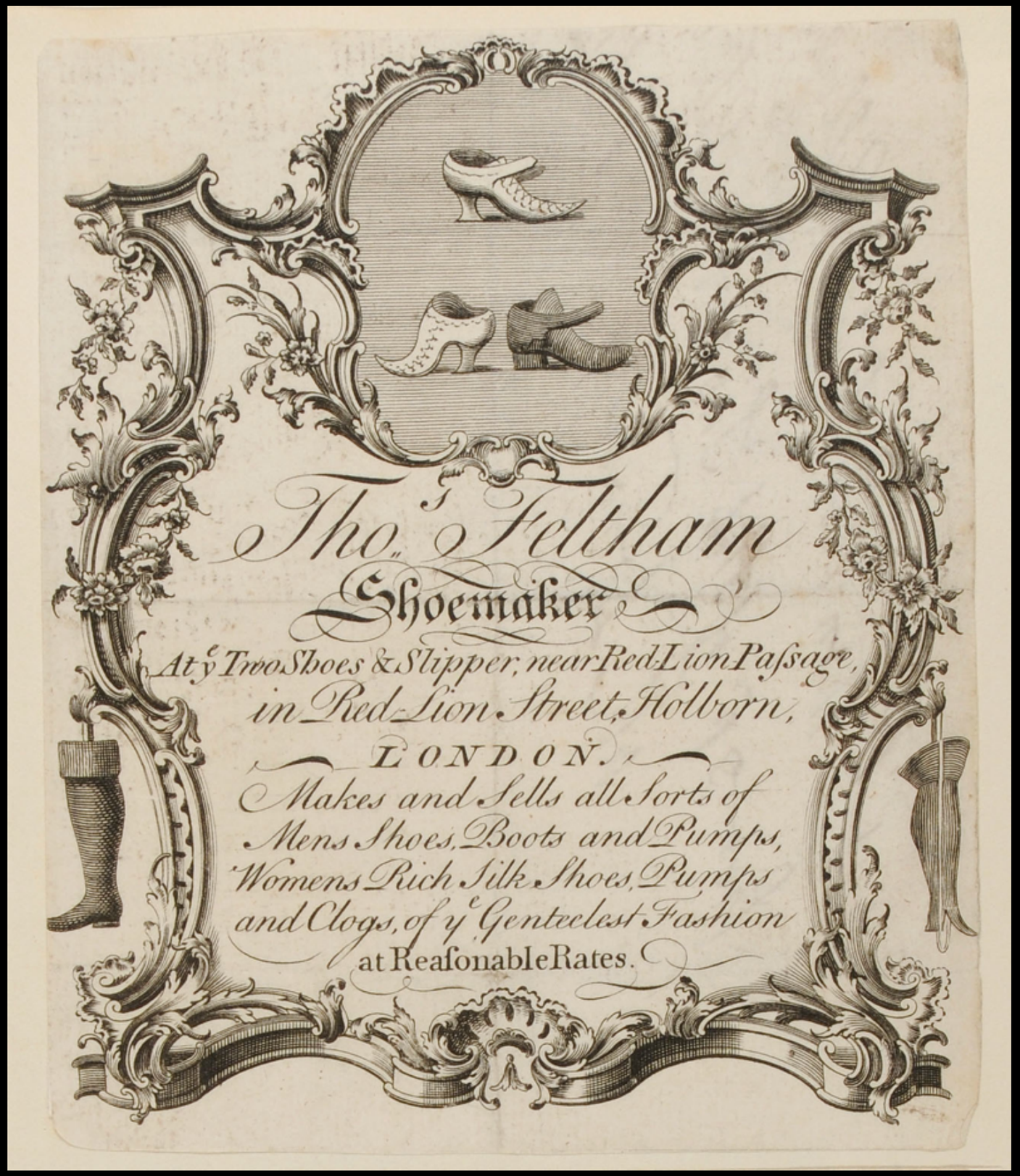
Likewiſe all Sorts of Childrens Pumps.



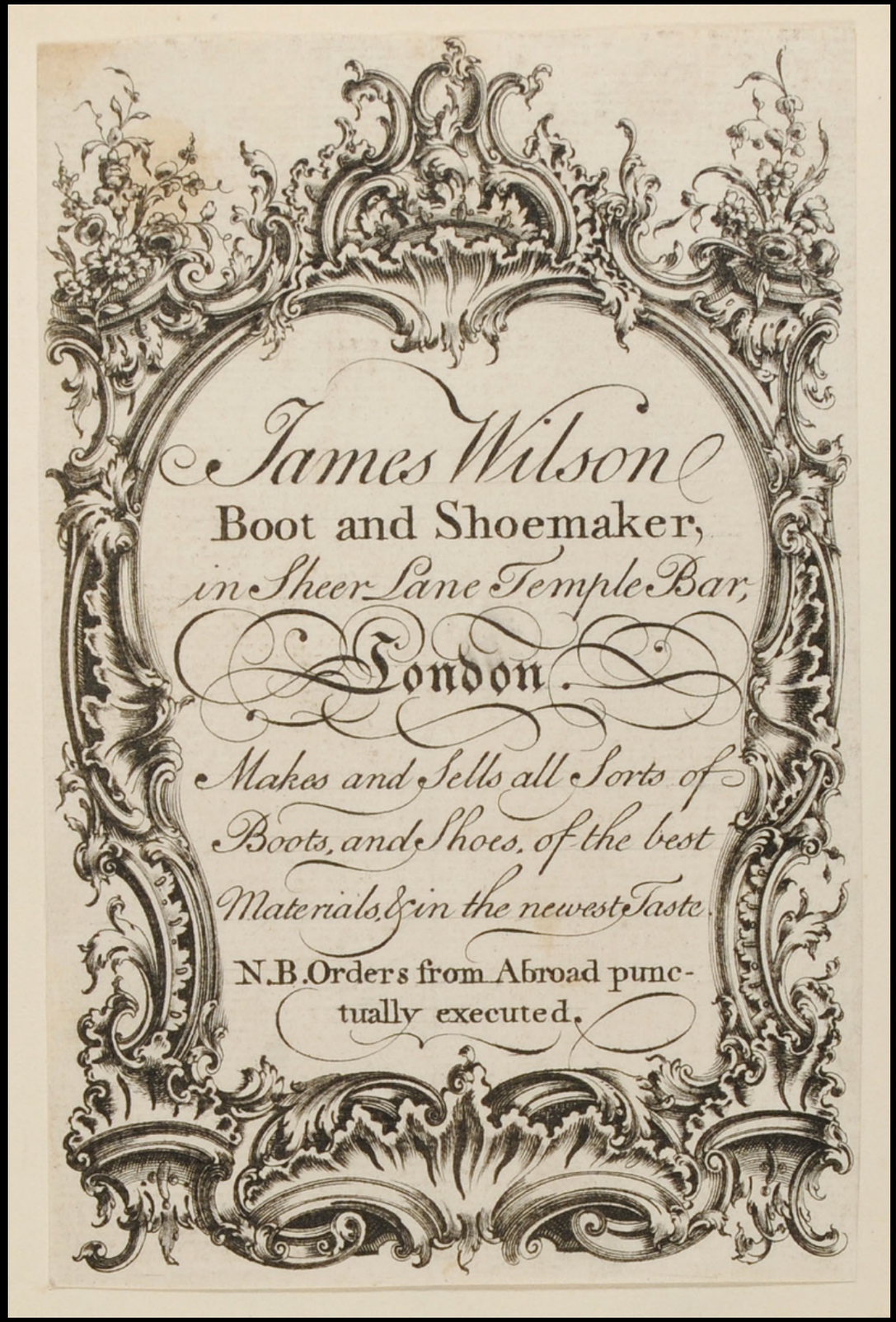
Trade Card
c. 1757 - 1758
(Lewis Walpole Library)



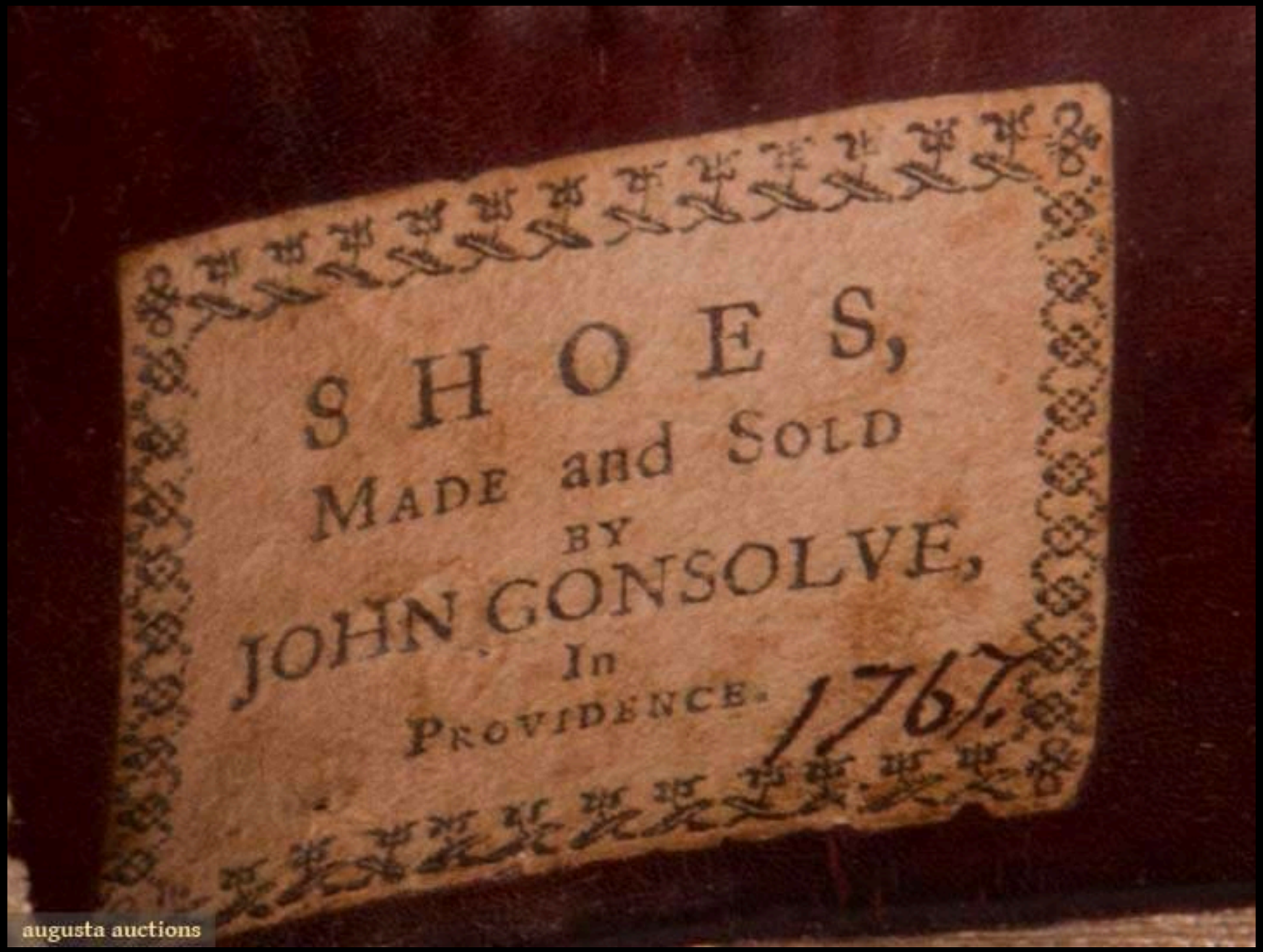
Trade Card
c. 1757 - 1758
(Lewis Walpole Library)



Trade Card
c. 1757 - 1758
(Lewis Walpole Library)



Trade Card
c. 1757 - 1758
(Lewis Walpole Library)



Providence, Rhode Island, Shoemaker Label
1767
(Augusta Auctions)

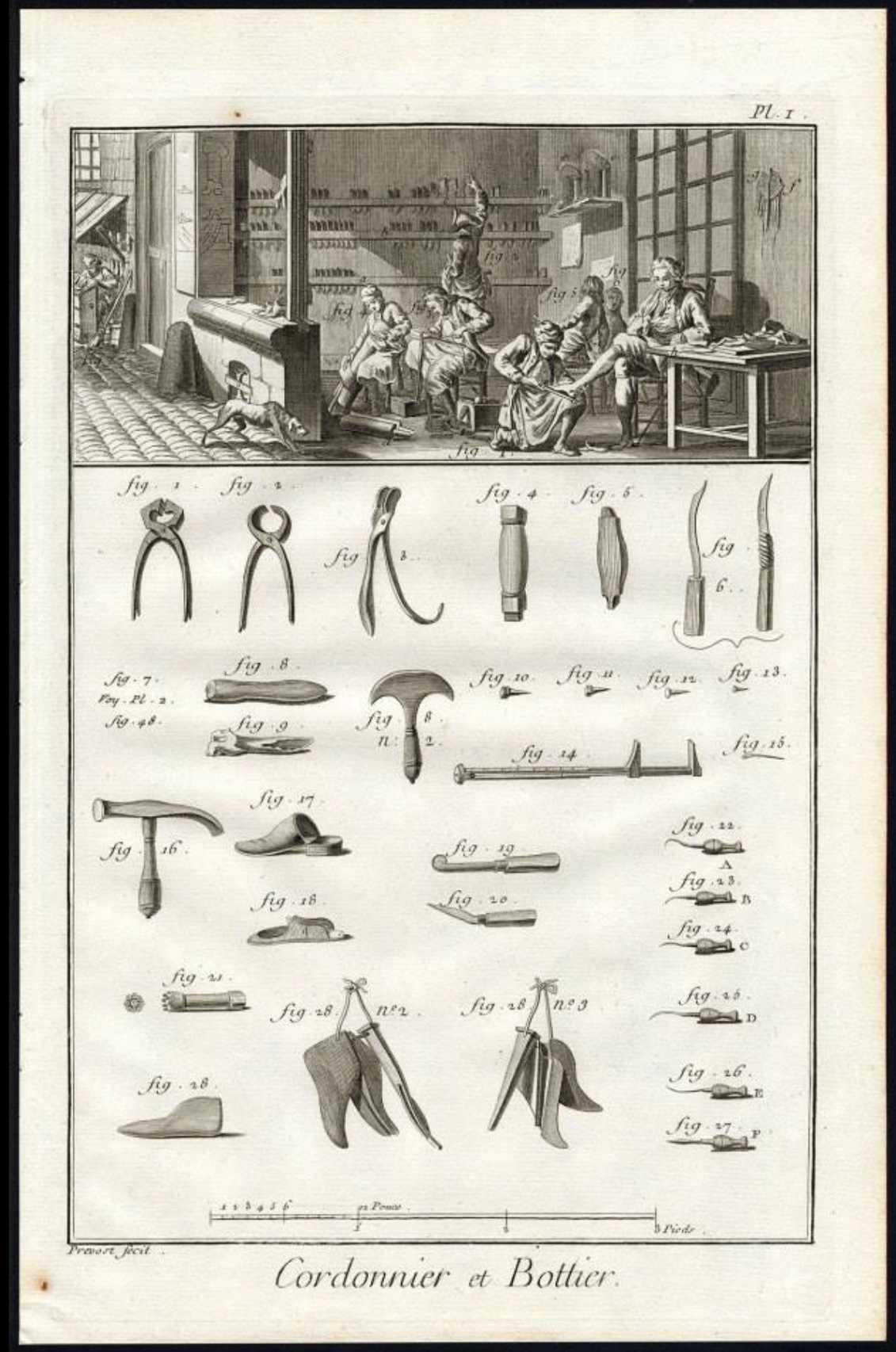


JAMES KEDMON, Boot and Shoe-maker,

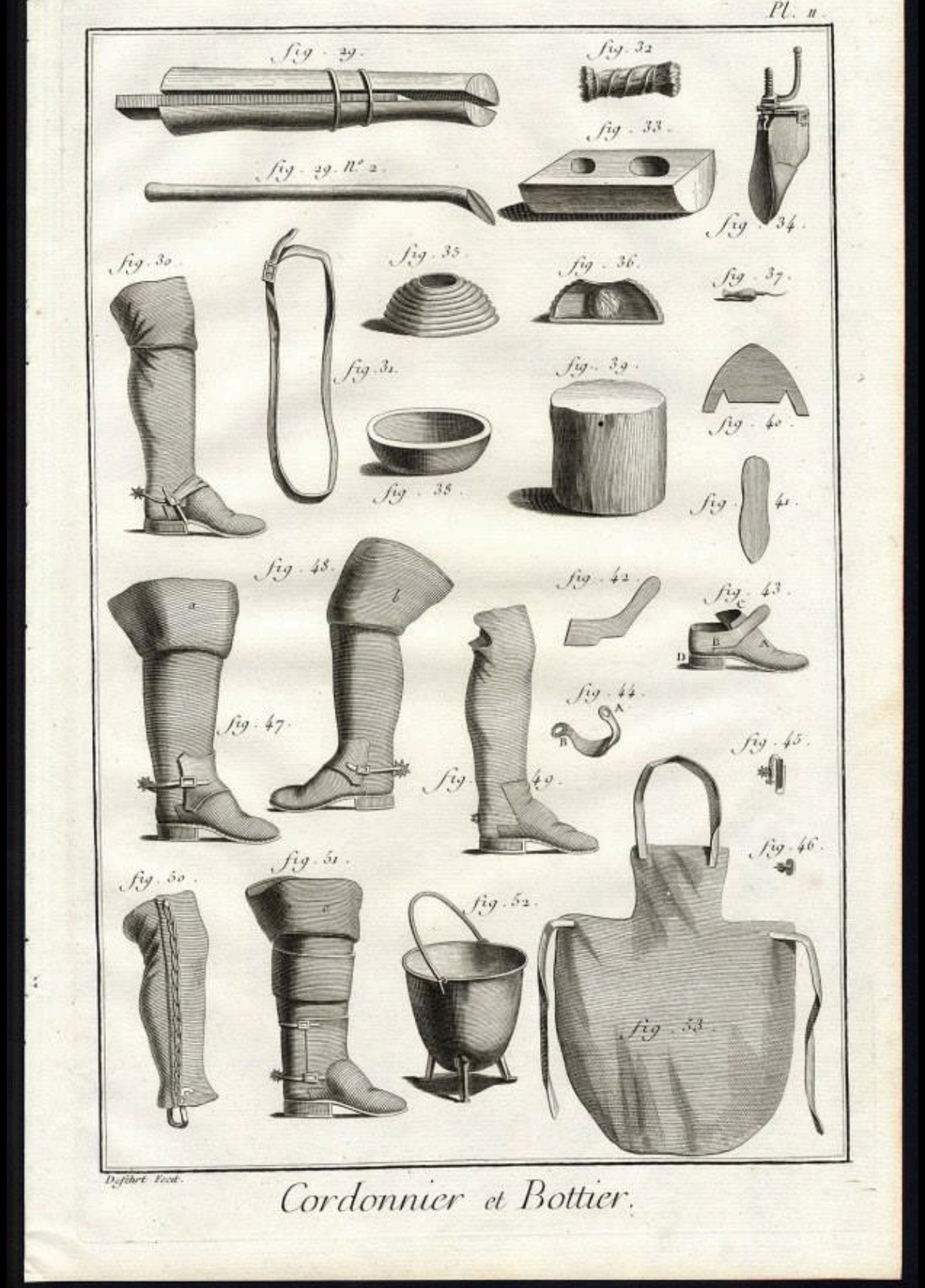
TAKES the liberty to acquaint his FRIENDS, who were pleased to favour him with their custom, That he has removed to Chestnut-street, three doors from the corner of Second-street, between Front and Second-streets, Philadelphia, where he carries on his BUSINESS in all its branches, particularly BUCKSKIN BOOTS, in the neatest manner. All Gentlemen and Ladies, who please to favour him with their commands, shall be punctually obeyed.

Advertisement in the Pennsylvania Gazette
July 26, 1770

The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert 1765



"Cordonnier et Bottier"
The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert 1765



"Cordonnier et Bottier"
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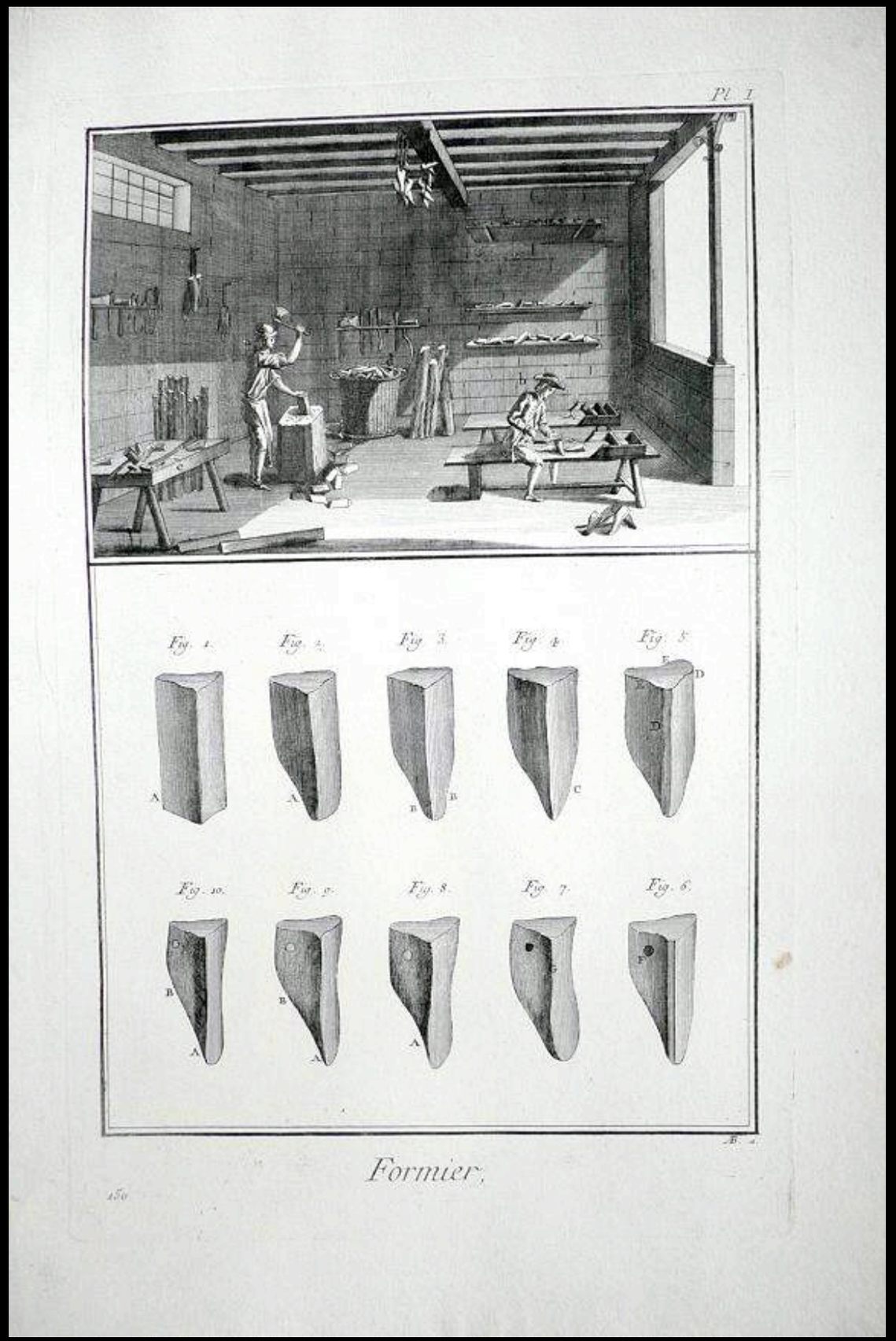
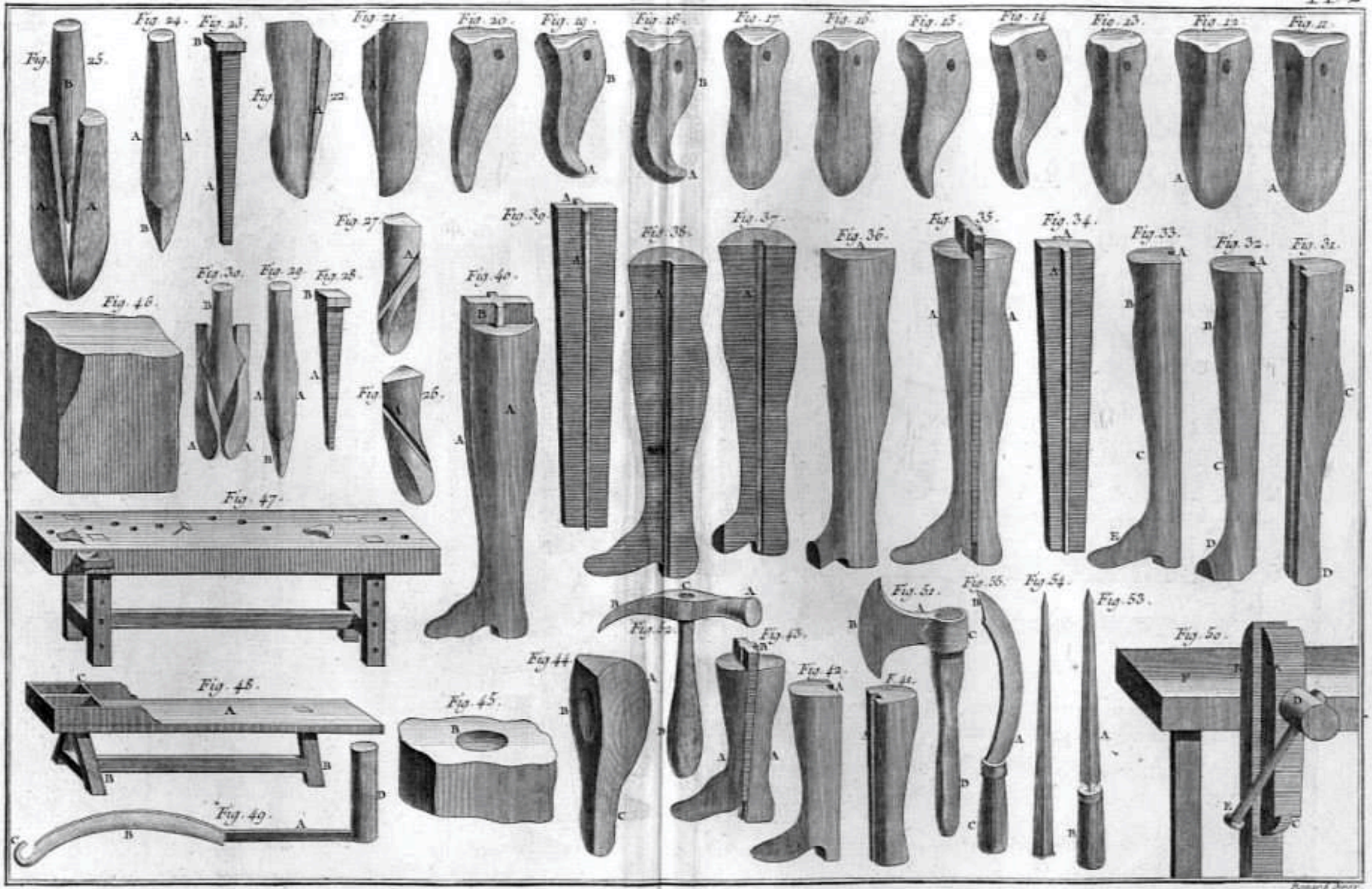
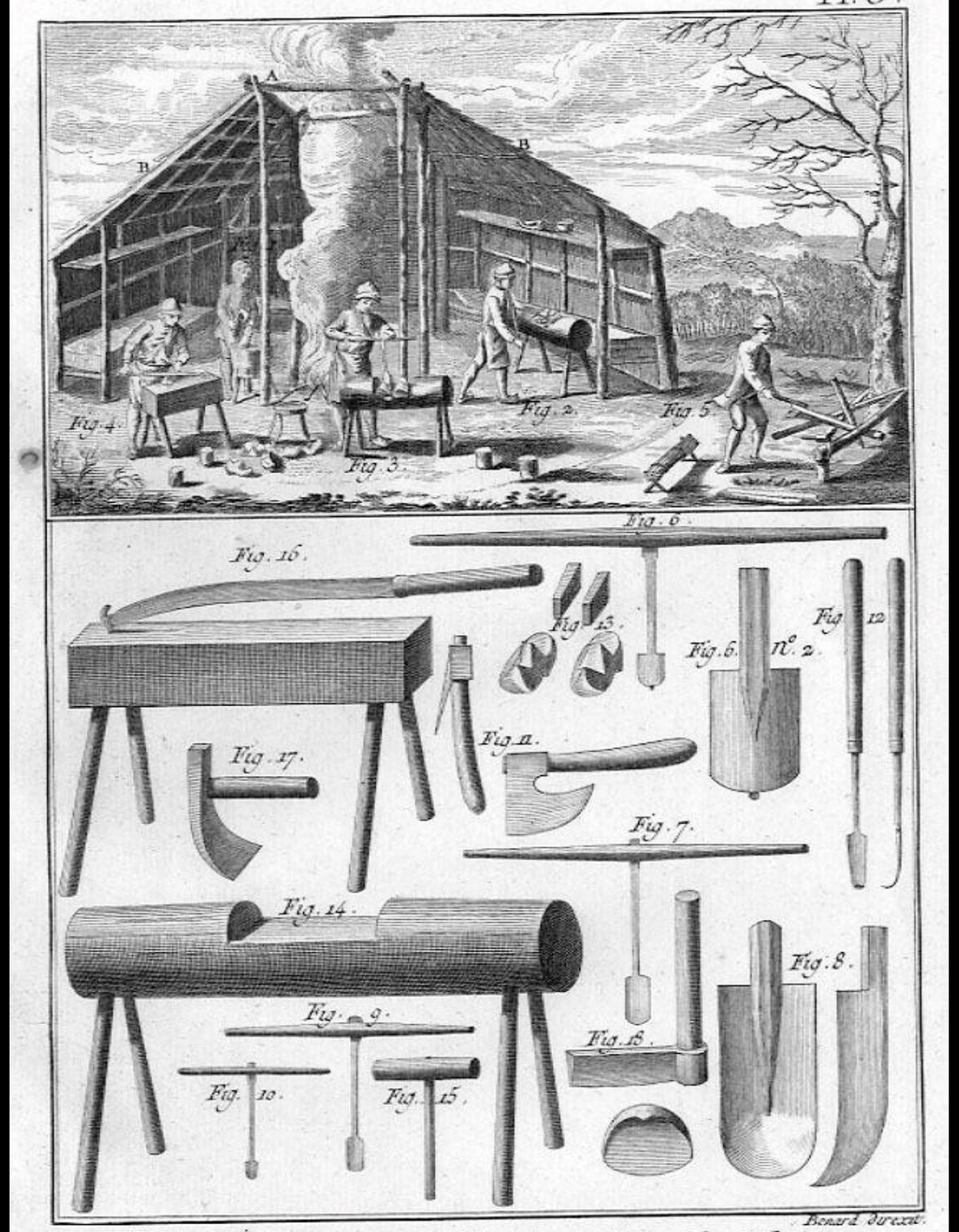


"Formier" (Last Maker)
The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert 1765



"Formier" (Last Maker)
The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert 1765



Formier, Maniere de faire les Sabots et les Echalats

"Formier" (Last Maker)
The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert 1765

“Art du Cordonnier”

by François Alexandre de Garsault

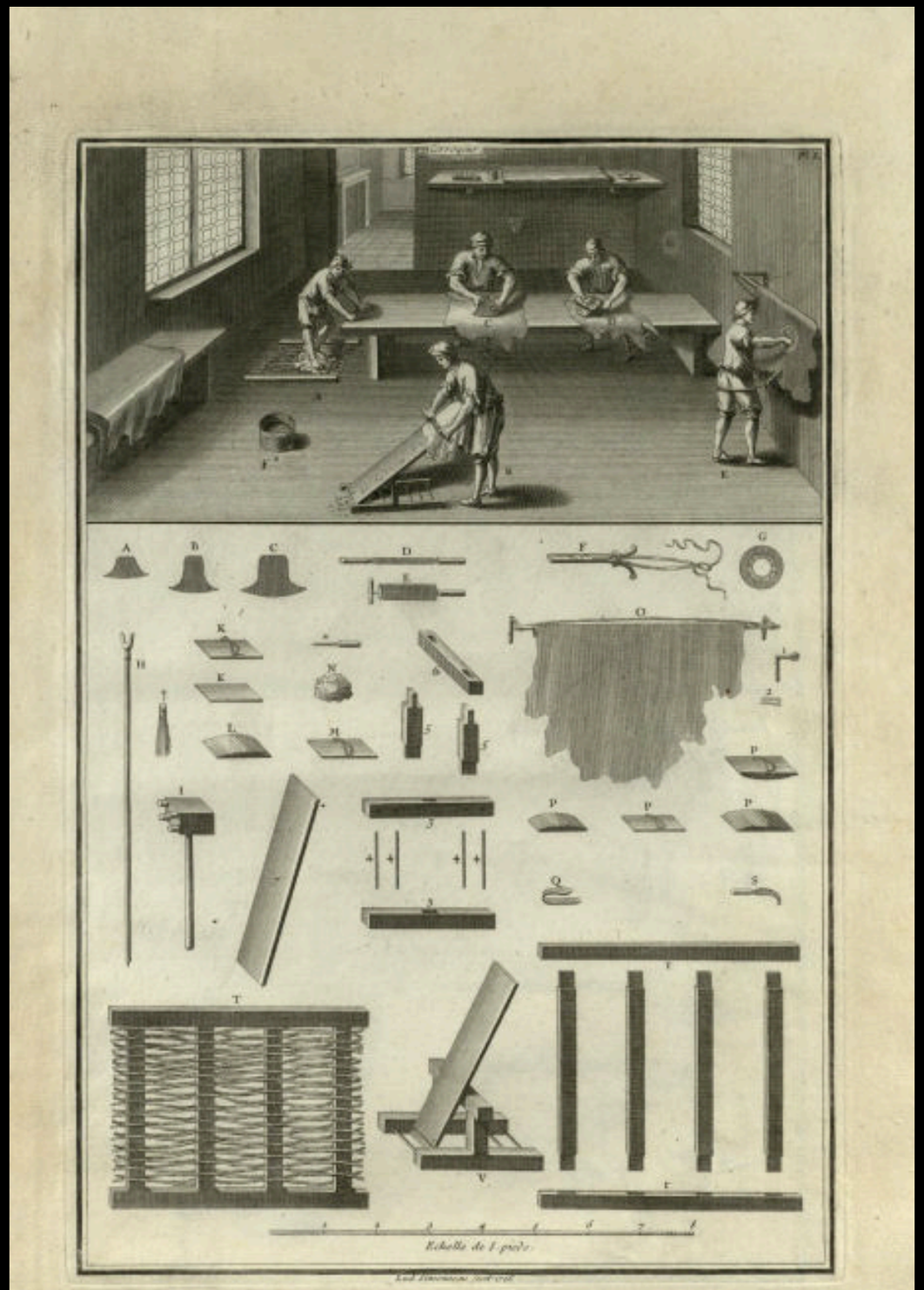
1767

ART
DU CORDONNIER,

Par M. DE GARSAULT.

M. DCC. LXVII.

"Art du Cordonnier"
by François Alexandre de Garsault 1767
(The Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences)



“Art du Cordonnier”
by François Alexandre de Garsault 1767
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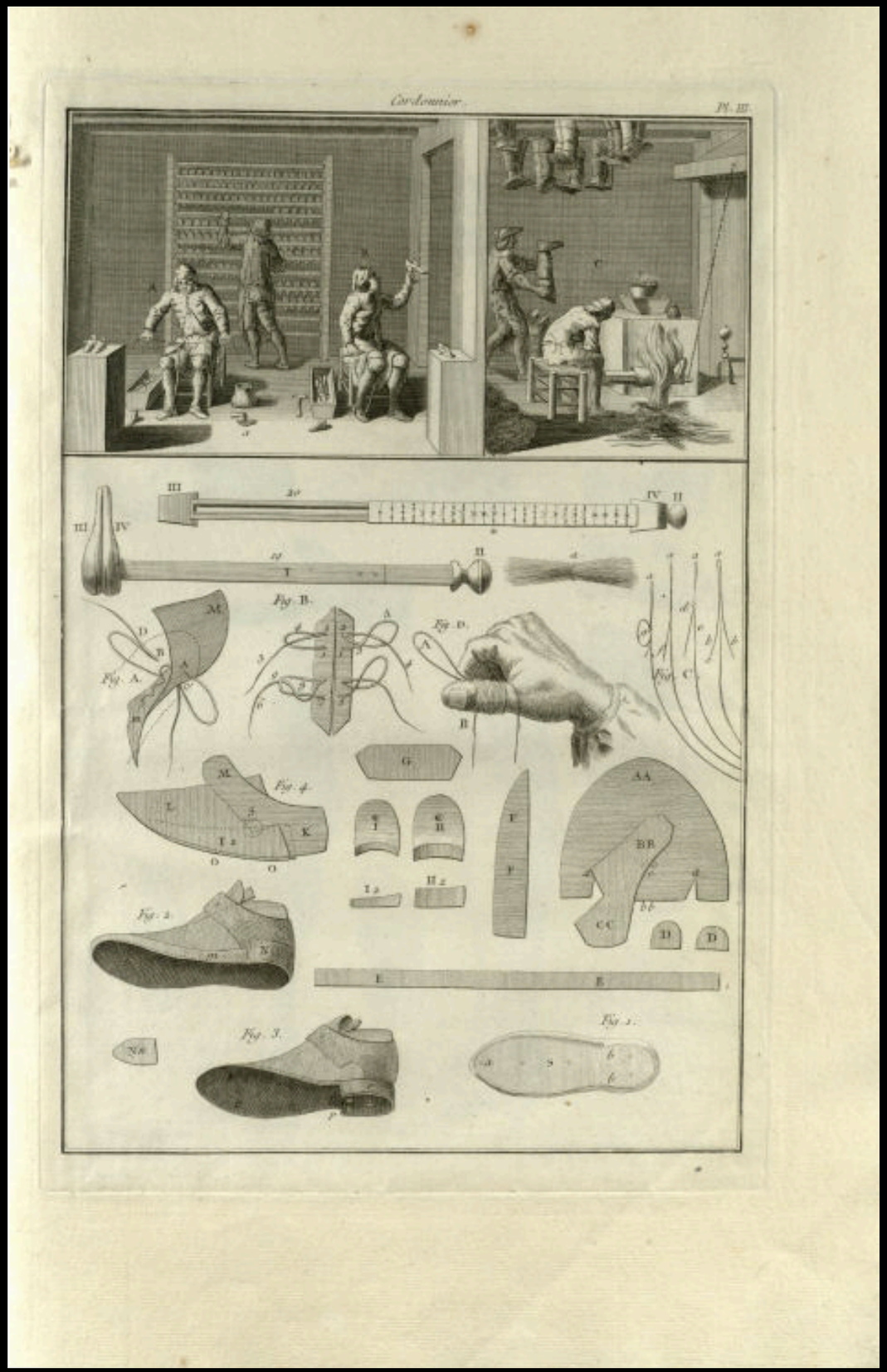

"Art du Cordonnier"
by François Alexandre de Garsault 1767
(The Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences)

Cobbler's Tools



English or Welsh Cobbler's Bench
Late 18th - Early 20th Century
(Christie's)



Woman's Shoe Last
c. 1770 - 1785
(Private Collection)





Woman's Shoe Last
c. 1770 - 1785
(Private Collection)



Woman's Shoe Last
c. 1770 - 1785
(Private Collection)



Awl from the Dauphine,
Wrecked on the Coast of St Malo, France 1704
(Natière : The Saint-Malo shipwrecks. Underwater archaeology at Saint-Malo)



Shoemaker's Knife
17th Century
(Private Collection Courtesy The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Shoemaker's Tacks (Stitching, Blocking, Lasting and Pin Tacks)
18th Century
(Colonial Williamsburg)



Shoemaker's Turn Shoe Relasting Pliers
18th Century
(Powerhouse Museum, Sydney)



Shoemaker's Relasting Pliers
18th Century
(Theberge Collection)





Shoemaker's Relasting Pliers
18th Century
(Theberge Collection)

The Recreated Cobbler Shop



The Shoemakers
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



The Shoemakers
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Rack of Shoe Lasts
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Recreated 17th CenturyShoemaker's Knives
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Recreated Journeyman Cordwainer
(Colonial Williamsburg)

Making A Jack Boot



(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg)



Boot Tree
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Boot Tree
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Tripod
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Firing up the Brazier
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Heating up the Wax (Rosin, Beeswax & Lampblack)
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Heating up the Wax (Rosin, Beeswax & Lampblack)
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Smoothing the Boot Leg
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Applying the Wax with a Linen Dauber
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Applying the Wax with a Linen Dauber
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Applying the Wax with a Linen Dauber
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Applying the Wax with a Linen Dauber
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Applying the Wax with a Linen Dauber
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Igniting the Fire
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Firing the 1st Coat of Wax
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Firing the 1st Coat of Wax
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Applying the 2nd Coat of Wax
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Firing the 2nd Coat of Wax
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Firing the 2nd Coat of Wax
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Completed Heat Treatment of the 2nd Coat of Wax
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Applying the 3rd Coat of Wax
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Firing the 3rd Coat of Wax
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Applying Wax to the Knee Piece
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Heat Treating the Knee Piece
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



Heat Treating the Knee Piece
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



The Completed Waxing Process
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))



The Vamp is Inked and the Boot Polished
(The Shoemaker's Shop - Colonial Williamsburg))

Acknowledgements

The 18th Century Material Culture Resource Center is indebted to the Shoemaker's Shop at Colonial Williamsburg for sharing with the world their magnificent research and photographs which grace this slideshow.

For more information on 18th Century show construction, please contact or visit Colonial Williamsburg and speak to these wonderful individuals directly.

We here at the Resource Center have personally worn shoes and half boots constructed by Timothy Wilson of Colonial Williamsburg for the past 25 years.

Acknowledgements

The material contained within these slideshows is presented for educational purposes only. The 18th Century Material Culture Resource Center does not personally own any of the items depicted herein and is indebted to the countless museums, libraries, and private collectors who willingly share their collections with the public through the internet. Every attempt has been made to credit these organizations and individuals for their contributions as best as possible.

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Thank you!

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