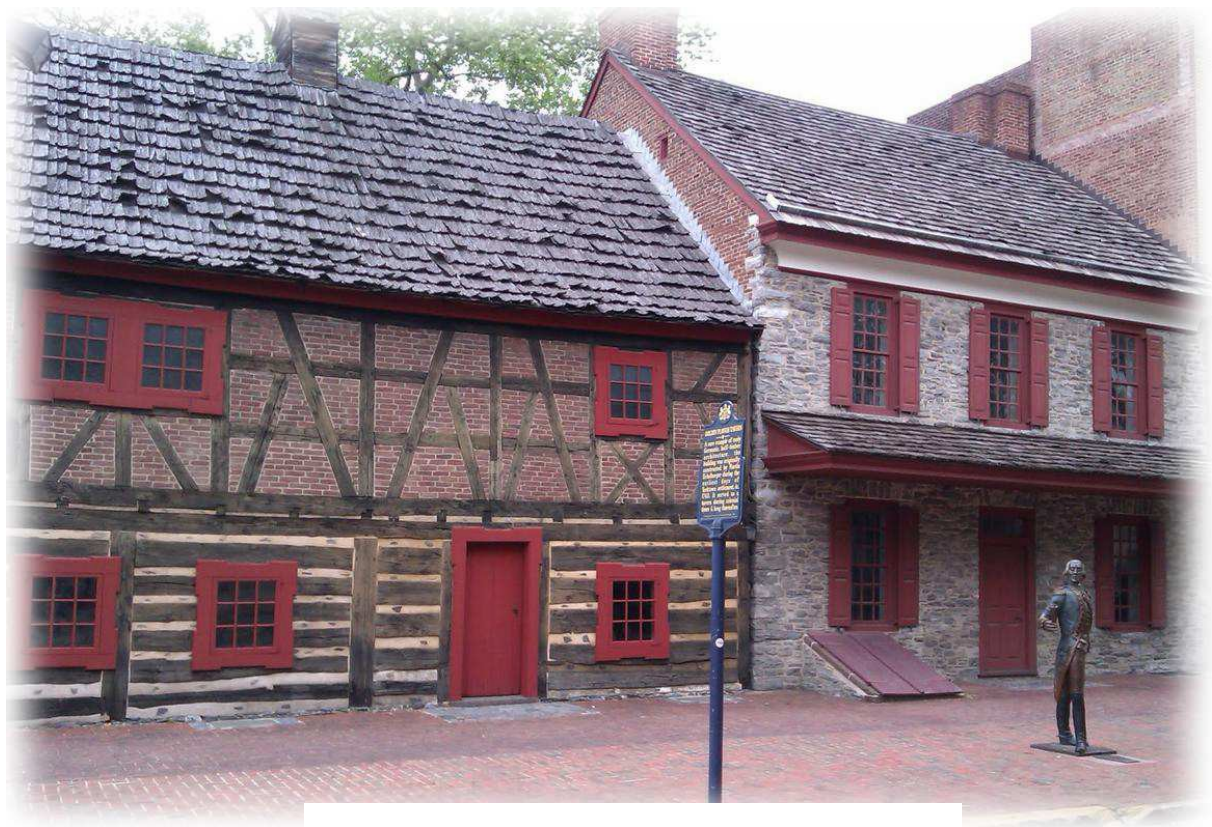


# COLONIAL COMPLEX

## TEACHER'S EXHIBIT GUIDE



YORK COUNTY  
**HISTORY**  
— CENTER —

717-848-1587

[www.yorkhistorycenter.org](http://www.yorkhistorycenter.org)

# COLONIAL COMPLEX

***Location & Address:*** 157 West Market Street  
York, PA 17103

***Telephone:*** 717-848-1587, ext. 401

***Website:*** [www.yorkhistorycenter.org](http://www.yorkhistorycenter.org)

***Reservations:*** YCHT Education Department  
717-848-1587, ext. 301  
[education@yorkhistorycenter.org](mailto:education@yorkhistorycenter.org)

## **TEACHERS ARE WELCOME TO VISIT THE HISTORY CENTER FOR FREE TO PLAN A FIELD TRIP!**

We will make every effort to have a staff member meet with you to discuss your needs and plan your field trip. However, it is recommended that you make an appointment to meet with a member of our staff beforehand. If you arrive unannounced, they may not be able to meet with you.

We thank you for your cooperation!

# INTRODUCTION

The Colonial Complex includes some of the most historic buildings in the city.

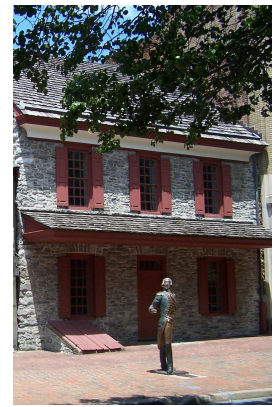


## THE GOLDEN PLOUGH TAVERN

A Germanic, half-timbered building built in 1741, the Tavern is the oldest structure in the City of York. It was originally a small, Pennsylvania German home before being converted into a tavern, and it served York residents and travelers into the early 1800s.

## THE GENERAL GATES HOUSE

Known as the most beautiful house in York in its day, the Gates House was built in 1751. It was the temporary residence of General Horatio Gates - a commander in the Continental Army under George Washington. Gates lived in this home during Congress' stay in York, and Gates served on Congress' Board of War.

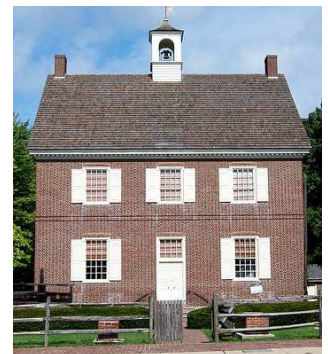


## THE BARNETT BOBB LOG HOUSE

A 19<sup>th</sup> century squared-timber dwelling, typical of those built in the Pennsylvania frontier during the early 1800s. It was moved to the Colonial Complex from its original location in the early 1960s, and has been located on the property ever since.

## COLONIAL COURTHOUSE

This is a replica of York's 18<sup>th</sup> century court house, meeting place of the Second Continental Congress (the original was demolished in the early 1800s). York was a temporary capital of the United States, as the Congress met here from November 1777 to June 1778. The Articles of Confederation and a Treaty of Alliance with France were signed in York.





**“THE MARQUIS DE  
LAFAYETTE”**

*This statue of the Marquis de Lafayette stands facing Market Street in front of the Golden Plough Tavern and the General Gates House. Lafayette was present in York while the Continental Congress was meeting in the city. It is said that in December 1777, in the second floor of the Gates House, Lafayette helped put an end to the “Conway Cabal,” a secret campaign to replace George Washington as commander of the Continental Army with General Horatio Gates. Lafayette later returned to York in 1825, where he received a hero’s welcome by the citizens.*

# A TYPICAL TOUR

Tours of the Colonial Complex typically involve a guided walkthrough of the site's buildings and, occasionally, its summer kitchen and four-square garden. Students start in the bottom floor of the Golden Plough Tavern, and then head to the Tavern's second floor. From there they enter the second floor of the General Gates House, then head to the first floor of the House. Next, groups cross the street to visit the Colonial Court House, before ending the tour in the first floor of the Barnett Bobb Log House.

Groups of 30 or more students will be divided into two or more groups to make traveling through the historic buildings easier. Each group will start their tour in a different area of the Complex, and rotate through as the tour progresses. By the end of the tour, every student will see the entire Complex, though not necessarily in the "typical" order.



*Tours begin in the backyard of the Colonial Complex, between the Golden Plough Tavern and the General Gates House.*

# THE GOLDEN PLOUGH TAVERN

Martin Eichelberger built the Golden Plough Tavern in 1741. It is believed that Eichelberger built only the first floor at the time because he was required to build a substantial dwelling on the property within a year of its purchase. The second floor was most likely added when Eichelberger transformed his home into a tavern. The building's half-timbered walls (wooden supports filled in with brick or plaster) and central chimney are two common characteristics of German-style architecture.

## STOREROOM

During the Colonial period, taverns served as restaurants, bars, and hotels. Because they were feeding large groups of people every day, they stored large quantities of food in this room. Barrels, baskets, and glass and ceramic jugs were handmade by skilled craftsmen and were used in the tavern to store food such as dried meat and vegetables, flour, and herbs.

## KITCHEN

The kitchen area is dominated by a large hearth fireplace that both cooked food and heated most of the building. This room also served as a "chore room," where various household tasks could be carried out while a meal was cooking. The chore being displayed in the kitchen pertains to cloth-making, specifically making linen from flax.



## TAVERN

In addition to accommodating travelers, taverns were social gathering places where townspeople could socialize, play games, and exchange news with travelers. Because of its location on the Monocacy Trail, many hunters and wagon drivers stopped at the Tavern for a hot meal and a place to sleep.

## SLEEPING QUARTERS

Most tavern guests slept in the common room on blanket rolls or straw-stuffed mattresses on the floor, along with all of the other guests. During the Colonial period, people did not always have the

same idea of privacy as we have today - guests did not typically expect their own bed or their own room.

## FAMILY BEDROOMS

These upstairs bedrooms were used by the Eichelberger family, who owned the tavern - they would not have slept in the common room on the floor with their guests. The parents most likely slept in the back room and their eight children shared a large rope bed and a trundle bed below.

# THE GENERAL GATES HOUSE

This home was built by Joseph Chambers in 1754 and represents an English-style construction: fireplaces in every room, high ceilings, and large windows. General Horatio Gates rented this house during the winter of 1777-1778 while Congress was meeting in York. Gates was a very popular general at the time, famous for his victory at the Battle of Saratoga - a major win for the Americans. He came to York after being appointed President of the Board of War, a position equivalent to the Secretary of Defense today.

## BANQUET ROOM

According to legend, General Gates was involved in a plot called the "Conway Cabal," whose members were seeking to replace George Washington, commander of the Continental army, with Gates. It is said that the group met in this room and the Marquis de Lafayette proposed a toast to General Washington, thereby thwarting the plot. This event was only recorded in Lafayette's diary years later, so the whole story may never be fully known.



## UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

This small bedroom could have been used by a secretary of General Gates - who would have been in charge of arranging the General's meetings, as well as taking notes and keeping records of those meetings. A unique artifact - a tricorne hat box - is located on a large blanket chest in the room.

## MASTER BEDROOM

This bedroom is on the first floor, which might seem strange to us today. Often times, bedrooms were created wherever there was extra room. The room also features several tools designed to help keep occupants warm in the winter.

## PARLOR

A parlor is a "sitting room" and was usually one of the nicest rooms in the house, as this was where one would entertain guests. Furniture in the room was typically moved during the day to let people sit in sunlight, and the furniture was then "straightened up" in the evening.

## DINING ROOM

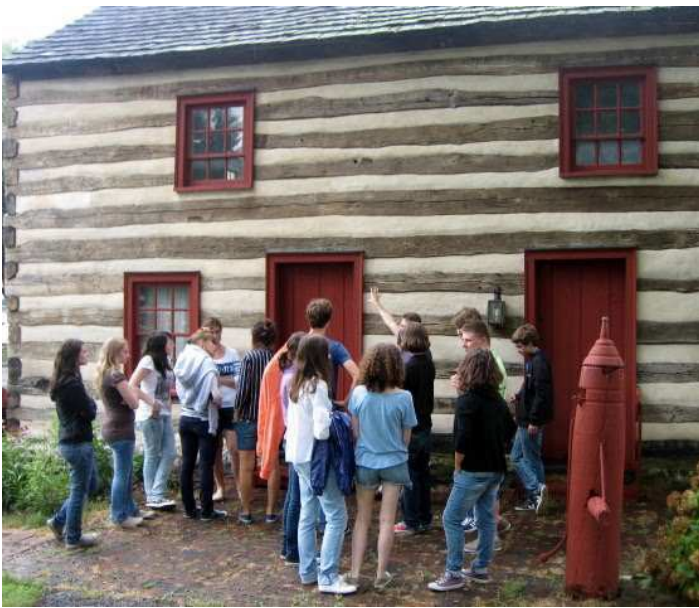
Compared to the Tavern, this dining room symbolizes the wealth and affluence of the owners of this home. Beautiful dishes, gold-lined glass bottles, and a large cone of sugar (a heaving taxed sweetener at the time) are all symbols of the owner's status in society. Also included in this room is a sedan chair - an 18<sup>th</sup> century "wheelchair" of sorts that allowed people with mobility problems to be carried on a chair by others.

## WARMING KITCHEN

During the summer months, meals would be prepared in a detached summer kitchen to keep the oppressive heat from entering the main house. The warming kitchen, as its name implies, was simply used to warm the food and add finishing touches before it was served to people eating in the dining room.

# THE BARNETT BOBB LOG HOUSE

This house was built between 1810 and 1812, but was not originally built on the Colonial Complex property. It was moved from its original location near William Penn High School, about five blocks away, to save it from being demolished. It is named after Barnett Bobb, a local weaver who owned the home. Bobb ran his weaving business from the bottom of the structure while he and his family lived on the upper floors. Today, the building is interpreted through its bottom floors as an example of an early 19<sup>th</sup> century home in York.



## FIRST BEDROOM

As visitors enter the home through this room, the most noticeable difference between the Bobb House and the Tavern is the décor of the room: the room is painted, pictures are hanging on the walls. Also featured in this room is a blanket made on a jacquard loom – a 19<sup>th</sup> century invention that uses punch cards to sort different colored threads into unique designs.

## GREAT ROOM

The “living room” of the Bobb House, this room serves as a place for the family to gather, eat, play games, and socialize. A large quilt stand is also in this room, with quilting emerging as a popular social activity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## SECOND BEDROOM

The bed in this room has been painted to emulate a wood-grain pattern – a popular alternative for people who could not afford specific types of wood. Also featured in this room is an example of *fraktur* – a detailed document used by Pennsylvania Germans as a marriage license or birth certificate.

## STORAGE AREA/KITCHEN

Unlike the Tavern, this kitchen area has no hearth fireplace. Cooking could instead be done on the large plate stove in the room. A number of kitchen “gadgets” are located in this room as well, including cooking cutters, a “kick” toaster, and a sausage grinder. These tools offered residents unique ways to make foods that were relatively easy to make and enjoy.

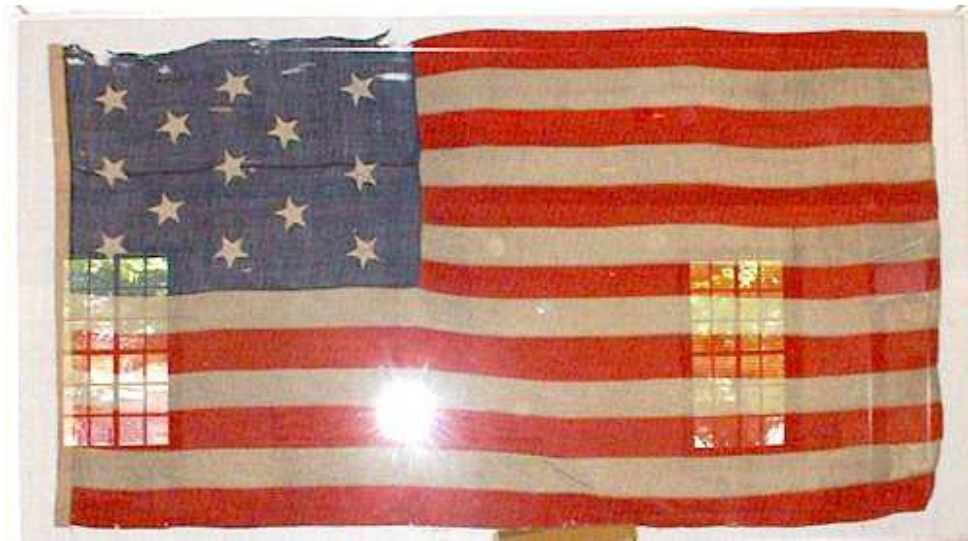


# THE COLONIAL COURTHOUSE

The Colonial Courthouse is a reproduction building that was built in 1976 for the Bicentennial Celebration. The original court house stood in the center square of York, where Market and George Streets meet. It was torn down in 1841.

York was a temporary capital of the United States from November 1777 to June 1778. The Second Continental Congress, who had been meeting in Philadelphia, fled the city after a British victory at the Battle of Brandywine. Congress stopped in Lancaster for one day, but it did not feel safe enough. Members went on to cross the wide Susquehanna River and felt much safer, settling in York for the next nine months.

While in York, Congress completed the Articles of Confederation – our nation’s first form of national government, and a precursor to the present Constitution. Also in York, Congress established a treaty of alliance with France, bringing the French economy and military into the Revolutionary War.



*This flag hangs in the Colonial Court House. It is a replica of George Washington's headquarters flag, which flew over his encampment at Valley Forge. .*