

Life in the Virginia Colony



Culture of Colonial Virginia

- The culture of colonial Virginia reflected beliefs, customs, and architecture of Europeans, Africans, and American Indians living in those areas.
- Although a colony of England, Virginia developed a unique culture different from that of England.
- Culture – the shared beliefs, customs, and values of a group.



Culture of Colonial Virginia



- Whenever people settle in an area, they change the landscape to reflect the beliefs, customs, and architecture of their culture. Examples of architecture that reflect different cultures include:
 - Barns
 - Homes
 - Places of worship (churches)

Culture of Colonial Virginia

- Although it was a colony of England, Virginia developed a unique culture different from that of England.
- Place names reflecting culture:
 - Richmond – English
 - Roanoke – American Indian



Cultural Groups and Where They Settled

- The English and other Europeans settled primarily in the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) and Piedmont regions. They established many successful plantations in these areas.
- The Germans and Scotch-Irish settled primarily in the Shenandoah Valley (Valley and Ridge region). This was along the migration route to unsettled territory. They hoped to establish new settlements.
- Migrate – to move from one region or country to another.

Cultural Groups and Where They Settled

- Africans were primarily in the Tidewater and Piedmont regions, where tobacco required a great deal of labor.
- Prior to the arrival of the settlers, American Indians lived throughout Virginia. After the settlers arrived, most were forced inland.
- Migration and living in new areas caused people to adapt old customs to their new environment.
- The culture of Virginia reflected American Indian, African, and European origins.

The Movement of Virginia's Capital



- A variety of factors explain the reasons for moving Virginia's capital.

Why Move the Capital from Jamestown to Williamsburg?

- The drinking water was contaminated (spoiled) by the salt water.
- The unhealthy living conditions caused diseases.
- A fire destroyed many wooden and brick buildings at Jamestown.

Why Move the Capital From Williamsburg to Richmond?

- The population was moving westward.
- Richmond was a more central location.
- Moving to Richmond increased the distance from any possible attack from the British.
- * Important - England became “Great Britain” in the early 1700s.

Everyday Life in Colonial Virginia



- Resources were used in colonial Virginia to produce the goods and services that people needed.

Everyday Life in Colonial Virginia

- People living in colonial Virginia depended on natural, human, and capital resources to produce the goods and services they needed.



Food in Colonial Virginia

- Food choices were limited.
- Meals were made of local produce and meats.



Housing in Colonial Virginia



- Most people lived in one-room homes with dirt floors.
- Some people (farmers) lived in large houses.



Clothing in Colonial Virginia



- Households made their own clothes.
- Most clothing was made from cotton, wool, and leather.

Life in the Virginia Colony

- Most white Virginians made their living from the land as small farmers. A few owned large farms (plantations).
- Most enslaved African Americans worked with tobacco, crops, and livestock. Enslaved Africans had no rights.
- Many free African Americans owned their own business and property, but were denied most rights.