

## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

Locations of places can be described in relative terms.

### Terms to Know

- **relative location:** the location of a place or region in relation to other places or regions

### Relative Location

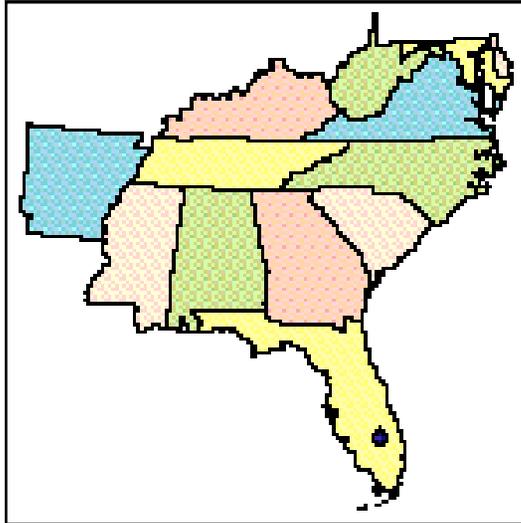
Relative location may be described using terms that show connections between two places such as “next to,” “near,” or “bordering.”

- **Large Bodies of Water Bordering Virginia**

- Atlantic Ocean
- Chesapeake Bay

- **Bordering States**

- North Carolina
- Tennessee
- Kentucky
- West Virginia
- Maryland



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

### Five Geographic Regions of Virginia

- **Coastal Plain (Tidewater)**

- Flat land
- Located near the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay (includes the Eastern Shore)
- East of the Fall Line

- **Piedmont**

- Rolling hills at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains
- *Located between the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) region and the Blue Ridge Mountains*
- West of the Fall Line

- **Blue Ridge Mountains**

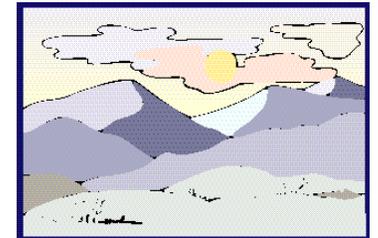
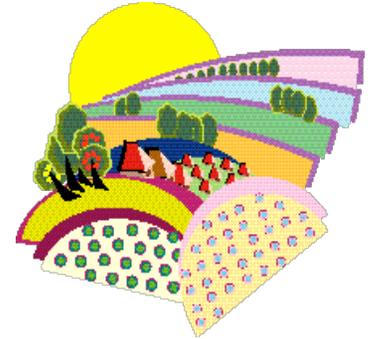
- Old, rounded mountains
- Part of the Appalachian Mountain System
- Located between the Piedmont and the Valley and Ridge regions
- Source of many rivers

- **Valley and Ridge**

- Includes the Great Valley of Virginia and other valleys separated by ridges
- Located west of the Blue Ridge Mountains
- The Blue Ridge Mountains and the Valley and Ridge regions are part of the Appalachian Mountain System.
- *Includes the Cumberland Gap*

- **Appalachian Plateau**

- Only a small part of the plateau is located in far, southwest Virginia. It lies west of the Valley and Ridge region along the Virginia and West Virginia border and in the southwest counties of Virginia.



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

### Water features were important to the early history of Virginia.

#### Terms to Know

- **peninsula:** a piece of land bordered by water on three sides

#### Water Features of Virginia

- **Atlantic Ocean**
  - Provided transportation links between Virginia and other places (such as Europe, Africa/Angola, Caribbean)
- **Chesapeake Bay**
  - Provides a safe harbor
  - A source of food and transportation
  - *Separates the Eastern Shore from the mainland of Virginia*
- **Lake Drummond**
  - Located in the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) region
  - Shallow natural lake surrounded by the Dismal Swamp
  - *Bowl shaped with acid-stained water (looks like tea) from the surrounding Dismal Swamp, which has peat soil*
  - *Limited fish population*
  - *It is a 3,142-acre natural lake in the heart of the Dismal Swamp.*
- **Dismal Swamp**
  - Located in the *southeastern corner of the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) region*
  - Wide variety of wildlife: *mammals, reptiles, and birds*
  - It was explored and surveyed by George Washington.



#### Largest Peninsula in Virginia

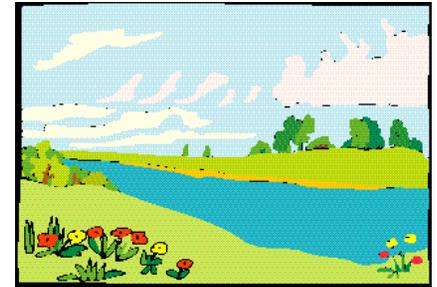
The Eastern Shore is a peninsula bordered by the Chesapeake Bay to the west and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. *It is part of the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) region.*

## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

### Major Rivers of Virginia

Each river was a source of food and provided a pathway for exploration and the settlement of Virginia. Many early Virginia cities developed along the Fall Line, the natural border between the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) and Piedmont regions where the land rises sharply and where *rocks and waterfalls* prevent further travel on the river.

- **James River**
  - Flows downhill into the Chesapeake Bay
  - Richmond and Jamestown are located along the James River.
- **York River**
  - Flows downhill into the Chesapeake Bay
  - Yorktown is located along the York River.
- **Potomac River**
  - Flows downhill into the Chesapeake Bay
  - Alexandria is located along the Potomac River.
- **Rappahannock River**
  - Flows downhill into the Chesapeake Bay
  - Fredericksburg is located along the Rappahannock River.



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

**American Indians (native peoples) were the first people who lived in Virginia.**

*Spain entered the race for Asian riches by backing the expeditions of an Italian explorer named Christopher Columbus. In 1492, he sailed from Spain for the East Indies (or the islands of Southeast Asia near China). He called the people in the lands he discovered “Indians” because he thought he was in the Indies. Actually, many historians think he set foot on the island of San Salvador, near the Bahamas.*

Artifacts, such as arrowheads, pottery, and other tools that have been found, tell a great deal about the first people who lived in Virginia. *The American Indians (native peoples) who lived in Virginia can be described according to the language they spoke. A language group is like a family of languages. Although the languages by individual tribes and cultures may differ, all languages within a language group share common characteristics and have a common parent language.*

All Virginia’s Indian groups are referred to as the Eastern Woodland Indians, with each having its own language group.



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

### Three Major American Indian Language Groups in Virginia

- **Algonquian** was spoken primarily in the **Coastal Plain (Tidewater) region**. The Powhatan Indians were a member of this group. *The Powhatan tribes grew corn/maize, beans, squash, sunflowers, and tobacco. They hunted and fished. Powhatan united some thirty Algonquian groups to form a Powhatan chiefdom. More than thirteen thousand people who were loyal to Powhatan lived in the 6,000 square mile chiefdom.*
- **Siouan** was spoken primarily in the **Piedmont region**. The Monacan Indians were members of this group. *The women gardened and gathered nuts, berries, and other food. They grew corn/maize, beans, squash, and other crops. The women made household goods out of wood, bone, animal skins, and other available natural resources. Men hunted, fished, and fought in wars.*
- **Iroquoian** was spoken in **southwestern Virginia** and in southern Virginia near what is today North Carolina. The Cherokee were part of this group. *The Cherokee lived in small communities, usually located on fertile lands alongside the rivers. Homes were made of wooden frames covered with woven vines and tree saplings plastered with mud. These were replaced in later years with log structures. Women had an equal voice in the decisions made in the tribe. Each village had a Council House where ceremonies and tribal meetings were held using a democratic process.*



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

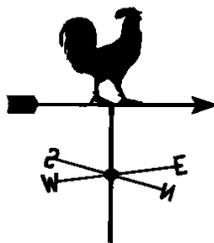
Virginia's American Indians (native peoples) related to the climate and their environment to meet their basic needs. The kinds of food they ate, the clothing they wore, and the shelters they had, depended upon the region of Virginia where they lived.

### Terms to Know

- **harvest:** to gather or pick ripe crops
- **preserve:** to prepare food so it will not decay and last longer

Climate in Virginia is relatively mild with distinct seasons.

- **Four seasons allowed for a variety of vegetation.**
  - **Spring:** mild temperatures with rain showers
  - **Summer:** hot and relatively dry
  - **Fall:** cool with rain
  - **Winter:** cold with snow and ice in some areas, rain in other areas
- **Vegetation**  
Forests, which have a variety of trees, cover most of the land in Virginia. As a result of this, all of Virginia's Indian groups (native peoples) are referred to as Eastern Woodland Indians, with each having its own language group.



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

American Indians (native peoples) in Virginia related to their environment/basic needs.

- **Foods** changed with the seasons.
  - During the *warm* spring, they hunted, fished, picked berries and planted seeds in the soil.
  - During the *hot* summer, they planted and took care of crops (corn, beans, and squash).
  - During the *cool* fall, they harvested crops and hunted for foods to preserve so they could eat during the cold winter season.
  - During the *cold* winter, they hunted birds and animals (such as wild turkey, deer, squirrel, and rabbit) and ate the foods they had preserved from the fall season.
- **Clothing**
  - Animal skins (deerskins) were used for clothing. *In winter, they also made garments of feathers and wore furs.*
  - *They wore decorations made from natural objects, such as shells, animal claws, and pearls.*
- **Shelter** was made from materials (*natural resources*) found around them. *The types of shelter varied from one region to another.*



### American Indians of Today

- All Virginia Indian groups are referred to as the Eastern Woodland Indians, with each having its own culture.
- Today most American Indians/native peoples live like other Americans. Their cultures have changed over time.

## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

Archaeologists have recovered new material evidence that people of long ago left behind through sites including Werowocomoco and Jamestown.

### Terms to Know

- **Archaeology:** the study of past cultures by using artifacts
- **artifacts:** material evidence that people of long ago left behind

Archaeologists study all kinds of material evidence (*artifacts*) that people living long ago left behind. Archaeologists have recently found evidence of *pottery, stone tools, and food remains, as well as, small stains in the soil, marking the locations of structures/buildings* in Werowocomoco (*weh-ro-wo-COM-o-co*) and historic Jamestown. *Archaeologists continue to investigate the villages of the Powhatan people.*

Werowocomoco is located in the Coastal Plain region, 12 miles north of Jamestown along the York River in Gloucester County, Virginia. Powhatan made his residence here at the time of European arrival. Werowocomoco was the site of an extensive trade network and tribal system. *It was an important social, political, and religious center.* Werowocomoco was a seat of power of the native people. *It consisted of 6,000 square miles, population of 14,000 people and 32 tribes.*

In present times, there is an on going archaeological dig at Werowocomoco. Archaeologists, with the help of native tribal leaders, continue to investigate the village in the Powhatan landscape.

Archaeologists have discovered the site of the original Jamestown fort. The recovered artifacts give archaeologists clues about the interaction among the English, Africans, and Indians in early Virginia.

## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

There are eight state-recognized Indian tribes in Virginia today.

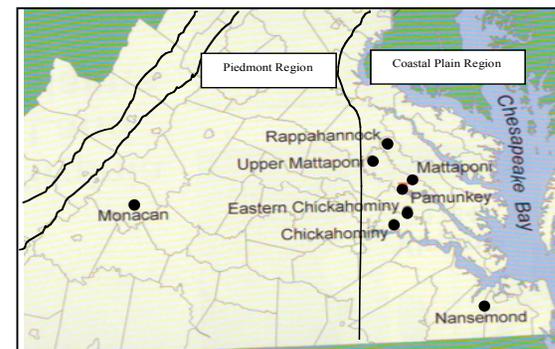
- **American Indians, who are able to trace their family history back to 1607 or before, continue to live in all parts of Virginia today.**
  - *The American Indians/native peoples of Virginia continue to practice beadwork, leather crafting, and pottery to share their culture and heritage.*
  - *Archaeologists have found artifacts showing similarities among the tribes of Virginia.*
  - *Most lived near or along the waterways that flowed into the four major rivers.*
  - *Disease and war killed many of these native peoples.*
  - The Commonwealth of Virginia officially recognized eight tribes in the 1980s.
- **The current state-recognized tribes are located in two geographic regions of Virginia.**

### Coastal Plain (Tidewater) Region

- Chickahominy (CHICK-a-HOM-a-nee)
- Eastern Chickahominy (CHICK-a-HOM-a-nee)
- Mattaponi (mat-ta-po-NYE)
- Nansemond (NAN-sa-mund)
- Pamunkey (pa-MUN-kee)
- Rappahannock (RAP-a-HAN-nock)
- Upper Mattaponi (mat-ta-po-NYE)

### Piedmont Region

- Monacan (MON-a-cun)



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

Some European countries, including England, were in competition to increase their wealth and power by expanding their territories to America.

### Terms to Know

- **economic venture:** starting a business to make money
- **finance:** to borrow money from a company and agree to pay the money back in the future
- **charter:** an official document from an organization granting certain rights and privileges

### Reasons for English Colonization in America



In 1606, King James I issued a charter authorizing a group of investors (or stockholders) to form the Virginia Company of London to settle colonists in North America as an economic venture. The Virginia Company of London established the Virginia colony to increase England's wealth and power.

A council, appointed by King James I, was to direct this economic venture from England with a second council of settlers making the decisions at that settlement. The English also hoped that Virginia would be a source of gold, silver, and natural resources (raw materials) that the English could not grow or easily obtain. This, in turn, would open new markets for trade.



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

**Jamestown: Location and physical characteristics influenced the decision to settle at Jamestown in 1607.**

On April 26, 1607, three small ships (*Susan Constant*, *Godspeed*, and the



*Discovery*) sailed between Cape Charles and Cape Henry into the Chesapeake Bay for the purpose of beginning a permanent English settlement in the land they called Virginia. Captain Christopher Newport was the explorer credited for this exploration. He and the other voyagers took seventeen days to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of the region for such an undertaking.

The first consideration for selecting the site was its possibilities for defense against enemies from both land and sea. The second most important factor for consideration was adequate harbor facilities. The water along the shore had to be deep enough for ships to dock. They also had to find a good supply of fresh, clean, drinking water.

They sailed up the James River and stepped ashore at "James Citie" or the present day Jamestown. The English chose a small, narrow peninsula to build their Jamestown fort. The James River bordered Jamestown on three sides. (Today, Jamestown is located on an island in the James River.)



The site, while easy to defend from Spanish attack from the sea, initially turned out to be a poor choice. *It was low and swampy, making it the perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes that carried diseases, such as malaria. By the end of the summer, nearly half of the men were dead or dying from fever. Few of the settlers knew how to farm or had the skills necessary to survive in the wilderness. Crops were not planted in time for winter, and if not for the strong leadership of Captain John Smith and some friendly Powhatan Indians who shared their corn, the settlers would have starved.*

## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

The King of England had the power to grant and revoke charters allowing the Virginia Company of London to establish settlements in North America.

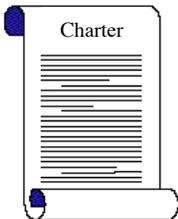
### Terms to Know

- **charter:** *an official document from an organization granting certain rights and privileges*



The charters of the Virginia Company of London were granted by the King of England giving the right (permission) to establish settlements in North America.

- **First Charter: Authorized the establishment of colonies**  
*In 1606, King James I issued the First Charter authorizing a group of investors to form the Virginia Company of London and to settle colonists (settlers) in North America.*
- **Second Charter: Allowed a representative form of government**  
*In 1609, the Second Charter of the Virginia Company of London allowed for a representative form of government in North America.*
- **Third Charter: Extended English rights to colonists**  
*In 1612, the Third Charter of the Virginia Company of London extended the same English rights to the English settlers living in Virginia. The Third Charter remained in force until May 1624 when the Virginia Company of London went bankrupt and Virginia became a Royal Colony.*



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

As Jamestown grew, the system of government evolved.

### System of Government

In 1619, the governor of the Virginia colony called a meeting of the General Assembly. The General Assembly included two representatives elected by the settlers (called burgesses) from each of the divisions of Virginia along with the governor's council and the governor. They met as one legislative body.

In 1643, the burgesses became a separate legislative body. It was named the House of Burgesses. They met separately from the governor's council as one of two legislative bodies of the General Assembly. The House of Burgesses was the first elected legislative (representative) body in the colony and in English America. This was an important step in beginning the foundation of American democracy.

Today it is called the Virginia General Assembly and is the oldest representative legislative body in the western hemisphere.



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

### Jamestown became a more diverse colony by 1620.

#### Terms to Know

- **cash crop:** a crop that is grown to sell for money rather than for use by the growers
- **natural resources:** water, soil, wood, coal, air, and sun
- **human resources:** people at work
- **capital resources:** goods made (manufactured) by people and used to produce other goods and services

In 1614, John Rolfe experimented with different types of tobacco plants and shipped Virginia's first cash crop of tobacco to England. It became a huge success in England, making Jamestown a success. The settlers could not keep up with the demand.



During the summer of **1619**, a ship arrived at Jamestown carrying people of African descent. The Portuguese had captured these African men and women from what is present-day Angola. *Angola is located in West Central Africa.* It remains uncertain without documentation whether or not they were considered slaves or servants.

The cultivation of tobacco, Virginia's first successful cash crop, boosted the economy. The Virginia settlers quickly became dependent upon planting more tobacco and securing more African slaves to grow and harvest tobacco.

In the winter of 1619, *the Virginia Company of London* sent a large group of unmarried English women on ships traveling to the Jamestown settlement.



After a long voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, the English women arrived at the Jamestown settlement in 1620. Their presence enabled the settlers *to marry and to begin families. The women also increased the quality of life for the men by cooking better meals, sewing clothes, and taking care of the sick. The Jamestown settlement offered the English women greater economic mobility and slightly more freedom than they had in England at that time.*

## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

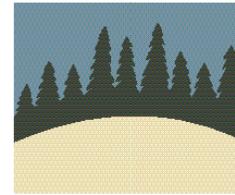
### The English settlers found life in Jamestown harder than they had expected. Good leadership was critical to the survival of the Jamestown settlement.

#### Terms to Know

- **agriculture:** preparing and working the soil to produce crops; having to do with farming

#### Hardships Faced by the Settlers

From 1607 to 1609, Jamestown was a struggling outpost with little direction and support from the Virginia Company of London. The Jamestown settlers found it harder than expected. The marshy land surrounding the settlement *usually flooded during the times of high water.* This flooding caused the lack of safe drinking water.



*In addition to this stretch of land, there were about eight hundred and fifty acres of heavily timbered forestlands around Jamestown, and about eight hundred acres of marsh, covered with coarse, reedy grasses.* The land had not been prepared for vegetable seeds to be planted. The settlers lacked many of the

skills necessary to provide food for themselves and many settlers died of starvation and disease.



#### Leadership

Captain John Smith continued to provide strong leadership. He worked with the native people to provide corn for the starving settlers. The arrival of two English supply ships, Captain John Smith's forced work program, and the emphasis on agriculture (farming) resulted in the survival of the Jamestown settlement.

#### Changes that Ensured Survival

*Settlers soon learned how to live off America's rich natural resources. Agriculture (farming) became the most important way of life. Since the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) region of Virginia had plenty of rich soil, farmers began to produce plenty of food.*



## Virginia: Geography, Native Peoples, and Jamestown

The Powhatan Indians and the English settlers at Jamestown established trading relationships and, for a while, had positive interactions. The Powhatan Indians taught the Jamestown settlers ways to survive in Virginia.

Captain John Smith began trading relationships with the native peoples. The native peoples traded (bartered) food, furs, and leather with the English settlers in exchange for tools, lead cooking pots, and copper to make jewelry.

**The native peoples contributed to the survival of the Jamestown settlers in several ways.**

- Chief Powhatan sent his daughter, Pocahontas, to meet the English settlers on behalf of his tribe. *She believed the English and the American Indians (native peoples) could live in harmony.*
- *Pocahontas began a friendship with the settlers that helped them survive. She met and then married John Rolfe, one of the Jamestown settlers.*
- The native peoples introduced new crops to the English settlers, including corn/maize and Indian tobacco. They taught them how to effectively hunt and fish.



After a period of time, the native peoples realized that the English settlement would continue to grow. They saw the English settlers as invaders, as they were beginning to take over their Indian lands.

## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

The success of tobacco as a cash crop transformed life in the Virginia colony and encouraged slavery.

### Terms to Know

- **cash crop:** a crop that is grown to sell for money rather than for use by the growers
- **agriculture:** *preparing and working with the soil to produce crops; having to do with farming*



The economy of the Virginia colony depended on agriculture as a primary source of wealth. Tobacco became the most profitable agricultural product and was sold to England as a cash crop. The successful planting of tobacco depended on a reliable and inexpensive source of labor. The planting of tobacco, Virginia's first successful economic base, quickly became dependent upon a large force of African slaves. Large numbers of African people were brought to the Virginia colony against their will to work as slaves on the tobacco plantations. The Virginia colony became dependent on slave labor, and the dependence lasted a long time.



## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

The culture of colonial Virginia reflected the beliefs, customs, and architecture of people living in those areas. Although a colony of England, Virginia developed a unique culture different from that of England.

### Terms to Know

- **migration:** people or animals moving from one place to another

By the middle of the 1600s, people from Europe were coming to North America by the thousands. Some came in search of wealth and others in hope of a better life. The colonies usually offered a better way of life for the Europeans who chose to come. The beliefs, customs, and architecture of Europe also came with them.

### Culture

Whenever people settle an area, they change the culture and landscape to reflect their beliefs, customs, and architecture. Examples of architecture that reflect different cultures are barns, homes, and places of worship. Some locations in Virginia reflecting different cultures include Richmond (named by the English) and Roanoke (named by the American Indians or native peoples).



### Settlement Areas

- The English settled primarily in the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) and the Piedmont regions.
- The Scots-Irish and Germans settled primarily in the Shenandoah Valley, which was along the Migration Route.
- The Africans settled primarily in the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) and Piedmont regions, where agriculture required a great deal of labor.
- The American Indians (native peoples) of Virginia settled primarily in the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) region, the Piedmont region, and near the Appalachian Plateau, where traditional homelands were located.

### Cultural Changes over Time

Migration and living in new areas allowed people to adapt old customs to their new environment. A distinct culture emerged in the Virginia colony combining English, Scots-Irish, German, African, and American Indian (native peoples) cultures, customs, and architecture.

## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

Geographical factors often influenced the location of the capital city of Virginia.

### Terms to Know

- **capital:** the city/town where the government building is located
- **capitol:** the office/building of a government

### Some factors which influenced the move of the capital city from Jamestown to Williamsburg

- The area around Jamestown was considered marshland, which made it the perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes that carried diseases, such as malaria.
- Drinking water was contaminated by seepage of salt water from the Chesapeake Bay.
- Dirty living conditions caused diseases.
- Fire destroyed wooden buildings in Jamestown.
- Williamsburg was located further inland, yet within distance for ships to dock along the James and York Rivers to maintain the transportation links.
- Moving to Williamsburg increased the distance of attack by the Spanish ships when they entered from the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay.
- In 1699, the decision was made by the General Assembly to move the capital city from Jamestown to Williamsburg. Williamsburg remained the capital city until 1780.



### Some factors which influenced the move of the capital city from Williamsburg to Richmond (1780 – Present day)

- Richmond was a more central location.
- Population was moving westward.
- Richmond was located directly along the James River, which allowed for ships to dock in order to maintain transportation links for trading purposes.
- Moving to Richmond further increased the distance of attack by the British ships from the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay.

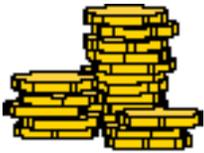


## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

Money was not commonly used in the early Virginia colony.

### Terms to Know

- **money:** a medium of exchange (currency, which includes coins and paper bills)
- **barter:** the trading/exchanging of goods and services without the use of money
- **credit:** buying a good or service now and paying for it later
- **debt:** a good or service owed to another
- **saving:** money put away to keep or spend in the future
- **consumer:** a person who uses (consumes) goods and services
- **producer:** a person who uses resources to make/produce goods and/or provides services
- **goods:** touchable things/items people make or use to satisfy needs and wants
- **services:** activities that satisfy people's needs and wants



There were no banks in colonial Virginia. Very few people of the Virginia colony used money to buy goods and services. Barter was commonly used instead of money. Tobacco was a highly valued barter item that was used frequently as money. A tobacco farmer could use his tobacco to pay for goods and services. Consumers could buy goods and services from merchants and shopkeepers on credit and would pay their debts when their crops were harvested and sold.



## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

Everyday life in colonial Virginia was different for whites, enslaved Africans, and free Africans.

### Terms to Know

- **natural resources:** materials that come from nature (water, soil, wood, coal, air, sun)
- **capital resources:** goods made (manufactured) by people and used to produce other goods
- **human resources:** *people at work*
- **enslaved:** *people who were considered property of their owners and had no civil rights*
- **free:** *African Americans who owned their own business and property, but were denied most civil rights*

People living in colonial Virginia depended on natural, human, and capital resources to produce goods and services they needed. Everyday life in colonial Virginia depended on the skills and work of the colonists to provide for their basic needs and overall well-being.

Food choices for the colonists were limited. Meals were made from local produce (fruits and vegetables) and meats. Most people lived in one-room homes with dirt floors. A small number of colonists in Virginia lived on large farms or plantations. Households made their own clothing from wool, leather, and cloth.

Most white people made their living from the land as small farmers, but some owned large plantations. Owners of the large plantations depended on enslaved Africans to produce crops, raise livestock, and run their plantations. The enslaved Africans were considered property of their owners and had no civil rights. Many Africans were free and owned a business and property, but they were denied most civil rights.

## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

**Conflicts developed between the colonies and Great Britain over how the colonies should be governed as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. England became Great Britain in the early 1700s.**

### Terms to Know

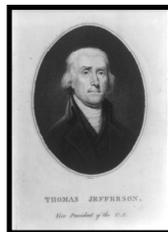
- **assembly:** *a lawmaking group of people gathered together for a meeting*



The American colonists and the British Parliament disagreed over how the colonies should be governed. The British Parliament believed it had legal authority in the colonies, while the colonists believed their local assemblies had the legal authority. The British Parliament believed it had the right to tax the colonies, while the colonists believed they should not be taxed since they had no representation in Parliament. The new laws developed by the British Parliament angered the colonists. The colonists objected to taxation without representation by the British Parliament.

### Virginians participated in events leading to war with Great Britain with the appointment of Thomas Jefferson to write the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration of Independence gave reasons for and some basic ideas on which a government should be based. It also gave reasons why Americans should become independent of Great Britain. The Declaration of Independence stated that authority to govern belonged to the people rather than to kings, that all people were created equal, and had rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. *On July 4, 1776, delegates of the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia and adopted the Declaration of Independence.*



## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

**Virginians made significant contributions to the American Revolution.**

### Terms to Know

- **patriot:** a person who is loyal or supports one's own country



During the Revolutionary War, most Virginians provided food, clothing, and supplies for the Continental Army. Many people tried to help the Americans win the war. Virginians served together in the Continental Army to gain independence from Great Britain. Farmers, sailors, business owners, and teachers all helped. Some Virginians were neutral and did not take sides. Other Virginians remained loyal to Great Britain.

Most Virginia women farmed and supported troops. They continued to work the farms when the men were fighting in the war. They made clothes for the soldiers in the Continental Army and cared for the soldiers who were wounded.

African Americans were divided about the Revolutionary War. Some slaves fought for the British because they were promised their freedom. The free slaves fought for independence along with the colonists in the American Revolution.

Many American Indians fought alongside both the Virginia patriots and the British. American Indians in western Virginia fought against the Virginia patriots to protect their land while others volunteered to fight against the British.

## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

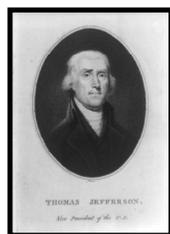
Virginians made significant contributions to the American Revolution.

**James A. Lafayette**, from *New Kent County*, was one of many enslaved Africans from Virginia who served with the troops of the Continental Army. He took important military information to other American spies. After the war was over, the General Assembly acknowledged his support and they granted him his freedom.



**George Washington** provided military leadership by serving as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolution.

**Patrick Henry** inspired patriots from other colonies when he spoke out against taxation without representation at the *Henrico Parish Church* (named *St. John's Church* fifty years later) in *Richmond, Virginia*, by stating, "...give me liberty or give me death."



**Thomas Jefferson** provided political leadership expressing the reasons for colonial independence from Great Britain in the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration of Independence laid out some basic ideas on which a government should be based. It also gave reasons why Americans should become independent.

## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

Virginia played an important role in the American Revolution.

### Terms to Know

- minutemen:** soldiers who pledged to be ready to fight at a minute's notice

### Battles of Lexington and Concord (April 1775)



The battles of Lexington and Concord took place in Massachusetts and were the first battles of the American Revolution. The British were unable to capture the minutemen's supplies. The battles signaled that the American colonists would fight for their freedom.

### Battle of Great Bridge (December 1775; Location: 7 miles south of Norfolk, Virginia)

The road leading from North Carolina to Norfolk was known as the *Great Road*. A bridge crossing the marshlands to Norfolk was constructed. Its purpose was to transport goods that were to be shipped to Great Britain. A village was started at this point known as *Great Bridge*. Although it was a brief battle (30 minutes), it was the first decisive battle fought in Virginia. It led to the destruction of Norfolk in January of 1776. The *Virginian* victory was a major step in eliminating British supply lines, which forced the British governor to flee from the city of Norfolk and made the British realize the colonists would be hard to beat.



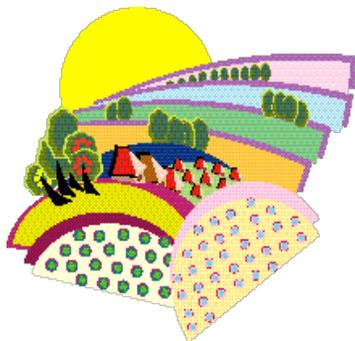
## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

Virginia played an important role in the American Revolution.

**Jack Jouett** was a Captain in the Virginia Militia.

He was stationed in Charlottesville, but was near Cuckoo Tavern (Louisa County) attending to business for his father on the evening of June 3, 1781. Captain Jouett was asleep on the lawn in front of the Cuckoo Tavern when he was awakened by the sounds of a large number of British soldiers.

He realized they were headed to Charlottesville where the General Assembly was in session, knowing that Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Daniel Boone, and others were in attendance.



Jack Jouett quickly mounted his horse and traveled 40 miles through the dense backwoods to Monticello. He awoke Thomas Jefferson and other legislators staying at Monticello, warning them that the British were approaching. Jack Jouett continued on to Charlottesville to the Swan Tavern where most of the other legislators were staying to warn them.

Most of the members of the General Assembly were able to escape before the

British arrived. The General Assembly acknowledged Captain Jouett's heroism by presenting him with silver-mounted pistols and a jeweled sword.

## Virginia: Colonial Life and the American Revolution

Virginia played an important role in the American Revolution.

**Battle of Yorktown (1781)**

Yorktown was located on a peninsula on the southern shore of the York River in southeastern Virginia. Virginia patriots served in the Continental Army and fought against the British. The French Navy gained control of the Chesapeake Bay, preventing the English Navy from helping British General Cornwallis. The French Army helped the Americans dig trenches around Yorktown and fought in the battle.

The American victory at Yorktown resulted in the surrender of the British Army, which led to the end of the American Revolution. The Treaty of Paris between the United States, England, France, and Spain, formally ended the war in 1783. It acknowledged the independence of the 13 colonies as the United States of America.

