



# Colonial Williamsburg: The History of the Settlement that Became America's Most Famous Living-History Museum

*Charles River Editors*

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\*Includes pictures

\*Includes historic accounts describing the colonial era city

\*Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading

\*Includes a table of contents

"That the future may learn from the past." – The motto of Colonial Williamsburg

Along with Jamestown and Yorktown, Colonial Williamsburg is known today as part of the Historic Triangle of Virginia, but all three of these old Virginian sites are known for vastly different reasons. While Yorktown was the scene of the final climactic battle of the American Revolution and Jamestown is remembered for being the first English settlement to survive in Virginia, Colonial Williamsburg is now best known as a bridge to the past.

Williamsburg got its start as a fortified site, which was vitally necessary for English settlers to heavily outnumbered by nearby Native Americans, many of which were at times hostile. Known originally as Middle Plantation, the site served as the capital of the colony for much of the 18th century, and it bore witness to seminal events in the history of Revolutionary era America, including the Gunpowder Incident, which nearly coincided with the Battles of Lexington and Concord to the north. However, once the capital was again moved, Williamsburg lost much of its prominence, and by the end of the 19th century it was best known for hosting the College of William and Mary.

As fate would have it, a major initiative during the 20th century would restore Williamsburg to a place of prominence, literally. In one of America's most ambitious building projects, efforts were undertaken to reconstruct the main parts of Colonial Williamsburg and restore it to a more original appearance, whether it was constructing new buildings with the old architecture or renovating colonial buildings.

In doing so, Williamsburg was transformed from a sleepy (albeit historic) town into the biggest tourist destination in Virginia, and America's most famous living-history museums. In the 20th century, it was used to teach students about American history and even current events, and naturally, it is now a place full of exhibits and historical reenactments. Put simply, there is no place else in the country that can provide modern Americans with a sense of what life was like in the 17th and 18th centuries better than Colonial Williamsburg, which is what makes it so popular nearly 400 years after it was founded.

Colonial Williamsburg: The History of the Settlement that Became America's Most Famous Living-History Museum analyzes the history of Williamsburg and its transformation into Virginia's most visited tourist spot. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about Colonial Williamsburg like never before, in no time at all.



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