

Exploring Life in St. Mary's City

Vocabulary

Assembly: The Maryland Assembly was a gathering of freemen to debate the laws of the colony.

Chapel: A chapel is a small place of worship for Christians.

Common council: The common council was a legislative body for a city or town

Council chamber: A council chamber is a room dedicated to meetings of councils and government bodies.

Enslaved: Enslaved means to be kept and forced to work without payment and against one's will. Over the course of the 17th century, slavery would become based on a person's race.

Gallows: A gallows was a frame from which people were hung until they died as punishment for a crime.

Indentured Servant: An indentured servant was an individual, commonly in the 17th–19th centuries, who signed a contract (indenture) to work without wages for a master for a fixed period—typically four to seven years—in exchange for passage to a new country (usually American colonies), food, clothing, and shelter.

Mill: A mill is a place with the tools and machines needed to grind the colonists' grain into flour and meal. In the 1600s, mills were usually powered by water or wind.

Ordinary: An ordinary was a tavern or eating house, often with places for travelers to sleep.

Provincial Council: The provincial council was a group who advised the governor with recommendations about running the colony.

Royal governor: A royal governor was an official chosen by a king or queen to run a colony.

Tenant farmer: A tenant farmer is a person who rents land in order to farm.

Witchott: A witchott is a one-room home used by one or more Algonkian families.

Yaocomico (ya-KOM-i-CO): The Yaocomico were the Indigenous subtribe related to the Piscataway who first welcomed the English colonists to the area. They resided on the north bank of the Potomac River, and were absorbed by the Piscataway in the 17th century.