Tour the Growing Colony
Location Overview

This document is an overview of the text, video and audio students can access as they explore this interactive.

Introduction: Explore the buildings and plantations and meet the people of St. Mary's City in 1685. Click on the locations in the drawing to learn what they were used for. If a location is yellow (like this one ⊕ , you can click on the link to watch video and see pictures of life in the 1600's.

Town Landing

This is the location where most travelers entered St. Mary's City by water. The water was deep enough for boats to get near the shore and the sandy beach made it the ideal location to land small boats and unload merchandise. From here, goods could easily be carried up a gentle slope into the city, along Middle Street.

Prison of 1676

A law was passed in St. Mary's City which said a prison had to be built by 1676. The prison was for debtors - people who didn't pay their bills - and criminals.

> **Longer Narrated Description:** In early Maryland, people were not put in jails for long periods of time. Most criminals were held in jail for only a few days while they waited for trials or until they paid their debt. The short jail time let the colonist get back to their most important job - growing tobacco - quickly.
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> Punishments for 17th century crimes might seem harsh by today's standards. The most common punishment was flogging, or whipping. Thieves might have their hand branded with a hot iron or have part of their ear chopped off. A person who used profanity might have a hole bored in their tongue. The most serious criminals, like pirates and murderers, were hung in the gallows green.
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> Some colonists were sentenced to stand in the pillory or sit in the stocks. Compared to flogging for branding, standing in the pillory might not seem that bad. But this punishment hurt more than the man's body. Standing in front of the entire colony all day ruined his reputation.
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> In Maryland, it was very important that people trust each other. Tobacco was only harvested once a year. So colonists had to promise to pay for goods and supplies with next year's crop. This meant that colonists had to trust each other to pay their debts when the time came. Now imagine you are a colonist and you see someone who wanted to trade with you standing in the pillory or stocks. Would you trust them the next time they wanted to trade you? Public punishment ruined a man's most valuable possession - his reputation.
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> **The side bar video features interpreters from St. Mary's City and a person who is being punished.**

Mulberry Tree

There is a legend in St. Mary's City that Leonard Calvert met with the Yaocomaco Indians under this tree in March of 1634 to sign a treaty for their lands. Later, it was said that the tree was used as a place to post public announcements. This tree was still standing in 1885, nearly 250 years after the Calverts stood beneath its shade.

Lawyer's Lodging

This house was built by Thomas Dent, a lawyer. He called it Lawyers' Lodging. At his death,

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Lawyer's Lodging (continued)

other lawyers used it and it may have eventually become an Ordinary, or inn. In 1686, Robert Gelley, then the manager of the Ordinary, was told he must close it down. People thought it was too great a temptation to clerks at work in the nearby state house.

1676 State House

The State House of 1676 was Lord Baltimore's seat of government and the place where the Assembly and Provincial Council conducted the colony's business

Longer Narrated Description: From 1634 to 1695, St. Mary's City was the center of the colony. Land deeds and titles for all of Maryland were approved here. Lord Baltimore's judges heard important cases here as well. Click the video to the right to see part of a court trial as it might have occurred in 1685.

But most importantly, St. Mary's City was home to the Assembly. This group of men met to write and change laws for the colony. The first Assembly in Maryland was made up of two parts. The Lower House came from all freemen in the colony. In other words, anyone who owned land could be a member of the Lower House. On the other hand, members of the Upper House were named by Lord Baltimore himself. Only the most important, wealthy men in Maryland were members of the Upper House.

What did the Assembly do before the Stat House was built? From 1634 to 1676, the government of Maryland met in private homes and ordinaries. Eventually, the colony found it needed a larger meeting place. In 1676, work was completed on the large, three-story brick state house. For nearly 20 years, the State House was home to judges, lawmakers, freemen, and clerks. In 1695, the capital moved to its new home in Annapolis. After the move, the old State House building briefly served as a county court house. It was later used as a church. In 1829, the building was torn down.

Pasture Land

Grazing land was needed for the many horses that carried travelers to St. Mary's City. Each public inn was required to have a stable for the convenience of travelers. By the 1680's, horses were more common in Maryland. But in the early years, horses were both rare and expensive, as they were very hard to ship over from Europe.

Clocker's Choice

Daniel Clocker, a former indentured servant who became a planter and carpenter, built a house on this property. Clocker was a member of the Common Council of St. Mary's City, the group of land owners who drafted laws in the colony. He probably planned to run an Ordinary here. However, he died and the house and lot had to be sold to pay his debts. The new owner, the lawyer John Jones, renamed it Providence and it may have been used as an inn.

Gallows

The gallows were used for public hangings.

Gallows Green

This piece of land was named for the gallows that were located there. Later, the land was fenced in for use as a pasture.

Triple Contract

This building was probably named for the three lawyers who owned it. It was used as an office for the lawyers. It was located close to the State House, which made it convenient for the

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Triple Contract (continued)
lawyers and their clients whose cases were tried there.

Garret van Sweringen's Council Chamber Inn
This building was first used as a government meeting house and a place for storing official records. When the State House was built in 1676, it was no longer needed for that purpose and became a private inn. The owner, a Dutch colonist named Garrett van Sweringen, made it one of the most luxurious inns in the colony. He also established a coffee house, which was a place to talk, drink, and smoke. This was the first known coffee house in the Chesapeake region. Early Marylanders probably wanted their colonial capital to be a special place where the wealthiest travelers could experience a touch of elegance in the newly settled frontier.

Building on Charles Calvert's Lot
This building may have been used by Governor Charles Calvert (the future Lord Baltimore) as townhouse when he was in St. Mary's City. He had a plantation called Mattapany on the Patuxent River but it was eight miles away. A house in the capital city would have been more convenient for overnight visits when court was in session.

Calvert House
Governor Leonard Calvert built this house in the 1630s. Since it was very large, the Assembly met here from time to time. Leonard Calvert probably died here in 1647. After his death the house was used as a state house and an inn and it became known as the Country's House. After the new brick State House was built in 1676, the house became an Ordinary until the capital was moved to Annapolis in 1695. The Calvert house was a very important building for nearly the entire history of St. Mary's City

Cordea's Hope
Mark Cordea was a French colonist and merchant. He served as mayor of St. Mary's City. As a merchant, he probably operated a store and office at this location. Some think he may have possibly operated an Ordinary here for a short time.

> **Longer Narrated Description:** With all the malls and superstores today, it might be hard to imagine a time with no place to shop. But that's just how it was in 17th century Maryland. Unlike colonies in Virginia and Boston, Maryland didn't have what we would call stores. Instead, they had trading and storehouses.
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> Cordea's Hope was one of the few storehouses in Maryland. Unlike a store, a storehouse was unheated and not open all the time. If a colonist wanted to buy shoes, utensils, cookware, candlesticks, gunpowder, or other goods imported from Europe, they could make an appointment with Master Cordea. After you arranged a time, Master Cordea or one of his servants would meet you at the store to get your goods and add up the total.
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> Paper was very scarce and expensive in early Maryland. So the merchants at Cordea's Hope may have used a counter board. A counter board was a piece of wood about the size of a cutting board with grid on it. Tokens, called jetons, were placed on the lines and spaces of the grid to add up the cost of the goods.
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> **Play the top video to the right to watch the owner of the storehouse explain the lines and spaces on the board.**
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> If a person wanted more than one item, the owner could add the total cost using the counting board. When it was a time to pay, the buyer would pay using a bill. The bill

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Cordea's Hope (continued)

promised a part of the buyer's tobacco crop to the owner of the storehouse at harvest time. There were almost no coins used in 17th-century Maryland. Instead bills were settled in pounds of tobacco - the cash crop of the colony.

Play the lower video to the right to watch the owner add up a purchase using the counter board.

The Lawyer's Office

This building was used as an office and townhouse by two attorneys, Robert Carvile and Robert Ridgely.   Later, the building was also used as an Ordinary, or inn. It was abandoned soon after 1695, when the capital was moved to Annapolis.

Smith's Ordinary

This building served as a public inn or Ordinary until it was destroyed by fire during the winter of 1678.

Longer Narrated Description: Today, hotels and inns are usually a nice place to stay. But in the 1600s, things were much less comfortable.

A public inn in the 1600s was called an ordinary. The name "ordinary" came from the fact travelers could get an "ordinary" meal and a bed for the night. The living area was tiny by today's standards. Smith's Ordinary was about 20 feet by 30 feet. That's about four kids laying head-to-foot one direction and six kids laying head-to-foot the other direction!

Guests at the ordinary slept on the floor on bedticks. A bedtick was like a person-sized pillow with cornhusks, rags, and lots of bugs. The nibbling bugs were so common, they lead to the expression, "Don't let the bed bugs bite!" During crowded times, visitors may even have shared their bedtick with other guests. Only the very rich in Maryland had bedsteads, or wooden frames that kept their mattress off the ground.

Meals were made in a single large pot. Bowls, cups, utensils were shared by all the guests. **Click the video to right to see what meal time at 17th-century ordinary might be like.**

You might have noticed there were many buildings used as ordinaries in St. Mary's City. As the center of government, men traveled from all over the colony to the small city. Men of the Assembly came here to create and pass new laws. Colonists came to have their cases heard before judges at the State House.

Printing House

William Nuthead was the first printer in Maryland and the southern colonies. He began printing in St. Mary's City in 1685.   Nuthead produced mostly legal forms such as contracts and indentures. Since few people could read or write in Maryland, newspapers were not produced in St. Mary's City in the 17th century. His wife, Dinah, assisted Nuthead. Following his death, Dinah moved to Annapolis and continued the business there, becoming one of the first women to run a printing press in America.

Longer Narrated Description: In the 17th century, very few people could read. So what was a printer doing in colonial Maryland?

William Nuthead first tried to operate his printing press in Virginia. But the governor of

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Printing House (continued)

Virginia, William Berkley, told Nuthead no printing should be done in a royal colony. "I thank God," said Berkley in 1671, "there are no free school and no printing and I hope we shall not have these [for a] hundred years; for learning has brought disobedience, and heresy, and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government." Since Nuthead couldn't print in Virginia, he moved to the capital of Maryland to set up his press. In Maryland, he was allowed to print government and legal documents - but only if the governor or member of the state Assembly saw the document first.

Running a 17th century press was quite a task. Each individual letter, or piece of type, had to be put between two composing sticks upside down and backwards. Paper, made from rags and imported from England, had to be cut from large, irregular sheets. Setting cutting, pressing, and drying documents could take hours. A good printer, working with an expert assistant, could create about 240 copies in an hour, once the type was set. By contrast, a modern newspaper press can print nearly 70,000 96-page newspapers with color per hour!

Catholic Chapel

Father Andrew White began his Maryland mission in an Indian witchott (the Yaocomaco word for dwelling) at St. Mary's City in 1634. Soon after, the colonists constructed a small wooden chapel. By 1641, they had completed a second wooden chapel somewhere near this spot. Then, between 1667 and 1669, a very large brick chapel was built here.

Longer Narrated Description: This chapel was Maryland's first major brick building. The structure was built in the form of a cross, 55 feet long and 57 feet wide at the arms of the cross. In frontier Maryland, where most colonists lived in humble wood cottages, this was a remarkable building. All that remains of the chapel is its massive brick foundation, which measured three feet wide and five feet deep and survives below ground today.

In 1689, Lord Baltimore's government was overthrown and the king of England took control of the colony. The Church of England was then made the official religion. After that, a new law was passed which said that Catholics could not worship in public, and the royal governor, John Seymour, ordered the Catholic chapel closed.

The Jesuits tore down the chapel around 1720 and used the bricks to build a Jesuit manor house at St. Inigoes, about two miles south of St. Mary's City. By the start of the merican Revolution, farmers were plowing and growing crops on the chapel field.

If you'd like to know more about three lead coffins found under the chapel, be sure to check out *Solving the Mystery of the Three Lead Coffins.*

St. Peter's

Philip Calvert, the Chancellor of Maryland, began construction on this very large brick house in 1678. Several years after his death, the royal governor probably used it for meetings until the government moved to Annapolis in 1695. Gunpowder stored in the house mysteriously exploded in 1695 and destroyed it, but its remains were still visible nearly two hundred years later.

Town Mill

In 1638, Thomas Cornwallis, one of the original colonists, had his servants construct an earthen mill dam and grist mill at this location. Using water power, the grist mill was planned to grind all

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Town Mill (continued)

the colonists' grain into flour and meal. This was the second mill he had built (see #29). The mill operated off and on for more than one hundred years. The large size of the earthen dam provided travelers a convenient path over the Mill Creek and formed the main land entrance to St. Mary's City for most of the early travelers.

Longer Narrated Description: Some of the colonists sent their corn harvests to the mill for grinding. But the mill wasn't as important to the colonists as Master Cornwaleys might have hoped. Why?

In England, farmers grew wheat, barley, rye, and oats. At harvest time, they sent their crop to a mill. At the mill, the grains were ground into flour and meal. The farmers then sold their crops at market or shipped them into town. The miller, or person who ran the mill, took part of the flour he ground as a fee. So the owner of the mill got part of everyone's crop each year. By building a mill, Cornwaleys was trying to make a profit just like he would have in England.

But things in Maryland were different. Instead of living in large towns, people lived on plantations spread far apart. They learned that grains from England didn't grow as well in Maryland. But the Indian plant corn grew very well. Finally, the colonists learned plowing fields in Maryland was too much work. All this lead to colonists making flour and meal the Indian way.

The colonists found it was easier to dry and grind their own corn using mortar and nestle. A mortar is a bowl-shaped container usually made of wood. The pestle was shaped like a baseball bat. Using the rounded end of the pestle, the colonists would mash, or pound, corn kernels into tiny pieces. The fine parts were sifted out and became cornmeal. The coarse parts were thrown into a pot and boiled into a mush. Pounding corn could take hours, and needed to be done every day. But colonists learned it was cheaper and easier to pound corn than haul it to the mill. Click the video to the right to hear plantation owner talk about grinding corn into meal each day.

Baker's Choice

Former indentured servants, John and Elizabeth Baker, built a house on the lot and ran an Ordinary, or inn, here.

Brick Yard Site

This is where the bricks for the brick chapel were made in 1666. Brick making was a skilled craft and relatively few brick makers lived in early Maryland

New Brick Yard

Construction of buildings at St. Mary's City required brick for chimneys, fireplaces, and other uses. The bricks were not made in one central location. Usually, they were produced as needed in places close to the building under construction. Numerous brick-making sites from colonial times have been found at various locations within St. Mary's City.

Mill Dam

This is the site of the earliest mill dam in Maryland. It was built in 1635. Thomas Cornwallis began construction of this dam within the first year of the colony's founding. Unfortunately, his millwright chose the location poorly and the mill could not operate effectively. He then had a new dam built further up Mill Creek.

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St. Barbara's

Philip Calvert owned this land and possibly leased both it and the buildings here to tenan farmers. Tenant farmers would pay the land owner part of their crop each year to rent the land. Some of Calvert's servants may also have lived here.

Longer Narrated Description: Almost everything the colonists needed was imported or shipped over from Europe. Sails, paper, spices, and cloth were all sailed to Maryland. Nearly all metal goods, like pots, utensils, nails, and tool heads, were imported as well. In return for the goods, colonists traded their one cash crop - tobacco.

Growing tobacco took an amazing amount of work. Much of the year was spent clearing more land and nurturing the valuable plants. The chart below shows the activities the farmers had to do throughout the year. Click the video to the right to listen to a plantation owner talk about the process of growing and shipping tobacco.

The entire economy of 17th-century Maryland depended on tobacco. Coins and regular money were almost never used. Instead, colonists would promise part of their tobacco crop to other colonists and merchants in England to buy what they needed. For example, a cow might 300-500 pounds of tobacco. An indentured servant could cost up to 2000 pounds of tobacco, depending on their strength and special skills. A simple household item like a cast iron pot might cost 30-100 pounds of tobacco. This might not seem like much, until you remember that each adult man grew about 1500-2000 pounds of tobacco in a year.

Month(s)	Activity	Description
Late January, February, March	Grow seeds in beds	From late January to March, farmers would grow seeds in small plots. If frost came, they covered the tiny plants with leaves and branches. When seeds were about the size of a quarter, they were ready to transplant.
April - May	Make hills, transplant seedlings	In April and May, farmers made hills for the plants in the field. Hills were made by pulling dirt toward one leg with a hoe. The tiny plants were then transplanted to the hills.
June, July, August	Tend crops - weed, thin, and worm	June, July and August were spent weeding, thinning and worming the tobacco. Farmers would thin, or take out small tobacco plants so the strongest could grow. Men and children also picked hornworms from the valuable leaves.
September - October	Cut leaves, hang in tobacco house	September and October were spent cutting and housing the leaves. When the leaves had been harvested, they were hung in a tobacco house to dry.
End of October - November	Pack into hogsheads	Finally, the end of October and November were spent cramming hundreds of pounds of tobacco into casks called hogsheads.

Corn Fields

St. Mary's City was bordered by fields of corn and other crops needed to feed residents and visitors.

Longer Narrated Description: Farming in the colony of Maryland was much different than what farmers from England were used to. Land in England had very few trees

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Corn Fields (continued)

and rocks. But the wild new land of Maryland was covered with forests, roots, and rocks. Plowing with horses or mules was impossible. Instead, almost all fieldwork was done by hand. **Click the video to the left to hear a plantation owner talk about how to farm in fields of Maryland.**

In addition to farming the land, there were other problems as well. People who came to America were eager to make a profit. Growing tobacco was the best way to make this dream come true. So almost everyone in early Maryland became a tobacco farmer. Some men became so focused on growing tobacco they forgot to plant enough corn for food! The Assembly even passed a law to make sure that all tobacco farmers also grew enough to eat. The law stated that for every hand, or person who grew tobacco, two acres of corn must be grown. One acre usually produced three or four hogsheads, or casks of corn. Since a normal man ate just under three barrels of shelled corn per year, the law made sure colonists wouldn't starve, even if there was a bad harvest.

St. John's

St. John's served as a dwelling house and a place for public meetings. It was in this building in 1642 that a former indentured servant, Mathias de Sousa, served in the Maryland legislative assembly-possibly making him the first person of color to vote in Maryland. It was also the site where, in 1648, Margaret Brent made her request for two votes in the Assembly. Governor Charles Calvert lived in this house from 1661 until 1667. Beginning in the 1670s, the building became a public inn.

Chapel Road

In the 1600s, a road extended from the center of St. Mary's City to the Catholic chapel. It was the main road and the major entrance to the city from the south.

Mill Dam Road

This road was built around 1640. It ran from Governor Leonard Calvert's house to the mill dam. Using the dam as a path over the water, the road crossed Mill Creek and joined Mattapany Road, an Indian trail to the Patuxent River. Most travelers who came to St. Mary's City during the 1600s entered along this route.

Middle Street

Starting as a path from Governor Leonard Calvert's house to the main boat landing in the 1630s, this roadway became Middle Street in the 1670s. Instead of using addresses, the buildings along the road were given names such as Clocker's Choice, Providence, Jamaica, and Triple Contract.

Aldermanbury Street

In 1672, a roadway was created and named Aldermanbury Street. It was named this because the aldermen, or government representatives, owned the lots of land that bordered the street. This street began at the town center and ran along the riverbank to where the new brick State House was to be built.