

COLONIAL TRAVELING TRUNK INVENTORY LIST "ARTIFAKE" DESCRIPTIONS

What are "artifakes"?

The items in this traveling trunk are not really from the 1700s. Those valuable items are kept safely in museums around the world and are called "artifacts." They are very fragile and people are usually not allowed to touch them. The items we have assembled for you are reproductions of those artifacts. Since they are made today, anyone can touch and examine them! Given that they are not artifacts, we call them "artifakes."

Men's Clothing

These clothes are what the average man of the 1700s would have worn. The outfit consists of a long-sleeved collared shirt, knee-breeches, a waistcoat (or vest), and long stockings (or socks). Men almost always wore waistcoats as part of their everyday outfits - to be seen in just your shirt was the equivalent of being seen in your underwear! The buttons on the waistcoat and breeches are made of pewter - a very common metal during the time period.



Women's Clothing

Women in the 18th century would have worn a drawstring skirt, a cotton or linen bodice (a vest-like garment), and a gathered cap. Aprons were sometimes worn over the skirts. Underneath their skirt and bodice would be a long shirt called a chemise (*sha-MEESE*). The chemise acted as an under-shirt when worn under a bodice, and a nightgown when worn by itself at night. Women would never be seen in public wearing only a chemise, as that would have been considered walking around in their underwear! Like the men, women also needed to wear a cap or hat when they were out in public.



Men's Headwear



Two types of hats were common for 18th century men: the tri-corner hat (left) and the round-hat (right). The tri-corner hat was made from the round-hat by pinning or sewing three sides of the hat to the crown, forming a triangle shape. We have included both hats so students may see exactly how a tri-corner hat could be pieced together. In the 1700s, men would rarely have left home without a hat. Both fashion and society deemed hats necessary for good dressing habits.

Haversack

Haversacks were cotton or linen bags normally carried by hunters and soldiers. Food was the primary item carried in haversacks. Soldiers would normally carry enough food to last three days. If there was room left over in the haversack, travelers may carry other personal items, such as money or extra clothes. These haversacks were not always weather treated, and tended to become filthy after a few uses. As a result, they are some of the most difficult artifacts to find today.



Powder Horn

Used by both soldiers and hunters alike, powder horns stored the gunpowder necessary to fire 18th century muskets. Gunpowder must be kept dry and will not shoot if it becomes wet. Even a few drops of water can render gunpowder useless. Hunters would use animal horns to store their powder, and would secure it with a wooden stopper at the top. They would then simply open the top and pour out the amount of gunpowder they needed into their muskets. Eventually, powder horns were replaced by paper cartridges, in which both gunpowder and a bullet were wrapped into a paper tube.

Straight Shoes

These shoes are made of thick leather that has been dyed black. Brass buckles close the shoes and keep them tight across your feet. They are known as “straight shoes” meaning that there are no right or left foot. People would wear them on whatever foot they wished and, over time, the shoes would mold to the shape of their feet. The shoes also lack tread or grip on the bottom, which can make them very slippery to walk in, especially on wooden floors! The shoes have no support or padding in them at all, which make them very uncomfortable to wear after a while.





Horn Books

In the 1600s and 1700s, paper was difficult to make and not easy to get. Books could be very expensive. Families wishing to teach their children to read and write used horn books. A horn book were made from a piece of wood shaped like a paddle. A small piece of paper containing the alphabet or a reading lesson would be pasted to the paper, and thin piece of animal horn would be placed over the paper. The horn was thin enough that the words under it could be read, but strong enough that it would protect the paper under it, allowing the horn book to be used for years.

Jacob's Ladder

Toys of the past were simple and usually made of wood. Jacob's Ladder was a popular toy among youngsters. It is made of wooden blocks held together by ribbons. When held up, the player turns their wrist back and forth, and the blocks seem to fall down on themselves, making the ladder get longer. It is simply an optical illusion, but the effect the toy produces was mesmerizing for children of the 1700s.



Ball-and-Cup

One of the most popular toys of the 18th century, the ball-and-cup game challenges players to toss the wooden ball up and attempt to catch it in the cup. The game is deceptively simple, but quickly proves to be addictive - especially if someone keeps missing the cup! A way to make the game "easier" is to wrap the string around the wooden stick a few times to shorten it. The ball now has less distance to travel and, therefore, becomes easier to catch.

Nine-Pins

The precursor to bowling, nine-pins was a popular game among both adults and children. Rules for the game vary across countries and other regions, but it is essentially played the same way as contemporary bowling. The pins are arranged in a diamond shape and the player rolls a small wooden ball towards them. This version of nine-pins is a tabletop version, though it can be played on the floor as well.





Bleeding Bowl

Known as a “barber’s bowl” or a “shaving bowl” as well, this copper bowl was a common fixture for 18th century men. The bowl could be filled with water for use in shaving. More commonly, it was used for the process of “bleeding.” Doctors and barbers (who were usually the same person) believed that a way of curing sickness was to “bleed” a person - allowing sickness, “bad blood” or excess blood to drain from the body, therefore curing the patient. In practice, the procedure was dangerous, unsanitary and, at times, deadly.

Spill Plane

Starting a fire in a fireplace was not necessarily the easiest task in the 18th century. Kindling, consisting of small sticks and leaves, could be difficult to find, especially in the winter months. The spill plane helped to make fire-starting a bit easier. Inside the wooden case is a small blade which leads to an opening on the side of the case. A wooden board is pressed repeatedly into the blade, creating small shavings that tumble through the opening. The shavings are then used as kindling, or small matches, to start fires.



Oil Lamps

In Colonial America, candles were not always easy to come by. They could be expensive and were not always made to last for long periods of time. Oil lamps proved to be able to produce just as much, if not more light than candles at a fraction of the cost. Vegetable oil or animal fat would be placed in the lamps, and cotton wicks (similar to candlewicks) could be fastened to the lamp for lighting. The oil could also be lit on its own, without the need for a wick. As long as the burning oil was not spilled on the floor, oil lamps could be suspended from walls or door frames to supply light for rooms.

Candle Mold

Tin candle molds allowed people to fashion their own candles. Cotton string was tied to a small stick, which was placed across the openings on the mold, allowing the string to fall through. Hot wax was then poured into the molds and allowed to harden. This allowed six candles to be made at once! Candle molds could be found in different shapes and sizes, allowing people to make different types of candles.



Punched Tin Lantern

Candles were not easy to light in the 18th century. Before the invention of strike-on matches, candles had to be lit from a fire or candle that was already burning. Should your candle go out, you would be left in the dark if you were not near a fire or another lit candle. Punched tin lanterns allowed lit candles to be transported from place to place without the risk of the candle being blown out. The punched tin allows light to shine through, lighting the carrier's way, while still protecting the lit candle from any breezes. Opening the lantern door gives access to the candle, and allows more light to be seen.



Sugar Cone and Sugar Nippers

Sugar was considered a luxury item in the 18th century, as it often had to be imported from the Caribbean Islands. It was displayed openly in people's homes as a sign of wealth. However, leaving sugar out in the open in this manner usually causes it to harden to near brick-like levels. As a result, small pliers or "sugar nippers" were needed to clip off pieces of sugar to be used in tea or in cooking.

Native American Items

The Susquehannock Indians that York Countians would have encountered in the 1700s lived near the Susquehanna River. The Susquehannocks were an Iroquois-speaking nation, and had lived in relative isolation from Europeans for many years. They and other Eastern Native Americans hunted the abundant game that lived near their villages, including fox and raccoon. Pelts such as these would often be traded for wampum, blue, white, and purple beads made from clam and whelk shells. Wampum beads would be woven into items such as bracelets and belts. These could then be exchanged as gifts, or to observe important events such as weddings or the signing of treaties. Wampum belts and bracelets were also given to European colonists as a sign of friendship.



Spectacles

Glasses in the 1700s were designed for practicality, and not necessarily for comfort. These glasses are designed with two sets of hinges: one set in the front to fold in the stems, and another set at the end of the stems that folds behind the ear. Since these glasses do not curve behind the ear, as modern glasses do, wearers would sometimes run string through the openings in the stems and tie the glasses to their heads, preventing them from falling off.



Wooden Bowl



Trees and forests were in abundance in 18th century Pennsylvania, so wood was commonly fashioned into household items. Bowls, plates, and mugs were among the kitchen items that could be made from wood. For the average colonist in York, wooden items were also chosen because of cost and reliability — wooden items were cheaper than pewter, and sturdier than pottery.

Chamber Pot

Before the existence of indoor plumbing, chamber pots were the common household toilets. Their name comes from the fact that they were usually found in one's bedroom, or "chamber." Chamber pots were emptied regularly, sometimes by servants if the owner was wealthy. For more average families, cleaning out chamber pots was a common chore assigned to children. So remember: the next time your students complain about receiving homework, remind them that it could always be worse!



Quill Pen

Quills were made from the wing-feathers of large birds. Goose feathers were commonly used to make quills, but the pens could also be made from other bird feathers including swans, eagles, and turkeys. Writers would carve a writing tip into the end of the feather, and would have to dip the end into a small bottle of ink in order to write. They would often have to do this several times while writing one document.

Pipe

Settlers to the New World were introduced to tobacco by the Native Americans, who had long been using it for spiritual purposes. Europeans quickly adopted tobacco as their own, and it was widely traded among colonists and the Native Americans, as well as between the colonists themselves. The pipes that these colonists used to smoke their tobacco were often made from a reed stem with a clay pipe on the end.



Silverware and Plate

The fork and knife look similar to our modern utensils, but the fork has two prongs instead of three. Two-pronged forks were great for eating meat, but were difficult to use when eating smaller items such as peas or carrots. So, a third prong was added to make this process easier. The plate is made from pewter, a metal alloy often consisting of tin and (in the 1700s) lead.



Folding Frying Pan

For soldiers in the field or woodsmen on the hunt, cooking was not always the easiest process. Large iron pans were too heavy and clumsy to carry around, so a folding frying pan like this would have been very popular. The handle is hollow and folds in over the pan, making the pan both compact and very lightweight. Since the pan is made of iron, it would have to be greased before use to ensure that food cooked inside of it did not get stuck.



Paper Money

Money used before the colonies gained independence was represented by the British currency system: the pound, the shilling (20 shillings = 1 pound) and the pent (or pence; 12 pence = 1 shilling). After independence, some states began using the Spanish dollar as their currency. Paper money was often not trusted by many Americans, who viewed it as little more than a worthless document. "Hard money" (gold and silver pieces) was usually preferred.