

Tobacco Inspection

In 1730, a law was passed requiring that all tobacco exported from Virginia be inspected by officials at one of the public inspection warehouses which were located in port towns or along the rivers throughout the colony. Any tobacco not meeting a minimum standard of quality was promptly destroyed. That which passed, would remain in the warehouses until it was shipped to Great Britain.



*Detail from A Map of Virginia, 1751.
Image courtesy of Library of Congress.*



Yorktown's earliest official inspection location was a warehouse and wharf owned by William Buckner. The site was located on the waterfront near here, below town lots one and four. The Buckner family provided inspection facilities at Yorktown until 1747, when a new warehouse was built at public expense. This structure, along with its wharf, was located just below the foot of Read Street. Buildings on the waterfront such as the tobacco warehouses were often in need of extensive repair or even rebuilding. In 1769, the county authorized the construction of another new warehouse, probably to replace one destroyed earlier that year by a hurricane.

*Tobacco farm at Yorktown Victory Center.
Photo courtesy of Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation.*

