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FACTSHEET – CLOTHING AT PORT-ROYAL

There were two distinct classes of people living at Port-Royal; the artisans (working class) and the upper class gentlemen. The clothing worn depended on the class of the person, the season and the type of activity they were performing. The clothing worn by the men was not manufactured at Port-Royal. They were responsible for bringing their clothes with them from France. A tailor was present to do repairs as needed.

The artisan generally wore linen shirts that were long and would serve as a night shirt as well. In colder weather they would wear thicker woolen shirts. Woolen breeches or pantaloons were worn. These were not full length. They went down just below the knee and tended to be fairly loose-fitting and comfortable.

When working in wet gardens and fields, the artisans wore wooden shoes called “sabots”. We often associate wooden shoes with Holland but they were not the only people to wear them. People in countries such as Sweden, Germany, Belgium and France at times also wore wooden shoes. “Sabots” were the affordable, waterproof footwear of the time.

The men wore thick woolen socks for comfort and warmth. The artisans often wore plain felt hats when working in the hot sun or if they were outside on rainy days. Artisans also had ordinary leather shoes and they adopted the moose hide moccasins from the Mi’kmaq. In colder weather woolen cloaks were worn as well as woolen toques.

The upper class gentlemen wore clothing quite similar to the artisans if they were working outside in the fields and gardens, but they had much fancier clothing which they wore for special occasions and ceremonies. At these special times, the gentlemen wore a much finer linen shirt. They also wore a tailored doublet or jacket usually made of wool or fine silk with a fancy linen collar as well as linen cuffs. Flowing pantaloons of the same material, extending just below the knee, accompanied the doublet.



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Gentlemen often wore high leather boots that came up slightly above the knee. At times they might wear a very fine linen hose with fancy leather shoes instead of the boots. A woolen or velour cape, which may have a silk thread embroidery around the edge, could be worn over the doublet.

The finishing touch was a felted beaver hat with decorative ostrich plumes extending out of the band around the body of the hat. Upper class gentlemen such as Pierre Dugua de Mons, Samuel de Champlain, Marc Lescarbot and Sieur de Poutrincourt probably wore attire quite similar to this on special occasions at Port-Royal.



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