

# A Mile in the Shoes of the Atlantic World

## Calamanco Shoes



Calamanco shoes are made of a glossy woolen cloth that is checkered on one side. In colonial times, they were a nicer and more sophisticated type of footwear.



During the colonial years, calamanco shoes would most likely be primarily purchased by members of the upper class. Calamanco was a less durable fabric than leather and therefore could not withstand significant rigorous activity like household chores.

Who bought them?

What are they?

Both George Washington and John Hancock purchased calamanco shoes, imported from London, for their wives. Calamanco was also used to line dresses such as this one. However, over time it would be replaced by cotton and linen calico.



Where and how were they purchased?

Many colonists in New England, where calamanco shoes were extremely popular for their ability to keep feet warm, preferred to import their shoes from Great Britain rather than purchase from American shops. They usually were priced at three shilling and six pence per pair.

It is possible that calamanco's roots can be traced back to the wool of Calamocha, found in Catalonia, Spain. During the peak of the Atlantic trade, however, calamanco fabric and shoes could be found in France, England, and the New World, including Virginia.

Where in the world was calamanco?

What role did they play in the trade of the Atlantic World?

The growth of imports from Atlantic markets led to increased development of retail stores in the colonies of the New World. These stores then began to sell popular commodities from world wide markets, including calamanco shoes from Europe.



Types of calamanco shoes

...with buckles

...with ribbon

