

ALLAN HUX/FRED JARMAN/BILL GLEBERZON

AMERICA

A HISTORY



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Writing a survey textbook on American history is a monumental task. We tackled this project because we believed that it was important that Canadian historians and teachers analyze and present an interpretation of American history to Canadian students rather than have us rely on American textbooks.

This project could not have been completed without the encouragement and support of many people. Dr. Ian Steele of the University of Western Ontario provided important background information on the colonial period and Ted Lea insisted that the colonial era receive its due in a high school textbook. The University of Toronto libraries were invaluable, and the excellent working space for researchers and writers at the Robarts Library made the long hours in the evenings, on weekends, and during holidays more bearable.

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The authors remain solely responsible for the opinions and interpretations presented, and for any errors that regrettably remain.

*Allan Hux
Fred Jarman
Bill Gleberzon*

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NOTE TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

American history is exciting and dramatic. For Canadians it is especially important because our past, present, and future are closely linked to developments in the United States of America.

It is extremely difficult to cover the entire sweep of American history in one survey course. Like climbing Mount Everest, it may not be impossible, but most of us as students and teachers have never succeeded. Teachers will select units and chapters which best meet the objectives of their individual courses. We hope that you will find the material interesting, informative, and easy to read. A few comprehension questions are included throughout each chapter to draw students' attention to the main points in the narrative. Teachers may wish to assign these for homework. Biographies focus attention on the lives, times, and contributions of particular Americans. For some periods, teachers may wish to use the biographies alone to cover the material quickly and then to move on to the next period. The biographies may be useful starting points for short, independent research and writing projects for

students. Primary documents are presented in the shaded sections of the text. These are very important written records from the past which students must learn to read and analyze as they strive to understand history.

The end-of-unit activities encourage students to develop their thinking, research, and communication skills in the field of history. These activities direct students to focus and to ask questions on important issues, and to develop a sense of time and structure. Organizing skills are extremely important in identifying and analyzing historical problems. Organization is the launching pad for selecting and evaluating historical evidence. It prepares the foundation for the expression of ideas and conclusions orally and in writing. Teachers will select only some activities from some units for individual and group assignments in their classes. Over the entire course there should be ample opportunity to advance students' skills in all of these areas.

We hope that you find American history as fascinating to read, research, discuss, study, and write about as we did.



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UNIT ONE

COLONIAL
ROOTS



COLONIAL ROOTS

Focus: How was the New World colonized?

THE AMERINDIANS OF THE NEW WORLD

Everyone knows that Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492. But, did he? And, what do we mean by discovered?

When he and his ships arrived from Spain there were at least one million people living north of Mexico. He called these people "Indians" because he mistakenly believed that he had reached India. These people had been in America thousands of years before Columbus discovered it.

Some historians have suggested that at different times through the centuries, ancient

Egyptians, Africans, Chinese, and peoples from the various islands in the Pacific Ocean sailed to America. If this is so, they were also in North America before Columbus "discovered" it.

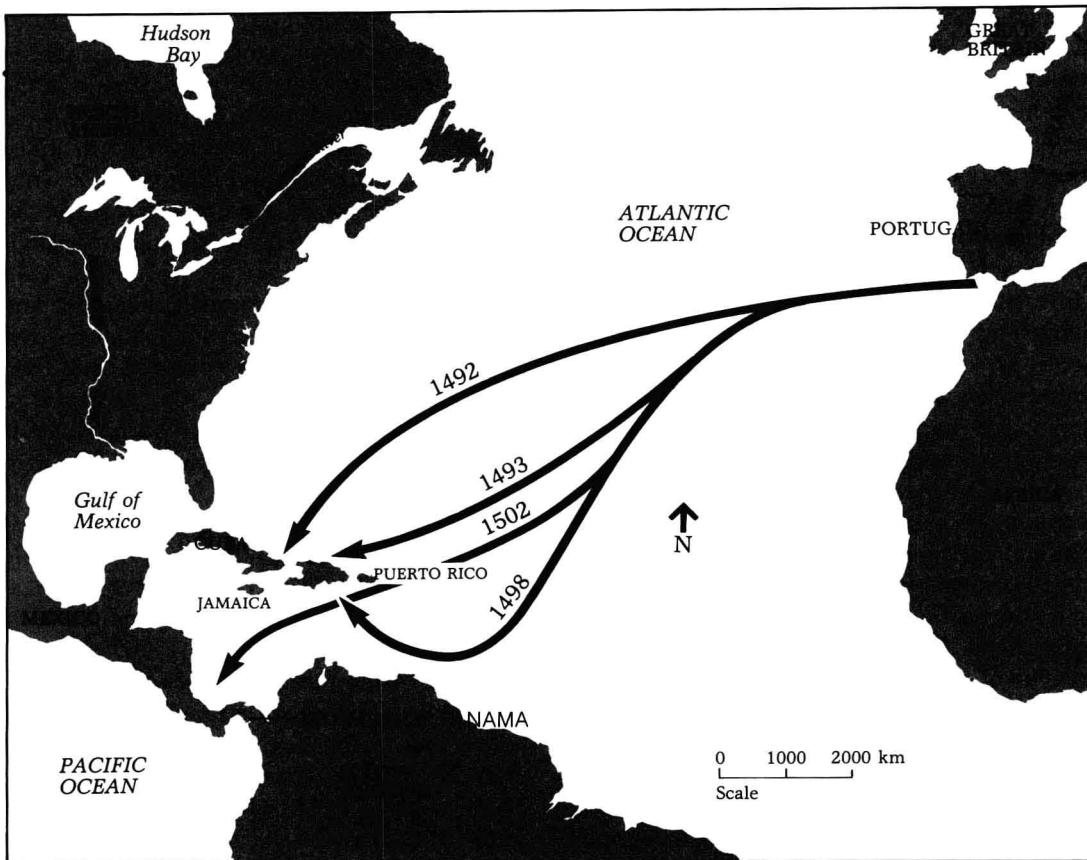
Vikings from Scandinavia and priests from Ireland had landed in the New World long before Columbus was even born. As well, fishermen from Portugal and France had sailed across the Atlantic Ocean, and caught fish in the Grand Banks off the coast of Newfoundland. They probably went on land to dry the fish before they sailed back home. Fish from these Atlantic waters, such as cod, were an important part of European diets long before Columbus set sail from Spain.

Columbus was not really the first to discover

In 1507, a map showing Vespucci and the New World used the term "America" for the first time.



The four voyages of Columbus to the New World



America. In fact, during his four voyages to the New World he never landed on the mainland. Still, Columbus was the first European to have bumped into the New World about whom we have records.

Columbus was not trying to find a New World; he wanted to discover a new route from Europe to the Far East. From the Far East came the spices that the Europeans needed to preserve their food. Spices, like pepper, at least made it possible to hide the taste of bad food when it had spoiled. From the Far East also came gold, gemstones, and silk.

The most direct route from Europe to the Far East — from the Mediterranean Sea across the land to China — was blocked by pirates and other peoples hostile to Christian Europeans. So European Kingdoms like Portugal, Spain, and England sent out expeditions to find new and safer routes to the Orient.

Reports of these discoveries began to be written up by Europeans. Among these writers was

a man named Amerigo Vespucci who claimed that he had visited the New World. The map makers who drew early maps of the newly discovered continent were impressed by Vespucci's stories. They called the new lands, "Amerigo's land". This name soon became changed to America, which became the name for the new lands that Columbus "discovered".

Who Are the Amerindians?

Thousands of years before Columbus arrived in America, Amerindians had lived in the new world. Although the Europeans called them "Indians", each group or tribe had its own name for itself. For example, one group who lived in the far north called themselves "Inuit", which means "the people" in their language.

In some ways, the Amerindians were similar to the peoples of Europe. Both societies were dominated by males. The man's role was to

It appears that Vespucci lied.

The first Europeans to have landed on the North American continent about whom we are certain were English sailors led by an Italian, Giovanni Cabotti (John Cabot). They landed on Newfoundland in 1497.

hunt for food and to defend his family from danger of any kind. Men also governed. Women took care of the home and the children. They gathered or grew food and cooked it. Generally, children helped their parents from an early age, girls working with their mothers, boys with their fathers.

At the same time, the tribes were as different from each other as the peoples of Europe were different from each other. They spoke many languages or variations of the same language (called "dialects"). However, they communicated with each other through sign language. Each group developed different customs, traditions, myths, and legends.

Still the Amerindians had many things in common. Generally, their religious beliefs were similar. They prayed to all parts of nature, and respected each part. Amerindian beliefs were memorized by the tribes' holy men. At most gatherings, the holy men would recite the religious stories. Thus, the traditions were learned by new generations.

Tribes in the different areas of the present-day United States developed different ways of living. In the north-east, the tribes lived in settlements and farmed the land. Corn, called "maize", was their main crop. They also grew squash (and further south, tobacco). The native peoples also hunted for food, like the wild turkey. To make their lives easier, they invented tools like the tomahawk and the bow and arrow. Also, they domesticated dogs to do work for them. They did not know about horses until the Europeans brought them to America.

Some of these tribes joined together to form a larger unit which was called a **confederacy**. One such group was the Iroquois, which consisted of five (later six) different tribes. The Iroquois became the largest and most powerful confederacy on the north-east coast.

In the centre of the continent, the region called "the Plains", the Amerindians followed, hunted, and lived on the buffalo. The huge animals weighed hundreds of kilograms when they became adults. They wandered widely across the land and numbered in the tens of millions.

Buffalo were the important fact of life for the Plains Indians. Buffalo provided meat for food, skins for clothing and homes (called tipis or

wigwams in the different dialects), thread for sewing, oil for cooking and grooming hair, even hair brushes, from the rough underside of the tongue. The Amerindians learned to hunt the buffalo with great skill. But they never killed more than they needed for their survival. They respected the buffalo's important place in nature, and respected the animals for their special qualities.

Other tribes hunted animals, like deer and rabbit, fished or gathered food, like berries. They moved from place to place as their food supply was used up.

Still others who lived in the barren deserts of the south-west lived in permanent dwellings. These people were called "the Pueblos" (a Spanish name which means "a town"). Their homes were built in mountains, but they were not caves. These people became very skilled at making handicrafts from silver and weaving cloth.

On the Pacific coast, the tribes evolved a unique culture. Fish provided most of their food needs. Since the fish were abundant and available these Amerindians had leisure time. They began to carve statues from large trees. These statues were called totem poles. The carved images represented the gods and legends of the west coast tribes.

Clash of Cultures

After Columbus discovered America, the lives of the Amerindians changed tremendously. The Europeans looked down on them as savages (wild or uncivilized people) or as heathens (non-Christians). They also regarded them as a part of nature, like a tree or a rock. And they believed that the native peoples had to be removed, like a tree or a rock, in order to "civilize" the land. At the same time, they feared and hated the Amerindians.

A basic difference between the native peoples and the Europeans was in their attitude toward the ownership of land. The Amerindians believed that land was holy, and that it belonged to everyone. They could not understand the view that land could be owned by one person alone. In Europe, a man was free when he did own things, especially land. The

Although European society had written languages, very few Europeans could read or write.

Europeans called the Amerindian holy men, medicine men.

It is said that the Iroquois confederacy was a model for the American federation of states.



This has been thought to be Shawnaadithit, the last recorded member of the Beothuk tribe; current research suggests that it may be her mother.

more land he owned, the richer, the more important he was. The Amerindians could not understand the Europeans' view of how important it was to own land. They tried to live in harmony with nature, with the land.

The result of this clash of cultural views was that the Europeans increased their efforts even more to remove the native peoples from the areas in which they wanted to settle. The Europeans hunted down and wiped out many tribes, such as the Caribs after whom the Caribbean Sea is named, and the Beothuks who lived in Newfoundland.

The Europeans tried to make slaves of the native peoples because help was needed for the heavy work of settlement. The Amerindians died quickly in captivity, mainly because they were unaccustomed to the diseases that the Europeans brought to the New World, diseases like smallpox and whooping cough. Those who survived refused to be enslaved.

At first, the native peoples did not know what to make of the Europeans. They were amazed by their large ships, by their armour,

by their weapons. Everything about the Europeans was strange. But, in many instances, the Amerindians helped the early settlers to survive.

However, as the Europeans took over their lands and attacked them, they began to resist. They counter-attacked. In present-day United States, the warfare between the Europeans and the Amerindians raged for over three hundred years. The Amerindians were forced to move west, and were finally defeated.

For the Amerindians, the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus meant the end of their age-old way of life. His "discovery" also opened a new chapter in the history of Europe, and certainly meant that North America would be developed in new ways.

1. Why did the Europeans want to find a route to the Far East?
2. How did differences in the geographical locations of tribes cause different ways of living to develop?
3. How did Amerindian and European views of land differ? Why did the differences lead to fighting?

BRITISH COLONIZATION

The British became seriously involved in exploring and settling the North American continent at the end of the sixteenth century. Many reasons motivated them. They wished to Christianize the heathen native peoples. They were very impressed by the success of the Spanish and Portuguese in South America, where great amounts of gold and silver had been discovered. The precious metals gave power to those nations who possessed them. Maybe, North America would yield similar metals. Also, during this period, the British economy became dependent on raising sheep to grow wool. Since sheep-raising required fewer people, many farmers were forced to leave their farms. They began to wander across the country. Perhaps, North America would provide a home for these poor, landless farmers and their families.

Scalping was introduced by the Europeans who paid a bounty for every Amerindian scalp brought to them.

The greatest display of bravery a warrior could give was to touch his opponent with his hand or a special short stick during a battle, then leave him alive.

The Navigation Acts

A new economic system had developed, called **mercantilism**. In this system a country tried to obtain land and colonies to provide it with cheap raw materials and a market for its manufactured goods. To the British, mercantilism meant that colonies should be developed to provide important goods such as timber to build ships or hemp to make ropes for the sails. Crops like tobacco and indigo, which was an important dye for clothing, could also be grown in the colonies. These products would be sent to Britain, which would sell them to other countries for a profit. Or, Britain could use them for its own purposes. Either way, Britain would become richer. It would be more independent of other nations; and it would become more powerful.

As well, the poor people could be sent to the colonies where they would grow other crops needed by the Mother Country. In turn, the colonists would need to buy manufactured goods, like nails, hammers, saws, and clothing from Britain. Therefore, the wealth of the Mother Country would grow even greater.

Around 1660, the mercantile system became law when the British parliament passed the "Navigation Acts". These Acts stated that all goods and crops carried between the British Isles and the colonies had to be taken in British ships. Since colonial ships were regarded as British ships, this meant that ship-building in the colonies would become a stronger industry.

The Navigation Acts also forbade the sale of certain crops, such as tobacco, indigo, and timber, to non-British nations. The Navigation Acts were intended to protect and benefit both the Mother Country and the colonies. They succeeded. The colonies prospered.

Over the years, the enforcement of the Navigation Acts became very weak. They were deliberately ignored by the British government and navy. This policy was called "salutary neglect", which meant "healthy neglect". Therefore the colonists began to trade directly with foreign countries. Smuggling became very important to the colonial economy. The colonists also began to manufacture some goods themselves, such as nails and clothing. This meant they stopped buying some goods from

the Mother Country. The colonies prospered even more.

Who Established Colonies?

Under Queen Elizabeth I, the British Crown had become very strong. Without the Crown's permission, colonies could not be established. In return, those who were allowed to create colonies promised loyalty to the Crown and promised to give the Monarch one-fifth of their profits.



Queen Elizabeth I, 1553-1603

Colonies were developed in several ways. At first, individual gentlemen-adventurers, like Sir Walter Raleigh and his half-brother Sir Humphrey Gilbert, tried to establish colonies with their own wealth. However, both men failed. And, both men paid for their failure with their lives. Nevertheless, Raleigh was responsible for

the settlement of the short-lived colony of Roanoke Island off the coast of North Carolina between 1585 and 1587. No one knows what happened to the colony or its settlers. However, we do know that the first English baby to be born in the New World, a girl named Virginia Dare, was born there.

During the early seventeenth-century, a new form of developing colonies came into being. Groups of wealthy nobles and merchants put their wealth together to form **joint-stock companies**. These co-operative companies were able to finance the establishment of colonies with less risk to the individuals involved. The London or South Virginia Company was established to colonize Virginia. The Plymouth or North Virginia Company was created to settle Massachusetts Bay.

However, the British monarchs still allowed their wealthy friends to establish colonies. These individuals were either very close personal friends of the monarch or were owed a favour because of special services they had performed for the monarch. This was the way in which the colonies of Maryland (1632), Pennsylvania (1681), and Georgia (1732) were founded. These colonies were called **proprietary colonies**, because they were in effect owned by an individual, who was known as "the proprietor".

What motivated these wealthy nobles and merchants to establish colonies? They wanted to increase their wealth from the profits of colonization, especially from the precious metals and important crops found or grown there. Some wanted to establish a safe place for people who were suffering from religious persecution at home. This was the main reason for the establishment of the Massachusetts Bay colony by the Puritans. Similarly, Lord Baltimore created the colony of Maryland as a home for English Catholics. William Penn established Pennsylvania as a haven for members of the Society of Friends, who were also known as Quakers. In the early eighteenth century, George Oglethorpe created the colony of Georgia as a place where poor Englishmen and women could go to better themselves. Within the colonies themselves, Rhode Island was established as a refuge for colonists who were being persecuted by the Puritans.



Lord Baltimore

persecute

Who Settled Colonies?

Why did the common people come to the colonies? Why did they leave their homes and all that was familiar to them to sail across dangerous seas to a land about which they knew very little?

They were obviously very courageous people. But their courage also came from their unhappiness. They wanted to escape religious persecution. They wanted to live where they could practise their religious beliefs without fear. Many others came simply to improve their lives economically. They wanted wealth and adventure. Especially, they wanted to own land. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries many farmers had been forced to leave their land. Their crops had been replaced by sheep, which needed a lot of land on which to graze and fewer farmers to care for them. The opportunity to own and farm land again was very attractive to these homeless farmers.

So, they were prepared to sail into the unknown, across a dangerous sea and into a

[refuge]

[persecution]

GOTTLIEB MITTELBERGER was a German schoolteacher who came to Pennsylvania in 1750. His description of the voyage to and the arrival in the New World is likely accurate for many colonists who arrived as indentured servants.

"Both in Rotterdam and in Amsterdam, the people are packed densely, like herrings so to say, in the large sea vessels . . . many a ship carries four to six hundred souls; not to mention the innumerable implements, tools, provisions, water-barrels and other things which likewise occupy much space.

On account of contrary winds it takes the ships sometimes 4 weeks to make the trip from Holland to England. Everything is examined there and the customs-duties paid, whence it comes that the ships ride there 8, 10 to 14 days and even longer at anchor, till they have taken in their full cargoes. During that time every one is compelled to spend his last remaining money and to consume his little stock of provisions which had been reserved for the sea. . .

When the ships have for the last time weighed their anchors in England, the real misery begins with the long voyage. For from there the ships, unless they have good wind, must often sail 8, 9, 10 to 12 weeks before they reach Philadelphia. But even with the best wind the voyage lasts 7 weeks.

But during the voyage there is on board these ships terrible misery, stench, fumes, horror, vomiting, many kinds of seasickness, fever, dysentery, headache, heat, constipation, boils, scurvy, cancer, mouth-rot, and the like, all of which come from old and sharply salted food and meat, also from very bad and foul water, so that

many die miserably. Add to this want of provisions, hunger, thirst, frost, heat, dampness, anxiety, want, afflictions, and lamentations, together with other trouble such as lice that abound so frightfully, especially on sick people, they can be scraped off the body. The misery reaches the climax when a gale rages for 2 or 3 nights and days, so that every one believes that the ship will go to the bottom with all human beings on board.

At length when, after a long and tedious voyage, the ships come in sight of land, which the people were so eager and anxious to see, they all creep from below on deck . . . weep for joy . . . and they are content to bear their misery in patience, in the hope that they may soon reach the land in safety. But alas!

When the ships have landed at Philadelphia, no one is permitted to leave except those who pay for their passage or can give good security; the others must remain on board till they are purchased. . . . The sale of human beings is carried on thus: every day Englishmen, Dutchmen, and High-German people come from Philadelphia and from places much further away and board the newly-arrived ship and select among the healthy persons such as they deem suitable for their business. They bargain with them how long they will serve for their passage money. When they have come to an agreement, it happens that adult persons bind themselves in writing to serve 3, 4, 5, or 6 years, according to their age and strength. But very young people, from 10 to 15 years, must serve till they are 21 years old. . . . It often happens that whole families, husband, wife, and children, are separated by being sold to different purchasers

strange and wild land. The perils which they faced were many. Shipwreck, starvation, and attacks by pirates were common occurrences. Once they reached land the odds of survival were very low. Between 1607 and 1623, four of every five colonists died in Virginia from disease, the effects of the harsh climate, or starvation. During the first winter spent in the Massachusetts Bay colony, one-half of the settlers died.

As the colonies developed, poor people found ways to get to the colonies. They had to borrow

money to pay for their passage across the ocean. In return, they signed an agreement or contract which guaranteed that they would work for five to seven years for whomever bought the contract. These settlers were called **indentured servants**. Their contract was torn in half; they were given half, and the other half was given to whomever bought the contract. The tear of the contract was ragged or indented, from which the term "indenture" came.

The contract was bought by people who already lived in the colonies. Many of these

It is estimated that two-thirds of the colonists came as indentured servants.

people had come to the New World in the same way. Indentured servants were not slaves, no matter how badly they were treated. After their term of service, they were given their freedom. Many were also given some money or land. Slaves, however, were usually not freed. They remained in slavery their entire lives, as did their children. Indentured servants were white-skinned people, who had come voluntarily from Britain (although some of them, especially homeless children, were kidnapped). Slaves were black-skinned people, stolen from Africa against their will.

1. Why did the British become interested in colonizing the New World?
2. How was mercantilism expected to help the Mother Country? the colonies?
3. Why did wealthy nobles and merchants want to establish colonies?
4. Why did people take the risks of sailing to the New World?
5. What were the differences between indentured servants and slaves?

THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

Three regions developed in the British colonies in North America that would become the United States: the Southern colonies, the Middle colonies, and the Northern colonies.

The first permanent British settlement was Jamestown, in the colony of Virginia. It was established by the London or South Virginia Company in 1608. The first year was very difficult for the settlement. In the second year conditions became better. One of the colonists, John Smith, who was the captain of the soldiers, took control. Smith was a very romantic and able individual. After many heroic adventures, he had come to the New World to seek his fortune. As the new leader of the colony, Smith began a very radical policy: he demanded that all colonists,

whether noble or commoner, had to work if they wanted to eat.

Smith told a story about being captured by Amerindians who were going to kill him to avenge the deaths of native peoples by the British. Smith said he was saved when the Indian princess, Pocohantas, threw herself across his body.

Soon after, Smith left the colony and returned to England. Pocohantas married one of Smith's friends, John Rolfe. She introduced Rolfe to tobacco, which the Amerindians smoked during their ceremonies. In 1612, Rolfe took Pocohantas and tobacco back to England. They both became extremely popular. Smoking quickly became very fashionable, although King James I did write

A 1609 pamphlet advertises Virginia.

NOVA BRITANNIA. OFFERING MOST

Excellent fruites by Planting in
VIRGINIA.

Exciting all such as be well affected
to further the fame.



LONDON
Printed for SAMUEL MACHAM, and are to be sold at
his Shop in Pauls Church-yard, at the
Signe of the Bul-head.
1609.

a book condemning the habit. After Pocohantas died in 1619, Rolfe returned to Virginia.

In Virginia, Rolfe and others established large farms, called plantations. These plantations grew only tobacco. Tobacco became the major crop grown in Virginia and the main source of the colony's wealth.

The owners of the plantations were called planters. As the growing of tobacco became more successful and important to their economic well-being, the planters realized they needed more labourers. In 1619, two developments occurred which dealt with this labour shortage and had a fundamental impact on the future of colonial, and American, society. The first development was the adoption of a system of government; the second was the adoption of slavery.

Toward Self-government

First, the planters persuaded the colonial government to establish a copy of the system of government that existed in the Mother Country. The Governor was assisted by a council, made up of the wealthier and more

important planters and merchants. It worked like the House of Lords. Even more important was the establishment of a lower house that worked like the House of Commons. It was called the House of Burgesses. With this local self-government in place, the British people felt that colonial society was similar to society at home. Therefore, they were more willing to move to the colonies.

Like the House of Commons in Great Britain, the House of Burgesses was intended to deal with issues of local importance. In particular, these issues concerned taxation: how money was raised and how it was spent. These decisions were very important to those individuals who owned land. They were the people who paid taxes. Also, they were given the right to vote for and elect the members to the House of Burgesses. They were also the people who had the right to run for and sit in the House of Burgesses. This political system reflected the British view that taxation should only be decided by those who were elected by and represented the people. "The people" meant men who were Protestants, over the age of twenty-one, and who owned land. Colonists who did not own land,

The charter of Virginia contained one clause that stated that all Englishmen in the colony "should have and enjoy all liberties, franchises, and immunities . . . as if they had been abiding and born within this our realm of England."

The first meetings of the Virginia House of Burgesses (1619-24) were probably held in a church.

