

The King's Charters



The King of England granted charters to the Virginia Company of London. A charter is an official document that tells the limits of the rights and duties of the group it is given to.

The charters were important for many reasons:

1. The charters gave the Virginia Company the right to establish (set up) a settlement in North America.
2. The first charter of the Virginia Company of London established companies to begin colonies in the New World.
3. The charters extended English rights to the colonists.

House of Burgesses



##The Virginia House of Burgesses was the first elected legislative body in America giving settlers the opportunity to control their own government.

##It became the General Assembly of Virginia, which continues to this day.

Government in the New Colony

House of Burgesses



##In 1619 only adult men were considered citizens.

##Men who served as representatives in the government were called "burgesses."

##In 1619, the governor of Virginia called a meeting of the Virginia Assembly.

##The Assembly included two citizen representatives—called "burgesses"—from each of the divisions of Virginia.

##Also included in the Assembly were the governor's council, and the governor.

##By the 1640s, the burgesses became a separate legislative body, called the Virginia House of Burgesses.

The Capitol Building in Richmond



Thomas Jefferson designed Virginia's capitol building.