

Unit 4: Colonial Life

Lesson 8: Colonial Government: Foundations of Self-Government

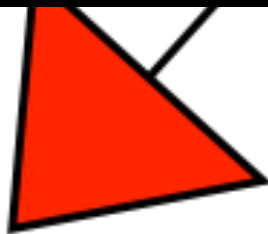
COLONIAL GOVERNMENT

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Royal Governor

Appointed by king or queen
Had final approval of laws
Oversaw colonial trade
Could dismiss the colonial assembly



Council

Appointed by governor
Board of advisors to governor
Acted as highest court in each colony



Colonial Assembly

Elected by colonists who could vote
Made laws
Had authority to tax
Paid governor's salary

VOTING

By the 1720s all the colonies had laws that restricted the right to vote to...

white

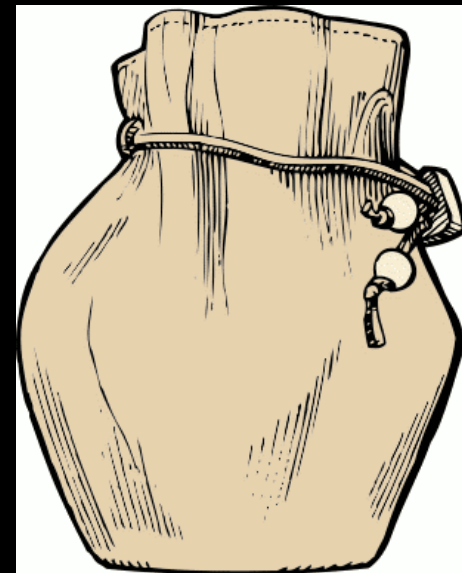
Christian

men

over the age of 21

who owned property

The Assembly had the “**power of the purse.**” This meant it had the sole power of taxation and also could refuse to grant the governor his salary.



Connecting Back

	What do you remember?
House of Burgesses	
Mayflower Compact	
New England Town Meetings	

Connecting Back

**House
of
Burgesses**

**Mayflower
Compact**

**N. E.
Town
Meetings**



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graph TD; A[House of Burgesses] --> D[The desire to have a say in their government.]; B[Mayflower Compact] --> D; C[N. E. Town Meetings] --> D;
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**The desire to have a say in their
government.**

30 representative government



a form of democracy where people
choose representatives to make
decisions for them

Example: The House of Burgesses was an
example of representative government

(SS050408)

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

- **After the House of Burgesses was begun in 1619 in Virginia, other colonies began to form their own representative assemblies. Massachusetts Bay did so in 1634 and then in 1639 Plymouth and Maryland did the same.**
- **The English felt the right to elect representatives to government was one of their most important rights. They brought this belief with them to North America.**



GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN

- The King of England was the head of the English government, but the main lawmaking body was the **Parliament**. This became the colonists' model for representative government.
- The Parliament had **two houses**. One was called the House of **Commons**. This was a group of men elected by the people. The other was called the House of **Lords**. This was made up of an appointed group of nobles, judges, and church officials.



32
bill of rights

a written list of freedoms
a government promises to
protect

Example: In the late 1600's, the king and
queen of England agreed to an English Bill of
Rights.



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English Bill of Rights

A written list of freedoms the
king and queen of England agreed to in
the late 1600s

Example: The English Bill of Rights also
applied to English colonists living in North
America.



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- **free elections**
- **no excessive fines or cruel punishments**
- **trial by jury**

Government in the Colonies

When colonists left England to settle in America, they took their beliefs about the rights of English subjects with them. These rights had been won in a series of conflicts between the English people and their kings and queens. These rights, known as the English Bill of Rights, included the right to be tried by a jury when accused of a crime and the right to live under laws approved by England's legislature, the lawmaking body known as Parliament.

Early in the 1600's, colonists in Virginia were granted their full rights as English subjects including the right to elect their own legislative assembly. This assembly, the House of Burgesses, was the first elected law-making body in the Americas. The House of Burgesses dealt with issues ranging from how much tobacco should be planted to what to do about the growing conflicts between Virginia's colonists and Native Americans.

Self-government also quickly took root in New England. While still on the Mayflower the Pilgrims signed the Mayflower Compact, a document that created a government for their colony. Later in time, New England people gathered in town meetings at village to deal with community issues. Anyone could speak at one of these town meetings before the men of the village voted on the issue. In their assemblies and town meetings, the colonists were practicing democracy, or government by the people. Colonists found they could run their everyday affairs quite well with little help from a distant king or government officials.

By 1750, each of the 13 British colonies had its own elected assembly. The assembly shared power with a governor, usually an official appointed by the Crown (the British monarch and his or her government). A few of these appointees were qualified to run colony but many were not. They were often chosen because of their friendship with someone of power in Britain.

The governor had a lot of power, including the power to veto laws passed by the assembly. When he issued a royal instruction in the name of the King, the assembly was supposed to obey. If the assembly did not, the governor had the power to get rid of the assembly. Over the years, however, colonial assemblies found they could use their power "over the purse" to control most governors. This meant they used money to control the governors. One method was to refuse to pay the salary of the governor since the assembly was in charge of paying the salary. Another approach was for the assembly to refuse to fund a governor's favorite project, unless he approved the assembly's laws. The colonists were so accustomed to running their own affairs that by 1750, they looked on royal instructions as little more than guidelines set down by the King for a governor.

Adapted from: *Redos of Solitary Neglect*

http://www.kirkwood.k12.mo.us/parent_student/KHS/cotterh/566/unl2/american%20studies/files/unl2/solitaryneglect.htm

Summarizing Chart

Three things
you discovered

Two things you
found
interesting

One question
you have

IMPORTANT POINT!

Although the colonies were under the control of the king and Parliament, Britain did not interfere much in the late 1600's and the first half of the 1700's.

Each colony developed its own government and even though the majority ended up royal colonies under the leadership of a royal governor, colonists still had some say in their government.

REASONS:

- **Britain had problems with other countries such as France.**
- **A large ocean separated the colonies**
- **Britain had internal problems such as a civil war.**


LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

NEW ENGLAND



Based on
towns and
town
meetings

MIDDLE COLONIES

- 
- Borrowed ideas from both other regions.
 - Had a mixed system of county and town.

SOUTHERN COLONIES



Based on
counties
instead of
towns

Town Meeting Simulation

- **The town is a very small one with only eight school-age children. They have been attending school in the home of the Parker family. The town pays for a teacher to teach the children.**
- **Now the town is starting to grow and some people want to use town funds to build a school.**
- **Other people would like to see town funds used for other things. They feel it is enough for the town to pay for the teacher.**
- **The town meeting is being held in order to decide whether or not to build a school.**

You are Mr. Parker. School is currently being held in your home. This has been fine with your family. However, now that the town is growing you feel there are too many students to hold school in your home. You think a school should be built.

You will be the leader at the town meeting. You will choose people to speak and keep order. In the end you will call for a vote in order to make a decision.

You do not have any children. Therefore, you favor spending town funds on something else rather than a school. You think building a second bridge over the river would be a better idea than a school.

You are the parent of one of the school children. You feel the town needs its own school because it is starting to grow. You feel it is difficult to have school in the Parker house.

You are the teacher in the town. You feel it is hard to teach in the home of a family and want a separate school.

You are a church leader in the town. You want to see town funds spent improving the church. You feel the teacher and students have plenty of room in the Parker home for school.

You do not want to spend town funds on anything right now. You think the money should be saved for an emergency like a fire in the town.

You feel that education is very important and that the town definitely needs a school of its own. You feel a school will help attract more people to the town and help the town grow.

You don't like to see things change too quickly. You have visited the teacher and students during school at the Parker house. You feel they are doing fine there. They looked happy and they were learning.

Town Meeting Reflection Sheet

What role did you play in the meeting?

What did you learn from playing this role?

What did you contribute to this activity?

How did you vote? Why?

What do you think was an advantage of making decisions through a town meeting?

What do you think was a disadvantage?



Att. a Towns Quarter meeting held att Providence this 27th day of January anno Dom:
1720/21 . . .

It is voated and ordered that / from and after the first day of aprill next / **Noo Geese** shall be Lett goe upon the Common or in the highways nor in the water with in this Township of Providence or with in the Jurisdiction there of nor upon any other persons Land. Except those that own the Geese: on the pennilty of the forfeiture of all such Geese that are so found — Past:

It is voated and ordred that **Herndens Lane** and the highway that Leads from thence to pautuckett **may be fenced for** the space of five years from hence next Comeing provided there be sufficiant Gates sett up and maintained in s^d [said] Lane and highway that may be Convenient for both horse men and Cartes to pass through as well as foot men dureing all the said term . . .

It is also voated and ordered that Each free holder with in this Township of Providence shall from and after this day have **two pence [per] head for every head of a Gray Squirrill** that shall be by them brought before the Towns Treasurer: and to be payed out of the Townes Treasurrey: and this order to Continue dureing the Towns pleasure and the s'd Treasurer shall be Carefull to accept of no squirrils heads but such as killed within this Township.

The meeting is dissolved.

Excerpt from town meeting in Rhode Island, 1721

WHEREAS, there is an increasing need for different techniques to resolve goose problems, and

WHEREAS, nest destruction and egg removal are effective tools to control site-specific nuisance geese, and

WHEREAS, it is sometimes necessary to gather and remove geese to control populations, as well as re-location or possible euthanization, and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources has set forth guidelines for obtaining permits that allow removal and destruction of goose eggs and for goose round-ups to control goose populations, and

WHEREAS, lake associations, private residents and business owners, subdivisions and property owners may submit appropriate paperwork to the DNR Wildlife Division and are responsible for adhering to the requirements under that permit,

NOW, THEREFORE, BET IT RESOLVED, that Waterford Township approves Egg Destruction and Round Up Permits for nuisance geese for five years (2006 -2011), including but not limited to, Angelus, Cass, Clam, Eagle, Elizabeth, Geneva, Huntoon, Loon, Lotus, Maceday, Oakland, Otter, Pleasant, Pontiac, Schoolhouse, Scott, Silver, Sylvan, Watkins, Williams and Woodhull Lakes. Further, that the applicant must apply annually through the DNR Goose Program.

**Moved by Fox,
Supported by O'Shea, RESOLVED, to approve the foregoing resolution adopting the DNR Goose Program for Waterford Township for five years, 2006- 2011.
Motion carried unanimously.**