

King James granted charters to both companies in 1606. A **charter** was a written contract, issued by a government, giving the company the right to establish a colony. Because a charter also gave the company the right to govern the colony, each charter was like a primitive constitution.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST Compare the benefits and risks of colonization.

Jamestown Is Founded in 1607

KEY QUESTION What democratic tradition was planted in Jamestown?

In 1607 100 colonists, sent by the Virginia Company of London, sailed into the Chesapeake Bay. They traveled up the James River until they found a spot that seemed safe from a Spanish attack. The settlement was named **Jamestown** in honor of King James I. This became the first permanent English settlement in North America.

Jamestown Struggles to Survive The colony's early years were troubled. Colonists became ill from diseases carried by water or insects. To make matters worse, the London Company had promised that the colony would be rich with gold, like the Spanish colonies. Settlers searched for treasure instead of building houses and planting crops.

The climate was also a hardship. The English were not prepared for Virginia's hot, humid summers and bitterly cold winters. As one colonist recalled, "There were never Englishmen left in a foreign country in such misery as we were in this newly discovered Virginia."

By January 1608, only 38 of the colonists remained alive. Later that year, **John Smith**, a soldier and adventurer, took control. Smith brought order to the colony. But when Smith returned to England, the colony fell back into confusion. During this "starving time" the colonists ate rodents and snakes. Fortunately, the colony was saved when relief ships arrived in 1610. Lord De La Warr, the new governor, imposed discipline. More attention was paid to farming, and the colony survived.

Although the local Powhatan tribe had traded corn to the colonists, relations between the two groups were tense and sometimes violent. The situation did not improve until 1614, when Chief Powhatan's daughter, Pocahontas, married a colonist named John Rolfe. The Virginia Company brought the couple to England to advertise the colony. Sadly, Pocahontas died there, when she was about twenty-one.

Tobacco Transforms the Colony Unable to find gold, the colonists discovered another product that could bring them wealth—tobacco. In 1614 John Rolfe sent the first shipment of tobacco to England. It became popular in Europe and ensured the colony's survival.

The success of tobacco growing changed the colony. When the colonists demanded a share of the profits, the company responded by allowing them to own land. Settlers worked harder once the land became their own.

Connect to the World

Colonization

In 1608, a year after the first permanent English colony was established at Jamestown, the French founded their first permanent colony at Quebec.

Chapter 2, p. 38.



Pocahontas in English dress