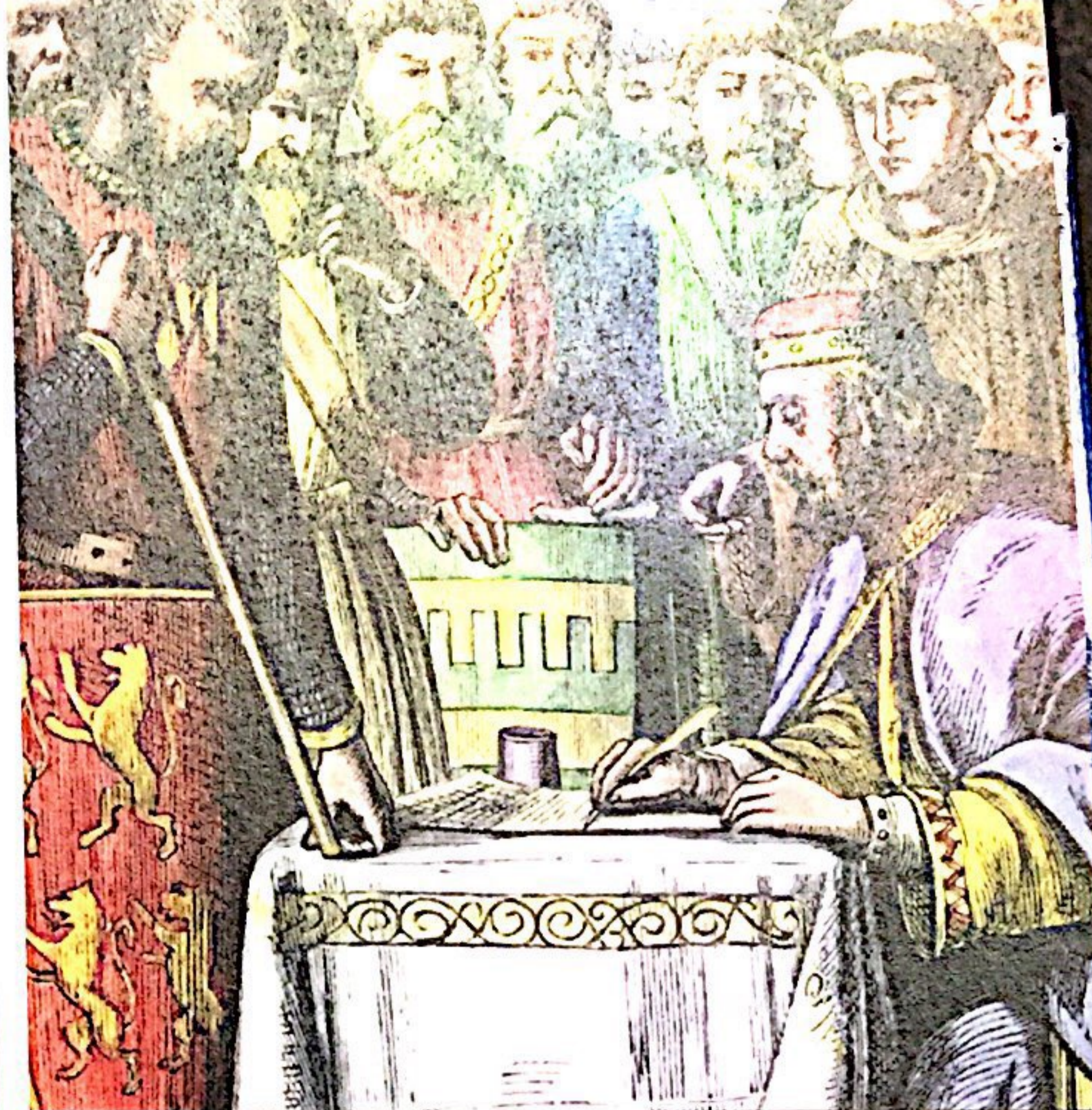


During the eighteenth century, the colonists looked to England as their model for literature, government, and their economy. Important English documents, such as the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights, were the basis of colonial government and law. In addition, the colonial economy was dependent on trade with England. Although the relationship between England and the colonies was a close one, during the 1700s, the distant American colonies began to form their own ideas about government and the economy.



>> In 1215, a group of barons forced the English king to sign the Magna Carta, a document guaranteeing certain individual liberties. Centuries later, American colonists drafted documents asserting these same rights.

 **Interactive Flipped Video**

Creating an American Identity

Early Government in the Colonies

England developed an empire of many disunited colonies during the 1600s. Lacking money, the English Crown granted charters to private companies or lords proprietors, individuals who supported the monarchy. Compared to the Spanish or French, the English monarch exercised little direct control over the colonists.

Foundations of English Government Also unlike the kings of France and Spain, the English monarchs were bound to uphold the provisions of the **Magna Carta**, a document English nobles forced King John to accept in 1215. The Magna Carta protected English nobles by limiting the king's ability to tax them and by guaranteeing due process, or the right to a trial. Before levying a tax, the king needed the consent of the nobles.

After the Magna Carta, a council of nobles continued to advise English monarchs. The nobles also maintained the right to approve taxes—one of their most important powers. During the 1300s, the council of nobles gained more power and evolved into the lawmaking body known as Parliament. The English Parliament became a bicameral, or two-house, legislature. Members of the House of Lords

>> Objectives

Explore how English traditions influenced the development of colonial governments.

Explain how the ideas of the Enlightenment shaped the colonists' worldview.

Describe how the Great Awakening affected colonial society.

>> Key Terms

Magna Carta
English Bill of Rights
habeas corpus
salutary neglect
Enlightenment
Benjamin Franklin
Great Awakening

were nobles, who inherited their positions, and church leaders. Commoners elected members of the House of Commons. However, only men with property could vote. Although this limited the number of eligible voters, England allowed more people to vote than any other European nation at the time.

Colonists Experiment With Self-Rule Although they were thousands of miles away from their homeland, most settlers in the North American English colonies asserted that they were entitled to the same rights as any other English subject. Nevertheless, the type of government in the American colonies varied from region to region.

In New England, the Puritans established republics with elected governors. Elsewhere, the distant Crown or lords proprietors appointed the governor of a colony. But that governor had to share power with the propertied colonists. Those colonists authorized their own elected representatives in a colonial assembly to debate the raising of taxes. Colonists also claimed they were protected by English common law, which emphasized individual liberties.

King James II Asserts Royal Power In 1685, James II became king of England and tried to rule without Parliament. An open Catholic, he alarmed the Protestant majority of England. The new king also

tightened control over the colonies by revoking their government charters. Then, he combined them with New York and New Jersey into a larger colony known as the Dominion of New England. The Dominion replaced the colonies' elected assemblies with a Crown-appointed governor-general and council. The Dominion angered the colonists, who insisted upon their right to refuse to pay taxes unless approved by their own elected representatives.

Impact of the Glorious Revolution In 1689, the colonists learned that James II had been overthrown in England in a coup called the Glorious Revolution. The plotters replaced him with two Protestant monarchs, King William and Queen Mary. The new monarchs promised to cooperate with Parliament and to support the Anglican church. William and Mary also agreed to sign an **English Bill of Rights**, a document guaranteeing a number of freedoms and restating many of the rights granted in the Magna Carta. These rights included **habeas corpus**, the idea that no one could be held in prison without being charged with a specific crime.

The English Bill of Rights also stated that a monarch could not keep a standing army in times of peace without Parliament's approval. News of the English upheaval inspired rebellions among colonists in Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland. In Boston,

The Dominion of New England, 1686–1689



>> **Analyze Maps** How might the size of the Dominion of New England have affected England's ability to rule the supercolony?

colonial militia arrested the king's appointed governor-general, the hated Sir Edmond Andros.

All the rebels claimed loyalty to the new monarchs who brought about changes in the colonies. Protestant rebels in Maryland were delighted when William and Mary converted their colony into a royal colony. The new monarchs merged the Massachusetts and Plymouth colonies into a single royal colony, called Massachusetts. The new charter provided a royal governor assisted by an appointed council and an elected assembly. The assembly was permitted to choose council members, subject to the governor's approval. The king let Rhode Island and Connecticut keep their old charters, which allowed them to elect their governors as well as their assemblies.

Compromise was harder in New York. There, the leader of the rebellion, Jacob Liesler, had seized the position of governor. Liesler, however, made many political enemies. When England appointed a new governor, Liesler was forced to surrender. He was quickly tried, convicted, and executed in 1691. That hasty trial and execution left a bitter legacy. For the next generation, Liesler's supporters and enemies feuded, souring politics in New York.


The Glorious Revolution encouraged England to adopt a colonial policy that historians would later call **salutary neglect**. England allowed its colonies local self-rule. In return, the Crown expected colonial cooperation with its economic policies and assistance in the empire's wars against France and Spain.

Establishing Freedom of the Press About 50 years after the Glorious Revolution, conflict broke out between the English-appointed governor and colonists in New York City. In 1734, articles criticizing the governor appeared in the *New York Weekly Journal*, a newspaper printed by John Peter Zenger. Although Zenger did not write the articles, the governor had Zenger imprisoned for libel—printing falsehoods that are intended to damage a person's reputation. He sat in jail for eight long months awaiting trial. When Zenger came to trial, his lawyer argued that the articles were not libelous but truthful. The jury agreed and found Zenger not guilty. Today, Zenger's case is considered an early victory for freedom of the press.

? **CHECK UNDERSTANDING** What was the impact of the Glorious Revolution on the 13 colonies?



>> After the Glorious Revolution ousted King James II, King William (left) and Queen Mary (right) took the throne.

 **Interactive Gallery**



>> New York publisher John Peter Zenger won a 1730s court case that claimed he had published falsely damaging criticisms of the government.

 **Interactive Gallery**