access to history

The American Revolution and the Birth of the USA

1740–1801

ALAN FARMER

THIRD EDITION

DYNAMIC LEARNING

HODDER EDUCATION
LEARN MORE

access to history

The American Revolution and the Birth of the USA

1740–1801

ALAN FARMER

THIRD EDITION

HODDER EDUCATION
AN HACHETTE UK COMPANY

The Publishers would like to thank the following for permission to reproduce copyright material.

Photo credits: are listed on page 232.

Acknowledgements: are listed on page 232.

Orders: please contact Bookpoint Ltd, 130 Park Drive, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4SE. Telephone: +44 (0)1235 827827. Fax: +44 (0)1235 400401. Email education@bookpoint.co.uk Lines are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Saturday, with a 24-hour message answering service. You can also order through our website: www.hoddereducation.co.uk

ISBN: 978 1 5104 5918 2

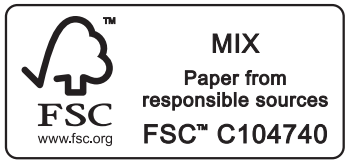
First published in 2008, this third edition published in 2020 by
Hodder Education,
An Hachette UK Company
Carmelite House
50 Victoria Embankment
London EC4Y 0DZ

www.hoddereducation.co.uk

Impression number	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Year	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020					

Cover photo © North Wind Picture Archives/Alamy Stock Photo
Typeset by Gray Publishing
Printed in the UK by CPI Group Ltd

A catalogue record for this title is available from the British Library.



Contents

Dedication

Keith Randell (1943–2002)

The *Access to History* series was conceived and developed by Keith, who created a series to 'cater for students as they are, not as we might wish them to be'. He leaves a living legacy of a series that for over 20 years has provided a trusted, stimulating and well-loved accompaniment to post-16 study. Our aim with these new editions is to continue to offer students the best possible support for their studies.

Introduction: about this book

This book has been written primarily to support the study of the following courses:

- AQA: The birth of the USA, 1760–1801
- OCR: The American Revolution 1740–1796.

The specification grid on page viii will help you understand how this book's content relates to the course that you are studying.

The writer hopes that student readers will regard the book not simply as an aid to better exam results, but as a study which is enjoyable in itself as an analysis of a very important theme in history.

The following explains the different features of this book and how they will help your study of the course.

Beginning of the book

Context

Starting a new course can be daunting if you are not familiar with the period or topic. This section will give you an overview of the history and will set up some of the key themes. Reading this section will help you get up to speed on the content of the course.

Throughout the book

Key terms

You need to know these to gain an understanding of the period. The appropriate use of specific historical language in your essays will also help you improve the quality of your writing. Key terms are in boldface type the first time they appear in the book. They are defined in the margin and appear in the glossary.

Profiles

Some chapters contain profiles of important individuals. These include a brief biography and information about the importance and impact of the individual. This information can be very useful in understanding certain events and providing supporting evidence to your arguments.

Sources

Historical sources are important in understanding why specific decisions were taken or on what contemporary writers and politicians based their actions. The questions accompanying each source will help you to understand and analyse the source.

Interpretations

These extracts from historians will help bring awareness of the debates and issues that surround this fascinating history topic.

Chapter summaries

These written summaries are intended to help you revise and consolidate your knowledge and understanding of the content.

Summary diagrams

These visual summaries at the end of each section are useful for revision.

Refresher questions

The refresher questions are quick knowledge checks to make sure you have understood and remembered the material that is covered in the chapter.

Question practice

There are opportunities at the end of each chapter to practise exam-style questions, arranged by exam board so you can practise the questions relevant to your course. The exam hint below each question will help you if you get stuck.

End of the book

Timeline

Understanding chronology (the order in which events took place) is an essential part of history. Knowing the order of events is one thing, but it is also important to know how events relate to each other. This timeline will help you put events into context and will be helpful for quick reference or as a revision tool.

Exam focus

This section gives advice on how to answer questions in your exam, focusing on the different requirements of your exam paper. The guidance in this book has been based on detailed examiner reports since 2017. It models best practice in terms of answering exam questions and shows the most common pitfalls to help ensure you get the best grade possible.

Glossary

All key terms in the book are defined in the glossary.

Further reading

To achieve top marks in history, you will need to read beyond this textbook. This section contains a list of books and articles for you to explore. The list may also be helpful for an extended essay or piece of coursework.

Online extras

This new edition is accompanied by online material to support you in your study. Throughout the book you will find the online extras icon to prompt you to make use of the relevant online resources for your course. By going to www.hodderhistory.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras you will find the following:

Activity worksheets

These activities will help you develop the skills you need for the exam. The thinking that you do to complete the activities, and the notes you make from answering the questions, will prove valuable in your learning journey and helping you get the best grade possible. Your teacher may decide to print the entire series of worksheets to create an activity booklet to accompany the course. Alternatively they may be used as standalone activities for class work or homework. However, don't hesitate to go online and print off a worksheet yourself to get the most from this book.

Who's who

A level history covers a lot of key figures so it's perfectly understandable if you find yourself confused by all the different names. This document organises the individuals mentioned throughout the book by categories so you know your Hamilton from your Madison!

Further research

While further reading of books and articles is helpful to achieve your best, there's a wealth of material online, including useful websites, digital archives, and documentaries on YouTube. This page lists resources that may help further your understanding of the topic. It may also prove a valuable reference for research if you decide to choose this period for the coursework element of your course.

Specification grid

Chapter	AQA	OCR
Chapter 1 Context	✓	✓
Chapter 2 The American colonies by 1763		
1 The development of the thirteen colonies	✓	✓
2 Colonial government	✓	✓
3 Colonial economy, society and culture	✓	✓
4 The struggle with France	✓	✓
5 Britain by 1763	✓	✓
Chapter 3 The causes of the American Revolution		
1 The situation in 1763–4	✓	✓
2 The Stamp Act controversy	✓	✓
3 The Townshend crisis	✓	✓
4 The impact of the Boston Tea Party	✓	✓
Chapter 4 Independence		
1 The outbreak of war	✓	✓
2 The war 1775–6	✓	✓
3 The Declaration of Independence	✓	✓
Chapter 5 The War of Independence 1776–83		
1 The situation in 1776	✓	✓
2 Military operations 1776–7	✓	✓
3 The extension of the war	✓	✓
4 American victory 1778–83	✓	✓
Chapter 6 The American Revolution		
1 Political developments within the states	✓	✓
2 National government	✓	✓
3 The social and economic impact of the war	✓	✓
Chapter 7 The American Constitution		
1 The political situation 1781–7	✓	✓
2 Demand for stronger national government	✓	✓
3 The Philadelphia Convention	✓	✓
4 The Constitution	✓	✓
5 The ratification of the Constitution	✓	✓
Chapter 8 George Washington and John Adams		
1 Organising the federal government	✓	
2 Hamilton's financial programme	✓	
3 Foreign and western affairs	✓	
4 The 1796 presidential election	✓	✓
5 The Adams administration 1797–1800	✓	
6 The 1800 presidential election	✓	

CHAPTER 1

Context

Attempts to establish English **colonies** in North America in the 1580s failed. The first successful English colony was established in Virginia in 1607. The second major colony followed the sailing of the ***Mayflower*** to Massachusetts in 1620. By 1650, four further colonies – Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Maryland – had been added. New York, previously New Amsterdam, was captured from the Dutch in 1664. New Jersey and North and South Carolina were founded during the 1660s and Pennsylvania and Delaware during the 1680s. The establishment of Georgia in 1732 completed the thirteen British colonies on the American mainland. They stretched about 2400 km (1500 miles) along the Atlantic seaboard from Canada to Florida. Pre-1763 most colonists lived to the east of the Appalachian mountains (see Figure 1.1).

KEY TERMS

Colony Territory, usually overseas, occupied by settlers from a 'mother country' that continues to have power over the settlers.

Mayflower The name of the ship on which the Pilgrim Fathers, a small group of English Puritans, sailed to America in 1620.

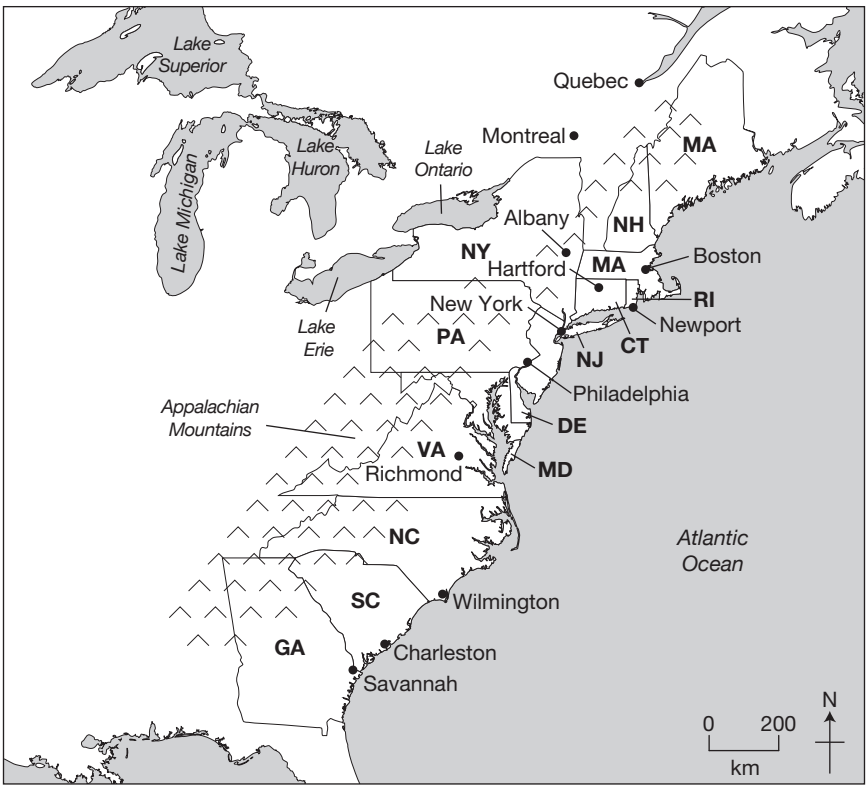


Figure 1.1 The thirteen colonies in 1740.

Abbreviations for US states used in this book:

CT	Connecticut
DE	Delaware
GA	Georgia
IL	Illinois
IN	Indiana
KY	Kentucky
MA	Massachusetts
MD	Maryland
ME	Maine
MI	Michigan
NC	North Carolina
NH	New Hampshire
NJ	New Jersey
NY	New York
OH	Ohio
PA	Pennsylvania
RI	Rhode Island
SC	South Carolina
TN	Tennessee
VA	Virginia
VT	Vermont
WI	Wisconsin

Colonial division

There were three colonial groups:

- the New England colonies – New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut
- the middle colonies – New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware
- the southern colonies – Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

Population growth

The first English colonists in Virginia and Massachusetts found life tough. Nevertheless, they managed to survive – and eventually thrive – for a number of reasons:

- They received support from two **chartered companies** in England. These companies ensured that more settlers were sent out to America.
- There were relatively few **Native Americans** and most were not initially hostile.
- Men like John Smith in Virginia and John Winthrop in Massachusetts provided strong leadership.

Vital to the colonies' well-being was economic success. The main appeal to settlers was the fact that there was an abundance of free land. In Virginia, the growing of tobacco soon led to an economic boom. The money from tobacco sales in England gave the colonists sufficient money to buy essential imports. The New England colonies were more dependent on fishing and shipbuilding. The lure of abundant land and religious persecution in England in the 1630s led to an influx of new settlers.

By the mid-seventeenth century there were some 25,000 settlers. By 1700 the population had increased to 250,000. The result was that English colonists in North America far outnumbered French and Spanish colonists (see pages 4–5).

KEY TERMS

Chartered companies
Trading companies which operated under a charter granted from the Crown. This guaranteed the companies various rights, powers and privileges.

Native Americans
The people, often known as Indians, who first lived in North America.

Native Americans

The English settlers did not assimilate with the Native Americans. Divided, less advanced technologically and hit hard by European diseases, Native Americans were unable to resist the newcomers establishing themselves down the Atlantic seaboard. They made several attempts.

- In 1622 the Opechancanough tribe attacked English settlers in Virginia, killing some 350 people. The settlers, who had been taken by surprise, fought back, killing thousands of Native Americans in retribution. Hostilities continued intermittently for the next two decades.
- In 1637 the Pequots, in a desperate attempt to retain their lands, tried to wipe out colonists in New England. Instead, after savage fighting, the Pequots themselves were virtually annihilated.

- In 1644 there was another savage war in Virginia, which ended in Native American defeat.
- There was serious fighting in Virginia and Maryland against the Susquehannochs in 1675. Although the English settlers defeated the Native American threat, the frontier areas of both colonies were devastated and took years to recover.
- In the so-called King Philip's War (1675–8), Native Americans killed large numbers of colonists in New England.

Fortunately for the English colonists the Native American tribes were divided, often fighting each other instead of uniting against the newcomers. Nevertheless, Native Americans remained a powerful force to the west of the Appalachians (see Figure 1.1, page 1). Usually allying with the French, they continued to pose a serious threat to English expansion. Most English settlers feared Native Americans and regarded them as ungodly savages.

Colonial self-rule

Unlike Spain and France, English governments made little attempt to oversee day-to-day or even month-to-month matters in North America. Almost as soon as the colonies were established, settlers founded their own councils or assemblies. These provided local government. Survival in the New World in the early seventeenth century was only possible with the consent of the people. Political institutions were instrumental in securing that consent. Although by no means totally democratic, colonial governments were far more representative than Parliament in England (see pages 25–7). Given the fact that it took some three months to sail from England to North America, it made good sense to allow the colonies considerable powers of self-rule.

Although largely independent, few colonists in the early eighteenth century wished to cut their ties with England.

- Most were proud of their English heritage.
- In many respects they were economically dependent on England.
- Given the threat of France and Spain, most New England colonists looked to England for military support.

CHAPTER 2

The American colonies by 1763

The establishment of the British colonies in North America seemed, by the mid-eighteenth century, to have been a huge success. In 1763 British North America ran from Hudson Bay in the north to Florida in the south. Few Americans or Britons expected that within twelve years they would be at war – a war which the Americans would win. This chapter will examine the relationship between Britain and its American colonies pre-1763 by focusing on the following themes:

- The development of the thirteen colonies
- Colonial government
- Colonial economy, society and culture
- The struggle with France
- Britain by 1763

The key debate on page 27 of this chapter asks the question: 'To what extent were there signs in 1763 that the colonies were likely to break their ties with Britain?'

KEY DATES

1754	Albany Congress	**1759**	Britain captured Quebec
1756–63	The French–Indian (or Seven Years') War	**1760**	Accession of George III
		1763	Peace of Paris

1 The development of the thirteen colonies

■ *Why did the American population grow so quickly in the eighteenth century?*

By 1740 the thirteen English North American colonies stretched about 2400 km (1500 miles) along the Atlantic seaboard from Canada to Florida. Virtually all the colonists lived to the east of the Appalachian mountains (see Figure 1.1, page 1).

Population growth

Between 1700 and 1763 the population of the thirteen colonies increased eightfold from 250,000 to reach 2 million. Between 1750 and 1770 England and Wales's population rose from 6.5 million to 7.5 million – a fifteen per cent increase. In the same period, the thirteen colonies' population expanded from 1.25 million to over 2.3 million – almost a 100 per cent increase. There were three reasons for the population growth:

- A high birth rate: the average American woman married young and had a family of seven children.
- A low death rate: Americans lived longer than most Europeans. This was partly because they were better fed. The fact that they were scattered over a large area also made them less prone to disease.
- Large-scale immigration (see below).

Nevertheless, North America was far from densely populated. The vast majority of colonists lived on farms. Almost half lived in the south, a quarter in the middle colonies and a quarter in New England (see page 2). By 1770:

- Virginia was the largest colony in population and land area, with some 500,000 inhabitants.
- Pennsylvania and Massachusetts each had about 275,000 inhabitants.
- Maryland and North Carolina each had 200,000.
- New York, South Carolina and New Jersey each had more than 100,000.
- New Hampshire and Rhode Island each had just over 50,000.
- Delaware had 40,000.
- Georgia had only 30,000.

American towns

There were only five towns of any size – all seaports: Philadelphia (with 23,750 inhabitants), New York (18,000), Boston (15,600), Newport (10,000) and Charleston (10,000). By 1760 their combined population was 73,000 – only 3.5 per cent of the total population.

The colonial melting pot

Some 400,000 people from Europe and Africa migrated to the thirteen colonies between 1700 and 1763. While most of the seventeenth-century settlers were of English stock, less than a fifth of the eighteenth-century migrants were English.

European settlement

The largest group of immigrants (some 150,000) were Scots-Irish Protestants from Ulster. Discontented with the land system, recurrent bad harvests and the decline of the linen trade, most Scots-Irish left their homeland for economic reasons.

About 65,000 Germans, mainly peasants from the Rhineland, hoping to improve their economic lot and attracted by the religious tolerance in the colonies, crossed the Atlantic. Many settled in Pennsylvania, making up almost a third of the colony's population by the 1760s. Smaller immigrant groups included Dutch and Swedes.

Indentured servitude

Few European immigrants crossed the Atlantic under their own resources. They tended to travel in groups, either as part of colonisation schemes or, more

frequently, under a system of temporary servitude designed to meet the colonies' severe labour shortage. The system enabled people to obtain free passage by entering into a contract (or indenture) pledging their labour for a specified number of years – usually four. Between a half and two-thirds of all white immigrants during the colonial period were indentured servants.

Undesirables

British authorities used the colonies as a dumping ground for 'undesirables'. Despite colonial protests, Britain transported at least 30,000 criminals, vagrants, paupers and political prisoners (mainly **Jacobites**) to America during the eighteenth century.

KEY TERMS

Jacobites Supporters of James Stuart, the eldest son of James II who was driven from the throne in 1688. Most were Roman Catholics and many were Scottish. There were serious Jacobite rebellions in 1715 and 1745.

Autonomy Independence or self-government.

African settlement

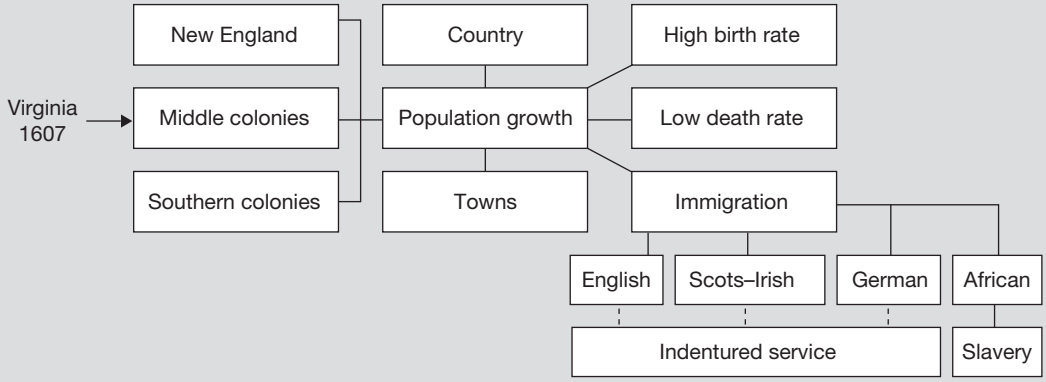
The first black slaves arrived in Virginia in 1619. Their numbers at first grew slowly. In the eighteenth century, however, the importation of slaves soared. By 1763 there were 350,000 slaves – one in six of the overall population. Most came from west Africa. The demand for slaves was so high that the black population in America grew faster than the white population. While there were African-Americans in all the colonies, 90 per cent lived in the south. They made up less than five per cent of the total population in New England but 40 per cent in Virginia, Maryland and Georgia, and 67 per cent in South Carolina.

The results of immigration

By 1760 only about half the American population was of English stock. Another fifteen per cent were Welsh, Scottish or Scots-Irish. Africans comprised over twenty per cent and Germans eight per cent of the population. While most European newcomers quickly blended into colonial culture and society, Germans maintained an important degree of religious and cultural **autonomy**.

SUMMARY DIAGRAM

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THIRTEEN COLONIES



2 Colonial government

■ *To what extent did the colonists govern themselves?*

All the colonies had, by 1760, a similar governmental structure, consisting of a governor and a legislative assembly.

Governors

In most colonies, the governor was appointed and could be removed only by the British monarch, to whom he was responsible. The exceptions were the following:

- the **proprietary colonies** of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Delaware, where the proprietor who ran the colony appointed the governor
- the **corporate colonies** of Connecticut and Rhode Island, where governors were popularly elected.

Responsible for internal administration, law enforcement, granting lands and military matters, the governors (in theory) had enormous powers – greater indeed than the Crown exercised at that time in Britain. In reality, however, the governors' authority was limited:

- They could be dismissed at will by the British government.
- Their average term of office was only five years.
- They were dependent for political support, revenue and even their own salaries on the lower houses of the colonial assemblies.

Colonial legislatures

Most colonial legislatures (usually called assemblies) consisted of two houses:

- Upper houses (or councils) were usually appointed by the governors. Chosen from the colonial elite, their members served as an advisory board to the governors.
- Lower houses were elected by a wide **franchise**. Most could be summoned and dismissed at the will of their governors. Moreover, their legislation could be vetoed by the governor or disallowed by the **Privy Council** in London.

Nevertheless, in practice, the power of the assemblies was considerable:

- They were responsible for initiating money bills and controlling expenditures.
- They represented their provincial communities in a way that neither the governors nor the upper houses did.

The assemblies usually met in the spring or autumn for a session of four to six weeks. While the main item on their agenda was to agree taxes to pay the expenses of the colonial government, the assemblies also made local laws

KEY TERMS

Proprietary colonies Colonies in which the Crown had vested political authority in the hands of certain families: the Calverts (in Maryland) and the Penns (in Pennsylvania and Delaware).

Corporate colonies Connecticut and Rhode Island possessed charters granted by the Crown which gave them extensive autonomy.

Franchise The right to vote.

Privy Council The private council of the British monarch, advising on the administration of government.

SOURCE QUESTION

The Massachusetts assembly met in the State House in Boston. What does the nature of the building shown in Source A suggest about the power of the colony's legislature?

SOURCE A

The State House in Boston, Massachusetts.

and acted as protectors of local interests. They offered lively arenas of debate. The most persistent disputes were between easterners and westerners over representation. Westerners felt they did not have enough seats in the assemblies.

Colonial democracy

Representative government had a greater democratic base in the colonies than in Britain. Most American adult white males owned enough property (usually land) to be able to vote. At least 50 (and sometimes as much as 80) per cent could do so, compared with only fifteen per cent in Britain.

Nevertheless, the colonies were far from democratic:

- Not all men owned sufficient property entitling them to vote. (The amount of property varied from colony to colony and from time to time.)
- Women and slaves could not vote.
- Higher property qualifications for office as well as custom and deference towards men of high social standing ensured that great landowners, rich merchants or lawyers were usually elected.

Local government

In New England, where settlements were relatively compact, authority over local affairs was vested in town meetings in which all **freeholders** had voting rights. Elected annually, the town meetings fixed local taxes and chose men to administer the town's business. In the middle and southern colonies a wider variety of practices prevailed. Some communities had New England-style town governments; in others local government was organised by county or parish. In the counties there was no democracy. The county court, an administrative as well as a judicial body, consisted of justices of the peace (JPs) appointed by the governor.

KEY TERMS

Freeholders People who own, rather than rent, their land.

Charters Formal documents, granting or confirming titles, rights or privileges.

Glorious Revolution In 1688 King James II fled Britain. William III and Mary became joint monarchs. Parliament assumed greater control.

British rule in the colonies

Charters were the umbilical cords attaching the colonies to Britain – the mother country. Granted in the seventeenth century, the charters tied the colonies to the Crown rather than to Parliament. The governors continued to be appointed by – and represented – the Crown, as if nothing had changed in England with the advent of parliamentary supremacy in the **Glorious Revolution**. The Crown's authority was somewhat ambiguous in the proprietary colonies and even more tenuous in the corporate colonies. After 1696 the British sovereign and the Privy Council had joint authority, conferred by Parliament, to review colonial laws. (Only five per cent of the 8500 colonial measures submitted between 1691 and 1775 were disallowed by Britain.)

For most of the eighteenth century, responsibility for colonial supervision rested with the Board of Trade, which advised on colonial appointments, drew up government instructions and reviewed or disallowed colonial legislation.

The Board of Trade answered to the Parliamentary Committee on Plantation Affairs which then made recommendations to the Privy Council. However, the secretary of state for the Southern Department also had responsibility for colonial affairs. Both the Board of Trade and the secretary communicated with governors on policy and routine administration. Governors submitted regular reports to the secretary on colonial affairs generally and to the Board of Trade on commercial matters.

Besides the Privy Council, Board of Trade and secretary of state, other agencies – the Treasury, the War Office and the Admiralty – had some role in imperial administration. Given that British administration affecting the colonies lacked central control, confusion and duplication often characterised the bureaucracy.

In order to follow developments concerning colonial matters, as well as to lobby Parliament and the Board of Trade on behalf of their interests, most colonies employed agents in Britain. These agents warned the colonies of pending measures by the Crown or Parliament and informed British officials of colonial thinking.

Salutary neglect

In the early eighteenth century, British governments realised it was best not to stir up trouble in the colonies. Given that they were 4800 km (3000 miles) away from Britain, the colonies were left largely to their own devices. This detached policy is often referred to as 'salutary neglect'.

Despite salutary neglect, the common presumption in Britain was that the colonies were subject to parliamentary legislation. The colonists did not necessarily accept this view. However, this was not a major issue pre-1763 because Parliament gave so little attention to colonial affairs. Trade regulation apart, there was hardly a single parliamentary act that touched on the internal affairs of the colonies. Few colonists, therefore, gave much thought to their relationship with Britain.

SUMMARY DIAGRAM

COLONIAL GOVERNMENT