

## The Charter of the City of Annapolis

Anne by the Grace of God of great Brittain, France and Ireland, and the Dominions thereto belonging Queen, Defender of the faith &<sup>c</sup> To all and singular our faithfull subjects within our Province of Maryland Greeting, Whereas there is a very pleasant, healthful and Commodious Place for Trade, by Act of the Generall Assembly of this our Province, laid out for a Town and port, and called Annapolis in honour of us - Which said Town and Port hath in few years (especially since the Accession of our Trusty and well beloved John Seymour Esq<sup>r</sup> our Captaine Generall and Governour in charge of this our Province to the Governm<sup>t</sup> thereof) very considerably increased in the number of it's [*sic*] Inhabitants as well as buildings both publick and private so that it Excelleth all other Towns and Ports in our said Province, And for that our present seat of Governm<sup>t</sup> within our Province afores<sup>d</sup> is fixed att the s<sup>d</sup> Port and Town, Whereby the same is become the chief Mart of the whole Countrey, We being willing to Encourage all our good and faithfull subjects as well att present residing and Inhabiting or which hereafter shall or may inhabitt or reside within the same Port of Annapolis, of our Royall Grace, good will and meer motion w<sup>th</sup> the advice of our Councill in our said Province have thought fitt and do by these our Letters patents constitute and Erect the said Town and Port of Annapolis together w<sup>th</sup> the Circuits and Precincts thereof including the Lands heretofore laid out for the said Town and Port of Annapolis, publick Pasture and Town Common together w<sup>th</sup> the river and Creeks adjacent into a City by the name of the City of Annapolis, and do grant unto the Inhabitants of the said City that the same City shall be an Incorporate City consisting of a Mayor, One Person Learned in the Law stiled and bearing the Office of Recorder of the said City and six Aldermen and Tenn other Persons to be Common Councill Men of the said City, which said Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and Common Councill Men shall be a Body incorporate and one Community for ever in Right by name of Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and common Councill of the said City of Annapolis shall be Able and Capable to sue and be sued att Law and to Act, Execute, do and perform as a Body Incorporate which shall have succession for Ever and to that End to have a Common seal and that Amos Garrettt Esq. one of the Inhabitants of the said City shall for the present be and be named

Mayor of the s<sup>d</sup> City for the Ensuing Year, and Wornell Hunt Esq Recorder thereof and William [591] Bladen, John Freeman, Benjamin Fordham, Evan Jones, Thomas Bordley, [and] Josiah Willson Esq<sup>rs</sup> Inhabitants of the said City shall be Aldermen for so long as they shall well behave themselves therein, haveing first taken and subscribed the Tests and severall Oaths for security of the Govern<sup>t</sup> by Law established and also the Oath appointed by us or our Present Governour to be taken by the Mayor, Recorder and Aldermen of the City of Annapolis aforesd which shall be administered to them by our Governour in Chief or Keeper of the Great seal of this our Province for the Time being or by such other Person or Persons as wee, our Heirs and successours or our Governour afores<sup>d</sup> for the time being shall from Time to Time Authorize and appoint to administer the same, and wee grant that the Mayor, Recorder and Aldermen or the Major part of them shall Elect and chuse tenn other of the most sufficient of the Inhabitants and freeholders of the said City being freemen thereof to be of the Common Councill of the said City for so long time as they shall well behave themselves ~ And to perpetuate the succession of the said Mayor, Recorder and Aldermen and Common Councill In all time to come, we do warrant that for the future they shall Assemble in some convenient Place in the s<sup>d</sup> City upon the feast Day of Saint Michael in Every Year and shall Elect and Chuse by the Major Vote of such of them as shall be then present one Other of the Aldermen of the said City for the Time being to be Mayor of the said City for the Ensuing year and upon decease or remoovall of the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor of the said City for the Time being or upon any decease or deceases remoovall or remoovalls of the said recorder or Aldermen or any of them or w<sup>th</sup> in one moneth [*sic*] after such respective decease or deceases removall or removalls the residue of the said Alderman together & w<sup>th</sup> the said Mayor if he shall be liveing or the major part of them shall att a sett time by them to be appointed w<sup>th</sup> in the said City and precincts Elect and nominate some other person or persons to be Mayor, Recorder, Alderman or Aldermen of the s<sup>d</sup> City in the place and places of such person or persons so deceased or removed respectively as the Case shall require so as the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor so to be Elected and nominated, be att the time of such Election and nomination of the Aldermen of the s<sup>d</sup> City and so as the s<sup>d</sup> Recorder so be Elected and nominated be a P[er]son learned in the Laws and so as s<sup>d</sup> Alderman or Aldermen so to be Elected and nominated be actually [592] att the time of such Election and Nomination of the common Councill of the said City, the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor, Recorder, Alderman or Aldermen so to be Elected and

nominated first takeing the severall and respective Oaths before mentioned to be appointed as afores<sup>d</sup> and shall likewise then fill up by the like Election out, of and from and among the Inhabitants and freeholders of the s<sup>d</sup> City the full number of ten P[er]sons to be common Councill Men and that the s<sup>d</sup> P[er]sons hereby appointed and named or hereafter to be Elected and nominated Mayor Recorder or Aldermen to be Justices of the peace w<sup>th</sup> in the City precincts and Liberties thereof haveing first taken the Oaths usually appointed to be taken by the Justices of the Peace and the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor, Recorder and Aldermen hereby named and appointed or hereafter to be Elected and nominated or Any three of them whereof the said Mayor or Recorder for the time being shall be one, shall have w<sup>th</sup> in the Precincts of the s<sup>d</sup> City full power and Authority to make constables and other necessary Officers, and to rule, Order and govern the Inhabitants thereof as Justices of the peace are authorized to do and shall have power to Execute all the Laws, Ordinances and statutes in y<sup>t</sup> behalf made as fully and amply as if they were authorized thereunto by Express commission named therein willing and commanding that no other Justices of peace or Quorum w<sup>th</sup> in our said Countie or Province do att Any time hereafter take upon them or Any of them to Execute the Office of a Justice of peace w<sup>th</sup> in the s<sup>d</sup> City or the precincts thereof, notw<sup>th</sup> standing any Commission att Large authorizing them thereunto, and further we will and grant unto the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor Recorder, Aldermen & Common Councill of the s<sup>d</sup> City for the time being full power and Authority after the space of six years to Elect a sheriff for the s<sup>d</sup> City (but that untill then the sheriff of Ann Arund<sup>ll</sup> County for the time being shall be sheriff of the said City, and to make Order and Appoint such by-Laws and Ordinances among themselves for the regulateing and good Governm<sup>t</sup> of Trade & other Matters, Exigences [*sic*] and Things w<sup>th</sup> in the s<sup>d</sup> City and precincts as to them or the major part of them shall seem meet so as they be consonant to reason and not contrary but as near as conveniently may be agreeable to the Laws statutes now in force, w<sup>ch</sup> s<sup>d</sup> by Laws shall be observed, kept and performed by all manner of persons tradeing and residing w<sup>th</sup> in the s<sup>d</sup> City under such reasonable pains, penaltys and forfeitures as shall be imposed by the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor Recorder [593] Aldermen and Common Councill or the major part of them then assembled from time to time not Exceeding forty shillings sterling the s<sup>d</sup> pains, penaltys and forfeitures to be raised by distress and sale of the Goods of such Person so offending and to be employed for the publick benefitt of the said City att their Discretion, and further we do grant and give full power, Lycence, priviledge and

Authority to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and the five senior or first common Councill Men of the s<sup>d</sup> City for the time being and their successors for Ever to send two Citizens and Delegates to Every of our Assembly or Assemblys hereafter to be held or att Any time or times hereafter to be called to be held for this our s<sup>d</sup> province of Maryland to be Elected and chosen out of the Inhabitants actually being and residing w<sup>th</sup>. in the s<sup>d</sup> City haveing a freehold or visible Estate of forty pounds sterling therein by the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor, Recorder or Aldermen and five common Councill men afd the major part of them being then present by virtue of our Writt or Writts of Election to be sent to them for that purpose, which s<sup>d</sup> Writt or Writts we do hereby grant shall be Issued out and sent to them when and so often as Occassion [*sic*] shall require and when hereafter there shall happen any generall Assembly to be held according as writts shall be sent to the severall and respective Countys for Electing of Deputys or Delegates for their severall and respective Countys in this our Province of Maryland, wee further grant that the s<sup>d</sup> Citizens and Delegates by them so as afd Elected and sent shall have full and free Votes and voices in all & Every of our General Assemblys Touching or concerning all Matters or Things their [*sic*] to be discoursed & handled as other the Deputys or Delegates of the severall and respective Countys formerly have had now have or hereafter shall have, And further wee grant and give Lycense to the Mayor, Recorder Aldermen and Common Councill of the said City for the time being and their successors for Ever to have and to hold two Marketts Weekly w<sup>th</sup>. in the s<sup>d</sup> City on Every Wednesday and Saturday in the Week in some convenient place to be by them appointed w<sup>th</sup>. in the precincts and Libertys of the s<sup>d</sup> City and also two fairs yearly to be kept on May Day otherwise called S<sup>t</sup> Philip and Jacobs day and on the feast of S<sup>t</sup> Michael the Arch Angell (or on the next Day succeeding Each or Either of them in case they shall happen to fall on the Lords Day for the sale and vending of all manner of Goods, Cattle, Wares and Merchandizes whatsoever on which s<sup>d</sup> fair days and for two days before and after all persons comeing to the s<sup>d</sup> fairs together w<sup>th</sup> their Cattle, Goods, Wares and Merchandizes or **[594]** returning thence shall be Exempt and priviledged from Any Arrests or Attachm<sup>ts</sup> or Executions whatsoever and that the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor, and Aldermen shall have power to sett such reasonable tole upon such Goods, Cattle, Merchandizes and other commoditys as shall be sold therein respectively as shall be thought fitt not Exceeding six pence on Every Beast sold and the twentieth part of the value of any Commodity and shall and may hold a Court of py-powdry dureing the s<sup>d</sup> fair for the

determination of all controversies & Quarrells which may happen therein, according to the usuall Course in England in the like cases, and we grant unto them all profitts and P[er]quisitts due, incident and belonging to the s<sup>d</sup> Markett, fair and Court of py-powdry, and further we do Grant that the s<sup>d</sup> Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen or Any three or more of them shall hold a Court of Hustings w<sup>th</sup>. in the s<sup>d</sup> City, where they are hereby impowered to make proper Officers and settle reasonable fees not Exceeding what are now allowed in the County Court, and shall have Jurisdiction and hold plea of Tresspass and Ejectm<sup>t</sup> for Any Lands Tenem<sup>ts</sup> w<sup>th</sup>. in the s<sup>d</sup> City as also of all Writts of Dower for the same Lands & Tenem<sup>ts</sup> and of all Other Actions personall and mixt, and as a Court of record give Judgem<sup>t</sup> and award Execution thereon according to the Laws and statutes of England & This Province, provided the Demand in the s<sup>d</sup> Action P[er]sonall & mixt Exceed not the sum of six pounds ten shillings sterling or seventeen hundred pounds of tob<sup>a</sup>[cco] And provided nevertheless that Any Party or Partys Plaintiffs of Defend<sup>ts</sup> shall be att their Liberty on good grounds to bring Writts of habeas Corpus and Certiorari to remove any plaints from the s<sup>d</sup> Hustings to the Provi<sup>ll</sup> Court of this Province and also to appeal from the Judgem<sup>t</sup> of the s<sup>d</sup> Mayors Court or bring Writts of Error att their Choice to y<sup>e</sup> provi<sup>ll</sup> court under limitation and regulation as is already by the Act of Assembly of this province assigned for prosecuteing appeals and Writts of Error from the County Courts to the provi<sup>ll</sup> -, In Testimony whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made patent, Given att Annapolis under the great seal of our s<sup>d</sup> province, Witness our Trusty and well beloved Jn<sup>o</sup> seymour Esq. Captain G[ene]rll and Gove<sup>r</sup> in chief of ours s<sup>d</sup> province this sixteenth day of August in the seventh year of our reign &<sup>c</sup> Annoq Domi 1708

Jo



Seymour,

Recorded P[er] John ffreeman Regist<sup>r</sup>