

Calvert arrived in Virginia with his second wife and many of his settlers in early October 1629. He was not warmly received by the Virginians, and soon returned to England. There he pressed his suit for a new patent. He first asked for a tract south of the James River, but this area had already been granted. His opponents—an alliance of Virginia planters, London tobacco merchants, and former members of the now dissolved Virginia Company—succeeded in thwarting any concession to Calvert. However, Charles I had married the Catholic Henrietta Maria, sister of the king of France, and was disposed to assist English Catholics, especially his father's friend Lord Baltimore. In the end, Charles I gave Lord Baltimore a grant in the northern Chesapeake—present-day Maryland.⁸

The Maryland Charter: George Calvert's Legal Genius

The patent, or charter, for this new colony was modeled on the one Sir George Calvert had written for Avalon, and this in turn had its roots in a long tradition of plans for New World colonies. Such plans faced two major problems. The first was that of any high-risk land development project, then or now—how to attract investors and settlers. The second problem was tied to the first—how to create social order, the foundation of profitable enterprise, in a wilderness settlement thousands of miles and many weeks away from England. Plans familiar to George Calvert saw the solution in offers of large land grants, political power, and special titles of honor to induce men with capital and capacity for leadership to settle in a new colony. These leaders were expected to bring servants or tenants to develop the land. By this means, the familiar hierarchy of English