

What is the Meaning of "Tithables"?

The term "tithable" was used during the colonial days. It referred to a person who paid one of the taxes imposed by the General Assembly which served to support the civil government in the colony. Great Britain seemed to always have a tax on its citizens, and this practice continued for its American colonies. For one, a poll tax or capitation tax was assessed on free white males, African American slaves and Native American servants (both male and female), all ages sixteen or older.

Owners and masters paid the taxes levied on their slaves and servants. Unfortunately, as Tithable lists do not enumerate anyone under the age of sixteen or any adult white woman (unless she was the head of household), the genealogist may review the Laws published in Henings Statutes at Large to better understand who was considered tithable and how tithable lists were taken. In an attempt to stop fraud concerning the "yearly importation of people into the collonie," an Act was passed in the House of Burgesses in 1649 requiring that all male servants imported into Virginia (of what age whatsoever) be placed on the tithable lists.

Natives of the colony and those imported free who were under the age of sixteen were exempt. Source: William W. Hening, ed. *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year 1619.*

1674 | 1678 | 1679 | 1680 | 1681 | 1682 | 1683 | 1684 | 1685 | 1686 |
1687 | 1688 | 1689 | 1690 | 1691 | 1692 | 1693 | 1694 | 1695