



DIFFERENT LIVES

In the 1800s, many people in the South were enslaved. Enslaved people were considered property and were not free to make any choices or decisions about their lives. What was their life like? Many enslaved people lived on plantations, but many also lived on small farms and in cities.

Plantations were large farms that grew cotton, tobacco, rice or sugar. These were cash crops that were sold for a profit. To make a better profit, plantation owners used enslaved workers to do the field work. Slave owners did not invest much into caring for enslaved workers, who received no pay at all.

Slave quarters were usually small cabins with dirt floors. Plantation owners often did not provide enslaved people with food that was fit to eat. Some enslaved people were allowed to grow vegetable gardens.

Whether exhausted or hungry, enslaved workers had to complete their difficult work. Men, women and children raised and tended to crops. If they stopped to rest, supervisors would often beat them. They often returned home very late.

Some enslaved workers were assigned to the plantation owner's home. Their jobs were cooking, cleaning and watching children. These were still difficult jobs if the owner was unfair or cruel. In the mid-1800s, almost 400,000 enslaved people lived and worked on plantations.

Enslaved people also worked on smaller farms, alongside the farmer. They sometimes became close to the farmer and his family. But life could also be difficult on a small farm. If a farmer did not do well, there might not be enough food. Enslaved people often had to sleep in the kitchen or a small building near

the home, such as a barn.

Plantations and small farms were not the only places where enslaved people resided. They could also be found living and working in cities, becoming skilled laborers. After harvests, some plantation-enslaved people would be hired out to blacksmiths, carpenters and other industries. Enslaved people who lived in cities could sometimes earn a little money from a trade. Sometimes this money could buy their freedom after a very long period of time. Even if they couldn't buy their freedom, enslaved people in cities sometimes lived in small communities on the outer edge of town. Some worked in homes as domestic workers who would cook, clean, serve food and help with other chores. While plantation-enslaved people rarely left the plantation and were isolated, those who lived in cities were exposed to more of the world and were able to travel around town if they had a pass to do so. Even though the lives of enslaved people who lived in cities were different from those who worked on large or small farms, all were under the control of their owners.

All enslaved people were subject to Slave Codes. These laws varied from state to state, but some of them were common. It was illegal for an enslaved person to learn to read or write. Fines and jail time were given to anyone caught educating African Americans. Enslaved people could not hold a meeting unless there was a white person present. Families could be separated and sold by their white owners. Enslaved people on plantations, farms and cities lived differently, but they were all seen as property and not as people.



Connections

The Cotton Industry Was a Huge Success ... but Not for All

How did the cotton industry make people rich? Here's how the process worked: First, the southern growers bought enslaved people. Where did these people come from? They came from Africa. Some of them were kidnapped, while others were bought from their village leaders. They were parents and children just like us, suddenly forced to go to America on a crowded slave ship, only to be sold to the farm owners to work for the rest of their lives without any kind of compensation. From then on, they were treated as property, not people. Many times their families were split up, never to see each other again. These enslaved people were helpless to do anything about this because they were harshly punished for even

the slightest protests.

On the plantations, the enslaved people produced the cotton by planting, growing and picking it. These people did all the fieldwork and harvesting and received no pay at all. They were treated very poorly even though they worked as hard as they could. The southern plantation owners who owned the cotton farms got rich when they sold their cotton to northerners. The northerners bought the cotton and shipped it to England. The English bought the cotton and made materials out of it, which they then sold. Each time the cotton changed hands, more money was made. Everyone made money and improved their lives, except the enslaved people.

Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards: SS.5.A.1.1: Use primary and secondary sources to understand history. **SS.5.A.1.2:** Utilize timelines to identify and discuss American History time periods. **SS.5.A.2.2:** Identify American Indian tribes from different geographic regions of North America (cliff dwellers and Pueblo people of the desert Southwest, coastal tribes of the Pacific Northwest, nomadic nations of the Great Plains, woodland tribes east of the Mississippi River). **SS.5.A.3.3:** Describe interactions among American Indians, Africans, English, French, Dutch and Spanish for control of North America. **SS.5.A.4.1:** Identify the economic, political and socio-cultural motivation for colonial settlement. **SS.5.A.4.3:** Identify significant individuals responsible for the development of the New England, Middle and Southern colonies. **SS.5.A.4.4:** Demonstrate an understanding of political, economic and social aspects of daily colonial life in the 13 colonies. **SS.5.A.4.6:** Describe the introduction, impact and role of slavery in the colonies. **SS.5.C.2.5:** Identify ways good citizens go beyond basic civic and political responsibilities to improve government and society.



Founders of the Southern Colonies

James Edward Oglethorpe (1696-1785)

Soldier, member of Parliament, philanthropist, humanitarian, founder—pick one! Or you could use all of them to describe James Edward Oglethorpe.

Oglethorpe and his nine older brothers and sisters were born in England at a time when war was going on almost all the time in Europe. When he was a teenager, he attended a military school and later joined the British army to fight against the Turks in Austria. When the war was over, he went back to England. He was elected to Parliament in 1722 and held that office for more than 30 years.

Whew! That all sounds pretty impressive, doesn't it? But that's not the whole story of Oglethorpe—not by a long shot. The rest of the story started when a friend of his was put in prison because he couldn't pay his debts. Robert Castell ended up in a cell with a man who had smallpox, a contagious disease that can be fatal (causing death). Castell caught smallpox and died in prison. Oglethorpe became chairman of a committee to investigate English

prisons. He saw how terrible the conditions were in the prisons and how badly prisoners were treated. He became known throughout England for his work to improve the prison system. He believed that people should not be put in prison just for being poor. He felt that the people in debtor's prisons could be productive citizens if they had the chance. To him, that chance was a Colony in America.

King George granted a charter, or lease, for the Georgia Colony, and in February 1733, Oglethorpe and more than 100 colonists started building a new town they called Savannah. Oglethorpe designed the city and worked hard to make it successful. He even spent his own money when funds ran out. He strongly opposed slavery and returned to England after it was introduced in the Colony. He died in 1785, but his name lives on in Georgia, where cities, schools, streets and businesses are named after him.



James Edward Oglethorpe



Cecilius Calvert, 2nd Lord Baltimore (1605-1675)

Cecilius Calvert became Lord Baltimore after the death of his father, George, in 1632. A fancy title wasn't all he inherited. He also got the charter for a new Colony in America. The Colony was named Maryland in honor of Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of King Charles I. (English kings liked to have the Colonies named after members of the royal family.) The Calverts were Catholic, and they hoped that Maryland would be a place for English Catholics to escape being persecuted by the Anglican Church. They wanted Maryland to be a place of religious freedom.

Lord Baltimore was all set to send settlers to the new Colony, but there was just one problem—a big problem. Settlers from the Virginia Colony had moved into some of the land that was supposed to be part of Maryland. King Charles changed the charter to avoid conflict, and Lord Baltimore didn't waste any more time. He sent about 200 colonists on two ships to settle Maryland before more Virginians moved in!

In keeping with the idea of religious freedom, the settlers included both Catholics and Protestants. Lord Baltimore stayed in England, and he chose his brother Leonard to be the Colony's first governor. In 1649, the Maryland Assembly passed a law that protected the religious freedom of both Catholics and Protestants. This was one of the first American laws that guaranteed freedom of religion.



Cecilius Calvert 2nd Lord of Baltimore



Replica of Dove, one of the two ships sent by Calvert

Nicholas Seccombe, Small Farmer in Maryland

Culture

Read this fictional letter to see how different the life of a small farmer was from the life of a plantation owner.

July 18, 1759

Dear Charles,
I hope this letter finds you well. We were in receipt of yours just last week. I am happy to hear that the family there has been in good health of late. You asked for more description of our life on the farm.



In hopes that you will be encouraged to join us, I write this happily. The abundance of this countryside will delight you, but we are sorely in need of manpower in order to reap those blessings. Yet I will never resort to using enslaved Africans to do my work. I know that you share my hatred for that idea!

We rise before the sun each day and do not pause for refreshment until all the livestock have been fed and cared for, as it would be devastating if we lost them. After our own morning meal, I face the task each day of clearing the acreage (land) granted to us. I continue to wrestle with the crops of fieldstone that we inherited and will rejoice when that heavy harvest is done. We will use that bounty for a fine stonewall and pray that the land will yield [give] a harvest of a cash crop soon, one that will allow us to make a living here in the Maryland Colony.

When we are not clearing the land, we are endeavoring to tame it with the plow. I have managed to plant an acre of indigo, and with the help of a neighbor, we will double that this spring. George Mattison and I trade work as often as possible. It seems that two men can accomplish more than twice as much as one.

The setting sun provides a moment of rest, and the opportunity for an industrious [hardworking] farmer to work by candle and firelight. Mended harnesses and other tools must be ready for use at dawn each day. And so, Charles, you can see that you would be much appreciated and well taken care of if you decide to join us. This land rewards hard work quite handsomely. You and I together, dear brother, could do much.

Love, Nicholas

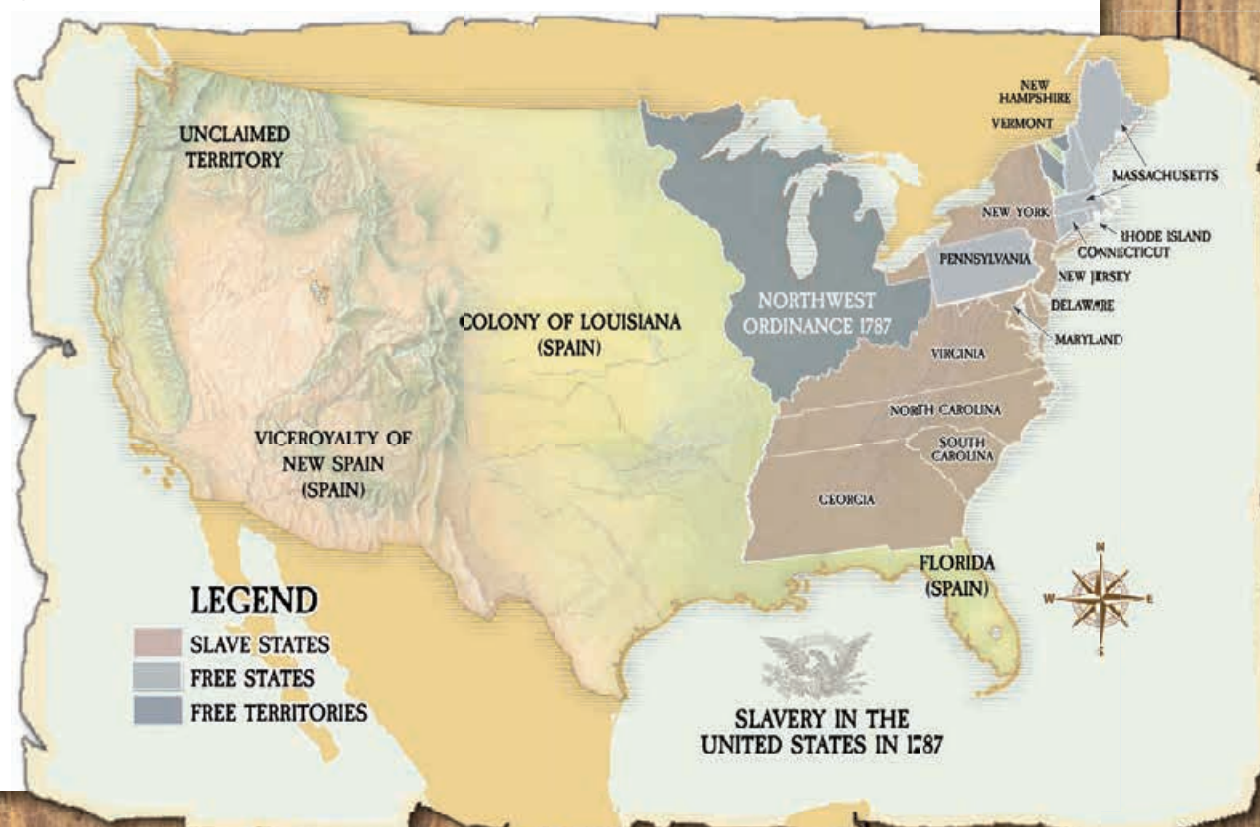
States' Rights

In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson wrote about America's need for freedom and equality for colonists as they worked to gain their independence from England. After they declared their freedom, they became the United States of America. However, when the Declaration of Independence was written in 1776, more than 500,000 African Americans were enslaved.

Enslaved African Americans were not seen as citizens. They were treated as if they were property, like a cow or horse. Yet plantation owners wanted to count them in the population so they could have more power in Congress. A way to count the large population had to be developed. The Three-Fifths Compromise stated that three out of every five enslaved persons were counted as people.

Northern states believed that enslaving people was morally wrong and that all men should be treated equally. Many northerners spoke up against the practice of enslaving people. However, as northern states abolished the practice of enslaving people, southern states insisted on keeping their enslaved African Americans. Southern states depended on them to work their plantations. Slaveholders believed that it was a state's right to enslave people and that the federal

government should not make laws about it. They also used economics and religion to justify the institution of enslaving people. These different views on enslaving people began to cause tensions between the northern and southern states.



Looking Back

Our history with enslaving people has been pretty rough. It's important to talk about our past so we can learn from it and avoid making the same mistakes in the future. It can be difficult to talk about sad, awful stories in our history. Enslaving people is one of the worst stories we can tell.

Many people were okay with the slave trade because the enslaved people came from Africa, a faraway continent. They had a different culture, language and skin color. Even though we know it's wrong to judge people by their differences, people didn't think so back then. Money and power were more important than equality. Slaveowners and traders knew they could make a lot more money if they didn't have to pay their workers. Eventually, there were so many enslaved people in America that it seemed normal! Over hundreds of years, racism became normal in American society, too! People in both the North and the South were racist. The struggle against racism has continued long after enslaving people ended.

Learning about enslaving people reminds us of how important it is to treat everyone fairly. Everyone deserves respect and to be treated with kindness. Our differences don't make us better or worse. They make us unique! How does learning about enslaving people make you feel?



