

Growth of the Cotton Industry

The Big Idea

The invention of the cotton gin made the South a one-crop economy and increased the need for slave labor.

Main Ideas

- The invention of the cotton gin revived the economy of the South.
- The cotton gin created a cotton boom in which farmers grew little else.
- Some people encouraged southerners to focus on other crops and industries.



Next

Main Idea 1: The invention of the cotton gin revived the economy of the South.

- Prices for major southern crops—tobacco, rice, and indigo—fell after the American Revolution.
- Cotton was not profitable because of the difficulty of removing seeds.
- Demand for American cotton grew rapidly with the rise of British textile mills.
- Eli Whitney patented the **cotton gin**, a machine to remove seeds from cotton, in 1793.
- **Planters**—large-scale farmers who held more than 20 slaves—soon adopted the cotton gin and were able to process tons of cotton much faster than hand processing.
- A healthy cotton crop could now guarantee financial success because of high demand.



Previous



Next

Main Idea 2: The cotton gin created a cotton boom in which farmers grew little else.

- Cotton gin made cotton so profitable that southern farmers abandoned other crops.
- Removal of Native Americans opened up more land for cotton farmers in Southeast.
- Development of new types of cotton helped spread production throughout South, as far west as Texas.
 - This area became known as the **cotton belt**.
 - United States produced more than half the cotton grown in the world by 1840.
- Economic boom attracted new settlers, built up wealth among white southerners, and firmly established slavery in the South.



Previous



Next

Chapter 13

Cotton Belt

Cotton had many advantages as cash crop: inexpensive to market and easy to store and transport.

Cotton had major disadvantage—used up nutrients in soil—so farmers began crop rotation.

Farmers developed stronger types of cotton through crossbreeding, which expanded the cotton industry.

Cotton industry was labor intensive; need for more slaves caused increase in internal slave trade. Instead of paying free workers, planters used enslaved Africans.



Previous



Next

Cotton Trade

- Southern cotton was used to make cloth in England and the North.
- Great Britain became the South's most valued foreign trading partner.
- Increased trade led to the growth of port cities, including Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans.
- Crop brokers, called **factors**, managed the cotton trade.



Previous



Next

Main Idea 3: Some people encouraged southerners to focus on other crops and industries.

Agriculture

- Corn—primary food crop
- Other food crops—rice, sweet potatoes, wheat, and sugarcane
- Tobacco production increased when a slave developed an improved drying process.
- Hemp and flax also became cash crops.
- As long as agriculture profits remained high, investors preferred to invest in land.

Industry

- Factories in South built to serve farmers' needs.
- Nation's first steam-powered sawmill built in Louisiana in 1803.
- Entrepreneurs began investing in cotton mills by 1840s.
- **Tredegar Iron Works**: one of nation's most productive iron works.
- Industry remained a small part of southern economy.



Previous



Next



Southern Society

The Big Idea

Southern society centered around agriculture.

Main Ideas

- Southern society and culture consisted of four main groups.
- Free African Americans in the South faced a great deal of discrimination.



Previous



Next

Main Idea 1: Southern society and culture consisted of four main groups.

- Planters had a powerful influence over the South.
 - Rich plantation and slave owners
- Small farmers, including yeomen and poor whites, made up the majority of the white southern population.
- Slaves
 - Did much of the work on plantations and in cities
- Free African Americans
 - By 1860, more than 250,000 lived in the South
 - Lived in both rural and urban areas
 - Faced constant discrimination



Previous



Next

White Social Groups in the South

Planters

- Wealthiest members of society
- Males concerned with crops and slave laborers
- Planters' wives raised children, ran households, and saw to social duties.
- Marriages were often arranged.

Yeomen

- **Yeomen** were owners of small farms averaging 100 acres.
- Mostly white southerners
- Families worked long hours.
- Some yeomen owned slaves.

Poor Whites

- Often lived on land that could not grow crops
- Survived by hunting, fishing, raising small gardens, and doing odd jobs



Previous



Next

A Southern Plantation

- **Plantation House** — Planter and his family lived here
- **Slave Cabins** — Slaves lived, crowded into small cabins
- **Cotton-Ginning Shed** — Vital machines housed in shed to protect them from the weather
- **Other Buildings** — Overseer's house, barn, smokehouse, stable



Previous



Next

Other Aspects of Southern Society

Religion

- Most white southerners shared similar religious beliefs.
- Families often saw neighbors only at church events.
- Wealthy white southerners thought that religion justified their place in society and the institution of slavery.

Urban Life

- Many southern cities were on the Atlantic Coast and began as shipping centers.
- City governments built water systems and maintained streets. Some provided public education.
- Slaves did much of the work in southern cities.



Previous



Next



Chapter 13

Main Idea 2: Free African Americans in the South faced a great deal of discrimination.

Most worked as paid laborers on farms; those in cities worked a variety of jobs.

Many governments passed laws limiting the rights of free African Americans—they could not vote, travel freely, or hold certain jobs. Some required that African Americans have a white person represent them in business transactions.

Many white southerners argued that free African Americans did not have the ability to take care of themselves.



Previous



Next

The Slave System

The Big Idea

The slave system in the South produced harsh living conditions and occasional rebellions

Main Ideas

- Slaves worked at a variety of jobs on plantations.
- Life under slavery was difficult and dehumanizing.
- Slave culture centered around family, community, and religion.
- Slave uprisings led to stricter slave codes in many states.



Previous



Next

Main Idea 1: Slaves worked at a variety of jobs on plantations.

- Most enslaved African Americans lived in rural areas and worked on farms and plantations.
- Most worked in the fields, where plantation owners used the gang-labor system.
 - All field hands worked on the same task at the same time.
- Men, women, and children older than 10 were forced to do the same work from sunup to sundown with little concern for sickness and poor weather.



Previous



Next

Other Types of Work Done by Slaves

- Some slaves worked as butlers, cooks, or nurses in planter's house.
 - They often had better food, clothing, and shelter than field hands but usually had to work longer hours.
- Some worked skilled jobs, such as blacksmithing or carpentry.
- Some slaveholders let their slaves sell their labor to other people.
 - Some slaves earned enough money this way to buy their freedom.



Previous



Next

Chapter 13

Main Idea 2: Life under slavery was difficult and dehumanizing.

Slaveholders viewed slaves as property, not people. Slaves could be sold at auction, with families often separated with little hope of reunion.

Slave traders sometimes kidnapped free African Americans and sold them into slavery.

Enslaved people often endured poor living conditions, such as dirt-floor cabins, cheap, coarse clothing, and small food rations.

Some planters used punishment to encourage obedience. They used irons and chains, stocks, and whips to punish slaves and also passed strict slave codes to prohibit movement.



Previous



Next



Main Idea 3: Slave culture centered around family, community, and religion.

- Family was the most important aspect of slave communities.
- Slave parents passed down family histories and African cultures and traditions.
- Slaves told **folktales** to teach lessons about how to survive under slavery.
- Religion played an important part in slave culture.
 - By the early 1800s many slaves were Christians.
 - They believed they were like the Hebrew slaves in ancient Egypt and would someday have freedom.
 - Some slaves sang **spirituals** to express religious beliefs.
- Slaves attempted to rebel in many ways, including holding their own religious beliefs, slowing down work, and planning escapes.



Previous



Next

Main Idea 4: Slave uprisings led to stricter slave codes in many states.

- White southerners lived in fear of slave revolts, which were relatively rare.
- **Nat Turner's Rebellion** was the most violent slave revolt.
 - In 1831 **Nat Turner**, a slave, led a group of slaves in a plan to kill all slaveholders in the county, killing about 60 white people.
 - More than 100 innocent slaves were killed in an attempt to stop the rebellion.
 - Turner was captured and executed.
- Many states strengthened slave codes, placing stricter controls on the slave population as a result.



Previous



Next