

THE SOUTH



Section 1: Growth of the Cotton Industry

Section 2: Southern Society

Section 3: The Slave System

SECTION 1: GROWTH OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY

OVERVIEW:

Cotton Revives the South's economy

Eli Whitney's cotton gin
Cotton Boom

Other Crops & Industries

Corn, tobacco, hemp & flax
Tredeger Iron Works

Cotton Gin – machine that removes seeds from short staple cotton

Cotton belt – area of high cotton production. Parts of SC, GA, AL, MS, AR, LA & TX

Factors – crop brokers who manage the cotton trade

Tredeger Iron Works – most productive iron works in the country, in Richmond, VA

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's Cotton Gin

- **Eli Whitney** patented the **cotton gin**, a machine to remove seeds from cotton, in 1793.
- The cotton gin created a cotton boom in which farmers grew little else



- **Planters**—large-scale farmers—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.
- It made cotton so profitable that southern farmers abandoned other crops.



The Cotton Boom

- 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
 - firmly established slavery in the South.

Cotton Belt

- Cotton had many advantages as cash crop:
 - inexpensive to market
 - easy to store
 - Easy to 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.

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
 - Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans.
- Crop brokers, called **factors**, managed the cotton trade.
- Some people encouraged southerners to focus on other crops and industries

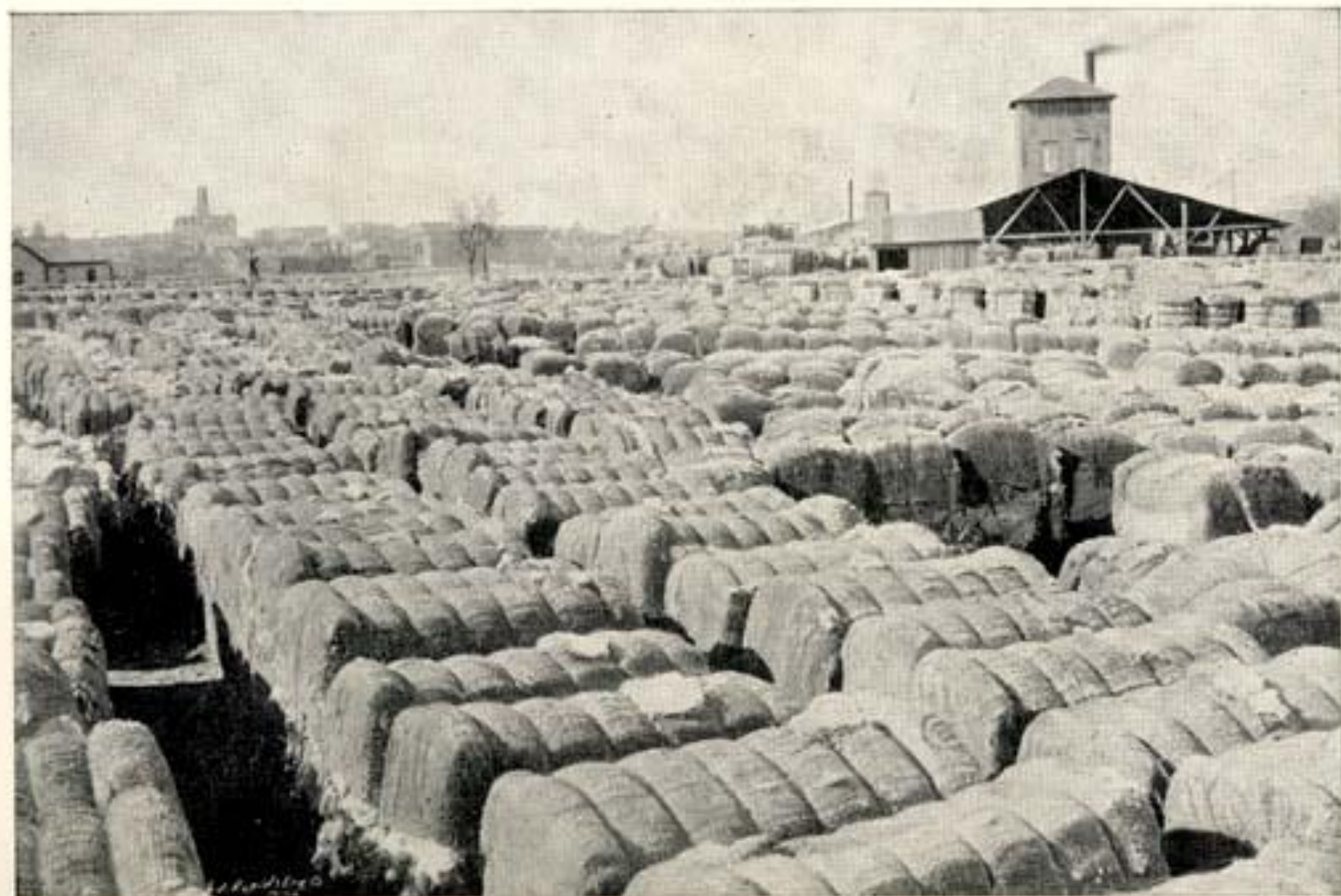


Fig. 8. Cotton Bales as Brought to the Compress.

Other Southern Agriculture:

- Corn—primary food crop.
- Other food crops—rice, sweet potatoes, wheat, and **sugarcane**.
- **Tobacco** production- curing and drying leaves very time consuming
 - 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.

Southern 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.
 - Owner- Joseph R. Anderson
- Industry remained a small part of southern economy.





SECTION 2: SOUTHERN SOCIETY

OVERVIEW:
Southern Society & Culture
Southern Plantations
Yeomen & poor whites
Free African Americans & discrimination

Key Terms & People:

Yeoman – farmers who had few or no slaves

Planters – large scale farmers who own 20+ slaves

Southern society and culture consisted of four main groups: Planters, Yeomen, Poor Whites and African Americans

- Only a third of white southern families had slaves
 - even fewer families had plantations.
- Planters had a powerful influence over the South.
- Other social groups included yeoman farmers, poor whites, African Americans
- African Americans were divided into Free and Slave

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.

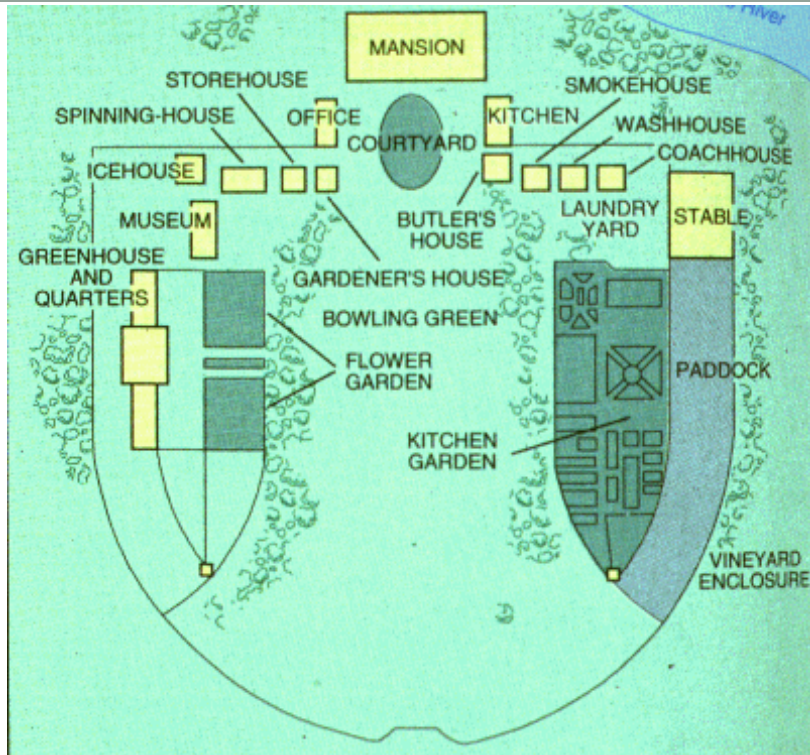
Yeomen

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

Poor Whites

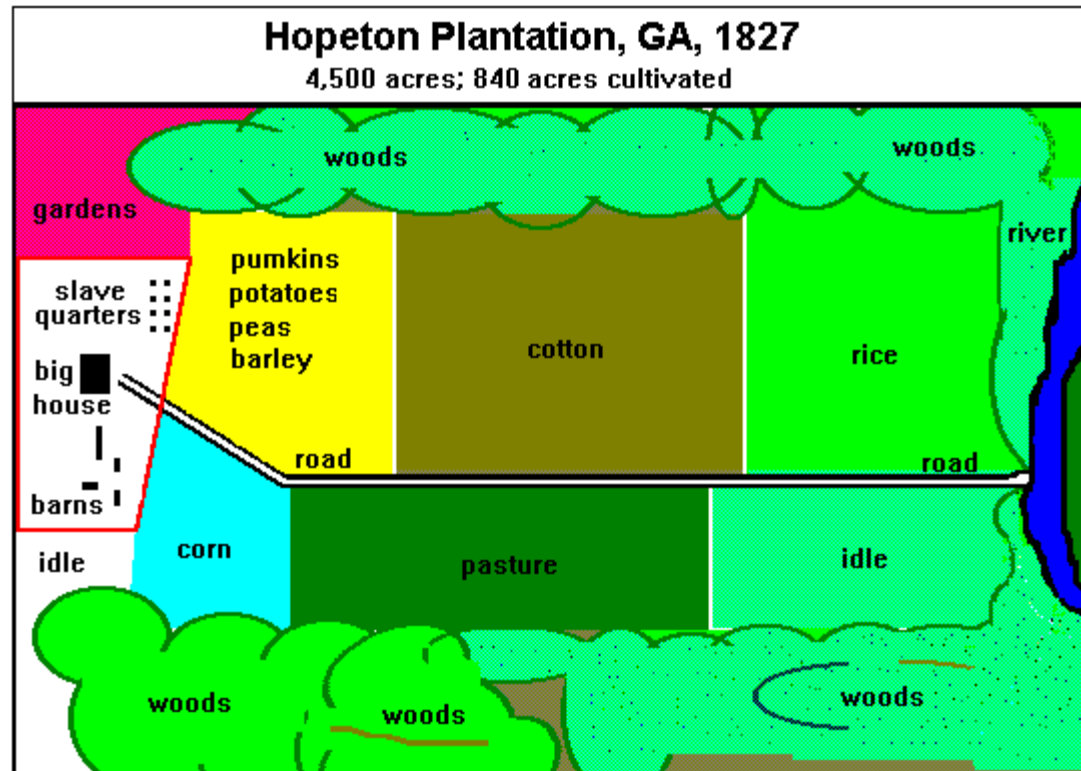
- Often lived on land that could not grow crops
- Survived by hunting, fishing, raising small gardens, and doing odd jobs

A Southern Plantation



commercial crops: cotton and rice (low-lying areas, such as coastal areas and along major rivers, with lots of water)

food crops: corn, potatoes, peas, pumpkins, and vegetables from the garden



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, stables, etc.



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.

Free African Americans in the South faced a great deal of discrimination

- More than 250,000 free African Americans lived in the South in 1860, in both urban and rural areas.
 - 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.

SECTION 3: THE SLAVE SYSTEM

OVERVIEW:

Types of Slave Jobs

House slaves

Field hands

Life under Slavery

Living conditions

Punishment & slave codes

Folktales & spirituals

Nat Turner's Rebellion

Folktales – stories with a moral

Spirituals – emotional Christian songs that blend African and European music

Nat Turner's Rebellion – most violent slave revolt in the US, 1831

Nat Turner – slave who led the revolt against slaveholders

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.

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.

Life under slavery was difficult and dehumanizing

- Slaveholders viewed slaves as property, not people.
- Slaves could be sold at auction
 - 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 slaves' obedience.

- used irons and chains, stocks, and whips to punish slaves
- passed strict slave codes to prohibit movement.





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.
- **Jumping the Broom** ceremony was used since marriage was often forbidden

Religion & 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.

Nat Turner's Rebellion

- The most violent slave revolt in US History.
- 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.

Slave uprisings led to stricter slave codes in many states

- Many states strengthened slave codes, placing stricter controls on the slave population as a result of Nat Turner's Rebellion
- White southerners lived in fear of slave revolts, which were relatively rare.