

SOCIAL STUDIES 1104

A NATION DIVIDED

CONTENTS

I. THE EMERGENCE OF SECTIONALISM	1
The Issues of Division	2
The Division of Land	5
The Division of People	14
II. THE EMERGENCE OF SLAVERY	21
The Economics of Slavery	21
The Social Conditions of Slavery	26
The Politics of Slavery	29
GLOSSARY	35

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II. THE EMERGENCE OF SLAVERY

A different way of life emerged in each of the three regions of the United States. As a result, each region had different needs and wants, and the people in each region often thought more about the needs of their own section than the needs of the nation as a whole. The desires of each region for different benefits from the national government led to conflict that escalated until compromise could no longer be reached.

The **Northeast** wanted a high tariff to protect its factory products from competition with foreign goods. The South, with only a few factories, had to buy most of its manufactured goods; consequently, the people of the South opposed any tariff that increased the cost of these goods. The **West** needed more settlers and therefore, favored cheap land prices. Factory owners were afraid that cheap land would lure workers from their factories to the **West**; therefore, the **Northeast** was opposed to cheap land. **Westerners** needed roads and canals to get their

produce to markets in the **East** and wanted the national government to help pay for these internal improvements. **Southerners**, with a splendid river transportation system, needed no roadways. Fearing that the government might increase the tariff rate to finance federal roads and canals, they insisted that state governments pay for their own improvements.

The issue that divided the country more than any other was slavery. Plantation owners felt that slaves were the basis of their economy and their way of life. Many southerners wanted to extend their influence by building plantations in new states and territories open to slavery. Many northerners were morally or economically opposed to slavery. Some did not think it was necessary to abolish slavery where it already existed, but they were determined to keep slavery out of the territories and the new states. On this issue the country was divided into two large regions instead of three; the conflict over slavery was between the North and the South.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able:

4. To identify generalizations about the effect of slavery on owners and slaves.
5. To outline the effects of slavery on our nation today.
6. To report whether issues that led to the Civil War have been resolved.
7. To discuss that God is no respecter of persons and that we are all equal in His sight.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

ante-bellem
chattel
deplete
despotism
durante vita

emancipation
emigrate
indentured servant
malinger
manumit

Mason-Dixon line
optimal
quarter
venerate



THE ECONOMICS OF SLAVERY

The emergence of sin into the world not only separated people from God, but divided people from each other. The story of Cain and Abel clearly shows that separation from God includes separation from our earthly brothers. This detachment has led people to develop political, economical, and social systems that restrict man's ability to follow God's will. Conditioned by the existence of slavery throughout the world, many people believed that God advocated or condoned this system of labor. Many interpreted certain passages in the Bible as God's support of

slavery, and some ignored Christ's message of God's love for all people.

Slave trading. Black people came to America with the earliest explorers in the sixteenth century. Columbus and De Aullon are said to have had black men among their crews. Estevanico, a black man sailing with the Spanish, explored the Gulf of Mexico from Florida to Mexico and discovered what is present-day Arizona.

In 1619 twenty black servants landed in

Jamestown. By 1630, sixty such servants had arrived and by 1662 the number had reached three thousand. Originally, black immigrants served a term of labor like other **indentured servants** and then were freed to make their own living. Anthony Johnson and John Castor, black men freed from indenture, became wealthy in their communities. Benjamin Banneker (astronomer, farmer, mathematician, and surveyor) and Paul Cuffe (ship owner and builder) were members of the free black community in the period following the Revolutionary War.

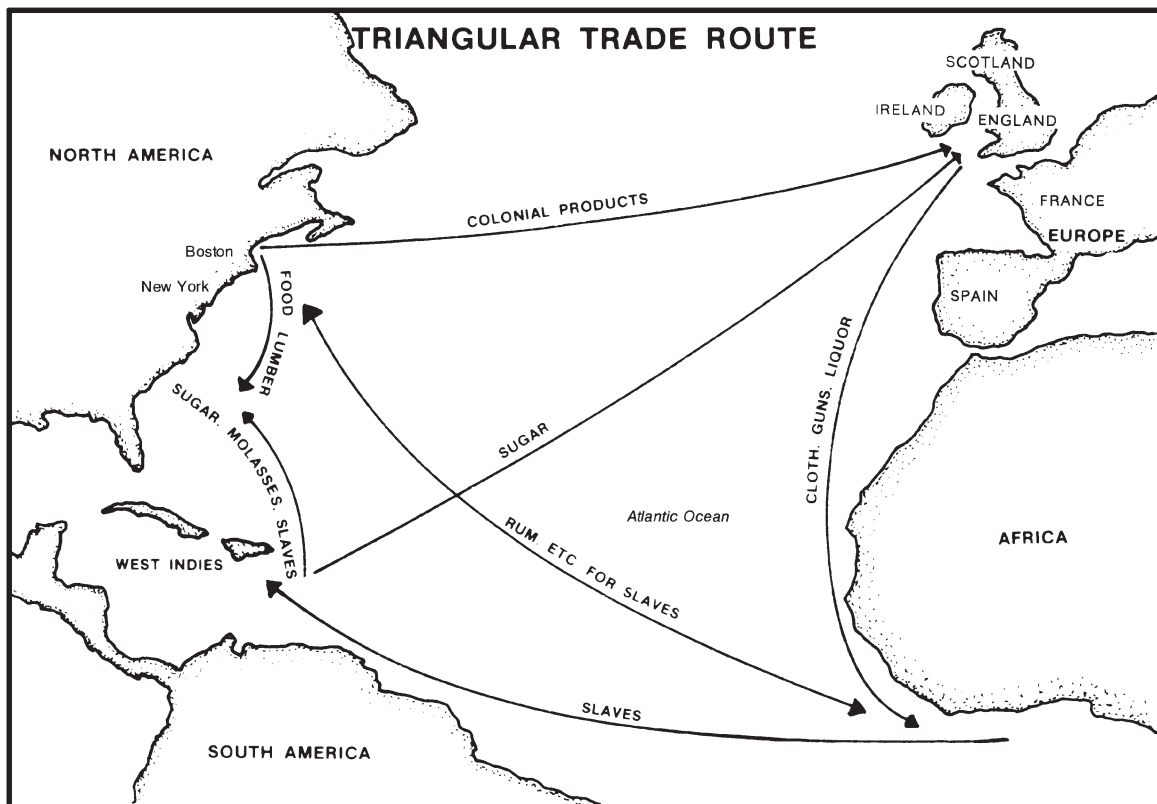
By the first census in 1790, fifty-nine thousand free black people were listed in the United States. These freemen led lives much like American citizens. They owned property, voted, organized churches and social groups, established schools, kept their money in banks, and demonstrated for better treatment of other black Americans. However, racial discrimination continued to increase and to limit their access to education and employment.

Although many black freemen lived in the United States, the status for black Americans was shifting toward a lifetime of slavery. As early as 1640 historical accounts show that black servants were no longer considered indentured, but **chattel** slaves. The records of three runaways in the 1600's indicate the changing status of black servants. The fugitives, two whites and one black, were captured and sentenced. The white servants received sentences extending their indenture four extra years; the black man was sentenced to service for the rest of his life. Soon laws were passed by the colonists retaining the services of black people "**durante vita**," during life.

The need for black slaves increased because the demand for consistent labor could not be met with white indentured servants or with the Indians. The white servants could appeal harsh treatment to their European governments and were almost impossible to detect in the community if they chose to flee their service, as many did. The Indians, more knowledgeable of the continent than their oppressor, quickly slipped through the hands of those who sought to enslave them. Black slave labor gradually became more and more valuable to the colonial owners.

Europeans and New England shipowners initiated a slave-trade cycle known as the Atlantic Triangle. European goods were traded for slaves in Africa. A full cargo of slaves was brought across to Carolina or Virginia, traded for sugar, cotton, tobacco, or any number of slave-produced crops; and the American crops were taken to Europe to be traded for goods desired by Africans.

Black people in increasing numbers were imported from the West African states of Ghana, Mali, Benin, and Songhay. The European and American ships sailed along the coast and up the Senegal, the Gambia, and the Niger Delta Rivers, where the institution of slavery already flourished. There the indigenous people participated in the delivery of thousands of men and women to the deadly hulls of ships destined for the New World. Taken from their homelands and kindred, the future slaves were wedged beneath the decks of ships and kept there with little to eat and drink until they reached their destination.



In the New World they encountered a different kind of slavery, where the bondman's burden was the color of his skin. Skin color marked a person, and as slaves, black people were no longer allowed to become men of accomplishment and learning as they had in Africa and throughout the world. Eventually the enslaved were blamed for their own condition as some men began to believe that black people were destined for slavery because they were racially inferior and sinful. For three hundred fifty years the lucrative slave trade brought more than three hundred forty-five thousand slaves to America before the formal closing of the slave traffic. Although the African slave trade was banned in 1808,

historians generally agree that between seventy thousand and two hundred fifty thousand slaves were smuggled into the country between 1808 and 1860.

Slaves were held in all thirteen of the original colonies until the Continental Congress passed a law banning the slave trade after December 1, 1775. During the Revolutionary War, black men, both free and slave, fought in every state except South Carolina and Georgia. Slaves were **manumitted** in return for their military service. Then, starting with Vermont in 1777, the Northern states banned slavery within their borders through gradual **emancipation** acts.



Complete these activities.

- 2.1 Use the dictionary to define the following terms.
- a. bondman _____

 - b. empire _____

 - c. indentured servant _____

 - d. manumission _____

- 2.2 Describe the Atlantic Triangle. _____

- 2.3 Many Africans died on the ships before they reached America. Use an encyclopedia or other resource books to explain why they died. _____

- 2.4 Benjamin Banneker and Paul Cuffe were free-born residents in colonial America. Use the encyclopedia or other resource books to find out about their lives. List the accomplishments of each of these men below.
- | Banneker | Cuffe |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| a. _____ | d. _____ |
| b. _____
_____ | e. _____
_____ |
| c. _____
_____ | f. _____
_____ |

Slave labor. In the South hundreds of slaves worked on huge indigo and rice plantations. Although slaves outnumbered the white people in some places in the South, the southerners were not willing to release their slaves. When Eli Whitney

invented the cotton gin in 1793, growing cotton became profitable. This invention sealed the fate of black people in America, and the rate of slavery grew phenomenally.

Growth of Slave and Freedman Population: 1790-1860

	1790	1800	1810	1820
Slave	697,624	893,602	1,191,362	1,538,022
Free	59,577	108,453	186,446	233,634
Total	757,181	1,002,055	1,377,808	1,771,656
	1830	1840	1850	1860
Slave	2,009,043	2,487,355	3,204,313	3,953,760
Free	319,599	386,293	434,495	488,070
Total	2,328,642	2,873,648	3,638,808	4,441,830

In the years before the invention of the cotton gin (the word *gin* is short for *engine*), all the seeds had to be separated from the cotton fibers by hand. This procedure was difficult and, consequently, expensive. One slave could only hand separate about one pound a day. The cotton gin, however, could separate about one hundred fifty pounds in the same time. This increase encouraged the planters to buy more slaves to cultivate and raise more cotton to satisfy the booming demands from the northern states and Europe.

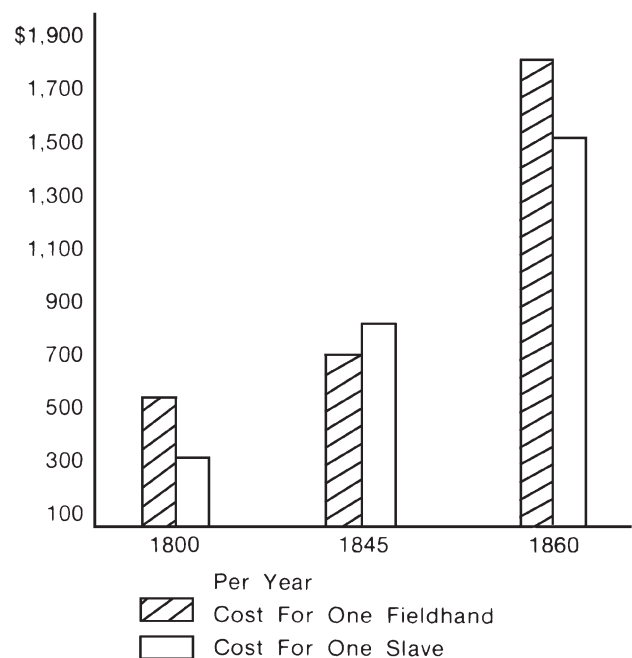
An evident purpose for black slavery was to provide a wealthy style of living for the owner, or at least an acceptable level of economic security. As owners recognized opportunities for increasing their wealth, the harsher aspects of slavery increased. Slaves were forced to increase production in direct proportion to the profits available before the soil was **depleted** or the bottom dropped out of the market.

The everyday life of a slave was tied to the kind of crops grown on the plantation, the demand for the product of their labor, and the personal qualities of the owner or overseer. In the areas where the crops were most abundant (the slave frontier), the cost of a slave was little compared to the profits derived from his labor. In fact, some owners on the frontier felt the best profit could be made by working a slave to death (eight to ten years), then replacing him.

On the frontier, slaves on some plantations were given "leisure time" only to eat and sleep. For example, some worked up to fifteen or sixteen hours a day during the sugar cane harvest when it was vitally important to get the cane to the press quickly. On the sugar cane plantations in Louisiana, the only state with a law limiting the slave workday, owners

were able legally to work a slave for as long as twenty-one hours a day. Often the same owners who worked their slaves long hours saved on the costs of maintaining slaves by issuing clothing only once a year and providing buckets of corn or rice once a week and the poorest cuts of meat less often.

As the demand for labor on the "slave frontier" increased, slaves were sold in the South by owners



The Cost of Buying and Maintaining Slaves

in the border states of Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia. A second source of labor for the deep South planters was the African slave trade. Although prohibited after 1807, the law was not enforced, and Africans were continually smuggled into southern ports until 1860.

In areas where the profit margin of agricultural production was decreasing, the relative cost of a slave was higher. As a result the owners treated the slaves with more care, often allowing them time to hunt, fish, and garden, thus improving the slaves' diet and consequent health. In these areas some slaves lived relatively comfortable lives when compared with those on the frontier, or with black freemen who were restricted by laws that made slavery seem better than freedom. With available leisure time some slaves were taught to read and write by benevolent owners.

The main responsibility of slaves on small farms was to cultivate the staple crop—cotton, hemp, rice, sugar, indigo, or tobacco. Secondarily, they served as general handymen, tended the gardens, and cared for the livestock used by the farmer and his family.

On the plantations slaves were assigned as either field-workers or house slaves and domestic servants. Large, well-established plantations frequently had a number of slaves who were skilled craftsmen or artisans, sometimes valued at \$3,000 or more.

Although most slaves in the **ante-bellum** South lived in the rural areas, some slaves lived in the cities. Some of these city slaves labored in the few factories of the South, worked in the shops, and built the streets and public buildings. Others ran the equipment in cotton, rice, and flour mills, sugar refineries, and foundries. City slaves also shoed horses, baked bread, transported cargo to the docks,

and, like the Charleston slave Robert Smalls, guided boats on the rivers and in the harbors. However, the vast majority of city slaves were domestic servants who kept the owner's house clean, raised the vegetables in the garden, cared for the owner's children, cooked the meals, served as grooms and valets, and worked from dawn to dusk in the service of the owner.

Some of these city slaves were allowed to "hire out" their time. Hiring out, though not exclusively urban, was most widely employed in the cities and developed into two forms. In the first form a slave was "leased" to another person for a period of a few weeks to a few years. The leasor provided food, clothing, and shelter for the slave and paid the owner a fee for the slave's labor. The amount of this fee depended on the skills of the slave and on the current market value of skilled slaves.

The second form of "hiring out" was a type of short-term employment. Owners hung metal badges around the necks of their slaves and released them to find work. City officials sold the badges and allowed prospective employees to meet their employers in a designated area of the city. The slave provided his own clothes, food, and housing and paid a prearranged portion of his wage to his owner. He was allowed to keep the remainder of the money for his own needs.

"Hiring out" became a vehicle for independence and in some cases freedom when the slave was able to save enough money to pay his owner for his papers. "Hiring out" caused considerable opposition in the South. Some owners declared that the freedom of the "hirelings" would destroy slavery, but the profits gained through hiring out ensured the continuation of that practice.



Complete these activities.

2.5 Write the definition of *ante-bellum*. _____

2.6 Explain why life on the "slave frontier" was so harsh.

2.7 List three types of slave labor that might be found on a well-established plantation.

a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

2.8 Rice and indigo were the staple crops grown on many Carolina plantations. List the staple crops grown on other southern plantations. _____
