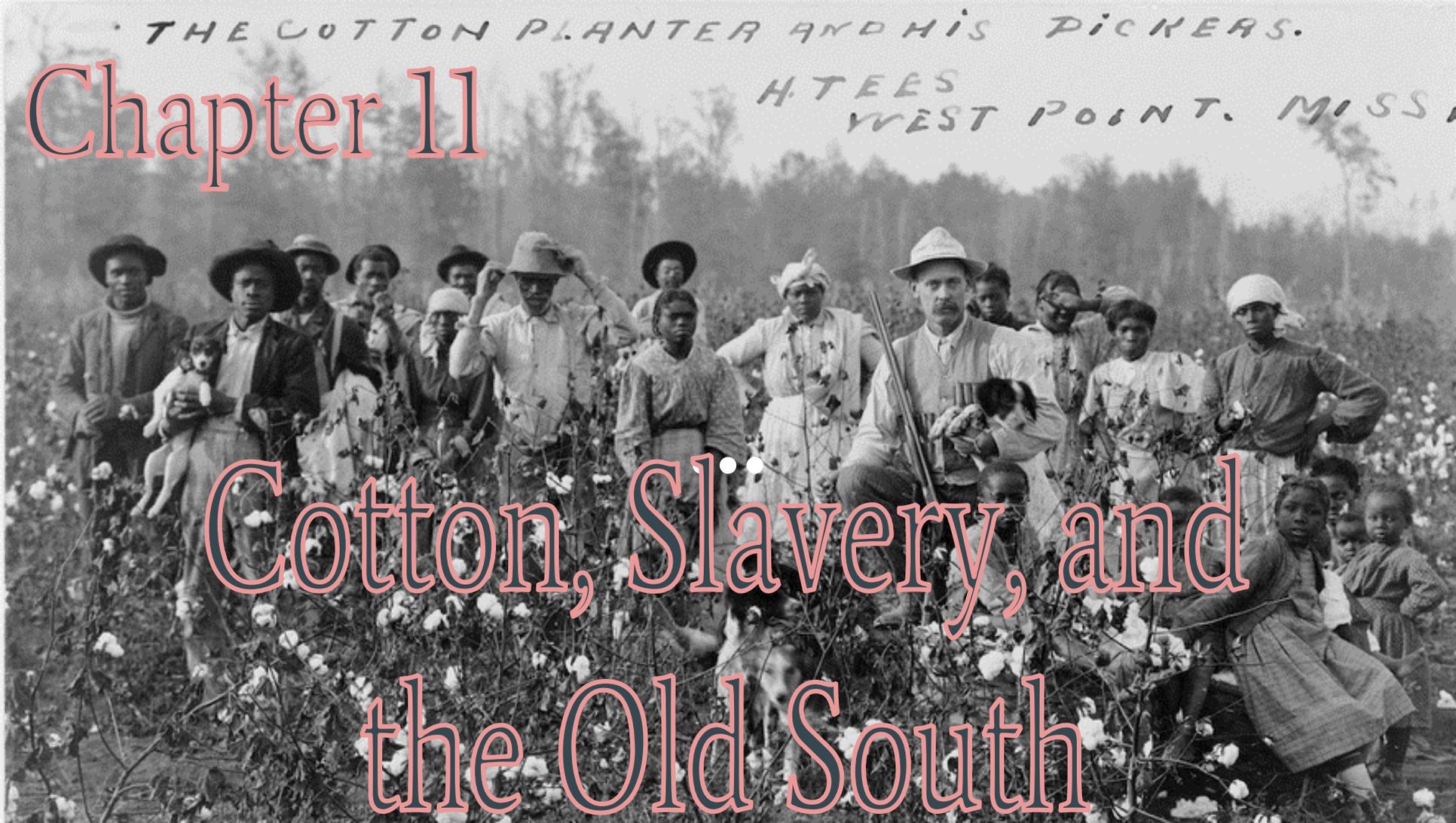


THE COTTON PLANTER AND HIS PICKERS.

H. TEES  
WEST POINT, MISS.

# Chapter 11



Cotton, Slavery, and  
the Old South

“Cotton is king”

- SOUTHERN PROCLAMATION



A close-up photograph of cotton bolls on a branch. The bolls are white and fluffy, with some showing the brown, papery husks. The background is dark and out of focus, showing more branches and leaves.

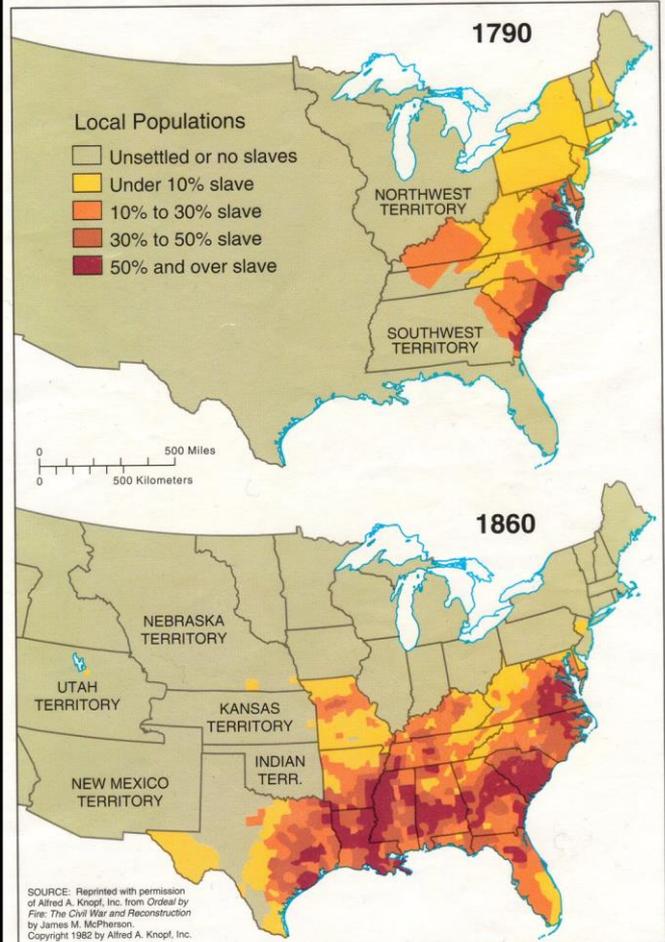
# The Cotton Economy

# Why Cotton?

- Tobacco market = unstable
  - New crops:
    - Wheat: Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina
    - Rice: South Carolina, Georgia, Florida
    - Sugar: Gulf Coast
- Short staple cotton overshadowed all other products being grown in South
  - Could grow successfully in a variety of climates and soils



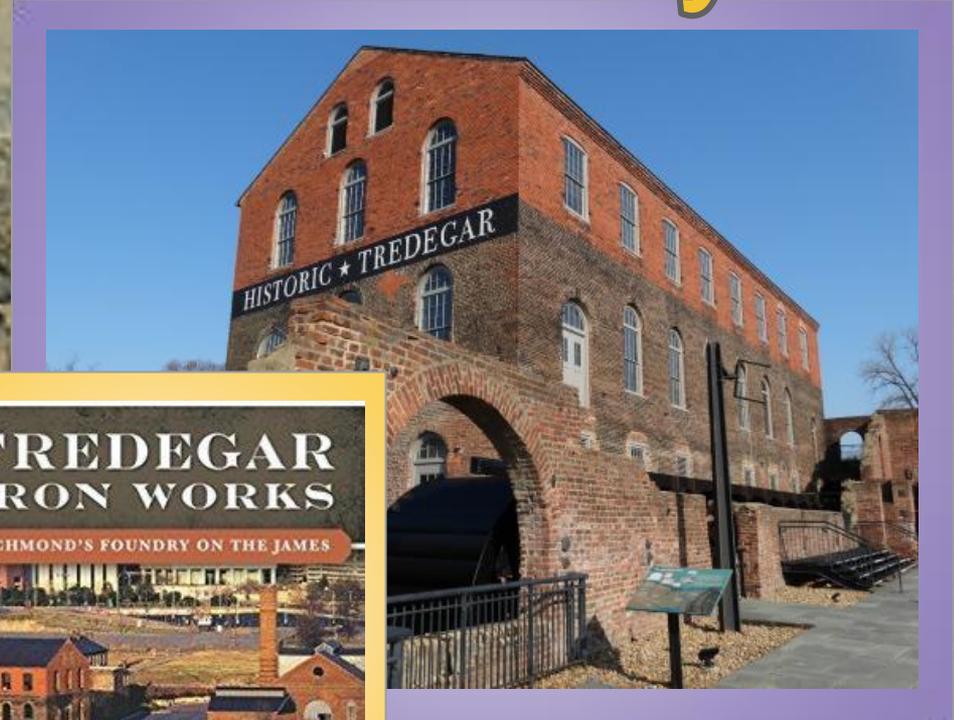
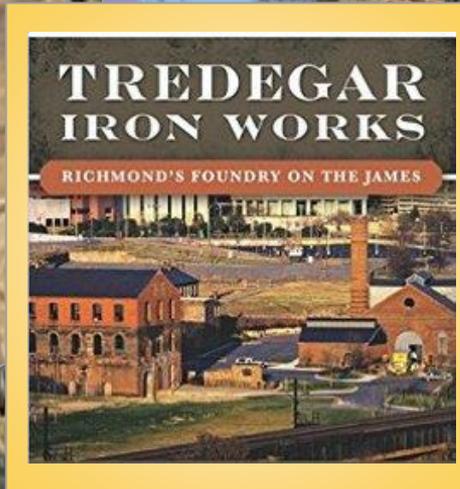
# The "Deep South"



- The “Deep South” was an area where cotton production was the dominant contributor to the economy
  - Used to be called the “Lower South”
  - Also referred to as “Cotton Kingdom”

# Southern Industry

- Industry in the South was insignificant, as their economy was primarily agrarian
- Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond was the equivalent of a northern factory



# The Rise of "King Cotton"

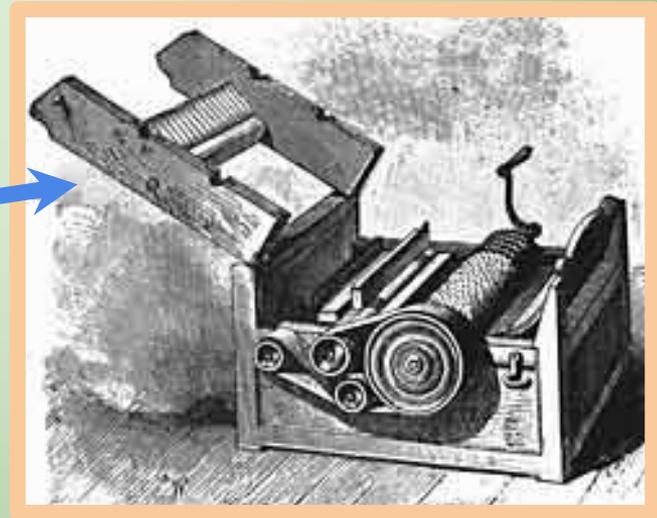
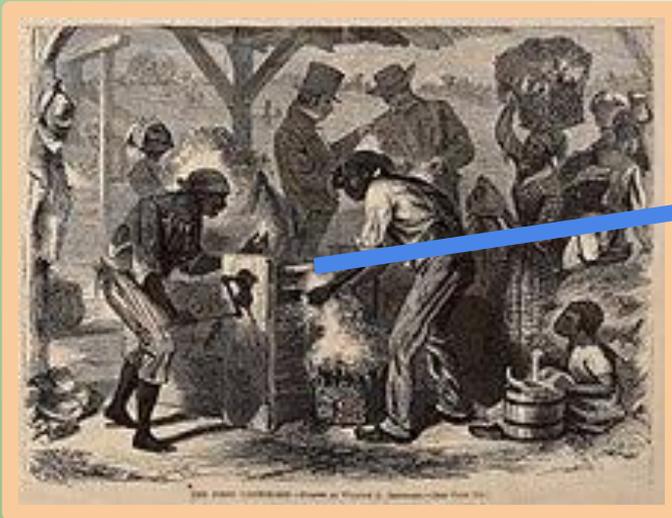


- High demand for cotton due to growth of textile industry
  - 1820: 500,000 bales/year
  - 1850: 3 million bales/year
  - 1860: 5 million bales/year
  - By the time of the Civil War, cotton constituted 2/3 of total trade export of US and was bringing in \$200 million/year

Scene on a Cotton Plantation.

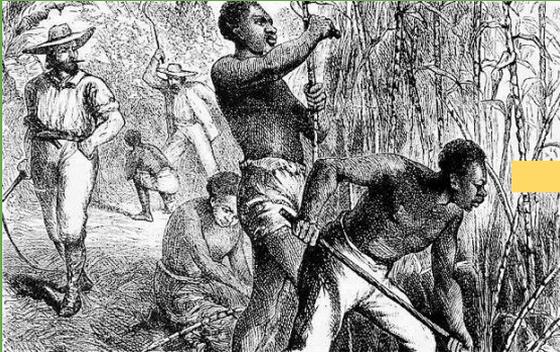
# The Cotton Gin

- The cotton gin was invented by Eli Whitney in 1794
  - Separates seeds from raw cotton fibers
  - Increased agricultural development of South
  - Expanded slavery because more cotton could be planted



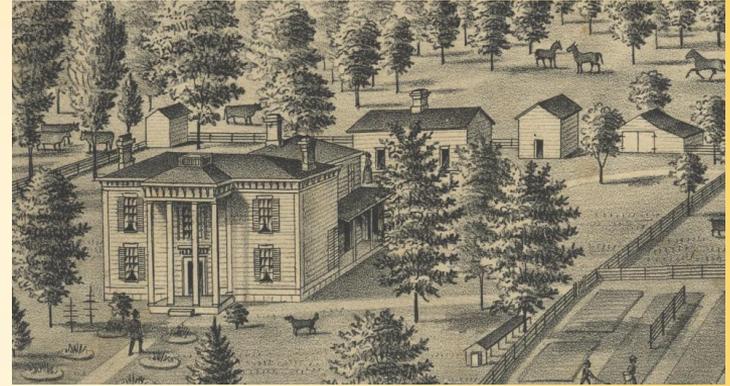
# Growth of Slavery

- From 1820 - 1860, there was enormous growth in the slave population in the “Deep South”
  - Alabama: 41,000 to 435,000
  - Mississippi: 32,000 to 436,000
- Many slaves moved from the Upper South to cotton states



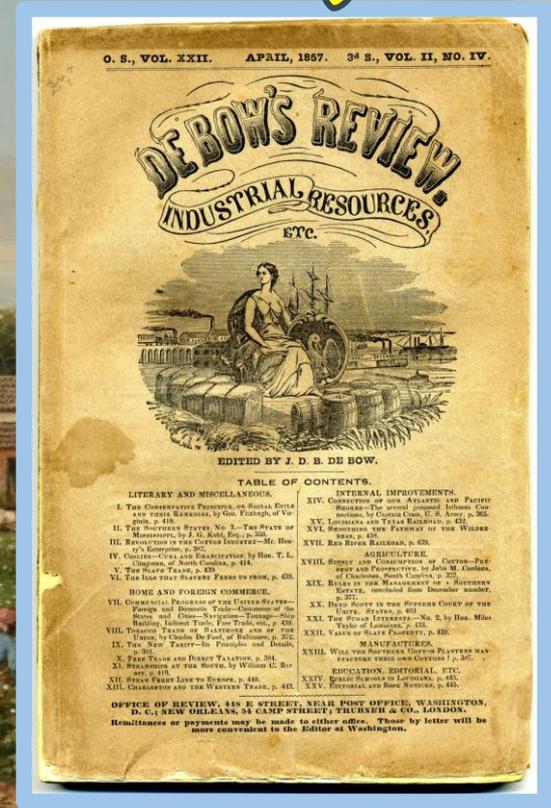
# Infrastructure Issues

- South had rudimentary financial system
- Too dependent on plantation economy
- Inadequate transportation system
  - The North had roads, canals, railroads
  - South did NOT have these investments



# Southern Economy

- De Bow's Review was created by James De Bow in response to the South's lack of industrialization
  - Advocated commercial expansion, southern nationalism, and economic independence from the north



O. S., VOL. XXII. APRIL, 1857. 3d S., VOL. II, NO. IV.

## DE BOW'S REVIEW INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES ETC.



EDITED BY J. D. B. DE BOW.

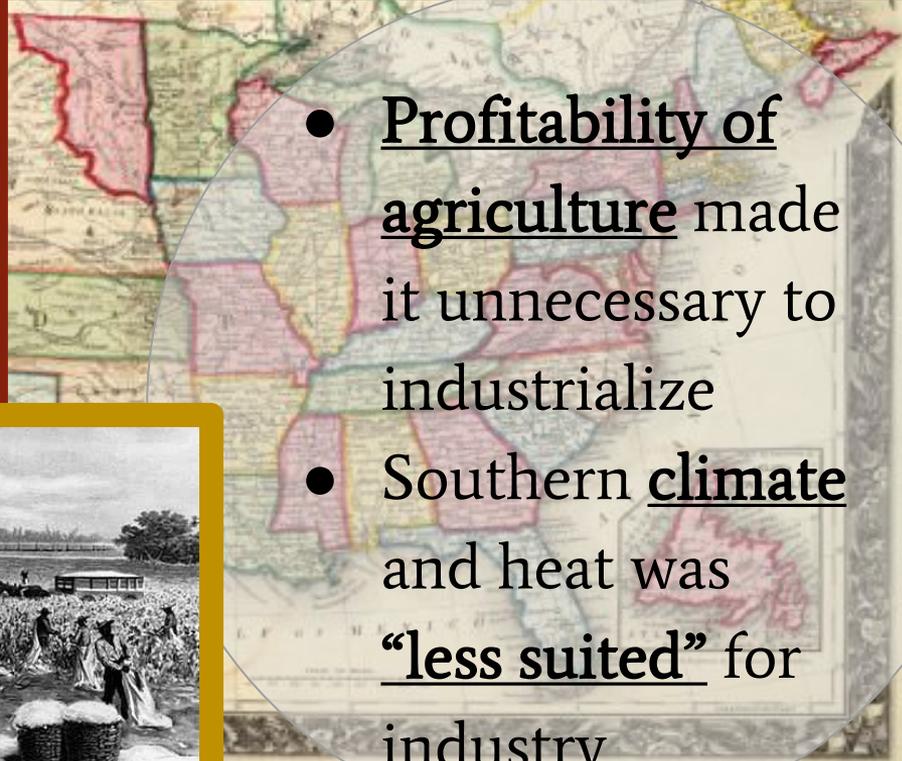
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OFFICE OF REVIEW, 418 E STREET, NEAR FOUNTAIN OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C. NEW ORLEANS, 26 CANAL STREET, THURSDAY, 6th, JANUARY.

Remittances or payments may be made to either office. Those by letter will be more convenient to the Editor at Washington.

# Geographical Differences



- Profitability of agriculture made it unnecessary to industrialize
- Southern climate and heat was “less suited” for industry



# Social Differences



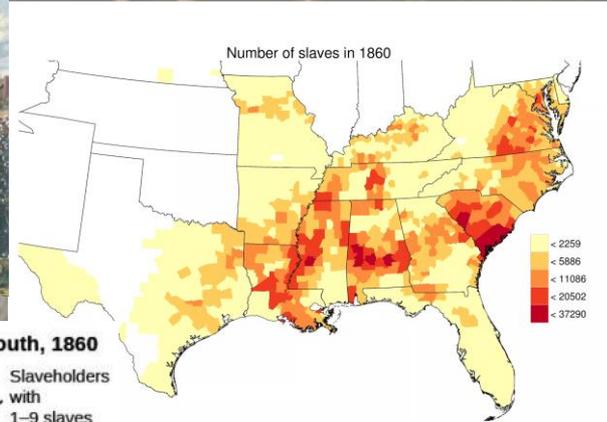
- White southerners viewed themselves as cavaliers, not yankees (like the North)
  - Did not want to work hard
  - Concerned with refined lifestyles rather than rapid growth

# WHITE SOCIETY IN THE SOUTH

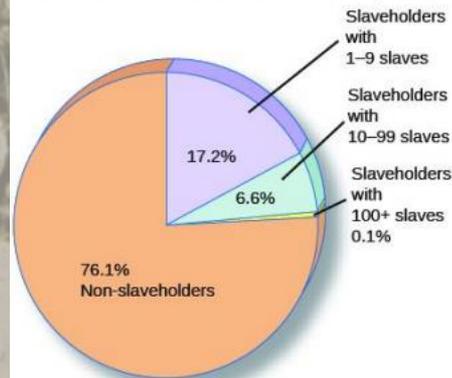


# WHITE SOCIETY IN THE SOUTH

- Despite popular belief, only a small minority of southern whites actually owned slaves
  - Slaves only accounted for around **one fourth** of the southern population
  - Only a small portion of slave owners owned a substantial number of slaves



White Class Structure in the South, 1860



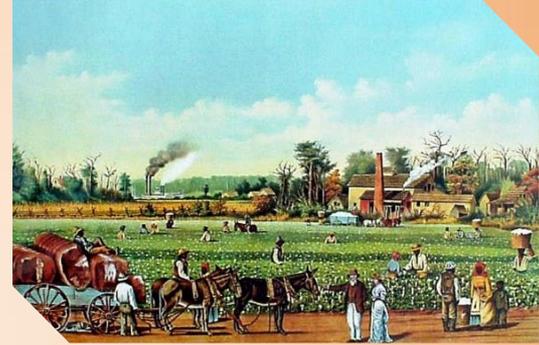
# THE PLANTER CLASS



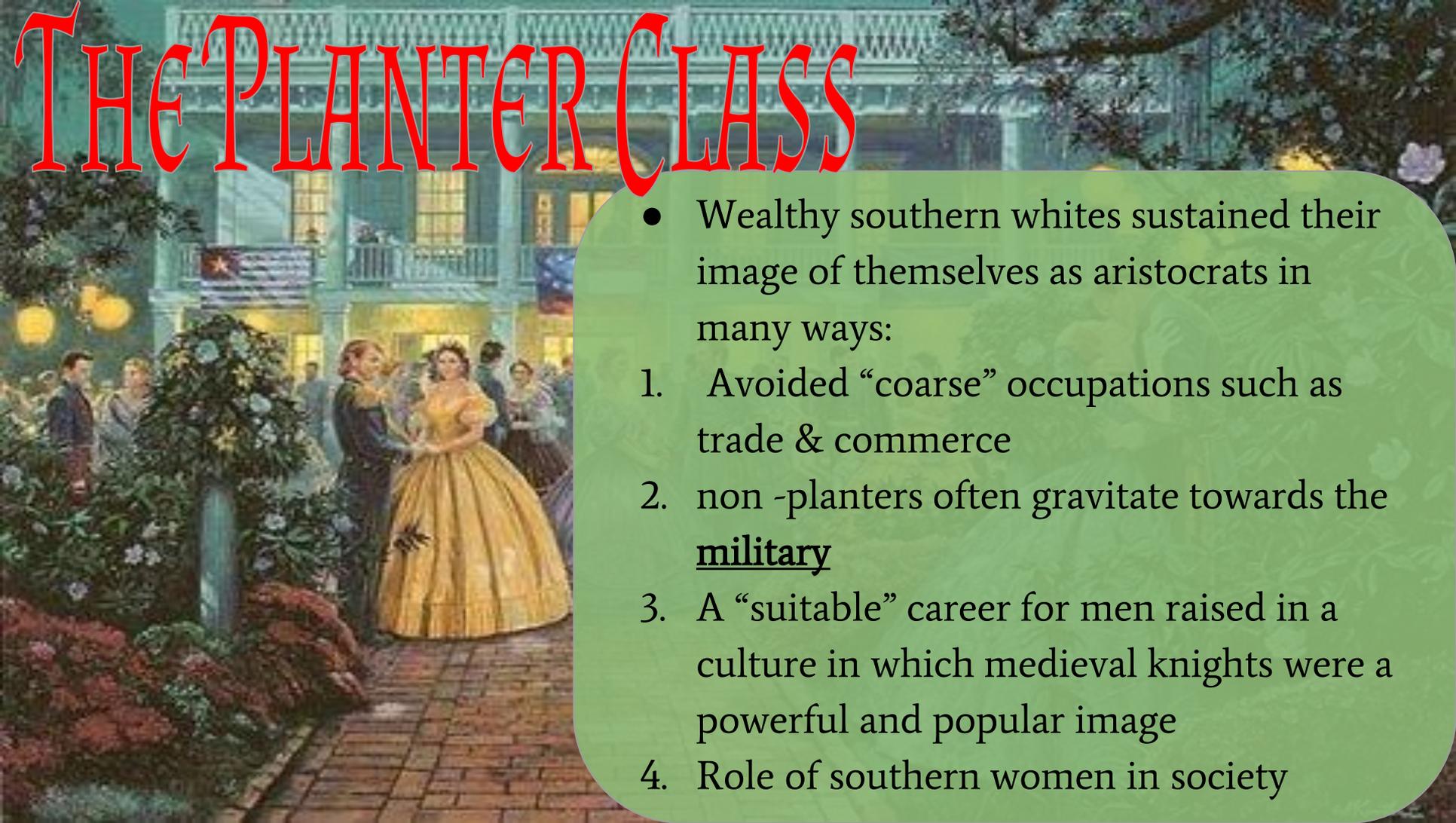
- The South was seen as a society dominated by great plantations and wealthy landowner planters because of the planter aristocracy
- They stood at the apex of society and dominated the political, economic, and social life of the region

# THE PLANTER CLASS

- Compared themselves to the old upper classes of true aristocracies such as those of England and Europe
  - Unlike the myth of the “cavalier” image and true aristocracies, planters in the cotton-growing areas of the South were typically new to their wealth and power
- Like the industrial business of the North, growing staple crops was a risky and competitive business to be in

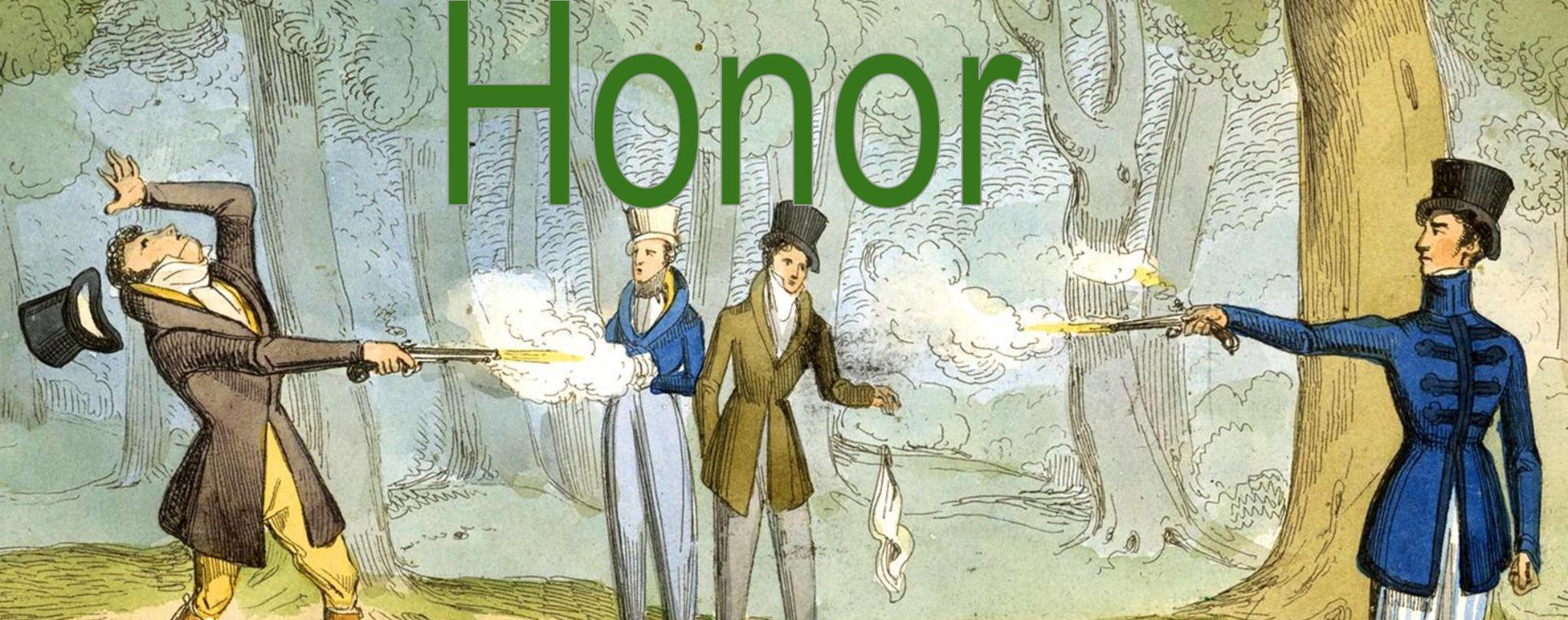


# THE PLANTER CLASS

A painting of a grand plantation house at night. The house is a large, two-story building with a prominent porch and balcony, illuminated from within. In the foreground, a group of people in formal 19th-century attire are gathered on a brick path. A woman in a large, yellow, ruffled dress is the central figure, surrounded by other guests. The scene is set in a lush garden with various plants and flowers.

- Wealthy southern whites sustained their image of themselves as aristocrats in many ways:
  1. Avoided “coarse” occupations such as trade & commerce
  2. non -planters often gravitate towards the military
  3. A “suitable” career for men raised in a culture in which medieval knights were a powerful and popular image
  4. Role of southern women in society

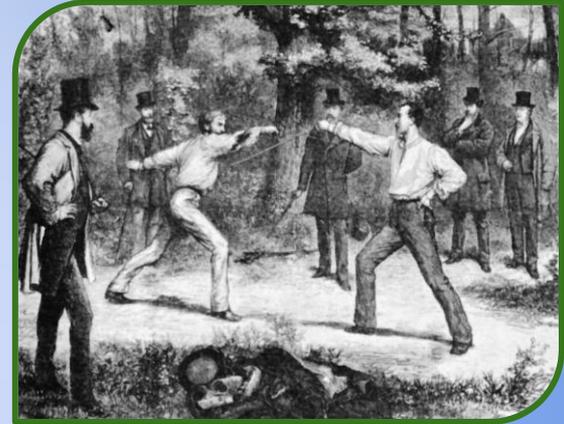
# Honor



- White males adopted an elaborate code of chivalry, which obligated them to defend their “honor,” -- often through dueling
  - White males wanted a public appearance of dignity and authority

# Honor

- South Carolina congressman Preston Brooks savagely beat Senator Charles Sumner with a cane
  - In south, seen as acting wholly with honor
  - In North, seen as a savage
- Code of behavior: avenging insults was a social necessity in southern society
  - avenging insults to white southern women was most important obligation of a white southern “gentleman”



# THE "SOUTHERN LADY"

- Lives centered around the home
  - hostess for their husbands
  - Nurturing mothers for children
- little job opportunity outside the home
- on larger plantations, white women became "plantation mistresses":
  - ornaments to their husbands
  - not involved in the economy or society
  - Women played key role on modest farms



# THE "SOUTHERN LADY"

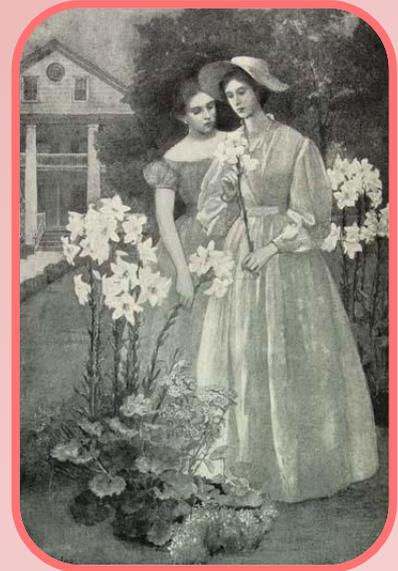
- Particular importance to “defense” of women
  - White men were more dominant in South
- less education than northern counterparts
  - 1/4 of white women over twenty were illiterate
  - Few women had more than a basic education



“Women, like children, have but one right, and that is the right to protection. The right to protection involves the obligation to obey” -  
George Fitzhugh (1850s)

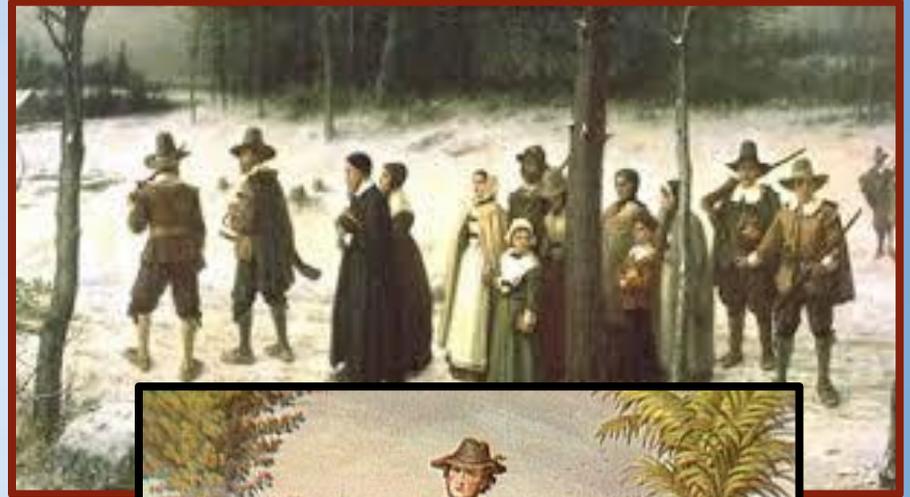
# THE "SOUTHERN LADY"

- Other burdens on the “southern lady”
  - birth rate was 20% higher than rest of nation
  - Infant mortality rate was higher
  - Slave labor had mixed impacts
    - Did not have to do arduous work
    - Threatened relationships with husbands
- Most women defended the special virtues of the southern way of life and the class lines



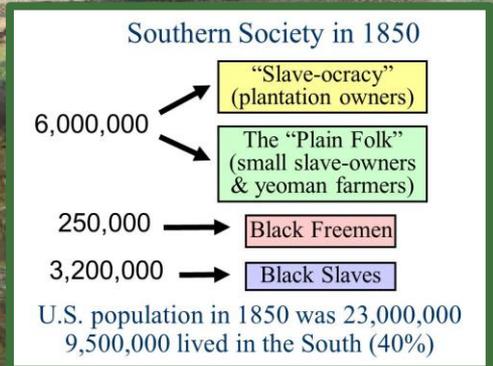
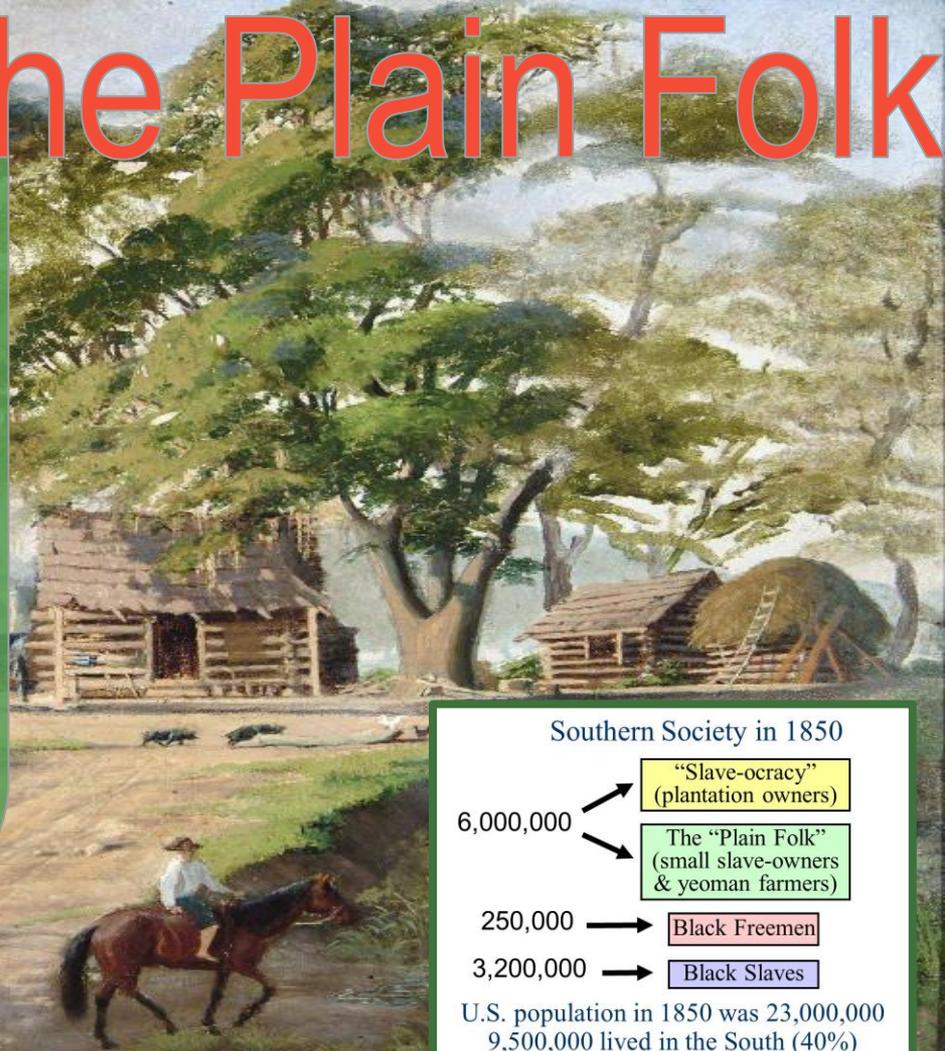
# The Plain Folk

- The typical white southern yeoman farmer, called the “plain folk,” who owned few or no slaves
- Many devoted themselves to subsistence farming or small cotton farms



# The Plain Folk

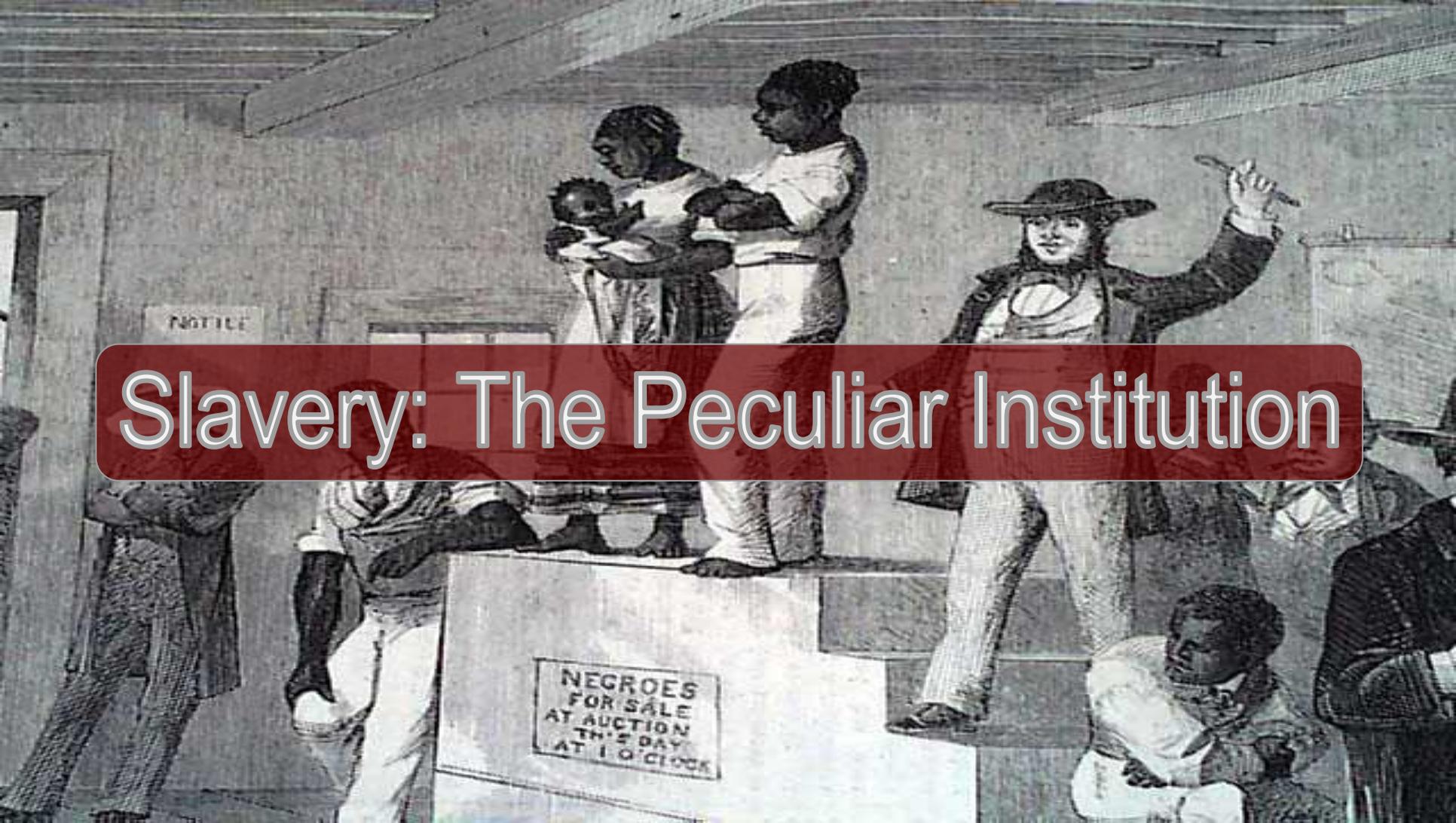
- Education was mainly for upper class men; left poorer whites with little hope for advancement
  - Higher proportion of whites were illiterate than in rest of country
- Did not resent rich planters because the rich provided plants and harvesting supplies, were markets for crops and livestock, and occasionally served as creditors



# The Plain Folk

- Nonslaveholding whites, known as “Hill People,” lived in hill country and backcountry in the South and opposed the traditional southern values and the planter elite
  - Most isolated, practiced simple subsistence farming, & had a proud sense of seclusion
  - Their society was defined by personal freedoms and isolations





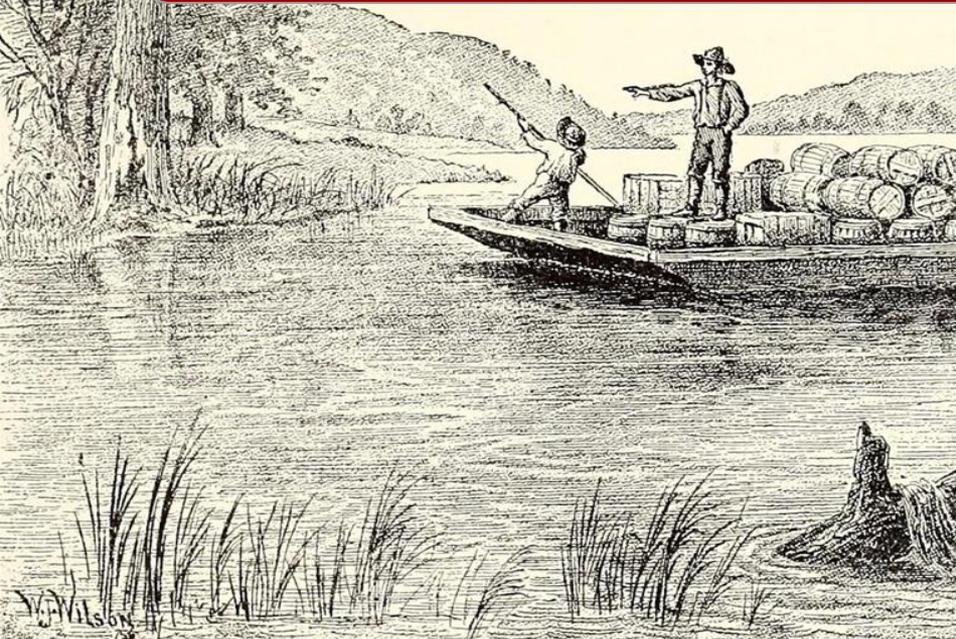
# Slavery: The Peculiar Institution

# SLAVERY: THE “PECULIAR INSTITUTION”

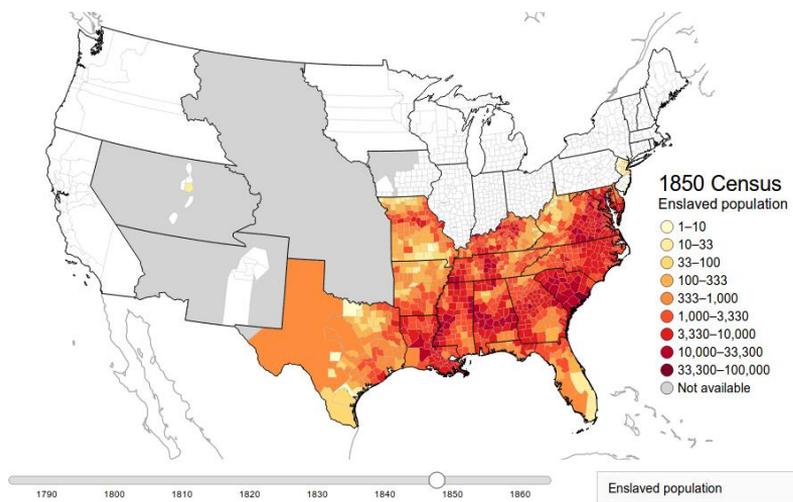
The South was the only area in the Western World where slavery still existed

Slavery isolated the South from the rest of American society

- As isolation increased, commitment to defend the institution did as well



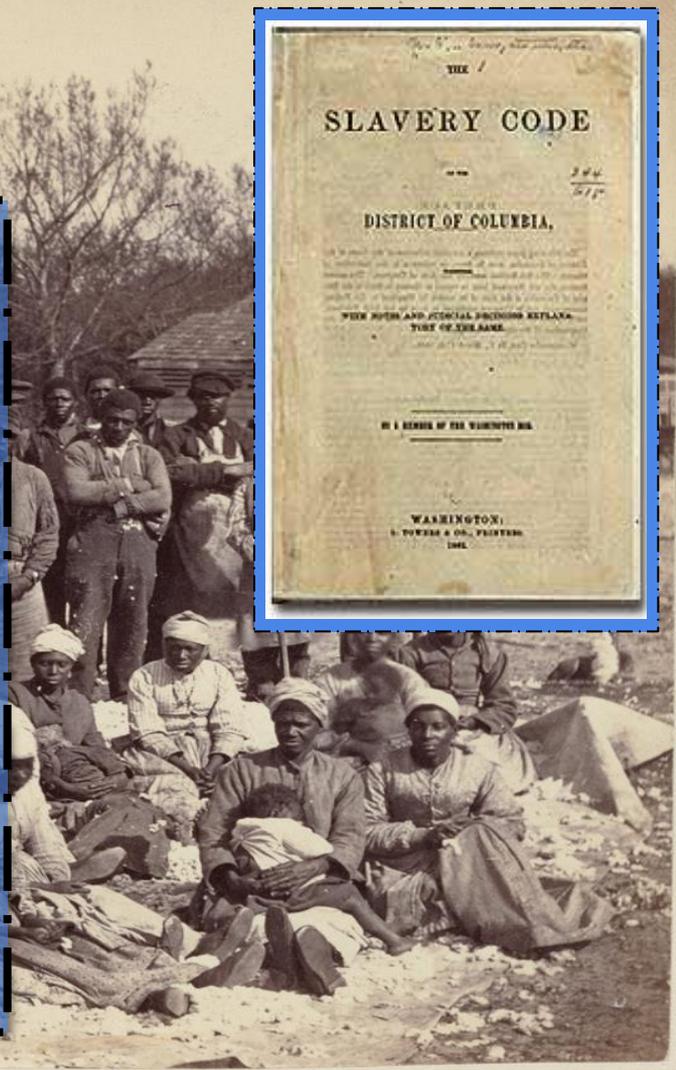
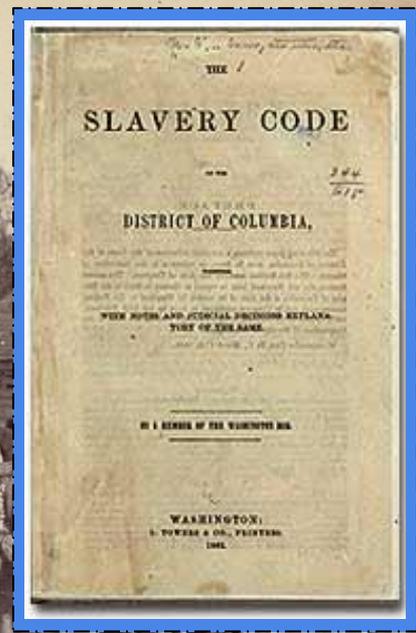
The Spread of U.S. Slavery, 1790–1860



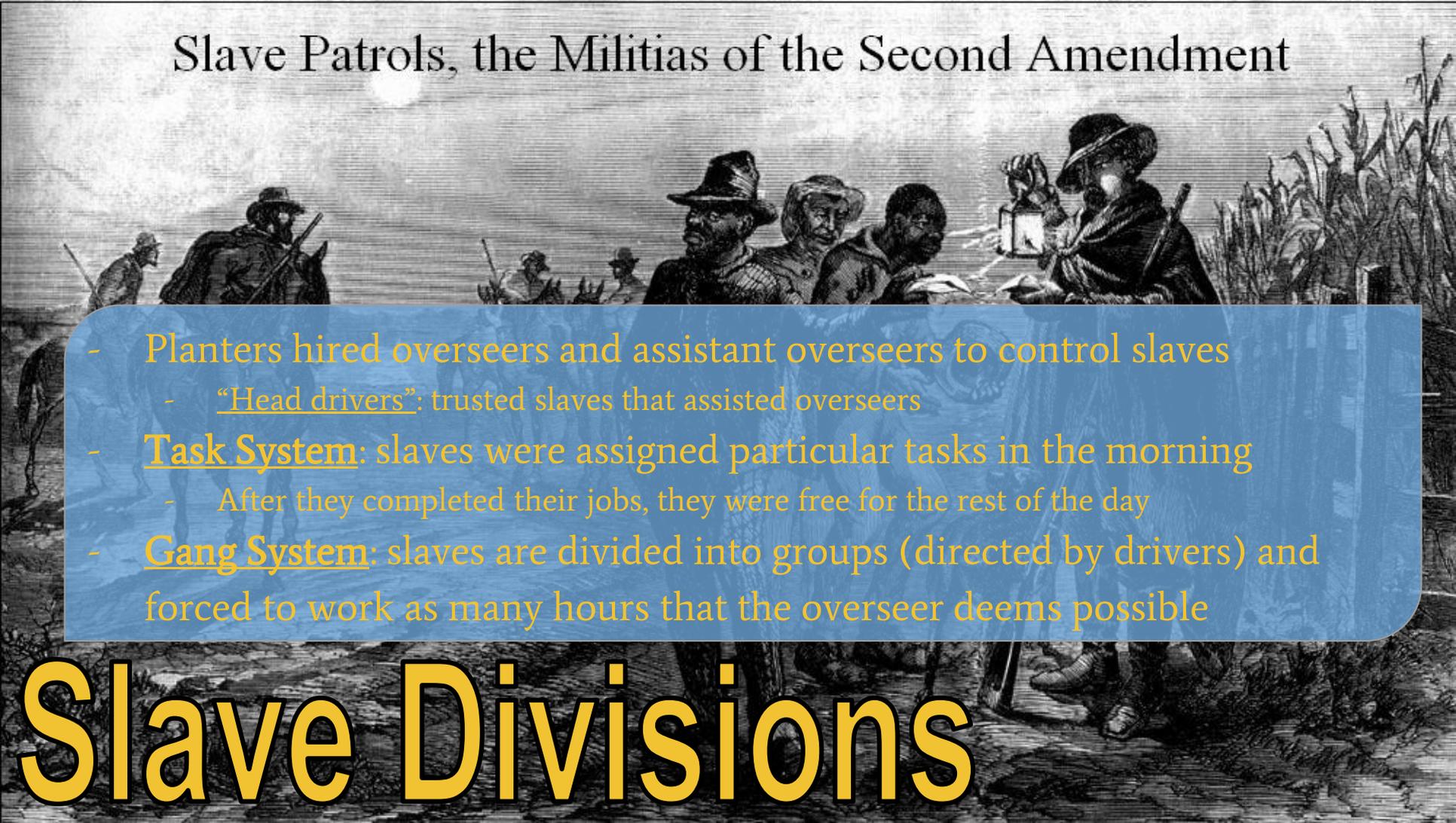
# Slave Codes

1. No slave could hold property
2. No slave could leave their Masters' premises without permission
3. No slave could be out after dark
4. Slaves cannot congregate outside of church
5. Slaves cannot carry firearms
6. A slave may never strike a white person, even in self defense
7. Slaves are prohibited to learn how to read and write
8. Slave marriages or divorces are not legalized

- Enforcement of these laws were uneven



# Slave Patrols, the Militias of the Second Amendment

- 
- Planters hired overseers and assistant overseers to control slaves
    - “Head drivers”: trusted slaves that assisted overseers
  - Task System: slaves were assigned particular tasks in the morning
    - After they completed their jobs, they were free for the rest of the day
  - Gang System: slaves are divided into groups (directed by drivers) and forced to work as many hours that the overseer deems possible

# Slave Divisions



Lived in slave quarters near their master's house

Ate cornmeal, salt pork, and molasses

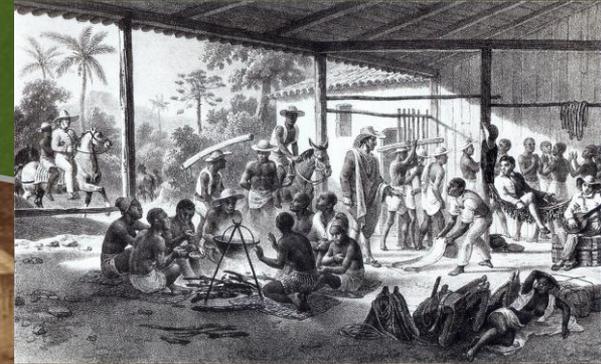
- Many were weak, thus making it harder to perform arduous labor

Received cheap clothing and sometimes shoes

Began working as small children

High mortality rates caused a slower increase in the black population

- Efforts to preserve slave health began
- hired help for more dangerous tasks



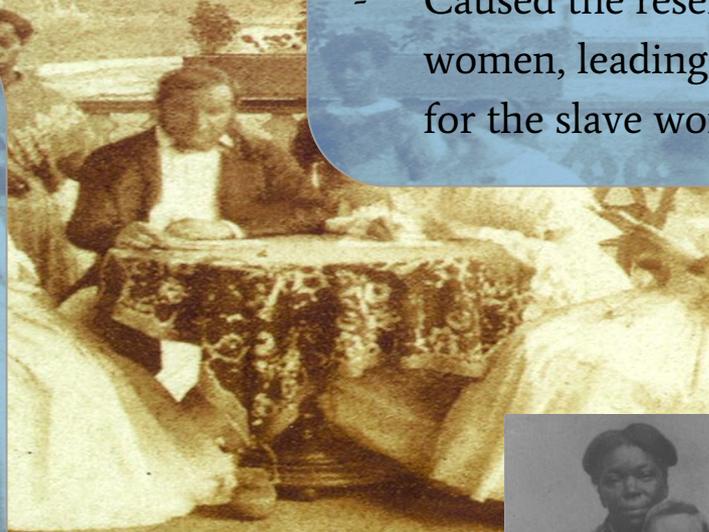
# Life Under Slavery

# Slave Women

- Many were “healers” and midwives
- Labored in the field with men
- Also took up a traditional women’s role
  - Cooking, cleaning, bearing children
  - Most women were single mothers as fathers were often separated
- Some women worked as household slaves, sometimes even living in their owner’s houses

Many women were pressured into sexual relationships with their masters and white overseers

- Caused the resentment of white women, leading to cruel punishments for the slave women

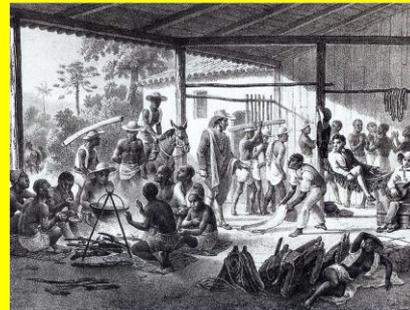


# Slavery in the Cities



- Slaves generally worked as blacksmiths, carpenters, or on construction

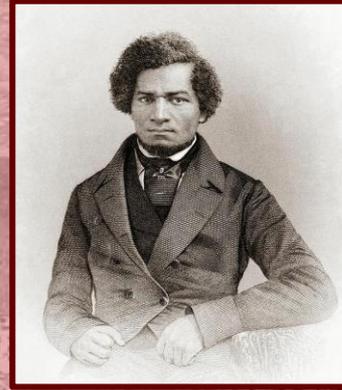
- In the cities, masters had a harder time supervising and profiting from slaves at the same time
  - Urban slaves had freedom to mingle with free blacks and whites
- Many city slave owners sold their slaves to the countryside in fear of insurrection



250,000 free blacks at the beginning of the Civil War

Tightened restrictions on free blacks

- Result of Nat Turner's Revolt
- Growing population of free blacks
  - more threatening/dangerous to whites



Freed blacks still lived in extreme poverty



Free African Americans

# The Slave Trade

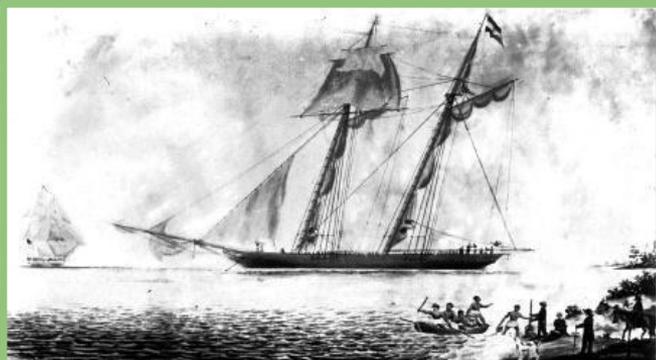


- Moved by foot, train, steamers
- Bid on them like they were livestock
- Women were more expensive than men

## Foreign slave trade

Laws restricting the number of imported slaves

- Still smuggled in
- Resistance to smuggling (Amistad)



# SLAVE RESISTANCE

Slave owners argued that blacks were content being slaves

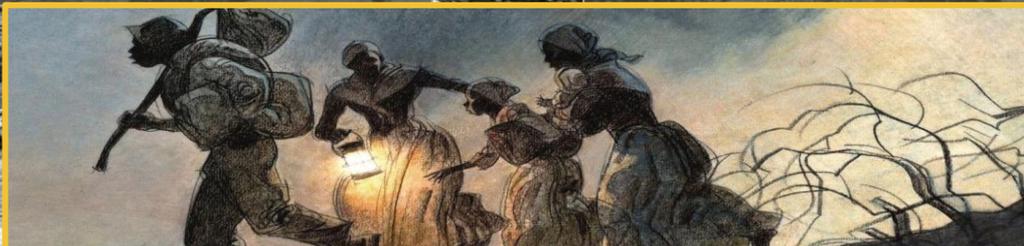
- Sambo: acted like the proper slave (facade)
- Rebel: could not accept or accomodate
  - Denmark Vessey & Nat Turner Rebellions

Some slaves ran away to the North or Canada

-underground railroad

Greatest form of resistance was the refusal to work hard

- Losing or breaking tools
- Performed tasks improperly





# The Culture of Slavery

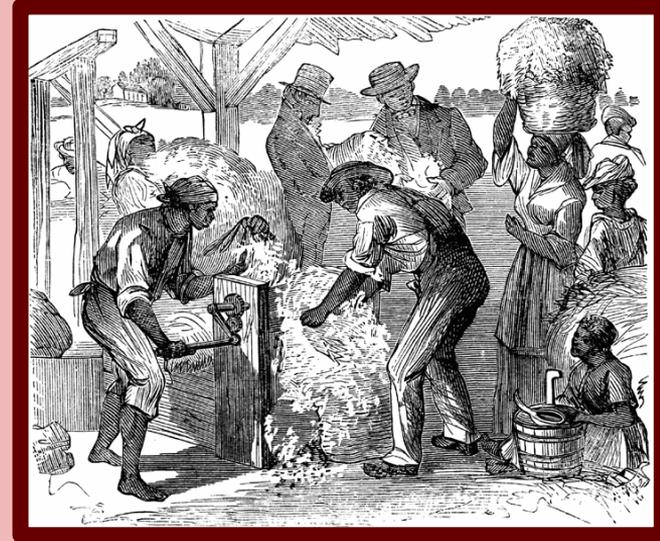
# Resistance vs Adaptation

- Resistance was a small part of slave response
- Adaptation was more common
  - Recognition that there was no realistic alternative
  - Developed their own culture that allowed a sustenance of racial pride and unity



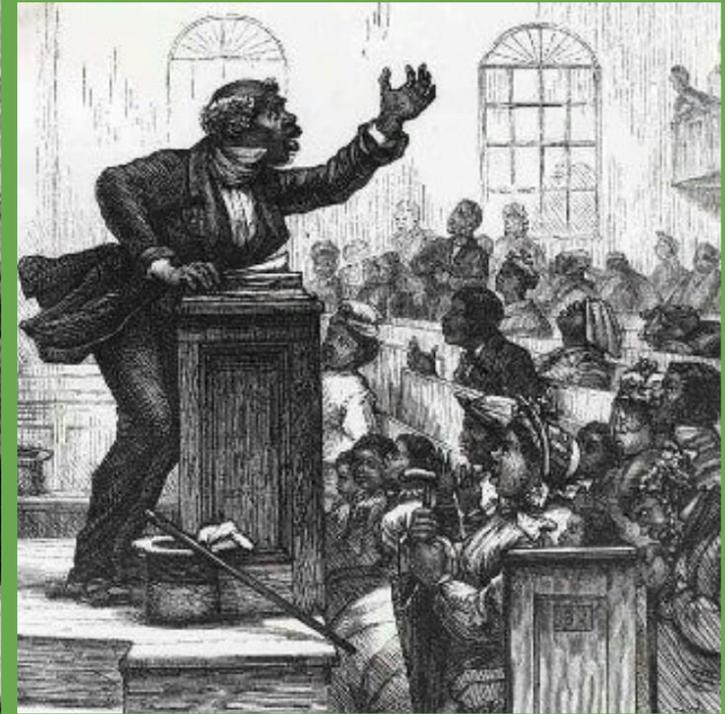
# Slave Language

- Pidgin was a simple, common language that retained some African words but drew primarily from English



# Slave Music

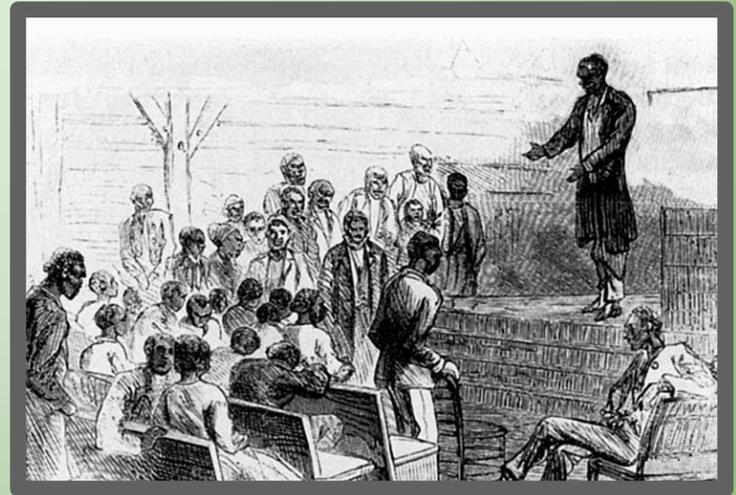
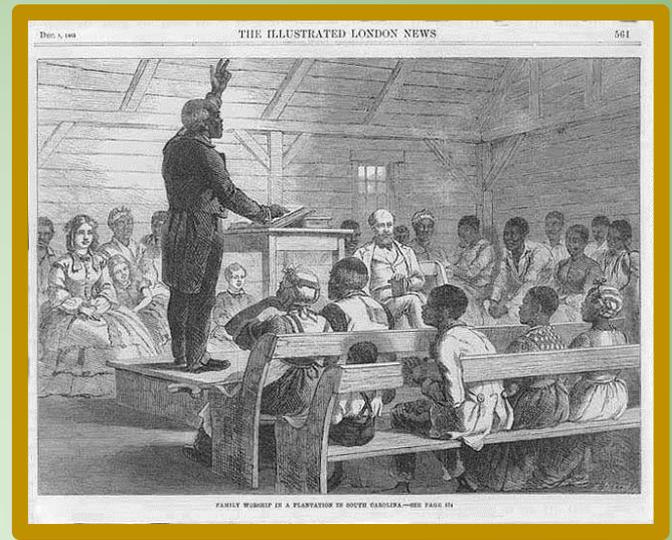
- Voice and music were incredibly important to slaves
- Field workers often used songs to pass the time
  - Created emotionally rich and politically challenging music while they worked and in religious services



PICKING COTTON ON A GEORGIA PLANTATION.

# Religion

- Slaves were made the same denomination as their masters
- However, they bent religion to their conditions of bondage
- Christianity for them was more joyful and affirming than white counterparts
  - Emphasized dream of freedom and deliverance



# Family Structure



- “Nuclear family” was the dominant kinship model among slave families
- Growth of Paternalism
- Marriages were very strong when they occurred
  - 1/3 of slave families were broken apart by slave trade
  - As a result, extended kinship networks including spouses, aunts, uncles, etc. were formed

# Cultural Affects

- North was creating a rapidly developing commercial-industry, while the South expanded its agrarian economy without making any fundamental changes
- The cotton economy created many fortunes
  - Caused the dominance of the planter class
- Slavery prevented social fluidity in the South

