

# The American Pageant

## 15<sup>th</sup> Edition

### Chapter 16 notes

### The South and the Slavery Controversy

#### I. “Cotton is king!”

1. Cotton brought quick profits; it made the nation's wealth grow.
  - Cotton was  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all American exports after 1840 and the south produced more than half of the world's supply of cotton.
2. Britain depended on America for its cotton.

#### II. The Planter “Aristocracy”

1. The south was more of an oligarchy than a democracy before the civil war.
  - Only some wealthy few influenced the government.
2. The women slaves were commanded by the slave owner's wives.
  - Relationships between them ranged from affectionate to brutal.
  - Almost no women believed in abolition.

#### III. Slaves of the Slave System

1. The economic structure of the south became monopolistic and people eager for profit sold their lands and moved on west after using up the soil.
2. There was a financial instability in the plantation system
  - Dependence on a one-crop economy was dangerous.
3. The south was envious of the prosperous north.

#### IV. The Whole Majority

1. The majority of the slave owners were the small-farm slave owners; however they didn't own most of the slaves.
  - $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the south white population didn't own slaves but were still for slavery because they liked knowing they were better off socially than someone else and liked being able to hope that one day they'd own slaves too.
  - They were known as “poor white trash” and “hillbillies.”
2. The mountain whites lived in the Appalachians away from civilization; they hated the southern whites and their gangs of blacks.

## **V. Free blacks: Slaves without masters**

1. The free blacks in the south were kind of a “third race”.
  - o Some had been emancipated, some were mulatto children and some had bought their freedom. Some even owned their own slaves.
  - o They were prohibited from certain jobs and from testifying against whites.
2. They weren’t liked in the north either.
  - o They weren’t allowed in some states, not allowed to vote, not allowed in public schools and were not liked by the Irish.

## **VI. Plantation Slavery**

1. Importation of black slaves was illegal but the price of “black ivory” was so high slaves were still being smuggled in.
  - o Most slaves were the children of slaves in America.
  - o Slaves were considered investments and slave owners took care that the slaves didn’t die.
2. Slave auctions were brutal - animals and slaves were sold in the same way.
  - o Families were split apart.

## **VII. Life under the Lash**

1. Slaves usually worked from dawn to dusk in the fields under the watch of an overseer with a whip.
  - o They had no civil or political rights.
2. Most slaves were used in the region that was furiously growing cotton called the black belt made up of South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana.
  - o Slaves managed to retain some family life in the Deep South and didn’t intermarry.
  - o African roots were visible in their religious practices.

## **VIII. The Burden of Bondage**

1. Slavery was degrading- deprived of dignity and independence.  
They were denied education because reading and writing brought ideas, and the owners wanted to keep them dim witted.
2. Slavery was known as the “peculiar institution”.
  - o Slaves tried to sabotage their masters and always freedom.
3. Rebellions and people trying to escape were stopped, and sometimes caught and killed.
4. Slavery tainted the whites too.
  - o They were made more cruel and paranoid.

## **IX. Early Abolitionism**

1. Quakers were some of the first to advocate antislavery
2. The American Colonization Society was founded in 1817 to send slaves back to Africa-  
They sent some back to Liberia in west Africa but by the 1860’s most slaves were

American born and didn't want to be sent to a strange country they didn't know much about.

3. The Abolitionist Movement really expanded in the 1830's.
  - o The second great awakening helped people notice the sin of slavery.
  - o Theodore Dwight Weld was an abolitionist who spoke against slavery he wrote a pamphlet against slavery "American slavery as it is" and influenced "Uncle Tom's Cabin".

## **X. Radical Abolitionism**

1. William Lloyd Garrison published "The Liberator"- an anti-slavery newspaper in 1831.
2. Other abolitionists founded the American Anti-slavery society in 183.
3. Black abolitionist advocated an end to white supremacy.
  - o Sojourner Truth a free black woman, fought for emancipation and women's rights.
  - o Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery was a gifted orator, writer and editor. He lectured widely for his cause and looked to politics to end slavery.

## **XI. The South Lashes Back**

1. Virginia defeated emancipation proposals and slave states tightened their restrictions.
  - o Garrison was condemned a terrorist because of his newspaper.
  - o States were making emancipation illegal.
2. The nullification crisis caused a decrease in abolitionism.
  - o White pro-slave owners defended slavery by saying it was a positive good thing supported by the bible.
3. The southerners compared their slaves with the northern factory workers
4. The Gag Resolution required all antislavery appeals to be disabled without debate- It was basically an attack on freedom of speech.
  - o Antislavery propaganda was burnt.

## **XII. The Abolitionist Impact in the North**

1. Northerners didn't think slavery should be abolished.
  - o Textile mills depended on the cotton raised by the slaves.
  - o The northerners didn't want a disrupted labor system.
2. Mobs broke out and killed abolitionists
3. Few people wanted to abolish slavery outright but a growing number opposed extending it to the western territories.
  - o These people were called the "free soilers" and their numbers grew as the civil war approached.

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