

Name: _____

Colonial Perspectives: Large Land Owners

The Southern colonies, which were Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia were primarily driven by large land owners and slaves. Over 75% of slaves in America lived in the Southern colonies. While the Northern colonies had hard working yeoman farmers, the Southern colonies had large land owners and slaves. These large land owners made large amounts of money off of their crops. They grew tobacco and cotton and sold it to the other colonies and England for high prices. The large land owners became very rich and took positions of authority in their towns and colonies. They were getting rich by having slaves do a majority of their work. They would even buy slaves to watch over the other slaves so that they did not have that responsibility. These slaves were called overseers.

Plantation life was far from wonderful for some though. In the South people were either very rich or very poor. There was no middle ground. The wealthy, large land owners often had nice houses with their land stretching out as far as they could see. They had servants and slaves to meet all of their needs. However, they were very far away from other people. Their children could not go to school because there was not a public school. They were far from doctors, shops, artisans, and other neighbors. If a child was at the age to go to school the wealthy plantation owner had to pay for a private tutor or allow his wife or slaves to educate the child.

Even though the large land owners were rich and owned slaves they still had to work on their plantations. Some hired overseers but still had a hand in the operations of the plantation. They would enjoy hobbies like hunting but would have to return to make sure the work on the plantation was going smoothly. But still, over half of the population in the Southern colonies, like Georgia were slaves. The large land owners acquired great deals of money and power by having slaves work hard for them.



Name: _____

Colonial Perspectives: Mr. Ellerby

It's another day at the plantation. People in England don't understand what life is like for us here in the colonies. Even though I have more money than anyone within a two days ride from me, I still have to work. I bought slaves, paid for indentured servants, and even hired a blacksmith and tutor to live on the plantation but it still won't run without me. Today I had to make rounds in the fields. The slaves haven't been putting in the effort that I need them to and it is starting to cost me. I have a tobacco farm and tobacco sells like gold in England! I can't grow it fast enough to satisfy all the buyers. But my slaves keep demanding more help or more food. They don't seem to understand that I have to pay for more slaves or more food and without more money from my crops I won't do it.

My wife Elizabeth hates living in the colonies. We didn't come with the first settlers so I remind her that we did not have to fight with Indians or worry about starving to death. But she complains that there are no social activities and she's expected to work too much. She hates that we can't ride to town to the milliner for a new gown unless it's a long trip. And she especially hates that our children, Anna and Oliver, don't have any friends besides slave children. I don't know what to do about that though. We paid for a tutor to live on the plantation so that they can get a good education but I can't pay for other children to come live with them.

So today is another day of everyone being mad at me. My children are upset that they cannot go play with the slave children, my wife is upset that I cannot leave the plantation to drive to the nearest town, and the slaves are upset that I won't provide them with more food. I cannot please anyone, well except for my buyers in England who are eagerly awaiting their tobacco! And I plan on making them very happy and making myself very rich!

