

The Southern Colonies

One American's Story

In the 1640s fear and confusion spread through Maryland. A Puritan rebellion had been followed by the governor's death. Soldiers demanded their pay, but there was no money to pay them. No one had time to wait for instructions from the colony's owner, **Lord Baltimore**, who lived in England. So **Margaret Brent**, the governor's attorney, took action. First she rose before the Assembly to demand the right to vote. Because she was a woman, her request was denied. However, as the governor's attorney, she still had power. So to raise money to pay the troops, she sold Lord Baltimore's cattle. When Baltimore heard of this sale he was furious. The Assembly defended Brent's actions:

PRIMARY SOURCE

“It was better for [the] colony's safety at that time in her hands than in any man's else in the province. She rather deserved favor and thanks from your Honor.”

—letter to Lord Baltimore from the Maryland Assembly

Margaret Brent acted decisively at a time when few women had political power or many legal rights. But the colonies were a new world, where unusual circumstances often led colonists to play unfamiliar roles.

Lord Baltimore Founds Maryland

KEY QUESTION What kind of society was planned for Maryland?

In 1634, the second Southern colony, Maryland, was settled on the Chesapeake Bay. Maryland was also intended to be a new kind of society, free from the religious conflicts of Europe.

The Act of Toleration When Maryland was founded, Catholics and Protestants in Europe had been fighting each other for a century. In England many Anglicans, including King Charles I, sympathized with the Catholics. Charles supported the Catholic Lord Baltimore's plan for a colony where



Margaret Brent demands the right to vote.

Catholics would not be persecuted. He gave Maryland to Lord Baltimore as a **proprietary colony**, a colony governed by a single owner, or proprietor.

The first settlement, St. Mary's City, located on the Chesapeake Bay, became the capital. Colonists were allowed to elect an assembly, and in 1649 the **Act of Toleration** forbade religious persecution.

Maryland based its economy on growing tobacco, which required back-breaking work. The tobacco crop quickly used up nutrients in the soil, and workers had to clear more land. Planters were always searching for laborers. Most tobacco workers were either indentured servants or slaves.



Religious Conflict In Maryland The colony did not develop as planned. Some Catholics, such as Margaret Brent, did settle in Maryland. But they were outnumbered by Protestants. In 1645 Puritans tried to seize power in Maryland. Although order was restored, in 1654 Puritans dismissed Maryland's governor. They got rid of the Act of Toleration and replaced it with an anti-Catholic law. Eventually the act was restored. However, it was clear that achieving religious tolerance would be a difficult struggle.

 **PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS** Describe the kind of society planned for Maryland.

COMPARING Religious Groups

RELIGION IN THE EARLY COLONIES

In the 17th century, conflict between Catholics and Protestants divided Europeans. In England and its colonies, there were also disagreements among Protestants. These disagreements created a variety of religious groups.

 Protestants (do not recognize Pope's authority)				 Catholic (Pope leads church)
Quakers	Baptists	Puritans	Anglicans	
Kings and bishops have no authority.	Church & state should be separate.	No bishops; congregations make decisions.	King heads church. Bishops rule.	Bishops help govern.
silent prayer important	sermon important	sermon important	sermon & Catholic-style ritual	ritual important

CRITICAL THINKING Compare and Contrast Which Protestant denomination was most similar to Catholicism?

The Carolinas

KEY QUESTION What attracted settlers to the Carolinas?

During the 1640s England was torn by civil war and colonization stopped. In 1649, a Puritan republic was set up in England. Then, in 1660, the monarchy was restored, and Charles II became king. He rewarded eight supporters by giving them land for a new colony named Carolina.

Proprietors Plan Their Colony The proprietors, or owners, hoped to attract settlers by offering religious toleration, large land grants, and political representation. The northern part of Carolina was already populated by colonists from Virginia. The southern area was settled by English colonists who had been living in the West Indies. It was in this region that English settlers from Barbados built Charles Town (later called Charleston) in 1670.

The proprietors offered religious toleration to all Christians and Jews. After 1685, Charleston became a refuge for **Huguenots**, or French Protestants. Many Huguenots fled France to seek religious freedom in America.

Rice and Slavery In the 1690s, Carolina's colonists started exporting rice. They learned how to cultivate this crop from enslaved Africans, who had grown it in West Africa. Growing rice required a large labor force. So planters imported more enslaved Africans to do the work.

PRIMARY SOURCE

“Our Staple Commodity for some years has been Rice, and Tilling, planting, Hoeing, Reaping, Threshing, Pounding have all been done merely by the poor Slaves here.”

—letter from a South Carolina doctor, quoted in *American Colonies*

Slave labor helped make Carolina planters the richest **elite**, or high-ranking group, on the eastern seaboard. However, because they were so outnumbered by their slaves, this elite lived in constant fear of revolt.

Colonists also captured and enslaved Native Americans. As a result of this, and the taking of tribal lands, wars broke out between the settlers and Native American tribes, including the Tuscarora and Yamasee. The wars killed so many Native Americans that more lands were opened for the settlers.

The Colonists Rebel In 1691 a group of settlers forced the proprietors to establish a separate government and assembly in “North Carolina.” Colonists were unhappy that the proprietors did not provide enough military protection from the Spanish and Native Americans. To gain more military support from the king, in 1719 the colonists overthrew the colony’s proprietary rule. In 1729, both North Carolina and South Carolina became royal colonies, ruled by governors appointed by the king.

CAUSES AND EFFECTS Explain what attracted settlers to the Carolinas.



Reenactors portray slave life in the South.

Georgia

KEY QUESTION Why was Georgia founded?

In 1732, **James Oglethorpe** received a charter for Georgia, named after King George II. A year later Oglethorpe built the first settlement at Savannah.

Ethnic and Religious Diversity The colony was meant as a place where debtors and the poor could make a fresh start. It was hoped that such settlers would protect the English colonies against Spanish Florida to the south and French Louisiana to the west.

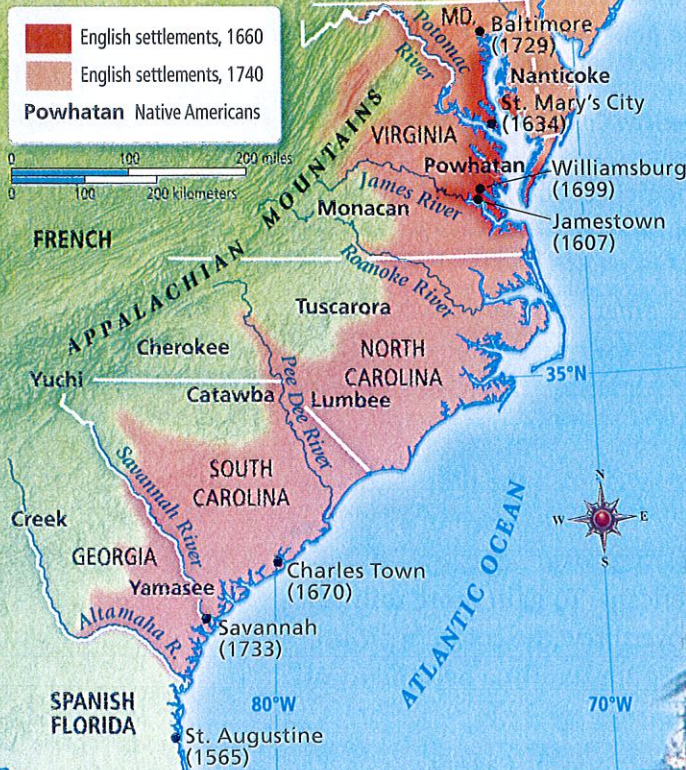
A population of great **diversity**, or variety, settled in Georgia. English, German, Swiss, and Scottish colonists arrived. All Protestant groups, as well as Jews, were welcome. However, Catholics were banned in case they might sympathize with Spanish Catholics in Florida.

Oglethorpe's Policies Oglethorpe set strict rules. He opposed large plantations and slavery because he wanted to help poor settlers establish small farms. He believed that a free population could better defend the colony against attack. He also feared that slave revolts might weaken the colony.

The colonists were unhappy with Oglethorpe's policies. They were envious of South Carolina's prosperity, which came from slave labor. In response, the trustees legalized slavery, and Georgia became a royal colony. Georgia turned into a plantation society like that of South Carolina.

SUMMARIZE Explain why Georgia was founded.

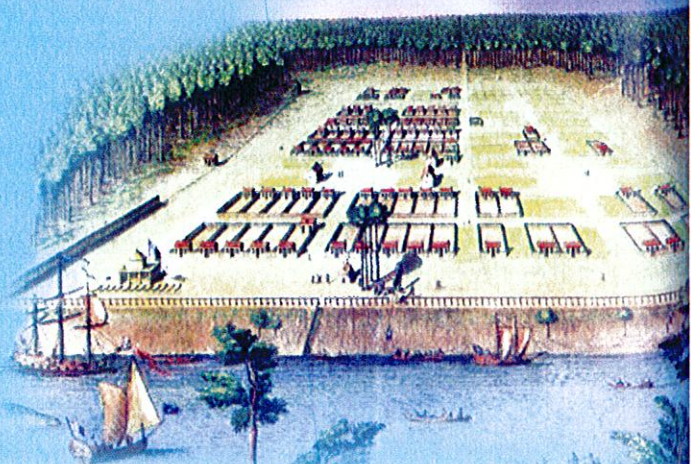
Southern Colonies 1740



Connect Geography & History

- 1. Place** Around what geographical feature were the earliest settlements located?
- 2. Draw Conclusions** What geographical features allowed some settlements to push farther west than others?

Savannah, Georgia, being built in the 1730s



The Region of the South

KEY QUESTION What features did the Southern Colonies have in common?

With the addition of Georgia, the Southern Colonies now formed a **region**, or distinct area of land. This Southern region stretched from the borders of the Spanish colony of Florida north through the Carolinas, Virginia, and Maryland. The Southern Colonies shared a common climate and culture.

Southern Culture Develops The Appalachian Mountains bordered these colonies in the west. In the east, the flat land along the coast was known as the **Tidewater**. The soil and climate of the Tidewater encouraged the planting of warm-weather crops such as tobacco, rice, and indigo. These crops required a large labor force, so the region became home to the largest population of enslaved Africans in the colonies.

As large plantations formed along the rivers in coastal areas, landowners became rich from exporting cash crops. A wealthy elite soon developed, especially in Virginia and South Carolina. Meanwhile, poorer settlers were forced west onto the frontier.

Although the Anglican church was the established religion throughout the South, religious diversity increased. Many of the Southern Colonies promised religious toleration in order to attract settlers.

Colonists throughout the South demanded greater say in how they were governed. Eventually, every Southern colony was allowed an elected representative assembly.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST Describe the features that the Southern Colonies had in common.

Connecting History

Social Conflict

Disagreements between the rich planters of the coast and poorer settlers of the frontier would lead to Bacon's Rebellion in 1676. *Chapter 4, p. 104.*



Section Assessment



ONLINE QUIZ

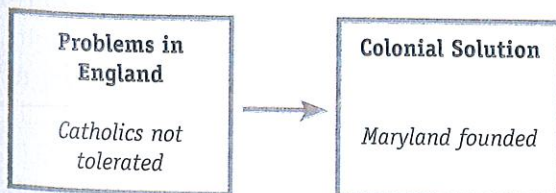
For test practice, go to
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TERMS & NAMES

1. Explain the importance of
 - Lord Baltimore
 - Huguenots
 - Margaret Brent
 - James Oglethorpe
 - Act of Toleration

USING YOUR READING NOTES

2. **Problems and Solutions** Complete the diagram you began at the beginning of this section.



KEY IDEAS

3. Why did Lord Baltimore found the colony of Maryland?
4. What drew settlers to the Carolinas?
5. What kind of society did Oglethorpe want for Georgia?

CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Analyze Causes and Effects** Why did slavery expand in the Southern Colonies?
7. **Connect Economics & History** Why did South Carolina planters become such a wealthy elite?
8. **Writing Letter** Write a persuasive letter to a London newspaper, describing opportunities in the Carolinas and urging other settlers to join you there.

The Southern Colonies:

Plantations and Slavery

One American's Story

George Mason was born to a wealthy Virginia family in 1725. Mason—who later called the slave trade “disgraceful to mankind”—described the skills of the enslaved people who worked on his family’s plantation.

PRIMARY SOURCE

“My father had among his slaves carpenters, coopers [barrel makers], sawyers, blacksmiths, tanners, curriers, shoemakers, spinners, weavers and knitters, and even a distiller.”

—George Mason, quoted in *Common Landscape of America*



George Mason

The Masons and other wealthy landowners set up self-sufficient plantations and had little need for the kind of densely settled towns that developed in New England. These scattered plantations, and the system of slavery needed to run them, shaped life in the Southern Colonies: Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas, and Georgia.

The Plantation Economy

KEY QUESTION What tensions developed between Tidewater and Backcountry?

In contrast to the small farms and numerous towns of New England, in the South large plantations developed. The earliest were built on the shores of the **Tidewater**—the flat land along the coast.

Geography and Climate The South’s soil and almost year-round growing season were ideal for plantation crops like rice and tobacco. These valuable plants required much labor to produce, but with enough workers they could be grown as **cash crops** and shipped to foreign markets for great profits. The Tidewater’s many waterways allowed oceangoing ships to load cargo at the plantation docks. This allowed the plantations to carry on a lively trade with other colonies and with England.

Because most plantations were largely self-sufficient, large urban centers were unnecessary in the South. The port city of Charles Town (later called Charleston) in South Carolina was an early exception.

The Planter Class The owners of the plantations were considered the **elite** of this society. In the early colonies, this class was drawn from the noble families of the south and west of England.

The planter class was relatively small compared to the rest of the population. However, they soon gained control of political and economic power in the South. A foreign traveler in the South commented that the planters “think and act precisely as do the nobility in other countries.”

The planters formed the highest level of a class system that included large numbers of poor freemen, indentured servants, and slaves. The social system in the South was dramatically different from New England, where numerous middle-class families had settled. In the South, tension between social groups led to a major conflict in the late 17th century.

Bacon's Rebellion in 1676 The desire for land and wealth had drawn settlers to America, so it is not surprising that many of the early conflicts in the South were over land. By the 1670s many indentured servants had completed their service and demanded land. Because the wealthy planters controlled the Tidewater region, these poorer freemen were forced into the western frontier, where they battled Native Americans for land.

Nathaniel Bacon and a group of landless frontier settlers were already angry with Virginia Governor William Berkeley. They complained about high taxes and Governor Berkeley's favoritism toward large plantation owners. Bacon demanded that Berkeley help defend frontier settlements against Native Americans. Berkeley's refusal of Bacon's demand sparked **Bacon's Rebellion** in 1676.

Bacon entered Jamestown, took control of the House of Burgesses, and burned Jamestown to the ground. However, Bacon's sudden illness and death ended the rebellion. Berkeley hanged 23 of Bacon's followers. Angered by Berkeley's actions, King Charles II recalled the governor to England. Afterwards, the House of Burgesses passed laws to prevent a royal governor from assuming such power again. The burgesses had taken an important step against tyranny.

 **COMPARE AND CONTRAST** Explain what tensions developed between Tidewater and frontier settlers.

Jamestown: N. Bacon,
1676 by Howard Pyle



The Search for Cheap Labor

KEY QUESTION Why did planters turn to slavery?

In the early Southern Colonies, there were few Africans, either enslaved or free. In 1665, fewer than 500 Africans had been brought into Virginia. At that time, African and European indentured servants worked in the fields together.

In the 1660s, the labor system began to change as indentured white servants left the plantations. Their terms of service were finished, and many moved west in order to buy their own farms. At the same time, fewer European laborers were emigrating to the Southern Colonies. Landowners had to find another source of labor.

Planters Turn to Slavery At first planters tried to enslave Native Americans. But many Native Americans either died of diseases brought by Europeans or were able to escape into the forests that they knew so well.

To meet their labor needs, the planters turned to enslaved Africans. As a result, the enslaved population grew rapidly. By 1750, there were over 235,000 enslaved Africans in America. About 68 percent lived in the Southern Colonies. By 1750 enslaved Africans made up about 40 percent of the South's population.

As the slave population increased, laws were passed to define slavery and to control the growing numbers of people being held against their will. Local militia patrolled the countryside to check that any traveling Africans were carrying passes. Slave quarters were checked regularly for weapons.

Living in Slavery On large Southern plantations, slaves usually toiled in groups of about 20 to 25 under the supervision of **overseers**. Overseers were people who watched over and directed the work of others. Enslaved people performed strenuous and exhausting work, often for 15 hours a day at the peak of the harvest season. If slaves did not appear to be doing their full share of work, they were often whipped by the overseer. If they defied their masters, they could be tortured or mutilated.

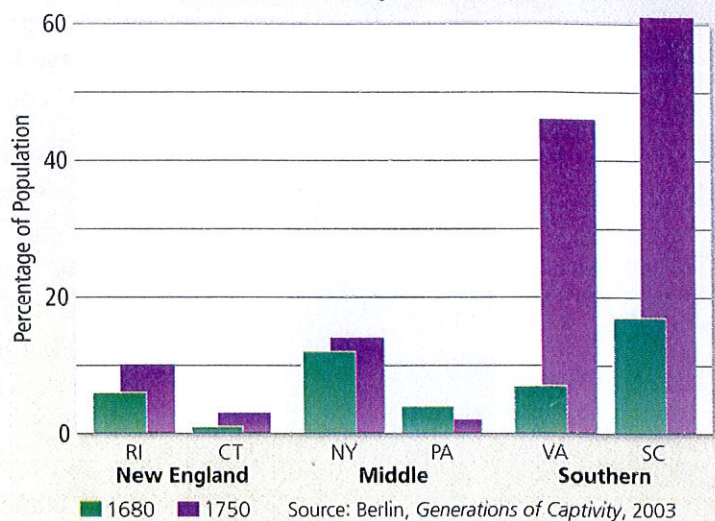
Enslaved people usually lived in small one-room cabins with straw for bedding. For a week's food, a slave might receive only around a quarter bushel of cornmeal and around 3 pounds of pork. Some planters allowed their slaves to raise their own food.

In spite of the brutal living conditions, Africans preserved many customs and beliefs from their homelands. These included music, dances, stories, and, for a time, African religions—including Islam. African kinship customs became the basis of African-American family culture.

CAUSES AND EFFECTS Explain why planters turned to slavery.

COMPARING Slave Populations

Selected States, 1680–1750



CRITICAL VIEWING Analyze Charts What percentage of the population was enslaved in the South in 1710?

Expansion of Plantations Brings Resistance

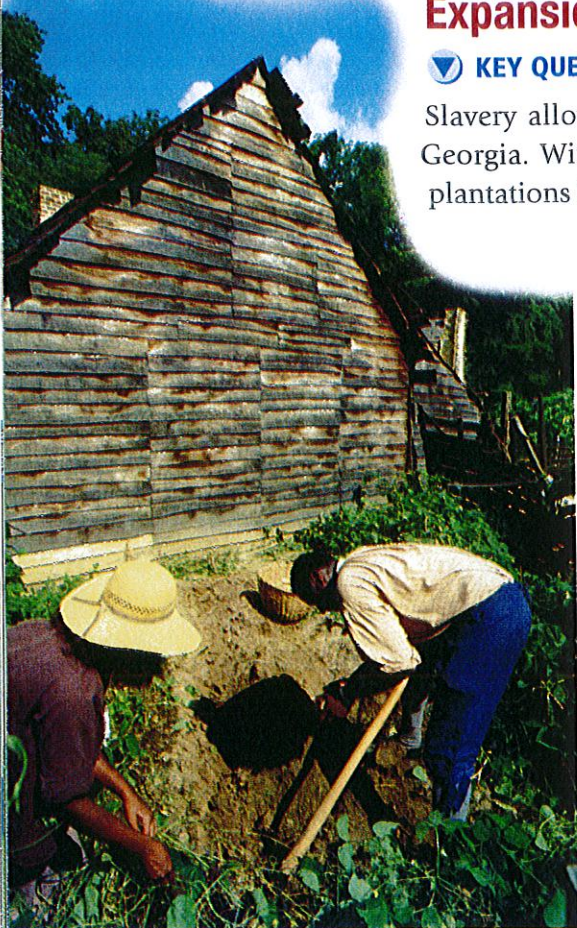
KEY QUESTION How did African Americans resist their enslavement?

Slavery allowed plantation farming to expand in South Carolina and Georgia. Without slave labor, there probably would have been no rice plantations in the lowcountry—the region's swampy lowlands.

Backbreaking Labor Rice cultivation required great skill. Because West Africans had these skills, planters sought out slaves who came from Africa's rice-growing regions. Rice growing involved backbreaking labor. Enslaved workers drained swamps, raked fields, burned stubble, and broke ground before planting. They also had to tend the fields and harvest the crop.

On higher ground, planters grew **indigo**, a plant that produces a deep blue dye used to dye clothes. A young woman named **Eliza Lucas** had introduced indigo as a successful plantation crop after her father left her to supervise his South Carolina plantations when she was 17.

The Enslaved Fight Back Although they were kept in bondage, people of African origin found ways to resist their enslavement. They sometimes worked slowly, damaged goods, or deliberately carried out orders the wrong way. A British traveler in 1746 noted that many slaves pretended not to understand tasks they often had performed in West Africa.



Reenactors portray slave labor.

PRIMARY SOURCE

“You would really be surpriz’d at their Perseverance; let an hundred Men shew him how to hoe, or drive a wheelbarrow, he’ll still take the one by the Bottom, and the other by the Wheel; and they often die before they can be conquer’d.”

—Edward Kimber, quoted in *White over Black*

Connecting History

Slavery

In the next century, South Carolina's continuing dependence on slavery would lead the state to secede from the Union in 1860—the event that led to the Civil War.

See Chapter 15, p. 502.

In South Carolina, the enslaved vastly outnumbered whites, who lived in fear of slave rebellions. Their fears came true in the late 1730s when a revolt occurred in South Carolina.

The Stono Rebellion In September 1739, an uprising known as the **Stono Rebellion** took place. The revolt began when about 20 slaves gathered at the Stono River just southwest of Charles Town. Wielding weapons, they killed planters and marched south, beating drums and chanting “Liberty!” They called out for other slaves to join them in their plan to seek freedom in Spanish-held Florida. Many joined them, and their numbers grew until there were perhaps one hundred in open rebellion. Seven plantations were burned along their route and twenty whites were killed. By late that afternoon, however, a white militia had surrounded the escaping slaves. The two sides clashed, and many slaves died in the fighting. Those captured were executed.

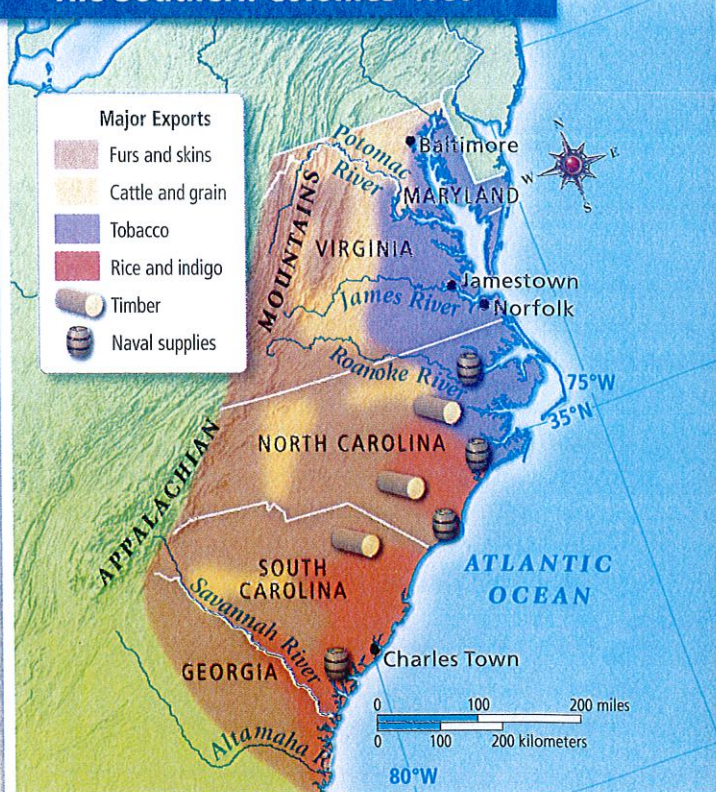
Stono and similar revolts led planters to make slave codes even stricter. Slaves were now forbidden from leaving plantations without written permission. The laws also made it illegal for slaves to meet with free blacks. Such laws made the conditions of slavery even more inhumane.

Economy of the South The Southern Colonies' plantation economy and large slave population helped create a unique Southern identity. In northern colonies, with their diverse economies, wealth was more evenly distributed. Southern economies were less diverse, based on crops such as tobacco, rice, and indigo. The wealth from these crops was concentrated in the hands of an elite.

The different economic systems of Northern and Southern Colonies were reflected in the landscape: the north had smaller farms and larger, more numerous towns. The South had scattered settlements, few towns, and self-sufficient plantations. The contrast between northern and southern landscapes, settlement patterns, and economic systems emerged very early in American history. Distinct regionalisms were developing that continue to influence American culture and politics.

SUMMARIZE Describe how African Americans resisted their enslavement.

The Southern Colonies 1750



Connect Geography & History

- Place** Which Southern Colonies grew both rice and indigo?
- Draw Conclusions** Where would planters have built their plantations if they wanted to keep transportation costs low?



Section Assessment



ONLINE QUIZ

For test practice, go to
Interactive Review @ ClassZone.com

TERMS & NAMES

- Explain the importance of
 - Bacon's Rebellion
 - Stono Rebellion
 - Eliza Lucas

USING YOUR READING NOTES

- Compare and Contrast** Complete the diagram you started at the beginning of this section.

Tidewater
wealthy planters

Western
Frontier

KEY IDEAS

- Where were most of the early plantations located?
- How did planters meet their labor needs?

CRITICAL THINKING

- Make Inferences** Why did South Carolina's colonists live in fear of a slave revolt?
- Summarize** How did the House of Burgesses strengthen colonists' rights after Bacon's Rebellion?
- Writing Research Report** Use the internet to research the Virginia House of Burgesses. Write a paragraph on the importance of the House of Burgesses in the history of American democracy.