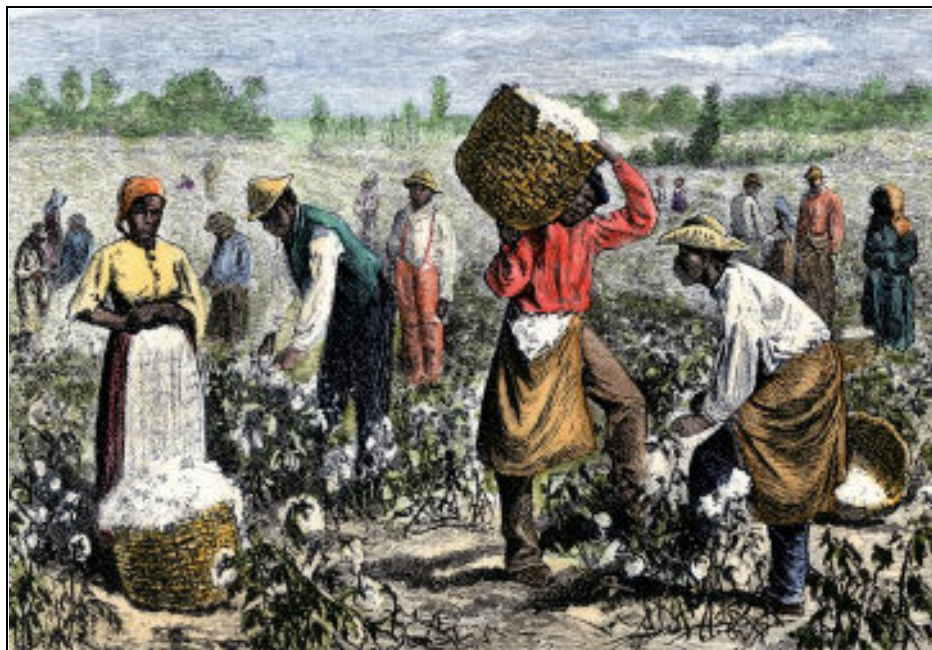


# The Work of Slavery

## An Online Professional Development Seminar

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**AMERICA *in* CLASS<sup>®</sup>**

*from the* National Humanities Center

## COMMON CORE GOALS

- Advance the goal of the **Common Core State Standards** in English Language Arts and literacy in history and social studies: “To help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy”
- Promote close attentive reading
- Foster deep and thoughtful engagement with high-quality literary and informational texts

## UNDERSTANDING

Africans arrived in the American colonies as laborers in the early 1600s just a few years after Europeans settled here. Over the next two hundred and forty years, their forced, unpaid labor produced the cash crops of indigo, rice, tobacco, cotton, and sugar cane, on which the American economy was built. In addition to working in agriculture, enslaved people performed almost every form of work imaginable; they worked as skilled craftsmen and women and they provided services throughout the North until the early 19th century, and the South until the end of the Civil War.

## FROM THE FORUM

### Challenges, Issues, Questions

- How does the popular image of plantation life and work compare with their reality?
- What was the relationship between the enslaved and working class whites, especially between white women and children and enslaved women and children?
- Did slave revolts or the threat of revolts change work patterns?
- To what extent did economic booms and busts affect the price of slaves?



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Teaches and writes about African Americans  
in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,  
with emphasis in the American South.

*Help Me to Find My People: The African  
American Search for Family Lost in Slavery*  
(2012)

*Self-Taught: African American Education in  
Slavery and Freedom*  
(2005)

## James Henry Hammond, “The Mudsill Speech,” 1858

“In all social systems there must be a class to do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life. That is, a class requiring but a low order of intellect and but little skill. Its requisites are vigor, docility, fidelity Such a class you must have, or you would not have that other class which leads progress, civilization, and refinement. It constitutes the very mud-sill of society and of political government, and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air, as to build either the one or the other, except on this mudsill. Fortunately for the South, she found a race adapted to that purpose to her hand. A race inferior to her own, but eminently qualified in temper, in vigor, in docility, in capacity to stand the climate, to answer all her purposes. We use them for our purpose and call them slaves. We found them slaves by the common ‘consent of mankind,’ which according to Cicero, ‘lex naturae est.’ The highest proof of what is Nature’s law. We are old-fashioned at the South yet; slave is a word discarded now by ‘ears polite;’ I will not characterize that class at the North by that term; but you have it; it is there; it is everywhere; it is eternal.”

### Discussion Questions

- What did Hammond mean by mudsill in this speech?
- How did he justify slavery?
- To whom was he referring when he spoke of “that class at the North?”

**From Leslie Harris, “Slavery in Colonial New York,” in *In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1863* (2003)**

African slaves became the most stable element of the New Netherland working class and population. The Dutch West India Company’s importation and employment of most of the colony’s slave labor enabled the settlement and survival of the Europeans at New Amsterdam as well as the limited economic success that the colony experienced. The first eleven African slaves were imported in 1626. The company, not individuals, owned these slaves who provided labor for the building and upkeep of the colony’s infrastructure. In addition to aiding in the construction of Fort Amsterdam, completed in 1635, slaves also built roads, cut timber and firewood, cleared land, and burned limestone and oyster shells to make the lime used in outhouses and in burying the dead.

## Discussion Questions

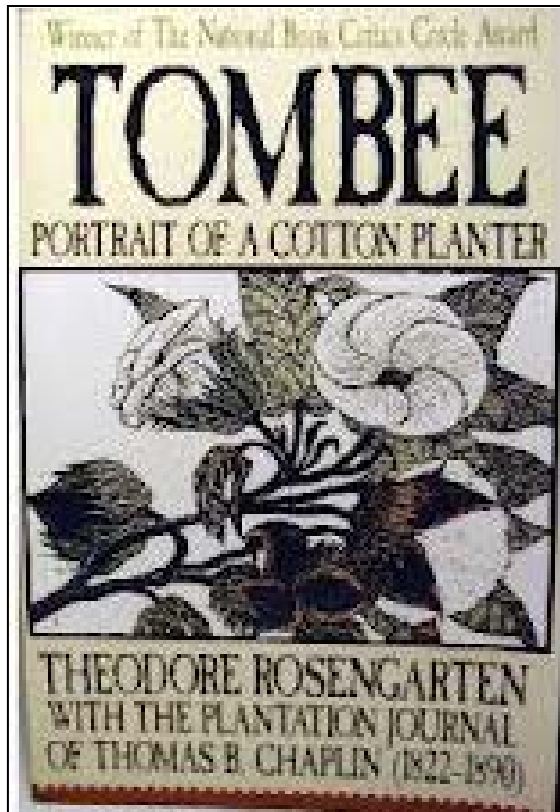
- What does this passage tell us about where slavery occurred in the American colonies?
- What about the structure of the institution?

*The Journal of Thomas B. Chaplin (1822-90)*  
Owner of Tombee Plantation, St. Helena's Island, South Carolina





Pay attention to the verbs Chaplin uses. Who was doing the work? What kind of work?



**Tombee Plantation, St. Helena's Island  
Beaufort County, SC**

1845, May 12<sup>th</sup> Had a veal killed. Sent a bit to Captain Jenk., & Coz. Betsy. Planted celery & sugarcane. Sent John to Beaufort, being very anxious to hear from Fickling. He intends returning from Charleston via Savannah.

John returned after I had gone to bed, brought a note from Fickling stating 7 Negroes were sold to a man near Georgetown named Cowen. Marcus, Prince & Sib had not yet been sold.

1845, May 14<sup>th</sup> Clear & hot in the morning. Everything growing beautifully. Cotton nearly full all up. Hauled potatoes. Cloud rising in the south about 2 p.m. Clears off before sunset. Started 2 flats & the boat with 60 baskets of corn & blades, with some furniture for the village. Sent 9 hands including Ben & the carpenters.

1845, May 17<sup>th</sup> Finished thinning & hauling the first planting of cotton & commenced hauling March corn. The only Negroes now sick are Rose since yesterday, Tony – 22 days, viz. since the 27<sup>th</sup> of April. Peggy has not gone out to work yet. In fact she does not *want* to do anything. She has now been laying up for 82 or more days.

*1845, June 4<sup>th</sup>* Had the Irish potatoes dug, 100 feet turned out 3 pks. [Three pecks. A peck equals eight quarts, dry measure, or one-quarter bushel.] I intend showing them for the premium at the Society tomorrow.

Dr. Jenkins & Capt. I. Fripp have made up & played billiards on my table yesterday.

*1845, June 6<sup>th</sup>* Had fodder corn planted in the stable yard, for the benefit of the milk cow & calf. Heard that man Bidcome, [A slave.] down on the estate of W. S. Chaplin, had caught runaway Dick belonging to Mr. Sandiford. He & Charles, his companion, were in the sheep pen, had two sheep tied. Charles escaped by knocking down one of the men. [Slaves from the estate of W. S. Chaplin, who confronted Sandiford's runaways.]

*1845, July 27<sup>th</sup>* Rode down home & over all the crop. Cotton looks very well, but backward. March corn tolerable – young, good & very bad in spots. Potatoes are very bad. Peas miserable. 3  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres of slips planted, no rain to plant more. Had only a few drops last eve, though we had a fine rain at the village. Ground almost as dry as it was before. Cattle suffering for water.

*1846, March 18<sup>th</sup>*      Wednesday. All hands banking corn land. Carpenters pulling down the old tabby house, got the top & one gable end & chimney down, I will get some very good lime brick from it. Rode over to see Uncle Ben, found him in a great deal of pain, cannot turn himself over in bed, and is likely to remain there for some time.

Sent a boy & got 19 crabs. If the day suits I try them myself tomorrow. Sent my buggy to Beaufort to be mended yesterday. Robert sick—

*1846, March 19<sup>th</sup>*      John plowing potato root land. All hands banking & tracking corn land, commenced planting the 14 acres. Went out drum fishing for the first time this year, took Ernest with me. Caught 2 drum – I one & Tony one – lost one. We had no pawn & caught no fish until I bought a few from a Negro, though the pawn appear to be plenty. Ernest was delighted. [Ernest is six years old at this time.] He never has been out with me before & never saw a drum caught. I fished at Bay Point & I understand that the Major, who fished at Middle Bank, took 20 drum & bass. Ernest got a little seasick, but after he got onshore, was ready for another trip.

*1846, March 24<sup>th</sup>*      In all the rain I went out & set out 43 trees in my new orchard of French trees. 2 in the yard called Maria Louise (apple) makes 45. The ground got so wet had to stop for a good day. Some of the trees I had to put down in water, & many of them were sprouting. Dr. Jenkins sent in his a/c – could not pay it. Sent it back. Lent Capt. D. Jenkins 10 bushels of corn. Between the showers, planted 1 ½ acres of yam potatoes.

1846, March 25<sup>th</sup> Finished planting potatoes, watermelons & muskmelons 7 days earlier than last year. Planted Smyrna muskmelon seed in the potato patch. Finished setting out the imported trees in the orchard – 66 trees in the orchard & 10 in the yard, 76 in all. I am afraid some of them will not take, as I had to set them out in the water that would spring in the holes, the ground was so very wet.

Rode over & took tea with Uncle Ben, he is much better. Saw J. H. Webb & his wife there. Paid Dr. Jenkins his a/cs, by order on Treville for \$500.

*\*\*Note This gives the lie to some assertions I have heard that Dr. Jenkins made “that I never paid him my acct.” He has scoundled me out of many a dollar for nothing.\*\**

## Discussion Questions

- Pay attention to the verbs Chaplin uses. Who was doing the work?
- What kind of work?
- What do you notice about the timing of the labor?

*1845, June 17<sup>th</sup>*      Tuesday. Capt. J. Fripp & Mr. J. J. Pope went with me down to the plantation for the purpose of appraising all of my land & Negroes, as I wish to have them secured to my wife & children, and take out of the bank \$10,000 of her legacy.

The Negroes were valued at \$14,605. The land, both tracts, at \$11,450.  
Making the full amount of my property appraised – \$26,055.

## Discussion Questions

- How do you think Chaplin determined the value of his slaves?
- Why was he valuing them?

# *Ar'n't I A Woman?*, Deborah Gray White

Despite their limited sensitivity regarding female slave labor, and the double standard they used when evaluating the uses of white and black female labor, slave owners did reluctantly acquiesce to female physiology. For instance, depending on their stage of pregnancy, pregnant women were considered half or quarter hands. Healthy, nonpregnant women were considered three-quarter hands. Three-quarter hands were not necessarily exempt from some of the herculean tasks performed by men who were full hands, but usually, when work assignments were being parceled out men were given the more physically demanding work unless there was a shortage of male hands to do the very heavy work or a rush to get that work completed. A case in point was the most common differentiation: men plowed and women hoed.

## **Discussion Question**

- According to White, how were pregnant women treated by their owners?

1845, July 10<sup>th</sup>          Peggy is at last confined. She had *\*\*pretty\*\** good cause for laying up, being delivered of two fine boys. She has never had a male child before.

1845, July 20<sup>th</sup>          Peggy lost one of her twin boys on the 18<sup>th</sup> inst. I thought they would not live, they were so very small. Went up to the chapel in the evening.

## Discussion Questions

- How would you interpret Peggy and Chaplin's behavior during her pregnancy?
- How do you assess Chaplin's reaction to the death of one of Peggy's twins?



# *Down by the Riverside*, Charles Joyner

West Africa was a land of consummate craftsmen, and enslaved Africans had brought with them to South Carolina highly developed technologies in metalwork, woodwork, leatherwork, ivorywork, pottery, and weaving. The natural environment of South Carolina was sufficiently like that of West Africa to render many of the skills learned in the Old World indispensable in the New World. Africans excelled not merely in heavy labor such as clearing land, but were so successful as bricklayers, butchers, carpenters, coachmen, farmers, fishers, and herdsman that they were imported in larger and larger numbers. Not least of the ironies of the slave trade was that the skills of the Africans helped to strengthen the rationale behind their enslavement. The contribution of skilled slave craftsmen and mechanics to the economic development of the plantations has yet to be adequately credited.

## **Discussion Questions**

- Joyner references skills brought to America from Africa. How else would enslaved people have acquired skills and knowledge?
- How could the economic contributions of enslaved people be credited today?

The skilled workers, especially the carpenters and mechanics, enjoyed a measure of status, deference, and independence in their work patterns on the plantations. The children of field hands were taught respect for these skilled workers because of their talents. Their status did not, however, seem to create a gulf between them and the field hands. The inventories reveal numerous examples of skilled craftsmen married to prime field hands, or ditchmen married to house servants. On the rice plantations of the Waccamaw, mechanics, craftsmen, and other skilled workers generally made common cause with house servants and field slaves. Together they created and maintained, against frightful odds, a slave community.

## **Discussion Questions**

- What do you make of the idea of “status” among enslaved people?
- According to Joyner, status did not keep slaves apart. Why do you suppose that may have been the case?

# The Work of Slavery

Office of Common Pleas, Charleston District, 24th day  
of October, 1850, 1am3\* October 25!

**WANTED TO HIRE, A YOUNG MULATTO FELLOW,** as a Porter in some store. Apply at 111 East Bay. December 15

**GOVERNESS WANTED, BY A FAMILY** residing in the Country during the Winter, to take charge of the education of the younger Children in the English Branches. Apply at 111 East Bay. December 22

**WET NURSE WANTED.—A COLORED** WET NURSE without a child. She must be well recommended. None other need apply. Apply at 40 Meeting-street. December 22

**WANTED, A SMART LAD, ABOUT 16** years of age, writing a fair hand, and capable of making himself generally useful in a Counting house. Address "Merchant," through the Postoffice. December 24

**WANTED TO HIRE, AND FROM HER OWNERS direct, a settled COLORED WOMAN,** who is a good Cook. She will be required only to Cook and attend to other house duties. Good wages will be promptly paid for a competent Servant. Apply at 154 King-street. December 24

**WANTED TO HIRE, A COLORED WOMAN** to do the COOKING AND WASHING of a small family; would prefer to hire from the master. Wages will be \$10 per month. Enquire at 50 Wentworth-street. December 24

**WANTED TO HIRE, TWO HUNDRED HANDS,** to work on the Florida Rail Road. Wages \$1.25 per day. Board can be had at \$12 per month. Apply to WILLIAM BARRAGAN, 67 East Bay, or 97 Church-street. December 13

**WANTED TO HIRE, A FEMALE HOUSE SERVANT,** colored; for one well recommended, liberal and punctual wages will be paid. Apply at 231 East Bay, one door from Hasell-street. December 23

**WANTED TO HIRE FROM HER OWNERS** A GIRL, of about sixteen years of age, to attend an infant and do light housework. She must be of tidy appearance. Highest wages will be given. Apply at this office. December 22

**WANTED, A COMPETENT MALE HOUSE SERVANT.** Apply at 1 South Atlantic wharf, up stairs. December 9

**WANTED TO HIRE, A NEGRO MAN, TO** drive a carriage and take care of horse. One of reliable character and competency can obtain a steady place for the year. Apply at 222 King-street. December 13

**WANTED TO HIRE, SEVERAL ADDITIONAL COLORED WAITERS.** Apply at Barrar's Office, Citadel, between 8 and 9 o'clock, A. M. December 9

**THE BEST QUALITY ENGLISH BRED COWS,** fresh calved, tip top milkers, fed well from the tub, for sale in Spring-street, between President and Norman-

WANTED TO HIRE, A COLORED WOMAN to do the cooking and washing of a small family; would prefer to hire from the master. Wages will be \$10 per month. Enquire at 50 Wentworth Street.

WANTED TO HIRE, TWO HUNDRED HANDS, to work on the Florida Rail Road. Wages \$1.25 per day. Board can be had at \$12 per month. Apply to William Barragan, 67 East Bay or 97 Church Street.

WANTED TO HIRE, A NEGRO MAN, to drive a carriage and take care of horse. One of reliable character and competency can obtain a steady place for the year. Apply at 222 King Street.

## Discussion Questions

- Why do you think some people hired slaves?
- Why were owners willing to hire them out?
- How might enslaved people have benefitted from being hired out?
- Why might some state governments have opposed the practice?

# The Work of Slavery

**FIVE HUNDRED HANDS WANTED.**  
FIVE Hundred hands wanted to work on the grading and track laying of the Chatham Railroad. The highest market price will be given and hands well taken care of.  
**ALSO, 100 CARPENTERS,**  
Also, a Portable Steam Saw Mill Wanted.  
Apply to **KEMP P. BATTLE,**  
Pres't Raleigh, N. C.,  
or to **J. E. ALLEN, Sup't,**  
Cary, N. C.  
dec 6-dtf  
Conservative copy till forbid.

FIVE HUNDRED HANDS WANTED.  
Five hundred hands wanted to work on the grading and track laying of the Chatham Railroad. The highest market price will be given and hands well taken care of.

**WANT TO BUY**  
**TWO BOYS** and **ONE GIRL**, between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, all strictly likely and active in body and mind. Cotton, Bacon, or Salted Pork will be given in payment if preferred.  
Address, **A. D. F.**  
**13-07t\*** **Marlboro', N. C.**

WANTED TO BUY.  
Two boys and one girl, between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, all strictly likely and active in body and mind. Cotton, bacon, or salted pork will be given in payment if preferred.

**A U C T I O N S A L E S .**  
**JANUARY 4th 1865.**  
One Negro Girl 18 years old,  
One child 3 " " old, and  
The woman is a good, House Servant Wash-  
er and ironer,  
One Negro Woman 80 years old and  
Child 3 months old.  
A number to be added to the Sale, by Sale  
day  
Four Hogsheads of fine leaf Tobacco  
One Fine Parlor Stove  
Four Boxes Snuff  
And a great many other articles added by  
Sale day.  
**TUCKER, ANDREWS & CO.,**  
Aucts. & Com. Merchants.

## AUCTION SALES.

JANUARY 4<sup>th</sup>, 1865

One Negro Girl 18 years old,  
One child 3 years old, and  
The woman is a good House Servant.  
Washer and ironer.

One Negro Woman 80 years old and  
Child 3 months old.

A number to be added to the Sale, by  
Sale day.

Four Hogsheads of fine leaf Tobacco

One Fine Parlor Stove

Four Boxes Snuff

And a great many other articles added  
by Sale day.

**100 NEGRO MEN WANTED!**  
The Gorgas Mining and Manufacturing Com-  
pany want to hire one hundred good hands, to work  
at their factories on Deep River, in Chatham  
county, N. C. The locality is a safe one. Liberal  
wages paid. Apply to W. L. Brodie, Gen. Sup't,  
at Gorgas, Chatham county, N. C., or to J. M.  
Heck, President, Raleigh, N. C.  
P. S. They also want 25 negro carpenters and  
15 negro blacksmiths. dec. 30-d't.

## 100 NEGRO MEN WANTED!

The Gorgas Mining and Manufacturing Company want to hire one hundred good hands to work at their factories on Deep River, in Chatham county, N.C. The locality is a safe one. Liberal wages paid. Apply to W. L. Brodie, Gen. Sup't, at Gorgas, Chatham county, N.C., or to J. M. Heck, President, Raleigh, N.C. P.S. They also want 25 negro carpenters and 15 negro blacksmiths.



## Discussion Question

- Why did southern states, and eventually the Confederacy, include images of slaves at work on their currency?



58 Slaves Moving Barrels  
Collection of Rev. Jesse Hawkins

9 Slave Tilling Ground  
Collection of Dr. Harold Rhodes III





14 Slave Cooking Dinner  
Collection of Dr. Harold Rhodes III

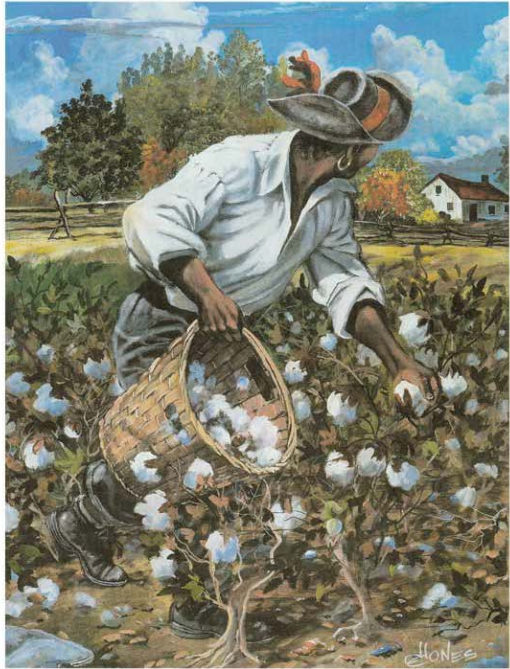
15 Slaves Working at Plantation  
Collection of Rev. Jesse Hawkins



16 Slaves Loading Sugarcane  
Collection of Dr. Alan Rashford

81 Slaves Picking Cotton  
Collection of Dr. Harold Rhodes

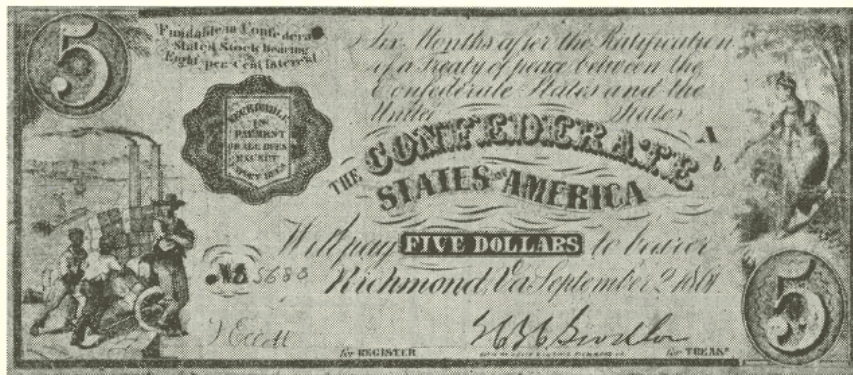
# The Art of John W. Jones



The State of Tennessee



The State of North Carolina



Type No. 118

- 118 \$ 5—"INDIAN PRINCESS" NOTE. FIGURE OF INDIAN GIRL, UPPER RIGHT. NEGROES LOADING COTTON ON STEAMBOAT, LOWER LEFT. (Hoyer & Ludwig) :Ab
- 119 \$ 5—CERES SEATED ON COTTON BALE. SAILOR LEANING ON CAPSTAN, LEFT. :9A to 16A\*
- A Engraved by "J. T. Paterson, Columbia, S. C." on lower left margin.

\* See Chapter 9 for the varieties of plate letter-numbers.



Type No. 138

- 138 \$100—NEGROES LOADING BALES OF COTTON ON WAGON. SAILOR LEANING ON ANCHOR AND COTTON BALE, LEFT. (Hoyer & Ludwig)
- A Without flourishes between "Confederate" and "States". : A, AC to AK, CA to OA (IA Unknown), A1 to A8, B to E\*
- B Flourishes between "Confederate" and "States". : A1 to A8
- In Variety A, the shading under "Confederate States of America" is composed of horizontal and diagonal lines; in Variety B, this shading is composed of horizontal lines only.

Final slide.

Thank You