

Week 3 Charter Generation in Carolina and the Low Country

Youtube: Stono <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zvcS2tlKS4&t=150s>

Sources:

Berlin, Ira Many Thousand Gone, The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America
Peter H. Wood Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion

Summary: The Carolina Colony was established a generation after the Chesapeake Colonies. The Civil War in England postponed plans of further colonization until the Restoration of King Charles II to the throne in 1660. The charter for the land was granted to a group of proprietors who had supported Charles in his efforts to return to power. The purpose of the colony was to establish a profitable trade in some product and to provide a buffer between the profitable Virginia colony to the north and the hostile Spanish in Florida. The charter generation of Africans in South Carolina included Atlantic Creoles who at first were able establish themselves with a modicum of freedom. The early attempts to find a profitable export included naval stores (tar and turpentine from pine trees), tobacco, indigo and raising livestock. None of these provided the level of profit that tobacco did in Virginia. The naval stores and livestock allowed enslaved Africans a great deal of freedom of movement. It also allowed them to become familiar with the geography of the colony. When the colonists learned to successfully grow rice (in large part from the enslaved Africans from rice growing sections of Africa) they found their profitable export. The colony was settled in large part by colonists from other British colonies, including the Barbados in the Caribbean. This group of settlers brought with them a highly organized, highly repressive form of slavery. Carolina changed rapidly from the charter generation to the plantation generation and from society with slaves to a slave society. Conditions for enslaved Africans deteriorated. The rice plantation work was brutal. People spent their 12 hour workdays in water upper to their shins. Mortality was high. As the century turned there developed a task system which allowed the enslaved work force time to grow their own food which soon produced an independent market system. The Carolina colony had an issue with runaways from its founding. The Spanish colony of Florida promised runaways freedom if they converted to Christianity and served in the militia. In July 1739 Stono the first major slave revolt in the colony occurred. This resulted in increased oppression of the Africans, and increased legislation eliminating what limited freedoms the Charter generation had achieved.

Essential Understanding:

- Difference between a Society with Slaves and a Slave Society
- The differences in the governance of the enslaved in Carolina vs Virginia
- The impact of European hostilities on the lives of Africans in the colonies

Suggested Supplemental Materials and Activities

Watch the first episode of Africans in America available on youtube