

Summary: British Rule

Britain Wins Florida

In the mid-1700s, Britain and France both wanted to control North America. In 1754, the French and Indian War began. Britain fought France and its American Indian allies. Spain helped France because it wanted to stop Britain from taking Spanish land.

Britain won the war. In 1763, France and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris. France agreed to give up much of its land in North America. Britain took Cuba from Spain during the war. After the war, Spain gave Florida to the British in return for Cuba.

Britain divided Florida into two colonies, East Florida and West Florida. East Florida included the Florida peninsula. Its capital was St. Augustine. West Florida included the Florida panhandle and land along the Gulf coast to the Mississippi River. Its capital was Pensacola.

Britain wanted to make Florida a stronger colony by getting more settlers to go there. The British governor offered free land to wealthy British citizens. Some settlers started plantations in East Florida. In West Florida, the British settled along the Mississippi River. They used the river as a highway to trade with people outside Florida.

Slavery in British Colonies

Florida grew under British rule. Plantation owners brought enslaved people and indentured servants to Florida. These people did the hard work that made the plantations successful.

Slavery in Florida grew. By the 1770s, more enslaved Africans than Europeans lived in Florida. The planters forced slaves to work long, hard hours in the fields and houses for no pay. Sometimes planters broke up families by selling family members to different plantations. Enslaved people had little hope of ever becoming free.

Some settlers lived in towns or on small farms. Farmers worked hard to clear land. Much of the land was not good for farming. The summers were very hot. Insects spread diseases that killed many people.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

treaty *noun*, an agreement between nations

capital *noun*, the city where the main government offices are located

plantation *noun*, a huge farm where crops are grown by workers who live there

indentured servant *noun*, a person who agrees to work for a certain time period in order to pay off a debt

slavery *noun*, a system in which people can be bought and sold and forced to work with no pay



After You Read

REVIEW How did Britain hope to make Florida a stronger colony? Underline the sentence that tells the answer.

REVIEW What were some difficulties slaves and small farm owners faced? Underline three sentences that tell about slaves. Circle the paragraph that tells about farmers and the land.