

to enact restrictive laws that mandated lifetime slavery (which children inherited from their mother no matter who their father was), deprived enslaved blacks of most legal rights, and effectively dissuaded potentially rebellious white laborers from making common cause with black allies. In contrast to enslaved women in the South, those in the North rarely worked in the fields, and less restrictive codes allowed them to marry, attend church, receive some education, and even enjoy a few legal rights. There were, of course, fewer slaves in the North; in the South, by 1700, the institution of black slavery was rapidly becoming a factor in the lives of all women.

The labor of both black and white women was essential for the survival of their communities. "Making Linen" provides one example of the kind of productive and time-consuming work that filled the lives of all seventeenth-century women, whether servants or mistresses. In addition to this work, many white women also managed large households. All women worked in dairies and kitchen gardens, processed and preserved the family's food and medicine, made and maintained cloth and clothing, milked cows, collected eggs, produced cheese and butter, made soap, bartered for necessities, nursed the sick, cooked and served meals for their families and hired help, and taught the skills of housewifery to their daughters. It is no wonder that a favorite biblical verse of the period maintained that a virtuous woman "eateth not of the bread of idleness" (Prov. 31:27). Where family units were strong, women's contributions were respected, and women retained some control over when and how they would work. For example, Plymouth Colony's governor, William Bradford, explained that the colony's experiment in communal labor and ownership failed largely because of the disapproval of its women. In the South, where family units were more rare and commercial farming was more common, white women were likely to live on scattered farms rather than in the closely knit villages common in the North.

But some class division did exist in the colonies, as we can see from the 1674 portrait of Elizabeth Freake and her daughter Mary. From Elizabeth's lovely lace and velvet, we know that the Freake family was wealthy. We also see, however, that although Mrs. Freake had the wealth to command a staff of servants, she still wore a matron's apron (ornamental though it certainly was), indicating that she defined herself as a working person who probably often labored alongside her servants and younger female family members. The baby daughter would be trained in the same family and household responsibilities and also in the Puritan religious tradition of her mother and father.

For the Increase of the Plantation

A few women came with the Jamestown settlers in 1607. They were included in the expedition to perform the many subsistence tasks that men did not know how to do. By 1620, the date of the following document, the Virginia Company decided to send large groups of potential wives to Jamestown to deflect the male colonists from pure profit-taking. The company was concerned that colonists might refuse to stay if women did not help establish a permanent community, as the company secretary noted in these excerpts from the company records. By 1622, these women were all married, but unfortunately one-third of the population died in a 1623 massacre. Apparently only about thirty-five of several hundred women survived. Spelling and punctuation of the document have been modernized.

From Susan M. Kingsbury, ed., *Records of the Virginia Company of London*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1906), pp. 256, 566.



Lastly he [the governor] wished that a fit hundredth might be sent of women, Maids young and uncorrupt to make wives to the Inhabitants and by that means to make the men there more settled & less moveable, who by defect thereof (as is credibly reported) stay there but to get something and then to return for England, which will breed a dissolution, and so an overthrow of the Plantation. These women if they marry to the public farmers, to be transported at the charges of the Company; If otherwise, then those that takes them to wife to pay the said Company their charges of transportation, and it was never fitter time to send them than now. . . .

. . . The Third Roll was for sending of Maids to Virginia to be made Wives, which the Planters there did very much desire, by the want of whom have sprang the greatest hindrances of the increase of the Plantation, in that most of them esteeming Virginia not as a place of Habitation but only of a short sojourning have applied themselves and their labors wholly to the raising of present profit and utterly neglected not only staple Commodities but even the very necessities of man's life. In regard whereof and to prevent so great an inconvenience hereafter, whereby the Planters minds may be the faster tied to Virginia by the bonds of Wyves and Children, care hath been taken to provide them young handsome and honestly educated maids whereof 60 are already sent to Virginia, being such as were specially recommended unto the Company for their good bringing up by their parents or friends of good worth: Which maids are to be disposed in

marriage to the most honest and industrious Planters who are to defray and satisfy to the Adventurers the charges of their passages and provisions at such rates as they and the Adventurers' Agents there shall agree.

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Passengers to Virginia

The following passengers, listed with their age, were transported to Virginia on the *Elizabeth de Lo* in August 1635. They were all single and unrelated, in contrast to the family groups that emigrated to Massachusetts. And they were young, the men mostly between fourteen and thirty and the women between nineteen and twenty-eight except for one unattached mother and her daughter.

From *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 15 (1861): 142.

Jo. Benford	20	Wm. Thurrowgood	13
Lodowick Fletcher	20	Samuel Mathew	14
Jo. Bagbie	17	Tho. Frith	17
Robt. Salter	14	Jo. Austin	24
Edward White	18	Paul Fearne	24
Stephen Pierce	30	Thomas Royston	25
Rich. Beanford	18	Jo. Taylor	18
Rich. Chapman	18		
Andrew Parkins	18		
Jo. Baker	16	WOMEN	
Jo. Walker	16	Katherine Jones	28
Jo. Vaughan	17	Eliz. Sankster	24
Yeoman Gibson	16	Ellin Shore	20
Tho. Leed	16	Alice Pindon	19
Geo Trevas	18	Sara Everedge	22
Wm Shelborn	20	Margaret Smith	28
Samuel Growce	38	Elizab. Hodman	20
Wm. Glasbrooke	21	Moules Naxton	19
Edward Dicks	30	Marie Burback	17
Jo. Bennett	18	Eliz. Rudston	40
Michael Saundby	25	Eliz. Rudston	5

Passengers to Massachusetts

The following passengers sailed from Weymouth, England, to Massachusetts on March 20, 1635. Most were family members, in contrast to the single young people who went to Virginia. There were women of all ages—wives, daughters, and kinswomen of various tradesmen, husbandmen (farmers), and the minister, who led the group. Even the servants were likely to be relatives.

From *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 25 (1871): 13-15.

1. Joseph Hull, of Somerset, a minister, aged 40 years
2. Agnes Hull, his wife, aged 25 years
3. Joan Hull, his daughter, aged 15 years
4. Joseph Hull, his son, aged 13 years
5. Tristram, his son, aged 11 years
6. Elizabeth Hull, his daughter, aged 7 years
7. Temperance, his daughter, aged 9 years
8. Grissell Hull, his daughter, aged 5 years
9. Dorothy Hull, his daughter, aged 3 years
10. Judith French, his servant, aged 20 years
11. John Wood, his servant, aged 20 years
12. Robert Dabyn, his servant, aged 28 years
13. Musachiell Bernard, of Batcombe, clothier in the county of Somerset, 24 years
14. Mary Bernard, his wife, aged 28 years
15. John Bernard, his son, aged 3 years
16. Nathaniel, his son, aged 1 year
17. Rich. Persons, salter and his servant, 30 years
18. Francis Baber, Chandler, aged 36 years
19. Jesope, joyner, aged 22 years
20. Walter Jesop, weaver, aged 21 years
21. Timothy Tabor, in Somerset of Batcombe, tailor, aged 35 years
22. Jane Tabor, his wife, aged 35 years
23. Jane Tabor, his daughter, aged 10 years
24. Anne Tabor, his daughter, aged 8 years
25. Sarah Tabor, his daughter, aged 5 years
26. William Fever, his servant, aged 20 years
27. John Whitmarke, aged 39 years