

Originally known as New Amsterdam, New York City grew to become the center of the Dutch colony of what was then called New Netherland (later renamed New York by the English), a territory founded in 1624 and governed by the great slave trading corporation, the Dutch West India Company, whose primary goal was to "extend the market for its human merchandise whithersoever its influence reached." Today New York City's official flag still bears the colors of the original flag flown by Netherland's slave ships: blue, orange, and white.

The location of New York state, and more importantly, New York City, was not accidental. The Dutch had carefully and intentionally chosen them, not only for their many protected inlets, but also for their strategic positions, situated midway between the Northern and Southern colonies. From here they hoped to maximize slave sales and further spread their slave trading business throughout the Eastern seaboard.

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New York City, the center of America's cotton business as early as 1815, was so deeply connected to the Yankee slave trade and to Southern slavery that it opposed all early attempts at abolition within its borders, and, along with New Jersey, was the last Northern state to resist the passage of emancipation laws.

Being America's slave- state capital, it is not surprising that New York practiced slavery for an astonishing 239 years:

1. Slavery in New York officially began (on the island of Manhattan) under the Dutch, and lasted for 38 years, from 1626 to 1664.
2. New York slavery then fell under the auspices of the English, lasting for 112 years, from 1664 to 1776.
3. After the formation of the US, New York slavery was turned over to the new state government, continuing on for another 51 years, from 1776 to 1827, when it was legally "abolished".

4. Slavery in New York then persisted illegally for another 38 years, only being permanently shut down by the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in December 1865.

New York's 239-year history of slavery is the longest of any state, and certainly far longer than any Southern state. It is greater even than Massachusetts, where both the American slave trade and American slavery got their start. This makes New York America's premier slave state, our one and only true slavocracy, prompting one early historian to refer to the Empire State as a slave "regime never paralleled in equal volume elsewhere."

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By the time the slavery-obsessed English took over the colony of New Netherland in 1664 and renamed it New York, it "contained more slaves in proportion to its inhabitants than Virginia." From then on the institution only increased. Between 1697 and 1790, for example, Albany's slave population grew from 3 percent to 16 percent. Influential Albany plantation owners, like the Schuyler and Van Rensselaer families, made vast fortunes using black slaves to build up their estates. A number of their well-known homes stand in New York's capital city to this day, including Ten Broeck Manor, Cherry Hill Mansion, and the Schuyler Mansion.

In 1665 New York passed Duke's Laws, named after the Duke of York (who later became King James II). A codification of statutes borrowed from the Massachusetts Fundamentals (a set of early colonial laws), they allowed Indians and blacks who had not been baptized into the Christian religion to be enslaved.

By the year 1700 New York Harbor was teeming with slave ships and slavery had become the foundation of the state's economy. New Yorkers believed that their "peculiar institution" was so vital to Northern finance that they blocked and delayed emancipation for over 100 years, with so-called "official abolition" not occurring until 1827. New York's slave owners were a brutal lot, engaging in a myriad of cruel practices, from disenfranchisement

and the separation of slave families to whipping, torture, and murder.

By the year 1720 New York had become one of the largest slaveholding states in the North, with 4,000 slaves against a white population of only 31,000. The situation was unbearable to the North's few abolitionists, resulting in the nation's first antislavery essay: *The Selling of Joseph*, penned in Massachusetts by the famed Yankee judge who presided at the Salem witch trials, Samuel Sewall. As in ancient Africa, Israel, and Thrace, slaves were such a valuable commodity in the American North that they could be used as an insurance policy to cover their- master's financial obligations, or be sold to pay off the owner's creditors. This led to the illegal Northern practice of falsely claiming free blacks as "personal property", then selling them to pay off debts.

By the mid 1700s one-sixth of New York City's population was comprised of African slaves. By 1756 New York state possessed some 13,000 adult black slaves, giving it the dubious distinction of having the largest slave force of any Northern colony at the time. That same year slaves accounted for 25 percent of the population in Kings, Queens, Richmond, New York City, and Westchester, making these areas the primary bastion of American slavery throughout the rest of the colonial period.

New Englanders moving south to Westchester and Long Island were among the most eager slave purchasers, and by 1750 at least one-tenth of the province of New York's householders were slave owners. At New York City's peak, at least one-fifth of the town's population were slaves. Little wonder that in 1785 New York's state legislators rejected a bill advocating gradual emancipation. In 1860 alone it has been estimated that 85 vessels—all which had been fitted out in and which had sailed from New York City — brought as many as 60,000 African slaves into the U.S.

What Northern and New South historians will not tell you is that there is only one reason that New York City is today America's largest and wealthiest municipality: for centuries it served as the literal

heart of North America's slaving industry. Some of the most famous New York names, in fact—names such as the Lehman Brothers, John Jacob Astor, Junius and Pierpont Morgan, Charles Tiffany, Archibald Gracie, and many others—are only known today because of tremendous riches their families made from the town's highly profitable slave business.

Many of the 21st Century's wealthiest New York Jewish families descend from 18th century Jewish slave ship owners and slave traders, who eagerly participated with Northern colonial Christians in the Yankee's "peculiar institution." You will never learn any of this from pro-North mainstream history books, for their anti-South authors and publishers have a deeply vested interest in hiding the truth.

-- *The Great Yankee Coverup*

- Lochlainn Seabrook