

**Caution:** There is a difference in labor (something most of us have to do for our daily bread and a roof over our heads) and *forced* labor. With *forced* labor:

- You cannot stop.
- You may be doing things that will kill you (as your textbook covers)
- Your master gains from your labor and you gain only that you live another day.

### Dictionaries Used

Unless the definition is in a box, all definitions are from *Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary* at <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>. Definitions in a box are from the *Oxford English Dictionary* available through the WCJC Library.

If you want to go directly to a definition, you can click on its name below. Some words are repeated because they belong in more than one category. If you need help, just ask.

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# Terms in the Column Headings in the History Changes Link

**servitude** [a general term applicable to all of the words on this page]

Main Entry: **ser·vi·tude**

Pronunciation: \ 'sər-və-, tūd, -, tyūd\

Function: *noun*

Etymology: Middle English, from Anglo-French *servitude*, from Latin *servitudo* slavery, from *servus* slave

Date: 15th century

1 : a condition in which one lacks liberty especially to determine one's course of action or way of life...

## **bondage**

1: the tenure or service of a villein, serf, or slave

2: a state of being bound usually by compulsion (as of law or mastery)

## **indentured servant**

Main Entry: indentured servant

Function: noun

Date: 1723

: a person who signs and is bound by indentures [See definition below] to work for another for a specified time especially in return for payment of travel expenses and maintenance

### **indenture**

Main Entry: 1in·den·ture

Pronunciation: \in-'den(t)-shə\

Function: noun

Etymology: Middle English *endenture*, from Anglo-French, from *endenter*

Date: 14th century

1 a (1) : a document or a section of a document that is indented (2) : a formal or official document usually executed in two or more copies

(3) : a contract binding one person to work for another for a given period of time —often used in plural b : a formal certificate (as an

inventory or voucher) prepared for purposes of control c : a document stating the terms under which a security (as a bond) is issued

From the *Oxford English Dictionary* available through the WCJC Library

### **Indenture – additional explanation of where such a contract gets its name**

2. A deed between two or more parties with mutual covenants, executed in two or more copies, all having their tops or edges correspondingly indented or serrated for identification and security. Hence, A deed or sealed agreement or contract between two or more parties, without special reference to its form.

Originally both copies were written on one piece of parchment or paper, and then cut asunder in a serrated or sinuous line, so that when brought together again at any time, the two edges exactly tallied and showed that they were parts of one and the same original document: hence the expression 'pair of indentures'. Occasionally a word, sentence, or figure was engrossed on the space where they were divided ....

## **serf**

Main Entry: serf

Pronunciation: \ 'sərf\

Function: noun

Etymology: French, from Old French, from Latin *servus* slave

Date: 1611

: a member of a servile feudal class bound to the land and subject to the will of its owner

## **slave**

1: a person held in servitude as the chattel [See indented definition below] of another

Origin of SLAVE

Middle English *sclave*, from Anglo-French or Medieval Latin; Anglo-French *esclave*, from Medieval Latin *sclavus*, from *Sclavus* Slavic; from the frequent enslavement of Slavs in central Europe during the early Middle Ages

First Known Use: 14th century

### **chattel**

Main Entry: chat·tel

Pronunciation: \ 'chə-təl\

Function: noun

Etymology: Middle English *chatel* property, from Anglo-French — more at *cattle*

Date: 14th century

1 : an item of tangible movable or immovable property except real estate and things (as buildings) connected with real property

# Terms for Those Owning or Controlling Those in Servitude

## lord

1: one having power and authority over others:

a : a ruler by hereditary right or preeminence to whom service and obedience are due

b : one of whom a fee or estate is held in feudal tenure

c : an owner of land or other real property

## master

2d (1) : one having control (2) : an owner especially of a slave or animal

## slaveholder

Main Entry: slave·hold·er

Pronunciation: \ 'slāv- hōl-də\

Function: noun

Date: 1776

: an owner of slaves

— slave·hold·ing \-dɪŋ\ adjective or noun

# Term specific to buying and selling of slaves

Someone buying and selling slaves may not have used their labor themselves.

## slave trade

Main Entry: slave trade

Function: noun

Date: 1734

# Terms specific to slavery in the South

## planter

a person who owns a plantation

## plantation (as in Virginia and Maryland and the South)

Main Entry: plan·ta·tion

Pronunciation: \plan-'tā-shən\

Function: noun

Date: 15th century

...2 : a settlement in a new country or region <Plymouth Plantation> [Note: this is why the Separatists used the term about their new settlement in Plymouth, Massachusetts.]

3 a : a place that is planted or under cultivation b : an agricultural **estate** [See the indented definition below.] usually worked by resident labor

## **estate** [This word is also used to explain the medieval term, *manor*.]

Main Entry: 1es·tate

Pronunciation: \i-'stāt\

Function: noun

Etymology: Middle English estat, from Anglo-French — more at state

Date: 13th century

1 : state, condition

2 : social standing or rank especially of a high order

3 : a social or political class; specifically : one of the great classes (as the nobility, the clergy, and the commons) formerly vested with distinct political powers

4 a : the degree, quality, nature, and extent of one's interest in land or other property b (1) : possessions, property; especially : a person's property in land and tenements <a man of small estate> (2) : ... c : a landed property usually with a large house on it ...

# Terms about European Backgrounds of Serfdom or Feudalism

Time period: Europe in the Middle Ages and beyond (c. 500 AD to 1300 to 1500 AD)

## feudalism

Main Entry: feu·dal·ism

Pronunciation: \ˈfyü-də,li-zəm\

Function: noun

Date: circa 1818

1 : the system of political organization prevailing in Europe from the 9th to about the 15th centuries having as its basis the relation of lord to vassal with all land held in fee and as chief characteristics homage, the service of tenants under arms and in court, wardship, and forfeiture

2 : any of various political or social systems similar to medieval feudalism

## lord

1: one having power and authority over others:

a : a ruler by hereditary right or preeminence to whom service and obedience are due

b : one of whom a fee or estate is held in feudal tenure

c : an owner of land or other real property

## manor (land held by the lord in feudalism)

Main Entry: man·or

Pronunciation: \ˈma-nə\

Function: noun

Etymology: Middle English maner, from Old French manoir, from manoir to sojourn, dwell, from Latin manēre — more at mansion

Date: 14th century

1 a : the house or hall of an estate : mansion b : a landed estate [See indented definition below]

2 a : a unit of English rural territorial organization; especially : such a unit in the Middle Ages consisting of an estate under a lord enjoying a variety of rights over land and tenants including the right to hold court b : a tract of land in North America occupied by tenants who pay a fixed rent in money or kind to the proprietor

...

to the manor born : born into circumstances of wealth and privilege

## serf

Main Entry: serf

Pronunciation: \ˈsɜrf\

Function: noun

Etymology: French, from Old French, from Latin servus slave

Date: 1611

## villein

: a member of a servile feudal class bound to the land and subject to the will of its owner

an unfree peasant standing as the slave of a feudal lord but free in legal relations with respect to all others

# Terms Used in Our Textbook Regarding Serfdom or Feudalism in the Americas from the 1500s to the 1700s

From the Oxford English Dictionary available through the WCJC Library

## **encomienda** [Spanish colonies]

[Covered in our textbook in Chapter 1 about Spanish colonies under the heading Forced Labor Systems and also in Chapter 2 under the heading Settlement of New Mexico.]

Sp., = commission, charge, n. corresp. to the vb. encomendar to commit, charge; cf. med.L. phr. in commendam (see COMMENDAM).]

An estate granted to a Spaniard in America, with powers to exact taxation and *corvée* [See the indented definition below.] from the Indian inhabitants; such authority; a system derived from such authority....

**corvée** [Read the descriptions of service that Native Americans were expected to do in Chapter 1 under the heading Forced Labor Systems and see if they sound similar to this.]

Feudal Law. ...A day's work of unpaid labour due by a vassal to his feudal lord; the whole forced labour thus exacted; in France, extended to the statute labour upon the public roads which was exacted of the French peasants before 1776...

## **patron** [Dutch colonies]

[Covered in our textbook in Chapter 2 under the heading New Netherland. Look for the word patroonship.]

Dutch, from French patron : the proprietor of a manorial estate especially in New York originally granted under Dutch rule but in some cases existing until the mid-19th century

Note: When the English took over the Dutch colony, New Amsterdam became New York. The new proprietor—the Duke of York, later the briefly the king of England—gave the Dutch “the choice of keeping their Dutch citizenship or becoming naturalized as English subjects” and he later “recognized preexisting titles to land” (including those patroonships). Covered in our textbook in Chapter 2 under the heading New York and New Jersey.

## **proprietor** [English colonies]

[Covered with many English colonies in the textbook, including the Carolinas, Maryland, New York, and Pennsylvania]

one granted ownership of a colony (as one of the original American colonies) and full prerogatives of establishing a government and distributing land

Examples in our textbook:

- Maryland – “The proprietor planned a feudal system in which manorial lords received large tracts depending on the number of tenants they transported.” – Chapter 2 under the heading The Proprietary Colony of Maryland
- Carolinas – “They [the proprietors] drew up the ‘Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina,’ creating a complicated feudal society with nobles and lords, a scheme the ordinary settlers of Carolina refused to accept.” – Chapter 2 under the heading Carolina

## **seignior** [French colonies]

[Covered in our textbook in Chapter 2 under the heading New France. To find it in the text, look for the plural of this word, *seigniories*.]

[The term *seignior* means]

1: lordship, dominion; specifically : the power or authority of a feudal lord

2: the territory over which a lord holds jurisdiction

Note: The section of the textbook says the French peasants were not willing to migrate. What reason would they have to risk your life to cross the Atlantic to remain a landless person.