

# Patent for eli whitney's cotton gin research paper examples

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## **Patent for Eli Whitney's Cotton Gin 1794**

### Introduction

This picture was taken on March 14, 1994, when Eli Whitney, the inventor of the modern mechanical machine applied for a patent that was granted to him, but was never validated until 1807. It shows the document that Whitney received for his invention to help increase the production of cotton in the United States. The picture depicts the beginning of Eastern capitalism.

### **Discussion**

Whitney abandoned his plans to study law with the hopes of making a patented machine and instead toiled throughout the winter in a secret workshop provided by Catherine Greene. He created a cotton gin within months. However, patenting an invention and making profit were separate entities. After considering available options, Whitney and his partner, Phineas Miller settled on large-scale production of many gins throughout America and charge farmers a fee for doing the ginning for them. Farmers had to part with two-fifths of the profits to gin owners. All the trouble began here when farmers throughout Georgia resented the idea of having to go to Whitney's gins and pay what claimed was an exorbitant tax. Instead, farmers resorted to making their own versions of Whitney's gin and claiming that they were "new" inventions. Despite bringing the case against the owners of these pirated versions to court, loopholes in the wording of the 1793 patent act prevented Whitney from winning any suit until 1800, when the law was changed.

Following the invention of the cotton gin, farmers experienced a double

increase in yield after 1800. Additionally, other inventions of the Industrial Revolution, such as steamboat transport and weaving machines fueled the demand. Towards the mid of the century, American farmers accounted for three-quarters of world's cotton supply, majority of which were shipped to England to manufacture clothes. During this period, the value of tobacco fell, rice export stayed stable, and sugar begun to pick, but only in Louisiana. During this period, the south provided three-fifth of export, mainly cotton. Nonetheless, as the case with many inventors, Whitney did not foresee the implications, which his inventions had for the society. On the negative side, it led to growth of slavery. While it is true that the invention of cotton gin reduced the amount of labor required for removing seeds, it increased the need for slaves to cultivate and pick cotton. In reality, the opposite occurred. Cotton cultivation became a profitable venture for farmers that it greatly increased their demand for both slave labor and land. Records show that by 1790, America had six slave states and by 1860, there were fifteen states. Southerners had imported 80, 000 slaves from 1790 until 1808 when the Congress banned the importation of slaves. By 1860, the ratio of slaves to Southerners was one to three.

The invention of cotton gin made slaves to toil on an ever-increasing plantations and work become more regimented and relentless. The increasing size of plantation, price of land and slave hindered the growth of industries and cities. Beginning the 1850s, seven out of eight of all immigrants settled in the North, where there was seventy-two percent of the nation's manufacturing capacity. Many aspects of the Southern life affected the growth of the "peculiar institution".

While many acknowledge Whitney as the inventor of cotton gin, few often remember him as the father of mass production method. Whitney figured out how to manufacture muskets using machines so that the parts were replicable. It is through manufacture of muskets that Whitney became rich. If his invention resulted into King Cotton to reign in the South, it also created the technology that the North used to win the Civil War.

### **Bibliography:**

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