

Guide ~ Source F (Richard Frethorne letter)

Title of your primary source: **Richard Frethorne's Letter to His Parents**

Type of source & date: **personal letter, 1623**

Author/creator: **Richard Frethorne**

What do you know about the creator of this source?

Richard Frethorne was an indentured servant in Virginia

What information does this source give you about the living conditions of servants or what it was like to be an indentured servant in the colonies?

- **there is a lot of sickness in Virginia, such as scurvy and “bloody flux” (dysentery)**
- **since his arrival in Virginia, Frethorne has eaten nothing but peas and gruel (porridge, probably made with wheat or cornmeal) and sometimes “a mouthful of bread and beef”**
- **his fellow servants would rather lose a limb and be in England again than stay in Virginia**
- **live in constant fear of “the enemy” (Indians)**
- **half of the other servants he came with are already dead**
- **Frethorne wears “rags” and does not have sufficient clothes**
- **Frethorne is much weaker than he ever was in England because he doesn't get enough to eat**
- **Frethorne begs his father to pay money to free him**

Does this source present a **positive**, **negative**, or **neutral** view of indentured servitude?

Explain why?

- **encourage students to give their views of this and ask them to explain them/provide support**
- **negative**
 - **sickness**
 - **inadequate food**
 - **death of so many servants**