

Spatial Organization

Early Period—1696–1730

The spatial organization of Early Period plantations is generally considered to be the least complex of the three time periods examined. However, plantations of the Early Period are also the least documented of all of the plantations in the county. Minimally, a small plantation with the fewest slaves or indentures engaged in agriculture using a set of outbuildings suited to their specific agricultural pursuits and household necessities. For instance, William Caghille, master of one slave and one indentured servant at the time of his death in 1702, appears to have been producing only subsistence-level agricultural capacity (Prince George's Inventories BB Liber 1:Folio 40). Cows, sheep, and hogs required few accompaniments, likely only a single barn and possibly a milk house. The three horses in Caghille's possession may also have required a stable. Activities such as wool spinning, evidenced by the possession of a spinning wheel and wool cards, could be conducted within the dwelling space. However, the inventory also indicates ownership of almost 80 apple trees. Implements for maintaining the orchard could likely be kept within the barn or in a small shed. As a perishable product, the apples produced would have required processing into a less perishable commodity, probably cider. Processing implements do not appear on the probate.

Also absent is tobacco from Caghille's inventory. During the Early Period, tobacco developed as the premier crop in Prince George's. Because, "tobacco was a poor man's crop," even small planters, with small workforces could profitably cultivate the staple on relatively small plots of land (Berlin 1998:31). Small planters engaged in tobacco agriculture would also require certain facilities for its processing, minimally a tobacco barn for curing and prizing into hogsheads. The inventories suggest cooperage occurring on many plantations with small workforces, possibly requiring a carpentry workshop. Additionally, other necessary crops, most importantly corn, would have required construction of a corncrib or similar structure. The relatively small workforce wielded by small slave/indenture holders limited the amount of land they could cultivate. A 1775 treatise published in *American Husbandry* indicated that one laborer could cultivate 50 acres of tobacco; this number, however, accounts neither for the cultivation of corn, wheat, barley, oats, hay and other necessary crops nor other plantation activities such as butter churning, soap making, sheep shearing, cooking, etc. Therefore, it is most likely that the operation of small slave/indenture holding plantations focused within a relatively small geographic area, with

the supporting agricultural structures centrally located in proximity to the domestic dwelling (Model 1).

The profitability of tobacco drove the market for labor, indentured and enslaved, during the Early Period (Kulikoff 1976:4; Middleton 1984:161-164). Simply put, the larger a workforce wielded by a planter, the greater his economic potential. The inventories of medium-sized slaveholders illustrate the fruition of this potential through the possession of more and finer goods. James Gamblins, for example, owned five slaves, all female. His inventory included items such as books, a bible, spectacles, and wearing apparel of sufficient quality to warrant assessment (Prince George's Inventories BB Liber 1:Folio 33). Most small slaveholders' inventories lack these goods. Of slightly higher economic standing, James Brookes mastered six slaves and nine servants at the turn of the eighteenth century (Prince George's Inventories BB Liber 1:Folio 43)¹. His inventory included greater numbers of sheep and cows than present on smaller slaveholdings of this period (see Prince George's Inventories BB Liber 1:Folio 3, 21, 40, and 199 for examples of small slaveholders). Although the increased dietary demands of a large plantation partially account for this discrepancy, Brookes possessed more riding horses and wearing apparel valued at five times that recorded for James Gamblings and John Johnson, small slave/indenture holding contemporaries.

The larger workforce fielded by a medium- versus small-sized slaveholder workforce derived largely from the ability to dedicate more acreage to tobacco cultivation. Increased tobacco production mandated an increase in the number of agricultural outbuildings. Minimally, additional and/or larger tobacco barns, proportionate to the level of tobacco production, would be required. Furthermore, the consumption demands of a larger workforce would necessitate the construction of additional structures such as sheds and corncribs. A medium-sized labor force would likely require dedicated housing (Model 2).

Apart from the added requirements demanded by a larger workforce, such as housing and food preparation and storage, medium-sized slave/indenture holding plantations participated in a wider range of activities than their smaller counterparts, requiring even additional structures (Models 3a and 3b). The slight increase in workforce often included specialized labor. For instance, James Brookes' inventory included a shoemaker servant as well as shoemakers' thread, tanning tools, alum salt, and 26 pairs of "Pennsylvania gloves" (Prince George's Inventories BB Book 1:Folio 43). The tradesman and the items clearly indicate the tanning of hides and manufacture of leather goods. These activities would require at least one workshop. Additionally, the nature of the tanning process likely dictated a tanning location on the landscape. Because of the smell, planters likely chose a location downwind from habitation areas. Distillation represents another activity conducted on plantations with medium-

¹ James Brookes' 1701 inventory was augmented in 1702 to include additional grains, tobacco, livestock, and goods as well as one white servant whose indenture was nearly served and a "negro" baby aged two months.

sized and larger labor forces. One 1704 Prince George's County Inventory (BB Liber 1:Folio 56) with seven slaves and one "East India Negro" servant also listed a copper furnace and pewter head and worms. These items are integral to even the most basic alcohol still (Wright 1907). Some medium and large plantations probably operated a dedicated distillery; smaller operations may have utilized a multipurpose detached kitchen.

Based on the inventories, medium-sized labor force plantations would likely exhibit a more complex set of outbuildings than smaller plantations. The core would remain centered on the manor house, but would also include barns on distant fields and perhaps workshops strategically placed on the landscape. At this period, it is most likely that both small- and medium-sized slaveholders utilized impermanent architecture for outbuildings and workshops and impermanent post-in-ground or semi-permanent, pier or post-on-foundation architecture for the manor house and possibly the servant/slave quarters.

Colonial Period—1731–1790

Large slaveholding plantations increased in architectural complexity during the Colonial Period. Plantation manor houses developed into more formal complexes (Model 6a). The wealthiest planters of the period skillfully designed their plantation manor landscapes. Outbuildings nearest to the manor house increasingly mimicked the architectural styles of the dwelling and utilized more permanent construction techniques. Similarly, non-necessary or recreational structures, evidence of a planter's wealth, became more common plantation landscape features. The practice among large slaveholders to possess several distant tracts of land with resident labor forces continued from the Early Period through the Colonial Period. The use of overseers became more prevalent during this period (Model 6b).

Similarly, small- and medium-sized planters also utilized increasingly permanent architectural forms. However, the products of these smaller plantations did not warrant the number of outbuildings associated with the main house (Model 4). Lacking the resources of the larger planters, small- and medium-sized plantations continued to use more functional and economical forms of outbuilding construction (Model 5).

Like the Early Period, large slaveholdings tended to be divided between several quarters. Each living quarters area represented something of a satellite of the manor house. Whereas the main plantation complexes on the wealthiest plantations still required numerous outbuildings for everyday activities, Colonial Period large slaveholders with means attempted to integrate these structures aesthetically as a projection of their prominence. Conversely, the satellite quarters were constructed as functional, agricultural production centers. Planters favored post-in-ground, temporary buildings for their functionality and economy.

The increase in population between the Early and Colonial Period drove many new planters away from the major waterways and into the interior of the county. Lacking the ability to transport goods via the riverine networks established during the Early Period, roadways increased exponentially during the Colonial Period.

National Period—1791–1864

As with their predecessors, complexity and the operation of several satellite quarters continued to represent the greatest difference in use of space on National Period plantations (Model 9). Simply put, large plantations consisted of a landscape in which the manor house served as the primary focus of social and economic activities associated with plantation operations. Although tied to the main house, slave quarters, when warranted by the size of the slave holding, were placed separately from the manor house. Conversely, slave quarters in direct landscape association occur only on the plantations of the extremely wealthy. These quarters represent the continuation of a trend started during the Colonial Period, the integration of outbuildings into the landscape. However, very few slaves lived in the immediate core of large plantations, relative to the number of slaves held by this class. Accordingly, these examples fail to capture the experience of most bound Prince Georgians.

By the early part of the National Period, intercounty physical geography impacted the county's social geography. With several noteworthy exceptions, small- and medium-sized holdings dominated the tobacco-poor north of Prince George's County. These plantations generally focused on grain agriculture, dairy farming, and animal husbandry (Models 7 and 8). Conversely, the tobacco-rich lands in the county's midsection and south demanded large labor forces. As a result, these areas contained the largest concentrations of slaves in the county. Agricultural capacity played a major role in plantation architecture as crop choices determined the specific types of structures necessary for cultivation and processing.

Plantation Model Symbol Key



Early Period Manor House
for Large Plantation



Early Period Servant/Slave House



Colonial Period Manor House
for Large Plantation



Colonial and National Period
Modest Dwelling/Overseer's House



National Period Manor House
for Large Plantation



Early Period Modest Dwelling for
Small and Medium Plantations



Log Cabin Slave House



Colonial and National Period
Formal Servant/Slave House



Colonial and National
Period Modest Stable



Colonial and National Period
Formal Stable



Early Period Barn



Early Period Outbuilding



Colonial and National
Period Barn



Colonial and National
Period Modest Outbuilding



Water Driven Mill



Colonial Period Formal Outbuilding
Designed for Manor Landscape



Waterway



Rye or Oat Field



Tobacco Field



Hay Field



Corn Field



Pasture



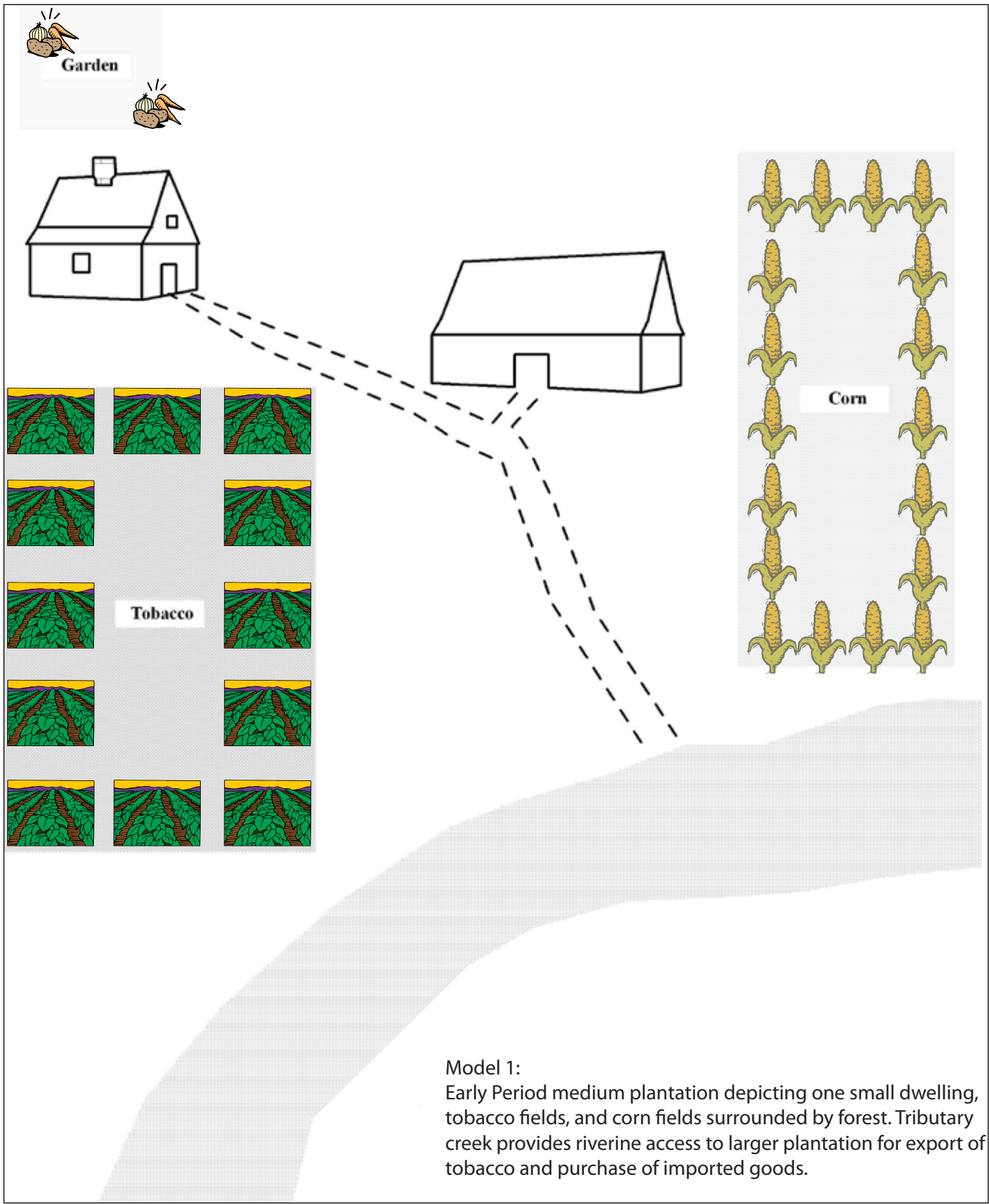
Wheat Field



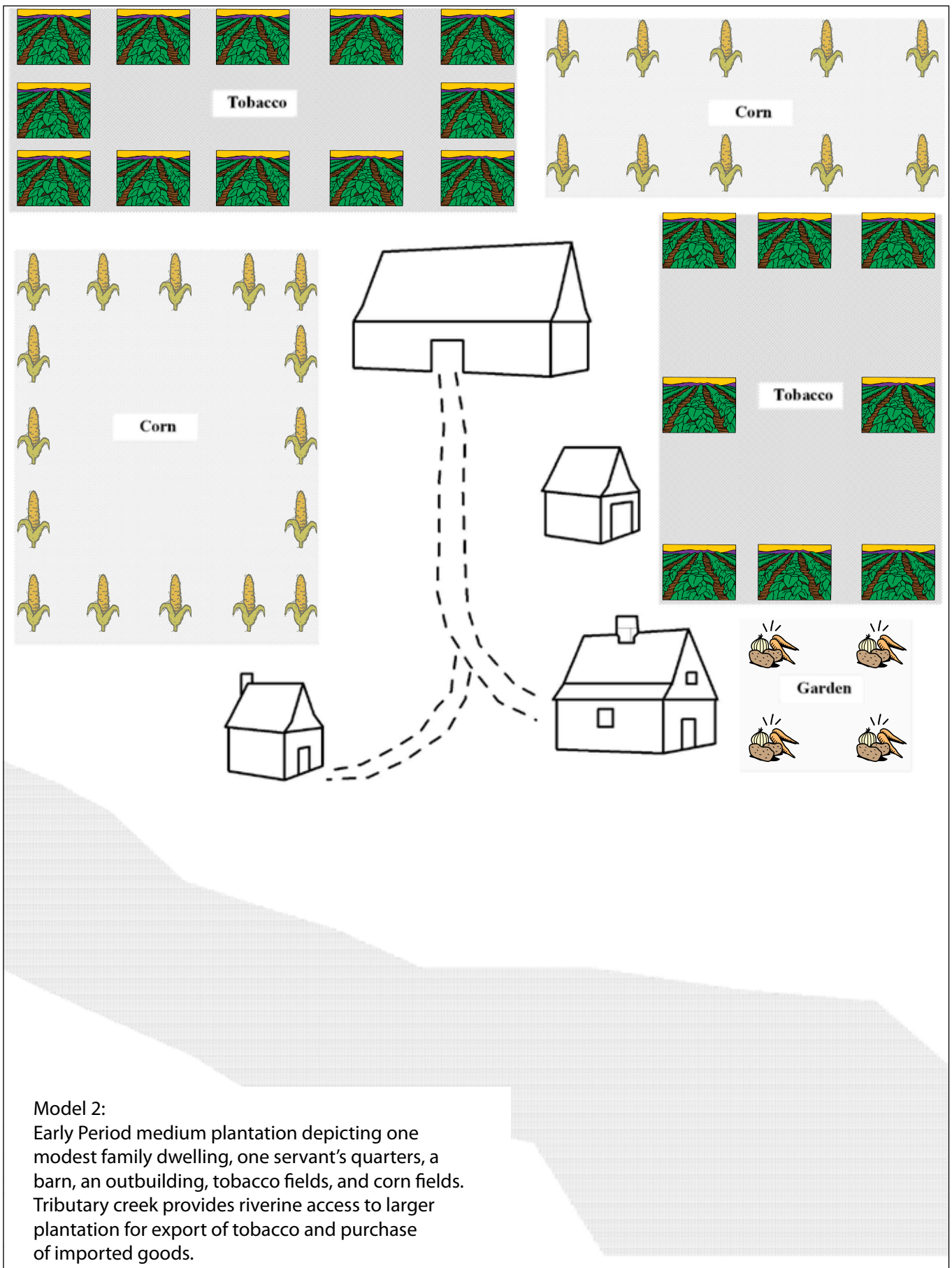
Garden



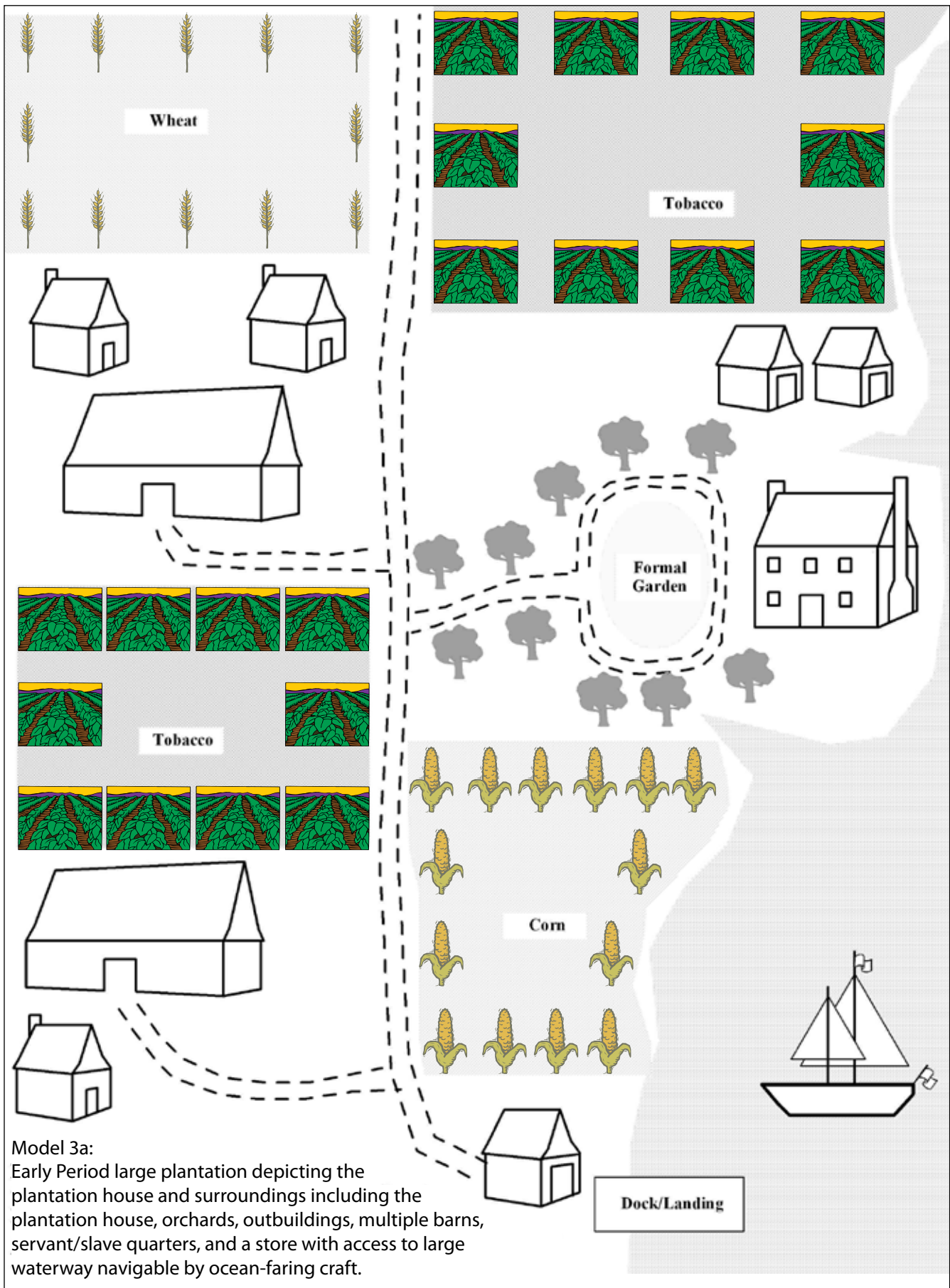
Orchard or Ornamental



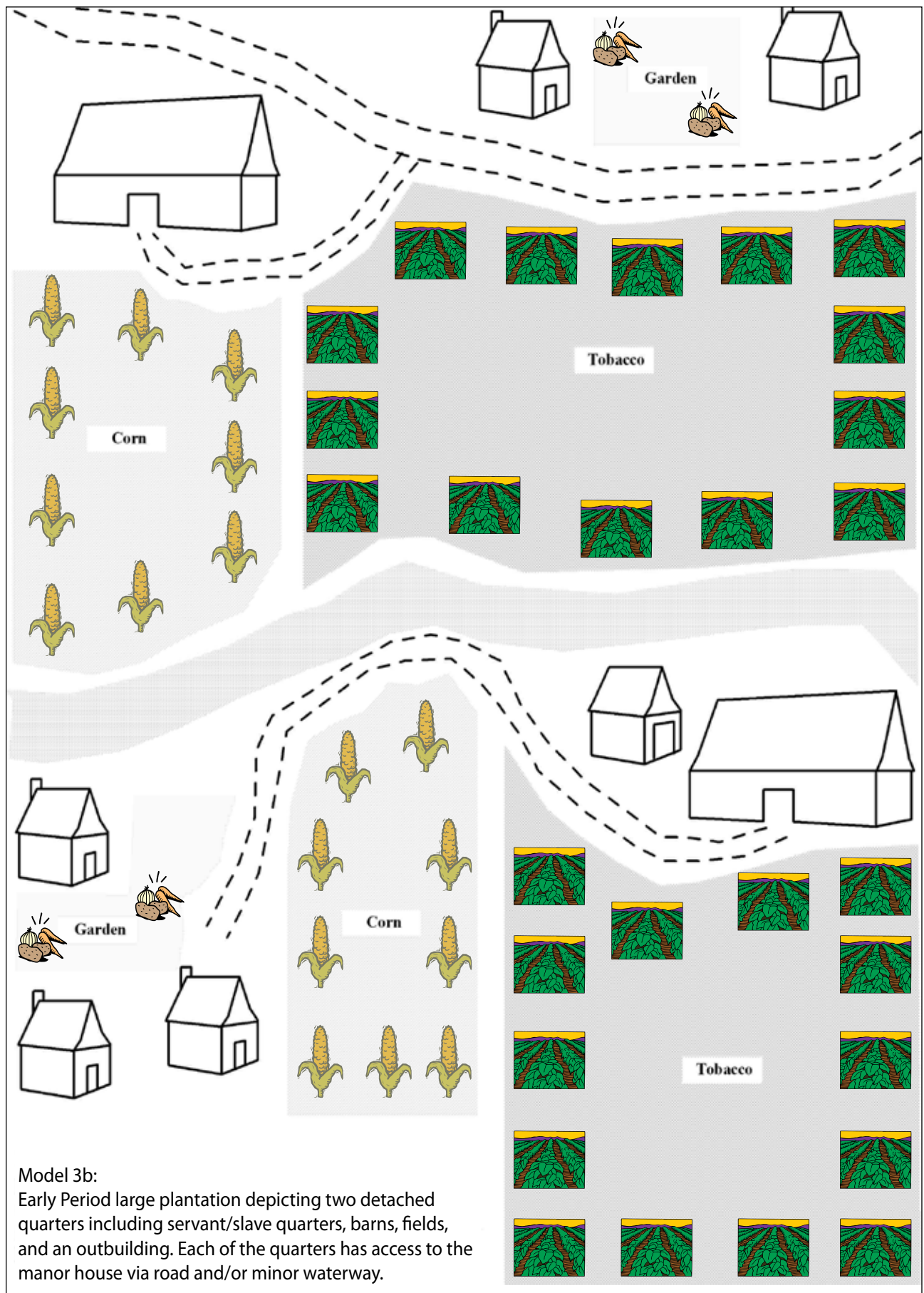
Model 1:
 Early Period medium plantation depicting one small dwelling, tobacco fields, and corn fields surrounded by forest. Tributary creek provides riverine access to larger plantation for export of tobacco and purchase of imported goods.



Model 2:
 Early Period medium plantation depicting one modest family dwelling, one servant's quarters, a barn, an outbuilding, tobacco fields, and corn fields. Tributary creek provides riverine access to larger plantation for export of tobacco and purchase of imported goods.

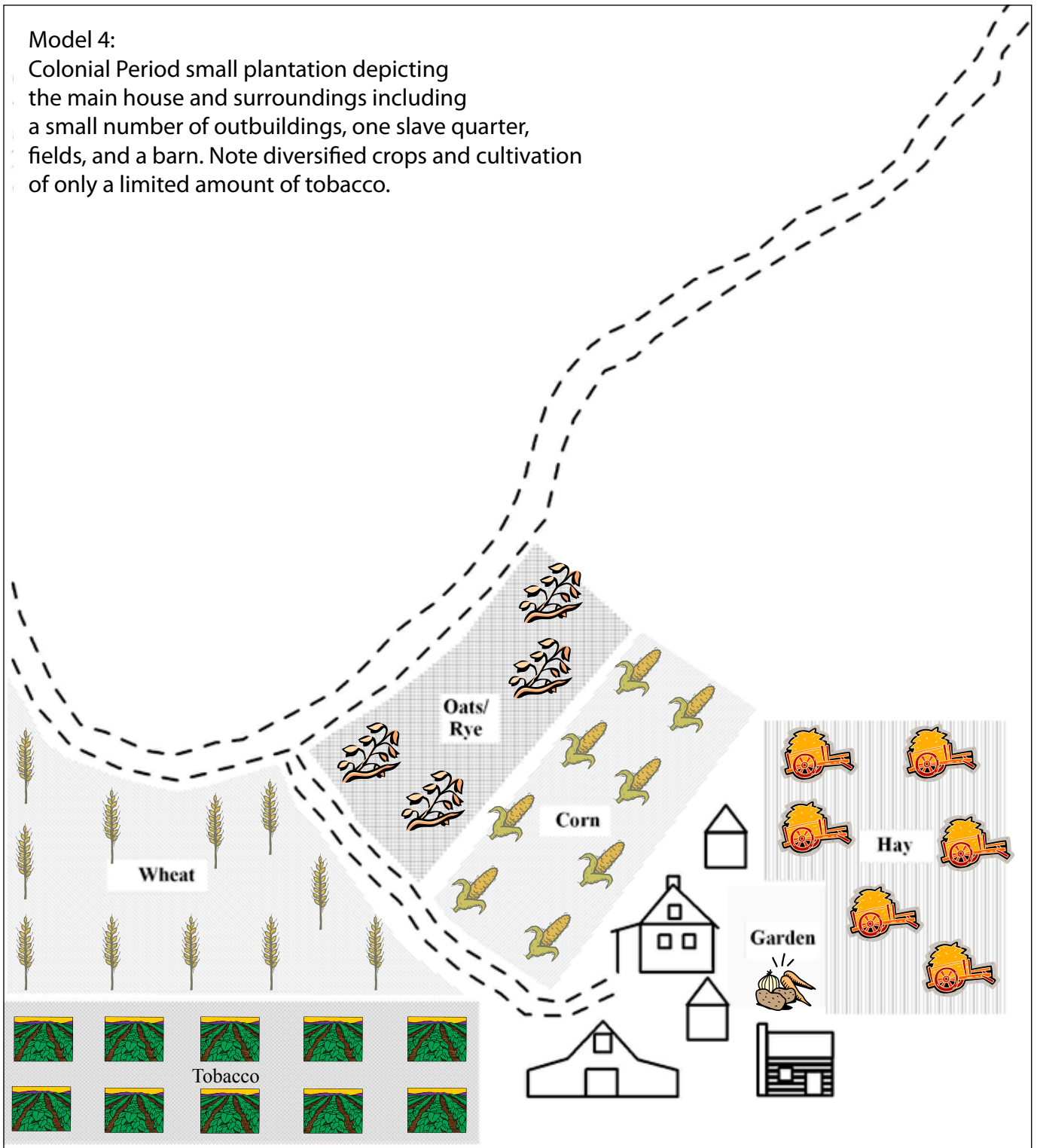


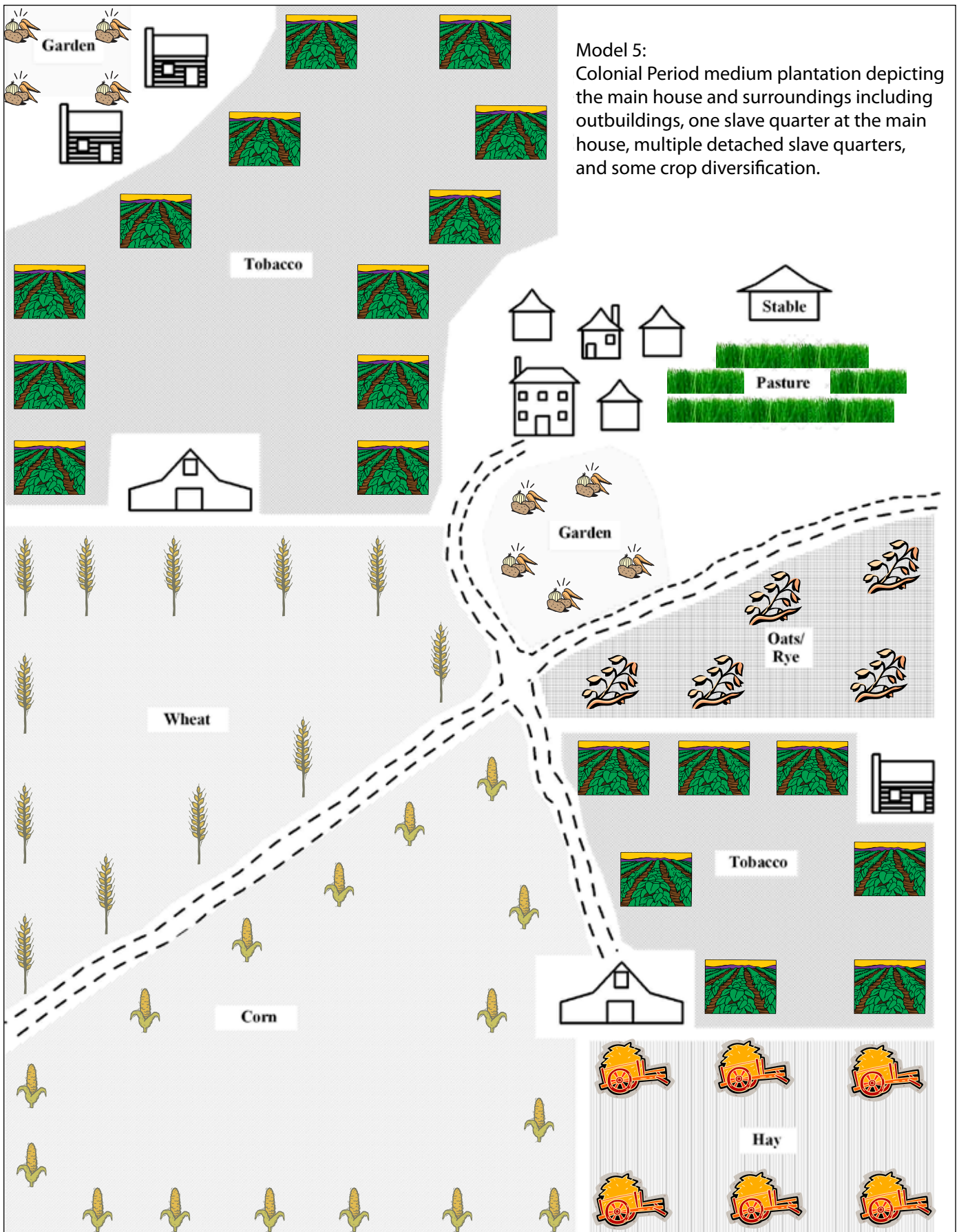
Model 3a:
 Early Period large plantation depicting the plantation house and surroundings including the plantation house, orchards, outbuildings, multiple barns, servant/slave quarters, and a store with access to large waterway navigable by ocean-faring craft.



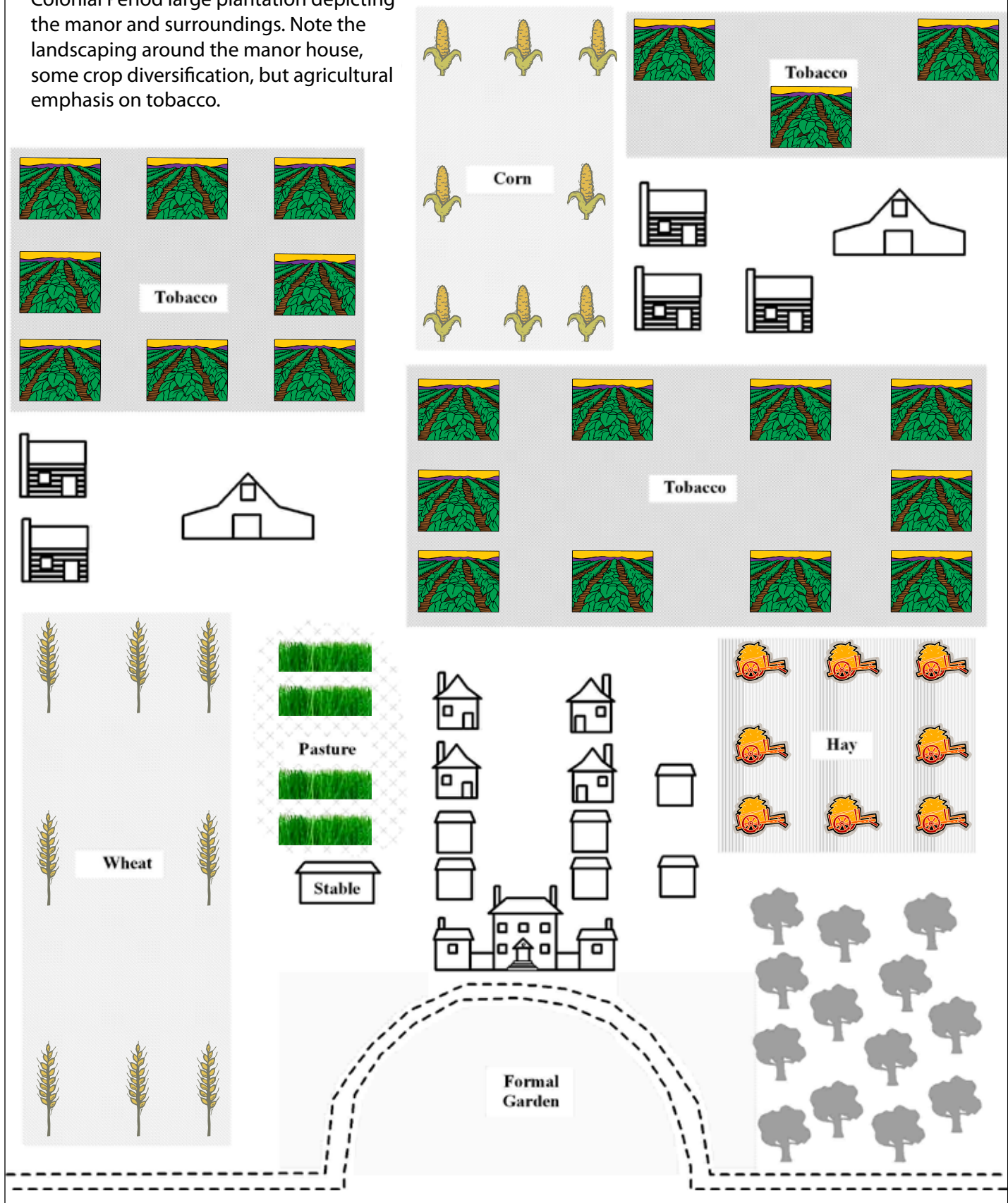
Model 3b:
 Early Period large plantation depicting two detached quarters including servant/slave quarters, barns, fields, and an outbuilding. Each of the quarters has access to the manor house via road and/or minor waterway.

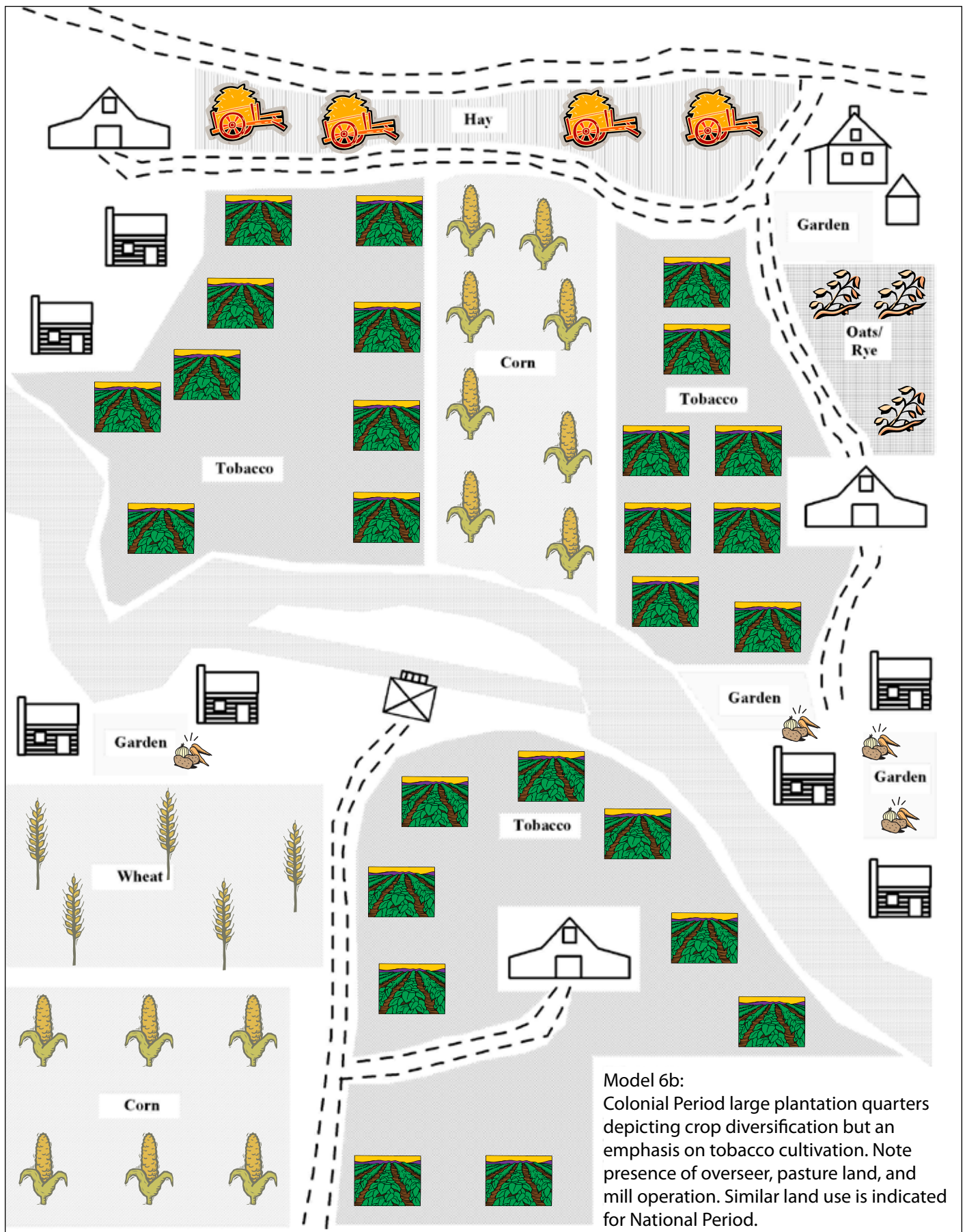
Model 4:
Colonial Period small plantation depicting
the main house and surroundings including
a small number of outbuildings, one slave quarter,
fields, and a barn. Note diversified crops and cultivation
of only a limited amount of tobacco.

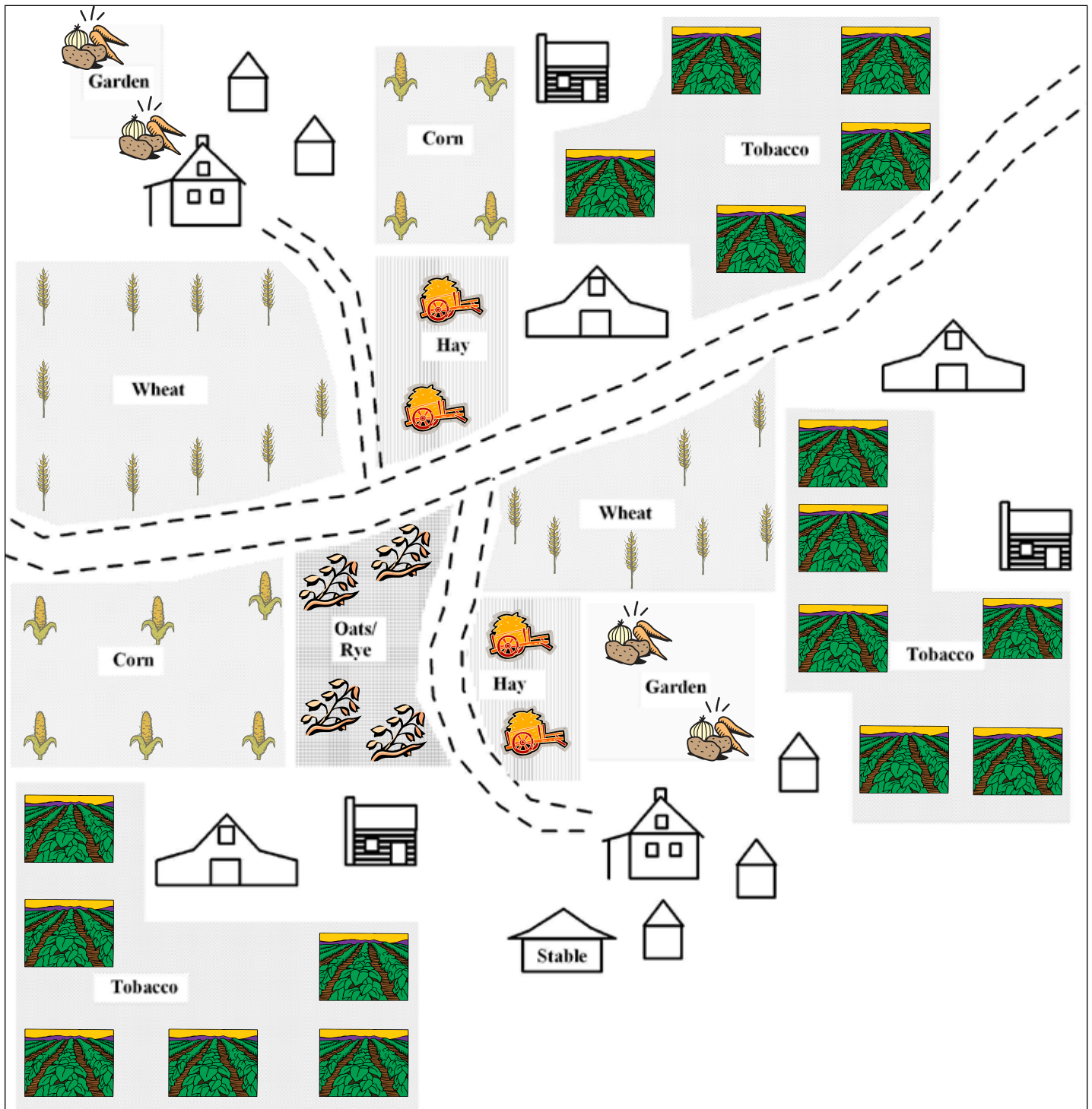




Model 6a:
 Colonial Period large plantation depicting the manor and surroundings. Note the landscaping around the manor house, some crop diversification, but agricultural emphasis on tobacco.







Models 7 and 8:
National Period small (above road) and medium (below road) plantations. Note the use of similar architectural styles but the cultivation of more tobacco as well as other crops and additional outbuildings on the medium plantation.

Model 9:

National Period large plantation depicting the manor and quarters. Note dispersed workforce and use of overseer.

