

Plateau, and often admit throughout their entire length of the entrance of the largest ocean-going vessels. The deeper channels are generally the continuation of the leading rivers, which suddenly change in character as they enter the Coastal Plain with great loss in the velocity of their currents. All of the large streams and many of the smaller ones as they cross the western margin of the Coastal Plain are characterized by a marked decrease in the velocity of their currents and at times by falls or rapids, the name "fall-line" being given to this boundary on that account. The inland border of the Coastal Plain thus marks the head of navigation and has likewise conditioned from the earliest times the leading highways of trade which connect the north and south. Along this line have grown up the larger cities of the Atlantic seaboard, Trenton, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Petersburg, Columbia, Augusta, and other less populous towns.

The Piedmont Plateau, which borders the Coastal Plain upon the west and extends thence to the foot of the Appalachian Mountains, is less clearly defined in the northern portion of the country than along the middle and southern Atlantic slope. It broadens from New York southward, reaching its greatest width of three hundred miles in North Carolina. The Piedmont Plateau is a region of somewhat greater elevation than the Coastal Plain which borders it upon the east, but stands in marked contrast to the high ranges of the Appalachian Region upon the west. It is characterized by a broken, hilly country with undulating surface, but with few mountains of conspicuous altitude or great extent. The region is crossed by numerous rivers which have their rise in the high mountains to the west, while many smaller streams and tributaries have their sources within the area. The streams flow with rapid currents and the country is everywhere well drained as compared with the low lands of the east.

The Appalachian Region is an area of high land which extends almost continuously from Cape Gaspé in Canada southward to Alabama, a distance of 1300 miles, and throughout most of that distance forms the divide between the streams which flow directly to the east across the Piedmont Plateau and the Coastal Plain into the Atlantic