

GEORGIA

HISTORY

Georgia has been home to mound builders, Native nations, Spanish priests, English colonists and railroad builders. Each of them helped shape the state.

Mound Builders and Native Nations

People have lived in Georgia for more than 12,000 years. About 1,000 years ago, Mississippian people built towns around tall earth mounds. They grew corn, beans and squash. You can still visit their mounds at Etowah and Ocmulgee. Later, two large nations held most of Georgia. The Creek, who call themselves Muscogee, lived in the south and middle. The Cherokee lived in the northern mountains.



Spain and England

A Spanish army led by Hernando de Soto marched through Georgia in 1540. Later, Spanish priests ran **missions** on the coastal islands for about 100 years. In 1733, James Oglethorpe started the English **colony** of Georgia at Savannah. In 1742, his soldiers beat a Spanish force at the Battle of Bloody Marsh. Spain did not attack Georgia again.

Revolution and Cotton

Georgia joined the American Revolution. British troops captured Savannah in 1778 and held it until 1782. Georgia became the 4th state in 1788. In 1793, Eli Whitney built a **cotton gin** near Savannah. The machine pulled the seeds out of cotton quickly, and cotton farms spread across the state. About 460,000 people were enslaved in Georgia by 1860, and many worked in the cotton fields. Slavery ended in 1865.



Gold and the Cherokee

The Creek gave up the last of their Georgia land in treaties by 1827. The Cherokee had farms, written laws and a capital at New Echota. Sequoyah invented a way to write the Cherokee language, and a Cherokee newspaper began in 1828. In 1829, gold was found near Dahlonega, and thousands of miners rushed onto Cherokee land. In 1838, United States soldiers moved the Cherokee west to what is now Oklahoma. Native people still live in Georgia today.

The Civil War

In 1861, Georgia left the United States and joined the **Confederacy**. In 1864, Union General William T. Sherman's army captured Atlanta. Confederate troops burned their supplies as they left, and Union troops later burned much of the city. Sherman's soldiers then marched to Savannah. They tore up railroads and took food from farms. Savannah surrendered in December 1864. The Union won the war in 1865.



Building Modern Georgia

Atlanta began in 1837 as the end of a railroad line. After the war, its people rebuilt it quickly, and it became the capital in 1868. Cloth mills opened along the rivers. Farmers added peaches and peanuts. During World War II, workers in Marietta built bomber planes. In 1996, Atlanta hosted the Summer Olympics.

GEORGIA THROUGH TIME



PEOPLE TO KNOW

James Oglethorpe	Founded Georgia in 1733.
Mary Musgrove	Creek translator for Oglethorpe.
Juliette Gordon Low	Started the Girl Scouts in 1912.
Martin Luther King Jr.	Born in Atlanta. Nobel Peace Prize.
Jackie Robinson	Baseball star born in Cairo, Georgia.

WORDS TO KNOW

mission	a church settlement
colony	land ruled by a faraway country
cotton gin	a machine that pulls seeds from cotton
Confederacy	11 states that left the Union