

SOUTH CAROLINA

HISTORY

South Carolina has been home to Native nations, Spanish and English settlers, enslaved Africans, soldiers and factory workers. Each of them helped shape the state.

The First Peoples

People have lived in South Carolina for thousands of years. By the 1500s, many Native nations lived here. The Cherokee lived in the mountains of the northwest. The Catawba lived in the Piedmont near the Catawba River. Smaller nations lived along the coast. They hunted deer, caught fish and grew corn, beans and squash.

Spanish and English Settlers

In 1566, Spain built a town called Santa Elena on what is now Parris Island. In 1663, the king of England gave the land called Carolina to eight men. English settlers came in 1670 and started Charles Town, now Charleston. The **colony** grew rice and later indigo, a plant used to make blue dye. Most of the work on rice **plantations** was done by enslaved Africans.

Wars With Native Nations

Traders and settlers moved onto Native land, and some traders sold Native people as slaves. In 1715, Yamasee warriors and their allies attacked farms and killed hundreds of settlers. The colony fought back with help from the Cherokee. Most of the Yamasee moved south to Spanish Florida. In 1760, war broke out with the Cherokee. Cherokee warriors attacked frontier farms, and soldiers burned Cherokee towns. The Cherokee made peace in 1761 and gave up land.

The Revolution

In 1776, **Patriots** on Sullivan's Island beat a British fleet. In 1780, the British captured Charleston. Francis Marion led small bands that struck and then hid in the swamps. Patriots won at Kings Mountain in 1780 and at Cowpens in 1781. In 1786, leaders chose a spot in the middle of the state for a new capital, Columbia. South Carolina became the 8th state in 1788.

Cotton and Railroads

After 1800, farmers in the upcountry planted cotton. In 1833, a railroad from Charleston to Hamburg, on the Savannah River, was finished. At about 136 miles, it was one of the longest in the world. By 1860, more than half of the people in South Carolina were enslaved. They did most of the work in the rice and cotton fields.



War and New Work

In December 1860, South Carolina became the first state to **secede**, or leave the United States. In April 1861, Confederate soldiers fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, and the Civil War began. In 1865, a Union army marched through the state, and much of Columbia burned. Slavery ended that year. Later, cloth mills rose in Piedmont towns. In 1994, BMW opened a car factory near Greer. The Catawba Nation and other Native people live in South Carolina today.

SOUTH CAROLINA THROUGH TIME

1566	1670	1715	1760	1780	1788	1833	1861	1994
Spain builds Santa Elena	English settle Charles Town	The Yamasee War begins	War with the Cherokee	Battle of Kings Mountain	South Carolina is the 8th state	Railroad to Hamburg	Shots fired at Fort Sumter	BMW factory opens

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Eliza Lucas Pinckney	Grew indigo in the 1740s.
Francis Marion	Patriot leader called the Swamp Fox.
Robert Smalls	Escaped slavery by steering a ship to freedom.
Mary McLeod Bethune	Teacher born near Mayesville.
Ronald McNair	Astronaut from Lake City.

WORDS TO KNOW

colony	land ruled by a faraway country
plantation	a large farm worked by many people
Patriot	a colonist who fought to be free of Britain
secede	to break away from a country