Georgia History

Established by a 1732 charter, Georgia originally included parts of
the present-day states of Alabama and Mississippi, and by 1795
included most of those states. The British settlers were followed by
Salzburgers (German Lutherans), Scots, and emigrants from other
colonies. The last of the original thirteen colonies to be founded,
Georgia was positioned as a kind of buffer area between the
Spanish who had settled in Florida, and the populated areas of the
Carolinas. Hostilities with the Spanish who occupied Florida began early and persisted until the Treaty of Aix-
la-Chappelle in 1748.

During the American Revolution, the British occupied Savannah. In 1779, American Revolutionaries and allies
from France, and Arthur Dillon's "Wild Geese" of Ireland attempted to regain control of the city during the
Siege of Savannah. Count Casimir Pulaski of Poland died during the siege, which eventually had to be
abandoned, leaving Savannah in control of the British, and Georgia a crown colony until the end of the
Revolution.

The Civil War left Georgia crippled economically and ravaged by the war. Reconstruction offered some
stability, but emancipation left the economic landscape forever changed. Many African Americans moved to
larger cities and in 1890 Jim Crow laws segregated them from the white population and greatly limited civil
rights. Racial violence plagued the state for the latter decades of the 19th century and into the 20th century.
During World War II, more than 320,000 servicemen from Georgia joined the war effort and the state
economy was bolstered by war industry.

GEORGIA CENSUSES

Although earlier censuses were taken, the 1820 census is the earliest federal enumeration to survive for
the state of Georgia. However, Franklin, Rabun and Twiggs counties are missing from the 1820 census,
and other counties are at times unreliable or unreadable. The remaining censuses are mostly complete,
and are available for each census year except for 1890, where only Muscogee County survived.

Various state censuses exist on a fragmented basis for many counties in Georgia. Tax lists and other
sources are often necessary to serve as substitutes for early censuses, and in between federal censuses.
A 1790 census has been created from tax lists for much of the state.

Ancestry.com has several "reconstructed" collections that can help fill the gaps of missing censuses:

- Georgia, Compiled Census and Census Substitutes Index, 1790-1890
- The Reconstructed 1790 Census of Georgia
- U.S. Census Reconstructed Records, 1660-1820

Significant Dates (through 1960)

1733—James Oglethorpe and 130 colonists arrive in the area near what will be Savannah, Georgia.

1739—The War of Jenkins Ear is fought between England and Spain, with engagements taking place in Georgia and Florida until 1742. The war formally ended with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chappelle in 1748.

1751—Bans on slavery and rum importation in Georgia are removed.

1752—- Georgia becomes a royal colony.

1762—Florida comes under British control relieving the border tensions.

1776—Georgia representatives, Burton Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, and George Washington sign the Declaration of Independence.

1779—Georgia's colony status is restored in July and in the fall the British successfully defend their position in control of Savannah.

1793—Eli Whitney develops the cotton gin near Savannah. The invention bolsters the Georgian cotton industry and greatly increases the need for slaves in the South.

1805—First land lottery (Baldwin, Wayne and Wilkinson Counties).

1807—Second land lottery (Baldwin and Wilkinson Counties).

1813-14—There was internal conflict within the Creek (Muscogee) Nation. Followers of the Prophet Josiah Francis wanted to return to Native American tradition, while others favored assimilation. After an attack on the U.S. at Fort Mims by the former faction, Creek forces were defeated at Horseshoe Bend at the hands of troops led by Gen. Andrew Jackson. The treaty of Fort Jackson that ended the conflict demanded Creek lands that now make up large portions of Alabama and Georgia as reimbursement for the costs of the war.

1820—Third land lottery (Appling, Early, Gwinnett, Habersham, Hall, Irwin, Rabun, and Walton Counties)

1821—Fourth land lottery (Dooly, Fayette, Henry, Houston, Monroe, and remaining lots from 1820 lottery)

1827—Fifth land lottery (Carroll, Coweta, Lee, Muscogee, and Troup Counties.)

1828—The Georgia gold rush began in Lumpkin County and spread through northern Georgia.

1830—The Indian Removal Act called for the relocation of members of what would become known as the Five Civilized Tribes.

1831— Members of the Choctaw Nation were the first Native Americans removed to the area that would become Oklahoma.

1832—Sixth and seventh land lotteries (land in formerly Cherokee territory) The sixth lottery distributed land and the seventh parceled out 40-acre gold districts. Also see _The Cherokee land lottery: containing a numerical list of the names of the fortunate drawers in said lottery, with an engraved map of each district._

Population	
1790	82,548
1800	162,686
1810	252,433
1820	340,989
1830	516,823
1840	691,392
1850	906,185
1860	1,057,286
1870	1,184,109
1880	1,542,180
1890	1,837,353
1900	2,216,331
1910	2,609,121
1920	2,895,832
1930	2,908,506
1940	3,123,723
1950	3,444,578
1960	3,943,116

1833—Eighth and final land lottery (remainder of former Cherokee territory and a handful of other remaining lots)

1834—The removal of the Creek (Muscogee) Nation began.

1836—Cherokee removal began on what would become known as the "Trail of Tears."

1839—The terminus of a railroad line that was being built grew quickly in the 1840s as additional lines were added beginning a period of growth from a small end-of-the-line town into a transportation hub. In 1845, that small town is renamed from Marthasville to Atlanta.

1840—The southern boundary between Alabama and Georgia was finally settled on the western banks of the Chattahoochee River.

1859—Legislation in Georgia was passed making it illegal to manumit a slave upon the death of the master. Legislation also prevented free persons of color from entering the state; free black seamen were exempt.

1861—Georgia seceded from the Union and joined delegates from Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina in forming the Confederate States of America. In April, President Lincoln ordered a blockade of all Southern ports.

1863—Confederates won at the Battle of Chickamauga in northwestern Georgia.

1864—Union Major General William Tecumseh Sherman invaded Georgia during the Atlanta Campaign. Following the capture of Atlanta, Sherman began his infamous "March to the Sea," which cut a swath of destruction across Georgia.

1865—In January, Sherman's army left Georgia and in April, Confederate forces surrendered at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

1865—Congress passed legislation creating the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, commonly referred to as the Freedmen Bureau. Search the U.S., Freedmen Bureau Records of Field Offices, 1863-1878.

1870s—"Jim Crow" laws began being enacted in the South, enforcing segregation in schools, public places, and on transportation.

1876-- Following the 1876 yellow fever epidemic, the South Atlantic Quarantine Station opened on Blackbeard Island to screen ships bound for U.S. southern Atlantic ports, quarantine passengers and crew, and disinfect ships carrying disease.

1881—The "Horrible Hurricane of 1881" hit Savannah, Georgia, and moved inland. The death toll is estimated at around 700 lives in Georgia, 335 of them reported in Savannah.

1893—The "Sea Islands Hurricane" made landfall near Savannah, killing between 1,000 and 2,000 people.

1898—A category 4 hurricane made landfall just south of Brunswick, Georgia, killing 179 people.

1918—The Influenza epidemic arrived in Georgia in October at Augusta's Camp Hancock.

1941-45—During World War II, more than 320,000 servicemen from Georgia joined the war effort and the state economy was bolstered by war industry.

1944—African Americans led by Primus King and Thomas Brewer organized an attempt to vote. At that time African Americans were not allowed to vote in Democratic Party primaries. Although they were turned away, it led to those laws being overturned and voter registration in the African American community jumped in the following years.

1954—Brown vs. Board of Education decision rules segregation in schools is unconstitutional.

GEORGIA VITAL RECORDS

- Birth and death records began on a statewide level in 1919. Compliance was not considered extensive until 1928. Records before that time were kept on a county basis, and vary from county to county. See the Ancestry.com Wiki for details to learn when records became available in each county. (Scroll down to the table at the bottom.) Marriage records are the most complete, available from the 1700s on in most areas, but also vary from county to county.

- Georgia Department of Community Health – Division of Public Records: Holds records of births and deaths from 1919 to the present; marriages and marriage applications from 1952-1996; and an index of divorce records from 1952 to the present. Earlier records may be available from the clerk of the county where the event occurred.

- Georgia Archives: Some vital records are available in Georgia's Virtual Vault, a digital archive which contains scanned images of selected marriage and death records.

GEORGIA VITAL RECORDS ON ANCESTRY.COM

Note: Collections may not be all-inclusive. See the descriptions below the search box for details on coverage in each individual collection.

- Georgia Marriage Index, 1699-1944
- Georgia Marriage Index to 1850
- Georgia Marriage Index, 1851-1900
- Georgia, Death Index, 1914-1927
- Georgia Death Index , 1919-98
- Savannah Georgia Vital Records, 1803-1966
- Web: Georgia, Find A Grave Index, 1728-2012-Free
- See all Georgia vital records collections

OTHER STATE RESOURCES

- Georgia Archives (Holds copies or films of most pre-1900 county records, Confederate pension applications and service records, tax digests, Freedmen's Bureau records, Bureau of Indian Affairs records, manuscript collections, local histories, and other special collections.)
  - o Documenting Family History in Georgia (PDF)
  - o Georgia's Military Districts
  - o Georgia Land Lotteries
- Georgia Genealogical Society
- Georgia Historical Society
  - o Collection descriptions and catalog
- Digital Library of Georgia
- New Georgia Encyclopedia
- Georgia USGenWeb Project

MORE GEORGIA RESOURCES ON ANCESTRY.COM

- Georgia State Map, 1864
- City Directories

  Use the browse box in the upper right corner to determine what directories are available for your ancestor's area. If they lived in a rural area, check to see if that area was included with a larger city in the vicinity.
- Georgia, Property Tax Digests, 1793-1892
- Georgia, Naturalization Records, 1793-1991
- Georgia, Confederate Pension Applications, 1879-1960
- Georgia Civil War Muster Rolls, 1860-64
- Georgia, Returns of Qualified Voters and Reconstruction Oath Books, 1867-1869
- Georgia, World War I Service Cards, 1917-1919
- View all Georgia collections on Ancestry.com

RECORDS OF THE FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES ON ANCESTRY.COM

- U.S., Native American Applications for Enrollment in Five Civilized Tribes, 1896
- U.S., Native American Applications for Enrollment in Five Civilized Tribes, 1898-1914
- U.S., Native American Enrollment Cards for the Five Civilized Tribes, 1898-1914
- U.S., Native American Citizens and Freedmen of Five Civilized Tribes, 1895-1914 (Dawes Rolls)
- U.S., Cherokee Baker Roll and Records, 1924-1929
- U.S., Citizenship Case Files in Indian Territory, 1896-1897

AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCES

- 1850 U.S. Federal Census - Slave Schedules
- 1860 U.S. Federal Census - Slave Schedules
- African American Newspapers, 1829-1947
- Freedman's Bank Records, 1865-1871
- Freedmen Bureau Marriage Records, 1815-1866
- Freedmen Bureau Records of Field Offices, 1863-1878
- Interviews with Former Slaves, 1936-1938
- U.S., Colored Troops Military Service Records, 1861-1865
- U.S., Descriptive Lists of Colored Volunteer Army Soldiers, 1864
- U.S., Register of Colored Troop Deaths During the Civil War, 1861-1865
- U.S. Southern Claims Commission Master Index, 1871-1880

"Atlanta, before being burnt: by order of Genl Sherman, from the cupola of the Female Seminary, 1864"

From U.S. Panoramic Photos, 1851-1991