Genealogy Research in Georgia

Early Native Americans in Georgia

Native inhabitants of the area that is now Georgia included:
*The Apalachee Indians
*The Cherokee Indians
*The Hitchiti, Oconee and Miccosukee Indians
*The Muskogee Creek Indians
*The Timucua Indians
*The Yamasee and Guale Indians
In the late 1700's and early 1800's, most of these tribes were forced to cede their land to the U.S. government. The members of the tribes were "removed" to federal reservations in the western U.S. In the late 1830's, remaining members of the Cherokee tribes were forced to move to Oklahoma in what has become known as the "Trail of Tears."
Read more information about Native Americans of Georgia:
http://www.native-languages.org/georgia.htm
http://www.ourgeorgiahistory.com/indians/
http://www.aboutnorthgeorgia.com/ang/American_Indians_of_Georgia

Some native people remained in hiding in Georgia. Today, the State of Georgia recognizes the three organizations of descendants of these people:

The Cherokee Indians of Georgia:
PO Box 337
St. George, GA 31646

The Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee:
PO Box 1993, Dahlonega, Georgia 30533 or PO Box 1915, Cumming, GA 30028
http://www.georgiatribeofeasterncherokee.com/

The Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe:
Rte 2, PO Box 370
Whigham, GA 31797

First People - Links to State Recognized Tribes, sorted by state - http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-Html-Links/state-recognized-tribes-in-usa-by-state.html

European Settlement of Georgia

Photo at left shows James Oglethorpe landing in what is now called Georgia
1732: King George II of England granted a charter to James Oglethorpe for the colony of Georgia to be a place of refuge. A Board of Trustees including James Oglethorpe, the governor, governed the colony. Districts and towns were the designated civil divisions. The Trusteeship, through the Governor, allotted land to males and their heirs. The town of Sunbury was settled. Early settlers were mainly German Protestants and Highlanders from Scotland.

1733: The Creek (Yamacraw) tribe ceded their land to Governor Oglethorpe.
The governor founded the city of Savannah, as a refuge for English debtors.
1734: German-speaking Salzburgers, central European Protestants, began to settle at Ebenezer, in present-day Effingham County

1752: The Trusteeship charter was surrendered and Georgia became a Crown Colony.
1755: A general court judicial system was established.
After 1755 lands were granted without restrictions. Land transfers before 1777 were generally recorded in Savannah.
1758: The land was separated into 8 parishes for ecclesiastical and political purposes.
Colonial Parishes:
Christ Church - St. Andrew - St. David - St. George - St. James - St. John - St. Mary - St. Matthew - St. Patrick - St. Paul - St. Philip - St. Thomas
10 February 1763: The French and Indian War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. Some Indian lands were ceded to the colony then; more were ceded in 1773, 1783, and 1790. The land between the Alatamaha and St. Mary's rivers was annexed to Georgia.
1777: Georgia parishes were formed into nine counties.
1783 – 1909: Land courts distributed land.
Between 1784 and 1820: thousands of Americans moved to Georgia seeking inexpensive land. The first land lottery was held in 1805.
1788: Georgia became a state.
1802: Georgia relinquished its claims to lands west of the Chattahoochee River. These lands became part of Mississippi and Alabama.
1802, 1804, 1817, 1818, 1819, 1821, 1826 and 1833: More Indian lands were ceded to Georgia.
1805, 1807, 1820, 1821, 1827 and 1832: Georgia Land Lotteries gave away Indian lands.
1828: The discovery of gold on Cherokee land prompted the Georgia state legislature to declare that all Cherokee land would be open to white settlement. In 1832, Ralph Waldo Emerson, the poet and Essayist, wrote to President Van Buren appealing against the removal of the Cherokee tribe.
1835: Treaty of New Echota: the Cherokee Nation ceded all its remaining land.
25 May 1838: Removal of the Cherokee Indians began. In December 1838, the remaining Cherokee were forcibly removed from Georgia by Federal Troops to Indian Territory west of the Mississippi River. (Trail of Tears and White River Trace) The survivors reached northeastern Oklahoma in March 1839.
1861: Georgia seceded from the Union. Soldiers from Georgia served in both the Union and the Confederate Armies.

Carvings at Stone Mountain, Georgia
Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee, and Jefferson Davis

1870: Georgia was readmitted to the Union.

Georgia Birth Records

Birth Indexes Online

FamilySearch.org has a name index of Georgia births, baptisms, and christenings from 1754 – 1960.
Ancestry.com has an index and images of birth certificates in Oconee County, GA, from 1875 – 2008, and another index of colonial vital records from the 1600's into the 1800's.

City Birth Records

The city of Atlanta began recording births in 1877.
Obtain Atlanta birth records from the **Fulton County Health Department**
The city of Savannah began recording birth records in 1890.
Obtain Savannah birth records from the **Chatham County Health Department**.

The city of Macon began recording births in 1891.
Obtain Macon birth records from the **Bibb County Health Department.**

Georgia State Birth Records:
Statewide registration of births in Georgia began in 1919 and was generally complied with by 1928.
Birth records are available only to the individual or his legal representative.
Obtain a birth record from 1919 to the present from the **Georgia Department of Human Resources, Vital Records Unit**.

Georgia Marriage Records

Marriage Indexes Online
Ancestry.com has various databases of some marriages in Georgia from the 1700's to 1944.
FamilySearch.org has databases of some Georgia marriages from 1754 through 1967.
The *Georgia Dept. of Archives and History* has microfilm of some Georgia marriage records dated prior to 1900 - http://www.georgiaarchives.org/
"Georgia Marriages" on the *Georgia GenWeb* is a searchable database of some Georgia county marriage records - http://usgwarchives.net/marriages/georgia/georgia.htm

County/State Marriage Records:
Most counties began keeping marriage records in the year that the county organized. Between 1952 and 1996 duplicate copies of the marriage records were required to be sent to the state. From 1996 to the present, records are held exclusively by the probate court in the county where the marriage occurred. **Obtain a copy of a marriage record from the Probate Court in the county where the marriage occurred.**

Georgia Death Records

Death Indexes Online
FamilySearch.org has indexes of Georgia death records from 1914 – 1998.
Ancestry.com has indexes of Georgia death records from 1919 – 1998.

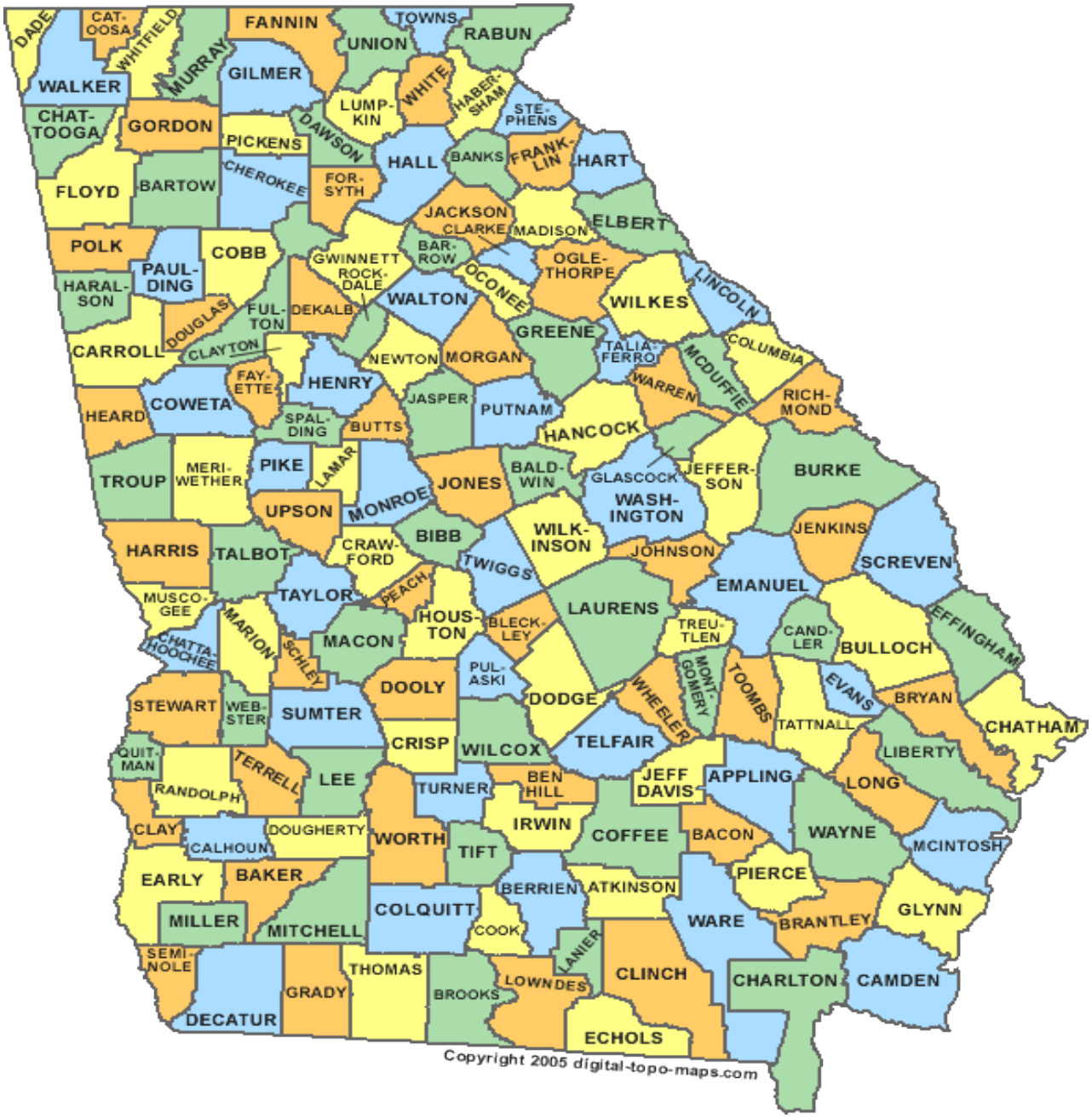
City Death Records:
The city of Atlanta began recording deaths in 1896.
Obtain an Atlanta city death record from the **Fulton County Department of Health.**
The city of Savannah recorded deaths from 1803 – 1947.
Obtain a Savannah city death record from the **Chatham County Health Department.**
The city of Macon began recording deaths in 1882.
Obtain a Macon city death record from the **Bibb County Health Department.**

Georgia County and State Death Records:
Georgia counties began recording death records in 1919 and sending copies to the state.
Obtain a copy of a death record from 1919 to the present from **the county** or from **the Georgia Department of Health.**

Georgia Church Records

In the colonial period, the Church of England, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Moravian churches were the largest religious groups in Georgia. After 1900 the largest groups were the Baptists and Methodists.
The Georgia State Archives - www.GeorgiaArchives.org - contain a large number of microfilmed pre-1940 church records from local congregations. The collection is growing.

Georgia Counties

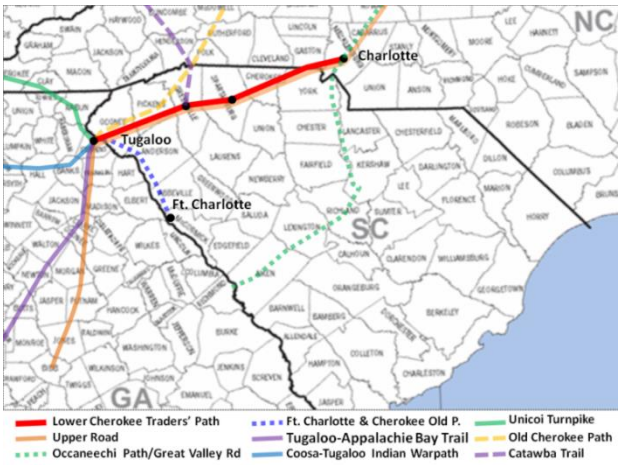


The Atlas of Historical County Boundaries – Interactive maps and text covering the historical boundaries, names, organization, and attachments of every county, extinct county and unsuccessful county proposal from the creation of the first county through December 31, 2000. - http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/index.html

Major Genealogical/Historical Repositories

Georgia State Archives · Georgia Genealogical Society · Georgia Historical Society · Atlanta History Center · Atlanta Public Library · Salzburger Society · National Archives Southeast Region (Atlanta) · Dallas Public Central Library · Washington Memorial Library, Macon, GA

Migration Routes



Augusta and Cherokee Trail · Augusta-St. Augustine Trail · Augusta-Savannah Trail · Charleston-Ft. Charlotte Trail · Charleston-Savannah Trail · Cisca and St. Augustine Trail (or Nickajack Trail) · Coosa-Tugaloo Indian Warpath · Fall Line Road (or Southern Road) · Federal Horse Path · Fort Charlotte and Cherokee Old Path · Fort Moore-Charleston Trail · Georgia Road (or Federal Road) · Great Valley Road · King's Highway · Lower Cherokee Traders' Path · Lower Creek Trading Path · Macon and Montgomery Trail · Middle Creek Trading Path · Occaneechi Path · Old Cherokee Path · Old Trading Path · Savannah-Jacksonville Trail · Tugaloo-Apalachee Bay Trail · Unicoi Trail · Upper Road

Georgia Genealogy Research Websites

Note: Look for the *GenWeb* and *Genealogy Trails* of the county in which your ancestor lived.

Atlanta Historical Tidbits - links to genealogical websites, photos, historical information, etc. - http://atlantahistoricaltidbits.blogspot.com/
Digital Library of Georgia – colonial wills, Confederate records, historic books, photographs, African American records, Native American records, a growing digital newspaper archive, Sanborn maps, African-American funeral programs, and Athens court records 1902 to 1907 - https://dlg.usg.edu/
Georgia Archives – in Virtual Vault search Colonial era wills, Confederate Pension apps, death records 1919 – 1927, General Name File, view images of records free - http://www.georgiaarchives.org/
Georgia Pioneers $ - membership required – digital indexes and images of early wills; cemetery databases, family Bible records, obits, Rev. War and Civil War records, passenger lists, land grants, etc. – http://www.georgiapioneers.com/
Georgia School Graduates 1818 and Beyond $- http://gagraduates.com/
Georgia US GenWeb Archives Project – index of births 1846 – 1869; indexes of deaths 1875, 1880, 1919 to 1998; few deeds; name indexes of land lotteries 1807, 1821, 1827, and 1832 - http://usgwarchives.net/ga/gavitals.htm
Harris County Marriages – index of county marriage records from 1833 to 1924 – https://www.cvlga.org/genealogy-resources/
Muskogee County Marriage Indexes - three alphabetical marriage indexes from 1835 to 1929 – https://www.cvlga.org/genealogy-resources/
Online County Histories - http://www.learnwebskills.com/family/countyhistories1.htm#il
Columbus, GA area: **African American Cemeteries and Obituaries** – search alpha listing of obituaries by name - http://www.blackcemeteries.com/

Georgia African American Research

Access Genealogy – links by state to websites of African American genealogy, cemeteries, censuses and more
AfricaMap – track the slave trade with historical overlays and geographical data - http://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap/
AfriGeneas – slave records, death and marriage records, censuses, surnames – chat or send messages to other researchers - http://afrigeneas.com/

Digital Library on American Slavery – search database of slave petitions, runaway slave advertisements, bills of sale, transatlantic slave trade database; this compilation of various online collections started with a focus on records in North Carolina but the information includes people in all 15 slave states and Washington D.C.; more records are currently being digitized - http://library.uncg.edu/slavery/
International African American Museum - African American funeral programs, obituaries, marriage records, photos, historical documents and family histories – military records of the U.S. Colored Troops are currently being digitized - https://cfh.iaamuseum.org/records/
Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery - search thousands of "Information Wanted" advertisements taken out by former slaves in all states searching for family members lost by sale, flight, or enlistment – the collection currently includes newspapers from 1853 to 1911 - http://www.informationwanted.org/
Low Country Africana - SC slaveholders, 1868 voter records, records of African Americans in the rice-growing areas of SC, GA, and northeastern FL, etc. - http://www.lowcountryafricana.com/
Slave Confederate Payrolls - digitized payrolls list names of slaves of 10 southern states who worked for the Confederate Army and whose pay went to their masters - https://catalog.archives.gov/search?q=719477
Slave Voyages - the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* documents vessels along the Atlantic slave routes from 1514 to 1866; *Intra-American Slave Trade Database* documents vessels traveling between the Atlantic and Pacific ports ranging from the United States to Brazil; the *African Names Database* gives names, ages, possible origins of slaves liberated from captured slave ships between 1808 and 1862 - https://www.slavevoyages.org/

Georgia Cemetery Research

Atlanta, GA – five **Cemeteries of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta, Georgia** - click cemetery name to link to list of burials - http://www.archatl.com/offices/cemeteries/
Columbus, GA – search the burials of **Linwood Cemetery, Porterdale Cemetery, Riverdale Cemetery, and East Porterdale Cemetery** by name; cemetery maps and directions available - http://riverdaleporterdale.org/genealogy/
Gainesville, GA: **Alta Vista Cemetery (includes the original cemetery, the old Woodlawn Cemetery, and at least one family cemetery)** – Click Cemetery Search and search burials list by name, date, etc. - http://www.gainesville.org/alta-vista-cemetery
Macon, GA: **Riverside Cemetery** – Search for burials by name - http://riversidecemetery.com/genealogy/search
Macon, GA: **Rose Hill Cemetery** – click one of the surnames in a growing list of interments at Rose Hill to open a new page with biographical information, obituaries, tombstone photographs, and other images – http://rosehillcemeterymacongeorgia.blogspot.com/p/surnames-list.html
Tennessee Valley Authority Cemeteries – index of over 30,000 graves originally in TN, AL, MS, KY, **GA,** NC, and VA that were flooded or relocated when the dams were built - https://www.tva.com/environment/environmental-stewardship/land-management/cultural-resource-management/relocated-cemeteries

Georgia Military Research

Grand Army of the Republic Records Project – developing database - histories of posts, reports of officers and members if available, search by state - http://suvcw.org/garrecords/

Georgia Native American Research

Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center – student records, cemetery information, info about Lakota, Ojibwe, Seneca, Oneida, Cherokee, Apache, Cheyenne, and Alaska Native tribes - http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/
Cherokee Heritage Center – preserves Cherokee history, research Cherokee family history - http://www.cherokeeheritage.org/cherokeeheritagegenealogy-html/cherokee-family-research/
First People - Links to State Recognized Tribes, sorted by state - http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-Html-Links/state-recognized-tribes-in-usa-by-state.html
Godfrey Memorial Library - $ - New England and Native American Resources – www.godfrey.org

Indian Pioneer Paper Collection - Interviews in the 1930's with Native American descendants in Oklahoma. Family stories cover the years 1861 – 1936. This is part of the University of Oklahoma Western History Collection. See websites listed in section titled "Early Native Americans in Georgia" on page 5. .
http://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/
Native American Tribes of Georgia - http://www.native-languages.org/georgia.htm

Georgia Newspaper Research

Columbus Enquirer-Sun Death Index – list of deaths reported from 1890 to 1899 and from 1900 to 1918 - https://www.cvlga.org/genealogy-resources/
Columbus Ledger Enquirer Obituary Index 2006 - 2011 – obituaries are listed by date of publication from April 1, 2006 through September 30, 2011 - https://www.cvlga.org/genealogy-resources/
Digital Library of Georgia – a variety of historical newspaper collections - https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/
Georgia Historic Newspapers Archive - digitized historical Georgia newspapers, including papers published prior to 1861 - http://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/

Information on these pages is compiled from information in:

- *FamilySearch.org* Wiki
- Family Tree Magazine
- *The Weekly Genealogist, NEHGS; Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter*
- *Genealogy Gems from the Allen County Public Library*