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GEORGIA.

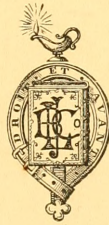


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GEORGIA.

By Charles C. Jones, Jr.



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91
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GEORGIA.

Georgia, the most southerly of the original thirteen states which composed the American confederation, is bounded N. by Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina; E. by the Savannah River, which separates it from South Carolina, and by the Atlantic Ocean; S. by the St Mary. River and Florida; and W. by the Chattahoochee River and Alabama. It lies between $30^{\circ} 31' 39''$ and 35° N. lat., and in 81° — $85^{\circ} 53' 38''$ W. long., and has a maximum length and breadth of 320 and 256 miles, and an area of 59,475 sq. m.—a little more than the area of England and Wales. Upon the Atlantic Ocean it fronts for a distance of 128 miles; but the coast, low-lying and sandy, is bordered with islands, between which and the mainland are a number of sounds and creeks; so that the total coast-line is said to be about 480 miles.

The territory of Georgia presents five physical divisions: (1) The Sea Islands, famous for their cotton (see COTTON), and covered with a growth of oak, palmetto, magnolia, cedar, pine, and myrtle; (2) the Swamp Region, consisting of rich alluvial lands and deltas, formed by the fresh-water rivers, verdant with a dense and semi-tropical vegetation, and admirably adapted

to the production of rice ; (3) the Pine Barrens, with a thin soil, lying between these marsh grounds and the undulating red-clay lands of the interior, sheltered by vast forests of pitch-pine, which are highly prized as lumber and for naval purposes, but lonely and monotonous ; (4) Middle Georgia, fertile, salubrious, hilly, crowned with forests of oak and hickory, the home of the short-staple cotton-plant, a fine fruit region, and yielding Indian corn, oats, wheat, and other cereals ; and lastly (5) Cherokee Georgia, abounding in mountains, with fertile valleys, streams, and waterfalls. Cereals, grasses, and cotton are profitably grown among the valleys and upon the hillsides of Upper Georgia ; and increasing attention is being bestowed upon the breeding of stock. In the central area of the last-mentioned division occurs the watershed, giving direction to the streams which flow respectively into the Gulf of Mexico on the one hand, and into the Atlantic Ocean on the other. The entire state is well watered. Of the rivers emptying into the Atlantic Ocean the most noteworthy are the Savannah, navigable as far as Augusta ; the Great Ogeechee ; the Altamaha, through its tributaries the Oconee and the Ocmulgee navigable as high as Milledgeville and Macon ; the Satilla ; and the St Mary. The streams belonging to the Gulf system are the upper waters of the Coosa ; the Chattahoochee, navigable as far as Columbus ; the Flint, navigable up to Albany ; and the Alapaha.

With the exception of the swamp-region in the south and south-east of the state, the climate is salubrious and agreeable. The mean temperature is 78°

in summer and 47° in winter; the annual rainfall nearly 50 inches. In the lowlands oranges and other semi-tropical fruits readily mature, whilst in the uplands peaches, apples, pears, &c. flourish; and fruits and market vegetables generally, being earlier than in the North, are exported in considerable quantities. The forests contain numerous species of oak, including the evergreen live-oak, which has been styled the king, as the *Magnolia grandiflora* has been styled the queen of the southern woods. Of great value is the long-leaf pine, furnishing both choice timber and naval stores. The list of useful native woods includes also the red, the white, and the post oak, the water-oak, the black walnut, the red cedar, the cypress, the poplar, and the locust. Among the indigenous flora are found valuable medicinal herbs and dye-plants; and the flowers often are of great beauty. Game is still abundant, in spite of the injury resulting from the failure to enact and enforce stringent laws for its preservation. Sea-fowl throng the coast and estuaries, alligators are numerous in the rivers, and food-fishes, oysters, clams, turtle, &c. are abundant. By reason of the denudation of their banks, rendering their waters turbid and causing unruly currents, the fresh-water streams have suffered material diminution in their animal life. From them food-fishes, once so abundant, have largely disappeared, and the pearl-bearing unio is now seldom seen; but the United States Fish Commission has been successful in the introduction of some varieties of fishes better suited to the changed condition.

The mineral wealth of Georgia is apparent in the gold-bearing strata of the Cherokee region, which for

the past fifty years have been successfully worked, in extensive deposits of coal, in iron, copper, silver, and lead ores, in marbles of attractive varieties, in vast fields of granite and slate, and in the presence of gypsum, limestone, syenite, marl, buhrstone, soapstone, asbestos, shales, tripoli, fluor-spar, kaolin, clays, porcelain, aragonite, tourmaline, emerald, carnelian, ruby, opal, chalcedony, agate, amethyst, jasper, garnets, rose-quartz, beryl, and occasional diamonds. In 1837-64 the United States branch mint at Dahlonega coined gold bullion to the value of over six million dollars, mostly from metals extracted from the auriferous rocks of the adjacent territory. To the development of these mineral resources of the state much attention is being paid, and with profitable results. Prior to the civil war the inhabitants of Georgia were almost exclusively engaged in agriculture and commerce; but more recent industries are the lumber trade, and extensive cotton, woollen, and other manufactures. The most important mills are at Augusta, Columbus, Atlanta, Athens, and Roswell. Recent statistics show that there are now within the state 54 cotton and woollen mills, with 350,000 spindles and 8000 looms; while the lumber, flour, grist, and pulp mills, &c. are being multiplied, and the iron and steel trade in the north-western part of the state is overtaking the cotton manufacture in importance.

Although, since the civil war, the production of black-seed cotton on the sea islands and along the coast has materially diminished, the yield of short staple cotton has greatly increased. The average crop of this variety will now approximate 1,000,000 bales,

worth at the point of consumption or of export over \$40,000,000. Of the other yearly agricultural products of Georgia the rice crop (25,000,000 pounds), the Indian corn (25,000,000 bushels), wheat, oats, sweet potatoes, and tobacco are important; and there is a yearly yield of 600,000 gallons of syrup, 650 hogsheads of cane-sugar, 5,000,000 pounds of butter, and 700,000 pounds of honey. From the ports of Savannah, Darien, Brunswick, and St Mary shipments of lumber and naval stores are annually increasing. Navigable rivers and an admirable system of railways (over 3000 miles), besides three short canals, furnish convenient transportation from the interior. Notably at Savannah, coastwise and foreign bound steamers and sailing-vessels convey the products of the region to the desirable markets of the world.

The state is divided into 137 counties, 10 congressional districts, 1 supreme judicial district, 21 judicial circuits, and numerous militia districts. Atlanta is the capital, and Savannah the commercial metropolis. Augusta, Macon, Columbus, and Athens may be mentioned among the thriving cities and towns of this commonwealth. The population has steadily increased from 82,548 in 1790 to (1860) 1,057,286; (1870) 1,184,109; (1880) 1,542,180. It is now estimated to exceed 1,750,000, of whom the whites form slightly more than half.

There exists in Georgia a thorough system of free common schools; separate schools are conducted for both white and coloured pupils. Opportunities for higher education are afforded by the university of Georgia, at Athens, by its dependent colleges at

Dahlonega, Milledgeville, Thomasville, Cuthbert, and Atlanta, and by sundry denominational colleges. At the university of Georgia and its dependent colleges tuition for Georgians is free. Georgia has also a school for the blind at Macon, for the education of the deaf and dumb at Cave Spring, and an asylum for lunatics near Milledgeville.

History.—The colony of Georgia was founded by James Oglethorpe (q. v.) in 1733, as a refuge for poor debtors and for the persecuted Protestants of Germany, and received its name in honour of George II. In 1752 Oglethorpe surrendered his charter to the British government. Georgia was thereafter classed as an English province, until, with her sister colonies, she succeeded in casting off her allegiance to the crown. Save during the few years of the civil war, she has since continued a component member of the confederation of the United States of America, and has long been regarded as the Empire State of the South. Despite the liberation of her slave population, which in 1860 numbered 450,033, and was valued at \$302,694,855, and in the face of grievous losses occasioned by the war, the state has during the last quarter of a century manifested recuperative powers of a marvellous sort.

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