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The Southern Colonies

Read Aloud

The king of England hoped that England's new colony of Georgia would protect the English Carolinas. South of the Carolinas the Spanish had built several settlements. To the west, the French had established a large colony, but few colonists lived there. In 1732 the founding of Georgia became the king's best plan for keeping the Carolinas under English control.

Focus Activity

READ TO LEARN

Why was the founding of Georgia important to the Southern Colonies?

VOCABULARY

- proprietor
- debtor
- indigo

PEOPLE

- Tomochichi
- James Oglethorpe
- King George II

PLACES

- Maryland
- Virginia
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Georgia
- Southern Colonies
- Savannah

THE BIG PICTURE

The Pilgrims, Puritans, and Quakers were not the only groups who could not worship freely in England. Others included Roman Catholics. In 1634 King Charles I of England gave Lord Baltimore, a Catholic, a charter to start a new colony for Catholics. He called the colony **Maryland**, after Queen Henrietta Maria of England. Maryland was controlled by **proprietors**. The proprietors were men who owned all the land of the colony.

South of Maryland, **Virginia** was growing. Good land was becoming harder to locate. In 1663 King Charles II gave eight proprietors a charter to found Carolina. It was later divided into **North Carolina** and **South Carolina**. In 1732 **Georgia** was founded. It was the last of a group of settlements that became known as the **Southern Colonies**.

THE MUSCOGEE AND THE ENGLISH

The area the English called the Southern Colonies was home to the Muscogee (Creek), Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw. Of these, the Creek were the largest group and spoke one language. Before Europeans arrived, the independent Creek villages formed one Creek Confederacy. The confederacy was better able to protect Creek lands.

Chief Tomochichi

① Another group of Creek people lived along the Savannah River in what is now eastern Georgia. They were not part of the Creek Confederacy. Called the Yamacraw, they built their village in a place called Yamacraw Bluff. Close to the river in an open area, it was a good place to farm.



② In the early 1700s the Yamacraw chief was named **Tomochichi**

(toh mah CHEE chee).

He met with the English colonists, led by **James Oglethorpe**.

General James Oglethorpe

③ James Oglethorpe was a wealthy English army general.

In 1729 he looked into England's prison system. He was shocked by the number of **debtors** there and wanted to help. A debtor is a person who owes money. Years later he was granted a charter to start a colony in North America. Oglethorpe named it *Georgia* after **King George II**.

James Oglethorpe (above) and Chief Tomochichi met in London, England (below), to sign a treaty giving the English land on which to build Savannah, Georgia.

Courtesy, Winterthur Museum



THE GEORGIA COLONY

- ① King George liked the idea of the colony of Georgia mostly because of its location. Georgia would separate the Carolinas from the Spanish and French lands. You can see this by finding Georgia on the map on this page. Also, Georgia would be a place to send England's debtors.
- ② Oglethorpe gave each colonist land for growing grapes and raising silkworms. The climate was not good for raising silkworms, though.

Geography of the Southern Colonies

- ③ The red clay soil at the foot of the Appalachians was good for growing corn and tobacco. The Atlantic Coastal Plain provided a long growing season of seven months. Planters grew rice and **indigo**. Indigo is a plant that produces a blue dye.

The Creek Assist the Colonists

- ④ In 1733 Oglethorpe planned Georgia's first settlement, **Savannah**. The site was next to Tomochichi's

village, so Oglethorpe had to get him to agree. Tomochichi agreed to give him land on Yamacraw Bluff.

Change Comes to Georgia

Oglethorpe had not allowed slavery. So the colonists pretended to "rent" enslaved Africans from South Carolina.

By the 1750s slavery was well established in Georgia. Between 1750



The Southern Colonies were located between the French territory to the west and Spanish Florida to the south.

1. Which colonies were founded after 1607 and before 1732?
2. Name some of the cities in the Southern Colonies.

In the spring tourists often take a carriage ride through the historic section of downtown Savannah, Georgia.



and 1760 the number of enslaved Africans in Georgia increased from about 1,000 to 4,000. By 1760 about 10,000 people lived in Georgia. About 4,000 of them lived in slavery.

WHY IT MATTERS

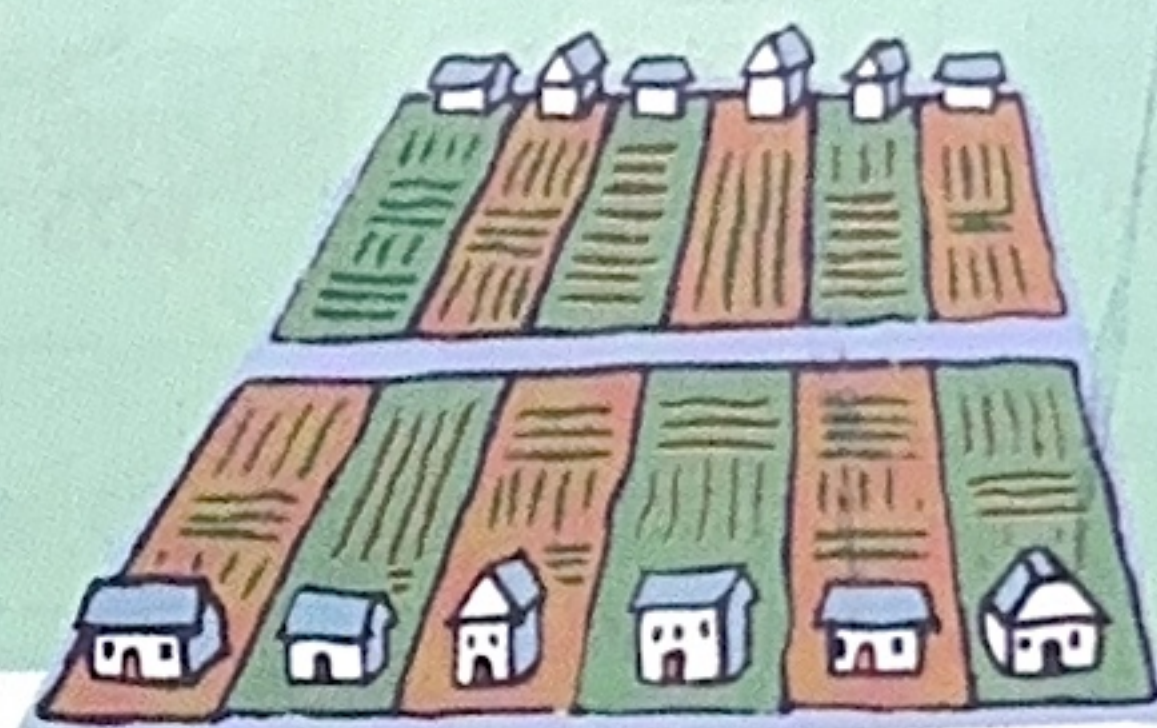
Founded by James Oglethorpe in 1732, Georgia became the thirteenth English Colony. From the forests of present-day Maine in the north to the coastal plains of Georgia in the south, the colonies were developing and expanding. It had been over 100 years since England had established its first colony in North America. In less than 50 years these 13 English colonies would become the United States of America.

Links to MATHEMATICS

Savannah's Squares

How did Oglethorpe plan the first settlement in Georgia? Savannah was laid out on Yamacraw Bluff as a series of squares. Each square measured 1 mile by 1 mile. Some squares were broken up into rectangular farms. In each square mile, there were 12 rectangular farms.

Oglethorpe laid out 23 of the square miles with rectangular farms. How many of such farms did Savannah have?



✓ Reviewing Facts and Ideas

SUM IT UP

- Lord Baltimore founded the colony of Maryland in 1634 as a place for Catholics to worship in freedom.
- In 1663 the English established Carolina, which became the colonies of North Carolina and South Carolina.
- Before the arrival of Europeans, the Creek, one of the largest Native American groups in the Southern Colonies, formed a Confederacy.
- In 1732 James Oglethorpe set out to establish Georgia as a colony for debtors and poor people. Later wealthy newcomers began forcing people to work as slaves.

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Name the Southern Colonies.
2. How did Tomochichi help with the settlement of Savannah?
3. **FOCUS** Why did King George II allow Georgia to be founded?
4. **THINKING SKILL** Compare the way Tomochichi and Oglethorpe got along with the way colonists and Native Americans in the other colonies did.
5. **GEOGRAPHY** Look at the map on page 218. How did landforms and bodies of water in the Southern Colonies help the colonists?