

Georgia Studies

**Unit 3 – Revolution,
Statehood, and Westward
Expansion**

**Lesson 4: Westward
Expansion**

Study Presentation



Lesson 4: Westward Expansion

- Essential Question
 - How do political policies and new technologies influence growth and development?

Education and Religion

- The **University of Georgia** chartered in 1785 as nation's first land-grant university; opened for classes in 1801
- Georgia Female College (later Wesleyan College) opened in 1836
- Religious groups, such as the **Baptist and Methodist churches**, also began to spread across Georgia. As more towns were established churches became the centers for social and community life.

Georgia's Capital City

- After the American Revolution Georgia's capital city moved from the original capital (Savannah) to Augusta.
- As Georgia's population began to move farther west Georgia decided to move its capital city; **Louisville** served as GA's third capital city from 1796-1807.
- The city of Milledgeville served as Georgia's fourth capital city from 1807 until after the Civil War (1868)
- The city of Terminus was created in 1837 and meant to serve as the end of a proposed railroad (Western and Atlantic Railroad) that originated in Chattanooga, Tennessee.
- Terminus was renamed Marthasville in 1843, after the daughter of former Governor Wilson Lumpkin
- The name was changed to Atlanta in 1845. Atlanta became Georgia's fifth capital city in 1868.

The Western Territory

- In 1802, Georgia ceded (gave up) its land claims west of the Chattahoochee River to the federal government for \$1.25 million
- President Thomas Jefferson doubled the nation's size in 1803 with the Louisiana territory purchase; the U.S. paid France \$15 million for land that stretched to the Rocky Mountains
- Many people began to move west across the Oregon and Santa Fe trails, many of these hoping to find gold. Between 1848 and 1850, the population of California increased tenfold due to a major gold rush.
- Georgia's farmers now had access to a large amount of land.

Frontier Georgia

- Undeveloped land in central and western Georgia
- Few settlers; much land given away in **land lotteries** or through the **Headright System**
- Far-flung trading posts were only stores
- Often danger lurked from hostile attacks
- Social activities often centered around necessary work
- The country store became the center of activity; few luxuries were available

Headright System

- Indian land in Georgia east of the Oconee River was given to settlers
- Every white male counted as a head of household and had the “right” to receive up to 1,000 acres
- This was generally replaced in 1803 by a **land lottery** for government-owned land west of the Oconee
- All white heads-of-household could buy a lottery chance and win land; millions of acres in several states were given away

Yazoo Land Fraud

- Around 1795, four companies bribed the governor and legislators
- Bought millions of acres in western Georgia (today's Alabama and Mississippi) for 1½¢ an acre
- The public found out and protested; the legislators involved were voted out of office
- The General Assembly (GA's legislative branch) repealed the law approving the sale; the federal government paid more than \$4 million to help Georgia settle Yazoo land claims

Cotton and the Cotton Gin

- Cash Crop – Crops (such as cotton) which are grown to be sold.
- Eli Whitney in 1793 invented a machine for separating cotton seeds from its fiber
- Increased the amount cotton growers could process each day
- The cotton gin used wire teeth on a turning cylinder to separate the seed from fiber
- Other inventions, such as Cyrus McCormick's Mechanical Reaper also helped farmers to become more productive.
- Since farmers were now able to do more work each day, many farmers wanted to move westward so that they could have even larger farms.

Early Roads in Georgia

- **Railroads**, most built after 1830, replaced horses, stagecoaches, and boats. Railroads helped Georgia's citizens travel and trade much more efficiently (easier/faster to move people and goods).
- Most Georgia roads ran east to west; they were former Indian footpaths
- Plank roads over wetlands that featured "pikes" or gates were called turnpikes
- Travelers paid a toll, or fee at each pike; the Old Federal Road connected Athens north to Tennessee