

Exploration and Colonization of Georgia

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Georgia's First Explorers

- In 1539, a Spanish explorer named Hernando de Soto landed in Florida
 - They moved through the southwestern part of Georgia during their explorations
 - They were looking for gold
 - During his search, he and his army killed thousands of Native Americans
 - Many more died from European diseases
 - De Soto died near the Mississippi River
 - His explorations changed the lives of Native Americans forever
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Spanish Settlement and Missions in Georgia

- In 1566, Spain sent colonists to set up settlements and missions on Georgia's barrier islands
 - The main purpose for the missions was to convert the Native Americans to Catholicism
 - They were also places for trade
 - Many Native Americans resisted converting and moved away
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More European Exploration...

- ❑ After De Soto, explorers came from Spain, France, and England
 - ❑ These countries competed with each other for land
 - ❑ Spain and England nearly started a war over new land
 - ❑ The first permanent English settlement was at Jamestown, Va.
 - They eventually established 12 colonies on the Atlantic coast
 - ❑ The English built Fort King George in Georgia to warn the French and Spanish away from their colonies
 - This was the first English presence in Georgia
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James Oglethorpe

- Born in London in 1696 to a wealthy family
 - He was well-educated and tried to help everyone
 - He had a friend who died in debtor's prison
 - He didn't believe that people should go to jail for not paying debts
 - Simply letting the people out of jail wouldn't work
 - There were no jobs for them
 - He, and a group of Trustees (people who hold responsibility on behalf of others) proposed a colony in the New World to send the former convicts so they could start fresh
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Oglethorpe's Reasons for Settlement

- Based on the colony's location (southwest of Carolina), it could help defend Carolina from the Spanish in Florida and the French who were moving east from the Mississippi River
 - He also believed that money could be made by trading with the Native Americans in the area
 - They could also grow crops and export them to England
 - New raw materials for building could be exported to England
 - Religious freedom would be offered to all
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Charter of 1732

- On June 7, 1732, King George II granted a charter to Oglethorpe for establishing the colony of Georgia
 - A charter is a document that outlines the conditions under which a government is organized and defines its rights and privileges
 - The charter granted the area between the Savannah and Altamaha Rivers extending westward to the Pacific Ocean
 - Catholics, liquor dealers, and lawyers could not be colonists
 - The colony belonged to the Crown, so King George was to run the colony, not Oglethorpe
 - The charter was for a period of 21 years
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The New Settlers

- ❑ People had to apply and be selected by King George II to settle the new colony
 - ❑ Debtors and former prisoners were not accepted, so the real reasons for the colony were all but forgotten
 - ❑ The colonists were promised 50 acres of land, tools, and enough food for a year
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Agreement for Settling

- In exchange for land and food, the new colonists had to agree to the following:
 - To defend the colony
 - Not to sell their land
 - They must use the seeds and tools to grow their food
 - They must grow mulberry trees on a part of their land so silkworms would make cocoons and they could produce silk
 - Obey regulations established by the leaders
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Making friends...

- ❑ Before settlers could arrive, Oglethorpe had to become friendly with the Yamacraw Indians
 - ❑ Their chief was Tomochichi
 - ❑ To communicate, an interpreter, Mary Musgrove, was used
 - She was half Yamacraw/half English
 - ❑ On February 12, 1733, Tomochichi granted the settlers a piece of land and allowed the colonists to settle near the mouth of the Savannah River
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The City of Savannah

- ❑ Oglethorpe, along with others, worked to plan the city of Savannah
 - ❑ It would have four squares, 16 spots for churches or stores, and close to 60 spots for houses
 - ❑ Each settler was expected to care for his house in the city, his 5-acre garden on the edge of the city, and his 45-acre farm outside of the city
 - ❑ During the first months, work moved steadily along, despite medical problems among the settlers
 - 40 settlers died in the first year due to heat-related illnesses
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The Salzburgers

- ❑ In March 1734, new settlers arrived from Germany
 - ❑ They asked Oglethorpe to live in Georgia
 - ❑ They were allowed a spot about 25-miles from Savannah, which they called Ebenezer
 - Their land had poor soil and was not good for growing crops
 - ❑ They moved to a new spot in 1736, which they called New Ebenezer
 - ❑ They also moved to Frederica on St. Simons Island
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Highland Scots

- To help with protection from the Spanish in Florida, Oglethorpe recruited about 175 Highland Scots to settle an area south of Savannah
 - They had reputations for being good soldiers
 - They established a town in 1736 called Darien
 - They were hard workers and raised cattle and harvested trees
 - They wrote the earliest anti-slavery petition in the South, and it worked for a time
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Malcontents

- In 1736, Oglethorpe made several new regulations
 - No Rum, no trading alcohol with the Native Americans, and no slaves
 - These were not popular among the colonists
 - Many things were going wrong in Georgia
 - The Mulberry trees were the wrong kind so silk worms weren't producing, and they were not allowed to grow many other things they wanted
 - Their neighbors in South Carolina, who had all the things Oglethorpe banned, were doing really well
 - Many Georgia settlers moved to places where they could live as they wanted
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The Spanish threat

- ❑ Since England controlled Georgia and Spain controlled Florida, the two groups were always arguing
 - ❑ In 1739, a war broke out called the War of Jenkins' Ear
 - ❑ This gave Oglethorpe a reason to invade Florida
 - ❑ He failed that first time, but in 1742, he succeeded by forcing the Spanish back into Florida
 - This marked the beginning of a safe southern border for the British
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The End of the Trustee Period

- In 1743, Oglethorpe was called back to England
 - Colonists had written to King George complaining about Oglethorpe's rules
 - William Stephens was named the new president of the colony
 - The ban on rum was lifted, as well as the ban on slavery
 - Many settlers who had left returned after these bans were lifted
 - In 1752, one year before the end of the charter, it was returned to King George II, and Georgia became a royal colony
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Questions...

- 1) Who was the first explorer to enter present-day Georgia?
 - 2) What was the main purpose of the Spanish missions?
 - 3) What was the name of the first British fort in Georgia?
 - 4) Who did Oglethorpe originally want to bring to the colony of Georgia?
 - 5) When was Georgia's charter granted?
 - 6) Who was the chief of the Yamacraw?
 - 7) What city did the settlers establish?
 - 8) Name 2 groups who came to Georgia after the original settlement
 - 9) What new regulations did Oglethorpe introduce in 1736?
 - 10) Which country posed the greatest threat to the colony of Georgia?
 - 11) How did Georgia change after Oglethorpe left?
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