

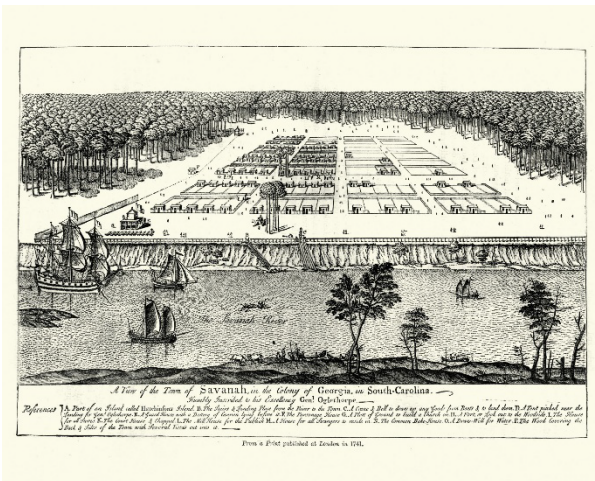


– Formation of the State of Georgia –

Georgia was founded as a British colony in 1732 and later became a U.S. state on **January 2, 1788**, when it ratified the U.S. Constitution as the **4th state**.

Key Historical Milestones Colonial Era (1732–1776)

- **Founder:** James Oglethorpe
- **Charter Granted:** June 9, 1732, by King George II
- **Purpose of the Colony:**
 - A buffer colony to protect South Carolina from Spanish Florida
 - A place for debtors and the poor to start anew
- **Original Policies:**
 - Slavery initially prohibited
 - Alcohol restricted
 - Small land ownership encouraged



- **First Settlement:** Savannah (founded 1733)

Slavery was legalized in 1751, transforming Georgia into a plantation-based economy similar to other Southern colonies.

American Revolution (1775–1783)

- Georgia was the youngest and most vulnerable colony
- Savannah was occupied by British forces from 1778–1782
- Despite Loyalist strength, Georgia ultimately supported independence

Statehood & Early Republic (1788–1820s)

- **January 2, 1788:** Georgia ratified the U.S. Constitution
- Adopted its first state constitution in 1777

- Rapid expansion westward due to land lotteries
- Increasing reliance on enslaved African labor for agriculture

19th Century Developments

- Indian Removal: The Trail of Tears forcibly removed the Cherokee, Creek, and other Native nations
- Civil War: Georgia seceded from the Union in 1861
- Major Event: Sherman's March to the Sea
- Reconstruction: Federal military occupation and political restructuring (1865–1877)

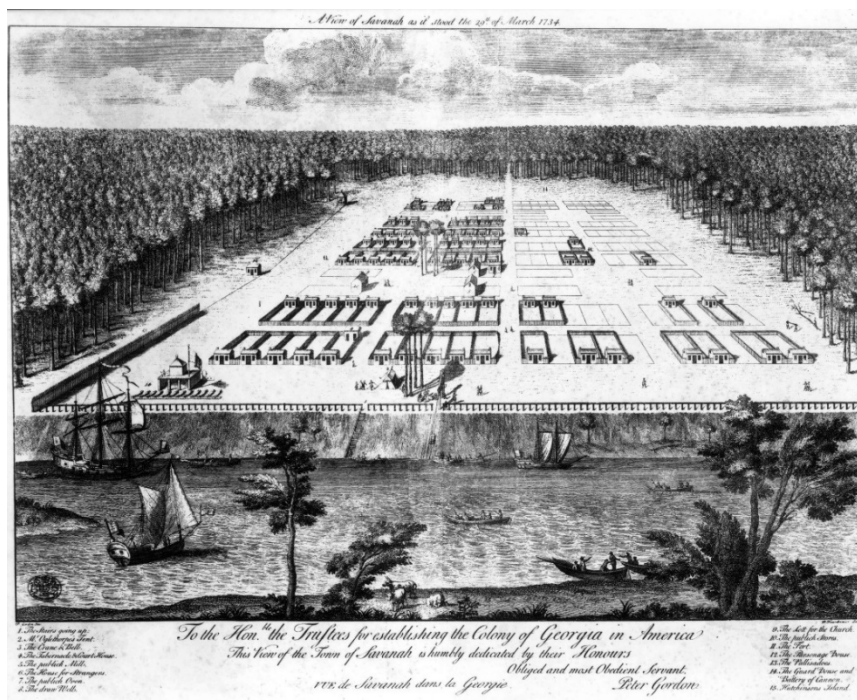


Modern Georgia

- Late 19th–early 20th century: Sharecropping and Jim Crow laws
- Mid-20th century: Major role in the Civil Rights Movement
- Home to influential leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr.
- Today, Georgia is a major economic, political, and cultural hub in the Southeast

Quick Facts

- **Founded:** 1732 (as a colony)
- **Statehood:** January 2, 1788
- **Nickname:** The Peach State
- **Capital:** Atlanta





Georgia History Through the Lens of African American Masons (Prince Hall Affiliation)

The history of African American Freemasonry in Georgia is inseparable from the broader struggle for Black citizenship, education, political power, and institutional self-determination in the Deep South. From Reconstruction through the Civil Rights era, Prince Hall Masons were among Georgia's most organized and influential Black leaders.

Origins: Prince Hall Freemasonry (National Context)

Prince Hall established African American Freemasonry in 1784 after Black men were barred from white Masonic lodges. His chartered lodge in Boston became the foundation for a parallel Masonic system that emphasized:

- moral discipline,
- mutual aid,
- education,
- and civic leadership.

This model would later take firm root in Georgia.

Reconstruction & Establishment in Georgia (1865–1900)

Formation of Prince Hall Masonry in Georgia

- After the Civil War, newly emancipated Black men sought structured institutions to protect civil rights and economic progress.

- In 1870, African American Masons organized what became the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Georgia.
- This made Prince Hall Masonry one of the earliest statewide Black institutions in Georgia—predating many churches, schools, and civic organizations.

Why Masonry Mattered

At a time when:

- Reconstruction was collapsing,
- white supremacist violence was rising,
- and Black political rights were under attack,

Prince Hall lodges provided:

- legal structure,
- leadership training,
- financial pooling,
- and protection networks.

Jim Crow Era: Masonry as Black Governance (1900–1930s)

During segregation, Prince Hall lodges functioned as:

- quasi-governments,
- community banks,
- employment networks,
- and political training grounds.

Lodges sponsored:

- schools and scholarships,
- burial societies,
- relief for widows and orphans,
- voter education (often quietly, to avoid retaliation).

Membership was selective, emphasizing character, literacy, and leadership—which is why many Black professionals in Georgia became Masons.

Sweet Auburn & the Atlanta Power Base

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple, built between 1937–1940, became the most important Black institutional building in Georgia.

It housed:

- Prince Hall Masonic offices,
- Black-owned businesses,
- meeting space for civil rights organizations,
- and Black media outlets.

The Temple anchored Atlanta’s Sweet Auburn District, often called the “Black Wall Street of the South.”

John Wesley Dobbs & Masonic Civic Power

A Mason as Political Architect

John Wesley Dobbs represents the apex of Prince Hall influence in Georgia.

- Initiated into Prince Hall Masonry in 1911
- Became Grand Master of Georgia Prince Hall Masons in 1932

- Served until his death in 1961

Under Dobbs:

- Prince Hall Masonry became a coordinating force for Black political action.
- He co-founded the Atlanta Negro Voters League, which helped:
 - register Black voters,
 - elected Atlanta's first Black city officials since Reconstruction,
 - lay groundwork for later civil rights victories.

Dobbs also held senior leadership in the Prince Hall Shriners (AEAONMS), showing how Masonic and Shrine networks overlapped.

Prince Hall Shriners in Georgia

The Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (Prince Hall Shriners) emerged in Georgia as the social and charitable arm of Black Masonry.

- Georgia operated as the “Desert of Georgia”
- Shrine temples (notably Nabbar Temple No. 128) provided:
 - public visibility,
 - youth engagement,
 - charity work,
 - ceremonial unity across cities.

Men like John Wesley Dobbs (1947) and John L. Webb (1954) served as Past Imperial Deputies, reflecting Georgia's prominence within Prince Hall Shrinedom.

Civil Rights Era (1940s–1960s)

Prince Hall Masons in Georgia:

- quietly funded legal challenges,
- hosted strategy meetings,
- provided bail and legal aid,
- and offered *respectable cover* for activism.

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple hosted offices for organizations linked to:

- Southern Christian Leadership Conference
- Leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., who grew up within Atlanta's Black institutional ecosystem shaped by Prince Hall leadership.

Legacy in Modern Georgia

Today, African American Masonry in Georgia remains:

- one of the oldest continuously operating Black institutions in the state,
- a bridge between Reconstruction-era self-help and modern civic leadership,
- a historical through-line connecting:
 - emancipation,
 - Jim Crow resistance,
 - civil rights,
 - and contemporary Black professional life.

Many Georgia political, educational, and religious leaders trace their formative leadership training to Prince Hall lodges.

In One Sentence

Prince Hall Freemasonry in Georgia functioned as the backbone of African American civic life—producing disciplined leaders, sustaining Black institutions, and quietly shaping the political destiny of the state from Reconstruction through Civil Rights.



Prince Hall Shriners in Georgia — Temples by City (AEAONMS “Desert of Georgia”)

Macon

Masab Temple No. 11 — 3865 Bloomfield Drive, Macon, GA

Savannah

Omar Temple No. 21 — 602 East Broad St, Savannah, GA

Augusta

Stolkin Temple No. 22 — 2004 Maryland Ave, Augusta, GA

Barack Temple No. 256 — Jamestown Community Ctr & Pk, 3647 Karleen Rd, Augusta, GA

Valdosta

Ossipe Temple No. 65 — 821 Paine Ave, Valdosta, GA

Darien

Amman Temple No. 82 — 7th Street, West Darien, GA

LaGrange

Bagdad Temple No. 104 — 412 Daniel Street, LaGrange, GA

Riverdale

Nabbar Temple No. 128 — 7340 Old National Hwy, Riverdale, GA

Al-Karim Temple No. 242 — 7340 Old National Hwy, Riverdale, GA

Albany

Al-Rakim Temple No. 142 — 1001 S. Madison Street, Albany, GA

Columbus

Al-Faruk Temple No. 145 — 815 Sixth Avenue, Columbus, GA

Griffin

Bokar Temple No. 166 — 336 E. Solomon St, Griffin, GA

Marietta

Al-Tariq Temple No. 245 — 367 Montgomery St, Marietta, GA

Musella

El-Hajj Temple No. 258 — 6300 Hwy 341 North, Musella, GA

Tifton

Al Ghan Temple No. 279 — 1705 S. Ridge Ave, Tifton, GA

Athens

AKHi Temple No. 280 — 496 Reese Street, Athens, GA

College Park

Shuja Temple No. 281 — 3721 College St, College Park, GA

Milledgeville

Zelzah Temple No. 282 — 305 West Walton St, Milledgeville, GA



Prince Hall Shriners in Georgia — Courts by City (AEAONMS “Desert of Georgia”)

Albany

Al-Rakim Court No. 31 — 914 18th St., Albany, GA 31701

Savannah

Omar Court No. 91 — P.O. Box 22264, Savannah, GA 31408

Atlanta

Nabbar Court No. 123 — 330 Auburn Ave NE, Atlanta, GA 30303

Augusta

Stolkin Court No. 173 — 2004 Maryland Ave, Augusta, GA 30904

Macon

Masab Court No. 174 — 3865 Bloomfield Dr, Macon, GA 31206

Valdosta

Ossipe Court No. 186 — 821 Paine Ave, Valdosta, GA 31601

Darien

Amman Court No. 195 — 200 7th Street, Darien, GA 31305

Riverdale

Al-Karim Court No. 219 — 6690 Church Street, Riverdale, GA 30274

Marietta

Al-Tariq Court No. 228 — 367 Montgomery Street, Marietta, GA 30062

Hephzibah

Barack Court No. 233 — 3647 Karleen Rd, Hephzibah, GA 30815

Musella

El Hajj Court No. 252 — 6300 Hwy 341 N, Musella, GA 31066

Griffin

Bokar Court No. 253 — 336 E. Solomon St., Griffin, GA 30223

College Park

Shuja Court No. 256 — 3717 College St., College Park, GA 30337

Milledgeville

Zelzah Court No. 257 — 305 W. Walton St., Milledgeville, GA 31061

Athens

AKHi Court No. UD — 496 Reese St., Athens, GA 30606