GROWTH was the most obvious characteristic of His Britannic Majesty's Colony of Georgia during the decade and a half before the American colonies revolted in 1775. Until 1763 Georgia was the youngest and weakest of the British Southern colonies. But the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Seven Years' War in 1763, removed the Spanish, who had been unpleasant neighbors to the south ever since Georgia's founding. The two new British provinces, East and West Florida, were new friends who added considerably to Georgia's military security and general peace of mind. Spanish interference with the Creek Indians, Georgia's most belligerent red neighbors, was ended. The colony's frontiers were safer than they had ever been before. The royal proclamation of 1763 created for the first time a definite southern boundary, the St. Marys River. The removal of the Spanish from the Floridas made possible settlement south of the Altamaha River. Some of the older mainland colonies objected to the provisions of the proclamation of 1763 that restricted white settlement to the area east of the headwaters of streams flowing into the Atlantic. Georgia's settlement had not reached nearly this far west yet; so there was no dissatisfaction on this account.

Besides getting rid of her unpopular Spanish neighbors to the south, Georgia in 1763 more than doubled her land available for white settlement. A congress attended by British Indian Superintendent John Stuart, the Southern governors, and the Southern Indians was held in Augusta in November, 1763, at which the Indians were informed of the exit of the Spanish and French from
the area east of the Mississippi, a new basis for white-Indian trade and peace was laid, and a land cession was made by the Indians. The cession included lands between the Savannah and Ogeechee rivers from just above Ebenezer to Little River, above Augusta, and a strip of coastal land about thirty miles deep between the Altamaha and the St. Marys rivers. Georgia had already expanded beyond the original Indian cession of 1733, but the 1763 cession gave her enough land to take care of the rush of new settlers for at least ten years. The lands between the Savannah and the Ogeechee were soon being settled by immigrants from the older colonies to the north and by Scotch-Irish direct from Northern Ireland.

Georgia's spirit of optimism and hopefulness for the future came from more than getting rid of her Spanish neighbors and the Indian cession of 1763. These changes were as much an indication of the colony's new attitude as they were a result. Both changes resulted from international political moves that Georgia could not possibly have brought about by her own efforts. Perhaps what really explained the new attitude was the fact that Georgia was at last fully over her unpleasant infancy of utopian idealism and had entered into a lusty adolescence of self-satisfied frontier realism. She had ceased to be the favorite charity of Englishmen and had become an ordinary American colony. She now had Negro slaves and strong drink, lawyers and plantations, a governor and a legislature; and she was pretty much left to work out her own destiny. She still got some financial help from Parliament and wanted more military help from the British army than she got. Economically and politically she was smaller and weaker than her neighbor, South Carolina, but time would bring maturity. The frontier has always been sure of a better day to come. And the majority of the white Georgians were frontiersmen.

Politically, Georgia looked like any other royal colony after the Trustees gave up their control and a royal government was instituted in 1754. The executive head of the government was a governor and council appointed from England. The legislature was made up of two houses, the Upper House of Assembly, which was the governor's council sitting for legislative business, and the Commons House of Assembly, elected by residents who owned fifty acres of land. The main courts were a court of errors, the highest court in the colony, made up of the governor and his council; a general court, the court of general jurisdiction; and justice of the peace courts, called courts of conscience—it was said
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because the justices used conscience instead of legal training to arrive at decisions. The duties and powers of each part of the government were the usual ones in a royal colony.

Governors and other administrative officials were controlled by detailed instructions from England. But the fact that colonial assemblies could not be forced to carry out royal instructions was one of the weak points in British colonial administration which it never overcame. The more important colonial executive officials (including the governor, the attorney general, the chief justice, the secretary, the receiver general of quit rents, the surveyor general, the provost marshal, and customs officials) were always paid by a Georgia civil list provided by Parliament. Since a number of these officers were sent out from England, it was possible to keep officials close to the viewpoint of the British government, and it was impossible for the colonial assembly to use nonpayment of their salaries as a club to control them. All colonies founded after the middle of the eighteenth century (Nova Scotia, Georgia, East and West Florida) had their executive officials paid by Parliament, and in these younger colonies executive control was stronger than in the older colonies where salaries were voted by the local assembly.

One thing that made Georgia's government different from that in several other colonies was the ability of her last royal governor, James Wright (1761-1782). Wright had studied law at Grey's Inn and had been called to the bar there. He had resided in South Carolina, where his father was chief justice, and had been attorney general, colonial agent to London, lawyer, and planter. He knew the political and economic conditions in the Southern colonies, and his legal training and work as South Carolina's agent in London had given him a good acquaintance with the workings of the British government. Wright was the only one of Georgia's three colonial governors who had any real qualifications for the office or any real interest in the development of the colony. He was above the average of colonial governors in his ability to get what he wanted out of his assembly and his colony. He worked hard at his job rather than ignoring it as did some nobles who took colonial offices to recoup their fortunes. He was popular with "the better sort of people"—the only kind he wanted popularity with—and he had the personal respect of his political enemies. He summed up his own character as governor when he said, "It has ever been my study to discharge my duty both to the King & People with integrity, & to the utmost of my power . . . ." He was
a typical eighteenth century gentleman who considered government to be the concern of "the better sort of people" rather than of the lower classes. Throughout his long term as governor, Wright remained in Georgia except for one leave, 1771-1773, and the period 1776-1779 when he was driven out by the revolutionary government.

Wright had considerable personal interest in Georgia's economic development. The entire time that he was in Georgia he was acquiring lands, plantation stock, and slaves and was one of the largest planters in the colony by the 1770's. There is no evidence of his acquiring land for speculative purposes, something that he opposed consistently as governor. All the evidence points to the fact that he farmed the lands which he acquired and that his lands were acquired legally under the headright system then in effect. Economically Wright and Georgia grew together, and his personal interest in Georgia's economy made him concerned with doing what he could to keep it healthy.

Wright's relationship with his executive council was always harmonious, and the council almost always followed his leadership and backed him in his arguments with the Commons House of Assembly. The tendency towards the end of the colonial period was to appoint the main executive officers of the colony to the council, a policy which gave Wright a council easy to work with but which deprived him of the more disinterested opinion of the leading nonofficeholding colonials. Wright was a good executive leader and seldom had any serious differences with his executive officers, who usually followed his lead.

Wright's relationship with his assemblies was harmonious throughout most of his period as governor. Of course there were differences and protracted arguments between the governor and the assembly, and there was certainly an opposition party after 1765. But for ordinary legislative matters, Wright and the assembly got along quite well. Here again Wright was a leader, and the assembly usually followed his suggestions as to needed legislation. Besides his formal messages to the assembly, Wright tried to work personally through his friends in the two houses to secure what he wanted. Since the Commons House contained only twenty-nine members at its largest, such close personal contact was easy. Wright had a good entree into the proceedings of the Commons House of Assembly in that he appointed its clerk, who received a part of his pay from the parliamentary grant, and regularly read the
journal of the House daily when it was in session. As a rule Wright signed all bills passed by the assembly and urged their approval in London.

Strictly speaking, throughout the colonial period Georgia had but one government, that in Savannah. Parishes did exist (twelve after 1765) as subdivisions for religious organizations, militia, voting, and local justice; but they were administrative subdivisions rather than units of local governments. All real functions of government were carried out in Savannah by the provincial government. There was only one general court for the colony. All land was granted by the governor and council sitting in Savannah. Road building and maintenance, construction or repair of public buildings and churches, clearing of navigable streams and construction of dock facilities, and other such governmental duties were carried out by commissioners appointed by the assembly and under its supervision. Strictly local affairs such as the cleaning of the streets and squares of Savannah and Sunbury, the creation and payment of town watches, and other local law-enforcement activities were provided for by the assembly. There was little real need for government outside Savannah until the 1773 Indian cession was settled.

Virtually the only elected parish officials were the vestrymen and church wardens. Justices of the peace, constables, parish tax collectors, and other local officials were appointed from Savannah. Parish taxes were assessed by the vestrymen and church wardens for the support of the parish church and for the relief of the poor. Other than the vestrymen and church wardens, the most important parish officials were the justices of the peace, who held the local courts of conscience, and the militia officers. The militia was organized upon parish lines for convenience, but all officers were appointed by and responsible to the governor.

Indian relations were important to most of the American colonies, but to a frontier colony like Georgia they were of the utmost importance. The treaty and Indian cession of 1763 did not bring immediate peace to the southern back country. The Indians did not fully understand the change which had been made, and French agents continued to operate east of the Mississippi regardless of the fact that this was now British territory. The Creeks, the strongest Indian group in the South, were the last to accept the results of the peace, the 1763 cession, and British friendship. They delayed the surveying of the boundary line agreed
upon in 1768, so that it was not finished until December, 1768. By 1765 the Creeks were generally peaceful, and Governor Wright reported that there were no whites killed by Creeks in 1766. This was a most unusual record! Peace with the Creeks continued until 1768, but after that it deteriorated. By this time the best lands of the 1763 cession had been granted, and frontiersmen began to push against the frontier and to violate the Indian territory more and more. Wright and his council tried to enforce literally the treaty agreements, especially the boundary line between whites and Indians and the punishments prescribed for violation by either side. Justice to the Indians was difficult because the only armed forces available to the colony consisted of militia, and frontier militia was not noted for fairness in its ideas of Indian justice. By 1771 and 1772 the Indian situation had become serious again.

In 1771 the traders to the Cherokees offered to cancel all Indian debts, which were considerable, and to furnish the Cherokees much more goods if they would cede a tract of territory about sixty miles square north and west of Augusta. In February a treaty of cession was actually signed between the Cherokees and the traders, but the proclamation of 1763 required that all land cessions from the Indians be handled by the government. Wright, favoring this cession because of the additional land that it would open for settlement in Georgia, worked for approval of it while he was in England on leave in 1771-1773. The situation was complicated by the fact that the Creeks claimed a part of this Cherokee cession and it was doubtful if they would cede their claims. The British government approved the proposed cession; instructions were issued to Stuart, the Indian Superintendent, to try to get the cession; and Wright returned to Georgia to help with the negotiations. At an Indian congress held in the summer of 1773 at Augusta Indian traders worked hard to get the Creeks to approve the cession so that their debts could be paid. The Creeks and Cherokees ceded jointly a tract of over 1,600,000 acres between the Savannah and Oconee rivers north and west of the area ceded in 1763, and the Creeks ceded an additional tract of about 500,000 acres between the Ogeechee and Altamaha rivers just west of the small strip ceded in 1763. Wright and the assembly wanted an additional cession between the Ogeechee River on the east and the Altamaha and Oconee rivers on the west extending north to the fall line or the source of the Oconee. The Creeks and Superin-
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tendent Stuart opposed this cession, and only the extreme southern part of it was made.⁸

Many of the Creeks opposed the 1773 cession, and the whites rushed into the new lands rapidly after the treaty was signed. There were renewed Creek troubles almost at once. Many Georgians feared a full scale Indian war and were sure that they could not defend themselves, as their militia was outnumbered by Creek warriors. An urgent appeal for British troops was made but was refused as had been other recent requests for frontier protection. The British commander-in-chief in America promised to send troops if hostilities actually broke out, but not before. This might be too late. A special session of the assembly met in the summer of 1774; and, at Wright’s and Stuart’s insistence, the British government issued instructions to all the Southern colonies to stop the Creek trade, instructions that could never be carried out completely. In the fall a Creek conference was called at Savannah at which both Indians and whites promised to live up to their former agreements and to respect the boundary line separating them.⁹ But peace between whites and Indians was really impossible, for the whites were determined to have the rich lands reaching to the Oconee and the Indians were just as determined to keep their “favorite hunting grounds.” Regardless of official agreements, whites would continue to cross into the Indian lands and the Indians would continue to murder the offending whites. Stuart realized the situation and pressed the British government to take a firmer stand, but signs of rebellion in America were too obvious for any action to be taken.

The desire of the whites for more Indian lands naturally led from political to economic affairs because the economic item of first importance in a frontier and agricultural society was land ownership and acquisition. Nobody in Georgia after 1760 could complain that land was hard to acquire. The colony granted lands upon a headright system that allowed 100 acres of land to every head of family and fifty additional acres for every member of the “family,” black or white. Land was granted free (excepting survey and office fees) but for the 1773 cession, which was sold at one to five shillings per acre under the old headright restrictions. Grantees could purchase additional lands beyond what they were entitled to under the headright system.¹⁰ Land speculation never became the mania in colonial Georgia that it did in some of the older
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colonies. Governor Wright opposed speculation because it caused large tracts of desirable lands to be held without settlement, and Wright was sure that Georgia needed all the settlers it could get for protection against the Creeks and also for economic advancement. All the evidence points to indications that lands granted in colonial Georgia were earned under the headright system, and that the majority of such granted lands were farmed, logged, or used in some way. Since all lands in Georgia, except the 1773 cession, were granted entirely by the governor and council, it was possible to prevent speculation and illegal acquisition of land easier than in colonies where local authorities made grants. Wright said in 1773 that 6,695,429 acres had been ceded by the Indians in Georgia since 1733, and less than a million acres had actually been granted, yet there was little ungranted plantable land in the colony exclusive of the 1773 Indian cession. Throughout the colonial period land continued to be granted in all parts of the colony, but more was granted after 1760 in the frontier parishes.

Before 1763 Georgia settlers had come from England, Germany, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the colonies to the north. The Germans were mainly centered at Ebenezer, some twenty miles above Savannah, and in Savannah itself. Darien on the Altamaha was the seat of Highland Scots who had come over as members of Oglethorpe's regiment. New England Puritans, who had come to Georgia after temporary residence in South Carolina, were settled about forty miles below Savannah at Midway, St. John's Parish. Scotch-Irish usually settled on the upper frontier whether they came direct from Northern Ireland or from one of the colonies to the north. People from other colonies settled throughout Georgia, though there tended to be more of these on the upper frontier with the Scotch-Irish. Financial assistance was often given by the colony to the Scotch-Irish who were too poor to pay their passage money and establish themselves in their new homes. Most of the people who settled the 1763 and 1773 Indian cessions were Scotch-Irish or from the Northern colonies.

Settlement of the 1773 cession was especially rapid despite the fact that the land was sold instead of granted free. By 1773 this was the only good unsettled land available in the Southern colonies, and it was eagerly sought by frontiersmen from the Carolinas and Virginia and immigrants from Northern Ireland. Most of the settlers were young, had large families, and owned few slaves—
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typical frontiersmen in every respect. Settlement was still going on rapidly at the time the fighting with Britain began, and settlement was not stopped, only slowed, during the war years.

The rapid growth of Georgia's frontier after 1763 helped the growth of the colony's few towns. Savannah, the metropolis of the colony, increased its population and business as is evidenced by the arrival of new artisans and by increased trade. But it was Augusta that grew most rapidly. Before 1763 it had been mainly a defense and Indian trading center. Indian trade continued, but after 1763 the town became more and more a trade center for the surrounding agricultural area. On the coast, the town of Sunbury on the Midway River in St. John's Parish had been created Georgia's second port of entry in 1762. Its trade was mainly local with Savannah except for the export of rice and lumber produced in the vicinity. In 1770 the town of Brunswick was officially created at Carr's Field on the Turtle River, and plans were laid for development of a considerable harbor in the river and on nearby Saint Simon's Island, but real growth there had to await the nineteenth century. Besides Savannah, Augusta, and Sunbury, the only towns worthy of the name in colonial Georgia were Ebenezer, Midway, and Darien. Like the rest of the Southern colonies, Georgia was predominantly rural.

In a general report which Wright made to the London government in 1773, he showed that Georgia's population had grown from 6,000 whites and 3,500 Negroes in 1761 to 18,000 whites and 15,000 Negroes in 1773. Most of these inhabitants lived along the coast between the Altamaha and the Savannah rivers, the lower area between the Ogeechee and Savannah rivers, and up the Savannah River to Augusta. As yet few lived beyond the Ogeechee, north or west of Augusta, or south of the Altamaha.

The economic support of this constantly growing population was to a large extent agriculture, forest industries, and the Indian trade. Along the coast and tidal streams were the rice plantations, which produced the greatest agricultural wealth. High ground grew indigo and Indian corn. Frontier farms in the upcountry produced wheat, Indian corn, tobacco, and a little hemp. Throughout the province large quantities of livestock, especially cattle and hogs, were pastured. They were usually marketed in the form of salt meat sold to West Indian planters for slave food. Governor Wright, with eleven plantations of over 24,578 acres and 523 slaves, and Lieutenant Governor John Graham, with over
26,000 acres, were representative of some of Georgia’s largest planters. Most of the large plantations were located on the coast, the coastal islands, or not very far upriver on the Savannah, Ogeechee, or Altamaha rivers. The upcountry was an area of small farms with few slaves and more emphasis upon subsistence farming, though practically everybody had at least one money crop.

In the coastal area live oak, cypress, and pine were the main timber cut, with pine and hardwoods in the upcountry. Most lumber and lumber products were produced along the coast or navigable streams because of the necessity of transportation. Lumber, shingles, pitch, tar, and turpentine were the main forest products; and the West Indies furnished their major market. Augusta early became an important center of the Southern Indian trade, replacing Charleston for much of this business. By 1768 Georgia was exporting yearly 306,510 pounds of deer skins secured through the Indian trade; but this amount declined to 284,840 pounds by 1770. An undetermined amount of skins bought by Augusta traders continued to be exported through Charleston. After the Floridas became British, some of the Indian trade shifted from Augusta to Pensacola because of easier entry into the Creek country from there.

There was no manufacturing, except household, in colonial Georgia. The people, as is usual in a frontier community, devoted themselves almost entirely to farming operations and imported their manufactured goods. A little cheap homespun cloth, a few cotton stockings, some plantation shoes, blacksmith products, and a little furniture made up Georgia manufactures. Despite the abundance of good timbers for shipbuilding, few ships were built. Though Georgia had some direct trade with Britain, the great majority of her European trade went through Charleston because of better shipping connections, insurance rates, and naval convoy routes. Coasting vessels plying between the mainland colonies and the West Indies stopped at Savannah and were responsible for much trade and contact with the outside world. Trade was carried on with Charleston, the West Indies, New England, England, and the middle colonies. To the West Indies went rice, corn, peas, lumber, shingles and staves, a little livestock, and considerable barreled beef and pork. Georgia imported sugar and rum and got most of her hard money from this trade. Manufactures of all sorts came from Britain and from the continent through Britain. To Britain went deer skins, rice, indigo, naval stores, lumber, and
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lumber products. Imports from Britain amounted to about £76,322 a year by 1773 and exports to £68,000. Food, especially fish and flour, was imported from the Northern colonies, who bought little in return, so that they secured the cash which Georgia derived from the West Indian trade. In 1772 there were 161 vessels cleared through the port at Savannah and 56 at Sunbury. In 1773, there were exported 11,276 tons of produce valued at £121,677. In value of both imports and exports Britain led, the West Indies came second, and the Northern colonies last.

Savannah business was carried on mainly by merchants who acted as importers of European goods and factors for Georgia produce and who sold their goods for cash or country produce. Sometimes a Savannah merchant was in partnership with a London, Charleston, or Philadelphia merchant; but the more usual situation was for the Savannah merchants to act as agents for merchants in these cities. Most of the capital was local and business was done on credit. Sometimes a large planter, like James Habersham, was also a merchant. Most merchants dealt in all types of goods; an advertisement of newly-arrived stock might include slaves, hardware, sugar, fine Madeira wine, clothing, books, flour and other foods, farm implements, and medicines. There were numerous artisans advertising in the Georgia Gazette as “just from London” and offering their services as bakers, peruke makers, clothiers, milliners, cabinet-makers and carpenters, jewelers, printers, paperhangers, and so on. Often the situation in Savannah must have been as James Habersham found regarding tailors in 1767 when he said “all my clothes are miserably spoiled by the Bunglers here, and after repeatedly trying new Hands” he was forced to ask his friend William Knox to get him some suits made in London.

Georgians were concerned with provision for both this life and the next. From its very inception the colony had been closely tied to the Church of England and had received considerable help from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. In 1758 Georgia was divided into eight parishes, and provision was made for the establishment of the church in each. Though the law nowhere stated that the Church of England was the established church in the colony, such was its obvious intent. The lands south of the Altamaha were organized into four additional parishes after 1763. Despite the parish organization, before the 1770s there was little church activity and no church buildings or
rectors except in Christ Church (Savannah) and St. Paul's (Augusta) parishes. A church was built in St. George's, St. John's, and St. Philip's parishes and each had rectors part time in the 1770s. Parish vestries were both political and religious bodies and were elected by all freeholders of the parish, Anglican or non-conformist. Rectors were paid by Parliamentary grant, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the local assembly, and the parishes themselves—usually by a combination of several of these sources. In the royal period there seemed little concern on the part of the Anglican church for missionary work in the parishes without rectors or among the Indians.

In regard to religion the majority of Georgians were dissenters by the time of the Revolution, and there were certainly more dissenting church organizations than Anglican. There were Presbyterians at Darien among the Highland Scots, in Savannah, and among the Scotch-Irish in the back country; but there was little Presbyterian church organization in the back country. Congregationalists in St. John's Parish maintained their own church and local government. The Germans at Ebenezer and Savannah were mainly Lutheran and maintained religious contact with Germany from whence they drew their clergy until after the Revolution. The vestry in St. Matthew's Parish, the site of Ebenezer, was composed of the deacons and elders of Jerusalem Church, a fact indicating that the Lutherans were not molested in religion or government and that a parish vestry did not have to be Anglican at all. There were Quakers at Wrightsborough on the frontier, Baptists on the frontier by 1773, and a few Jews in Savannah who maintained worship at least part of the time. Certainly the strongest and probably the most religious body in colonial Georgia was the Lutheran organization at Ebenezer and the several surrounding churches, usually served by the same clergy. The Germans remained a close knit group, under the leadership of their clergy. Their substantial red brick church, built around 1770, still stands at Ebenezer, the oldest church building in Georgia.

Georgia dissenters usually got as good treatment as Anglicans. Several dissenting clergy were granted glebes as were Anglican rectors, and the Lutherans were sometimes considered a part of the church establishment in the colony. John Joachim Zubly, the minister of the Independent Meeting House (Presbyterian) and the German Calvinistic congregations in Savannah, was the outstanding dissenting Georgia clergyman and the guardian of dis-
senters’ rights. Zubly, a native of St. Gall, Switzerland, was a man of considerable intellectual ability and broad religious beliefs. He often argued with Samuel Frink, the narrow and legalistic rector of Christ Church in Savannah, about clergymen’s fees, rights, etc. Zubly was clerk of the vestry in Christ Church and carried on extensive planting operations. Religious tolerance was the rule in colonial Georgia. There is only one record of arrest for religious reasons, and the Baptist preacher who was arrested for preaching without a license was freed and continued preaching.

Education, like religion, was supposed to be controlled and supervised by the Church of England; but the Church was little concerned with it. Two schoolmasters were paid out of the Parliamentary grant, but otherwise schooling was a private affair. Most clergymen, Anglican and dissenters alike, kept schools to supplement their income; and a schoolmaster was generally maintained by Jerusalem Church at Ebenezer for the education of the young. The college of George Whitefield’s dreams never materialized at Bethesda, but both orphans and boarding students were educated there. There were numerous private schools in Savannah at which one could take a variety of subjects including military drill and fencing, fancy work for girls, languages, mathematics, and scientific subjects. Classes were given day and night and private instruction could be arranged. Schools also existed in Georgia’s other towns and on plantations, but with not so varied a curriculum as in Savannah. Education was available for those who wanted it and could afford to pay for it; few Georgians thought more was necessary.

Other social affairs in Georgia may be glimpsed briefly from mention in the *Georgia Gazette*, the colony’s only newspaper, published weekly in Savannah, by James Johnston. Johnston was a born newspaperman in that he was anxious for news and would print any side of any controversy and seems to have injected a minimum of his personal feelings into the news which he published.

The social, political, and economic center of the colony was, of course, Savannah. Here most of the wealthy and important people lived at least a part of the time. Officials, the few professional men (doctors and lawyers), merchants, and wealthy planters made up the society of the town. Most of them were planters regardless of what other economic interests they had, and the entire group was small enough to work and play together with a minimum of
friction. A few of this group lived most of their time upon their plantations, which might be as far away as the Altamaha, but such was the exception rather than the rule. For amusement there were occasional plays and musicales by visiting artists. Public balls and private dinner parties were frequently held. Holidays like the King's Birthday, Gunpowder Plot Day, St. George's Day, and St. Patrick's Day were generally celebrated by militia drills, speeches, or special sermons. Cricket matches and other athletic contests were occasionally mentioned, but by far the most popular sport was horse racing. There were several social clubs in Savannah, a Masonic lodge, and other civic and social organizations. The Union Society, Savannah's oldest philanthropic and civic organization, paid for the schooling of worthy poor, looked after orphans, and made presentations to worthy citizens who did something of special civic note. The Georgia Library Society maintained a circulating library for the benefit of its members.

Socially and economically Georgia in 1773 was a frontier community of about 35,000 people scattered along the coast, up the rivers a short distance, and up the Savannah River as far as Augusta. The back country was just beginning to fill out from Augusta. While there were enough of "the better sort of people" to give Savannah's society some of the "tone" so ardently desired by Governor Wright, there was no real aristocracy of wealth or blood such as existed in some of the older colonies. The rapid filling up of the back country in the 1770s was making Georgia primarily an area of yeomen farmers instead of aristocrats. Most Georgians naturally deferred to their "betters" in matters of government, but they were not dictated to by an aristocracy. The main concern of most people was to get more good farming land from the Indians. Cultural affairs would have to wait until the frontier had been conquered.