When fighting stopped in the summer of 1782, most Georgians hoped the economic expansion that had been interrupted by the war would begin anew and soon compensate for the losses of the war years. Joseph Clay, a Savannah merchant and conservative Whig leader, said that things looked better every day. Old inhabitants were returning and new ones were coming in rapidly. The richness of the back-country lands had impressed soldiers from other states who saw Georgia during the war; and the opening of the land office early in 1783 helped migrations, especially from Virginia and the Carolinas. In April, 1783, five hundred families were reported to have settled in the back country in the past six months. A North Carolinian wrote, “Georgia must, I think, in a few years be one of the Richest States in the Union, and Where I’ve no doubt, you may live happy and secure a lasting and Valuable Estate for your self & family...”

As soon as the British left, Joseph Clay returned to Savannah and entered into business again. He endeavored to resume his old business relations with merchants in England, Philadelphia, and the West Indies and insisted that he intended to pay his pre-war debts. This would take time because plantations must be repaired of war ravages and be supplied with implements, work stock, and slaves. However, Clay said he was willing to deed land to his creditors at market prices if they desired it.

Because of the great need for goods in Georgia, the state was anxious to trade and in 1783 opened its port to all who had
anything to sell. The stocks that the British merchants had in Savannah at the evacuation were soon exhausted, and merchants were looking for permanent sources of supply. Joseph Clay thought that trade with the West Indies would be good, especially with the non-British islands, as long as the strong anti-British feeling lasted. He carried on extensive trade with Cuba and Jamaica before it was slowed by a state embargo on the export of provisions, imposed from November, 1782, through June, 1783. Naval stores, masts, spars, staves, shingles, and all sorts of lumber were reported available for export, but few provisions were offered before the embargo. Clay was sure that Georgia would need to import more than formerly because of the influx of new settlers, but he thought there would be little to export before the 1783 crop was ready for market and possibly not much before the 1784 crops could be marketed. Georgia needed plantation supplies and tools, Negroes, and cheap textiles and clothing in 1783. The demand for goods in Savannah made prices there considerably higher than in Charleston. Clay thought there would be insufficient trade between Savannah and Philadelphia in 1783 to fill a regular vessel, but that vessels between Philadelphia and the West Indies could profitably stop at Savannah. In the spring of 1784, he reported that Georgia trade was thriving, that prices of imports were good, and that much trade was back in old channels with a good demand for farm supplies.

The absence of customs house records and Joseph Clay's letter books for most of the 1780s makes precise information about Georgia's foreign trade difficult to secure. There are records of ship arrivals from June, 1783, through September, 1786, and for most of 1788, as well as customs house figures for part of 1788 and 1789. However, available information does indicate the general directions that trade took and the types of things that were imported and exported.

The efforts of Georgia merchants to establish trade between Georgia and Europe were helped by the appointment of consuls by several European governments and the desires of European merchants for American trade. A French consul general for the states from Maryland south was appointed in 1783, and there was a Georgia deputy by 1785. A Dutch consul for the three Southern states, Jan Bonner Graves, appointed in 1785, resided in Charleston. A British consul, George Miller, was appointed for the three Southern states in 1787; and he appointed a Savannah deputy, John Wallace, in March, 1788.
In 1782, Casper Voght and Company, of Hamburg, in a letter to the governor and assembly of Georgia, pointed out the superiority and cheapness of German goods in comparison with British goods usually bought by Americans. Items available were listed with the offer to send a personal representative and samples if desired. Three years later Arnold Delius, of Bremen, was in South Carolina and Georgia to buy local produce and to sell German goods. Available records of ship arrivals and departures show little direct trade between Europe and Savannah. London and Liverpool were the European ports most often mentioned. Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Lisbon, and Bordeaux are mentioned only a few times each.

Arrivals and departures of vessels in Savannah indicate that there continued to be more trade with Charleston than with any other port and that Charleston continued to act as port for much of Georgia's foreign trade. There was considerable intercourse with St. Augustine as long as it was British, but this stopped almost entirely after it became Spanish in 1785. After Charleston, West Indian ports are most frequently listed for ship destinations and sources. The British islands—Jamaica, Barbados, and New Providence—outranked the Danish, French, and Spanish possessions represented by St. Croix, Cape Francais, Hispaniola, and Cuba. So far as the United States was concerned, Philadelphia ranked first, Baltimore second, and New York third. Georgia continued to do most of her trade with Britain and her possessions despite British restrictions against American trade, objections of Georgians to these restrictions, and higher import duties on British goods. Britain was the one sure source of manufactured goods that Americans knew and wanted.

Savannah and Sunbury had been colonial ports of entry. In 1785 the executive appointed Henry Osborne the first collector for St. Marys and other areas south of the jurisdiction of the collector at Sunbury. In 1787 a separate collector was appointed for Brunswick. The trade of Georgia ports other than Savannah was inconsequential and confined almost entirely to Savannah, Charleston, and the West Indies. Import and export figures for Georgia's ports have been found for only the months of March through October, 1788. Exports were valued at about £55,433 and imports at £50,000. Duty of £1,565 was collected on imports.

Georgia's trade retained its colonial pattern so far as items of export and import were concerned. Exports were mainly rice,
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lumber, lumber products, naval stores, and some tobacco. Imports were West Indian sugar and rum, manufactured goods (from plantation tools to fine clothing—mainly from Europe), bar iron for a little local manufacture of hardware, flour and biscuit, and other food products not produced in sufficient quantity in Georgia (e.g., apples, potatoes, wine). To maintain the quality of its exports, Georgia continued the colonial practice of insisting that all items be inspected before export. A full complement of port authorities, including a “health officer and Surgeon” who headed the seamen’s hospital, were kept at Savannah. Other ports got along with fewer officials because of the smaller amount of business carried on through them.

Local trade was carried on by merchants who might or might not have connections with foreign or Northern merchants. The main items sold were farm and plantation supplies, clothing, Negroes, some luxuries, and items used in the Indian trade. Some prewar merchants (Joseph Clay is the best example) continued in business after the war. Many old merchants did not survive, and new arrivals were added. Big merchants continued to import European goods and to export Georgia produce, and smaller merchants often bought imports from and sold Georgia produce to a larger merchant. The British merchants allowed to remain at the evacuation of Savannah got their time extended, and there were complaints that they were still present in 1784. Crookshanks and Spiers, one of the larger of the houses remaining, advertised in January, 1785, that they would close their business and leave Georgia as soon as possible. Evidently these British merchants stayed so long in an effort to collect old debts which they knew they would have little chance of collecting once they left Georgia, and to keep connections for British houses interested in the American trade. From the advertisements in the Gazette, there seem to have been fewer mercantile houses in Savannah in the 1780s than in the colonial period, but they may have done as much or more business. There were more merchants in Augusta; they became increasingly general supply merchants and factors for the rapidly expanding upcountry of which Augusta was the economic and political capital. Savannah and Augusta merchants continued to do some Indian trade, but this became relatively less important, probably because of more farming in the back country and because the British firm of Leslie, Panton and Company remained in
the Indian supply business at Pensacola after the Floridas became Spanish territory.

As before the war, a number of tradesmen and artisans advertised that they were just arrived from Europe and were thus conversant with the latest styles. There was an increase in the number who advertised themselves as coming from Paris or France and fewer from London. Some came from Philadelphia and other Northern cities. The fact that a number of such tradespeople located in Augusta is an indication that it was a growing town and that the people of the upcountry were demanding more of the better things of life. One watch and clock maker evidently found insufficient business in the frontier town of Washington, Wilkes County, for in the fall of 1787 he advertised his removal from Washington to Augusta.14

Manufacturing, encouraged by both private individuals and the state, made some progress. In 1785, Clay, Telfair and Company of Savannah contracted with Jeremiah Fox, tobacco and snuff maker of Philadelphia, to come to Augusta and set up a tobacco and snuff manufactory, teach the employees the necessary operations, and superintend the factory for the first eighteen months. Fifteen months later Fox endorsed the contract as completed with cash settlement by Clay, Telfair and Company; but no record of the success of the venture has been found.15 In 1788 Thomas Glascock advertised that he had erected bolting cloths at his mill, in or near Augusta, and had a white attendant from Pennsylvania who completely understood flour manufacturing.16 When James White and David Robertson asked help in erecting an ironworks, the assembly voted them 5,000 acres of pine land if the work should be finished in three years, a premium of £50 for the first ton of good bar iron produced, and exemption of all employees from militia duty and the payment of poll taxes for five years. Benjamin and Adoniram Allen were granted £500 upon giving satisfactory security to erect an iron bloomery in Wilkes County within two years.17 No record has been found of the amount of iron produced, if any, by these two ventures.

An acute shortage of currency continued to plague business. Specie was especially short, and drafts on the Northern states or London were difficult to procure. To entice specie into Georgia, the assembly voted to give all foreigners, even if their nation was at war with the United States, the right to loan money at 7 per
cent interest and to have equality with citizens in recovering current debts in the state courts. This law was probably intended to bring British funds into Georgia by guaranteeing equal treatment to foreigners, though not recovery of prewar debts.

To relieve the currency shortage and to provide expenses for an anticipated Creek war, £50,000 in bills of credit was authorized for issue in 1786. These bills were to be redeemed in four years out of the proceeds of the sale of lands between the Altamaha and the St. Marys, were declared legal tender, and were to be taken for all specie payments due the state. The bills were to be issued in denominations from six pence to twenty shillings, to encourage their use in ordinary business. Four shillings and eight pence was declared equal to one dollar. Only £30,000 in bills was issued, presumably because the Creek war did not materialize.

There was immediate objection to these bills, mainly from Savannah merchants and artisans, many of whom agreed not to take the money. The upcountry approved the issue of the bills just as strongly as Savannah objected. At a public meeting in Augusta on December 2, 1786, action was taken to encourage the use of the bills and to bring unfavorable public opinion upon any who refused to accept them. Punishment prescribed for counterfeiting these bills was death, but reports were soon current that they were being counterfeited. The lands pledged to the support of the bills could not be sold because of Indian troubles; and despite all efforts of the government and the upcountry, the bills depreciated rapidly. The assembly was willing to admit a depreciation of 33½ per cent by January, 1789, and directed that £5,000 of the bills be withdrawn from circulation and burned immediately and each year thereafter for the next four years, while the time for their complete redemption was extended until January 15, 1794.

In agriculture, as in politics, one of the most notable changes after the Revolution was the development of the upcountry. The lands north and west of Augusta had been opened to white settlement by the Indian cession of 1773 and had filled up rapidly before the Revolution began. The partisan fighting in the back country had hurt settlement during the war, but land-hungry pioneers rushed in once the fighting had stopped. These lands were suited to the production of small grain, livestock, and tobacco. Large plantations or rice and indigo were not suitable to
the upcountry as they were to the low country. Most new settlers were relatively poor and owned few, if any, slaves. A small-farmer subsistence type of agriculture developed with grain or flour, meat, furs, and lumber products the main money crops.\textsuperscript{23}

The large number of slaves carried away by the British and the influx of new settlers created a shortage that made slaves hard to get and high in price in the 1780s. Just after the British evacuation, slaves were reported selling as high as 200 guineas, but six months later the price was 70 to 100 guineas. Prices from £50 to £100 or more for field hands continued to be quoted throughout the decade. Because of the insistence that slaves brought into the state come from Africa and not from West Indian plantations, it was harder to secure the desired number; but Joseph Clay and other merchants tried to make arrangements with London merchants for a supply direct from Africa. As late as 1787, Clay reported a good market for Negroes—more of a demand for them than there was money to pay for them.\textsuperscript{24}

Georgia’s 1783 crops were insufficient to meet her own needs, let alone to pay for the large amount of imported goods needed. Clay estimated that three times as much land would be planted in 1784 as in 1783.\textsuperscript{25} Production and the amount of land cultivated increased rapidly throughout the decade; there was also an increase in land granted and in population.

Rice planting continued upon the coastal plantations, but it never regained its former position of predominance. Because irrigation systems on many plantations had been damaged during the war and the slaves carried off, recovery of large coastal plantations was delayed; and the coast was put at a disadvantage when compared to the new lands in the back country.

Perhaps the crop that increased greatest in importance was tobacco, which was raised in the fertile upcountry area. This crop could be used locally or exported; the state insisted that the quality of tobacco exported be kept up to standard by continuing the colonial practice of inspection. In 1783, the assembly appointed inspectors, who were to receive one dollar per hogshead inspected, set standards for exportation, and set up official warehouses where tobacco might be inspected and stored. Because no public warehouse existed in Augusta, the inspectors there were to build one at their own expense and were given the exclusive right of storing all tobacco brought to Augusta in the next twenty years. Under the inspection law of 1785 warehouses were to be
maintained at Augusta, Savannah, on Broad River, and at the mouth of the Ogeechee River. A public warehouse large enough to accommodate 300 hogsheads of tobacco was erected at Washington in 1789 by the town commissioners.\textsuperscript{26}

Indigo continued to be cultivated for several years after the Revolution, as contemporary newspapers and export figures for 1789 show. Evidently the disruption of the old trade with Britain, the loss of the British bounty, the British encouragement of indigo production in the East Indies, and the introduction of cotton were responsible for the decline of indigo production in the 1780s and 1790s.\textsuperscript{27}

The first cotton had been grown and exported from Georgia in the colonial period. Sea-island and upland cotton were grown for domestic use and on an experimental basis in the 1780s. Roller gins were used for separating the seed from the lint of sea-island cotton, but no satisfactory gin was developed for upland cotton until Eli Whitney’s gin of 1793.\textsuperscript{28} In 1788 a Charleston newspaper reported that a large hogshead of cotton in seed had been rolled to Charleston from Wilkes County, Georgia, in the same manner that tobacco was rolled, and that the man who brought it reported that considerable cotton was grown in his area of Wilkes County.\textsuperscript{29} During the 1780s better methods of growing upland cotton were discovered, and all was prepared for the great rush in cotton production that was to begin in the early 1800s.

Some effort was made to stimulate hemp production in Georgia and the other Southern states. A small amount of hemp continued to be grown, as in the colonial period, but not enough to be of much commercial value.\textsuperscript{30} Cattle raising continued on the frontier and on uncultivated lands in the older part of the state. During the war there had been much confusion as to cattle ownership because of the great amount of cattle raiding done by both Whigs and Tories into areas each held and because branding and care of cattle were often neglected. The state declared in 1783 that all cattle with obliterated marks were state property and should be collected to feed the state troops and people in need.\textsuperscript{31} Cattle-production methods continued much as before the Revolution, with the use of brands (which were recorded by the state to protect them), drovers, cowpens, and slaughtering and salting of meat for export. A few horses were exported during the 1780s.\textsuperscript{32}

Prices of coastal lands held up for awhile immediately after the war despite the fact that much land could not be cultivated
because of the lack of slaves. Prices quoted in 1782 ranged from £2 to £8 per acre. The next year Joseph Clay priced land to correspondents at £12 sterling per acre for unimproved swamp, £22 sterling for improved tide swamps, and sixty shillings for rice land at the head of swamps. By the end of the decade, prices of coastal lands had declined considerably.\(^{33}\) Most of the land sold from confiscated estates brought between five and twenty shillings an acre. One tract of 2,500 acres sold for £10 an acre, the highest price discovered for confiscated land. No prices for upcountry improved lands have been found.\(^{34}\)

Not only agriculture, but almost everything in post-Revolutionary Georgia was tied to the land-granting system and the number of new settlers who moved in. After the fighting stopped, the hunger of frontiersmen for good virgin land set off a great rush into Georgia's back country. Veterans of the Revolution wanted the land bounties promised during the war, and the old southward drift of frontiersmen in search of good land brought others to take up the best virgin land then available in the South. Land speculators helped advertise the movement. Georgians realized that economic and political advancement, as well as protection from the warlike Creeks, was dependent upon increased population, and that good land would draw settlers quicker than anything else. Georgia therefore made land easily available to any and all who wanted to settle.

Land allowed under the old headright system was increased in early 1783 to 200 acres free (except for office and surveying fees) to heads of families. Up to 1,000 additional acres could be purchased on the basis of 50 acres for each member (white or black) of the family at the rate of one shilling per acre for the first 100 acres and an increase of six pence per acre for each additional 100 acres. Land courts were to be held by the justices of each county once a month, at which applications for lands were received and warrants for survey issued, a duty previously performed by the executive. After the land was surveyed, the fees paid, and the grantee had lived on it for six months and improved three acres out of every 100, the executive made the final grant.\(^{35}\) The executive recommended that the issuing of warrants for survey be taken from the county land courts and returned to it, but the assembly took no action.\(^{36}\) The land act of 1785 made all headright grants up to 1,000 acres free except for office and surveying fees.\(^{37}\)
When the new counties of Franklin and Washington were laid out in 1784, a special land court (composed of the governor and three members of the council) initially issued warrants for survey in these counties. Lands were to be settled within fifteen months of the issuance of the warrants, or the warrants would lapse. No taxes were to be paid for the first three years if the lands were settled and cultivated according to law. The lands between the north and the south forks of the Oconee River up to the temporary Indian line were to be reserved for twelve months for officers, soldiers, and seamen (except refugees and militiamen) who were entitled to bounty grants from Congress or the state. Bounty grants in the military reserve were to be made without any costs except office fees and without requirements as to settlement or cultivation. As an inducement to new settlers, nonresidents were allowed to reserve land for twelve months in these counties before they moved to Georgia.

This special land court met in Augusta on April 6, 1784, and began to receive petitions and issue warrants for survey. Its troubles in issuing 2,000 or more warrants to land-hungry frontiersmen were graphically described by its clerk, David Rees. "Fancy to yourself," Rees wrote to Governor John Houstoun, "my dear sir, the Honorable the President and members of Council, four or five in number, convened on the business of their countrymen, and 1500, or perhaps 2000 men, set on by designing villains, approaching the doors with threats and menaces, crying out aloud, that their warrants they would have at any rate." Finally, the grantees were calmed and persuaded to wait an additional week until all the warrants could be prepared and ready for issue. Then came the day for handing out the warrants. Pandemonium reigned because everybody wanted his warrant immediately. As Rees said, "The general vocification was, why can't I get my warrant, as well as another such a one has got his—and by G--d I'll have mine. My office was no longer one at my command; the breach being made—the Torrent soon widened it—and he thought himself the happiest person that could Grab the greatest number of them [warrants]." The Alphabetical order that I had observed was soon obliterated, and no trace of regularity or decorum left. They soon had the warrants—from my Table—on the floor—at the door and on the highway—about 4 or 500 were soon missing by this outrage." Many of the missing ones were later returned; duplicates had to be made for the others. "Speculation, as I
hinted before, has certainly extinguished in many men, passing for Gentlemen, every spark of Probity and Integrity. Many have sworn that instead of 287½ acres of land, for which their warrants were made, they were entitled to 575 acres, and others, on second thought have deposed that they petitioned or meant to petition for the other County, in both of which cases the warrants are taken up, and new ones made out accordingly." Rees, like many residents from the coast, was certain that he did not like frontier democracy in the raw but was helpless in knowing how to combat it. It is no wonder that the coast did not trust the upcountry, which was getting so much political power into its hands.

When the executive met in Augusta in September, 1784, and signed grants for the warrants issued by the special land court in April and May, there is the first evidence of soldier bounty grants being issued. The majority of grants issued in the 1780s were for under 1,000 acres and well within the headright and bounty systems. There were individual grants for as high as 20,000 acres, and many individuals received numerous grants that totaled well into the thousands of acres. Most speculators secured bounty warrants from veterans who needed money at once or who were not interested in the lands—especially from veterans who did not live in Georgia. There were Georgia state and militia officers who signed certificates stating that veterans who had served under them were entitled to bounty lands and then themselves acquired the warrants of survey and the lands when granted. Thomas Carr and Richard Call are examples of Virginians who secured Revolutionary warrants in Virginia, came to Georgia and secured the lands, and settled at Augusta as land speculators. Carr and others brought slaves from Virginia and engaged in farming and slave trading as well as land speculation. Call and other speculators bought lands from the commissioners of confiscated estates; but, since this business took more money than the acquisition of survey warrants, the practice was less common. John Wereat was close to the truth when he said that nothing but land speculation interested Georgians. Lachlan McIntosh complained that the speculators in bounty warrants made agreements with the county surveyors and that veterans found it almost impossible to get their own bounties surveyed.

Because of the frontiersman's desire for the best land and because of the great rush into the back country, there never seemed
to be enough land available. There was a continual demand that more land be secured from the Indians and opened to white settlement. Many people pushed over the Indian boundary line and selected and settled upon good lands still belonging to the Indians. Despite the efforts of the government to prevent such action, it could never be stopped. Land laws stated that settlements beyond the Indian boundary were void, but many people must have secured grants to lands they had settled illegally. Indian cessions were settled almost as soon as they were ceded by the Indians and often before they could be surveyed.46

The mix-up and destruction of records during the war years created great confusion about land titles. The assembly and executive devoted much time in trying to correct the confusion. The usual procedure in cases of missing or incomplete records was for people to petition that certain lands be confirmed to them because of missing records or incomplete grants. If there were no conflicting claims of ownership, the assembly usually confirmed the titles as requested.47 Much of the executive’s time was taken up in passing land grants and settling disputed cases between individuals who claimed the same lands.

The destruction of markers, the movement of markers by people who wanted to increase the size of their holdings, the general inability to find permanent markers in a new and wild country, and the poor or hurried surveying that often was done all contributed to the confused system of surveying and marking lands. At times it was necessary to compel people to renew their markers or to have their lands resurveyed. There is no doubt that many people received much more land than they were entitled to under the bounty or headright system. The basis for grants was an affidavit by the grantee as to what he was due for bounty or headright purposes. For a bounty grant, a certificate from the ex-commanding officer was also necessary. Land was plentiful, and many people were not too careful what they swore to. In 1788 the surveyor general was ordered to pass no warrants of over 1,000 acres and to stop all abuses of the land laws that came to his knowledge.48 A final note on land granting was an order by the executive that no grants be passed which included the whole or part of the Broad or Savannah rivers, which should be the common property of all Georgians.49