

# The Story of North Carolina

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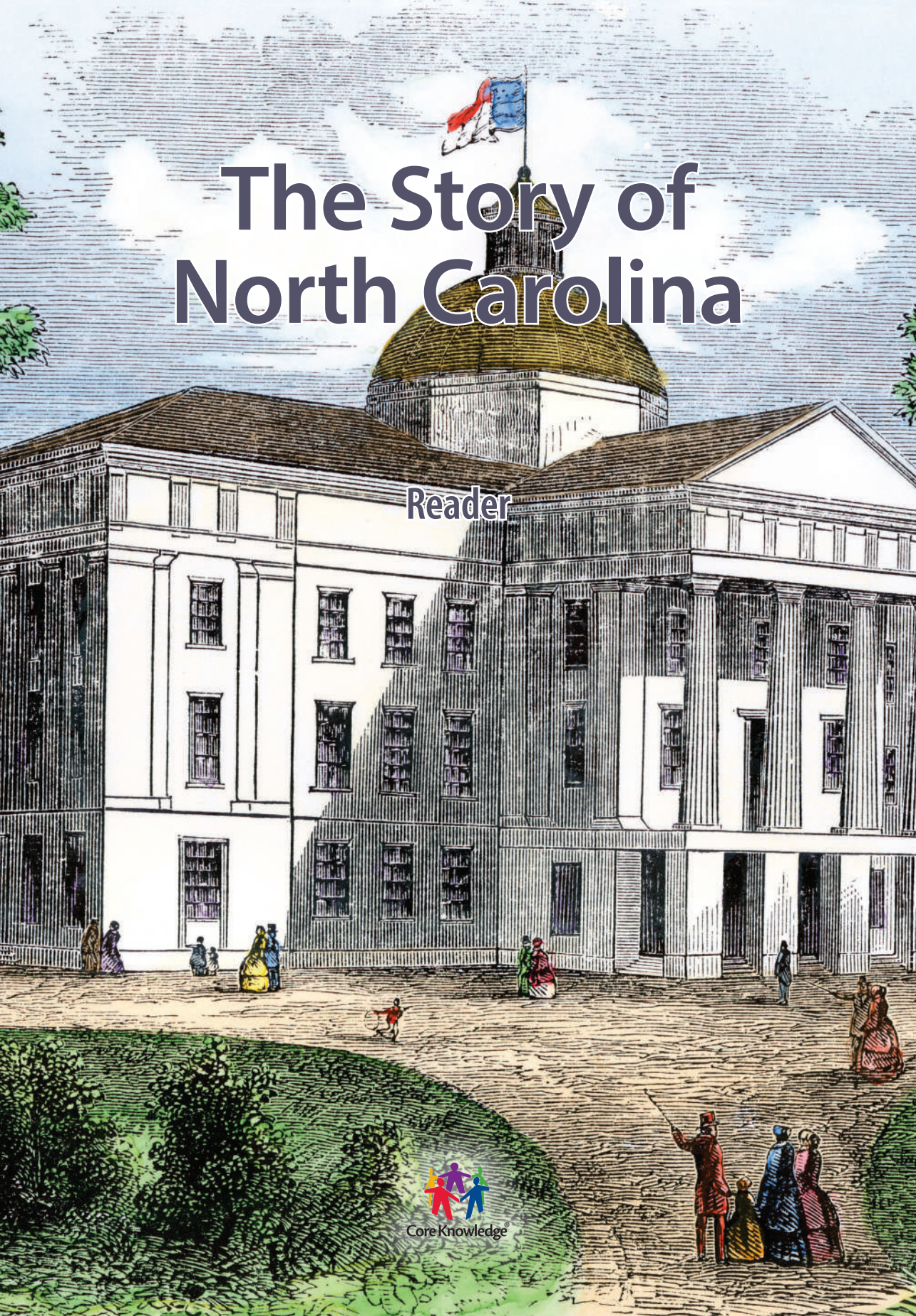
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Reader



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# The Story of North Carolina

## Table of Contents

Chapter 1	<b>A Place Called North Carolina</b> .....	2
Chapter 2	<b>Government in North Carolina</b> .....	16
Chapter 3	<b>North Carolina's First Peoples</b> .....	28
Chapter 4	<b>Colonial North Carolina</b> .....	40
Chapter 5	<b>Revolution and Early Statehood</b> .....	54
Chapter 6	<b>North Carolina and the Civil War</b> .....	72
Chapter 7	<b>North Carolina in a Changing Nation</b> .....	88
Chapter 8	<b>Years of Challenge and Conflict</b> .....	102
Chapter 9	<b>North Carolina in the Late 1900s</b> .....	120
Chapter 10	<b>North Carolina in the Twenty-First Century</b> .....	134
Glossary	.....	148



**The Story of North Carolina**  
**Reader**  
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# Chapter 1

## A Place Called North Carolina

### **A Journey Across the State**

A trip across North Carolina shows just how much the state has to offer. You could start at the Outer Banks, a beautiful chain of narrow islands along the Atlantic Ocean, where you can build sandcastles on the beach and eat seafood. Then, after you cross a bridge to the mainland and head west, the roads get busier. Some highways lead to the Research Triangle, an area known for its colleges and technology. Later on, you might see Charlotte, the biggest city in the state. It's a busy, exciting place with tall buildings that reach toward the clouds.

As you travel farther west, the roads get quieter. They pass through farmland, where you might see dairy cows and fields of sweet potatoes. The flat land begins to change into rolling hills, which eventually give way to foothills and mountains. At the end of your trip, you'll reach Great

### **Big Question**

What physical and human features define North Carolina?



The Appalachian Mountains in western North Carolina provide breathtaking views and many opportunities for outdoor activities.

Smoky Mountains National Park. Here, you can enjoy beautiful views and all kinds of outdoor activities. From the soaring mountains in the west to the sandy beaches in the east, the land of North Carolina is as **diverse** as its people. During your drive, you'll see many communities that have shaped the state, from the Lumbee and Cherokee peoples to generations of farmers and entrepreneurs.

Beaches, mountains, main streets, downtowns, barbeque, bluegrass, and everything in between: This is what North Carolina has to offer.

### Vocabulary

**diverse**, adj. having many different types or parts

## Where Is North Carolina?

North Carolina is in the southeastern United States. It borders Virginia to the north, Georgia and South Carolina to the south,

North Carolina's Location

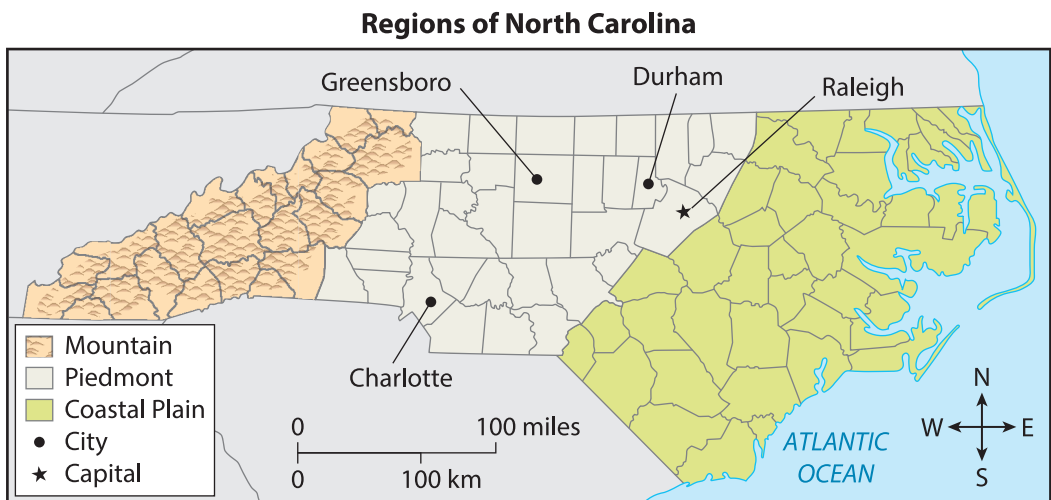


At 560 miles (901 km) wide, North Carolina is the widest state east of the Mississippi River.

and Tennessee to the west. The Atlantic Ocean serves as its eastern border.

The state can be divided into three regions: the Mountain region, the Piedmont, and the Coastal Plain. Each has different physical features and climates. The Mountain region rises in the western part of the state. It consists of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Great Smoky Mountains. Both are part of the larger Appalachian Mountains range. This long range stretches from Canada all the way to Alabama. Mount Mitchell, the tallest mountain in the eastern United States, is located in North Carolina. The Mountain region's dense forests, cool climate, and winding rivers create breathtaking views. People flock to the area for hiking, fishing, and skiing. The region is dotted with small towns tucked into valleys. The Mountain region's vast **natural resources** include forests and minerals.

**Vocabulary**  
.....  
**natural resource**,  
n. something from nature that is useful to humans



The majority of North Carolinians live in the Piedmont region.

East of the mountains is the Piedmont, which means “foot of the mountains.” The **fertile** land and mild climate of this hilly region make the Piedmont ideal for **agriculture**. The farm-friendly climate attracted many of the state’s earliest settlers. North Carolina’s largest cities, including the state capital, Raleigh, are found in the Piedmont region.



The town of Nags Head is on Bodie Island in North Carolina’s Outer Banks. Barrier islands form over time and separate the mainland from the open ocean.

The Coastal Plain is the flat land along the coast. It includes the Inner Coastal Plain, which has swamps and sandy shores. The other part, called the Outer Coastal Plain, has the famous Outer Banks. This chain of **barrier islands** is known for beautiful beaches, historic lighthouses, and tales of shipwrecks from long ago.

## North Carolina’s Unique Identity

North Carolina is a rich blend of **rural** landscapes, small towns, and large cities. In rural areas, people continue to farm, fish, and craft. Small villages are nestled in the mountains, where families have often lived in the same

### Vocabulary

**fertile**, adj. able to grow a large amount of crops

**agriculture**, n. the growing of crops and raising of livestock for food and other purposes

**barrier island**, n. a long, narrow island lying parallel to the shore that protects the mainland from storms

**rural**, adj. of or relating to the countryside

communities for generations. These are tight-knit communities where people continue to practice long-standing traditions. In contrast, the **urban** areas of Charlotte, Raleigh, and Durham offer a bustling city life. Many people move to these cities from other places, drawn to the jobs and opportunities that cities have to offer.

**Vocabulary**  
.....  
**urban**, adj. of or relating to a city

North Carolina’s cultural identity is shaped by its rich local traditions. Craftspeople continue age-old arts, such as woodworking and quilting. Places like the Museum of North Carolina Handicrafts in Waynesville help to preserve these arts by offering classes and exhibits.

North Carolina is home to many famous authors. Thomas Wolfe wrote vivid stories about growing up in the state, helping shape its identity. Festivals share local cultures, like the annual MerleFest, which is named after Merle Haggard and celebrates folk music and bluegrass from the Appalachian Mountains. The North Carolina State Fair highlights the state’s farming roots. Food traditions, like tangy North Carolina barbecue, bring people together and connect them to their past.

All across North Carolina, diverse peoples and communities come together to create a vibrant and rich society.

## **North Carolina’s People**

Long before Europeans settled in the Americas, North Carolina was home to many groups of Native Americans. Many of their

descendants still live, work, and thrive in the state. The largest tribe in North Carolina, the Lumbee tribe, is also the largest tribe east of the Mississippi River. The Lumbee settled along the Lumber River in the southeastern part of the state. More than fifty-five thousand members of the Lumbee tribe live in the state today.

The Eastern Band of Cherokee believe that the Creator brought them to their home in the Mountain region. Today, more than sixteen thousand members of the Cherokee Nation live in an area next to Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The Coharie, Haliwa-Saponi, Meherrin, Sappony, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, and Waccamaw Siouan also call North Carolina home. Each of these tribes has its own unique culture. In festivals and through storytelling, members keep their traditions alive.

Over time, many different groups of people have settled in North Carolina. Settlers from Scotland and Ireland arrived in the 1700s, looking for land and a better life. They brought their religion and culture. Their traditions, such as an emphasis on education,



In Cherokee, North Carolina, a statue of Cherokee hero Chief Sequoyah stands outside the entrance to the Museum of the Cherokee People.

are still important in the state. Around the same time, German immigrants settled in the Coastal Plain, where they introduced new farming methods. Their influence is also seen in the Lutheran churches at the center of many North Carolinian communities.

African Americans have also had a strong influence on the state's culture. They introduced new types of music, such as gospel and jazz. African Americans also influenced the soul food that the South has become famous for. African Americans also played an important role in the state's history. From North Carolina's colonial days to the present, they have helped shape the state's economy, society, and government. Today, African Americans account for more than 22 percent of the state's population.

North Carolina's Hispanic or Latino communities have grown in recent decades to more than 11 percent of the state's population. Many celebrate Catholic traditions such as Our Lady of Guadalupe festivals, Christmas posadas, and lively feast days. These and other groups continue to enrich the state with new traditions, lively music, and delicious foods.

## **Symbols of North Carolina**

Looking at a state's **symbols** can help us better understand it. North Carolina's state flower is the dogwood. Found throughout the state, the flower represents beauty, renewal, and hope. The pine is the state tree and symbolizes the state's connection to its forests. The state bird is the cardinal. These colorful, noble

### **Vocabulary**

**symbol**, n. an object or picture that stands for something else



The dogwood, North Carolina's state flower, is in full bloom. This tree is an important part of the local environment and forests.



North Carolina's state bird, the cardinal, also symbolizes the beauty of the state's abundant natural surroundings.

birds often form lifelong pairs and so symbolize loyalty. Another important symbol is the sweet potato, the state vegetable. North Carolina grows almost half of the country's sweet potatoes—more than any other state. Milk, the state beverage, honors the state's dairy **industry**. These symbols and others celebrate North Carolina's natural environment, culture, and history.

### Vocabulary

**industry**, n. a group of businesses that manufacture a product or provide a service

## North Carolina's Economy

**Scarcity** is the idea that there are not enough resources to meet everyone's wants and needs. Scarcity forces people, businesses, and governments to make choices about how to use limited resources.

### Vocabulary

**scarcity**, n. a limitation to the amount of a resource, good, or service

Scarcity affects North Carolina in many ways. For example, as cities grow, there is less space for farms. This means there is a

choice between using land for buildings or keeping it for growing food. Natural resources like timber and water are also limited. This means people must manage them carefully to ensure they last.

Because of scarcity, states trade with other areas. When a place does not have enough of something, it might **import** what it needs. For example, North Carolina imports oil and gas from other states and countries to fuel its factories and cars. The state **exports** agricultural products,

**Vocabulary**

**import**, v. to bring in goods from another country or state

**export**, v. to send goods to another country to sell

### Resources of North Carolina



= Seafood	= Freshwater fish	= Turkey	= Eggs	= Dairy
= Chicken	= Cattle	= Pork	= Peanuts	= Pickles
= Corn	= Tobacco	= Cotton	= Peaches	= Wheat
= Apples	= Tomatoes	= Potatoes	= Trees	= Sweet potatoes
= Gemstones	= Mica	= Clay	= Heavy minerals	

North Carolina's three regions are home to a diverse mix of natural resources, from seafood on the Atlantic coast to pine trees on the western border with Tennessee.

cloth and fabrics, and furniture. In 2024, the state exported over \$42 billion in goods to other countries. North Carolina products, such as aircraft parts, end up in places like China and France due to global trade. Individuals in the state can also use another scarce resource, money that they've earned, to purchase goods that they desire.

North Carolina's industries benefit from the state's natural resources. The Mountain region has large forests for timber. The Piedmont has fertile soil for crops. The state also has rich deposits of mica, feldspar, and other minerals used for everything from pottery to **high-tech** devices.

### Vocabulary

**high-tech**, adj.  
using advanced technology, such as electronics and computers

North Carolina has a long history of farming. The soil was well suited for tobacco, which became the main export during North Carolina's colonial days. In fact, tobacco was so important that it was once used for currency. Other important products in colonial times were tar and pitch. These thick, sticky, dark liquids are made using pine trees. They were used to make wooden ships waterproof. Because of the state's history as a producer of tar, North Carolina is known as the "Tar Heel State." In its early days as a state, North Carolina became a leader in making textiles and furniture. These industries are still important there today.

North Carolina also benefits from its location. Rivers provide transportation, electricity, spaces for outdoor activities, and water for crops. Ports on the Atlantic coast enable North



Raleigh is the state capital and the easternmost city in the so-called Research Triangle.

Carolina to trade with other countries. Wilmington and other ports trade with the wider world. At these ports, shipping containers bring products in from the rest of the world and send American goods out. These connections help the state's economy grow.

Today, North Carolina is a leader in new ideas and inventions, especially in the Research Triangle. This area includes the cities of Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill and is famous for its focus on technology, health, and science. Many companies have offices there, and people come from all over to work or study in this innovative region. The Research Triangle is a global hub, where businesses and researchers team up with partners across the country and around the world to create new technologies.

**Immigration** and trade create lively communities throughout the state. Charlotte is a center for banking. Cities like Asheville in the Mountain region attract artists and craftspeople.

### Vocabulary

**immigration**, n.  
the act of moving from one country to another to live

Historically, industries like tobacco, textiles, and furniture making drove North Carolina's economy. These industries developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Tobacco became a major cash crop, textile mills enabled the growth of industries, and furniture manufacturing thrived due to the state's supply of hardwood forests. While these remain important activities today, North Carolina also has kept up with changes in what people need and want. Its economy has shifted toward technology, banking, medicine, and drug manufacturing. A skilled and educated workforce has helped the state prosper. Rich in natural resources and a variety of cherished traditions, North Carolina is ready to grow and succeed in the future.



This huge chest of drawers in High Point is reportedly the world's largest. It celebrates North Carolina's furniture-making tradition.



## Chapter 2

# Government in North Carolina

**Government in Times of Need** In September 2024, Hurricane Helene passed across the mountains of North Carolina. The giant storm dumped huge amounts of rain

on the area. Rivers and streams rose quickly, flooding towns. Strong winds knocked out power lines, leaving people without electricity. Many families had to flee their homes. They passed rescue crews headed the other way to help those who were stranded. When the rain finally stopped, the extent of Hurricane Helene's damage became clear. The path of destruction spread across almost 500 miles (804 km). Homes were ruined, roads were washed out, and entire towns were cut off.

### Big Question

How do North Carolina's different levels of government work?

### Vocabulary

**governor**, n. the elected leader of a state in the United States

The government stepped in to help the communities hurt by this terrible storm. North Carolina's **governor** had declared a



Members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee, the local government, and the federal government worked together in North Carolina after Hurricane Helene. They managed debris and delivered water, food, and other needed supplies.

state of emergency before the storm hit. This meant that rescue teams and supplies were already in the western part of the state, ready to help people. After the storm passed, state troopers and emergency workers got to work. They cleared roads, delivered food, and helped families find places to stay. Governments at all levels worked together to repair roads and begin rebuilding. The response reminded people how important it is to have a government ready to help in times of trouble.

## Political Symbols of North Carolina

North Carolina's political symbols remind people of the state government's role and the state's rich history and heritage. The state capitol building in Raleigh is a symbol of **democracy**. Its design reflects

### Vocabulary

**democracy**, n. a form of government in which people choose their leaders; a country with this form of government



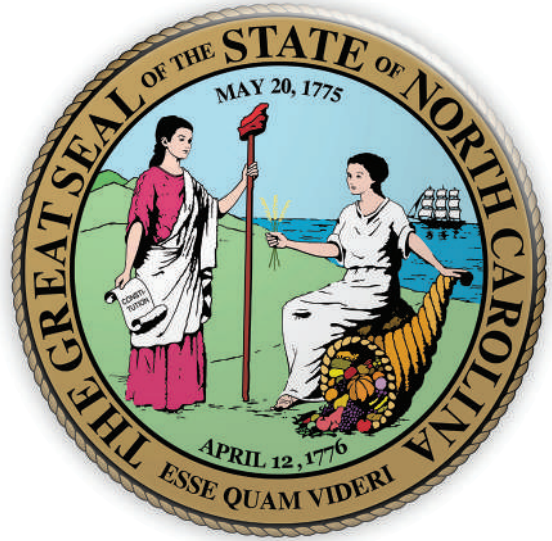
North Carolina's capitol building, built from 1833 to 1840, is the center of the state's government.

the architecture and buildings of ancient Greece, where democracy began. The **state legislature** meets here to decide what actions to take to meet the needs of the state’s people. The governor has an office in the capitol as well.

### Vocabulary

**state legislature**, n. the part of state government responsible for making laws for the state

The state seal is another important political symbol. The seal is used on official documents and at public events. North Carolina’s seal features two figures, Liberty and Plenty, who face each other. It also has the state motto, *Esse Quam Videri*, which means “to be rather than to seem.” This seal represents North Carolina’s values of freedom, prosperity, and having strong character.



The paper that Liberty holds represents the Constitution because that document protects people’s freedom.

North Carolina’s flag features red, white, and blue, mirroring the colors of the U.S. flag. Like the state seal, it includes two significant dates, both representing dates when the people of North Carolina declared independence from Great Britain. Although the government of North Carolina has changed tremendously since those declarations, it remains committed to the values of liberty and self-rule that defined the American Revolution.



State symbols, like the state flag, foster pride and unity.

## Vocabulary

**federal**, adj. relating to a system of government in which the national government shares power with other levels of government, such as state governments; it can also refer to the national government of the United States

## Roles and Responsibilities of Government

The United States has a **federal** system of government. Federalism is a system that balances power between a central, or national, government and smaller regional governments, like states. North Carolina is one of the fifty states of the United States.

The founders of the United States created a federal system to give the national government enough power to address issues affecting the country. But they also worried about giving the national government too much power. They wanted to keep as much power as close to the people as possible. Federalism was the answer. The U.S. Constitution outlines how the national and state governments are to share power.

Under our federal system, the national government handles issues that affect the entire country. This includes defense, trade, and foreign affairs. Only the national government can create money, too. This helps keep the economy stable and ensures that money is the same

everywhere in the country. States, meanwhile, have authority over education, elections, and marriage and business licenses. Some state and federal powers overlap. For example, both federal and state governments can collect taxes and build roads.

States set up local governments to take care of issues that affect towns, cities, and neighborhoods directly. Local governments determine zoning—or where you can build a home or business. Local police and fire departments protect communities and respond to emergencies. Local governments also maintain local roads and local parks. They make sure that trash is collected and people have clean water and electricity.

Each state has unique needs and priorities. Federalism allows states to govern themselves in ways that make sense for their people. For example, North Carolina may focus on hurricane preparedness while Montana might prioritize wildfire management.

The federal, state, and local governments often work together. After a disaster like Hurricane Helene, the federal government typically provides funding, but the state government usually oversees emergency operations. Local governments ensure immediate help for their residents. Working together allows governments to respond to the different needs of people and communities.

North Carolina also has eight tribal governments. These governments make laws for people living on tribal lands. Tribal lands are areas that the U.S. government has reserved for Native American tribes. Most of the people who live on tribal lands are members of the tribe, but the lands are also home to other people, such as teachers or employees of businesses that operate on tribal land.

## Government Roles and Responsibilities

Federal Government	State Government	Local Government
Handles issues for the whole nation and relations with other countries	Focuses on issues that affect North Carolina	Provides local services and handles issues close to home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defends the country from outside threats</li> <li>• Creates money</li> <li>• Manages interstate highways</li> <li>• Provides disaster relief funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manages public education</li> <li>• Builds and maintains state highways</li> <li>• Maintains state parks</li> <li>• Oversees public health</li> <li>• Oversees elections</li> <li>• Makes rules for forming local governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides public safety, including police and fire</li> <li>• Provides water, trash, and recycling services</li> <li>• Maintains local roads and parks</li> <li>• Makes laws about local zoning and housing</li> </ul>

All three levels of government have different roles and responsibilities that are sometimes shared and sometimes not.

The federal government usually treats tribal governments as **sovereign**. This means that they make their own laws and have their own court systems. However, this sovereignty is limited: Federal laws apply to tribal governments and peoples, and, recently, the Supreme Court gave states power to enforce state laws within tribal areas.

### Vocabulary

**sovereign**, adj.  
having the right to govern oneself

## Rights and Responsibilities in the North Carolina Constitution

Just like the U.S. Constitution outlines our federal government, so too each state has its own constitution. North Carolina adopted its first state constitution on December 18, 1776, during the American Revolution. Since then, North Carolina has adopted two other versions. The current constitution is from 1971. Since it was adopted, the people of the state have amended, or changed, it more than forty times.

One purpose of the state constitution is to outline the rights of citizens. For example, both the U.S. Constitution and North Carolina's constitution guarantee the right of free speech. This means people can express their ideas freely. North Carolinians also have the right to education. The state guarantees that children can attend public school. The people also have the right to be treated equally by the law.

Along with rights come responsibilities. Responsibilities are things that citizens must or should do to help their communities run smoothly. Some responsibilities, such as paying taxes, are required by law. A citizen also must serve on a **jury** if called. Other responsibilities, such as voting in elections, are not required but are still essential parts of good citizenship. A responsible citizen also stays informed about local, state, and national issues and speaks up when something is unjust. By meeting their responsibilities, everyone helps make their communities better places to live.

### Vocabulary

**jury**, n. a group of people who listen to information presented during a trial in a court and make decisions about whether someone is guilty or innocent

## Civic Participation and Influence

Participating in government and joining efforts to improve the community are important in a democracy. One way that citizens participate is by voting in elections. The state holds elections so that citizens can choose who will lead them at the national, state, and local levels. Citizens might also vote for or against certain new policies.

People can make their voices heard by attending public meetings and writing letters to elected officials. They can choose to take part in a protest activity like a march. The rights to speak and assemble in these ways are protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. They are also protected by the state constitution.

Kids can show civic responsibility too! Collecting donations for a food bank, helping clean up a park, and writing letters to community leaders are just a few ways to do so. It is also important to speak up when you see a problem. These helpful actions, such as being an upstander, can make your school, community, and state better places to live.



**These children are taking part in a project to clean up a local park by removing litter.**

## Government and the Economy

No town or state has enough resources to meet everyone's needs and wants. The state collects taxes, but the amount is limited. This raises tough choices: Should more money go toward schools, road repair, or protecting natural resources? Answering such questions requires a **budget**.

### Vocabulary

**budget**, n. a plan for how money will be spent

Every year, the governor proposes a budget for the state. The state legislature reviews the budget and suggests changes. Many people are involved. The budget may be changed several times before the state legislature approves it. Once the budget is approved, the state can assign money toward the projects that have been selected.

Nearly all state and local governments are required to balance their budgets. This means that they cannot spend more than they take in from taxes and other sources.

People can play important roles in the budget process. They can attend public meetings or budget hearings. They can also contact representatives to let them know their budget priorities. Citizens often vote for candidates whom they think have the best plans for spending taxpayer money. By getting involved, people help shape how their tax money is spent.

North Carolina's state government also tries to grow the state's economy. It may encourage companies to move to the state by offering tax breaks. New businesses bring jobs and boost local economies.

The federal government plays a role in North Carolina's economy too. For example, it gives farmers money to grow certain crops. In North Carolina, those crops include corn and soybeans. The federal government can also protect North Carolina industries with tariffs. A tariff is a tax on imported goods. The tax is placed on companies, but companies often add the cost of the tariff to their prices. That means consumers end up paying the tariffs. A tariff usually makes imported goods cost more than goods made in the United States. It is meant to encourage people to buy American-made goods, such as the furniture made in North Carolina.

## Financial Literacy and Community Responsibility

Being smart with money is an important part of being a responsible member of the community. Knowing how to make good decisions when earning, saving, and spending money is called **financial literacy**.

When people make good financial decisions, they can take care of their needs and plan for the future. For example, they save money so they can use it in case of an emergency. They also make a budget and follow it.

Our financial decisions affect people around us. When we shop, stores make money and can hire more workers. When people save their money in banks, banks can lend some of it to others. For example, a bank might loan money to someone starting a

### Vocabulary

**financial literacy**,  
n. the ability to understand how money is used and handled in order to make informed decisions about spending and saving

business or buying a house, which helps the whole community. People can also strengthen their communities by donating their time or money to organizations that help people in need.

However, communities suffer when many people face money difficulties. People may need the government to provide basic needs like food and housing. If people have less money to spend, businesses earn less. They also pay less in taxes. This means that the government has less money to spend on meeting people's needs. As a result, the whole community struggles.



Governments use tax money to help fund programs like food stamps. These programs help people meet their basic needs.

# Chapter 3

## North Carolina's First Peoples

**The First Peoples** Long before highways crisscrossed the land and towering skyscrapers reached up toward the sky, North Carolina was a vast natural landscape. The

first people to call this land home arrived thousands of years ago. They hunted wild animals that roamed the forests. They fished in crystal-clear rivers and coastal waters. They gathered nuts and berries from the lush woodlands. By studying the tools and other **artifacts** these early Native Americans left behind, **archaeologists** have gained fascinating insights into their rich and diverse ways of life.

### Big Question

Who were North Carolina's first peoples, and how did they live?

**artifact**, n. an object used during a past period of history

**archaeologist**, n. an expert in the study of ancient people and the objects from their time period that remain



Majestic elk roamed the dense forests of what is now North Carolina. Native Americans hunted them for food and to make tools and clothing.

## The Paleoindian Peoples

The time when the first people lived in the Americas is called the Paleoindian period. There are several different ideas about how these first people arrived in the Americas. Some experts think that people walked across a land bridge that connected Asia and North America during the last Ice Age. Others believe people traveled from Asia down the coast of North America in boats. But no one knows for sure what happened because there is no written history from that time. We rely on educated guesses based on artifacts. What we think we know often changes as scientists, archaeologists, and historians discover new things or look at clues in new ways. Every artifact we find is like a piece of a puzzle, helping us to better understand the past. One of the exciting things about early history is that there is always more to learn and uncover.

The Paleoindians lived in what is now North Carolina between 10,000 and 8000 BCE. They were **nomadic**, moving from place to place to hunt, fish, and gather plants and berries. They relied on the natural resources around them for everything they needed. As animals moved, so did the people. People also moved seasonally to collect plants and berries when they were ripe.

### Vocabulary

**nomadic**, adj.  
moving around often in search of food; not settled in one place



This arrowhead is one of many that have been discovered in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

How do we know that they were hunters? Archeologists have discovered spear points made from chipped stone, sharp enough to pierce tough animal hides, that the Paleoindians used to hunt. They have also found scrapers, drills, knives, and other stone tools that people used to smooth animal hides and to make clothing.

The climate back then was cooler and wetter than today. Different kinds of plants and animals live in different kinds of climates.

Many animals that roamed the area, such as bison, moose, and caribou, no longer live in the Southeast.

Some, such as the giant mastodon, are now **extinct**. These animals were too big for one person to hunt alone. Paleoindian

**Vocabulary**  
.....  
**extinct**, adj. having died out completely

hunters used teamwork to bring them down. When a hunt succeeded, they divided the meat, hides, and bones among the group. The Paleoindians relied on these large animals for food, clothing, and shelter. They also hunted a variety of smaller animals and gathered plants, berries, and nuts from the wilderness.

The Catawba have lived in North Carolina since the Paleoindian period. They built villages near rivers, where they farmed, hunted, and made beautiful pottery. The Catawba were known as strong warriors. Today, they continue to celebrate their culture and history in North and South Carolina.

## The Archaic Period

Archaic Indians descended from the Paleoindians. These people lived in North Carolina from about 8000 to 1000 BCE. The world

had become warmer, and the Archaic peoples **adapted**. Large animals like mastodons disappeared. Hunters shifted to smaller animals such as deer and rabbits.

### Vocabulary

**adapt**, v. to change to fit a new situation

The Archaic peoples also expanded their diets to include more plants, berries, seeds, and nuts.

Like the Paleoindians, the hunter-gatherers of the Archaic period didn't stay in one place. Archaic people lived in camps. These served as temporary homes as people moved from place to place in search of food. They were often located near rivers, forests, or other areas rich in resources. These camps were not just shelters—they were places where people rested, worked, and planned their next moves as they followed the rhythms of the seasons and the availability of food.

Archaic **foragers** returned to areas where they knew many plants grew, which were often near rivers. They traveled on foot to gather food and to trade with groups living in other areas. Some Archaic

### Vocabulary

**forager**, n. a person who finds food by collecting it from wild plants

people may also have dug out the trunks of large trees to make canoes. This made it possible for them to travel and move goods by water.

The stone, wood, basketry, and other artifacts that Archaic people left behind tell the story of how they adapted to their environments. For example, archaeologists believe that Archaic people built tents using wooden poles covered with animal hides. These tents were lightweight and easy to take down and could

be set up quickly. They provided protection from harsh weather, keeping people warm and dry during their travels.

Over time, Archaic Indians began to create new tools. They used new grinding tools to crush nuts gathered from forests. They used stone to make axes, awls, and fishhooks. One game-changing tool was the atlatl. This was a carved wooden tool with a hook or groove at one end to hold the base of a spear. It worked like an extension of the arm, enabling hunters to throw spears farther and more accurately. The atlatl made it easier to hunt smaller, faster animals. Hunters could also use it to take down large animals from a safer distance.



This man is using an atlatl to help him throw a spear.

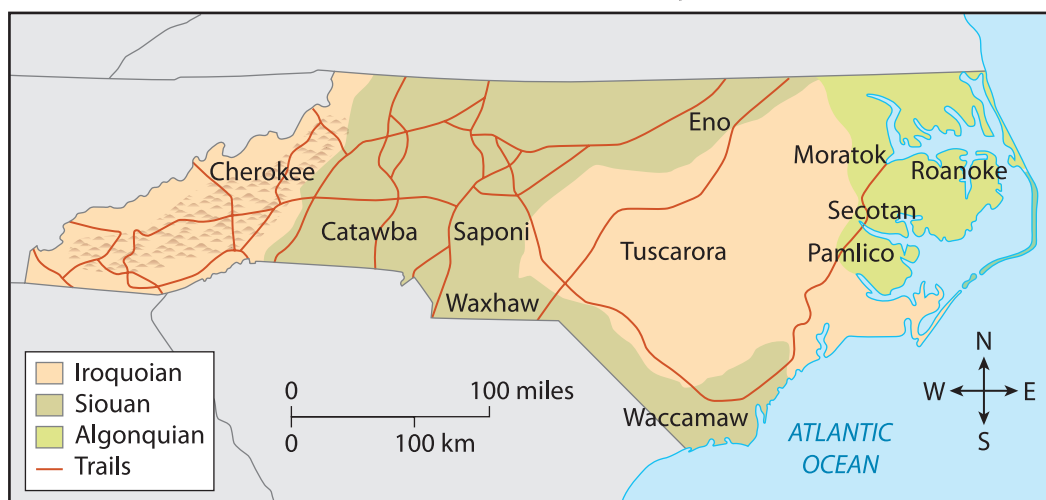
Artifacts from later Archaic sites show continued creativity and resourcefulness. Later peoples carved sturdy bowls from soapstone, a soft and easily shaped rock. These bowls were used for cooking, carrying water, and storing food. Around the same time, Archaic people began crafting simple pottery, which allowed them to cook and store food more efficiently. They also wove baskets, both beautiful and practical, for gathering and carrying goods. Some evidence suggests that they also started planting small gardens, using seeds from wild plants they had previously collected. This gradual shift toward growing food, rather than relying on hunting and gathering, marked a significant change.

## **Woodland Indians**

The Woodland period in North Carolina began around 1000 BCE and lasted until 1000 CE. During this time, people began to grow gardens to add to the food they hunted and gathered. Remains of Woodland settlements have been found throughout North Carolina. Many are near rivers and streams. There, soil was good for growing plants, and people had access to a steady supply of water. Gardens helped families grow food and spend less time searching for wild plants. Archaeologists have even found large food storage areas. These tell us that gardens were used to provide a steady source of food. The remains of permanent or semipermanent homes also indicate that people began to stay in one place for several months a year.

Woodland peoples settled in different areas. Each group used the natural resources they found around them. Over time, this led

## Native Americans of North Carolina, about 1500



By the 1500s, North Carolina was home to dozens of groups of Native Americans, each with its own culture and traditions.

groups to develop different cultures and traditions. For example, groups in the Coastal Plain and Mountain regions built square or rectangular homes while those in the Piedmont built round homes. Most homes were made of bark. Some groups, such as the Cherokee, built earthen winter homes without windows.

Yet the Woodland Indians of North Carolina shared many traits. In general, men and women worked. Villages were led by chiefs, who were usually chosen based on their wisdom, experience, and skill. Most villages had a public house where people could meet to make important decisions as a group.

These peoples also placed great importance on living in harmony, or agreement, with nature. They respected the land. They worshipped spirits of nature and believed that some animals had special powers. Their respect for nature left a lasting impact on their cultures.

People continued to develop new tools, including stone hoes for gardening. One of the most important advancements was the bow and arrow, which was a major improvement over the older spear and atlatl. Bows were lighter and easier to carry and could be used from a greater distance, making them more effective for hunting and warfare.

Over time, farming became more important. Many groups in North Carolina grew corn, beans, and squash, which they called the "Three Sisters." People cooperated to plant and harvest crops. Supported by farming, villages grew in size. Many villages had storage areas for food and protective walls called stockades.

As people settled, they had more time to gather together as a community. Storytelling rose in importance. Elders used stories to tell younger generations about the history and customs of their people. These stories often involved myths, legends, and lessons about nature, animals, and gods. Other activities like music and dancing also developed. Drums, rattles, and flutes were crafted from wood, animal bones, and hides. Dances were used to honor the spirits and celebrate successful hunts, harvests, and weddings.

Archaeological sites provide important clues about life in Woodland communities. The Biltmore Mound in Asheville, for example, was built by ancestors of the Cherokee. It includes a platform mound used to support large public structures. Pottery, seashells, and other artifacts have been found at the site. This suggests that many people went there for feasts or festivals.

The mound was rebuilt again and again. Clearly, it was important to its people.

Woodland groups also traded with one another. Coastal peoples traded colorful shells and salt for stone and other crafting materials with Native groups in the Piedmont. Mountain people traded skins and furs of bears and bison. Some groups also traded pottery or other things made by skilled artisans.

During this time, Native Americans of North Carolina also traded with other groups living in the East. Native trails crisscrossed the state and made travel easier. One major trail came down from the area near what is now Petersburg,



The Native Americans of North Carolina developed their own unique cultures, as seen in this painting of an Algonquian village on the Pamlico River.

Virginia, into North Carolina and then went south and west toward the Gulf of Mexico.

## **Mississippian Culture**

Around 900 to 1000 CE, the Woodland Indians came into contact with Native Americans from the Mississippian culture. The Mississippians were powerful groups whose influence stretched from the Midwest to the Southeast. They introduced new ideas and technologies to the Southeast Woodland Indians. Evidence of Mississippian influence can be seen in Cherokee villages in mountainous areas of North Carolina. Clay pots with unique designs show creativity and growing skills. They also show that groups in North Carolina had contact with people in places like Ohio and Tennessee.

Some Mississippian groups moved into what is now North Carolina. These groups had much in common with Woodland Indians, but there were important differences. The Mississippian culture was more focused on farming. Their systems of government had stronger leaders and more organized rules and ceremonies. The Mississippians even developed sites for their ceremonies. At the center of each site was often a large pyramid-shaped mound topped by a temple or meeting house. Town Creek Indian Mound in Montgomery County is an example. The Woodland tribes adopted some of these practices.

In 1524, an Italian explorer named Giovanni da Verrazzano reached the Cape Fear region and made contact with Indigenous peoples there. At that time, there were more than one hundred thousand

Native Americans living in what is now North Carolina. As waves of European settlers followed, the lives of the Cherokee, Catawba, and other Native American groups in North Carolina were changed forever.



Mississippian peoples lived across what is now the Midwest and southeastern United States. They are best known for the mounds that they built, such as this one near Greenville, Mississippi.

# Chapter 4

## Colonial North Carolina

**The Lost Colony** In 1587, about 115 English settlers arrived on Roanoke Island, off the coast of what is now North Carolina.

They worked hard to build a new home, but they found that life was difficult. As goods ran low, John White, the colony's leader, sailed back to England to gather supplies. He left behind the rest of the colonists, including his family. White's granddaughter, Virginia Dare, was a newborn—the first English child born in an American English colony.

It took time for White to travel back and forth across the Atlantic. When White finally returned in 1590, the colony was gone. No one knew where the settlers were. The only clue that remained was the word "CROATOAN" carved into a wooden post.

Some historians believe that the colonists wrote the message to indicate that they had gone to live with the Croatoans, a Native American tribe. Others think it was a plea for help because they were under attack. Still

### Big Question

How did Carolina grow and change as a colony?



Why the settlers on Roanoke Island carved the word "CROATOAN" into the bark of a tree remains an unsolved mystery.

others think that the colonists tried to sail back to England and were lost at sea. No one knows for sure. To this day, the fate of the lost colony remains one of the greatest mysteries in American history.

## Founding Carolina

In 1607, twenty years after the founding of Roanoke, an English expedition sailed west across the Atlantic Ocean again. This time the colonists established the first permanent English settlement in North America at Jamestown, Virginia. Over the next several decades, more ships brought more settlers. As Virginia's settlements grew larger, settlers began moving south, looking for new opportunities and land. In 1663, King Charles II of England granted land to eight **proprietors**, officially establishing the Carolina colony.

The next year, the proprietors established a county in the northernmost part of Carolina. Settlers from Virginia had begun living in this region along the shore. The proprietors named it Albemarle after one of their own, the Duke of Albemarle.

Life in Albemarle was difficult. Its location was remote, and travel was challenging. Although the county was located along the shore, the **sound** was too shallow for ships.

Government leaders passed new laws to attract settlers. For example, they made it easier for people to own land and did not collect taxes from new residents. The efforts succeeded. By 1700, Albemarle was a growing community with several thousand residents.

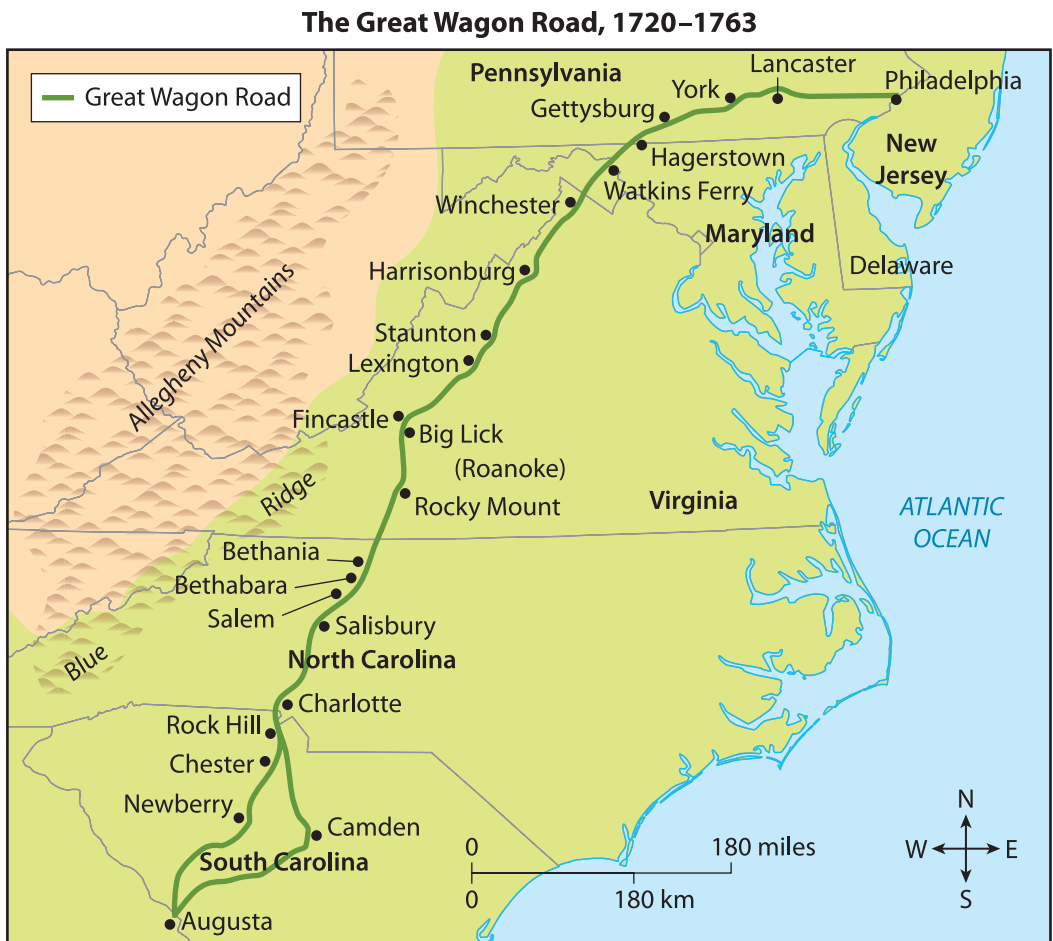
### Vocabulary

**proprietor**, n. a person who owns or is in charge of something, such as land or a business

**sound**, n. a large, shallow body of water

Over time, North Carolina attracted more settlers from Europe and from other British colonies. That flow of newcomers increased beginning in the 1730s. About ten thousand people came from Scotland, hoping to escape poverty. Many were drawn by the promise of farming fertile lands. That opportunity also brought Scotch-Irish settlers from northern colonies, where inexpensive land was becoming more difficult to find.

Land was not the only attraction. In Britain and its colonies, there were often strict religious laws. In places where the Church of



Tens of thousands of people seeking cheap land moved south from Pennsylvania and Virginia into North Carolina following a route called the Great Wagon Road.

England was recognized as the official church, people were often punished for worshipping differently. Quakers were among the religious groups that fled to Carolina to escape **persecution**.

### Vocabulary

**persecution**, n. cruel and unfair treatment of a group of people

They wanted to set up communities where they could worship freely. German Lutherans and Moravians also migrated from Pennsylvania for both economic and religious reasons. Many of these settlers traveled south along the Great Wagon Road, a major route that connected Pennsylvania to the remote Carolina backcountry. The arrival of these religious groups contributed to a growing and diverse population.

When settlers arrived, they often built their homes on lands where Native Americans already lived. Both groups believed the lands belonged to them, which led to conflict. One of the most violent examples was the Tuscarora War, which started in 1711 and lasted for several years. The Tuscarora people were originally from the Great Lakes region. They had relocated to what is now North Carolina and Virginia before the arrival of Europeans. The battles were fierce, and both sides suffered heavy losses. The fighting in what is now North Carolina ended by 1715. Many Tuscarora people were captured, killed, or forced to leave to settle elsewhere.

### Vocabulary

**immunity**, n. the body's ability to remain free of illness even after being exposed to the cause of the illness

Contact with colonists created other problems as well. Europeans carried diseases like smallpox and measles. These diseases had existed in Europe for thousands of years, and people had built up **immunity** to

them over time. However, these diseases were new to the Americas. Native Americans had never been exposed to them. They did not have the immunity that Europeans did. As a result, the diseases spread quickly and were extremely deadly. In 1738, for example, smallpox wiped out almost half of the Cherokee population. Some estimates say that up to 90% of some tribal groups died from these diseases. The loss of so many people so quickly greatly weakened Native American populations and made it harder for them to fight to stay on their lands.

## Colonial Growth

The Carolina colony kept growing as more settlers arrived, drawn by the area's rich natural resources. There was fertile land for farming and vast forests for lumber. Waterways enabled trade and transportation for people and goods around the lowland plains in the east. Tobacco, which grew well in Carolina's soil, was highly valued in Europe. This helped Carolina's economy thrive.

To grow enough tobacco to meet demand, settlers forced enslaved people to work on farms and **plantations**. Africans were forcibly taken from their homes and brought across the Atlantic Ocean by slave traders in terrible and inhumane conditions. To settlers, these enslaved humans were property. Once in the Americas, the enslaved Africans were forced to work long hours in harsh conditions. They were not free to live and work as they wished.

### Vocabulary

**plantation**, n. a large farm where cash crops are grown on behalf of the person who owns the land

The first enslaved Africans arrived in Carolina in the 1660s. By the late eighteenth century, more than 100,000 enslaved people of African descent lived in North Carolina—about one-fourth of its population.

The economy of the Coastal Plain relied heavily on agriculture. Here, the hard work of enslaved Africans made large farms possible and helped Carolina’s economy grow. Most worked in fields, but some did housework. A few were forced to learn skills like blacksmithing or carpentry.

Enslaved Africans provided not only labor but also important knowledge. Many had been skilled farmers in their home countries. They knew how to grow crops like rice and indigo, which became major sources of wealth for the colony. These crops grew particularly well in the southern part of the colony.

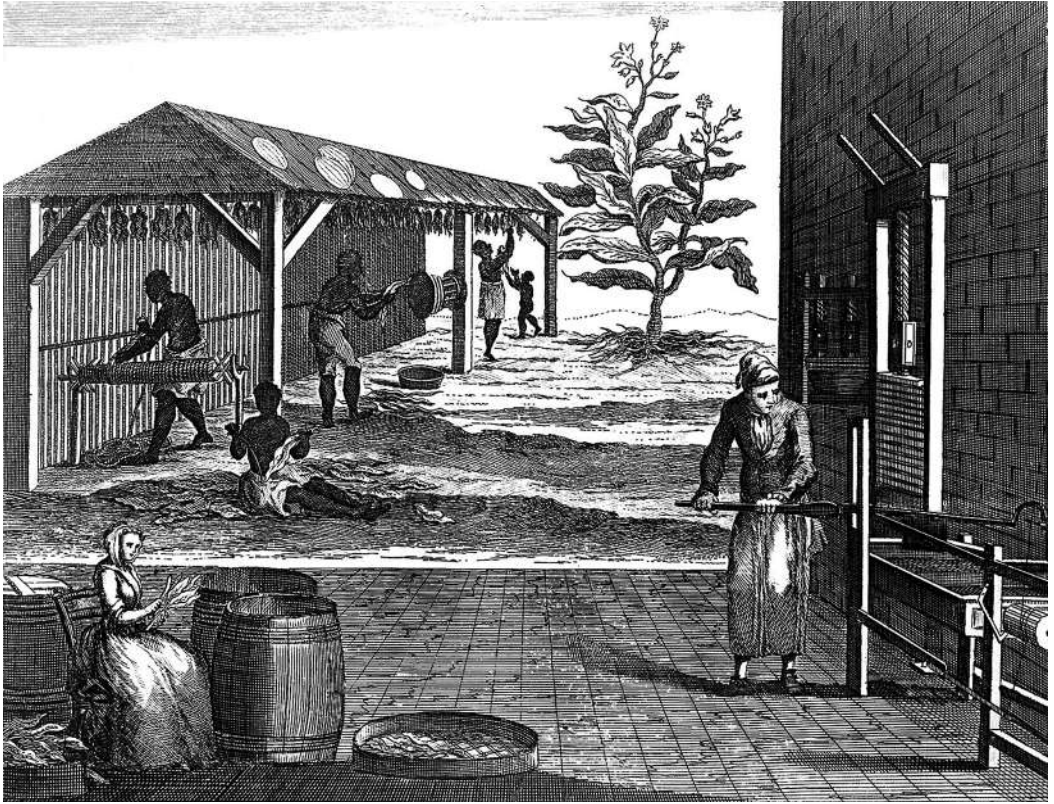
In northern Carolina, enslaved workers often toiled on tobacco plantations. Other important crops included corn, vegetables, and grain. Farmers also raised hogs and cattle.

Not all farmers relied on enslaved labor. The Piedmont region had mostly small family farms where settlers worked the land themselves. Here, large-scale farming was made difficult by a hilly landscape and thinner soil. Farming was even more challenging in western Carolina. Settlers in the Mountain region relied mostly on **subsistence** farming, hunting, and trade.

Settlers also made use of the forests for lumber, tar, turpentine, and other products. Carolina’s economy was boosted by the sale of these products to Britain.

#### Vocabulary

**subsistence**, n. just enough food to keep a person alive



This engraving from 1750 shows enslaved workers sorting tobacco and hanging it in a shed to dry.

## Carolina Splits in Two

The area of the original Carolina land grant was massive. This made it difficult to govern. Its varied geography also led to stark differences in how people lived, depending on where they lived. For example, the warmer and wetter climate of the southern area was suitable for growing rice. This crop did not grow well in the northern part of the colony, however.

Over time, settlers in the northern and southern parts of the colony developed different ways of life. The northern region had fewer settlers and a less developed economy. The southern region, particularly around Charleston Harbor, was more populated.

The economy of the southern region also became more and more dependent on large, wealthy plantations that profited from the use of enslaved workers.

By 1712, the differences between the two regions had grown too large to manage effectively. As a result, the colony was officially divided into North Carolina and South Carolina, each with its own

**The Carolina Colonies, 1663–1787**



The original Carolina colonial land grant was much larger than the borders of present-day North Carolina, encompassing what is now Georgia, as well as North and South Carolina.

governor and colonial government. These were two of the original thirteen American colonies.

After the split, most people in North Carolina kept living and working as farmers or enslaved workers. By the 1760s, the colony's economy was closely linked to farming, and wealthy plantation owners were making money from the labor of enslaved people. Many of these wealthy people used their money to buy more land. But even though some North Carolinians were becoming rich, the colony was still one of the poorest in North America. People without land often had a hard time, and the differences between the rich and the poor kept getting bigger. In other words, the rich were very rich, and the poor were very poor.

## **Cultures Mix and Blend**

The interaction of cultures during the colonial period led to an exchange of ideas. From the beginning of Carolina, Native Americans shared their knowledge of the land, farming methods, and how to use native plants in the region for medicine. In return, European settlers introduced new tools, animals such as horses, and their own farming methods. These exchanges helped both groups adapt to changes to come.

The colonists also learned from one another. The settlers of North Carolina were not all from the same area. Settlers from different parts of Europe mixed together, and as a result, their religions, traditions, and customs blended. For example, Anglican settlers, who made up the majority of the population, lived alongside Quakers, Moravians, and Presbyterians. Over time, these groups

influenced one another's worship practices. Churches played an important role in North Carolina's communities. The Church of England (or Anglican Church) was the official church in the colonies. It played a role in colonial government and social life but did not control how others worshipped.



St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Bath was built in 1734 and is the oldest church building in the state.

Enslaved Africans also held on to their traditions. African music, dance, language, and art began to influence the culture of the colony. As various cultures blended, new foods, music, dances, and customs developed. In North Carolina today, these traditions can be heard in the sounds of gospel and blues and experienced through traditional dance forms like the ring shout.

The Indigenous people of North Carolina influenced the colony as well. While advancing European settlement meant the loss of Native lands and occasional conflict, settlers and Native Americans also experienced peace and cooperation. The groups traded with each other. Native Americans exchanged deerskins for metal pots, knives, and similar goods. Settlers traveled along trails long used by Indigenous peoples—and began to trade and travel outside of North Carolina. The British government named agents to work with Native American peoples and maintain good relations with them.

Some Native Americans adopted European ways. They built schools and ran businesses. They rode horses and engaged in European-style trade. Some, like the Cherokee, obtained and worked enslaved Africans. Native American societies had their own views on wealth and material goods, so Africans enslaved by them were often treated differently than those enslaved on large, American plantations. In many cases, they were not subjected to the harsh conditions of plantations and sometimes even became members of Native communities over time. Nevertheless, those enslaved by Native Americans were not free.

Women in colonial North Carolina mainly took care of their homes and families. They managed household tasks like cooking, cleaning, and childcare. As the colony grew and small settlements gave way to thriving towns and wealthy plantations, some women began to help their husbands with farming and trading. Women had little political power. They could not vote or hold public office. Instead, women exerted their influence through their relationships with others in the community. By talking with others, they shared their ideas. Many became involved in forming local groups and helping neighbors in need.

In contrast, the roles of enslaved Africans and their **descendants** changed little over time. Few enslaved people in the Carolinas obtained freedom.

### Vocabulary

**descendant**, n.  
someone who is related to a person or group of people who lived in the past

## Reforms and Resistance

North Carolina's religious practices changed over time, too. Many of these changes came from a **revival** movement called the Great Awakening.

### Vocabulary

**revival**, n. a movement marked by renewed religious interest

The Great Awakening changed the way many people viewed religion. The movement spread through the colonies in the 1730s. The leaders of the Great Awakening said that people did not have to rely on church leaders to connect to God. They taught that anyone could have a personal relationship with God. The movement energized existing groups like the Baptists and helped new ones, such as the Methodists, grow. Church attendance increased, and religion became a more active and personal part of daily life for many people.

The revival movement brought other changes. It challenged some of the strict rules of society at the time. It taught that all people were equal in the eyes of God. It encouraged people of different backgrounds, including enslaved Africans, to take part in religious services. Many people began to question their leaders. In this way, the Great Awakening set the stage for future social movements, including **abolitionism**, even though some Great Awakening leaders owned enslaved people or supported slavery.

### Vocabulary

**abolitionism**, n. the movement to end slavery in the 1700s and 1800s

The Great Awakening also challenged ideas about the rich and poor. Before this, most churches reflected inequalities among

people. Wealthy people sat at the front of the church, and poor people sat in the back. Ministers spoke, and people listened. The Great Awakening meetings were different. The rich and poor mingled. Ordinary people were encouraged to share their ideas.

The Great Awakening also led people to think more about fairness and justice. Many colonists began to question the power of the British government and local leaders. Some argued that British authorities were not treating colonists fairly. These views became more widespread in the 1760s and 1770s.



Traveling ministers like George Whitefield, shown here, moved across the British colonies of North America to preach and spread new religious ideas during the Great Awakening.



## Chapter 5

# Revolution and Early Statehood

**Seeds of Anger** In the mid-eighteenth century, most white North Carolinians were farmers. Most farms were small family farms, especially in the less fertile western parts of the colony. Many farmers struggled to feed their families. They borrowed money to pay for supplies and also had to pay the high taxes demanded by the British colonial government. The taxes were decided by the British Parliament in England, so the colonists did not have any say over what they should be. To make matters worse, some tax collectors were not honest and demanded more money than farmers owed. Many farmers, unable to pay debts, lost their lands. Frustrated and angry, they began to organize. These upset farmers called themselves the Regulators because they sought to regulate, or control, the government.

### Big Question

How did North Carolina develop as a state?



Governor William Tryon, backed by British troops, faces a group of upset Regulators.

The situation grew worse when William Tryon, the governor appointed by King George III in 1765, raised taxes so he could build a grand new home and capitol building in New Bern, near the coast. This made the farmers furious. Desperate to be heard, they protested by breaking up court sessions and challenging government officials. Governor Tryon refused to back down. Instead, he called on the **militia** to stop the movement.

### Vocabulary

**militia**, n. a group of armed citizens prepared for military service at any time

On May 16, 1771, Tryon ordered the militia to break up the Regulators camped in the hills west of Hillsborough, a several-days ride from New Bern at that time. The Regulators refused to go home, and a battle followed. They were no match for Tryon's troops, who were better armed and more organized. They were defeated in two hours at the Battle of Alamance. The British won the so-called Regulator War, but the seeds of resistance had been planted among North Carolinians.

## Revolution Approaches

The Regulators were not the only ones upset with British rule. North Carolina was one of the original thirteen colonies, and protests broke out in many other colonies as well. British laws had placed heavy taxes on paper, tea, and other things that colonists used daily. The colonists disliked these taxes, but not just because they were costly. They felt the tax laws were unfair because no one in Parliament, the British legislature, represented them. This meant that the colonists had no say in how they were taxed or governed. A common phrase was "No taxation without representation!"

Some members of Parliament did vote against taxing the colonies, but they were a small group. People in North Carolina and in other colonies organized **boycotts** of British goods. Women in Edenton, a port in northeastern North Carolina, played a major role in this effort. Their boycott of British tea and cloth is one of the earliest recorded political actions by colonial women.

The British government responded to the growing protests with harsh new laws. The British thought that the colonists were not fulfilling their duties as subjects of the British Empire. The new laws shocked colonists and fueled demands for change. North Carolinians sent **delegates** to a meeting called the Continental Congress, where representatives from nearly all the colonies planned what to do next. Some colonists began to believe that the only way to solve the problem was to become independent from Britain. These colonists came to be called Patriots.

### Vocabulary

**boycott**, n. a form of organized protest in which people refuse to buy goods or have anything to do with a particular group or country

**delegate**, n. a representative

Due in part to the vast distance of the Atlantic Ocean, many colonists began to see themselves as separate from the British. While they had once been proud British subjects, they increasingly saw themselves as a distinct people: Americans. Over time, tensions grew, and the idea of remaining under British rule became unacceptable to many. The colonists might not have known it at the moment, but the American Revolution had begun. Small colonies in North America were now rebelling against the most powerful empire in the world!

However, not everyone was a Patriot or agreed with the revolution. Many North Carolinians—called Loyalists—sided with Britain because they remained loyal to the king. They believed that breaking with Britain would hurt the economy. They saw themselves as British subjects who just happened to live in America. They preferred peace to war with Britain. Loyalists thought that Patriot complaints about taxes and the king were exaggerated. They thought that Britain had the right to charge taxes, especially because Britain had previously spent a lot of money defending the colonies. To them, rebellion seemed reckless and unnecessary when the colonies still had protection and trade under British rule.

## **The American Revolution**

Talk of revolution did not go unanswered by the British government. In the spring of 1775, British forces marched out of Boston, Massachusetts, to seize weapons Patriots kept in nearby towns. Patriot militia and British forces fought two small battles in the towns of Lexington and Concord. These fights marked the beginning of the Revolutionary War. News of the fighting spread quickly through the colonies. Patriots in North Carolina formed their own government, called the Provincial Assembly.

Fighting came to North Carolina, too. Many of North Carolina's Loyalists had Scottish roots and had settled in the Piedmont region. Loyalists there formed an army of about 1,500 troops and marched to meet Patriots for battle. The Patriot militia had news of their advance and waited for them at Moore's Creek Bridge, near Wilmington. When the Loyalist troops arrived, the Patriots opened



This 1775 illustration shows British troops, known as redcoats for the color of their bright uniforms, in the town of Concord, Massachusetts.

fire. The Patriots' victory in the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge in February 1776 gave the Patriots in North Carolina hope and stopped the Loyalists there from gaining control of the colony early in the war.

Two months later, the North Carolina Provincial Assembly took a bold step. It voted to give new directions to the colony's delegates still at the Continental Congress. The Provincial Assembly issued a document called the Halifax Resolves. This document told the delegates to urge the Congress to vote for independence from Britain. Today, the date the Assembly adopted the Halifax Resolves—April 12, 1776—appears on the state flag and seal.

On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, formally announcing the colonies' decision to break away from Britain. Mostly written by Thomas Jefferson, the document

declared that “all men are created equal” and that people had the rights to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” The Declaration further said that Britain was not meeting its responsibility to protect these rights. As a result, the colonists had a right to separate from Britain and form a new government. With the Declaration, North Carolina became one of the thirteen states in the new United States of America.

The American Revolution was not simply a conflict between the Patriots and the British. In North Carolina’s backcountry, neighbors, relatives, and friends often found themselves on opposite sides. Indigenous groups and enslaved people also took different sides. Many Native Americans tried to stay out of the war. However, the war was sometimes fought on their lands, which made neutrality almost impossible. Some enslaved people escaped to join the British, who promised them freedom. Others sided with the Patriots, whose talk of freedom and equality raised hopes.

Clashes like Moore’s Creek Bridge between Patriots and Loyalists continued throughout the war. At the Battle of Kings Mountain in 1780, the Patriots defeated the British on the border of North and South Carolina. This helped to turn the tide of the war in the Patriots’ favor. A year later, Patriot and British forces fought at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. The British won the battle, but they suffered heavy losses. This fight weakened the British army and convinced its commander to retreat to Virginia. There, late in 1781, the British surrendered at the Battle of Yorktown. That was the last major battle of the war. Two years later, the Americans and British agreed to a treaty that ended the war. The British lost the war to their former colonies. They now had to accept American independence.



*THE BATTLE OF KING'S MOUNTAIN.*

By 1780, the Revolutionary War had shifted to the southern states, where fierce battles like Kings Mountain took place.

The American Revolution had a significant impact on life in North Carolina. The divisions between Loyalists and Patriots drove families apart. Loyalists faced other problems too. The Patriots had passed laws allowing the government to seize the property of anyone who refused to pledge themselves to the Patriot cause. Many Loyalists lost their lands and homes. Many chose to leave the state.

The war also had a crushing impact on Native Americans. Some groups, including the Cherokee in North Carolina, had sided with the British. They had hoped that Britain would protect their land from being taken over by American settlers. Patriot forces had responded by destroying Cherokee villages and seizing their land.

Meanwhile, many enslaved people had seen a chance for freedom and fled to British-controlled areas during the war. Most were later re-enslaved or faced other harsh conditions.

The war also paved the way for women to take on new roles outside the home. As men went to fight, their wives managed their farms and businesses. Women also banded together to raise money and provide supplies for soldiers. A few even fought in the war, usually by pretending to be men. Some traveled with the army, cooking in camps and tending to the wounded after battles.

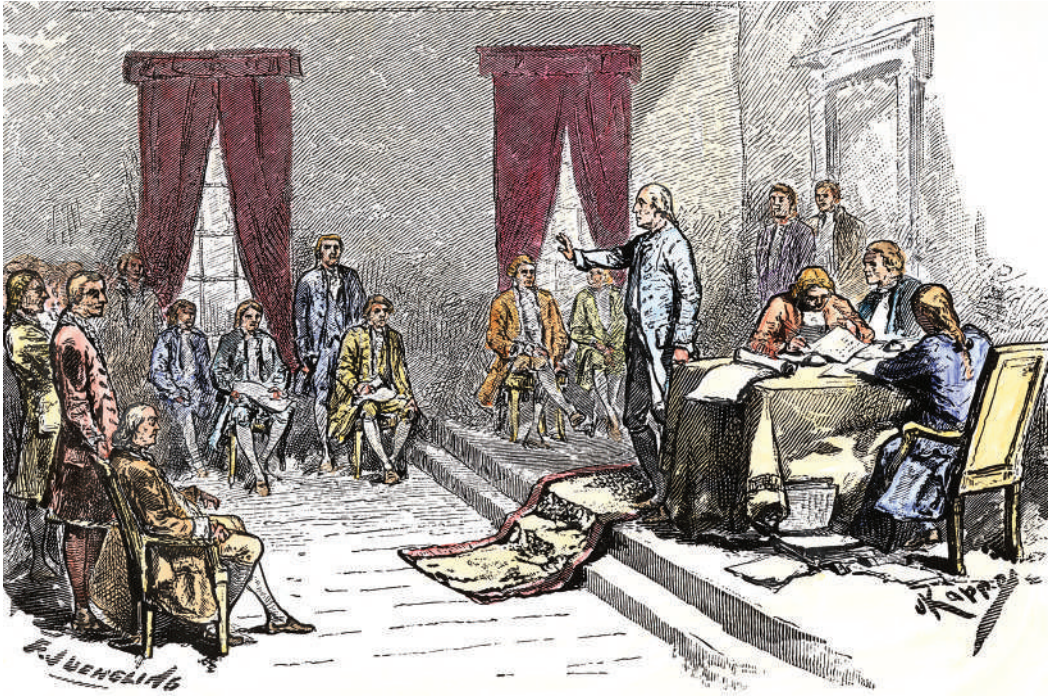
## North Carolina in the New United States

In 1777, during the war, the Continental Congress created a plan for a new government called the Articles of Confederation. This plan established a weak central government with legislators but no executive to enforce laws. As a result, states often acted independently rather than as a united nation. Each state used its own currency, or money, and the central government had to request money from state governments to pay for the war. Growing disagreements among the states made it clear that the new country needed a stronger, more unified government.

In 1787, delegates from the thirteen states met in Philadelphia. They were instructed to improve the Articles of Confederation. Instead, they decided to write a brand-new constitution. The delegates sent the finished Constitution to the states for their approval. They agreed that it would go into effect when nine states **ratified** it.

### Vocabulary

**ratify**, v. to approve



Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, including Governor Richard Caswell, William R. Davie, Willie Jones, Alexander Martin, and Richard Dobbs Spaight from North Carolina, met for over four months to work through differences and outline a new form of government for the new nation.

Throughout the country, people debated the Constitution. Supporters were called Federalists because they wanted a strong federal government. They wrote articles and speeches explaining why it was needed. Opponents, called Antifederalists, feared a strong national government. They argued that a national government might take away the freedoms that Americans had fought for when they rebelled against the British.

By June 1788, nine states had ratified the Constitution, putting the new government into effect. North Carolina was not one of them. Some state leaders feared the new government would be too powerful. The state legislature voted against approving the Constitution in August 1788. North Carolina's leaders were finally

convinced to accept the Constitution only when the Federalists promised to add a bill of rights to protect citizens' rights, such as the freedoms of speech and religion. On November 21, 1789, North Carolina ratified the U.S. Constitution, becoming the twelfth state to accept the new government.

## Challenges and Growth

North Carolina faced challenges after the American Revolution. One was the poor condition of its roads. Roads connected cities and towns, and farmers relied on them to carry their crops to market. But in the early 1800s, most of the roads in North Carolina were dirt paths. During dry spells, horses kicked up clouds of dust. Rains made the roads thick with mud, and wagon drivers risked having wheels get stuck. The roads were narrow, too. When wagons met, one had to pull off the road to let the other pass. This made travel hazardous and slowed the passage of goods to market.

In western North Carolina, settlers faced the challenge of rugged mountain terrain, which made transportation especially difficult. Steep trails and river crossings made trade with other regions slow and expensive. Farmers in the mountains often had to rely on small local markets. The growing towns and farms in the Piedmont also needed better **infrastructure** to support trade and manufacturing. This area was becoming a center for textile and tobacco industries, and the lack of reliable roads made it hard to transport goods.

### Vocabulary

**infrastructure**, n.  
the public works system that includes roads, bridges, water, public transportation, etc.

Beginning in the 1830s, the state legislature passed laws to improve North Carolina's roads. New roads covered by wooden planks made for smooth travel by wagon. Ditches were built on either side for water to drain. Some roads included **turnpikes**. With turnpikes, property owners charged travelers a fee to cross their land. The owners used the money to maintain their part of the road. Some owners kept their sections of the road in better condition than others, but turnpikes provided a low-cost way for the state to maintain its road system. As road improvements expanded, turnpikes and plank roads helped connect mountain settlements to markets in the Piedmont and beyond.

On the coast, North Carolina's natural waterways played a major role in transportation and trade. However, shifting inlets and shallow sounds made navigation difficult for large ships. To address this, the

state invested in **canals** to improve water transportation. Canals were an important development because goods could travel much faster by water than over bumpy roads. The Dismal Swamp Canal, completed in 1805, linked North Carolina to Virginia. Later improvements were paid for by charging a toll, or fee, to the boats passing through the canal. Settlements also began to rise up along the canals.

The attention to roads and canals soon shifted to railroads. The first railroad in North Carolina was built in 1833 in downtown Raleigh to move the granite blocks needed to build the state capitol. The next year, a railroad between Wilmington and Raleigh

### Vocabulary

**turnpike**, n. a road with a gate that people had to pay a toll to pass through

**canal**, n. a channel dug by people, used by boats or for irrigation

was completed. When it began operation, the railroad covered a distance of 161 miles (259 km). At the time, it was the longest railroad in the world. Railroads revolutionized transportation. They enabled more goods and people to travel farther and faster than ever before. They enabled goods to reach distant markets in hours instead of days. They brought different parts of North Carolina closer together and North Carolina closer to the other states.

## **The First Industrial Revolution**

Better transportation made travel faster and more efficient. This set the stage for something bigger: a change so enormous that people call it a revolution. It was the Industrial Revolution, and it was driven by the rise of factories. Just like the American Revolution resulted in a new country, the Industrial Revolution resulted in a new economy.

The First Industrial Revolution had begun in Britain, where steam power and machines changed the way goods were made. Now, these new methods were making their way to the United States, including North Carolina. Water-powered mills sprang up along rivers. Machines in textile mills spun cotton into thread and wove thread into cloth much faster than was possible by hand. The hum of machines signaled the beginning of the First Industrial Revolution in America.

North Carolina became a leader in the textile industry. In part, this was due to the state's ability to produce a useful raw material, cotton. The state's fertile soil and warm climate were good for growing cotton. The invention of the cotton gin in the 1790s

made cotton easier to process. This led to a boom in cotton production that helped to fuel the textile industry. North Carolina also benefited from its location. It served as a connection for trade between the agricultural, cotton-growing South and the increasingly industrialized North.

The Industrial Revolution changed settlement patterns. The promise of work in textile mills drew settlers to the Piedmont region, where rivers and streams provided waterpower to run machinery.

Not everyone benefited equally from the changes sweeping the state, though. Factories provided new opportunities, but the work in them was difficult. Farmers who moved to mill towns soon found



THE FIRST COTTON-GIN.—DRAWN BY WILLIAM L. SHEPPARD.

The cotton gin, patented by Eli Whitney in 1794, separated cotton fibers from cotton seeds—a time-consuming process when done by hand.

their lives ruled by bosses who demanded long hours in noisy factories. At the same time, the Industrial Revolution created more job opportunities for people who had few options before. Towns grew as mills, railroads, and new businesses brought economic diversity, giving some families a chance to earn wages and build new lives outside of farming.

### Vocabulary

**cure**, v. to preserve meat, fish, or other food by smoking, drying, or salting it

Machines like the cotton gin made farming more efficient and profitable. Enslaved African Americans often suffered as a result. More cotton meant more wealth for plantation owners in eastern North Carolina. The demand for enslaved people grew. Many enslaved workers were forced to work harder under harsh conditions.

With the development of new methods for **curing** tobacco, North Carolina became a major supplier of the crop. But tobacco farming was often a risky venture. It drained the soil of nutrients that plants need to grow. That led to smaller harvests after many years. For small farmers, one bad tobacco season meant the end of their farm.

## Indian Removal and Forced Migration

North Carolina's economic growth put increasing pressure on Native American lands. Settlers sought new land for farming, where Native Americans were already living. Many Americans began to argue for the removal of the Cherokee and other Native American tribes to land west of the Mississippi River.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830, signed by President Andrew Jackson, aimed to clear the way for settlers to move onto Native lands. This law led to the forced migration of thousands of Native Americans to land set aside for them in present-day Oklahoma. The federal government claimed that relocation would protect Native Americans from settlers and allow them to live freely. But Native Americans saw things differently. They viewed the government's policy as a way to strip them of the land they had lived on for generations. Many Native Americans fought to protect their homeland.

Some fought back and resisted with weapons. Others fought in the courts. The Cherokee Nation, which spread from the mountains of North Carolina to Georgia, was among them. Cherokee leader John Ross wrote letters to President Jackson and other officials, arguing that the Cherokee Nation had a right to its land. Under his leadership, the Cherokee challenged their removal in court. Surprisingly, they won! In the 1832 case *Worcester v. Georgia*, the Supreme Court ruled that a Georgia law making the Cherokee leave their land went against the U.S. Constitution. But the victory didn't last.

The Cherokee still had to deal with settlers trying to settle on their land. Some Cherokee thought it would be better to move. This divided the Cherokee Nation. Elias Boudinot became the leader of a group that wanted to leave. In 1835, he met with representatives of the U.S. government at New Echota, the Cherokee capital. In the New Echota Treaty, he agreed to give up Cherokee land in exchange for money and land in the West. Although most Cherokee did not approve of the treaty, the U.S. government used

it to push the Cherokee off their land. Government officials argued that Native Americans and white settlers could not live peacefully together and claimed that removal would “save” the Cherokee from conflict and destruction. This belief was used to justify forcing them westward.

Some Cherokee left their land voluntarily. In 1838, the U.S. Army gathered the rest into groups and forced them to travel over

### The Trail of Tears



The Trail of Tears was actually several routes that the Cherokee and others were forced to take to reach present-day Oklahoma. Other tribes were relocated as well, as were enslaved African Americans owned by Native Americans.

1,000 miles (1,609 km) to present-day Oklahoma. The journey took about four to six months. It became known as the Trail of Tears. The Cherokee call it *Nuna-da-ut-sun'y*, or “The Place Where They Cried.”

Under the watch of U.S. Army troops, the Cherokee crowded onto flatboats for the first part of the trip. Later in the journey, they had to go on foot. They slept on the ground, sometimes without blankets to stay warm. Food and supplies ran out. Disease spread rapidly. By the time the Cherokee finished the trip, thousands of them had died from disease, starvation, and harsh conditions.

A few of North Carolina’s Cherokee avoided removal by fleeing to the mountains. Many of these were “traditionalists,” meaning they continued to hunt and farm in the ways of their ancestors. Their survival and **resilience** show the strength of Indigenous communities in the face of forced migration and change. These communities grew into what is today the Eastern Band of Cherokee. Most members live in the Qualla Boundary, a **reservation** located near the Great Smoky Mountains. They continue to preserve their traditions and heritage.

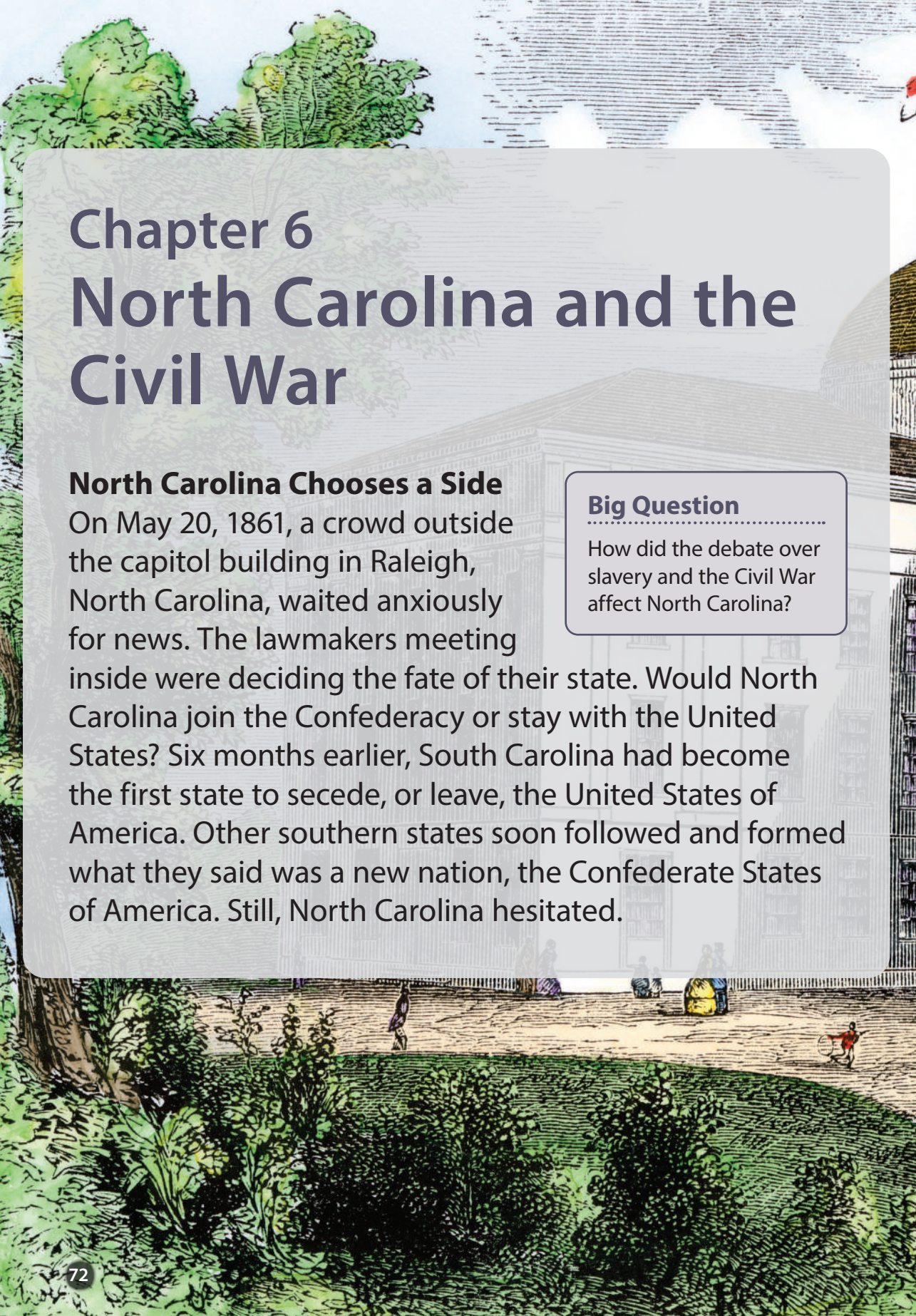
### Vocabulary

**resilience**, n. the ability to recover from hardship or difficult conditions

**reservation**, n. an area of land set aside by the government for Native Americans to live



The Cherokee of North Carolina have preserved their culture and passed down traditional skills to future generations.



# Chapter 6

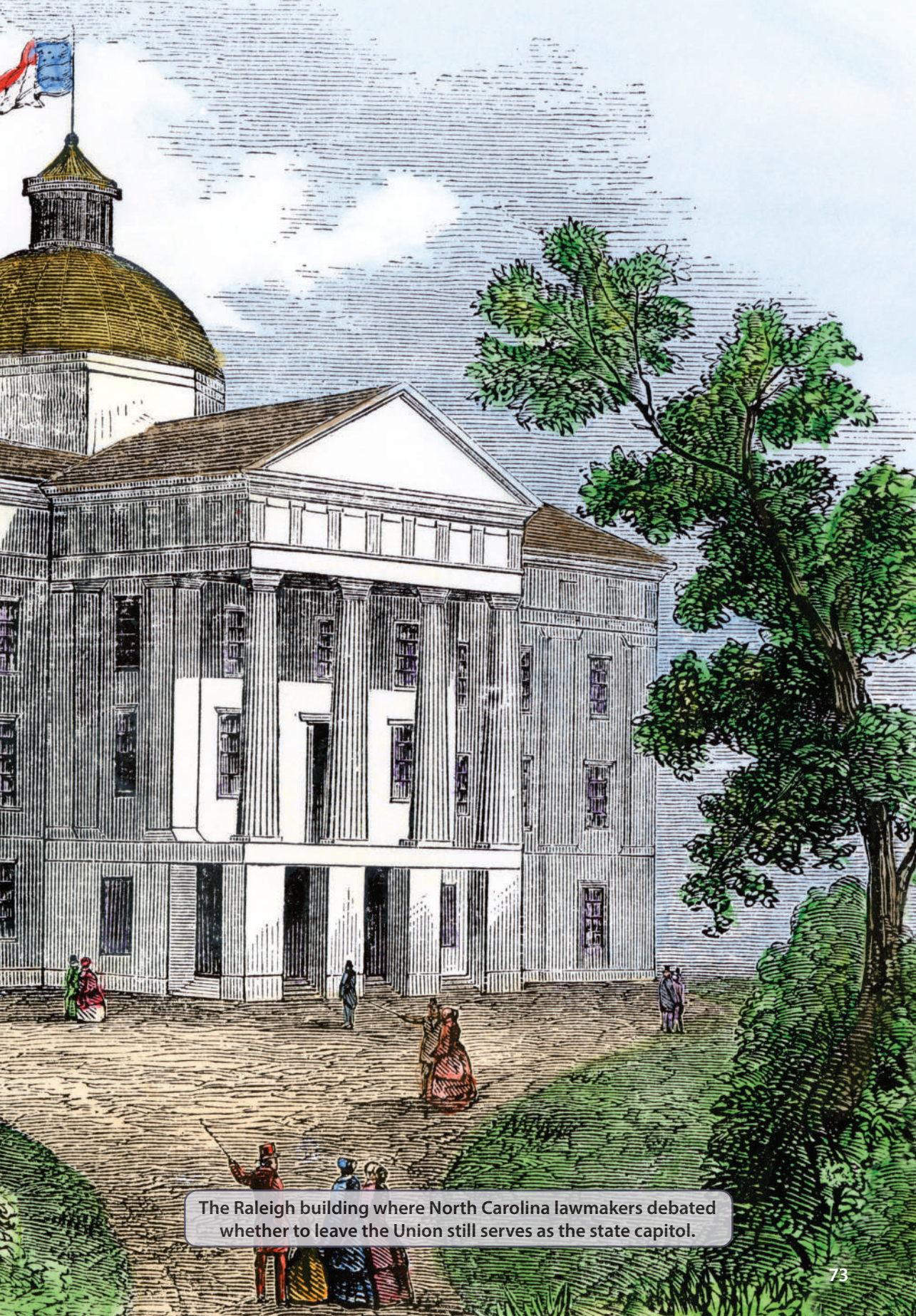
## North Carolina and the Civil War

### North Carolina Chooses a Side

On May 20, 1861, a crowd outside the capitol building in Raleigh, North Carolina, waited anxiously for news. The lawmakers meeting inside were deciding the fate of their state. Would North Carolina join the Confederacy or stay with the United States? Six months earlier, South Carolina had become the first state to secede, or leave, the United States of America. Other southern states soon followed and formed what they said was a new nation, the Confederate States of America. Still, North Carolina hesitated.

#### Big Question

How did the debate over slavery and the Civil War affect North Carolina?



The Raleigh building where North Carolina lawmakers debated whether to leave the Union still serves as the state capitol.

North Carolinians disagreed about what to do. Some wanted to stay in the Union with a “watch and wait” approach. Others thought that North Carolina, a southern state, should side with the newly formed Confederate States of America. They believed that states should be able to decide for themselves on issues like slavery. Besides, North Carolina was already mostly surrounded by Confederate states. Did it really make sense to remain in the Union?

Finally, the vote was announced: North Carolina’s lawmakers had chosen to secede. It was official.

North Carolina was the tenth state to join the Confederacy. In the streets of Raleigh, church bells rang, cannons fired, and cheers erupted. Still, many North Carolinians worried. They knew war was coming. No one knew how long it would last or how destructive it would be. But one thing was certain: There was no turning back.

State	Date of Secession
South Carolina	December 20, 1860
Mississippi	January 9, 1861
Florida	January 10, 1861
Alabama	January 11, 1861
Georgia	January 19, 1861
Louisiana	January 26, 1861
Texas	February 1, 1861
Virginia	April 17, 1861
Arkansas	May 6, 1861
North Carolina	May 20, 1861
Tennessee	June 8, 1861

The decisions of eleven states to leave the United States came after decades of angry debate and rising tensions between the North and South over slavery.

## Sectionalism and the Slavery Debate

By the mid-1800s, North Carolina found itself caught between two worlds. Social and economic differences divided the United States into two main regions. In the North, factories and trading businesses drove the economy. In the South, the economy centered around large farms and plantations that relied on enslaved labor to grow cash crops. These divisions resulted in

politics marked by **sectionalism** and created tension between the two regions.

The country's expansion westward worsened the tensions. The United States had gained large areas of land from the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and the Mexican-American War in 1848. As new territories formed, people argued about whether they should allow slavery. Abolitionists sought to stop the spread of slavery. When western territories sought to become states, the debate became heated. New states could disrupt the balance of free and slave states. Southern states feared that having more free states would lead to the end of slavery. Tensions between North and South grew even stronger.

New laws regarding slavery and **states' rights** increased the division. In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act. This law said that people had to send back anyone who had escaped from slavery, even if the escaped person had reached a free state. Many North Carolinians supported the law. They saw it as an important step for protecting what they perceived as people's property. Some North Carolinians considered it immoral and inhumane.

Enslaved people resisted in their own ways. Some ran away, traveling long distances in great danger to seek safe refuge in free states. Others slowed down their work on

### Vocabulary

**sectionalism**, n.  
strong loyalty to one's region and its interests, often to the exclusion of the interests of other regions

### Vocabulary

**states' rights**, n.  
political powers that belong to state governments under the Constitution; also, the belief that the federal government should have less power and state governments should have more power

purpose. They broke or hid tools, for instance. A few resisted in more direct ways, like revolts. Some enslaved people sued for their freedom. One example is Dred Scott, an enslaved man who sued for his freedom in court, arguing that he had lived in free territories. However, in 1857, the Supreme Court ruled against him, stating that African Americans could not be citizens and had no rights.

North Carolinians found themselves on different sides of the slavery debate. Some farms relied on slavery, but North Carolina had fewer plantations than some southern states. It also had a growing textile industry that relied on customers in northern states. Plantation owners argued that the state's economy would collapse without slavery. Political leaders said that this issue—like others—should be left for states to decide. The issue of slavery became closely linked to the belief in states' rights.

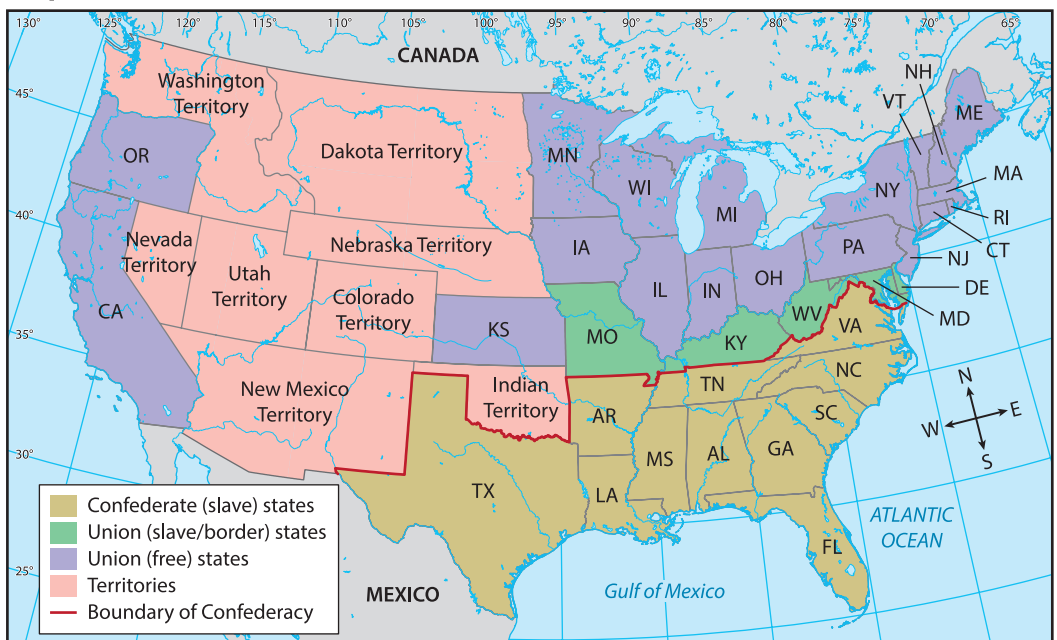


People escaping slavery braved harsh conditions on their long journey to freedom. Some were helped by abolitionists in a secret network of escape routes and safe houses known as the Underground Railroad.

On the other side were those who believed slavery was wrong or undesirable. Religious groups such as the Quakers insisted that it was wicked. In addition, most people in the Mountain region and small farmers of the Piedmont felt they had little to gain from slavery. They didn't want North Carolina to go to war over the issue. Even after North Carolina left the Union, the debate raged on.

U.S. president Abraham Lincoln believed that the Constitution did not allow states to leave the United States, or Union. The Union was made up of states that did not secede. Lincoln did not withdraw U.S. troops that were in the South, and in April 1861, Confederate forces fired on Union troops at Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina. That clash launched the Civil War. Lincoln called for the states to send soldiers to fight to restore the Union. A terrible war had begun that would last for the next four years.

### Map of Union and Confederate States



North Carolina was one of eleven states that seceded from the Union.

Early in the war, North Carolina depended on volunteers to fight. But the war lasted much longer than expected. In April 1862, the Confederate government passed a law requiring men between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five to serve in the military. Many North Carolinians were angry about this draft, or forced service in the army. Some argued that it went against the very freedoms that they had seceded to uphold. Others felt that the war benefited only the rich. They thought that the war was fought to protect slavery and would only help the wealthy people who had slaves. Their anger was fueled further by a part of the law that said men who owned twenty or more enslaved people were **exempt** from the draft. Supporters of the law argued it was needed to protect against uprisings. Poor Southerners viewed this law as a way for wealthy plantation owners to get out of fighting.

### Vocabulary

**exempt**, adj.  
excused from the reach of a law or rule

## North Carolina's Role in the Civil War

On May 21, 1861, North Carolina joined the newly formed Confederate States of America. The Confederacy had established its own government, separate from the United States. It elected a president and vice president and set up a capital—first in Montgomery, Alabama, and then in Richmond, Virginia.

At the time of the Civil War, most people viewed themselves as citizens of their state first and of the United States second. In other words, most people in North Carolina viewed being a North Carolinian as more important than being an American. In the war, military units were usually formed within states. Over the course of the war, 133,905 North Carolinians served in the Confederate Army.

This was more than any other Confederate state except Virginia. North Carolina also suffered more **casualties** than any other Confederate state. Between 33,000 and 35,000 North Carolinians died in the fighting or from diseases that spread during the war.

### Vocabulary

**casualty**, n. a person killed, wounded, injured, or missing in wartime

A much smaller number of North Carolinians sided with the Union. As many as fifteen thousand people from the state served in the Union Army. About two-thirds were white citizens who wished to remain in the Union. Most of these soldiers lived in the Piedmont and the western regions of the state. The first North Carolinian Union recruits, though, came from the Outer Banks. About five thousand of the North Carolinians who fought for the Union were African Americans. Most were formerly enslaved people who fled to freedom and joined the U.S. Army.

North Carolina's location made it a key battleground during the war. The state was particularly important because of its ports. The Confederacy needed them to bring in food, weapons, and supplies for its war effort. Specifically, the Confederacy relied on the ports to bring in shoes, uniforms, bullets, medicine, and even wheat to feed its soldiers. The Union wanted to shut off this flow of goods. To do so, it set up a **blockade**. Union ships patrolled North Carolina's coast. They chased and captured or sank any Confederate ships they found off the coast to stop ships from entering or leaving. In response, the Confederates used fast, small ships called blockade runners to sneak past the Union Navy.

### Vocabulary

**blockade**, n. a military strategy aimed at preventing people and goods from entering or leaving an area



The victorious Union assault on Fort Fisher in January 1865 and the closing of the last major Southern port of Wilmington marked a turning point in the Civil War.

In 1862, Union troops seized Hatteras and Roanoke Island and then captured the port of New Bern. With these actions, the Union gained control of the northern half of North Carolina's coast. As a result, all Confederate trade by sea through North Carolina had to come through Wilmington.

The Union's effort to capture that port began in the winter of 1864. By then, Wilmington was the Confederacy's last major port to bring in supplies. To close it, the Union had to capture Fort Fisher, which protected the port. On January 13, 1865, Union warships began firing on the fort. Cannons pounded it for two full days. Then, on January 15, Union troops landed on the beach near the fort. By the end of the day, the Union had captured the fort and closed off the port of Wilmington.

## **Civil War–Era Changes**

Other battles took place across the state. Homes and towns were destroyed. In 1865, after taking Savannah, Georgia, Union soldiers led by General William T. Sherman marched through South Carolina into North Carolina. They left a path of destruction in many parts

of the Piedmont region. In Fayetteville, Union troops seized food and supplies. They also set fire to the railroad station, factories, and warehouses. In Goldsboro, Confederate troops destroyed parts of the town. They tore up railroad tracks to slow the Union's advance and burned farms so that the Union couldn't use the crops for food. Events like these left parts of North Carolina badly damaged.

Families were often forced to flee their homes to escape the fighting. Refugees moved to the mountains or other parts of North Carolina. Others fled the state to start new lives elsewhere. In April 1865, the armies fighting for the Confederates in the east surrendered. Other Southern armies did as well. The war was over.

### Sherman's March to the Sea, 1864 – 1865



Sherman's march ended at Bennett Place, where the commander of the Confederate army opposing him surrendered.

The war changed the way goods moved in North Carolina. Both the Union and Confederate armies needed food, weapons, and other supplies to keep fighting. Ports played a critical role. Towns like Wilmington along the coast grew in size. As the war went on, the Union blockade stopped most ships from reaching the Confederacy. With ports blocked, roads and railroads became even more essential for transporting supplies. Towns grew along supply routes. Greensboro, for example, arose as a key railroad hub connecting important supply lines.

The war also influenced people's views. People started thinking more about the meaning of freedom. More people began to believe that slavery would come to an end, especially as Union forces freed enslaved people in their path. In 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. This order declared the end of slavery for most of the enslaved people in Confederate lands. It was a first step, but it offered people the possibility of freedom. Areas controlled by the Union became safe havens for African Americans. These areas brought the opportunity for a new life. African Americans were recruited to build ditches or prepare supplies. By the end of the war, about 500,000 formerly enslaved people had sought protection behind Union lines.

## **The Impact of the War on North Carolina's Economy**

In the years leading up to the war, North Carolina's economy was largely based on agriculture. The state's fertile soil made it a good place for growing tobacco, cotton, and rice, especially in the Coastal Plain and Piedmont regions. Many farms growing these crops were plantations that relied on enslaved labor. As

the demand for these crops grew, so did the need for enslaved workers. By 1860, North Carolina had one of the largest populations of enslaved people in the South.

The plantation system came apart after the Civil War. In 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment officially ended slavery across the country. This meant that plantation owners could no longer rely on enslaved labor. Newly freed people, meanwhile, owned little or nothing. Both the rich and poor wondered how they would survive.

Adding to North Carolina's difficulties was the widespread destruction from the war. Roads and railroads had been torn up. Mills had been destroyed in the fighting. This made it hard for farms and businesses to get goods to market. North Carolinians had no choice but to spend money on the long and difficult process of rebuilding.

Some industries were rebuilt more quickly than others. With the end of slavery and the rise of a free labor system, factories and mills started popping up across the state, particularly in the Piedmont region. Powered by water from local rivers, these mills spun cotton into thread and fabric. They offered new jobs to people, including newly freed people seeking work. This marked a gradual shift in the state away from agriculture toward manufacturing.

## **Contributions and Changing Roles**

North Carolinians from many different backgrounds played important roles in the Civil War. One notable group was the Thomas Legion, a Confederate unit that included about four hundred Cherokee soldiers. The Cherokee were skilled fighters

who helped defend the mountains of western North Carolina. They hoped that their participation in the war would help them protect their land. However, challenges to their land ownership continued after the war.

Women took on new responsibilities in North Carolina during the war. With so many men away in the army, women managed family farms and businesses. Some wrote about their experiences, shedding light on daily life during the war. Others, both African American and white, worked as nurses or sewed uniforms and blankets for soldiers.

The Civil War and its aftermath affected African Americans perhaps more than any other group. Many enslaved people gained freedom by escaping to Union army camps. Others were freed by Union troops when they reached a new area. Some newly freed individuals worked in Union Army camps as cooks, nurses, and laborers. Some served the Union Army as spies or scouts. As the war went on, the Union gave African Americans an opportunity to join in the fighting. 179,895 African Americans served in the Union Army. Around five thousand of them were from North Carolina. African American soldiers fought in all-Black regiments led by white officers. One such regiment was the 35th United States Colored Troops, trained in New Bern, North Carolina. They faced



During the Civil War, many individuals who had escaped slavery joined the Union forces.

unfair treatment and harsh conditions, but their strength of mind and dream of freedom helped the Union win the war.

## Reconstruction and Postwar Reform Efforts

When the Civil War ended in 1865, the United States faced an enormous challenge: rebuilding a nation torn apart by conflict. The war had taken a heavy toll on North Carolina. Tens of thousands of men had died, leaving many families struggling to survive. Cities were in ruins, families were divided, and thousands of newly freed African Americans were uncertain about their futures. It was time to rebuild. This period of rebuilding and reshaping society in the South is called Reconstruction.

The economic impact of the end of slavery was felt across the South. Plantation owners struggled to pay workers. Many couldn't afford to hire enough workers to produce as many crops as they used to. In some areas, people who had been freed from slavery worked as **sharecroppers**. Sharecroppers worked a patch of land in exchange for a portion, or share, of the crops they grew. Too often, however, these workers could not pay what they owed. Many farms and plantations fell into decline.

### Vocabulary

**sharecropper**, n. a farmer who works land owned by someone else and pays the landowner with a portion of the crops they grow

The end of the war brought military rule to the South. Union troops were stationed throughout the South to keep order and enforce new laws. The federal government sent people to the South to repair infrastructure, build schools, and help Southerners adjust to their new lives. Despite resistance from

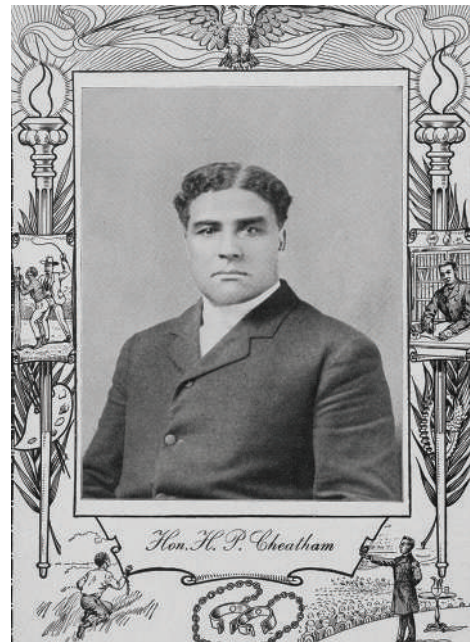
many white Southerners, federal oversight helped bring important changes, such as the creation of public schools and enforcement of legal rights for African Americans.

North Carolina wrote a new state constitution. The constitution of 1868 officially abolished slavery and granted all men of any race the right to vote. For the first time, African American men were elected to public offices in North Carolina. New laws protected the rights of African Americans to own property, sign contracts, and go to court. The state constitution also created a system of public education. Over time, however, many of the rights of African Americans would be worn away. Federal, state, and local governments passed new discriminatory laws that enforced **segregation** and restricted voting rights.

### Vocabulary

**segregation**, n.  
the act of keeping people separate, usually on the basis of race

One of the most important organizations during Reconstruction was the Freedmen's Bureau, established by Congress in March 1865. Its mission was to assist formerly enslaved people and poor whites in the South by setting up schools, providing medical care, and helping freedmen find jobs and land to farm. However, the bureau faced strong opposition in the South and struggled with limited funding to carry out its



Henry P. Cheatham was an African American who served as a member of the U.S. House from 1889 to 1893.

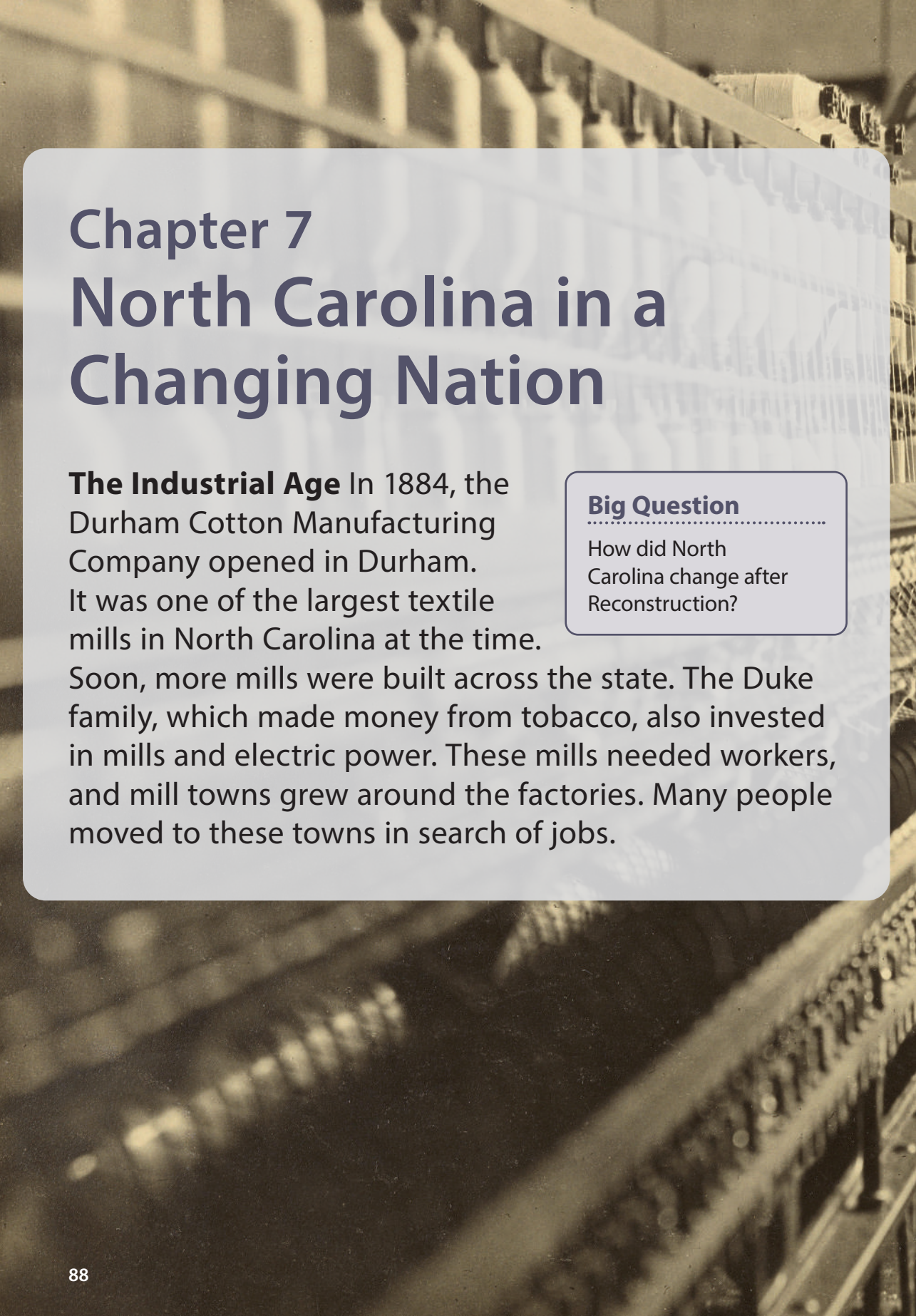
mission. The bureau lasted only seven years before being shut down, but not before building more than a thousand schools for African Americans.

Not everyone liked the changes occurring in the South. Many people—particularly plantation owners and those who had fought in the Confederate Army—wanted to restore the old way of life. Many Southern white people resented the North telling them how to live.

By the 1870s, support in the North for Reconstruction had weakened. White leaders in Southern states passed new laws limiting the rights of African American citizens. These states slowly stripped away African American voting rights. Laws that called for strict segregation became common. The promise of Reconstruction faded away. It would take nearly a century for the civil rights movement to push the country closer to equality.



The Trent River settlement near New Bern was a community established under the Freedmen's Bureau.



## Chapter 7

# North Carolina in a Changing Nation

**The Industrial Age** In 1884, the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company opened in Durham. It was one of the largest textile mills in North Carolina at the time.

Soon, more mills were built across the state. The Duke family, which made money from tobacco, also invested in mills and electric power. These mills needed workers, and mill towns grew around the factories. Many people moved to these towns in search of jobs.

### Big Question

How did North Carolina change after Reconstruction?



Many North Carolina children worked in textile mills in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

As more factories were built, North Carolina's economy changed. Instead of relying mostly on farming, manufacturing became important. This industrialization of the state's economy was part of a major change called the Second Industrial Revolution.

## African American Communities

After the Civil War ended in 1865, the U.S. government sent federal troops to the South to help rebuild damaged communities and protect the rights of formerly enslaved people. This period after the Civil War became known as Reconstruction. Early on, the period was defined by an increase in rights for African Americans. In 1877, Reconstruction ended, and the last federal troops left the South. Without their protection, life became harder for African Americans, who faced unfair laws, **discrimination**, violence, and intimidation.

### Vocabulary

**discrimination**, n.  
unfair treatment of a person or group because of beliefs about that group of people

In spite of these difficulties, African Americans worked to build strong communities. They started their own schools, churches, and businesses. Many African American leaders viewed education as the path to a better life. New schools and universities were founded. One of them was Shaw University. When Shaw opened in Raleigh, it became the first African American college in the South. The college taught almost a thousand formerly enslaved people to read in its first four years. In 1880, Shaw established a medical school, the first one in the United States for African Americans.

Religion also played an important role in African American communities. Churches served as centers of worship and social life. Many African American churches blended Christian worship with African practices to create a unique style of worship. Services included **spirituals**, call-and-response singing, and lively sermons. African American churches also provided support to African Americans facing discrimination. Church leaders helped organize efforts to try to gain civil rights and better economic opportunities. They also promoted education. African American churches in the state joined to launch Kittrell College in 1886 for African American students.

African Americans continued to face many challenges. New laws, informally known as Jim Crow laws, created a segregated society. The laws made it illegal for African American citizens to use the same schools, restaurants, and public spaces as white

## Vocabulary

**spiritual**, n. a type of religious song marked by strong emotions that developed in African American churches



In 1868, William Hunt Sr., an African American farmer who had once been enslaved, gifted land in Currituck County for a school for African American students. Today, the building is a museum that shares and celebrates stories of African American students in North Carolina.

citizens. States across the South, including North Carolina, passed these discriminatory laws.

Segregation affected almost every part of life. African American and white people were forced to use separate water fountains, train cars, and schools. The Supreme Court upheld segregation laws in 1896. The court said segregation was legal as long as there were “separate but equal” places for the two races. In reality, segregated places were rarely equal. African American schools often lacked books, desks, and other supplies. Public spaces for African Americans were not equally maintained or funded.

State laws also denied African American citizens their voting rights. The Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, approved in 1870, said that the right to vote could not be denied “on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” But states found ways to get around this clear rule. In 1900, North Carolina passed a new law called the Disenfranchisement Amendment. This law made it much harder for African Americans to vote. It was created by white leaders who wanted to stay in power and stop African American citizens from having a voice in government.

The law required **literacy tests**. People had to pass these tests in order to vote. Because African American voting was not desired by state officials, the tests were often designed to be impossible to pass.

In addition, state laws required voters to pay **poll taxes**. Poor people did not have enough money to pay the taxes. North

### Vocabulary

**literacy test**, n.  
a test to measure whether people could read, which citizens had to pass before they could vote

**poll tax**, n. a fee people had to pay in order to vote

Carolina also created a rule called the grandfather clause. The grandfather clause said that if a voter, their parent, or their grandparent could vote in 1867, that voter didn't have to take a literacy test or pay a poll tax. This meant that only white voters were excused. No African Americans had been allowed to vote in North Carolina in 1867. Without a say in the process of government, they could not vote for candidates who advocated for their rights.

## Native American Communities

North Carolina's Indigenous peoples, including the Lumbee and Cherokee, also struggled during this time. Many white leaders wanted them to **assimilate** and follow "American" ways of life. The federal

### Vocabulary

**assimilate**, v. to adopt the culture or traditions of another group

government set up Indian schools to educate Native American children in these ways. These schools often forced students to give up their Native languages, cut their hair, wear non-Native clothing styles, and adopt new customs. The pressure to change their culture made the children's lives difficult. Students were taught to farm and do domestic chores.

Some Indigenous people in North Carolina did change their ways of life. They built brick homes and went to Christian churches. Some of them married white partners. Other Native Americans rejected assimilation and fought to hold onto their traditions.

The Cherokee people established their own schools, including the Cherokee Indian School in 1889. Classes provided education while

preserving Cherokee culture. The Lumbee worked to gain official recognition of their identity from the state. They reached this goal in 1885. The state created a school system for the Lumbee that was separate from the schools for white students and for African American students. It also formed a college where some Lumbee trained to become teachers.

## Women's Lives

Women also saw dramatic changes in the roles and opportunities available to them. Some took jobs in factories that had been built across the state. Others became teachers or nurses. Women's experiences differed by race, however. Despite not being allowed into textile mills, more than 40 percent of African American women worked outside the home. Only 15 percent of white women did.

Women also formed charities and reform groups to improve education and living conditions in their communities. Some women joined groups that worked for women's **suffrage**. Many women joined the **temperance** movement. This was a movement that wanted to ban alcohol. Advocates of temperance argued that drinking alcohol caused many social problems, including poverty, violence, and crime. They held rallies, wrote letters to lawmakers, and wrote newspaper articles to encourage people to support a ban on alcohol. In 1908, they won a victory. North Carolinians voted to ban the making and sale of alcohol across the state. Eleven years later, the Eighteenth Amendment made alcohol illegal nationwide.

### Vocabulary

**suffrage**, n. the right to vote

**temperance**, n. the practice of drinking little or no alcohol

## Economic Growth and Industrialization

North Carolina's growth was fueled by new tools and technologies. In the textile industry, steam-powered machines allowed mills to spin and weave cotton faster. By 1899, the value of textile products made in North Carolina topped that of all but two other states. Towns like Greensboro, Charlotte, and Gastonia became centers for making textiles. The tobacco industry grew as well. New machines helped process and pack tobacco faster than before. Durham and Winston-Salem became centers of the industry, with companies like W. Duke & Sons leading the way. Meanwhile, the furniture industry grew in the Piedmont region. Factories used steam-powered saws and assembly lines to make chairs, tables, and cabinets.

Railroads played an important role in the state's growing economy. By the late 1800s, railroads connected cities and factory centers across North Carolina. This helped businesses grow faster and send goods farther. For example, High Point became a major place

### Map of North Carolina's Railroads, Around 1900



In the late 1890s, railroad lines grew quickly, linking factories to markets in North Carolina and beyond. Railroads helped towns grow along their routes.

for furniture manufacturing because of its location along the railroad. Coastal ports like Wilmington helped by shipping goods to other places.

As industries grew, the regions of North Carolina developed in different ways. The Piedmont became the heart of the state's industry, home to textile and furniture mills. The Mountain region remained rural, focusing on logging and small-scale farming. The Coastal Plain, with its fertile soil, remained a farming region. In addition, its ports and railroads made it important for trade. These regional differences shaped North Carolina's economy and people for years to come.

## **Migration and Movement**

As industries grew, factory towns became busy centers of activity. Factories needed workers. Families that had lived on farms for generations moved to cities like Charlotte, Greensboro, and Durham. The cities grew.

Many African Americans also moved from rural areas to cities. Many were driven to leave due to a lack of work opportunities or because of harsh conditions caused by discrimination and violence. Sharecropping, often the only option in rural areas, led to debts that were difficult to overcome. African Americans often hoped to find better lives in cities, but many discovered that city life was also challenging.

Industries in North Carolina also attracted people from outside the country. In the late 1800s, people from Lebanon moved to North Carolina to find jobs. After 1900, immigrants came to the state from Italy, Greece, and other countries to work in factories.

North Carolina's economy grew during the Second Industrial Revolution, but not everyone benefited. Factory jobs provided work, but that work was often dangerous. Workers also had little job security. When times were good, companies hired them. If business slowed, they were fired. Workers often found themselves working long hours for low pay. About 75 percent of the workers in the state's textile mills were women or children. Children as young as eight were put to work in textile and furniture factories. The machines were big and loud, and sometimes children's clothing or hair got caught in them. Many rooms in the factories were dark and dusty, making it hard to breathe.

### Vocabulary

**labor union**, n. a group of workers who join together to make sure their rights and wages are protected

Over time, some workers formed **labor unions** to fight for better working conditions and pay. The first unions were in smaller industries, such as bookbinding and printing. They included few workers. Still, these unions and other reformers pushed for better wages and safer conditions. Slowly, labor laws began to change.



Women and children worked long hours in North Carolina's cotton mills, like the White Oak Cotton Mill in Greensboro.

## Resistance, Reform, and Social Challenges

In the late 1800s, African Americans faced ongoing discrimination and increasing violence. One of the most shocking events took place in 1898 in Wilmington. In the 1890s, Wilmington's city government included both African American and white leaders. This upset many white people who believed the government should be run only by white citizens. On November 10, a mob of white people violently took control of the city. They forced out the white mayor, Silas P. Wright, and declared Alfred Waddell the new mayor. Waddell was one of the key leaders of the mob. Dozens of African American people were killed. Many more fled the city. The event, which became known as the Wilmington Coup, showed how much some people wanted to go back to the way things were before the Civil War.

The Wilmington Coup highlighted a pattern of racial discrimination across North Carolina and the South. State and local governments stripped African Americans of the rights and political power they had gained during Reconstruction. When African Americans tried to fight for their rights, they often were met with violence. It wasn't until the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, through the efforts of countless activists and a massive people's movement, that the rights of African Americans were slowly realized.

At the same time, some people wanted to address problems that stemmed from the growth of industry. Many people blamed big business for those problems. Business leaders had made their fortunes in large industries. For example, John D. Rockefeller

controlled the oil industry, Andrew Carnegie led the steel industry, and Cornelius Vanderbilt dominated the railroad business. These men built huge companies that shaped the U.S. economy, but many people criticized them for using unfair business practices to gain wealth. Many Americans felt these captains of industry had made their money at the expense of workers. People called these business leaders “robber barons.”

With the help of industrialization, certain businesses had grown in size. Some bought up other businesses to become huge companies called corporations. They merged with competing businesses to create **monopolies**. Because they lacked

### Vocabulary

**monopoly**, n. a situation in which one person, country, or company has complete control of the supply of a good or service



The Biltmore Estate in Asheville was constructed between 1889 and 1895 by George Washington Vanderbilt II. The Vanderbilts were among the “robber barons” who had made their fortunes in shipping and railroads. The Biltmore is the largest home in the United States and today serves as a tourist destination.

any significant competition, monopolies could charge whatever they wanted for their products and services. They often used this power to drive smaller companies out of business.

Many people found the practices of robber barons and monopolies to be unjust. They came together to form a new movement, called Progressivism, to address these problems. Progressive reformers wanted to stop the unfair practices of big business. They worked to break up monopolies and make sure businesses treated workers fairly. They attempted to make life better for everyone, especially people who were struggling.

Many of the reform movements in North Carolina focused on improving labor conditions. New laws were passed to help protect workers. For example, in 1903, North Carolina passed a law that stopped children under age twelve from working in factories, mines, and other industries. Another law said that factory workers could not be made to work more than 66 hours each week. New federal laws also forced factory owners to give workers better working conditions. Often these labor laws were not enforced, however. Many workers continued to labor in harsh conditions.

Other reformers focused on improving public health. They made gradual gains in providing clean drinking water. They also improved the way waste was disposed of in urban areas. New laws helped make cities cleaner, healthier, and safer for those living in them.

There were also improvements in education. In 1913, North Carolina passed a law making school **mandatory** for children

### Vocabulary

**mandatory**, adj.  
required

eight to twelve years old. New public schools were built, and more teachers were hired. Still, not all children attended school. In rural areas, for example, schools were often too far away for some children to get there.

African American children faced even greater challenges. African American schools had little funding and few resources. They were overcrowded. Teachers often lacked experience. School buildings and classrooms were in poor condition. These problems made it especially hard for African American children to get a good education.

Progressivism promised a better tomorrow. However, life in the present was still difficult for many people. African Americans and Native Americans faced unfair treatment. In addition, while industrialization had made some people very rich, many others struggled to survive. These inequalities would affect North Carolina for many years to come.

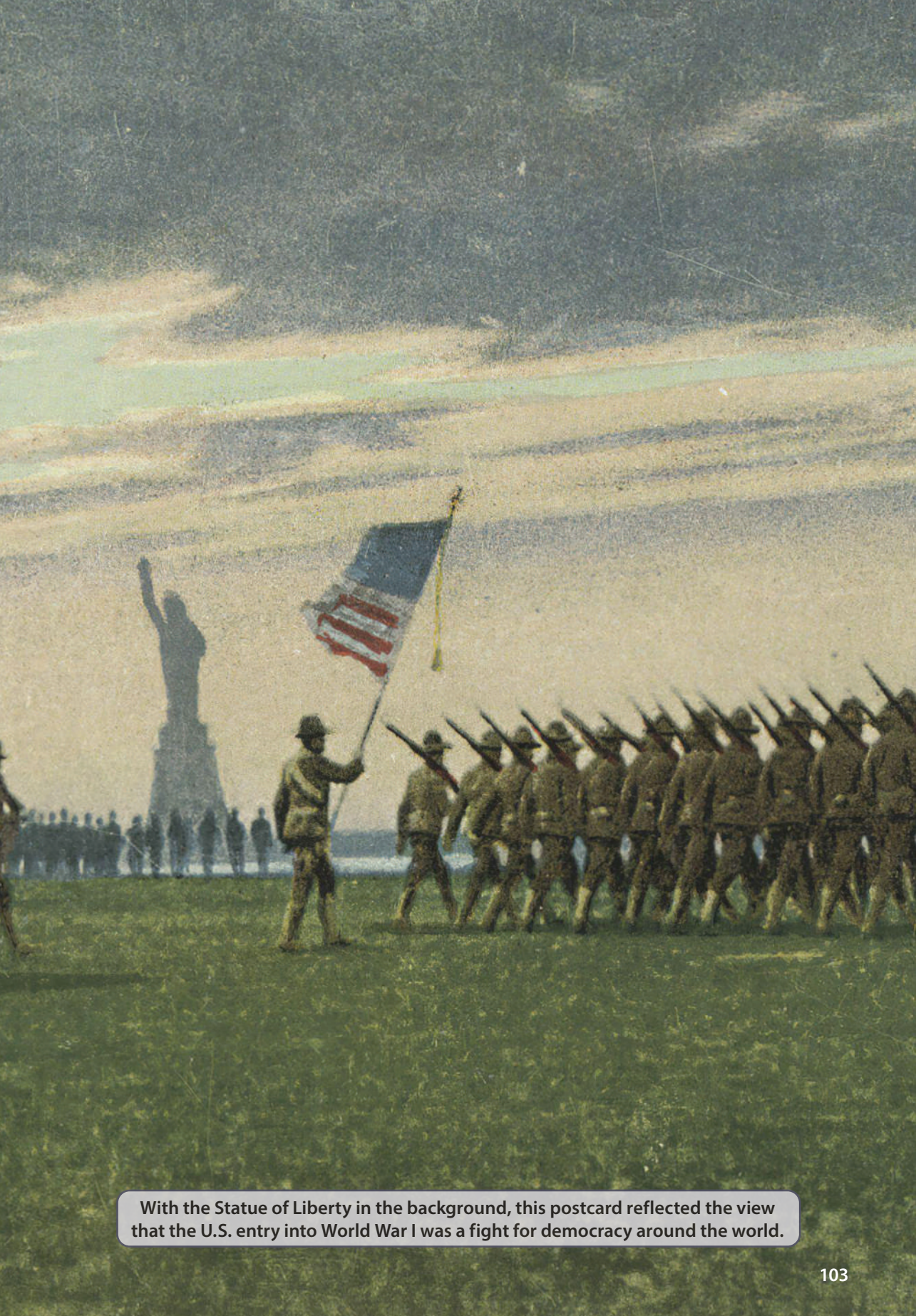
# Chapter 8

## Years of Challenge and Conflict

**Entering a World War** In the summer of 1914, a devastating war broke out in Europe. At first, the United States stayed out of the conflict. Then, in 1917, Germany took actions that threatened the United States. President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany. “The world must be made safe for democracy,” he said. Congress agreed, and the United States officially entered what would become known as World War I.

### Big Question

How did world and national events affect North Carolina in the early twentieth century?



With the Statue of Liberty in the background, this postcard reflected the view that the U.S. entry into World War I was a fight for democracy around the world.

The war began in 1914 with the shooting of the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary. Countries across Europe quickly took sides. Austria-Hungary, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) formed the Central Powers. Britain, France, Italy, and Russia joined together as the Allied Powers.

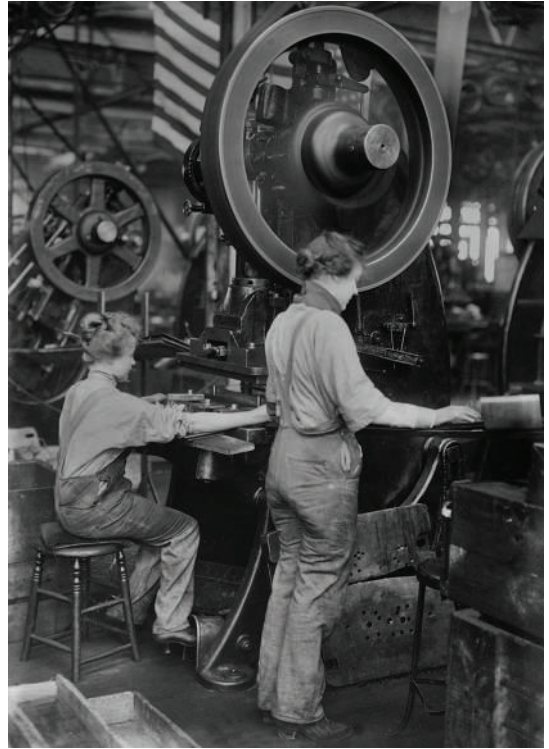
For three years, the United States stayed out of the fighting, though it did send supplies to Britain. German submarines attacked American ships carrying those supplies. When Germans sank the *Lusitania*, a British ship, more than 120 U.S. passengers died. U.S. president Wilson got the Germans to agree to stop attacking ships with passengers. In early 1917, though, the Germans renewed those attacks. Soon after, the German government sent a secret message that encouraged Mexico to go to war against the United States. When that message became public, Americans were outraged. Wilson then asked Congress to declare war. On April 6, 1917, the United States entered a global conflict that was so deadly it eventually became known as “the War to End all Wars.”

## **North Carolina’s Role in World War I**

North Carolina played an important role in the war effort. More than 86,000 North Carolinians fought overseas. New soldiers in the army trained at several sites in the state. These sites included Camp Greene in Charlotte, Camp Polk near Raleigh, and Camp Bragg near Fayetteville.

North Carolina’s industries worked hard to produce supplies needed for the war. Textile mills made uniforms, blankets, and

other materials for soldiers. North Carolina's furniture companies made furniture for the armed forces. One produced wooden propellers for airplanes. The tobacco industry supplied its products to the army as well. Many people moved from farms to cities like Charlotte, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem to work in factories. These cities became busy places during the war. Winston-Salem grew the most, more than doubling its population from 1910 to 1920.



Many women went to work in factories to support the war effort, which expanded their influence in the workforce.

## Women's Suffrage

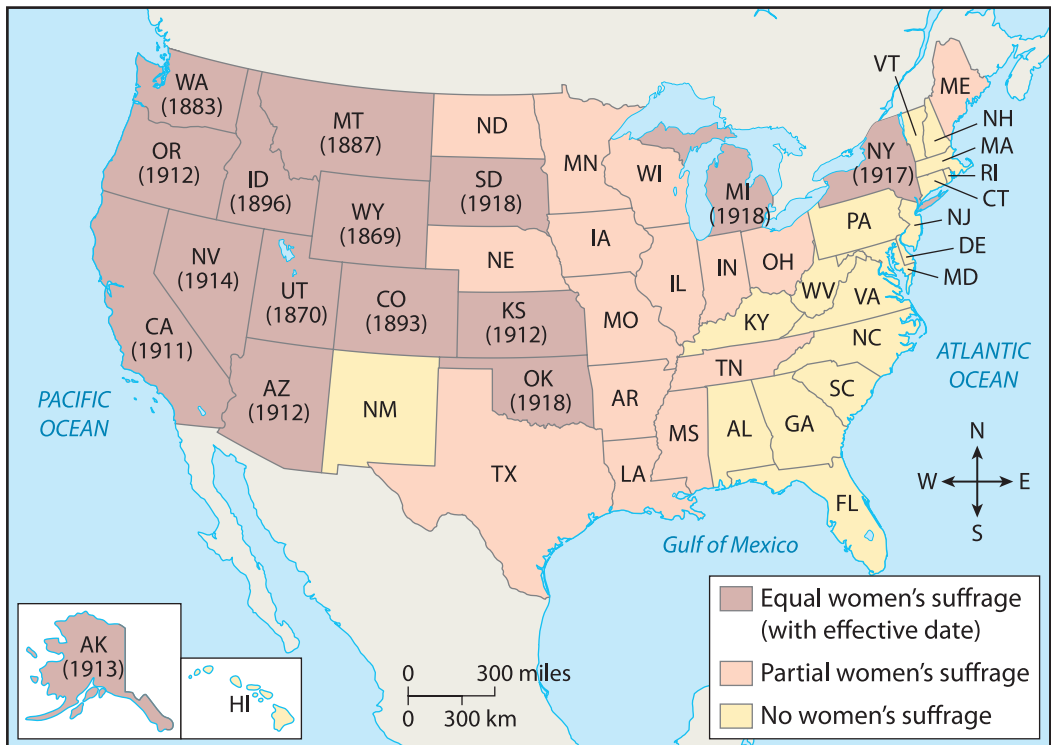
As women filled jobs left behind by men at war, the movement for equal rights grew stronger. An increasing number of women—and men—began to rally for women to have the right to vote.

The fight for women's suffrage had begun many decades before. In 1848, a group of women and men gathered in Seneca Falls, New York, to demand equal rights for women. They weren't just asking for better treatment—they were asking for something bold: the right to vote. At the time, many people thought the idea did not make sense or simply did not agree that women should have the right to vote.

For decades after the meeting, suffragists pushed for the right to vote.

Activists for women's suffrage came from many different walks of life. White women such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Alice Paul led national suffrage organizations. But they were not the only ones. Some African American women believed that women's suffrage could be a tool to gain other rights. In 1912, the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) joined the suffrage movement. Mary Church Terrell, one of its founding members, toured the country to lecture on the importance of winning the vote. Similarly, Nannie Helen Burroughs campaigned for voting rights at the

**Territories and States with Women's Suffrage, 1869–1919**



National Baptist Convention. Coralie Franklin Cook was a teacher and activist who fought for women’s right to vote and for equal rights for African Americans. She had been born into slavery in 1861. Cook was one of the first African American women to speak publicly about women’s suffrage and worked to make sure all women had a voice.

Women in other communities did the same. Mabel Ping-Hua Lee, a Chinese American, was praised for her work as a suffragist when she was just sixteen years old. She helped lead events like a suffrage parade in New York. Jovita Idár involved Hispanic women in the suffrage movement through the League of Mexican Women. During suffrage debates in New Mexico, Nina Otero-Warren made



Reformers from across the country and from many different groups worked tirelessly for decades to achieve suffrage for women.

sure that suffrage materials were printed in both Spanish and English. In 1922, she became the first Hispanic woman to run for the U.S. Congress.

In 1919, Congress passed a constitutional amendment granting women the right to vote. Three-fourths of the states had to ratify it for it to become part of the Constitution. In North Carolina, the debate was fierce. Women like Goldsboro's Gertrude Weil spoke at rallies and wrote to the state's leaders urging them to support the amendment. But not everyone agreed. Some argued that politics was unpleasant work that should be left to men. Others believed that women should focus on church and charity work. Some politicians opposed women's suffrage because they worried that it would upset the balance of power.

By the summer of 1920, only one more state needed to ratify the amendment for it to be approved. North Carolina's legislature did not vote to ratify it. In fact, North Carolina did not ratify the amendment until 1971. Tennessee lawmakers did ratify it in 1920, though, and the Nineteenth Amendment became law. After decades of activism, women across the country—including in North Carolina—finally had the right to vote.

## **The Roaring Twenties and Prohibition**

The 1920s was a time of great change in the United States, including North Carolina. World War I ended in 1918, and soldiers returned home. Women entered the workplace and secured the right to vote. After a brief downturn, the economy boomed. The decade became known as the Roaring Twenties.

Factories shifted back to producing goods for consumers. These goods included cars, radios, and household appliances. Businesses expanded. In North Carolina, jobs attracted people to cities like Charlotte, Winston-Salem, and Raleigh. These cities continued growing. The furniture industry began producing high-quality products at low prices. Production nearly doubled from 1919 to 1929. In the 1920s, North Carolina became the leading producer of textiles in the country.



The Roaring Twenties ushered in new styles of entertainment and clothing, like the flapper dress shown here.

Not everyone participated equally in the good times, however. Farmers, especially those in the Great Plains, suffered. African Americans in North Carolina continued to face discrimination under Jim Crow laws. African American citizens were denied their right to vote. Many of the postwar economic gains of the period were not enjoyed by North Carolina's African American population.

U.S. economic growth was accompanied by new social, technological, and cultural trends. Jazz music, radios, and movies became popular. Women's fashion changed dramatically. Some women, called flappers, cut their hair short and wore shorter dresses as a sign of independence. Some people welcomed these changes, but others worried about losing traditional values.

Another major change in the 1920s was a national ban on alcohol, called Prohibition. As you read earlier, North Carolina had a strong temperance movement in the early 1900s. It had banned the making and sale of alcohol within the state in 1908. The Eighteenth Amendment, which took effect in 1919, made it illegal to make, sell, or transport alcohol anywhere in the country. Supporters of Prohibition blamed alcohol for crime, poverty, and family problems. They thought that banning alcohol would create a safer and healthier society.

Prohibition did not work as expected, however. People found ways to get around the ban. Some people in North Carolina's mountains secretly produced illegal alcohol. Smugglers, called bootleggers, secretly transported and sold alcohol. Illegal bars opened where people could drink alcohol without getting caught. Prohibition also led to more crime, as gangs made money by selling alcohol despite the ban.

Many people came to think that Prohibition caused more problems than it solved. In 1933, the Twenty-First Amendment was ratified. It overturned the Eighteenth Amendment and ended Prohibition in most of the nation. However, North Carolina's state law remained in effect. Four years later, that ban was ended, and Prohibition was finally over in the state.

## The Great Depression in North Carolina

The Roaring Twenties ended suddenly—and badly. On October 29, 1929, the **stock** market in New York crashed, marking the start of the Great Depression.

### Vocabulary

**stock**, n. a share of ownership in a company

A stock market is where people can buy and sell stock, or shares of a company. When businesses do well, stock prices go up. That means investors can sell their stocks for a profit. During the 1920s, it seemed like the economy would keep growing. Many people bought stocks, hoping to gain wealth. Some even borrowed money from banks to buy shares.



The Great Depression had dragged on for nine long years when this photo was taken in 1938. African Americans and people in rural areas were among those hardest hit by this economic crisis.

In October 1929, however, stock prices dropped sharply. Large numbers of investors tried to sell their stocks, and stock prices fell even more. Some people lost their life savings overnight. The crisis spread through the whole economy. What became known as the Great Depression was the worst economic crisis the United States had ever seen.

North Carolina was hit hard. The state's economy depended on agriculture and manufacturing, both of which suffered greatly. Times were already tough for farmers in the western and central parts of the state. The prices of cotton and tobacco had been low for years. When the Depression hit, prices fell even lower. Many farmers lost their land because they could not repay the money they had borrowed. By 1933, farmers' income was less than half of what it had been in 1929.

The industrial areas of the Piedmont region faced different challenges. Factory workers had their pay and hours cut. People did not have enough money to buy goods, and many factories shut down. By 1933, about one in four workers in North Carolina was unemployed. Mountain and coastal regions were hit especially hard.

To help Americans, newly elected president Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced a plan called the New Deal. New Deal programs created jobs and provided support for people in need. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) put people to work building roads, schools, and parks. These jobs helped people earn money for food, clothing, and other needs.

New Deal programs changed the face of North Carolina. The CCC played an important role in building the Blue Ridge Parkway. That scenic highway winds through the Appalachian Mountains.

The WPA built 14,500 miles (23,335 km) of highways, roads, and streets and about 700 bridges in North Carolina. The WPA also planted trees, built **levees**, and restored oyster beds in the Outer Banks. Several of the buildings at North Carolina State

University were built through the New Deal as well. The Penderlea Homesteads in Pender County, in the southeastern part of the state, was the first of 152 New Deal homestead projects. These projects provided homes and farmland for struggling families. Their goal was to provide economic stability for farmers. The

### Vocabulary

**levee**, n. a raised area of land along a body of water built to prevent flooding

development was set up as a self-sufficient community with shared resources, schools, and markets. Penderlea Homesteads served as a model for similar projects.

Not everyone benefited equally from the New Deal, however.

Discrimination was present in both hiring for federal jobs and distributing federal aid. Some job and housing programs left out African Americans or paid them less than white workers. Many African American farm workers and sharecroppers received no federal aid at all.

Despite hardships, communities across North Carolina found ways to support one another. In rural areas, where New Deal aid was relatively limited, neighbors shared what they had. Churches often provided meals and clothing to people who needed them.

## Labor Movements and the Gastonia Strike

Textile mills had long been important to North Carolina's economy. However, these mills were crowded, noisy, and often dangerous. Workers toiled long hours—sometimes twelve hours a day, six days a week. Their wages were low, and machines in the mills were often unsafe. Accidents were common.



A chicken coop at Penderlea Homesteads photographed in 1935.



With more than 2,000 workers, the Loray Cotton Mill in Gastonia was North Carolina's largest textile mill when the workers went on strike in 1929.

Across the United States, workers began organizing for change. They believed that if they joined together, they could improve workplace conditions. To accomplish this goal, they formed labor unions. Workers in North Carolina's textile mills faced barriers to joining unions, however. Mill owners saw unions as a threat and worked to stop them. Many workers feared that union membership would cost them their jobs.

In 1929, however, workers at the Loray Mill in Gastonia took action. Two years before, the mill had cut the number of workers from 3,500 to just 2,200. It was still the largest mill in the state, though, which led the National Textile Workers Union to organize workers there. The mill responded by firing several workers who had tried to join the union. On April 1, Loray's workers went on strike. They refused to work until the mill agreed to a minimum wage of twenty dollars a week. Some reports suggest that Loray's workers had

been making about ten to fifteen dollars per week. In addition, factory workers in the South generally made less than those in the North. Workers felt this was unfair. The strikers also wanted equal pay for women and children and better working conditions for all.

At first, the strike was peaceful. As the days went by, tensions grew. The mill owners hired strikebreakers—temporary workers to replace those on strike. This made the situation worse. The strikers and strikebreakers began to fight. Local police tried to remove the union organizers from the area. The conflict then grew even worse, and two people—a pregnant worker named Ella May Wiggins and Gastonia’s police chief—were killed.

For workers in Gastonia, the strike did not change anything. Many of them lost their jobs, and the mill refused to make changes. However, the strike made national news. It called attention to the harsh conditions for workers in factories. Sinclair Lewis and Sherwood Anderson, who were well-known authors at the time, wrote articles about the strike. Other writers wrote novels with Gastonia as their setting. One example is *To Make My Bread* by Grace Lumpkin. Published in 1932, this novel provides a fictionalized account of hardships faced by mill workers in Gastonia. The strike became a milestone in the labor movement’s long road to securing better wages and working conditions.

## **North Carolina in World War II**

On the morning of December 7, 1941, U.S. sailors at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, were going about their daily routines. Suddenly, hundreds of Japanese warplanes filled the sky and began dropping bombs.

Within hours, twenty-one U.S. ships and three hundred aircraft were destroyed. More than 2,400 Americans lost their lives and another 1,104 were wounded in this surprise attack.

The next day, President Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan. Both the House and Senate voted overwhelmingly to do so. In response, Japan's allies, Germany and Italy, declared war on the United States. World War II had officially reached America.

The war had already been going on in Europe and Asia for years. Germany and Japan had been invading neighboring countries since the 1930s. They had formed an alliance called the Axis. Britain and France had declared war on Germany in 1939. They were later joined by the Soviet Union. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States joined Britain, France, and the Soviet Union as leaders of the Allies.

As in World War I, North Carolina stepped up to support the war effort. More than 362,000 North Carolinians joined the military. Fort Bragg, near Fayetteville, was a major training site for soldiers. Camp Lejeune, near Jacksonville, served the same purpose for U.S. Marines. Seymour Johnson Field (now Seymour Johnson Air Force Base) in Goldsboro trained pilots. The Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point, near Havelock, became one of the largest air stations in the world. In total, about two million people saw training in North Carolina.

Indigenous Americans from North Carolina also played an important role in the war, just like they had during World War I. Some took on special jobs while serving as soldiers. Members of the Cherokee tribe worked as code talkers, using their Native language to send messages that enemy troops could not



Several military bases in North Carolina, like Fort Bragg, helped train and equip soldiers who fought in WWII.

understand. They were among fourteen different tribes that took part in this special program. Their messages enabled U.S. forces to coordinate operations and relay information quickly and safely. The code talkers played a critical role in the success of the Allies.

More than 69,000 African Americans from North Carolina served bravely in World War II. Most were assigned to segregated units. They served as truck drivers, mechanics, engineers, and combat troops. Despite their service, they returned home to a country that still denied them equal rights. However, their sacrifices and experiences helped inspire the civil rights movement. In 1948, just three years after the war ended, President Harry Truman ordered

the **desegregation** of the U.S. military. This action paved the way for the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

At home during World War II, North Carolina's factories shifted to wartime production. They made airplane parts, weapons, and military uniforms. The state's shipyards built vessels to transport troops and supplies. One Wilmington shipyard turned out more than 230 ships in five years. Farmers increased food and cotton production to support the war effort. People also helped by **rationing** food, gas, and rubber, and by collecting scrap metal. As in World War I, many people raised money for the military. They also planted victory gardens to grow their own vegetables. This allowed a more farm products to go to people in the armed forces.

The war brought big changes to North Carolina. More people left farms and moved to Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, or other cities to take advantage of higher-paying jobs in factories. These cities grew further as a result. Some people found work building the homes needed to house all the newcomers.

Women also took on new roles. Just like they had during World War I, women proved they could do jobs once thought to be only for men. After the war, many women returned to focusing on their homes and families, but others stayed in the workforce.

World War II finally ended in 1945. Italy surrendered in 1943, followed by Germany in 1945. The fighting in the Pacific lasted a

## Vocabulary

**desegregation**, n. the process of ending segregation, or the separation of people based on race

**ration**, v. to carefully control how much of something people can have, especially when there isn't enough

few months longer. Then, in August, the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945, officially bringing World War II to a close.

The United States had entered the war while the effects of the Great Depression were still being felt. Jobs were hard to find. However, wartime production boosted the economy and put many people back to work. By the end of the war, North Carolina's economy had been transformed. The state was no longer mostly rural. It had more factories, bigger cities, and a much stronger economy than before the war began.

Still, challenges remained. African Americans and other minorities were still a long way from equality. The war had inspired them, however. They had newfound energy to demand equal rights. They had earned the respect of others. Those who had fought against injustice abroad were now ready to do so at home.



To help ensure that there was enough food for troops fighting overseas, Americans were encouraged to grow their own food in small plots at home.

# Chapter 9

## North Carolina in the Late 1900s

**Research Triangle Park** In the 1950s, North Carolina faced a big challenge. Farm income and factory wages were low. High-paying jobs were hard to find.

Business and government leaders worried about the future. A group of business leaders decided to use the world-class universities in Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and Durham to attract companies focused on research and innovation. They bought land near these three cities to build a new research park.

### **Big Question** .....

How did North Carolina change in the late twentieth century?



Research Triangle Park is the largest research park in the United States. It occupies seven thousand acres (28.3 sq km) in North Carolina and is home to more than three hundred companies.

With this vision in mind, leaders and investors marketed the area to science and technology companies. By the end of 1959, five companies had moved in. They were soon followed by larger and more well-known businesses. All were drawn by the opportunity to work with professors and students of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Raleigh's North Carolina State University, and Durham's Duke University.

The Research Triangle changed North Carolina's economy. The state soon became a leader in education, medicine, technology, and innovation. The Research Triangle also attracted many new people, creating a more diverse state.

## **Postwar Growth and Urbanization**

The creation of Research Triangle Park was part of North Carolina's immense overall economic growth after World War II. Soldiers returned home, families grew as many more children were born, and cities expanded.

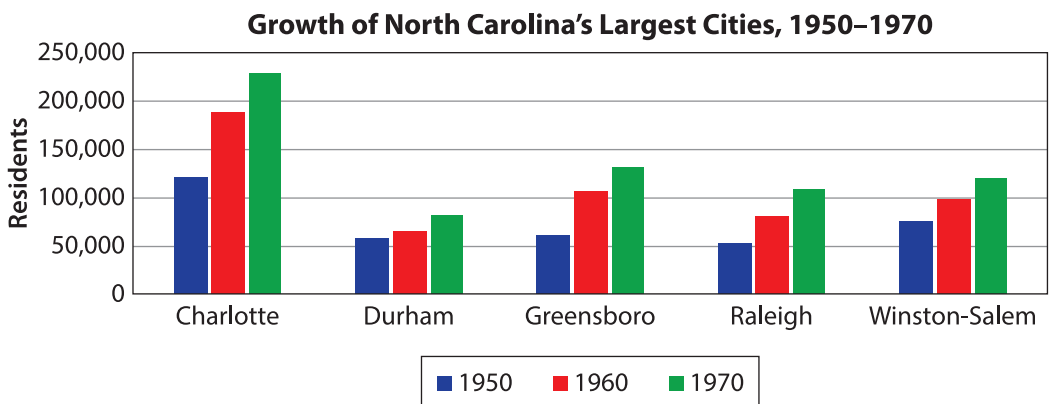
In the decades after the war, North Carolina's textile industry continued to grow. Factories produced fabrics and clothing for people across the United States. They also exported these goods to other countries. More than half of North Carolina's mills were located in its Piedmont region. This area continued to grow in population. Farther west, High Point and Hickory led the state's successful furniture industry. Tobacco farming remained a key industry, especially in and around Winston-Salem and Durham.

Transportation advances aided the state's economic growth. In 1956, a new law provided federal funding for an

**interstate highway** system. North Carolina built several new highways as part of this system. These highways made travel easier, allowing companies to ship goods faster. I-85 and I-40 became key transportation routes, linking North Carolina’s cities with the rest of the state and country. This system helped fuel the growth of existing industries. The highway system also helped new technology and medical companies expand.

**Vocabulary**  
**interstate highway**, n. a major highway that runs through more than one state

By the late 1900s, however, economic conditions had changed. Global competition increased. Goods were cheaper to make in other countries, where workers were not paid as much as American workers, and the cost of shipping goods internationally decreased. Many textile and furniture companies moved to these countries to make their products, and, as a result, several factories in North Carolina closed. The state’s economy continued to shift away from manufacturing toward technology, research, and



Source: Data from U.S. Census Bureau

**North Carolina’s postwar population growth was largely driven by the growth of its largest cities, all located in the Piedmont.**

banking. Charlotte, for example, built on its success as a center of banking and finance to become one of the country's leaders in that industry.



Suburbs, like this one near Charlotte, North Carolina, provided more property and green space than growing families could find within cities.

Improved transportation also made it easier for people to travel to work in cities. This led to the rise of **suburbs**. Families moved out of crowded city centers into new housing developments in surrounding areas, particularly around Charlotte, Raleigh, and Greensboro. This increased the demand for schools and shopping centers in suburban areas. New businesses rose to meet the demand. North Carolina, which began as a state built around farming and agriculture, saw most of its people living in cities and suburbs by the 1990s.

### Vocabulary

**suburb**, n. a town or small city within commuting, or easy traveling, distance of a large city

## The Civil Rights Movement and Social Change

Even as North Carolina's economy grew in the postwar years, African Americans struggled. Jim Crow laws limited their rights. These laws affected almost every area of daily life. African Americans were segregated with regard to restaurants, movie theaters, restrooms, and public services such as transportation and

even drinking fountains. African American students were required to attend segregated schools. In the 1890s, the U.S. Supreme Court had decided that “separate but equal” facilities were legal. In reality, public services, which are funded by a government, were always separate but rarely equal. Facilities for African Americans were usually much worse than those for white people. African American schools generally were in poor condition. Classrooms often had few books or supplies. Meanwhile, literacy tests and poll taxes kept the vast majority of African American citizens from voting. In the 1940s and 1950s, African American activists launched the civil rights movement to try to end these injustices.

One early victory for the movement came in 1954, with the Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The case centered around segregated schools. In its decision, the Supreme Court ruled that segregated schools violated the Constitution. It ordered state governments to **integrate** schools as quickly as possible. Many Southern states, including North Carolina, delayed making changes.

### Vocabulary

**integrate**, v. to end a policy that keeps apart people of different races; to make a place open to everyone

People disagreed about how to move forward. Some African American leaders believed that instead of integrating schools, the state should invest more money into improving African American schools. Others worried that African American students would face anger and unfair treatment in integrated schools. This fear was realized when the first African American students to attend integrated schools were greeted with threats, protests, and even violence.

As segregation was ended by the courts, some white people used violence and intimidation to resist what they saw as unwanted changes to society. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a white supremacist group that dated back to Reconstruction, gained new members in the late 1950s. The KKK used threats and violence to try to stop integration. Hooded members targeted African American families and anyone else who supported desegregation, regardless of race.

In Robeson County, the KKK also targeted the Lumbee people. This Native American group had lived in North Carolina for hundreds of years. They made up about one-third of Robeson County's population. The Klan wanted to keep them out of white schools and did not want the Lumbee to have relationships with their white neighbors. On January 18, 1958, about one hundred Klan members held a rally to scare the Lumbee. A group of Lumbee men surrounded the Klan. Several young Lumbee shot guns into the air, scaring off the KKK members. This event was a rare victory against the racially motivated hatred of the era.

The Lumbee also fought to be officially recognized by the federal government as a Native American tribe. This recognition would get them help from the federal government, such as funding for education, health care, and housing. It would also allow the Lumbee people to largely govern themselves. In 1956, the U.S. government recognized the Lumbee, but it did not give them full tribal status. This meant that the Lumbee still could not make their own laws. In 2025, the U.S. government finally granted them full tribal status.

The Lumbee were not the only ones to stand up against hate and discrimination. In Greensboro in 1960, four courageous African

American students from North Carolina A&T State University sat at a whites-only lunch counter at a Woolworth's department store. The servers refused to serve them, but the students refused to leave. This was the first **sit-in**. The students—and others who joined them—came back several days in a row. White people who opposed this action also began showing up. They screamed at the students and called them names. The students kept showing up every day and sitting quietly. Soon, similar protests spread across the country. The store began to lose money. Finally, it gave in. The Greensboro Woolworth's began serving African Americans and white people at the same counter on July 25, 1960.

### Vocabulary

**sit-in**, n. a type of nonviolent protest in which protestors sit down in a place and refuse to move



The Greensboro sit-in inspired similar protests, like this one in Charlotte on February 9, 1960.

As more sit-ins and marches took place, the police were often called in. Many times, they arrested protestors even if they were peaceful. In May 1963, for example, more than one hundred students in Raleigh were arrested while marching peacefully. That same month, more than one thousand African American students demonstrated in Fayetteville. Protests continued for many months. National media coverage of the protests and the arrests brought attention to the civil rights movement.

African American churches played a critical role in this movement. Churches provided a safe place to meet. They provided moral support to protestors. Churches often provided help for those who were arrested. Ministers became leading advocates for change. One of the civil rights movement's leaders was Martin Luther King Jr. King was a reverend and a Baptist minister who advocated for peaceful, nonviolent **civil disobedience**. Religious ideas about fairness and loving one's neighbors began to guide the civil rights movement.

### Vocabulary

**civil disobedience**, n. refusal to follow the law or government because it goes against one's conscience; an act of protest

One of the most influential civil rights leaders in North Carolina was Reginald Hawkins. A dentist and a minister, Hawkins became known for his strong stands against racism and discrimination. He led protests, filed lawsuits, and spoke out for equal rights. In 1968, Hawkins became the first African American candidate to run for governor of North Carolina since Reconstruction. Hawkins lost the election, but his campaign inspired other African American politicians.

While Hawkins worked for change in North Carolina, fellow North Carolinian Ella Baker was shaping the national movement. In 1960, she founded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) at Shaw University. The SNCC played a major role in the civil rights movement. It engaged young people in sit-ins, voter registration drives, and protests across the South.

After years of challenges, the civil rights movement won some major victories. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act. This law ended segregation in public places and discrimination in housing and employment. That same year, the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified. It banned poll taxes in federal elections. A year later, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. It ended literacy tests and gave new protections to African Americans wishing to register as voters and cast their votes. These laws helped move the country closer to equality and the ideals outlined in the Declaration of Independence.

## The Cold War

After World War II ended in 1945, a new kind of global conflict began. The United States and the Soviet Union had worked together during the war, but they had very different ideas about government, freedom, and economics. The United States believed in democracy. It was also based on **capitalism** and private property. The Soviet Union was a **communist** country.

### Vocabulary

**capitalism**, n. an economic system in which resources and businesses are privately owned and prices are not controlled by the government

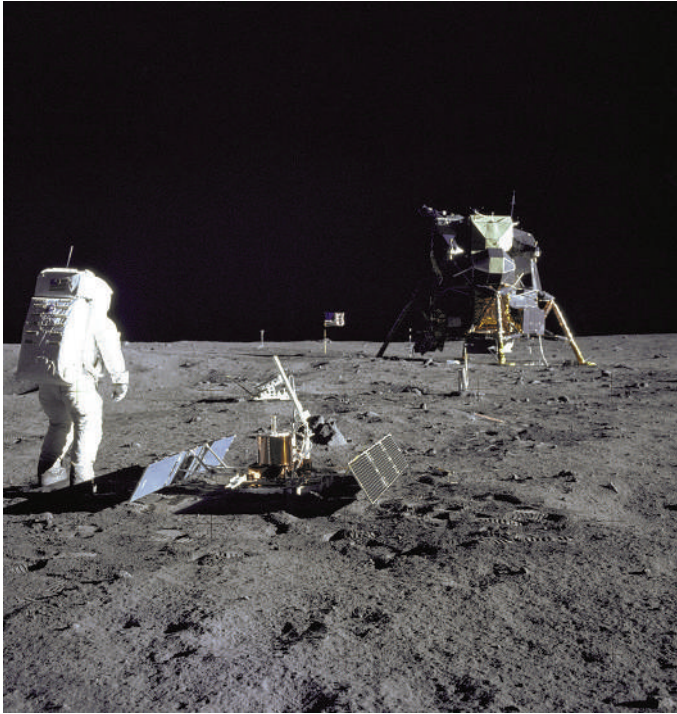
**communist**, adj. relating to communism, an economic system based on community ownership of property and industry

One political party, the Communist Party, controlled all political power. The government owned all businesses and controlled the economy. Both countries wanted to spread their way of life and system of government to the rest of the world. Neither country trusted the other. They competed to gain influence and control over other countries. This struggle became known as the Cold War.

It was called a “cold” war because the two countries never faced each other directly in battle, as in a “hot” war. Instead, it was a war of ideas, threats, and competition. The two countries stockpiled arms, including nuclear weapons. They also struggled for power and influence in other ways. For example, each sought to prove it was superior by being the first in space. This rivalry led to the space race, where both nations worked to send satellites and astronauts into space.

The Cold War was hardly peaceful. Many “hot” wars were fought all over the world. At the end of World War II, Korea was divided into two areas. North Korea was supported by the Soviet Union, and South Korea was backed by the United States. In 1950, North Korean troops invaded the southern part of Korea. The United States sent troops to defend South Korea. After three years of war, a ceasefire, ending the fighting. Korea is still divided today.

A similar conflict happened in Vietnam. After World War II, Vietnam was divided into communist North Vietnam and a noncommunist South Vietnam. Fighting between the two sides began in 1955, when North Vietnam tried to unite the country under its rule. The United States supported South Vietnam, first



**In the space race, the United States aimed to prove it had superior technology. In July 1969, Americans Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin (shown here) became the first people to walk on the moon.**

by sending military advisors and supplies. Starting in 1964, the United States became deeply involved in the war, sending troops who fought communist forces. By 1968, more than 500,000 U.S. troops were in Vietnam. As the war dragged on, it became increasingly unpopular. Many

Americans began to protest the war. In 1973, the United States withdrew its forces. Two years later, North Vietnam invaded South Vietnam and united the country under communist rule.

The Cold War had a major impact on North Carolina. Thousands of people from the state were sent to fight in Korea or Vietnam. The state continued to be home to several important military bases. Military personnel trained at Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base, Camp Lejeune, and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base. These bases brought thousands of military families to the state. New businesses opened near the bases to serve soldiers and their families. This helped North Carolina's economy to grow and attracted more people to move to the state for jobs.

One of the scariest moments of the Cold War happened in North Carolina. In 1961, a B-52 bomber carrying two nuclear bombs broke apart in the sky over Goldsboro. A nuclear bomb is a very powerful weapon that can create a huge explosion. One of the bombs almost exploded, but, luckily, that was prevented.

The Vietnam War also had a lasting impact on the makeup of North Carolina. Shortly after the United States withdrew its troops, many Vietnamese people fled South Vietnam. The federal government helped some of them move to the United States. Those getting this help included a group called the Montagnards. The Montagnards had helped American soldiers during the war. Many Montagnard families settled in North Carolina. Today, the state is home to the largest Montagnard population outside Vietnam. Montagnard traditions contribute to North Carolina's cultural diversity.

## **Hurricane Floyd and Environmental Challenges**

The Cold War ended when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. In the years that followed, North Carolina faced another kind of challenge: the weather.

On September 16, 1999, Hurricane Floyd slammed into the coast of North Carolina. It brought heavy rain, strong winds, and flooding. People had prepared for the storm, but no one expected it to be so devastating. Rainfall continued for several days. In some places, heavy rain lasted five days. Rivers overflowed, putting entire towns under water. Thousands of people had to be rescued by boats and helicopters. Thirty-six North Carolinians lost their lives.



Hurricane Floyd grew in size and strength as it moved across the Atlantic Ocean toward the coast. People in coastal areas of North Carolina braced for the storm.

When the rain finally stopped, the damage was enormous.

Thousands of North Carolinians had lost their homes.

Floodwaters had carried waste and pollution into rivers.

Drinking water had become unsafe for people and animals. Floods had also destroyed crops and livestock, putting farmers out of business. The loss of farms would hurt the state's economy.

The storm also showed the strength of North Carolina's people. After the storm, federal, state, and local governments came together to help. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided money and supplies to help people rebuild. State and local officials organized cleanup and rebuilding work. Many individuals volunteered to help as well. Rescue workers, police officers, and volunteers set up shelters for displaced families who had nowhere else to go.

Hurricane Floyd also taught North Carolinians about the need to protect the environment and plan for disasters. The state government worked to improve emergency plans so that the state would be ready for future hurricanes. The government also worked with scientists and engineers to build stronger levees, improve drainage, and reduce pollution. The hope was that these steps would make the state safer and better prepared for future challenges.

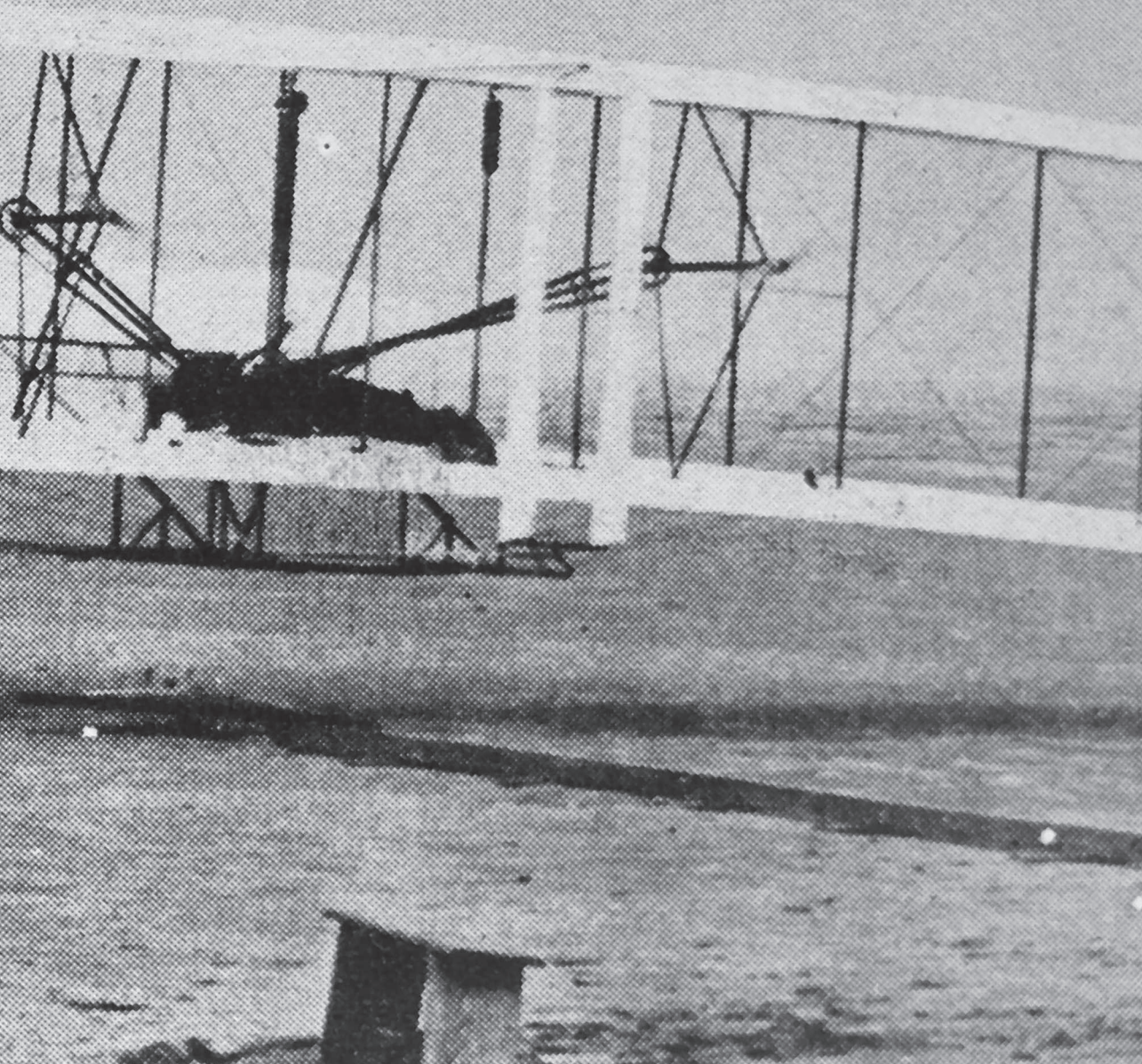
# Chapter 10

## North Carolina in the Twenty-First Century

**Celebrating a First** In 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright built a small airplane in their Ohio bicycle shop. They named it the Flyer. To test it, they needed a flat, windy place. They chose Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. After several trial runs, on December 17, 1903, Orville flew the Flyer for twelve seconds. This was the world's first piloted flight.

### **Big Question**.....

What challenges and changes face North Carolina in the twenty-first century?



North Carolina became the birthplace of flight when the Wright brothers' Flyer took off near Kitty Hawk on December 17, 1903.

In 2003, people gathered at Kitty Hawk to celebrate this first flight. The **centennial** celebration drew people from around the world. President George W. Bush and astronaut Neil Armstrong—the first person to walk on the moon—gave speeches. Other astronauts, **aviation** experts, and members of the Wright family also attended. The event featured air shows, exhibits, and a model of the Flyer built from the Wright brothers' design.

### Vocabulary

**centennial**, n.  
a celebration of something that happened 100 years ago

**aviation**, n. the business or practice of flying airplanes and helicopters

North Carolina's role in aviation has grown since that first flight. The state's military air bases help train pilots and support national defense. Aviation milestones in North Carolina include Tiny Broadwick's historic achievement in 1913 as the first woman to parachute from a plane and the establishment of Pope Field, a military airfield that remains active today. Piedmont Airlines was founded in Winston-Salem in 1948 and operated until its merger with US Airways in 1989.

More recently, North Carolina's contributions to space exploration were highlighted in 2019 when astronaut Christina Koch, a graduate of North Carolina State University, set a record for the longest spaceflight by a woman (328 days) and participated in the first all-female spacewalk. Companies like Boom Supersonic have chosen North Carolina, particularly Greensboro, for its skilled workforce, top universities, and strong aviation **supply chain**. From its

### Vocabulary

**supply chain**, n.  
the entire process of making and selling goods, including every stage from the supply of materials to the manufacture of the goods and how they are sold

“First in Flight” legacy to its ongoing contributions to aviation and space exploration, North Carolina’s past achievements continue to shape its future as an innovative leader.

## **Economic Growth and Change**

As you have read, North Carolina’s economy has changed greatly over time. In the 1700s and 1800s, the state was known for tobacco farms and tar supplies. After the Industrial Revolution, it became famous for textile mills and furniture factories. Today, it is a leader in technology, finance, and research.

One major change has been the rise of Charlotte as a banking center. As of 2024, Charlotte was the second-largest banking hub in the country after New York City. Bank of America and Truist are headquartered in Charlotte. Banking is the third-largest industry in the state in terms of the value that it produces each year. The Research Triangle has also grown into one of the world’s leading centers for technology and medical research. These industries provide thousands of jobs.



In Murphy, North Carolina, solar panels generate electricity directly from sunlight.



Wind turbines generate electricity from strong ocean breezes in North Carolina’s Outer Banks.

North Carolina is also a leader in **renewable energy**. The state is a major producer of **solar energy**. Large solar farms across the state supply electric power for homes and businesses. Wind energy is increasing too, especially along the coast. Offshore wind projects aim to generate electricity to reduce the use of **fossil fuels**.

**Tourism** is also growing. Each year, millions of visitors come to enjoy the state's beaches, mountains, and cities. The Outer Banks and Blue Ridge Parkway are popular destinations for outdoor activities. Historic sites such as the Biltmore Estate and the Wright Brothers National Memorial attract history lovers. NASCAR is another draw. North Carolina is home to 90 percent of NASCAR teams and over 1,000 related businesses. The NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte celebrates the sport's history. Big races, like the NASCAR All-Star Race, attract large crowds and bring millions of dollars to the state. Tourism creates jobs in hotels, restaurants, and entertainment. Many women, as well as African American, Hispanic, and Asian workers in Charlotte, take on these jobs. Overall, tourism has become a key part of the state's economy, with visitors spending a record \$36.7 billion in 2024.

The changing economy has also brought challenges. Many textile mills and furniture factories have closed. Tobacco has been mostly

## Vocabulary

**renewable energy**, n. energy that comes from natural sources that won't run out, such as the sun, wind, and water

**solar energy**, n. energy captured from sunlight

**fossil fuel**, n. fuel, such as oil, natural gas, and coal, formed in the earth from the remains of living things

**tourism**, n. the business of providing services—such as places to stay, eat, and play—for people who are traveling



This display from Charlotte's NASCAR Hall of Fame shows the excitement of auto racing that draws many fans to North Carolina.

replaced by such crops as soybeans, corn, and sweet potatoes. As industries change, some workers have trouble finding new jobs. Cities like Charlotte and Raleigh are growing quickly. This increases the demand for housing, which in turn raises housing costs. Prices for goods and services have also gone up, making city life more expensive.

## Population and Demographics

North Carolina is one of the fastest-growing states in the country. In 2025, about 10.9 million people lived in North Carolina—up from 8 million in 2020. Many people have moved there from other states and countries for jobs. Others come to attend the state's many colleges and sometimes choose to remain in the state. Many

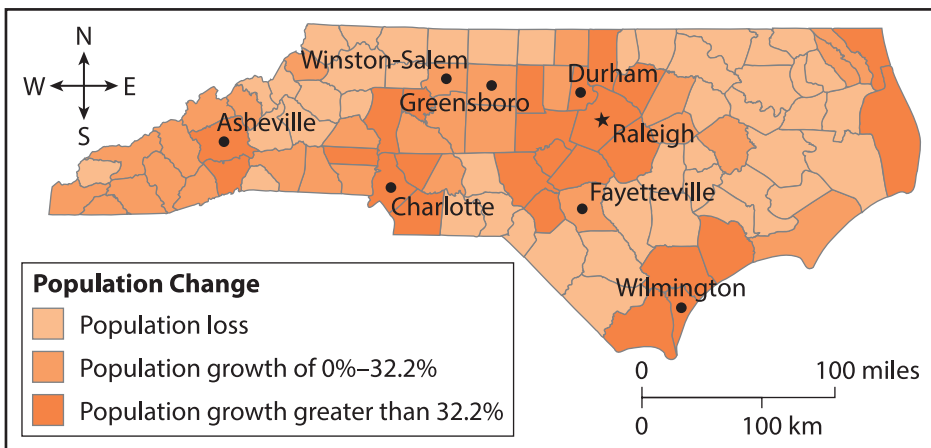
come because North Carolina has a lower cost of living compared to their previous locations.

The state's population growth is uneven, however. Most new residents settle in cities where the banking, technology, and health care industries are growing. Some rural areas have fewer people than a decade ago. Experts predict that nearly half of North Carolina's counties will continue to lose population. One reason is the decline in industries like agriculture and furniture making.

The migration of retired people has also changed the state's population. The population aged 65 and older grew from 13 percent in 2010 to 17.4 percent in 2022. Many retired people are settling in scenic places along the coast or in mountain towns like Asheville.

Change brings both opportunities and challenges. Growing cities need better roads and more housing, schools, and public services.

**Projected Population Change in North Carolina's Counties, 2021–2050**



As shown on the map, forty-six of North Carolina's one hundred counties are expected to have fewer people in 2050 than they had in 2021.

The need to build these roads and buildings translates into jobs for construction workers. Rural areas, meanwhile, must find ways to attract new residents or adjust to having fewer people. How the state and its communities handle these challenges will shape the future.

## **Culture and Diversity**

North Carolina's culture has also changed. As people from different backgrounds have moved to the state, its towns and cities have become more diverse. Today, North Carolina is home to many racial and ethnic groups, including African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Indigenous peoples such as the Lumbee tribe. Their different customs and perspectives all contribute to North Carolina's identity.

North Carolina has made progress, but there are still opportunities for growth. Experts point out that there are far fewer women than men in government. The state has had only one female governor: Beverly Perdue, who served from 2009 to 2013. In 2003, Elizabeth Dole became the first woman to represent North Carolina in the U.S. Senate. She only served one term, however.

Some activists have pushed for social change. One example is the "Moral Mondays" protests led by Rev. William Barber. Beginning in 2013, protestors met every Monday to demonstrate at the state legislature. They called for more funding for schools, better access to health care, and increased wages for workers. Over time, thousands of people joined them, including teachers, doctors, and faith leaders. The protests gained national attention and spurred

similar actions in other states. While the weekly demonstrations slowed after 2017, the movement has found other ways to be active.

North Carolina has a rich and diverse culture. It has roots in a number of musical genres, from bluegrass and country to hip-hop and gospel. Famous musicians from the state include singer and pianist Nina Simone, guitar player and songwriter Doc Watson, and rapper J. Cole. Barbecue is an important part of the state's food culture. Festivals in different parts of the state celebrate special flavors and styles. The barbecue festival held in Lexington attracts about 200,000 visitors each year. Other festivals honor other sides of North Carolina's history and culture. The North Carolina Sweetpotato Festival, for example, highlights the state's role as the country's top sweet potato producer.

North Carolina offers many ways to have fun outdoors. People enjoy hiking in the mountains, fishing in lakes and rivers, and swimming and boating along the coast. State and national parks provide places to explore nature. Jockey's Ridge State Park, for example, is home to the tallest sand dune system on the Atlantic coast. People enjoy sliding down the huge dunes.

Watching sports is another popular pastime. Many North Carolinians follow college basketball. Fans of Duke University, the University of North Carolina, and North Carolina State flock to games these schools play. Games between these teams draw huge crowds. Thanks in part to new residents from northern states, hockey has also become popular. Fans were thrilled when the Carolina Hurricanes won the Stanley Cup in 2006.

# The Impact of National and Global Events on North Carolina

Events across both the country and the world have had an impact on the state. One of the most significant events in recent history was the **terrorist** attack of September 11, 2001, known as 9/11. On that day, terrorists hijacked four airplanes.

**Vocabulary**  
.....  
**terrorist**, n. a person who uses violence against civilians to achieve political goals

They crashed two into the Twin Towers in New York City, causing the buildings to collapse. Another plane hit the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The Pentagon is home to the U.S. Department of Defense. Passengers on the fourth plane fought the hijackers, causing the plane to crash in Pennsylvania without reaching its target. It was aimed at the U.S. Capitol.

The 9/11 attacks shocked Americans. The United States launched military actions against the terrorist group that carried out the attack. Many people from North Carolina served in these wars. Military bases like Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune increased security and readiness. Fort Bragg served as a primary deployment base for the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division, which was sent to Afghanistan in late 2001 as part of the U.S. response to the 9/11 attacks. Camp Lejeune was home to Marine Corps units that also deployed to both Afghanistan and Iraq in the early 2000s.

As North Carolina supported these military efforts, it also faced economic challenges. In 2008, a banking crisis caused many people to lose their jobs and homes. By 2010, the state’s unemployment rate was 10.9 percent. Gas prices shot up past

\$4.00, per gallon and stations started running out of gas. In North Carolina, rural areas and manufacturers were the hardest hit. The crisis also hurt the economy of Charlotte, where banking is so important. In 2007, the city was home to eight major banks; soon, Bank of America was the only one that remained. This decline had a ripple effect. Construction projects in the downtown area came to a screeching halt. It would take almost a decade for the city to regain its losses.

Then, in 2020, the country was rocked by a health crisis. Early in the year, a new disease, COVID-19, began to spread through the population. From 2020 to 2023, the state had more than 3.5 million cases of the disease. Nearly thirty thousand people in North Carolina died in that time. Several companies developed vaccines that could lower the risk of getting COVID-19 or of having a severe case. Doctors also found methods to treat people who had the disease. These steps helped slow the spread of COVID-19.

Public health officials closed schools across the state to try to stop the spread of the disease. Schools switched to remote learning. Students and their families spent days, weeks, and even months at home. Many people reported feeling isolated and lonely.

The disease also hurt the state's economy. To slow the spread of the disease, the government closed businesses and limited travel. These rules led to shortages of goods, such as food and supplies, and caused delays in shipping. The supply shortages caused the prices of many items to increase. Even after the worst of the pandemic was over, prices rose rapidly. These rising prices made



One effort to preserve North Carolina's natural heritage is a program to bring red wolves back to eastern North Carolina.

it harder for families and businesses to meet basic needs. State leaders have worked to help North Carolinians adjust and keep the economy strong.

North Carolina has also faced environmental challenges. As the state's population grows, communities must find ways to protect their natural resources and wildlife. Protecting wetlands, forests, and other natural spaces is crucial for the many species that call North Carolina home, including migratory birds, deer, and the endangered Carolina northern flying squirrel. In the mountains, rapid development threatens habitats for species like the eastern box turtle and the Appalachian elktoe, a rare freshwater mussel. On the coast, sea turtles, such as the threatened loggerhead, rely on protected beaches for nesting. Coastal wetlands also

provide vital habitats for fish and birds. Efforts to bring back red wolves have become a symbol of the state's commitment to wildlife preservation.

Pollution is another concern. Factories and cars can harm air, water, and land quality. State leaders balance the desire for economic development with the need to provide a clean and healthy environment for today's residents and future generations.

Another environmental concern is hurricanes. One of the costliest storms to strike the state was 2018's Hurricane Florence. It caused severe flooding and destruction in the southeastern part of the state. Then, in 2019, Hurricane Dorian battered the Outer Banks, washing away roads and homes.

Most of the impact from hurricanes is usually felt along the coast, but in September 2024, Hurricane Helene did damage far inland. It slammed into the state's mountain region, dumping rain for days. Water collected in the steep valleys and foothills, leading to flash floods and landslides. Roads washed away, and falling trees brought down power lines. Some mountain towns were cut off from help for days.

But the people of North Carolina are resilient. They come together with their neighbors to rebuild. After Hurricane Florence, volunteers from across the state came to New Bern to help rebuild homes and clean up debris. Local churches, businesses, and organizations also held fundraisers and provided shelter for people displaced by the storm. State and local governments also have helped. The state has improved its systems for responding to emergencies and issued new building codes. Towns in the

mountains have created new emergency plans. Coastal communities are also working to slow beach **erosion** and prepare for rising sea levels.

Another major environmental challenge is related to **fracking**. Fracking has developed as a way to increase the supply of oil and natural gas. In short, it breaks apart underground rock to release these resources. It can help create jobs and boost the economy. But fracking also poses risks to the environment. Fracking can damage fresh water supplies, pollute land, and harm wildlife habitats. As the state's energy needs grow, North Carolina will need to find ways to meet them without causing lasting environmental harm.

**Vocabulary**

**erosion**, n. the carrying away of soil and rock by water, ice, or wind

**fracking**, n. a way to get fossil fuels from deep underground

North Carolina has changed in many ways. Its cities have expanded. Communities have come together to meet the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse population. New industries have created jobs to replace those lost in farming, textiles, and woodworking.

No one can predict the future, but one thing is certain: The state will change. New challenges will arise, and new solutions will be needed to meet them. As a resident of North Carolina, you have the opportunity to contribute to its progress. Whether you focus on environmental protection, advancements in technology, or improving education, your actions will help shape North Carolina's future. What challenges will you face, and what role will you play in solving the problems of tomorrow?

# Glossary

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## A

**abolitionism, n.** the movement to end slavery in the 1700s and 1800s [52]

**adapt, v.** to change to fit a new situation [32]

**agriculture, n.** the growing of crops and raising of livestock for food and other purposes [6]

**archaeologist, n.** an expert in the study of ancient people and the objects from their time period that remain [28]

**artifact, n.** an object used during a past period of history [28]

**assimilate, v.** to adopt the culture or traditions of another group [93]

**aviation, n.** the business or practice of flying airplanes and helicopters [136]

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## B

**barrier island, n.** a long, narrow island lying parallel to the shore that protects the mainland from storms [6]

**blockade, n.** a military strategy aimed at preventing people and goods from entering or leaving an area [79]

**boycott, n.** a form of organized protest in which people refuse to buy goods or have anything to do with a particular group or country [57]

**budget, n.** a plan for how money will be spent [25]

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## C

**canal, n.** a channel dug by people, used by boats or for irrigation [65]

**capitalism, n.** an economic system in which resources and businesses are privately owned and prices are not controlled by the government [129]

**casualty, n.** a person killed, wounded, injured, or missing in wartime [79]

**centennial, n.** a celebration of something that happened 100 years ago [136]

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**civil disobedience, n.** refusal to follow the law or government because it goes against one's conscience; an act of protest [128]

**communist, adj.** relating to communism, an economic system based on community ownership of property and industry [129]

**cure, v.** to preserve meat, fish, or other food by smoking, drying, or salting it [68]

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## D

**delegate, n.** a representative [57]

**democracy, n.** a form of government in which people choose their leaders; a country with this form of government [18]

**descendant, n.** someone who is related to a person or group of people who lived in the past [51]

**desegregation, n.** the process of ending segregation, or the separation of people based on race [118]

**discrimination, n.** unfair treatment of a person or group because of beliefs about that group of people [90]

**diverse, adj.** having many different types or parts [4]

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## E

**erosion, n.** the carrying away of soil and rock by water, ice, or wind [147]

**exempt, adj.** excused from the reach of a law or rule [78]

**export, v.** to send goods to another country to sell [11]

**extinct, adj.** having died out completely [31]

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## F

**federal, adj.** relating to a system of government in which the national government shares power with other levels of government, such as state governments; it can also refer to the national government of the United States [20]

**fertile, adj.** able to grow a large amount of crops [6]

**financial literacy, n.** the ability to understand how money is used and handled in order to make informed decisions about spending and saving [26]

**forager, n.** a person who finds food by collecting it from wild plants [32]

**fossil fuel, n.** fuel, such as oil, natural gas, and coal, formed in the earth from the remains of living things [138]

**fracking, n.** a way to get fossil fuels from deep underground [147]

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## G

**governor, n.** the elected leader of a state in the United States [16]

---

## H

**high-tech, adj.** using advanced technology, such as electronics and computers [12]

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## I

**immigration, n.** the act of moving from one country to another to live [14]

**immunity, n.** the body's ability to remain free of illness even after being exposed to the cause of the illness [44]

**import, v.** to bring in goods from another country or state [11]

**industry, n.** a group of businesses that manufacture a product or provide a service [10]

**infrastructure, n.** the public works system that includes roads, bridges, water, public transportation, etc. [64]

**integrate, v.** to end a policy that keeps apart people of different races; to make a place open to everyone [125]

**interstate highway, n.** a major highway that runs through more than one state [123]

---

## J

**jury, n.** a group of people who listen to information presented during a trial in a court and make decisions about whether someone is guilty or innocent [23]

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## L

**labor union, n.** a group of workers who join together to make sure their rights are protected [97]

**levee, n.** a raised area of land along a body of water built to prevent flooding [112]

**literacy test, n.** a test to measure whether people could read, which citizens had to pass before they could vote [92]

---

## M

**mandatory, adj.** required [100]

**militia, n.** a group of armed citizens prepared for military service at any time [56]

**monopoly, n.** a situation in which one person, country, or company has complete control of the supply of a good or service [99]

---

## N

**natural resource, n.** something from nature that is useful to humans [5]

**nomadic, adj.** moving around often in search of food; not settled in one place [30]

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## P

**persecution, n.** cruel and unfair treatment of a group of people [44]

**plantation, n.** a large farm where cash crops are grown on behalf of the person who owns the land [45]

**poll tax, n.** a fee people had to pay in order to vote [92]

**proprietor, n.** a person who owns or is in charge of something, such as land or a business [42]

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## R

**ratify, v.** to approve [62]

**ration, v.** to carefully control how much of something people can have, especially when there isn't enough [118]

**renewable energy, n.** energy that comes from natural sources that won't run out, such as the sun, wind, and water [138]

**reservation, n.** an area of land set aside by the government for Native Americans to live [71]

**resilience, n.** the ability to recover from hardship or difficult conditions [71]

**revival, n.** a movement marked by renewed religious interest [52]

**rural, adj.** of or relating to the countryside [6]

---

## S

**scarcity, n.** a limitation to the amount of a resource, good, or service [10]

**sectionalism, n.** strong loyalty to one's region and its interests, often to the exclusion of the interests of other regions [75]

**segregation, n.** the act of keeping people separate, usually on the basis of race [86]

**sharecropper, n.** a farmer who works land owned by someone else and pays the landowner with a portion of the crops they grow [85]

**sit-in, n.** a type of nonviolent protest in which protestors sit down in a place and refuse to move [127]

**solar energy, n.** energy captured from sunlight [138]

**sound, n.** a large, shallow body of water [42]

**sovereign, adj.** having the right to govern oneself [22]

**spiritual, n.** a type of religious song marked by strong emotions that developed in African American churches [91]

**state legislature, n.** the part of state government responsible for making laws for the state [19]

**states' rights, n.** political powers that belong to state governments under the Constitution; also, the belief that the federal government should have less power and state governments should have more power [75]

**stock, n.** a share of ownership in a company [110]

**subsistence, n.** just enough food to keep a person alive [46]

**suburb, n.** a town or small city within commuting, or easy traveling, distance of a large city [124]

**suffrage, n.** the right to vote [94]

**supply chain, n.** the entire process of making and selling goods, including every stage from the supply of materials to the manufacture of the goods and how they are sold [136]

**symbol, n.** an object or picture that stands for something else [9]

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## T

**temperance, n.** the practice of drinking little or no alcohol [94]

**terrorist, n.** a person who uses violence against civilians to achieve political goals [143]

**tourism, n.** the business of providing services—such as places to stay, eat, and play—for people who are traveling [138]

**turnpike, n.** a road with a gate that people had to pay a toll to pass through [65]

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## U

**urban, adj.** of or relating to a city [7]



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