

Virginia: Reconstruction and Life in Virginia Today

After Reconstruction, Virginia changed from a rural, agricultural society to a more urban, industrial society and Virginia's cities began to grow.

Terms to Know

- *rural*: life in the country/open farmlands
- *urban*: life in the city

During the early 20th century, agriculture began to change.

- Old systems of farming were no longer effective.
- Crop prices were low.

Growth of Virginia's cities

- People moved from rural to urban areas and from many other states for economic opportunities.
- Technological developments in transportation, roads, railroads, and streetcars helped cities grow.
- Coal mining encouraged the growth of Virginia towns and cities as people moved across Virginia to find jobs.
- During the 20th century, northern Virginia experienced growth due to increases in the number of federal jobs (government) located in the region.
- In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, northern Virginia and the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) region grew due to computer technology industries.
- Virginia changed from a rural, agricultural society to a more urban, industrial society.



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Thomas Woodrow Wilson and George C. Marshall had an impact on international events.

Thomas Woodrow Wilson

- He was born in Staunton, Virginia.
- He was a 20th century President of the United States.
- He wrote a plan for world peace at the end of World War I.
- His plan earned him a Nobel Peace Prize.



George C. Marshall

- He was a military leader.
- He created an economic plan to ensure world peace (*The Marshall Plan*).
- His plan earned him a Nobel Peace Prize.



Virginia: Reconstruction and Life in Virginia Today

During the 20th century, Virginia struggled over the issue of Civil Rights. After World War II, African Americans demanded equal treatment and the recognition of their rights as American citizens. As a result of the Civil Rights Movement, laws were passed that made racial discrimination illegal.

Terms to Know

- *integration*: full equality of all races in the use of public places
- *desegregation*: abolishment of racial segregation
- *segregation*: the separation of people, usually based on race or religion
- *prejudice*: a negative opinion formed without proof
- *civil rights*: the individual rights of all citizens to be treated equally under the law
- *Civil Rights Movement*: an organized manner to achieve the individual rights of all citizens to be treated equally under the law
- *discrimination*: an unfair difference in the treatment of people
- *separate but equal*: people of different races would remain segregated, but have equal rights
- *boycotts and sit-ins*: to refuse to conduct business or have contact with a person, group, country, or product; to protest by sitting down

Desegregation and Massive Resistance in Virginia

- After World War II, African Americans demanded equal treatment and recognition of their rights as American citizens.
- The United States Supreme Court ruled in 1954 (*Brown vs. Board of Education*) that "separate but equal" public schools were unconstitutional.
- All public schools, including those in Virginia, were ordered to desegregate. Now, students of all races could attend the same public schools.
- In Virginia, as in the rest of the South, this change did not come easily.
- Harry F. Byrd, Sr. led a Massive Resistance Movement against desegregation and strongly opposed integrating Virginia's public schools. Some schools were closed down to avoid integration. In 1959, a special session of the Virginia General Assembly met and the policy of Massive Resistance was overturned. All but one public school system reopened, and the process of integrating Virginia's public schools began.
- As a result of the Civil Rights Movement, laws were passed that made racial discrimination illegal.



Virginia: Reconstruction and Life in Virginia Today

Part 1: Citizens of Virginia made political, social, and/or economic contributions in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Maggie Lena Walker

Maggie Lena Walker was born in 1867 in Richmond, Virginia. She died in 1934. She was a driving force in Richmond's African-American community. In 1903, she founded the Saint Luke Penny Savings Bank. She was the first African-American woman to establish a bank and become a bank president in the United States.



Harry F. Byrd, Sr.



Harry Flood Byrd, Sr. was born in 1887 in Winchester, Virginia. He died in 1966. During his four-year term as governor of Virginia, he reorganized and modernized Virginia's government. He was known for a Pay-As-You-Go policy for road improvements. (He did not believe in going into debt to finance public projects, so he funded Virginia's extensive highway improvement program with a gasoline tax.) He led a Massive Resistance Movement against the integration of public schools.

Arthur R. Ashe, Jr.

Arthur Robert Ashe, Jr. was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1943. He died in 1993. He was the first African-American winner of a major men's tennis singles championship. He was an eloquent spokesperson and an author for social change and civil rights for all people.



VS.9d

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Part 2: Citizens of Virginia made political, social, and/or economic contributions in the 20th and 21st centuries.

L. Douglas Wilder

Lawrence Douglas Wilder was born in 1931 in Richmond, Virginia. He served in the General Assembly for ten years. In 1990, he became governor of Virginia. He was the first African-American governor in the United States.



Oliver W. Hill, Sr.

Oliver W. Hill, Sr. was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1907. He died in 2007. He was a lawyer and civil rights leader who worked for equal rights of African Americans. He played a key role in Brown vs. Board of Education, the Supreme Court case that declared segregated schools unconstitutional.

A. Linwood Holton, Sr.

A. Linwood Holton, Sr. was born in 1923 in Big Stone Gap, Virginia. He was a governor of Virginia who promoted race equality. He appointed more African Americans and women to positions in state government than previous governors.



VS.10a

Virginia: Reconstruction and Life in Virginia Today

Virginia's state government is made up of three parts (branches) that make sure Virginia's laws agree with the state's constitution.

The government of Virginia is divided into three parts or branches.

- The Legislative Branch**
The General Assembly is the legislative branch of the Virginia government that makes state laws. It is divided into two parts: the Senate and the House of Delegates.
- The Executive Branch**
The Governor heads the executive branch of the state government. The executive branch makes sure that state laws are carried out.
- The Judicial Branch**
The judicial branch is the state's court system. The judicial branch decides cases about people accused of breaking the law and whether or not a law agrees with Virginia's Constitution.



VS.10b

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Selected Products and Industries of the 20th and 21st Centuries

Coastal Plain (Tidewater) Region:

- **Products:** Seafood, peanuts
- **Industries:** Shipbuilding, fishing, tourism, military bases



Piedmont Region:

- **Products:** Tobacco products, informational technology
- **Industries:** Federal and state government, farming, horse industry



Blue Ridge Mountains:

- **Products:** Apples
- **Industries:** Recreation, farming



Valley and Ridge Region:

- **Products:** Poultry, apples, dairy, beef
- **Industries:** Farming



Appalachian Plateau:

- **Products:** Coal
- **Industries:** Coal mining



VS.10c

Virginia: Reconstruction and Life in Virginia Today

During the 20th and 21st centuries, advances in transportation, communication, and technology have encouraged migration and led to economic development in Virginia.

Terms to Know

- **export:** to send products to another location/place to sell

Virginia's extensive transportation system of highways, railroads, waterways, and air transportation moves *natural resources* (raw materials) to factories and finished products to markets. Virginia exports agricultural products (including tobacco and poultry), manufactured goods (large ships), and coal. Tourism is a major part of Virginia's economy. Virginia has a large number of communications and high-technology industries.

Many people from other states and from around the world have migrated to Virginia for employment. The federal government has a significant impact on Virginia's economy, since many of the government agencies are located in Virginia and in nearby Washington, D.C.

