



*Midway Church and cemetery*

president of the Executive Council, delegate to the Second Continental Congress, and signer of the Declaration of Independence. He contributed significantly to the creation of Georgia's first permanent constitution in 1777.

Gwinnett became jealous of the commission given to Lachlan McIntosh and McIntosh became indignant for having to rescue Gwinnett in his failed attempt to take Saint Augustine and East Florida. Gwinnett and his friends tried to paint Lachlan's brother John as lacking in patriotic devotion, McIntosh called Gwinnett "a scoundrel and a lying rascal" on the floor of the Assembly. A challenge was issued by Gwinnett and accepted by McIntosh. A duel was fought on May 16, 1777, with both men receiving balls in the thigh. McIntosh recovered but Gwinnett died of an infection that was blamed on the incompetence of his doctor, corroborated by the fact that Mrs. Gwinnett brought prosecution against the physician who had attended her husband. Button Gwinnett's name has become more widely known than it otherwise might have because his signature, being in short supply, commands such a high price. Gwinnett's signature sold for \$28,500, a record for any Signer's signature. The location of his grave is not known, but he is remembered by a marker in Colonial Cemetery.

**7. Dorchester Academy** was founded after the Civil War to educate freed slaves. In the early part of this century the school had eight buildings and 300 students. It was closed in the 1940s when a new consolidated school was built. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., retreated here in preparation for the 1963 Birmingham civil rights cam-

paign. Dorchester Academy is today a community center and museum with several special events held each year. Located two miles from Midway on US-84.

**8. Dorchester** was the fourth community to bear the name of the original home of the Puritans, Dorchester, England. There is also Dorchester, Massachusetts (1630) and Dorchester, South Carolina (1695). Grants to land in the Dorchester, Georgia area were made to Congregationalists on July 11, 1752. The center of religious and social life for citizens centered around Midway, but the distance from outlying plantations lead to the establishment of Dorchester about 1843. It was built on high ground halfway between Midway and Sunbury and the church was built in 1854. Dorchester is another deserted town, its decline beginning with the destruction and impoverishment caused by the Civil War.

**9. Seabrook Village.** During the days of the large rice plantations the coast of Georgia was a de facto African country. Most whites lived away from the fields and the miasmas they believed hung over the stagnant water. The cultivation of rice by gangs of slaves created a large, isolated population of blacks. During the Civil War the white population deserted the coastal plantations of Georgia and South Carolina, many never to return. The former slaves were left to form communities and earn a livelihood as best they could. Sherman, by decree, made all the Sea Islands a separate state for freed slaves. Although the order was later rescinded, this region remained a separate cultural state. Blacks received small parcels of

land and were able to survive off the bountiful gardens and tidal creeks and produce a little extra for trade.

The best-known product of the isolation of these coastal African-American communities is the Geechee dialect, a mixture of African and English that developed out of the need for speakers of many languages to communicate with one another. Geechee communities existed on Saint Simons Island, Sapelo Island, and in isolated communities on the coastal mainland between Brunswick and Savannah. In South Carolina the African derived dialect and culture is called Gullah (see page 34).

Seabrook Village is a recreation of an actual rural African-American community that existed from 1870 to about 1930. The village includes authentic buildings, demonstrations, and oral history events. The Annual Seabrook Celebration is held at the end of October and Old Timey Day is the last Sunday of February. Open 10 a.m.–5 p.m, Tuesday through Saturday.

**10. Fort Morris Historic Site.** Fort Morris is named for Captain Thomas Morris, a commander of the Georgia Continental Artillery, and was renamed Fort Defiance during the War of 1812. Fort Morris was constructed on the site of a Gualie Indian village and was to protect Sunbury and Saint Catherines Sound from the British. Benjamin Andrew was the supervisor of construction.

Colonel Mark Prevost and Colonel L. V. Fuser made an attempt to capture the fort in November 1778 but failed. During the siege there were McIntoshes inside and outside the fort, demonstrating the complex nature of the Scottish relationship to Great Britain and the fact that the Revolution was also a civil war. Midway Church and plantations were burned as the British marched back to Florida. Fort Morris was taken by the British in January, 1779 soon after their successful campaign against Savannah.

Fort Morris State Historic Site has a primitive camping area, nature trails, picnic area, and a museum. To reach Fort Morris State Historic Site from Midway follow GA-38, Colonels Island Road, and Ft. Morris Road. Open 9 a.m.–5p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and 9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. on Sunday and legal holidays. Admission.

**11. Sunbury.** All that remains of this once bustling seaport is the cemetery. The town of Sunbury was laid out around 1758 in 496 lots on lands owned by Mark Carr, James Maxwell, Kenneth Baillie, John Elliott, Grey Elliott, and John Stevens—all citizens of Midway. The name is from the Saxon language and means a sunny place or a sunny town. Sunbury is also the name of a town in England on the Thames River. Extensive wharves were built and Sun-