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## Introduction

The 1805 Georgia Land Lottery was the first experiment of its kind in the United States. Partly in response to the Yazoo and Pine Barrens Land Frauds of the 1790s, the people of Georgia decided to distribute newly acquired lands using a lottery, thereby minimizing opportunities for corruption. Land lotteries had been used previously on a limited basis, but the distribution of public lands on a mass scale by lottery is unique to Georgia.<sup>1</sup> New land was surveyed into square lots using public funds and then distributed by chance to eligible citizens.<sup>2</sup> Widows and orphans, classes typically disadvantaged under the headright system, were specifically allowed to participate in the lottery.

This book is an index to the List of Persons Entitled to Draws for the 1805 Land Lottery and is a new transcription of the data in *1805 Georgia Land Lottery*, published in 1964 by Virginia S. Wood and Ralph V. Wood. The list represents most of the households in the state in the year 1803 and is an invaluable substitute for Georgia's lost 1800 U.S. Federal Census.

## Land Lottery Process

On 16 June 1802, at Fort Wilkinson, the Creek Indians ceded two strips of land, one in central Georgia just west of the Oconee River and the other in the southeast corner of the state. Today, the first tract is part of Morgan, Putnam, Baldwin, Jones, Wilkinson, and Laurens Counties. The second tract, known as the Tallassee Strip, is located between the Altamaha River and St. Mary's River, and is now part of Wayne, Brantley, and Charlton Counties.

The Lottery Act of 11 May 1803 established the general process by which the lottery would operate.<sup>3</sup> The law outlined the creation of three counties and thirteen districts: five districts in Baldwin County, three districts in Wayne County, and five districts in Wilkinson County. Each district was to be surveyed into lots, containing 202 ½ acres each in Baldwin and Wilkinson County and 490 acres each in Wayne County.<sup>4</sup> In the end, 4,580 land lots were surveyed. All square (or whole) lots, as well as all islands containing more than 100 acres, were included in the lottery drawing. All fractions were held out to be sold at public auction in 1806.

The task of registering eligible participants for the lottery fell upon the justices of the Inferior Courts of the counties. They were charged with compiling a list of participants in their respective counties from May 1803 to 1 March 1804, along with the number of draws to which each person was entitled. Each list was sent to the Executive Department and a copy was deposited in the Superior Court of the county. Those entering the lottery were required to pay 12.5 cents per draw to the justices for the privilege of being registered.

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<sup>1</sup> Besides the Georgia land lotteries from 1805 to 1833, the only other large-scale land lottery occurred in Oklahoma in 1901, when 3,250 sections were made available on formerly Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache Indian land. Approximately two million acres were distributed in the Oklahoma lottery, compared to more than one million acres in Georgia's 1805 Land Lottery and more than 27 million acres in all eight Georgia lotteries. A proposed land lottery in Pennsylvania never materialized.

<sup>2</sup> Farris W. Cadle, *Georgia Land Surveying History and Law* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 169.

<sup>3</sup> Augustin Smith Clayton, *Compilation of the Laws of Georgia ... 1800-1810* (Augusta, Ga.: Printed by Adams & Duyckinck, 1813), 100.

<sup>4</sup> 202 ½ acre land lots are 45 chains square (66 ft. per chain) and 490 acre land lots are 70 chains square.

Researchers should note that the residence of participants included in this book reflects their location between May 1803 and 1 March 1804, not where they resided during the lottery in the summer of 1805. A participant's registration information was not changed at any time during the lottery process, and grants, even those issued ten years after the lottery, include the fortunate drawer's location during the registration period, not their residence on the date of the grant.

The majority of eligible citizens registered for the lottery. However, due to apathy, religious objections to gambling, or lack of knowledge about the process, many people did not participate. It is common to find established residents in county tax digests and deed records but not on the final list of land lottery participants.

When the lists of participants were received from the counties, the names were consolidated into one list spanning four books, known as the List of Persons Entitled to Draws. The books were compiled by George R. Clayton and James Bozeman and were completed 19 July 1805, three days before the drawing began.<sup>5</sup> According to the list, approximately 24,000 individuals participated in the lottery and altogether were eligible for more than 40,000 draws. Each draw represented slightly less than a one in ten chance of winning a lot. For the lottery, the number of each whole lot survey was placed on a ticket. A number of tickets labeled "blank" were then added to equal the total number of draws. The mass of tickets was placed in a large container (a "lottery wheel") built by John Jacob Schley for \$40.<sup>6</sup>

Apparently, no accounts of the actual lottery drawing were published, but it is possible to reconstruct the administrative events involved using knowledge of the legal process, the surviving lottery books, and contemporary newspaper announcements. Beginning on 22 July 1805 and drawing approximately 1,250 tickets each day, six days a week, the process lasted more than five weeks, to 31 August 1805. Unlike later lotteries with open-ended schedules, the 1805 Land Lottery was planned with precision. The draw schedule was published one month in advance of the lottery and was followed exactly as planned.

At the lottery, the room was most likely arranged with a long table against one wall for the commissioners and their record books. The lottery commissioners were Jared Irwin (President), William Barnett, George R. Clayton, Edwin Mounger, and George Watkins. The container full of prizes and blanks stood in front of the table where a young boy, Burke Chisholm, was charged with drawing the tickets.<sup>7</sup> At the table, a volume of the List of Persons Entitled to Draws was open. The commissioners read the names from the list in order, calling out the name and number of draws. Each ticket was drawn and passed to the commissioners, who marked a "B" (Blank) or "P" (Prize) beside the participant's name for each draw. If a prize was drawn, the fortunate drawer's information and the lot description were written into a book known as the List of Fortunate Drawers.

For the complete record of fortunate drawers in the 1805 Land Lottery, see *1805 Georgia Land Lottery Fortunate Drawers and Grantees*, by Paul K. Graham.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Georgia Office of the Governor. Minutes of the Executive Division (31 October 1805). RG 1-1-3. Georgia Archives.

<sup>6</sup> Georgia Office of the Governor. Minutes of the Executive Division (30 October 1805). RG 1-1-3. Georgia Archives.

<sup>7</sup> Augustin Smith Clayton, *Compilation of the Laws of Georgia ... 1800-1810* (Augusta, Ga.: Printed by Adams & Duyckinck, 1813), 288. Burke Chisholm, an orphan, was registered for one draw in the lottery. The draw returned a blank.

<sup>8</sup> Paul K. Graham, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery Fortunate Drawers and Grantees* (Decatur, Ga.: The Genealogy Company, 2004).

## List of Persons Entitled to Draws

The List of Persons Entitled to Draws is the official list of 1805 Land Lottery participants compiled by the state of Georgia.<sup>9</sup> The list spans four volumes and includes each participant's name, residence, identifying remarks, number, and the number of draws for which he was eligible. No detailed information about individual participants is available beyond what appears in this book. The list is organized by first letter of last name, then by county, so that the list begins with As from Bryan County, Bulloch County, Burke County, etc. The names are numbered sequentially, beginning with "1" at the start of each letter, so that all number-letter combinations are theoretically unique, e.g. A-25, M-25, and Z-25. Despite their best efforts, the lottery commissioners skipped and duplicated many individual numbers and some large sequences. The number-letter combination can be used to quickly locate a participant's location in the original volumes. At the end of each book, the compilers included an official tally of the number of draws in each letter group. This calculation was used to determine the number of blank tickets to place in the lottery wheel. At the lottery, a "P" (Prize) or "B" (Blank) was placed by the name of each participant representing the result of each draw. The last sheet in the second volume (with approximately 24 Ms from Jackson County) is missing completely.

### Using This Book

This book is an alphabetical index to the List of Persons Entitled to Draws. Each record includes the following information: the participant's number, name, identifying remarks, place of residence, and the result of each draw. Also, a reference to the specific land lot is included for individuals whose draw returned a prize. The land lot number was not recorded in the List of Persons Entitled to Draws but is included here as a quick reference to the book *1805 Georgia Land Lottery Fortunate Drawers and Grantees*.

A microfilm copy of the List of Persons Entitled to Draws is available at the Georgia Archives and through the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with the title "List of Lottery Names, 1805-1806." Because the "Bs" and "Ps" are so faded, they are impossible to read in most places on the microfilm copy, but all the primary information is legible. To find an individual's record, go to the section of the list corresponding to the first letter of the person's surname, then use the number in this book to locate the specific page of the original record. Some numbers and sequences are duplicated, so look at adjacent pages if the name is not readily apparent.

Some entries refer to non-participants for the purpose of description. The records for many widows include the husband's name and many orphans are recorded with the name of a guardian or deceased parent. To help researchers find these non-participants, their names have been placed in a separate entry with a reference in brackets to the primary record.

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<sup>9</sup> Georgia Surveyor General. List of Persons Entitled to Draws, 1805 Land Lottery. RG 3-5-21. Georgia Archives.

## Reliability

Overall, the List of Persons Entitled to Draws is a reliable substitute for Georgia's lost 1800 U.S. Federal Census. However, there are two primary issues that researchers must be aware of when using the list to support genealogical conclusions. First, spelling errors occur frequently. Basic name spelling variations familiar to researchers exist throughout the list. In addition, many names were entered incorrectly. For example, William McClenne appears in the list of participants as a fortunate drawer, but he was forced to petition the governor to issue the land grant to William McKinney, his real name. Also, some names were entered in reverse order. It is always useful to look for a person's given name recorded as the surname. All name corrections are available for fortunate drawers who received a grant from the state, but no information is available for participants who drew blanks or who did not obtain a grant. Based on the number of fortunate drawers who corrected the spelling of their names, as much as two percent of the entire list may contain these two types of serious errors. Because of the possibility of spelling errors in the original list, it is important to also consult *1805 Georgia Land Lottery Fortunate Drawers and Grantees* to verify that an individual was not a fortunate drawer with a misspelled name.

Second, registration for all the land lotteries was voluntary and required payment of a registration fee of 12.5 cents per draw to the county Inferior Court. Many eligible citizens did not participate. Historical documents rarely allude to non-participants, but there appear to be three primary reasons for any lack of participation: religious objections to gambling, general apathy toward the process, or, because it was the first lottery, lack of education and awareness of the process and its potential economic benefits. Many established residents can be found in county records during the 1790s and early 1800s but not in the list of land lottery registrants.

The List of Persons Entitled to Draws is an important resource for determining the residence of most of Georgia's families in the year 1803. However, the list should not be used as proof in its own right. It is best used to substantiate facts and conclusions arrived at through other contemporary documents.

### Eligible Drawers

The following categories of people were entitled to draws in the 1805 Land Lottery. Participants had to be white, a United States citizen, and a resident of Georgia for one year prior to the land lottery law in May 1803.

White male, 21 years old	One Draw
White male, 21 years old with wife and legitimate children under age 21	Two Draws
White female, widowed, with legitimate children under age 21	Two Draws
Orphan family, whose parents were both deceased, or whose father was deceased and mother remarried	One Draw

### Interpreting Draws

There are three important facts to keep in mind when interpreting the eligibility status of land lottery participants based on the number of draws they received. First, not every county official explicitly labeled registrants "widow" or "orphan" and no men are labeled "single male" or "married male." Second, many people who were eligible for two draws only registered for one draw. Third, some individuals registered under false pretenses.

A participant's draws can be used to interpret their situation, but cannot be used to come to a definitive conclusion about eligibility status. The following list includes all possible interpretations based on each participant's number of draws.

- Male, 1 Draw**
- White, 21 years old, citizen of the United States, and resident of Georgia from May 1802
  - White, 21 years old, citizen of the United States, and resident of Georgia from May 1802, with a wife and legitimate children under age 21 (eligible for two draws, but registered for one draw)
  - Orphan whose parents were both deceased, or whose father was deceased and mother remarried, citizen of the United States, and resident of Georgia from May 1802. Not all orphans are specifically named as "orphans" on the list. Any male with one draw has the potential to be an orphan.
- Male, 2 Draws**
- All men with two draws are white, 21 years old, citizens of the United States, and residents of Georgia from May 1802, with a wife and legitimate children under age 21
- Female, 1 Draw**
- White, widowed, citizen of the United States, and resident of Georgia from May 1802, with legitimate children under age 21 (eligible for two draws, but registered for one draw)
  - Orphan whose parents were both deceased, or whose father was deceased and mother remarried, citizen of the United States, and resident of Georgia from May 1802. Not all orphans are specifically named as "orphans" on the list. Any female with one draw and no description has the potential to be an orphan.
- Female, 2 Draws**
- All females with two draws are white, widowed, citizens of the United States, and residents of Georgia from May 1802, with legitimate children under age 21

### Column Headings

<b>Number</b>	This number was entered by the land lottery commissioners and represents the order in which the name was recorded within a specific letter group. It is only used as a finding aid, and has no further significance.
<b>Name</b>	The name column includes each participant's name, surname first, with any identifying remarks. Non-participants mentioned are indexed alphabetically with a reference in brackets [] to the primary record.
<b>County</b>	The county is the residence of participants at the time of the land lottery registration during the months of May 1803 through 1 March 1804.
<b>Draw</b>	This column includes the draw result as recorded by the lottery commissioners, with a "B" for a blank draw (did not win) and "P" for a prize draw (did win). For some people, the recorded draw result does not match the number of eligible draws.
<b>Prize</b>	For fortunate drawers only, the prize record includes the county, district, and number of the land lot won by the participant. This information was added for reference purposes and does not appear on the original list.

### Abbreviations

This book contains references to the land lot prizes won by fortunate drawers. If a participant was a fortunate drawer, use this table to determine which land lot was drawn against their name. Using the county, district, and land lot number, look up the land lot in *1805 Georgia Land Lottery Fortunate Drawers and Grantees* to determine if the fortunate drawer received a grant for the land.

P	Prize (Land Lot)
B	Blank
Ba	Baldwin County
Wa	Wayne County
Wi	Wilkinson County
D[#]	District [#]
L[#]	Land Lot [#]

### Search Tips

Look for all possible name spelling variations. Names have been indexed exactly as they are spelled in the original record.

Look for the individual's given name as a surname. The land lottery commissioners reversed the names of some individuals. In this book, those names have been indexed exactly as they appear in the original record.

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