



News for Immediate Release

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York County, South Carolina Facts

- Settled:** The earliest known inhabitants of York County, SC were the Catawba Indians. The first European settlers were the Scots-Irish from Pennsylvania and Virginia. The county was officially established in 1785.
- County History:** From 1772 until the end of the Revolutionary War the area was known as the New Acquisition and ran approximately eleven miles north-to-south and sixty-five miles from east-to-west. In 1785, York County became one of the original counties in the newly-created state. The section of South Carolina known as the “New Acquisition” was the scene of significant activity during the American Revolution. The Battles of Williamson’s Plantation (Huck’s Defeat) and Kings Mountain were both fought on York County soil. York County as a whole experienced significant growth during the antebellum years, and the increase occurred primarily among the black population. As the importance of cotton grew, so did slavery become an integral part of the economic life of the county. The antebellum period saw the establishment and growth of several rural settlement areas and communities in York County. Key to York County’s mid-nineteenth-century growth was the arrival in the eastern part of the county of the Charlotte and South Carolina Railroad, opened in 1852. Beginning in the 1880s, the textile industry became increasingly important, and by the 1950s it was the largest employer in the county. Railroads and textiles also spurred the development of Rock Hill and Fort Mill, which are now the largest cities in the county. Since the decline of textiles in the late 20th century, the economy has shifted to finances, high technology, services and heritage tourism, and the close proximity of Charlotte, North Carolina has created a substantial commuter work force.
- County Seat:** Yorkville (now the city of York) was established as the county seat in 1785. At the 2010 US Census the population was 8,189. York is situated between two important Revolutionary war battle sites, the Battle of Kings Mountain and the Battle of Williamson’s Plantation (Huck’s Defeat).
- Physical Features:** York County is 682 square miles of gently rolling landscape located in the Piedmont area of Carolina 75 miles north of Columbia and 35 miles southwest

of Charlotte, NC. Elevations in York County range from 500 to about 1,200 feet above sea level. The majority of soil conditions provide excellent building and development foundations.

Climate: York County's climate is characterized by warm, humid summers and mild winters. The average high temperature in summer is 87 degrees while average high temperatures in winter are in the low 50s. Snow is rare, averaging 1-2 inches accumulation per year.

County Flower: White Rose

County Bird: The Eagle

More "fast facts" about York County, SC

- **Borders** – North Carolina to the north, Chester County to the south, Lancaster County to the east, Cherokee and Union counties to the west
- **Time Zone** – Eastern
- **Geographic center** – Fergus's Crossroads (now York, SC) was near the geographic center (crossing of six roads near present location of Congress and Liberty Streets) of the newly formed county and was chosen as the site of the new county seat. All of York County is within the Piedmont region and the Charlotte Metropolitan region. York County is located in north central South Carolina along the North Carolina border. Natural boundaries are the Broad River on the west and the Catawba River on east. York County is a total of 696 square miles (1,800 km²), 682 square miles (1,770 km²) is land and 13 square miles (34 km²) is water.
- **Largest City** – Rock Hill (66,154 population), density: 1,532.8/sq mi (591.8/km²)
- **Smallest City** – Tega Cay (7,620 population), density: 1630.0/sq mi (629.4/km²)
- **Highest point** – Henry's Knob – a mountain and former site of the open-pit mining operation for the world's largest deposit of kyanite. It stands at 1,120 ft. (340 m) above sea level.
- **Largest lake** – Lake Wylie (325 miles of shoreline)
- **Longest river** – Catawba River. The river is 220 miles (350km) long. It rises in the Appalachian Mountains, drains in the Piedmont and is impounded through a series of reservoirs for flood control and hydroelectricity. The river is named after the Catawba Tribe of Native Americans.

Population, Demographics

- **Estimated population** – 226,073 (2010 U.S. Census, SC 2nd fastest growing county)
- **Percent white** – 74.8
- **Percent black** - 19.0
- **Percent Hispanic** – 4.5

- **Median age** – 37
- **Percent under 18** – 25.3
- **Percent 18 – 64** – 67.2
- **Percent 65 and older** – 11.7

Biggest industry: Commercial and Financial Industries. Wells Fargo is the largest employer in York County, SC.

Biggest farm product: Cotton was historically the dominant crop after 1800 and is still grown today, but not to the extent as in the past. Peaches, soybeans, corn, wheat and hay are also important crops.

County parks: Historic Brattonsville is the 778-acre site of the 18th- and 19th-century Bratton family plantation near McConnells. Brattonsville includes the site of the Revolutionary War Battle of Williamson’s Plantation (Huck’s Defeat), an important Patriot victory, and 8.5 miles of hiking, biking and equestrian nature trails.

State parks: Kings Mountain State Park is a 6,883-acre retreat that has two lakes and several streams for fishing and 35 miles of hiking and equestrian trails. The park has a 19th century living history farm and 115 campsites with individual water and electrical hookups, plus 10 rustic tent sites.

National parks: Kings Mountain National Military Park commemorates the Battle of Kings Mountain, one of the most important Patriot victories of the American Revolution which changed the course of history for South Carolina and the United States. The park preserves the entire battlefield site in a natural setting evocative of the Carolina frontier of 1780.

Movies filmed here: *The Patriot* (2000 film) at Historic Brattonsville, *Black Rainbow* (1989 film) in Rock Hill, *The Rage: Carrie 2* (1999 film) in Rock Hill, *Asylum* (2008 film) at Winthrop University, *Walker Payne* (2006 film) in Rock Hill, *Gospel Hill* (2008 film) in Rock Hill, SC.

Entertainers (from York County, SC): David Ball (country music singer), Edmund Lewandowski (American Precisionist movement artist), Leon Rippey (actor), Emery (band founded in Rock Hill), Jimmy Ellis (lead singer of disco band The Trammps, famous for their 1978 hit single “Disco Inferno”).

Famous authors and artists: Dori Sanders (folk author and storyteller), Vernon Grant (commercial artist/creator of Snap, Crackle and Pop[®] characters), William Ivey Long (Tony Award-winning costume designer), Jim Hoagland (journalist/two-time Pulitzer Prize winner).

Famous athletes: Chris Hope (NFL), Gerald Dixon (NFL - retired), Benjamin Watson (NFL), Stephon Gilmore (NFL), Johnathan Joseph (NFL), Jeff Burris (NFL – retired), Jim Ray (MLB – retired), Lauren Cholewinski (Olympic Speedskater – 2010 Winter Olympics), Lafayette Currence (MLB - retired), Ivory Latta (WNBA).

Major colleges and universities: Winthrop University, York Technical College, and Clinton Junior College

Statesmen, politicians, military men, civil rights leaders: Colonel William Bratton, Revolutionary War officer, state legislator, founder of Historic Brattonsville; General Daniel Harvey (D. H.) Hill, division commander, Confederate States Army; Friendship Nine, founders of the “Jail, No Bail” civil rights movement in 1961; Congressman John M. Spratt Jr. (D-SC), long-serving member of US House of Representatives (28 years).

A few first, most and largest:

- Home to Carowinds theme park. Carowinds is the only gated theme park in the nation located in two states (North and South Carolinas).
- Carowinds is home to the longest, tallest, fastest rollercoaster in the southeast, ***Intimidator***®
- The Catawba Indians are the only federally recognized tribe in South Carolina.
- The Battle of Williamson’s Plantation, or Huck’s Defeat (July 12, 1780), was the first Patriot victory over British regular army troops during the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War.
- The Battle of Kings Mountain (October 7, 1780), is considered by many historians to be the major turning point of the American Revolution.
- William Hill’s Iron Works was the first iron factory in South Carolina (1776).
- The Rock Hill Cotton Factory was the first steam-powered textile mill in South Carolina (1880).

Notes/Resources

1. York County, South Carolina. In *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved October 9, 2012, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/York_County,_South_Carolina
2. Rock Hill, South Carolina. In *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved October 8, 2012, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock_Hill,_South_Carolina
3. Catawba River. In *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved October 9, 2012 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catawba_River
4. Lewis, J.D. (2007). York County, South Carolina. In *South Carolina – The Counties*. Retrieved October 9, 2012 from http://www.carolana.com/SC/Counties/york_county_sc.html
5. York County, South Carolina. In United States Census Bureau. Retrieved October 9, 2012 from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/45/45091.html>
6. Michael C. Scoggins. *Historic York County: An Illustrated History*. San Antonio: Historical Publishing Network, 2009.
7. Michael C. Scoggins. *The Day It Rained Militia: Huck’s Defeat and the Revolution in the South Carolina Backcountry, May-July 1780*. Charleston: The History Press, 2005.