

Marble Story

Later in the 1830s, Samuel Tate came to the area and quickly recognized an opportunity to invest in Georgia marble's potential. He bought extensive land and mineral rights. About the quarries he purchased, he told his son, "They may not make me rich and they won't make you rich, but they will surely make your children rich."

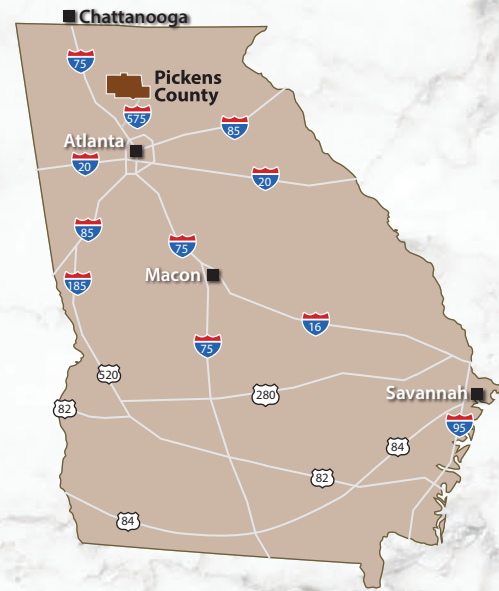
That prophesy was realized by his grandson, Col. Sam Tate. He became the managing officer of the Georgia Marble Company, formed in 1884 by wealthy businessmen from Chicago. Through Sam Tate's leadership, the company thrived, mining marble from Tate's vast holdings of the vein of beautiful North Georgia rock. Because of these holdings, Sam Tate became recognized as one of the wealthiest men in the world, with an estimated worth of \$165 billion!

From 1900 through the Roaring Twenties, sales of Georgia Marble soared, with architects favoring it for both its durability and beauty. The Lincoln Memorial statue in Washington, D.C. was carved from Georgia Marble in 1918. In fact, more than 60% of the monuments in Washington, D.C. are made from Pickens County marble. Then, during the Great Depression, Col. Sam Tate kept the Georgia Marble Co. workforce employed by donating tons of marble to noteworthy building projects throughout the area, state, and nation.

Today it is very likely that the lives of most people have been touched in some way by Georgia Marble. Elegant buildings, monuments, and sculpture continue to be created for the world to see. Interestingly though, it is the calcium products from pulverized stone that appear in many homes. From tires to paints, food supplements, pharmaceuticals, and chewing gum, the marble of Pickens County helps us live our lives and fulfill our dreams.



Col. Sam Tate



Georgia Marble Beyond Pickens County

Pickens County marble has been used on such landmarks as the New York Stock Exchange; the Lincoln Memorial, the Library of Congress' James Madison Memorial Public Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, The National Air and Space Museum, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art, all in Washington, D.C.; and, in Atlanta, the Fulton County Courthouse, Emory University's Alumni Memorial University Center, and what is now The Candler Hotel.

About an hour's drive south of Jasper, in Cartersville, Georgia, the Mississippian culture built the Etowah community between 1,000-1,500 A.D., complete with ceremonial mounds, a village, plots of land devoted to farming, a wood and mud palisade, and defensive ditches outside the wall. A matched male/female pair of effigy statues carved from marble were found at the site in 1957 and are displayed in the museum at the Etowah Indian Mounds Historic Site.

About 65 miles west of Jasper, at James H. "Sloppy" Floyd State Park, you can hike the Marble Mine Trail to an abandoned mine entrance and trickling waterfall into a beautiful lake.



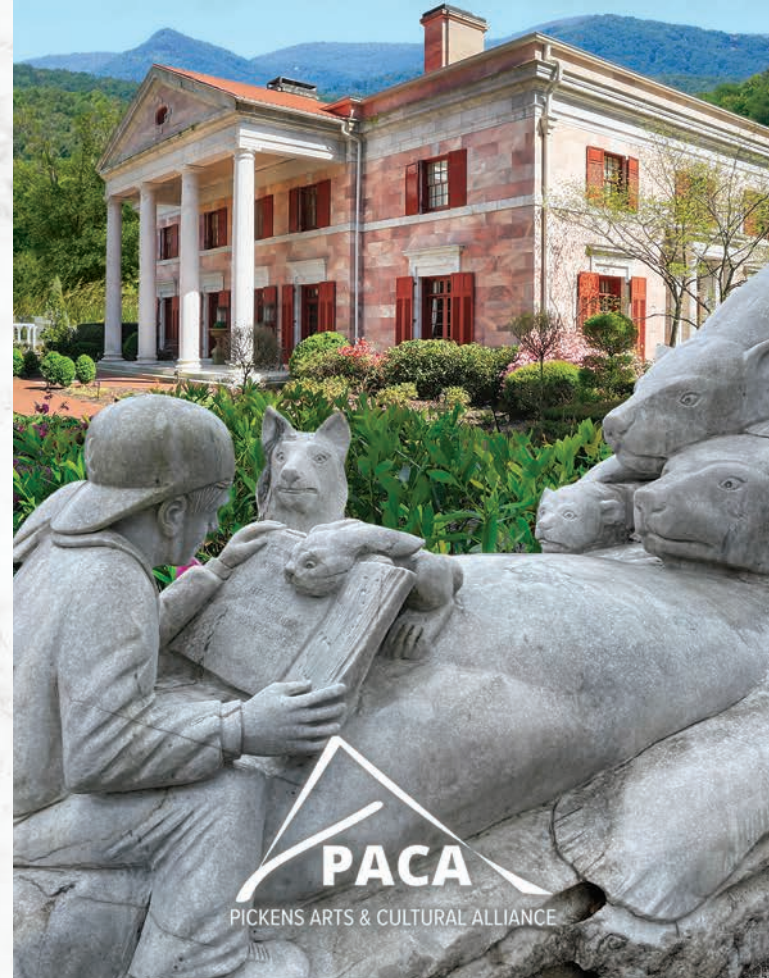
104 North Main St, Suite A-1 • Jasper, GA 30143
(770) 893-7940
pickensartsandculturalalliance.org

Set off on a

MONUMENTAL ADVENTURE

EXPLORE GEORGIA'S MARBLE STORY TRAIL

PICKENS COUNTY AND BEYOND



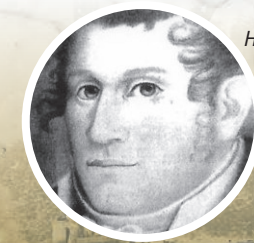
The Georgia

What do the communities of Pickens County, Georgia have in common with many famous cultural sites and households around the world? The answer lies in a story that began about 541 million years ago with oceanfront property in the North Georgia Mountains.

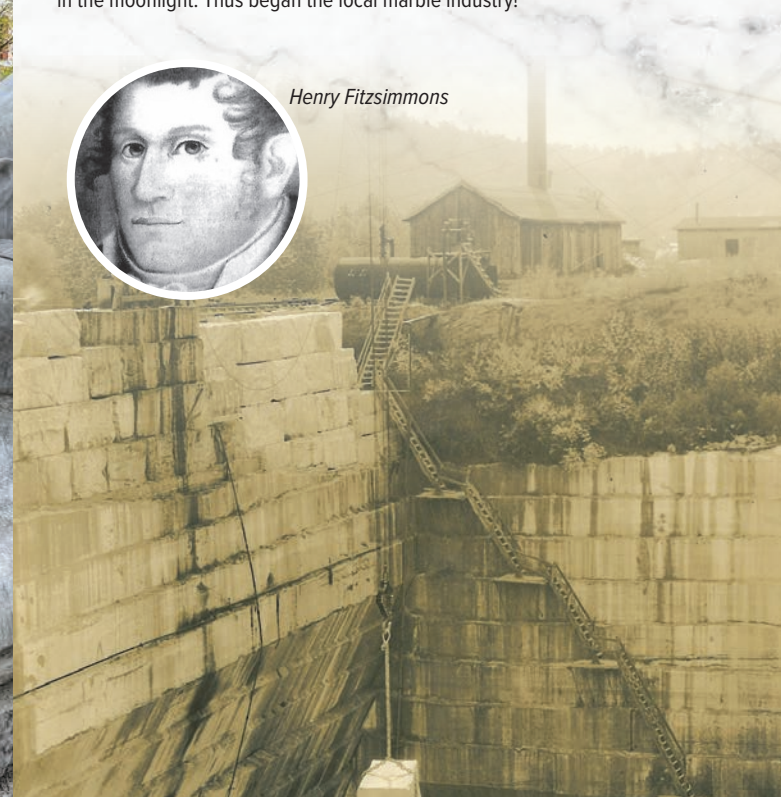
At that time, the earth's fiery crust rose up from the sea to form the Appalachian Mountains. When the waters receded, beachheads appeared with tiny shells of prehistoric sea organisms. Plates of tectonic rock collided and compressed those organisms to form the gorgeous and elegant Georgia Marble we know today. The vein of stone extended five to seven miles long, a half-mile wide, and 2,000 feet deep.

This metamorphic rock lay untouched for many years until humans discovered it. As early as 800 A.D. Native Americans, including the Cherokee people, used and traded marble. In 1957, two marble effigies circa 1300 A.D. were found at the Etowah Indian Mounds. These statues, along with marble bowls and small round marbles (actually made of marble!), are valuable connections to ancient indigenous cultures.

Irish stonemason Henry Fitzsimmons arrived in Pickens County in the mid-1830s. According to legend, Fitzsimmons stopped at one of the Cherokee taverns along the Old Federal Road. After dining and drinking one night, he became rowdy and was thrown out the door. Arising from an unpleasant landing, he discovered the hard rock outcropping he landed on was beautiful and gleaming in the moonlight. Thus began the local marble industry!



Henry Fitzsimmons



The Georgia Marble Story Trail Sites

Start your explorations in Tate, Georgia. Tate is on the National Register of Historic Places for its marble heritage. Look for the historical marker outside the Tate Depot on Highway 53.

1 The **Tate House**, listed in the National Register of Historic Place as the Pink Palace and recently named a top Georgia “must-see” by *Georgia Magazine*, was built in 1926 as the private estate home of Col. Sam Tate, president of the Georgia Marble Company. The house was constructed using a rare, bright pink Etowah marble. Now a private wedding and event venue, the mansion is open to the public only in December; tours and information are on the website, www.tatehouse.com. *61 Georgia Marble Rd., Tate, GA 30177*



2 **Mt. Calvary Baptist Church** is important to the Georgia Marble Story Trail and to Pickens County’s African American heritage. One of the church’s musical groups gained fame singing on Sundays on Atlanta’s WSB radio station. The singers worked at Georgia Marble Company during the week. *1141 Smokey Hollow Rd., Tate, GA 30177*

3 The beautiful **Tate United Methodist Church** was where the historic Tate family attended, and is one of the oldest churches in the county. *5880 Hwy. 53, Tate GA 30177.*

4 **Tate School** was built in 1927 entirely of Creole marble – known to be the only school in the U.S. built as such – as is the foundation of the wood-frame Tate Gymnasium nearby. The school served as the high school and is now Tate Elementary School. *5630 Hwy. 53, Tate, GA 30177*

5 Stroll through the **Old Tate Cemetery** beside the train depot to see beautifully hand carved monuments and mausoleums built from Georgia Marble. Adjacent to the Old Tate Cemetery is a small cemetery surrounded by a stone wall that includes some of the largest, most elaborate memorials in Tate. *N. Railroad St., Tate, GA 30177*

6 Across the train tracks from the cemetery, have lunch at **Bell’s Family Pharmacy’s** old-fashioned soda fountain, where you can get a feel for the mill town of Tate. It’s located in the historic Village of Tate and modeled after the old Allred-Jordan Pharmacy that once operated in the same space. *4875 Hwy. 53, Tate, GA 30177, 678-454-2300*

Continue north on Highway 53 to Jasper, Georgia, where there are several must-see marble sites.

7 The **Pickens County Courthouse**, built in 1949, was constructed in the Stripped Classical style using marble siding from the Georgia Marble Company. It is on the National Register of Historic Places. Historical markers at the site inform about the creation of the county and about the Old Federal Road. *1266 E. Church St., Jasper, GA 30143, 706-253-8809*

8 About 400 feet from the Courthouse is the **Old Pickens County Jail**, built in 1906 and featuring a marble façade. It includes a hanging gallows. There is also the Kirby-Quinton Cabin on site, built in the 1820s by Cherokee man Charles Dunbeam in the 1820s and fitted with 19th century furnishings. *141 N. Main St., Jasper, GA 30143, 706-253-1141*

9 Across from the Old Jail, the 42-foot-tall marble **Oglethorpe Monument** is a tribute to Georgia’s founder, Gen. James Oglethorpe. It was located atop Mount Oglethorpe at the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail between 1930 and 1958. It was later restored and moved to its present location in 1999. Eagle’s Rest Park Overlook is now at the old southern terminus. *N. Main St., Jasper, GA 30143*



10 **Woodbridge Tavern**, originally the Lenning Hotel built in the 1880s (an earlier boarding house began operating there in 1849) served the needs of Pickens County’s marble executives and travelers of all types. Today, the inn is open for lunch, dinner, and lodging. *44 Chambers St., Jasper, GA 30143, 706-253-8500*

If you missed lunch in Tate, consider stopping in Jasper at the **Woodbridge Inn & Tavern** or **The Old Mulehouse**.

11 A visit to **The Old Mulehouse** restaurant in Jasper is a treat. Most north Georgia towns had a mule house, where someone coming into town for business could shelter their mule so it wouldn’t wander off. Undoubtedly, some of the Jasper area mules were carting marble. Mule houses eventually gave way to automotive establishments; Jasper’s Old Mulehouse restaurant is in a century-old building that once housed a Chevrolet dealership. *2 N. Main St., Jasper, GA 30143, 706-253-3440*

12 From downtown Jasper, follow Burnt Mountain Road to the Pickens County Library to see (and snap a pic) at the **“Learning is Fun” sculpture** outside the library. William I. Sunderland created the whimsical piece depicting a child reading to a group of friendly woodland creatures. Of course, the sculpture was carved from local Georgia Marble! *100 Library Ln., Jasper, GA 30143, 706-692-5411*

13 Back in Downtown Jasper, head west on Highway 53 to **The Marble Museum** inside the Pickens County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center, which includes a year-round exhibit of fine marble and shows the history of marble mining in Pickens County. The Visitor Center also has a display of marble sculptures carved during the annual Georgia Marble Festival. *500 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Jasper, GA 30143, 706-692-5600*



14 Come to Jasper for the **Georgia Marble Festival** the first full weekend in October to see marble sculpture carving and reserve ahead for a tour of the marble quarry, the only time the quarry is open to the public. There is also a road race, parade, arts & crafts, food, live music, and trolley rides to local shopping and restaurants. *Lee Newton Park, 500 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Jasper, GA 30143, georgiamarblefestival.com*

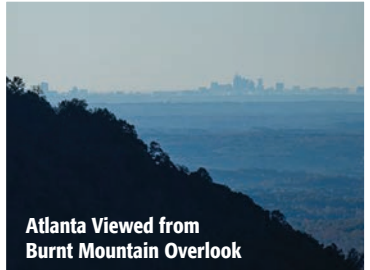
15 Another special marble site in Jasper is the **Rotary Peace Pole**. This international symbol for peace is a 12-foot marble obelisk bearing the message “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in different languages of the world, including Cherokee. This is one of more than 250,000 peace poles around the world, one of 121 in the U.S. *Roper Park, 101 Freedom Way, Jasper, GA 30143, worldpeace.org/peacepoleproject*

North of Jasper on Highway 515, turn east onto Highway 136 at the charming town of Talking Rock.

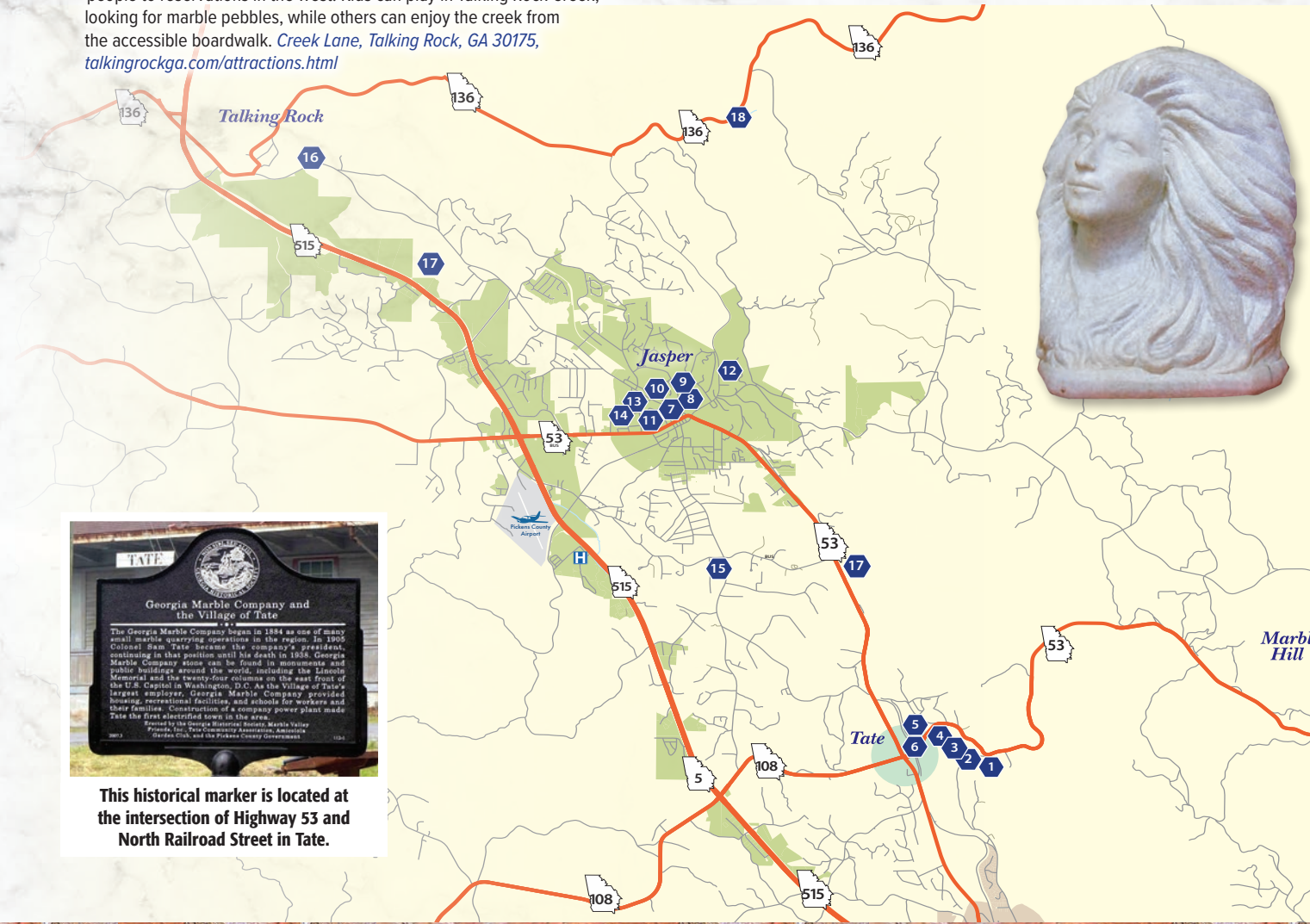
16 Get out and stretch your legs at **Talking Rock Park** and view the **Trail of Tears** mural depicting the early 1800s removal of the Cherokee people to reservations in the west. Kids can play in Talking Rock Creek, looking for marble pebbles, while others can enjoy the creek from the accessible boardwalk. *Creek Lane, Talking Rock, GA 30175, talkingrockga.com/attractions.html*

17 If you would like some marble for your own home, pay a visit to the folks at **Appalachian Monuments** (*2939 Highway 53 E., Jasper, GA 30143*) or **Watson & Carver Memorials** (*45 Jaydee Pl., Talking Rock, GA 30175*) They can create bookends, desk name markers, and paperweights in addition to their signature memorials.

18 Watch for signs on Highway 136 to the **Burnt Mountain Overlook** where, on a clear day, you can get a bird’s eye view of our marble-producing hills and vales as well as glimpse the high-rises of Atlanta, 60 miles away, many of them, such as The Candler Hotel (c. 1906), built and decorated with Georgia Marble. Stop at **Fainting Goat Vineyards & Winery** where you can imbibe Georgia wines along with the views. *201 Vineyard Way, Jasper, GA 30143*



Atlanta Viewed from Burnt Mountain Overlook



This historical marker is located at the intersection of Highway 53 and North Railroad Street in Tate.

