

December 7, 1787

Delaware Becomes a State

Delaware is the second-smallest state in the Union, however, because of its favorable business laws, there are hundreds of thousands of companies incorporated there. Many companies have their headquarters in Delaware, which adds jobs to the economy there. Since the earliest days of European settlement in Delaware, there were questions as to who Delaware belonged to. Dutch settlers tried to start a colony there, but it failed. The Swedish settlers started the colony of New Sweden in present-day Delaware, but the Dutch colony of New Netherland established a fort in New Sweden. The Swedish colonists captured the fort, but the Dutch retaliated by capturing all of New Sweden and making it part of New Netherland. Later, the English captured all of New Netherland, including present-day Delaware, making it all part of the colony of New York. In time, the King of England gave William Penn land for the colony that came to be Pennsylvania and included Delaware in the land grant. As time went on, Delaware asked to be allowed to have a separate legislature, and William Penn allowed it. Those conditions remained until the Revolutionary War. Some famous people from Delaware include Annie Jump Cannon, John M. Clayton, Harry Coover, George Welch, Nancy J. Currie, Caesar Rodney, Samuel Davies, and George Ross.

Look at the map of Delaware below. Label the capital of Delaware. Locate the cities of Wilmington, Harrington, Avondale, Castle, Dayton, Hartly, Kirkwood, New Castle, Millsboro, Newark, Trinity, Woodside, Smyrna, and Rockland, and label them on the map. Also, locate the Delaware River, St. Jones River, Nanticoke River, Smyrna River, Christina River, Leipsic River, Mispillion River, Murderkill River, Andrews Lake, Moores Lake, Haven Lake, and Garrisons Lake, and label them. Lastly, label the states or bodies of water that border Delaware. When you have finished, move on to the timeline of Delaware history on the next page and the research prompts that follow.



Timeline of Delaware History

1638

1664

1682

1754

1774

1776

1785

1787

1788

1802

1829

1832

1897

1924

1927

1939

1951

1963

1980

2000

1. England captures all of the area of Delaware when they capture New Netherland
2. The Blue Hen Chicken is officially adopted as Delaware's state bird
3. Delaware votes unanimously to ratify the United States Constitution, becoming the first state in the Union
4. Delaware adopts its present constitution
5. Delaware votes for independence at the Second Continental Congress
6. Delaware elects its first female governor
7. The Library Company of Wilmington, now the Wilmington Public Library, is incorporated
8. Delaware establishes a system of public education
9. Delaware sends delegates to the First Continental Congress
10. The Delaware Memorial Bridge across the Delaware River opens, connecting Delaware and New Jersey
11. The Duke of York gives the Delaware area to William Penn as part of a land grant
12. The first trip by a train pulled by a steam locomotive occurs in Delaware
13. President John F. Kennedy visits Delaware to dedicate the opening of Highway Interstate 95 at the border of Delaware and Maryland
14. The first successful newspaper in present-day Delaware, *The Delaware Gazette*, is published
15. The DuPont Highway, Route 13, is completed
16. The state approves a constitutional limit that does not allow the government to spend more than 95% of its expected income
17. Swedish settlers come to the area and found New Sweden, the first permanent colony in the area
18. Delaware's chemical industry gets its start when Éleuthère Irénée du Pont, a French immigrant, establishes a powder mill on Brandywine Creek
19. F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife move into a mansion known as Ellerslie near the Delaware River in Edgemoor, Delaware
20. The first library in present-day Delaware is established in Wilmington

Timeline of Delaware History

Answer Key

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| F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife move into a mansion known as Ellerslie near the Delaware River in Edgemoor, Delaware | 1927 | |
| | 1939 | The Blue Hen Chicken is officially adopted as Delaware's state bird |
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