More than mere lines on a map, the boundaries of present-day Georgia reflect centuries of wars, treaties, political maneuvering, litigation, heroic actions, and even human error.

William J. Morton has written a well-researched book discussing the boundaries of his home state in the context of the events and the personalities of those that helped to determine them.

Throughout The Story of Georgia’s Boundaries: A Meeting of History and Geography, Morton sprinkles anecdotes that illuminate the facts. For example, he introduces readers to the brilliant Andrew Ellicott, foremost surveyor of his time and associate of Washington, Jefferson and Franklin. Morton observes, “Ellicott’s knowledge of astronomy, mathematics, and surveying instruments provided measurements that have proven to be extremely accurate even today,” then contrasts him with the bumbling James Camak, whose incompetent surveys “haunt Georgians to this day.” Morton also recounts details of James Oglethorpe’s life when he returned to England after establishing the Colony of Georgia.

In addition, Morton examines every lawsuit affecting the common boundaries between Georgia and its neighbors and explains the resulting opinions rendered by the U.S. Supreme Court and others.

Numerous maps and illustrations in the book span from the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 to Georgia in 2009, including the boundaries after the Revolutionary War in 1783, as described in the state’s constitution in 1798, and more.

The Georgia Humanities Council president, Jamil Zainaldin, enthusiastically endorses the book for all students of history.

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