

CHAPTER 8

Exploring and Settling Western Virginia

CHAPTER PREVIEW

TERMS

emigrant, charter, expedition, monopoly, militia, surveyor, frontier, speculator, denomination, discriminate, indentured servant, slavery

PEOPLE

Abraham Wood, John Lederer, Thomas Batts, Robert Fallam, James Needham, Gabriel Arthur, Robert Cavellier, Sieur de La Salle, Nathaniel Bacon, Alexander Spotswood, John Howard, John Peter Salley, Pierre Joseph Céloron de Blainville, Thomas Walker, Christopher Gist, Morgan Morgan, Pennsylvania Dutch, Scots-Irish

PLACES

Jamestown, Big Coal River, Kanawha River, Martinsburg, Bunker Hill, Morgantown, Shepherdstown, Greenbrier Valley, Draper's Meadow, Sewell Mountain, Marlinton, Beverly, Tygart Valley, Files Creek

A little more than thirty years after Christopher Columbus discovered the New World, other European explorers arrived in search of a water route to Asia as well as gold, silver, and other treasures. The exploration of Virginia, and more specifically western Virginia, did not occur for more than one hundred years after Columbus's voyages.

As the population of Virginia grew, settlers pushed into the western lands, and later across the mountains, to find available land. Those who settled western Virginia included a variety of European **emigrants** (those who leave their native country to settle in another) who were looking for religious freedom. These settlers brought their customs, food, and language with them.



Background: Jamestown was a bustling trade center during its early history. Merchants brought a variety of items to sell or trade. Some of the items in the picture were actually found during archaeological excavations at the site and are on display today in the Visitors Center.



SIGNS of the TIMES

HISTORY

The northern part of western Virginia was surveyed by fur trader John Van Nehne. John Rolfe married Pocahontas and exported the first crop of tobacco. The Harpers' ferry began carrying passengers across the Shenandoah River.

ECONOMICS

Some of the earliest industries in Jamestown included glassmaking and the production of wood products, pitch, and tar. By 1725, the colonies produced four-fifths of the tar and pitch used in England. In 1613, tobacco was introduced as a cash crop.

GOVERNMENT

The first representative government in British America was convened at Jamestown by settlers who wanted input into the laws that would govern them. The first jury trial in British America was held in Jamestown when John Smith was acquitted of mutiny for allegedly concealing a mutiny movement by one of the settlers.

GEOGRAPHY

Christopher Columbus's explorations revealed new continents to Europe. The Iroquois surrendered their claims to the land south of the Ohio River and to land in the eastern panhandle. The territory between the Allegheny Mountains and the Ohio River was ceded to the English by the Indians of the Six Nations.

EVERYDAY LIVING

Life Expectancy: Males around 30-40.

Music: "Forester's Reel," "Soldiers Joy," "Gaspé Reel," and similar dance tunes. Hymns were also popular, including John Wesley's *Charleston Hymnal*.

Education: Some children were taught at home, perhaps using the Bible as a textbook. In wealthier families, boys were trained in the classics (Latin and Greek) or French and liberal arts; girls learned homemaking skills, writing, and reading. Later, some boys were sent to England to be educated.

Literature: Popular authors included Samuel Pepys, New England writer Anne Bradstreet, John Bunyan, Jonathan Edwards, Cotton Mather, and Benjamin Franklin.

Science/Technology: "India rubber," which was to be used for everything from raincoats to erasers, was brought to Great Britain in 1736.

Above: A statue of Pocahontas in Jamestown, Virginia.

Figure 8.1

Timeline: 1625 – 1750



Finding the Main Idea

DEFINING THE SKILL

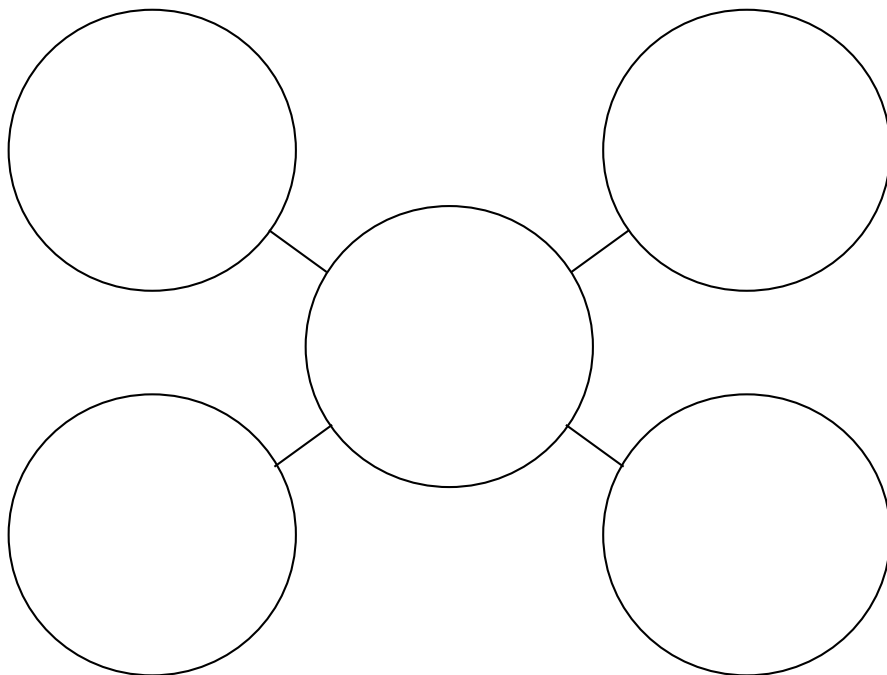
You should always read to find main ideas. The main idea, which is often the first sentence in a paragraph, is usually a single sentence that describes specific ideas or details. The main idea is followed by supporting details that explain, describe, prove, or clarify. Supporting details may tell who, what, where, when, or why. Supporting details may also provide examples, facts, or statistics.

The main idea is easy to locate if it is the first or last sentence in a paragraph. It is more difficult to identify the main idea, however, when it is located in the middle of the paragraph or is inferred instead of actually being stated.

PRACTICING THE SKILL

Copy the graphic organizer below on a separate sheet of paper. Then, read the following paragraph and identify the main idea and the supporting details. On your graphic organizer, write the main idea in the center circle and the supporting ideas on the circles that surround the center one.

Although Europeans and Native Americans sometimes found themselves on opposite sides of issues, the newcomers adopted many Indian ideas and lifestyles. The early pioneers made clothing and moccasins from buckskin and built canoes for river travel. They planted Indian crops like maize, popcorn, pumpkins, and tobacco in abandoned old fields. Wild turkey and black walnuts became a part of their diet; and words like *moccasin*, *toboggan*, *skunk*, *succotash*, and *raccoon* became part of their vocabulary.



SECTION 1

Early Explorers in Western Virginia

As you read, look for

- the location of the first permanent English settlement in North America;
- the reasons for the exploration of western Virginia;
- the importance of each of the following explorers: Abraham Wood, John Lederer, Batts and Fallam, Needham and Arthur, Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, Alexander Spotswood, Howard and Salling, Céloron de Blainville, Dr. Thomas Walker, and Christopher Gist;
- terms: **charter, expedition, monopoly, militia, surveyor.**

In 1606, King James I of England granted charters (official permission to operate something, such as a colony) to two separate land companies, which collectively became known as the Virginia Company. The charters gave the two companies permission to establish settlements in different parts of North America. In December 1606, one of the companies—The Virginia Company of London (or, as it was more commonly called, the London Company)—sent three ships to Virginia to start a settlement on Roanoke Island, in what is now North Carolina. The group was led by Captain Christopher Newport, who commanded the largest of the three ships, the *Susan Constant*. After a 144-day trip across the Atlantic Ocean, bad weather drove the group of 105 persons north of their destination. They found themselves on a peninsula in the James River, about thirty miles from the present-day city of Richmond. In May 1607, this site became the location for the settlement of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in what is now the United States.



Above: From left to right are the *Discovery*, *Susan Constant*, and *Godspeed*; re-creations of the vessels that brought America's first permanent English colonists to Virginia in 1607.



something extra!

John Smith became Jamestown's leader in 1608, but he was injured by burning gunpowder in 1609 and had to return to England. Smith never came back to Jamestown.

Jamestown was chosen as the site for the settlement because it could be easily defended and the land was not occupied by Native Americans. However, the location proved to be a challenge to the settlers. The low, marshy land where the settlement was established was a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Also, the brackish water (slightly salty water, the result of the mixing of fresh water and salt water) from the James River was not suitable for drinking.

A year after the settlement of Jamestown, Captain Newport left Jamestown to explore the lands of western Virginia, so the settlers could know what lay beyond their settlement. Newport hoped to find out more about the Native Americans who traveled throughout this isolated land.

English Explorations in Western Virginia

The first documented explorers of western Virginia—those who left written descriptions of their travels—were from the Tidewater and Piedmont regions of eastern Virginia. For the most part, they were people sent out by companies that were looking for profitable areas across the mountains.

The mountains of western Virginia proved to be a tremendous barrier to exploration. As a result, the Europeans investigated the easiest routes first. They looked for river valleys and gaps that would make it easier to cross the mountains and get to the land on the other side.



Abraham Wood

By the late 1640s, as more and more people came into Virginia, forts were built to protect the coastal settlements and the growing fur trade. All of the forts were built along important rivers, such as the Appomattox, James, and Rappahannock. Abraham Wood, the commander of Fort Henry on the Appomattox River in Virginia, was given the fort and six hundred acres of land in exchange for taking command of a fort in the wilderness. Although Wood already had a profitable fur-trading business with the Indians, he wanted to enlarge his territory and ensure that England claimed as much land as possible. To those ends, he led or sent **expeditions** (journeys for a specific purpose, such as exploration) westward.

The most important of Wood's early expeditions took place in 1650. It was important not only because of the distance traveled, but also because the journey was documented and an account of it was later published. Wood and Edward Bland, a merchant, left Fort Henry and traveled westward through Occaneechi Indian lands to the origin of the Roanoke River. Bland kept the record of the trip, which was later published as a pamphlet entitled "The Discovery of New Brittain."

The pamphlet increased Virginians' interest in western exploration, but a civil war in England delayed support from the land companies, which were based there. Although Wood probably made other expeditions trying to develop trade during this period, it was almost twenty years before England's problems were settled and businessmen could again encourage trade and exploration.

Below: The low, marshy land at Jamestown proved to be challenging. It was a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and the brackish water was not suitable for drinking.



Below: Governor William Berkeley sponsored the expedition led by John Lederer. **Bottom:** New River.



John Lederer

In the late 1600s, Governor William Berkeley of Virginia sponsored a number of expeditions to expand the area claimed by Virginia. Perhaps the most interesting were three trips led by German physician John Lederer between 1669 and 1671. Lederer was the first European to document reaching the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains and entering what is now West Virginia in the area near Harpers Ferry. However, he was much criticized as an explorer. One of the most educated of the early explorers, Lederer included in his journal items that caused others to doubt his account. Two things in particular raised questions about his account of his expedition.

First, some of his references were thought to be imaginary. Scholars scoffed at his accounts of seeing “lions,” the “Atlantick Ocean,” and “feathered ornaments . . . of peacock.” They thought Lederer could not possibly have seen these things; however, the scholars may have been wrong. It is entirely possible that Lederer’s “lions” were American cougars, which were known to inhabit the Appalachian Mountains in 1670. It was also possible that, when the explorer looked back toward the east from the Blue Ridge Mountains, he mistook the fog that shrouded the distant valleys for the ocean. This would explain his reference to the “Atlantick.” Finally, because the Eastern Woodland Indians traded extensively with the Spaniards and southern Indians, it would have been possible for them to have peacock feathers.

Second, some scholars believe that Lederer sometimes recorded hearsay (things heard in rumors or gossip) instead of facts. For example, he recorded stories of huge Indian women who “shoot arrows over their husbands’ shoulders.” Using women as warriors was unacceptable to the Indians. However, Lederer may have been told this story by one tribe as a way to belittle a rival tribe. Having no way to determine whether the statement was accurate, Lederer may have recorded it as fact.

Although he is probably best remembered for his journal, Lederer also made a map of western Virginia. The map included the territory between the Atlantic Ocean and the Blue Ridge Mountains.



Thomas Batts and Robert Fallam

In 1671, Abraham Wood outfitted another western expedition, hoping to find flowing water on the other side of the mountains. At that time, anyone who discovered a stream or a river could claim all the lands drained by it. Several others accompanied Captain Thomas Batts, the leader of the expedition. These included Robert Fallam, who kept a journal; Thomas Wood, who may have been a relative of Abraham Wood and who died along the way; Penecute, an Appomattox Indian who served as a guide; and Jack Weason, perhaps a former indentured servant of Abraham Wood. Several other Indians later joined the group.

On September 1, the group left Fort Henry, near Petersburg, Virginia, and traveled along the Appomattox River. They continued westward on horseback and crossed the mountains into uncharted territory. Along the way, they passed two trees on which were written in charcoal the letters *M.A.N.I.* and *MA. NI.* They passed a third tree with the letters *MA* carved into its bark. The tree markings may indicate that Batts and Fallam were not the first explorers to travel into this area. There are, however, no records to prove this.

Traveling through the mountains, Batts and Fallam eventually came to the New River. In two weeks they had gone downriver as far as they could (near Swope's Knob in present-day Monroe County) before they ran out of provisions and the Indians' fear of a change of weather stopped them. Before they turned back, they claimed the territory and marked several trees with hot irons. The trees were burned with the letters *CR* for English King Charles II, *WB* for Virginia Governor William Berkeley, *AW* for Abraham Wood, and *TB: RFP.* The letter *P* was for Penecute. Because these English explorers marked territory by burning initials into tree trunks, the *M.A.N.I.* markings mentioned earlier were probably also left by Englishmen.

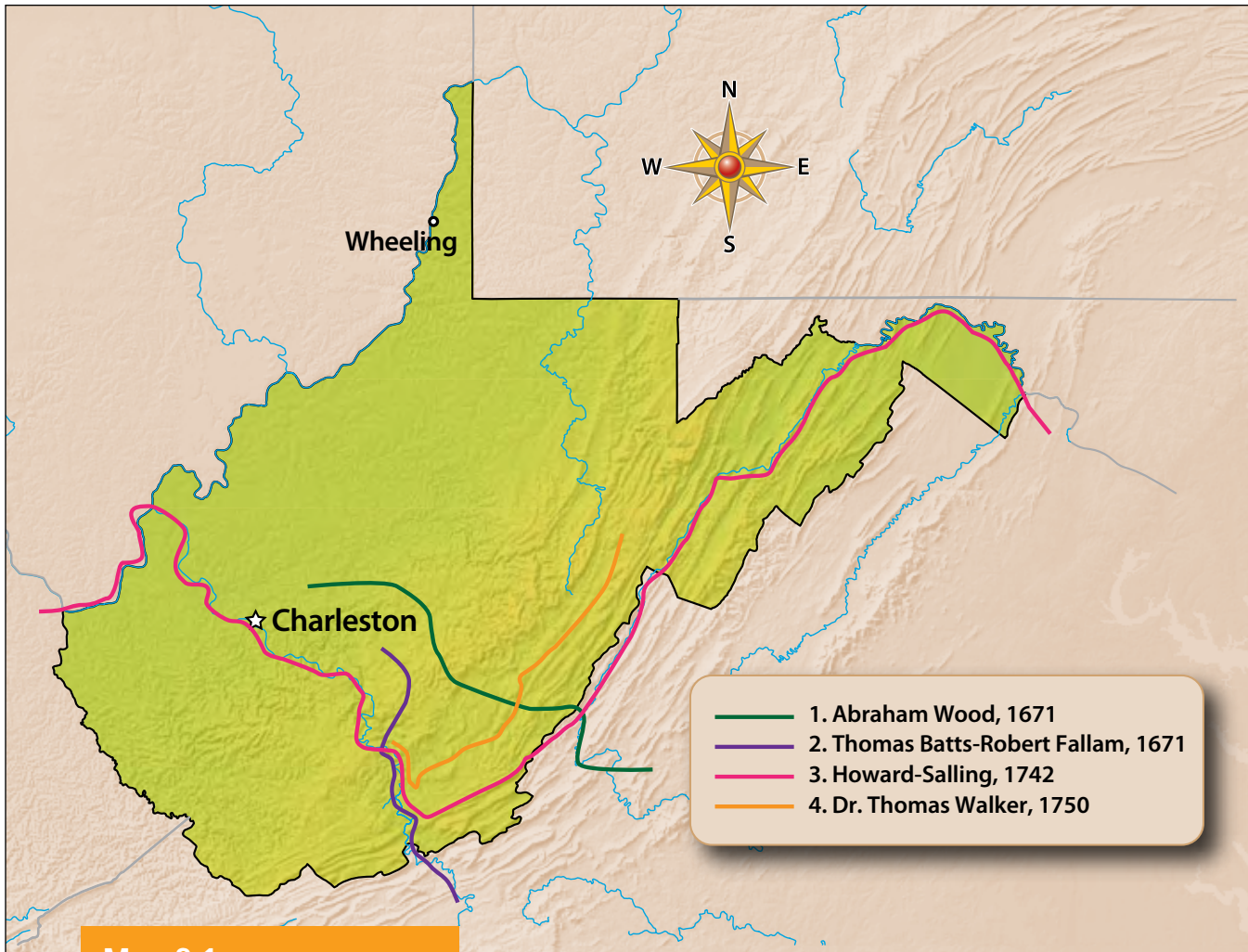
Batts and Fallam carefully documented their trip, but some historians think they may have followed a different route. Their charting of the New River, however, strengthened England's claim to the Allegheny Valley, which includes the Ohio River Valley.

something
extra!



Thomas Batts and Robert Fallam named the New River the "Wood River," perhaps in honor of Abraham Wood who outfitted their expedition.





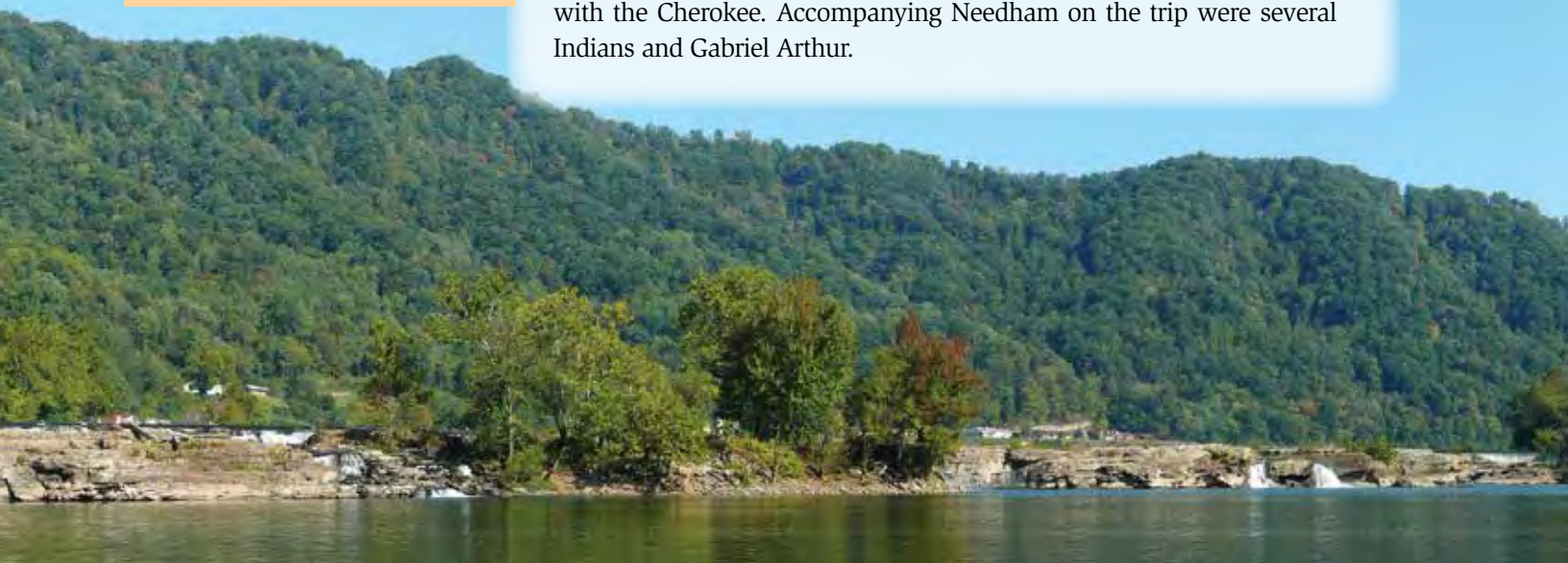
Map 8.1

Early Explorations in Western Virginia

Map Skill: Which expedition entered present-day West Virginia at the southernmost point?

James Needham and Gabriel Arthur

Although these early expeditions did increase trade between Virginia and the western Indians, the Occaneechi had a **monopoly** (the sole possession or control of something) on the trading activity. Hoping to break this control, Abraham Wood persuaded James Needham to undertake a trip to the interior. Wood hoped Needham could establish trade directly with the Cherokee. Accompanying Needham on the trip were several Indians and Gabriel Arthur.



Below: Gabriel Arthur is believed to be the first European to see the Kanawha River.

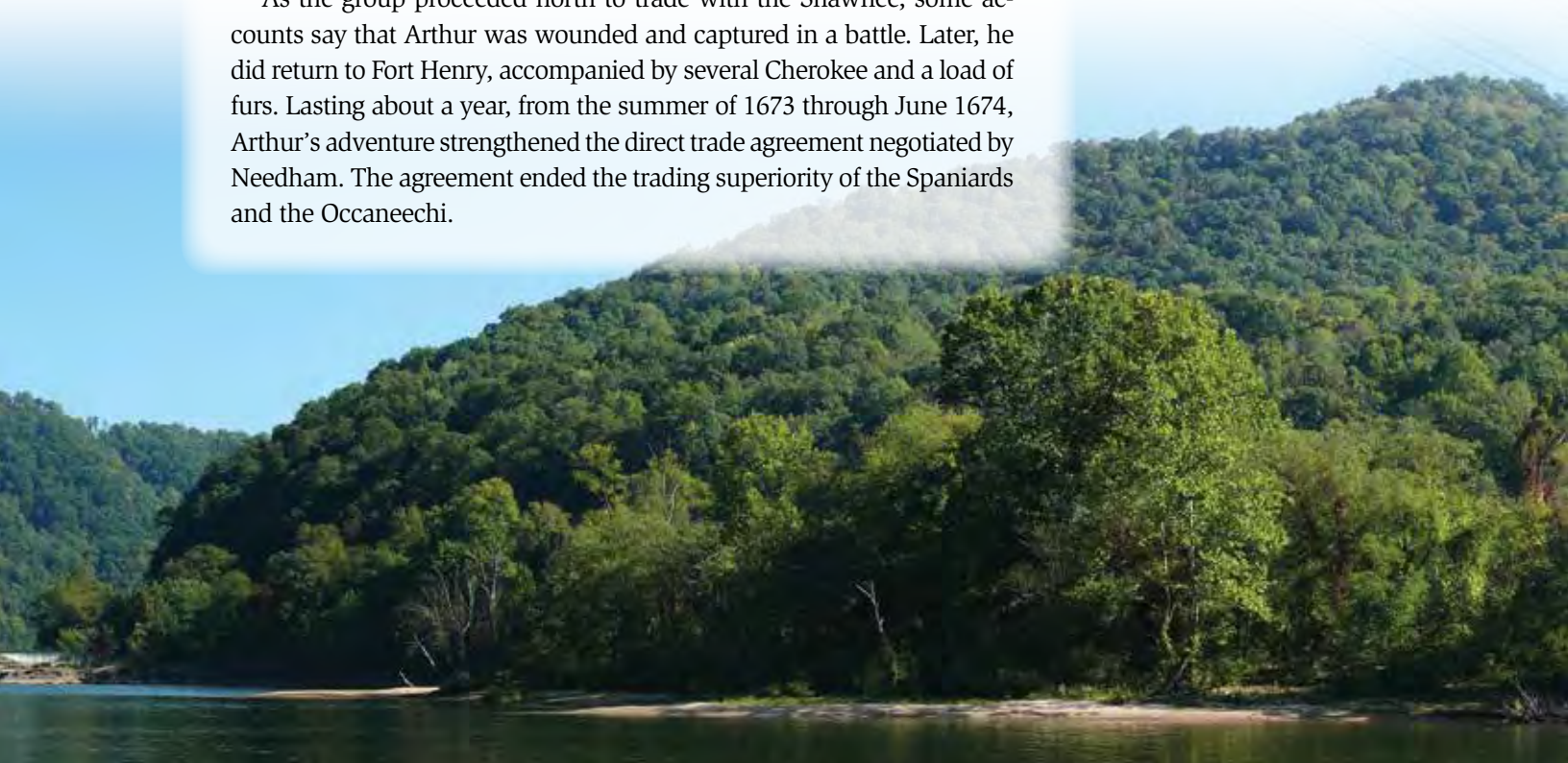
Needham and Arthur immediately headed for the backcountry (the region west of the fall line) of the Carolinas where they encountered the Occaneechi at Staunton River. The Indians, angry over the attempt to break their trade monopoly, promptly forced the group back to Fort Henry. Wood persuaded Needham and Arthur to try again. On the second try, the explorers succeeded in reaching the Cherokee in present-day Tennessee. Along the way, they probably touched the headwaters of the New River and crossed the mountains by way of the Yadkin River.

The Cherokee welcomed Needham and Arthur, and Needham was able to work out a trade agreement. The treaty eliminated the Occaneechi as middlemen for all trade between the Cherokee and the Virginians. When the negotiations were finished, Needham and several Cherokee returned to Fort Henry. Arthur stayed behind in Tennessee with the Cherokee so he could learn their language.

A month later, Needham planned to return for Arthur. He set out with the Cherokee and an Occaneechi guide named Indian John. But before they had gone too far, Indian John killed Needham. After Needham's death, the Cherokee returned to their village and reported what had happened. Their chief decided to detain Arthur, perhaps to protect him from the Occaneechi or perhaps out of fear that the English might retaliate against the Cherokee for Needham's death.

Sometime later, Arthur was permitted to go with a trading party traveling south to what was then Spanish West Florida, probably near present-day Mobile, Alabama. On the way back, the traders passed through Tennessee and western Virginia. Arthur and the Cherokee apparently followed the Coal River to a Moneton Indian village located where the Coal enters the Kanawha River, near present-day St. Albans. Arthur is believed to be the first European to see the Kanawha River.

As the group proceeded north to trade with the Shawnee, some accounts say that Arthur was wounded and captured in a battle. Later, he did return to Fort Henry, accompanied by several Cherokee and a load of furs. Lasting about a year, from the summer of 1673 through June 1674, Arthur's adventure strengthened the direct trade agreement negotiated by Needham. The agreement ended the trading superiority of the Spaniards and the Occaneechi.



Below: Nathaniel Bacon organized his own militia and led a successful expedition against the Indians. He then attacked and burned Jamestown in a revolt against Governor Berkeley.

French Exploration in Western Virginia

While the English were exploring western Virginia from the east, the French were exploring it from the north. The French had settled in Canada and had built settlements along the St. Lawrence River. From there, they explored the Great Lakes and nearby rivers. One explorer, Robert Cavellier, Sieur de La Salle, heard from the Indians about a river called the Ohio that flowed to the sea. In 1669, La Salle, accompanied by several Frenchmen and Indians, reportedly crossed from the Great Lakes to the Ohio River. The group sailed downstream as far as the Falls of the Ohio at present-day Louisville, Kentucky.

As a result of La Salle's journey, France claimed the Ohio Valley. As you recall, the English also claimed this area two years later because of the Batts-Fallam expedition. This dual claim would later lead to confrontation and war between the French and English.

A Temporary Stop to Exploration

As the French increased their exploration of the interior of North America, the English seemingly lost interest in the area. There were several reasons for this. First, Abraham Wood died, and Virginia lost its main promoter of exploration. Second, Governor William Berkeley, who had supported Wood's efforts, angered the western settlers by refusing to send troops to protect them after a series of Indian attacks in 1675.

Reacting to Berkeley's lack of concern, Nathaniel Bacon, a young planter, organized his own **militia** (a military force composed mostly of citizen-soldiers) and led a successful expedition against the Indians. Bacon then called for government reforms to help the western settlers. Berkeley responded by declaring Bacon a rebel. In September 1676, Bacon and his followers attacked and burned Jamestown. Governor Berkeley fled, leaving the colony under Bacon's control for a short time. However, within days of his victory, Bacon became very ill and died. Berkeley regained control of the colony and later hanged twenty-three of Bacon's followers.

When the news of these events reached England, many supporters of the western fur trade withdrew their support. From the time of Bacon's 1676 rebellion until 1716, a period of forty years, Virginia did not officially engage in exploration.



Alexander Spotswood

Virginia's interest in western exploration returned in 1710 when Alexander Spotswood was sent from Great Britain to serve as lieutenant governor. In his first six years in Virginia, Spotswood heard many stories about the vast, rich land beyond the mountains. In 1716, he personally set out on a journey hoping to expand Great Britain's settlements, establish new markets, and counter French expansion in the area.

Spotswood assembled a party of thirty aristocrats, a number of servants, and several Indian guides. Realizing the importance of accurately documenting their journey, Spotswood also brought along Frenchman John Fontaine to serve as the party's recorder. After a ceremonial kickoff at the colonial capital in Williamsburg, the group set off in August 1716 amidst a picnic-like atmosphere. The men took along fancy clothing, several cases of liquor, and plenty of food.

Although the trip started with festivity, the group soon encountered difficulties. According to a recorded account:

About eight we were on horseback, and about ten we came to a thicket so tightly laced together, that we had a great deal of trouble to get through; our baggage was injured, our clothes torn all to rags, and the saddles and holsters also torn.

We had two of our men sick with the measles, and one of our horses poisoned with a rattlesnake. . . . The sides of the mountains were so full of vines and briars, that we were forced to clear most of the way before us.

The group also experienced good times. One entry reported, "We killed three bears this day, which exercised the horses as well as the men." They hunted and enjoyed evening feasts. After dinner, they sometimes sat around campfires and told stories and sang songs. The group traveled almost five hundred miles. Their journal reported:

We drank King George's health, and all the Royal Family's, at the very top of the Appalachian Mountains. . . . We crossed the river which we called Euphrates [the Shenandoah]. It is very deep; the main course of the water is north; . . . I went a swimming in it.

When they crossed the river, the lieutenant governor buried a bottle with a proclamation in it claiming the land for the British king.



something extra!



At the end of his term as lieutenant governor, Alexander Spotswood started an iron furnace near present-day Fredericksburg, Virginia. In 1730, he was made deputy postmaster general of the American colonies.

Above: Alexander Spotswood created a renewed interest in the exploration of western Virginia.

Below: A replica of Fort Randolph at Point Pleasant.

After returning from what would later be known as the Shenandoah Valley, Spotswood began a campaign to obtain land in the region. He encouraged settlement of the area by picturing it as an agricultural paradise. He was able to convince Great Britain to establish forts in the area and pass laws that made it easier to purchase land. As a result, more people moved into the backcountry.

Spotswood also awarded a gift to each gentleman who accompanied him across the mountains. According to Hugh Jones in a 1724 sermon,

The governor presented each of his companions with a golden horseshoe, some of which I have seen studded with valuable stones, resembling the heads of nails, with the inscription, “Sic jurat transcendere montes.”

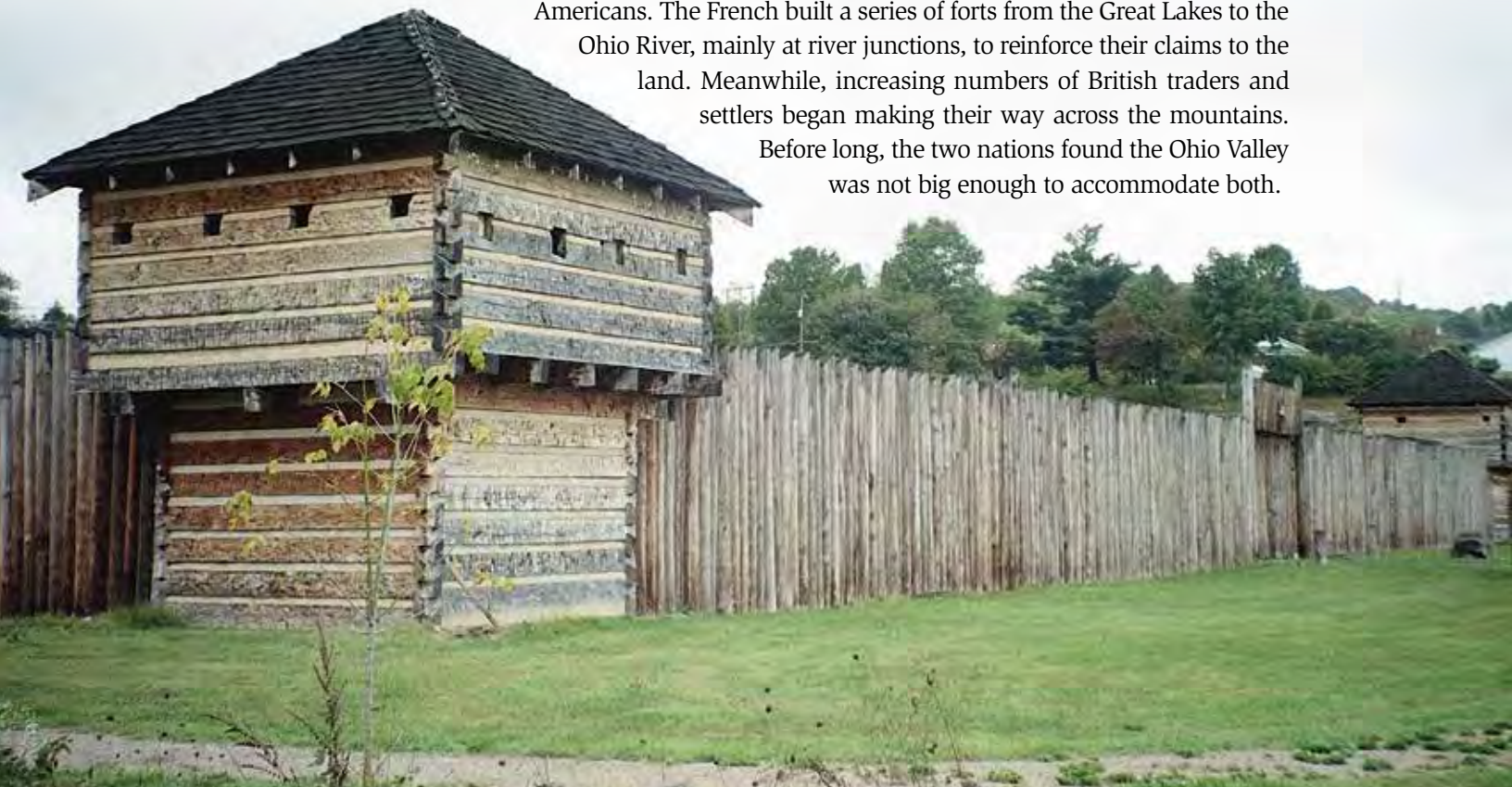
Translated from Latin, the inscription reads “Thus it was decided to cross the mountains.” On the reverse side was written “Order of the Golden Horseshoe.” Because of this, the recipients became known as “The Knights of the Golden Horseshoe.”

Spotswood’s gifts still have meaning today. The annual Golden Horseshoe test for students of West Virginia Studies rewards top scorers with a day at the Capitol in Charleston. The students are dubbed Knights or Ladies of the Golden Horseshoe and receive miniature golden horseshoes in recognition of their accomplishment.

Explorations Lead to Conflicts

Both the French and the British claimed the Ohio and Mississippi valley regions. And both sides wanted to control the fur trade with the Native Americans. The French built a series of forts from the Great Lakes to the Ohio River, mainly at river junctions, to reinforce their claims to the land. Meanwhile, increasing numbers of British traders and settlers began making their way across the mountains.

Before long, the two nations found the Ohio Valley was not big enough to accommodate both.



John Howard and John Peter Salling


British interest in the area beyond the mountains grew as more knowledge became available. In 1742, Sir William Gooch, the governor of Virginia, commissioned a group led by John Howard and John Peter Salling (or Salley) to explore as far west as the Mississippi River. The Virginia government saw the expedition as a way to dispute the French claims to the Ohio Valley area.

Howard, Salling, and the rest of their group traveled north along the South Branch of the Potomac River and then south to its headwaters. They continued southwest by land, crossing the Allegheny Mountains. When they came to the New River, they killed five buffalo and used the hides to cover the frame of a boat that was large enough to carry the entire group. The explorers followed the New River northwest. Travel on the river was difficult because of the large number of rocks and waterfalls they encountered. They decided to leave the New River and travel southwest on foot across the hills. Soon they came to a smaller, calmer river. While traveling along this river, near Peytona in Boone County, the explorers saw coal for the first time. As a result, they named the smaller river the Coal River. The adventurers followed the Coal River north to the Kanawha River near present-day St. Albans and then followed the Kanawha to the Ohio River at Point Pleasant. They arrived at the Ohio River on May 6, about two months after they left home. They continued on the Ohio, finally reaching the Mississippi River on June 7.

Although Howard and Salling passed from British into French territory, they were not intercepted until July 2. That morning, they had gone ashore to cook breakfast when a company of Frenchmen and Indians surprised them. They were made prisoners and taken to New Orleans. Salling was imprisoned in New Orleans, but the others were taken to France for trial. Because no charges were brought against the men in France, Howard and his followers were released and permitted to travel to London.

Right: John Howard and John Peter Salling explored the New River. **Left:** The expedition also took the two explorers on another river from which they saw coal. After seeing that, they named this river the Coal.





Background: Although explorers traveled through some very rough terrain, they also experienced the natural beauty of the state.



something extra!

The practice of burying lead plates first began in Europe in the Middle Ages and was a common way to show land ownership.

After two years, Salling escaped from the French and made his way back to Virginia. A journal of his travels, which was later published, again increased interest in western Virginia. In 1751, Peter Jefferson and Joshua Fry, cartographers and acquaintances of Salling, published a new map of western Virginia. Information on the map probably came from Salling's journal.

Céloron de Blainville

The French were also actively exploring the territory west of the Appalachians. In 1749, the governor of Canada ordered an expedition sent to the Ohio River to claim all the land drained by that river for King Louis XV of France. Pierre Joseph Céloron de Blainville led around 250 men, including Indians, to the banks of the Ohio, where they buried engraved lead plates as proof of French ownership. Of the three plates that have been found, one is of particular importance to West Virginia. This plate was buried at the mouth of the Kanawha River in 1749 and was found by a boy in 1846.

Two journals were kept of the trip—one by de Blainville and the other by Father Bonnecamps, a Jesuit mathematician. Father Bonnecamps also served as cartographer for the expedition. The two journals described the flora, fauna, and geography of the land and provided strong evidence for French claims to the Ohio Valley.

Thomas Walker and Christopher Gist

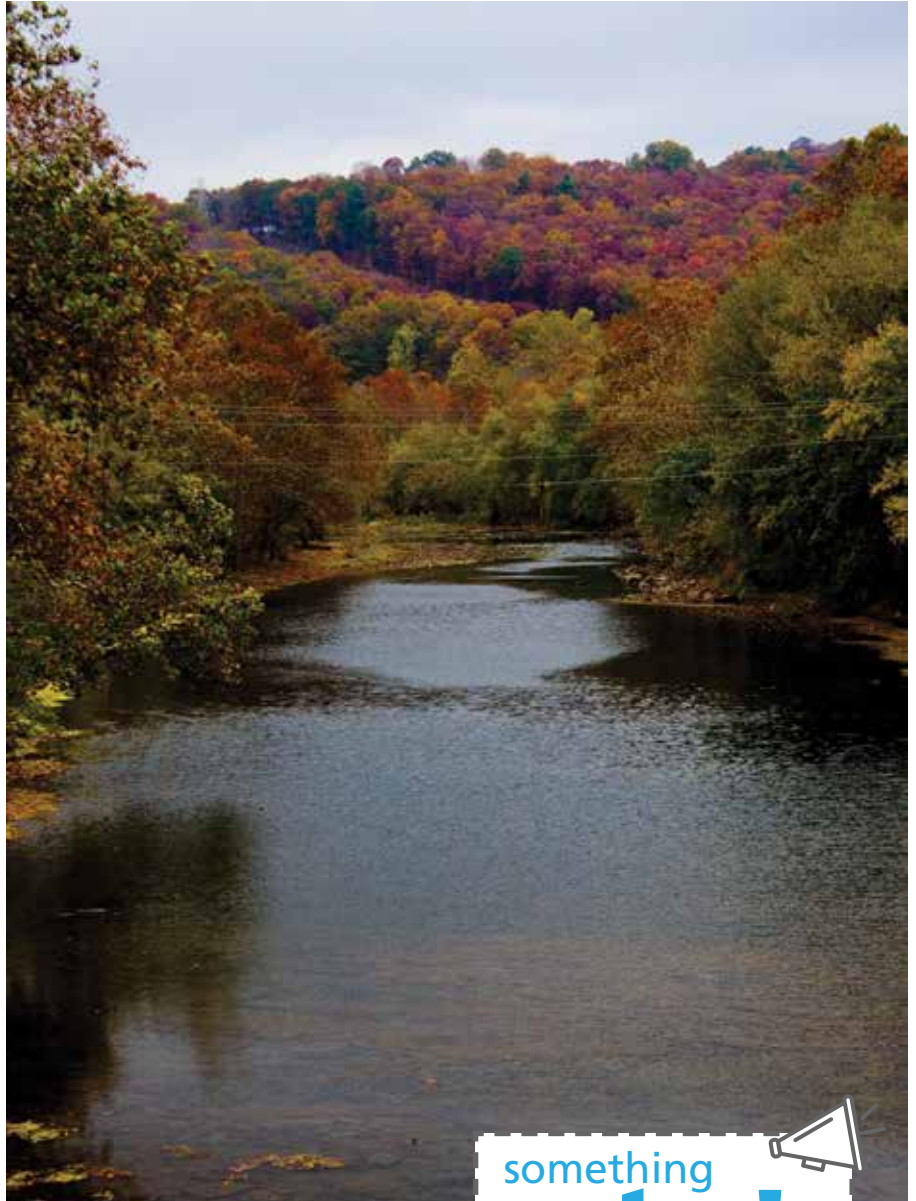
Many of the early explorations were driven by a desire for monetary or military gain. Early explorers were often individuals looking for adventure, although governments financed some. By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, the nature of British explorations changed. Privately owned land companies in search of profits began sending explorers to the lands across the mountains.

Two of the most important land-company explorers were Dr. Thomas Walker and Christopher Gist. The Loyal Land Company employed Dr. Walker, while Gist was an employee of the Ohio Land Company. These two companies distrusted each other, and each tried to gain an advantage over the other through exploration and eventual settlement.

In 1750, the Loyal Land Company sent Walker out to inspect the 800,000 acres it had received as a land grant from the Council of Virginia. The grant was in the southern part of Virginia and included what is now part of southern West Virginia. The trip took Walker through the Cumberland Gap (which he named) and north to the Kentucky River. At this point, Walker and his six companions turned eastward. They followed the Tug Fork River and crossed to the New River. Just below the mouth of the Greenbrier River, they crossed the New River and followed the Greenbrier northward. Along the Greenbrier Valley, Walker found scattered settlements.

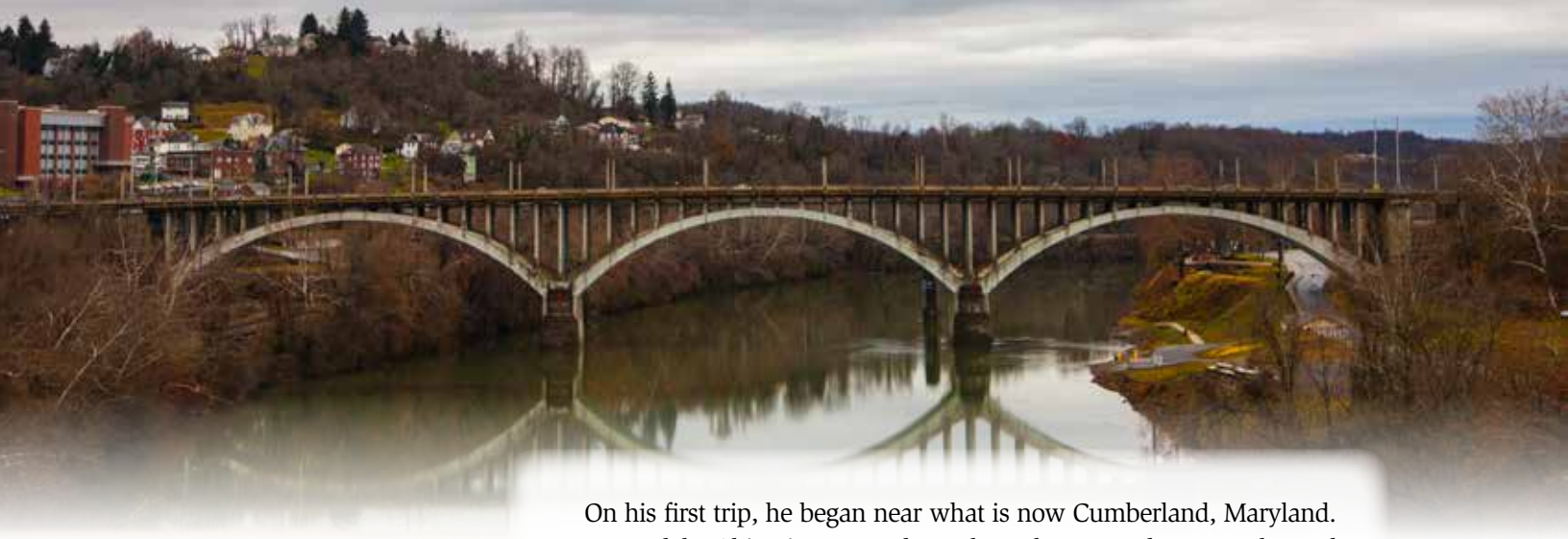
Christopher Gist played a slightly different role from previous explorers. Although cartographers and journal writers had almost always been included in the western expeditions, Gist was a **surveyor**, one who measures and maps out the size, shape, position, and so on of an area of land. Gist made two trips to explore the Ohio Land Company's claims—one in 1750-1751 and a second in 1751-1752.

Below: Thomas Walker found scattered settlements along the Greenbrier River.



something extra!

Dr. Thomas Walker was a close friend of Peter Jefferson, father of Thomas Jefferson. Walker actually became Thomas Jefferson's guardian after Peter's early death.



On his first trip, he began near what is now Cumberland, Maryland. He crossed the Ohio River, went down through present-day Kentucky, and returned along the Yadkin River in North Carolina. On Gist's second trip, he explored an area bordered by the Monongahela, Ohio, and Kanawha Rivers. Gist kept an accurate account of the topography, minerals, and animal and plant life.

Reviewing the Section

Reviewing the Content

1. Who had a monopoly on the trade between Virginia and the western Indians?
2. What area of North America did France control in the early 1700s?
3. Who claimed territory for his country by burying lead plates to mark the land?

Using the Content

1. Write a newspaper headline and news story about one of the expeditions described in this section.
2. Pretend that you are a leader of an early expedition that will soon set out for western Virginia. Make a list of the items that you will need to take on the voyage.

Extending the Literacy Skill

Read the first paragraph on page 310, which begins with "While the English were exploring western Virginia." Then, answer the following questions.

1. What is the main idea of the reading?
2. What sentence in the reading states the main idea?
3. Which sentences provide supporting details?
4. What are some of the details?

Above: The Monongahela River in Fairmont

Focus on Technology

LEARNING SKILL: CREATIVE THINKING

Produce a digital presentation using cropped photos, original charts and graphs, images, video clips, and/or music.

TECHNOLOGY TOOL: FILE FORMAT EXTENSIONS

Recognize different file format extensions (.doc, .xls, .ppt, .rft, .pdf, .jpg, .mpg, .wav, .mp3) and import them into documents and/or presentations.

Use a number of search engines to find pictures, graphics, videos, and music that describe the life and times of early Virginia colonizers and explorers. Include at least two of these file formats in your presentation.



Early Settlers in Western Virginia

As you read, look for

- reasons for the settlement of western Virginia;
- the location of the first settlement in western Virginia;
- reasons for the arrival of Europeans such as the Germans and the Scots-Irish;
- names of the early settlers in western Virginia;
- terms: **frontier**, **speculator**, **denomination**, **discriminate**, **indentured servant**, **slavery**.

Settlers soon followed explorers into western Virginia. Because the laws and customs of European countries did not allow the common people to own land, they hoped they could make a better life for themselves in the backcountry of the New World. In Europe, opportunity was reserved for those of aristocratic (noble) birth. Those who were born into a lower station had no hope of advancement. However, the **frontier** of America—the area just at the edge of or beyond a settled area—was considered the great equalizer. Success and acceptance there were based on ability. Democracy took root on the frontier.

Reasons for Settlement

One of the first known people to take an active interest in settling the new land was Louis Michel, a native of Switzerland. In 1706, Michel visited the land along the Potomac River and sketched a map of the area that was to become known as Harpers Ferry. He hoped the sketches would attract others to the area.

After 1730, settlement increased due to several factors. First, the reports of the early explorers who investigated the area told of unspoiled beauty and untold adventure. Second, because

they were afraid the French would gain control of the land east of the Ohio River, the British encouraged settlers to move there to discourage



Above: Sketches of Harpers Ferry such as this one were published to attract others to the area.

further French expansion. Third, as land became scarce in the middle colonies of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, and Delaware, many people moved toward the unsettled area where they could acquire “breathing room.”

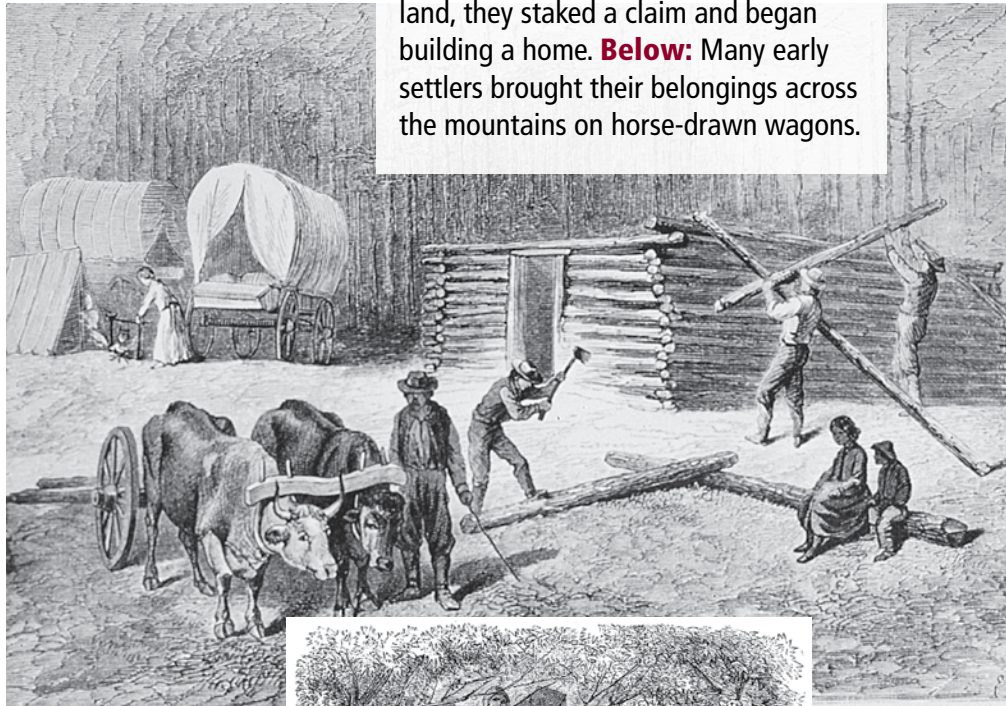
Finally, there was Virginia’s revision of its land policies. The Virginia government feared not only French advances but also claims to western land by Maryland and Pennsylvania. As a result, in 1730 the colony of Virginia established a policy giving land speculators 1,000 acres for each family settling in western Virginia. **Speculators** are people who buy something, such as land, hoping it will increase in value and, when sold, provide a profit. This policy provided an opportunity for speculators to make money by selling land to settlers. To prevent a large exodus (departure) from its own colony, the Virginia government stated that these settlers could not come from established Virginia settlements. Thus, most of the migration to western Virginia came from the middle colonies, which had been populated by Germans, Scots-Irish, and English.

An unplanned result of Virginia’s land policies was that a variety of religious groups found their way into the frontier. Since the settlers could practice religious beliefs of their choosing, a mixture of **denominations** (religious groups) could be found. Some of the churches established there were Episcopal, Presbyterian, Quaker, Lutheran, German Reformed, Church of the Brethren (Dunkard), Mennonite, Moravian, Seventh-Day Baptist, Methodist, Baptist, and Catholic. Not all churches had enough clergy (ministers or priests) to adequately serve the spread-out settlements; therefore, circuit-riding preachers visited some isolated areas once every few weeks. Some of the more remote settlements were visited only once or twice a year.

Settlers Come to Western Virginia

It took Virginians from 1607 until almost 1750 to settle as far as the Appalachian Mountains. Settlement was slow because there were no roads on which people and their wagons could travel.

Top: When people found unsettled land, they staked a claim and began building a home. **Below:** Many early settlers brought their belongings across the mountains on horse-drawn wagons.



something
extra!

Due to a shortage of ministers, funeral services (called second or green funerals) were often held up to three years after a burial.

Folk Medicine

There were few doctors on the frontier, and many people who claimed to be physicians actually had no formal medical training. By the mid-1800s, more doctors began to move into the trans-Allegheny region. Settlers came to accept some cures prescribed by doctors, but many people still used herbs and roots, some of which were also recommended by doctors.

Medical knowledge was often spiced with belief in the supernatural and bits of superstition (the belief that an event can be influenced by certain actions, even when those actions have no connection with the event). It was common “knowledge” that remedies were best when given during the waning moon (when the moon is decreasing in size), which was believed to cause the disease or illness to wane as well. For serious diseases, it was common to call upon the seventh child of a seventh child for help. These people were supposed to have special healing powers.

Some people wore their cures. For a fever, rattlesnake bones were worn in a pouch as a necklace. To prevent nose bleeds, red beads were put in a bag and hung around the neck. Copper bracelets, which are a popular cure today, were worn to combat arthritis.

Some folklore medicines may really have been effective even though they sound peculiar. To cure chapped lips, a person was advised to kiss the middle rail of a five-rail fence. This might have been effective if the fence was made of pine because sap from a pine tree would have the same effect as today’s lip balms. One cure for warts was to wash them in rainwater caught in an oak stump. This might have helped because the oak stump and water would have formed tannic acid, which is known to slowly reduce warts. Washing irritated facial skin in the morning dew or in honey and buttermilk was thought to clear up the rash. This probably helped because the person stopped using harsh lye soap.

Although it is hard enough to believe that some pioneer cures were effective, it is more difficult to believe that washing freckles in blacksmith’s water could clear a complexion. Even more absurd is the belief that seizures could be cured by stripping off the victim’s shirt and burning it. Carrying a hog’s tooth in a pocket was supposed to ward off a toothache, and pouring tobacco juice into an ear was thought to soothe an earache.



First Permanent Settler in Western Virginia

Morgan Morgan is usually credited with being the first permanent European settler in western Virginia. He moved from Delaware, crossed Maryland, and entered western Virginia from the north. Although he was a well-known business and government official in Delaware, Morgan decided to seek new adventures on the western frontier. Because he had lived in Delaware (one of the middle colonies), Morgan qualified to receive land under Virginia's land policies.

Morgan was typical of the early settlers who moved to the area. Probably in 1731, some sixty years after John Lederer first explored the area, Morgan took his wife and five children over the mountains on a horse-drawn sled. When they arrived near where Martinsburg is located today, Morgan built a crude log cabin. He then spent three years building a more substantial one. Soon other settlers followed his lead; in a short time, there were enough settlers to have a church and school. Morgan, Jacob Hite, and Dr. John Briscoe established a church in 1740. The church, Christ Episcopal Church, offered services to the public until a few years ago.

The frontier life was good for Morgan. He became a highly respected advocate for the state of Virginia. He appointed himself justice of the peace, an office he had held in Delaware. He also formed a militia and was named captain. He established an inn and became the first hotel proprietor in western Virginia. He also organized the building of a road from his home to Winchester, about twenty miles away. Morgan actually physically helped construct the road.

Morgan and his wife had three more children. Some of their children and grandchildren established settlements of their own. Zackquill Morgan established Morgan's Fort (Morgantown); his sons Levi, Mod, and James established a fort at New Martinsville.

Below: In 1976, Morgan Morgan's Cabin was rebuilt, using many of the original logs, as a West Virginia and Berkeley County Bicentennial Project.

something
extra!



Morgan's Chapel, established in 1740 by Morgan Morgan, was the first Episcopal church in western Virginia.



Below: View down German Street in Shepherdstown.

Bottom: Farmland in the Shenandoah Valley.

German Settlers

Some historians do not believe Morgan Morgan was western Virginia's first European settler. Rather, they claim he was one of a number of settlers who came to the area at about the same time. Prominent among the early European settlers were the Germans, who came from the Rhine Valley. This area of Europe, called the Palatinate, was the scene of many wars. Control of the area changed back and forth between the German states and France. Tired of warfare, people from that region fled to America.

Because they also suffered religious persecution in their homeland, the Germans looked for a place to settle where they would have religious freedom. The German settlers first sailed into Philadelphia. While some settled there, others moved into western Pennsylvania or east to New Jersey. These settlers became known as the *Pennsylvania Dutch* from the mispronunciation of the word *Deutsch*, the German word for "German."

In 1730, Virginia granted ten thousand acres of land in the Shenandoah Valley to Isaac Van Meter, a resident of New Jersey. Later, Isaac and his brother John obtained 40,000 acres on the condition that a certain number of families locate there within a given period of time. The Van Meters sold some of their land to Robert MacKay and Joist Hite, a German from New York, who settled near Winchester. Later, Hite acquired more land, which was transferred to Thomas Shepherd and ultimately became the town of Shepherdstown.





Scots-Irish Settlers

A group of Europeans who followed the Germans into western Virginia were the Scots-Irish. Actually, they were no more Irish than the Germans were Dutch. They were Scots who had been settled in northern Ireland by King James I of England. The Scots did not relate to the Irish way of life.

Differences in culture, religion, and language divided the two groups. Perhaps the biggest difference, however, was religion. The Irish were Roman Catholic, while the Scots were Presbyterian. After living almost one hundred years in Ireland, the Scots became known as Scots-Irish.

The Scots-Irish were **discriminated** against (denied their rights because of prejudice) in Ireland. They could not practice their religion or hold political offices. Restrictions were placed on their farming practices. In the 1700s, when the chance to go to America arose, many fled Europe. They settled in Pennsylvania and then moved south as land became available in Virginia. Since these people had not suffered from wars like the Germans, they were not opposed to fighting. As a result, they did most of the frontier fighting. Since they had suffered politically, religiously, and economically, they were willing to fight for their rights. The Scots-Irish instilled (implanted into a person's mind gradually) a love of freedom and democracy into the frontier people of western Virginia.

While the Germans settled in the eastern panhandle of present-day West Virginia, the Scots-Irish moved farther to the southeast—into the Greenbrier Valley. In 1748, the Scots-Irish founded the first settlement west of the Allegheny Divide. Draper's Meadow, as it was called, was populated by, among others, the Drapers and the Ingles, who had come from Pennsylvania.



Top: The New River is near the Scots-Irish settlement in the Greenbrier Valley. **Above:** The area of Blacksburg, Virginia, was originally known as Draper's Meadow.

Below: Many of the Africans who were sold as indentured servants were never released.

Later Settlers

In 1751, Andrew Lewis, a surveyor whose family owned part of the Greenbrier Valley, crossed the mountains. There he met Jacob Marlin and Stephen Sewell. Marlin and Sewell were friends who had settled in the valley in 1749. Two years later, their friendship broke up over religious differences. When Lewis met them, Marlin was living in a rough cabin the two had built; Sewell was living in the hollow trunk of a sycamore tree. Today, the two early settlers are remembered each time we cross Sewell Mountain or visit the town of Marlinton.

Other settlers from the East continued to cross the mountains. In 1753, the families of David Tygart and Robert Files settled near the present town of Beverly. Tygart Valley and Files Creek bear their names today. Two years after establishing a settlement, the entire Files family, except for one son, was killed by Indians.

Indentured Servants

Early settlers had a desire to succeed. Many of them saw escape from

the European continent as their only hope against war, religious persecution, and discrimination. In order to escape, many became **indentured servants**. Under this system, people agreed to work for a period of years as servants in America in exchange for passage to the New World. A ship's captain transported a boatload of immigrants across the Atlantic and then "sold" them for a period of indenture—usually seven years. At the end of this time, the servants became free people, free to move west and start new lives. Some families in West Virginia today can trace their lineage to an ancestor who came to America as an indentured servant.

One bad aspect of the system was that many Africans, who were sold as indentured servants, were never released. This helped establish a system of **slavery** (the practice of owning people as property and forcing those people to work for a slaveholder) in the United States. In 1619, a Dutch pirate ship brought twenty Africans



to Virginia and sold them to English planters. Although the democratic ideals of the Scots-Irish and the Germans' belief in equality never allowed slavery to gain a firm hold in the area west of the mountains, the first blacks entered western Virginia in the 1750s. They were brought to the Greenbrier/New River area with the family of William and Mary Ingles.

Below: Africans became slaves in eastern Virginia, but slavery never gained a firm hold in western Virginia.

Reviewing the Section

Reviewing the Content

1. Where did the Germans settle in western Virginia?
2. In what part of western Virginia did the Scots-Irish settle?
3. What is the indentured servant system?

Using the Content

1. Compare the reasons why various groups of people came to America. Why do people move to new locations today?
2. Write a paragraph describing what it would be like to leave your home and move to a new home. How do you think your feelings compare with the feelings of the early settlers of western Virginia?

Extending the Literacy Skill

Read paragraph two under "Scots-Irish Settlers" on page 323. Identify the main idea and three supporting facts.

something extra!

More than three-fourths of the immigrants who arrived in Virginia in the seventeenth century were thought to be indentured servants.



Augusta Heritage Center

The Augusta Heritage Center, housed at Davis & Elkins College, has as its mission to promote the preservation, practice, and appreciation of traditional folk art and culture. Augusta was the historic name of West Virginia during the period of early settlement. In 1973, a summer program, Augusta Heritage Arts and Workshops, was established with the goal of preserving Appalachian heritage and traditions. Eight years later, the program became part of Davis & Elkins College as the Augusta Heritage Center. Since that time, the program has grown and achieved national and international acclaim.

The Augusta Heritage Center is best known for its themed summer workshops. These intensive week-long sessions include Arts, Crafts and Folklore, Classic Country Week, Blues and Swing Week, Bluegrass Week, Old-Time Week, and Vocal Week, among others. Participants have an opportunity to learn a craft, including banjo building, loom weaving, rug hooking, appliqué, stone carving, blacksmithing, willow-wicker and white oak basketry, gourd art, letter pressing, and wood engraving. Others can explore various forms of music (folk, blues, religious, swing, pop) as a vocalist or nonperformer. They can also receive instruction or perform on instruments,



such as guitar, bass, piano, harmonica, or fiddle. During the week-long programs, there are workshops, demonstrations, and informal jam sessions, as well as concerts and dances that are open to the public. Some of the workshops are specifically for children and, in 2018, a Teen Workshop was added to give teenagers an opportunity to experience traditional music, dance, food, and crafts.

The culmination of the summer workshops is the Augusta Festival, which is held on the second weekend in August. Some of the workshop attendees actively participate in and/or display their creations at the festival. Events include dances, live music, juried craft competitions, fiddle and banjo contests, and concerts. The event is family centered with something for everyone.

Besides the summer workshops, the Heritage Center offers year-round activities, including folklife research and documentation, production of films, and audio recordings. The Center houses a significant collection of field recordings, oral histories, photographs, instruments, and Appalachian art. Augusta-sponsored community activities enrich the lives of residents in the Elkins area throughout the year. Pickin' in the Park is a weekly series of informal old-time and bluegrass jam sessions that are held in the Elkins City Park on Wednesday evenings from May through September. They continue in the Myles Center for the Arts on the campus of Davis & Elkins from October to May.



Below: The Augusta Festival is a popular annual event that focuses on Appalachian culture, including traditional dance and music.

Chapter Summary

Section 1: Early Explorers in Western Virginia

- In 1607, a group of 105 persons, aboard three ships sent from England by the London Company, landed on a peninsula in the James River. There they founded Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in today's United States.
 - Abraham Wood's 1650 expedition resulted in the publication of a pamphlet that led to increased interest in western Virginia.
 - John Lederer was the first European to document reaching the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains and entering what is now West Virginia, near Harpers Ferry. He was criticized as an explorer because some of his references were thought to be imaginary.
 - The expedition of Batts and Fallam strengthened England's claim to the Ohio Valley.
 - The expedition of Needham and Arthur strengthened trade agreements with the Cherokee.
 - French Explorer Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, reportedly sailed down the Ohio River as far as present-day Louisville, Kentucky. His exploration strengthened French claims to the Ohio Valley, which conflicted with English claims to the same area. This would later lead to confrontation and war between the two nations.
 - The exploration of western Virginia was suspended for a time because of the death of Abraham Wood and the policies of Virginia Governor William Berkeley.
 - When Governor Berkeley failed to protect settlers from Indian attacks, Nathaniel Bacon organized a militia and successfully deterred the Indians. Berkeley declared Bacon a rebel, Bacon and his followers burned Jamestown, and Berkeley fled the colony, leaving Bacon in control. When Bacon died soon thereafter, Berkeley regained control and hanged Bacon's followers.
 - Alexander Spotswood awarded those who accompanied him the "Order of the Golden Horseshoe." The title *Knights (and Ladies) of the Golden Horseshoe* today honors those with high scores on the West Virginia Studies test.
- Conflicting land claims in the Ohio Valley led to disagreements between the British and the French. The expedition by John Howard and John Peter Salling was a way to dispute the French claims.
 - Céroron de Blainville buried lead plates to mark land claims for France.
 - Two important privately owned land companies were the Loyal Land Company and the Ohio Land Company. The Loyal Land Company sent Dr. Thomas Walker to inspect its 800,000-acre land grant. The Ohio Land Company employed Christopher Gist as a surveyor to measure and map its land claims.

Section 2: Early Settlers in Western Virginia

- Reports from early explorers, fear of French control of the Ohio Valley, and overcrowding in the middle colonies attracted early settlers to western Virginia.
- The Virginia colony gave land speculators 1,000 acres for each family settling in western Virginia. Government policy stated that settlers could not come from established Virginia settlements, so most of the migrants to western Virginia were Germans, Scots-Irish, and English who came from the middle colonies.
- The first permanent European settler in western Virginia was believed to be Morgan Morgan.
- Germans came to America to avoid warfare and religious persecution in their home country.
- The Scots-Irish were people from Scotland who had been settled by the English king in northern Ireland. Because they were discriminated against by the Irish, many of them came to America. Eventually, many settled in the Greenbrier Valley.
- People who could not afford to pay the passage to North America often signed up as indentured servants.
- Many Africans who came to Virginia as indentured servants ultimately became slaves; but the democratic ideals of the Scots-Irish and the Germans' belief in equality never allowed slavery to gain a firm hold in western Virginia.

Exploring and Settling Western Virginia

Recalling the Facts

1. Name some of the English explorers of western Virginia and tell where each explored.
2. What did Batts and Fallam find that led them to believe that other explorers might have preceded them?
3. Why did English interest in exploration decline in the late 1600s and early 1700s?
4. Describe Morgan Morgan.
5. When did the first Africans come to western Virginia?

Learning Skill

1. The frontier was called the great equalizer in this chapter. What do you think that means?
2. Make a list of characteristics that you think a good explorer must possess. Then, evaluate each explorer mentioned in the chapter on the basis of your criteria. How does each rank?
3. How do you think the history of the United States and West Virginia might have been different if conditions in Europe had not forced people to emigrate from Europe to North America?

Community Connection

1. Explore your own community. Keep a journal of your findings to share with your classmates.
2. Interview someone you consider an adventurer. Ask him or her why trying new things is exciting. Share their reasons with the class.

Chapter Review

Literacy Skill

1. Write a want ad to attract people to sign up for an expedition that you are sponsoring in the 1600s.
2. Draw a picture of what an early settlement in your county might have looked like. Then, write a paragraph telling how the county is different today.

Technology Tool

1. Use a search engine to find information on the life and expeditions of an explorer from another period of history, such as Jacques Cousteau or Neil Armstrong. Compare that person's journey with one of the early explorers of western Virginia.
2. Go to <http://jeff560.tripod.com/places.html> to find a list of place names in West Virginia. Make a list of unusual place names and the origin of those names.