

VT 2 P5826



STATE CAPITOL OF WEST VIRGINIA

HISTORICAL WEST VIRGINIA



COVERED BRIDGE AT PHILIPPI

Until the War between the States, West Virginia was a part of Virginia. On June 20, 1863, it was admitted to the Union as the thirty-fifth state; the only change in the map of the United States that occurred during the war. We present here only a few of the outstanding dates in our history.

- 1669—Dr. John Lederer, a German, sent out by Sir William Berkeley, governor of Virginia, to explore Western lands, climbed the summit of the Blue Ridge and looked across the Shenandoah and saw the Alleghenies, which range of mountains form the boundary between Virginia and West Virginia.
La Salle, French Explorer, discovered the Ohio River, western boundary of West Virginia.
- 1671—Thomas Batts and Robert Fallam discovered the New River at Kanawha Falls.
- 1716—Expedition of Knights of Golden Horseshoe to crest of one of the highest peaks of Appalachian Mountains.
- 1726—First permanent white settler, Morgan Morgan, built his cabin at what is now Bunker Hill, Berkeley County.
- 1727—A small band of Germans located their homes on the Potomac, and called their settlement Mecklenburg. Years later the name was changed to Shepherdstown.
- 1742—John Peter Salley, with four other persons, left New River, crossed the mountains to another stream which they named Coal River from the abundance of coal on its course, built boats, and descended the stream to its mouth.
- 1744—On July 4, the Six Nations sold all land between the Allegheny Mountains and Ohio River to the English King, George II, for 400 pounds. Hence, nearly all of West Virginia was once sold for the small sum of \$1,942.
- 1746—The Fairfax Stone, most noted landmark in West Virginia erected to mark the western boundary of the grant of land made to Lord Fairfax by the King of England.
- 1748—George Washington surveyed land for Lord Fairfax in the eastern section of our State.
- 1749—Marlinton was settled by Jacob Marlin and Stephen Sewell. In this same year Celoron de Bienville, the French soldier, buried lead plates along the Ohio River shores, asserting the claims of France to all the country drained by its tributaries.
- 1750—First frontier fort of any size erected within what is now West Virginia was built at Ridgeley, Mineral County, and was called Fort Ohio.

- 1753**—Beverly, Randolph County, settled by Robert Files and David Tygart.
- 1754**—Beginning of French and Indian War. Caused erection of many forts in the Potomac Valley, and in the settlements along its tributaries.
- 1755**—July 9—General Braddock was defeated on the Monongahela. Fort Ashby, Mineral County, was built as outpost against Indians.
- 1758**—Thomas Decker led a party of settlers to the mouth of Deckers Creek and settled on the present site of Morgantown, but the settlement was broken up by Indians the following year. Fort Seybert and Fort Upper Tract, Pendleton County, were attacked and burned by Killbuck, famous Delaware Indian. Capture of Fort Duquesne by the English destroyed French power in the Ohio Valley.
- 1762**—The towns of Romney and Shepherdstown were laid out and chartered by the General Assembly of Virginia.
- 1763**—Mason and Dixon, two English surveyors, began famous survey. The Mason and Dixon Line, completed in 1784, forms northern boundary between West Virginia and Pennsylvania.
- 1764**—John Simpson, a trapper, settled on Elk Creek near site of Clarksburg.
Buckhannon was settled by John and Samuel Pringle.
- 1768**—Zackwell Morgan established a permanent settlement at Morgantown.
- 1769**—Wheeling was first settled by Ebenezer Zane. Permanent settlements were also made in the present Greenbrier County by Colonel John Stuart, Robert McClanachan, Thomas Renick, William Hamilton and others.
- 1770**—Second period of fort building began. During this period about 75 places of defense were erected.
George Washington traveled down the Ohio River to the mouth of the Great Kanawha and selected several tracts of desirable land for himself and others to be surveyed later.
- 1772**—Great Mound at Moundsville first discovered by white men and found to have been made by human hands. Berkeley County was formed by House of Burgesses, named after Norborne Berkeley, Governor of Virginia, 1768-1770.
- 1773**—First settlements in Kanawha Valley. Definite plans were made for a new province to be called Vandalia with the seat of government at the mouth of the Great Kanawha.

- 1774**—October 10—Famous battle of Point Pleasant, began when Indians attacked white troops under General Lewis. Dunmore's War. Daniel Boone, noted scout and ranger for General Andrew Lewis, was placed in command of a fort in the New River Country. Fort Fincastle, later Fort Henry, erected on site of Wheeling.
- 1775**—On July 17, Captain Hugh Stephenson and 100 men set out on "bee line" to Boston to join General George Washington in the Revolutionary cause. The first troops from South of the Potomac.
- 1776**—Bath, now Berkeley Springs, was made a town by the House of Burgesses of Virginia.
- 1777**—Bloody year of the three sevens on frontier, so called because of numerous Indian raids and massacres. First Indian seige of Fort at Wheeling.
- 1778**—Martinsburg was created.
- 1781**—Thomas Jefferson said of the majesty and scenery at Harpers Ferry: "The passage of the Potomac through the Blue Ridge is, perhaps, one of the most stupendous scenes in nature, and worthy of a trip across the Atlantic."
- 1782**—Second seige of Fort Henry, sometimes called the last battle of the American Revolution.
- 1784**—First boat propelled by steam was tested on the Potomac by James Rumsey, the inventor. Washington journeys into West Virginia to determine whether it would be profitable to construct a canal from the headwaters of the Potomac to the Cheat River.
Harrison County formed.
- 1785**—Randolph Academy was established by an act of the Virginia Assembly, at Clarksburg, the first institution of higher learning west of the Alleghenies.
- 1786**—First Methodist Church west of Alleghenies was built near Union—Rehobeth Church.
- 1788**—George Clendenin established fort which later became Charleston. Named for Clendenin's father.
- 1790**—The Potomac Guardian and Berkeley Advertiser printed at Shepherdstown, the first newspaper published in West Virginia. First United States Census, recorded population of counties which later formed West Virginia. Beverly, Randolph County, was chartered by the Virginia Assembly.

- 1796**—Aldermanic Law passed, beginning of public school system. It gave white children privilege of attending schools for three years without tuition charges.
- 1797**—The manufacture of salt in the Kanawha Valley on a commercial scale. *The Christian Panoply: An Apology for the Bible*, first book printed in West Virginia.
- 1797**—Harman Blennerhassett purchased Baccus Island in Ohio River near Parkersburg. In 1798 he built famous mansion.
- 1799**—The United States arsenal was built at Harpers Ferry. Wood County was created.
- 1809**—The Legislature established The Literary Fund, from proceeds of public land sales, to be used for aid to help maintain academies and higher education.
- 1811**—First steamboat on the Ohio. It had been built at Pittsburgh.
- 1812**—Hawk's Nest was visited and measured by John Marshall, the great chief justice of the United States Supreme Court. For many years it was called "Marshall's Pillar." Men from West Virginia served in War of 1812 at Norfolk and in the Northwest.
- 1818**—Western terminus of the National Road completed to Wheeling.
- 1820**—Manufacture of glass began at Wheeling.
- 1823**—The Legislature directed surveys to be made for a turnpike from Staunton to mouth of Little Kanawha. This was beginning of the Staunton-Parkersburg road.
- 1827**—The Northwestern Turnpike, third important thoroughfare in state incorporated, was to be built from Winchester to Parkersburg. Bethany College established by Alexander Campbell.
- 1832**—The James River-Kanawha Turnpike was completed.
- 1834**—The first iron mill was established at Wheeling.
- 1838**—Great Mound at Moundsville opened by man who owned land on which it was located. Grave Creek inscribed stone taken from mound; has been studied by scientists and men versed in ancient language, but its inscriptions have never been deciphered. Nothing like it has been found in any other place.
- Northwestern Turnpike completed to Clarksburg and Parkersburg at a cost of \$400,000.

- 1840—Bethany College in Brooke County established by Christian Church.
- 1843—Barbour County was formed from parts of Lewis, Harrison, and Randolph under an act of the General Assembly of Virginia passed March 3.
- 1850—Joseph Johnson of Harrison County was elected Governor of Virginia.
- 1852—The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad reached Fairmont and then Wheeling.
- 1856—Baltimore and Ohio reached Ohio River at Parkersburg.
- 1858—West Virginia State Hospital at Weston authorized under name of Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum. This was State's first institution.
- 1859—October 16, John Brown raid at Harpers Ferry.
- 1860—Covington & Ohio Railroad reached base of Alleghenies. First oil well developed at Burning Springs, on Little Kanawha.
- 1861—June 3, Battle at Philippi, first land engagement of Civil War.
August 26, Formation of State of Kanawha authorized by Wheeling Convention.
November 26, Wheeling Convention adopts constitution for new state, to be named West Virginia.
- 1862—May 13, Formal consent given to formation of new state.
May 29, Waitman T. Willey, U. S. Senator, presents formal request to U. S. Senate for formation of new state and its admission to the Union.
- 1863—April 20, President grants independent statehood to West Virginia. June 20, Admission of West Virginia to Union.
- 1863—West Virginia Legislature passed Voter's Test Act, requiring all persons to take oath of allegiance to United States and to West Virginia before being allowed to vote.
- 1866—Amendment to constitution denied right of franchise of those who gave voluntary aid to Confederate cause, disfranchising about 15,000 men. Same year Registration Act passed to strengthen Test Act.
- 1867—West Virginia Agricultural College established at Morgantown.
- 1868—Covington and Ohio Railroad reorganized and name changed to Chesapeake and Ohio. State grants money to road from sale of lands, towns also contribute.
- 1870—First brick street in world laid at Charleston.

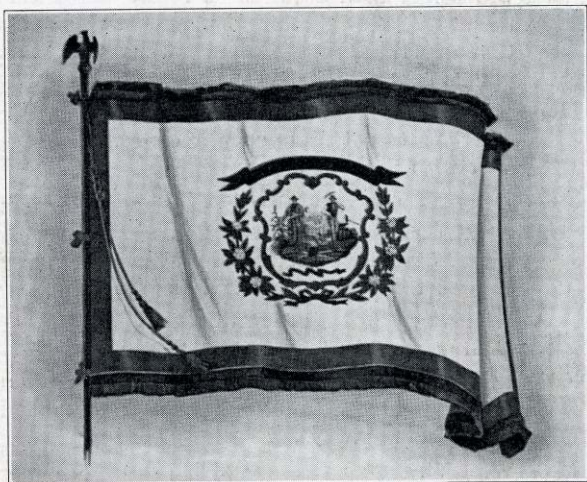
- 1870—Test Oath Act repealed. Flick amendment repealed disfranchisement amendment of 1866.
- 1871—Flick amendment to constitution ratified.
- 1872—Present constitution of State adopted.
Jan. 16. Capital moved to Charleston from Wheeling.
- 1873—Chesapeake and Ohio completed across the State.
- 1877—In August, voters of State in an election "elected" Charleston the permanent capital of West Virginia.
- 1887—Legislature passed an act to prevent bribery and corruption in elections.
- 1894—William H. Harvey published his famous book, "Coin's Financial School."
- 1898—Spanish American War. Andrew S. Rowan, West Virginian, carried message to Garcia in Cuba.
- 1903—State flower, the rhododendron selected by Legislative Act.
- 1906—Beginning of State Geological Survey.
- 1911—United States Supreme Court sets amount West Virginia shall pay Virginia in the Virginia Debt Case.
- 1913—Legislature provided for creation of Public Service Commission.
- 1915—On discovery that Virginia had held property which had been acquired as result of the borrowed funds, Supreme Court allowed deduction in Virginia Debt Case and set West Virginia's debt at \$12,393,929.50.
- 1917—May 4, Legislature convenes to provide appropriations to put State on war footing to aid in War with Germany.
- 1918—Budget Amendment written into Constitution.
- 1919—Great disturbances occurred in Southern coal fields. State Department of Public Safety was created to provide a system of State Police.
- 1920—Wheeling Steel Corporation, one of world's leading steel concerns, formed at Wheeling.
- 1921—Road building program started. More than hundred million dollars have been spent on improved highways.
- 1923—West Virginia Review established, State magazine of general interest.
- 1921—State capitol burned. New ten million dollar capitol erected on sixteen acre site.
- 1924—John W. Davis nominated for President of the United States. Howard M. Gore, Secretary of Agriculture in President's cabinet, elected Governor of West Virginia.

- 1933**—Tax Limitation Amendment to Constitution adopted. County made unit for school operation and maintenance in West Virginia.
- 1940**—Senator M. M. Neely elected Governor; one of few times a United States Senator has resigned to become governor of a state.

During the past few years great chemical plants have been established in the Kanawha Valley near Charleston. The du Ponts, Carbon Carbide, Electro Metallurgical, Viscose and Monsanto Chemical Companies have established large plants.



State Seal designed by Joseph H. Diss Debar. Adopted by Legislature in September, 1863. Note date when State was organized, June 20, 1863. Also State motto, *Montani Semper Liberi* (Mountaineers Always Free).



First State flag authorized by Legislature on January 28, 1864. New design in 1904, another one in 1907. On March 7, 1929, the present flag was adopted by the Legislature.

Prepared and distributed by
THE WEST VIRGINIA PUBLICITY COMMISSION