

Chapter 4

A Royal Colony Struggles



Chapter Preview

Terms: immigrant, boycott, Granville District, frontier, French and Indian War, ranger, backcountry, prairie, girdling, drover, grist mill, toll, capital, appropriate, Regulator, extortion, militia

People: Gabriel Johnston, Arthur Dobbs, Scots-Irish, Germans, Moravians, Highland Scots, Saura, Reverend Alexander Craighead, David Caldwell, William Tryon, Edmund Fanning, Herman Husband, Josiah Martin

Places: Fort Dobbs, Cross Creek, Halifax, Hillsborough, Salisbury, Charlotte, Wachovia, Alamance Creek

Henry Weidner came to North Carolina from Pennsylvania at an early age. His widowed mother had joined other Germans in a community where everyone wore the same kind of clothes and slept on the floor with a wooden block for a pillow. Henry, not wanting that life, ran away. As his mother later complained, he “went from me and made himself his own master.”

In 1734, Henry made for the southern wilderness to become a hunter and trapper. He set up camp on what became known as the Henry River, near today’s city of Hickory. For ten winters, he hunted with his six-foot-long rifle; each spring, he walked back all the way to Philadelphia to sell his skins and pelts.

At age thirty, having saved his money, Henry decided to start a farm and a family. He picked out a spot on the Catawba River near the Blue Ridge. However, his hunting companion, a young Irishman named John McDowell, wanted the same land. So, the two wrestled for it. For more than an hour they tussled. Finally, McDowell threw Henry to the ground and claimed the land for himself. Pleasant Gardens in McDowell County is still one of the most beautiful places in the state.



Henry went back to Pennsylvania and married sixteen-year-old Katherine Mull. In 1750, he brought her to Henry River. They selected a home site, built a log house with a huge stone chimney, and lived there for the next forty years.

The Weidners, McDowells, and many others moved to North Carolina after it became a royal colony. The colony's population doubled from 1730 to 1750, then doubled again from 1750 to 1770. Most of these **immigrants** settled west of the fall line. The newcomers spoke different languages and kept different customs than had the settlers of the Proprietary period. These backcountry families tried to take their place in the affairs of the colony, but they only partially succeeded. Coastal residents were no better able to get along with anyone in the 1700s than they had been in the 1600s. In fact, the resulting ruckus led to one of the momentous events in state history, the Regulation.

Opposite page, above: The pediment (triangular area below the roof line) on Tryon Palace in New Bern displays the British royal coat of arms. **Below:** This is the main street of Old Salem, a living history museum of the main Moravian settlement in North Carolina.





SIGNS OF THE TIMES

RELIGION

The thirteen colonies were caught up in a great religious revival known as the Great Awakening. From this movement came the Methodist and Baptist denominations that would later be popular in North Carolina. George Whitefield, the leading minister of the movement, would inspire Billy Graham, a North Carolinian who became the world's leading preacher in the twentieth century.

EDUCATION

The religious movement known as the Great Awakening created a need for ministers. The College of New Jersey, created by Presbyterians in Princeton, became the college of choice for new settlers in the Carolina backcountry. Princeton graduates became the leading educators of early North Carolina.

MUSIC

What North Carolinians would come to know as classical music was at its peak. George Frederick Handel's "Messiah," completed in 1741, later became a favorite event in churches across North Carolina, including Duke University Chapel.

FOOD

The Earl of Sandwich in 1760 refused to quit playing cards when he was hungry. He ordered his servant to bring meat and cheese stuffed between two pieces of bread. Lovers of North Carolina barbecue sandwiches have been grateful ever since.

SCIENCE

Electricity literally thrilled thousands in Europe and America. People lined up in human chains to "get a charge." In 1752, Benjamin Franklin's kite experiment proved that lightning was electricity. His fame later led the University in Chapel Hill to name its main street in Chapel Hill after him.

POPULATION

North Carolina was the fastest growing of the thirteen colonies. The population was 50,000 in 1730. It doubled by 1750, then doubled again by 1770.

TECHNOLOGY

“India rubber,” which was to be used for everything from raincoats to erasers, was brought to Great Britain in 1736.

Englishman James Watt invented a steam engine in 1764 and improved it in 1775.

Figure 7 Timeline: 1730–1775



1734
Gabriel Johnston became first royal governor

1754
Arthur Dobbs became royal governor; Bethania established

1771
Battle of Alamance

1770
Tryon's Palace completed

1753
Bethabara and Salisbury established

1766
First meeting of Regulators

1744
Granville District granted

1752
Moravians arrived in colony

1762
Charlotte founded

1730

1740

1750

1760

1770

1732
Colony of Georgia founded

1741
Captain Vitus Bering discovered Alaska

1754
French and Indian War began

1765
James Watt invented the steam engine

1763
French and Indian War ended

1757
First street lights appeared in Philadelphia

TARGET READING SKILL

Comparing and Contrasting

Defining the Skill

Comparing and contrasting is a reading strategy that enables you to identify similarities or differences between two or more events, people, places, or periods of time. When comparing or contrasting, most often writers describe one event, person, place, or thing and then write about a second similar or different event, person, place, or thing. Sometimes, however, you might see words like *and*, *same as*, *as well as*, *not only . . . but also*, *like*, *also*, *both* and *at the same time* used to describe two things that are similar. When contrasting two or more items, authors may use words like

however, *on the other hand*, *but*, *on the contrary*, *in contrast*, *as opposed to* and *different from*.

Practicing the Skill

After reading Section 3, make a list of characteristics of life on the Carolina frontier. Then, draw a Venn diagram like the one shown here. Under “Carolina Frontier,” list characteristics of the area during the period of early settlement. Under “Carolina Today,” list characteristics of life in North Carolina today. In the middle section, list common characteristics of then and now.

