

Settlement of the Ohio Country Begins

The United States was anxious to settle these new lands. The Congress decided to give land to the veterans of the Revolutionary War as payment for their service. The first to take advantage of this plan was the Ohio Company, led by Gen. Rufus Putnam. Their settlement, Marietta was the first permanent settlement in the Northwest Territory. Congress gave sections of the Ohio Country to states like Connecticut and Virginia, who would then award them to Revolutionary War veterans from their state. A big section of land west of the Scioto River which includes the western half of Ross County was given to the state of Virginia. This was called the Virginia Military District.

The DVD “Opening the Door West” is an excellent resource for this unit.

This feature length historical documentary is the story of the Ohio Company of Associates, a group of Revolutionary War officers and soldiers, and how, in 1788, they first opened the door for westward expansion of the new United States. At Marietta, Ohio, they began the first legal, organized American settlement in the old Northwest Territory. Divided into 12 chapters which can be watched individually. **Teacher guide is available.**

Please contact Julie Lambert to borrow a copy or order one at [http:// www.openingthedoorwest.com](http://www.openingthedoorwest.com)

[Marietta, Ohio's First Permanent Settlement](#)-Marietta was the first of many Ohio towns to be settled by land speculation. The Ohio Company of Associates, was formed by a group of Massachusetts men with the purpose of land speculation in the Northwest Territory. Many settlers purchased land with their land warrants, still others acquired free land in the Donation Tract. With the arrival of Territorial Gov. St. Arthur St. Clair, the Territorial Secretary and judges, Marietta became the seat of government in the Northwest Territory.

DVD- Opening the Door West-

Chapter 4. **Fort Harmar** – Was built in 1785 to “protect the Indians from the settlers.” Soldiers evicted squatters from the north side of the river so the Federal Government could sell the land. Thus, Marietta became the first legal American settlement in the NW Territory. (13 mins)

Chapter 5. **Adventure Galley, or Going Out of the World** – Moving from the long settled East to the Ohio frontier was not only an adventure, it was dangerous business. Rufus Putnam and the Ohio Company men used careful planning and organization to bring security and community to the wilderness. (11mins)

Chapter 6. **Field of Mars** – The Ohio Company’s civilian fort was just a temporary building but Campus Martius was a magnificent sight in the frontier wilderness. Built of four-inch thick sawn planks, it was perhaps the country’s first prefabricated condominium. (7 mins.)

Chapter 7. **Adelphi** – The village at “The Point” became the commercial center of the settlement and grew into the city of Marietta. The first year brought hard work, celebrations and a treaty with the Indians. (19 mins)

[Benjamin Stone Comes to Ohio](#) Benjamin Franklin Stone tells of his family's trip from Massachusetts to the newly settled Northwest Territory in 1790. Based on his autobiography "Reminiscence of An Early Ohio Pioneer"

DVD- Opening the Door West-

Chapter 8. **Spies and Rangers** – Experienced frontiersmen were hired by The Company to protect the settlements. While they knew the challenges of the frontier well, they hated Indians and sometimes caused more problems than they solved. (8 mins)

Chapter 9. **Farmer's Castle** – The second year saw the settlement expand to Waterford up the Muskingum River and Belle Prairie (Belpre) 12 miles down the Ohio. Beyond the surveyors, the builders, the millers and the rangers, the king of occupations was farming. (11 mins)

Chapter 10. **The Starving Year** – Hardship and deprivation characterized the third year. Just as they were recovering from disease, flood and famine they were visited by another plague, one of ironic proportions. (12 mins.)

Chapter 11. **Big Bottom** – The massacre of 12 Ohio Company settlers begins five years of bloody warfare on the frontier. The U. S. Army would suffer one of the worst defeats in its history and the Native Americans would stop settlement dead in its tracks – with devastating effects on the Ohio Company. (1:45)

[It Was a Scary Time](#) Benjamin Franklin Stone remembers the scary times living on the Ohio frontier after the Big Bottom Massacre of January 1791.

DVD- Opening the Door West-

12. **The Door Opens** – The Federal Government finally comes to the rescue. The Greenville Treaty brings stability to the Ohio Lands, yet it dashes the hopes of the Ohio Company men.

[4th Ohio Social Studies Learning Standard-#5](#) The articles above corresponds with the Ohio Social Studies Learning Standard for Grade 4