



**The District of West Augusta** was a short-lived historical region of Virginia that encompassed much of what is now northern West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania. Before Virginia and Pennsylvania agreed to extend the Mason-Dixon Line westward from the western boundary line of Maryland, both states claimed what is now southwestern Pennsylvania.

The area was sparsely populated in the years following the French and Indian War (1754–63), and neither colony made any serious attempts at forming a local government until the early 1770s, when legal settlement was permitted west of what was called the Proclamation Line. Virginia administered the region as a part of Augusta County, Virginia. Pennsylvania later established Westmoreland County with its seat at Hannastown, overlapping Virginia's claims.

Virginia's governor, Lord Dunmore, traveled to Pittsburgh, which Virginia claimed as part of its territory, to appoint government officials under the Virginia charter. In 1774, the Virginia assembly separated the western portion of Augusta County's territory and formed the District of West Augusta.

The following several years were contentious. Officials from Virginia arrested their counterparts from Pennsylvania and vice versa. Each state attempted to stem settlers' coming in from the other state.

The government of West Augusta was administered from Fort Dunmore in what is now Pittsburgh. (After Virginians took control of Fort Pitt, they called it Fort Dunmore, in honor of Governor Lord Dunmore of Virginia.) The seat of government was later moved to Augusta Town in what is now Washington County, Pennsylvania.

**In 1776, the District of West Augusta was divided into three counties: Ohio County, Monongalia County, and Yohogania County.** Ohio County encompassed most of the western region of the district bordering the Ohio River, including parts of what are now Washington and Greene Counties in Pennsylvania. Monongalia County encompassed much of what is now north-central West Virginia, and parts of what are now Washington, Greene and Fayette Counties in Pennsylvania.

**Yohogania County** consisted of much of what is now southwestern Pennsylvania, including all of what is now Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, parts of the present counties of Washington, Fayette, Allegheny, and Beaver, and the counties of Hancock County, West Virginia and the northern part of Brooke County, West Virginia. The court house for Yohogania County was located in West Elizabeth along the Monongahela River. **Oliver Miller served as a justice for Yohogania County.**

**In 1780, the boundary dispute between Virginia and Pennsylvania was finally settled** when both sides agreed to extend the Mason-Dixon line westward from Maryland. The survey determined that parts of Ohio and Monongalia counties and nearly all of Yohogania County were within the Pennsylvania boundaries. Ohio County and Monongalia Counties remained as part of Virginia (now West Virginia). Yohogania County was dissolved since it was almost entirely within Pennsylvania. Yohogania County is often referred to as "the lost county".

Pennsylvania created Washington (1781) and Fayette (1783) counties from part of Westmoreland County and land that had been claimed as part of Yohogania County, Virginia. Allegheny County was officially created on September 24, 1788, from parts of Washington and Westmoreland counties. *MPS*