

# 18<sup>th</sup> century American Indian perspectives on invasive species

As informed by historical documents  
and archaeological research.

Doug Wood

# Earliest evidence thus far of prehistoric invaders of North America:

## Fossil footprints at White Sands National Park, NM

With three separate lines of evidence pointing to the same approximate age, it is highly unlikely that they are all incorrect or biased and, taken together, provide strong support for the 21,000 to 23,000-year age range for the footprints.

<https://www.usgs.gov/news/national-news-release/study-confirms-age-oldest-fossil-human-footprints-north-america>

Announcement Oct. 5, 2023



<https://www.npr.org/2023/10/07/1204031535/fossil-footprints-in-new-mexico-suggest-humans-have-been-here-longer-than-we-tho>

... and your little dog too, Ah ha ha ha ha!



Dog bone fragment  
10,150 years old found  
in southeast Alaska.

Photo by Douglas  
Levere/University at Buffalo

<https://people.com/pets/ancient-dog-bone-suggests-dogs-migrated-with-humans-to-americas/>

# Hoof or moccasin: Which invasive species came first?

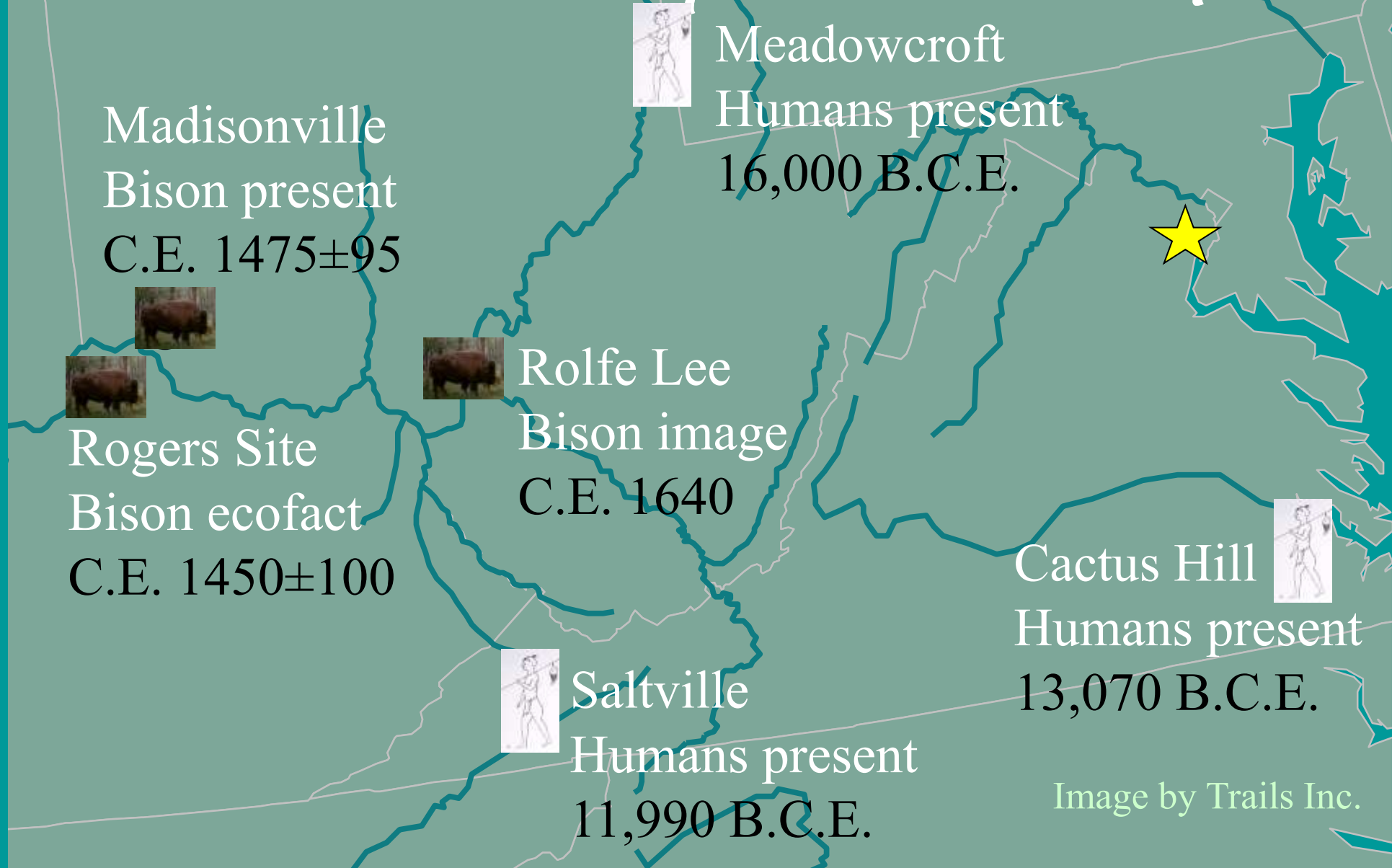


Image by Trails Inc.

# Oldest known European invader settlement in North America at L'Anse aux Meadows ~1021 CE



- Photo shows recreated Norse buildings at the site.
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%27Anse\\_aux\\_Meadows](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%27Anse_aux_Meadows)

# Ancient runic inscription found on stone at L'Anse aux Meadows



Translation:

We come from the land of the ice and  
snow

From the midnight sun where the hot  
springs flow

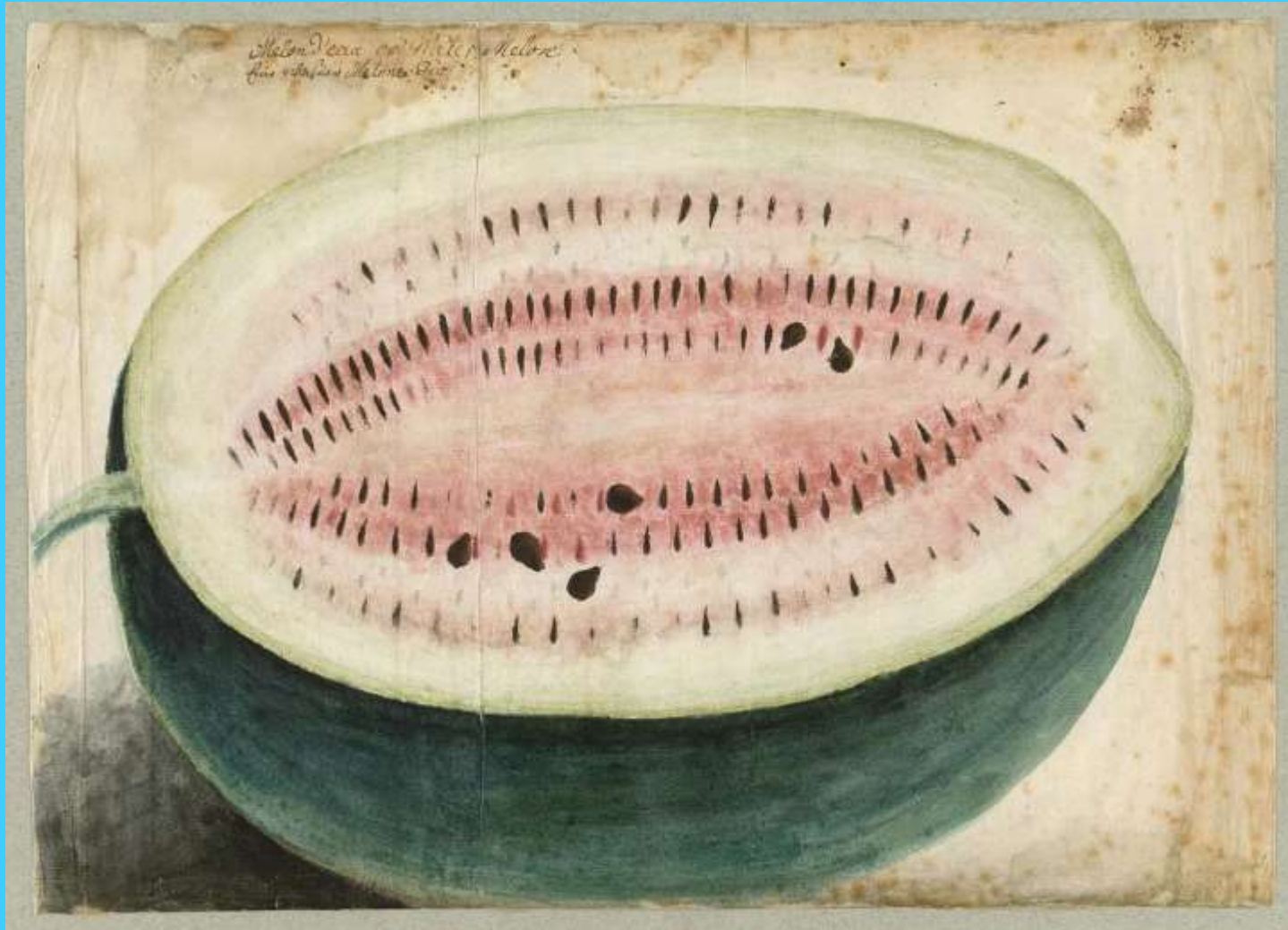
The hammer of the gods

Will drive our ships to new lands

To fight the horde, sing and cry  
Valhalla, I am coming

-Led the Red, son of Zeppelin

# Watermelon introduced early in North America



Phillipp Georg Freidrich Von Reck watercolor made in 1736, when he visited the Yuchis of Georgia.

<https://allthingshominy.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/watermelonvonreck.jpg?w=1200&h=864>



Common Mullein  
(*Verbascum thapsus*)

Excellent bronchodilator  
(opens airways)

Can be drunk as a tea, or  
dried leaves smoked/ inhaled

Not native, but a notable  
exception since readily  
adopted as superior to  
Lobelias



# Upper Ohio Valley

**“Wednesday 4.—We hunted up and down this Creek to examine the land—The Bottoms are of a Mile wide & very rich, a great many cleared Fields covered with white Clover, the high Land rich, but in general, hilly.”**

-- Christopher Gist describing Middle Island Creek on an exploratory journey in 1752.



**Buffalo clovers**



# Invasive Honeybee harbinger of white men to come

“The honeybee is not a native of our continent. [...] The Indians concur with us in the tradition that it was brought from Europe. [...] The bees have generally extended themselves into the country, a little in advance of the white settlers. The Indians therefore call them the **white man’s fly**, and consider their approach as indicating the approach of the settlements of the whites.”

---Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. 1832. Boston: Lilly and Wait. Page 77.

# Clover; American Indian legend

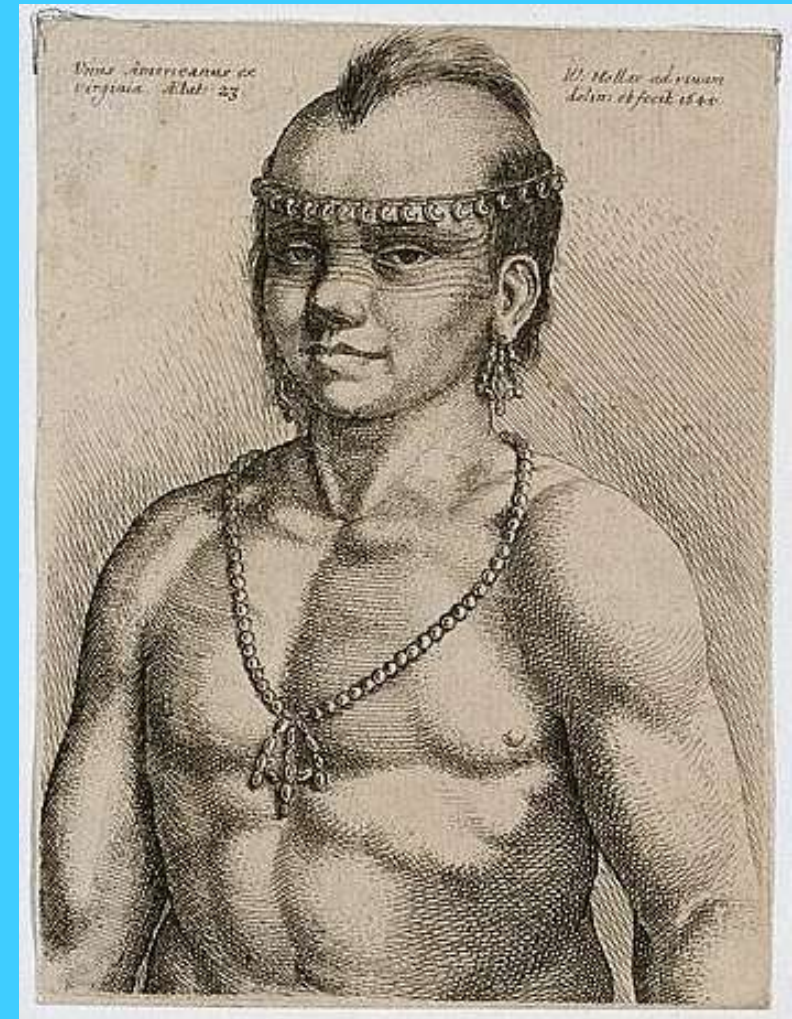
**“I have frequently heard, when a boy, an anecdote related by an old settler, somewhat to this effect:--- The white, or wild clover, is of indigenous growth, and abounded on the banks of the rivers, etc. The red was introduced by John Lewis, and it was currently reported by their prophets, and believed by the Indians generally, that the blood of the red men slain by the Lewises and their followers, had dyed the trefoil to its sanguine hue.”**

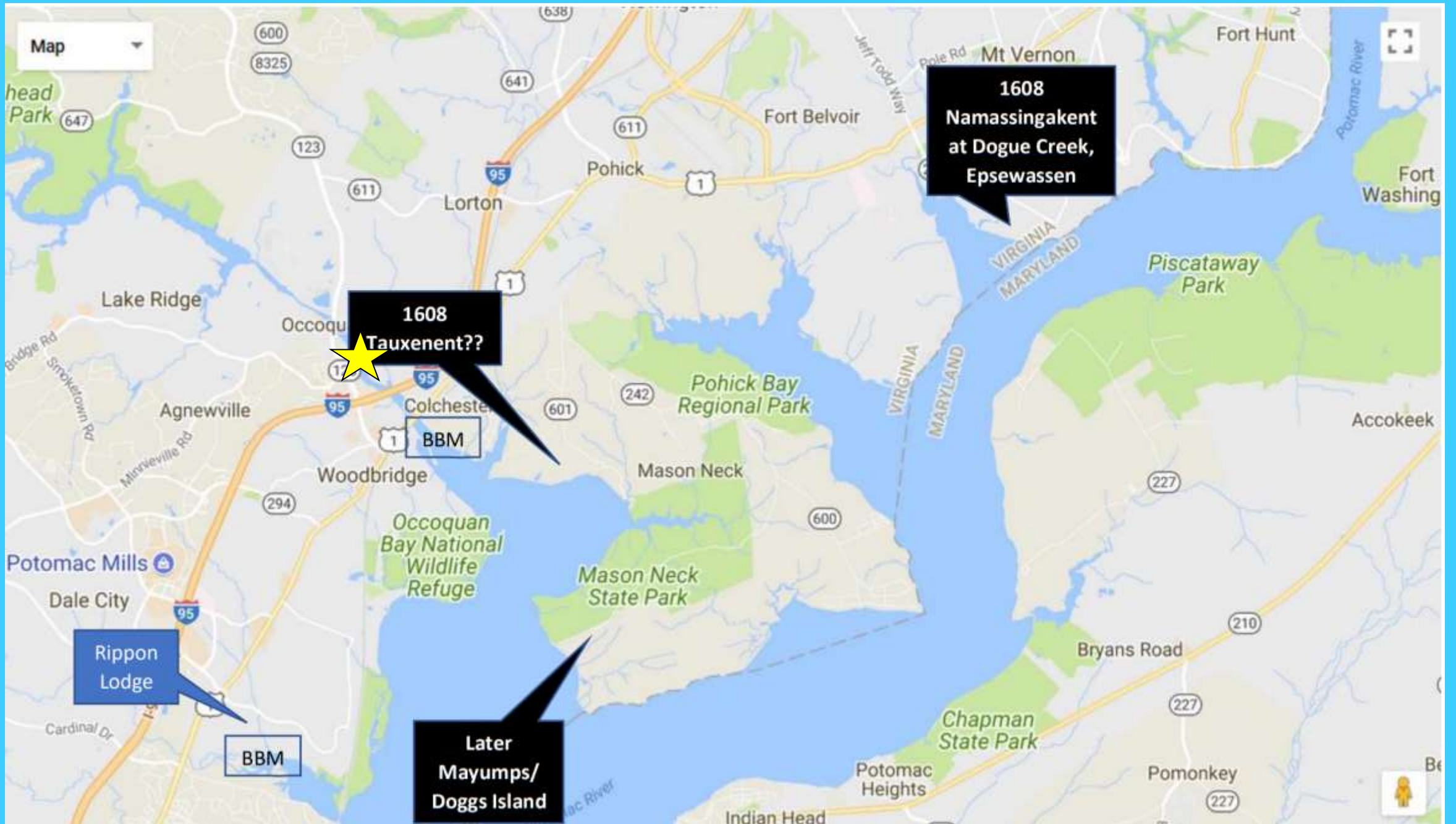
-- quoted in Henry Howe's *“Historical Collections of Virginia,”* published in 1852, p 183.

# Taux/Toag/Doeg/Dogue/Doggs and hogs; Invasive livestock troubles 1608-1676

Increased ranging of Virginian livestock on American Indian lands, resulted in increased violence between the two peoples.

In 1675, fed up with the livestock trespass, Taux men were implicated in the murder of Thomas Matthews' herdsman Robert Hen. Militiamen retaliated by murdering 10 Taux, including their "King" and captured the King's son. This escalated into greater violence including hog-stealing, kidnapping, and murders, until Bacon's Rebellion erupted in 1676.





1608  
Namassingakent  
at Dogue Creek,  
Epsewassen

1608  
Tauxenent??

Rippon  
Lodge

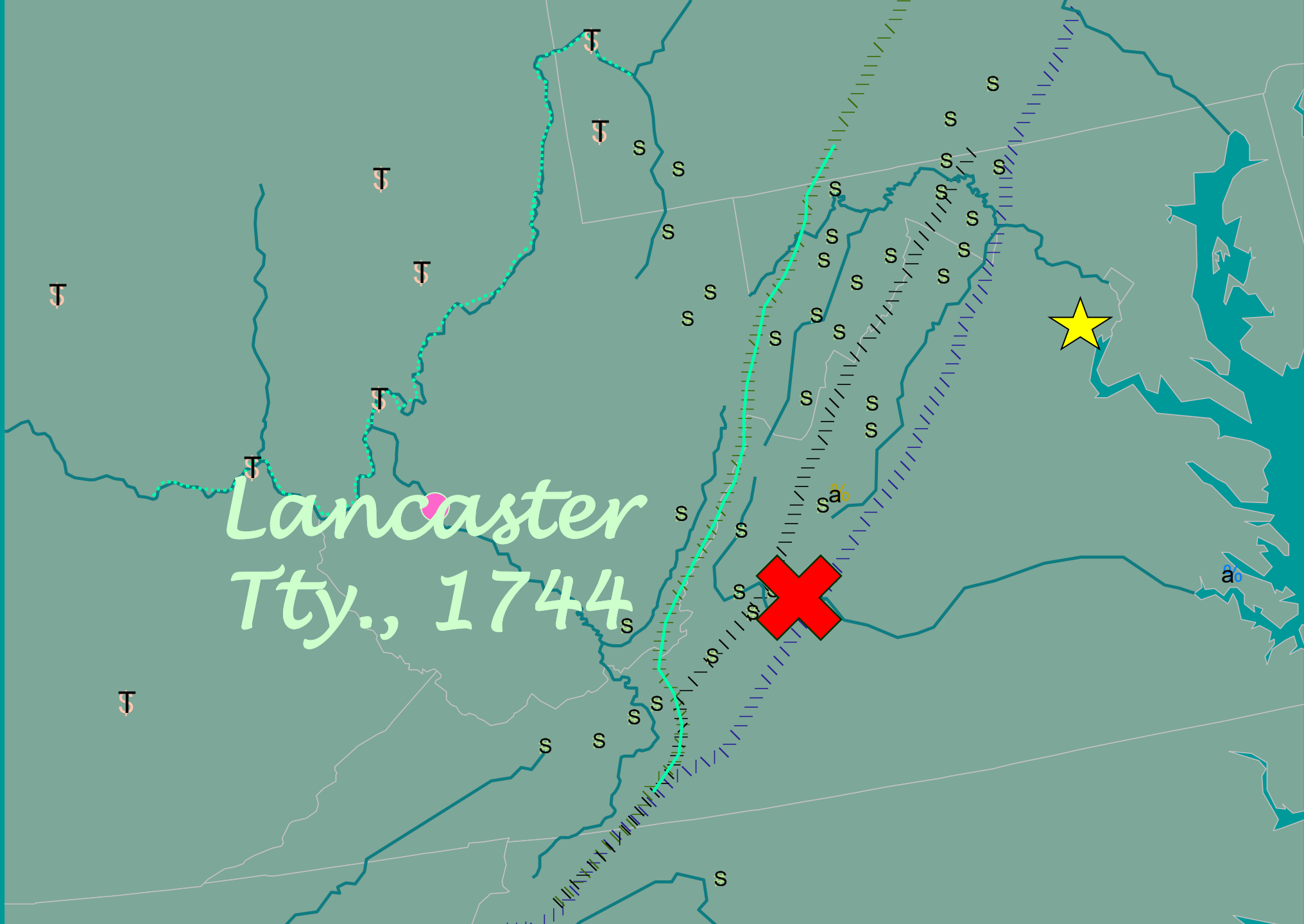
Later  
Mayumps/  
Doggs Island

BBM

BBM



Lancaster  
Tty., 1744



# Invasive cows and cowboys

“From the Heart of the Settlements we are now got into the Cow-Pens, the Keepers of these are a very extraordinary Kind of Fellows, they drive up their herds on Horseback, and they had need do so, for their Cattle are near as wild as Deer [...] they may perhaps have a Stock of four or five hundred to a thousand head of Cattle belonging to a Cow-Pen, these run as they please in the great Woods, where there are no inclosures to stop them.”

-- A British officer on Braddock's campaign in 1755 wrote home to a friend with a detailed description of cattle ranching near the Maryland-Virginia border. From *Braddock Road Chronicles 1755*, by Andrew J. Wahll. 1999. Heritage Books, Bowie, MD.

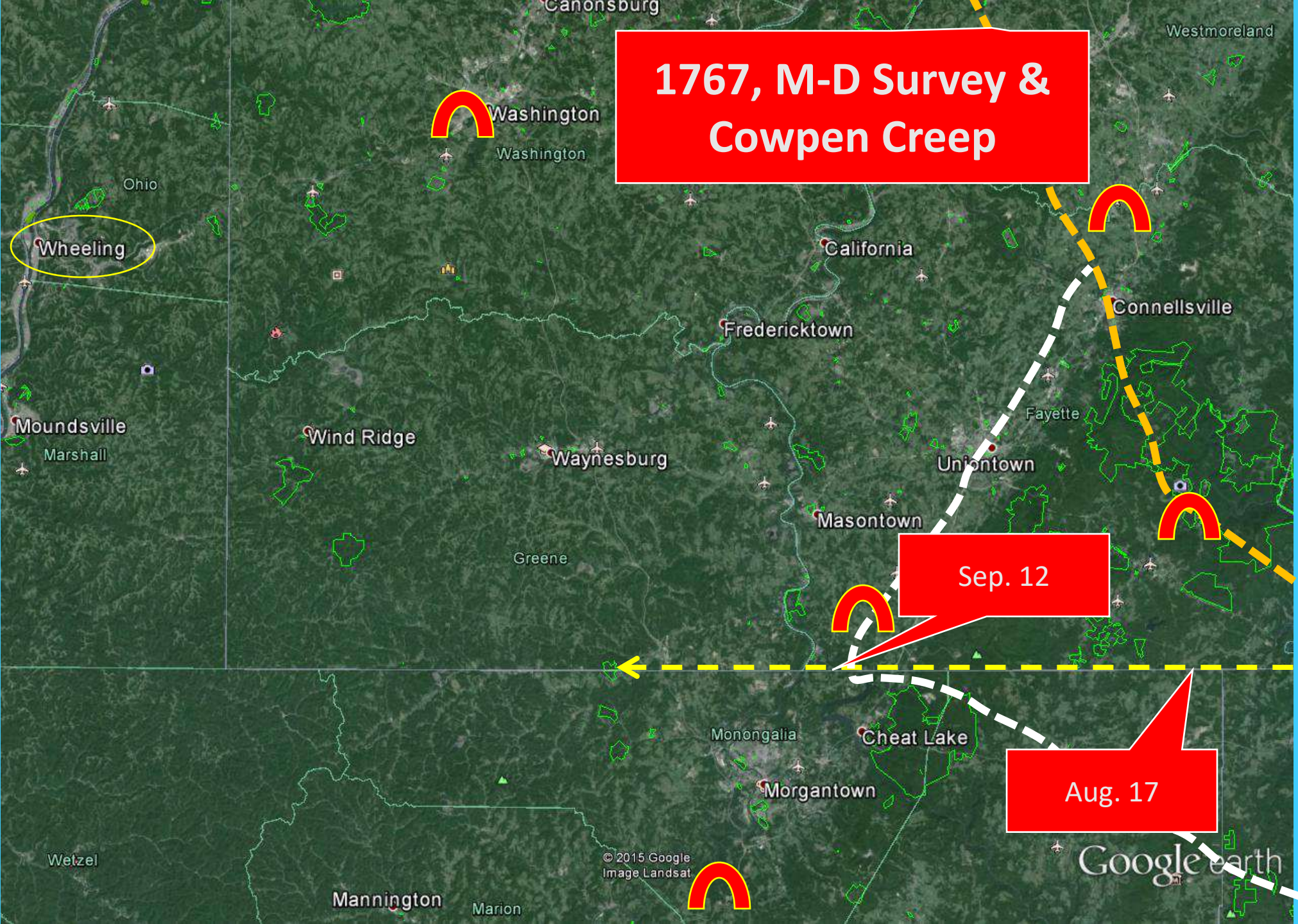


# The cowpens creep westward

“[...] One McCullock from the South Branch of Potomac brought up Yesterday a Hundred good Hogs, Some Salt, and Sundry Necessaries for the Garrison, as he is the first adventurer, Mr Hoops Ought to Reward his Industry with as high a price as can be afforded. The Virginia Gentlemen here Recommend him as a proper person to contract with for Supplies for the Garrison from the Branch. [...]”

-- Col. Hugh Mercer January 3, 1759. From *The Papers of Henry Bouquet, Volume II*. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Edited by S. K. Stevens, Donald H. Kent, and Autumn L. Leonard. 1951.

# 1767, M-D Survey & Cowpen Creep



Sep. 12

Aug. 17

Wheeling

Google earth

© 2015 Google  
Image Landsat

Reverend John Heckewelder's  
lesson about invasive  
livestock ranging.

# Col. Burwell to the Board of Trade

“August 21, 1751 - Notwithstanding the Grants of the Kings of England, France or Spain, the Property of these uninhabited Parts of the World must be founded upon prior Occupancy according to the Law of Nature; and **it is the seating and cultivating the soil and not the bare traveling through a Territory that constitutes Right**; and it will be politic and highly for the Interest of the Crown to encourage the seating the Lands Westward as soon as possible to prevent the French.”

---Darlington 1893:220

The Ohio Indians experienced the same invasive species problem as the Taux did: bees, livestock, Europeans & Africans, resulting in the loss of territory.

“The Indians who reside upon the Ohio, the upper parts of it at least, are composed of Shawanees, Delawares, and some of the Mingoos, who, getting but little part of the consideration that was given for the lands eastward of the Ohio, view the settlements of the people upon this river with an uneasy and jealous eye, and do not scruple to say, that they must be compensated for their right if the people settle thereon, notwithstanding the cession of the Six Nations [at Fort Stanwix in 1768].”

--George Washington, Nov. 17, 1770 journal entry.