



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment



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Imagine waking up in Hell one morning but going to sleep in Heaven at the end of the day.

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt said that's how an Arthurdale resident described going from a cramped, poverty-stricken mining town to the new experimental farming community. For that resident, Arthurdale, West Virginia, was Heaven. For Eleanor, it was a humanitarian project and experiment. For politicians and policy commentators, it was a flashpoint for the great debate over the role of government during an economic crisis.

Arthurdale was the first of one hundred homestead communities built from the ground-up by the federal government during the Great Depression. Due to Eleanor Roosevelt's lobbying and influence, this New Deal project provided spacious new homes with indoor plumbing, modern appliances, and furniture to a select, lucky few. Arthurdale children attended an experimental school and their parents worked cooperatively to support the town. The experiment Roosevelt championed faced many challenges, but Arthurdale remains.



Document Contents

National Curriculum Standards

About This Lesson

Getting Started: Inquiry Question

Setting the Stage: Historical Context

Locating the Site: Map

1. Map 1: The Appalachian Coal Basin.

Determining the Facts: Readings

1. Reading 1: A New Deal for Scotts Run
2. Reading 2: Life at Arthurdale
3. Reading 3: Arthurdale Struggles

Visual Evidence: Images

1. Photo 1: Miners' Housing in Scotts Run, West Virginia.
2. Illustration 1: A New Deal Homestead Farm, ca. 1934.
3. Map 2: Arthurdale Town Map.
4. Photo 2: Arthurdale, 1937.
5. Photo 3: School children in Arthurdale, 1935.

Putting It All Together: Activities

1. Activity 1: A New Deal for the United States
2. Activity 2: Discover the New Deal Homesteads
3. Activity 3: Plan Your Own Community
4. Activity 4: Heritage and Community Service

References and Endnotes

Additional Resources



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

Where this lesson fits into the curriculum

Time Period: Progressive Era, Early to Mid-20th Century

Topics: The lesson can be used in U.S. History units on the Progressive Era, the Great Depression, the New Deal, as well as in lessons on economics, politics, and sociology.

Relevant United States History Standards for Grades 5-12

This lesson relates to the following National Standards for History from the UCLA National Center for History in the Schools:

US History Era 8

- Standard 1A- The student understands the causes of the crash of 1929 and the Great Depression.
 - Standard 2A- The student understands the New Deal and the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt.
-

Relevant Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

This lesson relates to the following Curriculum Standards for Social Studies from the National Council for the Social Studies:

Theme I: Culture

- Standard A - The student compares similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures meet human needs and concerns.
- Standard E - The student articulates the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Theme II: Time, Continuity, and Change

- Standard E - The student develops critical sensitivities such as empathy and skepticism regarding attitudes, values, and behaviors of people in different historical contexts.

Theme III: People, Places, and Environments



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

- Standard D - The student estimates distance, calculates scale, and distinguishes other geographic relationships such as population density and spatial distribution patterns.
- Standard G - The student describes how people create places that reflect cultural values and ideals as they build neighborhoods, parks, shopping centers, and the like.
- Standard H - The student examines, interprets, and analyzes physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land uses, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.

Theme V: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

- Standard E - The student identifies and describes examples of tensions between belief systems and government policies and laws.
- Standard G - The student applies knowledge of how groups and institutions work to meet individual needs and promote the common good.

Theme VI: Power, Authority, & Governance

- Standard C - The student analyzes and explains ideas and governmental mechanisms to meet wants and needs of citizens, regulate territory, manage conflict, and establish order and security.

Theme VII: Production, Distribution, and Consumption

- Standard C - The student explains the difference between private and public goods and services.
- Standard D - The student describes a range of examples of the various institutions that make up economic systems such as households, business firms, banks, government agencies, labor unions, and corporations.

Theme X: Civic Ideals and Practices

- Standard F - The student identifies and explains the roles of formal and informal political actors in influencing and shaping public policy and decision-making.
- Standard I - The student explains the relationship between policy statements and action plans used to address issues of public concern.
- Standard J - The student examines strategies designed to strengthen the "common good," which consider a range of options for citizen action.

Relevant Common Core Standards

This lesson relates to the following Common Core English and Language Arts Standards for History and Social Studies for middle school and high school students:

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Key Ideas and Details

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.2

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.7

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.10



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

About This Lesson

This lesson is based on the National Register of Historic Places registration file for "[Arthurdale Historic District](http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NRHP/Text/88001862.pdf)" [http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NRHP/Text/88001862.pdf] and it features public domain photographs of historic Arthurdale archived at the Library of Congress.

It was published in 2014. This lesson was written by Angela Sirna, a graduate student at West Virginia University. It was edited by Teaching with Historic Places staff. This lesson is one in a series that brings the important stories of historic places into classrooms across the country.

Objectives

1. To explain the goals of the New Deal and its Homestead Project;
2. To describe the conditions Scotts Run families faced during the Great Depression;
3. To argue whether Arthurdale was a failure or a success;
4. To report on New Deal projects or programs that affected their region.

Materials for students

The materials listed below can either be used directly on the computer or can be printed out, photocopied, and distributed to students.

1. Two maps showing the Appalachian Coal Basin and the Arthurdale town plan;
2. Three readings about the development of Arthurdale, life at Arthurdale, and why the Arthurdale experiment ended;
3. Three photographs of Scotts Run and Arthurdale;
4. One illustration of a proposed Homestead Farm.

Visiting the site

Arthurdale is located on Rt. 92 S, 2.5 miles from the intersection Rt. 7 and 92 near Reedsville, West Virginia. Arthurdale Heritage, Inc. operates a museum complex in former community buildings. For more information, visit the organization's [website](#) or call 304-864-3959.



Getting Started



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What is happening in this photo?

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Photo Analysis Worksheet

Step 1:

Examine the photograph for 10 seconds. How would you describe the photograph?

Step 2:

Divide the photograph into quadrants and study each section individually. What details--such as people, objects, activities--do you notice?

Step 3:

What other information--such as time period, location, season, reason photo was taken--can you gather from the photo?

Step 4:

How would you revise your first description of the photo using the information noted in Steps 2 and 3?

Step 5:

What questions do you have about the photograph? How might you find answers to these questions?



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Setting the Stage

In the decades before the Great Depression, Americans moved from agricultural areas to take jobs in mining and industry. The rise of industrialization led to more coal mining. When the Stock Market Crash of 1929 hit and the Great Depression caused the American economy to collapse, millions of people struggled to support their families. Industrial and mine workers especially suffered. They had already faced falling prices in the 1920s and competition for jobs in urban areas. On the eve of the Great Depression, in the late 1920s, coalminers in Scotts Run, West Virginia were already near revolt. Falling coal production left many of them without jobs, facing destitution, and the situation worsened. The Great Depression left them with little to no opportunities for work. In a depression, a decrease in American industry means a decrease in demand for coal to fuel it.

After Franklin Delano Roosevelt became president in 1933, he announced a "New Deal" for America. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt toured the country extensively and gathered information used to formulate plans to combat the Great Depression. She conveyed her accounts of the conditions she witnessed and urged immediate action for relief. In his first one hundred days, FDR's immediate concern was providing relief for struggling Americans.

Roosevelt followed Progressive ideologies that believed society's various problems could be solved by providing good education, secure sources of food, a safe environment, and an efficient workplace. He increased federal government spending and created New Deal programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration, which used federal money to temporarily employ thousands of people through public works projects. Projects like the Subsistence Homesteads Division moved urban Americans out of cities and into rural areas where they could grow their own food.

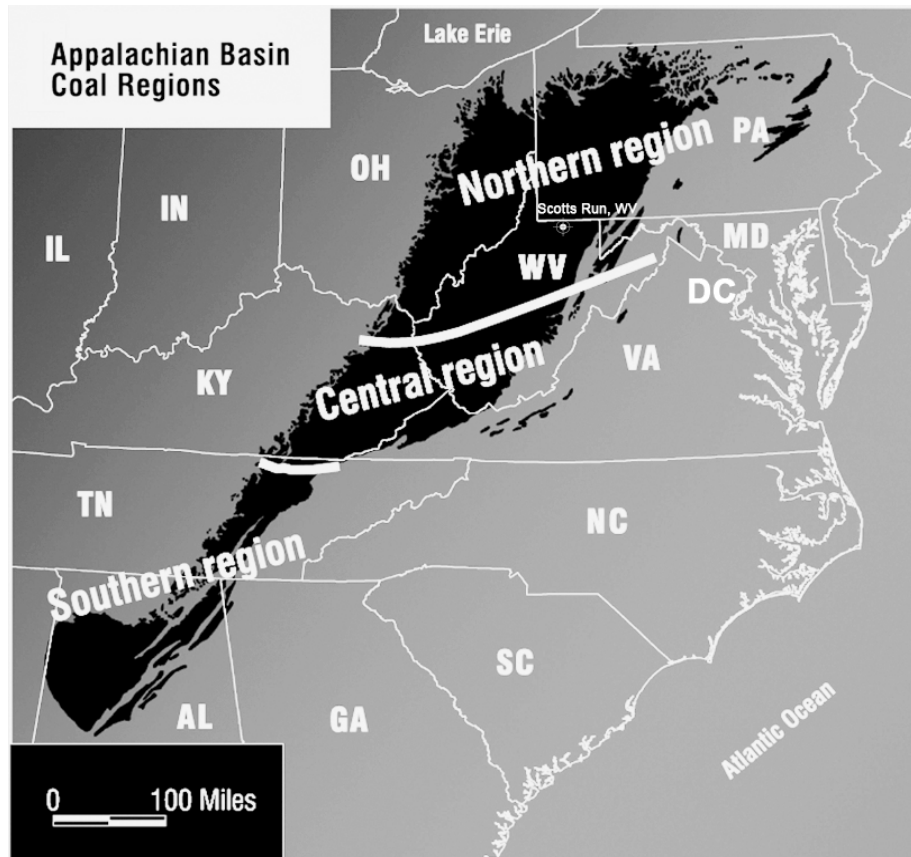
After her husband's death in 1945, Eleanor Roosevelt was appointed as United States delegate to the United Nations, where she became an outspoken advocate for its Declaration of Human Rights. She campaigned for Democratic presidential candidates Adlai Stevenson and John F. Kennedy and continued her travels abroad. She visited many world leaders and entertained many at Val-Kill, her home in Hyde Park, New York. In her lifelong pursuit of humanitarian ideals, Eleanor Roosevelt would earn the title "First Lady of the World," a label bestowed on her by President Harry S. Truman.



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Locating the Site

Map 1: The Appalachian Coal Basin.



(USGS map edited by Teaching with Historic Places staff.)

The Appalachian Coal Basin is named after the long mountain range it covers: the Appalachian Mountains. Some of the coal mines in the Appalachian Coal Basin employed whole towns in West Virginia in the early 20th century. People in mining towns like Scotts Run depended on the coal industry for jobs to earn money for their families.

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Questions for Map 1

- 1) Find Scotts Run. What kind of landscape do you think this town has? Why?
- 2) Why might people in West Virginia suffer more than those in other states shown in Map 1 if the coal industry collapsed?
- 3) Use a ruler and find the distance between the District of Columbia and Scotts Run. How far away is Scotts Run from D.C.?
- 4) What do you think happens to a town like Scotts Run when the coal mine closes or has to lay off most of its workers? Why?



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Determining the Facts

Reading 1: A New Deal for Scotts Run

During the Great Depression, many Americans struggled to find jobs, food for their families, and a safe place to live. Coal miners in the town of Scotts Run, West Virginia, became nationally-famous for their struggles. By April 1933, 63 percent of the town's population was unemployed. Many families lived in small shacks with little to eat and no running water. Several families would share an outdoor toilet. These living conditions made people vulnerable to disease. Children might go to school if they were healthy enough and not working to help their families. Historians call Scotts Run the "poster child of the Great Depression" because the people there had many of the troubles that hurt people all over the United States.

Scotts Run was a lot like other coal mining towns in the Appalachian Coal Basin. These mountain towns suffered from boom-bust cycle periods of wealth and poverty even before the depression. People moved to coal towns to work in the mines when the coal industry boomed in the 1910s. The industry declined in the 1920s and people lost their jobs or were paid less money for the same work. When the stock market crashed in 1929 and the whole United States sank into a depression, other job opportunities for fired miners disappeared. Unemployed miners were stranded in the mountains with no money to leave and barely enough to survive.

The town of Scotts Run attracted outsiders who wanted to help. Christian groups like the Salvation Army and the American Friends Service Committee tried to aid the mining families. Bushrod Grimes, a member of the West Virginia University Agricultural Extension Program, created a garden club that gave seeds and land to miners to grow their own food. The most-famous outsider who visited Scotts Run was Eleanor Roosevelt, a humanitarian and the wife of President Franklin Roosevelt. She went there after her friend Lorena Hickok, a journalist, reported on life in the Appalachian Coal Basin. This is how Hickok described the region in her own words:

The visit was illuminating and shocking. The Great Depression had never really hit me personally at all not as it had those people. [...]

Scott's Run, a coal-mining community, not far from Morgantown, was the worst place I'd ever seen. In a gutter, along the main street through the town, there was stagnant, filthy water, which the inhabitants used for drinking, cooking, washing, and everything else imaginable. On either side of the street were ram-shackle houses, black with coal dust, which most Americans would not have considered fit for pigs. And in those houses every night children went to sleep hungry, on piles of bug-infested rags, spread out on the floor. There were rats in those houses.

As I proceeded through the state I found other places just as bad. Everywhere, grimy, undernourished, desperate people so hungry that they could not wait for the vegetables to mature in the pathetic little gardens they tried to raise on mountainsides so steep that they must have had to shoot the seeds in to make them stick. They would dig up the tiny potatoes long before they had reached their full size and pick the tomatoes and eat them while they were still green.¹

Eleanor Roosevelt went to West Virginia in 1933 to see this for herself. When she returned to Washington, DC, she was determined to use her power and influence to help those people. Her vision was of a new town where people would grow their own food and work in local businesses or factories. She encouraged her husband and other powerful people in Washington, DC, to support this idea. Soon,

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President Roosevelt's administration established the Subsistence Homestead Division as part of the New Deal.

The New Deal was a collection of public projects and programs that President Roosevelt created during the Great Depression. They were based on ideas related to progressivism and social reform. These projects and programs gave government agencies power to help the country during the national economic crisis. This power was used to create new jobs to employ people, regulate the stock market, and provide "social security" for Americans. The president and his supporters, including Eleanor, believed the New Deal would help Americans everywhere.

The federal government's New Deal provided \$25 million dollars for the Subsistence Homestead program in the 1930s. This program moved struggling Americans into brand-new communities designed by the federal government. The homesteaders would rent their own modern homes, grow food on their own land, and hold jobs at a local industry. The federal government established about 100 homestead communities around the nation during the New Deal era. The first federal homestead community was Arthurdale, located in Preston County, West Virginia. Many of Arthurdale's residents came from Scotts Run.



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Questions for Reading 1

- 1) What was Scotts Run like during the Great Depression?
- 2) What did the government do to help Americans during the Great Depression?
- 3) How did Eleanor Roosevelt help the people of Scotts Run?
- 4) What do you think might be some challenges of a Homestead Community? What might be the benefits?



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Determining the Facts

Reading 2: Life at Arthurdale

The Arthurdale Subsistence Homestead Community was built near Reedsville, West Virginia in the early 1930s. It was located in a valley and founded on 1,100 acres of farmland that the government bought from Richard Arthur in 1933. Arthurdale was called the “Reedsville Project” at first and then renamed after the land’s previous owner. Government workers at the Department of the Interior began quickly to plan and design Arthurdale. People in Scotts Run were anxious to move.

First, the planners divided the land into 165 homesteads. Each homestead had two to four acres of land. These homes all had modern features. These features included indoor plumbing, electricity, and outbuildings like sheds for farm equipment. This was very different from the crowded and unclean coal mining company housing. The houses were constructed over three years and the first group of homesteaders moved to Arthurdale in 1934.

Money to buy furnishings for the houses came from the Civil Works Administration, another program of the federal government’s New Deal. Local women made curtains, sheets, and pillowcases. A local furniture company, called the Mountaineer Craftsman’s Cooperative Association, handcrafted the furniture. A historic church from the nearby area was disassembled, moved, and rebuilt in Arthurdale. The homesteaders used it as a community center. A general store, blacksmith’s forge, gas station, and administrative building were built around the community center. Not too far from that cluster was a campus of six new school buildings: the Arthurdale school system.

In 1933, while the government was busy building Arthurdale, hundreds of people applied to be homesteaders. However, only 165 families could move into Arthurdale. A committee of social workers familiar with Scotts Run formed to look at the applications and choose families. The committee members wanted to help the families who were most in need. In the end, they selected the families that they believed had the qualities that would create a good community and make the project work smoothly. They “checked applicants’ neatness, posture, church affiliation, debts, and attitudes.” ¹

The applications included questions:

- What particular farm jobs do you like best to do?
- What particular farm jobs do you most dislike?
- Do you observe any rules in planting determined by the phases of the moon?
- What games do you like to play with others?
- [How] do you like best to spend your idle hours?
- How much education would you like your children to get?

The first homesteaders moved to Arthurdale in June 1934. Of the first 50 families chosen, about half were miners, a fourth were sawmill workers, and a fourth were farmers. They were mostly families with children or couples who planned to have children. Eleanor Roosevelt hoped Arthurdale would have families from diverse backgrounds that would reflect the diversity of the United States. She knew many people in Scotts Run were African American or immigrants. Eleanor could not persuade the committee and the first homesteaders to make the community

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Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

desegregated. This was the era of "separate but equal" and additional West Virginia homestead communities for non-whites were planned.

Life in Arthurdale was hard work, but for residents that came from Scotts Run, the difference between the two was like night and day. The homesteaders told Eleanor Roosevelt "we woke up one morning in hell, and went to bed the next night in heaven."² The new residents immediately began to farm their new plots of land. They grew grains and vegetables. Every family had a cow, which produced milk for butter and cream. What the families did not eat immediately, they canned. Community members socialized in the community center and at the large school. The men established the Homesteader's Club. The women organized the Eleanor Roosevelt Farm Women's Club. The homesteaders met regularly to do their chores together. The community also gathered for festivals, holidays, and dances. They purchased a community farm where they raised chickens and cows to sell eggs and milk. They ran a cooperative store and shared a medical clinic.

Children that moved to Arthurdale had unique opportunities as well. They had fresh space to roam and play. It was very different from the unhealthy and polluted Scotts Run. They did not have to work to help their families and they were healthy enough to go to Arthurdale's experimental schools. The new school principal, Elsie Clapp, had a lot of new ideas about education. She believed a good education was one that emphasized practical learning experience over theoretical learning. She thought education should help people become better community members and better citizens. She took advantage of this new environment when she was hired. When not teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic, the teachers held classes outside. Students walked around the town to watch and sometimes help with the work that the adults did to run Arthurdale. This included building houses, caring for animals, and planting crops.

Clapp wanted to see if she could use the schools to build a strong community in Arthurdale. The school was not just for children, but was a center for community events and learning. Teachers lived in the town and were part of the Arthurdale community. Clapp organized community events at the school, including music and square dancing.

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Questions for Reading 2

1) How were families chosen to be part of Arthurdale?

2) What kinds of work did Arthurdale adults do?

3) How was Arthurdale different from your community? List four examples.

4) What is practical education? What would practical education look like in your school?



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

Determining the Facts

Reading 3: Arthurdale Struggles

The people who moved to Arthurdale experienced positive changes. They breathed clean air, children went to school, and the adults had work. However, the community and its supporters struggled to make the town independent. Some politicians were unhappy with President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal program from the beginning. They felt the government was interfering with people's private lives and businesses. Even some New Deal supporters saw the Arthurdale project as too expensive for an experiment. They criticized the construction costs. They said the homes were too elaborate. They pointed out that the community was unable to attract private industry.

It is not easy to build a community from scratch. One problem was that the program managers tried at first to use mass-produced cottages called Hodgson homes. These homes were not expensive and were easy to build. However, they were designed for New England summers, not West Virginia winters. Another problem was many of the first houses did not fit on their foundations. Construction on the next 75 homes began in 1934. These also experienced design issues that cost the program more than the managers expected. These problems meant the people paying for Arthurdale, both private citizens and the federal government, had to spend more on construction than they planned. These problems delayed the opening of Arthurdale for a short time, but homesteaders moved in and new houses went up. Construction finished in 1936.

Eleanor Roosevelt tried to use her connections to bring private industries to the town, but politics and the Depression-era economy made it too difficult. Communities all over the country were struggling. People needed jobs and industries in every town. In Congress, politicians were worried about the people in their own districts. People in other parts of the country would lose their jobs if their own factories moved to Arthurdale. Some opponents felt the federal government was trying to compete with its own citizens' businesses by supporting subsidized factories in Arthurdale. "Subsidized" means that the government pays for some of the costs that a private business would normally pay on its own. Others believed the community was an abuse of government power. Arthurdale's opponents pointed to the town's failure to attract a business without the government's help as proof that it could not succeed.

From the beginning, Arthurdale's homesteaders earned wages working for government-sponsored and community-based industries. Some homesteaders tried to make and sell quality furniture as part of a West Virginia heritage crafts project. They operated business cooperatives, like a dairy farm, and shared the profits. None of their cooperatives were successful enough to make the community independent. Even its supporters began to doubt it would succeed. Politicians who once supported the homestead program stopped trying to fund it. By the end of the 1930s, the Arthurdale experiment was over.

The federal government began to close down the Arthurdale project in 1941, but the town of Arthurdale was not abandoned. The government sold the public land, community buildings, and businesses to private citizens. Most of the homesteaders were able to buy their houses from the government and continued to live there. They did not return to Scotts Run. All of the homes were sold by 1947. The local school board took over the Arthurdale schools. Eleanor continued to visit Arthurdale and kept close ties with the community until her death.

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More than 100 historic buildings from the experiment survived into the 21st century. These include the community center, general store, administrative office, blacksmith's forge, and car service station. A short distance away from those community buildings are the historic white, wooden school buildings. There is a small memorial garden dedicated to Eleanor Roosevelt there, too. It is built on the foundation of the old Arthurdale co-op building. These buildings and this foundation are part of the Arthurdale Historic District. Some buildings are owned by the New Deal Homestead Museum. Today, this museum tells the story of Arthurdale and the homestead program.

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Questions for Reading 3

- 1) What problems did Arthurdale face in the 1930s?

- 2) Why did some people not support Arthurdale?

- 3) Do you think Arthurdale was a failure or a success? Why or why not? Use evidence from Readings 1-3 to support your answer.

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Visual Evidence

Photo 1: Miners' Housing in Scotts Run, West Virginia



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Questions for Photo 1

- 1) What kinds of buildings can you find in the photo?

- 2) How many families do you think lived in a Scotts Run house? How can you tell?

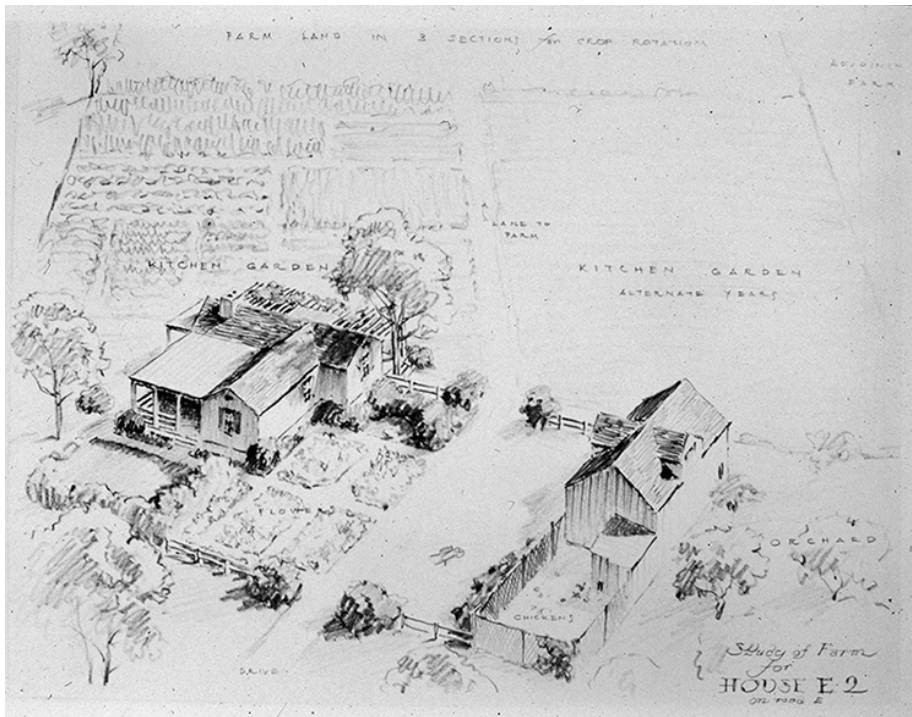
- 3) What challenges do you think the people living here faced? What evidence can you find of a hard life?



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Visual Evidence

Illustration 1: A New Deal Homestead Farm, ca. 1934



(Public domain image courtesy of Arthurdale Heritage, Inc.)



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Questions for Illustration 1

1) What kinds of buildings does this homestead have?

2) Do you have a "kitchen garden" at your house? Why or why not?

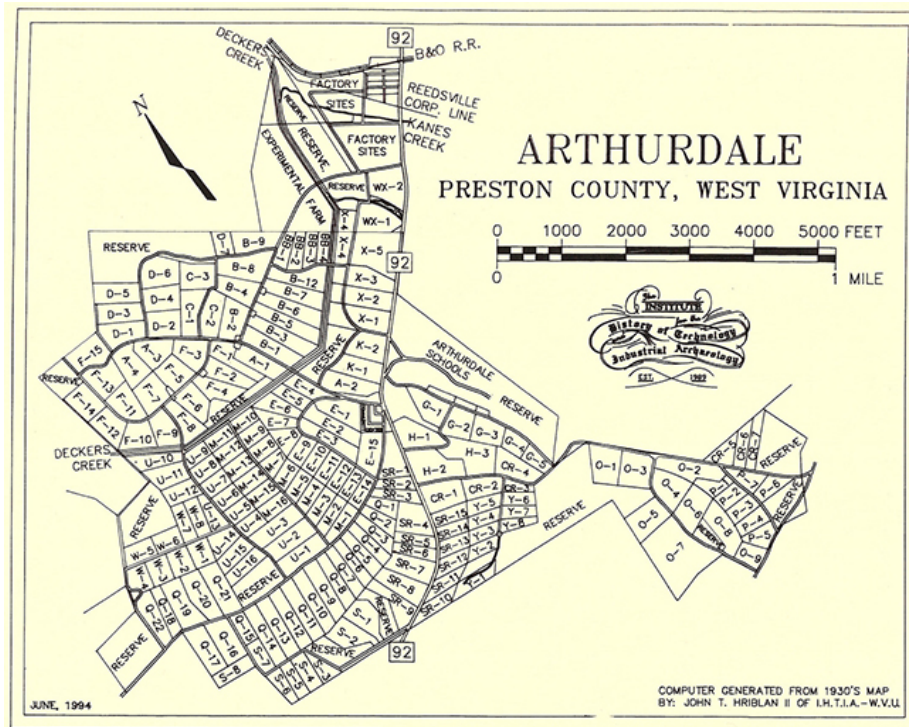
3) New Deal homesteads were designed by progressives like Eleanor Roosevelt. What do you think the progressives of the 1930s valued, based on this sketch?



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Visual Evidence

Map 2: Arthurdale Town Map



(Map courtesy of John T. Hriblan II and Arthurdale Heritage, Inc.)

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Questions for Map 2

- 1) What kinds of places can you find on the map?

- 2) What jobs do you think were available in Arthurdale? How can you tell?

- 3) Why might a planned community like Arthurdale be a good place to live?

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Visual Evidence

Photo 2: Arthurdale, 1937



(Library of Congress)



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Questions for Photo 2

- 1) How does what you see in Photo 2 compare to Scotts Run? (Refer to Photo 1 and Reading 1 if necessary)

- 2) What buildings can you identify in Photo 2? What do you think they were used for?

- 3) Eleanor Roosevelt said the residents described Arthurdale as “heaven.” How is this place “heaven?”

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Visual Evidence

Photo 3: School children in Arthurdale, 1935



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Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

Putting It All Together

The following activities will deepen and broaden students' understanding of the New Deal, the Homestead program, and how heritage preservation and public service can go hand-in-hand.

Activity 1: A New Deal for the United States

The New Deal could be found in communities throughout the country during the 1930s. Have each student or each small group of students identify a New Deal program, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps or Works Progress Administration that affected their community through a public works project. Examples include a state or city park built by the Civilian Conservation Corps or a mural painted by a Works Progress Administration artist, perhaps located at the local post office or municipal building. If there is no local New Deal public works project from the era, students can research a project somewhere else in the state or research how the New Deal's economic policies would have affected people living in their community in the 1930s.

Once your students have each identified and researched their New Deal project, have the individual students or groups of students each design a computer slideshow or a poster that describes what the project was, who was in charge of it, who did the work, what it accomplished, and what the student or students think its legacy is today. They can use historic and/or contemporary images to illustrate the slideshow or poster and should use bullet points to outline their major findings. After the students perform their investigation and design their projects, hold a class exhibit and have each student or group present their slideshow or poster to the class. Students should describe what they discovered and then share their opinions on New Deal projects. What are the pros and cons of these types of programs? After they finish presenting, facilitate a class discussion about the role of government in an economic crisis and use their research as a starting point.



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

Activity 2: Discover the New Deal Homesteads

Arthurdale was the first of many homestead communities built under the New Deal. In this activity, students will explore the Homestead program and learn about other planned New Deal communities. Have each student choose a homestead community to research and write about in a formal paper. In their research papers, students should describe who lived in the community, where the homesteaders came from, why they moved, how their lives changed, what kinds of buildings the community had, what life was like there during the 1930s, and what happened to it after the Homestead program ended. Students should also include information about any surviving buildings and historic resources. They can determine if any still exist by contacting the right [State Historic Preservation Office](#) or by searching the [National Register of Historic Places](#).

After students submit their papers, have each student give a short oral presentation in front of the class about the homestead they studied and how its history compares and contrasts with Arthurdale.

Use the Web to start this activity. The Arthurdale Heritage, Inc, website [offers a page](#) with an overview of other Homestead communities. [NewDealLegacy.org](#) and [Wikipedia](#) also offer lists of the Homesteads. Another resource for identifying New Deal Homesteads is [Tomorrow a New World: the New Deal Community Program](#) (1959) by Paul Conkin.

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Activity 3: Plan Your Own Community

Most towns grow slowly-- evolving over tens, hundreds, or even thousands of years-- but Arthurdale was planned and constructed in a very short period of time by people with a very specific vision. What makes a town ideal? Have your students design their own heavenly town. They should each write a 1-2 page report on their vision for an ideal community, explaining what features it will have and why. Features should meet the needs of the town's human citizens, but students can think outside the box and not be limited by zoning laws, contemporary technology, or traditional town planning conventions. Once your students each have a plan, have them use graph paper to draw out their perfect town (use Map 2: Arthurdale, West Virginia as an example). They should label each feature in the town with a number and include a key that explains what each feature is. If the technology is available to you, digitize the students' planned communities and have them create a class blog to feature their designs.



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

Activity 4: Heritage and Community Service

The New Deal funded and supported many historic preservation and heritage initiatives throughout the country that are woven into the fabric of our communities, recreation areas, and parks today. In the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration, Civilian Conservation Corps, Federal Writers Project, and the early Historic American Buildings Survey preserved American heritage. These programs recorded historic architecture and oral histories, built memorials and parks for public enjoyment, and preserved historic places. Have your students work in small groups to identify a need in local heritage preservation that they can adopt as a public service project. For example, they could organize a clean-up of a local historic site, collect oral histories from members of their community, nominate a local historic place to the National Register of Historic Places, or design an exhibit about a local history topic.

Have each group submit to you a project plan that outlines why the project is worth undertaking, what the goal of their project is, specifically how they intend to meet that goal, and what will happen to the subject of their service project once they complete it. If they produce something like an exhibit or oral history collection, they should submit a finished product to a local library or local history museum. A nomination to the National Register of Historic Places is a heavily researched written report that can be submitted to you first and a local historian for review. If students clean up a historic site, have them also submit a short essay about the history of the site and what they recommend the community do in the future to care for it.



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

References and Endnotes

Reading 1

Reading 1 was compiled from the National Register of Historic Places registration file, Arthurdale Historic District, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1988; *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Arthurdale Experiment* by Nancy Hoffman; Chapter C-A Digital Resource Model of the Upper Pennsylvanian Pittsburgh Coal Bed, Monongahela Group, Northern Appalachian Basin Coal Region," U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Geological Survey, 2000; Ron Lewis, "Scotts Run: An Introduction," Scotts Run Writing Heritage Project.

¹ Hickok, Lorena. *The Reluctant First Lady*. New York: Dodd, Meade, & Company, 1962. 137-138.

Reading 2

Reading 2 was excerpted and compiled from Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt: Volume 2* (New York: Viking, 1999) and *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Arthurdale Experiment* by Nancy Hoffman.

¹ Hoffman, Nancy. *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Arthurdale Experiment*. North Haven, Connecticut: Linnet Books, 2001. P. 21.

² Quoted in Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt: Volume 2* (New York: Viking, 1999) 143.

Reading 3

Reading 3 is based on the National Register of Historic Places registration file for the Arthurdale Historic District.



Arthurdale: A New Deal Community Experiment

Additional Resources

By studying *Arthurdale: A New Deal Experiment*, students learn about the hardships coal miners faced during the Great Depression and the importance of New Deal administration in trying to help reform society through education and assistance.

Arthurdale Heritage, Inc.

Arthurdale Heritage, Inc. is a grassroots organization that was formed to preserve the town of Arthurdale. It currently operates the museum complex, which includes the community center, general store, forge, administration building, and E-15. Its [website](#) includes an excellent history of Arthurdale and New Deal communities.

Scotts Run Writing Heritage Project

This is the [website](#) of the “Scotts Run Writing Heritage Project,” which gives an excellent history of the place that inspired Arthurdale. It features articles by West Virginia University professor Ron Lewis and interviews of people that lived in Scotts Run.

The Living New Deal

The Department of Geography at the University of Berkley hosts and operates [The Living New Deal](#), an online database of information about New Deal projects, programs, economy, and legacy. This clearing house offers visitors a vast wealth of information about New Deal projects, organizing them by state, artist, city, government agency, and more. The website also offers a large list of secondary resources for New Deal research, including books and films.

Library of Congress

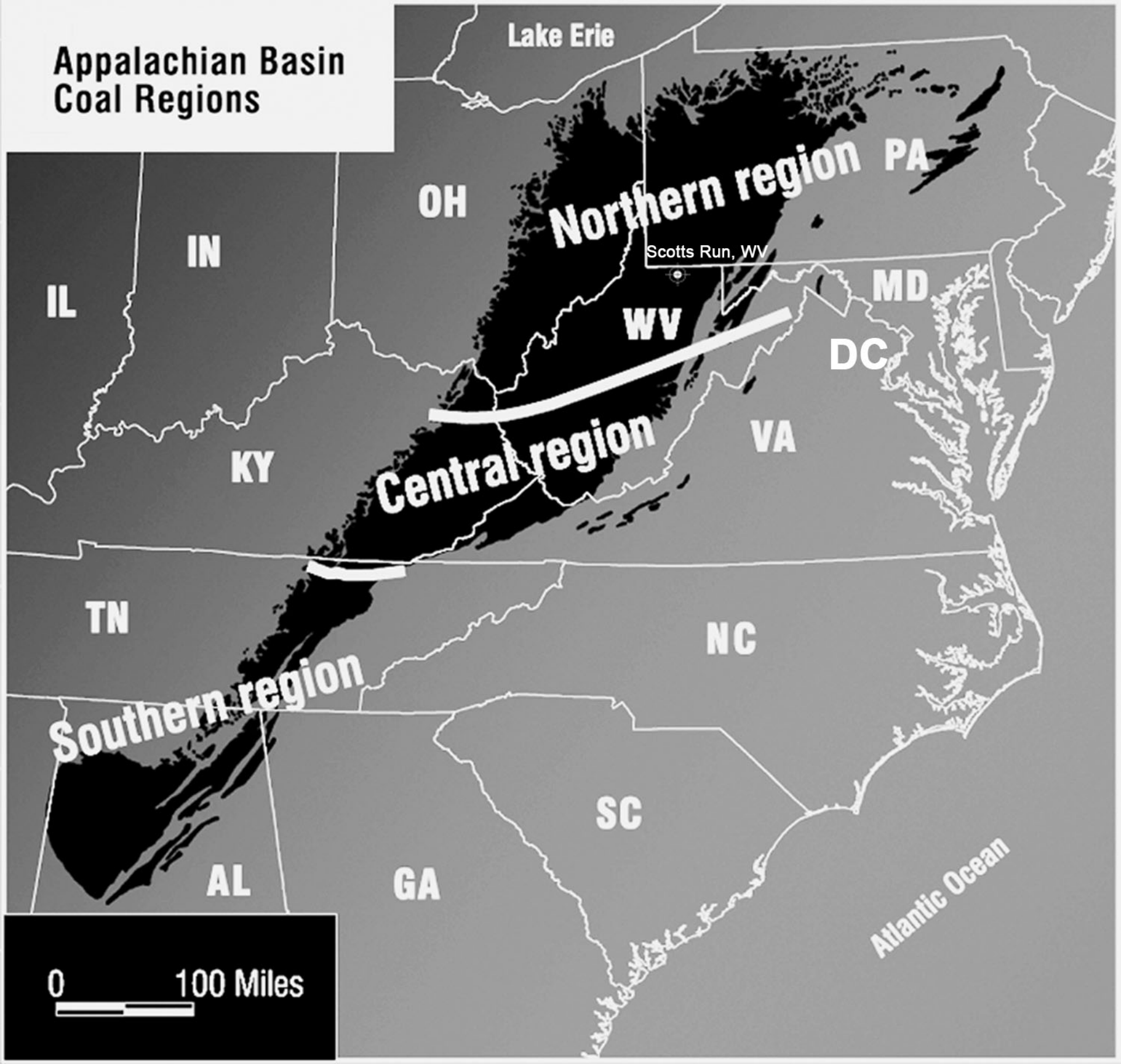
Farm Security Administration photographers took [hundreds of pictures](#) of Scotts Run and Arthurdale (also listed under “Reedsville Project”), which are now available on the Library of Congress website.

Arthurdale: The Unknown Jewel

This [four minute video](#), “Arthurdale: The Unknown Jewel,” tells the story of Arthurdale by a young girl that moved there from Scotts Run. It uses archival photographs, and was produced by West Virginia State Archives, Arthurdale Heritage, Inc., and WV Center for Professional Development.



Appalachian Basin Coal Regions



Lake Erie

Northern region PA

Scotts Run, WV

OH

IN

IL

WV

MD

DC

VA

Central region

KY

TN

NC

Southern region

SC

AL

GA

Atlantic Ocean

0 100 Miles



DECKERS CREEK
 B&O R.R.
 REEDSVILLE CORP. LINE
 KANES CREEK

ARTHURDALE

PRESTON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

