

*Adventures on the American Frontier*

# Westward Over the Blue Ridge Mountains

Part Two

Gabe Arthur Walks the Warrior's Path



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This book features QR codes that link to audio of the book being narrated so that readers can follow along.

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“As you travel, map the way to the Pacific Ocean so we can send traders there.”

This was the order that General Abraham Wood gave James Needham, the man he had chosen to lead a two-man exploring party into the wilderness.



General Wood was in charge of Fort Henry in what is now the state of Virginia. A year and a half earlier, in 1671, he had sent a man named Captain Thomas Batts over the Blue Ridge—the line of mountains that blocked the way to the Pacific Ocean. No one yet knew that there were many more mountains blocking the way beyond that Blue Ridge, for Captain Batts had run into problems and had not been able to go far enough to find the ocean. Since then, General Wood had sent out other exploring



parties, but every one of them had been turned back by the rough terrain or by unfriendly Native Americans.

“We’ll do our best,” said James. He shook hands with General Wood.

General Wood reached up a hand to young Gabriel Arthur, who sat on his horse, waiting for James to start out. “Take care, Gabe, and good luck to you,” said the general. Gabe had worked at Fort Henry since he had come to America from England. He was like a son to General Wood.

“I’m sure I’ll have stories to tell when we get back,” said Gabe. He expected to ride back into Fort Henry in about two months. In fact, it would be a year before he returned, and the stories he would tell would be of adventures that no young man had ever lived to tell.

The two men rode toward the mountains. To stay clear of a Native American village where another exploring party had been turned back, they swung to the south into what is now North Carolina.



Along the way, they met some members of a Cherokee tribe, who led them to the Yadkin Valley. The group headed west from there and saw the Great Smoky Mountains with their crown of blue haze.

For four days they climbed up hills and rode down into valleys. Then they reached a ridge that was higher than the rest. James saw that from there on, the streams ran down the west side of the mountains instead of to the east. "We should see the Pacific Ocean soon," he said hopefully.