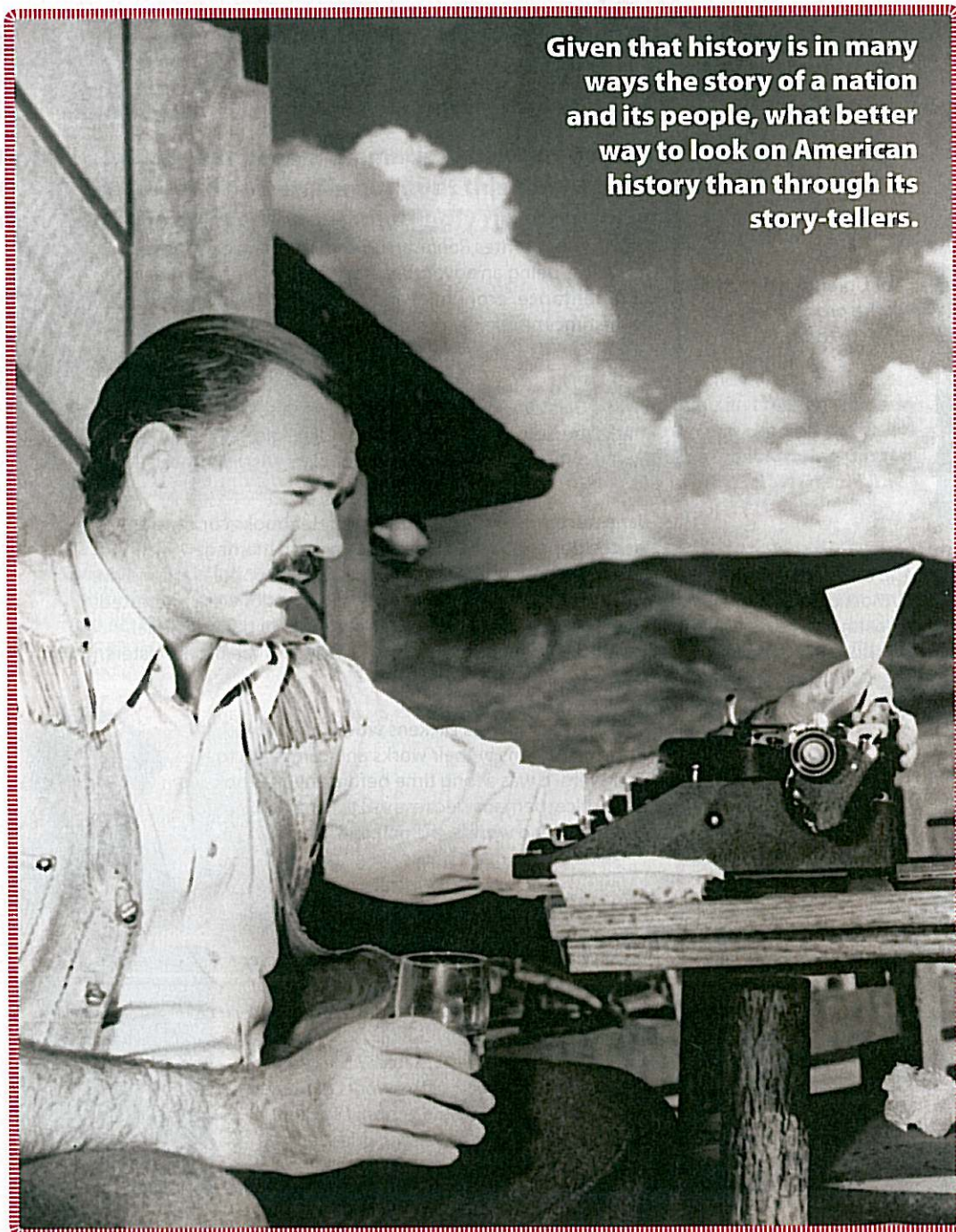


Given that history is in many ways the story of a nation and its people, what better way to look on American history than through its story-tellers.



Ernest Hemingway, who started out as a journalist, became a major American novelist. He drew inspiration from his travels in Europe and Africa.

AMERICAN LITERATURE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

THE BEGINNINGS

We could date modern America's origins back to the 1500s when Spanish and Portuguese explorers began landing in places that are now Florida or Texas. Later, English explorers started sending colonists further north to places like North Carolina and Virginia. In 1607, one of the first colonies, Jamestown, was founded. Its population **was booming**: In 1630, only about 3,000 people lived there, but in the next ten years, 16,000 more colonists arrived.

The colonists weren't the first people to live on this land. The Native Americans farmed and hunted all over the US long before them. While they didn't have much written work, their stories and beliefs **were handed down** generation by generation.

COLONISATION AND INDEPENDENCE

During the 1700s, the immigrant population expanded westwards, resulting in conflicts with Native Americans as the colonists were taking their land. James Fennimore Cooper (*The Last of the Mohicans*) is known for his books about Native Americans and the pioneers (they are set in this period although they were written in the following century). In 1732 Benjamin Franklin began producing *Poor Richard's Almanac*. **Almanacs** were popular for their weather forecasts, calendars, **household hints**, puzzles and games. Franklin's was especially popular because of his writing style, which included **proverbs** like "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."

In the late 1700s the colonists started to **resent** British rule. Revolts began, like the Boston Tea Party in 1773, and **clashes** between British soldiers and colonists. On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence, written primarily by Thomas Jefferson, was adopted. The Revolutionary War, which ended