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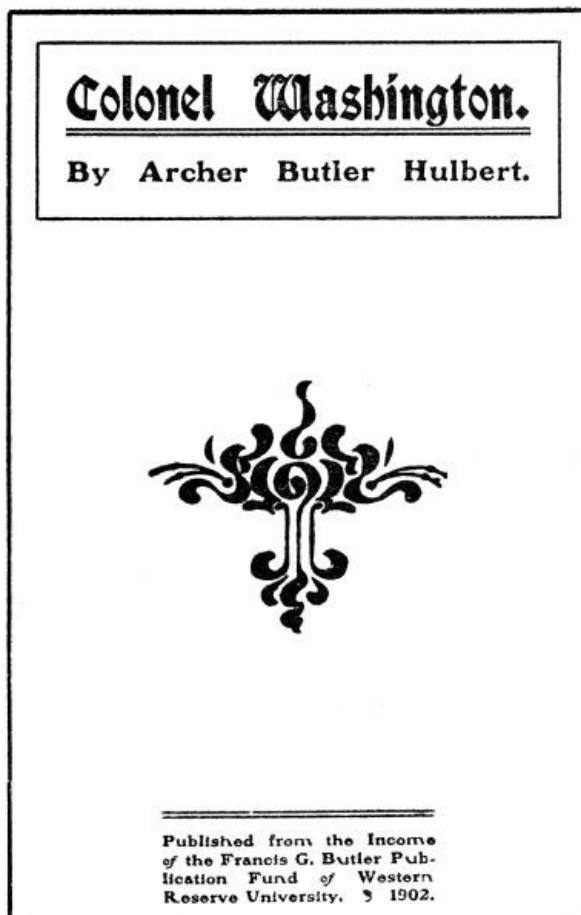
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## Colonel Washington.

By Archer Butler Hulbert.

Published from the Income  
of the Francis G. Butler Publication  
Fund of Western  
Reserve University. 1902.

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# COLONEL WASHINGTON

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COLONEL WASHINGTON  
BY ARCHER BUTLER HULBERT

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

PUBLISHED FROM THE INCOME  
OF THE FRANCIS G. BUTLER  
PUBLICATION FUND OF WESTERN  
RESERVE UNIVERSITY.  
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## NOTE.

The following pages contain a glimpse of the youth Washington when he first stepped into public view. It is said the President and General are known to us but "George Washington is an unknown man." Those, to whom the man is lost in the official, may well consider Edward Everett's oration in which the conduct of the youth Washington is carefully described—that the orator's audience might see "not an ideal hero, wrapped in cloudy generalities and a mist of vogue panegyric, but the real identical man."

A. B. H.

Marietta, Ohio, Nov. 28, 1901.

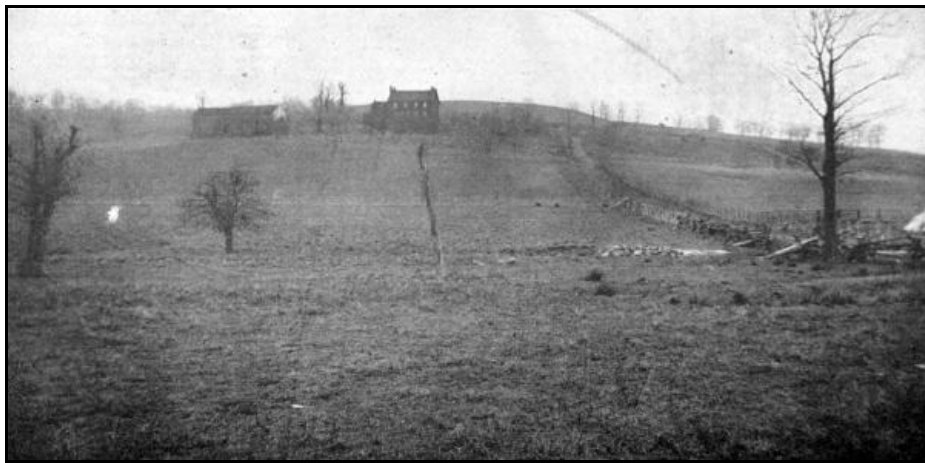
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**SITE OF FORT NECESSITY.**

The outline of the Southern embankment is in the fore-ground. The hill is locally known as Mount Washington; the brick mansion stands on the old National road and was known as Sampey's Tavern. From this hill the French first attacked the little Virginian army under Washington in the fort.

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## COLONEL WASHINGTON.

### I.

#### A PROLOGUE; THE GOVERNOR'S ENVOY.

A thousand vague rumors came over the Allegheny mountains during the year 1753 to Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia, of French aggressions into the Ohio River valley, the more alarming because vague and uncertain.

Orders were soon at hand from London authorizing the Virginian Governor to erect a fort on the Ohio which would hold that river for England and tend to conciliate the Indians to English rule. But the Governor

was too much in the dark as to the operations of the French to warrant any decisive step, and he immediately cast about him for an envoy whom he could trust to find out what was really happening in the valley of the Ohio.

Who was to be this envoy? The mission called for a person of unusual capacity; a diplomat, a soldier and a frontiersman. Five hundred miles were to be threaded on Indian trails in the dead of winter. This was woodman's work. There were cunning Indian chieftains and French officers, trained to intrigue, to be met, influenced, conciliated. This, truly, demanded a diplomat. There were forts to be marked and mapped, highways of approach to be considered and compared, vantage sites on river and mountain to be noted and valued. This was work for a soldier and a strategist.

After failing to induce one or two gentlemen to undertake this perilous but intrinsically important task, the services of a youthful Major George Washington, one of the four adjutant-generals of Virginia, were offered, and the despairing Scotch Governor, whose zeal always approached rashness, accepted them.

But there was something more to the credit of this audacious youth than his temerity. The best of Virginian blood ran in his veins, and he had shown already a taste for adventurous service quite in line with such a hazardous business. Acquiring, when a mere lad, a knowledge of mathematics, he had gone surveying in Lord Fairfax's lands on the south branch of the Potomac. There he spent the best of three years, far beyond the settled limits of Virginia, fortifying his splendid physique against days of stress to come. In other ways this life on his country's frontier was of advantage. Here he had met the Indians—that race upon which no man ever wielded a greater influence than Washington. Here he learned to know frontier life, its charms, its deprivations, its fears and its toils—a life for which he was ever to entertain so much sympathy and so much consideration. Here he studied the Indian traders, a class of men of much more importance, in peace or war, than any or all others in the border land; men whose motives of action were as hard to read as an Indian's, and whose flagrant and oft practiced deceptions on their fellow white men were fraught with disaster.

It was of utmost fortune for his country that this youth went into the West in his teens, for he was to be, under Providence, a champion of that West worthy of its influence on human affairs. Thus he had come to it early and loved it; he learned to know its value, to foresee something of its future, to think for and with its pioneer developers, to study its roads and rivers and portages: thus he was fortified against narrow purposes, and made as broad in his sympathies and ambitions as the great West was broad itself. No statesman of his day came to know and believe in the West as Washington did; and it is not difficult to think that had he not so known and loved it, the territory west of the Allegheny mountains would never have become a portion of the United States of America. There were far too many serious men like Thomas Jefferson who knew little about the West and boasted that they cared less. Yet today the seaboard states are more dependent commercially and politically on the states between the Alleghenies and Mississippi than are these central commonwealths dependent on them.

The same divine Providence which directed this youth's steps into the Alleghenies had brought him speedily to his next post of duty, for family influence secured him an appointment as adjutant-general (with rank of major) over one of the four military districts into which Virginia had been divided for purposes of defense, a position for which he was as fitted by inclination as by frontier experience.

This lad now received Dinwiddie's appointment. As a practical surveyor in the wilderness he possessed the frontiersman's qualifications; as an apt and diligent student of military science, with a brother—trained under Admiral Vernon—as a practical tutor, he had in a degree a soldier's qualifications; if not a diplomat, he was as shrewd a lad as chivalrous old Virginia had within her borders; still, at twenty-one, that boy of the sixty maxims, but hardened, steadied and made exceeding thoughtful by his life on Virginia's great black forest-bound horizon. His keen eyes, quick perception and daring spirit were now to be turned to something of more moment than a tripod's reading or a shabby line of Virginia militia. All in all, he was far better fitted for this mission than anyone could have known or guessed.

It is not to be doubted that George Washington knew the dangers he courted, at least very much better than we can appreciate them today. He had not lived three years on the frontier for nothing. He had heard of these French—of their bold invasion of the West, their growing trade, their cunning conciliation of the Indian, their sudden passion for fort building when they heard of the grant of land to the Ohio Company to which his brothers belonged. Who can doubt that he looked with envious eyes upon those fearless fleets of *coureur de bois* and their woodland pilgrimage; who can doubt that the few stolid English traders who went over the mountains on poor Indian ponies made a sorry showing beside the roistering, picturesque, irrepressible Frenchmen who knew and sailed those sweet, clear rivers that flowed through the dark, green forests of the great West? But the forests were filled with their sly, redskinned proselytes. One swift rifle ball might easily be sent from a hidden covert to meet the stripling envoy from the English who had come to spy out the land and report both its giants and its grapes. Yet after one day's preparation he was ready to leave a home rich in comfort and culture, a host of warm friends, and bury himself six hundred miles deep in the western forests, to sleep on the ground in the dead of winter, wade rivers running with ice and face a hundred known and a thousand unknown risks.

"Faith, you're a brave lad," broke out the old Scotch Governor, "and, if you play your cards well, you shall have no cause to repent your bargain," and the Major Washington departed from Williamsburg on the last day of October, but one, 1753. The first sentence in the *Journal* he now began suggests his avidity and promptness: "I was commissioned and appointed by the Honourable *Robert Dinwiddie*, Esq; Governor, &c of *Virginia*, to visit and deliver a Letter to the Commandant of the *French Forces* on the *Ohio*, and set out on the intended Journey the same Day." At Fredericksburg he employed his old fencing tutor, Jacob van Braam, as his interpreter, and pushed on westward over the new road built by the Ohio Company to Will's Creek (Fort Cumberland, Maryland) on the upper Potomac, where he arrived November 14th.

Will's Creek was the last Virginian outpost, where Fort Cumberland was soon erected. Already the Ohio Company had located a store house at this point. Onward the Indian trail wound in and out through the Alleghenies, over the successive ranges known as Wills', Savage and Meadow Mountains. From the latter it dropped down into Little Meadows. Here in the open ground, covered with rank grasses, the first of the western waters was crossed, a branch of the Youghiogony River. From "Little Crossings," as the ford was

called, the narrow trail vaulted Negro Mountain and came down upon the upper Youghiogony, this ford here being named "Big Crossings." Another climb over Briery Mountain brought the traveller down into Great Meadows, the largest tract of open land in the Alleghenies. By a zig-zag climb of five miles the summit of the last of the Allegheny ranges—Laurel Hill—was reached, where the path turned northward and followed the line of hills, by Christopher Gist's clearing on what is known as Mount Braddock, toward the lower Youghiogony, at "Stewart's Crossing." Thence the trail ran down the point of land where Pittsburg now lies in its clouds of smoke between the "Forks of the Ohio."

This trace of the buffalo and portage path of the Indian had no name until it took that of a Delaware Indian, Namacolin, who blazed its course, under the direction of Captain Thomas Cresap, for the Ohio Company. To those who love to look back to beginnings, and read great things in small, this Indian path, with its border of wounded trees, leading across the first great divide into the central west, is worthy of contemplation. Each tree starred whitely by the Indian's axe spoke of Saxon conquest and commerce, one and inseparable. In every act of the great world-drama now on the boards this little trail with its blazed trees lies in the foreground.

And the rise of the curtain shows the lad Washington and his party of seven horsemen, led by the bold guide Christopher Gist, setting out from Will's Creek on the 15th of November, 1753. The character of the journey is nowhere better described than in Washington's words when he engaged Gist's services: "I engaged Mr. *Gist* to pilot us out."

It proved a rough voyage! A fierce, early winter came out of the north, as though in league with the French to intimidate, if not drive back, these spies of French aggression. It rained and snowed, and the little roadway became well nigh impassable. The brown mountain ranges, which until recently had been burnished with the glory of a mountain autumn, were wet and black. Scarce eighteen miles were covered a day, a whole week being exhausted in reaching the Monongahela. But this was not altogether unfortunate. A week was not too long for the future Father of the West to study the hills and valleys which were to bear forever the precious favor of his devoted and untiring zeal. And in this week this youth conceived a dream and a purpose, the dearest, if not the most dominant, of his life—the union, commercial as well as political, of the East and the West. Yet he passed Great Meadows without seeing Fort Necessity, Braddock's Run without seeing Braddock's unmarked grave, and Laurel Hill without a premonition of the covert in the valley below, where shortly he should shape the stones above a Frenchman's grave. But could he have seen it all—the wasted labor, nights spent in agony of suspense, humiliation, defeat and the dead and dying—would it have turned him back?

The first roof to offer Washington hospitable shelter was the cabin of the trader Frazier at the mouth of Turtle Creek, on the Monongahela, near the death-trap where soon that desperate horde of French and Indians should put to flight an army five times its own number. Here information was at hand, for it was none other than this Frazier who had been driven from Venango but a few weeks before by the French force sent there to build a fort. Joncaire was spending the winter in Frazier's old cabin, and no doubt the young Virginian heard this irrepressible French officer's title read clear in strong German oaths. Here too was a Speech, with a string of wampum accompanying, on its way from the anti-French Indians on the Ohio to Governor Dinwiddie, bringing the ominous news that the Chippewas, Ottawas and Wyandots had taken up the hatchet against the English.

Washington took the Speech and the wampum and pushed on undismayed. Sending the baggage down the Monongahela by boat he pushed on overland to the "Forks" where he chose a site for a fort, the future site, first, of Fort Duquesne, and later, Fort Pitt. But his immediate destination was the Indian village of Loggstown, fifteen miles down the Ohio. On his way thither he stopped at the lodge of Shingiss, a Delaware King, and secured the promise of his attendance upon the council of anti-French (though not necessarily pro-English) Indians. For this was the Virginian envoy's first task—to make a strong bid for the allegiance of the redmen; it was not more than suggested in his instructions, but was none the less imperative, as he well knew whether his superiors did or not.

It is extremely difficult to construct anything like a clear statement of Indian affiliations at this crisis. This territory west of the Alleghenies, nominally purchased from the Six Nations, was claimed by the Shawanese and Delawares who had since come into it, and also by many fugitives from the Six Nations, known generally as Mingoos, who had come to make their hunting grounds their home. Though the Delaware King was only a "Half-King" (because subject to the Council of the Six Nations) yet they claimed the land and had even resisted French encroachment. "Half-King" and his Delawares believed that the English only desired commercial intercourse and favored them as compared with the French who had already built forts in the West. The northern nations who were nearer the French soon surrendered to their blandishments; and soon the Delawares (called *Loups* by the French) and the Shawanese were overcome by French allurements and were generally found about the French forts and forces. In the spring of the year Half-King had gone to Presque Isle and spoken firmly to Marin, declaring that the land was not theirs but the Indians'.

Insofar as the English were more backward than the French in occupying the land the unprejudiced Delawares and Mingoos were inclined to further English plans. When, a few years later, it became clear that the English cared not a whit for the rights of the redmen, the latter hated and fought them as they never had the French. Washington was well fitted for handling this delicate matter of sharpening Indian hatred of the French and of keeping very still about English plans.

Here at Loggstown unexpected information was received. Certain French deserters from the Mississippi gave the English envoy a description of French operations on that river between New Orleans and Illinois. The latter word "Illinois" was taken by Washington's old Dutch interpreter to be the French words "*Isle Noire*," and Washington speaks of Illinois as the "Black Islands" in his *Journal*. But this was not to be old van Braam's only blunder in the role of interpreter!

Half-King was ready with the story of his journey to Presque Isle, which, he affirmed, Washington could not reach "in less than five or six nights' sleep, good traveling." Little wonder, at such a season, a journey was measured by the number of nights to be spent in the frozen forests! Marin's answer to Half-King was not less spirited because of his own dying condition. The Frenchman frankly stated that two English traders had

been taken to Canada "to get intelligence of what the English were doing in Virginia." So far as Indian possession of the land was concerned Marin was quickly to the point: "You say this Land belongs to you, but there is not the Black of my Nail yours. I saw that Land sooner than you did, before the Shannoahs and you were at War: Lead was the Man who went down, and took Possession of that River: It is my Land, and I will have it, let who will stand-up for, or say-against, it. I'll buy and sell with the English, (mockingly). If People will be rul'd by me, they may expect Kindness, but not else." La Salle had gone down the Ohio and claimed possession of it long before Delaware or Shawanese, Ottawa or Wyandot had built a single fire in the valley! The claim of the Six Nations, only, antedated that of the French—but the Six Nations had sold their claim to the English for 400 pounds at Lancaster in 1744. And there was the rub!

At the Council on the following day (26th), Washington delivered an address, asking for guides and guards on his trip up the Allegheny and Riviere aux Boeufs, adroitly implying, in word and gesture, that his audience was the warmest allies of the English and equally desirous to oppose French aggression. The Council was for granting each request but the absence of the hunters necessitated a detention; undoubtedly fear of the French also provoked delay and counselling. Little wonder: Washington would soon be across the mountain again and the rough Frenchman who claimed even the earth beneath his finger nails and had won over Ottawas, Chippewas, and fierce Wyandots, would make short work with those who housed and counselled with the English envoy! And—perhaps more ominous than all—Washington did not announce his business in the West, undoubtedly fearing the Indians would not aid him if they knew it. When at last they asked the nature of his mission he answered just the best an honest-hearted lad could. "This was a Question I all along expected," he wrote in his *Journal*, "and had provided as satisfactory Answers to, as I could; which allayed their Curiosity a little." This youthful diplomat would have allayed the burning curiosity of hundreds of others had he mentioned the reasons he gave those suspicious chieftains for this five-hundred-mile journey in the winter season to a miserable little French fort on the Riviere aux Boeufs! It is safe to assume that could he have given the real reasons he would have been saved the difficulty of providing "satisfactory" ones.

For four days Washington remained, but on the 30th. he set out northward accompanied only by the faithful Half-King and three other Indians, and five days later (after four "nights sleep") the party arrived at the mouth of the Riviere aux Boeufs where Joncaire was wintering in Frazier's cabin. The seventy miles from Loggstown were traversed at about the same poor rate as the one hundred and twenty five from Will's Creek. To Joncaire's cabin, over which floated the French flag, the Virginian envoy immediately repaired. He was received with much courtesy, though, as he well knew, Legardeur de St Pierre, at Fort La Boeuf, the successor to the dead Marin, was the French commandant to whom his letter from Dinwiddie must go.

However Washington was treated "with the greatest Complaisance" by Joncaire. During the evening the Frenchmen "dosed themselves pretty plentifully," wrote the sober, keen-eyed Virginian, "and gave a Licence to their Tongues. They told me, That it was their absolute Design to take Possession of the *Ohio*, and by G—they would do it: For that altho' they were sensible the *English* could raise two Men for their one; yet they knew, their Motions were too slow and dilatory to prevent any Undertaking of theirs." For a true picture of the man Washington (who is said to be forgotten) what one would be chosen before this: the youth sitting before the log fire in an Englishman's cabin, from which the French had driven its owner, on the Allegheny river; about him sit leering, tipsy Gauls, bragging, with oaths, of a conquest they were never to make; dress him for a five-hundred-mile ride through a wilderness in winter, and rest his sober eyes thoughtfully upon the crackling logs while oaths and boasts and the rank smell of foreign liquor fill the heavy air. No picture could show better the three commanding traits of this youth who was father of the man: hearty daring, significant, homespun shrewdness, dogged, resourceful patience. Basic traits of character are often displayed involuntarily in the effervescence of youthful zest. These this lad had shown and was showing in this brave ride into a dense wilderness and a braver inspection of his country's enemies, their works, their temper, and their boasts. Let this picture hang on the walls of every home where the lad in the fore-ground before the blazing logs is unknown save in the role of the general or statesman he became in later life.

How those French officers must have looked this tall, stern boy up and down! How they enjoyed sneering in his face at English backwardness in coming over the Alleghenies into the great West which their explorers had honeycombed with a thousand swift canoes! As they even plotted his assassination, how, in turn, that young heart must have burned to stop their mouths with his hand. Little wonder that when the time came his voice first ordered "Fire," and his finger first pulled the trigger in the great war which won the west from those bragging Frenchmen!

But with the boasts came no little information concerning the French operations on the great lakes, the number of their forts and men. Washington did not get off for Fort La Boeuf the next day for the weather was exceedingly rough. This gave the wily Joncaire a chance to tamper with his Indians, and the opportunity was not neglected! Upon learning that Indians were in the envoy's retinue he professed great regret that Washington had not "made free to bring them in before." The Virginian was quick with a stinging retort: for since he had heard Joncaire "say a good deal in Dispraise of the *Indians* in general" he did not "think their Company agreeable." But Joncaire had his way and "applied the Loquor so fast," that lo! the poor Indians "were soon rendered incapable of the Business they came about."

In the morning Half-King came to Washington's tent hopefully sober but urging that another day be spent at Venango since "the Management of the *Indians* Affairs was left solely to Monsieur *Joncaire*." To this the envoy reluctantly acquiesced. But on the day after the embassy got on its way, thanks to Christopher Gist's influence over the Indians. When Joncaire found them going, he forwarded their plans "in the heartiest way in the world" and detailed Monsieur la Force (with whom this Virginian was to meet under different circumstances inside half a year!) to accompany them. Four days were spent in floundering over the last sixty miles of this journey, the party being driven into "Mires and Swamps" to avoid crossing the swollen Riviere aux Boeufs. On the 11th of December Washington reached his destination, having traveled over 500 miles in forty-two days.

Legardeur St. Pierre, the one-eyed commander at Fort La Boeuf, had arrived but one week before Washington. To him the Virginian envoy delivered Governor Dinwiddie's letter the day after his arrival. Its contents read:

“Sir,

The Lands upon the River *Ohio*, in the Western Parts of the Colony of *Virginia*, are so notoriously known to be the Property of the Crown of *Great-Britain*; that it is a Matter of equal Concern and Surprise to me, to hear that a Body of *French* Forces are erecting Fortresses, and making Settlements upon that River, within his Majesty’s Dominions.

The many and repeated Complaints I have received of these Acts of Hostility, lay me under the Necessity, of sending, in the Name of the King my Master, the Bearer hereof, *George Washington*, Esq; one of the Adjutants General of the Forces of this Dominion; to complain to you of the Encroachments thus made, and of the Injuries done to the Subjects of *Great-Britain*, in the open Violation of the Law of Nations, and the Treaties now subsisting between the two Crowns.

If these Facts are true, and you shall think fit to justify your Proceedings, I must desire you to acquaint me, by whose Authority and Instructions you have lately marched from *Canada*, with an armed Force; and invaded the King of *Great-Britain’s* Territories, in the Manner complained of? that according to the Purport and Resolution of your Answer, I may act agreeably to the Commission I am honored with, from the King my Master.

However, Sir, in Obedience to my Instructions, it becomes my Duty to require your peaceable Departure; and that you would forbear prosecuting a Purpose so interruptive of the Harmony and good Understanding, which his Majesty is desirous to continue and cultivate with the most Christian King.

I persuade myself you will receive and entertain Major *Washington* with the Candour and Politeness natural to your Nation; and it will give me the greatest Satisfaction, if you return him with an Answer suitable to my Wishes for a very long and lasting Peace between us. I have the Honour to subscribe myself,

*SIR,*

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

ROBERT DINWIDDIE.”

While an answer was being prepared the envoy had an opportunity to take careful note of the fort and its hundred defenders. The fortress which Washington carefully described in his *Journal* was not so significant as the host of canoes along the river shore. It was French canoes the English feared more than French forts. The number at Fort La Boeuf at this time was over two hundred, and others were being made. And every stream flowed south to the land “notoriously known” to belong to the British Crown!

On the 14th. Washington was planning his homeward trip. His horses, lacking proper nourishment, exhausted by the hard trip northward, were totally unfit for service, and were at once set out on the road to Venango, since canoes had been offered the little embassy for the return trip. Anxious as Washington was to be off, neither his business nor that of Half-King’s had been forwarded with any celerity until now; but this day Half-King secured an audience with St. Piere and offered him the wampum which was promptly refused, though with many protestations of friendship and an offer to send a load of goods to Loggstown. Every effort possible was being put forth to alienate Half-King and the Virginian frankly wrote: “I can’t say that ever in my Life I suffered so much Anxiety as I did in this Affair.” This day and the next the French officers out did themselves in hastening Washington’s departure and retarding Half-King’s. At last Washington complained frankly to St. Piere, who denied his duplicity—and doubled his bribes! But on the day following Half-King was lured away, Venango being reached in six long days, a large part of the time being spent in dragging the canoes over icy shoals.

Four days were spent with Joncaire, when abandoning both horses and Indians, Washington and Gist set out alone and afoot by the shortest course to the Forks of the Ohio. It was a daring alternative but altogether the preferable one. At Murdering Town, a fit place for Joncaire’s assassin to lie in wait, some French Indians were overtaken, one of whom offered to guide the travelers across to the Forks. At the first good chance he fired upon them, was disarmed and sent away. The two, building a raft, reached an island in the Allegheny after heroic suffering but were unable to cross to the eastern shore until the following morning. Then they passed over on the ice which had formed and went directly to Frazier’s cabin. There they arrived December 29th. On the first day of the new year, 1754, Washington set out for Virginia. On the sixth he met seventeen horses loaded with materials and stores, “for a Fort at the Forks of the *Ohio*.” Governor Dinwiddie, indefatigable if nothing else, had commissioned Captain Trent to raise a company of an hundred men to erect a fort on the Ohio for the protection of the Ohio Company.

On the sixteenth of January the youthful envoy rode again into Williamsburg, one month from the day he left Fort La Boeuf. St. Piere’s reply to Governor Dinwiddie’s letter read as follows:

“*SIR,*

As I have the Honour of commanding here in Chief, Mr. *Washington* delivered me the Letter which you wrote to the Commandant of the *French* Troops.

I should have been glad that you had given him Orders, or that he had been inclined to proceed to *Canada*, to see our General; to whom it better belongs than to me to set-forth the Evidence and Reality of the Rights of the King, my Master, upon the Lands situated along the River *Ohio*, and to contest the Pretensions of the King of *Great-Britain* thereto.

I shall transmit your Letter to the Marquis *Duguisne*. His Answer will be a Law to me; and if he shall order me to communicate it to you, Sir, you may be assured I shall not fail to dispatch it to you forthwith.

As to the Summons you send me to retire, I do not think myself obliged to obey it. What-ever may be your Instructions, I am here by Virtue of the Orders of my General; and I entreat you, Sir, not to doubt one Moment, but that I am determin’d to conform myself to them with all the

Exactness and Resolution which can be expected from the best Officer.

I don't know that in the Progress of this Campaign any Thing has passed which can be reputed an Act of Hostility, or that is contrary to the Treaties which subsist between the two Crowns; the Continuation whereof as much interests, and is as pleasing to us, as the *English*. Had you been pleased, Sir, to have descended to particularize the Facts which occasioned your Complaint, I should have had the Honour of answering you in the fullest, and, I am persuaded, most satisfactory Manner.

I made it my particular Care to receive Mr *Washington*, with a Distinction suitable to your Dignity, as well as his own Quality and great Merit. I flatter myself that he will do me this Justice before you, Sir; and that he will signify to you in the Manner I do myself, the profound Respect with which I am,

*SIR,*

Your most humble, and  
most obedient Servant,

LEGARDEUR DE ST. PIERE"

Washington found the Governor's council was to meet the day following and that his report was desired. Accordingly he rewrote his *Journal* from the "rough minutes" he had made. From any point of view this document of ten thousand words, hastily written by a lad of twenty-one who had not seen a school desk since his seventeenth year, is far more creditable and remarkable than any of the feats of physical endurance for which the lad is idolized by the youthful readers of our school histories. It is safe to say that many a college bred man of today could not prepare from rough notes such a succinct and polite document as did this young surveyor, who had read few books and studied neither his own nor any foreign language. The author did not "in the least conceive ... that it would ever be published." Speaking afterward of its "numberless imperfections" he said that all that could recommend it to the public was its truthfulness of fact. Certain features of this first literary work of Washington's are worthy of remark: his frankness, as in criticising Shingiss' village as a site for a fort as proposed by the Ohio Company; his exactness in giving details (where he could obtain them) of forts, men, and guns; his estimates of distances; his wise conforming to Indian custom; his careful note of the time of day of important events; his frequent observations of the kinds of the land through which he passed; his knowledge of Indian character.

This mission prosecuted with such rare tact and skill was an utter failure, considered from the standpoint of its nominal purpose. St. Piere's letter was firm, if not defiant. Yet Dinwiddie, despairing of French withdrawal, had secured the information he desired. Already the French had reached the Forks of the Ohio where an English fort was being erected. Peaceful measures were exhausted with the failure of Washington's embassy.

England's one hope was—war.

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## II.

### THE STORY OF THE CAMPAIGN.

No literary production of a youth of twenty-one ever electrified the world as did the publication of the *Journal* of this dauntless envoy of the Virginian Governor. No young man more instantly sprang into the notice of the world than George Washington. The *Journal* was copied far and wide in the newspapers of the other colonies. It sped across the sea, and was printed in London by the British government. In a manly, artless way it told the exact situation on the Ohio frontier and announced the first positive proof the world had had of hostile French aggression into the great river valley of the West. Despite certain youthful expressions, the prudence, tact, capacity and modesty of the author were recognized by a nation and by a world.

Without waiting for the House of Burgesses to convene, Governor Dinwiddie's Council immediately advised the enlistment of two hundred men to be sent to build forts on the Monongahela and Ohio rivers. The business of recruiting two companies of one hundred men each was given to the tried though youthful Major Washington, since they were to be recruited from the northern district over which he had been adjutant-general. His instructions read as follows:

*"Instruct's to be observ'd by Maj'r Geo. Washington, on the Expedit'n to the Ohio.*

Maj'r Geo. Washington: You are forthwith to repair to the Co'ty of Frederick and there to take under Y'r Com'd 50 Men of the Militia who will be deliver'd to You by the Comd'r of the s'd Co'ty pursuant to my Orders. You are to send Y'r Lieut. at the same Time to the Co'ty of Augusta, to receive 50 Men from the Comd'r of that Co'ty as I have order'd, and with them he is to join You at Alexandria, to which Place You are to proceed as soon as You have rec'd the Men in Frederick. Having rec'd the Detachm't, You are to train and discipline them in the best Manner You can, and for all Necessaries You are to apply Y'rself to Mr. Jno. Carlisle at Alex'a who has my Orders to supply You. Having all Things in readiness You are to use all Expedition in proceeding to the Fork of Ohio with the Men under Com'd and there you are to finish and compleat in the best Manner and as soon as You possibly can, the Fort w'ch I expect is there already begun by the Ohio Comp'a. You are



to act on the Defensive, but in Case any Attempts are made to obstruct the Works or interrupt our Settlements by any Persons whatsoever You are to restrain all such Offenders, and in Case of resistance to make Prisoners of or kill and destroy them. For the rest You are to conduct Y'rself as the Circumst's of the Service shall require and to act as You shall find best for the Furtherance of His M'y's Service and the Good of His Dom'n. Wishing You Health and Success I bid you Farewell."

The general command of the expedition was given to Colonel Joshua Fry, formerly professor of mathematics in William and Mary College and a geographer and Indian commissioner of note. His instructions were as follows:

*"Instruction's to Joshua Fry, Esqr., Colo. and the Com'r-in-Chief of the Virg'a Regiment.*  
March, 1754.

"Sir: The Forces under Y'r Com'd are rais'd to protect our frontier Settlements from the incursions of the French and the Ind's in F'dship with them. I therefore desire You will with all possible Expedition repair to Alexandria on the Head of the Poto. River, and there take upon You the com'd of the Forces accordingly; w'ch I Expect will be at that Town the Middle of next Mo. You are to march them to will's Creek, above the Falls of Poto. from thence with the Great Guns, Amunit'n and Provisions. You are to proceed to Monongahela, when ariv'd there, You are to make Choice of the best Place to erect a Fort for mounting y'r Cannon and ascertain'g His M'y the King of G. B's undoubt'd right to those Lands. My Orders to You is to be on the Defensive and if any foreign Force sh'd come to annoy You or interrupt Y'r quiet Settlement, and building the Fort as afores'd, You are in that Case to represent to them the Powers and Orders You have from me, and I desire they w'd imediately retire and not to prevent You in the discharge of your Duty. If they sh'd continue to be obstinate after your desire to retire, you are then to repel Force by Force. I expect a Number of the Southern Indians will join you on this expedit'n, w'ch with the Indians on the Ohio, I desire You will cultivate a good Understanding and Correspondence with, supplying them with what Provisions and other Necessaries You can spare; and write to Maj'r Carlyle w'n You want Provisions, who has my Orders to purchase and Keep a proper Magazine for Your dem'ds. Keep up a good Com'd and regular Discipline, inculcate morality and Courage in Y'r Soldiers that they may answer the Views on w'ch they are rais'd. You are to constitute a Court Martial of the Chief of Your Officers, with whom You are to advise and consult on all Affairs of Consequence; and as the Fate of this Expedition greatly depends on You, from the Opinion I have of Your good Sense and Conduct, I refer the Management of the whole to You with the Advice of the Court Martial. Sincerely recommending You to the Protection of God, wishing Success to our just Designs, I heartily wish You farewell."

This expedition was in no sense the result of general agitation against French encroachment. And, as in Virginia, so it was in other colonies to which Governor Dinwiddie appealed; the Governors said they had received no instructions; the validity of English title to the lands upon which the French were alleged to have encroached was doubted; no one wished to precipitate a war through rash zeal.

Before the bill voting ten thousand pounds "for the encouragement and protection of the settlers on the Mississippi," as it was called, passed the House of Burgesses, Governor Dinwiddie had his patience well-nigh exhausted, but he overlooked both the doubts raised as to England's rights in the West, and personal slights, and signed the bill which provided the expenses of this memorable expedition of the Virginia Regiment in 1754.

Major Washington was located at Alexandria, on the upper Potomac, in February where he superintended the rendezvous and the transportation of supplies and cannon. It was found necessary to resort to impressments to raise the required quota of men. As early as February 19th, so slow were the drafts and enlistments, Governor Dinwiddie issued a proclamation granting two hundred thousand acres of land on the Ohio to be divided among the officers and men who would serve in the expedition. This had its effect.

By April 20th Washington arrived at Will's Creek (Cumberland, Maryland) with three companies, one under Captain Stephen joining him on the way. The day previous, however, he met a messenger sent from Captain Trent on the Ohio announcing that the arrival of a French army was hourly expected. And on the day following, at Will's Creek, he was informed of the arrival of the French on what is now the site of Pittsburg and the withdrawal of the Virginian force under Trent from the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela whither they had been sent to build a fort for the protection of the Ohio Company. This information he immediately forwarded to the Governors of Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Fancy the state of mind of this vanguard of the Virginian army at the receipt of this news. It was, then, at the last frontier fort, eleven companies strong. Their order was to push on to the Ohio, drive off the French (which was then reported to number a thousand men) and build a fort. Before it the only road was the Indian path hardly wide enough to admit the passage of a pack-horse.

A ballot was cast among Washington's Captains—the youngest of whom was old enough to have been his father—and the decision was to advance. The Indian path could at least be widened and bridges built as far as the Monongahela. There they determined to erect a fort and await orders and reinforcements. The reasons for this decision are given as follows in Washington's *Journal* of 1754:<sup>[1]</sup>

*1st.* That the mouth of *Red-Stone* is the first convenient place on the River *Monongahela*.

*2nd.* The stores are already built at that place for the provisions of the Company, wherein the Ammunition may be laid up, our great guns may also be sent by water whenever we shall think it convenient to attack the Fort.

*3rd.* We may easily (having all these conveniences) preserve our men from the ill consequences of inaction, and encourage the *Indians* our Allies to remain in our interests."

[1] The private *Journal* kept by Washington on the expedition of the Virginia Regiment in 1754 was composed of rough notes only. It was lost with other papers at the Battle of Fort Necessity and was

captured by the French and sent to Paris. Two years later it was published by the French government, after being thoroughly "edited" by a French censor. It was titled "MEMOIRE contenant le *Precis des Faits, avec leurs Pieces Justificatives, pour servir de Reponse aux OBSERVATIONS envoyees, par les Ministres d'Angleterre, dans les Cours de l'Europe. A Paris; de l'Imprimerie Royale, 1756.*"

In this MEMOIRE, together with portions of Washington's *Journal* appear papers, instructions, etc., captured at Braddock's defeat in 1755. Of the portion of Washington's *Journal* published, Washington himself said; "I kept no regular one (Journal) during the Expedition; rough notes of occurrences I certainly took, and find them as certainly and strangely metamorphised, some parts left out which I remember were entered, and many things added that never were thought of, the names of men and things egregiously miscalled, and the whole of what I saw Englished is very incorrect and nonsensical." The last entry on the *Journal* is on June 27th., six days previous to the Battle of Fort Necessity.

Thus Washington's march westward in 1754 must be looked upon only as the advance of a van-guard to open the road, bridge the streams and prepare the way for the commanding officer and his army. Nor was there, now, need of haste—had it been possible or advisable to hasten. The landing of the French at the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela already thwarted Governor Dinwiddie's purpose in sending out the expedition "To prevent their (French) building any Forts or making any Settlem's on that river (Ohio) and more particularly so nigh us as that of Loggstown (fifteen miles below the forks of the Ohio.)" Now that a fort was building, with a French army of a thousand men (as Washington had been erroneously informed) encamped about it, nothing more was to be thought of than a cautious advance.

And so Washington gave the order to march on the 29th. of April, three score men having been sent ahead to widen the Indian trail. The progress was difficult, and exceedingly slow. In the first ten days the hundred and fifty men covered but twenty miles. Yet each mile must have been anticipated seriously by the young commander. He knew not whether the enemy or his Colonel with reinforcements was nearest. Governor Dinwiddie wrote him (May 4) concerning reinforcements, as follows:

"The Independ't Compa., from So. Car. arriv'd two days ago; is compleat; 100 Men besides Officers, and will re-embark for Alexa next Week, thence proceed imediately to join Colo. Fry and You. The two Independ't Compa's from N. York may be Expected in ab't ten days. The N. Car. Men, under the Com'd of Colo. Innes, are imagin'd to be on their March, and will probably be at the Randevvous ab't the 15th. Itst." ... "I hope Capt. McKay, who Com'ds the Independ't Compa., will soon be with You And as he appears to be an Officer of some Experience and Importance, You will, with Colo. Fry and Colo. Innes, so well agree as not to let some Punctillios ab't Com'd render the Service You are all engag'd in, perplex'd or obstructed."

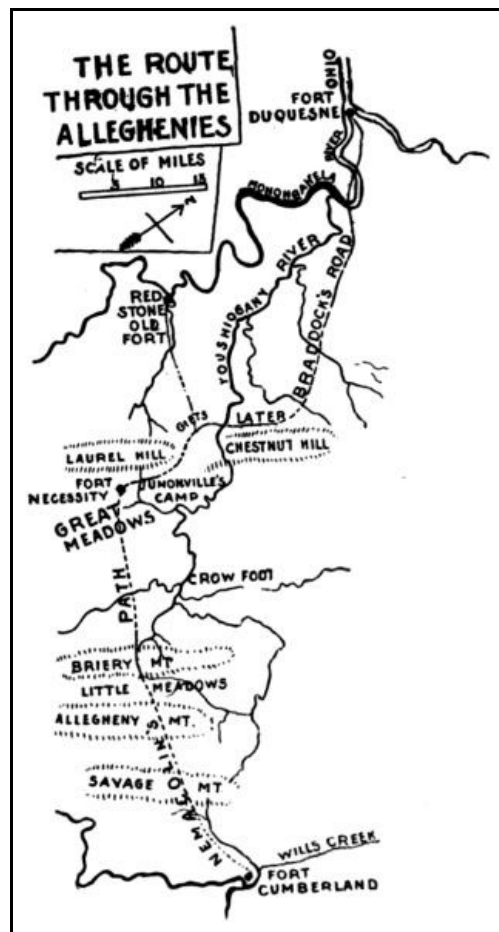
Relying implicitly on Dinwiddie, Washington pushed on and on into the wilderness, opening a road and building bridges for a Colonel and an army that was never to come! As he advanced into the Alleghenies he found the difficulty of hauling wagons very serious, and, long before he reached the Youghiogheny, he determined to test the possibility of transportation down that stream and the Monongahela to his destination at the mouth of the Redstone Creek. May 11th. he sent a reconnoitering force forward to Gist's, on Laurel Hill, the last spur of the Alleghenies, to locate a French party, which, the Indians reported, had left Fort Duquesne, and to find if there was possibility of water transportation to the mouth of Redstone Creek, where a favorable site for a fort was to be sought.

Slowly the frail detachment felt its way along to Little Meadows and across the smaller branch of the Youghiogheny which it bridged at "Little Crossings." On the 16th, according to the French version of Washington's *Journal*, he met traders who informed him of the appearance of French at Gist's and who expressed doubts as to the possibility of building a wagon road from Gist's to the mouth of Redstone Creek. This made it imperatively necessary for the young Lieutenant-Colonel to attempt to find a water passage down the Youghiogheny.

The day following much information was received, both from the front and the rear, vividly stated in the *Journal* as follows:

"The Governor informs me that Capt. McKay, with an independent company of 100 men, excluding the officers, had arrived, and that we might expect them daily; and that the men from New-York would join us within ten days.

This night also came two *Indians* from the *Ohio* who left the French fort five days ago: They relate that the French forces are all employed in building their Fort, that it is already breast-high, and of the thickness of twelve feet, and filled with Earth, stones, etc. They have cut down and burnt up all the trees which were about it and sown grain instead thereof. The *Indians* believe they were only 600 in number, although they say themselves they are 800. They expect a greater number in a few days, which may amount to 1600. Then they say they can defy the *English*."



THE ROUTE THROUGH THE ALLEGHENIES  
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Arriving on the eastern bank of the Youghiogheny the next day, 18th, the river being too wide to bridge and too high to ford, Washington put himself "in a position of defence against any immediate attack from the Enemy" and went straightway to work on the problem of water transportation.

By the 20th., a canoe having been provided, Washington set out on the Youghiogheny with four men and an Indian. By nightfall they reached "Turkey Foot," (Confluence, Pennsylvania,) which Washington mapped as a possible site for a fort. Below "Turkey Foot" the stream was found too rapid and rocky to admit any sort of navigation and Washington returned to camp on the 24th. with the herculean hardships of an overland march staring him in the face. Information was now at hand from Half-King, concerning alleged movements of the French; thus the letter read;

"To any of his Majesty's officers whom this May Concern.

As 'tis reported that the French army is set out to meet M. George Washington, I exhort you my brethren, to guard against them, for they intend to fall on the first *English* they meet; They have been on their march these two days, the Half-King and the other chiefs will join you within five days, to hold a council, though we know not the number we shall be. I shall say no more, but remember me to my brethren the English.

Signed The Half-King."

At two o'clock of that same May day (24th.) the little army came down the eastern wooded hills that surrounded Great Meadows, and looked across the waving grasses and low bushes which covered the field they were soon to make classic ground. Immediately upon arriving at the future battle-field information was secured from a trader confirming Half-King's alarming letter. Below the roadway, which passed the meadow on the hillside, the Lieutenant-Colonel found two natural intrenchments near a branch of Great Meadows run, perhaps old courses of the brook through the swampy land. Here the troops and wagons were placed.

Great Meadows may be described as two large basins the smaller lying directly westward of the larger and connected with it by a narrow neck of swampy ground. Each is a quarter of a mile wide and the two a mile and a half in length.

The old roadway descends from the southern hills, coming out upon the meadows at the eastern extremity of the western basin. It traverses the hill-side south of the western meadow. The natural intrenchments or depressions behind which Washington huddled his army on this May afternoon were at the eastern edge of the western basin. Behind him was the narrow neck of low-land which soon opened into the eastern basin. Before him to his left on the hillside his newly-made road crawled eastward into the hills. The Indian trail followed the edge of the forest westward to Laurel Hill, five miles distant, and on to Fort Duquesne.

On this faint opening into the western forest the little army and its youthful commander kept their eyes as the sun dropped behind the hills closing an anxious day and bringing a dreaded night. How large the body of French might have been, not one of the one hundred and fifty men knew. How far away they might be no one

could guess. Here in this forest meadow the little van-guard slept on their arms, surrounded by watchful sentinels, with fifty-one miles of forest and mountain between them and the nearest settlement at Will's Creek. The darkling forests crept down the hills on either side as though to hint by their portentous shadows of the dead and dying that were to be.

But the night waned and morning came. With increasing energy, as though nerved to duty by the dangers which surrounded him, the twenty-two year old commander Washington gave his orders promptly. A scouting party was sent on the Indian trail in search of the coming French. Squads were set to threshing the forest for spies. Horsemen were ordered to scour the country and keep look-out for the French from neighboring points of vantage.

At night all returned, none the wiser for their vigilance and labor. The French force had disappeared from the face of the earth! It may be believed that this lack of information did not tend to ease the intense strain of the hour. It must have been plain to the dullest that serious things were ahead. Two flags, silken emblems of an immemorial hatred, were being brought together in the Alleghenies. It was a moment of utmost importance to Europe and America. Quebec and Jamestown were met on Laurel Hill; and a spark struck here and now was to "set the world on fire."

However clearly this may have been seen, Washington was not the man to withdraw. Indeed, the celerity with which he precipitated England and France into war made him a criticised man on both continents.

Another day passed—and the French could not be found. On the following day Christopher Gist arrived at Great Meadows with the information that M. la Force (whose tracks he had seen within five miles of Great Meadows) had been at his house, fifteen miles distant. Acting on this reliable information Washington at once dispatched a scouting party in pursuit.

The day passed and no word came to the anxious men in their trenches in the meadows. Another night, silent and cheerless, came over the mountains upon the valley, and with the night came rain. Fresh fears of strategy and surprise must have arisen as the cheerless sun went down.

Suddenly, at eight in the evening, a runner brought word that the French were run to cover! Half-King, while coming to join Washington, had found la Force's party in "a low, obscure place."

It was now time for a daring man to show himself. Such was the young commander at Great Meadows.

"That very moment," wrote Washington in his *Journal*, "I sent out forty men and ordered my ammunition to be put in a place of safety, fearing it to be a stratagem of the French to attack our camp; I left a guard to defend it, and with the rest of my men set out in a heavy rain, and in a night as dark as pitch."

Perhaps a war was never precipitated under stranger circumstances. Contrecoeur, commanding at Fort Duquesne, was made aware by his Indian scouts of Washington's progress all the way from the Potomac. The day before Washington arrived at Great Meadows Contrecoeur ordered M. de Jumonville to leave Fort Duquesne with a detachment of thirty-four men, commanded by la Force, and go toward the advancing English. To the English (when he met them) he was to explain he had come to order them to retire. To the Indians he was to pretend he was "travelling about to see what is transacting in the King's Territories, and to take notice of the different roads." In the eyes of the English the party was to be an embassy. In the eyes of the Indians, a party of scouts reconnoitering. This is clear from the orders given by Contrecoeur to Jumonville.

Three days before, on the 26th, this "embassy" was at Gist's plantation where, according to Gist's report to Washington, they "would have killed a cow and broken everything in the house, if two *Indians*, whom he (Gist) had left in charge of the home, had not prevented them."

From Gist's la Force had advanced within five miles of Great Meadows, as Gist ascertained by their tracks on the Indian trail. Then—although the English commander was within an hour's march—the French retraced their steps to the summit of Laurel Hill and, descending deep into the obscure valley on the east, built a hut under the lee of the precipice and rested from their labors. Here they remained throughout the 27th, while Washington's scouts were running their legs off in the attempt to locate them and the young Lieutenant-colonel was in a fever of anxiety at their sudden, ominous disappearance. Now they were found.

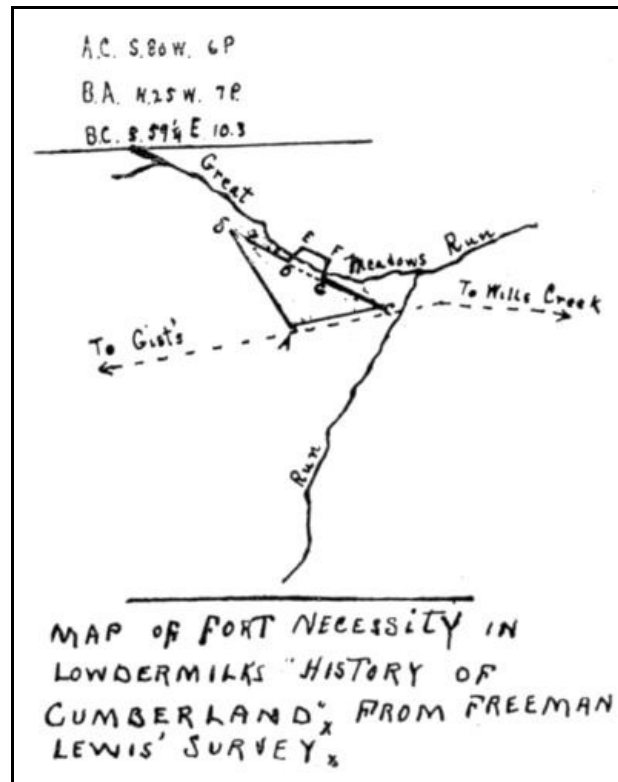
What a march was that! The darkness was intense. The path, Washington wrote, was "scarce broad enough for one man." Now and then it was lost completely and a quarter of an hour was wasted in finding it. Stones and roots impeded the way, and were made trebly treacherous by the torrents of rain which fell. The men struck the trees. They fell over each other. They slipped from the narrow track and slid downward through the soaking leafy carpet of the forests.

Enthusiastic tourists make the journey today from Great Meadows to the summit of Laurel Hill on the track over which Washington and his hundred men floundered and stumbled that wet May night a century and a half ago. It is a hard walk but exceedingly fruitful to one of imaginative vision. From Great Meadows the trail holds fast to the height of ground until Braddock's Run is crossed near "Braddock's Grave." Picture that little group of men floundering down into this mountain stream, swollen by the heavy rain, in the utter darkness of that night! From Braddock's Run the trail begins its long climb on the sides of the foot-hills, by picturesque Peddler's Rocks, to the top of Laurel Hill, two thousand feet above.

Washington left Great Meadows about eight o'clock. It was not until sunrise that Half-King's sentries at "Washington's Spring," saw the van-guard file out on the narrow ridge, which, dividing the headwaters of Great Meadow Run and Cheat River, made an easy ascent to the summit of the mountain. The march of five miles had been accomplished, with great difficulty, in a little less than two hours—or at the rate of *one mile in two hours*.

Forgetting all else for the moment, consider the young leader of this floundering, stumbling army. There is not another episode in all Washington's long, eventful, life that shows more clearly his strength of personal determination and daring. Beside this all-night march from Great Meadows to Washington's Spring, Wolf's ascent to the Plains of Abraham at Quebec, was a past-time. The climb up from Wolf's Cove (all romantic accounts and pictures to the contrary notwithstanding) was an exceedingly easy march up a valley that hardly deserved to be called steep. A child can run along Wolfe's path at any point from top to bottom. A man in full daylight today, can walk over Washington's five mile course to Laurel Hill in half the time the little army

needed on that black night. If a more difficult ten-hour night march has been made in the history of warfare in America, who led it and where was it made? No feature of the campaign shows more clearly the unmatched, irresistible energy of this twenty-two-year-old boy. For those to whom Washington, the man, is "unknown," there are lessons in this little briery path today of value far beyond their cost.



MAP OF FORT NECESSITY IN LOWDERMILK'S "HISTORY OF CUMBERLAND", FROM FREEMAN LEWIS' SURVEY.

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Whether Washington intended to attack the French before he reached Half-King is not known; at the Spring a conference was held and it was immediately decided to attack. Washington did not know and could not have known that Jumonville was an ambassador. The action of the French in approaching Great Meadows and then withdrawing and hiding was not the behavior of an embassy. Half-King and his Indians were of the opinion that the French party entertained evil designs, and, as Washington afterwards wrote, "If we had been such fools as to let them (the French) go, they (the Indians) would never have helped us to take any other Frenchmen."

Two scouts were sent out in advance; then, in Indian file, Washington and his men with Half-King and a few Indians followed and "prepared to surround them."

Laurel Hill, the most westerly range of the Alleghenies, trends north and south through Pennsylvania. In Fayette county, about one mile on the summit northward from the National Road, lies Washington's Spring where Half-King encamped. The Indian trail coursed along the summit northward fifteen miles to Gist's. On the eastern side, Laurel Hill descends into a valley varying from a hundred to five hundred feet deep. Nearly two miles from the Spring, in the bottom of a valley four hundred feet deep, lay Jumonville's "embassy." The attacking party, guided by Indians, who had previously wriggled down the hillside on their bellies and found the French, advanced along the Indian trail and then turned off and began stealthily creeping down the mountain-side.

Washington's plan was, clearly, to surround and capture the French. It is plain he did not understand the ground. They were encamped in the bottom of a valley two hundred yards wide and more than a mile long. Moreover the hillside on which the English were descending abruptly ended on a narrow ledge of rocks thirty feet high and a hundred yards long.

Coming suddenly out on the rocks, Washington leading the right division and Half-King the left, it was plain in the twinkling of an eye that it would not be possible to achieve a bloodless victory. Washington therefore gave and received first fire. It was fifteen minutes before the astonished but doughty French, probably now surrounded by Half-King's Indians, were compelled to surrender. Ten of their number, including their "Embassador" Jumonville, were killed outright and one wounded. Twenty-one prisoners were taken. One Frenchman escaped, running half clothed through the forests to Fort Duquesne with the evil tidings.

"We killed," writes Washington, "Mr. de Jumonville, the Commander of that party, as also nine others; we wounded one and made twenty-one prisoners, among whom were *M. la Force*, and *M. Drouillon* and two cadets. The Indians scalped the dead and took away the greater part of their arms, after which we marched on with the prisoners under guard to the *Indian* camp.... I marched on with the prisoners. *They informed me that they had been sent with a summons to order me to retire.* A plausible pretense to discover our camp and to obtain knowledge of our forces and our situation! It was so clear that they were come to reconnoiter what we were, that I admired their assurance, when they told me they were come as an Embassy; their instructions were to get what

knowledge they could of the roads, rivers, and all the country as far as the Potomac; and instead of coming as an Ambassador, publicly and in an open manner, they came secretly, and sought the most hidden retreats more suitable for deserters than for Ambassadors; they encamped there and remained hidden for whole days together, at a distance of not more than five miles from us; they sent spies to reconnoiter our camp; the whole body turned back 2 miles; they sent the two messengers mentioned in the instruction, to inform M. de Contrecoeur of the place where we were, and of our disposition, that he might send his detachments to enforce the summons as soon as it should be given. Besides, an Ambassador has princely attendants, whereas this was only a simple petty *French* officer, an Ambassador has no need of spies, his person being always sacred: and seeing their intention was so good, why did they tarry two days at five miles distance from us without acquainting me with the summons, or at least, with something that related to the Embassy? That alone would be sufficient to excite the strongest suspicions, and we must do them the justice to say, that, as they wanted to hide themselves, they could not have picked out better places than they had done. The summons was so insolent, and savored of so much Gasonade that if it had been brought openly by two men it would have been an excessive Indulgence to have suffered them to return.... They say they called to us as soon as they had discovered us; which is an absolute falsehood, for I was then marching at the head of the company going towards them, and can positively affirm, that, when they first saw us, they ran to their arms, without calling, as I must have heard them had they so done."



**Ledge from which Washington opened fire upon Jumonville's party.**

In a letter to his brother, Washington wrote "I fortunately escaped without any wound; for the right wing where I stood, was exposed to, and received all the enemy's fire; and it was the part where the man was killed and the rest wounded. I heard the bullets whistle; and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound." The letter was published in the London Magazine. It is said George II. read it and commented dryly: "He would not say so if he had been used to hear many." In later years Washington heard too much of the fatal music, and once, when asked if he had written such rodomontade, is said to have answered gravely, "If I said so, it was when I was young." Aye, but it is memorials of that daring, young Virginian, to whom whistling bullets were charming, that we seek in the Alleghenies today. We catch a similar glimpse of this ardent, boyish spirit in a letter written from Fort Necessity later. Speaking of strengthening the fortifications Washington writes: "We have, with nature's assistance, made a good entrenchment, and by clearing the bushes out of these meadows, prepared a charming field for an encounter." Over and above the anxieties with which he was ever beset there shines out clearly the exuberance of youthful zest and valor—soon to be hardened and quenched by innumerable cares and heavy responsibilities.

Thus the first blow of that long, bloody, seven year's war was struck by the red-uniformed Virginians under Washington, at the bottom of that Allegheny valley. He immediately returned to Great Meadows and sent eastward to the belated Fry for reinforcements. On the 30th, the French prisoners were sent eastward to Virginia, and the construction of a fort was begun at Great Meadows, by erecting "small palisades." This was completed by the following day, June 1st. Washington speaks of this fort in his Journal as "Fort Necessity" under date of June 25th. The name suggests the exigencies which led to its erection; lack of troops and provisions. On June 2nd Washington wrote in his Journal: "We had prayers in the Fort"; the name Necessity may not have been used at first. On the 6th Gist arrived from Will's Creek bringing the news of Colonel Fry's death from injuries sustained by being thrown from his horse. Thus the command now devolved upon Washington who had been in actual command from the beginning. On the 9th the remainder of the Virginia regiment arrived from Will's Creek, with the swivels, under Colonel Muse. On the day following Captain Mackaye arrived with the independent company of South Carolinians.

This reinforcement put a new face on affairs, and it is clear that the new Colonel commanding secretly hoped to capture Fort Duquesne forthwith. The road was finished to Great Meadows. For two weeks, now, the work went on completing it as far as Gist's, on Mount Braddock. In the meantime a sharp lookout for the French was maintained and spies were continually sent toward Fort Duquesne. Among all else that taxed the energies of the young Colonel was the Indian question. At one time he received and answered a deputation of Delawares and Shawanese which he knew was sent by the French. Yet the answer of this youth to the "treacherous devils," as he calls them in his private record of the day, was as bland and diplomatic as that of Indian Chieftain bred to hypocrisy and deceit. He put little faith in the redskins, but made good use of those he had as spies. He also did all in his power to restrain the vagrant tribes from joining the French, and offered to all who came or would come to him a hospitality he could ill afford.

On the 28th the road was completed to Gist's, and eight of the sixteen miles from Gist's to the mouth of Redstone Creek. On this day the scouts brought word of reinforcements at Fort Duquesne and of preparations for sending out an army. Immediately Washington summoned Mackaye's company from Fort Necessity, and the building of a fort was begun by throwing up entrenchments on Mount Braddock. All outlying squads were called in. But on the 30th, fresher information being at hand, it was decided at a council of war to retreat to Virginia rather than oppose the strong force which was reported to be advancing up the Monongahela.

The consternation at Fort Duquesne upon the arrival of that single, barefoot fugitive from Jumonville's company can be imagined. Relying on the pompous pretenses of the ambassadorship and desiring to avoid an indefensible violation of the Treaty of Utrecht—though its spirit and letter were "already infringed by his very presence on the ground"—Contrecoeur (one of the best representatives of his proud King that ever came to America) assembled a council of war and ordered each opinion to be put in writing. Mercier gave moderate advice; Coulon-Villiers, half-brother of Jumonville, burning with rage, urged violent measures. Mercier prevailed, and an army of five hundred French and as many, or more, Indians, among whom were many Delawares, formerly friends of the English, was raised to march and meet Washington. At his request, the command was given to Coulon-Villiers—*Le Grande Villiers*, so called from his prowess among the Indians. Mercier was second in command. This was the army before which Washington was now slowly, painfully, retreating from Mount Braddock toward Virginia.

It was a sad hour—that in which the Virginian retreat was ordered by its daring Colonel, eager for a fight. But, even if he secretly wished to stay and defend the splendid site on Mount Braddock where he had entrenched his army, the counsel of older heads prevailed. It would have been better had the army stuck to those breastworks—but the suffering and humiliation to come was not foreseen.

Backward over the rough, new road, the little army plodded, the Virginians hauling the swivels by hand. Two teams and a few pack-horses were all that remained of horse-flesh equal to the occasion. Even Washington and his officers walked. For a week there had been no bread. In two days Fort Necessity was reached, where, quite exhausted, the little army went into camp. There were only a few bags of flour here. It was plain, now, that the retreat to Virginia was ill-advised. Human strength was not equal to it. So there was nothing to do but send post-haste to Will's Creek for help. But, if strength were lacking—there was courage and to spare! For after a "full and free" conference of the officers it was determined to enlarge the stockade, strengthen the fortifications, and await the enemy, whatever his number or power.

The day following was spent in this work, and famed Fort Necessity was completed. It was the shape of an irregular square situated upon a small height of land near the center of the swampy meadow. "The natural entrenchments" of which Washington speaks in his *Journal* may have been merely this height of ground, or old courses of the two brooks which flow by it on the north and on the east. At any rate the fort was built on an "island," so to speak, in the wet lowland. A narrow neck of solid land connected it with the southern hillside, along which the road ran. A shallow ditch surrounded the earthen palisaded sides of the fort. Parallel with the southeastern and southwestern palisades rifle pits were dug. Bastion gateways offered entrance and exit. The work embraced less than a sixth of an acre of land. All day long skirmishers and double picket lines were kept out and the steady advance of the French force, three times the size of the army fearlessly awaiting it, was reported by hurrying scouts.

No army ever slept on its arms of a night surer of a battle on the morrow than did this first English army that ever came into the west. *Le Grande Villiers*, thirsting for revenge, lay not five miles off, with a thousand followers who had caught his spirit.

By earliest morning light on Wednesday, July third, an English sentry was brought in wounded. The French were then descending Laurel Hill, four miles distant. They had attacked the entrenchments on Mount Braddock the morning before only to find their bird had flown, and now were pressing after the retreating redcoats and their "buckskin Colonel."

Little is known of the story of this day within that earthen fort save as it is told in the meagre details of the general battle. There was great lack of food, but, to compensate for this, as the soldiers no doubt thought, there was much to drink! By eleven o'clock the French and Indians, spreading throughout the forests on the northwest, began firing at six hundred yards distance. Finally they circled to the southeast where the forests approach nearer to the English trenches. Washington at once drew his little army out of the fort and boldly challenged assault on that narrow neck of solid land on the south which formed the only approach to the fort.

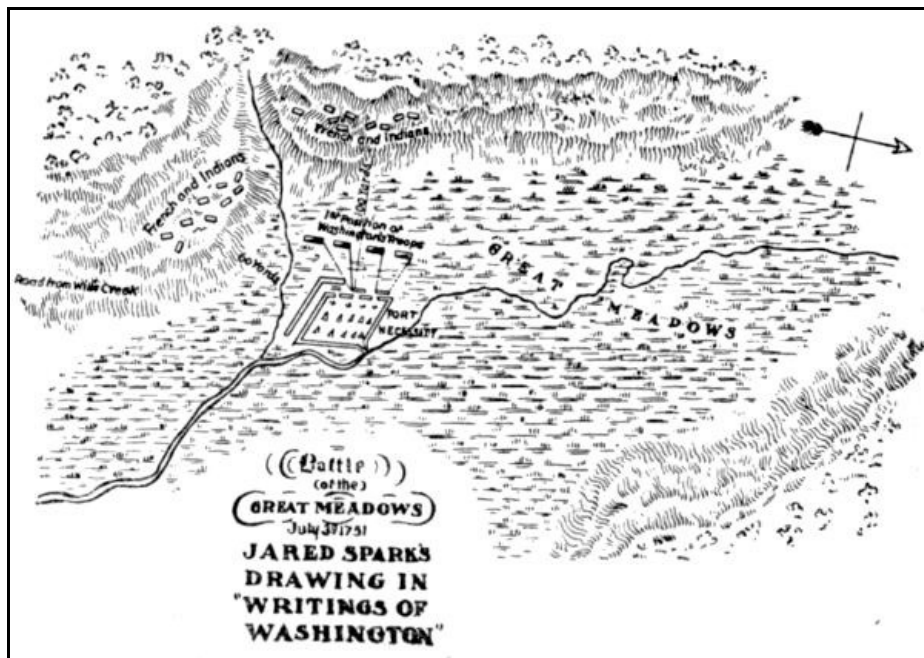


Grape Shot found near Fort Necessity. Actual size.

But the crafty Villiers, not to be tempted, kept well within the forest shadows to the south and east—cutting off all retreat to Virginia! Realizing at last that the French would not give battle, Washington withdrew again behind his entrenchments, Mackaye's South Carolinians occupying the rifle-pits which paralleled the two sides of the fortification.

Here the all-day's battle was fought between the Virginians behind their breastworks and in their trenches, and the French and Indians on the ascending wooded hill-sides. The rain which began to fall soon flooded Mackaye's men out of their trenches. No other change of position was made. And, so far as the battle went, the English doggedly held their own. In the contest with hunger and rain however, they were fighting a losing battle. The horses and cattle escaped and were slaughtered by the enemy. The provisions were being exhausted and the ammunition was spending fast. As the afternoon waned, though there was some cessation of musketry fire, many guns being rendered useless by the rain, the smoking little swivels were made to do double duty. They bellowed their fierce defiance with unwonted zest as night came on, giving to the English an appearance of strength which they were far from possessing. The hungry soldiers made up for the lack of food from the abundance of liquor, which, in their exhausted state had more than its usual effect. By nightfall half the little doomed army was intoxicated. No doubt, had Villiers dared to rush the entrenchments, the English would have been annihilated. The hopelessness of their condition could not have been realized by the foe on the hills.

But it was realized by the young Colonel commanding. And as he looked about him in the wet twilight of that July day, what a dismal ending of his first campaign it must have seemed. Fifty-four of his three hundred and four men were killed or wounded in that little palisaded enclosure. Provisions and ammunition were about gone. Horses and cattle were gone. Many of the small arms were useless. The army was surrounded by *Le Grande Villiers*, watchfully abiding his time. And there was comedy with the tragedy—half the tired men were under the influence of the only stimulant that could be spared. What mercy could be hoped for from the brother of the dead Jumonville? A fight to the death, or at least a captivity at Fort Duquesne or Quebec was all that could be expected—for had not Jumonville's party already been sent into Virginia as captives?



Battle at the Great Meadows July 3<sup>d</sup> 1751



JARED SPARK'S  
DRAWING IN  
"WRITINGS OF  
WASHINGTON"  
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At eight in the evening the French requested a parley and Washington refused to consider the suggestion. Why should a parley be desired with an enemy in such a hopeless strait as they? It was clear that Villiers had resorted to this strategy to gain better information of their condition. But the request was soon repeated, and this time Villiers asked for a parley between the lines. To this Washington readily acceded, and Captain van Braam went to meet le Mercier, who brought a verbal proposition for the capitulation of Fort Necessity from Villiers. To this proposition Washington and his officers listened. Twice the commissioners were sent to Villiers to submit modifications demanded by Washington. They returned a third time with the articles reduced to writing—but in French. Washington depended upon van Braam's poor knowledge of French and mongrel English for a verbal translation. Jumonville's death was referred to as an assassination though van Braam Englished the word "death"—perhaps thinking there was no other translation of the French *l'assassinat*. By the light of a flickering candle, which the mountain wind frequently extinguished, the rain falling upon the company, George Washington signed this, his first and last capitulation.

ARTICLE 1st. We permit the English Commander to withdraw with all the garrison, in order that he may return peaceably to his country, and to shield him from all insult at the hands of our French, and to restrain the savages who are with us as much as may be in our power.

ART. 2nd. He shall be permitted to withdraw and to take with him whatever belongs to his troops, *except the artillery, which we reserve for ourselves.*

ART. 3d. We grant them the honors of war; they shall withdraw with beating drums, and with a small piece of cannon, wishing by this means to show that we consider them friends.

ART. 4th. As soon as these articles shall be signed by both parties, they shall take down the English flag.

ART. 5th. Tomorrow at daybreak a detachment of French shall lead forth the garrison and take possession of the aforesaid fort.

ART. 6th. Since the English have scarcely any horses or oxen left, they shall be allowed to hide their property, in order that they may return to seek for it after they shall have recovered their horses; for this purpose they shall be permitted to leave such number of troops as guards as they may think proper, *under this condition, that they give their word of honor that they will work on no establishment either in the surrounding country or beyond the Highlands during one year beginning from this day.*

ART. 7th. Since the English have in their power an officer and two cadets, and, in general, all the prisoners whom they took *when they murdered Lord Jumonville*, they now promise to send them, with an escort to Fort Duquesne, situated on Belle River; and to secure the safe performance of this treaty article, *as well as of the treaty*, Messrs. Jacob van Braam and Robert Stobo, both Captains, shall be delivered to us as hostages until the arrival of our French and Canadians herein before mentioned.

We on our part declare that we shall give an escort to send back in safety the two officers who promise us our French in two months and a half at the latest.

Copied on one of the posts of our block-house the same day and year as before.

(Signed.) MESSRS. JAMES MACKAYE, GO.

GO. WASHINGTON

COULON VILLIER

The parts printed in italics were those misrepresented by van Braam. The words "*pendent une annee a compter de ce jour*" are not found in the articles printed by the French government, as though it repudiated Villier's intimation that the English should ever return. Yet within a year—lacking nine days—an English army, eight times as great as the one now capitulating, marched across this battle-field. The nice courtesy shown by the young Colonel in allowing Captain Mackaye's name to take precedence over his own, is significant, as Mackaye, a King's officer, had never considered himself amenable to Washington's orders, and his troops had steadily refused to bear the brunt of the campaign—working on the road or transporting guns and baggage. In the trenches, however, the Carolinians did their duty.

And so, on the morning of July 4th, the red-uniformed Virginians and the King's troops marched out from Fort Necessity between the files of French, with all the honors of war and *tambour battant*. Much baggage had to be destroyed to save it from the Indians whom the French could not restrain. Such was the condition of the men—the wounded being carried on stretchers—that only three miles could be made on the homeward march the first day. However glorious later July Fourths may have seemed to Washington, memories of this distress and gloom and humiliation served to temper his transports. The report of the officers of the Virginia regiment made at Will's Creek, where they arrived July 9th, shows thirteen killed, fifty-three wounded, thirteen left lame on the road, twenty-one sick, and one hundred sixty-five fit for duty.

On August 30th, the Virginian House of Burgesses passed a vote of thanks to "Colonel George Washington, Captain Mackaye of his Majesty's Independent Company, and the officers under his command," for their "gallant and brave Behavior in Defence of their Country." The sting of defeat was softened by a public realization of the odds of the contest and the failure of Dinwiddie to forward reinforcements and supplies.

But the young hero was deeply chagrined at his being duped to recognize Jumonville's death as an

assassination. Captain van Braam, being held in disrepute for what was probably nothing more culpable than carelessness, was not named in the vote of thanks tendered Washington's officers. But this chagrin was no more cutting than the obstinacy of Dinwiddie in refusing to fulfil the article of the treaty concerning the return of the French prisoners. For this there was little or no valid excuse, and Dinwiddie's action in thus playing fast and loose with Washington's reputation was as galling to the young Colonel as it was heedless of his country's honor and the laws of war.

Washington's first visit to the Ohio had proven French occupation of that great valley. This, his second mission, had proven their power. With this campaign began his military career. "Although as yet a youth," writes Sparks, "with small experience, unskilled in war, and relying on his own resources, he had behaved with the prudence, address, courage, and firmness of a veteran commander. Rigid in discipline, but sharing the hardships and solicitous for the welfare of his soldiers, he had secured their obedience and won their esteem amidst privations, sufferings and perils that have seldom been surpassed."

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### III. FORT NECESSITY AND ITS HERO.

On a plateau surrounded by low ground at the western extremity of classic Great Meadows, Fort Necessity was built, and there may be seen today the remains of its palisades.

The site was not chosen because of its strategic location but because, late in that May day, a century and a half ago, a little army hurrying forward to find any spot where it could defend itself, selected it because of the supply of water afforded by the brooks.

From the hill to the east the young Commander no doubt looked with anxious eyes upon this well watered meadow, and perhaps he decided quickly to make his resistance here. As he neared the spot his hopes rose, for he found that the plateau was surrounded by wet ground and able to be approached only from the southern side. Moreover the plateau contained "natural fortifications," as Washington termed them, possibly gullies torn through it sometime when the brooks were out of banks.

Here Washington quickly ensconced his men. From their trenches, as they looked westward for the French, lay the western extremity of Great Meadows covered with bushes and rank grasses. To their right—the north—the meadow marsh stretched more than a hundred yards to the gently ascending wooded hillside. Behind them lay the eastern sweep of meadows, and to their left, seventy yards distant, the wooded hillside to the south. The high ground on which they lay contained about forty square rods, and was bounded on the north by Great Meadows brook and on the east by a brooklet which descended from the valley between the southern hills.

When, in the days following, Fort Necessity was raised, the palisades, it is said, were made by erecting logs on one end, side by side, and throwing dirt against them from both sides. As there were no trees in the meadow, the logs were brought from the southern hillside over the narrow neck of solid ground to their place. On the north the palisade was made to touch the waters of the brook. Without its embankments on the south and west sides, two trenches were dug parallel with the embankments, to serve as rifle-pits. Bastion gateways, three in number, were made in the western palisade.

The first recorded survey of Fort Necessity was made by Mr. Freeman Lewis, senior author, with Mr. James Veech, of "The Monongahela of Old," in 1816. This survey was first reproduced in Lowdermilk's "History of Cumberland"; it is described by Mr. Veech in "The Monongahela of Old," and has been reproduced, as authoritative, by the authors of "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania" published in 1895 by the State of Pennsylvania. The embankments are described thus by Mr. Veech on the basis of his collaborator's survey: "It (Fort Necessity) was in the form of an obtuse-angled triangle of 105 degrees, having its base or hypotenuse upon the run. The line of the base was about midway, sected or broken, and about two perches of it thrown across the run, connecting with the base by lines of the triangle. One line of the angle was six, the other seven perches; the base line eleven perches long, including the section thrown across the run. The lines embraced in all about fifty square perches of land on (or?) nearly one third of an acre."

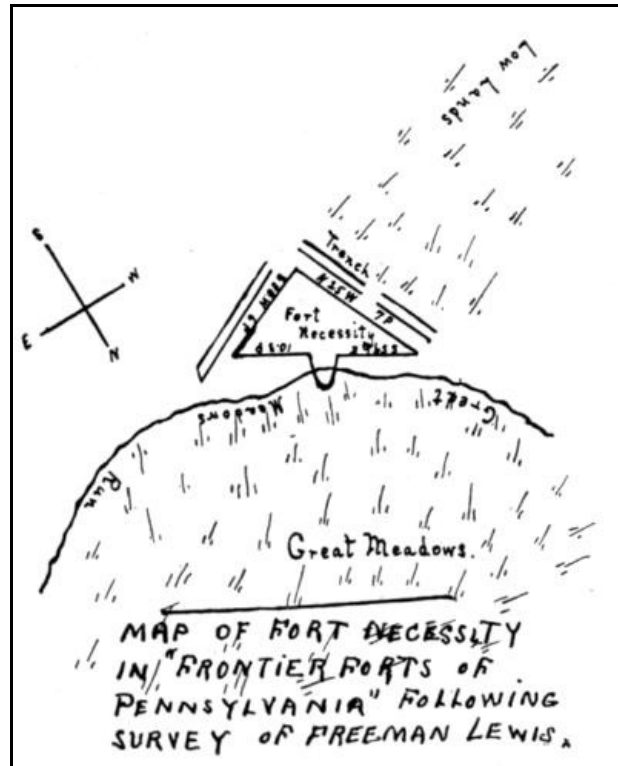
This amusing statement has been seriously quoted by the authorities mentioned, and a map is made according to it and published in the "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania" without a word as to its inconsistencies! How could a triangle, the sides of which measure six, seven and eleven rods, contain fifty square rods or one third of an acre? It could not contain half that amount.

The present writer went to Fort Necessity armed with this two page map of Fort Necessity in the "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania" which he trusted as authoritative. The present owner of the land, Mr. Lewis Fazebaker objected to the map, and it was only in trying to prove its correctness that its inconsistencies were discovered.

The mounds now standing on the ground are drawn on the appended chart "Diagrams of Fort Necessity" as lines C A B E. By a careful survey of them by Mr. Robert McCracken C. E., sides C A and A B are found to be the identical mounds surveyed by Mr. Lewis, the variation in direction being exceedingly slight and easily accounted for by erosion. The direction of Mr. Lewis' sides were N 25 W and S 80 W: their direction by Mr. McCracken's survey are N 22 W and S 80.30 W. This proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the embankments surveyed in 1816 and 1901 are identical.

But the third mound B E runs utterly at variance with Mr. Lewis' figure. By him its direction was 59¼ E;

its present direction is S 76 E. The question then arises; Is this mound the one that Mr. Lewis surveyed? Nothing could be better evidence that it is than the very egregious error Mr. Lewis made concerning the area contained within his triangular embankment. He affirms that the area of Fort Necessity was fifty square rods. Now take the line of B E for the hypotenuse of the triangle and extend it to F where it would meet the projection of side A C. *That triangle contains almost exactly 50 square rods or one-third of an acre!* The natural supposition must be that some one had surveyed the triangle A F B and computed its area correctly as about fifty square rods. The mere recording of this area is sufficient evidence that the triangle A F B had been surveyed in 1816, and this is sufficient proof that mound B E stood just as it stands today and was considered in Mr. Lewis' day as one of the embankments of Fort Necessity.



MAP OF FORT NECESSITY IN "FRONTIER FORTS OF PENNSYLVANIA" FOLLOWING SURVEY OF FREEMAN LEWIS.

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Now, why did Mr. Lewis ignore the embankment B E and the triangle A F B which contained these fifty square rods he gave as the area of Fort Necessity? For the very obvious reason that that triangle crossed the brook and ran far into the marsh beyond. By every account the palisades of Fort Necessity were made to extend on the north to touch the brook, therefore it would be quite ridiculous to suppose the palisades crossed the brook again on the east. Mr. Lewis, prepossessed with the idea that the embankments must have been triangular in shape, drew the line B C as the base of his triangle, bisecting it at M and N, and making the loop M S N touch the brook. This design (triangle A B C) of Fort Necessity is improbable for the following reasons:

1. It has not one half the area Mr. Lewis gives it.
2. It would not include much more than one-half of the high ground of the plateau, which was none too large for a fort.
3. There is no semblance of a mound B C nor any shred of testimony nor any legend of its existence.
4. The mound B E is entirely ignored though there is the best of evidence that it stood in Mr. Lewis' day where it stands today and was considered an embankment of Fort Necessity. Mr. Lewis gives exactly the area of a triangle with it as a part of the base line.
5. Loop M S N would not come near the course of the brook without extending it far beyond Mr. Lewis' estimate of the length of its sides.
6. Its area is only about 5200 square feet which would make Fort Necessity unconscionably small in face of the fact that more high ground was available.

In 1759 Colonel Burd visited the site of Fort Necessity. This was only five years after it was built. He described its remains as circular in shape. If it was originally a triangle it is improbable that it could have appeared round five years later. If, however, it was originally an irregular square it is not improbable that the rains and frosts of five winters, combined with the demolition of the Fort by the French, would have given the mounds a circular appearance. Was Fort Necessity, then, built in the form of an irregular square? There is the best of evidence that it was.

In 1830—fourteen years after Mr. Lewis' "survey,"—Mr. Jared Sparks, a careful historian and author of the standard work on Washington, visited Fort Necessity. According to him its remains occupied "an irregular square, the dimensions of which were about one hundred feet on each side." Mr. Sparks drew a map of the embankments which is incorporated in his "Writings of Washington." This drawing has not been reproduced in any later work, the authors of both "History of Cumberland" and "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania" preferring to reproduce Mr. Lewis' inconsistent survey and speculation rather than the drawing of what Mr.

Sparks, himself, saw.

It is plain that Mr. Sparks found the embankment B E running in the direction it does today and not at all in direction of the line B C as Mr. Lewis drew it. By giving the approximate length of the sides as one hundred feet, Mr. Sparks gives about the exact length of the line B E in whatever direction it is extended to the brook. The fact that such an exact scholar as Mr. Sparks does not mention a sign or tradition of an embankment at B C, only fourteen years after Mr. Lewis "surveyed" it, is evidence that it never existed which cannot come far from convicting the latter of a positive intention to speculate.

Mr. Sparks gives us four sides for Fort Necessity. Three of these have been described as C A, A B and the broken line B E D. Is there any evidence of the fourth side such as indicated by the line C D? There is.

When Mr. Fazenbaker first questioned the accuracy of the map of Fort Necessity in "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania," he believed the fort was a four sided construction and pointed to a small mound, indicated at O, as the remains of the fourth embankment. The mound would not be noticed in a hasty view of the field but, on examination proves to be an artificial, not a natural, mound. It is in lower ground and nearer the old course of the brook than the remains of Fort Necessity. A mound here would suffer most when the brook was out of banks, which would account for its disappearance.



**Western embankment of Fort Necessity marked with a line of white stones.**

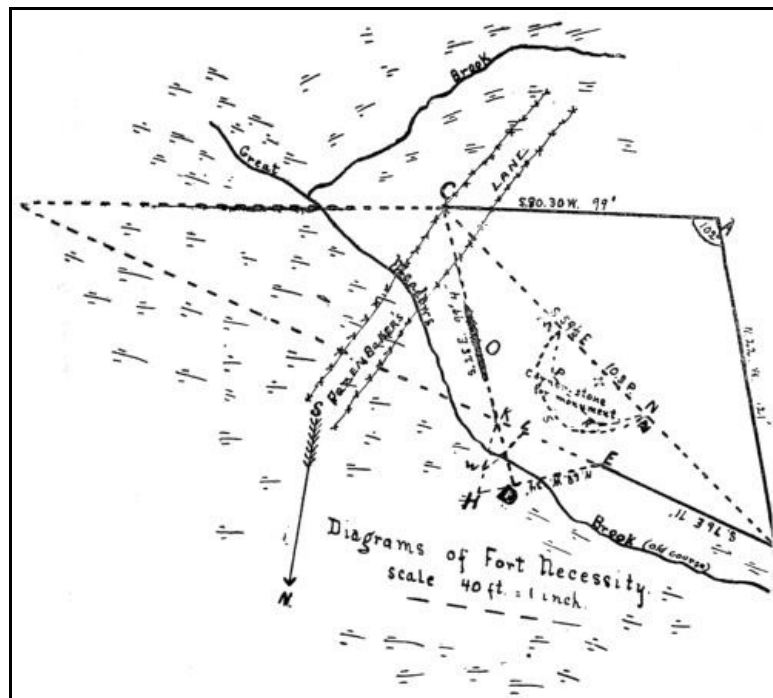


**Remains of the Southern embankment of Fort Necessity.  
The low ground covered with rank grass, on the right, marks the rifle-pit.  
In the distance is the Eastern sweep of Great Meadows.**

Excavations in the other mounds had been unsuccessful; nothing had been discovered of the palisades, though every mound gave certain proof of having been artificially made. But excavations at mound O gave a different result. At about four and one-half feet below the surface of the ground, at the water line, a considerable amount of bark was found, fresh and red as new bark. It was water-soaked and the strings lay parallel with the mound above and were not found at a greater distance than two feet from its center. It was the rough bark of a tree's trunk—not the skin bark such as grows on roots. Large flakes, the size of a man's

hand, could be removed from it. At a distance of ten feet away a second trench was sunk, in line with the mound but quite beyond its northwestern extremity. Bark was found here entirely similar in color, position, and condition. There is little doubt that the bark came from the logs of the palisades of Fort Necessity, though nothing is to be gained by exaggerating the possibility. Bark, here in the low ground, would last indefinitely, and water was reached under this mound sooner than at any other point. No wood was found. It is probable that the French threw down the palisades, but bark would naturally have been left in the ground. If wood had been left it would not withstand decay so long as bark. Competent judges declare the bark to be that of oak. An authority of great reputation, expresses the opinion that the bark found was probably from the logs of the palisades erected in 1754.

If anything is needed to prove that this slight mound O was an embankment of Fort Necessity, it is to be found in the result of Mr. McCracken's survey. The mound lies in *exact line* with the eastern extremity of embankment C A, the point C, being located seven rods from the obtuse angle A, in line with the mound C A, which is broken by Mr. Fazenbaker's lane. Also, the distance from C to D (in line with the mound O) measures ninety-nine feet and four inches,—almost exactly Mr. Sparks' estimate of one hundred feet. Thus Fort Necessity was in the shape of the figure represented by lines K C, C A, A B, and B E, and the projection of the palisades to the brook is represented by E D K, E H K, or L W K, (line B E being prolonged to L.) Mr. Sparks' drawing of the fort is thus proven approximately correct, although Mr. Veech boldly asserts that it is "inaccurate," (the quotation being copied in the "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania") and despite the fact that two volumes treating of the fort, "History of Cumberland," and "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania," refuse to give Mr. Sparks' map a place in their pages. It is of little practical moment what the form of the fort may have been, but it is all out of order that a palpably false description should be given by those who should be authorities, in preference to Mr. Sparks' description which is easily proven to be approximately correct.



**Lewis' plan of Fort Necessity: A, B, N, S, M, C.**

**Enlarged triangle (containing "1/3 of an acre"): A, B, F.**

**Sparks plan: A, B, L, W, K, C.**

**Remains of Eastern embankment: O.**

**Variation of Lewis' triangle (given in "Fort Cumberland"): A, B, N, R, P, M, C.**

**Actual shape of Fort Necessity according to last survey: K, C, A, B, E;  
the projection to the water may have been E, D, K, or E, H, K, or L, W, K.**

**This detail is immaterial.**

**The irregular square A, B, K, C, gives the general outline of the fortifications, CA, (save where the lane crosses it) AB, BE and O being still visible in 1901.**

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Relics from Fort Necessity are rare and valuable, for the reason that no other action save the one Battle of Fort Necessity ever took place here. The barrel of an old flint-lock musket, a few grape shot, a bullet mould and ladle, leaden and iron musket balls, comprise the few silent memorials of the first battle in which Saxon blood was shed west of the Allegheny Mountains. The swivels, it is said, were taken to Kentucky to do brave duty there in redeeming the "dark and bloody ground" to civilization.

But, after all—and more precious than all—our study of this historic spot in the Alleghenies and the memorials left near it becomes, soon, a study of its hero, that young Virginian Colonel. Even the battles fought hereabouts seem to have been of little real consequence, for New France fell, never to rise, with the capture of Quebec—"amid the proudest monuments of its own glory and on the very spot of its origin!"

And it is not of little consequence that there was here a brave training school for the future heroes of the Revolution. For in what did Colonel Washington need training more than in the art of manoeuvring a handful of ill-equipped, discouraged men? What lesson did that youth need more than the lesson that Right becomes Might in God's own good time? And here in these Allegheny glades we catch the most precious pictures of the lithe, keen-eyed, sober lad, who, taking his lessons of truth and uprightness from his widowed mother's knee,

his strength hardened by the power of the mountain rivers, his heart, now thrilled by the songs of the mountain birds, now tempered by a St. Pierre's hauteur, a Braddock's blind insolence, or the prejudiced over-rulings of a Forbes, became the hero of Valley Forge and Yorktown, the immeasurable superior of Piere, Braddock, Forbes, Kaunitz or Newcastle.

For consider the record of that older Washington of 1775 beneath the Cambridge elm. He had capitulated at Fort Necessity, with the first army he ever commanded, after the first battle he ever fought! He had marched with Braddock's ill-starred army, in which he had no official position whatever until defeat and rout threw upon his shoulders a large share of the responsibility of saving the army from complete annihilation. He had marched with Forbes, only to write his Governor begging to be allowed to go to England to tell the King the sad story of the campaign—of "how grossly his glory and interest and the public money, have been prostituted." For the past sixteen years he had led a quiet life on his farms.

Why, now, in 1775, should he have had the unstinted confidence of all men, in the hour of his country's great crisis? Why should his journey from Mt. Vernon to Cambridge have been a triumphal march? Professor McMaster asserts that the General and the President are known to us, "but George Washington is an unknown." How untrue this was in 1775! How the nation believed it knew the man! How much of reputation he had gained while those by his side lost all of theirs! What a hero—of many defeats! What a man to fight England to a standstill, after many a wary, difficult retreat and dearly fought battle-field! Aye—but he had been to school with Gates and Mercer, Lewis and Stephen and Gladwin, on that swath of a road in the Alleghenies which led to Fort Necessity.

Half a century ago multitudes were pointed to the man Washington in the superb oratory of Edward Everett. But how, if not by quoting that memorable extract from the letter of the *youthful surveyor*, who boasted of earning an honest dubloon a day? Thus, the orator declared, he presented to his audience "not an ideal hero, wrapped in cloudy generalities and a mist of vague panegyric, but the real, identical man." And, again, did he not quote that pathetic letter from the *youth* Washington to Governor Dinwiddie from the bleeding Virginia border, after Braddock's defeat, that his hearers might "see it all—see the whole man."? Was Edward Everett mistaken, are these letters not extant today, or are they unread? Surely the latter supposition must be the true one if the man Washington is being forgotten.

A candid review of the more popular school histories will bring out the fact that the man Washington is almost forgotten, in so far as the General and statesman do not portray him. In one of the best known school histories there seems to be but one line, of five words, which describes the character of Washington. Could we not forego, for once, what the Indian chieftain said of his bearing a charmed life at Braddock's defeat, to make room for one little reason why Washington was "completer in nature" and of "a nobler human type" than any and all of the heroes of romance?

Mr. Otis Kendall Stuart has written a most interesting account of "The Popular Opinion of Washington" as ascertained by inquiry among persons of all ages, occupations and conditions. He found that Washington was held to be a "broad," "brave," "thinking," "practical," man; an aristocrat, so far as the dignity of his position demanded, but willing to "work with his hands" and with a credit that was "A 1!" Also, "when he did a thing, he did it," and, if to the question, "Was he a great general and statesman?" there was some hesitation, to the question, "Was he a great man?" the answer was an unhesitating, "Yes."

One may hold that such opinions as these have been gained from our school histories, but I think they are not so much from the histories, as from the popular legends of Washington, which, true and false, will never be forgotten by the common people, until they cease to represent,—not the patient, brave and wary general, or the calm, far-seeing statesman, but the man—"simple, stainless, and robust character," as President Eliot has so beautifully described it, "which served with dazzling success the precious cause of human progress through liberty, and so stands, like the sunlit peak of Matterhorn, unmatched in all the world."

The real essence of that "simple, stainless, and robust character" is nowhere so clearly seen as in these Allegheny vales where Colonel Washington first touched hands with fortune. Here truly, we may still "see it all—see the whole man."

## THE END.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK COLONEL WASHINGTON \*\*\*

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