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The Journal of Major George Washington (1754)

George Washington

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Washington, George and Royster, Paul , editor, "The Journal of Major George Washington (1754)" (1754). *Electronic Texts in American Studies*. Paper 33.
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George Washington
The Journal of Major George Washington (1754)

In October of 1753, George Washington, a 21-year-old major in the Virginia militia, volunteered to carry a letter from the governor of Virginia to the French commander of the forts recently built on the headwaters of the Ohio River in northwestern Pennsylvania. The French had recently expanded their military operations from the Great Lakes into the Ohio country, and had spent the summer of 1753 building forts and roads along the Allegheny River, with the design of linking their trade routes and sphere of influence down the Ohio to the Mississippi. Virginia governor Robert Dinwiddie believed them to be in violation of treaties and claims that made those territories part of Virginia and Pennsylvania, as granted by the British Crown, and his letter to the French commander instructed him to cease, desist, and depart from those regions.

Washington left Williamsburg, Virginia on October 31, 1753, and completed the round trip of more than 1,000 miles by horse, foot, canoe, and raft in about ten weeks. He was accompanied by Christopher Gist, an explorer and surveyor employed by the Ohio Company, by Jacob Van Braam, a French Interpreter, four Indian traders and baggage-men, and various Indian delegations and guards, including Tanacharison, known as the "Half-King." Washington accomplished far more than the mere delivery of a letter: he practiced diplomacy to keep the Native leaders allied to the English cause; he interviewed French deserters and reported on the extent of French military posts between New Orleans and the Great Lakes; he reconnoitered the Forks of the Ohio with an eye to the proper site for building a fort; and he inspected and reported on the construction of the new French forts and made estimates of their strength and preparations for the following year's expeditions.

When Washington arrived back in Williamsburg on January 16, 1754, Governor Dinwiddie immediately asked him to prepare a written report for the House of Burgesses. Dinwiddie then had this report printed, and it became very popular reading. The Virginia legislature was so pleased with his mission and his report that they voted him a £50 reward. *The Journal of Major George Washington* was reprinted in various colonial newspapers as far away as Boston, and a British edition was issued in London later that same year, for which Washington sent materials for the preparation of a map.

This online electronic text edition of the *Journal* is based on the first American edition published at Williamsburg in February 1754. It includes some annotations for the nonspecialist reader and a note on the text discussing the sources and the few emendations made.

It is accompanied by 2 maps, attached as supplementary PDF files: one is a copy of the map that appeared with the London edition, showing the whole region from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, based on materials furnished by Washington; the other is a detail derived from the map accompanying Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787), showing the frontier region through which Washington travelled, between Cumberland (Md.) and Lake Erie. Of the two, the Jefferson map shows the geography with somewhat greater accuracy.

THE

JOURNAL

OF

Major *George Washington*,

SENT BY THE

Hon. *ROBERT DINWIDDIE*, Esq;
His Majesty's Lieutenant-Governor, and
Commander in Chief of *VIRGINIA*,

TO THE

COMMANDANT

OF THE

FRENCH FORCES

ON

OHIO.

To which are added, the

GOVERNOR's LETTER,
And a TRANSLATION of the
French OFFICER's ANSWER.

WILLIAMSBURG:
Printed by WILLIAM HUNTER. 1754.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS it was thought adviseable by his Honour the Governor to have the following Account of my Proceedings to and from the French *on* Ohio, *committed to Print; I think I can do no less than apologize, in some Measure, for the numberless Imperfections of it.*

There intervened but one Day between my Arrival in Williamsburg, *and the Time for the Council's Meeting, for me to prepare and transcribe, from the rough Minutes I had taken in my Travels, this Journal; the writing of which only was sufficient to employ me closely the whole Time, consequently admitted of no Leisure to consult of a new and proper Form to offer it in, or to correct or amend the Diction of the old; neither was I apprised, or did in the least conceive, when I wrote this for his Honour's Perusal, that it ever would be published, or even have more than a cursory Reading; till I was informed, at the Meeting of the present General Assembly, that it was already in the Press.*

There is nothing can recommend it to the Public, but this. Those Things which came under the Notice of my own Observation, I have been explicit and just in a Recital of: ——— Those which I have gathered from Report, I have been particularly cautious not to augment, but collected the Opinions of the several Intelligencers, and selected from the whole, the most probable and consistent Account.

G. WASHINGTON.

THE

JOURNAL, *&c.*

Wednesday, October 31*st,* 1753,

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; the next, I arrived at *Fredericksburg,* and engaged Mr. *Jacob Vanbraam,* to be my *French* Interpreter; and proceeded with him to *Alexandria,* where we provided Necessaries; from thence we went to *Winchester,* and got Baggage, Horses, *&c.* and from thence we pursued the new Road to *Wills*-Creek, where we arrived the 14th of *November.*

Here I engaged Mr. *Gist* to pilot us out, and also hired four others as Servitors, *Barnaby Currin,* and *John MacQuire,* Indian Traders, *Henry Steward,* and *William Jenkins,* and in Company with those Persons, left the Inhabitants the Day following.

The excessive Rains and vast Quantity of Snow that had fallen, prevented our reaching Mr. *Frazier*'s an Indian Trader, at the Mouth of *Turtle*-Creek, on *Monongahela,* till *Thursday* the 22d. We were informed here, that Expresses were sent a

few Days ago to the Traders down the River, to acquaint them with the *French* General's Death, and the Return of the major Part of the *French* Army into Winter Quarters.

The Waters were quite impassable, without swimming our Horses; which obliged us to get the Loan of a Canoe from *Frazier,* and to send *Barnaby Currin,* and *Henry Steward,* down *Monongahela,* with our Baggage, to meet us at the Forks of *Ohio,* about 10 Miles, to cross *Aligany.*

As I got down before the Canoe, I spent some Time in viewing the Rivers, and the Land in the Fork, which I think extremely well situated for a Fort, as it has the absolut Command of both Rivers. The Land at the Point is 20 or 25 Feet above the common Surface of the Water, and a considerable Bottom of flat, well-timbered Land all around it, very convenient for Building: The Rivers are each a Quarter of a Mile, or more, across, and run here very near at right Angles: *Aligany* bearing N. E. and *Monongahela* S. E. the former of these two is a very rapid and swift running Water, the other deep and still, without any perceptible Fall.

About two Miles from this, on the South East Side of the River, at the Place where the *Ohio* Company intended to erect a Fort, lives *Shingiss,* king of the *Delawares*; we call'd upon him, to invite him to Council at the *Loggs*-Town.

As I had taken a good deal of Notice Yesterday of the Situation at the *Forks,* my Curiosity led me to examine this more particularly, and I think it greatly inferior, either for Defence or Advantages; especially the latter; for a Fort at the *Forks* would be equally well situated on *Ohio,* and have the entire Command of *Monongahela,* which runs up to our Settlements and is extremely well design'd for Water Carriage, as it is of a deep still Nature; besides, a Fort at the *Fork* might be built at a much less Expence, than at the other Place.———

Nature has well contrived the lower Place, for Water Defence; but the Hill whereon it must stand being about a Quarter of a Mile in Length, and then descending gradually on the Land Side, will render it difficult and very expensive, making a sufficient Fortification there.—The whole Flat upon the Hill must be taken in, or the Side next the Descent made extremely high; or else the Hill cut away: Otherwise, the Enemy may raise Batteries within that Distance without being expos'd to a single Shot from the Fort.

Shingiss attended us to the *Loggs*-Town, where we arrived between Sun-setting and Dark, the 25th Day after I left *Williamsburg:* We travelled over some extreme good, and bad Land, to get to this Place. —

As soon as I came into Town, I went to *Monacatoocha* (as the Half-King was out at his hunting-Cabbin on little *Beaver* Creek, about 15 Miles off) and inform'd him by *John Davison* my *Indian* Interpreter, that I was sent a Messenger to the *French* General; and was ordered to call upon the Sachems of the *Six Nations,* to acquaint them with it.—I gave him a String of Wampum, and a Twist of Tobacco, and desired him to send for the Half-King; which he promised to do by a Runner in the Morning, and for other Sachems.—I invited him and the other great Men present to my Tent, where they stay'd about an Hour and return'd.

According to the best Observations I could make, Mr. *Gist*'s new Settlement (which we pass'd by) bears about W. N. W. 70 Miles from *Wills*-Creek; *Shanapins,* or the Forks N. by W. or N. N. W. about 50 Miles from that; and from thence to the *Loggs*-Town, the Course is nearly West about 18 or 20 Miles; so that the whole Distance, as we went and computed it, is at least 135 or 140 Miles from our back Inhabitants.

25th, Came to Town four of ten *Frenchmen* that deserted from a Company at the *Cuscuscas,* which lies at the Mouth of this River; I got the following Account from them. They were sent from *New Orleans* with 100 Men, and 8 Canoe Loads of Provisions to this Place; where they expected to have met the

same Number of Men, from the Forts this Side Lake *Erie,* to convey them and the Stores up, who were not arrived when they ran off.

I enquired into the Situation of the *French,* on the *Missisippi,* their Number, and what Forts they had built: They inform'd me, That there were four small Forts between *New-Orleans* and the *Black-Islands,* garrison'd with about 30 or 40 Men, and a few small Pieces, in each: That at *New-Orleans,* which is near the Mouth of the *Missisippi,* there are 35 Companies, of 40 Men each, with a pretty strong Fort mounting 8 Carriage Guns; and at the *Black-Islands* there are several Companies, and a Fort with 6 Guns. The *Black-Islands* are about 130 Leagues above the Mouth of the *Ohio,* which is about 350 above *New-Orleans:* They also acquainted me, that there was a small pallisado'd Fort on the *Ohio,* at the Mouth of the *Obaish* about 60 Leagues from the *Missisippi*: The *Obaish* heads near the West End of Lake *Erie,* and affords the Communication between the *French* on *Missisippi* and those on the Lakes. These Deserters came up from the lower *Shanoah* Town with one *Brown,* an *Indian* Trader, and were going to *Philadelphia.*

About 3 o'Clock this Evening the Half-King came to Town; I went up and invited him and *Davison,* privately, to my Tent, and desir'd him to relate some of the Particulars of his Journey to the *French* Commandant, and Reception there; and to give me an Account of the Ways and Distance. He told me, that the nearest and levellest Way was now impassable, by Reason of many large miry Savannas; that we must be obliged to go by *Venango,* and should not get to the near Fort under 5 or 6 Night's Sleep, good Travelling. When he went to the Fort, he said he was received in a very stern Manner by the late Commander; Who ask'd him very abruptly, what he had come about, and to declare his Business, which he said he did in the following Speech.

Fathers, I am come to tell you your own Speeches; what your own Mouths have declared. Fathers, You, in former Days, set a Silver Bason before us, wherein there was the Leg of a Beaver, and desir'd of all Nations to come and eat of it; to eat in Peace and Plenty, and not to be churlish to one another; and that if any such Person should be found to be a Disturber, I here lay down by the Edge of the Dish a Rod, which you must scourge them with; and if I your Father, should get foolish, in my old Days, I desire you may use it upon me as well as others.

Now Fathers, it is you that are the Disturbers in this Land, by coming and building your Towns, and taking it away unknown to us, and by Force.

Fathers, We kindled a Fire a long Time ago, at a Place called Montreal, *where we desired you to stay, and not to come and intrude upon our Land. I now desire you may dispatch to that Place; for be it known to you, Fathers, that this is our Land, and not yours.*

Fathers, I desire you may hear me in Civilness; if not, we must handle that Rod which was laid down for the Use of the obstreperous. If you had come in a peaceable Manner, like our Brothers the English, *we should not have been against your trading with us, as they do; but to come, Fathers, and build great Houses upon our Land, and to take it by Force, is what we cannot submit to.*

Fathers, Both you and the English *are white, we live in a Country between; therefore the Land belongs to neither one nor t'other: But the Great Being above allow'd it to be a Place of Residence for us; so Fathers, I desire you to withdraw, as I have done our Brothers the* English; *for I will keep you at Arms length: I lay this down as a Trial for both, to see which will have the greatest Regard to it, and that Side we will stand by, and make equal Sharers with us. Our Brothers the* English *have heard this, and I come now to tell it to you, for I am not afraid to discharge you off this Land.*

This he said was the Substance of what he said to the General, who made this Reply.

Now my Child, I have heard your Speech, you spoke first, but it is my Time to speak now. Where is my Wampum that you took away, with the Marks of Towns in it? This Wampum I do not know, which you have discharged me off the Land with; but you need not put yourself to the Trouble of speaking, for I will not hear you: I am not afraid of Flies, or Musquitos, for Indians *are such as those; I tell you, down that River I will go, and will build upon it, according to my Command: If the River was block'd up, I have Forces sufficient to burst it open, and tread under my Feet all that stand in Opposition, together with their Alliances; for my Force is as the Sand upon the Sea Shore: Therefore, here is your Wampum, I fling it at you. Child, you talk foolish; 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 that 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.*

The Half-King told me he enquired of the General after two *Englishmen* that were made Prisoners, and received this Answer.

Child, You think it is a very great Hardship that I made Prisoners of those two People at Venango, *don't you concern yourself with it, we took and carried them to* Canada, *to get Intelligence of what the* English *were doing in* Virginia.

He informed me that they had built two Forts, one on Lake *Erie,* and another on *French*-Creek, near a small Lake about

15 Miles asunder, and a large Waggon Road between; they are both built after the same Model, but different in the Size; that on the Lake the largest; he gave me a Plan of them, of his own drawing.

The *Indians* enquired very particularly after their Brothers in *Carolina* Goal.

They also asked what sort of a Boy it was that was taken from the *South*-Branch; for they had, by some *Indians,* heard that a Party of *French Indians* had carried a white Boy by the C*uscusca* Town, towards the Lakes.

26*th.* We met in Council at the *Long-House,* about 9 o'Clock, where I spoke to them as follows,

Brothers, I have called you together in Council, by Order of your Brother the Governor of Virginia, *to acquaint you that I am sent, with all possible Dispatch, to visit, and deliver a Letter to the* French *Commandant, of very great Importance to your Brothers the* English; *and I dare say, to you their Friends and Allies.*

I was desired, Brothers, by your Brother the Governor, to call upon you, the Sachems of the Nations, to inform you of it, and to ask your Advice and Assistance to proceed the nearest and best Road to the French. *You see, Brothers, I have got thus far on my Journey.*

His Honour likewise desired me to apply to you for some of your young Men, to conduct and provide Provisions for us on our Way, and be a Safeguard against those French Indians *who have taken up the Hatchet against us. I have spoke this particularly to you, Brothers, because his Honour our Governor treats you as good Friends and Allies, and holds you in great Esteem. To confirm what I have said, I give you this String of Wampum.*

After they had considered some Time on the above, the Half-King got up and spoke.

Now, my Brothers, in Regard to what my Brother the Governor has desired of me, I return you this Answer.

I rely upon you as a Brother ought to do, as you say we are Brothers and one People: We shall put Heart in Hand, and speak to our Fathers the French *concerning the Speech they made to me, and you may depend that we will endeavour to be your Guard.*

Brother, as you have asked my Advice, I hope you will be ruled by it, and stay till I can provide a Company to go with you: The French *Speech-Belt is not here, I have it to go for to my hunting Cabbin; likewise the People which I have ordered in, are not yet come, nor cannot till the third Night from this, till which Time, Brother, I must beg you to stay.*

I intend to send a Guard of Mingo's, Shannoahs, *and* Delawares, *that our Brothers may see the Love and Loyalty we bear them.*

As I had Orders to make all possible Dispatch, and waiting here was very contrary to my Inclination, I thanked him in the most suitable Manner I could, and told him that my Business required the greatest Expedition, and would not admit of that Delay: He was not well pleased that I should offer to go before the Time he had appointed, and told me that he could not consent to our going without a Guard, for Fear some Accident should befal us, and draw a Reflection upon him; besides, says he, this is a Matter of no small Moment, and must not be entered into without due Consideration; for now I intend to deliver up the *French*-Speech-Belt, and make the *Shanoahs* and *Delawares* do the same; and accordingly he gave Orders to King *Shingiss,* who was present, to attend on *Wednesday* Night with the Wampum, and two Men of their Nation to be in Readiness to set out with us next Morning. As I found it was impossible to get off without affronting them in the most egregious Manner, I consented to stay.

I gave them back a String of Wampum that I met with at Mr. *Frazier*'s, which they had sent with a Speech to his Honour the Governor, to inform him, that three Nations *of French Indians, viz. Chippoways, Ottoways,* and *Orundacks,* had taken up the Hatchet against the *English,* and desired them to repeat it over again, which they postponed doing till they met in full Council with the *Shannoahs* and *Delaware* Chiefs.

27*th.* Runners were dispatched very early for the *Shanoah* Chiefs, the Half-King set out himself to fetch the *French*-Speech-Belt from his Hunting Cabbin.

28*th.* He returned this Evening, and came with *Monocatoocha,* and two other Sachems to my Tent; and begged, (as they had complied with his Honour the Governor's Request, in providing Men, *&c.*) to know on what Business we were going to the *French?* this was a Question I all along expected, and had provided as satisfactory Answers to, as I could, and which allayed their Curiosity a little.

Monocatoocha informed me, that an *Indian* from *Venango* brought News, a few Days ago, that the *French* had called all the *Mingos, Delawares,* &c. together at that Place, and told them that they intended to have been down the River this Fall, but the Waters were growing cold, and the Winter advancing, which obliged them to go into Quarters: But they might assuredly expect them in the Spring, with a far greater Number; and desired that they might be quite passive, and not to intermeddle, unless they had a Mind to draw all their Force upon them, for that they expected to fight the *English* three Years, (as they supposed there would be some Attempts made to stop them) in which Time they should conquer, but if they should prove equally strong, that they and the *English,* would join to cut them all off, and divide the Land between them; that tho' they had lost their General, and some few of their Soldiers, yet there were Men enough to reinforce them, and make them Masters of the *Ohio.*

This Speech, he said, was delivered to them by one Captain *Joncaire* their Interpreter in Chief, living at *Venango,* and a Man of Note in the Army.

29*th.* The Half-King and *Monocatoocha,* came very early, and begged me to stay one Day more, for notwithstanding they had used all the Diligence in their Power, the *Shanoah* Chiefs had not brought the Wampum they ordered, but would certainly be in To-night; if not, they would delay me no longer, but would send it after us as soon as they arrived: When I found them so pressing in their Request, and knew that returning of Wampum was the abolishing of Agreements; and giving this up, was shaking of all Dependence upon the *French,* I consented to stay, as I believed an Offence offered at this Crisis, might be attended with greater ill Consequence, than another Day's Delay. They also informed me that *Shingiss* could not get in his Men, and was prevented from coming himself by his Wife's Sickness, (I believe, by Fear of the *French*) but that the Wampum of that Nation was lodged with C*ustaloga* one of their Chiefs at *Venango.*

In the Evening late they came again and acquainted me that the *Shannoahs* were not yet come, but it should not retard the Prosecution of our Journey. He delivered in my Hearing, the Speeches that were to be made to the *French,* by *Jeskakake,* one of their old Chiefs, which was giving up the Belt the late Commandant had asked for, and repeating near the same Speech he himself had done before.

He also delivered a String of Wampum to this Chief, which was sent by King *Shingiss,* to be given to C*ustaloga,* with Orders to repair to the *French,* and deliver up the Wampum.

He likewise gave a very large String of black and white Wampum, which was to be sent up immediately to the Six Nations, if the *French* refused to quit the Land at this Warning; which was the third and last Time, and was the Right of this *Jeskakake* to deliver.

30*th.* Last Night the great Men assembled to their Council-House, to consult further about this Journey, and who were to go; the Result of which was, that only three of their Chiefs, with one of their best Hunters, should be our Convoy: The Reason which they gave for not sending more, after what had been proposed at Council the 26th, was, that a greater Number might give the *French* Suspicions of some bad Design, and cause them to be treated rudely: But I rather think they could not get their Hunters in.

We set out about 9 o'Clock with the Half-King, *Jeskakake, White Thunder,* and the Hunter, and travelled on the Road to *Venango,* where we arrived the 4th of *December,* without any Thing remarkable happening but a continued Series of bad Weather.

This is an old *Indian* Town, situated at the Mouth of *French* Creek on *Ohio,* and lies near N. about 60 Miles from the *Loggs*-Town, but more than 70 the Way we were obliged to go.

We found the *French* Colours hoisted at a House which they drove Mr. *John Frazier,* an *English* Subject, from; I immediately repaired to it, to know where the Commander resided: There were three Officers, one of whom, Capt. *Joncaire,* inform'd me, that he had the Command of the *Ohio,* but that there was a General Officer at the near Fort, which he advised me to for an Answer. He invited us to sup with them, and treated us with the greatest Complaisance.

The Wine, as they dosed themselves pretty plentifully with it, soon banished the Restraint which at first appear'd in their Conversation, and gave a License to their Tongues to reveal their Sentiments more freely.

They told me, That it was their absolute Design to take Possession of the *Ohio,* and by G— they would do it; for that 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. They pretend to have an

undoubted Right to the River, from a Discovery made by one *La Sol* 60 Years ago; and the Rise of this Expedition is, to prevent our settling on the River or Waters of it, as they have heard of some Families moving out in Order thereto. From the best Intelligence I could get, there have been 1500 Men on this Side *Ontario* Lake, but upon the Death of the General all were recalled to about 6 or 700, who were left to garrison four Forts, 150 or there abouts in each, the first of which is on *French* Creek, near a small Lake, about 60 Miles from *Venango,* near N. N. W. the next lies on Lake *Erie,* where the greatest Part of their Stores are kept, about 15 Miles from the other; from that it is 120 Miles to the carrying Place, at the Falls of Lake *Erie,* where there is a small Fort which they lodge their Goods at, in bringing them from *Montreal,* the Place that all their Stores come from: The next Fort lies about 20 Miles from this, on *Ontario* Lake; between this Fort and *Montreal* there are three others, the first of which is near opposite to the *English* Fort *Oswego.* From the Fort on Lake *Erie* to *Montreal* is about 600 Miles, which they say requires no more, if good Weather, than four Weeks Voyage, if they go in Barks or large Vessels, that they can cross the Lake; but if they come in Canoes it will require 5 or 6 Weeks, for they are oblig'd to keep under the Shore.

5th, Rain'd excessively all Day, which prevented our Travelling. Capt. *Joncaire* sent for the Half-King, as he had but just heard that he came with me: He affected to be much concern'd that I did not make free to bring them in before; I excused it in the best Manner I was capable; and told him I did not think their Company agreeable, as I had heard him say a good deal in Dispraise of *Indians* in general; but another Motive prevented me from bringing them into his Company; I knew he was Interpreter, and a Person of very great Influence among the *Indians,* and had lately used all possible Means to

draw them over to their Interest; therefore I was desirous of giving no Opportunity that could be avoided.

When they came in, there was great Pleasure express'd at seeing them; he wonder'd how they could be so near without coming to visit him, made several trifling Presents, and applied Liquor so fast, that they were soon render'd incapable of the Business they came about, notwithstanding the Caution that was given.

6th, The Half-King came to my Tent, quite sober, and insisted very much that I should stay and hear what he had to say to the *French;* I fain would have prevented his speaking any Thing, 'til he came to the Commandant; but could not prevail: He told me, that at this Place a Council Fire was kindled, where all their Business with these People was to be transacted, and that the Management of the *Indian* Affairs was left solely to Monsieur *Joncaire.* As I was desirous of knowing the Issue of this, I agreed to stay, but sent our Horses a little Way up *French* Creek, to raft over and encamp; which I knew would make it near Night.

About 10 o'Clock they met in Council; the King spoke much the same as he had before done to the General, and offer'd the *French* Speech-Belt which had before been demanded, with the Marks of four Towns on it, which Monsieur *Joncaire* refused to receive; but desired him to carry it to the Fort to the Commander.

7th, Monsieur *La Force,* Commissary of the *French* Stores, and three other Soldiers came over to accompany us up. We found it extremely difficult getting the *Indians* off To-day, as every Stratagem had been used to prevent their going up with me: I had last Night left John *Davison* (the *Indian* Interpreter that I brought from the *Loggs*-Town with me) strictly charg'd not to be out of their Company, as I could not get them over to my Tent (they having some Business with *Custaloga,* to know

the Reason why he did not deliver up the *French* Belt which he had in Keeping) but was obliged to send Mr. *Gist* over To-day to fetch them, which he did with great Persuasion.

At 11 o'Clock we set out for the Fort; and were prevented from arriving there 'til the 11th by excessive Rains, Snows, and bad Travelling, through many Mires and Swamps, which we were obliged to pass, to avoid crossing the Creek, which was impossible, either by fording or rafting, the Water was so high and rapid.

We passed over much good Land since we left *Venango,* and through several extensive and very rich Meadows; one of which I believe was near four Miles in Length, and considerably wide in some Places.

12*th,* I prepar'd early to wait upon the Commander, and was received and conducted to him by the second Officer in Command; I acquainted him with my Business, and offer'd my Commission and Letter, both of which he desired me to keep 'til the arrival of Monsieur *Riparti,* Captain, at the next Fort, who was sent for and expected every Hour.

This Commander is a Knight of the military Order of St. *Lewis,* and named *Legardeur de St. Piere.* He is an elderly Gentleman, and has much the Air of a Soldier; he was sent over to take the Command, immediately upon the Death of the late General, and arrived here about seven Days before me.

At 2 o'Clock the Gentleman that was sent for arrived, when I offer'd the Letter, *&c.* again; which they receiv'd, and adjourn'd into a private Apartment for the Captain to translate, who understood a little *English;* after he had done it, the Commander desired I would walk in, and bring my Interpreter to peruse and correct it, which I did.

13*th,* The chief Officers retired, to hold a Council of War, which gave me an Opportunity of taking the Dimensions of the Fort, and making what Observations I could.

It is situated on the South, or West Fork of *French* Creek, near the Water, and is almost surrounded by the Creek, and a small Branch of it which forms a Kind of an Island; four Houses compose the Sides; the Bastions are made of Piles driven into the Ground, and about 12 Feet above, and sharp at Top, with Port-Holes cut for Cannon and Loop-Holes for the small Arms to fire through; there are eight 6 lb. Pieces mounted, two in each Bastion, and one Piece of four Pound before the Gate; in the Bastions are a Guard-House, Chapel, Doctor's Lodging, and the Commander's private Store, round which are laid Plat-Forms for the Cannon and Men to stand on: There are several Barracks without the Fort, for the Soldiers Dwelling, covered, some with Bark, and some with Boards, made chiefly of Loggs: There are also several other Houses, such as Stables, Smiths Shop, *&c.*

I could get no certain Account of the Number of Men here; but according to the best Judgment I could form, there are an Hundred exclusive of Officers, of which there are many. I also gave Orders to the People that were with me, to take an exact Account of the Canoes that were haled up to convey their Forces down in the Spring, which they did, and told 50 of Birch Bark, and 170 of Pine, besides many others that were block'd out, in Readiness to make.

14*th,* As the Snow encreased very fast, and our Horses daily became weaker, I sent them off unloaded, under the Care of *Barnaby Currin* and two others, to make all convenient Dispatch to *Venango,* and there wait our Arrival if there was a Prospect of the Rivers freezing, if not, then to continue down to *Shanapin's* Town, at the Forks of the *Ohio,* and there to wait 'til we came to cross *Aligany,* intending myself to go down by Water, as I had the Offer of a Canoe or Two.

As I found many Plots concerted to retard the *Indians* Business, and prevent their returning with me; I endeavour'd all

that lay in my Power to frustrate their Schemes, and hurry them on to execute their intended Design; they accordingly pressed for Admittance this Evening, which at Length was granted them, privately, with the Commander and one or two other Officers: The Half-King told me, that he offer'd the Wampum to the Commander, who evaded taking it, and made many fair Promises of Love and Friendship; said he wanted to live in Peace, and trade amicably with them, as a Proof of which he would send some Goods immediately down to the *Loggs*-Town for them; but I rather think the Design of that is, to bring away all our straggling Traders they meet with, as I privately understood they intended to carry an Officer, *&c.* with them; and what rather confirms this Opinion, I was enquiring of the Commander, by what Authority he had made Prisoners of several of our *English* Subjects; he told me that the Country belong'd to them, that no *Englishman* had a Right to trade upon those Waters; and that he had Orders to make every Person Prisoner that attempted it on the *Ohio,* or the Waters of it.

I enquir'd of Capt. *Riparti* about the Boy that was carried by, as it was done while the Command devolved on him, between the Death of the late General, and the Arrival of the present; he acknowledged, that a Boy had been carried past, and that the *Indians* had two or three white Men's Scalps (I was told by some of the *Indians* at *Venango* Eight) but pretended to have forgot the Name of the Place that the Boy came from, and all the Particulars, though he question'd him for some Hours, as they were carrying him past: I likewise enquired what they had done with *John Trotter* and *James MacClocklan,* two *Pensylvania* Traders, whom they had taken, with all their Goods: They told me, that they had been sent to *Canada,* but were now returned Home.

This Evening I received an Answer to his Honour the Governor's Letter from the Commandant.

15th, The Commandant ordered a plentiful Store of Liquor, Provision, *&c.* to be put on Board our Canoe, and appeared to be extremely complaisant, though he was exerting every Artifice that he could invent to set our own *Indians* at Variance with us, to prevent their going 'til after our Departure: Presents, Rewards, and every Thing that could be suggested by him or his Officers. —— I can't say that ever in my Life I suffer'd so much Anxiety as I did in this Affair; I saw that every Stratagem that the most fruitful Brain could invent, was practised, to win the Half-King to their Interest, and that leaving Him here was giving them the Opportunity they aimed at. —— I went to the Half-King, and press'd him in the strongest Terms to go: He told me the Commandant would not discharge him 'til the Morning. I then went to the Commandant, and desired him to do their Business, and complain'd of ill Treatment; for keeping them, as they were Part of my Company, was detaining me; which he promised not to do, but to forward my Journey as much as he could: He protested he did not keep them, but was ignorant of the Cause of their Stay; though I soon found it out:—He had promised them a Present of Guns, *&c.* if they would wait 'til the Morning.

As I was very much press'd, by the *Indians,* to wait this Day for them, I consented, on a Promise, That nothing should hinder them in the Morning.

16th, The *French* were not slack in their Inventions to keep the Indians this Day also; but as they were obligated, according to Promise, to give the Present, they then endeavoured to try the Power of Liquor, which I doubt not would have prevailed at any other Time than this, but I urged and insisted with the King so closely upon his Word, that he refrained, and set off with us as he had engaged.

We had a tedious and very fatiguing Passage down the Creek, several Times we had like to have been staved against Rocks, and many Times were obliged all Hands to get out and

remain in the Water Half an Hour or more, getting over the Shoals; at one Place the Ice had lodged and made it impassable by Water; therefore we were obliged to carry our Canoe across a Neck of Land, a Quarter of a Mile over. We did not reach *Venango,* till the 22d, where we met with our Horses.

This Creek is extremely crooked, I dare say the Distance between the Fort and *Venango* can't be less than 130 Miles, to follow the Meanders.

23*d.* When I got Things ready to set off, I sent for the Half-King, to know whether he intended to go with us, or by Water, he told me that *White-Thunder* had hurt himself much, and was sick and unable to walk, therefore he was obliged to carry him down in a Canoe: As I found he intended to stay here a Day or two, and knew that Monsieur *Joncaire* would employ every Scheme to set him against the *English* as he had before done; I told him I hoped he would guard against his Flattery, and let no fine Speeches influence him in their Favour: He desired I might not be concerned, for he knew the *French* too well, for any Thing to engage him in their Behalf, and though he could not go down with us, he would endeavour to meet at the Forks with *Joseph Campbell,* to deliver a Speech for me to carry to his Honour the Governor. He told me he would order the young Hunter to attend us, and get Provision, *&c.* if wanted.

Our Horses were now so weak and feeble, and the Baggage heavy, as we here obliged to provide all the Necessaries that the Journey would require; that we doubted much their performing it: therefore myself and others (except the Drivers which were obliged to ride) gave up our Horses for Packs, to assist along with the Baggage; I put myself in an Indian walking Dress, and continued with them three Days, till I found there was no Probability of their getting in, in any reasonable Time; the Horses grew less able to travel every Day; the Cold increased very fast, and the Roads were becoming much worse

by a deep Snow, continually freezing; and as I was uneasy to get back, to make Report of my Proceedings to his Honour the Governor, I determined to prosecute my Journey the nearest Way through the Woods, on Foot.

Accordingly I left Mr. *Vanbraam* in Charge of our Baggage, with Money and Directions, to provide Necessaries from Place to Place for themselves and Horses, and to make the most convenient Dispatch in.

I took my necessary Papers, pulled off my Cloaths; tied myself up in a Match Coat; and with my Pack at my Back with my Papers and Provisions in it, and a Gun, set out with Mr. *Gist,* fitted in the same Manner, on *Wednesday* the 26th. The Day following, just after we had passed a Place called the *Murdering*-Town, where we intended to quit the Path, and steer across the Country for *Shannapins* Town, we fell in with a Party of *French* Indians, who had lain in Wait for us; one of them fired at Mr. *Gist* or me, not 15 Steps, but fortunately missed. We took this fellow into Custody, and kept him till about 9 o'Clock at Night, and then let him go, and walked all the remaining Part of the Night without making any Stop, that we might get the Start, so far, as to be out of the Reach of their Pursuit the next Day, as we were well assured they would follow our Tract as soon as it was light: The next Day we continued travelling till quite dark, and got to the River about two Miles above *Shannapins;* we expected to have found the River frozen, but it was not, only about 50 Yards from each Shore; the Ice I suppose had broke up above, for it was driving in vast Quantities.

There was no Way for getting over but on a Raft, which we set about, with but one poor Hatchet, and got finished just after Sun-setting, after a whole Days Work; we got it launched, and on Board of it, and set off; but before we were Half Way over, we were jammed in the Ice in such a Manner that we expected every Moment our Raft to sink, and ourselves to per-

ish; I put out my setting Pole to try to stop the Raft, that the Ice might pass by, when the Rapidity of the Stream threw it with so much Violence against the Pole, that it jirked me out into ten Feet Water, but I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the Raft Logs; notwithstanding all our Efforts we could not get the Raft to either Shore, but were obliged, as we were near an Island, to quit our Raft and make to it.

The Cold was so extremely severe, that Mr. *Gist,* had all his Fingers, and some of his Toes frozen, and the Water was shut up so hard, that we found no Difficulty in getting off the Island, on the Ice, in the Morning, and went to Mr. *Frazier's*. We met here with 20 Warriors who were going to the *Southward* to War, but coming to a Place upon the Head of the great *Cunnaway*, where they found seven People killed and scalped, all but one Woman with very light Hair, they turned about and ran back, for Fear the Inhabitants should rise and take them as the Authors of the Murder: They report that the People were lying about the House, and some of them much torn and eaten by Hogs: By the Marks that were left, they say they were *French* Indians of the *Ottaway* Nation, *&c.* that did it.

As we intended to take Horses here, and it required some Time to find them, I went up about three Miles to the Mouth of *Yaughyaughgane* to visit Queen *Alliquippa,* who had expressed great Concern that we passed her in going to the Fort. I made her a Present of a Matchcoat and a Bottle of Rum, which latter was thought much the best Present of the two.

Tuesday the 1st Day of *January,* we left Mr. *Frazier's* House, and arrived at Mr. *Gist's* at *Monongahela* the 2d, where I bought Horse, Saddle, *&c.* the 6th we met 17 Horses loaded with Materials and Stores for a Fort at the Forks of *Ohio,* and the Day after some Families going out to settle: This Day we arrived at *Wills*-Creek, after as fatiguing a Journey as it is possible to conceive, rendered so by excessive bad Weather: From

the first Day of *December* to the 15th, there was but one Day but it rained or snowed incessantly; and throughout the whole Journey we met with nothing but one continued Series of cold wet Weather, which occasioned very uncomfortable Lodgings, especially after we had left our Tent, which was some Screen from the Inclemency of it.

On the 11th I got to *Belvoir* where I stopped one Day to take necessary Rest, and then set out, and arrived in *Williamsburg* the 16th, and waited upon his Honour the Governor with the Letter I had brought from the *French* Commandant, and to give an Account of the Proceedings of my Journey, which I beg leave to do by offering the foregoing, as it contains the most remarkable Occurrences that happened to me.

I hope it will be sufficient to satisfy your Honour with my Proceedings; for that was my Aim in undertaking the Journey, and chief Study throughout the Prosecution of it.

With the Hope of doing it, I, with infinite Pleasure, subscribe myself,

Your Honour's most Obedient,

And very humble Servant,

G. Washington.

COPY of his Honour the GOVERNOR's Letter to the Commandant of the *French* Forces on the OHIO, sent by Major *Washington.*

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 Surprize 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 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 agreably to the Commission I am honoured 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.

Williamsburg, *in* Virginia,
October 31st, 1753.

TRANSLATION of a Letter from Mr. *Legardeur de St. Piere,* a principal *French* Officer, in Answer to the Governor's Letter.

SIR,

AS I have the Honour of commanding here in Chief, Mr. Washington *delivered me the Letter which you writ 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 Marquiss 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; whatever may be your Instructions, I am here by Virtue of the Orders of my General; and I intreat 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, and his Quality and great Merit; I flatter myself he will do me this Justice before you, Sir, and that he will signify to you as well as I, the profound Respect with which I am,*

S I R,

Your most humble, and

most obedient Servant,

LEGARDEUR DE ST. PIERE,

From the Fort *sur La Riviere au Beuf,*
the 15th of *December* 1753.

Notes

3.4 commissioned ... *Robert Dinwiddie*] Dinwiddie (1693–1770) was the lieutenant governor of colonial Virginia, but its nominal governor, Willem Anne van Keppel, 2nd Earl of Albemarle, was a Crown appointee who resided in England, making Dinwiddie in effect the colony's chief executive. Washington's official commission from Dinwiddie read:

> The Honble Robert Dinwiddie Esqr. Governor & Commander in Chief of the Colony & Dominion of Virginia Chancellor & Vice Admiral of the same.
>
> To George Washington Esqr. One of the Adjutants Genl of the Troops & Forces in the Colony of Virginia.
>
> I reposing especial Trust & Confidence in the Ability Conduct, & Fidelity, of You the said George Washington have appointed You my express Messenger, And You are hereby authoriz'd & impower'd to proceed hence with all convenient & possible Dispatch, to that Part, or Place, on the River Ohio, where the French have lately erected a Fort, or Forts, or where the Commandant of the French Forces resides, in order to deliver my Letter & Message to Him; & after waiting not exceeding one Week for an Answer, You are to take Your Leave & return immediately back.
>
> To this Commission I have set my Hand, & caus'd the Great Seal of this Dominion to be affix'd, at the City of Williamsburg, the Seat of my Government, this Thirtieth Day of October in the twenty seventh Year of the Reign of His Majesty George the Second King.of Great Britain &ca Annoque Domini 1753.

Washington was supplied with the following instructions:

> Instructions for George Washington Esqr.
>
> Whereas I have receiv'd Information of a Body of French Forces being assembled in an hostile Manner on the River Ohio, intending by force of Arms to erect certain Forts on the said River, within this Territory & contrary to the Peace & Dignity of our Sovereign the King of Great Britain.

These are therefore to require & direct You the said George Washington Esqr. forthwith to repair to the Logstown on the said River Ohio; & having there inform'd YourSelf where the said French Forces have posted themselves, thereupon to proceed to such Place: & being there arriv'd to present Your Credentials, together with my Letter to the chief commanding Officer, &, in the Name of His Britanic Majesty, to demand an Answer from him thereto.

On Your Arrival at the Logstown, You are to address Yourself to the Half King, to Monacatoocha & other the Sachems of the Six Nations; acquainting them with Your Orders to visit & deliver my Letter to the French commanding Officer; & desiring the said Chiefs to appoint You a sufficient Number of their Warriors to be Your Safeguard, as near the French as You may desire, & to wait Your further Direction.

You are diligently to enquire into the Numbers & Force of the French on the Ohio, & the adjacent Country; how they are like to be assisted from Canada; & what are the Difficulties & Conveniencies of that Comunication, &: the Time requir'd for it.

You are to take Care to be truly inform'd what Forts the French have erected, & where; How they are Garrison'd & appointed, & what is their Distance from each other, & from Logs-town: And from the best Intelligence You can procure, You are to learn what gave Occasion to this Expedition of the French. How they are like to be supported, &: what their Pretentions are.

When the French Commandant has given You the requir'd & necessary Dispatches, You are to desire of him that, agreeable to the Law of Nations, he wou'd grant You a proper Guard, to protect You as far on Your Return, as You may judge for Your Safety, against any stragling Indians or Hunters that may be ignorant of Yr Character & molest You.

Wishing You good Success in Yr Negotiations & a safe & speedy return I am Sr Yr hble Servt

Dinwiddie also supplied the following passport:

Virginia
To All to whom these Presents may come or concern Greeting

Whereas I have appointed George Washington Esqr. by Commission under the Great Seal, My express Messenger to the Comandant of the French Forces on the River Ohio, & as he is charg'd with Business of great Importance to His Majesty &: this Dominion.

I do hereby Command all His Majesty's Subjects, & particularly require All in Alliance and Amity with the Crown of Great Britain, & all Others to whom this Passport may come agreeable to the Law of Nations, to be aiding & assisting as a Safeguard to the said George Washington & his Attendants: (viz.)
in his present Message to & from the River Ohio as aforesaid

Given under my Hand & the Seal of the Colony at the City of Williamsburg this Thirtieth Day of October, One Thousand seven hundred, fifty & three, in the twenty seventh Year of His Britannick Majesty's reign.

(All three documents reproduced from *The Papers of George Washington: Colonial Series 1, 1748–August 1755*, ed. W. W. Abbot & Dorothy Twohig, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983. Pp. 58–62.)

3.10 *Jacob Vanbraam*] Born c.1729 in Holland, he had come to Virginia in 1752, and settled in Fredericksburg, where he taught French.

3.14 *Wills*-Creek] Joins the North Potomac River at present-day Cumberland, Maryland.

3.16 Mr. *Gist*] Christopher Gist (1706–1759) had been engaged by the Ohio Company in 1750 and 1751 to explore and map the regions west of the Alleghanies from Shannapin's Town (present-day Pittsburgh) as far west as the Falls of the Ohio (present-day Louisville, Ky.) and the Great Miami River in western Ohio.

3.22–23 Mr. *Frazier*'s ... *Turtle*-Creek] John Frazier, a gunsmith and Indian trader; Turtle Creek joins the Monongahela River about 10 miles above its junction with the Allegheny, near present-day Duquesne, Pa. Frazier had established a post at Venango in the 1740s, and was evicted by the French in the summer of 1753.

4.2 the *French* General's Death] Paul Marin De La Malgue

(La Marque) (1692–1753), a native of Montreal and a lifelong soldier on the French frontier. He had been sent in 1753, by the Marquis Duquesne, Governor of Canada, with 1500 men, to establish a route and chain of forts from Lake Erie to the Ohio. He drove his officers and men mercilessly, offended the Iroquois whose lands were invaded, and arrested American fur-traders and sent them to Montreal in chains. He fell sick, but refused to return to Canada, and died at Fort Le Boeuf (Waterford, Pa.) on October 29, 1753.

4.7–8 Forks of *Ohio*] The site of present-day Pittsburgh, where the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers join to form the Ohio River.

4.22 *Shingiss*, king of the *Delawares*] or Shingas (d. 1763); he lived at Shannapin's Town, on the Allegheny River about 2 miles above the Forks. He and the Delawares remained neutral in the early stages of the ensuing war, but after Braddock's defeat in 1755, joined the French and carried out raids in western Pennsylvania and Virginia.

4.23 *Loggs*-Town] About 17 miles below the Forks of the Ohio, on the north (east) side, several miles above the mouth of Big Beaver Creek (or Beaver River); near the site of present-day Ambridge, Pa.

5.12 *Monacatoocha*] Also known as Scarcydia or Scarrooyady or Scarouady, an Oneida chief.

5.13 the Half-King] Tanacharison (d. 1754), an adopted Seneca (one of the Iroquois or Six Nations). He accompanied Washington's 1754 expedition to establish a fort at the Forks, and killed the wounded French Ensign Joseph Coulon de Jumonville, taken prisoner at the Battle of Jumonville Glen.

5.13–14 little *Beaver* Creek] About 15 miles further downstream from Loggs-Town, beyond Big Beaver Creek (or Beaver River).

5.14–15 John Davison] Indian trader who operated out of Logstown.

5.23–24 Mr. *Gist*'s new Settlement] near present-day Uniontown, Pa.

5.25 *Shanapins,* or the Forks] Indian settlement on the Allegheny River, about 2 miles above the Forks.

5.31 *Cuscuscas*] Kuskuskies was a nearby Indian town on the Great Beaver Creek (or River); but the name is probably a mistranslation for Kaskaskia, a French outpost on the Mississippi about 50 miles above its confluence with the Ohio.

6.7 *Black-Islands*] A mistranslation of Illinois (as "Iles noires"). The Frenchmen were apparently referring to the Illinois River, which enters the Mississippi above present-day St. Louis.

6.16 Obaish] The Wabash River, which arises in northwestern Ohio, flows into the Ohio River above Old Shawneetown, Illinois. No evidence of a fort at its mouth has been found.

6.19–20 lower *Shanoah* Town] Probably Shawnee Town, near the confluence of the Ohio and the Great Kanawha rivers (present-day Portsmouth, Ohio).

6.20 one *Brown*, an *Indian* Trader] Probably James Brown.

6.29 *Venango*] Settlement and trading post at the confluence of French Creek with the Allegheny River; near present-day Franklin, Pa.

7.1–33 *Fathers, ... Land.*] A substantially different report of the meeting as recorded by the French is given in Fernand Grenier, ed., *Papiers Contrecoeur et autres documents concernant le conflit anglo-français sur l'Ohio de 1745 à 1756* (Quebec: Les Presses Universitaires Laval, 1952), pp. 53–58.

8.17 Lead *was the Man*] La Salle had explored the Ohio and claimed possession for the French in the 1680; "Lead" may be a reference to the practice of burying lead plates at the mouths of rivers to establish such claims.

8.23 two *Englishmen* ... Prisoners] They were John Trotter and James McLaughlin, who were taken into custody at Venango and sent to Montreal and then to France. They were eventually released and Trotter made his way back to Pennsylvania.

8.29–30 two Forts, ... *French*-Creek] These were Fort Presque Isle (present-day Erie, Pa.) and Fort Le Boeuf (present-day Waterford, Pa.).

9.5–6 their Brothers in *Carolina* Goal] Six Shawnee had been captured during Indian raids on the South Carolina frontier in

the summer of 1753. By January 1754, they had all been exchanged or released.

9.7 a Boy] According to Claude Pierre Pécaudy, sieur de Contrecoeur, the boy was the lone survivor of a Carolina family killed by Indians of the Six Nations; he was reportedly turned over to the French and delivered to Boston; see *A Memorial Containing a Summary View of Facts, with Their Authorities. In Answer to the Observations Sent by the English Ministry to the Courts of Europe* (*Translated from the French*) (1757).

9.9–10 Cuscusca Town] see note 5.31, although here Kuskuskies on Big Beaver Creek is clearly intended.

12.1–2 Captain *Joncaire*] Phillippe Thomas de Joncaire, sieur de Chabert (1707–c.1766)

13.11 *White Thunder*, and the Hunter] White Thunder, also known as Belt of Wampum, was an Iroquois chief; the Hunter, also known as Guyasuta or Kiasutha, was a Seneca chief.

14.2 *La Sol*] Robert Cavelier, sieur de La Salle

15.26 Monsieur *La Force*] Michel Pépin, or Pépin-Laforce, or Pépin-dit-Laforce

16.18 Monsieur *Riparti*] Louis Le Gardeur de Repentigny (1721–1786)

16.21 *Legardeur de St. Piere*] Jacques Le Gardeur, sieur de Saint-Pierre (1701–1755)

20.21 *Joseph Campbell*] Pennsylvania Indian trader; he was killed in September 1754.

20.30-31 Indian walking Dress] *i.e.*, deerskin leggings and hunting shirt

21.10 Match Coat] a large piece of wool, blanket, or fur worn as an outer garment

21.14 the *Murdering*-Town] Delaware village on Connoquenessing Creek, about 15 miles north of Logstown; near present-day Harmony, Pennsylvania. Gist's account of this incident includes somewhat more detail:

Thursday 27.—We rose early in the morning, and set out about two o'clock. Got to the Murthering town, on the south-east fork of Beaver creek. Here we met with an Indian, whom I thought I had seen at Joncaire's, at Venango, when on our journey up to the French fort. This fellow called me by my Indian name, and pretended to be glad to see me. He asked us several questions, as how we came to travel on foot, when we left Venango, where we parted with our horses, and when they would be there, etc. Major Washington insisted on travelling on the nearest way to forks of Alleghany. We asked the Indian if he could go with us, and show us the nearest way. The Indian seemed very glad and ready to go with us. Upon which we set out, and the Indian took the Major's pack. We travelled very brisk for eight or ten miles, when the Major's feet grew very sore, and he very weary, and the Indian steered too much north-eastwardly. The Major desired to encamp, to which the Indian asked to carry his gun. But he refused that, and then the Indian grew churlish, and pressed us to keep on, telling us that there were Ottawa Indians in these woods, and they would scalp us if we lay out; but to go to his cabin, and we should be safe. I thought very ill of the fellow, but did not care to let the Major know I mistrusted him. But he soon mistrusted him as much as I. He said he could hear a gun to his cabin, and steered us more northwardly. We grew uneasy, and then he said two whoops might be heard to his cabin. We went two miles further; then the Major said he would stay at the next water, and we desired the Indian to stop at the next water. But before we came to water, we came to a clear meadow; it was very light, and snow on the ground. The Indian made a stop, turned about; the Major saw him point his gun toward us and fire. Said the Major, "Are you shot?" "No," said I. Upon which the Indian ran forward to a big standing white oak, and to loading his gun; but we were soon with him. I would have killed him; but the Major would not suffer me to kill him. We let him charge his gun; we found he put in a ball; then we took care of him. The Major or I always stood by the guns; we made him make a fire for us by a little run, as if we intended to sleep there. I said to the Major, "As you will not have him killed, we must get him away, and then we

must travel all night." Upon which I said to the Indian, "I suppose you were lost, and fired your gun." He said, he knew the way to his cabin, and 'twas but a little way. "Well," said I, "do you go home; and as we are much tired, we will follow your track in the morning; and here is a cake of bread for you, and you must give us meat in the morning." He was glad to get away. I followed him, and listened until he was fairly out of the way, and then we set out about half a mile, when we made a fire, set our compass, and fixed our course, and travelled all night, and in the morning we were on the head of Piney creek. (*Christopher Gist's Journals*, ed. William M. Darlington [Cleveland, 1893], pp. 84–86.)

22.14 great Cunnaway] Great Kanawha River; colonial records indicate the family killed was that of Robert Foyles, including his wife and five children, and that it occurred on the Monongahela rather than the Kanawha River.

22.24 Queen *Alliquippa*] (d. December 23, 1754) She was variously described as a Delaware, Seneca, or Iroquois. She was the leader of the village at present-day McKeesport, Pa., and a longtime ally of the English.

23.7 Belvoir] The estate of William Fairfax, on the eastern shore of the Potomac about 10 miles south of Alexandria, Va.

Note on the Text

The text of this electronic edition of *The Journal of Major George Washington* is based on the first edition published at Williamsburg, Virginia, in February 1754. It was transcribed from a facsimile copy, reproduced from an original held in the New York Public Library, and published in New York in 1940 by Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, with a brief introduction by Randolph G. Adams. The spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and italics are those of the original. The typeface is IM Fell DW Pica, digitized and furnished by Igino Marini [http://www.iginomarini.com/fell.html]. The decorative ornaments and initials are reconstructions of those used in the Williamsburg edition. A few typographical errors have been corrected, and a list of these is given below (the line count includes chapter headings, but not running heads):

Page.line	*1754 text*	*emended to*
11.13	th y	they
19.4	I*ndians*	*Indians*
19.22	I*ndians*	*Indians*
20.4	Quart r	Quarter
20.12	therefor he	therefore he
20.14	th t Monsi ur	that Monsieur
20.22	Hononr	Honour
23.12	containsthe	contains the

Many editions of Washington's *Journal* have been published since the first. The most comprehensively annotated is the one contained in *The Diaries of George Washington: Volume I, 1748–65*, Donald Jackson, editor, Dorothy Twohig, associate editor (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976), pages 118–161. That volume has been frequently consulted in the preparation of the notes to this edition.