VICTORY AT KITTANNING

By William A. Hunter*

The meaning and effectiveness of Lieutenant Colonel John Armstrong’s attack on Kittanning, on September 8, 1756, cannot be fully understood without some consideration of preceding military events of the French and Indian War.

In Pennsylvania, Braddock’s defeat on July 9, 1755, had brought war to a province unwilling to take military action and unaccustomed to military planning. Fearful of French military invasion and wanting in military funds and forces, Governor Robert Hunter Morris had at first, in the summer of 1755, extemporized local defenses in the Cumberland Valley, between Carlisle and the Maryland line. In October, Indian attacks, minor in terms of actual numbers and losses but alarming in implication, woke Pennsylvanians to the real nature of the danger they faced; and on November 1 a heavier Indian attack on the Coves, between present McConnellsburg and the Maryland line, showed the inadequacy of any merely local defenses.

With this attack, Pennsylvanians also learned the identity of the enemy leader. In 1752-3, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Six Nations had recognized Shingas as “king”—that is, spokesman—of the Delaware Indians on the Ohio. Shingas and his constituents, who had moved to the Ohio from southeastern Pennsylvania, had close ties of friendship and trade with the white population; in the Indian phrase, the two peoples “had been brought up together.” Shingas himself was a nephew of Alumapees (or Sasoonan), the old Delaware “king” who had died at Shamokin (present Sunbury) in 1747; his oldest brother, Pisquitomen, had long been known in eastern Pennsylvania, and another brother, the Beaver, was to succeed as “king” in 1758. Now Shingas led the enemy.

With passage of a Supply Act, on November 27, the Governor and the Commissioners named to dispense the fund were able to plan more adequate defenses. During the winter a line of forts was erected along the frontiers of the settlements; and in the summer of 1756 the Governor's favorite project of erecting a fort at Shamokin (Fort Augusta) was carried out. West of the Susquehanna, the defense line comprised four forts: Fort Lyttelton (present Fort Littleton, Fulton County), Fort Shirley (present Shireysburg, Huntingdon County), Fort Granville (near present Lewistown, Mifflin County), and Fort George (also called Patterson's Fort, near present Mexico, Juniata County). The Governor's repeated proposal to abandon Patterson's and to link the
more western posts with Fort Augusta by building a fort (to be called Pomfret Castle) on the Mahantango failed.\footnote{See \textit{Pennsylvania History}, XXII (1955), 229-255, for a brief account of the establishment of these defenses.}

Indeed, the whole western defense system failed. General removal of the Indian population from the upper reaches of the Susquehanna, followed by erection of the frontier posts and Fort Augusta, relieved the eastern settlements from heavy attack; but west of the Susquehanna the Delaware leaders Shingas and Captain Jacobs waged such energetic and effective war that on January 1, 1756, a reward of seven hundred dollars was offered in Philadelphia for their heads—a price which, at the end of April, Virginia increased by a hundred pistoles. Near the end of January the Indians attacked places in present Perry County; in early February they attacked on the Conococheague, in present Franklin County; on February 29 they appeared at McDowell’s Mill (present Markes, Franklin County). Some soldiers who had come from Fort Shirley for supplies helped defend this place, where the Indians, armed with muskets and cutlasses taken from Braddock, charged directly upon their opponents in most un-Indian fashion. Captain John Potter, who had been commissioned to build a fifth fort, near the Maryland line, was recalled; and his company and a new one under Captain John Steel (a Presbyterian minister) were stationed at McDowell’s. The attacks continued, however. On March 30, Indians attacked Patterson’s Fort; and on April 1 the enemy took a “private fort,” McCord’s Fort, northwest of Chambersburg, killing and capturing twenty-seven persons. A militia company and a detachment of troops who set out in pursuit were defeated at Sideling Hill, with a loss of twenty killed and twelve wounded; one Indian was reported killed at the fort, and three at Sideling Hill.

The wounding of Shingas near Fort Cumberland on April 17 seems to have occasioned a lull in the enemy attacks. The Province posted a garrison at Carlisle, and on May 11 commissioned Lieutenant Colonel John Armstrong to command the Pennsylvania Regiment’s Second Battalion, comprising the garrisons west of the Susquehanna. Armstrong had early advocated a defense line south of the Blue Mountain; and his appointment implies recognition of the value of a closer defense line than that first estab-
lished. On June 11, however, the Indians took another “private fort,” Bigham’s Fort, near Fort George. On July 22 a force of about sixty Indians appeared before Fort Granville and challenged the garrison to come out and fight. A week later the Indians returned, led by Captain Jacobs and accompanied by a few Frenchmen, and besieged and captured the fort, on July 30.2

It is true that Captain Edward Ward and part of his company had been absent, leaving Lieutenant Edward Armstrong and twenty-four men to defend the post; but the defeat was a shocking one. The Lieutenant and one soldier had been killed, and twenty-two soldiers and a few civilians captured; the fort had been burned to the ground; and near the ruins a French flag and a pouch containing a mutilated and irrelevant French letter had been left to anger and puzzle the English. News of the disaster was not entered in the minutes of the Provincial Council, but the painful facts could not be overlooked.3 Captain Jacobs boasted that he could take any fort that would burn; and the Provincial forts were all built of wood.

So, two steps were necessary: First, an act of retaliation, both as a setback to the Indians and as an encouragement to the Province; second, a consolidation and strengthening of the Provincial defenses west of the Susquehanna. Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong, on whom fell the burden of both undertakings, had a very personal feeling in the matter; for Lieutenant Edward Armstrong had been his brother.

It had been learned from escaped prisoners that Shingas and Captain Jacobs had their headquarters at Kittanning, on the Allegheny River. This was a site of early Delaware settlements on the Ohio, dating from the 1720’s, and had long been known to the Pennsylvania traders who accompanied and followed these In-

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2 There are contemporary accounts of these incidents in the Pennsylvania Gazette; in the manuscript Provincial Record, printed in Colonial Records of Pennsylvania, VII (Harrisburg, 1851); and in manuscript Papers of the Provincial Council, many of which are printed in Pennsylvania Archives, first series, II (Philadelphia, 1853). These sources will be cited as Pa. Gazette, PR, CR, PPC, and PAI, respectively.

3 The best description of this letter, which seems to have disappeared in the 1840’s, is in I. D. Rupp, History and Topography of Northumberland (Lancaster, 1847), 122. There is an incomplete contemporary translation in Joseph Shippen’s journal, under date of August 18, 1756 (Historical Society of Pennsylvania: Shippen Family Papers). There is a gap in the Council minutes from July 31 to August 20 (CR, VII, 220); see PAI, II, 743, for the minute relating to Fort Granville.
dians from the Susquehanna. The Delaware name of the place meant “at the great river”; and the Iroquois name, Attigua, was of similar significance; it was a major landmark on a route running westward from the lower Susquehanna to the prairie country south of the Great Lakes. To this place Shingas had removed in 1754 from the forks of the Ohio. Pushed, both by economic need and by threat of danger, to accept the French, he and his followers seem to have regarded themselves as casually allied with, rather than subservient to, the French; and there is reason to believe that their vigorous attacks upon Cumberland County were inspired more by hopes of wringing concessions from the Province and of stalling white occupation of the Ohio country than by any wish to strengthen the French position.4

With Governor Morris’ approval, Armstrong made secret plans for an attack upon Kittanning. Armstrong’s battalion then comprised seven companies, his own and those of captains Potter and Steel at McDowell’s Mill, Hamilton at Fort Lyttelton, Mercer at Fort Shirley, and George Armstrong and Ward at Fort George. Nominally, each company consisted of three officers and fifty men; but Ward’s company had at a blow been reduced by half, and the other captains found it difficult to keep men in service: Potter, for example, had forty-seven men, Steel only about thirty. As Morris (newly replaced by Governor William Denny) described the plan to the Provincial Council on August 27, Armstrong was to take with him “the Companies under Captain Hamilton, Captain Mercer, Capt Ward and Captain Potter, and to engage what Volunteers he could besides”; and Armstrong’s subsequent report shows that his force included men from all seven companies. All reports agree that the expedition numbered about three hundred men; so very few can have been left behind in garrison.5

The Provincial Commissioners, necessarily privy to the plan, furnished supplies which were distributed to the garrisons; and the detach-

4 For contemporary interpretations of the situation, see “Captivity of Charles Stuart, 1755-57,” in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XIII (1926), 64-65; and William West’s letter of January 12, 1756, in *Historical Society of Pennsylvania: Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence*, VIII, 11.

5 *Pa. Gazette*, Sept. 23, 1756 (No. 1448), p. 3, col. 1; “Three hundred Men, taken from the Provincial Forces, posted in the several Garrisons on the Western Frontiers,” Governor Denny wrote to Thomas Penn, November 4, 1756 (Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence, VIII, 197; printed in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XLIV, 107).
ments were instructed to march by various routes to Fort Shirley. For information regarding Kittanning, Armstrong relied upon escaped prisoners, and especially upon John Baker, a young man who had been taken near Fort Shirley about January 27 and had escaped from Kittanning in March.

On Friday, August 20, Armstrong wrote from Carlisle to inform the Governor of the departure of the first contingents. Captains Ward and Armstrong apparently were the first to march, abandoning Fort George as they set out for Fort Shirley. Ordered to inspect the remains of Fort Granville on their way, they had already reported to Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong when he wrote. Part of the Lieutenant Colonel’s own company was to leave Carlisle with the provisions on the afternoon of the 20th, to await the remainder of the company in Shermans Valley, north of the mountain, and on the 21st the detachments were to march from McDowell’s. A week later, on August 27, ex-Governor Morris disclosed this letter and the plan of the expedition to the Provincial Council.

On Sunday, August 29, Armstrong wrote again, probably from Fort Shirley; and this letter (if extant) might tell a fuller story of the final preparations for the march. By this date the advance party probably was on its way; and we know that in this letter Armstrong advised that the main body of troops would set out the next day. On the 20th Armstrong had expressed his opinion that, “As Fort Shirley is not easily defended, and their Water may be taken possession of by the Enemy it running at the Foot of a high bank Eastward of the Fort and no well but, I am of Opinion from its remote situation that it can’t serve the Country in the present Circumstances, and if attacked, I doubt will be taken if not strongly Garrisoned but (extremities excepted) I cannot evacuate this without your Honor’s Orders.” If the departure of

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6For accounts of Baker’s captivity, see Pa. Gazette, April 1, 1756 (No. 1423), p. 2, col. 3, and his examination, dated March 31, in Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence, VIII, 63, and Indian Affairs, II, 78. Armstrong’s map of Kittanning, reproduced with the present article, clearly is based on Baker’s information. Baker went on the expedition as a volunteer in Captain Mercer’s company, and was killed at Kittanning.

7The Bougainville journal, subsequently referred to, states: “Au départ de ce détachement le fort George était abandonné.” Presumably, this information was given by prisoners. Pennsylvania records make no mention of this evacuation, but by October 14 “Captain Pattersons” is referred to as abandoned (P-A1, III, 11-12).

the troops, including the garrison of this fort, did not constitute an extremity, it at least approached one. Stragglers from the march were to be discouraged; so, as Governor Denny wrote Thomas Penn on November 4, "at Setting out by order of the Colonel the Gates were taken off finding the Fort untenable and of no further use, the Inhabitants of Sheermans Valley, having entirely abandoned their Plantations, for whose Protection it was Built, and left it open, without any Garrison."

On Monday, August 30, just a month after the fall of Fort Granville, Armstrong and the main body of the Provincial force left Fort Shirley, and, according to their commander, "on Wednesday the Third Instant join'd our advanc'd Party at the Beaver Dams a few miles from Franks Town on the North Branch of Juniata" (near present Hollidaysburg). There is a difficulty of chronology here; Wednesday was September 1, and Armstrong, or his clerk, probably meant Friday the third. The advance party had discov-

9 Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence, VIII, 197 (PMHB, XLIV. 108).
10 There is further difficulty in the story, in Historical Memorial of the Centennial Anniversary of the Presbytery of Huntingdon (Philadelphia, 1896), 41, that at the Beaver Dams the Reverend Charles Beatty preached
ered the tracks of two Indian hunters on the east side of the mountain; but though the tracks were recent the Indians apparently had gone their way unaware of the advancing troops.

On Saturday morning, September 4, the combined force resumed its march, “and in two Days”—presumably by Sunday night—“came within Fifty Miles of the Kittanning.” Robert Robison remembered afterward that “we came to a place called the Forty Mile Lick. . . . We lay there on Saturday night, the next morning the colonel ordered two of our guides to spy the town, they went and brought back word, that the Indians were there.” However, it appears from Armstrong’s report that these scouts, “an Officer with one of the Pilots and two Soldiers,” he says, were sent out on Monday, the 6th; so Robison, whose story was not printed until 1811, may also have been confused in his chronology. According to Robison, “The names of the spies were Thomas Burke, and James Chalmers, both old traders.”

Having dispatched the scouts, the troops resumed their march, apparently covering some twenty miles this day; on the following day, Tuesday the 7th, they met the returning scouts. It does not follow that these scouts had in fact covered eighty miles in two days; Armstrong later reported that “it appear’d they had not been nigh enough the Town either to perceive the true Situation of it, the Number of the Enemy, or what Way it might most advantageously [be] attack’d.”

At this point the troops stored the bulk of their supplies on scaffolds, out of the reach of wild animals, and on the morning of Tuesday, September 7, set out on an unbroken thirty-mile march to Kittanning. About nine or ten o’clock that night, when they thought themselves about six miles from their destination, they encountered the first Indians. A few rods in advance, a guide discovered a fire with two or three men visible about it. “Whereupon,” says Armstrong, “with all possible Silence, I order’d the Rear to Retreat about one Hundred Perches in Order to make Way for the Front that We might consult how we could best pro-

*Sunday sermon to Armstrong’s regiment (sic).* In this form, at least, the story seems to be apocryphal. The Provincial Council minutes add to the chronological confusion by referring to September 2 and 6 as Friday and Tuesday, respectively, instead of Thursday and Monday (CR, VII, 238, 241).

Robison’s narrative is to be found in Archibald Loudon, A Selection of Some of the Most Interesting Narratives . . . (Carlisle, 1808, 1811), II, 171-182.
John Barker Soldier
at Fort Shirely, who last
Winter made his escape from
from the Indians at the Kittanning
Wills
Says there are generally near 1000 Pion
Blade Elderlymen and boys at P. Town
Not more than English passengers are there when he came off. That the Allegheny
Hills will not admit any Road that can be travel'd from the Fort Shirley or Lykett. It
So that Town in Life than 150 Miles or thereabout.
This map, based on John Baker's information, is part of Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong's proposal for his expedition. In the manuscript, the answers to Armstrong's queries and requests are inserted in the handwriting of William Peters; and in the following transcription Peters' notations are indicated by italics.

John Baker Soldier at Fort Shierley, who last Winter made his escape from from the Indians at the Kittanning Says there are generally near 100 Warriors beside Elderly men and boys at Sd Town and that more than [100] English prisoners were there when he came off—that the Alleghany Hills will not admit any Road that can be travel'd from the Forts Shirley or Lyttleton to that Town in less than 150 Miles or thereabout.

Query, Ought not an attack be made as early as possible on this Town and also on that of Shingaclamoose, with an endevour to recover Prisoners & if so, how many Men will be necessary? Answer Two hundred & fifty Men and where will they Rendezvous? Ans at Shirley or Littleton must not Secrecy and very little parade be Observ'd? Ans: Certainly. will any Number of Horses be necessary, or how are they to be Obtain'd? Answer. Fifty Horses may be sufficient & these to be hired by the Day @ 1/6 pr d. Must not a few necessary people in the way of Pilots be engag'd for about Five Shills pr day? Answer. Six Pilots agreed to. and shou'd not Baker who brought in the Scalp have some encourag-ement? The Commiss's pd Croghan for this service. if it is the Pleasure of the Governor and Commissioners, I desire to go personally upon this Servise. John Arm-strong Agreed to.

Baggs will be wanted to Carry Provisions the 300 wt of Gun Powder to be sent to Carlisle, shou'd be finer than that last Sent, as Course Powder is Seldom ready fire. Some Swan Shot will be very necessary. a few Small Kettles is necessary for the Rangers.

Some where betwixt the Reas Town and the Alleghany Mountain wou'd be a proper place to Erect a Fort, and if Suported cou'd Scarcely fail of Sundry good effects to this Government, this if possible shou'd not be delay'd.

ENDORSED: Scheme of Expedi to Kittanning—
ceed without being discover'd by the Enemy." When the guide reported again that he could see only three or four Indians in the party, someone proposed to fall upon and kill them without further ado; but the risk of alarm was too great. On the other hand, the expedition could not afford to wait until the Indians went to sleep; so Lieutenant James Hogg, of Captain George Armstrong's company, was left with twelve men and the guide, with instructions to attack the Indians at daybreak. The troops left their horses, "with what Blankets and other Baggage we then had," at this place, since known as Blanket Hill; and, leaving the road in order to get past the Indians, made their silent and difficult way through the woods toward the town.

Armstrong complained afterward of "the Ignorance of our Pilots who neither knew the true Situation of the Town nor the best Paths that lead thereto"; but off the main path and with only the light of the moon, even a resident Indian, one might think, would have had difficulty. Not long before moonset—"About three in the Morning," the Pennsylvania Gazette estimated—the head of the column reached the Allegheny River about a hundred rods below the main part of the Indian town, "To which place, rather than by the Pilots we were guided by the beating of the Drum and the Whooping of the Warriors at their Dance." By the last light of the moon, the soldiers moved up toward the cornfield, in which, here and there, little fires began to appear; according to Baker ("our best Assistant," said Armstrong), the Indians chose to sleep here because of the warm weather, and lit little fires to drive off the gnats. Most of the soldiers slept, too, though the last three companies in the column had not yet descended the last hill to the river.

With daybreak at hand, Armstrong ordered the soldiers wakened and disposed for the attack. Retaining the larger part of his force for the main attack, he sent a detachment, probably comprising the rear of the column, northward along the hill behind the town, "at least one hundred perches and so much farther, it then being Day Light, as wou'd carry them opposite the upper Part or at least the Body of the Town." Allowing "Eighteen or Twenty Minutes" for this maneuver—"In Doing of which," says Armstrong cryptically, "they were a little unfortunate"—, he then opened the attack, sending some of his men through the cornfield and the others against the houses of the town, now visible by daylight.
The attack began in the cornfield along the river, beside which Armstrong's party had awaited morning. "Our Men with great Eagerness pass'd thr'o and fir'd in the Corn Field where they had several Returns from the Enemy as they also had from the opposite Side of the River," says the official report. Clearing the cornfield protected the flank of the party sent against the houses; but the action of course attracted attention from across the river, where stood Shingas' part of the settlement. White prisoners who were in that part of the town tell us that the Indian warriors sent their women and the prisoners to a place "ten miles farther into the interior," for safety, and themselves crossed the river to join in the fighting.\footnote{12} Arrival of these reinforcements, as well as strong opposition from the Indians in the town, probably brought to a hurried conclusion the action in the cornfield; in his report Armstrong expresses belief that Indian scalps were overlooked here because the men could not go back to look for them.

Of the attack on the houses, where the action centered, Robison retained a vivid recollection:

The form in which we made the attack was, our captains stood all in rank, each company behind their captain; the word was given every man do for himself; we rushed down to the town, the Indian's dogs barked, and the first house we came to, the Indian came out, and held his hand, as shading the light from his eyes, looking towards us, until there was five guns fired at him; he then ran and with a loud voice, called shewanick, which signifies whitemen...

According to Armstrong's report:

Capt Jacob immediately then gave the War Whoop and with Sundry other Indians, as the English Prisoners afterwards told, cried the White Men were at last come they wou'd then have Scalps enough but at the Same Time order'd their Squa's and Children to fliee to the Woods. . . . Presently after a brisk Fire begun among

\footnote{12 "The Narrative of Marie Le Roy and Barbara Leininger" is here cited from the translation printed in \textit{PA2}, VII, 401-412 (Harrisburg, 1878). Of two accounts of Hugh Gibson's captivity, the earlier is in Loudon, \textit{ib. cit.}, II, 192-195; the later, more detailed but not necessarily more accurate, is in \textit{Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society}, Third Series, VI (1837), 141-153.}
the Houses, which from the House of Capt Jacob was return’d with a greal Deal of Resolution, to which Place I immediately repaird.

Captain Jacobs’ house clearly was the center of resistance. According to the recollections of a prisoner, Hugh Gibson, long after the event, Captain Jacobs himself killed fourteen of Armstrong’s men. Before Armstrong’s arrival at this place, Captain Hugh Mercer’s company had trouble; Mercer himself had his arm broken by a musket ball, and retired to the hill to have his wound treated, and his company, which had seven men killed out of a total of seventeen for the whole attacking force, began to break up. Armstrong himself was then struck in the shoulders by a musket ball fired from Captain Jacobs’ house. He ordered the neighboring houses set on fire; and although Armstrong himself does not say so, other reporters say that Jacobs’ own house was also fired. The accounts are contradictory. According to Robison’s recollections,

... the colonel says, is there none of you lads, that will set fire to these rascals that have wounded me, and killed so many of our men. John Ferguson a soldier swore by the Lord God that he would, he goes to a house covered with bark, and takes a slice of bark which had fire on it, he rushes up to the cover of Jacobs’s house anp held it there until it had burned about one yard square, then he ran, and the Indians fired at him the smoke blew about his legs but the shot missed him.

But the Reverend Thomas Barton wrote to Thomas Penn, on February 28, 1757, that

One Mr Callender, who at that Time bore only a Lieutenant’s Commission, distinguish’d himself by the most uncommon Bravery & Resolution. It is asserted that when Jacobs took to a House, out of which he killed & wounded Many of our Men Callender undertook to fire it, which he accomplish’d at the infinite Hazard of his Life.

In any event, the houses, including that of Captain Jacobs, burned; and as they did so supplies of powder blew up within, and

13 Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence, VIII, 239.
Indians broke from cover. Two men and a woman ran from one house and were shot down. Robison seems to identify these as Jacobs, his wife, and his son, but Armstrong leaves these three unidentified and adds that

... it was thought Capt Jacob tumbled himself out at a Garret or Cock Loft Window at which he was shot, our Prisoners offering to be qualified to the Powder Horn and Pouch there taken off him which they say he had lately got from a French Officer in Exchange for Lieutt Armstrongs Boots which he carried from Fort Granville where the Lieutt was kill’d. The same Prisoners say they are perfectly assur’d of his Scalp as no other Indians there wore their Hair in the same Manner; The also say they knew his Squas’ Scalp by a particular Bob, and also knew the Scalp of a young Indian call’d the Kings Son.

It should be explained, perhaps, that the “Bob” here mentioned was an ornament, not a style of haircut.

In effect, the deaths of this group of Indians were the climax of the engagement; and although the fighting was still in progress, Armstrong retired to the hill to have his wound tended; and here he received, from white prisoners who had fled the Indian town, disconcerting news which terminated the attack. The Reverend Mr. Barton, writing of Lieutenant Callender’s exploits, relates “that when our People precipitately retreated upon a Report prevailing that the French were to be up that Day from Fort du Quesne, Callender not content to leave the Houses standing, went back with a small Party of Men, & set Fire to them all.” As the town burned, Armstrong and others watched from the hill.

During the burning of the houses which were Near thirty in Number we were agreeably entertain’d with a quick Succession of charged Guns gradually firing off as reached by the Fire, but much more so with the vast Explosion of sundry Bags and large Cags of Gunpowder wherewith almost every House abounded, the Prisoners afterwards informing that the Indians had frequently said they had a sufficient Stock of Ammunition for ten Years War with the English.—With the Rooft of Capt Jacob’s House when the Powder blew up, was thrown the Leg & Thigh of an Indian with a Child of three or four Years old such a Height that they appear’d as
Nothing & fell in the adjacent Corn Field. There was also a great Quantity of Goods burnt which the Indians had received in a present but ten Days before from the French.

About six hours had now passed since the beginning of the attack, and the time was near noon. It is apparent that as the action in the town approached an end, the hill overlooking it had become a rendezvous for Armstrong's men. The nucleus of the gathering here undoubtedly was the detachment sent out that morning to flank the town. Following this attempt, which seems to have been of little consequence, the party on the hill was augmented by wounded and prudent soldiers retiring from the town below. These observers had already warned Armstrong of Indian reinforcements crossing from the west side of the river; and the few white prisoners who in the course of the fighting had escaped from the Indians had their own alarming story to tell. This very day, they said, two bateaux of Frenchmen and Indians were expected from Fort Duquesne, intending to set out next day with Captain Jacobs' warriors to attack Fort Shirley. In preparation for this expedition, they said, an advance party of twenty-four Indians had left Kittanning the previous evening. It occurred to some of the troops to identify this advance party with the supposed three-or-four Indians seen about their camp fire the night before, and the idea was not a cheering one. Had the troops known, as they prepared to retreat, that a French party already had arrived at Kittanning, they might have been even more alarmed.

At this point we may evaluate the outcome of the attack in terms of casualties. The first question, of course, is the size of the opposing forces. We have said that Armstrong's Provincials numbered about three hundred men; for, while Armstrong does not state the strength of his party, all our evidence agrees on this figure, contained in a letter written by Governor Denny to Thomas Penn. The French accounts contained in the journals of Bougainville and Nicolas Renaud agree: Dumas, the French commander at Fort Duquesne, wrote on September 9 that three hundred English had come to burn the village of Attigué; his information probably came from prisoners. Armstrong, in his report of the

14 For the account in the Bougainville journal, see *Rapport de L'Archiviste de la Province de Québec*, 1923-24, p. 234; for that in Renaud's journal, see *ibid.*, 1928-29, pp. 23-24.
expedition, asked for three hundred blankets to replace those left behind by his soldiers. Robison says in his recollections that the party numbered 307, and although his narrative is of too late date to carry great weight, it agrees with the other evidence. For the Indian strength, needless to say, our information is less satisfactory. The Indian, Joseph Hickman (Delaware Jo), told George Croghan in January, 1756, that there were then 140 Delaware and Shawnee warriors at Kittanning, and a hundred white captives. John Baker, on whose information Armstrong most relied, said that there were, in March, "between eighty or ninety Warriors all Delawares," and more than a hundred prisoners; John Cox, at Kittanning about the same time, thought there were a hundred warriors and about fifty prisoners. Although Indian towns did not constitute stable population groups, it seems safe to say that the attackers probably outnumbered the attacked about three to one. Furthermore, since the Indian settlement was scattered, we cannot be sure, for example, that all the warriors from the houses west of the river joined in the fighting.\textsuperscript{15}

Another question is the part played by the French in the battle. As Renaud has recorded the story, a French officer, Normanville, had come with sixty men to raise a war party. When the attack began, the Indians undertook to remove their families to safety, but seeing the hardihood exhibited by the French officer, they returned to the attack and routed the English. Normanville himself was wounded. Bougainville’s account, obtained from Dumas, is more modest: The French officer and his men (name and number unspecified) gained time for the Indians to remove their women and children, after which they attacked and put the English to flight. All in all, it does not seem that the French took any conspicuous part; neither the Provincials nor the Indians captives were aware of them. One of the Delawares, Wauntau-penny, later taken captive, asserted in May, 1757, that “A Number of French were at the Kittanning, but run off when it was Attack’d, only one French Man fought.”\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{15}Hickman’s report is preserved in two versions, one in PR, N, 353-354 (CR, VI, 781-782); the other, preserved in manuscript in PPC, under date of January 23, 1756, is printed in I. D. Rupp, \textit{History and Topography of Dauphin . . .} (Lancaster, 1846), 583-584. For Cox’s statement, see \textit{Pa. Gazette}, September 9, 1756 (No. 1446), p. 3, cols. 2-3; PR, P, 21-22 (CR, VII, 242-243).

\textsuperscript{16}PPC, under date of May (26), 1757 (P-41, III, 147-148). For another statement by the same Indian, see PR, P, 248-249 (CR, VII, 531).
For the casualties, we have on the one hand Armstrong's report, listing seventeen men killed, thirteen wounded, and nineteen missing (including Captain Mercer, Ensign Scott, and seven of their men). We know that some of the missing were killed and that others made their way home; but the accuracy of Armstrong's report, as of September 14, can hardly be questioned. That enemy estimates of his losses should be less reliable and higher would be expected. Renaud says the English lost forty men, and this same figure appears in the very late recollections of Hugh Gibson, an Indian prisoner at the time of the attack. On the other hand, Bougainville's statement agrees very well with Armstrong's; the English, he says, lost eighteen men, including two prisoners.

By contrast, there is the wildest disagreement regarding the Indian losses. In the first place, the English did not remain in possession of the field, and could make no accurate count of the enemy dead. Armstrong conceded this in his report:

It is impossible to ascertain the exact Number of the Enemy kill'd in the Action as some were destroy'd by Fire and others in different Parts of the Corn Field but upon a moderate Computation it's generally believ'd there cannot be less than Thirty or Forty kill'd & mortally wounded as much Blood was found in sundry Parts of the Corn Field and Indians seen in several places crawl into the Woods on Hands and Feet, whom the Soldiers in pursuit of others then overlook'd expecting to find & scalp them afterward and also several kill'd and wounded in crossing the River.—On Beginning our March back we had about a Dozen of Scalps and Eleven English Prisoners but now find that four or five of the Scalps are missing. . . .

Writing to the Proprietors on October 30, Richard Peters was even more sanguine:

Several Accounts from Prisoners who have made their Escape since the Action at Kittanin agree that much more mischief was done than Colonel Armstrong imagined—Seventeen Wounded Indians were found in the Corn field and parts adjacent of which eight are dead or dying and about fifty Indians were killed—\(^{17}\)

\(^{17}\) Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence, VIII, 181 ff.
In part, Peters seems to be using the story of an English deserter taken into custody at Fort Cumberland, who, according to the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of October 28, reported “That after the taking Kittanning the Indians came to Fort Du Quesne, and told that they had buried upwards of 50 of their People that were killed there, and that more were missing. . . .” A friendly Six Nations Indian who came to Fort Augusta on October 11 related that ten days earlier, when he was at Tioga Point, “two Delaware Indians came there from the Ohio, who informed him, that the English had lately destroy’d the Kittanning Town and killed some of their People, but avoided mentioning to him the Number.” Over against these hopeful but vague accounts we must set other reports. Hugh Gibson’s statement, made in his old age, that “At that encounter, well known in Indian warfare, Armstrong lost forty men, and the enemy but fourteen, as reported by the Indians,” cannot carry much weight. More significantly, however, both French reports say that only seven Indians were killed. A similar statement was made at Philadelphia on July 9, 1758, by Lawrence Burck, a white trader who until then had stayed among the Delaware with his Indian wife; according to Burck, the Indians had seven men and two women killed at Kittanning. Unreasonably small as they at first appear, these figures deserve serious consideration. They seem flatly contradicted, it is true, by Armstrong’s account of scalps taken, but two points must be noted: First, Armstrong admits that only seven or eight scalps actually were brought back; second, the Provincial Commissioners had proposed bounties not only for the scalps of adult Indians but also for those of males above the age of ten years.

Of the identity of the Indians killed with Captain Jacobs there was also disagreement. Armstrong asserted that Jacobs himself, his wife, and “a young Indian call’d the Kings Son” were killed. Colonel Adam Stephen wrote from Fort Cumberland, on November 14, that “A son of Captain Jacobs is kill’d, and a Cousin of

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25 PR, P, 53 (CR, VII, 281). A son of the French commander at Fort Machault, La Chauvignerie, captured and questioned on October 26, 1757, had heard “that one or two of the Chiefs and many of those Indians were killed at Kittanning” (PPC, printed in *PAI*, III, 307).

26 Rough draft, in hand of Richard Peters, in PPC, under date of July 9, 1758.

27 PR, O, 70 (CR, VII, 78-79).
his about seven foot high call’d young Jacob, at the Destroying of the Kittanning, and it’s thought a noted Warrior known by the name of the Sunfish, as many of them were kill’d that we know nothing of.” Later accounts have other versions of the story. Robison, whose narrative was published in 1811, says, “Jacobs fell first, then his wife, and then his son, in proportion seven feet high,” and speaks also of “one called by the traders Pisquetum, and some others that were blown up with their magazine”; but Pisquitomen, Shingas’ brother, certainly was not killed there. According to Gibson, who told his story in 1826, at the age of eighty-five, “Bisquittam,” who had adopted Gibson as a brother, was at Shingas’ settlement on the west side of the river when the fighting began; and what is more to the point, Pisquitomen is mentioned repeatedly after this time, as late as 1761. As Gibson remembered, “besides Jacobs, his brother and another great warrior were among the slain.” Of Captain Jacobs’ own death, there is no real question; unlike Pisquitomen, Shingas, and the Beaver, Captain Jacobs is never mentioned after September 8, 1756, as a living person.

In brief, then, a Provincial force of three hundred men had attacked an Indian settlement capable of mustering about a hundred warriors. Besides superior numbers, the attackers had the great advantage of complete surprise; the defenders, on the other hand, had the advantages of familiarity with the field and of fighting from the cover of their houses, and they had limited help from a French officer and his party. In a six-hour engagement the Provincials had seventeen men killed; the Indian losses are uncertain but probably were not greater. After destroying much of the Indian town, the Provincials withdrew hurriedly and in some disorder, but with most of their force intact.

The partial nature of Armstrong’s military success is illustrated by one other detail. Of the hundred or so white prisoners supposed to have been at Kittanning at the time, only eleven came into English hands; four of these, a woman, a boy, and two little girls, were lost when Mercer’s company was scattered, and two, at least, fell again into Indian hands.

As the French accounts have it, the defeated English scattered

2 "P.A1, III, 83; also in PR, P, 127-128 (CR, VII, 381-382)."
through the woods; and it is clear from Armstrong's own account that some disorder accompanied the departure from Kittanning:

Capt Mercer being wounded was induc'd, as we have reason to believe, by some of his Men to leave the Main Body with his Ensign John Scott and ten or twelve Men they being heard tell him that we were in great Danger and that they cou'd take Him into the Road a nigh Way. . . . A Detachment was sent back to bring him in but cou'd not find him and upon the Return of the Detachment it was generally reported he was seen with the above Number of Men take a different Road.

Of the fate of this party, Armstrong had heard nothing more at the time he made his report to Governor Denny.

In the meantime, while the fighting went on in the Indian town, a lesser engagement had been fought at Blanket Hill, where Lieutenant Hogg and his men had been left to watch the Indians at the fire. As the affair was reported to Armstrong, when Hogg attacked that morning, according to orders, he had found not "three or Four Indians" but "a Number considerably Superior to his"; and although three Indians were thought to have been mortally wounded, the hour's engagement ended with Hogg twice wounded and three of his twelve men dead. What happened is told in fuller, but not necessarily more accurate, detail by Robert Robison:

These twelve men and their officers, crawled near to the Indians before day break. An Indian came toward them and was like to come too near, the Indian not knowing any thing of them, these men fired at this Indian, but missed him, when all the Indians ran from the fire and left their guns standing at a rack, which they commonly have. Our men standing, and not laying hold of the Indians guns, gave them time to return for their guns, and commence a battle. Out of which party the Indians killed the lieutenant, and five men, and wounded two others. Shortly after they began, we began at the town, and they heard our firing which discouraged the Indians greatly; our people telling them your town is on fire, you dogs you: our people got off, and the Indians did not follow them as they would have done. When the Indian magazine blew up in the town, they ceased firing a considerable time, which report was heard at fort Pitt.
Against this story of recollection and hearsay we must set the statement of the Delaware prisoner, Wauntaupenny, mentioned earlier:

—He was of the Party of Blanket Hill which consisted of 11 Indians. One of which were killed & thre wounded; he run off towards the French Fort, but met a Party in Pursuit of us, who followed us to the Allegany Hill where they kill’d Chambers—As he return’d he found a Prisoner had been taken by the Delewares, a small Young Man dark Colour’d who remains now at Bever Creek. . . .

Part of this statement anticipates our story, of course. Robison’s story to the contrary, Lieutenant Hogg was badly wounded but not killed, and hid himself in a thicket. Here he was discovered by a sergeant and a few others of Captain Mercer’s men who had withdrawn early from the battle, perhaps when their captain was wounded. These men put Hogg on a horse, and carried him with them in their retreat; but upon meeting four Indians this party scattered, leaving the wounded officer to his own devices. Wounded again in this encounter, Hogg “died in a few hours,” after riding some distance.

By this time Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong and the main body of his troops had begun their retreat, harried “by the attempts of a few Indians, who for some time after the march fir’d upon each wing and immediately ran off, from whom we receiv’d no other Damage but one of our Mens being wounded thr’o both Legs.” (Robison identifies the man as Andrew Douglas, and says he was shot through the ankles.) At Blanket Hill, the troops found Mercer’s “cowardly Serjt,” whose story caused great alarm, says Armstrong,

. . . he telling us that there were a far larger Number of the Indians there than appear’d to them and that he and the Men with him had fought five Rounds. That he had there seen the Lieut & sundry others kill’d and scalp’d and had also discover’d a Number of Indians throwing themselves before us and insinuated a great Deal of such Stuff as threw us into much Confusion So that the Officers had a great Deal to do to keep the Men together but cou’d not prevail with them to collect what Horses and other Baggage the Indians had left
after their Conquest of Lieut Hogg and the Party under his Command in the Morning. Except a few of the Horses which some of the bravest of the Men were prevailed on to collect. . . .

Thereafter this main body of the troops traveled unchecked, however, "not being ever separated [or] attack'd thr'o our whole March by the Enemy th'o we expected it every Day," as Armstrong reported.

According to Robison, there was still another incident in the confusion at Blanket Hill:

We were then preparing to leave the town, when captain Mercer, who had his right arm broke in the town: his company was chiefly composed of traders, who persuaded their captain that there would not one living man of us ever get home, and if he, capt. Mercer would go with them they would take him a near cut, accordingly all his company went with him but sergeant Brown, and twelve men; the captain however, and his men, unfortunately fell in with the Indians that lieutenant Hogg had been fighting with that morning; they fell upon his company and broke it, killing about twenty men: captain Mercer having a horse, Thomas Burke, ensign Scott and he, drove to the road that we had gone along; there the captains arm broke loose, and he was forced to stop and dress it, he became faint, in the mean time they espied an Indian coming from following us, Burke and Scott mounted Mercer's horse and rode off, leaving him to his fate, but Mercer lay down behind a log, it happening to be thick of weeds, the Indian came about six feet from him, and seeing Burke and Scott riding, he gave out a halloo and ran after, in a short time Mercer heard two guns go off: he then went down through a long plumb bottom, and lay there until night, when he made the best of his way. It was at the time of the plumbs being ripe, but that did not last long enough, for the captain had a month to struggle with, before he got home, all the food he got after the plumbs were done was one rattle snake, and to eat it raw. . . .

All this sounds circumstantial enough; but Mercer's company cannot have lost twenty men at Blanket Hill, and we must protest that in fact Mercer arrived at Fort Lyttelton in half the time allowed
by Robison. In what other respects this story needs correcting, we can only guess.

The fact that the Indians made no real pursuit of Armstrong's retreating men is accounted for simply enough in Bougainville's journal: The Indians lacked powder, having lost two barrels of it in the burning of the town. The speed of the retreat is another factor to be considered; troops who had taken nine days (August 30-September 7) to march from Fort Shirley to Kittanning covered the distance from Kittanning to Fort Lyttelton in four and a half days (September 8-12). In their return they were not encumbered by baggage, of course; supplies had been consumed on the outward march, and blankets and other baggage had been left at Blanket Hill, to the displeasure of the Provincial Commissioners. However, as Wauntaupenny later reported, a few Indians did follow the troops and pick off the straggler, Chambers. Of this man, whose fate was unknown at the time Armstrong made his report, Robison tells another story, which follows his mention of Andrew Douglas:

We had no more injury done until we came to this side of the Alleghany mountain, when one Samuel Chambers having left his coat at the Clear Fields [near present Ashville], desired leave of col. Armstrong to go back for his coat, and to bring three horses which had given out; col. Armstrong advised against it, but Chambers persisted in going, and so went back; when he came to the top of the mountain, a party of Indians fired on him but missed him; Chambers then steared towards Big Island, the Indians pursued and the third day killed him in French Margaret's Island. So the Indians told old capt. Patterson.

On Sunday night, September 12, the troops arrived at Fort Lyttelton, where, two days later, Armstrong dictated and signed his report to Governor Denny. His wound was causing him some trouble: "I beg the Favour of your Honr assoon as possible to furnish Governor Morris with a Copy of this Letter & The Gentlemen Commissioners for the Province with another as my present Indisposition neither admits me to write or dictate any more at this Time." The report in fact is in the handwriting of Lieu-

*PA1, III, 93-95.*
tenant Robert Callender, who in the following month was to be commissioned a captain.\(^3\)

In contrast to this account of the safe return of the main body of troops, there are the fragmentary stories of the nineteen soldiers and four liberated captives still missing when Armstrong made his report. We know that Samuel Chambers, one of the three men missing from Captain Ward's company, had been killed. So too had Ensign John Scott of Mercer's company. Like his captain, this man was a doctor; and Major James Burd, at Fort Augusta, wrote of him, on December 28, that

there was a very pretty Young Gent\(^{1}\) a Nephew of Mr. John Scott of Millany he was bred a Doct\& was an Ensign in the Western Battalion & was kill'd in this Action; his Father Lives in Maryland, he served his apprenticeship with one Doct\r Mercer an Intimate Acquaintance of myne and who was Cap\n of ye Comp\y in which Mr. Scott was Ensigne. . . \(^{24}\)

Two of the soldiers were taken by the Indians, according to Bougainville's information; one of these, presumably, was the "small Young Man" seen by Wauntaupenny. Of the liberated captives, two at least fell again into Indian hands, and were tortured to death at Kittanning. Other missing men made their way to safety, though the Pennsylvania Gazette of September 23, which gave its readers Armstrong's report of the expedition, was entirely too optimistic in adding that

Since receiving the above Return from Fort Littleton, we are informed, that Capt. Mercer, and 23 Persons, are returned safe, which makes up the Number of the Missing, and the four released Prisoners.

On September 20, someone wrote from Winchester, Virginia, "that three of Colonel Armstrong's Men had got to Fort Cumber-

\(^{3}\)Armstrong's manuscript report, preserved in PPC, has been printed in PA1, II, 767-775. As copied into PR, P, 34-38 (without the lists of casualties and rescued prisoners), it is printed in CR, VII, 257-263. It is paraphrased in Pa. Gazette, September 23, 1756 (No. 1448), p. 3, cols. 1-2. Prior to appearance in CR and PA1, the report was printed by Neville B. Craig, The Olden Time, I (1846), 76-82, and by (I. D. Rupp), Early History of Western Pennsylvania . . . (Pittsburgh and Harrisburg, 1848), 121-129. All quotations in the present article are from the original manuscript.

\(^{24}\)Division of Public Records: E. S. Thompson Collection, folder A-7.
land, after a March of nine Days; and that they were in a miserable Condition, having had nothing to subsist on but a Rattle Snake, and Gensang. Of the six men reported missing from Captain George Armstrong's company, one, "George Appleby (alias Doudy)," came down the West Branch by canoe to Fort Augusta, on September 29.

He reported that he belonged to Capt Geo: Armstrong's Company, & that he marched with Colo Armstrong on an Expedition to Kittanning on the Ohio which they set on fire & had an Engagement with the Indus whch lasted 6 hours & that they killed a great Number of them; that when the Colo returned from thence with his Battalion, he (appleby) with two others lost their way & could not come with the Party & was 19 days coming here.

But the famous story was that of Captain Mercer. By September 30, the Pennsylvania Gazette had a more accurate idea of his adventures:

We hear that Captain Mercer was 14 Days in getting to Fort Littleton. He had a miraculous Escape, living ten Days on two dried Clams and a Rattle Snake, with the Assistance of a few Berries. The Snake kept sweet for several Days, and, coming near Fort Shirley, he found a Piece of dry Beef, which our People had lost, and on Trial rejected it, because the Snake was better. His wounded Arm is in a good Way, tho' it could be but badly drest, and a Bone broken.

Major Burd, in the letter we have quoted, says that the Captu had his Arm brock with a Muskett Ball in this Action & was 15 days in the woods by himself without a Morsell of Victuals except a little Rattle snake which he gott in ye woods before he gott into an English Fort, he is now doing very well & Commands the Garrison at Shippinsburg—

These two accounts probably are as close as we shall get to the true story. Robison, as we have seen, knew a more elaborate ver-

—— Shippen Family Papers, Joseph Shippen's journal, under date of September 29, 1756.
tion of the tale, including incidents suspiciously unsuggested by the older accounts:

On the north side of the Alleghany mountain, he saw one day what he thought to be an Indian, and the other saw him, both took trees and stood a long time: at last the captain thought he would go forward and meet his fate, but when he came near, he found it to be one of his own men: both rejoiced to meet, and both in that situation scarcely able to walk they pushed over the mountain, and were not far from Franks town, when the soldier lay down unable to go any further, with an intention never more to rise. The captain went about seven miles when he also lay down giving up all hopes of ever getting home. At this time there was a company of Cherokee Indians in king's pay, and being at fort Littleton captain Hamilton sent some of them to search along the foot of the Alleghany mountain to see if there were any signs of Indians on that route, and these Indians came upon captain Mercer, able to rise, they gave him food, and he told them of the other, they took the captain's track and found him, and brought him to fort Littleton, carrying him on a bier of their own making.

Robison, be it remembered, doubled the length of Mercer's adventures to a month; but that time is still insufficient to account for the appearance of the Cherokees, not otherwise known to have been at Fort Lyttelton until May, 1757.

For happenings at Kittanning subsequent to the troops' retreat, we have the stories of three English prisoners. Marie Le Roy, Barbara Leininger, and Hugh Gibson made their escape in 1759, and the two women had their narrative published soon afterward (Hugh Gibson apparently is the "Owen Gibson" of their story). All three were in the settlement west of the river when the attack began, and were taken by the Indians to a place ten miles away. According to the Le Roy-Leininger narrative:

... After the English had withdrawn, we were again brought back to Kittanny, which town had been burned to the ground.

There we had the mournful opportunity of witnessing the cruel end of an English woman, who had attempted to flee out of her captivity and to return to the settlements
with Col. Armstrong. Having been recaptured by the savages, and brought back to Kittanny, she was put to death in an unheard of way. First, they scalped her; next, they laid burning splinters of wood, here and there, upon her body; and then they cut off her ears and fingers, forcing them into her mouth so that she had to swallow them. Amidst such torments, this woman lived from nine o'clock in the morning until toward sunset, when a French officer took compassion on her, and put her out of her misery. An English soldier, on the contrary, named John . . . , who escaped from prison at Lancaster, and joined the French, had a piece of flesh cut from her body, and ate it. When she was dead, the Indians chopped her in two, through the middle, and let her lie until the dogs came and devoured her.

Three days later an Englishman was brought in, who had, likewise attempted to escape with Col. Armstrong, and burned alive in the same village. His torments, however, continued only about three hours; but his screams were frightful to listen to. It rained that day very hard, so that the Indians could not keep up the fire. Hence they began to discharge gunpowder at his body. At last, amidst his worst pains, when the poor man called for a drink of water, they brought him melted lead, and poured it down his throat. This draught at once helped him out of the hands of the barbarians, for he died on the instant.

Gibson, whose recollections were printed much later, also tells of the death of the woman, whom he identifies as “wife of Alexander M’Allister, who had been taken at Tuscarora valley.”

“Soon after these occurrences,” says the Le Roy-Leininger narrative, “we were brought to Fort Duquesne, where we remained for about two months.” Of this Indian removal we have another report, whatever its reliability, made soon after the event. An English deserter from Fort Cumberland, apprehended in October, said

... That after the taking Kittanning the Indians came to Fort Du Quesne and told that they had buried upwards of 50 of their People that were killed there, and that

²⁷ For the two versions of Gibson’s story, see note 12. Gibson tells only of the death of the woman; but his later account, generally the vaguer, seems to borrow the detail of the rainstorm from the circumstances of the man’s death.
more were missing: That their Brethren the English had never struck them before in their Towns, and that it was at the Instigation of the French they (the Indians) had struck the English, and had now lost all the Goods they had received for Scalps, besides the Loss of their People; they therefore desired the French to let them know where they must settle. To this the French answered, that there was a fine Piece of Land, about four Miles on this Side of Fort Du Quesne, which would be a very commodious Situation for them; but the Indians told them, they would no longer continue in any Place between them and the English, but would remove to the other Side of Fort Du Quesne, as a Place of greater Safety...  

Relying on this and other information, Richard Peters wrote of the Indians that “after committing some Acts of the most horrid cruelty in roasting alive some English Women and Men Prisoners they went to Fort Duquesne where they were supplied with Thirty French and Thirty Indians with whom they returned to get in their Indian Corn which they intend to carry off and to move nearer the French Fort for Protection.”

However much we may discount the tales of recaptured deserters, it is certain that the Indians withdrew from Kittanning to towns on Big Beaver River. Marie Le Roy and Barbara Leininger tell us that they accompanied the Indians to “Sackum” (Saukunk, present Beaver), and, in the spring of 1757, to “Kaschkaschkung” (Kuskusky, present New Castle). Hugh Gibson also relates that he spent this time in the towns on the Big Beaver—Saukunk, Kuskusky, and Shenango—; and it was to Kuskusky that Pisquitomen conducted Christian Frederick Post in the summer of 1758 for conferences with Shingas and the Beaver.

The attack on Kittanning, as our informants describe it, and the immediately subsequent incidents on the frontier and in the Indian country, as we have traced them, may seem an inadequate basis for the common interpretation of the expedition as a great victory; but that it was so interpreted we have excellent evidence. The issue of the Pennsylvania Gazette following that which first

\[29\] See Note 17.
printed the news of the attack carried on its first page a triumphant "ODE to the Inhabitants of PENNSYLVANIA":

Rouze, rouze at once, and boldly chase
From their deep Haunts the savage Race,
Till they confess you Men.
Let other ARMSTRONGS grace the Field:
Let other Slaves before them yield,
And tremble round DU QUESNE.

A week later, the same publication carried another tribute:

We hear that Colonel ARMSTRONG, and his Officers, have generously given their Part of the Money for the Scalps brought in from Kittanning, likewise for the released Prisoners, and what Plunder they got, to the private Men, as a Reward, for their good Behaviour in the late Expedition, and to encourage them to go out again against the Indians. An Instance of Generosity this, which shews that those Gentlemen did not go against the Enemy, from a mercenary Motive, but from a Regard for the Service of their King and bleeding Country.

The Corporation of the City of Philadelphia had a medal struck in honor of Armstrong and his officers; and Mayor Attwood Shute's letter of January 5, 1757, which accompanied the medal and other gifts praised Armstrong's "Conduct and publick Spirit . . . the signal Proofs of Courage and personal Bravery given by you, and the Officers and Soldiers under your Command."

Thomas Penn presented Armstrong with a sword and belt; and some years later the Proprietors ordered a tract of land surveyed for Armstrong, "Including the old Kittanning Town." The patent for this tract, dated March 22, 1775, makes the grant "In Testimony and Memorial of the Services of Colonel John Armstrong in his arduous and Successful Expedition against the Indians at the

30 Pa. Gazette, September 30, 1756 (No. 1449), p. 1, col. 1. Of ten stanzas, the one given here is the ninth.
31 Ibid., October 7, 1756 (No. 1450), p. 3, col. 3. The Commissioners appear to have been out of funds at this time. Their later report lists payment of 349 pounds, 13 shillings "To Col. John Armstrong, for Sundry on the Expedition to Kittanning," under date of October 29, and that of 271 pounds, 17 shillings, sixpence, "To Col. John Armstrong, for sundry Prisoners and Scalps brought from Kittanning," under October 30 (PA8, V, 4370).
Indian Town and Settlement at Kittanning on the Allegany which was the first Instance of carrying the War into the Indian Country and gave a Check to their Incursions into this Province"; and it pointedly names the tract "Victory."\(^{22}\)

But here again, in evaluation, we must remember the situation and background against which the raid was carried out. As we noted, the offensive operation was essential for two purposes, to give a setback to the Indians, and to shore up the morale of the Province; and its success should be measured in terms of these objectives.

In consideration of the first objective, these points are to be noted: First, that although the probable Indian casualties were not great, they included Captain Jacobs, one of the two chief warriors; second, that although the settlements at Kittanning were not entirely destroyed by the attackers, they were abandoned by the Indians for less exposed settlements; third, that, as subsequent events showed, the Indians' confidence was badly shaken and they did not resume their warfare with the old vigor and effectiveness. That the Indians suffered a defeat at Kittanning is beyond ques-

tion; the Province's ability to pay for such victories may be less certain.

In respect of the second objective, the results are less clearcut. The Kittanning expedition did not remove—nor had it been expected to remove—the necessity for consolidating the Province's western defenses. Fort George, Fort Granville, and Fort Shirley were not reoccupied; and Armstrong's forces were reassigned to a less advanced line, comprising Carlisle Fort, Fort Morris (Shippensburg), McDowell's Mill (later replaced by Fort Loudoun), and Fort Lyttelton. Nor was there any real Provincial sequel to this attack; no subsequent expedition could hope for the same advantage of surprise, and two years were to elapse before the British advance to the Ohio under General Forbes.

The expedition was intended to bolster morale, however, and it was of course exploited in what we now should call propaganda; indeed, it lent itself well to such treatment. Here lies the simple explanation for the discrepancy, as it appears to us, between the facts of the affair and the note of public rejoicing. We may feel that a military undertaking whose success depended so much on fortuitous circumstances, and which of course could not be repeated, was entirely too risky; but to surprise the Indians in their homes, to return successfully with "Prisoners and Scalps taken at Kittanning... with Jacobs's Horn and Pouch, and many Belts of Wampum," was just the sort of table-turning feat to delight the frontiersmen. In similar mood, even Captain Mercer's precarious survival took on something of the air of a triumph. All in all, the present-day reader with a fondness for drawing parallels may be reminded of Major James Doolittle's attack on Tokyo in the darker days of a more recent conflict. There were people, west of the Susquehanna especially, who, in soberer mood, took a more realistic view, however. The Indian raids were not wholly at an end: On September 20, a week after the return of Armstrong's men, the house and mill of George Brown were burned at Conococheague, Brown himself was killed, and a woman and two children were taken prisoner; and the note of optimism in Mr.

33 The quoted passage is from Pa. Gazette, October 14, 1756 (No. 1451), p. 3, col. 2.
Since the Reduction of the Kittanning under Colonel Armstrong, we have not been much disturb'd—Many poor Families who were oblidg'd to flee without Bread to eat, or Money to buy any, are return'd to their Plantations, & enjoy both Quiet & Plenty at present.—At Carlisle they have erected a large Stockade Fort, which I hope will be Proof against any Attacks that can be made with Musquetry; So that Cumberland seems to revive.—But, alas! I fear the approaching Spring will again make us tremble. We have a great deal to do, & but little done . . .

We might sum it up by saying that in its effect upon the Indians the Kittanning expedition was, by good fortune, a measured success, and that in its effect upon the people of the Province it was successful, with reservations; and, having said this; we may quote the remainder of Barton's opinion:

... Tho' the killing of a few Indians & burning their Huts at the Kittanning is an Action not very considerable in itself, yet it is the best that has yet appear'd for this Province, And will I hope in the End countervail the Expence the Government has been at to maintain it.—