Among the more important problems which confronted Major George Washington in 1754 were those of securing supplies and transporting them through the wilderness, and of maintaining favorable relations with the Indians. Croghan assisted in solving each of these problems. Croghan and Trent furnished Washington with much of the powder and lead which he used at Fort Necessity. On May 30, 1754, following a conference with Governor Dinwiddie at Winchester, Croghan contracted to transport to Redstone Creek 10,000 pounds of flour by means of packhorses. He also promised John Carlyle, the Commissary for the Virginia forces, to transport an additional 50,000 pounds. Flour reached Washington's soldiers so slowly that at one time they had none for six days. In answer to Washington's complaint, Carlyle explained that Gist and Croghan were not fulfilling their agreements. Carlyle added that Gist had promised to try to hasten delivery and that since Croghan was at Washington's camp, the latter could force him to keep his contract. Of Croghan he wrote: "I understand he's not a man of Truth and therefore not to be depended on . . . ", and stated that Dinwiddie
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saw his error and was sorry he had put him in a position of trust. Washington, himself, wrote to Fairfax: "The promises of those traders . . . are not to be depended upon; a most flagrant instance of which we experienced in Croghan, who . . . had the assurance, during our sufferings, to tantalize us, and boast of the quantity he could furnish, as he did of the number of horses he could command . . . out of two hundred head he had contracted for, we never had above twenty-five employed in bringing the flour that was engaged for the camp; and even this, small as the quantity was, did not arrive within a month of the time it was to have been delivered." Carlyle and young Washington, placed in positions of responsibility in the midst of serious events, were probably too severe in their condemnation of Croghan.59

When Washington started on his retreat to Fort Necessity he impressed the packhorses of Croghan and Trent. As a result, such furs and merchandise as they still had in the woods were left behind for the French to seize.60

Croghan was also associated with Washington as an Indian agent. Dinwiddie wrote Washington on June 1, 1754: "Mr. Geo. Croghan, a Gent. well acquainted with Ind’n Affairs, is engag’d by me to serve His M’y as an Interpreter." and added that he was sending some Indian presents in whose distribution Croghan and Montour were to assist and advise him. Washington expected Croghan to enlist the aid of a large number of Indians. The task was a difficult one. Some Indians came to his camp as friends and others as spies. Many of the Indians felt that Washington regarded them as slaves who were to be sent out alone every day scouting and attacking the enemy. In spite of great efforts on the part of Croghan and Montour but thirty warriors joined Washington and of these not more than half
were in service at any one time. Washington was sorely disappointed with the failure of Croghan and Montour. They had stated that their influence with the Indians was so strong that they would be able to enlist a large number to aid him. Their failure is largely explained by Washington, himself, who wrote to Fairfax: "... if we depend on Indian assistance, we must have a large quantity of proper Indian goods to reward their services, and make them presents. It is by this means alone, that the French command such an interest among them, and that we had so few. This with the scarcity of provisions, was proverbial; would induce them to ask, when they were to join us, if we meant to starve them as well as ourselves." The campaign of 1754 gave Croghan and Washington their first military experience. That the campaign failed was not due to their conduct. Both were to profit by their experience.61

The news of the defeat at Fort Necessity was brought to Governor Hamilton by an express sent by Callender, one of Croghan's partners. After Washington's retreat, not an English flag waved beyond the Alleghenies and soon nearly all the Ohio tribes drew their scalping knives to aid the French. Croghan now left Virginia and because of his debts retired to Aughwick. About two hundred Indians, still faithful to the English, without an invitation sought safety by following their old friend to his new abode. This farthest outpost in Pennsylvania soon became an important center of activity. Leading Indian traders and frontiersmen visited Croghan from time to time; Indian runners brought intelligence from the Ohio which was sent on to Philadelphia by expresses and then forwarded to Governors Sharpe of Maryland and Dinwiddie of Virginia. James Burd, one of Croghan's visitors, wrote on September 25, 1754: "On Friday night last about 12 o'Clock there arrived at Auchwick
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while I was there one of our Indians who had traveled night and day from the French fort to give us Intelligence that there was Three hundred French Indians arrived to make a Divertion upon our Back Inhabitants. This Mr. Croghan desired me to acquaint his Honour our Governour which you’ll please do.”

Croghan soon found thrust upon him the troublesome problem of providing food for the Indian refugees. They erected some twenty cabins near his house and expected to be provided for by the provincial government in accordance with its promise. Game was not plentiful nearby and the Indians feared to penetrate far into the forest. They helped themselves to such provisions as Croghan’s clearing furnished, destroying thirty acres of Indian corn. Croghan felt compelled to purchase provisions for them. Unscrupulous traders, supplied by some county officials, sold liquor to the Indians. Some of the Indians traded for liquor even the clothes which they wore and then came to Croghan expecting him to furnish them with new clothing. Croghan endeavored to prevent the sale of liquor. He wrote to Hamilton: “. . . nor do I even keep one Drop in my own House.” Later he wrote to Governor Morris: “I am oblig’d to give them a Cag Now and then myself for a frolick, but that is Attended with no Expense to the Government nor no bad Consequence to the Indians as I Do itt but onst a Month. . . .” In order to determine what should be done, Hamilton in August, 1754, sent Weiser out to investigate and report. He met the Indians in council, gave them presents and told them that they would be taken care of by the government. He brought £300 to Croghan to reimburse him and to enable him to buy provisions until the Assembly should determine the policy to be followed. Croghan was also told to present a bill for the damage to his crops and was assured that payment for his services would be duly considered.
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As winter came on Croghan's task became more difficult. Gifts had to be given to visiting Indians and to messengers and scouts; Virginia accused him of enticing friendly warriors to leave her soil; the Indians suspected him of holding back goods when he did not supply all their wants; the government of Pennsylvania delayed supplying him with funds until it was necessary for him to secure provisions on his own credit from inhabitants of the back country; and to add to his troubles his own government distrusted him. Weiser had violated the Governor's instructions by leaving with Croghan money for purchasing provisions instead of purchasing the provisions himself and leaving them with Croghan. He defended his action by saying that Croghan "might (if he intended it) purloin a great deal of it, but I have the Opinion of him that he will do Justice. . . . Mr. Croghan must either be trusted to buy and distribute Provision or the Government must keep a Man there in whom they can confide. . . ." Croghan felt this keenly and wrote to Peters, his intimate friend: "I think itt to hard to be att a Loss by acting for the good of the Province, besides Laying my Self under a great many Reflections. . . ." After some delay the Assembly paid, one by one, the bills which Croghan presented. The total cost to Pennsylvania of maintaining the Indian refugees was about £1000.64

Croghan was glad to be called away from Aughwick to aid General Braddock. He offered the free use of his house to the man who should take care of the Indians in his absence. He informed Governor Morris that all of his packhorses had been engaged for Braddock's expedition and that he therefore could no longer transport provisions for the Indians. He provided Braddock with about fifty packhorses and this was the largest number furnished by one individual. One compensation which Croghan received for his trying
services at Aughwick during the year 1754–1755, was a strong recommendation by Peters to the new Governor, Robert H. Morris. Also, these services helped in persuading the Assembly to pass the act which granted him ten years’ relief from his debts.  

Croghan was called away from Aughwick to assist in laying out two roads for Braddock’s expedition. Braddock planned to advance upon Fort DuQuesne by way of the Potomac and contemplated the establishment of a garrison at the forks of the Ohio. He wished two roads to be built in Pennsylvania that he might be able to secure reinforcements by two different routes and that he might have access by the most direct route possible to the Susquehanna and Delaware Valleys—the “bread basket” of the British colonies. One of these roads was to lead through the Cumberland Valley to his camp at Will’s Creek, the other to run westward from Shippensburg and connect near Fort DuQuesne with the road which he himself intended to build. So important did he consider them that he expressed his intention to postpone his advance until they were finished.

On February 24, 1755, Governor Morris received a letter from Quartermaster General Sir John St. Clair asking that these roads be built. He at once went to the Speaker of the Assembly, who with a committee controlled a fund of £5000, but they declined to aid. Fortunately, the Speaker of the Delaware Assembly, who had sole control over a fund of £1000, agreed to pay the expenses of a survey. This enabled Morris to appoint commissioners to survey routes for the two roads. For this work, which was to be done as secretly as possible, he appointed on March 12, George Croghan, John Armstrong, James Burd, William Buchanan and Adam Hoops. Croghan furnished packhorses and Indian scouts and he was expected to satisfy the curiosity of the Indians. He was also depended upon
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to guide the party, as he was the only one of the commissioners who was familiar with the region which was to be penetrated.67

The commissioners started from Carlisle on March 29 with two pilots, four packhorsemen, three blaisers, two chain-carriers and some Indians. The shortest route to the Ohio which they found followed an old Indian trail and traders’ path; it began south of Shippenburg and then crossed the mountains, following Raystown Creek for part of the way. So dangerous was the work owing to scouting and hunting parties of the French and their Indian allies that the Indians who accompanied the party deserted until but one remained. A good route was found and blazed to within eighteen miles of the forks of the Youghiogheny. Here the approach of a French party caused a hurried return to Fort Cumberland.

The report of the commissioners to Governor Morris narrates the manner in which they were here received by General St. Clair after they had risked their lives in the service of the army: “We waited for Sir John’s coming to Camp . . . [he] treated Us in a very disagreeable manner; he is extremely warm and angry at our Province; he would not look at our Draughts nor suffer any Representations to be made to him in regard of the Province, but stormed like a Lyon Rampant. He said our Commission to lay out the Road should have been issued in January last upon his first Letter, that doing it now is doing of nothing, that the Troops must march on the first of May, that the want of this Road and the Provisions promised by Pennsylvania has retarded the Expedition, which may cost them their Lives . . . ; That instead of marching to the Ohio he would in nine days march his Army into Cumberland County to cut the Roads, press Horses, Wagons, etc.; that he would not suffer a Soldier to handle an Axe, but by Fire and Sword
oblige the Inhabitants to do it . . . ; that he would kill all kind of Cattle and carry away the Horses, burn the Houses, etc. . . . That he would tomorrow write to England by a Man-of-War, shake Mr. Penn’s Proprietaryship, and represent Pennsylvania as a disaffected Province . . . and told Us to go to the General if We pleased, who would give Us ten bad Words for one that he had given.” Morris complained to Braddock of St. Clair’s words and was assured that the latter was ashamed of what he had said and had been reprimanded. His words, however, had some effect and represented the feelings of the English officers who were disgusted with the lack of support they received in the Quaker province. Upon the return of the commissioners they were each paid £7, 10s. and all expenses for their twenty-five days of service.

The Quaker Assembly finally agreed to pay for the construction of the roads which had been laid out and the commissioners who had surveyed the roads were instructed to supervise the work of construction. Amidst great difficulties and dangers a road was cut westward to a point beyond the present site of Bedford, when the news of Braddock’s defeat caused the workmen to hasten back. The entire work had cost the province £3000. Three years later Forbes made good use of the work that had been done and carried it on to the Ohio. Thereafter, the road which Croghan had helped to lay out remained a great thoroughfare to the West until it was displaced by the canal and the railroad.

Croghan, however, had no part in the actual construction of the road. On April 23, instructions were sent to him to take to Fort Cumberland from Aughwick as many Indian warriors as he could. This was the result of several factors: of the four hundred Cherokees and Catawbas which Dinwiddie and Gist had promised Braddock, not one came; the Iroquois
were with Shirley and Johnson; and the Ohio Indians were overawed by the French. When Braddock heard of the refugees at Aughwick he wrote Morris asking him to send the warriors to Fort Cumberland and to take care at Aughwick of their women and children. Croghan received his instructions on the night of April 30. The next day he met the Indians in council and made plans to start the following morning. Before starting out he sent trusty messengers to all the Ohio tribes urging them not to oppose Braddock. The expense of bringing the Indians to Fort Cumberland was advanced by Croghan, who later had trouble to collect it from Pennsylvania.

Croghan brought to Braddock about one hundred Indians. On May 15, Croghan wrote to Johnson that he had "forty odd fighting Men and Lads," chiefly Iroquois. These warriors refused to leave their families behind and so the women and children accompanied them. Braddock took Croghan and Montour into his service and to Croghan he gave a commission. A separate camp was provided for the Indians and Braddock issued orders that they were not to be spoken to nor molested. On May 12, Braddock and his officers met the Indians in council and urged them to join his expedition; a "ceremony of Drams round" followed. On the 18th, another council was held at which the Indians showed their appreciation of the presents by making "a most horrible noise, dancing all night." On the 19th, Braddock again met the Indians and was informed that they would take up the hatchet and serve as scouts for him. Thereupon Braddock ordered "3 Howitzers, 3 12-Pounders, and 3 Cohorns to be fired, all the drums and fifes playing, and beating the point of war, which astonished and pleased the Indians greatly. They then retired to their own Camp, where they ate a bullock, and danced their war dance. . . ." On the 22d they were furnished with arms and clothing.
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A mutual interest and curiosity soon developed between the soldiers from Europe and the red men. A visit to the camp of the latter was one of the best diversions available for the soldier when off duty. Richard Peters, after a visit to Braddock, reported that the Indians “were extremely dissatisfied at not being consulted with by the General, and got frequently into high Quarrels, their Squas bringing them money in Plenty which they got from the Officers, who were scandalously fond of them. . . .” Peters recommended to Braddock that the women and children be sent home and Colonel Innes acted likewise, adding that all but ten warriors should also be sent home as this number would be sufficient for scouts. When the women and children were ordered home most of the warriors went along as an escort and never returned. Thereafter, Braddock seems to have ceased to give much attention to the Indians. Their number instead of increasing on the march as Croghan had expected, decreased until he had but eight Indians left. At times some Indians from the Ohio would visit Braddock and promise to join him, but they always failed to keep their promise. Gordon wrote: “These people are villains, and always side with the strongest.”

The service performed on the march by Croghan and his eight faithful Indians, including the two chiefs, Scarroyaddy and Monacatootha, staunch friends to the English, must not be underestimated. Croghan furnished the messengers who kept open the communications between Braddock and Burd’s roadcutters in Pennsylvania as they both moved westward into the wilderness. Croghan and the Indians were continually at the front and on the flanks of the army as it marched westward. On June 19, the French captured Scarroyaddy and his son who were saved only by the refusal of the hostile Indians to allow them to be killed. On July 6, during a skirmish with hostile Indians, the
British soldiers by mistake fired on their own Indians, killing the son of Scarroyaddy. At times when stragglers were scalped, Croghan and his Indians with volunteers would be sent out to try to retaliate. It was not until they were within a few miles of Fort DuQuesne that Croghan’s Indians faltered in securing intelligence. Finally two of them agreed to go out; they came within a half mile of the fort and brought back the scalp of a French officer. A party which included Croghan and his Indians was then sent out to reconnoitre.

Two days later, on the fatal July 9, 1755, came the French attack. Braddock was not surprised, as is so often stated. Croghan and his Indians, Gist, six mounted Virginians, the engineers led by Gordon and a detachment of three hundred men headed his march. This vanguard was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Gage, later commander-in-chief of all the British forces in America. Gordon first saw the French and Indians advancing in a body led by Beaujeau and dispersing when Beaujeau waved his hat. A few weeks after the battle Croghan told his friend Charles Swaine that he “had a free sight of the Enemy as they approached. . . they were about three hundred, the French in shirts and the Indians naked . . . lead by three French officers with hats in their hands, and with which they gave a Signal for the firing.”

No record has been found which tells of Croghan’s conduct during the murderous battle which ensued. There is a record, however, which shows that in the disgraceful retreat which followed he manifested a high degree of courage and loyalty to his unfortunate commander-in-chief. Braddock had five horses shot under him and he was finally mortally wounded. His own redcoats fled so precipitately that Captain Orme, his aide-de-camp, could prevail on none to tarry long enough to carry off their dying general—not even when
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he offered a reward of sixty guineas. Two Americans, Croghan and Washington, helped to place Braddock on horseback and later into a wagon; their fire helped to keep back the enemy as they recrossed the Monongahela. The faithless conduct of the British soldiers added to the terrible defeat and his wounds caused Braddock to insist that he be left upon the field of battle to die like an old Roman. When this was denied him he attempted to seize Croghan's pistols to end his life. Croghan and Washington remained with Braddock till midnight on July 9, when they were sent with six light horse to secure aid from Colonel Dunbar.77

With the memories of the bloody defeat fresh in his mind and still subject to imprisonment for debt, Croghan returned during the late summer of 1755 to his home at Aughwick. When the causes for the catastrophe were given, it was charged that the Indian traders and frontiersmen had undermined the morale of the British soldiers by telling them that if they fought in their accustomed manner they would certainly be defeated.78 The failure of the expedition reacted on Croghan by discrediting him with Governor Morris and his Council. They ignored him for months to come, even though his services were sorely needed. When Croghan had some advice or news which he felt ought to be given to the Governor, he wrote confidentially to his old friend ex-Governor Hamilton.79 In spite of these conditions Croghan's temporary service as an imperial official gave him a greater feeling of responsibility for Indian affairs and helped to prepare him for a permanent imperial appointment.80

The defeat of Braddock let loose upon the Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia frontiers a fiendish swarm of savages which gave to the Quaker province its first taste of real Indian warfare. Adam Hoops, a
friend of Croghan, wrote from Carlisle on November 3, 1755, to Governor Morris: "We, to be sure, are in as bad Circumstances as ever any poor Christians were ever in, For the Cries of Widowers, Widows, fatherless and Motherless Children, with many others for their Relations, are enough to Pierce the most hardest of hearts; Likewise it's a very Sorrowful specticle to to see those that Escaped with their lives not a Mouthful to Eat, or Bed to lie on, or Cloths to Cover their Nakedness, or keep them warm, but all they had consumed into Ashes." 81

This deplorable condition in Pennsylvania was due to internal as well as to external causes. Quaker pacifism, the quarrel of the Assembly with the Proprietors over the taxation of their estates and with the crown over the issuance of paper money, and the failure to manage Indian affairs properly were the most important internal causes. Croghan wrote that because of the lack of funds little was being done to keep friendly Indians steadfast and that he was glad to have no part in the short-sighted Indian policy which was being pursued. 82

On October 31, 1755, five western leaders sent an appeal to Governor Morris saying in part: "We are all in uproar, all in Disorder, all willing to do, and have little in our power. We have no authority, no commissions, no officers practiced in War. . . ." Trent wrote to Peters from Carlisle on February 15, 1756: "... all the People have left their Houses betwixt this and the Mountain, some come to Town and others gathering into little Forts; they are moving their Effects from Shippensburg, every one thinks of flying; unless the Government fall upon some effectual Method, and that immediately, of securing the Frontiers, there will not be one Inhabitant in this Valley one Month longer. There is a few of us endeavour to keep up the Spirits of the People." 83
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One of these few staunch leaders in the great crisis was Croghan. While people were fleeing even from Shippensburg and while John Harris, who lived on the eastern bank of the Susquehanna, was writing, "I have this day cut holes in my House, and is determined to hold out to the last extremity...," Croghan was raising a volunteer company and fortifying himself at his own expense at Aughwick, forty miles further west than Harris' Ferry. On October 9, 1755, he asked Charles Swaine of Shippensburg for the immediate loan of six guns with some powder and lead, promising to return them as soon as he received his shipment from Maryland. He wrote Johnson that he and his company were ready to serve their King whenever called upon. After his fort was finished he wrote to Hamilton: "I have about 40 men with me there, butt how long I shall be able to keep itt, I realy can't tell." Doubtless his company was composed of old employees and associates in the Indian trade. Aughwick became a rallying place for Indians who still espoused the English cause. Several times it was reported that Croghan and his men had been cut off. Friendly Indians came to warn him to save his scalp, which would be no small prize to the French. Croghan and his men, however, remained in their little island fortress in the wilderness. Illimitable woods encompassed them and afforded an ideal lurking ground for hostile forces.84

At last when conditions reached the nadir, a peaceful political revolution occurred by which the Quakers lost their power. The colony now acted. An appropriation of £60,000 was made for defense and the Proprietors offered a land bounty of 1000 acres to every colonel, 500 acres to every captain and 200 acres to every private who should enlist. An offer of $350 was made for the scalps of chiefs Shingas and Captain Jacobs and the government offered a bounty of $150
for the scalp of every male Indian above ten years of age and $50 for the scalp of every Indian woman. The Board of Commissioners, appointed by the Assembly to supervise the expenditure of funds, planned and had built a chain of forts guarding the passes of the Blue Mountains from the Delaware River to the Maryland border. In spite of all these measures, the stealthy savage, in the dead hours of the night, fell upon the inhabitants at the least suspected points. Safety depended upon the capture of Fort DuQuesne and upon the work of the Indian agent rather than upon the erection of innumerable blockhouses and stockades. 

Most of the Indian traders who had been associated with Croghan entered the provincial military service. Callender, Ward, Smallman and Trent became captains and Crawford, Prentice and Alexander McKee became lieutenants. 

On December 2, 1755, the act granting Croghan and Trent ten years’ relief from their debts was passed. On December 18, Croghan was examined before the Council on the defense of the frontier and on the same day Hamilton gave him a captain’s commission. The situation had become so serious that Hamilton had been called to the Council and while Governor Morris was in the western part of the province examining the defenses, a dedimus had been given Hamilton, thereby practically giving Pennsylvania two governors for the time being. Hamilton wrote Morris on December 18: “I have given Geo. Croghan a Captain’s Commission; He is to raise the men immediately, and Superintend the building over Susquehannah, as I knew not whom else to employ, and upon Supposition that He is honest, no body is fitter for that Service.” At last Croghan had secured the position for which he had yearned. He at once entered upon his duties with great vigor.

As captain, Croghan received 7s. 6d. per day and
was eligible for a land bounty of 500 acres. He was ordered to proceed across the Susquehanna and select sites for, and erect, three stockades. Each was to be fifty feet square, with blockhouses on each of two corners and with barracks capable of accommodating fifty men. On December 17, 200 guns, 300 pounds powder, 500 pounds lead, 2000 flints, 26 brass kettles and 240 blankets were issued to him; on January 1, 1756, he also received 1 barrel powder, 1 drum and 7 casks of nails. After the forts had been built and men enlisted for their defense, Croghan was given command of his own stockade at Aughwick. This was strengthened and named Fort Shirley. For its garrison of 75 men Pennsylvania furnished only 30 guns. Additional guns of a better grade, tools and other supplies were furnished by Croghan, himself. On June 1, 1756, Croghan was paid £200 for the equipment which he had furnished and for the work which he had done on Fort Shirley before the government assumed control over it.88

Croghan was stationed at Fort Shirley during the early part of 1756. Here he had charge of routine garrison duty. Patrols were sent out each day to scour the woods; spies as well as friendly Indians visited him. When Washington, who was in charge of the defense of Virginia’s frontier, wished three trusty Indian messengers to send to the Ohio and Wabash Indians, Croghan provided them. Morris ordered Croghan to secure all possible intelligence of the movements and designs of the French and Indians. Croghan sent “Delaware Jo” to the Ohio. This Indian reported that all of the Ohio tribes had taken up the hatchet and that a large number of Indians were gathered at Kittanning and had with them more than one hundred prisoners from Pennsylvania and Virginia. This information resulted in Armstrong’s daring and successful expedition. It started out from
Fort Shirley and attacked Kittanning in 1756. Morris, however, who seems never to have had a high estimate of Croghan, wrote that he "never procured me any [intelligence] that was very material. . . ." 89

Croghan was called away from Fort Shirley for a short time in January, 1756, to assist in the Indian conferences at Harris’ Ferry and Carlisle. But one Seneca and one Mohawk Indian came to Harris’ Ferry. When but seven Indians came to Carlisle, where were present Governor Morris, ex-Governor Hamilton, two members of the Board of Commissioners and Weiser, and when Croghan failed to appear until two days before the treaty was to open, he was asked to explain. He replied that he had been busy recruiting men and building forts and that the Indians were out hunting. The attempt to enlist the aid of the upper Susquehanna Indians proved a failure. The contrast between these conferences and the conferences held a few years before show to what extent the tide had turned against the English. 90

After Croghan returned from Carlisle, news of the preparations at Fort DuQuesne by the French and Indians to attack his fort on about March 1, 1756, was brought to him by his Indian friends. Captain Coulon de Villiers, anxious to avenge the death of his brother, Jumonville, set out in the spring of 1756 to attack Croghan’s fort, but illness forced him to return. Thinking that Croghan was still at Fort Shirley, he set out again on July 13 with fifty-five men, but lost his way and came upon Fort Granville instead. This he attacked and destroyed. The destruction of Fort Granville, located east of Fort Shirley, together with the weakness of the latter due to its poor water supply, caused Fort Shirley to be abandoned in the fall of 1756. 91

Croghan had left Fort Shirley before its abandonment and never returned to Aughwick to reside. He
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held his captain's commission but about three months, resigning it in March, 1756. On March 15 he was paid in full for his outlays while he was captain. His successor, Captain Mercer, at once had difficulty in keeping his company filled. Croghan had raised men for the defense of the frontier and erected forts in a very expeditious manner, but not so frugally as the Commissioners thought he might have done. Disputes over accounts followed and Croghan, who felt himself unjustly treated and unappreciated, resigned. In June, 1756, he informed Morris that he had not received pay upon a warrant from Braddock and asked him for a recommendation to the new commander-in-chief, General Shirley. This Morris gave to him and he left for Albany. Here he soon entered the imperial service under Sir William Johnson.92

From the very beginning of Croghan's official relations to Pennsylvania in 1747 until their end in 1756, he never possessed the absolute confidence of most of the colonial officials. Various illustrations of their lack of confidence have been given in this chapter. During the years 1754 to 1756 he was charged with perfidious conduct on three different occasions. He was suspected of participating in the illicit trade whereby the French at Fort DuQuesne received not only guns, powder and lead, but also intelligence of the movements of the English. The English traders at Aughwick and along Raystown Creek were so active in this trade that Braddock took measures to have it stopped.93

Serious charges were also brought against Croghan because of his relation to the letters written by Captain Stobo, an English hostage at Fort DuQuesne. Stobo, at the risk of his life, wrote two letters to Colonel Innes, a commander of the Virginia forces; in one he enclosed a plan of Fort DuQuesne. These letters he succeeded in sending with two Indians who
were going to Aughwick in August, 1754. Croghan, probably not appreciating their significance, opened the letters and sent copies to Hamilton. As a result, the French learned about it and Stobo suffered close confinement. The opening of Stobo’s letters prompted Governor Sharpe of Maryland to write to Morris and suggest that Croghan be placed under surveillance. Sharpe accused Croghan of being a Roman Catholic, of harboring at Aughwick other Catholics who were in communication with the French, and of persuading the Indians to keep away from the camp at Will’s Creek. Morris replied that he was informed that Croghan was not a Catholic, that Croghan had himself warned the authorities against illicit traders and regretted his indiscretion in opening Stobo’s letters. As to the other charges, Morris ordered Weiser to investigate them quietly and wrote Sharpe: “...I hope they will not turn out to be anything very Material, or that will effect his faithfulness to the trust reposed in him, which at this time is of Great importance. . . .” These secret attacks on Croghan’s character were doubtless the cause of some of his troubles at Aughwick and of Morris’ hesitation to call upon him to help defend the frontier in 1755.4

The most serious accusations against Croghan, however, were associated with the famous “Filius Gallicæ” letters to the Duc de Mirepoix, the French Ambassador to England from 1749 to 1755. They were written by someone in America in January and March, 1756, and were sent by way of Londonderry, London and Amsterdam. They were intercepted in Ireland and England. The writer stated that he was French by birth, a Roman Catholic and a trusted British army officer of high rank, but devoted to France; and that there were in Pennsylvania many discontented German and Irish Catholics among whom he could raise from 10,000 to 15,000 troops. To be
able to do this, he asked for money, French passports, arms and military commissions. He gave such accurate intelligence of the English plans that even the British officials in London were enlightened by the letters.\textsuperscript{95}

To the statesmen and military leaders who were responsible for the maintenance of the British Empire at the time when report after report came from America telling of reverses and inefficiency, these letters seemed of vast importance. Morris wrote to Governor Hardy of New York: "I am with you in opinion that the French, both in Europe and America, have intelligence of every thing we do, and that we have many Spyes amongst us. . . ."\textsuperscript{96} The Earl of Halifax, President of the Board of Trade, wrote to Hardy: "It may be nothing.—It may be an Artifice to draw a little money from France. . . . But on the other hand, it may be a matter of the highest consequence. . . ." So important were these letters considered that the highest civil and military officials in America were ordered to investigate the matter in person with the utmost secrecy.

The author, however, was never discovered. The Indian traders and Catholics of Pennsylvania and Maryland were especially suspected. Morris had Peters send to Hardy specimens of the handwriting of all the leading Indian traders of Pennsylvania. Lydus, Joncourt, a Popish priest, a Jesuit of Philadelphia, Washington and Croghan were mentioned as possible authors. Henry Fox, Secretary of State, wrote to the Duke of Devonshire on April 20, 1756: "One Captain George Croghan, an Intriguing, Disaffected Person, an Indian Trader, in Pennsylvania, was very much suspected. . . ." Fox ordered Colonel Webb, commander-in-chief of the British forces in America at the time, to make particular inquiry in regard to Croghan and if he found the suspicion justi-
fied, to send Croghan and all his accomplices with the evidence against them to England. John Pownall, Secretary to the Board of Trade, appears to have been responsible for the attention centered on Croghan.

The authorship as well as an estimate of the importance of the "Filius Gallicæ" letters remains one of the unsolved problems of history. It is not probable that Croghan was the author. The letters were not in his handwriting. Hardy and Morris did not consider the suspicions of Croghan justified. Johnson, to whom the records of the case had been opened, revealed his opinion when he appointed Croghan as his Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs. All of the relations which Croghan had had with the French for over a decade would lead him to a policy of revenge and not one of cooperation with them. A study of Croghan's character as revealed by his entire life would not lead one to suspect him of playing the part of a traitor.

Because of the very secret nature of the investigation few people ever knew that Croghan was suspected of treachery; he, himself, may never have been aware of it. That he had rivals and enemies whose reports caused English officials to know him as an intriguing, discontented man, unworthy of trust, is evident; this factor was probably one cause of many of his troubles. One direct effect of the shadow cast over his reputation can be traced; the Earl of Loudoun declined Croghan's offer to recruit a company of rangers and enter Loudoun's service at their head. Instead, Loudoun suggested to Johnson that Croghan's services be utilized as an Indian agent.

The mistrust displayed towards Croghan by colonial and imperial officials was due to various factors. He was handicapped as well as aided by certain traits in his character. He was a born diplomat and put into practice Talleyrand's famous dictum that language is
made to conceal thoughts and not to reveal them. This made him a wily and successful Indian agent, but it also engendered distrust. John Connolly, who knew him well, wrote to Washington: "You must well know how specious He is. . . . As He is specious where unknown He may impose and carry points. . . ." Levi A. Levy wrote confidentially of Croghan: "... he is such an Artful person, I make no doubt he will take some person in, in Virginia." Croghan's intimate friend, George Morgan, in a letter to his wife, characterized Croghan as follows: "He can appear highly pleased when most chagrined and show the greatest indifference when most pleased. Notwithstanding my warm temper, I know you would rather have me as I am than to practice such deceit." A second cause of distrust was the fact that Croghan was almost always financially interested in his missions. In these two respects he was in marked contrast to Conrad Weiser and Christian Frederick Post. They had almost no financial interest in their missions and instead of the craft of the diplomat, they possessed the guileless simplicity of the ascetic and the missionary.

Croghan's frequent disregard of official instructions, especially concerning expenditures, made him more efficient, though less trusted as an Indian agent. To eastern officials he seemed profuse in his gifts to the Indians. His lack of respect for legal formalities, so typical of the frontier, is illustrated by the following characterization in a business memorandum: "He has Only Acted according to his Usual practice, Which is that of doing what He has no right to do."

The conditions under which he carried on his official duties were also conducive to a lack of trust in him. Eastern officials usually had no other alternative but to employ him or some other Indian trader for their missions to the West and after he entered the wilder-
ness they had no satisfactory means of ascertaining whether he was properly carrying out their instructions. Finally, the machinations of rival traders, the natural prejudice and contempt of many eastern aristocrats and English military officials for a frontiersman, together with the opposition of the dominant faction in Pennsylvania to an aggressive military policy which Croghan and most other Episcopalians supported, helped to arouse and circulate attacks on his conduct and character. Though many of these attacks were unjust, Croghan did not become embittered thereby.

"Were there nothing at Stake between the Crowns of Great Britain and France, but the Lands on that Part of the Ohio included in this Map, we may reckon it as great a Prize as has ever been contended for, between two Nations. . ." wrote Lewis Evans in 1755. It was during the period immediately following 1747 that these two nations first fully appreciated the importance of this great valley. Few Englishmen did more than Croghan to bring the English to realize its great potential value. One of the most important causes of the Seven Years War between England and France was their rivalry for its control.

Probably no Englishman had more at stake in this struggle than had Croghan. Loyalty to his King as well as his own vital material interests caused him to put forth his best efforts for almost a decade to help stem the rising French tide. He was always present at the places where the struggle was most critical, rendering daring and efficient service. In times of crises men looked to him for counsel and guidance. In trying to unite in support of an aggressive western policy the colonists living near the seaboard and those living near the frontier with their widely divergent attitude towards Indian affairs and the West, Croghan suffered many unpleasant experiences. The official
relations which Croghan had had with Pennsylvania and Virginia brought him certain advantages: it increased his prestige among the Indians and for a time this enabled him to increase his trade; it helped him to keep out of a debtor's prison; it gave him the opportunity to become acquainted with the leaders in the east; and finally, the experience which he had gained as a provincial Indian agent and as a temporary imperial official under Braddock prepared him for a wider field of service. He soon developed a longing to enter permanently the imperial service.

REFERENCES.

Fairfax to Washington, July 10, 1754, Hamilton, S. M.: Letters to Washington, 1: 26; Carlyle to Washington, June 17 and June 28, 1754, ibid, 5, 8, 18; Washington to Dinwiddie, June 10 and 12, 1754, Writings, 1: 96 ff; Washington to Fairfax, Aug. 11, 1754, ibid, 132; cf. note 53 above.—No documents giving Croghan's side of the case were found. He probably encountered the same obstacles that delayed Gist, but he was much more severely condemned. The bitter rivalry between Pennsylvania and Virginia traders probably had much to do with criticisms of Croghan. Gist and Croghan had many incentives to fulfill their agreements if possible.

Croghan's Affidavit of Losses, O. Co. MSS., 1: 7.
Washington to Fairfax, Aug. 11, 1754, Writings, 1: 132; Washington's Journal, June 21 and 25, 1754, ibid, 118; Weiser's Journal, Sept. 3, 1754, Pa Col. Rec., 6: 151–152; ibid, 195; Dinwiddie to Washington, June 1, 1754, Dinwiddie Papers, 1: 186; Dinwiddie to Hamilton, July 31, 1754, ibid, 255.


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Croghan, 1755, ibid, 16: 92; Votes of the Assembly, 4: 401, 477, 613; Board of Trade Pap., Proprieties, XIX.


"Morris to Braddock, May 12, 1755, Pa. Col. Rec., 6: 380; ibid, 300, 318, 324; Burd to Morris, July 17, 1755, ibid, 484; Morris to Orme, May 26, 1755, Pa. Arch., 2: 330; Votes of the Assembly, 6: 30; Accounts of the Commissioners, Burd's Road to the Ohio, Norris of Fairhill MSS., 3-5.


The best source for these events is Engineer Harry Gordon's Journal. References to this Journal will be to it as printed in Sargent's Braddock's Expedition. Here it is printed as "The Morris Journal" with the author unidentified; Parkman in Montcalm and Wolfe calls it a "Journal of the Proceeding of the Detachment of Seamen"; Hulbert in Braddock's Road identifies the author and also prints the Journal. Gordon belonged to the small detachment left by Admiral Keppel to aid Braddock.


"Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, Aug. 28, 1755, Letters of Horace Walpole (Toynbee ed.), 3: 336; Dinwiddie to Halifax, Oct. 1,
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1755, Bancroft Coll., Va. Papers, Vol. I; Gordon's Journal, 386; James Toby's Journal (MS. in the possession of the Shippen family); Chas. Swaine to Peters, Aug. 5, 1755, Peters MSS., 4: 38. Swaine, Peters and Croghan were intimate friends. Croghan was probably in error when he wrote two years later that "had we had fifty Indians instead of eight, we might in a great measure have prevented the surprise, that day of our unhappy defeat." Croghan: Transactions with the Indians, etc.; this statement is not included in the document as printed in the N. Y. Col. Docs., 7: 271, nor in Thwaites: Early Western Travels, 1: 88, but it is included in Sargent, Braddock's Expedition, 408 and in the manuscript copies in the Du Simitiere Coll. and in the Penn MSS., Indian Affairs, 1: 51–52. The common experiences of Croghan and Gordon led to an intimate friendship between these two men. Gordon soon developed an active interest in the West. He engaged with Croghan in land speculation in Pennsylvania and in 1766 he accompanied Croghan to Illinois.


80 Croghan to Johnson, Sept. 10, 1755, Johnson MSS., 2: 212.


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Shippen to Burd, Mar. 24, 1756, Shippen Corresp., 2: 35; Votes of the Assembly, 4: 618, 620; Capt. Steel to Morris, April 11, 1756, Pa. Arch. 2: 623; Morris to Hardy, July 5, 1756, ibid, 2: 690.


Professor A. B. Hulbert of Colorado College, who has been interested in this problem, courteously sent to the writer some transcripts from the Public Record Office which bear upon it.

Loudoun to Johnson, Sept. 19, 1756, Johnson MSS., 4: 120. This suspicion of Croghan was not, as Kingsford states (History of Canada, 4: 23), a cause of his resigning as captain. Kingsford is led to make this statement by erroneously placing the date of Croghan's resignation in July instead of in March, 1756. The only persons who were charged to investigate in America the authorship of the letters were the Earl of Loudoun, Governor Hardy and Colonel Webb. Loudoun did not arrive in America until July 23, 1756. The letters to Hardy were entrusted to Webb who did not arrive in America until June 7, 1756. The letters first came to the notice of Halifax in England during March, 1756: Before any influence radiating from these officials could affect Croghan beyond the Susquehanna he had already resigned his commission.


Levi A. Levy to M. Gratz, June 23, 1774, McAllister Coll. (Ridgway Lib., Phila.)


O. Co. MSS., 2: 15.

Evans, Lewis: Analysis of a Map of the Middle British Colonies, etc., 31.