Discovery of a new "captivity journal" in the period of the French and Indian War throws more light on the participation of the Detroit Indians in Western Pennsylvania hostilities, further illuminates the battle of Grant's Hill during the Forbes expedition of 1758, and underscores certain ethnic traits of the Indians.

The author of the following journal was Thomas Gist (d. 1786), a son of the famed Christopher Gist (1706–1759), Ohio Valley explorer, scout for Washington and Braddock, and Indian agent. Christopher had three sons and two daughters, probably all born in Maryland. By 1750 the family had migrated to North Carolina and was living near the Boones. About 1753 Christopher moved northward to the disputed wilderness of Western Pennsylvania, making a home and settlement west of Chestnut Ridge, near modern Brownsville. He guided Washington in both of his westward missions against the French, and with his two eldest sons, Nathaniel (d. 1798) and Thomas, served actively in Braddock’s campaign. The family had fled into Virginia, and the two sons became officers in the provincial troops of that colony under Washington’s command.

For more than three years the French remained supreme in Western Pennsylvania. Not until the spring of 1758 was the second
effort made by the British to oust them. Brigadier General John Forbes was ordered to Philadelphia in April to gather supplies and troops, both regular and provincial. Virginia furnished the largest number of militia, some 2,000 men. Among them were Lieutenant Nathaniel Gist and Ensign Thomas Gist. By the end of June, 1758, when Forbes moved out to Carlisle, he commanded almost 7,000 men, of which only 2,000 were regulars. He advanced to Shippensburg by the middle of August and to Raystown (Bedford) a month later, when Thomas Gist's journal begins.

Unfortunately, Forbes had fallen ill before he left Philadelphia, and with dysentery and other complications he was hardly able to carry on. Meanwhile, he dispatched Colonel Henry Bouquet to cut a new road over the Alleghenies in advance of the expedition. In August, Major James Grant was sent forward to join Bouquet at Fort Ligonier. He was ambitious and hoped to distinguish himself in action. Authority for the expedition he was about to lead stemmed directly from Bouquet, who wrote to Forbes on September 11 that the Indians were sniping at the road workers outside Dagworthy's advanced camp. “To check the boldness of this Indian rabble,” he continued, “I consented to the Major’s request that I give him a large party to go straight to the source. He departed the day before yesterday with the pick of the troops, and instructions to reconnoiter the place [Fort Duquesne] carefully, and to have a plan made by Rhor [the engineer] as soon as the distance would permit it, for the rest letting himself be guided by the circumstances.”

Details of the operation are found in the journal in so far as Gist saw and understood them. Grant expected to attack the Indians encamped around Fort Duquesne, but on arriving within view of the place late at night he saw no fires. He ordered Major Lewis, who commanded the Virginians, to take four hundred men and “Attack every thing that was found about the Fort.” Gist was with this detachment. The men were given white shirts to wear to identify one another; they were to retreat without order when Grant sounded drums and bagpipes. At daylight Lewis returned alone and said he could do nothing; it was too dark, there were road blocks that sepa-

2 Ibid., 501.
rated the men, and everyone became confused. His detachment came straggling back contrary to his orders.

Understandably disappointed, Grant sent fifty men back to attack at least one Indian camp. They found no Indians outside the fort, but set fire to a house. Meanwhile, Lewis was ordered to the rear to support Captain Bullett, who was guarding the baggage. Then Grant sent Rhor and a hundred men forward so that a map could be sketched. Shortly he ordered his drummers to beat reveille. The French and their Indian allies within the fort, aroused first by the fire and then by the drums, poured out and fell on Rhor’s advanced detachment. The Indians swept around both flanks, and on Grant’s right the Pennsylvanians retreated without firing.

Major Lewis came forward on hearing the battle cries, but failed to find Grant, who had had to fall back on Bullett’s rear guard. There Grant made another stand, before moving off to the left where he was surrounded and surrendered. Lewis and Bullett held the retreat route open until Lewis was also captured, as was Gist. Grant’s force of 700 to 900 men lost twenty-two officers and 278 men killed, and seven officers and thirty-two men captured. Of this number, the 150 to 175 Virginians suffered the loss of sixty-two killed and fifty-one wounded!

Grant got through a report on the battle to Bouquet, who forwarded it to Forbes on September 17 with the comment that Grant should have retreated after Lewis’ failure and certainly should not have ordered Rhor and the detachment forward. Forbes was disappointed and denied any knowledge of the expedition; of course, he wished it had not been undertaken. But French jubilation was premature. The loss to the over-all British effort was not serious. Bouquet repulsed an attack in October, pushed his road forward relentlessly, and Forbes moved up behind him, although he now had to be carried in a sling between two horses. Unable to offer further resistance, the French evacuated and destroyed their fort, the site of which was occupied by Forbes’s army on November 25.

Meanwhile, Gist and some of his companions who had been captured by Hurons were carried to the Huron town opposite Fort Pontchartrain (Detroit), where they arrived on October 11. There Gist was adopted by an Indian family and was well treated throughout the winter, spring, and summer of 1759. His journal reveals him
to be a courageous, adaptable, and likeable young man, imbued with some humor and never sorry for himself. However, he longed to escape, and with John and William McCrary he made the break in September.

His manuscript journal is contained in a small notebook, covering one hundred seven pages, obviously written all at one time after Gist’s return home. It is not in his handwriting. The details suggest an extraordinary memory or, what is more likely, notes made at the time and transcribed afterward. At the head of the first page is a note: “This book was written by Thomas Gist—during his imprisonment among the Indian, aged 14.” This brief statement makes three assertions, none of which is true! It was not actually written by Gist, could not have been done while he was a prisoner, and he certainly was not fourteen years old in 1758. Boys of fourteen might occasionally slip into the militia, but they would not be elected officers; furthermore, Thomas had served with Braddock three years earlier. He was probably in his twenties. These errors suggest that some other member of the family transcribed Thomas’ notes or took down his dictation, then wrote the above sentence as a kind of title and penned the wrong age—14 for 24 perhaps.

Whatever the explanation, the reliability of the manuscript seems unaffected. Every event or observation that can be tested is true enough. It is an authentic document of an undoubted personal adventure. More disturbing is its incompleteness. The journal breaks off on September 30, 1759, just before Gist reached Fort Niagara and safety. It is as if he, or the copyist, had been interrupted in the writing and never had returned to the task.

In the papers of Thomas Gage at the William L. Clements Library were found a letter from Gist, which is quoted at the end of the journal, and a letter from Captain Thomas Falconer at Fort Niagara, October 5, 1759. He informed Brigadier General Gage, then at Oswego, New York, that Gist and the two McCrarys had just come into the fort. Lieutenant Colonel William Farquhar, though mortally ill, had spoken to the three fugitives and given each a shirt, shoes, and stockings. Falconer revealed that John McCrary and his brother William had been captured from their father’s farm in Augusta County, Virginia. As a sloop was leaving for Oswego, the former prisoners of war were put aboard and referred to Gage. There
their trail is lost, but presumably they were sent across New York to Albany and down the Hudson toward home.

In transcribing the manuscript for printing, I could see no more point in trying to imitate the spacing, the ambiguous dashes, or other misleading punctuation and capitalization than in attempting to reproduce the handwriting. I believe the reader is best served by being offered a readable transcription in which unending sentences are broken by periods, clauses are set off by commas, and capitalization follows modern practice. The dating of entries has been standardized. Otherwise, the original spelling is maintained, nothing has been omitted, and nothing has been added that is not enclosed in brackets. The resulting text can be comprehended, I trust, in a first reading rather than in labored study. The author's footnotes are so labeled; the others are those of the editor.

The notebook belongs to P. Blair Lee, of Philadelphia, who kindly made it available to The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography for publication.

*Thomas Gist's Journal*

Legonier*3 [September 9, 1758] This morning march'd a detachment of seven hundred rank and file (consisting of Royal Americans, Highlanders, Virginians, Marylanders, and Pennsylvanians)*4 to the side of a great hill two or three miles from Legonier, where we were taught the art of bush fighting by our commander, Maj' Grant,

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3 Fort Ligonier is modern Ligonier, Pa. It had just been built by Col. Bouquet on Loyalhanna Creek.

4 The Royal Americans were the 60th Regiment, organized earlier in the war for recruitment of Americans in the regular British army. Composed of four battalions of a thousand men each, it was the largest regiment in the army. The Highlanders were the 77th Regiment under Lt. Col. Archibald Montgomery; the 78th Regiment was called the Second Highland Battalion. The Virginians were under Maj. Andrew Lewis, the Pennsylvanians under Col. James Burd, and the Maryland troops under Lt. Col. George Dagworthy. Although Gist gives a total of 700 men, plus officers, Forbes reported to William Pitt that Maj. Grant had 900 men (Alfred P. James, *Writings of John Forbes* [Menasha, Wis., 1938], 237), but his return of casualties and survivors after the battle totals up to 798 (Papers of Henry Bouquet, II, 509). From his study of the episode Douglas Southall Freeman counted 775 men, composed of 300 Highlanders, 100 Royal Americans, 175 Virginians, 100 Pennsylvanians, 100 Marylanders, and some Indian scouts (George Washington [New York, 1948], II, 341).
Howie; from there to Dagworthys\(^6\) camp, seven miles more, and there encamp’d.

[September 10] Here we worked very hard all day making a breastwork of logs. At night the Virginians were drawn up and divided into platoons, by which we were to march and do other duties, and every officer to lay with his party. We likewise received orders to hold our selves in readiness to march at a minutes warning and the General to beat half an hour before day and the assembly at day brake the next morning.

[September 11] Early this morning we all paraded, with different opinions concerning our adventure. Some was of opinion that we was destined for some Indian town, others that we was to go to Bradocks road\(^7\) and perhaps to make some discoveries if possible. But Majr Lewis\(^8\) determined the matter, he being before consulted in the whole secret. Orders being given to march we took the road to Fort Duquesne,\(^9\) marched twenty five miles and encamp’d.

[September 12] Marched early this morning and arrived at a high hill ten miles from the Fort Duquesne about 2 oclock in the afternoon, where we received orders to kill our bullocks and have our provisions drest against the next morning. And Ens\(^a\) Allen\(^10\) with ten men to go near the fort and make what discoveries he could. He did not return till very late in the night and brought word that he had seen a number of fires on both sides the river, and imagined there was a great number of Indians and heard and saw them singing and dancing very merrily.

[September 13] This morning Majr Lewis with about three hundred men marched very early and formed an ambuscade within

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5 Maj. James Grant (1720–1806) of the 77th Regiment commanded the detachment of Highlanders and the whole expeditionary force. He was sent a prisoner with Maj. Lewis to Montreal and was later exchanged. He served as governor of East Florida, fought in the American Revolution, and sat in Parliament.

6 Lt. Col. George Dagworthy was at work on a fortification about three miles north of modern Greensburg, Pa. He also had with him a few troops from Delaware and North Carolina.

7 Bradock’s Road was the route from Fort Cumberland west and northwest toward Fort Duquesne cut in 1755.

8 Maj. Andrew Lewis (1720–1781), Virginia frontiersman and soldier who became a brigadier general in the Revolution. The Virginians he commanded were taken from Col. George Washington’s regiment.

9 Fort Duquesne had been erected by the French in 1754 to control the forks of the Ohio. It was on land claimed by both Pennsylvania and Virginia.

10 Ens. Allen of the 1st Virginia Regiment.
five miles of the fort; and sent Ens\textsuperscript{11} Chew\textsuperscript{11} with a small party of Indians to find out if we was discover'd, and in case he was persued to retreat through a space left on purpose. A man was then sent back to Maj\textsuperscript{r} Grant to let him know that he had done all he could till he came. About sun setting Maj\textsuperscript{r} Grant came with the remainder of the troops, and gave orders that every man should put on a white shirt over his cloaths,\textsuperscript{12} and they which had none was to remain with Capt\textsuperscript{n} Bullett\textsuperscript{13} at the place appointed to leave our baggage.\textsuperscript{14}

The light of the sun being now gone we marched by the light of the moon, and was not the most agreeable sight that I ever saw (for the road being very crooked gave us in the rear an opertunty of seeing the glis[t]ening of the firelocks against the moon, and the white shirts appearing to dodg[e] every way in a movement which made some of the soldiers observe that we look'd more like ghosts than soldiers). We met Ens\textsuperscript{n} Chew about three miles from the fort who informed us that there was a number of Indians encamped about it.

Here we left Capt\textsuperscript{n} Bullett and the baggage, and proceeded to the top of a hill\textsuperscript{15} within one mile of the fort. From thence we discovered a number of fires which was supposed to be the Indian camp. Here we halted a considerable time, and here the Highlanders gave up there post to the Virg\textsuperscript{ns}. A party being ordered down towards the fort, the Royal Americans taking the front with Maj\textsuperscript{r} Lewis at their head, the Virg\textsuperscript{ns} the rear, and the Highlanders, Marylanders and Pensylvanians in the center, we marched holding down the hill, each holding his leaders shirt tail, and kepted the most profound silence. We had not gone\textsuperscript{e} far when there was a halt,\textsuperscript{16} and soon after the Highlanders or Royal Americans began to cock their peaces and amediately after came back with such violence that we was obliged to give them the road and they kepted it till they join'd Maj\textsuperscript{r} Grant on the top of the hill from whence they came. They got their men in good order again by day break. A very thick fog arising prevented us from seeing the fort or any thing about it.

\textsuperscript{11} Ens. Colesby Chew was also of the 1st Virginia Regiment. He was killed. His party was to draw the Indians into Lewis' ambush.

\textsuperscript{12} Author's note: No man was to go unprovided with a white shirt.

\textsuperscript{13} Capt. Thomas Bullett, a Virginia officer.

\textsuperscript{14} Author's note: Capt\textsuperscript{n} Bullett with a hundred men was order'd to guard the baggage.

\textsuperscript{15} Still known as Grant's Hill in modern Pittsburgh.

\textsuperscript{16} Author's note: The cause of the halt was some of the Highlanders got lost and strayed into the woods, one of which got to the French camp.
[September 14] About sunrise Maj' Lewis was ordered from the top of the hill to the baggage where he placed his men on the most advantageous post in order to wait for Maj' Grant. But soon after having taken post on the hill we heard M. Grant’s drums,17 upon which the officers began to collect. Immediately after we heard several guns and then platoons, and observe them retreat, the officers & soldiers all eager to go to Maj' Grant’s assistance with all the men except Capt^ Bullett’s party, which still remaind with the bagage.

We marched under the foot of the hill. We came oposite to the parties engaged18 and then took straight up the steep hill and after a good deal of trouble and difficulty arrived at the top of the hill, almost out of breath, and in the rear of the Indians. But had we got up against them I believe they had made some of us find breath enough to have carried us down again. However, we attacted them before they knew we were at there heels. We stood and fought as long as they would let us be at armes length. By this time I could not see two white men together, so I took my leave in a very abrupt manner by turning my back upon them an[d] making the best of my way dow[n] the hill, while they was content to send a plenty of there sugar plumbs on all sides of me, which luckily I keep’d clear of so far.

When I came almost to the bottom of the hill I overtook Lt: Baker19 with about 20 men. We stear’d now for the bagage and arrived there soon, but met with such a reception from a party of Indians who had posted themselves on purpose to receive us, that we was obliged to face about and march back toward the fort, till we got out of their sight. Then marched down to the riverside, where we hear’d a party of the enemy fireing at some of our straglers. They was coming very swift upon us. Lieut: Baker took [to?] the river20 with the men, then made for the hills. I had not gone far when I saw two Indians at about a hundred yard[s] distance, and beleiving they did not see me I stop’d behind a tree and striped myself and should

17 One of the mysteries of this expedition is why Maj. Grant, having achieved phenomenal success in coming within sight of Fort Duquesne undetected, should have thrown away his surprise and opened his attack with drums beating and bagpipes blowing.
18 Author’s note: This I think was bad conduct. We ought to [have] raised the hill and been ready again they came.
19 Lieut. James Baker, of the 1st Virginia Regiment.
20 Probably the Monongahela.
have stay'd some longer, but I discovered the party making down to the place where Baker took the water. I made for the hill which the two young fellows discovering, persued with all their speed and coming within twenty yards of me I expected they would fire so I turned quickly about and presented my piece at one of them, upon which both of them fired. Upon which I ran again but being almost spent, I could not get out of their sight before they had charged again. It was not long before they overtook me and came within fifteen steps of me, and calling as before. I turn'd about and fired at one, who fired at me at the same time, shot me across the forehead and knock'd me down. I got up immediately and the other shot me through the right hand.

I then had nothing left but my heels to depend on which I made as good use of as was in my power till fairly run down. I was obliged to surrender to a husky likely young Indian man, almost naked and painted all over. He had not time to charge his gun this time. He took hold of my hand and look'd at it, then put it into my bosom and made signs to me to march towards the fort, which I agreed to without grumbling.

We soon came where he had kill'd Lieut: Billings of the R[oyal] Americans, which after striping of his cloaths was cut almost to pieces by some young Indians who came up in the meantime. We then marched for the fort, and the rest of the Indians went, I suppose, after plunder. When we came in sight of the fort, I saw a long Indian camp on the right hand of the rode, or rather a street with a number of Indians sitting down who seemed not to notice us, also some log houses on the left whos[e] tops was cover'd with women.

As soon as we got about half way [to?] the barrick yard they jump'd up and screamed as if the Devil himself had possesed them. Everyone seized a tomahawk or some other as hateful a weapon to my sight and was coming across the way toward me when my friend

21 Author's note: The Indians was to the right and the hill as nigh to them as to me.
22 Author's note: I believe I wounded the one I shot at. When I was brought back to the place he could not be found, tho: the other hallowed for him. I saw one at the fort wounded with two balls, and I shot two balls at that fellow I mentioned.
23 Lieut. John Billings, of the 60th Regiment.
24 Author's note: The Indian camp on the right was blankets and other things, one end tied to pole set up for that purpose and the other end to the stockades. The camp was equal in length with the barrack yard, 70 yards.
that wounded me in the hand once more saved my life, by pushing me headlong into a house on my left hand whose door was, by good fortune, standing open. He then got an old shirt and taring it in pieces tied up my wounds.

Some time after I was conducted to a camp of the same nation with the man that took me prisoner. From that I removed over the river where we encamp’d. Here it was that I was first striped to my buff and got a blow on the side of my head by a Shawanah man which did not much please the Indian who had the care of me. I observ’d several parties of Indians come from the persuit of our poor stragling men. They drove some prisoners before them, at the edge of the woods in order to run to the fort, but none of the poor unhappy fellows I believe had the luck to reach the d—d hole, for they was follow’d by the Indians who they left behind them and met by a number from the fort with tomahawks, knives, swords and stick, with the most horrid screaming and yelling that I ever heard, and was beat and drove from one side of the cleared ground to the other, till the unhappy men could not stand; then they were tomohawked, scelped and in short was massacred in the most barbarious manner that can be immajined.

Some few were thrown into the river. The rest was left in the field, about two or three hundred yards from the fort, and unburied. Thus their effort continued till night, when they began to scrape the flesh and blood from the scalps, and dry them by the fire, after which they dressed them with feathers and painted them, then tied them on white, red, and black poles, which they made so by pealing the bark and then pain[t]ing them as it suited them. Immediately after they began to beat there drums, shake their rattles, hallow and dance like so many Devils, I suppose, for I never saw in all my life any thing like it.

About nine oclock at night they left of[f] dancing, then came an Indian man to the fire where I was, and after having talked a few minutes to the Indians there he made a sign to me to follow him. I immediately got up and followed him leaving in the hand of one of the Indians that stay’d the little bit of a lousy blanket which one of them had some time before put about my shoulders, to keep the

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25 Gist was taken by a Huron, or Wyandot.
26 Shawanee, or Shawnee warrior.
frost from them. However, this new acquaintance threw a little half
dres’d dearskin over them again, which he took from his own. I then
came to another fire, where I saw the man that took me and saved
me by pushing me into the house. I also saw Ens\textsuperscript{a} Mc Donnald\textsuperscript{27} of
the Highlanders with five other prisoners. Here I got some stinking
beef, rotten tallow, and as bad bread as ever was eat, neither of
which I could tast[e]. After some time I threw down my dearskin
and laid down on it, and one of the Indians spread an old blanket
with an hundred holes in it over me, so I ended in sleep the most
troublesome day I had ever seen.

\textit{[September 15]} About 12 oclock I got an Indian lad to go with
me to the fort, where I expected to have my wounds dressed, but the
Surgeion\textsuperscript{28} refused to do it and ordered me away from his house. I
then prevailed with the young Indian to go with me to the hospital,
where I apply’d to the orderlyman, who understood English. He told
me he could do nothing with it except washing it with brandy, which
he thought would be of some service. Then he tied it up for me and I
returned to the Indians again who was ready to set out for there
towns. I was sent down the river in a battau with the rest of the
wounded; the others went by land. We encamped a few miles above
Loggs Town.\textsuperscript{29}

\textit{[September 16]} This morning set off early down the river and
arrived at Loggs Town in the afternoon where we was supplied with
corn, pumpkins, water melons, &c.

\textit{[September 17]} Remained here till 3 oclock in the afternoon,
then marched (by land leaving our battaus) to the mouth of Beaver
Creek,\textsuperscript{30} where they encamped and spent part of the night in dance-
ing, singing, and making sport the prisoners.

\textit{[September 18]} This morning early up Beaver Creek. Wound’d
as I was, my lott was to carry about fifty pound of plunder that they
had got chiefly from the Highlanders. After a very fatigueing days
march we arrived at Cuscuskes\textsuperscript{31} at sundown where we was plenti-
fully supplied with corn and other provitions.

\textsuperscript{27} Ens. John McDonald, of the 77th Regiment.
\textsuperscript{28} The surgeon of the French garrison, whom I could not identify.
\textsuperscript{29} Logstown, a Delaware town on the Ohio about eighteen miles northwest of Pittsburgh.
It is close to modern Ambridge, Pa.
\textsuperscript{30} Beaver Creek empties into the Ohio River at modern Beaver, Pa.
\textsuperscript{31} Kuskuski was a Delaware town up Beaver Creek near modern New Castle, Pa.
[September 19] About 2 o'clock this morning died a young Indian man which I took to be the man that I wounded in the field (see page 19 [of the journal; page 293 of this transcription]). About 9 o'clock every thing was prepared for burial. A[t] 10 o'clock the corps[e] was laid in the grave, a post sett up at the head of the grave with marks on it, with two or three sculps hing there on. Then began the women to shed their tears while the men set very serious smoaking their pipes. About 12 went a cryer through out the whole town (from our camp) and at one was gathered unto our camp about an hundred Indians, who held a council for the space of about four hourers and to conclude smoaked the pipe of friendship. I observed a deal of wampum to pass in the time of councell. The meaning of this, as I afterwards understood, was only a confirmation of friendship between our folks (I mean the Wyendotts) [or Hurons] and Dil-lawaus [Delawares], the inhabitants of Cuscuskes. Late in the evening our councilers dispersed and we concluded the evening with a dance and music and so betook ourselves to rest.

[September 20] From this town we marched early, all hands loaded with green corn. The fatigues of marching and the pains of my wounds with the weight of the burthen of unnecessary goods that I carryed put out of my head a thousand things I otherways should have mention'd. We continued our march and hunted for provitions, suffering as much as any person can imagine who realy did never feel the trouble of it. My burthen continued the same, my wound grew worse and my enemies less carefull of them. In this condition I remaind till we came to the river,32 where we got boats and, rid of the trouble of march8 with that of carreing loads on our backs, we suffered no little by water, on acco1 of storms and cold weather.

Our boats was built of birch bark and in the form of cannoes, which I beleive need no description. Only they was as tender as brown paper when the least snag, rock or any sharp thing touch'd them. We frequently had them to mend, which was done in the most expeditious maner that can be emagined. If a hole was made in the side or bottom by any actindent a patch of the same kind of bark was put on (or sew'd on rather). If a crack, a little turpentine warmed and plastered on it stop'd all [leaks].

32 Author's note: Our boats was left up the river call[e]d Canahoge or Kiehugar [probably Cuyahoga] about fifteen miles from the Leake.
We continued down the river with all the women, prisoners & part of the Indian men. The other part went by land to kill some provisions. When we came to the leake I was a little surprised to see such a body of water in that part of the world. Here we took our boats out of the water, and cook'd a plenty of venison, after which our boats was again put into the water, masts set up and all things again put on board. The wind blew very fresh and the sea (if it may be so call'd) run very high. We push'd directly into the leake.

For my part I never expected to come alive to the land again. We had seventeen or eighteen boats and in ten minutes after we got out of the mouth of the river I am convinced I could not see above one or two at a time. The wind being allmost ahead we was obliged to make use of paddles altogether. The wind grew stronger, the waves ran higher, the boats all squandered about so that is seldom that I could discover any of them, and we at least one mile from land. (We never went nigher land when the water was rough; I mean when we diirst venture, for sometimes it was so very rough that we diirst not put in our boats for fear of having [them] dash'd to peaces.) We continued about the same distance from land nor did I see any prospect of getting to the land if we'd had a minde to do so, for it appear'd to me to be a steep rock near twenty miles [long?]. The waves dashed against it and rose ten or fifteen feet high. Thus continued we till sun sett, when the wind ceased and it grew an entire calm. Then we put in close by the shore where I saw a pretty beach and some little creeks empt[y]ing into the leake.

We did not encamp till nine oclock at night, the method of which was this: we took our boat and carried out and laid them bottom upwards upon the beach, and laid ourselves under them, so they served us both for houses and boats.

We was seven or eight days on the lake. The land on which we encamped every nite appeared to be very rich and level, and well timbered. I saw a plenty of wild fowl such as swans, gees[e], ducks &c. Fish was also plenty. About the 10th of Oct we made the mouth of the straits Le Detroit, and encamp'd on an island. The next morning my hair was cut off and my head shaved with an old razor sharp'd on a whetstone without soap, after which operation I was

33 Lake Erie.
34 Probably Isle au Bois Blanc.
painted all over in a most curious manner. (The other prisoners had been drest many days before me.) After dresing we sett sail up the river with a fair wind, and soon came in sight of the French settlement on the east side the strait, and is about seven miles in length. The land is a certain wedth on the strait and runs as far back as the farmer is able to cultivate, which makes it appear very beautiful to those that pass by it. The reason of laying the land out in this manner was for the conveniance of having the inhabitance ready to assist each other in case of necessaty, or be the better able to fly to the fort if the Indians attempt any mischief.

We landed a little below the Wyendott town which stands a mile below the Frence fort on the east side the strait and marched to the edge of the town with most horred shouts, accordin[g] to custom, where the Indians turned out to look at us, men, women and children, and sometimes would answer our shouts with such terrible screams and yells that anything that I can mention is not half so terrible as that appeared to me. I expected nothing but the same usage that some of our men received at Fort Duquesne which I have mentioned (page 24 & 25 [of the journal; page 294 of this transcription]), when several prisoners who had been before taken, and some Indian boys ran to us and every one of them taking one of us by the hand ran with us to a post set up in the middle of the town, where we stood naked, while the Indian ladies was satisfied as to their sight.

For my part I expected they was going to chuse some of ye likeliest of us for husbands, by their standing and looking so long at us in this condition, and the weather being very cold, and my wounds not dress'd, that I suffered the most of any one of the prisoners. After standing naked about an hour, we was taken away from the post, some to one house and some to another where we stayed till Sunday following, when we were dressed with paint of various colours, and a

35 Author's note: If I mistake not the lotts are \(\frac{1}{2}\) part of mile wide at the waterside. [Gist is commenting on the "ribbon farms" of the French habitants which were 400 to 800 feet wide and ran back from the shore two or three miles.]

36 Author's note: The fort stands oposite the upper end of the settlement, on the west side of the strait. [Fort Pontchartrain was a stockaded fort with three bastions and containing seventy or eighty houses besides the barracks. One gate opened directly on the river. It is regrettable that Gist never seems to have visited the fort nor left us a description of it, as contemporary descriptions are few and somewhat contradictory.]

37 The Wyandot or Huron town lay on the east side of the river almost opposite the mouth of River Rouge. It had been established on invitation to the tribe by Cadillac.
belt of wampum about our necks, then led to the house appointed. Seats being set at the door we all set down.

Then the cryer went through the town, and soon after was gathered a number of Indians who stood at some distance. About twenty old men took seats in the house. Then was call’d in one of the prisoners, and stood in the presents of the Indian majestie for a considerable time. (I thought at first we was to be tried for our lives, but after found it was their method of adoption.) After a very long speach, the prisoner was led to the door by one of his nearest relations (who came in at the conclusion of the king’s speach to receive him) where he return’d thanks to his majestie and the council for their great care in keeping up the number of the family by adapting prisoners in the stead of those that had died at home or been kill’d at war. After this the prisoner was led away by the person who led him to the door, then came another and so on till all was disposed of.

For my part I was led into the house where I was to live, there strip’d by a female relation, and then led to the river. There she wash’d me from head to foot, leavin[g] none of the paint itself on me. We then return’d to house, where was gather[ed] all my relations (and I beleive few men has so many). Such hug[ging] and kissing from the women and crying for joy, I never saw before. The men acted in a different manner; they looked very serious, shook my hand, and spake little. As soon as this ceremony was over I was clad from head to foot; then was an interpreter brought to tell me which of my kin was the nearest to me. I think they rec[k]onded from brother to seventh cousins. They made great promises how vastly kind they would be to me, and I must do them the justice to acknowledge that they was a[s] good as their word, for one of the old women did atten[d] me duly twice a day and dress my wounds, and all the family was as kind to me as if I had realy been the nearest of relation they had in the world. The old man that I lived with had a sister

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38 Indians frequently adopted prisoners of war to replace members of the family who had died or been killed. The prisoner of war might be another Indian or a white person. Some guard was usually maintained over the adopted person, or his freedom of movement limited, until the village became assured that he would not try to escape. If a female, the prisoner commonly remained a household slave; if a male, he usually shared equally in family activities and welfare. The treatment accorded Gist seems a little exceptional in his apparent freedom from duties; clearly he won the affection of the family with whom he lived.
who lived a mile from us. She came every day with a present of some kind or other for me.

Thus I lived till the first of Nov when she came and removed me bodily to her house. She was one [of the] tallest women that I ever saw, and I must do her the justice to say that she was the cleanliest Indian that I ever met with. She was about thirty years old and had three children. Her husband I beleive was near forty, and that he was the most industrious Indian in America I do sincerely beleive.

I am as unable to discribe the kind treatment I received from those good people, in the manner it deserves, as I am to reward them for it. As to provitions, we never wanted. It was chiefly corn, pease, beens &c with a little dried meat sometimes till the fifteenth or twentieth of Nov, when we left the town. Here was I a good [deal?] surprised for when I was sure we was fixed for the winter we packed up every thing of any value with a few baggs of corn &c, put them on board a large bark canoe, big enough to carry twenty men. Then the old man fastened the doors and came out at the chimney. (This was the custom of them all to prevent their corn from being stole by other Indians who pass'd by the town in [our?] absence, or the French who lived nigh the town, tho some used to be stole notwithstanding this precaution.)

We then sett sail down the river to Lake Erie, then along the west end of it about twenty miles, then took up a little river 39 about ten miles and there we built a little hutt with some few logg and bark which was only big enough to contain our goods and selves. Nor had we room for any thing else. Our canoe we took out of the water and took her into the woods, turned her bottom upward and left her to winter without any shelter here. I was without any com[plany that could unders[and] one word that I spake. (We lived much better now than when in town; we never wanted meat of various kinds.)

Thus I continued, near five months, sometimes reading, other times singing, never melancholy but when alone. My wounds was well the two last months, part of which I spent in hunting and other innocent devertions in the woods. About the first of April (1759) I prevailed on the family to return to town, and by the last of the month all the Indians and prisoners returned, when I once more had

39 Otter Creek or one of the creeks flowing into North Maumee Bay, in extreme southern Michigan.
the pleasure to talk to people that understood what I said. But I, like all mankind, could not bear good usage. I now thought the family I lived with all the winter was not half so kind to me as they ought to be; so I left them and went to that which I was first in.

The old woman imajined I was affronted, tho she knew not why. She then came and asked me the reason why I had left her, or what injury she or any of the family had done me that I should leave her without so much as letting her know of it. I told her it was the company of my fellow prisoners that drew me to the town. She said that it was not so far but I mite have walked to see them every two or three days, and ask some of them to come and see me those days that I did not chuse to go abroad, and that all such persons as I thought proper to bring to the house should be as welcom[e] as one of the family, and made many promises how kind she would be if I would return. However, I was obstinate and would not. After she found I was determined to stay where I was, she desired that I would frequent the house when it suited me, which I did. One of her sons, who was about five or six years old, had been my favorite in the family. He allway[s] was with me chattering some thing; from him I learn’d more than from all the rest, and he learn’d English as fast as [I] did Indian. Here I was as kindly treated as any man would desire who was in my condition.

Some time in June all the Indian men except ten or twelve old ones went to war, with a number from all the nations about the lakes, and all the French that could be raised, in order to retake Fort Duquesne (otherways Fort Pitt). In the town was about one hundred young women unmarried, besides a number of married ones that was not old, and not one young man except prisoners. The women was kinder now than ever. In this sittuation I lived three months, nor was I very uneasy about the men’s return. However, I began at last to tire of the town and a little while before the warriers return’d I chose to withdraw to my country seat again and visited the town only when it su[i]ted me.

The old woman was very glad that I came back to her, and dress’d me as fine as she could, and at the same time told me if I wanted a wife she would get a pretty young girl for me. I thanked

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40 As soon as the British occupied the ruins of Fort Duquesne, they rebuilt it and named it Fort Pitt, for the British prime minister.
her, and told her that I had not the least occasion. Soon after this I had the pleasure to [see?] all our Indians return, except six which went with the French to rais[e] the seige at Niagara, and without scalps or prisoners; and not long after, the fragment of the French troops that had saved their heads by the help of their heels. They had a number of wounded men with them.

After I had deverted myself for several days with their misfortunes, I began to think of making my escape, and after having seriously considered the risque, hardships and fatigues that I must undergo in the attempt and had got a tolerable idea of the country, with the courses of the lake and rivers that emptied therein from the old man that I lived with, who took much pains to make me understand him, by marking them out to me as often as I would ask him. All curiosity with regard to acting the part of an Indian, which I could do very well, being thoroughly satisfied, I was determined to be what I really was.

On Sunday 9th Sept 1759, I went to town, and there I met with John McCrary, who I knew to be a lad I could depend on. I told him the resolution I had taken and desired him to go with me. He agreed to it immediately. Then I told him the rout we must take. The greatest difficulty we labour'd under now was to provide ammunition. He told me that an old Dutchman who was a prisoner also had a plenty and he believed that he would be glad to go with us or at least supply us with a little, if not give us all he had. [We] went to him and soon found that he had desire to get home, and after some time trying him we let him unto the secret. He told us that he was already engaged with a party who was to go by water, if he chose to go with them. I desired he would come on Monday to my house and bring some ammunition with him and there determine whether he would go or not with us. But he, like a true Dutchman, never true [to] his trust, went and informed the other party.

Here John McCrary proposed taking his brother with us, who was but thirteen years old. I told him what I thought of the matter, that

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41 Fort Niagara, under Capt. François Pouchot, was besieged on July 7, 1759, by Sir William Johnson and his Iroquois allies. Capt. De Ligneris, who had abandoned Fort Duquesne and retreated to Fort Machault (Franklin, Pa.), called to his Indian allies and prepared to relieve Fort Niagara. His force marched straight into an ambush prepared by Johnson on July 24. De Ligneris was killed, and the Detroit Indians fled home in their canoes. Fort Niagara fell to the British.
we would find it a difficult task to get home without having a child to take care of, who we could look upon in no other light than an incumbrance. He assured me that he could march as well as we could, and if he lived and we found we were persued, or likely to perish for want of provitions, we would leave him in the woods; that it was a matter of indifference to him whether he went or not, if he could not have his brother along with him. It being concluded he was to go, and John McCrary to inform him of it Tuesday night, Wednesday being the day appointed for us to set out for Niagara.

[September 11] Tuesday about 12 clock came one of the other party to me and told me that two or three of the prisoners and a Frenchman, who I knew was of the party by water, wanted to see me at the Frenchman's house. I told him perhaps I mite walk down in the afternoon. However, I never intended to go to them, for I was not without business of much more consequence to me. I was obliged to watch all opportunities that the Indians was out of the house to steal a little ammunition and dress'd leather to help me along on my journey, which I hid in my bed.

A little after dark another came and told me that the Dutchman had disclosed every thing and begged that I would never think of going by land and so continued to shew me the inconveniences that would necessarily attend such a journey. I told him I was not certain whether I should attempt it or not. He replied that he was certain I was going and asked me when I would set off. I assured him that until I saw McCrary I knew nothing of the matter, and as the Dutchman had deceived us, I believed we should drop it. He desired I would go with him by water. I told him that that was the first attempt that I had ever made and, as such bad luck attended it, I should not try soon again. He said he should set off that week, but hoped he would see me again and be able to satisfy me in some things, which I was doubtfull was dangerous, in our passage by water, and bid me good night. Now I was certain that every thing but time when we was to set off was known to six or seven, amongst which was a woman, and I always understood that a woman never was to be trusted with any secret, which made me restless all night.

[September 12] This morning about day break I got up and dress'd myself in my hunting habit, then folded up my fine cloaths and layed them by as I used to do when I was going a hunting. The
old woman asked me where I was going. I told her I was going to kill some ducks. She asked me if I would not take breakfast first. I told her I was not hungry and wished her well till I should see her again.

Now I set off with a heart full of joy to meet my companion at the place appointed, which was about one mile from the house where I lived. We got there together and I told him all that happened. Here we agreed that we had better continue our journey and not be frightened by those people who only had it in their power to discover the plot after we was out of their reach, because they knew not which way we was going, whether the north or south side of the lake.

The boy was yet in the town. I desired the lad to go and bring his brother. He refused, and insisted very hard that I should go for him. I went back and found the boy by himself roasting some corn. I told him which way to go and I would meet him at the edge of the woods. I took another course and as soon as I got out of sight of the town I ran as fast as I could, till I came to the place where he was to enter the woods. Then I made him mend his pace, till we came where we had left his brother, who immediately marched on as fast as was necessary. The young boy marched about sixty yards after his brother and I about the distance of one hundred yards in the rear of him.

In this order we continued for the space of ten or twelve miles, when the foremost man saw a feasant. He knew that we were without provisions, as well as himself. He therefore halted till I came up. He then asked me if we should kill it. I immediately shot it, and we marched very brisk for five or six miles further when we saw an owl. I then took my bow and arrows from the boy, for he having no gun carried them for me, and with it kill’d the owl. We was not uneasy about provisions now and had nothing else to do but march as fast as we were able. We heard guns fired on all sides from morning till about three o’clock. From then till sun sett, neither heard nor saw anything. We being now the best part of forty miles from the town, very hungry, and almost tired, set down on an old tree to rest. We did not intend to move from there till dusk, and then march till it was dark and we found a place that suited us to sleep at before we stop’d again.

We had not set long here when we heard several guns, at about half a mile distance. Soon after we heard some thing walk in the
leaves and soon after discovered a very large racoon coming towards us. We soon kill’d him, then threw away the owl, and marched from that place for fear of seeing more company. We continued marching notwithstanding it was very dark, till between eight and nine o’clock, when we found a hole of water that was occasioned by a tree being blown up by the roots. Here we gathered some brush, made a fire, roasted our provisions, eat as much as was necessary, then put out our fire and laid down to sleep.

[September 13] Set off[f] this morning by day light. About sun rise we killed one raccoon with a tomahawk. The land till about 12 o’clock was much like what we traveled over the day before, that is it was very level, rich and well timbered, with some swamps. Then we traveled through some bad swamps and poor land for three or four hours, then came to good land again. We heard the enemys guns all day, and at some times not half a mile from us, but we never halted till after dark, when we made a fire and cooked our meat, mended our mocasons, &c.

[September 14] This morning by break of day we marched. About 9 o’clock we came to the lake and discovered a sail at about half a mile distance from the land. We immediately took to the woods again and after marching some few miles came to a swamp, or marsh, about four miles wide. We attempted to cross it, but when we got about the middle it grew worse, and a stamp of my foot would make it tremble twenty yards round us.

By this time the grass had cut our mocasons and let our toes out. The flags and a small kind of reeds was so high in some places that we scarcely knew which way to steer. However, we at last got to a place that was clear; from that we saw a point of wood that ran directly into the marsh and appeared to be the nighest to us of any land that we could discover, so we steered directly for it. When we came within half a mile of the woods, we was obliged to step or jump from one tussoc to another. Thus we continued till we came within three hundred yards of the point we wanted to arrive at, and then we had nothing to walk on but the mud, and that would not bare the weight of a bird. I then put down one leg and finding no bottom was some what afraid, but to return back, with my feet cut in several places, and nothing to hinder the grass from cutting them again, I was determined not to do, if posable to be avoided.
I then took hold of some vines that grew upon the tussock that I stood on and leaped into the mud. After sinking to the middle of my body, I found a good bottom and from there waded to the land. Here we washed our cloaths, and after mending our moccasons we marched between the swamp and the lake (which was not above a hundred yards apart) till we came to a large rode that was cleared from the lake to a large pond which was at the end of this swamp. We now began to suspect that this water would be a stop to us where ever it entered the lake and had a mind to turn back and march round the head of it, but considering it was entirely out of our course to head it, we determined to attempt the mouth of it by the way of a raft.

This pond appeared to me to be five or six miles over, and partly round. I could see the woods all round it, except that side on which the marsh lay, from which I concluded the communication it had with the lake must be small and easily pass’d. We marched several miles on this point, which ran directly into the lake, when being suddenly surprised by the noise of the waves on our left hand, we concluded that that pond was an arm of the lake, and some point of woods had intercepted our sight from where we saw it, and made it appear to us to be a pond. However, we were determined to see what it was before we turned back, for we had at least fifteen miles to march before we could get to the place where we first took the swamp.

We now went to discover what all this proceeded. We soon saw it was the lake, then went down on the beach and could discover the end of the point that we was on. We now marched almost back again for we was only on the other side of the point which was not above three hundred yards wide at the place where we discovered we was wrong. We had not march’d far when we saw a bear, and all being hungry we was determined to kill him if possible. McCrary went after him and got a shot at him. He wounded him badly but he took a different course from that we wanted to go so we lost him.

After marching about ten miles, we came to the pond again, and there was [the] road from it to the lake. They was not above thirty yards apart here. The Indians used to carry their canoes out of the lake at one of these carrying places, put it into the pond, sail through it, and at the other carry them into the lake again, which saved them at least thirty miles. The sun being now very near out of our sight,

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42 Peninsula on the southwest side of Rondeau Harbor.
we march’d a few miles further, gathered a plenty of sower grasses, made a little fire, and then to mending shoes again.

Notwithstanding we marched very hard [a] great part of this day, I am convinced we did not gain above ten miles. After get[t]ing ourselves prepar’d for another days march, and eating grapes till we was sick, put out our fire and sleep’d.

[September 15] March’d this morning by breake of day. About sunrise we shot a bear twice, but he got into the swamp that we was in yesterday but we rather chose to lose him than follow. Being now tolerable hungry, we march’d as fast as we was able, in hopes of getting some thing to eat. About 12 oclock we kill’d one raccoon. This day we marched through very poor land, the timber chiefly beech, and very thick underwoods. In the evening we kill’d another raccon, then march’d till dark and encamped not far from the lake.

[September 16] This morning we marched as soon as day appear’d. Till 11 oclock poor land, then came to very [good?] land well timbered. About 2 oclock we came again to the lake. We saw a swamp not far from the lake and a narrow slipe of land lay between them, on which we march’d, but that course was soon altered, for the lake breaking through the slipe of wood formed a large bay, and a swamp lay on the side of it which prevented us from marching by the side of [it], so we was obliged to march back again six or eight miles, in order to get to the main land. When we had got almost back to the woods, we heard as we immagined a gun and saw some thing turn the next point, which we took to be Indians. However, we stay’d no time to discover what it was, but ran as fast as we could to the woods, marched in the thickest part of them. A little before dark we kill’d one raccon and camp’d in the edge of the swamp.

[September 17] This morning by the breake of day I was awaked by some frightfull dreams. I desired the two that was with me to get up that we mite be gone from that place, and while I was telling them that I believed there was something about us that I was afraid of, was suddenly surprised by an old buck, who had been feeding about ten yards behind me, and I suppose either heard or saw us, gave two or three skips amongst the brush. It was too severe a shock to last long; we soon discover’d what it was, and shot him through the neck, altho: it was hardly yet light, and for fear he should serve us as the bears had done, we tomahawked him in a moment.

43 Rondeau Harbor, the east side of which is a peninsula ending in Pointe aux Pins.
cut off as much as we thought would serve us seven day[s], nor even
took time to skin what [we] took, but tied it up, put it on our backs
and marched off before it was fairly light. We had very bad swamps to
march through, some of which was so thick with a kind of bushes and
very [word omitted] that we was obliged to crawl under them;
others so vary bad that we was forced to cut them out of the way.
Notwithstanding the badness of the way, we never halted till 12
oclock, when we made a fire, and two roasted the meat while the
other one stood centrie at some distance. When our meat was a little
more than half done, we tied it up again and after eating as much as
necessary, we march'd, nor halted more till night.

[September 18]  March'd till about 12 oclock through the same
kind of land as yesterday, then came to the lake where we kill'd one
raccoon. March'd on the sand by the side of the lake till almost
night, then left the lake, got into a thicket to prevent our fire from
being discovered by the enemy in case there should be any near us.

[September 19]  This day kill'd one raccoon in the evening. The
land we traveled on was but poor and very thick underwoods, and
so continued, without any thing else worth taking notice of, till
Saturday night.

[September 23]  This day we broke our fast with the last of our
buck and then march'd. About 10 oclock it began to rain, and con-
tinued till about 12 at night. The land was tolerable good this day.

[September 24]  This morning came three bears within ten or
fifteen yards of our fire. M'Crary shot at one of them but his gun
being damp by the rain which fell on us the day and night before,
made long fire and missed them all. This day we lived on grapes.

[September 25]  Very good land and well timbered, but nothing
to eat.

[September 26]  About 12 oclock we came again to the lake and
there found a buck that had been drown'd. He was so spoil'd that we
could not come near him. Not far from that we came to a little
river that forked about thirty yards from the mouth. We waded
over, marched about ten miles then discovering we were marching
directly into the lake, for the land grew narrow and we discovered the
lake on both sides of us. We march'd directly back, and got where the

44 Author's note: These swamps was only along the water courses, the upland very rich
and well timbered.
45 Probably Big Creek.
buck lay by dark. (The river that I observed came down through a very large marsh to the beginning of this point of land which ran about thirty miles into the lake. The fork of the river that we crossed ran into the lake on the west or upper side of the point; the other, through a marsh about two miles and emptied into the lake on the east, or lower side of said point. The French Indians used to go through this river, which did not exceed three miles, and so saved all they otherways must have lost by going round so long a point.)

I was here determined to stay all night and if posable to make my supper of the buck, and while the lads kindled a fire I went and cut a piece of his thigh, roasted it and attempted to eat it, but it was so bad that it made me heave. The others lay down without trying it.

[September 27] This morning about 9 o'clock came to a river and finding it too deep to wade, march'd up it till 12 and finding it still too deep, we agreed to make a bark canoe, and after working till almost sundown, we spoilt it. We then fell to work and tied a few small dry logs together to raft ourselves over, but finding it would bare one of us I tied a long piece of bark to one end of the raft, and after strip[pling] to my buff and desired the boy to do the same, I tied them on the raft. Then causing the boy to take hold of the end of the raft, I took the end long string of bark between my teeth, swam over and so drew the raft and boy hanging to it. When I got over and landed the cloaths and boy, I took my string again and returned to the place from whence I came, and there being again freighted, I made for the other side and after some difficulty arrived safe with my other companion and the remainder of our goods. The coldness of the water almost deprived me of the use of my limbs, but we soon got a fire and warmed ourselves nor marched farther that night.

[September 28] This day march'd th[rough] chesnut hilly land till about 4 o'clock, then rained very hard. I kill'd one young turkey, which was not enough to satisfy us.

[September 29] After marching some miles, we came again to the lake and on the sand we found the leg of a raccoon which had been kill'd, and drawn amongst the sand till it was as dirty as it could be, and I believe it had laid there two or three days by the smell. Soon

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46 Long Point, which extends twenty miles into Lake Erie.
47 Either Young Creek or Lynn River, which are four miles apart close to the lake shore. The latter empties at Port Dover.
48 Author's note: The intent of this canoe was to have saved us the trouble of marching by going down the river to the lake and so to Niagara.
after we found a little fish, then we made a fire and roasted them, and eat them notwithstanding the smell. Here we discovered land on the other side the lake for the first time, march’d all the afternoon on the sand by the lake, gathered some fruit, and encamp’d not far from the lake.

[September 30]

Abruptly the journal ends here, just as Gist was approaching the source of the Niagara River. But it was six days before the party reached Fort Niagara, on the east side of the river where it discharges into Lake Ontario. The relatively short distance suggests that the fugitives suffered some delay or were forced to retrace some of their steps, perhaps to make a crossing. Nevertheless, they achieved their goal and safety, and the journal makes clear that Gist was definitely the leader of the three; perhaps the McCrary brothers could never have finished the harrowing journey without him.

After the interview at Fort Niagara and the gift of new clothes, the three young men were sent by ship down the lake to Oswego. Probably it was there that Gist rendered to General Gage the following report of his escape:

Sir

I was taken prisone[r] the 14\textsuperscript{th} of Sept\textsuperscript{r} 1758, within about four miles of Fort Duquesne by the Wyendot Indians at the defeat of Maj’ Grant.

The number of Frenchmen that can be raised at Fort Detroit are about twelve hundred.\footnote{Possibly too large a figure. In 1760 George Croghan reported that the militia at Detroit numbered about 800. A few Frenchmen left Detroit just before the British took over in 1760, but not enough to account for the discrepancy between the two figures. Gist may have counted in some regular soldiers.}

The nations of Indians living near Detroit, first the Wyendots, the [Ot]Tawwas, the Potowotomes, these three nations live within sight of the Fort. The [O]Jebwas live some distance up the river from Detroit which I do not know.\footnote{The Ojibways, or Chippewas, had a village at Saginaw Bay.} The country is leavel and very wet, but chiefly sandy but good land, and well timbered bringeth good game.

Between Detroit and Niagara, the country is chiefly leavel and the
most part of it is good land and well timbered, but some part of it is prodejius bad, and beach timber. The people immagened that you would certainly come in the spring if you did not come this fall, and distroy that place. The [Ot]Tawwas heared that Sir William Johnson\textsuperscript{51} took one of their men prisone[r] and cut his right arm off and his nose, for which they burned one of the Highland soldiers and eat part of him. The 12\textsuperscript{th} of Sept\textsuperscript{r} 1759 I set out from the Wyendot town with John McCrary & Wm: his brother, and arrived at Niagury 5\textsuperscript{th} of Oct\textsuperscript{o} after being in the wood 24 day[s].

\begin{quote}
I am your
\begin{flushright}
Humble Serv\textsuperscript{t}
\end{flushright}
Thomas Gist
\end{quote}

John McCrary and his brother was taken in Augu[s]te County in Virginia on a branch of James River, by the Wyendot Indiens. The prisoners in the Wyendot town about 40.\textsuperscript{52}

Thomas Gist succeeded to his father's property in Western Pennsylvania. He settled a tract of four hundred thirty-three acres adjoining his father's land and built a house, where he lived with his sister Ann. Later he acquired his brothers' inherited lands there and at one time owned 2,750 acres. George Washington visited him in 1770 and again in 1784. In his diary of 1770, Washington wrote: "When we came down the Hill to the Plantation of Mr. Thos. Gist, the Ld. [land] appeared charming; that which lay level being as rich and black as anything coud possibly be."\textsuperscript{53} Apparently Thomas did not serve in the Revolution, at least not as a Continental officer. He was a justice of the peace for three counties at various times and died in 1786.\textsuperscript{54}

\textit{William L. Clements Library} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{Howard H. Peckham}

\textsuperscript{51} Sir William Johnson (1715–1774) was the Crown Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the Northern Department.

\textsuperscript{52} Late in 1760 George Croghan obtained the release of fifty-seven English captives from the Detroit Indians.

\textsuperscript{53} J. C. Fitzpatrick, ed., \textit{The Diaries of George Washington, 1748–1799} (Boston, 1925), I, 407.

\textsuperscript{54} Lawrence A. Orrill, "Christopher Gist and His Sons," \textit{Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine}, XV (1932), 191–218.