

TREASURE HUNT IN THE FOREST

Two hitherto unpublished documents reporting on the fate
of Braddock's pay chest

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EVERY secluded cove on the eastern seaboard has its legend of sunken Spanish gold or pirates' buried treasure. The ghosts of Captain Kidd and his piratical crew haunt the entire region of salt marshes and tidal rivers. For nearly three centuries now, the lore, legends, and hoaxes relating to Kidd's hidden treasure have pervaded the minds of otherwise sober citizens. Belief in these myths has become so realistic, at times, as to incite the credulous to digging and diving by the direction of maps coded in language as obscure as their origin, often resorting to the use of divining rods. The futile search has gone on; and many have been the legal entanglements arising from too literal a faith in the legendary pot of gold. Prominent personages and renowned fortunes have been enmeshed in long trains of embarrassing litigation.¹

We may look askance at the naiveté of our seaboard neighbors, yet we have our own particular phantom treasure lore here in the hinterland of Western Pennsylvania. As persistent as Captain Kidd legends have been the rumors of buried money that fell from the

Mr. Williams, a valued contributor to this Magazine, has again made available to scholars some eighteenth century documents.—Ed.

1 Myriad have been the occurrences of sporadical treasure hunts in eastern regions. Some of them are recounted in the following: W. H. Bonner, *Pirate Laureate* (New Brunswick, 1947), 130 ff. Also B. A. Botkin, *A Treasury of New England Folklore* (New York, 1949), 531-532, for accounts of Narragansett Bay, Newport, R. I., legends. Piracies in Delaware Bay and Linhaven Bay, in the Chesapeake, are reported in Thomas F. Gordon, *History of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1839), 111, and in M. P. Andrews, *Virginia, The Old Dominion* (Garden City, 1937), I, 174. Legal actions arising out of the piracies, Samuel Lowman vs. Pennsylvania (1704), John Curso vs. Pennsylvania (false claim for £30,000, in 1704), Shaw vs. Shaw (Hampden County, Massachusetts, 1850), all reported in Botkin, *op. cit.*, 530-533.

The most spectacular of the quasi-legal episodes gained widespread publicity and credence early in this century. The hoax purported to link the foundation of the great Astor fortune with the lost treasure of Captain Kidd through an ancient iron chest, London jewel merchants, and a web of evidence worthy of the pen of the most imaginative novelist. A copy of Franklin H. Head, *A Notable Lawsuit* (Chicago, privately printed, 1898), is in the Library of Congress, photostatic copy in New York Public Library; the case reviewed in *Forum*, LXXXVI (July, 1931), 56-64.

grasp of the mortally wounded Braddock on that fearful afternoon of July 9, 1755. Many have been the conjectures concerning the supposedly rich pay chest of the British army. Even historians have not agreed as to the fate of the alleged wealth, while their estimates of its value have mounted to fantastic figures.²

The condition of Braddock's finances can be simply told. As the army advanced from Alexandria, Virginia (the point of debarkation), toward Fort Cumberland (Wills Creek), Braddock became increasingly aware of the enormous difficulty of the task that lay ahead of him. He found that distances, the mountains, and transportation problems were many times greater than either the War Office had planned or he himself had dreamed. Consequent expenses for team, wagon, and teamster hire, also for provisions, far exceeded expectations.³ In this situation, his money supply was rapidly

2 James Veech, writing in the 1850's, estimated the value of Braddock's captured money chest at £25,000. Concerning the location of Dunbar's camp, he wrote: "It was then cleared of its timber, but is since much overgrown with timber and small trees. It is, however, easily found by the numerous diggings in search of relics and treasure, by the early settlers and others in later times." *Monongahela of Old* (Pittsburgh, 1892-1910), 64.

Dr. Archer B. Hulbert, *Braddock's Road* (IV of *Historic Highways of America* series, Cleveland, 1903), 107, printing the "Seaman's Journal," estimates the loss thus: "The General's private chest . . . had about £1,000 in it" and adds the following footnote: "The contents of the chest was undoubtedly £10,000."

Winthrop Sargent, *History of an Expedition Against Fort DuQuesne* (Philadelphia, 1856), 389, printing the same journal under the title of "The Morris Journal," quotes the same with the same figure in nearly the same footnote.

George D. Albert, in *Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania*, II, 57, stated the £25,000 figure, without any supporting authority.

It should be here mentioned that Sargent, *op. cit.*, printed the above cited journal with the explanation that it had first been printed by the Rev. Francis O. Morris, to whom it had been given by the family of the naval officer who had accompanied Braddock, hence the "Seaman's Journal." Hulbert, *op. cit.*, printed the same journal with the explanation that it is identically the same as, and possibly written by, Engineer Harry Gordon, except that Gordon adds a few fuller details. See also, William Matthews, *American Diaries*, 60.

From Windsor Castle's Royal Archives, Dr. Stanley M. Pargellis brought forth a series of letters selected from the papers of the Duke of Cumberland, son of George II, and Captain-General of all British armies. *Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765* (New York: London, 1936). Among them was a letter of special significance to the study of this expedition, being an unsigned letter of a British officer to the Duke of Cumberland, reporting in detail on all phases of the campaign. He states, *ibid.*, 123, that the General had £2,500 in his private baggage. Both Sargent and Hulbert, quoting the "Seaman's Journal," *op. cit.*, above, state explicitly that it was the General's private money that they designate. Refer to concluding paragraphs of this article for evaluation of this evidence.

3 The War Office in far off Britain had little idea of conditions or distances in the wilds of America. Braddock, writing to Robert Napier, adjutant general and secretary to the Duke of Cumberland, April 19, 1755, makes the

dwindling. George Washington, his new aide-de-camp, was ordered to ride back to Hampton to procure £ 4000⁴ from the army paymaster. Obtaining all the money the paymaster could supply and securing the balance from the Virginia House of Delegates, in Williamsburg, Washington hastened back to Fort Cumberland with the £ 4000 in his saddlebags, escorted by only eight militiamen. Of these he wrote: " . . . I believe they would not have been as many seconds dispersing if I had been attacked."⁵ All of this is a matter of record and is well known to students of Washington's career. What has not been known is what was the lot of the pay chest—whether it escaped capture or was taken by the French, as many have supposed.

In the interest of historical truth, we should take note of two documents of prime significance to those who are interested in the events surrounding the defeat of British arms on the Monongahela. In the William L. Clements Library rather recently have come to view two letters⁶ that set forth the authentic story of how it happened that the pay chest of Braddock's army escaped capture by the French and Indians.

These letters are the official reports of the Commissary of Ordnance, who accompanied the army, addressed to the Board of Ordnance in London. Written after the battle by one who witnessed the butchery and escaped with the remnants of the troops, they constitute one of the best first-hand records of the disastrous events that have appeared in a century and a half.⁷

The reports, furthermore, offer renewed light upon many other moot subjects relating to various phases of the march and retreat.

admission: "I am impatient to begin my March over the Mountains, which in my last I told you were fifteen Miles over, tho' I now know them to be between sixty and seventy. . . ." Stanley M. Pargellis, *Military Affairs in North America* (Cumberland Papers, New York, 1936), 82. Also see D. S. Freeman, *George Washington* (seven volumes, New York, 1948-1957), II, 49.

4 John C. Fitzpatrick, *Writings of George Washington* (39 volumes, Washington, 1931-1944), I, 125. Memorandum in Washington's handwriting.

5 *Ibid.*, 131. Memorandum in Washington's handwriting.

6 The letter book of James Furnis now in the William L. Clements Library at Ann Arbor, Michigan. It is through the courtesy of its director, Mr. Howard H. Peckham, himself one of the first authorities and author relating to the Colonial and Revolutionary period of American history, that we have the privilege of presenting these letters to the public in the *WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL MAGAZINE*. While this article was in preparation, the writer found that the curator of manuscripts at the Clements Library, Dr. William S. Ewing, was preparing a paper on the Fort William Henry experiences of James Furnis. We refer the reader to this interesting article published in *New York History*, July, 1961.

7 The letters from the Cumberland Papers, *Military Affairs in North America*, *op. cit.*, 77-133, were the greatest contribution to our knowledge of these events in a century. See note 2, above.

Some accounts have sought to gloss over Braddock's arbitrariness and unreasonable tirades.⁸ Here we have direct evidence that he cursed the War Office and particularly the Board of Ordnance "from head to Foot," and even "drank damnation" to them. We have heard, from various authors, mollification of Braddock's fascination for Robert Orme,⁹ one of his three aides-de-camp, who was called captain, although he never attained higher rank than lieutenant in the British Army Lists.¹⁰ In these letters we see Orme insulting even officers of exalted rank, with the apparent approval of the General.¹¹

Our interest in these reports lies in the fact that they state categorically that the "money tumbril" remained at Fort Cumberland and did not accompany the army, and that a box containing a relatively small amount for commissary expenses, together with the Commissary's vouchers, fell into French hands. Of course we know that Braddock's papers with his secret instructions from the War Office and the detailed plans of Fort Duquesne by Captain Robert Stobo were taken in Braddock's baggage.¹²

The writer of the letters was James Furnis, at that time Commissary of Ordnance and Paymaster of the Royal Artillery. More than a year later he became Comptroller of Ordnance.¹³ His official status in relation to the army is ambiguous. Nowhere in any of the standard narratives of the expedition is he mentioned; neither is there any allusion to him in Orme's journal or in the "Seaman's

⁸ See Letter II, following.

⁹ Pargellis, *op. cit.*, 120-123 (unsigned letter written to the Duke of Cumberland by a British officer who had been in the engagement); *Pennsylvania Archives*, 1st ser., II, 317 (Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts, to Governor Robert Hunter Morris, of Pennsylvania, May 23, 1755).

¹⁰ The Lists of Officers of the Navy and Marine Corps (London, issued each year, hereinafter cited as British Army Lists) have been consulted in the Clements Library, the Library of Congress, and the New York Public Library. Orme disappears from the lists after 1756. Sargent, *op. cit.*, 284, states that he married the only daughter of Viscount Townshend, the sister of General George Townshend, who succeeded Wolfe at Quebec. According to the *Army Lists*, he never attained higher rank than lieutenant in the Coldstream Guards. See also Pargellis, *op. cit.*, 98n.

¹¹ See Letter II, following; also News Letter of Daniel Dulaney, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, III, 20-21.

¹² *Pennsylvania Archives*, ser. 2, VI, 223; *Memoirs of Robert Stobo* (anonymous, probably N. S. Craig, Pittsburgh, 1854), 20-23; E. B. O'Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, X, 311n (hereinafter cited as *N. Y. Colonial Documents*).

¹³ See MS Letters of James Furnis, Clements Library, Furnis to the Board of Ordnance, July 23, 1755, and October 7, 1755, printed following; also W. S. Ewing, *New York History*, July, 1961, 307.

Journal" (actually Engineer Harry Gordon's journal).¹⁴ One looks in vain for an appearance of Furnis's name in either Washington's orderly book or Lieutenant Disney's, both in the Library of Congress. His name does not appear in the British Army Lists for any year.¹⁵

It seems that commissaries, comptrollers of ordnance, and the like, were civilians attached to the army. Furnis, in his second letter, infers that he was one of the class of civilians who came under the Royal Artillery, who were "treated with the greatest Contempt by the late General and Mr. Orm." In the British army, in the early days, even the artillerists had been civilian artisans, the art of gunnery, ammunition making, etc., being closely guarded trade secrets.¹⁶ The corps of engineers was, at that very time, a civilian adjunct to the fighting forces, as Furnis's contemporary and friend, John Montessor, sadly lamented.¹⁷ He loudly groaned because of the military system wherein an engineer officer faithfully served his king and country for many years, sharing the same dangers and hardships with the rest of the army, without receiving official recognition.

An engineer "was called Mr. So and So until the Sovereign, as a reward for service, bestowed honorary rank" ¹⁸ Although, out of twenty-one mentions of Furnis's name in the two Montessor's journals, he is designated "Mr. Furnis" in all but one instance, and only once is he given the title of Major. That he rated officer status of good standing is attested by the fact that he was classed with, mingled on an equal footing with, and often dined with a group of the best of the ranking officers.¹⁹

In October of 1756, Furnis became Comptroller of Ordnance with headquarters in New York,²⁰ whither the reports of the various commissaries were sent to him. There were, or he appointed, com-

14 See Winthrop Sargent, *History of an Expedition Against Fort Duquesne*, "Captain Orme's Journal," and, *ibid.*, the "Morris Journal."

15 *The British Army Lists* from 1750 to 1770 were searched in the Clements Library.

16 John W. Fortesque, *History of the British Army* (London, 1899), II, 49; Albert Manucy, *Artillery Through the Ages* (Washington, D. C., 1949), 4.

17 See Captain John Montessor's "Extra Services by Me," also "To What Reduced After 24 Campaigns in America," Montessor Journals, *Collections of the New York Historical Society* for the year 1881, 117-127 (hereinafter cited as NYHS Collections).

18 *Ibid.*, 126 footnote, quoting a member of the Montessor family to G. D. Scull, editor of the Montessor Journals.

19 *Ibid.*, Montessor Journals, 55, 57, 60, 65, 68. He was one of a party of four gentlemen invited to have dinner with Governor James Glenn of South Carolina when he was visiting New York, in 1759. See *Ibid.*, Journal of Colonel James Montessor, 111.

20 W. S. Ewing, *New York History*, *op. cit.*, 307.

missary clerks with each of the scattered detachments of the army. For the purpose of establishing order in ordnance business at Fort Edward and Fort William Henry, Furnis traveled to the Lake George country in company with General Daniel Webb, commander in the New York and Lake Champlain area. Here Furnis shared with the garrison of Fort William Henry the hardships of the siege and the perils of the troops after the capitulation. He suffered great distress and loss of all his baggage and horses during the attack upon and massacre of many of the paroled prisoners by Montcalm's Indians. Furnis was actually captured by Indians but rescued by a French guard and finally sent to Fort Edward.²¹

Two such harrowing, even terrifying, experiences must have been an ordeal for a man of sensibilities, which Furnis certainly was. He remained in New York, receiving a communication, near the end of December, 1763, from General Thomas Gage, commander-in-chief of British forces in North America.²² On August 30, 1766, Furnis sailed for home, bound for Bristol, England, aboard the ship *Grace*, Captain Chambers.²³ He was still living in England in 1787, as he was mentioned by a traveler then recently arrived from America, Mrs. Samuel Vaughan.²⁴

Furnis wrote as if he were well educated, with a careful observance of punctuation and grammar as it existed in his day. His letter book, in the Clements Library, is one of the finest examples of penmanship, meticulous attention to detail, good expression, and businesslike reports.

The letters follow:

Camp at Fort Cumberland 23^d July 1755.

Right Hon^{ble} and Hon^{ble} Gen^l

I beg leave to Acquaint your Hon^{rs} that I drew on you at the Camp at the little Meadows on the 16th Ultimo for One hundred and fifty Pounds Sterling on Acco^t of Incidents Payable Thirty Days after Sight to M.^{rs} Eliz.th Gates or order²⁵

On the 9th Instant the General at the Head of about 1200 Men—crossed the Manongahela near Fort DuQuesne. the rear of the Army had scarce forded the River before the advanced Party consisting of

21 *Ibid.*, 307 ff., including Furnis's letter to the Board of Ordnance, August 6, 1757, describing his experiences at Fort William Henry.

22 *Ibid.*, 307.

23 *Journal of Colonel James Montessor, op. cit.*, 386.

24 Letter of Mrs. Samuel Vaughan to her son, 1787, Benjamin Vaughan papers.

25 Not identified.

250 Men Commanded by Lieu.^t Col.^o Gage, received a smart fire from behind the Trees which put them into some disorder,²⁶ upon which the General who was about a quarter of a Mile Distant, immediately advanced with the Troops and drew up in an open place, when the Action became general, but the Enemy had greatly the Advantage, by securing themselves behind Trees—in such a manner, as they could not be seen, while our people by keeping together in a Body were a Butt for them to fire at, and only threw away their Ammunition the Action began about half an hour past One, and continued untill a Quarter past Four, when the Troops gave way, and all methods taken to rally them prov'd ineffectual, so that we were oblig'd to leave all our Artillery and Horses in the Field and to cross the River in great Confusion, several of the Indians pursued us into the Water, and came up with and scalp'd some of the straglers, but the main body keep'd the field in order to secure the Artillery and Baggage expecting we might rally which was very lucky, for the Soldiers were struck with such a Pannick that a small body might have cutt off what remained, we are at present uncertain of the Number of the french and Indians, but they are computed at about three or four Hundred— and our loss kill'd and wounded about Eight hundred. at this time Col.^o Dunbar was in the Rear with the rest of the Army, Horses and Provisions about 54 Miles dist.^t not being able to proceed for want of Horses. —On the 11th in the Evening the General with most of the wounded Arrived at the Camp, and the next day gave orders to destroy the Stores which were there, and a great Quantity of Provisions, least they should fall into the hands of the Enemy, who we then expected would pursue us, the greatest part of the Drivers having gone off with their Horses, on the first Alarm of our defeat on the 14th the General died of His Wounds.²⁷ and on the 21st we return'd hither, having only brought with us Two Six pounders Two Ammunition Carts and one Tumbrill from Colonel Dunbars Encampm^t.²⁸ I have

26 The two letters, printed herewith, furnish still another eyewitness account of the battle on the Monongahela. Comparison with others is interesting.

27 Orme's Journal, Sargent, *op. cit.*, 357, states that the General died on July 13th. The "Seaman's Journal," *Ibid.*, 388, and Hulbert, *op. cit.*, 106, (printing the same journal), says: "... the 12th, at 8 at night, he departed this life." Furnis thought it was the 14th. Under the distracting circumstances, one hardly could have been blamed for not knowing the day or the date.

28 There has long been a question of whether any wagons arrived back at Fort Cumberland. Here we have the explicit report on only two wagons (ammunition carts) having been returned. Cf. Don H. Berkebile, "Conestoga Wagons in Braddock's Campaign, 1755," *United States National Museum Bulletin* 218 (Washington, D. C., 1959), 149.

inclosed your Hon.^{rs} a Return of Artillery taken in the Action²⁹ and now taken a Remain of the Horses left by order of the General in this Fort. 'tis said we are to march in a few days for Philadelphia and hope to be able to transmitt from thence a Particular Acco^t of every thing.

Before we left this place I memorializ'd the General for £ 700 on Acco^t of Pay and Incidents [*i.e.*, incidentals] in which he immediately acquiesed, but on marching off the Ground the Money Tumbrell and Military Chest was order'd to be left, on which I immediately wrote to his Excellency desiring an order in writing to indemnify me in Case any Accident should happen to the money, as I had no proper place for its Security, at which he was greatly enraged return'd me my Letter, and suffer'd the Tumbrill to March, but gave orders to the Paymaster General not to Supply me with Money on any Account whatsoever. the next day it was resolv'd the Tumbrill with some other Stores should be sent back. so that I had no other Security for my Cash and Vouchers than a Box which I had made for that Purpose, which as I could not bring off, was unavoidably taken with my cash,³⁰ pay lists and Vouchers, a Particular Acco.^t of, I shall give yours (*sic*) honours in my next. —

I am with the greatest Respect ———

R.^t Hon.^{ble} & c.^a

J. F.

Hon.^{ble} Board of Ordnance

The like of same date to Charles Frederick Esq.^r Sury^r Gen.^l

Philadelphia 7th October 1755.

R.^t Hon.^{ble} and Hon.^{ble} Gent.ⁿ

In my Letter to your Honours from Fort Cumberland and dated 23^d July last, I inform'd you of my having drawn on the 16th June for One Hundred and fifty pounds Sterling on Account of Incidents payable at Thirty days Sight to Elizabeth Gates or Order, and herewith advise you of my Drafts since that time and inclose

An Abstract of the Remains Receipts Issues & c.^a of the Brass Ordnance and Horses from 1st January to 30th September Inclusive.

Muster Rolls of the Detachment 1st May to 30th June Inclusive.

29 See Pargellis, *op. cit.*, 97, for a reproduction of this return, signed by both Furnis and Captain Ord.

30 See Letter II for an elaboration of these same events. Here we have an official, specific, and authentic statement as to what money fell into the hands of the victors. Cf. note 2, above, for reported amounts and comparison of the figures.

Muster Rolls of Engineers, Staff Officers from 1st May to 30th September

List of Stoppages from Conductors & Artificers from 1st March to Ditto

— Copie (*sic*) of Gen.^l Braddocks order to Cap.^t Ord for destroy^e the Stores.³¹

We March'd from Fort Cumberland 2^d August with the Late Sir Peter Halkets, Colonel Dunbars Regiment and three Additional Companys. Col.^o Dunbar left four Companys of Virginians to Garrison the above Fort and as we were oblig'd to leave about 300 Barrells of Powder with other Stores as p^r inclosed Abstract have left a Conductor in charge therewith. we Arrived here on the 30th Aug.^t and on the 2nd Instant the above Troops with the small Remain of Artillery, and Stores march'd hence for Albany. —

As I had the Misfortune of loosing (*sic*) my Vouchers of Stores and Cash in our late unhappy defeat near Fort Du Quesne, I have labour'd under great difficulty in making up the inclosed Abstract, but believe it to be nearly correct, as my Issues have been very inconsiderable.

On Cap.^t Ords³² joining the General, I was immediately order'd up from the Second Division, where I luckily left my Book of Cash and Payments. otherways should not have been able to have made up any Account, which I am now forwarding, and if any Error should appear on Receipt of said Accompts it will proceed from the loss of my Cash Vouchers, as in the Continual Hurry of Marching, and the many Inconveniences I have labour'd under time would not allow me to Particularise the Articles, some of which Vouchers, I

31 This is concrete proof of the existence of written orders from Braddock for the destruction of the stores, munitions, etc., since this is the official transmittal of the order to the Board of Ordnance. Although various accounts have stated that the General gave the orders, it has usually been assumed that they were verbal, or that Colonel Dunbar assumed the authority himself. This should clear Dunbar of much of the onus of executing these orders, as it is here proven that he acted on written orders from his general and had no alternative.

32 Captain Thomas Ord was brought to America, landing in Newfoundland, to take command of the artillery of Braddock's army. He traveled to Philadelphia, which he left on June 13. See *Pennsylvania Archives*, II, 358. He caught up with the army June 23, according to Letter II, following. At the battle of the Monongahela, he was severely wounded. Ord's military record shows that he was appointed lieutenant in the Royal Regiment of Artillery, 1741; captain, 1746; major, with rank of lieutenant-colonel in the army, 1759; and colonel, January 1, 1777. He fought with Amherst at Ticonderoga and Crown Point in 1759 and was in Martinique in 1762. In 1776, Ord was in America for a brief time, but returned to England, where he died in May of 1777. See *British Army Lists*, the Royal Regiment of Artillery for these years; Pargellis, *op. cit.*, 96n.

referr'd to Particulars in postage of my Payments. no pains shall be wanting in making them appear as clear as possible.

In my Letter from Alexandria dated 13th April last I inform'd your Honours of Proceedings to that time, and am very sorry to inform your Hon.^{rs} that the Affairs of the Artillery were afterwards conducted with great Irregularity and our Corps in general particularly treated with the greatest Contempt by the late General and M.^r Orm³³ his Aid de Camp (for what Reason) to us — is yet unknown, before we March'd from thence, we inquired from the General in what manner we were to be Supply'd with Waggons and horses, by whom we were inform'd wou'd be impress'd for transporting the Artillery and Stores from Alexandria to Fort Cumberland, on our Arrival at which place a sufficient Number of both would be provided — when we found the late Gen.^{ls} Contract was made by one Frankland [*i.e.*, Benjamin Franklin] of this place, for Waggons and Horses for the use of the Expedition in General, were deliver'd to M.^r Scott Waggon-Master Gen.^l and still remains in his hands as these Waggons and horses were not confin'd in our service, but occasionally (*sic*) used to carry Provisions & c.^a it will be very difficult to make any exact Acco.^t of them in order to regulate the Payments for those employ'd, and destroy'd in each particular Service.³⁴ I have convers'd with the Commissary General of Provisions on the Subject, who is equally at a loss — since the death of Gen.^l Braddock Colonel Dunbar has been applyd to on this head, by the Contract^r who refus'd to interfere in any such matter, so that unless General Shirley will order the Payment I do not know in what manner it will be settled, I have already paid a considerable Sum on Acco.^t of Waggons, out of the money appropriated for the Payment of Engineers Staff & c.^a to 31st August by the late Generals order, which Acco.^t I have kept separate and shall transmitt with my Cash Accompts ———.

33 The unidentified officer, reporting directly to His Grace, the Duke of Cumberland, gives a full statement regarding Orme's unaccountable arrogance and deliberate insults to high ranking officers of great military experience, particularly to Sir Peter Halket and Colonel Dunbar. William Shirley's good estimate of him to the contrary, it is reasonable to suppose that Orme should "put his best foot forward" after the disaster and when reporting to his new commander, just as he had with Braddock. Pargellis, *op. cit.*, 121-122; *Colonial Records of Pennsylvania*, IV, 404.

34 This clear statement by Furnis should explain his position and relieve him of some of the blame attached to him by Pargellis' note, *op. cit.*, 96n, 2, for causing delay in settling wagoners' accounts for which Franklin had made himself responsible. Had Braddock given his written order, all would have been cleared. Many people contributed to the existing conditions.

During our Encampm^t at Fort Cumberland, the Managment (*sic*) of Artillery Affairs was transacted by M.^r Orme, and in a great measure taken out of the hands of the persons sent out for that purpose, notwithstanding he acknowledg'd himself unacquainted with our Service, on my first Application to him at which place the various proportions, loading and unloading the Waggon for the March not only required the greatest part of my time, but created great Confusion and uncertainty in the Package, in which there were hourly Alterations.

On the first days March from which place the Money Tumbrill was stop'd without any previous Notice on which I apply'd to the General by Letter desiring an order in writing to indemnifie me against any Accident, that might ensue, which was absolutely refus'd but after some Consideration and examing (*sic*) into the loading, suffer'd to march, giving Orders at the same time to the Paymast.^r General not to supply me with £ 700 Sterling for which I had before memorialised his Excellency and he had granted. ———

At our first Encampment from the Fort the Tumbrill was again mention'd by the General, and as I am well inform'd on M.^r Orm's saying it must not, should not March, it was return'd to the Fort, the want of which was very inconvenient, as it oblig'd me to carry my Cash and Vouchers in a small Box in an open Waggon to which everyone had access, the Cash tho' lodg'd for some days in the hands of the Paym.^r Gen.^l was inconvenient to us both, that I was under a necessity of carrying it in the above manner in which it was lost in the Action.³⁵ I had a small Desk convenient for writing and containing Vouchers Papers &c.^a this was carryed in a Waggon for want of the above Timbrill, when Cap^t Orm passing and looking into the Waggon, knowing it to be mine, order'd it to be left on the road, hearing of this—I was oblig'd to return from our Encampm.^t 3 Miles to secure my Vouchers and papers, which I brought off tied up in Handkerchiefs having no other Conveniency, and this way march'd for some days, untill I could have them better secured ———

Since Cap.^t Ords Arrival on 23^d June, I have apply'd for Musters. was in hopes of sending them from this place, must now waite an Opportunity from Albany, a Ship going for England soon. was oblig'd to stay here to finish the Inclosed Abstract, and forward my Cash Acco.^{ts} which when done shall immediately proceed for the above place.

³⁵ Refer to note 30, above.

At the Camp at Fort Cumberland the late General M.^r Scott Wagon Master General who resign'd as Conductor 31st May the Lieu.^{ts} McLoad³⁶ and McCullough with M.^r Marsh Clerk of Stores and Assist.^t Paymaster, Waggon masters, the latter has been of very little Service to me — An Instance of the late Gen.^l Prejudice to the Artillery and Civil Branch is evident from the following Ex[er]cration and Toast Viz.^t

At the Camp at the little Meadows Lieu.^t McLoad being order'd to March with the first Division Apply'd to me from Cap.^t Orme for a Sum of Money to Advance to the Waggoners employ'd on the Contract, as Cap.^t Hind & Self were unacquainted with the said Contracts did not immediately comply therewith on which the General sent for me, whom I inform'd it was contrary to my Instructions, to advance any money without an order in writing under the hand of the Commanding Officers of Artillery which I then had not, when perusing my Instructions,³⁷ he denounced Damnation to the whole Board of Ordnance, after which he filled a Glass of Wine, told me he was going to drink, and Damnation to the whole board of Ordnance from head to Foot, especially the Person at the

³⁶ The several following officers mentioned by Furnis are thus identified: Lieutenant John McCullough, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. His name is written "McCuller" in the list of officers that precedes the "Seaman's Journal," Sargent, *op. cit.*, 364, among the wounded. He was sent home early in 1757, as appears in Lord Loudoun's letter to the Duke of Cumberland, December 26, 1756: "... ever since he was wounded at the Monongahela, (he) has been at times disordered in his Judgment: I am to allow him to go home for recovery of his health." Pargellis, *op. cit.*, 278. Lieutenant William McCleod is meant. He is designated "Lieut. McCloud" in the list of officers preceding the "Seaman's Journal," Sargent, *op. cit.*, 364; also in the *Waggoners' Accounts*, from the Shippen Papers, Pennsylvania Historical Society, L. B. Walker, editor (70 copies privately printed). He sailed home in the same ship with Furnis, in August, 1766. He is at that time designated "Capt. Wm. McLeod, late Royal Artillery." See Colonel James Montrossor's Journal, *op. cit.*, 386.

Captain Robert Hind is on the return of the detachment of the Royal Artillery at Fort Cumberland, June 8, 1755. He was superseded by Captain Ord (note 32, above), when that officer reached Wills Creek, June 23. He is not listed as one of those present at the engagement, but he turns up at Oswego, the following summer, with the Royal Artillery. See Engineer Patrick Mackellar's Journal at Oswego, printed in Pargellis, *op. cit.*, 212.

"Mr. Scott, Waggon Master General" is the only designation found in the orderly books, and no mention by name is found in the journals of the expedition. In the *Waggoners' Accounts*, *op. cit.*, he is cited 99 times as "Mr. Scott," 4 times as "Scott," and once as "Capt. Scott." There is one entry for money paid to Samuel Scott for forage for 54 horses. All the other entries in the account are for hire of teams and wagons, except two: James Rankin, Horsemaster, and Philip Crol, Assistant Wagon Master. This may indicate that this was Samuel Scott, who was Wagon Master General. General Charles Scott of the Revolution was with Braddock, but was an ensign only eighteen years of age.

³⁷ Cf. note 34 above.

Head, these were his words, of which I thought it my Duty to acquaint your Honours. Colonel Dunbar was present, and has mention'd it to me several Times with Reluctance. ——— I am with the greatest Resp.^t

Yours Hon.^{rble} &c.^a

J. F.

Hon.^{ble} Board of Ordnance. ———

Here then we have evidence from a primary source which has never before been available to students of this significant episode of an important era of our history. It is possible that this evidence may at least modify our long accepted conception of the events leading up to and culminating in the great losses at the battle on the Monongahela. The influence that these events cast upon future concepts of military tactics and military history is beyond the scope of this paper.

In evaluating the evidence at hand, we should consider the fact that we have the official reports, accompanied by the official accounting for the money, as opposed to many secondary, even third-handed declarations that a great amount of money was captured, all based upon what appears like primary information. But let us examine the evidence further. We know that the "Seaman's Journal" was written by a naval officer, of subaltern grade, who was not in the engagement; but the journal was amplified and completed by Engineer Harry Gordon. This journal printed by both Sargent and Hulbert expressly states that it was the General's *private* chest that was lost [*i.e.*, privately owned] containing £ 1000, to which both editors add a footnote that this figure is probably an error, and that £ 10,000 was certainly meant. This note was entirely undocumented and unsupported by any authority. Similarly, we have, in the anonymous officer's letter to the Duke of Cumberland, the declaration that " . . . the General in some of his trunks on the day of action had Two thousand five hundred pounds, all which . . . fell into the Enemys hands." ³⁸

Now let us evaluate the foregoing facts. These journals and this letter we have rightly considered as primary eyewitness accounts of events up to this point; but we here find that their testimony is nothing better than hearsay. Furnis's reports have established beyond a doubt that the army pay chest (public or government money) had been sent back to Fort Cumberland and was safe. If the General

³⁸ Cf. note 2 above.

had any money along, it had to have been his own private money, to which the "Seaman's (Gordon's) journal" and the anonymous officer agree. But they greatly disagree on the amount of money he had, which clearly shows that they were guessing.

Furthermore, are we to imagine the General, having such a vast amount of cash in his traveling trunk, telling all the minor officers of its whereabouts and the amount carried? If he had had so large an amount available, why would he not have used part of it, obtaining an accounting for which he would have been reimbursed, rather than to send Washington back for £ 4000, which amount was so vital to success of the expedition? Or why would Braddock, who was far from a wealthy man, carry his entire private fortune with him into the savage wilderness?

At best, these officers could offer only a surmise. They probably did not know that the army tumbrel had been sent back, or they mistook the box Furnis described, or they were just guessing about the whole matter. Probably all three conditions are true, and it is very apparent that they were indulging in hearsay. Add to this that the French accounts do not mention any large amounts of money. The first account mentions nothing beyond the British loss in men and *materiel*. The second account, official "return of artillery and munitions of war found upon the field," adding a footnote in which is stated as an afterthought: "The Indians have plundered a great deal of gold and silver coin." It is certain that many if not all of the enlisted men carried some money, as they were paid at Fort Cumberland. This was accomplished with the small gold and silver coins which Braddock had requested of the Duke of Newcastle for paying the troops.³⁹ It seems reasonable that this would have been the gold and silver coin the Indians plundered. Had there been a large locked strongbox, the French would surely have gotten it. It is also worthy of note that Lieutenant Orme, who of all persons was nearest to Braddock and conversant with all of his affairs, mentioned nothing of any monetary loss.

Whether or not future historians of the struggle between France and Britain for possession of this American continent may modify their views of this one episode, they will at least consider these two letters of "J. F." to the "R.^t Hon.^{ble} and Hon.^{ble} Gent.ⁿ" worthy of consideration.

³⁹ Pargellis, *op. cit.*, 80-81 (Braddock to Newcastle, March 20, 1755, copy among the Cumberland Papers, evidently captured with Braddock's effects, translated into French, retranslated into English).