NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

COLONEL EYRE'S JOURNAL OF HIS TRIP FROM NEW YORK TO PITTSBURGH, 1762

The floodwaters at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers in January, 1762, rose to such a height that the oldest Indian could not remember the waters being so high.\(^1\) Snow almost every day in December, and a rain and thaw on the eighth of January caused the waters to rise ten feet over the banks on January 9, playing havoc with Fort Pitt. Reporting to General Amherst on the destruction of the flood, Colonel Bouquet, commandant at Fort Pitt, gave no opinion concerning the necessary repairs and rebuilding, assuming that an engineer would be sent to survey the damage.\(^2\) The engineer that Amherst dispatched to Fort Pitt was Lieutenant Colonel William Eyre.

Colonel Eyre's engineering record began in 1744 as a practitioner engineer and ensign. He served at Culloden in 1746, and the next year was in Flanders. In 1755 he came to America with the 44th Regiment under General Braddock and served throughout the French and Indian War. Captain Eyre was promoted to the rank of major in 1756 and became commandant of Fort William Henry which he had constructed. Two years later he was a lieutenant colonel and engineer in ordinary and fought at Ticonderoga with General Abercromby, returning later to build a new fort there. After 1759 Eyre was "chief engineer for the Department of New York" under General Amherst, commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America. He became thoroughly acquainted with all the posts in the northern colonies and Canada. After nine years in America, Eyre was anxious to return to England to settle private affairs. He sailed from New York aboard the "Beulah" on October 12, 1764. Not until February 18, 1765, did the New York Mercury carry the notice that this ship had been lost in the Bristol Channel.

\(^1\) Bouquet to Amherst, Fort Pitt, March 7, 1762, in British Museum Add. Ms. 21634;
\(^2\) The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet, Series 21634, p. 75-76 (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1940).
on the night of November 12. Colonel Eyre was one of those drowned.

Eyre’s journey from New York to Fort Pitt was only one phase in the work of a person who might be called a “consulting military engineer.” The manuscript journal of this event was prepared after his return to New York. Logically, Eyre would make a report of this trip to General Amherst, and a copy is reported to be in the Amherst Papers, W. O. 34, Public Record Office, London. Since the manuscript printed below was found among the Gage papers in the William L. Clements Library at Ann Arbor, Michigan, the supposition is that it was part of the correspondence on unfinished business which Amherst turned over to his successor, General Gage, in November, 1763.

*William L. Clements Library  Frances R. Reece*

**JOURNAL TO PITTSBURGH BY BRIGADIER GENERAL FORBES’S ROUTE AND RETURN BY THE ROAD GENERAL BRADDOCK MADE. 1762**

Set off from New York the 16th of Feb. Lay that Night at Watsons on Staaten Island. The 17th went to [Perth] Amboy. The Day [was] warm but much Snow on the Ground. The 18th travell’d to Brunswick[ ]. Very cold Weather. The Night before [there was] a great Fall of Snow. 19th Cold, reach’d[ ]d Prince Town. There continued the 20. 21. 22. 23. and 24.

3 Although unsigned, the manuscript of nine folio pages was quickly ascribed to Eyre by comparison with the letters he wrote at certain stops on his trip. These letters are printed in the appropriate footnotes that follow. The manuscript has been transcribed from the original, but Eyre’s long and rambling sentences have been broken into smaller units, adding the necessary punctuation and capital letters. Certain omitted words have been inserted in brackets for the sake of clarity.

4 From Princeton Eyre wrote to Amherst:

I am Extremely unhappy to be obliged to Inform Y. Excellency that I do not find my self so Well as I hoped I should, and as I wish’d in order to be able to perform this Journey. Before I reached Brunswick I found the Complaint I have Experienced some time past shew it self a fresh. Mere necessity now obliges me to tell Y. Excellency that my Disorder has been a Gleet, or I fear something Worse of the Vineral kind, from it’s Obstinance after all I have done to get rid of it. This Complaint which I fancy’d was all over, is now apparently bad, that I have too much Reason to fear it will prevent me from pursing my Journey, as travelling I see already makes it be-come so trouble-some. I am so Distress’d on Acc. of it, that I do not know how to Express it. I shall wait here, and do all I can to See if I shall grow better, when I hope to Receive Y. Excellencys Orders, what I am next to do, if I find I cannot proceed on my Journey. This last Thought hurts me so much, that I can not reflect on it without Extreme Uneasyness.
went to Trenton. The Weather these last Days was cold and little Snow. The 25.\(^{th}\), 26.\(^{th}\), 27.\(^{th}\) and 28.\(^{th}\) froze very hard, the two first Days so intensely, that it was never remember'd by the Inhabitants there so cold at any Season of the Year.\(^5\) The River Delaware shut up, which detain'd me there untill the 1\(^{st}\) of March, when I cross'd the River on the Ice and sent my Horses over at the Ferry four Miles above the Town, with great Difficulty, by cutting a Passage thro' the Ice for the Scow. I reach'd Philadelphia this Day, the Weather beginning to moderate, but a good Deal of Snow upon the Ground; the Road near the City being very good, the only Part that I met with tolerable from my leaving [New] York. There I remain'd the first, 2.\(^{d}\), 3.\(^{d}\) 4.\(^{th}\) and 5.\(^{th}\) I came to the Sign of the Prince of Wales, nine Miles from Philadelphia in my Way to Pittsburgh. The Weather continued cold while I remain'd in Town, and some Snow fell the 2.\(^{d}\) Day after I got there. The 6.\(^{th}\) I lay at the Sign of the Ship thirty five Miles from Philadelphia, the 7.\(^{th}\) at Clynch's 57\(\frac{1}{2}\) Miles from Philadelphia, and the 8.\(^{th}\) got to Lancaster; the Road all the Way from Philadelphia good, it being frozen and much us'd by the Waggons. The Air still continued cold and a great Deal of Snow fell this last Day, which spoil'd the Roads again, as the Sun soon melted it in the middle

I have been traveling here ever Since Tuesday the 16\(^{th}\) from [New] York, on Acc.\(^1\) of the Terrible Condition of the Roads, and tho' it has been so Slow and in a Chair, yet what am to expect, if I went faster, and on Horse back, as I must do if I should attempt to proceed. This is the only time Since I have been in the Service that indisposition has hinder'd me from doing my Duty, which to me now is very mortifying. Your Excellency has been always so good, which embolden[s] me now to be so particular in mentioning my uneasy circumstances so minutely.—Eyre to Amherst, Prince-Town, Feb. 19, 1762, Public Record Office, W.O. 34, vol. 69. Photostat in W. L. Clements Library.

Amherst's reply was the following:

I have this Morning Your Letter of 19.\(^{th}\) Instant, and am Sorry for the Distress You are in on Account of Your health.

I am so Sensitive that You will Use Your utmost Endeavors to Execute the Service You are on, that I leave it entirely to You to pursue Your Journey, or Come back as You Judge best, and Shall therefore only Desire You will take a due Care of Your Health.

I must Mention, one thing which You may not be acquainted with viz. that going on Horseback may perhaps prove a Cure to You. I have known it prescribed, and have a good Effect, when nothing else would do. I don't say this to persuade You to pursue Your Journey. You will please to do as You think best.—Amherst to Eyre, New York, Feb. 22, 1762, Public Record Office, W.O. 34, vol. 69. Photostat in W. L. Clements Library.

\(^5\) At Trenton Eyre wrote Amherst that he would attempt the trip as planned:

I had the Honour of Your Excellency's Letter of the 22. Inst: last Wednesday, for which I return You my most Grateful Thanks. I have the pleasing hopes that what you was so kind as to acquaint me of, may enable me to proceed. At all Events, I shall try, for to return, the very thought is painful. Your Excellency's Indulgence and kindness, I shall ever endeavour to merit the Continuance of.

I will ride from hence to Philadelphia by way of tryal. I left Prince-Town upon the Receipt of Your Letter, but am detained here by the Severity of the Weather, the River not being passable on Acc.\(^5\) of the Ice. I hope I shall be able to cross tomorrow. The People here Say, they never remember at any time, the Weather so cold as it is this Day.—Eyre to Amherst, Trent-Town, Feb. 26, 1762, Public Record Office, W.O. 34, vol. 69. Photostat in W. L. Clements Library.
of the Day, tho' the Weather still continued freezing at Nights, and in the Day, when and where the Sun did not shine.

The Country between Philadelphia and Lancaster is generally level, and pretty well inhabited the whole Way. There are some few Hills between the Ship and Clyncbes, within nine Miles of Lancaster, and there I observ'd it was best inhabited and much more improv'd. There is a small River within a Mile and a half of Lancaster call'd Conistoga, where there is a Ferry, but it may be forded very easily if the Water be not high. The ninth, I went to the Ferry, ten Miles from Lancaster, call'd [W]Rights Ferry. There is a small River with a Bridge over it call'd little Conistoga, one mile from Lancaster.

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Very few Inhabitants [live] on this Road, [which is] chiefly Wood. The 10.\textsuperscript{th} came to York, a small Town twenty two Miles from Lancaster, well laid out and pleasantly situated with a small River running thro' it, call'd Catoris,\textsuperscript{7} that runs from thence near eleven Miles and then empties itself into the Susquehannah. There is very fine Limestone to be met with here, some of the Houses being built with it, but they are chiefly Wood as yet, the Inhabitants mostly Germans. Very few Houses between this Place and the Susquehanna, [on] the Road I came. A good Deal of Snow upon the Ground, and the Air still continues cold. The People of Lancaster inform'd me for twenty Years past, they never remember'd the Air so cold as it was the 25\textsuperscript{th} and 26\textsuperscript{th} of February. No one remembers the Susquehanna frozen over twice in one Year, particularly so late and that for Waggon's to cross loaded, and this the third Day after it began to freeze, which was Sunday the 27\textsuperscript{th} of Feb.'

11\textsuperscript{th} Came to Sloss's in the Mountain. Few Inhabitants on the Road, and chiefly hilly, and these very considerable. The Distance from York to this House is fifteen Miles. In coming here you cross a River call'd Conewagy at ten Miles from York. Its fordable except when there are Fresches, when it rises to a most prodigious Height. There is a Flatt to cross over at such Times. 12\textsuperscript{th} Reach'd Carlile [!], being sixteen Miles from Scoss's, the first five Mile of which continues to be very uneven, some very high Hills, but very fine flats between them, and here and there some Houses. Eight miles from Scoss's, there is a River one crosses call'd Yellow Breeches Creek, remarkable for never swelling much, tho' there is ever so much rains. It runs into the Susquehannah; the Head of it proceeds from Springs and never freezes over. The Rest of the Road to Carlile is pretty even, but few Inhabitants, chiefly owing to the Want of Water. The Town of Carlile seems to be now much at a Stand, Several Buildings left half finish'd and many of them to be sold for What they cost, with the Lott into the Bargain. There are few Tradesmen in Town. Its mostly

\textsuperscript{6} Wrightsville on the Susquehanna River.

\textsuperscript{7} Codorus Creek.
compos'd of People who keep Shops and publick Houses. The Contrary is to be observ'd at York, for there every Body seems to be employ'd at one Business or another. Carlisle is the County Town, and is very well situated and regularly laid out, with a small Stream of water running at one End, which rises from a Spring.8

13. th Reach'd Millers nine Miles from Carlisle, and the 14. th got to Shippensburgh,9 being fifteen Miles from Millers and twenty four from Carlisle . . . .10 This Part of the Country is remarkable for being ill water'd, for there is not above two small Streams from Yellow Breeches Creek to Shippensburgh, being near thirty Miles in Length. This is a small Place, tho' it appears, as if it were going on to do well. Its not ill situated, and has two small Streams of Water running thro' it at each End. There is a small Fort made of Stocks here, but no one in it. A Well within Side [is] seventy Feet deep, and very good Water; it stands high. I forgot to observe there is a Breastwork thrown up at Carlisle of Earth, but its now almost in Ruins.

15 th Reach'd the Foot of the first Ridge of Mountains, commonly call'd the blue Ridge, and lay at one M'. Commans House, twelve Miles from Shippensburgh, close to the Gap, call'd Sisneys Gap. The Land at the Foot of this Ridge [is] very good. Some few Inhabitants settled in different Places in these Parts, particularly close to the Ridge. In taking this Way I left Loudon to my left a great Way, by which Means I cut off nineteen Miles of my Journey. The next Day, being the sixteenth, I cross'd the blue Ridge* at Sisneys Gap, being only for Horses or Men, pretty steep, both going up and going down on the other Side. I heard there was another Place to cross this Ridge at, to the northward of this about six Miles, and several between that and the Susquehanah. Beyond this Ridge, there is another higher [ridge]. The Valley between is not near a Mile broad, call'd the Horse Valley. The ascending

8 Letort Spring and Creek.
9 From this town Eyre wrote to Amherst:

Since I did my self the honour to write to Your Excellency from Trent-Town, I have been Endeavouring to proceed on my Journey in the best Manner I could. The Weather and Roads Still continue to be remarkably bad. I arrived here this Day, and Set off tomorrow for Fort. Loudon. Pittsburgh is from this Place about 200 Miles.

The Suskahannagh is now frozen over and very difficult to pass over in any Shape on Account of the Badness of the Ice. A great Fall of Snow Yesterday and the Weather [is] very cold.

My Complaint I hope will not hinder me from getting to Pittsburgh. It continues much the Same Way, tho' some times alarmed, as being every Day on Horseback creastes much uneasiness. I suffer very much thro' the Apprehention of being Prevented from going on, tho' I hope I shall be able to accomplish my Journey. The Pain of Mind I labour under on that Account, is more than I can Well Say.—Eyre to Amherst, Shippensburgh, March 14, 1762, Public Record Office, W.O. 34, vol. 69. Photostat in W. L. Clements Library.

10 Here the original repeats "and the 14. th got to Shippensburgh being fifteen Mile from Millars and twenty four from Carlisle."
this Ridge is troublesome, but the descending of it is prodigious steep, but I
was inform'd there is a much better and easier Way a little to the Northward
of this Crossing, that's both easier to ascend and descend, besides a nearer Way
to Littleton. The third Ridge is about the same Distance of the second from
the first, and the Valley between is call'd the Path Valley. Its to be observ'd
that thro' the Horse Valley runs a small River call'd Canadeguin Creek,¹¹
which runs into the Susquehannah. Thro' the next Valley call'd the Path Valley
runs another Stream, calld Canagojigg Creek¹² and runs into the Potowmack,
and on the other Side of the third Ridge runs another Stream¹³ which empties
itself into the Susquehannah. These three Streams run almost Parallel to each
other, the middle one into the Potowmack, and the other two into the Susque-
hanna in quite different Directions. In these Valleys are several Inhabitants
particularly in the Path Valley. This Day I reach'd Fort Littleton, being six-
teen Miles from Sisneys Gap and twenty six from Shippensburgh. No House
on this Way [that] I came over the Ridges, untill I got within three Miles
of Fort Littleton at one Robert Elliots, near where this bye Path, fell into the
great Road from Fort Loudon. Only three Inhabitants settled at this Place,
and but one that can give any Entertainment or Assistance to Travellers. The
Country [is] very hilly or more properly mountainous from the third Ridge
to Fort Littleton. There are a good many Inhabitants settled in both the small
and great Cove,¹⁴ where they raise every Thing they want in the Family Way.

¹⁷th. Got to Juniata¹⁵ calld the Crossings. Its nineteen Miles from F[ort].
Littleton, and about half Way you cross the Sideling Hill. Its a considerable
Mountain; from the Beginning of the Assent to the other Side, the Distance
is four Miles and a half. The Ascent and Descent of this Mountain is very bad.
I think the Place chosen for the Road up and down the Hill is ill fixt upon, as
I apprehend, both on the Right and Left of the Road made Use off by
Generals Stanwix and Forbes is very bad. General Monckton¹⁶ chang'd the
Road on the South Side of the Hill, to go up a Valley to the left of the present
Road. The Descent of this Mountain is also very steep; it should have been
zigg'zagg'd more. There is one omission I observe every where in the publick
Roads, that the Water is allow'd to run along them. If small Trees were laid
across them in proper Places it would save them from Torrents that cut them
all to Pieces. Sideling Hill I think is remarkable for a Defeat of a Number of

¹¹ Conodoguinet Creek.
¹² Conococheague Creek.
¹³ Tuscarora Creek.
¹⁴ The Little and Great Coves, southeast of Fort Littleton.
¹⁵ Raystown Branch of the Juniata River.
¹⁶ Generals Stanwix and Monckton were commandants at Fort Pitt following Forbes.
our People by the Savages, [at] the Beginning of the War.\textsuperscript{17} A great Number of Men were kill'd there, tho' our People went out to fight them and surpriz'd one half of the Party who fled from their Arms.

There is a small Stockaded Fort at this Place, and a Flatt to cross the River. The Country is all Mountain between this and Fort Littleton, and not one House to be met with on the Way. The 18.\textsuperscript{th} reach'd Bedford. A great Fall of Rain this Day, which swell'd the River so much as kept me here three Days, and then was oblig'd to swim my Horses over the River, where Ourry's Bridge\textsuperscript{18} was carried off. Only one House between Littleton and this, at the Narrows; the Distance is said to be 14 Miles but I think it will measure seventeen. The whole Country is a continual Tract of Hills and Valleys and the Land [is] very bad. Bedford is situated on a rising Ground, which is surrounded by Mountains, close to two of the Branches of the Juniata, where [there] are Bridges over each of these Streams, but frequently damag'd by the sudden Freshes. There is a stockaded Fort here, and about two thousand Barrels of Flower [], a good Deal of Whisky, and I was told a considerable Quantity of Oats, Spelce,\textsuperscript{19} and cut Rye, entirely for Forage. Vast Quantities of Rats, that do great Damage. A few Barrels of Powder, but a good Deal of Cartridges, and fixt Ammunition, with a vast Deal of small Shells for Cohorns or royals. There are about thirty or forty small Huts, with People living at this Place. The Ground round the Town is pretty good; there is a Valley which is call'd a Cove to the South of this Place, pretty well settled, where the Land is said to be good. 19.\textsuperscript{th} 20.\textsuperscript{th} 21.\textsuperscript{st} staid at Bedford, on account of the Rivers being impassable. 22.\textsuperscript{nd} Came to Hays nine Miles from thence, the Weather most dreadfully severe, freezing hard attended with Snow and Hail. Cross'd a Branch of the Juniata at this House. 23.\textsuperscript{rd} Reach'd Stony Creek, the River very high, the Day tolerable, which was lucky as I cross'd the Allegheny Mountain; from 1\textsuperscript{st} to 3.\textsuperscript{d}. Fall of Snow upon it, and so hard that I could walk upon the Snow without sinking in it. The Distance is twenty one Miles to Stony Creek from Hays's. Six Miles before you begin to ascend the Mountain, the Road to it [is] very bad; ten Miles from the Ascent to Edmonds Swamp,\textsuperscript{20} all of which is extreamly bad, both stony and swampy, but in some Places so very terrible as to surprise one how the Waggon's got on. The Ascent and Descent of this Mountain is not very steep on either Side.

\textsuperscript{17} In April, 1756, Capt. Alexander Culbertson and his men were forced to surrender after the Indians had received reinforcements. Both sides lost about twenty killed, with about as many wounded.

\textsuperscript{18} Juniata River bridge. Captain Lewis Ourry was the commandant of Fort Littleton.

\textsuperscript{19} Spelt, or spelze, is a grain.

\textsuperscript{20} Buckstown, Somerset County. Edmunds Swamp was named for a trader, Edmund Cartlidge.
It seems as if Edmonds Swamp was the Limits of this Mountain, on the West Side, but its consider'd the Allegheny Hill until you reach Stony Creek, call'd so on Account of its rocky Bottom which makes it very dangerous in fording it over, particularly when the Water is high, which is very often. This Mountain is seldom cross'd without meeting with either Rain or Snow, Summer or Winter. But the Road is worse in the former than in the latter. In short but utmost Necessity could induce any one to carry over a Wheel Carriage of any Kind. By what I can learn very few, if any Wheel Carriages attempted this Mountain except the Artillery, and the Ordnance Stores. Provisions of all Kinds are carried across upon Pack Horses, at so much the hundred Weight. I understand that all Sorts of Provisions, and forage for Cattle, when carried to Pittsburgh from the inhabited Country [are] by Contract at so much the hundred Weight, to different Stages on the Communication, viz, from Lancaster to Carlisle, four Shillings, from Carlisle to Fort Bedford, eighteen Shillings, sometimes more, from thence to Fort Ligonier, from eighteen Shillings to Twenty two Shillings and six Pence, and from thence to Fort Pitt twenty Shillings.

24. Got to Fort Ligonier. This Day prov'd favorable, as I cross'd the Laurel Hill without Snow or Rain. From this Place to the Foot of the Mountain is twelve Miles. One Mile from it, is a little House. This Road is excessively bad, both swampy, and full of Stones, the Hill is four Miles over, not exceeding steep; tho' high and cover'd with Snow three Feet and upwards, and hard enough to bear a Man. All the Hills between the Allegheny and this Mountain are cover'd with Snow, but not so deep. Fort Ligonier is situated between very high Hills pretty much like Bedford. The Fort is Partly Stockaded and partly logg'd Horizontally, tho' it was never finish'd. There is here about six hundred Barrels of Flour, besides Pork with some Whisky. And thirty Waggons or Carriages of different Kinds, some of them Artillery ones, all spoiling for Want of being under Cover, besides a vast Deal of old Iron belonging to Waggons, and spare Wheels and other Parts of the Waggons stor'd up in one of the out Houses. There are eight or ten poor People who live here, and are making little Gardens and do intend to sow Indian Corn this Year. The River call'd Loyal Hanning runs by the Place. Its but a small River, except in Freshes. The Distance between Stony Creek and this Place is twenty two Miles.

25. Staid here, 26. Came to Bushy Run, thirty five Miles from Fort Ligonier. Five Miles from Fort Ligonier is the Chesnut Ridge. The Country is very hilly pretty much, as it is described from the three Ridges to Stony Creek. This Hill is pretty steep, and stony, but not near so bad as Laurell Hill. After one crosses this Hill which is four Miles over, you get into a more level
Country tho hilly, but the Land [is] exceeding good, and continues so all the Way to Bushy Run. The Timber [is] very fine, lofty, and chiefly black and white Oak, with a good Deal of Chesnut, and the Valleys between these little Hills, would afford fine Meadows. Before one reaches Bushy Run by four Miles and a half, the old Road struck off to the Northward and [was] made use of by General Forbes's Troops. It is from this Place twenty nine Miles and a half to Fort Pitt and to go the old Road, its sixty Miles. The new Road was found out the Spring 1759. The Country which this old Road passed thro is extremally rich and fertile, fit to produce any Thing that the Farmer would require, but I am inform'd the Land that lies to the South of the short Road to Fort Pitt is still better. 27th Arriv'd at Fort Pitt. The Road from Bushy Run to this Fortress is not by any means so good as from Ligonier to Bushy Run, being more uneven, wet, and springy, besides when Turtle Creek is high it must then be impassable. After one quits this Stream, you mount a very high steep Hill, that must be very severe for any Sort of Waggon; after one comes to a small Stream within nine Miles of Fort Pitt, the Road is somewhat more level. 28th 29th 30th and 31st, staid at this Place. The first Day went up the Allegheny about four Miles and a half to M. Croghans House. The Ground for some Distance from the River is level, and looks as if it was overflow'd in some high Freshes. The Country after this rises into Hills. 29th very wet; 30th Reconnoitred the Country, between the Rivers Allegheny and Monongehala. 31st Went down the Ohio, as far as Chartiers Island and Rock. The lower End of the Island is about three Miles and a half from the Fort, the Island about one Mile long, and not half one across. There is a very convenient Hill on the west Side of the Ohio, opposite to the End of the Island, about one hundred and fifty Yards broad and five or six hundred long, [which] terminates at one End close to the River, on the other in a Point down the Stream. [It is] of very difficult Access on any Side, quite flatt at Top, and surrounded on one Side by the River, and the other by low Ground very even, which would produce any Thing that a rich Soil could. No Hill [is] within Reach of it, so of Course the French here would have made a very formidable Post. A few Block Houses upon this Hill, join'd by a Stockade, would make it a difficult Task for any Army to force, and was it made with Loggs, no Army that we could bring against it, could reduce it. Its amazing the French neglected this Situation, and chose so bad a one; but its still as Amazing that we repeated the Mistake by doing it in a more expensive Manner by building pretty nearly on the same Ground, in so formidable a

21 Croghan's house was across the Allegheny River from Pine Creek, near the present McCandless Street, Pittsburgh.

22 Brunot's Island and McKees Rock, at the mouth of Chartiers Creek.
Manner when it could be so easily avoided. And that by taking Post on a very high Eminence about three Quarters of a Mile from the first Fort, which lies close to the Monongehala. It domineers over every Thing within Cannon Shot, is only attackable in one Part, All the rest being either very steep or a Precipice, particularly on the Side of the River. There is a small Stream that runs quite close to the Foot of the Hill, nearly half Way round. The only Difficulty is to sink a Well, but Water is sure to be met with, by going down seventy or eighty Feet, tho' it may be got much sooner. A few Block Houses upon this Hill, join'd by a strong Stockade would make this a most formidable Place: if a Fort was built with Wood here, in the Manner they are now practis'd, with a Battery or two advanced on the Side of the Ridge, where its accessible, [it] would make it a difficult Job for any Canadian Army to take. And all this I propose could have been done in one Summer with the greatest Ease, as also the necessary Barracks and Store Houses with one thousand Men. This I only mention as a temporary Work or Undertaking to secure this Quarter, until the Fate of War settled our Frontiers, so that there a more durable one might be made on the same Spot, or it remov'd elsewhere, according to the Events of War. As I am of opinion, a Work built here well dispos'd would be out of the Power of all Canada, with the Force of Louisiana to reduce, for it would be difficult to find a stronger Situation by Nature, and in Order to command the Passage of the Rivers more effectually, its only to build a Block House sufficient to contain eighteen or twenty Men, just at the Point where the two Rivers meet, close to where the old French Fort stood, which would answer the Purpose if of any Consequence, more than the present Fort now does. I mention this as the main Work was so near. And in Order to secure in Time of War all the Land between the two Rivers Allegheny and Monongehala, from this Hill, where I propose to strengthen only to erect one Block House at the lower Point of Grants Hill, and another close to the Allegheny River, which twelve Men, would well defend each. These Block Houses would protect any Settlers within these Limits, where Corn of every Kind might be raised in the most dangerous Times. There is the most delightful Prospect from this Hill of the three Rivers, as also of the Country round; the Air must be most pleasant and healthfull and always clean and dry. A Road leads up by the River, where there is a very gentle Ascent like a Glacis, but

23 As late as the 1850's this hill was known as Ayres' Hill, named for Col. Eyre. It is now the site of Duquesne University on Boyd's Hill. (Neville B. Craig, The History of Pittsburgh, 1851).  
25 The scene of Major James Grant's defeat by the French and Indians on Sept. 14, 1758.
grows narrow as one descends this Eminence on the Side only where it can be approached by an Enemy.

1st April set off from Fort Pitt in a Barge, up the Monongehala, and that Evening reach'd the second Crossing of this River by General Braddock near which Place he was defeated. This is thirteen Miles from the Fort, and the second Day, got up the River within nineteen Miles of Red Stone Creek, where [there] is a small Fort called Fort Bird, upon a Hill, made of Stockades. I got to this Place the 3. and it is about sixty Miles up the River from Fort Pitt, and the Stream very gentle all the Way. In great Freshes it runs pretty strong. However upon the whole at all Seasons, its a very navigable River for Battoes. There are high Hills on each Side, and the Soil up to the Top of them extremely rich, and what appeared to me very singular, that I observ'd every where after I pass'd the Chesnut Hill between that and the Ohio, the Tops of the Hills were the richest, no garden mold can be more luxuriant. This River I am told is navigable for Battoes or Canoes one hundred Miles higher up. Some say more but I fancy this is but at some Seasons in the Summer or only with Canoes, and I am told also the Land is rather better the farther one goes up the River. The Country its said, on each Side is pretty level. 4th Left Fort Bird, and got as far as where General Braddock's Grave is, about twenty or twenty four Miles. The Road thus far is pretty good, the Country only hilly and I left Guests House four Miles upon my left Hand, close to which General Braddocks Road pass'd. I cross[ed] what is call'd the Laurel Hill, before I reach'd the Grave which is pretty steep on the East Side, tho' not so on the other, but they are both stoney. After I got on the East Side of this Hill, I fell in with General Braddocks Road. The 5. came to the great Crossings. The Road all the Way [was] very bad both wet and rocky, and very much out of Repair, particularly the Bridges, and Numbers of fallen Trees across the Road. The Country thro' which I came this Day [was] much worse than that of yesterday, and more mountainous. The great Meadows as they are calld, seem'd to me to be not more than thirty or forty Acres, made famous by the Loss that Col. Washington sustain'd, when he was attack'd in his Fort by the French and Indians. This Place is about one Mile nearer to Fort Cumberland than where General Braddock was buried. This Distance between General Braddocks Grave and the Crossings is

26 Fort Burd, or Redstone Old Fort, at Brownsville, Pennsylvania.
27 Braddock was buried in the roadway near Fort Necessity in the Great Meadows.
28 Gist's Plantation, the site of Mount Braddock in Fayette County. Christopher Gist settled here in 1753.
29 Somersfield, Pennsylvania.
30 The attack on Fort Necessity in 1754.
nineteen or twenty Miles. The 6th pass'd the little Meadows which is call'd by some twenty two, by others twenty three Miles from Fort Cumberland, and the 7th reach'd Fort Cumberland which is reckon'd to be between forty two and forty four Miles from the great Crossings. All the Road from these Crossings, what is called Yonogeny[1] to Cumberland is very bad, and I think next to impassable with any Wagons. The Road [is] very hilly, Rocky, and wet, occasion'd by Variety of Springs every where in the Mountains. In Short all the Road from Red Stone to Fort Cumberland is very bad. The Allegheny or Apalachian Mountains are very broad here, very near sixty Miles over. I found Fort Cumberland going to Ruin. The Side of it next the Hill would have been pretty strong, if it had not been for a Magazine of Powder, that blew up by Accident in the Fort which damag'd the two Curtains. These Sides were never finish'd; the other Sides are pretty open. There are ten Iron Four Pounders, and one Brass one, in pretty good Repair, twenty Barrels of Powder and three hundred and thirty or upwards, Boxes of small Musket Ball, some old Arms and nine good Wall Pieces that was never us'd. There are a vast Number of Artillery Waggons taken to Pieces in some Out Houses, and I believe a good Deal of small Cannon Ball, as likewise a great Number [of] Hand Granades. The Ohio Company is building a Storehouse on the opposite Side of the River from the Fort. The 8th staid there and the 9. got to Fort Bedford. The Road [was] very level the whole Way, chiefly between Hills, but in wet Weather, I fancy its extremely deep particularly near the Block House. Tho' this Road runs thro' a Valley, I never saw worse Ground in general, for so much as I observ'd the whole Way.

Eyre arrived in New York on April 27, unfavorably reporting to Amherst on the state of Fort Pitt. Amherst was not able to send any more men to Fort Pitt to aid in the repairs, but ordered Bouquet to restore the Fort as well as possible with the hands he had, using the former plan. The General did not care to make any alterations without receiving orders from home. The following letter to General Amherst, written the first day after Eyre's return to New York, reports the engineer's opinions of rebuilding the fort at the source of the Ohio.33

31 Youghiogheny.
33 Eyre to Amherst, New York, April 28, 1762, Public Record Office, W.O. 34, vol. 69; Photostat in W. L. Clements Library.
New York
28th April 1762

Sir

Agreeable to Your Excellency's order, I have been to visit Fort Pitt, to report to you the State I found it in, the Damage it Sustained by the Inundation last Winter, as also My Opinion what I thought was further necessary to be undertaken for its future Security against the Overflowing of the Rivers Allegheny and Monongehela.

All the Sod Work that was done last Year, and likewise the best Part of that which was raised the Year before is tumbled down, and a great Part of the Rampart has far'd the same Fate. However all this might be easily remedied if one was Sure the like Flood would not happen again, but as that may be the Case it appears to me that there is no alternative, Either to revet the whole Scarp and Counterscarp with Brick, pretty much in the Same Manner that two of the Exterior Sides of the Pentagon are already done, or Suffer it to wash away by Degrees as the Floods happen.34

The Buildings within Side may be raised high, Particularly the Store-houses, so that the first Floor may be five feet above the Parade, and a Magazine for Powder, as also for fixt Ammunition may be made of Brick arch'd in one of the Bastions least Exposed to an attack, the Floor of which may be five or Six feet above the Level of the Parade. In this Building the Powder and fixt Ammunition may be Lodg'd, and in Case of a Siege, it may then be removed into those under the Bastion which are Bomb-proof.

Your Excellency knows the State the Fort was in before the Flood, by a Plan and Report made me last Winter by Cap.1 L[i]eu.1 Basset Engineer, which I laid before Your Excellency.

The present Interior buildings cannot be fit long to receive the Troops, so that there is but one in the Fort, (which is designed for the Commandant) that's good for much, and that is not yet finish'd.

I must beg leave to Observe to Your Excellency, that tho' all which I have mentioned was carried into Execution in Respect of finishing this Fortress, I should be still Apprehensive that a Repetition of the Same kind of Swellings of the Rivers, may injure the Works, or perhaps a higher might undo the whole.

The compleating the Fort in the Manner I have above Observed, I believe would amount to about Seven thousand Pounds Sterling.

I think it's my Duty to acquaint Your Excellency, that this Fortress in an

34 Fort Pitt was five-sided. The two sides facing the country were the ones revetted with brick.
other Respect is unhappily situated. The neighbouring Grounds are rather higher than that which the Works Stand Upon, particularly towards the Monongehela River, and behind these Places there are hollow-Ways, which may Serve Effectually an Enemy as Parallels, where very considerable Body's of men may be concealed, so that if this Place should be besieged, the Enemy would be saved a great deal of trouble, as their first Batteries would be near enough to batter the Works.

I have directed an Exact Survey to be made of the Country round the Fort, which I shall lay before Your Excellency, as soon as it's transmitted to me, that will more fully explain what I have above observed.

I think it's necessary that I should Mention to Your Excellency upon this Occasion, that whilst Examining the Ground between the two Rivers, I took notice of an Eminence about 1300 Yards above the Fort close to the Monongehela River, that is by Nature most luckily formed to build a Post upon, as it's of it's self so remarkably Strong, attackable only on One Side, and that very narrow. A Block House below just where the two Rivers meet, would Effectually command the Passage of the Rivers. This Blockhouse with one or two more would Secure in time of War from Scalping Party's all the Ground for a Mile or two up each River between them, where all kind of Grain might be Sow'd, and Gardens Made for the Use of the Garison. The Survey which I have before observed will Explain fully what I now mention.

I am Sir,

Your Excellencys

Most Obedient,

And most

humble Servant

Will: Eyre

chief Eng.' for the

Dep.' of New York

His Excellency S.' Jeffery Amherst