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THE GENERAL CHOOSES A ROAD
The Forbes Campaign of 1758 to Capture Fort Duquesne
NILES ANDERSON

INTRODUCTION

"I am in hopes of finding a better way over the Alleghany Mountains, than that . . . which Gen[11]. Braddock took . . . For were I to pursue Mr. Braddock's route, I should save but little labour, as that road is now a brushwood, by the sprouts from the old stumps, which must be cut down and made proper for Carriages, as well as any other Passage that we must attempt."

Forbes to Prime Minister Wm. Pitt
Carlisle Camp west of Susquehannah
July 10, 1758

Perhaps no phase of the 1758 Forbes expedition against Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh) has been as over-emphasized as the dispute between Colonel George Washington of Virginia and British Brigadier General John Forbes over choice of routes—whether to go by Major General Edward Braddock's old road as the Vir-

Mr. Anderson, Solicitor and Assistant Secretary for the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education, is a colonel in the United States Army Active Reserve. He has long had an interest in the Forbes Road and in addition to careful research made many field trips with the late David W. Rial in the never ending task of locating the old road.—Ed.

1 Forbes to Pitt: Writings of General John Forbes, A. P. James, ed., p. 141, cited herein-after as James. Technically William Pitt, the Elder, first Earl of Chatham, was Secretary of State in the British Ministry and not Prime Minister, the later office being officially of more recent date. However, if no less an authority than Winston Churchill quotes Carlyle on Pitt, "It is a considerable fact in the history of the world, that he was for four years King of England," the writer feels safe in adopting the short-cut of modern writers in identifying William Pitt as Prime Minister.
ginians urged, or to seek a new route as Forbes' military judgment led him to decide.

And perhaps the over-emphasis in turn flows from the fact that no facet of the campaign is as well documented. Both men wanted their choices a matter of record if, as might well happen, the ultimate route selection contributed directly to success or failure. Late in the campaign Forbes from Raystown (Bedford) wrote his second-in-command, Colonel Henry Bouquet, at Stony Creek (Stoystown): "So I beg you will without taking notice to any body make yourself master of the arguments for and the objections against the two roads so that upon comparison one may Judge how far we have been in the right in our Choice."

The road argument stemmed from conflicting interests of the rival provinces of Pennsylvania and Virginia, each anxious to capitalize on the opening of the Ohio basin, each knowing full well that trade logically would follow the road the army prepared. Washington clearly recognized the ultimate outcome of road choice. He wrote of the Pennsylvania or Forbes Road to Virginia Governor Francis Fauquier: "It secures their Frontiers at present, and the Trade hereafter."

Virginia naturally wanted the Braddock Road, already cut from Fort Cumberland (Cumberland, Md.) to Braddock's field (Braddock) within a few miles of Fort Duquesne. This was the old route of the Virginia-spawned Ohio Company and twice a route of defeat for military expeditions in which Washington had been involved: the Fort Necessity skirmish in 1754 and the Braddock debacle of 1755. It was a proven route over which troops and trade goods had been and could be moved.

Philadelphia merchants, on the other hand, wanted an all-Pennsylvania route, and later use of the Forbes Road fully justified their optimistic appraisal of its commercial potential.

Understandably, both provinces wanted their favorite routes used in order to blockade major paths of Indian raids on their

2 Forbes to Bouquet, October 15, 1758: The Papers of Henry Bouquet, II, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, p. 561, cited herein-after as Bouquet Papers. Worthy of note is that while all of Forbes' correspondence is in English, Bouquet, when addressing his superior, wrote in French. Bouquet's other letters are in English.

frontiers, the prevention of which was, after all, the major reason for the Forbes campaign as far as they were concerned.

Forbes, almost the forgotten man in the provincial rivalry, merely wanted the best military road to Fort Duquesne and the best supply route after its capture, however it might run. As he noted in a letter to Bouquet, he didn't give "a single twopence for Provincial Interest, Jealousys, or suspicions." 4

Actually the ultimate choice of routes was not a hasty decision but rather the outgrowth of topographic, logistical and strategic considerations. The Braddock or Virginia Road was not dropped as the main line of advance until Forbes was assured of an all-Pennsylvania route. Even then the southerly route was kept in mind for use as an alternate road, as one of the routes for a two-pronged attack, as a route for assembly west of Loyalhanna (Ligonier) and finally for use as a decoy to deceive the French.

To his credit soldier Washington gave full support to the final decision of his superior officer, even though he never then or later agreed that it was the right one. But the fiery young Virginian (then age 26) had to swallow considerable pride and be called on the carpet by Forbes before his sense of duty prevailed. 5

From a distance of 200 years Forbes' military judgment in selection of routes needs no apology. After all it is hard to argue with success. When failure of troops to arrive on time upset his original time schedule of a quick assault on Fort Duquesne, the general's subsequent decision to avoid the known difficulties of the Braddock Road and select more of an all-weather route, better suited for present and future supply requirements, represented sound analysis.

The documentary record indicates, however, that Forbes himself was not aware how well he chose his road of conquest. Elements of time and temper, of sickness and military judgment, all contributed to the final decision. As he followed his army in a sick bed litter slung between two horses, the road as far as Forbes was concerned was one long hellish nightmare: "You may guess my condition when I tell you I have not the Strength to ride on Horseback, nor indeed is my Body able to bear the roughness of

5 Ibid.
a Waggon... I must Sally forth in a kind of Horse litter actually made by Doctor Russell and my Servants."

To the writer it seems significant that the capture of Fort Duquesne was not an end in itself but a means to an end; further that in selecting his military route Forbes kept a visionary eye on the future as well as a practical eye on the present.

At no time was Forbes specifically assigned the capture of Fort Duquesne as a military objective; rather his orders, such as they were, were a blank check to use his own judgment in mounting an offensive "for annoying the enemy" and "removing and repelling the Dangers that threaten the Frontiers of any of the Southern Colonies."

The "enemy" was both the French and their Indian allies; the dangers threatening the frontiers were the French-inspired Indian raids that had terrorized border settlements since Braddock's defeat and had caused Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland to construct and garrison a long line of defensive frontier forts.

Every mile Forbes advanced westward reduced the Indian threat by that measure. Because of its strategic importance the capture of Fort Duquesne necessarily became the major objective. The fort at the forks of the Ohio not only controlled the chief waterway route from French Canada to French Louisiana, but also it was a major enemy strong point and supply base and starting point for Indian raids on the English settlements.

Apparently Forbes, looking into the future, saw the seacoast settlements eventually spilling over the mountain barriers into the "back Countrys." This long view, particularly as it called for opening a supply road from the Pennsylvania granary, was one consideration in the choice of roads to reach Fort Duquesne. Writing Prime Minister Pitt of his problems and plans, Forbes noted: "And lastly if not thought convenient to settle upon the Ohio, or in that Country, I shall have a sure retreat, leaving a road always practicable to penetrate those back Countrys, as our Settlements

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7 On May 19, 1758 Forbes wrote Prime Minister Pitt, "I hope in a short time to inform you of . . . my General plan for annoying the enemy." *James*, p. 91. The only orders Forbes ever received were contained in Pitt's directive to his new North American Commander-in-Chief, Major General James Abercromby: Pitt to Abercromby, Dec. 30, 1757, printed in G. S. Kimball, *Correspondence of William Pitt*, p. 143, cited hereinafter as *Kimball*. The orders arrived aboard the Man of War *Squirrel* in New York harbor on March 4, 1758. Forbes to Loudoun, Mar. 4, 1758: *James*, p. 54.
advance towards them, from this side of the Allegheny Mountains."

At this time, 1758, the British more so than the provincials were aware of America as a nation with rich potential. Prime Minister Pitt, in his circular letter to the Governors of the various provinces asking troops for the 1758 campaign, noted that it was for the safety and preservation of "America" as well as for the benefit of the individual provinces.9

Historian George Bancroft aptly notes: "But the expedition was not merely a military enterprise; it was also the march of civilization towards the west."10

The listing below points up the principal individuals and troop units involved in the 1758 campaign:

William Pitt (1708-1778), British Prime Minister.

**TROOP LIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGULARS:</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Highlanders</em> (77th Regt.)</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col. Archibald Montgomery (1726-1796)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maj. James Grant (1720-1806)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Royal Americans</em> (1st. Bn., 60th Regt.)</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col. Henry Bouquet (1719-1765)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Royal Artillery</em></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<th>PROVINCIALS:</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Pennsylvania Regiment</em></td>
<td>2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st. Bn.—Col. John Armstrong (1717-1795)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd. Bn.—Col. James Burd (1726-1793)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd. Bn.—Col. Hugh Mercer (c.1725-1777)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Virginia Regiments</em></td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st.—Col. George Washington (1732-1799)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd.—Col. William Byrd III (1729-1777)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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8 Forbes to Pitt, June 17, 1758: *James*, p. 116.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Troops</th>
<th>Maryland Troops</th>
<th>North Carolina Troops</th>
<th>Lower Counties (Delaware) Troops</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
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<td></td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7,440</td>
<td>6,790</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Highlanders were Scottish troops recruited in 1757.

The Royal American Regiment was formed in America in 1756-7. Many recruits were German-speaking and mostly from Pennsylvania. Officers were European. Colonel Bouquet was a Swiss.

The "actual" troop strengths are maximum figures, reduced as the campaign progressed by casualties, sickness and desertion. For these reasons, as well as the posting of troops on the line of communication and in Pennsylvania back forts, the effective strength of the fighting force probably never exceeded 5,000. Unfortunately, few troop returns have been located and all figures are round estimates.

I. The Braddock Plan on a Larger Scale—April 1758

In the beginning the concept of the Forbes campaign was substantially that of the ill-fated Braddock campaign all over again, following the same time schedule and the same route, but on a three times larger scale, and avoiding—so Forbes hoped—Braddock's mistakes.

Fort Cumberland, as it had been under Braddock, was to be the jumping-off place. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, rather than Alexandria, Virginia, however, was to be the supporting seaport; and instead of basing the campaign on one strong point (as had Braddock with Fort Cumberland) more than a hundred miles from the objective, Forbes resolved to erect intermediate "deposits" every 40 miles or so for supplies and for sanctuary in case of retreat.¹¹

In the 1755 Braddock campaign the 2,000-plus troops involved assembled at Fort Cumberland during April and May and moved out on attack June 7. One month later the forward assault force of 1,450 men had advanced some 100 miles to the junction of the Turtle Creek with the Monongahela River (Braddock). The old Ohio Company road had been cleared for the first 60 miles to Christopher Gist's plantation (Mt. Braddock) and a new road cut the remainder of the way. The wagon train and a small reserve

¹¹ Forbes to Pitt, June 17, 1758: *James*, p. 118.
under Colonel Thomas Dunbar had reached Dunbar's Camp (Methodist Training Center at Jumonville on top of Chestnut Ridge) some five miles back from Gist's. Braddock, with a loss of 1,000 men killed and wounded, was routed on July 9 by a force inferior in numbers—200 French and Canadians and a rabble of 600 Indians—but superior in tactics of wilderness warfare.

All this Forbes knew, by report and first-hand accounts from participants. Many of Braddock's command still were in North America and later served with Forbes. Among them were: Harry Gordon, engineer; Forbes' aide, Major Francis Halkett; Sir John St. Clair who had been Braddock's Quartermaster General and was to have a like post under Forbes.

The British military staff knew that troops in sizeable numbers, as well as artillery, could be moved across the forbidding Allegheny Mountains; they knew that Braddock by gambling all, lost all in not securing his line of communication; and they knew that old world tactics were unsuited to the American wilderness. They had every reason to believe that Braddock's plan with refinements was a workable one.

It was only natural, then, that the original concept of the Forbes campaign against Fort Duquesne was of an assembly of all troops at Fort Cumberland on or about May 1, to be followed by a rapid advance on Braddock's Road at a time simultaneous with other British attacks farther north.\(^{12}\)

But let the record speak for itself:—

Forbes' memorandum of a "Plan of Operations," prepared for

\(^{12}\) Prime Minister Pitt's grand strategy for North America was to split the French and prevent reinforcement at any point by concurrent attacks on: first the Fortress Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island that guarded the mouth of the St. Lawrence River; second on the French forts on Lake Champlain that blocked the water approach from the provinces to Montreal and Quebec; and third an attack on the French and their Indian allies in the Ohio basin—the Forbes campaign. This latter attack had the added potential of severing communication between French Louisiana and French Canada.

Success for the campaigns in America proper was dependent upon the colonies supplying troops to reinforce British regulars. Pitt informed the Governors that the King would furnish arms, ammunition, tents and provisions; the Provinces themselves were to raise, clothe and pay their own troops, although Pitt held out the promise of asking Parliament to reimburse such war expenses. Pitt to Governors, Dec. 30, 1757, *Kimball*, p. 135. For use of the northern Provinces 10,000 arms and 4,000 tents were ordered to the Port of New York; to support the Forbes expedition 2,000 arms and 1,000 tents were directed to Philadelphia. Pitt to Abercromby, Dec. 30, 1757, *Kimball*, p. 143. Late arrival of these supplies forced Forbes to rely on local procurement in early stages of his campaign.
Lord Loudoun under date of February 1, suggested in regard to "Operations on the Ohio": "... one is naturally led to believe, that any attempt made upon Fort de Casne ... might be attended with success. And for that purpose would assemble early at Fort Cumberland."\textsuperscript{13}

On February 4 Forbes informed Lord Loudoun, "I am told the road from Fort Cumberland to the Monongahela, is still very practicable except a few bridges,"\textsuperscript{14} a message no doubt concurred in by William Byrd III of Virginia, who later was to command as Colonel the Second Regiment of Virginia Provincials under Forbes and who then was a welcome volunteer with Loudoun's army.

Follow-up letters in mid-March to the Governors of the various cooperating Provinces repeated the Braddock Road concept. North Carolina troops were to pace themselves so as to arrive at Fort Cumberland by May 1; Virginia troops were to be formed at Fort Loudoun (Winchester, Va.)\textsuperscript{15} and proceed to Fort Cumberland; Maryland troops were to gather at Frederick town by April 20; regular army troops after disembarking at Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania provincial troops, were to rendezvous at William's Ferry or Conococheague (Williamsport, Md.) by April 20.

In addition Governor William Denny of Pennsylvania was asked to repair the road from Lancaster to William's Ferry, and Governor Horatio Sharpe of Maryland to look to the road from William's Ferry to Fort Cumberland.

The plans were good but the time-table was wrong. When the charted assembly times rolled around, Forbes was without troops worthy of the name. Not without reason he complained to his old friend and deposed commander, Lord Loudoun, on April 23 from Philadelphia: "Think a little of my Dr Lord how I am to proceed

\textsuperscript{13} James, p. 35. Lord Loudoun had been Commander-in-Chief in North America in 1757 and Forbes (then a Colonel) his adjutant and trusted friend and advisor. Prime Minister Pitt under date of December 30, 1757 (see note 7) replaced Lord Loudoun with his former second-in-command, Major General James Abercromby. The order was not received in America until early March, 1758. Meanwhile Lord Loudoun had gone ahead with his own plans for 1758 military operations. Except for troop assignments, the plans of Loudoun and Pitt were much alike. As a fortunate coincidence Lord Loudoun had assigned to Forbes the capture of Fort Duquesne and like orders from Pitt amounted to a confirmation.

\textsuperscript{14} Forbes to Loudoun: James, p. 37.

\textsuperscript{15} The Virginia Fort Loudoun is cited as "Fort Loudoun (Winchester)" to avoid confusion with a Pennsylvania fort of like name near the present town of Fort Loudon. Note that the final "u" has been dropped in today's spelling.
or succeed, I am here these six days by my self alone, having no mortall but Halkett. In short necessity will turn me a Cherokee, and dont be surprised if I take F: du Quesne at the head of them; and them only ...”

The complaint was hardly an overstatement. Some 600 Cherokees were then assembled at Fort Loudoun (Winchester), although without a stick of equipment or hardly a stitch of clothes. Only three of Colonel Archibald Montgomery’s thirteen companies of the 77th Regiment, the Highlanders, were at hand, and they sick from their long sea journey from England. The remaining ten companies were at Charleston, South Carolina, waiting troop transports. Colonel Bouquet’s four companies of the First Battalion of the Royal American Regiment (the 60th) were somewhere at sea, en route from Charleston.

While Maryland had 300 men under arms, the Provincial Assembly refused to pay them, and their continuance in service was in doubt. No report was at hand of the Carolina contingent. Pennsylvania had authorized 2,700 troops including those already under arms, but the Assembly had made no appropriation for pay, and recruiting was at a standstill. Troops under arms—1,000 or so—were occupied in manning the many frontier forts between the Delaware and the Susquehanna and a few strong points west of the Susquehanna. The 300 promised men from the Lower Counties (Delaware) were yet to be enrolled.

Virginia had promised 2,000 troops, but the one existing under-strength regiment of 800 men under the command of Colonel George Washington could not be relieved until a militia force was raised for service in frontier defense.

So the assembly dates of April 20 and May 1 arrived and the Forbes army still was a paper army. The underbrush thickened as spring came to the Braddock Road.

16 Major Francis Halkett, aide to Forbes.
17 James, p. 70.
18 Disembarked at New York April 19, 1758. After a few days in New York Bouquet proceeded to Philadelphia to confer with Forbes. On May 20 he was at Lancaster en route to Carlisle to start road building.
II. No Road Leads to Cumberland—May 1758

While Forbes fretted in Philadelphia, organizing supplies and waiting for his army to assemble at Carlisle, the breathing spell gave him opportunity to study his proposed line of communication and pick a better way of entering the Braddock Road than by the originally planned William's Ferry route to Fort Cumberland.

Instead of taking a road, Forbes now had time to choose the road that best favored his objective. He sought a road with adequate forage for cattle and horses and one that followed ridge lines and watersheds and avoided major river crossings. The Potomac and Youghiogheny and Monongahela, he knew, were at times too deep to ford and too wide to bridge. And he wanted a road that would favor re-supply.

Road information, although undoubtedly Philadelphia-biased, was at every hand. Available to Forbes was the Provincial Council's "Account of the Face of the Country on the Borders of Pennsylvania," made to Lord Loudoun in April 1757 and describing Pennsylvania routes to Fort Duquesne. Available was first-hand information concerning Burd's Road that had been cut from west of the Susquehanna to Raystown (Bedford) in 1755 at the request of General Braddock though never used. Colonel James Burd, its builder, was commander of the Second Battalion of the Pennsylvania Provincial Regiment.

Available were road reports of John Harris; of Lewis Evans, John Patten, Andrew Montour and others who had been questioned by the Provincial Council in 1754 when Pennsylvania was trying to determine whether or not Fort Duquesne was in Pennsylvania or strictly a Virginia problem. Evans even had prepared a map and

20 Apparently Carlisle was selected as the major base for operations sometime after Forbes' arrival in Philadelphia. It was a natural choice: a fortified military post at the western edge of English settlements, meadows for forage, some shelter and civilian artisans, and favorable either for an advance through Maryland and Virginia or by an all-Pennsylvania route.


22 Cut as a road 20 feet wide, but narrowed to 10 feet in parts requiring digging or quarrying, and with "a large swipe for the wagons at each turn." Pa. Colonial Records, VI, 402, 433, 466, 484. Starting point was McDowell's Mill or Fort McDowell (Markes, Pa.) about three miles southeast of present day Fort Loudon.


a written description of the country, printed by a firm in which the enterprising Benjamin Franklin had an interest.\textsuperscript{25}

Forbes also had opportunity to contact Philadelphia merchants and their traders, including George Croghan and John Fraser and others, who for years had packed trade goods to the Ohio over the Indian trails of central Pennsylvania. A hundred men could tell of the routes.\textsuperscript{26}

Finally Forbes could hardly fail to appreciate that all roads are two-way—that the very paths used by the Indians to harass the settlers could in turn be used by the English to harass the French and their Indian allies. As a matter of fact Colonel John Armstrong of the First Battalion of the Pennsylvania Regiment had done this very thing in 1756 when he led 300 provincials in a successful raid to destroy the Indian town of Kittanning on the upper Allegheny.\textsuperscript{27}

And had not Forbes, in a comparable situation, recently advised Lord Loudoun that "he was at no loss to see that if 100 French can march to Fort Edward and back again; that some 200 or 2000 British, might execute it likewise."\textsuperscript{28}

While at this time Forbes may have conjectured an all-Pennsylvania road direct to Fort Duquesne, his present public decision was to reach the Braddock Road by clearing the old Burd Road to Raystown (Bedford)\textsuperscript{29} and then open two alternate roads, either or both of which could carry him to the Braddock Road.

One alternate was to complete Burd's road beyond Raystown to the Youghiogheny River in the vicinity of the Great Crossings of the Braddock Road (where U. S. 40 crosses Youghiogheny Reser-

\textsuperscript{25} Lewis Evans, \textit{Analysis of a General Map of the Middle British Colonies}, Philadelphia, 1755.

\textsuperscript{26} More than 300 Pennsylvania traders were engaged in fur trade in the Ohio region between 1750 and 1754. George Croghan, King of the traders, had several buildings and headquarters on Pine Creek (Etna) and storehouses at the Indian village of Logstown (Ambridge). John Fraser had a blacksmith shop and trading post at Venango (Franklin) until forced out by the French when he retreated to the Turtle Creek (Braddock). John A. Adams, "Indian Traders of Upper Ohio Valley," \textit{WPHM}, 17, pp. 163-174 (1934).


\textsuperscript{28} Forbes to Loudoun, Feb. 19, 1758: \textit{James}, p. 45.

\textsuperscript{29} Raystown, also called Reastown or Raestown, was a well known location and crossroads of major Indian paths. Robert Ray established a trading post there as early as 1750-1, to be followed by Garret Pendergast. Provincial troops camped there in the summer of 1757 in an offensive maneuver to waylay Indian raiders. Apparently the trader cabins had been destroyed by the Indians after Braddock's defeat—Forbes reported no buildings there in 1758.
voir). Actually Burd's road had been aimed at this point near Turkey Foot (Confluence) and had been cut for some 20 miles southwest beyond Raystown when news of Braddock's defeat halted road work and forced retirement.\(^{30}\) The other alternate was to cut a new road directly south from Raystown to Fort Cumberland, a distance estimated at 30 miles.

Although completion of Burd's road would require considerable prior reconnaissance—which was ordered—no difficulties were anticipated in opening the Raystown-Fort Cumberland by-pass. Two well known Indian trails joined the locations.\(^{11}\)

Forbes' conclusion was fortified by the recommendation of Sir John St. Clair, his Quartermaster General, who knew or should have known the country from his like service under Braddock. Consequently St. Clair's later opposition to the Raystown route must have come as a surprise to Forbes and with reason aroused his suspicion of Virginia influence.

The absence of a satisfactory road from William's Ferry to Fort Cumberland forced the change in plans. As a practical matter neither troops nor supplies in sufficient quantities could be gotten to Cumberland except over a new route.

The trouble with the William's Ferry way was that it involved many crossings of the Potomac River and its feeder tributaries. Braddock had faced the same problem and had damned Maryland for failure to provide a road. The only alternative by existing roads was to proceed on the prohibitively long route through Fort Loudoun (Winchester) and a creek-and-river-infested road from there to Fort Cumberland. There was no wagon road on the Maryland side of the Potomac.

Even Washington recognized the necessity for a change in plans. In a letter to Brigadier General John Stanwix on April 10 concerning the proposed rendezvous of the regular troops, he had noted: "Fort Frederic, I hear, is mentioned for this purpose, and, in my humble opinion, a little improperly . . . I am fully convinced there never can be a road made between Fort Frederic and Fort Cumberland, that will admit the transportation of carriages."\(^{12}\)

\(^{30}\) Burd's working tools later were recovered and used by Forbes. Baker, "Report on Road to Raystown," July, 1758: *Bouquet Papers*, p. 254.

\(^{31}\) St. Clair to Bouquet, June 11, 1758: *Bouquet Papers*, p. 77.

\(^{32}\) Washington to Stanwix, April 10, 1758: *Fitzpatrick*, p. 173. Stanwix had been commander of British regulars in the southern provinces, with headquarters at Carlisle, prior to the arrival of Forbes.
On May 4 Washington advised John Blair, President of the Virginia Council and then Acting Governor: "With regard to opening the roads, I think it would be most advisable to postpone all attempts, 'till Sir. Jno. St. Clair's arrival . . . For Pearsalls, altho' it is the most convenient road for the Virginia, may not be used by the northern troops; as I understand their rendezvous is ordered at Fort Frederick in Maryland."[33]

Washington at this time was busy assembling his troops at Fort Loudoun (Winchester). Pearsalls was a strong point on the old road to Fort Cumberland from Virginia and near the present day Romney, West Virginia. Fort Frederick, constructed in 1756 for frontier defense, was on the Maryland side of the Potomac about fourteen miles west of William's Ferry. A state park now marks the location, and the fort, which also saw service in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, has been partially restored.

Even the Maryland folk themselves recognized the lack of a suitable road, although the recognition came late. In December 1758 a Committee of the Assembly reported: "Your committee have made inquiry into the situation of the present wagon-road from Fort Frederick to Fort Cumberland and are of the opinion that the distance by that road from one fort to the other is at least eighty miles, and find that wagons which go from one fort to the other are obliged to pass the river Potomack twice, and that for one-third of the year they can't pass without boats to set them over the river."[34] Distance of the projected new road was reported by the Committee as 62 miles.

One might, in retrospect, wonder about the situation had the Maryland Assembly in December 1757 (or even in December 1754) been as alert to the need for a road direct to Fort Cumberland as it was in December 1758. If there had been a road, Forbes likely would have used it. As a matter of fact, Maryland came within an eyelash of getting its road at the hands of Forbes, as the next chapter will develop.

When as early as May 7 Forbes decided upon a "pallisaded Deposit" at Raystown,[35] and when shortly later he suggested to Bouquet that the road be reconnoitred from Raystown to the

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34 Will H. Lowdermilk, History of Cumberland (Md.), p. 252.
35 Forbes to Abercromby, May 7, 1758: James, p. 87.
Youghiogheny, Virginia Road advocates had no real cause for alarm. After all, Forbes merely was carrying out the spirit if not the letter of the original Braddock plans. Hadn't Braddock asked for a road from the Pennsylvania granary to join in with the Braddock Road at Turkey Foot?

III. RUMBLINGS OF DISSENT—June 1758

Troop\textsuperscript{16} and supply build-up, and the promised arrival of wagons to haul ammunition and provisions, finally permitted the advance to get under way.

On May 22, writing from Lancaster, an optimistic Bouquet informed Forbes that wagons were to report to Carlisle on June 1 and that he expected to arrive at Raystown via the Burd Road five days later. At Raystown he planned to build a fort with adequate storehouses and an “intrenchment” for the troops.\textsuperscript{37}

The time schedule, however, died a-borning. Conditions at Carlisle forced a two-week delay. On June 3, writing from the main army base at Carlisle, Bouquet revised for Forbes his plans for rapid advance:

- June 5—Shippensburg
- 6—Fort Loudon\textsuperscript{18}
- 7—Fort Littleton\textsuperscript{18}
- 8—Reconnaissance to Juniata River
- 9—Juniata River
- 10—Erect stockade at Juniata Crossing
- 12—ReasTown

\textsuperscript{36} Many of the Pennsylvania troops were armed with the later to become famous Pennsylvania “long rifles.” Bouquet reported to Forbes, “a large part of the provincials are armed with grooved rifles and have their molds. Lead in bars will suit them better than bullets,” Bouquet to Forbes, June 7, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 47.

\textsuperscript{37} Bouquet to Forbes, May 22, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{38} Forts Loudoun and Littleton, near present towns of the same names, were rude frontier forts erected by Pennsylvania for protection against the Indians following Braddock's defeat. Forbes described them to Pitt as being “two or three houses each, inclosed with a Stockade of 100 feet square.” Forbes to Pitt, July 10, 1758: James, p. 140. They were two of four provincial forts west of the Susquehanna manned after 1757, the others being at Carlisle (Fort Lowther) and Shippensburg (Fort Morris). Fort Littleton or Lyttleton was on the Burd Road at “Sugar Cabins.” It was completed and a detail of 75 provincials stationed there by the end of January, 1756. Apparently the then Pennsylvania Governor had a long eye on the future for he informed General Shirley (Governor of Massachusetts and Major General commanding British forces after Braddock’s death) that the fort would “at the same time serve as an advanced post or magazine, in case of an attempt to the westward.” Morris to Shirley, Feb. 9, 1756: Pa. Archives, 1st Series, II, p. 569.
Once again, however, the time-table proved faulty, and not until the end of the month was the road—unsatisfactory at the best—completed to Raystown.

After a week had passed Bouquet was no farther than Shippenburg, and in the following days he almost gave up in despair over the difficulties from rain and terrain in opening the Fort Loudon-Fort Littleton section of the road through Cowan’s Gap of the formidable Tuscarora Mountain.

So slow was progress over the mountains to the Juniata water gap leading to Raystown that serious consideration was given to abandonment of repair of Burd’s road in favor of an entirely new route direct from Fort Frederick to Fort Cumberland.

The proposed alternate road, in turn, brought into the open the poles-apart viewpoints of Pennsylvania and Virginia in regard to road location.

Virginia didn’t want to march through Pennsylvania, nor Pennsylvania through Maryland and Virginia. Forbes and Bouquet alone wanted the best military route wherever it might run. They had no provincial axes to grind. On June 9 St. Clair informed Bouquet, “I find that the Virgians are dissatisfied with the Whole Army taking the route of Pennsylvania.” In late June, when rumors were confirmed of cutters on a Maryland road to Fort Cumberland, Colonel Armstrong wrote Bouquet, “I assure you Our Troops are going into that Province with reluctance.”

The month’s activities also awakened a doubt as to the eventual use of Fort Cumberland as the jump-off for Forbes’ final assault on Fort Duquesne, and led the Virginians to accent the importance of Fort Cumberland for that purpose. Washington insisted upon assembling at Fort Cumberland according to the original plans.


40 Bouquet reached the vicinity of Raystown on June 24 and then spent four days exploring to locate a suitable site for the proposed fort and storehouses. Bouquet to Forbes, June 28, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 142.

41 Cowan’s Gap State Park is located at the westerly terminus of the Gap. From here Burd’s road followed a north flowing stream to Burnt Cabins and then bore due west to Fort Littleton.

42 St. Clair to Bouquet: Bouquet Papers, p. 60.

43 Armstrong to Bouquet, June 28, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 145.

44 St. Clair to Bouquet, June 9, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 60.
Later St. Clair, expressing the southern state's viewpoint, tried to dissuade Bouquet from attempting an extension of Burd's road direct to the Youghiogheny, suggesting rather that Braddock's road be entered from Fort Cumberland.\textsuperscript{45}

Interminable and frustrating delays in opening Burd's road persuaded Bouquet to listen with attentiveness to Maryland Governor Sharpe's suggestion that a road be opened from Fort Frederick direct to Fort Cumberland through Maryland. On June 13 he requested the Governor to reconnoitre such a route. On the 27th St. Clair reported that the suggested route was practicable and that he had given Governor Sharpe 500 men to start cutting the road.\textsuperscript{46}

Almost in the same breath that he had asked Governor Sharpe to explore the possibility of a Maryland road to Fort Cumberland, Bouquet ordered work continued on the Burd Road to Raystown. A sure but difficult route was not to be abandoned for a hope and a promise. On the 14th he reported to Forbes that the road to Raystown might be made passable, even though he favored the Maryland substitute. By the 21st he was sufficiently satisfied with progress on the Raystown way to advise the General that "the season is too far advanced to consider any other communication." He did suggest, though, that pack horses be substituted for carriages and that supplies be trans-shipped westward by pack from either Loudon or Littleton.\textsuperscript{47}

Forbes was kept informed of the rival roads. While he assented to the Maryland proposal, if necessary, he did not give up on the Raystown route nor on the possibility of a direct way from Raystown to the Youghiogheny. To him all road advice from outsiders was suspect. He advised Bouquet on the 19th: "I find wee must take nothing by report in this country, for there are many who have their own designs in representing things . . . So I am glad you have proceeded to Raes Town, where you will be able to judge of the roads and act accordingly."\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{45} St. Clair to Bouquet, June 11, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 76.
\textsuperscript{46} After his arrival at Fort Cumberland in early July Washington was ordered by Bouquet to work on the Maryland road from the western end. Captain (later Lt. Col.) John Dagworthy's Maryland garrison at Fort Cumberland was assigned the task. Cutting was not abandoned until mid-July when the axis Carlisle-Raystown became certain.
\textsuperscript{47} Actually this was the subsequent history of the Forbes Road after it had fallen into disrepair following the campaign. Not until after the Revolutionary war was a satisfactory wagon road constructed. Bouquet to Forbes, June 21, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 120.
\textsuperscript{48} Forbes to Bouquet: Bouquet Papers, p. 112.
Act accordingly Bouquet did, and the most of the next month was taken up with route reconnaissance and exploration leading to final decision in favor of an all-Pennsylvania road to Fort Duquesne.

At the end of June, however, there was no real cause for Virginia complaint as to choice of roads. Ostensibly Forbes still was carrying out Braddock's plan, but with the additional safeguard of a direct communication from Raystown to Fort Cumberland at the head of the Braddock Road. While the possibility of a supply road from Raystown to the Great Crossings—avoiding the bad mountains west of Cumberland—was under consideration, Braddock had contemplated the same plan and had started its execution. The plan that had generated little heat from the Virginians when proposed by Braddock would hardly be expected to blaze into a major conflagration when executed by Forbes just three years later.

Basically, however, a road through Raystown had the same fault, as far as Virginia was concerned, as a direct route to Fort Duquesne. It opened a way, roundabout as it might be, from the Susquehanna to the Ohio. On such a road Pennsylvania commerce could compete on even terms with Virginia.

For another reason, unknown to Washington, Forbes had time to feel his way during the planning month of June and the month to follow. Hurry no longer was important. Bouquet had advanced the idea to Forbes. On June 11 he wrote to suggest September 1 as a new target date for the assault on Fort Duquesne. Bouquet reasoned that by that date the enemy would have lost his Indians from inactivity, that Forbes' army would be better trained, and that adequate time for necessary reconnaissance would be provided.

Forbes' own words give the best summary of his problems and plans at the start of summer. He reported to Prime Minister Pitt on June 17: "As my offensive operations are clogged with many Difficultys, owing to the great distance & badness of the roads, through an almost impenetrable wood, uninhabited for more than 200 Miles, our back inhabitants being all drove into Carlisle. I am therefore lay'd under the Necessity of having a stockaded Camp, with a Blockhouse & cover for our Provisions, at every forty Miles distance. By which means, altho' I advance but gradually, yet I shall go more Surely by lessening the Number, and immoderate long train of provisions Waggons &c, For I can set out with a
fortnight's provisions from my first deposite, in order to make my second . . . "49

Time, also, was in the thinking of Colonel George Washington. He was anxious for an early campaign in order to hold the Indian allies and was aware of the "inherent slowness" of Forbes' plan to "keep open the Communication . . . and secure a retreat by the construction of Posts at advantageous situations, and proper distances as the Army advances."

Down at Fort Loudoun (Winchester) where the Virginia troops were assembling, the already assembled Cherokees and Catawbas were melting away from lack of activity.50 On June 19 Washington wrote Forbes a courteous and analytical critique of war plans "to shew the necessity of Indians and the advantages and disadvantages of a late campaign."51 Obviously an early campaign would force the use of the Braddock route so strongly favored by the Virginian. Forbes, however, refused to be stampeded into road decision and held open final choice until necessity forced his hand.

IV. THE STORM BREAKS—July 1758

June saw the abandonment of Fort Cumberland in favor of Raystown as the forward army base. July saw the virtual abandonment of the Braddock Road if another way could be found. The fat was in the fire and Virginia tempers reached the frying point by month's end.

Whatever prior conversation they may have had on the subject, the first official intimation that a direct road from Raystown to Fort Duquesne was being considered is found in a letter from Bouquet to Forbes, written from Juniata Crossings on June 21 as Bouquet was on the last lap of his road to Raystown: "When I have been at Raystown a couple of days, I shall have the road across the Alleghenies reconnoitered by two detachments, one going directly toward the heights above the forks of the Youghiogheny and the other to the right to try to find a passage across Laurel Hill. The advantage of this latter route would be that it is shorter, avoiding all the rivers . . . and that it would confuse the enemy . . . The

49 Forbes to Pitt, June 17, 1758: James, p. 116. See also Forbes to Pitt, Oct. 20, 1758: James, p. 237, regarding plan of frequent posts.
50 Recruited largely through efforts of Col. William Byrd III of Second Virginia Regiment.
destination of all these parties will be known only to the leader."  

By return post Forbes replied from Philadelphia on the 27th: "I approve much of your trying to pass the Laurel Hill leaving the River Yohageny to the left."  

On the same day Forbes reported to Abercromby: "... at Raestown I am making storehouses for the provisions &c as from thence I shall take my Departure across the Allegany Mountains."  

Significantly, he did not state by what route.  

First things came first, however. On arrival at Raystown Bouquet gave immediate attention to building a fort and storehouses adequate to receive and store the three months' provisions for 6,000 men already en route and the troops that were to follow.  

At this time—early July—Bouquet had only some 800 troops fit for duty at Raystown, including the six Virginia companies under Lieutenant Colonel Stephen. The Virginians were reluctant to do further work in Pennsylvania. Roads they had helped build, and guard duty they would pull, but they objected to "working without being paid." The pay incidentally was a gill—¼ pint—of rum per day, a bonus acceptable to the home state troops without grumbling. Bouquet reported this work-detail trouble to St. Clair on June 30, and in the same letter cited that scouts gave hope of finding a good road over the Alleghenies.  

Washington's arrival at Fort Cumberland with the remaining five companies of his regiment and eight companies of Colonel William Byrd's regiment, all understrength, was timed almost to the minute with the occupancy of Raystown by Bouquet. Stephen was

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52 Bouquet to Forbes, June 21, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 120.  
53 Forbes to Bouquet, June 27, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 135.  
54 Forbes to Abercromby, June 27, 1758: James, p. 126.  
55 Forbes to Pitt, May 19, 1758: James, p. 91; Forbes to Bouquet, July 14, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 207. Normal approved ration was one pound of beef—usually fresh—and one pound of flour per man per day, a ration Bouquet found inadequate for the provincial road cutters. Fresh mutton and pork, and salt pork, were alternative meat issues. Bouquet to Forbes, July 21, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 251.  
56 Bouquet to St. Clair, June 30, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 147. Remainder of Virginia troops were closing on Fort Cumberland en route from Fort Loudoun (Winchester). Maryland troops already were at Fort Cumberland. Regular troops and Pennsylvania troops were in assembly areas—principally about Carlisle—and on duty at frontier forts, awaiting the establishment of the Raystown depot before going forward; some were on road repair work and some were detailed to protect supply wagons. In a letter of July 10 to William Pitt, Forbes reported 1,500 provincial troops at Raystown. Forbes to Pitt: James, p. 140.  
57 Bouquet to St. Clair, June 30, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 147.
prompt to send a note of welcome to his senior officer: "I con-
gratulate you on your Arrival at Fort Cumberland. It would have
saved Us a deal of trouble to have taken the Same Route."58 From
then on Stephen fanned the flames of provincial rivalry by keeping
Washington informed of Bouquet's every move.

Final road choice was uppermost in the minds of the newly
arrived troops at Fort Cumberland. Likely at the instigation of
Washington, Ex-Governor James Glen of South Carolina (a cousin
of Forbes en route to join Bouquet for the remainder of the cam-
paign) wrote Bouquet from Fort Cumberland on July 5: "I hear
you have laid aside all thoughts of a road directly from where you
are to Fort Duquesne."59

Washington additionally was disturbed about the possible
abandonment of Fort Cumberland, and even if that Fort were con-
tinued he worried lest it would be supplied from Pennsylvania rather
than over Virginia roads. Not only did the physical presence of
the Raystown depot give concern, but also to relieve the critical
supply situation of the Virginians, Bouquet had suggested that after
garrisoning Fort Cumberland Washington move on to Raystown.60

Washington quickly assured Bouquet that his supply troubles
were under control. He added in his letter of July 7 that it was
important to keep Fort Cumberland since Forbes must "inevitably"
use the Braddock Road from Cumberland. He concluded with the
startling and, to Forbes, inflammatory statement that "Col. Byrd
assures me that the Indians with him absolutely refuse to March
any other Road than this they know."61

The supply predicament in which Washington found himself
was to be repeated time and again in the next few months. The
handwriting that Forbes so clearly read and that Braddock earlier
had recognized was not admitted by the loyal and ambitious Vir-

second-in-command of the 1st Virginia Regiment, had been with his senior
officer at the Jumonville fracas, at Fort Necessity, and on the Braddock ex-
pedition.
59 Glen to Bouquet, July 5, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 163.
60 Bouquet to Washington, July 1, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 156.
61 Washington to Bouquet, July 7, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 167. Forbes wrote
Bouquet on July 23, 1758, "Colo. Byrd in a paragraph of his letter from
Fort Cumberland . . . writes; that he has upwards of Sixty Indians . . .
but they will not follow me unless I go by Fort Cumberland. This is a new
System of military Discipline truly; and shows that my Good friend Byrd
is either made the Cats Foot off himself, or he little knows me, if he imagines
Sixty Scoundrels are to direct me in my measures." Bouquet Papers, p. 264.
ginian—that Virginia economy just couldn’t support an army at Cumberland.

In this first week of July when Bouquet was erecting a stockade and storehouses at Raystown and Washington was organizing the forces at Fort Cumberland, Forbes had moved on to the general depot and assembly area at Carlisle. As he watched his army grow larger by the day, and watched load after load of supplies leave for the Raystown “deposite,” the final goal seemed in sight. The supply ships and artillery had arrived from England; now he had everything at hand he would have. By the end of the month, if all went well, an army of 5,000 effectives might be assembled at Raystown, poised to strike at a time of his choosing.

With the goal in sight the selection of a route beyond Raystown became a matter of high priority. Forbes continued in the hope of a direct road to Fort Duquesne, reserving the Braddock route in his thinking as an ace in the hole. But come what may, he resolved to go by way of Raystown. On July 6 he wrote Bouquet: “... most Certainly wee shall now all go by Raes town, but I am afraid that Sir John is led by passions, he says he knows very well that wee shall not find a road from Raes town across the Allegany, and that to go by Raes town to F Cumberland is a great way about, but this he ought to have said two months ago or hold his peace now... Pray examine the Country tother side of the Allegany particularly the Laurell Ridge that he says its impossible wee can pass, without going into Braddocks old road... Let the road to Fort Cumberland from Raes town be finished with all Deligence, because if we must go by Fort Cumberland it must be through Raes town, as it is now too late to make use of the Road by Fort Frederick.”

On July 9 Forbes informed Abercromby: “I shall march on directly [from Raystown] either across the Allegany and leave the Yohageny on my left, or else by Fort Cumberland and take Genl

62 Forbes to Bouquet, July 6, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 163.
63 Grant to Bouquet, July 11, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 185: “15 men per Company of the Pensilvania Provincials have been detached to guard the Frontiers. You may believe the best men have not been chose for that service—but we shall have remaining of those Gentlemen about 1680, with 300 of the lower County’s, 1800 Virginians, 1250 Highlanders 360 of your Corps, but making an Allowance for sickness &c with Artillery-men, Waggoners, Sutlers Servants &c I imagine we shall consist of about five thousand men when we assemble at Raes-Town.”
64 Forbes to Bouquet, July 6, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 163.
Braddocks road, which I have already opened the length of the Crossing of the Yohageny.”

The next day he addressed Wm. Pitt: “I am in hopes of finding a better way over the Alleganey Mountains, than that from Fort Cumberland which Gen'l Braddock took . . .”

On July 11 Forbes instructed Bouquet: “I shall hurry up the troops directly so pray see for a road across the Allegany or by Fort Cumberland, which Garrison may if necessary be clearing Braddocks old road.”

The same day he had Major James Grant of Colonel Archibald Montgomery’s Highlanders and a trusted advisor write Bouquet by way of emphasis: “The General desires that the road over the Allegany may be reconoitred, for he is unwilling to be put under the necessity for making any detour.”

So much for Forbes. While Forbes was writing, Bouquet was acting. The commander and his second-in-command were days apart in correspondence and Forbes’ illness caused additional interruptions. Forbes’ letter of July 6 was not received by Bouquet until the 11th, his first message from the bed-ridden General since June 19. Fortunately, however, the two men saw eye to eye and Bouquet anticipated the General’s moves.

After attending, as a proper soldier ought to do, to security measures, Bouquet’s next efforts with his limited troops were directed towards road construction and route reconnaissance. Washington was instructed to cut towards Raystown from Fort Cumberland. Bouquet assigned men to work from his end of the road. Five hundred men working from both ends completed the 30 mile road by the 20th of the month.

But even before the road cutting details were organized, Bouquet formed a large reconnaissance party of 100 soldiers, six officers, and four Indians to explore the two routes—the one to the Youghiogheny and the other direct to Fort Duquesne. They left Raystown with their pack horse train on the 8th under secret instructions known only to the officers.

Bouquet was optimistic that the exploration would prove successful and was not impressed by the prophets of doom from Virginia.

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65 Forbes to Abercromby, July 9, 1758: *James*, p. 134.
66 Forbes to Pitt, July 10, 1758: *James*, p. 140.
68 Grant to Bouquet, July 11, 1758: *Bouquet Papers*, p. 185.
He reported to Forbes on the 11th: "All the letters I receive from Virginia are filled with nothing but the impossibility of finding a passage across Lawrell Hill, and the ease of going by Braddock's road. This is a matter of politics between one province and another . . . I am certain we shall find a passage . . . From all disinterested persons . . . I learn that it is possible to have a wagon road across Lawrell Hill, and that on the other side there is nothing but some small mountains which cannot stop us, with forage and water all the way."\(^69\)

Following up Forbes' instructions of the 11th, Bouquet on the 14th informed Washington that "The General desires you would send a Party to reconnoitre Braddocks Road, and begin to clear a few miles."\(^70\) Since his troops were occupied in road work, Washington could not comply for a week. He wrote Bouquet on the 21st: "... Tomorrow . . . proceed to open General Braddock's Road . . . I shall direct their going to George's Creek 10 miles advanced . . . if they go further, it may be requisite to reinforce the Party; but this matter I suppose will be ordered according to the Rout determined on by the General: for it will be needless to open a Road that no use is made of."\(^71\)

The reconnaissance party sent out by Bouquet on the 8th returned late on the 20th to report no hope of a road to the Youghiogheny but definite possibility of a direct road across the mountains to Fort Duquesne. Extracts of the reports were made and sent back to Forbes at Carlisle the next day.

In the forwarding letter Bouquet noted that 100 men under Major George Armstrong of the Third Battalion of the Pennsylvania Regiment (brother of Colonel John Armstrong of the First Battalion) would leave in two days to mark the proposed road over the mountains, and that a spot on the other side of the Laurel Mountain—Loyalhanna—appeared to be the next suitable site for a depot. He cautioned Forbes: "The Virginia party in regard to your route is continuing in full force . . . this is an additional reason for acting with double caution . . . in order that we may answer their outcries convincingly in case of accident, which they would not fail to attribute to the choice of a new route."\(^72\)

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\(^{69}\) Bouquet to Forbes, July 11, 1758: *Bouquet Papers*, p. 179.

\(^{70}\) Bouquet to Washington, July 14, 1758: *Bouquet Papers*, p. 205.

\(^{71}\) Washington to Bouquet, July 21, 1758: *Bouquet Papers*, p. 258.

\(^{72}\) Bouquet to Forbes, July 11, 1758: *Bouquet Papers*, p. 251.
Forbes was prompt to reply, and in replying to let off steam against St. Clair and the Virginians, although in the same breath he detailed St. Clair to examine the new road. He wrote on the 23rd: "I therefore cannot Conceive what the Virginia folks would be att, for to me it appears to be them, and them only, that want to drive us into the road by Fort Cumberland, no doubt in opposition to the Pennsylvanians who by Raestown would have a higher Communication (than them) to the Ohio . . . Sir John I am afraid had got a new light at Winchester . . . If what I say is true and those two roads are compared [90 miles over Laurel Hill and 160 by Fort Cumberland] I don't see that I am to Hesitate one Moment which to take, unless I take a party likewise, which I hope never to do in Army Matters . . . "

News of the return to Bouquet's reconnaissance party was not long in reaching Washington at Fort Cumberland. To smoke out Bouquet's intention he asked on the 24th: "I should not choose to propose anything that might seem officious: but woud it not facilitate the Operations of this Campagne if the Virginia Troops were Ordered to proceed as far at least as the great Crossing of the Yaugyauggane? . . . If any use is intended to be made of this Road, from such a step, great advantages may certainly be derivd."

On the same day Bouquet had written Washington, holding out the olive branch of possible use of the Braddock Road, but at the same time asserting that Forbes likely would make some use of the Laurel Hill route: "Therefore untill he [General Forbes] has determined which Way to march, I think it is very well to open Braddocks Road, but I would not advance further than ten miles: The rest I Suppose could be cut as fast as the Army can March . . . I do imagine that the General may Send a Body of Troops . . . over Lawrell Hill . . . and as you desire to have your Regt and Self employed immediately I would be glad to Know before hand, between us if it would be agreable to you to march that Way or wait untill the Generall is able to determine fully about the Roads."

Washington did not take the bait. He refused to commit himself to take a road he so vigorously had opposed. He replied the next day to assert again the advantages of the Braddock Road:

74 Washington to Bouquet, July 24, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 270.
75 Bouquet to Washington, July 24, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 268.
"... since you desire me to speake, permit me to observe this;... a Road comparable to General Braddocks or indeed fit for any Service at all, even for Carrying horses cannot be made... I should be extreme glad of one hours conference with you, and that after the General arrives;... I coud then demonstrate the advantages of pushing out a Body of Light Troops on this Quarter."

Bouquet responded on the 27th, setting a meeting at the half-way post between Raystown and Fort Cumberland for the 29th, and expressed the hope that their differences might be resolved in order to spare the time of the General. The day previous, on the basis of glowing reports of the new road from Major Armstrong, Bouquet had written Forbes: "On the report of the major we shall be certain of the route as far as Loyal Hannon... From the guides I have sent you, you will have learned the advantages of this route, which is open and requires few repairs; and its inconveniences, which are lack of forage, its length, its narrow passes, and the river crossings. [i.e., Braddock Road] Colonel Washington... writes me that... our route is impracticable even for pack horses... and that Braddock's is absolutely the only one to take... Would you not find it apropos to see Colonel Washington here before you decide, and if our parties continue to bring good news, persuade him to yield to the evidence?"

Forbes at this time still was at Carlisle, delayed by the details of expediting supplies and of moving the army forward; and delayed by his recurring sickness that immobilized him for days at a time. But Forbes had enough road evidence at hand to make up his own mind. And still bitter from Colonel Byrd's veiled ultimatum that the Indians would take no road but Braddock's, he had no desire to see the Virginians, other than to take them to task for open hostility to their commander's plans.

Not known by Bouquet, Forbes had about made up his mind in regard to roads as early as the 25th and only awaited further confirmation before public decision. On that date he had written Abercromby: "... according to the reports... the road over the Allegany mountains and the Laurel Ridge will be found practicable for Carriages, which... will facilitate our matters by shortening the march about seventy miles besides the advantage of having no

77 Bouquet to Forbes, July 26, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 277.
rivers to pass... The troops are all in motion... in order to be assembled in Raestown, but I have retarded the march of some of them... as I am unwilling to bring them together till the route is finally determined, and till I am able to keep up constantly three months provisions at Raestown by throwing in fresh supplies according to the consumption.”

Prior to his conference with Washington at the halfway post, Bouquet had received another report from Major Armstrong praising Loyalhanna as an excellent site for a forward depot. It contained the oft-quoted remark: “The Situation is undoubtedly Good for nature has supplied it with all conveniencies, and what makes it more desirable is the Western breezes carrying with them the Smell of the French Brandy.”

French brandy, Bouquet rightly suspected, might even affect the judgment of an inexperienced young officer. Consequently he sent Colonel Burd, Ensign Charles Rhor and Captain Edward Ward to verify Armstrong’s findings. These officers, Burd and Ward Pennsylvanians and Rhor an engineer from the Royal Americans, found things far different from Armstrong’s glowing reports.

Fortunately, however, Rhor discovered another gap over the Allegheny Mountain that would accommodate the building of a wagon road “with a good deal of labour.” St. Clair then was sent with Burd and 200 men to reconnoiter the gap discovered by Rhor. Bouquet did not believe in half-measures.

All these things Bouquet reported to Forbes on July 31, as well as the negative results of an inconclusive interview with Washington: “I think as you do that you cannot accept Cumberland until after you have it in your power to demonstrate the impossibility of finding another road, or at least the impossibility of opening it without risking the expedition by too great a loss of time... We are in a cruel situation, if you are reduced to a single communication. In the 64 miles from Cumberland to Gist’s, there are only three places which could furnish enough forage for the army... the rivers overflowing in the spring cut off all communication.”

Bouquet continued: “I had an interview with Colonel Wash-

78 Forbes to Abercromby, July 25, 1758: James, p. 158.
80 Bouquet to Forbes, July 31, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 287.
ington to find out how he imagines these difficulties can be overcome. I learned nothing satisfactory. Most of these gentlemen do not know the difference between a party and an army, and find everything easy which agrees with their ideas, jumping over all the difficulties."

Forbes had not waited receipt of report of Bouquet's meeting with Washington. On July 31, by the hand of aide Major Halkett, he ordered Bouquet to begin opening the new road: "The General . . . has directed me to inform you, that you are immediately to begin the opening of it . . . he is extreamly surpris'd at the partial disposition that appears in those Virginia Gentlemens sentiments, as their can be no sort of comparison between those two routes." 81

Two days later Forbes confirmed the order in his own hand: "I made Halkett write you the other day when I really was unable myself—he told you my opinion of the Laurell Hill road, and that I thought it ought to be sett about directly, as it is good to have two Strings to one Bow." 82

Two strings to one bow might be Forbes' idea, but as Washington read events there was only one arrow and it was aimed straight across Laurel Hill towards Fort Duquesne. Any use of Braddock's road now seemed doubtful.

Washington's only hope, based on his opinion of the impossibility of opening a new road, was that the Braddock Road still might be used by entering it from Fort Cumberland. In any event Raystown was to be the major assembly point whatever direction or directions the final route might take.

It was a disturbed and angry Washington who rode the fifteen miles from the halfway post back to Fort Cumberland after his conference with Bouquet. Yet he hardly could complain of his treatment. If he had failed to change Bouquet's mind, Bouquet still had asked him to put his arguments in writing for forwarding to the General. He would have been more disturbed had he known that Forbes already had made up his mind to start cutting the new road.

Washington had other things on his mind as well. He was waiting a report on his election as a Burgess; he was conducting

81 Halkett to Bouquet, July 31, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 294.
a courtship by mail; and from a distance he was attempting to manage his farmlands.

As Bouquet looked at things at the end of July, campaign plans still were in good order. There was plenty of time to meet his projected September 1 time-table for final assault. In one month he surely could cut a new road and push the head 50 miles closer to Fort Duquesne at Loyalhanna.

Nor was Forbes concerned that it was past mid-year. He was waging a war on the political as well as on the military front. Christian Frederick Post, Moravian missionary and Indian emissary for the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly, had been sent to the Ohio country to weaken the French hold on the Shawnee by inviting them to re-occupy their old homes on the Susquehanna and by encouraging their neutrality. If the French were deprived of their allies a bloodless victory would result. Pending the outcome of Post's mission any attack would but prejudice its results.

One concern Forbes had, however. What was happening up north? Had Major General Jeffery Amherst succeeded at Louisbourg? News of Abercromby's and Lord Howe's failure on Lake Champlain in early July, received by Forbes on July 14, had been a sharp disappointment and had caused him to consider the risk of a "forced march or two to create a diversion." One time of the three-pronged North American attack strategy had broken; were the others strong enough to pierce the French line?

Forbes could take consolation in one fact: on July 31 Bouquet reported, "We haven't yet had a man killed which seems very remarkable to me." [To be continued]

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84 Forbes to Bouquet, July 14, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 207.
85 Bouquet to Forbes, July 31, 1758: Bouquet Papers, p. 287.