NEW LIGHT ON THE 1758 FORBES CAMPAIGN

Niles Anderson

Ever since the Pittsburgh bicentennial of 1958, followed by the Bushy Run bicentennial of 1963, increasing attention has been given by historical writer and romantic citizen alike to events of the French and Indian War in general and to the Forbes and other military routes in particular.¹

With this interest, it is apropos for the author to review his article of a few years ago, “The General Chooses a Road — the Forbes Campaign of 1758 to Capture Fort Duquesne,” and hopefully to shed

Mr. Anderson in this article continues his study of the Forbes Campaign and carries forward his quest for information on the exact course of the Forbes Road.—Editor

¹ In late 1964 a loosely organized group under the name of the Forbes Trail Committee discussed opening a section of the Forbes Road as a hiking trail. In early 1965, under the leadership of Hartzell A. Michael of the East Boroughs Boy Scout Council, the group cleared and marked a trail from the vicinity of the Three Redoubts to the vicinity of Bouquet’s Camp. Society member Edgar A. Roth designed a Trail Medal and patch for scout use. The author and Society member Harold A. Thomas assisted in identifying the route. On the rainy opening day of April 24, 1965, some 5,000 boy and girl scouts and others trudged the 20 mile trail.

Concurrently, another group of history buffs east of Chestnut Ridge has formed a non-profit corporation under the name of the Forbes Road Association, with the long-range objective of promoting tourism in the Allegheny-Laurel plateau area by re-opening the Forbes Road as a bridle and hiking path, and even dreams of a stage-coach road with operative hostels. Several Society members are active in the organization.

The present restoration program at Fort Ligonier of the Fort Ligonier Memorial Association is under the guiding hand of Society vice-president Charles M. Stotz. Even more luster will be added to what already is considered a gem of fort restoration.
new light on an old military episode that then and now is so meaningful to Western Pennsylvania. 2

I. Food a Plenty

Writers, both contemporary to the Forbes expedition and modern, have in critical vein suggested that shortage of provisions forced Forbes to leave but a small garrison rather than the whole army at captured Fort Duquesne during the winter of 1758-59. 3

This easy assumption, although based upon an initial occupation garrison of 200 provincial soldiers under command of Colonel Hugh Mercer of the Third Battalion of the Pennsylvania Regiment, does injustice to the logistical mastery of General Forbes and to the seasonal nature of warfare of that period.

The situation was not that shortage of food occasioned withdrawal of the bulk of the conquering army but rather that a preplanned withdrawal occasioned the low food reserves. Win or lose — a small garrison at captured Fort Duquesne or a small garrison at the farthest point of advance to preserve progress that far was part of the design for the winter months. Never did Forbes intend that his entire army was to winter in the wilderness at the end of a more than 200 mile supply line, passable only to pack horses and at times forbidden even that transport.

Calling off combat for the winter was the pattern of war then and the pattern up to and including the American Civil War, times prior to mechanization that has conquered ice and snow and mud and distance. Military campaigns were fair-weather affairs, with hostilities suspended in the winter except for sporadic raids.

Such were the practical dictates of winter that even before Brigadier General John Forbes left Loyalhannon (Ligonier) for his final assault on Fort Duquesne, the French already had withdrawn the bulk of their forces from Fort Duquesne and other western forts. 4 Both the

2 Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine (WPHM), Vol. 42, June, September, December 1959.

3 Harry Gordon, Engineer with the Forbes expedition, reported in a 1765 "Memorial Concerning Back Forts in Pennsylvania," that Forbes had to "march back from Duquesne or starve." S. M. Pargellis, Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765 (New York and London, 1930), 464. The words are repeated by Walter O'Meara in Guns At the Forks (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1965), 213: "With winter at their heels, the rest of the army retraced its march with all possible haste. It was that or starve."

4 William A. Hunter, Forts On the Pennsylvania Frontier, 1753-1758, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (Harrisburg, 1966), 117, 135, 136. The French winter garrison at the closest strongpoint of Fort Machault (Franklin, Pa.) was 100 men, too small to pose a threat to the English at Pittsburgh.
French and British planned and executed winter withdrawals, to await the coming spring and new campaign decisions of war offices far removed from the fighting front. Fortunately for the British, the earlier French withdrawal time-table played a significant part in the capture of Fort Duquesne. Time was on the side of Forbes.

The whole history of the 1758 Forbes campaign demonstrates the logistical planning of its leader. Troops were not brought together until supplies were adequate. As early as the middle of May an initial reserve of three months supplies for 6,000 men had been arranged for; by July this amount was in store at the Raystown (Bedford) “deposite” or en route there, over and above daily consumption requirements.

Again, although advance detachments occupied Loyalhannon in early September, Forbes himself did not go forward with the army rear until supply support was adequate for the expected duration of the campaign. From his main base at Raystown, Forbes wrote his second-in-command, Colonel Henry Bouquet, at Loyalhannon on October 21:

"as we have now plenty of provision betwixt this and Loyal Hannon for forty days, besides five hundred Pack horses on the Road from Carlile with the Provender &c and the Season of the year pressing hard upon us, I have therefore ordered the whole to March upon Monday next with a design to make very few halting days, until that we see the Enemy . . . .

At this time — mid-October — or even earlier, the General was concerned with garrisoning his conquests for the winter months in order to preserve progress thus far made and protect the Provinces from Indian raids. His problem was compounded by his desire for comfortable winter quarters for the regulars in order that they might be refreshed for subsequent campaigns, and by the fact that most provincial enlistments were scheduled to expire December 1.

In the absence of advice from the Provincial Governors or orders from the military establishment, Forbes planned troop dispositions for winter security as follows: Pittsburgh (formerly Fort Duquesne) — 400; Ligonier (formerly Loyalhannon) — 400; Stony Creek — 30;

5 Forbes to Pitt, May 19, 1758. Alfred P. James, Writings of General John Forbes (Menasha, Wisc., 1938), 91. Hereinafter referred to as James.
7 Forbes to Bouquet, Oct. 21, 1758. James, 241; BP, 582.
8 Forbes to Pitt, Oct. 20, 1758. James, 237.
Forbes to Abercromby, Oct. 24, 1758. James, 244.
Military correspondence during December 1758 and in the early spring of 1759 document the troop dispositions and supply arrangements, and a planned build-up of forces for protection of Pittsburgh at the break-up of winter. Late in December 1758 Colonel Bouquet informed Colonel Mercer at Pittsburgh that 200 reinforcements were on the way and that General Forbes had ordered supplies sufficient to bring to 100,000 pounds the foodstocks to serve the two posts of Pittsburgh and Ligonier. This amount was deemed adequate to provision 800 men for four months. By late January 1759 the Pittsburgh garrison had been increased to 400.

An interesting sidelight to the supply picture is that while overall stocks generally were adequate during the 1758 Forbes campaign, occasionally there was an imbalance between meat and flour — the two principal items of diet — and substitutions or adjustments were required.

This was the exact situation immediately before and during the first few days of the final assault on Fort Duquesne. The decision to push on to Duquesne was reached late in the evening of November 12, after interrogation of captured prisoners from a French and Indian raid on Loyalhannon had revealed the weakness of the French fort at the head of the Ohio River. General orders of that day reduced the flour ration from one pound per man per day to one-half pound; to compensate, the meat allowance was increased from the customary one pound per man per day to one and one-half pounds.

9 Forbes to Amherst, Jan. 18, 1759, James, 282.
11 Forbes to Amherst, Jan. 26, 1759, James, 283; Mercer to Bouquet, Jan. 29, 1759. Papers of Colonel Henry Bouquet, B.M., Add Mss 21644, f.34.
12 “The General Chooses a Road,” WPHM, XLII, 392; Forts on the Pennsylvania Frontier, 134-5.
13 Washington-Forbes Orderly Book, George Washington Military Papers, Library of Congress, entry for Nov. 12, 1758: “As Gen. Forbes is Apprehensive that the Stock of flour at Loyall Hannon may fall short by each Soldier receive a pound a day it is his orders for the future each Soldier receive ½ pd flower & 1½ pd fresh Beef in Lieu of a pound of each pr day with a proportion of Salt.” In his earlier article (WPHM, XLII, 391) the author mistakenly transcribed the meat ration in the above General Order and concluded “to cast further gloom on the reluctant decision of halting at Loyalhannon for the winter, the supply situation was now so critical that half rations were ordered.” This was in error; as noted above the flour ration was reduced by half but the meat ration increased in like amount, and the imbalance soon was corrected.
The ration imbalance soon righted itself. On November 20 Forbes suggested (a polite term for ordered) that "the men ought to be putt again to their old Allowance," additional flour having arrived at Loyalhannon.14

This directive was carried out in General Orders published on November 21 at Washington's Camp where the bulk of the attack force had assembled approximately halfway to Fort Duquesne. The orders read: "All the Troops are to receive Provisions to the 24th inclusive at the rate of one pound of Flour & one pound of Meat to each Man, & those who have received but half a Pound of flour are to be compleated to that time with half a pound more." 15

II. LOGISTICAL PLAN FOR FINAL ASSAULT ON FORT DUQUESNE

General Forbes and the army rear reached Loyalhannon at the beginning of November 1758. The General knew and his now assembled troops knew that it was attack promptly or wait until next spring to conclude the capture of Fort Duquesne. Supply planning and troop planning had been keyed to a deadline of December 1, the latest possible date before foreboding winter would call a halt to a major military thrust.

The General's immediate action was to speed up preparations for the final assault. General Orders of early November echo his prodding to make ready for movement westward:16

On November 4 the troops were informed that but a short time remained to conclude the campaign and the General exhorted continued "Spirits & Zeal for the Honour of their King and Country."

On the 5th an inspection of arms was ordered and the requirement laid down of 80 rounds of fire per man.

On the 6th the unit commanders were authorized to cannibalize equipment of the sick being returned to Reas Town [or Raystown — Bedford] for cartridge boxes and the best of arms.

Orders of the 7th directed that the requirement of 80 cartridges per man be completed by the next day, 44 of which were to be packed in casks and clearly marked, and that all tools be put in repair.

Apparently alerted to the possibility of a raid by the French, orders of the 12th reinforced the grass guard [for horses and cattle] by 200 men and outlined troop dispositions in case of an alarm.

As far as the record appears, Forbes almost was alone in his insistence that the campaign be carried to a final conclusion in 1758 and even he was apprehensive. A Council of War was called for

14 Forbes [to Washington], Nov. 20, 1758. James, 259; BP, 603.
15 Washington-Forbes Orderly Book, Nov. 21, 1758; same, Shippen Orderly Book, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, for same date.
A Return of the Number of Persons who draw Provisions in BrigadeWashington's
Division Incapacitated Chesnutt Ridge November 16th 1788

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Officers Present</th>
<th>Rank &amp; File</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Officers Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th Virginia Regiment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Lt</td>
<td>Capt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capt. Fields's Company of Artificers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Lt</td>
<td>Capt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capt. Parry's Company of Foot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina Companies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Lt</td>
<td>Capt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capt. Huggan's Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draggers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Lt</td>
<td>Capt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Capt. Dist. 600 Drawd. Of Capt. Harrett. Envoys all Persons Indicating in the above.

Lumby County
Total 659
November 11 at which senior officers were asked to weigh alternatives and give the General their opinion "as to what would be the best course to pursue."

The officers advised holing up at Loyalhannon for the winter: "The risks being so obviously greater than the advantages, there is no doubt as to the sole course that prudence dictates." Objections to going forward were cited as scarcity of provisions and winter clothing, reduction of the army by half at the expiration of provincial enlistments, problems of winter re-supply at Fort Duquesne, and lack of knowledge of the enemy.17

Forbes probably reluctantly concurred for the time being, but with a mental reservation and a hope that the attack still might be mounted. He had not come this far to give up easily. As an experienced commander he knew that decision was his prerogative; a staff was for advice and to check thinking and to carry out orders.

An occurrence the next day, November 12, removed the objection of lack of knowledge of the enemy. As noted in the first section of this article, fortuitous capture of prisoners from a Fort Duquesne mounted raid on the oxen and horses at Loyalhannon resulted in the gaining of information of weakness of the French fort.

The course of events indicates that the decision to push on to Fort Duquesne was reached late in the day of November 12, after publication of the morning's General Orders and after the capture and interrogation of prisoners from the raiding party in the late afternoon.

It may be presumed that candles burned late that Sunday night at headquarters in the cold stockade fort at Loyalhannon, while the staff debated composition of the assault force, its order of march and matters of supply; as an immediate measure After Orders were published ordering out Colonel John Armstrong with a force of 960 rank and file at daybreak the next morning.18

The fact that on this same November 12 the flour ration for the troops was reduced by half and the meat ration increased by half19 provides a strong clue to identify a hitherto unidentified march plan

17 BP, 600-1. The report is dated as from “Pittsburgh,” this name first being applied to Loyalhannon when it appeared the campaign would terminate there for the winter.

18 After Orders, Nov. 12, 1758, Washington-Forbes Orderly Book. "A Detachment from the line consisting of 1 Colonel, 1 Lt. Colonel, 1 Major, 10 Captains, 30 Subs [subalterns], 40 Serjeants, 40 Corporals & 960 Private Men to March tomorrow morning at 8 o'clock." Colonel John Armstrong of the 1st Battalion of the Pennsylvania Regiment was named detachment commander.

19 See note 13.
in the Bouquet Papers as likely a working draft of the logistical plan for the final assault on Fort Duquesne and to date it likely as having been written in the evening hours of that day or in the early morning hours of the next day.20

The content of the plan gives its significance and dating: it could not have been written prior to the 12th since the incidents reflected in the plan did not occur until the 12th; nor could it have been formulated later than the early morning darkness hours of the 13th since it relates to activities ordered for the morning of the 13th.

The plan, printed below, computes flour and meat rations on the basis of the changed allowances that had been announced in General Orders earlier on the 12th; the reference to Colonel Armstrong’s detachment conforms with the After Orders concerning Armstrong’s assignment for the next day; and the total number of troops to be provisioned corresponds with troop strengths subsequently used.

The march plan follows, identified in the British Museum records as B.M., Add.Mss.21643,f.278, A.Df, and reprinted from the Bouquet Papers, II:

**Bouquet: Detail for a March**

Proportion of Artillery, Ammunition, Tools, Provisions, Rum, and forrage for a Detachment of 3000 Men including officers, &c or 2500 R.F.

- 4. Six Pounders..........................Horses 16
- 40 Rounds Each, Powder &c..... 1 Wagon
- 6 Cohorns & Amm: Buck Shott 2 d°
- 24 Barrills of Cartridges or the quantity in Powder & Balls 4 d°
- for 12 Spare Rounds p° Man
- 200 falling Axes & two
- Grind Stones ..................... 1
- Intrenching Tools .................... 1
- Rum & forrage ....................... 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A forge Cart</td>
<td>15 at 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draught H.</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20 History-minded Richard G. Naugle of Ligonier, Pa., first brought this intriguing likelihood to the author’s attention. When reprinted from the British Museum manuscript in the mimeographed Bouquet Papers the plan was given the date “[1758].” In the subsequent printing in the Bouquet Papers, II, 595-6, the date was refined to “[c. November 5, 1758].” It is here suggested that the more plausible date is Nov. 12, 1758.
CAMP AT LOYAL HANNON

The sketch map reproduced on the other side of this page bears the caption "Camp at Loyal Hannon — 1758" and is the earliest known plan of Fort Ligonier. It is from our Society's manuscript collection of James Burd papers. Along with other original documents, it was presented to the Society in 1934 by Mr. Edward S. Thompson of Thompsontown, Pa., a descendant of provincial Colonel James Burd who commanded the Second Battalion of the Pennsylvania Regiment in the Forbes campaign.

This sketch, while unidentified as to exact date, probably is Burd's letter book copy of a "draught" of the breastwork entrenchments promised Colonel Bouquet in a letter from Burd under date of September 6, 1758. BP, 478.

Colonel Burd's advance detachment of 1,500 regular and provincial troops arrived at Loyalhannon on Sunday, September 3, 1758. Not satisfied with the camp site suggested earlier by Engineer Charles Rhor, Burd ordered an immediate reconnaissance and located a more favorable site which subsequently became Fort Ligonier. Work on the breastwork started the next morning and neared completion on the 6th.

Suggestive of the accuracy of the September 6 date for the sketch is the fact that it locates only the entrenchments and does not designate supply storehouses which, even though temporary, would have been the next order of business once local security was assured.

Also evidentiary is the fact that the sketch does not indicate the outline of the inner fort, decision concerning which was not reached until late in the month. As an alternate to Loyalhannon, a post on the westerly side of Chestnut Ridge initially was favored and preliminary steps were taken to fortify such a post. The idea had been abandoned by September 11 because of difficulties of road construction through the Loyalhanna pass where the stream of that name cut through the mountain. Bouquet to Forbes, September 11, 1758, BP, 492. However, confusion surrounding Major James Grant's abortive excursion against Fort Duquesne resulted in further indecision and not until September 25 was construction of the inner fort at Loyalhannon ordered. Instructions to Burd, BP, 543, Engineer in charge was Captain Harry Gordon, the more experienced Rhor having been lost at Grant's defeat before Fort Duquesne on the 14th.

Work on the inner fort progressed rapidly and an impression of the ambitious nature of the structure may be gained from General Forbes' complaint to Colonel Bouquet on October 10, "I was told this day to my great surprize that Captain Gordon was building at Loyalhanna fit to stand a siege, you know we want nothing but a strong post So for Gods sake think of both time money and Labour and put a Stop to all superfluities." Forbes to Bouquet, James, 228; BP, 520.

It should be noted that the Burd sketch contains one caption, "The French Army's line of attack," which is inconsistent with a September 6 dating for the sketch. The only major attack of record did not occur until October 12. In the absence of other explanation, it is suggested that possibly Burd added the descriptive wording to his letter book sketch following the October 12 attack.
Flying Hospital ........................................ 6 Pack horses

3000 lbs. of flour ½ allowance for
five days to Col. Armst: detach:

15000 lbs. ½ allowance for
ten days for 3000 Men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9000 lbs. Meat for five days for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1200 Men at 1½ lbs. p' Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18000 lbs. d° for 10 days for d°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48600 lbs. d° for 18 days for 1800 Men:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75600 lbs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Endorsed in Bouquet’s handwriting] Detail for the march from Fort Ligonier

Aside from the identification and dating of the plan, the plan itself gives many interesting details of the final assault:

. Troops to be used total 2500 rank and file (privates) or 3000 in all.

. Rations for Armstrong’s detachment are computed for a strength of 1200 men.

. 106 draught horses would be needed to haul an artillery train of four six-pounders and six Cohorns (mortars), reserve ammunition for the foot soldiers, road building tools, forage for the horses and the rum ration. This wagon train, in turn, would force the cutting of a road through the forest and slow down the advance.

. 150 pack horses would be needed to carry reserve flour rations and six horses for the Flying Hospital (field hospital or aid station).

. 252 bullocks would be needed for reserve meat rations. The bullocks, of course, would accompany the troops and be butchered when needed. Each bullock would dress out to 300 pounds according to the computations. Estimating dressed weight as 50% of live weight, the cows were rather small animals by today’s standards.

. Pack horses would be expected to carry 120 pounds each. This contrasts with early logistical planning of 200 pounds at the beginning of the campaign.
III. THE FINAL ASSAULT ON FORT DUQUESNE

Despite oft-repeated estimates of almost double the number, we now may be reasonably certain that the final assault force for the capture of Fort Duquesne consisted of about 2500 "rank and file" or of 3000 including military overhead. This was about two-thirds of the total army strength at Loyalhannon in early November 1758, and confirms Colonel Bouquet's report that "We marched from Loyal Hannon with 2,500 picked men without [Tents] or Baggage and a light train of artillery." It also is consistent with the march order discussed in the preceding section of this article.

General Orders of November 14, undoubtedly confirming earlier verbal decisions and instructions, organized the final assault force into three brigades, each under the command of a senior colonel with temporary status of brigadier — a tasty morsel of rank for young George Washington (1st Virginia Regiment) and even for the professionals, Archibald Montgomery (Highlanders or 62nd Regiment) and Henry Bouquet (Royal Americans — 1st Bn. 60th Regiment).

Troop organization within the brigades was as follows:

First Brigade (Bouquet) — the three Pennsylvania Battalions and the Royal Americans
Second Brigade (Montgomery) — Highlanders and the 2nd Virginia Regiment
Third Brigade (Washington) — 1st Virginia Regiment, two companies of artificers, North Carolina companies, Maryland companies and Lower Counties (Delaware) companies

As recounted in many places, the final assault got under way on November 15, culminating in entry into the burned ruins of vacated Fort Duquesne ten days later.

Methodical and with accent on security was General Forbes' conduct of the final assault, just as it had been on the long march from

21 The figure of 4300 appears in an account in the Pennsylvania Gazette (Philadelphia), perpetuated for the unwary by being reprinted in Frontier Forts (George D. Albert, Ed., Report of the Commission to Locate the Sites of the Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania, 2 vols., Harrisburg, 1896, 1916), II, 269-270. Unfortunately the Gazette researcher stopped too soon: on Dec. 12, 1758, in summarizing many letters from the frontier, the Gazette reported "that the General marched 2500 picked men from Loyalhanning, without Tents or Baggage, and a light train of Artillery."
22 Bouquet to William Allen, Nov. 25, 1758, BP, 610.
23 Washington-Forbes Orderly Book, Nov. 14, 1758. The Orders also constituted a reserve of 600 — 200 Highlanders, 200 from the 2nd Va. Regiment and 200 Pennsylvanians, under the command of Colonel James Burd, of the 2nd Pennsylvania Battalion.
24 "The General Chooses a Road," WPHM, XLII, 393-395.
Carlisle to Loyalhannon. An earth reveted strong point, called the Three Redoubts, was constructed a few miles short of the halfway mark to Fort Duquesne. A few miles farther, surrounding hilltops were manned to guard Washington's Camp (also called New Camp) where the three brigades first joined forces. Earthworks again were thrown up at Bouquet's Camp, the final rendezvous a day's march from Fort Duquesne.

Prior to the assembly at Washington's Camp and as well on the march forward to Bouquet's Camp the various brigades, although coordinated in activity, operated independently. Leapfrog would be the word for progress forward.

While Washington's 3rd Brigade was cutting a road for the wagon train, elements of the 1st and 2nd Brigades were ahead, starting work on the Three Redoubts and serving as a covering force. Upon arrival at the Three Redoubts Washington took the lead to establish Washington's Camp. Here Bouquet joined up and with his 1st Brigade jumped ahead to fortify Bouquet's Camp. The 2nd Brigade followed, cutting the road; the 3rd Brigade brought up the rear with the army train.

With this background, we can dispel a common misconception that the troops advanced in a line to the front, with brigades abreast. It was only on the final day of the campaign, if even then, that the task force marched brigades abreast in panoply array.

Not until Bouquet's Camp on November 24, the day before the army entered Fort Duquesne in a body, was the march formation in question published as a General Order:25

> When the Army marches it is to be in three Divisions, the 1st Brigade on the Left, the 2d in the Center, & the 3d upon the Right.—

> Each Brigade to march in 4 or more Columns according to the Nature of the Ground, having 8 Light Horse belonging to each Brigade divided at the Head of their different Columns Besides 6 more upon each of the right & left Flanks of the 1st and 3d Brigades disposed as Flankers marching abreast.

It is doubtful if this terrain-difficult formation was used. On the 24th scouts reported the evacuation and destruction of Fort Duquesne. Forbes later reported to Generals Abercromby and Amherst that he had taken possession of Fort Duquesne with light troops that evening and with his little army the next day.26 All that was needed on the 25th was reconnaissance for affirmation of the enemy's withdrawal and for flank security. A line or column advance — it hardly would seem to

26 Forbes to Abercromby and Amherst, Nov. 26, 1758, James, 262.
A Return of His Majesty's Forces at New Camp, November 18, 1738

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Officers Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Americans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland Battalion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Virginia Regiment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th Virginia Regiment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina Companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland Companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Battalion Pennsylvania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Battalion Pennsylvania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Battalion Pennsylvania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Country Companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capt. Stewards troop of Light Horse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 2, 142, 127, 23, 24, 2, 9, 10, 3, 4, 7, 3, 2, 4

The difference between the return of Pennsylvania Companies and New Jersey.

[Signature]
We come now to the matter of troop strengths, bearing in mind that casualties, sickness, desertion, convoy guards and security detachments day by day reduced the matter of effective "rank and file." Like a cake of ice, the army shrank the farther it advanced.

Whatever troops originally might have been planned or hoped for, and whatever the number of provincial soldiers promised, actual troops at hand were considerably less. A gross estimate of the army's actual size comes from the pen of Major James Grant, second-in-command of the Highlanders and respected staff advisor to Forbes, unfortunately better known from his fiasco that named Grant's Hill and Avenue in Pittsburgh. On July 11 he wrote Bouquet:

15 men per Company of the Pensilvania Provincialls have been detached to guard the Frontiers. You may believe the best men have not been chose for that Service — but we shall still 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 Raestown. 27

This estimate of Grant's is in general harmony with an actual troop "return" from Raystown dated September 25. 28 For convenience in identifying the Brigade organization used on the final assault, the figures have been tabulated by the author to reflect that organization:

### Return of Troops — Raystown, September 25, 1758

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brigade</th>
<th>Troop</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Brigade</td>
<td>Royal Americans</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1st Penna. Bn.</td>
<td>755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd Penna. Bn.</td>
<td>666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3rd Penna. Bn.</td>
<td>771 (2555)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Detached on Frontier :</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Brigade</td>
<td>Highlanders</td>
<td>1267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Brigade</td>
<td>1st Va. Regt.</td>
<td>782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2 Cos. Artificers) 29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

27 Grant to Bouquet, July 11, 1758, BP, 185.
29 From the 2nd Va. Regiment, companies of Captains Posey and Fields.
More is known of Washington's Brigade on the final assault than of the other two brigades, thanks to Washington's even then meticulous insistence on records and his almost daily letter writing. The Washington Military Papers at the Library of Congress contain a number of returns: of Washington's own 1st Virginia Regiment, of the 3rd Brigade, and at some halts of attachments to the 3rd Brigade of other troops for rations.

Pertinent in these returns is the total strength of Washington's Brigade repeatedly listed as under 800 rank and file. Rank and file figures are cited, for this was the accepted measure of combat strength. Troop overhead would add 15 to 20% more mouths to feed. For example, while Washington reported 788 rank and file in his Brigade on November 21, his ration was for 929 as follows: 13 captains, 39 subalterns, 68 sergeants, 7 drummers, 788 rank and file, 10 staff and field officers and 4 servants.

Much also is known of the 1st Brigade from many returns extant in the Shippen Papers at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Major Joseph Shippen, Brigade Major (adjutant) of the Pennsylvania Regiment, was assigned like duties with Bouquet's 1st Brigade on the final march to Fort Duquesne.

A return for November 21 indicates 904 rank and file of the 1st Brigade as present, with 1062 rations required.

No returns have been found in respect to Montgomery's 2nd Brigade. However, assuming that Forbes organized his three brigades in approximately even strength, favoring somewhat trusted Henry Bouquet, we can estimate the strength of the 2nd Brigade as approximately equal to that of Washington's 3rd Brigade.

In round numbers rank and file totals of the three Brigades, organized as a task force for the final subjugation of Fort Duquesne, were probably as follows: 1st Brigade — 900; 2nd Brigade — 800; and 3rd Brigade — 800. This gives a total of 2500, corresponding with advance plans and with after action reports.

Also significant in the Shippen Papers is a return of troops left behind at Loyalhannon after the final march got under way. The return, dated Nov. 20, 1758, is as follows: Royal Americans —
New Light on the 1758 Forbes Campaign

59; Highlanders — 329; 1st Va. Regiment — 143; 2nd Va. Regiment — 120; North Carolina — 25; Maryland — 73; 1st Penna. Battalion — 173; 2nd Penna. Battalion — 109; 3rd Penna. Battalion — 101; Lower Counties — 53; a total of 1185. If to the 2500 rank and file in the assault force is added the approximately 1200 left behind at Loyalhannon, we arrive at a total of 3700 rank and file on duty at Loyalhannon in mid-November 1758. Expanding this figure by 20 per cent for overhead, the total force would be somewhat under 5000.

The difference in numbers between troops assigned to Raystown in late September (whether physically present or not) and those actively present at Loyalhannon in early November is understandable. Not all troops went forward since it was necessary to leave an adequate security detachment at the Raystown base, the location of major stores and the general hospital. Other troops guarded intermediate strong points. In the interval, too, there was attrition from natural causes (sickness, principally) and from the misfortunes of war. In addition to isolated casualties, the major French and Indian raid on Loyalhannon on October 12 and the annoyance raid on November 12 took their toll.

Many questions, of course, still remain unanswered concerning the Forbes campaign. But missing accounts and documents have a way of turning up and even closer examination of available records, as this article indicates, can add to the body of knowledge.

---


31 Forbes was interested in having only "effectives" at Loyalhannon in the final stages of the campaign. Reference is made in General Orders of both November 4 and 8 regarding the evacuation of the sick to Raystown. Washington-Forbes Orderly Book.