

THE WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

VOLUME 59

JANUARY 1976

NUMBER 1

FORT PITT AND THE REVOLUTION ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER

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Introduction

A memorandum written to the Executive Committee of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, in April 1974, by Joseph G. Smith, Director of the Society, is pertinent to our view of the American Revolution from the perspective of an eyewitness at the Forks of the Ohio.

We have often discussed the geographical area of interest of our Society with the result that generally we have defined our interest to cover western Pennsylvania and at least part of the territory drained by the Ohio River. I thought you would be interested to know that the Charter of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania granted to us by the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County defines our geographical area of interest as "western Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Northwest Territory and the states embodied therein."

By coincidence or by design, the scope of this charter embraces the wide orbit of influence of Fort Pitt and its commanders during the far-flung conflict of the war of the American Revolution. The territorial domain of Virginia extended over the vast fertile region styled the Northwest Territory after its cession by that state to the national government, in 1783, from which were formed the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. West Virginia and Kentucky then embodied Virginia counties.

The military authority of the commanders at Fort Pitt reached far down the Ohio River to Fort Henry at Wheeling and Fort

This is the first in a series of four articles on the Pittsburgh region and the Revolution written especially for the bicentennial by Edward G. Williams. Mr. Williams, who has written numerous articles in addition to his recent book, *Bouquet's March to the Ohio*, is an expert on colonial and Revolutionary military history.—Editor

Randolph at the Big Kanawha, also up the latter and the New River to the Lead Mines, very near the North Carolina border. Up the Allegheny River, in Pennsylvania, Forts Armstrong, Hand, and Crawford were dependencies of Fort Pitt. Various military expeditions emanating from Fort Pitt, or under the aegis of its commanders, thrust deeply into the Indian country, now Ohio, to build Fort Laurens on the Tuscarawas and to punish Coshocton on the Muskingum. Brodhead's expedition attacked and destroyed the Indian towns in western New York. Western Pennsylvania had a vital and primary concern in Colonel George Rogers Clark's conquests and forays on the Wabash and the far Mississippi, as well as in the proceedings, plots, plans, and savage attacks that proceeded from Detroit. It will appear that events and actions within the above described vast territory were of paramount importance to affairs at Fort Pitt. Conversely, it will appear that military activities within this vast terrain were under the control of, reported to, or consulted with the commandants at Fort Pitt as well by the authority of the governors of Virginia as by the orders of General Washington.

A broil of activity prevailed. Withal, the constant state of events at the citadel at the Forks can be described only as turmoil. The frustrations faced by commanders included desertions, defections, failure of recruiting, utter lack of food supplies — some outposts actually starving and destitute of clothing and medical supplies — insubordination, and dissensions among officers. They produced the result that no officer left the command of Fort Pitt with credit.

During the last two years of the prolonged struggle for independence and self-preservation of the erstwhile British subjects on the North American continent, Western Pennsylvania and the immediate area were to play a key role in the comprehensive, well-laid and cold-blooded strategic planning of the British high command, which gave the American commander in chief months of uneasiness, counter-planning, and counterspying. Parts of this story are intriguing. The scope of Sir Henry Clinton's master plan and time schedule and the diabolical means of subversion to accomplish his ends have never been presented in the light of their true significance. True, many of the facts have received notice in relation to their part in separated episodes; but never have we seen the plan unfolded as one gigantic sweep to encompass New England, including New Hampshire and Vermont, the Hudson, the Great Lakes to Presq' Isle, the French Creek and Allegheny River valleys to Pittsburgh, the Potomac valley and

Chesapeake Bay and environs, all in one gigantic sweep to separate the eastern states from the west and the south. How nearly the plan succeeded through another British general's folly and cupidity and Washington's alertness and generalship will appear. Fort Pitt was to have been a major anchor point in this plan, and due to Washington's successful spy system the British tight security was amazingly penetrated.

It is the purpose of this series of articles to bring the documentary evidence of this interesting story together. There is much support found for the old cliché that "truth is stranger than fiction." In order to do this, the documents and correspondence, or significant parts thereof, need to be printed in the text rather than to be relegated to footnotes or appendixes, as is usual. This will therefore take the form of a documentary essay.

Virtually all county histories and most of the state histories have, in their coverage of the Revolutionary period, recorded long narrations of Indian attacks and atrocities and have listed long rolls of local forefathers who went forth to fight on the fields of battle for freedom or to range the frontiers in defense of homes and firesides. The lists are now avidly culled by genealogists and the annals of Indian raids furnish dramatic story materials for the local press. The local press is rendering a good service in bolstering our pride in our community's heritage at this bicentennial time.

It will, however, be the purpose of this series of articles to provide a different viewpoint of those momentous events than has heretofore been presented, by pointing up the image of the link supplied by Western Pennsylvania in the great chain of action that brought about the birth of the nation.

Prelude to Revolution

To appreciate many of the events that took place in our designated area of interest during the rather ill-defined era of the American Revolution, one must understand some of the conditions that antedated the actual hostilities between the colonies and the mother country. The complicated situation that existed on the frontier of civilization around Fort Pitt, political and military, needs clarification. It involves the Pennsylvania-Virginia controversy concerning possession of the land west of Laurel Hill, especially that near Fort Pitt, claimed by both governments.

In the first place, the government of the colony was divided politi-

cally over matters of defense and taxation. The Pennsylvania assembly, dominated by pacifist Quakers, long resisted pressure to appropriate funds for militia to defend the frontiers from Indian attack.¹ The Quakers clung to the belief that the century-old treaty agreements concluded between William Penn and the Delaware Indians were yet valid evidence of the honesty of the proprietary government in purchasing land and that the ties of friendship still held.² In the meantime, hordes of land-hungry outlanders had pushed far past the purchase bounds and had seized fertile lands wherever they could be found. The assembly did not believe that the government was under obligation to defend these interlopers beyond the pale of the law and justice.³ Many of these were lately arrived immigrants who had not tarried long in the seaboard settlements, recently freed from political, religious, and military restraints in European countries, and all with voracious appetites for land.⁴

The Penns, proprietors of Pennsylvania by grant from the crown, although Quakers themselves, were at odds with the Quaker-dominated assembly over the issue of taxation of the proprietary lands at the same rate as that of citizens. When one considers that the proprietary manors surveyed and patented to the proprietors scattered through the various counties of the colony numbered seventy-six with a total area of more than 619,500 acres, with the inclusion of 6 percent for improvements and roads allowed in all surveys,⁵ a tremendous item for the Penns' estate, or for the colonial treasury, is represented. All money bills for the relief of the frontier defense or for raising a militia were either vetoed by the lieutenant governor or were made dependent upon favorable consideration of proprietary real estate assessments. That discriminating and astute historian, Thomas F. Gordon, has concisely recorded these controversies that at one time caused the assembly to petition Parliament to take back the province to be governed as a crown colony.⁶ (Within a present-day three-county area, there were five proprietary manors totaling 21,469 acres, including 6 percent allowances.)⁷

1 Thomas F. Gordon, *The History of Pennsylvania from its Discovery by Europeans to the Declaration of Independence in 1776* (Philadelphia, 1829), 314, 330, 338, 345, 384-85.

2 *Ibid.*, 256.

3 *Ibid.*, 338-39.

4 *Ibid.*, 259-61.

5 W. H. Egle, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives*, 3rd ser. (Harrisburg, 1897), 4: 1-3 (hereafter cited as *Pa. Archives*, with series and volume).

6 Gordon, *History of Pa.*, 345-46, 419-20, 422-23.

7 *Pa. Archives*, 3rd ser., 4: 1-3.

By comparison, the Penns' proprietary holdings were modest when we consider the following. The Virginia holdings of Lord Fairfax, the Northern Neck Grants to the family ancestor, Lord Culpeper, were estimated at the sale of the estate early in the nineteenth century to equal one-quarter of the state of Virginia (then including West Virginia), amounting to more than 5,733,000 acres.⁸ In New York colony, the van Rensselaer estates encompassed seven hundred square miles, or 448,000 acres, not to mention the other manors of the van Courtlandts, Livingstons, Phillipses,⁹ and others, not neglecting Sir William Johnson on the Mohawk. Johnson's deputy Indian agent at Pittsburgh, George Croghan, held Indian grants of indeterminate millions of acres on which he evaded paying taxes pending confirmation of the grants by the king's council or until it could be determined in which province the vast acreage lay.

Those were times when everybody with a few pounds and shillings more than his daily needs — or if he might borrow the capital — was obsessed with the preoccupation of land speculation. The measurement of a man's worth and status was the extent of his land possessions. None was immune from it; the Franklins, father and son, Patrick Henry, the provost and vice-provost of the College of Philadelphia (later the University of Pennsylvania), all were infected with the contagion. Washington's comparatively modest and prudent western land deals were nearly all military bounty grants for Virginia veterans, some of whom preferred money, and he accommodated them by buying as an investment. The obsession engendered by greed for land lasted longer than that of the Gold Rush in California; but be it remembered that there were many more gold rushes, seventeen states having enjoyed gold finds.

The Treaty of Paris in 1763 heaped upon the British government the control of vastly more territory than the colonial ministers had ever imagined. The challenge was to deal with a great variety of problems arising from the immediate necessity of governing and overseeing an empire of half a continent peopled by prosperous colonists on the seaboard and by numerous savage and warlike tribesmen inland, plus a sizable segment of conquered French colonists. The king and council dealt with all of these situations by the issuance of a proclama-

⁸ Samuel Kercheval, *History of the Valley of Virginia*, 4th ed. (Strasburg, Va., 1925), 148.

⁹ Wilbur C. Abbott, *New York in the American Revolution* (New York, 1929), 13-19.

tion on October 7, 1763,¹⁰ the provisions of which originated with the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations (commonly known as the Board of Trade). The roots of Western Pennsylvania's most serious land problems go back to that famous proclamation of October 7, 1763.

This remarkable document had perhaps a greater influence upon settlement and colonization in the British American provinces than any other legal entity of the period, unless it be the Treaty of Fort Stanwix. After sections relating to Quebec province, the Floridas, and provisions for land grants as rewards for officers and soldiers of the armies who had served through the campaigns of the French and Indian War, the king's proclamation asserts: "It is our Royal will and pleasure . . . that no Governor or Commander in chief of our other colonies or plantations in *America*, do presume for the present, and until our further pleasure be known, to grant warrants of survey, or pass any Patents for lands beyond the heads of sources of any of the rivers which fall into the Atlantic Ocean from the West or North West; or upon any lands whatever, which not having been ceded to or purchased by us, as aforesaid are reserved to the said Indians or any of them." All persons settled upon lands not ceded by or purchased from the Indians were warned to remove themselves immediately from the lands.¹¹

The proclamation further expressly declared that

we do strictly enjoin and require that no private person do presume to make any purchase from the said Indians of any lands . . . within those parts of our colonies where we have thought proper to allow settlement; but if at any time any of the said Indians should be inclined to dispose of the said Lands, the same shall be purchased only for us in our name at some public meeting or assembly of the said Indians, to be held for that purpose by the Governor or Commander in Chief of our colony respectively, within which they shall lie . . .¹²

This seemed very explicit; but that great Indian trader at Fort Pitt, Indian agent, and land speculator, George Croghan, had been granted by the Indians, in 1749, more than 200,000 acres of choice land near Fort Pitt — 100,000 acres on the south side of the Monongahela and southwest of the Ohio from a run opposite Turtle Creek (in modern Kennywood Park) down the river to Raccoon Creek (four miles below Beaver), up that creek ten miles, thence by a straight line to the run at Kennywood Park. Croghan also received 40,000 acres

¹⁰ William Kingsford, *The History of Canada*, 10 vols. (London, 1887-1898), 5: 142-45.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 144-45.

¹² *Ibid.*, 145.

between the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, starting at Twomile Run above the Point and extending to Plum Creek and Turtle Creek and nearly another 100,000 acres on both sides of the Youghiogheny River, above McKeesport. This Indian land title was confirmed to Croghan at the Treaty of Logstown in 1752.¹³

The Proclamation of 1763 further provided “. . . that the several nations or tribes of Indians with which we are connected, and who live under our protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such parts of our dominions and territories as, not having been ceded to us are reserved to them, or any of them, as their hunting grounds.”¹⁴ This, and other expressions of British protection over the Indians, asserted the policy of the government thenceforward toward the Indians. It also elicited comments to the effect that the proclamation sought to placate the Indians rather than to benefit the colonies.

The news of the Treaty of Paris (February 1763), ending the Seven Years War in America, had hardly arrived in America when, in April, May, and June, Pontiac's War let loose its torrent of bloodshed, fire, and terror upon the frontier forts and settlements. Thousands of settlers fled to the interior, across the Susquehanna, even to Lancaster. It was feared that the efforts of many years of pioneering and settlement had been lost. The heroic march of Colonel Henry Bouquet's little army to fight the two-day battle at Bushy Run and to relieve Fort Pitt, in August 1763, followed the next year by his march into the Muskingum valley of Ohio, effected a peace of a decade's duration. The officers of the latter expedition formed an association at Fort Bedford to petition the proprietors of Pennsylvania for 24,000 acres of land on the tributary waters of the West Branch of the Susquehanna, which, with the above mentioned considerations, was a factor in the projection of plans for the New Purchase of Indian lands.¹⁵ A new era in Indian-British relations had emerged; the Iroquois Confederacy and the Cherokees were now disposed to sell large tracts of land.

Then followed, in 1768, the Treaty of Fort Stanwix (Rome, New York) between the Six Nations (Iroquois Confederacy) Indians and the commissioners of the colonies of Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York, with Sir William Johnson presiding. Pennsylvania purchased a

13 George T. Fleming, *History of Pittsburgh and Environs*, 4 vols. (New York, 1922), 1: 566-67; Nicholas B. Wainwright, *George Croghan, Wilderness Diplomat* (Chapel Hill, 1939), 28, 49.

14 Kingsford, *History of Canada*, 5: 144.

15 Howard H. Peckham, *Pontiac and the Indian Uprising* (Princeton, 1947), 156-70; *Collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, 1: 94-106 (hereafter cited as *Pa. Hist. Soc. Colls.*).

strip of land of varying width extending diagonally from the northeast corner to the southwest corner of the present state.¹⁶ The Allegheny and Ohio rivers, however, bounded the purchased land on the north, and the north side of the rivers remained "Indian country" until 1794, after General Anthony Wayne's victory at Fallen Timbers and the subsequent Treaty of Greenville (1795). Surprisingly enough, the Indians sold and ceded to Virginia more land than the British government permitted that colony to accept. The boundary first agreed upon for lands lying on the southwest side of the Ohio River was at the Tennessee River, or Cherokee River as it was then known. The line was finally set at the Great Kanawha River, more than 600 miles farther east.¹⁷ The truth of the matter is that the Iroquois could not claim suzerainty over territory farther down than the Kanawha, and the Cherokee could claim influence no farther than the Kentucky River which lay between.

Yet another element of importance to certain great land speculators was the effect of a legal opinion rendered by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Camden, and by the eminent lawyer, Charles Yorke, who succeeded Camden as Chief Justice. This opinion had been issued at the behest of the king (supposedly George III), was copied by Colonel William Trent in England with Samuel Wharton in 1769, brought to America and for a time concealed from the knowledge of other land speculators. It purported to be a legal decision for the guidance of the king in his administration of the colonial affairs then before the council. It apparently did have the effect of law just as an opinion of an attorney general in the United States today may have the effect of law. The eminent historian and scholar, Clarence W. Alvord, printed the legal gem in *The Mississippi Valley in British Politics*:

In respect to such places, as have been or shall be acquired by treaty or grant from any of the Indian princes or governments, your Majesties letters patents are not necessary, the property of the soil vesting in your Majesties right of sovereignty over the settlements, as English settlements, and over the inhabitants as English subjects, who carry with them your Majesties laws wherever they

¹⁶ Thomas P. Abernethy, *Western Lands and the American Revolution* (1937; reprint ed. New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1959), 62-68.

¹⁷ This is one of the rare cases where the Indians were willing to sell more land than was actually the case. The Board of Trade disallowed the sale as an abuse of the "protectorate" which the Proclamation of 1763 declared the crown exercised over the Indians. Of course, we later learn that Lord Hillsborough had other than altruistic motives for the disallowance. The Great Kanawha was fixed as the boundary line by the Board of Trade, 387 miles farther east by a straight line, 841½ miles by the river. Beverly W. Bond, Jr., ed., *The Courses of the Ohio River Taken by T. Hutchins Anno 1766* (Cincinnati, 1942), 77; Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 34, 62, 63.

form colonies, and receive your Majesties protection, by virtue of your royal charters.¹⁸

Another profound scholar of the colonial and early Confederation period, Thomas P. Abernethy, writing twenty years later, discovered that the cause laid before the august judges occurred in 1759 (32 George II), when Camden, Sir Charles Pratt, was yet attorney general and concerned title to land ceded by an East Indian nabob. The opinion as rendered read:

In respect to such places, as have or shall be acquired by treaty or grant from the *Grand Mogul* or any of the *Indian* princes or governments, your Majesties letters patents are not necessary¹⁹

The words in italics Trent did not copy and he sought to apply the leverage of the prestigious legal principle to the case of the titles derived from American Indians — in effect taking for granted that a decision specifically affecting legal titles in British India in the far-flung empire should apply as well to all of England's colonies. The Library of Congress copy of Cyrus McCormick's publication of the controversial piece in his *The Illinois-Wabash Land Company's Manuscript*, for which Alvord wrote the introduction, did not contain the significant words of connotation found by Abernethy two decades later. Regardless, Croghan went on selling his land in large tracts in Western Pennsylvania, although the British crown authorities never confirmed his rights, nor did Virginia, nor Pennsylvania directly. Claimants to land in Western Pennsylvania under Croghan's titles were to cause Washington, among others, some most unpleasant experiences.

At the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 a tract of 1,800,000 acres, extending on the south side of the Ohio River from Fort Pitt into present West Virginia, was granted by the Indians as compensation to the "Suffering Traders" of 1763 (Pontiac's War) for their losses in confiscated furs and merchandise.²⁰ It was called the Indiana grant, obviously conflicted with Croghan's grant mentioned above, and overlapped the old claim of the Ohio Company of Virginia.²¹ Samuel Wharton, partner in the Philadelphia trading firm of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, and Colonel William Trent, were sent to England in 1769 as emissaries (lobbyists) to promote approval of the Board of Trade and the council preliminary to the royal assent.

18 Clarence W. Alvord, *The Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, 2 vols. (New York, 1916), 2: 200-201.

19 Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 116, 144.

20 Max Savelle, *George Morgan: Colony Builder* (New York, 1932), 79, 80.

21 Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 38.

Wharton was a very shrewd and resourceful dealer and politician. He soon found that, in order to gain the support of the great politicians, it was necessary to offer large acreage as bribes, which obviously reduced the shares of members. He contrived a scheme whereby a new and much larger company was formed, in which the Indiana Company was merged. The Grand Ohio Company (or the Walpole Company), as it was called, purchased 2,400,000 acres at low rates. There was plenty of land for the advocates at court.²² Alvord has given us a view of the atmosphere in London at that time and of the manner in which things were done. Quoting William Strahan, member of Parliament and king's printer, who approached Lord Hertford, confidant of the king, we read that he was "very fond of the idea of a large tract of country in America, and otherwise very attentive to the improvement of his fortune." The Board of Trade (Lords of Trade and Plantations) having recommended favorable action to the king and council, and the Lords of the Treasury having agreed to the financial terms of the purchase, the whole arrangement was ready for the king's signature.²³

Before the final arrangements, however, there had been a reorganization and 20,000,000 acres were granted, from which a new colony was to be formed, called Vandalia. The Indiana claim of the Suffering Traders was absorbed into the larger framework with due consideration of its stipulated grant, and the old Ohio Company of Virginia (which George Washington and Christopher Gist had served as surveyors and scouts) was also incorporated into the Grand Ohio Company with issuance of compensating shares. In addition, the 200,000 acres promised by Virginia to the soldiers of Washington's regiment, in 1754, were included.²⁴ Of course, this new colony would have interposed a barrier between Virginia and its western lands — soon to be Kentucky County — not to mention the loss of most of present West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. Vigorous legal actions took place on both sides of the Atlantic to block the establishment of the new colony. The king gave his approval on August 14, 1772.²⁵

In 1770, the attitude of Lord Hillsborough, then president of the Board of Trade, changed toward that of allowing settlement on a limited scale in the upper Ohio valley. This has been hard for historians to understand in the light of Hillsborough's steadfastness toward holding

²² *Ibid.*, 44-45.

²³ *Ibid.*, 46; Alvord, *British Politics*, 2: 128, 103-104.

²⁴ Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 48-49.

²⁵ William M. Darlington, *Christopher Gist's Journals* (Pittsburgh, 1893), 242-43.

the Indian boundary line at the heads of the rivers flowing into the Atlantic, also his later position in opposing the establishment of the colony of Vandalia.²⁶ Some have been content to term the change inconsistency. Franklin called him deceitful.²⁷ Hillsborough himself claimed that he appeared to favor the plan, at first, in expectation that the treasury or the king might block the project.²⁸

Strenuous objections to the project were raised by Virginia, and George Washington was prompt to address the governor, Lord Botetourt, in persuasive language. On October 5, 1770, Washington wrote from Mount Vernon:

I shall take the liberty (being tolerably well acquainted with the frontiers of this dominion) to inform your Lordship, that the bounds of that grant, if obtained upon the extensive Plan prayed for, will comprehend at least four fifths of the Land for which the Colony hath lately voted £2500 Sterling, for the purchase and survey of; . . . Lands, the securing of which hath cost this Country much Blood and treasure, . . . a person, who considers himself in some degree the Representative of the Officers and Soldiers who claim a right to 200,000 Acres of this very Land (petitioned for by Mr. Walpole and others) under a solemn Act of Government, adopted at a very alarming and important crisis to his Majesty's Affairs in America . . . these Troops not only enlisted agreeable to the terms stipulated, but behaved so much to the Satisfaction of the Country as to obtain the honour of its public thanks. Would it not be hard, My Lord, to deprive Men under these Circumstances (or their Successors) of the just reward of their Toils? . . . We flatter ourselves that in this point of view your Excellency will also consider it, and by your kind Interposition, and favourable Representation of our case, his Majesty will be graciously pleased to confirm the 200,000 Acres of Land to us agreeable to the Terms of the Proclamation.²⁹

Washington's plea was successful and the soldiers' grants were included.

Opposition to western expansion appeared in many quarters. General Thomas Gage was antiexpansionist in sentiment from consideration of peacekeeping with the Indians. It is suspected that he had also reasons of keeping the colonies under tighter controls and dependent upon the mother country for manufactured products.³⁰ His letter to Hillsborough of November 10, 1770, in the Gage Papers in the William L. Clements Library³¹ had great influence upon Hillsborough's change of mind regarding western settlement. In the mean-

26 Alvord, *British Politics*, 2: 123, 130n.

27 *Ibid.*, 123-24, 125.

28 *Ibid.*, 161-62.

29 John C. Fitzpatrick, *The Writings of George Washington*, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1931-44), 3: 26-28.

30 Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 55; John R. Alden, *General Gage in America* (Baton Rouge, 1948), 147, 148, 149.

31 Gage's retained copy of his long letter to Hillsborough is in the Gage Papers under date of November 10, 1770.

time, Hillsborough ordered Governor Botetourt to issue no new grants of western lands.³²

Unexplainable delays occurred; the Privy Council referred the petition to the Board of Trade for study and report, which was delivered in 1772. Lord Hillsborough wrote the report wherein he expounded some theories which reverberated through time to be amplified and broadcast to the world by the instrumentality of the Declaration of American Independence. These ideas have been denominated "the doctrines of the colonial system." Some excerpts will illustrate: "Confining the Western extent of settlements to such a distance from the seacoast as that those settlements should be within the reach of the trade and commerce of the Kingdom, upon which the strength and riches of it depend . . . authority . . . necessary for the preservation of the colonies in subordination to, and dependence upon, the Mother Country . . . to extend the commerce, navigation, and manufactures of England." Inland colonies would manufacture their own needs or would tend to trade to the westward; therefore the report recommended a return strictly to the line laid down in the Proclamation of October 7, 1763. Historian B. A. Hinsdale has remarked that this pronouncement would have restricted the colonies effectively to the French-imposed boundary before the French and Indian War. He further observed that the foregoing was "proof of the incapacity of the British mind, at that time, to understand American questions." Continuing, he noted: "It would be hard to say whether this report won for its author wider fame by reason of its odious application of the doctrines of the colonial system to the question of Western settlements, or by reason of the crushing reply it called out from Dr. Franklin."³³

Long ascribed to Franklin, the masterful reply to Hillsborough was delivered by Samuel Wharton and composed by him also. Hillsborough resigned. The main thrust of Hillsborough's argument seems to have been related to a fear of England's being depopulated by further westward settlement in the American colonies. The council was not convinced of this threat.³⁴ The king gave his approval on August 22, 1772, ordering a draft to be prepared of the surveys and patents for final approval and to receive the great seal. During the next

32 Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 49.

33 B. A. Hinsdale, "The Western Land Policy of the British Government from 1763 to 1775," *Ohio Archeological and Historical Quarterly* 1 (December 1887): 216-17 (hereafter cited as *OAHQ*).

34 Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 50; Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin* (New York, 1938), 397-98.

two or three years the government was totally preoccupied with the resistance of all of the American colonies to the various taxes, the non-acceptance of tea, the Boston Port Bill, and the outbreak of general violence in America. It was not till the spring of 1775 that the draft was finally submitted and executed to the trustees (commissioners) of Vandalia, Thomas Walpole, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Wharton, and John Sargent.³⁵

The foregoing narrative is drawn from the viewpoints of many different sources in an effort to present a perspective upon the times. It hopes to portray the giant wheels of empire turning ponderously, impelled by greed for land and fortune, lubricated by honorariums then considered the perquisites of high office. That was the way the nobility survived, and the gentry were just beginning permissibly to participate. If all this is confusing, please be assured that the foregoing presents only a surface-skimming resumé of fabulous dealings and machinations afoot in the high places at court in London, far beyond the understanding of the ordinary American settler seeking to buy only enough land to support his family. Of course, there were speculators, but they were small by comparison with the great politicians, who in fact controlled the mechanism of how the buyer might buy, where he bought, how much he paid, or even whether he might buy at all. Fickle lords at court controlled these operations; also they sought to exert a paternal protection over the Indians.

Furthermore, there were many more land companies with involved affairs like the single one we have exemplified. Besides the Grand Ohio Company, which swallowed up the Ohio Company of Virginia and the Indiana Company, there were the Illinois Company, the Wabash Land Company, The Loyal Company, the Mississippi Land Company, the Louisa Company, and the Transylvania Company, to mention a few. Some, like Benjamin and William Franklin, Patrick Henry, Samuel Wharton, and George Morgan, were interested in several companies. The Franklins were deeply involved in schemes with private dealers, as was George Croghan.³⁶ Benjamin even corresponded with his son, Governor William Franklin, after hostilities had far advanced, about private business of the Vandalia Company long after they had broken over political matters,³⁷ William remaining a staunch

³⁵ Darlington, *Gist*, 242-43.

³⁶ Benjamin Franklin became interested in western lands mainly through the dealings of his son William and by attempting to help friends. See Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 16-38.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 143.

loyalist. Of course, all of the land company business came to a stop with the continuation of the war; at first there was a tendency toward an attitude that the war would soon be over and the business would be picked up where it had been interrupted. The states, however, took over land affairs, and Congress finally received cessions of western lands from the states.

In Western Pennsylvania, in America, events had been progressing. In 1771, the Pennsylvania government had divided Cumberland County at the top of Ray's Hill to establish Bedford County, and on February 26, 1773, Westmoreland County was formed to include all of the land from the crest of Laurel Hill to the western extent of the province.³⁸ Settlers were moving in and obtaining warrants for surveys at a fast rate — especially near the line of the Forbes Road. At this juncture, Virginia cast a jealous eye over the developments at the Forks of the Ohio. That colony had expended much money and blood in establishing a foothold on this very valuable piece of real estate, considered both militarily and economically. Virginia subjects had settled thickly in the area now Fayette, Greene, and southern Allegheny counties. They remembered that the Pennsylvania assembly had once refused to defend it or even to recognize it as within its grant.³⁹ General Gage had, upon orders in 1772, evacuated the British troops from Fort Pitt.⁴⁰ By late 1773 and early 1774, the Virginia settlers were petitioning that colonial assembly for protection against anticipated Indian raids. Pennsylvania had no militia.

It is true that Pennsylvania had invited competition for control of the land west of the Laurel Hill, when first the Indians at Logstown, in 1751, requested Croghan to have the Pennsylvania government build a fort at the junction of the rivers. This Croghan dutifully reported to Lieutenant Governor Hamilton, but the assemblymen pleaded religious scruples, disbelief of the request, or that there was no point in defending territory beyond the boundary of their charter.⁴¹ The request was made of the Virginians at the Logstown Treaty in 1752, and they indeed did build a fort, however ineffectually, too small and too late,

³⁸ *Pa. Archives*, 3rd ser., 24: iv, vi, Bedford County formed, iv., Westmoreland, vi.

³⁹ Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 10, 14, 15; Gordon, *History of Pa.*, 281-84.

⁴⁰ Alden, *Gage*, 144.

⁴¹ Croghan's letter to Gov. Hamilton of Pennsylvania is in R. G. Thwaites, *Early Western Travels* (Cleveland, 1904), 1: 51-56; Croghan's Journal at Logstown, May 18-27, 1751, in *ibid.*, 58-69; also in *Pennsylvania Colonial Records*, 16 vols. (Harrisburg, 1838-53), 5: 496-98, 530-36 (hereafter cited as *Pa. Col. Rec.*).

for the French took it before completion and incorporated the structure into their own Fort Duquesne.

This point was dramatically driven home in a letter to Captain Arthur St. Clair, at Hannas Town, by the redoubtable and picturesque deputy Indian agent for the crown, trader, and politician, George Croghan. His instinctive sense of the essential elements of a situation, fearlessness in vigorous action, his flamboyance in colorful speech far overreached his formal education. His phonetic spelling betokens his lusty Irish brogue; the letter speaks: "I tould him that my Leters from England Did menshon that the Western bounds of Pensylvania Could Nott Come any Distance on this Side ye Hills, . . . Every one will agree, any Law is beter than No Law, Butt when Laws are administered with two much Severity wh have been two often Don fer three years past, it becomes oppressife and unjust . . . pray why did Not the proprietors prevent all those Disputes, by ascertaing thire bounds, I will Submitt itt to yr Self how farr itt is Consistant with the prinseples of Justice, forr thire agents to open an ofese to dispose of Lands so Curcomstanced as to admitt of Dispute, without proscribing themselves any Limites, when they must well Remember that itt's Nott a Great Number of Years Sence the aSembly Refused to build a Trading house or fort heer [Pittsburgh], aLedging itt to be out of Mr. Penn's Grant, & after that ye Same aSembly Refused Granting mony for the King's use, to aSist in the Reduction of Fort Du quasne, & I Dont Know that Ever Mr. Penn Tuck any meshures Sence that Time to ascertain his bounds, or make itt Known to the publick, . . ." ⁴²

As early as September 1771, Arthur St. Clair had written to Colonel Joseph Shippen, secretary of the colony of Pennsylvania, that "A rediculous story that Mr. [Michael] Cressap has spread . . . that this Province did not extend beyond the Alleghany Mountain, but that all to the westward of it was King's Land, has taken great hold of the people, and together with Mr. Croghan's claims and surveys has put numbers in a very doubtful situation, and will probably make it very difficult to carry the laws into execution." ⁴³ It seems evident that the Penn proprietors did not publicize the fact that they had employed the most skilled mathematicians and astronomers in America — equal to the famed Englishmen, Mason and Dixon — Dr. William Smith and Professor David Rittenhouse of the College of Philadelphia (the Uni-

⁴² William H. Smith, ed., *The St. Clair Papers*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati, 1882), 1: 262.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1: 260, Sept. 24, 1771.

versity of Pennsylvania), to locate the western line of the province and particularly its relation to Fort Pitt. The line was shown to lie six miles west of the Point of the rivers. The story of the survey of the western line of the, then, state in 1785, twenty-one miles to the westward, belongs to the history of the early federal period.

About the beginning of 1774, appeared upon the scene at Pittsburgh Dr. John Connolly, not a stranger there, since we know that George Washington met him at Samuel Semple's tavern in 1770⁴⁴ and that Connolly had married Semple's sister, Susannah. Connolly had felt that the Pennsylvania government was overextended in presuming to survey for itself manors west of the mountains and especially to grant lands within the forks of the river. He went to Williamsburg, Virginia, where he ingratiated himself with Lord Dunmore, the lieutenant governor of that province. He was given a militia captain's commission and later a justice's commission from Augusta County,⁴⁵ seated at Staunton. Thus equipped, he returned to Pittsburgh, where he proceeded to assume all of the functions of dictatorial government by force, in the name of Virginia.

The first inkling which the Pennsylvania authorities had of these events and acts at Pittsburgh was the appearance of one of the recruiting posters, advertising enlistment in the Virginia militia, received by Captain St. Clair at Hannas Town. On January 24, 1774, St. Clair had Connolly placed under arrest and taken to Hannas Town. The report of the latter to Governor Penn tells the story.

ARTHUR ST. CLAIR TO GOVERNOR PENN

Ligonier, February 2, 1774.

I am honored with your letter of the 20th January, which reached me the 28th, and am happy to find the method pursued at Pittsburgh, on the 25th, did not very materially differ from that you had been pleased to direct.

Doctor *Conolly* was arrested previous to the meeting, by my orders, on his avowing himself the author of the advertisement requiring the people to meet as a militia, and committed on refusing to find sureties for his good behaviour till next court.

⁴⁴ John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Diaries of George Washington, 1748-1799*, 4 vols. (Boston, 1925), 447; Susannah Semple, see Charles A. Hanna, *The Wilderness Trail*, 2 vols. (New York, 1911), 2: 84; Wainwright, *Croghan*, 287.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 287; John Connolly, "A Narrative of the Transactions, Imprisonment, Sufferings, of John Connelly, an American Loyalist," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 12: 312-13 (hereafter cited as *PMHB*).

I was in hopes the sending him out of the way would have put an end to it altogether ; but I was mistaken. About eighty persons in arms assembled themselves, chiefly from Mr. *Croghan's* neighbourhood, and the country west of and below the *Monongahela*, and after parading through the town and making a kind of *feu de joy*, proceeded to the Fort where a cask of rum was produced on the parade, and the head knocked out. This was a very effectual way of recruiting.

As a scene of drunkenness and confusion was likely to ensue, I got the Magistrates (who attended in consequence of the letters I had sent them) together, and read the enclosed paper, which we had concocted that morning, and at the conclusion, when they were required to disperse, they replied they had been invited there, but came with peaceable intentions, and would go home again without molesting any one ; on which we left them ; however, towards night, their peaceable disposition forsook them, and I should probably have felt their resentment had I not got intimation of their design. I thought it most prudent to keep out of their way.

I have no doubt but the Magistrates will do their duty with spirit, and I shall take the earliest opportunity to make them acquainted with the support your Honor is determined to afford them. In some parts of the country they will have a difficult task, and I am really affraid this affair will be productive of a great deal of confusion. I shall not fail to give them the necessary cautions with regard to the Riot Act, and I think I can judge pretty nearly how far it may be safely extended.

Mr. *Conolly* has most certainly a commission from Lord *Dunmore*, expressly for *Pittsburg* and its dependencies, and his subalterns are *John Stephenson*, a brother of Mr. *Crawford*, our senior magistrate, *William Harrison*, a son-in-law of his, and *Dorsey Penticost*, who was lately in the commission of the peace here. Mr. *Penticost* has, I hear, been down to Mr. *Conolly* since his confinement, and taken the necessary oaths to qualify him for his military office, and is to assemble the people at *Red Stone* and take possession of *Fort Burd*. I have wrote to the Justices in that part of the country to watch his motions. Mr. *McKee* is said to be appointed a Justice by Lord *Dunmore*, but I would fain hope without his consent ; at any rate he behaved very well on the late occasion, and as he was doubted, I made a point of having him there under pretence of his being *Indian* Agent, but in fact, if he was a friend or abettor of *Conolly's* measures.

It is, sir, extremely grateful to me that my conduct in any part meets with your approbation ; but should I forget to be attentive to

any thing that may disturb the happiness of your Government, or from which you may receive a personal injury, I should be guilty of the grossest breach of duty, as well as the blackest ingratitude, neither of which I trust will ever be the case.

I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

AR. ST. CLAIR.

The Honorable *John Penn*, Esq.

Paper enclosed in *Arthur St. Clair's* Letter to the Governor, of
February 2, 1774.

As friends and fellow countrymen, which we ought all to consider each other, from whatever different quarters of the globe we have met here, suffer that we make you acquainted with some things of which you ought not to be ignorant.

We do not blame you for having an affection for the laws of the countries and provinces in which you have been born; 'tis a praiseworthy affection! And it requires a length of time and diligent application to discover and give the deserved preference to different systems of laws and forms of Government, for which but few have either leisure or opportunity.

We do not tell you the plan of *Pennsylvania* is a perfect one. Such no human institution is or ever was; but the rapid progress *Pennsylvania* has made, the numbers of people that flock to it from every part of the world, and particularly the much greater value of landed property than in the adjoining parts of the neighbouring countries, evince that it is no very defective one; evince that its laws are mild and salutary, and that property and liberty, civil and religious, is well secured, and that it has some advantages over its neighbours.

We doubt not but you will readily acknowledge these matters; but you will reply, it is nothing to us; the soil we live on being no part of *Pennsylvania*; we can have no part of the advantages or disadvantages arising from its constitution.

We well know much pains have been taken to persuade many of you to a belief of this, and likewise that the Proprietaries have industriously delayed to settle their boundary. There is not the least foundation for either.

The Proprietaries of *Pennsylvania* claimed the country about *Pittsburg*, and the settlers quietly acquiesced in that claim; and as soon

as doubts began to arise about it they took effectual pains to satisfy themselves whether or not they were right in that claim, and actually found the country a considerable distance west of that place within their Province: And so far are they from delaying the running their boundary line, we have the best authority for saying that a petition has been a considerable time before his Majesty for that very purpose. You must be sensible it would be to little purpose to run it without the concurrence of the Crown; certainly it would never be conclusive.

The jurisdiction of *Pennsylvania* has been regularly extended to *Pittsburg*, and exercised there for a number of years, as the records of *Cumberland*, *Bedford*, and *Westmoreland* counties testify; and you yourselves have acknowledged it, by applying for your lands in that Province. Whether that extension has been legally made or not, can be determined by the Crown alone; but must be submitted to till it is determined. And it must be evident to you that *Lord Dunmore*, as Governor of *Virginia*, can have no more right to determine this matter than one of us, for this plain reason: the charters of *Pennsylvania* and *Virginia* both flowed originally from the Crown; on that footing they are perfectly independent of each other; but they are both parties in this dispute, and consequently neither can be judge.

We would fondly hope no person in this country would wish to be from under the protection of law. A state of anarchy and confusion, and total subversion of property must inevitably ensue. We cannot help thinking contending jurisdictions in one and the same country must produce similar effects, and every attempt to introduce modes or regulations not warranted by the laws or constitution of *Pennsylvania* will also do so in a certain degree.

Any grievances the inhabitants of this part of the country suffer there is no doubt the Legislature want only to be informed of to redress. Should it be imagined the protection of a military force is necessary, the votes and proceedings of the last winter session of Assembly will shew that, probably, it was owing to the representations of the *Indian* Agent, that an *Indian* war would certainly follow, establishing a military force at *Pittsburg*, that such protection was not then granted, and time seems to have shewn he was not in the wrong.

If that effect would have supervened at a time when his Majesty's troops were just withdrawn, when the country was naked, defenceless, and alarmed, and when the *Indians* were accustomed to the idea of troops in their neighbourhood, much more is it to be doubted the establishing a militia, which is a military force, will produce that effect

now when they have been so long disused to it.

As his Majesty's Justices and Protectors of the public peace of *Pennsylvania*, it is our duty to tell you your meeting is an unlawful one, and that it tends to disquiet the minds of his Majesty's liege subjects. We do in his Majesty's name require you to disperse, and retire yourselves peaceably to your respective habitations.

Present when this was read.

ALEXAN[D]ER MCKEE,
WILLIAM LOCHRY,
JAMES POLLOCK,
JAMES CAVET,

AENEAS MACKAY,
VAN SWEARINGEN,
WILLIAM BRACHEN,
ARTHUR ST. CLAIR.⁴⁶

The foregoing paper appended to, or enclosed with, the letter by St. Clair was probably a flyer or handbill intended to be handed out to the Virginia people in particular. It is enlightening regarding the foregoing transactions. It points out that the Pennsylvania government had had a petition lying before the Board of Trade and the king's Privy Council in England for several years, praying for an official survey and adjustment of the boundary line between the two provinces. Neville Craig's *The Olden Time* (now rare) has traced in detail the original charter provisions and the several suggested methods of simplification and solution of the problem. The present purpose is only to convey some idea of the state of confusion that existed in men's minds, at that time, regarding their property rights, taxes, and quit-rents, and to whom owed.

In summary, Connolly was released from custody at Hannas Town, promising to return when required by the court. He did, indeed, return when the court convened — with about 150 of his militia with drawn swords and firelocks at the ready, and took possession of the courthouse. When the Westmoreland justices who lived in Pittsburgh returned home, they were arrested by Connolly and sent to Augusta

⁴⁶ Peter Force, *American Archives*, 2 series, 9 vols. (Washington, D. C., 1837), ser. 4, 1: 266-68 (hereafter cited as Force, *Amer. Arch.*, with series and volume number); printed in Smith, *St. Clair Papers*, 279-83. The documents reprinted herewith are from the *American Archives*, part of the great collection in the Library of Congress gathered by Peter Force in the early nineteenth century. Congress appropriated funds to print only the fourth and fifth series of six planned, or nine volumes including the king's message to Parliament, March 7, 1774, to the end of 1776, published 1837-1853. Neville B. Craig, *The Olden Time*, reprinted some of these, without complete accuracy or credit to the source.

Courthouse (Staunton), in Virginia. One of them, Aeneas Mackay, whom we shall meet later, obtained permission to go to Williamsburg to interview Governor Dunmore. The governor, thereupon, ordered the justices released. Arrests, beatings, and brutality continued with unrestrained arrogance on the part of Connolly. Twice an armed posse from Pittsburgh broke open the Hannas Town jail, smashing the doors with sledgehammers, holding Pennsylvania officials at gunpoint. The jail seems to have been moved elsewhere from Hanna's house. A pertinent letter from St. Clair to Joseph Shippen, secretary of the colony, serves to explain the situation at Hannas Town.

ARTHUR ST. CLAIR TO JOSEPH SHIPPEN

Ligonier, January 15, 1774.

SIR: This will be delivered by Mr. Hanna, one of the trustees for Westmoreland county. To some management of his, I believe, the opposition to fixing the county town at Pittsburg is chiefly owing — it is his interest it should continue where the law has fixed the courts, *pro tempore*; he lives there; used to keep a public house there; and has now, on that expectation, rented his house at an extravagant price. Erwen, another trustee, adjoins, and is also a public house keeper. A third trustee lives in the neighborhood, which always make a majority for continuing the courts at the present place. A passage in the law for erecting the county is, that the courts shall be held in the foregoing place, (the house of Robert Hanna) till a court house and jail are built; this puts it in their power to continue them as long as they please — for a little management might prevent a court house and jail being built this twenty years. This is an explanation of a petition to the House, which was sent down lately . . . Mr. Hanna holding his horse whilst I write. I will see you early in the spring. And am, sir, your most humble and most obedient servant,

AR. ST. CLAIR.

Joseph Shippen, Jun., Esq.⁴⁷

At the outset of Westmoreland County organization, Aeneas Mackay, one of the new magistrates appointed for the Pittsburgh end of the jurisdiction, expressed an opinion to St. Clair on March 3, 1773,

⁴⁷ Force, *Amer. Arch.*, ser. 4, 1: 266; reprinted in Neville Craig, *The Olden Time* (Pittsburgh, 1846), 1: 471.

thus: "I can not but express my surprise at the point determined in favor of the courts of law first sitting at Hanna's Certainly the people must sit at the roots of trees and stumps . . ." Hanna had rented his house but apparently still owned it. Whether or not the original log house had one or two stories, Mackay was at least right that the people that always gathered for court days in early times could not have crowded into the justices' hearing room.

A representative letter, one of hundreds of such documents emblematic of the times, states the desperate condition of the Westmoreland settlement and the consequences of the pacific attitude of the Penns' government. The following letter, although written early in 1775, demonstrates the long continuance of the conflict.

ROBERT HANNA TO GOVERNOR PENN

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOR: On Tuesday, the 7th inst. came a number of armed men to this town, who demanded entrance in the jail of this county. On the Jailer refusing to admit them, they in a violent manner broke said jail with a sledge, which they took out of the smithshop without leave. One William M'Geery came to me about daybreak to inform me of the affair, on which I as soon as possible went to the jail, and demanded of them what they were about. Benjamin Harrison (one of the company) answered, "what they had done, they did by the authority from Virginia." They had before this broke the jail doors, and released the prisoners. I then commanded silence, and read the riot act, and immediately the sheriff of this county came up, and demanded by what authority they broke the jail. They said they had authority, which they could show if they pleased. The sheriff replied, a civil question demanded a civil answer. Then they produced a paper which they read as their order from William Crawford, Esquire, President of our Court, which will further appear from the sheriff's deposition, (and I believe the sheriff does every thing in his power in the execution of his office.) After reading the riot act, they remained together upwards of one hour. They took three prisoners with them, and what they were committed for, your Honor will know by the inclosed depositions. One Samuel Wilson presented his gun at me at the same time, which I caught hold of to prevent his shooting me; he also used very bad language. There will, it is thought, (unless your Honor does something respecting this affair,) be soon few Pennsylvanians here, as the chief of the people are taking out orders from Virginia. They are in so confused a situation, that they seem not to

know what they are about. I have it from good authority, that David Vance, one of the above company, damned the Pennsylvania magistrates, and also their authority. I am your Honor's most humble servant,

ROBERT HANNA.

To the Honorable John Penn, Esquire, Governor-in-Chief of the province of Pennsylvania, &c.

February 8, 1775.⁴⁸

During all this skirmishing there were proclamations hurled back and forth with all of the deliberate effectiveness of the skilled artilleryman, calculating his trajectory and fusing the bomb of a well-laid siege gun. Each sought to enfilade the other's defensive position, and the confused settlers were caught in the cross fire. All this bombast only imparted the sanction of authority to the oft-repeated insults, beatings, and violence. Two examples are representative.

By his Excellency John, Earl of Dunmore, Lieutenant and Governor General in and over his Majesty's Colony and Dominion of Virginia, and Vice Admiral of the same:

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas, the rapid settlement made on the west side of the Alleghany Mountains, by his Majesty's subjects, within the course of these few years, has become an object of real concern to his Majesty's interest in this quarter. And whereas, the province of Pennsylvania have unduly laid claim to a very valuable and extensive quantity of his Majesty's territory; and the Executive part of that government, in consequence thereof, has most arbitrarily and unwarrantably proceeded to abuse the laudable advancements in this part of his Majesty's Dominions, by many oppressive and illegal methods, in the discharge of this imaginary authority. And whereas, the ancient claim laid to this country by the colony of Virginia, founded in reason upon pre-occupancy, and the general acquiescence of all persons, together with the instructions I have lately received from his Majesty's servants, ordering me to take this country under my administration; and as the evident injustice manifestly offered to his Majesty by the immediate strides taken by the proprietors of Pennsylvania, in prosecution of their wild claim to this country, demand an immediate remedy, I do

⁴⁸ Force, *Amer. Arch.*, ser. 4, 1: 271.

hereby, in his Majesty's name, require and command all his Majesty's subjects west of the Laurel Hill, to pay a due respect to this my Proclamation, strictly prohibiting the execution of any act of authority on behalf of the Province of Pennsylvania, at their peril, in this country; but, on the contrary, that a due regard and entire obedience to the laws of his Majesty's colony of Virginia under my administration, be observed, to the end that regularity may ensue, and a just regard to the interest of his Majesty in this quarter, as well as to the subjects in general, may be the consequence. Given under my hand and seal, at Fort Dunmore, September 17th, 1774.

DUNMORE.

By his Excellency's command.
*God save the King.*⁴⁹

And the inevitable reply :

By the Honorable John Penn, Esquire, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the province of Pennsylvania, and counties of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, on Delaware :

A PROCLAMATION

Whereas, I have received information that his Excellency the Earl of Dunmore, governor-general in and over his Majesty's colony of Virginia, hath lately issued a very extraordinary proclamation, setting fourth, "that the rapid settlement made on the west of the Allegheny mountains, by his Majesty's subjects, within the course of these few years, had become an object of real concern to his Majesty's interest in that quarter; that the province of Pennsylvania had unduly laid claim to a very valuable and extensive quantity of his Majesty's territory; and the Executive part of that government, in consequence thereof, had most arbitrarily and unwarrantably proceeded to abuse the laudable adventures in that part of his Majesty's dominions, by many oppressive and illegal measures, in discharge of their imaginary authority; and that the ancient claim laid to that country by the colony of Virginia, founded in reason, upon pre-occupancy, and the general acquiescence of all persons, together with the instruction he had lately received from his Majesty's servants, ordering him to take that country under his administration; and as the evident injustice manifestly offered to his Majesty, by the immediate strides taken by the proprietaries of Pennsylvania, in prosecution of their wild claim to that country, de-

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 790-91.

manded an immediate remedy, he did thereby, in his Majesty's name, require and command all his Majesty's subjects west of the Laurel hill, to pay a due respect to his said proclamation, thereby strictly prohibiting the execution of any act of authority on behalf of the province of Pennsylvania, at their peril, in that country; but on the contrary, that a due regard and entire obedience to the laws of his Majesty's colony of Virginia, under his administration should be observed, to the end that regularity might ensue, and a just regard to the interest of his Majesty in that quarter, as well as to his Majesty's subjects, might be the consequence."

And whereas, although the western limits of the province of Pennsylvania have not been settled by any authority from the Crown, yet it has been sufficiently demonstrated by lines accurately run by the most skilful artists, that not only a great tract of country west of the Laurel hill, but Fort Pitt also, are comprehended within the charter bounds of this province, a great part of which country has been actually settled, and is now held under grants from the proprietaries of Pennsylvania; and the jurisdiction of this government has been peaceably exercised in that quarter of the country, till the late strange claim set up by the Earl of Dunmore, in behalf of his Majesty's colony of Virginia, founded, as his Lordship is above pleased to say, "in reason, pre-occupancy, and the general acquiescence of all persons; which claim to lands within the said charter limits must appear still the more extraordinary, as his most gracious Majesty, in an act passed the very last session of parliament, "for making more effectual provision for the government of the province of Quebec," has been pleased, in the fullest manner, to recognise the charter of the province of Pennsylvania, by expressly referring to the same, and binding the said province of Quebec by the northern and western bounds thereof. Wherefore, there is the greatest reason to conclude, that any instructions the governor of Virginia may have received from his Majesty's servants, to take that country under his administration, must be founded on some misrepresentation to them respecting the western extent of this province. In justice, therefore, to the proprietaries of the province of Pennsylvania, who are only desirous to secure their own undoubted property from the encroachment of others, I have thought fit, with the advice of the council, to issue this my proclamation, hereby requiring all persons west of Laurel hill, to retain their settlements as aforesaid made under this province, and to pay due obedience to the laws of this government; and all magistrates and other officers who

hold commissions or offices under this government, to proceed as usual in the administration of justice, without paying the least regard to the said recited proclamation, until his Majesty's pleasure shall be known in the premises; at the same time strictly charging and enjoining the said inhabitants and magistrates to use their utmost endeavors to preserve peace and good order.

Given under my hand and the great seal of the said province, at Philadelphia, the twelfth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, and in the fourteenth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, and so forth.

JOHN PENN.

By his Honor's command,

EDWARD SHIPPEN, JR., Secretary.

*God save the King.*⁵⁰

After nearly two years of wrangling, and after Dunmore had turned down the commissioners sent by Penn to Williamsburg to offer a proposal for establishment of a temporary line until the king's council should get around to fixing a permanent boundary, the inhabitants of Westmoreland County tried to offer such a solution. They probably did not know of the rebuff of Penn's offer. The substance of the proposals is enlightening.

WESTMORELAND CO., PA., COMMITTEE TO ———.

Gentlemen:

1775.

We have this Day met and Constituted our Brethren in Committee for our County concerning the present dangerous dispute Subsisting this long time between the Colonies of Virginia and Pennsylvania and as we Repose Confidence in these Gentlemen members of your Committee that you will Maturely, Deliberately and honestly consider the Injuries that daily arise from these Disputes to Every Inhabitant of this young and once Peaceable, unanimous and very prosperous country. We have thought it prudent in order to have animosities and Feuds of Every Kind as well as Jealousies, Hostilities and Violent proceedings Entirely Removed to propose to your Honourable Chamber a

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 856-57.

Treaty of Peace and Reconciliation by settling a Temporary Line or Boundary as soon as Possible. We have appointed Mr. James Kinhead, a member of our Committee to attend on your Honors and will expect the sence of your Chamber by him at his Return next Tuesday we meet to Receive your answer, and will proceed further agreeable thereto.

Signed by order of the Committee,

JOHN PROCTOR, *Chairman*.

A Copy :

JAMES BERWICK

Cl'k to the Com'tee of West Waters.

Westmoreland County Committee Chamber, 29th June, 1775.⁵¹

WEST AUGUSTA, VA. COMMITTEE TO WESTMORELAND CO.,
PA., COMMITTEE.

Gentlemen :

We are now to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 29th of June of Mr. Kinhead and are very sensible of the distress'd and unhappy situation of the People of this Side of the Laurell hill arising from the causes which you have mentioned. We have considered the subject with that mature deliberation which a matter of so much consequence deserves, and are earnestly desirous of contributing everything in our Power to restore peace and Tranquility to this unfortunate County.

But we are fully convinced the mode that you prescribe for that purpose by striking a Temporary line far exceeds the power of a Committee and can only be effected by the Executive powers of both Governments, Therefore the only method in our power to accomplish so desirable an end must be by a Joint petition sign'd without distinction by all the Inhabitants to the Westward of the Laurel Hill to the Governors of Virginia and Pennsylvania, beseeching them to have a *Temporary line drawn as soon as possible** and as we have Resolved on this mode of proceeding if agreeable to you be assured we will use every endeavour and influence to expedite the Petition and promote its success. As no community can subsist without a due submission to the civil Laws the people residing within the Limits ascertained by Lord Dunmore's Proclamation must untill the prayers of the Petition is obtained be amainable to the Laws of Virginia, The civil majestates of

⁵¹ *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 13: 418-23 (hereafter cited as *VMHB*).

*Author's emphasis.

which Colony we are fully determined to support in the execution of their offices as the only security for the welfare of the People.

This to every distinterested and unprejudiced person must appear to be the most probable means of restoring Harmony and Tranquility to his Country for whilst the two Governments are contending for the jurisdiction daily outrages will be committed the Rights of the people violated as evidently appears from some recent instances.

You can not but be sensible that his Majesty has the undoubted authority & Dominion over all his Territorys and a Right to all quit rents, &c., where it does not appear that he has precluded himself by his Royal Grant, Therefore untill the proprietors of Pennsylvania make it Evidently appear in Legal, Judicial manner that their Grant doth include this Country the Inhabitants ought not to be subject to the Laws, &c., of that Government. To remove every doubt of our sincere intentions for the Public good we here with send you two Resolves the first of which proves at least that we have not been wanting in that particular and the latter empowers each District or Township to send members to represent them in this Committee.

We are Gentlemen

Signed, JOHN CAMPBELL, &c.
July 3d, 1775.

A Copy :
JAMES BERWICK,

Cl'k to ye Committee of the *Western Waters*.⁵²

PENNSYLVANIA COMMITTEE TO VIRGINIA COMMITTEE AT
PITTSBURGH.

Hannahs Town July 3d, 1775.

GENTLEMEN :

Your Letter without date in answer to ours of the 29th, Ulto. by Mr. Kinkaid we have received. The subject of that Letter certainly deserved that mature deliberation you are pleased to say you have bestowed upon it as the peace & Tranquility of the Country are intimately connected with it.

We did not mean to lead you into a discussion of the powers of

⁵² *Ibid.*, 419-20.

Committees it would be difficult perhaps to ascertain them, your Gentlemen we supposed were the representatives of the People West of Laurel Hill who acknowledge the Jurisdiction and wish to live under the Laws of Virginia we are the representatives of those who submit to the Government of Pennsylvania in that capacity we conceived there would be no impropriety in our consulting upon and fixing some boundary line convenient for both on the several sides of which the respective Laws and forms of Government to which our several constituents had been accustomed might have operated and by that means the great obstacle to our uniting in the common cause of Liberty removed.

Gentlemen we have not forgot the first rise of the dispute that now subsists between the Colony of Virginia & Pennsylvania nor are we afraid of being charged with want of candour when we say that it was owing to the Avarice of some Individuals and to the Villiany of others with which we make no doubt some of your Committee are very well acquainted. That their Designs unhappily coincided with the passions & prejudices of a Weak Governor and the vices of an inciduous and wicked Ministry inimical to the rights of Mankind and of the Americans in particular and ever has been our opinion that that Dispute was set on foot on purpose to forward their Views and by involving two Great Colony's in a Quarrel about Territory detach them from the common Cause or at least prevent their giving their proper attention to it.

A Joint Petition to the different Governors to establish a temporary line signed without distinction by all the Inhabitants Westward of the Laural Hill we think an absurdity, seperate Petitions would probably produce no effect as we know the Governor of Virginia has repeatedly rejected such a proposal from the Governor of Pennsylvania.

The positive institutions of every Society are certainly binding upon the Members of that Society and a power to compel obedience is necessarily incident but how Lord Dunmore's Proclamation is to give authority from this position or how his intrusion into the possessions of, seizing the Government of a Society which never made any compact with him nor owes him obedience are to be justified by it we do not discover the Jurisdiction of Pennsylvania in this Quarter of the Country has been confirmed by the highest authority and cannot be Suppressed by any act of the subordinate nor will Ten Thousand Proclamations alter the nature of the Case or render our Inhabitants amenable to the Courts of Virginia.

We entreat you to reflect upon the cause which has call'd all America into arms part of it certainly is the wanton abrogation of Established constitutions that had been entered into by the mutual consent of the crown and the People. America is now Banded to procure the restitution of the Antient Form of Government in the Massachusetts Bay and we pray you to believe whilst we are ready to assist that Colony in repelling the Incroachments of the crown we will not suffer another to obtrude their Government upon us. The Majistrates of every Country ought to be supported in the Execution of their very important office & we shall not be behind Hand in affording those of our Government every necessary continuance.

The Bounds of a Letter (nor indeed the design of this) will not allow us to enter into the Question of Precedence or how far the granting of it to Virginia might contribute to restore Harmony and Tranquility to this Country we conceive it foreign to the purpose. Suffice it to say the Right of Persons & the Property of the People have not only recently but for a length of time by past been violated in so open & outrageous a manner by officers pretending to act under the Authority of Virginia as has been sufficient to create the utmost abhorrence and detestation of that Government and that those men being continued in their office unreprieved reflects the greatest Disgrace upon the executive power of that Country. The Kings Authority & Dominion over all his territory and His right to Quit rents are distinct in themselves and arise from very different considerations why they are classed in your Letter or why introduced at all we cannot imagine nor is it easy to understand the sequel of that paragraph. The Crown has not yet charged Proprietors of Pennsylvania with Incroachment when it does there is no doubt that they will make it evidently appear in a Legal & Judicial manner that they have not extended the Laws, &c. of their Government beyond their just limits and that consequently the People owe neither obedience nor Quit Rent to Virginia.

When your resolves have consistency they may possibly convince us that you suppose that we have common sence but whilst they are evidently otherwise whilst a vote of thanks to such a paracide as George Gibson for an action acknowledged by Himself to be contrary to the Laws of His Country disgrace Your minutes you will hardly persuade us of your sincere Intentions for the Publick Good.

Your Letter with a Copy of his answer we shall immediately transend to the Continental Congress. We are Gentlemen your very Humble Servants.

Signed by order of the Committee,

JAMES KINKAID, Clerk.

[Endorsed] To the Committee at Pittsburgh.

A Copy:

JAMES BERWICK,

Clerk of the Com'ee of Augusta,

West of Laurel Hill.⁵³

Of course, all or much of this broil and hardship might have been obviated by a posture of defense on the part of the Pennsylvania government. Connolly knew that he could perpetrate his bullying tactics with impunity. At an early date in the controversy, Governor Penn was forced to adopt a cautious and impotent stance, due to the policy of the assembly already mentioned, thereby losing many of his best adherents, such as William Crawford who defected to the Virginia faction. The following letter speaks volumes.

Philadelphia, April 22, 1774.

GENTLEMEN: The present alarming situation of our affairs in Westmoreland county, occasioned by the very unaccountable conduct of the government of Virginia, requires the utmost attention of this government, and therefore I intend, with all possible expedition, to send Commissioners to expostulate with my Lord Dunmore upon the behavior of those he has thought proper to invest with such power as hath greatly disturbed the peace of that county. *As the government of Virginia hath the power of raising militia, and there is not any such in this province, it will be in vain to contend with them in the way of force**; the magistrates therefore, at the same time that they continue with steadiness to exercise the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania with respect to the distribution of justice and punishment of vice, must be cautious of entering into any such contests with the officers of my Lord Dunmore as may tend to widen the present unhappy breach; and therefore as things are at present circumstanced I would not advise the magistracy of Westmoreland county to proceed by way of criminal prosecution against them for exercising the government of Virginia. I flatter myself that our commissioners to Virginia will succeed according our expectations, and that our affairs to the westward will soon be put upon a peaceable and quiet footing. I am gentlemen,

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 421-23.

*Author's emphasis.

your very humble servant,

JOHN PENN.

To William Crawford, Esquire, and his Associates, of Westmoreland county.⁵⁴

The final curtain fell upon the scene of the troubles on the western frontiers of Virginia and Pennsylvania when, on July 25, the members of Continental Congress representing the two colonies, meeting in Philadelphia, with the voice of authority, addressed the inhabitants of this whole disputed region as men already committed to the defense of American liberties. Astonishing indeed is the fact that the contestants ended their conflict and their passions to unite in the greater cause of common interest. The bidding of such men as Patrick Henry, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson could not be ignored.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF PENNSYLVANIA AND VIRGINIA,
ON THE WEST SIDE OF LAUREL HILL.

Philadelphia, July 25, 1775.

Friends and Countrymen:

It gives us much concern to find that disturbances have arisen, and still continue among you, concerning the boundaries of our Colonies. In the character in which we now address you, it is unnecessary to inquire into the origin of those unhappy disputes, and it would be improper for us to express our approbation or censure on either side, but as representatives of two of the Colonies, united among many others for the defence of the liberties of *America*, we think it our duty to remove, as far as lies in our power, every obstacle that may prevent her sons from co-operating, as vigorously as they would wish to do, towards the attainment of this great and important end. Influenced solely by this motive, our joint and earnest request to you is, that all animosities which have heretofore subsisted among you as inhabitants of distinct Colonies, may now give place to generous and concurring efforts for the preservation of every thing that can make our common Country dear to us.

We are fully persuaded that you, as well as we, wish to see your differences terminate in this happy issue. For this desirable purpose we recommend it to you that all bodies of armed men, kept under either Province, be dismissed; that all those on either side, who are in

⁵⁴ Force, *Amer. Arch.*, ser. 4, 1: 266.

confinement, or under bail, for taking a part in the contest, be discharged, and that until the dispute be decided, every person be permitted to retain his possessions unmolested.

By observing these directions, the publick tranquillity will be secured without injury to the titles on either side. The period, we flatter ourselves, will soon arrive, when this unfortunate dispute, which has produced much mischief, and, as far as we can learn, no good, will be peaceably and constitutionally determined.

We are your friends and countrymen,

PATRICK HENRY,	JOHN DICKINSON,
BENJAMIN HARRISON,	BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
RICHARD HENRY LEE,	CHARLES HUMPHREYS,
THOMAS JEFFERSON,	GEORGE ROSS,
	JAMES WILSON. ⁵⁵

If the Pennsylvania government seemed powerless to cope with the indignities and encroachments perpetrated upon its citizens on its western borders, the fact remains that it was forced to carry on two quasi-wars at the same time at each end of its jurisdiction. The western contest has just been noticed; the eastern section of the colony was invaded by Connecticut settlers, who seized upon the fertile Wyoming valley on the North (East) Branch of the Susquehanna River. When Pennsylvania authorities tried to serve eviction notices, they were fired upon, killing one and wounding three Pennsylvanians at the first volley. The struggle went on for about six years with more killed and wounded. Fortifications were employed, a siege conducted, a force of five hundred was sent by Northumberland County. Connecticut claimed all of the land down to the forty-first parallel by virtue of their ancient sea to sea charter.⁵⁶ Translated into familiar terms for inhabitants of Western Pennsylvania, this meant the inclusion of the present state down to West Sunbury, in Butler County, and to New Castle, in Lawrence County. In the same vein, the older Maryland boundary dispute, in which many killings and much violence had occurred, was finally put at rest by Governor Penn's proclamation, pursuant to a letter from Lord Dartmouth, in April 1775.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2: 1723.

⁵⁶ Charles Minor, *History of Wyoming* [Pennsylvania] (Philadelphia, 1845), 104-33, 165-79.

⁵⁷ Force, *Amer. Arch.*, ser. 4, 2: 303.

The Maryland claim, reaching to the fortieth parallel, would have established a line through Connellsville and Brownsville, and most of Philadelphia would have also been included.

Had all of these unwarranted claims succeeded, Pennsylvania would have been confined to a strip less than sixty-five miles in width, from north to south, and limited by the top of the Allegheny Mountain on the westward side. Until the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, in 1768, at least half of that territory would have been shared with the Indians.

These intercolonial territorial encroachments engage attention as they explain the necessary absorption of executive and legislative energies from our immediate concern with the chaotic situation in the environs of Pittsburgh on the eve of the Revolution. Connolly interests us only as he contributed to this confusion, for we shall meet him again during pursuit of the broader aspects of a comprehensive view of the struggle for independence.

At this point it will be necessary to revert to a sequence of events that took place simultaneously with those narrated above but had no relation to them in origin, although they certainly did immeasurably muddy the already turbulent waters. This was the episode known as Dunmore's War.

The facts, in brief, are that in the early spring (April 30) of 1774, several Indians were killed at a white man's cabin on the Virginia side of the Ohio River opposite the mouth of Yellow Creek (in Ohio, below East Liverpool). Among the victims were the Indian wife of John Gibson, then a prominent Indian trader, and the relatives of the famous Chief Logan. Other incidents occurred, attended by killings, up and down the river within a few days. The records and eyewitness accounts widely varied as to responsibility for the first bloodletting. An Indian war was precipitated upon the frontier settlements, Logan's vengeance had to be satiated, the Shawnees and Mingoes attacked, burned, and pillaged forts, homes, and farms.⁵⁸

The significance of this for Westmoreland County people was that the Indians proclaimed that this was a war of retaliation against the Virginians, not involving the Pennsylvanians. The fact remained, however, that Virginians held Fort Pitt (rebuilt and renamed Fort Dunmore), where there were also nearly as many partisans of the

⁵⁸ R. G. Thwaites and L. P. Kellogg, *Documentary History of Dunmore's War* (Madison, Wisc., 1905), 9-18; Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 106, 108-109; E. O. Randall, "The Dunmore War," *OAHQ* 11(1903) : 173-74.

Pennsylvania faction. Traders from the Allegheny were scattered over the wide Ohio and Illinois trading area. Pennsylvanians were indeed involved and were concerned.

In the summer of 1774 Governor Dunmore raised an army and marched to Ohio, stopping in Pittsburgh for nearly three weeks. The army passed down the Ohio in canoes to Wheeling. There Dunmore met Major William Crawford and a large part of the army, with which he marched to the mouth of the Hocking River and built Fort Gower. Colonel Andrew Lewis led a force of a little over a thousand down the Kanawha River to its mouth at Point Pleasant, where it was attacked on October 10, 1774, by about an equal number of Indians led by the great Shawnee chief, Cornstalk.⁵⁹ Having won the battle, with great casualties on both sides, Lewis moved to join Dunmore near the Scioto River (actually on Sippo Creek). Dunmore now resented Lewis's success, ordered him to return to Virginia, and at one point is said to have drawn his sword on Lewis. In the light of Dunmore's later actions against his former constituents, many historians have suspected him of perfidious motives then. He did conclude a treaty with the Indians whereby they permanently ceded all of the land south of the Ohio, where surveying was already proceeding and settlement was opening up in Kentucky.⁶⁰

In the train of events after the battle, the object of admiration has been the eloquence of two Indian orators remembered through the ages — that of Logan and of Cornstalk.

A jewel among the treasures of American Revolutionary literature, that deserves to be preserved and given more prominence than has been accorded to it, is the slate of resolves drawn up and signed by the officers of Dunmore's army when they reached Fort Gower on their return march. They were in an extremely resentful mood and were bitterly disillusioned by Dunmore's manner of acceptance of their great sacrifices, and especially by his treatment of their respected commander.⁶¹ The resolves are appended. Let us bear in mind that the Boston Port Bill had been passed by Parliament at the end of April, given royal assent on May 1, 1774, and so seems to have been put into effect in America prior to the march of the troops from

59 Nicholas B. Wainwright, "Turmoil at Pittsburgh: Diary of Augustine Prevost, 1774," *PMHB* 85 (April 1961): 131-44; Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 112; Thwaites and Kellogg, *Dunmore's War*, xix-xxi, 253-80; Randall, "Dunmore War," *OAHQ*, 195, 196-97.

60 *Ibid.*, 191; Abernethy, *Western Lands*, 113.

61 Randall, "Dunmore War," *OAHQ*, 189-91.

Virginia. A month after they marched, the first Continental Congress met in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774,⁶² and thus after the Virginia militia army had passed the frontier. These brave resolves issued from the depths of the American wilderness should have been taken as a trenchant reminder to the pioneers' royal and noble overlords of the aggressively independent spirit of Americans inured to hardships and dangers. The address and resolves are presented:

MEETING OF OFFICERS UNDER EARL OF DUNMORE.

At a Meeting of the Officers under the command of his Excellency the Right Honourable the Earl of *Dunmore*, convened at *Fort Gower*, November 5, 1774, for the purpose of considering the grievances of *British America*, an Officer present addressed the Meeting in the following words:

"GENTLEMEN: Having now concluded the campaign, by the assistance of Providence, with honour and advantage to the Colony and ourselves, it only remains that we should give our country the strongest assurance that we are ready, at all times, to the utmost of our power, to maintain and defend her just rights and privileges. We have lived about three months in the woods without any intelligence from *Boston*, or from the Delegates at *Philadelphia*. It is possible, from the groundless reports of designing men, that our countrymen may be jealous of the use such a body would make of arms in their hands at this critical juncture. That we are a respectable body is certain, when it is considered that we can live weeks without bread or salt; that we can sleep in the open air without any covering but that of the canopy of Heaven; and that our men can march and shoot with any in the known world. Blessed with these talents, let us solemnly engage to one another, and our country in particular, that we will use them to no purpose but for the honour and advantage of *America* in general, and of *Virginia* in particular. It behooves us then, for the satisfaction of our country, that we should give them our real sentiments, by way of resolves, at this very alarming crisis."

Whereupon the meeting made choice of a Committee to draw up and prepare Resolves for their consideration, who immediately withdrew; and after some time spent therein, reported that they had agreed to and prepared the following Resolves, which were read, maturely considered, and agreed to, *nemine contradicente*, by the Meeting, and ordered to be published in the *Virginia Gazette*:

⁶² Force, *Amer. Arch.*, ser. 4, 1: 893-94.

Resolved, That we will bear the most faithful allegiance to his Majesty King *George* the Third, whilst his Majesty delights to reign over a brave and free people; that we will, at the expense of life, and every thing dear and valuable, exert ourselves in support of the honour of his Crown and the dignity of the *British* Empire. But as the love of Liberty, and attachment to the real interests and just rights of *America* outweigh every other consideration, we resolve that we will exert every power within us for the defence of *American* liberty, and for the support of her just rights and privileges; not in any precipitate, riotous, or tumultuous manner, but when regularly called forth by the unanimous voice of our countrymen.

Resolved, That we entertain the greatest respect for his Excellency the Right Honourable Lord *Dunmore*, who commanded the expedition against the *Shawanese*; and who, we are confident, underwent the great fatigue of this singular campaign from no other motive than the true interest of this country.

Signed by order and in behalf of the whole Corps,

BENJAMIN ASHBY, *Clerk*.⁶³

Perhaps John Adams may have been right when, long after the event, he reflected that "the revolution was complete, in the minds of the people, and the union of the colonies, before the war commenced in the skirmishes of Concord and Lexington on the 19th of April, 1775." ⁶⁴

[*To be continued*]

⁶³ Fort Gower Resolutions, *ibid.*, 962-63.

⁶⁴ Lawrence Henry Gipson, *The Coming of the Revolution* (New York, 1954), 231-32.

MORE IN THE SOCIETY'S
1975-1976 LECTURE SERIES

Wednesday, March 3. William F. Trimble, "A Century and a Half of Warship Building in Pittsburgh." (illustrated)

Wednesday, March 24. University of Pittsburgh Glee Club.

Wednesday, April 7. Dr. James M. Adovasio, "The Dig at Meadowcroft — A New Look into the Past."

Wednesday, April 21. Dr. Gerard J. Brault, "Early American Heraldry." (illustrated) Members lecture.

Wednesday, May 5. Col. J. B. B. Trussell, Jr., U.S.A., ret., "The Role of the Professional Soldier in the Preservation of the Republic."

Wednesday, May 19. Richard B. Chesney, "This Little Piggy Went to Market." (illustrated) Members lecture.

Wednesday, June 2. Keith D. F. Rowland, "Decorative Wrought Iron in Pittsburgh's History." (illustrated) Members lecture.