

## A BRITISH OFFICER'S JOURNAL OF THE BRADDOCK EXPEDITION — ET CETERA

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assisted by

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IF Charles II, in his last hours, could express regret for having taken "such an unconscionably long time a-dying," fairness dictates that I introduce this brief piece with an apology. It is now more than one year since I promised, in the course of an article that appeared in these pages, to publish an account of the Braddock expedition—the "British A" journal—that had previously been available only in manuscript, being among the Hardwicke Papers of the New York Public Library's Manuscripts and Archives Division.<sup>1</sup> A variant version of this document, I noted, had already been published, by Charles Hamilton.<sup>2</sup> My transcription of the Hardwicke text will appear at the close of this prefatory section. But I believe that it is appropriate first to account for the delay in its appearance.

As some readers may be aware, a controversy has arisen over the question of whether the British A journal and a second document published by Hamilton, a journal of Braddock's campaign kept, at least as conjecture would have it, by the batman of Captain Robert Cholmley, are forgeries. It has also been alleged that the two pieces

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1 Paul E. Kopperman, "An Assessment of the Cholmley's Batman and British A Journals of Braddock's Campaign," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* 62 (July 1979): 217, n. 36 (hereafter cited as *WPHM*). "British A" is the name I assigned this journal in *Braddock at the Monongahela* (Pittsburgh, 1977), the designation serving to distinguish it from other anonymous accounts of Braddock's campaign or of the Battle of the Monongahela.

2 In *Braddock's Defeat* (Norman, Okla., 1959). The batman's journal appears on 7-36; the officer's, on 40-58. Hamilton's prefatory remarks, ix-xxi, 5-7, 39-40, include some interesting observations on both documents.

may have been composed by the same hand.<sup>3</sup> For reasons that I detailed in my earlier article, I strongly doubt that either document is bogus, and I will continue to hold this opinion unless a compelling case against one or both appears, an eventuality that I consider to be most improbable. In the present piece, however, I intend to deal primarily with the issue of whether the two journals may have been the work of the same writer and to demonstrate that common authorship is extremely unlikely.

In my article, I pointed out several obvious disparities between the British A and the Cholmley's Batman journals as they appear in Hamilton. As I noted, Cholmley's Batman seems to have been incapable of handling complex sentence structure. His sentences are either short or grammatically weak. On the other hand, long sentences present no grammatical problems to British A. Orthography likewise places the two writers in sharp contrast, with Cholmley's Batman tending to spell phonetically and with far less regularity than is evident in British A. The batman shifts tense haphazardly and his pronominal usage is so awkward that the reader frequently has difficulty in locating, or even guessing, the antecedent, while British A handles both tenses and pronouns well.<sup>4</sup> All these disparities, I suggested and still believe, reflect the differences in educational level that likely separated the batman from the officer.

Since that piece appeared, I have become interested in the potential of quantitative methodology for further resolving the question of whether the journals may have been the product of a common

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3 The controversy is reviewed in my article, "An Assessment," 197-218. Only three bases for the charge of common authorship have, to my knowledge, been publicly put forth (*ibid.*, 208): both Hamilton versions include some mixing of thorn and "th," particularly in the definite article (that is, *ye* and *the*); both contain references to *Frazier's Plantation*, although that site, which served Braddock's army as a point of rendezvous, was more properly known as *Frazier's Cabin*; both are marred by apparent inaccuracies. To each of these points, I responded (*ibid.*, 208-10): virtually all eighteenth-century writers who use thorn at all use "th" part or most of the time, and in fact thorn is used far more often in the British A journal (Hamilton draft) than in Cholmley's Batman; as far as is known, no one name was consistently applied to the Frazier building by contemporaries, and for that matter British A also refers to it as *Frazier's house* (it might strike some readers as odd that anyone would have referred to the structure as a *plantation*; however, it was a trading post and consequently of some significance: Howard G. Clark, "John Fraser: Western Pennsylvania Frontiersman," *WPHM* 38 [Fall-Winter 1955]: 88-92); all accounts of the Braddock expedition and battle, including those by confirmed eyewitnesses, contain errors, and there are no mistakes in the British A or the Cholmley's Batman journals of such seriousness as to suggest either one is bogus, let alone that they were the product of a common hand.

4 Kopperman, "An Assessment," 210-14.

hand. Various works of scholarship aroused my interest, most notable among them being *Inference and Disputed Authorship: The Federalist*, the extraordinary monograph that Frederick Mosteller and David Wallace published in 1964. Using various quantitative devices, particularly word counts, Mosteller and Wallace attempted, with considerable success, to determine the authorship of certain numbers of *The Federalist Papers*. Their book, as well as the work of others, made me wonder what I could judge about the two Braddock journals if I applied similar tests to them.<sup>5</sup> With the help of Dr. Michael J. Freiling, who produced the necessary program and generally handled the computer side of the problem, I then obtained word counts for the two journals.

In preparing my word count, I restricted the subject matter. Cholmley's *Batman* covers Braddock's army from the moment it left Ireland, January 8, 1755, through August 8 of that year, while British A's account begins on June 10, the day the army departed from Fort Cumberland on its ill-fated march to the Monongahela, and concludes its day-by-day coverage with the entry for July 9. So that the two writers would be dealing with like events, I confined the word count to the entries for June 10 through July 9 in both journals. This delimitation also allowed me to excise a brief section that is appended to the day-by-day account — a general review of the activities of Braddock's army through July 17. Since that section does not appear in the Hardwicke version, its authenticity has been challenged.<sup>6</sup> It was therefore given a separate word count and analysis. After the initial count had been obtained, I restricted the definition of "words" by

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5 Besides the tests that I have applied, several others, including an analysis of word combinations, might be carried out with profit. Some particularly useful guides to methodology are Mosteller and Wallace, *Inference and Disputed Authorship: The Federalist* (Reading, Mass., 1964); Louis T. Milic, "The Computer Approach to Style," in George Levine and William Madden, eds., *The Art of Victorian Prose* (New York, 1968), 338-61; Donald Ross, Jr., "The Use of Word-Class Distribution Data for Stylistics: Keats' Sonnets and Chicken Soup," *Poetics* 6 (Sept. 1977): 169-96; and Francis D. Covella, "Grammatical Evidence of Multiple Authorship in *Piers Plowman*," *Language and Style* 9 (Winter 1976): 3-16; and D. Ross, "An EYEBALL View of Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*," in J. L. Mitchell, ed., *Computers in the Humanities* (Minneapolis, 1974), 94-108. It should be noted that word count was seldom used as a test prior to 1960, so it is highly unlikely that an earlier forger would have had the foresight to imagine such analysis and tailor his vocabulary accordingly. Given the fact that the British A and Cholmley's *Batman* journals include markedly different sets of vocabulary, the question of the common authorship becomes almost academic.

6 Note Kopperman, "An Assessment," 198, 202-4. The main portion of the British A journal closes with "no Provisions for 60 Miles" (Hamilton, *Braddock's Defeat*, 52). The appended section concludes with "are as follows" (*ibid.*, 54).

omitting from analysis all numbers, cardinal and ordinal, and all proper nouns. Since Cholmley's Batman has a tendency to divide verbal elements that even by eighteenth-century standards should be written without a break, or perhaps hyphenated, I have counted these elements together. So, for example, *a bout* is counted as one word, *about*, *after known* becomes *afterknown* (afternoon), and *a shouting* becomes *a-shouting* (a-shooting). The ampersand, which British A uses but Cholmley's Batman does not, is counted as *and*.

These various definitions produced, in the two more important cases, excellent samples. The Cholmley's Batman portion totals 2,806 words, while the section of British A's journal that concludes with the events of July 9 is 2,993 words long. That the two portions are of comparable length is fortunate, since it means that the writers have similar opportunities to put their respective vocabularies on display. By contrast, the appended section of the British A journal is only 461 words long. Since a sample should include 1,000 words, more if possible, this part of the journal is not a particularly good subject for analysis. Nevertheless, some judgments can be made about it, and they will be, in the course of the next few pages. My analysis will, however, concentrate on the journal of Cholmley's Batman and the main section of the British A account, which have produced samples that are more than adequate to serve as the basis for judging the common-author argument.

If one journal is indeed by a batman, and the other is by an officer, we should expect that the two writers would have had quite disparate educational backgrounds and, therefore, distinct vocabularies. In particular, we might guess that Cholmley's Batman would include a more narrow and less varied vocabulary than would British A. Both general observations and statistics tend to point up just such a contrast. The vocabulary in the batman's journal is markedly less sophisticated than is that in the officer's journal. It is also less varied. In judging vocabulary, I counted singular and plural forms of nouns together, but otherwise, all variant forms were totaled separately. A word that was spelled in various ways was, of course, counted only once. Since the computer could not distinguish between homonyms, it was necessary to count words with shared spellings as one. It is interesting, however, to note that in the two journals certain words are consistently used to mean one thing in one journal, only to be used in a different sense in the other. For example, British A uses *found* to mean *realized*, as in, "We found that we should never gain ye day," while Cholmley's Batman uses it to mean *saw*

or *discovered*: "In the mean time one of our men found her."<sup>7</sup>

Within these limitations, I found that the main portion of the British A journal includes 736 words, each of which is used an average of 4.07 times. By contrast, there are only 556 different words in the journal of Cholmley's Batman, the average usage being 5.05. That the two journals show such a marked difference in usage is quite significant. The contrast provides important evidence that the manuscripts were, in fact, written by different men. It also suggests, as does qualitative analysis of vocabulary, that one journalist was on a higher verbal plane than was the other — the sort of contrast that one might expect between an officer, who was likely born to at least moderate wealth and was educated accordingly, and a batman, who likely had a grammar-school education at best.

An analysis of the frequency with which individual words are used further underlines the differences between the two journals. Some variations are explained by the nature of the style. The batman often writes in the first person singular, so the fact that he uses *I* twenty-three times, to once for British A, and *my* eleven times, while British A never uses it, is not surprising. Furthermore, his occupation helps to explain why he uses *master* — Cholmley — on eight occasions, British A never, and *horse* or *horses* a total of seventeen times, to twice for the officer. Other disparities reflect quirks. The batman tends to note month as well as date in heading his entries, while the officer does not, so the fact that *June* and *July* are mentioned a total of thirty times in the batman's account, and three in the British A journal, is not surprising. In British A, compulsion is often denoted by *obliged to*; consequently, *obliged* appears twelve times in the officer's journal, never in the batman's. The fact that the batman uses *that* as a relative pronoun, in cases where the officer, like more sophisticated writers of the eighteenth century, as well as the twentieth, uses *who*, helps to explain two sets of disparities: thirty-seven usages of *that* by Cholmley's Batman, fourteen by British A; one use of *who* by Cholmley's Batman, fifteen by British A. The author of the officer's journal prefers *very* as an intensifier and he uses it twenty-one times, while the batman, who less often uses intensifiers and shows no fixed preference when he does, uses it on only five occasions. Possibly the most dramatic difference in usage involves *were*. The batman incorrectly, though colloquially, uses *was* as a verb form to indicate past action in the plural, while the officer,

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<sup>7</sup> These examples are drawn from Hamilton, *Braddock's Defeat*, 51, 29.

properly, uses *were*. The end result is a dramatic disparity: in the British A journal, thirty-nine uses of *were*; Cholmley's Batman, zero.

Several hundred words are used by one writer but not by the other. Besides *my* and *master*, both of which were noted in the preceding paragraph, there are eight words used five or more times in the batman's account, never in British A's: *work* (twelve uses); *army* (eleven); *began* (nine); *receive, then, her* (seven); *lay* (six); *above* (five). Ten words, including the aforementioned *were* and *obliged*, are found five or more times in British A's journal, never in the batman's: *what* (eight); *right* (seven); *left* (six); *course, entirely, kept, least, steep* (five).

Some words that are used quite commonly by one writer are seldom used by the other. Of thirty-one words that are found at least twenty times in one of the journals, fourteen occur at least three times in it for every two usages in the other, and no fewer than nine appear in ratios of more than 2:1.<sup>8</sup> These nine include *were, very, and that*, which have already been discussed, and also *before* (twenty-one usages by Cholmley's Batman, seven by British A), *some* (eight by Cholmley's Batman, twenty-three by British A), *him* (twenty to seven), *us* (twenty-nine to twelve), *he* (twenty-five to eleven), and *them* (thirty-one to fifteen). Other common words that appear in a ratio of 2:1 or more are *by* (five usages by Cholmley's Batman, fifteen by British A), *came* (eighteen to five), *not* (eighteen to nine), and *or* (seven to nineteen).

In analysis of usage, not all words should be assigned the same value. Mosteller and Wallace, as well as others, have prepared lists of "function" words — fillers, such as prepositions, conjunctions, articles, pronouns, and adverbs — and have concentrated on them. Function words are doubly useful. First, precisely because they seem to be trivial, a forger is likely to ignore them as he seeks to make two works by himself appear to be the product of different authors. Second, function words tend to provide insight into a given writer's grammar and syntax. A noun may often be replaced by its synonym without altering the form of the sentence. On the other hand, in many situations a particular conjunction or preposition is called for, and the writer, unless he is ignorant of the requirement, is unconcerned about his usage, or is willing to alter the sentence, will use the appropriate word. Since everyone favors particular phrases and syntactical patterns, he will tend also to favor certain function words.

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<sup>8</sup> These ratios are adjusted to compensate for the slightly different lengths of the two sections under study.

Such favoritism would be apparent, and significant, even when the author in question is, like Cholmley's Batman, a rather poor writer, since compensating for his problems with grammar is the fact that his sentences tend to be simple and fairly regular in style and organization.

Given the significance of function words, it is worthwhile to note that the batman's journal and the British A account show marked disparities in the usage of ten of the words included in Mosteller and Wallace's list. All ten have been mentioned in previous paragraphs: *by, her, my, not, or, some, that, who, were, and what*.<sup>9</sup>

A note of disparities in usage of function words introduces us to the overall question of grammar and syntax. In my earlier article, I suggested that the authors of the two Braddock journals wrote on quite disparate planes, and earlier in this piece I recalled my reasoning. Reviewing the journals, with word counts to help guide me, I noted some additional differences that are apparent between Cholmley's Batman and British A. All these differences tend to support the impression that the author of British A was not only a different writer from, but also a much more competent writer than, the person who wrote Cholmley's Batman. In the British A journal, one finds that modifying phrases often introduce sentences and that they are used properly, while such phrases are rare in the account of Cholmley's Batman. British A includes the genitive somewhat more often, and complex or compound sentences far more often, than does Cholmley's Batman. Finally, the author of the officer's journal writes almost entirely in a past tense, either the simple past or the past perfect, while that of Cholmley's Batman alternates rather haphazardly between the simple past and the present, perfect tenses being little used.

Just as word counts point up great differences between the two journals, so do analyses of punctuation. In one respect, the two documents display similar usage. Periods consistently close the dates that head entries, and therefore the period counts for this function are similar: Cholmley's Batman, twenty-nine; British A, twenty-two.<sup>10</sup> Otherwise, however, the rule is contrast. The apostrophe is used to mark elision nineteen times by Cholmley's Batman, only twice by

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<sup>9</sup> Note the list of seventy function words in Mosteller and Wallace, *Inference and Disputed Authorship: The Federalist*, 38. Some of the function words that they list (such as *and, as*) are used in comparable ratios by British A and Cholmley's Batman. Most, however, are not used in either journal to an extent that might permit of analysis.

<sup>10</sup> The difference in numbers is due to the fact that British A does not include entries for halting days.

British A. In the batman's journal, 147 periods close sentences, giving an average sentence length of 19.09 words, while in the officer's the period is so used eighty-seven times, or once every 34.40 words. The batman uses commas less often than he uses periods to conclude sentences, 76-147, while the officer's case is the opposite, 100-87. Use of the semicolon to separate clauses, usually independent ones, is common in British A — fifty-seven cases — but is found only once in Cholmley's Batman. Furthermore, while only four kinds of punctuation are used by Cholmley's Batman, three other marks are included by British A. The author of British A uses the colon, both to divide clauses (five times) and to abbreviate (twelve times). He also makes limited use of the parenthesis (four sets) and of the exclamation point (once). Furthermore, besides using the period and the apostrophe in the ways that the batman does, he also uses the former to abbreviate (four times) and the latter to show possession (three times).

Thus far, I have concentrated on the journal of Cholmley's Batman and the main portion of British A. What can be said of the appended section of the officer's account? As I mentioned before, it constitutes a regrettably small sample. One noteworthy aspect, however, is the range of vocabulary contained in it. Despite its brevity, it contains no fewer than 204 words, the average usage being a mere 2.26. Since words tend to recur when stylistic, grammatical, or contextual circumstances warrant, the number of different words in a small section of prose is apt to be high, the average usage low. The large number of words used in the added portion of British A, however, suggests that the person who wrote it had a rather sizable active vocabulary — as had the author of the major section of the journal, but not that of Cholmley's Batman. Furthermore, in the course of his brief piece he uses many words that are found in British A but not in Cholmley's Batman, and eight of them he uses twice or more: *were* (eleven times); *obliged* (three); *action*, *bad*, *extremely*, *number*, *rest*, *utmost* (twice).<sup>11</sup> In general, the vocabulary, as well as grammar, syntax, style, and punctuation found in the briefer part of British A do not serve to distinguish the section from the main journal, but stamp it as being markedly different from that of the batman's journal. In all probability, the smaller portion was appended some months

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<sup>11</sup> In addition, he uses two words, *wounds* and *mens* (men's) twice that are not found in either British A or in Cholmley's Batman. He does not use any words twice or more that are included in the batman's account but not in British A.



after Braddock's defeat by the same author who was responsible for the day-by-day account. Owing to the brevity of the account, however, it is best to be tentative.

There is less need for tentativeness as regards the journals of British A and Cholmley's Batman. Both samples are quite lengthy, more than adequate to serve as a basis for quantitative inquiry. Of course, any methodology that might be used in analyzing them should itself be subjected to questioning. As regards word count, for example, it should be observed that if the same person were to compare two samples of his own writing, he would notice that he used certain words in one piece, perhaps several times, but not in the other. Such incongruities would be particularly common if the selections were short, if they dealt with dissimilar subjects, or if they were directed to different audiences. However, the weight of evidence — of which only a small, though representative, portion has been reviewed in this paper — provides ample proof that no individual just happened to pen two documents as different as are British A and Cholmley's Batman. The real question is, could a forger have prepared two such dissimilar works? The answer is, probably not.

Suppose we are faced by a determined forger. What would he have to do to produce two documents that differ as greatly as do the journals in question, without at the same time making an error that would reveal his chicanery? First, he would have to write in such a way as to forestall nonquantitative challenges. He would, for example, have to know the history of the Braddock expedition so well that he could produce not one but two journals, both of which were consistently plausible, but not so close that one might seem to be a rehash of the other. He would also have to be so aware of eighteenth-century usage, including military terminology, that he could totally avoid anachronistic words and expressions. Discoveries of errors of fact or of anachronistic usages have led to the exposure of countless forgeries, among them the famous Donation of Constantine and the Horn Papers.<sup>12</sup> Significantly, neither British A nor Cholmley's Batman includes any anachronisms, and while both contain some apparent factual errors, no error is of a sort that would indicate that the writer

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12 On the latter case, note Arthur Pierce Middleton and Douglass Adair, "The Mystery of the Horn Papers," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd ser., 4 (Oct. 1947): 409-43. If a forger had drafted both the Cholmley's Batman and British A journals and had done so shortly after Braddock's defeat, he would not have been endangered by anachronistic words and phrases, but had he prepared the drafts even fifty years later, he would have been. The danger of factual error would, of course, have been present regardless of when the documents were drawn.

did not march with Braddock. It is highly unlikely that a forger would be capable of producing even one journal that would be so free of incriminating evidence, let alone two. But even if he could, he would have other dangers to consider.

In order to produce two Braddock journals that appeared to be the work of different men, the forger would have to bear in mind which words were expected to show a disparity, and he would then face the painstaking labor of manipulating his style in such a way as to accommodate contrasting sets of vocabulary. In effect, he would have to program himself. Some of the individual programs would be easy. He could, for example, determine to use *was* in one journal, where *were* was called for in standard usage, and to use the correct form in the other. He could also program himself to name the month in heading entries in one of his fabricated journals, while omitting that detail from the other. He might use certain nouns in one manuscript, their synonyms in the other. Some schemes would therefore be simple to carry out individually, but even in cases involving simple replacement the forger would be oppressed by the sheer number of programs that he had to apply. Furthermore, he would be faced by a second set of programs, which would be much harder to implement. In order to use a certain preposition, conjunction, or other function word, he would have to make sure that the context, style, grammar, and syntax allowed it. Therefore, he would not only have to write the journals in different styles, but the styles would have to serve the purpose of permitting him to use contrasting vocabularies. Finally, he would be faced by the prospect of carrying on his charade, not through a few brief paragraphs, but through two rather lengthy pieces of writing. The writer would, in sum, have hundreds, perhaps thousands, of details to remember at any given time, and I frankly doubt that anyone, even a veritable Fu Manchu of forgery, could carry off such a challenge successfully. One must, in fact, wonder why anyone would even attempt the task, just for the sake of bedeviling historians of the Braddock expedition. An individual who had the tenacity and the ability to prepare two documents as disparate as are the British A and Cholmley's Batman journals would more likely be laying schemes to topple empires than wasting himself on small projects.

Since historians are not supposed to deal in absolutes, I suppose that if someone asked the rhetorical question, "Is there any possibility *whatever* that the two Braddock journals were written by the same hand?" it would be necessary to provide the rhetorical response, "Yes,

they *may* have been." So may a Clydesdale win the Preakness. And if I were given a choice of odds, I would sooner bet on the horse.

The prologue completed, I shall proceed to the *raison d'être* of this article. Besides the version that Hamilton printed, a second, earlier draft of the British A journal is extant, and unlike the Hamilton manuscript, which, along with the journal by Cholmley's Batman, is in the possession of a private party and is not readily available, this document may be inspected by the public.<sup>13</sup> It is found among the Hardwicke Papers, volume 136, in the Manuscripts and Archives Division of the New York Public Library. Following it in the volume is an account of Braddock's defeat written by Lieutenant William Dunbar. Dunbar's manuscript, as well as the portion of the British A journal that deals with the battle, was included among the documents that I appended to my monograph, *Braddock at the Monongahela*.<sup>14</sup> The section of the journal that deals with events prior to July 9, however, has never appeared in print, although the later draft that includes the British A appendage has, of course, been published by Hamilton. The two drafts differ somewhat in style, the Hardwicke version being less polished.<sup>15</sup> In addition, each contains a few details not noted in the other. Hamilton's draft is almost certainly the work of a scribe, while the Hardwicke manuscript may well be in British A's own hand.

A few notes on transcription are in order. Since the Hardwicke draft is rather rough, it is not surprising that a number of words, all in the author's hand, are inserted with carets. In the following transcription, such words are denoted by angle brackets. The superfluous periods that the author places after many short words and small numbers are not transcribed. Superscript letters are brought down to

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13 As was noted in "An Assessment" (p. 220), the current owner of both manuscripts is Dr. Frank Siebert, of Old Town, Maine. Anyone who wishes to view the documents should contact Dr. Siebert.

14 163-65, 186-88.

15 Some of the differences are discussed in Kopperman, "An Assessment," 210-11. The question might be put, "Is it possible that some writer became aware of the draft that was later to be included in Hardwicke and using it as his basis forged a second document — the Hamilton draft — and then the Cholmley's Batman journal?" This line of speculation is more worthwhile than is the one that casts British A and Cholmley's Batman as being entirely the work of a forger, but only slightly so. By analyzing the differences between the Hardwicke and the Hamilton drafts of British A, even excluding the appended portion, one can develop a sense of the style of the man who prepared the fair copy. And that style is quite dissimilar from the one that is evidenced in Cholmley's Batman.

the line. Otherwise, this transcription simply follows the draft in Hardwicke.

But an introduction to the British A journal should not close in a discussion of technicalities. The document at hand contains one of only three journals of the entire Braddock expedition, and like the other two, by Cholmley's Batman and by Captain Robert Orme, it is invaluable for that reason alone. Furthermore, it provides one of the four or five best accounts of Braddock's defeat itself. British A ranks high as an observer and as an analyst. His account of the battle, like every other one, is not inerrant. He does, after all, claim that the British were ambushed, whereas in fact the French and Indians were no less shocked by the onset of battle than were Braddock's troops. On the whole, however, British A is highly reliable. Although he is not without bias, the level of his integrity is high. In every respect, he stands as one of our best sources on an expedition and a battle that did much to alter the flow of Pennsylvania history.<sup>16</sup>

March from Wills Creek to within 6 Miles of fort Du Quesne from June 10th to July 9th 1755

Tuesday June the 10th all the remaining Troops Marched from fort Cumberland, to the Number of 1500. for 600 men and two Engineers marched some days before to clear the road; the March was attended with many difficultys, owing to <the> road and Cariages being bad, and tho' the Line of March was intended only to be two Miles and a half in extent, yet they were frequently twice that distance. this was a Circumstance impossible to be helped, accidents occasioning many halts in different parts of the Line. at first all our provisions and amunitions were carried in Waggons, and loaded to 18 or 20 hundred, but after the 1st Day's March, they found it absolutely necessary to lighten them to 12 or 14 and carry all they could on Horses backs: the better to ease the Train which they looked upon to be too much, they sent back the next Morn, two Six pounders with their allotted Amunition. So that the Train now consisted of four twelve pounders, four Six pounders, four Howitzers and fifteen Cohorns with 300 rounds for each, and three Months provisions for 2000 Men. It was recommended to the Officers and everyone to lighten their Baggage as much as possible which they did, and every thing was sent away to the Fort: this Fort is Square, the Sides about

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<sup>16</sup> I have commented on the British A journal at greater length in *Braddock at the Monongahela* (see esp. 165-66) and in "An Assessment," 214-17.

120 feet, built on long logs of 15 or 16 feet, and 18 or 20 inches Diameter fixed upright in the ground, as close as can be, fastened within side with a nail: at the joining of of [*sic*] these logs, they have fixed Planks to make it nearly of an equal thickness, and cut Loopholes for small arms; there 9 or 10 four pounders in the faces and flanks of this Fort. the Situation is high & pleasant, on a Neck of Land formed by the Powtamack on one Side and Wills Creek on the other. this first days March five Miles, and halted till the 13th.

Friday the 13th the General beat at four, and we were on our March; this days March was closer than ye former but was still tedious with some Accidents; we Marched to George's Creek, about Six Miles, there we halted the next day, and Marched Sunday the 15th within four miles of the Little Meadows.

Monday 16th the Generall at three, and altho' the distance was short, two very long and Steep hills hindered the last Brigade from reaching the Meadows till the next day in the Morn, it being halting Day. the weather being very hot and Water bad, it caused many fluxes and fever among the Men. The Genl. finding that such a No. of Carriages delay'd our March very Much, and not thinking the Enemy to be so powerfull as we unfortunately found afterwards, he was resolved to March forwards with 1000 Men. Accordingly a disposition was Made immediately, 700 Men of the old *Standers* were picked out of the two Regts., one Company of Carpenters and two of Rangers; four Twelve Pounders, two Sixes, four howitzers, and three Cohorns, with 70 rounds for each; and between 30 and 40 days provisions for the Men; so that the Carriages <in all> did not exceed 50.

Thursday 19th everything being in readiness, we Marched forward, and reached about 8 Miles, leaving <the> Command at the Meadows to Colonel Dunbar. immediately on our Coming to our Ground, we were all alarmed by some Indians who had been sent to Spy into our Motions; the reason of our alarm was; Monaca to' the the half king, as Chief of our Indians, being on the advance the day before, was Met by 70 Indians and some French at their head, who bound him and were going to kill him, but an Indian of his own nation being among them, entreated that he might have his liberty, which after some difficulty was granted, they asked him many questions about our Numbers, and what Artillery, and were excessively Surprised at his account, however the French they had with them endeavoured to perswade the Indians, <that> it was impossible to March Artillery thro' such a Country, and that what Monacato'

said was false. nevertheless the French not knowing how to credit what he said, sent 5 Indians to reconnoitre, who met some of ours, and asked them if what they heard the Day before was true, they said it was, and if they would stop a little, they wou'd be convinced, which they did; and were no sooner so, than they ran away, saying the French themselves should come next time; this Alarm was made general, but every thing was soon quiet again.

Friday 20th the General at three, and Marched at five, the road was Stoney, and some hills, but we reached about 8 Miles, the Huntsmen brought in Venison almost every day, but the Soldiers and Bast Men begun to find themselves on short allowance; the road not being Cleared we were obliged to halt there till the 23d.

Monday the 23d the Genl. at 3, and marched within a Mile of the Yauyaogany.

Tuesday the 24th we crossed it very early in the Morning. the crossing of this River was extreemly beautifull, and afforded us a pleasant prospect; it undoubtedly appeared much more so to us, having had nothing but a continued thickett to March through, since our first setting out, close to the Crossing of this River is a Small Log Fort, built by the Indian Women last Year to secure themselves and Children in when Mr. Washington was engag'd with the French; we marched this Day 5 Miles the other side the River. on our March, the Guides imagined they saw some Indians frequently lurking round our Line, which we had reason afterwards to think true. a Waggoner going out next Morn to bring in his Horses; was surprised by a party of Indians, who shot him in four places in the Belly, and his Horse in the Neck; he made a Shift to return to Camp, but after Lingerig some days he died; the same Morn 4 People going out to look after their Horses, were kill'd and Scalp'd, one of the Guides shot an Indian or frenchman as was found by the quantity of Blood spilt on the Ground for at least an 100 yards, where they found a french gun, and the place where somebody had been newly Buried.

Wednesday 25th Marched about two miles the other Side of the great Meadows. it was strongly imagin'd if we met with an opposition it would be there, but we marched through without any Molestation or Alarm. there are about 150 Acres of Meadow Land entirely clear. in the Middle of this spot is fort Necessity; built by Mr. Washington last year when he retreated from the French. it was a Small four sided figure with a Trench dug round it, they had Some very good Swivels, which when they retreated from thence the French disabled intirely, but left them in the ditch, there are many human Bones all

round the Spot, but at present every thing is intirely pulled down.

The 26th March'd about four Miles and cross'd a very high and Steep Mountain, our Encampment was under a rocky Hill where 150 or 200 french and Indians had Encamped the night before. they had drawn Many odd figures on the Trees, expressing in red paint, the Scalpes and Prisoners they had taken with them, there were three french names wrote, vizt. Rochefort, Picauday, and Chauraudray. from this place Capt. Dobson with 70 Volunteers set out for Redstone Creek, where a party of french and Indians had been all Winter. they found nothing but a Batteau and some Canoes, with some pieces of Pork and Beef; all which they burned. at going out they took a Bisquit and a gill of Rum each man, on which they were obliged to Subsist 48 hours.

The 27th marched to Guests or Gist's Plantation, over a long and steep mountain; our course to the Eastward of the North; here the Mountains begin to Diminish, and a fine Ple<as>ant rich Soil is seen:

The 28th marched within half a Mile of the great crossing of the Yauaugany River, over exceeding fine ground; our course Northerly.

The 29th crossed it without opposition, as was not expected; Encamped on the other side.

The 30th remained in Camp. a Party advanceing to Clear the road for next days march.

July 1st March'd early over a very long & high Ridge, the Yauaugany running on each side of us. there were found frequently peices of Coal, which when tried burnt like Pitch; in this days March we Made 8 or 9 Miles, soil good, pretty Level, course still Northerly.

The 2d Marched about three, and reached 6 Miles to a place call'd Jacob's Cabbin; course North.

The 3d March'd at four, and got to Lick Creek, the ground in some parts a little uneven, but mostly very good; this Creek takes its name from a Lick being there, where Deer, Buffaloes, and Bears came to lick the Salt out of the Swamp. This Day made about 5 Miles and to the Westward of the North.

The 4th March'd at three, and about 6 Miles. Two of our Indians went to Reconnoitre the french Fort.

The 5th remain'd in Camp except a Reconnoitring Party with Sr. John Sinclair, and an Engineer who returned the Same Evening. this Day a party from Colonel Dunbar came in with an 100 Oxen, and a large quantity of flour, which was a Very Seasonable Supply having lived on Salt provisions the whole time.

The 6th Marched very early: about ten, the two Indians who went to Reconnoitre return'd with a french Scalp; they told us they saw some Canoes coming down the Monongahela with men and Provisions to the Fort, which we had reason afterwards to be Sorry for: they said the french had Made no alterations in their fort, except changing their flag from on Bastion to another, and that they had no advanced Posts whatever, after we had March'd 6 Miles nearly, we were allarmed by some Indians who fired on our Right flank; they put the Men in a good deal of confusion; however they fired at them very Briskly, and obliged them to retire; there was no Damage done on either side, except at the beginning of the fire, our own Indians interfering, unluckily one of them was shot by our own People; it was Monaca to' the's Son who had brought in the Scalp that same Morning; when we halted we had him buried with all the Decency in our Power, which the Rest of the Indians Seem'd Much pleased with; old Monacato the his father, who is really a good Man, was hardly able to Support his loss, he said had his Son been kill'd by the french it would have been triffling, but what he regretted Most was his being kill'd by our own People. we sent a party immediately to pursue them, who tracked some blood for a considerable way. they found two Spears, and some other little things belonging to the Tawwaws: we went on the Rest of the Day without any opposition, and halted after we had Marched ten Miles.

The 7th advanced both Parties. after we had Marched about 5 Miles along a very fine Ridge, we were obliged to halt at least four hours, the guides having lost their way; we kept very Much to the Right of The old Indian path, to avoid some very bad Swamps, which put the guides entirely out of their way; however after some reconnoitring, we found a tolerable good Road, but were obliged to halt within 600 yards of the first halting place. altho our accounts before we came into the Country, were very favourable for us in regard to having good Water, we still found ourselves very much streightened for it, being obliged generally to goe at least half a mile for it, and even then very bad.

The 8th we Marched very early. in this day's March was a hollow way through which we were obliged to pass, the greatest breadth for at least three Miles was 50 yards, two very Steep hills encompassing us: there we were obliged to reinforce our flanks; but however the fatal Stroke was reserved till next day; which the wise thought would never happen.

It may be Satisfactory to be particular in the next day's account



which is as follows; in Wednesday July the 9th as we were to cross the Monongahela that day, and So near the Fort as we were drawing, it was found absolutely necessary to detach a Party to Secure the crossings. Accordingly Lt. Col: Gage with 300 Men, the two Companies of grenadiers and two peices of Canon, Marched before daybreak, and before the Road was cleared. at Day break the whole Detachment Marched tho' Slowly, having a great deal of trouble with the Road; after about 5 Miles we came to the first crossing of the River which was extreamly fine, having a view of at least four Miles up a River, undoubtedly pleasing, the breadth about 600 yards; near this first crossing, our advanced party had Scared some Indians from their holes; finding many Spears, and their fires newly burning; from this crossing, to the other was near two Miles, and much the finest of the two: on the other side of the Second crossing, the advanced Party had halted at Frazier's House, close to the Bank, which was very Steep, and took two hours to make it passable for the Carriages. The General now thinking the dangerous Passes were over, did not Suffer the Advanced Party to proceed any farther than just the Distance of a few yards from the main body; it was proposed to Strengthen the flanks, but rejected. between 12 and one, after we had Marched about 800 yards from the River, our first flank upon the left was fired upon, and every Man killed or wounded. the Alarm soon became general, and the fire was very brisk from Right to Left; the Indians were every one of them planted behind Trees, and fired with the <utmost> Security; the ground from where the Enemy fired, and were posted was rising and advantageous. upon our right were a Couple of Immense large Trees, fallen on each other, which the Indians were in possession of, and annoyed us from very much; but an officer and a party of Men soon dislodged them, and by pretty brisk fire, kept our Right tolerably easy; The Guns which were all rather to the Left fired both Round and grape Shot, and with great Execution. The Indians, whither ordered or not, I can't say, kept an incessant fire on the guns, and kill'd the Men very fast. The Indians from their irregular method of fighting, by running from one place to another, obliged us to wheel from right to Left, to quit the Guns, and then hastily to return and cover them. at the first of the firing the General who was at the head of the Detachment came to the front, and the American Troops tho' without any orders ran up immediately, some behind Trees, and others into the Ranks, and put the whole into confusion. The Men from what Storys they had heard of the Indians, in regard to their Scalping; and Mohawking,

were so pannick Struck; that their officers had little or no Command over them, and if they got a Shot at one, the fire immediately ran through the whole Line, tho' they saw nothing but Trees; The whole Detachment was frequently divided into Several parties, and then they were sure to fire on one another. the greatest part of the men who were behind trees, were either kill'd or wounded by our People, even one or two officers were killed by their own Platoon. such was the confusion that the men were sometimes 20 or 30 deep, and he thought himself Securest, who was in the Center. during all this time the Enemy kept continually firing, and every shot took place. The general had given orders that they should fire in Platoons, which was impossible to be Effected, tho' certainly a very bad way as we were Situated. within about two hours and a half, the Men were obliged to /at least did/ Retreat 3 or 4 times, and were as often rallied. we found at last, that we should never gain the Day, unless we dislodged them from the Rising ground, upon which Lt. Col: Burton with the Grenadiers attempted the hill; for some time we were in hopes of their Success, but Some Shot killing two or three of them, the rest Retreated very fast, leaving their officers, entreating and commanding but without any Regard to what they did.

The Indians were Scalping at the beginning of the affair, which we heard was a Sign of their being dubious of Success, but it is certain they never gave ground.

General Braddock who was in the heat of the action the whole time, was greatly exposed, he had 4 Horses Shot under him, and Balls through Several parts of his Clo<a>ths: at the latter end of the unlucky affair, a Shot hit him in the Body, which occasioned his death three or four days afterwards.

Sir Peter Halkett was killed at the beginning, and many other officers; after they had Retreated from the Hill, the men made some Stand, and the Canon kept a tolerable good fire, but very soon for want of Sufficient guard to it, the Men were obliged to Desert them. during this time the Waggoners who imagined things would turn out badly, had taken the gears from their horses and galloped <intirely> away, so that if fortune had turned in our favour, we had not one horse left to draw the Train along. however after about four hours incessant fire and two thirds of our killed or wounded, they as if by beat of Drum, turned to the Right about, and made a most precipitate Retreat, every one trying who Should be the first. the Enemy pursued us, butchering as they came, as far as the other Side of the River; in crossing it they Shot Many in the Water, both Men and Women,

Scalping and cutting them in a most Barbarous manner.

on the other Side of the River most of us halted to consider what to doe, but the Men being so terrified desired to go on, nay indeed they would, Melancholy Situation! expecting every Moment to have our Retreat cut off /which half a Dozen Men would very easily have done/ and a certainty of Meeting no Provisions for 60 Miles.

Retreated to Col. Dunbar, 12 Miles beyond Gist's Plantation, which Plantation is 50 Miles from the Place of Action.

Killed 385.                      Wounded 328.                      not Wounded 523  
[endorsed] Journal of Genl Braddocks March to the Ohio &c 1755