

CHRISTOPHER GIST AND HIS SONS¹

As early as 1727 traders on their way west passed through the region that is now western Pennsylvania. These traders are usually classified as French and English; the latter group, however, included German, Scotch, and Irish inhabitants of the English colonies. Today little is known of a majority of these men, yet they were here, roamed our hills, and conducted their business with the aborigines. Some of them formed temporary establishments located at points now thickly populated; for then as now places of convenient natural resources formed trading points. They were not interested in permanent settlement; they were here to trade and for the adventure that such a life afforded. They were for a greater part of the time in motion and have left little trace behind. There may be remote instances of English-speaking men with their families west of the Alleghenies prior to 1750, but they have left little record for the present-day historian. John Fraser, the trader and gunsmith, was living on the Allegheny River at French Creek as early as 1745, and in 1753 on the Monongahela at Turtle Creek, but little is known of his family. George Croghan conducted extensive trading in this vicinity previous to 1750 and, on August 2, 1749, purchased a large quantity of land from the Iroquois Indians, part of it lying within the present city of Pittsburgh. He did not, however, take up a residence there until some years later.²

¹ The author of this paper, Mr. Lawrence A. Orrill of Crafton, Pennsylvania, is a former student of the Carnegie Institute of Technology with a hobby for historical research. The paper was read at a meeting of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania on January 26, 1932. *Ed.*

² Charles A. Hanna, *The Wilderness Trail*, vol. 2, ch. 9 (New York, 1911); J. H. Newton, ed., *History of Venango County, Pennsylvania*, 42, 442 (Columbus, Ohio, 1879); *Colonial Records of Pennsylvania*, 5:659 (Harrisburg, 1851); Mary Carson Darlington, ed., *History of Colonel Henry Bouquet and the Western Frontiers of Pennsylvania, 1747-1764*, 38, 55, 72 (n. p., c1920); Albert T. Volwiler, *George Croghan and the Westward Movement, 1741-1782*, 13 (Cleveland, 1926).

For the making of the first permanent settlement in western Pennsylvania, colonizing, and carrying on agriculture, credit seems due Christopher Gist, agent of the Ohio Company. Although his settlement was temporarily abandoned during the period of the French and Indian War, it was later reclaimed by members of his family and remained in the family until the latter part of the eighteenth century. To the early inhabitants east of the mountains it was known as Gist's settlement or Gist's plantation and to Gist himself as Monongahela. It is indicated on Fry and Jefferson's map of 1755 as Gist's settlement, and on Lewis Evans' map of 1755 as Gist's.³ About 1765 it was named Mount Braddock by Thomas Gist, who resided there. The location can now be seen in passing along the main highway from Connellsville to Uniontown. About six miles from Uniontown, within sight of the Mount Braddock station, the spot can be identified by a large stone mansion on the left, standing well back from the road. This house was erected in 1802 by Colonel Isaac Meason, who purchased the site from members of the Gist family in 1795.⁴ The highway crosses a part of the original tract.

Gist's settlement was an oasis in the wilderness, and no place in western Pennsylvania, except the forks of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, was better known to English-speaking people in the middle part of the eighteenth century. Colonel George Washington in June, 1754, temporarily fortified there on his way to Redstone, now Brownsville, but because of the pitiful condition of his forces was compelled to retreat when he learned that the French from Fort

³ Franklin Ellis, ed., *History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania*, 25, note 2 (Philadelphia, 1882). The maps are reproduced in William M. Darlington, ed., *Christopher Gist's Journals*, 30, 90 (Pittsburgh, 1893). See also map facing p. 80.

⁴ Fayette County, Pennsylvania, Archives, Mount Braddock abstract of title; Deed Book C, p. 83, 85. Colonel Isaac Meason was a Virginian who came to the region of the Youghiogheny as early as 1770. He purchased the estates of Thomas Gist and Colonel William Crawford and in 1799 was credited with owning six thousand acres.

Duquesne were on the way to meet him. It was there on the night of July 10, 1755, that Major General Edward Braddock was carried, mortally wounded, from his frightful defeat on the Monongahela. He remained there through the night and part of the next day until hospital stores arrived in wagons from Colonel Dunbar's camp a few miles distant; he was then given attention and carried on his way. Two days later he died and was buried a short distance over Laurel Hill, in a secret grave.⁵

Christopher Gist throughout his sturdy manhood was a remarkable character of the Virginia and Pennsylvania frontiers. He was capable, resourceful, and loyal, and was always just in his dealings with the natives. He made three important trips, of which he kept careful journals, which have proved of great value to historians of later years. Two of these trips were as an explorer in the interest of the Ohio Company, and one was as a guide to the youthful and inexperienced Washington, then only twenty-one years of age. On each of these journeys he penetrated western Pennsylvania.

The journal of the first tour, covering a period from October 31, 1750, to May 19, 1751, was published for the first time in London, in 1776, in Pownall's *Topographical Description*. Probably because of confusion caused by the War of Independence, few copies reached North America, and the journal was therefore little known in this country. The journal of the second tour, covering a period from November 4, 1751, to March 29, 1752, was discovered by William M. Darlington in the British Museum and was published by him in 1893. The journal of the third trip, extending from November 14, 1753, to January 4, 1754, when Gist acted as Washington's guide from Wills Creek (Cumberland,

⁵ Pennsylvania Indian Forts Commission, *Report of the Commission to Locate the Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania*, 2:28 (second edition, Harrisburg, 1916); Winthrop Sargent, *The History of an Expedition against Fort Du Quesne, in 1755; under Major-General Edward Braddock*, 357 (Historical Society of Pennsylvania, *Publications*—Philadelphia, 1885); John S. Ritenour, *Old Tom Fossil*, 102 (Pittsburgh, 1926).

Maryland) to Fort Le Bœuf, located on the present site of Waterford, in Erie County, Pennsylvania, was published for the first time in 1836 by the Massachusetts Historical Society.⁶

Christopher Gist, grandfather of the subject of this narrative, was the immigrant ancestor of a notable and distinguished family. His wife was Edith Cromwell, daughter of Henry Cromwell, who was also an English immigrant and, it is claimed, a first cousin of the Lord Protector. He arrived from England sometime before 1682 — the precise date is unknown — and settled on the south side of the Patapsco River in Baltimore County, Maryland. He died in Baltimore County in 1691, and his wife died in 1694. Land conveyances call him a planter. He was a member of the Baltimore County grand jury in March, 1682, and one of the justices of the county in 1689.⁷

Captain Richard Gist, born in 1684 in Baltimore County, was the only child of Christopher Gist and Edith Cromwell. When a young man he was responsible for considerable surveying along the Western Shore of Maryland and became an extensive holder of land, part of which he inherited from his parents. He married Zipporah Murray on December 7, 1704. On March 2, 1727, he was commissioned a justice and commissioner of Baltimore County and in 1729, by an act of the assembly, he was appointed one of seven commissioners to lay out Baltimore Town. In 1736 he became a presiding justice; he represented his county in the provincial assembly for two years before his death in August, 1741. His military commission of captain was probably received in the Baltimore County militia.⁸

⁶ Thomas Pownall, *A Topographical Description of Such Parts of North America as Are Contained in the (Annexed) Map of the Middle British Colonies*, appendix, 7-16 (London, 1776); Darlington, *Gist's Journals*, 30, 67-136; Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, third series, 5:101-108 (Boston, 1836).

⁷ George N. Mackenzie, ed., *Colonial Families of the United States of America*, 4:107 (Baltimore, 1914); Christopher Johnston, "Gist Family of Baltimore County," in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 8:373 (December, 1913).

⁸ *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 8:373, 374, 375 (December, 1913).

Richard Gist and Zipporah Murray had four sons and two daughters: Christopher, Nathaniel, William, Thomas, Edith, and Jemima. All the sons, except Thomas, married daughters of Joshua Howard, who served on King James' side in the Monmouth Rebellion in 1685. Christopher's wife was Sarah; Nathaniel's, Mary; and William's, Violetta. Thomas married Susan Cockey.⁹ Nathaniel Gist was a man of note, and active in military affairs in Baltimore as late as the Revolutionary War.¹⁰ William Gist and Violetta Howard were the great-grandparents of William Henry Gist, fortieth governor of South Carolina (1858-60). Their son William migrated to South Carolina sometime prior to the Revolutionary War and became a Loyalist captain in the battle of King's Mountain, where he was captured by the Whigs. He escaped and made his way back to Charleston.¹¹ Thomas Gist and Susan Cockey were the parents of General Mordecai Gist of Revolutionary fame; and of Colonel Thomas, Major Joshua, and Captain John Gist, who also served their country in that eventful struggle.¹² Little can be learned of the two sisters, Edith and Jemima.

Christopher, the eldest of Captain Gist's sons, was born about 1706, and very likely assisted his father in surveying at an early age. This may account for his skill in that capacity when selected by the Ohio Company to fill a position of importance in later years. Early records disclose that he purchased Lot 56 in the original Baltimore Town, which his father was active in laying out.¹³ Sometime later he became

⁹ Mackenzie, *Colonial Families of the United States*, 1:267; *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 8:374, 376, 377, 378 (December, 1913).

¹⁰ James Veech, *The Monongahela of Old*, 117 n. (Pittsburgh, 1858-92).

¹¹ Lyman C. Draper, *King's Mountain and Its Heroes*, 355 (Cincinnati, 1881).

¹² Hester D. Richardson, *Side-Lights on Maryland History*, 2:109 (Baltimore, 1913).

¹³ J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County from the Earliest Period to the Present Day*, 53 (Philadelphia, 1881). This lot was located on or near Exchange Place at Commerce Street in the present city of Baltimore.

a merchant, but apparently did not prosper in this line, for in 1745 he made an assignment to Cromwell and Stansbury, said to be relatives of his.¹⁴ At about this time he and his brother Nathaniel sold to a Robert North one thousand acres of land at the head of Green Spring Valley, now within the city of Baltimore.¹⁵ He was evidently active for a number of years in St. Paul's Episcopal Church (then the only church in Baltimore, a town of less than twenty houses), for in 1742 he was appointed to receive subscriptions for the purchase of two acres of land on which to build a chapel.¹⁶ The next record found concerning him is a conveyance in 1750 of "Gist's Limepits in Baltimore County," where he refers to himself as "late of Baltimore County . . . but now in the Colony of Virginia." Little more than this is known of his early life. The exact date on which he left his native province is also uncertain. He and his wife, Sarah Howard, were the parents of three sons and two daughters: Nathaniel, Thomas, Richard, Ann (Nancy), and Violetta.¹⁷ In the latter part of the year 1750 the family was living in North Carolina, "on the north side of the Yadkin River, and on the west side of the stream marked Saw Mill Creek, near and west of Reddies River, near the present town of Wilkesbarre, in Wilkes County."¹⁸ Just what caused Gist to seek a future home for his family in a land so far from his friends and kinsmen is not easily explained. There was, however, at about this time, a small migration into this section from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. It was at this time that

¹⁴ *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 8:376 (December, 1913); Ritenour, *Old Tom Fossit*, 229.

¹⁵ *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 25:440 (October, 1917).

¹⁶ Scharf, *History of Baltimore*, 519.

¹⁷ *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 8:376, 377 (December, 1913).

¹⁸ Darlington, *Gist's Journals*, 136. According to the librarian of the North Carolina State Library at Raleigh, the name of Wilkesbarre was later changed to the present Wilkesboro.

Squire Boone with his family and notable son, Daniel, set out from eastern Pennsylvania and settled in the same section.¹⁹

It is not definitely known how long Gist lived in North Carolina prior to his acceptance of the proposal of the Ohio Company in 1750. This company, which had been formed by a number of influential gentlemen of England and Virginia, petitioned King George II in 1748 for five hundred thousand acres of land lying west of the Allegheny Mountains and in the Ohio Valley. The purpose was to extend British trade to the then far West and settle the country for the English Crown. In 1749 a charter was accordingly granted to John Hanbury, a London merchant, and his Virginia associates, for two hundred thousand acres on condition that they settle thereon a specified number of families and build a fort for their protection within a given time. Upon fulfilling this requirement, an additional three hundred thousand acres were to be made available for extending the proposed settlements. Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia and George Washington were later added as members of the company, and Colonel Thomas Cresap was appointed field manager with headquarters at Wills Creek. Cresap at one time had lived in Baltimore and later in Pennsylvania; but, after a stormy career with the Pennsylvania authorities, he had settled at Wills Creek. He was responsible for selecting Gist as agent for the company.²⁰

The proposition made to Gist was attractive and he readily accepted. Setting out on October 31, 1750, with instructions to make a general survey of the region in which the company's lands were to be located, he passed through the central part of Pennsylvania and arrived on November 19 at

¹⁹ Reuben G. Thwaites, *Daniel Boone*, 15-17 (New York and London, 1913).

²⁰ Darlington, *Gist's Journals*, 225; Lawrence C. Wroth, "The Story of Thomas Cresap, a Maryland Pioneer," in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 9:1-37 (March, 1914); Corra Bacon-Foster, *Early Chapters in the Development of the Patomac Route to the West*, 10 (Washington, 1912). An account of the Maryland-Pennsylvania boundary dispute in which Cresap was concerned is in *Colonial Records*, 4:57-145.

Shannopin Town, situated on the Allegheny River near the location of the present Thirty-third Street in Pittsburgh.²¹ After spending some time here he passed on through western Pennsylvania and Ohio, arriving at Muskingum, a Wyandot town, on December 14; here, for the first time, he met George Croghan and Andrew Montour, men with whom he was later frequently associated.²² Here he remained for some time, cultivating the friendship of the Indians and making observations of the country. He then crossed the Ohio River, traveled almost within sight of the falls of the Ohio (Louisville, Kentucky), then turned eastward through Kentucky and Virginia, and arrived at his Yadkin home on May 18, 1751, after almost seven months' absence. There was little joy in his home-coming, for he found his cabin deserted. An old man nearby informed him that his family had been frightened away, "for the Indians had killed five People in the Winter near that Place," and had gone to Roanoke, Virginia, thirty-five miles distant. There Gist found them the next day. His journal of this trip, which was his official report to the Ohio Company, contains the account of some very unusual experiences, and a detailed description of the country he passed through.²³

In July, 1751, Gist received instructions from the company to explore the Monongahela Valley and the south side of the Ohio River to the Kanawha Valley. He left Wills Creek on November 4, and proceeded over Nemacolin's Trail, which took the general course of the present National Pike, to what is now Fayette County, Pennsylvania. After observing different parts of this section, he crossed the Monongahela River into Washington County and continued on his way

²¹ Neville B. Craig, *The History of Pittsburgh*, 5 n. (Pittsburgh, 1917). A further description of Shannopin Town is in Charles W. Dahlinger, "The Marquis Duquesne," *ante*, p. 135.

²² The town of the Wyandots was located on the Tuscarawas, head branch of the Muskingum River, about a mile from the present Coshocton, Ohio, and at this time consisted of about one hundred families. Croghan had a store there. Darlington, *Gist's Journals*, 37, 105.

²³ Darlington, *Gist's Journals*, 32-66.

through the western part of West Virginia, reaching the Kanawha Valley in the early part of 1752. He returned through very much the same country and arrived at Wills Creek by the end of March. This expedition was not so perilous as the first trip but revealed some very rich, well-timbered country, particularly in the southwestern part of Pennsylvania.²⁴

After presenting a report of this trip, Gist had but little time to spend with his family. Sometime in April, 1752, Governor Dinwiddie made arrangements for conducting a treaty with the Indians to confirm the Lancaster Treaty of 1744, in which, the Virginians claimed, the Indians had acknowledged the right of the colony of Virginia to the lands upon the Ohio River. He appointed Colonel Joshua Fry, Lunsford Lomax, and Colonel James Patton as commissioners, and Andrew Montour and Conrad Weiser as interpreters, and contracted with Thomas Cresap to transport goods (presents) to Logstown, where the conference was to be held.²⁵ Gist was to be present at the proceedings as a representative of the Ohio Company. He had advertised the conference on his second tour, urging the Indians whom he met to be present.²⁶

On Thursday, May 28, about three miles out of Shanopin Town, the commissioners were met by a number of

²⁴ Darlington, *Gist's Journals*, 67-79. Nemacolin was a friendly Indian who assisted Gist at this time in making the trail that was afterwards named for him. Will H. Lowdermilk, *History of Cumberland, (Maryland) from the Time of the Indian Town, Caiuctucuc, in 1728*, 29 (Washington, 1878).

²⁵ The proceedings of the Lancaster Treaty are in *Colonial Records*, 4:698-737. Logstown, a once noted Indian and French town, "stood on the first and second bank on the north side of the Ohio River, immediately below the present town of Economy, eighteen miles from Pittsburgh, in Beaver County, Pennsylvania." For a further description see Darlington, *Henry Bouquet*, 9.

²⁶ The material relative to the Logstown Treaty contained in this and the following paragraph is based on "The Treaty of Logg's Town, 1752," in the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 13:43-174 (October, 1905). The proceedings are taken from "Contemporary Copies in the Collection of the Virginia Historical Society."

Delawares, who welcomed them to the town, where they remained for the night. At this time the Delawares had no king, but their leaders were two brothers, Shingiss and The Beaver. They are described as dressed after the English fashion, ornamented with silver breastplates and plenty of wampum. The next day two meetings were held here with remarkable success. Saturday morning all the goods were put on board four canoes lashed together and the commissioners departed for Logstown. After going some distance they came to a place where Queen Aliquippa resided; here they went ashore and were warmly received. After the good queen had presented them with a string of wampum and a dish of fish to carry along, some food was set out, of which they all ate. The commissioners then presented the queen with a brass kettle, tobacco, and some trifles, and took their leave.²⁷ Because of the bad weather that had set in, shelter for the night was sought at a trader's cabin, some distance farther down the river. On Sunday morning, May 31, they arrived at Logstown, where for two weeks Gist, the commissioners, and interpreters, negotiated the Logstown Treaty. Many questions were discussed, and many objections raised by the Indians. Although a copy of the Lancaster Treaty was carried by the commissioners and it was regarded as authentic by all present, the Indians did not at first agree to the boundary line assumed by the Virginians. They were willing that a fort should be built for protection against the French, but objected to a settlement around it. On Saturday, June 13, with the assistance of the reliable Andrew Montour, who talked to the Indians privately for half an hour, the chiefs signed and sealed the treaty. Gist's name appears as a witness.

Little is known of Gist for the remainder of the year 1752, except that he, with Andrew Montour, Thomas Cresap, and the latter's son Michael petitioned the Virginia colony for

²⁷ C. Hale Sipe, *The Indian Chiefs of Pennsylvania*, 257 (Butler, Pennsylvania, c1927).

eighty thousand acres of land on the Ohio River "and the waters thereof, not to interfere with the grant already made to the Ohio Company." For some reason the petition was never granted.²⁸ Sometime early in 1753, Gist became actively engaged in laying out his settlement and inducing families to take adjoining sections. For himself he selected a choice piece at the foot of Laurel Hill. It is probable that, while on his journey through this country in 1751 and 1752, he looked about for the most desirable location for himself and his family and decided on this fertile, well-situated land.

In August, 1753, while William Trent was conducting a treaty at Logstown, Gist was intrusted with a message from Governor Dinwiddie to the Indians there, inviting them to a council at Winchester, Virginia. As he was prevented by business from leaving at once he sent Mr. Thomas Burney in advance and went himself a few days later.²⁹ Upon his arrival a consultation was held and, because of the information Trent had received that the French were building a fort at Presqu' Isle (Erie, Pennsylvania) and a road from that place south to French Creek, it was thought best that Gist should proceed at once to Williamsburg and relate the news to Governor Dinwiddie. Trent in return promised to take the Indians to Winchester within a few days. This mission of Gist's was successful, for in September the Winchester Treaty, which included matters of importance to the Ohio Company, was negotiated. Gist was probably at Williamsburg at the time of the treaty, but he was appointed with Montour and Trent to distribute to the Indians at some future date the gifts of guns and ammunition which the Virginians feared to give them at the time.³⁰

²⁸ *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 5:241 (January, 1898).

²⁹ Darlington, *Henry Bouquet*, 27. This is the same Thomas Burney, a blacksmith, whom Gist had met at Muskingum in 1750.

³⁰ Darlington, *Henry Bouquet*, 12-14, 37; Volwiler, *Croghan and the Westward Movement*, 81.

The governor, after hearing Gist's story concerning the French fort at Presqu' Isle, immediately prepared to take some action, and on October 31, 1753, commissioned young George Washington as an envoy to deliver a message of protest to the French commander at Fort Le Bœuf. Gist at the same time was selected to act as the young man's guide. His journal of this trip is his third and the last of which we have knowledge. He and Washington, together with John Davison, Henry Steward, William Jenkins, Barnaby Currin, Jacob Van Braam, and John MacQuire, departed from Wills Creek on November 15 and followed Nemacolin's Trail, with which Gist was now thoroughly familiar. On November 17 they arrived at Gist's "new Settlement," where they remained until November 19. The stop is mentioned in both Washington's and Gist's journals of the trip, and this is the first authoritative information we have of the actual existence of the settlement.³¹

On November 22 the travelers reached John Fraser's cabin, where they borrowed a canoe. They sent their baggage down the Monongahela River in charge of two or three members of the party, and Washington and Gist set out on horseback. On November 23, Washington, in the company of Gist, viewed for the first time the forks of the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers, a place which, for the five succeeding years, occupied much of the attention of both men. They remained here for a short time looking over the possibilities and natural resources of the location and considering it as a site for a fort that might be built in the spring. Continuing their journey to

³¹ This and the three following paragraphs are based on Washington's and Gist's journals of 1753. Washington's journal, first published at Williamsburg in 1754 and reprinted in London in the same year, is to be found in his *Writings*, 1:11-40 (edited by Worthington C. Ford—New York and London, 1889); and in his *Diaries . . . 1748-1799*, 1:431-66 (edited by John C. Fitzpatrick—Boston and New York, 1925). A reprint in convenient form of both journals is in a pamphlet entitled *A Reprint of the Journals of George Washington and His Guide, Christopher Gist . . . in November-December, 1753* (edited and compiled by Don M. Larrabee—n. p., 1929).

Logstown they called upon Shingiss, the Delaware king, who was then living on the south side of the Ohio River, a short distance below the mouth of Chartiers Creek.³² Gist no doubt remembered Shingiss from past meetings and very likely introduced him to the young major, who explained the nature of his trip. Shingiss was urged to accompany them to Logstown to talk over matters of importance with Tanacharison, the Half-King, and other sachems. This he did. On November 30, Washington, Gist, and the rest of the party departed from Logstown for Venango. Gist was not so familiar with this part of the country but some of the Indians were able to show the way. The story of the trip for the next four weeks is well known and need not be repeated here.

This journey as Washington's guide may be called Gist's most responsible undertaking, the full importance of which he did not live to see. On two occasions, using his woodsman's instinct and experience, he saved the young major's life. On one of these occasions, while they were returning alone through what is now Butler County,³³ a traitorous Indian guide fired upon them when but a few feet away. The shot missed its mark and Gist was upon the Indian in an instant, seizing him before he could reload. He would have killed the unsuccessful assassin, had Washington not intervened. The Indian was kept for some time and then was given undue consideration and released. Washington and Gist gave up a night's much-needed rest to make time after this experience. They traveled all night and all the next day, traversing the present northern Allegheny County, and arrived at the mouth of Pine Creek (Etna) on December 28, where they found the Allegheny River full of floating ice. Washington was footsore and weary from making his way through the wilderness and snow but, after a night's rest, they constructed a raft of

³² This location is now known as the Indian Mound at McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania.

³³ To hasten their return, Washington and Gist had separated from the rest of the party and proceeded alone "the nearest Way through the Woods." Washington, *Writings*, 1:35 (Ford edition).

logs and attempted to cross the river. This proved a hazardous venture for they were compelled to force their way with poles through the jammed ice. When they were almost across and had floated with the current to a point near the present Washington Crossing Bridge at Fortieth Street, Pittsburgh, the young major, fatigued and inexperienced, lost his balance and plunged into ten feet of water. He was fortunate enough to be able to grasp the raft and, with the assistance of Gist, was drawn to safety. As they were now jammed in the ice it was impossible to reach the shore. They drifted to an island, where they remained all night, and the next morning they reached the shore by walking over solid ice. Gist had all his fingers and some of his toes frozen, so severe had been the cold during the night, but they made their way over a hill, through the present East End of Pittsburgh, to Fraser's, where they intended taking horses for the remainder of the journey. They spent the night of December 30 at this hospitable trader's home and the next day paid a visit to Queen Aliquippa, who resided at the mouth of the Youghiogheny River (McKeesport), and who had expressed a desire to meet the two Virginia representatives. The remainder of the day and that night were spent at Fraser's and on New Year's Day, 1754, they set out for Gist's plantation, where they arrived the second of January. Here Washington purchased a horse and saddle from one of the settlers and, after remaining with Gist two days, continued on his journey to Williamsburg. On January 16 he presented Governor Dinwiddie with the unfavorable reply of the French commander.

Washington relates in his journal that on January 6, while he and Gist were traveling somewhere between the latter's settlement and Wills Creek, they met seventeen horses loaded with material and stores for the new fort and the next day several families going out to settle. This is an indication of the progress of the Ohio Company and Gist's colony.

In this important mission of Washington's, with Gist as his guide, there was born a friendship between the two men

that lasted until Gist's death. They were together often. In the defeats and victories of the French and Indian War Gist was continually serving the young colonel in some capacity and, when Gist sought assistance and influence to promote a cause, he found Washington ever willing to assist and encourage him. In the succeeding years this friendship was cemented; and Gist's sons, Nathaniel and Thomas, enjoyed the friendship of Washington until well after the Revolutionary War.

History records the prompt action Governor Dinwiddie obtained after he had read the contents of the French commander's letter. The reply was not at all satisfactory, and he immediately issued orders to Captain William Trent, who was then at the mouth of Redstone Creek building a storehouse for the Ohio Company, to discontinue this work and to proceed to the forks of the two rivers and erect a fort there. On February 17, 1754, Trent arrived at the forks, where he met Gist and others; there they laid plans and picked a site for the proposed fort. Within a few days Ensign Ward arrived with his workmen from Redstone Creek. After Trent had delivered a speech to the Indians who had gathered about, land was cleared and the foundation laid. While the work was in progress a message arrived from Gist, who had departed a few days previous, giving the information that Washington with a detachment of the Virginia Regiment was on the way to support the cause. From then on, Gist's duties in the Ohio Company kept him busily engaged in arranging for provisions for the workmen. On April 17, however, before Washington was in a position to give assistance, the French swarmed upon the partly finished fort and compelled the Ohio Company to abandon its plans, at least temporarily.³⁴

Gist was content to remain at his plantation, then thought to be at a safe distance from harm, while the French took up the work where Ward left off. While they were thus engaged, Gist was left in peace, but as soon as Fort Duquesne

³⁴ Craig, *Pittsburgh*, 9-12; Darlington, *Henry Bouquet*, 41-47.

was finished it became the seat of organized action. One of the first acts of the commander, Contrecoeur, was to send Lieutenant La Force with a number of men to scout the country to the south for intelligence concerning English settlers. Under the pretense of hunting deserters he came to Gist's place, now a trading point, in the early part of May, but continued beyond to scout the surrounding country. At noon on May 26 his party, consisting of fifty men, some of whom were Indians, returned and would have killed a cow and broken everything in Gist's house, had not two friendly Indians who lived with Gist in the settlement dissuaded them. They then inquired of Gist where the Half-King was, but, upon his pleading ignorance, they departed. Gist trailed them to within five miles of the Great Meadows, where Washington was encamped. Very early the next morning he arrived at the Great Meadows, where he related to Washington what had taken place. This alarmed the major to such an extent that he immediately dispatched seventy-five of his men to look into the matter. He then wrote a letter to Governor Dinwiddie, which he gave to Gist to deliver, with the request that he give the governor detailed particulars of what had taken place. Gist was on this mission when Washington defeated Jumonville. On June 6 he returned to the Great Meadows with a reply from the governor. He reported that, to the great satisfaction of the Virginia authorities, the prisoners captured in the battle had arrived at Winchester, and he also brought the sad news of the death at Wills Creek of Colonel Fry, who had been preparing to join Washington with additional troops for the western campaign.³⁵

While on this mission Gist, with George Croghan, was appointed deputy to Major John Carlyle, commissary, for the expedition to the Ohio. One of his first acts was to arrange an agreement with Robert Callender to furnish eighty horse loads of flour to be delivered to the troops in thirty days.

³⁵ Robert Dinwiddie, *Official Records*, 1:152, 175, 179 (Virginia Historical Society, *Collections*, vol. 3 — Richmond, 1883); Washington, *Diaries*, 1:86-91.

In this work both Gist and Croghan experienced trouble, for those to whom they applied for provisions were unable to foresee ready cash in payment and, as the majority of the settlers had little more than what was necessary for their immediate need, progress was slow and disappointing. Washington, at the Great Meadows, was trying to make soldiers of woodsmen, farmers, and whatever other material had been recruited. He was looking each day for provisions, clothes, teams, and additional cannon, and when none of these arrived he was driven to exasperation and complained bitterly to Major Carlyle. After some persuasion on the part of the latter Gist promised to do all in his power to speed up the necessities.³⁶

He must have partly succeeded, for on June 16 Washington departed from the Great Meadows for Redstone, making a road as he went. The equipment was poor and some of the wagons broke down, slowing his progress. He was almost two weeks going over Laurel Hill, less than thirteen miles from his starting point. On June 28 he arrived at Gist's plantation, where house and cleared field looked inviting as a temporary resting place. In haste rail fences were torn down and used as palisades. Gist's horses and wagons were put to service and his house was used as headquarters. In a short time his plantation was transformed into an armed camp and the building of a fort was begun. Washington, who, after Colonel Fry's death, had been promoted to the rank of colonel, did not remain long, however; for, when the fort was half finished, he received a message informing him of the French advance under Coulon de Villiers. The Virginia troops were in no condition for an engagement after their toil on Laurel Hill and Gist's plantation. A council of war was held and, when it was discovered that the provisions were all consumed, it was decided to abandon the works and return east. On July 1, Fort Necessity at the

³⁶ Stanislaus M. Hamilton, ed., *Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers*, 1:5, 18 (Cambridge, 1898).

Great Meadows was reached. It was decided to remain there and, if the French should approach, to make a stand. The enemy arrived on July 3, and the Virginians were defeated after a valiant defense.³⁷

Gist, who took part in the battle, was a heavy loser. What the Virginians did not destroy at his settlement in their short stay, Villiers burned to the ground upon his victorious retreat on July 5. Villiers continued on to Redstone, where the Ohio Company storehouse met the same fate; and his report states that he burned every house and building that he found on his march. After this defeat not an English flag floated west of the mountains. This turn of fate meant for the Ohio Company a blow from which it never fully recovered, and in its failure to carry on, Gist lost untold opportunities. It is said that before he was driven out by the French he had settled eleven families about him. The statement has been questioned, but a limited research tends to verify it. When Washington withdrew from the settlement, Gist's wagons were used to transport army stores and his personal effects were left behind. When Villiers burned his home he lost all his household goods and farm implements. In October, 1754, he petitioned the Virginia assembly to make him such allowances as it saw fit for these losses, adding that he had been and still was ready to risk his life and small fortune in promoting His Majesty's settlement, so necessary to the preservation and interest of all his American plantations. The petition was referred to the committee on propositions and grievances, which advised, on May 9, 1755, that the request be rejected.³⁸

There are no records available to show when and how Gist's family left his western home at the approach of danger, while

³⁷ Washington, *Diaries*, 1:93; Petition of Christopher Gist, May 7, 1755, in Virginia House of Burgesses, *Journals*, 1752-58, p. 244 (edited by H. R. McIlwaine—Richmond, 1909); Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 1:17; Veech, *Monongahela of Old*, 48-50. Of the entrenchment at Gist's, Veech says: "The lines of this old fortification have been long obliterated, but its position is known by the numerous relics which have been ploughed up. It was . . . within fifty rods of the centre of Fayette County."

³⁸ Virginia House of Burgesses, *Journals*, 1752-58, p. 244.

he was so busily engaged, but in those times settlers' families on many occasions made quick moves in time of trouble. Gist does not seem to have held any grievance for his misfortune and inability to recover for his loss. During the remainder of the year 1754 he continued to serve in the commissary department of the regiment. Early in 1755, when it was learned that Major General Edward Braddock was on his way from England with troops and that a strong effort would be made to recapture the western country, Gist was sent into the South to invite the Cherokee and Catawba Indians to help drive the French from their hunting grounds. Progress was slow but Governor Glenn of South Carolina gave him some assistance and the Indians finally promised to take part. As General Braddock approached Fort Cumberland with his troops and no Indians were yet in sight, Governor Dinwiddie sent Gist's son, Nathaniel, to hurry them along. Young Gist, who by this time was quite well acquainted with Indian methods, was fairly successful and had between four and five hundred ready to march, when a certain Richard Pearis, a trader respected by the Indians, belittled the young man's efforts. He represented to them that Gist had no commission or presents and that one so young and of such little importance would not be sent on such a mission if their presence were greatly needed. Consequently Gist arrived at Fort Cumberland without the Indians. Dinwiddie stormed when he learned of the failure of this undertaking. He dispatched a messenger with a letter to Pearis accusing him of personal jealousy toward the elder Gist and stating that all quarrels between private persons should subside when public welfare was involved. He would not now say who was at fault but he was convinced that their dispute was the only reason the Indians failed to respond and give assistance.³⁹ A reward was later offered for the apprehension of Pearis.

³⁹ Dinwiddie, *Official Records*, 2:26, 76, 77 (Virginia Historical Society, *Collections*, vol. 4—Richmond, 1884); Daniel Dulany, "Military and Political Affairs in the Middle Colonies in 1755," in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 3:19 (1879).

When Braddock marched from Fort Cumberland on his expedition to Fort Duquesne, Christopher Gist was selected as his personal guide and his son Nathaniel as a scout. Thomas Gist also accompanied the expedition in some capacity. Gist was probably often consulted because of his knowledge of the country. On one occasion, when the troops advanced to a point near Turtle Creek, he was sent on to scout Fort Duquesne. He approached very near the fort and concealed himself with the intention of making some observations but was discovered and pursued by two Indians, who nearly overtook him. He returned safely, however, and made his report. He was responsible with other guides for changing the course of Braddock's march to avoid the narrows at Turtle Creek, a move which eventually led the army to the Monongahela River near McKeesport. With his sons, Thomas and Nathaniel, he was present at the battle on that fatal day of July 9 and in the subsequent retreat.⁴⁰

Shortly after the battle, Nathaniel, with a loyal Indian, was sent by his father to Fort Cumberland to relate the disappointing outcome. They were instructed to cut through the wooded country and avoid the reserve troops camped under Colonel Dunbar. While snatching some rest in the dark of night, they mistook the noise of some bird or beast for Indians. In the confusion that followed they became separated, but each continued on his way. When nearing their destination they emerged from the wooded country to the open road and spied each other a short distance off, whereupon they laughed at each other for their causeless alarm.⁴¹

Colonel Dunbar's troops became so panic-stricken from listening to the stories of the battle that the colonel found it necessary to march them directly to winter quarters in Phila-

⁴⁰ Ellis, *Fayette County*, 56, note 1; Sargent, *Expedition against Fort Du Quesne*, 209, 349, 351; Darlington, *Gist's Journals*, 88.

⁴¹ This story was told by Henry Beeson, the founder of Uniontown, to whom it was told by Nathaniel Gist himself. Veech, *Monongahela of Old*, 66.

delphia, unheeding the Virginians' solemn request for assistance in guarding their frontiers against the French and savages, who might follow up their successes on the Monongahela. Prompt action was then taken by the frontiersmen, who organized to protect themselves. One of their first acts was to send Christopher Gist to confer with the Pennsylvania authorities and learn what action they were taking for guarding the frontiers of the province, and to obtain information concerning the intentions of the Indians. He proceeded directly to Philadelphia, where he met Governor Morris, Benjamin Franklin, and Secretary Peters. After he had spent some time with them the governor gave him a letter to Conrad Weiser, who was living near Womelsdorf, which instructed Weiser to furnish all the knowledge he had or could obtain concerning the disposition and intentions of the Indians.⁴² He learned before leaving Philadelphia that Scarrooyady, who had been a guide with him in Braddock's army but who disappeared shortly after the battle, had been in contact with the Indians on the Ohio, was now at Shamokin with other chiefs, and would be at John Harris' Ferry (Harrisburg) in a few days. In a letter to Colonel Washington, Gist expressed his intention of meeting the Indian there.⁴³ While on this trip he was granted a captain's commission in one of the seventeen companies of the Virginia Regiment, raised for the defense of the frontier. Governor Morris, a little later, offered him the same position in a proposed Pennsylvania regiment, but he declined, preferring the Virginia appointment.

⁴² *Colonial Records*, 6:593, 602, 661; Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 1:118.

⁴³ *Pennsylvania Archives*, first series, 2:451 (Philadelphia, 1853); Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 1:118. After Braddock's defeat Scarrooyady (or Monacatootha) was greatly provoked at what he considered to have been unsound warfare on the part of the English general. On August 22, 1755, he appeared before Governor Morris in Philadelphia and complained of Braddock's ignorance. Some time later he threatened to join the French. C. Hale Sipe, *The Indian Wars of Pennsylvania*, 201, 231 (second edition, Harrisburg, 1931).

On November 24 he was at Lancaster, where he recruited twenty men for his company.⁴⁴ Sometime in December he returned to Winchester.

While in Pennsylvania Gist learned of the many Indian invasions and massacres that took place immediately after Braddock's defeat. These he reported to the Virginia authorities and his reports served to hasten preparation for frontier defense. In 1756 his son Nathaniel was enrolled as lieutenant in his company. With Nathaniel he went on recruiting duty to Baltimore, where he was quite successful, and on his return to Fredericksburg, Virginia, he received additional recruits. In a letter of March, 1756, Lieutenant Colonel Adam Stephen told Washington that Gist was the only officer "who, as near, has had good Success in recruiting."⁴⁵

In May, Lieutenant Nathaniel Gist with eighteen of his men and seven Indians left Fort Cumberland in company with Colonel Cresap, who was commanding a larger number, to scout along the Youghiogheny River. After going some distance, Cresap's men mutinied, whereupon Gist and his men left them and proceeded alone. At a point on Laurel Hill, back of Connellsville, they met a number of French and Indians from Fort Duquesne on a similar mission to the Virginia frontier. There followed a sharp skirmish, which lasted for almost an hour, the Virginians losing two men and the French six. Gist, having reason to believe that a greater number of the enemy were coming up from the crossing, brought off his men with great skill and after some difficulty returned to Fort Cumberland, where he was given credit for unusual courage. Lieutenant Gist continued to scout along the Maryland and Virginia frontiers during the remainder of the year 1756, while his father commanded the company at Fort Cumberland and Camp Maidstone. On July 10 of this year, Captain Gist with Colonel Washington, Lieutenant

⁴⁴ Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 1:118, 129.

⁴⁵ Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 1:205, 299. A complete list of the men in Gist's company is in the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 2:44 (July, 1894).

Colonel Stephen, and seven other captains of the regiment discussed and laid plans for building a chain of forts for the protection of the western Maryland and northern Virginia frontiers. Many of the proposed twenty-two were built before the project was abandoned.⁴⁶

Early in 1757 it became evident that the expense of maintaining the regiment must be reduced and on May 16 Colonel Washington received instructions to dismiss seven companies. Small wonder that Washington complained at times; he was even told what captains were to be dismissed. Gist was one of those discharged. At the same time, Washington was relieved of Indian management and Edmund Atkin was appointed the king's agent to take charge of that service.⁴⁷ Washington showed his friendship for Gist by sending him with a letter to Speaker Robinson urging an appointment for him in the Indian service. He wrote, "I know of no person so well qualified . . . He has had extensive dealings with the Indians, is in great esteem among them, well acquainted with their manners and customs, indefatigable, and patient . . . As to his capacity, honesty, and zeal, I dare venture to engage."⁴⁸ Gist was subsequently appointed a deputy in the Indian service by Atkin. His duties were to distribute goods to the Cherokee and Catawba Indians and to continue soliciting their friendship. He was located at Winchester a greater part of the time and his dealings with the Indians occasionally led him into heated controversies with the high-strung governor. At one time he complained that he was retarded in his work because he did not receive the necessary confidence from his superiors. Dinwiddie replied with a letter outlining Gist's specific duties, in which he remarked: "I know not what You mean by the Country being troubled with an

⁴⁶ Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 1:270, 272, 301; Washington, *Writings*, 1:372 (Ford edition).

⁴⁷ Dinwiddie, *Official Records*, 2:622; Washington, *Writings*, 1:442, note 1 (Ford edition).

⁴⁸ George Washington, *Writings*, 2:236 (edited by Jared Sparks—Boston, 1834).

Agent they cannot confide in." Gist continued faithfully in his appointed work during the remainder of 1757 and 1758.⁴⁹

Sometime after Captain Gist's company in the regiment was disbanded, his son Nathaniel joined one of the other companies. In the early part of 1758 he was sent with six soldiers and thirty Indians to reconnoiter Fort Duquesne. After suffering great fatigue, occasioned by the snows of the Allegheny Mountains, the party reached the mouth of Redstone Creek, where Gist by a fall from a precipice was rendered unable to proceed. This caused a change in plans and the party separated. Three of the Indians descended the Monongahela River in a bark canoe till they came near Fort Duquesne, where they left their canoe and concealed themselves on the margin of the river till they found an opportunity of attacking two Frenchmen, whom they killed and scalped. These scalps were later brought to Fort Loudoun at Winchester by Ucahula, one of the Indians. Lieutenant Gist at this time was reputed to be one of the most valuable scouts on the Virginia and Maryland frontier. In June, 1758, he made his way to join the Virginia Regiment at Fort Cumberland, where Colonel Washington was collecting his forces preparatory to joining Forbes at Raystown (Bedford).⁵⁰

Captain Christopher Gist was also active in the affairs of the camp at Raystown. After a strenuous effort he was able to deliver to Colonel Bouquet a body of Cherokee Indians for the campaign against Fort Duquesne. These Indians disappeared, however, before the march began. Gist was with Forbes at the camp on September 3, 1758, but it is not likely that he accompanied the expedition. On November 25 Nathaniel Gist marched with General Forbes into the ruins of Fort Duquesne, and he may have been with Major Lewis at Grant's disastrous defeat a short time before. It is certain

⁴⁹ Virginia House of Burgesses, *Journals*, 1761-65, p. 103 (edited by John P. Kennedy — Richmond, 1907); Dinwiddie, *Official Records*, 2:671, 707, 708, 713; Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 2:215, 244, 260.

⁵⁰ William A. Crozier, ed., *Virginia Colonial Militia, 1651-1776*, 27 (New York, 1905); Washington, *Writings*, 2:283 n. (Sparks edition); Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 2:334.

that Ensign Thomas Gist took part in this memorable battle on Grant's Hill. He was wounded and taken prisoner by the Indians and was carried into Canada. After a year of hardship he escaped, made his way back to Virginia,⁵¹ and rejoined his regiment. In a letter of December 31, 1758, to Washington from Captain Robert Stewart, written while the latter was on duty at Fort Loudoun, the following is related:

Last night Lieu^t Gist, Sergeant Ostin (who M^r Gist got from the Indians) and three men on Furloueh with Liberty to stay at this place only 3 days arriv'd here in 7 days from Pittsburgh where Fort Barracks, & Store Houses were erected, three Months Provisions laid in and three Months more on the Road — this Fort is 120 feet in the interior Square with four Bastions in each of which they have got a small Mortar Mounted — the Barracks Form the Curtains and the Bastions are Stockaded — the Duty there is hard and our Men suffer vastly for want of Clothes — The Indians informs our people that 150 of the French went down the River with the Cannon and 350 more (the remainder of the Garrison) went up to Venango where they now are and from whence (the Indians add) a Body of Troops will pay our Garrison a visit whenever the River is open.⁵²

This description places the completion of the first Fort Pitt not later than December 23, 1758.⁵³ While Nathaniel Gist was at Fort Loudoun he and some other officers of the Virginia Regiment wrote a letter to Washington expressing their regret at his resignation of the command. He probably returned to Pittsburgh and served under Colonel Hugh Mercer, but sometime before July 9, 1759, he must have been transferred to some other point, as his name does not appear in the list of officers at Fort Pitt on that date.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 2:362; 3:79; Virginia House of Burgesses, *Journals*, 1761-65, p. 52, 175. Gist's name appears as "Guest" in the list of officers of the First Virginia Regiment killed or missing. *Olden Time*, 2:283 (June, 1847).

⁵² Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 3:148.

⁵³ This is a little nearer an exact date than heretofore calculated. Neville B. Craig states that it was "probably about the 1st of January, 1759." *History of Pittsburgh*, 66.

⁵⁴ Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 3:143; *Olden Time*, 1:195 (May, 1846).

In the spring of 1759 Captain Christopher Gist journeyed back to the ruins of his plantation, west of Laurel Hill. He had probably not seen it since Braddock's campaign. He spent some time in the section that is now Fayette County, selecting and laying out lands for the soldiers in accordance with Governor Dinwiddie's proclamation of February 19, 1754, which promised bounty land to volunteers for expelling the French and Indians from the forks of the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers and erecting a fort there. As late as September 16, 1759, Colonel George Mercer, then at Winchester, speaks of him in a letter to Washington as acting in this capacity. A little later we hear of him for the last time. Captain Robert Stewart, serving at Fort Pitt, after describing to Washington in a letter of September 29, 1759, the beauties of the newly captured country, inquired, "what Steps have been taken in securing to us, those Lands which poor Capⁿ Gist was to have enter'd for us, I hope the needfull is done, they surely will soon be very valueable."⁵⁵ Until this time his name is referred to frequently in correspondence of the French and Indian War. After this the references cease and his name cannot anywhere again be found. It is said by different writers that he died about this time in North Carolina or Virginia of smallpox. Although no definite evidence has been found for the statement it is probably correct.⁵⁶ The time could well be placed in September, 1759. The late John Ritenour made some attempt to locate the place of his burial but without success. That the death of Gist's wife, Sarah, preceded her husband's by a few years is most likely, for in a letter written by William Fairfax on July 17, 1757, he relates

⁵⁵ *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 5:173 (October, 1897); Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 3:159, 165.

⁵⁶ James Veech implies that Christopher Gist returned to his settlement as late as 1765. *Monongahela of Old*, 112. Sufficient documentary evidence has since been published, however, to disprove this theory. In November, 1762, the "Administrators of . . . Christopher Gist, deceased," petitioned the Virginia assembly for six hundred pounds due Gist for service in Indian affairs. Virginia House of Burgesses, *Journals*, 1761-65, p. 136.

that Captain Gist's daughter (Ann) was living with him, "and is kindly treated by Mrs. [*Fairfax*] and Miss Hannah.⁵⁷

Gist's sons, Nathaniel, Richard, and Thomas, survived their father and continued to take an active part in colonial affairs. Nathaniel continued his service in the Virginia Regiment until it broke up in 1762, when he joined an independent regiment under Lieutenant Colonel Adam Stephen and served as captain until it was disbanded. He then became an Indian trader in the Holston River Valley, a region with which he was familiar. In 1760 he and Daniel Boone had led a hunting party down the river, and during 1760-61 his regiment had been encamped along the north bank of the south fork, nearly opposite the upper end of Long Island (Kingsport, Tennessee), an island which he afterwards bought from the Cherokee Indians. His title to it, however, was probably not confirmed.⁵⁸ As deputy to the British agent and superintendent of Indian affairs, Gist remained loyal to the British Crown during the early days of the Revolution and instigated several Indian raids against the settlements, but he later joined the Virginia militia and on January 11, 1777, Washington appointed him colonel to raise a regiment of rangers in Virginia. In 1780 he was taken prisoner by the British at Charleston, but he was released on January 1, 1781; and he then retired from the army. For his services he received a large tract of land in what is now Clark County, Kentucky, where he resided for some time before his death in 1798.⁵⁹ Richard Gist, who

⁵⁷ Ritenour, *Old Tom Fossit*, 231; Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 2:148.

⁵⁸ Crozier, *Virginia Militia*, 15, 27; Hamilton, *Letters to Washington*, 3:234; Lewis P. Summers, *History of Southwest Virginia, 1746-1786*, 71, 76, 83, 617 (Richmond, 1903).

⁵⁹ Summers, *Southwest Virginia*, 240; *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 52 n. (January, 1909); *The American Pioneer, a Monthly Periodical*, 2:237 (May, 1843); Washington, *Writings*, 4:271 n. (Sparks edition); Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the Officers of the Continental Army during the War of the Revolution*, 249 (Washington, 1914); Josiah S. Johnston, *First Explorations of Kentucky*, 99 (Louisville, 1898). The year of Nathaniel Gist's death has been furnished by the United States Pension Bureau.

lived in Washington County, Virginia, also served in the Revolution and was killed at the battle of King's Mountain.⁶⁰

On Thomas Gist devolved the ownership and management of Christopher Gist's property west of Laurel Hill. After the Virginia Regiment was disbanded, Thomas apparently retired from military service and returned to the scene of his father's plantation, where he built a house. He settled a tract of 433 acres adjoining his father's original land and lived there with his sister, Ann. Nathaniel Gist had received bounty land here under the proclamation of 1763, and Richard had, in 1769, entered a claim with the Pennsylvania Land Office for 357 acres next to those of his father. Thomas finally acquired this property and at one time owned almost 2,750 acres. George Washington dined with him there on an expedition to the Ohio in 1770, and was again his guest in 1784. Thomas was at different times a justice of the peace for Cumberland, Bedford, and Westmoreland counties, and he resided on his Mount Braddock estate until his death in 1786. The Gist property, including Christopher Gist's original tract, was then distributed among members of the family.⁶¹ It has since passed into the possession of several different owners.

LAWRENCE A. ORRILL

CRAFTON, PENNSYLVANIA

⁶⁰ *American Pioneer*, 2:238 (May, 1843).

⁶¹ Fayette County Archives, Mount Braddock abstract of title, p. 12, 15, 22; County Surveyor's Book A, p. 118, 119; Deed Book C, p. 129; Deed Book no. 16, p. 201; Will Book no. 1, p. 7; Darlington, *Gist's Journals*, 88; Willard R. Jillson, *The Kentucky Land Grants . . . 1782-1924*, 55 (Louisville, 1925); Bacon-Foster, *Development of Patomac Route*, 259; Veech, *Monongahela of Old*, 115; Washington, *Diaries*, 1:499; 2:289; George D. Albert, ed., *History of the County of Westmoreland, Pennsylvania*, 42 (Philadelphia, 1882); *Colonial Records*, 9:730.