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The Overthrow of France in the North-West

By Harvey Wilson Compton

Superintendent of Toledo Public Schools, 1886-1897—Died 1916

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The surface of the United States is divided into four great geographical areas: the Pacific slope, the Mississippi Valley, the Atlantic slope and the Basin of the Great Lakes. The region west of the Rocky Mountains is drained by rivers which flow into the Pacific ocean. All of the territory between the Rockies and the Alleghanies except an irregular area of land south of the Great Lakes, varying in width from ten to one hundred miles, belongs geographically to the Mississippi Valley and is drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries. The waters of this vast extent of country, to which LaSalle gave the name of Louisiana, all empty into the Gulf of Mexico. The region east of the Alleghanies, called the Atlantic slope, drains its waters through rivers of no great length, like the Hudson and Connecticut, into the Atlantic ocean. The Great Lake Basin the smallest of the four lies partly in Canada and partly in the United States. Its waters, through numerous rivers of comparatively small size, flow into the Great Lakes, whose outlet is the St. Lawrence river. The narrow strip of land south of the Great Lakes, which empties its short rivers into these lakes, is separated by a low watershed from the Mississippi Basin.

ROUTE OF THE FRENCH EXPLORERS AND TRADERS

The short rivers flowing into the Great Lakes, from the Fox river of Green Bay around the entire southern shores of the lakes as far as Lake Chautauqua, were early used by the French explorers and traders to reach the Mississippi Valley. They passed up the lakes in their canoes, entered one of the rivers flowing in, as the Fox, the Chicago or the Maumee. They rowed up one of these streams as long as it had sufficient depth to float a canoe. They then disembarked and carried their canoes over the dry land of the watershed to the head waters of some stream flowing south into the Ohio or Mississippi.

PORTAGES OR CARRYING PLACES

These stretches of dry land over which canoes and baggage had to be carried between the heads of streams flowing in opposite direction were called portages or carrying places. They varied in length according to the season of the year and the abundance of water in the streams, though the portages most used did not exceed from one and a half to ten miles in length. The Indians had used the portages perhaps for centuries, and readily guided the Frenchmen to them.

The Fox river connected with the Wisconsin by a short portage which was the route used by Joliet and Marquette in reaching the Mississippi. The Chicago and St. Joseph rivers connected by easy portages with the Illinois, forming the route most used by LaSalle in passing to and from the great valley.

ROUTES VIA THE MAUMEE—THE SANDUSKY AND THE CUYAHOGA RIVERS

A shorter route to the Mississippi was discovered later by way of the Maumee and the Wabash. The French traders and bushrangers learned from friendly Indians to steer their canoes into the Maumee at the southwestern end of Lake Erie. They paddled up that stream a distance of ninety miles to where the city of Fort Wayne now stands, and by a portage of considerable length reached the Wabash down which they could float to the Ohio.* Two other Ohio rivers, the Sandusky and Cuyahoga, were used by Indian hunters and bushrangers; the Sandusky connecting by an easy portage with the Scioto. The Cuyahoga connected with the Mahoning and the Walhonding, by longer and more difficult carrying places.

FORTS, TRAPPING STATIONS AND MISSIONS

By means of these streams and portages, up to the year 1750, the French had penetrated almost every part of the Mississippi Valley, and at the mouths of most of the rivers, or on the watershed at the sources of the streams they had erected palisaded forts, with the usual accompaniments of the fort, a trading station and a mission.

Michilimackinac, now better known as Mackinac, was for a long time the strongest and most important French post in the North-West. This island had been early selected by the Jesuits as a suitable place for a mission because of its security from Iroquois raids, if anything might be considered safe from those human tigers. Here great multitudes of Indians assembled to spear white fish or depart with their canoe loads of peltries for Montreal. Here the French traders soon came for the Indian trade with their stores of trinkets, blankets, brandy and weapons, a strong fort was built and occupied by a garrison of two hundred French soldiers commanded by LaMotte-Cadillac. In order to control the lake route to the north and west and prevent English traders from going among the western tribes, Cadillac in July of 1701, laid the foundations of the present beautiful and prosperous city of Detroit. He cleared the ground and built a strong fort and gathered about Detroit a large Indian population. The Ottawas and Hurons of Mackinac, as well as most of the traders, followed Cadillac to Detroit, feeling secure from their dreaded foes, the Iroquois, in the shadow of French palisades and cannon. We have seen that the Iroquois, because of their hostility to the French, had long restricted or completely blockaded the Niagara river, thus preventing free communication between the lakes. LaSalle's discerning mind promptly recognized the importance of controlling the Niagara portage and we have seen how he wheedled the Iroquois into permitting him to built a fort there. This quasi-fort or palisaded house was burned soon after its construction. In 1678, Denonville, governor of Canada, determined to build another fort on the site of LaSalle's, but the Senecas objected. He regarded this route to the west as of such great importance that he attacked the Senecas, and, after a bitter struggle, drove them from their villages with great slaughter. He then proceeded to built a fort, but the scurvy broke out among the garrison, the Iroquois and the English remained hostile to French occupation, so the fort was abandoned and destroyed by its builders.

FRENCH CONTROL NIAGARA 1726 TO 1759

In 1726, however, the French succeeded in building a strong fortress near the site of the two previous forts, and thus controlled the Niagara and the eastern end of Lake Erie until the final overthrow of the French in 1759. By means of

*In regard to the old portage from the Maumee River to the Little Wabash our sources of information are rather vague as to the exact distance.

It appears that the distance varied somewhat according to the season and water stages. However, we feel safe in saying that the distance would average about ten or twelve miles.

the strong strategic posts now briefly described the French had absolute control of the Great Lakes and the Indian trade of adjacent regions. By the year 1750 the French had built up several strong communities along the Illinois river and the Kaskaskia region of the Mississippi. Jesuits and French traders and farmers had gathered the tribes who had escaped the destructive wrath of the Iroquois into villages, and had taught them some of the ruder arts of civilization. The center and citadel of this semi-savage life was Fort Chartres, an elaborate and costly stone fortress on the Mississippi not far from the mouth of the Kaskaskia. Following up the design of LaSalle, the French under the lead of Iberville and Bienville had gradually worked their way up from the Gulf and founded New Orleans and Natchez and formed a connection with the posts and villages on the Kaskaskia and the Illinois. The Mississippi region had been joined to Canada by the shorter route of the Maumee and Wabash. At the headwaters of the Maumee stood Fort Miami (afterwards Fort Wayne) and a trail through the woods over the portage, led to Fort Ouiatenon (below Lafayette) on the Wabash. Lower down that river, guarding the Ohio against the descent of English traders, stood Fort Vincennes. Opposite the abandoned English Fort Sandowski, at the head of and on the right bank of Sandusky Bay, near the mouth of Pickerel Creek, the French in 1754 built Fort Junundat, around which Wyandotte and Ottawa Indians from Detroit had gathered in considerable numbers.

LAKE REGION AND MISSISSIPPI VALLEY NAMED NEW FRANCE

All of the vast lake region and the valley of the Mississippi had thus been taken possession of by the French, and to this immense domain was given the name of New France. The English were practically hemmed in between the rugged walls of the Alleghanies and the sea. The English made no objection to this so long as there was plenty of land east of the mountains. But toward the middle of the eighteenth century the rapid increase of the English population made the Alleghany slope seem too limited in extent for the proper expansion of trade and settlement. Moreover the English looked upon the lands west of the Alleghanies as their own, granted to them by charters based upon the discoveries of the Cabots. They regarded the seizure and occupation of the great valley by French forts and colonies as a menace to English supremacy and a trespass upon English right and ownership.

COMPARISON OF FRENCH AND ENGLISH METHODS OF COLONIZATION

The French idea of colonization was radically different from that of the English. The French occupation was always based upon the fur trade. Their forts and settlements were little else than depots for peltries. Louis XIV and his ministers had always opposed extensive colonization, as this would involve the hewing away of forests, the building of towns and the cultivation of extensive tracts of land. This would drive away the beaver and buffalo and so impair the imperial revenue. The beaver skin was at once the strength and the bane of New France. It furnished the stimulus to exploration and trade and the means for their extension, but fatally blighted the growth of colonies and rendered them indifferent or averse to the agriculture and manufacturing that spring up in populous and industrious communities. Moreover the French scheme of settlement made much of the Indian. He was not only the necessary gatherer of furs but he furnished constant exercise for the zeal and solicitude of missionaries. As a consequence of this false view of colonization the industrious artisan and peasant were not important factors in the civilization of New France, while the soldier, the priest and the trader were its cornerstones. With the English it was vastly different. Instead of one absorbing source of gain, the fur trade, one religion, one supreme autocratic authority and severely restricted immigration, the English were practically free to govern themselves, follow the dictates of their own consciences and work out their own destinies. All who would, might come to the colonies of the Atlantic slope, and all nationalities and all religions were represented.

The devout Moravian, the Irish Catholic and the persecuted Hugenot were alike welcome. The great desiderata with the English colonists were homes and land. As they gradually spread westward toward the Alleghanies, the forests fell before them, towns sprang up, streams were bridged, highways laid out, cultivated fields and farm houses greeted the eye and agriculture and manufacturing employed the energies of an industrious, thrifty people. Unlike the French, the English had no place for the Indian in their system. He was regarded as a vagabond, an incumbrance to the soil and incapable of civilization. The English did to some extent tolerate and temporize with the Indians. They made treaties with them, bought lands of them and employed them, especially the powerful confederacy of the Iroquois, as a useful foil against the French and the western Indians. But their general policy was not like that of the French to fraternize with the Indians, but to drive them westward into the dense forests beyond the mountains.

INDIANS FRIENDLY TO PENNSYLVANIA AND VIRGINIA TRADERS

In spite of the fact that the English greed for land had gradually driven the Indians westward beyond the Alleghanies the traders of Pennsylvania and Virginia had contrived to retain the friendship and good-will of many of the Indian tribes. The Delawares, however, who dwelt along the valley of the Muskingum, looked with suspicion and resentment upon the steady advance of English traders and land speculators.

For thirty years previous to the actual breaking out of hostilities between the French and English in 1754, the traders had been scaling the mountains and penetrating the forests west and north of the Ohio. Trains of packhorses laden with brandy, blankets, guns, knives, hatchets and trinkets of all sorts, and guided by rough and lawless drivers, crossed the mountains and followed the forest trails leading to the remotest Indian villages situated upon the waters of the Muskingum, Scioto and Miami. The French could not compete with the excellence and cheapness of the English wares and viewed with alarm, these aggressions upon territory which they claimed by a century of exploration and occupation. But the English did not rest their claim to the Ohio region upon its occupation by traders and the fact that their colonial charters extended westward to the Pacific. As early as 1684 they had strengthened their claim by purchases and treaties with the Iroquois who claimed as their own all the lands occupied by the tribes which they had subjugated. In 1744 at Lancaster the English made a purchase — if the transaction deserves that name, from the Iroquois of a vast tract of land in the Ohio Valley.

EXPEDITION OF CELORON DE BIENVILLE

The French, jealous and alarmed at the encroachments of traders, settlers and speculators from Virginia and Pennsylvania, made loud and bitter complaint to the authorities at Quebec.

Galissoniere, the governor of Canada, determined to send an expedition to the Ohio to reassert French authority in that region and drive out the English traders who were getting on altogether too friendly terms with the Indians. In the spring of 1749 Galissoniere sent Celoron de Bienville with a force of over two hundred French officers and soldiers together with a band of Indians to the Ohio valley to proclaim the authority and ownership of Louis XV and warn off the pestilent English traders. This force ascended the St. Lawrence, voyaged along Lake Ontario, carried their canoes and supplies over the Niagara portage and by way of Lake Chautauqua reached the Alleghany river. Bienville here began at once the old pompous, feudal farce of taking possession of the country. A sheet of tin stamped with the fleur-de-lis was nailed to a tree, a plate of lead engraved with a suitable inscription was buried at its foot and in a loud voice Louis XV was proclaimed lord of the whole region. The party then began to descend the river, stopping occasionally to warn off traders and bury lead plates. In some of the Indian towns they found from six to ten English traders whom they sternly ordered off the dominions of Louis XV. The traders submissively packed their wares and vanished eastward only to return as soon as the expedi-

tion had disappeared around a bend in the river. Bienville continued to descend the Ohio, burying his leaden plates at the mouths of streams, but growing more humble in his demands as he found the traders more numerous and the Indians more hostile in their attitude.

Two of the leaden plates buried by Bienville, one at the mouth of the Muskingum and another at the mouth of the Kanawha, becoming unearthed by floods, have been discovered in recent years by boys while bathing in the Ohio, and one of the plates is now preserved in the archives of the American Antiquarian Society. Celoron reached the mouth of the Great Miami and toiled upward against the current for thirteen days, dragging his leaky, splintered, birch canoes over the shallow rapids of that stream until he reached the mouth of what is now Loramie Creek, where stood the great Indian town called by the French, Pique, by the English Pickawillany. The great chief of the Miamis, to whom the French had given the name of La Demoiselle, presided over this town. He was the firm friend of the English and for this reason was called by them Old Britain. Celoron and his officers called La Demoiselle and his Indians to a council, showered gifts upon them and harrangued them eloquently to abandon their English friends and move to the protection of the French fort on the Upper Maumee. La Demoiselle accepted all their gifts but evaded making any promises, and Bienville, at length regarding his mission as a failure, burned his shattered canoes and made his way with his followers on foot across the long portage to the French post at the head waters of the Maumee. He there procured wooden canoes, descended the Maumee to Lake Erie and thence to Montreal, having accomplished nothing except to bury his leaden plates and learn that the Indians were "ill disposed to the French and devoted entirely to the English."

THE OHIO LAND COMPANY

Another occasion of great irritation to the French arose at this time. An association called the Ohio Land Company was organized in Virginia and had among its members many of the leading Virginians of that day, including Thomas Lee and two brothers of George Washington, Lawrence and Augustine. The object of this company was to settle lands of the Ohio country and secure for itself the fur trade with the Indians instead of permitting this profitable commerce to remain in the hands of roving and scattered traders. The company had a wealthy and influential agent in London and secured from the English king a grant of 500,000 acres on condition of settling upon it one hundred families within seven years and building a fort for their protection. The land was to lie mainly between the mouths of the Kanawha and Monongahela but to extend northward of the Ohio if the company deemed best. This company, which should not be confounded with the Ohio Company formed in Boston in 1786, immediately began erecting stores at Wills Creek, now Cumberland, and laying out a road for the purpose of connecting the Ohio country with the head waters of the Potomac.

EXPLORATIONS OF CHRISTOPHER GIST

An experienced frontiersman and surveyor by the name of Christopher Gist was sent out by the land company to explore Ohio and locate the best lands. Gist rode over the mountains and traversed the wilderness in a westerly direction until he came to the White Woman's Creek, now better known as the Walhonding river, a stream which unites with the Tuscarawas to form the Muskingum. Some twenty miles above the "Forks" of these two streams, Gist found a large Indian village, inhabited mostly by Wyandots. Here lived a white woman for whom the stream was named. She told Gist that her name was Mary Harris, that she had been stolen from her home in New England when ten years old. At the time of Gist's visit she was fifty years old, the wife of an Indian husband and the mother of a family of half-breeds. She told Gist of her early home in New England and its religious influences and marvelled at the wickedness she had seen among the white men who came among the Indians. Gist also found in this village one George Croghan an English trader who had been sent by the governor of Pennsylvania among the Indians "to renew the chain of friendship."

The disturbed condition of affairs in Ohio became every day more evident to Gist as English traders came in who had been robbed and threatened by roving bands of French and Indians. Gist, Croghan and Andrew Montour, an Indian interpreter, left the Indian village and rode southwest to the Scioto and visited the Indian towns at its mouth. These towns were inhabited by the Shawnee Indians. Meeting with a kind reception Gist and his companions spent several days and then journeyed northwest to the great Indian town of Pickawillany on the Big Miami, ruled over by the Miami chief Demoiselle or Old Britain, whom Celoran had visited a year and a half before. La Demoiselle greeted Gist and his companions very cordially, although the French were still trying to ally him to their interests. Even while Gist and Croghan were in the town four Ottawas came from the French commandant at Detroit with abundant gifts of tobacco and brandy, planted a French flag in the town and tried by speeches and gifts to induce the Pickawillany king to renounce the English and swear allegiance to the French. But La Demoiselle was only angered by the persistence of the French. He arose in the council and savagely denounced the Ottawa emissaries and proclaimed his friendship for the English, his chiefs tore down the French flag planted in the town, and the Ottawas, alarmed for their lives, fled during the night. Gist now turned southeast toward the Ohio river, looking with admiring eyes upon the wealth, beauty and fertility of the country through which he passed. He speaks of the luxuriant forests and vast fields of blue grass, wild rye and white clover, dotted with wild turkeys, deer and herds of buffalo. Gist crossed the Ohio and returned to Virginia to report to his company the wealth and beauty of the Ohio lands. But the Ohio Land Company was destined to accomplish but little.

PICKAWILLANY DESTROYED BY FRENCH

The French were now thoroughly aroused because of the intrigues and aggressions of the English traders who were fast seducing the Indian tribes from their former masters. The French began arresting English traders in Ohio and deporting them to Detroit or Montreal, and to aid in this work built about this time their fort on Sandusky Bay. The French looked upon La Demoiselle's town of Pickawillany (near the present site of Piqua) as the germinating point of all the mischief to French influence, for they knew as many as fifty English traders had congregated there at one time. A French trader by the name of Langlade gathered a horde of Ottawa and Ojibwa warriors at Mackinac, descended the lakes, paddled up the Maumee and led his savage rabble across the portage toward Pickawillany. On the twenty-first of June, 1752, a few months after Gist's visit, with fierce yells and roar of musketry, Langlade and his swarm of French and Indians burst upon the surprised and defenseless town. The Indian warriors were away on a summer hunt and only a feeble resistance was offered. La Demoiselle and fourteen other Miamis were soon shot down, eight English traders were capturned and the town was burned. Says Parkman, concerning the savage throng that destroyed Pickawillany, "Seventy years of missionaries had not weaned them from cannibalism, and they boiled and ate the Demoiselle."

FRENCH GOVERNOR BUILDS FORT LE BOEUF AND FORT VENANGO

The Marquis Duquesne, governor of Canada, now resolved to pursue more vigorously than ever the policy inaugurated by Galissoniere and Jonquiere, his predecessors. He mustered a force of fifteen hundred soldiers and ascended the St. Lawrence, crossed Lake Ontario and embarking upon Lake Erie landed at Presque Isle where the city of Erie now stands. They then cut a road eighteen miles long southeast through the forest to the head of French Creek where they built another strong fortress which they called Fort Le Boeuf. When French Creek was swollen with rains they could descend to the Alleghany and thence to the Ohio. At the mouth of French Creek where it empties into the Alleghany was an English trading house which the French seized and converted into a military post, which they named Fort Venango. These bold measures produced an immediate effect. The English traders began to hasten out of the disputed territory, the Indians were cowed and alarmed and began to offer English scalps to the French as a signal of loyalty and repentance. One Indian chief, called

by the English, Half King, bolder than the rest, ventured to order the French out of the country. Marin, the brave and able commander of the French said to him, "Child, you talk foolishly. You say this land belongs to you; there is not the back of my nail yours. It is my land and I will have it, let who will stand up against me. I am not afraid of flies and mosquitos, for as such I consider the Indians. I tell you that down the river I will go and build upon it. If it were blocked up I have forces sufficient to burst it open and trample down all who oppose me. My force is as the sands upon the sea-shore. Here is your wampum, I fling it at you." The Half King went away shedding tears of rage and humiliation. Not long after this Marin sickened and died and was succeeded by Legardeur de Saint Pierre, a capable and experienced officer, who took up his quarters at Fort Le Boeuf. The Indians and traders hastened to carry the news of the French seizure and occupation to the English colonies. The apathetic and slow moving English were simply amazed at such vigorous measures.

WASHINGTON SENT BY GOVERNOR DINWIDDIE TO FRENCH FORTS

Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia was deeply roused and angered by what he considered an invasion of Virginia territory and he determined to warn the invaders to withdraw. He cast about for a suitable person to bear his message to the French commander and hit upon a youth twenty-one years of age, George Washington, destined to become illustrious in the annals of his country. Washington had already had considerable experience as a woodsman and surveyor in the forest wilds and he was possessed of excellent judgment and a noble and dignified bearing. On the thirtieth of October, 1753, Washington set out on his long journey through the unbroken wilderness for the French forts on the upper waters of the Ohio. He was accompanied by some half dozen hardy companions, with Christopher Gist as guide, and Jacob Van Braam as French interpreter. The little party climbed the mountains and threaded the dense thickets and tangled morasses, driving their pack-horses single file before them. They reached the forks of the Ohio and passed down the river sixteen miles to Logstown or Chiningue, a noted Indian trading resort, where after several days of tedious delay Washington succeeded in inducing the friendly chief Half King and three other Indians to accompany him. They then followed the traders' trail northward, pelted by ceaseless rains and whitened by falling snows, until they reached the French post, Venango, at the mouth of French Creek. Here the French officer received Washington courteously but plied his Indians so plenteously with food, wine and specious words that they were almost persuaded to desert him. For four days more, Washington and his men toiled up the windings of French Creek, through bogs and marshes and snow-choked thickets, and on the eleventh of December, emerging from the misty gloom of the forest, saw before them the palisades and wooden walls of Fort Le Boeuf. Saint Pierre received Washington with the politeness and hospitality characteristic of the French and took three days to frame his answer. This was in brief that Dinwiddie's letter should be forwarded to Du Quesne and that he should continue to hold his post according to orders of his superior.

During Washington's stay there the French commander, while treating him with every form of outward courtesy, employed every means to seduce from him his red allies. St. Pierre used all sorts of verbal blandishments upon the Half King and his tribesmen, freely supplying them with gifts and brandy. Washington justly became alarmed for the loyalty of his Indians and with difficulty persuaded them to leave the fort for the return journey. Anxious to make his report and finding his jaded horses unable to travel with any speed, Washington and Gist abandoned them to Van Braam and the drivers and pushed off through the wilderness alone on foot.

WASHINGTON SUBMITS REPORT TO GOVERNOR AND ASSEMBLY

After imminent dangers from assassination by French and Indians, and from drowning in the icy current of the Alleghany, Washington reached Williamsburgh about the middle of January and laid before the governor and the assembly of Virginia, the evasive answer of the French. Washington reported the alarming

aggressions of the French and urged immediate action to secure the forks of the Alleghany and Monongahela by building there a strong fort, before the French could seize the place and thus control the Ohio river and the entire west. Governor Dinwiddie was awake to the danger and made every exertion to secure men and money to build forts and resist the advance of the French. But a strange lethargy prevailed among the colonies, largely induced by parsimony and mutual jealousies. The invaded territory belonged to Pennsylvania and Virginia, so the other colonies looked on with indifference. The assembly of Pennsylvania was controlled by peace-loving Quakers and stolid German farmers and would not act. The Virginia legislature was extremely distrustful of the royal governor and would vote no money.

GOVERNOR DINWIDDIE ATTEMPTS TO BUILD FORT AT FORKS OF OHIO

Dinwiddie at last by dint of great effort succeeded in raising a regiment of three hundred men with Joshua Fry as colonel and Washington second in command. In addition to these troops a band of backwoodsmen was raised by Captain William Trent. Trent's band crossed the mountains in February, 1754, for the purpose of building a fort at the forks of the Ohio, the present site of Pittsburg. It was expected that Trent would fortify himself before the French could descend the Alleghany and that Fry and Washington would join him in time to hold the fort against all comers. But the French moved swiftly and silently, without delays or dissensions. About forty of Trent's backwoodsmen were at work on the fort when on April 17th, a swarm of light boats and canoes, manned by a thousand French soldiers under command of Contracoer, Saint Pierre's successor, suddenly appeared in the river. The French dragged their cannon up the banks, planted them against the rude beginnings of the fort and ordered the English to surrender. This they hastened to do and were glad to retire in the direction of home with their working tools on their backs. The French demolished the incipient fort of the English and immediately rebuilt it upon a much larger, stronger plan, naming it Fort Du Quesne.

THE FIRST BLOOODSHED OF THE GREAT SEVEN YEARS' WAR

In the meantime Washington had started with a force of men to cut a road across the mountains to the Monongahela and reinforce Trent at the forks of the Ohio, but was met by the ejected builders and told that the French were in possession. Washington's anger as well as his military ardor was fully roused and he determined to march toward Fort De Quesne and accomplish what he could against the aggressive enemy. Having crossed the dividing ridge of the mountains, he received a message from his old friend, the Half King, that Contracoer had sent out a detachment of the French under Jumonville, an ensign, to attack the English, Washington traced the French to their hiding place in a rocky hollow and boldly attached them. The conflict was brief, but Jumonville and nine other Frenchmen were killed and twenty-two were captured. This was the first bloodshed of the great Seven Years' War which raged in Europe and America. Parkman says, "This obscure skirmish began the war that set the world on fire." And Thackeray writes, "It was strange that in a savage forest of Pennsylvania a young Virginian officer should fire a shot and waken up a war which was to last for sixty years, which was to cover his own country and pass into Europe, to cost France her American colonies, to sever ours from us and create the great western republic, to rage over the Old World when extinguished in the New, and of all the myriads engaged in the great contest to leave the prize of the greatest fame with him who struck the first blow."

WASHINGTON SURRENDERS FORT NECESSITY

After having struck the blow that inaugurated the great war Washington knew the French would soon send a large force against him from Fort Du Quesne. He fell back to a place called the Great Meadows and there in three days rapidly

constructed a rude fortification which he called Fort Necessity.* This was a square enclosure of logs set on end, with a shallow trench and ramparts on which were mounted nine swivels. Washington was now in chief command through the death of Colonel Fry, and had a force of about four hundred men. The French under command of Villiers, a brother of the slain Jumonville, soon appeared with a force of nine hundred Canadians and Indians and attacked the fort. The swivels on the ramparts were soon silenced, the gunners being exposed to the full fire of the French who were posted on wooded hillocks but a few paces distant from the walls of the fort. A desultory firing was kept up on both sides for nine hours through a heavy mist and a cold drizzling rain. When night came, Washington's soldiers were in dismal plight. They were standing knee deep in mud and water, their ammunition was exhausted and they had nothing to eat. Luckily the French were in pretty much the same condition and at eight o'clock in the evening asked for a parley. Washington sent Van Braam to them, he being the only one among the English who understood French. The conditions of the capitulation were written out and signed about midnight. By the terms of the surrender Washington was permitted to march out the next morning with drums beating and colors flying and with all the property of the fort except the artillery. The drenched and half starved troops marched away to Wills Creek, carrying their sick and wounded upon their backs. This was a disastrous blow to the English. The Indians looked upon them as effectually conquered and hastened to ally themselves to the victorious French. Not an English flag now (1755) waved west of the Alleghanies. War had not yet been declared between England and France and each country was trying to make the other believe it desired an amicable settlement of the difficulties, while all the time both nations were making preparations for war with as much secrecy and dispatch as possible. France agreed to remain west of the Ohio if England would confine herself to the lands east of the Alleghanies. England would consent to a peaceful adjustment if France would stay west of the Wabash and destroy her forts on the Ohio. Neither nation, of course, would consent to the terms proposed and so the strife continued.

BRADDOCK'S DISASTROUS EXPEDITION AGAINST FORT DU QUESNE

The colonists became more and more alarmed and angered at the trespasses of the French upon what they considered their territory and appealed to the mother country for aid. England sent General Edward Braddock with two regiments of regular soldiers. France sent Baron Dieskau with an army of three thousand veterans. Braddock reached Hampton Roads in February of 1755. He called a council of all the colonial governors and asked their assistance in raising a common fund for carrying on the war. They were unable to pledge the support demanded of them, well knowing the jealousy, apathy and dissension existing among the colonists. The victories of the French and the atrocities of the savages on the border had not yet fired the Saxon blood to the proper pitch. Braddock's troops passed up the Potomac to Alexandria where they encamped, while Braddock himself, assisted by Dinwiddie, was long engaged in unsuccessful attempts to induce the colonial assemblies to furnish money, provisions, horses and wagons for the expedition planned against Fort Du Quesne. After long and exasperating delays the assemblies reluctantly voted meager supplies of money, while horses and wagons were secured by the personal efforts of Benjamin Franklin among the Pennsylvania farmers. The various detachments of troops for the expedition against Fort Du Quesne marched along the banks of the Potomac and concentrated at Wills Creek, the old station of the Ohio Company called Fort Cumberland. The assembled army consisted of twenty-two hundred men, made up of regulars, provincials and sailors, the latter intended chiefly to aid in getting the artillery over the mountains. If this little army had had the right sort of a commander the dreadful disaster which followed might easily have been averted.

*The Fort Necessity Memorial where Washington fought his first battle, July 3, 1754, has recently been provided for by a Congressional grant of $25,000.00 and a legislative appropriation by the State of Pennsylvania of a similar amount. In addition to this the Fort Necessity Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, Uniontown, Pa. is now engaged in raising $100,000.00 to improve the property surrounding the old Fort. The dedication of the reconstructed Fort Necessity is expected to be one of the outstanding events of the Washington Bi-Centennial in 1932.

But Braddock, though brave and honest, was obstinate and conceited to an inordinate degree. He looked with undisguised contempt upon the provincial troops who had spent their whole lives in the woods and among the Indians. He refused to accept the advice of such subordinate officers as Washington who knew the country and the nature of the foes with whom he had to deal. He had won an honorable record upon European battle fields but had become a slave to the military tactics which he imported with his "regulars." His blunt discourtesy to Captain Jack drove away that famous ranger and his band of skilled Indian fighters almost upon the eve of battle. The army began its long march on June tenth, 1755, with the design of first seizing Fort Du Quesne and thence proceeding to Fort Niagara, thus cutting off the French communication with the west. A squad of axemen led the way to cut a road and the long train of pack horses and wagons, laden with supplies and artillery followed, stumbling and jolting over the stumps and stones of the narrow way, the soldiers marching in the forest on either side. The army slowly dragged itself along, winding over lofty heights and through gloomy defiles, the sombre forest shades and precipitous crags echoing to the roll of drum and the blare of trumpet. So slow was the progress of the army and so great was the danger that Fort Du Quesne would be reinforced by the French that Washington finally prevailed upon Braddock to send on a chosen body of men, leaving the heavy baggage and a sufficient guard behind. Twelve hundred men were chosen to advance with a train of pack horses and light artillery. They pushed ahead as rapidly as they could through such an impassable country, leaving Colonel Dunbar to command the rear division.

On the seventh of July the advance division of the army approached a ford of the Monongahela, seven miles from Fort Du Quesne. Here Braddock expected an ambuscade and sent over an advance guard to reconnoitre. Finding no enemy Gage took possession of the further shore and the army crossed over. Washington spoke in after years of the brilliant and impressive scene the army presented as it marched down to the ford on that fateful day. The martial music, the waving banners, the mounted officers, the brilliantly uniformed soldiers, the unclouded sun gleaming from their burnished arms all served to arouse the confidence and enthusiasm of the army and duly impress the imagination of skulking foes. The army, now increased to above fourteen hundred men by detachments from Dunbar's rear division, crossed the ford and Gage's advance column marched into the forest beyond. Suddenly the woods in front of them began to swarm with French and Indians who spread to the right and left of the advancing troops, firing with deadly effect and filling the woods with terrific yells. Gage's column formed and poured volley after volley into the ranks of their unseen foes. The cannons were unlimbered and shot and shell went crashing among the trees. The French and Indians recoiled at the first fire but quickly swarmed back and concealing themselves behind bushes, trees, rocks and in ravines poured in a destructive fire upon the British who began to retreat, falling back upon the main body. In their frantic efforts to protect themselves from the storm of bullets the whole British force was thrown into confusion, some facing one way and some another, and all an open mark for their invisible foes. The Virginian troops took to the woods and hiding behind trees fought the Indians effectively after their own fashion, but Braddock, storming furiously, and upbraiding them with cowardice, ordered them back into line. Some of the regulars tried in a clumsy way to imitate the Virginians and fight from behind trees, but Braddock's military pedantry was so shocked at this that he struck the soldiers with the flat of his sword and with loud oaths drove them back into helpless platoons, where huddled together in a bewildered mass they fell in bloody heaps before the leaden hail of the screaming savages. Braddock rode furiously about trying to rally the panic stricken troops. Five horses were shot under him and his clothes were riddled with bullets. Washington behaved with cool intrepidity amidst these trying scenes. His voice and presence were everywhere, directing and animating the soldiers. Two horses were shot under him and four bullets pierced his clothing, but his hour had not yet come. For three hours the English stood in the midst of the awful carnage, firing wherever they saw puffs of smoke and often shooting down their own comrades. At last over two-thirds of the English officers and about seven hundred of the soldiers lay dead and dying upon the fields, and still the frightful yells of the savages filled the air and the pitiless hail of invisible death mowed down the living.

DEATH OF GENERAL BRADDOCK AND RETREAT OF ARMY

Braddock saw at last that all was over and gave the order for retreat. Then followed such a panic rout as was, perhaps, never before witnessed upon any battlefield. At its beginning, Braddock, during a last effort to rally the fleeing troops into some semblance of order, was shot through the lungs and fell from his horse mortally wounded. He was carried off the field and died four days later, with his last breath saying, "Who would have thought it!"

Those who survived the battle left weapons, stores and artillery behind them, abandoned dead and wounded to the merciless scalping knives of the savages, rushed pell mell across the river and never stopped running until they reached Fort Cumberland. The people of the colonies could not at first believe it when they heard that Braddock's formidable army was annihilated by a few hundred savages and a handful of French-Canadians. Dismay and anger possessed them when they fully realized the truth. Their sluggish patriotism was quickened by a sense of imminent danger and they began to vote men and money in more liberal measure for prosecuting the war. Braddock's disgraceful defeat was disastrous to the English chiefly in two ways. It destroyed all respect among the Indians for the English as fighters and exposed the whole Virginia and Pennsylvania frontiers to murder and pillage by the western savages. The French were now in possession of all the territory from the Alleghanies to the Mississippi, and their prestige with their Indian allies was never greater. France had won the great valley. Could she hold it? It took five years of cruel and bloody war to answer this all important question. Those lovely sheets of water, Lake Champlain and Lake George, and their forest clad mountain shores formed the principal theater of the long contest which followed.

Although France had struck vicious blows in the American forests and England had everywhere assailed French ships on the high seas and had towed three hundred prizes into English ports, war had not yet been declared between the two nations.

In the September following Braddock's defeat the English under Sir William Johnson gained an important victory over Baron Dieskau near the southern end of Lake George, but for the first few years of the war the successes were nearly all with the French arms. Early in 1756, Fort Bull on the great carrying place of the route to Oswego, was stormed and taken by the French. Montcalm invested and captured Fort Oswego itself, with all its garrison and stores, the greatest triumph French arms had yet gained in America. In 1757 Montcalm laid seige to Fort William Henry at the southern end of Lake George and captured it and a terrible and inhuman massacre by the Indian allies of the French followed the taking of the fort. Loudon's great expedition against the French fortress of Louisburg on Cape Breton Island ended in failure and disaster.

WILLIAM PITT, THE "GREAT COMMONER" BECOMES SECRETARY OF STATE

In the meantime, William Pitt, the "Great Commoner" assumed control of the English government, the weak and inefficient Duke of Newcastle having been dismissed. Pitt took hold of the work before him with remarkable vigor, reorganized the English army and appointed younger and abler generals. England and her American colonies now determined to subjugate the French and break their power in the New World forever. For this purpose they patrolled the seas and put an army of fifty thousand men into the field. The task was rendered lighter by the fact that Madame Pompadour who was the real head of the French government, impelled by her petty spite against Frederick the Great of Prussia, induced Louis XV, that weak and vicious monarch, to pour one hundred thousand of the best soldiers of France into the allied forces of Europe that were waging ineffectual war against the redoubtable Frederick. Montcalm with his comparatively weak force of regulars, Canadians and Indians was left to take cars of himself as best he could. Madame Pompadour's pique must be gratified even if it cost so immense a prize as the empire of New France. In the campaign of 1758 the tide of success began to turn slowly in favor of the English.

THE OHIO REVOLUTIONARY MEMORIAL COMMISSION

Created by Authority of the General Assembly and Appointed By the Governor

By virtue of the authority granted in Senate Bill, No. 91, passed April 6th, 1929, the Ohio Revolutionary Memorial Commission has recently erected in Northwestern Ohio the following permanent markers of appropriate and beautiful design, viz. :

Auglaize County—7 miles east—site of Fort Amanda. Erected in 1812, for General Wm. H. Harrison, by Colonel Robert Poague, who named the fort for his wife. An important supply base during the War of 1812.

Auglaize County—Fort St. Mary's. Built by General Wayne—1794. Fort Barbee. Built by General Harrison—1812. Girty Town. So named for the renegade Girtys, whose home it was.

Defiance County—Fort Winchester. Built by General Wm. H. Harrison in October, 1812 and named for General Winchester. For a time it was the only defensive work against the British and Indians in Northwestern Ohio.

Defiance County—Abatis and Camp. General Wayne's Army in 1794 and General Winchester's Army in 1812 encamped on this spot. Here also was the western end of General Winchester's Abatis.

Defiance County—Pontiac's Birthplace. Here, in 1712, was born the great Indian chief who incited Pontiac's Conspiracy. He federated the tribes and with the aid of the French threatened British supremacy. Killed in Illinois in 1769.

Hancock County—Indian Green. Site of a fortified Indian village, and scene of a somewhat legendary battle between Wayne's troops and the Wyandotte Indians. Now a natural beauty spot.

Hancock County—Seven-eight-mile west—Site of Fort Necessity. Erected in 1812 by Hull's army on its march northward from Fort McArthur, when incessant rains and mud made further advance impossible.

Henry County—Girty's Island. Named for George Girty, renegade brother of Simon Girty. This was his hiding place between various treacherous expeditions.

Lucas County—Site of Fort Deposit. Built by General Wayne on his march to Fallen Timbers in 1794. "Roche De Boeuf". This peculiar rock island was a famous landmark in Indian and Pioneer days.

Lucas County—One-half mile northwest. Fallen Timbers Battlefield. Where, on August 20, 1794, General Wayne decisively defeated the Indians and British, thereby opening much of the old Northwest to the whites.

Lucas County—700 feet southeast. Site of Fort Miami. Erected 1680—the oldest fortified trading post in the Mid-west. Here flew the flags of France, 1680; Great Britain, 1760; and the United States, 1796.

Lucas County: Hull's Crossing. Here, at the Maumee Rapids, Hull's army crossed on its fateful march to Detroit. Turkey Foot Rock. Where Chief Turkey Foot died in battle, August, 1794. Later a great Indian Shrine.

Lucas County—Dudley's Massacre. Here, on May 5, 1813, Colonel Dudley's troops spiked the British artillery besieging Fort Meigs; but, in the enthusiasm of victory they were led into an ambush where over 600 were lost.

Mercer County—St. Clair's Defeat. 300 feet north, 900 feet west, General St. Clair's army met its crushing defeat by the Indians on November 4, 1791. Fort Recovery. Built on the same spot in 1793, by General Wayne.

Mercer County—Site of Fort Adams. One-fourth mile east. Built by General Wayne in August, 1794. A deserter from this fort warned the Indians of the American approach.

Ottawa County—End of Harrison Trail. War of 1812. Six miles east is the western boundary of the Firelands—500,000 acres given by Connecticut to its citizens whose property was destroyed by the British in the Revolution.

Paulding County—Charloe. From this point, known as "Upper Delaware Town." Wayne destroyed the Indians' abundant crops, which skirted the Auglaize all the way to Fort Defiance.

Paulding County—1,000 feet east. Site of Fort Brown. Erected in the War of 1812 by a contingent of Harrison's Army commanded by Colonel Brown.

Putnam County—3 miles east. Site of Fort Jennings. Built by Colonel William Jennings in 1812, as one of the posts along General Harrison's march to the confluence of the Auglaize and the Maumee.

Putnam County—The Black Swamp. To the west and south, a former boggy area about one hundred and twenty miles long and forty miles wide, presented constant difficulties to the pioneer armies in their advance northward.

Sandusky County—2 blocks south—Site of Fort Stephenson. Here, in 1813, Major Croghan with only 160 men and the cannon, "Old Betsy," heroically defended the fort against over 2800 British and Indians.

Sandusky County—Where Fremont now stands was the great gathering place for captives en route to Detroit for bounty. Here Boone, Kenton, Brady, the Moravian missionaries, Heckewelder and Zeisberger, and many others were held.

Sandusky County—Brady's Island. From the island opposite, Samuel Brady, one of Washington's scouts, sent from Fort Pitt, watched the Indians. On the second trip he was captured, but escaped from his burning pyre.

Sandusky County—Whittaker's Reserve. The Wyandottes here gave 1,100 acres to their white captive, James Whittaker. About 1780 he married, thus establishing probably the first permanent Amercian home in Ohio.

Sandusky County—Indian Gantlet and Race Course. From present State Street to the railroad bridge was a famous Indian race track and gantlet run by captives. James Whittaker ran it so well that he was adopted and given land by the Indians.

Sandusky County—Site of camps during the Pontiac Conspiracy. Here Bradstreet's British expedition camped in 1764. Also the farthest point west reached by colonial forces under command of Israel Putnam.

Seneca County—Three blocks east. Site of Fort Ball. Erected in 1813 by Colonel James V. Ball as one of the fortifications of General Harrison's army on its way to Canada. Its site was at a large spring, now marked by a bronze statue.

Van Wert County—Waynes' Strategy—Wayne feinting to right and left, led the Indians to expect attacks at Maumee Rapids and the Miami Villages. Having outwitted them, he drove through the unguarded course to victory.

Wood County—1,000 feet west. Site of Portage Stockade. Built in 1812, by General Hull, to protect one of his camps on his march from Dayton to Detroit. Garrisoned again in 1813, by order of General Harrison.

Wood County—Site of Clay's Landing. Here on May 5, 1813, General Green Clay landed with his Kentucky troops to reinforce General Harrison at Fort Meigs, during British siege under General Proctor.

Wood County—General Hull's trail through the forest to the east may still be seen. The trail of Hull's army in June, 1812, en route to Detroit. Some of the corduroy timbers are still buried along the route.

Wood County—Maumee Indian Mission. Founded by Presbyterians in 1822, and, after several changes of administration was closed in 1834. These missions were important factors in the winning of the west.

Wyandot County—Battle Island. About one mile east, on June 7-8, 1782 Crawford's expedition was annihilated by the Indians and its commander captured. Also site of a famous Indian Gantlet Ground.

Wyandot County—Fort Ferree. Built by General Harrison and occupied successively by large numbers of American troops during the War of 1812. Many of these soldiers are buried where the courthouse now stands.

Wyandot County—Crawford's Burning. One-half mile northeast of here, on June 11, 1782, the Indians burned Colonel Wm. Crawford at the stake, in revenge for the brutal massacre of the Christian Moravian Indians.