

T H E S I S .

Subject, *Fort Duquesne*

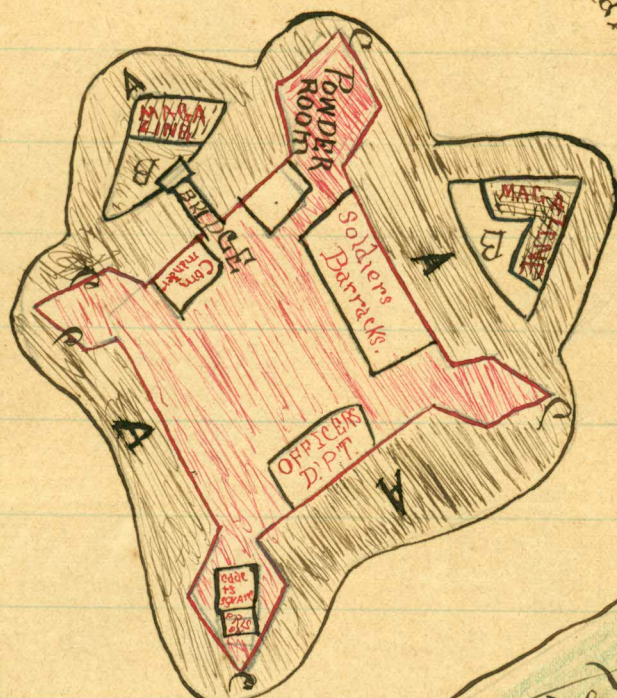
Name, *Benjamin G. Wilkinson*

Woods.

Corn Field

Bark Cabins of Soldiers.

Allegheny



- A. Ditch
- B. Earth not dug out.
- C. Cannon

Monongahela

Ohio

Region
of
FORT DUQUESNE
in
1754

During the early part of the history of our country the French and English built forts in this region for the protection of their possessions in this region. One of these forts was built at the junction of the Monongahela, Alleghany and Ohio rivers. It was called Fort Duquesne in honor of the governor of New France.

In 1753 Geo Washington then about twenty one years of age, was sent by Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia to the region of the Ohio river, to know the reasons the French had for invading the English territory while the two nations were at peace. It was in the winter time that Washington left Virginia. He had with him two attendants and an Indian guide. He crossed the mountains

and icy streams. At the end of two weeks he arrived at the junction of these rivers. Here he stopped to view the country, and then went up the Alleghany river to the French fort at Venango. Washington found that the French were eager to get possession of the Ohio.

While Washington was on this visit he noticed the beautiful country, and more especially that at the junction of the Alleghany, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers. When he returned to Virginia he told Governor Dinwiddie of the importance of building fortifications in the region of the Ohio. The Governor sent Captain W^m Trent to the junction of the three rivers to build a fort. The fort was commenced on Sunday Feb. 17th 1754. It was not quite completed, when the French came down the river, in

great numbers, for the purpose of erecting a fort at this place. They erected a fortification which (as I have said before) they called Fort Duquesne. The fort was completed early in the summer of 1754.

It was located on what is now called the point, a place commanding the entrance to the river. After the French built their fort the English were forced to surrender. The English hearing of the intention of the French had already commenced to gather a volunteer army to aid Captain Trent to maintain his foothold in the region. Some of these volunteers were on the way when they heard of the surrender of Trent. The French hearing of the approach of the English sent out a band of soldiers to meet them. When Washington heard

of the surrender of Trent, he concluded that it would be impossible for him to attack successfully without reinforcements, so he thought the best plan for him would be to move to the fort at the mouth of Redstone Creek, at Brownsville. This point was a favorable one for opening operations against the fort at the forks of the Monongahela and Alleghany rivers. He crossed the mountains and reached a point near the Youghiogheny. Learning that the French had sent a force much larger than his to oppose him, he hastened forward to a point not far from Uniontown; where he erected a fort; which he called Fort Necessity. Washington waited here until the French came. Then a battle was fought in which the French gained the undisputed possession of Fort

Duquesne.

After this victory the French gained considerable strength; they made friends with the Indians, and had for their support all the tribes in the vicinity of their fort. This place also became a trading post. The Indians and traders would come from all parts of the country to Fort Duquesne to trade the furs, and other productions for provisions.

The next expedition against Fort Duquesne was led by General Braddock. Gen. Braddock left Virginia in June 1755, with two thousand men. On the 9th of July, when they were at a point near Fort Duquesne, where Braddock now stands, they were assailed by the Indians who were concealed in ambush. A severe battle ensued. Washington was Braddock's aid. He knew how to fight the

Indians and offered Braddock some advice. Braddock was defeated, and received a severe wound. He was carried back in to the country near old Fort Necessity where he died and was buried. Washington was the only officer not wounded. He took command and conducted a retreat to save the remainder of the army.

In July of 1758, Gen. Forbes commenced a march against Fort Duquesne, with nine thousand men. He moved so slowly that he did not get over the Alleghany Mountains until November. He was attacked by the French and defeated. Washington then took command and moved forward rapidly. The French hearing of his approach set fire to Fort Duquesne and fled down the Ohio river in boats. In honor

of the great statesman, the name of Fort Pitt was given to the ruin, and where the old fort stood the city of Pittsburg now stands.

I will now give a description of the fort as it appeared in 1754. It was built of square logs laid across each other. The length of these logs was about sixteen feet, the ~~places~~ between these logs were filled with dirt and rocks so as to make it stronger. The fort was surrounded on the two sides which did not face the water, by a ditch about twelve feet wide and twenty-five deep. The garrison was composed of about 400 men.