

THESIS.

Subject, Fort Duquesne.

Name, J. N. Tillaman.

Captain William Trent began the erection of a fort at the forks of the Ohio river, under the auspices of the Ohio company, on Sunday, Feb. 17. 1754. It was called Fort Duquesne, in honor of the Governor General of Canada. It was located in the point, at the extreme end of the neck of land between the rivers, upon plans made by M. de Chevalier de Mercier, Captain of artillery who had been the designer and engineer of a number of such fortifications for the French in their Canadian possessions.

It is built of square logs transversely placed as is frequent in Mill Dams, and the crevices filled up with earth, the length of these logs is about sixteen feet which was the

thickness of the rampart. There is a parapet raised on the rampart of logs, and the length of the curtains is about thirty feet, and the Demigorge of the bastions about eighty. The foot is surrounded on the two sides that do not front the waters with a ditch about twelve feet wide and very deep, because there being no covert way the men fire from thence having a glacis before them.

Fort Duquesne could in less than two years support itself, since in the very first year 2100 bushels of Indian corn had been gathered there, and from the clearings that was made, it was calculated that if the harvest was good, at least 9000 bushels could be saved.

On the 25th of November 1754.

Major General Edward Braddock was commissioned General in Chief of His Majesty's forces in North America and received his instructions touching his duties with relation to the encroachment of the French.

On Jan. 14, 1755 Gen Braddock sailed from Cork for America, with the Forty fourth and Forty-eighth regiments of royal troops, each consisting of five hundred men, one of these commanded by Col. Dunbar, and the other by Sir Peter Halket. He arrived at Alexandria, Virginia, on the 20th. of February. In a council held at Camp on the 14th. of April, 1755. three expeditions were decided upon, the first of which was against Fort Duquesne under command of Braddock, with

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British troops, and with such aid as he could get from Maryland and Virginia.

There were afterwards added two independent companies from New York, Gen Braddock then furnished with every thing necessary for the expedition, and confident of success, wrote to his friend Gov. Morris of Pennsylvania, that he should soon begin his march for Fort Duquesne, and that if he took the fort in the condition it then was, he should make the additions to it which he deemed necessary. But in case the French should abandon, or destroy the fortification, with the guns, stores, and ammunition of war, he would repair or construct some

place of defence for the garrison which he should leave, but that Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland must immediately supply the artillery, ammunition, stores and provision, for the use and defence of the garrison left in the fort, as he should take all he now had, and all he should find in the fort along with him, for the further execution of his plans.

On the 8th. of July. Gen. Washington arrived with his division at the junction of the Youghio-gheny and Monongahela rivers.

The officers and soldiers were now in the highest spirits, and firm in conviction that they should within a few hours

Victoriously enter the walls of Fort
Duquesne. The steep and rugged
grounds on the north side of the
Monongahela prevented the army
from marching in that direction,
and it was necessary in approaching
the fort, now about fifteen miles
distant, - to ford the river twice,
and to march part of the way
on the south side. Early on the
morning of the 9th. all things
were in readiness, and the whole
train passed over the river a
little below the mouth of the
Youghiogheny, and proceeded in
perfect order along the southern
margin of the Monongahela.

Washington was often heard to say.
"The most beautiful sight he ever saw
was the display of the British troops

on this eventful morning; Every man was neatly dressed in full uniform. The soldiers marched in exact order.

In this order they marched forward till noon, when they arrived at the second crossing place, ten miles from Fort Duquesne. They halted a little while, and then began to ford the river, and regain its northern banks. And at one o'clock the whole army had crossed the river, and almost at that moment a sharp firing was heard upon the advance parties, who were now ascending the hill, and had got forward about a hundred yards from the termination of the plain. A heavy discharge of musketry was poured in upon their front, which was their first intelligence

they had of the proximity of an enemy, and this was suddenly followed by another on their right flank. They fired in return, but quite at random, and obviously, without effect, as the enemy kept up a discharge in quick and continued succession.

The second expedition was led by Gen. Forbes, Washington commanded the Virginian troops. The general lost so much time in building roads that, in November, he was fifty miles from the fort. But Washington receiving news of the weakness of the French garrison, urged a forward movement, he himself led the advance guard, and by his vigilance dispelled all danger

of Indian surprise. The French
fired the ~~the~~ fort, and fled at
his approach. As the flag of Eng-
land floated out over the
ruined ramparts, - this gateway
of the west was named Pittsburg.