

**Excerpt: George Washington to Royal Governor Dinwiddie, March 7, 1754**

Source Type: Letter

*Courtesy of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** In March 1754, before the Seven Years' War began, rising tensions between the French and British colonists along the western frontier were rapidly escalating. In this letter, George Washington lays out the concerns of the Virginia Company under his command to Royal Governor Dinwiddie.

1 Hblr Sir

2 The generality of those Men, who have enlisted for this Expedition are much in want of, and press  
3 greatly for Cloathings[.] They all desire so earnestly to be put into a Uniform dress that they would  
4 gladly do it at their own Expence to be deducted out of their Pay it was the greatest objection to  
5 enlisting and many have refus'd solely on that account after coming purposely to do it with  
6 Expectation of getting a Regimental Sute and if I may be so bold to offer my Opinion I can't think  
7 but the good Effects that it may produce will sufficiently recompense for any trouble that will ensue.  
8 It is the Nature of Indians to be struck with, and taken by show and this will give them a much higher  
9 Conception of our Power and greatness and I verily believe fix in our Interest many that are now  
10 wavering and undetermin'd whose Cause to Espouse—If it was only a Coat of the Coursest red  
11 which may be had in these parts it would answer the Intention—red with them is compard to Blood  
12 and is look'd upon as the distinguishing marks of Warriours and great Men—The shabby and ragged  
13 appearance the French common Soldiers make affords great matter for ridicule amongst the Indians  
14 and I really believe is the chief motive why they hate and despise them as they do. If these are the  
15 Effects, the Cause may be easily, and timely remedied. I hope Your Honour will pardon this  
16 freedom, which I should not have assum'd but with a good Intention It is my acquaintance with these  
17 Indians, and a Study of their Tempers that has in some measure let me into their Customs and  
18 dispositions.

19 There is another thing the Soldiers enquire much about i.e, who is to be pay Master and the time for  
20 payment Your Honour's answer to this will oblige me very much as I may thereby satisfie the doubts  
21 which arrise on that Head[.] I am with all due respect Yr Honours most Obt Humble Servt

22

Go: Washington

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**Map of the Western Parts of the Colony of Virginia from the Journal of Major George Washington, 1754**

Source Type: Map

Courtesy Mount Vernon Ladies' Association

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** *The Journal of Major George Washington* is George Washington's account of his two and half month trans-Allegheny journey as an emissary to demand that the French remove themselves from the Ohio Country. It was published by Royal Governor Robert Dinwiddie to raise awareness among colonists and British authorities of the French presence. This map was created to show Royal Governor Dinwiddie the intrusion by the French into territory claimed by the British.



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**Excerpt: Expedition to the Ohio – Narrative, 1754**

Source Type: Report

*Courtesy of [www.founders.archives.gov](http://www.founders.archives.gov)*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** George Washington wrote this in-depth account of his return to the Ohio Country to remove the French from their encroachments onto British land. This excerpt provides Washington's version of the Battle of Jumonville Glenn and the death of French Commander Jumonville. Washington's account highlights colonial views of the French, and describes his relationship with Native Americans during the first part of the Seven Years' War.

1 ...We killed Mr. de Jumonville, the Commander of that Party, as also nine others; we wounded one,  
2 and made Twenty-one Prisoners, among whom were M. la Force, M. Drouillon, and two Cadets.  
3 The Indians scalped the Dead, and took away the most Part of their Arms, after which we marched  
4 on with the Prisoners and the Guard, to the Indian Camp, where again I held a Council with the Half-  
5 King; and there informed him, that the Governor was desirous to see him, and was waiting for him  
6 at Winchester; he answered that, he could not go just then, as his People were in too eminent a  
7 Danger from the French, whom they had fallen upon; that he must send Messengers to all the allied  
8 Nations, in order to invite them to take up the Hatchet...After this I marched on with the  
9 Prisoners; They informed me that they had been sent with a Summons to order me to depart. A  
10 plausible Pretence to discover our Camp, and to obtain the Knowledge of our Forces and our  
11 Situation! It was so clear that they were come to reconnoitre what we were, that I admired at their  
12 Assurance, when they told me they were come as an Embassy; for their Instructions mentioned that  
13 they should get what Knowledge they could of the Roads, Rivers, and of all the Country as far  
14 as Potowmack: And instead of coming as an Ambassador, publicly, and in an open Manner, they  
15 came secretly, and sought after the most hidden Retreats, more like Deserters than Ambassadors  
16 in such Retreat they incamped, and remained hid for whole Days together, and that, no more than  
17 five Miles from us: From thence they sent Spies to reconnoitre our Camp; after this was done, they  
18 went back two Miles, from whence they sent the two Messengers spoken of in the Instruction, to  
19 acquaint M. de Contrecoeur of the Place we were at, and of our Disposition, that he might send his  
20 Detachments to inforce the Summons as soon as it should be given...

21 ...It was the Opinion of the Half-King in this Case, that their Intentions were evil, and that it was a  
22 pure Pretence; that they never intended to come to us but as Enemies; and if we had been such Fools  
23 as to let them go, they would never help us any more to take other Frenchmen. They say they called

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24 to us as soon as they had discovered us; which is an absolute Falshood, for I was then marching at  
25 the Head of the Company going towards them, and can positively affirm, that, when they first saw  
26 us, they ran to their Arms, without calling; as I must have heard them, had they so done.



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***Jumonville* by Antione Leonard Thomas, 1759**

Source Type: Print

Featured in *The Cult of Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* by David A. Bell

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** This widely circulated print was part of a larger campaign to incite the French population to support a war against the British. *Jumonville* depicts the death of Commander Jumonville at the hands of George Washington. Through the use of clothing and landscape, the artist alludes to the Crusades with the French as the Crusaders and the British as the Saracens (or Muslims).



**Excerpt: Articles of Capitulation, Fort Necessity, 1754**

Source Type: Document

*Courtesy of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** After the French defeated the British at the Battle of Fort Necessity these *Articles of Capitulation* were drawn up. This document was written in French and signed by Washington, who could not read French.

1 Capitulation granted by Mons. De Villier, Captain of infantry and commander of troops of his most  
2 Christian Majesty, to those English troops actually in the fort of Necessity which was built on the  
3 lands of the King's dominions July the 3rd, at eight o'clock at night, 1754.

4 As our intention had never been to trouble the peace and good harmony which reigns between the  
5 two friendly princes, but only to revenge the assassination which has been done on one of our  
6 officers, bearer of a summons, upon his party, as also to hinder any establishment on the lands of the  
7 dominions of the King, my master. Upon these considerations, we are willing to grant protection of  
8 favor, to all the English that are in the said fort, upon conditions hereafter mentioned.

9 Article 1

10 We grant the English commander to retire with all garrisons, to return peaceably into his own  
11 country, and we promise to hinder his receiving any insult from us French, and to restrain as much as  
12 shall be in our power the Savages that are with us.

13 ...Article 7

14 Since the English have in their power an officer and two cadets, and, in general all the prisoners  
15 whom they took when assassinated Sieur de Jumonville they now promise to send them with an  
16 escort to Fort Duquesne, situated on Belle River, and to secure the safe performance of this treaty  
17 article, as was as of the treaty, Messrs. Jacob Van Braam and Robert Stobo, both Captains shall be  
18 delivered to us as hostages until the arrival of our French and Canadians herein before...

19 James Mackay

20 George Washington

21 Coulon de Villiers

**Excerpt: Instructions for Colonel George Washington from Royal Governor Dinwiddie, August 14, 1755**

Source Type: Document

*Courtesy of [www.founders.archives.gov](http://wwwFOUNDERS.archives.gov)*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** Royal Governor Robert Dinwiddie provided instructions to Colonel George Washington, commander of the Virginia Regiment, to go west to the Ohio Country and remove the French.

1 Williamsburg August 14th 1755

2 Instructions for Colonel George Washington Commander in Chief of the Virginia Regiment.

3 Whereas the French have unjustly invaded His Majesty's Lands on the Ohio, and have sent flying  
4 Parties of French and Indians, to robb, and murder our back Settlers to the Westward, which the  
5 Legislature of this Dominion having seriously taken into their Consideration, and voted Money  
6 for the Protection of our Frontiers, and for conducting the necessary Expedition to drive the  
7 French from the Ohio. In Consequence thereof, I have granted Commissions for raising Sixteen  
8 Companies of Men to be formed into a Regiment—The Command of which Regiment, together  
9 with the Forces that now are, or may be employd in the Country Service, being given to You; You  
10 are as soon as possible to use Your utmost Endeavours to compleat the said Regiment by sending  
11 the Officers to recruit in the different Counties of this Dominion, as You shall see most  
12 Convenient, leaving six Officers to do Duty with the Men who remain at Fort Cumberland...

13 ...The Clothing of the Regiment is to be provided by the Country, & to be sent to You, in order to  
14 be delivered to the Effective Men of each Company...

15 ...You are to transmit to me Weekly Returns of the Regiment and a Return the first Day of every  
16 Month, with the Variations that may have happened the preceding Month. When any of the Non-  
17 Commissioned Officers, or Private Men should happen to die, they are to be continued on the  
18 Returns and Rolls as Effective Men for Twenty eight Day's to pay for his Coffin, that the  
19 Commander of the Company 〈may be〉 no Losser by his Death.

20 I sincerely desire that You will inculcate Morality and Virtue among Your Men, to punish  
21 Drunkenness and Swearing—Wishing You Health & recommending You to the Protection of  
22 God, I am Sir Your Friend and humble Servant.

23

Robt Dinwiddie



**Excerpt: George Washington to Royal Governor Dinwiddie, July 18, 1755**

Source Type: Letter

*Courtesy of [www.founders.archives.gov](http://wwwFOUNDERS.archives.gov)*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** George Washington recounts the Battle of Monongahela (also known as the Battle of the Wilderness or Braddock's Defeat) to Royal Governor Robert Dinwiddie in this letter. British General Edward Braddock was shot during the battle and later died from the wounds. **NOTE:** The crossed out text indicates Washington's own edits.

1 To The Honble Robt Dinwiddie

2 Esqr. Williamsburgh

3 Honble Sir

4 As I am favourd with an oppertunity, I shoud think myself inexcusable, was I to omit givg you some  
5 acct of our late Engagemt with the French on the Monogahela the 9th Inst.

6 We continued our March from Fort Cumberland to Frazer's (which is within 7 Miles of Duquisne)  
7 witht meetg ~~with~~ any extraordinary event, havg only a stragler or two picked Up by the French  
8 Indians. When we came to this place, we were attackd, (very unexpectedly ~~I must own~~) by abt 300  
9 French and Indns; Our number's consisted of abt 1300 well armd Men, chiefly regular's, who were  
10 immediately struck with such ~~a deadly~~ an inconceivable Panick, that nothing but confusion and  
11 disobedience or order's prevaild amongst them: The Officers's in genl behavd with incomparable  
12 bravery, for which they greatly suffered, there being near 60 killd and woundd A large Proportion  
13 out of the number we had! The Virginians Companies behave like Men, and died like Soldier's; for I  
14 believe out of 3 Companys that were ~~there~~ on the ground that Day, scarce 30 were left alive: Captn  
15 Peyrouny and all his Officer's down to a Corporal, were killd; Captn Polson shard almost as hard a  
16 Fate, for only one of his Escap'd: In short the dastardly behaviour of the ~~English Soldier's~~ Regular  
17 Troops exposd all those who were inclin'd to do their duty, to almost certai(n) Death; and at length,  
18 in despiht of every effort to the contraty, broke & run as Sheep before ~~the~~ Hounds, leavg the  
19 Artillery, Ammunition, Provision, ~~and every individual~~ Baggage & in short every thing ~~we had with~~  
20 ~~us~~ prey to the enemy...

21 ...The Genl was wounded ~~behind~~ in the Shoulder, & into the Breast; of wch he died three days  
22 after... It is supposed that we ~~left~~ had 300 or more ~~dead in the field~~ killed; abt that number we  
23 brought off wounded; and it is ~~imagin'd~~ conjectured (I believe with ~~great justice to~~ much truth) that  
24 two thirds of both ~~those number's~~ receiv'd their shott from our own cowardly ~~dogs of Soldier's~~  
25 Regulars, who gathered themselves into a body contraty to orders 10 or 12 deep, then would level,  
26 Fire, & shoot down the Men before them.

27 I Tremble at the consequences that this defeat may have upon our back settlers, who I suppose will all  
28 leave their habitation's unless there are proper measures taken for their security...

29

G. W--n

30 Fort Cumberland July 18th 1755

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**Braddock's Sash, c. 1709**

Source Type: Object

Silk, 19inches x 144 inches

Made in England

*Courtesy of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** The sash is made from silk and woven using a method called sprang, which makes it extremely strong. On July 9, 1755, every British officer, including General Edward Braddock, was either injured or killed at the Battle of Monongahela; the only exception was Braddock's aide-de-camp, George Washington. Braddock sustained a fatal wound and is said to have been carried from the battlefield in this officer's sash. The dark line on the right side of the sash is believed to be blood from Braddock's injuries. Family tradition maintains that prior to his death, Braddock presented the sash to Washington. Officers' sashes were a symbol of the status of the officer and acted as a clear visual marker on the battle field to indicate the chain of command.



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**Excerpt: George Washington to Royal Governor Dinwiddie, November 5, 1757**

Source Type: Letter

*Courtesy of [www.founders.archives.gov](http://www.founders.archives.gov)*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** George Washington writes to Royal Governor Robert Dinwiddie expressing his frustration and describing the British treatment of Native Americans.

1 Honble Sir.[Fort Loudoun] Novem. 5th 1757

2 Duty to my country and His Majesty's interest, indispensably requires, that I again trouble your Honor on

3 The subject of Indian affairs here; which have been impeded and embarrassed by such a train of

4 mismanagement, as a continuance of which must inevitably produce the most melancholy consequences.

5 The sincere disposition the Cherokees have betrayed to espouse our cause heartily, has been demonstrated

6 beyond the most distant doubt: and if rewarded in the manner in which that laudable and meritorious

7 disposition entitles them to, wou'd, in all human probability, soon effect a favourable change in the present

8 (apparently) desperate situation of this poor, unhappy part of His majesty's Dominions. But, in the stead of

9 meeting with that great encouragement which the essential Services of that brave people undoubtedly merit;

10 several of them, after having undergone the rudest toils and fatigues of an excessively long march

11 destitute of all the conveniences, and almost necessities of life—and, (to give us still more convincing

12 proofs of their strong attachment to our interest) in that very situation, went to war; and in the way behaved

13 nobly (from which we reaped a signal advantage;) and, when they returned here with an enemys' *scalp*,

14 Baggage, and other trophies of Honor, they must have gone home without any kind of reward or thanks—or

15 even provisions to support them on their march—justly fired with the highest resentment for their mal-

16 treatment—

17 ... I applied to Captn Gist in their behalf; and told him I must represent the matter to your Honor. But he

18 assures me that he has neither Goods to reward them, money to procure them; or even an Interpreter; which

19 totally incapacitates him for doing any kind of service. If so (which I have no reason to doubt), it is

20 surprizing that any man shou'd be entrusted with the negotiating of such important affairs, and not be

21 possess'd of the means to accomplish the undertaking: By which he, and several others who receive high

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22 pay from virginia, are not only rendered useless, but our Interest with those Indians is at the brink of  
23 destruction. Whenever a party arrives here, they immediately apply to me: But I have neither any thing to  
24 give them, nor any right to do it. Nor is there any body to inform them, to what these and their other  
25 disappointments is owing: which reduces me to such a dilemma as I wou'd most gladly be extricated from.

26 I must likewise beg leave to mention to your Honor once more, the vast hardships many of the poor people  
27 groan under here, having been so long kept out of the money which the country owes them on account of  
28 the Indians. When I proposed going down to Williamsburgh, many of them brought their accompts to me,  
29 which I intended (had you given me liberty) to have laid before your Honor. I mention this circumstance,  
30 not with any view of being employed in examining and paying off those accompts (which for many reasons  
31 I can, by no means, undertake) but in hope that your Honor will be pleased to give directions to, and  
32 denominate some person for that purpose, for the neglect of which so many poor peop[le] greatly Suffer. I  
33 am Yr's &c.

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***The Death of General Wolfe* by Benjamin West, 1770**

Source Type: Painting

Courtesy of National Gallery of Canada, [www.gallery.ca](http://www.gallery.ca)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** *The Death of General Wolfe* by Benjamin West depicts the Battle of Quebec (also known as the Battle of the Plains of Abraham) which took place on September 13, 1759. This encounter was the last major battle in the North American theater of the Seven Years' War with the British gaining political and military control over the French in North America. Following a three-month siege of the city of Quebec, the Battle of Quebec lasted approximately fifteen minutes. British General James Wolfe was killed by musket fire within the first few minutes of the battle.





**Excerpt: Treaty of Paris, 1763**

Source Type: Document

*Courtesy of The Avalon Project, [www.avalon.law.yale.edu](http://www.avalon.law.yale.edu)*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** The Treaty of Paris is the treaty that formally ended the Seven Years' War between France and Britain.

1 It has pleased the Most High to diffuse the spirit of union and concord among the Princes, whose  
2 divisions had spread troubles in the four parts of the world, and to inspire them with the inclination  
3 to cause the comforts of peace to succeed to the misfortunes of a long and bloody war, which having  
4 arisen between England and France during the reign...

5 ...**VII.** In order to re-establish peace on solid and durable foundations, and to remove for ever all  
6 subject of dispute with regard to the limits of the British and French territories on the continent of  
7 America; it is agreed, that, for the future, the confines between the dominions of his Britannick  
8 Majesty and those of his Most Christian Majesty, in that part of the world, shall be fixed irrevocably  
9 by a line drawn along the middle of the River Mississippi, from its source to the river Iberville, and  
10 from thence, by a line drawn along the middle of this river, and the lakes Maurepas and  
11 Pontchartrain to the sea; and for this purpose, the Most Christian King cedes in full right, and  
12 guaranties to his Britannick Majesty the river and port of the Mobile, and every thing which he  
13 possesses, or ought to possess, on the left side of the river Mississippi, except the town of New  
14 Orleans and the island in which it is situated, which shall remain to France, provided that the  
15 navigation of the river Mississippi shall be equally free, as well to the subjects of Great Britain as to  
16 those of France, in its whole breadth and length, from its source to the sea, and expressly that part  
17 which is between the said island of New Orleans and the right bank of that river, as well as the  
18 passage both in and out of its mouth: It is farther stipulated, that the vessels belonging to the subjects  
19 of either nation shall not be stopped, visited, or subjected to the payment of any duty whatsoever.  
20 The stipulations inserted in the IVth article, in favour of the inhabitants of Canada shall also take  
21 place with regard to the inhabitants of the countries ceded by this article...

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**George Washington as a Colonel in the Virginia Regiment by Charles Volkmar (1874), after Charles Willson Peale**

Source Type: Painting

*Courtesy of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** Martha Washington commissioned this portrait of George Washington nearly ten years after the end of the Seven Years' War. Washington chose to have himself painted in his uniform from his time as a colonel in the Virginia Regiment. At the time of the commission it was assumed this might be the only portrait made of Washington, since portraits were expensive, and he wanted to communicate his greatest accomplishment.

