

Cover Sheet

Overview

This is a chapter from the fourth edition of the e-book “**In Search of the Turkey Foot Road: Unraveling the mystery, charting new history, plotting the route**” (2014). To access other chapters, see the [online table of contents](#).

As described on pages 3 to 6 of [Addendum A](#), the fourth edition mistakenly claims that a dashed line route on the 1755 Fry and Jefferson map is an antecedent to the Turkey Foot Road. Shortly after publication, I realized that the dashed lines actually represent Christopher Gist’s second Ohio Company Tour. If that or another known mistake affects this or another chapter of the book, the relevant text will be highlighted in yellow, and the mistake will be briefly described in a comment that is accessible via a clickable comment icon.

In this and other chapters of the book, any supplemental information will be provided via clickable comment icons, inserted yellow sheets, or other readily identifiable means.

L. Dietle

August 23, 2026

9. Colonel Morgan's 1779 road to Pittsburgh

Introduction

According to the previously described traditions, the Turkey Foot Road evolved from an Indian and packer's path. Whatever the previous alignments were, a new packhorse road was cut during the Revolutionary War as a supply route from Fort Cumberland to Fort Pitt (Figures [0748](#), [0750](#)). Colonel George Morgan ordered it cut in 1779, at a time when supplies at Fort Pitt were desperately low, and urgently needed for a punitive expedition George Washington was planning against hostile Indians. It was routed through the southern part of what is now Somerset County so that packhorse trains could obtain forage from the thriving farming settlements in the Casselman valley and Turkeyfoot regions.

By 1784 (the year after the peace treaty was signed), George Washington was calling the contemporaneous route the Turkey Foot Road, as detailed in Chapter 11.

Introducing George Morgan

George Morgan ([Figure 0550](#)) was born in Philadelphia in 1743. His mother died giving birth to him, and his father died when he was five.²⁴²

As a young teenager, he began working as an apprentice at the firm of Baynton and Wharton.²⁴³ That company was engaged in many different trading activities, including trade with the Indians. After about four years, he became a bookkeeper for the firm; and by 1762, he was testing the waters of private business venture.

Baynton and Wharton had financial difficulties in 1763, including the loss of Indian trade consignments due to Pontiac's War²⁴⁴. George Morgan used inherited money to join and recapitalize the firm, which then became the partnership of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan.

Morgan gains experience dealing with large-scale logistical problems

Due to his young age and freedom from other commitments, Morgan was available to take on, though reluctantly, the responsibility of overseeing the transportation of a large shipment of Indian trade goods to the Illinois country. First, he had to organize transportation to Fort Pitt, using wagons and hundreds of packhorses. At Fort Pitt, he had to arrange for temporary storage, and ended up building what is erroneously credited as being the first house with a shingled roof in Pittsburgh.²⁴⁵

²⁴² The introductory information about George Morgan that does not reference supporting documentary evidence is based on Max Savelle's 1932 book "[George Morgan Colony Builder](#)".

²⁴³ According to the 1904 "[History of Beaver County...](#)", George Morgan married John Baynton's daughter Mary on October 24, 1764.

²⁴⁴ In 1765, after Morgan became a partner, the firm tried to send a shipment of Indian trade goods westward before legal trade was reopened by the government. The pack train was attacked by the "[Black Boys](#)", and most of the goods were destroyed. See the story beginning on page 49 of the 1884 "[History of Bedford, Somerset, and Fulton Counties](#)", and Savelle's book.

²⁴⁵ An 1846 issue of "[The Olden Time](#)" describes this house as "[a two story, double hewn log house...built by Colonel George Morgan about 1794, and was the first shingle roofed house in Pittsburgh](#)". This was not really the first shingled building in the area. William Marshall's deposition describes making shingles for buildings at Fort Duquesne in 1755.

Next, he had to arrange for shipments down the Ohio River, and up the Mississippi. This involved large-scale boat building, and hiring over 300 crewmembers. In the fall of 1766, 65 boatloads of goods were sent to the Illinois country under his supervision.

In addition to the Indian trade, the firm eventually became engaged in provisioning soldiers in the Illinois country, providing government agents with gifts for Indian tribes, and supplying settlers. In the long run, they were unable to successfully compete with French and Spanish traders, and their business in the Illinois country declined. They abandoned the effort in 1772, and had to sell their assets to pay creditors. The company effectively ceased to exist by 1776, but Morgan had gained a tremendous amount of experience in dealing with large-scale logistical problems.

Agent for Indian affairs

As revolutionary war clouds loomed, the Continental Congress organized an Indian department in July 1775 to try to maintain peace with the Indians. George Morgan was an honest man, and well respected by the Indians. The Continental Congress appointed him the “*agent for Indian affairs in the middle department*” at Fort Pitt in 1776, and gave him the rank and pay of Colonel on January 8, 1777. In his 1848 book “**Pioneer history: being an account of the first examinations of the Ohio ...**”, Hildreth describes Morgan as follows:

Colonel Morgan was appointed Indian agent for the middle department, the head quarters of which office were at Pittsburgh, by Congress, in April, 1776. He was a man of unwearied activity, great perserverance, and familiar with the Indian manners and habits, having for several years had charge of a trading post in the Illinois... His frank manners, soldierly bearing, generosity, and, above all, his strict honesty in all his dealings with them, won their fullest confidence...

Provisioning the western troops

Part of Morgan’s responsibilities included gathering various types of supplies for Indian conferences. This activity snowballed into acquiring provisions for the western forts and expeditions, resulting in the aforementioned rank.

According to Volume 8, “**Journals of the Continental Congress**”, page 476, on June 18, 1777, Congress recorded:

That the commissary general be directed to supply Colonel George Morgan, with five hundred bushels of salt, to be forwarded to Fort Pitt, for curing²⁴⁶ the provisions directed by Congress to be stored there.

According to page 502 of the same book, on June 27, 1777, the Congress recorded:

That there be advanced to Colonel George Morgan, 20,000 dollars,²⁴⁷ for compleating the payment of monies he has engaged for on contracts for provisions, which are directed to be laid up

²⁴⁶ Salt was used for preserving meat before the advent of refrigeration. Mr. Dietle’s father Roy indicated that during his Larimer Township boyhood, his family made salt pork before the advent of rural electrification allowed the use of refrigerators and freezers. He was describing common knowledge and skills that were being lost to the generations that followed his. Roy Dietle’s boyhood home was electrified in 1940. Salt became very scarce during the Revolutionary War, which added to Morgan’s supply problems.

²⁴⁷ During the Revolutionary War, paper currency known as “*Continental*” ([Figure 0372](#)) was issued by the Continental Congress. Some denominations indicate the value in “*Spanish Milled Dollars*”, while others just reference the “*dollar*”. The “*Continental*” depreciated severely. By 1780, it was only valued at roughly 2.5 percent of its initial face value. Printing was discontinued in 1780. This severe depreciation was a significant problem that Morgan and others reference in correspondence.

in magazines at Fort Pitt, for the supply of the different garrisons in that quarter; for the expenditure of which, the said Colonel George Morgan is to be accountable.

Ordered, That the same be advanced.

These are a few examples, among many, of Morgan's role in provisioning Fort Pitt.

Morgan is relieved of duties during a treason investigation

The Indian situation worsened, despite Morgan's sincere efforts. People turned against him, and he was falsely accused of treason. The resulting investigation, which exonerated him, also left a record of his accomplishments, which included going beyond his official duties and supplying the western forts so they could remain occupied. During the investigation, Morgan was temporarily relieved of his duties. On October 15, 1777, Congress:

Resolved, That a deputy commissary general of purchases and a deputy commissary general of issues be appointed for supplying the forts and posts on the western frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia....

That the said deputy commissary general of issues be directed to receive from Colonel George Morgan, all the provisions in his possession belonging to the United States...

On October 22, 1777, Congress:

Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to enquire into the conduct of colonel Morgan; and that he be required forthwith to repair to Congress for that purpose; and that a proper person be appointed to perform the duties entrusted to colonel Morgan until the event of such enquiry...

Morgan acknowledges this suspension in a November 11, 1777 letter, reproduced in the 1904 "**History of Beaver County...**"²⁴⁸ which references "*your Letter of the 30th inclosing a copy of the Resolve of Congress on the 22nd Ulto.,*"²⁴⁹ *suspending me from my employment...*"²⁵⁰ On November 20, 1777, Congress decided to allow the indefatigable Morgan to continue his work while the treason investigation continued, and recorded the following:

Resolved, That the case of colonel G. Morgan be included in the business referred to the consideration of the commissioners who are to be appointed for various purposes on the western frontiers; that; in the mean while, col. Morgan be restored to the appointment for Indian affairs, and that he be appointed deputy commissary-general of purchases in the western district.

Morgan keeps working while temporarily under arrest

On December 21, 1777, General Edward Hand wrote a letter to Richard Henry Lee and others confirming a report that George Morgan had been arrested. The letter included the following:

²⁴⁸ This book states: "*General Hand...was constantly hampered by circumstances beyond his control... One difficulty with which he had to contend was the suspicion which arose during the summer of 1777 as to the loyalty of some of the inhabitants of western Pennsylvania and Virginia. Some of the best men in Pittsburg were arrested, among whom was Colonel George Morgan, the United States Indian Agent. Even General Hand himself was suspected*".

²⁴⁹ "*Ulto*" means the previous month.

²⁵⁰ The letter goes on to list some of his contributions to the American cause, including "*...my having prevented the total Evacuation of the Posts on the Ohio for want of Provisions, through the Neglect or Inability of those instructed to supply them...*", and requests a speedy hearing.

*The report of Col. George Morgan's being arrested here was well founded, the Express (a Militia Officer) who brought the enclosed Letter from Col. Zach: Morgan informed some of his Acquaintance in Town, that the principal People here concerned in the Conspiracy, were Col. Geo. Morgan, Col. John Campbell, Capt. Alex^r McKee & Simon Girty, and that the Reason they were not pointed out in the Letter was, that, I was myself suspected. From this Information I judged it prudent to secure these Persons to prevent their escaping the Punishment they deserved, if Guilty ... Col. Campbell before he had learned my Intention of arresting him, waited on me, and desired Permission to accompany me, which I agreed to, & told Col. George Morgan he might have the same Liberty, which he declined, being then, he said very busie, and remained a Prisoner in his own House. ... I was present at the Examination of the greatest Number of the Prisoners, and learned from the Magistrates who examined the whole, that no more than one Man mentioned Col. George Morgan's Name ... for this Reason on my Return I took off Col. Morgan's Arrest ... I must declare in Justice to him, that every Proceeding of his, that came to my Knowledge, either as Indian Agent, or Commissary, appeared to me, to be that of a Zealous and faithful Serv^t to the United States. I should have made early mention of his Arrest, but as it is on a groundless Assertion, I wished to have it buried in Oblivion.*²⁵¹

Morgan is exonerated and praised

The investigation of George Morgan was completed in March 1778, and a certificate forwarded to Congress included the statement:

We the commissioners for the western department, acting under authority of Congress, having, in obedience to our instructions, notice being first given to all the neighbouring countries, proceeded to an enquiry into the conduct of colonel George Morgan, agent for Indian affairs ... after the clearest and most satisfactory testimonies, wholly acquit the said colonel George Morgan of the charges against him, of infidelity to his public trust and disaffection to the American cause; and we testify that we are possest of the knowledge of various facts and circumstances evincing not only his attachment to the cause, but also an uncommon degree of diligence in discharging the duties of his employment, and of the attention to the interests of the United States; and therefore are of opinion he ought to be restored to the fullest confidence of his country.

Purchasing Commissary for the Western Department

An August 14, 1778 War Office document²⁵² describes Morgan as the “*purchasing Commissary for the Western department*”, and in that capacity requested 617,500 pounds of fresh beef.

A September 17, 1778 War Office document²⁵³ states:

The Board ... are of the opinion that the whole sum asked for by Col. Morgan, vis. Two hundred and four thousand dollars, will be necessary to enable him to lay in the provisions requisite for the troops kept up on the western frontiers, and which must be maintained, to prevent the inhabitants abandoning their extensive settlements.

On October 24, 1778, an October 16, 1778 War Office document was read to Congress²⁵⁴. It states:

²⁵¹ At least two published versions of this letter exist, and vary in small details. One is in the 1912 book “*Frontier defense on the upper Ohio, 1777-1778*”, and the other is in the 1919 book “*The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*”.

²⁵² Volume 12 of the “*Journals of the Continental Congress*”, page 869.

²⁵³ Volume 12 of the “*Journals of the Continental Congress*”, page 870.

The Board have considered of Colonel Morgan's letter of the 12th instant referred to them. It appears by the letter of his agent Mr. Shelton, that 1,000 head of cattle have been purchased for the troops at the westward, and by the information of Mr. Gibson, ye express now here from fort Pitt, that several hundred head have actually been delivered, and by that means General McIntosh has been enabled to commence his expedition before the arrival of supplies from Mr. Lockart; and as the cattle were purchased probably at rather high prices, the Board beg leave to report:

That sixty thousand dollars be paid to Colonel George Morgan for the purchases of cattle made by his direction for the troops on the western frontiers, and to defray the expence of purchasing and driving the same; he to be accountable for that sum.

The Board beg leave to remind Congress that they reported some time since a large sum to be granted to Colonel Morgan to enable him to lay up salt provisions²⁵⁵ and flour for next year, for the troops at the westward. The forming such magazines is every day growing more difficult and expensive; and in a little time will probably be quite impracticable.

Although Lockhart was appointed by Congress to procure supplies for McIntosh's campaign against the Detroit garrison, Morgan's supply contribution was significant.

A new Quartermaster General

General Nathanael Greene ([Figure 0655](#)) was a skilled strategist, and a close confidant and trusted advisor of George Washington. On March 2, 1778, Congress appointed Greene as Quartermaster General, and appointed John Cox and Charles Petit as Greene's Assistant Quartermasters-General. Greene would have preferred a more glorious post, but dug into his new responsibilities.

1778 massacres anger Americans

On July 3, 1778, during what became known as the Wyoming Valley Massacre, Iroquois and Tory raiders from New York killed more than 300 Americans in Pennsylvania. On November 11, 1778, another massacre took place at Cherry Valley, New York, where 32 inhabitants were scalped and killed. One popular idea for retaliation was to attack Canada.

Congress funds supplies for the west

Because of the hostile Indian tribes, on December 1, 1778, Congress approved new funding for 1,300 men for the western department. The Congressional journal²⁵⁶ states:

A letter of 28 November, from Colonel George Morgan, was read; Whereupon,

Congress took into a consideration a report of the Board of War of 14 August last, wherein the Board sets forth,

'That Colonel George Morgan, purchasing commissary for the western department, has represented to the Board the necessity of preparing immediately for the laying up of such magazines of provisions as shall be sufficient for the troops maintained for the defence of the western frontiers; that for the supply of 1300 men for ten months, 617,500 lb. of flour, a like quantity of fresh beef, or 494,000 lb. of pork, will be necessary; the cost of which, with 1500

²⁵⁴ Volume 12 of the "Journals of the Continental Congress", pages 1059 and 1060.

²⁵⁵ The term "Salt provisions" means salted meat.

²⁵⁶ Volume 12 of the "Journals of the Continental Congress", page 1181.

gallons of whiskey, will amount to 204,000 dollars, that on account of hostile Indians to the westward, and the northern tribes, particularly the Senecas, the number of men above stated will be necessary, including 150 for garrisoning Fort Randolph; Whereupon,

Resolved, that Colonel George Morgan, commissary of purchases for the western district, be furnished with two hundred and four thousand dollars, to enable him to form magazines of provisions for the use of that department the year ensuing.

A multi-pronged attack is proposed to disrupt the Indian food supply

In a January 5, 1779 letter to Washington, Greene advised against attacking Canada. He recommended moving against the Indian food supply in New York instead, using a multi-pronged attack to include a division from Fort Pitt:

I think the fact is pretty clearly ascertain'd that there is a great scarcity of Provision and Forage.²⁵⁷ The Middle and Eastern States have been harassed very greatly for four Campaigns running by means of which the Country has got much exhausted and the People sore with the hardships they have suffer'd, and the state of our currency added to the other two considerations renders a contracted plan and a breathing spell for the People absolutely necessary. No foreign Expedition should be undertaken while the Enemy remains formidable in these States.

There is three principal objects to be attended to in the plan of next Campaign. To take a position favorable for subsisting the army with ease and at the least Expence, To scourge the Indians at the proper season, and route the Enemy from N York should the state of the Garrison there render it practicable. ...

To scourge the Indians properly there should be considerable bodys of men march into their Country by different routes and at a season when their Corn is about half grown. The month of June will be the most proper time. One division to move from Fort Pitt. One division by way of Wyoming and the other by the Mohawk River. The only object should be that of driving off the Indians and destroying their Grain and as soon as that is completed to return again. This must be done whether the Enemy continues in great or little force in New York.

No offensive operations can take place against N York until green forage can be had. ...

The need for forage is mentioned repeatedly in other correspondence. This need played a significant role in determining the route of the road that is now known as the Turkey Foot Road.

Washington orders pack saddles

By January 27, 1779, Washington began preparations for the attack, writing to Greene:

"You are hereby directed to provide with all convenient dispatch Twenty five hundred pack saddles of the cheapest and strongest kind fit for the purpose of transporting Provisions, Stores and Baggage."

As will be shown by documentary evidence below, after the Turkey Foot Road was cut, 1,500 packhorses were using the new road later in 1779 to supply Fort Pitt.

²⁵⁷ For a detailed look at the severe forage problem and its effect on transportation, and the extreme difficulties faced by those who were charged with provisioning the troops, see Erna Risch's 1981 book "**Supplying Washington's Army**". (Published by the Center of Military History, United States Army.)

Fort Pitt desperately needs supplies

On January 30, 1779, Washington took action to try to obtain supplies for Fort Pitt for the impending attack, writing to the President of Congress:

In consequence of the authority vested in me by Congress of 'directing and superintending the military operations in these States,' I was led to make enquiry into the State of the Magazines to the Westward. From a late letter of Genl. McIntosh's to myself, and several to the Board of War, I find that he has been so much distressed for provision, that he has been obliged suddenly to disband all the Militia that were in service, and seems to be very apprehensive that he shall with difficulty subsist the two Continental Regiments and a few Independent Companies, thro' the Winter. I communicated this to the Commissary General of Purchases, and desired him to make an estimate of what Magazines of provisions he could establish at Fort Pitt during the Winter, or time enough in the Spring to commence operations should they be necessary. In answer to this he informed me, that the supply of the Army in the Western department had never been under his direction, and that therefore he did not conceive himself authorized to take any Steps in the matter. I have thought it my duty to represent this to Congress as early as possible that proper enquiries may be made of those who have hitherto had the charge of procuring supplies, whether they have made the necessary arrangements for establishing proper Magazines at Fort Pitt in the Spring, and if they have not, or cannot engage to do it with certainty, it will be necessary without loss of time to authorize the Commissary General of purchases to extend his Commission so as to include the Western operations. He, from transacting his Business upon a very large scale, is more likely to be acquainted with the general Resources of the Country, and consequently more able to supply our wants, than those who have been confined to a particular district. If the Commissary General is to undertake the establishment of the Magazines, he should immediately be made acquainted with it, that he may begin to put matters in a train for moving the provision from below as soon as the State of the Roads will admit, as I take it for granted that none can go farther than the foot of the Mountains during the winter. I fear, notwithstanding our utmost exertions, it will be late before sufficient Magazines can be formed, especially of Flour, the Crops beyond the Allegahany having been generally lost last summer by the evacuation of the Country. The transportation of that Article therefore must be very distant. I hope Congress will view this matter in the same important light that I do, and that whatever their determination may be, it be as speedy as the case will admit. In addition to what I have said, I shall only remark that many good consequences result from having all the Branches of the same department under one head...

A plan for an attack from Fort Pitt

The next day, January 31, 1779, Washington wrote to Brigadier General Lachlan McIntosh ([Figure 0656](#)), commander at Fort Pitt, about the upcoming campaign:

I make no doubt but you have a sufficiency of difficulties to struggle with, but am glad to find that the steps you have taken have given at least a temporary relief to the Inhabitants upon the frontier, and I hope by pursuing a steady and properly concerted plan next Campaign we may, if we cannot engage the friendship of the savages, reduce them to the necessity of remaining quiet. To effect this, it is determined, at present, to carry the War into the Indian Country next Spring as early as the season and the state of our Magazines will admit. No particular plan is yet fixed, nor are the places which will be the most proper objects of attack yet marked out. But as we may conclude that Fort Pitt will be one of the principal places from whence we shall commence our operations, I

must desire you will immediately upon the Rect. of this set about making the following preparations and collecting the necessary intelligence of the state of the Country, Waters &c. over which we shall probably pass.

It will in the first place be necessary to provide Batteaus or Canoes, (which-ever may be thought most suitable for the Waters of that Country) for 1000 or 1200 Men, and endeavour to form Magazines sufficient for the same number for three or four months. From your letter to me and those to the Board of War, I imagine you will be able to do little towards the latter, as the provision must chiefly go from below, I shall therefore endeavour to put matters in a proper train for the formation of Magazines as early as possible, before I leave this town.

Washington goes on to discuss a possible attack against Detroit, and then describes the possibility of an attack against the Seneca Indians:

But if an expedition against the Indians of the Six Nations should be determined upon in preference to the other, it will be necessary to enquire how far the Force assembled at Pittsburg seemingly with an intent to operate either against the Indians upon the Ohio or agt. Detroit may be turned to a cooperation with other Bodies from Albany from the Susquehannah, or perhaps from both. To form a judgment of the practicability of this, the distance between Fort Pitt and the Country of the six Nations especially the Senecas, who are most numerous, warlike and inimical of the whole, should be exactly ascertained...

Persons (either Indians or Whites) of trust should be hired for the several purposes before mentioned; they should not know that we ourselves are undetermined as to the plan of our operations, and then each party will suppose that the Route which they are sent to explore is the one by which we mean to carry on an expedition.

If they betray the confidence reposed in them, they will deceive the Enemy in every quarter but that which may happen to be our real object. As the force collected at and the preparations made at Fort Pitt will point equally every way, it will add to the distraction of the enemy should they find out that we are making enquiries concerning the different Routes leading to their posts.

Congress responds to George Washington

On February 1, 1779, Congress gave Washington the authority to direct the Commissary and Quartermaster departments:

Resolved, That the Commander-in-Chief give such directions as he may think proper for arranging the commissary's and quarter master's departments to the westward, any resolutions of Congress notwithstanding; and that for his information the secretary be directed to lay before him the several letters on that subject from Colonel G. Morgan to Congress; and that the Board of War communicate to him all necessary intelligence that may have come to them respecting the same subject.

Look into the transportation issue!

On February 14, 1779, Washington wrote to Commissary General Jeremiah Wadsworth ([Figure 0660](#)) about drawing provisions for Fort Pitt from the surrounding region and from Virginia, and asks him to look into the means of transportation:

If my order of the _____, respecting the Magazine of Provision at Fort Pitt did not explicitly declare that the quantity there directed to be laid up by the first of May is to be over and above the necessary supplies for the Troops in that Quarter I now inform you that this was my meaning; And I have further to desire that you will form a Magazine under like circumstances, and for the same time (that is four Months) for one thousand Men at Sundbury on Susquehanna.

For particular reasons I think it advisable, that the Magazine at Pittsburgh should be drawn from the Frontiers of Virginia, and the parts of Pensylvania contiguous to that Post; and, that the supplies for Sundbury be drawn from the Westside of the Susquehanna. You will consult the Quarter master Genl. on the means of Transportation that no disappointment may take place in either of these cases.

Washington writes McIntosh again

On February 15, 1779, Washington again wrote to McIntosh about attacking the Indians from Fort Pitt, and describes how he is trying to address the dire supply problem at Fort Pitt:

The more I contemplate on an Expedition from Fort Pitt, the more perswaded I am of the superior advantages that will result from its co-operation with some enterprize from this quarter (if circumstances will permit) but as a measure of this kind depends upon contingencies, no perfect plan can be yet formed; but as there will be little or no difference, in the preparation for an Expedition up the Alligany against the hostile tribes of the Six Nations, and one against the Indians more Westerly and Detroit, I would have you confine your attention more to the first than the latter objects; keeping the design as much as possible an impenetrable secret, under an Idea that you are preparing to prosecute the objects of the last campaign; and to lessen as much as possible the expence of land transportation, you mean to make use of that by Water.

The only means that can lead to a discovery of the real design, is the steps which must necessarily be taken to obtain a thorough knowledge of the rout, and other circumstances to form the plan; but this may be covered in a great degree by the adoption of similar measures (which may eventually be equally necessary) the other way. Your oblique enquiries in the first case, should always be accompanied with pointed ones in the second, which will naturally give the bias to that way of thinking.

Washington goes on to ask McIntosh to investigate the route of attack, then states:

I have directed the Commissary Genl. of purchases under the inclosed resolve, to lay in four Months provision for 1200 Men, at Pittsburg, by the first of May. He will continue Colo. Morgan in this business, if he chooses it; but as it is necessary to avoid interference in office that all the branches of the same department should be under one general direction, and superintendance, my orders have gone, and must go through him.

Danger in Bedford County

A February 16, 1779 letter to the Pennsylvania General Assembly from various county and township tax assessors of Bedford County describes Indian depredations within the county. The letter confirms the basis of the trepidation Morgan later expresses to Greene on March 19, 1779 (below). The letter, and the response of the Pennsylvania government, are quoted near the end of this chapter.

Washington writes to Greene about transportation

To make doubly sure the problem of transportation to Fort Pitt was addressed, Washington wrote directly to Nathanael Greene on February 24, 1779:

I have given the Commissary General orders to lay in a Magazine of four months provisions for Twelve hundred men at Fort Pitt, and another of the like quantity for One thousand men at Sunbury, both to be formed by the first day of May next, and exclusive of the quantities necessary for the subsistence of the troops in these quarters.

I have directed him, if possible, to draw his supplies for Pittsburgh from the frontiers of Virginia, and those for Sunbury from the Westside of the Susquehanna. You will consult with him and afford him the necessary aid respecting the transportation.

At some point, Quartermaster General Greene asks George Morgan to look into the issue of transporting supplies from Virginia. The fact that Greene did so is revealed by a May 2, 1779 letter from Morgan to Greene that is included below.

Congress asks Washington to act to protect the frontier

On February 25, 1779, Congress passed a resolution asking Washington to chastise the Indians:

Resolved, That the representation of the circumstances of the western frontiers, communicated by a committee of the general assembly of Pennsylvania, and also copies of the memorials and of the letters from the governors of Connecticut and New-York, respecting the depredations on the said frontiers, be transmitted to the commander in chief, who is directed to take effectual measures for the protection of the inhabitants and chastisement of the savages.

Washington admonishes Wadsworth

On March 2, 1779, Washington directed Wadsworth to increase the amount of provisions at Sunbury, and included the admonition, “*The Supply for Fort Pitt as mentioned in the above order of the 14th. Ulto. must not be dispensed with either in quantity, or time, under no pretence whatsoever.*”

Washington writes to Governor George Clinton

Washington’s March 4, 1779 letter to New York Governor George Clinton describes a plan to take the fight to the Indians in response to the 1778 massacres:

Dear Sir, The President of Congress has transmitted me your Excellency’s letter to the delegates of New York, representing the calamitous situation of the northwestern frontier of that State, accompanied by a similar application from the Pennsylvania Assembly, and a Resolve of the 25th directing me to take the most effectual measures for the protection of the inhabitants and chastisement of the Indians.

The Resolve has been in some measure anticipated by my previous dispositions for carrying on offensive operations against the hostile tribes of Savages.

McIntosh is replaced by Brodhead

On March 5, 1779, Washington appointed Colonel Daniel Brodhead ([Figure 0654](#)) to replace McIntosh, who had by then requested to be relieved of his command.²⁵⁸ In his letter of appointment, Washington emphasizes the need for provisions to support the upcoming attack:

You will observe by my letter of the 15th. Feby. that I have directed the Commy. General, to endeavour to form his magazines by the 1st. May, by which time I hope the other preparations will be in sufficient forwardness to move. ...

The establishment of adequate magazines and the preparation of a sufficient number of Boats, of the kind that may be deemed most proper, are what ought principally to engage your attention. Should the enquiries concerning the Country, the Waters, the distances & ca. be not so compleat as might be wished, we might yet proceed, but without the others we must be intirely at a stand.

The construction of boats was a continuing problem that is not highlighted in this chapter.

Morgan describes cutting the Turkey Foot Road

Around March 18, 1779, Morgan wrote a letter to Greene regarding the transportation of supplies to Fort Pitt, in which he describes cutting a new road to Fort Pitt. The letter includes the following statements:

The service has suffer'd from Want of Attention to the Water Carriage on Potomack.

Six Batteaux sufficient to carry 100, or 120 Kegs of _____ each, and twenty Cannoes capable of carrying 30 Kegs each, should be kept on that River, for the Transportation of Stores to Skipton.

One Store House and a Coopers Shop, should be built at the Mouth of Connecocheague, One at _____ Landing on the Virginia Side and One at Skipton. Coopers should be stationd at each of those Places.

A Road may be opend from Fort Cumberland to Fort Pitt which will shorten the Distance 22 or 25 Miles in 81. The New Road may easily be made a much better One for Waggons than the old One can be even with the same Labour and it leads through two plentiful Settlements for Forage Vizt²⁵⁹ The South End of Brothers Valley and Turkey Foot Settlement. I have directed it to be opend for Pack Horses, and to be surveyd. More than One half is already done.

Morgan's letter proves that he was responsible for having the Turkey Foot Road cut through the present-day Salisbury, Pennsylvania area, which was then a part of Brothersvalley Township, Bedford County. The road went through that area and the general Turkeyfoot region so the packhorses could draw forage from the plentiful settlements that were already located there in 1779.

Transportation to the western forts is hazardous

On March 19, 1779, Greene wrote a letter to Wadsworth, which includes the following statement:

Col Morgan your deputy for the district of Fort Pitt was here to day. He refuses to act upon the usual commission. He says the business is so laborious and risky that he will not engage in it

²⁵⁸ "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript ...", Volume 14, John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

²⁵⁹ An abbreviation for videlicet. The definition for videlicet in the 1780 book "A General Dictionary of the English Language" is "To wit, that is generally written Viz."

without a larger commission. He has represented the matter to Congress; and they have it now under consideration.

The business of that district is so much behind hand, that I am afraid it will be difficult for us to get it forward so as to keep pace with the opening season. However I will try.

I like Col Morgan exceedingly; and intend giving him a kind of general superindendance in my department as well as yours. That if the present Agents don't give him the necessary assistance in forwarding the provisions; to empower him to take such further measures as he may think the good of the service may require.

Washington wavers about the attack from Fort Pitt

Around the time Morgan wrote to Greene about cutting the new road, he talked to Washington in person. Washington mentions the conversation in a March 20, 1779 letter to a fellow founding father, Gouverneur Morris ([Figure 0657](#)):

I have received your favour of the 14th Inst by Colo Morgan, and have a good deal of conversation with him respecting our affairs to the Westward.

I wish matters had been more prosperously conducted under the command of Genl McIntosh. ...²⁶⁰ He is now coming away, and the second in command, Brodhead (as there will be no military operation of consequence to be conducted) will succeed him...

Morris wrote a scathing letter to Washington about McIntosh

The meeting Washington had with Morgan was the result of a scathing March 14, 1779 letter Gouverneur Morris wrote to Washington about McIntosh. Part of the letter is quoted here:

You will excuse in me the Liberty I have taken in requesting Col^o Morgan to call on you. That Gentleman can give you much and important information relative to the State of our Western Frontiers. From the first View of the Commander of that Department in York Town he struck me as one of those who excel in the Regularity of still Live from the Possession of an indolent uniformity of soul. The little Eagerness he shewed to go thence when every Thing almost depended on Vivacity gave no good omen of his success. ... When I heard of some Proceedings in the Department I ventured to say aloud that no Good would follow from the Exertions of the Army under his Command. Unfortunately I have not been mistaken. I have reason to believe that his Recall hath become necessary from a variety of Causes. ... I believe it is unnecessary for me to say that Colo Morgan is a Man of Honor and Truth as he is of your acquaintance but as you may not know him so well as to know how much he may be relied on permit me to assure you that I have the highest Reason to believe that you cannot derive Information from a more certain source or thro a surer Channell

Brodhead is ordered to plan an attack

On March 22, 1779, Washington wrote to Brodhead, including the following statement:

You are to inform me with precision and by a careful Express when you will be ready to begin your movement from Fort Pitt, when you can be at Kittanning, when at Venango, when at the head of

²⁶⁰ The redacted part of this letter describes McIntosh's good qualities that Washington observed at Valley Forge, and McIntosh's neutrality regarding the boundary dispute between Virginia and Pennsylvania, as reasons for having appointed McIntosh to command Fort Pitt.

the Navigation, how far it is from thence to the nearest Indian Towns, and when you can reach them. In making your estimate of the times, you are to calculate upon moving as light as possible, and with only a few pieces of the lightest Artillery. These are necessary for me to know with as much accuracy as possible, that the plan of co-operation, upon which much depends, may be perfectly formed.

I would wish you to pacify and cultivate the friendship of the Western Indians by all the means in your power.

When you are ready to move and your probable destination can be no longer concealed, contrive ways to inform them that you are going to meet a large force to fall upon and destroy the whole Country of the Six Nations, and that if they do in the mean time give the least disturbance to the Frontiers, that whole force will be turned against them, and that we will never rest till we have cut them off from the face of the Earth.

On March 27, 1779, Joseph Reed, president of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, wrote a letter to his lieutenants about steps being taken to defend Bedford and Westmoreland Counties, in which he says, “...these are only Parts of the System, for it is fully determined to penetrate into the Indian Country, and by a seasonable, vigorous Stroke make them feel the weight of American Arms.

George Morgan’s memorial to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania

George Morgan’s March 25, 1779 memorial to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania²⁶¹ describes the reason for cutting the Turkey Foot Road, and describes the route and his desire to upgrade it into a wagon road:

*To the Hon^{ble} the Representatives of the Freemen of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met —
The Memorial of George Morgan.*

Sheweth,

That great impediments have arisen in the Transportation of public stores to the Ohio, from the badness of the Roads leading to Fort Pitt, which have been neglected so much that Carriages pass with the utmost Difficulty—

That a New Road may be opened from the Pennsylvania Line near to Fort Cumberland leading through Bedford County into the Old Road in Westmoreland County, which will shorten the Distance from thence to Fort Pitt, at least 22 Miles in 80—Whereby all the Stores procured from Virginia & Maryland for the Army on the Ohio may be transported, with a great Saving of Time & Expence to the United States in general & much Advantage to this State in particular; As the New Road may be opened & made better for Waggons, than what is called the Virginia Road can be at the same Expence—

That the public service on the Frontiers of this State has suffer’d from Pack-Horse-Men, Drivers & other necessary Persons employd by the staff of the Continental Army, being drafted into the Militia, & heavy Fines being levied on those who did not attend the Call of the County Lieutenants—

²⁶¹ Robert R. Reed collection, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, Illinois.

As the Interest of this State in general & of the suffering frontier Inhabitants thereof in particular is deeply concernd in facilitating every Military Operation in that Quarter, Your Memorialist presumes this Representation to the Honourable House, with whom alone the Remedies rest, will not be disagreeable—

GM

Philad^a March 25th 1779

Memorial—G Morgan To the Assembly of Pennsylvania

The missing March 1779 Morgan letters

A March 25, 1779 letter from George Morgan to Charles Clinton and a March 27, 1779 letter from George Morgan to Zack Connell are described as referencing the new road. Zack Connell evidently is the militia Captain Zachariah Connell²⁶², who ultimately owned property on the Turkey Foot Road in Fayette County, Pennsylvania and founded Connellsville. The letters were owned by George Morgan's descendant Mrs. A. G. Happer²⁶³ circa 1930. The current whereabouts of the letters is unknown.

Worrying the campaign details

On April 5, 1779, Washington wrote to Greene about provisions for the campaign:

I wish to know, how many horns have been delivered to your department in consequence of the general orders for that purpose; and that you would take measures to have a sufficient number of them converted into the common powder flasks for the proposed expedition. And that the whole may be under your view.

You will also be pleased to give directions for the necessary complement of shot pouches.

An April 20, 1779 update on cutting the road

On April 20, 1779, Captain Charles Clinton wrote the following letter ([Figure 0364](#)) to Morgan from Fort Cumberland:

Yours of the 25th of March came to hand the 6th instant. I have open'd the Road from this place to Turkey Foot except four or five miles which I expect will be completed this week. I shall be in Want of Money to pay the Hands, which you will please to send by the first Opportunity — I think three thousand five hundred dollars will be sufficient — The Men who are employed are all of Opinion that a good Waggon Road may be made as the whole way is clear of Swamps except about twenty

²⁶² The 1912 book "**Frontier Defense on the Upper Ohio, 1777-1778**" includes Samuel Murphy's recollection of Zachariah Connell being credited with killing an armed Indian lad during General Hand's winter expedition against the Indians. That expedition, which became known as the Squaw Campaign, consisted mostly of militia from Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. In 1776, Connell was appointed as a Captain of Yohogania County, which was a Virginia County that overlapped Pennsylvania's Westmoreland County. After Virginia and Pennsylvania agreed to resolve their competing claims, Fayette County, Pennsylvania was formed from Westmoreland County in 1783. According to the "**Pennsylvania Archives**", "*Zacharia Connell*" was a member of Captain William Perry's Westmoreland County militia during some part of the 1778-1783 time period.

²⁶³ According to the 1893 Beers "**Commemorative Biographical Record of Washington County, Pennsylvania**", Matilda (Morgan) Happer was the great-granddaughter of Colonel George Morgan. According to the "**Pittsburgh Press**", she was the widow of the merchant Andrew G. Happer, and died on February 1, 1935 at age 86.

Perches near the little Crossings — The enclosed Survey is laid down by a Scale of 600 equal parts to an Inch —

The reference to “*little Crossings*” is confusing today; but when Clinton wrote this letter, the entire Casselman River was known as “*Little Crossings*”.²⁶⁴ Clinton’s road survey²⁶⁵ has not been found; but in the context of Morgan’s letters, Clinton’s letter clearly describes the Turkey Foot Road.

In an April 21, 1779 letter, Washington approved a January 1, 1779 court martial verdict that found Deputy Quarter Master General Colonel Archibald Steel²⁶⁶ innocent of charges leveled against him by General McIntosh, including the charge of “*the delaying the transporting provisions and other stores for the expedition until it was too late*”, even though “*Steel acknowledged that he did not, nor could not, transport the flour &c. over the mountain, which was purchased by Colonel Morgan...*”

According to Hildreth’s 1848 book “**Pioneer history: being an account of the first examinations of the Ohio ...**”: “*Colonel Morgan was absent at Pilladelphia, on public business...and did not return until the 20th of January, 1779. During this time, the affairs of that department had been under the direction of General McIntosh, in whose hands they became much deranged.*” On January 25, 1779, Morgan wrote a frank letter to the Council of Inquiry at Pittsburgh that stated:

On reference to the proceedings of the late general court martial, for the trial of Colonel Steel, you will find some of the reasons why great part of the flour (eight thousand kegs) has never yet been brought to this place. But the principal reasons, as I apprehend, not only for this disappointment, but also the present scarcity of provisions, have been the ignorant, absurd and contradictory conduct and orders of General McIntosh, throughout the whole campaign. When this gentleman’s conduct comes to be canvassed before a proper court, I shall afford such lights as may be necessary.”

Brodhead’s attack is temporarily canceled

On April 21, 1779, Washington wrote to Brodhead that he decided against using Fort Pitt in the attack against the six nations. One of the reasons was the supply problem:

Dear Sir: Since my last letter, and upon a further consideration of the subject, I have relinquished the idea of attempting a cooperation between the troops at Fort Pitt and the bodies moving from other quarters against the six nations. The difficulty of providing supplies in time, a want of satisfactory information of the routes and nature of the country up the Alleghany, and between that

²⁶⁴ Clinton’s mention of “*Little Crossings*” seems, at first blush, to mean that Clinton’s road went through the present-day Grantsville area, where the 1813 Stone Bridge crosses the Casselman River. After all, that place has been referred to as the “*Little Crossings*” since George Washington called it that when crossing it on June 19, 1755 with Braddock’s expedition. The complicating factor with that interpretation is that the entire Casselman River was sometimes referred to as “*Little Crossings*”. For example, Doctor James Craig’s October 2, 1784 letter to General Washington (quoted at length in the following chapter) mentions “*sixty miles of difficult navigation up the Little Crossing*”. This is a clear reference to a stream, rather than a fording site. For another example, see the 1790 Abrams survey of the present-day location of Confluence ([Figure 0365](#)). Volume IV of the 1814 book “**The Geographical and Historical Dictionary of America and the West Indies**” also refers to the Casselman River as “*Little Crossings*”, stating: “*TURKEY FOOT, in Youghiogany river, is the point of junction of the great S. Branch, Little Crossings from the s. e. and N. Branch from the n. It is 40 miles from the mouth of the river, 20 miles s.s.w. of Berlin, in Pennsylvania, and 29 n.e. of Morgantown. Lat. 39° 48’ n.*”

²⁶⁵ The survey and original letter are not part of the Morgan Letter Book Collection at the Carnegie Library (Pittsburgh) or the Morgan family papers at the Senator John Heinz History Center (Pittsburgh). Nathanael Greene’s copy of the letter is summarized in the 1900 book “**Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society**” ([Appendix 0024](#)).

²⁶⁶ On May 22, 1778, Nathanael Greene appointed Colonel Archibald Steel to be the Deputy Quartermaster General “*for the Garrison of Fort Pitt on the Ohio, and the neighboring Country west of the Allogana mountains*”.

and the Indian Settlements, and consequently the uncertainty of being able to cooperate to advantage and the hazard which the smaller party might run, for want of a cooperation are principal motives for declining of it. The danger to which the frontier would be exposed, by drawing off the troops from their present position, from the incursions of the more western tribes, is an additional though a less powerful reason. The post at Tuscarowas is therefore to be preserved if, under a full consideration of circumstances it is judged a post of importance and can be maintained without running too great a risk and the troops in general under your command, disposed in the manner best calculated to cover and protect the country on a defensive plan.

As it is my wish however, as soon as it may be in our power to chastize the Western savages by an expedition into their country; you will employ yourself in the mean time in making preparation and forming magazines of Provisions for the purpose. If the expedition against the six nations is successfully ended, a part of the troops employed in this, will probably be sent, in conjunction with those under you to carry on another that way.

Washington explains the cancelation

Around April 24, 1779, Reed wrote a letter to Washington that includes the statement:

We have been at a very great Expence in sending Stores of all kinds up to Fort Pitt, & as that Part of the Plan is altered which seemed to require a Collection of Troops there, I hope they may be used in some such Way as to check the temporary Ravages of the Indians – At least affording Westmoreland complete Protection.

On April 27, 1779, Washington wrote a long letter back to Reed that includes the following:

The hurry in which I am often obliged to write letters will sometimes not allow them to be as full and explicit as might be wished. But besides the reasons assigned in my last for relinquishing the idea of a co-operation from Fort Pitt according to the original plan, the uncertainty of timing it well and a want of sufficient information of the country, through which they would have to pass. I might have added another, which had no small influence in the determination. I found, by my accounts from that quarter, that the removal of these troops, would not only uncover the part of the country where they now are; but add confidence to the Western Indians, already too much inclined to hostility, and expose our affairs there to the most disagreeable consequences.

Two days later, on April 29, 1779, George Morgan writes to Royal Flint (an assistant commissary of purchases) about his efforts concerning the supply of Fort Pitt. The letter includes the following statement:

As I have made it a point to employ men of character & influence in their respective counties, I hope very shortly to be able to inform you that all the necessary provisions are laid in at Pittsburgh in spite of the delays of the treasury.

Morgan sends another road update

On May 2, 1779, Morgan wrote the following letter to Greene, updating him on the status of the new road, and requesting money to pay the hands. He declines a commission on the road cost, indicating that he is doing his part for the good of the country:

Although the annexd Extrat of a Letter does not communicate the full Intelligence I could wish, I do myself the pleasure to transmit it to you, that you may see I have not been inattentive to the

small matter you were pleased to commit to my charge. I have not yet received advice from the Gentleman I directed to open the Road from Turkey Foot to Fort Pitt; but I doubt not its being speedily done, as he is a Man of Activity, and every way qualified for the Service to complete which I sent him three thousand dollars. I therefore take the liberty to request that you will transmit an Order to me for this Sum and the Amount of Captain Clintons demand, the whole being six thousand five hundred dollars, for which I will Acct. Or, if you please your D Qr Mr Genl for the Department may settle and pay the Acct for I would not wish to interfere with him in any Advantage of Commission. It will be a sufficient recompence to me if I have in this Instance, promoted the public, and render'd you an agreeable Service.

In spite of the delays of the Treasury, I have been able to make as ample Provision in the Commissarys Department, as could have been expected; and Colonel Steel tells me he has 600 Horses engaged in transporting Flour from Skipton, to which place it is now carried by water to the great Saving of Time and Expencc.

Clinton's above-quoted April 20, 1779 letter accompanied this May 2, 1779 letter from Morgan to Greene. From these two letters, it is clear that Morgan's road ran from Fort Cumberland to support Fort Pitt, crossed the Casselman River somewhere, and passed through the Turkeyfoot region. The May 2, 1779 letter also shows that Greene assigned the road construction project to Morgan.

Sullivan is appointed to lead the eastern campaign

In a May 3, 1779 follow-up letter to Brodhead, Washington writes:

I have been favoured with your Letter of the 3rd. Ulto., with its several Inclosures. I wrote you on the 21st. of April, some days before the receipt of it, that I had relinquished the idea of attempting a co-operation between the Troops at Fort Pitt and the bodies moving from other Quarters against the Six Nations, and assigned the reasons. Lest this Letter should have miscarried by any accident I now enclose you a Copy, and you will consider it as a Letter of Instructions, as far as it extends.

I have written to the Board of War on the subject of Cloathing and Money for the Troops under your command; and I am persuaded they will use their endeavours to furnish such supplies, as may be in their power."

On May 4, 1779, Washington wrote to Greene that he appointed Major General John Sullivan ([Figure 0659](#)) to command the attack on the Six Nations:

Having already fully explained to you the plan of the Western expedition against the Indians of the six nations, and the preparations necessary in your department; I am now to inform you that Major General Sullivan is appointed to the command of this expedition, and to desire that you will comply with his immediate requisitions for every thing which falls under the providence of your department so far as is consistent with the general directions, you receive from me, relative to the operations of the army at large.

Brodhead urges offensive measures

On May 6, 1779, Daniel Brodhead wrote a letter to George Washington that includes the following statement:

I beg your Excellencies leave to make one more observation, from experience I believe it to be much easier to protect the Inhabitants by carrying the War into the Indian Country with one

thousand men than with three times that number stationed at different Forts or even ranging on the frontier

I sincerely wish that my remarks which proceed from a hearty desire to afford you every assistance in my power may not offend, if they should, a single word will be sufficient rebuke.

Supplies are moving toward Fort Pitt

On May 8, 1779, Colonel John Cox wrote a letter to Greene that includes the following statement:

I this moment Received your favor of the 6th Inst, in answer to which I am to inform you that every possible step in my power hath been taken to expedite the necessary preparations as well for the intended Indian Expedition, as for the Army at large, and I flatter myself that most of the Articles ordered to be deposited at Estherton are now their and those for Fort Pitt on their way up.

On the same day, Reed wrote a letter to Washington to say he understood why the Fort Pitt attack was canceled:

We are perfectly satisfied with the Motives which have induced your Excellency to lay aside the Cooperation of the Troops from Fort Pitt...

Brodhead reaches out for supplies

On May 17, 1779, Brodhead wrote a letter to Colonel Thomas Smyth that includes the statement:

The Troops here are in great distress for want of provisions, and I am unable to strike a single stroke until a supply arrives, I am informed that a considerable quantity is arrived at Bedford & must intreat you if possible to send it on immediately.

On May 22, 1779, Brodhead wrote a letter to Washington that states:

You can scarcely conceive how difficult it has been for some time past to procure meat for the Troops at this post. I think we have been without that article upwards of Twenty days...

In my last I mentioned a Great supply of salt provisions having arrived at Bedford which could not be brought on for want of forage but the information I had then rec'd was wrong and I am informed by the Quartermaster at Carlisle, there is only forty nine barrels of Pork...

On May 26, 1779, Brodhead wrote a letter to Greene that mentions “...some salt provisions I was under the necessity of drawing from the Magazine at Carlisle, still remains at Bedford, for want of forage to enable teams to bring them on...” This shows that not all of the supplies intended for Fort Pitt came through Fort Cumberland. On the same day, Brodhead also wrote a letter to Colonel Stephen Bayard that includes the following:

Doctor Morgan²⁶⁷ arrived a few days ago and informed me you was on the road with the Regimental stores, and as a Field officer is and has long been wanting at this place, I sent Captain Moore to take charge of the stores that you might not be longer detained.

I am much surprised that no Assi't Deputy Qr. Master is stationed at Old Town or Skipton, a place where I am told most of our stores are loaded and unloaded, and consequently the Brigades

²⁶⁷ This appears to be a reference to George Morgan's brother John, who is not to be confused with the Colonel John Morgan of Springhill Township, Fayette County, who is described on page 773 of Ellis' 1882 book “**History of Fayette County**”.

Rendezvous, and shall write to Col. Davis on that account, because I believe much more might be done by the Pack horses than what I learn is done.

I believe the stores are in no danger from the Enemy, but we must keep a look out against those we esteem our Friends...

Brodhead's reference to "*Old Town or Skipton*" is a clue that most of the supplies for Fort Pitt were coming out of Virginia, as Washington had directed Wadsworth on February 14, 1779. Since Braddock's road was cut as a wagon road, it may seem surprising that packhorses were still being used in 1779. Jacob Brown's 1896 book "**Brown's Miscellaneous Writings..**" provides insight, indicating that packhorses were the norm on Braddock's road for many years:

This now historic road, when made, was of sufficient capacity to pass vehicles; with a mere removal of timber and rocks—no engineering, grading, or smoothing. But there was scarcely a wagon passed over it for the first thirty years. Such heavy articles as salt, iron, etc., were carried from the East to the West over the mountains on pack horses. Tradition (the oldest inhabitant cannot reach back) tells how they then went in convoys, single file, in this road.

Morgan resigns from public service

On May 22, 1779, Daniel Brodhead wrote a cordial letter to George Morgan that stated:

It is a long time since I had the pleasure of hearing from you, I hope you are in perfect health and the full enjoyment of every human felicity.

I am told Gen. McIntosh has declared against you a second time, & that a gentlemen with whom he lately smoked the calumet is gone down to support him. We feel the effects of Gen McIntoshes economical plans, & have greatly suffered for want of meat... If there be any worth communicating of news or politics and you can find leisure to write me a very long letter, I shall take great pleasure in reading it...

On May 26, 1779, Brodhead took a swipe at McIntosh in a letter to Nathaniel Greene which stated:

I am glad General McIntosh is to go to the Southward, and I really wish him success, but if he is to have the command there we may soon be informed that his temper is disagreeable to the inhabitants and others there, as well as those in this district.

In a May 28, 1779 letter to Congress, George Morgan tendered his resignation. The ultimate reason was likely due to the irascible McIntosh's continuing animosity toward Morgan. Macintosh was trying to profer charges against Morgan, and wrote an angry letter to George Washington on the subject on May 14, 1779.²⁶⁸ After passing the letter on to Washington, Alexander Hamilton replied to Macintosh in a May 14, 1779 letter, stating that the proposed court marshal "*would be attended with so many difficulties as to make it utterly inconvenient.*" George Washington's correspondence also contains an April 17, 1779 document from McIntosh, listing charges against George Morgan ([Figure 0776](#)). Washington shelved the charges.

In his resignation letter, Morgan states that:

...it is his opinion an Agent for Indian Affairs in the Western Department is at present unnecessary further than to act under the sole direction of the Officer commanding in the Department—which,

²⁶⁸ "Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin", Volume 23.

from the conduct of General McIntosh the late Commandant on most occasions, Col^o Morgan begs leave to decline—being fully satisfied, that a perseverance in the late adopted Indian Politics will terminate in a general Indian War, which, by a proper conduct may be avoided.—These are the sentiments Colonel Morgan has held forth to Congress ever since he had the honour of acting under them—They are dictated from honest principles & a sincere desire to serve his Country without injuring the Indians who wish to live in Peace with us. But as Gentlemen of knowledge & superior abilities differ in opinion & as Policy may require a certain conduct toward the Indians which Colo Morgan is not capable of, he most respectfully entreats the favor of Congress to allow him to retire from the employment of Agent for Indian Affairs and more particularly as some Circumstances in his family require his immediate attention. For this reason & others he also most respectfully requests a person may be appointed in his place to act as Deputy Commisary General of Purchases in the Western Department...

For a summary of the intractable challenges of Indian policy and military supply that Morgan valiantly wrestled with, see the chapters “Fort Pitt: Indian Affairs 1776-1779” and “Fort Pitt: Problems of Supply” in Max Savelle’s 1932 book “**George Morgan Colony Builder**”. Also see the article “George Morgan, Indian Agent Extraordinary, 1776-1779” in the October 1934 issue of “**Pennsylvania History**”. Morgan’s mention of “Circumstances in his family that require his immediate attention” statement seems to be a reference to his need to be in the east to devote attention to the land interests of the Indiana Company.²⁶⁹

Sullivan’s marching orders are to lay waste to the Indian settlements

Washington’s May 31, 1779 instructions to Sullivan include this statement:

The expedition you are appointed to command is to be directed against the hostile tribes of the six nations of Indians, with their associates and adherents. The immediate objects are the total destruction and devastation of their settlements and the capture of as many prisoners of every age and sex as possible. It will be essential to ruin their crops now in the ground and prevent their planting more. ...

So soon as your preparations are in sufficient forwardness, you will assemble your main body at Wyoming and proceed thence to Tioga, taking from that place the most direct and practicable route into the heart of the Indian Settlements. ...

I would recommend that some post in the center of the Indian Country should be occupied with all expedition, with a sufficient quantity of provisions, whence parties should be detached to lay waste all the settlements around with instructions to do it in the most effectual manner; that the country may not be merely overrun but destroyed.

After you have very thoroughly completed the destruction of their settlements; if the Indians should show a disposition for peace, I would have you to negotiate on condition that they will give some decisive evidence of their sincerity by delivering up some of the principle instigators of their past hostility into our hands—Butler, Brandt, & the most mischevious of the tories that have joined them or any other they may have in their power that we are interested to get into ours...

²⁶⁹ In 1796 George Morgan moved to his “Morganza” farm in Washington County, where he lived out the remainder of his life. A historical marker ([Figure 0889](#)) at Latitude 40.273475°, Longitude -80.158345° along Morganza Road, in Cannonsburg, marks the site of the farm.

But you will not by any means listen to an overture of peace before the total ruin of their settlements is effected ... Peace without this would be fallacious and temporary...

Fort Pitt receives supplies

On June 24, 1779, Brodhead wrote a letter to Reed about actions taken recently against Indians. One part of the letter states:

I now have a considerable quantity of Provisions, & could make a successful Campaign up the Alleghany, but I am not at Liberty to do it. ...

The wicked Waggoners & pack horse drivers have destroyed at least one sixth of our Spirits, &c. In future it had better be cased.

Since the new road was initially cut as a packer's path, the reference to "Waggoners" suggests that not all of the supplies were coming by the new road.

On the next day, Brodhead wrote a letter to George Washington that included the statement:

With great pleasure, I can now inform your excellency, that I have upwards of four hundred head of beef cattle, and near a thousand kegs of flour, with which, had I your permission, I conceive I could make a successful expedition against the Senecas.

Morgan's November 9, 1779 letters (below) make clear that the new road played a significant role in provisioning Fort Pitt during the summer of 1779.

Brodhead plans a diversionary attack

On July 11, 1779, Brodhead wrote a letter indicating that he was going to make a diversionary attack in support of Sullivan. Washington wrote the following to Brodhead on July 13, 1799:

Yours of the 25th of June was delivered me yesterday. I inclose you a duplicate of mine of the 23d. which gave my consent to an expedition against the Mingoës—I am glad to hear you had received a supply of provisions and only waited my concurrence to make an expedition against the Senecas. I hope by this time you are carrying it into execution.

Brodhead's July 11, 1779 letter suggests that he had received Washington's June 23, 1779 letter.

Brodhead chastises Steel

On July 15, 1779, Brodhead strongly chastises Steel:

It is not a little surprising, that notwithstanding the frequent requisitions I have made, you seem determined not to make me acquainted with ye instructions you have received for supplying this district. If Flour is not transported over the Mountain faster than it has hitherto been, it will not be in my power to employ a single man from the country, however great the demand may be. I assure, Sir, yt I had entertained great hopes of extraordinary exertions from you after the charges yt have been exhibited against you,²⁷⁰ and yet I am sorry to say, too little has been effected. Therefore, I am obliged to make a peremptory demand of the copy of your instructions, and return of the

²⁷⁰ An April 21, 1779 general order from George Washington notes that "The Court do unanimously acquit Colonel Steel of each and every of the charges made against him by General McIntosh...the court are satisfied on the most mature consideration that the general distresses of our country, Colonel Steel's want of money and other causes mentioned by different evidences have been the occasion thereof."

Articles you have procured in obedience to your orders. It has been frequently alleged that the Pack horse Drivers are very idle, at and between Old Town and this place, and as they are accountable to you, I expect you will see that abuse corrected.

Brodhead asks nearby counties for volunteers

On July 17, 1779, Brodhead wrote a letter to the lieutenants of nearby counties asking for volunteers:

His Excellency, the Commander in Chief, has at length given me a little latitude, and I am determined to strike a blow against one of the most Hostile nations, that in all Probability will effectually secure the tranquility of the Frontiers for years to come.

Sullivan's successful expedition against the Indian settlements

Sullivan's now famous expedition was significantly delayed due to severe logistical difficulties. His troops finally set forth from the Wyoming Valley on July 31, 1779, destroying at least 40 Indian villages in a wide-ranging, highly successful campaign in New York.

Brodhead complains to Greene about Colonel Steel

Brodhead's August 2, 1779 letter to Greene includes the following:

The Destruction of publick stores for this Department was not confined to Fort Pitt. I rather incline to believe the greater destruction happened before they reached it. I believe much of them were destroyed here too, for want of regularity in the issues...

As to Colo. Steel I have not seen him since April, and but seldom heard from him; I never knew what instructions he received, or what stores I might expect from him until a few days ago. ...

I don't know how far Col. Morgan may be culpable, but by a letter I received from him last Summer, at Carlisle, he did not consider himself Comm'y of the Department, but alleged that Mr. Lockart was the proper purchasing Comm'y, and of that I gave Gen'l McIntosh a copy. I believe, as I said before, that the chief misfortunes in this department were owing to the General's haughty insulting temper. ...

In a few days more I shall march towards the Seneca towns up the Alleghany, and am much obliged for your good wishes.

Morgan was correct. Patrick Lockhart was specifically appointed by Congress on June 11, 1778, to "procure provisions, pack-horses, and other necessities for the army destined for" operations against the garrison of Detroit. Nevertheless, as previously quoted, Morgan was lauded in an October 16, 1778 War Office document for delivering several hundred cattle that enabled McIntosh "to commence his expedition before the arrival of supplies from Mr. Lockart."

Brodhead's parallel campaign is also successful

Brodhead left Fort Pitt on August 11, 1779 with 605 combatants and 100 escorts for the campaign supplies. According to a letter he wrote to George Washington on September 16, 1779, Brodhead marched north as far as the upper Seneca towns, destroying a number of Indian villages and over 500 acres of associated crops, and returned to Pittsburgh on September 14, 1779.²⁷¹ Sullivan's and

²⁷¹ For details on Brodhead's campaign, see his September 16, 1779 letter to George Washington, which is published in the "Pennsylvania Archives", Volume XII, 1855.

Brodhead's successful attacks were followed by the exceptionally harsh winter of 1779, which was devastating to the now under-provisioned Indians.

Brodhead continues to ask Morgan for help with supplies

On September 23, 1779, Brodhead wrote a letter to Reed stating: *"I hope a second supply of Stores is on the road for my Regt..."* Despite George Morgan's May 28, 1779 resignation from his two thankless jobs, it appears that he remained engaged in some capacity. A September 24, 1779 letter that Brodhead wrote to Morgan describing a hoped for attack against Detroit states: *"if therefore this should reach you whilst you continue in the purchasing Department..."* The letter also mentions some documents Brodhead sent to the Board of War, including *"copies of Talks between me and the Savages, which you will doubtless be made acquainted with."* Brodhead wrote again to Morgan on November 23, 1779, asking for help with supplies. The letter includes the statement:

I have heard nothing from you since the arrival of Mr. Boreman, and as it is highly expedient to lay in a greater quantity of meat than is yet purchased, I should be glad to know why no money is sent up to discharge the debts due from your Department and make further purchases. Mr. Boreman assured me there was a considerable sum ready for you. Should a reinforcement be sent to this District the flour on hand will likewise be deficient. I wrote you some time ago and requested you would purchase some Tea, Sugar & Coffee for me, which I hope you have done. ... I am very anxious to hear from you and hope you will be here very soon.

Morgan's November 9, 1779 letters about the Turkey Foot Road

On November 9, 1779, Morgan wrote letters concerning the new road to Colonel Charles Petite, Assistant Quartermaster General, and Providence Mounts. Copies of the letters were found among Morgan's papers.²⁷² The first letter is to Charles Petite:

Princeton November 9th 1779

Dear Sir

From the extraordinary Rise of Wages & Produce, I find the new Road will Cost a much more Considerable Sum than I thought when I Last Conversed with you The bearer M^r William Wilson on whom I gave Captin Clinton (one of the undertakers) a Letter of Credit has advanced to him aboute twenty thousand Dollars, the Sum I have received from you, & Providence Mounts Esq^r to whome I have advanced Six thousand Dollars has now made application to me for the further Sum of Eight thousand Dollars to enable him to Settle his acc^{ts} for that part of the Road he undertook to open, and there yet Remains a Number of Rocks to Remove & Sum Bridges to make before the Road will be Compleate for wagons

At present it is Constantly traveled by more than 1500 Horses in public Servis, & cuts of twenty two Miles in the Distance from Fort Pitt, to Fort Cumberland—to which if the goodness of the Road be added will make a difference of three days in Every Trip without making aney Allowance for Detention by the Rise of Waters which frequently happen on the old Road—

This has enabled us to keep up a Constant plentiful Supply of Provisions in the western Department the last Season & when the above mentioned Rocks are Removed & Bridges built so as to Compleat the Road for wagons it will Reduce the Expence of Carriage Verely Considerably

²⁷²Robert R. Reed collection, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, Illinois.

as well as facilitate the public Servis—For these reasons I must Request the favor of you to pay to the Bearer Mr William Wilson the Sum of twenty thousand Dollars for Compleating this Business which with the like sum I have formerly Received from you shall be accounted for by

Your obedient humble

Servant

GM

PS

Mr. Wilson has Reviewed the Road & Can inform you particularly abouts it—

Colonel Charles Petite

A. Q^r Master Gen^l

The statement “...*Detention by the Rise of Waters which frequently happen on the old Road*” is a reference to packhorses on Braddock’s road being unable to cross the Youghiogheny River during high water. The Turkey Foot Road was a dryer route because it avoided the Youghiogheny River.

The second November 9, 1779 letter is to Providence Mounts:

To Providence Mounts Esq^r Phila Novr 9th 1779

Dear Sir

I have Rec^d your favor of the 20th Ulto by Mr. Wilson to whome I have given orders to answer your Draft for ten thousand Dollars to enable you to Discharge the demands on you to finish the Road Complete for Waggon to pass & Repass without obstructions of Fallen Timber Rocks, Swamps, Trees &c & to bridge wherever wanted—Should you want a further Sum M^r Wilson or M^r Mitchel will Supply you—for which purpose & to enable you to form a perfect Judgement of M^r Clintons part of the Road as well as your own I recommend to you to Ride yourself to Skipton for the money Unless M^r Wilson has a safe opportunity to send it to you with this letter—

I incline to sell my interest at Salt Lick & will take £ 12 P acre in hand or Eight Bushels of Indian Corn to be Delivered on the place next october or November & Shall be glad if you can find me a purchaser on Either of these Terms

I hope your Family are well I have sent M^r Skelton²⁷³ a proper Supply of Cash which be pleased to inform M^r Hay of & request him to go to Fort pitt for what he wants

I am Sir Your humble

Servant

Geo. Morgan

November 9th 1779 Copies of Letters To Col^l Charles Petit & Col^l Prov. Mounts.

These two letters show that the new road was used to support the summer campaign season: Brodhead’s campaign that began on August 11, 1779. They also show that Providence Mounts extended the route that Clinton cut to Turkeyfoot, and was in the process of upgrading the new road to handle wagons.

²⁷³ Joseph Skelton served as the commissary of stores at Fort Pitt as an agent of George Morgan.

Just as importantly, these letters help to explain the survival of a packer's path tradition in the Mount Savage and Salisbury areas. One can easily imagine that 1,500 packhorses regularly passing through a remote wilderness neighborhood is the sort of thing settlers would remember, and tell their grandchildren about. Although various evidence points to a packer's path of some kind before 1779, this heavy use is the kind of noteworthy activity that legends are made of. It helps to explain why, among all the packer's paths that connected the early communities, the Turkeyfoot route is the one that has been celebrated in local traditions down to the present day. The heavy military use of the road would have also brought welcome income to the community for food, lodging, and forage.

A teamster's story

The October 15, 1838 pension application²⁷⁴ of David Blue tells the story of moving supplies approximately 72 miles from Virginia to Fort Cumberland in the fall of 1779. The relevant portion is quoted here:

...David Blue, a resident of said County of Union and State of Kentucky aged seventy eight years who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath, make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7 1832

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated –

That in the year 1778 & 1779 he resided in Berkley County Virginia that in the fall 1779, he was drafted at Shepherdstown then Berkley County Virginia for a three months tour of militia duty in the service of the United States in the army of the Revolution – that he and a few others who were then drafted (were not marched north as most of the drafted men were then marched) were attached, to waggons and teams, and were employed in hauling flour from Berkley County to Cumberland old fort at or near the foot of the Alleghany mountain for the use of the United States – who ordered the change of service he does not now recollect, but he was put with his waggon & team, (owned by his father Uriah Blue) under the command of Capt Duncan Campbell and twenty four waggons & teams & driven were engaged in hauling the flour aforesaid, and he made three trips from Berkley to Cumberland old fort and back and at the end of the third trip received from Capt Campbell a written discharge for a three months tour of militia duty, as had been stipulated when he was transferred from the militia drafted to march, to driving the waggon as aforesaid

Veech describes a George Morgan tradition

In addition to the above letters, there is a surviving tradition that the Turkey Foot Road was used to supply Fort Pitt. In his nineteenth century book **“The Monongahela of old, or, Historical sketches of south-western Pennsylvania to the year 1800”**, which was written circa 1858 and published posthumously in 1892, Judge James Veech ([Figure 0766](#)) writes:

There was, however, one Turkey Foot road which was an important one, though it is now mostly abandoned, and much of it overgrown with bushes, or fenced in. It was established as a nearer route to Fort Pitt from Cumberland, than Braddock's road. It left the last named road somewhere in Maryland, east of the Great Crossings, and entered Fayette county, from Somerset, as it crossed the summit of Laurel Hill; thence, passing down Skinner's Mill run to near its entrance into Indian creek, crossing it a little above the junction, and the Mud Pike near where Springfield now is, it

²⁷⁴ The pension application was found by Francis Bridges.

passed by Cornelius Woodruff's old place, descended the Chestnut ridge, and crossed Mountz's creek at Cathcart's, or Andrews' Mill, and crossed Jacob's creek about a mile below the old Chain Bridge, there leaving this county; and soon coming into the route of Braddock, it passed through the Sewickley settlement,²⁷⁵ &c., to Fort Pitt.

On this road, about the junction of Skinner's Mill run and Indian creek, were the well known "bullock pens." As early as 1776, if not earlier, Gen. George Morgan, afterwards Indian Agent in the Pittsburgh region, came out by this road with a lot of cattle, either on private account, or for the garrison at Fort Pitt, and finding fine range and natural meadow here, he stopped, had a large body of land, lying on both sides of the creek, enclosed with a rail fence, (some of which was visible within ten years past) and kept the cattle there a long time. He afterwards had two warrants and surveys of the land in the names of George Morgan and John Morgan, which tracts he sold to some Germans, and they have since been known as land of Storman's heirs, and more recently of James Paull, Jr.

Veech prepared a similar statement for the 1872 **"Atlas of the County of Fayette and the State of Pennsylvania"**:

Turkey Foot being a confluent point, at which was one of the earliest settlements in the west, many roads leading to and from it were called Turkey foot roads. One of these, diverging from Braddock's Road a few miles Eastward of the Great Crossings, was made for an easier and shorter route to Fort Pitt. Passing Through Turkey Foot it crossed Laurel Hill to Skinner's Mill Run, which it followed to near Indian Creek, whence, bearing across Chesnut (sic) Ridge, it crossed Mountz's Creek at Andrews' Mill, and Jacob's Creek near the Chain Bridge Crossing, from which it soon joined Braddock's road. Col. George Morgan, of Morganza, U.S. agent for supplies to Fort Pitt, and Indian Agent in the early period of the Revolutionary War, brought out on this Road a herd of cattle, which for a while he grazed near the junction of Skinner's Run and Indian Creek. He took warrants and surveys for these lands, known as the "Bullock pens," in the names of two of his sons, George and John.

Surveys for George and John Morgan were performed on April 29, 1776, concerning property at the mouth of Mill Creek (Survey Book C-135, Page 31, [Figure 0415](#), and Page 32, [Figure 0416](#)). More information on the Morgan properties is provided in Chapter 34. Morgan's letter to Providence Mounts indicates that he, and not his sons, owned the property at Indian (Salt Lick) Creek.

There is one bit of information that may suggest that a path preceded the Turkey Foot Road across Indian Creek. In a June 8, 1774 letter to George Washington, Valentine Crawford writes:

There have been several parties of savages seen within these two or three days, and all seem to be making towards the Laurel Hill or mountain. For that reason the people are afraid to travel the road by Gist's, but go a nigh way by Indian Creek, or ride in the night...

²⁷⁵ Harton S. Semple, Junior, Executive Director of the Sewickley Valley Historical Society, reports that four places in western Pennsylvania use the name "Sewickley". Mr. Semple's Swickley, which was settled around 1800, is located on the northern side of the Ohio River in the "Sewickley Valley", down-river from Pittsburgh. Braddock's road ran through "Old Sewickley" in Westmoreland County. The other two Sewickley locations are New Sewickley and North Sewickley townships in Beaver County. George P. Donehoo's 1921 article "Indian Place Names in Western Pennsylvania" states: "The region south of the Braddock Road, where it crosses the Big Sewickley creek, was filled up with Scotch-Irish settlers about the time of the Treaty of Fort Stanix, in 1768,—some had settled in this region soon after the capture of Fort Duquesne and before the land had been purchased from the Indians. This region is called in many of the early documents the 'Sewickley Settlement.'"

The peace treaty is signed in 1783

The Revolutionary War was won with the October 19, 1781 surrender of Cornwallis at the Battle of Yorktown, and the peace treaty was signed in Paris on September 3, 1783.

Post-war documents name the Turkey Foot Road

As detailed in Chapter 11, a 1784 letter from Washington's physician James Craig, as well as Washington's September 22, 1784 journal entry, and Washington's November 30, 1786 letter to his personal secretary Tobias Lear ([Figure 0658](#)), identify the Turkey Foot Road by name. Craig refers to the route as "*the Turkey-foot road*". Washington's 1784 journal describes "*the Rout by the New (or Turkey foot) Road as it is called (which is said to be 20 Miles near[er] than Braddocks).*"

Washington's mileage savings statement is similar to that in Morgan's March 1779 letter to Greene, which states: "*A Road may be opend from Fort Cumberland to Fort Pitt which will shorten the Distance 22 or 25 Miles...*" Presumably, Washington knew about the Turkey Foot Road as a result of his interactions with Greene and Morgan.

Postwar surveys of the Turkey Foot Road

Without falling prey to the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* (after, therefore because of) logical fallacy, it is worth noting that only six years after Morgan's 1779 roadwork, and only two years after the peace treaty was signed, the Turkey Foot Road is clearly illustrated on two 1785 surveys near Salisbury, Pennsylvania (Figures [0304](#) and [0306](#)). While various Pennsylvania property surveys that mention the Turkey Foot Road have been reviewed, all of them are post-1779.

Analysis of Veech's information

The above quoted passage from Veech appears to be the basis for Wallace's statement "*Turkeyfoot soon became a stopping place on a short route from Cumberland to Fort Pitt.*" The Turkey Foot Road was shorter than Braddock's road, and dryer, because Braddock's road forded the Youghiogheny at Great Crossings, swinging wide to the west before recrossing the Youghiogheny at Stewart's Crossing (Connellsville). The Turkey Foot Road did not cross the Youghiogheny.

Veech's vague description of the Fort Cumberland to Turkeyfoot portion of the route indicates that he was unfamiliar with the road in Somerset County, Pennsylvania and Allegany County, Maryland.

Veech describes a road that ran from Cumberland to Fort Pitt, and describes its use for a cattle drive by George Morgan that he believed occurred circa 1776. If Veech's 1776 estimate is accurate, then it would mean that a basic route existed before the 1779 roadwork of Clinton and Mounts. Whether or not the 1776 date of the cattle drive is correct, Morgan did warrant property along the eventual route of the Turkey Foot Road on February 10, 1776, as documented by the April 29, 1776 surveys described above. This simple fact may also be evidence of an antecedent path.

The road Veech describes is illustrated on Howell's 1792 map

It is clear from Veech's description that he refers to at least part of the route illustrated on the 1792 Reading Howell map of Pennsylvania. [Figure 0379](#) is a copy of that map that has been marked up to identify the route Veech describes, and the referenced landmarks.

The 1791 Reading Howell map ([Figure 0568](#)) shows the northern part of the route from the vicinity of Turkeyfoot in Bedford County (now Somerset County) to Chestnut Ridge in Fayette County. The

1792 Reading Howell map is the first known published map to illustrate the entire post-Revolutionary war route of the Turkey Foot Road through Somerset County. An error near Salisbury is corrected on the 1811 version ([Figure 0020](#)).

Veech's route north of Turkeyfoot to the present-day location of Pittsburgh is clearly much different from the route via the Meadows and Stewart's Crossing that is shown on the 1755 Lewis Evans map ([Figure 0003](#)), and is clearly much different from the route past Gist's that is shown on the Fry and Jefferson map ([Figures 0009 and 0010](#)). Cornelius Woodruff's survey ([Figure 0389](#)) is presented in some detail in Chapter 34.

Other evidence supporting a Revolutionary War route east of Turkeyfoot

Morgan's letter that mentions "...two plentiful Settlements for Forage Vizt The South End of Brothers Valley and Turkey Foot Settlement." is solid documentary evidence that he had the portion of the Turkey Foot Road cut between Fort Cumberland and the Turkeyfoot region. Other evidence that the road was cut during the Revolutionary War is scattered throughout this book:

- No pre-1779 property surveys have been found that mention the Turkey Foot Road.
- The March 2, 1785 survey of Christian Hochstetler ([Figure 0306](#)) and the April 1, 1785 survey of William Tissue ([Figure 0304](#)) prove that the Turkey Foot Road that is the topic of this book already existed in early 1785, shortly after the close of the Revolutionary War.
- Veech states that the Turkey Foot Road connected with Braddock's road "*somewhere in Maryland, east of the Great Crossings*". This is consistent with the route documented by this book.
- The 1792 Reading Howell map ([Figure 0001](#)) shows no other direct principal route connecting Turkeyfoot to Braddock's road (or its successor the "Old Road") east of the Great Crossings, except the Turkey Foot Road.
- A September 22, 1784 entry in George Washington's journal mentions the "*New (or Turkey foot) Road*" in connection with Doctor James Craig (Chapter 11). Craig's October 2, 1784 letter to Washington makes clear that the Turkey Foot Road existed well before the 1792 Reading Howell map, and was something different from, and better than, Braddock's old road, and crossed the Casselman River somewhere different from the route of Braddock's road. Craig reportedly purchased property near the "*bullock pens*" (see below).
- The above two 1784 letters prove that the Turkey Foot Road already existed before Washington's February 8, 1785 letter to Richard Henry Lee about "...an application to the state of Pennsylvania, for permission to open another road from fort Cumberland to the Youghioany, at the three forks, or Turkey foot. Chapter 11 proves that Washington's letter to Lee does not pertain to the Turkey Foot Road that is the subject of this book.
- No contemporaneous documents, except Washington's 1785 letter to Lee, and the aforementioned Clinton and Morgan references, have been located that refer to cutting a road from Cumberland to Turkeyfoot.
- The road on the 1792 Reading Howell map was clearly known as the Turkey Foot Road, as proven by analysis of Doctor Wellford's travel journal (Chapter 13). It had the same name as the route that Craig described in 1784, and does not conflict with Craig's description.

Analysis of Clinton's swamp statement

In terms of determining the route east of Turkeyfoot, Clinton's April 20, 1779 reference to 20 perches (110 yards) of swamp near the Little Crossings is not definitive. The term "*swamp*" encompassed more in the 1700s than what it generally brings to mind today²⁷⁶. For example, Heckewelder's 1796 map mentions a "*swamp which will make good meadows*" near present-day Detroit. The July 15, 1760 journal entry of Captain Thomas Hutchins, (later the Geographer General of the United States) reports: "*Marched through very Rich Bottoms, commonly called Swamps, almost all this day.*"²⁷⁷ He was near French Creek at the time. Wallace quotes Bishop John Ettwein's June 11, 1772 journal entry about the "*Great Swamp*", and states that the term "*comprised*"²⁷⁸ the majority of the mountains in Sullivan County. The journal²⁷⁹ reads: "*After we crossed the Susquehanna at the ford our way led straight to the mountains, and after proceeding two miles, we entered the Great Swamp, where the undergrowth was so dense that oftimes it was impossible to see one another at a distance of six feet.*"

Many North American swamps that could be easily drained for fields or pasture were drained long ago. To a certain extent, the swamps that remain today are simply the more intractable ones (or protected, like Finzel Swamp) that survived humankind. Any poorly drained area would have been soft and problematic for a primitive road.²⁸⁰

Candidate swamps near the Casselman River

The ground just west of Salisbury, Pennsylvania appears to be level and low lying in photographs. Another candidate for a colonial "*swamp*" appears to be the Engles Mill area, 2.6 miles east of the Casselman River near Salisbury. Harry Ringler, Senior recalls one small swamp east of Salisbury that was drained (location unreported), and is now used as a field. Although few people today are familiar with beaver dams, they were also a cause of temporary swamps in level areas.

Clinton apparently followed part of the early trading path

It appears that Clinton followed the general route of the earlier trader's path from Fort Cumberland to the Casselman River. That portion of the trader's path may have stayed in continuous use between the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War, based on:

- The similarity between the route in that area on the 1755 Fry and Jefferson map (Figure 0007), part of the annotation on the Mayo map (Figure 0988), and Reading Howell's 1792 map (Figure 0001).
- The route between Fort Cumberland and the Casselman River that is illustrated on the 1776 Sayer and Bennett map of the middle British colonies (Figure 0639).
- Surviving Indian/packer path traditions connected with the Turkey Foot Road in the Salisbury and Mount Savage areas, and particularly the tradition told by Christian C. Livengood and recorded in Chapter 5 of the 1906 book "**History of Bedford and Somerset Counties...**" (see Chapter 30 herein).

²⁷⁶ Wallace expounds on this subject on page 8 of his 1965 book "**Indian Paths of Pennsylvania**".

²⁷⁷ "*A Journal of a March from Fort Pitt to Venango, and from thence to Presqué Isle...*" from the 1878 publication "**The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography**", Volume II.

²⁷⁸ A word with such contradictory meanings that the United States Patent Office has its own official definition.

²⁷⁹ From the 1901 "**The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography**", Volume XXV.

²⁸⁰ A swampy area remains 2.7 miles east of the Casselman River along Route 40 in Maryland, at the old stone bridge across Meadow Run.

- The tradition that Peter Livengood used the Turkey Foot Path to bring his wagon to the vicinity of Salisbury, Pennsylvania in 1775, before Morgan's road building activities.

Clinton and Mounts cut the road during a tumultuous period

Pages 120 and 121, Volume II, of the 1906 book "**History of Bedford and Somerset Counties...**" reveal that Clinton and Mounts were cutting their road at a tumultuous time in Bedford County history. A February 16, 1779 letter to the Pennsylvania General Assembly from various Bedford county and township tax assessors (including Henry Abrams of the Turkeyfoot settlement and Hugh Robinson who lived about two miles south of the present-day site of Meyersdale) describes a period of Indian depredations within the county that made it impractical to levy taxes. The letter states:

To the Honourable the Representatives of the Freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in general Assembly met.

The Petition of the Board of Commissioners Assessors & Assistant Assessors of Bedford County—Humbly Sheweth: That the Petitioners have met in order to Lay the Taxes directed by Law to be paid by this County, but the situation of the greatest part of the County is such that Humanity forbids them to levy the Same and induces them to apply to the Honourable House for relief and to represent That for eighteen months past the frontier inhabitants have almost entirely been deprived of the fruits of their labor by the incursions of the Indians. Many of them are gone entirely out of the County, and when that part of the Petitioners whose duty it is to take the Returns of Property went to the once Chearful abodes of Humble Industry & content the Inhabitant had fled to preserve his life, and nothing presented to their view but forlorn inhabitations and untilled fields (in several of which the grave of the former owner murdered by the Indians was to be seen) and to levy Taxes off those would be adding distress to the afflicted and taking from the Poor that which he has not to give.

That part of the Inhabitants which remained collected into forts—some formed into Companies and Ranged along the Frontiers in order to afford some small Protection to the rest who, at the hazzard of their lives ventured out to save their Scanty harvest and to prepare another but they were so often driven in that it was but little they could do.

The Panic occasioned by one incursion was scarcely over till they were alarmed afresh by another. Many were deprived of Sowing & planting & not a few were prevented from reaping that which they had put in—In consequence of which Famine Stares us in the face. There is not Bread enough amongst us to sustain the Inhabitants till Harvest & were it to be had for Money which it is not. Many of the Poorer sort have not wherewithal to purchase it. The great Plenty of Money that is circulating in other parts of the Country is to them no relief because their Savage Foe has prevented them from having anything to sell to acquire Money and many of them have undergone hardship & distress and suffered such loss that they are really objects of Compassion & if the Times would permit their Situation would strongly Plead for Public assistance to save the helpless families of those to have perished by the Sword, and those who have been deprived of Providing Bread for their families from suffering by Famine. The few who have been permitted to remain at their Habitations, and reap the fruits of their industry will chearfully pay their part of the Taxes according to their circumstances but should the whole Quota laid on this County be levied off them it is so large and their numbers so few that they would be reduced to beggary by it. We therefore intreat the interposition of the Honourable House and that they would grant such an exemption in the premises as to their wisdom shall seem meet & the Petitioners as in duty bound shall pray &c.

A May 17, 1779 letter, written less than a month after Clinton's letter to Morgan, states:

Pursuant to adjournment the subscribers met at George Milligan's with the Intention to assess and lay the Quota of the 62000 Dollars as also the taxes for the current year but the Indians having made a recent and general Invasion into this County the unfortunate Inhabitants have generally been obliged to abandon their Habitations and either fly or collect into Forts to save their lives has made it impossible for the full board to meet.

As a result of these letters, on March 20, 1780, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed a relief statute titled "*An act for the relief of the suffering inhabitants of the counties of Northampton, Bedford, Northumberland and Westmoreland.*" The act is Chapter DCCXCI of the Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania ([Appendix 0078](#)).

Who was Captain Charles Clinton?

Information on Captain Charles Clinton has been difficult to find. Once found, it is difficult to prove that the information relates to the right Charles Clinton, since Clinton is a widespread name. Nevertheless, the Charles Clinton described below was in the right place, at the right time, to be the individual who cut the southern part of the Turkey Foot Road. This book presents the information that has been found, with the hope that it may stimulate further research by Clinton genealogists. Guy Clinton's 1936 manuscript "**The Clintons Appearing in Early American Records**",²⁸¹ which is available at the Library of Congress, provides the first clues, stating:

In Book O, page 56 of the Frederick, Md. County Registry of Deeds we find this entry: Feb. 7, 1771 Joseph Reynolds gave a bill of sale to Charles Clinton for one bay mare and one copper still for 28 pounds and 18 shillings Pennsylvania money. Reynolds was a resident of Antitam District, now of Washington County. In Scharf's History of Western Maryland we find that Charles Clinton became head of a committee (1775) for Cumberland Hundred (then in Frederick County) to raise funds to buy arms and ammunition which were required by the Maryland Council of Safety. In Force's American Archives, we find that the Council of Safety commissioned him Captain of Militia July 27, 1776. He was said to have been from Skipton²⁸² or Shipton District; this name is no longer known in that region but it was undoubtedly in the neighborhood of Cumberland. In the Pennsylvania Archives 6th S. Vol. 5 pages 310 and 320 we find that he had become Captain of the Eighth Company of Fayette County (Pa.) Militia 1791-1792. He had bought several tracts of land in Union Township of Fayette County in 1784-1792, and in the deeds he gave Washington County, Md. as his residence.²⁸³ This fact identifies him as the same man referred to in the records just cited.

Details from early Maryland records

Scharf's 1882 book "**History of Western Maryland**" contains additional material. One part of the book states: "*On the 22d of June, 1774, deputies from all the counties assembled in general convention at Annapolis and adopted non-importation resolutions of the strongest character. ... On the 5th of September, 1774, the Continental Congress...adopted a plan 'for carrying into effect the non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation' association.*" At a November 18 meeting at the Frederick County courthouse, Charles Clinton was one of a number of men appointed to "*be a*

²⁸¹ This reference was identified by Francis Bridges.

²⁸² Oldtown, Maryland.

²⁸³ In a May 22, 1784 deed, Henry Beeson sold a lot in Uniontown to Charles Clinton of Washington County, Maryland.

committee to represent this county to carry into execution the association agreed on by the American Continental Congress..."

Scharf's book goes on to state:

This convention, after an adjournment from the 21st of November to the 8th of December, adopted resolutions encouraging the colonies to rely upon the products of their own fields and their own industry, and recommending "such of the inhabitants of this province as are from sixteen to fifty years of age to form themselves into companies of sixty-eight men; to choose a captain, two lieutenants, an ensign, four sergeants, four corporals, and one drummer for each company, and to use their utmost endeavors to make themselves masters of the military exercise. That each man be provided with a good firelock and bayonet fixed thereon, half a pound of powder, two pounds of lead, and a cartouch-box or powder horn, and a bag for ball, and be in readiness to act in any emergency." It was further recommended that £1333 should be raised in Frederick by subscription to be expended by the committee of the county in the purchase of arms and ammunition.

At a meeting of the inhabitants of Frederick County,²⁸⁴ held at the court-house, on Tuesday, the 24th of January, 1775...the association and resolves of the American Congress and the proceedings of the last Provincial Convention were read and unanimously approved.

At the same meeting, Charles Clinton was one of a number of men appointed to *"be a committee of observation, with full powers to prevent any infraction of the said institution, and to carry the resolves of the American Congress and of the Provincial Convention into execution..."*

At the same meeting, it was *"Resolved, As the most convenient and effectual method of raising the sum of \$1333, being this County's proportion of the \$10,000 which the provincial convention has appointed to be raised for the purchase of arms and ammunition, that a subscription be immediately opened in every part of the County, and the following gentlemen be appointed to promote such subscriptions in their several Hundreds:"* In the list of appointments that followed, Clinton is listed as *"For Cumberland Hundred, Charles Clinton."* This places him in Cumberland, where the Turkey Foot Road originates.

More information placing Clinton at Cumberland, Maryland

Betty Maker's 1989 book **"Coleman, Branstine, Reusch, and allied families"** indicates that Charles Clinton was one of the heads of families who signed a petition in 1787 to incorporate Cumberland as a town, and lived there since 1774. Testimony in the 1825 court case of *"Beall's Lessee vs. Lynn"* relating to Charles Clinton indicates: *"In 1782...Clinton lived on Walnut Bottom, where the town of Cumberland now stands..."* Alfred Proctor James' 1959 book **"The Ohio Company: Its Inner History"** mentions George Mason's lawsuit against Charles Clinton, which pertained to unpatented sections of the June 13, 1761 Walnut Bottom Resurvey. Lowdermilk's 1878 book **"History of Cumberland"** lists Charles Clinton as a resident of Cumberland in 1787. Frederick County unpatented certificate 522 relates to the February 5, 1776 survey of *"Nicholls Dispute"* for Charles Clinton, which was examined by Francis Deakins.

Captain of Maryland forces at Cumberland

Volume 1 of Peter Force's 1848 book **"American Archives"** contains the minutes of the July 27, 1776 meeting of the Maryland Council of Safety, which *"Ordered That Commissions issue to the*

²⁸⁴ At the time, Frederick County comprised what became Allegany County.

following Persons appointed Officers of Militia Companies in Skipton District in Frederick County...” Among the individuals listed were “Daniel Cresap, Captain” and “Charles Clinton, Captain”. The same minutes are included in Volume 12 of the 1893 book “**Archives of Maryland**”. The appointment as Captain suggests that Clinton already had a track record of supporting the American cause, which helps to identify him as the individual listed in Scharf’s book. Dorman’s book “**Virginia Revolutionary pension applications**” indicates that a company of Maryland forces at Cumberland was commanded by Captain Charles Clinton in 1777.

Volume 21 of the “**Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, April 1, 1778 through October 26, 1779**” includes a letter from the council to D. Hughes that states: “*Cap^t Charles Coulston has waited on us and tells us that the Company over which he was appointed Captain is, in your now Disposition of the Militia, broke and divided between Daniel Cresap’s & Charles Clinton’s Companies.*” The same volume indicates that commissions were issued to Charles Clinton, Captain and Daniel Cresap, Captain, “*belonging to the third or Western Battalion of Militia in Washington County*” in June 1778. There are also May 1778 references to Captain Clinton’s company and Captain Cresap’s company.

Who was Providence Mounts?

Introduction

In 1779, George Morgan had agents gathering food in eight different districts. Providence Mounts was an agent in the Westmoreland district. According to Saville’s book “**George Morgan Colony Builder**”, Morgan contracted with Providence Mounts for flour in 1777, and built storehouses at Mount’s mill in 1778. An exact account of the Providence Mounts who cut the northern part of the Turkey Foot Road is difficult, because a father and son shared the same name.

An abstract of the 1784 will of Providence Mounts of Westmoreland County²⁸⁵ indicates a wife named Rachel, sons named Joseph, Providence, William, Thomas, Caleb, and Joshua, and daughters named Ann Anderson and Sarah White. The August 28, 1781 will of Samuel Cornwell of Westmoreland County also demonstrates that there were a father and son named Providence Mounts, because it was witnessed by Providence Mounts, Senior.²⁸⁶ The 1952 book “**The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society**” indicates that a Providence Mounts married Hannah Van Metre on September 20, 1785. This is believed to be Providence Mounts, Junior. Since there were two men sharing the same name, it is very difficult to distinguish between them when studying the available Revolutionary War literature. This accounting gives what has been found, without distinguishing perfectly between the two men.

Mounts Creek

Mounts Creek, which joins the Youghiogheny River just below Connellsville, is named in honor of Providence Mounts. Volume 1 of the 1900 book “**Nelson’s Biographical Dictionary and Historical Reference Book of Fayette County**” states: “*...Mounts’ creek, named in honor of Providence Mounts, whose home was upon a tract of land included within the present township of Connellsville.*”

²⁸⁵ The will abstract is from the 1912 “**Genealogy: A Weekly Journal of American Ancestry**”, Volumes 1-2.

²⁸⁶ The will abstract is from the 1912 “**Publications of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania**”, Volume 5.

Ellis' 1882 book "**History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania**" states:

The earliest inhabitant of any part of the territory now comprised in Connellsville township was Providence Mounts, who came before 1772, and settled on a tract of four hundred acres of land lying on the Youghiogheny River, and extending from Broad Ford to, and a considerable distance up. Mounts' Creek, which stream received its name from him. On this tract he built his log house and erected a mill, at which he also carried on wool-carding. At the time of his death, in or about 1782, he had received no warrant for the tract on which he settled more than ten years before. It was afterwards warranted and surveyed to his son Abner, Sept. 7, 1786. Providence Mounts left a will, devising property to his sons, Caleb, Joshua, Jesse, Asa, and Abner. These emigrated to Kentucky, and the property passed into possession of Stewart H. Whitehill, and in 1826 was purchased by Alexander Johnston.

Although the children mentioned in the will are not a perfect match to the abstract of the April 23, 1784 will mentioned above, the references to sons Caleb and Joshua suggest that Ellis is writing about the same Providence Mounts. Ellis' book also indicates that Providence Mounts was enumerated with three slaves in 1782.

Timothy M. Tamburrino²⁸⁷ indicates that the will of Providence Mounts was probated on June 10, 1784, leaving the home plantation to Rachel and leaving the mill and other property to his sons Jesse, Asa, Abner, Joseph, Providence, William, Thomas, Caleb and Joshua. Mr. Tamburrino states that Providence Mounts was born in Virginia circa 1730, and afterwards his parents moved to Frederick County, Maryland. He also indicates that Mounts served under Captain Joseph Chapline of the Maryland Militia in 1757, and was living with his wife Rachel near Oldtown in 1764 when their son Thomas was born.

Thomas Mounts' military pension file S.17594 indicates that he was born on July 8, 1764 near Fort Cumberland, served under both Providence Mounts and Caleb Mounts²⁸⁸ during the Revolutionary War, lived 27 years in Pennsylvania, 15 years in Kentucky, and then moved to Indiana. The June 12, 1932 issue of the "**Indianapolis Star**" mentions Thomas Mounts' July 8, 1764 birth near Fort Cumberland, and various Revolutionary War services, beginning with enlistment at age 15.

Chapter 8 of the book "**History of Bedford, Somerset and Fulton Counties**" references a "complete list of all the grist and saw mills in the southwest quarter of Pennsylvania, in 1772", and mentions "Providence Mounts, gristmill, in Tyrone township, which then included portions of the present counties of Fayette and Westmoreland." According to James Veech's book "**The Monongahela of Old**", the 1772 assessment rolls of Bedford County for 1773 lists a Providence Mounts as a resident of Tyrone Township. A footnote in Ellis' book references this assessment roll as the source of the "before 1772" date of Mounts' arrival in Fayette County, stating:

His name is found in the assessment rolls for that year of Bedford County (which then embraced all that is now Fayette), in the township of Tyrone, which at that time comprehended all of the present township of Connellsville and a large extent of surrounding country.

²⁸⁷ Timothy M. Tamburrino: <http://badmedic.tripod.com/html/d0000/g0000050.html>.

²⁸⁸ Alexander Hamilton's September 3, 1794 letter to George Washington indicates that Caleb Mounts was involved in the Whiskey Insurrection, stating: "Caleb Mount then a Captain since a Major of Militia, stands charged before Isaac Meason and James Finley, Assistan Judges, by information upon Oath of Benjamin Wells, Collector of the Revenue and his Wife, with being of a party that broke into the House of the Said Collector sometime in April, 1793."

Ellis' book lists Providence Mounts as a resident of the original Bullskin Township in 1788 and an overseer of the poor in 1787. These references show that Providence Mounts, Junior remained in the area after his father's death. Another part of Ellis' book states:

At the mouth of White's Run, and partly in the present township of Connellsville, was the tract of land owned by Providence Mounts, and adjoining him on the west was Wm. McKee. The McCormick place was below, in the present township of Connellsville. Providence Mounts was probably the earliest of these settlers, and the principal stream of the township took its name from him. Just below the Bullskin line Mounts had a mill at a very early day, and wool-carding was carried on at the same place. Upon the removal of the Mounts family (who emigrated to Kentucky) the farm became the property of Stewart H. Whitehill...

A brief biography of Providence Mounts, Senior

The 1912 book "**Frontier defense on the upper Ohio, 1777-1778**" states:

Providence Mounts was a Marylander by birth, and is said to have been with Washington at Fort Mifflin. In 1768 he removed to the Youghiogheny, in what is now Connellsville township of Fayette County, where he erected a mill on a creek which there emptied into the river. During the Revolution he was colonel of the 2nd battalion of Westmoreland militia, and ... served in the pursuit of the savage enemy after the sack of Hannastown (1782). He died at his home in 1784, and after his decease his land was patented to his descendants.

The book also includes the recollections of Samuel Murphy from General Hand's Squaw Campaign during the winter of 1778 to 1779. Murphy lists some of the men who went out on the campaign, stating: "*Col. Providence Mounts, of Mounts Creek, which empties in Youghiogheny, was out. Col. William Crawford, Major Brenton, Capt. John Stephenson, Captain Scott, etc.*" The name "*Col. Providence Mounts*" appears to be a reference to Providence Mounts, Senior, because Benjamin Van Clive's journal states: "*Dec. 1. Came to Mrs. Rachel Mounts' Widow of Col. Providence Mounts near the Broad ford on Yohiogeny bot some Corn of her & she refused pay for the pasture & hay for our horses.*"²⁸⁹

According to Volume 2 of the "**Pennsylvania Archives**", Sixth Series, Providence Mounts, Esquire was also a Lieutenant Colonel in the Third Battalion of the Westmoreland County Militia in 1778.

A Providence Mounts was engaged in road related activities prior to 1779

Samuel Gordon Smyth's 1909 book "**A Genealogy of the Duke-Shepherd-Van Metre Family**" reveals that a Providence Mounts was engaged in other road activities prior to the cutting of the northern part of the Turkey Foot Road. In reference to the Augusta County, Virginia court, the book states:

Feb. 24, 1775; Court orders Providence Mounts, Wm. Crawford and Paul Froman to view the most convenient way for a road from Mounce's Mill to Froman's Mill.

May 17, 1775, Court orders Providence Mounts, and others, to view road from Major Crawford's to Indian Creek".

The Bullskin Township chapter of Ellis' 1882 book "**History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania**" indicates that the Mounts family was still involved with local road activities following the war,

²⁸⁹ "Quarterly Publication" of the Cincinnati Historical Society, Volumes 16-18, 1923.

stating: “in 1784 the court was petitioned for a road from Cherry’s mill to Uniontown. Joseph Torrance, John Mintor, Providence Mounts, Adam Hatfield, Samuel McLean, and James Rankin were appointed viewers.” The same chapter also documents road activity after the death of Providence Mounts, Senior, stating: “In March, 1786, Zachariah Connell petitioned for a road ‘from Uniontown to Jones’ road, on the Laurel Hill, between Cherry’s and Jones’ mills, and Uriah Springer, Providence Mounts, Henry Schlater, Samuel Work, Samuel McClean, and William McKee appointed viewers.’”

References to Providence Mounts, Junior

Samuel Gordon Smyth’s book indicates that a Providence Mounts and his brother-in-law Reuben Foreman laid out a town known as West Liberty,²⁹⁰ stating:

The present site of West Liberty was originally improved by Abraham Van Metre... His daughter Ruth m. Reuben Foreman; another daughter, named Hanna, m. Providence Mounts. Foreman and Mounts (or Mounce) laid out the town which was organized 20 Nov., 1787, and was the first in Ohio Valley.”

Page 102 of Smyth’s book states that “HANNA VAN METRE, m. Col. Providence Mounce, of Youghania Co., Va.” Page 100 states that “John Van Metre, Morgan Morgan, Van Swearington, and others, ordered by the Augusta Co., Va., Court, 22 Feb., 1775, to view a road from Providence Mount’s Mill, by Augsberg Ferry, to Catfish Camp (Washington, Pa.)”.

The Providence Mounts who was married to Hanna Van Metre appears to be the son of Providence and Rachel Mounts. Smyth’s book indicates that Providence Mounts was an officer in General Hand’s Squaw Campaign. In this regard, Smyth may be conflating the junior and senior Providence Mounts, if it can be assumed that the Providence Mounts who married Hanna Van Metre was a young man when he married Hannah Van Metre on September 20, 1785. In 1788, after the death of Providence Mounts, Senior, Rachel Mounts and Providence Mounts were enumerated separately as Bullskin Township property owners.

The book “**Abstracts of Deed Book 1 1777-1790 Ohio County (W) VA**” proves that at some point, Providence and Hanna Mounts moved to Ohio County, Virginia. Two March 5, 1787 deeds for lots in West Liberty reference Providence Mounts and his wife Hanna as living in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. One of these deeds indicates that West Liberty was laid out on a tract of land that had been granted jointly to “Rubon Furman” and “Hannah Vanmeatre”. A June 8, 1790 deed lists Providence and Hanna Mounts as residents of Ohio County, as do several subsequent deeds, including one dated April 8, 1794.

The 1889 book “**History of the Presbytery of Washington**”, which references Washington County, Pennsylvania and adjacent areas, states:

In 1791 Providence Mounts, and Hanna his wife, “in consideration of the love and affection they had for the congregation on Short Creek under the care of the Rev. James Hughes, and for the further consideration of five shillings to them paid, bargained, granted, sold, released, aliened,

²⁹⁰ The 1833 book “A History of the Valley of Virginia” states: “In the month of October, 1787, the town of West Liberty, in the county of Ohio, was established. Sixty acres of land was laid off into lots and streets by Reuben Foreman and Providence Mounts.” As recorded in Volume 12 of the 1823 book “**The statutes at large: being a collection of all the laws of Virginia**”, the town of West Liberty was established by “An act to establish a town at the court house in the county of Ohio”, which passed November 29, 1787. West Liberty, West Virginia, is located at Latitude 40.168118°, Longitude -80.596948°, not far from the state line and Washington County, Pennsylvania.

and confirmed two lots in the Town of West Liberty, for the use of said congregations, and for all Christian people of all denominations to bury their dead in.”

Justice of the Peace

According to Volume 9 of the 1903 book “**The Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania from 1682 to 1801**”, a Providence Mounts was appointed as a Justice of the Peace for Westmoreland County in 1776. According to the 1782 book “**The Acts of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**”, a Providence Mounts was also appointed as a Justice of the Peace for Westmoreland County in 1778.

The impact of the campaign, and the deep snow that came afterwards

The winter of the deep snow

According to pages 13 and 170 of John Cassaday’s 1932 book “**The Somerset County Outline**”, the winter of 1779 to 1780 was the “*deep snow*”, which gave settlers relief from the Indian raids. The average depth of snow was said to be four to five feet. This heavy snow is described on page 123 of the 1906 book “**History of Bedford and Somerset Counties...**” as follows:

Early in the winter of 1779-80 there was a very heavy fall of snow. It is said to have been from four to five feet deep on a level, and seems to have lain until very late in the spring of 1780. On February 27, 1780, Colonel Brodhead wrote from Fort Pitt: “I fear the public horses will all perish before grass comes again unless a sum of money can be furnished to purchase forage. The great depth of snow on the Allegheny and Laurel hills has prevented our getting every kind of stores, nor do I expect to get any until the last of April.”

This great depth of snow for the time isolated the people who still remained in these settlements from their neighbors both to the east and west. In fact, from all accounts, the settlers were largely isolated from each other all of the winter. In a way, this deep snow was really a blessing that brought a feeling of security to the settlers for the time being, for it was not believed that the Indians would attempt any incursion with such a snow covering the earth as this was. But when spring had really come, this blockade of snow soon disappeared under the warmth of the sun, and the fears of Indian invasion were once more renewed.

Pages 128 and 129 of the book provide the recollections of Joseph Ankeny, a son of the pioneer Peter Ankeny. He heard the tales often from his mother:

In the fall of 1779 the neighbors were all busy threshing and preparing to go to mill to get their flour ground out. My father had finished his threshing, and intended to go to Jones’ mill, which was at the foot of Laurel Hill, about twelve miles, this being the only mill within thirty or forty miles,²⁹¹ but the evening before he was to start it commenced to snow, and by morning the snow was about three feet, and it continued to snow for forty successive days, more or less every day. The snow was from four to five feet average depth. Nobody was able to get to the mill, and they lived on potatoes and boiled wheat in lieu of bread for six weeks, and it made a good substitute,

²⁹¹ According to Cassaday’s 1932 book “**The Somerset County Outline**”, Jones’ mill may have been the only mill in what is now Somerset County when it was built in 1779. An article in the May 1960 “**Laurel Messenger**” states: “*The JOURNAL of Peter Ankeny reported (1779) a grist mill built on Laurel Creek by William Jones...*”, and also states: “*The Husband JOURNAL reported (1779) a tub mill located on the south side of Flaugherty Creek...built by Adam Cook...*” The Jones mill at the foot of Laurel Hill is identified on the 1792 Reading Howell map ([Figure 0001](#)).

and they never thought of starving. Some time in March, the snow having settled some, all hands turned out to break the path to the mill, and in four days they returned with flour.

The campaign, and the deep snow, had a devastating effect on the Indians

Mary Jemison was married to Chief Hiokattoo, and was known to the Indians as the “*White Woman*”. Before Sullivan’s attack, she lived at Beard’s town, the headquarters village of the Senecas, in the Genesee country. In 1823, she described the effect of the winter that followed the destruction of the Indian villages and food supply by Sullivan:

The succeeding winter was the most severe that I have witnessed since my remembrance. The snow fell about five feet deep, and remained so for a long time; and the weather was extremely cold, so much so, indeed, that almost all of the game upon which the Indians depended on for subsistence perished, and reduced them almost to a state of starvation through that and three or four succeeding years. When the snow melted in the spring, deer were found dead upon the ground in vast numbers; and other animals of various descriptions perished from the cold also, and were found dead in multitudes. Many of our people barely escaped with their lives, and some actually died of hunger and freezing.

The effect of Brodhead’s campaign, combined with the severe winter, would have been similar. The 1838 book “**Sketches of Rochester**” quotes from the “**Annals of Tyron County**” as follows regarding the Sullivan campaign:

The country of the Onondagas, the Cayugas, and the Senecas, the three western tribes, was completely overrun and laid waste. To some it may seem that too much severity was exercised in the burning of Indian towns, and that corn, &c., was wantonly destroyed; but it must be borne in mind that this was not a bare retaliatory measure, though as such it might have been justified by the previous conduct of the Indians. Their towns were their retreats, and from thence they made incursions into the settlements: driven back to Niagara, and rendered dependent upon the English for supplies of provisions, they would necessarily be much crippled in their future operations. Though, as we have seen, this campaign did not put a stop to the ravages of the Indians, yet they never recovered from the severe chastisement which they received. A part only of the Indians ever returned to their old settlements from which they were driven. During the following winter, 1779-80, they remained in and about Niagara. Provisions were scarce; those they received were salt; a kind to which the Indians were unaccustomed. They took the scurvy, and died in great numbers. The winter was unusually cold, which increased the difficulties of their situation.

Gresham’s 1891 book “**Biographical and portrait cyclopedia of Chautauqua County, New York**” reports similarly:

As a result of Sullivan and Broadhead’s expeditions against the Indians in 1779, and the destruction of their towns and of the products of their fields which was accomplished as their harvests were ripening, the Indians of the Genesee and Allegheny rivers were without shelter and without food. The winter of 1779 and 1780, was one of unexampled severity. Such deep snows, and such ice, had not been known in the memory of the oldest natives. Deer and turkies died in the woods for want of food by hundreds. Great numbers of Indians perished during the winter of cold and starvation. To escape general destruction, the Indians fled to Fort Niagara for shelter and relief. There, to add to their desolation a fatal disease induced by unusual exposure swept them off in great numbers. As the Indians had freely shed their blood during the war, and now had suffered almost annihilation for their faithful adherence to the cause of the king, the British authorities

could not without gross ingratitude omit to provide for their relief. Large numbers of Indians had gathered around the fort, and along the river Niagara, and during the winter had fed from the British stores. To relieve themselves from this burden, the British Governemnt encouraged the Indians to establish themselves at convenient places, and obtain support by cultivating the land.

Chautauqua County encompasses Jamestown, New York, and is located immediately east of Erie County, Pennsylvania.

Boucher's 1918 book "**Old and New Westmoreland**" describes the protective benefit afforded to the Pittsburgh area as the result of Brodhead's campaign and the severe winter:

A campaign of this kind...into the Indian country was at best very destructive to the natives and, as a result, they were forced to seek winter quarters farther west and south, and many of them never returned. But Broadhead's campaign was followed by one of the severest winters in the history of the United States. It set in late in 1779 and lasted until March or April, 1780. The British drove wagons across the harbor between New York and Staten Island on the ice. Around Pittsburgh the winter was equally severe. Snow fell early and accumulated until it was four feet deep in the valleys and on the mountains it was much deeper. All communication with the east ws cut off and all of Westmoreland county suffered for every possible convenience. Scouting parties made up by the soldiers of Fort Pitt, were not only impossible but unnecessary, for the deep snow prevented the Indians from coming here to commit depredations. Many Delawares came to the fort early in the winter and were kept there until spring, thus further depleting their limited stores. The Indians suffered correspondingly and especially those whose crops and houses had been destroyed by Broadhead's troops. These suffered worse than any others. Scores of them starved to death, and, whilst this weakened the enemy, it but increased the hatred and malice of the race for the pioneer settlers and the American army. It reduced the Senecas to such an extent that when spring came they could scarcely renew their depredations, and settlers around Fort Pitt for once were allowed to plant their spring crops in peace so far as their worst enemies in the North and East were concerned.

Difficult as the ways of war may be to digest, Brodhead's operation was a success, and we are here today to talk about it. Even though war is incomprehensibly cruel, the descendants of the pioneers of western Pennsylvania owe a certain debt of gratitude to Brodhead and his army for protecting the lives of their ancestors. This debt extends to the men who cut the road that made Brodhead's campaign possible, to the packhorse drivers who risked their lives to deliver the precious supplies, and to the settlers along the road who provided forage and other assistance to the packhorse trains.

