

From a long list of notes from <http://www.evansville.net/~jdhamm/notes.html>

[NI0470] Robert was killed in General Braddock's campaign against the French at Fort Duquesne. Robert and his Brother Joseph were with Braddock in a group of 230 Virginia Rangers led by George Washington in the French and Indian War.

Apparently died as a result of battle at Fort Duquesne during the French and Indian War. Fort Duquesne was the forerunner of Fort Pitt, and then Pittsburgh.

Check on Grant's Hill in Pittsburgh. Apparently where a band of Scots led by a man named Grant charged down this hill toward Fort Duquesne and were slaughtered.

The French and Indian War began in 1754 and in 1757 the British began a major effort to drive France out of North America. The fighting around Fort Duquesne was between July and November of 1758. After some hard fighting, the French blew up the fort and abandoned it on November 24. As battles throughout the area continued and the French were pushed back, I imagine many settlers at this time would have moved back to safer areas in Quebec. The Treaty of Paris, which ended the French and Indian War in North America and the Seven Years' War in Europe, was signed in February of 1763. The movement of people during the war would have continued for a while after the war as attempts were made to adjust to the new reality and to start anew.

from: The Battle of the Wilderness

**** The following is a historical account of where Robert Barnett probably lost his life. -- Jesse L Barnett

Braddock's Defeat

In January, 1755 an English fleet, with two regiments set sail from Cork for North America. These under-strength regiments were to be brought up to strength with recruits from the colonies. Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Peter Halkett commanded the 44th, with 700 regulars, 5 companies of Virginia Rangers: Capt. Adam Stevens Co., Capt. Peter Hogg's Co., Capt. Thomas Waggoner's Co., Capt. Thomas Cocke's Co., and Capt. William Perronée's Co. Captain Ely Dagworthy's Maryland and New York, and some 50 carpenters. Colonel Thomas Dunbar commanding the 48th, with 650 regulars, 230 Rangers from Virginia and Captain Arthur Dobb's North Carolina Rangers, plus 35 carpenters. Both regiments also had one independent company from New York. To supervise the ferrying and block and tackle work, Lieutenant Charles Spendlowe from H.M.S. Norwich was attached with a landing party to the gunners. For the assault they brought four 12- pounders, six 6-pounders, four 8-inch howitzers and fifteen mortars.

With these 1,400 British regulars and 500 colonial troops, 45 year old General Edward Braddock meant to drive the French out of Fort Duquesne, which they had built on the site of the present city of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania.

After drilling his combined force at Fort Cumberland, Braddock marched into the Allegheny wilderness in June 1755. His advance was cautious and in good order, with the pioneers (engineers) hacking a road 12 feet wide through the virgin forest. Built on an old Indian trail, the road was widened and surfaced to accommodate both wagons and cannon. While the axe-men hacked the road, clearing as they went, often no more than four miles could be covered.

At far off Michilimackackinac, Charles de Langlade had been gathering Ottawa, Huron and Chippewa tribesmen to take up the hatchet against the English.

With two hundred warriors in a fleet of canoes, he headed southward, paddling from dawn till dark in fine June weather. Early in June they arrived at Fort Duquesne and reported to Captain Lienard de Beaujeu, the French commander.

Indian scouts reported seeing Braddock s army advancing in three columns toward the Monongahela River. Commander de Beaujeu decided to intercept them there. Along with six hundred Frenchmen and Indians, Langlade marched to the Monongahela and concealed themselves in dense ravines along the river.

By July 7th, Braddock s army reached the Monongahela at a point about ten miles from Fort Duquesne. The

French and Indians were waiting when the English arrived and broke ranks for their noon rations. Langlade wanted to attack at that moment, but Beaujeu hesitated: The British outnumbered them more than two to one. Langlade persisted--they could not halt the British in open battle, but they could stun them now from ambush.

On the morning of July 9th, Lt. Colonel Thomas Gage was ordered to lead a strong advance party across the river. The British had been forced to ford the river twice to avoid a narrow defile and were in engaged in a short skirmish at the second crossing with some thirty Indians who fled. Now they were in more open country, woods rather than thick forest. A band played and redcoats and provincials stepped out, with Braddock and his men following closely behind in two columns. Grenadiers were on the flanks, Virginians in the rear, and cattle and packhorses were between the columns.

Waiting for them was Beaujeu, who had great difficulty in persuading his Indians to stay. Like them, he and his men were stripped for action and painted.

Braddock's men marched on. Suddenly, Beaujeu appeared, turned and waved his hat to the men behind him. He was killed almost at once, but the French and Indian losses were small. The redcoats swung from their columns into line as bullets tore into them from the trees. The French Canadians took to their heels, and only the prompt action of Captain Dumas and Charles Langlade, leading the Indians, prevented them from following the French. Yet despite this disarray in the enemy ranks, the British were doomed.

The British advance party was soon driven back into the main body of the army, which had advanced to meet it. With the enemy firing from cover, and the advance guard s attempted retreat, the troops could not form ranks. Confusion turned to panic, orderly withdrawal became a rout. The British never saw their enemies; they fired blindly across the river. Crouching in trees and thickets, the shadowy Indians cut down the British regiments. They could not see their enemy and their whole training was foreign to the situation. So as the provincials sensibly took cover, the redcoats became confused and fired at them by mistake.

The officers on their horses were soon picked off by Indian marksmen, and their men went out of control. Braddock arrived and did his best with curses and the flat of his sword to restore order. But his men were broken up into heaving groups, totally without purpose, except for some of the colonials. The few British who tried to take cover, Indian fashion, incurred their leader's wrath.

Braddock had four horses shot from under him, while trying to rally his troops. He was shot through the lungs while mounting the fifth horse, and while his troops scattered, the Indians charged after them with tomahawks and scalping knives.

In horrible pain Braddock lingered four days, then his body was buried in the middle of the military road. The troops marched over the site so the Indians would not find and mutilate the body. In the end, 977 of the 1,459 British and Provincial army, including 63 of 86 officers, were killed.

The Indians, as usual, were too busy with plunder to follow: the booty that they took included Braddock's war chest. In it were all the British plans for the military operations in the south and west. It was George Washington who brought the news of the disaster back to Dunbar. The fleeing redcoats met the supply wagons at Gist's Plantation, where they had been sent by Dunbar, but the panic went on. At Dunbar's camp, Dunbar himself ordered the destruction of everything: Cannons, ammunition, powder wagons and shells, a disgraceful miscalculation although another attack seemed imminent.