

## Letter from Virginia's Governor Dinwiddie to the French Commander in the Ohio Country, October, 1753.

[October 31, 1753]

Sir,

The lands upon the River Ohio, in the western parts of the Colony of Virginia, are so notoriously known to be the property of the Crown of Great Britain that it is a matter of equal concern and surprise to me, to hear that a body of French forces are erecting fortresses and making settlements upon that river, within his Majesty's dominions.

The many and repeated complaints I have received of these acts of hostility lay me under the necessity of sending, in the name of the King, my master, the bearer hereof, George Washington, Esq., one of the Adjutants-General of the forces of this dominion, to complain to you of the encroachments thus made, and of the injuries done to the subjects of Great Britain, in violation of the law of nations, and the treaties now subsisting between the two Crowns. If these facts be true, and you think fit to justify your proceedings, I must desire you to acquaint me by whose authority and instructions you have lately marched from Canada with an armed force, and invaded the King of Great Britain's territories, in the manner complained of; that according to the purport and resolution of your answer I may act agreeably to the commission I am honored with from the King, my master.

However, sir, in obedience to my instructions, it becomes my duty to require your peaceable departure; and that you would forbear prosecuting a purpose so interruptive of the harmony and good understanding, which his Majesty is desirous to continue and cultivate with the most Christian King.

I flatter myself that you will be pleased to receive Major Washington with the evidences of courtesy and politeness which are natural to your nation, and I shall be at the height of satisfaction if you send him back with a reply conforming to my wishes for a durable peace between us.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very humble,

ROBERT DINWIDDIE.

Williamsburg, in Virginia

October 31, 1753.

**Source:** Francis Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, vol. 1. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1914), 134. Quoted from <http://explorepahistory.com/odocument.php?docId=1-4-1A>