

Fort Gower: Forgotten Shrine of Virginia History

by Jim Glanville © 2011

Introduction

In early November, 1774, an army of Virginians arrived back at the point of land formed by confluence of the Ohio and Hocking Rivers and to the makeshift base camp they had established several weeks earlier named Fort Gower.¹ In the interim they had been west in Ohio Indian territory. There they had made war on the Shawanee Indians and forced the treaty of Camp Charlotte on them. Back at Fort Gower, the officers of the army received anxiously-awaited news about the decisions of the First Continental Congress, which had concluded its deliberations in Philadelphia only a few days earlier. The news from Philadelphia was exciting: Congress had made strongly worded declarations asserting the rights of British Americans and called for addresses of both remonstrance and loyalty to the king.

On 5 November 1774, responding to the news from Philadelphia, the officers of the army made their own assertion of rights and addressed the king in what history calls the Fort Gower Resolves (see Appendix). We do not have a roll of the names of the men who adopted those Resolves, but we can deduce that among those officers were many Virginians who would go on to become famous during the Revolution. Present were William Campbell, George Rogers Clark, William Crawford, Simon Kenton, Andrew Lewis, Daniel Morgan, William Russell, Adam Stephen and many others.

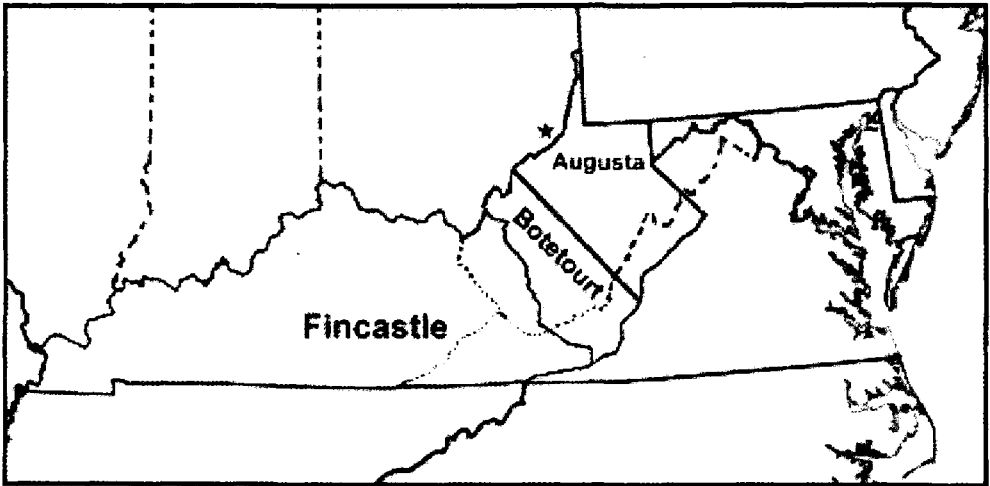
It is the purpose of this article to thrust the Fort Gower Resolves into the limelight and demonstrate their influence on the course of American history. In the shadow of the American Revolution, the Resolves are today largely lost to sight. Nonetheless, they were consequential and significant. Their influence was seen almost immediately in the adoption of resolutions and assertions of rights by the

Virginia frontier counties of Augusta, Botetourt, and Fincastle, and by their impact on the thinking of Revolutionary Virginia leaders such as Richard Henry Lee. The Resolves rapidly became widely known throughout the Virginia colony as a result of their prompt publication in the 22 December 1774 edition of Purdie and Dixon's *Virginia Gazette*. Indeed they quickly became known in England, where they were read out loud during a parliamentary debate in the House of Lords in March of 1775.

The importance of the Resolves makes Fort Gower a true shrine of Virginia history. With that importance established, this article goes on to examine the incidental questions of exactly where that shrine was in 1774 and where it is now. The answers come in three parts: first, in telling what archaeology reveals about Fort Gower; second, by examining under which political jurisdiction Fort Gower was constructed, and in which is it now; and, third, by telling what happened when the author went looking for Fort Gower.

The Fort Gower Resolves

On 5 November 1774 the officers of Lord Dunmore's army gathered at Fort Gower "...for the Purpose of considering the Grievances of BRITISH AMERICA." On that day at that place the officers voted



The boundaries of the three frontier counties of western Virginia as they were circa 1774. Some present-day state boundaries are shown dotted for reference. The star shows the location of Fort Gower in Hockingport, Ohio,² which is about fifteen miles down the Ohio River from Parkersburg, West Virginia, on the Ohio, or west bank of the river, and only yards from the imaginary line that follows the river and divides the two modern states. (Author's diagram)

to adopt the Fort Gower Resolves.³ The adoption of the officers' Resolves was effectively the final act of Dunmore's War — the five-month Indian campaign of warfare against the Ohio Indian tribes undertaken by the Virginians in the summer and fall of 1774. It was a campaign mounted by the colony to permanently neutralize the depredations of those tribes along Virginia's western frontier and with the eventual objective to open western land for occupation and settlement by Virginians.

Arguably, the adoption of the Fort Gower Resolves was the first "official" action taken under the auspices of the First Continental Congress, which had concluded about a week earlier in Philadelphia, after being in session for almost two months.⁴ The officers at Fort Gower resolved faithful allegiance to George III but asserted, because the just rights of America outweighed all else, that they would fight for the defense of American Liberty, when called upon by their countrymen. The full text of their Resolves is reproduced in the Appendix.

Within a few weeks of their adoption, the Fort Gower Resolves had produced two significant consequences. First, the men of Virginia's three frontier counties of Augusta, Botetourt, and Fincastle adopted strongly worded county Resolutions.⁵ These resolutions followed in tone and spirit the Fort Gower Resolves, which is no surprise since many of the men on the frontier county committees who adopted these resolutions had been present at Fort Gower. Second, the exploits of the western Virginia riflemen in the Ohio country during Dunmore's War in 1774, and the self-confidence they exuded — "...our Men can march and shoot with any in the known World..." — in their written sentiments at the fort, encouraged Virginians such as Richard Henry Lee in the belief that Virginians could win a coming fight with the British.⁶ In a letter to his brother Arthur Lee, dated 24 February 1775, R. H. Lee wrote:

The inclosed Address to the Virginia Delegates published a few days since in the *Gazette* will shew you the spirit of the Frontier Men ... The six frontier Counties can produce 6000 of these Men who from their amazing hardihood, their method of living so long in the woods without carrying provisions with them, the exceeding quickness with which they can march to distant parts, and above all, the dexterity to which they have arrived in the use of the Rifle Gun.⁷

It is quite clear from Lee's remark about the men's "amazing hardihood" that he knew of the Fort Gower Resolves and their im-

plications. One of the few professional historians who has argued for the importance of the Fort Gower Resolves is the retired, Richmond-based professor, Harry Ward. Ward wrote about the Resolves in his biography of Adam Stephen, one of the officers present at their adoption, and the person who Ward regards as the likely author of the Resolves. Here is what Ward wrote:

The fusing of a military stance and the rhetoric of liberty in the "Fort Gower Resolutions" at this time is significant, anticipating the *rage militaire* in a little more than a year and the "Spirit of 76." The document exudes the officers' confidence in their military ability and their sense of fraternal pride. It expresses unstinted patriotism, which was intended to counter apprehensions of the dangers of calling forth a strong regular army.⁸

The Historical Background

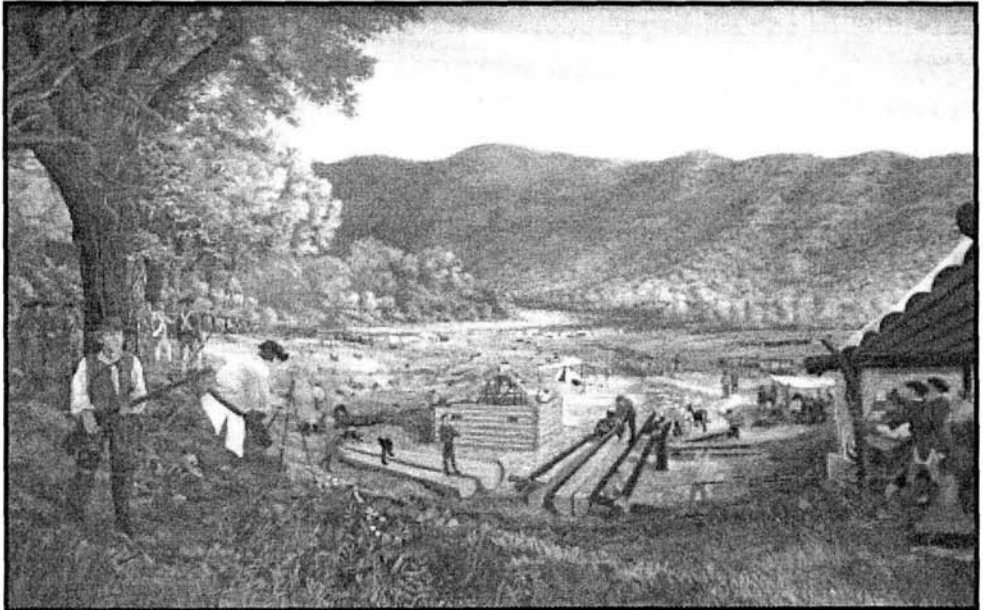
In March 1774, at a time of growing unrest in the American colonies, the British parliament passed an act closing the port of Boston. Other "Coercive Acts," aimed principally at Massachusetts, soon followed. On 13 May Bostonians met at Faneuil Hall, resolved to boycott all British goods, and called on the other colonies for support and assistance. Virginians were closely following events in Massachusetts through a Committee of Intercolonial Correspondence established a year earlier. On 24 May 1774, the Virginia House of Burgesses adopted a resolution naming 1 June, the day the port of Boston was to be closed, as a Virginia day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.

Two days later Virginia Governor Dunmore dissolved the House of Burgesses and on the following day, 27 May, eighty-nine members of the just-dissolved House of Burgesses met at the Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg, formed an "Association" to defend "the constitutional rights and liberty of British America" and proposed an annual "general congress" of the colonies. This newly-constituted Association then issued a summons to all the members of the former House of Burgesses to attend a Virginia convention to be held on 1 August 1774 in Williamsburg. This Virginia convention took place as planned, but in the meantime, Governor Dunmore had departed for Ohio.⁹

From July to November 1774 the military campaign known to history as Dunmore's War played out in western Virginia.¹⁰ John Murray, the Earl of Dunmore and Viscount Fincastle, was a Scot who had been appointed governor of Virginia in 1771. Dunmore person-

ally led the northern wing of the Virginia army that went to the Ohio country. Dunmore collected men from the Virginia counties of Hampshire, Dunmore (later renamed Shenandoah), and Augusta. For the southern wing of the army, its leader Andrew Lewis collected men from Fincastle and Botetourt counties, and also, like Dunmore, from Augusta County. By the end of September, Dunmore and a force of 700 men had moved by canoes and flatboats down the Ohio River to Fort Fincastle (modern Wheeling). There, Dunmore's command was joined by about 800 men led by William Crawford and Adam Stephen. The combined force proceeded down river and established Fort Gower at Hockingport in early October.¹¹

On the southern flank, Andrew Lewis commanding the lower wing of Dunmore's army gathered about 1,000 men at Camp Union at the Great Levels (present-day Lewisburg, West Virginia), and left



Building Fort Gower. Detail from one of the series of murals painted between 2006 and 2010 by artists employed by the Robert Dafford Company on the outside of the flood wall at Point Pleasant, West Virginia. The Ohio River can be seen curving in the center of the picture; the course of its tributary, the Hocking River, runs to the right. This "artist's conception" would be appropriately dated to about the first week of October 1774. It is described by the artist in the following words "... we show Lord Dunmore crossing the Ohio, building Fort Gower, and preparing to march his army of a thousand men to meet Lewis in central Ohio."¹² (Author's photograph)

from there to advance up the Kanawha Valley to the Ohio River. It was this southern wing of the army that first clashed with the Indians and bore the brunt of the fighting at the Battle of Point Pleasant — at the confluence of the Kanawha and Ohio Rivers — on 10 October 1774.

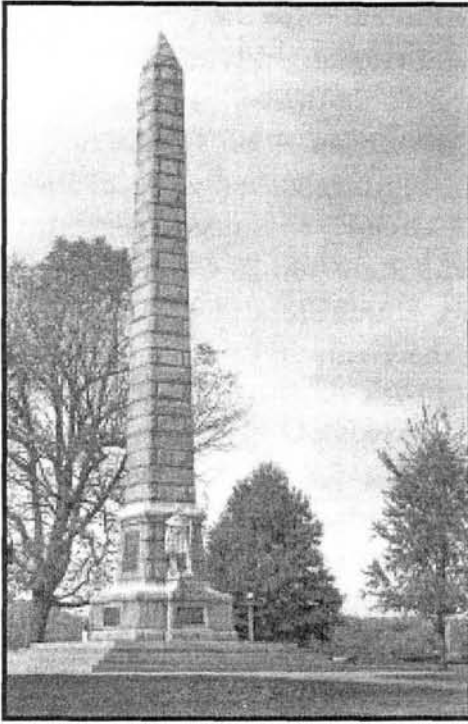
After Lewis and his men had regrouped, his wing of the army joined Dunmore's wing that had already advanced west into central Ohio to attack the Indian towns there. On 20 October 1774, near the present-day Chillicothe, Ohio, Dunmore and the Indian chiefs concluded the conflict by signing the Treaty of Camp Charlotte. As a consequence of Dunmore's War, Indian power in the Ohio country went into a steep decline.

Augusta County Men at Point Pleasant

The names of some of the several hundred men from Augusta County who fought at Point Pleasant are well known. Indeed many of the names are cited on the plaque affixed to the Point Pleasant memorial obelisk. History records only the names of a few of the many officers who were present when the Fort Gower Resolves were adopted. John Robbins identified about twenty officers, including men with well-known names such as George Rogers Clark and Daniel Morgan, who, as Robbins notes, went on to become "frontier movers and shakers" during the war for independence.¹³ The genealogical writers Skidmore and Kaminsky provide many names of Dunmore's officers located on militia rolls.¹⁴ I was able to identify some of the Fincastle men who were present (or, in the case of William Christian, absent) at the adoption of the Resolves in my article about the Fincastle Resolutions (cited in endnote 3). Even though we cannot definitely establish their presence through contemporary documentary records, it is probable that many of the Augusta officers who fought at Point Pleasant were among those men who adopted the Resolves at Fort Gower.

Archaeologists and Historians Search for Fort Gower

Fort Gower lies on or near the point of land between the Hocking River and the Ohio River, as shown on the map in figure 6. Archaeological investigations to locate the site of the fort were instigated circa 1974 by the Ohio American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. A preliminary report of the exploratory archaeological sur-



The obelisk at Point Pleasant, above left, commemorates the 10 October 1774 battle there. The commanding officer (of 648 men) of the Augusta Regiment was Colonel Charles Lewis who was killed at the battle. The statue of the frontiersman symbolizes the Virginians who fought and died at the Battle of Point Pleasant. The names of those lost are listed on the plaque seen to the left of the statue of the frontiersman. The plaque, above right, records the names of the Augusta men who fought at Point Pleasant. In addition to the Augusta regimental commander, Colonel Charles Lewis, the Augusta captains of companies listed are John Dickinson, George Moffatt, George Mathews, John Skidmore, John Lewis, Samuel McDowell, Alexander McClennahan, Andrew Lockridge, Samuel Wilson, Benjamin Harrison, and William Nalle. Also listed are men from the Botetourt County regiment, the Fincastle County battalion, and independent companies. (Author's photographs)

vey made by a team from Defiance College described the archaeological findings in trenches dug at the point and included a thorough review of the historical literature and land survey data.¹⁵

Professor Robert Boehm, the chairman of Defiance College's Division of Social Sciences, made the historians' final report of the search for Fort Gower.¹⁷ Defiance College's professor of history and archaeology Randall Buchman made the final archaeology report.¹⁸ Two significant conclusions that Randall reached were: 1. That the lack of

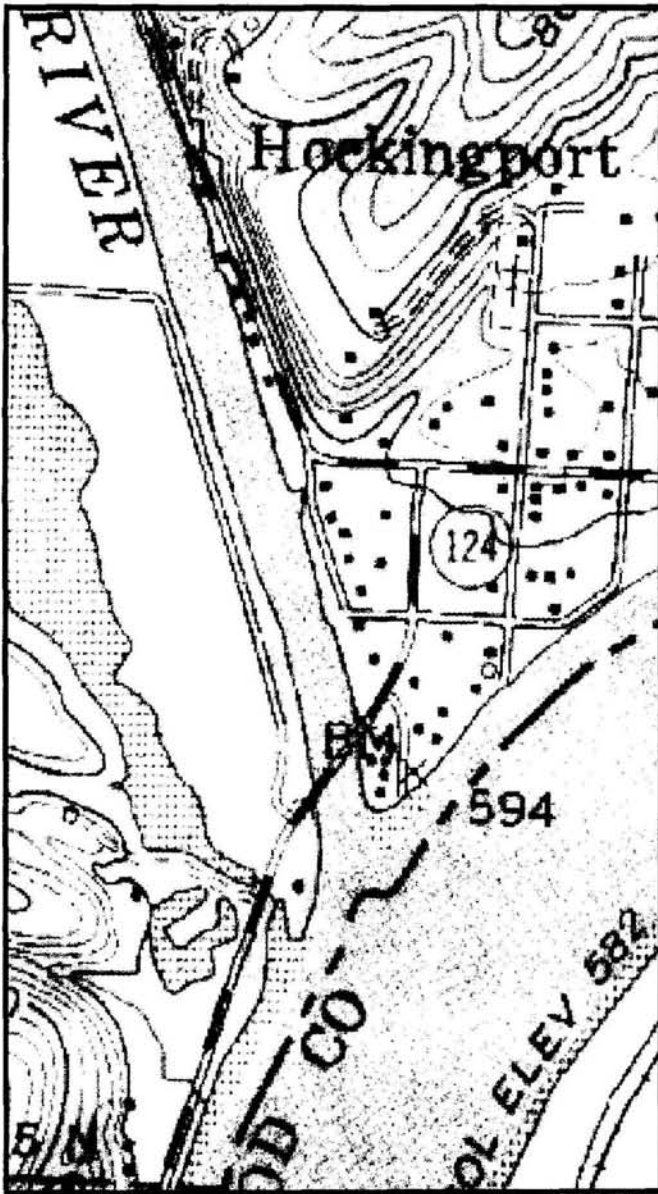


Figure 5. The point of land between the Hocking and Ohio Rivers, site of Fort Gower. A detail from the United States Geological Survey Map of the Coolville Quadrangle, Ohio, created in 1958; modified in 1998. Online at http://www.archive.org/details/usgs_drg_oh_39081_b7. The map in figure 5 scales to 1,800 yards from north to south and 1,000 yards from east to west. North is at the top of the map. The Ohio River flows southwest from the right hand edge of the map toward the bottom edge. The Hocking River flows south from the top edge of the map to its confluence with the Ohio. The dashed-and-dotted line on the Ohio River is the modern state boundary line that separates Athens County, Ohio, from Wood County, West Virginia (Wood County is seen in the lower righthand corner of the map). The measured perpendicular distance across the Ohio River from the point to Wood County is 382 yards.¹⁶ The state boundary line is about 175 feet offshore from the point. (U.S. government image)

any archaeological evidence for Fort Gower at any distance away from the Ohio River suggests that the fort stood close to the water's edge, and 2. That erosion in the wake of twentieth century dam construction on the Ohio River has caused the point to lose land. Randall wrote "With the loss of 210 feet from 1913 to 1963 it is quite possible that the southern portion of the fort could easily be eroded away." (p. 34).

In summary, the exact site of Fort Gower is not definitely known and the best archeological guess is that the fort site is today under the Ohio River not far offshore from the present-day point. Remarkably, in early 2005 the potential site of Fort Gower became exposed as a result of an unexpected drop in the water level of the Ohio River. In its present form, the Ohio is really not so much a river as a series of connected pools of water. It is the Belleville Dam, located four-and-a-half miles downstream from Hockingport that maintains the pool of water that

inundated the Fort Gower site when the pool reached its planned level in 1968.¹⁹ In January 2005 an accident involving an errant tow of coal barges that jammed the dam preventing the proper closing of its gates of the dam. For a few days, the level of the pool dropped about fifty feet. After reading the first draft of this article it was Lantz Repp (about whom more is discussed below) who told the author about this event, adding he had some photographs he had taken at the time. A search for information about the drawdown quickly led to the discovery of an excellent article by the Ohio Department of Transportation engineers Chris Merklin and Jason Wise.²⁰ The drawdown produced serious problems for the engineers to deal with because

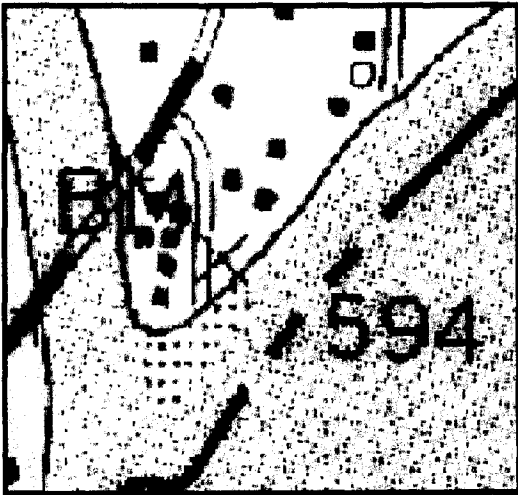


Figure 6. A further detail from the United States Geological Survey Map of the Coolville Quadrangle, Ohio, created in 1958; modified in 1998. Online at http://www.archive.org/details/usgs_drg_oh_39081_b7. The stippled area (purple colored on the original map) off of the present-day point was an update to the 1958 edition of the map when it was revised in 1998. That time frame, of course, correctly brackets the 1968 date that the Army Corps of Engineers tells that the pool reached full height behind the Belleville Dam.

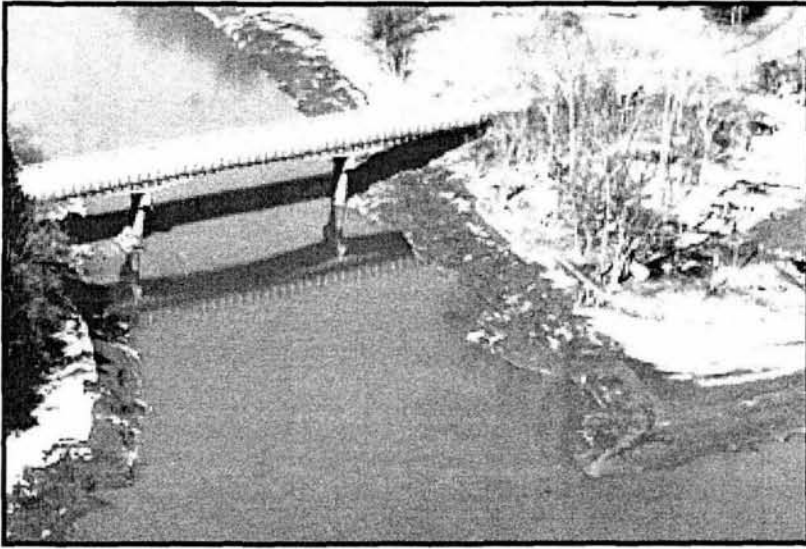


Figure 7. Aerial photograph of the confluence of the Hocking and Ohio Rivers during the drawdown. Picture taken in January 2005 by Alan Craig from a helicopter operated by the Ohio Department of Transportation. The contrast has been enhanced in this black and white image made from a portion of the original, colored jpg file image. (Used with permission of the Ohio Department of Transportation.)

the loss of water pressure against the sides of the pool caused landslide and severe damage to roadways paralleling the river.

In figure 6, a magnified image of a portion of the United States Geological Survey map from figure 5 shows the very probable site of Fort Gower as the stippled area just off of the point. Figure 7 is an aerial photograph of the point taken during the drawdown from a helicopter of the Ohio Department of Transportation. Figure 8 is one of Lantz Repp's pictures taken during the drawdown.

The Author's Search for Fort Gower

Having learned of the significance of the Fort Gower Resolves, in the Fall of 2009 I traveled to Fort Gower where I discovered how very obscure and difficult it is to find. Upon arrival in Hockingport, no signs announced Fort Gower, and asking a man on a tractor who was cleaning roadside brush about the fort drew only a blank stare. However, driving down to the end of the point and looking around on my own solved the problem. A photograph of the point at Hockingport taken by the author on Friday 23 October 2009 is shown in figure 9. Wandering among the point's community of retirement/vacation homes I finally

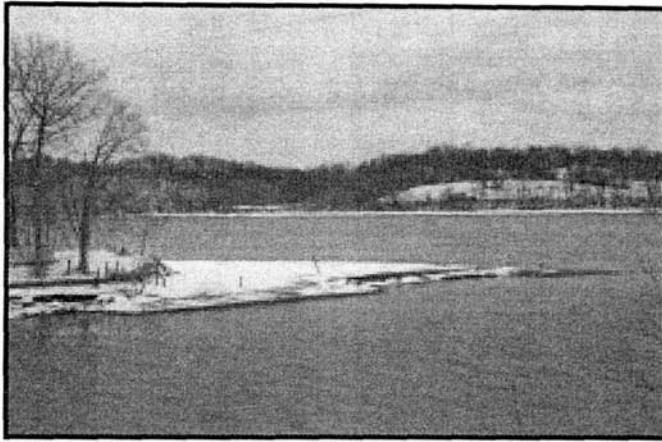


Figure 8. One of Lantz Repp's pictures of the point of land taken during the drawdown in January 2005. The normal shore line is the row of bulwarks seen near the trees at the left edge of the picture. There is a very high probability that Fort Gower lies under the snow field to the right of the bulwarks on the point. (Picture courtesy of Lantz Repp.)

Figure 9

Figure 10

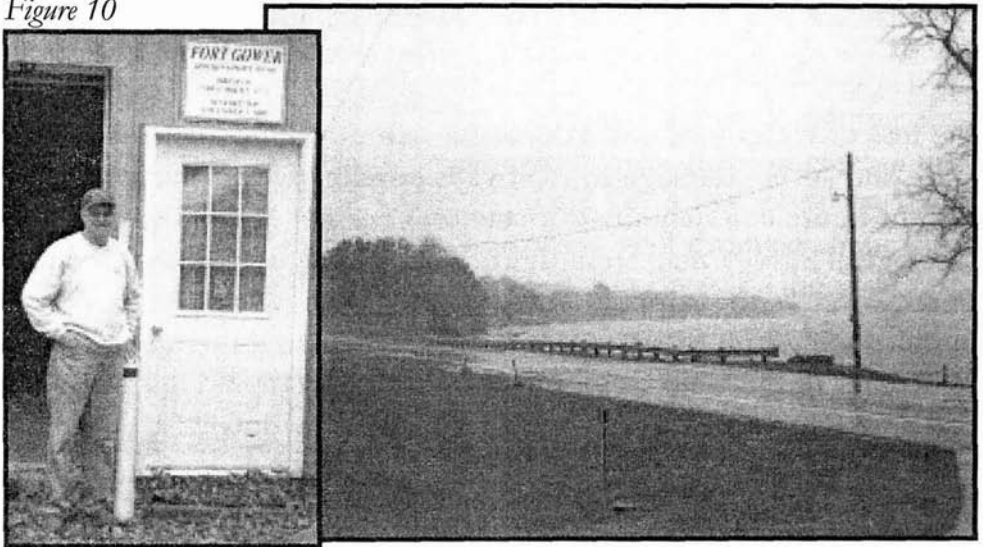


Figure 9. The confluence of the Hocking River and the Ohio River seen on a dreary, rainy day on Friday 23 October 2009. The Ohio River is to the right (east) and the Hocking River flows into the Ohio from the left, in front of the group of trees that covers the point. (Author's photograph)

Figure 10. The "resurrected" Fort Gower and Lantz Repp. The site of Fort Gower is not easy to find. It was only by driving around the community of retirement/vacation homes on the point that the author finally found the site by stumbling on the sign on Repp's "pole" building. (Author's photograph)

found the sign shown in figure 10 that reads "Fort Gower, Hockingport, Ohio. Original November 5, 1774. Resurrected [sic] November 5, 2008." Knocking on the wrong door produced directions to knock on the right door. Thus it was that I found Lantz Repp and what he calls his "pole" building, or the utility building behind his home.

After a useful discussion, Repp shared his file of information with the author and directed him to the Daughters of the American Revolution Fort Gower plaque beside Ketchum's convenience store (figure 11). The commemorative plaque and its transcription are shown below and on the next page.



Figure 11. Ketchum's convenience store in Hockingport, Ohio. The Daughters of the American Revolution bronze plaque commemorating the Fort Gower Resolves is mounted on the pink granite plinth at the left of the picture. (Author's photograph).

This brass plaque erected in 1923 by the Daughters of the American Revolution records the significance of the Fort Gower site to American history. It



stands beside the parking lot and gasoline pumps of Ketchum's convenience store. The map coordinates of the marker are 39.188185° north of the equator and 81.752192° west of Greenwich. (Author's photograph) A transcription of the legend on the brass plaque recording the significance of what happened at Fort Gower in November 1774 is on the next page. In the eighth line, it appears that something was deleted, apparently before the plaque was erected.²¹ This is the only marker recording the location of Fort Gower.

NEAR THIS SITE STOOD
FORT GOWER
ERECTED IN 1774
HERE WAS EXPRESSED THE
SPIRIT OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE
ON NOVEMBER 5, 1774
WHEN THE OFFICERS OF
LORD DUNMORE, [UNREADABLE]
LAST ROYAL GOVERNOR OF THE
OLD DOMINION
DECLARED THEY WOULD BE LOYAL
TO KING GEORGE III, SO LONG AS HE
REIGNED JUSTLY
OVER THE PEOPLE OF THE COLONIES.
THAT FIRST, HOWEVER, CAME THEIR
LOVE FOR AMERICA
AND THEIR DUTY IN THE DEFENSE OF
THEIR COUNTRY.
[SPINNING WHEEL INSIGNIA OF THE DAR]
OHIO
ERECTED BY
THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
NOVEMBER 5, 1923

Conclusions

The evidence presented here is compelling. It convincingly establishes the significance of the events that took place at the fort in November 1774 for Virginia history. The brief congregation of so many men who would go on to play important and substantial roles in the coming Revolution was a remarkable and notable occurrence.

Given its location, obscurity, and lack of signs directing tourists to it, Fort Gower must surely be one of the least visited shrines of Virginia history, unlike other shrines of the Virginia Revolutionary War history in Virginia, such as Yorktown, St. John's Church in Richmond where Patrick Henry made his famous "Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death" speech or the site of the Battle of Petersburg, in Petersburg.

The approximate location of its site is not in doubt though its exact location remains uncertain. With the best archaeological guess being that the fort site is located offshore of the present-day point, some interesting possibilities arise. With the twentieth-century shoreline erosion (or inundation) being estimated at 210 feet and with the modern-day state boundary line being about 175 feet offshore from the point, it's quite conceivable that Fort Gower straddled the present-day line between Ohio and West Virginia. Given the cited distance estimates, a good argument can be made that it was built in present-day West Virginia. If this latter speculation were to be true, then we can reach the ironic conclusion that the Fort Gower site actually remained in Virginia after the formation of the State of Ohio from the Northwest Territory in 1803 — at least until the time of separation of Virginia's western counties to form West Virginia in 1863.

The final conclusion is that Fort Gower was built in Augusta County and not the West Augusta District that some authors have stated to have been created in October 1773.²² It is certain, though, that the boundaries of the West Augusta District were not ascertained until 1776,²³ or two years after the construction of Fort Gower. However, the detailed proof of that case belongs in a separate article.

Speculatively, I argue that if Richard Henry Lee had not by March of 1775 developed such a high level of confidence in the quantity and ability of Virginia's western riflemen events might have transpired differently in St. John's church at the Second Virginia Convention, when Patrick Henry delivered his "liberty or death" speech. It is noteworthy that one of Henry's brothers-in-law, William Campbell, was present for the adoption of the Resolves while a second Henry brother-in-law, William Christian, left Fort Gower only a few days before their adoption.

Therefore, what happened at Fort Gower on 5 November 1774 was profoundly significant.

Acknowledgments

My thanks and acknowledgments go to the following people: Lantz Repp for sharing his file of Fort Gower documents and pictures with the author. John Robbins for useful discussions and reviewing an earlier version of this article. Jason Merklin and Andy Moreland of the Ohio Department of Transportation who tracked

down the aerial photograph. Mary Kegley and Ryan Mays kindly reviewed an earlier version of this article. Professor Harry Ward for useful discussions and for reinforcing many of the author's opinion. Professor Dan Metraux and Carolyn Harris whose general comments and detailed comments, respectively, on an earlier draft strengthened this article significantly. Carolyn Harris also edited the final draft of this article. Special thanks, as always to Deena Flinchum for her ongoing support. The errors, misconceptions, and infelicities that remain in this article are the sole responsibility of its author.

Endnotes .

¹Tradition says that the fort took its name from Granville Leveson-Gower, a prominent English politician, known also as Earl Gower, who was Lord President of the Council from 1767-1779.

²One can locate the position of the Fort Gower Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) commemorative marker in Hockingport by inserting the coordinates 39.188185, -81.752192 (in that format) into the search line of a web atlas such as Bing or Google Maps. The site of Fort Gower is somewhere near the point of land about 250 yards SSW of the DAR marker.

³Benjamin Ashby, clerk, "At a Meeting of the officers Under the Command of his Excellency the Right Honourable the EARL of DUNMORE...". *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), December 22, 1774, 1-2. Online at <http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/BrowseVG.cfm>. Reproduced here in the appendix to this article.

⁴The "Articles of Association" adopted by the Congress on 20 October 1774 called for, among other things, local committees to be formed to act in the interests of the colonies. Dunmore's officers in effect formed such a committee. See: U.S. Congress, Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress, October 14, 1774, (Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale University), online at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/resolves.asp.

⁵Jim Glanville, "The Fincastle Resolutions." *The Smithfield Review*, 14: 69-119, 2010.

⁶Jim Glanville, "Leedstown and Fincastle." Paper published online at the website of the Essex County Museum and Historical Society at <http://www.essexmuseum.org/pdf/lib/leedstown.pdf>.

⁷James Curtis Ballagh, collector and editor, *The Letters of Richard Henry Lee*. Two volumes. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), volume 1, 131-132.

⁸Harry M. Ward, *Major General Adam Stephen and the Cause of American Liberty*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia 1989), 112.

⁹Standard sources for Dunmore's War include: Alexander Scott Withers, *Chronicles of Border Warfare* [1831] edited and annotated by Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cincinnati: The Robert Clarke Company, 1895); Joseph Addison Waddell, *Annals of Augusta County, Virginia, from 1726 to 1871*, second edition (Staunton: C. Russell Caldwell, 1902); and, Reuben Gold Thwaites and Louise Phelps Kellogg, *Documentary History of Dunmore's War, Compiled from the Draper Manuscripts*. (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1905).

¹⁰Other sources for Dunmore's War include Virgil Anson Lewis' *History of the Battle of Point Pleasant: ... The Chief Event of Lord Dunmore's War* (Charleston WV: The Tribune Printing Company, 1908); Elizabeth Van Wrick, "Dunmore - Virginia's Last Royal Governor," *West Virginia History*, 8 (1947): 237-282; and, Patricia Givens Johnson, *General Andrew Lewis of Roanoke and Greenbrier* (Blacksburg, Va.: Walpa Publishing, 2nd. ed. 1994), 165-185.

¹¹Charles M. Walker, *History of Athens County, Ohio*. (Cincinnati: R. Clarke & Co., 1869). See also: Anonymous. "Dunmore's War in Athens County." *Ohio Genealogy and History*. Online at http://www.ohiogenealogy.org/athens/dunmores_war.htm.

¹²Robert Dafford, Description of the Point Pleasant Series of Murals. Online at http://www.robertdaffordmurals.com/Work_In_Progress.htm. Copy in the author's files.

¹³John E. Robbins, "The Fort Gower Resolves November 5, 1774," 21-26 in Thomas H. Smith, ed. *Ohio in the American Revolution: a conference to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Ft. Gower Resolves*, (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society 1976).

¹⁴Warren Skidmore and Donna Kaminsky, *Lord Dunmore's little war of 1774: his captains and*

their men who opened up Kentucky & the West to American settlement, (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 2002).

¹⁵Randall L. Buchman and Robert B. Boehm, eds., *The Preliminary Report of the Exploratory Archaeological Survey of Fort Gower (AT-33)*, (Defiance, Ohio: Defiance College, 1975). Copy in author's files.

¹⁶The online Daft Logic "Google Maps Distance Calculator" gives the result 0.217 miles for the width of the Ohio River at the point. See <http://www.daftlogic.com/projects-google-maps-distance-calculator.htm>.

¹⁷Robert B. Boehm, "Fort Gower," 26-30 in Thomas H. Smith, ed., *Ohio in the American Revolution: a conference to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Ft. Gower Resolves*, (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society 1976). This interesting piece of work sadly lacks footnotes or references, although some of them can be guessed from the bibliography of the preliminary report.

¹⁸Randall L. Buchman, "Archaeological Work at Fort Gower, (At-33)," 30-34 in Thomas H. Smith, ed. *Ohio in the American Revolution: a conference to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Ft. Gower resolves*, (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society 1976).

¹⁹U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "Belleville Locks and Dam," Online at http://www.lrh.usace.army.mil/_kd/go.cfm?destination=Page&Pge_ID=1151.

²⁰Christopher Merklin and Jason Wise, "Landslides Induced by Rapid Drawdown at Belleville Dam," paper presented at the Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference, (Columbus, Ohio, 25 October 2006). Copy in author's files.

²¹Lantz Repp (personal communication, telephone conversation 2 December 2010) examined the plaque while the author studied a magnified picture of his file photograph of the plaque. The conversation did not yield any conclusion as to why the eighth line of the inscription is defaced.

²²Thomas Perkins Abernethy, *Western Lands and the American Revolution*, (New York: Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, for the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, University of Virginia, 1937), 94.

²³William Waller Hening, "An act for ascertaining the boundary between the county of Augusta, and the district of West Augusta, and for dividing the said district into three distinct counties," *Laws of Virginia*, October 1776. Chapter XLV, 262. *The statutes at large: being a collection of all the laws of Virginia*. Volume IX. 1775-1778, (Charlottesville: Jamestown Foundation and the University of Virginia 1969, [1823]).

Appendix

The Fort Gower Resolves

At a Meeting of the Officers under the Command of his Excellency the Right Honourable the EARL of DUNMORE, convened at Fort Gower*, November 5, 1774, for the Purpose of considering the Grievances of BRITISH AMERICA, an Officer present addressed the Meeting in the following Words:

* Situated the Junction of the Ohio and Hockhocking Rivers, 200 miles below Fort Dunmore. [It is actually about 120 miles below, author.]

GENTLEMEN: "Having now concluded the Campaign, by the Assistance of Providence, with Honour and Advantage to the Colony, and ourselves, it only remains that we should give our Country the strongest Assurance that we are ready, at all Times, to the utmost of our Power, to maintain and defend her just Rights and Privileges. We have lived about three Months in the Woods, without any intelligence from Boston, or from the Delegates at Philadelphia. It is possible, from the groundless Reports of designing Men, that our Countrymen may be jeal-

ous of the Use such a Body would make of Arms in their Hands at this critical Juncture. That we a[r]e a respectable Body is certain, when it is considered that we can live Weeks without Bread or Salt, that we can sleep in the open Air without any Covering but that of the Canopy of Heaven, and that our Men can march and shoot with any in the known World. Blessed with these Talents, let us solemnly engage to one another, and our Country in particular, that we will use them to no Purpose but for the Honour and Advantage of America in general, and of Virginia in particular. It behooves us then, for the Satisfaction of our Country, that we should give them our real Sentiments, by Way of Resolves, at this very alarming Crisis."

Whereupon the Meeting made Choice of a Committee to draw up and prepare Resolves for their Consideration, who immediately withdrew; and after some Time spent therein, reported, that they had agreed to, and prepared the following Resolves, which were read, maturely considered, and agreed to *nemine contradicente*, by the Meeting, and ordered to be published in the Virginia Gazette:

Resolved, that we will bear the most faithful Allegiance to his Majesty King George III, whilst his Majesty delights to reign over a brave and free People; that we will, at the Expense of Life, and every Thing dear and valuable, exert ourselves in Support of the Honour of his Crown and the Dignity of the British empire. But as the Love of Liberty, and Attachment to the real Interests and just Rights of America outweigh every other Consideration, we resolve that we will exert every Power within us for the Defence of American Liberty, and for the Support of her just Rights and Privileges; not in any precipitate, riotous, or tumultuous Manner, but when regularly called forth by the unanimous Voice of our Countrymen.

Resolved, that we entertain the greatest Respect for his Excellency the Right Honourable Lord Dunmore, who commanded the Expedition against the Shawanese; and who, we are confident, underwent the great Fatigue of this singular Campaign from no other Motive than the true Interest of this Country.

Signed by Order, and in Behalf of the whole corps,
BENJAMIN ASHBY, Clerk.

The transcription is taken from Purdie and Dixon's Virginia Gazette, of 22 December 1774, 1-2. see endnote 3 for the online citation.