

109

Williamsburg tho the winter was then unhappily just approaching
I was not absolutely without hopes of being enabled to satisfy
in some measure my Friends wishes for my success, & accordingly
I proposed to Gov. Dinwiddie who had £20000 from England
at his Disposal beside £1000 which his Assembly had granted
to raise 500 or 600 Men immediately & with them & the Independ-
dent Companies to have made an Attempt on the Fort that
the Enemy had raised at the Mouth of the Monongahela;
but whatever were my hopes at that time I was soon convinced
of their Vanity when in Novem^r. I arrived at Wills Creek
there I learnt that the Number of the French at their
Fort exceeded 600, beside several Parties of Indians who
were at their Devotion & submitted to their Command. The
Fort tho small was rendered pretty defensible by a Ditch
& two Outworks before the Curtains that faced the Land on
the Side of the Rivers it was well secured by Palisades
& the Garrison had laid in a sufficient Quantity of Provision
for at least the whole winter. On the contrary, we had no
Provisions yet procured & with great Difficulty could a
Sufficiency be at that late Season purchased & collected;
neither had Gov. Dinwiddie as yet commissioned Commis-
saries for that Purpose, Mortars, Field Pieces or Cannon
we had none except four small ones of the latter which I
purchased out of a Ship. The Troops that I must have
commanded were three Independent Companies that did
not in the least answer my Expectations as your Ld^y will
conceive when you are informed that St John de Blair
on receiving them has since discharged 40 Men from one
of them only as entirely unfit for Duty. The Remains of the
Virg^a. Forces with a few recruits amounted to about 130.