

The Journal of George Washington

13 July, 1755

I sat up with a sudden start, my heart pounding in my chest. A soldier poked his head into my tent. "General Braddock would like to see you sir." he said. I nodded. I knew that General Braddock's condition was not well. I believe that his days are numbered. I put on my uniform and walked out into the crisp cool morning air. I walked into the tent where General Braddock was. Inside, Braddock was lying on a cot. "Ahh, George. Good to see you. Come sit." he said. Braddock had beads of sweat that kept forming at his temple and his face was rather pale. "How are you feeling?" I asked. "Not well. The reason I asked for you to see me is that I wanted to give you something." he said. Wincing, he reached over to his night stand and grabbed a large wide box that was tarnished. "Here are my two most prized possessions. I want you to have them." he said, handing me the box. I opened it up. Inside, were his red velvet ceremonial sash and his pistol. My eyes widened. "You want me to have them?" I asked. He nodded. "I trust that you will keep them safe for me when I'm gone." he said. "Thank you. It has been an honor to serve with you sir." I said. He smiled. Suddenly he started to cough violently. He stopped and whispered faintly "Next time, we shall know how to fight them." There was utter silence. "Somebody help!" I yelled. I put my ear to his chest and did not hear his heart beating. A doctor along with a few people rushed in to help." I think it would be better if you took a step outside for a minute." The doctor said. A few minutes later the flap of the tent opened and the doctor stepped out. "I'm so sorry sir but, General Braddock did not make it." I walked across the road that we had built ourselves and back into my tent. I sat on my cot and stared at the ground. *How could this be happening?* I thought. I knew that I had to have a proper burial service to honor him. I would bury him in the road that his men built. I ordered some of the soldiers to dig a hole to bury him in. After filling the hole in, we eliminated any sign of the grave so it would not be desecrated. Everyone then listened to what I had to say. I said: "General Edward Braddock was not only a great man but also a great leader. He led his men 200 miles through the wilderness with no roads and he had major transportation problems. He trained his men and built a road along the way. General Braddock was not a coward. During the battle his actions proved his bravery. Thank you General Edward Braddock. It was an honor to serve with you." I then saluted. Everyone else saluted and headed back to their tents. Back in my tent I looked at the pistol he had given me. I remember him telling me about it. "This gun was made by a Spanish armorer named Gabbitas. It is an English Flintlock pistol and it is a .71 caliber." he said. As I looked at the gun, I noticed that his initials were engraved on it. I tucked the pistol inside my coat and went outside. I spoke with Colonel Nicholas Meriwether about leaving tomorrow

morning. He agreed that we must leave as soon as possible. I announced to everyone that we would be leaving tomorrow. Exhausted, I went back into my tent and went to sleep.

Afterword

After George performed heroically in the battle, he settled in his home on Mount Vernon. He lost four horses and had a horrific amount of bullet holes through his coat and hat but, not a single scratch was left behind. George Washington always carried General Edward Braddock's pistol and ceremonial sash with him wherever he went.