

publication, when made, in 1755, was dedicated to their secretary. In an accompanying text the English claim was pushed to its utmost, and every old story was revamped which served to bolster pretensions of the English preceding the French in exploring the country, reviving the antiquated boast that New Englanders had even preceded the French in crossing the Mississippi, and had really furnished the guides for La Salle's discoveries.

Perhaps the best knowledge which was attainable at the time, of the valley of the Ohio, had been reached by Christopher Gist, who, in his wandering, had corrected the supposed curves and trends of that river. Lewis Evans, in June, 1750, made his proposals to visit and map the country under disguise as a trader, and in the pay of the province of Pennsylvania. His map of the *British Middle Colonies* was published at Philadelphia just in time to be of use to Braddock. Washington later said of it that, "considering the early period, it was done with amazing exactness." The Governor of Pennsylvania was satisfied that Evans had mapped the Alleghanies correctly, and contended that this new draft showed how much would be lost if the English made these mountains their bounds.

Of the country in dispute Evans's map in one of its legends represents: "Were nothing at stake," it reads, "between the crown of Great Britain and France but the lands in the Ohio, we may reckon it as great a prize as has ever been contended for between two nations, for this country is of that vast extent westward as to exceed in good land all the European dominions of Great Britain, France and Spain, and which are almost destitute of inhabitants. It is impossible to conceive, had His Majesty been made acquainted with its value and great importance, and the huge strides the French have been making for several years past in their encroachments on his dominions, that His Majesty would sacrifice one of the best gems in his crown to their usurpation and boundless ambition."