

These lakes especially the two lower ones, lake *Ontario*, and *Erie*, with great part of the two next adjoining to them, lake *Huron*, and *Michigan*, are the property of the *Five Nations* of Indians, and have belonged to them by conquest and actual possession upwards of a hundred years; which they have made over to the crown of Great Britain by many solemn and formal acts and deeds, and the same was acknowledged by France itself at the treaty of *Utrecht*, as we shall abundantly prove in the second part of this discourse concerning the rights and titles of the two nations in America. The only claim the French have to them is, the liberty they had by the treaty of *Utrecht* to frequent those countries of the Indians for the sake of trade; from which they would now pretend a right to them, we suppose, as they have been allowed to make some settlements in them, for the convenience and refreshment of their traders in passing backwards and forwards, as they pretended when they made them.

The chief settlements they have here are *Niagara* and *le Detroit*, or the *Straits of the Lakes*, between lake *Erie* and *Huron*. At the first they have only a small fort, built chiefly of wood, and since the year 1751, where they keep about sixty or seventy men, for no other purpose but to keep possession of this important