



# The Volunteer Review

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### THE REVOLT OF THE

### British American Colonies, 1764-84.

#### CHAPTER LIII.

The close of this extraordinary revolution left Great Britain shorn of an immense territory but with a vast addition of material wealth. Since the period of the revolution of 1688, England invariably emerged from each conflict in which she was engaged with all the material advantages in her possession, and now, although the loss of her Colonial Empire was a severe blow, yet the struggle by which it was effected had placed in her hands the commerce of the civilised world and the undisputed empire of the seas. So completely had she crippled the maritime resources of Spain, France, and Holland that she monopolised almost wholly the trade of the United States and supplemented the acute Boston shipper in the trade with the Spanish Main.

In those days intelligence travelled slowly and another engagement between the English and French fleets off Pondichery in the West Indies, on the 20th of June, 1783, closed the operations of this war. The English fleet, under Vice Admiral Sir E. Hughes, consisted of one 80-gun ship, five 74, one 70, one 68, seven 64, one 54, and two 50-gun ships, in all 18 ships and 12 frigates. The French squadron was still vastly superior in sailing qualities and consequently had all the advantages which a thorough command of motive power gives in a naval combat—that of a choice of position—and the power of avoiding or declining an engagement. On this occasion, after a good deal of manoeuvring, the French having the weather gauge, took up a position on the weather beam of the British at long gun shot and commenced an engagement which lasted for three hours, when the French fleet hauled to the windward and made sail, having done considerable damage to the British fleet in masts and rigging. The loss on board the latter was 99 men killed and 431 wounded; the French loss has not been ascertained.

It is believed that the attack on the British fleet was prompted by the knowledge that nearly one-third of the crews of the different ships of which it was composed were laboring under the effects of a virulent scurvy, and confined to their hammocks. The results of this indecisive action would have secured India to the British Empire, even if the connection had been seriously menaced which was not the case, although she had to lament the loss of half the continent of North America, a possession far more valuable than ever Hindustan can be.

The Provisional Articles of that treaty which created the United States were signed at Paris on the 30th of November, 1782, and are as follows: "Articles agreed upon by and between Richard Oswald, Esq., the Commissioner of his Britannic Majesty, for treating of peace with the Commissioners of the United States of America in behalf of his said Majesty on the one part, and John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Henry Laurens, four of the Commissioners of the said States, for treating of peace with the Commissioner of his said Majesty on their behalf on the other part, to be inserted in and to constitute the treaty of peace proposed to be concluded between the Crown of Great Britain and the said United States, but which treaty is not to be concluded until terms of a peace shall be agreed upon between Great Britain and France, and His Britannic Majesty shall be ready to conclude such treaty accordingly. Whereas reciprocal advantages and mutual convenience are found by experience to form the only permanent foundation of peace and friendship between States; it is agreed to form the articles of the proposed treaty on such principles of liberal equity and reciprocity, as that partial advantages (those seeds of discord) being excluded, a beneficial and satisfactory intercourse between the two countries may be established, as to promise and secure to both perpetual peace and harmony:

Article I.—His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the United States, viz., New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware,

Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, to be Free, Sovereign and Independent States; that he treats with them as such; and for himself, his heirs and successors, relinquishes all claims to the government, proprietary and territorial rights of the same, and every part thereof; and that all disputes which might arise in future on the subject of the United States may be prevented, it is hereby agreed and declared that the following are and shall be their boundaries, viz.:

Article II.—From the northwest angle of Nova Scotia, viz., that angle which is formed by a line drawn due north from the source of the Saint Croix River to the Highlands, along the said Highlands, which divide those rivers that empty themselves into the River Saint Lawrence from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, to the northwestern most head of Connecticut River; thence down along the middle of that river to the forty-fifth degree of north latitude; from thence by a line due west on said latitude until it strikes the River Iroquois or Cataraquy; thence along the middle of the said River into Lake Ontario; through the middle of the said Lake until it strikes the communication by water between that Lake and Lake Erie; thence along the middle of said communication into Lake Erie; through the middle of said Lake until it arrives at the water communication between that Lake and Lake Huron; thence along the middle of said water communication with Lake Huron; thence through the middle of said Lake to the water communication between that Lake and Lake Superior; thence through Lake Superior northward of the Isles Royal and Philipeaux, to the Long Lake; thence through the middle of said Long Lake and the water communication between it and the Lake of the Woods; thence through the said Lake to the most northwestern point thereof, and from thence in a due west course to the River Mississippi; thence by a line to be drawn along the middle of the said River Mississippi until it intersect the northernmost part of the thirty-first degree of north latitude. South—by a line to be drawn due east from the determination of the line last mentioned in the latitude thirty-one degrees north of the Equator to the middle of the River Apalachicola or Catatrouche; thence along the middle thereof to its junction with the Flint River; thence straight to the end of St. Mary's River, and thence along the middle of St. Mary's River to the Atlantic Ocean. East, by a line to be drawn along the middle of the River St. Croix from its mouth in the Bay of Fundy to its source, and from its source directly north to the aforesaid High-