

and Clark were the first to explore the lower portion of the river and its branches.

The title of the United States was good enough to have warranted them in proceeding with the settlement of the territory, or rather to allow the migration of their own citizens, which had been going on, and say nothing about it. Douglas had the right of it when he recommended that the territories be organized and settled without attempt to define the boundaries; but under sudden need and by mutual good-will the dispute was composed.

All questions arising out of the Treaty of Paris have been for the most part settled; and at the first view there is nothing further to discuss. But that is an antiquated view. A time comes when even a treaty may become a legitimate subject of discussion. Many such treaties are being discussed at the present moment. A treaty is not forever final, as is proved by the long contest over Alsace-Lorraine; and it is quite certain that many other treaties are due for revision. Wars breed treaties, and these in turn are the causes of new wars, unless they are revised in the light of fresh events. The continuous validity of a treaty depends upon the continuation of the circumstances in which it was created. As between the United States and England, the circumstances in which the Treaty of Paris was formulated have completely passed away. Yet it is historically important to recall them to mind in order to understand the genesis of the Treaty.

England was defeated disastrously at Yorktown, October 19th, 1781, and after the surrender of Cornwallis held only New York and Charlestown on the American coast. But both sides were determined on peace, although neither fully appreciated the extremity of the other. England was sufficiently committed in Europe; and the military and financial outlook of the Colonies was none too promising. The Colonial treasury was empty, and the army was clamouring for pay. Washington had reported that it was impossible to recruit his forces, and that the arrears of debt and the slender public credit made further exertions impossible.