

# NEGOTIATIONS

between the  
**Western Indian Confederacy  
& U.S. Commissioners**

on the issue of the Ohio River  
as the boundary of Indian lands

August 1793

from

E. A. Cruikshank, ed., *The Correspondence of  
Lieut. Governor John Graves Simcoe*,<sup>1</sup> vol. I-II,  
(Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1923-1924).

## **MESSAGE from the WESTERN INDIANS to the COMMISSIONERS OF THE UNITED STATES, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 1793** (II, 17-20; excerpts] \_\_\_\_\_

**BROTHERS;**— You tell us that after you had made peace with the King our Father, about ten years ago, “it remained to make peace between the U. States, and the Indian Nations who had taken part with the King, for this purpose Commissioners were appointed who sent messages to all those Indian Nations, inviting them to come and make peace,” and after reciting the periods at which you say “Treaties were held at Fort Stanwix, Fort McIntosh, and Miami, all which Treaties according to your own acknowledgement, were for the sole purpose of *making peace*; you then say, “Brothers, the Commissioners who conducted these Treaties, in behalf of the United States, sent the papers containing them to the general Council of the States, who supposing them satisfactory to the Nations treated with proceeded to *dispose of the lands thereby ceded*” Brothers, this is telling us plainly what we always understood to be the case, & it agrees with the declaration of those few, who attended these treaties. Vizt. that they went to meet your Commissioners to *make peace*, but through fear were obliged to sign any paper that was laid before them, and it has since appeared that deeds of cession were signed by them instead of Treaties of peace. . . .”

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<sup>1</sup> Simcoe was the administrator of British Upper Canada, the area surrounding the northern shores of the Great Lakes, and was involved in negotiating Jay’s Treaty of 1793 with the United States. In a letter two months before the messages excerpted here, Simcoe wrote to a colleague: “It appears to me that there is little probability of effecting a Peace, and I am inclined to believe that the Commissioners do not expect it; that General Wayne does not expect it; and that the Mission of the Commissioners is in general contemplated by the People of the United States as necessary to adjust the ceremonial of the destruction and pre-determined extirpation of the Indian Americans.” [v. I, 355]

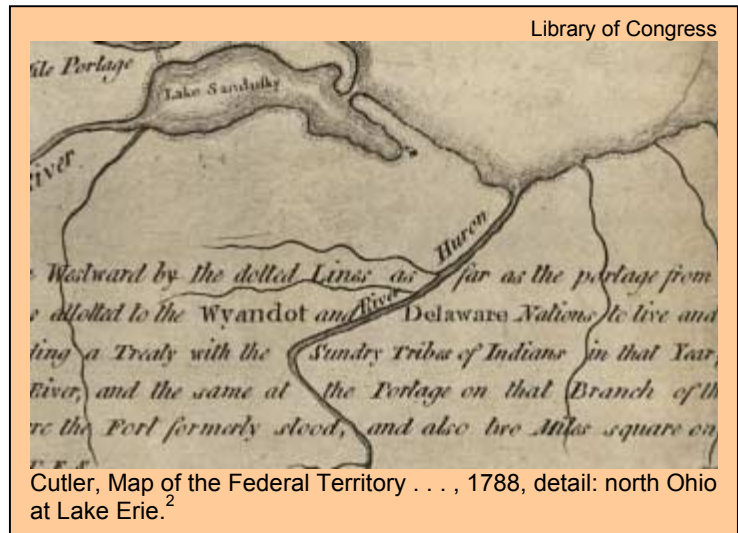
**BROTHERS;**— Money, to us, is of no value, & to most of us unknown, and as no consideration whatever can induce us to sell the lands on which we get sustenance for our women and children; we hope we may be allowed to point out a mode by which your settlers may be easily removed, and peace thereby obtained.

**BROTHERS;**— We know that these settlers are poor, or they would never have ventured to live in a country which have been in continual trouble ever since they crossed the Ohio; divide therefore this large sum of money which you have offered to us, among these people, give to

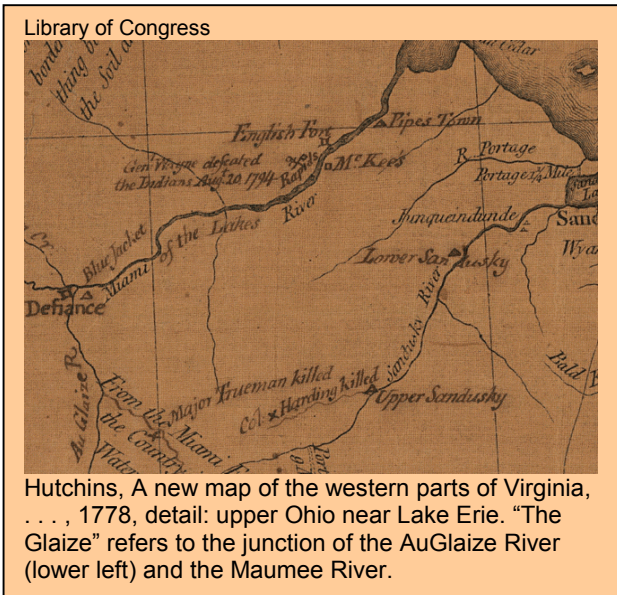
each also a portion of what you say you would give us annually over and above this very large sum of money, and we are persuaded they would most readily accept of it in lieu of the lands you sold to them, if you add also the great sums you must expend in raising and paying Armies, with a view to force us to yield you our Country, you will certainly have more than sufficient for the purposes of repaying these settlers for all their labour and improvements.

**BROTHERS;**— You have talked to us about concessions. It appears strange that you should expect any from us, who have only been defending our just Rights against your invasion; We want Peace; Restore to us our Country and we shall be Enemies no longer. . . .

**BROTHERS;**— We never made any agreement with the King, nor with any other Nation that we would give to either the exclusive right of purchasing our lands. And we declare to you that we consider ourselves free to make any bargain or cession of lands, whenever & to whomsoever we please, if the white people as you say, made a treaty that none of them but the King should purchase of us, and that he has given that right to the U. States, it is an affair which concerns you & him & not us. We have never parted with such a power.



<sup>2</sup> Text of map entry (underlined sections denote text in map above): This particular Tract of Country and to the Westward by the dotted Lines as far as the portage from the big Miami (which runs into the Ohio) to the Omie River and so down the said River, was allotted to the Wyandot and Delaware Nations to live and to hunt on and to such of the Ottowas as lived thereon in 1785, by the Commissioners for holding a Treaty with the Sundry Tribes of Indians in that Year; Reserving for the Establishment of trading posts six miles square at the mouth of the Omie River, and the same at the Portage on that Branch of the big Miami which runs into the Ohio and the same on the lake of Sandusky where the fort formerly stood, and also two Miles square on each side of the lower rapids of Sandusky River for the use of the UNITED STATES.



**BROTHERS;**— At our General Council held at the Glaize last Fall, we agreed to meet Commissioners from the U. States, for the purpose of restoring Peace, provided they consented to acknowledge and confirm our boundary line to be the Ohio; and we determined not to meet you until you gave us satisfaction on that point; that is the reason we have never met.

We desire you to consider Brothers, that our only demand, is the peaceable possession of a small part of our once great Country. Look back and view

the lands from whence we have been driven to this spot, we can retreat no further, because the country behind hardly affords food for its present inhabitants. And we have therefore resolved, to leave our bones in this small space, to which we are now confined.

**BROTHERS;**— We shall be persuaded that you mean to do us justice if you agree, that the Ohio, shall remain the boundary line between us, if you will not consent thereto, our meeting will be altogether unnecessary. This is the great point which we hoped would have been explained, before you left your homes, as our message last Fall was principally directed to obtain that information.

**DONE** in General Council at the Foot of the Miamis Rapids the 13th day of August, 1793.

<b>NATIONS.</b>	<b>MARKS.</b>
Wyandot's .....	Bear.
Seven Nations of Canada .....	Turtle.
Delaware's .....	Turtle.
Shawanoe's .....	Wolf.
Miami's .....	Turtle.
Ottawa's .....	Sturgeon.
Chippawa's .....	Crane.
Seneca's of the Glaize .....	Turtle.
Potawatamie's .....	Black Fish.
Connoy's .....	Turkey.
Munsey's .....	Turkey.
Nanticoke's .....	Turtle.
Mohiken's .....	Turkey.
Messasaga's .....	Eagle.
Creek's .....	Bear.
Cherokee's .....	Elk.

Sent with Strings of Black and White Wampum.



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Wampum belt presented at the signing of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, by which the Indian confederacy abandoned its claim to the Ohio River as the boundary of its land.

**MESSAGE from the COMMISSIONERS OF THE UNITED STATES to the CHIEFS & WARRIORS of the INDIAN NATIONS Assembled at the Foot of the Miamis Rapids. August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1793** [II, 24] \_\_\_\_\_

**BROTHERS;**— We have just received your Answer dated the 13th Inst. to our speech of the 31st of last month, which we delivered to your Deputies at this place. You say it was interpreted to your nations, and we presume it was fully understood. We therein explicitly declared to you that it was now impossible to make the River Ohio the boundary between your lands & the lands of the United States. Your answer amounts to a declaration that you will agree to no other boundary than the Ohio. The negotiation is therefore at an end.

We sincerely regret that peace is not the result. But knowing the upright & liberal views of the United States, which as far as you gave us opportunity we have explained to you, We trust that impartial judges will not attribute the continuance of the war to them.

**DONE** at Captain Elliott's at the Mouth of Detroit River, the sixteenth day of August, 1793.

B. LINCOLN	Commissioners
BEVERLY RANDOLPH,	of the
TIMOTHY PICKERING,	United States.

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**GENERAL ORDER BY GENERAL ANTHONY WAYNE. October 6, 1794.**

[II, 409-410; excerpts] \_\_\_\_\_

(Enclosed in a letter from Major John H. Buell to General Knox, dated Greenville, 6 October, 1794, and intercepted by the Indians [and delivered to the British].)

HEADQUARTERS, BANKS OF THE MIAMIS,  
23rd August, 1794.

The Commander in Chief takes this opportunity to congratulate the Federal Army upon their Brilliant success in the action of the 20<sup>th</sup> Ins't, against the whole Combined Force of the hostile Savages,<sup>3</sup> . . . The Indians to all appearances, having totally abandoned their Settlements quite to the mouth of the River, and their Villages and Cornfields being consumed and Destroyed in every direction, even under the influence of the Guns of Fort Miamis, facts, which must produce a conviction to the minds of the Savages that the British have neither the power or inclination to Afford them that protection which they had been taught to expect, . . . The Commander in Chief therefore requests the Army in general and every Commissioned officer in particular from the Generals down to the Ensigns, to accept of his most grateful thanks, for their good conduct, example, and bravery upon the late glorious and important occasion, . . .

JOHN H. BUELL, MAJOR

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<sup>3</sup> Battle of Fallen Timbers, 20 August 1794, at which the U.S. defeated the Indians of the western confederacy