

La paix a été signée le 19 à six heures
du soir, en voici les conditions
Les Anglois rendent Gibbarto aux Espagnols
et restent en possession de Minorque qu'ils
reproposent par fortifier, aux autres
leurs rendent aux Anglois la Guinée et P.
Christophe, ils leur rendent P. Louis et
Tabago, P. Antioche revient aux Hollandais,
nous avons la moitié ou sans de
terre noire pour la pêche de la morue
nous gardons en Afrique les établissements
sur la rivière d'Alger et l'île de Gorée
dans l'Inde, d Pondichéry nous abandonnons
aux Anglois qui ne pourront avoir qu'un
port comptant sur la Côte de Malabar
Le Commerce est devenu libre partout
Les mers et les États unis d'Amérique
seront indépendants, la France pourra
restituer l'année de paix vingt vaisseaux
de guerre armés et l'Angleterre quinze
seulement

(American Revolution – Treaty of Paris) **Information or Misinformation? - Anonymous, Intriguing, and Possibly Secret, Manuscript Note Concerning the Treaty of Paris 1782-1783**

small folio, one page, formerly folded, top edge lightly browned, else very good. Text neatly inscribed in ink on laid paper. The sheet, judging from the fold marks, was evidently folded into a very small triangle of just over an inch in size, possibly for easy concealment and transmittal.

The present document is both intriguing and curious it discusses the Treaty of Paris and contains information which poses several intriguing questions: the document states that Peace would be signed on the 19th at six o'clock in the evening and with conditions which differed somewhat from the terms of the final treaty.

The preliminary articles of peace were not signed until November 30, 1782, the final Treaty ending the War was signed on September 3, 1783. The terms mentioned in this manuscript differ from the final document.

The questions posed by this document are: Does the present document discuss a preliminary draft? Is it incorrect or secretly transmitted information from the private negotiations? Is it deliberate misinformation?

The document reads:

“La paix a été signée le 19 a six heures du soir, en vois les conditions –

Les anglois rendent Gibraltar aux Espagnoles et rentrens sa possession de mexique quis repoussant pas fortifiée aux Antilles nous rend aux anglois la Grenade et St. Christophe, ils nous rendent St^e Lucie et tabago, St. Eustache revient aux hollandais, nous aurons la moitié du Banc de Terre Neuve pour la peche de la marine nous gardons en Afrique les etablissement sur la Riviere du Senegal et L'isle de Gorée dans L'inde pondichery a nous, madras aux anglois qui repoussant avoie qu'un seul comptoir sur la cote de Malabare Le commerce et deveniere libre sur toute les mers et les etats unis de L'Amerique recouvrer independent; La France pourra entretenir en tenir de paix vingt vaisseaux de Guerre arrive a l'Angleterre quinze seulement”

The Definitive Treaty of Peace was signed at Paris, September 3, 1783. This treaty between Great Britain and the United States marked the final consummation of American independence. Coincidentally were signed peace treaties between Great Britain and each of two other belligerents, France, the ally of the United States, and Spain, the ally of France. A preliminary peace between Great Britain and the Netherlands (no one's ally) had been signed on September 2, 1783.

The definitive treaties marked the end of a complicated negotiation in Paris between Great Britain and her several enemies, begun in March, 1782, by the Rockingham Ministry, and continued by the government of Lord Shelburne through its agent, Richard Oswald, who had conducted the American negotiation from the first, and other British diplomatic officers. It was featured by the separately negotiated preliminary and conditional articles of peace between the United States and Great Britain, signed Nov. 30, 1782, which were not to go into effect until peace should be signed between the American ally France, and the common enemy, Great Britain. France, in turn, deferred her peace until her ally, Spain, should have also reached a settlement with Great Britain. The French and Spanish preliminaries were signed on Jan. 2, 1783, on which date the American preliminaries went into effect, and a general armistice took place pending signature of a final and definitive treaty of peace. The three sets (Anglo-American, Anglo-French and Anglo-Spanish) of preliminary articles of peace were thus in the nature of armistice agreements which accompanied a cessation of hostilities but did not end the legal state of war.

The definitive treaties, which ended the war, were deferred for several months in the hope of securing more concessions from the British, and to give the Dutch time to make a satisfactory peace with Great Britain. The Anglo-Dutch preliminary articles of peace were signed on Sept. 2, 1783, and the next day the definitive treaties American, French and Spanish) were signed in essentially the same form as the respective preliminary articles. The Anglo-Dutch definitive treaty was not concluded until May 20, 1784.

Conflicting interests of the United States, France and Spain, but particularly of the United States and Spain, made each distrustful of the other and imperiled the success of the allies and associates in the war against Great Britain, and in the peace negotiations. The United States strove to get recognition of its independence within boundaries as wide as could be obtained, including Canada. Spain wanted Gibraltar from England and hoped to see the boundaries of the United States kept well to the east of the Mississippi. France desired primarily to cripple her traditional enemy, Great Britain, by detaching the United States from the Empire, thus fulfilling the obligations of the Franco-American alliance of 1778 by securing the independence of the United States, absolute and unlimited, either by treaty or by truce; and it was the hope of France to induce Spain to make peace with Great Britain if necessary, without securing Gibraltar, which France had pledged to Spain by the Convention of Aranjuez.

In these negotiations it was the strategy of the French Minister of State, the Comte de Vergennes, to defer the definitive peace until all could sign their respective treaties simultaneously, and meanwhile to steer the negotiations so as to preserve France's essential objective, the independence of the United States, without leaving that republic powerful enough to get along without French patronage. To do this he endeavored to reconcile Spanish and American differences by suggesting limitations of American boundaries east of the Mississippi, which would have left both banks of the river, and its lower valley south of the Ohio, to Spain; and which would have left the Great Lakes and territory north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi to Great Britain.

Vergennes' compromise suggestions helped to precipitate the signature, separately and secretly from France, of preliminary and conditional articles of peace with Great Britain by the plenipotentiaries of the United States, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, John Jay and Henry Laurens. Despite perfunctory protests at this conditional signature without the privity of France, Vergennes did not seem much displeased with the separate American conditional articles, because it enabled him to suggest to his Spanish ally the hopelessness of continuing the common war in order to secure Gibraltar, particularly after the British had broken up a Franco-Spanish siege of that fortress. Aranda, Spanish Ambassador at Paris, signed on his own responsibility a peace with Great Britain which gave Florida but not Gibraltar to Spain.

The principal terms of the Anglo-American definitive treaty were: independence of the United States; evacuation "with all convenient speed" of British troops; guaranty against legal obstacles for the collection, in sterling money, of private pre-war debts to British creditors; boundary on the north corresponding to the present one as far west as the Lake of the Woods, on the west the Mississippi, on the south Florida; and "liberty" to fish in Atlantic inshore fisheries of remaining British North America. A secret article in the preliminary articles had stipulated that if Florida should remain to Great Britain in the final peace, then the northern boundary of Florida should be made more favorable to Great Britain (the latitude of the mouth of the Yazoo River – present Vicksburg – instead of 31° N. Lat.). Since Spain took Florida in the final peace this article was omitted from the definitive Anglo-American Treaty.

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