

Josiah Harmar, Diplomatic Courier

JOSIAH HARMAR is usually remembered for his command of the first United States Army when, in 1784, it tried to effect the transition from British to American possession of the Old Northwest provided for in the treaty of peace that ended the American Revolution. His name is also associated with those of Arthur St. Clair and Anthony Wayne in the campaigns against the Indians that were ultimately climaxed by the Treaty of Greene Ville in 1795.

Less well known is Harmar's earlier career in the service of his country. He was born in Philadelphia in 1753, and educated there in Robert Proud's Quaker school. When the Revolution broke out, he received a commission as a captain and served throughout the war in Pennsylvania units, retiring as a brevet colonel in 1783. In 1784, while acting as private secretary to Thomas Mifflin, president of the Continental Congress, Harmar was chosen to carry out an important diplomatic mission for the new Republic. The mission and Harmar's role in it are generally mentioned only in passing, but it is a story that deserves telling in some detail.¹

News that the definitive treaty of peace with Great Britain had been signed in Paris on September 3, 1783, reached the Continental Congress at Princeton on October 31.² Three weeks later, on November 22, the official messenger arrived with the document itself.³ Congress was not then in session, but was to convene at Annapolis on November 26.⁴

¹ Harmar does not have a biographer, but a convenient sketch may be found in the *Dictionary of American Biography*. An outline of his military career is in Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army* (Washington, 1903). The research for this study was made possible by a Clements Library-Lilly Endowment Fellowship granted by the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

² Elias Boudinot to the Commissioners at Paris, Oct. 27–Nov. 3, 1783, Edmund C. Burnett, ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress* (Washington, 1921–1938), VII, 357, hereinafter cited as *Letters of the Continental Congress*.

³ Thomas Mifflin to George Washington, Nov. 23, 1783, *ibid.*, 376–377.

⁴ Worthington C. Ford, et al., eds., *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789* (Washington, 1904–1937), XXV, 807.

Thomas Mifflin, newly elected president of the Congress, was fearful that there would not be a quorum of states present at the opening session when the treaty was to be considered. He was well aware that its Article 10 stipulated that ratifications had to be exchanged "between the contracting Parties in the Space of Six Months or sooner if possible to be computed from the Day of Signature" (September 3). Realizing the urgency of the situation, Mifflin sent a letter to the chief executives of New Hampshire, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware to the effect that "as much of that time is elapsed, I think it proper to give your Excellency this information, to the end that the delegates of your State may be impressed with the necessity of their attending in Congress as soon as possible."⁵

When the day for reconvening Congress arrived, there were not enough states represented to do business, so adjournment was made to the next day. And to the next. Thus it was, day after day, with time rapidly running out for the exchange of the ratifications.⁶ Thomas Jefferson, for one, was becoming exasperated. "It is now above a fortnight since we should have met," he wrote on December 11, "and six states only appear. We have some hopes of Rhode Island coming in to-day, but when two more will be added seems as insusceptible of calculation as when the next earthquake will happen."⁷ Finally, on December 13, after repeated adjournments for want of a quorum, seven states were present, and the treaty was laid before Congress.⁸

Since Congress had considered and approved the preliminary articles of the treaty in April, and since the definitive articles were much the same, very little debate would precede acceptance. The difficulty lay in the fact that nine states were needed to ratify the treaty. As the precious days slipped by only six or seven states, and later only five, were present. On December 23, Congress felt compelled to send letters to the absent states "informing them, that the safety, honor and good faith of the United States require the imme-

⁵ Mifflin to Certain States, Nov. 23, 1783, *Letters of the Continental Congress*, VII, 377.

⁶ *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XXV, 809.

⁷ Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Dec. 11, 1783, *Letters of the Continental Congress*, VII, 390.

⁸ *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XXV, 809-812.

diate attendance of their delegates in Congress . . . that the ratification of the definitive treaty, and several other matters, of great national concern, are now pending before Congress, which require the utmost despatch, and to which the assent of at least nine states is necessary."⁹

In desperation, Congress tried to rationalize that seven states rather than nine might presently satisfy the spirit of the Articles of Confederation.¹⁰ Then, after more agonizing delay, it began to appear that it might be possible to assemble the required number.¹¹ As one expedient, Lieutenant Colonel Josiah Harmar was sent to Philadelphia to round up the members from New Jersey and Connecticut and to bring back Richard Beresford, a South Carolina delegate who had been confined in that city with illness.¹²

Harmar left Annapolis on January 4, 1784, and, traveling by horse and stage, was in Trenton three days later, and back in Annapolis on January 13. His was a rapid journey, and a successful one.¹³ Beresford returned with Harmar, and, on the following day when the vote was taken on the ratification, the required number of states was present, including New Jersey and Connecticut.¹⁴ The treaty of peace was thus ratified by Congress on January 14, 1784, but much too late for comfort. The treaty-imposed deadline for the exchange of ratifications was March 3, less than two months hence. Given the transportation and communication facilities of the time, especially in mid-winter, it would require all haste to get the Ameri-

⁹ *Ibid.*, 814-815, 817-819, 836-837.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, XXVI, 5-6.

¹¹ Details cannot be traced here, but may be found in *ibid.*, XXVI, *passim*; *Letters of the Continental Congress*, VII, *passim*.

¹² In desperation, pragmatic Jefferson suggested a mountain-to-Mohammed move in Beresford's case if this would achieve sufficient numbers for ratification. Jefferson to Madison, Jan. 1, 1784, *Letters of the Continental Congress*, VII, 406.

¹³ Harmar kept a small leather-bound "Accot of my Expences, on my Journey from Annapolis to philadelphia, and from thence back to Annapolis, at the desire of Congress, in order to request Mr Beresford, and the Jersey & Connecticut delegates to appear in Congress, to form nine States, to ratify the definitive Treaty." Hereinafter referred to simply as Account Book, the original is in the Josiah Harmar Papers. Citations to manuscripts in this collection will be made to the volumes in which the items are found, along with such other identifications as can be made. The Account Book is found in volume XLVI, as is a one-sheet debit-credit summary. These and all other manuscripts cited and used in this study are in the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

¹⁴ *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XXVI, 22-31.

can ratification to the commissioners in France within the remaining seven weeks.

Congress moved that the ratification "be transmitted with all possible dispatch under the care of a faithful person to our Ministers in France who have negotiated the Treaty, to be exchanged." Thirty-one-year-old Josiah Harmar, who had served as an officer under Washington and Nathanael Greene and whose name was included on Washington's list of "Gentlemen . . . [who] are personally known to me as some of the best Officers who were in the Army," was designated as the person.¹⁵ A duplicate copy of the ratified treaty was also sent to Robert Morris, the agent of marine, in hopes that he might be able to send it by a faster method. As it turned out, no such opportunity afforded itself to Morris.¹⁶

A committee of Congress considered other ways to expedite transmission of the ratification. One suggestion, not accepted, was to send copies to the governors of Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, to be forwarded by the first vessel sailing from their ports. It was decided, instead, to commission Colonel David S. Franks, who was going to France on private matters, to carry a triplicate of the treaty ratification, if he could sail before February 3 in a vessel "in which neither of the instruments of ratification, already forwarded [*by Harmar and in care of Morris*], may be sent."¹⁷

Acceptance of this commission altered Harmar's personal plans and dreams. The previous summer he had met Sarah Jenkins, the daughter of a prominent Quaker, and was smitten at the initial encounter. Usually reserved and devoid of any sentiment or opinion in his journal, he recorded the occasion in the entry for August 17, 1783, with considerable feeling: "din'd with Col. Harry Miller in comp[an]y with Miss S. J. a divine girl." On the next Sunday, just a week later, "Rode with Major Nichols to Abingdon Springs 11

¹⁵ Resolution of Congress, Jan. 14, 1784, copy signed by Charles Thomson, Secretary, Harmar Papers, II, 1; also printed in *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XXVI, 29. See also Mifflin to Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay, Jan. 14, 1784, Francis Wharton, ed., *The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States* (Washington, 1889), VI, 754-755; Washington to Mifflin, Dec. 21, 1783, John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington* (Washington, 1931-1944), XXVII, 279.

¹⁶ Thomson to Franklin, Jan. 15, 1784, *Letters of the Continental Congress*, VII, 416; Robert Morris to Mifflin, Feb. 2, 1784, in *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence*, VI, 762.

¹⁷ *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XXVI, 34-36.

Miles from the City where we spent the day," and he added a breathless "Miss S. J." The romance blossomed and became serious, but Sarah had to await his return from the treaty mission.¹⁸

Immediately upon the selection of Harmar as courier for Congress, Mifflin wrote a letter of private instructions to him concerning the business at hand. Harmar was to go to Philadelphia to get money from Robert Morris, superintendent of finance; to wait upon the French minister, whom he would encounter somewhere en route to the port, for letters of recommendation to help expedite the journey; to sail from New York to France on a French packet boat; to deliver the ratification and other official papers to the first of the American commissioners (John Jay, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, or Henry Laurens) he could find; and to "take a Receipt" for these dispatches. This accomplished, he was "at Liberty to return to America recollecting that the Act of Congress . . . provides only for your necessary Expences on the particular Business assigned by them to you." This last instruction was flexible enough to include time to deliver letters and run other errands for various American officials in England as well as in France.¹⁹

Getting to France proved to be as slow and frustrating to Harmar as securing the ratification had been to Congress. He left Annapolis on January 15; by stage and by sleigh, by night and by day, with business stops between, he was in New York and on board the *Courier de L'Amérique* four days later.²⁰ And there he stayed; ice and bad weather prevented sailing.²¹ Although some ships left harbor on January 25, the captain of the *L'Amérique* was sent by the French consul to investigate another inward-bound French packet that had wrecked on the south side of Long Island, and thereby "the opportunity for sailing was lost." Colonel Franks, meanwhile, had arrived and signed on a London-bound English ship, which Harmar was

¹⁸ Entries, Aug. 17 and 24, 1783, Oct. 10, 1784, and *passim*, Harmar Journal, Harmar Papers, XLVI. Harmar married Sarah Jenkins on Oct. 19, 1784.

¹⁹ Mifflin to Harmar, Jan. 14, 1784, *ibid.*, II, 2. Harmar to Mifflin, Apr. 8, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter VII. For other official papers included in the dispatches he was entrusted with, see Franklin and Jay to David Hartley, Mar. 31, 1784, and enclosures, David Hartley Papers, IV, 78-83.

²⁰ Jan. 15-19, 1784, Account Book, Harmar Papers, XLVI; Debit-credit summary, *ibid.*; Harmar to Mifflin, Jan. 19, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter I.

²¹ Harmar to James White, Jan. 24, 1784, *ibid.*, Letter II.

afraid might sail before his. Conditions were again favorable on February 4, and the *L'Amérique* set sail, "but either by the ignorance or villainy of the pilot, the Vessel was run aground on Governor's Island, and was in imminent danger of being lost. We remained in this situation attacked by large Cakes of Ice, until the next high water, when the ship got off, and returned to the dock."²² When finally she set forth again on February 21, Harmar's race against time seemed almost lost.²³

During his prolonged delay in New York, Harmar spent some time in shopping for items he would need on the voyage. For example, he made one purchase of a mattress, a pillow, and three blankets. Another day, he paid £1 10s. "for 10¼ yds linen for a pair of sheets & pillow Case & making the same." Not to be overlooked are the "two pots pickled Oysters to go on board," which cost him fifteen shillings. Although no direct mention is made that a servant accompanied him on the journey, occasional items are entered in Harmar's account book to establish this fact; for example, one entry lists a pair of shoes, a woolen cap, and "A pr drawers . . . for my servant Tom."²⁴

"After a rough & stormy passage of thirty three days," the packet *L'Amérique* anchored at L'Orient on the French coast on March 25.²⁵ Harmar saw the "very pretty Town, in size something larger than Baltimore," conducted some business, and "went to the Comedie in the Evening but understood very little of it, not being acqu[ainte]d with the french Language." During the next four days he traveled by *voiture* across the French countryside toward Paris. He was not impressed with what he saw. A breakdown of his carriage, the repair of which he had to pay for, may have affected his impression. "Britagny is reckoned one of the poorest provinces in france, the Land in many places very barren. The peasants ignorant." But later, "fine parts of france after you pass through the province of Britagny." On the afternoon of March 29 (the deadline was March 3),

²² Harmar to Mifflin, Jan. 29 and 31, 1784, *ibid.*, Letter III; Harmar to Mifflin, Feb. 9, 1784, *ibid.*, Letter V.

²³ Harmar to Mifflin, "Off the Hook," Feb. 21, 1784, *ibid.*, Letter VI; entries, Feb. 7-21, 1784, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*, XLVI.

²⁴ Jan. 21 and 30, Feb. 13 and 18, 1784, Account Book, *ibid.*, XLVI.

²⁵ Harmar to Mifflin, Apr. 8, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter VII; entries, Feb. 21-Mar. 25, 1784, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*, XLVI.

Harmar delivered the treaty ratification to Benjamin Franklin at his residence in Passy.²⁶

The question which haunted Congress and which was of utmost concern to Harmar was how Britain would react to the failure of the United States to make the treaty-stipulated deadline for the exchange of ratifications. Harmar learned that Franklin had been advised of the delay, but had been assured that there would probably be no problem of ratification once nine states had assembled in Congress.²⁷ Just in case, however, in a communication with one of his colleagues Franklin explained the reasons for the tardiness, and said "that if it should be judged necessary by the Court of Great Britain . . . Mr Laurens would do well to enter into an Agreement for an extension of time." According to Harmar's report to Mifflin, David Hartley, the British commissioner, replied to this suggestion "that the Court were satisfied with the reasons advanced, and that an extension of time was unnecessary. I [*Harmar*] therefore have the satisfaction to inform your Excellency *All is well*."²⁸ With that, the pressure was off. The ratifications were not finally exchanged until May 12, partly because of some delay on the part of the British.²⁹

Harmar expected to stay in Europe for about two months, but it proved to be nearly three before he left. During this time he engaged in official business that gave him important contacts. American officials were eager to maintain their friendship with the Marquis de Lafayette, and had commissioned Harmar to deliver letters to the French-American hero. Lafayette received the courier "with the

²⁶ Harmar to Mifflin, Apr. 8, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter VII; entries, Mar. 25-29, 1784, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*, XLVI.

²⁷ Charles Thomson to Franklin, Jan. 5, 1784, Hartley Papers, IV, 74; Franklin to Hartley, Mar. 11, 1784, *ibid.*, 73; Hartley to the Marquess of Carmarthen, Mar. 22, 1784, *ibid.*, 75-76.

²⁸ Harmar to Mifflin, Apr. 8, 1784, Harmar Papers, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter VII; Harmar to Mifflin, May 5, 1784, *ibid.*, Letter VIII; Marquess of Carmarthen to Hartley, Mar. 25, 1784, Hartley Papers, IV, 72; Hartley to Henry Laurens, Mar. 26, 1784, *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence*, VI, 789-790.

²⁹ Franklin to Charles Thomson, May 13, 1784, Albert H. Smyth, ed., *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin* (New York, 1905-1907), IX, 212-213. Franklin's letter was received on July 27, 1784. Charles Thomson to Samuel Hardy, July 28, 1784, *Letters of the Continental Congress*, VII, 575; Hartley to the Marquess of Carmarthen, Apr. 30, 1784, Hartley Papers, IV, 86; Hartley to the Marquess of Carmarthen, May 6, 1784, *ibid.*, 87; Marquess of Carmarthen to Hartley, May 11, 1784, *ibid.*, 89; Hartley to the Marquess of Carmarthen, May 13, 1784, *ibid.*, 90.

greatest affection & politeness imaginable";³⁰ the Marquis seemed to go out of his way to make his stay both profitable and interesting. Harmar dined frequently with him and apparently became a regular guest at his customary Monday night "American dinners," along with other American officials. Lafayette also arranged an audience with King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette, a dinner with the diplomatic corps, and numerous other affairs.³¹ Although Lafayette had not returned to America since the Revolution, he had continued an active interest in the young republic he had helped establish. When possible, he used his influence to bring commercial and political advantage to the United States, and he organized a Society of the Cincinnati in France, among other things. Now, he decided to sail to America and invited Harmar to return with him. Harmar, of course, was delighted to accept.³² These attentions, with all the favors and contacts that Franklin and other Americans arranged for him, made Harmar's Paris stay exciting. When he was not rubbing elbows with the great and the near-great, he was occupied with sightseeing, much as any other tourist. He rounded out his already busy schedule with all the entertainment he could cram in; before he left Europe, this Philadelphia Quaker had become an inveterate theater-goer.³³

The extent of Lafayette's estimate of the young American courier was manifested in an unexpected fashion. Congress had directed Robert Morris, superintendent of finance, to furnish Harmar "with money to defray his necessary expenses," and it can be assumed that *sufficient* was implied in this order. Morris gave him £103 15s. in cash, and a "Credit upon paris." This and the amount he received from a banker in Paris apparently were not sufficient, and Harmar was in a state of financial embarrassment. Just before he left Paris for home, Lafayette advanced him a sum of twenty-four louis d'ors. Again, on the day they docked in New York on the return trip,

³⁰ Mifflin to Harmar, Jan. 14, 1784, Harmar Papers, II, 2; Harmar to Mifflin, Apr. 8, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter VII; entry, Mar. 31, 1784, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*, XLVI.

³¹ Entries, Apr. 5, 12, and 13, 1784, and others, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*; Harmar to Mifflin, Apr. 8, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter VII.

³² See especially letters between Lafayette and Washington, Marie Lafayette, comp., *Memoires, Correspondance et Manuscrits du General Lafayette* (Brussels, 1837-1839), III, 92-112.

³³ Harmar Journal, Harmar Papers, XLVI, *passim*.

Lafayette lent him another 29 69/414 louis d'ors "for my passage & servant from L'Orient to N York."³⁴

Harmar's original instructions anticipated that he might go to London, if time permitted. The purpose, beyond personal gratification, was to carry letters of at least a semiofficial character.³⁵ At any rate, Franklin wrote a letter of introduction to David Hartley to the effect that "The Bearer, Col. Harmar, is an American of good Character, who visits England in Curiosity to see the Country and People he has been fighting against. I wish to give him a good Opinion of them by the Sample he may be acquainted with, and therefore beg leave to recommend him to your acquaintance & Civilities."³⁶ Armed with a passport signed by the king and by his minister of foreign affairs, the Comte de Vergennes, Harmar set out on April 19 in a diligence for Calais and London.³⁷ England impressed him, but his visit was anticlimactic after Paris. Aside from the theater, he was most interested in the political fortunes of Charles Fox in an election in which "*Fox* and *No Fox* is all the cry." Expecting Lafayette to sail for America about June 1, he returned to Paris, arriving there in mid-May.³⁸

As it turned out, Harmar was to have another month before leaving Paris, and his days were filled with more dinners, more sightseeing, and more theater.³⁹ Franklin issued him a passport printed on his press at Passy,⁴⁰ and he was given an order from the Intendant General des Courriers, Postes, Relais & Messageries de

³⁴ Resolution of Congress, Jan. 14, 1784, *ibid.*, II, 1; Mifflin to Harmar, Jan. 14, 1784, *ibid.*, 2; Harmar to Mifflin, Jan. 19, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter I; Debit-credit summary, *ibid.*, XLVI; "Harmar's Expense Account for Carrying the Treaty of 1782-3 [*sic*]," *ibid.*, XLV.

³⁵ Mifflin to Harmar, Jan. 14, 1784, *ibid.*, II, 2; Harmar to Mifflin, May 5, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter VIII.

³⁶ Franklin to David Hartley, Apr. 17, 1784, Hartley Papers, IV, 84; also printed in *Writings of Franklin*, IX, 196. This is one of several letters Franklin wrote for Harmar. See entry for Apr. 26, 1784, Harmar Journal, Harmar Papers, XLVI.

³⁷ Passport, *ibid.*, XLV.

³⁸ Harmar to Mifflin, May 5, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter VIII; entries, Apr. 19-May 17, 1784, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*, XLVI. These entries cover the round trip between Paris and London, and his stay in London.

³⁹ Entries, May 18-June 17, 1784, *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Passport, Rare Book Room, William L. Clements Library. See also Luther S. Livingston, *Franklin and His Press at Passy* (New York, 1914); Randolph G. Adams, *The Passports Printed by Benjamin Franklin at His Passy Press* (Ann Arbor, 1925); Randolph G. Adams, "A Passy Passport," *The Journal of the Rutgers University Library*, V (1941), 5-8.

France to expedite his travel to L'Orient,⁴¹ where he arrived on June 21. Lafayette came in the next morning. Favorable winds did not prevail until the 29th, when they sailed on the *Courier de L'New York*.⁴² All the passengers, except Harmar, promptly became seasick, even the Marquis, who was "intolerably & constantly sick." After an uneventful trip, their ship docked in New York late in the evening of August 4, 1784.⁴³ That night Harmar called on the president of Congress, and the next day set out for Philadelphia.

While Harmar was in Europe, Congress had reached a decision that was to determine his future. By an act of June 3, 1784, it directed that an army be raised from four designated states "for securing and protecting the northwestern frontiers of the United States, and their Indian friends and allies, and for garrisoning the posts soon to be evacuated by the troops of his britannic Majesty." Pennsylvania's share was the largest, and to that state was given the honor of selecting the "lieutenant-colonel commandant."⁴⁴ It is probable that Mifflin told Harmar about this the night of his arrival in New York, and that he gave Harmar the autograph draft of his letter to John Dickinson, president of Pennsylvania, and the Supreme Executive Council of that state, strongly recommending Harmar for the job.⁴⁵ At any rate, Harmar confided to his journal that "I have every expectation of success." On August 13 he was appointed to the coveted position.⁴⁶

There was one more item of business necessary to complete his mission as a diplomatic courier. Enclosed in a letter dated Philadelphia, August 7, was the "receipt for the dispatches when delivered [*to Franklin*], specifying the several papers delivered by me, and the Time of the delivery."⁴⁷ For no apparent reason, this official letter of his arrival in America and the enclosed receipt were not

⁴¹ Printed document signed, the Baron d'Ogny, June 18, 1784, Harmar Papers, XLV.

⁴² Entries, June 18-29, 1784, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*, XLVI.

⁴³ Entries June 30-Aug. 4, 1784, *ibid.* Harmar had no reason to brag, for he had been sick in crossing the Atlantic to France and the Channel to England. Entries, Feb. 24 and 26, and April 24, 1784, *ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XXVII, 530-531.

⁴⁵ Mifflin to John Dickinson and the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, July 17, 1784, Harmar Papers, II, 8.

⁴⁶ Entries, Aug. 8 and 13, 1784, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*, XLVI.

⁴⁷ Harmar to Mifflin, Aug. 7, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter IX. Harmar delivered the papers to Franklin on Mar. 29, 1784, but, according to his journal, he did not pick up the receipt until Apr. 18, 1784. Entries for those dates, Harmar Journal, *ibid.*, XLVI.

sent until October 31, as an enclosure in still another letter. By then, Harmar was already on his way to the West to wrestle with the problems of consolidating the holdings of the new United States granted by the treaty whose ratification he had carried to France as a diplomatic courier.⁴⁸

After all the suspense and effort connected with Harmar's mission to France, what might he and the Founding Fathers say if they could read a letter from the Public Record Office, the repository of official British state papers, that the ratification of the definitive treaty of peace between Britain and the United States is not to be found today in their records—"nor is it known to have survived elsewhere." Could it be that the only contemporary manuscript copy is the one in the papers of David Hartley, the British negotiator, in the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan? This is indeed an ironic footnote to a curious chapter in American history.⁴⁹

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⁴⁸ Harmar to Mifflin, Oct. 31, 1784, *ibid.*, XXVIII, Letter Book A, Letter X.

⁴⁹ Public Record Office, London, to Howard H. Peckham, Aug. 22, 1962; ratification (manuscript copy by George Hammond), Hartley Papers, V, 3-4.