



Securing Borders

DOCUMENT 6.5 | Northwest Ordinance, Key Sections 1787

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 was passed under the Articles of Confederation government and helped establish the process for creating new state governments west of the Appalachian Mountains and around the Great Lakes. The United States acquired these territories in the Treaty of Paris (1783), which also recognized American independence.

Sec. 13. And for extending the fundamental principles of civil and religious liberty, which form the basis whereon these republics, their laws, and constitutions are erected; to fix and establish those principles as the basis of all laws, constitutions, and governments, which for ever hereafter shall be formed in the said territory; to provide, also, for the establishment of States, and permanent government therein, and for . . . [their] admission to a share in the federal councils on an equal footing with the original States, at as early periods as may be consistent with the general interest: . . .

Article III. Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government, and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged. The utmost good faith shall always be observed towards the Indians; their lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and in their property, rights, and liberty, they shall never be invaded or disturbed, unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress; but laws founded in justice and humanity shall, from time to time, be made, for preventing wrongs being done to them, and for preserving peace and friendship with them. . . .

Article VI. There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted: Provided, always, That any person escaping into the same, from whom labor or service is lawfully claimed in any one of the original States, such fugitive may be lawfully reclaimed, and conveyed to the person claiming his or her labor or service as aforesaid.

"The Ordinance of 1787," Marietta Times, 1888, 8–9, 11–12.

PRACTICING Historical Thinking

Identify: List the key provisions of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

Analyze: What might account for the seeming change in relations toward Native Americans and slavery? Consult your history textbook for additional information.

Evaluate: Evaluate the political, moral, and geographic influences in the passage of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Which of these influences was greatest? Consult your history textbook for additional information.

DOCUMENT 6.6 | Treaty of Greenville, Article 9 1795

The Treaty of Greenville was signed between the United States and the Algonquin-speaking Shawnee and Lenape tribes of the Northwest Territories after the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. This battle ended a long-term strategy by George Washington's administration to force the tribes of the Northwest Territories into submission.

Lest the firm peace and friendship now established should be interrupted by the misconduct of individuals, the United States, and the said Indian tribes agree, that for injuries done by individuals on either side, no private revenge or retaliation shall take place; but instead thereof, complaint shall be made by the party injured, to the other: By the said Indian tribes, or any of them, to the President of the United States, or the superintendant by him appointed; and by the superintendant or other person appointed by the President, to the principal chiefs of the said Indian tribes, or of the tribe to which the offender belongs; and such prudent measures shall then be pursued as shall be necessary to preserve the said peace and friendship unbroken, until the Legislature (or Great Council) of the United States, shall make other equitable provision in the case, to the satisfaction of both parties. Should any Indian tribes meditate a war against the United States or either of them, and the same shall come to the knowledge of the before-mentioned tribes, or either of them, they do hereby engage to give immediate notice thereof to the general or officer commanding the troops of the United States, at the nearest post. And should any tribe, with hostile intentions against the United States, or either of them, attempt to pass through their country, they will endeavour to prevent the same, and in like manner give information of such attempt, to the general or officer commanding, as soon as possible, that all causes of mistrust and suspicion may be avoided between them and the United States. In like manner the United States shall give notice to the said Indian tribes of any harm that may be meditated