

ascertainment of these limits by actual examination and survey. But your committee are constrained to remark, that the virtuous precept which is found in the constitution of Virginia, has never been followed up by the same frankness and generosity in ascertaining and yielding to us our limits. While Maryland has asked for nothing but a clear ascertainment of her limits as recognized and acknowledged by Virginia, upon terms suitable to the honor and dignity of both states, she has been asked by Virginia to permit the latter to fix beforehand the place of beginning. This is stated with pain and reluctance—but it is a truth that ought not to be concealed. The people of Virginia and the world, should know the wrong done to us by our sister state, who acted so just when the revolution was in embryo. Soon after the revolution, it became the duty of this state, with as little delay as possible, to dispose of the reserved lands westward of Fort Cumberland, to fulfil engagements made to the officers and soldiers of the Maryland line, which had been in the service of the United States during the war; and an act of the legislature of Maryland therefore, passed at November session seventeen hundred and eighty-eight, to sanction the proceedings of commissioners previously appointed to locate certain lots of land westward of Fort Cumberland for the benefit of these officers and soldiers. So urgent were the claims of these military servants who had lately gone through the heat and burthen of the day of the revolution, that this state could not, without evident injustice, postpone the location of their lands until the settlement of our southern and western limits. The commissioners therefore, to avoid all collision with Virginia, run a temporary meridian far within our just limits. By the act of seventeen hundred eighty-eight, chapter forty four, section 15, it is provided, as a protest your committee presume, “that the line to which the said Francis Deakins has laid out the said lots, is, in the opinion of the general assembly, far within that which this state may rightfully claim as its western boundary; and that at a time of more leisure, the consideration of the legislature ought to be drawn to the western boundaries of this state, as objects of very great importance.”

By this reservation, this state cautiously precluded all idea of abandonment of our claim, or of yielding at any time to unjust pretensions on the part of Virginia; and embracing the first moment of leisure, in the year seventeen hundred and ninety five, opened again a door for negotiation. In that year by a resolution of the general assembly, three distinguished gentlemen, Messrs. Pinkney, Cooke and Key, were appointed commissioners on the part of this state,