

Articles of the New England Confederation (1643)

Dieses Dokument datiert vom 19. Mai 1643.

Ein [Abdruck](#) des Textes findet sich bei: *Francis Newton Thorpe (Hrsg.), The Federal and State Constitutions Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories, and Colonies Now or Heretofore Forming the United States of America. Compiled and Edited Under the Act of Congress of June 30, 1906, Band 1, Washington 1909, S. 77-81.*

Bei *Adolf Rock (Hrsg.), Dokumente der amerikanischen Demokratie, Wiesbaden 1947, S. 62-73*, findet sich eine [gedruckte Fassung](#) sowie eine [deutsche Übersetzung](#).

The Articles of Confederation between the Plantations under the Government of the Massachusetts, the Plantations under the Government of New Plymouth, the Plantations under the Government of Connecticut, and the Government of New Haven with the Plantations in Combination therewith:

[1.] Whereas we all came into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely, to advance the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and to enjoy the liberties of the Gospel in purity with peace; and whereas in our settling (by a wise providence of God) we are further dispersed upon the sea coasts and rivers than was at first intended, so that we can not according to our desire with convenience communicate in one government and jurisdiction; and whereas we live encompassed with people of several nations and strange languages which hereafter may prove injurious to us or our posterity. And forasmuch as the natives have formerly committed sundry Insolence and outrages upon several Plantations of the English and have of late combined themselves against us: and seeing by reason of those sad distractions in England which they have heard of, and by which they know vie are hindered from that humble way of seeking advice, or reaping those comfortable fruits of protection, which at other times we might well expect. We therefore do conceive it our bounder duty, without delay to enter into a present Consociation amongst ourselves, for mutual help and strength in all our future concerns: That, as in nation and religion, so in other respects, we be and continue one according to the tenor and true meaning of the ensuing articles: Wherefore it is fully agreed and concluded by and between the parties or Jurisdictions above named, and they jointly and severally do by these presents agree and conclude that they all be and henceforth be called by the name of the United Colonies of New England.

2. The said United Colonies for themselves and their posterities do jointly and severally hereby enter into a firm and perpetual league of friendship and amity for offence and defence, mutual advice and succor upon all just occasions both for preserving and propagating the truth and liberties of the Gospel and for their own mutual safety and welfare.

3. It is further agreed that the Plantations which at present are or hereafter shall be settled within the limits of the Massachusetts shall be forever under the Massachusetts and shall have peculiar jurisdiction among themselves in all cases as an entire body, and that Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven shall each of them have like peculiar jurisdiction and government within their limits; and in reference to the Plantations which already are settled, or shall hereafter be erected, or shall settle within their limits respectively; provided no other Jurisdiction shall hereafter be taken in as a distinct head or member of this Confederation, nor shall any other Plantation or Jurisdiction in present being, and not already in combination or under the jurisdiction of any of these Confederates, be received by any of them; nor shall any two of the Confederates join in one Jurisdiction without consent of the rest, which consent to be interpreted as is expressed in the sixth article ensuing.

4. It is by these Confederates agreed that the charge of all just wars, whether offensive or defensive, upon what part or member of this Confederation soever they fall, shall both in men, provisions and all other disbursements be borne by all the parts of this Confederation in different proportions according to their different ability in manner following, namely, that the Commissioners for each Jurisdiction from time to time, as there shall be occasion, bring a true account and number of all their males in every Plantation, or any way belonging to or under their several Jurisdictions, of what quality or condition soever they be, from sixteen years old to threescore, being inhabitants there. And that according to the different numbers which from time to time shall be found in each Jurisdiction upon a true and just account, the service of men and all charges of the war be borne by the poll: each Jurisdiction or Plantation being left to their own just course and custom of rating themselves and people according to their different estates with due respects to their qualities and exemptions amongst themselves though the Confederation take no notice of any such privilege: and that according to their different charge of each Jurisdiction and Plantation the whole advantage of the war (if it please God so to bless their endeavors) whether it be in lands, goods, or persons, shall be proportionately divided among the said Confederates.

5. It is further agreed, that if any of these Jurisdictions or any Plantation under or in combination with them, be invaded by any enemy whomsoever, upon notice and request of any three magistrates of that Jurisdiction so invaded, the rest of the Confederates without any further meeting or expostulation shall forthwith send aid to the Confederate in danger but in different proportions; namely, the Massachusetts an hundred men sufficiently armed and provided for such a service and journey, and each of the rest, forty-five so armed and provided, or any less number, if less be required according to this proportion. But if such Confederate in danger may be supplied by their next Confederates, not exceeding the number hereby agreed, they may crave help there, and seek no further for the present: the charge to be borne as in this article is expressed: and at the return to be victualled and supplied with powder and shot for their journey (if there be need) by that Jurisdiction which employed or sent for them; but none of the Jurisdictions to exceed these numbers until by a meeting of the Commissioners for this Confederation a greater aid appear necessary.

And this proportion to continue till upon knowledge of greater numbers in each Jurisdiction which shall be brought to the next meeting, some other proportion be ordered. But in any such case of sending men for present aid, whether before or after such order or alteration, it is agreed that at the meeting of the Commissioners for this Confederation, the cause of such war or invasion be duly considered: and if it appear that the fault lay in the parties so invaded then that Jurisdiction or Plantation make just satisfaction, both to the invaders whom they have injured, and bear all the charges of the war themselves, without requiring any allowance from the rest of the Confederates towards the same. And further that if any Jurisdiction see any danger of invasion approaching, and there be time for a meeting, that in such a case three magistrates of the Jurisdiction may summon a meeting at such convenient place as themselves shall think meet, to consider and provide against the threatened danger; provided when they are met they may remove to what place they please; only whilst any of these four Confederates have but three magistrates in their Jurisdiction, their requests, or summons, from any two of them shall be accounted of equal force with the three mentioned in both the clauses of this article, till there be an increase of magistrates there.

6. It is also agreed, that for the managing and concluding of all Stairs and concerning the whole Confederation two Commissioners shall be chosen by and out of each of these four Jurisdictions: namely, two for the Massachusetts, two for Plymouth, two for Connecticut, and two for New Haven, being all in Church-fellowship with us, which shall bring full power from their several General Courts respectively to hear, examine, weigh, and determine all affairs of our war, or peace, leagues, aids, charges, and numbers of men for war, division of spoils and whatsoever is gotten by conquest, receiving of more Confederates for Plantations into combination with any of the Confederates, and all things of like nature, which are the proper concomitants or consequents of such a Confederation for amity, offense, and defence: not intermeddling with the government of any of the Jurisdictions, which by the third article is preserved entirely to themselves. But if these eight Commissioners when they meet shall not all agree yet it [is] concluded that any six of the eight agreeing shall have power to settle and determine the business in question. But if six do not agree, that then such propositions with their reasons so far as they have been debated, be sent and referred to the four General Courts; namely, the Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven; and if at all the said General Courts the business so referred be concluded, then to be prosecuted by the Confederates and all their members. It is further agreed that these eight Commissioners shall meet once every year besides extraordinary meetings (according to the fifth article) to consider, treat, and conclude of all affairs belonging to this Confederation, which meeting shall ever be the first Thursday in September. And that the next meeting after the date of these presents, which shall be accounted the second meeting, shall be at Boston in the Massachusetts, the third at Hartford, the fourth at New Haven, the fifth at Plymouth, the sixth and seventh at Boston; and then Hartford, New Haven, and Plymouth, and so in course successively, if in the meantime some middle place be not found out and agreed on, which may be commodious for all the Jurisdictions.

7. It is further agreed that at each meeting of these eight Commissioners, whether ordinary or extraordinary, they or six of them agreeing as before, may choose their President out of themselves whose office work shall be to take care and direct for order and a comely carrying on of all proceedings in the present meeting; but he shall be invested with no such power or respect, as by which he shall hinder the propounding or progress of any business, or any way cast the scales otherwise than in the precedent article is agreed.

8. It is also agreed that the Commissioners for this Confederation hereafter at their meetings, whether ordinary or extraordinary, as they may have commission or opportunity, do endeavor to frame and establish agreements and orders in general cases of a civil nature, wherein all the Plantations are interested, for preserving of peace among themselves, for preventing as much as may be all occasion of war or differences with others, as about the free and speedy passage of justice in every Jurisdiction, to all the Confederates equally as to their own, receiving those that remove from one Plantation to another without due certificate, how all the Jurisdictions may carry it towards the Indians, that they neither grow insolent nor be injured without due satisfaction, lest war break in upon the Confederates through such miscarriages. It is also agreed that if any servant run away from his master into any other of these confederated Jurisdictions, that in such case, upon the certificate of one magistrate in the Jurisdiction out of which the said servant fled, or upon other due proof, the said servant shall be delivered, either to his master, or any other that pursues and brings such certificate or proof. And that upon the escape of any prisoner whatsoever, or fugitive for any criminal cause, whether breaking prison, or getting from the officer, or otherwise escaping, upon the certificate of two magistrates of the Jurisdiction out of which the escape is made, that he was a prisoner, or such an offender at the time of the escape, the magistrates, or some of them of that Jurisdiction where for the present the said prisoner or fugitive abideth, shall forthwith grant such a warrant as the case will bear, for the apprehending of any such person, and the delivery of him into the hands of the officer or other person who pursues him. And if there be help required, for the safe returning of any such offender, then it shall be granted to him that craves the same, he paying the charges thereof.

9. And for that the justest wars may be of dangerous consequence, especially to the smaller Plantations in these United Colonies, it is agreed that neither the Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, nor New Haven, nor any of the members of them, shall at any time hereafter begin, undertake, or engage themselves, or this Confederation, or any part thereof in any war whatsoever (sudden exigencies, with the necessary consequents thereof excepted), which are also to be moderated as much as the case will permit, without the consent and agreement of the forementioned eight Commissioners, or at least six of them, as in the sixth article is provided: and that no charge be required of any of the Confederates, in case of a defensive war, till the said Commissioners have met, and approved the justice of the war, and have agreed upon the sum of money to be levied, which sum is then to be paid by the several Confederates in proportion according to the fourth article

10. That in extraordinary occasions, when meetings are summoned by three magistrates of any Jurisdiction, or two as in the fifth article, ii) any of the Commissioners come not, due warning being given or sent, it is agreed that four of the Commissioners shall have power to direct a war which cannot be delayed, and to send for due proportions of men out of

each Jurisdiction, as well as six might do if all met; but not less than six shall determine the justice of the war, or allow the demands or bills of charges, or cause any levies to be made for the same.

11. It is further agreed that if any of the Confederates shall hereafter break any of these present articles, or be any other ways injurious to any one of the other Jurisdictions; such breach of agreement or injury shall be duly considered and ordered by the Commissioners for the other Jurisdictions, that both peace and this present Confederation may be entirely preserved without violation.

12. Lastly, this perpetual Confederation, and the several articles and agreements thereof being read and seriously considered, both by the General Court for the Massachusetts, and by the Commissioners for Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven, were fully allowed and confirmed by three of the forenamed Confederates, namely, the Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven; only the Commissioners for Plymouth having no commission to conclude desired respite until they might advise with their General Court; whereupon it was agreed and concluded by the said Court of the Massachusetts, and the Commissioners for the other two Confederates, that, if Plymouth consent, then the whole treaty as it stands in these present articles is, and shall continue, firm and stable without alteration: but if Plymouth come not in yet the other three Confederates do by these presents confirm the whole Confederation, and all the articles thereof; only in September next when the second meeting of the Commissioners is to be at Boston, new consideration may be taken of the sixth article, which concerns number of Commissioners for meeting and concluding the affairs of this Confederation to the satisfaction of the Court of the Massachusetts, and the Commissioners for the other two Confederates, but the rest to stand unquestioned.

In testimony whereof, the General Court of the Massachusetts by their Secretary, and the Commissioners for Connecticut and New Haven, have subscribed these present articles of this nineteenth of the third month, commonly called May, Anno Domini 1643.

At a meeting of the Commissioners for the Confederation held at Boston the 7th of September, it appearing that the General Court of New Plymouth and the several townships thereof have read, considered, and approved these Articles of Confederation, as appeareth by commission of their General Court bearing date the 29th of August, 1643, to Mr. Edward Winslow and Mr. William Collier to ratify and confirm the same on their behalf: we therefore, the Commissioners for the Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven, do also from our several Governments subscribe unto them.

Neuengland-Konföderation

19. Mai 1643

Artikel einer Konföderation zwischen den Siedlungen unter der Regierung von Massachusetts, den Siedlungen unter der Regierung von Plymouth, den Siedlungen unter der Regierung von Connecticut und der Regierung von New-Haven mit den damit verbundenen Siedlungen.

Sintemalen wir alle in diese Teile Amerikas mit gleicher Absicht und gleichem Ziel gekommen sind, nämlich das Reich unseres Herrn Jesus Christus zu fördern und die Freiheiten des Evangeliums in Reinheit und Frieden zu genießen, und sintemalen wir in unseren Siedlungen (durch Gottes weisen Ratschluß) weiter, als erst beabsichtigt war, über die Küsten und Flußgebiete zerstreut sind, so daß wir nicht (wie es unser Wunsch wäre), unbehindert unter einer Regierung und Rechtsprechung bestehen können, und sintemal wir von Menschen verschiedener Nationalität und fremder Zunge umgeben sind, die sich später als schädlich für uns und unsere Nachkommenschaft erweisen können, und insbesondere, da die Eingeborenen kürzlich verschiedene Übergriffe und Überfälle gegen verschiedene englische Siedlungen begangen und sich neuerdings gegen uns verbündet haben, und angesichts der traurigen Zustände in England, von denen sie gehört haben und von denen sie wissen, daß wir durch sie behindert werden, sowohl untertänigst Rat zu suchen als auch jene wohltuende Frucht des Schutzes zu erhalten, die wir zu anderen Zeiten wohl erwarten durften, so erachten wir es daher als unsere unentrinnbare Pflicht, ohne Verzug in einem Bund zu gegenseitiger Hilfe und Stärkung in allen unseren künftigen Angelegenheiten zusammenzutreten, der Art, daß wir hinsichtlich der Nationalität, der Religion sowie nach jeder anderen Hinsicht ein einheitliches Ganzes gemäß dem Tenor und der wahren Meinung der folgenden Artikel sind und bleiben:

1. Es wird von und zwischen den obengenannten Parteien und Rechtsbezirken in voller Übereinstimmung beschlossen, und diese geben gemeinsam und einzeln mit diesem ihre Einwilligung und ihren Beschluß kund, daß sie alle künftig den Namen tragen „Die vereinigten Kolonien von Neu-England“.

2. Die besagten vereinigten Kolonien schließen hiermit für sich und ihre Nachkommen zusammen und einzeln einen festen und ewigen Freundschafts- und Bruderbund zum Angriff und zur Abwehr, zum gegenseitigen Rat und zu gegenseitiger Hilfe für alle rechten Gelegenheiten, um sowohl die Wahrheit und die Freiheit des Evangeliums als auch die eigene gegenseitige Sicherheit und Wohlfahrt zu bewahren und zu verbreiten.

3. Es wird ferner vereinbart, daß die Siedlungen, die gegenwärtig oder später innerhalb des Gebietes von Massachusetts errichtet sind oder werden, für immer der Regierungsgewalt von Massachusetts unterstellt bleiben sollen und ihre eigene Rechtsprechung bei sich als geschlossener Verband genießen sollen, und daß Plymouth, Connecticut und New-Haven jedes für sich in jeder Hinsicht die gleiche besondere Rechtsprechung und Regierung innerhalb ihres Gebietes genießen sollen. Dies auch in bezug auf die Kolonien, die bereits errichtet sind oder es später innerhalb des Gebietes jener als besonderes Glied oder Mitglied dieser Konföderation werden sollten, vorausgesetzt, daß keine neue Rechtsprechung hernach übernommen wird, auch soll keine zur Zeit bestehende Kolonie oder Rechtsverband, der nicht bereits im Bund oder unter der Rechtsprechung eines dieser Konföderierten steht, von irgendeinem von diesen aufgenommen werden, noch sollen sich zwei derselben in einem Rechtsverband zusammenschließen ohne die Zustimmung der anderen, und zwar einer Zustimmung, die entsprechend dem unten folgenden Artikel 6 auszulegen ist.

4. Es wird ferner von den Konföderierten vereinbart, daß die Lasten aller gerechten Kriege, offensiven wie defensiven, gleichgültig welchem Mitglied dieser Konföderation sie zufallen, und zwar Menschen, Vorräte und alle sonstigen Leistungen von allen Partnern dieser Konföderation in verschiedenem Maße, ihren Fähigkeiten entsprechend, in der Weise getragen werden sollen, daß die Bevollmächtigten für jeden Rechtsbezirk von Zeit zu Zeit bei passender Gelegenheit die genaue Liste, und zwar aller männlichen Einwohner jeder Kolonie oder derer, die sonstwie ihrer besonderen Rechtsprechung unterstehen, welcher Art und welchen Standes sie auch seien, vom 16. bis zum 60. Lebensjahr aufstellen, und daß entsprechend den verschiedenen Zahlen, die sich jeweilig in jedem Rechtsbezirk ergeben, die Dienstleistungen der Männer und alle Lasten des Krieges in genauer und gerechter Berechnung nach der Liste verteilt werden, wobei es in das billige Ermessen und die Gepflogenheit jedes Rechtsbezirks bzw. jeder Kolonie gestellt wird, sich selbst und die Leute nach ihrem verschiedenen Grundbesitz mit gebührender Berücksichtigung ihrer Qualitäten und Vergünstigungen einzuschätzen, wenn auch die Konföderation selbst von solchen Privilegien keine Notiz nimmt. Gemäß der verschiedenen Lastenverteilung der einzelnen Rechtsbezirke oder Kolonien soll der gesamte Kriegsgewinn — so Gott so unser Bemühen zu segnen beliebt sollte — an Landgütern oder Personen geschlüsselt unter die besagten Konföderierten aufgeteilt werden.

5. Es wird ferner vereinbart, daß, wenn irgendeiner dieser Rechtsbezirke oder irgendeine Kolonie, die mit ihnen im Bunde steht, von irgendeinem Feind überfallen wird, die anderen Verbündeten auf Melden und Ersuchen von drei Magistratspersonen des überfallenen Rechtsbezirks ohne

irgendeine weitere Zusammenkunft oder Aufforderung sofort dem gefährdeten Bundesstaat Hilfe zusenden sollen, und zwar in verschiedenem Verhältnis, nämlich Massachusetts 100 Mann, ausreichend bewaffnet und zu solchem Dienst und Marsch ausreichend ausgerüstet, und jeder der übrigen 45 Mann, entsprechend bewaffnet und ausgerüstet, oder, falls weniger erforderlich sind, eine geringere Zahl in entsprechendem Verhältnis. Aber wenn ein Bundesstaat Hilfe erfahren kann, ohne daß die hiermit festgelegte Zahl überschritten wird, kann er daselbst um Hilfe ersuchen, ohne sich zunächst weiter zu bemühen. Die Last ist, wie in diesem Artikel ausgeführt, zu tragen. Und bei ihrer Rückkehr sind sie von dem Rechtsbezirk, der sie verwendet hat oder hat holen lassen, für ihren Marsch zu verproviantieren und notfalls mit Pulver und Kugeln zu versorgen. Keiner der Rechtsbezirke aber soll diese Zahlen überschreiten, bis durch eine Zusammenkunft der Bevollmächtigten für diese Konföderation eine größere Hilfe geboten erscheint; und dieses Verhältnis soll bleiben, bis auf Grund der Kenntnis der Zahlen in jedem Gerichtsbezirk, welche der nächsten Versammlung vorgelegt werden, eine andere Schlüsselung festgelegt wird. Aber in jedem Fall, wo Leute zur sofortigen Hilfe, sei es vor oder nach einer solchen Anordnung oder Abänderung abgesandt werden, wird vereinbart, daß auf der Versammlung der Bevollmächtigten für die Konföderation die Gründe für den betreffenden Krieg oder die betreffende Invasion gebührend zu berücksichtigen sind, und falls sich ein Verschulden der überfallenen Partei herausstellen sollte, daß dann der betreffende Rechtsbezirk oder die betreffende Kolonie sowohl dem Eindringling, der von ihnen geschädigt worden ist, Genugtuung geben als auch alle Lasten des Krieges selbst tragen soll, ohne einen Beitrag hierfür von den übrigen Konföderierten zu verlangen.

Und ferner, wenn irgendein Rechtsbezirk irgendeine Gefahr einer Invasion herankommen sieht, und noch Zeit für eine Zusammenkunft ist, können in einem solchen Falle drei Magistratspersonen des betreffenden Rechtsbezirks an einem Ort, den sie für geeignet halten, eine solche anberaumen, um die drohende Gefahr zu besprechen und Maßnahmen gegen sie zu treffen. Sobald sie zusammengetreten sind, können sie sich an einen beliebigen Platz begeben, und solange einer der vier Bundesstaaten noch drei Magistratspersonen in einem Rechtsbezirk hat, soll ein Ersuchen oder eine Aufforderung von zweien von ihnen als von gleicher Wirkung wie von den drei in beiden Absätzen dieses Artikels erwähnten Personen erachtet werden, bis eine Vermehrung der Magistratspersonen dort stattfindet.

6. Sodann wird vereinbart, daß für das Betreiben und Beschließen aller Angelegenheiten, die die gesamte Konföderation angehen und betreffen, je zwei Beauftragte aus den vier Gerichtsbezirken gewählt werden, und zwar zwei für Massachusetts, zwei für Plymouth, zwei für Connecticut und zwei

für New-Haven, die alle in Kirchengemeinschaft mit uns stehen; sie sollen von ihren einzelnen Landtagen ermächtigt sein, alle Fragen des Krieges oder Friedens, der Bündnisse, Hilfeleistungen, Lasten und der Anzahl der Männer für Kriegszwecke, der Verteilung der Beute oder dessen, was durch Eroberung errungen ist, die Aufnahme neuer Konföderierter oder Siedlungen in den Bund der schon bestehenden Konföderierten und alle derartigen Dinge, die mit einer solchen der Freundschaft, dem Angriff und der Verteidigung dienenden Konföderation verbunden sind oder aus ihr folgen, anhören, prüfen, abwägen und beschließen, wobei sie sich der Einmischung in die Regierung eines der Rechtsbezirke, welche durch den dritten Artikel diesen selbst vorbehalten ist, enthalten sollen. Sollten diese acht Beauftragten bei ihren Zusammenkünften keine völlige Übereinstimmung erzielen, so wird beschlossen, daß falls sechs von den acht einer Meinung sind, sie befugt sein sollen, die fragliche Angelegenheit zu beregeln und zu entscheiden. Wird keine Übereinstimmung bei sechs Mitgliedern erzielt, so sollen die betreffenden Verhandlungsgegenstände mit ihren Gründen, soweit sie diskutiert worden sind, den vier Landtagen zugeleitet werden, nämlich dem von Massachusetts, von Plymouth, von Connecticut und von New-Haven. Wenn über die besagte ihnen zugeleitete Angelegenheit von den Landtagen befunden ist, soll dieses von den Konföderierten und allen ihren Mitgliedern ausgeführt werden.

Es wird ferner vereinbart, daß diese acht Bevollmächtigten jährlich einmal neben den außerordentlichen Zusammenkünften zusammentreten sollen gemäß dem 5. Artikel, um alle Angelegenheiten, die diese Konföderation angehen, zu erwägen, zu behandeln und zu bestimmen. Diese Zusammenkunft soll stets am ersten Donnerstag im September sein. Das nächste Zusammentreffen nach dem Zeitpunkt dieses vorliegenden Vertrages, welches als die zweite Zusammenkunft zu bezeichnen ist, soll in Boston in Massachusetts stattfinden, das dritte in Hartford, das vierte in New-Haven, das fünfte in Plymouth, das sechste in Boston und dann in Hartford, New-Haven, Plymouth und so abwechselnd, falls nicht in der Zwischenzeit irgendein mittlerer Platz ausfindig gemacht und bestimmt wird, welcher für alle Rechtsbezirke hinlänglich bequem gelegen ist.

7. Es wird ferner vereinbart, daß bei jeder Zusammenkunft dieser acht Bevollmächtigten, sei sie ordentlich oder außerordentlich, letztere in ihrer Gesamtheit oder durch die Vereinbarung von sechs Mitgliedern, ihren Präsidenten aus ihrer Mitte wählen können, dessen Amt und Arbeit es sein soll, für die ordentliche und reibungslose Erledigung der Geschäfte der jeweiligen Sitzung zu sorgen. Es soll ihm jedoch keine Macht oder Berechtigung übertragen werden, kraft deren er das Vorschlagen oder Erledigen irgendeines Geschäftes behindern könnte oder in einem anderen als in dem im vorangehenden Artikel vorgesehenen Sinne beeinflussen könnte.

8. Es wird ferner vereinbart, daß die Bevollmächtigten dieser Konföderation hernach bei ihren Sitzungen, ordentlichen wie außerordentlichen, je nachdem sie Auftrag oder Gelegenheit haben, Sorge tragen sollen, Abmachungen und Bestimmungen für allgemeine Rechtsfälle ziviler Natur zu treffen, an denen alle Kolonien interessiert sind, um den Frieden unter ihnen zu erhalten und, soweit als möglich, alle Möglichkeiten eines Krieges oder eines Streites mit anderen zu beseitigen, wie für das freie und rasche Funktionieren der Rechtsprechung in jedem Rechtsbezirk, und zwar für alle Konföderierten gleichartig betreffs ihres Eigentums, betreffs derer, die ohne hinlänglichen Ausweis aus einer Siedlung in eine andere verziehen, wie die gesamte Rechtsprechung es mit den Indianern halten soll, damit diese sich weder Übergriffe erlauben, noch ohne gebührende Buße geschädigt werden, damit durch solche Verfehlungen nicht Krieg über die Konföderation komme.

Es wird ferner vereinbart, daß, wenn ein Diener seinem Herrn nach irgendeinem dieser konföderierten Gerichtsbezirke entläuft, in solchem Falle auf das Zeugnis eines Beamten des Gerichtsbezirkes, aus dem der besagte Diener entfloh, oder auf irgendeine andere beweiskräftige Unterlage hin der besagte Diener entweder seinem Herrn oder irgendeinem anderen Ansuchenden, der ein derartiges Zeugnis oder Beweisstück vorlegt, ausgeliefert werden soll. Bei der Flucht eines wegen kriminellen Vergehens inhaftierten Gefangenen — ob dieser nun aus dem Gefängnis ausgebrochen oder der Wache entlaufen ist — sollen auf die Beurkundung zweier Beamten des Rechtsbezirkes hin, in dem die Flucht geschah, derzufolge der Betreffende zur Zeit seiner Flucht ein Gefangener oder Verbrecher war, die Beamten oder einige von ihnen des Rechtsbezirkes, in dem der besagte Gefangene oder Flüchtling sich gerade aufhält, unverzüglich einen entsprechenden Verhaftsbefehl ausfertigen für das Ergreifen der betreffenden Person und ihre Auslieferung in die Hand des verfolgenden Beamten oder der verfolgenden Person. Und wenn Hilfe für die sichere Auslieferung eines solchen Verbrechers benötigt wird, soll sie dem darum Ansuchenden auf seine Kosten gewährt werden.

9. Und angesichts dessen, daß besonders für die kleineren Siedlungen in diesen vereinigten Kolonien auch die gerechtesten Kriege gefährliche Folgen zeitigen können, wird vereinbart, daß weder Massachusetts noch Plymouth noch Connecticut noch New-Haven noch irgendeines der Mitglieder von ihnen zu irgendeiner künftigen Zeit Krieg beginnen soll oder sich oder diese Konföderation oder irgendeinen Teil davon in irgendeinen Krieg (plötzliche Notstände mit den notwendigen Folgen ausgenommen, die aber ebenfalls, soweit es der Fall gestattet, zu mildern sind) ohne die Zustimmung und Billigung der vorbenannten acht Bevollmächtigten oder wenigstens sechs von ihnen, wie in dem sechsten Artikel vorgesehen, ver-

wickeln soll. Und keine Leistung ist im Falle eines Defensivkrieges von irgendeinem der Konföderierten zu verlangen, bis die erwähnten Bevollmächtigten zusammengetreten sind und die Rechtmäßigkeit des Krieges anerkannt haben und sich über die zu erhebende Geldsumme einig geworden sind; diese Summe ist dann von den einzelnen Konföderierten geschlüsselt, dem vierten Artikel entsprechend, zu entrichten.

10. Für den Fall, daß bei außergewöhnlichen Gelegenheiten Sitzungen von drei Magistratspersonen eines Rechtsbezirkes oder von zweien gemäß dem fünften Artikel einberufen werden und einige der Bevollmächtigten trotz angemessener Benachrichtigung nicht erscheinen, wird bestimmt, daß vier der Bevollmächtigten ermächtigt werden sollen, für einen Krieg, der nicht verschoben werden kann, so als ob sie sechs in einer Vollsitzung wären, von jedem Gerichtsbezirk die entsprechende Anzahl von Männern anzufordern, aber nicht weniger als sechs sollen über die Rechtmäßigkeit des Krieges befinden, das Nachgesuchte oder die Anträge auf Leistungen bewilligen oder Aushebungen dafür veranlassen.

11. Es wird ferner vereinbart, daß wenn einer der Konföderierten künftig einen der vorliegenden Artikel brechen sollte oder sonstwie den einen oder den anderen Gerichtsbezirk schädigen sollte, ein solcher Bruch des Abkommens oder eine solche Unbill gebührend erwogen werden soll, und daß von den Bevollmächtigten für die übrigen Gerichtsbezirke angeordnet werden soll, daß sowohl der Friede wie die vorliegende Konföderation ohne Verletzung intakt erhalten werde.

Schließlich wurden diese ewige Konföderation und die verschiedenen Artikel und Vereinbarungen darüber, nachdem sie von dem Landtag für Massachusetts wie von den Bevollmächtigten für Plymouth, Connecticut und New-Haven gelesen und ernstlich erörtert worden waren, sogleich und völlig von dreien der vorgenannten Konföderierten zugestanden und bestätigt, nämlich von Massachusetts, Connecticut und New-Haven; zum Zeugnis dessen unterschrieben sie der Landtag von Massachusetts durch seinen Sekretär und die Bevollmächtigten für Connecticut und New-Haven am neunzehnten Tage des dritten Monats, gemeinhin Mai genannt, Anno Domini 1643. Nur die Bevoilmächtigten von Plymouth, die keine Vollmacht abzuschließen, mitgebracht hatten, wünschten Aufschub, um mit ihrem Landtag zu beraten; dieses wurde gewährt, und bei der zweiten Zusammenkunft der Bevoilmächtigten für die Konföderation, die im folgenden September in Boston stattfand, reichten die Bevollmächtigten für den Gerichtsbezirk Plymouth eine vom 29. August 1643 datierte Kundgebung ihres Landtages ein, aus welcher hervorging, daß diese Konföderationsartikel von dem besagten Landtag gelesen, gebilligt und bestätigt worden waren, und daß alle Stadtgemeinden und Bevollmächtigten ermächtigt waren, sie durch ihre Unterschrift zu ratifizieren, was sie demgemäß am 7. Tage des September 1643 taten.

NEW ENGLAND CONFEDERATION

May 19, 1643

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

betwixt the Plantations under the Government of the Massachusetts, the Plantations under the Government of Plimouth, the Plantations under the Government of Connecticut, and the Government of New-Haven, with the Plantations in Combination therewith.

WHEREAS we all came into these parts of America, with one and the same end and ayme, namely, to advance the Kingdome of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to enjoy the liberties of the Gospel, in purity with peace; and whereas in our settling (by a wise providence of God) we are further dispersed upon the Sea-Coasts, and Rivers, then was at first intended, so that we cannot (according to our desire) with convenience communicate in one Government, and Jurisdiction; and whereas we live encompassed with people of severall Nations, and strange languages, which hereafter may prove injurious to us, and our posterity: And forasmuch as the Natives have formerly committed sundry insolencies and outrages upon severall Plantations of the English, and have of late combined against us. And seeing by reason of the sad distractions in England, which they have heard of, and by which they know we are hindred both from that humble way of seeking advice, and reaping those comfortable fruits of protection which, at other times, we might well expect; we therefore doe conceive it our bounden duty, without delay, to enter into a present Consotiation amongst our selves, for mutuall help and strength in all our future concernments, that, as in Nation, and Religion, so in other respects, we be, and continue, One, according to the tenour and true meaning of the ensuing Articles.

1. Wherefore it is fully Agreed and Concluded by and between the parties, or Jurisdictions above named, and they doe joyntly and severally by these presents agree and conclude, That they all be, and henceforth be called by the name of, The United Colonies of New-England.

2. The said United Colonies for themselves, and their posterities doe joyntly and severally hereby enter into a firm and perpetuall league of friendship and amity, for offence and defence, mutuall advice and succour, upon all just occasions, both for preserving and propagating the truth, and liberties of the Gospel, and for their own mutuall safety, and welfare.

3. It is further agreed, That the Plantations which at present are, or hereafter shall be settled within the limits of the Massachusetts, shall be forever under the Government of the Massachusetts. And shall have peculiar Jurisdiction amongst themselves as an intire body, and that Plymouth, Connecticut, and New-Haven, shall each of them, in all respects, have the like peculiar Jurisdiction, and Government within their limits. And in reference to the Plantations which already are settled, or shall hereafter be erected and shall settle within any of their limits respectively, provided that no other Jurisdiction shall hereafter be taken in, as a distinct head, or Member of this Confederation, nor shall any other either Plantation, or Jurisdiction in present being, and not already in combination, or under the Jurisdiction of any of these Confederates, be received by any of them, nor shall any two of these Confederates, joyne in one Jurisdiction, without consent of the rest, which consent to be Interpreted, as in the sixt ensuing Article is expressed.

4. It is also by these Confederates agreed, That the charge of all just Wars, whether offensive, or defensive, upon what part or Member of this Confederation soever they fall, shall both in men, provisions, and all other disbursements, be born by all the parts of this Confederation, in different proportions, according to their different abilities, in manner following, namely, That the Commissioners for each Jurisdiction, from time to time, as there shall be occasion, bring a true account and number of all the Males in each Plantation, or any way belonging to, or under their severall Jurisdictions, of what quality, or condition soever they be, from sixteen years old, to threescore, being inhabitants there. And that according to the different numbers, which from time to time shall be found in each Jurisdiction, upon a true, and just account, the service of men, and all charges of the war, be born by the poll: Each Jurisdiction, or Plantation, being left to their own just course, and custome, of rating themselves, and people, according to their different estates, with due respect to their qualities and exemptions among themselves, though the Confederation take no notice of any such priviledge. And that, according to the different charge of each Jurisdiction, and Plantation, the whole advantage of the War (if it please God so to blesse their endeavours) whether it be in Lands, Goods, or persons, shall be proportionably divided, among the said Confederates.

5. It is further agreed, That if any of these Jurisdictions, or any Plantation under, or in Combination with them, be invaded by any enemy whomsoever, upon notice, and request of any three Magistrates of that Jurisdiction so invaded. The rest of the Confederates, without

any further meeting or expostulation, shall forthwith send ayde to the Confederate in danger, but in different proportion, namely the Massachusetts one hundred men sufficiently armed, and provided for such a service, and journey. And each of the rest five and forty men, so armed and provided, or any lesse number, if lesse be required, according to this proportion. But if such a Confederate may be supplied by their next Confederate, not exceeding the number hereby agreed, they may crave help there, and seek no further for the present. The charge to be born, as in this Article is expressed. And at their return to be victualled, and supplied with powder and shot (if there be need) for their journey by that Jurisdiction which imployed, or sent for them. But none of the Jurisdictions to exceed these numbers, till by a meeting of the Commissioners for this Confederation, a greater ayde appear necessary. And this proportion to continue, till upon knowledge of the numbers in each Jurisdiction, which shall be brought to the next meeting, some other proportion be ordered. But in any such case of sending men for present ayde, whether before or after such order or alteration, it is agreed, That at the meeting of the Commissioners for this Confederation, the cause of such war or invasion, be duly considered, and if it appear, that the fault lay in the party so invaded, that then, that Jurisdiction, or Plantation, make just satisfaction, both to the invaders, whom they have injured, and bear all the charges of the war themselves, without requiring any allowance from the rest of the Confederates toward the same.

And further, if any Jurisdiction see any danger of an invasion approaching, and there be time for a meeting, That in such case, three Magistrates of that Jurisdiction may summon a meeting, at such convenient place, as themselves shall think meet, to consider, and provide against the threatened danger. Provided, when they are met, they may remove to what place they please, onely while any of these four Confederates, have but three Magistrates in their Jurisdiction, a request or summons, from any two of them, shall be accounted of equall force, with the three mentioned in both the clauses of this Article, till there be an increase of Magistrates there.

6. It is also agreed, That for the managing and concluding of all affaires proper to, and concerning the whole Confederation, two Commissioners shall be chosen by, and out of the foure Jurisdictions, namely two for the Massachusetts, two for Plimouth, two for Connecticut, and

two for New-Haven, being all in Churchfellowship with us, which shall bring full power from their severall generall Courts respectively, to hear, examine, weigh, and determine all affaires of war, or peace, leagues, aydes, charges, and numbers of men for war, division of spoyles, or whatsoever is gotten by conquest, receiving of more confederates, or Plantations into Combination with any of these Confederates, and all things of like nature, which are the proper concomitants, or consequences of such a Confederation, for amity, offence, and defence, not intermeddling with the Government of any of the Jurisdictions, which by the third Article, is preserved intirely to themselves. But if these eight Commissioners when they meet, shall not all agree, yet it is concluded, That any six of the eight agreeing, shall have power to settle, and determine the businesse in question. But if six doe not agree, that then such Propositions, with their Reasons, so far as they have been debated, be sent, and referred to the foure Generall Courts, viz. The Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New-Haven. And if at all the said Generall Courts, the businesse so referred, be concluded, then to be prosecuted by the Confederates, and all their Members. It is further agreed, That these eight Commissioners shall meet once every year, besides extraordinary meetings, according to the fifth Article to consider, treat, and conclude of all affaires belonging to this Confederation, which meeting shall ever be the first Thursday in September. And that the next meeting after the date of these presents, which shall be accounted the second meeting, shall be at Boston in the Massachusetts, the third at Hartford, the fourth at New-Haven, the fifth at Plimouth, the sixth and seventh at Boston; and then Hartford, New-Haven, and Plymouth, and so in course successively. If in the mean time, some middle place be not found out, and agreed on, which may be comodious for all the Jurisdictions.

7. It is further agreed, That at each meeting of these eight Commissioners, whether ordinary or extraordinary; they all, or any six of them agreeing as before, may choose their President out of themselves, whose Office and work shall be, to take care, and direct for Order, and a comely carrying on of all proceedings in the present meeting. But he shall be invested with no such power or respect, as by which, he shall hinder the propounding or progresse of any businesse, or any way cast the scales, otherwise then in the precedent Article is agreed.

8. It is also agreed, That the Commissioners for this Confederation hereafter at their meetings, whether ordinary or extraordinary, as they may have Commission or opportunity. doe endeavour to frame and establish Agreements and Orders in generall cases of a civil nature, wherein all the Plantations are interested, for preserving peace amongst themselves, and preventing (as much as may be) all occasions of war, or differences with others, as about the free and speedy passage of Justice in each Jurisdiction, to all the Confederates equally, as to their own, receiving those that remove from one Plantation to another, without due Certificates, how all the Jurisdictions may carry it towards the Indians, that they neither grow insolent, nor be injured without due satisfaction, least War break in upon the Confederates, through such miscarriages.

It is also agreed, That if any Servant run away from his Master, into any other of these Confederated Jurisdictions, That in such case, upon the Certificate of one Magistrate in the Jurisdiction, out of which the said Servant fled, or upon other due proof, the said Servant shall be delivered either to his Master, or any other that pursues, and brings such Certificate, or proof. And that upon the escape of any Prisoner whatsoever, or fugitive, for any Criminall Cause, whether breaking Prison, or getting from the Officer, or otherwise escaping, upon the Certificate of two Magistrates of the Jurisdiction out of which the escape is made, that he was a prisoner or such an offender, at the time of the escape. The Magistrates, or some of them, of that Jurisdiction where for the present the said prisoner or fugitive abideth, shall forthwith grant such a Warrant, as the case will bear, for the apprehending of any such person, and the delivery of him into the hand of the Officer, or other person who pursueth him. And if help be required for the safe returning of any such offender, it shall be granted unto him that craves the same, he paying the charges thereof.

9. And for that the justest Wars may be of dangerous consequence, especially to the smaller Plantations in these United Colonies, it is agreed, That neither the Massachusets, Plymouth, Connecticut, nor New-Haven, nor any of the Members of any of them, shall at any time hereafter begin undertake or engage themselves, or this Confederation, or any part thereof in any War whatsoever (sudden exigents with the necessary consequences thereof excepted, which are also to be moderated, as much as the case will permit) without the consent and agreement of the forenamed eight Commissioners, or at least six of them, as in the sixth Article is provided. And that no charge be required of any of the Confederates in case of a defensive War, till the said Commissioners have met, and approved the Justice of the War, and have agreed upon the sum of

money to be levied; which sum is then to be paid by the severall Confederates, in proportion, according to the fourth Article.

10. That in extraordinary occasions, when meetings are summoned by three Magistrates of any Jurisdiction, or two as in the fifth Article, if any of the Commissioners come not, due warning being given, or sent, it is agreed, That foure of the Commissioners shall have power to direct a War which cannot be delayed, and to send for due proportions of men, out of each Jurisdiction, as well as six might doe, if all met, but not lesse than six shall determine the justice of the War, or allow the demands, or Bills of charges, or cause any levies to be made for the same.

11. It is further agreed, That if any of the Confederates shall hereafter break any of these presents Articles, or be any other way injurious to any one of the other Jurisdictions such breach of Agreement, or injury shall be duly considered, and ordered by the Commissioners for the other Jurisdictions, that both peace, and this present Confederation, may be intirely preserved without violation.

Lastly, this perpetuall Confederation, and the severall Articles and Agreements thereof, being read and seriously considered, both by the Generall Court for the Massachusetts, and by the Commissioners for Plymouth, Connecticut, and New-Haven, were presently and fully allowed and confirmed by three of the forenamed Confederates, namely the Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New-Haven; in testimony whereof, the Generall Court of the Massachusetts by their Secretary, and the Commissioners for Connecticut and New-Haven subscribed them the 19 day of the third month, commonly called May, Anno Domini, 1643.

Only the Commissioners from Plymouth, having brought no Commission to conclude, desired respite to advise with their Generall Court, which was granted, and at the second meeting of the Commissioners for the Confederation, held at Boston in September following, the Commissioners for the Jurisdiction of Plymouth, delivered in an Order of their Generall Court, dated the 29 of August, 1643, by which it appeared that these Articles of Confederation were read, approved and confirmed by the said Court, and all their Townships, and their Commissioners authorized to ratifie them by their subscriptions, which they accordingly did, the 7 day of September, 1643.

THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION OF THE UNITED COLONIES OF NEW ENGLAND—1643-1684*

The Articles of Confederation between the Plantations under the Government of the Massachusetts, the Plantations under the Government of New Plymouth, the Plantations under the Government of Connecticut, and the Government of New Haven with the Plantations in Combination therewith:

Whereas we all came into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely, to advance the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and to enjoy the liberties of the Gospel in purity with peace; and whereas in our settling (by a wise providence of God) we are further dispersed upon the sea coasts and rivers than was at first intended, so that we can not according to our desire with convenience communicate in one government and jurisdiction; and whereas we live encompassed with people of several nations and strange languages which hereafter may prove injurious to us or our posterity. And forasmuch as the natives have formerly committed sundry insolence and outrages upon several Plantations of the English and have of late combined themselves against us: and seeing by reason of those sad distractions in England which they have heard of, and by which they know we are hindered from that humble way of seeking advice, or reaping those comfortable fruits of protection, which at other times we might well expect. We therefore do conceive it our bounden duty, without delay to enter into a present Consociation amongst ourselves, for mutual help and strength in all our future concernments: That, as in nation and religion, so in other respects, we be and continue one according to the tenor and true meaning of the ensuing articles: Wherefore it is fully agreed and concluded by and between the parties or Jurisdictions above named, and they jointly and severally do by these presents agree and conclude that they all be and henceforth be called by the name of the United Colonies of New England.

2. The said United Colonies for themselves and their posterities do jointly and severally hereby enter into a firm and perpetual league of friendship and amity for offence and defence, mutual advice and succor upon all just occasions both for preserving and propagating the truth and liberties of the Gospel and for their own mutual safety and welfare.

3. It is further agreed that the Plantations which at present are or hereafter shall be settled within the limits of the Massachusetts shall be forever under the Massachusetts and shall have peculiar

* Plymouth Colony Records, IX, X; Bradford's, New Plymouth Plantation.

jurisdiction among themselves in all cases as an entire body, and that Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven shall each of them have like peculiar jurisdiction and government within their limits; and in reference to the Plantations which already are settled, or shall hereafter be erected, or shall settle within their limits respectively; provided no other Jurisdiction shall hereafter be taken in as a distinct head or member of this Confederation, nor shall any other Plantation or Jurisdiction in present being, and not already in combination or under the jurisdiction of any of these Confederates, be received by any of them; nor shall any two of the Confederates join in one Jurisdiction without consent of the rest, which consent to be interpreted as is expressed in the sixth article ensuing.

4. It is by these Confederates agreed that the charge of all just wars, whether offensive or defensive, upon what part or member of this Confederation soever they fall, shall both in men, provisions, and all other disbursements be borne by all the parts of this Confederation in different proportions according to their different ability in manner following, namely, that the Commissioners for each Jurisdiction from time to time, as there shall be occasion, bring a true account and number of all their males in every Plantation, or any way belonging to or under their several Jurisdictions, of what quality or condition soever they be, from sixteen years old to three-score, being inhabitants there. And that according to the different numbers which from time to time shall be found in each Jurisdiction upon a true and just account, the service of men and all charges of the war be borne by the poll: each Jurisdiction or Plantation being left to their own just course and custom of rating themselves and people according to their different estates with due respects to their qualities and exemptions amongst themselves though the Confederation take no notice of any such privilege: and that according to their different charge of each Jurisdiction and Plantation the whole advantage of the war (if it please God so to bless their endeavors) whether it be in lands, goods, or persons, shall be proportionably divided among the said Confederates.

5. It is further agreed, that if any of these Jurisdictions or any Plantation under or in combination with them, be invaded by any enemy whomsoever, upon notice and request of any three magistrates of that Jurisdiction so invaded, the rest of the Confederates without any further meeting or expostulation shall forthwith send aid to the Confederate in danger but in different proportions; namely, the Massachusetts an hundred men sufficiently armed and provided for such a service and journey, and each of the rest, forty-five so armed and provided, or any less number, if less be required according to this proportion. But if such Confederate in danger may be supplied by their next Confederates, not exceeding the number hereby agreed, they may crave help there, and seek no further for the present: the charge to be borne as in this article is expressed: and at the return to be victualled and supplied with powder and shot for their journey (if there be need) by that Jurisdiction which employed or sent for them; but none of the Jurisdictions to exceed these numbers until by a meeting of the Commissioners for this Confederation a greater aid appear necessary. And this proportion to continue till upon knowledge of greater numbers in each Jurisdiction which shall be

brought to the next meeting, some other proportion be ordered. But in any such case of sending men for present aid, whether before or after such order or alteration, it is agreed that at the meeting of the Commissioners for this Confederation, the cause of such war or invasion be duly considered: and if it appear that the fault lay in the parties so invaded then that Jurisdiction or Plantation make just satisfaction, both to the invaders whom they have injured, and bear all the charges of the war themselves, without requiring any allowance from the rest of the Confederates towards the same. And further that if any Jurisdiction see any danger of invasion approaching, and there be time for a meeting, that in such a case three magistrates of the Jurisdiction may summon a meeting at such convenient place as themselves shall think meet, to consider and provide against the threatened danger; provided when they are met they may remove to what place they please; only whilst any of these four Confederates have but three magistrates in their Jurisdiction, their requests, or summons, from any two of them shall be accounted of equal force with the three mentioned in both the clauses of this article, till there be an increase of magistrates there.

6. It is also agreed, that for the managing and concluding of all affairs proper, and concerning the whole Confederation two Commissioners shall be chosen by and out of each of these four Jurisdictions: namely, two for the Massachusetts, two for Plymouth, two for Connecticut, and two for New Haven, being all in Church-fellowship with us, which shall bring full power from their several General Courts respectively to hear, examine, weigh, and determine all affairs of our war, or peace, leagues, aids, charges, and numbers of men for war, division of spoils and whatsoever is gotten by conquest, receiving of more Confederates for Plantations into combination with any of the Confederates, and all things of like nature, which are the proper concomitants or consequents of such a Confederation for amity, offence, and defence: not intermeddling with the government of any of the Jurisdictions, which by the third article is preserved entirely to themselves. But if these eight Commissioners when they meet shall not all agree yet it [is] concluded that any six of the eight agreeing shall have power to settle and determine the business in question. But if six do not agree, that then such propositions with their reasons so far as they have been debated, be sent and referred to the four General Courts; namely, the Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven; and if at all the said General Courts the business so referred be concluded, then to be prosecuted by the Confederates and all their members. It is further agreed that these eight Commissioners shall meet once every year besides extraordinary meetings (according to the fifth article) to consider, treat, and conclude of all affairs belonging to this Confederation, which meeting shall ever be the first Thursday in September. And that the next meeting after the date of these presents, which shall be accounted the second meeting, shall be at Boston in the Massachusetts, the third at Hartford, the fourth at New Haven, the fifth at Plymouth, the sixth and seventh at Boston; and then Hartford, New Haven, and Plymouth, and so in course successively, if in the meantime some middle place be not found out and agreed on, which may be commodious for all the Jurisdictions.

7. It is further agreed that at each meeting of these eight Commissioners, whether ordinary or extraordinary, they or six of them agreeing as before, may choose their President out of themselves whose office and work shall be to take care and direct for order and a comely carrying on of all proceedings in the present meeting: but he shall be invested with no such power or respect, as by which he shall hinder the propounding or progress of any business, or any way cast the scales otherwise than in the precedent article is agreed.

8. It is also agreed that the Commissioners for this Confederation hereafter at their meetings, whether ordinary or extraordinary, as they may have commission or opportunity, do endeavor to frame and establish agreements and orders in general cases of a civil nature, wherein all the Plantations are interested, for preserving of peace among themselves, for preventing as much as may be all occasion of war or differences with others, as about the free and speedy passage of justice in every Jurisdiction, to all the Confederates equally as to their own, receiving those that remove from one Plantation to another without due certificate, how all the Jurisdictions may carry it towards the Indians, that they neither grow insolent nor be injured without due satisfaction, lest war break in upon the Confederates through such miscarriages. It is also agreed that if any servant run away from his master into any other of these confederated Jurisdictions, that in such case, upon the certificate of one magistrate in the Jurisdiction out of which the said servant fled, or upon other due proof; the said servant shall be delivered, either to his master, or any other that pursues and brings such certificate or proof. And that upon the escape of any prisoner whatsoever, or fugitive for any criminal cause, whether breaking prison, or getting from the officer, or otherwise escaping, upon the certificate of two magistrates of the Jurisdiction out of which the escape is made, that he was a prisoner, or such an offender at the time of the escape, the magistrates, or some of them of that Jurisdiction where for the present the said prisoner or fugitive abideth, shall forthwith grant such a warrant as the case will bear, for the apprehending of any such person, and the delivery of him into the hands of the officer or other person who pursues him. And if there be help required, for the safe returning of any such offender, then it shall be granted to him that craves the same, he paying the charges thereof.

9. And for that the justest wars may be of dangerous consequence, especially to the smaller Plantations in these United Colonies, it is agreed that neither the Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, nor New Haven, nor any of the members of them, shall at any time hereafter begin, undertake, or engage themselves, or this Confederation, or any part thereof in any war whatsoever (sudden exigencies, with the necessary consequents thereof excepted), which are also to be moderated as much as the case will permit, without the consent and agreement of the forementioned eight Commissioners, or at least six of them, as in the sixth article is provided: and that no charge be required of any of the Confederates, in case of a defensive war, till the said Commissioners have met, and approved the justice of the war, and have agreed upon the sum of money to be levied, which sum is then to be paid by the several Confederates in proportion according to the fourth article.

10. That in extraordinary occasions, when meetings are summoned by three magistrates of any Jurisdiction, or two as in the fifth article, if any of the Commissioners come not, due warning being given or sent, it is agreed that four of the Commissioners shall have power to direct a war which cannot be delayed, and to send for due proportions of men out of each Jurisdiction, as well as six might do if all met; but not less than six shall determine the justice of the war, or allow the demands or bills of charges, or cause any levies to be made for the same.

11. It is further agreed that if any of the Confederates shall hereafter break any of these present articles, or be any other ways injurious to any one of the other Jurisdictions; such breach of agreement or injury shall be duly considered and ordered by the Commissioners for the other Jurisdictions, that both peace and this present Confederation may be entirely preserved without violation.

12. Lastly, this perpetual Confederation, and the several articles and agreements thereof being read and seriously considered, both by the General Court for the Massachusetts, and by the Commissioners for Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven, were fully allowed and confirmed by three of the forenamed Confederates, namely, the Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven; only the Commissioners for Plymouth having no commission to conclude, desired respite until they might advise with their General Court; whereupon it was agreed and concluded by the said Court of the Massachusetts, and the Commissioners for the other two Confederates, that, if Plymouth consent, then the whole treaty as it stands in these present articles is, and shall continue, firm and stable without alteration: but if Plymouth come not in yet the other three Confederates do by these presents confirm the whole Confederation, and all the articles thereof; only in September next when the second meeting of the Commissioners is to be at Boston, new consideration may be taken of the sixth article, which concerns number of Commissioners for meeting and concluding the affairs of this Confederation to the satisfaction of the Court of the Massachusetts, and the Commissioners for the other two Confederates, but the rest to stand unquestioned.

In testimony whereof, the General Court of the Massachusetts by their Secretary, and the Commissioners for Connecticut and New Haven, have subscribed these present articles of this nineteenth of the third month, commonly called May, Anno Domini 1643.

At a meeting of the Commissioners for the Confederation held at Boston the 7th of September, it appearing that the General Court of New Plymouth and the several townships thereof have read, considered, and approved these Articles of Confederation, as appeareth by commission of their General Court bearing date the 29th of August, 1643, to Mr. Edward Winslow and Mr. William Collier to ratify and confirm the same on their behalf: we therefore, the Commissioners for the Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven, do also from our several Governments subscribe unto them.