

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 31 1975
DATE ENTERED	MAY 30 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Boundary Marker #1

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Marine Drive @ U.S./CANADA border

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Point Roberts

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Washington

CODE
53

#2 - Honorable Lloyd Meeds

COUNTY
Whatcom

CODE
073

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Whatcom County Auditor's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Whatcom County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Bellingham

STATE

Washington

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The boundary marker is an obelisk 19 feet in height assembled from a number of smooth granite blocks mortared together on a rubble foundation. The lower portion is a seven foot square rectangular base resting on a nine foot square plinth. In the transition from plinth to base and base to shaft, the sides taper inward to a band moulding before continuing upward with the next section. The shaft, or obelisk proper, is slightly less than 12 feet tall.

In the central portion of the base on all sides is a recessed panel each with a different inscription. They read as follows:

East side

LAT 49. 0. 0.
LONG 123. 3. 53.

ERECTED 1861.

South side

ARCHIBOLD CAMPBELL
U.S. COMM S.S.R.

West side

TREATY OF
WASHINGTON
JUNE 15th 1846

North side

CAPT. J.C. PREVOST. R.N.
CAPT. C.H. RICHARDS. R.N.
LT. COL. J.S. HAWKINS. R.E.
H.B.M. COMM S.S.R.S.

The obelisk is in excellent unaltered condition with only slight weather discoloration as evidence of its age.

It is located on Point Roberts at a beautiful site overlooking Georgia Strait a short distance from the beach. Point Roberts is a small promontory of only four square miles beginning on the Canadian mainland but crossing the 49th parallel. It is separated by an accident of geography from the rest of the United States, reached only by traveling 25 miles through Canadian Territory.

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The marker itself is positioned near the extreme westward point of land along the Canadian-American border.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1861

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This monument is an international boundary marker between the United States and Canada erected in 1861. The original survey and marking were conducted between 1857 and 1869 in accordance with provisions of the Oregon Treaty of 1846, later known as the Treaty of Washington, establishing the 49th parallel as the mainland boundary from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean.

The Oregon Treaty was the culmination of complex, lengthy negotiations over disputed territories west of the Rockies involving issues of national prestige, military and economic advantage, and domestic political considerations in both Britain and the United States.

The Convention of 1818 had resulted in a joint occupation agreement providing equal access to the contested territories for the citizens of both countries for a period of ten years. This period was extended in 1827.

It was thought that a boundary line at the 49th parallel already existed between British Rupert's Land and French Louisiana beginning westward from the Lake of the Woods and continuing as far as the Stony Mountains [the Rockies]. This was a line supposedly established by the British and French in 1713 with the Treaty of Utrecht, and would presumably remain the border following the Louisiana Purchase. This section of the boundary was also agreed upon in the Convention of 1818.

The Hudson's Bay Company maintained extensive operations below the 49th parallel and above the Columbia River. The British negotiating position sought to protect the interests of the company, although not at the cost of war with the United States. The British also were concerned with retaining sheltered port locations for future military needs and in anticipation of trade with the Orient. The British negotiator's opening proposal was that the boundary follow the Columbia River west of its intersection with the 49th parallel.

The American State Department in 1827 claimed territory to 50 degrees, 40 minutes, but offered the compromise of following the 49th parallel to the sea. Oregon was remote, however, with few American settlers living north of the Columbia. These territorial claims hinged primarily on the rights gained through discovery and exploration when the American Captain Robert Gray first entered the Columbia River and when Lewis and Clark followed the river's course from the interior. The position of the United States was influenced by strong expansionist sentiment among

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

International Boundary Commission. Joint Report Upon the Survey and Demarcation of the Boundary between the U.S. and Canada from the Gulf of Georgia to the Northwesternmost Point of Lake of the Woods.

(CONT'D)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one

UTM REFERENCES

*UTM OK
RH*

A | 1,0 | 4,9,3 | 5,6,0 | 5,4 | 2,7 | 4,9,0 |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Susan H. L. Barrow, in conjunction with Ann Nugent

ORGANIZATION

Whatcom Museum of History & Art

DATE

January 16, 1973

STREET & NUMBER

121 Prospect Street

TELEPHONE

676-6981

CITY OR TOWN

Bellingham

STATE

Washington

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

SIGNATURE *Charles H. Rogers*
 TITLE Director - Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

DATE *MARCH 25, 1975*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

R. R. Winters 5/30/75 DATE
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *Charles H. Rogers* DATE *5-30-75*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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the population furthered by aggressive rhetoric on the part of candidates for political office, including James Knox Polk in 1844. There were also compelling trade and military motivations that were underscored by the findings of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes' surveying expedition into the Columbia River and Puget Sound. Wilkes reported that the Columbia was quite treacherous and considerably inferior to Puget Sound in its potential navigation and port uses.

At first the American compromise was rejected by the British government, although their position softened considerably before the election of President Polk. Lord Aberdeen proposed establishing the boundary at the 49th parallel, retaining joint access to Puget Sound, its harbors and the Columbia River. However, by this time anti-British feeling was quite strong in the United States. The House of Representatives passed a resolution authorizing the President to notify Great Britain of intent to terminate the convention of joint occupation and provide for the organization of the Oregon Country as a territory. The Senate failed to act on this bill, but the British navy responded by stationing the *H.M.S. Modeste* off Fort Vancouver for eighteen months.

After his inauguration in 1845, President Polk reaffirmed American claims to "all of Oregon" from the 42nd to the 54th parallels. Secretary of State James Buchanan again offered a settlement at 49° without additional concessions, but Sir Richard Pakenham rejected the proposal. Polk, against Buchanan's advice, then withdrew the 49° compromise and asked Congress for authority to terminate the Convention of 1827. It was during debate on this question that the slogan "54-40 or fight" came into use among advocates of expansion at any cost. The Senate was not eager to pass the President's request. This situation was resolved by the nearly unprecedented surrender by Polk of responsibility for further negotiations to the Senate. He submitted a draft treaty that was approved as a "convention" in the Senate. It was signed June 15, 1846, and ratified on the 19th.

The Oregon Treaty consisted of four brief articles. In the first article, the boundary was extended westward along the 49th parallel "to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island; and thence southerly through the middle of said channel, and of Fuca's Straits to the Pacific Ocean" with navigation in the channel and Straits south of 49° remaining unrestricted for both parties. The second article provided free and open navigation of the Columbia River for the Hudson's Bay Company and "all British subjects trading with same". Articles Three and Four protected the trade and property rights of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company.

The Treaty failed to define what was meant by "the middle of the channel" which was actually divided by the San Juan Islands. Disagreements in the 1850's between Hudson's Bay Company sheep ranchers and Americans on the Islands reached a crisis when an American killed a company pig. American troops were quickly stationed on

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the southern part of San Juan Island, while British warships were anchored off-shore. In 1860, joint military peace keeping occupation was agreed upon, and for twelve years the Pig War remained unresolved. In 1871, Emperor William I of Germany was chosen to arbitrate. His decision established the Canal de Haro as the boundary line, placing the San Juan Islands in American Territory.

The negotiations leading to a settlement of the Northwest boundary dispute are considered by historian Frederick Merk and others to be a classic achievement in international diplomacy. The treaty provided a mutually beneficial resolution satisfying the significant economic, military and political objectives of both parties. Agreement was accomplished without the humiliation of either side.

The boundary marker at Point Roberts is monument #1 of the international border survey conducted following the Treaty of 1846. It is the only one of its kind and the last marker remaining from the original survey. The others were either iron posts or rock cairns, all of which have been replaced. Nearly 1000 posts now mark the 49th parallel.

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Meany, Edmund S. History of the State of Washington. New York: The McMillan Company, 1927.

Merk, Frederick. The Oregon Question, Essays in Anglo-American Diplomacy and Politics. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1967.