American Political & Military Affairs, 1828-60.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM COUNTY- ISTRICT OF Columbia (Type all entries - complete applicable sections) DATE RAME COMMON St. John's Church Parish House AND'OR HISTORIC Ashburton House (British Legation) DOCATION DOCATION St. John's Church Parish House Maington STATE District of Columbia CODE CARSOFICATION Code Tome Mashington STATE District of Columbia Code Tome CATECORY OWNERSHIP STATU Accessible Object Bath Public Acquisition: District of Transportation Yes: CATECORY Ownershift Prove Residence YZ Brainicad National Information Bath District of Columbia Code Yes: Yes: Yes: Other Bublic Code owner Status Yes: Yes: Yes: Bath Polic Acquisition: Discrict of Columbia Yes: Yes: CATECORY Ownershift Polic Acquisition: Yes: Yes: Bath Information Polic Polic Y	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE					Washington, D.C.					
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th ese co	lumns ado:	rn the f	ront of t	he Pra	tt Hous	e, a Mar	yland landmark	•
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ance. (Certain ch	anges ha	ve been 1	nade, ho	wever, t	to the bu	ilding.	
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15th Century	17th Century	X 19th Century	
PECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicab	le and Known)		
REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch	eck One or More as Appropria	ate)	
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Architecture	Landscape	Sculpture	
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Conservation	☐ Music	Transportation	

The Ashburton House, or the British Legation as it had come to be known, was the scene of 10 months of negotiations resulting in the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842. This agreement resolved the long-standing dispute with Great Britain over major segments of the boundary with Canada. Diplomatic historian <u>Alfred</u> Flagg Bemis called this dispute "one of the gravest and most inveterate diplomatic <u>Samuele</u> issues of the United States in the generation following the War of 1812."* In addition, these negotiations saw the United States protect and respect the rights of the States in international **affairs**. Furthermore, the Federal Government stood firm against British impressment of sailors aboard American ships. Great Britain abandoned her claims to 6,500 square miles north of the St. Louis River, which, it was later discovered, contained one of the world's most abundant iron ore deposits--the Mesabi Range.

History

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For almost 60 years after the end of the Revolutionary War in America the northeast boundary line between Canada and the United States remained in dispute. In Paris in 1783, British and American diplomats, due to inadequate geographic knowledge, had settled upon a line of division unsatisfactory to both sides. Maps locating the boundary were not annexed to the treaty itself and subsequently disappeared. Attempts to trace on the ground what was stated in a treaty led to disagreement and confrontation between settlers in the disputed areas.

A three-man commission created by Jay's Treaty of 1794 solved part of the problem by determining that a river, the Schoodiac, was the one emptying into the present Bay of Fundy which was listed as the "St. Croix" in the 1783 treaty's document. Thus from the coast to the Aroostook Valley the people knew which country owned which land.

Samuel *Alfred Flagg Bemis, <u>Diplomatic History of the United States.</u> (New York, 1936), p. 254.

(continued)

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES			
Alfred Flagg Bemis, <u>A Diploma</u> New York, Henry Holt & Comp			
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LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPE	RTY	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATI DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPE OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES	
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FORM PREPARED BY			
NAME AND TITLE:			
Benjamin Levy, Senior H	Histor	ian, and Paul Ghioto, Assistant	
ORGANIZATION Division of History, Of Historic Preservation,			
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As the designated State Liaison Officer for the 1 tional Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclu	c Law usion	I hereby certify that this property is included i National Register.	n the
in the National Register and certify that it has the evaluated according to the criteria and procedure	es set		
forth by the National Park Service. The recomm level of significance of this nomination is: National State Local [Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Prese	ervation
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Form 10-300a (July 1969)	UNITED ST	NATION	District of Columbia			
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8.	Significance:	(1)	St. John's Church Par:	ish House		

However, beyond this point, negotiated settlements collapsed for a number of reasons. First, the U.S. Senate rejected an article adopted by an Anglo-American convention in 1803. Second, negotiations at Ghent after the War of 1812 failed. Finally, the State of Maine and the Senate both refused to accept arbitration recommendations by the King of the Netherlands (1827-1831).

When settlers from both sides began to follow the fur traders into the fertile valley of the Aroostook, local rivalries, politics, and personalities clashed and erupted into the "Aroostook War" of 1838-39. An armed U.S. force, commanded by Winfield Scott, managed to restore a truce in the area but it became clear that a permanent settlement of the northeast boundary must be made if further violent confrontation was to be averted.

In England little disposition to settle the issue was made so long as the truculent Lord Palmerston remained Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Palmerstone felt no desire to make any concessions to a growing nation whose manners and politics seemed so primitive to that of his own.

Changes of administration in both countries in 1841 saw the Conservative Robert Peel becoming Prime Minister and Lord Aberdeen replacing Palmerstone as Foreign Secretary in England while in the United States Harrison, and later Tyler, succeeded Van Buren as President. Such changes saw a new attitude toward reconciliation of differences and later in the same year the U.S. Secretary of State, Daniel Webster, informed Britian that the United States would be willing to consider a new conventional northeastern boundary. Accordingly, in 1842, the British dispatched a special plenipotentiary, Alexander Baring, Lord Ashburton, to negotiate with Webster.

The home of Joseph Gales, editor of the National Intelligencer, was rented by Webster for 10 months as quarters for Ashburton and those accompanying him. It was here at 1525 H Street that much of the negotiations took place, frequently at extravagant dinners and dances.

In addition to Webster and Ashburton, representatives from the States of Massachusetts and Maine also attended and took active parts since it was their present and former boundaries which were at stake in the negotiations.

Since both Ashburton and Webster were dedicated to preserving peace and cultivating friendship between their respective countries, little difficulty was encountered in agreeing upon a compromise boundary.

(continued)



Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
District of Columb	oia
COUNTY	
Washington, D.C	, ,
FOR NPS USE ONL	Y
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries) 8. Significance: (2) St. John's Church Parish House

The major provisions of the treaty included the following:

a. The United States received slightly less territory in the northeast than they would have had they accepted the award of the King of the Netherlands.

b. Britain accepted as final the inaccurately surveyed line of 45° Latitude as the northern boundary of New York and Vermont and yielded to the major part of American claims above the head of the Connecticut River.

c. The United States, not Britain, reimbursed Maine and Massachusetts for territory surrendered and for defense expenses during the long controversy.

d. The boundary line from Lake Huron to Lake of the Woods in the midwest was settled.

e. Certain rivers were made open to navigation by both sides.

f. The United States and Great Britain agreed to maintain a joint cruising squadron on the coast of Africa to help suppress the slave trade.