

giving the whole of Vancouver's Island to Great Britain, and that to effect this purpose the line was to be carried through the Canal de Haro to the Straits of Fuca, on its way to the Pacific Ocean. This line gives to the United States the Haro Archipelago, of which San Juan Island forms a part.

The treaty having been concluded, and the exciting controversy of forty years having been settled, the government of the United States remained, for a time, without any further interest in the boundary, awaiting the settlement of the country before exhibiting any anxiety to have the line definitively marked.

In November, 1846, Mr. Bancroft, then minister of the United States at London, communicated to this department his apprehensions of a design on the part of Great Britain to claim the boundary line to be through the Rosario Strait instead of the Canal de Haro, so as to throw the island of San Juan and the other islands of the Haro Archipelago within the limits of British jurisdiction. Mr. Bancroft met this pretension promptly, and for a time it was apparently abandoned. He was then under the impression that the Hudson's Bay Company were the parties who sought to possess that valuable group of islands, and that the British ministry did not favor their proceedings.

In January, 1848, Mr. Crampton, the British diplomatic representative accredited to the United States, under instructions from his government, made a proposition to the United States to appoint joint commissioners for the purpose of determining the water boundary. With this proposition was presented a draught of joint instructions to the commissioners, framed so as to leave but little for them to do except to run the line through the channel, which would give to Great Britain all the islands of the Haro Archipelago.

In 1852, the Territory of Oregon, by an act of their legislature, included the Haro Archipelago in one of its counties; and after the passage of this act, the Hudson's Bay Company established a post on San Juan Island. When the Territory of Washington was created these islands were declared by the legislature of that Territory to form a part of Whatcom County. In 1855 the property of the Hudson's Bay Company on San Juan Island was assessed in the same manner as other property within the Territory, and upon their refusal to pay the taxes, their property was advertised and sold, in the usual way, to satisfy the demand. This led to a correspondence between the governors of Vancouver's Island and Washington Territory, in which the former declared that he had the orders of her Majesty's government to regard the islands of the Haro Archipelago as a part of the British dominions. This correspondence, with a heavy claim for damages, was laid before this department by John F. Crampton, esq., the British minister here at the time, with a renewal of his proposition for the appointment of a joint commission to determine the boundary line, and in the event that the proposal could not be met by the government of the United States without difficulty or delay, he suggested "the expediency of the adoption, by both governments, of the channel marked as the only known navigable channel by Vancouver, as that designated as the treaty." In other words, the United States were requested to run the line through Rosario Strait and give up to Great Britain the Haro Archipelago.

The Executive complied with Mr. Crampton's proposal so far as to recommend to Congress the creation of a commission to determine the boundary line, and on the 11th of August, 1856, an act was passed authorizing a commission, on the part of the United States, to unite with similar officers to be appointed on the part of the British government. Instead of adopting the proposed joint instructions to the commissioners, each government instructed its own commissioner as to the duties he was to perform.

In 1857 the commissioners met at Esquimalt harbor, Vancouver's Island, and exchanged credentials, with the understanding that they were mutually invested with full powers; and the discussion of the boundary question took place with this understanding on the part of the United States commissioner.