

the journal of Captain Vancouver, a British authority. On the contrary, its authenticity being thus acknowledged by the party having an adverse interest, is more firmly established than if it had been first published in the United States.

From a careful examination and review of the subject, the undersigned ventures the assertion, that to Spain and the United States belong all the merit of the discovery of the northwest coast of America south of the Russian line, not a spot of which, unless it may have been the shores of some of the interior bays and inlets, after the entrance to them had been known, was ever beheld by British subjects, until after it had been seen or touched by a Spaniard or an American.

Spain proceeded in this work of discovery, not as a means of acquiring title, but for the purpose of examining and surveying territory to which she believed she had an incontestible right. This title had been sanctioned for centuries by the acknowledgment or acquiescence of all the European powers. The United States alone could have disputed this title, and that only to the extent of the region watered by the Columbia. The Spanish and American titles, now united by the Florida treaty, cannot be justly resisted by Great Britain. Considered together, they constitute a perfect title to the territory in dispute, ever since the 11th May, 1792, when Capt. Gray passed the bar at the mouth of the Columbia, which he had observed in August, 1788.

The undersigned will now proceed to show that this title of the United States, at least to the possession of the territory at the mouth of the Columbia, has been acknowledged by the most solemn and unequivocal acts of the British Government.

After the purchase of Louisiana from France, the Government of the United States fitted out an expedition under Messrs. Lewis and Clarke; who, in 1805, first explored the Columbia, from its source to its mouth, preparatory to the occupation of the territory by the United States.

In 1811, the settlement of Astoria was made by the Americans near the mouth of the river, and several other posts were established in the interior along its banks. The war of 1812 between Great Britain and the United States thus found the latter in peaceful possession of that region. Astoria was captured by Great Britain during this war. The treaty of peace concluded at Ghent in December, 1814, provided that "all territory, places, and possessions whatsoever, taken by either party from the other, during the war, &c. "shall be restored without delay." In obedience to the provisions of this treaty, Great Britain restored Astoria to the United States; and thus admitted in the most solemn manner, not only that it had been an American territory or possession at the commencement of the war, but that it had been captured by British arms during its continuance. It is now too late to gainsay or explain away these facts. Both the treaty of Ghent, and the acts of the British Government under it, disprove the allegations of the British plenipotentiary, that Astoria passed "into British hands by the voluntary act of the persons in charge of it," and "that it was restored to the United States in 1818 with certain well-authenticated reservations."

In reply to the first of these allegations, it is true that the agents of the (American) Pacific Fur Company, before the capture of Astoria on the 16th October, 1813, had transferred all that they could transfer—the private property of the company—to the (British) Northwest Company; but it will scarcely be contended that such an arrangement could impair the sovereign rights of the United States to the territory. Accordingly, the American flag was still kept flying over the fort until the 1st December, 1813, when it was captured by his Majesty's sloop of war *Raccoon*, and the British flag was then substituted.

That it was not restored to the United States "with certain well-authenticated reservations," fully appears from the act of restoration itself, bearing date 6th October, 1813. This is as absolute and unconditional as the English language can make it. That this was according to the intention of Lord Castlereagh, clearly