

the river. With such undeniable rights and equities on both sides, a complete surrender by either was impossible, and after a full discussion, a treaty of joint occupation for ten years was agreed upon, by which nominal possession of Astoria should be given to the United States, but actual possession and ownership should remain in the Northwest Company, an English corporation.

In 1819 the United States government added the Spanish title to its claims by the Florida purchase, which also included all Spanish claims north of the forty-second parallel. During the ten year period the question was spasmodically discussed in congress, and much correspondence on the subject passed between the two governments. The United States urged its Spanish title as its right by original discovery, also that the mouth of the Columbia river was hers by dual right of discovery and settlement; and, therefore, following the general rule which had been observed by European nations in colonizing America, all the country tributary to the river and its confluents was also subject to her dominion. As the Columbia sweeps northward to the fifty-third parallel, it was urged that, by this title alone, the government had indisputable right to the whole region lying between the forty-second and fifty-third parallels. In 1820 the Czar of Russia issued an imperial ukase, by which exclusive title was asserted on the coast from the Arctic ocean as far south as the fifty-first parallel, based upon original discovery and undisputed occupation for upwards of fifty years. Both England and the United States formally protested, and separate negotiations by both governments were carried on with Russia, resulting, finally, in the full acknowledgement of Russian title as far south as fifty-four degrees and forty minutes, which at once became the northern limit of the claim of the United States. Another step was the promulgation of the celebrated "Monroe doctrine." In his message to congress December 2, 1823, President Monroe said that the "American continents, by the free and independent position they had assumed, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for colonization by any European power." This elicited a formal protest from both England and Russia. In February, 1824, General Jessup submitted to congress a proposition to establish a chain of posts from Council Bluffs to the Pacific, by which, "at the expiration of the privilege granted to British subjects to trade on the waters of the Columbia, we should be enabled to remove them from our territory and to secure the whole trade to our citizens." Great Britain was justly offended at this proposition to forcibly expel her subjects from the disputed territory, and it did much to complicate the future negotiations.

As the ten year period of joint occupation drew near to its close, new commissioners were appointed and the whole subject was again opened. The claims of the United States, as previously outlined, were again urged, and the proposition was made to divide on the fifty-first parallel, Great Britain taking all north of that to fifty-four-forty. Great Britain declined to acknowledge the claims as set forth, and urged substantially the same claims as in the previous discussion. After a number of communications had passed, the English commissioners proposed that the boundary line follow the forty-ninth parallel west until it struck the Columbia, and then the main channel of that stream until it reached the ocean, navigation of the river to be open and free to the subjects of both governments. As a counter proposition, the American representative offered the forty-ninth parallel to the ocean. The difference was that in the latter case all of Washington Territory west of the Columbia and the southern portion of Vancouver island would belong to the United States, and in the former to England. Neither proposition was accepted, and negotiations were closed, but in 1826 were again reopened, when another commissioner was sent to London. England again offered the line of the forty-ninth parallel and the Columbia river, with a sop in the shape of a slice of Washington south of Gray's harbor and Hood's canal thrown in. The American proposition was the same as before, with free navigation to the sea from all branches of the Columbia lying north of that line. The claims of title were substantially the same as before, except that the United States added that of "contiguity," claiming that the populous settlements in the Mississippi valley constituted a strong claim to the extension of authority "over the contiguous vacant territory, and to the occupation and sovereignty of the country as far as the Pacific ocean." The pioneers who, a few years later, toiled wearily across the miles of plain and mountain separating the Mississippi valley from that of the Willamette, were not so forcibly impressed with the "contiguity" of the two as was Mr. Gallatin, the American commissioner. To offset England's claim of settlement and possession by reason of Fraser's post and other posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, which had at that time absorbed the Northwest Company, Mr. Gallatin denied that mere fur trading factories, being simply private enterprises, could be considered settlements such as were necessary to perfect the title of a nation to an extended region; but by doing this he discredited the best title of his own government, based upon the founding of Astoria by the Pacific Fur Company; also, by a simple process of reasoning, the discovery title claimed through Gray's discovery of the mouth of the Columbia, since Gray