AMERICAN AMBASSADORIAL REPRESENTATION TO
ENGLAND FROM JOHN ADAMS TO
CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

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CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

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CHAPTER I

ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

In the diplomatic service of every country there is usually one foreign post of high importance and very special honor. So in our own country, the office of American ambassador to the Court of Saint James has been regarded, from the first, as the crown of a diplomatic career. And from the very first also, this legate has held an office charged with grave responsibilities, for our relations with Great Britain have always been more important than those with any other power on the globe.

American-British relations are far from the work of modern propagandists. Our connection has been continuous since the end of the sixteenth century when the first English colony was planted on American shores.

A European war gave us our independence. Since we no longer belonged to England, we escaped the wars instigated by the French Revolution, except during the brief struggle with France following the X. Y. Z. Affair. This interval of peace gave Washington and Adams an opportunity to strengthen our independence.¹

¹S. F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States, p. 138.
It was during this period of infancy that the American foreign policy was formulated. It is on the whole a simple affair, containing three objectives -- to keep clear of entangling alliances, to maintain and foster commerce, and to promote the position of the United States on the American continent. These have been defined as Isolation, Open Door, and the Monroe Doctrine.

Non-intervention has, of course, been the cornerstone of that policy. It is the integral part of the political philosophy of Americans. There is nothing in the pages of our history more characteristic or fundamentally American than non-intervention.

The object of a large part of our early ambassadorial labors was the extension of commerce. It had to be fought for because England was not disposed to let us trade at will. Right of neutrals, continuous voyage, coastwise trade and early commercial treaties were all subjects with which all these early ambassadors worked.

The third phase of our policy we borrowed from England herself. Jefferson said of England when we were having trouble in Florida:

\[\text{We should contemplate a change of neighbors with uneasiness. A balance of power on our borders is no less desirable than a balance of power in Europe has always been to them.}\]

\[2^J. \text{ R. Moore, Principles of American Diplomacy, p. 197.}\]
\[3^W. \text{ B. Johnson, America's Foreign Relations, p. 198.}\]
No study of this third cornerstone of our policy -- the Monroe Doctrine -- can be made independently of England.

Naturally, our contacts with England were before the Civil War, as now, very close. She is our mother country. This alone would bind us together. A large part of our trade has always been with her. This was especially true in the early years of our nation. England could supply our wants. Trade has a tremendous influence on a nation's foreign policy.

Our northern boundary touches England's for four thousand miles. The settlement of this boundary fills volumes of our diplomatic history. The fact that it is a most famous unguarded boundary is doubtless due to the ability of American diplomats.

The British navy and the British merchant marine have dominated the Atlantic since our nation's birth. This chief highway of intercourse, England has kept free for us. 4 Thus, we have had many points of contact.

But, it is true also that we have had many points of dispute. England by virtue of her position and navy was the world's most important sea power. While America due to her population and resources was the greatest land power. Consequently, the two powers have spent half their time battling each other and the other half defending each other.

4J. H. Latane, From Isolation to Leadership, p. 100.
against the rest of the world.⁵

From 1763 until 1783, England oppressed us as Colonies. From 1813 until 1815, she was a tyrant over neutral commerce. From the Revolution to the Civil War, the ruling classes of England were bitterly antagonistic to our nation. We, ourselves, kept alive the embers of 1776 and 1812. We were uneasy in the presence of England's great power. We felt inferior and brooded over it. We tried to compete with her, sometimes admiring her, often resenting her, and never really liking her.⁶

England, in turn, had no love for us -- her rebellious offsprings. She looked upon us as a swaggering, arrogant people. To her, we were full of patriotic conceit and likewise had an unholy appetite for all surrounding territory. Possibly as one authority puts it, England never really hated us but regarded us with contemptuous dislike.⁷ To the dignified British mind, Americans were noisy, ill mannered and vain. Our policy was too aggressive. Likewise, she hated our tariff.

British leaders were partly responsible for this attitude. Lord Palmerston said on one occasion:

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These Yankees are most disagreeable fellows to have to do with about any American Question. They are on the Spot, strong, deeply interested in the matter, totally unscrupulous and dishonest and determined somehow to carry their point.⁸

Canning probably did more to drive the Americans away from England than anyone else.⁹ He called America's navy a few fir frigates with a bit of bunting at the top. From the younger Pitt to 1825, England's history is one of great events and little men.¹⁰ This was not beneficial to England and was most trying to the men who represented us there.

Even so, England never desired to put us in an opposing camp. It is true that she wanted to check American growth and expansion. Again and again, she limited, or attempted to limit our diplomatic success. Never did she desire a strong United States, but it is equally true that she feared a break. With true British sense of sportsmanship, Englishmen became friendly at last, because as a nation they admire success and America has been successful.

Through long years America and England have settled their differences without bloodshed. This has been largely due to the superb work of our diplomats. Both countries have benefited under the Saxon system. We are bound together by interests if not by liking. Both nations want the

⁸T. A. Bailey, Diplomatic History of the American People, p. 281.

⁹Henry Lodge, One Hundred Years of Peace, pp. 19-20.

same way of life.

Our international manners have not always been the best — certainly they have not always pleased our mother country. In their actions, Americans were not always polite and considerate of the feelings of other nations. We have preferred to be upright and honest. This is known as "shirt sleeve diplomacy."\(^{11}\) We have been largely unhampered by tradition or precedent since we started our career as an independent state. Thus, it has been easy for our envoys to disregard the devious methods used by the diplomats of other nations.\(^{12}\) Our diplomats have been selected for their general success in their chosen careers and for their inherent ability rather than for expertness or proficiency in diplomacy.

American lawyers and business men have gone to England and come to blows again and again with the most practical diplomats at the Court of Saint James. Their office was no holiday. The journey to Europe itself was beset with perils. Salaries were small. There was no glamour socially in those early times, as there is today. But they went, in spite of these obstacles and we view with pride the achievements of our representatives at the number one United States diplomatic post. In character and actions they have varied

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greatly, and with them our friendship with Great Britain has sometimes dipped and sometimes soared.
CHAPTER II

A REPUBLICAN AT THE COURT OF SAINT JAMES

On February 24, 1785, John Adams appeared in London with his credentials as the first American ambassador to the Court of Saint James. The London Public Advertiser commented:

A minister from America! Good Heavens what a sound! The Gazette surely never announced anything so extraordinary before. . . . This will be such a phenomenon in the Corps Diplomatique that 'tis hard to say which can excite indignation most, the insolence of those who appoint the Character or the meanness of those who receive it. ¹

Thus the London public received the news of the Adams appointment. Adams himself felt his importance more. It was to him impressive to represent his new country, which had so recently been a part of this nation to whose court he was accredited. His French friend Count de Vergennes, upon hearing of his appointment, said to him, "It is a mark."² It was indeed a mark. But it was likewise a responsibility. Mr. Adams felt this responsibility but he was so constituted that he bore it well.³

Our first minister to England was well suited by both

¹T. A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People, p. 38.
²J. T. Morse, John Adams, p. 231. ³Ibid., pp. 231-232.
birth and training to his position. In fact, his appointment was a great compliment to England, for he was, after Washington, America's greatest man.\textsuperscript{4}

Adams was as British as the British themselves. Indeed, he has been called the very epitome of John Bull. His youth spent in Braintree, Massachusetts, was provincial, but he was no backwoodsman.\textsuperscript{5} Although he did not belong to aristocratic New England, he was sent to Harvard. Educated for the clergy, he early began to feel that he was unfitted for the church. Already he had discovered that he was vain and conceited. In his early writings he said that vanity was his cardinal vice and folly.\textsuperscript{6}

After teaching Latin at the Worcester Grammar School for a year, he selected law as his profession. At twenty-two he was admitted to the bar in Boston and started his practice immediately in Braintree.

Early in his career Adams became a politician. Indeed, politics was his forte rather than diplomacy. It was at this time that the troubles between England and her colonies started. Adams was committed to the patriot cause. At one point, however, he digressed. During the trial of those who had taken part in the Boston Massacre, he defended some of

\textsuperscript{4}R. B. Mowat, Diplomatic Relations Between Great Britain and the United States, p. 16.

\textsuperscript{5}B. Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 6.

the British soldiers. A verdict favorable to England was obtained by his efforts. This was later a great point in making him a persona grata in England.\textsuperscript{7}

As a member of the Continental Congress, he served on the Congressional Committee for Foreign Affairs. He went to France as minister. Here, he quarreled with Franklin. His actions led Sir John Temple to say of him, "He is the most ungracious man I ever met."\textsuperscript{8}

While in Europe, Adams represented his country at The Hague. When that mission was completed the war for independence was over, and he went to Paris to help negotiate the peace treaty with Great Britain.

In the matter of making an appearance, Adams was a happy choice for ambassador. This, moreover, was no small point. Much of real importance was to be gained by his demeanor. Gentlemanly bearing and good manners were instinctively his and he used his good sense when he did not change these for that peculiar artificial finish of high European society. In all his relations with the Corps Diplomatique, we point with pride to his simple dignity. The pomp of court offended his New England taste. He is supposed to have said that no man will ever be pleasing at court, in general, who is not depraved in morals or warped

\textsuperscript{7}Mowat, The Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{8}Adams, The Adams Family, p. 62.
from his country's interests.\(^9\)

By his training Adams was especially fitted to be the first representative of his country to England. Unhappily, his temperament was unsuited to diplomacy. Able and patriotic, he was arrogant and had no capacity for negotiations.\(^10\) He was impetuous and irascible, and when his anger was aroused, he became violent. He, as all the Adamses, loved to play the leading role in every situation. His censorious judgment of other men, their motives, and even their habits in life, was not conducive to good diplomacy.

Before going to England, he had called upon his wig maker and tailor. He understood it was necessary to have new clothes and good ones. After his presentation he wrote, "It is thus the essence of things is lost in ceremony in every country in Europe."\(^11\)

Sir Clement Cottrell Dormer, the master of ceremonies at the court, called on Adams at the Bath Hotel, Westminster, which was temporarily the embassy headquarters. It was his duty to groom the new representative in the art of court procedure. Then, the two went to Saint James Palace, where Adams was conducted to the king's closet.

It was a dramatic moment. Here was John Adams, arch rebel, meeting the king he had defied. He made the three


reverences as he had been instructed; one at the door, another half way to the king, and a third one before the king. Adams bore himself nobly. The king received him with that cold courtesy so typically British. Even so, it is certain that our first minister's introduction was accorded every formality and even had some evidences of special attention.\textsuperscript{12}

With this very auspicious beginning, Anglo-American relations seemed to brighten. Encouraged and gratified by his reception, Adams presented his threefold program to Lord Carmarthen. This called for the relinquishment of the frontier posts, indemnity for slaves carried away by British during the war, and, most important of all, a favorable commercial treaty.

For each of these points, Adams had his usual clearly thought out arguments. Concerning the British holding of the posts, his position was that in so doing the British were keeping the American merchants from a very profitable fur trade, which would have gone to England in the payment of debts.\textsuperscript{13} As to the slaves, he maintained that the slaves carried away by Sir Guy Carleton deprived their masters of labor which would help produce goods with which to pay debts.

In his efforts to gain a favorable commercial treaty

\textsuperscript{12} Alvord, \textit{Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States}, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{13} C. E. Hill, \textit{Leading American Treaties}, p. 48.
Adams encountered great opposition. England believed in the mercantile theory and the system of colonial monopoly. By declaring their independence the United States forfeited the prosperous trade they had enjoyed as English colonies. American ships were not allowed in British colonial ports. England had refused to include a commercial clause in the treaty of 1783. It was this concession America desired most. We preferred trade with England, because we wanted English goods and we understood English business methods.\(^{14}\)

Adams waited for months for an answer to his note. The new government back at home was not going well. He saw the hopelessness of his purpose.\(^{15}\) Each state was governing and regulating its own commerce. It was impossible to have a uniform program by which a treaty could be negotiated. Adams undertook to negotiate a treaty to safeguard American commerce in war and peace alike. To this England turned a deaf ear, and for many years thereafter the two nations could come to no agreement on this policy. The only result of his labor was a few conversations with the British minister. England had power. She regarded the United States as a nation in name only. Her trade had a one-sided basis. Anything which the British navy or factories needed, she would buy. Pitt, the prime minister, had much outside pressure.


British ship owners were afraid to let Americans enter the carrying trade. The Loyalists in Canada were also influencing British attitude. They wished to supply the West Indian trade and were of course considered first.\(^{16}\)

Adams' dispatches show his helplessness. He wrote the American Secretary of Foreign Affairs:

> The popular pulse seems to beat high against Americans. The people are deceived by numberless falsehoods industriously circulated by gazettes and in conversation so that there is too much reason to believe that if this nation had another one hundred million to spend, they would force the ministry into a war against us. Their present system as far as I can penetrate it, is to maintain a determined peace with all Europe, in order that they may war singly against America, if they think it necessary.\(^{17}\)

Adams grew more aggressive when the ministers failed to reply to his notes. The English, in turn, grew more civil and taciturn. Adams wrote: "I can obtain no answer from the ministry to any one demand, proposal or inquiry."\(^{18}\) The king and his court became cool. Public opinion hardened against America.

But even in the face of this Adams had the friendship of many of his diplomatic colleagues. Several notable Whigs were friendly.

\(^{16}\)S. F. Remis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, p. 69.

\(^{17}\)F. A. Updyke, *Diplomacy of the War of 1812*, pp. 1-2.

Mrs. Adams was an inspiration to him. America may well be proud of Abigail Adams, the first representative of her sex to the Court of Saint James. It is she who has given us such delightful pictures of all the Adamses in her letters, which are prominent in American literature. Her character was as fine as her mind. She was delighted with England and things English. At first she had regretted her husband's appointment, fearing that she would make an awkward figure. However, she, as did her husband, understood the manners of London.19

At last the English mission became too unhappy. Several things caused a climax. Thomas Jefferson came from Paris. When he was presented at court, the king rudely turned his back upon him and upon Adams, who was presenting him.20 The British signified that they did not intend to give up the frontier posts. They would not talk about the commercial treaty. As a last straw, the American Congress cut the salary of their representatives to foreign courts. Adams found that he could not possibly live in London as the other ambassadors did.

He wrote to Jay asking to be relieved of his mission. His letter of recall was presented to the king in February, 1786. George's farewell was curt. Adams gave as his reason

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20Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 16.
for resigning his post the fact that it was contrary to the dignity of the United States to have a minister in England when England refused to send one to America.\textsuperscript{21} Of his leave taking he wrote that he proceeded to bid farewell to the queen and the princesses, cabinet members and corps diplomatique -- a species of slavery more of which he thought had fallen to his share than happened before to a son of liberty.\textsuperscript{22}

Adams' service in England cannot be overestimated. While his make-up was not suited to diplomacy, no man of his day had a clearer conception of the significance of our independence or of the great future reserved for this country. More than any other of our ministers, he impressed these ideals in Europe.

The whole secret of his failure lay in the weakness of our own government. His ministry was all it could be under the circumstances. It has been appropriately called "a strong and dignified protest against the willfulness of a short sighted and selfish policy."\textsuperscript{23} Certainly in all our history cannot be found a truer patriot, a more conscientious worker, and a higher gentleman than John Adams.

\textsuperscript{21} Cowen, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 20.

\textsuperscript{22} Foster, Practice of Diplomacy, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{23} Trescot, A Diplomatic History of the Administrations of Washington and Adams, p. 62.
CHAPTER III

MISSIONS OF FAILURE

After the failure of John Adams to secure concessions from England, it became even more difficult for the United States to make overtures to that country. By this time we had adopted the Constitution, but this had no effect on British determination to ignore the place of the United States in the family of nations. Although this irked Washington and other officials, it was felt it was wise to keep a minister in England. As our second minister to the Court of Saint James, Washington selected Gouverneur Morris, the wisdom of whose selection was a much debated question.

Morris belonged to colonial aristocracy.¹ Born in a manor house on the family estate at Morrisania, New York, he inherited traditions of public service. He was a direct descendant of one of Cromwell's officers. His family had always had much strength and ability to wield influence. Both his father and his grandfather had held high judicial offices in the states of New York and New Jersey. In his own family

of three brothers, one was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, one a chief justice of New York, and a third one an officer in the British army and a member of Parliament.

Morris, himself, already had had a very active part in the politics of the United States. As a member of the Continental Congress, he had been of valuable assistance to his cousin, Robert Morris, in financing the Revolution.² He afterwards had his share in making a powerful nation. The final draft of the Constitution was his work. He also outlined our present system of coinage.³

Morris was an accomplished scholar. His political judgment was very sound, and it had been acquired early. He was a genius in whom every species of talents combined to make him conspicuous.⁴ He was very witty. It was said of him that "no one played a better hand at ombre or quadrille, told a better story or made a more agreeable companion at a dinner party or an assembly."⁵

He was quite a favorite with the ladies. In Paris, where Franklin introduced him into the salons, he was a sensation. It was astonishing to the French to see a Republican and an

²W. H. Trescot, Diplomatic Relations of the Administrations of Washington and Adams, p. 130.
⁵Nowat, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 20.
American with so aristocratic a manner.

Morris was in Paris on business when Washington asked him to go to England to fill John Adams' place. Meanwhile, the President had difficulty getting the appointment through the Senate, since Morris had many enemies. He was appointed in October, 1789, and the following March the appointment was approved.

Morris went to London with the same grievances Adams had carried there. A commercial treaty was to be made; America wanted compensation for slaves carried away during the war; and the frontier posts were to be given up. The Duke of Leeds was at the head of the Foreign Office. Morris expected to get into his good graces at once.

The Duke received Morris courteously but not cordially. He assured him that England desired a friendly commercial treaty between herself and America. Morris reminded him that all obstacles to England's recovery of the debts had been removed by the formation of the Constitution of the United States with its Federal Court, which had cognizance of all clauses arising from the Treaty of 1783.

He likewise commented on the fact that England had not sent a minister to America. The Duke explained that the delay had been due to an effort to appoint a man equal to the task and who would be agreeable to America. Morris told the Duke: "We are too near neighbors not to be either very good
friends or very hostile enemies."\textsuperscript{6}  
The interview ended on a note of good feeling, with Morris offering to let the Duke examine a copy of America's new Constitution.  

Morris himself was very much pleased with this interview. He wrote Washington that he expected no difficulty in England except from the king to whom the very name America was hostile. But Morris was too optimistic. He also made one serious mistake, before his interview with Leeds, of visiting the French minister La Luzerne. France was trying her best to embroil England and America in a controversy. England naturally became suspicious, thinking Morris was dabbling in French politics. Luzerne did not help matters by hinting that he knew all about America's negotiations with England.\textsuperscript{7}  

In the meantime Morris was highly entertained and made much of in some social circles. He was a bachelor and very much in demand. He had an entree into English society which made him very agreeable. His brother had married the Duchess of Gordon, who was a favorite in London. But Morris found other English groups cold and haughty. He made sarcastic references to their social functions when he wrote that "a tedious morning, a great dinner, a boozy afternoon, and a

\textsuperscript{6}A. B. Darling, \textit{Our Rising Empire}, p. 130.

\textsuperscript{7}Roosevelt, \textit{Gouverneur Morris}, p. 205.
dull evening make the sum total of English life." Continuing in this same vein, he said that he loved many individuals in England but hated their manners. His temperament was bright and charming, and to him the English were awkward and unfriendly. He characterized them as too proud, saying: 
"If they are brought to sacrifice some of their importance, they will readily add some other sacrifice." 

After his first interview with Leeds, Morris waited until April for an answer. He then wrote for another interview. This time the Duke was evasive and used all his diplomatic tricks of delay. He declared that he was uninformed on the western posts and could do nothing. Morris gave him our policy concerning these:

We do not think it worth while to go to war with you for the frontier forts; but we know our rights and will avail ourselves of them when time and circumstances may suit. 

At this point the question of impressment came up. Concerning this, which was to be the bone of contention between the United States and England for so many years, Morris told Leeds: "I believe, my Lord, that this is the only instance in which we are not treated as aliens." He later told Pitt that impressment was the only privilege he knew England accorded America.

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8Tbid., p. 200.  
9Darling, op. cit., p. 132.  
10Roosevelt, Gouverneur Morris, p. 204.  
When Morris again presented himself at the Foreign Office, he was ready to write: "I have presented myself to let them know that I am alive."¹¹² He was becoming abrupt and brusque. Speaking of Anglo-American relations at a dinner, he was goaded into giving the company "my honest sentiments respecting Britain and America, which are not pleasing, but I do not aim to please."¹³

So America failed again. People at home blamed Morris. They contended that his haughty bearing and proud manners made him unpopular. They pointed out and rightly so that he had been influenced by the French. But it must be remembered that at this time Great Britain, as well as all Europe, was in a state of uncertainty. England herself was in suspense, and it pleased her to keep America the same way. There was nothing Morris could do. He failed utterly at making a commercial treaty and settling the boundary dispute. But his efforts did induce the foreign secretary to send a minister to America. George Hammond was named England's first minister to America, and this marks the beginning of regular relations between the two countries.

About the last of June, 1791, news came to London of the escape of the King and Queen of France from the Tuileries. Morris was anxious to get back to Paris where his friends

¹²B. Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 34.
¹³Ibid.
eagerly awaited him. Accordingly, he resigned his post and
left for Paris at once.

Morris had the unusual faculty of mixing business and
diplomacy. Socially, as we have seen, he was a success in
London. His social position, even as the English saw it,
was their equal. Mentally and intellectually, he was the
superior of all the public men he met. He was American
through and through. We have not in all our history a
shrewder or more far-reaching observer of contemporary men
and events than Morris, our second minister to England.

Upon Morris' resignation in 1791, Washington looked to
the extreme South for his successor and sent to the British
court Thomas Pinckney, highly acceptable to the English. He
was the son of Charles Pinckney and Eliza Lucas of indigo
fame, and had been educated in England. While a student in
Westminster School, he was a first scholar in Greek. Later,
he entered Christ College, Oxford. His education was com-
pleted by a year's study at the Royal Military Academy at
Caen, France. During the Revolution, his military science
was useful to him, as he was on the staff of General Gates.14

At the time of his appointment Pinckney was forty-one.
He was handsome, poised, cultivated in taste, and simple in
manner. He had been placed by fortune in a place where the
exercise of graceful hospitality was the habit of daily life.

Concerning him it has been said:

He sought neither place nor power, but rose gradually from duty to duty, illustrating in the fullness of his life and service the virtue of the class to which he belonged. ¹⁵

Secretary Jefferson's instructions to Pinckney were as follows:

To you, Sir, it will be unnecessary to undertake a general delineation of the duties of the office to which you are appointed. I shall therefore only express a desire that they will always be exercised in that spirit of sincere friendship that we hear the English nation and that in all transactions with the minister his good disposition be concluded by whatever in language or attendance may attend to that effect. ¹⁶

Pinckney's greatest task was to try to liberate American commerce from British restrictions. Relations of the two countries were at a very low ebb. Added to ill feeling due to England's restricting commercial policy was a suspicion that Lord Dorchester was using the frontier posts as centers from which to incite the Indians.

Pinckney was well received by the English Whigs. Under-secretary Burges was an old friend and helped him in many ways. The minister attended faithfully the king's levees. He wrote that he was ignored by the queen. Both the king and the court were civil but ungracious. The king tried to draw him into an argument over the North and the South. ¹⁷

¹⁵Trescot, Diplomatic Relations of the Administrations of Washington and Adams, p. 170.
¹⁶W. F. Johnson, America's Foreign Relations, p. 164.
The minister established the American Legation at Number One, Cumberland Place. Mrs. Pinckney was a shy lady and in delicate health. She was of no help to her husband. The English considered her shyness to be "offish." It is said that she was in tears from the time of her husband's appointment until her death, which took place during the English mission.

Pinckney was pro-French, and the presence of many French refugees at the American Legation aroused English suspicions. The court and diplomatic circles were inclined to blame the United States with convulsions brought on by the French Revolution. In 1793, the French Republic declared war on England. Consequently, Anglo-American relations became more strained.

Questions on impressment were started by Pinckney. He bombarded the Foreign Office continually with applications for the release of impressed American seamen. He did not succeed but he did inspire the admiration of the British. It was written of him at this time: "He was of mild and liberal manner and perfectly untinctured by prejudice." With the declaration of war by France on England, New England merchants and ship builders saw their opportunity for contraband trade with each side. Washington considered this to be a good time to ask England for a commercial treaty.

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\(^{18}\text{Ibid.}, p. 267.\)

\(^{19}\text{Ibid.}\)
He and Jefferson preferred not to let Pinckney make it because of detailed instructions which would be involved. John Jay was sent as extraordinary plenipotentiary.

Pinckney's feelings were hurt. Concerning the Jay appointment he wrote: "As to Jay's mission, if I should say that I had no unpleasant feelings on the occasion, I should not be sincere."20

But as always we see his natural urbanity, social balance and dignity. Putting his own feelings aside, he helped Jay all he could. During the negotiations important questions concerning contraband arose. 21 Pinckney had made a study of this subject and these questions were discussed masterfully by him. Wheaton, a British minister present at negotiations, wrote declaring that Pinckney's arguments were "finished models of judicial eloquence uniting power and comprehensive arguments with powerful and energetic reasoning."22

Pinckney remained in London after the Jay treaty was completed. He continued to call at the Foreign Office, but his patience was becoming exhausted. He asked for an audience of leave, which the King granted. Thus ended the ministry of Washington's second appointment.23

20 Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 44.
21 J. R. Moore, American Diplomacy, p. 312.
22 Ibid.
23 C. R. Fish, American Diplomacy, p. 88.
Thomas Pinckney accomplished nothing in England. His departure left us with no minister there at a time when one was badly needed. But he deserves admiration, though he worked hard to no avail. As an interpreter of political events and as a negotiator, he had to match England's finished diplomats.

In 1796 Washington made his third appointment to the Court of Saint James. This time, he selected a New Englander, Rufus King, a long time friend of Hamilton, who insisted on the appointment when Washington hesitated over it. Hamilton described King as a remarkably well informed man, a very judicious one, a man of address, a man of fortune whose situation afforded him just ground for confidence.\(^{24}\)

Hamilton's faith in his friend was justified. King's experience prior to his appointment fitted him for his position. Born in Maine, he was the son of Richard King, a successful merchant. He was educated at Harvard and possessed a classical education as well as a legal one. He early showed himself to be a man of business. He was married to Miss Mary Alsop, a wealthy New Yorker.

King's first service to his country was in the Constitutional Convention. Here his eloquence as an orator was noted.\(^{25}\) Later, he served eight years as a senator. In the

\(^{24}\)Dictionary of American Biography, X, 399.

Senate, he advocated the Jay treaty, and his efforts helped much to secure the passage of that unpopular measure.

At the time of his mission, America needed a man of his type. He was bent on a conciliatory course and was able to see both sides of a question with unbiased opinion. He was not impatient or ill tempered. King was, as a matter of fact, pro-British. When news of Nelson's victory reached England, no Englishman was more proud than he.26 There was just enough haughtiness and austerity in his make-up to battle with the cold civility of the Britishers.

The English themselves liked King. Only one rift occurred during the entire ministry. Upon the death of Washington, King put his entire family in mourning. The English King ignored this and did not offer sympathy. King was very much angered at this omission.

As far as improving Anglo-American relations was concerned, Rufus King did no more than his predecessors. Pitt was at the head of the English government and King had two conventions with him. One was in regard to impressment. King proposed that no seaman should be taken off ships by other nations. England contended that the narrow seas be excepted. King considered this an evasion and thought it was England's opportunity to revive the doctrine of "closed

26 Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 66.
seas." The convention was abandoned. 27 He always felt, however, that he could have persuaded Great Britain to abandon impressment had he but stayed longer.

His other convention was successful. It settled a minor dispute regarding the Canadian boundary. He also improved West Indian Admiralty Courts. But he could do nothing with Lord St. Vincent's prejudices upon impressment, and was not able to negotiate a commercial treaty. 28

Upon the election of Jefferson, King asked to be relieved of his mission. Nothing is more in keeping with his character than his request to be sent home on a battleship in order to take sheep and cattle home for breeding purposes. He expected the people at home to be grateful for his services.

King never relaxed his efforts to keep Anglo-American relations in harmony. He wrote: "I have lived more intimately with the public men of England, as well with those of the Opposition as of the Government, than any foreigner of my time." 29 He served his country to great advantage. The United States was still at peace with Britain, and the Federalist party had sent Rufus King to England to keep that peace.

Jefferson's first choice for minister fell upon James

27F. A. Updyke, Diplomacy of the War of 1812, pp. 16-17.
28Darling, Our Rising Empire, p. 515.
29Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 76.
Monroe. He and Monroe were close friends. Both native Virginians, they were educated at the same school, William and Mary's. Monroe was the son of wealthy Virginia planters. His stock was good but undistinguished. He had served in the Virginia legislature and the Congress of the Confederation. Later he was ambassador to France.

Monroe was almost entirely without personal charm. In appearance, he had distinction, although he was unpretentious. His most outstanding characteristics were his application and perseverance. The longer his public service, the wider grew his circle of admirers. He can be characterized as not being really great but useful. He was not intellectual as was Jefferson, but he was a better administrator. He had a happy faculty for timing things accurately. This is the trait which made him a great statesman.

Monroe had long coveted the English post. He went to England with high hopes. His first impression was that the great majority of English people misunderstood the people of America. Many things happened at the very beginning of his mission to give Monroe a bad time.

First, at an official dinner his seating arrangement was inferior to the representatives of two principalities which he avowed were no bigger than his farm. Angered by

\[30\textit{Dictionary of American Biography, XIII, 92.}\]

\[31\textit{Mowat, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 82.}\]
this slight, he never managed to get into the good graces of the King. The English were at the same time angry with Jefferson because he snubbed the British minister in Washington. Monroe paid for this in England. When Mrs. Monroe called, her calls were not returned.  

Monroe's first convention started happily. James Fox, a friend of America, was Foreign Minister. But Monroe's instructions called for an agreement regarding impressment, indemnity for American cargoes condemned unjustly, and satisfactory provisions regarding trade in the West Indies. This was an ambitious program and one which no British minister would offer compromise. Monroe signed a treaty in 1805, which was in every way as unsatisfactory as the Jay treaty and sent it to our Senate, which did nothing about it.

Meanwhile, New England, whose commerce was being ruined by the war between England and France, blamed Monroe. It was claimed that he could not get along with the English. Monroe protested to Madison that his mission was hopeless. He urged resistance to the English encroachments upon our commerce even at the risk of war. He said, and rightly so, that impressment was the "most corrosive issue ever existing between the United States and Great Britain."

32Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 79.
33Fish, American Diplomacy, p. 158.
35Bemis, Diplomatic History of the United States, p. 194.
At last Jefferson and Madison tired of Monroe's bungling. William Pinkney was sent to London to work with Monroe as a joint commissioner. Naturally, to a man of Monroe's tempera-
ment, this was a blow. He was angry and considered that
Madison was jealous of him and that Jefferson expected him to
do the impossible.

The treaty which was drawn up by the joint commission
was not good. The ministers had been instructed to accept
no treaty in which the English would not agree to relinquish
the practice of impressment. To this the English would not
agree; however, they did promise to suspend the practice.
Nothing was said of indemnities for past injuries to Ameri-
can shipping. Jefferson did not accept the treaty.

At this time Monroe's health was beginning to fail.
Fruitless diplomacy proving enervating, he asked to be re-
lieved of his post. This was granted and Pinkney was left
in London.

Monroe's mission was in every way a failure. He was not
even acceptable to the English as his predecessors had been.
Jefferson, however, was not displeased with his services. He
wrote: "He is a man whose soul might be turned inside out
without discovering a blemish to the world."36 And Madison
said of him: "His understanding has been much under-rated.
His judgment is particularly good, few men have made more

of what may be called sacrifice in the service of the pub-
lic."37

Monroe's resignation left William Pinkney in charge of
American affairs in London. A native of Maryland, his
father had been a Loyalist during the American Revolution
and his property had been confiscated, leaving him a poor
man. Thus, his son had been deprived of an education suit-
able to the aristocracy of the times. But this only served
to make young William strive to better himself. He studied
law in the library of Samuel Chase. His rise at the bar was
no less than sensational.

Washington sent him to London on official business.
His contact there with men of culture caused him to realize
his own lack of it. He had himself tutored in Latin and
Greek and studied dictionaries and lexicons faithfully.38
Gradually his powers enlarged and his manners became more
polished.

Pinkney's energetic attitude on searches and seizures
crushed Jefferson to send him to London to help Monroe draft
a treaty. Although the treaty was never accepted, Jefferson
still respected his judgment and he named him as Monroe's
successor. Shortly after Pinkney went to London, the affair
of the Leopard and the Chesapeake occurred. War seemed

37 Ibid., pp. 223-224.
38 Dictionary of American Biography, XIV, 627.
almost inevitable. Pinkney undertook to explain the Embargo to Canning. He promised that the American government would suspend it if England would repeal her Orders in the Council. He hinted that the Orders were the cause of the Embargo. Debates between the two men were friendly though at times they grew warm. In regard to suspension of the Orders, Canning told Pinkney that the King could not consent to buy off that hostility which America ought not to have extended to him, at the expense of a concession made not to England but to France. 39

In the midst of negotiations Madison became president of the United States. London felt that the Madison government was for peace at any price. 40 Pinkney worked hard to dispel that belief.

People at home were growing weary of England's highhanded methods. Naturally, they blamed Pinkney. His manner, they considered, was entirely too conciliatory. Campaigns against him were begun and a clamor was raised for his recall.

In 1810, the British recalled their minister from Washington. All negotiations were then transferred to London. Pinkney still worked for the repeal of the Orders, since he thought this would prepare the way for a more or less satisfactory adjustment of every difference between the two nations. 41

39Updyke, Diplomacy of the War of 1812, pp. 99-100.
40Johnson, America's Foreign Relations, p. 270.
41Updyke, Diplomacy of the War of 1812, pp. 110-115.
Convinced that he could do no more, on January 14, 1811, Pinkney presented himself at the Foreign Office and asked for an audience of leave. As his reason for this request, he stated that for many months England had made no move whatever to send a minister to America. Wellesley wrote him a private note saying A. J. Foster was being sent to America at once. Pinkney replied by official note asking what Mr. Foster's attitude toward the Chesapeake affair and the Orders in the Council would be. The reply was -- as expected -- that England would not yield. Pinkney renewed his request for leave, and this time it was granted.

Pinkney did not have the background for diplomacy which had been the possession of his predecessors, but he handled his difficult task in an admirable way. His natural dignity, his experience, and above all his good common sense made him rank as one of our foremost representatives of that period. The times seemed to be out of joint and nothing could be done.

The failure of these missions must not be construed as personal failures. England's position at this time of self-preservation at the expense of America made the solving of all major diplomatic problems impossible. It can be readily seen that in many ways this young nation struggled to keep the peace with England, yet at the same time sacrificed none of its own importance. A profound admiration is due to these men who worked faithfully against such great odds to preserve a nation's integrity.
CHAPTER IV

THE DIPLOMACY OF THE WAR OF 1812

William Pinkney's resignation on February 28, 1811, as minister to London left America without a representative in England, when one was most urgently needed. Daily the two countries drifted nearer to war. Affairs at the English Foreign Office were not going well. George III was hopelessly insane, and it was not the policy of the regent government to pay any attention to America. Surprisingly, at the time when war was actually declared by America, June 18, 1812, the United States had less cause for grievance than at any time since 1807. Two days before the declaration Castlereagh suspended the offensive Orders-in-Council. But there was no Atlantic cable, and even if the news could have reached America, it is to be doubted if it would have had any effect.1 The accumulated grievances which the United States had suffered caused the war. Monroe, Madison's Secretary of State, remembering recent snubs suffered while in England as ambassador, wanted to fight to a finish.

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1T. A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People, p. 138.
Surprisingly, again, both sides started peace negotiations immediately.

If the War of 1812 was a strange war, the treaty which ended it was even stranger. That it was a good treaty cannot be denied, for it has been the basis of over a hundred years of peace between England and the United States. Moreover, it has been the foundation for arbitration, by which the two countries have settled their difficulties and which has contributed much to the peace of the world.²

The Treaty of Ghent was made by a commission from each country. It was five months in the making, during which time Napoleon was conquered at Waterloo. The London Times remarked:

Having disposed of all our enemies in Europe, let us have no cant of moderation. There is no public feeling in this country stronger than indignation against the Americans. As we urged the principles of no peace with Bonaparte, so we must maintain the doctrine of no peace with James Madison.³

It is known that England did have hopes of making conquests in America with the Peninsular Army when it should be released from the European war. Wellington advised against this.⁴

The American commission was notable. It was composed of

³C. R. Fish, American Diplomacy, pp. 180-181.
⁴Mowat, op. cit., p. 62.
Henry Clay, James Bayard, Jonathan Russell, Albert Gallatin, and John Quincy Adams. Their very strength almost proved their downfall. All of them were strong minded and it became increasingly hard to present a united front to their enemies. Wellington said in the House of Lords that the American delegates showed "a most astonishing superiority."\(^5\) They so tenaciously refused to concede anything that England gradually reduced her demands.

John Quincy Adams, a scholar and a trained diplomat, headed the American commission. From childhood he had been brought in contact with stimulating influences, socially and intellectually, in both America and Europe. He had more connection with diplomacy than any other American, beginning at the age of fifteen, thus fulfilling the tradition accredited to the Adams family by James G. Blaine, who said that its members began to hold office in the cradle and continued to the grave.\(^6\) He was only twenty-seven when he was named minister to The Hague. Later, he served in the same capacity in Prussia. In 1807 he went to Russia as minister, and it was from that post that he went to Ghent.

Henry Clay had been a successful lawyer before his election to the United States Senate. Later, he was sent to the House of Representatives and became the Speaker of that body,

\(^5\) S. F. Bemis, *Diplomatic History of the United States*, p. 163.

which position he held when Madison appointed him as a member of the commission. Clay was a typical American, a man of little formal education but much native ability. He represented the West whose interests he always sought to further. In the fearlessness with which he stated his convictions, he was unexcelled by his countrymen. He possessed great personal magnetism and understanding of human nature. Perhaps his greatest strength lay in his ability to appeal to human reasoning.

Gallatin was an able statesman of Swiss birth, who had proven his ability as Secretary of the Treasury. He never made a parade of his love for his adopted country but his patriotism was sincere. He has never been adequately recognized by his adopted country, possibly because it was his adopted country. In intellect Gallatin was the peer of his contemporaries. He had the respect and admiration of Wellington, who wrote him at Ghent: "In you I have the greatest confidence."

England's commissioners, on the other hand, were very mediocre. In reality they were mere messenger boys of the Foreign Office. That country's best talents were naturally at the Congress of Vienna, where the complicated European peace settlement was being made. The commission at Ghent consisted of Admiral Lord Gambier, Henry Gaulburn, and Dr.

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8 *Gallatin, Diary of James Gallatin*, p. 35.
William Adams. 9

As is well known, the treaty settled none of the points in conflict. During all negotiations, the English had the advantage of never being out of touch with the home government. The Americans depended on written instructions from Monroe, three thousand miles away. 10

Clay and Adams disagreed at the very beginning of the negotiations. It was proposed that the British renew the articles of the Peace of 1783, which stipulated the rights of the Americans to fish, and dry and cure fish in the waters under British jurisdiction. The Americans, in turn, were to renew the rights, secured by the British in that same treaty, to navigate the Mississippi. Clay, a Westerner, was naturally interested in the political and economic situation on the Mississippi and he sought to keep it American. He said that anything else would make a "damned bad treaty." 11

Adams on the other hand was fully as tenacious in his stand on the fisheries. This is very understandable. He was a New Englander, the son of the man who had struggled for those same rights in the original treaty. Mr. Adams wrote:

Mr. Clay considers the fisheries an object of trifling amount and that a renewal of the right of the British to navigate the Mississippi would be giving them a privilege more important than we should receive in return. 12

10Ibid.
11Ibid., p. 63.
12J. Q. Adams, Diary of John Quincy Adams, p. 141.
Adams thought that the British navigation of the Mississippi had never been of the slightest injury to our country. His position, also, was that to make a peace without reference to the fisheries was to create a nest egg for another war.

Gallatin supported Adams on his stand concerning the fisheries. He felt like the fisheries were of supreme importance to the people on the New England coast, and that to make peace without securing these rights to the full extent, enjoyed before the war, would encourage the party which was planning a separation from the Union, and formation of the New England Confederacy.

But this argument did not convince Clay. He hinted that there might be a separation party in the West some day. It has been said that Gallatin had more trouble keeping peace between the Americans than making it with the British. His son, James, commented: "Mr. Adams is in a very bad temper. Mr. Clay annoys him. Father pours oil on troubled waters."

When the Americans received the final draft of the treaty, it was found that nothing was said of fisheries or of the navigation of the Mississippi. At this point Clay was for continuing the war. He wanted to play a "game of brag" with the British plenipotentiaries, as he thought they were doing

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13 Ibid., p. 146.  
14 Ibid., p. 145.  
15 Adams, The Adams Family, p. 149.  
16 J. Gallatin, Diary of James Gallatin, p. 27.
with the Americans. His position was extremely uncomfortable. Clay had almost made this war by his goading both his countrymen and the administration. He had predicted an easy victory with the peace signed in an American Quebec. A peace, signed now without accomplishing any of the purposes of the war, would be a mere wriggling out of a bad situation. He was afraid that his career would be ruined. On the other hand, if the war continued, its fortunes might change in favor of the United States. Adams, however, would not delay the peace to save Clay's face.

The treaty was signed on Christmas Day, 1814, and the British commissioners entertained the Americans at a dinner of roast beef and plum pudding. In January the British and American delegates were entertained by the Belgian government. All were in full dress. "Hail Columbia" and "God Save the King" were played throughout. To John Quincy Adams it was a very tiresome affair. He made the last toast, saying: "Ghent, city of peace: may the temple of Janus, here closed, not be opened again for a century." Upon completing the toast, he turned to the British commissioner Gambier and said that he hoped it would be the last peace treaty.

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19 Nowat, *Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States*, p. 64.
between England and the United States.20

Since the Treaty of Ghent said nothing about fisheries, Madison accordingly appointed America's ablest authority on fisheries, John Quincy Adams, as minister to England. He was to repeat his father's experience of being the first minister to that court immediately following a war. But his father was presented at court as a successful rebel, while the son represented a country which, having an equal grievance against both England and France, had chosen to fight England. There was also this difference in positions. The elder Adams had represented a national political experiment whose failure was expected, while the son represented one about to succeed.21

In becoming minister at the Court of Saint James, Adams fulfilled Washington's prophecy that he would reach the highest rank in the diplomatic service. He had been trained from earliest childhood in diplomatic usage. His early schooling was in Paris during the Revolution, while his father was there on official business. During the elder Adams' services as ambassador to England, the younger came home and attended Harvard. In the beginning of his political career, he was active in his defense of our rights on the seas.

In England, Adams established his embassy at No. 67 Harley Street. It was not long, however, before he moved to

20Ibid.
the Ealing suburb to escape invitations which took his precious time. Adams received his credentials at a levee. Private dinners, official dinners from cabinet members, and banquets from the Lord Mayor followed in rapid succession. He won favor at one of these dinners by his toast, "May every Briton who sets foot in America, and every American who visits England still find himself at home."22 But he was bored by what he described as "dull English feedings," and complained about having to show a capacity for tablecloth oratory.23

Adams and his wife were presented at the Queen's drawing room. It was the same queen who, thirty years before, had turned her back on his mother. At the wedding of the Princess Charlotte, where he was hidden as a guest, he offended the Russian minister by saying he had never known such a thing as warm weather in Russia.24 He further put himself in a bad light at this same function by his reply to Sir James Mackintosh, who asked if any of the American leaders actually desired the Revolution. Adams assured him that his own father had.25

Quite chagrined at Wellington's failure to remember him,

22R. Wilson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 129.
23J. T. Morse, John Quincy Adams, p. 99.
24Adams, Diary of John Quincy Adams, p. 172.
25Ibid.
Adams wrote: "This is one of the many incidents from which I can perceive how very small a space my person, or my station, occupies in the notice of these persons and at these places." The British were not friendly, but Adams was not a man easily snubbed, and, as minister, he had no rebuffs to resent. Moreover, British society knew just what was due diplomatic usage, and it was duly given.

His stay in England was not brilliant, for his duties and opportunities were few. Naturally, he had interviews with Castlereagh. Of this minister Adams wrote that his manner was cold, but not absolutely repulsive. The American minister's presentation on the matter of fisheries was so able that Castlereagh was relieved to discover that he did not have full power to make a treaty.

Castlereagh, in one of his interviews, informed Adams that England was considering placing an international force on the coast of Africa to capture slave trading vessels. America was expected to cooperate. Adams adroitly changed the subject, well knowing what a hornet's nest that this would stir up at home.

There were questions enough to be settled, for Ghent was a negative treaty. The boundary question was not wholly determined, the fishing question as yet unsettled, and maritime rights needed to be discussed. It was desirable that the

\[26\] Ibid., p. 174.

West Indian trade be regulated. There were claims that
needed wise handling and delicate diplomacy. America's prob-
lems after the War of 1812 were economic. Peace was needed
to develop trade and agricultural interests. England's com-
plete maritime supremacy was always a threat to America's
well being. 26 There was no guarantee in the Treaty of Ghent
that England wished to settle these differences. Against
these problems even Adams, the finished product of our
diplomatic corps, was ineffective. But he did defend his
country's interests and in many ways advanced them.

A slight remission of the severe restrictions placed on
our East Indian trade was gained. But the most satisfactory
contribution of Adams' stay in England was the beginning of
the Lake Agreement. This is the famous Lake Treaty which has
resulted in a frontier of twenty-eight hundred miles between
the United States and Canada being entirely undefended. 29
This, however, was only started by Adams. Bagot, British
minister in Washington, and Rush, Adams' successor in London,
completed it.

The British Foreign Office was impressed by Adams. Can-
ning, who sought his acquaintance, said of him:

He was more commanding than attractive in
personal appearance, much above par in general
ability, but having the air of a scholar rather
than a statesman, a very uneven temper, a disposi-
tion at times well meaning, a manner often domineer-
ing and an ambition causing uneasiness in his po-
itical career. 30

26E. H. Tatum, The United States and Europe, p. 22.
29Mowat, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the
United States, p. 73.
30Tatum, United States and Europe, p. 215.
Adams after two years became dissatisfied with his British ministry. One of the most trying duties of an American ambassador to England and one which Adams truly hated was that of introducing young American women at Court. He wrote of this:

The ambition of young Americans to crowd themselves upon European courts and into the company of the nobility is a very ridiculous and not very proud feature of their character. There is nothing in my estimation of things, meaner than courting society, when if admitted, it is only to be despised.31

He also complained of the salary, which was the same as before the Revolution, while the cost of living had more than doubled. He pointed out that if this practice continued, only rich men would be able to be sent as ambassadors.

Monroe's election to the presidency ended Adams' ministry. He was immediately called home to serve as Secretary of State and he was more than ready to go.

In Adams, we have one of the most paradoxical political careers. His education and diplomatic posts should have made him a cosmopolite. But Adams was a Puritan, and he developed all the good and bad traits of his Puritan ancestry. He was cold, aloof, and self-centered. Yet he was a devoted son, husband, and father. His petty meannesses are always apparent, yet his political career is spotless.32

Politically Adams was an independent. Although allied with the Republican party, it was always difficult for him

31G. H. Stuart, American Diplomatic and Consular Practice, p. 252.
32Clark, Old Man Eloquent, p. 9.
to have party allegiance.

In the field of diplomacy, his talents were limited, although he had been brought up on its traditions. He lacked the ability to think things over. His domineering manner repelled instantly. If opposed, he considered it an insult to him personally and became intolerant. He had the family trait, perhaps greatest in him, of being sensitive to criticism. While he had a contempt for his enemies, at the same time he never had a bitter word for them.33

It might be said that Adams was an idealist and a dreamer. This seems out of keeping with his character, but it is true. At one time when he was forming a convention for the regulation of neutral and belligerent rights in time of war, he wrote: "... when I think if it possibly could succeed, what a real and solid blessing it would be to the human race, I can scarcely guard myself from a spirit of enthusiasm which it becomes me to distrust."34

One sentiment ran through all his life -- an intense love of freedom for all men. His belief in the inalienable rights of men was invincible. Theodore Parker wrote of him at his death: "The one great man since Washington, whom America had no cause to fear."35

34Tatum, United States and Europe, p. 215.
CHAPTER V

RICHARD RUSH

John Quincy Adams' resignation upon the election of Monroe left our diplomatic post in England again vacant. Monroe's choice, which was in reality the choice urged upon him by Adams himself, was indeed a happy one. Richard Rush, high in the graces of the entire Adams family, was sent to the Court of Saint James and was more gratefuly received there than any American representative since Gouverneur Morris.¹

Rush was proud of his English lineage -- he was a direct descendant of one of Cromwell's Captains of the Horse.² But at the same time he was a staunch American. Both his father and grandfather were signers of the Declaration of Independence. His own public service started at the age of thirty-four when he became attorney-general of the United States, which position he held in a very authoritarian manner.

Rush's very arrival in England was auspicious. He

¹R. Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 138.
²R. E. Wood, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 76.
traveled there on our frigate of war Franklin, which in itself was a most unorthodox way for an American ambassador to travel. However convenient, Adams was afraid it would create the wrong impression, but Rush had his heart set on this manner of arrival. It was to be an object lesson to the British — an American ambassador landing from a battleship of line.³

Upon his arrival bells were ringing in his honor. Rush was pleased, for were they not the same bells that had rung for Hawkes and Nelson? His statement, on landing, was prophetic of future good relations between the two countries:

Is it not fit that two such nations should be friends? Let us hope so. It is the hope which every minister from the United States should carry with him to England. It is the hope in which every British Minister of State should meet him. If, nevertheless, rivalry is in the nature of things, at least let it be on fair principles. Let it be generous, never paltry, never malignant.⁴

At no time in the relations between the two countries did America have more need of a man like Richard Rush. Americans and Englishmen alike were suffused with resentments and hatreds which had been piling up consistently. Rush did much to tear down that feeling. He went to England prepared to admire the British. His zeal at learning about things British was indefatigable. He came to know London well and loved it very much. Traditions of English history thrilled him. At one time he signed a treaty in the room where the


⁴Mowat, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 75.
Duke of Monmouth had lived. He was thrilled to dine with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a room where Pitt had dined. The ceremonies and pomp of court life were enjoyed instead of endured, for he had an eye for color and pageantry.

At Queen Charlotte's first drawing-room party Rush was astonished at the magnificent scene. There were a thousand richly dressed ladies-in-waiting all wearing plumes and hoops. The brilliant and joyous scene was to him synonymous with England's power and opulence. Later, at the Carlton House where he was entertained at dinner, he toasted this power: "Other nations chiefly fight on or near their own territory; the English everywhere." 5

Because the British were interested in the American navy, Rush became an authority on his country's naval history. Any expression of regard for America or for things American on the part of the British inspired him to greater efforts to improve relations between the two countries. He studied books on British finance, and since his own first interest was law, the British legal institutions were carefully noted. The English clubs were of special interest to him. Their antiquity surprised him. He was particularly interested in Whites, where the light had burned continuously since the time of Charles II. Needless to say, he was a welcome guest in these clubs. 6

5Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 140.
But Rush in his zeal for things British did not lose sight of the things that had importance for his own country. Trade, finance, and national policies were studied with this end in view.

Rush's first audience with Castlereagh came on December 23, 1817, after his arrival on the 17th. He was well received by the British minister, who commented on America's prosperity, saying that the prosperity of one commercial nation contributed to that of another. Rush, on his part, was much impressed by Castlereagh's candid and liberal spirit, but at the same time he recognized that England would pay no very high price for America's friendship. A slight rift occurred in this first interview when Castlereagh asked him, as he had Adams, for America's help in putting down the slave trade. And Rush, like Adams, remained silent on this question. 7

The problems in Rush's portfolio to be solved were: slave questions under the Treaty of Ghent, fisheries, the northern boundary question, Columbia River question, United States and British West Indian trade, intercourse between United States and British North American colonies, island intercourse, blockade, colonial trade in time of war, list of contrabands, and the ever present question of impressment.

The claims American citizens had against England's

7 Ibid., p. 112.
confiscation of slaves obligated Rush to handle private claims of American citizens. This he did well. They had to be pressed continually one by one. He took them to Castle-reagh, pressing them politely, never stressing principle but terms. His progress was made through personalities, not principles. A surprising number of claims were thus settled. ⁸

The best known event of the Rush ministry is the Rush-Bagot treaty for the demilitarization of the United States-Canadian frontier. This was in reality planned by John Quincy Adams. He had desired it inserted in the Treaty of Ghent. It is important in the history of the world, since it is the first limitation of armaments by international agreement. ⁹ Only a force necessary for custom service was kept on the boundary. It has been considered one of the most enlightened steps ever taken by two countries similarly located as the United States and England. It reduced the cost of maintaining armaments and prevented hostile demonstrations in time of war. ¹⁰

As to commercial relations, it was decided to make a treaty settling all outstanding difficulties of this nature between the two countries. Monroe ordered Albert Gallatin,

⁸Ibid., pp. 111-112.
⁹S. F. Bemis, Diplomatic History of the United States, p. 172.
¹⁰J. Latane, History of the American Foreign Policy, p. 159.
American representative at Paris, to proceed to England to help Rush. The two American envoys went down to Castle-Reagh's country place in North Croy, Kent, to bring out subjects of dispute with the British ministers Robinson and Gaulburn. This was done by means of informal conversations. The technical part of the treaty was handled by the Board of Trade in Whitehall.\textsuperscript{11}

The treaty known as the Convention of October 24, 1818, was a good treaty and served to further relations between the United States and England.\textsuperscript{12} It cleared up some uncertainties about rights of American subjects in regard to British trade under the treaty of 1783. Liberties of American fishermen in British waters were defined. The right of Americans to dry and cure fish forever in unsettled bays was given. The British objected strenuously to the word "forever," but it was not taken out. Americans could not dry or cure their fish within three miles of any British territory in America.

The frontier boundary was also defined. It followed the 49th parallel of north latitude between the United States and Canada from the Lake of the Woods to the Rockies. This definition is still in force. Beyond the Rockies the Oregon was to be free and open for a ten-year period to settlement by both countries without prejudice to claims of either.

\textsuperscript{11} Nowat, \textit{Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States}, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{12} C. E. Hill, \textit{Leading American Treaties}, p. 140.
This is the famous joint occupation clause. Navigation of the Mississippi was touched upon again. Americans regarded the river closed to foreign trade. The English tried to renew the treaty rights to navigation of the river but failed.14

Upon the completion of this treaty Castlereagh said to Rush at a dinner:

May the happy tranquility long continue! Europe requires repose. Each State has had enough of war, and ought to be content. And you, too, you of America, Mr. Rush, ought also to be satisfied; you left off very well and ought to wish for nothing but continuance of peace.15

Rush felt complimented.

When the news of Jackson’s courtmartial of Ambrister and Arbuthnot reached England, storms of indignation arose. America was denounced. Jackson was called a murderer and a tyrant. Feeling became intense. It was lucky for America that her ambassador was the type of man that he was. He remained suave, polished, and sprightly. His bearing was always correct, but he missed nothing. Castlereagh told him after the crisis had passed that war could have been produced over the incident if the ministry had raised a finger.

During the summer of 1820 the long reign of George III ended with his death. Rush, as did all others of the

13Bemis, *Diplomatic History of the United States*, p. 175.
diplomatic corps, put his servants in black. He attended the
King's funeral at Windsor. The new King went into office
immediately, but his coronation did not take place until
July 19, 1821. A coronation medal is given to all ministers
when a King is crowned. Rush, of course, could not accept
his, due to the clause in our Constitution forbidding Ameri-
cans to accept presents from the royalty. This medal was
then offered to Mrs. Rush. It was declined, but Rush pleased
by quoting to them their own common law; namely, a wife's
gold was her husband's.16

Four years passed. In America, Monroe was re-elected
and in England Castlereagh committed suicide. Rush was an
ardent admirer of the British minister and regretted his
death very much. Canning, his successor, was a much more
colorful person than Castlereagh but much more wily. It
has been said of him that he could not take his tea without
a stratagem.17 Rush felt that he had to be constantly on
guard. The new minister had no thought of continuing Castle-
reagh's policy of liberalism.

Even before Castlereagh's suicide, the diplomats of
Europe were worried over Spain and her colonies. At Aix-
la-Chapelle, the Allied Powers met to formulate the policy
of the Holy Alliance. Castlereagh was not yet ready to

16Ibid., p. 153.
17Powell, Richard Rush, p. 149.
recognize the independence of Spanish colonies, but he did want American support in whatever policy he pursued. Meanwhile, in America, Henry Clay insisted on recognizing the independence of the colonies. Of this Rush duly informed Castlereagh.

Canning continued Castlereagh’s policy of non-recognition. But in a note to Rush on August 20, 1823, he suggested that the two countries issue a joint declaration to this effect: (1) Spain could not recover her colonies, (2) the question of recognition would be one of time and circumstance, and (3) neither England nor America wanted any portion of the colonies themselves and would not view with indifference their transfer to another power. But Rush’s hands were tied. America’s instructions called for recognition and America wanted no joint declaration. He demonstrated here his ability as a diplomat. His cool and objective character was perfect in this situation. His temperament was not belligerent.

Monroe was greatly pleased with Rush. The American president’s idea in not accepting England’s offer to issue a joint declaration was wise. If that had taken place, England would have assumed leadership in both American and Latin-American affairs. But the situation was delicate. Rush

18Latane, A History of the American Foreign Policy, p. 183.

expressed no opinion in favor of the suggestions but re-
frained from saying anything against them. 20 That he handled
things well is evidenced by Monroe's note: "You could not
have met Canning's proposal better if you had had the whole
American cabinet at your right hand." 21

Rush was the first minister to deal with the question of
British emigration to America. His ability to see both sides
of a question and his inherent honesty is shown by his posi-
tion on this question. He said: "The bad citizens of
Britain we do not want; the good, it is no part of my pro-
vision to be instrumental in drawing away." 22

When John Quincy Adams was elected president in 1824,
he offered Rush the important Cabinet post of Secretary of
the Treasury. Rush was ready to go home. During the eight
years of his service to England, two daughters had died.
His wife's health was poor and she, too, wanted to go home.
Also, he had two sons whom he wanted to be educated at home.

On the long list of public services Rush rendered to
his country not one was elective. He was not a leader, but
always one of the group. This is surprising, for he cer-
tainly possessed independence of mind and had a gift of

21 Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 156.
22 Ibid., p. 149.
original expression. But his genius lay in carrying to fruition policies thought out by others.

His interests were broad. Indeed, he is one of the most versatile and cosmopolitan of all our ambassadors. He knew French and Latin, was well versed in architecture, and knew a little painting. His gentle wit and fund of anecdotes made him a delightful conversationalist. One of his most endearing qualities was his full capacity for enjoyment of every human problem which made him a sought-after companion.

It was Rush's conventional mind which made his chief appeal to the British. He set forth his country's point of view with candor but not offense. Subtle changes in public attitudes, he could readily sense. The ease and gracious manners of Morris and the intense nationalism of Adams were combined in Rush. Probably no public man had fewer enemies and probably about very few can this tribute be paid: "It was said of Richard Rush that during his long public career he never said a word that was improper, nor betrayed a thought that might peril his country's fortunes." 23

CHAPTER VI

THE ERA OF GOOD FEELING

From 1825 until 1861, America was represented at the British court by twelve different men. This period might be designated as the era of good feeling in the diplomatic relations of the two countries. The British apparently had concluded that the United States was a power to be respected. The men of the period were, with the exception of Albert Gallatin, not outstanding diplomats. But the times did not call for master diplomacy. Also, much of the business of foreign relations was carried on in Washington.

Upon the resignation of Richard Rush in 1825, Rufus King was again appointed as minister to Britain. King had previously served in this same capacity from 1796 until 1802. His second ministry had no outstanding work. His health was failing, he was feeble and cantankerous, and he himself requested that he be given an envoy extraordinary to help make the treaty called for in his instructions.

Gallatin was sent to England in answer to King's request. No stranger to English diplomats was the envoy extraordinary. He had been, according to British opinion, the most outstanding member of the American commission at Ghent.
Born in Europe in an aristocratic family, he was familiar with the facts and traditions of diplomacy. It is said that he knew the purpose, terms, and results of every great treaty made for centuries between European powers. Mr. Madison had told him, when persuading him to accept the commission at Ghent, that there was nobody compared to him as a negotiator. Wellington had much confidence in him, placing him above England's own delegates. The Treaty of Ghent itself has been called the special and peculiar triumph of Mr. Gallatin.

The points to be settled in the British treaty at this time were (1) the ever-present commercial questions, chief of which was a renewal of the Commercial Convention of 1818, (2) the Oregon boundary, (3) claims of slave owners, and (4) participation in colonial trade.

Gallatin was able to get England to settle the slave claims by the payment to the United States of $1,200,000. As to the right of American trade in the British West Indian colonies, he could get no concessions. Canning was the head of the British Foreign Office, and both Clay and Adams

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1J. A. Stevens, Albert Gallatin, p. 313.
2J. Gallatin, Diary of James Gallatin, p. 1.
3Stevens, Albert Gallatin, pp. 335-336.
irritated him on this point. Americans, being protectionists, naturally offered no concessions for England's relaxation of the Navigation Laws. Gallatin complained at the limitation of his instructions, saying that they were of a most peremptory nature, leaving him no discretion and making a machine of him. The West Indian negotiations were subsequently dropped. The northwestern boundary dispute was submitted to arbitration. The commercial treaties of 1815-1818 were renewed.

Mr. Gallatin, indeed, had accomplished all that was practical, and he left the British government in a much better humor than he found it. He himself was confident that there would be peace for many years between his country and England.

Likewise, he won congratulations from President Adams, who, in a letter to Gallatin, graciously made ample amends for his previous harsh judgment:

I shall feel most sensibly the loss of your presence at London, and can form no more earnest wish than that your successor may acquire the same influence of reason and good temper which you did exercise and that it be applied with as salutary effect to the further discussions between the two governments.

During his stay in London, Gallatin was overwhelmed with

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5 Stevens, Albert Gallatin, pp. 359-360.
6 Ibid., p. 361.
7 Ibid., p. 360.
civilities. Not a day passed but the American ambassador could choose between half a dozen invitations to dinner. He was especially sponsored by the Countess de Lieven, wife of the Russian minister, who was the aristocrat of foreign circles. But he could have done without a sponsor, for Albert Gallatin could win his way in any society. He could talk well on government and science, the dry figures of finance, or the more genial topic of diplomatic intrigue.

Gallatin did not attend court, giving as his excuse that he was not the resident American minister. In truth, having a poor opinion of English society, he commented on the excessive splendor and degrading poverty found there. He heartily agreed with his son who wrote concerning a social function:

... if to crawl up three or four steps every half hour; to be stifled and have toes trodden upon; to make a bow to your host; to edge one's way through the crowd; to drink hot champagne and secure an ice down one's back; then to start one's journey back again -- if this spells pleasure, then a "rout" is pleasant.

Much more congenial to his taste were small dinners where he talked with his old friends and cronies on subjects in which he was vitally interested.

Gallatin was an adroit politician. One of his best traits was his ability to abandon his own opinions if those of another person promised better success. He did not hold

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Gallatin, Diary of James Gallatin, p. 265.
English diplomacy very high. He remarked that occasionally French statesmen say what is not true, but in London they conceal the truth. He felt that diplomacy's only weapon was strength.

Long residence in America had changed Gallatin very little from a citizen of cosmopolitan Geneva. His self-poise and great power of argument won British favor. His notes to the British government were excellent in tone, forbearing in temper, and conclusive in argument. He could honestly see the British point of view.

When Gallatin failed to obtain for his country a share in the British West Indian trade, Adams shut out British goods in retaliation. Under the strain of responsibility, Gallatin wrote:

The United States wants here a man of considerable talent, but he must be younger than I am and capable of going through great labor with more facility than I now possess. This is at all times the most laborious foreign mission.

In November, Gallatin's resignation was accepted by President Adams, and he was replaced briefly by James Barbour of Virginia. Barbour had himself requested the appointment to England, obviously to avoid running as vice-president on the ticket with Adams.

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11Dictionary of *American Biography*, 1, 591.
Barbour was received with great favor in England, doubtless due to Gallatin's popularity. His instructions, resembling somewhat those of his predecessor, included such subjects as abolition of privateering, free ships make free goods, contraband, rights and duties of belligerents, and the old question of impressment. Barbour was also to present the new grievance -- that British import duties were discriminating against American goods, especially cotton.

The British administration was at this time Tory. Barbour found Lord Aberdeen friendly to America and apparently anxious to remove every difficulty. However, in referring to the late American tariff, Aberdeen remarked that he felt the United States had treated England scurvily. The American minister, who had served on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, replied that Great Britain had taxed our principal staple from two hundred to six hundred per cent. Aberdeen seemed impressed and the new ministry had an auspicious start.¹²

James Barbour later attracted attention by his defiance of custom in not kissing the hand of the Queen of Portugal at a reception. But before the new minister could prove himself, either by his diplomatic power or his eccentric manners, Andrew Jackson was elected president and he was recalled.

Jackson's first appointment as ambassador to England went

¹²Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 183.
to Louis McLane, who accepted the post with reluctance. McLane's career started when he served as midshipman under Stephen Decatur. He had been a member of both the Senate and the House of Representatives. In politics, he was definitely a non-conformist.  

In an effort to re-open the British West Indian trade, Jackson and his Secretary of State, Martin Van Buren, directed McLane to tell England that the United States would open its ports to British vessels coming from British colonies, laden with such goods as might be imported in American vessels, on the condition that England would extend to America the same privileges of the act. The United States had formerly refused to comply with this concession. McLane was to explain, if the ministry was reluctant to re-open the question, that the rejection of a similar offer in 1825 had been the position of the Adams administration, and had been repudiated by the election of Jackson. The British were reluctant to re-open the question of the West Indian trade. They were encouraged in this position by the Canadians, who profited at our exclusion from colonial trade.

The policy of the Jackson administration was good will and conciliatory negotiations. It bore fruit. An Order-in-Council, May 29, 1830, permitted American ships to trade in

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the British West Indies, thus opening reciprocal trade for
the first time in forty years. Jackson, in turn, opened
American ports to British ships by proclamation.

Relations became more cordial. King William IV, who
was an old sailor, took a great fancy to McLane because of
their mutual love of the sea. Consequently, McLane was
treated with marked attention by the royal family. He gave
great promise as a diplomat. His chief weakness was his ap-
parent inability to cooperate. But his diplomatic career
was cut short, by his decision to accept a seat in Jackson's
cabinet. In charge of the London legation, he left his
secretary, Washington Irving, who was a great favorite.

Martin Van Buren received Jackson's second appointment
to England, in May, 1831. Although Van Buren had helped in
his election to the presidency, Jackson felt that he was
compromising the administration.

Van Buren was received in a most friendly manner by the
English king and court. He was able to arrange with Lord
Palmerston for the establishment of American consulates in
the chief manufacturing towns of Great Britain, a matter
that had long been much needed.

Just as all seemed to be going well, the American Senate
refused to confirm Van Buren's appointment. He was accused

\[16\text{Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 190.}
\[17\text{Ibid., p. 199.} \]
of being guilty of truckling to England concerning the West Indian trade. He had a farewell audience with the King, who expressed regret at the turn of events.

Jackson, angry at the Senate's treatment of Van Buren, refused to appoint another minister to England, saying that he would subject no other American statesman to such indignity. For a period of four years, from 1832 to 1836, the United States had no representative in England. But Jackson, in spite of this and of the fact, also, that he had fought England, improved relations with that country. He used brusque methods, throwing out hints and threats which brought relations to conclusions. Thus Jackson initiated what is known as "shirt sleeve diplomacy."\(^{18}\)

In 1836 Jackson appointed Andrew Stevenson as minister to England, who continued in this capacity until the end of Van Buren's term as president, thus giving the United States the advantage of continuous representation once more. However, few of our ambassadors to the Court of Saint James had such a stormy career in London as he had.

The first upset came with the first interview. England desired that the slave trade be wiped out. This was, of course, embarrassing to Stevenson because of the United States' defense of the institution. England argued that the trade could be wiped out if the right of search, or at least

\(^{18}\text{R. B. Howat, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 105.}\)
of visitation, was granted. The United States' contention over the right of search was technically correct, but at the same time, the slave trade could not be abolished unless each nation kept her own flag from fraudulent use, and in this contention England was correct.\textsuperscript{19}

Forsyth, American Secretary of State, instructed Stevenson that the United States would not be a party to any convention on the subject of slave trade. Stevenson had no love for Forsyth, and he wrote him angrily that he could control the situation. Jackson thereupon ordered the secretary to issue the minister a rebuke and to instruct him to tell Palmerston not to dictate a policy in regard to slavery to Texas. Stevenson was not a man to take browbeating. The situation tensed and did not improve during Stevenson's ministry.\textsuperscript{20}

More important and disturbing, however, was the McLeod affair. American adventurers were helping Canadians in a rebellion against England. Navy Island on the Niagara was seized and the ship \textit{Caroline} chartered to bring in supplies. The Canadian militia seized the ship and let it float over the falls. The American government then protested to England. Alexander McLeod boasted that he had helped seize the ship and had killed one of her crew. He was arrested and

\textsuperscript{19}J. S. Reeves, \textit{American Diplomacy Under Tyler and Polk}, pp. 21-22.

\textsuperscript{20}Willson, \textit{America's Ambassadors to England}, p. 214.
charged with murder. England demanded his release.\footnote{Kowat, \textit{Diplomatic Relations of the United States and England}, p. 108.} Palmerston wrote that McLeod's execution would produce "war immediate and frightful because it would be a war of vengeance and retaliation."\footnote{Ibid., p. 109.} The prisoner was later released on the contention that the destruction of the \textit{Caroline} was an order from the British government and that the United States could not hold any single individual personally responsible.

At almost the same time it was rumored that British officials were planning a railroad across the disputed region in the northeast, for the purpose of improving communications between Halifax and Quebec. English lumberjacks appeared on the Aroostock. Maine officials ordered them to withdraw.\footnote{Jones, \textit{History of Foreign Policy of United States}, pp. 155-157.} At this juncture Wellington and Peele made speeches in Parliament, which were anything but friendly. Stevenson adroitly advised immediate arbitration of the boundary.\footnote{Willson, \textit{America's Ambassadors to England}, p. 222.}

Stevenson soon became arbitrary. He began to hammer Palmerston about indemnity for slaves freed by British at Nassau in 1834. The British contended that when slaves touched British territory they were free. However, the indemnity was eventually paid.

Jackson and his minister continued their wrangling.
Upon the death of King William, Stevenson requested that the American government pay for the mourning of his official family. Jackson’s reply was characteristic. He advised his secretary that if he wanted his family in mourning, he would have to pay for it.25

Although Stevenson was courtly and talented, he was weak in personality, a machine politician, and not a diplomat.

He took his departure from England with a stormy note. He informed Palmerston of the offensiveness of the British search of American ships on the African coast, saying, "I shall assert again the determination of my Government that its Flag shall cover all that sails under it."26

The next minister was of a very different type. He was Edward Everett, scholar, distinguished orator and man of letters, whom the British thought was a novel type of an American. They appreciated his standing in the world of letters, his charming oratory and his grace of manner.

The Maine boundary question was uppermost at the beginning of Everett’s ministry. Webster wanted Everett to negotiate it, but Aberdeen wanted to send a man to Washington to make the treaty. Ashburton was sent, relieving Everett of this responsibility, but he was not pleased. This treaty, a very good one, settled most of the long disputed questions, leaving Everett little to do.27

26Ibid., p. 227.  
In the argument over the slave trade, it was easy for Everett to see the English point of view, since he held abolitionist ideas himself. He began to be criticized by his own countrymen. It was said that he was too British, an aristocrat, full of ostentation. Thurlow Weed accused him of departing from the simplicity of Franklin and Jay in his dress. Everett defended himself by saying his clothes were the simplest in the diplomatic circle.

His daughter died and this affected his social habits. Cheerlessly he wrote:

> It must be confessed that to be an American minister at present is not the most enviable thing in the world; a conspicuous station with nothing to support it; the representation of a country little respected and a Government not at all.

He became less and less attracted to his position. It became beyond his strength to sit at a desk all day and stand in a heated room at night. He knew when he heard of Polk's election that he would be replaced. He was succeeded at once by Louis McLane. Everett stayed to introduce McLane. Then he sailed away saying, "John Bull is amiable in private but in his foreign policies he is selfish and grasping, and when he dares, insolent."

President Polk, wanting a rugged American who would not be susceptible to London's flattery, chose Louis McLane who

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had been Jackson's minister sixteen years before. He arrived in England July 31, 1845. The points of difference were the Oregon boundary and the slave trade. England was up in arms at the failure of the United States to help stop the traffic in slaves. McLane considered England's warlike preparations unwarranted by affairs in Europe and concluded she was preparing a blow at the American nation.

Folk, anxious to go on with his war with Mexico, was glad to settle the Oregon question. Buchanan wrote McLane of the willingness of the United States to accept the 49° as a boundary line. England received Vancouver Island. Thus, the long series of boundary disputes was closed.31

Mclane, angry at the treasury's cutting down on salaries and allowances for those in diplomatic service, asked to be released from his mission. His request was granted and he returned to the United States in 1845.

Folk's next appointment to the English legation was the eminent historian, George Bancroft, who arrived in London in June, 1846. As Folk's Secretary of the Navy, he had distinguished himself by establishing the Naval Academy at Annapolis. He especially wanted the British appointment so he could do research for his history.32

31 Jones, History of the Foreign Policy of the United States, p. 171.

As a young man studying in Germany, Bancroft referred to himself as "too American in ways of thinking." But he retained this individual Americanism, and the British liked him and his American ways. He possessed extraordinary vitality, which was necessary for this legation. Perhaps his most distinguishing trait was his patriotism. He declared that England does not love us but she is compelled to respect us. Victories in the Mexican War caused Englishmen to congratulate him. He wrote: "A year's residence would convince you how entirely we are now beyond all danger of being interfered with injuriously by England."

Bancroft's diplomatic duties were concerned mostly with postal and commercial arrangements between the two countries. He also drafted a convention for a greater share in the West Indies trade, giving England privileges of American coastwise trade.

General Taylor's election to the presidency brought Bancroft's ministry to an end. He would not wait for his successor but went home, at once, December, 1849, with his trunks full of notes for his forthcoming history books and a doctorate of civil law from Oxford.

One of America's most outstanding ambassadors to England from the standpoint of quiet, unassuming and efficient

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33 Ibid.
34 Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 255.
service was Taylor's appointee, Abbott Lawrence, who went to England in 1849. He was a practical, hard-headed American businessman, and he ran his embassy on that principle. Quick of decision, prompt in action, and possessing extraordinary physical energy, he became at once popular in diplomatic circles. 35

For three years, Lawrence represented American interests with great dignity. In London, he brought prominent Americans and leading Britons together to a great advantage in cementing the relations between the two nations. He appreciated and admired what was admirable in the British, without being accused of being pro-English. Possibly, at the end of his service, American and British relations had never been more cordial. 36

One of the concerns at this time was the North American fisheries. Americans were accused of encroaching within the three-mile limit, and the British local population were restricting American activity. This matter, Lawrence easily straightened out.

More important was the Cuban question. The ambassador believed England and France were preparing to support Spain's sovereignty in Cuba. Palmerston asked that the United States enter into a joint agreement with England and France not to take possession of Cuba. Lawrence's instructions did not

allow him to sign a treaty of this nature, since it was the policy of his country to keep free from such alliances. The question remained unsettled.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 267-269.}

Lawrence was full of projects. One dearest to his heart was a projected ship canal across Central America. He tried to get England's interest by assuring her how such a canal would help insure perpetual peace between her and America. He also insisted that England give up her protectorate over the Mosquito Islands.

The Exhibition of 1851 was held during the Lawrence administration. He was anxious that his country be properly represented. This incident reveals how the United States underpaid its foreign diplomats. The ambassadors had much to do at their own expense. The legation was understaffed and the work was growing. Lawrence spent much of his own fortune in preparing for the Exhibition and in issuing pamphlets relating to his pet project of the canal.

In the summer of 1852 Lawrence resigned his post and was succeeded in England by Joseph R. Ingersoll, whom Daniel Webster introduced as a scholar, a gentleman, and a personal friend of his.\footnote{Ibid., p. 271.} The Ingersoll ministry was brief. The pressing questions were settled in Washington, where the United States Senate could act on them at once. Ingersoll found an increasing respect in England for the power of the United States.
Upon the election of Pierce, James Buchanan went to London, arriving there in August, 1853. His instructions called for a reciprocal trade treaty, agreement on fisheries, and a check on British interests in Central America. The first two of these were settled in Washington.

The Cuban question, which came up during the Buchanan ministry, reached a climax in a meeting of Buchanan, Soule from Madrid, and Mason from Paris at Ostend. The result was the Ostend Manifesto of October 18, 1854. Unfriendly critics say Buchanan sought Cuba in order to get himself elected to the presidency.\textsuperscript{39} Our Secretary of State rapidly closed the incident by saying that if Spain wanted to sell Cuba, we would buy it, but we would not urge the transaction.

Buchanan's manner of dress for an ambassador was both confusing and amusing. He wore the conventional black evening clothes. In order not to be confused with the servants, he fastened a dress sword at his side. The Queen was amused. Buchanan wrote: "I must confess that I never felt more proud of being an American than when I stood in that brilliant circle in the simple dress of an American Citizen."\textsuperscript{40}

Relations continued to improve between the United States and England. In February, 1856, Buchanan wrote of

\textsuperscript{39} W. Mowat, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 147.

\textsuperscript{40} T. A. Bailey, Diplomatic History of the American People, p. 282.
this: "There has been a marked and favorable change of feeling here within the last month toward the United States. I am now something of a lion wherever I go." The entire mission was very agreeable, although nothing was accomplished. Miss Harriet Lane, Buchanan's niece and hostess, made his legation one of the most popular the United States ever had in London. Reports from home concerning his prospects for the presidency increased his popularity and the regard in which he was held in England. These same prospects caused him to resign his mission and return to America in March, 1856.

Upon Buchanan's resignation, Pierce sent George Mifflin Dallas to England. Experienced in this line of activity, having been Prussian minister under Van Buren, he impressed himself more arrogantly on English public life than did his predecessors.

Dallas found a distinct anti-American element in the ministerial and social sets of England. He declared that he would break it down by conciliation if they would respond, and if not, by open defiance. It would seem that he pursued the latter policy. At his first presentation at court, he declared that his coat fit as well as the British coats, although it was made by an American tailor. He disclaimed all talk about England as America's mother country.

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41 Ibid., p. 300.
42 Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 297.
43 G. M. Dallas, Letters from Dallas, I, 19.
the Spithead review of the English fleet was held, he vowed he would not go unless he was commanded to do so by the Queen, and he did not. He made fun of the British guards, saying that they looked like boys of nineteen, hardly heavy enough to fight. All in all, he considered the English a decadent race.\textsuperscript{44}

When Dallas had an audience with the Queen at Buckingham Palace, he seemed more impressed with her than most things English. He was invited to attend the wedding of the Queen's daughter, Victoria Adelaide, to the Prince of Prussia. After this event he wrote that he thought common sense was gradually getting the better of traditional fooleries in England.\textsuperscript{45}

Politically, Dallas' ministry had no important events. He wrote that he could never get Clarendon, the British foreign secretary, to say anything worthy of crossing the Atlantic to hear.\textsuperscript{46} He vowed that if his mission failed it would be because the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty had checked England's commercial ambitions.

The American government was again becoming incensed over British visitation of vessels searching for slaves. His government instructed Dallas to say that if an order was not given to stop this practice within a fortnight, he would demand his passport. Clarendon issued the order and Dallas

\textsuperscript{44}Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 300.

\textsuperscript{45}Dallas, Letters from Dallas, I, 14. \textsuperscript{46}Ibid., p. 26.
was subsequently congratulated by his own government. He let the British government understand that the United States did not want to be lectured to as to its duties. He complained that "English statesmen generally have a complacent and irrepressible sense of moral superiority." Since this last source of trouble was removed between the United States and England, it must be admitted that Dallas began to regard himself as a hero.

But the era of good feeling was drawing to a close. Storm clouds were gathering on the diplomatic horizon between England and America. Lincoln was elected president. Charles Francis Adams, third generation of the Adams family, was to come to England. Confederate agents flocked to London. Seward, Lincoln's secretary of state, instructed Dallas to keep England from recognizing the seceding Southern states of America. Russell assured Dallas that when Adams arrived England would dictate her policy. Dallas wrote characteristically, that he would not be surprised if he were the last American minister to Great Britain and that this would be fame, if not an honor.48

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47 Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 306.
48 Ibid., p. 298.
CHAPTER VII

AMERICAN DIPLOMACY COMES OF AGE

The appointment of Charles Francis Adams to the Court of Saint James was as fortunate, in its way, as the election of Lincoln. His load was heavy and trying, as was that of the President. Actually, the fate of the United States depended on the English position, and one false step from Adams would have been fatal! His business in England was to see that nothing happened, and his career there was marked by important things anticipated but which did not happen.¹

Adams arrived in England May 1, 1861. He had a curious feeling upon returning to this country, where he had lived as a boy. He had always had an odd inherent distrust of Europe. His dislike of England was probably a part of his inheritance. The Adams family was not kindly disposed to England.² Personal experiences of his own in an English boarding school, during the War of 1812, had not been happy. However, it was here that he received his best diplomatic preparation. He unconsciously learned the strong and weak

¹C. R. Fish, American Diplomacy, p. 306.
²J. Latane, A History of the American Foreign Policy, p. 366.
points of British mind and character during his youth in England.\(^3\)

On May 13, 1861, Queen Victoria signed the Proclamation of Neutrality, thus recognizing the South as a belligerent. Adams immediately, in an interview with Russell, protested. Russell assured him that he was placing too much stress on the Queen's move. The British papers at this time took Adams' position -- that England should not recognize the slave-holding South. Adams, at once, let Russell know that it was strict neutrality the United States government expected.\(^4\) But the British government seemed convinced of the impossibility of the Northern cause. The great body of the aristocracy and wealthy commercial classes of England were anxious for the United States to go to pieces. However, the middle and lower classes sympathized with the North in so far as they understood the nature of the struggle.\(^5\)

The one good result from Adams' first interview with Russell was the mutual respect which the two men inspired in each other. They were naturally calculated to deal with the problems at hand. A simplicity of manner characterized them both. Russell was the older and more experienced of the two. Adams had the undemonstrative reserve which showed his Anglo-

\(^3\)C. F. Adams, *Charles Francis Adams*, p. 164.


Saxon stock and which the British understood. Adams had his son Henry with him, who served as his secretary and general handy man. The ambassador did not take a house for more than a month at a time, so sure was he that his stay in London would be short. And, indeed, he was almost completely isolated for the first fourteen months of his stay. The British only fulfilled the requirements of official etiquette and nothing more. Socially, he knew no one. As most of the English aristocracy was openly for the South, Adams found the air of their drawing rooms unsympathetic. True, the working classes favored the North but he had no contact with them. Newspapers were generally very hostile.

In an early interview, Adams protested to Russell at his receiving the pseudo-Southern commissioners, Mason and Sildell, and threatened to break off relations if these were received again. Russell was again ready with assurances -- he was receiving them unofficially. But Adams saw that the situation was growing tense. The South was pressing for recognition. France, spurred on by Napoleon's ambitions, was doing the same. News came of the Battle of Bull Run. The position of Adams became more and more uncomfortable but he kept his cool impassive judgment. He wrote: "My duty here is, so far as I can do it honestly, to prevent the

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mutual irritation from becoming a downright quarrel."\(^8\)

He continued his tactful pestering of Russell. Of this procedure his son, Henry, wrote:

The contest between the two gentlemen is flavored with as copious dashes of vinegar as you could wish to see. About once a week, the wary chieftain sharpens a stick to a fine point and then digs it into the excellent Russell's ribs. For two or three times, the joke was borne with well bred politeness and calm indifference, but the truth is the stick's becoming so sharp that things are being thrown around with considerable energy, and our friend Russell is not entirely in a good humor.\(^9\)

It became known in England that Mason and Slidell, Southern commissioners, were on their way to London, and Palmerston, the Prime Minister, asked Adams to call upon him at the Cambridge House. His purpose was to advise the American minister of impending difficulties.

Then came the news that the Northern naval officer, Captain Wilkes, had taken the Southern commissioners from the British ship Trent. Wilkes earned the international title of enfant terrible by this action. No American naval officer had ever been guilty of more ill-considered behavior. This violated a principle of international law for which the United States had struggled for over seventy years, and carried the right of search and seizure far beyond any precedent ever established by Great Britain.\(^10\)

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\(^8\)Lowat, *Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States*, p. 172.


When news of the Trent affair reached England, Adams was away from the embassy on a little vacation. He had not been overwhelmed with invitations, but Richard Milnes had invited him to the Milnes estate at Frystone. This was the first time that Adams had left London since his arrival there. It was a large, pleasant party, and an excursion had been planned to places of historical interest. Just before the excursion was to start, news came of Captain Wilkes’ action. Adams told his host that he had received stirring news. His British friends were impressed by his coolness.

Adams went immediately to Russell, avowing that he knew nothing about the affair. The Northern attitude at home did not help matters. Wilkes was publicly congratulated by the Secretary of the Navy. The House of Representatives voted him thanks. The entire government seemed dedicated to a policy that would cause a war with England.

The British press, becoming steadily unfriendly, accused Adams of consenting to take up and wear Britain’s cast-off clothing. It was indeed fortunate that there was no Atlantic cable. Slowness of communication gave Seward in America and Russell in England, with Adams as a link, time to guide the situation. England realized that if she went to war with the North, she would set up a slave state in the South.

Lord Lyons, British ambassador in Washington, insisted that something be done. America’s ancient doctrine of
the rights of neutrals was on his side. The prisoners from the Trent were demanded by England and were at last returned. Lincoln yielded because the English were right, not because they were strong, and because the United States was wrong, not because it was weak.\footnote{R. W. Page, \textit{Dramatic Moments in American Diplomacy}, p. 164.}

When the situation settled, Adams wrote, "So the danger of war is at present removed; and I am to remain in this purgatory a while longer."\footnote{Adams, \textit{The Adams Family}, p. 281.} Smarting with the conviction that he was the mark at which all classes in England were shooting, he declared in a letter:

> Our army must do the rest. I had a telegram from Mr. Seward full of promises of what is about to be done. The past future tense does not go down here. He ought to know it.\footnote{Adams, \textit{Charles Francis Adams}, p. 239.}

Henry, also, wrote of the growing tenseness of the situation, saying, "Anxiety has become our normal condition and I find a fellow can dance in time on a tight rope as easily as on the floor."\footnote{Ford, \textit{A Cycle of Adams Letters}, I, 222.}

On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. This was the consummation of Adams' wishes, but he was bitterly disappointed at its reception in England. The British saw in the proclamation a political dodge with no value. The British upper classes were still against
the North. Although the British government had long waged a fight against the institution of slavery in America, it now loudly denounced injustice done to slave holders in the South by the United States government. 15

Pleased with the proclamation, Adams wrote: "The Proclamation has done more for us here than all our former victories and all our diplomacy." 16 Concerning the British reception of the document he said:

The most flagrant case of all is the construction put by Lord Russell on the President's Proclamation of Emancipation. Such is English manliness! Such is English honesty! 17

Just as Adams straightened out the Trent affair and fortified himself for the next move, General Butler, Northern general in command at New Orleans, created another incident when he ordered all Southern women who insulted Northern soldiers were to be regarded as common women and treated accordingly. 18 In a note to Adams, Palmerston showed his disgust at such an order, which, of course, was meddling outside his province. Palmerston was taken in America as a perfect example of British wrong-headedness and official insouciance. Adams, angry at the turn of affairs, answered the note, inquiring if it were official. The Prime Minister had approached a foreign representative directly and in

15Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 329.
18Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 323.
undiplomatic language. Adams, in his note, assured Palmerston that the United States would take care of its own reputation and that furthermore, it would not want its representative to receive such an indignity under the seal of privacy. This is one of the most beautiful examples of Adams' diplomatic rapier play.

Russell was greatly embarrassed over the situation. He informed Adams that the whole thing could be regarded as only private proceedings, and, at that, very irregular. After this incident, Adams did not present himself at the Palmerston receptions. Later, Lady Palmerston tactfully smoothed out the affair.

In February, 1863, Adams began his long correspondence with Russell on the Alabama claims, which were to embroil the two countries for a very long time. In his usual methodical way, Adams had a memorial from a New York insurance company concerning losses in Northern shipping insured with that company. America claimed judgment, while Russell disclaimed all responsibility. After repeated protests from Adams, Russell, at last, granted him an interview on March 27, 1864, but nothing came of it. Adams wrote again, enclosing an affidavit from Clarence R. Younge, paymaster on the Alabama, listing crew officers. The correspondence grew, the bill mounted, and England's Lord Russell became disgruntled.¹⁹

¹⁹Bowat, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 190.
Early in the summer of 1862, Adams learned that several rams were being built in the Birkenhead shipyards for the Southern Confederacy. On February 9, 1863, he protested this to the British Cabinet. Events came to a climax in September when the rams were about to sail. Russell said that Her Majesty's government could not interfere with their sailing, but he did delay their going on September 3. That same day Adams sent a thinly veiled ultimatum to Russell. This was a crisis in the political intercourse between the two countries. To Adams the wavering of the British was weakness.

Meanwhile, news of the Battle of Gettysburg reached England. In English eyes this was the doom of the Confederacy. Adams hoped it would sway the Foreign Office. On September 5, 1863, he carried with him to an interview with Russell, a clipping from a Southern newspaper with a threat to burn Northern ports with their English-built ships, and he warned Russell:

It would be superfluous in me to point out to your Lordship that this is war. . . . In my belief it is impossible that any nation, retaining a proper degree of self-respect, could tamely submit to a continuance of relations so utterly deficient in reciprocity. I have no idea Great Britain would do so for a minute.

From then on Adams deluged the Foreign Office with

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21N. C. Lodge, One Hundred Years of Peace, p. 108.
22Ibid., pp. 109-110.
protests couched always in suave, correct language. He informed Russell that if the rams sailed, England would be a participant in the war. Palmerston and his advisers solved the question by laying hold of the vessels for the use of the Queen and prevented the sailing of the rams.

The entire summer was unpleasant, and Henry wrote that he could not think of it without a shudder. 23 Years later, Adams saw one of these rams at a naval review in Portsmouth and said, "As I looked on the mean little thing, I could not help a doubt whether she was really worthy of all the anxiety she had cost us."24

Adams' success with the rams fixed his position in English society. It had been his greatest diplomatic victory. He now took up the normal life of an American minister to London. For many weary months he had carried on a struggle against the ministry, the crown, the bar, the vested interests, and the aristocracy; but he wisely recognized the rank and file of Englishmen as the source of Her Majesty's opposition. England did not recognize the Southern government, because England was ruled by its people.25

The ambassador's function now became merely social. His position was unparalleled by any of his predecessors.


25Page, Dramatic Moments in American Diplomacy, p. 140.
In short, he had achieved a position that would have caused his father and his grandfather uncredulous envy.

In January, 1864, Henry Adams wrote, "No one treads on our coat tails any longer."²⁶ And later:

Society is much more agreeable now. We no longer dread any conversation about our affairs. The name of Sherman has of late placed those of us who are abroad in a very commanding position, and our military reputation is at the head of other nations. Now we receive compliments where we used to hear nothing but sneers.²⁷

So for the first time in the history of our diplomatic relations, an American felt as strong as an Englishman.

Adams remained in England until 1868. By this time, he was well established, both in his own country and at the Court of Saint James. In spite of congenial entertainment and friends, he still regarded his stay in England as exile. Gladstone invited him to small breakfasts, which reminded him of those of his father in Washington. This was to him a most pleasant type of English society. The esteem in which he was held is shown by his invitation to become a part of the escort for Palmerston's body at Westminster Abbey. Mrs. Adams, a very charming person, was even more popular than her husband. Thus the remaining years of his ministry passed uneventfully in the light of the stormy period preceding them.

In 1868, he was relieved of his post.

Truly American diplomacy came of age under Charles Francis Adams. Third in direct line of the Adams family to hold this post in London, there was no decrease of family ability in him. Possessing the ability of both his father and grandfather, he had also two other gifts in which they were deficient -- namely, balance of mind and ability to get along pleasantly with his fellow man.28 Moreover, he was exactly the man the situation called for. When the English became cold and reserved, Mr. Adams became a shade colder and a little more reserved. He had much in common with them intellectually and socially.

One of the best characterizations of Adams was written by his own son Henry. He speaks of his father as being singular for his mental poise; as having an absence of self-restraint or self-consciousness, a faculty for standing apart without seeming aware that he was alone. He had a balance of mind that neither challenged nor avoided notice, nor admitted a question of superiority or inferiority, of jealousy or of personal motives.29

Certainly at no time was American diplomacy at so low an ebb as in 1861, when Adams arrived in England. Never had the American policy stood so high, and nowhere higher than

28T. A. Bailey, Diplomatic History of the American People, p. 341.
in England, as it did in 1868, when he left.\textsuperscript{30}

James Russell Lowell said of him: "None of our generals in the field, nor Grant himself, did us better or more trying service than he in his forlorn outpost of London."\textsuperscript{31} But the man Adams, wise, calm, and serene, sums his success and shows best his entire character in his own simple statement: "My rule is, as far as I know how, to follow a strict rule of right."\textsuperscript{32}

Thus in the first half of our national history American and English statesmen have set a pattern for international decency. A dozen times when old world powers would have grabbed each other's throats, the enlightened representatives of these two great powers have managed their difficulties without bloodshed.

Our first President impressed upon our foreign representatives high ideals and avoidance of chicanery in international dealings. From the period of our first ambassador to England, John Adams, who distinguished himself by his frankness and simplicity of conduct as well as by his advanced humane and political views, to the time of his grandson,

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\textsuperscript{31}Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, p. 335.
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\textsuperscript{32}Ford, A Cycle of Adams Letters, I, 277.
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Charles Francis Adams, who cemented cordial relations with Britain, there was no relaxing of effort to carry out this sound advice of President Washington. Relations were not always harmonious, but the rest of the world stands amazed at such steadfast friendship as had developed by the 1870's between two powers which had begun diplomatic relations with such traditional hatred.

In the light of recent history, Mr. Balfour's prophecy appears to be coming true:

The time may come, nay the time must come when some statesman of authority more fortunate even than Monroe will lay down a doctrine that between English speaking people, war is impossible.  

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33 Lodge, One Hundred Years of Peace, p. 1.
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