Episode 12

Hello and welcome history friends patrons all to the final episode of \_\_\_\_. Last time, we saw how the Oregon Treaty was finally signed by the Americans on 12 June 1846. An AA resolution over Oregon had been a long time coming, yet, as we noted, the deadlock in negotiations seemed only to break once Aberdeen got more serious, and communicated in February that Britain would prepare its forces. This warning was communicated by America’s ambassador in London, Louis McClane, and the palpable tone of menace may well have given President Polk pause for thought. In this episode then, we’ll wrap up this fascinating era by tackling a few important questions. How close did Britain and America really come to war over Oregon? How prepared war Britain for this war? Did President Polk back down in the end, owing to a looming war with Mexico, or was the Oregon resolution a more natural outcome to factors less exciting, but still of crucial importance for this era of AA diplomacy? Let’s find out, as I take you back to this fascinating era for the final time.

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The Oregon question was settled by the launching and fitting out of certain heavy frigates at Portsmouth without a word being said. The American government read it in the papers and Mr McClane was sent in a great hurry to ask Lord Aberdeen what it all meant. His Lordship replied that our relations in the Mediterranean required a great force there, and added that the way the Oregon question was taken up by the US was not altogether satisfactory. From that moment…a peace party formed itself in Congress, and Mr Polk shortly found himself with five members of the Senate for his sole support in his celebrated declaration of the ‘whole or none, 54 degrees 40 or fight.’[[1]](#footnote-1)

This was how John Crampton, secretary of the British legation at Washington, and later ambassador to Washington in the 1850s, recalled the Oregon settlement to a peer in 1855. Although Crampton was an Irishman, and an alumni of my alma mater TCD, it is easy to see this account as the most unapologetically pro-British. It is also riven with inaccuracies. Thanks to those letters written home by Alphonse Pageot, the French ambassador to Washington, we know that the Senate’s supposed peace party was much larger than five men, and was in fact closer to forty. However, Crampton’s focus on McClane’s message back home, to the effect that thirty sail of the line were being prepared for despatch, does connect us to a key debate on the negotiations.

Richard Packenham, who had been British ambassador to Washington during the Oregon negotiations, did observe a change in tone in his letters to Aberdeen. The FS must have been intrigued by this, since he had asked Louis McClane not to use any tone of menace towards the Americans. Aberdeen requested a copy of McClane’s despatch for his own interest, but only Aberdeen himself knows how accurate its sentiments were.[[2]](#footnote-2) Was the British FS, this hater of war and lover of peace, truly prepared to send thirty ships to America’s shores? Although it was outside of our analysis here – since, seriously, we can’t talk about everything – American officials would have been aware of Aberdeen’s work alongside France in Latin America. Latin American politics at this time consisted of a lot of AF gunboat diplomacy, both to secure each country’s economic interests, and to protect the interests of their independent citizens.[[3]](#footnote-3) So, one could argue, Aberdeen had form in using the Royal Navy to get what he wanted. Yet, it goes without saying that Latin America was not the US, and as Rebecca Matzke noted in her article on this period, we should not overstate the importance of gunboat diplomacy in AA relations:

Britain's policy was not really 'gunboat diplomacy', or at least not gunboat diplomacy alone. Britain did not park warships off the US coast, as it might have done against an underdeveloped nation. Rather, it made its capabilities known to the US, occasionally deploying a suitable warship, so the US knew its potential and knew (from Palmerston and later from Peel and Aberdeen) what Britain was prepared to do.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Indeed, other historians like Kenneth Bourne, who wrote extensive surveys of the period, looks at the stand-off in a different light. To Bourne, President Polk was ‘difficult to the end’ in his approach to AA diplomacy, yet Bourne does suggest that one of the forgotten reasons for his eventual acceptance of the offer of the 49th parallel was the apprehension over Palmerston’s imminent return to office, which seemed only a matter of time thanks to the looming collapse of the Tories over the Corn Laws.[[5]](#footnote-5) Palmerston would certainly have complicated matters, and may even have engineered a clean break with Aberdeen’s more conciliatory policy. Yet Bourne notes in addition to this that Aberdeen himself missed the boat in his diplomatic approach, for it lacked much of the depth of Palmerston’s by not making full use of American pressures from Mexico to alter the American balance of power.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Then again, it is worth asking, what if Aberdeen saw no value in adjusting the American balance of power to Britain’s benefit? Rebecca Matzke noted that true British intentions in the crisis looked more like a wish to improve AA trade, protect British citizens, and secure the borders of its North American possessions. Insofar as these were Aberdeen’s objectives, they do seem to have been successful.[[7]](#footnote-7) Although she had to concede that disputed triangle of land below the Columbia River, Aberdeen had never believed that area held much value, nor did he see it as worth a lengthy AA controversy.

That said, British military preparations were underway, partly as a precaution, but also as a result of Aberdeen’s sapped patience, after so many months opposing his more belligerent colleagues, such as the Duke of Wellington. British officials sent out urgent military alerts to their bases in Aden and Singapore, while some contemporaries, such as Lord Lyndhurst, who served as Lord High Chancellor several times, reported in February 1846 that ‘We are sending out many ships of war to the American coast. I am far from convinced that we shall be able to escape war.’ Lyndhurst believed he would ‘feel the inconvenience’, as the family had estates in America.[[8]](#footnote-8) Perhaps the best evidence of a willingness to go further is found in the increased military estimates presented to Parliament – a development which the spendthrift Aberdeen and Peel surely loathed, but must have believed was necessary.[[9]](#footnote-9) Of course, these considerations of British actions are contingent on the American reaction, so perhaps the real question should be not whether British threats were effective, but why President Polk subsequently approached the negotiations over Oregon with a new energy and seriousness after the threats were sent. To answer this, we must wade into American politics.

I thought the great error of the whole debate in both Houses had been that whatever had been said was spoken not only to our own people but to the British Government; that we thereby exposed our hand, whilst our adversary kept hers concealed.[[10]](#footnote-10)

President Polk expressed these sentiments to a Senator on 9 April 1846, just as the Senate grappled with Aberdeen’s proposals, before eventually approving them. They suggest that Polk was both aware of the impact which belligerent discussions might have on Britain, and that he lamented that America ‘exposed its hand’, as he put it, by making it plain through its debates that this belligerence only went so far. Indeed, the political mood in the US appears much like a mirror image of that in Britain during the same time. Certainly, Oregon was of far more importance to the US than to Britain, and arguments for its incorporation up to the extreme border of the 54th parallel did exist, but by and large, it is safe to say that President Polk did not want war with Britain.[[11]](#footnote-11) As Stuart Anderson observed, in his article considering the impact of British threats on American diplomacy during Oregon:

Knowing Britain’s earnest desire to settle the Oregon question peaceably and to avoid a war of grave implications over a piece of territory which both Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen were known to hold in little regard, Polk saw an opportunity to gain, temporarily at least, a bargaining position of strength. A skilful player of diplomatic poker, the President persisted in his bluff until Lord Aberdeen’s threats called his hand and impelled him to pay his cards on the table.[[12]](#footnote-12)

Driving a hard bargain during the negotiations required keeping the British in the dark regarding what he actually wanted. What Polk wanted remained a pressing question, particularly since, in August 1845, the President reiterated his support for all of Oregon up to the 54th parallel. Over the months that followed Polk kept Britain guessing as to what he would agree to, and even late January 1846 the President authorised a communique which confirmed America’s desire for negotiations, without specifying its terms.[[13]](#footnote-13) The turning point, in Stuart Anderson’s view, was the arrival of the letter from McClane in Washington on 21 February. This letter contained the warnings about thirty sail of the line, of Aberdeen removing his opposition to war, and of the prevailing belief in Peel’s Cabinet – which McClane urged SOS Buchanan to dispel – that Polk’s administration was disinterested in compromise, and even negotiations themselves.[[14]](#footnote-14)

This, Anderson believes, moved Polk to mollify his attitude towards the Oregon question. The notable difference in his approach from here was his decision to actually clarify what he wanted, and Buchanan was left to communicate this to McClane in his reply sent on 26 February. The acceptable terms included the aforementioned settlement along the 49th parallel, and other details we don’t need to get into, but the point, as Anderson underlines, was that Polk believed these terms would be acceptable to the Senate. There would be no danger of a British proposal floundering embarrassingly on the public American stage. From this account, it is hard to deny that Aberdeen’s threats had proved the difference, although the image given by John Crampton which has the US scrambling to all of a sudden make a deal with Britain from fear of its navy goes a little far. As Anderson concluded:

Thus it is clearly apparent that British threats, although they were not the single great decisive element that some writings would make them out to be, did play an important part in bringing about the final settlement on the Oregon boundary dispute. Polk the realist was always ready to compromise at 49 degrees, but his strategy of keeping the pressure on his adversaries made him dangerously reluctant to enlighten Britain as to his true intentions. The ominous rumblings coming out of London, including the pointed warning from Lord Aberdeen that the Royal Navy was preparing to carry out offensive operations in American waters, finally coerced the tenacious President into laying his cards on the table.[[15]](#footnote-15)

You’ll note the important distinction that Anderson makes. The threat to send the navy did not force Polk to reduce his demands and compromise, it simply forced him to actually clarify what he wanted, which was close to what the British were willing to give him anyway. They forced the President to talk, but they did not compel him to engage in concessions which would not have come without the threats. Alphonse Pageot’s account of Polk being caught between the peace and war factions supports this idea, as the President played the field for as long as he could, rousing the American public into a patriotic fervour. However, as Anderson also notes above, British threats were a factor, but were not ‘the single great decisive element’. This indicates that Polk was under pressures other than those posed by a looming British naval attack. But what were those pressures? A note on Polk’s foreign policy towards Mexico would be useful here, particularly considering the deal on California which the Mexican minister in London tried to negotiate in late 1845, covered in episode 10, and the fact that affairs in Mexico deteriorated to the point of war in May 1846, just as AA relations passed the period of danger. Could this be a coincidence?

There is little need to delve into the full origins of the MA war, as it has been covered elsewhere by me, and other eminently more qualified historians. However, where it is relevant to us in the Oregon negotiations, it is worth noting that Congress announced the annexation of Texas in December 1845, an act which successive Mexican governments claimed would be akin to a casus belli in previous years. That act having been made, what would Mexico do, and does uncertainty over Mexican moves in early 1846 help to explain why Polk was more amenable to settling Oregon with Britain than he otherwise would have been? On 11 May 1846, Polk sent Congress the message "War exists, and, notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico herself”, a first for the American Presidency, which would henceforth react to Congress’ declaration of war, not the other way around.[[16]](#footnote-16)

Polk’s annual address in early December 1845 may have deeply offended the British for its stand on Oregon, but it also irritated some Americans as they noted Polk’s tendency to speak as though a state of war already existed between Mexico and the US. By that point, General Zachary Taylor’s cavalry had crossed the Rio Grande and gotten into difficulty. Was this a skirmish, or was it a full-blown war? Polk insisted the US should act as though it were the latter, but opposition voices soon made their voices heard, though they were largely drowned out by restrictions placed on Congress, which only provided a few days to consider critically important bills relating to the raising of militia in the event of war.

In addition, questions of slavery hung over the war like a dark cloud, dividing the Democratic and Whig parties in the US, and denying Polk the united front against Mexico he may have expected.[[17]](#footnote-17) In time, when the US settled into the war, these divisions were largely swept aside, and we even see new figures in the 1847 Congress like Abraham Lincoln approving votes of supply for the war. Initially though, Polk’s most important instrument for whipping supporters was the idea that the flag had been attacked during General Taylor’s skirmish, and that this had to be met with force.[[18]](#footnote-18) Only in recent memory, opposition to the annexation of Texas had deadlocked American political debate, and distracted American officials who defined their positions along pro or anti annexation lines.[[19]](#footnote-19) Was American politics thus destined for another such deadlock over Mexico? Critics of the war did not vanish during its duration, but records show that during the summer of 1846 particularly, patriotism won the day, and eventually carried the US to victory against the weaker power.[[20]](#footnote-20)

In short, Polk was arguably distracted by Mexican affairs in spring 1846 just as the confrontation over Oregon was heating up with Britain. There was no guarantee that his efforts to rally Americans towards war would be successful, and if he bore the recent example of Texas in mind, he may have been mentally preparing for another exhausting political fight, particularly since the wide range of views on what to do with Mexico when it was defeated predicted a Manifest Destiny many times the size of that which absorbed Texas. If we add to this the confirmation given by Francois Guizot in Paris that France would retain its neutrality in any war between Britain and America, Polk’s strategic dilemma becomes plain. It was important to reign in any potential Anglo-French moves to take advantage of American distraction, and the record of those powers in Texas suggested that they would, if the opportunity arose, intervene in that region to secure their advantage.

Polk also could not discount the work of Mexican diplomacy, particularly through the arm of its officials in London and Paris. From an early stage, the Mexican government had tried to reach some agreement with the British and French whereby the latter powers would intervene to protect California and New Mexico in the event of a MA War. But letters sent across the Atlantic also reveal an awareness in Mexican circles that if the British and Americans came to blows, Mexican requests for support in its more exposed lands would receive a much more sympathetic ear.[[21]](#footnote-21) If we view the Mexican diplomacy over Texas as a precursor to Mexico’s expected policy during the MA war, then it would only have made strategic sense for President Polk to tie the British down to an agreement in case AF diplomacy engaged in unwarranted interference. This unwarranted interference would be particularly disruptive if, as was expected, Palmerston entered the FO upon the collapse of Peel’s government.

From the British perspective, the problem was not necessarily a lack of interest or opportunity, but Mexico itself. Aberdeen had repeatedly urged Mexican officials to take the loss in Texas, which, if done properly, would remove the direct reason for war from the Mexicans and Americans. In that scenario, where America lacked the Texan excuse, Washington would cast itself more clearly as the aggressor if it then tried to invade its southern neighbour. However, As Aberdeen had lamented in early 1845, with palpable frustration

What had Mexico to hope from such an undertaking? Not only would she never recover that territory, but in the course of the war with the United States in which she would be involved she would probably lose other provinces and especially the Californias. These and no others would be the results, truly disastrous for Mexico, if she persisted in so imprudent a policy. How different would the conditions be if she would listen to the voice of reason and decide once for all to recognize the independence of Texas! . . . In that event, as he had told me several times, it might be possible, with the co-operation of France, to enter into arrangements for guaranteeing at the proper time the independence of Texas and the territory of Mexico. The recognition of the independence of that country is therefore the only course which reason, prudence and sane policy commend to Mexico – following the example of other countries in the like circumstances. It was well for England that she recognized the independence of her former colonies when she saw it was hopeless to reconquer them; and it was well for Spain that she did the same in respect to hers.[[22]](#footnote-22)

So long as Mexico refused to swallow its bitter Texan pill, Aberdeen believed a rupture with the US was only a matter of time, and he loathed the idea of tying British fates to an unpredictable – and some even said, despotic – Mexican regime. Nor could the Mexicans hope for much support from France, so long as it insisted on reclaiming the lost Texan provinces. Even the declaration of the intention to annex the region could not sway AF minds, and the Mexican minister in Paris even got an earful from the French King Louis Philippe, who said in March 1845 that:

To describe the kind of obstinacy which prevents seeing what is evident, we have a word in French which is very easy to translate into Spanish, *infatuation*. This infatuation prevents you from recognizing what everybody else sees; that is, that you have lost Texas irrevocably. If I urge you to recognize her independence, it is because I believe that advantages will result to Mexico, in whose happiness I take great interest. If a barrier is once established between Mexico and the United States, they will have no excuse for mixing in your affairs, and they will let you live in peace.[[23]](#footnote-23)

The Mexican infatuation with Texas perceived by the French was believed as unfortunate in French circles as it was in the British. It was not necessarily that London or Paris wanted Mexico to exercise caution and calm over Texas to make it a better potential partner. Instead, British and French fears centred on the scenario which would follow Mexico’s war of reclamation against Texas, which would inevitably draw in the US. In this scenario, the weaker Mexico would be overrun in its distant provinces like California and New Mexico, and the Americans would emerge even stronger and more expanded than ever before.

This is all to say that the Mexican infatuation with Texas did not prevent a proper AF accord with that country; neither London nor Paris could countenance war between Mexico and America full stop, because they knew where it would lead, and they did not much like the idea of America fulfilling its manifest destiny at the expense of any independent enterprises they might concoct in the region. Events were then overtaken by the force of Texan opinion, which seemed to reject any suggestion of remaining independent, even with Mexico’s blessing. Since it was not extremely unlikely that Texas would remain independent for long, by the summer of 1845, Aberdeen effectively washed his hands of any planned manoeuvring in Texas or Mexico for the foreseeable future.[[24]](#footnote-24)

From this analysis, it seems clear that President Polk had little to fear from the British or French in the event of a MA War. No one in Europe rated Mexico’s prospects of success very highly, and Mexican diplomacy essentially failed either to secure any commitment on Texas, or to acquire guarantees for support of Mexico in the event of an American War. Not even the introduction of California into the Anglo-Mexican discussions could induce Aberdeen to take the bait, in the name of a vague arrangement which would see California protected from an American attack by the British and French. Significantly for us, Aberdeen’s discussions in Cabinet stalled on the fact that Oregon was still unsettled by late 1845, and a scheme for California would overextend British resources in the event that Oregon required more than mere diplomacy. Indeed, we see Aberdeen actively work to delay Mexican declarations of war until the Oregon business was settled, not wanting to have to balance two headaches at once.[[25]](#footnote-25)

We could speculate that President Polk dragged Oregon out in order to distract the British from becoming involved in California, but this is to see an aspiration where none truly existed. Polk’s intransigence over Oregon was a diplomatic tactic, which then became a domestic political hurdle, and even if they had been freed from Oregon earlier, British officials believed that a sudden declaration of interest in California would be an imperial step too far even for them, and had told the Mexicans as much. For Mexico to have been a key issue in Polk’s Oregon policy, we would have expected a sea change in his approach to Mexico once he received news of British military preparations. Yet, nowhere did this materialise. Instead, we can judge that Polk sped up his Oregon response, but that he carried on as usual with Mexico, likely expecting that war would take place that year. The timing of the declaration of war in May, shortly before the final British proposal arrived, also undermines the thesis that the two fronts were intimately connected. Although it is perhaps less exciting than an alternative scenario then, we must conclude that the prospect of war with Mexico neither influenced Polk to change his tactics on Oregon, nor did Mexico factor much in Britain’s consideration of the Oregon question. Instead, of far more importance to Aberdeen and Peel than distant Mexican schemes was the struggle closer to home over the Corn Laws.

Although research by Frederick Merk has dispelled the theory that Britain resolved the Oregon crisis because of acute famine in Ireland and food shortages at home – hoping with American goodwill to fill this gap in domestic production – there is some use in seeing the repeal of the Corn Laws and the arrival of free trade as an important factor in the Oregon settlement.[[26]](#footnote-26) It was not famine, but opportunity, that some free traders offered to the Americans. Would not the removal of tariffs grant the US an opportunity to increase its domestic food production to everyone’s benefit?[[27]](#footnote-27)

By late February 1846, Washington was able to read the latest repeal bill, and it was known both that Peel intended to transform Britain’s economic model, and that he would suffer domestically for it.[[28]](#footnote-28) If this news was digested properly by Polk, then he may have connected the definite repeal of the Corn Laws with the imminent collapse of Peel’s administration and, thus, the return of Palmerston. Perhaps this is what induced Polk to change his negotiating tactics? If this was true for Polk it was not true for American political parties, who were divided on the prospect of a freer British trade arrangement, which they feared would offer opportunities, while undercutting domestic American producers. All segments of American opinion were nonetheless clear that whatever impact it had in Britain, it would not change their minds on how to proceed in Oregon.[[29]](#footnote-29) As the Washington correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* observed in March:

The news of Sir Robert Peel’s great economical scheme has not tended to allay the zeal of the western members for war as much as might have been expected. The constituents of these gentlemen, it must be remembered, are about the most reckless and dangerous population under the sun, just civilized enough to read the paltry village newspaper, which panders to their vanity.[[30]](#footnote-30)

The greatest impact upon peace which the Corn Laws had was, in the final analysis, upon the British themselves. Particularly after Peel’s government briefly collapsed in December 1845, attitudes in his party hardened, and it became clear the party would not survive the full repeal of the old traditions. With a sense of fatalism then, both Peel and Aberdeen proceeded with their Oregon policy safe in the knowledge that whatever they acquired, it would not matter enough in the grand scheme of domestic politics. Whether a win or a loss, Oregon would be forgotten amidst the once in a generation alteration they insisted on making at home, and it was this assurance, tied to the increasing support of Russell’s Whig Party, which moved Aberdeen to resolve Oregon.[[31]](#footnote-31)

He may have believed that by resolving it, the greatest barriers against AA peaceful cooperation would be removed, and war between the two powers would become unthinkable. Yet we must also remember Aberdeen’s general disinterest in the Oregon region, his sincere aversion to war, and – lest we forget – his exhaustion after such a trying period in office. When compared to the flak he was about to receive in Parliament over the Corn Law policy – from a young Disraeli, no less – Aberdeen prioritised a settlement which could not be called dishonourable, but which could hardly be called a triumph. The result was the status quo seen today; an outcome of Polk’s intransigence, Aberdeen’s firmness, and the often-perplexing limits of the Oregon question.

And that, my dear patrons, is how we’re going to end this series. I hope you’ve enjoyed our exploration of AA relations during the period, as we examined two very different periods of crisis under two very different British Cabinets, and even more different Foreign Secretaries. Palmerston would return to the FO in July 1846, to begin his most critically acclaimed period in office yet, but Aberdeen left with his nerves frayed, the party he had served in ruined, and the prospects for future office – as he would himself have confessed – not rosy. Of course, AA moved on from this period of the Caroline, Alexander McLeod and Oregon towards pastures new and more contentious, and we imagine that Aberdeen particularly was delighted to be free from all of them. Having already examined this period to death for my PhD, I’d be lying if I said I ever want to hear about Oregon ever again, but I hope you found this exploration of this forgotten period as fascinating as I did. It provides a glimpse into a forgotten period of history, where the special relationship did not exist; where vaguely worded treaties solved AA disputes; where questions of rights, honour and compromise revolved around the increasingly active British and American public spheres; where British military force still held precedence, and where Brother Jonathan, the caricature of American stubbornness and foolishness, gave way in time to Uncle Sam.

In time, our regular programming will return to this era for our BGTW series, but this is a mere snapshot of the research I will do for that mammoth series, as well as the research I have already done for the PhD which, if I hadn't mentioned before, supporters like you have made possible. So, thanks so much for listening to this series and supporting this show. If you enjoyed it, be sure to let me know through the usual channels, and tell your friends about it too, in case they want to delve into this history and see for themselves how Britain and America used to do things. For now though, I will take my leave, to look at anything other than Oregon. My name is Zack, this has been \_\_\_\_, thanks for everything, and I’ll be seeing you all soon.

1. Quoted in Jones, *American Problem*, 51-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Ibid*, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See Iwan Morgan, ‘French Policy in Spanish America: 1830-48’, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Nov., 1978), pp. 309-328. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Rebecca Berens Matzke, ‘Britain Gets Its Way: Power and Peace in Anglo-American Relations, 1838-1846’, *War in History*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (January 2001), pp. 19-46; 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Bourne, *Foreign Policy*, 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America 1815-1908* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 71, 112, 121-122, 161-162. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Matzke, ‘Britain Gets Its Way’, 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See Jones, *American Problem*, 223, note 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Ibid*, 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Quoted in Anderson, ‘British Threats’, 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See Henry Commager, ‘England and Oregon Treaty of 1846’, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Mar., 1927), pp. 18-38; 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Anderson, ‘British Threats’, 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *Ibid*, 159. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Ibid*, 159. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *Ibid*, 160. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Merk, ‘Dissent in the Mexican War’, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Third Series, Vol. 81 (1969), pp. 120-136; 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. *Ibid*, 121-124. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. *Ibid*, 125-128. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Merk, ‘A Safety Valve Thesis and Texan Annexation’, *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Dec., 1962), pp. 413-436. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Particularly the opposition in Tennessee is worth noting, see B. H. Gilley, ‘Tennessee Whigs and the Mexican War’, *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (SPRING 1981), pp. 46-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See George L. Rives, ‘Mexican Diplomacy on the Eve of War with the United States’, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Jan., 1913), pp. 275-294; 278-279. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Quoted in *Ibid*, 281. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Quoted in *Ibid*, 282. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. *Ibid*, 284-286. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *Ibid*, 287-289. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Merk, ‘The British Corn Crisis of 1845-46 and the Oregon Treaty’, 95-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Ibid*, 104-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. *Ibid*, 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. *Ibid*, 115-117. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *Ibid*, 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *Ibid*, 120-123. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)