

THE ALASKA BOUNDARY

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The Alaska Boundary by George Davidson

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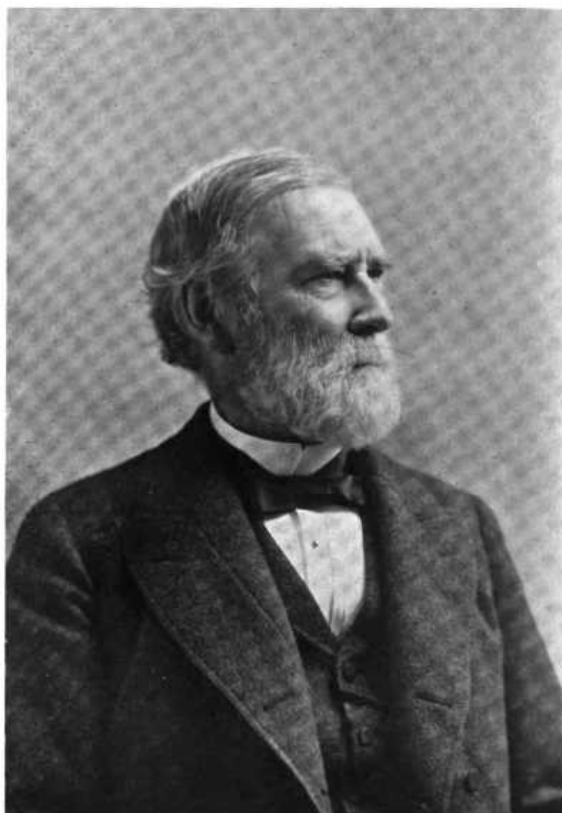
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GEORGE DAVIDSON

**THE ALASKA
BOUNDARY**



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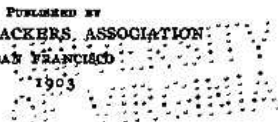
Member National Academy of Sciences of the United States.
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THE
ALASKA BOUNDARY

GEORGE DAVIDSON

PRESIDENT OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF THE PACIFIC,
ETC., ETC.

PUBLISHED BY
ALASKA PACKERS ASSOCIATION
SAN FRANCISCO
1903



LETTER OF TRANSMISSION.

San Francisco, Cal., August, 1903.

ALASKA PACKERS ASSOCIATION,

SAN FRANCISCO:

Dear Sirs.—I herewith transmit the paper which I engaged to write upon the Alaska Boundary.

It looks very long, but I wished to sustain every statement by an appeal to charts, maps, official documents, special papers, pro and con, and whatever would add authority to the investigation.

I have named the authorities, and in critical points have used the original French text of the letters and documents that passed between the Plenipotentiaries of Russia and Great Britain, preceding the date of the Convention of 1825; and which, in part, were used in the Fur Seal Arbitration of 1892.

As I believe great weight will be given to a strict construction of the French texts of the Convention of 1825, and the Treaty of 1867, I have introduced each document with the French and English texts in parallel columns; and have freely criticised the weak and unequivalent English translation. I understand that the French draft only was signed; certainly French was the diplomatic language of the earlier period.

I have given some space to the inside or secret history of the Negotiations of 1825. The boundary incident of the Convention was confessedly a struggle between the two great fur companies, Russian and British.

I have criticised the misquotations of the Canadian authorities in several cases; and have referred to the British Columbia map of 1895 wherein the great mountains north of Lynn Canal are "washed out"; and have shown the progress of Canadian contention since 1885 by their maps and written opinions.

Great Britain has no claim whatever to the lisière or border of the country surrounding the Archipelago. The narrowest part of that lisière will likely be at the highest parts of the White and Chilkoot Passes; and the thirty miles limit will cross the Chilkah River more than fifteen miles beyond the *modus vivendi* line of 1899.

I have shown how the boundary line may be laid down upon a properly authorized map; and have then explained how it may be arbitrarily and prominently marked by natural objects, thus forming a broken line boundary nearly coincident with the curved boundary line. A little "give and take" by both countries would soon settle the whole trouble.

I have summed up very briefly in stating that the decision of sovereignty over the lisière will largely depend upon a strict construction of the French text with the Charts and Narrative of Vancouver before the tribunal; and for other reasons.

I have not hesitated to assert that the United States has an impregnable right to the territory and the dominion thereof; and that this is a question that should never have been submitted to arbitration.

Yours with great respect,

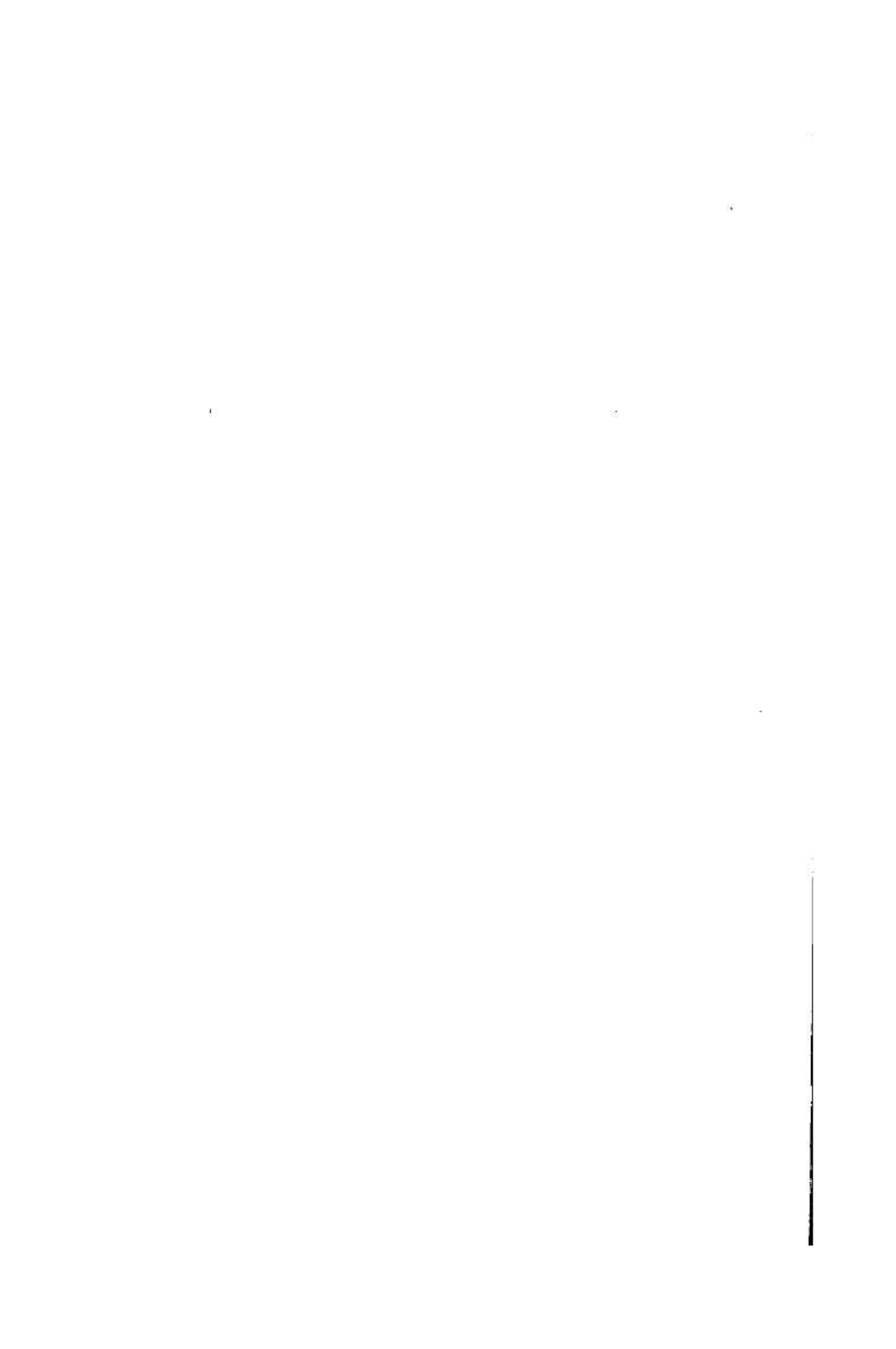
GEORGE DAVIDSON.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

The valuable paper prepared by Professor Davidson upon the ALASKA BOUNDARY (originally intended for private use) is of such inestimable worth as an historical and geographical treatise on that subject, that we have concluded to publish it, with the assurance that the public will not fail to appreciate the labors of the venerable Author, whose comprehensive and scientific learning and indomitable energy have been so faithfully exemplified.

ALASKA PACKERS ASSOCIATION.

San Francisco.



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