

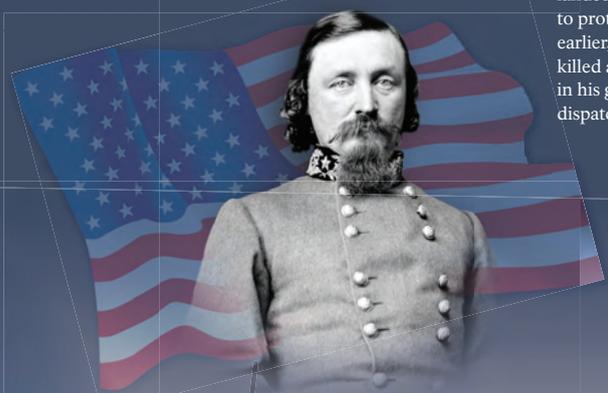


Peace Over War

In 1846 when the Oregon Treaty was signed, the United States and Great Britain thought they had ended their differences over a vast territory known as the Oregon Country. The treaty set the 49th parallel as the boundary between the two nations. But the treaty was ambiguous about which side of the San Juan Islands the boundary fell. (It referenced a strait, but there are two straits.) To keep peace, the nations tabled a decision, but the unresolved issue festered.

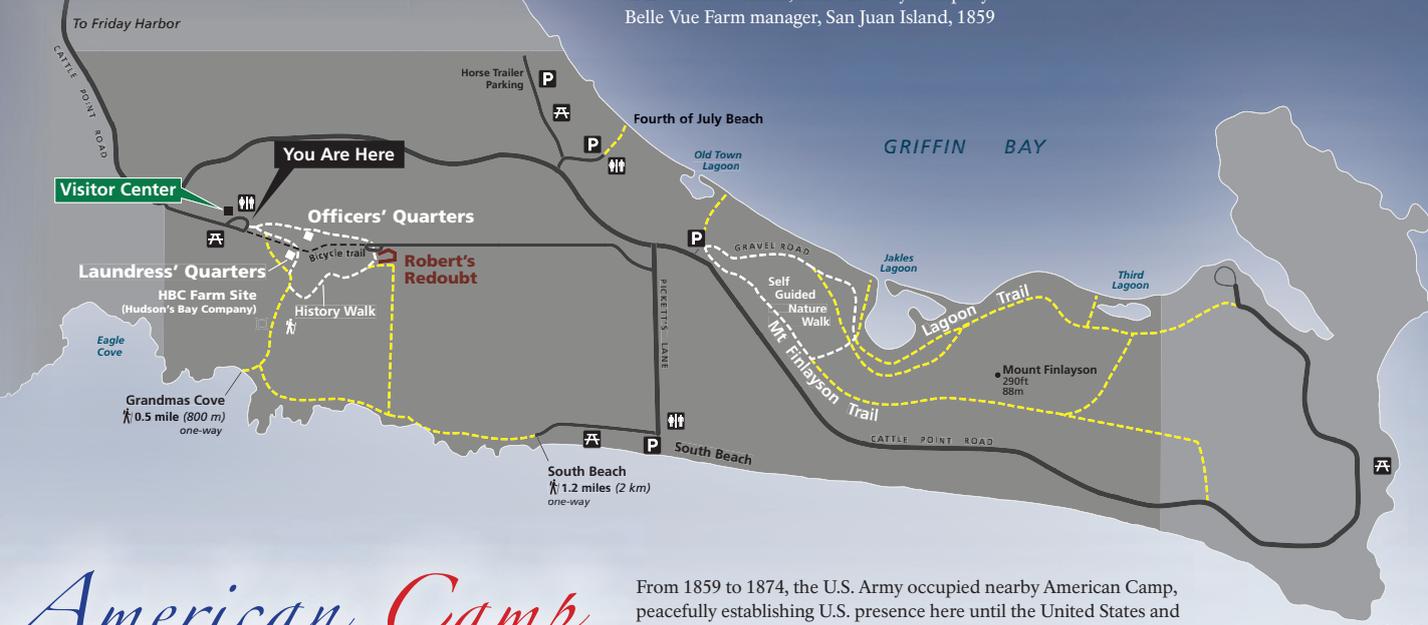
A squabble over a pig in 1859 on San Juan Island nearly sparked war between the United States and Great Britain. At the heart of the spat was the island's rightful ownership. After 12 years of peaceful, joint military occupation on the island, the British bowed out, accepting a German arbitrator's decision in favor of the United States.

Capt. George E. Pickett and his 66-man unit landed on the island July 27, 1859, under orders to protect the U.S. settlers there. A few weeks earlier, American Lyman Cutlar had shot and killed a Hudson's Bay Company pig rooting in his garden. Tempers flared, and Pickett was dispatched as a show of force.



There are now upwards of 16 squatters . . . on various parts of the island, all claiming to be Citizens of the United States and they have one and all taken up claims.

🇬🇧 Charles Griffin, Hudson's Bay Company's Belle Vue Farm manager, San Juan Island, 1859



American Camp

From 1859 to 1874, the U.S. Army occupied nearby American Camp, peacefully establishing U.S. presence here until the United States and Great Britain could resolve the rightful ownership of San Juan Island. No shots were ever fired in battle. No lives were ever lost in war.



OREGON COUNTRY
Combined British and U.S. Territory
before the 49th parallel boundary was set.

