

## Impressment of American sailors: The British-American diplomacy in searching for resolving impressment from the war of 1812 to the webster-Ashburton treaty

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**Abstract:** Impressment was an infamous part of history in British-American relations in the first half of the XIX century. The Chesapeake-Leonard affair became one of the reasons for the war between the two countries (1812-1814). After its end, the American government made attempts to diplomatically resolve this issue, although they did not result in success. The practice continued, as is shown by the incidents with the Pharos, Juno, Monroe and Telegraph ships. Only long and difficult negotiations between Daniel Webster (United States) and Lord Ashburton (Great Britain) ended this practice in 1842. Based on historical sources and monographs, this article focuses on analyzing the origins of impressment in the British - American relations, the struggle between Great Britain and the United States on the issue of impressment and negotiations between the two countries to abolish this problem. The results of the article show that the impressment is a special case in the history of Anglo-American relations and the history of maritime security in the 19th century. A nation's honor and sovereignty are factors for the US to constantly fight against this phenomenon. This study contributes to the comprehensive study of Anglo-American relations after the American Revolutionary War to Webster-Ashburton Treaty.

**Keywords:** *American ships, Great Britain, Impressment, the War of 1812, United States, Webster-Ashburton treaty.*

### 1. Introduction

Since the founding of the nation, the United States of America has announced its pursuit a foreign policy of neutrality (Sang et al. 2018); (Sang 2019); (Burgan 2007). The purpose of American government was to establish a neutral trade on the sea. However, Great Britain did not want the United States to trade with France which was a British archenemy during that time. The British Order in Council of 8 June 1793 declared that all ships moving to any French ports or French-occupied places must be brought to Great Britain. Their goods had to sell there or sell to a Britain-friendly country (Hannay 1905: 3); (Sherman 1922: 51). Since 1803, Great Britain participated in the Napoleonic Wars (Frederick 1934). The increasing hostility between Great Britain and France led to increase the demand for sailors of the British Royal Navy (Heaton 1941). During the war with France on the sea, Great Britain desperately needed sailors. At that time, the British Royal Navy had 175 warships and 600 ships with a demand of up to 140,000 sailors (Toll 2008: 382). They used various methods to recruit sailors for the Royal Navy. One of the traditional methods was the continuation of the impressment. This created a historical phenomenon in Anglo-American relations known as impressment.

### 2. The Birth of Impressment of American' Sailors

This impressment was restricted to British citizens, in particular, the defectors from the British Royal Navy who fled to American ships, where better food and shelter were available. Consequently, the impressment was partly a way to find defectors and return them to service or punishment by the Royal Navy (Childress 2004). However, the practice has been applied to the American citizens. Great Britain

frequently stopped American ships and forced American sailors to board and join (also by force) the Royal Navy (Sonneborn 2004). Great Britain claimed that they had full rights to force deserters to go back to serve military service. The Royal Navy declared that they based on the principle of “*once an Englishman, always an Englishman*”. However, the United States said that Great Britain had no right to board an American ship without permission. According to American historians, the total number of the American sailors impressed by Great Britain into their Royal Navy from American ships was huge. Hezekiah Niles, a journalist from Baltimore, estimated that in 1812 about 6,257 sailors, mostly Americans, were forced to join the Royal Navy. Meanwhile William Dudley estimated that 9,991 American sailors were forced into military service from 1796 to January 1, 1812 (Arthur 2011: 137). The loss of a large number of sailors and national honor has made the American government and society pay great attention to the impressment. This issue along with the right of neutrality at sea, was one of the first signs leading to the tension in the Anglo-American relations in the first part of 19th century.

Despite the reaction of American society, the British Royal Navy increased the impressment of American sailors. As a result, the armed conflicts were expected to occur soon in the British-American relations. The most notable incident regarding impressment was the Chesapeake-Leopard affair. On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1807, the Chesapeake was the American Navy ship sailing from Norfolk, Virginia. The Chesapeake went to the Mediterranean to carry out its task where the American Navy was preventing Barbary pirates from arresting their merchant ships, slaves and crews (Tucker 2014); (Utt 2012). Suddenly, the crew saw a British ship chasing the Chesapeake. The British HMS Leopard ship forced the Chesapeake to stop. Meanwhile, on the British side, from the source of the reconnaissance in Norfolk (Mackenzie 1846: 145-146), the British captain learned that three Americans and other deserters were on the Chesapeake so he intended to take them back (Utt 2012: 30-31). The captain of Leopard, Salisbury Humphreys, requested to board the Chesapeake to search for sailors who deserted the British Royal Navy (Prince 2010: 132); (James 2016: 288). American Captain James Barron refused the request. The British began shooting at the Chesapeake. The crew shot back with a gun and fled the ship. The attack caused three people to be killed, 18 wounded including James Barron. Great Britain captured four sailors from the Chesapeake (Prince 2010: 132). These people were later put on trial.

This event led to the appearance of the so-called Chesapeake-Leopard affair. For Americans, Chesapeake-Leopard affair was the main source of disputes between Great Britain and the United States. American interest in the impressment issue was clearly shown in press statistics. From 1803 to 1805, articles had the phrase impressment appear in the press from 71 to 83 times a year. The phenomena of impressment was growing and growing. That is why in 1806 and 1807, the articles had the phrase impressment appear 250 times. After the Chesapeake incident, it was 738 times. In the subsequent years, the word "impressment" appeared 464 times (1810), 664 times (1811), in 1812 alone, 1,798 times (Gilje 2013: 181). As soon as the Chesapeake returned to Norfolk with damage, it immediately received a strong reaction from the Americans. Opponents from across the United States argued that the incident was an excessive violation of American sovereignty (Coles 1965: 7) and insulted the United States' honor. The issue of national honor became the subject of controversy among some young "War Hawks". They supported the view of starting a war against Britain (Risjord 1961: 196-210). As official claims, the Americans wanted to set a war with Great Britain to protect their honor. The strong reaction of Americans to the Chesapeake-Leopard incident caused the government to act. Thomas Jefferson, then President of the United States of America, proclaimed that “*Never since the Battle of Lexington have I seen this country in such a state of exasperation as at present, and even that did not produce such unanimity*” (Jefferson, 2009). The United States Secretary of State, James Madison sent a letter to the United States Minister in London asking Great Britain to stop the act, return four sailors, abolish the impressment regime, summon Admiral Berkeley and withdraw their army from the American sea (Toll 2008: 301-304). Meanwhile, Americans wanted to wage a war with Great Britain. The American public was enraged by the humiliating and damaging failures of the United States Navy without any protest from the Chesapeake and suspected the United States naval power. Barron was banned from working for 5 years as a punishment to calm American public opinion (Cooper 1856: 231). However, Jefferson instead of taking a tough approach chose a trade war with Great Britain through the Embargo Act on December

22, 1807 (Bartnicki et al. 1992: 383). The United States banned merchant ships from European countries. As a result, the United States did not achieve its desires, even suffered heavy loss. President Jefferson hoped to pass the law to conduct a commercial war, punishing Britain and France and forcing them to respect United States neutrality and stopping the impressment. However, the measures taken by the law were not as realistic as expected, bringing both diplomatic and economic failures, United States economy also suffered heavily. In fact, United States exports fell from 108 million dollars in 1807 to 22 million dollars in 1808. Meanwhile, exports from Great Britain to the United States in 1808 to January 2019 fell from 12,097,942 pounds to 5,302,866 pounds, 58 percent down. The actual exchange value of American goods into Britain dropped from 6,531,410 pounds to 1,751,986 pounds, the decline of 73 percent (Skrabec 2012: 16-18); (Ogunbitan 2014: 12-14); (Selden 1999: 43); (Daszyńska 2018).

### **3. Impressment in the British-American diplomacy from Napoleonic Wars to the Webster-Ashburton Treaty**

After Napoleonic Wars, the impressment of British army against American seamen basically ended in practice. However, this issue continued to be discussed by two countries in diplomatic relations such as looking for a long-term solution in peace time to prevent from the same situation happening in the future. In 1815, President Madison sent a special message to the United States Senate and House of Representative. He said that the peace established in the Anglo-American relations was a period of time to resolve incidents, which was interrupted by European wars, including seaman impressment (The Presidents 1837). On November 2nd, 1818, John Quincy Adams sent a letter to Albert Gallatin and Richard Rush affirming that long-term peace between two countries was a period of time that was not suitable any more to maintain the impressment. However, the United States efforts to form an agreement on impressment after ending the war failed to make any progress.

In 1823, this topic continued to be discussed between Great Britain and the United States. Rush, following the instruction of Adams on July 28th, 1823, submitted a proposal to the British government on the impressment. In this proposal, Rush gave two solutions: Firstly, limit the naturalization of seamen. After that, completely eliminate mutual seamen from the services of each party, whether in public or on merchant vessels, with a positive rule against the impressment applied to men in any (United States Congress, United States House of Representatives 2012: 3-10). However, the British Minister in the United States Charles Richard Castlereagh said that at this time the impressment of Great Britain during the war time was unchanged unless the British government was willing to negotiate because the viewpoint previously agreed by two countries had a fundamental change in nature (United States Congress, United States House of Representatives 2012: 3-12). The British government therefore rejected the proposal.

On August 13th, one day after Rush announced the result of the negotiation with Great Britain to the American government, Castlereagh informed Rush that the first proposal was rejected because it was like a Rush's personal suggestion without any advice from other members of the cabinet. The second proposal was acceptable but must be revised. The proposal of amendment from the British government became the subject of discussion in the United States Congress to give instructions to Rush for agree or refuse decision. John C. Calhoun strongly protested and opposed the request for amendment from the British side while President James Monroe tended to support this amendment. In the following days, Castlereagh's proposal for the United States' proposal continued to be discussed and drawn the attention. However, due to conflicting opinions, the President decided to reject the British government's request for amendment (Moore 1898: 997-998). The impressment was discussed once again under John Quincy Adams's instructions to Rush but failed to achieve any result.

During the office term of Secretary of State in London, Gallatin continued to receive instructions from Henry Clay on the tasks that needed to be addressed in relation between Great Britain and the United States. Impressment was also one of the many topics entrusted to Gallatin. Henry Clay mentioned six conclusions between Rufus King and Great Britain and instructed Albert Gallatin on eight tasks including the abolition of privateering, the principle "free ship, free goods", impressments applied to seamen, the law of blockade, contraband, confiscation of debts of funds in public stocks, exemption of persons engaged in trade in the respective countries, from molestation in consequence of

the existence of a war between them, other special provisions designed to define more precisely the rights and duties of the neutral and belligerent in given cases and generally to mitigate the rigors of war (United States. President 1854). Through the instructions to Gallatin, the President of the United States expressed his wish that Great Britain would make serious efforts and perseverance in the same way the government did in solving previous dispute issues in order to ensure the satisfaction and harmony between two countries. At the same time, the United States also wanted to inherit the result of the negotiation reached by two countries related to this issue. A presentation of signs to support from Great Britain considered the cases related to naturalized citizens proposed by the United States government (Clay 1973). In discussions with the British government, Gallatin said that the impressment played a very important role, which could lead to conflict in case there was a real war between Great Britain and Spain. According to Gallatin, in fact the impressment was contrary to the legal principles of nations. Gallatin declared that no nation complied with it and the United States was no exception. Gallatin considered the actual restoration of the impressment as a war declaration. The declaration of Gallatin was intended to warn the British government of the actual restoration of the impressment. Canning responded that he recognized the importance of the Cuban and impressment issue and promised to seriously consider this issue (H. Adams 1960: 344).

During the time of Gallatin's mission in the United States, there were accusations of impressment applied to two American seamen of *Pharos* vessel in African coast by Captain Clavering of *Redwing* vessel of Great Britain. On May 20th, 1826, the United States President instructed Henry Clay to submit to the United States House of Representatives the information that Clay possessed related to the impressments applied to seamen from the US vessels in international waters or anywhere by British vessels or foreign vessels from February 18, 1815, along with the correspondence on this subject with foreign governments. Two impressment cases reported by Clay were those including two seamen of *Pharos* vessel and Raguat. In which, the case of *Pharos* included the correspondence with Charles Vaughan marked A in the report, the diplomatic notes passed on this case marked B in the report and the impressment case from the correspondence of Raguat marked C in the report (Dickins & Allen 1859: 368-369). The United States relied on the report of Samuel Hodges, the consul of the United States at the Cape de Verde Islands that, Clevering, a captain of *Redwing* vessel of Great Britain applied the impressments to two seamen of *Pharos* vessel of Boston on 6 December, 1825 while the vessel was moored in Freetown port, Sierra Leone on African coast. A seaman was arrested for 11 days and then was released, and another was arrested because he was considered to be British (United States Congress, 1859: 372). Based on the above report, Clay sent a diplomat to Vaughan, the British Minister in the United States, stating that the above facts were realistic and confirmed Clavering's actions were directed by the British government. The United States government couldn't believe that such actions could take place in the peaceful time. The United States considered such actions unacceptable, asked the British government to prevent from any similar case in the future. At the same time, the United States required to quickly send the diplomat to the British government for resolution (Clay 1973).

Clay then transferred a diplomat to the British government (United States. President, 1854). The British side collected information, especially the information provided by George Manners - British Consul at Boston (United States Congress 1859: 372). Based on this reference, the British government responded to the United States that the captain of *Pharos* vessel admitted that no man arrested onto *Redwing* vessel was American. One of two of them was British and was picked up in Cape de Vedre and the other was Norwegian. Both volunteered to serve Great Britain on *Redwing* vessel. When the *Redwing* vessel ran along *Pharos* vessel, a survey was conducted and these two people voluntarily boarded the vessel. They informed it to the commander of *Pharos* vessel. During the time staying on *Redwing* vessel, the Norwegian seaman was found to be protected by the United States. Therefore, he was sent back to *Pharos* vessel. In order to confirm the presented evidence, the British government invited the United States government to participate in the verification of events related to the suspicion of impressment applied to two seamen on *Pharos* vessel, accusing this vessel's captain of deceiving the United States government from presenting inadequate circumstances generating the problem (United States Congress, 1859: 372).

After receiving a response from Vaughan, all documents including Manners' letter were sent to the American Attorney General in Massachusetts County for review. If the transaction was correct and complete as above, if necessary, the testimony would be taken from Captain Merchant, captain of *Pharos* vessel. The American government thought that, in the short term, the legality of Manners should be focused on with Merchant interview. The American government doubted the willingness of the seamen in participating in service on British vessels (United States Congress, 1859: 381). The British side wished to continue talking with the United States side through correspondence to achieve results for this issue in the future (United States Congress, 1859: 381).

In London, after a period of time when promising to consider the impressment, in July 1827, Canning invited Gallatin to have an informal meeting to discuss a series of pending issues between two countries. At the meeting, Canning mentioned the topic of impressment. However, as a result, it's just like before, although British diplomats had authority to receive and discuss but did not accept any new offer. He discovered that Canning, like Lord Castlereagh, in response to public opinion and the arrogance of national honor, did not feel himself strong enough to confront ideas and to put his arms to reach his enemy. Canning did not prepare at this time to create any proposal (Wheaton & Phillipson 1916). After that, a new announcement was made by Lord Dudley to arrange two ministers to join a general agreement. However, this petition failed to reach any new negotiation (Clay 1982).

Before James Barbour replaced Gallatin to act as a United States Secretary in London, on June 13, 1828, Clay sent instructions to guide Barbour's mission in London with the content of similar instructions as Gallatin. In Clay's view, the United States government will be very willing to negotiate all topics to create agreements based on the principles of regularly communicating with Great Britain. The American Government was aware that achieving one agreement must come from the British government's campaign. The talks took place in a peaceful time; it's not difficult to reach an agreement on one of the issues between two countries. For the case of impressment of American seaman, it's needed to reprimand strongly but respectfully so that the British government understood that the United States government couldn't and wouldn't obey it (Clay 1982).

During his time in London, Barbour continued to pursue the dispute between two countries related to the impressment of *Pharos* vessel. On January 21, 1829, Clay transferred to Barbour all correspondence between him and Vaughan from May 8, 1826 to December 17, 1828, involving three impressment cases including *Pharos*. Earlier, the British government rejected the viewpoint of Samul Hodges when affirming that there was no basis for impressment applied to two seamen on *Pharos* vessel (Clay 1973). However, Clay insisted, according to the testimony of *Pharos*'s chief officer, Benjamin Homer, that was clearly an impressment case. The accusation of two seamen voluntarily boarding *Redwing* vessel was just a screen for the mistakes that was made. President of the United States said that Great Britain would have to compensate for this case (Clay 1982). Vaughan, in response to Clay on December 8, 1828, said that he would send Clay's diplomatic note to the British government related to the impressment and doubt about Homer's testimony because that took place for nearly two years after the arrival of the events and there was a difference from Clavering's statement.

Another case of impressment was transferred to Barbour by Clay on April 28, 1828 at Clarence Bay, Island of Fernando Po on the African coast. Captain Owner of *Eden* vessel of Great Britain was accused of applying impressment to the seamen from *Monroe* vessel of Boston and *Juno* vessel of New Bedford of the United States. According to the indictment of Captain Gallop of *Monroe* vessel, the first two seamen were asked and then arrested from *Monroe* vessel showed Captain Owner that the fact that they were arrested would disclose the vessel and extremely dangerous goods, making the vessel lack huge human resources in bad weather. Captain of *Monroe* vessel also said that a man boarding *Monroe* vessel seemed to be a foreigner; another person seemed to be an American. Josiah Gould, *Monroe*'s carrier, testified the truth about the statement of Captain Gallop. At the same time, he also witnessed related to impressments applied to two seaman of *Juno* vessel of Captain Hensey at the same time by Captain Owner. The British side justified that these seamen requested to voluntarily board *Eden* vessel and they swore they were English. Clay said that in fact the impressment applied to the unarmed seamen from United States vessel in any way was something that the United States government couldn't accept.

The third impressment case was from *Telegraph* vessel at Campeachy by *Harpy* Vessel's Captain Rich. The consul of the United States at Campeachy reported that, on September 16th, 1828, two seamen were arrested from *Telegraph* vessel while the vessel was mooring in Campeachy Bay under the jurisdiction of the Mexican government by Captain Rich's enactment, Commander of *Harpy* vessel. A request was sent to the Military Commandant at Campeachy using his authority to restore two men, using force to take them. However, Captain Rich refused. On December 11th, 1828, Clay sent a letter to Vaughan asking the British government to explain and expect the British government immediately to stop the impressments that the United States government couldn't forgive. Vaughan, in his response, pledged to request for an explanation from the British government. At the same time, Vaughan expressed his regret and affirmed that the impressment was not under the jurisdiction of the British government during the peaceful time. The cases that the seamen were British on American vessel accepted into British services beyond the scope of action were considered to be the impressment.

On January 26th, 1829, Clay sent a letter to Barbour stating that if the impressment process was approved by Great Britain, Barbour would inform the British government that the United States government wouldn't tolerate them. If that continued to exist, that would be opposed by the government and that the British government would be responsible for all consequences regardless of consequences. That could lead to an irreconcilable reality with United States sovereignty rights (Moore 1906: 311).

Between 1831 and 1832, Van Buren assumed the mission of United States Secretary of State in London. In London, Van Buren affirmed that negotiations need to be made on impressment to create a friendly, cohesive and peaceful space for the development of bilateral relation. However, Van Buren's efforts to promote a formal agreement between Great Britain and the United States were delayed by himself due to problems in bilateral relation and United States internal affairs. Van Buren announced to Palmerston that the discussion about impressment should be postponed until the British government had time to deal with this issue. The impressment from 1831 had no significant impact on the future of peace between Great Britain and the United States (Ritcheson 1986: 208). Following Buren's conclusion, in 1834, due to the claims related to the impressment, the issue continued to be discussed again by the United States government. John Forsyth, in a direction to Aaron Vail in London continued to affirm that the fact that Great Britain intervened and applied the impressment to American vessels by the seamen considered to be British was absolutely unacceptable. During the peaceful time, British seamen were free under their own laws, had right to participate in foreign merchant services. It is never possible to acknowledge that the British warship commander was authorized to enforce British law on foreign vessels and within the jurisdiction of foreign countries (Moore 1898: 311).

#### 4. The Negotiations of Daniel Webster and Lord Ashburton and the End of the Impressment

In 1842, a negotiation between Daniel Webster and Lord Ashburton was conducted to solve problems in relationship between two countries (Jones 1977); (Sang 2018a); (Sang 2018b); (Sang et al. 2019). The impressment was one of the missing issues in the negotiation between two parties because Ashburton thought that not any British could think that the impressment would repeat (E. D. Adams 1912: 775). The content of the treaty was signed but none of the terms mentioned this issue. After the Webster-Ashburton treaty was signed, Webster and Ashburton were in correspondence about the impressment. On August 8, 1842, in a letter sent to Ashburton, Webster said that Great Britain and the United States had made a lot of dialogues about the issue but the British government's guidance on impressment negotiation was not necessary because no benefits were found in that. Webster asserted that in a long term, there was no major impact, no much concerned effect on political relationship between Great Britain and the United States compared with the impressment applied to seamen from United States vessels by the British ocean-going cruiser. From the French revolution to 1812, the claims about the impressment were found every year. In Webster's view, the impressment execution by the British government was a violation of rights against countries, including the United States. Webster explained that the impressments initially emphasized the obligations of British citizens to the throne. It then spread out of British territory and was applied to foreign vessels as well. This was to interfere with



the rights of other countries, beyond British domination and jurisdiction over foreign vessels at sea. The merchant vessels at sea had full right to see as part of the territory of the country it belonged to. Thus the intrusion into neutral vessels by another country was considered to be an action of force, an infringement unless that was made for a certain purpose by justification or permitted by the laws of nations. The British ocean-going cruiser entered the American merchant vessels to kidnap the alleged British subjects without making any excuses under the laws of the nations. This statement based on British law on respect of the king's privilege was unacceptable. Because British land and territory, law enforcement of Great Britain were the suitable scope for British law. The ocean was under the scope of the laws of nations. Any merchant vessel at sea must comply with these laws, under the protection of the laws of the nation's owning the vessels and could request for an exemption, unless those laws allowed boarding the vessels and paying visit. Moreover, the king's privilege was to have no obligation to human and properties located and residing abroad (Webster 1853: 319-326). He also pointed out the contradiction in the British government's policy related to the migration of the British to the United States and the obligations of these British immigrants to Great Britain. He said it would be unreasonable for the British government to encourage them to migrate to new lands, including the United States and to bind and force them to assume national responsibility for Great Britain. The letter sent by Webster to Ashburton explained the contradiction of Great Britain in immigration and impressment policy. Webster pointed out that poverty was a burden for Great Britain. This migration class brought benefits to Great Britain. Therefore, Great Britain encouraged migration by supporting the travel to a new world, especially the United States. The United States received hundreds of thousands of people from this class. They came to the United States to escape from poverty in Great Britain, find jobs, become comfortable in a new place, live in a free country and use their language with many familiar legal aspects. As of the last 6 months of 1842, there were more than 20,000 migrants from Liverpool to the United States, 4 times more than the number of migrants from this port to the United States during the colonial period. When they arrived in the United States, they found jobs in cities, travelled to the border to reclaim, cultivate, naturalize to participate in trade services under the flag accepting them. When war broke out between Great Britain and an European power, Great Britain forced these people to abandon their new jobs and new political relations to participate in difficult and arduous military service for a country they no longer belonged to. It would be more reasonable if from the beginning Great Britain stopped the migration of its citizens. Because Great Britain encouraged them to emigrate, Great Britain should leave them. So the execution of military service must be based on the option of these people. They felt suitable with the places where they had a living, institutions and laws in the nations that can protect them (Featherstonhaugh 1843: 91-93). Webster also affirmed the consequences brought from the impressment to the United States, bilateral relation, international maritime trade and international law issues. Webster asserted that the impressment was an issue that caused widespread opposition because in practice it affected the political rights of other countries, endangered their security, subjects and citizens. The sovereignty of a country was related to maintaining the jurisdiction and maintenance rights, exclusive ownership to their ships at sea unless the laws of countries allowed for intrusion for special purposes. Impressment left serious consequences, weakening vessels because sea-going trips were often postponed. The seamen did not want to engage in American trade during the European war because they were afraid of being arrested for military service in British warships. They had to serve for many years before being freed. Moreover, the impressment created an atmosphere of tension, conflict, hostility between two commercial powers at sea (Webster 1853: 319-326).

In his response to Webster, Ashburton, in his letter, affirmed his view that Webster's proposals would soon be transferred to the British government, would receive the attention of the British government due to the importance of the issue. The mission of Ashburton at this negotiation under the goal is to establish and resolve existing differences. There was no difference between two countries related to the impressment. Great Britain committed to make every effort to seek solutions but could not solve the issue at this time due to the limited time of the mission. Therefore, it was necessary to calmly consider and believe that the establishment would be successful. The British government was willing to maintain the peaceful relation with the United States (Webster 1853: 326-327).

The result of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty in 1842 did not mention the impressment but two letters between Webster and Ashburton on this issue, which caused a wave of suspicion in the United States. The United States public opinion said that the correspondence on this issue after the treaty was a trick to the United States public opinion. Its nature was a language exchange and “a handshake” between negotiators of two Parties. Both agreed that the peaceful time was a good time to set the issue but denied that the current peaceful time was not a convenient time for that. Jefferson criticized with a strong word that in fact there was no signed agreement, no terms against the impressment (Benton 2015: 432).

## 5. Conclusion

From the fact that the United States and Great Britain diplomacy on the impressments, it could be affirmed that US diplomats had reduced the significance of the impressment issue. They mostly paid attention to the national honor than protecting seamen applied to impressment from merchant vessels. This is evidenced by the demands of United States diplomats related to limiting search right of the Great Britain. From 1815, United States diplomats repeatedly sought an official promise from Great Britain for actually stopping the action of arresting seamen from American vessels. However, Great Britain refused to make any concession. Until 1842, Lord Ashburton informed Webster that Great Britain abandoned the impressment in practice but there were no formal agreements or treaties between Great Britain and the United States declaring this issue from the time when it happened in bilateral relation.

In general, the struggle to abolish the impressment stemmed from the efforts of the American government. Great Britain was almost unconcerned with the consequences of its policy and attempts to abolish it. In the case that the conflict over the conscription was pushed to the top, Great Britain always put peace as a basis to ease the problem. After a 50-year period, when the war between Great Britain and European countries basically ended, the need for sailors ceased and the efforts of correspondence by Webster and Ashburton came to a complete end the impressment in the history of the both countries which was opened a relatively peaceful and stable period in the British-American relations.

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