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There Are No Victors Here: A Local Perspective on the Treaty of Portsmouth

Peter E. Randall

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For about a month in the late summer of 1905, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was at the center of international attention. In this unlikely location, Japan and Russia met to negotiate a settlement to a war that was the bloodiest known to date.

For eighteen months, Japan and Russia fought over territorial rights in Manchuria and Korea. Although President Theodore Roosevelt had supported Japan's claims against Russia, the president was concerned about the balance of power in the Far East as Japan won victory after victory.

After a prolonged diplomatic effort Roosevelt was able to convince the belligerents to settle their differences peacefully. When Russia and Japan agreed to meet in Washington, D. C., for the peace conference, Portsmouth was selected because it was cooler in the summer than Washington, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard provided security for discussions, and the Hotel Wentworth offered superb accommodations.

Although Roosevelt received the Nobel Prize for his efforts in bringing the participants to the peace table, many have forgotten the war and the treaty, but not the Japanese where the treaty is remembered as an event that signaled Japan's entry into the ranks of important and powerful nations.

This is only book devoted to the Russo-Japanese War and the treaty negotiations to deal with local events and to feature the many photographs taken during the conference period. In preparing this new edition, we have added several photographs, and provided a new introduction outlining various events and activities since the first edition was published in 1985. Plans are currently underway in Portsmouth to celebrate and remember the Portsmouth Peace Conference in 2005, the 100th anniversary of the treaty.

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