

DOCUMENTS

A New Vancouver Journal

Vancouver was one of the greatest explorers who visited the shores of Northwestern America. Any new document that can throw light on his work is therefore important.

The known history of this present document is very brief. In 1907, the Macmillan Company published Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound, by Edmond S. Meany. The relatively few copies printed travelled widely over the earth. Among the letters received by the author was one from A. H. Turnbull of Wellington, New Zealand.

He said Vancouver's work was of great interest to the people in that part of the world because of his explorations there. The armed tender Chatham, consort of Vancouver's ship Discovery, had discovered and named Chatham Island, which was later associated with New Zealand in government. In his search for books bearing on explorations, Mr. Turnbull had located in an old book stall in London the manuscript of a journal kept by a member of the Chatham's crew. He purchased it and placed it in his private library in Wellington.

Finding that part of the journal related to the Northwest coast of America he had that portion carefully copied and it is from this copy that the present publication is made. Mr. Turnbull entered "(sic)" in a few doubtful places and these are allowed to stand. He also omitted a portion descriptive of a tragedy in Hawaii.

This journal is by no means as full or as finished in style as that of Vancouver, but it will certainly be cherished as a companion to the larger work.

Probably one reason for the name of the writer being unknown is that it was a government expedition and no private journals were permitted.

The present editor is responsible for the annotations.

EDMOND S. MEANY.

March, 1792.

From the Sandwich Islands to the No. We. Coast of America.

After leaving Oonehow we had the wind from the Northward and Eastward, with which we stood to the N. W. close hauld. At daylight Oonehow¹ bore East 7 or 8 leagues, Atooi Eb N 1-2 N, and Tahouru

¹The names here given of the Hawaiian Islands are not all recognizable, but this one is evidently the modern Oahu.

S E b S. As the morning advanced we got the wind from the N. Wr'd. and the Signal was made to steer NNE. The wind blew fresh in squalls attended with rain all day and at night, and we lost sight of the Discovery, in the morning she was perceived a considerable distance to Leeward with only her head sails set, and we bore down to her, and as we came nearer we judged from what we saw going forward on board her, that she had sprung her Main Mast, indeed we could observe clearly that they were fishing it. This disagreeable weather continued several days, the wind chiefly from the Nd. & NbE. On the 23rd our Latde: was 24.49 Nd. and the Longe: 209° Et. We now began to feel a very considerable change in the weather, and from the thin linen cloathes that we were used to wear at the Islands, we were obliged to change to our wramest dresses. The Sandwich Island fowls though fed on their own country food all died.

The 24th in the afternoon being calm Capt. B. went on board the Discovery, and Mr. Paget² returned and dined on board the Chatham, when we learnt that their Main Mast was not only sprung, as we conjectured but that they had found the head of the Foremast also sprung, and had carried away both the Fore & Main Top Gallant Yards on the night of the 19th. In the evening we had the wind again from the N Erd. which continued and with it continued also very gloomy disagreeable weather. On the 27th our Lat: was at noon 24.21 N and the Longe: 215.5 Et. Tack'd and stood to the N W. We kept tacking occasionally, and on the 31st we were no further to the Nd. than the Lat. of 28°.

The 1st of April being the Anniversary of our leaving England, double allowance of Grog was served to the Ship's Company to commemorate the day and drink the healths of their old friends at home. We made but a very poor hand of working through the Trade Wind and from the 1st to the 4th made scarce anything. We then got the breeze pretty fresh with fair weather at N. E. and steered N. N. W. the Lat: 30.26 N. this fine weather continued till the 6th when we were in Lat: of 33.59 N. and the Longe: of 216.30 Et. It was not till the 8th in the Lat: of 36° N. that we lost the N E trade, to carry it so far is uncommon; we then had it calm, and two gentlemen from the Discovery who had been shooting some marine Birds came on board. They had kill'd a very large bird call'd by the sailors Mother Carey's Goose, it measured 7½ feet from tip to tip of the wings. They told us they had seen a duck fly past the Ship the day before, which is somewhat surprising as we know of no

²This officer is always referred to as Mr. Paget. Captain George Vancouver, chief of the expedition, used the more familiar spelling and the world has long known him as Lieutenant Peter Puget.

land very near us. This day and yesterday observed the surface of the water to be covered with a species of what is call'd the Medusa Valilla.³

The weather became now very thick & foggy with drizzling rain, and it continued for the most part calm till the 10th. When a breeze began to freshen from the W b S we made all sail steering E N E. In the morning of the 11th it veer'd to S E b S where it made a stand with fine pleasant weather. Our Lat: that day was 36.10 and the Longe: 221.8 Et. We had this fine weather till the 16th when the wind veer'd to E S E blowing in hard squalls attended with rainy dirty weather, that at night increased to a hard gale and brought us to close reef'd Topsails. We wore occasionally, and our Lat: at Noon was 38.50 N. The gale settled at S. E. encreasing in volume, and in the course of the night, we were oblig'd to hand the Topsails. Moderating a little by the morning, we let out the reefs and stood to the E N E. At noon the 17th the Lat: was 39.23 N and the Longe: 234.50 Et. The weather was very thick and Hazy, and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the Discovery who was two mile ahead of us made the Signal for seeing the Land. At this time we had vast numbers of Shags, Divers, Ducks & other Birds of the Sea-shore about us, but from the thickness of the weather it was not till near 5 o'clock that we saw the Land, when the Coast of New Albion⁴ was seen bearing from N b E to E b S, not many miles distant. The haze over the Land clearing up a little gave us an opportunity of seeing it. It had a very pleasing appearance, high and covered to the top with tall pines with here and there some rich verdant lawns. We tack'd early and stood off and on during the night and in the morning stretch'd in again for the shore. We had no wind till towards noon when a fine breeze from S. S. E. sprung up and we bore away along shore with all sail set. As we had now entered upon our Station, and the survey of the Coast, we were obliged to haul off at dark and spend the night in short boards, that we might take up the Land in the morning where we left off the evening before. The 19th we had a fine moderate Breeze at S. E. with which we run along shore. Our Lat: at Noon 40.2 N & Long: 235.22 Et. It freshened in the evening with rainy hazy weather and by midnight we had a very hard gale which continued all the 21st. In the morning of the 22nd it fell calm with thick, Foggy unpleasant weather and it was not till the following day that we were inabled to get in with the Land and run along shore. Our weather was now clear and pleasant with the wind from the Sd: & S. Eastd. At noon on the 24th our Lat: was 42.31 N and

³A form of jelly-fish. Other common names are sun-fish, sun-squalls and umbrella-jellies.

⁴This name was given to the Northwest coast of America by Sir Francis Drake two hundred years before this voyage.

it falling calm soon after, with a Current setting us fast on Shore we anchor'd per Signal in 37 fm: in a deep Bay, the N Extreme of which is a remarkable Cape, which Captn: Vancouver named Cape Orford,⁵ in honor of the Earl of that name.

We presently found that this place was inhabited, for two Canoes appear'd (the first on this Coast we had seen) one of which went to the Discovery, the other came to us. In this one there were five men who after making fast their canoe came on board with great confidence, and did not shew much surprise on entering the Vessel. Though they had brought nothing purposely to sell yet they were perfectly well acquainted with bartering, and their Cloathing which was Deer Skins with one or two Fox Skins, and a few Bows & Arrows that they had, they readily sold for trifles, nor wou'd they part with anything till they got what they conceived an equivalent. They were fond of metal of any kind and Bits of Iron & Yellow Buttons they eagerly took. One of them had a thin bit of old Iron fixed into a piece of wood as a knife. Some of them had ornaments of Necklaces, composed of a small black berry and shells, intermixed with small tubes of copper. Their Ears and the Septum of the Nose were perforated and ornamented in the same manner. They were perfectly naked except two of them that had deer skins thrown loosely over their shoulders. Their colour was not easily to be found out from the quantity of dirt and paint with which they were besmeared, but were they clean I should suppose they are something of an Olive colour. They had very bad teeth, their hair was black and grew long behind, and their Language was the most uncouth I ever heard. Their Bows were small and made from the Ewe Tree and their Arrows were strait and even of about two feet and a half long, feathered at one end and barbed and pointed with flint at the other. Some of them had also Knives of Flint. Their canoes were extremely rude and unwieldy and little calculated for any distant embarkation, they were about 17 feet in length, 4ft. 6in. in breadth at the Gunwales, and 3 feet deep, roughly hewn out of one solid tree, flat bottom'd and square at each end. After selling every little thing they had they took their leave. This Canoe had no Sea Otter skins in her but the one that went to the Discovery had a couple of small Cub Otter Skins.

25th. At night with the land wind we weigh'd and stood out to the Wd. and at daylight with a fair Soly: Breeze bore away along shore. The fair and pleasant weather continued, and on the 27th at noon we observed in the Lat: of 46.10 N. Just then the Discovery made the Signal that we were standing into Danger, we haul'd out, this situation is off Cape Disappointment from whence a very extensive Shoal stretches out

⁵This name is still in use on the Southern coast of Oregon.

and there was every appearance of an opening there, but to us the sea seem'd to break entirely across it.⁶ On the 28th at Noon our Lat: was 47.32 N and in the Evening the 29th falling calm, we came to an anchor with the Discovery near Destruction Island, the place where a Boat's Crew of the Imperial Eagle commanded by Mr. Berkley⁷ were barbarously murdered by the Natives as mention'd in Mears's Voyage. None of the natives came off to us but we observ'd two canoes entering a small Bay abreast of us. At about 3 we weigh'd per Signal and at 5 set Studding Sails with a moderate Soly: Breeze, but rainy weather. At daylight a strange Sail was seen in the N. W. quarter standing towards us, she hoisted American Colours. About 7 we spoke her, she proved to be the Ship Columbia of Boston commanded by a Mr Grey,⁸ on the Fur trade. She had wintered on the Coast in Port Clynquot⁹ in Berkley's Sound. This Mr. Grey being the man who Mr Mears¹⁰ in his Chart has published having entered the Streights of De Fuca, and after proceeding a considerable distance up, return'd to sea again by another passage to the Northward of that by which he entered—Captn: Vancouver was desirous of obtaining from him some information respecting the Streights, he therefore hoisted a boat out, and sent an officer on board the Columbia. Mr Grey very civilly offered him any information he could possibly give him, but at the same time told him that Mr Mears had been very much misled in his information and had published what never had happened; for though he (Mr Grey) did enter the Streights of De Fuca, and proceeded a considerable distance, where he still saw an unbounded horizon, he return'd, but return'd by the same way he entered. He had been two & twenty months from Boston, and had obtained a valuable cargo of Furs. He had built a small sloop of about 45 tons at Clynquot which was now trading to the Northward.

He gave no very favourable account of the Northern Indians whose daring and insolent spirit had carried them to very unwarrantable lengths. Several attempts had been made by them to seize his, and other Vessels on the Coast. Several people of different Ships had been treacherously murdered, and Mr Grey's Chief Mate with two of the seamen were in this manner murder'd while fishing round a point of Land, a small distance

⁶Here is seen the reason why the expedition doubted the existence of a river there until Captain Robert Gray discovered and named the Columbia River during that same year.

⁷The family and the British Columbia map-makers are particular about this name being spelled Barkley. See Captain John T. Walbran's *British Columbia Coast Names*, Pp. 33-35.

⁸This name is also misspelled throughout. He refers to Captain Robert Gray.

⁹He refers to Clayoquot Sound but errs in making it a part of Barkley Sound.

¹⁰Like errors in other names, he leaves out a letter in that of Captain John Meares.

from the Ship. This happen'd somewhere about the Lat: of $54\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$. After the Boat with the Officer return'd we made sail to the Nd. and the Columbia stretched in for the Shore. About noon we were nearly abreast of the much talked of Streights of Juan De Fuca, the Discovery made our Signal to lead in. The weather was thick and Hazy and prevented our having an observation. Cape Classet¹¹ at Noon bore N 20 E 2 miles. This Cape is settled by Captn: Vancouver in the Lat: of 48.23 N and the Longe: 235.38 Et.

At one o'clock we haul'd round Green Island,¹² and as we pass'd had a view of the Spiral Rock,¹³ which is remarkable. On Green Island is a very large Village, and from it and the Villages on the Main, a number of canoes came off. The Natives brought a number of Otter Skins to sell, but wou'd part with none for anything but Copper & Blue Cloth Cloathing with Metal Buttons they were very eager after and we saw several with Blue Coats & round Hats. Mr Mears is very much out in the distance he makes the entrance of these Streights, he says they are 15 leagues wide, whereas the Entrance is no more than 12 leagues in breadth. In the Evening having but little wind and it coming on thick we brought up on the S. shore in 12 fathoms water and then observed the Columbia following us. She had just entered the Streights. After we came too a few fish were caught with the hook & line.

May. The following morning the 1st of May with a fine breeze at West and clear pleasant weather we got under weigh and proceeded up the Streights, and left the Columbia off Green Island laying too, bartering with the Natives for Skins. Several canoes follow'd us with skins, fish &c., to sell but the rage was copper; next to this article Cloth & wear- ing apparel with Brass Buttons, Copper wrist bands, Musquets & Swords were chiefly in demand.

Among other articles offered for sale was their children, several were offered for a Musquet or a Sheet of Copper. The women being the first we had seen since leaving the Sandwich Islands, had not a few attacks of Gallantry made on them by the Sailors though they were by no means inviting. But however great the difference between them and the Sandwich Islanders in point of Beauty much greater was it in point of behaviour, for here the smallest degree of indelicacy towards one of these Ladies,

¹¹A former name for Captain Cook's Cape Flattery. Vancouver mentions "Classet" as the Indian name, but in a foot-note gives the name Cook had written on his chart.

¹²In 1788, Meares named this island "Ttatoosh" after the Indian chief he found there. Vancouver calls it Tatooshe. See Vancouver's Voyage (2nd Ed.), Volume II, p. 46. It is not clear where the writer got this name of Green Island.

¹³This rock was supposed to be the one referred to in the De Fuca record now supposed to be a myth. Vancouver refers to it in doubtful terms.

shock'd their modesty to such a degree, and had such an effect on them, that I have seen many of them burst into tears, they would endeavour to hide themselves in the bottom of their canoes and discover the most extreme degree of uneasiness and distress.

Some of the canoes were very large and contain'd a whole family of men & women and a considerable part of their Household furniture, large Bladders full of their delicious Whale Oil was in every canoe and the little Infants in their Cradles were plied with large quantities of it by their Mothers. As we got the Breeze fresher, the canoes soon dropp'd off.

About 6 o'clock in the evening having run about 20 leagues from the Entrance in a Bite on the S. side in 8 fathoms, from this the Streights appear'd to widen, but we saw some very distant land in which there were many apparent large openings. So far as we had yet proceeded up these Streights, we had seen no opening, nor the appearance of any Harbour, on the Southern, or Continental Shore; now two or three openings presented themselves, and as the great object of the voyage was if possible to discover a communication by water between this Coast and the Lakes situated on the other side of America, the Continental Shore must of course be kept always aboard and all openings minutely explored.

Captain Vancouver was now anxious to get the Vessels into a Harbor, and while the Vessels were refitting it was intended that the boats should be sent to explore the openings now in sight. Accordingly the next morning he went himself in the Pinnace, accompanied by our Cutter (both well arm'd) to look for a Harbour. This they found at a short distance from us, and the next morning we weigh'd and made sail for it. The Harbour was a very complete one and shelter'd from all winds but the water was deep and we anchor'd in 25 fathoms water not a quarter of a mile from the Shore. This place at first was named Port Discovery, conceiving ourselves the first that had been in it, but we afterwards found ourselves mistaken, it having been visited by two Spanish Vessels, and call'd Port Quadra,¹⁴ by which name it was continued and we settled its Lat: to be 48.2.30 N and the Long: 237.22.19 E.

Opposite to where the Vessels lay a low Point of Land run out, where there was an excellent run of Freshwater. Here the Tents and Observatory were set up, and there being plenty of Spruce Pine here a party from each Ship was sent on shore to brew Spruce Beer for the Ships' Companies. As this Beverage was well known to be a great Antiscorbutic, the people were allow'd to drink freely of it in lieu of their

¹⁴The crew may have continued the use of this older Spanish name, but Vancouver in text and chart retained the name Port Discovery, which continues to the present time.

Grog. As the Chatham was very open in her upper works the Carpenters of both Vessels were employ'd in Caulking her.

Not having met the Store ship at the Sandwich Islands as was expected and fearing that we might probably not see her till the next Season at those Islands, and possibly not then, should any unfortunate accident have happen'd to her in which case we should have been somewhat distress'd for Provisions particularly Bread & Flour, it was only proper to guard against such disappointments and delays. The Ships Company was therefore on the 5th put to two-thirds allowance of Bread only. This on the coast of America cou'd be no hardship as Fish is always to be got. We haul'd the Seine here generally every day, and in general with success, and we frequently got Salmon Trout in it.

On the 17th Captn: Vancouver, with Lieut: Paget, and Mr. Johnstone our Master set out in 3 Boats well Mann'd and arm'd, and victuall'd for a week, to explore the openings between this and our last anchorage which I spoke of. In the meantime the Vessels were refitting for sea. The Powder was sent on shore to dry, and being in want of Plank the Carpenters were employ'd, after the Caulking was finished, in sawing up a fine large tree, of which there were plenty, and very convenient. As there were no Inhabitants here we carried on all our operations with facility; now and then a couple or 3 canoes wou'd come in with a little Fish to sell, but this was not often, and they were very quiet and inoffensive. They were evidently a tribe that visited the Sea Coast but seldom, as they were generally clad in skins of Land animals, and during our stay here, they brought but one Sea Otter skin to sell. Once or twice they brought some fresh kill'd Venison which was very acceptable to us, for though we could everywhere observe the track of Deer, and shooting excursions were frequently made, we were never so fortunate to shoot any here.

When the time arrived for the expected return of the Boats we began impatiently to look out for them, but it was not till the 16th that they return'd to the Ships, after nine days absence. They had examined several arms or openings, which after running some distance inland closed, and they had left some extensive openings unexplored to the Eastward of this Port, where it was now intended to proceed to with the Ships. Having got everything ready for Sea, on the 18th we sail'd out of Port Quadra. The weather was fair and pleasant, indeed we had enjoy'd much fine weather in Port. After getting outside, by desire of Captn: Vancouver, we parted company with the Discovery, in order to examine an opening in the N. W. quarter, whilst she proceeded up an arm to which the Continent had been brought, to the Eastd. of Port Quadra. We cross'd

the Streights with a fine Breeze, and entered the opening about 6 o'clock in the evening and came to an anchor for the night. In the morning boats were dispatched to examine the branches which run within this opening, which employ'd us till the 23rd. It is very extensive being full of Islands.¹⁵ The land is delightful, being in many places clear and the soil so rich that the grass in several parts grew to man height. We were surprised in such a fine country to find scarce and inhabitants, not a smoke or a village was seen, and only two small canoes with 3 people in each were met by the Boats in all their cruising; from these, three young Fawns just kill'd were purchased. We saw several Deer on the sides of the rising grounds, but could never kill any. The navigation in this place so full of Rocks and small Islands was intricate and dangerous. On the 21st we touch'd a Rock on one side, whilst at the other we had twenty-two fathoms water.

On the 23rd we again enter'd the Streights but a different opening to that we came in at. We cross'd over and about Noon got into the arm up which the Discovery went when we parted from her. Here we met with a small tribe of Indians who came off to sell a little fish, Bows & Arrows, and some few skins of Land Animals. We observ'd among them some articles we knew they must have got our of the Discovery, and they soon made sufficient (sic) that she was up the arm. The people spoke a different language from the Indians we saw at the entrance of Dufuca's Streights though little else about them appeared different for they were equally as dirty. It seemed evident that their intercourse with Ships had been limited (if indeed they ever had any) from their surprize and astonishment at many things, and their not having about them any European articles whatever except it might be a knife, but they had a very good idea of bartering and wou'd not part with anything without the value of it. Copper was yet the rage.

(To be continued.)