

## DOCUMENTS

### *Our First Horticulturist—Brackenridge's Journal of the Chehalis Route, 1841*

(Continued from Vol. XXII, p. 58)

#### *Introductory Note*

Immediately upon his return from the Inland Expedition narrated in the preceding issues of this *Quarterly*, Lieutenant Johnson was again ordered to fit out a party to proceed across country to the Chehalis River, Grays Harbor, and the mouth of the Columbia. In the party were to be, among others, Passed Midshipman Eld and our journalist, Mr. Brackenridge, a botanist and horticulturist.

When the time of departure had arrived and written orders were handed to Johnson, he expostulated with Commander Wilkes "in apparent temper." Wilkes ordered him to be ready to leave ship in five minutes. Johnson, improperly uniformed, again came and expostulated, was suspended and arrested, and the name of Passed Midshipman Eld was substituted for Johnson as leader. Johnson's objection seems to have been to that part of the order that required him to consult with Eld as to the propriety of abandoning any United States property if such should become necessary. For the full account of this see the *Diary*, p. 89 ff. and *Narrative*, Vol. IV., p. 477.

Passed Midshipman Eld, with whom was now associated Passed Midshipman Colvocoressis, started at once.

This exploring and surveying party (Nisqually to the mouth of the Columbia via the Chehalis River and Grays Harbor) reversed the exploring trip recorded by John Work in the year 1824. Work's *Journal*, carefully edited by Mr. T. C. Elliott, is found in this *Quarterly*, III: 198-229. It should be consulted especially for a comparison of place and tribal names.

Wilkes expressed regret at the poor outfit available for the expedition; he was highly appreciative of the promptness and good spirit of Eld and those who accompanied him. He advised that the party might be absent about forty days, much of the time upon its own resources.

Page references, unless otherwise stated, are to Volume V of the Wilkes *Narrative*.

## Oregon Territory—Chekilis Route

July 19th / 41.—Having spent three days at Nesqually part[1]y on board Ship and partly on the plains, collecting a few of the summer plants; during this time a party was organized (in which I was included) which was to pass up to the head of one of the branches of Puget Sound cross overland to find the source of the Satchell<sup>179</sup> river, one of the tributaries of the Chekilis,<sup>180</sup> follow this last down to the Coast where it terminates in what is called Grays Harbour, then to proceed along the Coast by way of Chenook b[a]y<sup>181</sup> and join the Ship at Fort George on the Columbia. This party consisted when we left the Ship of Mr. Eld,<sup>182</sup> Mr. Colvo. c—s,<sup>183</sup> Sergt Stearns, myself, two Seamen, two Marines, Henery Walton, and a young lad which we called Joe,<sup>184</sup> who was to act as interpreter. Two canoes had been purchased, and the party provided with 20 days provisions. The party started from Nesqually in the early part of the forenoon & wishing to make the portage by sundown every one took a paddle and did his best, but night had closed in upon us before we reached the head<sup>185</sup> of the Sound, where we pitched our Tents for the night, without knowing where a drop of water was to be found for Supper. I had advised the propriety of hauling a few miles back at a spring & resuming our journey early in the morning, but this was not listened to, and it was only when the[y] had run themselves into difficulty that I was consulted,<sup>186</sup> and in this instance with the assistance of an Indian I was able to relieve their wants. Young men from a Ship are about the poorest hands to conduct an expedition of this sort that I have ever fallen in with. Weather clear and very warm—

20th. Mr. Colvocoressis & S. Stearns this morning went overland to *Lakes*<sup>187</sup> in order to procure Natives and Horses from chief, to assist the following day in making a portage of our Luggage and Canoes. I went a collecting plants, and in the woods found an

179 *Satchell* (Called Shaptal in Wilkes's order), now the Black River, from the color of its water. Work in 1824 records Black as the name; Brackenridge is following Wilkes's instruction in using the Indian names. Work, however, calls the Indians the Holloween nation. *Quarterly*, III: 207.

180 *Chekilis*. The Chehalis River.

181 *Chennooh*, Willapa Harbor; Shoalwater Bay in the *Narrative*.

182 *Mr. Eld*. Henry Eld, originally on the *Peacock*, had transferred to the *Vincennes* at Fiji.

183 *Mr. Colvo*. George W. Colvocoressis had joined the *Peacock* at Rio and transferred to the *Vincennes* at Fiji.

184 *Joe*. A half-breed boy.

185 *head*. Eld Inlet, more often called Mud Bay.

186 *consulted*. This situation seems strange, in view of the fact that Eld himself had been on the survey of the inlet "a few days before," whereas the region was entirely new to Brackenridge.

187 *Lakes*. (Shaptal Lakes in Wilkes's order). Black Lake is the only one of importance; the others are ponds.

Epimedium,<sup>188</sup> the first one observed by us in the Oregon. Saw Trees of *Cornus Nuttalliensis*<sup>189</sup> 40 feet high at 2 ft. from the ground stem 11 inches in diam: The soil here is somewhat similar to that bordering on the Straits of Juan de Fuca, viz, a shallow black sandy vegetable earth with a large portion of gravel. I shot two large Pigeons and saw several Deer in a band but owing to the density of brush could not get a sight on them. Mr. C. & S. Stearns returned and reported that the[y] had reached the lake and that assistance would be over early in the morning.

Weather very fine in the early part of the day, afternoon Cloudy—

July 21st. / . At an early hour the Old Chief with five Horses and a number of his men was ready at the head of the Sound about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile above us. We paddled up to the point with our two Canoes, one of which was to[o] heavy to drag over, therefore disposed of to the Chief. The other got up on the bank while the Horses wer[e] loading with our *traps*, while this work was going on I could observe that the Chiefs Wife<sup>190</sup> reigned superior and that he was only a meere tool or pro formo individual in her presence. The portage overland to Lake is a distance of about 4 miles through a forest of high trees of Spruce and Maple, with *Cornus*, Hazel, & *Spiraea* as underwood. When within about 1 mile of Lake we had to cross the end of a small prairie deeply broke[n] in upon by points of the forest, on leaving this prairie we passed through a thicket of trees and came again into another small prairie of about 10 acres in extent, laying on the N. West side of the Lake which is separated from this and surrounded on all sides by low Willow & Alder bushes, its length 2 Miles, breadth  $\frac{3}{4}$  M—s, in it I found *Nuphar lutes*,<sup>191</sup> two species of *Potamogeton*,<sup>192</sup> and a little pink flowered plant in habit of *Nymphaea*, but in its vicinity plants were very scarce. The most of the soil which I examined today Consisted of a light brown poor sandy Loam. Mr. E. & C. went of[f] to survey the L.— Seaman Brook<sup>193</sup> Came into Camp taken bad with a cramp in the Stomach. Weather warm and clear.

188 *Epimedium (hexandra)*, now *Vancouveria hexandra*, or barren-wort.

189 *Cornus Nuttalliensis*, now written *Cornus nuttallii*.

190 *Chiefs Wife*. She is called the Squaw Chief in the *Narrative*, p. 124. She "seemed to exercise more authority than any that had been met with; indeed her character and conduct placed her much above those around her. Her horses were remarkably fine animals; her dress was neat, and her whole establishment bore the indications of Indian opulence. Although her husband was present, he seemed under such good discipline, as to warrant the belief that the wife was the ruling power, or, to express it in more homely language, 'wore the breeches'."

191 *Nuphar lutes*. *Nuphar* is an old name for *Nymphaea*, the pond-lily. The *Narrative* calls this the yellow-lily (p. 125).

192 *Potamogeton*, pondweed.

193 *Brook*. John Brooks served the entire cruise.

July 22d. In the early part of the forenoon Mr. Eld & C. went off to survey what the natives told them was another Lake, but was found to be a puddle hole or pond of no great consequence. At 2 O'Clock P.M. taking a small canoe we found on Lake, and our own large one, we began our River<sup>194</sup> excursion by a small outlet, which for the first four Miles below the Lake varies from 20 to 60 feet in breadth, and from 3 ft. to 2 fathoms in depth, and nearly choked up with flows: of Nup[h]ar, Potamogeton, Comarum,<sup>195</sup> & Sparganium.<sup>196</sup> These plants with the sharp zig-zags which brot. the bows of our large Canoe in contact with the thickets of bush on the banks before the Stearn Could get clear. Towards evening the Moschitos became so thick that we could scarcely find the channel among the weeds & thus, there being no place to land we had to keep on till 9 P.M. when we came to a Camp of 5 Natives, where we stopd. on the bank and slept for the night. Weather fine but Cloudy —(Near to the Lake are a good many scattered Oaks, on the prairie.)

July 23d. We had this day again to make a portage of about 1 mile over a prairie where the river was choked by brush, in which we were assisted by the natives. The Stream or river was so much inter[r]upted with mud & sand bars that we were compelled to leap out and drag them along by hand, got as far down before night as the Old Chiefs Camp when we came to for the night. The land on both sides of Stream is flat and Marshy, observed a good many Ash trees, shot 7 Grouse crossing over the prairie. Weather pleasant—

24th. Provided with poles in order to keep the Canoe from coming broadside to the many Rapids we had to get over. The party could only progress slowly owing to the many Shoals in the river. Passed two small prairies on which were several small neglected Native houses.<sup>197</sup> The banks of the stream were now become high and dry, we had so far observed no rock of any description (if we except the block of Granate on small prairie at Lake). Weather very warm & close—

25th. About 10 O'Clock got into the Chekilis River, a little below the mouth of the Satchell (the name of the river and Lake that we approached it by), its breadth is about 150 feet, with a gravelly bottom and smooth water except where gravel bars set across the Channel, the soil on both sides for about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile

194 *River*. The Black, from Black Lake to the Chehalis.

195 *Comarum (palustre)*, purple marsh-larks.

196 *Sparganium*, bur-reed.

197 *Native houses*. These are described by Work, *Quarterly*, III: 206.

back, is a rich deep alluvial Loam, overgrown with Poplar, Alder, Willow, Dogwood & Raspberry bushes.—Weather very fine and Clear—

26th. The Old Chief and wife had followed us down so far in a large Canoe, came upon several large flocks of a bird which I call a Scart,<sup>198</sup> of these I killed four, in the afternoon arrived at a fishing station<sup>199</sup> where there were a number of Indians; but no fish to be had, and soon after reached the mouth of the Satchap River,<sup>200</sup> where we encampd. & made preparations to ascend this as far up as the Lake where it takes its rise. The character of the soil much the same as yesterday.

27th. At an early hour Mr. Eld, S. Stearns & two men in a small canoe set out for the Lake of Narwatzk,<sup>201</sup> while Mr. C. and myself remained at camp: during the day I crossed over to the South side of the Chekilis, and penetrated back into the Spruce forest 3 or 4 Miles during which I did not find a single new plant. Shot a Grouse and a brown squirrel. The Soil I found to be a miserable poor Mixture of Sand and Gravel, whereas on the opposite or North Side, up the banks of the Satchap for four Miles on both sides, belts of alluvial deposit, averaging from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a mile in breadth, the same sort of land in the same position lines also the banks of the Chekilis, as I before observed. All of which would undoubtedly produce good crops of Grain, were it not that an overflow in spring is to be dreaded, as I could observe the water mark on trees a considerable distance back from the banks of the River. Weather fine and clear.—

28th. Went 4 Miles up the Satchap but found it very much chocked up with drift wood. Weather cloudy but very warm.—

29th. Towards the evening of this day the party returned from Lakes: the native name of the first—Narwatzk, the other Kamalichi,<sup>202</sup> neither of them of much importance, the whole of this trip so far is the poorest for a Botanist that could be picked out of the whole Oregon Territory Weather dry and clear, no natives come near us—

30th. Began early to descend the river, and before mid-day began to observe the effects of the tide, which impeded the progress of the Canoes. My impression<sup>203</sup> is that it acts up as far as

<sup>198</sup> Scart. According to the dictionaries this is Scotch for *Cormorant*; but the *Narrative* calls them *teal*.

<sup>199</sup> fishing Station, on the Chehalis Reservation.

<sup>200</sup> Satchap, the Satsop River.

<sup>201</sup> Narwatzk. Nawatzel Lake.

<sup>202</sup> Kamalichi (Kamilche?) The *Narrative*, p. 127, has Kamalitz, described as a smaller lake near Lake Nauvitz (Nawatzel?) No Lake Kamilche is recorded; it is the name of an arm of Puget Sound, not far away.

<sup>203</sup> impression. His impression is just right, for summer months at least.

the mouth of the Satchap, though we did not perceive it. Towards evening by the return of tide went on pretty well, on landing to encamp for the night we had some difficulty in getting up the mud banks as the[y] had now become pretty high. Today on the south side of the river I observed several bluff[s] of Talk<sup>204</sup> or Soft Slate Stone, but so fragile that specimens of it would not carry. Weather fine—

31st. At 6 A.M. the tide was setting in strong but we set out and three hours after had to round a point<sup>205</sup> where the river took a sharp turn, here we met a sharp breeze setting up from the Harbour, which caused a pretty round ripple on the water, our Canoes took in a large quantity of it by the bowes, our progress was about 1 Mile per hour, and by the time we reached the upper end of the Harbour (Grays), we had to make for the North Shore, the Natives<sup>206</sup> farther down the bay on the opposite shore seeing our situation immediately came with a large Canoe to our assistance; after we had made fruitles[s] attempts in which we came near getting swamped, our people having no idea of managing a Canoe in such a sea and loaded as we were with all sorts of things but provisions, which we now much wanted. The party remained a short time at Native Village, but some difficulty arising between the Indians and Mr. Eld, about a Canoe, we were obliged at last to leave them in our own Chenook one which was all we now possessed, having left the small one on the opposite Shore. After paddeling half a mile farther up the bay we campd. on the bank of a small Creek.<sup>207</sup>

August 1st. From this date to the 6th our Camp remained stationary on the South side of the bay about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a Mile from its head, during which Mr. E and party were busy surveying when the weather would admit of their going out in a canoe. My time was occupied in searching for plants and preserving the same, & assisting the surveying party in noting the Tide staff, Thermomiter, &c &c. Our own stock of provisions was now getting low and little was procurable from the Natives. Game is in this neighborhood very scarce. Of Plants the most interesting found was *Nuttallia*,<sup>208</sup> *Epilobium*,<sup>209</sup> *Scrophularia*,<sup>210</sup> *Stellaria*, the former in

204 *Talk*. Usually spelled *talc*. Called "talcose slate" in the *Narrative*, p. 129.

205 *point*. The northern tip of South Aberdeen.

206 *Natives*. The *Narrative* indicates that the Squaw Chief again came to the rescue at this time. She had preceded them to Grays Harbor. The whole situation seems funny—a squaw leading Indian braves to rescue a boat loaded with midshipmen and seamen from a United States naval vessel.

207 *small Creek*, Charles Creek.

208 *Nuttallia*. This is now known as *Osmaronia cerasiformis*, or Indian plum. An older name is *oso berry*.

209 *Epilobium*, probably *angustifolium*, fireweed.

210 *Scrophularia*, probably *S. californica*, figwort.

great beauty and abundance on the meadow land behind our Camp, but on the whole a more same and meagre vegetation could scarcely cloathe any Country.

6th. With the assistance of the Indians and one of their large Canoes we shifted our Camp about 5 Miles farther down the bay to a nice patch of Meadow close to a stream of water;<sup>211</sup> this day was foggy like the four preceding, with a strong breeze setting in from the Sea.

7th. The spruce forest sets down close to the bay with the exception of the small space of open land about our camp. I penetrated the forest behind our tents to the distance of 6 Miles in search of Game & Plants, of the former I got a couple of Pigeons, of the latter only a few ferns, a *Menzesia*, & *Tanacetum*.<sup>212</sup>

8th. I set out this morning in order to reach the coast thinking it possible to be able to procure some Clams, but when I had got about three miles a deep River<sup>213</sup> setting up a long meadow put a stop to my progress, but in order to satisfy the cravings of hunger in my Companions, I went and filled my Collecting Case with *Shallon*<sup>214</sup> berrys— (*Gaultheria Shallon*). On my return found that no surveying had been done today. Weather very thick and disagreeable.

9th. Party went up to native village to see and procure assistance to shift our Camp down to the South entrance to the Harbour, which was promisid. Weather showery, with strong breeze setting in from Sea.

10th. The Indians not fulfilling their promise in coming to our assistance, we packed up all our luggage in onr *one* Canoe, when we all shoved off but found it advisable to keep close to the Shore as the Canoe shipped a deal of water but so soon as we could make our way along the beach on the banks of mud, the Canoe was dragged along, and by 2 O'Clock we had reached the S. head (or *Chehilis point*).<sup>215</sup> Soon after landing Mr. Colvocoressis & S. Stearns set of [f] for the North point<sup>216</sup> on opposite side to purchase another Canoe from the Natives which had been previously bargained for. At dark the[y] returned to the Camp with it. Mr. Eld went to view the entrance, while I went to Botanize along the Coast. Weather cloudy, with strong breeze setting in from the sea.

<sup>211</sup> *stream of water*. O'Leary Creek. Here, seven years later, William O'Leary settled, the first settler on Grays Harbor.

<sup>212</sup> *Tanacetum*. Tansy; probably the seashore tansy.

<sup>213</sup> *deep River*. John's River.

<sup>214</sup> *Shallon*. The salal berry is eaten, but it cannot be called a favorite.

<sup>215</sup> *Chehilis point*, now Point Hanson; also Peterson's Point and several other names attach to it.

<sup>216</sup> *North point*, now Point Brown.



11th. All hand[s] but Henery Walton & myself went to plant signals out on the heads<sup>217</sup> to triangulate on. S. Stearns, Brook, and Foord<sup>218</sup> went off to sand bar for the same purpose, having two natives with them, at mid day it came on to blow and rain very heavy, so that the[y] could not return, and were compelled to run down for a native village where the[y] passed the night. In the early part of the day I went in search of plants, in the afternoon collected about a bushel of Clams the party being in a state of Starvation. Weather squally, continued to rain till dark.—

12th. At 8 this morning the S. Stearns & Crew arrived assisted by three natives. Soon after the whole party went of[f] to survey, while Henery remained at Camp, I went out a collecting, during which I shot a brace of Grouse. Weather wet, with strong breeze setting in—

13th. At an early hour this morning we were all agreeably surprised at the arrival of Lt. De Haven<sup>219</sup> & party of men, who had been sent along by Capt. Wilkes to search after and if necessary assist in finishing the survey. He had not been well seated when the disclosure of the los[s] of the Peacock<sup>220</sup> was made known,—a circumstance which I had for some time dreaded, from the fact that a Chekilis Indian had told me that a large *Boston* Ship had got brock (as he termed it) on the bar at the entrance to the Columbia. The only consolation was that no lives were lost. Mr. De H. and party left us about mid-day to send on as quick as possible a stock of provisions as we were in a state of Starvation, subsisting on dead Fish cast on shore by the surf, a few Clams, and now and then a Grouse, the latter being very scarce. Our men from bad fare and the moisture of the climate with their feet always wet by dragging the Canoe over the mud flats became feable and sick, so that little progress was made in the survey, and nothing of interest occur[r]ing I shall pass on till the

18th. when a party of Indians & Konakas<sup>221</sup> headed by a Frenchman<sup>222</sup> arrived with a stock of provisions from the Brig Porpoise. Mr. Eld detained the Konakas to assist, so that when the weather would permit the work went on briskly.

<sup>217</sup> *heads*. The bluff to the northeast (just west of Hoquiam) is known locally, and shown on Kroll's County map, as Brackenridge Bluff. So far as I know, this is the only instance in the state where either geography or botany has preserved Brackenridge's name. A corresponding bluff along the south shore of the Harbor commemorates Sergeant Stearns in Stearns Bluff.

<sup>218</sup> *Foord*. Thomas Ford, ordinary seaman.

<sup>219</sup> *Lt. De Haven*. E. H. De Haven, acting master of the tender, *Flying Fish*.

<sup>220</sup> *Peacock*. This ship went aground in attempting to cross the Columbia Bar July 18, 1841. The weather was not unfavorable, but no one on board really knew the channel.

<sup>221</sup> *Konakas*. Kanakas, Hawaiians.

<sup>222</sup> *Frenchman*. Boileau.



The Character of the land around Grays Harbour and up the Chehilis as far as the entrance of the Satchap is of the poorest description, the spruce forest along the most of it setting down to the waters brink, with occasionally a small patch of Salt marsh or meadow, producing coarse grasses and Cat Tails. These meadows are generally Snaked with narrow creeks or *guts* up which the tide water sets, and occasionally in Spring tides overflowing the whole, as I could observe the dead grass on the willow bushes that had been washed up at such times. The only patch of land that could be cultivated as a farm is that immediately within the South Head, in extent about 100 acres, but perhaps better calculated for Cow pasturage. The coast from this point to Cape Shoalwater<sup>223</sup> is a smooth sand beach, with behind a line of low sand hills about 20 feet high, inclining gradually to descend in towards the Pine trees; a belt of which skirt the Spruce forest which extends inland. The coast vegetation is same all along, consisting of the following

*Plants*: *Obronia*,<sup>224</sup> sp: flos: orange, stem prostrate, leaves alternate, Sand Hills.

Umbelliferous plant, Dwf: habit, an *Hieracium*<sup>225</sup> &c &c

*Lathrus*,<sup>226</sup> an *L. Maratima*, Common Sand Hills

*Sisyrinchium* sp: flos: yellow, leaves glaucous, Salt marshes

*Neottia* Sp: Salt Marsh, a *Herbinaria*<sup>227</sup> with green flos: same locality

*Ambrosia* sp<sup>228</sup>: Sand Hills *Tanacetum* Same locality

*Aster* two sp: with several *Juncaea*<sup>229</sup> and *Graminaea*,<sup>230</sup> an *Armeria*,<sup>231</sup> with a number of Saline plants,

The *Gaultheria Shallon* which produces a very palatable fruit was abundant among the Pine trees.

The weather during the 24 days we remained at Grays Harbour was wet and foggy, with frequent strong breezes setting in from the Ocean. Whether this harbour will ever become the resort of vessels above 100 Tons burden is a matter of doubt, to me it appeared that should a vessel above that burden get within the bar (on which the sea breaks with great violence) that there is no

223 *Cape Shoalwater*, north cape at entrance to Willapa Harbor, Brackenridge's Chenook Bay.

224 *Obronia*. *Abronia*, probably *A. latifolia*, yellow abronia.

225 *Hieracium*, hawkweed. Piper gives 8 species for the state.

226 *Lathrus*. *Lathyrus maritima*, beach pea.

227 *Herbinaria*, probably a slip for *Habenaria*. The *Lymnorchis* or *Habenaria* includes our orchis.

228 *Ambrosia*. Ragweed. (*Ambrosia* seems a most inappropriate name for it)

229 *Juncaea*, the rush.

230 *Graminaea*, the grass family. The spelling should be *Gramineae*.

231 *Armeria*. *Statice armeria*; common name, thrift.

basin capacious enough for her to come too in, and provided she did, were it to come on to blow heavy, she must inevitably get on to a mud bank, the channels and basins being all so contracted—

August 24th. The survey being now at a close & an old chief from Chenook bay engaged to assist in getting our Canoes along to C. Shoalwater; at 11 A.M. each man with his burden on left the miserable Grays Harbour station, two Indians dragged<sup>232</sup> one of our Canoes along through the Surf, while the other was left behind, we all reached Chenook bay<sup>233</sup> a little before sundown, the distance being 15 miles. Day warm & clear.—

25th. Another Canoe was hired, the party at an early hour began to cross the bay. I happened to be in Mr. Colvocoressis Canoe in which was also the old Chief to act as pilot, at mid-day Mr. Eld fell behind, we halted at small island till he should come up, but he bore away to leeward by which the party became devided. The Old Chief then directed our course and brot. us on the opposite side to the entrance of a small river<sup>234</sup> about 10 yards wide at mouth of which we paddled our Canoe about a Mile till we came into the forest where we encampd for the night. (Weather Squally)

26th. Mr. Eld not having come up Mr. C. with two Indians in small Canoe set of [f] in search of him, while I remained with the men to get the Canoe and Luggage up to the Lake.<sup>235</sup> which was distant by a straight line  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Miles. I made the men first make a portage of the luggage, & afterwards began to drag the Canoe up the narrow Zig-zag Channel, the bows of the Canoe often getting foul before the Stern was cleared, the depth of water from 10 in. to 2 ft: and sometimes the mud so deep that the men went up to the arm pits. With the exception of the belt of Spruce in which we campd, the whole up from the bay to the Lake is one Continued Marsh or Swamp: in which I found Vacciniums, Ledums, and a Myrica.<sup>236</sup> We got to within 200 yds. of the Lake when it got so dark & the men so fatigued that we all went to sleep in the bush for the night, towards 9 o'clock Mr. C. and Indian reached us, without having seen Mr. Eld.

27th. At day light we all set about getting the Canoe into the Lake, where we shipd our things on board and ferried across it,

<sup>232</sup> dragged. "Close along the beach, inside the surf, by tracking the Canoe." *Narrative*, p. 133. This was the Indian way along the coast.

<sup>233</sup> Chenook bay, Willapa Harbor; earlier known as Grays Bay and Shoalwater Bay. Eld had been ordered to survey this bay also "with all accuracy," but time did not permit.

<sup>234</sup> small river. A very small creek, rather, draining Tarlet Slough and Cranberry Marsh. The marshy nature is shown vividly by the Brackenridge description.

<sup>235</sup> Lake. Whealdon's pond, sometimes dignified with the name Black Lake.

<sup>236</sup> Myrica, called candleberry-bushes in the *Narrative*, p. 134. Either *M. gale* (sweet gale) or *M. californica* (wax myrtle).

its breadth here  $\frac{1}{4}$  and its whole length about  $\frac{1}{2}$  Mile, surrounded by dense banks of spruce trees, from this landing we had a portage of  $\frac{1}{2}$  a Mile to make over to Bakers Bay.<sup>237</sup> the pass near the lake was hilly to the height of 80 ft. and towards the bay a gradual descent down which we got the Canoe without much difficulty, and for my own part I would have considered myself badly paid<sup>238</sup> had she then been given over for the trouble she had cost me, the distance from Chenook over to Bakers Bay by the portage I estimated at  $4\frac{1}{4}$  Miles—the Schooner Flying Fish being in waiting<sup>239</sup> carried us over to Fore George,<sup>240</sup> where we had the pleasure of meeting a good many old friends (Mr. Eld we found on board the Schooner, having taken a different route<sup>241</sup> overland).—

28th. We had orders today to proceed up the River to Vancouver which was countermanded. Immediately behind Mr. Barneys<sup>242</sup> House is the site of the old Fort Astoria, which belonged to the American Fur Company,<sup>243</sup> the grounds which the[y] had cleared of the timber & cultivated as Gardens, is now overgrown with brush, save a small patch which produces Mr. B. very fine Potatoes. The Soil here is a rich heavy loam and the size of the timber both above and below this place is an indication of the depth and strength of the land.

29th. At 7 O'clock the whole of our party 10 in number got on board one of the Company's<sup>244</sup> barges which was to carry us to F. Vancouver, when opposite Tongue Point<sup>245</sup> a fine breeze sprang up which carried us rapidly along. On leaving F. George and up above Tongue Point the banks of the river is lined to the margin with Spruce Trees: with occasional patches of *Arbutus*,<sup>246</sup> in bights and Islands, (of which there are several), Willow, Alder, and high Poplar trees prevail, two species of *Potamogeton* and batches of *Nuphar* were found abundant on flats in the River, at Sundown we calculated to be 25 Miles on our way, and campd. on the banks of the River.—

237 *Bakers Bay*. On the Columbia, just within Cape Disappointment. It was named by Lieut. Broughton, after an American, captain of the *Jenny*, anchored there at that time.

238 *badly paid*. Wilkes pays high tribute to Eld, Colvocoressis, and Brackenridge for their "devotion to the service in which they were engaged." *Narrative*, p. 134.

239 *in waiting*. At the site of the present town of Ilwaco.

240 *Fort George*. Astoria was so re-named by Captain Black of the *Raccoon* when he captured the fur-post in 1814.

241 *Different route*. Brackenridge's route was the one preferred by Indians. The other portage was some six miles long.

242 *Mr. Barneys*. James Birnie, for several years in charge of what was left of Fort George.

243 *American Fur Company*. More exactly, the Pacific Fur Company.

244 *Company's*, the Hudson's Bay Company.

245 *Tongue Point*. A prominent headland on the south shore of the Columbia, a short distance above old Astoria.

246 *Arbutus*. The madrona.

30th. We had no wind till late in the afternoon when a pretty fresh breeze set up so we kept on till midnight when we were compelled to come to and pitch our Tents on Shore owing to the heavy rains that fell, had observed today on both banks of the River several batches of fine Oaks, also at Pillar rock,<sup>247</sup> two Species of Ledum, one of which had particularly thick and glaucous leaves, passed towards evening on our left hand the entrance to the Kowlitze<sup>248</sup> River.

31st. Having no wind this morning we were compelled to pull close in shore, passed the two entrances to the Willamette and soon after came in sight of our two Brigs, the Porpoise & [the] Oregon formerly the Thos. Perkins,<sup>249</sup> which had been purchased by Capt. Wilkes after the wreck of the Peacock, both of which lay in the River opposite F. Vancouver. I observed along the banks of the River considerable patches of al[l]uvial land, but the fact of them being sometimes overflowed might prevent such from being Cultivated, at least a great risk would attend it—

#### *Oregon Territory—Fort Vancouver*

Sept. 1st, 1841. Had received orders from the Commander to prepare by the following morning to join a party of the Peacocks officers who had been laying encampd. up the Willamette for several weeks, this party under the guidance of Lt. Emmons<sup>250</sup> was to proceed overland to California & join the Squadron at San Francisco. We had already had a pretty hard Campaign, but as it was a new field we were anxious to get into it.

Of F. Vancouver and its environs I can say but little, having only spent a few hours with the principal, Dr. M. Loughlin, who in the most friendly manner showed me round his gardens, under the keeping of Mr. Bruce,<sup>251</sup> a Scotch Highlander by birth. The Apple Trees bore remarkable heavy crops of fruit and were invariably in a healthy Condition, there were from 4 to 500 of these in a bearing state, and with the exception of a few approved varieties imported from England the whole stock had been raised from Seeds at Vancouver, and to my taste the majority were better adapted for bakeing than for a dessert, but in a new Country certainly a

<sup>247</sup> *Pillar Rock*, north side of the Columbia, in the southwestern part of Wahkiakum County; about 25 feet in height, 10 feet square at the top; of conglomerate rock.

<sup>248</sup> *Kowlitze*. The Cowlitz. The site is now two thriving cities, Longview and Kelso.

<sup>249</sup> *Thos. Perkins*. This ship, under charter to the Hudson's Bay Company, was purchased by Wilkes and re-conditioned to take the place of the *Peacock*.

<sup>250</sup> *Lt. Emmons*. George F., from the wrecked *Peacock*.

<sup>251</sup> *Mr. Bruce*. William Bruce was so wedded to Fort Vancouver that after a return to England, he begged to come back to his gardens here, which he was ambitious to make equal to the best in England.

great acquisition. Gooseberrys and strawberrys the[y] had of the finest sorts. Peaches and Nectarines the same. Grapes I was told had succeeded well but of late years their cultivation had been neglected. Melons, Musk & Water, do well. Of Vegetables the[y] Can raise any quantity, all of which produce good Seeds. Of the Companys farming and dairying operations here I could collect no satisfactory information nor was I able to examine the quality of the soil in the neighborhood.—

2nd. Mr. Emmons who had been confined at F.V. with the Tertian Fever,<sup>252</sup> was now partially recovered, he this morning went overland to join the party, while Messrs Eld, Colvo—s. S. Stearns & myself, with Henery Walton left in a Canoe to ascend the Willamette, and as this river had been denominated the paradise of the Oregon, I kept my eyes about in order to catch some of its beauties. After leaving the Columbia, the first 10 miles of the Willamette, the banks is covered with Willow, Alder, & Dogwood, behind which rises spruce trees, (*Abies Douglasii*), and as you proceed farther up towards the *Falls*,<sup>253</sup> the same kind of brush wood line its banks, but behind this occasional patches of open prairie which support solitary Oaks, with scrub brush of the same, are observed. I saw no Squat[t]ers or other dwelling Houses till we reached the Falls, where on both sides of the River are a number of both Indian huts and White Mens Houses—

### *The Willamette Route to California*

#### *Introductory Note*

Again there is little rest for Brackenridge, the Horticulturist. Commander Wilkes immediately attaches him to the ready-made overland expedition to San Francisco Bay, the party being composed mainly of officers and men from the wrecked *Peacock*. Thomas McKay had promised to act as guide, but backed out at the last minute, with a remark to the effect that he had never intended to keep his promise. A few civilians, including some men with wives, attached themselves to Lieutenant Emmons's expedition as a precaution against Indian attack on their way to California. Troublesome Indians were often found in the Rogue River valley. Prior to 1841, the Willamette-Sacramento route had been frequently traveled by explorers, fur-traders, and settlers.

<sup>252</sup> *Tertian Fever*. A fever or ague, the pains of which return every third day; that is, with one day intervening between paroxysms.

<sup>253</sup> *Falls*. On the Willamette; now Oregon City.

The photostat copy breaks off at about Mount Shasta. We know from the *Narrative*, Vol. V, that the party proceeded without serious mishap down the Sacramento and around San Francisco Bay via San Jose and Santa Clara to Yerba Buena, where they reached the ship about a month later, October 28.

*Oregon Territory—Willamette*

Sept. 3 rd. A Company of Settlers had built close to the falls a small Schooner<sup>254</sup> which the[y] intended to use in procuring Otter skins along the coast towards California. Her timbers consisted principally of a species of White Oak which prevails in the vicinity, & is said to be hard and durable. There is also another which the[y] Call there (Red Oak) which is not held so high in estimation, the white men assisted us in making a short portage of our Canoes past the falls, the water here is estimated to fall about 45 ft. and it struck me that by opening a run from above the falls along the banks on either side of the River, that a power of water could be commanded, & regulated by sluces, to propel an[y] machinery that could be erected beneath. Our Indians which had brot. us up so far were now about to return, but were compelled by Mr. E. to proceed. At 11 P.M. we reached what is called Champooi,<sup>255</sup> or the first of the Settlement where we encampd. in a Barn yard for the night.

We had today passed a number of our Officers on a survey of the River, saw also a number of patches of what looked like good land, but in general thickly wooded.

4th. Early this morning we found that we had come too on the farm of Mr. Thomas McKay,<sup>256</sup> on finding out who we were he kindly invited us to breakfast at his house, which was not far distant. Mr. McK. possesses a good Flour Mill, but for want of water during the greater part of the year is of little use to him. The party being still 15 Miles farther up the River, he provided us with Horses to ride and a cart to carry our luggage, which was accepted, but as

<sup>254</sup> *Schooner*. According to the *Narrative*, pp. 337-342, these eight young men were building the schooner to leave the country for California, "taking sea otter by the way." They "were not dissatisfied with the country, but they would not settle themselves down in it, because there were no young women to marry, except squaws or half-breeds." The boat was later christened *Star of Oregon*. At Yerba Buena (San Francisco) the young men traded their ship for cattle.

<sup>255</sup> *Champooi*, Champooing in the *Narrative*; usually written Champoeg. It was meeting place of the settlers who formed the Provincial Government. The village was located on Mission Creek, between Newberg and Butteville.

<sup>256</sup> *Thomas McKay*, son of Alexander McKay, one of the Astorians. Thomas was a step-son of Dr. McLoughlin. He was first a North-Wester and then a Hudson's Bay man. He was later famous as a Willamette settler, and captain of a company in the Cayuse War.

I wished to pick up a few plants by the way I walked on in Co. with S. Stearns, & reached the encampment( which was on the opposite side of the River from the Mission Station),<sup>257</sup> about 3 in the Afternoon.

During my walk today from Champooi to Mission Station, the country was level, and the soil appeared good, of a deep black Loamy nature. Hazel bushes & a goodly number of fine Oaks was the prevailing vegetation. On this district a considerable number of Canadian Frenchmen have settled down. Cultivating small farms from 10 to 40 acres in extent. These people want both means and energy ever to become very formidable competitors in the farming line. The Methodist Mission by some claim or another have taken possession of 8 Square Miles of the best of the land, part of which the[y] Cultivate and the remainder the[y] wont permit any one to settle down upon, and ten Miles farther up the River at the Flour Mills, the[y] also lay claim to a considerable tract of good land. On the Tualatin<sup>258</sup> plains where the most of the Americans have as yet settled the land is said to be good and als[o] a considerable extent of it. Farmers from that district have told me that Wheat produces 40 bushels per acre, this I consider high for a general estimate, and from the Careless manner that the[y] plow and dress their land, that from 30 to 35 bushels would be a fairer average,—it must be admitted that the quality of Wheat produced on the Willamette is superior to that grown in the U. States by 4 lbs. per: bushel, about as much as what the U. States Wheat is superior to the English.—

Mays, owing perhaps to the Coldness of the Nights, does not do so well. Oats, Barley, & Potatoes produce good Crops, whereas Rye has not succeeded well with any one. The soil I take it is to[o] rich and heavy.

5th & 6th. I spent the most of these two days in collecting Seeds, & viewing the nature of the country in our vicinity, and in both of these I was perfectly well satisfied. The season for flowers being now past, the Seeds were in good condition, particularly Annuals: *Oenotheras*,<sup>259</sup> *Gilias*, *Escholzia California*,<sup>260</sup> *Clintonia*,<sup>261</sup> *Mimulis*,<sup>262</sup> and several other good plants I secured. Of Soil or land the whole within 6 Miles of our Camp, Could be brought in as good farming ground. The major part of the land in the Willamette is

<sup>257</sup> Mission Station, east side of the Willamet, south of Wheatland, now known as Mission Bottom.

<sup>258</sup> Tualatin. These plains were famed for their beauty. The Tualatin River is a western tributary of the Willamet, entering just above Oregon City.

<sup>259</sup> *Oenothera*, an evening primrose.

<sup>260</sup> *Escholzia California*, properly *Eschscholtzia Californica*, the California poppy.

<sup>261</sup> *Clintonia*, a member of the lily-of-the-valley family.

<sup>262</sup> *Mimulis*. *Mimulus*, the monkey-flower.



a deep black heavy Loam and very difficult to break up after the Summer droughts set in. This character will gradually give way to Cultivation. I did not visit any of the Mission Gardens, but I understood the[y] are well managed and produce good Vegetables.

7th. Got all the luggage devided out into Horse loads. When the same was put on and adjusted the Cavalcade mooved on towards a farm belonging to a Mr. Turner,<sup>263</sup> here we remained during the 8th while some of our men were in search of Two Horses that had strayed off.

9th. The party again made a start, mooving slowly along over an open prairie country, swelling gently into round hills with a few scattered Oaks along their Summits. In moist low ground a Species of Ash reaching to the height of 30 or 40 feet, the trunks of which are to[o] small ever to be of much utility. Campd. on Ignat<sup>264</sup> Creek (today 15 M). Course S.S. West.

10th. The Country rode over today was much of the same Character as yesterday, the soil rich but of a yellowish cast. The prairies we found swarming with Wolves. (Course S. East by Comps. distance 16 Miles.)

11th. Struck into what our hunter (Guide)<sup>265</sup> called the long prairie, at the entrance to which is Marshes Creek,<sup>266</sup> a small still pond pond of water. The N. East side of this prairie is bounded for a considerable distance by the Lamale<sup>267</sup> River, which is about 20 yds. broad and very still. On the banks grew Dogwoods, Spiraea, Willows, Alder, and Close by Clumps of a large Pinus, near to P. ponderosa, procured Seed of Madia<sup>268</sup> elegans, but the rascally Indians by setting fire to the prairies had deprived us of many fine plants, land still good. (Course S. by East. distance 24 Miles).—

12th. A good many large open spaces of prairie lands pass'd through today, some of the soil slightly mixed up with gravel, a few spruce Trees mingled with the Oaks on the rising grounds. (distance 20 Miles).<sup>269</sup>

13th. Owing to the thicknes[s] of the weather a great many of our horses had escaped the guards during the night and were not

<sup>263</sup> Mr. Turner, "known as the mission butcher. He owns a farm, in the acceptation of the word in Oregon, having a log-hut, an Indian woman to reside in it, and an undefined quantity of land." *Narrative*, p. 221.

<sup>264</sup> Ignat. Ignas in the *Narrative*, p. 222. Probably named for Inass, an Indian hunter in the party. The name does not seem to have survived.

<sup>265</sup> Guide. Baptist Guardipii.

<sup>266</sup> Marshes Creek. The "small still pond" seems identical with Lake Guardipii in the *Narrative*, p. 222.

<sup>267</sup> Lamale. This seems to be the same as Lumtumbuff river in the *Narrative*, p. 222. John Work in 1834 recorded it as Lamitambuff; David Douglas recorded it as Longtabuff. It has been modernized to Long Tom River.

<sup>268</sup> Madia elegans, tarweed.

<sup>269</sup> Miles. The camp was on the Male creek, according to the *Narrative*.

all got before midday, we did not travel more than 2 Miles before we were forced to camp, there being no water for a long way after passing the small creek where we pitched our Tents. Weather very hot and foggy—(Distance 2 Miles).

*Plants:* Gentians sp: flos: blue: fol: Glaucus, in marshes

*Eryngium*<sup>270</sup> sp: fol: lanceolate, Marsh.

*Madia elegans* in great abundance

*Madia*-looking annual. flos: small yellow, dry banks.

15th. Started this day at 9 A.M., after riding 4 Miles came to the base of the Elk mountains.<sup>271</sup> Their ascent was gradual on both sides, breadth of the range where we crossed, 10 Miles. The whole is a broken Chain of round [k]nobs the highest of which we estimated at 1600 feet.—the summits are clothed with Spruce and Oak trees, with an undergro[w]th of Cornus, Hazel, Arbutus, Rubus,<sup>272</sup> *Ceanothus*,<sup>273</sup> also a species of *Castanea* with lanceolate leaves very rusty beneath, the cups of the nut very prickly, in moist places at the base a sp: of *Rudbeckia*<sup>275</sup> four feet high.—day very fine but dense with smoke from the prairie fires in the vicinity. (distance 17 miles).

Sept. 16th. The party got underway at 9 A.M. the short space that we went today was through a hilly district in many places thickly covered with Spruce trees, till we reached Elk river,<sup>276</sup> which is about 10 yds. broad. The party encampd. on its banks till a party consisting of Messrs Emmons, Agate,<sup>277</sup> & Stearns with a Canadian as Guide paid a visit to Fort Um[p]qua,<sup>278</sup> belonging to the H. B. Company, which was said to be distant 12 Miles. Mr. R.<sup>279</sup> and myself examined our collections, and in the afternoon walked out, where we found a species of Oak, new to us, its size and habit is near that of the one on the Willamette (and which continued plentiful all along our route), but the lobes of the leaves have a spine at their termination, the acorns are larger and sit deeper in the Cup. A *Lonicera*<sup>280</sup> with yellow flos: was also got on the banks of the River. (distance 4 Miles).—

(To be Continued)

<sup>270</sup> *Eryngium*, *eryngo*, a member of the carrot family.

<sup>271</sup> *Elk mountains*, the divide between the Willamette and the Umpqua.

<sup>272</sup> *Rubus*, blackberry.

<sup>273</sup> *Ceanothus*, redroot.

<sup>274</sup> *Castanea*, probably the chinkapin.

<sup>275</sup> *Rudbeckia*, a cone-flower, probably *R. californica*, the Mexican Hat.

<sup>276</sup> *Elk river*. This northern affluent of the Umpqua enters about three miles below Fort Umpqua.

<sup>277</sup> *Agate*. Alfred T. Agate, artist, joined the *Peacock* at Callao. For him Agate Point (Bainbridge Island) was named.

<sup>278</sup> *Fort Umqua*. The later fort by that name, opposite Elkton on the Umpqua River.

<sup>279</sup> *Mr. R.* William Rich, botanist. He had been scientist on the *Peacock*.

<sup>280</sup> *Lonicera*, probably *L. ciliosa*, orange honey-suckle.