

## CHAPTER XIV.

### DE FUCA'S STRAITS AND LOSS OF THE PEACOCK.

1841.

WHEN Lieutenant Johnson returned with his party, I was still engaged with the boats in completing the surveys of the remaining arms of Puget Sound. Orders had been left with Lieutenant Carr, to have the ships prepared for sea against the return of the surveying party; and on the evening of the 16th June, when we reached the Vincennes, we found every thing ready for our departure.

Lieutenant Johnson was again ordered to fit out a party to proceed across the country to Chickeeles river, descend that river to its mouth, and make a survey of Gray's Harbour. The party, besides Lieutenant Johnson, was to consist of Passed Midshipman Eld, Mr. Brackenridge, Sergeant Stearns, three sailors, and two Indian guides. I had understood that the proposed route was practicable, although difficult and somewhat dangerous.

On the 17th, in the morning, we were prepared to sail; but the party of which Lieutenant Johnson was to take charge was not ready, that officer at the last moment declining to obey the orders, (on account of my directing the officer associated with him, Passed Midshipman Eld, to be consulted as to the propriety of abandoning public property, should it become necessary,) caused his arrest. These orders have been inserted in Appendix XIV., that all may be able to judge of their tenor. Passed Midshipman Eld was then ordered to take charge of the party, and Passed Midshipman Colvocoressis to accompany him.

We had already taken leave of Mr. Anderson and Captain M'Niel, and I have here to acknowledge the obligations we were under to them for many attentions, and particularly for the facilities they