

Another division of boats, with those of the Porpoise, were employed in surveying New Dungeness Bay, and connecting it with Protection Island, while I was occupied in getting a series of observations for latitude and longitude, dip and intensity, at the low sand point which forms the bay. Orders were also prepared for the Porpoise to proceed to Port Townsend; thence to Fraser's river, visiting Fort Langley; and then through Johnson's Straits, and round the north end of Vancouver's Island, to Nootka Sound.

A large boat expedition was also fitted out, of which I took charge in person, to proceed across the Straits of De Fuca, to complete the survey of the Canal de Arro, with the adjacent bays and harbours, and thence to the mouth of Fraser's river, where I anticipated falling in with the Porpoise again.

On the morning of the 25th, the brig parted company, and in the afternoon I set out, with seven boats, to cross the strait. The wind had been blowing strong, but I did not anticipate much sea or danger. It proved otherwise, however, for the tide was found to be running strong ebb against the wind, producing a very high sea, which made the passage at times perilous. We, however, crossed this distance of twenty miles without any other accident than the loss of a mast belonging to one of the boats, and reached the opposite shore in safety, though completely wet from the quantity of water we had shipped. The boats all behaved uncommonly well; and many, who had believed them unsafe, were now satisfied that they were admirably adapted for all weathers. Large fires and dry clothes soon restored the men to their wonted good spirits.

On the 26th, we began the survey of this labyrinth of islands, which was continued the next day, 27th, on the afternoon of which I was joined by Passed Midshipman May, with letters from the ship and despatches from Nisqually, informing me of the loss of the Peacock, on the bar of the Columbia, but that all hands were saved. This news, although bad, was a great relief to me; for I had feared not only the loss of the vessels, but had serious apprehensions for the lives of the persons on board. A heavy load that had long hung over my mind was removed.

All my plans for the employment of the squadron were now at once to be changed; for it became necessary for me to proceed without delay to afford relief to our shipwrecked companions. I therefore immediately sent orders to the Porpoise, countermanding her previous instructions, and ordering her to repair forthwith to join the Vincennes at New Dungeness. On the 28th, the duties of our surveys were again