

XIV.

U. S. Ship Vincennes,
Nisqually Roads,
July 17th, 1841.

SIR,—

You are entrusted with the party, consisting of yourself, Passed Midshipman Eld, Mr. Brackenridge, Sergeant Stearns, Privates Rodgers and Dinsman, John Brooks (seaman), Thomas Ford and Henry Waltham (ordinary seamen), and the boy Joe, as interpreter, for the purpose of proceeding to Gray's Harbour, by the portage of Shaptal, and through the lakes of the same name, thence down the Chickeeles river, which empties itself into the ocean, forming Gray's Harbour.

You are provided with two canoes and four balsas, together with provisions for twenty days, which is considered by me ample time to effect the following objects, &c.

Your departure will take place from Nisqually, on the 19th, proceeding up Puget Sound to the portage, where you will ascertain your latitude and longitude by equal altitudes and the pole-star; thence passing over the portage, you will direct your attention particularly to the facilities it offers for transportation, and sketch the topographical plan of it.

On reaching the Shaptal Lakes, you will embark (after having made a rough survey to ascertain their extent, if they are too large to be embraced by one view of the eye), on the Chickeeles, and proceed down it towards Gray's Harbour, making observations in order to ascertain its courses, length, and width, together with its capabilities for navigation.

On your arrival at Gray's Harbour, you will proceed to make an accurate survey of it, by measuring a base-line on the Sandy Flats at low water, and establishing well-marked signals round the harbour; and those near the entrance sufficiently large to enable you to see to angle on them at the bar, which must be sounded at low water, when it is supposed to be more clearly defined.

Some difficulties may occur in this part of the duty; and after the signals are put up, it would be better to sacrifice a little time, if a favourable and smooth time occurs, by beginning at that part of the work.

Your canoes are considered amply sufficient and safe to effect this object, even in boisterous weather, being furnished with balsas.