VOL. V, No. 11 NOVEMBER 1961

THE WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGIST

WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, WASHINGTON STATE MUSEUM, SEATTLE 5, WN.

NEXT MEETING: Seattle Chapter - Wednesday, November 8, 1961 - 8:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Washington State Museum
4037 15th N E
Seattle 5, Washington

SPEAKER: Mr. Kent Weeks, University of Washington student in Archaeology.

TOPIC: Archaeology of the Fort Simcoe Area - Summer 1961

- - -

MR. ROBERT WHITEBROOK, author of Coastal Exploration of Washington, and member of the Washington Archaeological Society, gave an interesting account of his recent travels in Greece and Egypt at the October meeting. Many of the views and details might not have been taken had he not used a Minox camera which was small enough to be carried in his pocket.

Mr. Whitebrook gave a vivid account of the archaeological remains in Greece, some from the Prehellenic period as the "Beehive Tombs" at Mycenae and the fortress at Tiryns. The remnants of temples and other buildings on the Acropolis in Athens revealed the aesthetic and cultural climax of the Athenian state at the time of Pericles. Archaeological restoration has been going on slowly in all Greece. It is remarkable to see how much work must still be done when money and labor are available. The Parthenon and the Erectheon dominate the temple complex. The genius of Greek building was shown in their study of illusion and architecture, making adjustments in the actual layout and forms to compensate for the peculiarities of the eye. Thus, the stylobate was curved upwards along the length of the Parthenon to give the illusion of being straight. The Doric columns along the facade (Cont'd Page 8)

THE WILKES MAP OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Wilkes' surveys of Puget Sound and the Columbia River were the most extensive of their day. The 1841 Wilkes map of the Columbia River is here discussed and compared with modern and historic observations. This is done with particular attention being paid to the evolution of place names.

The Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the Years 1838, 1939, 1840, 1841, 1842, in Five Volumes and an Atlas, by Charles Wilkes, contains one plate in the Atlas entitled "Map of Oregon Territory by the U.S. EX. Ex., Charles Wilkes Esqr. Commander, 1841" in which there is an insert with the title, "Columbia River, Reduced from a Survey Made by the U.S. Ex. Ex., 1841." A reproduction of the complete map appeared in the July issue of the Washington Archaeologist (Nelson. 1961: 12). The purpose of this paper is to examine in detail the Wilkes map of the Columbia River and relate the place names shown on this map with those in current use today.

The history of the discovery of the Columbia River is the subject of some controversy. Historians with an American prejudice credit Captain Robert Gray with the discovery of the Columbia River on May 11, 1792. The account generally states that Bruno Heceta, the Spanish explorer, discovered a bay, Bahia de la Asuncion, August 17, 1775, and noted indications of a river. John Meares, an English explorer, searched for the river. On July 6, 1788, he rounded the northern cape, named San Roque by Heceta, and failed to find it. Meares re-named San Roque, Cape Disappointment; and Bahia de la Asuncion, Deception Bay (Meany 1918: 35). Whitebrook states the other position: "The Columbia River was discovered by Bruno De Hezeta on August 17, 1775, and was named 'Ensenada de la Neura Senora de Asuncion.' Later Spanish maps label it the 'Entrade de Ezeta.' Capt. Robert Gray gave it its present name on May 19, 1792, when he entered it on a fur trading expedition. Lt. William R. Broughton entered the Columbia River on October 19, 1792, in the Chatham pursuant to the orders of Capt. George Vancouver. Broughton proceeded up the river approximately 84 miles. He named Point Vancouver as well as Mount Hood." Whitebrook 1959: 103). It is of some interest that Vancouver actually doubted that Gray had discovered a river in this location (Meany 1949, pp. 83-84). Morgan quotes Heceta at length to support his statement that Heceta tried unsuccessfully for three days to enter the bay he had discovered (Morgan 1949: 36-38). Bancroft lists the rights of discovery of the Columbia River as Spain first, England second and the United States a poor third. (Bancroft 1884: 316-354). The Oregon 'question' having been settled, the point of history becomes academic. Our immediate concern is related to the place names. Continuing, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1803-1806, developed information from the mouth of the Snake to the mouth of the Columbia accounting for 324 miles of the river. David Thompson's explorations in 1811 made additional information available. The Hudson Bay Company prepared maps for their use and a review of the literature indicates that at least two had been prepared during the thirty year period following Thompson's explorations. Wilkes' surveys of Puget Sound and the Columbia River represents the first extensive charting work undertaken by the United States in the Oregon Territory. The relative importance of Wilkes'

charts and observations (intelligence) concerning the Oregon Territory is evidenced by the fact that President Tyler communicated the report confidentially to the Senate July 1, 1842, as background material for the negotiations between the U.S. and Great Britain (Wilkes 1925: 51).

In order to properly evaluate the Wilkes Columbia River map it would be necessary to have complete details of the surveying procedures, original notes as well as similar information about the cartography. Since the information is not available, the judgment or critique must be made using other techniques. We have used the overlay method in comparing Wilkes' map with the U.S.G.S. base map. Each of these maps were enlarged photographically so that the straight line distance between Cape Disappointment and the mouth of the Snake River were the same. According to the respective scales, the distance between the two control points is within 5%. The alignment, however, lacks this degree of accuracy. The charting from Pillar Rock to the head of navigation is very accurate except for its orientation with respect to true north. The least accurate portion of the map is from the head of navigation east to the John Day River. The remainder to the east is only moderately accurate. The comparison suggests that where the charting and surveying was performed by the survey crew with their own transportation and equipment, the work was as accurate as could be expected with the instruments available and as time and conditions would permit. There apparently was little time to close and double check traverses. The group (Wilkes' men) that traveled with Odgen from Ft. Vancouver to Ft. Walla Walla were restricted as to both time and opportunity in their measurements of distance and bearing, thus resulting in an appreciably reduced degree of accuracy. The cartographer used both survey data and existing maps to develop the map and his selection may be one of the contributing factors in the degree of inaccuracy that exists east of the head of navigation. This particular map was created to supplement the Narrative and Wilkes may have considered the map to be adequate for this purpose. In support of this there is information on his charts which is not included in the published map.

There are a number of disparities which are worth noting. One case in point is Mt. Coffin. Mount Coffin which is near Walkers Island is described in the narrative: "In the evening of the next day, we reached Mt. Coffin, at the mouth of the Cowlitz. This mount afforded a favourable point for astronomical observations, being seven hundred and ten feet high, and quite isolated. The canoes used by the Indians as coffins are seen upon it in every direction, in all stages of decay.----I remained the whole day on top of this mount, and obtained a full set of observations; the weather being remarkable clear and beautiful," (Wilkes 1845: 121). The diary of Wilkes has the following entry for 27th May: "Today we passed the Mount Coffin just below the Cowlitz and also Coffin Rock so named from these being the principal burying places." (Wilkes 1925: 216). Meany in the geographic names of Washington series has the following description: "Mount Coffin, on the north bank of the Columbia River in the southwestern part of Cowlitz County. Elevation, 240 feet. It was mentioned by its present name by Alexander Henry on January 11, 1814. Wilkes describes the Indian canoes used as coffins and tells of a fire accidentally started by his men in 1841." (Meany 1920: 213). Landes records Mount Coffin as: "A hill on the north bank of Columbia River, about 5 miles below the mouth of Cowlitx River, in southwestern Cowlitz County; elevation, 240 feet. (11) (Landes 1917: 104). The U.S.C.G. Chart No. 5163 (reference 11 above)

shows Mt. Coffin but with no notation of elevation. The Kelso quadrangle shows Mt. Coffin with a maximum elevation of 40 ft. To the west is Mt. Solo, elevation 580. Chart 5163 shows Mt. Solo, elevation greater than 500 ft. From the descriptions and comparison of elevations, the Mt. Coffin of the Wilkes map is the Mt. Solo of today. The Mt. Coffin of today is the Coffin Rock of Wilkes. Many accepted Landes' description in the face of Wilkes' diary, narrative and maps. The particular issue of Chart 5163 which Landes used probably showed Mt. Coffin at an elevation of 240 ft. Landes also lists Mt. Solo with the same general description, elevation, about 500 feet. (11) (Landes 1917: 260).

Another feature of the map is the omission of certain of the tributary rivers to the Columbia. These omissions are one of choice since the charts Wilkes published with his final report locate a number of these rivers. This is true only to the head of navigation.

The cartographer added his bits of research. One example is Saddle Peak. Landes described Saddle Peak: "A peak about 18 miles northwest of Stevenson, in southwestern Skamania County. (4)" (Landes 1917: 244). His source is a Kroll Map of the State of Washington dated 1917 which, incidentally, the Kroll Map Company does not have in their files. The topographic sheet NL 10-8, Vancouver, United States, shows only one prominent peak in this location, Silver Star Mountain, elevation 4359 ft. Neither the topographic sheets, quadrangles nor U.S.C.G. charts show a Saddle Peak. It is however a popular entry on railway land maps. The Northern Pacific Railway Land Department Map, 1897, shows Saddle Peak. The latest map to show Saddle Peak is "Railroad Map of Washington Issued 1928 by Department of Public Works of Washington" which is identical to a similar map issued by the Northern Pacific Railway except for title. Both maps are printed by the same publisher, McGill-Warner Co., St. Paul. Where Wilkes' cartographer observed this entry is very problematical. Its location on the Wilkes map is 25 miles east of that shown on the later maps. It is reasonably certain that the Wilkes party did not observe Saddle Peak while traveling to Ft. Walla Walla.

Plate I is a photographic reproduction of the Wilkes Columbia River Map (Wilkes 1845: Vol. VI) to which has been added the place names in current use on at least one modern map. The names which have not been changed and appear on at least one modern map are underlined. Those names which have not been changed and are not currently in use have no distinguishing mark. The absence of a distinguishing mark simply means that our findings are negative, i.e., no positive identification or no record of either change or usage. This is valid only in so far as our research has gone. Those identifications which seem reasonable but have some element of doubt are identified with a question mark. As a matter of general orientation the approximate or relative position of the dams on the lower Columbia are also shown.

The charting of the navigable waters of the Columbia River represents a small percentage of the total work (hydrology) done by Wilkes. The attention to detail by his survey crews definitely shows a preference for coast and geodetic survey techniques as compared to topographical survey techniques. Present day coast and geodetic charts have the same elements of accuracy relating to navigable waters while the land information is generally something less than accurate. In the Puget Sound and adjacent waters Wilkes names some 230 or more features of which over 65% are in use today. On the other hand, none of the names he prescribed for features on the Columbia are in use today. The first

Snake River

South Fork

Ft Walla Walla

Walla Walla R.

Wallula

Lasts Island

Indian Village

Goat I.

Yakima R.

Indians

Windmill Rock

Hat Rock

Grand Rapids

Umatilla Rapids

McNARY DAM

Indian Village

Umatilla or Utilla

Indians

Indians

Grand I.

Indians

Blalock Island

Indian Village

Indians

Lava Bill

Crow Butte ?

Willow Creek

Sand drift I.

Quesnells R.

Thanksgiving Island

McCarthy Island

Sand I.

Island No. 28

Indian Village on this I.

Longreach Elbow

Indian Village

Here the Indians have recorded their principal events for many years

Hieroglyphic Rocks

John Day Rapids

Upper Middle Lower

Pebble I.

Indian Village

Sleepy or Echo I.

John Day River

Abbot Village

Indians

John Days R.

Rocks & Rapids

Miller Island

JOHN DAY DAM

The Columbia for several miles above and below John Days River is filled with Rocks and Rapids

Indians

Channel Rock

Deschutes River

Indians

Indians

Wall I.

High Rocks

Falls or Skutes R.

Wall Island and the Country from the Dalles to 5 miles above John Days River is Volcanic

Indian Village

Indian Village

Indians

Cedar Tree

This is the last tree for 50 miles above the great forks

THE DALLES DAM

The River rises at the Dalles in June during the melting of the Snow in the mountains 62 feet perpendicular over the Winter level

The Dalles

Nicolinia or Wishram Village, 150 Indians Here

Methodist Mission

Wishram

Log drifting Pond

Klickitat River

Upper Cape Horn

Dead I.

Memaloose Island

Rim ?

Pillar Rock

Perpendicular Rocks like the walls of an old Crater

Cathlatata R.

White Salmon River ?

Saddle Peak

Here it generally blows a gale in Summer up the River

Grave Rocks

Silver Star Mountain

Profile Rock

Mt Hood

The Cascade range of Mountains is the Eastern boundary of tillable land

EASTERN BOUNDARY

FOREST LAND

BONNEVILLE DAM

Bradford Island

Indian Village

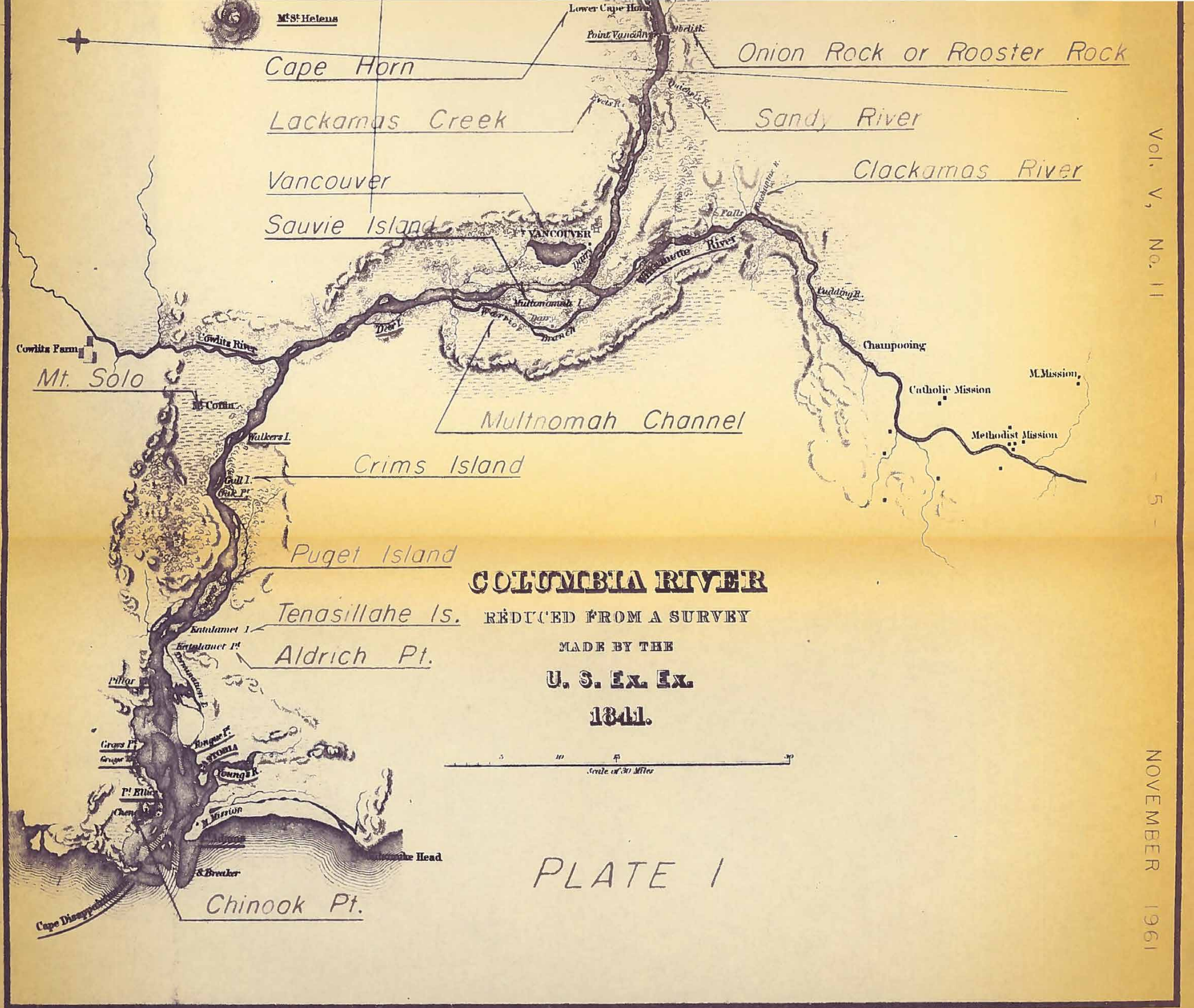
Castle Rock

Head of Navigation

West end of Cascade Rapids

Beacon Rock

Castle Sinclair



Vol. V, No. 11 - 5 - NOVEMBER 1961

official charts prepared by the United States Coast Survey of the Puget Sound region were based on charts prepared by Captain George Davidson in 1847 who had both Wilkes' and Vancouver's charts. His choice of place names established the official name. Had a similar set of charts been made of the Columbia River navigable waters at the same time, there may have been a preference for the 'American' names. Considering that Lt. W. R. Broughton had named many of the features in 1792 and that the Hudson Bay Company dominated the lower Columbia River from 1821 to the 1840's, it is not surprising that the 'British' names should persist.

C. G. Nelson

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bancroft, Hubert H. — The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft. Volume XXVIII History of the Northwest Coast, Volume II, 1800-1846. San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1884.

Landes, Henry — A Geographic Dictionary of Washington. Washington Geological Survey Bulletin No. 17. Olympia: 1917.

Meany, Edmond S. — Origin of Washington Geographic Names. The Washington Historical Quarterly Vol. VIII, No. 4, October 1917 thru Vol. XIV, No. 3, July, 1923.

Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound. Portland: Binfords & Mort, 1949.

Morgan, Murray — The Columbia - Powerhouse of the West. Seattle: Superior Publishing Co., 1949.

Nelson, Kay — The United States Exploring Expedition of the Columbia River & Pacific Northwest - 1841. Seattle: The Washington Archaeologist, Vol. V, No. 7, July, 1961.

Whitebrook, Robert B. — Coastal Exploration of Washington. Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1959.

Wilkes, Charles — Diary of Wilkes in the Northwest. Edited by Edmond S. Meany. The Washington Historical Quarterly Vol. XVI, No. 1, January 1925, thru Vol. XVII, No. 3, July, 1926, Seattle.

Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, In Five Volumes, and an Atlas. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1845.

The following maps were used in comparative studies. Groups of maps are listed from west to east following the Columbia River; secondary listing north to south.

U.S. Geological Survey Quadrangle Sheets (All shown on Washington index sheet)

Cape Disappointment	1949	Portland	1954
Ft. Columbia CE	1938	Mt. Tabor	1954
Chinook	1949	Camas 15'	1954
Warrenton	1949	Camas 7½'	1954
Knappton	1949	Washougal	1954
Astoria	1949	Bridal Veil	1954
Grays River	1955	Hood River 30'	1926
Rosburg	1949	Lookout Mountain	1957
Svensen	1955	Bonneville Dam	1957
Cathlamet Bay	1949	Hood River 15'	1957
Cathlamet	1953	The Dalles	1930
Clatskanie	1937-52	White Salmon	1957
Kelso	1953	The Dalles	1957
Rainier	1953	Wishram	1957
Kalama	1953	Wasco	1957
Deer Island	1954	Arlington	1913
St. Helens	1954	Blalock Island	1906
Sauvie Island	1954	Pasco	1914
Ridge Field	1954	Umatilla	1907
Vancouver	1929-59	Wallula	1915
		Pendleton	1931

U.S. Geological Survey Topographic Series Scale 1:250,000

NL 10-1, 4 Copalis Beach	1954	NL 10-9 The Dalles	1957
NL 10-5 Hoquiam	1953	NL 11-4 Walla Walla	1958
NL 10-8 Vancouver	1957	NL 11-7 Pendleton	1957

6151 Columbia River, Pacific Ocean to Harrington Point	1960
6152 Columbia River, Harrington Point to Crims Island	1960
6153 Columbia River, Crims Island to St. Helens	1960
6154 Columbia River, St. Helens to Vancouver	1960
6156 Columbia River, Vancouver to Bonneville	1959
6157 Columbia River, Bonneville to The Dalles	1959
6158 Columbia River, Lake Celilo	1961
6159 Columbia River, John Day Dam to Blalock	1961
6160 Columbia River, Sundale to Heppner Junction	1961
6163 Columbia River, McNary Dam to Juniper	1960
6164 Columbia River, Juniper to Pasco	1960

U. S. Geological Survey State of Washington Base Map 1914

Map of State of Washington and Part of Oregon and Idaho. Prepared by Land Department, Northern Pacific Railway, Tacoma, Wash., 1897

Railroad Map of Washington Issued 1928 by Department of Public Works of Washington.

Map No. 1, Washington Territory Showing Lines of the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway, 1888.

David Thompson's Map of the Northwest, No Title, ca 1815.

Metsker County Maps, no publication or copyright date shown, of the following counties:

Pacific County
Wahkiakum County
Cowlitz County
Clark County
Skamania County
Klickitat County
Benton County
Walla Walla County

- - -

(Whitebrook - Continued from Page 1)

of the Parthenon were thicker in the middle in order to allow greater aesthetic appeal in counteracting the tapering effect as seen by the observer standing at the base of the temple. This feature, called entasis, was only one of the many devices used by the skilled builders of the 5th century B.C. Many other sites and monuments were seen, including the Agora and the Dionysian theater.

In Egypt the timelessness and durability of Ancient Egyptian art was graphically shown. Many monumental sites were visited, none less overpowering than the Pyramid complex at Giza or the Colossi of Memnon -- gigantic statues, once part of a larger temple construction, but now standing alone, scored and abused by time and man. The mortuary temples of Ramses II at Abu Simbel and of the famous queen, Hatshepsut, at Dier el Bahri stressed the importance of mortuary customs in Egypt. Similarly, the later practice of hiding the burial places, brought about by a discouraging practice common in Egypt even in the remotest times -- grave robbing -- was evidenced in a visit to the tomb of Tutankhamen in the Valley of the Kings. Temple complexes at Thebes, Luxor and Karnak showed the emphasis on theocracy in Ancient Egyptian society.

- - -