Journal of Richard Meade 1868-69
with details from his nautical chart
Preface, 2014:

Although most Southeast Alaskan historians are well aware of the expedition of Commander Richard Worsam Meade III on the USS Saginaw, and have seen many second-hand references to his notes and noteworthy exploits, none that I’ve spoken to in the past year knew that Meade’s journal had been made available online:

http://books.google.com/books?id=nyNUAAcAAJ&dq=Hydrographic%20Notices%201869&pg=PA11&v=onepage&q&f=false

Whoever put this on google books has done a great service for Alaskans willing to look their past in the eye. Scanning through the entire online document online convinced me Meade’s journal should be compiled and illustrated.

The link above is to his journal only, published as Hydrographic Notice #13, 1869. In that journal, he made frequent reference to simple maps and plans depicting key anchorages, often near major Tlingit or Haida settlements—therefore of high interest to me. They were published separately, as explained here:

http://books.google.com/books?id=NgPAQAAIAJ&dq=Hydrographic%20Notices%201869&hl=en&sa=X&ei=J_LSUq6XHoL5oASC-ICIAw&ved=0CFYQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=Hydrographic%20Notices%201869&f=false

“An account of the cruise was published by the Navy as Hydrographic Notice #13 of 1869, and Meade’s maps were incorporated in Hydrographic Chart 225, published in 1869.”

In Marcus Baker’s original Dictionary of Alaska place names (predecessor to Orth’s 1960 version), Marcus called Meade’s sketches: “a chart of rough and crude appearance, but which has been very useful in preparing this dictionary.” I’ve searched for these crude sketch maps without success. But I did find something better, on NOAA’s website for historical maps and charts:

http://historicalcharts.noaa.gov/historicals/search#mainTitle

NOAA’s archives contain a chart that’s easy to overlook in regard to Meade’s voyage, because the date is 13 years after 1869, and it’s mistakenly labeled “Southwest Alaska.” But it does contain the code number “225,” the same ID# as Meade’s handdrawn “plans”:

HO225-08-1862: SOUTHWEST [sic] COAST OF ALASKA, ALEXANDER ARCHIPELAGO.

My cover shows a bit of the result—after Vancouver’s charts, probably the most valuable historic map of Southeast Alaska in existence. It’s a Coast & Geodetic Survey chart with “corrections from reconnaissances by officers of US Ship Saginaw, Comdr RW Meade in 1869, and Jamestown Com.” LA Beardslee and H Glass in 1880.” I was concerned the latter expeditions’ additions and alterations would bury Meade’s observations, village locations, naming conventions, etc. but for the most part they didn’t appear to mess with RW’s work.

The combined power of Meade’s detailed daily journal with this high-res, artfully drawn map convinced me to finish an illustrated, searchable .pdf version of Hydrographic Notice No. 13. For comparison, I frequently pair the 1882 maps with equivalent portions of the latest NOAA nautical charts or other maps.

Learning about Tlingit and Haida culture and geography from Richard Meade requires a strong stomach. But to not know about his activities in 1868 and 69 is worse. I’ve tried to resist the temptation of editorial complaints and outbursts. But I do insert clarifications and corrections in brackets [ ] and footnotes. Also, I’ve deleted long boring passages of nautical minutia, converted written numbers to numerals, and tightened up the language in some places. This document should not be quoted in published documents. For that, please cite the googlebooks original.

1 Thanks to Karla Hart for sending me this link!
2 Note on my cover-page scan of chart 225 that Marcus Baker’s name is handwritten twice. So although his preceding quote references the “rough & crude” versions as “very useful” to his place-name dictionary, this slicker draftsman-enhanced copy also came into his possession at some point.
Hydrographic notice

No 13, 1869, Alaska
The following hydrographic information is taken from the Remark Book of Commander R. W. Meade during a cruise in East Alaska, while in command of the USS Saginaw.

Victoria BC to Sitka, Alaska
RC: The journal begins on December 14th, 1868, in Victoria. I've skipped the first 6 days, until the 20th, when Saginaw entered Alaska.

Dec. 20, 1868—Weather clear and cold, wind from NW & NNW. At 6.30 passed the Pointers or “Five Fingers,” a fearful reef in Dixon’s Entrance, and on which, in a southeaster, the sea must break terrifically; this shows the necessity of running cautiously in these waters. At 6 I had ordered the engines to be stopped, as the pilot was uneasy about something. When it was light enough to see, we discovered the reef 2 points on the port bow, and one mile off. As we crossed Portland Inlet, the wind drew down the inlet from the NNE with tremendous force.

At 9 am entered the channel leading to Fort Tongass, and at 9.30 anchored off Fort Tongas, (southernmost post in Alaska), bottom rocky, depth 15 fathoms close to rocks.

Fort Tongas is on an island surrounded by very ugly reefs, and the channel being extremely narrow and tortuous, is accessible only to steamers. The water is everywhere very deep. The garrison consists of one company of US Infantry. There are about 300 Indians of non-combatants would probably have been recorded. Instead, his reports of village destruction, any measures Meade took minimize murder of defenseless peoples forced military withdrawal from the Archipelago.

Meade journal 1868-69

USS Saginaw
From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Saginaw_%281859%29
This account is oblivious to the arrogance of destroying peoples’ homes “in defense” of US interests. I’ve paraphrased for brevity, and added a few [...] for balance.

“The first USS Saginaw was a sidewheel sloop-of-war in the US Navy in the Civil War. She sailed from San Francisco to Shanghai in 1860, serving in the East India Squadron, cruising the Chinese coast to protect American citizens and suppress pirates. In 1862, Saginaw returned to Mare Island [San Francisco] for repairs. Recommissioned in 1863, Saginaw was attached to the Pacific Squadron and operated along the western seaboard to prevent Confederate activity.1 In 1864 [the terrorized] Mexico and Central America, protecting US interests. In 1865, she was assigned to the Revenue Service, and in 1866, sailed for Puget Sound to support settlers, while there, aiding the Western Union Company in laying a telegraph cable.

In April 1868, a year after the Alaska purchase, Saginaw got underway for Alaska and, except for a run home late in the year for replenishment, spent the next year charting the coast.2 In February 1869 a conflict erupted between the U.S. Army and the Tingit in the Kake region. After the Indians refused a command in Sitka not to leave, one Indian was killed. In reprisal, two miners were killed on Admiralty Island at Murder Cove.3

In reprisal, the U.S. Army deployed the gunboat USS Saginaw from Sitka which attacked, shelled, and burned 3 [sic: 5] Tingit villages on Kuiu Island near what is today called Saginaw Bay. The villages had been evacuated.4 The Tingit of the Kake area did not rebuild these 3 destroyed villages, but many relocated and settled around 1890 at the present site of Kake.5

There were numerous outbreaks of violence by Indians prior to this incident near Saginaw Bay. The crew of a British trader, Royal Charlie, were killed by Indians in the early 1860s while Russia still owned Alaska according to George Davidson of the first coastal survey for the US in Alaska. (Alaska Coast Pilot, 1869).

In 1862, the Labouchere, a Hudson’s Bay trading steamer was boarded by hundreds of Indians who seized the captain and the head of the HBC in Alaska. The armed crew negotiated a release. Also in the 1860s, Indians paddled from the Kiku Island region to Puget Sound where they beheaded the customs inspector. General Davis in Sitka considered all these events when crafting a strategy to maintain law and order in the territory.6


1 Lynn Schooler’s 2005 book, The Last Shot has great detail on this episode, a couple years before Saginaw headed to Alaska. She was fortunate not to meet the confederate Shennandoah, who’d have likely sunk her.
2 Mitchell led Saginaw from spring to autumn, 1868, apparently passing command to Meade in December. He ran aground in Mitchell Bay in July, but Meade wrote nothing more of that prior expedition.
3 Wikipedia calls the miners “innocent” but says nothing of his frustratingly brief notes in this otherwise detailed journal, what proportion of hand-torching to shelling from Saginaw was involved. At least when you burn peoples’ homes, its more obvious than to a ship-based cannoneer whether they’re inside.
4 Oliver Howard’s visit in 1875 suggests first resettlement was not at Kake but in Skanag, noisy bay (Saginaw Bay; page 22).
5 Scott’s earlier recommendation (footnote 1, page 4) for a show of force at first opportunity suggests Meade’s attacks (and the December bombardment at Wrangell; page 30) were inevitable—nothing like a “considered strategy.” Every clan in SE AK operated autonomously. Punishing all Kiks’ kin for one clans action was arbitrary, preemptive, regional terrorism—yet naval commanders framed their actions to the public and superiors as surgical justice. In the decade of Little Big Horn (1876), that worked, but by 1884, national disgust at demolition of defenseless villages forced military withdrawal from the Archipelago.
Above: Comparison of modern chart with 1880 (publication was 1882, but showed conditions of 1868 to 80). Island positions are way off. Compare 1836 Russian chart.

Right: The very first well-known photographs in SE Alaska were taken as 3D pairs for use in stereopticons, then the rage. (Jim Geraghty tells me the first photos in SE AK may have been taken slightly earlier, during the 1865 Union Telegraph Survey, mostly inland through BC.) Eadward Muybridge (famed for Animals in Motion) accompanied General Halleck’s expedition of 1868 on SS Pacific, which followed Scott’s autumn 1867 survey (footnote below). Scott only recommended a fort here, but in the Muybridge scene on August 13th, 1869, it was already called a fort; things happened fast. Although I’ve found no log from the Halleck trip, it was short: Aug 15 Ft Wrangle; Aug 18 Sitka; Sept 4 San Francisco.

1 As far as I could judge from our short stay, the facilities for wooding and watering are very poor, and the anchorage is very bad, dangerous in fact in any sort of blow. At 10:30 left Tongas and soon entered Revilla Gigedo Channel or as it is called in these parts Tongas Narrows. At 2 pm the north point of Mary Island bore NW, distant 3 miles.

Tongas Narrows is a dangerous channel and requires a pilot well posted.

At 7 pm entered Duke of Clarence Straits. Weather very cold. Wind N by W.

1 A year prior to this, in fall 1867, Lt-Col Robert Scott was sent by General Halleck to survey the AK/BC border. He reported back that the “Kakes, Sitheens, Hydas, Chimpsains, Tongass, Cape Fox and other tribes congregate on Portland Channel and the Naas River to trade with each other and the whites. The liquor trade is generally carried on within what is now our boundary.” He recommended the site for what became Fort Tongass, and that “a show of military power be made at the earliest practicable moment” by the Navy. (US Senate, 1904, p 348)

On the island. Tongas Island has been a cultural nexus since at least the earliest Euro-exploration. This Russian sketch map from 1836 is better than anything by Meade, Davidson, or their successors in the following decade. Alas-ka’s Digital Archives has the following information:

“Title: Plan gavani Talakhonsiti ; cniat briga Chichiagova 1836 goda.
Post-purchase expeditions

The Revenue Cutter Saginaw’s expedition of 1868 to 69 was just one of many federal voyages through Southeast Alaska, beginning with Seward’s purchase of Alaska. Since the term “Revenue” is not especially self-explanatory, here’s some background:

Paraphrased from Allen T. Mordica, USCG: (http://tlmha.exis.net/rcs.htm) and other web sources:

The fledging US faced serious financial troubles. Smugglers had avoided British import taxes during the Revolution. Afterward, merchants likewise evaded tax funds (revenues) by U.S. Treasury. In 1790, Treasury Secretary Hamilton predicted bankruptcy within the decade, convincing Congress to build 10 small topmast schooners, or “revenue cutters” to cruise East Coast waters ensuring inbound cargoes weren’t offloaded away from approved Ports of Entry. The organization was originally named the US Revenue-Marine. The US Navy wasn’t created until 1794. So today’s Coast Guard, direct descendant of the Revenue Marine, is arguably the oldest of the 5 armed services.

In the Civil War, revenue cutters were stationed at ports from Maine to Texas and from Washington to San Francisco. Several were seized by the Confederacy, and several were moved north to avoid confiscation. With shortage of vessels to enforce blockade of southern ports, revenue cutters were assigned to the North Atlantic. The name was changed to Revenue Cutter Service in 1862.

With Alaska purchase in 1867, the Service requested 4 new steam cutters—a large propeller-driven ship, a large side-wheeler and 2 smaller side-wheelers, all with with sails to save on coal—and received $125,000 for operation of cutters. December. Explored what Meade named Mitchell Bay. (p 12, this pdf). No surviving journals?

1865-99 William Healy Dall First trip in 1865 with the Western Union Telegraph Expedition. Back in US wrote Alaska and its resources published 1870. In 1871, appointed to what became the USCGS. On the Humbolt (1871-2) and Yukon (1873-4), surveyed from Sitka to Attu and Bering Sea. Wrote the 1879 Coast Pilot with Marcus Baker. In 1884 transferred to USGS. In 1895 surveyed for gold and coal, and in 1899 returned with Harriman.

1867 William Howard Capt US Revenue Cutter Lincoln departed San Francisco with George Davidson and 4 other scientists just prior to the April purchase—first of many such inspection trips to cruise the new US waters. Howard never came north again.

1867-69 George Davidson Pre-purchase visit on RC Lincoln. Recon work during negotiations. His observations are in Coast Pilot: First Part. Returned in 1869 for solar eclipse in Chilkat Valley, Mapped Kootznoo and Wrangel Harbor, but I haven’t learned on which ship.

1868-70 Jefferson Davis Maj Gen commanding the first Department of Alaska.

1868 John W White Comdr RC Wayanda. Little was known of her Alaskan cruises until Jim Geraghty transcribed White’s logs. While visited the L’eeneidí village at Admiralty Cove in September, before Meade in March 1869, and sent a steam launch through what became Gastineau Channel, a decade before Muir & Young. He also may have seen Aanchgaiatsu. In April to autumn, before Meade took over in December. Explored what Meade named Mitchell Bay. (p 12, this pdf). No surviving journals?

1868 Henry Hallock Maj Gen commanding Military Division of the Pacific, visited Alaska on SS Pacific (Muybridge photographing). Reconnaissance of Saginaw Bay—no journal?

1868-69 Richard Worsam Meade Comdr later Rear Adm USS Saginaw, making recon sketches throughout the Archipelago. USN Hydrographic Notice #13. Sketches published in Hydr Chart 225 of 1869, but also incorporated into our more polished version of 1882.

1869 Vincent Colyer Sketched and described incident at Wrangell to force surrender of Scouting. At the request of the Native village, taking fugitive’s mother hostage until he came in for execution. Sutdoo had killed a white trader for the murder of his cousin Si-Wau.

1873-80 Marcus Baker coauthored the 1883 Coast Pilot with Dall, and wrote the first Geographic Dictionary of Alaska (pre-Orth 1967). Founding member of US Board of Geographic Names, established in 1890, TC Mendenhall, chair.

1875 Oliver Howard Maj Gen, toured the archipelago on steamer California, Capt Hayes commanding. He described Wrangell, Sitka, Angoon, and towns in Aak’w, T’aak’u, S’awd’an country. Visited rebuilt village in Saginaw Bay.

1877-1906 Sheldon Jackson Presbyterian evangelist appointed US general agent for education in Alaska. Numerous inspection tours, annual reports, artifact footings and language suppression. (Cruiikshank, 2005)

I’ve so far been unable to find a concise chronology of the early post-purchase expeditions. But Orth (1967) includes an alphabetical list of short bios for Important White Guys (IWG) whose names litter our maps. Many commanded or served on these expeditions. Behind each IWG on Orth’s list are the dates of his travel in Alaska. Re-ordering these instead by date of first arrival helps a little in piecing together the sequence of American exploration and conquest. I inserted about a dozen key players who didn’t make it into Orth:

1865-99 William Healy Dall First trip in 1865 with the Western Union Telegraph Expedition. Back in US wrote Alaska and its resources published 1870. In 1871, appointed to what became the USCGS. On the Humbolt (1871-2) and Yukon (1873-4), surveyed from Sitka to Attu and Bering Sea. Wrote the 1879 Coast Pilot with Marcus Baker. In 1884 transferred to USGS. In 1895 surveyed for gold and coal, and in 1899 returned with Harriman.

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1878-1924  S Hall Young  Presbyterian minister, first in Wrangell, from which he toured with Muir and many others. Although as irritating to read as Meade in regard to his arrogance and condescension toward the Tlingit, Young's descriptions are today more valuable than Muirs (the 2 should be read side-by-side) because he was a resident who paid more attention to geography and culture.

1879-80  Lester Beardslee  Captain of USS Jamestown expedition to Sitka. Surveying officers included Frederick Symonds & Gustavus Hanus. LB's report was in 1882.

1879-99  John Muir  Alaska's first adventure-travel tourist. With SH Young took a canoe tour guided by Shtax'héen elder Toyatte in 1879 and 80. In 1881, joined Nelson on the Corwin farther north. In 1889 returned to Southeast with Harriman on the Elder. Rather oblivious to cultural subtleties, Muir's purple prose is today best applied to study of glacial and successional change. (Cruikshank, 2005)

1881  Henry Glass  Comdr succeeding Beardslee on USS Jamestown & Wachusett. See following chart by Lt Symonds.

1881-84  Henry Nichols  Lt Comdr USN, of USCGS steamer Hassler, surveying Kaigani and Wrangell Straits, Revill to Wrangell, Dixon Entrance. In 1884, enforced order on USS Pinta. Author of 3rd Coast Pilot in 1891.

1882  M. A. Healy  Lt Comdr of Sitka-based USS Corwin. JM Vanderbilt of NW Trading Co at Killisnoo petitioned for aide. Complaining Xutsnoowú Kwáan had taken over the station. Capt EC Merriman ordered Healy to Angoon on Corwin. Healy demanded blankets as fine for unruliness, and on refusal, destroyed about 40 canoes, then shelled and burned the village. Favorite assisted Corwin in this, turning a howitzer on homes of its former employees (Jacobs, 2006). National disgust at the over-reaction led to evacuation of the military from Southeast in 1884.

1882-99  George Emmons  USN officer, ethnographer and collector, author of The Tlingit Indians. Fantastic journals, but lack of maps limits the use of his observations for geographic specificities as I've tried to derive from Meade.

1883-  Eliza Scidmore  A woman, so not included in Orth's list of IWGs, even though she was a better writer than Muir and gave valuable descriptions of Native communities and geographic features throughout her travels. Returned ~1892. Guidebooks resulted from both tours.

1884  Joseph Coghlan  Comdr of USS Adams, surveying NE from Sitka Sound. Results in USCGS charts of 1885.

1885  Richardson Clover  Lt Comdr of USCGS Steamer Patterson in southern archipelago. Reports excerpted in USCGS annual report of 1886.

1889-91  Henry Mansfield  Comdr USCGS steamer Patterson, USN, making surveys all 3 years, relieved by Moore in 1892. Reported in USCGS annual for 1890.

1892-95  William I. Moore  Lt USN, surveys on USCGS Patterson, surveys between Mansfield and EK Moore, noted below.

1897-1901  Jefferson Moser  Lt Comdr USN, of US Bureau of Fisheries steamer Albatross, surveying the archipelago in 1890 and 1898. Notes and maps published by USCGS in 1899. In 1900-01, visited most important salmon streams, summarized in 1902 publication. Excellent notes on Tlingit & Haida settlements. (Z. Tanner was prior Comdr of Albatross, 1888-93, but didn't tour SE)

1898-1902  William John Peters  USGS topographer led interior reconnaissance with Alfred Brooks as geologist. In 1899 surveyed from head of Lynn Canal to Eagle on the Yukon. In 1902 made topographic map of Juneau.

1898-98  Edwin K. Moore  Lt Comdr USN, surveys on USCGS steamer Patterson, lovely chart of Whitewater Bay.

1899-1905  Edmund Dickens  Comdr USCGS steamer Gedney's triangulation surveys of Chatham and Sumner Straits. Also Iliams, Davidson Inlet, Iphigenia Bay, Moira Sound. Reports in USCGS annuals for 1900 and 1902-4.

1899  Edward Harriman  Privately funded celebrity voyage on the SS Elder. Probably the densest congregation of Important White Guys ever to tour Southeast Alaska, nearly matched in 2001 by the sequel, which was equally casual about actually going ashore to learn from the country.

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Mapping and imaging technology

The mid- to late-1800s saw rapid advance in both cartography and photography. Meade’s journal is best understood not only in context of the series of federal expeditions, but also in the timeline of mapping and imaging technology. I provided one in a sidebar on stereoscopy in my report on Discovery Southeast’s Repeat Photography Project (p 34) with Kathy Hocker. (http://www.juneaunature.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/repeatphottotfinal.pdf)

From that broader timeline, here are just a few dates relevant to our period of interest—the post-purchase decades of US colonization and documentation of Southeast Alaska:

1849: First use of terrestrial photography for topographic mapping.
1855: Stereoscopic photos give 3D images (wet-plate process).
Civil War: Tintypes were the rage, but oddly rare in Alaskan archives.¹
1868: Muybridge at Ft Tongass & Wrangell; were his stereograms the first SE AK photos?
1880: Eastman dry-plate process; still glass, but easier than wet-plate for Alaskan conditions.
1890: Lloyd Winter arrives in Juneau; Percy Pond in 1893.
1890s: Terrestrial survey gear: 3-in transit theodolite, tripod, aneroid barometer, sidereal chronometer; field glass, box compass and cartographic camera (Klotz, 1896)
1900: Kodak’s Brownie; box roll-film camera; first photography for the masses; prior photos only by professionals.
1903: Wright brothers’ first airplane. But first Alaskan airborne imagery not until 1926.

From Meade’s visit through the early 1880s, charts at the scale of this pair at Stikine and Zimovia Straits were impressionistic sketches from steamer decks. From 1882 to 84, the Coast Survey’s Hassler was constantly deployed, under Commanders Nichols, then Snow. For the next decade, cartographers focused on channels and harbors most used by federal vessels and commercial shipping.

From a shore station, surveyors began to triangulate to distant points and summits, describing not only shorelines but topography, such as the 1891 draft contour map on right. Ultimately, office-based cartographers used 3D models from both terrestrial and aerial photogrammetry to generate contours. Even before airborne verticals, Alaskan and Canadian boundary surveyors brought home hundred of cartographic glass-plate images from mountain summits.

As for photography, there was no camera on Saginaw, or almost any of the other early steamship expeditions. The only contemporary photos included in this journal are the Muybridge stereograms from August, 1868. For visual impact on maps and in reports, chroniclers sent rough field sketches to eastern publishers. In a process much like nautical chart production, these were converted to attractive engravings. I don’t know if it was Meade or someone on the later James-town expeditions who made the sketches that were embellished into the lovely panoramic engravings in this journal.

Probably the best known graphic artist to visit Alaska in the post-purchase years was Vincent Colyer. Before any resident or even visiting photographers were documenting the Inside passage, he sent sketches to publishers that became the polished engravings in the following sidebar Wrangell: the second bombardment, page 30.

Even the boomtown of Juneau went almost unphotographed in its first decade. Only with establishment of studios such as Landerkin’s and Winter’s in 1890, and the simultaneous invention of more field-worthy dry-plate imaging, did the era of Alaskan photography truly arrive.

1 Of thousands of early Alaskan images I’ve seen from this period, I only remember one obvious tintype. No doubt, collectors such as Dick Wood and Jim Geraghty could cite a few more. This is interesting because tintypes were hugely popular during the Civil War. Vendors frequented public events such as fairs, and in a few minutes created durable portraits affordable by the average person. Perhaps the extremely low and dispersed populations in Alaska between 1867 and 1880 made it uneconomical for this form of imaging.
Dec 21—Cold winds from N by W. Clear weather. Thermometer 29°F. at 1 am in Stichinski Straits. At 2 Nesbitt Point bore west, distant 2 miles. At 4 am north point of Voronoski Island bore N by E, distant 1 mile.

At 6 am came to in Point Highfield Harbor in 15 fathoms water; soft bottom. The English survey in 1862 has it 56° 33' north, 132° 22' west. Rise of tide 16 feet (approx.) At 7.50 am got under way, and passing Point Highfield lay to, off and on near Fort Wrangel, a United States Post with a garrison of one company of infantry. Anchor age off Fort Wrangel very bad and facilities for wood and water poor. In Point Highfield Harbor the anchorage is fair and facilities for both wood and water good.

At 8.25 am got under way; left Wrangel anchorage, and at 11 came to in Wrangel Channel to wait the tide. Anchored in 9 fathoms; soft bottom.

Wrangel Channel is very narrow and is considered the most difficult passage in these parts, as it is full of reefs.

At 1 pm got underway and passed through Wrangel Channel keeping the lead going all the time and running at half speed. The tide was dead low, and the least water we got going through 2 3/4 fathoms, and that only in one place. Nearly everywhere else it was 4 and 5 fathoms, and in many places deeper. I do not consider it a very dangerous channel, as the tide does not run strong, and if one goes through at low water the rocks can all be seen easily. A few buoys put down in the most difficult places would make this passage a good thoroughfare and enable vessels to shorten the distance to Prince Frederick.
Sound from Duke of Clarence Straits, instead of going round Cape Decision. Any vessel drawing less than 17 feet water can go through at low water, and the largest vessels can do so at high water.

At 3.30 pm emerged into Prince Frederick Sound. The last 6 miles of Wrangel Channel (northern end) is perfectly free from dangers of every kind, though it is quite narrow. At the northern entrance is a rock and some small islands, which are good guides to find the opening. At 11.45 pm entered Chatham Straits. Wind variable—weather cold.

[Apparently Saginaw ran all night to Angoon, and never anchored again until Sitka]

Dec 22—Wind northwest. Weather cold and overcast. At 6.15 am arrived off Kootznahoo Village, and laid off and on until 7.25 am, when steamed in close for the village. The shore here is very bold, steep-to, but there are 2 large reefs and some rocks to southward of village, which may be avoided by keeping the point to westward of the village close aboard, say 2 cables lengths. The object in coming here was to ascertain how much coal was to be procured from the coal mine opened last summer by direction of Commander Mitchell. The Indians report a large quantity as taken out. At 9 bore away for Peril Straits, called on the Russian Charts Pogibshi or Lost Straits, from the fact that in a creek near Return Island 200 Russians and Indians were poisoned by eating the muscles [sic] found there.

At 10 am entered Peril Straits, a wide and beautiful estuary with no dangers mid channel. At 1.30 entered First Rapids (tide running flood, or against us, but not very strong) and at 2.30 pm cleared the Second Rapids (1.5 miles from the First Rapids). By the time the vessel reached Second Rapids the tide was so strong that (though only one-fourth tide) the ship, with steam bottled up, hardly got through, and sheered in the eddy a good deal. In going through we kept starboard or northern shore very close aboard, say 30 feet from our paddle boxes, but with a favorable tide the southern or wide channel is much to be preferred.

Meade returned 3 times to Kootznahoo for coal and cordwood. Maps etc follow. In 1875, James Swan and Oliver Howard on separate visits both described the nascent village on the peninsula. All called it "Kootznahoo Village." The name Angoon (Aangóon = isthmus town) doesn't appear until about 1880. The town probably dates to the mid-1860s. Too bad RM wrote so little of it!
At 3.45 reached the reef of white boulders in Nevski Straits. There is a large rock which is partly out of the water and right in the center of the channel. The ground is very much broken, and at low water there is as little as 2.5 fathoms in the channel. By keeping clear of the kelp, which is readily seen, and with the aid of the lead, a vessel of 15 feet draught can pass through at low water, and the largest steamer at high water. On a clear day the rocks can be seen and avoided, as the water is very clear.

The next narrow place before reaching Sitka is Olga Straits, but there are no hidden dangers and the water is very bold.

When opposite Old Sitka there are 1 or 2 reefs to be passed on the port hand, thence close to the port shore into the channel between Japan Island and the town of Sitka, New Archangel, where the anchorage is good, but holding ground not very good.

At 9 pm we anchored in 9 fathoms water abreast of the Indian (Sitka) village. Vessels generally moor here, mooring head and stern; but I would recommend that if unable to get hold of one of the mooring buoys, of which there are 3 or 4, that a vessel moor with 45 fathoms on the starboard chain, the anchor laid out to the NE, and 30 fathoms on the port chain, the anchor laid out to the west, and the mooring swivel on. Then, if the harbor is crowded, a light kedge may be dropped to SW to prevent swinging around the swivel. I found this to be the best way of holding on. The bottom is “shale” or “shingle,” and vessels ride solely by the weight of their anchors.

The winds are variable from the NE to SE and thence to SW, clearing off. The gales blow outside with great violence from NE to SE, and inside of the chain of islands forming the anchorage the squalls sweep down the ravines with great fury. I consider a vessel moored as I describe perfectly free from the danger of dragging, if her ground tackle is moderately heavy for her. Vessels with stern hawse-holes, however, would do well to moor head and stern: one anchor NE and one SE, and the stern anchor west.

**Sitka Harbor and approaches**

The latitude of Sitka is 57°03’N, and longitude 135°16’W, (approx.)

Time of HWF&C 0° 34”. Rise of tide—mean 8 feet, springs 14 feet.

Variation of compass 28°30’E. The tides in their rise are extremely irregular.

The harbor is formed by a chain of islands, and there are 3 principal ship channels, viz: West Channel, Middle Channel and East Channel, of which the safest, for sailing vessels, is the East or broad Channel, the other 2 being narrow and somewhat tortuous. Pilots may readily be procured, the charge for men-of-war being 4 dollars
per foot, the pilot taking the ship outside of Biorca Island or Cape Edgecumbe on Kruzov Island. It is recommended to strangers to take a pilot if possible. The pilots, however, go out in small boats, and in bad weather will not venture, as a very heavy sea rolls into the outer bay. Inside of the Islands the sea is always smooth.

The best landmark for making the Bay is Mount Edgecumbe, 2,800 feet high, which is the extinct crater of a tremendous volcano, and can be seen miles out at sea, the summit being covered with snow nearly all year round.

When inside of Cape Edgecumbe, steer for Harbor Mount, a prominent peak back of the town, bringing it to bear NNE one quarter E, and passing Vitzkari Islands on port hand, carefully avoiding a dangerous reef of rocks (above water) . . . [more approach & anchorage paragraphs . . .]

From Sitka to Kootznahoo

Jan. 13, 1868 [sic, 1869]—At noon got underway with a large lighter in tow, proceeding to Kootznahoo to take in some coal mined there last summer under Commander Mitchell’s direction.3 The same remarks in regard to the passage from Sitka to the Rapids, will apply to our passage today. At dark finding that we would not be able to go through the rapids safely with the lighter in tow, anchored for the night in a small indentation, called on the charts Suloia Bay, in 5 fathoms water. The anchorage here is fair, but a shoal runs across the bay from point to point. The water shoals suddenly from 15 to 5 fathoms, beyond that there is a flat.

Jan 14—The passage through the Rapids and through Peril Straits, as far as Distant Island, is tolerably well laid down on the tracing we have; but from here to Chatham Straits the charts are very inaccurate,4 and though there are no dangers which cannot be seen and avoided, it will be well to keep a reasonable distance from the northern shore, in preference to that of the southern.

The navigator may coast the northern shore of the straits within a mile, almost anywhere, except at Point Craven, where a reef of rocks runs off a considerable distance. After emerging from the straits, an ENE 3/4 E course will lead fair to Kenasnow Island in Hood’s Bay. The Island can be seen in clear weather and should be steered for, keeping it a little open on the starboard bow to avoid Kenasnow Reef, which runs off a long distance and is dry at low water (see plan). After passing reef, pass mid-way between Saginaw Point and Hood’s Point and anchor in

3 Reading in Orth (1967) that Mitchell Bay was named for a West Point classmate of Meade’s, I first assumed this was just a throwaway butter-up to a distant dignitary. But apparently Mitchell preceded Meade into the tidal labyrinth. He or White brought Davidson, who made a sketch map, but not as good as Meade’s.

4 Obviously, Meade was not dependent on the Vancouver Charts, which at this time were about 60 yrs old, because GV never even demonstrated that Baranof and Chichagof were separate islands. Meade doesn’t specify whose charts he “traced” from, but he often refers to Russian charts.
Koteosok Harbor, behind Kenasnow Island in about 12 fathoms water, soft bottom.

The names Kenasnow and Koteosok are the Indian names of these places, and as such I have inserted them on my charts. Koteosok Harbor is tolerably secure from all wind, the anchorage, though limited, is good, but with a southeaster the swell rolls in somewhat around Shelter Point.

Wood can be procured here in abundance, either by sending the crew ashore to cut it, or by hiring the Indians to do so. I recommend the latter course, as you save the wear and tear of the boats in bringing it off, and the Indians will cut 100 cords while your men are cutting 10.

Kootznahoo Archipelago

Jan 17—At 8:30 am, weather being overcast and wind from southeast, got underway with the lighter in tow, to proceed to a coal mine in Kootznahoo Archipelago, where it is said the Indians have taken out a large amount of coal.

At 9:45 am passed Kootznahoo Head, which is on the northern side of the entrance. In entering, avoid the reef on the southern shore, which runs out nearly 300 yards WNW, by keeping Kootznahoo Head a cables length off, where you will have no bottom with 20 fathom line. When half a mile inside, bottom is 13 to 10 fathoms. Keep the port shore well aboard, and when about a mile from Kootznahoo Head you will reach a long reef of rocks on port hand, and a large black rock on starboard hand. Pass in mid-channel between them, and carefully avoid borrowing too much on the rock on starboard side, or passing between it and the Indian village, as the space between the rock and the south shore is full of sunken ledges and very dangerous. [more nautical directions . . .] After passing the island you will strike the Rapids, which on good spring tides are said to run at least 10 knots per hour . . . In entering Mitchell’s Bay steer through mid-channel between North Point Reef and South Point Reef. . . exceedingly treacherous, full of sunken ledges of hard rock, on which this ship struck last July, and the RC Wyanda last fall, the latter knocking off

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5 “Koteosok” doesn’t remotely resemble any of the dozen or so place names in Killisnoo Harbor listed in Thornton (2012)
40 feet of her false keel. . . . From North Point to anchorage is ENE 3.4E. Don’t close too much with the 2 islands in the center of the bay, and when Target Island appears about N by W, distant 750 yards, you may anchor in 10 fathoms.

The tide runs ebb in Mitchell’s Bay about an hour after it has begun to run flood at Kootznahoo Head. The stranger will do well to examine this locality in a boat before trusting himself to take his vessel in. It is perfectly safe, however, to do so if one starts with the last of the ebb, as the tide is then weak in the Rapids and it will uncover all of the rocks to view. Moreover if the vessel takes the ground, the flood tide will float her off. Run slow and feel your way with the eye and lead. At low water nearly all the rocks show.

Mitchell’s Bay is the most dangerous place in the whole route, as it appears to be a broad sheet of deep water, and it was by attempting to take a short cut from the South Point to Mine Point that the Saginaw, Commander Mitchell, struck last July, knocking off 30 or 40 sheets of copper and injuring the vessel considerably.

We lay in Mitchell’s Bay until January 22nd, and during that time took on 30 tons of coal (all there was) and 22 cords of wood, as well as a considerable amount of excellent water from Freshwater Creek (see sketch) The coal mine is located in Lighter Creek, and there is plenty of water for a vessel in either Lighter or Davis Creeks, though the channel is extremely narrow between Passage Island, and there is but room to swing in Davis Creek off Bryant’s Point. To enter the creek from anchorage steer for the Dead Tree Bluff.

The coal obtained has about been exhausted unless a shaft be sunk, or the rock drifted horizontally into, and the Indians are not intelligent enough to do this. For the 30 tons taken I paid in goods the value of 2 dollars per ton to the 33 laborers and 50 cents per ton to the Indian Andre, who superintended the work. The coal is not worth more than $2.50 per ton, as it is a lignite, very resinous and inflammable, dangerous to have on board ship. For the wood we paid $1 to $1.50 per cord in Indian goods, bought at Sitka for the purpose; and I should recommend the economy of this policy so far as the government is concerned, for the Indians hardly value silver, except for what the trading vessels will give them for it, and the latter generally ply the poor wretches with whisky and then cheat their eyes out. They labor willingly when a bargain is made with them beforehand, sometimes they make a noise for more than they bargained for, but by showing them you are indifferent as to whether they work or not, they generally come to terms. We paid 6 yards of calico for a cord of wood, and one axe for 1.5 cords. A leaf of tobacco extra is paid for every 10 sticks, for bringing the wood off, and each Indian, as he brings his canoe-load off, receives a paper on which is marked the number of sticks he has delivered. All the wood, however, is first piled up on shore and measured, each Indian receiving his amount.

The weather was very disagreeable during our stay in the bay, and especially on the night of the 18th, when the squalls from eastward were very violent, accompanied by much rain. On the night of the 21st it came on foggy and remained so all night and next morning. In the violent squalls we had only one anchor and 45 fathoms cable out. In paying the Indians for their labor, it is well to pay them in commodities, though
they will generally like to have the silver first and then exchange that afterwards for commodities. They most esteem silver; dollars, half dollars, quarters and dimes are all they care for. Gold they do not understand. The best goods to pay them in for work done are blankets, coarse calico, coarse cotton, coarse articles of clothing, common leaf tobacco, looking glasses, molasses and rice. Powder and rum they are of course eager for, but both are now regarded as contraband articles for traders to carry, and the discovery of the illicit traffic works forfeiture to the vessel. There are very few furs to be obtained at Kootznahoo, the tribe being the poorest on the coast.

They brought off a few indifferent skins—martin, lynx, bear, red fox, crossed fox, mountain sheep [sic? even if actually goat hide, it was a long way to Angoon from goat country] &c. There are myriads of ducks and geese, and the Indians sell them tolerably cheap, a quarter-plug navy tobacco will buy a pair of first-rate ducks, a half-plug, a large goose, a quarter, a bucket of hard clams, &c. The wild ducks vary much in kind, some being like the canvas-back, some like the teal and mallard, others again very rancid and fishy. An expert duck hunter can readily detect the good from the bad. Venison we did not find at Kootznahoo. At least none was brought off. Of dried salmon (such as it its) there is an abundance. Basket work and carved work the Indians excel in. The best Indian to employ here to superintend work is a subchief called Andre. He speaks a little Russian and a little Chinook. Another fellow named Jake is a great talker and small worker, besides being troublesome. He has been to San Francisco.

Jan 22—Commenced foggy, but cleared off by 10 am. At noon, lighted the fires and a 12:30 steam formed, and at 12.40 we had steam enough to start (Kootzmahoo and Nanaimo coal). We started ahead from anchorage at 1.45 and 2.30 passed Danger Point Reef. In the Upper Rapids the turn was made at full speed, and no vessel that cannot turn in a tide-way can begin to make this short turn. But I think there is a clear passage between the rocks, marked on the plan as A and B. There certainly is at high-water, but the tide rushes through with great velocity. If the ship had struck anywhere she must have knocked a tremendous hole in her bow, and in the Upper Rapids we could not have passed 10 feet from the rocks. After passing the head of Long Island, in going up Mitchell’s Bay, pass midway between North Point Reef and South Point Reef, as both are very dangerous. When fairly by North Point Reef . . . steer for Diamond Island. When abreast, steer for Dead Tree Bluff, which will bring you in toward the anchorage, where we found 9 fathoms, stiff mud, excellent holding ground. After emerging from the archipelago we steered around Danger Point Reef towards the village anchorage and lay off and on between the Indian Village and Kootzmahoo Reefs until Andre came off with a canoe and 3 Indians, and taking him on
board with his canoe and men, we steamed NW 1/4 W for 3 hours, when having run 22 miles, we found ourselves off New Harbor.

At 8 pm, having groped our way with the lead into Fresh Water Bay, anchored in 15 fa, soft bottom.

Fresh Water Bay, or New Harbor

In entering this bay (see plan), give East Point a berth of at least 2 cables . . . after rounding, you may steer S by W . . . There is a cascade a few yards from the entrance of the Salmon River and a settlement of 3 huts where in season, the Indians resort to take the fish. The height of the cascade above high water is about 6 feet. . . . The stream is about 30 yards wide, and easily accessible. Of wood there is an abundance. . . . On the whole Fresh Water Bay is one of the best harbors on the coast. The scenery is very picturesque and beautiful.

Fresh Water Bay to Tchilkat River

Jan 24—Although smooth at the anchorage, rounding East Point . . . we found it was a southeast gale blowing. . . . Average speed 9 knots. . . . False Bay is said to be a fair anchorage in summer, but bad in blowy weather. About 10 miles NNE 1/2 E from

6 Meade was not specific about which part of today’s “Freshwater Bay” he anchored in. The “Indian Salmon Fishery” he mapped was centered on the sockeye system already named Pavlov Lake & Harbor by the Russians. Here’s from Orth (1967):

“Named ‘Gavan Pavlova’ meaning ‘Paul’s Harbor’ in 1849 by Capt Tepenkov. In 1869, Comdr RW Meade, USN, called it ‘Freshwater Bay.’ Baker (1906) says ‘its native (Indian) name is said to be Nasanki.’ “Nasanki” doesn’t match either of the Tlingit names reported here by Thornton (2012)
Above: Stereopair of Pavlof Lake and Harbor in 1929. Entire lake shoreline freshly logged, including the fan-delta at the inlet stream that once hosted giants, as indicated by the dark survivors just upstream. This early cut is not in the USFS managed stands database. Comparing to the GINA aerial on left, this fan is still Alder-captured, almost a century later. The falls is detectable, midway along the outlet stream. Moser (1902) said the broken 10-foot falls was so stepped that fish could ascend at high tide. He reported an abandoned cannery of the Astoria & AK Packing Co on the south side of the cove—one of Alaska’s earliest—destroyed by fire in 1892. The Pavlof Harbor Packing Co. acquired and rebuilt in 1918. Judging from this photo, that would be about right for the date of lakeside logging.

Above left: Alaska Shorezone flight index on orthophoto base (no date). Each blue dot is an oblique photo. Unfortunately, although the Shorezone helicopter flew directly over the falls, it wasn’t captured in any oblique stills.

Freshwater Bay is claimed by the Wooshkeetaan of Xutsnoowú Kwaan. Most numerous in Áak’w Aaní, the Wooshkeetaan also had 3 clan houses in latter-day Angoon. I think of them as the ‘in-between’ clan, controlling virtually all lands on the boundaries of Áak’w, Xunaa, and Xutsnoowú Kwáans. That included what we now call Berners and St James Bays, Point Couverden, Hawk and Funter Bays on Admiralty, and Tenakee and Freshwater Bays on Chichagof.

Thornton (2012) shows 2 place names here. Tax’áas translates rock waterfall, referring to the steep, bedrock-controlled falls in the previous Soboleff image. Taakw.aaní means winter village. Studying this orthophoto, it seems doubtful the 3 buildings (smokehouses?) mapped by Meade were in a suitable position for wintering. This site is too close to brown bear concentrations, with poor views of approaching enemies. In all regards except wind and wave exposure, the crescent-shaped cove to the north (Shorezone #776) would have made a superior overwintering location.
Point Augusta, on Admiralty Island, is a singular volcanic-looking peak [sic] which we named Lone Mount. It is a capital landmark for entering the passage between Douglass Island and Admiralty Island. Two miles N by W 1/4 W from Point Retreat is the south point of an island which we named Lincoln Island. [only a few years after his assassination]. . . After passing the north point of that island we noticed an immense glacier [named the Eagle by Meade; caption, next page]. The ice seemed to rise tier upon tier to the height of 1000 feet, and the sun shining on it at the time gave it an appearance grand beyond description. NW 1/4 W, 14 miles from Point Retreat, is a low point of land projecting some distance into the straits, named by us Point Grant. [then president] The weather looking thick at 3 pm, ran into a small bay, called by the traders William Henry Bay, 61 miles NNW since 8 am. No dangers that we saw. Water can be procured from a small stream on the west side where water falls several feet directly into the sea. Wood must be difficult to get. Sounded out the harbor (see plan).

Jan 25—At 7 am left William Henry Bay and steered for the Chilkat River. At 10 am passed an island named last summer Sullivan’s Island after the master of the American Schooner ‘Louisa Downs,’ wrecked here. Called the roadstead where she anchored and was lost Rescue Harbor, in remembrance of the 6 persons rescued there by this vessel.

At 11 am passed a dry stream on port hand where I fancy one might find auriferous deposits.

At 11.30 passed an enormous glacier7 coming down nearly to the water’s edge between a gorge in the mountains. The point near this glacier was named Glacier Point. It is low and apparently grassy, as if swampy at times. Give this point berth, as a sand spit projects, on which, in a southeaster, the sea breaks furiously. . . . When the Pyramid Island is well on the starboard beam haul to the anchorage, when you will get bottom in 17 to 25 fathoms, named by us Pyramid Island Harbor, long the anchorage of the Hudson’s Bay Company’s steamers. . . . From NNW and SSE winds, Pyramid Island is perfectly sheltered.

The Saginaw remained at Pyramid Island until January 30.

Jan 30—At 1 pm got underway and stood for Kootzahoo, where, after landing [dropping off] the Indians hired to go to Chilkat, proceeded through Peril Straits to Sitka, reaching there at 1 pm on the 31st. In the straits the tide was opposing, and with all the steam power and all sail set, barely the ship got through. . . . I estimated the ship’s speed at 12 knots, making the tide 11 knots. I should counsel that none attempt these rapids against the tide. This, my second experience, has been quite enough for me.

7 Davidson called that glacier by his own name in the Coast Pilot of 1869 (based upon a visit in 1867). Meade departed before publication, so didn’t have that document—or any IWGN for the feature—in Jan 1869.
Left: For Eagle Glacier, Orth (1967) reports: “so named by Comdr Meade in 1869, because of the feature’s resemblance to an eagle with outstretched wings.” This explanation is not in Hydrographic Notice #13.

Researching the RC Wyanda expedition of 1868, Jim Geraghty had access to both the deck log and Captain White’s pocket diary. Apparently, Orth too had more sources for Meade and Saginaw than just this journal.

At any rate, it’s hard to imagine what we call the Eagle Glacier today ever being thick enough to resemble a spread-wing eagle from way out in Lynn Canal. Meade’s chart (possibly further tweaked by Glass or Beardslee in the following decade) suggests what we today call the Herbert and Eagle were merged in the valley below. This never happened, even a century earlier at the Little Ice Age maximum advance (added to 1929 photo, previous page). But from out on the water, they may have seemed to.

Herbert Glacier was not named until 1890 (By Mansfield, for a Confederate Colonel turned Secretary of the Navy). In Meade’s day, when no white person had even been ashore on the estuary, let alone ventured upriver to the ice, there’d have been no distinction between these 2 apparently merged valley glaciers. With that in mind, check out my blue outlines on the preceding 1929 oblique. Could these have been the eagles “wings?”

Below: Meade was at Pyramid Harbor Jan 25th to 30th, but this “hydrographic” journal reports no terrestrial adventures. Is more recorded somewhere?
Feb 11, 1869—Cloudy and overcast, winds ENE. At 7 am left for Kootznahoo via Peril Straits. Ran on quite well until 9.15, when we grounded on a sand knoll in the Whitestone Narrows, Nevski Straits. [detail about getting off the bar . . .]

At 11.05 entered Second Rapids, and at 11.45, First Rapids . . .eastward of Return Island is Goose Creek, quite an extensive stream. It is said that many years ago a large party of Russians, who were engaged in felling timber at this place, were poisoned by eating the mussels and drinking the water of a poisonous spring near the entrance to Goose Creek, and that the roadstead consequently took the name of Deadman’s Bay, and the straits were called Pigibshi or Straits of the Lost, more recently on account of the dangers attending passage of the Rapids, and the gloomy appearance of the land here at Peril Straits.

Feb 12, 1869—Overcast. Wind from eastward and light drizzle. At 7 am left Deadman’s Bay, east into hard wind, making Chatham Straits about 11.30, and Koteosok anchorage at 1.05 pm, in 10.5 fa. Day ended calm.

Feb 13, 1869—Calm and clear. At 5.34 am got underway, and at 7.10 entered Kootz-nahoo Inlet (Hell’s Acre), but the ebb tide being quite strong, and the eddies and whirlpools numerous, laid off and on until slack water, when steamed up through Village Rapids around Turn Point Reef, and passed Channel Point, anchoring about midway between it and Deception Island . . .As there is comparatively but little tide felt here, I have called this anchorage between the 2 rapids, Stillwater Anchorage. During the day we took in about 22 cords of hemlock wood, which the Indians cut for us, and which had been standing to season.

Feb 14, 1869—N winds, overcast and rainy. At 8.35 left Stillwater Anchorage at slack water, and made the turn safely. At 9 Kootznahoo Head, hitherto improperly styled Pt Samuels, bore NNE 1/2E, distant 1/4 mile. The wind, sea and tide against us, and the vessel steaming with only one boiler, we made slow progress, though it proved economical to use wood in combination with the Kootznahoo coal.

At 3.30 we passed Pt Gardiner and kept away for Saginaw Bay, Kow Island, making sail, greatly increasing our speed. Passed Yasha Island, and at 5.45 pm

Considering all the time he spent near what would soon be named Angoon, it’s revealing (and sad) that Meade never described it. The 1883 Coast Pilot has this: “Kootznahoo [not yet called Angoon] contains about 60 houses, each of which may lodge a number of families. In front of the village the shore is bold-to, 5 to 7 fa close in; anchorage may had here. . .This village is supposed to be as large or larger than the Indian village at Sitka. In 1882 it was shelled and partly destroyed by the US Steamer Corwin on account of unruly demonstrations against the employees of the trading station, cannery, &c. on Kanasnow Island. The lives of some of them were threatened, on account of the accidental death of a native in the company’s employ, in accordance with Indian law. There are no totem poles at this village. Potatoes have been cultivated here by the Indians for many years—each year more or less are sold to the whites. They preserve their own seed potatoes but substitute new ones when they can.”
Chatlk’aanoow  fort on top of the halibut

In Hope & Thornton (2000), Herbert Hope has a 31-page chapter on his epic, multi-year re-enactment of the Kiks.adi survival march of 1804. Reaching the mouth of Peril Strait, Herb’s ancestors were transported across to the Chichagof side, some say by the Deisheetaan of Angoon.

“The Sitka Kiks.adi promptly took over the abandoned fort called Chatlk’aanoow near Point Craven. They re-roofed the old tribal houses with new bark strips and went to work re-enforcing the old fort atop the high rock hill. Other crews cleared the trees behind the fort and began to construct new houses.” Hope & Thornton (2000)

Editors Andy Hope and Tom Thornton summarized:

“in 1996 [Herb Hope] succeeded in reaching Point Craven, where the potential remains of the Kiks.adi fort site were found and documented by archaeologists. He was then satisfied that he had found the trail . . .”

Neither Emmons nor deLaguna claimed to know the exact site of Chatlk’aanoow. It was variably postulated to be at Points Hayes, Craven or Lindenburg Head. In an earlier draft of my 4-part slideshow series (villagefactors.exe) for Goldbelt Heritage Foundation, I used this question as a chance to demonstrate the utility of Alaska Shorezone oblique photography in pre-field scoping. I concluded that none of those 3 sides were a satisfactory match for Von Langsdorff’s description of the fort in 1805. Although vague geographically, he was quite specific about the fort structure and topography:

“Expelled from Norfolk [Sitka] Sound, they have fortified themselves here, upon a rock which rises some hundred feet above the water. The only possible access to it is on the NW side, and they have rendered this extremely difficult by strewing it all over with very large trunks of trees which they have cut down. The rock itself is secured against the attack of an enemy by a double palisade of large trunks of trees stuck close together; measuring from 12 to 15 feet in length, and from 3 to 4 feet in thickness. A high natural wall of earth beyond the palisading, on the side towards the sea, conceals the habitations effectually, so that they cannot be discerned by any ship.” Emmons & deLaguna, 1991, p 76.

None of the above-3 points have cliffs even half the size of Von Langsdorff’s “some hundred feet.” Neither do they (except Burnt Island near Hayes) have the described limited approach from the NW. All have sweeping views, so probably were fortified at various times in the past 1,500 years (Moss & Erlandson, 1992). Toward the end of Herb Hope’s research, he apparently concluded that Point Craven was the correct fort location. In Thornton (2012), Chatlk’aanoow is mapped at Craven, citing Hope: “the fort site they [the Kiks.adi] built there has recently been identified and commemorated.”

1 Perhaps this means Gaana.adi ancestors of the Deisheetaan. The latter clan take their name and beaver crest from the trail and associated beaver story that happened on Aangóon isthmus. A careful comparison between clan origin stories (deLaguna, 1960) and reports of early Euro visitors suggests the isthmus town—last in a series of 5 central villages of Xutsnowo Kwlan—was just being established when Meade came through, half a century after the Kiks.adi chapter at Chatlk’aanoow.
Meade passed through the mouth of Peril Strait several times during his Alaskan tour in 1868 and 69. He showed no cultural features at any of the 3 postulated points, but did map a “Stockade & Block House” on the shore about a mile to the northwest from Lindenburg. On ferry trips to and from Sitka in March 2014, I was thrilled to see a tall bluff, 1 mile WNW from Lindenburg, and regretted not bringing a telephoto camera.

Archaeologists seeking confirmation of Craven as the Chatlk’aanoo site doubtless found cultural remains there, as would also be found at Hayes and Lindenburg. But was it really Chatlk’aanoo? These aerials from BING and Alaska Shorezone, combined with our most recent clue from Meade’s chart 225, point more strongly toward the point WNW 1 mile from Lindenburg Head. Since the Kiks.ádi reputedly occupied Chatlk’aanoo for several years before returning to Sitka, a decent canoe landing would have been important. Shorezone photo 883 shows a medium-gradient yakweixiyi, canoe ramp, in the protected bight just north of the bluff.

George Emmons said Kiks.ádi forts at Kaasdahéen (Indian River) and Chatlk’aanoo were the only instances “where the whole tribe [kuwáan?] united to live within one fort.” Both were massive fortifications of logs and earth, constructed to withstand fierce naval bombardment. Although Chatlk’aanoo was disguised from the water in 1805, its remains (or some other fort?) were apparently visible to Meade in 1868-69. Unfortunately the National Park Service’s Kaasdahéen grounds at Shis’g’i Noow, green tree fort, were subsequently so disturbed that only vague hints remain of its presence (Hunt, 2010). In contrast, Chatlk’aanoo escaped the otherwise pervasive logging of Ocean Boulevard, and if we’re lucky, has lain undisturbed, just as the Kiks.ádi left it, for 2 centuries. Let’s go find out!
anchored in *Saginaw Bay*, off a Kake or Kekou village of 6 houses, in 7.5 fa, soft bottom.

Saginaw was selected by Major General Halleck as a site for a military post, but abandoned upon subsequent representation (or rather misrepresentation) that Kootznahoo would be a better site.

The anchorage is very well sheltered and the approach is easy, but around the little bay known as the harbor, a reef of sunken rocks extends and prevents the harbor from being as good as if the landing were better. the bay is very deep, contains several islands, and numerous islets or rocks, and will shelter a large fleet; but I believe the depth of water is too great to make the open bay desirable for an anchorage. . . . [steer for] the bold bluff point of the northern side of the anchorage, then for the ruins of the settlement, and anchor in 8 fathoms. A woman named Sheckshani, who is friendly to the white traders, owns the only remaining house. [i.e. RM destroyed all the others].

The Indians who inhabit this locality are known as the Kakes, Kekis, or Kekous, the terms being indifferently applied; are very treacherous and hostile to whites, and our object in coming to *Kou Island* was to punish them for the murder of two white men under circumstances of great brutality.¹

Feb 15, 1869—At 10 am, after having burned all but one house in the settlement at *Saginaw Bay*, left the anchorage and proceeded to the main Kekou village on the northwest end of *Kuprianoff Island*. The entrance to the anchorage shows clear at low water, but it should be run at great caution and the lead kept going, as there are numerous rocks and reefs which cover at half tide. No one should undertake to approach the place without someone on board who is tolerably well acquainted with the channel. There are more rocks, however, marked on the Russian charts than I fancy exist.

We anchored within 500 yards of the village, which contained about 20 houses, some of them built with great care. The chief’s house was lined with cedar boards. This village has been in existence a great many years, as shown by the numerous posts carved in grotesque shapes which stand near every chief’s house and are hollowed out at the top to contain the ashes of his ancestors. The anchorage is bad, open to all northerly winds and not much protected from southeast squalls, which have full sweep across Keku Bay, which is a very extensive arm of the sea, and connects with *Clarence Straits* by *Kekou Straits*, a narrow pass filled with reefs and said to be impassible for any vessel drawing over 4 feet, though I doubt this.

Off Kekou village we anchored in 9 fathoms water, sandy bottom, and having destroyed the village very completely,² returned at 2.35 pm to *Saginaw Bay*, where we anchored for the night. The weather

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¹ Meade refers to the incident at Daaxich’daak.uhu, frogs wading up around it (Surprise Harbor). Orth (1967) quotes him, possibly in an annotation to Hydr. Chart 225: “It owes its name to one of the two tragedies in the area, which resulted from attacks by Indians on whites.”

² Duff Mitchell says Kake elders claim these houses were in Portage Pass, inside Hamilton Island, which seems consistent with Meade’s chart.
was thick and rainy, with wind from ENE, which would probably be a southeaster outside or in Chatham Straits.

Feb 16, 1869—At 8.45 am, weather cloudy but dry. Left Saginaw Bay and steamed around to the next indentation to westward, which subsequently proved to be a large and well-sheltered bay which, from its advantages, I named Security Bay [secure for whom??!!], and the anchorage, Snug Harbor.

Outside of Security Bay is a good roadstead, with from 10 to 12 fa water, soft bottom, extending from Cedar Point (see plan) to northward and westward about 1.5 miles, thence to SSW until South Point bears about east. This roadstead is sheltered from SE winds and from any sea, though I presume that with a northerly some slight swell might get up inside, as Frederick Straits are some 10 or 12 miles wide at this point.

It is 42 miles from Security Bay to Cape Omaney, and the channel is perfectly clear through Chatham Straits, the shores of which may be everywhere approached with a mile. The Russian charts give an incorrect idea of Security Bay, and locate some rocks across the entrance which I did not see at low water (see plan). There are 5 or 6 small islands at the mouth of the bay and a reef off South Point, but no dangers we could see, and the channel up to Snug Harbor seemed remarkably clear. The anchorage ground is perfectly land locked and sheltered from all winds and seas, though I presume that squalls blow at times through the ravines.

The bottom is soft and the bay extensive enough for a large fleet. If the whales resort to Chatham Strait during the calving season, as they are said to do [?!], Security Bay is the best possible rendezvous for a whaling fleet. Cedar, hemlock and rock pine abound. There are numerous freshwater streams emptying into the bay, and in season the salmon, cod, and other fine fish are said to be numerous. We anchored off a salmon fishing village of the Kakes, known as Tom's Ranch,4 to the ENE of which is a small inlet. The anchorage at low water was in 6 fa, but beyond the village the water deepens to 8 or 10 fa, soft bottom, plenty of room for many vessels.

Snug Harbor has a southern exposure, and the land about Tom's Ranch is fairly cleared. As a harbor Security Bay is immeasurably superior to anything I have yet seen in Alaska. Its advantages are—First, proximity to the ocean, Cape Omaney being only 42 miles distant, and a clear splendid channel all the way to Cape Kingsmill; Second, a good roadstead outside of the harbor, where a vessel may anchor if the wind is SE so that she cannot fetch into Snug Harbor; Third, a clear channel, which dispenses with the necessity of a pilot; Fourth, a southern exposure at the site of the proposed settlement, which is favorable to the growth of vegetables,&c: Fifth, abundance of freshwater and of excellent timber; Sixth, and lastly, perfect security from all winds which may blow, the anchorage being landlocked.

Our anchorage was about 700 yards from Tom's Ranch, which we burned, and during the afternoon I sent off an expedition of 2 boats with their crews, and 17 soldiers from the garrison at Sitka, to destroy 2 fishing villages at the head of the bay, 4.5 miles distant. Midshipman Bridge made a plan of the bay, with soundings, in the track of the boats (see plan) He found 2 stockaded forts and 2 villages, which he destroyed. He carried a depth of 8 fa to within a mile of the head of the bay, where the water shoals suddenly to 2 fathoms and less.

The charts give little idea [of the bay’s depth], though the Hudson’s Bay Company have known of it and resorted to it for years. Captain Lewis, of the Otter, formerly of the LaBouchere, told me it was one of the finest harbors in this region. The Indians being hostile, the greater

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3 Hard to believe that as late as 1869 humpbacks were thought to give birth in Alaska. Am I misinterpreting this statement?
4 The term “ranch” has fallen out of use in Southeast, but was applied to the rows of clan houses in Tlingit coastal settlements.
the necessity why a post should be established to keep them in order and subjection. We remained here all night of the 16th.

Feb 17, 1869—Left Security Bay at 7.30 am for Kootznahoo. On the way, [sounded a reported reef off White-water] It is close to the land and consists of 11 very ugly rocks, extending about NW and SE along the land for 2 miles. If a line were drawn from Woody Point to Point Caution (named by us) the distance of the reef outside would be a mile. . . At 2 pm, being flood and near high water, I anchored in Kootznahoo Inlet, between Kootznahoo Head and Village Rock. At 3.10, therefore we came in to Hell's Acre, in 17 fa, and veered to 45 fa cable, hard bottom with boulders, a very bad anchorage. During the last of the flood, the vessel sheered about so violently there was danger of snapping the cable, so I got underway with some difficulty, and having drifted out past Danger Point Reef; steamed up for anchorage off Kootznahoo Village, where I came to at 8.45 pm in 13 fa, close to the beach and shore reefs. Weather pleasant but foggy.

No vessel can ride at anchor in Kootznahoo Inlet during the ebb stream. The water is deep, bottom uneven, and current 4 to 8 knots. This produces whirlpools and eddies, sheering the vessel violently, and might put her on the shore rocks.

Feb 18, 1869—Made a plan of the anchorage off Kootznahoo Village, which I called Kootznahoo Roads (see plan). The anchorage is poor and very much exposed, particularly in southeast weather, which must bring a heavy sea. It is not to be resorted to except in summer and during good weather.

At 11 am, weather clear and beautiful, with strong breeze NW, we re-entered the inlet on the last of the ebb and made the turn with little difficulty, but finding the ebb still strong at Race Island in the Upper Rapids, came to for 1/2 hour at Still Water Anchorage.

At 1 pm, steamed through Upper Rapids to Mitchell's Bay. Passing Diamond Island, we steamed for Dead Tree Bluff, keeping close to the eastern shore of Davis Creek, avoiding a small sand knoll off Fresh Water Creek. Passed through this extreme narrow passage and anchored off Bryant's Point in 12.5 fa, muddy bottom, plenty of room and water to swing with a whole cable out. Day ended with heavy fog and southerly airs.

Feb 19, 1869—Set up our gauge between Mine Point and Ponte's Point, and sent a gang of men on shore to dig some coal. Thirteen Indians agreed to work for 50 cents and a foot of good coal. Thirteen Indians agreed to work for 50 cents and some coal. Thirteen Indians agreed to work for 50 cents and across Ponte's Point (~24 cords) and at 5 pm, with a lighter full of wood (same lighter left here on Jan 22nd), we got underway and stood out of Hell's Acre, otherwise Kootznahoo Inlet, and across Chatham Straits.

Feb 20, 1869—At about 10 am, with slack, descended to Still Water Anchorage, where we filled up with wood (~24 cords) and at 5 pm, with a lighter full of wood (same lighter left here on Jan 22nd), we got underway and stood out of Hell's Acre, otherwise Kootznahoo Inlet, and across Chatham Straits.

Feb 22, 1869—At about 10 am, with slack, descended to Still Water Anchorage, where we filled up with wood (~24 cords) and at 5 pm, with a lighter full of wood (same lighter left here on Jan 22nd), we got underway and stood out of Hell's Acre, otherwise Kootznahoo Inlet, and across Chatham Straits.

Feb 23, 1869—. . . came in Deadman's Bay in 12.5 fathoms, muddy bottom; Return Island bearing SW 3/4W, distant 1.5 miles. The anchorage here seems good. At 9.30 am, got underway with ebb tide, towed the lighter safely through the First and Second Rapids, though she sheered a good deal, and at 4 pm anchored off Sitka in 6/4 fathoms.
From Sitka to Fort Wrangel
via Auke, Takou, and Kekou country

March 16, 1869—At 7 am left Sitka and passed safely through White Stone Narrows and Peril Straits to Kootznahoo Roads, where we remained for half an hour, when stood to N & W up Chatham Straits for the N point of Admiralty, known on the “Cordova Bay and Cross Sound” chart as Point Retreat. The weather during the day had been bright and beautiful, though chilly, but by 6 pm mist and fog came in over high land, and by 11 pm it was blowing strong from NNW down Lynn Channel. As we passed Cross Sound the wind blew through the sound from WNW.

By 2 am it blew strong from NNW down Lynn Canal and a heavy sea was rising. Being dark, kept the ship’s head to the sea with just enough steam for steerage way, we being then off Point Retreat.

March 17, 1869—At daylight, Point Retreat on starboard quarter, put the helm up and stood for the Stephens Channel. Passed Barlow’s Cove, and taking the channel close to the large island off the mouth of the Cove, which I have named Shelter Island, ran out of the strong gale into a smooth sea with moderate fresh breeze. The course is not laid down correctly on the chart, the best channel being close to Shelter Island, and not between the small islets and rocks off the north end of Barlow’s Cove. After passing the east end of Shelter Island, we opened out a new channel to north of the island, leading past an immense glacier and into Lynn Channel between Lincoln and Shelter Islands. Passed Lone Mount, which from eastward presents quite a different appearance from what it does in Chatham Straits.

At 9 am anchored in Auke Harbor off a settlement of some 10 or 12 houses stockaded. The harbor is fair, but is open to northwest and north winds, which sometimes bring in quite a heavy sea. As the holding ground is mud, however,

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The village cycle
As I delve ever deeper into the history of Tlingit and Haida settlements, it’s becoming clear that even central, ‘winter’ villages moved, on a regular basis, especially throughout the 1800s, as communities were buffeted by disease, alcoholism, displacement by European settlement, resource appropriation, and cultural suppression.

Even prior to these external pressures, central villages for any given kwáan probably rotated, perhaps every decade or so, as waste accumulated and food & firewood became harder to gather—especially in the more glaciated north, so hammered by the Little Ice Age. For example, my reading of DeLaguna (1960) indicates Xutsnoowú Kwáan had 5 central villages between about 1835 and 1869, when the town of Angoon was settled (so recently it wasn’t yet called Aangóon; see chart on page 12).

For several years I’ve known that Aanchgalsísow—considered the old Aák’w village, was fairly recent, apparently not yet present when Lt Whidbey rowed through in 1794. But a close reading of this newly-available Meade journal of 1869—combined with these impressionistic-but-explicit maps from his and numerous other federal cruises of the 1860s and 70s—indicates that that even 75 years after Whidbey, the Admiralty Cove village was Aák’w Kwáan’s central community. Did Aanchgalsísow even exist? Evidence follows in footnote 6.

If “village” implies a more substantial community than "settlement" on the 1880 Navy charts, then Aák’w Kwáan’s central village was Tsa’a T’ei Héen on Admiralty. As for T’aak’u Kwáan, the “settlement” shown here, reported as “12 houses stockaded in,” probably held the majority of their coastal population.

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Footnote 6: In 1869, what we know today as Auke Bay had no Euro-name. As shown on the map above, Meade gave that name—logically enough—to waters off the central Aák’w village in what we now call Admiralty Cove. The L’eeneidi called the creek and village Tsa’a T’ei Héen. In its 4th edition, the 1901 Coast Pilot changed the name of the Admiralty Island bay to Auke Cove. The 1932 Coast Pilot for the first time named Auke Bay, where we know it today, NW of Fritz Cove. Similarly, the 1901 Geographic Dictionary of Alaska placed Auke Cove off Admiralty Island, and not until 1906 moved Auke Bay to the current position. (Early Juneauites favored the spelling Auk’).
any vessel with good tackle may ride out a blow here. Do not shoal the water to less than 10 fathoms, as after
getting that the water shoals very suddenly to 5 and 4, and then to much less. A flat runs across the head of
the bay, and each of the points forming the harbor is rocky. We anchored in 10 fathoms, muddy bottom, within a
mile of the village, and when we swung round to northwest wind, with 15 fathoms cable out, our stern was in 4.5
(low tide at the time and the flat bare). 7

The Auke tribe is a very poor one. They profess to be friendly to the whites, but were in great terror, think-
ing we had come to destroy the village. Every house had a white flag over it, and seeing they were alarmed we
hoisted a white flag at the fore, whereupon their chief man came off [probably Kawa.ée, born 1817, so aged 52].

At 9.45 left Auke and ran through the passage between north end of Admiralty Island and Douglas Island.
Passed a village to east of Point Salisbury, on the west point of the entrance to Takou Inlet: about a dozen houses
stockaded in. 8

At 11.45 passed Grand Island, and at 12.30 pm anchored in Takou Harbor.

The latitude of Takou Harbor, as given by Russian charts, is 58° N. longitude 133° 56’ 30” W. The settlement consists of
about 8 dilapidated houses and a stockade in ruins. Two new houses seemed to be going up. There was nobody to be seen,
everything being deserted. The harbor is a very snug one, the soundings regular and bottom muddy. Facilities excellent for
wood and water. Two very pretty streams fall into the harbor near the village. Sounded out the harbor and made a plan of

7 Bob DeArmond quotes from Meade’s “smooth deck log,” which apparently has additional information that didn’t make it into
Hydrographic Notice #13.

8 Sik’na Aan Geeyí: The map shows it as “Takou settlement.” This town emptied 11 years later with discovery of gold in Juneau, but was re-estabished in the mid 1800s by an
element of T’aakú Kwáan who had wearied of the dissolution of the gold craze. Since that
seems to have happened after this map was published in 1882, the town’s location probably
reflects Meade’s by-then-obsolete depiction of an active community in 1869. As for Tsaa T’ei
Héen, I’ve written an extensive illustrated pre-field scoping paper speculating on the history
of this T’aakú village. I hope to visit both sites soon with students, archaeologists and
culture bearers!
it. (See sketch.) Takou Harbor was formerly held by the Hudson's Bay Company as a trading post under a lease from the American Fur Company, but for some years it has been deserted. The Hudson’s Bay traders had a block-house and stockade here—now in ruins. The harbor is usually the rendezvous of the Takou tribe when the traders are in this vicinity. A signal to bring the Indians down is 2 guns.

March 18, 1869—At 9 left Takou Harbor and stood to southward and eastward down the Stephens Passage.

Takou Harbor is between Stockade Point and Grave Point, and the sketch represents Takou Mount bearing NW, distant 5 miles. A short distance from Takou Harbor passed an inlet open to south, which, from a remarkable looking streak on the side of the mountain forming the west side of the inlet, I called Limestone Inlet, and the mountain Limestone Bluff. The streak has been probably laid bare by a snow or land slide.

About 9 miles southeast of Takou Harbor is Point Styleman (named by Vancouver), the NW point of a very large indentation in the mainland extending back some 10 miles apparently. The opening is 2 miles wide (as given by Russian charts), and Point Anmer is the name given to the southeast point. The bay is called Port Snettisham on the charts, and seems like a good harbor. After passing Point Anmer the mountains have a singularly bare appearance and resemble immense masses of rusty iron, rather than anything else. The desolate appearance of their summits has doubtless been produced by successive snowslides, which have carried away all the trees and exposed the bed, rock to view. Three miles from Point Anmer is a pretty little cascade tumbling from a mountain ravine into the sea.

The Midway Islands (named by myself) are about 8 miles from Point Anmer, and are located to northward and westward of Point Coke, and not to the southward of it as given on “Cordova Bay and Cross Sound” chart. These islands are low and contain a few patches of trees. They form a capital landmark for making Holkham Bay, coming from the northward.

After passing Midway Islands, Holkham Bay will commence to open and the islands and floating ice from Soundun Glacier will be seen. Steer for the south point of Harbor Island (see plan), giving it a berth of 3/4 mile, and when you open Soundun Island, on which is the stockaded village of the Soundun or Sumdum Indians, haul in for the stockade and anchor when you get 8 fathoms. The vessel will then be in a sort of bay formed by Harbor and Soundun Islands, and will be tolerably well sheltered from all but southwest wind, though in a southeaster a sea gets up and renders the anchorage uncomfortable. There are great quantities of berg ice in this bay. Masses become detached from Soundun Glacier and float away to sea. Care must be exercised to keep them clear of the vessel. They do not give much trouble, I am told, except in spring and summer. Holkham Bay is a very extensive sheet of water and was the resort of the Hudson’s Bay Company traders in former days. The Sumdum or Soudum Indians are located here and are a branch of the powerful Takou tribe. We found them very friendly (apparently), though they acknowledged to being somewhat alarmed on seeing us, thinking we had come to make war on them. It seems the Kakes are trying to incite the other tribes to a league offensive, by alleging that the whites intend to kill all the Indians. I convinced these people of the falsity of the story.

The Sumdums are the cleanest and best clad Indians I have seen on this coast as yet. They claim to have plenty of fur; and showed us some very fine martin skins and a few silver-gray fox skins, but their prices are exorbitant. A blanket each for martin, without regard to quality, and $5 coin for each first class skin. Blankets they don’t seem to value as much as the other tribes to northward. What they most covet is whisky or rum, powder, lead, and shot, molasses, rice, and other provisions. Of course we explained to them that the vessel was a man-of-war and not a trader; but they did not, or would not, seem to fully understand it. The Chiefs Anatlass, Catlany, and Conk complained to the interpreter that they were not treated with sufficient consideration by the Captain, and
that they were suffered to stand around the deck like slaves; that they were not slaves, and had a “big feeling.” I suppose they expected me to do as the Hudson’s Bay and other traders usually did—invite them below, give them liquor and tobacco, and allow the squaws to “circulate” freely among the crew—all of which not being allowed by me, gave them “big feeling,” which I took no pains whatsoever to soothe, much to their disgust. The truth is, the traders have spoiled these people by making them believe they were of very great importance, so that the ordinary civility which passes current among white men is lost upon the chief, who all expect to be made much of and allowed their own way in every respect.

March 19, 1869—The third cutter went ashore, and remained until 2 pm, but the officers could not succeed in purchasing any furs, the price being extravagant. At 2.30 we left the harbor. The anchor came up very hard, showing the holding ground to be very good. By the Russian charts the position of Soundun Island is latitude 59° 41’ 45” N, longitude 133° 30’ 30” W. We did not get the sun and could not verify this; but I think it is right within 2 or 3 miles. The rise and fall of the tide is fully 15 feet. On the night of the 18th it blew a gale from eastward, with snow, and we experienced some very violent squalls. The easterly wind produced a swell which made the vessel ride uneasily, but the holding ground was good, and we rode out the squalls with the light bower, and, only 22 fathoms cubic, turning engines over slowly during the heaviest squalls.

At 2.45 we were fairly underway, and passing Point Astley found the wind ahead SE by S. There are several rocky islets off Point Astley and off Point Lookout (named by me); there is a most dangerous reef awash at high water, and fully 1.5 miles from the point. We passed within 30 yards of it, and only avoided it, because the southeast wind caused a break on the rock. I regard it as very dangerous. It is steep-to on the western edge. In coasting through Stephens Channel, from Point Astley to Point Windham, I would recommend that the eastern shore be approached no nearer than 1.5 to 2 miles anywhere, as there are many rocks. Point Windham is a remarkable headland, resembling a gigantic ladder of 3 steps. I estimate the height of Mount Windham to be 2000 feet. The extremity of the point is quite low and wooded. At 5.30 we passed a small island on the port beam which I named Sunset Island, and about dusk passed small islets which I named The Twins.

At 7 pm. passed Point Hobart and stood into a very large bay, marked on the chart as Port Houghton, with the hope of finding an anchorage until morning. After passing Point Hobart, slowed down to 4 knots, and

9 On the 18th, Meade insisted to S’awdán leaders that Saginaw was not a trader. Small wonder they doubted him if officers tried with his apparent permission to trade.
steamed on until 8.40 pm. (6 miles from Point Hobart) without getting any soundings with the hand lead (20 fathoms), when having run far enough, in my judgment, and it being dark, with only an occasional glimpse of the moon, I stopped the engines and got a cast of the deep-sea lead in 79 fathoms, soft bottom, within a mile of a group of islands. We then steamed in slowly towards an island, and getting no bottom with the hand lead, turned around to come out, when, seeing that the land was very close, I stopped and allowed the ship to turn with helm hard-a-port. It was very fortunate that we stopped when we did, as a few moments after a large black rock, 3 or 4 feet above water, was discovered about 50 feet from port paddle box, and had we been going ahead, even with the helm hard-a-port, we must have struck it. A few moments afterwards another rock was reported on the port bow. I judged it high time to steam out slowly the way we came in, and did so.

All of these islands seemed low and densely wooded. I am sure there must be an anchorage somewhere in this beautiful sheet of water; but we did not have the good fortune to find it. If I should pass this way again I will examine Port Houghton by daylight.

After getting away from Port Houghton steamed for Cape Fanshaw, and lay-to off cape until daylight, when steamed in for the cape. Seeing no signs of a settlement on eastern side of Cape Fanshaw, which is low and heavily timbered, steered for Perenosnaya Creek.\(^{10}\)

The land about Cape Fanshaw trends east to Highland Point, with several bights or gaps in the land. From Point Highland to Perenosnaya Creek the course is SE 3/4 E, very nearly. The opening is narrow, but may be known by a couple of small islets off the northwest side of the opening. I called these the Perenosnaya Islands. The creek seems deep enough for quite a large vessel, but the entrance is very narrow, and the turn tolerably sharp, before the stream widens. We saw no signs of any settlement off the creek. I noticed several whales playing about, with a spout vertical, or nearly so.

At 9.20 am passed the cape known as Cape of the Straits, and got a view of the great Stachtre Glacier. Passed a group of these islands which I named the Souchoy Islands. They are an excellent guide for entering Wrangel Straits.

At 11.15 am (being low water) passed the “middle” rock off Proliva Point, and entered Wrangel Straits.

Messrs. Bridge, Pillsbury, and Schroeder were employed to make a running plan of Wrangel Straits, with soundings, &c.—(For result see plan.) This reconnaissance was made with assistance, primarily, from the Russian chart, which I found, in many instances, to be radically wrong. For instance, 011 Russian chart Duncan Passage is laid down opposite Blind Passage, when it is nearly 3 miles further south.

I cannot consider Wrangel Straits a difficult passage for vessel of 15 feet draught. The roundings are very regular, the turns easy, except near mud flats, and the tide is not very strong anywhere. Its greatest strength is probably 2.5 knots in the Narrows opposite Captain’s Island.

I had been through this place but once before, and then with a pilot; but I found no great difficulty in getting the vessel through, though in one place, Vexation Point, I got embarrassed in the channel, so anchored for the night, and sounded out the

channel, running next day with a boat ahead.

March 21—At 11.30 am left our anchorage in Wrangel Straits and proceeded with the gig ahead, stopping once near Duncan’s Passage, mistaking the channel. By 2 pm we were clear of the straits, and in the open water of Clarence Straits. When fairly out give Point Alexander a considerable berth (say 3/4 mile), and steer up for the south end of Vank’s Island, thence past Scraggy Island (named by me), straight for flagstaff at Fort Wrangel. We anchored at 5 p.m. in 9 fathoms.

Fort Wrangle is a post of 70 US soldiers, located on Wrangel Island at the mouth of the Stickeen River. The anchorage is very much exposed, and

\(^{10}\) Meade was probably searching for a reported village. The 1883 Coast Pilot reports: “From the Portage Islets NW about 11 miles lies Cape Fanshaw, named by Vancouver, ‘a very conspicuous, low, projecting point, in latitude 57° 11’. It is heavily timbered. A deserted village was found here by Whidbey, and a present by Vancouver, ‘a very conspicuous, low, projecting point, in latitude 57° 11’.” It is temporarily engaged in their annual fishery, trade or hunting in some other locality.”
Wrangell: the second bombardment

If we lump all of Meade’s actions against K’eeý K’wáán into one incident, federal forces can be said to have attacked Tlingit villages 3 times: 1) Feb 1869, Meade, N. Kuiu; 2) Dec 1869 Borowoe, Wrangel; 3) 1882, Healy, Angoon. The second action is least known today—possibly because it was so shocking that town historians have tended to sweep it under the rug, as Juneau did after its vigilante roundup of Chinese workers. But at the time it caused national outrage, documented in letters to the US Senate from prominent Alaskans such as Vincent Colyer and Father Duncan of Metlakatla.

It’s impossible to do justice to the incident in a sidebar; if you’re interested, read Colyer (1870). While burned homes at Kake and Angoon were at least alleged (?) unoccupied, the residents of the above engraving were shelled while still in their clan houses, to force delivery of a Tlingit fugitive. Vincent Colyer—then Secretary of the Board of Indian Commissioners—and like many was upset by the bombing. His report on the attack included a priceless description of the splendor of the destroyed homes, and of the culture of Shtax’heen K’wáán.

“*The Indian village of Wrangel is on a tongue of land and cove. . . . On the opposite side . . . the US post is about 800 yards distant, with its guns commanding the village. There are 32 houses in the village, and when all are at home there are 508 inhabitants. . . . The houses are built of plank fastened on heavy timbers, well morticed together. They are about 40 by 50 feet square . . . The cabins, or private sleeping-rooms of one family, are built on raised platforms. They are as neatly finished as most whaling ships’ cabins . . . Some of the young men are quite skillful mechanics, handling carpenters’ tools with facility, and if you closely examine the sketch you will see that there is a floor and raised platform of boards, neatly fastened together below the private cabins so that the amount of carpenter work about one of these houses is considerable.

You will notice in Sketch No. 4 a frame-work erected in the center of the cabin. On this rack of
untrimmed sticks they hang their salmon and other fish to smoke and dry them over the fire. They then pack them for use in square boxes neatly made of yellow cedar, smoked, oiled, and trimmed with bears' teeth, in imitation of the nails we use on our trunks like the old brass nails of former years.

Testament to the peaceful and industrious character of the Indians at Wrangell is abundant. . . . I have spoken of the ill effects of the near proximity of soldiers to the Indian villages, and of the demoralizing effects upon both. . . . Nowhere else that I have visited is the absolute uselessness of soldiers so apparent as in Alaska."

Colyer recommended replacement of land-based soldiers with a fleet of revenue officers. As demonstrated by the subsequent vessel-delivered destruction of Angoon, that wasn’t the greatest solution either. Harry Williams offered an interesting contrast Stikine river people to the degeneracy at Wrangell:

"In 1862 a large immigration of gold miners headed 200 miles up the Stikine River to “Buck’s Bar.” Departing, most left their entire kits of tools and utensils and goods; some hung them up on trees, others in caves or rock niches. The Indians are continually passing them, and have been known to replace them when their fastenings would give way and let them fall to the ground, thereby showing not even the existence of a wrong thought in their minds".

Above: Unless bedrock was subsequently covered by fill (compare 2013 chart, page 32), the foreground rocks in this view could be relocated. This scene probably faces SSE across the right side of the village. • Below: View NE across the left end of the crescent of clan houses. Compare with 1888 map, following.
is hardly safe in a southeaster; but in Point Highfield Harbor the anchorage is good and tolerably well sheltered.

While at Fort Wrangle I examined the Souchoi Channel, but found it impassable for vessels of over 4 feet draft, owing to the shifting sand, which everywhere obstruct it. At anchor in 5 fathoms, quicksand came up within 200 yards of the vessel, and I deemed it high time to get out.

From Fort Wrangel to the gold region of the Stickeen is about 80 miles. The season is short and labor hardly remunerative.

From Fort Wrangel to San Francisco, via Fort Tongas and Victoria
March 24, 1869—At 1.30 pm left Wrangel and passed through the Stachinski Straits into Clarence Straits. We encountered several very severe hail storms, but made our way along without material difficulty. At midnight we were off Cape Grindall, at the entrance to Casann Bay and at 4 am anchored in Casann Bay off a salmon fishery belonging to one Baronovitch. The fishery is located in latitude 55° 30' N, longitude 132° 19' W and is a considerable affair. Baronovitch puts up about 1,000
barrels of fish every season. The Bay of Casann is one of the most extensive and beautiful sheets of water in Alaska, and will no doubt, in time, be greatly resorted to by the fishermen. Cod and halibut abound in season, and the salmon come in June in perfect myriads. Barono-vitch says he has known them to obstruct the passage of canoes in the streams.

We remained at Casaan several days, and made a rough plan of the bay. The charts do not locate it at all.

March 27, 1869—On 27th ran over to Fort Tongas, 90 miles distant, which I found somewhat improved by new buildings. [By 1975 Howard reported it abandoned]

March 28, 1869—Left Tongas and anchored in Fort Simpson Harbor, which is accurately described in the English harbor chart.

March 29, 1869—Left Fort Simpson, and next day arrived at McLoughlin’s Bay, where, being short of fuel, I took on board 15 cords of wood. Left at 2 pm and anchored in Safety Cove. All these places are well described by the English charts.

March 31, 1869—Left Safety Cove, and at 3 pm anchored in Beaver Harbor; off Fort Rupert, when remained for the night, sailing at daylight next morning. Reached Naniamo at 6 am on the next morning (2d). Coaled and arrived at Victoria on 3d of April at 2 pm.

April 8, 1869—At 9.30 am left Victoria, and after a rapid run of 3 days and 16 hours, reached San Francisco Sunday night (11th).

NOTE.—The plans and sketches referred to in this notice will be found on Hydrographic Office Chart No. 225, which will soon be issued. [RC: I still haven’t seen those rough sketches that were “soon issued.” My excerpts from the 1880[82] version of Chart 225 contain additional corrections and updates from the voyages of Beardslee and Glass, not to be published for another 11 years.]