

"top of the ascent is an extended plain covered with pine, oak, and ash  
"trees, scattered here and there so as to form a park-like scene."

Governor Stevens, of Washington Territory, who was assigned by the Government, in 1853, to the duty of exploring a route for a Pacific Railroad from St. Paul to Puget Sound, thus describes this marvelous body of water: "On the whole west coast from San Diego to the north, nothing like this is met. All the water-channels of which Admiralty Inlet is composed are comparatively narrow and long. They have all, more or less, bold shores, and are throughout very deep and abrupt, so much so that in many places *a ship's side will strike the shore before the keel will touch the ground*. Even in the interior and most hidden parts, depths of fifty and one hundred fathoms occur as broad as De Fuca Strait itself. Vancouver found sixty fathoms near the Vashon Island within a cable length of the shore, and in Possession Sound he found no soundings with a line of one hundred and ten fathoms. Our modern, more extensive soundings prove that this depth diminishes toward the extremities of the inlets and basins. Nothing can exceed the beauty and safety of these waters for navigation. Not a shoal exists within them; not a hidden rock; *no sudden overfalls of the water or the air*; no such strong flaws of the wind as in other narrow waters, for instance, as in those of Magellan's Strait. And there are in this region so many excellent and most secure ports that the commercial marine of the Pacific Ocean may be here easily accommodated."

That is an understatement. The war and merchant ships of the world could be received and sheltered in this unequalled archipelago of harbors. Port Townshend is a harbor six miles long, with regular soundings of from one hundred and four fathoms to twenty fathoms, and good holding-ground all over. Dwamish Bay is six miles long, two and a half miles wide, and has a depth of from eighty fathoms to thirty. Port Susan is ten miles long, three and a half wide, and good-holding ground in from forty to fifty fathoms. Port Discovery is six miles long, and two and a half wide, with regular soundings of from thirty to thirty-five fathoms in mid-channel, and ten fathoms close to the shore. It is covered by a little high island called "Protection," which is two miles from the entrance to the harbor, and which locks out all winds. Washington Harbor, likewise protected against all winds, has a depth of from twenty fathoms to nine, right in shore. But both time and space fail to catalogue the ports on Puget Sound with their soundings. The survey of these waters by our Government has been thorough, and a study of the charts of the sound issued by the Coast Survey Bureau will simply