

a very great novelty, not having seen any vessel but our consort during the last eight months. She soon hoisted American colours, and fired a gun to leeward. At six we spoke her. She proved to be the ship *Columbia*, commanded by Mr. Robert Gray, belonging to Boston, from which port she had been absent nineteen months. Having little doubt of his being the same person who had formerly commanded the sloop *Washington*, I desired he would bring to, and sent Mr. Puget and Mr. Menzies on board to acquire such information as might be serviceable in our future operations."

On the return of the boat, Vancouver found that his conjectures had not been ungrounded, and that Mr. Gray was the same gentleman who had commanded the sloop *Washington* at the time she had made a voyage behind the island. It was a little remarkable that on his approach to the entrance of this inland sea or strait, he should fall in with the identical person who, it had been stated, had sailed through it. Mr. Gray assured the officers, however, that he had penetrated only fifty miles into the straits in question in an ESE. direction; that he found the passage five leagues wide; and that he understood from the natives that the opening extended a considerable distance to the northward. He then returned to the ocean the same way he had entered it. This inlet he supposed to be the same De Fuca had discovered. The fact, however, remains that Vancouver most thoroughly explored the coasts of the island, and the inlets and shores of Puget Sound, Washington Territory, and British Columbia—countries which are slowly but surely taking their proper place in the world's estimation.