

PAPERS RELATIVE TO

I send by the "Frolic" a box containing a specimen of the coals which Captain Gordon found to consume, on a trial of four hours, as compared with Scotch and Welsh, in the following proportions; viz.—

									Tons.	Cwts.
Welsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	8
Scotch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	14
Ellenborough and Hamilton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	18

And I also transmit plans of the parts of the coast to which his investigation extended.

A steam-vessel arriving on the north-west coast in want of fuel might advantageously pass by the north-west end of Vancouver's Island (Cape Scott), complete her coals in one of the bays described by Captain Gordon, and go on to the settlements on the south side of Johnstone's Straits.

In transmitting this report from Captain George Gordon, I consider it my duty to add, that during the service on which he has been employed, on the very distant parts of this station from which he is returned, he has continued to display his merit as one of the best steam officers in Her Majesty's service.

I have, &c.

(signed) *G. F. Seymour,*

Rear-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.

To Henry George Ward, Esq.
Secretary of the Admiralty.

— No. 3. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Commander *Gordon* to Captain *J. A. Duntze*.

Her Majesty's Steam Sloop "Cormorant,"
Nisqually, 7 October 1846.

Sir,

With reference to that part of your letter of the 15th September last wherein you direct me to ascertain whether the coals, which are said to abound on the northern part of Vancouver Island, can be collected in sufficient quantity to afford a supply for steam fuel, I have the honour to inform you that, having arrived at McNeil's Harbour for that purpose, I made known to the natives, through Mr. Sangster, my wish to obtain a supply, and the next day several canoes came laden with coal, and they continued to increase in number until our departure.

At the advice of Mr. Sangster, I slung a tub, holding about 6 cwt., from the fore-yard, which was lowered into a canoe and quickly filled; in this manner we received 62 tons from the 24th to the 26th, paying for each tub as it came up, by articles of trifling value, which I procured at your suggestion from the officer in charge of Fort Victoria. The whole of the expenses incurred, including a few presents necessarily made to the chiefs, will make the coals average not more than 4s. per ton.

During our stay I proceeded on shore, accompanied by Mr. Sangster and the first and second engineers. I found the north-west part of McNeil's Harbour to be a peninsula, and, in honour of the First Lord of the Admiralty, I called it Ellenborough. We found a seam of coal just below high-water mark, which appeared to descend at an angle of about 30° towards the land; we then ascended the hill, and, very near the top, at about 60 feet above the level of the sea, in the bed of a stream, we found a layer of freestone, at about 5 feet 6 inches below a surface of peat, and below that a seam of coal, much resembling in appearance the English Newcastle coal; this seam was 10 inches thick, with freestone below; having bored through and blasted this, we came to another seam, 18 inches in thickness, both seams appearing to run parallel to each other, descending at an angle of 20° in a north-west direction.

Being confident from these two trials that the seams thicken lower down, I did not make any further experiments here, but proceeded the next day to a small sheltered bay, about eight miles further down the coast to the north-west, which we called Baillie Hamilton Bay, after Captain Baillie Hamilton, Secretary of the Admiralty; here we observed another rich seam, extending along the beach below high-water mark, and which we traced a quarter of a mile in an inland direction.

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