

VANCOUVER ISLAND

PILOT

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## CHAPTER V.

THE STRAIT OF GEORGIA, FROM NANAIMO HARBOUR AND  
BURRARD INLET, TO CAPE MUDGE AND BUTE INLET.

VARIATION, 22° 20' East, in 1864.

THE strait of Georgia, as already observed, commences at the northern end of the Haro archipelago, and extends in a general W.N.W. direction to Cape Mudge, a distance of 110 miles. There are many harbours, both on the Vancouver, and continental shores, and several islands, some of considerable size, form other channels, all of which are navigable.

The average width of the main strait westward of Nanaimo is about 9 miles, diminishing at its narrowest part, between Lasqueti and the Ballinac islands, to 5 miles. The general depth of water is great, frequently over 200 fathoms. The tides are not strong, and between Nanaimo and Cape Mudge there are few dangers in the way of ships navigating the strait.

The smaller channels on the continental shore are Malaspina strait and Sabine channel, the former lying between the continent and Texhada island, the other separating Texhada from Lasqueti island.

On the Vancouver shore is Ballinac channel, lying westward of the islands of the same name; also Lambert channel and Baynes sound, the former between Hornby and Denman islands, and the latter dividing both from Vancouver island; they will be separately described.

**TIDES.**—The meeting of the tides takes place between Cape Mudge and Cape Lazo; that is to say, the flood entering by Fuca strait meets that entering by the north end of Vancouver island, within 20 miles of the former cape, generally much nearer, but varying according to the phases of the moon and the state of the winds; and at the point of meeting a considerable race occurs, which would be dangerous to boats: there is generally such a race at the entrance of Discovery passage. It is high water, full and change, at Cape Mudge and Cape Lazo at about 5.30, and the range during ordinary springs is from 12 to 14 feet. At the entrance of the passage during springs the stream runs as much as from 4 to 6 knots an hour, the flood, or easterly stream, being the strongest.

**WINDS.**—The prevailing summer wind in the strait of Georgia is from N.W., or the same as on the outside coast, and between May and September it blows strong and steady, commencing about 9 a.m. and dying away

to the N.N.W. between them and Hornby island for 4 miles, and then resumes its original trend to the W.N.W. : the distance between the Sisters and point St. John, the low bare east point of Hornby island, is 5 miles ; the latter, with the small islets off it, should be given a berth of nearly a mile. The Sisters are bold on all sides, but should not be approached too close in calm or light winds, as the tide sets straight past them. Having passed point St. John, the distance to the entrance of the Discovery passage is 38 miles. The strait maintains a uniform width of 9 miles, until near Mittlenatch island, or for 30 miles, the only stopping places being Oyster bay, already described, 4 miles from Cape Mudge, and Gillies bay on the west side of Texhada island. The shore of Texhada island is bold.

Gillies bay is N.  $\frac{1}{4}$  W.  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles from point St. John, and 2 miles north-west of a small group, the Mouatt islets, which lie nearly a mile from the shore. It will be known by a remarkable white patch on its northern point, which is seen for many miles, and shows as two distinct white spots. An anchor may be dropped a quarter of a mile from the beach in 12 fathoms, but it is only a stopping place.

In standing to the westward towards the Denman island shore, Lambert channel should not be opened out between Shingle spit and the south-east end of the island, (page 128,) nor should Cape Lazo be approached nearer than 2 miles.

#### NORTHERN SHORE OF THE STRAIT OF GEORGIA.

**HOWE SOUND**, immediately adjoining Burrard inlet (page 109) on the north is an extensive though probably useless sheet of water, the general depth being very great, while there are but few anchorages. It is almost entirely hemmed in by rugged and precipitous mountains rising abruptly from the water's edge to elevations of from 4,000 to 6,000 feet ; there is no available land for the settler, and although a river of considerable size, the Squawmisht, navigable for boats, falls into its head, it leads by no useful or even practicable route into the interior of the country.

The entrance is between Atkinson point, the north point of Burrard inlet, and Gower point, nearly 12 miles apart. The sound penetrates the continent in a northerly direction for 20 miles, and although of such considerable width for nearly 12 miles of its length, yet it is choked by some large and numerous smaller islands, between which are several ship passages. Bowen island, the largest and easternmost, is remarkable, its highest summit ; rising to nearly 2,500 feet, being round, smooth, and partially bare, unmistakably pointing out the entrance from any direction ; the island is 7 miles in length in a northerly direction, and more than 3 in width.

one of the many arms of Jervis inlet. The Trail islets, four in number, lie something more than half a mile off the western end of this bay, and if necessary small vessels may drop an anchor inside them in 12 or 13 fathoms,

Thormanby islands, two in number, almost joined, and upwards of 2 miles in extent, are 18 miles from Gower point and form the south-east entrance point of Malaspina strait; there is a deep but very narrow channel, Welcome pass, between these islands and the main.

**TEXHADA ISLAND**, lying parallel with and on the eastern side of the strait of Georgia, is 27 miles in length, with an average width of scarcely 4 miles. Throughout its whole length stretches a ridge of rugged trap mountains, wooded generally to their summits; at the southern end mount Shepherd reaches a height of 2,900 feet; towards the northern end the range decreases in elevation, but there is scarcely an acre of cultivable land throughout the island. Its shores are steep and bold on all sides, and the land rises abruptly, except at the north extreme.

On the north side 3 miles from Marshall point, there is a boat cove; the only anchorage, and that merely a stopping place, is Gillies bay, on the south-west side (page 132); good limestone is found at the north end of the island.

**LASQUETI ISLAND** lies parallel with Texhada at its south-east end, and is separated from it by a channel about a mile in width. Its length is 9 miles, its average width something more than 2 miles, and it is remarkable from a singular turret-shaped summit, 1,000 feet high, called mount Tremeton, rising nearly in its centre. On its southern side are several boat coves, and in Tucker bay, on the northern, there is very fair anchorage, with some good land in the neighbourhood.

Sangster island, half a mile long, lies S.S.W. a mile from Young point, the eastern extreme of Lasqueti. There is a deep passage with 70 fathoms water between the two, but a rocky ledge with shoal water on it extends off the western point of Sangster; and the Seal rocks, which cover at half-tide, lie W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N. a little more than a mile from the same point; it is not recommended to pass between the island and the rocks.

Jenkins island lies 3 miles westward of Sangster, and close to the south shore of Lasqueti. The Sea Egg rocks, always uncovered, lie 3 cables off its west end.

False bay, at 3 miles westward of Jenkins island, and the same distance N.E. by E. of the Sisters islets, is a deep bight, but is not recommended as an anchorage, though small vessels would find shelter in its north-west corner in 7 fathoms.

**STEVENS PASSAGE**, between the Sisters islets and Lasqueti, is upwards of a mile wide, and perfectly safe and clear. Flat islands,

on its eastern side, should be given a berth of a quarter of a mile, likewise Bare islands, a small group lying off the north-west end of Lasqueti.

**SABINE CHANNEL**, between Texhada and Lasqueti islands, is a good ship passage 9 miles long, in nearly an East and West direction, with very deep water ; its breadth at the western end is 3 miles, but several high conical islands lying off the north-east side of Lasqueti contract the width at the eastern end, in some parts to three-quarters of a mile. There is also a narrow but deep channel, Bull passage, to the southward of these islands, by keeping close along the Lasqueti shore.

**Tucker Bay**, on the north side of Lasqueti, and equidistant from either end, is a very fair anchorage. Entering from the westward it is 4 miles from Bare island, and will be readily known by a group of small wooded islands which form its eastern side ; its western point is sloping and somewhat remarkable, partially bare of trees. The water shoals rather suddenly from 30 to 16 fathoms, and the anchorage is in 14 fathoms, with the outermost and westernmost of the small islands bearing N.N.E. and the west point of the bay W. by N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N., which will be within a quarter of a mile of the shore. The tides through Sabine channel are as much as 2 knots an hour, the flood running to the westward, the ebb to the eastward. With a strong N.W. wind and flood tide, the bay, though safe, would not be a comfortable anchorage ; from the eastward sailing vessels would find some difficulty in reaching it in consequence of the prevailing N.W. winds and the narrowness of the channel at that end.

**MALASPINA STRAIT** is a wide navigable channel, separating Texhada island from the mainland. Its general direction is W.N.W. for 30 miles, when it again enters the strait of Georgia between Marshall point, the north-west extreme of Texhada, and Harwood island ; its southern entrance lies between Upwood point, the south-east extreme of Texhada, and the western of the Thormanby islands, and is 4 miles in width.

Upwood point is rugged and precipitous ; stunted pines grow between the crevices of the bare trap rock ; the land behind more thickly wooded. Almost immediately over it rises mount Dick, a very remarkable hump-shaped hill, 1,100 feet high, and 3 miles within is mount Shepherd, the highest summit of the island. A covering rock lies 2 cables off the point.

Thormanby islands, lying close to the mainland, and appearing as part of it, terminate at their north-west point in a steep clay cliff, off which, at low water, dries a boulder point. The Texhada shore is bold, and almost straight for its whole length, fronted by narrow shingle or boulder beaches.

point and Mary island, something more than a cable apart, with a depth of 12 fathoms, and anchor in Gerrans bay, a quarter of a mile to the southward, in 6 or 7 fathoms; there is also good anchorage in Garden bay just eastward of the peninsula in 5 or 6 fathoms. The harbour runs three-quarters of a mile above Garden bay by a very narrow passage with only 2 fathoms in it, and then opens out with a depth of 7 fathoms.

Entering the harbour between Williams and Charles islands, the channel is only 100 yards in width, with 7 fathoms, and a rock which covers at three-quarters flood lies N.N.W. from the east point of the latter island, distant something more than half a cable.

**THE WESTERN or ENTRANCE PROPER** of Jervis inlet is between Alexander point, the south extreme of Hardy island, on the east, and Scotch Fir point on the west. The points are not remarkable, but the opening is readily made out; it is nearly 2 miles in width, and takes for a short distance a N.N.W. direction. Scotch Fir point is rocky, and has two small islets lying close to the westward of it, which like the point itself are covered with stunted pines. Hardy island lies close to and is nearly connected with Nelson island; Blind bay between them is useless, and its entrance choked by small islands.

**Thunder Bay**, formed on the western side  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles above Scotch Fir point, is one of the few spots in Jervis inlet where a vessel may drop an anchor, and being near the entrance is likely to prove convenient. The bay is about half a mile deep, with a sandy beach at its head, off which, at the distance of 2 cables, 17 fathoms will be found; immediately outside it there are 30 fathoms, and the lead then drops suddenly to a great depth.

A mile within Scotch Fir point the inlet takes a N.E. by E. direction for 12 miles, when it forms a junction with Agamemnon channel at the northern end of Nelson island. Just before reaching this point, Hotham sound, a wide opening, trends to the N.N.W., terminating at the distance of 7 miles in a double-headed bay; the water in every part of it is too deep for anchorage.

**NELSON ISLAND**, in the middle of the entrance to Jervis inlet, is 10 miles long in a northerly direction, and about 4 or 5 miles wide; its shores are much broken and indented by several bays, in none of which, however, can anchorage be obtained in consequence of the great depth. The island is mountainous, the summits ranging from 500 to 1,000 feet in height. Cape Cockburn, its south point, is of white granite, about 80 or 90 feet high, covered with a few dwarf pines; a rock lies one cable south of it.

Captain island, north of Nelson island, and separated from it by a narrow passage, is about a mile in extent, rocky, and steep-to.

One Tree islet, off the east side of the inlet,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles north-east of Captain

latter by a low neck of land 1,100 yards wide, forming an extensive mountainous peninsula to the westward, called See-chelt peninsula. On the east side of the arm, at a distance of 7 and 11 miles from its entrance, are two smaller branches extending to the north-eastward for upwards of 10 miles.

The arm at 3 miles within its entrance contracts in breadth to less than a third of a mile, and is partially choked up with rocks and small islands, which preventing in a great measure the free ingress and egress of the tide, cause most furious and dangerous rapids, the roar of which may be heard for several miles. These rapids prevent any vessel, or even boat, from entering the arm, except for a short time after high and low water, when the tide slackens for a very limited period; it would, however, be hazardous for any vessel, except a very small one, to attempt to enter at any time, although there is a passage with from 4 to 7 fathoms between the islands and the south or peninsula shore.

The shores of the arm, except near its south part or head, are high and rocky, and it is a useless sheet of water, unless as regards fishing; in the summer season the natives catch great quantities of salmon.

**TIDES.**—It is high water at full and change in Jervis inlet at 6 hours, the rise and fall being about 14 feet; within the See-chelt arm the rise and fall seldom exceeds 6 or 7 feet.

The tidal streams are, except near the entrance of See-chelt arm, weak and irregular and influenced by winds.

**HARWOOD ISLAND**, off the west entrance to Malaspina strait,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the continental shore and about 3 miles north-west of point Marshall, is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles long in a northerly direction,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles wide, from 150 to 200 feet high, flat, and thickly wooded. It is bordered by a sandy beach, and at its north point is a low grassy spit. There is deep water between the island and the shore.

Midway between point Marshall and Harwood lies the Black rock, of small extent, and about 6 feet above high water.

Bare islet, one mile south-west from Harwood, is a bare yellow cliffy rock about 2 cables in extent, and 30 feet above high water.

**The COAST.**—Westward of Jervis inlet, the north shore of Malaspina strait runs in a westerly direction for 11 miles, terminating at Grief point; for a considerable distance inland it is low, and bordered by a sandy beach; there are no off-lying dangers that are not seen.

From Grief point the north or continental shore of the strait of Georgia runs in W.N.W. direction for nearly 20 miles almost straight to Sarah point, the south-east entrance point of Desolation sound. Throughout the whole distance the coast is low, not rising to more than 500 or 600 feet, and but slightly indented. There is a fresh-water stream of considerable

size 4 miles west of Grief point, and at a mile farther westward a vessel may anchor in fine weather for night or tide at a distance of 3 or 4 cables off shore near the coast abreast Harwood island in 12 to 13 fathoms.

In navigating along this coast between Grief and Sarah points, a vessel will avoid danger by keeping not more than half a mile off shore, and passing northward of Harwood and Savary islands. When past Hurtado point, a vessel ought to steer more to the westward, and pass southward or westward of the White, Double, and Powell islets.

**SAVARY ISLAND**, nearly 6 miles W.N.W. of Harwood island and one mile from the continental shore, is 4 miles long in a W.S.W. direction, but narrow. A sandy beach strewed with huge boulders surrounds it, and extends a considerable distance off its north and west sides, which should not be approached nearer than half a mile. The height of the island varies from 80 to 120 feet, and the south side is faced by some remarkable white sandy cliffs, very conspicuous from the south-east; its east extreme is a granite cliff, steep-to. There are several clear grassy patches on the island, but the soil is poor and sandy. A sandy bar or ledge, of 1 to 2 fathoms water, extends from its west point to Hernando island.

Hurtado point, on the main abreast Savary island, is about 250 feet high, bold and cliffy. There are 37 fathoms in mid-channel between it and the island.

**MYSTERY ROCK**, apparently a short distance to the eastward of Savary island, is of small extent and uncovers at low water. Uncertainty exists as to its exact position, but during the survey the rock was twice seen by Mr. Bedwell in 1862 from the south point of Harwood island, though not from anywhere else. Vessels therefore in navigating this locality should observe great caution when going between Savary and Harwood islands, but by keeping within half a mile of the continental shore this danger will be avoided.

**RAGGED ISLANDS**, close to the continental shore and running parallel to it, are a rocky group of small islands  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles long and 3 cables wide; their south-east part is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of Hurtado point, and some rocks extend 4 cables from their north-west extreme.

White islet, a mile to the south-west of them, is a very remarkable bare white granite rock about 70 feet high. A rock which uncovers at low water lies one cable east of it, but in the middle of the passage between the islet and Ragged islands are 37 fathoms.

Double islets, half a mile west of the north-west part of the Ragged group, are small, and about 90 feet high, with a single tree on each of their summits.

Powell islets, one mile north-west of Double islets, are two in number, small, about 90 feet high, and covered with a few stunted bushes and trees; the westernmost islet is steep-to on its north and west sides.

**SARAH POINT**, at 20 miles W.N.W. of Malaspina strait, may be called the north-west entrance point of the strait of Georgia. It is a rounding rocky point sloping gradually to the sea from a height of about 700 feet, at a short distance within it. The coast here turns sharply round to the eastward into Malaspina inlet.

**HERNANDO ISLAND**, 2 miles west of Savary, and 3 miles N.N.E. of Mittlenatch island (page 130), is about 2 miles in extent, flat, thickly wooded, and from 120 to 170 feet high. A ledge composed of sand and huge boulders extends two-thirds of a mile from its south-east point, and there is only  $1\frac{1}{4}$  fathoms in the channel between it and Savary islands. From the west side some rocks extend off upwards of 2 cables in many places, and it should not be approached nearer than half a mile in passing.

**Stag Bay**, on the north side of Hernando, affords anchorage in 12 to 15 fathoms at a distance of about 2 cables off shore, and is useful as a stopping place for vessels bound to Bute inlet or Desolation sound. There is a small fresh water stream in the east part of the bay.

Tongue point, the north-west extreme of Hernando and of the bay, is a low sharp sandy point or spit covered with a few trees, steep-to, and may be approached to 50 yards. Vessels should anchor about three-quarters of a mile from this point, with the east part of Twins island bearing N. by E.

**BAKER PASSAGE**, to the northward of Hernando island and leading from the strait of Georgia to the entrance of Desolation sound, is about 3 miles long in a north-easterly direction, and one mile wide in the narrowest part, being bounded on the north side by Cortes and Twins islands. The only danger is at its north-west entrance point, off which a boulder ledge extends upwards of 3 cables in a south-easterly direction.

Twins island, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Hernando, are two rocky islands connected by a sandy beach at low water, covering an extent 2 miles long in a north-westerly direction, and about one mile broad; their south shore is steep-to and may be approached to one cable. Some small islets lie a short distance off their north side, and the Centre rock, which covers at a quarter flood, is in the middle of the passage between them and Cortes; the northernmost Twin is 490 feet high, rising to an almost bare summit in the centre; the southern one is about 300 feet, and on both of them are numerous indications of iron and copper ores. None but small craft should go north of these islands.

If entering Baker passage from the strait of Georgia, to avoid the ledge