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Description Report

Harbor of Lacome, Wash.

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J. J. Gilbert

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Descriptive Report
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Descriptive Report
Harbor of Bacommer, Wash.: -
1892. -

This survey was made for the Washington State Tide Land Commission, and under its direction, and for the purpose of complying with the law of the State requiring the establishment of Harbor lines along the water front of Cities, and for a distance of one mile beyond the city limits.

Bacommer is a small town, on the Swinomish Slough, and it exists because of the Swinomish tide lands. Originally these tide flats, which extend from Kagit Bay to Padilla Bay, with an average width of three or more miles, were subject to overflow, but about 1870, some one experimented by diking, and found the reclaimed land to be marvellously productive. The Swinomish Flats were soon taken up and reclaimed, and Bacommer was built, it being the point most suitable for wharves. The town was laid out by Mr. Connor, and was named for his wife, Mrs. L. A. Connor. It is built, largely, on a rocky hill, which was an islet, before the flats about it filled and became marsh.

and when Padilla Bay and Skagit Bay, were one continuous body of water.

During the earlier years, and until the "boom" times the Swinomish Slough was the usual route from Seattle to Whatcom. It was necessary to run the Slough when the tide was in, and the channels into it, ~~from~~ ^{at} each end, were narrow, shallow and crooked.

The Entrance from Skagit Bay, or as more familiarly known, Passaic Sound, is through a narrow channel, to the west of the rocky island at the mouth of the Swinomish. This entrance is known by all Steamboat-men as "the hole in the wall," - the entrance is very narrow, and the shores are rock.

There is no channel through the broad opening to the east of the island, but there is water enough all over the flats, at high tide for light draught craft. After passing through the "Hole in the Wall" the left hand shore is a low bluff - ~~and~~ ^{and} opposite the town of ~~Boomer~~ it becomes rocky and high, with a flat in front, on which is an Indian Village. All the land west of the Slough is Indian reservation. The point at the mouth of the unnamed Slough, east of the Swinomish, is high rocky shore-line, surrounded by marsh.

Through the Swinomish Slough the border is marked and a high dike extends the whole distance, sometimes close to the slough; sometimes a short distance back.

The fertility of the diked land is wonderful, producing 150 bushels or more of oats, to the acre, and for many years the tonnage of the shipments from Bacommer exceeded that of any other port on the Sound, excepting the milling ports.

The population of Bacommer is small, only a few hundreds, and its business is the shipment of grain, and supplying merchandise to the farmers. There were one or two small hotels and two or three large stores, besides several small shops, in 1892.

Since 1892, the Government, through the U.S. Engineers, has improved the entrance to Bacommer by dredging a channel across the flats in Possession Sound, and another inside the "Hole in the Wall". I have not seen these improvements and cannot describe them more definitely.

The slough in 1892 seemed to me to have been shoaling, for at extreme low tides I found there was not enough water to float a row boat drawing but one foot, only a short-

distance above the town. At the wharves, however
the water was quite deep.

Reaconnur has passed its zenith, and will
continue to be a small country town.

Doubtless much of the grain, already, finds
its way to market over the rail roads.

J. J. Gilbert
Assoc. C. & S. Survey