Descriptive Report
Sheet No. 2193
Topography of Washington Sound
Wash
1894
The survey of these islands was made in the latter part of August, and in September, 1874.

The sheet embraces the group of islands lying between Spieden Channel and Haro Strait, and includes the following islands: Stuart, Spieden, John James, Casius, Flattop, and Sentinel, together with several small islands and reefs.

It was necessary to make the projection so as to include Big Douglas on Snowbank Point. Rendor Island, which made it necessary to survey Flattop and Foul Foul, and Witlee Rock independently.

Stuart Island is a series of ridges with valleys between, and the general direction is S.E. and N.W. Reid and Brown Harbors are two of these valleys.

The highest of these ridges is that between Reid Harbor and Haro Strait, and culminates in two knobs of nearly equal height, just west of the head of Reid Harbor. The height
...is about 650 feet. I have designated these hills as Stuart Knobs. I regret that I did not obtain a view of them from the S.W. The first view is from the direction of Hattop Island. It also represents the outline of all the ridges on Stuart Island.

The second view is from the entrance to New Channel, from which direction the two knobs are in line. These knobs are a conspicuous land mark visible for many miles in all directions.

The shore of Stuart Island are all rocky except a few gravel beaches, as at the head of Reid Harbor, and in some of the small bays, and some parts of Ross Harbor, where are gravel beaches. The water is deep to within a short distance from the shore line. The formation, as of all the islands on this sheet, is sandstone. And from Finleys house around to the entrance to Ross Harbor, and from Ross Harbor nearly to Johns Pass, the bluff is precipitous to the water's edge.

One fine point is a stare light and fog horn, and a short distance off the point is the deepest water to be found anywhere inside of Cape Flattery.
The sketch shows the building used for the fog horn, and just
outside is the Stale light. View was taken from a point-off
Signal Stuart-West.

This view was taken from off shore nearly almost of Stuart-
Knobs, and shows the West Slope of the West Knobs. The
Tangent of the Island in sketch is the point half way
between Signal Pilote and Stuart-West. The former signal is
seen in the sketch.

A marked characteristic of all these islands is noticeable
on this as in other views; - the slopes of the hills which
face the Winter Storms (S.E. & S.W.) are bare; - there is usually
a thin soil over the rock, while in the wet season produces
a fine grass, and during this season the slopes are
grassy. A few days of hot sun however, kills the grass.
and the landscape becomes a rusty brown. The rock crops out at all points throughout these slopes.

Reid Harbor is a quiet, safe, landlocked harbor, with a safe entrance. The views taken in the harbor were all from an anchorage, one nearly in the center of the harbor, the first is of the head of the harbor, and gives another view of Stuart Knob.

The second view shows the only clearing, North Mountain, in the harbor, and also Lakes in the East Knob.

From Ego in Reid Hr. Looking S.E.
The first view is looking west, out of the harbor, and shows the East point of entrance and the Gossip Islands, and in the distance, the outline of Spikew and Castor.

The fourth view, looking north from anchorage, is another exhibit of the general features of the landscape. Porvoo Harbor is shallow, and there are a number of reefs, dangerous at high tide, where they are covered. The entrances however are deep, and it is probable that safe anchorage might be found in either of them.

This view of the East entrance was taken from a point off John's Pass.

John's Pass is quite safe for steam vessels of ordinary draught, it is necessary to make a short turn. The Channel is well marked by the line of kelp.

The only reef to avoid is that off the Eastemment point of Stuart Island.
There are two views looking through the Pass, one from the North and one from the South.

In this Pass on Stuart Island, at the point nearest to John Island, the stratification is remarkable. It dips to the South at an angle of 60° or 70° and the light-colored sandstone Strata are alternated with thin Strata of Slate, color and appearance.

I took this picture of this formation, which crops out again in Booth Harbor, particularly in the large reef near the west-end, and in the bluff west of the reef.

There is but little land on Stuart suitable for cultivation.

It is a favorite hunting ground for deer, which are said to be quite numerous.

James Island is entirely wooded, and unknown save
By a small herd of Sheep which was near, Stationed at the time the Sun was made, The shores on the W. Side are precipitous and rocky.

John Island is mostly low, the North face being rocky and precipitous, while a gravel beach extends along the South Side. This View, which was taken from Shieden

Channel. Shows Johns Pass in the distance. The East part of Stuart Island and the West end both of John and Shieden Islands. The next View, taken from New Channel, near the W. End of Shieden. Shows the East end of John Island, as also Ripple Island and Gull Reef. From John Is. to Ripple and

Toward Cactus Islands are a number of reefs, all of which I believe, are represented on the Sheet.

The Cactus Islands are rocky and wooded, with reefs on the South side of each.

There is a deep, and clear, though not very wide Channel between them.

Flatlopp is a small island of rock, with bare slopes to Southward, and high perpendicular rocky shores to
Northward. The sketch also shows Gill rock a bare rocky spot about 35 feet high. Virtually deep water all around it. White Rock is a reef, or the highest point of a reef, extending S. E. and N.W. At low tide the reef shows about 40 fathoms to N.W., and a little further, to S.E., it comes within about 8 ft of surface. This last is called Danger Reef. It is marked by a black patch, and also extends from White Rock to the N.W. reef.

Spider Island is a long back bone or ridge of rock rising at the highest point a little more than 100 feet. The northern slopes are covered with forest, while the southern slopes covered with brush. The whole island is a sheep pasture, but the pasturage is very scarce during the dry season. The view from here has Spider Island and Sentinel Rock in the foreground gives a good idea of the nature of the topography. A few scattered trees, mostly oak or maple, are seen on the slopes, while the bed rock crops out everywhere. When the grass becomes parched it becomes very slippery, and it is difficult to...
Walk along these slopes. The second view of Spieden.

...taken from Halo Strait, and also show Turnesa and Mt. Constitution in the distance. The next view is of a rocky promontory on the north side of Spieden near the west end of the island... While the last view was taken from New Channel and shows two points on the north side of Spieden, and also a final glimpse of...
over the point of Cactus Island... Keep lines all the shores of this chart except a few places, as around the head of Reid Harbor, etc. Anchorage are few and have been mentioned in the description of Reid and Portland Harbors. The tidal currents on large tides are remarkable, swift. On the 12th there is an overflow around the east ends of Spieden and Cactus Islands, the "Chimney" where doing her best, about 9 knots, would often lose ground when in the axis of these currents.

I was surprised at the pronunciation of Spieden. Everyone in the country calls it Spidy-dee, while I am satisfied that the proper pronunciation is Spieden. I understand it was named by Admiral Wilkes for one of his lieutenants. I am not sure whether it is worth while to try to correct the error, which is no doubt due to the first real sailor settlers, who could not master the map, but contented himself with the first vowels.

In the bluff, a short distance N.W. from the west end of Spieden Is., I discovered quite a number of fossil shells, mostly clam shells of forms not now found.

J. J. Gilbert
Capt. 47th S.B.