ENGLISH EXPLORERS

History

In 1579 the British captain and privateer Francis Drake sailed up the west coast of North America perhaps as far as Oregon before returning south to land and make ship repairs. At this landing site, probably near present-day San Francisco, Drake made a symbolic claim of the region for England, naming it New Albion. In 1778 Captain James Cook visited Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island and voyaged as far north as today's Seward, Alaska. He was later killed during this third exploratory voyage while attempting to kidnap a member of Hawaiian royalty. The former story, Drake's, may be legend; the latter, has several versions. All had a young midshipman aboard, George Vancouver, who finished the voyage and later returned as Captain of Cook's HMS Discovery.



Ethnobotanical Gardens

Native plant "starts" from Bonhoeffer Gardens (to your SW, by the I-5) illustrate 99 foods and materials available to the American peoples who lived here 10,000 years without the need to develop agriculture. Planter boxes contain:

From 1792 to 1794, George Vancouver charted the Pacific Northwest on behalf of Great Britain, including the Strait of Georgia, the bays and inlets of Puget Sound, and much of the rest of the British Columbia Coast and southeast Alaska shorelines. Spanish ships met Vancouver in the Strait of Georgia on June 21, 1792. Vancouver had just explored Puget Sound. The Spanish explorers also knew of the unexplored region to the south. After sharing maps and agreeing to cooperate, they sailed north together to Nootka Sound. Hence the strange mix of Puget Sound names used today. both Spanish & English.

Vancouver had a mapping and navigation advantage; his ship had 2 precise chronometers for determining longitude. He employed a "running survey" that used a log line to determine the speed of his ship which gave him distance while the sextant gave him latitude. That said, no one knew the currents, the tides, or the hidden rocks. Pictured at the left is his ship the HMS Discovery, run aground in early August 1792. Everyone has a "Bad Day at Black Rock" as they say.