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Francis Drake in Nehalem Bay in 1579: Setting the Historical Record Straight. By Garry David Gitzen. Pp. x+251, footnotes, maps, drawings, photographs, appendices, bibliography. Wheeler, OR: Fort Nehalem Publishing, 2008, 2012. contact@fortnehaem.net \$39.95. ISBN 9781105227042.

Is Nehalem Bay, Oregon, truly the place where Sir Francis Drake landed in June 1579 to take possession of a territory he called 'Nova Albion' (New England), to repair his leaking ship, the *Golden Hind*, and to establish a 'point of position' for making geographical measurements? It seems unlikely that Drake would have done all three in the same place at the same time, since he had unimpeded access to much of the Pacific coast of North America for several months. In fact, there is still no consensus about any one of these actions taking place at any given site; we have a considerable list of possibilities to choose from. Yet the author of this argumentative book, Garry Gitzen, makes all three claims for the site he favors, about 40 miles south of the Columbia River. 'After exploring the area around Vancouver Island at 48 degrees north to look for the Northwest passage, Drake sailed south until he reached 45 degrees 51 at Portus Nova Albionis, which is today's Nehalem Bay on the North Oregon coast. Drake spent nearly five weeks repairing his ship and doing surveys on Neahkanie Mountain which has been referred to as his 'Point of Position' (p. 109). The evidence Gitzen offers in support of his first two claims is generally weak or questionable, while the third may be worth a closer look.

The notion that Drake's New England was (or had) a 'port' comes from the Hondius Broadside map (c. 1589-98), which includes a 2 x 2 insert depicting 'Portus Novae Albionis,' an inlet of indeterminate size. It could be as little as Drake's Estero, as big as the port of Seattle or San Francisco Bay. Gitzen sees a close resemblance between this depiction and the physical shape of his favored site, which is actually the mouth of a small river. He asserts that the Hondius drawing is 'the first image of Nehalem Bay (p. 57). But what is the proof? Other authors have made similar claims for other bays, lagoons, and estuaries of various sizes, from Canada to Southern California using map overlays and other techniques to prove their points. The list of possible sites keeps getting longer rather than shorter. More conclusive evidence, or a more powerful kind of analysis, is needed to resolve this issue.

Gitzen also refers to a map engraved by Van Sype in 1581, otherwise known as the 'French Drake map,' that does strengthen his case. It shows 'Nova Albio' extending from the Pacific coast to the Atlantic – a veritable empire which, had it materialized, would have required seaports on the order of Boston, New York, Vancouver or Long Beach, rather than a winding, shallow little estuary such as Nehalem Bay. This incidentally is the map with the distinctive inscription 'Carte veueé et corrigé par le dict seigneur Drack' (map seen and corrected by Drake). If accurate, it suggests the very ambitious scope of Drake's plans for Nova Albion, at least initially. But unlike Columbus, he was not sent back to develop his discoveries further, and a different vision of new England later took the place of his.

The wooden hull of the *Golden Hind* had to be cleaned periodically and repaired occasionally during Drake's three-year voyage. With no shipyards available, his crew would run the ship

aground to 'careen' it, preferably in a sheltered place with a sloping sandy beach. For a major overhaul involving longer stay, considerations also included defensibility (from the native people or the Spaniards), the security of their valuable cargo and plentiful supplies of food, water, firewood and so on. Nehalem Bay met these criteria, but so did other sites, including San Quentin Point (near San Francisco), used to careen vessels during the whaling era and perhaps earlier. To win this debate, Gitzen would have to do more than declare that his site 'is the true and only harbor at which Francis Drake spent five weeks in the summer of 1579.'

The most unusual exhibits in Gitzen's book are photographs of incised boulders and sizeable cairns, several dozen or more, said to have been discovered at various times since the late nineteenth century on Neahkahnie Mountain, just north of Nehalem Bay. Whether or not they are connected with Drake, these mysterious objects ought to be evaluated by disinterested specialists. Gitzen, following the lead of two local predecessors, Jensen and Vilers, identifies them as markers used by Drake and his crew in calculating latitude and longitude. Such a 'point of position' could have been very helpful to Drake, had he ever returned to the Pacific coast, or to other Englishmen seeking Nova Albion, and the artifacts might be important relics of a promising if temporary English possession. On the other hand, they might be the makings of a hoax, bigger and potentially more embarrassing than the fake 'plate of brass' discovery of 1936, which captivated many drake enthusiasts for decades.

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