

May 26, 2010

At the Oregon Archaeological Society May 4, 2010 meeting at which I was the guest speaker, Mr. Edward von der Porten, President of the Drakes Navigator Guild tried to debate Drake's landing site which caused me to be somewhat amiss in not giving a fair answer to his question.

To paraphrase Mr. Von der Porten's question was the California Pomo Indians had "fully covered feather baskets" which were described by Rev. Francis Fletcher in his "The World Encompassed" and so where are Nehalem Bay's fully covered feather baskets? My answer to him at the time was, "California's Pomo baskets are contemporary baskets and it's documented in my book and that's all I have to say."

The complete and fair answer to Mr. Von der Porten's question begins with footnote 56 in Chapter 6 of my book, *Francis Drake in Nehalem Bay 1579, Setting the Historical Record Straight*, which notates "Surviving Through the Days", by Herbert W. Luthin, pg 262, Berkeley 2002 and "Elizabethan California", Robert Heizer, pg 95, plate 2, 1974. These books are the genesis to the misuse of fully covered feather baskets as those belonging to Pomo Indian's and as being from the Francis Drake period.

Let me enlighten those who believe this to be in any way proof that Drake was in California and met the Pomo.

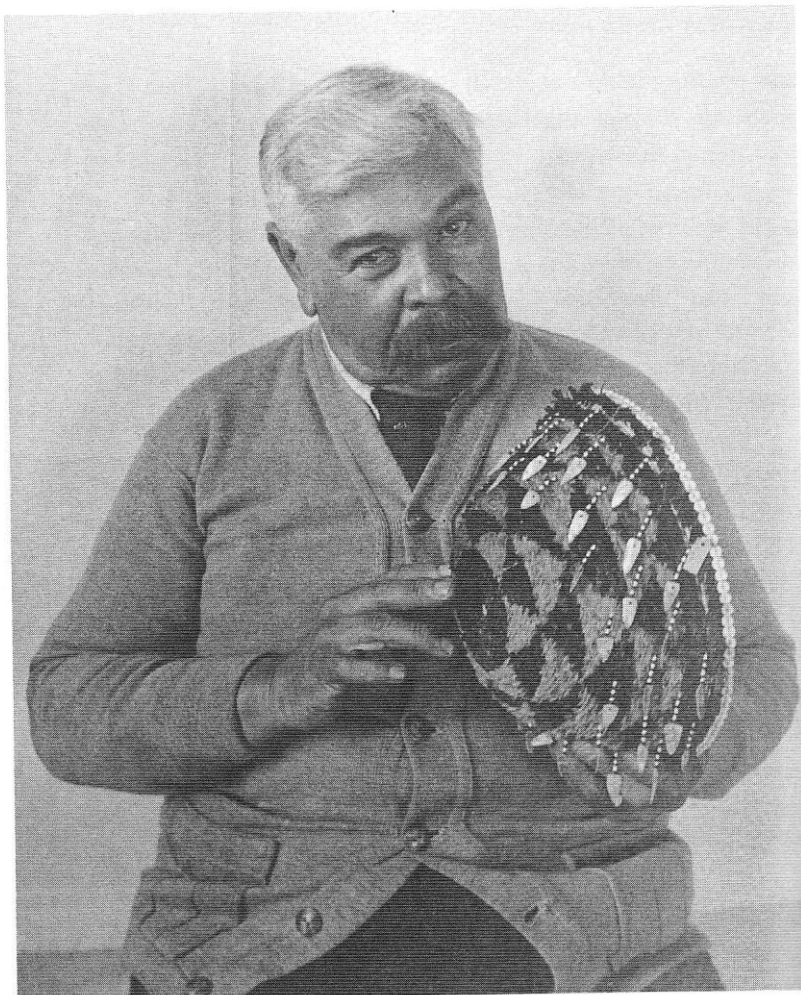
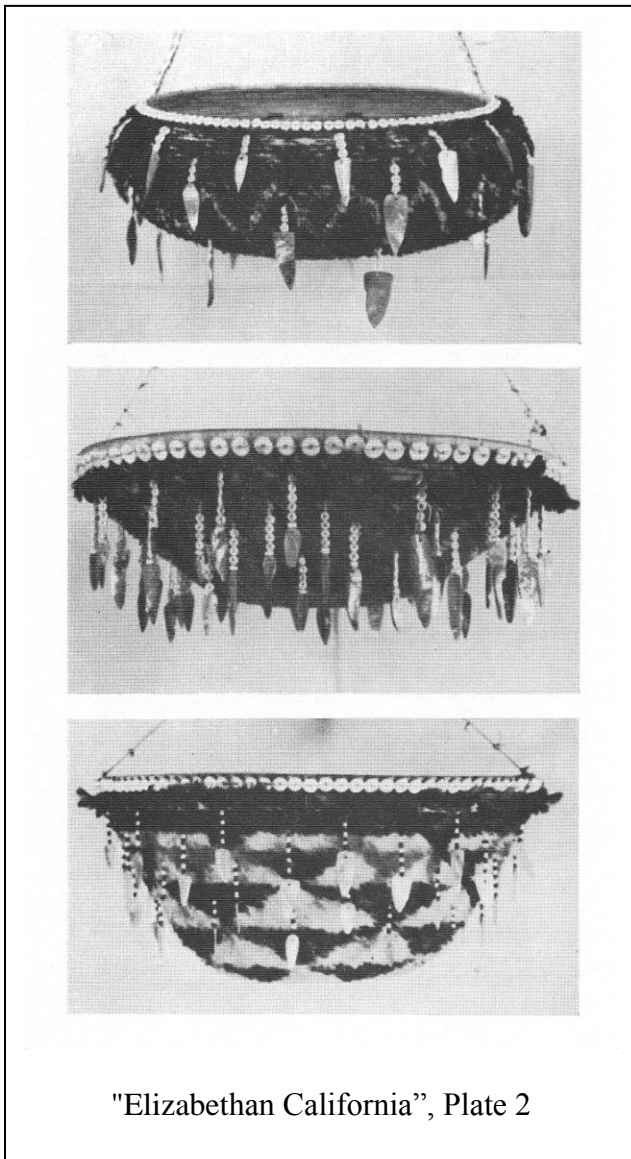


FIGURE 7. William Ralganal Benson, circa 1936.
Courtesy Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology
and the Regents of the University of California.

The above photograph (shown here) from 1936 is of William Benson, the Native American Pomo artist from “Surviving Through the Days”, pg. 262, holding the contemporary California fully covered red feather baskets he made.



In 1947 Robert Heizer, of Berkeley, used these same baskets in his thesis (shown here). And again in 1974 Heizer's "Elizabethan California", Plate 2, they were again portrayed as examples of fully covered red feather baskets with neither their date of production nor identifying them as not being from period of Drake.

The Oregon Public Broadcasting's Antique Road Show of May 3, 2010 filmed in [Phoenix \(#1415\)](#) during minute 23 of the show describes these baskets as made about 1920 and were for decorative purposes only.

Reverend Francis Fletcher, journalist who accompanied Drake on his epoch voyage describes the baskets in this way,

"they (baskets) were fashion in deep bowl,... that the most part would hold water... they were wrought upon with the matted down of red feathers, into diverse works and forms."

Fletcher does not say they were fully covered with feathers. Only the contemporary baskets made by Mr. Benson are fully covered feather baskets. Fletcher said they were baskets which held water (unlike Benson's baskets) with their top decorated with shells and red feathers woven into the basket of different forms. This basket description matches with the Pacific Northwest for its ability to hold water and for baskets with colored forms woven into them as in the 1803-1807 Bancroft sketch below by Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff, Baron de Langsdorff (b. Wöllstein, Germany, April 8, 1774; d. Freiburg, Germany, June 9, 1852) was a Prussian aristocrat, politician and naturalist. He lived in Russia and was better known by his Russian name, *Grigori (Gregory) Ivanovitch*. He was a member and correspondent of the Russian Imperial Academy of Sciences and a respected physician, graduated in medicine and natural history at the University of Göttingen, Germany.



Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff, Baron de Langsdorff
<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/45/Grigori-langsdorff.jp>

Langsdorff first participated as naturalist and physician in the great Russian scientific circumnavigation expedition commanded by Ivan Fedorovich Kruzenshtern, from 1803 to 1805. He left the expedition in Kamchatka to explore the Aleutians, Kodiak and Sitka; and returned in 1808.

The basket shown below in the Bancroft sketch is the earliest recorded example of a feathered basket in existence on the entire Pacific Coast and that being a Pacific Northwest basket and is not from a California Miwok/Pomo origin.



Dated between 1803 and 1807 Eleven numbered items including adornments, necklaces, bow and arrows, and baskets. Pacific Northwest Artifacts; Travel sketches.

Bancroft Library

Additionally, it is possible that Benson used Bancroft Library sketch (Figure 64 pictured in my book) as his basket model.

In my book, Clara Pearson, a Nehalem native informant describes red feathers being gathered by native boys for decorative purposes. Although it is not conclusive that Nehalem Bay had red feather baskets, the fully covered red feather baskets represented as of the Drake period by California theorists are nothing like the baskets described by Fletcher. Mr. Von der Porten and the Drake Navigators Guild have shown no other documentation or proof of the California Pomo Indians ever possessing water-tight red

feather baskets while Natives of the Pacific Northwest are well known for crafting water-tight baskets.

In 1974 the reason for the officially legislative California Commission on Drake couldn't come to a consensus of a California landing is because Drake was never in California. I believe there are many in people in California who now know Drake wasn't in California because they have no proof, they have no Indians which match Fletcher's description, they have no islands described as plentiful with seals and birds, they have no 16th century Hondius map depicting Nehalem Bay and they have no survey stone map made by Francis Drake. The day has come for the recognition of Nehalem Bay as the historically accepted Drake landing site and where the California Drake Navigator Guild's approval is no longer needed to set the historical record straight.