

# Town of Alki

## Great Hopes - Fountainhead for Tears



Phillip Hoffman

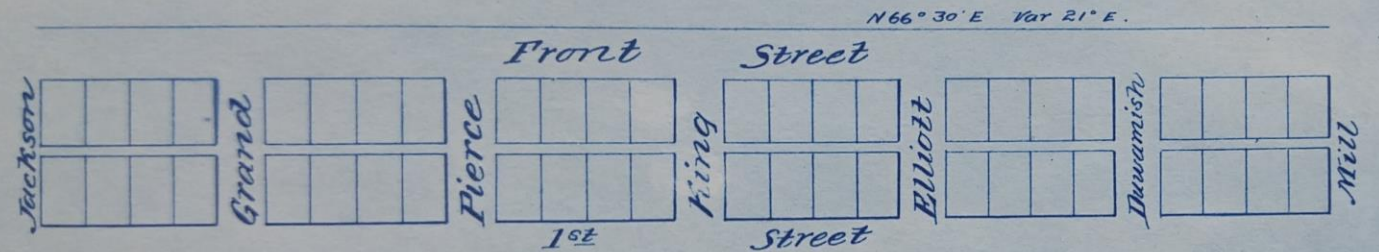
[AlkiHistoryProject@gmail.com](mailto:AlkiHistoryProject@gmail.com)

October 27, 2018

# Town of Alki

Established May 28, 1853

## *Plat of the Town of Alki.*



The Town of Alki is laid out on the land Claim of C. C. Terry. Lots 60 feet by 92 feet.  
Streets are 66 feet wide, alleys are 16 feet wide.

Surveyed May 27<sup>th</sup> 1853 Attest (signed) A. A. Denny

I, H. L. Yester Clerk of Probate do hereby certify that the above named C. C. Terry has  
this day been examined by me and acknowledged the above Plat to be correct  
as laid out by him and of which he claims to be proprietor.

King County Washington Territory May 28<sup>th</sup> 1853  
Signed H. L. Yester.

Recorded Feby 15<sup>th</sup> 1854

Recorded in the Records of King County W. T. in original Vol "A" Page 39 Rerecorded  
in this plat book per order County Comm at Feby Term 1875 this 30<sup>th</sup> April 1875

S. C. Harris  
Draftsman.

# Town of Alki

First Real Estate Development Feasibility Study – Alki,  
Sponsored by Great Britain's Hudson Bay Company

Findings .....

“unproductive soil & the inconvenience of going at least ½ mile  
for a supply of water”, outweighed

“Fort well garrisoned would answer well as a trading post on the  
prairie ..... it would have the advantage of a fine prospect down  
the Sound & of proximity to the Indians”

William Tolmie, Hudson Bay Company, 7/9/1833



# Town of Alki

Map by United States  
Coast Survey, 1854

Note: The Town, The Mill  
& The Mound



# The Town of Alki

## Classic Alki Settlement Story

- Denny Brothers migrate to Portland-1851
- David Denny & John Low advance party
- At Olympia - meet Leander Terry and Robert Fay, Travel to Duwamish
- Terry & Low choose Alki for great city claim

PIONEER DAYS  
ON  
PUGET SOUND,

BY

ARTHUR A. DENNY.

SEATTLE, W. T.  
C. B. BAGLEY, PRINTER.  
1888.

# The Town of Alki

## Classic Alki Settlement Story

- Denny stays at Alki, Low returns to Portland
- Arthur Denny, John Bell, Carson Boren & Charles Terry join Low in taking Schooner Exact to Alki
- Depart Portland, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 12 adults & 12 children, Destination Alki, Arrive November 13<sup>th</sup>
- The 'Denny Party' contracts with itinerate ship for a timber cargo

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# The Town of Alki

## Classic Alki Settlement Story

- Party co-exists with 1,000 Indians
- Low & Terry laid out town, spring 1852
- Arthur Denny, Boren and Bell began search for site to locate land claims
- Settled upon Elliott Bay eastern shore
- Dennys relocate April 1852
- Leander Terry and brother Charles Terry & John Low remain at Alki.

PIONEER DAYS  
ON  
PUGET SOUND,

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# **The Town of Alki**

## **Oregon Donation Land Claim Act**

- Land Donation Grant To Those 21 & Over
- Immigrating to Oregon Territory, December 1, 1850 – December 1, 1853
- Oregon Territory was Oregon, Washington, Idaho & parts of Wyoming and Montana
- Must be an American citizen or person intending to become American citizen
- Must be white settler or married woman



# **The Town of Alki**

## **Oregon Donation Land Claim Act**

- If entering Oregon on or prior to 12/1/1850, married male entitled to 640 acres, one half to his wife, single male 320 acres
- If entering Oregon after 12/1/1850, married male entitled to 320 acres, one half to his wife, single male 160 acres

# **The Town of Alki**

## **Oregon Donation Land Claim Act**

But There Is A Deal, There's Always A Deal:

- Land must be surveyed by U.S. Government,
- Native Americans must cede their 'right to occupy' land to U. S. Government, and
- Must "resided upon and cultivated the same for four consecutive years".

# Lee Terry & John Low Potential Land Claim

- Maximize shorelines
- Domaine over prairie & grazing lands
- Avoidance of steep slopes & hillsides
- Capture fresh water supplies



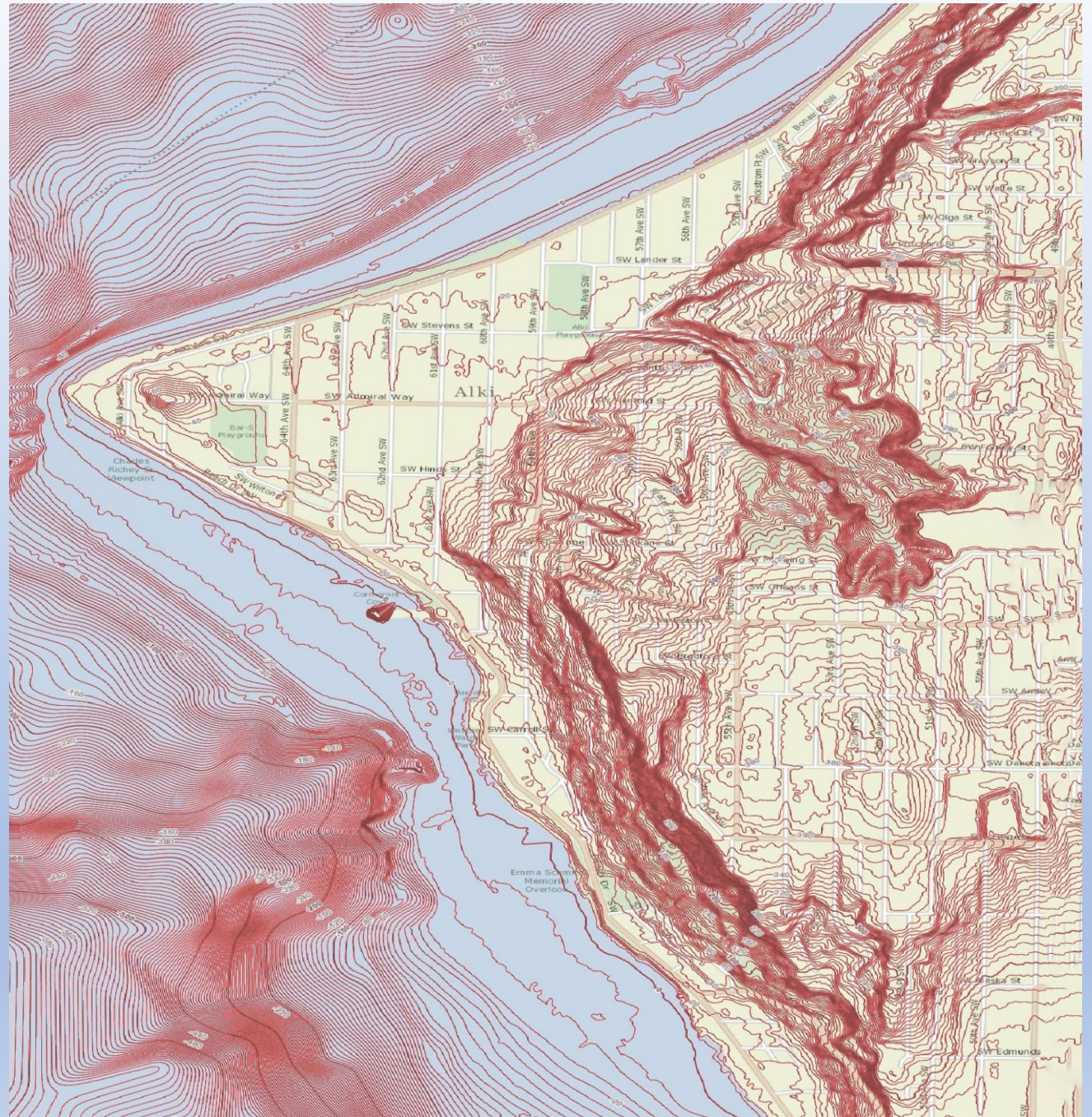


# The Town of Alki

## Topography

Steep slopes and hillsides, barrier to entry and hinterland development

Note shoreline fill on this contemporary map

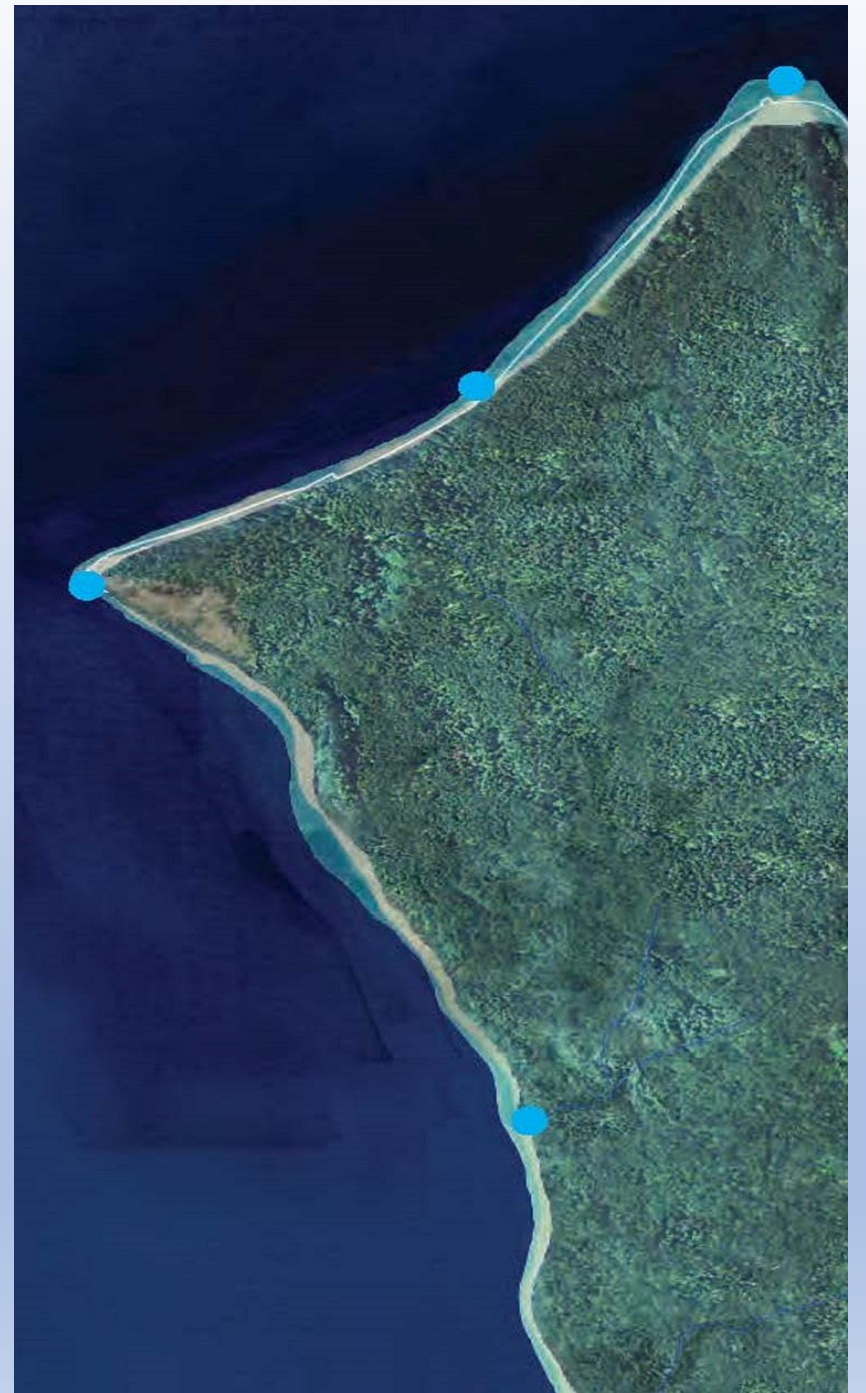




# The Town of Alki

## Environmental Conditions - 1853

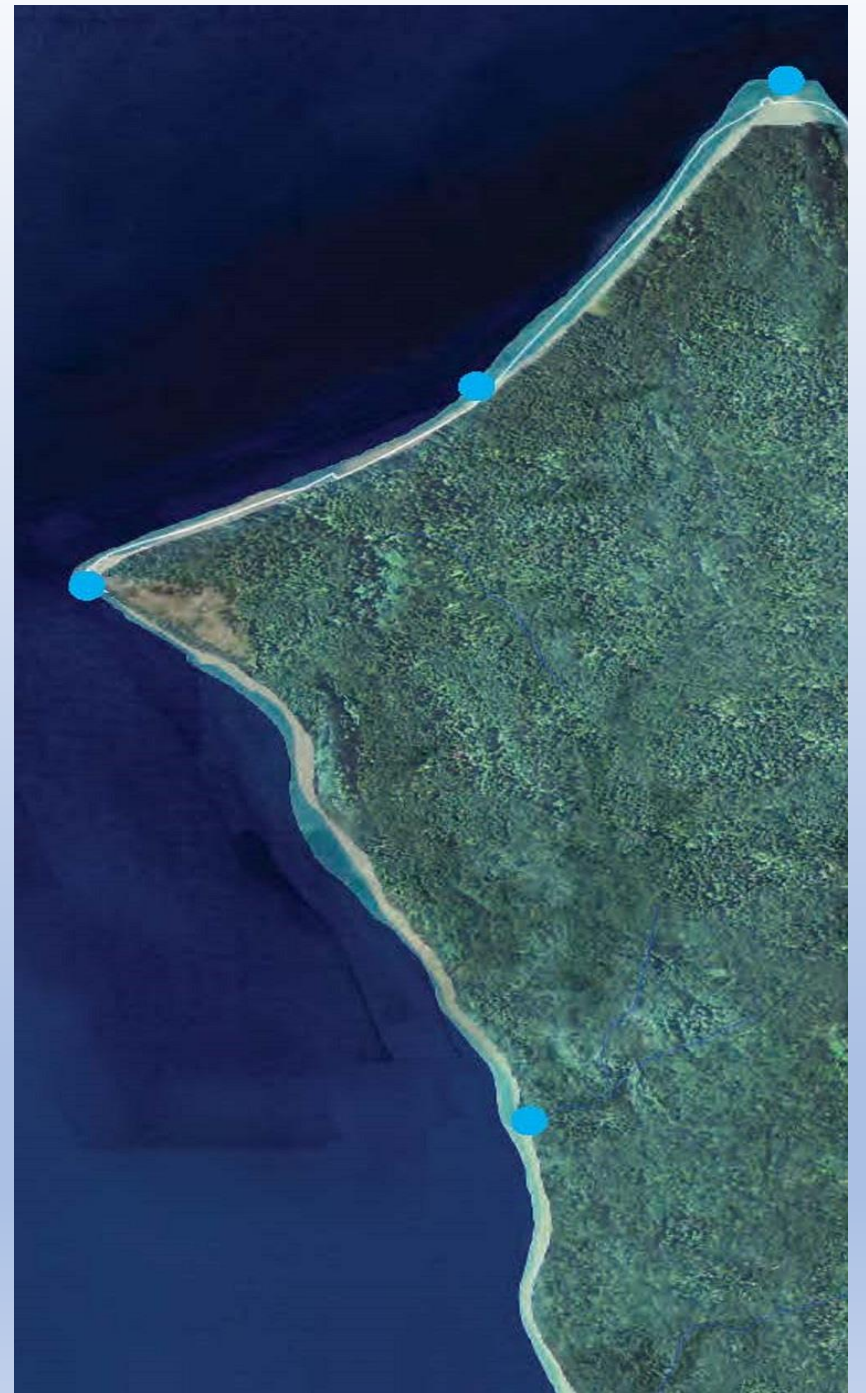
- Mount Baker to the north, Mount Rainier to the south, Olympics to the west & the Cascades behind the forest curtain to the east
- Clear view up and down the Sound,
- Spawning salmon habitat, wildlife and shellfish abundant
- Fir, cedar and hemlock, & cherry trees as move toward Point,



# The Town of Alki

## Environmental Conditions - 1853

- Grades of as much as 200 elevation increase in 400 distance,
- “2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> rate” soil for farming,
- Alki Beach reported “as smooth and very regular”,
- East of Point was a “curiously sloped mound rising”, and
- Southeast of Point a clearing or prairie of 25-30 acres.



# **The Town of Alki**

The Terrys originated in Sangerfield (Madison County), New York, destined for the California gold fields,

The Lows originated from Illinois, along with 45 head of cattle, destined for the Oregon Territory,

The Dennys (including Carson Boren) also originated from Illinois, destined for the Willamette Valley, and

The Bells joined immigrant group in Portland

# **The Town of Alki**

## **The Underappreciated Robert C Fay**

Assists John Low to Return to Portland

Pilots Schooner Exact to Alki and Olympia

Assists John Low in Shipping Cattle to Alki



# The Town of Alki

- Meeting Need for Housing
- The Need for Pin Money
- Fresh Water Provision
- Sovereign Native American Nation Relationships

# The Town of Alki

- Meeting Need for Housing

Four cabins / shacks built

Where did Lee and Charles Terry live?

# The Town of Alki

- The Need for Pin Money

They sold the trees and  
timber around them to  
the Brig Leonesa



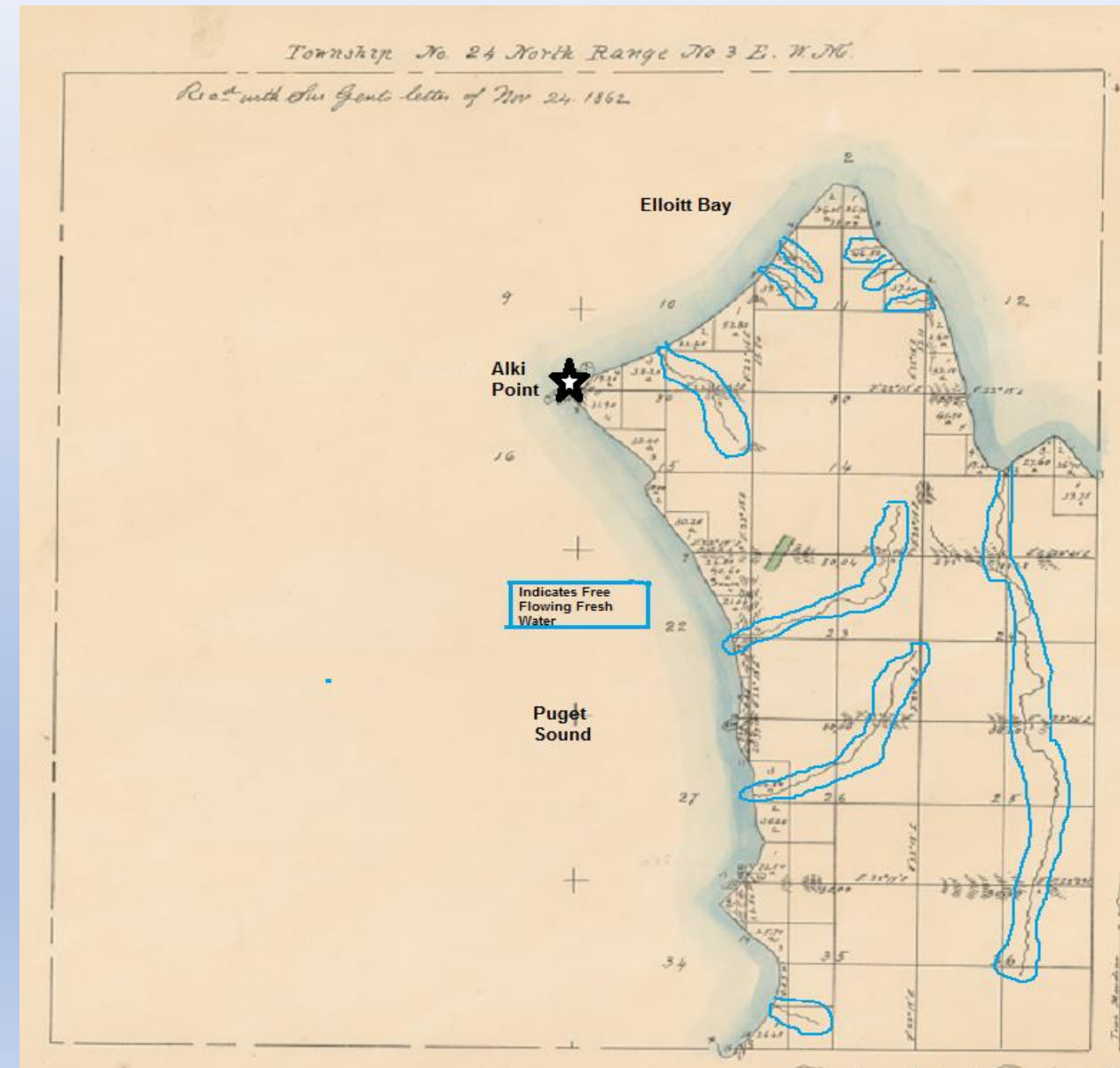
# The Town of Alki

- Fresh Water Provision

A half-mile walk to Schmitz Creek

William Toolmie rejected Alki as a Hudson Bay fort site

Soon to be Renton's sawmill





# The Town of Alki

- Sovereign Native American Nation Relationships

Duwamish living on land occupied by immigrant group for 10,000 years.

Immigrant group asserted land ownership and rights under color of the Oregon Donation Land Claim Act of 1850.

Host of cultural, social, political and economic misunderstandings.  
Relationship would deteriorate into armed conflict. Wars of Occupation 1854-1857.

The open question of “The Curious Mound”

# The Town of Alki

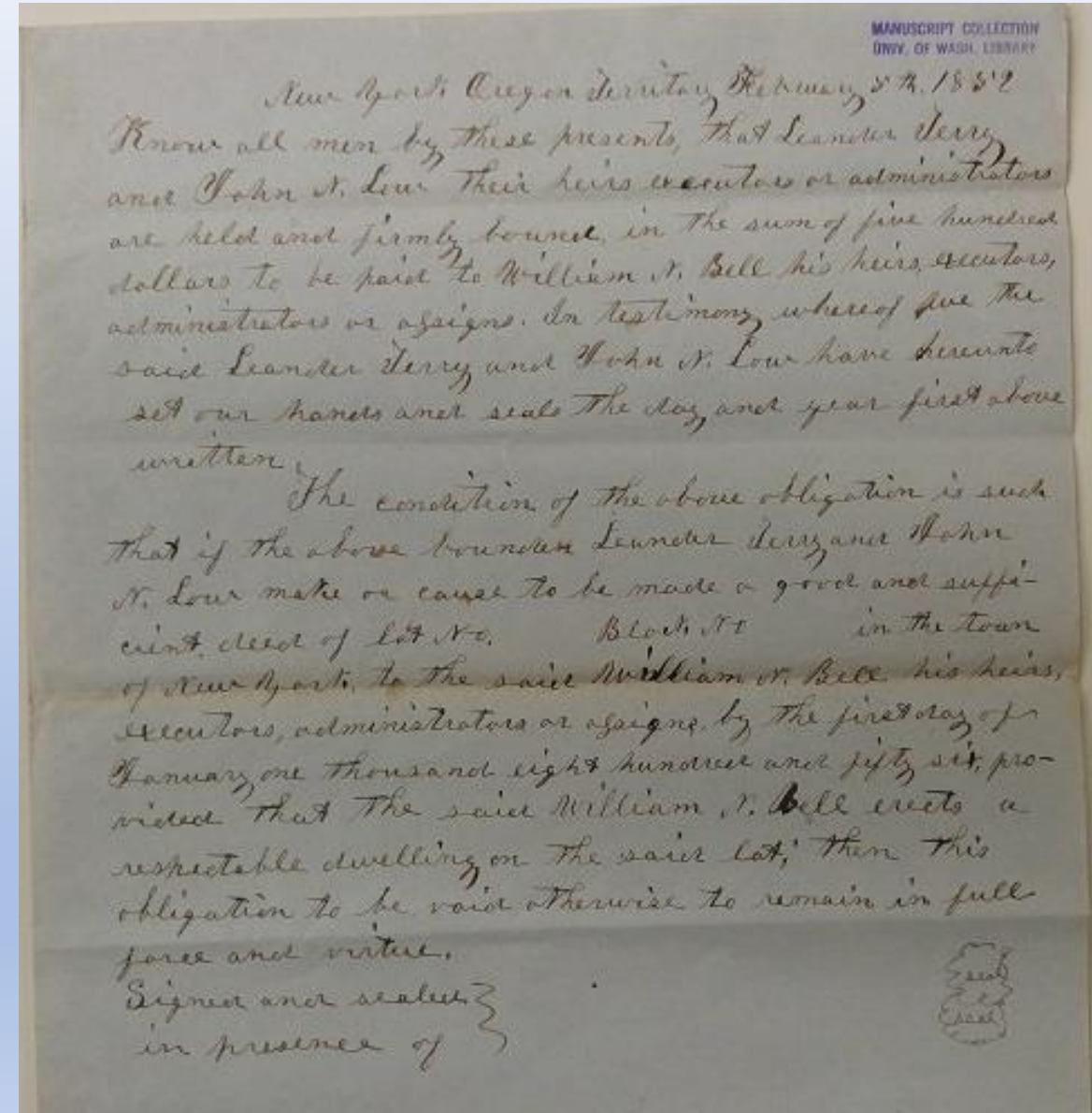
## The William Bell Affair

### Exposes Alki's Faulty Assumptions

### How was Bell to sustain himself

### The Terry land monopoly

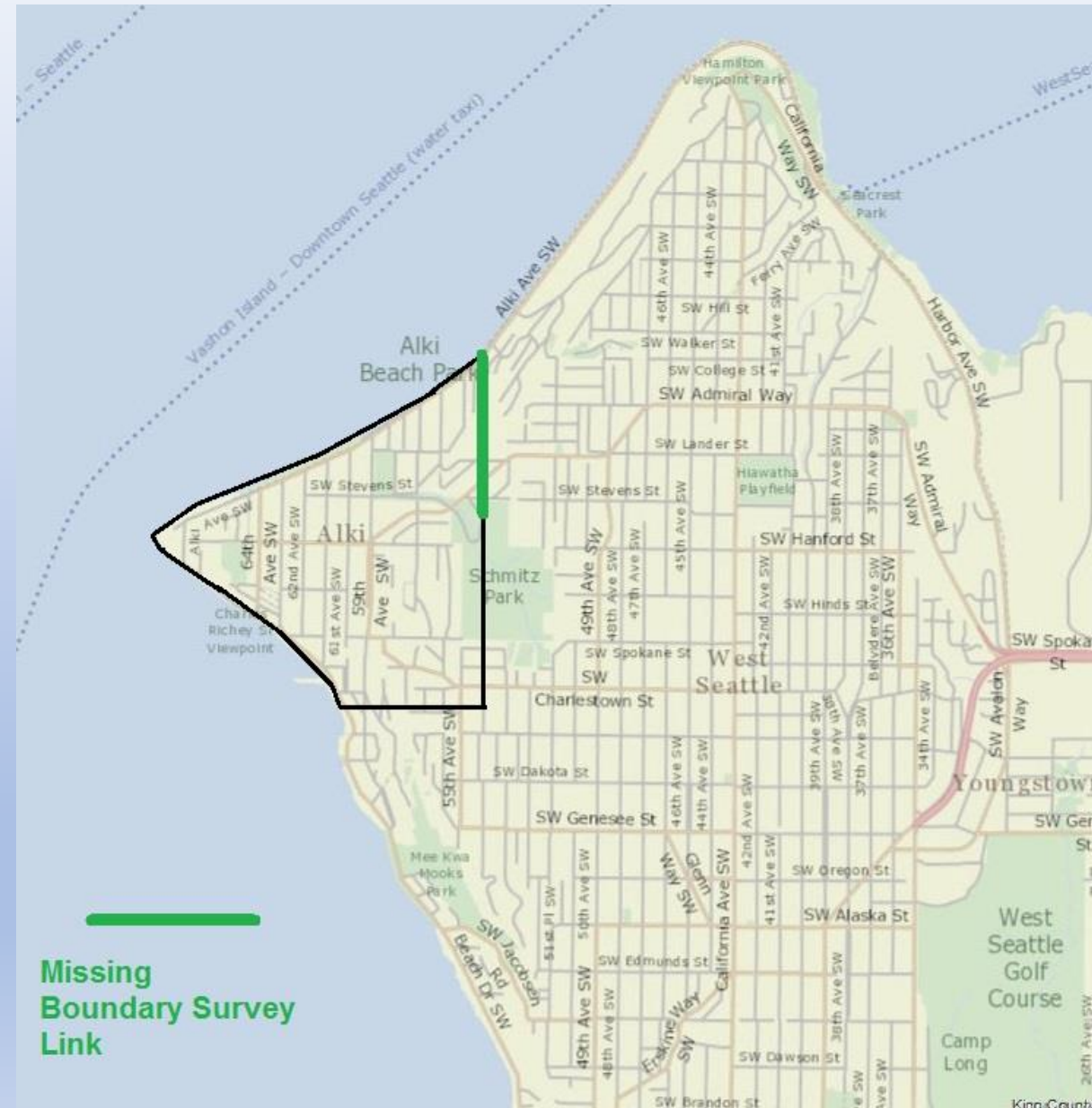
### Urbanization process



# The Town of Alki

Lee Terry returns to New York,  
John Low moves on  
Charles Terry gets into the real estate  
business  
A A Denny makes a huge blunder

“Commencing at New York Point, thence S 51 degrees E, 30 ch (*chains or 66 feet per chain*) with beach thence S 26 degrees E 10 ch thence S 10 ch thence S 35 ½ degrees E 5 ch to a post from which a maple 14 in bears N 12 W 31 lin (*links or 1/100 of a chain*) thence due east 31 ch 66 link to a stake, **thence due north 41 ch to a stake on the beach** from which a crab apple tree bears S 36 degrees W 17 links, thence in a westerly direction along the beach to the place of beginning containing 320 acres.” (Italicized added by author for clarity.)





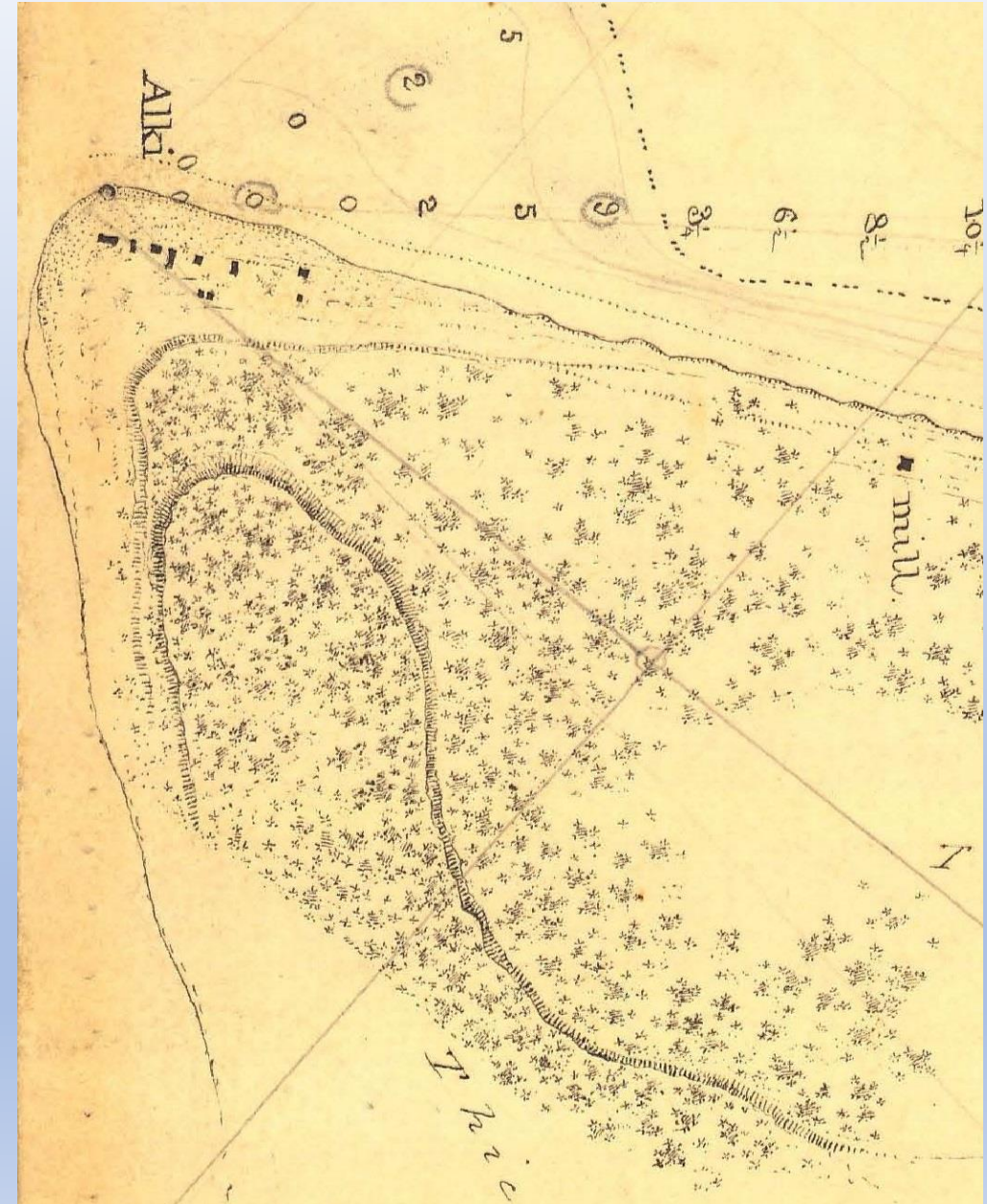
# The Town of Alki

## Industrial Development Begins First Environmental Consequence

The Renton sawmill fails to conduct an  
appropriate location feasibility study

Relocates Spring 1854 to Port Orchard

Terry takes \$6,000 mortgage from Renton  
and Captain Howard of the Leonesa





# The Town of Alki

## Dissolution of Copartnership.

**T**HE copartnership heretofore existing between C. C. Terry and J. N. Low, has this day been dissolved by mutual consent of both parties. The business of said firm will hereafter be continued under the name of **C. C. TERRY.**

S. B. All persons having claims against or indebted to the above firm of C. C. Terry and J. N. Low, are requested to call and settle the same immediately.

**C. C. TERRY,**

**J. N. LOW.**

New York, April 14, 1853. 52tf

## NEW YORK MARKOOK HOUSE.

**C**HAS. C. TERRY & CO., thankful for past favors take this opportunity to inform their numerous friends and customers that they still continue at their well known stand in the town of New York, on Puget's Sound, where they keep constantly on hand and for sale, at the lowest prices, all kinds of merchandize usually required in a new country.

N. B. Vessels furnished with cargoes of Piles, Square Timber, Shingles, &c.

New York, Sept. 1, 1852. 11f

## SMITH'S EXPRESS!

**T**HE celebrated Clipper Yacht "LAPLETE," will run weekly between Olympia and Port Townsend, touching at Poe's Point, Johnson's Ranch, Nesqually, Steilacoom, New York, Whidby's Island, and all other intermediate ports. Having a superior craft, with good accommodations, the proprietor flatters himself that he will be able to give entire satisfaction to all who may favor him with their patronage.



For freight or passage apply on board.

**W. M. SMITH.**

Sept. 5, 1852. 11f

## NOTICE!

**T**HE FIRM heretofore existing under the name of **LAMBERT & SMITH** is this day dissolved by mutual consent. Mr. Samuel Lambert is the only one authorized to settle the business. All out standing debts are requested to be rendered immediately for settlement, and those indebted to the firm will make an immediate payment.

**SAMUEL LAMBERT.**

**W. M. SMITH.**

Alki, W. T., October 1st, '53. no5-1m

## "BUY WHERE YOU CAN

*BUY THE CHEAPEST!"*

**J**UST RECEIVED, Ex Leonessa, a full and general assortment of



**PROVISIONS, GROCERIES, DRY GOODS, CLOTHING, LIQUORS, STOVES, &c., &c., &c.**

Being anxious to close out the present stock, I will sell cheaper than can be purchased elsewhere on the Sound.

**C. C. TERRY.**

Alki, Feb. 1, 1854. 22tf

# Town of Alki

*“Notice*

Is hereby given to all person having demands against or indebted to the firm of the Leonesa Co. or to C. C. Terry, are requested to call and settle immediately, as the undersigned is about to leave for the Atlantic states.

CHAS. C. TERRY,

Jan. 26, 1853. (sic)”

Terry’s phrase “Atlantic states”, is probably an oblique term for his home of Sangerfield (Madison-Oneida Counties) New York.

# Town of Alki

“THE UNDERSIGNED having purchased the stock in hand of C. C. Terry, together with recent arrivals per Success and Merchantman, have on hand an assortment of general merchandise for the trade, which they offer wholesale and retail at a small advance on costs.

George & Co.

Alki, July 21, 1854”

Pioneer and Democrat, (Olympia, W. T.), July 29, 1854, p 3, col 3.

Charles Terry skips town, mid 1855. Returns early to mid 1856.

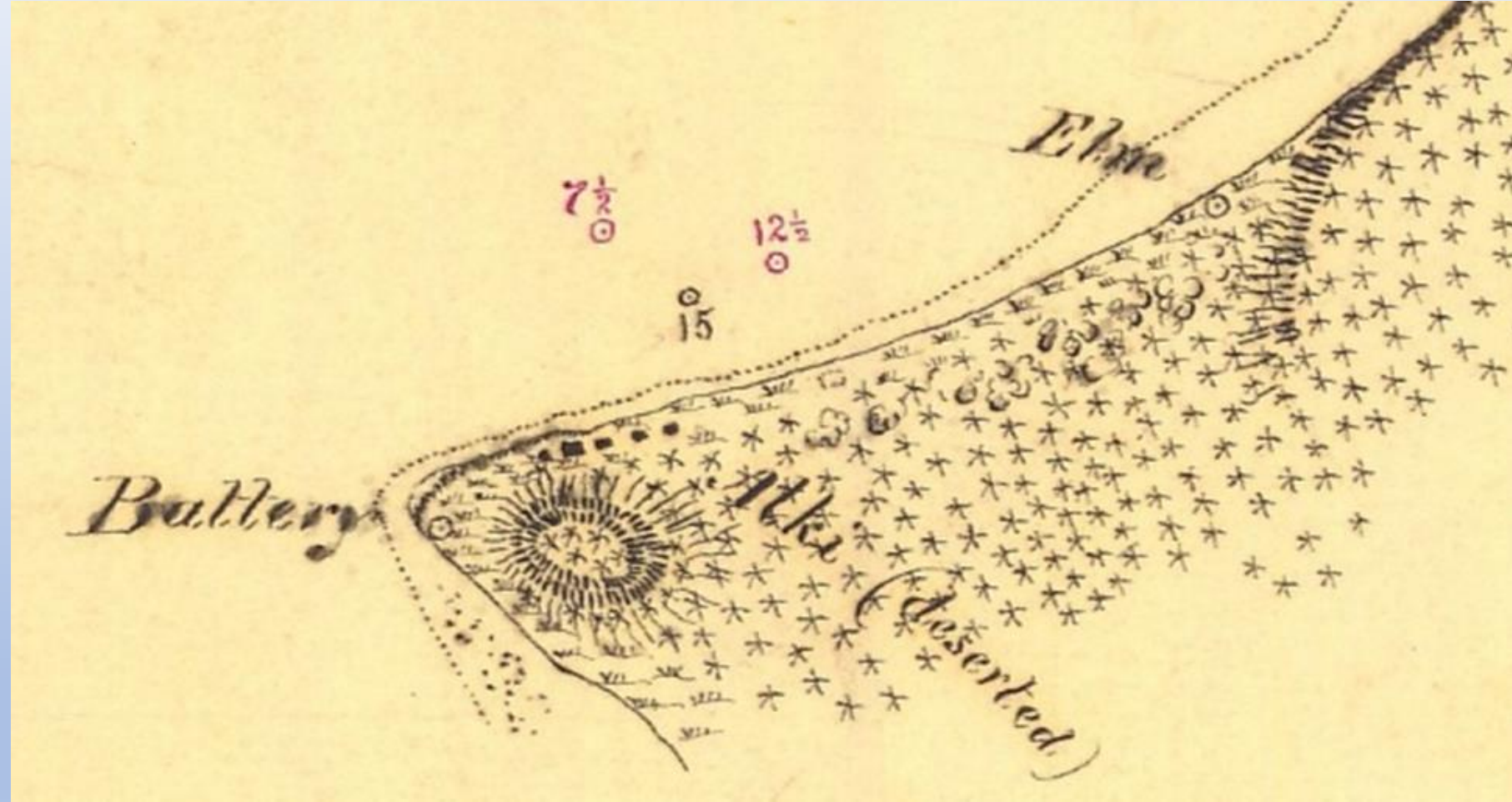
# Town of Alki

- Was Terry entitled to his Alki land claim? Sold it under 'bond', Bought & relocated to Seattle, April 1855.
- Status of the historical record
- Redress of grievances
- Alki was destined for failure
- Pioneers were not perfect people

# Town of Alki

“On this side of Battery Point is the deserted town of Alki, (the Indian phrase for “by and by”). The town has had several names, but there is nothing about it to command trade.”

True until Seattle could no longer be dismissed as a “few houses and stores, a church and a sawmill.”





..... such a Reservation would do great injustice to this section of country, and is uncalled for, and of little value to the Indians.....

Charles C. Terry                      D. S. Maynard  
D. T. Denny  
among many others ..... ,1866





## Suggested Readings

Isaac I Stevens, Young Man In A Hurry by Kent D. Richards

Chief Seattle and the Town That Took His Name by David M. Buerge

Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing Over Place, by Coll Thrush

AlkiHistoryProject.com, click on Presentations and Research Articles tab

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