The present route, through the whole of the first section, runs through the Columbia bottom, a narrow strip of prairie or rather meadow country, intersected by numerous wide sloughs communicating with the Columbia, and subject to overflow, ~~in some places~~ to a depth of ~~from five to 15 feet~~ several feet. ~~The trail as far as possible runs along~~ is conducted low ridges. The character of the soil is a light silty loam of great depth, and affording no foundation for a road even were it secure from flood. No bridges could be erected here that would withstand the freshets, ~~The route is therefore so far, looked upon as simply impractic~~ which occur in the Columbia River in June, & continue for ~~from~~ about a month, the rise of the water above its ~~the~~ lowest level being 20 feet. The route therefore so far may be considered as simply impracticable. It is however believed that another, probably even more direct, can be found upon the plateau or terrace before mentioned which will ~~moreover~~ besides strike the Cathlapootl at a point more convenient for crossing. This will indeed require continuous cutting ~~of~~ through timber and the ~~probable~~ bridging of the ~~Yakohtl, or~~ Yakotle, or south fork, following then the base of the hills between the ~~forks~~ two to a higher crossing of the main stream. No examination for the purpose having been made it cannot however with certainty be stated that beyond the South fork there exists any ~~p~~ line practicable for wagons. (a)

The Cathlapootl ~~is at the present crossing~~ ~~near~~ at the present crossing is about 200 yards wide, its depth variable, arising from shifting sand banks, but ~~nowhere~~ at no time fordable. ~~near its mouth~~. The

(a) This first section has an importance in itself, independent of the connection with the sound, not merely as leading to the Lewis River settlements, but as ~~connecting~~ uniting with the Indian trail from the Tillamook country to the Columbia by way of Chequers. (b)

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