

Mount Shasta Annotated Bibliography

Chapter 4

Early Exploration: Lapérouse Expedition, 1786

Lapérouse, contrary to legend, did not see Mount Shasta in eruption in 1786. The legend began with R. H. Finch, an associate volcanologist of the Lassen Volcano Observatory. He was the first geologist to publish a proposal that Mt. Shasta or Mount Lassen erupted in 1786. Finch's 1930 article postulated that an erupting Mt. Shasta or Mt. Lassen was seen by French explorer Jean-François Galaup de Lapérouse, on September 7, 1786, from a ship sailing along California's Mendocino coast. The Lapérouse expedition was one of the greatest scientific charting expeditions of the 18th Century, comparable in scope and purpose with the voyages of Cook, and of Vancouver. Lapérouse and his two ships were shipwrecked in 1788, never having returned to Europe. Fortunately Lapérouse intermittently, from various ports of call, sent reports back to France. A large portion of his journals and maps he sent in 1787 via a messenger who traveled for two years across Siberia to reach Paris with the precious documents. Lapérouse's manuscript journals mention the vivid 1786 eruption, and his original manuscript map (kept in Paris at the French National Archives) depicts the volcano's smoke in dramatic full purple color. But the manuscript map (and the published versions as well) clearly shows the location of the volcano directly on the sea coast, not inland at all. Books and atlases based on the manuscripts were published in 1797. The 1786 eruption of Mt. Shasta has become, in textbooks and in popular accounts, almost an accepted geological fact. But the position of the volcano as depicted on the manuscript map and published maps of Lapérouse make it very doubtful that what he saw took place as far inland as Mt. Shasta or Mt. Lassen. Consider, too, that in 1816, thirty years later at the same place, on Cape Mendocino, the French fur trader Camille de Roquefeuil, saw the same sight as Laperouse, but recognized it as fires set by the native peoples. De Roquefeuil says: "It was, doubtless, this circumstance, which was unknown to our illustrious La Peyrouse, and that was the cause of his error, when seeing a great fire on Cape Mendocino, about the same time of year, he thought it was a volcano."

The [MS number] indicates the Mount Shasta Special Collection accession numbers used by the College of the Siskiyous Library.

[MS900]. Allen, Edward Weber 1885-1976. **Jean-Francois Galaup de Laperouse: A Check List**. San Francisco, Calif.: California Historical Society, 1941. First published in the California Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. 20, No. 1, Mar., 1941. An annotated check-list of books and articles specifically about the 1786 voyage of Laperouse, with an emphasis on materials relevant to the great explorer's reconnaissance southward along the west coast of the North American continent, from Alaska to Monterey. 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS900].

[MS1018]. Chinard, Gilbert. **Le Voyage de Laperouse sur les Cotes de l'Alaska et de la Californie**. Baltimore, Md.: John Hopkins Press, 1937. Contains the French text of Laperouse's journal of voyage along the North American coast in 1786. Laperouse wrote: "Nous apercumes alors un volcan sur la cime de la montagne qui nous restait a l'Est; la flamme etait tres-vive; mais bientot une brume epaisse vint nous dérober ce spectacle: il fallut encore s'eloigner de terre" (p. 76). The editor footnotes Laperouse's mention of a volcano: "Aucun volcan n'existe pres de la cote dans cette region. Le professeur Andrew C. Lawson decrit en ces termes la nature du terrain: 'Petrographically the strata consists of evenly bedded yellow and brown clays...'" (The Geomorphology of the Coast of Northern California. Bulletin of the Department of Geology of the University of California, vol. 1, No. 8, November 1894, pp. 249-250.) D'autre part Laperouse se trouvait exactement a la hauteur de Mount Lassen qui est encore en activite de facon plus ou moins intermittente, mais qui se trouve a 150 miles a l'interieur des terres et separe de la cote par plusieurs chaines de montagnes. Bien que Laperouse ait pu prendre un feu de foret pour une eruption, la coincidence n'en est pas moins curieuse; l'altitude de Mount Lassen etant de 10,453 pieds, une eruption violente aurait a la rigueur pu etre apercue des vaisseaux" (p. 76). In brief, the editor

says that since no volcano or volcanic soils exist along the coast of the region in question, Laperouse probably saw a forest fire; but also, since the latitude of the sighting was equal to that of Mt. Lassen, the possibility remains of the explorer having seen the 10,453 foot mountain in eruption. 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS1018].

[MS554]. Davidson, George 1825-1911. **Coast Pilot of California, Oregon, and Washington**. Washington, D.C.: United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1889. 'Fourth Edition (entirely re-written)' George Davidson gives an account of sighting Mount Shasta in 1886 from close off the shore of the Californian coast (p. 357). Davidson writes: "Mount Shasta.- In July, 1886, in coming down the coast, when about latitude 41;39', and twenty-two miles southwest three quarters west (SW.3/4W.) from Point Saint George, we caught two short glimpses of Mount Shasta through two low, contiguous gaps in the coast range. We judged we were looking up the valley of the Klamath River, where it breaks through to the sea, and we saw the mountain twice while the vessel moved about four miles. The bearing was east by north (E. by N.), but there may have been some local deviation of the ship's compass. It is possible that the mountain may be seen from other points to the northward of that bearing, but not to the southward. It can be seen from a vessel only when it is on the direct course between Cape Orford and Cape Mendocino and from six to ten miles off those capes. The limits of visibility of Mount Shasta falls about ten miles outside of this course when in the latitude of Point Saint George. Mount Shasta lies ninety-two miles north eighty-two degrees east (N.82;) from Point Saint George. It rises to fourteen thousand four hundred and forty feet above the sea, and is visible at a distance of one hundred and thirty eight miles. It is in latitude 41;24'26' north, longitude 122;11'48' west. It is the highest mountain in California. It has been reported that a very distant snow peak has been seen to the southeastward through breaks in the mountains between Koos Bay and the Umpquah. If this be the case it may be possible that Mount McLoughlin (Mount Pitt) has been seen. Mount Shasta, from that latitude, would be far below the horizon, even if there were no intervening elevations to hide it" (p. 357).

Note that Davidson's mention of seeing Mt. Shasta from ship near Cape Mendocino in 1886, indirectly suggests that the French explorer Laperouse, one hundred years earlier, in 1786, could physically have seen Mt. Shasta in eruption. On the Laperouse maps of the North American coast the site of the erupting volcano was just north of Cape Mendocino. Thus there is some latitude agreement between the accounts of Davidson and Laperouse.

Note, however, that Davidson's 1886 sighting of Mt. Shasta has been placed in doubt by more than one authority. C. L. Stewart, for example, states that Davidson's given positions are not correct for the Klamath gap (see Stewart 1929, p. 109). 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS554].

[MS281]. Finch, R. H. **Activity of a California Volcano in 1786**. In: The Volcano Letter. 1930. Vol. 308. p. 3. The idea of an 1786 eruption has become part of Mt. Shasta's lore, and has become almost an accepted geological fact (see Miller 1980). In 1930 R. H. Finch, an associate vulcanologist of the Lassen Volcano Observatory, was the first person to publish the suggestion of the 1786 eruption. Finch's three paragraph 1930 article is here reprinted in full:

"ACTIVITY OF A CALIFORNIA VOLCANO IN 1786 -- The following quotation was brought to the attention of the writer by Dr. Max Ferrand, Director of Research of Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

"La P rouse, in voyaging along the California coast in 1786 witnessed a volcanic eruption, and the location given on his map is roughly in the Lassen region. A direct quotation from his observations is as follows: '....our latitude, observed at noon, was 40; 48' 30' north; our longitude, according to the timekeeper, was 126; 59' 45' west. I continued my course to near the land, from which, at nightfall, I was only four leagues distant. We there perceived a volcano on top of a mountain, which bore east of us; its flame was very lively, but a thick fog soon deprived us of this sight....'

"As Mt. Shasta might be visible from a ship at sea in the position given, it, as well as Lassen Peak, should be considered as a possible source of the witnessed eruption. Both peaks would be nearly east from the stated latitude. If the eruption were from Lassen, nothing but an explosion cloud would have been visible. Considerable volcanic activity occurred at the summit of Mt. Shasta since the time of general glaciation, and nothing on the peak at present indicates the impossibility of their having a minor eruption in 1786."

Note that there are conflicting opinions as to what Laperouse actually saw in 1786. Geologists who statistically predict the next eruption of Mt. Shasta based on the Laperouse sighting should be aware of the low certainty of a 1786 eruption. On the one hand there is little positive evidence that the volcano was actually a volcano and not a forest fire. Also, evidence points to the fact that the "Volcan" was right on the coast. For example, the Laperouse manuscript map in the French National Archives, and the published Laperouse maps as well, depicted a volcano placed directly on the coast itself and not inland.

On the other hand the maps do show that the erupting volcano of 1786 was directly on "Cape Mendocin" (see Carte Particuliere... No. 31 1798, and Manuscript Carte Generale de la partie...1786). Laperouse's "Cape Mendocin" is the same as today's Cape Mendocino, meaning that his actual latitude at the time does not rule out a sighting of Mt. Shasta or Mt. Lassen. There is also arguable evidence that Mt. Shasta's summit can be seen from the coast near the mouth of the

Klamath (see Davidson 1889). But note that the Laperouse manuscript map was drawn by Sebastien Bernizet, the 'ingenieur-geographe,' on the ship Boussole with LapŽrouse in 1786 (see de Brossard. *Rendez-vous avec Laperouse* ^ Vanikoro. Paris: Editions France Empire, 1964, p. 278). Bernizet must have known how far inland to place the volcano; by placing the volcano on the coast it implies that there is only slight probability that Laperouse saw Mt. Shasta in eruption in 1786. Until such time as more evidence is found or better arguments are formed, the certainty of a 1786 eruption should be approached with caution. The probability that Laperouse saw Mt. Shasta in eruption, based on the available evidence, is, for the sake of argument, perhaps one in three. 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS281].

[MS828]. Laperouse, Jean-Francois Galaup de 1741-1788. [**Manuscript Carte Generale de la Partie de la Cote du Nord Ouest de L' Amerique Septen.**]. 1786. 'Dressee par Sebastien Beruizet.' Manuscript map in the collection of the French National Archives; catalogued under MAR: MAP JJ 34 A + B. No copy available. Original viewed in Paris. This is the original map used to create the published maps for the first edition of the Laperouse Atlas of 1797. The name of "Sebastien Bernizet" as the preparer is significant. Bernizet was on the same ship as Laperouse and this means the map is probably a faithful reproduction of the geography as seen by Laperouse.

This manuscript map is very large, being about seven feet high and five feet wide. The "Volcan" is shown, as on the published map no. 31 from the Atlas, directly on the coast. However the manuscript map depicts the volcano's smoke as flowing south-southwest as opposed to northwest on the published map. The smoke is colored a brilliant violet-purple, and although time may have altered the color it has not altered its intensity. The volcano is the only colored object on the entire map; the violet-purple smoking volcano on a vast field of white creates a startling impression. This volcano, no matter what or where it was, was something which greatly impressed Laperouse and his men. 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS828].

[MS823]. Laperouse, Jean-Francois Galaup de 1741-1788. [**Manuscript journal, by J.F.G de Laperouse, concerning the Sept. 7, 1786 volcanic eruption seen from off the Mendocino Coast.**]. 1786. Photocopied from a microfilm of the original document. The journal is in the French National Archives in Paris, collection of the Marine Service Hydrographique. The microfilm is catalogued under the entry: 'MAR 3 JJ 387-389.' This manuscript appears to be a very legible clerk's hand-copy of the Laperouse journal. It could have been prepared on Laperouse's ship or perhaps in Paris. This document is an important primary source for the study of the legend that Laperouse on Sept. 7, 1786, saw Mt. Shasta erupting (see Finch 1930). Laperouse wrote (misspellings as in the original) that: "A l'entree de la nuit nous appercumes alors un Volcan, sur la Cime de la Montagne qui nous Restait a l'E. la flame etait tres Vive, Mais Bientot une Brume epaisse, Vint nous derrober ce Spectacle, il falut encore s'eloigner de la Cote. Craignant en suivant une Route Parallele, la Rencontre de quelque Pointe ou isle, un Peu ecartee du Continent. la Brume fut tres epaisse" (Sept. 7, 1786).

Note that the 1798 English translation expressed the phrase "...la flame [sic] etait tres Vive, Mais Bientot une Brume epaisse, Vint nous derrober [sic] ce Spectacle" as "The flame was very vivid; but a thick fog soon concealed it from our sight" (see Laperouse Journal... 1968). A more dramatic translation would be "The flame was very vivid; But soon a thick fog robbed us of this spectacle." 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS823].

[MS825]. Laperouse, Jean-Francois Galaup de 1741-1788. **Voyage de Laperouse autour du monde, publie conformement au decret du 22 avril 1791 et redige par M. L.A. Milet-Mureau.** Paris: Imprimerie de la Republique, 1797. 4 volumes plus atlas. This is the first edition of the Laperouse journal. The book was translated into English the following year in 1798 (see Laperouse Voyage... 1968). Note that the original Laperouse journal and maps are kept in the French National Archives (see Laperouse Manuscript journal... 1786). 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS825].

[MS826]. **Carte Generale d' une Partie de la Cote du Nord-Ouest de l' Amerique Reconnue par les Fregates Francaises La Boussole et L' Astrolabe. No.16 [published map].** In: Laperouse, Jean-Francois Galaup de 1741-1788. **Atlas du Voyage de la Perouse.** London: Robinson, 1798. 27 inches vertical by 19 1/2 inches horizontal. This map, probably from the first English edition of the Laperouse VoyageÉ is nearly identical to the same map as published in the 1797 French first edition. This map, No. 16 from the Atlas of the Laperouse voyage of 1785-88, shows a larger section of the coast-line of the Pacific Northwest than does the other Laperouse Atlas map No. 31. But, like No. 31, this map depicts the "Volcan" just north of "C. Mendocin." No smoke is shown rising from the volcano as was the case with No. 31. This map No. 16 has the added interest of large mountains in the Alaska region which are placed perhaps three times farther inland than the "Volcan." This indicates that if the "Volcan" had been seen inland as far as today's Mt. Shasta, then it would have been so indicated. 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS826].

[MS827]. **Carte Particuliere de la Cote du Nord-Ouest de l' Amerique Reconnue par les Frigates Francaises La Boussole et L'Astrolabe en 1786. Troisieme Feuille. No. 31. [published map].** In: Laperouse, Jean-Francois Galaup de 1741-1788. **Atlas du Voyage de la Perouse.** London: Robinson, 1798. 19 inches vertical by 27 inches horizontal. This map from the first English edition of the Laperouse Voyage... is identical to the published in the 1797 French edition. Jean-Francois Galaup de Laperouse, the French explorer who was searching for the fabled Northwest passage, sailed south along the northern California coast in 1786. He wrote in his report that on Sept. 7, 1786 he and his men saw an eruption of a volcano. By Laperouse's own account his ship was four leagues offshore at the time he saw the "Volcan." Atlas map no. 31 is especially important for it shows the "Volcan" issuing smoke, which thus unequivocally identifies this mountain as the one which was seen in eruption. Since the volcano is shown right on the coast, this mountain is unlikely to have been Mt. Shasta. The published map is a faithful rendition, except for the direction of the "Volcan" smoke, of the manuscript map which Laperouse sent to Paris (see Laperouse Manuscript Carte Generale de la partie... 1786). These maps call into question the assumption made by several historians (see Finch 1930) that the volcano which Laperouse saw in 1786 was actually Mt. Shasta or Mt. Lassen.

The Laperouse ships were near present-day Cape Mendocino on Sept. 7, 1786, according to the map. Laperouse later sent his journals, notes, plans, and maps, by messenger to Paris via an overland route from the Russian Kamchatka Peninsula. He also sent letters and materials from other ports of call, including Monterey. If Laperouse had returned to France we might have had a better account of what he actually saw and called a volcano. But he, his ships, and his men shipwrecked and perished after his last letter was sent from Australia in early February of 1788.

The journals and maps which were sent to Paris were subsequently published, first in France in 1797, and then in an English translation in 1798.

If one assumes that map No. 31 is an accurate rendition of what Laperouse saw, then the indicated "Volcan" would not be Mt. Shasta for the following reasons. First, the "Volcan" is the northern-most mountain of three equal size mountains stretching the few miles from his "C. Mendocin" north to his "Punta Gorda." His "C. Mendocin" is the same as present-day Cape Mendocino based on the nearly exact agreement of his topography to that of present-day maps. Note that his "Punta Gorda" is not the same as the more southerly Punta Gorda of modern maps. Present Mt. Shasta has no rival mountains like those of his map; it is unlikely he saw Mt. Shasta. Second, it appears that the mapmaker tried to show only what had been actually seen from the ship, with unobserved sections of the coast left blank; this indicates a high degree of integrity and accuracy for the map, and thus if the "Volcan" was further inland it would have been drawn so. A third consideration arises from looking at the entire map. One can then see that the hills around the "Port de Monterey" at the bottom of the map are drawn at the same scale as those of the "Volcan." We know that Laperouse actually landed at Monterey, that there the skies were clear, and that the Monterey hills were drawn as they actually appear, on the coast. It is therefore reasonable to think that the "Volcan" near "C. Mendocin," was drawn on the coast in a similar manner to the accurate drawing of the more southerly Monterey hills on the coast. Thus the "Volcan" was probably a mountain on the coast. 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS827].

[MS824]. Laperouse, Jean-Francois Galaup de 1741-1788. **Voyage de Laperouse redige d'apres ses manuscrits originaux...et enrichi de notes par M. de Lesseps.** Paris: Arthus Bertrand Librairie, 1831. (No copy available, original viewed in Paris.) Laperouse sent Jean-Baptiste de Lesseps, a Frenchman raised in St. Petersburg, overland from the North Pacific coast to Paris in 1786. De Lesseps traveled from the Kamchatka peninsula across Siberia and delivered the Laperouse journals to Paris in 1788. Laperouse and his ships disappeared in 1788, making de Lesseps one of the few lucky survivors of the expedition. De Lesseps was undoubtedly a witness to the volcano eruption on the Mendocino coast on Sept 7, 1786. Anything he may have added to the Laperouse story about the volcano is important.

In his 1831 edition of the Laperouse journals he has occasionally changed Laperouse's wording, i.e. changing "Continent" to "terre" and changing the order of the sentences. But the passages pertaining to the sighting of the volcano are basically the same in meaning and are as ambiguous as the Laperouse manuscript itself (see Laperouse Manuscript journal... 1786). De Lesseps has in a minor way added a sentence to the volcano passage to the effect that it was customary procedure to go further offshore whenever a fog approached. But unfortunately de Lesseps has not clarified the identity or location of the volcano sighted in 1786. 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS824].

[MS282]. Laperouse, Jean-Francois Galaup de 1741-1788. **A Voyage Round the World Performed in the Years 1785, 1786, 1787 and 1788 by the Boussole and Astrolabe.** Amsterdam and New York: N. Israel and De Capo Press, 1968. Reprint of an 1799 English edition entitled A Voyage Round the World Performed in the Years 1785, 1786, 1787 and 1788 by the Boussole and Astrolabe, Under the Command of J.F.G. de la Perouse: Published by the Order of the National Assembly, Under the Superintendence of L.A. Milet-Mureau....In Two Volumes Illustrated by a Variety of Charts and Plates, In a Separate Folio Volume. Translated from the French. The first English translation appeared in 1798. Originally published in French in 1797. Sometime in 1788, Laperouse and his two ships ran aground and sank on an

atoll in the South Pacific. Fortunately the journals of the voyage up to the time of 1787 had been sent ahead to Paris. This English translation of the journal of the great French explorer Laperouse contains the statements which have led many to believe Mount Shasta erupted in 1786. The placement of the volcano directly on the coast on Laperouse's maps probably indicates that he did not see Mount Shasta, but rather some other smaller coastal mountain. Note that the original unpublished Laperouse manuscript map, in the collection of the National Archives in Paris, shows that whatever they saw, it impressed them greatly, for on that map the small "Volcan" drawn on the coast has billowing smoke brightly colored in purple-violet ink. It is the only feature so colored on the entire table-size black and white map.

Here is the translated paragraph from September 7th, 1786 which has caused so much discussion: "We found the weather in this part of America less clear than in higher latitudes, where the navigators enjoyed, at least by intervals, the sight of everything that was above their horizon; for to us the land never once appeared distinct in all its parts. On the 7th the mist was still thicker than the day before. It cleared up, however, towards noon, and we saw the tops of mountains to the east, at a considerable distance. As we had made a southern course, it is evident, that from the latitude of 42; the coast begins to run to the east. Our latitude observed at noon was 40; 48' 30" north: our longitude by our timekeepers 126; 59' 45' west. I continued to steer so as to get nearer the land, from which I was only four leagues distant at the approach of night. We then perceived a volcano on the summit of a mountain which bore east from us. The flame was very vivid; but a thick fog soon concealed it from our sight. Deeming it prudent again to increase our distance from the land, as I might fall in with some rock or island at a little distance from the continent, I stood towards the offing again" (p. 431).

Note that the original manuscript in the French National Archives is the most authoritative source, rather than this English translation, of Laperouse's statements about the volcano (see Laperouse "manuscript..." 1786). There is also an edition of Laperouse's journal updated and corrected by expedition survivor F. de Lesseps. For two years, de Lesseps carried the Laperouse journals and maps overland from the Kamchatka peninsula on the Pacific Coast across Russia to Paris (see Laperouse Voyage de Laperouse...et enrichi de notes par M. de Lesseps 1831). 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS282].

[MS757]. Laperouse, Jean-Francois Galaup de 1741-1788. **Voyage Autour Du Monde Sur L'Astrolabe et La Boussole (1785-1788)**. Paris: Editions La Decouverte, 1991. This is an abridged French language edition of Laperouse's Voyage ... first published in 1797. This edition omits the passages concerning the volcano seen from the California coast. But the book does include a glossary of nautical terms used in Laperouse's narrative. The glossary states that a league is equivalent to approximately 5,555 meters: "Lieue : Mesure de marine et de geographie qui vaut 5,555 metres environ" (p. 402). If one assumes that the editor's definition of a league is a historical one, then 5. 555 kilometers was the length of a French league in 1786. Laperouse stated that he was about four leagues offshore at the time he saw an eruption of a volcano on the California coast. $(5.555 \times 4) = 22.22$ kilometers offshore at the time of sighting of the volcano.

The introduction to this book also contains information on the spelling of the LapŽrouse name. Most books and articles spell his name as "La Perouse," "la Perouse," or "laPerouse," all in reference to his own early signature of "La Peyrouse." After having been given by his parents a large landed estate named "Laperouse" he began, upon his entry into the French navy, to sign his name as one word as "Laperouse" (p. 14). The editor considers "Laperouse" to be the most appropriate spelling.

Contains a brief bibliography of the principal editions of books resulting from the Laperouse expedition and from the numerous expeditions sent out to find the missing explorer and his ships. Note that one of Laperouse's two ships was found in 1828. The second ship was not located until 1964. Both were ship-wrecked off the atoll Vanikoro, north of the New Hebrides.

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[MS1162]. Oakeshott, Gordon B. **California's Changing Landscapes**. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1978. Second edition. A widely-used geology text. Contains a generalized account of Mt. Shasta's geology and includes the statement that: "An explorer in the area reported an explosive eruption of the mountain in 1786" (p. 273).

Note that the author's statement about the 1786 eruption of Mt. Shasta is typical of many restatements of the 1786

eruption legend. In fact, the French explorer Laperouse was on a ship off California's Mendocino coast, hardly qualifying as "in the area," and Laperouse mentioned no 'explosive' eruption but wrote only that the flame was very vivid. This book is one of many which could serve to illustrate how the 1786 legend has continued to be accepted as fact. 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS1162].

[MS2150]. Roquefeuil, Camille de. **Voyage Around the World, 1816, and Trading for Sea Otter Fur on the Northwest Coast of America.** Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1981. Reprint of the 1823 English translation printed in London for R. Phillips. Originally published in french as 'Journal d'un Voyage autour du Monde pendant las Annees 1816, 1817, 1818, et 1819.' Paris: Libries Ponthieu, Lesage, et Gide, 1823. The author offers an explanation, from first hand obsrvation in September, 1818, during an expedition along the northwest coast, that it was a fire and not a volcano, that Laperouse had viewed in 1786. Many writers have speculated that Laperouse may have witnessed the last eruption of Mount Shasta. The author states: 'At six o'clock, after having gone twenty-two miles, we had, to the south-south-east, a point, which I judged to be Cape Mendocino. At half past seven, we suddenly discovered, to the south-south-east, a considrable fire on Cape Mendocino; this fire covered the greater part of the hill, from the sea-shore to the summit, and it appeared to extend to the other side. Impelled by a fresh breeze, it made a rapid progress. The mountain of fire, its summit crowned with immense clouds of smoke, the sea shining with the reflection, which every wave multiplied, the rocks scattered round the promontory, and the second hill clothed with various tints, this prospect, in the gloom of the night, was of the most majestic description, and filled the soul with exalted ideas. Accurate inquires at Saint Francisco, convinced me that this fire which, at a distance might have been mistaken for a volcano, must be ascribed to the Indians, as well as other less considerable, and more distant ones, which we saw that and the preceding nights. The natives, at this season, set fire to the grass, to the dry pods of a grain which they use for food, to render it more easy to gather. It was, doubtless, this circumstance, which was unknown to our illustrious La Peyrouse, and that was the cause of his error, when seeing a great fire on Cape Mendocino, about the same time of year, he thought it was a volcano.' (pp. 125-126) 04. Early Exploration: Laperouse Expedition, 1786. [MS2150].