THE NEW FOUND LAND

BY DAVID BEERS QUINN

John Carter Brown Library Fellow
THE NEW FOUND LAND
THE NEW FOUND LAND:
The English Contribution to the Discovery
of North America

BY DAVID BEERS QUINN
John Carter Brown Library Fellow

An Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of
the Associates of the John Carter Brown Library,
May 14, 1964, together with a Catalogue of the
Exhibition opened on that occasion.

PROVIDENCE
The Associates of the John Carter Brown Library
1965
Copyright © 1965 by Brown University
All rights reserved

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 65-19020

The Address
The English Contribution to the Discovery of North America

There is a certain danger that in speaking of the part played by Englishmen in the discovery of North America we may tend to give them more than their due. Far be it from me as an Irishman to do so. The Norsemen who settled in Greenland in the tenth century and who appear to have visited L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland and other places in North America in the eleventh century are the real western discoverers, and it is not unlikely that their knowledge of the West was preserved in some form or other in Renaissance Europe. Then too, Columbus, from his Caribbean discoveries and their ready exploitation by Spain, played an essential part in the rediscovery of the western lands farther to the North. Spaniards, Ponce de Leon and the rest, were the first to attempt seriously to settle North America. French and Spaniards, Verrazzano commanding for the one and Estévão Gomes for the other—an Italian and a Portuguese—were, between 1523 and 1525, the first we know to have sailed along the Eastern coast of North America over the greater part of its length. The French under Cartier were the first to penetrate the continental interior by water, the Spaniards under De Soto and Coronado the first by land. San Agustín in 1565 was the first permanent European settlement; St. Croix (1604) was the mother of Port Royal and Quebec before Jamestown was founded. Even in the Newfoundland fisheries, French, Basques, and Portuguese were long predominant. The discovery of the eastern North American seaboard and its hinterland was a truly international achievement.

It is very difficult to characterize the precise contribution which the English made. Looking back on it with the hindsight which history kindly provides for us, we may guess that it was the eventual discovery by Northern Europeans that they could settle profitably in considerable numbers, subject to continental extremes of heat and cold, in North America. But history is a process of convergence and in it assumptions have dangers in that they predicate a conclusion, a point of departure, and a point of arrival. History is rather more like a series of chance events which can take on a pattern only when we look back at them from the standpoint of a major historical achievement. In asking what was the English contribution to North American discovery, we are assuming, to some extent, a conclusion. It is probably best if we look at a number of strands separately before seeing if they, in fact, seem to tie together sufficiently to allow us to give a coherent answer.

We are now on reasonably firm ground when we say that the English rediscovered North America after the Norsemen and before Columbus' voyages took place. When the Englishman John Day mentioned to Christopher Columbus late in 1497 "the land which the English discovered in times past as your
Lordship well knows," the tone of that tantalizingly brief reference was none the less authoritative. My hypothesis on the "Bre til" referred to by Day and other contemporaries is no more than a guess, but it is one which has a certain plausibility. This is that the land found was regarded as of little importance in itself but only as marking the location of a major offshore fishery in western waters. There are indications, if not entirely explicit evidence, that the Newfoundland Banks were first found by the English and were being systematically exploited by them at least from 1490 onwards.

How, then, about John Cabot? We shall probably have to discard his priority in the rediscovery of North America if what I have said is likely to be correct. The clever Italian that appears as one who had learned in Spain in 1493 of Columbus' discovery and who came to England as soon as possible because he had an inkling that the English too had found something in the West, only farther north and not so far distant from Europe. He consequently set out in 1499 or 1500 to see the English discovery as a jumping-off point for the pre-trading northeast horn of Asia as it appeared in pre-Columbian world maps of the time. Cabot's failure in his first voyage was crowned by apparent success in his second. In 1497 he sailed with full authority to occupy parts of Asia not hitherto touched by the Spaniards in the name of the King of England. He reported after his return on the fishableness of the Newfoundland Banks, but his main discovery, as he worked his way along some appreciable part of the coast line between Maine and Labrador, was a continental shore line he firmly believed to be Asia.

There is no direct evidence that in 1498 any one of the five ships which sailed with Cabot for Asia found herself on the barren and northwest-trending Labrador coast. Yet the chances are that one or more of them did so and that she (or they) returned to tell the tale. This, if it happened, is likely to have provided the clue that the obstinately un-Asian and uncivilized shores they found were not Asia at all but those of a new land of continental proportions, one which might perhaps be circumvented by an ambitious following of this northwest shore. John Cabot, it seems, was lost on the voyage; a ship equipped by King Henry returned. This is all we have. We can do more than guess, even if we cannot quite prove, that these voyages in 1497 and 1498 established with reasonable certainty that the "Bre til" which the English found in times past was no isolated island but the cutler of a continent, not Asia but another.

Columbus, blindly or otherwise, was to miss the continentality of America; Vespucci was to see it later and to his own enduring credit. John Cabot had, it is probable, seen it before his death, or at least the knowledge of it came home with his surviving ships.

The English kept venturing between 1501 and 1505 to the new mainland. We cannot say quite clearly what they were about. The Bristol men who followed John Cabot westwards were associated with a Portuguese discoverer, João Fernandes, who may have rediscovered Greenland or found Labrador ahead of another Portuguese, Gaspar Corte-REAL, in either 1499 or 1500 and then came to England to get by out of his countryman's way. No wholly satisfactory account of the Portuguese discoveries of 1499-1505 has yet been given, but they certainly included the relocation of Newfoundland during the years that the Bristol men were voyaging to America. The latter may have been working the Newfoundland fishery, but it is likely that they were also trading with the mainland Indians, possibly in southern New England or even a little farther south still. They were also, it seems, making the first attempts since Norse times to place a permanent trading post or colony on the new continent. But this venture faded out in a tangle of business losses. Western lands in temperate latitudes were not, at first contact, rich except in fish, not easy to exploit rapidly, no Mexico, not even Hispaniola.

Sebastian Cabot, building in some way on the experience of his father, the Bristol men, and the Portuguese, sailed to the northwest in 1508, as G. P. Winslow was the first to point out, perhaps wintering on a cold American shore, certainly returning with vivid recollections of northern ice floes, but also with the sustained belief in a continuing open sea channel in late summer towards Asia. If Sebastian had to return unsatisfied, he had firmly established the concept of a Northwest Passage around America to Asia. The concept is often regarded as a purely negative element in English maritime activity. This, I think, is wrong. It provoked waste and misdirection as well as much disappointment, but it also led to the accumulation of sound navigational experience and a slowly emerging understanding of how to survive in the climatic extremes of western lands and waters.

After 1508 there is, down to the beginnings of permanent settlement, a counterpart in English relations with North America: the colonizing motif, slow and tender in emergence; and the discovery (Astatic Passage) motif, more vigorous if more intermittent. The latter continuously affected and enriched the former.

There is one area of sustained annual effort of a highly profitable character which is too often minimized in drawing a balance sheet of profits and losses in North American discovery. Most of the early voyages to this area down to 1603 or later lost money, men, ships and reputations. The Newfoundland fishery was the great exception. It is likely that Englishmen were sending two, three, or four ships there each year from 1490 onwards to 1506, before Cabot's successful expedition. This scale of activity continued after Cabot's voyage of 1497, though we have no more direct evidence of it for some years. The Bristol adventurers of 1501-1505, if they also ranged beyond the fishing banks, seem to have added a few ships to the little fishing squadron. By the 1520's the English Newfoundland men made up a "fleet," probably not a very large one but sizable, composed of vessels from a number of southwestern English ports and probably one or two Irish ones as well. By this time other European fishing fleets had outstripped the English. The main contributors were Basques (mixed
Spanish and French) fishing off southwest and west Newfoundland and Breton and Norman-based on southern Newfoundland and sharing Cape Breton with the Basques. Southeast Newfoundland, the greater part of the Avalon peninsula, was already left to the English and Portuguese in partnership, the latter supplying salt to the English and adding the cash proceeds from it to the results of their catch.

Historians of discovery are inclined to get impatient with the Newfoundland fishermen. Why, if hundreds and even thousands of them went every year to American waters, did they leave so little record of what they saw and experienced, and why did they range within such a narrow compass rather than contribute more liberally to the discovery story? The truth was that they were exploiting eastern North America in the most profitable terms possible at the time. Fish was the most valuable import Europe could have. For many of her people it was the only cheap protein food available, North American discovery made it cheaper and more plentiful. It was, it might be argued, of much more use to the European economy than Potosí silver. Along with it went oil from cod, whale, seal, and walrus, all essential to fabricate a growingly mobile society. Everything else that North America had immediately to offer—a marginal fur trade, timber products, possibly minerals—was of lesser utility in the shorter run. Only in different circumstances could North American produce be extracted and used in quantity in Europe. If the fishermen stuck closely to their books, nets, and harpoons, their sires, flutes, and saltboxes, they were justifying, slowly perhaps but very surely, the discovery of North America. And it is not true that they spawned no discoverers: Jacques Cartier came from their ranks, though no major English explorer did.

Amerigo Vespucci's writings most probably led Sir Thomas More to write Utopia in the form in which he gave it to us in 1516, while Vespucci also seems to have inspired More's brother-in-law, John Rastell, to make the first preparations for settling a colony in the northern part of the newly realized land mass. In 1517, aided by a loan from Henry VIII, he set out with two ships to make an American settlement. The season did not wish to face the Atlantic Ocean and eventually abandoned Rastell and his convinced supporters in Ireland, going off pilfering in European waters instead. Rastell was sufficiently discouraged not to try again, but he soon published his Interlude of the four elements, in which he set out in print for the first time the proposal that Englishmen should occupy the North American lands. This would redound to the king's honor, would provide an opportunity to make Christians of the Indians, and would create employment and commerce by exploiting the fishery, timber, and timber products such as pitch. Newfoundland fishermen must have helped him with information. America was for him too a halfway house to Asia. In many ways he epitomized the Tudor approach to the western lands. By 1520, therefore, the colonizing of North America by the English was seen, by some intellectuals at least, as an objective which was possible of attainment.

It is by no means true that Henry VIII had no interest in western voyaging. What is true is that he showed little sustained interest in North America itself. His concern was rather to have a way found round or through America to Asia. Thus in 1521, Sebastian Cabot, on a visit to England from Spain, induced King Henry and Cardinal Wolsey to press the London merchants to fit out a squadron of ships to sail through the Northwest Passage and sell English cloth to the Asians. The merchants were not too optimistic and the lack of sufficient subsidies ruined the plan.

Later, when Henry learned that a French ship, under Giovanni da Verrazano, had coasted eastern North America—discovering, incidentally, Narragansett Bay—and had returned with some hope of a westward passage in temperate latitudes, he sent out two ships in 1527 to probe both Sebastian Cabot's supposed Northwest Passage and also the newly mapped isthmus-like coast farther south (in the Carolinas). His own wine ship, the Mary Guildford, under Captain John Rut, was one, the Samuel the other. They sailed up the Labrador coast until discouraged by icebergs. The Samuel may have been lost then. The Mary Guildford retracted Verrazano's route in reverse, possibly being the first ship to coast North America in this direction. But no passage or isthmus was found. The Mary Guildford visited the Spanish West Indies and returned safely and unrewardingly home, having, however, greatly widened English horizons on the extent of the western continent.

A voyage in 1536 was also inspired, it would seem, by the achievements of other Europeans, notably Jacques Cartier, who had returned to St. Malo in 1534 with news of a great water entry into North America. This news, together with a Breton pilot who apparently knew something of Cartier's voyage, reached England and set off another English venture. King Henry may have contributed money as well as good will to the expedition made by the William, under Captain Richard Hose, and another ship, possibly the Trinity. They sailed to northeast Newfoundland and from there one or both of the ships seems to have penetrated the Straits of Belle Isle and suffered some hardship on the bare southern coast of Labrador, to which Cartier had given the name "the land that God gave Cain." Their Breton pilot, Alain Moyne, does not seem to have brought them all the way into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Instead, he conducted the William to the traditional fishing ground on southeast Newfoundland; she obtained a cargo at the Isle of Spear, and she brought back to England a number of young gentlemen from the Court who had gone sightseeing on her. There is no record that any of them attempted to return to American waters.

If the expeditions of 1527 and 1536 were productive of little more than experience, they showed at least that the English were anxious to keep up with the French in North American discovery, though after 1535 we do not know that any English vessels continued to trail Cartier and Rebeval westwards until they too ended their explorations in 1543. After demonstrating that they
could maintain contact with the western continent in this way, Englishmen began to lag behind in western voyaging. Robert Thorne's proposal to King Henry in 1527 that the English should sail directly over the Pole to Cathay was taken out of its wrappings from time to time but nothing was done to test its feasibility. In 1541 Roger Barlow, who had been on a Spanish search for a Southwest Passage in the 1520s, revived the notion of a polar voyage for King Henry in "A briefe summe of geography," while Jean Rotse was at court drawing for the King a set of fine new maps showing the nature and extent of French and Spanish explorations in America up to that time. All this was to no effect; rumors persisted of ships being prepared and projects planned but that was all.

Indeed, all new activity in the west—the fishery of course excepted—faded out for some twenty years, or at least we know almost nothing of what was done during this period. It may be that we will find out something from Spanish sources in the end. There are a few tantalizing references to Englishmen serving with the Spaniards, even to one taking part with Trinidad de Lauta y Arriano on a North American expedition. The decade 1540 to 1550 was an active one for English commerce, but perhaps too much attention was being paid to the booming cloth trade with the Low Countries to leave room for other ventures. Then, in the 1550s, the cloth trade went to pieces and new enterprises in search of alternative markets were put in hand, but these were to the Levant, Morocco and thence to Guinea, or to the Northeast Passage and finally, through the latter venture, to Muscovy. Why was nothing tried in the west? It must have acquired a bad reputation as a money loser which stuck to it for the best part of a generation. But I should stress again, this may prove in the end to be more of a historian's gap than a historical one, even though we may be almost sure that no successful North American ventures were made.

Florida swam rather suddenly into view when, in 1562, Jean Ribaut took refuge in England from the religious storms of his native France as he returned from the post he had set up on Fort Royal Sound, then reckoned as part of Florida. He needed to get aid sent back to his garrison—actually they came home without waiting for it—so he enlisted help from Englishmen he knew and others whom he could interest in his experiences. His story of the new land he had seen circulated first in manuscript and then in print. Finally an English gentleman, Thomas Stukely, was given authority by Queen Elizabeth to take a squadron westward to reinforce the French Huguenots with English colonists. His five ships, named after his family and friends and backed by extensive subscriptions, eventually set out but got no farther west than Ireland. The Spanish ambassador had undermined the venture by convincing Stukely that it was safer and more profitable for him to act the pirate in European waters. This fiasco did not help the prospects of other colonizing projects over the next twenty years, though John Hawkins visited the second French colony at Fort Caroline on the St. John's River in 1565 and the recorde of his voyage, John Sparke, took sympathetic notes of the fine climate, attractive vegetation, fertile soil, and colorful Indians. I have a strong suspicion that Hawkins later hoped to capture the Spaniards from Florida, as they had expelled the French in 1565, but though it was several times rumored that he was about to depart on this mission he never did so in the end. His objective, had he succeeded, would have been like that of the French, to support a colony partly by plunder from the Spanish Indiab. Drake showed in 1572 and later that English pirates could range the Caribbean successfully without having a supply base nearby, thus making a Florida colony seem less necessary. We can see once again in these Florida initiatives a tendency for the English to imitate and follow France.

In 1566 a young soldier, Humphrey Gilbert, concocted a treatise on the possibilities of a Northwest Passage, which began a period of discussion on the subject lasting over a decade and involving as disputants, besides Gilbert, Anthony Jenkinson, Michael Lok, John Dee, Richard Witlees, and the elder Richard Hakluyt. Out of their debate stemmed the Cathay Company under whose auspices Martin Frobisher went three times to far northern waters between 1576 and 1578. Frobisher was neither a very enterprising explorer nor a good navigator, but he had a military knack of keeping an expedition together and he lost few men and fewer ships. Entering Hochon Strait in 1576, he turned back before discovering the Bay and went instead into the dead end of Frobisher Bay in Baffin Island. The chance mineral discoveries there, of mica shine in the local metamorphic rock as it appeared in the end, turned the second and third voyages into a gold rush. Seamen and laborers backed away at American rock in purposeful economic endeavor. On the third occasion, in 1578, they would have created a permanent mining camp if parts of the prefabricated buildings sent out with them had not gone astray. Frobisher's "Meta Incognita" eventually proved to be a will-of-the-wisp, but it enlarged English concepts of the northern American lands and gave many Englishmen a first opportunity to assess the prospects of settlement and trade. Since these did not seem good north of Newfoundland, concern with America shifted south again. A minority retained their interest in the more challenging prospects in more northerly parts.

The Northwest Passage notion was not dead. Drake did something to keep it going by investigating towards its supposed Pacific end and by annexing New Albion in the process. John Davis built on Frobisher's iniative ventures and began the serious exploration of the Arctic seas by his courageous voyages between 1585 and 1587 when he exposed the west coast of Greenland as far north as 73°, investigated much of the Labrador coast for the first time, and laid the foundations for an English whale fishery off Greenland. Moreover, he made a gallant attempt to enter the Pacific to complete Drake's probing but failed to get beyond the Straits of Magellan in the stormy southern winter of 1592 and returned to England barely alive. In this northern venturing the
English were original, perhaps a little obsessed, but also by their voyages contributing to a stock of experience in transatlantic voyaging which was, in the longer run, to stand them in good stead.

In 1578 Sir Humphrey Gilbert switched his attention sharply and decisively to the temperate coasts of North America. His expedition in that year was planned, it seems, on a grand scale. He explored the coasts of eastern North America from south to north. But his reconnaissance had not merely the aim of finding a North American base against the Spaniards. His interests had widened out into a serious concern with American land for its own sake. His first expedition failed for reasons similar to those of Stakes—most of his squadron deserted on a perilous voyage. Gilbert, to raise money and attention, began a land-sales rush almost as elaborate as the earlier Frobisher gold rush. He found a substantial number of Englishmen who were prepared to make a down payment for a stake in an American colony represented by a contract for the acquisition of a specific—and large—number of acres of land. There is something almost in the way in which he handled out titles to great blocks of American territory to all subscribers. Dr. John Dee’s maps, on the basis of which he operated his sales program, were based very largely on those derived from Verrazano and Gomes and materials of similar date and of no considerable accuracy, yet they were accepted as if they were accurately surveyed on the ground. However credulous—and even fraudulent—these proceedings were, he focused attention firmly, so firmly that it was never quite lost again, on the one undisputed North American asset of great potential value, namely, unlimited productive land. Gilbert directed a good part of his campaign to the attractions of Verrazano’s “Refugio” (or River of Verrazano, River of Nortumega, Des River), the bay where the ship had found shelter, friendly Indians, and fertile surrounding land in 1524. It was around this bay that Gilbert laid out land grants to the English Catholic gentry, led by Sir George Peckham, who wished to move from the repressive Protestant state which Elizabethan England, under Spanish pressure, was fast becoming. As things turned out, none of the grantees ever took up their land. Gilbert went out in 1583, sailing the northern route by way of Newfoundland, attracted by the chance of raising rents from the international fishing community for stages and tokens on which to dress and dry their fish. When he arrived he was also diverted by the potential riches of the minerals he found there. But going on with his reconnaissance to the American mainland he lost his largest ship on Sablo Island, turned back across the Atlantic, and himself disappeared with his little vessel, the Squire, in mid-ocean. The land grantees were unable to get enough capital together to launch out on their own and so they sold off the second big North American investment—the first having been Frobisher’s—as a total loss.

The grandiose plans of Gilbert left still alive a limited but genuine interest in American settlement. His half brother, Walter Raleigh, revived colonizing plans in 1584 in a more modest form. The growing tensions with Spain re-

vived the attractions of a western base against the Spanish Indies. The desire to grow new products spurred on the acquisition of land in America well to the south of Gilbert’s New England objectives. Roanoke Island, behind the Carolina Outer Banks, was thought in 1584, to combine the virtues of a rich land, fertile for agricultural experiments and a center for exploration. Consequently, the three Roanoke colonies, those of 1585, 1586, and 1587, all gave Englishman experience, many of them hard and even fatal experience, of the delights and problems of living in North America, the first English people so far as we know to attempt to do so.

Yet these were in many respects very imperfect attempts at colonization. In the first a company of soldiers and a few specialists were left for a year under Ralph Lane and proved effective enough for exploration and garrison duties, but useless as self-providing settlers. The second, the handful left by Grenville in 1586, was a stopgap only, too weak to survive. The third alone was a real village community, but when Governor John White left it, it became a lawless group which dissipated into the American wilderness. The main things which came out of the Roanoke experiments were Thomas Hariot’s little book, A Briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia (1588), and the drawings of John White, which when published together by Theodore de Bry in 1590, gave for the first time a credible view of a sectional part of the North American shore. The other thing they left, something less tangible but not insignificant, was a tradition of settlement. The sense that Englishmen had survived for a year in America and that some of them, Hariot and White in particular, enjoyed it, was important: too was the feeling that the Lost Colonists might still be there to be found, might in a real sense be forerunners. These symbols of continuity between Roanoke and Jamestown were not without significance. Here English enterprise, this time in colonization, if limited, was original. It owed much to her intellectuals, Hakluyt, Raleigh, and Hariot, who thought out the problems of settlement almost from first principles and, in spite of mistakes and the narrow range of the colonizing effort they initiated, left in the end a valuable residue of experience won by trial and error.

The Spanish war broke the continuity of settlement in Raleigh’s Virginia. The failure of the 1580’s could, with reasonable good fortune, have been turned into at least qualified successes had ships been able to move freely across the Atlantic with settlers on board. As it was, one of the gains that Spaniards had to chalk up when war ended in 1604 was that the English had not yet occupied permanently a foot of their Indies, either in Guiana, the Caribbean, or Jada, as they called the lands around Chesapeake Bay.

The war, at the same time, pushed Englishmen who were interested in North America to a renewed consideration of those colder and less attractive shores where Gilbert’s hopes had centered. Edward Hayes, the recorder of the Gil-

bert voyages, continued to urge Lord Burghley that Newfoundland be occupied by settlers so that the foreign fishing fleets could be effectively taxed. Later,
Hayes switched to advocating the penetration of the St. Lawrence and the settlement of which are now the Maritime Provinces. In this he co-operated with Christopher Carrell, who had himself boosted a project to settle this area in 1583 and 1584 but had, in the latter year, taken his intended colonists—as Rustell and Stukely had long before—no farther than Ireland.

The attractions of the more northern parts of the mainland were explored in another way by the English adventurers who learned of a Breton walrus fishery on the Magdalen Islands in 1591. They managed in 1593 and 1594, with the aid of a Basque pilot, Stévan de Becall, to sample the profits of walrus hunting and the collection of whalebone in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, during which process much of the Gulf was for the first time explored by the English. But the French were found to be too strong and too knowledgeable to be easily displaced.

The St. Lawrence story was given another twist when in 1597 plans were made to establish an English settlement on the Magdalen. This was to consist of the advance guard of an ultra-Puritan, Separatist London congregation which had been in prison for some years. As they had refused to conform to the Church of England or to go into exile, their leaders considered they were kept in prison for being too loyal to the Queen, though others regarded their loyalty as obstinacy. Four of the intending settlers, under their pastor Francis Johnson, were to winter with a ship's crew on the islands so as to be in good time to catch most of the walrus and a sufficient lading of cod before the Basques and Bretons arrived. Actually one ship went aground and was lost by Basques at Cape Breton. Before the winter was over, the Pilgrim Fathers on board exacerbated the season by refusing to take part in the piracy necessary to recoup their fortunes. The two others, along with Captain Charles Leiph's ship, were forcibly expelled by the French from the Magdalen and, after picking up the shipwrecked crew at Cape Breton, returned home to give up the colonizing project and to retire to Holland after all. There they formed one of a number of influences which turned the Pilgrims towards America in 1620.

In the next few years some other tentative plans for a St. Lawrence colony emerged. At least one of them showed a very clear appreciation of the difficulties of keeping a colony going in temperate latitudes where there were no really valuable luxury products to be obtained easily, and where the ingredients of success were patience and perseverance in providing the necessities of life. But nothing more was done, so far as we know, to press English enterprise in this area.

The road to permanent settlement on the North American continent was still an arduous one for the English when the sixteenth century ended. Expeditions begun in 1602 or earlier towards the old coast line frequented during the Roanoke voyages seem to have had little or no effect. Samuel Mace, in 1602, coasted the Carolinas in the vicinity of Cape Fear, doing no more than pick up roots of the sassafras tree and other plants believed to have some medicinal value. Bartholomew Gilbert, sent to rediscover the mouth of the Chesapeake in the following year, got himself killed by Indians somewhere along the coast to the north of Cape Charles. Raleigh, who had set these attempts in motion, was then deprived of all his Virginia rights, extending all the way along the coast from Spanish Florida to Cape Breton it seems, and the revival languished. Activities farther north, between the Chesapeake and the Maritimes, were productive of more results. Merchants and gentlemen in London and Bristol combined in an attempt to set up the kind of fur-trading post which a Frenchman, Etienne Bellanger, had already tried to establish in 1583 in the Maritimes. They were also inspired once more to look along the coast for Verazzano's "Refugio" or his "Angoulême." The result was an important series of discoveries in the course of which the New England coast from the Penobscot to Buzzards Bay was mapped and described in outline and with few major ambiguities. If Bartholomew Gosnold fell in 1602 to establish his fur-trading and reconnaissance post on Elizabeth Island (now represented by Cuttyhunk and Nauset Beach Islands), then it was probably as well since the Wampanoag and Narragansett Indians might have wiped it out within a short time. Martin Pring's voyage in 1605, backed both by Bristol merchants and by Richard Hakluyt himself, had more limited objectives—to consolidate the knowledge of the newly discovered coast and especially of Cape Cod Bay and to make a more determined effort to trade over an extended period with the Massachusetts Indians. It was entirely successful in these limited objectives. Pring obtained an accurate picture of part of the Massachusetts coast. He also traded with the Indians, his camp at Provincetown (or Plymouth) lightly protected by a pallsade, and so passed the summer months easily, profitably, and almost peacefully.

The Waymouth expedition of 1605 was rather different in character. Its main task was to prospect for a site for a Catholic colony, thus reviving the plans which Gilbert had fostered over twenty years before. Moreover, it seems not at all unlikely that Waymouth was sent to rediscover Verazzano's "Angoulême" and perhaps also to confirm whether or not the islands and channels found by Gosnold in 1602, south of Cape Cod, Buzzards Bay and its inlets in particular, were identifiable with the long-sought "Refugio" or whether it was to be found nearby. If we conjecture that he was sent to coast present-day Rhode Island and New York, we may not be far wrong. Instead of this he sailed much farther north, making a landfall at the Cape Cod Highlands, and prospecting Menemsha, the Georgiana Islands and the St. George River before returning to give a somewhat exaggerated account of the inlet he had found. George Waymouth's observer, James Rosier, who might be called New England's Harriet, brought welcome details of the natural and human resources of the Maine coast. With news of good fishing of Menomucks and with five Indians
who soon were able to talk about their homeland, Weymouth and Rosier were able to make the picture of the new discoveries more coherent and to bring Englishmen one step nearer settlement in this region.

The English voyages of 1602-1603 were an important original contribution to the revelation of eastern North America in bringing to light a fertile and forested land in latitudes not too far south or too different in climate from England itself, as it was thought—nothing being known of possible wintry extremes. (This remains true even though Champlain duplicated and amplified some of the English information by his surveys of 1604-1606.) The three English voyages are more important if taken together when considered separately. They showed that, barring the accident of severe Atlantic storms, the ocean could be traversed in these latitudes both safely and with reasonable accuracy well to the south of the tracks usually followed by the Newfoundland fishing fleets. Such voyages too were by no means long at a time when four to six months out and back was a very reasonable reckoning for a round trip. This would allow from twelve to sixteen weeks for the double crossing and ten to fourteen weeks trading on the coast. A modest or even possibly a handsome return could be obtained from exchanging expensive European manufactures for furs with the Indians, who could also at times supply some corn and other foodstuffs to cut down the costs of provisioning. The extent and limits of this kind of trade were still very imperfectly understood. Fishing, it was clear, could in these coastal waters become at least a subsidiary, possibly even a major source of profit, even though the full riches of Georges Bank and the other New England extensions of the continental shelf were still only very imperfectly established. Only a few of the questions on the chances of a permanent settlement being successful could so far be answered. How many men would be needed and what defenses would be reasonably safe from Indian attack? What trading returns were available to a wintering settlement that were not already accessible to a summer camp such as Pring had operated successfully? Precisely how easy would it be to raise English grain crops (the wort-germination and plant-growth experiments of Gosnold, Pring, and Weymouth being very limited in value)? Were there really any minerals, base or precious, to be exploited in quantity? Did the great river estuaries lead anywhere, to Canada, to a continental divide opening the way to the Pacific, or to wild wastes in the interior only? Was there enough good land, with an equable all-year climate, to produce a good living for a self-supporting English community without excessive effort? Some of these answers could be obtained in a fashion from Weymouth's Indians as they learned English; they could at least answer something about Indian habits and population and about the limits of the fur trade with some accuracy. On the river arteries they were liable to be very misleading; by reckoning portages as through routes for ships they built them up into important water systems. They could give little real help on questions of settlement. Other questions may have been answered in whole or in part by the

fourth expedition, that under Harham and Pring in 1608, on which we have very little surviving information, though enough to show that they took the work of their predecessors some appreciable way further forward. Experiments in wintering, a whole trial-and-error process of attempted colonization, could alone bring sure answers.

By 1606 the various forces on the side of American colonization had sorted themselves out to some degree. The gentlemen who wanted land alone were not too particular where they got it, although the London merchants and those of Plymouth, Bristol, and Exeter had rather different interests. It was the capacity of the merchants for large and continuing investment which made colonization possible in the conditions of the time. The Londoners were set on a southern colony, the westerners on a northern. Why? The western preference sprang out of the old concern with fish and furs, oil and timber, and the desire to maintain year-round bases so as to keep away both foreigners and unlicensed English rivals. The London preference arose from the desire to master an agricultural economy which was complementary to that of Britain, and out of which Mediterranean-type products could and would come. Also, since the Spanish Indies were closed to the English, even though the East India Company was just opening the doors to Oriental spices, silks, and dyes, colonies well to the south on the North American coast might provide some, if not all, of the products of the West Indies.

We may suggest that there was little overlap of interests between the two groups—though this needs further study—and that in general each group held firmly to its own objectives. The basic difference was that to the westerners a colony was a convenience since they could carry on a fishery and an intermittent fur trade without one—and did so after their colony failed in 1608—while to the Londoners a colony was essential. For them it was Jamestown or nothing.

The Saghalien colony of 1607 was not in any marked degree original in conception or execution. It was very similar to those Champlain had attempted at St. Croix and at Port Royal, and was shortly to initiate at Quebec, though it lacked the versatile genius of Champlain and the dedicated tenacity of Poutrincourt. Its chief practical defect may well have been that it did not integrate a fishing program with its functions as a garrison and fur-trading post. Had it demonstrated from the first that settlement could help the fishermen by extending the fishing season, by supplying labor for handling and drying fish and by providing handy stores which would simplify their provisioning problems, the split which later developed between the land-settlement interests (Sir Ferdinando Gorges with the gentry and merchants he kept together) and the fishing interests (mainly the Plymouth fish merchants and shipowners) might not have arisen, and consequently Maine might have been more rapidly occupied with some degree of satisfaction to all concerned.

The Jamestown settlement was more original. Planted far inland, it was
perhaps influenced in its placing to some degree by the Roanoke Island experiment and even possibly by the Cartier-Rebeval experiments some seventy years before. It was clearly not just a foothold on a seacoast but was focused on the interior. From the beginning, too, it was a center of government, if not for some time an efficient one, in that the surrounding Indians were treated as if they would in time be brought under English political control and taken into some organized relationship with the settlement. The force of investing Powhatan as the vassal of James I underlined these implications. The aim of finding a way through the rocky gorges at the Fall Line and emerging into the Piedmont, the search for greater water inlets into the interior other than the James River, the extent to which Chesapeake Bay itself and the Potomac in turn aroused great hopes of a deep penetration of the land, all illustrate the scope and direction of the enterprise. The men who settled Jamestown were, almost from the first, expected to fortify and to grow crops, to experiment with timber products, to try out iron- and glassmaking, to attempt potash manufacture, to trade with the Indians for furs and whatever else they might, even to organize a fishery, as well as to explore the country. Moreover, the speed of reinforcement was surprising. Newport was back in England in July 1607 after his seven-month founding voyage; not again in October, the second supply reached Jamestown by January 1608, the third in August 1608, the fourth was at sea by April 1609. Each time more men arrived and from late in 1608 a nominal number of women also. Each supply was accompanied by fresh plans for the employment of new and old settlers alike. The scale, the continuity, the versatility shown in Jamestown's first two years were quite new for any English (or French) North American settlement so far. The earliest Spanish initiatives in Florida between 1565 and 1571 alone bore comparison with them. We know, of course, how near each newly planted group of settlers was to extinction when the next arrived, but replacement was not the primary reason for the outcome; it was rather the feeling that this must be a large and diversified colony if the wide array of objectives sought to be within reach of attainment. The basic reason why all this was possible was that the main reservoir of English capital, that of the London merchants, had at last been tapped for American colonizing purposes and that this, in turn, had attracted enough capital from outside the city to provide resources sufficient for continuous colonization. Jamestown's survival seemed to hang many times in the balance but its eventual survival was not accidental. It was the result of the continued momentum of the Jamestown effort, and it was this which was quite new. And so at last, with state encouragement though no royal finance, the English achieved a major breakthrough in American colonization.

Jamestown alone, for all the virtuosity shown in its founding, still does not fully establish that the English had mastered an adequate range of techniques of colonization. In spite of its successes over adversity, Virginia was too expensive in lives and money to provide a pattern for settlement elsewhere. The Pilgrims were the first to point the way to something simpler and more complete, the occupation of a tiny area by a community with a discipline which gave it the character of a social entity from the beginning, instead of only after a long period of essentially artificial cultivation, and yet a settlement which retained adequate ties with fishing and merchant interests in England. The Pilgrims have been unduly overshadowed as pioneers in the last thirty years, just as they had been overemphasized as the found and origin of all white settlement in North America in the previous century. We can, in thinking of the progress of colonization up to the further revolution in settlement which the Massachusetts Bay Colony brought (which is beyond my scope), suggest that with Roanoke, Sugaulihoc, Jamestown, and Plymouth behind them, the English had already discovered something new and valuable in the settlement of new lands in the temperate zone of the New World.

Historians are the great rummigrants of the academic species. Always churning and rechewing the tattered remnants of the historical past, they recast them successively into new and subtly different substances. In some respects, I might suggest, the English are the rummigrants of the colonizing process. They avoid in their gradual approach to the realities of the North American continent the spectacular or the striking. They theorize about colonization only within narrow limits; they experiment tentatively and on a small scale, now with one objective, now with another. Their versatility is formidable and so is their persistence in the face of failure. Each new program, built up economically on the ruins of the one that went before, takes them a little further. We may begin by wondering why they did not achieve an earlier permanence for their attempts; we may end, perhaps, by being a little surprised that they ever brought them to a successful conclusion.

Posing the question directly, "What did the English contribute to North American discovery?" we may say that their initial contribution to the relocation of the continent at the end of the fifteenth century appears to have been greater than has, until recently, been attributed to them, as the first, it may seem, to rediscover North America land after the knowledge of the Norse pioneers had been forgotten or had become illusory, the first to recognize that North America was a land mass of continental dimensions, the first to embark on the fruitless but seminal attempts to find a way round the northern sea rim to Asia. These conclusions a reasonably critical view of their known actions would warrant.

In long-range coastal exploration they were a little behind both French and Spaniards, in the penetration of the interior by land a long way behind the Spaniards, in the exploration of the interior by water a good long way behind the French. The first substantial colonies, even if they did not survive, were planted by the French, the first which endured by the Spaniards. In persistence the English record is good, and in their colonizing plans, both on the southern and more northerly shores, they showed great resilience as well. If some of
the Elizabethan colonizing effort was unrealistic and empty of achievement, much of it was fruitless of experiments from which it proved possible to learn. In the end, each of the early English colonies in the west represented something new, though often something borrowed, in part at least, from the stock of projects and experiments of an earlier Elizabethan generation, or learned by reaction after studying the fate of the less fortunate ventures. In discovery, then, the English priorities were not sustained; in colonization, the learning of techniques of implanting white communities in latitudes which were like but not the same as those which were already familiar to them, the English achievement was in the end outstanding.

A brief account of colonizing beginnings, such as this is bound to be, held within a chronological framework and concerned with the broader aspects of colonial initiatives only, should, rightly, be paralleled by a more analytical view of the changing objectives of the English colonial ventures. It is incomplete, too, in being wholly Europe-centered. We tend to write even now as if North America was an empty wilderness on which white men wrote the first human patterns, instead of a home of many human cultural experiments for millennia before the appearance of the English and other Old World intruders. The impact, even by implication, of the earliest English contacts with the American Indian is a vital factor in the approach to settlements: the Indian reaction to casual visits to apparently temporary trading posts, to fortified settlements, to the first beginnings of land appropriation, are all essential parts of the story which involved English communities with the first Americans. But the necessity for these multiple approaches need not in itself vitiate any one of them. The process of English discovery and settlement of Eastern North America needs each and all of them if it is to be fully known and understood.
NOTE CONCERNING EDITIONS OF THE CATALOGUE
OF THE JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

The principal citations below are to one or more of the three editions of the chronologically arranged John Carter Brown printed catalogue. The differences between these three editions and the variations in their format have in the past caused some confusion. The Library has adopted the following standard method of citation: JCB Catalogue (33):1317. The number in parentheses refers to the edition, followed by the volume number. Numbers after the colon, in the case of the first and second editions, refer to the item number; in the case of the third edition, since the items were not numbered, references are to page number.

The First Edition, which includes the whole time span from the beginning through 1800, was published in Providence between 1865 and 1872. It appeared in three volumes. The last volume, devoted to the eighteenth century, was issued in two parts.

The Second Edition, which includes books from the beginning through the year 1700, was published in Providence between 1873 and 1889. It appeared in two volumes.

The Third Edition, which includes books from the beginning through the year 1674, was published in Providence between 1910 and 1931. It appeared in three volumes, of which the first and second were issued in two parts.

I. FROM MYTH TO REALITY

1. VESCO CONTE MAGGIOLO. Manuscript map of the British Isles and Western Europe, from atlas of 1311.

This map shows the British Isles facing towards the Western Ocean at about the time of the earliest British voyages. Iceland, at the north, and the Azores and Canary Islands are shown. In addition there are two legendary islands—Maldia and Brazil, to the west and southwest of Ireland. The origin of these names, as well as the belief in the existence of the islands, goes back to very early times and possibly to unrecorded voyages. The name "Brazill" was originally Gaelic and was not in any way connected with the South American country. "Brazill" was derived from brazillewood, imported from the East for many centuries.

JCB Catalogue (81):52.

2. VON SÁNT BRANDON ein hübsch lieblichs lesen, was er wunders nuff dem Meere erfanen hat. (Erfurt, 1511?)

Legends concerning islands and continents in the Atlantic Ocean are often found in early European literature. They were especially plentiful in Old Irish. With the coming of Christianity these stories attached themselves to the wandering missionaries who are known to have ranged as far as Iceland. One of them was St. Brendan of Clonfert, a sixth-century priest whose life was written shortly after A.D. 900. It attributed to him various journeys into western seas, and from it was subsequently developed a separate account of his voyaging. Usually called the Navigatio Sancti Brendani, this narrative recounted a search for a western haven for a group of monks.

The "Life" and the "Voyage," often intermingled, circulated extensively in Irish, Latin, and Norman-French before the invention of printing. This German version is one of a number of Early printed editions which give evidence of the continued vitality of the legend even after the discoveries of Columbus, Cabot, and Vespucci.


This book contains the tale of a Welsh prince, Madoc, a voyager from the British Isles to lands westward about A.D. 1170, where he founded a colony. The legend grew up in Wales and was later spread to encourage the idea that British had priority in the discovery of America. The sixteenth-century Welsh antiquarian David Powell claimed to have found the story in the collections of Humphrey Llwyd, who died in 1598. Supposedly it was written by a historian, one Caradoc of Llancarvan. Powell elaborated the story for this edition of 1584. Madoc cannot be traced as a son of Owain Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales. His name and a sea voyage he made first appeared in a fifteenth-century poem, but without details

[ 25 ]
of where he went and no mention of a colony. The rest of the story seems to have been added later.

JCB Catalogue (2):398; (3):300.


This letter, discovered in the Spanish Archives at Simancas in 1895 by L. A. Vigueras, reports that a Venetian adventurer (John Cabot) made one unsuccessful western voyage but that on his second he found an extensive mainland coast between the latitudes of the River of Bofcon (the Garonne) and Durney Head (in southwest Ireland). Day remarks the Lord High Admiral that “it is considered certain that the cape of the said land [last found by Cabot] was found and discovered in other times by the men of Bristol who found ‘Brasil’ as your Lordship knows. It was called the Vale of Brasil and it is assumed and believed to be the mainland that the Bristol men found.” Englishmen in the fifteenth century had been making regular fishing and trading voyages to Iceland as well as voyages to Madeira and the Canary Islands after they had been settled by the Portuguese and Spaniards. From 1480 onwards, at least, they were also sending expeditions into the western ocean to search for the legendary island of Brasil, which appeared on many fourteenth- and fifteenth-century maps. The “Brasil” which they found, and to which John Day makes specific reference, is most probably Newfoundland. No certain date can be set for the discovery. It could have been about 1480 or as late as the year 1492.

5. RICHARD HAKLUYT. The Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English nation. London, 1589. (Page 247.)

Robert Thorne, a Bristol merchant who lived and traded in Seville, claimed that a voyage of discovery had been made by his father sometime before 1497. He said that his inclination toward discovery I inherited of my father, which with another merchant of Bristol named Hugh Elst, were the discoverers of the New found lands, of which there is no doubt, (as none plainly appears) if the mariners would then have been ruled, and followed their Pilots minde, the lands of the West Indies (from whence all the golde commeth) had bene ours.” JCB Catalogue (2):394; (3):317-318, copy 3.

6. FERDINAND COLUMBUS. Historie. Venice, 1571. (Leaf 31r.)

Henry VII of England might have been the sponsor of Columbus’ voyage of discovery. Bartholomew Columbus went to England seeking support for the project. Authorities differ as to whether the King’s decision was favorable or not, but at any rate it was too late. Columbus had already found in the King and Queen of Spain his sponsors for the “enterprise of the Indies.” This is the earliest printing of the biography of Columbus by his son in which appears an account of Bartholomew’s trip to England.

JCB Catalogue (2):279; (3):244.

7. RICHARD HAKLUYT. Divers voyages touching the discoverie of America. London, 1589. (Leaf 31r.)

The patent granted to John Cabot by Henry VII on March 5, 1496, is the earliest dated evidence both of his presence in England and of his success in convincing the King that Atlantic lands lay westward across the sea. Hakluyt discovered this document in the royal archives and published it here, thus providing an important step in clarifying the early English voyages which had hitherto been attributed solely to Cabot’s son Sebastian. Under this patent John Cabot raised the standard of England on American land in the summer of 1497. The following year he was lost at sea in a further attempt to sail westward. It is possible that he discovered that the westward lands formed a barrier blocking any route between England and the East.


Drawn on a polar projection, this is one of the few surviving maps of the early sixteenth century to show the American discoveries. Its special importance is that it bears the legend “terra de los incayos,” or “land of the English,” indicating some knowledge on the part of the Italian mapmaker of early English voyages from Bristol before 1495.

JCB Catalogue (3):59.

II. The Northwest Passage

For two generations after John Cabot’s voyages, English interest in the western discoveries was spasmodic. While Spain grew rich from her American conquests and Portugal prospered from her Far Eastern trade by the Cape of Good Hope, England was barred from both areas. The hope of reaching Cathay by a northerly passage or of sailing northwest by means of a strait through the North American continent seemed to be England’s best opportunity. The concept of the Northwest Passage was the first result of the rethinking done by Sebastian Cabot after his father’s failure to find Cathay. It persisted and led in the last quarter of the sixteenth century to a series of probing voyages which carried Englishmen far into Arctic waters.
9. PETER MARTYR. The History of Travyle in the West and East Indies ... With a discourse of the Northwest Passage ... done into English by Richard Eden ... augmented, and finished by Richardes Willes. London, 1577. (Folio 124v.)

Sebastian Cabot, son of the discoverer, led a long and varied career in the service of both England and Spain. He was an expert on navigation, a mapmaker, and an explorer. Throughout his life he was obsessed with a belief in a northern passage to Asia. It appears that he first tried to apply his theory in 1538 when he made a voyage to the Northwest, possibly (though the accounts are confusing) reaching Hudson Strait. Peter Martyr, the celebrated historian, talked with him about it shortly after he entered the Spanish service in 1519. Four years later Martyr published a report of the conversation. Shown here is the English version issued in 1577 with other materials on the Northwest Passage which had been collected by Richard Willes.

JCB Catalogue (231:1512; 31:286).

10. HUMPHREY GILBERT. A Discourse Of a Discoverie for a new Passage to Catla. London, 1576.

Humphrey Gilbert's Discourse has been called "the first considerable English treatise on the subject of the Northwest Passage, although it was "an academic exercise by a fairly recent recruit to geographical studies." English historians were broadenin the early years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, but even so Gilbert was originally moved to write his Discourse in 1565 to prove to his brother John, a Devonshire squire, that the voyage of discovery he had in mind was not 'vain, or foollish.'

Gilbert's project did not materialize, but his Discourse was put into print a decade later to help gain support for the backers of Martin Frobisher's northern voyages.

JCB Catalogue (231:1604; 31:1861).

11. ROBERT THORNE. "This is the forme of a Mappe ..." from Richard Hakluyt, Divers Voyages, London, 1582.

The desire of British merchants to find a passage to the Indies that would avoid Spanish and Portuguese claims in the New World early manifested itself in a proposal by Robert Thorne, a British trader in Seville. In 1527 he wrote a letter to Henry VIII suggesting that England establish northern trade routes to the East. With it he sent a world map based on the best information available to him at that time. Fifty-five years later Hakluyt published Thorne's proposal and the map in the Divers Voyages as a part of his investigation of a "shorte and easie passage by the Northwest." He apologized for the map's shortcomings, saying, "although the same in this present time may seeme rude, yet I have set it out, because his booke could not well be understood without the same." He goes on to point out that in Thorne's time merchants were not as well versed in cosmography as they later became. In England the spread of geographical knowledge among merchants was particularly important because they provided much of the financial backing for the early English voyages and exploration.


12. GEORGE BEST. A True Discourse of the late voyages of discoverie, for the finding of a passage to Cathayn, by the Northwest. London, 1578.

Martin Frobisher's three voyages northwest of Greenland to Baffin Island are among the most important in the early history of the discovery of Arctic America. Through them hundreds of Englishmen obtained experience in American waters. Their disappointment with the cold and barren northern islands turned many toward warmer climates but later a few attempted to follow up Frobisher's explorations in search of a Northwest Passage.

Frobisher got a great deal of unfavorable publicity for diverting so much of his energy to the search for gold- and silver-bearing ore. The adventurers and guineas which he brought back had no minerals which could be profitably extracted. The lure of his gold was only the glint of myth.

In the course of Sir Francis Drake’s voyage around the world he explored the western coast of North America, claiming it for England and calling it “New Albion.” Although he did not actually search for a western entrance to the Northwest Passage, he told the Spaniards in Mexico he intended to go home by that route. The published account of Drake’s circumnavigation was delayed nine years after his return. Initially Queen Elizabeth wished to limit publicity about the voyage. After her breach with Spain in 1585 Drake himself was otherwise engaged and did not begin to write his story until after the defeat of the Armada. When he discovered that Hakluyt was completing the first edition of his Principall Navigations, he allowed a summary account to be added to the collection after the volume had been completed. Not all copies of the book contain the Drake account.


Sir Francis Drake’s discoveries on the west coast of North America aroused the interest of John Davis, who had earlier voyaged in northwestern waters beyond Greenland. In 1591 he joined a raiding expedition to the Pacific. Its commander, Thomas Cavendish, promised Davis “that when we came to the California, I should have his Pinnace with my own Bark (which for the purpose went with me to my great charges) to search that Northwest discovery upon those back parts of America.” The expedition did not get beyond the Straits of Magellan, however. Davis’s description of this abortive attempt appeared in the preface of this sailor’s manual first published in 1595.

JCB Catalogue (32):246-246.

III. The Spaniards and French in North America

The English were not in the forefront of the early exploration of North America. The Spaniards, first from their bases in the Caribbean and later from Mexico, were in a better position to penetrate the southern part of the continent. The French, too, were ahead of them in the discovery of the coast of North America and the penetration of the northern part of the continent.


This monumental work on Spain’s conquest of the New World is indispensable for the study of the early exploration of North America by the Spaniards. The section on Florida is the earliest comprehensive account of Spanish activities and is particularly important since it is based on sources which have disappeared. Among the small portraits in the lower right-hand corner of the title page is that of Ponce de León, the earliest known voyager to Florida.


While Cortés was carrying out the conquest of Mexico his reports in the form of letters to the King were often of such interest to all in Europe that most of them were promptly put into print. The map accompanying the Latin translation of his earliest surviving letter gives a general idea of the Gulf of Mexico and uses the name “Florida” for the first time on a printed map. On the same sheet is a plan of the City of Mexico.

JCB Catalogue (21):81; (31):90.

20. DIEGO RIBERO. Carta Universal En que Se contiene todo lo que del mundo Se ha descubierto fasta agora ... Año del 1592, en Sevilla ... Facsimile, colored. “Reproduced from the original in the Museum of the ‘Propugnada’ in Rome ... by W. Griggs, London.” in 1895.

Diego Ribero, a Portuguese, was cosmographer to the King of Spain. His map, made in 1599, shows the American discoveries made up to that time by the Spanish and Portuguese, and also the Line of Demarcation which had been established by treaty between their respective possessions in 1494. No trace of the Cabot voyages appears, but there is perhaps a record of early Bristol voyages in “Tiera de Labrador,” which probably represents Greenland.


A French expedition in 1524, sponsored by Francis I under the command of the Italian navigator, Giovanni da Verrazzano, set out to find a western passage to Asia. “My intention was,” he says in his report of the voyage, “to reach Cathay and the extreme east of Asia, not expecting to find such an obstacle of new land as I found; and if for some reason I expected to find it, I thought it to be not without some strait to penetrate to the Eastern Ocean.” He did not find the strait he hoped for, but explored for the first time the east coast from South Carolina to Cape Breton. His report that the land narrowed to a few miles in one place the Carolina
VESCOVOTE MAGGI0LO. [World map, manuscript] "Vescovote de Maggiolo compendio en hac carta. In Januano dixit. 1527, die xx. decembrie." Facsimile, colored, in Edward Luther Stevenson, Maps Illustrating Early Discovery and Exploration in America 1500-1530 reproduced by Photography from the original Manuscript, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1905, No. 10, section showing North and South America.

This section of Maggiolo's great world map records the results of the 1594 voyage of Verrazano, and shows clearly his mistaken idea of the narrowness of the continent, which influenced some of the English voyages. It is known that Henry VIII owned a map that had been made and given to him by Verrazano himself, and it may very well have been similar to this.

M. D. XXXIII. DEL MESE DI DICEMBRE. La carta universale della terra ferma & Isole delle Indie occidentali ... Venice, 1534.

This is one of the few printed maps of the period to be based on Spanish knowledge of the American coasts. Although published in 1554, it shows no influence of the North American discoveries of Verrazano (who sailed under the French flag). Instead it follows the ideas of Esteban Gaeta, a Portuguese pilot in the service of Spain who made a voyage in 1595 looking for a passage through the North American continent between Florida and Newfoundland.


ALVAR NUNEZ CABEZA DE VACA. [Zamora, 1542.]

A Spanish expedition of 1528 under Pánfilo de Narváez came to grief on the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico. The expedition is memorable chiefly for the overland journey of Cabeza de Vaca and a few companions, who for eight years wandered among the Indians, finally reaching the Spanish settlements in northern Mexico near the Gulf of California. The report of his journey stimulated the hopes of the Spanish adventurers for finding additional riches in the country to the north and led to the later explorations of De Soto and Coronado.


JACQUES CARTIER. A Shorte And brieyle narration of the two Navigations and Discoveries to the Northwest partes called Newe Fraunce. London, 1580.

Jacques Cartier's discovery and exploration of the Gulf and River of St. Lawrence was a by-product of another search for the Northwest Passage carried out by
the French in 1554 and 1555. The narrative of his first two voyages is shown here in its English publication in 1580, a translation by John Florio of Oxford from the Italian version in Ranasile's book of voyages (number 21 in this catalogue). The publication was the first to be sponsored by Richard Hakluyt. In Florio's preface to his translation, he echoes Hakluyt's sentiments when he says of the English, "there is no nation that hath so good righte, or is more fitt for this purpose, than they are, who . . . might very commodiously transporte a sufficient number of men to plant a Colonie."

JCB Catalogue (31:1:331; (31:1:278).

IV. England's Interest Aroused


England's interest in voyages overseas found impetus in the work of a small group of geographer-scholars who were able to translate the reports of Spanish and Portuguese voyages. The first of these men was Richard Eden, whose first effort was this little book, a translation of part of an enormous volume in Latin by Sebastian Münster, a learned German scholar. From 1550 onwards Englishmen had been making voyages to Africa, first to Morocco and then to Guinea, and Eden's preface makes clear his patriotic motives and his desire to encourage his countrymen who had "attempted with new viages to seerche ye seas and newe found lands."\n
JCB Catalogue (31:1:185; (31:1:177).


Eden followed Münster's "treatise" with a more ambitious translation of Peter Martyr's history of the Spanish discoveries and conquests in the Western Hemisphere. This book was dedicated to Philip II of Spain and Queen Mary of England, whose marriage had taken place some months before. In it Eden added the first accounts of the English voyages recently made to Africa, thus setting a model later followed by Hakluyt.


William Cuningham, a physician, compiled the first English book of cosmography, the science which, he said, had been responsible for the discovery of America, "unknowne in all ages before our time." An understanding of astronomy as well as of geography was a prerequisite to the improvement in the science of navigation which made possible long voyages over the ocean.

JCB Catalogue (31:1:288; (31:1:204).
30. NICOLÁS DE MONARDES. Joyfull Newes Out of the newe founde worlde ... Englished by Jhon Frampton Munchaunt. London, 1577.

Eeden's pioneering work of translation was followed by others. Notable among these was John Frampton whose efforts were intended to invite his fellow countrymen to challenge the supremacy of Spain and Portugal in overseas enterprises. He also thought of it as a personal revenge on the Spaniards for whom he had conceived a natural and deep-seated hatred because of the treatment he had received at the hands of the Inquisition while a trader in Spain.

Perhaps Frampton's most important work was this translation of a work written by a Spanish physician and botanist first published in Seville in 1565 under the title, \textit{Do Libros de Todas las cosas de Indias Occidentales al uso de la Medicina}. The actual translation was based on a 1574 printing, the first complete edition of all three parts of the work (see number 61 below). Monardes's description of the products, trees, and other products of America, many of them thought to have high medicinal value, served as advertising for the attractions of a marvelous New World. Moreover, since many of these plants were said to come from "Florida," the book was taken by the English as a guide to the herbal resources of the North American coast from the Carolinas Outer Banks to Maine.


31. BERNARDINO DE ESCALANTE. A discourse of the navigation which the Portugueses doe make ... Translated ... by John Frampton. London, 1579.

Another of Frampton's translations was made from a Spanish account of the Portuguese discoveries and trade in the Far East. Although America is mentioned only incidentally in this book, it still may be considered as a stimulus to American exploration because it described the wonders of Cathay and the Spice Islands which might perhaps be reached by way of the Northwest Passage.

JCB Catalogue (31): 575.

32. AGUSTÍN DE ZÁRATE. The strange and delectable History of the discovery and Conquest of ... Peru ... Translated out of the Spanish tongue, by T. Nicholas. London, 1581.

This translation byyet another Englishman who traded in Spain describes the conquest of Peru and the source of the silver that was changing the economy of Europe. No subsidy was needed to make attractive to Englishmen the possibility of discovering a mountain of silver similar to Potosí.


Translated from the French by Thomas Hacket, a bookseller and printer responsible for a number of geographical works, this book is chiefly concerned with a French colony in Brazil attempted by Durand de Villegaignon. It has, however, a short section on North America, dealing particularly with Canada, which contains what is probably the first account of Cartier's explorations to be published in English.


34. ANTONIO GALVÃO. The Discoveries of the World from their first original unto the yeere of our Lord 1555. London, 1601.

This translation from the Portuguese was published by Richard Hakluyt, the historian and editor who spent most of his life encouraging and helping to organise English exploration and colonising activities. He was directly or indirectly responsible for the publication of twenty-eight works on geography and discovery between 1580 and 1635, and his works are to be found scattered throughout this exhibition. His quite accurate estimate of the importance of his own activities is expressed in the dedication of this book. Remarking that Galvão, who wrote in 1555, mentioned the English only four times, he explains that this was because "there was little count of our annis travels. And for ought I can see, there had no great matter yet come to light, if my selfe had not undertaken that heavi burden."


35. ANTONIO GALVÃO. Tratado. [Lisbon, 1563.]

This is the original Portuguese edition of the preceding book written by a one-time governor of the Molucca Islands. By 1601 when Hakluyt came to publish it, it had already become a source book. He was unable to find a copy and had to depend upon a faulty English translation which came to him from an unknown source and to which he made a number of additions.

V. The French and Spaniards Clash in Florida


The first short-lived French settlement in North America was made in 1569 by a group of Huguenots under Jean Ribault. Their "Charlesfort" was probably on Parris Island in Port Royal Sound (near the site of the present Marion base in South Carolina). The engraving was made from a drawing by Le Moyne, an artist-observer, who accompanied a later French expedition which visited the site of the fort. It gives a generally correct impression of the land, flat, marshy, honeycombed with tidal inlets, and not an ideal location for a pioneer settlement.


Ribault left thirty men at Charlesfort and returned to France for supplies and additional colonists. Religious wars had broken out in France during his absence, and he found his best hope was to appeal to Queen Elizabeth for support of his Protestant colony. The Queen was sympathetic, but for complicated diplomatic and political reasons Ribault's English venture came to nothing. His colonists abandoned the fort even before the Spaniards had time to dislodge them. Ribault's report of his expedition, printed in English in 1565, was the earliest book linking the French and English interest in Florida.

This pen copy of the original edition in the British Museum was acquired by John Carter Brown in 1846. A photographic facsimile of the other known copy in the Huntington Library which contains two leaves of dedication by Thomas Hacket to Sir Martin Bowes was published in Jean Ribault by the Florida State Historical Society in 1927 as its Publication No. 7, edited by J. T. Connor.

JCB Catalogue (21):244; (3):222.


A second French colonizing expedition under René de Laudonnière was sent out during a lull in the Huguenot wars. The site chosen this time was on the St. John's River not far from the present Jacksonville, Florida. An engraved plan of the fort built by Laudonnière's men illustrates a letter written by one of the soldiers to his father in Rouen. It is probably the earliest printed view of a European settlement in North America.


The English seaman John Hawkins, best known for his voyages to Africa and his activities in the slave trade, paid a visit to the struggling French colony on his way home from a profitable voyage to the West Indies in 1555. Neither Hawkins nor Laudonnière knew whether his country was at war with the others, but the Frenchmen broke out his last bottle of wine to entertain his guest, while Hawkins sold Laudonnière a ship and enough supplies to return home. This book, the first full account of the French activities in Florida, contains Laudonnière's version of Hawkins's visit. An English translation appeared in London in the following year; the Hawkins version of the visit is to be found in Hakluyt's Principal Navigations, London, 1589.


Supplies and reinforcements reached Fort Caroline with a French fleet commanded by Ribault just in time to meet the Spaniards under Pedro Menéndez de Avilés who was determined to put an end to French colonies in Florida. One of the few Frenchmen to escape the massacre at the fort was a carpenter, Nicolas Le Challeux, who managed to get home to France and tell his story. Shown here is one of several editions printed in order to promote French feeling against the Spaniards. An English translation by Thomas Hacket was also published in 1566 of which only three copies survive, all in British libraries.


41. BARTOLOMÉ DE FLORES. Obra Nuestra Real Institución, En La qual se cuíta, la felix victoria. [Seville, 1571.]

The repeated failure of her early Florida expeditions led Spain to abandon any attempt to colonize the area. It was only when the French appeared that she took a renewed interest. In 1568 Pedro Menéndez de Avilés persuaded Philip II to allow him to attempt to establish a settlement. His lasting achievement was St. Augustine, but part of his task was the elimination of the French (described in number 40 in this catalogue). The poem of Bartolomé de Flores in praise of Menéndez's "happy victory" over the French is the only contemporary printed account of the incident from the Spanish point of view.


Two years after the Fort Caroline massacre, Dominique de Gourgues, a French corsair, attacked the Spaniards who had renamed the fort San Mateo. In what he felt was a justifiable revenge, he wiped out the fort and garrison, adding one more chapter of violence to the grim early history of Florida. The first appearance in print of De Gourgues's version of the story of his exploit was in this work.

JCB Catalogue (21):548; (3):293.
VI. The Beginnings of English Colonization


Sir Humphrey Gilbert was the first Englishman to see clearly the possibilities of becoming a landed proprietor in North America. His plan was an ambitious one, vague as to territorial boundaries but specific in its feudal organization. It failed partly from lack of capital and partly because no one fully realized how difficult was the actual process of planting and supporting a successful pioneer settlement. Gilbert took possession of Newfoundland in 1583, but some of his vessels were wrecked, and on the way home his own small ship sank in a storm. The *Reporte* was written by a leader of a group of English Catholics who had hoped to accompany the expedition. He expected this pamphlet to attract subscribers for another voyage the following year, but again he met with disappointment.

46. CHRISTOPHER CARLEILL. *A discourse upon the intended Voyage to the bethermost parts of America*. [London, 1583.]

Among the earliest pamphlets issued to promote a specific voyage was this *Discourse* by Christopher Carleill, who planned to follow Gilbert's attempt. It was written before the return of Gilbert's unsuccessful expedition and was a forthright effort to convince the merchants of the importance and practical nature of the project. Little is known of Carleill's actual voyage. He did set out for New England in 1584, but returned without going further west than Ireland.

JCB Catalogue (21):50; (31):283 (entered in error under 1851).


Richard Hakluyt was responsible for the most important document connected with the early English attempts at colonization. His "Discourse of Western Planting," as it is usually called, was presented to Queen Elizabeth in 1584. It was to win the approval of the Queen for the western voyages and also to provide a textbook on colonization for her secretary of state, Sir Francis Walsingham. The document was not put into print at the time, but the ideas expressed in it became extremely influential. Hakluyt acted as a research consultant and technical adviser to the group interested in American colonization and especially to Gilbert and Raleigh.

The original manuscript from which the text was first printed in this form is now in the New York Public Library.


This is the first published map containing the name "Virginia." In 1584 Queen Elizabeth granted Gilbert's half-brother Walter Raleigh the right to colonize anywhere south of Newfoundland. A reconnoitering expedition the following year recommended Roanoke Island on the coast of Carolina, and Raleigh promptly named the area after his Queen. The book, one of many for which Hakluyt was responsible, was a republication in full of Martyr's great account of the early Spanish discoveries taken from the edition printed at Aleid de Henares in 1550.

JCB Catalogue (31):111.


Richard Hakluyt's cousin, whose name was the same, was a lawyer of the Middle Temple, London. He had been a pioneer in the field of preceding colonization and advising the organizers of expeditions. This short essay which he originally wrote in connection with Raleigh's Virginia project discusses the possible economic advantages the English might derive from colonies. His statement, "Trafficke easily followeth conquest," was an early expression of the doctrine that "trade follows the flag."


VII. Raleigh's Roanoke Colonies

The colonists sent out by Sir Walter Raleigh to Virginia (parts of modern North Carolina and Virginia) included Thomas Harriot, "a good geographer to make description of the lands discovered," and John White, "a skillful painter . . . to bring the descriptions of all beasts, birds, fishes, trees, towns, &c." To these two men we are indebted for a first-hand pictorial record of the Roanoke colony. The
paintings of John White are among the earliest original pictures of North American Indians, scenes, plants, and animals. In 1590 some of his pictures were engraved and published by Theodor de Bry at Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany, with the text of Harriot's report in English, Latin, French, and German versions. Some of these were reprinted in several editions. The engravings thus achieved a wide circulation and were one of England's more significant contributions to sixteenth-century Europe's knowledge of America.

Copies of the 1590 editions in all four languages have been chosen for this exhibition from the collection of De Bry's publications acquired by John Carter Brown during the early years of his collecting.


In July 1584, two English ships commanded by Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe discovered the island behind the Carolina Outer Banks which the local Indians called Roanoke. At first the Indians resisted the English but they soon settled down to friendly commerce. De Bry's engraving of a lost drawing by White shows an English boat penetrating the sound to reach the island.

JCB Catalogue (21): 397; (2): 386.


"Pomeloco" was one of the first Indian settlements to be visited by the English. A palisaded village, it showed community life among the Carolina Algonquian people. Its temple was distinctive in shape. Large family long-houses were matched by small individual dwellings and storehouses. A communal fire, cornfields, and a well make up a vivid and accurate picture of tribal life.


This fishing scene is one of the most elaborate of the engravings, composed from many individual drawings. The fish weirs, the dugout canoes, nets, fish spears, and paddle are all important in illustrating Indian artifacts. The fish seen in and through the waters of Pamlico Sound and the flowers along the shore illustrate the natural history of the Carolina Outer Banks. The original drawing shows fewer fishes, is simpler and more realistic. The original drawing is reproduced as plate number 42 in Hulton and Quinn, The American Drawings of John White, described in number 55.

The arrival of the Englishmen in Virginia.

Heere the coasts of Virginia are full of hills, woods by the entrance into the maine land is hard to finde. For although they bee separat by divers and sundrie large Ditches, which seeme to yield commodious entrance, yet to our great perill we prosted that they were shallow, and full of dangerous flares, and could never peace opp the maine land, until we made trial in many places with or without fire. At lengthe we found an entrance vpon our mens diligent search thereof. After that we had gained opp, and tyed thee in foure short space we discovered a mangy turer falling downe into the townes, our enemies. These Hands, which none other we could not take opp any thing far by reason of the heightness, the mouth of being annoyed with lands downe in with the tyde therefore the fyllinge further, we came vnto a Good bigge land, the inhabitants thereof as one as they sawe, began to make ane great and horrible crye, as people which meaner before had given men appalled like vs, and damme a way making our crye like wild beasts to men out of their eyes. But being gently called backe, were offered the of our ware, as gulleys, knives, habbers, and other triales, which we thought they deigned in, soe they fell still, and perceiving our Good will and courtesie came farringe vpon vs, and bore us welcome. Then they brought vs to their village in the land called, Roanoe, and vnto their Warours or Prince, which entertained vs with Reasonable curteisie, although we were amazed at the first sight of vs. Such was our arrival into the parte of the world, which wee call Virginia, the nature of bodies of men, people, they araye, and maner of living, their feasts, and bankeettes, I will particulare declare vnto you.

Harriot and White collaborated closely in compiling this map. The engraved version carefully records the features of the coast around Roanoke Island and, less carefully, the shores, sounds, and rivers (including the southern shore of Chesapeake Bay) farther afield. De Bry elaborated the rivers and mountains somewhat as compared with the original drawing, but the result is a remarkably faithful representation for the time.

One thing made clear by this map is the difficulty of entering the shallow harbors in the Outer Banks. One of Raleigh’s—and therefore Queen Elizabeth’s—chief purposes in making the settlement was to use it as a privateering base against the Spaniards to the South. The location was eventually recognized as unsuitable and the possibilities of Chesapeake Bay were investigated.

JCB Catalogue (21)1:43; (31):286-287.

53. JOHN WHITE. A selection of seventeen drawings in hand-colored facsimile.

The watercolors of John White have survived, many of them in originals, some others in nearly contemporary copies. They found their way into the collections of the British Museum in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The need for full-color reproductions of these drawings was long recognized, and in the spring of 1964 this task was accomplished with the appearance of The American Drawings of John White, edited by Paul Mellon and David Beers Quinn, published jointly by the British Museum and the University of North Carolina Press.

The decision to have the color plates produced in France made it necessary to execute hand-colored facsimiles for the use of the printer. The work was carried out by Mrs. P. D. H. Page and Mrs. Jeanne Holgate. Seventeen of these facsimiles were loaned for this exhibition by their present owner, the University of North Carolina Library, through the courtesy of William S. Powell, Chief, North Carolina Collection and Curator of North Caroliniana. The subjects of the seventeen pictures chosen to illustrate the remarkable variety of White’s work are listed here, plate numbers being cited first, followed by the catalogue item number:

- Land crab (pl. 4, cat. 5A)
- Flamingo (pl. 14, cat. 15)
- Tropic bird (pl. 16, cat. 17)
- Flying fish (pl. 26, cat. 27A)
- Trigger fish (pl. 29, cat. 31A)
- Indian woman and baby of Pamlico (pl. 34, cat. 37A)
- Indian Village of Secoto (pl. 35, cat. 38A)
- Indians dancing (pl. 36, cat. 42A)
- Indians round a fire (pl. 39, cat. 43A)
- Indians fishing (pl. 42, cat. 46A)
- Indian elder, or chief (pl. 45, cat. 50A)

[41]
Indian conjurer (pl. 48, cat. 53A)
Loggerhead turtle (pl. 56, cat. 103A)
Diamond-back terrapin (pl. 56, cat. 105)
Swallow-tail butterfly (pl. 57, cat. 108A)
Map of Eastern North America Florida to Chesapeake Bay (pl. 58, cat. 110)
Map of Raleigh's Virginia (pl. 59, cat. 111A)

54. BAPTISTA BOAZIO. The Farnese West Indian Voyage. [London, 1589]. Engraved map, with English text in 6 columns pasted beneath.

Raleigh's first colony stayed on Roanoke Island for a year, beset by the usual troubles—lack of adequate supplies, and difficulties with the Indians. Sir Francis Drake's fleet called there on the way home after his raid on St. Augustine and offered help to tide the settlers over until the arrival of another expected relief ship. A severe storm upset their plans, however, and in the end the colonists abandoned the settlement and took passage home to England with Drake. This general map of the expedition's route clearly shows the Virginia settlement as the last stop before the homeward voyage. The printed summary account of the voyage pasted beneath this copy of the map is the scarce English version.

John White was among those rescued. Drake's company included a man of similar interests and abilities, an artist-cartographer whose identity is not known. The two men must have become acquainted on the homeward voyage, and some exchange of ideas seems to have taken place. The drawing of the "Sea Conyne," or triggerfish, which is found at the lower left corner of this later map of the Drake voyage, is almost exactly like one of John White's drawings.


55. RICHARD HAKLUYT. The Third And Last Volume Of The Voyages. London, 1600. (Page 287)

This volume contains the most complete contemporary account of Raleigh's Virginia colonies. It is open to show the list of colonists sent out on the second expedition in 1587, under the governorship of John White, the artist. Although the intent was to found a "City of Raleigh" on Chesapeake Bay, the colonists were put ashore at the less favorable site of the earlier colony on Roanoke Island, White returned to England to arrange for additional supplies, which he was never able to send. The list of the personnel of the "Lost Colony" of Roanoke includes Virginia Dare, White's granddaughter, who was born in the settlement. According to the list, another less famous baby was born to Dionys and Margery Harvey, but there is no record of the child's Christian name.


56. FRANCISCUS DRACUS REDIVIVUS. Das ist, Kurför Beschreibung ... Amsterdam, 1596.

The threat of the Armada, illustrated here by a somewhat inaccurate picture in a German tract, kept relief and reinforcements from sailing for Virginia in 1588 and

1589. John White made conscientious efforts but even after the defeat of the Spanish fleet it was difficult to get ships because English seamen were more interested in privatering expeditions against the Spanish. By 1590 White alone was able to get back to Roanoke but by that time the colonists were gone. The circumstances of their disappearance have never been completely known.


57. WALTER RALEIGH. The Discoverie of the large, rich, and beauteous Empire of Guiana. London, 1596.

Raleigh was a man of many projects, but he did not entirely forget his unfortunate Roanoke colonists. In 1595 on his first voyage to Guiana in search of El Dorado, he told some Spaniards of his hope of finding the colonists. In this narrative of the voyage he adds that he would have gone to Virginia "in my returne if extremity of weather had not forth me from the said coast."

The portrait of Raleigh, inserted in this copy of his account of Guiana, was engraved by Simon van der Passe. It was intended as a frontispiece for Raleigh's History of the World, the massive work he wrote in later years while a prisoner in the Tower of London.


VIII. The North Part of Virginia


For some years after the tragic failure of Raleigh's Roanoke colonies and the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the English showed little active interest in North American voyages. It was inevitable that their interest would revive, however, and the possibilities of success became greater with the remarkable advances in navigation science and seamen's craft made in England during the second half of the sixteenth century. Slowly an inward-looking island nation was being transformed into a respected naval power. This progress, both technical and geographical, is exemplified in this world map drawn on the Mercator projection which had been given practical exposition by Edward Wright, an Oxford mathematician, some years after it had been conceived by the celebrated Dutch mapmaker.


59. [JOSEPH HALL]. The Discovery of A New World. [London, ca. 1609.]

In 1597 a congregation of English separatists planned to go into voluntary exile on the Magdalen Islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. There they expected to con-
60. **JOHN BRERETON.** A Brief and true Relation of the Discoverie of the North Part of Virginia ... Made this present yeere 1602, by Captaine Bartholomew Gosnold ... and divers other gentlemen. London, 1602.

This is the first separate publication of an English voyage to New England. In addition to this printing an enlarged edition appeared in the same year. Gosnold brought the ship ***Concord*** to the Maine coast, discovered Cape Cod and Cape Cod Bay, and explored Martha's Vineyard and Nauset's Bay. He began to erect a trading post on Cutthunk Island, but his men refused to stay there. He traded profitably with the Indians for furs and took home to England small furs, and timber.

JCB Catalogue (3)2-15;

61. **NICOLÁS DE MONARDES.** Joyfull Newses Out of the New-found Worlde ... Englished by John Frampton Merchant. Newly corrected as by conference with the old copies may appeare. London, 1596. (Folio 45v.)

From the point of view of the "adventurers," or as we would call them today the investors in the early voyages, it was essential that the ships return from America with some kind of salable cargo. During Bartholomew Gosnold's stay on Cutthunk Island the Indians helped him load small furs on the ship, and he brought a good return on the London market—three shillings a pound. The use of small furs as a medicine, thought them to be good for almost any ailment, had been popularized in England by John Frampton's ***Joyfull Newses out of the newe founde worldes.*** The sketch of the sassafras tree shown here also appeared in the 1577 edition of the translation (number 50 in this catalogue) and was copied from the 1674 edition of Monardes entitled **Primaera y segunda y tercerca Partes de la Historia medicinal, Seville, 1574.** It took only a few cargoes of sassafras to glut the market in London, and later voyagers usually sought the more dependable profits of the fur trade.

JCB Catalogue (3)1:497;

62. **MARTIN PRING.** "A Voyage set out from the City of Bristol ... for the discoverie of the North part of Virginia ..." in Samuel Purchas, **Purchas his Pilgrimes ... The Fourth Part,** London, 1625.

The Reverend Richard Hakluyt was not content to publish accounts of voyages. He also helped to promote them. In 1605 Martin Pring took the ships ***Speedwell*** and ***Discovery,*** equipped by Hakluyt in association with some Bristol merchants, to the coasts of Maine and Massachusetts. This voyage was intended to follow up Gosnold's discoveries of 1602. Pring built a summer camp, called by a stockade, near the site on Province town on Cape Cod (some believe it to have been on Plymouth Harbor) and traded with the Indians for furs. He made another voyage to New England in 1606, of which we know little.

JCB Catalogue (3)2-508;

63. **JAMES ROSIER.** A True Relation of the most prosperous voyage made this present yeare 1605, by Captaine George Waymouth, in the Discovery of the land of Virginia. London, 1605.

George Waymouth was one of the first Englishmen to make a close inspection of the Maine coast. James Rosier, who accompanied him as a scientific observer (just as Thomas Harriot had done with the Roanoke colony in 1585-1586), tells us in this book how Waymouth explored Monhegan Island, the approaches to the St. George's River and the river itself. He adds his own notes on natural history and on the Indians. The length of the St. George's River was exaggerated to impress prospective settlers.

Waymouth had been sent out by Lord Arundell of Wardour to prepare for a settlement of English Catholics. On his return the Catholics abandoned the scheme, and this little book was intended to attract others to take up trading and settling in northern New England.

JCB Catalogue (3)3:55.


In this account, Samuel de Champlain tells how he examined the shores of New England and the Maritimes, the St. Lawrence, and the Great Lakes, as well as how he settled St. Croix Island in 1604, Port Royal in 1605, and later Quebec. His descriptions of the coast and islands made a great contribution to knowledge of North America. Champlain's plan of the island in the St. Croix River, between Maine and New Brunswick, shows where seventy-nine Frenchmen camped for the winter of 1604-1605. The French achievements interacted closely with those of the English. The English voyages to New England from 1605 to 1608 were primarily intended to check French penetration northward, where it was hoped English colonies might be established. They were, therefore, an essential part of the preparations for the eventual success of the Jamestown settlement.

JCB Catalogue (3)2:147; (3)3:93.
Publications of the
Associates of the John Carter Brown Library

The First Century of the John Carter Brown Library. 1946.
American Woodcuts and Engravings, 1670-1800. 1946.
A Rhode Island Chaplain in the Revolution. 1949.
Errand into the Wilderness. 1952.
Printed by The Anthoensen Press, Portland, Maine.
Illustrations in collotype by