

consequently we know almost nothing of a voyage which was destined to become one of the most famous in the history of maritime discovery. At early morn on June 24th—being St. John the Baptist's day—after having been about fifty-three days out of Bristol, the “Matthew” first sighted land. Cabot thought he had reached Cathay, in the east of Asia, and visions of India and its riches rose before him. Greater, however, was to be his renown than if he had merely found a western passage to the East, for he had fathomed the marvellous and well-kept secret of the Occident—he had opened to the Old World the mainland of a new and boundless continent, the very existence of which had never been dreamed of by the most imaginative cosmographer or mariner of the fifteenth century.

Cabot landed and erected a cross, and beside it unfurled the banners of St. George and St. Mark, and took formal possession in the name of Henry of England. On that day began the claim of Britain in the New World.

The location of the landfall has been the subject of much vehement controversy. Portions of the coast of Labrador and of Newfoundland have each had their advocates; but I think most writers now agree that some portion of the Island of Cape Breton is the right situation, and there cannot be a doubt but that such evidence as we now have points to that locality. Dr. S. E. Dawson, whose exhaustive and able articles have done very much to clear away the uncertainty which attaches itself to nearly every particular of the Cabot voyages, considers that Cape Breton, on the eastern side of the island of that name, is the exact situation of the landfall.

One of the documentary evidences in favor of the Cape Breton Island landfall is an engraved *mappemonde* now preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. It bears the date 1544, and there are reasons for believing that Sebastian Cabot was indirectly responsible for some of the information it contains. At or near the extremity of what is evidently intended to represent the present Island of Cape Breton are inscribed the words *Prima tierra vista* (first land seen), and an inscription elsewhere on the chart informs us that this land was discovered by Cabot. If the authority of that map is in the main unquestioned, there can be no doubt regarding the approximate location of the landfall. All, however, do not admit its claims to accuracy, although the balance of opinion is in favour of the theory it supports. It must be remembered, though, that the claims of Cape