

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

REGARDING

JOHN AND SEBASTIAN CABOT¹

"Although the fact of their voyages had been reported by jealous and watchful liegers at the English Court to the principal cabinets of the Continent . . . the historical literature relating to the discovery of America, as preserved in print, is, for nearly twenty years after the events took place, silent as to the enterprises and even the names of the Cabots. Scarcely anything has come down to us directly from these navigators themselves, and for what we know we have hitherto been chiefly indebted to the uncertain reports, in foreign languages, of conversations originally held with Sebastian Cabot, many years afterwards, and sometimes related at second and third hand . . . For more than two hundred years succeeding these events there was no mention made of more than one voyage."—Deane, in Winsor, *America*, III. 7-8.

The section of SOURCES in the present bibliography is based upon the admirable "*Syllabus* of the original contemporary documents which refer to the Cabots, to their lives, and to their voyages, 1476-1557," which Mr. Harrisse prepared for his *John Cabot the discoverer of North America and Sebastian his son*, London, 1896, pp. 387-469. From these eighty pages have been taken the statements giving the exact location of the manuscripts cited below, and in my references to printed books. The latter have in most instances been verified by examination of the volume in question. Where these were not available in Providence, I have used the copies belonging to Harvard University or to the Boston Public Library.²

Henry Harrisse, in his *Jean et Sébastien Cabot, leur origine et leurs voyages*, printed in 1882, the most authoritative text he could obtain of every document or extract which throws any light on the lives and character of the father and son, upon whose deeds England bases her claim to the discovery of the North American mainland in 1497.

The comprehensive nature of Mr. Harrisse's very careful and very thorough work renders it unnecessary to refer specifically in each case to the pages in his volume where are printed the pertinent passages from documents and narratives which are catalogued below. The few cases where this volume has been found incomplete are such as are noted as printed in Mr. Harrisse's *Cabot*.

¹ Including works written or printed during the XVI. century, containing references to the Cabots. Including also modern works whose chief value is due to the contemporary documents relating to Cabot, which they contain.

² The number following some of the titles is the call-number in the Providence Public Library. Books which were consulted at the Providence Athenæum, the Boston Public Library, Brown University, or Harvard University Libraries, are designated by the letters, respectively, A, B.P.L., B, and H.