

T H E  
C A S E  
O F T H E  
*H U D S O N ' s - B A Y* Company.

2 May,  
22 Cha. II.  
1669.  
The Charter.

**H**IS late Majesty King *Charles* the Second, by Charter under the Great Seal, reciting, That Prince *Rupert*, and divers other Persons therein named, had, at their great Cost, undertaken an Expedition for *Hudson's-Bay*, in the North-west Parts of *America*, for the Discovery of a new Passage into the *South-Sea*, and for finding some Trade for Furs, and other Commodities; and had there made such Discoveries as encouraged them to proceed further; and had besought his Majesty to incorporate them, and grant them the sole Trade and Commerce of those Parts; and his Majesty being desirous to promote all Endeavours tending to the publick Good, did incorporate them by the Name of, *The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's-Bay*; and did give and grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their Successors, for ever, the sole Trade and Commerce of those Seas, Rivers, and Lakes, in whatsoever Latitude they should be, that lie within the Entrance of the Streights, called *Hudson's Streights*, with all the Lands upon the Coasts and Confines thereof, that were not then possessed by or granted to any of his Majesty's Subjects, or possessed by any other Christian State; and the whole and intire Trade and Traffick to and with the Natives and People inhabiting those Parts, and Coasts adjacent.

This Grant (as it appears from the Tenor thereof) was made to the first Discoverers of, and Adventurers in, a Trade to *Hudson's-Bay*; and which they had thereby merited; and the Crown might lawfully grant them, and did grant, by such Descriptions as the best Knowledge of these newly discovered Parts would admit of: And it was for their *Reward*, and to encourage them to prosecute a Trade they had thus begun, to Parts where no civilized Inhabitants dwelt, and none but dispersed *Indians* were to be met with, to Parts (perhaps the most inhospitable) and where the greatest Extreme of Cold is felt, of any in the known Parts of the Globe, to which any Trade is carried, and though a Sea filled with Ice, of such Bodies, and of such mountainous Height, as, by the concurrent Testimony of all Navigators, is not to be met with in any other Parts, though nearer to the Pole: So true is the Observation, that the excessive Cold or Heat that is met with in many Places, is owing to other Circumstances, than merely the Latitude of its Situation.

The Company, soon after this Charter, prosecuted the Trade to *Hudson's-Bay*, by sending several Ships, laden with Merchandize, into these Parts, and by erecting Storehouses and Factories there, and sending Persons up into the Country to cultivate an Understanding with the Natives; and though it was attended with a great Expence, and was a Work of Hazard and Difficulty, and that required Time and Pains to effect and settle a Correspondence and Traffick with the wild dispersed Natives there, who had never seen any *Europeans* before, and were Strangers to all Trade; yet the Company happily brought that about, and laid the first Foundation; which has, in Process of Time, established a considerable Trade to those Parts, and which must redound to this Company's particular Merit however they may be envied by some late Adventurers, who having failed in another Attempt they lately made, would now willingly reap the Fruit of this Company's Labour, and establish Factories, in Opposition to them, upon this Company's Foundations.

This Company, besides the Difficulties and Expences they necessarily underwent in the Outset of their Trade, have, in the Course thereof, met with others not less considerable: For in the Year 1682. the *French*, who set up a pretended Right to some of those Parts, came in Time of Peace, with a considerable Force, into the Bay, and by Surprize took several of the Company's Factories, with great Quantities of their Goods for Trade, and Furs therein, and committed several hostile Depredations, by which the Company sustained so great a Loss, that they were forced to take up Money upon Bond, and otherwise; and by this and the succeeding War with *France* were disabled from making any Dividend for a great many Years; viz. From 1691 to 1718. after the Treaty of *Utrecht*, when such of the Company's Factories as had been taken by the *French*, being delivered up to the Company's chief Officers, who were appointed by her late Majesty Queen *Anne*, to take Possession thereof, for the Use of the Company, and who thereby received her Majesty's Sanction of their Rights; and the Company being put into Possession of those Factories, they revived their Trade, and in a few Years brought it into a flourishing Condition, and have effectually kept the *French* from carrying on any Trade in the Bay ever since.

The