

Cook are of the highest order. He made many discoveries in the South Sea, and added greatly to Britain's possessions. In 1778, after leaving the Sandwich Islands, which he discovered, he reached the west coast of the continent, which he followed northward in the hope of finding a passage to the Atlantic. He penetrated as far as the bay now known as Cook's Inlet in Alaska, but of course failed in the object of his search. At Bering Strait he was repelled by the impenetrable wall of ice. Returning to the Sandwich Islands to winter there, he met a sad death at the hands of the natives.

We now come to the last and most important explorer, from a geographical point of view, that laboured along the north-west coast of the continent,—George Vancouver.

As an accurate geographer I place Vancouver above anyone previous or subsequent to his time, considering the extent of coast and shore-line covered, and the time taken for executing the same. It is now a hundred years since Vancouver made his survey; look at the most recent charts extending from California to Cook's Inlet—1,500 miles in latitude—and thousands of miles of coast-line, and what do we find new—minor details—the groundwork is as prominent to-day as a century ago. To one familiar with Vancouver's work and the intricate British Columbian and Alaskan coast, the former must ever be an object of the highest admiration.

Vancouver was with Captain Cook when the latter visited the American continent. After Cook's death Vancouver was given the command of an expedition to the north-west coast of America, the object being to take over from the Spaniards their territory in that region, and to explore the coast from 30° north latitude to Cook's Inlet with a view to the discovery of an eastward passage to the Great Lakes in the British dominions.

Vancouver was then only 33 years of age. He spent the seasons of 1792, 1793 and 1794 in surveying the coast, wintering in the Sandwich Islands. He died when he was but forty, and before he had quite finished the narrative of his work. His zeal led him to take an active share in all operations, and the hardships he thus suffered tended, no doubt, to shorten his life. He was a man of great tact, humanity, generosity, and uprightness of character.