

In a letter dated 25 January 1796-7 they urge, "whenever there be a treaty of peace between the Crowns of England and France, that the French may not travel or drive any trade beyond the midway betwixt Canada and Albany Fort, which we reckon to be within the bounds of our charter."

In 1698, in a letter written by their deputy-governor to the Lords Commissioners of Trade, they repeat the same desire.

In a memorial, dated in June 1699, they represent the charter as constituting them the true and absolute proprietors of Hudson's Bay, and of all the territories, limits, and places thereto belonging. They further set forth the attacks made in 1682 and 1686 by the French from Canada, and their applications for redress, and the declaration made by James the Second that he, upon the whole matter, did conceive the said Company well founded in their demands, and therefore did insist upon his own right and the right of his subjects to the whole Bay and Straits of Hudson, and to the sole trade thereof; and they pray the then king, William the Third, to insist upon the inherent right of the Crown of England, and the property of his subjects, not to be alienated, that so considerable a trade might not be lost, and the Hudson's Bay Company "be left the only mourners" in the peace of Ryswick.

At this time all their forts but one (Albany Fort) had been taken by the French, some of them, indeed, while the two Crowns were at peace; an act of aggression specially referred to by his Majesty in the declaration of war in 1689.

In January 1700, being called upon by the Lords of Trade and Plantations, they offered proposals for limits between them and the French in Hudson's Bay, insisting, at the same time, upon their undoubted right "to the whole Bay and Streights of Hudson." The proposed limits were to confine the French from trading, or building any house, factory, or fort to the northward of Albany River, situate in about 53° of north latitude on the west main coast, or to the northward of Rupert's River on the east main or coast of the bay; binding themselves not to trade, or build any house, factory, or fort to the southward of these two rivers, "on any ground belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company." They urged that these limits should be settled, stating that, if the French refused, they must insist upon their prior and undoubted right to the whole Bay and Straits of Hudson, which, they observed, the French never yet would strictly dispute or suffer to be examined into, though the first step of the eighth article of the treaty of Ryswick directs the doing of it. These limits would have given the French access to the bay by the Moose River.

The French ambassador did, however, in March 1698-9, set forth the claims of his sovereign in a long answer to the English memorial; among other things observing, that the different authors who have written about Canada, or New France, gave it no limits northwards; and that it appeared, by all the grants or letters of corporation made at several times by the kings of France to the companies settled in New France, and particularly in 1628, that all the Bay of the North is comprehended in the limits mentioned by the said grants.*

He also further suggested, that if the English had had any knowledge of the bay, or any claim thereto, they would not have failed to have insisted on it, and expressly to mention it in the treaty of 1632 (that of St. Germain en Laye), when they restored to the French, New France. Admitting that the French neither then, nor for a long time afterwards, had any forts on the coasts of the bay, he explains it by saying that being masters of the inland country, the savages, with whom they had a continual trade, brought their furs over lakes and rivers.

In April 1714, the Hudson's Bay Company thank the Queen, "for the great care your Majesty has taken for them by the treaty of Utrecht, whereby the French are obliged to restore the whole Bay and Streights of Hudson, the undoubted right of the Crown of Great Britain."

In August 1714, in reference to the same treaty, the Hudson's Bay Company proposed that the limits between the English and French on the coast of Labrador, should commence from the island called Grimington's Island, or Cape Perdrix, in the latitude of 58 $\frac{1}{2}$ N., which they desire may be the boundary between the French and English on the coast of Labrador, and that a line be drawn south-westerly, to pass through the centre of Lake Mistassinnee, and from that lake a line to run south-westward into 49° north latitude, and that such latitude be the limit; that the French do not come to the north, nor the English to the south of it.

In another paper of about the same period, they give the following account of the motives which induced the formation of the Company: "It was, therefore, after the happy restoration of King Charles the Second, that trade and commerce began to revive, and in particular that some noblemen and other public-spirited Englishmen, not unmindful of the discovery and right of the Crown to those parts in America, designed at their own charge to adventure the establishing of a regular and constant trade to Hudson's Bay, and to settle forts and factories there, whereby to invite the Indian nations (who lived like savages many hundred leagues up in the country) down to their factories."

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* L'Escarbot describes Canada at the period of the appointment of De la Roche in 1698, thus—"Ainsi notre Nouvelle France a pour limites du côté d'ouest les terres jusqu'à la Mer Pacifique au-delà du Tropique du Cancer; au midi les îles de la Mer Atlantique du côté de Cuba et l'île Espagnole; au levant la Mer du Nord qui baigne la Nouvelle France; et au septentrion cette terre qui est dite inconnue vers la Mer Glacée jusqu'à la Pole Arctique."