

however, that not even the voyager himself then suspected that the mainland of a new continent had been reached. He reported that he had landed on the seaboard of Cathay, and a contemporary document speaks of the King having acquired a great part of Asia without a stroke of the sword. It was only in later years that the full importance of his achievement became manifest.

Though the whole of Europe rang with Cabot's praise, Henry VII. showed but little gratitude toward the bold navigator. In the privy-purse accounts of Henry—still preserved in the British Museum—we find the following curt entry: "August 10th (1497), To hymne that founde the new Isle, £10." No other official recognition of this great deed exists. "The stingy monarch," as one author writes, "no doubt considered that he had amply rewarded Cabot, little thinking that the entry referred to would post his own niggardliness for the scorn of posterity." It is true that at a later period Henry thought fit to further reward the discoverer with an annual pension of £20, but this was to be paid from the funds of the Bristol Custom House. It has been rightly said that the discovery of a continent was, after all, cheap at such a price.

In February, 1498, John Cabot obtained new letters patent authorizing a second and more extensive expedition of six ships. The intention was to colonize the new lands and to barter with the natives, and also to endeavour to find the much-desired route to India. The expedition sailed in the spring of 1498, about the time when Columbus departed on his third voyage. John was in command, and with him were his son Sebastian and about three hundred other men. From thenceforth John Cabot is lost to sight, and we hear only of Sebastian. No man knows how, when or where the discoverer of the American mainland met his death or where his body rests. Some think he must have died during the voyage. It is to be hoped that future research may bring forth definite particulars of the end of this worthy man.

It is fairly certain that the second voyage was in a northern and northwestern direction, to a region of ice and continual daylight, in which case the second landfall was probably somewhere on the Labrador coast. It seems that the presence of ice forced the ships to turn, and they coasted southward until they reached the vicinity of the present Cape Hatteras. Failing to discover the desired passage to the land of silk and jewels, and provisions being low, they set sail for home, and arrived there some time after September, 1498.