THE CONQUEST OF THE GREAT NORTHWEST

BY AGNES C. LAUT

THE CONQUEST OF THE GREAT NORTHWEST

Collier's famous picture of Hudson's Last Hours.

THE CONQUEST OF THE GREAT NORTHWEST

Being the story of the ADVENTURERS OF ENGLAND known as THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY. New pages in the history of the Canadian Northwest and Western States

BY

AGNES C. LAUT

Author of "Lords of the North," "Pathfinders of the West," etc.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE

NEW YORK
MOFFAT, YARD AND COMPANY
MCMXI

NEW EDITION IN ONE VOLUME
OCTOBER, 1911

THE QUINN & BODEN CO. PRESS
RAHWAY, N. J.

TO

G. C. L.
and
C. M. A.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I

PART I

PART II

PART III

CHAPTER XV

CHAPTER XVI

CHAPTER XVII

CHAPTER XVIII

CHAPTER XIX

CHAPTER XX

FOREWORD

IT HAS become almost a truism to say that no complete account of the Hudson's Bay Adventurers has yet been written. I have often wondered if the people who repeated that statement knew what they meant. The empire of the fur trade Adventurers was not confined to Rupert's Land, as specified by their charter. Lords of the Outer Marches, these gay Gentlemen Adventurers setting sail over the seas of the Unknown, Soldiers of Fortune with a laugh for life or death carving a path through the wilderness—were not to be checked by the mere fiction of limits set by a charter. They followed the rivers of their bay south to the height of land, and looking over it saw the unoccupied territory of the Great Lakes and the Upper Mississippi. It was American territory; but what did that matter? Over they marched and took possession in Minnesota and the two Dakotas and Montana. This region was reached by way of Albany River. Then they followed the Saskatchewan up and looked over its height of land. To the north were MacKenzie River and the Yukon; to the west, the Fraser and

the Columbia. By no feat of imagination could the charter be stretched to these regions. Canadian merchants were on the field in MacKenzie River. Russians claimed Alaskâ. Americans claimed Oregon down as far as the Spanish Settlements; but these things did not matter. The Hudson's Bay Adventurers went over the barriers of mountains and statecraft, and founding their fur empire of wildwood rovers, took toll of the wilderness in cargoes of precious furs outvaluing all the taxes ever collected by a conqueror. All this was not enough. South of the Columbia was an unknown region the size of half Europe—California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho. The wildwood rovers of the Hudson's Bay Adventurers swept south in pack-horse brigades of two- and three-hundreds from the Columbia to Monterey. Where Utah railroads now run, their trappers found the trail. Where gold seekers toiled to death across Nevada deserts, Hudson's Bay trappers had long before marched in dusty caravans sweeping the wilderness of beaver. Where San Francisco stands today, the English Adventurers once owned a thousand-acre farm. By a bold stroke of statecraft, they had hoped to buy up Mexico's bad debts and trade those debts for proprietary rights in California. The story of why they failed is theme for novelist or poet rather than historian. Suffice to say, their Southern Bri-

gades, disguised as Spanish horsemen, often went south as far as Monterey. *Yet more!* The Hudson's Bay Adventurers had a station half way across the Pacific in Hawaii.

In all, how large was their fur empire? Larger, by actual measurement, much larger, than Europe. Now what person would risk reputation by saying no complete account had yet been written of all Europe? The thing is so manifestly impossible, it is absurd. Not one complete account, but hundreds of volumes on different episodes will go to the making of such a complete history. So is it of the vast area ruled by the Hudson's Bay Company. The time will come when each district will demand as separate treatment as a Germany, or a France or an Italy in its history. All that can be attempted in one volume or one series of volumes is the portrayal of a single movement, or a single episode, or a single character. In this account, I have attempted to tell the story of the Company only as adventurer, pathfinder, empire-builder, from Rupert's Land to California—feudal lord beaten off the field by democracy. Where the empire-builder merges with the colonizer and pioneer, I have stopped in each case. In Manitoba, the passing of the Company was marked by the Riel Rebellion; in British Columbia, by the mad gold stampede; in Oregon, by the terrible Whitman

massacres; in California, by the fall of Spanish power. All these are dramas in themselves worthy of poet or novelist; but they are not germane to the Adventurers. Therefore, they are not given here. Who takes up the story where I leave off, must hang the narrative on these pegs.

Another intentional omission. From the time the Adventurers wrote off £100,000 loss for search of the North-West Passage, Arctic Exploration has no part in this story. In itself, it is an enthralling story; but to give even the most scrappy reference to it here would necessitate crowding out essential parts of the Adventurers' record—such as McLoughlin's transmontane empire, or the account of the South Bound Brigades. Therefore, latter day Arctic work has no mention here. For the same reason, I have been compelled to omit the dramatic story of the early missions. These merit a book to themselves.

Throughout—with the exception of four chapters, I may say altogether—I have relied for the thread of my narrative on the documents in Hudson's Bay House, London; the Minute Books of some two hundred years, the Letter Books, the Stock Books, the Memorial Books, the Daily Journals kept by chief factors at every post and sent to London from 1670. These documents are in tons. They are not

open to the public. They are unclassified; and in the case of Minute Books are in duplicates, "the Foule Minutes"—as the inscription on the old parchment describes them—being rough, almost unreadable, notes jotted down during proceedings with interlinings and blottings to be copied into the Minute Books marked "Faire Copie." In some cases, the latter has been lost or destroyed; and only the uncorrected one remains. It is necessary to state this because discrepancies will be found—noted as the story proceeds—which arise from the fact that some volumes of the corrected minutes have been lost. The Minute Books consist variously from one to five hundred pages each.

Beside the documents of Hudson's Bay House, London, there is a great mass of unpublished, unexploited material bearing on the Company in the Public Records Office, London. I had some thousands of pages of transcripts of these made which throw marvelous side light on the printed records of Radisson; of Iberville; of Parl. Report 1749; of the Coltman Report and Blue Book of 1817–22; and the Americans in Oregon.

In many episodes, the story told here will differ almost unrecognizably from accepted versions and legends of the same era. This is not by accident. Nor is it because I have *not* consulted what one writer

sarcastically called to my attention as "the secondary authorities"—the words are his, not mine. Nearly all these authorities from earliest to latest days are in my own library and interlined from many readings. Where I have departed from old versions of famous episodes, it has been because records left in the handwriting of the actors themselves compelled me; as in the case of Selkirk's orders about Red River, Ogden's discoveries in Nevada and Utah and California, Thompson's explorations of Idaho, Howse's explorations in the Rockies, Ogden's robbery of the Americans, the Americans' robbery of him.

I regret I have no clue to any Spanish version of why Glen Rae blew out his brains in San Francisco. On this episode, I have relied on the legends current among the old Hudson's Bay officers and retold so well by Bancroft.

To Mr. C. C. Chipman, commissioner of the Hudson's Bay Company, to Mr. William Ware, the secretary, and Lord Strathcona-and-Mount-Royal, the Governor—I owe grateful thanks for access to the H. B. C. documents.

On the whole, the record of the Adventurers, is not one to bring the blush of regret to those jealous for the Company's honor. It is a record of daring and courage and adventuring and pomp—in the best

sense of the words—and of intrigue and statecraft and diplomacy, too, not always in the best sense of the words—which must take its place in the world's history far above the bloody pageantry of Spanish conqueror in Mexico and Peru. It is the one case where Feudalism played an important and successful rôle in America, only in the end to be driven from the stage by Young Democracy.

PART I

1610–1631

Being an Account of the Discoveries in the Great Sea of the North by Henry Hudson and the Dane, Jens Munck. How the Search for the North-West Passage Led to the Opening of two Regions—New York and the North-West Territories.

THE CONQUEST OF THE GREAT NORTHWEST

CHAPTER I

1607

HENRY HUDSON'S FIRST VOYAGE

PRACTICAL men scorn the dreamer, especially the mad-souled dreamer who wrecks life trying to prove his dream a reality. Yet the mad-souled dreamer, the Poet of Action whose poem has been his life, the Hunter who has chased the Idea down the Long Trail where all tracks point one way and never return—has been a herald of light for humanity.

Of no one is this truer than the English pilot, Henry Hudson.

Hudson did not set out to find the great inland waters that bear his name—Hudson River and Hudson Bay. He set out to chase that rainbow myth—the Pole—or rather the passage across the Pole. To

him, as to all Arctic explorers, the call had become a sort of obsession. It was a demon, driving him in spite of himself. It was a siren whom he could not resist, luring him to wreck, which he knew was certain. It was a belief in something which reason couldn't prove but time has justified. It was like a scent taken up by a hound on a strange trail. He could not know where it would lead but because of Something in him and Something on the Trail, he was compelled to follow. Like the discoverer in science, he could not wait till his faith was gilt-edged with profit before risking his all on the venture. Call it demon or destiny! At its voice he rose from his place and followed to his death.

The situation was this:

Not a dozen boats had sailed beyond the Sixtieth degree of north latitude. From Sixty to the Pole was an area as great as Africa. This region was absolutely unknown. What did it hide? Was it another new world, or a world of waters giving access across the Pole from Europe to Asia? The Muscovy Company of England, the East India Company of Holland, both knew the Greenland of the Danes; and sent their ships to fish at Spitzbergen, east of Greenland. But was Greenland an island, or a great continent? Were Spitzbergen and Green-

land parts of a vast Polar land? Did the mountains wreathed there in eternal mists conceal the wealth of a second Peru? Below the endless swamps of ice, would men find gold sands? And when one followed up the long coast of the east shore—as long as from Florida to Maine—where the Danish colonies had perished of cold centuries ago—what beyond? A continent, or the Pole, or the mystic realm of frost peopled by the monsters of Saga myth, where the Goddess of Death held pitiless sway and the shores were lined with the dead who had dared to invade her realm? Why these questions should have pierced the peace of Henry Hudson, the English pilot, and possessed him—can no more be explained than the Something on the Trail that compels Something in the hound.

Like other dreamers, Hudson had to put his dreams in harness; hitch his Idea to every day uses, The Muscovy Company trading to Russia wanted to find a short way across the Pole to China. Hudson had worked up from sailor to pilot and pilot to master on the Dutch traders, and was commissioned to seek the passage. The Company furnished him with a crew of eleven including his own boy, John. It would be ridiculous if it were not so pathetic—these simple sailors undertaking a venture that has baffled every great navigator since time began.

Led by Hudson with the fire of a great faith in his eyes, the men solemnly marched to Saint Ethelburge Church off Bishopgate Street, London, to partake of Holy Communion and ask God's aid. Back to the muddy water-front opposite the Tower; a gold coin for last drinks; a hearty God-speed from the gentlemen of the Muscovy Company pompous in self-importance and lace ruffles—and the little crew steps into a clumsy river boat with brick-red sails. One gentleman opines with a pinch of snuff that it may be "this many a day before Master Hudson returns." Riffraff loafers crane necks to see to the last. Cursing watermen clear the course by thumping other rivermen out of the way. The boat slips under the bridge down the wide flood of the yeasty Thames through a forest of masts and sails of as many colors as Joseph's coat.

It is like a great sewer of humanity, this river tide with its city's traffic of a thousand years. Farmers rafting down loads of hay, market women punting themselves along with boat loads of vegetables, fishing schooners breasting the tide with full-blown sails, high-hulled galleons from Spain, flat-bottomed, rickety tubs from the Zee, gay little craft—barges with bunting, wherries with lovers, rowboats with nothing more substantial than silk awnings for a sail—jostle and throng and bump each other as Hudson's crew

shoots down with the tide. Not a man of the crew but wonders—is he seeing it all for the last time?

But here is the Muscovy Company's ship all newly rigged waiting at Gravesend, absurdly small for such a venture on such a sea. Then, in the clanking of anchor chains and sing-song of the capstan and last shouts of the noisy rivermen, apprehensions are forgotten. Can they but find a short route to China, their homely little craft may plough back with as rich cargo as ever Spanish caravel brought from the fabulous South Sea. The full tide heaves and rocks and bears out; a mad-souled dreamer standing at the prow with his little son, who is very silent. The air is fraught with something too big for words. May first, 1607, Hudson is off for the Pole. He might as well have been following the Flying Dutchman, or ballooning to the moon.

The city along the banks of the Thames has presently thinned to towns. The towns slide past into villages. The villages blur into meadow lands with the thatch roof of the farmer's cot; and before night, the last harbor light has been left in the offing. The little ship has headed her carved prow north. The billows of the North Sea roll to meet her. Darkness falls with no sound but the swish of the waters against the ports, the hum of the wind through the

rigging, and the whirring flap of the great sails shifting to catch the breeze.

For six weeks, north, north-west, they drove over the tumbling world of waters, sliding from crest to trough, from blue hollow to curdling wave-top, ploughing a watery furrow into the region of long, white light and shortening nights, and fogs that lay without lifting once in twenty days. The farther north they sailed, the tighter drew the cords of cold, like a violin string stretched till it fairly snapped—air full of pure ozone that set the blood jumping and finger-tips tingling! Green spray froze the sails stiff as boards. The rigging became ropes of ice, the ship a ghost gliding white through the fogs. At last came a squall that rolled the mists up like a scroll, and straight ahead, high and lonely as cloud-banks, towered the white peaks of Greenland's mountains. Though it was two o'clock in the morning, it was broad daylight, and the whole crew came scrambling up the hatches to the shout of "Land!" Hudson enthusiastically named the mountain "God's Mercy"; but the lift of mist uncurtained to the astonished gaze of the English sailors a greater wonder than the mountains. North, south, east, west, the ship was embayed in an ice-world—ice in islands and hills and valleys with lakes and rivers of fresh water flowing over the surface. Birds flocked overhead with lonely

screams at these human intruders on a realm as white and silent as death; and where one crystal berg was lighted to gold by the sun, a huge polar bear hulked to its highest peak and surveyed the newcomers in as much astonishment at them as they felt at him. Truly, this was the *Ultima Thule* of poet's dream—beyond the footsteps of man. Blue was the sky above, blue the patches of ocean below, blue the illimitable fields of ice, blue and lifeless and cold as steel. The men passed that day jubilant as boys out of school. Some went gunning for the birds. Others would have pursued the polar bear but with a splash the great creature dived into the sea. The crew took advantage of the pools of fresh water in the ice to fill their casks with drinking water. For the next twenty-four hours, Hudson crept among the ice floes by throwing out a hook on the ice, then hauling up to it by cable.

By night the sea was churning the ice in choppy waves, with a growl of wind through the mast, and the crew wakened the next morning to find a hurricane of sleet had wiped out the land. The huge floes were turning somersets in the rough sea with a banging that threatened to smash the little ship into a crushed egg shell. Under bare poles, she drove before the wind for open sea.

As she scudded from the crush of the tumbling

ice, Hudson remarked something extraordinary in the conduct of his ship. Veering about, sails down, there was no mistaking it—*she was drifting against the wind!* As the storm subsided, it became plainer: the wind was carrying in one direction, the sea was carrying in another. Hudson had discovered that current across the Pole, which was to play such an important part with Nansen three hundred years later. Icebergs were floating *against* the wind, too, laboriously, with apparently aimless circlings round and round, but circles that carried them forward against the wind, and the ship was presently moored to a great icepan drifting along with the undertow.

Then the curse of all Arctic voyagers fell on the sea—fog thick to the touch as wool, through which the icebergs glided like phantoms with a great crash of waters, where the surf beat on the floes. Never mind! Their anchor-hold acts as a breakwater. They are sheltered from the turmoil of the waves outside the ice. And they are still headed north. And they are up to Seventy-three along a coast, which no chart has ever before recorded, no chart but the myths of death's realm. As the coast might prove treacherous if the ice began thumping inland, Hudson names the region "Hold Hope," which may be interpreted, "Keep up your Courage."

Ice and fog, fog and ice, and the eternal silences

but for the thunder of the floes banging the ports; up to Seventy-five by noon of June 25, when the sailors notice that the floundering clumsy grampus are playing mad pranks about the ship. The glistening brown backs race round the prow and somerset bodily out of the water in a very deviltry of sauciness! Call it sailors' superstition, but when the grampus schools play, your Northern crew looks for storm, and by noon of June 26, the storm is there pounding the hull like thunder and shrieking through the rigging. Not a good place to be, between land and ice in hurricane! Hudson scampers for the sea, still north, but driven out east by the trend of Greenland's coast along an unbroken barrier of ice that seems to link Greenland to Spitzbergen.

No passage across the Pole this way! That is certain! But there is a current across the Pole! That, too, is certain! And Greenland is as long as a continent. So driving before the storm, Hudson steers east for Spitzbergen. In July, it is warmer, but heat brings more ice, and the man at the masthead on the lookout for land up at Seventy-nine could not know that a submerged iceberg was going to turn a somerset directly under the keel. There was a splintering crash. Something struck the keel like a cannon shot. Up reared the little boat on end like a frightened horse. When the waters plunged

down two great bergs had risen one on each side of the quivering ship and a jagged gash gaped through the timbers at water line. Water slushed over decks in a cataract. The yardarms are still dipping and dripping to the churning seas when the crew leaps out to a man, some on the ice, some in small boats, some astraddle of driftwood to stop the leak in the bottom. As they toil—and they toil in desperation, for the safety of the ship is their only possibility of reaching home—they notice it again—wood drifting *against* the wind, the undertow of some great unknown Polar Current.

Hudson cannot wait for this current to carry him toward the Pole, as Nansen did. Up he tacks to Eighty-two, within eight degrees of the baffling Pole, within four degrees of Farthest North reached by modern navigators. When he finds Spitzbergen locked by the ice to the north, he tries it by the south. But the ice seems to become almost a living enemy in its resistance. Hudson had anchored to a drifting floe. Another icepan shut off his retreat. Then a terrific sea began running—the effect of the ice jam against the Polar Current. The fog was so thick you could cut it with a knife. Not a breath of wind stirred. Sails hung limp, and the sea was driving the ship to instant destruction against a jam of ice. Heaving out small boats, the crew rowed for dear

life towing the ship out of the maelstrom by main force, but their puny human strength was as child's play against the great powers of the elements. Backwash had carried rowers and ship and small boats within a stone's throw of the ramming icebergs when a faint air breathed through the fog. Moistening their fingers, the sailors held up hands to catch the motion of any breeze. No mistake—it was a fair wind—right about sails there—the little ship turned tail to the ice and was off like a bird, for says the old ship's log: "*it pleased God to give us a gale, and away we steered.*"

The battle for a passage seemed hopeless. Hudson assembled the crew on decks and on bended knees prayed God to show which way to steer. Of no region had the sailors of that day greater horror than Spitzbergen. They began to recall the fearful disasters that had befallen Dutch ships here but a few years before. Those old sailors' superstitions of the North being the realm of the Goddess of Death, came back to memory. That last narrow escape from the ice-crush left terror in the very marrow of their bones. In vain, Hudson once more suggested seeking the passage by Greenland. To the crew, the Voice of the North uttered no call. Glory was all very well, but they didn't want glory. They wanted to go home. What was the good of chasing

an Idea down the Long Trail to a grave on the frozen shores of Death?

When men begin to reason that way, there is no answer. You can't promise them what you are not sure you will ever find. The Call is only to those who have ears to hear. You must have hold of the end of a GOLDEN THREAD before you can follow the baffling mazes of a discoverer's faith, and these men hadn't faith in anything except a full stomach and a sure wage. After all, their arguments were the same as the obstructions presented against every expedition to the Pole to-day, or for that matter, to any other realm of the Unknown. It was like asking the inventor to show his invention in full work before he has made it, or the bank to pay its dividends before you contribute to its capital. What reason could Hudson give to justify his faith? Standing on the quarter deck with clenched fists and troubled face, he might as well have argued with stones, or pleaded for a chance with modern money bags as talked down the expostulations of the mutineers. They were men of the kidney who will always be on the safe side. As the world knows—there was no passage across the Pole suitable for commerce. There was no justification for Hudson's faith. Yet it was the goal of that faith, which led him on the road to

greater discoveries than a dozen passages across the Pole.

Faith has always been represented as one of three sister graces; cringing, meek-spirited, downtrodden damsels at their best. In view of all she has accomplished for the world in religion, in art, in science, in discovery, in commerce, Faith should be represented as a fiery-eyed goddess with the forked lightnings for her torch, treading the mountain peaks of the universe. From her high place, she alone can see whence comes the light and which way runs the Trail. Step by step, the battle has been against darkness, every step a blow, every blow a bruise driving back to the right Trail; every blood mark a milestone in human progress from lowland to upland.

But Hudson's men were obdurate to arguments all up in air. They will *not* seek the passage by Greenland. Hudson must turn back. To a great spirit, obstructions are never a stop. They are only a delay. Hudson sets his teeth. You will see him go by Greenland one day yet—mark his word! Meantime, home he sails through what he calls "slabbie" weather, putting into Tilbury Docks on the 15th of September. If money bags counted up the profits of that year's trip, they would write against Hudson's name in the Book of Judgment—Failure!

CHAPTER II

1608

HUDSON'S SECOND VOYAGE

HENCEFORTH Hudson was an obsessed man. First, *he* possessed the Idea. Now the *Idea* possessed him. It was to lead him on a course no man would willingly have followed. Yet he followed it. Everything, life or death, love or hate, gain or loss, was to be subservient to that Idea.

That current drifting across the Pole haunted him as it was to haunt Nansen at a later date. By attempting too much, had he missed all? He had gone to Spitzbergen in the Eighties. If he had kept down to Nova Zembla Islands in the Seventies, would he have found less ice? The man possessed by a single idea may be a trial to his associates. To himself, he is a torment. Once he becomes baffled, he is beset by doubts, by questions, by fears. If his faith leaves him, his life goes to pieces like a rope of sand. Hudson must have been beset by such doubts now. It is the place where the adventurer leaves the mile-

stones of all known paths and has not yet found firm footing for his own feet. Hundreds, thousands, have struck out from the beaten Trail. Few, indeed, have blazed a new path. The bones of the dead bleach on the shores of the realm ruled by the Goddess of the Unknown. It is the place where the beginner sets out to be a great artist, or a great scientist, or a great discoverer. Thousands have set out on the same quest who should have rested content at their own ingle-nook, happy at the plow; not good plowmen spoiled. The beginner balances the chances—a thousand to one against him! Is his vision a fool's quest, a will-o'-the-wisp? Is the call the tickling of his own restless vanity; or the voice of a great truth? He can learn only by going forward, and the going forward may take him over a precipice—may prove him a fool. This was the place Hudson was at now. It is a place that has been passed by all the world's great.

Nine Dutch boats had at different times passed between Nova Zembla and the main coast of Russia. To be sure, they had been blocked by the ice beyond, but might not Hudson by some lucky chance follow that Polar Current through open water? The chances were a thousand to one against him. Who but a fool would take the chance? Nansen's daring plan to utilize the ice-drift *to lift* his ship above the

ice-crush—did not occur to Hudson. Except for that difference, the two explorers—the greatest of the early Arctic navigators and the greatest of the modern—planned very much the same course.

This time, the Muscovy Company commissioned Hudson to look out for ivory hunting as well as the short passage to Asia. Three men only of the old crew enlisted. Hudson might enjoy risking his life for glory. Most mortals prefer safety. Of the three who re-enlisted one was his son.

Keeping close to the cloud-capped, mountainous shores of Norway, the boat sighted Cape North on June 3, 1608. Clouds wreathed the mountains in belts and plumes of mist. Snow-fields of far summits shone gold in sudden bursts of sunshine through the cloud-wrack. Fjords like holes in the wall nestled at the foot of the mountains, the hamlets of the fisher folk like tiny match boxes against the mighty hills. To the restless tide rocked and heaved the fishing smacks—emblems of man's spirit at endless wrestle with the elements. As Hudson's ship climbed the waves, the fishermen stood up in their little boats to wave a God-speed to these adventurers bound for earth's ends. Sails swelling to the wind, Hudson's vessel rode the roll of green waters, then dipped behind a cataract of waves, and dropped over the edge of the known world.

Driftwood again on that Polar Current up at Seventy-five, driftwood and the endless sweep of moving ice, which compelled Hudson "*to loose from one floe*" and "*bear room from another*" and anchor on the lee of one berg to prevent ramming by another; "*divers pieces driving past the ship,*" says Hudson—just as it drove past Nansen's *Fram* on the same course.

To men satiated of modern life, the North is still a wonder-world. There are the white silences primeval as the morn when God first created Time. There is "*the sun sailing round in a fiery ring*"—as one old Viking described it—instead of sinking below the horizon; nightless days in summer and dayless nights in winter. There is the desolation of earth's places where man may never have dominion and Death must always veil herself unseen. Polar bears floundered over the ice hunting seals. Walrus roared from the rocks in herds till the surf shook—ivory for the Muscovy Company; and whales floated about the ship in schools that threatened to keel the craft over—more profit for the Muscovy traders.

What wonder that Hudson's ignorant sailors began to feel the marvel of the strange ice-world, and to see fabulous things in the light of the midnight sun? One morning a face was seen following the ship, staring up from the sea. There was no doubt of it.

Two sailors saw it. Was it one of the monsters of Saga myth, that haunted this region? The watch called a comrade. Both witnessed the hideous apparition of a human face with black hair streaming behind on the waves. The body was like a woman's and the seamen's terror had conjured up the ill omen of a mermaid when wave-wash overturned its body, exhibiting the fins and tail of a porpoise—"skin very white"—mermaid without a doubt, portent of evil, though the hair may have been floating seaweed.

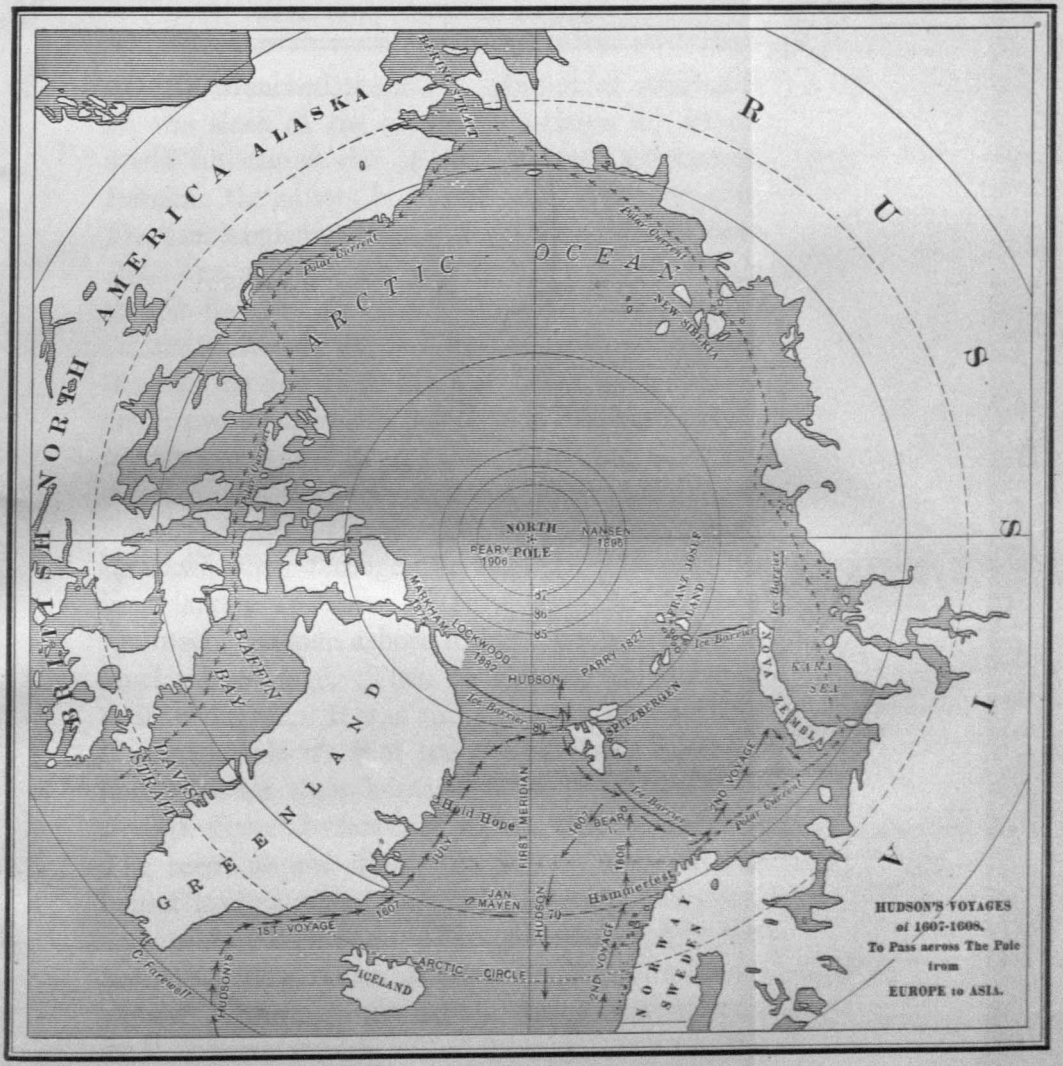
Sure enough, within a week, ice locked round the ship in a vise. The floes were no brashy ice-cakes that could be plowed through by a ship's prow with a strong, stern wind. They were huge fields of ice, five, ten, twenty and thirty feet deep interspread with hummocks and hillocks that were miniature bergs in themselves. Across these rolling meadows of crystal, the wind blew with the nip of midwinter; but when the sun became partly hidden in fiery cloud-banks, the scene was a fairy land, sea and sky shading off in deepest tinges to all the tints of the rainbow. Where the ocean showed through ice depths, there was a blue reflection deep as indigo. Where the clear water was only a surface pool on top of submerged ice, the sky shone above with a light green delicate as apple bloom. Where the ice was a broken mass of an adjacent glacier sliding down

to the sea through the eternal snows of some mountain gorge, a curious phenomenon could sometimes be observed. The edge of the ice was in layers —each layer representing one year's snowfall congealed by the summer thaw, so that the observer could count back perhaps a century from the ice layers. Other men tread on snow that fell but yesterday. Hudson's crew were treading on the snowfall of a hundred years as though this were God's workshop in the making and a hundred years were but as a day.

Beyond the floating ice fields, the heights of Nova Zembla were sighted, awesome and lonely in the white night, gruesome to these men from memory of the fate that befell the Dutch crews here fifteen years previously. Rowing and punting through the ice-brash, two men went ashore to explore. They saw abundance of game for the Muscovy gentlemen; and at one place among driftwood came on the cold ashes of an old fire. It was like the first print of man's footstep found by Robinson Crusoe. Startled by signs of human presence, they scanned the surrounding landscape. On the shore, a solitary cross had been erected of driftwood. Then the men recalled the fate of the Dutch crew, that had perished wandering over these islands in 1597. What fearful battles had the white silences witnessed between

puny men explorers and the stony Goddess of Death? What had become of the last man, of the man who had erected the cross? Did his body lie somewhere along the shores of Nova Zembla, or had he manned his little craft like the Vikings of old and sailed out lashed to the spars to meet death in tempest? The horror of the North seemed to touch the men as with the hands of the dead whom she had slain.

The report that the two men carried back to Hudson's boat did not raise the spirits of the crew. One night the entire ship's company but Hudson and his son had gone ashore to hunt walrus. Such illimitable fields of ice lay north that Hudson knew his only chance must be between the south end of Nova Zembla (he did not know there were several islands in the group) and the main coast of Asia. It was three o'clock in the morning. The ice began to drive landward with the fury of a whirlpool. Two anchors were thrown out against the tide. Fenders were lowered to protect the ship's sides. Captain and boy stood with iron-shod poles in hand to push the ice from the ship, or the ship from the ice. The men from the hunt saw the coming danger and rushed over the churning icepans to the rescue. Some on the ice, some on the ship, with poles and oars and crowbars, they pushed and heaved away the icepans, and ramming their crowbars down


NORTH AMERICA
ALASKA
RUSSIA
ARCTIC OCEAN
BERING STRAIT
Polar Current
NEW SIBERIA
NORTH POLE
NANSEN 1895
PEARY 1906
87
86
85
MARKHAM 1876
LOCKWOOD 1882
PARRY 1827
FRANZ JOSEF LAND
Ice Barrier
KARA SEA
NOVA ZEMBLA
HUDSON
SPITZBERGEN
80
BAFFIN BAY
DAVIS STRAIT
GREENLAND
Hold Hope
JULY
FIRST MERIDIAN
(60)
BEARS
1608
2ND VOYAGE
Hammerfest
JAN MAYEN
1801
70
1ST VOYAGE
C. Farewell
HUDSON'S
ICELAND
ARCTIC CIRCLE
NORWAY
SWEDEN
HUDSON'S VOYAGES
of 1607-1608.
To Pass across The Pole
from
EUROPE to ASIA.

crevices wrenched the ice to splinters or swerved it off the sides of the ship. Sometimes an icepan would tilt, teeter, rise on end and turn a somerset, plunging the sailors in ice water to their arm pits. The jam seemed to be coming on the ship from both directions at once, for the simple reason the ship offered the line of least resistance. Twelve hours the battle lasted, the heaving ice-crush threatening to crush the ship's ribs like slats till at last a channel of open water appeared just outside the ship's prison. But the air was a dead calm. Springing from icepan to icepan, the men towed their ship out of danger.

Rain began to drizzle. The next day a cold wind came whistling through the rigging. The ship lay in a land-locked cove of Nova Zembla. Hudson again sent his men ashore to hunt, probably also to pluck up courage. Then he climbed the lookout to scan the sea. It was really to scan his own fate. It was the old story of the glory-seeker's quest—a harder battle than human power could wage; a struggle that at the last only led to a hopeless *impasse.* The scent on the Trail and the eagerness in the hound leading only to a blind alley of baffled effort and ruin! Every great benefactor of humanity has come to this *cul de sac* of hope. It is as if a man's highest aim were only in the end a sort of trap whither some impish will-o'-the-wisp has impelled

him. The thing itself—a passage across the Pole—didn't exist any more than the elixir of life which laid the foundations of chemistry. The question is how, when the great men of humanity come to this blind wall, did they ever have courage to go on? For the thing they pursued was a phantom never to be realized; but strangely enough, in the providence of God, the phantom pursuit led to greater benefits for the race than their highest hopes dared to dream.

No elixir of life, you dreamer; but your mad-brained search for the elixir gave us the secrets of chemistry by which man prolongs life if he doesn't preserve eternal youth! No fate written on the scroll of the heavens, you star-gazer; but your fool-astrology has given us astronomy, by which man may predict the movements of the stars for a thousand years though he cannot forsee his own fate for a day! No North-West Passage to Asia, you fevered adventurers of the trackless sea; but your search for a short way to China has given us a New World worth a thousand Chinas! Go on with your dreams, you mad-souled visionaries! If it is a will-o'-the wisp you chase, your will-o'-the-wisp is a lantern to the rest of humanity!

Climbing the rigging to the topmast yardarm, Hudson scanned the sea. His heart sank. His

hopes seemed to congeal like the eternal ice of this ice-world. The springs of life seemed to grow both heavy and cold. Far as eye could reach was ice—only ice, while outside the cove there raged a tempest as if all the demons of the North were blowing their trumpets.

"There is no passage this way," said Hudson to his son. Then as if hope only dies that it may send forth fresh growth like the seed, he added, "But we must try Greenland again, on the west side this time." It was ten o'clock at night when the men returned laden with game; but they, too, had taken counsel among themselves whether to go forward; and the memory of that dead crew's cross turned the scales against Hudson. It was only the 5th of July, but they would not hear of attempting Greenland this season. From midnight of the 5th to nine o'clock of the 6th, Hudson pondered. No gap opened through the white wall ahead. The Frost Giants, whose gambols may be heard on the long winter nights when the icecracks whoop and romp, had won against Man. "*Being void of hope,*" Hudson records, "*the wind stormy and against us, much ice driving, we weighed and set sail westward.*" Home-bound, the ship anchored on the Thames, August 26.

CHAPTER III

1609

HUDSON'S THIRD VOYAGE

WHILE Hudson was pursuing his phantom across Polar seas, Europe had at last awakened to the secret of Spain's greatness—colonial wealth that poured the gold of Peru into her treasury. To counteract Spain, colonizing became the master policy of Europe. France was at work on the St. Lawrence. England was settling Virginia, and Smith, the pioneer of Virginia, who was Hudson's personal friend, had explored the Chesapeake.

But the Netherlands went a step farther. To throw off the yoke of Spain, they maintained a fleet of seventy merchantmen furnished as ships of war to wage battle on the high seas. Spanish colonies were to be attacked wherever found. Spanish cities were to be sacked as the buccaneers sacked them on the South Sea. Spanish caravels with cargoes of gold were to be scuttled and sunk wherever met. It was to be brigandage—brigandage pure and simple

—from the Zuider Zee to Panama, from the North Pole to the South.

Hudson's voyages for the Muscovy merchants of London to find a short way to Asia at once arrested the attention of the Dutch. Dutch and English vied with each other for the discovery of that short road to the Orient. For a century the chance encounter of Dutch and English sailors on Arctic seas had been the signal for the instant breaking of heads. Not whales but men were harpooned when Dutch and English fishermen met off Nova Zembla, or Spitzbergen, or the North Cape.

Hudson was no sooner home from his second voyage for the English than the Dutch East India Company invited him to Holland to seek passage across the Pole for them. This—it should be explained—is the only justification that exists for writing the English pilot's name as Hendrick instead of Henry, as though employment by the Dutch changed the Englishman's nationality.

The invitation was Hudson's salvation. Just at the moment when all doors were shut against him in England and when his hopes were utterly baffled by two failures—another door opened. Just at the moment when his own thoughts were turning toward America as the solution of the North-West Passage, the chance came to seek the passage in America.

Just when Hudson was at the point where he might have abandoned his will-o'-the-wisp, it lighted him to a fresh pursuit on a new Trail. It is such coincidences as these in human life that cause the poet to sing of Destiny.

But the chanciness of human fortune did not cease because of this stroke of good luck. The great merchants of the Netherlands heard his plans. His former failures were against him. Money bags do not care to back an uncertainty. Having paid his expenses to come to Holland, the merchant princes were disposed to let him cool his heels in the outer halls waiting their pleasure. The chances are they would have rejected his overtures altogether if France and Belgium had not at that time begun to consider the employment of Hudson on voyages of discovery. The Amsterdam merchants of the Dutch East India Company suddenly awakened to the fact that they wanted Hudson, and wanted him at once. Again Destiny, or a will-o'-the-wisp as impish as Puck—had befriended him.

At Amsterdam, he was furnished with two vessels, the *Good Hope* as an escort part way; the *Half Moon* for the voyage itself—a flat-bottomed, tub-like yacht such as plied the shallows of Holland. In his crew, he was unfortunate. The East India Company, of course, supplied him with the sailors of their own

boats—lawless lascars; turbaned Asiatics with stealthy tread and velvet voices and a dirk hidden in their girdles; gypsy nondescripts with the hot blood of the hot tropics and the lawless instincts of birds of plunder. Your crew trained to cut the Spaniard's throat may acquire the habit and cut the master's throat, too. Along with these sailors, Hudson insisted on having a few Englishmen from his former crews, among whom were Colman and Juet and his own son. Juet acted as astronomer and keeper of the ship's log. From Juet and Van Meteren, the Dutch consul in England in whose hands Hudson's manuscripts finally fell—are drawn all the facts of the voyage.

On March 25 (April 6, new style), 1609, the cumbersome crafts swung out on the hazy yellow of the Zuider Zee. Motlier ships were about Hudson, here, than on the Thames, for the Dutch had an enormous commerce with the East and the West Indies. Feluccas with lateen sails and galleys for oarsmen had come up from the Mediterranean. Dutch pirates of the Barbary Coast—narrow in the prow, narrow in the keel, built for swift sailing and light cargoes—had forgathered, sporting sails of a different design for every harbor. Then, there were the East Indiamen, ponderous, slow-moving, deep and broad, with cannon bristling through the ports like men-of-war,

and tawny Asiatic faces leering over the taffrail. Yawls from the low-lying coast, three-masted luggers from Denmark, Norwegian ships with hideous scaled griffins carved on the sharp-curved prows, brigs and brigantines and caravels and tall galleons from Spain—all crowded the ports of the Netherlands, whose commerce was at its zenith. Threading his way through the motley craft, Hudson slowly worked out to sea.

All went well till the consort, *Good Hope*, turned back north of Norway and the *Half Moon* ploughed on alone into the ice fields of Nova Zembla with her lawless lascar crew. This was the region where other Dutch crews had perished miserably. Here, too, Hudson's English sailors had lost courage the year before. And here Dutch and English always fought for fishing rights. The cold north wind roared down in gusts and flaws and sudden bursts of fury. Against such freezing cold, the flimsy finery of damasks and calico worn by the East Indians was no protection. The lascars were chilled to the bone. They lay huddled in their berths bound up in blankets and refused to stir above decks in such cold. Promptly, the English sailors rebelled against double work. The old feud between English and Dutch flamed up. Knives were out, and before Hudson realized, a mutiny was raging about his ears.

If he turned back, he was ruined. The door of opportunity to new success is a door that shuts against retreat. His friend, Smith of Virginia, had written to him of the great inlet of the Chesapeake in America. South of the Chesapeake was no passage to the South Sea. Smith knew that; but north of the Chesapeake old charts marked an unexplored arm of the sea. When Verrazano, the Italian, coasted America for France in 1524, he had been driven by a squall from the entrance to a vast river between Thirty-nine and Forty-one (the Hudson River); and the Spanish charts of Estevan Gomez, in 1525, marked an unknown Rio de Gamos on the same coast. Hudson now recalled Smith's advice —to seek passage between the James River and the St. Lawrence.

To clinch matters came a gust driving westward over open sea. Robert Juet, seeking guidance from the heavenly bodies, notices for the first time in history, on May 19, that there is a spot on the sun. If Hudson had accomplished nothing more, he had made two important discoveries for science—the Polar Current and the spot on the sun. Geographers and astronomers have been knighted and pensioned for less important discoveries.

West, southwest, drove the storm flaw, the *Half Moon* scudding bare of sails for three hundred miles.

Was it destiny again, or his dæmon, or his Puck, or his will-o'-the-wisp, or the Providence of God—that drove Hudson contrary to his plans straight for the scene of his immortal discoveries? Pause was made at the Faroes for wood and water. There, too, Hudson consulted with his officers and decided to steer for America.

Once more afloat, June saw the *Half Moon* with its lazy lascars lounging over rails down among the brown fogs of Newfoundland. Here a roaring nor'-easter came with the suddenness of a thunderclap. The scream of wind through the rigging, the growlers swishing against the keel, then the thunder of the great billows banging broadsides—were like the burst of cannon fire over a battlefield. The foremast snapped and swept into the seas as the little *Half Moon* careened over on one side, and the next gust that caught her tore the other sails to tatters, but she still kept her prow headed southwest.

Fogs lay as they nearly always lie on the Grand Banks, but a sudden lift of the mist on June 25 revealed a sail standing east. To the pirate East Indian sailors, the sight of the strange ship was like the smell of powder to a battle horse. Loot! Spanish loot! With a whoop, they headed the *Half Moon* about in utter disregard of Hudson, and gave chase. From midday to dark the *Half Moon* played pirate,

cutting the waves in pursuit, careening to the wind in a way that threatened to capsize boat and crew, the fugitive bearing away like a bird on wing. This little by-play lasted till darkness hid the strange ship, but the madcap prank seemed to rouse the lazy lascars from their torpor. Henceforth, they were alert for any lawless raid that promised plunder.

Back about the *Half Moon* through the warm June night. Dutch and English forgathered in the moonlight squatting about on the ship's kegs spinning yarns of bloody pirate venture, when Spanish cargoes were scuttled and Spanish dons tossed off bayonet point into the sea, and Spanish ladies compelled to walk the plank blindfolded into watery graves. What kind of venture did they expect in America—this rascal crew?

Then the fogs of the Banks settled down again like wool. Here and there, like phantom ships were the sails of the French fishing fleet, or the black-hulled bateaux, or the rocking Newfoundland dories.

A long white curl of combing waves, and they have sheered off from the Wreckers' Reef at Sable Island.

Slower now, and steady, the small boats sounding ahead, for the water is shallow and the wind shifty. In the calm that falls, the crew fishes lazily over decks for cod. Through the fog and dark of July 16, something ahead looks like islands. The boat

anchors for the night, and when gray morning breaks, the *Half Moon* lies off what is now known as Penobscot Bay, Maine.

Two dugouts paddled by Indians come climbing the waves. Dressed in breechcloths of fur and feathers, the savages mount the decks without fear. The lascars gather round—not much promise of plunder from such scant attire! By signs and a few French words, the Indians explain that St. Lawrence traders frequent this coast. The East India cutthroats prick up their ears. Trade—what had these defenceless savages to trade?

That week Hudson sailed up the river and sent his carpenters ashore to make fresh masts, but the East India men rummaged the redskins' camp. Great store of furs, they saw. It was not the kind of loot they wanted. Gold was more to their choice, but it was better than no loot at all.

The *Half Moon* was ready to sail on the 25th of July. In spite of Hudson's commands, six sailors went ashore with heavy old-fashioned musketoons known as "murderers." Seizing the Indian canoes, they opened fire on the camp. The amazed Indians dashed for hiding in the woods. The sailors then plundered the wigwams of everything that could be carried away. This has always been considered a terrible blot against Hudson's fame. The only

explanation given by Juet in the ship's log is, "*we drave the savages from the houses and took the spoyle as they would have done of us.*" Van Meteren, the Dutch consul in London, who had Hudson's account, gives another explanation. He declares the Dutch sailors conducted the raid in spite of all the force with which Hudson could oppose them. The English sailors refused to enforce his commands by fighting, for they were outnumbered by the mutineers. No sooner were the mutineers back on deck than they fell to pummeling one another over a division of the plunder. Any one, who knows how news carries among the Indians by what fur traders describe as "the moccasin telegram," could predict results. "The moccasin telegram" bore exaggerated rumors of the outrage from the Penobscot to the Ohio. The white man was a man to be fought, for he had proved himself a treacherous friend.

Wind-bound at times, keeping close to land, warned off the reefs through fog by *a great rutt or rustling of the tide*, the pirate sailors now disregarding all commands, the *Half Moon* drifted lazily southward past Cape Cod. Somewhere near Nantucket, a lonely cry sounded from the wooded shore. It was a human voice. Fearing some Christian had been marooned by mutineers like his own crew, Hudson sent his small boat ashore. A camp of Indians

was found dancing in a frenzy of joy at the apparition of the great "winged wigwam" gliding over the sea. A present of glass buttons filled their cup of happiness to the brim.

Grapevines festooned the dank forests. Flowers still bloomed in shady nooks—the wild sunflower and the white daisy and the nodding goldenrod; and the sailors drank clear water from a crystal spring at the roots of a great oak. Robert Juet's ship log records that "*the Indian country of great hills*"—Massachusetts—was "*a very sweet land.*"

On August 7, Hudson was abreast New York harbor; but a mist part heat, part fog, part the gathering purples of coming autumn—hid the low-lying hills. Sliding idly along the summer sea, mystic, unreal, lotus dreams in the very August air, the world a world of gold in the yellow summer light—the *Half Moon* came to James River by August 18, where Smith of Virginia lived; but the mutineers had no mind to go up to Jamestown settlement. There, the English would outnumber them, and English law did not deal gently with mutineers. A heat hurricane sent the green waves smashing over decks off South Carolina, and in the frantic fright of the ship's cat dashing from side to side, the turbaned pirates imagined portent of evil. Perhaps, too, they were coming too near the Spanish

settlements of Florida. All their bravado of scuttled Spanish ships may have been pot-valor. Any way, they consented to head the boat back north in a search for the passage above the Chesapeake.

Past the swampy Chesapeake, a run up the Delaware burnished as a mirror in the morning light; through the heat haze over a glassy sea along that New Jersey shore where the world of pleasure now passes its summers from Cape May and Atlantic City to the highlands of New Jersey—slowly glided the *Half Moon.* Sand reefs gritted the keel, and the boat sheered out from shore where a line of white foam forewarned more reefs. Juet, the mate, did duty at the masthead, scanning the long coast line for that inlet of the old charts. The East India men lay sprawled over decks, beards unkempt, long hair tied back by gypsy handkerchiefs, bizarre jewels gleaming from huge brass earrings. Some were paying out the sounding line from the curved beak of the prow. Others fished for a shark at the stern, throwing out pork bait at the end of a rope. Many were squatted on the decks unsheltered from the sun, chattering like parrots over games of chance.

A sudden shout from Juet at the masthead—of shoals! A grit of the keel over pebbly bottom! On the far inland hills, the signal fires of watching Indians! Then the sea breaking from between

islands turbid and muddy as if it came from some great river—September 2, they have found the inlet of the old charts. They are on the threshold of New York harbor. They have discovered the great river now known by Hudson's name. Even the mutineers stop gambling to observe the scene. The ringleader that in all sea stories wears a hook on one arm points to the Atlantic Highlands smoky in the summer heat. On their left to the south is Sandy Hook; to the north, Staten Island. To the right with a lumpy hill line like green waves running into one another lie Coney Island and Long Island. The East India men laugh with glee. It's a fine land. It's a big land. This is better than risking the gallows for mutiny down in Virginia, or taking chances of having throats cut boarding some Spanish galleon of the South Seas. The ship's log does not say anything about it. Neither does Van Meteren's record, but I don't think Hudson would have been human if his heart did not give a leap. At five in the afternoon of September 2, the *Half Moon* anchored at the entrance to New York harbor not far from where the Goddess of Liberty waves her great arm to-day.

Silent is the future, silent as the sphinx! How could those Dutch sailors guess, how could the Dutch company that sent them to the Pole know, that the commerce of the world for which they fought Spain

—would one day beat up and down these harbor waters? Dreamed he never so wildly, Hudson's wildest dream could not have forseen that the river he had discovered would one day throb to the multitudinous voices of a world traffic, a world empire, a world wealth.

In Hudson's day, Spain was the leader of the world's commerce against whom all nations vied. To-day her population does not exceed twenty million, but there flows through the harbor gates, which Hudson, the penniless pilot dreamer, discovered, the commerce of a hundred million people. It is no straining to say that individual fortunes have been made in the traffic of New York harbor which exceed the national incomes of Spain and Holland and Belgium combined. But if a city's greatness consists in something more than volume of wealth and volume of traffic; if it consists in high endeavor and self-sacrifice and the pursuit of ideals to the death, Hudson, the dreamer, beset by rascal mutineers and pursuing his aim in spite of all difficulties, embodied in himself the qualities that go to make true greatness.

Mist and heat haze hid the harbor till ten next morning. The *Half Moon* then glided a pace inland. Three great rivers seemed to open before her

—the Hudson, East River and one of the channels round Staten Island. On the 4th, while the small boat went ahead to sound, some sailors rowed ashore to fish. Tradition says that the first white men to set foot on New York harbor landed on Coney Island, though there is no proof it was not Staten Island, for the ship lay anchored beside both. The wind blew so hard this night that the anchor dragged over bottom and the *Half Moon* poked her prow into the sands of Staten Island, "*but took no hurt, thanks be to God,*" adds Juet.

Signal fires—burning driftwood and flames shot up through hollow trees—had rallied the Indian tribes to the marvel of the house afloat on the sea. Objects like beings from heaven seemed to live on the house—so the poor Indians thought, and they began burning sacrificial fires and sent runners beating up the wise men of all the tribes. A religious dance was begun typifying welcome. Spies watching through the foliage came back with word that one of the Manitous was chief of all the rest, for he was dressed in a bright scarlet cloak with something on it bright as the sun—they did not know a name for gold lace worn by Hudson as commander. When the Manitou with the gold lace went ashore at Richmond, Staten Island, Indian legend says that the chiefs gathered round in a circle under the oaks and

chanted an ode of welcome to the rhythmic measures of a dance. The natives accompanied Hudson back to the *Half Moon* with gifts of maize and tobacco—"*a friendly people*," Hudson's manuscript describes them.

Two days passed in the Narrows with interchange of gifts between whites and Indians. On the morning of the 6th, Hudson sent Colman and four men to sound what is now known as Hell Gate. The sailors went on to the Battery—the southernmost point of New York City as it is to-day—finding *lands pleasant with grass and flowers and goodly oaks*, the air crisp with the odor of autumn woods. With the yellow sun aslant the painted autumn forests, it was easy to forget time. The day passed in idle wanderings. At dusk rain began to fall. This extinguished "the match-lighters" of the men's muskets. Launching their boat again, they were rowing back to the *Half Moon* through a rain fine as mist when two canoes with a score of warriors suddenly emerged from the dusk. Both parties paused in mutual amazement. Then the warriors uttered a shout and had discharged a shower of arrows before the astonished sailors could defend themselves. Was the attack a chance encounter with hostiles, or had "the moccasin telegram" brought news of the murderous raid on the Penobscot? One sailor fell dead shot through the throat. Two of the other four men were injured.

The dead man was the Englishman, Colman. This weakened Hudson against the Dutch mutineers. Muskets were wet and useless. In the dark, the men had lost the ship. The tide began to run with a high wind. They threw out a grapnel. It did not hold. All night in the rain and dark, the two uninjured men toiled at the oars to keep from drifting out to sea. Daylight brought relief. The enemy had retreated, and the *Half Moon* lay not far away. By ten of the morning, they reached the ship. The dead man was rowed ashore and buried at a place named after him—Colman's Point. As the old Dutch maps have a Colman's Punt marked at the upper end of Sandy Hook, that is supposed to have been the burial place. A wall of boards was now erected round the decks of the *Half Moon* and men-at-arms kept posted. Indians, who came to trade that day, affected ignorance of the attack but wanted *knives* for their furs. Hudson was not to be tricked. He refused, and permitted only two savages on board at a time. Two he clothed in scarlet coats like his own, and kept on board to guide him up the channel of the main river.

The farther he advanced, the higher grew the shores. First were the ramparts, walls of rock, topped by a fringe of blasted trees. Then the coves where cities like Tarrytown nestle to-day. Then the forested peaks of the Highlands and West Point

and Poughkeepsie, with the oaks to the river's edge. Mist hung in wreaths across the domed green of the mountain called Old Anthony's Nose. Mountain streams tore down to the river through a tangle of evergreens, and in the crisp, nutty autumn air was the all pervasive resinous odor of the pines. Mountains along the Hudson, which to-day scarcely feel the footfall of man except for the occasional hunter, were in Hudson's time peopled by native mountaineers. From their eerie nests they could keep eagle eye on all the surrounding country and swoop down like birds of prey on all intruders. As the white sails of the *Half Moon* rattled and shifted and flapped to the wind tacking up the river, thin columns of smoke rose from the heights around, lights flashed from peak to peak like watch fires—the signals of the mountaineers. From the beginning of time they had dwelt secure on these airy peaks. What invader was this, gliding up the river-silences, sails spread like wings?

By the 13th of September, the *Half Moon* had passed Yonkers. On the morning of the 15th, it anchored within the shadow of the Catskills. On the night of the 19th, it lay at poise on the amber swamps, where the river widens near modern Albany. Either their professions of friendship had been a farce from the first, or they were afraid to be carried into the land of the Mohawks, but the two savages.

who had come as guides, sprang through the porthole near Catskill and swam ashore, running along the banks shouting defiance.

Below Albany, Hudson went ashore with an old chief of the country. "*He was chief of forty men,*" Hudson's manuscript records, "*whom I saw in a house of oak bark, circular in shape with arched roof. It contained a great quantity of corn and beans, enough to load three ships, besides what was growing in the fields. On our coming into the house, two mats were spread to sit upon and food was served in red wooden bowls. Two men were dispatched in quest of game, who brought in a pair of pigeons. They likewise killed a fat dog and skinned it with great haste with shells. The land is the finest for cultivation that ever I in my life set foot upon.*" Hudson had not found a passage to China, but his soul was satisfied of his life labor.

Above Albany, the river became shoaly. Hudson sent his men forward twice to sound, but thirty miles beyond Albany the water was too shallow for the *Half Moon.*

How far up the river had Hudson sailed? Juet's ship log does not give the latitude, but Van Meteren's record says 42° 40′. Beyond this, on September 22, the small boat advanced thirty miles. Tradition says Hudson ascended as far as Waterford.

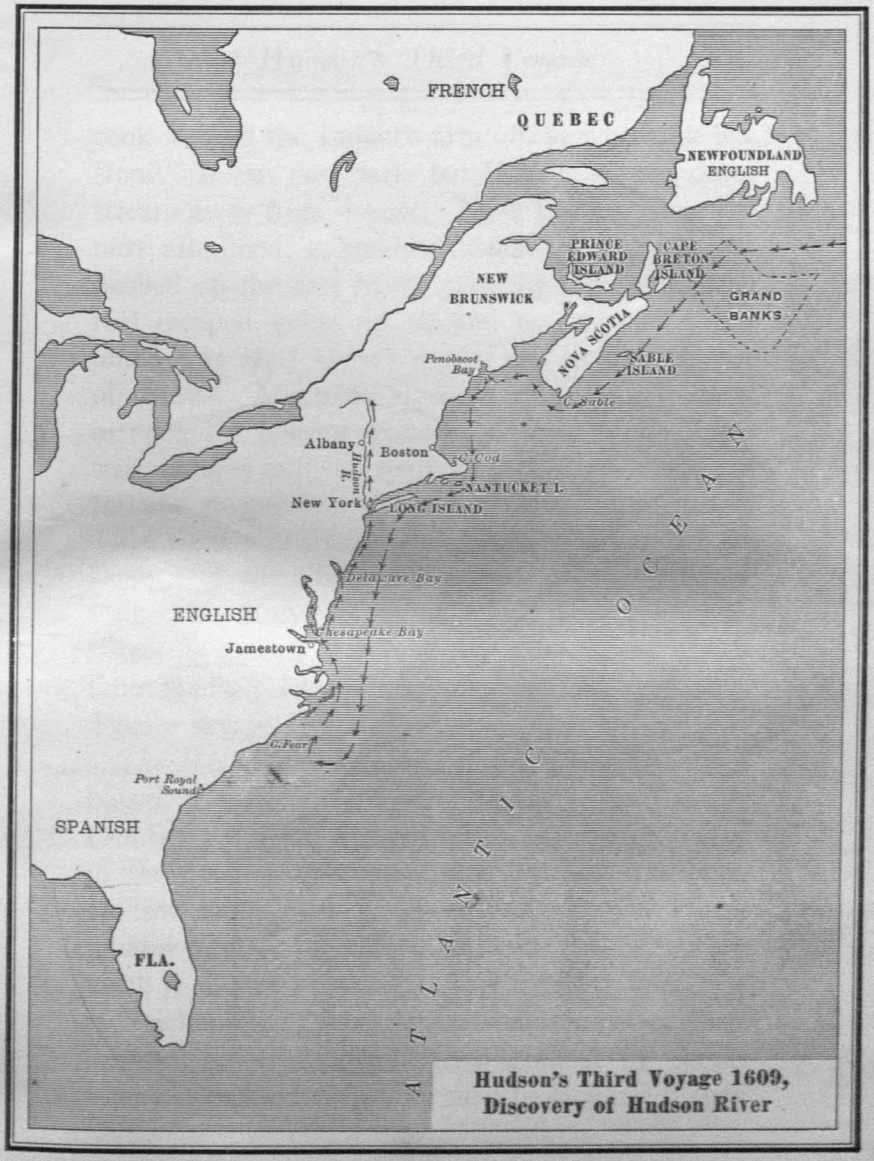
While the boats were sounding, the conspirators

were at their usual mischief. Indian chiefs had come on board. They were taken down to the cabin and made gloriously drunk. All went merrily till one Indian fell insensible. The rest scampered in panic and came back with offerings of wampum—their most precious possession—for the chief's ransom. When they secured him alive, they brought more presents—wampum and venison—in gratitude. To this escapade of the mischief-making crew, moccasin rumor added a thousand exaggerations which came down in Indian tradition to the beginning of the last century. After the drunken frenzy—legend says—the white men made a great oration promising to come again. When they returned the next year, they asked for as much land as the hide of a bullock would cover. The Indians granted it, but the white men cut the buffalo hide to strips narrow as a child's finger and so encompassed all the land of Manahat (Manhattan). The whites then built a fort for trade. The name of the fort was New Amsterdam. It grew to be a mighty city. Such are Indian legends of New York's beginnings. They probably have as much truth as the story of Rome and the wolf.

On September 23, the *Half Moon* turned her prow south. The Hudson lay in all its autumn glory—a glassy sheet walled by the painted woods,

now gorgeous with the frost tints of gold and scarlet and carmine. The ship anchored each night and the crew wandered ashore hatching pirate plots. Finally they presented their ultimatum to Hudson—they would slay him if he dared to steer for Holland. Weakened by the death of Colman, the English were helpless against the Dutch mutineers. Perhaps they, too, were not averse to seizing the Company's ship and becoming sea rovers along the shores of such a land. At least one of them turned pirate the next voyage. Twice, the *Half Moon* was run aground—at Catskill and at Esopus—probably intentionally, or because Hudson dared not send his faithful Englishmen ahead to sound.

Near Anthony's Nose, the wind is compressed with the force of a huge bellows, and the ship anchored in shelter from the eddying gale. Signal fires had rallied the mountain tribes. As the ship lay wind-bound on the night of October 1, the Indians floating about in their dugouts grew daring. One climbed the rudder and stole Juet's clothes through the cabin window. Juet shot him dead red-handed in the act, and gave the alarm to the rest of the crew. With a splash, the Indians rushed for shore, paddling and swimming, but a boat load of white men pursued to regain the plunder. A swimmer caught Juet's boat to upset it. The ship's



Hudson's Third Voyage 1609, Discovery of Hudson River

cook slashed the Indian's arm off, and he sank like stone. It was now dark, but Hudson slipped down stream away from danger. Near Harlem River the next afternoon, a hundred hostiles were seen ambushed on the east bank. Led by the guides who had escaped going up stream, two canoes glided under *The Half Moon's* rudder and let fly a shower of arrows. Much as Hudson must have disliked to open his powder magazines to mutineers, arms were handed out. A spatter of musketry drove the Indians a gunshot distant. Three savages fell. Then there was a rally of the Indians to shoot from shore near what is now Riverside Drive. Hudson trained his cannon on them. Two more fell. Persistent as hornets, out they sallied in canoes. This time Hudson let go every cannon on that side. Twelve savages were killed.

The Half Moon then glided past Hopoghan (Hoboken) to safer anchorage on the open bay. It was October 4th before she passed through the Narrows to the Sea. Here, the mutiny reached a climax. Hudson could no more ignore threats. The Dutch refused to steer the ship to Holland, where punishment would await them. Juet advised wintering in Newfoundland, where there would be other Englishmen, but Hudson allayed discontent by promising not to send the guilty men to Holland if they

would steer the ship to England; and to Dartmouth in Devon she came on November 7, 1609.

What was Hudson's surprise to learn he had become an enormously important personage! The Muscovy Gentlemen of London did not purpose allowing his knowledge of the passage toward the Pole to pass into the service of their rivals, the Dutch. Hudson was forbidden to leave his own country and had to send his report to Holland through Van Meteren, the consul. *The Half Moon* returned to Holland and was wrecked a few years later on her way to the East Indies. It is to be hoped Hudson's crew went down with her. The odd thing was—while Hudson was valued for his knowledge of the Polar regions, the discovery of Hudson River added not one jot to his fame. In fact, one historian of that time declares: "*Hudson achieved nothing at all in* 1609. "*All he did was to exchange merchandise for furs.*" Nevertheless, the merchants of Amsterdam were rigging out ships to establish a trading factory on the entrance of that newly discovered river. Such was the founding of New York. Money bags sneer at the dreamer, but they are quick to transmute dreams into gold, though three hundred years were to pass before any of the gold drawn from his dreams was applied toward erecting to Hudson a memorial.

CHAPTER IV

1610

HUDSON'S FOURTH VOYAGE

THREE years almost to a day from the time he set out to pursue his Phantom Dream along an endless Trail, Hudson again set sail for the mystic North. This time the Muscovy Gentlemen did not send him as a company, but three members of that company—Smith, Wolstenholme and Digges—supplied him with the bark, *Discovery*. In his crew of twenty were several of his former seamen, among whom was the old mate, Juet. Provisions were carried for a year's cruise. One Coleburne went as adviser; but what with the timidity of the old crew and the officious ignorance of the adviser stirring up discontent by fault-finding before the boat was well out of Thames waters—Hudson was obliged to pack Coleburne back on the first craft met home-bound. The rest of the crew comprised the usual proportion of rogues impressed against their will for a voyage, which regular seamen feared.

Having found one great river north of the Chesapeake, Hudson's next thought was of that arm of the sea south of Greenland, which Cabot and Frobisher and Davis had all reported to be a passage as large as the Mediterranean, and to Greenland Hudson steered *The Discovery* in April, 1610. June saw the ship moored off Iceland under the shadow of Hekla's volcanic fires. Smoke above Hekla was always deemed sign of foul weather. Twice *The Discovery* was driven back by storm, and the storm blew the smoldering fears of the unwilling seamen to raging discontent. Bathing in the hot springs, Juet, the old mate, grumbled at Hudson for sailing North instead of to that pleasant land they had found the previous year. The impressed sailors were only too ready to listen, and the wrong-headed foolish old mate waxed bolder. He advised the men "to keep muskets loaded in their cabins, for they would need firearms, and there would be bloodshed if the master persisted going by Greenland." And all unconscious of the secret fires beginning to burn against him, was Hudson on the quarter-deck gazing westward, imagining that the ice bank seen through the mirage of the rosy North light was Greenland hiding the goal of his hopes. All you had to do was round Cape Farewell, south of Greenland, and you would be in the passage that led to the South Sea.

It was July when the boat reached the southern end of Greenland, and if the crew had been terrified by Juet's tales of ice north of Asia, they were panic-stricken now, for the icebergs of America were as mountains are to mole-hills compared to the ice floes of Asia. Before, Hudson had cruised the east coast of Greenland. There, the ice continents of a polar world can disport themselves in an ocean's spacious area, but west of Greenland, ice fields the area of Europe are crunched for four hundred miles into a passage narrower than the Mediterranean. To make matters worse, up these passages jammed with ice-bergs washed hard as adamant, the full force of the Atlantic tide flings against the southward flow of the Arctic waters. The result is the famous "furious overfall," the nightmare of northern seamen—a cataract of waters thirty feet high flinging themselves against the natural flow of the ice. It is a battle of blind fury, ceaseless and tireless.

Hudson Straits may be described as a great arm of the ocean curving to an inland sea the size of the Mediterranean. At each end, the Straits are less than fifty miles wide, lined and interspread with rocky islands and dangerous reefs. Inside, the Straits widen to a breadth of from one hundred to two hundred miles. Ungava Bay on the east is a cup-like basin, which the wash of the iron ice has

literally ground out of Labrador's rocky shore. Half way up at Savage Point about two hundred miles from the ocean, Hudson Straits suddenly contract. This is known as the Second Narrows. The mountainous, snow-clad shores converge to a sharp funnel. Into this funnel pours the jammed, churning maelstrom of ice floes the size of a continent, and against this chaos flings the Atlantic tide.

Old fur-trade captains of a later era entered the Straits armed and accoutered as for war. It was a standing regulation among the fur-trade captains always to have one-fourth extra allowance of provisions for the delay in the straits. Six iron-shod ice hooks were carried for mooring to the ice floes. Special cables called "ice ropes" were used. Twelve great ice poles, twelve handspikes all steel-shod, and twelve chisels to drill holes in the ice for powder—were the regulation requirements of the fur traders bound through Hudson Straits. Special rules were issued for captains entering the Straits. A checkerboard sky—deep blue reflecting the clear water of ocean, apple-green lights the sign of ice—was the invariable indication of distant ice. "Never go on "either at night or in a fog when you have sighted "such a sky"—was the rule. "Get your ice tackle "ready at the straits." "Stand away from the in-"draught between a big iceberg and the tide, for if

"once the indraught nails you, you are lost." "To "avoid a crush that will sink you in ten minutes, "run twenty miles inside the soft ice; that will break "the force of the tide." "Be careful of your lead "night and day."

But these rules were learned only after centuries of navigating. All was new to the seamen in Hudson's day. All that was known to the northern navigator was the trick of throwing out the hook, gripping to a floe, hauling up to it *and worming a way through the ice with a small sail.*

Carried with the current southward from Greenland, sometimes slipping into the long "tickles" of water open between the floes, again watching their chance to follow the calm sea to the rear of some giant iceberg, or else mooring to some ice raft honeycombed by the summer's heat and therefore less likely to ram the hull—*The Discovery* came to Ungava Bay, Labrador, in July. This is the worst place on the Atlantic seaboard for ice. Old whalers and Moravian missionaries told me when I was in Labrador that the icebergs at Ungava are often by actual measurement nine miles long, and washed by the tide, they have been ground hard and sharp as steel. It is here they begin to break up on their long journey southward.

An island of ice turned turtle close to Hudson's ship. There was an avalanche of falling seas. "*Into*

the ice we put for safety," says the record. "*Some of our men fell sick. I will not say it was for fear, though I saw small sign of other grief.*" Just westward lay a great open passage—now known as Hudson Strait, so the island in Ungava Bay was called *Desire Provoked.* Plainly, they could not remain anchored here, for between bergs they were in danger of a crush, and the drift might carry them on any of the rock reefs that rib the bay.

Juet, the old mate, raged against the madness of venturing such a sea. Henry Greene, a penniless blackguard, whom Hudson had picked off the streets of London to act as secretary—now played the tale-bearer, fomenting trouble between master and crew. "Our master," says Prickett, one of Digges' servants who was on board, "was in despair." Taking out his chart, Hudson called the crew to the cabin and showed them how they had come farther than any explorer had yet dared. He put it plainly to them—would they go on, or turn back? Let them decide once and for all; no repinings! There, on the west, was the passage they had been seeking. It might lead to the South Sea. There, to the east, the way home. On both sides was equal danger—ice. To the west, was land. They could see that from the masthead. To the east, between them and home, the width of the ocean.

The crew were divided, but the ice would not wait for arguments and see-sawings. It was crushing in on each side of *The Discovery* with an ominous jar of the timbers. All hands were mustered out. By the usual devices in such emergencies—by blowing up the ice at the prow, towing away obstructions, rowing with the ship in tow, all fenders down to protect the sides, the steel-shod poles prodding off the icebergs—*The Discovery* was hauled to open water. Then, as if it were the very sign that the crew needed—water opened to the west! There came a spurt of wind. *The Discovery* spread her sails to the breeze and carried the vacillating crew forward. For a week they had lain imprisoned. By the 11th of July they were in Hudson Straits on the north side and had anchored at Baffin's Land, which Hudson named *God's Mercy.*

That night the men were allowed ashore. It was a desolate, silent, mountainous region that seemed to lie in an eternal sleep. Birds were in myriads—their flacker but making the profound silence more cavernous. When a sailor uttered a shout, there was no answer but the echo of his own voice, thin and weird and lonely, as if he, too, would be swallowed up by those deathly silences. Men ran over the ice chasing a polar bear. Others went gunning for partridge. The hills were presently rocketing with the crash and echo of musketry. Prickett climbed

a high rock to spy ahead. Open water lay to the southwest. It was like a sea—perhaps the South Sea; and to the southwest Hudson steered past Charles and Salisbury Islands, through "*a whurling sea*"—the Second Narrows—between two high headlands, Digges island on one side, Cape Wolstenholme on the other, eventually putting into Port Laperriere on Digges Island. Except for two or three government stations where whaling captains forgather in log cabins, the whole region from Ungava Bay to Digges Island, four hundred miles, practically the whole length of the Straits on the south—is as unexplored to-day as when Hudson first sailed those waters.

The crew went ashore hunting partridge over the steep rocks of the island and examining stone caches of the absent Eskimo. Hudson took a careful observation of the sea. Before him lay open water—beyond was sea, a sea to the south! Was it the South Sea? The old record says he was proudly confident it was the South Sea, for it was plainly a sea as large as the Baltic or Mediterranean. Fog falling, cannon were set booming and rocketing among the hills to call the hunters home. It was now August 4. A month had passed since he entered the Straits. If it took another month to go back through them, the boat would be winter-bound

and could not reach England. There was no time to lose. Keeping between the east coast of the bay with its high rocks and that line of reefed islands known as The Sleepers, *The Discovery* pushed on south, where the look-out still reported "*a large sea to the fore.*" This is a region, which at this late day of the world's history, still remains almost unknown. The men who have explored it could be counted on one hand. Towering rocks absolutely bare but for moss, with valley between where the spring thaw creates continual muskeg—moss on water dangerous as quicksands—are broken by swampy tracks; and near Richmond, where the Hudson's Bay Fur Company maintained a post for a few years, the scenery attains a degree of grandeur similar to Norway, groves covering the rocky shores, cataracts shattering over the precipices and lonely vistas opening to beautiful meadows, where the foot of man has never trod. But for some unknown reason, game has always been scarce on the east side of Hudson Bay. Legends of mines have been told by the Indians, but no one has yet found the mines.

The fury of Juet the rebellious old mate, now knew no bounds. The ship had victuals for only six months more. Here was September. Navigation would hardly open in the Straits before June. If the boat did not emerge on the South Sea, they would

all be winter-bound. The waters began to shoal to those dangerous reefs on the south where the Hudson's Bay traders have lost so many ships. In hoisting anchor up, a furious over-sea knocked the sailors from the capstan. With a rebound the heavy iron went splashing overboard. This was too much for Juet. The mate threw down his pole and refused to serve longer. On September 10, Hudson was compelled to try him for mutiny. Juet was deposed with loss of wages for bad conduct and Robert Bylot appointed in his place. The trial showed Hudson he was slumbering over a powder mine. Half the crew was disaffected, plotting to possess themselves of arms; but what did plots matter? Hudson was following a vision which his men could not see.

By this time, Hudson was several hundred miles south of the Straits, and the inland sea which he had discovered did not seem to be leading to the Pacific. Following the south shore to *the westernmost bay of all*—James Bay on the west—Hudson recognized the fact that it was not the South Sea. The siren of his dreams had sung her fateful song till she had lured his hopes on the rocks. He was land-bound and winter-bound in a desolate region with a mutinous crew.

The water was too shallow for the boat to moor.

The men waded ashore to seek a wintering place. Wood was found in plenty and the footprint of a savage seen in the snow. That night, November 2, it snowed heavily; and the boat crashed on the rocks. For twelve hours, bedlam reigned, Juet heading a party of mutineers, but next day the storm floated the keel free. By the 10th of November, the ship was frozen in. To keep up stock of provisions, Hudson offered a reward for all game, of which there seemed an abundance, but when he ordered the carpenters ashore to build winter quarters, he could secure obedience to his commands only by threatening to hang every mutineer to the yardarm. In the midst of this turmoil, the gunner died. Henry Greene, the vagabond secretary, who received no wages, asked for the dead man's heavy great coat. Hudson granted the request. The mutineers resented the favoritism, for it was the custom to auction off a dead man's belongings at the mainmast, and in the cold climate all needed extra clothing. Greene took advantage of the apparent favor to shirk house building and go off to the woods with a rebellious carpenter hunting. Furious, Hudson turned the coveted coat over to Bylot, the new mate.

So the miserable winter dragged on. Snow fell continuously day after day. The frost giants set the ice whooping and crackling every night like

artillery fire. A pall of gloom was settling over the ship that seemed to benumb hope and benumb effort. Great numbers of birds were shot by loyal members of the crew, but the ship was short of bread and the cook began to use moss and the juice of tamarac as antidotes to scurvy. As winter closed in, the cold grew more intense. Stone fireplaces were built on the decks of the ship. Pans of shot heated red-hot were taken to the berths as a warming pan. On the whole, Hudson was fortunate in his wintering quarters. It was the most sheltered part of the bay and had the greatest abundance of game to be found on that great inland sea. Also, there was no lack of firewood. Farther north on the west shore, Hudson's ship would have been exposed to the east winds and the ice-drive. Here, he was secure from both, though the cold of James Bay was quite severe enough to cover decks and beds and bedding and port windows with hoar frost an inch thick.

Toward spring came a timid savage to the ship drawing furs on a toboggan for trade. He promised to return after so many sleeps from the tribes of the South, but time to an Indian may mean this year or next, and he was never again seen. As the ice began to break up in May, Hudson sent men fishing in a shallop that the carpenters had built, but the fishermen plotted to escape in the small boat. The next

time, Hudson, himself, led the fishermen, threatening to leave any man proved guilty of plots marooned on the bay. It was an unfortunate threat. The men remembered it. Juet, the deposed mate, had but caged his wrath and was now joined by Henry Greene, the secretary, who had fallen from favor. If these men and their allies had hunted half as industriously as they plotted, there would have been food in plenty, but with half the crew living idly on the labors of the others for a winter, somebody was bound to suffer shortage of food on the homeward voyage. The traitor thought was suggested by Henry Greene that if Hudson and the loyal men were, themselves, marooned, the rest could go home with plenty of food and no fear of punishment. The report could be spread that Hudson had died. Hudson had searched the land in vain for Indians. All unconscious of the conspiracy in progress, he returned to prepare the ship for the home voyage.

The rest of *The Discovery's* record reads like some tale of piracy on the South Sea. Hudson distributed to the crew all the bread that was left—a pound to each man without favoritism. There were tears in his eyes and his voice broke as he handed out the last of the food. The same was done with the cheese. Seamen's chests were then searched and some pilfered biscuits distributed. In Hudson's cabin were

stored provisions for fourteen days. These were to be used only in the last extremity. As might have been expected, the idle mutineers used their food without stint. The men who would not work were the men who would not deny themselves. When Hudson weighed anchor on June 18, 1611, for the homeward trip, nine of the best men in the crew lay ill in their berths from overwork and privations.

One night Greene came to the cabin of Prickett, who had acted as a sort of agent for the ship's owners. Vowing to cut the throat of any man who betrayed him, Greene burst out in imprecations with a sort of pot-valour that "*he was going to end it or mend it; go through with it or die*"; the sick men were useless: there were provisions for half the crew but not all——

Prickett bade him stop. This was mutiny. Mutiny was punished in England by death. But Greene swore he would rather be hanged at home than starve at sea.

In the dark, the whole troop of mutineers came whining and plotting to Prickett. The boat was only a few days out of winter quarters and embayed in the ice half way to the Straits. If such delays continued, what were fourteen days' provisions for a voyage? Of all the ill men, Prickett, alone, was to be spared to intercede for the mutineers with

Sir Dudley Digges, his master. In vain, Prickett pleaded for Hudson's life. Let them wait two days; one day; twelve hours! They called him a fool! It was Hudson's death, or the death of all! The matter must be put through while their courage was up! Then to add the last touch to their villainy, they swore on a Bible to Prickett that what they contemplated was for the object of saving the lives of the majority. Prickett's defense for countenancing the mutiny is at best the excuse of a weakling, a scared fool—he couldn't save Hudson, so he kept quiet to save his own neck. It was a black, windy night. The seas were moaning against the ice fields. As far as human mind could forestall devilish designs, the mutineers were safe, for all would be alike guilty and so alike pledged to secrecy. It must be remembered, too, the crew were impressed seamen, unwilling sailors, the blackguard riffraff of London streets. If the plotters had gone to bed, Prickett might have crawled above to Hudson's cabin, but the mutineers kept sleepless vigil for the night. At daybreak two had stationed themselves at the hatch, three hovered round the door of the captain's cabin. When Hudson emerged from the room, two men leaped on him to the fore, a third, Wilson the bo'swain, caught and bound his arms behind. When Hudson demanded what they meant,

they answered with sinister intent that he would know when *he* was put in the shallop. Then, all pretense that what they did was for the good of the crew was cast aside. They threw off all disguise and gathered round him with shouts, and jeers, and railings, and mockery of his high ambitions! It was the old story of the Ideal hooted by the mob, crucified by little-minded malice, misunderstood by evil and designing fools! The sick were tumbled out of berths and herded above decks till the shallop was lowered. One man from Ipswich was given a chance to remain but begged to be set adrift. He would rather perish as a man than live as a thief. The name of the hero was Phillip Staffe. With a running commentary of curses from Henry Greene, Juet, the mate, now venting his pent-up vials of spleen, eight sick men were lowered into the small boat with Hudson and his son. Some one suggested giving the castaways ammunition and meal. Juet roared for the men to make haste. Wilson, the guilty bo'swain, got anchors up and sails rigged. Ammunition, arms and cooking utensils were thrown into the small boat. *The Discovery* then spread her sails to the wind—a pirate ship. The tow rope of the small boat tightened. She followed like a despairing swimmer, climbing over the wave-wash for a pace or two; then some one cut the cable. The castaways

were adrift. The distance between the two ships widened. Prickett looking out from his porthole below, caught sight of Hudson with arms bound and panic-stricken, angry face. As the boats drifted apart the old commander shouted a malediction against his traitor crew.

"Juet will ruin you all——"

"Nay, but it is that villain, Henry Greene," Prickett yelled back through the porthole, and the shallop fell away. Some miles out of sight from their victims, the mutineers slackened pace to ransack the contents of the ship. The shallop was sighted oars going, sails spread, coming over a wave in mad pursuit. With guilty terror as if their pursuers had been ghosts, the mutineers out with crowded sails and fled as from an avenging demon! So passed Henry Hudson down the Long Trail on June 21, 1611! Did he suffer that blackest of all despair—loss of vision, of faith in his dream? Did life suddenly seem to him a cruel joke in which he had played the part of the fool? Who can tell?

What became of him? A silence as of a grave in the sea rests over his fate. Barely the shadow of a legend illumines his last hours; though Indians of Hudson Bay to this day tell folk-lore yarns of the first Englishman who came to the bay and was wrecked. When Radisson came overland to the bay

fifty years later, he found an old house "*all marked by bullets.*" Did Hudson take his last stand inside that house? Did the loyal Ipswich man fight his last fight against the powers of darkness there where the Goddess of Death lines her shores with the bodies of the dead? Also, the Indians told Radisson childish fables of a "ship with sails" having come to the bay; but many ships came in those fifty years: Button's to hunt in vain for Hudson; Munck, the Dane's, to meet a fate worse than Hudson's.

Hudson's shallop went down to as utter silence as the watery graves of those old sea Vikings, who rode out to meet death on the billow. A famous painting represents Hudson huddled panic-stricken with his child and the ragged castaways in a boat driving to ruin among the ice fields. I like better to think as we know last of him—standing with bound arms and face to fate, shouting defiance at the fleeing enemy. They could kill him, but they could not crush him! It was more as a Viking would have liked to die. He had left the world benefited more than he could have dreamed—this pathfinder of two empires' commerce. He had fought his fight. He had done his work. He had chased his Idea down the Long Trail. What more could the most favored child of the gods ask? With one's task done, better to die in harness than rot in some garret of obscurity,

or grow garrulous in an imbecile old age—the fate of so many great benefactors of humanity!

It needed no prophet to predict the end of the pirate ship with such a crew. They quarreled over who should be captain. They quarreled over who should be mate. They quarreled over who should keep the ship's log. They lost themselves in the fog, and ran amuck of icebergs and disputed whether they should sail east or west, whether they had passed Cape Digges leading out of the Straits, whether they should turn back south to seek the South Sea. They were like children lost in the dark. They ran on rocks, and lay ice-bound with no food but dried sea moss and soup made of candle grease boiled with the offal left from partridge. Ice hid the Straits. They steered past the outlet and now steered back only to run on a rock near the pepper-colored sands of Cape Digges. Flood tide set them free. They wanted to land and hunt but were afraid to approach the coast and sent in the small boats. It was the 28th of July. As they neared the breeding ground of the birds, Eskimo kyacks came swarming over the waves toward them. That day, the whites rested in the Indian tents. The next day Henry Greene hurried ashore with six men to secure provisions. Five men had landed to gather scurvy (sorrel) grass and trade with the fifty Indians along the shore.

Prickett being lame remained alone in the small boat. Noticing an Eskimo boarding the boat, Prickett stood up and peremptorily ordered the savage ashore. When he sat down, what was his horror to find himself seized from behind, with a knife stroke grazing his breast. Eskimo carry their knives by strings. Prickett seized the string in his left hand and so warded off the blow. With his right hand he got his own dagger out of belt and stabbed the assailant dead. On shore, Wilson the bo'swain, and another man had been cut to pieces. Striking off the Indians with a club, Greene, the ringleader, tumbled to the boat with a death wound. The other two men leaped down the rocks into the boat. A shower of arrows followed, killing Greene outright and wounding the other three. One of the rowers fainted. The others signaled the ship for aid, and were rescued. Greene's body was thrown into the sea without shroud or shrift. Of the other three, two died in agonies. This encounter left only four well men to man the ship home. They landed twice among the numberless lonely islands that line the Straits and hunted partridge and sea moss for food. Before they had left the Straits, they were down to rations of half a bird a day. In mid-ocean they were grateful for the garbage of the cook's barrel. Juet, the old mate, died of starvation in

sight of Ireland. The other men became so weak they could not stand at the helm. Sails flapped to the wind in tatters. Masts snapped off short. Splintered yardarms hung in the ragged rigging. It was like an ocean derelict, or a haunted craft with a maimed crew. In September, land was sighted off Ireland and the joyful cry of "a sail" raised; but a ship manned by only four men with a tale of disaster, which could not be explained, aroused suspicion. *The Discovery* was shunned by the fisher folk. Only by pawning the ship's furniture could the crew obtain food, sailors and pilot to take them to Plymouth. Needless to say, the survivors were at once clapped in prison and Sir Thomas Button sent to hunt for Hudson; but Hudson had passed to his unknown grave leaving as a monument the two great pathways of traffic, which he found—Hudson River and the northern inland sea, which may yet prove the Baltic of America.

DATA FOR HUDSON'S VOYAGES

Purchas' Pilgrims contains the bulk of the data regarding Hudson's voyages. The account of the first voyage is written by Hudson, himself, and by one of the company, John Playse, Playse presumably completing the log-book directly from Hudson's journal. This is supplemented by facts taken from Hudson's manuscripts (long since lost) now to be found in *Edge's Discovery of the Muscovy Merchants* (Purchas III, 464) and *Fotherby's* statement concerning Hudson's journals (Purchas III, 730), the whole being concisely stated with ample proofs in the *Hakluyt Society's* 1860 publication on Hudson by

Doctor Asher. The account of the second voyage is given by Hudson, himself. On the third voyage, the journal was kept by Juet, the matê. The story of the last voyage is told in *An Abstract of Hudson's Journals* down to August 1610; and in an account written by that Prickett who joined the mutineers, plainly to excuse his own conduct. Matter supplementary to the third voyage may be found outside *Purchas* in such Dutch authorities as *Van Meteren* and *De Laet* and *Lambrechtsen* and *Van der Donck*. Also in *Heckewelder* and *Hessel Gerritz*. Every American historian who has dealt with the discovery of Hudson River draws his data from these sources. *Yates, Moulton, O'Callaghan, Brodhead* are the earliest of the old American authorities. Supplementary matter concerning the fourth and last voyage is to be found in almost any account of Arctic voyaging in America, though nothing new is added to what is told by Hudson, himself, and by Prickett. Both the *New York Historical Society* and the *Hakluyt Society* of England have published excellent and complete transcripts of Hudson's Voyages with translations of all foreign data bearing on them including the voyages of *Estevan Gomez* and *Verrazano* past New York harbor. For data bearing on the navigation of Hudson Straits, the two reports of the Canadian Government on two expeditions sent to ascertain the feasibility of such a route—are excellent; but not so good, not so detailed and beautifully unguarded as the sailing records kept by the old sea captains in the service of the Hudson's Bay furriers. The Government reports are too guarded. Besides, the ships stayed only one season in the straits; but these old fur company captains sailed as often as forty times to the bay—eighty times in all through the straits; and I have availed myself of Captain Coat's sailing directions especially. In the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, London, are literally shelf loads of such directions. That modern enterprise will ultimately surmount all difficulties of navigation in the straits cannot be doubted. What man sets himself to do —he does; but the difficulties are not child's play, nor imaginary ones created by politicians who oppose a Hudson Bay route to Europe. One has only to read the record of three hundred years' sailing by the fur traders to realize that the straits are —to put it mildly—a trap for ocean goers. Still it is interesting to note, it is typical of the dauntless spirit of the North, that a railroad is actually being built toward Hudson Bay. Not the bay, but the straits, will be the crux of the difficulty.

When I speak of "Wreckers' Reef" Sable Island, it is not a figure of speech, but a fact of those early days—that false lights were often placed on Sable Island to lure ships on the sand reefs. Men, who waded ashore, were clubbed to death by pirates: See Canadian Archives.

The Indian legends of Hudson's Voyage to New York are to be found in early missionary annals: see New York History, 1811.

The report of the Canadian Geologic Survey of Baffins Land and the North was issued by Mr. A. P. Low as I completed this volume.

All authorities—as seen by the map—place Hudson's wintering quarters off Rupert River. From the Journals, it seems to me, he went as far west as he could go, and did not come back east, which would make his wintering quarters off Moose. This would explain "the old house battered with bullets," which Radisson records.

My authority for data on Moose Factory is Bishop Horden.

CHAPTER V

1619

THE ADVENTURES OF THE DANES ON HUDSON BAY —JENS MUNCK'S CREW

THOUGH Admiral Sir Thomas Button came out the very next year after Hudson's death to follow up his discoveries and search for the lost mariner—the sea gave up no message of its dead. Button wintered on the bay (1612–13) at Port Nelson, which he discovered and named after his mate who died there. With him had come Prickett and Bylot of Hudson's crew. Hudson's old ship, *The Discovery*, was used with a larger frigate called *The Resolution*. No sooner had the ships gone into winter quarters on the west coast at Port Nelson than scurvy infected the camp. The seaport which was destined to become the great emporium of the fur trade for three hundred years —became literally a camp of the dead. So many seamen died of scurvy and cold, that Button had not enough sailors to man both vessels home. The big one was abandoned, and for a second time Hudson's ship, *The Discovery*, carried back disheartened

survivors to England. Button's long absence had raised hopes that he had found passage westward to the South Sea. These hopes were dashed, but English endeavor did not cease.

In 1614, a Captain Gibbon was dispatched to the bay. Ice caught him at Labrador. Here, he was held prisoner for the summer. Again hopes were dashed, but national greatness sometimes consists in sheer dogged persistence. The English adventurers, who had sent Button and Gibbon, now fitted out Bylot, Hudson's former mate. With him went a young man named Baffin. These two spent two years, 1615–1616, on the bay. They found no trace of Hudson. They found no passage to the South Sea, but cruised those vast islands of ice and rock on the north to which Baffin's name has been given.

The English treasure seekers and adventurers of the high seas took a breathing space. Where England left off, the trail of discovery was taken up by little Denmark. Norse sailors had been the first to belt the seas. Before Columbus was born, Norsemen had coasted the ice fields from Iceland to Greenland and Greenland to the Vinelands and Marklands farther south, supposed to be Nova Scotia and Rhode Island. The lost colonies of eastern Greenland had become the folk-lore of Danish fireside.

King Christian IV, himself, examined the charts and supervised the outfitting of two ships for discovery in America. *The Unicorn*, named after a species of whale, was a frigate with a crew of forty-eight including chaplain and surgeon. *The Lamprey* was a little sloop with sixteen of a crew. There remained the choice of a commander and that fell without question on the fittest man in the Danish navy—Jens Munck, such a soldier of fortune as the novelist might delight to portray.

Munck's father was a nobleman, who had suicided in prison, disgraced for misuse of public funds. Munck's mother was left destitute. At twelve years of age Jens was thrown on the world. Like a true soldier of fortune, he took fate by the beard and shipped as a common sailor to seek his fortunes in the New World. When a mere boy, he chanced to be off Brazil on a Dutch merchant ship. Here, he had his first bout with fate. The Dutch vessel was attacked off Bahia by the French and totally destroyed. Of all the crew, seven only escaped by plunging into the water and swimming ashore in the dark. Of the seven survivors, the Danish boy was one. He had succeeded in reaching shore by clinging to bits of wreckage through the chopping seas. Half drowned, friendless, crawling ashore like a bedraggled water rat, here was the boy, utterly alone in a

strange land among a strange people speaking a strange tongue.

Such an experience would have set most boys swallowing a lump in their throat. The little Dane was too glad to get the water out of his throat and to set his feet on dry land for any such nonsense. For a year he worked with a shoemaker for his board, and incidentally picked up a knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese over the cobbler's last. The most of young Danish noblemen gained such knowledge from tutors and travel. Then Munck became apprentice to a house painter. Not a yelp against fate did the plucky young castaway utter, and what is more marvel, he did not lose his head and let it sink to the place where a young gentleman's feet ought to be—namely the pavement. Toiling for his daily bread among the riffraff and ruff-scuff of a foreign port, Munck kept his head up and his face to the future; and at last came his chance.

Munck was now about eighteen years old. Some Dutch vessels had come to Bahia without a license for trade. Munck overheard that the harbor authorities intended to confiscate both vessels. It was Munck's opportunity to escape, and he seized it with both hands. Jostling among the sailors of the water-front, keeping his intentions to himself,

Munck waited till it was dark. Then, he stripped, tied his clothes to his back, and swam out to warn the Dutch of their danger. The vessels escaped and carried Munck with them to Europe. Within five years he was sailing ships for himself to Iceland and Nova Zembla and Russia—keeping up that old trick of picking up odds and ends, knowledge of people and things and languages wherever he went. Before he was thirty he had joined the Danish navy and was appointed to conduct embassies to Spain. and Russia where his knowledge of foreign languages held good. When the traders of Copenhagen and King Christian looked for a commander to explore and colonize Hudson Bay, Munck was the man.

Sunday, May 16, 1619, the ships that were to add a second Russia to Denmark, sailed for Hudson Bay. Sailors the world over hate the Northern seas. Some of Munck's crews must have been impressed men, for one fellow promptly jumped overboard and suicided rather than go on. Another died from natural causes, so Munck put into Norway for three extra men.

Greenland was sighted in twenty days—a quick run in those times and evidence that Munck was a swift sailor, who took all risks and pushed ahead at

any cost, for the Hudson's Bay fur trade captains considered seven weeks quick time from London to the Straits of Hudson Bay. A current sweeps south from Greenland. Lashing his ships abreast, Munck ran into the center of a great field of soft slob ice, that would keep the big bergs off and protect the hulls from rough seas. Then lowering all sails, he drifted with the ice drive. It came on to blow. Slob ice held the ships safe, but sleet iced the rigging and deck till they were like glass and life lines had to be stretched from side to side to give hand hold, every wave-wash sending the sailors slithering over the icy decks as if on skates. Icicles as long as a man's arm would form on the cross-trees in a single night. The ropes became like bolts—cracking when they were bent, but when the heat of mid-day came; both ships were in a drip of thaw.

What with the slow pace of the ice drift and the heaviness of the ships from becoming ice-logged, it was the middle of July before they reached the Straits. Eskimos swarmed down to the islands of Ungava Bay, but seemed afraid to trade with Munck's crew. It was on one of the islands here that the Eskimo two centuries later massacred an entire crew of Hudson's Bay Company fur traders, who had been wrecked by the ice jam and escaped

across the floes to the island. It was, perhaps, as well for Munck that the treacherous natives took themselves off, bounding over the waves in skin boats, so light they could be carried by one hand over the ice floes. The collision of the Atlantic tide with the eastward flowing current of the Straits created such a furious sea as Munck had never seen. It was no longer safe to keep *The Lamprey* lashed to the frigate, for one wave wash caused by an overturning iceberg lifted the little ship almost on the masts of *The Unicorn.*

The ships then began worming their way slowly through the ice drift. A grapnel would be thrown out on an ice floe. Up to this, the ships would haul by ropes. Both crews stood on guard at the deck rails with the long iron-shod ice poles in their hands, prodding and shoving off the huge masses when the ice threatened a crush. Six hours ebb and six hours flow was the rate of the tide, but where the Straits narrowed and the inflow beat against the ice jam, the incoming tide would sometimes last as long as nine hours. This was the time of greatest danger, for beaten between tide and ice, the Straits became a raging whirlpool. It was then the ships had to sheer away from the lashing undertow of the big bergs and stood out unsheltered to the crush and jam of the drive. Sometimes, a breeze and open

passage gave them free way from the danger. At other times, the maelstrom of the advancing tide caught them in dead calm. Then the men had to leap out on the icepan and tow the ships away. Soaked to their armpits in ice water, toiling night and day, one day exposed to heat that was almost tropical, the next enveloped in a blizzard of sleet, the two crews began to show the effects of such terrible work. They were so completely worn out, Munck anchored on the north shore to let them rest. At Icy Cove off Baffin's Land, one seaman—Andrew Staffreanger—died. Where he was buried, Munck remarked that the soil showed signs of mica and ore. To-day—it is interesting to note—those mica mines are being worked in Baffin's Land.

One night toward the end of July, ice swept on the ships from both sides. Suddenly the crew were tumbled from their berths by the dull rumbling as of an earthquake. The boards of the cabin floors had sprung. Ice had heaped higher than the yard-arms—the ships were like toys, the sport of grim Northern giants. When the ships were examined, a gash was found in the keel of *The Lamprey* from stem to stern as broad as one's hand. Barely was this mended when the rudder was smashed from *The Unicorn*. A great icepan tossed up on end and shivered down in splinters that crashed over

the decks like glass. A moment later a rolling sea swept the ships, sending the sailors sprawling, while the scuppers spouted a cataract of waters. Munck felt beaten. Again he ran to the north shore for shelter. While the sailors rested, the chaplain held services and made "offerings to God" beseeching His help. Munck, meanwhile, went ashore and set up the arms of the Danish King—a superfluous proceeding, as Baffin had already set up the arms of England here.

On the ebb of the tide the sea calmed, and Munck succeeded in passing the most dangerous part of the Straits—the Second Narrows. An east wind cleared the sea of ice. Sails full blown, Munck's ships shot out on the open water of Hudson Bay in the first week of September. Munck was six weeks traversing the Straits. It should not have taken longer than one.

The storm pursued Munck clear across the bay. The ships parted. Through the hurricane of sleet, the man at the masthead discerned land. A small creek seemed to open on the long, low, sandy shore. Through the lashing breakers *The Unicorn* steered for the haven. A sunken rock protruded in mid-current. Munck sheered off, entered, drove up-stream and found himself in a land-locked lagoon

such as he could not have discovered elsewhere on the bay if he had searched every foot of its shores. By chance, the storm had driven him into the finest port of Hudson Bay, called by the Indians, River-of-the-Strangers or Danish River, now known as Churchill.

Heaving out all anchors, the toil-worn Danes rested and thanked God for the deliverance. But the little *Lamprey* was still out, and the storm raged unabated for four days. Taking advantage of the ebb tide, the men waded ashore in the dark and kindled fires of driftwood to guide *The Lamprey* to the harbor. At Churchill, the land runs out in a long fine cape now known as Eskimo Point. Here signal fires were kept burning and Munck watched for the lost ship. Such a wind raged as blew the men off their legs, but the air cleared, and on the morning of September 9, the peak of a sail was seen rising over the tumbling billows. The sailors of *The Unicorn* ran up their ensign, hurrahed and heaped more driftwood. By night the little *Lamprey* came beating over the waves and shot into the harbor with flying colors.

The Danes were astonished at the fury of the elements so early in the season. Snow flew through the air in particles as fine as sand with the sting of bird-shot. When the east wind blew, ice drove up

the harbor that tore strips in the ship's hull the depth of a finger. Munck moved farther up stream to a point since known as Munck's Cove.

To-day there are no forests within miles from the rocky wastes of Churchill, but at that time, the country was timbered to the water's edge, and during the ebb tide the men constructed a log jam or ice-break around the ship. Bridge piles were driven in the freezing ooze. Timber and rocks were thrown inside these around the hulls. Six hawsers moored each ship to the rocks and trees of the main shore. Men were kept pumping the water out of the holds, while others mended the leaky keels.

It was October before this work was completed. Then Munck and his officers looked about them. Plainly, they must winter here. Ice was closing the harbor. Inland, the region seemed boundless—a second Russia; and the Danish officers dreamed of a vast trans-atlantic colony that would place Denmark among the great nations of the earth.

Three great fireplaces of rock were constructed on the decks. Then, every scrap of clothing in the cargoes was distributed to the crews. Used to the damp temperate climate of Denmark, the men were simply paralyzed by the hard, dry, tense cold of America and had no idea how to protect themselves

against it. Later navigators compelled to winter in Churchill, have boarded up their decks completely, tar-papered the sealed boarding and outside of this packed three feet of solid snow. Had Munck's men used furs instead of happing themselves up with clothing, that only impeded circulation, they might have wintered safely with their miserable make-shifts of outdoor fireplaces, but they had no furs, and as the cold increased could do nothing but huddle helpless and benumbed around the fires, plying more wood and heating shot red-hot to put in warming pans for their berths.

Beer bottles were splintered to shivers by the frost. Most of the phials in the surgeon's medicine chests went to pieces in nightly pistol-shot explosions. Kegs of light wines were frozen solid and burst their hoops. The crews went to their beds for warmth and night after night lay listening to the whooping and crackling of the frost, the shrieking of the wind, the pounding of the ice—as if giants had been gamboling in the dark of the wild Northern storms. The rest of Munck's adventures may be told in his own words:

October 15—Last night, ice drift lifted the ship out of the dock. At next low water I had the space filled with clay and sand.

October 30—Ice everywhere covers the river. There

is such a heavy fall of snow, it is impossible for the men to go into the open country without snowshoes.

November 14—Last night a large black dog came to the ship across the ice but the man on the watch shot him by mistake for a black fox. I should have been glad to have caught him alive and sent him home with a present of goods for his owner.

November 27—All the glass bottles broken to pieces by the frost.

December 10—The moon appeared in an eclipse. It was surrounded by a large circle and a cross appeared therein.

December 12—One of my surgeons died and his corpse had to remain unburied for two days because the frost was so terrible no one dared go on shore.

December 24, 25—Christmas Eve, I gave the men wine and beer, which they had to boil, for it was frozen to the bottom. All very jolly but no one offended with as much as a word. Holy Christmas Day we all celebrated as a Christian's duty is. We had a sermon, and after the sermon we gave the priest an offertory according to ancient custom. There was not much money among the men, but they gave what they had, some white fox skins for the priest to line his coat.

January 1, New Year's Day—Tremendous frost. I ordered a couple of pints of wine to the bowl of every man to keep up spirits.

January 10—The priest and the other surgeon took to their beds. A violent sickness rages among the men. My head cook died.

January 21—Thirteen of us down with sickness. I asked the surgeon, who was lying mortally ill, whether any remedy might be found in his chest. He answered he had used as many remedies as he knew and if God would not help, there was no remedy.

It need scarcely be explained that lack of exercise and fresh vegetables had brought scurvy on Munck's crew. In accordance with the spirit of the age, the pestilence was ascribed not to man's fault but to God's Will.

January 23—This day died my mate, Hans Brock, who had been in bed five months. The priest sat up in his berth to preach the sermon, which was the last he ever gave on this earth.

January 25—Had the small minute guns discharged in honor of my mate's burial, but so exceedingly brittle had the iron become from frost that the cannon exploded.

February 5—More deaths. I again sent to the surgeon for God's sake to do something to allay sickness, but he only answered as before, if God did not help there was no hope.

February 16—Nothing but sickness and death. Only seven persons now in health to do the necessary work. On this day died a seaman, who was as filthy in his habits as an untrained beast.

February 17—Twenty persons have died.

February 20—In the evening, died the priest. Have had to mind the cabin myself, for my servant is also ill.

March 30—Sharp frost. Now begins my greatest misery. I am like a lonely wild bird, running to and fro waiting on the sick.

April 1st—Died my nephew, Eric Munck, and was buried in the same grave as my second mate. Not one of us is well enough to fetch water and fuel. Have begun to break up our small boats for fuel. It is with great difficulty I can get coffins made.

April 13—Took a bath in a wine-cask in which I had mixed all the herbs I could find in the surgeon's chest, which did us all much good.

April 14—Only four beside myself able to sit up and listen to the sermon for Good Friday, which I read.

May 6—Died John Watson, my English mate. The bodies of the dead lie uncovered because none of us has strength to bury them.

Doom seemed to settle over the ship when Munck, himself, fell ill in June. On the floor beside his berth, lay the cook's boy dead. In the steerage were the corpses of three other men. On the deck lay three more dead, "for"—records Munck—"nobody had strength to throw them overboard." Besides himself, two men only had survived. These had managed to crawl ashore during ebb tide and had not strength to come back.

Spring had come with the flood rush that set the ice free. Wild geese and duck and plover and curlew and cranes and tern were winging north. Day after day from his port window the commander watched the ice floes drifting out to sea; drifting endlessly as though from some vast inland region where lay an unclaimed empire, or a passage to the South Sea. Song birds flitted to the ship and darted fearfully away. Crows perched on the yardarms. Hawks circled ominously above the lifeless masts. Herds of deer dashed past ashore pursued by the

hungry wolves, who gave over the chase, stopped to sniff the air and came down to the water's edge howling all night across the oozy flats. More . . . need not be told. The ships were a pest house; the region, a realm of death; the port, a place accursed; the silence, as of the grave but for the flacker of vulture wings and the lapping—the tireless lapping of the tide that had borne this hapless crew to the shores of death. Artist brush has never drawn any picture half so terrible as the fate of the Danes on Hudson Bay. . . . Nor need the symptoms of scurvy be described. Salt diet and lack of exercise caused overwhelming depression, mental and physical. The stimulants that Munck plied—two pints of wine and a pint of whiskey a day—only increased the languor. Nausea rendered the thought of food unendurable. Joints swelled. Limbs became discolored. The teeth loosened and a spongy growth covered the gums. . . . .

Four days Munck lay without food. Reaching to a table, he penned his last words:

"As I have now no more hope of life in this world, I request for the sake of God if any Christians should happen to come here, they will bury my poor body together with the others found, and this my journal, forward to the King. . . . Herewith, good night to all the world, and my soul to God. . . .

"JENS MUNCK."

The stench from the ship became unendurable. The Dane crawled to the deck's edge. It was a mutual surprise for him to see the two men ashore alive, and for them to see him. Coming over the flats with painful and labored weakness, they helped him down the ship's ladder. On land, the three had strength only to kindle a fire of the driftwood, which kept the wolves off, and lie near it sucking the roots of every green sprout within reach. This was the very thing they had needed—green food. From the time they began eating weeds, sea nettles, hemlock vines, sorrel grass, they recovered.

On the 18th of June, they were able to walk out at ebb tide to the ships on the flats. By the 26th they could take broth made of fish and fresh partridge. "In the name of Jesus after prayer and supplication to God, we set to work to rig *The Lamprey*," records Munck. The dead were thrown overboard. So were all ballast and cargo. Consequently, when the tide came in, the sloop was so light it floated free above the ice-break of rocks and logs constructed the year before. Munck then had holes drilled in the hull of *The Unicorn* to sink her till he could come back for the frigate with an adequate crew. "On the 16th of July," writes Munck, just a year from the time they had entered Hudson Straits, "Sunday in the afternoon, we set sail from

there in the name of God." Neither a kingdom nor a Northwest Passage had they found for King Christian of Denmark, but only hardships unspeakable, the inevitable fate of every pioneer of the New World, as though Nature would test their mettle before she began rearing a new race of men, pioneers of a new era in the world's long history.

If it had been difficult for crews of sixty-five to navigate the ice floes, what was it for an emaciated crew of three? Forty miles out from Churchill, a polar bear strayed across the ice sniffing at *The Lamprey* when the ship's dog sprang over in pursuit with the bold spirit of the true Great Dane. Just then the ice floe parted from the sloop, and for two days they could hear the faithful dog howling behind in dismay. A gale came banging the ship against the ice and smashed the rudder, but Munck out with his grapnel, fastened *The Lamprey* to the ice and drifted with the floe almost as far as the Straits. A month it took to cross the bay to Digges Island at the west end of the Straits. For a second time, the brave mariner worked his way through the Straits by the old trick of throwing out the grapnel and hauling himself along the floes. This time he was drifting *with* the ice, not *against* it, and the passage was easier. Once out of the Straits, such a gale was raging "*as would blow a man off his legs,*" records

Munck, but the wind carried him forward. Off Shetland a ship was signaled for help, but the high seas prevented its approach and the little *Lamprey* literally shot into a harbor of Norway, on September 20th. Not a soul was visible but a peasant, and Munck had to threaten to blow the fellow's brains out before he would help to moor the ship. With the soil of Europe once more firmly under their feet, the poor Danes could no longer restrain their tears. They fell on their knees thanking God for the deliverance from "the icebergs and dreadful storms and foaming seas."

As Munck did not record the latitude of his wintering harbor—presumably to keep his ship in hiding till he could go for it—doubt arose about the port being Churchill. This doubt was increased by an erroneous account of his voyage published in France, but the identity of Munck's Cove with Churchill has been trebly proved. The drawing which Munck made of the harbor is an exact outline of Churchill. Besides, eighty years afterward when the Hudson's Bay Fur Company established their fort at Churchill, brass cannon were dug from the river flats stamped with the letter C 4—Christian IV. Strongest confirmation of all were the Indian legends. The savages called the river, River of Strangers, because when

they came down to the shore in the summer of 1620, they found clothing and the corpses of a race they had never seen before. When they beheld the ship at ebb tide, they could hardly believe their senses, and when they found it full of plunder, their wonder was unspeakable. But the joy was short-lived. Drying the cargo above their fires, kegs of gunpowder came in contact with a spark. Plunder and plunderers and ship were blown to atoms. Henceforth, Churchill became ill omened as the River-of-the-Strangers.

The same erroneous French account records that Munck suicided from chagrin over his failure. This is a confusion with Munck's father. The Dane had seen enough to know while there was no Northwest Passage, there was an unclaimed kingdom for Denmark, and he had planned to come back to Churchill with colonists when war broke out in Europe. Munck went back to the navy and was in active service to within a few hours of his death on June 3, 1628.

Many nameless soldiers go down to death in every victory. The exploration of America was one long-fought battle of three hundred years in which countless heroes went down to nameless graves in what appeared to be failure. But it was not failure. Their little company, their scouts, the flanking movement—met defeat, but the main body moved on to

victory. The honor was not the less because their division was the one to be mowed down in death. So it was with Jens Munck. His crews did their own little part in their own little unknown corner, and they perished miserably doing it. They could not foresee the winning of a continent from realms as darkly unknown as Hades behind its portals. Not the less is the honor theirs.

By what chances does Destiny or Providence direct the affairs of nations and men? If Munck had not been called back to the navy and had succeeded in bringing the colonists as he planned back to Hudson Bay, Radisson would not have captured that region for the Hudson's Bay Company. Though Hudson, an Englishman, had discovered the bay, one might almost say if Munck had succeeded, as far as the Northwest is concerned, there would have been no British North America.

NOTES ON MUNCK

Munck's Voyages, written by himself and dedicated to the King of Denmark, appeared in Copenhagen in 1624. Unfortunately before his authentic account appeared, stories of his voyage had been told in France from mere hearsay, by *La Peyrére*. It is this erroneous version of Munck's adventures that appears in various collections of voyages, such as *Churchill's* and *Jeremie's Relation* in the *Bernard Collection*. Of modern authorities on Munck, Vol. II of the *Hakluyt Society* for 1897, and the writings of *Mr. Lauridsen* of *Copenhagen* stand first. Data on the topography of the Straits and Bay and Baffin's Land may be found in the Canadian Government Reports from

1877 down to 1906. But best of all are the directions of the old sailing masters employed by the Hudson's Bay Company, which are only to be found in the Archives of Hudson's Bay House, London. In English reports—though all English accounts of Munck except the Hakluyt Society's are limited to a few paragraphs—his name is spelled Munk. He, himself, spelled it Munck.

PART II

1662–1713

How the Sea of the North is Discovered Overland by the French Explorers of the St. Lawrence —Radisson, the Pathfinder, Founds the Company of the Gentlemen Adventurers of England Trading to Hudson's Bay and Leads the Company a Dance for Fifty Years—He is Followed by the French Raiders Under d'Iberville.

CHAPTER VI

1662–1674

RADISSON, THE PATHFINDER, DISCOVERS HUDSON BAY AND FOUNDS THE COMPANY OF GENTLEMEN ADVENTURERS

FOR fifty years the great inland sea, which Hudson had discovered, lay in a silence as of death. To the east of it lay a vast peninsular territory—crumpled rocks scored and seamed by rolling rivers, cataracts, upland tarns—Labrador, in area the size of half a dozen European kingdoms. To the south, the Great Clay Belt of untracked, impenetrable forests stretched to the watershed of the St. Lawrence, in area twice the size of modern Germany. West of Hudson Bay lay what is now known as the Great Northwest—Keewatin, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Mackenzie River and British Columbia—in area, a second Russia; but the primeval world lay in undisturbed silence as of death. Fox and James had come to the bay ten years after Jens Munck, the Dane; and the record of their sufferings has been compared to the Book of Lamenta-

tions; but the sea gave up no secret of its dead, no secret of open passage way to the Orient, no inkling of the immeasurable treasures hidden in the forest and mine and soil of the vast territory bordering its coasts.

A new era was now to open on the bay—an era of wildwood runners tracking the snow-padded silences; of dare-devil gamesters of the wilderness sweeping down the forested waterways to midnight raid and ambuscade and massacre on the bay; of two great powers—first France and England, then the Hudson's Bay Fur Company and the Nor'Westers—locked in death-grapple during a century for the prize of dominion over the immense unknown territory inland from the bay. Hudson and Jens Munck, Vikings of the sea, were to be succeeded by those intrepid knights of the wilderness, Radisson the pathfinder, and d'Iberville, the wildwood rover. The third era on Hudson Bay comes down to our own day. It marks the transition from savagery with semi-barbaric splendor, with all its virtues of outdoor life and dashing bravery, and all its vices of unbridled freedom in a no-man's land with law of neither God nor man—to modern commerce; the transition from the Eskimo's kyack and voyageur's canoe over trackless waters to latter-day Atlantic liners plowing furrows over the main to the marts

of commerce, and this period, too, is best typified in two commanding figures that stand out colossally from other actors on the bay—Lord Selkirk, the young philanthropist, and Lord Strathcona, whose activities only began at an age when other men have either made or marred their careers. For three hundred years, the history of Hudson Bay and of all that region for which the name stands is really the history of these four men—Radisson, d'Iberville, Selkirk and Strathcona.

While Hudson Bay lay in its winter sleep, the world had gone on. The fur traders of New France had pushed westward from the St. Lawrence to the Great Lakes and Mississippi. In fact, France was making a bold bid for the possession of all America except New Spain, and if her kings had paid more attention to her colonies and less to the fripperies of the fool-men and fool-women in her courts, the French flag might be waving over the most of America to-day. In New England, things had also gone apace. New York had gone over from Dutch to English rule, and the commissioners of His Majesty, King Charles II, were just returning from revising the affairs of the American plantations consequent upon the change from Cromwell's Commonwealth to the Stuart's Restoration. In England, at Oxford,

was Charles himself, fled from the plague of London. Majesty was very jaded. Success had lost its relish and pleasure had begun to pall from too much surfeit. It was a welcome spur to the monarch's idle languor when word came posthaste that the royal commissioner, Sir George Carterett, had just arrived from America accompanied by two famous Frenchmen with a most astonishing story.

They had set sail from America on August 1, 1665, Carterett bearing a full report of conditions in the American plantations. When off Spain, their boat had been sighted, pursued, captured and boarded by a Dutch privateer—*The Caper*. For two hours, hull to hull, rail to rail, hand to hand, they had fought, the men behind the guns at the portholes of one ship looking into the smoke-grimed faces of the men behind the guns on the other ship till a roaring broadside from *The Caper* tore the entrails out of Carterett's ship. Carterett just had time to fling his secret dispatches overboard when a bayonet was leveled at his breast and he surrendered his sword a captive. Likewise did two French companions. Taken on board *The Caper*, all three were severely questioned—especially the Frenchmen. Why were they with Carterett? Where were they going? Where had they come from? Could they not be persuaded to go to Holland with their

extraordinary story. One—Medard Chouart de Groseillers—was a middle-aged man, heavily bearded, swarthy, weather-worn from a life in the wilderness. The other—his brother-in-law—Pierre Esprit Radisson, was not yet thirty years of age. He was clean-shaved, thin, lithe, nervous with the restlessness of bottled-up energies, with a dash in his manners that was a cut between the courtier and the wilderness runner. These were the two men of whom such famous stories had been told these ten years back—the most renowned and far traveled wood-runners that New France had yet produced. It was they, who had brought 600,000 beaver skins to Quebec on a single trip from the North. How they had been robbed by the governor of New France and driven from Quebec to Cape Breton, where, out of jealousy, they were set upon and mobbed, escaping only with the clothes on their backs to Port Royal, Nova Scotia—was known to all men. In vain, they had appealed to France for justice. The robber governor was all powerful at the French court and the two explorers—penniless nobodies pitting their power against the influence of wealth and nobility—were dismissed from the court as a joke. They had been promised a vessel to make farther explorations in the North, but when they came to Isle Percé, south of Anticosti, to await the vessel, a Jesuit was sent

to them with word that the promise had been a put-off to rid the court of troublesome suitors—in a word, a perfidious joke. There had followed the flight to Cape Breton, the setting to work of secret influence against them, the mob, the attempted murder, the flight to Port Royal, Nova Scotia. Port Royal was at this time under English rule, and an English captain, Zachariah Gillam, offered his ship for their trip North, but when up opposite Hudson Straits, the captain had been terrified by the ice and lost heart. He turned back. The season was wasted. The two Frenchmen had then clubbed their dwindling fortunes together and had engaged two vessels on their own account, but fishing to lay up supplies at Sable Island, one of the vessels had been wrecked. For four years they had been hounded by a persistent ill-luck: First, when robbed by the French governor on pretense of a fine for going to the North without his permission; second, when befooled by the false promises of the French court; third, when Captain Gillam refused to proceed farther amid the Northern ice; and now, when the wreck of the vessel involved them in a lawsuit. In Boston, they had won their lawsuit, but the ill-luck left them destitute. Carterett, the Royal Commissioner, had met them in Boston and had persuaded them to come to England with him.

The commander of the Dutch ship listened to their story and took down a report of it in writing. Could they not be persuaded to come on with him to Holland? The two Frenchmen refused to leave Carterett. Groseillers, Radisson and Carterett were then landed in Spain. From Spain, they begged and borrowed and pawned their way to France, and from France got passage to Dover. Here, then, they had come to the king at Oxford with their amazing story.

The stirring adventures of these two explorers, I have told in another volume, and an exact transcript of their journals I am giving elsewhere, but their story was one to make King Charles marvel. How Radisson as a boy had been captured by the Mohawks and escaped through the Dutch settlement of New York; how, as a youth, he had helped the Jesuits to flee from a beleaguered fort at Onondaga; how before he was twenty-five years old, he had gone overland to the Mississippi where he heard from Cree and Sioux of the Sea of the North; and how before he was thirty, he had found that sea where Hudson had perished—all those adventures King Charles heard. The King listened and pondered, and pondered and listened, and especially did he listen to that story of the Sea of the North, which Henry Hudson had found in 1610 and from which

Radisson sixty years later had brought 600,000 beaver. Beaver at that time was worth much more than it is to-day. That cargo of beaver, which Radisson had brought down from Hudson Bay to Quebec would be worth more than a million dollars in modern money.

"We were in danger to perish a thousand times from the ice runs," related Radisson, telling how they had passed up the Ottawa to Lake Superior and from Lake Superior by canoe seven hundred miles north to Hudson Bay. "We had thwarted (portaged) a place forty-five miles. We came to the far end at night. It was thick forest, and dark, and we knew not where to go. We launched our canoes on the current and came full sail on a deep bay, where we perceived smoke and tents. Many boats rush to meet us. We are received with joy by the Crees. They suffer us not to tread the ground but carry us like cocks in a basket to their tents. We left them with all possible haste to follow the great river and came to the seaside, where we found an old house all demolished and battered with bullets. The Indians tell us peculiarities of the Europeans, whom they have seen there. We went from isle to isle all summer. We went along the bay to see the place the Indians pass the summer. This river comes from the lake that empties in the Saguenay

at Tadoussac, a hundred leagues from where we were in the Bay of the North. We left in the place our mark and rendezvous. We passed the summer coasting the sea. This is a vast country. The people are friendly to the Sioux and the Cree. We followed another river back to the Upper Lake (Lake Superior) and it was midwinter before we joined the company at our fort" (north of Lake Superior).

When King Charles moved from Oxford to Windsor, Radisson and Groseillers were ordered to accompany him, and when the monarch returned to London, the two Frenchmen were commanded to take chambers in town within reach of the court, and what was more to the point, the King assigned them £2 a week maintenance, for they were both destitute, as penniless soldiers of fortune as ever graced the throne room of a Stuart. At Oxford, too, they had met Prince Rupert, and Prince Rupert espoused their cause with the enthusiasm of an adventurer, whose fortunes needed mending. The plague, the great fire in London, and the Dutch war——all prevented King Charles according the adventurers immediate help, but within a year from their landing, he writes to James, Duke of York, as chief of the navy, ordering the Admiralty department to loan the two Frenchmen the ship *Eaglet* of the South Sea fleet for a voyage to Hudson Bay, for the purpose

of prosecuting trade and extending their explorations toward the South Sea. I have his letter issuing the instructions, and it is interesting as proving that the initiative came from King Charles, as Prince Rupert has hitherto received all the credit for organizing the Adventurers of England trading to Hudson Bay. Prince Rupert and half a dozen friends were to bear the expense of wages to the seamen and victualling the ships. During the long period of waiting, Charles presented Radisson with a gold medal and chain. To Groseillers—if French tradition is to be accepted—he gave some slight title of nobility. During this time, too, Radisson and Groseillers heard from the captain of the Dutch ship, who had questioned them. There came a spy from Amsterdam—Eli Godefroy Touret, who first tried to bribe the Frenchmen to come to Holland, and failing that, openly accused them of counterfeiting money. The accusation could not be proved, and the spy was imprisoned.

The year 1667–8 was spent in preparations for the voyage. In addition to *The Eaglet* under Captain Stannard, the ship *Nonsuch* under Captain Gillam, who had failed to reach the bay from Nova Scotia—was chartered. As far as I could gather from the old documents in Hudson's Bay House, London, the ships were supplied with provisions and goods for

trade by leading merchants, who were given a share in the venture. The cash required was for the seamen's wages, running from £20 to £30 a year, and for the officer's pay, £3 a month to the surgeons, £50 a trip to the captains, with a bounty if the venture succeeded. With the bounty, Gillam received £160 for this trip, Stannard, £280. Thomas Gorst, who went as accountant, and Mr. Sheppard as chief mate, were to assume command if anything happened to Radisson and Groseillers. All, who advanced either cash, or goods, or credit for goods, were entered in a stock book as Adventurers for so many pounds. There was as yet no company organized. It was a pure gamble—a speculation based on the word of two penniless French adventurers, and in the spirit of the true gambler, gay were the doings. Captain Gillam facetiously presents the Adventurers with a bill for five shilling for a rat catcher. The gentlemen honor the bill with a smile, order a pipe of canary, three tuns of wine, "a dinner with pullets," dinners, indeed, galore, at the Three Tunns and the Exchange Tavern and the Sun, at which Prince Rupert and Albermarle and perhaps the King, himself, "make merry like right worthy gentlemen." Everybody is in rare, good humor, for you must remember Mr. Radisson brought back 600,000 beaver from that Sea of the

North, and the value of 600,000 beaver divided among less than a dozen Adventurers would mean a tidy $100,000 of modern money to each man. Then, the gentlemen go down to Gravesend Docks to see the ships off. Each seaman shakes hands heartily with his patron. Then the written commission is delivered to the captains:

"You are to saile with the first wind that presents, keeping company with each other to your place of rendezvous (the old mark set up by Radisson when he went overland to the bay.) You are to saile to such place as Mr. Gooseberry (Groseillers) and Mr. Radisson shall direct to trade with the Indians there, delivering the goods you carry in small parcells no more than fifty pounds worth at a time out of each shipp, the furs in exchange to stowe in each shipp before delivering out any more goods, according to the particular advice of Mr. Gooseberry (Groseillers) and Mr. Radisson."

Then follows a cryptogramatic order, which would have done credit to the mysterious cipher of pirates on the high seas.

"You are to take notice that the *Nampumpeage* which you carry with you is part of our joynt cargoes wee having bought it for money for Mr. Gooseberry and Mr. Radisson to be delivered by small quantities with like caution as the other goods."

No more drinking of high wines, my gentlemen! Strict business now, for it need scarcely be explained

the mysterious *Nampumpeage* was a euphemism for liquor. Fortifications are to be built, minerals sought, the cargo is to be brought home by Groseillers, while Radisson remains to conduct trade, and

"You are to have in your thought the discovery of the passage into the South Sea and to attempt it with the advice and direction of Mr. Gooseberry and Mr. Radisson, they having told us that it is only seven daies paddling or sailing from the River where they intend to trade unto the Stinking Lake (the Great Lakes) and not above seven daies more to the straight wch. leads into that Sea they call the South Sea, and from thence but forty or fifty leagues to the Sea itselfe."

Exact journals and maps are to be kept. In case the goods cannot be traded, the ships are to carry their cargoes to Newfoundland and the New England plantations, where Mr. Philip Carterett, who is governor of New Jersey, will assist in disposing of the goods.

"Lastly we advise and require you to use the said Mr. Gooseberry and Mr. Radisson with all manner of civility and courtesy and to take care that all your company doe bear a particular respect unto them, they being the persons upon whose credit wee have undertaken this expedition,

"Which we beseech Almighty God to prosper."

	RUPERT	ALBERMARLE
(signed)	CRAVEN	G. CARTERETT
	J. HAYES	P. COLLETON.

A last shout, the tramp of sailors running round the capstans, and the ships of the Gentlemen Adventurers of England trading to Hudson's Bay are off; off to find and found a bigger empire for England than Russia and Germany, and France, and Spain, and Austria combined.

Notes on Chapter VI.—Full details of Radisson's life prior to his coming to England, when he was an active explorer of New France, are to be found in the previous volume, *Pathfinders of the West*. The data for that volume came almost exclusively from the Marine Archives of Paris. The facts of this chapter are drawn from the Archives of Hudson's Bay House, London, England, which I personally searched with the result of almost three hundred foolscap folio pages of matter pertaining to Radisson, and from the Public Records Office of London, which I had searched, by a competent person, on the Stuart Period. It is extraordinary how the Archives of France and the Archives of England dove-tail and corroborate each other in every detail regarding Radisson. King Charles' letter in his favor is to be found in the Public Records Office, State Papers, Domestic Series, Entry Book 26. The Admiralty Board Books, No. 15, contain the correspondence regarding the voyage. The instructions to the captains—five foolscap pages—are in the S. P. Dom. Carl. II. No. 180. The exact data regarding Radisson's movements, given in this chapter, are from his Manuscript Journal in the Bodleian and from the two petitions which he filed, one to the Company, one to Parliament, copies of which are in Hudson's Bay House, London. It is necessary to give the authorities somewhat explicitly because in the case of *Pathfinders of the West*, the *New York Evening Post* begged readers to consult original sources regarding Radisson. As original sources are not open to the public, the advice was worth just exactly the spirit that animated it. However, transcripts of all data bearing on Radisson will be given to the public with his journals, in the near future.

CHAPTER VII

1668–1674

THE ADVENTURES OF THE FIRST VOYAGE—RADISSON DRIVEN BACK ORGANIZES THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND WRITES HIS JOURNALS OF FOUR VOYAGES—THE CHARTER AND THE FIRST SHAREHOLDERS—ADVENTURES OF RADISSON ON THE BAY—THE COMING OF THE FRENCH AND THE QUARREL

AT LAST, then, five years from the time they had discovered the Sea of the North, after baffling disappointments, fruitless efforts and the despair known only to those who have stood face to face with the Grim Specter, Ruin, Radisson and Groseillers set sail for Hudson Bay from Gravesend on June 3, 1668. Radisson was on the big ship *Eaglet* with Captain Stannard, Groseillers on *The Nonsuch* of Boston, with Captain Gillam.

Countless hopes and fears must have animated the breasts of the Frenchmen. It is so with every venture that is based on the unknown. The very fact that possibilities *are* unknown gives scope to unbridled fancy and the wildest hopes; gives scope,

too, when the pendulum swings the other way, to deepest distrust. The country boy trudging along the road with a carpetbag to seek his fortunes in the city, dreams of the day when he may be a millionaire. By nightfall, he longs for the monotonous drudgery and homely content and quiet poverty of the plow.

So with Radisson and Groseillers. They had brought back 600,000 beaver pelts overland from Hudson Bay five years before. If they could repeat the feat, it meant bigger booty than Drake had raided from the Spanish of the South Seas, for the price of beaver at that time fluctuated wildly from eight shillings to thirty-five. And who could tell that they might not find a passage to the South Seas from Hudson Bay? That old legend of a tide like the ocean on Lake Winnipeg, Radisson had heard from the Indians, as every explorer was to hear it for a hundred years. The explanation is very simple to anyone who has sailed on Lake Winnipeg. The lake is so shallow that an inshore wind lashes the waters up like a tide. Then sudden calm, or an outshore breeze, leaves the muddy flats almost bare. I remember being stranded on that lake by such a shift of wind for twenty-four hours. To the Indians who had never seen the ocean, the phenomenon seemed like the tide of which the white man told,

so Radisson had reported to the Adventurers that the Indians said the South Sea was only a few weeks' journey from Hudson Bay.

Radisson, whose highest hope from boyhood was to be a great explorer, must have dreamed his dreams as the ships slid along the glassy waters of the Atlantic westward. Six weeks, ordinarily, it took sailing vessels to go from the Thames to the mouth of Hudson Straits, but furious storms—as if the very elements themselves were bent on the defeat of these two indomitable men—drove their ships apart half way across the Atlantic. As is often the case, the little ship—Gillam's *Nonsuch*—weathered the hurricane. Now buried under billows mountain-high, with the yardarms drenched by each wash of the pounding breakers, now plowing through the cataract of waters, the little *Nonsuch* kept her head to the wind, and if a sea swept from stem to stern, battened hatches and masts naked of sails took no harm. The staunch craft kept on her sea feet, and was not knocked keel up.

But *The Eaglet*, with Radisson, was in bad way. Larger and ponderous in motion, she could not shift quick to the raging gale. Blast after blast caught her broadsides. The masts snapped off like saplings uprooted by storm. A tornado of waters threw the ship on her side "*till we had like to have*

swamped"—relate the old Company records—and when the storm cleared and the ship righted, behold, of *The Eaglet* there is left only the bare hull, with deck boards and cabin floors sprung in a dozen places. The other ship was out of sight. Carpenters were set at work to rig the lame vessel up. It was almost October before the battered hull came crawling limply to her dock on the Thames. There, Sir James Hayes, Rupert's secretary, turned her over to the Admiralty.

Adversity is a great tester of a man's mettle. When some men fall they tumble *down* stairs. Other men, when they fall, make a point of falling *up* stairs. Radisson was of the latter class. His activity redoubled. The design in the first place had been for one of the two ships to winter on the bay; the other ship to come back to England in order to return to the bay with more provisions. Radisson urged his associates not to leave *The Nonsuch* in the lurch. Application was made to the Admiralty for another ship. *The Wavero* of the West Indies was granted. Radisson spent the winter of 1668–69 fitting up this ship and writing the account of his first four voyages through the wilds of America, "*and I hope*"—he concludes the fourth voyage—"*to embarke myselfe by ye helpe of God this fourth year*" of coming to England. But *The Wavero* on which

Radisson sailed in March, 1669, proved unseaworthy. She had to turn back. What was Radisson's delight to find anchored in the Thames, *The Nonsuch*, with his brother-in-law, Groseillers.

After parting from the disabled *Eaglet*, *The Nonsuch* had driven ahead for Hudson Straits, which she missed by going too far north to Baffin's Land, but came to the entrance on the 4th of August. Owing to the lateness of the season, the straits were free of ice and *The Nonsuch* made a quick passage for those days, reaching Digges' Island, at the west end of the straits on the 19th of August. Groseillers and Gillam then headed south for that rendezvous at the lower end of the bay, where the two Frenchmen had found "a house all battered with bullets," five years before, and had set up their own marks. Slow and careful search of the east coast must have been made, for *The Nonsuch* was seven weeks cruising the seven hundred miles from Digges' Island to that River Nemisco, which had seemed to flow from the country of the St. Lawrence or New France. Here they cast anchor on September 25, naming the river Rupert in honor of their patron. Beaching the ship on the sand-bars at high tide, the crew threw logs about her to fend off ice jams and erected slab palisades round two or three log huts for the winter—a fort named after King Charles.

Weather favored *The Nonsuch's* crew. The south end of Hudson Bay often has snow in October, and nearly always ice is formed by November. This year, the harbor did not freeze till the 9th of December, but when the frost did come it was a thing to paralyze these Englishmen used to a climate where a pocketful of coal heats a house. The silent pine forests, snow-padded and snow-wreathed; the snow-cones and snow-mushrooms and snow-plumes bending the great branches with weight of snow like feathers; the icy particles that floated in the air; ice fog, diamond-sharp in sunshine and starlight but ethereal as mist, morning and evening; the whooping and romping and stamping and cannon-shot reports of the frost at night when the biggest trees snapped brittle and the earth seemed to groan with pain; the mystic mock-suns that shone in the heavens foreboding storm, and the hoot and shout and rush of the storm itself through the forests like the Indians' Thunder Bird on the wings of the wind; the silences, the awful silences, that seemed to engulf human presence as the frost-fog closed mistily through the aisled forests—all these things were new and wondrous to the English crew. It was—as Gillam's journal records—as if all life "had been frozen to death." And then the marvel of the frost world, frost that fringed your eyelashes and hair

with breath as you spoke, and drew ferns on the glazed parchment of the port windows, and created two inches of snow on the walls inside the ship! Snow fell—fell—fell, day after day, week after week, muffling, dreamy, hypnotic as the frost sleep.

But these things were no new marvels to Groseillers. The busy Frenchman was off to the woods on snowshoes in search of the Indians—a search in which a twig snapped off short, old tepee poles standing bare, a bit of moose skin blowing from a branch, deadfall traps, rabbit snares of willow twigs —were his sole guides. True wood-loper, he found the Ojibways' camps and they brought down their furs to trade with him in spring. I don't know what ground there is for it, but Groseillers had the reputation for being a very hard trader. Perhaps it was that the cargo of 600,000 pelts had been brought back when he had gone North with only two canoe loads of goods. As far as I could ascertain from the old records, the scale of trade at the time was half a pound of beads, one beaver; one kettle, one beaver; one pound shot, one beaver; five pounds sugar, one beaver; one pound tobacco, one beaver; one gallon brandy (diluted?), four beaver; one blanket, six beaver; two awls, one beaver; twelve buttons, one beaver; twenty fishhooks, one beaver; twenty flints, one beaver; one gun, twelve beaver; one

pistol, four beaver; eight bells, one beaver. At this stage, trade as barter was not known. The white man dressed in gold lace and red velvets pompously presented his goods to the Indian. The Indian had previously, with great palaver, presented his furs to the trader. Any little difference of opinion as to values might be settled later by a present from the trader of drugged liquor to put the malcontent to sleep, or a scalping raid on the part of the Indian.

As spring came, life awakened on the bay. Wild geese darkened the sky, the shrill honk, honk, calling the sailors' notice to the long curved lines marshaled like armies with leaders and scouts, circling, maneuvering, filing north. Whiskey jays became noisier and bolder than in winter. Red bills alighted in flocks at the crew's camp fires, and a constant drumming told of partridge hiding in underbrush the color of his own plumage. There was no lack of sport to Gillam's crew. The ice went out with the rush of a cataract in May, and by June it was blistering hot, with the canaries and warblers and blue jays of Southern climes nesting in the forests of this far Northern bay. By June, *The Nonsuch* was ship-shape for homeward voyage, and the adventurers sailed for England, coming into the Thames about the time Radisson was driven back on *The Wavero.*

There is no record of what furs Groseillers and Gillam brought back, doubtless for the reason that the proceeds of their sale had to satisfy those creditors, who had outfitted the ships and to purchase new ships for future voyages. But the next move was significant. With great secrecy, application was made to King Charles II for a royal charter granting "the Gentlemen Adventurers Trading to Hudson's Bay" monopoly of trade and profits for all time to come.

In itself, the charter is the purest piece of feudalism ever perpetrated on America, a thing so alien to the thought of modern democracy and withal destined to play such a necessary part in the development of northern empire that it is worth examining. In the first place, though it was practically deeding away half America—namely all of modern Canada except New France, and the most of the Western States beyond the Mississippi—practically, I say, in its workings; the charter was purely a royal favor, depending on that idea of the Stuarts that the earth was not the Lord's, but the Stuarts, to be disposed of as they wished.

The applicants for the charter were Prince Rupert, the Duke of Albermarle, the Earl of Craven, Lord Arlington, Lord Ashley, Sir John Robinson, Sir Robert Viner, Sir Peter Colleton, Sir Edward

Hungerford, Sir Paul Neele, Sir John Griffith, Sir Philip Carterett, Sir James Hayes, John Kirke, Frances Millington, William Prettyman, John Fenn and John Portman. "Whereas," runs the charter, "these have at their own great cost and charges undertaken an expedition for Hudson's Bay for the discovery of a new passage to the South Sea and for trade, and have humbly besought us to incorporate them and grant unto them and their successors the whole trade and commerce of all those seas, straits, bays, rivers, creeks and sounds in whatsoever latitude that lie within the entrance of the straits called Hudson's Straits together with all the lands, countries and territories upon the coasts and confines of the seas, straits, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks and sounds not now actually possessed by the subjects of any other Christian State, know ye that we have given, granted, ratified and confirmed" the said grant. There follow the official name of the company, "the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading with Hudson's Bay," directions for the appointment of a governor and a governing committee—Prince Rupert to be the first governor—Robinson, Viner, Colleton, Hayes, Kirke, Millington and Portman to be the first committee, to which elections are to be made each November. Their territory is to be known as Rupert's Land.

Of this territory, they are to be "true and absolute lords" paying as token of allegiance to the King when he shall happen to enter these dominions "two elks and two black beaver."

Permission is given to build forts, employ mariners, use firearms, pass laws and impose punishments. Balboa has been laughed at ever since he crossed Panama to the Pacific for claiming Heaven and earth, air and water, "from the Pole Arctic to the Pole Antarctic" for Spain; but what shall we say of a charter that goes on royally to add, "and furthermore of our own ample and abundant grace we have granted not only the whole, entire and only liberty of trade to and from the territories aforesaid; but also the whole and entire trade to and from all Havens, Bays, Creeks, Rivers, Lakes, and Seas unto which they shall find entrance by water or land out of the territories aforesaid . . . and to, and with, all other nations adjacent to the said territories, which is not granted to any other of our subjects?"

In other words, if trade should lead these Adventurers far afield from Hudson Bay where no other discoverers had been—the territory was to be theirs. For years, it was contended that the charter covered only the streams tributary to Hudson Bay, that is to the headwaters of Churchill and Saskatchewan and Moose and Rupert Rivers, but if the charter

was to be valid at all, it was to be valid in all its provision and the company might extend its possessions indefinitely. And that is what it did—from Hudson Bay to Alaska, and from Alaska to California. The debonair King had presented his friends with three-quarters of America.

All other traders are forbidden by the charter to frequent the territory on pain of forfeiture of goods and ships. All other persons are forbidden to inhabit the territory without the consent of the Company. Adventurers at the General Court in November for elections are to have votes according to their stock, for every hundred pounds one vote. The Company is to appoint local governors for the territory with all the despotic power of little kings. In case of misdemeanors, law-breakers may be brought before this local governor or home to England for trial, sentence, and punishment. The Shah of Persia had not more despotic power in his lands than these local governors. Most amazing of all, the Company is to have power to make war against other "Prince or People whatsoever that are not Christians," "for the benefit of the said company and their trade." Should other English intrude on the territory, the Company is explicitly granted the right to seize and expel them and impose such punishment as the offense may warrant. If delinquents appeal

against such sentence, the Company may send them home to England for trial. Admirals, judges, sheriffs, all officers of the law in England are charged by the charter to "aid, favor, help and assist" the Company by "land and sea. . . " signed at Westminster, May 2, 1670.

We of to-day may well smile at such a charter; but we must remember that the stones which lie buried in the clay below the wall are just as essential to the superstructure as the visible foundation. Let us grant that the charter was an absurd fiat creating a tyranny. It was an essential first step on the trail that was to blaze a way through the wilderness to democracy.

In the charter lay the secret of all the petty pomp —little kings in tinsel—with which the Company's underling officers ruled their domain for two hundred years. In the charter lay the secret of all the Company's success and all its failure; of its almost paternal care of the Indians and of its outrageous, unblushing, banditti warfare against rivals; of its one-sidedness in driving a bargain—the true caste idea that the many are created for exploitation by the few—of its almost royal generosity when a dependent fell by the way—the old monarchical idea that a king is responsible for the well-being of his subjects, when other great commercial monopolists

cast their useless dependents off like old clothes, or let them rot in poverty. Given all the facts of the case, any man can play the prophet. With such a charter, believing in its validity as they did in their own existence, it is not surprising the Adventurers of Hudson Bay ran the magnificent career the Company has had, and finally—ran their privileges aground.

Thus, then, was the Hudson's Bay Company incorporated. Its first stock book of 1667 before incorporation, shows the Duke of York to have £300 of stock; Prince Rupert, £470; Carterett, £770 in all; Albermarle, £500; Craven, £300; Arlington, £200; Shaftsbury, £600; Viner, £300; Colleton, £300; Hungerford, £300; Sir James Hayes, £1800; Sir John Kirke, £300; Lady Margaret Drax, £300 —with others, in all a capital of £10,500. The most of these shares were not subscribed in cash. It may be inferred that the Duke of York and Prince Rupert and Carterett and Sir James Hayes received their shares for obtaining the ships from the Admiralty. Indeed, it is more than probable that very little actual cash was subscribed for the first voyages. The seamen were impressed and not usually paid, as the account books show, until after the sale of the furs, and the provisions were probably supplied on credit by those merchants who are credited with

shares. At least, the absence of any cash account or strong box for the first years, gives that impression. Mr. Portman, the merchant, it is, or Mr. Young, or Mr. Kirke, or Robinson, or Colleton who advance money to Radisson and Groseillers as they need it, and the stock accounts of these shareholders are credited with the amounts so advanced. Gillam and Stannard, the captains, are credited with £160 and £280 in the venture, as if they, too, accepted their remuneration in stock.

The charter was granted in May. June saw Radisson and Groseillers off for the bay with three ships, *The Wavero* under Captain Newland, *The Shaftsbury* under Captain Shepperd, *The Prince Rupert* under Gillam, in all some forty men. The vessels were loaned from the Admiralty. Bayly went as governor to Rupert River, Gorst as secretary; Peter Romulus, the French apothecary, as surgeon at £20 a year. While the two big ships spent the summer at Charles Fort, Radisson took the small boat *Wavero* along the south shore westward, apparently seeking passage to the South Sea. Monsibi flats, now known as Moose, and Schatawan, now known as Albany, and Cape Henrietta Maria named after royalty, were passed on the cruise up west and north to Nelson, where Radisson himself erected

the English King's Arms. Only a boat of shallow draft could coast these regions of salt swamps, muddy flats and bowlder-strewn rocky waters. Moose River with its enormous drive of ice stranded on the flats for miles each spring was found by Radisson to have three channels. Ninety-six miles northwest from Moose was Albany River with an island just at its outlet suitable for the building of a fort. Cape Henrietta Maria, three hundred miles from Moose, marked where James Bay widened out to the main waters of Hudson Bay. All this coast was so shallow and cut by gravel bars that it could be explored only by anchoring *The Wavero* off shore and approaching the tamarack swamps of the land by canoe, but the whole region was an ideal game preserve that has never failed of its supply of furs from the day that Radisson first examined it in 1670 to the present. Black ducks, pintail, teal, partridge, promised abundance of food to hunters here, and Radisson must have noticed the walrus, porpoise and seal floundering about in the bay promising another source of profit to the Company. North of Henrietta Cape, Radisson was on known ground. Button and Fox and James had explored this coast, Port Nelson with its two magnificent harbors—Nelson and Hayes River—taking its name from Button's seaman, Nelson, who was buried here.

Groseillers wintered on the bay but Radisson came home to England on *The Prince Rupert* with Gillam and passed the winter in London as advisor to the company. This year, the Company held its meetings at Prince Rupert's lodgings in Whitehall.

In the summer of '71, Radisson was again on the bay cruising as before, to Moose, and Albany, and Nelson with a cargo of some two hundred muskets, four hundred powderhorns and five hundred hatchets for trade. Though Radisson as well as Groseillers spent the years of 1771–72 on the bay, there was no mistaking the fact—not so many Indians were bringing furs to Rupert River for trade. Radisson reported conditions when he returned to London in the fall of '72, and he linked himself more closely to the interests of the Company by marrying Mary, the daughter of Sir John Kirke.

"It is ordered," read the minutes of the Company, Oct. 23, 1673, "that *The Prince Rupert* arriving at Portsmouth, Captain Gillam do not stire from the shippe till Mr. Radisson take post to London with the report." The report was not a good one. The French coming overland from Canada were intercepting the Indians on the way down to the bay. The Company decided to appoint another governor, William Lyddell, for the west coast, and when Radisson went back to the bay in '74, a council

was held to consider how to oppose the French. The captains of the ships were against moving west. Groseillers and Radisson urged Governor Bayly to build new forts at Moose and Albany and Nelson. Resentful of divided authority, Bayly hung between two opinions, but at length consented to leave Rupert River for the summer and cruise westward. When he came back to Fort Charles in August, he found it occupied by an emissary from New France, Father Albanel, an English Jesuit, with a passport from Frontenac recommending him to the English Governor, and with personal letters for the two Frenchmen.

Bayly's rage knew no bounds. He received the priest as the passports from a friendly nation compelled him to do, but he flared out in open accusations against Radisson and Groseillers for being in collusion with rivals to the Company's trade. A thousand fictions cling round this part of Radisson's career. It is said that the two Frenchmen knocked down and were knocked down by the English Governor, that spies were set upon them to dog their steps when they went to the woods, that Bayly threatened to run them through, and that the two finally escaped through the forests overland back to New France with Albanel, the Jesuit.

All these are childish fictions directly contradicted

by the facts of the case as stated in the official minutes of the Company. No doubt the little fort was a tempest in a teapot till the Jesuit departed, but quietus was given to the quarrels by the arrival, on September 17, of William Lyddell on *The Prince Rupert*, governor-elect for the west coast. Radisson decided to go home to England and lay the whole case before the Company. There is not the slightest doubt that he was desperately dissatisfied with his status among the Adventurers. He had found the territory. He had founded the Company. He had given the best years of his life to its advancement, and they had not even credited him as a shareholder. When he returned to England, they accepted proof of his loyalty, asking only that he take oath of fidelity, but financially, his case had already been prejudged. He was not to be a partner. At a meeting in June, it was ordered that he be allowed £100 a year for his services. That is, he was to be their servant. As a matter of fact, he was already in debt for living expenses. In his pocket were the letters Albanel had brought overland to the bay and offers direct from Mons. Colbert, himself, of a position in the French navy, payment of all debts and a gratuity of some £400 to begin life anew if he would go over to Paris. Six weeks from the time he had left the bay, Radisson quit the Company's services in disgust. It

was the old story of the injustice he had suffered in Quebec—he, the creator of the wealth, was to have a mere pittance from the monopolists. Radisson could not induce his English wife to go with him, but he sailed for France at the end of October in 1674.

As the operations of the Adventurers were now to become an international struggle for two hundred years, it is well to pause from the narrative of stirring events on the bay to take a glance forward on the scope and influence and power of the Hudson's Bay Company in the history of America.

Notes on Chapter VII.—For authorities on this chapter see Chapters VIII and IX. To those familiar with the subject, this chapter will clear up a great many discrepancies. In the life of Radisson in *Pathfinders of the West*, it was necessary to state frankly that his movements could not be traced definitely at this period both as to locale and time. The facts of this chapter are taken solely from the official Stock Books, Minute Books, Sailing Directions and Journals of Hudson's Bay House, London. Extracts from these minutes will be found after Chapter VIII and IX. One point in *Pathfinders of the West*, all authorities differ as to the time when Radisson left the company, Albanel's Journal in the Jesuit Relations being of 1672, Gorst's record of the quarrel in 1674, and other accounts placing the date as late as 1676. My examinations of the Hudson's Bay records show that the rupture occurred in London in October, 1674. How, then, is Albanel's Relation 1672? The passport from Frontenac, which Albanel delivered to Bayly—now on record in Hudson's Bay Company papers—is dated, Quebec, Oct. 7, 1673. If the passport only left Quebec in October, 1673, and Albanel reached the bay in August, 1674—there is only one conclusion: the date of his journal, 1672, is wrong by two years. One can easily understand how this would occur in a journal made up of scraps of writing jotted down in canoes, in tepees, everywhere and anywhere, and then passed by couriers from hand to hand till it reached the Cramoisy printers of Paris.

A letter to the Secretary of State, dated Sept. 25, 1675, relates: "This day came *The Shaftsbury Pink* ffrom Hudson

Baye. Capt. Shopard, ye capt. tiles me thay found a franch Jesuit thare that did endeavor to convert ye Indians & persuad them not to trade with ye English, for wh. reason they have brought him away with them. . . . Capt. Gillam we expect to-morrow."

Later: "This day is arrived Capt. Gillam. I was on board of him and he tells me they were forced to winter there and spend all their Provisions. They have left only four men to keep possession of the place. I see the French Jesuit is a little ould man."

CHAPTER VIII

1670–1870

"GENTLEMEN ADVENTURERS OF ENGLAND"—LORDS OF THE OUTER MARCHES—TWO CENTURIES OF COMPANY RULE—SECRET OATHS—THE USE OF WHISKEY — THE MATRIMONIAL OFFICES — THE PART THE COMPANY PLAYED IN THE GAME OF INTERNATIONAL JUGGLING—HOW TRADE AND VOYAGES WERE CONDUCTED

JUST where the world's traffic converges to that roaring maelstrom in front of the Royal Exchange, London—on Lime Street, off Leadenhall Street—stands an unpretentious gray stone building, the home of a power that has held unbroken sway over the wilds of America for two-and-a-half centuries. It is the last of those old companies granted to royal favorites of European courts for the partitioning of America.

To be sure, when Charles II signed away sole rights of trade and possession to all countries bordering on the passage supposed to lead from the Atlantic to the South Sea, he had not the faintest notion that he was giving to "*the Gentlemen Adventurers of Eng-*

land Trading on Hudson's Bay," three-quarters of a new continent. Prince Rupert, Albermarle, Shaftsbury, the Carteretts and half a dozen others had helped him back to his throne, and with a Stuart's good-natured belief that the world was made for the king's pleasure, he promptly proceeded to carve up his possessions for his friends. Only one limitation was specified in the charter of 1670—the lands must be those *not* already claimed by any Christian power.

But Adventurers on booty bound would sail over the edge of the earth if it were flat, and when the Hudson's Bay Company found, instead of a passage to the fabulous South Sea, a continental watershed whence mighty rivers rolled north, east, south, over vaster lands than those island Adventurers had ever dreamed—was it to turn back because these countries didn't precisely border on Hudson's Bay? The Company had been chartered as Lords of the Outer Marches, and what were Outer Marches for, but to march forward? For a hundred years, the world heard very little of these wilderness Adventurers except that they were fighting for dear life against the French raiders, but when Canada passed to the English, Hudson's Bay canoes were threading the labyrinthine waterways of lake and swamp and river up the Saskatchewan, down the Athabasca, over the mountain passes to the Columbia. Hudson's

Bay fur brigades were sweeping up the Ottawa to Abbittibbi, to the Assiniboine, to MacKenzie River, to the Arctic Circle. Hudson's Bay buffalo runners hunted the plains from the Red River to the Missouri. Hudson's Bay Rocky Mountain brigades—one, two, three hundred horsemen, followed by a ragged rabble of Indian retainers—yearly scoured every valley between Alaska and Mexico in regular platoons, so much territory assigned to each leader—Oregon to McLoughlin, the Snake Country to Ogden, the Umpqua to Black or McLeod, the Buffalo Country to Ross or some other, with instructions not to leave a beaver alive on the trail wherever there were rival American traders. Hudson's Bay vessels coasted from the Columbia to Alaska. The Adventurers could not dislodge Baranoff from Sitka, but they explored the Yukon and the Pelly, and the official books show record of a farm where San Francisco now stands. Beginning with a score of men, the Company to-day numbers as many servants as the volunteer army of Canada. Railroads to Eastern ports now do the work of the four or five armed frigates that used yearly to come for the furs, but two company ships still carry provisions through the ice floes of Hudson's Bay, and on every navigable river of the inland North, floats the flag of the Company's steamers. The brigades

of fur canoes can yet be seen at remote posts like Abbittibbi; and the dog trains still tinkle across the white wastes bringing down the mid-winter furs from the North.

The old Company has the unique distinction of being the only instance of feudalism transplanted from Europe to America, which has flourished in the new soil. Other royal companies of Virginia, of Maryland, of Quebec, became part of the new democracy. Only the Hudson's Bay Company remains. The charter which by "the Grace of God" and the stroke of a pen gave away three-quarters of America—was, itself, pure feudalism. Oaths of secrecy, implicit obedience of every servant to the man immediately above him—the canoemen to the steersman, the trader to the chief factor, the chief factor to the governor, the governor to the king—dependence of the Company on the favor of the royal will—all these were pure feudalism. Prince Rupert was the first governor. The Duke of York, afterwards King James, was second. Marlborough, the great general, came third; and Lord Strathcona, the present governor, as High Commissioner for Canada, stands in the relation of ambassador from the colony to the mother country. Always the Company has been under the favor of the court.

Formerly, every shareholder had to make solemn oath: "*I doe sweare to bee True & faithfull to ye Govern'r & Comp'y of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay & to my power will support and maintain the said comp'y & the privileges of ye same; all bye laws and orders not repeated which have been or shall be made by ye said Govern'r & Company I will to my best knowledge truly observe and keepe: ye secrets of ye said company, which shall be given me in charge to conceale, I will not disclose; and during the joint stock of ye said comp'y I will not directly nor indirectly trade to ye limitts of ye said company's charter without leave of the Govern'r, the Deputy Govern'r and committee, So help me God.*"

A similar oath was required from the governor. Once a year, usually in November, the shareholders met in a general session called the General Court, to elect officers—a governor, a deputy governor, and a committee which was to transact details of business as occasion required. Each officer was required to take oath of secrecy and fidelity. This committee, it was, that appointed the captains to the vessels, the men of the crews, the local governors for the fur posts on the bay, and the chief traders, who were to go inland to barter. From all of these, oaths and bonds of fidelity were required. He, who violated his oath, was liable to forfeiture of wages

and stock in the Company. In all the minute books for two-and-a-half centuries, both of the committee and the General Court which I examined, there were records of only one director dismissed for breaking his oath, and two captains discharged for illicit trade. Compared to the cut-throat methods of modern business, whose promise is not worth the breath that utters it and whose perjuries having become so common, people have ceased to blush, the old, slow-going Company has no need to be ashamed.

Each officer in his own sphere was as despotic as a czar, but the despotism was founded on good will. When my Lord Preston did the Company a good turn by sending Radisson back from Paris to London, the committee of 1684 orders the warehouse keeper "*to deliver the furrier as many black beaver skins as will make my lord a fine covering for his bedd*"—not a bribe *before* the good turn, but a token of good will *afterwards*. When Mr. Randolph of New England arrests Ben Gillam for poaching on the Company's preserve up on Hudson Bay, the committee orders a piece of plate to the value of £10 for Mr. Randolph. When King Charles and the Duke of York interceded with France to forbid interlopers, "*two pair of beaver stockings are ordered for the King and the Duke of York;*" and the committee of April, 1684, instructs "*Sir James Hayes do attend His Royal Highness*

at Windsor and present him his dividend in gold in a faire embroidered purse." For whipping "*those vermin, those enemies of all mankind, the French,*" the Right Honorable Earl John Churchill (Marlborough) is presented with a cat-skin counterpane.

The General Court and weekly committee meetings were held at the very high altars of feudalism—in the White Tower built by William the Conqueror, or at Whitehall where lived the Stuarts, or at the Jerusalem Coffee House, where scions of nobility met the money lenders and where the Company seems to have arranged advances on the subscribed stock to outfit each year's ships. Often, the committee meetings wound up with orders for the secretary "*to bespeake a cask of canary for ye governor,*" or "*a hogshead of claret for ye captains sailing from Gravesend,*" to whom "*ye committee wished a God speed, a good wind and a faire saile.*"

When the Stuart line gave place to a new régime, the Company hastened to King William at Kensington, and as the minutes of Oct. 1, 1690, record—"*having the Honour to be introduced into His Majesty's clossett . . . the Deputy-Governor Sir Edward Dering delivered himself in these words. . . . May it Please your Majesty—Your Majesty's most loyal and dutifull subjects, the Hudson's Bay Company begg leave most humbly to congratu-*

late your Majesty's Happy Returne home with honours and safety. And wee doo daily pray to Heaven (that Hath God wonderfully preserved your Royall person) that in all your undertakings, your Majesty may bee as victorious as Caesar, as Beloved as Titus, and (after all) have the glorious long reign and peacefull end of Augustus. . . . We doo desire also most humbly to present to your Majesty a dividend of three hundred guineas upon three hundred pounds stock in the Hudson's Bay Company now Rightfully devolved to your Majesty. And altho we have been the greatest sufferers of any Company, from these common enemies off all mankind, the French, yet when your Majesty's just arms shall have given repose to all Christendom, wee also shall enjoy our share of those great Benefitts and doo not doubt but to appeare often with this golden fruit in our hands—And the Deputy-Governor upon his knees humbly presented to his Majesty, the purse of gold . . . and then the Deputy-Governor and all the rest had the honour to kiss His Majesty's Hand."

Holding its privilege by virtue of royal favor, the Company was expected to advance British dominion abroad and resist all enemies. For exactly one hundred years (1682–1782) it fought the ground inch by inch against the French. From 1698, agents were

kept in Russia and Holland and Germany to watch the fur markets there, and when the question of designating the bounds between Russian Alaska and British Columbia, came up between England and Russia, it was on the Hudson's Bay Company that the British Government relied for the defense of its case. Similarly, when the United States took over Louisiana, the British Government called on the Company in 1807 to state what the limits ought to be between Louisiana and British America. But perhaps the most notoriously absurd part the Company ever played internationally was in connection with what is known as "the Oregon question." The bad feeling over that imbroglio need not be recalled. The modern Washington and Oregon—broadly speaking, regions of greater wealth than France—were at stake. The astonishing thing, the untold inside history of the whole episode was that after insisting on joint occupancy for years and refusing to give up her claims, England suddenly kow-towed flat without rhyme or reason. The friendship of the Company's chief factor, McLoughlin, for the incoming American settlers of Oregon, has usually been given as the explanation. Some truth there may be in this, for the settlers' tented wagon was always the herald of the hunter's end, but the real reason is good enough to be registered as melodrama

to the everlasting glory of a martinet officer's ignorance. Aberdeen was the British minister who had the matter in hand. His brother, Captain Gordon in the Pacific Squadron was ordered to take a look over the disputed territory. In vain the fur traders of Oregon and Vancouver Island spread the choicest game on his table. He could not have his English bath. He could not have the comforts of his English bed. He had bad luck deerstalking and worse luck fishing. Asked if he did not think the mountains magnificent, his response was that he would not give the bleakest hill in Scotland for all these mountains in a heap. Meanwhile, the Hudson's Bay Company was wasting candle light in London preparing the British case for the retention of Oregon. Matters hung fire. Should it be joint occupancy, "fifty-four-forty or fight," or compromise? Aberdeen's brother on leave home was called in.

"Oregon? Oregon?" Yes, Gordon remembered Oregon. Been there fishing last year, and "the fish wouldn't rise to the fly worth a d——! Let the old country go!" This, in a country where fish might be scooped out in tubfuls without either fly or line!

The committeemen meeting to transact the details of business were, of course, paid a small amount,

but coming together in the court, itself, or in the jolly chambers of a gay gallant like Prince Rupert, or at the Three Tunns, or at the Golden Anchor, great difficulty was experienced in calling the gentlemen to order, and the law was early passed, "*yt whensoever the committee shall be summoned, yt one hour after ye Deputy-Governor turns up ye glass, whosoever does not appear before the glass runs out, shall lose his committee money.*" The "*glass,*" it may be explained, was the hourglass, not the one for the "cask of canary." Later on, fines were imposed to be put in the Poor Box, which was established as the minutes explain, "a token of gratitude for God's great blessing to the company," the proceeds to go to old pensioners, to those wounded in service, or to wives and children of the dead.

The great events of the year to the committee were the dispatching of the boats, the home-coming of the cargoes and the public sales of the furs. Between these events, long recesses were taken without any evidence that the Company existed but a quiet distribution of dividends, or a courier spurring post-haste from Southhampton with word that one of the Company's ships had been captured by the French, the Company's cargo sold, the Company's ship sunk, the Company's servants left rotting in some dungeon waiting for ransom. From January

to April, all was bustle preparing the ships, two in the first years, later three and four and five armed frigates, to sail to the bay. Only good ice-goers were chosen, built of staunchest oak or ironwood, high and narrow at the prow to ride the ice and cut the floes by sheer weight. Then captains and crews were hired, some captains sailing for the Company as long as forty years. Goods for trade were stowed in the hold, traps, powder, guns, hatchets, blankets, beads, rope; and the committee orders the secretary "*to bespeake a good rat catcher to kill the vermin that injure our beaver*," though whether this member of the crew was biped or quadruped does not appear. A surgeon accompanied each ship. The secret signals left in duplicate with the posts on the bay the year before were then given to the captains, for if any ship approached the bay without these signals the forts had orders to fire their cannon at the intruder, cut the harbor buoys, put out all lights and do all they could to cause the interlopers' wreck. If taken by pirates, all signals were to be thrown overboard, and the captains were secretly instructed how high a ransom they might in the name of the Company offer their captors. On the day of sailing, usually in early June, the Committee went down on horseback to Gravesend. Lockers were searched for goods that might be hidden for clandestine trade,

for independent trade, even to the extent of one muskrat, the Company would no more tolerate than diamond miners will allow a private deal in their mine. These searchers examined the ships for hidden furs when she came home, just as rigorously as the customs officers examine modern baggage on any Atlantic liner. The same system of search was exercised among the workers on the furs of the Company's warehouses, the men being examined when they entered in the morning, and when they left at night. For this, the necessity was and is yet plain. Rare silver fox skins have been sold at auction for £200, £300, £400, even higher for a fancy skin. Half a dozen such could be concealed in a winter overcoat. That the searchers could no more prevent clandestine trade than the customs can smuggling—goes without saying. Illicit trade was the pest of the committeeman's life. Captains and crews, traders and factors and directors were alike dismissed and prosecuted for it. The Company were finally driven to demanding the surrender of even personal clothing, fur coats, mits, caps, from returning servants. On examination, this was always restored.

The search over, wages were paid to the seamen with an extra half-crown for good luck. The committee then shook hands with the crew. A parting cheer—and the boats would be gone for six months,

perhaps forever, for wrecks were frequent, so frequent that they are a story of heroism and hardship by themselves. Nor have the inventions of modern science rendered the dangers of the ice floes less. There are fewer Hudson's Bay Company ships among the floes now than in the middle period of its existence, but half a dozen terrible wrecks mark its latter history, one but a few years ago, when a $300,000 cargo went to the bottom; the captain instead of being dismissed was presented by Lloyds with gold plate for preventing another wreck in a similar jam the next year. Pirates, were, of course, keener to waylay the ships home-bound with furs than outgoing, but armed convoys were usually granted by the Government at least as far as the west Irish coast.

One of the quaintest customs that I found in the minute books was regarding the home-coming ships. The money, that had accrued from sales during the ships' absence, was kept in an iron box in the warehouse on Fenchurch Street. It ranged in amount from £2,000 to £11,000. To this, only the governor and deputy-governor had the keys. Banking in the modern sense of the word was not begun till 1735. When the ships came in, the strong box was hauled forth and the crews paid.

After the coming of the cargoes the sales of the furs were held in December, or March, by public

auction if possible, but in years when war demoralized trade, by private contract. This was the climax of the year to the fur trader. Even during the century when the French raiders swept the bay, an average of ten thousand beaver a year was brought home. Later, otter and mink and marten and ermine became valuable. These, the common furs, whalebone, ivory, elks' hoofs and whale blubber made up the lists of the winter sales. Before the days of newspapers, the lists were posted in the Royal Exchange and sales held "by candle" in lieu of auctioneer's hammer—a tiny candle being lighted, pins stuck in at intervals along the shaft, and bids shouted till the light burned out. One can guess with what critical caress the fur fanciers ran their hands over the soft nap of the silver fox, blowing open the fur to examine the depth and find whether the pelt had been damaged in the skinning. Half a dozen of these rare skins from the fur world meant more than a cargo of beaver. What was it anyway, this creature rare as twentieth century radium, that was neither blue fox nor gray, neither cross nor black? Was it the black fox changing his winter coat for summer dress just caught at the moment by the trapper, or the same fellow changing his summer pelt from silver to black for winter? Was it a turning of the black hairs to silver from old age, trapped

luckily just before old age had robbed the fur of its gloss? Was it senility or debility or a splendid freak in the animal world like a Newton or a Shakespeare in the human race? Of all the scientists from Royal Society and hall of learning, who came to gossip over the sales at the coffee houses, not one could explain the silver fox. Or was the soul of the fur trader, like the motto painted on his coat of arms by John Pinto for thirty shillings, in December, 1679—*Pro Pelle Cutem*—not above the value of a beaver skin?

Terse business methods of to-day, where the sales are advertised in a newspaper and afterward held apart from the goods, have robbed them of their old-time glamor, for the sale was to the city merchant what the circus is to the country boy, the event of the year. By the committee of Nov. 8, 1680, "*Sir James Hayes is desired to choose 3 doz. bottles of sack & 3 doz. of claret to be given the buyers at the sale & a dinner to be spoke at the Stellyarde, Mr. Stone to bespeake a good dish of fish, a lione of veale, 2 pullets and 4 ducks.*"

In early days when the Company had the field to itself, and sent out only a score or two of men in two small ships, £20,000 worth of beaver were often sold in a year, so that after paying back money advanced for outfit and wages, the Company was able to

declare a dividend of 50 per cent. on stock that had been twice trebled. Then came the years of the conflict with France—causing a loss in forts and furs of £100,543. Though small cargoes of beaver were still brought home, returns were swamped in the expenses of the fight. No dividends were paid for twenty years. The capital stock was all out as security for loans, and the private fortunes of directors pledged to keep the tradesmen clamoring for payment of outfits quiet. Directors borrowed money on their own names for the payment of the crews, and the officers of the Company, governors, chief factors and captains were paid in stock. Then came the peace of 1713 and a century's prosperity, when sales jumped from £20,000 to £30,000 and £70,000 a year. In five years all debts were paid, but the Company had learned a lesson. To hold its ground, it must strengthen grip. Instead of two small sloops, four and five armed frigates were sent out with crews of thirty and forty and sixty men. Eight men used to be deemed sufficient to winter at a fur post. Thirty and forty and sixty were now kept at each post, the number of posts increased, some of them built and manned like beleaguered fortresses, and that forward march begun across America which only ended on the borders of the Pacific and the confines of Mexico. Though the

returns were now so large from the yearly cargo, dividends never went higher than 20 per cent., fell as low as six, and hardly averaged above eight.

Then came the next great struggle of the Company for its life—against the North-West Company in Canada and the American traders in the Western States. Sales fell as low as £2,000. Oddly enough to-day, with its monopoly of exclusive trade long since surrendered to the Canadian Government, its charter gone, free traders at liberty to come or go, and populous cities spread over two thirds of its old stamping ground, the sales of the Company yield as high returns as in its palmiest days.

The reason is this:

It was only in regions where there were rival traders, or where colonization was bound to come, as in the Western States, that the fur brigades waged a war of extermination against the beaver. Elsewhere, north of the Saskatchewan and Athabasca, where cold must forever bar out the settler and leave the hunter in undisturbed possession of his game preserve, the Company acted as a nursery for the fur-bearing animals. Indians were taught not to kill in summer, not to kill the young, to leave the mother untouched. Tales are told—and the tales are perfectly true—of Hudson's Bay fur traders taking a particularly long-barreled old musket standing it on

the ground and ordering the poor, deluded Indian to pile furs to the top before he could have the gun; but to make these tales entirely true it should be added that the furs were muskrat and rabbit killed out of season not worth a penny apiece in the London market and only taken to keep the Indians going till a year of good hunting came. When arraigned before a committee of the House of Commons, in 1857, charged with putting an advance of 50 per cent. on all goods traded to the Indians, and with paying ridiculously small prices for the rare skins in proportion to what they had paid for the poor, the Company frankly acknowledged both facts, but it was proved that 33 per cent. of the advance represented expenses of carriage to the interior. As for the other charge, the Company contended that it was wiser to take many skins that were absolutely worthless and buy the valuable pelts at a moderate price; otherwise, the Indians would die from want in bad years, and in good years kill off the entire supply of the rare fur-bearing animals. Since the surrender of the monopoly, countless rival traders have invaded the hunting grounds of the Company. None has yet been able to wean the Indians away from the old Company. It is a question if the world shows another example of such a long-lived feudalism.

Though a Hudson's Bay servant could not take as much as one beaver skin for himself, every man afield had as keen an interest in the total returns as the shareholders in London. This was owing to the bounty system. To encourage the servants and prevent temptations to dishonesty, the Company paid bounty on every score (20) of made beaver to captains, factors, traders, and trappers, in amounts ranging from three shillings to sixpence a score. Latterly, this system has given place to larger salaries and direct shareholding on the part of the servants, who rise in the service.

A change has also taken place in methods of barter. Up to 1820, beaver was literally coin of the realm. Mink, marten, ermine, silver fox, all were computed as worth so much or so many fractions of beaver. A roll of tobacco, a pound of tea, a yard of blazing-red flannel, a powderhorn, a hatchet, all were measured and priced as worth so many beaver. This was the Indian's coinage, but this, too, has given way to modern methods, though the old system may perhaps be traced among the far Northern tribes. The account system was now used, so much being consigned to each factor, for which he was responsible. The trader, in turn, advanced the Indian whatever he needed for a yearly outfit, charging it against his name. This was repaid by the year's

hunt. If the hunt fell short of the amount, the Indians stood in debt to the Company. This did not in the least prevent another advance for the next year. If the hunt exceeded the debt, the Indian might draw either cash or goods to the full amount or let the Company stand in his debt, receiving coins made from the lead of melted tea chests with 1, 2, 3 or 4 *B*—beaver—stamped in the lead, and the mystic letters N. B., A. R., Y. F., E. M., C. R., H. H., or some other, meaning New Brunswick House, Albany River, York Fort, East Main, Churchill River, Henley House—names of the Company's posts on or near the bay. And these coins have in turn been supplanted by modern money.

One hears much of the Indians' slavery to the Company owing to the debts for these advances, but any one who knows the Indians' infinite capacity for lounging in idleness round the fort as long as food lasts, must realize that the Company had as much trouble exacting the debt as the Indian could possibly have in paying it.

A more serious charge used to be leveled against the fur traders—the wholesale use of liquor by which an Indian could be made to give away his furs or sell his soul. Without a doubt, where opposition traders were encountered—Americans west of the Mississippi, Nor'Westers on the Saskatchewan,

French south of the bay, Russians in Alaska—liquor and laudanum, bludgeon and bribe were plied without stint. Those days are long past. For his safety's sake, the fur trader had to relinquish the use of liquor, and for at least a century the strictest rules have prohibited it in trade, the old Russian company and the Hudson's Bay binding each other not to permit it. And I have heard traders say that when trouble arose at the forts the first thing done by the Company was to split open the kegs in the fort and run all liquor on the ground.

The charge, however, is a serious one against the Company's past, and I searched the minutes for the exact records on the worst year. In 1708, conflict was at its height against the French. The highest record of liquor sent out for two hundred servants was one thousand gallons—an average of five gallons a trader for the year, or less than two quarts a month. In 1770, before the fight had begun with the Nor'-Westers, the Company was sending out two hundred and fifty gallons a year for three hundred traders. In 1800, when Nor'Westers and Hudson's Bay came to open war and each company drove the other to extremes of outlawry, neither had intended at the beginning, coureurs falling by the assassin's dagger, a Hudson's Bay governor butchered on the open field, Indians horsewhipped for daring to

communicate with rivals, whole camps demoralized by drugged liquor, the highest record was twelve thousand six hundred gallons of brandy sent out for a force of between 4,000 or 5,000 men. This gives an average of three gallons a year for each trader. So that however terrible the use of liquor proved in certain disgraceful episodes between the two great British companies—it must be seen that the orgies were neither general nor frequent.

It is astonishing, too, to take a map of North America and consider what exploration stands to the credit of the fur traders. They were first overland from the St. Lawrence to Hudson Bay, and first inland from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi—thanks to Radisson.

In the exploration of the Arctic, who stands highest? It was a matter of paralyzing astonishment to the Company, itself, when I told them I had counted up in their books what they had spent on the Northwest Passage, and that before 1800 they had suffered dead loss on that account of £100,000. Beginning with old Captain Knight in 1719, who starved to death on Marble Island with his forty-three men, on down to Hearne in 1771, and Simpson and Rae in later days—that story of exploration is one by itself. The world knows of Franklins and

Nansens, but has never heard of the Company's humble servants whose bones are bleaching on the storm-beaten rocks of the desolate North. Take that bleak desert of the North, Labrador—of which modern explorers know nothing—by 1750 Captain Coates of the Hudson's Bay had explored its shores at a loss to the company of £26,000.

Inland—by 1690, that ragamuffin London boy, Henry Kelsey, who ran away with the Indians and afterward rose to greatness in the service, had penetrated to the present province of Manitoba and to the Saskatchewan. The MacKenzie River, the Columbia, the Fraser, the passes of the Rocky Mountains, the Yukon, the Liard, the Pelly—all stand to the credit of the fur trader. And every state north of Louisiana, west of the Mississippi, echoed to the tramp of the fur traders' horses sweeping the wilderness for beaver. Gentlemen Adventurers, they called themselves, but Lords of the Outer Marches were they, truly as any robber barons that found and conquered new lands for a feudal king.

Old-fashioned feudalism marked the Company's treatment of its dependents. To-day, the Indian simply brings his furs to the trader, has free egress to the stores, and goes his way like any other buyer. A hundred years ago, bartering was done through a

small wicket in the gate of the fort palisades; but in early times, the governor of each little fort felt the pomp of his glory like a Highland chief. Decking himself in scarlet coat with profusion of gold lace and sword at belt, he marched out to the Indian camp with bugle and fife blowing to the fore, and all the white servants in line behind. Bartering was then accomplished by the Indian chief, *giving* the white chief the furs, and the white chief formally presenting the Indian chief with a *quid pro quo*, both sides puffing the peace pipe like chimney pots as a token of good-fellowship.

How these pompous governors—little men in stature some of them—kept their own servants obedient and loyal in the loneliness of these wilderness wilds, can only be ascribed to their personal prowess. Of course, there were desertions, desertions to the wild life and to the French overland in Canada and to the Americans south of the boundary, but only once was payment withheld from the men of the far fur post on account of mutiny, though many a mutiny was quelled in its beginnings by the governor doffing his dignity and laying a sound drubbing on the back of the mutineer. The men were paid by bills drawn on the home office to the amount of two thirds of their wages, the other third being kept against their return as savings. Many devices were

employed to keep the men loyal. Did a captain accomplish a good voyage? The home committee ordered him a bounty of £150. Hearne, for his explorations inland, over and above his wages was given a present of £200. Did a man suffer from rigorous climate? The committee solemnly indites: "£4, smart money, for a frozen toe." Such luck as a French wood-runner deserting from Canada to the Hudson's Bay was promptly recognized by the order: "To Jan Ba'tiste Larlee, £1-5, a periwig to keep him loyal." No matter to what desperate straits war reduced the Company's finances, it was never too poor to pension some wreck of the service, or present gold plate to some hero of the fight, or give a handsome funeral to some servant who died in harness—"funeral by torch light and linkmen, to St. Paul's Churchyard, company and crew in attendance, £31." Though Governor Semple had been little more than a year on the field when he was murdered, the Company pensioned both his sisters for life. The humblest servants in the ranks —men beginning on twenty shillings a month, like Kelsey, and Grimmington, and Hearne, and old Captain Knight—were urged and encouraged to rise to the highest positions in the Company. The one thing required was—absolute, implicit, unquestioning loyalty; the Company could do no wrong. Quite the

funniest instance of the Company's fatherly care for its servants was the matrimonial office. For years, especially in time of war, it was almost impossible to secure apprentices at all, though the agents paid £2 as bonus on signing the contract. At this period in the Company's history, I came across a curious record in the minutes. A General Court was secretly called of which no entry was to be made in the minutes, to consider the proposals of one, Mr. Andrew Vallentine, for the good of the Company's service. In addition to the shareholders' general oath of secrecy, every one attending this meeting had to take solemn vows not to reveal the proceedings. What could it be about? I scanned the general minutes, the committee books, the sub-committee records of shippings and sailings and wars. It was not about France, for proceedings against France were in the open. It was not a "back-stairs" fund, for when the Company wanted favors it openly sent purses of gold or beaver stockings or cat-skin counterpanes. But farther on in the minutes, when the good secretary had forgotten all about secrecy, I found a cryptic entry about the cryptic gentleman, Mr. Andrew Vallentine—"that all entries about Mr. Andrew Vallentine's office for the service of the Company be made in a Booke Aparte," and that 10 per cent. of the regular yearly dividends go as

dowries for the brides of the apprentices, the ceremonies to be performed—not by any unfrocked clergyman under the rose—but by the Honorable, the Very Reverend Doctor Sacheverell of renown. The business with the gentleman of matrimonial fame was not called "a marriage office." No such clumsy herding of fair ones to the altar, as in Virginia and Quebec, where brides were sent in shiploads and exposed on the town square like slaves at the shambles. The Company's matrimonial venture was kept in dignified reserve, that would send down no stigma to descendants. It was organized and designated as a separate *company;* certainly, a company of two. Later on, Mr. Vallentine's office being too small for the rush of business, the secretary, "*Mr. Potter is ordered to arrange a larger office for Mr. Vallentine in the Buttery of the Company's store house.*" But all the delightful possibilities hidden in Mr. Vallentine's suggestive name and in the oleaginous place which he chose for his matrimonial mart—failed to make the course of true love run smooth. Mr. Vallentine entangled the Company in lawsuits and on his death in 1731, the office was closed.

Notes on Foregoing Chapters.—Groseillers's name is given in a variety of ways, the full name being Medard Chouart Groseillers—the last translated by the English as "Goosebery," which of course would necessitate the name being spelled "Groseilliers."

The account of the passage of the ships across the Atlantic is drawn from Radisson Journals, from his Petitions, and from the Journal of Gillam as reported by Thomas Gorst, Bayly's secretary. There are also scraps about the trip in Sir James Hayes' report of damage to *The Eaglet*, which he submitted to the Admiralty.

The relationship of Radisson to Groseillers and the French version of the quarrel on the bay—are to be found in the life of Radisson in *Pathfinders of the West*. Though I have searched diligently, I have not been able to find a single authority, ancient or modern, for the odd version given by several writers of Radisson and Groseillers absconding overland to New France. The statement is sheer fiction—neither more nor less, as the Minutes of Hudson's Bay House account for Radisson's movements almost monthly from 1667 to 1674, when he left London for France.

A comical story is current in London about the charter. After the monopoly was relinquished by the Company in 1870 and its territory taken over by Canada, the old charter was, of course, of no importance. For thirty years it disappeared. It was finally found jammed behind old papers tumbled down the back of an old safe—and this was the charter that deeded away three-quarters of America.

Before a Parliamentary Commission on March 10, 1749, the Company made the following statement concerning its stock:

1676 October 16 It appears by the Company's Books, that their stock then was.....	£ 10,500
1690 September The same being trebled is..	21,000
Which made the Stock to be.....	31,500
1720 August 29 This Stock being again trebled is.....	63,000
Which made the Stock to be.....	94,500
And a subscription then taken in of 10% amounting to Additional Stock.....	9,450
Which makes the present Amount of the Stock to be.....	103,950

The minutes of the Company and Radisson's journal alike prove that he passed to France from England, in October, 1674. Whether Groseillers came to England on the ship is not stated, therefore the question is left open, but it *is* stated that Groseillers

passed to France at the same time, so that pretty story of Groseillers knocking Bayly's head is all fiction.

I was not able to find that "Booke Aparte" in which entries were made of Mr. Andrew Vallentine's matrimonial mart. It may yet turn up in the cellarful of old papers in the Company's warehouse. Perhaps it is as well that it should not, for some of the most honored names in Canadian history came into the service of the Company at this time.

Lyddell's salary as governor of the west coast of the bay was to be £100 per annum. Sailors were paid, in 1671, from £20 to £30 a year, the surgeons £20 a year.

CHAPTER IX

1674–1685

IF RADISSON CAN DO WITHOUT THE ADVENTURERS, THE ADVENTURERS CANNOT DO WITHOUT RADISSON—THE ERUPTION OF THE FRENCH ON THE BAY—THE BEGINNING OF THE RAIDERS

WHILE Radisson became once more a man without habitat or country, the Hudson's Bay Adventurers were in the very springtime of wonderful prosperity. Despite French interlopers coming overland from the St. Lawrence, the ships of 1679 brought home cargoes totaling 10,500 beaver, 1,100 marten, 200 otter, 700 elk and a vast quantity of such smaller furs as muskrat and ermine. Cash to the value of half the Company's capital lay in the strong box as a working fund, and by 1681 dividends to the value of just twice the Company's stock had been paid to the shareholders. The first speculation in the stock began about this time, the shares changing hands at an advance of 33 per cent. and a new lot of shareholders coming in, among whom was the famous architect—Christopher Wrenn. At this time, too, one, Mr.

Phillips, was expelled as a shareholder for attempting to conduct a private trade through members of the crews. Prince Rupert continued to be governor till the time of his death, in 1682, when James, Duke of York, was chosen to succeed. At first, the governing committee had met only before the ships sailed and after they returned. Committee meetings were now held two or three times a week, a payment of 6s 8d being made to each man for attendance, a like amount being levied as a fine for absence, the fines to be kept in a Poor Box for the benefit of the service.

Bayly, who had been governor on the south coast of Hudson's Bay, when Radisson left, now came home in health broken from long exposure, to die at Mr. Walker's house on the Strand, whence he was buried with full military honors, the crew of *The John and Alexander* and the Adventurers marching by "torch light" to St. Paul's Churchyard.

Hudson Bay—let it be repeated—can be compared in size only to the Mediterranean. One governor could no more command all the territory bordering it than one ruler could govern all the countries bordering the Mediterranean. Nixon was commissioned to succeed Bayly as governor of the South Shore—namely of Rupert and Moose Rivers, territory inland about the size of modern Germany, which the new governor was supposed to keep in order

with a force of sixteen men from the crew of *The John and Alexander* and garrison of eight men at each of the two forts—thirty-two men in all, serving at salaries ranging from $60 (£12) to $100 (£20) a year, to police a barbarous pre-historic Germany; and the marvel is, they did it. Crime was almost unknown. Mr. Nixon's princely salary as governor, poohbah, potentate, was £200 a year, and it is ordered, May, 1680, "that a cask of canary be sent out as a present to Governor Nixon."

On the West Coast, it will be remembered, Lyddell had gone out as governor. That vague "West Coast"—though the Adventurers did not know it—meant a region the size of Russia. Lyddell was now succeeded by Sargeant, the bluffest, bravest, halest, heartiest of governors that ever donned the gold lace and pompous insignia of the Adventurers. Sargeant's garrison never at any time numbered more than forty and usually did not exceed twelve. His fort was on an island at the mouth of Albany River, some one hundred miles north of Moose. It will be recalled that Radisson had traveled three hundred miles farther up the west coast to Port Nelson. The Company now decided to appoint a governor for that region, too, and John Bridgar was commissioned to go out in 1682 with Captain Gillam on the ship *Prince Rupert*—a bad combination, these two, whose

chief qualification seemed to be swashbuckler valor, fearlessness of the sea, ability to break the heads of their men and to drown all remorse pottle deep in liquor. How did they rule, these little potentates of the wilds? With all the circumstance and pomp of war, couriers running beforehand when they traveled, drums beating, flags flying, muskets and cannon roaring salutes, a bugler tootling to the fore of a governor dressed in gaudiest regimentals, a line of white servants marching behind, though they were so poor they wore Indian garb and had in their hearts the hatred of the hireling for a tyrant; for over them the Company had power of life and death without redress. All very absurd, it seems, at this long distant time, but all very effective with the Indians, who mistook noise for power and display for greatness.

By royal edict, privateers were forbidden to go to Hudson Bay, whether from England or New England. Instead of two small ships borrowed from the Admiralty, the Adventurers now had four of their own and two chartered yearly—*The Prudent Mary*, and *Albermarle* frigate and *Colleton* yacht outward bound, *The Prince Rupert* and *John and Alexander* and *Shaftsbury*—which was wrecked—homeward bound, or *vice versa*. And there began to come into Company's records, grand old names of grand old

mariners—Vikings of the North—Mike Grimmington, who began before the mast of *The Albemarle* at thirty shillings a month, and Knight, of whose tragic fate more anon, and Walker, who came to blows with Governor Sargeant, outward bound. Those were not soft days for soft men. They were days of the primordial when the best man slept in his fighting gear and the victory went to the strong.

When Captain James had come out to follow up Hudson's discoveries, he had left his name to James Bay and discovered Charlton Island, some forty miles from the South Shore. Now that the Company had so many ships afloat, Charlton Island became the rendezvous. The ships, that were to winter on the bay, went to their posts, but to Charlton Island came the cargoes for those homeward bound.

To Port Nelson, then, came Governor Bridgar on *The Prince Rupert* with Captain Gillam, in August, of 1682. Mike Grimmington is now second mate. Gillam must have been to Port Nelson before on trading ventures, but Governor Bridgar's commission was to establish that fort which for two centuries was to be the battleground of Northern traders and may yet be the great port of Northern commerce. The whole region was called Nelson after Admiral Button's mate, but it was to become better known

as Fort Bourbon, when possessed by the French; as York, when it repassed to the English.

Shifting shoals of sand-drift barred the sea from the main coast for ten miles north and south, but across the shoals were gaps visible at low tide, through which the current broke with the swiftness of a river. Gillam ordered small boats out to sound and stake the ship's course by flags erected in the sand at half tide. Between these flags, *The Prince Rupert* slowly moved inland. Inside the sand-bar, the coast was seen to be broken by the mouths of two great rivers—either one a miniature St. Lawrence, on the north the Nelson, on the south the Hayes. It was on the Hayes to the south that the Adventurers finally built their fur post, but Bridgar and Gillam now pushed *The Prince Rupert's* carved prow slowly up the northern river, the Nelson. The stream was wide with a tremendous current and low, swampy, wooded banks. Each night sails were reefed and men sent ashore to seek a good site or sign of Indians. Night after night during the whole month of September, John Calvert, Robert Braddon, Richard Phineas, Robert Sally and Thomas Candy punted in and out of the coves along the Nelson, lighting bonfires, firing muskets, spying the shore for footstep of native. On the ship, Bridgar ordered the cannon fired as signals to distant Indians and for

the first time in history the roar of heavy guns rolled across the swamps. Winter began to close in early. Ice was forming. Nipping frosts had painted the swamp woods in colors of fire. One afternoon toward October when *The Prince Rupert* was some seventeen miles from the sand-bar, gliding noiselessly with full-blown sails before a gentle wind, the smoke of an Indian signal shot skyward from the south shore.

In vain Bridgar fired muskets all that afternoon and waved flags, to call the savages to the ship. A solitary figure, seeming to be a spy, emerged from the brushwood, gazing stolidly at the apparition of the ship. Presently, two or three more figures were discovered moving through the swamp. The next morning Governor Bridgar ordered the gig-boat lowered, and accompanied by Gillam and an escort of six sailors—rowed ashore. First impressions count much with the Indians. On such occasion, Hudson's Bay Company officers never failed of pompous ostentation—profusion of gold lace, cocked hats for officers, colored regimentals for underlings, a bugler to the fore, or a Scotchman blowing his bagpipes, with a show of burnished firearms and helmets.

On rowed the gig-boat toward the imperturbable figure on the shore. Some paces out, the boat

grated bottom and stuck in the sand. A sailor had jumped to mid-waist in water to drag the craft in, when the stolid figure on the sand suddenly came to life. With a leap, leveled musket covering the incoming boat, the man had bounded to the water's edge and in purest English shouted—"Halt!"

"We are Hudson's Bay Company men," protested Bridgar standing up.

"But I," answered the figure, "am Radisson, and I hold possession of *all* this region for France."

If the Frenchman had been Vesuvius suddenly erupted under some idling tourists, or if a ghost arisen from the ground, the English could not have been more astonished. They had thought they had finished with the troublesome Frenchman, and behold him, here, in possession with a musket leveled at their heads and three men commanding ambushed forces behind.

With a show of hollow courage, Bridgar asked permission to land and salute the commander of the French forces. One can guess with what love, they fell on each other's necks. Radisson's courage rose recklessly as if the danger had been so much wine. These three men were his officers, he said. His fort was some distance away. He had two ships but expected more. How many men had he? Ah, there his English failed, but his broken French

conveyed the impression of forces that could wipe the English out of existence. Gillam and Bridgar, who could not speak one word of French, looked glum enough. To test this brave show of valor, they invited him on board *The Prince Rupert* to dine. Radisson accepted with an alacrity that disarmed suspicion, but he took the precaution of inviting two English sailors to remain on shore with his French followers. What yarns were spun over the mess room table of *The Prince Rupert* that day! Radisson enquired for all his own friends of London, and Bridgar in turn heard what Radisson had been doing in the French navy all these eight years. Who knew Port Nelson better than Radisson? They asked him about the current of the river. He advised them to penetrate no farther for fear of a clash with the French forces and to forbid their men marauding inland in order to avoid trouble with the Indians.

Could any one guess that the astute Frenchman, boasting of ships and so recklessly quaffing toasts at the table of his enemies—was defenseless and powerless in their hands? His fort was not on this river but on the Hayes across the swamp to the south—a miserable collection of log shacks with turf roofs, garrisoned by a mere handful of mutinous sailors. His fear was *not* that the English would clash with

the French forces, but that they would learn how weak he was. And another discovery added the desperation of recklessness to the game. Radisson and Groseillers had come to the bay but a month before on two miserable ships with twenty-seven men. Musketry firing had warned Radisson of some one else at Port Nelson. Twenty-six miles up Nelson River on Gillam Island, he had discovered to his amazement, poachers who were old acquaintances—Ben Gillam, son of the Company's captain, with John Outlaw, come in *The Bachellors' Delight* from Boston, on June 21, to poach on the Company's fur preserve. It was while canoeing down stream from the discovery of the poachers that Radisson ran full-tilt into the Company's ship. Here, then, was a pretty dilemma—two English ships on the same river not twenty miles apart, the French south across the swamp not a week's journey away. Radisson was trapped, if they had but known. His only chance was to keep *The Prince Rupert* and *The Bachellors' Delight* apart, and to master them singly.

If Bridgar had realized Radisson's plight, the Frenchman would have been clapped under hatches in a twinkle, but he was allowed to leave *The Prince Rupert.* Bridgar beached his ships on the flats and prepared to build winter quarters. Ten days later,

Radisson dropped in again, "to drink health," as he suavely explained, introducing common sailors as officers and firing off muskets to each cup quaffed, to learn whether the Company kept soldiers "on guard in case of a surprise." Governor Bridgar was too far gone in liquor to notice the trick, but Captain Gillam rushed up the decks of *The Prince Rupert* with orders for the French to begone. Gillam and Radisson had been enemies from the first. Gillam was suspicious. Therefore, it behooved Radisson to play deeper. The next time he came to the ship he was accompanied by the Captain's son, Ben, the poacher, dressed as a bushranger. There was reason enough now for the old captain to keep his crew from going farther up the river. If Ben Gillam were discovered in illicit trade, it meant ruin to both father and son. When some of his crew remarked the resemblance of the supposed bushranger to the absent son, Captain Gillam went cold with fright.

Falsity, intrigue, danger, were in the very air. It lacked but the spark to cause the explosion; and chance supplied the spark.

Two of the Company men ranging for game came on young Gillam's ship. They dashed back breathless to Governor Bridgar with word that there was a strange fort only a few miles away. Bridgar thought

this must be the French fort, and Captain Gillam had not courage to undeceive him. Scouts were sent scurrying. Those scouts never returned. They had been benighted in a howling blizzard and as chance would have it, were rescued by Radisson's spies. While he waited for their return, worse disaster befell Bridgar. Storm and ice set the tide driving in Nelson River like a whirlpool. *The Prince Rupert* was jammed, ripped, crushed like an eggshell and sunk with loss of all provisions and fourteen men, including old Captain Gillam. Mike Grimmington, the mate, escaped. Governor Bridgar was left destitute and naked to the enemy without either food or ammunition for the remainder of his crew to face the winter. The wretched man seems to have saved nothing from the wreck but the liquor, and in this he at once proceeded to drown despair. It was Radisson who came to his rescue. Nothing more was to be feared from Bridgar. Therefore, the Frenchman sent food to the servants of his former friends. Without his aid, the entire Hudson's Bay crew would have perished.

Cooped up in the deplorable rabbit hutches that did duty as barracks, and constantly besotted with liquor, Governor Bridgar was eking out a miserable winter when he was electrified by another piece of chance news. A thunderous rapping awakened the

cabin one winter night. When the door was opened, there stumbled in a disheveled, panting Scotchman with an incoherent plea for help. The French were attacking Ben Gillam's fort. For the first time, Bridgar learned that the fort up stream was *not* French but English—the fort of Ben Gillam, the poacher; and all his pot valor resolved on one last, desperate cast of the dice. To be sure, the other ship was a poacher; but she was English. If Bridgar united with her, he might beat Radisson. He would at least have a ship to escape to the Company's forts at the lower end of Hudson Bay, or to England. Also, he owed his own and his crew's life to Radisson; but he owed his services to the Company, and the Company could best be served by treachery to Radisson and alliance with that scalawag sailor adventurer—Ben Gillam, whose ship sailed under as many names as a pirate and showed flags as various as the seasons. Better men than Bridgar forced to choose between the scalawag with the dollar and honor with ruin, have chosen the scalawag with the dollar.

Men sent out as scouts came back with unsatisfactory tales of having failed to capture Ben Gillam's ship, but they were loaded with food for Bridgar from Radisson. Bridgar only waited till spies reported that Radisson had left Gillam's fort to cross the marsh to French headquarters. Then he armed

his men—cutlass, bludgeon, such muskets as Radisson's ammunition rendered available—and set out. It was a forced tramp in midwinter through bitter cold. The men were an ill-clad rabble. They were unused to this cold with frost that glittered sharp as diamond-points, and had not yet learned snowshoe travel over the rolling drifts. Frost-bitten, plunging to their armpits in snow, they followed the iced river bed by moonlight and sometime before dawn presented themselves at the main gate of Ben Gillam's palisaded fort. Never doubting but Gillam's sentry stood inside, Bridgar knocked. The gate swung open before a sleepy guard. In rushed Bridgar's men. Bang went the gates shut. In the confusion of half-light and frost smoke, armed men surrounded the English. Bridgar was trapped in his own trap. Not Gillam's men manned the poacher's fort, but Radisson's French sailors. Ben Gillam and his crew had long since been captured and marched across the swamp to French headquarters. Bridgar and his crew were the prisoners of the French in the poacher's fort.

The rest of the winter of 1682–83 belongs to the personal history of Radisson and is told in his life. Between despair and drink, Bridgar was a madman. Radisson carried him to the French fort on Hayes River, whence in a few weeks he was released on

parole to go back to his own rabbit hutch of a barracks. When spring came, between poachers and Company men, the French had more English prisoners than they knew what to do with. To make matters worse, one of the French boats had been wrecked in the ice jam. It was decided to send some of the English prisoners on the remaining boat to Moose and Rupert River at the south end of the bay, and to carry the rest on the poacher *Bachellors' Delight* to Quebec. Outlaw and some of the other poachers would take no chance of going back to New England to be arrested as pirates. They went in *The Ste. Anne* to the foot of James Bay and joined the Hudson's Bay Company. Bridgar, too, was to have gone to his company's forts on James Bay, but at the last moment he pretended to fear the ice floes on such a slender craft and asked to go with Radisson on *The Bachellors' Delight* to Quebec. Giving the twelve refugees on *The Ste. Anne* each four pounds of beef, two bushels of oatmeal and flour, Radisson dispatched them for the forts of James Bay on August 14th. He had already set fire to Bridgar's cabins on Nelson River and destroyed the poachers' fort on Gillam Island, Bridgar, himself, asking permission to set the flame to Ben Gillam's houses. Leaving Groseillers' son, Chouart, with seven Frenchmen to hold possession of Port Nelson, Radisson set

sail with his prisoners on *The Bachellors' Delight.* A few miles out, a friendly Englishman warned him of conspiracy. Bridgar and Ben Gillam were plotting a mutiny to cut the throats of all the Frenchmen and return to put the garrison at Port Nelson to the sword; so when Bridgar asked for the gig-boat to attempt going six hundred miles to the forts at the south end of the bay, Radisson's answer was to order him under lock the rest of the voyage.

At Quebec, profound disappointment awaited Radisson. Frontenac had given place to De la Barre as governor of New France, and De la Barre knew that a secret treaty existed between France and England. He would lend no countenance to Radisson's raid. *The Bachellors' Delight* was restored to young Gillam and Radisson ordered to France to report all he had done. Young Gillam was promptly arrested in Boston for poaching on Hudson Bay. Within a few years, he had turned pirate in earnest, or been driven to piracy by the monopolistic laws that gave every region for trade to some special favorite of the English crown. About the time Captain Kidd of pirate fame was arrested at Boston, one Gillam of *The Prudent Sarah* was arrested, too. By wrenching off his handcuffs and filing out the bars of his prison window with the iron of the handcuff, Gillam almost escaped. He was

leaping out of the prison window on old Court Street when the bayonet of a guard prodded him back. With Captain Kidd, he was taken to England and tried for crimes on the high seas. There, he drops from history.

As for Bridgar, he no sooner whiffed Governor De la Barre's fear of consequences for what Radisson had done, than he set two worlds ringing with vauntings of the vengeance England would take. Putting through drafts on the Hudson's Bay Company for money, he hired interpreters, secretaries, outriders, and assumed pomp that would have done credit to a king's ambassador. Sailing to New England with Ben Gillam, he cut a similar swath from Boston to New York, riding like a Jehu along the old post road in a noisy endeavor to rehabilitate his own dignity. Then he sailed for England where condign humiliation lay in wait. The Company was furious. They refused to honor his drafts and would not pay him one penny's salary from the day he had surrendered to Radisson. The wages of the captured servants, the Company honored in full, even the wages of the dead in the wreck of *The Prince Rupert*. Bridgar was retained in the service, but severely reprimanded.

Notes on Chapter IX.—Practically the entire contents of this chapter are taken from the documents in Hudson's Bay House, London. Details of the Company's affairs are from the Minute Books, of the fracas with Radisson, from the affidavits

of John Outlaw, who first went to the bay as a poacher with young Gillam, and from the affidavits of Bridgar's crew.

It has always been a matter of doubt whether Gillam Sr. survived the wreck of *The Prince Rupert*. The question is settled by the fact that his wages are "payable to an attorney for his heirs." If he had lived, it was ordered that he was to be arrested for complicity in piracy with his son.

The ultimate fate of Ben Gillam I found in the Shaftesbury collection of papers bearing on Captain Kidd. His name is variously given as "William" and "James," but I think there can be little doubt of his identity from several coincidences. In the first place, the Gillam whom Mr. Randolph arrested for piracy (and was given a present by the Company for so doing) was the Gillaum later arrested in connection with Captain Kidd. Also Gillam's boat was known under a variety of names—*Bachellors' Delight*, *Prudent Sarah*, and the master of *The Prudent Sarah* was arrested in connection with Captain Kidd. The minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company show that the Boston owners of Gillam's boat sued for the loss of this trip against the Hudson's Bay Company, and lost their suit. This was the first test of the legality of the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly, and the courts upheld it.

Radisson's life as given in *Pathfinders of the West* and *Heralds of Empire* affords fuller details of the fray from the Frenchman's point of view. It is remarkable how slightly his record differs from the account as contained in the official affidavits.

As to the distance of Charlton Island from the main coast—it puzzled me how the sailing directions for the ships that were to rendezvous there gave the distance of the island from the main coast as anything from twenty to eighty miles. The explanation is the point on the south coast that is considered.

CHAPTER X

1683–1685

THE ADVENTURERS FURIOUS AT RADISSON, FIND IT CHEAPER TO HAVE HIM AS FRIEND THAN ENEMY AND INVITE HIM BACK — THE REAL REASON WHY RADISSON RETURNED—THE TREACHERY OF STATECRAFT—YOUNG CHOUART OUTRAGED, NURSES HIS WRATH AND THERE GAILY COMES ON THE SCENE MONSIEUR PÉRÉ—SCOUT AND SPY

THE Hudson's Bay Adventurers were dazed by the sudden eruption of Radisson at Port Nelson. Their traders had gone there often enough to have learned that the finest furs came from the farthest North. Here was a region six hundred miles distant from the French bush-lopers, who came overland from the St. Lawrence. Here were the best furs and the most numerous tribes of Indian hunters. Radisson had found Port Nelson for them. Now he had snatched the rich prize from their hands.

Bad news travels fast. Those refugees, who had been shipped by the French to the Company's posts at the south of the bay, reached the ships' rendezvous

at Charlton Island in time to return to England by the home-bound vessels of 1683. Before Radisson had arrived in France, Outlaw and the other refugees had come to London. The embassies of France and England rang with what was called "the Radisson outrage." John Outlaw, quondam captain for Ben Gillam, the poacher, took oath in London, on November 23, of all that Radisson had done to injure the English, and he swore that Groseillers had showed a commission from the Government of France for the raid. Calvert, Braddon, Phineas and those seamen, who had gone up Nelson River with Bridgar—gave similar evidence, and when Bridgar, himself, came by way of New England, the clamor rose to such heights it threatened to upset the friendly treaty between England and France. Lord Preston, England's envoy to Paris, was besieged with memorials against Radisson for the French Government.

"I am confirmed in our worst fears by the news I have lately received," wrote Sir James Hayes of the Company, "Monsieur Radisson, who was at the head of the action at Port Nelson is arrived in France the 8th of this month (December, 1683) in a man-of-war from Canada and is in all posthaste for Paris to induce the ministry to undermine us on Hudson's Bay. Nothing can mend at this time but

to get His Majesty's order through my Lord Preston instantly to cause ye French King to have exemplary justice done upon ye said Radisson."

At the same time, Hayes was urging Preston to bribe Radisson; in fact, to do anything to bring him back to the service of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Radisson and Groseillers had meanwhile reached Paris only to find that the great statesman, Colbert—on whose protection they had relied—was dead. Fur traders of Quebec had the ear of the court—those monopolists, who had time and again robbed them of their furs under pretense of collections for the revenue. Both Radisson and Groseillers separately petitioned the court for justice. If De la Barre had been right in restoring the pirate vessel to Ben Gillam, what right had he to seize their furs? One fourth for revenue did not mean wholesale confiscation. The French Court retorted that Radisson and Groseillers had gone North without any official commission. "True," answered Groseillers in his petition, "no more official than a secret verbal commission such as Albanel the Jesuit had, when he came to us years ago, and that is no good reason why we should be condemned for extending French dominion and changing Nelson's name to Bourbon." Radisson's

petition openly stated that while they carried no "official commission," they had gone North by the express order of the King, and that the voyage, itself, was sufficient proof of their zeal for France.

King Louis was in a quandary. He dare not offend the Hudson's Bay Company, for its chief shareholders were of the English court, and with the English Court, Louis XIV had a secret treaty. To De la Barre he sent a furious reprimand for having released Gillam's pirate vessel. "It is impossible to imagine what your conduct meant," ran the reproof, "or what you were about when you gave up the vessel captured by Radisson and Groseillers, which will afford the English proof of possession at Port Nelson. I am unwilling to afford the King of England cause of complaint," he explained, "but I think it important to prevent the English establishing themselves on Nelson River." In brief, according to the shifty trickery of a royal code, Radisson was to be reprimanded publicly but encouraged privately. Groseillers dropped out of the contest disgusted. The French court sent for Radisson. He was ordered to prepare to sail again to the bay on April 24, 1684, but this time, Radisson would have no underhand commission which fickle statesmen might repudiate. He demanded restoration of his confiscated furs and a written agreement that he should

have equal share in trading profits. The Department of the Marine haggled. Preparations went on apace, but the Hudson's Bay Company was not idle. Sir James Hayes and Sir William Young and my Lord Preston—English envoy to Paris—urged Radisson to come back to England on one hand, and on the other threatened rupture of the treaty with France if "condign punishment" were not visited on the same men.

It is here what historians have called "Radisson's crowning treachery" takes place. "Prince of liars, traitors, adventurers and bushrangers"—says one writer. "He received the marked displeasure of M. Colbert," explains another, though Colbert was dead. "He was blamable for deserting the flag of France: the first time we might pardon him, for he was the victim of grave injustice, but no excuse could justify his second desertion. He had none to offer. It was an ineffaceable stain," asserts yet another critic.

In a word, Radisson suddenly left France secretly and appeared in England, the servant of the Hudson's Bay Company. Why did he do it? Especially, why did he do it without any business agreement with the Company as to what his rewards were to be? Traitors sell themselves for a *quid pro quo*, but there was no prospect of gain in Radisson's case.

His own journals give no explanation. I confess I had always thought it was but another example of the hair-brained enthusiast mad to be back in his native element—the wilds—and shutting his eyes to all precautions for the future. It was not till I had examined the state papers that passed between the Hudson's Bay Company and France that I found the true explanation of Radisson's erratic conduct. He was sent for by the Department of the Marine, and told that the French had quit all open pretentions to the bay. He was commanded to cross to England at once and restore Port Nelson to the Hudson's Bay Company.

"Openly?" he might have asked.

Ah, that was different! Not openly, for an open surrender of Port Nelson would forever dispose of French claims to the bay. All Louis XIV now wanted was to pacify the English court and maintain that secret treaty. No, not openly; but he was commanded to go to England and restore Port Nelson as if it were of his own free will. He had captured it without a commission. Let him restore it in the same way. But Radisson had had enough of being a scapegoat for state statecraft and double dealing. He demanded written authority for what he was to do, and the Department of Marine placed this commission in his hands:

"In order to put an end to the Differences wh. exist between the two Nations of the French & English touching the Factory or Settlement made by Messrs. Groseillers and Radisson on Hudson Bay, and to avoid the efusion of blood that may happen between the sd. two nations, for the Preservation of that place, the expedient wch. appeared most reasonable and advantageous for the English company will, that the sd. Messrs. De Groseillers and Radisson return to the sd. Factory or habitation furnished with the passport of the English Company, importing that they shall withdraw the French wh. are in garrison there with all the effects belonging to them in the space of eighteen months to be accounted from the day of their departure by reason they cannot goe and come from the place in one year. . . . The said gentlemen shall restore to the English Company the Factory or Habitation by them settled in the sd. country to be thenceforward enjoyed by the English company without molestation. As to the indemnity pretended by the English for effects seized and brought to Quebec . . . that may be accomodated in bringing back the said inventory & restoring the same effects or their value to the English Proprietors."

This, then, was the reason for Radisson a second time deserting the French flag. He was compelled by "the statecraft" of Louis XIV, and this reason, as a man of honor, he could not reveal in his journals.

On the 10th of May, 1684, Radisson landed in London. He was welcomed by Sir James Hayes and forthwith carried in honor to Windsor, where

he took the oath of fidelity as a British subject—a fealty from which he never swerved to the end of his life. In a week, he was ready to leave. Three ships sailed this year, *The Happy Return*, under Captain Bond; *The Success*, under Outlaw, who had been with Ben Gillam, and a little sloop called *The Adventure* for inland waters, under Captain Geyer. Radisson went on board *The Happy Return*. Groseillers had long since left France for Quebec, where he settled at Three Rivers with his family. Favorable winds carried the ships forward without storm or stop, to the straits, which luckily presented open water. Inside the bay, ice and heavy seas separated the vessels. Sixty miles from Port Nelson *The Happy Return* was caught and held. Fearing that the French at Nelson, under young Chouart Groseillers, might attack the English if the other ships arrived first, Radisson asked permission of Governor Phipps, who had superseded Bridgar, to take seven of the crew and row the sixty miles ashore. It was a daring venture. Ice floes were tossing in a heavy sea, but by rowing might and main, portaging over the ice where the way was blocked, and seeking shelter on the lee side of a floe when the wind became too rough, Radisson and his men came safely to Port Nelson in forty-eight hours, spending only one night in the gig-boat on the sea. Radisson was amazed

to find the French fort on Hayes River deserted. Indians presently told him the reason. Barely had he left the bay the year before when the annual frigate of the English company came to port. Young Chouart Groseillers trusted to the loyalty of the Indians as a defense against the English till he learned that the savages had been offered a barrel of gunpowder to massacre the French. Then Chouart hastily withdrew up Hayes River above the first rapids to the camping place of the Assiniboines, whose four hundred warriors were ample protection.

Young Groseillers' anger at the turn of affairs knew no bounds. In his fort were twelve thousand beaver skins and eight thousand other pelts of the same value as beaver. To the expedition the year before, he had contributed £500 of his own money, and the cargo of that voyage had been confiscated at Quebec. Now, he had rich store of pelts to compensate for the two years' toil, and by the order of the French Government—a secret back-stairs, treacherous order which could not stand daylight and would brand him as a renegade—he was to turn these furs over to the enemy. The young man was furious, and surrendered his charge with an ill grace. Radisson had been commissioned to offer the Frenchmen employment in the English Company at £100 a year for Chouart, £50 for Durvall, Lamotte, Greymaire

and the rest. They heard his offer in sullen silence, for it meant they must forswear allegiance to France. They preferred to remain free-lances and take chances of crossing overland to Quebec two thousand miles through the wilderness.

Then came what was truly the crowning treachery. A square deal is safest in the long run. The man of double dealing forgets that he often compels men, who would otherwise deal squarely, to meet him on his own ground—double dealing; to stoop to the trickery that his dishonesty has taught.

Radisson had been assured that the Frenchmen left in Hudson Bay should be free to do as they wished, or if they joined the English they should be well treated; but when they evinced no haste to become English subjects, Governor Phipps took his own counsel. By September, a new fort had been built on Hayes River five miles from the mouth. The Indians had come down stream with an enormous trade and Radisson had made a treaty of peace between them and the English, which has lasted to this day. Finally, the cargo of beaver was on board *The Happy Return.* Sailors were chanting their singsong as they ran round the capstan bars heaving up anchor on September the 4th, when Governor Phipps suddenly summoned a final council on board the decks of *The Happy Return.* To this council

came the unsuspecting Frenchmen from the shore. Three—as it happened—had gone to the woods, but young Groseillers and the rest clambered up the accommodation ladder for last orders. No sooner were they on board, than sails were run out. *The Happy Return* spread her wings to the wind and was off for England carrying the unwilling Frenchmen passengers.

In a trice, hands were on pistols and swords out, but Radisson besought the outraged Frenchmen to restrain their anger. What was their strength against an armed crew of ruffians only too glad of a scuffle to put them all to the sword? It was a sullen, sad home-coming for the adventurer. Uncle and nephew were scarcely on speaking terms, and the trick of Governor Phipps must have opened Radisson's eyes to the treatment he might expect now that he was completely in the power of the English. The boat reached Portsmouth on October 23. Not waiting for coach, Radisson took horse and rode fast and furious to London. He was at once taken before the Company. He was publicly thanked for his services, presented with a set of silver and given a present of a hundred guineas. He became the lion of the hour. Nor did he forget his French confrères. The committee at once voted each of the Frenchmen twenty shillings a week for

pocket money and ordered their board paid. Later, Mr. Radisson is authorized to offer them salaries ranging from £100 a year to £50 if they will join the Company. But they are in no haste to join the Company, and strangely, when they evince intentions of going across to France—a thousand obstructions arise as out of the ground. They are watched—even threatened; politely, of course, but threatened with arrest. Some suave-tongued gentleman points out an advantageous marriage that young Chouart might make with some well-dowered English belle, like his Uncle Radisson, who had married Mary Kirke. Monsieur Chouart shrugs his shoulders. He hasn't a very high opinion of the way Radisson has managed his marriage affairs.

But when they find that they can gain their liberty in no other way, these young French knights of the wilderness, they accept service in the English company to be sent to the bay forthwith, and take out "papers of denizenation," which can be broken with less damage to conscience than an oath of fealty and the forswearing of France. And all the while, they are burning with rage that bodes ill for Governor Phipps' trick on the deck of *The Happy Return.* Letters came from France to Chouart, letters from one Duluth, who is pushing north from Lake Superior; letters from one Comporté, who has offered to go

overland and "wipe the English from the bay"; messages from a bush-loper, one Péré, who is useful to the king of France as a spy. To Comporté, Chouart writes: "*I am not at liberty to do as I wish. All the advantages offered do not for a moment cause me to waver. I shall be happy to meet you by the route you travel. I will perish or be at the place you desire me to go. It is saying enough. I will keep my word.*" To his mother at Three Rivers, the young Frenchman confesses: "*Orders have been given to arrest me if I try to leave. I will cause it to be known in France that I never wished to follow the English. I will abandon this nation. I have been forced here by my Uncle's subterfuges. See M. Duluth in my behalf and M. Pèré and all our good friends.*" "All our good friends," are the bush-rangers who are working overland north from the St. Lawrence to intercept the trade of Hudson Bay—especially "Mons. Péré."

And the same French Government that has compelled Radisson to go back to England, issues orders to the Governor of New France—M. de Denonville, "to arrest Radisson wherever he may be found," "to reward young Groseillers if he will desert from Hudson's Bay," and "to pay fifty pistolles" to any man who seizes Radisson. And the reason for this duplicity of statecraft? Plain enough. The Stuart

throne is tottering in England. When it falls, there falls also the secret treaty with France. His Most Christian Majesty does not wish to relinquish claim to one foot of ground in the North, and well might he not—it was an empire as large as half Europe.

Meantime, the Company was proceeding on the even tenor of its ways. Dividends of 50 per cent. were paid in '83, the same in '84, despite interception of furs by the French overlanders. In the suit for loss by the owners of Ben Gillam's ship, the Company had emerged triumphant—its monopoly vindicated, and in 1684, Captain Walker of the south coast coming out of the bay on *The Diligence*, captured another pirate ship, *The Expectation*, whose owners again tested the Company's claim to exclusive trade on the bay, by a lawsuit; and again the Company came out a victor—its monopoly justified by the courts. Three of the ships—*Happy Return*, Captain Bond; *Owners' Good Will*, Captain Lucas, and *Success*, Captain Outlaw—were yearly chartered from Sir Stephen Evance, a rich goldsmith, who had become a heavy shareholder in the Company. Besides these, there were *The Perpetuana Merchant*, Captain Hume, with Smithsend as mate; *The Diligence*, Captain Walker; the sloop *Adventure*, Captain Geyer. and one frigate; in all a fleet of seven vessels,

each carrying from twelve to twenty men plying to and from the bay. It was in 1686 that the sloop was sent north of Nelson to Churchill River, named after the great General—to open trade on the river where Munck's Danes had suffered such frightful disaster. About this time, too, poor London boys began to go out as apprentices—scullions, valets, general knockabouts—among whom was one Henry Kelsey engaged at £8 a year, and his keep for Port Nelson. When James, Duke of York, became king, the position of governor of the Company was vacated, and Sir James Hayes, who seems always to have been the Company's emissary in all court matters, is directed by the governing committee "*to bespeak the Lord John Churchill to dynner at ye Rummor Tavernne in Queen's Street*" on business for the company's very great interests. What that business was became evident at the General Court of the Adventurers called on April 2, 1685, when my Lord Churchill is elected governor by unanimous ballot. Phipps remains at Nelson as local governor, Sargeant at Albany, Nixon at Moose. Bridgar has been transferred to Rupert River, not important now, because the French are luring the Indians away, and Radisson is general superintendent of all trade, spending the winters in London to arrange the furs for sale and to choose the outgoing cargoes,

going each summer to the bay to barter with the Indians.

Notes on Chapter X.—With the exception of the two petitions filed by Radisson and Groseillers in France, and of young Groseillers' letters—all the contents of this chapter are drawn from the official records of the Hudson's Bay House. Young Groseillers, by the way, is usually called Jean Baptiste, but as he signs himself Chouart I have referred to him by that name.

The real reason why Radisson came back to England is so new to history that I have given the instructions of the French Government in full. Radisson refers to these instructions in his affidavit of 1697, a document—which for State reasons—has never been given to the public till now. The State reasons will become plainer as the record goes on. Both governments were lying to sustain fictitious claims for damages. Herewith in part, is Radisson's affidavit, taken before Sir Robert Jeffery, Aug. 23, 1697, left with the English commissioners of claims against France the 5th of June, 1699:

"Peter Esprit Radisson of the Parish of St. James in the County of Middlesex Esqr. aged sixty-one years or thereabouts maketh oath that he came into England in the year 1665 And in the year 1672 married one of the Daughters of Sir John Kirke And in the year 1667 this deponent with his Brother in law Medard Chouart De Groseilier were designed for a voyage in the service of the English to Hudson Bay, which they undertook, this deponent going on board the ship *Eagle* then commanded by one Captain Wm. Stanard was hindered being disabled at sea by bad weather, soe could not compleate the sd. intended Voyage, But the sd. Grosilier proceeded in another English ship called the *Nonsuch* and arrived in the Bottom of Hudson's Bay on a certaine River then which Capt. Zachary Gillam commander of the sd. ship . . . then named Rupert River in Honor of His Highness Prince Rupert who was chiefly interested in that expedition. . . . And this deponent alsoe saith that in the year 1668 He went from England . . . to another voyage to Port Nelson on an English ship called the *Wavero* but was also obstructed . . . and at his returne found the sd. Grossilier safely arrived . . . and in the year 1669 this deponent went on the sd. ship the *Wavero* commanded by Captain Newland & arrived at Port Nelson . . . and in the year 1670 the sd. Grosilier was sent in an English Barke to Port Nelson . . . and in the year 1673 there arising some difference between the Hudson's Bay Company of England & this deponent, this deponent went unto France

. . . and in the year 1682 there were two Barkes fitted out at Canada . . . sailed to Hudson's Bay and arrived on Hayes River . . . and took Port Nelson and an English vessel which came from New England commanded by one Benj. Gillam . . . and gave the name of Bourbon to the said Port Nelson . . . and in the year 1683 he came from Canada to Paris by order of Monsr. Colbert, who soone after dyed. And this deponent being at Paris was there informed that the Lord Preston, Ambassador of the King of England had given in a Memoriall . . . against this Deponent And after this deponent had been several times with the Marquis de Seignlay & Monsr. Calliere (one of the Plenipotentiaries at the Treaty of Peace) this Deponent found that the French had quitted all pretences to Hudson Bay, And thereupon in the year 1684 in the month of Aprill, this deponent by the special direction of the sd. Monsr. Calliere did write the papers hereunto annexed . . . " (there follow the instructions to return to England as given in the text) . . . "which the sd. Monsr. Calliere dictated . . . and the sd. Monsr. Calliere acted in the sd. affaire by the directions of the Superintendent of Marine affairs in France. . . . And the deponent was commanded by the sd. Monsr. Calliere . . . to goe to Port Nelson to withdraw the French from thence, And to restore the same to the English who—he sd.—should be satisfied for the wrong & damages done them by this deponent . . . and this deponent went in one of the Hudson's Bay Company ships to Port Nelson and withdrew the French that were there from that Place, and the sd. Place was then put into possession of the English . . . and the French that withdrew were brought unto England . . . .

(Signed) Pierre Esprit Radisson London."

August 1697.

Those who wish a more detailed account of Radisson will find it in *Pathfinders of the West.* Chouart's letter will be found in the appendix of the same volume. *Documents Relatifs à la Nouvelle France,*" Tome I (1492–1712), contains the petitions filed by Radisson and Groseillers in France.

It has been almost a stock criticism of the shallow nowadays to say that an author has rejected original authorities, if the author refers to printed records, or to charge that the author has ignored secondary authorities, if the writer refers only to original documents. I may say that I have not depended on secondary authorities in the case of Radisson, because to refer to them would be to point out inaccuracies in every second line—an ungrateful task. But I have consulted and

possess in my own library every book that has ever been printed on the early history of the Northwest. As for original documents, I spent six months in London on records whose dust had not been disturbed since they were written in the sixteen-hundreds. The herculean nature of this laborious task can best be understood when it is realized that these records are not open to the public and it is impossible to have an assistant do the copying. The transcripts had to be done by myself, and revised by an assistant at night.

CHAPTER XI

1685–1686

WHEREIN THE REASONS FOR YOUNG CHOUART GROSEILLERS' MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE TO OUR GOOD FRIEND "PÉRÉ" ARE EXPLAINED—THE FOREST ROVERS OF NEW FRANCE RAID THE BAY BY SEA AND LAND—TWO SHIPS SUNK—PÉRÉ, THE SPY, SEIZED AND SENT TO ENGLAND

IT IS now necessary to follow the fleet of seven ships—four large frigates, three sloops for inland waters—to the bay. Radisson goes as general superintendent with Captain Bond and Captain Lucas to Nelson—the port farthest north. In these ships, too, go young Chouart Groseillers and his French companions, bound for four years to the Hudson's Bay Company, albeit they have received and sent mysterious messages to and from "our good friend, Monsieur Jan Péré," of Quebec, swearing they will meet him at some secret rendezvous or "perish in the attempt." What Chouart Groseillers and his friends—sworn to serve the English company—mean by secret oaths to meet French bush-rovers from Quebec—remains to be seen.

Young Mike Grimmington is second mate on Captain Outlaw's ship, *The Success*, destined for the fort south of Nelson—Albany, where bluff old Governor Sargeant holds sway from his bastioned stronghold on the island at the mouth of Albany River. Bridgar—quondam governor at Nelson—now goes with the small sloops bound for the bottom of the bay——Moose and Charlton Island and Rupert River.

No Robin Hoods of legendary lore ever lived in more complete security than the Gentlemen Adventurers of Hudson Bay. Radisson—the one man to be feared as a rival—had been compelled by the French Court to join them. So had his followers. The forts on the bay seemed immune from attack. To the south, a thousand miles of juniper swamp and impassable cataracts separated the English fur traders from the fur traders of New France. To the west, was impenetrable, unknown wilderness. To the north, the realm of iron cold. The Adventurers of Hudson Bay slumbered secure on the margin of their frozen sea. Rupert and Moose—the forts of the south—yearly collected 5,000 beaver pelts each, not counting as many again of other rare furs. Albany—where the bay turns north—gave a yearly quota of 3,500, and Nelson sent out as much as $100,000 worth of beaver in a single year. The

Adventurers had found a gold mine rich as Spanish Eldorado.

To be sure, the French fur traders, who had been led to the bay by Radisson once, would now be able to find the way there for themselves, but the French fur traders demanded four beavers in barter where the English asked only two, and two French ships that had come up under Lamartiniére commissioned "to seize Radisson," could neither find Radisson nor an Indian who would barter them a single pelt. They dare not land at Nelson, for it was now English. Reefing sails, Lamartiniére's ships spent the summer of '85 dodging the ice floes and hiding round Digges' Island at the inside end of the straits for reasons that young Chouart Groseillers might have explained if he would.

It was July before the fleet of Hudson's Bay boats reached the straits. Ice jam and tide-rip had presently scattered the fleet. As usual, the smaller vessels showed their heels to danger and slipping along the lee edge of the floes, came to the open water of the bay first. *The Happy Return*, under Captain Bond with Monsieur Radisson, Monsieur Chouart and his comrades; *The Success*, under Captain Outlaw; *The Merchant Perpetuana*, under Captain Hume, with mates Smithsend and Mike Grimmington looking anxiously over decks at the tumult of

ramming ice that swept past—came worming their way laboriously through the ice floes, small sails only out, grappling irons hooked to the floating icepans, cables of iron strength hauling and pulling the frigates up to the ice, with crews out to their armpits in ice slush ready to loose and sheer from the danger of undertow when the tide ripple came.

On July 27, with the crews forespent and the ships badly battered, the three emerged on the open water of Hudson Bay and steered to rest for the night under shelter of the rocky shores off Digges' Island. Like ghosts from the gloom, shadows took form in the night mist—two ships with foreign sails on this lonely sea, where all other ships were forbidden. In a trice, the deathly silence of the sea is broken by the roar of cannonading. It is Monsieur Radisson, on whose head there is a price, who realizes the situation first and with a shout that they are trapped by French raiders—by Lamartiniére—bids Captain Bond flee for his life. Captain Bond needs no urgings. *The Happy Return's* sails are out like the wings of a frightened bird and she is off like a terrified quarry pursued by a hawk. Nor does Captain Outlaw on *The Success* wait for argument. With all candles instantly put out, he, too, steers for the hiding of darkness on open water. *The Perpetuana* is left alone wedged between Lamartiniére's

two French ships. Hooked gang planks seize her on both sides in a death grapple. Captain Hume, Mates Smithsend and Mike Grimmington with half a dozen others are surrounded, overpowered, disarmed, fettered and clapped under hatches of the victorious ships. Before morning, *The Perpetuana* had been scuttled of her cargo. Fourteen of her crew have been bayoneted and thrown overboard. A month later, cargo and vessel and captives are received with acclaim at Quebec. Captain Hume is sent home to France in December on a man-of-war to lie in a dungeon of Rochelle till he can obtain ransom. So are Mr. Richard Alio and Andrew Stuckey—seamen. The rest are to lie in the cells below Château St. Louis, Quebec, on fare of bread and water for six months. Mike Grimmington is held and "tortured" to compel him to betray the secrets of navigation at the different harbors of Hudson Bay, but Mate Grimmington tells no tales; for he learns that rumors of raid are in the air at Quebec. Though England and France are at peace, the fur traders of Quebec are asking commission for one Chevalier de Troyes with the brothers of the family Le Moyne, to raid the bay, fire the forts, massacre the English. Smithsend by secret messenger sends a letter with warnings of the designs to the Hudson's Bay Company in England, and Smith-

send for his pains is sold with his comrades into slavery in Martinique, whence he escapes before spring. Grimmington is held prisoner for two years before a direct order from the French Court sets him free. Other things, Grimmington hears in Quebec of the French on the bay.

All unsuspecting of plots at Quebec and pirate attacks on the Company's ships, the governors of the different forts on the bay awaited the coming of the ships. From July, it was customary to keep harbor lights out on the sand-bars, and station sentinels day and night to watch for the incoming fleet. Secret codes of signals had been left the year before with the forts. If the incoming ships did not display these signals, the sentinels were ordered to cut the harbor buoys, put out the lights, and give the alarm. If the signals were correct, cannon roared a welcome, flags were run up, and pilots went out in small boats to guide the ships in through sand-bars and bowlder reefs.

At Albany, Governor Sargeant, whose wife and family were now with him at the fort—had ordered a sort of lookout, or crow's-nest, built of scaffolding, on a hill above the fort. As far as known, not a single Englishman had up to this time penetrated the wilds west of the bay. One Robert Sanford had been ordered this very year to "go up into the

country," but fear of French bush-rovers made him report that such a course was very unsafe. It would be wiser and safer for the Company to give handsome presents to the Indian chiefs. This would induce them to bring their tribes down to the bay. So the sentinel at Albany could hardly believe his senses one morning when from the eerie height of his lookout he espied three men—three white men, steering a canoe down the swift, tumultuous current of the rain-swollen river. They were coming *not* from the sea, but from the Upcountry. This was a contingency the cutting of harbor buoys had not provided against. The astounded sentinel ran to Sargeant with the alarm. Cannon were manned and Governor Sargeant took his stand in the gate of the palisaded walls.

Beaching their canoe, the three white men marched jauntily up to the governor. The shaggy eyes of the bluff old governor took in the fact that the newcomers were French—Frenchmen dressed as bush-lopers, but with the manners of gentlemen, introducing themselves with the debonair gayety of their race, Monsieur Péré, Monsieur Coultier de Comporté and a third, whose name is lost to the records. Old Governor Sargeant scratched his burly beard. England and France were at peace, very much at peace when France had sent Radisson back;

and he must treat the visitors with courtesy; but what were gentlemen doing dressed as bush-rovers? Hunting—taking their pleasure where they found it—knights of the wildwoods—says my good friend, Jan Péré, doffing his fur capote with a bow. Governor Sargeant hails good friend Péré into the fort, to a table loaded with game and good wine and the hospitality of white men lonely for companionship as a sail at sea. The wine passes freely and stories pass freely, stories of the hunt and the voyage and of Monsieur Radisson and his friends, whom the Governor expects back this year—soon, very soon, any day now the ships may come.

But at base, every Hudson's Bay Company man is a trader. Governor Sargeant evincing no zealous desire to extend his hospitality longer, Monsieur Péré tactfully evinces no desire to stay. The gay adventurers aver they are going to coast along the shore—that alkali shore between the main coast of cedar swamps and the outer reef of bowlders—where good sport among feathered game is to be expected. Once they are out of sight from Albany, the three Frenchmen rest on their paddles and confer. They had not counted on leaving *quite* so soon. Still gay as schoolboys on an escapade, that night as they sleep on shore under the stars, they take good care to leave their canoe so that the high tide carries

it out to sea. What is to be done now—a thousand miles by swamp from the nearest French fort? Presto—go back to the English fort, of course; and back they trudge to Albany with their specious farce of misadventure.

Meanwhile, Outlaw on *The Success*, had arrived at Albany with the tale of Lamartiniére's raid and the loss of *The Perpetuana*. Before Monsieur Jan Péré can feign astonishment—he is dumfounded at the news, is Monsieur Péré—Governor Sargeant has clapped irons on his wrists and irons on his feet. The fair-tongued spy is cast manacled into the bastion that served as prison at Albany, and his two comrades are transported across to Charlton Island to earn their living hunting till they have learned that no one may tamper with the fur trade of the English adventurers. What welcome Chouart Groseillers and his French comrades received—is not told in Hudson's Bay annals. They go north to Nelson for the next four years, then drop from the pay lists of the Company, and reappear as fur traders of New France. It would hardly be stretching historic fact to infer that these daring French youths took to the tall timbers.

Over on Charlton Island, Péré's comrades hunted as to the wildwoods born; hunted so diligently that by September they had store enough of food to stock

them for the winter. By September the boats that met at Charlton Island had sailed. No one was left to watch the Frenchmen. They hastily constructed for themselves a large canoe, loaded it with their provisions, set out under cover of night and reached the south shore of James Bay, keeping well away from Moose and Rupert River. Then they paddled for life upstream toward New France. By October, ice formed, cutting the canoe. They killed a moose, cured the buckskin above punk smoke, made themselves snowshoes and marched overland seven hundred miles to the French fort at Michilimackinac. Word ran like wildfire from Lake Superior to Quebec —Jan Péré was held in prison at Albany. These were the rumors Mike Grimmington and Richard Smithsend heard from their prison cells under Château St. Louis. If these two spies can march overland in midwinter, cannot a band of bush-rovers march overland to the rescue of Péré? France and England are at peace; but Albany holds Péré in prison, and Quebec holds Mike Grimmington and Smithsend in the cellar of the Château St. Louis.

Up on the bay, old Sargeant was puzzled what to do with Péré. All told, there were only eighty-nine men on Hudson Bay at this time. It was decided that Outlaw should remain for the winter with

Sargeant, but take Péré up to Captains Bond and Lucas at Nelson to be shipped home to England, where the directors could decide on his fate. On October 27, Bond and Lucas arrived in London, and on October 29, the minutes of the Company report "one Monsieur Jan Péré sent home by Governor Sargeant as a French spy." The full report of *The Perpetuana's* loss was laid before the Company on the 30th. On November 4, Monsieur Péré is examined by a committee. Within a week the suave spy suffers such a change of heart, he applies on November 11 for the privilege of joining the Company. Before the Company have given answer to that request, comes a letter from Captain Hume dated December 13, Rochelle, France, giving a full account of the wreck of *The Perpetuana*, the indignities suffered at Quebec, stating that he is in a dungeon awaiting the Company's ransom. Captain Hume is ordered to pay what ransom is necessary and come to England at once, but it is manifest that the French spy, Jan Péré, must be held for the safety of the other English prisoners at Quebec. The Company lodges a suit of £5,000 damages against him, which will keep Péré in gaol till he can find bail, and when he sends word to know the reason for such outrage, the minutes of the Company glibly put on record "*that he hath damnified the company*

very considerably." Unofficially, he is told that the safety of his life depends on the safety of those English prisoners held at Quebec. In January arrives Captain Hume, putting on record his affidavit of the wreck of *The Perpetuana.* In February, 1686, comes that letter from Smithsend which he smuggled out of his prison in Quebec, "*ye contents to be kept private and secret,*" warning the Company that raiders are leaving Canada overland for the bay. By March, Jan Péré is on his knees to join the Company. The Company lets him stay on his knees in prison. All is bustle at Hudson's Bay House fitting out frigates for the next summer. Eighteen extra men are to be sent to Albany, twelve to Moose, six to Rupert. Monsieur Radisson is instructed to inspect the large guns sent over from Holland to be sent out to the bay. Monsieur Radisson advises the Company to fortify Nelson especially strongly, for hence come the best furs.

The Company is determined to be ready for the raid, but the straits will not be clear of ice before July.

Notes on Chapter XI.—The contents of this chapter are taken from the Minutes of the Company, Hudson's Bay House. All French records state that Hume was killed in the loss of *The Perpetuana.* As I have his letter from Rochelle, dated December, 1685, this is a mistake. He reached England, January, 1686, and his affidavit is in Hudson's Bay House. Captain Bond was severely censured by the Company for deserting *The*

Perpetuana. If he had not fled, the French would without a doubt have dispatched Radisson on the spot. Some of the men of *The Perpetuana* spent two years imprisoned in Quebec. Up to this time, by wreck and raid, including sloops as well as frigates—the Company had lost thirteen vessels. Record of Péré is found also in French state documents of this date. Smithsend escaped to England, February 14, 1686.

CHAPTER XII

1686–1687

PIERRE LE MOYNE D'IBERVILLE SWEEPS THE BAY

WITH Captain Outlaw's crew adding strength to Albany, and Governor Bridgar's crew wintering at Rupert River, the Adventurers on Hudson Bay once more felt secure. Like a bolt from the blue came the French raiders into the midst of this security.

It was one of the long summer nights on the 18th of June, 1686, when twilight of the North merges with dawn. Fourteen cannon in all protruded from the embrasures of the four stone bastions round Moose Factory—the southwest corner of the bay; and the eighteen-foot pickets of the palisaded square wall were everywhere punctured with holes for musketry. In one bastion were three thousand pounds of powder. In another, twelve soldiers slept. In a third were stored furs. The fourth bastion served as kitchen. Across the middle of the courtyard was the two-story storehouse and residence of the chief factor. The sentinel had shot the strong

iron bolts of the main gate facing the waterway, and had lain down to sleep wrapped in a blanket without loading the cannon it was his duty to guard. Twilight of the long June night—almost the longest day in the year—had deepened into the white stillness that precedes dawn, when two forms took shape in the thicket of underbrush behind the fort, and there stepped forth clad in buckskin *cap-à-pie*, musket over shoulder, war hatchet, powderhorn, dagger, pistol in belt and unscabbarded sword aglint in hand, two French wood-lopers, the far-famed *coureurs des bois*, whose scalping raids were to strike terror from Louisiana to Hudson Bay.

At first glance, the two scouts might have been marauding Iroquois come this outrageous distance through swamp and forest from their own fighting ground. Closer scrutiny showed them to be young French noblemen, Pierre le Moyne d'Iberville, age twenty-four, and his brother, Sainte Hélène, native to the roving life of the bushranger, to pillage and raid and ambuscade as the war-eagle to prey. Born in Montreal in 1661 and schooled to all the wilderness perils of the struggling colony's early life, Pierre le Moyne, one of nine sons of Charles le Moyne, at Montreal, became the Robin Hood of American wilds.

Sending his brother Ste. Hélène round one side of

the pickets to peer through the embrasures of the moonlit fortress, Pierre le Moyne d'Iberville skirted the other side himself and quickly made the discovery that not one of the cannon was loaded. The tompion was in every muzzle. Scarcely a cat's-paw of wind dimpled the waters. The bay was smooth as silk. Not a twig crunched beneath the moccasined tread of the two spies. There was the white silence, the white midnight pallor of Arctic night, the diaphanous play of Northern lights over skyey waters, the fine etched shadows of juniper and fir and spruce black as crayon across the pale-amber swamps.

With a quick glance, d'Iberville and his brother took in every detail. Then they melted back in the pallid half-light like shadows. In a trice, a hundred forms had taken shape in the mist—sixty-six Indians decked in all the war-gear of savage glory from head-dress and vermilion cheeks to naked red-stained limbs lithe as tiger, smooth and supple as satin—sixty-six Indians and thirty-three half-wild French soldiers gay in all the regimentals of French pomp, commanded by old Chevalier de Troyes, veteran of a hundred wars, now commissioned to demand the release of Monsieur Péré from the forts of the English fur traders. Beside De Troyes, stood De la Chesnay, head of the Northern Company of Fur Traders in Quebec, only too glad of this chance to

raid the forts of rivals. And well to the fore, cross in hand, head bared, the Jesuit Sylvie had come to rescue the souls of Northern heathendom from hell.

Impossible as it may seem, these hundred intrepid wood-runners had come overland from Montreal. While Grimmington and Smithsend were still in prison at Quebec, d'Iberville and his half-wild followers had set out in midwinter on a voyage men hardly dared in summer. Without waiting for the ice to break up, leaving Montreal in March, they had followed the frozen river bed of the Ottawa northward, past the Rideau and Chaudiere Falls tossing their curtains of spray in mid-air where the city of Ottawa stands to-day, past the Mattawa which led off to the portages of Michilimackinac and the Great Lakes, up the palisaded shores of the Temiscamingue to Lake Abbittibbi, the half-way watershed between the St. Lawrence and Hudson Bay. French silver mines, which the English did not rediscover to the present century, were worked at Temiscamingue. At Abbittibbi, a stockade was built in the month of May, and three Canadians left to keep guard. Here, too, pause was made to construct canoes for the voyage down the watershed of Moose River to James Bay. Instead of waiting for the ice of the Ottawa to break up, the raiders had forced their

march to be on time to float down on the swollen currents of the spring thaw to Moose Factory, four-hundred miles from the height of land.

And a march forced against the very powers of the elements, it had proved. No tents were carried; only the blanket, knapsack fashion, tied to each man's back. Bivouac was made under the stars. No provisions but what each blanket carried! No protection but the musket over shoulder, the war axe and powderhorn, and pistol in belt! No reward but the vague promise of loot from the English wig-wamming—as the Indians say—on the Northern Bay! Do the border raids of older lands record more heroic daring than this? A march through six-hundred miles of trackless forest in midwinter, then down the maelstrom sweep of torrents swollen by spring thaw, for three-hundred miles to the juniper swamps of rotting windfall and dank forest growth around the bay?

If the march had been difficult by snowshoe, it was ten-fold more now. Unknown cataracts, unknown whirlpools, unknown reaches of endless rapids dashed the canoes against the ice jam, under huge trunks of rotting trees lying athwart the way, so that Pierre d'Iberville's canoe was swamped, two of his voyageurs swept to death before his eyes, and two others only saved by d'Iberville, himself, leaping

to the rescue and dragging them ashore. In places, the ice had to be cut away with hatchets. In places, portage was made over the ice jams, men sinking to their armpits in a slither of ice and snow. For as long as eleven miles, the canoes were tracked over rapids with the men wading barefoot over ice-cold, slippery river bed.

It had been no play, this fur-trade raid, and now Iberville was back from his scouting, having seen with his own eyes that the English fur traders were really wigwamming on the bay—by which the Indians meant "wintering." Hastily, all burdens of blanket and food and clothes were cast aside and *cached.* Hastily, each raider fell to his knees invoking the blessing of Ste. Anne, patron saint of Canadian voyageur. Hastily, the Jesuit Sylvie passed from man to man absolving all sin; for these men fought with all the Spartan ferocity of the Indian fighter—that it was better to die fighting than to suffer torture in defeat.

Then each man recharged his musket lest the swamp mists had dampened powder. Perhaps, Iberville reminded his bush-lopers that the Sovereign Council of Quebec had a standing offer of ten crowns reward for every enemy slain, twenty crowns for every enemy captured. Perhaps, old Chevalier de Troyes called up memories of Dollard's fight on

the Long Sault twenty years before, and warned his thirty soldiers that there was no retreat now through a thousand miles of forest. They must win or perish! Perhaps Dechesnay, the fur trader, told these wood-rovers that in at least one of the Hudson's Bay Company's forts were fifty-thousand crowns' worth of beaver to be divided as spoils among the victors. De Troyes led his soldiers round the fore to make a feint of furious onslaught from the water front. Iberville posted his Indians along each flank to fire through the embrasures of the pickets. Then, with a wild yell, the French raiders swooped upon the sleeping fort. Iberville and his brothers, Ste. Hélène and Maricourt, were over the rear pickets and across the courtyard, swords in hand, before the sleepy gunner behind the main gate could get his eyes open. One blow of Ste. Hélène's saber split the fellow's head to the collar bone. The trunk of a tree was used to ram the main gate. Iberville's Indians had hacked down the rear pickets, and he, himself, led the way into the house. Before the sixteen terrified inmates dashing out in their shirts had realized what was happening, the raiders were masters of Moose. Only one man besides the gunner was killed, and he was a Frenchman slain by the cross-fire of his comrades. Cellars were searched, but there was small loot. Furs were evidently

stored elsewhere, but the French were the richer by sixteen captives, twelve portable cannon, and three-thousand pounds of powder. Flag unfurled, muskets firing, sod heaved in air, Chevalier de Troyes took possession of the fort for the Most Redoubtable, Most Mighty, Most Christian King of France, though a cynic might wonder how such an act was accomplished in time of peace, when the sole object of the raid had been the rescue of Monsieur Péré, imprisoned as a spy.

Eastward of Moose, a hundred and thirty miles along the south coast of the bay on Rupert's River, was the other fort, stronger, the bastions of stone, with a dock where the Hudson's Bay Company's ships commonly anchored for the summer. Northwestward of Moose, some hundred miles, was a third fort, Albany, the citadel of the English fur traders' strength, forty paces back from the water. Unassailable by sea, it was the storehouse of the best furs. It was decided to attack Rupert first. Staying only long enough at Moose to build a raft to carry Chevalier de Troyes and his prisoners along the coast, the raiders set out by sea on the 27th of June.

Iberville led the way with two canoes and eight or nine men. By sailboat, it was necessary to round a long point of land. By canoe, this land could be portaged, and Iberville was probably the first man

to blaze the trail across the swamp, which has been used by hunters from that day to this. By the first of July, he had caught a glimpse of Rupert's bastions through the woods. Concealing his Indians, he went forward to reconnoiter. To his delight, he espied the Company's ship with the H. B. C. ensign flying that signified Governor Bridgar was on board. Choosing the night, as usual, for attack, Iberville stationed his bandits where they could fire on the decks if necessary. Then he glided across the water to the schooner.

Hand over fist, he was up the ship's sides when the sleeping sentinel awakened with a spring at his throat. One cleft of Iberville's sword, and the fellow rolled dead at the Frenchman's feet. Iberville then stamped on the deck to call the crew aloft, and sabered three men in turn as they tumbled up the hatchway, till the fourth, Governor Bridgar, himself, threw up his hands in unconditional surrender of the ship and crew of fourteen. Twice in four years, Bridgar found himself a captive. The din had alarmed the fort. Though the bastions were dismantled for repairs, gates were slammed shut and musketry poured hot shot through the embrasures, that kept the raiders at a distance. Again, it was the Le Moyne brothers who led the fray. The bastions served the usual two-fold purpose of defense and

barracks. Extemporizing ladders, Iberville went scrambling up like a monkey to the roofs, hacked holes through the rough thatch of the bastions and threw down hand grenades at the imminent risk of blowing himself as well as the enemy to eternity. "It was," says the old chronicle, "with an effect most admirable"—which depends on the point of view; for when the defenders were driven from the bastions to the main house inside, gates were rammed down, palisades hacked out, and Iberville with his followers, was on the roof of the main house throwing down more bombs. As one explosive left his hand, a terrified English woman dashed up stairs into the room directly below. Iberville shouted for her to retire. The explosion drowned his warning, and the next moment he was down stairs dashing from hall to hall, candle in hand, followed by the priest, Sylvie. A plaintive cry came from the closet of what had been the factor's room. Followed by his powder-grimed, wild raiders, Iberville threw open the door. With a scream, there fell at his feet a woman with a shattered hip. However black a record these raiders left for braining children and mutilating women, four years later in what is now New York State, they made no war on women here. Lifting her to a bed, the priest Sylvie and Iberville called in the surgeon, and barring the door from the

outside, forbade intrusion. The raid became a riot. The French possessed Rupert, though little the richer but for the ship and thirty prisoners.

The wild wood-rovers were now strong enough to attempt Albany, three hundred miles northwest. It was at Albany that the French spy Péré was supposed to be panting for rescue. It was also at Albany that the English fur traders had their greatest store of pelts. As usual, Iberville led off in canoes; De Troyes, the French fur traders, the soldiers and the captives following with the cannon on the ship. It was sunset when the canoes launched out from Rupert River. To save time by crossing the south end of the bay diagonally, they had sheered out from the coast when there blew down from the upper bay one of those bitter northeast gales, that at once swept a maelstrom of churning ice floes about the cockleshell birch canoes. To make matters worse, fog fell thick as night. A birch canoe in a cross sea is bad enough. With ice floes it was destruction.

Some made for the main shore and took refuge on land. The Le Moynes' two canoes kept on. A sea of boiling ice floes got between the two. There was nothing to do for the night but camp on the shifting ice, hanging for dear life to the canoe held high on the voyageurs' heads out of danger, clinging hand to hand so that if one man slithered through the ice-

slush the human rope pulled him out. It was a new kind of canoe work for Iberville's Indians. When daylight came through the gray fog, Iberville did not wait for the weather to clear. He kept guns firing to guide the canoe that followed and pushed across the traverse, portaging where there was ice, paddling where there was water. Four days the traverse lasted, and not once did this Robin Hood of Canadian wildwoods flinch. The first of August saw his Indians and bush-lopers below the embankments of Albany. A few days later came De Troyes on the boat with soldiers and cannon.

Governor Sargeant of Albany had been warned of the raiders by Indian coureurs. The fort was shut fast as a sealed box. Neither side gave sign. Not till the French began trundling their cannon ashore by all sorts of clumsy contrivances to get them in range of the fort forty yards back, was there a sign of life, when forty-three big guns inside the wall of Albany simultaneously let go forty-three bombs in midair that flattened the raiders to earth under shelter of the embankment. Chevalier De Troyes then mustered all the pomp and fustian of court pageantry, flag flying, drummers beating to the fore, guard in line, and marching forward demanded of the English traders, come half-way out to meet him, satisfaction for and the delivery of Sieur Péré, a

loyal subject of France suffering imprisonment on the shores of Hudson Bay at the hands of the English. One may wonder, perhaps, what these raiders would have done without the excuse of Péré. The messenger came back from Governor Sargeant with word that Péré had been sent home to France by way of England long ago. (That Péré had been delayed in an English prison was not told.) De Troyes then pompously demanded the surrender of the fort. Sargeant sent back word such a demand was an insult in time of peace. Under cover of night the French retired to consider. With an extravagance now lamented, they had used at Rupert the most of their captured ammunition. Cannon, they had in plenty, but only a few rounds of balls. They had thirty prisoners, but no provisions; a ship, but no booty of furs. Between them and home lay a wilderness of forest and swamp. They must capture the fort by an escalade, or retreat empty-handed.

Inside the fort such bedlam reigned as might have delighted the raiders' hearts. Sargeant, the sturdy old governor, was for keeping his teeth clinched to the end, though the larder was lean and only enough powder left to do the French slight damage as they landed their cannon. When a servant fell dead from a French ball, Turner, the chief gunner, dashed from his post roaring out he was going to throw

himself on the mercy of the French. Sargeant rounded the fellow back to his guns with the generous promise to blow his brains out if he budged an inch. Two English spies sent out came back with word the French were mounting their battery in the dark. Instantly, there was a scurry of men to hide in attics, in cellars, under bales of fur, while six worthies, over signed names, presented a petition to the sturdy old governor, imploring him to surrender. Declaring they would not fight without an advance of pay anyway, they added in words that should go down to posterity, "*for if any of us lost a leg, the company could not make it good.*" Still Sargeant kept his teeth set, his gates shut, his guns spitting defiance at the enemy.

For two days bombs sang back and forward through the air. There was more parleying. Bridgar, the governor captured down at Rupert, came to tell Sargeant that the French were desperate; if they were compelled to fight to the end, there would be no quarter. Still Sargeant hoped against hope for the yearly English vessel to relieve the siege. Then Captain Outlaw came from the powder magazines with word there was no more ammunition. The people threw down their arms and threatened to desert *en masse* to the French. Sargeant still stubbornly refused to beat a parley; so Dixon, the

under factor, hung out a white sheet as flag of truce, from an upper window. The French had just ceased firing to cool their cannon. They had actually been reduced to melting iron round wooden disks for balls, when the messenger came out with word of surrender. Bluff and resolute to the end, Sargeant marched out with two flagons of port, seated himself on the French cannon, drank healths with De Troyes, and proceeded to drive as hard a bargain as if his larders had been crammed and his magazines full of powder. Drums beating, flags flying, in full possession of arms, governor, officers, wives and servants were to be permitted to march out in honor, to be transported to Charlton Island, there to await the coming of the English ship.

Barely had the thirty English sallied out, when the bush-lopers dashed into the fort, ransacking house and cellar. The fifty-thousand-crowns' worth of beaver were found, but not a morsel of food except one bowl of barley sprouts. Thirteen hundred miles from Canada with neither powder nor food! De Troyes gave his men leave to disband on August 10, and it was a wild scramble for home—*sauve qui peut*, as the old chronicler relates, some of the prisoners being taken to Quebec as carriers of the raided furs, others to the number of fifty, being turned adrift in the desolate wilderness of the bay! It was

October before Iberville's forest-rovers were back in Montreal.

From Charlton Island, the English refugees found their way up to Port Nelson, there to go back on the annual ship to England. Among these were Bridgar and Outlaw, but the poor outcasts, who were driven to the woods, and the Hudson's Bay servants, who were compelled to carry the loot for the French raiders back to Quebec—suffered slim mercies from their captors. Those round Albany were compelled to act as beasts of burden for the small French garrison, and received no food but what they hunted. Some perished of starvation outside the walls. Others attempted to escape north overland to Nelson. Of the crew from Outlaw's ship *Success*, eight perished on the way north, and the surviving six were accused of cannibalism. In all, fifty English fur traders were set adrift when Albany surrendered to the French. Not twenty were ever heard of again.

Notes on Chapter XII.—The contents of this chapter are drawn from the documents of Hudson's Bay House, London, and the State Papers of the Marine, Paris, for 1685–87. It is remarkable how completely the State papers of the two hostile parties agree. Those in H. B. C. House are the Minutes, Governor Sargeant's affidavit, Bridgar's report, Outlaw's oath and the petition of the survivors of Outlaw's crew—namely, John Jarrett, John Howard, John Parsons, William Gray, Edmund Clough, Thomas Rawlin, G. B. Barlow, Thomas Lyon. As the raids now became an international matter, duplicates of most of these papers are to be found in the Public Records Office, London. All French historians give some account of this raid of

Iberville's; but all are drawn from the same source, the account of the Jesuit Sylvie, or from one De Lery, who was supposed to have been present. Oldmixon, the old English chronicler, must have had access to Sargeant's papers, as he relates some details only to be found in Hudson's Bay House.

CHAPTER XIII

1686–1697

D'IBERVILLE SWEEPS THE BAY (*Continued*)

THE French were now in complete possession of the south end of Hudson Bay. Iberville's brother, Maricourt, with a handful of men remained at Albany to guard the captured forts. Some of the English, who had taken to the woods in flight, now found the way to Severn River, half-way north between Albany and Nelson, where they hastily rushed up rude winter quarters and boldly did their best to keep the Indians from communicating with the French. Among the refugees was Chouart Groseillers, who became one of the chief advisers at Nelson. Two of his comrades had promptly deserted to the French side. For ten years, Hudson Bay became the theater of such escapades as buccaneers might have enacted on the Spanish Main. England and France were at peace. A Treaty of Neutrality, in 1686, had provided that the bay should be held in common by the fur traders

of both countries, but the Company of the North in Quebec and the English Adventurers of London had no notion of leaving their rights in such an ambiguous position. Both fitted out their raiders to fight the quarrel to the end, and in spite of the Treaty of Neutrality, the King of France issued secret instructions to the bush-rovers of Quebec "*to leave of the English forts on the Northern Bay, not a vestige standing.*" If the bay were to be held in common, and the English abandoned it, all rights would revert to France.

The year 1687 saw the tireless Iberville back at Rupert River. The Hudson's Bay sloop, *The Young*, had come to port. Iberville seized it without any ado and sent four spies over to Charlton Island where *The Churchill*, under Captain Bond, was wintering. Three of the French spies were summarily captured by the English fur traders and thrown into the hold of the ship, manacled, for the winter. In spring, one was brought above decks to give the English sailors a helping hand. The fellow waited till six of the crew were up the ratlines, then he seized an axe, tip-toed up behind two Englishmen, brained them on the spot, rushing down the hatchway liberated his two comrades, took possession of all firearms and at pistol point kept the Englishmen up the mast poles till he steered the vessel across

to Iberville at Rupert River, where a cargo of provisions saved the French from famine.

It was in vain that the English sent rescue parties south from Nelson and Severn to recapture Albany. Captain Moon had come down from Nelson with twenty-four men to Albany, reinforced by the crews of the two ships, *Hampshire* and *North-West Fox*, when Iberville came canoeing across the ice floes with his Indian bandits. The English ships were locked in the ice before the besieged fort. Iberville ambushed his men in the tamarack swamps till eighty-two English had landed. Then, he rushed the deserted vessels, took possession of one with its cargo of furs, and as the ice cleared sailed gayly out of Albany for Quebec. The astounded English set fire to the other ship and retreated overland to Severn. At the straits, Iberville ran full-tilt into the fleet of incoming English vessels, but that was nothing to disconcert this blockade-runner, not though the ice closed round them all, holding French and English prisoners within gunshot of each other. Iberville ran up an English flag on his captured ship and had actually signaled the captains of the English frigates to come across the ice and visit him when the water cleared, and away he sailed.

Perhaps success bred reckless carelessness on the part of the French. From 1690 to '93, Iberville

was absent from the bay on the border raids of Schenectady, and Pemaquid in New England. Mike Grimmington of *The Perpetuana* was at last released from captivity in Quebec and came to England with rage in his heart and vengeance in his hands for France. It was now almost impossible for the English Adventurers to hire captains and crews for the dangerous work of their trade on the bay. The same pensions paid by the State were offered by the Company in case of wounds or death, and in addition a bonus of twenty shillings a month was guaranteed to the sailors, of from £50 to £200 a year to the captains. A present of £10 plate was given to Grimmington for his bravery and he was appointed captain. Coming out to Nelson in '93, Grimmington determined to capture back Albany for the English. Three ships sailed down to Albany from Nelson. The fort looked deserted. Led by Grimmington, the sailors hacked open the gates. Only four Frenchmen were holding the fort. The rest of the garrison were off hunting in the woods, and in the woods they were forced to remain that winter; for Grimmington ransacked the fort, took possession and clapped the French under Mons. Captain Le Meux, prisoners in the hold of his vessel. With Grimmington on this raid was his old mate in captivity—Smithsend. Albany was the largest fort on

the bay at this time. As the two English captains searched the cellars they came on a ghastly sight—naked, covered with vermin, shackled hands to feet and chained to the wall was a French criminal, who had murdered first the surgeon, then the priest of the fort. He, too, was turned adrift in the woods with the rest of the garrison.

Mons. Le Meux, carried to England captive, is examined by the English Adventurers. From his account, all the French garrisons are small and France holds but lightly what she has captured so easily. Captain Grimmington is given a tankard worth £36 for his distinguished services. Captain Edgecombe of *The Royal Hudson's Bay*, who, in spite of the war, has brought home a cargo of twenty-two thousand beaver, is given plate to the value of £20 as well as a gratuity of £100. Captain Ford, who was carried prisoner to France by Iberville, is ransomed, and *The Hampshire* vessel put up at auction in France is bid in by secret agents of the English company. Chouart Groseillers is welcomed home to London, and given a present of £100 and allowed to take a graceful farewell of the Company, as are all its French servants. The Company wants no French servants on the bay just now—not even Radisson to whom Mons. Péré, now escaped

to France, writes tempting offers. Sargeant, who lost Albany in 1686, is first sued for £20,000 damages for surrendering the fort so easily, and is then rewarded £350 for holding it so bravely. Phipps has refused point-blank to serve as governor any longer at so dangerous a point as Nelson for so small a salary as £200 a year. Phipps comes home. Abraham tries it for a year. He, too, loses relish for the danger spot, and Walsh goes to Nelson as governor with the apprentice boy Henry Kelsey, risen to be first lieutenant. In spite of wars and raids and ambuscades, there is a dividend of 50 per cent. in '88, (the King refusing to receive it personally as it might prejudice him with France) and of 50 per cent. in '89, and of 25 per cent. in '90 on stock which had been trebled, which was equivalent to 75 per cent. dividends; and there are put on record in the Company's minutes these sentiments: "*being thoroughly sensible of the great blessing it has pleased Almighty God to give the company by the arrival of the shippes, the comp'y doo thinke fitt to show some testimony of their Humble thankfulness for Gods so great a mercy and doo now unanimously resolve that the sum of £100 bee sett aparte as charity money to be distributed amongst such persons as shall dye or be wounded in the companies' service, their widows or children & the secretary is to keep a particular account in the*

company's books for the future." Stock forfeited for the breaking of rules is also to go to wounded men and widows.

And the Company is equally generous to itself; no shilling pay for committeemen now but a salary of £300 a year to each committeeman of the weekly meetings on the Company's business.

The upshot of the frequent meetings and increasing dividends was—the Company resolved on a desperate effort to recapture the lost forts. The English now held—Nelson, the great fur emporium of the North; New Severn to the South, which had been built by refugees from Albany, burnt twice to escape bush-raiders and as promptly rebuilt when the French withdrew; and Albany, itself, which Mike Grimmington had captured back.

The French held Moose and Rupert on the south of the bay.

James Knight, who had acted variously as apprentice, trader and captain from the beginning of the Company—was now appointed commander of the south end of the bay, with headquarters at Albany, at a salary of £400 a year. Here, he was to resist the French and keep them from advancing north to Nelson. New Severn, next north, was still to serve as a refuge in case of attack. At Nelson, in addition to Walsh, Bailey—a new man—Geyer, a captain,

and Kelsey were to have command as officers. Three frigates—*The Dering*, *The Hudson's Bay* and *The Hampshire* are commissioned to the bay with letters of marque to war on all enemies, and three merchantmen—*The Prosperous*, *The Owner's Love* and *The Perry* are also to go to the bay. Mutinous of voyages to the bay, seamen are paid in advance, and two hundred and twenty gallons of brandy are divided among the ships to warm up courage as occasion may require.

But Iberville was not the man to let his winnings slip through his fingers. It had now become more than a guerrilla warfare between gamesters of the wilderness. It was a fight for ascendency on the continent. It was a struggle to determine which nation was to command the rivers leading inland to the unknown West. If the French raiders were to hold the forts at the bottom of the bay, they must capture the great stronghold of the English—Nelson.

Taking on board one hundred and twenty woodrangers, Iberville sailed from Quebec on August 10, 1694. He had two frigates—*The Poli* and *Salamander*. By September 24, he was unloading his cannon below the earthworks of one hundred great guns at Nelson. Steady bombardment from his frigates poured bombs into the fort from

September 25 to October 14, and without ceasing, the fort guns sent back a rain of fire and ball. Chateauguay, Iberville's brother, landed to attempt a rush with his bush-rovers by the rear. He was met at the pickets by a spattering fire and fell shot as other brave sons of the Le Moyne family fell —wounded in front, shouting a rally with his dying breath. The death of their comrade redoubled the fury of the raiders. While long-range guns tore up the earthworks and cut great gashes in the shattered palisades to the fore, the bushrangers behind had knocked down pickets and were in a hand-to-hand fight in the ditch that separated the rows of double palisades. In the hope of saving their furs, Walsh and Kelsey hung out a tablecloth as flag of truce. For a day, the parley lasted, the men inside the pickets seizing the opportunity to eat and rest, and spill all liquor on the ground and bury ammunition and hide personal treasures. The weather had turned bitterly cold. Winter was impending. No help could come from England till the following July. Walsh did his best in a bad bargain, asking that the officers be lodged till the ships came the next year, that the English be allowed the same provisions as the French, that no injury be offered the English traders during the winter, and that they should be allowed to keep the Company's books.

Iberville was depending on loot to pay his men, and would not hear of granting the furs to the English, but he readily subscribed to the other conditions of surrender, and took possession of the fort. When Iberville hastily sailed away to escape through the straits before winter closed them, he left De la Forêst commander at Nelson, Jeremie, interpreter. And De la Forêst quickly ignored the conditions of surrender. He was not a good man to be left in charge. He was one of those who had outfitted Radisson in '83 and lost when Radisson turned Nelson over to the English in '84. Early next year, the English ships would come. If De la Forêst could but torture some of the English officers, who were his prisoners, into betraying the secret signals of the ships, he might lure them into port and recoup himself for that loss of ten years ago. Only four officers were kept in the fort. The rest of the fifty-three prisoners were harried and abused so that they were glad to flee to the woods. Beds, clothes, guns and ammunition—everything, was taken from them. Eight or ten, who hung round the fort, were treated as slaves. One Englishman was tied to a stake and tortured with hot irons to compel him to tell the signals of the English ships. But the secret was not told. No English ships anchored at Port Nelson in the summer of '95.

The sail that hove on the offing was a French privateer. In the hold of this, the English survivors were huddled like beasts, fed on pease and dogs' meat. The ship leaked, and when the water rose to mid-waist of the prisoners, they were not allowed to come above decks, but set to pumping the water out. On the chance of ransom money, the privateer carried the prisoners in irons to France because—as one of the sufferers afterward took oath—"*we had not the money to grease the commander's fist for our freedom.*" Of the fifty-three Hudson's Bay men turned adrift from Nelson, only twenty-five survived the winter.

So the merry game went on between the rival traders of the North, French and English fighting as furiously for a beaver pelt as the Spanish fought for gold. The English Adventurers' big resolutions to capture back the bay had ended in smoke. They had lost Nelson and now possessed only one fort on the bay—Albany, under Governor Knight; but one thing now favored the English. Open war had taken the place of secret treaty between France and England. The Company applied to the government for protection. The English Admiralty granted two men-of-war, *The Bonaventure* and *Seaforth*, under Captain Allen. These accompanied Grimmington and Smithsend to Nelson in '96, so when Iberville's

brother, Serigny, came out from France with provisions on *The Poli* and *Hardi* for the French garrisons at Nelson, he found English men-of-war lined up for attack in front of the fort. Serigny didn't wait. He turned swift heel for the sea, so swift, indeed, that *The Hardi* split on an ice floe and went to the bottom with all hands. On August 26, Captain Allen of the Royal Navy, demanded the surrender of Nelson from Governor De la Forêst. Without either provision or powder, La Forêst had no choice but to capitulate. In the fort, Allen seized twenty thousand beaver pelts.

Nelson or York—as it is now known—consisted under the French rule of a large square house, with lead roof and limestone walls. There were four bastions to the courtyard—one for the garrisons' lodgings, one for trade, one for powder, one for provisions. All the buildings were painted red. Double palisades with a trench between enclosed the yard. There were two large gates, one to the waterside, one inland, paneled in iron with huge, metal hinges showing the knobs of big nail heads. A gallery ran round the roof of the main house, and on this were placed five cannon. Three cannon were also mounted in each bastion. The officers' mess room boasted a huge iron hearth, oval tables, wall cupboards, and beds that shut up in the wall-panels.

Captain Allen now retaliated on the French for their cruelty to English captives by taking the entire garrison prisoners. Loaded with furs to the water-line, the English ships left Bailey and Kelsey at Nelson and sailed slowly for England. Just at the entrance to the straits—the place already made so famous by Indian attack on Hudson's crew, and French raid on *The Perpetuana*, a swift-sailing French privateer bore down on the fleet, singled out Allen's ship which was separated from the other, poured a volley of shot across her decks which killed Allen on the spot, and took to flight before the other ship could come to the rescue. Was this Iberville's brother—Serigny—on his way home? It will never be known, for as the ships made no capture, the action is not reported in French records.

The war had reduced the Hudson's Bay Company to such straits that several of the directors had gone bankrupt advancing money to keep the ships sailing. No more money could be borrowed in England, and agents were trying to raise funds in Amsterdam. Nevertheless, the Company presented the captains—Smithsend and Grimmington—with £100 each for capturing York. The captured furs replenished the exhausted finances and preparation was made to dispatch a mighty fleet that would forever settle mastery of the bay.

Two hundred extra mariners were to be engaged. On *The Dering*, Grimmington, now a veteran campaigner, was to take sixty fighting men. Captain Moon was to have eighteen on the little frigate, *Perry*. Edgecombe's *Hudson's Bay*, frigate, was to have fifty-five; Captain Fletcher's *Hampshire*, sixty; the fire ship *Prosperous* another thirty under a new man, Captain Batty. These mariners were in addition to the usual seamen and company servants. On *The Hudson's Bay* also went Smithsend as adviser in the campaign. Every penny that could be raised on sales of beaver, all that the directors were able to pledge of their private fortunes, and all the money that could be borrowed by the Adventurers as a corporate company, went to outfit the vessels for what was to be the deciding campaign. With Bailey in control at Nelson and old Governor Knight down at Albany—surely the French could be driven completely from the bay.

Those captives that Allen's ship had brought to England, lay in prison five months at Portsmouth before they were set free. Released at last, they hastened to France where their emaciated, ragged condition spoke louder than their indignant words. Frenchmen languishing in English prison! Like wildfire ran the rumor of the outrage! Once before

when Péré, the Frenchman, had been imprisoned on Hudson Bay, Iberville had thrust the sword of vengeance into the very heart of the English fastness. France turned again to the same Robin Hood of Canada's rude chivalry. Iberville was at this time carrying havoc from hamlet to hamlet of Newfoundland, where two hundred English had already fallen before his sword and seven hundred been captured.

On the 7th of April, 1697, Serigny, his brother, just home from Nelson, was dispatched from France with five men-of-war—*The Pelican*, *The Palmier*, *The Profound*, *The Violent*, *The Wasp*—to be placed under Iberville's command at Palcentia, Newfoundland, whence he was to proceed to Hudson Bay with orders, "to leave not a vestige remaining" of the English fur trade in the North.

The squadron left Newfoundland on July 8. By the 25th, the ships had entered the straits amid berg and floe, with the long, transparent daylight, when sunset merges with sunrise. Iberville was on *The Pelican* with Bienville, his brother, two hundred and fifty men and fifty guns. The other brother, Serigny, commanded *The Palmier*, and Edward Fitzmaurice of Kerry, a Jacobite, had come as chaplain. A gun gone loose in the hold of *The Wasp*, created a panic during the heavy seas of the Upper Narrows in the straits—the huge implement

of terror rolling from side to side of the dark hold with each wash of the billows in a way that threatened to capsize the vessel—not a man daring to risk his life to stop the cannon's roll; and several gunners were crushed to death before *The Wasp* could come to anchor in a quiet harbor to mend the damage. On *The Pelican*, Iberville's ship, forty men lay in their berths ill of scurvy. The fleet was stopped by ice at Digges' Island at the west end of the straits —a place already famous in the raiders' history. Here, the icepans, contracted by the straits, locked around the vessels in iron grip. Fog fell concealing the ships from one another, except for the ensigns at the mastheads, which showed all the fleet anchored southward except Iberville's *Pelican*. For eighteen days the impatient raider found himself forcibly gripped to the ice floes in fog, his ship crushed and banged and bodily lifted until a powder blast relieved pressure, or holes drilled and filled with bombs broke the ice crush, or unshipping the rudder, his own men disembarked and up to the waist in ice slush towed *The Pelican* forward.

On the 25th of August at four in the morning, the fog suddenly lifted. Iberville saw that *The Palmier* had been carried back in the straits. *The Wasp* and *Violent* had disappeared, but straight to the fore, ice-jammed, were *The Profound*, and—

Iberville could scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes—three English men-of-war, *The Hampshire*, and *Dering*, and *Hudson's Bay* closing in a circle round the ill-fated and imprisoned French ship. Just at that moment, the ice loosened. Iberville was off like a bird in *The Pelican*, not waiting to see what became of *The Profound*, which escaped from the ice that night after a day's bombardment when the English were in the act of running across the ice for a hand-to-hand fight.

On the 3rd of September, Iberville anchored before Port Nelson. Anxiously, for two days, he scanned the sea for the rest of his fleet. On the morning of the fifth, the peaked sails of three vessels rose above the offing. Raising anchor, Iberville hastened out to meet them, and signaled a welcome. No response signaled back. The horrified watch at the masthead called down some warning. Then the full extent of the terrible mistake dawned on Iberville. These were not his consort ships at all. They were the English men-of-war, *The Hampshire*, Captain Fletcher, fifty-two guns and sixty soldiers; *The Dering*, Captain Grimmington, thirty guns and sixty men; *The Hudson's Bay*, Edgecombe and Smithsend, thirty-two guns and fifty-five men—hemming him in a fatal circle between the English fort on the land and their own cannon to sea.

One can guess the wild whoop of jubilation that went up from the Englishmen to see their enemy of ten years' merciless raids, now hopelessly trapped between their fleet and the fort. The English vessels had the wind in their favor and raced over the waves all sails set like a war troop keen for prey. Iberville didn't wait. He had weighed anchor to sail out when he thought the vessels were his own, and now he kept unswervingly on his course. Of his original crew, forty were invalided. Some twenty-five had been sent ashore to reconnoiter the fort. Counting the Canadians and Indians taken on at Newfoundland, he could muster only one hundred and fifty fighting men. Quickly, ropes were stretched to give the mariners hand-hold over the frost-slippery decks. Stoppers were ripped from the fifty cannon, and the batterymen below, under La Salle and Grandville, had stripped naked in preparation for the hell of flame and heat that was to be their portion in the impending battle. Bienville, Iberville's brother, swung the infantrymen in line above decks, swords and pistols prepared for the hand-to-hand grapple. De la Potherie got the Canadians to the forecastle, knives and war hatchets out, bodies stripped, all ready to board when the ships knocked keels. Iberville knew it was to be like those old-time raids—a Spartan conflict—a fight to the death;

death or victory; and he swept right up to *The Hampshire*, Fletcher's frigate, the strongest of the foe, where every shot would tell. *The Hampshire* shifted broadsides to the French; and at nine in the morning, the battle began.

The Hampshire let fly two roaring cannonades that ploughed up the decks of *The Pelican* and stripped the French bare of masts to the hull. At the same instant, Grimmington's *Dering* and Smithsend's *Hudson's Bay* circled to the left of the French and poured a stream of musketry fire across *The Pelican's* stern. At one fell blast, forty French were mowed down; but the batterymen below never ceased their crash of bombs straight into *The Hampshire's* hull.

Iberville shouted for the infantrymen to fire into *The Dering's* forecastle, to pick off Grimmington if they could; and for the Canadian sharpshooters to rake the decks of *The Hudson's Bay*.

For four hours, the three-cornered battle raged. The ships were so close, shout and counter-shout could be heard across decks. Faces were singed with the closeness of the musketry fire. Ninety French had been wounded. *The Pelican's* decks swam in blood that froze to ice, slippery as glass, and trickled down the clinker boards in reddening splashes. Grape shot and grenade had set the fallen

sails on fire. Sails and mastpoles and splintered davits were a mass of roaring flame that would presently extend to the powder magazines and blow all to eternity. Railings had gone over decks; and when the ship rolled, only the tangle of burning débris kept those on deck from washing into the sea. The bridge was crumbling. A shot had torn the high prow away; and still the batterymen below poured their storm of fire and bomb into the English hull. The fighters were so close, one old record says, and the holes torn by the bombs so large in the hull of each ship that the gunners on *The Pelican* were looking into the eyes of the smoke-grimed men below the decks of *The Hampshire.*

For three hours, the English had tacked to board *The Pelican*, and for three hours the mastless, splintered *Pelican* had fought like a demon to cripple her enemy's approach. The blood-grimed, half-naked men of both decks had rushed *en masse* for the last leap, the hand-to-hand fight, when a frantic shout went up!

Then silence, and fearful confusion, and a mad panic back from the tilting edges of the two vessels with cries from the wounded above the shriek of the sea!

The batteries of *The Hampshire* had suddenly silenced. The great ship refused to answer to the

wheel. That persistent, undeviating fire bursting from the sides of *The Pelican* had done its work. *The Hampshire* gave a quick, back lurch. Before the amazed Frenchmen could believe their senses, amid the roar of flame and crashing billows and hiss of fires extinguished in an angry sea, *The Hampshire*, all sails set, settled and sank like a stone amid the engulfing billows. Not a soul of her two hundred and fifty men—one hundred and ninety mariners and servants, with sixty soldiers—escaped.

The screams of the struggling seamen had not died on the waves before Iberville had turned the batteries of his shattered ship full force on Smithsend's *Hudson's Bay*. Promptly, *The Hudson's Bay* struck colors, but while Iberville was engaged boarding his captive and taking over ninety prisoners, Grimmington on *The Dering* showed swift heel and gained refuge in Fort Nelson.

In the fury and heat of the fight, the French had not noticed the gathering storm that now broke with hurricane gusts of sleet and rain. The whistling in the cordage became a shrill shriek—warning a blizzard. Presently the billows were washing over decks with nothing visible of the wheel but the drenched helmsman clinging for life to his place. The pancake ice pounded the ships' sides with a noise of

thunder. Mist and darkness and roaring sleet drowned the death cries of the wounded, washed and tossed and jammed against the railing by the pounding seas. *The Pelican* could only drive through the darkness before the storm-flaw, "the dead" says an old record, "floating about on the decks among the living." The hawser, that had towed the captive ship, snapped like thread. Captor and captive in vain threw out anchors. The anchors raked bottom. Cables were cut, and the two ships drove along the sands. The deck of *The Pelican* was icy with blood. Every shock of smashing billows jumbled dead and dying *en masse*. The night grew black as pitch. The little railing that still clung to the shattered decks of *The Pelican* was now washed away, and the waves carried off dead and wounded. Tables were hurled from the cabin. The rudder was broken, and the water was already to the bridge of the foundering ship, when the hull began to split, and *The Pelican* buried her prow in the sands, six miles from the fort.

All small boats had been shot away. The canoes of the Canadians swamped in the heavy sea as they were launched. Tying the spars of the shattered masts in four-sided racks, Iberville had the surviving wounded bound to these and towed ashore by the others, half-swimming, half-wading. Many of the men sprang into the icy sea bare to mid-waist as

they had fought. Guns and powderhorns carried ashore in the swimmers' teeth were all that were saved of the wreck. Eighteen more men lost their lives going ashore in the dark. For twelve hours they had fought without pause for food, and now shivering round fires kindled in the bush, the half-famished men devoured moss and seaweed raw. Two feet of snow lay on the ground, and when the men lighted fires and gathered round in groups to warm themselves, they became targets for sharp-shooters from the fort, who aimed at the camp fires. Smithsend, who escaped from the wrecked *Hudson's Bay* and Grimmington, who had succeeded in taking *The Dering* into harbor—put Governor Bailey on guard. Their one hope was that Iberville might be drowned.

It was at this terrible pass that the other ships of Iberville's fleet came to the rescue. They, too, had suffered from the storm, *The Violent* having gone to bottom; *The Palmier* having lost her steering gear, another ship her rudder.

Nelson or York under the English was the usual four-bastioned fur post, with palisades and houses of white fir logs a foot thick, the pickets punctured for small arms, with embrasures for some hundred cannon. It stood back from Hayes River, four miles up from the sea. The seamen of the wrecked *Hud-*

son's Bay carried word to Governor Bailey of Iberville's desperate plight. Nor was Bailey inclined to surrender even after the other ships came to Iberville's aid. With Bailey in the fort were Kelsey, and both Grimmington and Smithsend who had once been captives with the French in Quebec. When Iberville's messenger was led into the council hall with flag of truce and bandaged eyes to demand surrender, Smithsend advised resistance till the English knew whether Iberville had been lost in the wreck. Fog favored the French. By the 11th, they had been able to haul their cannon ashore undetected by the English and so near the fort that the first intimation was the blow of hammers erecting platforms. This drew the fire of the English, and the cannonading began on both sides. On the 12th, Serigny entered the council again to demand surrender.

"If you refuse, there will be no quarter," he warned.

"Quarter be cursed," thundered the old governor. Then turning to his men, "Forty pounds sterling to every man who fights."

But the Canadians with all the savagery of Indian warfare, had begun hacking down palisades to the rear.

Serigny came once more from the French. "They

are desperate," he urged, "they must take the fort, or pass the winter like beasts in the wilds.". Bombs had been shattering the houses. Bailey was induced to capitulate, but game to the end, haggled for the best bargain he could get. Neither the furs nor the armaments of the fort were granted him, but he was permitted to march out with people unharmed, drums beating, flags unfurled, ball in mouth, matches lighted, bag and baggage, fife screaming its shrillest defiance—to march out with all this brave pomp to a desolate winter in the wilds, while the bush-lopers, led by Boisbriant, ransacked the fort. In the surrender, Grimmington had bargained for his ship, and he now sailed for England with the refugees, reaching the Thames on October 26. Bailey and Smithsend with other refugees, resolutely marched overland in the teeth of wintry blasts to Governor Knight at Albany. How Bailey reached England, I do not know. He must have gone overland with French coureurs to Quebec; for he could not have sailed through the straits after October, and he arrived in England by December.

That the blow of the last loss paralyzed the Company—need not be told. Of all their forts on the bay, they now had only Albany, and were in debt for the last year's ships. They had not money to pay the captains' wages. Nevertheless, they borrowed

money enough to pay the wages of all the seamen and £20 apiece extra, for those who had taken part in the fight. Just at this time, the Treaty of Ryswick put an end to war between England and France, but, as far as the Company was concerned, it left them worse than before, for it provided that the contestants on the bay should remain as they were at the time, which meant that France held all the bay except Albany. Before this campaign, the loss of the English Adventurers from the French raiders had been £100,000. Now the loss totaled more than £200,000.

Chouart Groseillers had long since been created a nobleman for returning to France. In spite of the peace, this enigmatical declaration is found in the private papers of the King of France:

> "Owing to the peace, the King of England has given positive orders that goods taken at Hudson Bay, must be paid for; but the French King relies on getting out of this affair."

Iberville sailed away to fresh glories. A seigniory had been granted him along the Bay of Chaleurs. In 1699, he was created Chevalier of St. Louis. The rest of his years were passed founding the colony of Louisiana, and he visited Boston and New York harbors with plans of conquest in his mind, though as the Earl of Belomont reported "he pretended it

was for wood and water." In the war of the Barbadoes, Iberville had hoped to capture slaves for Louisiana, and he had transported hundreds, but yellow fever raged in the South and Iberville fell a victim to it on July 9, 1706, at Havana. He was, perhaps, the most picturesque type of Canada's wildwood chivalry, with all its savage faults and romantic heroism.

And His Majesty, the King of France, well pleased with the success of his brave raiders sends out a dispatch that reads: "His Majesty declines to accept the white bear sent to him from Hudson Bay, but he will permit the fur traders to exhibit the animal."

Notes on Chapter XIII.—The English side of the story related in this chapter is taken from the records of Hudson's Bay House, London, and of the Public Records Office. The French side of the story, from the State Papers of the Marine Archives. *Bacqueville de la Potherie*, who was present in the fight of '97, gives excellent details in his *Historie de l'Amerique Septentrionale* (1792). *Jeremie*, who was interpreter at York, wrote an account, to be found among other voyages in the *Bernard Collection of Amsterdam*. For side-lights from early writers, the reader is referred to *Doc. Relatifs Nouvelle France; Oldmixon; Doc. Hist. N. Y.; Quebec Hist. So. Collection* in which will be found *Abbé Belmont's Relation* and *Dollier de Casson's*.

It will be noticed that one of the conditions of surrender was that the English should be permitted to march out "match-lighted; ball in mouth." The latter term needs no explanation. The ball was held ready to be rammed down the barrel. With reference to the term "match-lighted," in the novel, "Heralds of Empire," I had referred to "matches" when the argus-eyed critic came down with the criticism that "matches" were not invented until after 1800. I stood corrected till I happened to be in the Tower of London in the room given over to the collection of old armor. I asked one of the doughty old "beef

eaters" to take down a musket of that period, and show me exactly what "match-lighted" must have meant. The old soldier's explanation was this: In time of war, not flint but a little bit of inflammable punk did duty as "match-lighter." This was fastened below the trigger like the percussion cap of a later day. The privilege of surrendering "match-lighted" meant with the punk below the trigger. I offer this explanation for what it is worth, and as he is the keeper of the finest collection of old armor in the world, the chances are he is right and that matches preceded 1800.

At first sight, there may seem to be discrepancies in the numbers on the English ships, but the 200 mariners were extra men, in addition to the 50 or 60 seamen on each frigate, and the 50 or 60 servants on each boat sent out to strengthen the forts.

CHAPTER XIV

1688–1710

WHAT BECAME OF RADISSON? NEW FACTS ON THE LAST DAYS OF THE FAMOUS PATHFINDER

WHAT became of Radisson? It seems impossible that the man, who set France and England by the ears for a century, and led the way to the pathfinding of half America, should have dropped so completely into oblivion that not a scrap is recorded concerning the last twenty-five years of his life. Was he run to earth by the bailiffs of London, like Thackeray's "Virginian?" Or did he become the lion tamed, the eagle with its wings clipped, to be patronized by supercilious nonentities? Or did he die like Ledyard of a heart broken by hope deferred?

Radisson, the boy, slim and swarth as an Indian, running a mad race for life through mountain torrents that would throw his savage pursuers off the trail—we can imagine; but not Radisson running from a London bailiff. Leading flotillas of fur brigades up the Ottawa across Lake Superior to the

Great Northwest—he is a familiar figure, but not stroked and petted and patronized by the frowzy duchesses of Charles the Second's slovenly court. Yet from the time Radisson ceased to come to Hudson Bay during Iberville's raids, he drops as completely out of history as if he had been lost in Milton's Serbonian Bog. One historian describes him as assassinated in Quebec, another as dying destitute. Both statements are guesses, but from the dusty records of the Hudson's Bay Company—many of them undisturbed since Radisson's time—can be gleaned a complete account of the game pathfinder's life to the time of his death.

The very front page of the first minute book kept by the Company, contains account of Radisson—an order for Alderman Portman to pay Radisson and Groseillers £5 a year for expenses—chiefly wine and fresh fruit, as later entries show. There were present at this meeting of the Company, adventurers of as romantic a glamor as Robert Louis Stevenson's heroes or a Captain Kidd. There was the Earl of Craven, married to the Queen of Bohemia. There was Ashley, ambitious for the earldom that came later, and with the reputation that "he would rob the devil, himself, and the church altars." It was Ashley, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, who charged a bribe of £100 to every man appointed in

the government services, though he concealed his peculations under stately manners and gold lace. Notoriety was the stock in trade of the court beauties at that time, and Ashley's wife earned public notice by ostentatiously driving in a glass coach that was forever splintering in collision with some other carriage or going to bits over the clumsy cobblestones. Old Sir George Carterett of New Jersey was now treasurer of the Navy. Sir John Robinson was commander of the Tower. Griffith was known as the handsome dandy of court balls. Sir John Kirke, the Huguenot, was a royal pensioner of fighting blood, whose ancestors had captured Quebec. The meeting of the Hudson's Bay Adventurers was held at the house of Sir Robert Viner, Lord Mayor of London, renowned for the richest wife, the finest art galleries, the handsomest conservatories in England. It was to Viner's that Charles the Second came with his drunken crew to fiddle and muddle and run the giddy course, that danced the Stuart's off the throne. Mr. Young was a man of fashion as well as a merchant, so famous for amateur acting that he often took the place of the court actors at a moment's notice.

These were Radisson's associates, the Frenchman's friends when he came to London fresh from the wilderness in his thirtieth year with the explora-

tion of the North and the West to his credit. None knew better than he, the money value of his discoveries. And Radisson knew the way to this land. By the lifting of his hand, he could turn this wealth into the coffers of the court adventurers. If the fur trade was a gamble—and everything on earth was gamble in the reign of Charles—Radisson held the winning cards. The gamesters of that gambling age gathered round him like rooks round a pigeon, to pick his pockets—politely and according to the codes of good breeding, of course—and to pump his brain of every secret, that could be turned into pounds sterling—politely, also, of course. Very generous, very pleasant, very suave of fair promises were the gay adventurers, but withal slippery as the finery of their silk ruffles or powdered periwigs.

Did Radisson keep his head? Steadier heads have gone giddy with the sudden plunge from wilderness ways to court pomp. Sir James Hayes, Prince Rupert's secretary, declares in a private document that the French explorer at this time "*deluded* the daughter of Sir John Kirke into secretly marrying him," so that Radisson may have been caught in the madcap doings of the court dissipations when no rake's progress was complete unless he persuaded some errant damsel to jump over the back wall and elope, though there was probably no hindrance in

the world to ordinary lovers walking openly out of the front door and being married properly. The fact that Radisson was a penniless adventurer and a Catholic, while his bride was the daughter of a rich Puritan, may have been the explanation of the secrecy, if indeed, there is any truth at all in the rumor repeated by Hayes.

For seven years after he came to London, the love of wilderness places, of strange new lands, clung to Radisson. He spent the summers on Hudson Bay for the Company, opening new forts, cruising up the unknown coasts, bartering with new tribes of Indians, and while not acting as governor of any fur post, seems to have been a sort of general superintendent, to keep check on the Company's officers and prevent fraud, for when the cargoes arrived at Portsmouth, orders were given for the Captains not to stir without convoy to come to the Thames, but for "*Mr. Radisson to take horse*" and ride to London with the secret reports. During the winters in London, Sir John Robinson of the Tower and Radisson attended to the sales of the beaver, bought the goods for the next year's ships, examined the cannon that were to man the forts on the bay and attended to the general business of the Company. Merchants, who were shareholders, advanced goods for the yearly outfit. Other shareholders, who owned ships, loaned or gave ves-

sels for the voyage. Wages were paid as money came in from the beaver sales. So far, Radisson and his associates were share and share alike, all laying the foundations of a future prosperity. Radisson and his brother-in-law drew from the beaver sales during these seven years (1667–1673) £287, about $2,000 each for living expenses.

But now came a change. The Company's ships were bought and paid for, the Company's forts built and equipped—all from the sales of the cargoes brought home under Radisson's superintendence. Now that profits were to be paid, what share was his? The King had given him a gold chain and medal for his services, but to him the Company owed its existence. What was his share to be? In a word, was he to be one of the Adventurers or an outsider? Radisson had asked the Adventurers for an agreement. Agreement? A year passed, Radisson hung on, living from hand to mouth in London, receiving £10 one month, £2 the next, an average of $5 a week, compelled to supplicate the Company for every penny he needed—a very excellent arrangement for the Gentlemen Adventurers. It compelled Radisson to go to them for favors, instead of their going to Radisson; though from Radisson's point of view, the boot may have seemed to be on the wrong leg. Finally, as told in a preceding chapter

the committee met and voted him "*£100 per ann. from the time of his arrival in London, and if it shall please God to bless this company with good success, they will then resume the consideration of Mr. Radisson.*" One hundred pounds was just half of one per cent. of the yearly cargoes. It was the salary of the captains and petty governors on the bay.

Radisson probably had his own opinion of a contract that was to depend more on the will of Heaven than on the legal bond of his partners. He quit England in disgust for the French navy. Then came the raids on Nelson, the order of the French Court to return to England and his resumption of service with the Hudson's Bay Company up to the time Iberville drove the English from the bay and French traders were not wanted in the English service.

For changing his flag the last time, such abuse was heaped on Radisson that the Hudson's Bay Company was finally constrained to protest: "*that the said Radisson doth not deserve those ill names the French give him. If the English doe not give him all his Due, he may rely on the justice of his cause.*"

Indeed, the English company might date the beginning of the French raids that harried their forts for a hundred years from Radisson's first raid at Port Nelson; but they did not foresee this.

The man was as irrepressible as a disturbed hornets' nest—break up his plans, and it only seemed to scatter them with wider mischief. How the French Court ordered Radisson back to England has already been told. He was the scapegoat for court intrigue. Nothing now was too good for Radisson—with the English. The Adventurers presented him with a purse "*for his extraordinary services to their great liking and satisfaction.*" A dealer is ordered "*to keep Mr. Radisson in stock of fresh provisions,*" and the Company desires "*that Mr. Radisson shall have a hogshead of claret*" presumably to drown his memory of the former treatment. My Lord Preston is given a present of furs for pursuading Radisson to return. So is "Esquire Young," the gay merchant of Cornhill, who was Radisson's best friend in England, and Sir James Hayes, who had been so furious against him only a few months before, begs Monsieur to accept that silver tankard as a token of esteem from the Adventurers (£10 4s, I found it cost by the account books.)

Only one doubt seemed to linger in the minds of the Company. In spite of King Louis' edict forbidding French interlopers on Hudson's Bay, secret instructions of an opposite tenor were directing Iberville's raiders overland. If Radisson was to act as superintendent on the bay, chief councillor

at Port Nelson, the Company must have bonds as well as oath for his fidelity, and so the entry in the minute books of 1685 records: "*At this committee, Mons. Pierre Radisson signed and sealed the covenants with the company, and signed a bond of £2,000 to perform covenants with the company, dated* 11 *May. . . . Dwelling at the end of Seething Lane in Tower Street.*"

I think it was less than ten minutes from the time I found that entry when I was over in Seething Lane. It is in a part of old London untouched by the Great Fire running up from the famous road to the Tower, in length not greater than between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, New York. Opening off Great Tower Street, it ends at Crutched Friars. At the foot of the lane is the old church of All Hallows Barking, whose dial only was burned by the fire; at the top, the little antiquated church of St. Olave Hart's, whose motley architecture with leaning walls dates from the days of the Normans. If Radisson lived "*at the end of Seething Lane,*" his house must have been just opposite St. Olave Hart's, for the quaint church with its graveyard occupies the entire left corner. In this lane dwelt the merchant princes of London. Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Navy, who thought his own style of living "mighty fine" —as he describes it—preening and pluming himself

on the beautiful panels he had placed in his mansion, must have been a near neighbor of Radisson's; for in the diarist's description of the fire, he speaks of it coming to Barking Church "at the bottom of our lane." But a stone's throw away is the Tower, in those days commanded by Radisson's friend, Sir John Robinson. The Kirkes, the Colletons, Griffith the dandy of the balls, Sir Robert Viner, the rich Lord-Mayor; Esquire Young of Cornhill—all had dwellings within a few minutes' walk of Seething Lane.

The whereabouts of Radisson in London explain how the journals of his first four voyages were lost for exactly two hundred years and then found in the Pepys Collection of the Bodleian Library. He had given them either directly or through the mutual friend Carterett, to his neighbor Pepys, who was a keen collector of all matter appertaining to the navy, and after being lost for years, the Pepys Collection only passed to the Bodleian in recent days.

The place where Radisson lived shows, too, that he was no backstairs sycophant hanging on the favor of the great, no beggarly renegade hungry for the crumbs that fell from the tables of those merchant princes. It proves Radisson a front-door acquaintance of the Gentlemen Adventurers. Sir Christopher Wren, the famous architect who was a share-

holder in the Hudson's Bay Company at this time, thought himself well paid at £200 a year for superintending the building of St. Paul's. Radisson's agreement on returning to the Adventurers from France, was for a salary of £50 a year, paid quarterly, £50 paid yearly and dividends—running as high as 50 per cent.—on £200 of stock—making in all, practically the same income as a man of Wren's standing.

Second-rate warehouses and dingy business offices have replaced the mansions of the great merchants on Seething Lane, but the two old churches stand the same as in the days of Radisson, with the massive weather-stained stone work uncouth, as if built by the Saxons, inner pillars and pointed arches showing the work of the Normans. Both have an antique flavor as of old wine. The Past seems to reach forward and touch you tangibly from the moldering brass plates on the walls, and the flagstone of the aisles so very old the chiseled names of the dead below are peeling off like paper. The great merchant princes—the Colletons, the Kirkes, the Robinsons, Radisson's friends—lie in effigy around the church above their graves. It was to St. Olave's across the way, Pepys used to come to hear Hawkins, the great Oxford scholar, also one of the Adventurers —preach; and a tablet tells where the body of Pepys'

gay wife lies. From the walls, a memorial tablet to Pepys, himself, smiles down in beplumed hat and curled periwig and velvet cloak, perhaps that very cloak made in imitation of the one worn in Hyde Park by the King and of which he was—as he writes —"so mighty proud." The roar of a world's traffic beats against the tranquil walls of the little church; but where sleeps Radisson, the Catholic and alien, in this Babylon of hurrying feet? His friends and his neighbors lie here, but the gravestones give no clue of him. Pepys, the annalist of the age, with his gossip of court and his fair wife and his fine clothes—thought Radisson's voyages interesting enough as a curio but never seems to have dreamed that the countries Radisson discovered would become a dominant factor in the world's progress when that royal house on whose breath Pepys hung for favor as for life, lay rotting in a shameful oblivion. If the dead could dream where they lie forgotten, could Radisson believe his own dream—that the seas of the world are freighted with the wealth of the countries he discovered; that "*the country so pleasant, so beautiful . . . so fruitful . . . so plentiful of all things*"—as he described the Great Northwest when he first saw it—is now peopled by a race that all the nations of Europe woo; that the hope of the empire, which ignored him when he lived, is now

centered on "that fair and fruitful and pleasant land" which he discovered?

For ten years Radisson continued to go to the bay, Esquire Young acting as his attorney to draw the allowance of £100 a year and the dividends on £200 stock for Radisson's wife, Mary Kirke. The minutes contain accounts of wine presented to Mr. Radisson, of furs sent home as a gift to Mistress Radisson, of heavy guns bought for the forts on the advice of Mr. Radisson, of a fancy pistol delivered to Monsieur Radisson. Then a change fell.

The Stuarts between vice and folly had danced themselves off the throne. The courtiers, who were Adventurers, scattered like straws before the wind. The names of the shareholders changed. Of Radisson's old friends, only Esquire Young remained. Besides, Iberville was now campaigning on the bay, sweeping the English as dust before a broom. Dividends stopped. The Company became embarrassed. By motion of the shareholders, Radisson's pension was cut from £100 to £50 a year. In vain Esquire Young and Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough, now governor of the Company, urged Radisson's claims. The new shareholders did not know his name.

These were dark days for the old pathfinder. He must have been compelled to move from Seething

Lane, for a petition describes him as in the Parish of St. James "in a low and mean condition" in great want and mental distress lest his family should be driven to the poorhouse. It was at this period three papers were put on file that forever place beyond dispute the main facts of his life. He filed a suit in Chancery against the Company for a resumption of his full salary pending the discontinuance of dividends. He petitioned Parliament to make the continuance of the Company's charter dependent on recognition of his rights as having laid the foundations of the Company. And he took an oath regarding the main episodes of his life to be used in the treaty of peace with France. A fighter he was to the end, though haunted by that terrible Fear of Want which undermined his courage as no Phantom Fright ever shook him in the wilderness. No doubt he felt himself growing old, nearly seventy now with four children to support and naught between them and destitution but the paltry payment of £12 10s a quarter.

Again the wheel of fortune turned. Radisson won his suit against the Company. His income of £100 was resumed and arrears of £150 paid. Also, in the treaty pending with France, his evidence was absolutely requisite to establish what the boundaries ought to be between Canada and Hudson Bay; so the

Adventurers became suddenly very courteous, very suave, very considerate of the old man they had kept standing outside their office door; and the committee of August 17, 1697, bade "*the secretary take coach and fetch Mr. Radisson who may be very useful at this time as to affairs between the French and the Company.*" The old war horse was once more in harness. In addition to his salary, gratuities of £10 and £8 and £20 "for reliable services" are found in the minutes. Regularly his £50 were paid to him at the end of each year. Regularly, the £12 10s were paid each quarter to March 29, 1710. When the next quarter came round, this entry is recorded in the minute book:

"*Att A Comitte the 12th July 1710—*
"*The Sec is ordered to pay Mr. Radisson's widow as charity the sum of six pounds.*"

Between the end of March and the beginning of July, the old pathfinder had set forth on his last voyage.

But I think the saddest record of all is the one that comes nineteen years later:

"*24 Sept. 1729 Att A Comitte—*
"*The Sec. is ordered to pay Mrs. Radisson, widow of Mr. Peter Esprit Radisson, who was formerly employed in the company's service, the sum of £10 as charity, she being very ill and in very great want, the said sum to be paid her at such times as the Sec. shall think most convenient.*"

This was the widow of the man who had explored the West to the Mississippi; who had explored the North to Nelson River; who had twice saved New France from bankruptcy by the furs he brought from the wilderness, and who had laid the foundations of the most prosperous chartered company the world has ever known.

Notes on Chapter XIV.—It need scarcely be explained that the data for this chapter are all drawn from thousands of sheets of scattered records in Hudson's Bay House, London. Within the limits of this book, it is quite impossible to quote all the references of this chapter. Details of Radisson's early life are to be found in "*Pathfinders of the West.*" One of Radisson's petitions has been given in a former chapter. Another of his petitions runs as follows:

"Copy of Peter. Esprit Radisson's peticon to ye Parleamt. presented ye 11th of March 1697–8.

"To ye Hon'ble the Knights Citizens & Burgesses in Parliament Assembled——

"The Humble Peticon of Peter Esprit Radisson Humbly sheweth

"That your petitioner is a native of France, who with a brother of his (since deceased) spent many years of their youths among the Indians in and about Hudson's Bay, by reason whereof they became absolute masters of the trade and language of the said Indians in those parts of America

"That about the year 1666 King Charles the Second sent yr. Pet'r and his said brother with two ships on purpose to settle English colonies & factories on the sd. Day, wh. they effected soe well by the said King's satisfaction that he gave each of them a gold chain & medell as a marke of his Royale favour & recommended them to the Comp'y of Adventurers of England Trading unto Hudson's Bay to be well gratified and rewarded by them for their services aforesaid.

"That since the death of yr. Petr. Brother, the sd. compy have settled on your Petr: six actions in the joint stock of ye sd. compy and one hundred pounds per annum during yr. Petr: life

"That your Petr is now 62 years of age (being grown old in the compys service) & hath not recd any Benefits of the sd. six

shares in the compys stock for more than 7 years last past & hath had nothing but the sd. 100 pds. Per annum to maintain himselfe and four small children all borne in England

"That during the late Reign a Price was set upon your Petr head by the French & several attempts were made upon him to assassinate him & that for none other reasons but for quittting his owne country & serving the compy.

"That your Petr: dares not return to his Native country for the reasons aforesaid: & seeing all his subsistance depends on the sd. compy & is shortly to Determine with the life of your Petr and his four smalle children must consequently fall to be maintained by the Alms of the Parish altho' the company hath had many thousand pounds effects by his procurement & some that he conceives he had himselfe a good tytle to——

"Your Petr therefore most humbly prays that this House will comiserate the condition of yr. Petr said children, and whereas he hath now the said six actions & £100 only for his life, that you will Vouchsafe to direct a provisoe in the Bill depending to grant the sd. annuity to be paid quarterly & the dividends of the sd. Actions as often as any shall become due to your Petr: his Heirs for Ever during the joint stock of the said compy

"And yr. Petr shall forever pray

"PETER ESPRIT RADISSON."

The occasion of this petition by Radisson was when the Stuarts had lost the throne and the Company was petitioning for a confirmation of its royal charter by an act of Parliament. "The many thousand pounds which he conceived himself to have a title to," refers to 1684, when the French Court compelled him to turn over all the £20,000 in his fort at Nelson to the English. That beaver had been procured in the trade of goods for which Radisson and Groseillers and young Chouart and La Fôrest and De la Chesnay and Dame Sorrell had advanced the money. As a matter of fact, the Company never gave Radisson any stock. They simply granted him the right to dividends on a small amount of stock—a wrong which he was powerless to right as he dared not return to France. It was during Iberville's raids that the Company stopped paying Radisson dividends or salary, when he filed a suit against them in Chancery and won it. It is quite true the Company was unable to pay him at this time, but then they had their own niggardly policy to thank for having driven him across to France in the first place.

When the Company presented a bill of damages against France for the raids, Radisson's evidence was necessary to prove that the French King gave up all claims to the bay when he ordered Radisson back to England, so the old man was no

longer kept cooling his heels in the outer halls of the Company's Council Room. The bill of damages was made up as follows:

1682—Port Nelson taken with Gov. Bridgar & Zechariah Gillam & 5 men perished	£ 25,000
1684—damage to trade at Nelson	10,000
1685—*Perpetuana* taken with 14 seamen	5,000
loss of life and wages	1,255
1686—forts captured at the bottom of the bay	50,000
loss in trade	10,000
1688—loss of *Churchill* Captain Bond	15,000
Young—Stimson cargo to Canada	70,000
1692—forts lost	20,000
	£206,255

The French King had said, "You may rely on me getting out of this affair," and the bill of damages, however absurdly exaggerated, was never paid. The French raiders proved an expensive experiment.

Radisson's other affidavit was made to prove that the French had quitted all pretensions to the bay when he was ordered back to Nelson. The French responded by denying that he had ever been ordered back to Nelson and by calling him "a liar," "a renegade," "a turn coat." To this, the English answered in formal memorial: "The Mr. Radisson mentioned in this paper doth not deserve the ill names heaped upon him," following up with the proof that the French had sent him back to England.

The real reason that the Company were so remiss to Radisson in his latter days was their own desperate straits. Besides, the old shareholders of the Stuart days had scattered like the wind. Radisson was unknown to the new men, so completely unknown that in one committee order his wife is spoken of as Madam Gwodet (Godey) instead of Mary Kirke. Now Madam Godey was the damsel whom Lord Preston offered to Radisson in marriage (with a dowry) despite the fact that he already had a wife—if he would go back from Paris to London. De la Potherie tells the story and adds that Radisson married her—another of the numerous fictions about the explorer. This mass of notes may give the impression that I am a protagonist of Radisson. My answer is that he badly needs one, when such staunch modern defenders of his as Drs. Bryce, and Dionne, and Judge Prudhomme refuse to excuse him for his last desertion of the French flag. In that case, Radisson was as much a victim of official red tape as Dreyfus in modern days.

PART III

1700–1820

The Search for the North-West Passage, the Fall of France, the Inlanders, the Coming of the Colonists and the Great Struggle with the North-West Company of Montreal.

CHAPTER XV

1699–1720

THE FIRST ATTEMPT OF THE ADVENTURERS TO EXPLORE—HENRY KELSEY PENETRATES AS FAR AS THE VALLEY OF THE SASKATCHEWAN—SANFORD AND ARRINGTON, KNOWN AS "RED CAP," FOUND HENLEY HOUSE INLAND FROM ALBANY—BESET FROM WITHOUT, THE COMPANY IS ALSO BESET FROM WITHIN—PETITIONS AGAINST THE CHARTER—INCREASE OF CAPITAL—RESTORATION OF THE BAY FROM FRANCE

THE Peace of Ryswick in 1697, which decreed that war should cease on Hudson Bay, and that France and England should each retain what they chanced to possess at the time of the treaty—left the Adventurers of England with only one fort, Albany, under doughty old Governor Knight, and one outpost, New Severn, which refugees driven to the woods had built out of necessity.

Back in '85 when Robert Sanford had been ordered to explore inland, he had reported such voyages impracticable. The only way to obtain inland trade, he declared, was to give presents to the Indian

chiefs and attract the tribes down to the bay. Now that the French had swept the English from the bay, Sanford was driven to the very thing he had said could not be done—penetrating inland to intercept the Indian fleets of canoes before they came down to the French. With one Arrington, known as Red Cap on the bay, and a man, John Vincent, Sanford year after year went upstream from Albany through Keewatin toward what is now Manitoba. By 1700, Henley House had been built one hundred and fifty miles inland from Albany. The French war was proving a blessing in disguise. It had awakened the sleeping English gentlemen of the bay and was scattering them far and wide. The very year the French came overland, 1686, Captain Abraham had sailed north from Nelson to Churchill—"a faire wide river," he describes it, naming it after the great Marlborough; and now with only Albany as the radiating point, commanded by old Governor Knight, sloops under the apprentice boy, young Henry Kelsey, under Mike Grimmington and Smithsend, sailed across to the east side of the bay, known as East Main (now known as Ungava and Labrador) and yearly traded so successfully with the wandering Eskimo and Montagnais there that in spite of the French holding the bay, cargoes of 30,000 and 40,000 beaver pelts were sent home to England.

But the honors of exploration at this period belong to the ragamuffin, apprentice lad, Henry Kelsey. He had come straight to Nelson before the French occupation from the harum-scarum life of a London street arab. At the fur posts, discipline was absolutely strict. Only the governor and chief trader were allowed to converse with the Indians. No man could leave the fort to hunt without special parole. Every subordinate was sworn to unquestioning obedience to the officer above him. Servants were not supposed to speak unless spoken to. Written rules and regulations were stuck round the fort walls thick as advertisements put up by a modern bill poster, and the slightest infraction of these martinet rules was visited by guardroom duty, or a sound drubbing at the hands of the chief factor, or public court-martial followed by the lash. It was all a part of the cocked hat and red coat and gold lace and silk ruffles with which these little kings of the wilderness sought to invest themselves with the pomp of authority. It is to the everlasting credit of the Company's governors that a system of such absolute despotism was seldom abused. Perhaps, too, the loneliness of the life—a handful of whites cooped up amid all the perils of savagery—made each man realize the responsibility of being his brother's keeper.

Henry Kelsey, the apprentice boy, fresh from the

streets of London, promptly ran amuck of the strict rules at Nelson. He went in and out of the fort without leave, and when gates were locked, he climbed the walls. In spite of rules to the contrary, he talked with the Indians and hunted with them, and when Captain Geyer switched him soundly for disobedience, he broke bars, jumped the walls, and ran away with a party of Assiniboines. About this time, came the French to the bay. The Company was moving heaven and earth to induce servants to go inland for trade when an Indian runner brought a message on birch bark from Kelsey. He had been up Hayes River with the Indians and now offered to conduct an exploration on condition of pardon. Geyer not only pardoned the young renegade but welcomed him back to the fort bag and baggage, Indian wife and all the trumpery of an Indian family. The great Company issued Kelsey a formal commission for discovery, and the next year on July 15, 1691, as the Assiniboines departed from Deering's Point where they camped to trade at Nelson, Kelsey launched out in a canoe with them.

Radisson and young Chouart had been up this river some distance; but as far as known, Kelsey was the first white man to follow Hayes River westward as far as the prairies. The weather was exceedingly dry, game scarce, grass high and brittle,

the tracks hard to follow whether of man or beast. Within a week, the Indians had gone up one hundred and seventy miles toward what are now known as Manitoba and Saskatchewan, but only two moose and one partridge had been killed, and provisions were exhausted. Leaving the Indians, Kelsey pushed forward across country following the trail of an encampment to the fore. At the end of a thirty mile tramp through brushwood of poplars and scrub birch, he came to three leather tepees. No one was in them. Men and women were afield hunting. Ravenous with hunger, Kelsey ransacked provision bags. He found nothing but dried grass and was fain to stay his hunger with berries. At night the hunters came in with ten swans and a moose. Here, Kelsey remained with them hunting till his party came up, when all advanced together another one hundred and thirty miles to the Assiniboine camping place. There were only twenty-six tents of Assiniboines. In a fray, the main party of Assiniboine hunters had slain three Cree women, and had now fled south, away from Cree territory. By the middle of August, Kelsey and his hunters were on the buffalo plains. All day, the men hunted. At night, the women went out to bring in and dress the meat. Once, exhausted, Kelsey fell sound asleep on the trail. When he awakened, there was not even

the dust of the hunt to guide him back to camp. From horizon to horizon was not a living soul; only the billowing prairie, grass neck high, with the lonely call of birds circling overhead. By following the crumpled grass and watching the sky for the reflection of the camp fires at night, Kelsey found his way back to the Assiniboines. Another time, camp fire had been made of dry moss. Kelsey was awakened to find the grass round him on fire and the stock of his musket blazing. With his jackknife he made a rude gunstock for the rest of the trip. Hunting with an Indian one day, the two came unexpectedly on a couple of grizzly bears. The surprise was mutual. The bears knew no fear of firearms and were disposed to parley, but the hunters didn't wait. The Indian dashed for a tree; Kelsey for hiding in a bunch of willows, firing as he ran. The bears mistook the direction of the shot and had pursued the Indian. Kelsey's charge had wounded one bear, and with a second shot, he now disabled the other, firing full in its face. The double victory over the beast of prey most feared by the Indians gained him the name of Little Giant—*Miss-top-ashish.*

From Kelsey's journal, it is impossible to follow the exact course of his wanderings. Enemies, who tried to prove that the English Company deserved no credit for exploration, declared that he did not go

farther than five hundred miles from the bay, seventy-one by canoe, three hundred through woods overland, forty-six across a plain, then eighty-one more to the buffalo country. From his own journal, the distance totals up six hundred miles; but he does not mention any large river except the Hayes, or large lake; so that after striking westward he must have been north of Lake Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan, but not so far north and west as Athabasca. This would place his wanderings in the modern province of Saskatchewan.

It was the 24th of August before he joined Washa, chief of the Assiniboines, and took up lodgings amid the eighty tents of the tribe. Solemnly, the peace pipe was smoked and, on the 12th of September, Kelsey presented the Assiniboine chief with the present of a lace coat, a cap, a sash, guns, knives, powder and shot, telling the Indians these were tokens of what the white men would do if the Indians proved good hunters; but on no account must the tribes war on one another, or the white man would give the enemy guns, which would exterminate all fighters. Washa promised to bring his hunt down to the bay, which tribal wars prevented for some years. Hudson's Bay traders, who followed up Kelsey's exploration—aimed for the region now known as Cumberland House, variously called Poskoyac and Basquia—

westward of Lake Winnipeg, so there is little doubt it was in this land that the Hudson's Bay boy first hunted and camped. With Kelsey, the result was instant promotion. His wife went home to England, where she was regularly paid his salary, and he rose to a position second only to the venerable old Governor Knight, commander of the entire bay.

Meanwhile, the French were having their own troubles in the captured forts. War had broken out again, and was going against France in Marlborough's victories. The French might hold the bay, but not a pound of provisions could be sent across seas on account of English privateers. The French garrisons of Hudson Bay were starving. Indians, who brought down pelts from the Pays d'En Haut or upcountry—could obtain no goods in barter and having grown dependent on the whiteman's firearms, were in turn reduced to straits.

Lagrange, a gay court adventurer, had come out in 1704 to Nelson, which the French called Bourbon, with a troop of pleasure-seeking men and women for a year's hunting. For one year, the drab monotony of post life was enlivened by a miniature Paris. Wines from the royal cellars flowed like water. The reckless songs of court gallants rang among the rafters, and the slippered feet of more reckless court beauties tripped the light dance over

the rough-timbered floors of the fur post. It was a wild age, and a wild court from which they came to this wilderness—reckless women and reckless men, whose God was Pleasure. Who knows what court intrigue was being hidden and acted out at Port Nelson? Poor butterflies, that had scorched their wings and lost their youth, came here to masquerade! Soldiers of fortune, who had gambled their patrimony in the royal court and stirred up scandal, rusticating in a little log fort in the wilderness! The theme is more romantic than the novelist could conceive.

But war broke out, and Lagrange's gay troop scattered like leaves before the wind. Iberville was dead in Havana. LaFôrest of the Quebec Fur Company had gone back to the St. Lawrence. Jeremie, the interpreter, had gone to France on leave, in 1707, and now in 1708, when the French garrisons were starving and the high seas scoured by privateers—Jeremie came back as governor, under the king. He at once dispatched men to hunt. Nine bushrangers had camped one night near a tent of Crees. The Indians were hungry, sullen, resentful to the whitemen who failed to trade guns and powder as the English had traded. At the fort, they had been turned away with their furs on their hands. It is the characteristic of the French trader that he frequently descends to the level of the Indian.

Jeremie's nine men were, perhaps, slightly intoxicated after their supper of fresh game and strong brandy. Two Indian women came to the camp and invited two Frenchmen to the Indian tents. The fellows tumbled into the trap like the proverbial country jack with the thimblerigger. No sooner had they reached the Indian tepees than they were brained. Seizing the pistols and knives of the dead men, the Indians crept through the thicket to the fire of the bush-rovers. With unearthly yells they fell on the remaining seven and cut them to pieces. One wounded man alone escaped by feigning the rigor of death, while they stripped him naked, and creeping off into hiding of the bushes while the savages devoured the dead. Waiting till they had gone, the wounded man crawled painfully back by night—a distance of thirty miles—to Jeremie, at an outpost. Jeremie quickly withdrew the garrison from the outpost, retreated within the double palisades of Nelson (Bourbon) shot all bolts, unplugged his cannon and awaited siege; but Indians do not attack in the open. Jeremie held the fort till events in Europe relieved him of his charge.

In spite of French victories, as long as Mike Grimmington and Nick Smithsend were bringing home cargoes of thirty thousand beaver a year, the English

Adventurers prospered. In fact, within twenty years of their charter's grant, they had prospered so exceedingly that they no longer had the face to declare such enormous dividends, and on September 3, 1690, it was unanimously decided to treble their original stock from £10,500 to £31,500. The reasons given for this action were: that there were furs of more value than the original capital of the Company now in the Company's warehouses; that the year's cargo was of more value than the original capital of the Company; that the returns in beaver from Nelson and Severn alone this year exceeded £20,000; that the forts and armaments were of great value, and that the Company had reasons to expect £100,000 reparation from the French.

Immediately after the decision, a dividend of 25 per cent. was declared on the trebled stock.

Such prosperity excited envy. The fur buyers and pelt workers and skin merchants of London were up in arms. People began to question whether a royal house, which had been deposed from the English throne, had any right to deed away in perpetuity public domain of such vast wealth to court favorites. Besides, court favorites had scattered with the ruined Stuart House. Newcomers were the holders of the Hudson's Bay Company stock. What right had these newcomers to the privileges of such monopoly?

Especially, what was the meaning of such dividends, when the Company regularly borrowed all the money needed for working operations? As late as 1685, the Company had borrowed £2,000 at 6 per cent. from its own shareholders, and after French disasters began to injure its credit in the London market, it regularly sent agents to borrow money in Amsterdam.

The Company foresaw that the downfall of the Stuarts might affect its monopoly and in 1697 had applied for the confirmation of its charter by Parliament. Against this plea, London fur buyers filed a counter petition: (1) It was too arbitrary a charter to be granted to private individuals. (2) It was of no advantage to the public but a mere stockjobbing concern, £100 worth of stock selling as high as £300, £30 as high as £200. (3) Beaver purchased in Hudson Bay for 6d sold in London for 6s. (4) Monopoly drove the Indians to trade with the French. (5) The charter covered too much territory.

To which the Company made answer that not £1,000 of stock had changed hands in the last year, which was doubtless true; for '97 was the year of the great defeat. The climate would always prevent settlement in Hudson Bay, and most important of all—England would have lost all that region but for the Hudson's Bay Company. In its mood at the time, that was a telling argument with the English Parlia-

ment. Negotiations were in progress with France for a permanent treaty of peace. If the Hudson's Bay Company were dissolved, to whom would all the region revert but to those already in possession—the French? And if the impending war broke out, who would defend the bay from the French but the Company?

By act of Parliament, the charter of the English Adventurers was confirmed for a period of seven years. And more—when an act was passed in 1708 to encourage trade to America, a proviso was inserted that the territory of the Company should not be included in the freedom of trade.

From the time France was beaten in the continental wars, the English Adventurers never ceased to press their claims against France for the restoration of all posts on Hudson Bay and the payment of damages varying in amount from £200,000 to £100,504. Memorials were presented to King William, memorials to Queen Anne. Sir Stephen Evance, the goldsmith, who had become a heavy shareholder through taking stock in payment for his ships chartered to the bay—had succeeded Marlborough as governor in 1692, but the great general was still a friend at Court, and when Evance retired in 1696, Sir William Trumbull, Secretary of State, became governor. Old Governor Knight came from Albany

on the bay, in 1700, to go to France with Sir Bibye Lake and Marlborough to press the claims of the English fur traders against France. For the double claims of restoration and damages, France offered to trade all the posts on the south shore for all the posts on the west shore. The offer was but a parley for better terms. Both English and French fur traders knew that the best furs came from the west posts. Negotiations dragged on to 1710. It was subterraneously conveyed to the English fur traders that France would yield on one point, but not on both: they could have back the bay but not the indemnity; or the indemnity but not the bay. The English fur traders subterraneously conveyed to the commissioners in Holland, that they would accept the restoration of the bay and write off the indemnity bill of £100,000 as bad debts. Such was the Peace of Utrecht, 1713, as it affected the fate of the Hudson's Bay Company.

One point was left unsettled by the treaty. Where was the boundary between bushrangers of New France working north from the St. Lawrence, and the voyageurs of the Hudson's Bay Company, working south from James Bay? A dozen different propositions were made, but none accepted. The dispute came as a heritage to modern days when Quebec and Ontario wrangled out their boundaries,

and Ontario and Manitoba competed for Keewatin, and finally the new province of Saskatchewan disputed Manitoba for a slice giving access to a seaport on Hudson Bay.

The settlement came just in time to save the Company from bankruptcy. The Adventurers had no money to pay their captains. Grimmington and Smithsend accepted pay of £200 apiece in bonds. Yet this same Company so often accused of avarice and tyranny to servants borrowed money to pay £20 each to the seamen surviving the terrible disasters of '97, and donated a special gratuity to Captain Bailey for bringing the books of Nelson safely home. Sir Stephen Evance became governor again in 1700 and transferred £600 of his own stock to Captain Knight as wages for holding Albany. Captains would now accept engagements only on condition of being ransomed if captured, at the Company's expense; and no ship would leave port without a convoy of frigates.

June 2, 1702, the secretary is ordered to pay the cost of making a scarlet coat with lace, for *Nepanah-tay*, the Indian chief, come home with Captain Grimmington.

November 5, 1703, Captain Knight is ordered to take care of the little Indian girl brought home by Captain Grimmington. It is ordered at the same

time that tradesmen's bills shall be paid "as long as the money lasts," but that seamen's wages be paid up to date. Orders are also issued for the gunsmith "to stamp no barrell nor locks with ye compy's marker that are not in every way good and perfect."

Henry Kelsey is now employed at £100 per annum either "to go up country"—meaning inland—or across to East Main (Labrador). When Mike Grimmington is not on the bay in his frigate, he is sent to Russia with beaver, bringing back cargoes of leather. Fullerton takes Knight's place at Albany, with a scale of wages running from £10 to £16 a year for apprentices with a gratuity of 20s a month if they prove worthy; and to Fullerton and the captains of the vessels are sent twenty-three hogsheads of liquor to keep up their courage against the French in 1710. Outward bound the same year, Mike Grimmington, the veteran of a hundred raids, falls desperately ill. Like the Vikings of the North, he will not turn back. If vanquished, he will be vanquished with face to foe. So he meets his Last Foe at sea, and is vanquished of Death on June 15—within a few weeks of Radisson's death—and is buried at Harwich. Learning the news by coureur, the Governing Committee promptly vote his widow, Anne, a gift of £100 and appoints the son, Mike Grimmington, Jr., an apprentice. Sir Bibye Lake, who had helped

to secure the favorable terms of the peace treaty, is voted governor in 1713.

In no year at this period did the sales of furs exceed £100,000 but big cargoes are beginning to come in again, and the Company is able to declare a dividend of 10 per cent. in 1718. Before the French war, the forts had been nothing but a cluster of cabins palisaded. Now the Adventurers determine to strengthen their posts. For the time, Rupert and Severn are abandoned, but stone bastions are built in 1718 at Moose and Albany and Nelson (now known as York) and Churchill. Inland from Albany, Henley House is garrisoned against the French overlanders. At East Main on Slude River a fort is knocked together of driftwood and bowlder and lime.

In spite of increased wages and peace, the Adventurers have great difficulty procuring servants. The war has made known the real perils of the service. Mr. Ramsay is employed in 1707 and Captain John Merry in 1712 to go to the Orkneys for servants—fourteen able-bodied seamen in the former year, forty in the latter, and for the first time there come into the history of the Northwest the names of those Orkney families, whose lives are really the record of the great domain to which they gave their strength—the Belchers and Gunns, and the Carruthers, and the Bannisters, and the Isbisters and the Baileys,

generation after generation, and the Mackenzies, and the Clarkes and the Gwynnes's. Some came as clerks, some as gunners, some as bush-lopers. The lowest wage was 12s a month with a gratuity of £2 on signing the contract. But this did not suffice to bring recruits fast enough for the expanding work of the Company, and there comes jauntily on the scene, in 1711, Mr. Andrew Vallentine of matrimonial fame with secret contracts to supply the Company with apprentices if the Company will supply the dowries for the brides of the said apprentices. As told in a former chapter, "*all proposals to be locked up in ye Iron Chest in a Booke Aparte.*" Dr. Sacheverell, the famous divine, performed the marriage ceremonies; and from an item surreptitiously smuggled into the general minutes of the Company's records instead of "the Booke Aparte," I judge that the marriage portions were on a scale averaging some £70 and £100 each. A Miss Evance is named as one of the brides; so that the affair was no common listing of women for the marriage shambles such as Virginia and Quebec witnessed, but a contract in which even a relative of the Company's governor was not ashamed to enter. Business flourished—as told elsewhere. The marriage office had to have additional apartments in "the Buttery" until about 1735, when lawsuits and the death of Mr. Vallentine

caused a summary shutting down of the enterprise. It had accomplished its aim—brought recruits to the Company.

By 1717 Kelsey, the aforetime apprentice, had become governor of Churchill at £200 a year. One William Stewart and another apprentice, Richard Norton, were sent inland from Churchill to explore and make peace between the tribes. How far north they proceeded is not known—not farther than Chesterfield Inlet, where the water ran with a tide like the sea, and the Indians by signs told legends of vast mines. Kelsey had heard similar tales of mines over on the Labrador coast. Thomas Macklish, who had gone up Nelson River beyond Ben Gillam's Island, heard similar tales. Each of these explorers, the Company rewarded with gratuities ranging from £20 to £100. There were legends, too, at Moose and Rupert of great silver mines toward Temiscamingue —the field of the modern cobalt beds.

The Company determined to inaugurate a policy of search for mineral wealth and exploration for a passage to the South Sea. Old Captain Knight—now in his eighties—had gone back to the bay to receive the posts from the French under Jeremie. He had returned to England and was, in 1718, ordered on a voyage of exploration. He demanded stiff terms for the arduous task. His salary was to be

£400 per annum. He was to have one-tenth profit of all minerals discovered and all new trade established, which was not in furs, such as whale hunting and fishing. He was to be allowed to accept such presents from the evacuating French as he saw fit, and was not to be compelled to winter on the bay. The contract was for four years with the proviso in case of Knight's death, Henry Kelsey was to be governor of all the bay. With a Greenland schooner and a yawl for inland waters, Knight set sail on the frigates bound from England, hopes high as gold miners stampeding to a new field.

Notes on Chapter XV.—The Sandford first sent inland from Albany was a relative of Captain Gillam and was at one time put on the lists for dismissal owing to Ben Gillam's poaching.

Robson casts doubt on Kelsey having gone inland from Nelson, but Robson was writing in a mood of spite toward his former employers. The reasons given for his doubt are two-fold: (1) Kelsey could not have gone five hundred miles in sixty days; (2) in the dry season of July, Kelsey could not have followed any Indian trail. Both objections are absurd. Forty miles a day is not a high average for a good woodsman or canoe-man. As to following a trail in July, the very fact that the grass was so brittle, made it easy to follow recent tracks. Night camp fire and the general direction of the land would be guides enough for a good pathfinder, let alone the crumpled grasses left behind a horde of wandering Indians.

Kelsey's Journal is to be found in the Parliamentary Report of 1749. At the time, it was handed over to Parliament, it was taken from Hudson's Bay House, and is no longer in the records of the Company. The exact itinerary of the journey, I do not attempt to give. Each reader, especially in the West, can guess at it for himself.

It is about this time that Port Nelson became known as York, in honor of the Duke of York, former governor. Hereto-

fore, dispatches were headed "Nelson." Now, they are addressed to "York."

The account of French occupation is to be found in French Marine Archives and in the *Relation of Jeremie, Bernard's Voyages.*

Governor Knight paid £277 to the French for provisions left at Nelson. It was the cargo of furs he sent home in 1714 that enabled the Company to pay its long-standing debts and declare a dividend by 1718.

As York may soon be Manitoba's seaport, it is worth noting that in 1715 Captain Davies spent the entire summer beating about and failed to enter Hayes River for the ice. For this failure, he was severely reprimanded by the Company.

In 1695 the lease was signed for thirty-five years for the premises on Fenchurch Street, occupied till the Company moved to present quarters in Lime Street.

The first map of the bay drawn for the Company was executed in 1684, by John Thornton, for which he was paid £4.

It was in 1686 that the famous Jan Péré, the spy, was discharged from prison and escaped to France.

All trace of young Chouart is lost after 1689, when he came to London from Nelson.

CHAPTER XVI

1719–1740

OLD CAPTAIN KNIGHT BESET BY GOLD FEVER, HEARS THE CALL OF THE NORTH—THE STRAITS AND BAY—THE FIRST HARVEST OF THE SEA AT DEAD MAN'S ISLAND—CASTAWAYS FOR THREE YEARS—THE COMPANY BESET BY GOLD FEVER INCREASES ITS STOCK—PAYS TEN PER CENT. ON TWICE-TREBLED CAPITAL—COMING OF SPIES AGAIN

FROM the time of the first voyage up to Churchill River, in 1686, the fur traders had noticed tribes of Indians from the far North, who wore ornaments of almost pure copper. Chunks of metal, that melted down to lead with a percentage of silver, were brought down to the fur post at Slude River in Labrador on the east side of the bay. Vague tales were told by the wandering Eskimo and Chippewyans at Churchill of a vast copper mine somewhere on that river now known as Coppermine, and of a metal for which the Indians had no name but which white man's avidity quickly recognized as gold dust coming from the far northern realms of iceberg

and frost known as Baffin's Land. How true some of these legends were has been proved by the great cobalt mines of modern Ontario and placers of Alaska. But where lies the hidden treasure trove from which the Indians brought down copper to Churchill, silver to Slude River, and gold dust—if gold it was—from the snowy realm of the Eskimo in the North? Those treasure stores have not yet been uncovered, though science has declared that vast deposits of copper may be found west of Chesterfield Inlet, and placers may at any time be uncovered in Baffin's Land.

The Hudson's Bay charter had been granted in the first place for "the discovery of a passage to the South Sea." At this time, there was great agitation in Russia for the discovery of the Straits of Anian, that were supposed to lead through America from Asia to Europe. Vitus Bering's expedition to find these straits resulted in Russia's discovery of Alaska.

The English Adventurers now kept agents in Russia. They were aware of the projects in the air at the Russian Court. Why not combine the search for the passage to the South Sea with the search for the hidden mines of Indian legends? Besides—the Company had another project in the air. Richard Norton, the apprentice boy, had gone overland north from Churchill almost as far as Chesterfield Inlet.

Chesterfield Inlet seemed to promise the passage to the South Sea; but what was more to the point—the waters in this part of the bay offered great opportunities for whale fisheries. With the threefold commission of discovering mines, the passage to the South Sea, and a whale fishery, old Captain Knight sailed from Gravesend on June 3, 1719, "*so God send the good ships a successful Discovery and to return in safety—your loving friends*"—ran the words of the commission.

Four ships there were in the fleet that sailed this year: *The Mary*, frigate, under Captain Belcher, with Mike Grimmington, Jr., now chief mate, a crew of eighteen and a passenger list of new servants for York and Churchill, among them Henry Kelsey, to be governor during Knight's absence from Churchill; the frigate *Hudson's Bay* under Captain Ward, with twenty-three passengers for the south end of the bay; and the two ships for Knight's venture: *The Discovery*, Captain Vaughan; *The Albany*, Captain Bailey, with fifty men, all told, bound for the unknown North, the three men, Benjamin Fuller, David Newman and John Awdry going as lieutenants to Captain Knight. Henry Kelsey had left his wife in London. Each of the captains had given bonds of £2,000 to obey Knight in all things.

Knight himself is now eighty years of age—an old war horse limbering up to battle at the smell of powder smoke—his ships loaded with iron-hooped treasure casks to carry back the gold dust. The complete frames of houses are carried to build a post in the North, and among his fifty men are iron forgers, armorers, whalers from Dundee, and a surgeon paid the unusual salary of £50 a year on account of the extraordinary dangers of this voyage. Bailey was probably the son of that Bayly, who was first governor for the Adventurers on the bay. A seasoned veteran, he had passed through the famous siege of Nelson in '97. When Knight had left Albany to come to England, Fullerton was deputy and Bailey next in command. There was peace with France, but that had not prevented a score of French raiders coming overland to ambush the English. Bailey got wind of the raiders hiding in the woods round Albany and shutting gates, bided his time. Word was sent to the mate of his ship lying off shore, at the sound of a cannon shot to rush to the rescue. At midnight a thunderous hammering on the front gates summoned the English to surrender. Bailey gingerly opened the wicket at the side of the gate and asked what was wanted.

"Entrance," yelled the raiders, confident that they had taken the English by surprise.

Bailey answered that the Governor was asleep, but he would go and fetch the keys. The raiders rallied to the gate. Bailey put the match lighters to the six-pounders inside and let fly simultaneous charges across the platform where the raiders crowded against the gate. There was instant slaughter, a wild yell, and a rush for cover in the woods, but the cannon shot had brought the master of Bailey's sloop running ashore. Raiders and sailors dashed into each other's faces, with the result that the crew were annihilated in the dark. For some days the raiders hung about the outskirts of the woods, burying the dead, waiting for the wounded to heal, and hunting for food. A solitary Frenchman was observed parading the esplanade in front of the fort. Fullerton came out and demanded what he wanted. The fellow made no answer but continued his solitary march up and down under the English guns. Fullerton offered to accept him as a hostage for the others' good conduct, but the man was mute as stone. The English governor bade him be off, or he would be shot. The strange raider continued his odd tramp up and down till a shot from the fort window killed him instantly. The only explanation of the incident was that the man must have been crazed by the hardship of the raid and by the horrors of the midnight slaughter.

Bailey, then, was the man chosen as the captain of *The Albany* and Knight's right-hand man.

The ships were to keep together till they reached the entrance of the straits, the two merchantmen under Ward and Belcher then to go forward to the fur posts, Knight's two ships straight west for Chesterfield Inlet, where he was to winter. Two guineas each, the Adventurers gave the crews of each ship that afternoon on June 3, at Gravesend, to drink "*God-speed, a prosperous discovery, a faire wind, and a good sail.*"

As a railway is now being actually built after being projected on paper for more than twenty-five years—from the western prairie to a seaport on Hudson Bay, which has for its object the diversion of Western traffic to Europe from New York to some harbor on Hudson Bay, it is necessary to give in detail what the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company reveal about this route. Hudson Strait opens from the Atlantic between Resolution Island on the north and the Button Islands on the south. From point to point, this end of the strait is forty-five miles wide. At the other end, the west side, between Digges' Island and Nottingham Island, is a distance of thirty-five miles. From east to west, the straits are four hundred and fifty miles long—wider at the east where the south

side is known as Ungava Bay, contracting at the west, to the Upper Narrows. The south side of the strait is Labrador; the north, Baffin's Land. Both sides are lofty, rocky, cavernous shores lashed by a tide that rises in places as high as thirty-five feet and runs in calm weather ten miles an hour. Pink granite islands dot the north shore in groups that afford harborage; but all shores present an adamant front, edges sharp as a knife or else rounded hard to have withstood and cut the tremendous ice jam of a floating world suddenly contracted to forty miles, which Davis Strait pours down at the east end and Fox Channel at the west.

Seven hundred feet is considered a good-sized hill; one thousand feet, a mountain. Both the north and the south sides of the straits rise two thousand feet in places. Through these rock walls ice has poured and torn and ripped a way since the ice age preceding history, cutting a great channel to the Atlantic. Here, the iron walls suddenly break to secluded silent valleys moss-padded, snow-edged, lonely as the day Earth first saw light. Down these valleys pour the clear streams of the eternal snows, burnished as silver against the green, setting the silence echoing with the tinkle of cataracts over some rock wall, or filling the air with the voice of many waters at noontide thaw. One old navigator—Coates—describes the

beat of the angry tide at the rock base and the silver voice of the mountain brooks, like the treble and bass of some great cathedral organ sounding its diapason to the glory of God in this peopleless wilderness.

Perhaps the kyacks of some solitary Eskimo, lashed abreast twos and threes to prevent capsizing, may shoot out from some of these bog-covered valleys like seabirds; but it is only when the Eskimos happen to be hunting here, or the ships of the whalers and fur traders are passing up and down—that there is any sign of human habitation on the straits.

Walrus wallow on the pink granite islands in huge herds. Polar bears flounder from icepan to icepan. The arctic hare, white as snow but for the great bulging black eye, bounds over the bowlders. Snow buntings, whistling swans, snow geese, ducks in myriads—flacker and clacker and hold solemn conclave on the adjoining rocks, as though this were their realm from the beginning and for all time.

Of a tremendous depth are the waters of the straits. Not for nothing has the ice world been grinding through this narrow channel for billions of years. No fear of shoals to the mariner. Fear is of another sort. When the ice is running in a whirlpool and the incoming tide meets the ice jam and the waters mount thirty-five feet high and a wind roars between the high shores like a bellows—then it

is that the straits roll and pitch and funnel their waters into black troughs where the ships go down. "Undertow," the old Hudson's Bay captains called the suck of the tide against the ice-wall; and that black hole where the lumpy billows seemed to part like a passage between wall of ice and wall of water was what the mariners feared. The other great danger was just a plain crush, getting nipped between two icepans rearing and plunging like fighting stallions, with the ice blocks going off like pistol shots or smashed glass. No child's play is such navigating either for the old sailing vessels of the fur traders or the modern ice-breakers propelled by steam! Yet, the old sailing vessels and the whaling fleets have navigated these straits for two hundred years.

Westward of the straits, the shores dropped to low, sandy reaches at Mansfield Island. Another five hundred miles across the bay brought the ships to Churchill and York (Nelson).

Here, then, came Captain Knight's fleet. And the terrific dangers of his venture met him—as it were—on the spot. The records do not give the exact point of the disaster, but one may guess without stretching imagination that it was in the Upper Narrows where thirty-five feet of lashing tide meet a churning wall of ice.

The ships were embayed, sails lowered, rudders

unshipped, and anchors put out for the night. Night did not mean dark. It meant the sunlight aslant the ice fields and pools in hues of fire that tinted the green waves and set rainbows playing in the spray. Gulls wheeled and screamed overhead. Cascades tinkled over the ice walls. There was the deep stillness of twilight calm, then the quiver of the ship's timbers forewarning the rising tide, then the long, low undertone of the ocean depths gathering might to hurl against the iron forces of the ice. The crews had been rambling over the ice but were now recalled to be on the watch as the tide rose. Some were at the windlass ready to heave anchors up at first opening of clear water; others ready to lower boats and tow from dangers; others again preparing blasts of powder to blow up the ice if the tide threatened to close the floes in a squeeze. Captain Ward's men must have been out on the ice, for it happened in the twinkling of an eye as such wrecks always happened, and not a man was lost. Two icepans reared up, smashed together, crushed the frigate *Hudson's Bay*, like an eggshell and she sank a water-logged wreck before their eyes. Ward's crew were at once taken on board by Belcher, and when the ice loosened, carried on down to York and Albany. There was a lawsuit against the Company for the wages of these men wrecked outward bound

and kept in idleness on the bay for thirteen months. The matter was compromised by the Company paying ten months' wages instead of thirteen.

Captain Knight waited only long enough at Churchill to leave the fort provisions. Then he set out on his quest to the north. This could scarcely be described as foolhardy, for his ships carried the frames for houses to winter in the North. From this point on, the story must be pieced together of fragments. From the time Captain Knight left Churchill, in 1719, his journal ceases. No line more came from the game old pathfinder to the Company. The year 1719 passed, 1720, 1721, still no word of him. Surely, he must have passed through the Straits of Anian to the South Sea and would presently come home from Asia laden with spices and gold dust for the Company. But why didn't he send back one of the little whaling boats to Churchill with word of his progress; or why didn't some of the men come down from the whaling station he was to establish at Chesterfield Inlet? Henry Kelsey takes a cruise on the sloop *Prosperous* from York, in 1719, but finds no trace of him. Hancock has been cruising the whaling seas on *The Success* that same summer, but he learns nothing of Knight. The whole summer of 1721, while whaling, Kelsey is on the lookout for

the peaked sails of Knight's ships; but he sees never a sail. Napper is sent out again on the sloop *Success*, but he runs amuck of a reef four days from Nelson River and loses his ship and almost his life.

Three full years were long enough for Knight to have circumnavigated the globe. By 1721, the Company was so thoroughly alarmed that it bought *The Whalebone*, sloop—John Scroggs, master—and sent it from Gravesend on the 31st of May to search for Knight. Two years Scroggs searched the northwest coast of the bay, but the northwest coast of the bay is one thousand miles in and out, and Scroggs missed the hidden hole-in-the-wall that might have given up the secret of the sea. Norton traveling inland with the Indians hears disquieting stories, and some whalers chancing North, in 1726, discover a new harbor at the bottom of which lie cannon, anchors, bits of iron, but it is not till fifty years later that the story is learned in detail.

Here it is:

Knight steered for that western arm of the sea known as Chesterfield Inlet. It was here that Norton had heard legends of copper mines and seen evidences of tide water. Just south of Chesterfield Inlet is a group of white quartz islands the largest five by twenty miles, known as Marble Island, from the fact that it is bare of growth as a gravestone.

Bedford whalers of modern days have called it by another name—Dead Man's Island.

At the extreme east is a hole-like cavity in the rock wall where Eskimos were wont to shoot in with their bladder boats and hide from the fury of the northeast gale. One night as the autumn storms raged, the Indians were amazed to see two huge shadows emerge from the lashing hurricane like floating houses—driving straight as an arrow for the mark to certain destruction between an angry sea and the rock wall. If there were cries for help, they were drowned by the shrieks of the hurricane. In the morning, when the storm had abated, the Indians saw that the shadows had been whitemen's ships. The large one had struck on the reefs and sunk. The other was a mass of wave-beaten wreckage on the shore, but the white men were toiling like demons, saving the timbers. Presently, the whites began to erect a framework—their winter house. To the wondering Eskimos, the thing rose like magic. The Indians grasped their kyacks and fled in terror.

It need scarcely be told—these were Knight's treasure-seekers, wrecked without saving a pound of provisions on an island bare as a billiard ball twenty miles from the mainland. How did the crews pass that winter? Their only food must have been such wild cranberries as they could gather under the

drifting snows, arctic hares, snowbirds, perhaps the carcass of an occasional dead porpoise or whale. When the Indians came back in the summer of 1720, there were very few whitemen left, but there was a great number of graves—graves scooped out of drift sand with bowlders for a tombstone. The survivors seemed to be starving. They fell like wild beasts on the raw seal meat and whale oil that the Eskimos gave them. They seemed to be trying to make a boat out of the driftwood that had been left of that winter's fuel. The next time the Eskimos visited the castaways, there were only two men alive. These were demented with despair, passing the time weeping and going to the highest rock on the island to watch for a sail at sea. Their clothes had been worn to tatters. They were clad in the skins of the chase and looked like madmen. From the Indians' account, it was now two years from the time of the wreck. What ammunition had been saved from the ships, must have been almost exhausted. How these two men kept life in their bodies for two winters in the most bitterly cold, exposed part of Hudson Bay, huddling in their snow-buried hut round fires of moss and driftwood, with the howling north wind chanting the death song of the winding sheet, and the scream of the hungry were-wolf borne to their ears in the storm—can better be imagined than described.

Why did not they try to escape? Possibly, because they were weakened by famine and scurvy. Surely Bering's Russians managed better when storm cast them on a barren island while they were searching this same mythical passage. They drifted home on the wreckage. Why could not these men have tried to escape in the same way? In the first place, they did not know they were only twelve miles from the main coast. Cast on Marble Island in the storm and the dark, they had no idea where they were, except that it was in the North and in a harbor facing east. Of the two last survivors, one seemed to be the armorer, or else that surgeon who was to receive £50 for the extraordinary dangers of this voyage, for he was constantly working with metal instruments to rivet the planks of his raft together. But he was destined to perish as his comrades. When his companion died, the man tried to scoop out a grave in the sand. It was too much for his strength. He fell as he toiled over the grave and died among the Eskimo tents. So perished Captain Knight and his treasure-seekers, including the veteran Bailey—as Hudson had perished before them—taken as toll of man's progress by the insatiable sea. Not a secret has been wrested from the Unknown, not a milepost won for civilization from savagery, but some life has paid for the secret to go down in despair

and defeat; but some bleaching skeleton of a nameless failure marks where the mile forward was won. The lintel of every doorway to advancement is ever marked with some blood sacrifice.

Whalers in 1726, saw the cannon and anchors lying at the bottom of the harbor, also casks with iron hoops—that were to bring back the gold dust. Hearne, in 1769, could count where the graves had been scraped up by the wolves, and he gathered up the skeletons along the beach to bury them in a common grave. Latterly, oddly enough, that island was the rendezvous of Northern whalers—where they came from the far North to bury their dead and set up crosses for those who lie in the sea without a grave. It was known as Dead Man's Island.

After giving an account of three wrecks in four years, I hope it may not seem inconsistent to say that I believe the next century will see a Hudson's Bay route to Europe. What—you say—after telling of three wrecks in four years? Yes—what Atlantic port does not have six wrecks in ten years? New York and Montreal have more. If the Hudson's Bay route is not fit for navigation, the country must make it fit for navigation. Of telegraphs, shelters, lighthouses, there is not now one. Canals have been dug for less cause than the Upper Narrows of Hudson

Straits. If Peter the Great had waited till St. Petersburg was a fit site for a city, there would have been no St. Petersburg. He made it fit. The same problem confronts northwest America to-day. It is absurd that a population of millions has no seaport nearer than two thousand miles. Churchill or York would be seaports in the middle of the continent. Of course, there would be wrecks and difficulties. *The wrecks are part of the toll we pay for harnessing the sea. The difficulties are what make nations great.* One day was the delay allowed the fur ships for the straits. Who has not waited longer than one day to enter New York harbor or Montreal?

Meanwhile, moneybags at home were counting their shekels. A wild craze of speculation was sweeping over England. It was a fever of getting-something-for-nothing, floating wild schemes of paper capital to be sold to the public for pounds, shillings and pence. In modern language it would be called "wild-catting." The staid "old Worthies"—as the Adventurers were contemptuously designated—were caught by the craze. It was decided on August 19, 1720, to increase the capital of the Company from £31,500 to £378,000 to be paid for in subscriptions of 10 per cent. installments. Before the scheme had matured, the bubble of speculation had collapsed.

Money could neither be borrowed nor begged. The plan to enlarge the stock was dropped as it stood—with subscriptions to the amount of £103,950 paid in—which practically meant that the former capital of £31,500 had been trebled and an additional 10 per cent. levied.

On this twice-trebled capital of £103,950, dividends of 5 per cent. were paid in 1721; of 8 per cent. in 1722; of 12 per cent. in 1723 and '24; of 10 per cent. from 1725 to 1737, when the dividends fell to 8 per cent. and went up again to 10 per cent. in 1739. From 1723, instead of leaving the money idle in the strong box, it was invested by the Company in bonds that bore interest till their ships came home. From 1735, the Bank of England regularly advanced money for the Company's operations. Sir Bibye Lake was governor from the time he received such good terms in the French treaty. The governor's salary is now £200, the deputy's £150, the committeemen £100 each.

It was in February, 1724, that a warehouse was leased in Lime Street at £12 a year, the present home of the Company.

In four years, the Company had lost four vessels. These were replaced by four bigger frigates, and there come into the service the names of captains famous on Hudson Bay—Belcher, and Goston, and

Spurell, and Kennedy, and Christopher Middleton, and Coates, and Isbister, with officers of the names of Inkster, and Kipling, and Maclish, and MacKenzie, and Gunn, and Clement. Twice in ten years, Captain Coates is wrecked in the straits, on the 26th of June, 1727, outward bound with all cargo and again on the frigate *Hudson's Bay* in 1736, when "*we sank*," relates Coates, "*less than ten minutes after we were caught by the ice.*"

From being an apprentice boy traveling inland to the Indians, Richard Norton has become governor of Churchill, with an Indian wife and half-Indian sons sent to England for education. Norton receives orders, in 1736, once more to explore Chesterfield Inlet where Knight had perished. Napper on *The Churchill*, sloop, and Robert Crow on *The Musquash* carry him up in the summer of 1737. Napper dies of natural causes on the voyage, but Chesterfield Inlet is found to be a closed arm of the sea, not a passage to the Pacific; and widow Napper is voted fifty guineas from the Company. Kelsey dies in 1729, and widow Kelsey, too, is voted a bounty of ten guineas, her boy to be taken as apprentice.

In 1736, Captain Middleton draws plans for the building of a fine new post at Moose and of a stone fort at Eskimo Point, Churchill, which shall be the strongest fort in America. The walls are to be six-

teen feet high of solid stone with a depth of twenty-four feet solid masonry at base. On the point opposite Eskimo Cape, at Cape Merry, named after the deputy governor, are to be blockhouses ten feet high with six great guns mounted where watch is to be kept night and day.

Moose will send up the supply of timber for Churchill, and the Company sends from London sixty-eight builders, among whom is one Joseph Robson, at £25 a year, who afterward writes furious attacks on the Company. Barely is Moose completed when it is burned to the ground, through the carelessness of the cook spilling coals from his bake oven.

Two things, perhaps, stirred the Company up to this unwonted activity. Spies were coming overland from St. Lawrence—French explorers working their way westward, led by La Vérendrye. "*We warn you,*" the Company wrote to each of its factors at this time, "*meet these spies very civily but do not offer to detain them and on no account suffer such to come within the gates nor let the servants converse with them, and use all legal methods to make them depart and be on your guard not to tell the company's secrets.*"

Then in 1740, came a bolt from the blue. Captain Christopher Middleton, their trusted officer, publicly resigned from the service to go into the

King's navy for the discovery of a Northwest Passage through Hudson Bay.

Notes on Chapter XVI.—Of Baffin's Land, Dr. Bell, who personally explored Hudson Bay in 1885 for the Dominion Government, says: "These ancient grounds probably contain rich placer gold in the valleys of the streams." The mica mines of Baffin's Land were being mined in 1906.

The name of the captain, who perished with Knight, is our friend Bailey of the Iberville siege; not Barlow, as all modern histories copying from Hearne and 1749 Parl. Report give. The minutes of the H. B. C. show that Barlow is a misprint for Berley, and Berley for Bailey, which name is given repeatedly in the minutes in connection with this voyage.

The account of Bering's efforts to find the Straits of Anian and of his similar fate will be found in "*Vikings of the Pacific.*"

All the printed accounts of Knight's disaster say he wintered at Churchill in 1719–20. This is wrong, as shown by the unprinted records of H. B. C. He sailed at once for the North. All printed accounts—except Hearne's—give the place of disaster as the west end of Marble Island. This is a mistake. It was at the east end as given in the French edition of Hearne. Hearne it is, who gives the only account of Bailey's defense of Albany in 1704, only Hearne calls Bailey, Barlow, which the records show to be wrong.

An almost parallel wreck to that of Knight's took place at Gull Island off Newfoundland twenty-five years ago. A whole shipload of castaways perished on a barren island in sight of their own harbor lights, only in the case of Gull Island, the castaways did not survive longer than a few weeks. They lived under a piece of canvas and subsisted on snow-water.

It was not till 1731 that Knight's Journals as left at Churchill were sent home to London. They cease at 1719.

Richard Norton first went North by land in 1718. His next trip was after Knight's death; his next, by boat as told in this chapter.

In 1723, Samuel Hopkins was sent home in irons from Albany for three times absconding over the walls to the woods without Governor Myatt's leave. Examined by the committee, he would give no excuse and was publicly dismissed with loss of

wages. Examined later privately, he was re-engaged with honor—which goes to prove that Myatt may have been one of those governors, who ruled his men with the thick end of an oar.

At this period, servants for the first time were allowed to go to the woods to trap and were given one half the proceeeds of their hunt.

CHAPTER XVII

1740–1770

THE COMPANY'S PROSPERITY AROUSES OPPOSITION—ARTHUR DOBBS AND THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE AND THE ATTACK ON THE CHARTER—NO NORTHWEST PASSAGE IS FOUND BUT THE FRENCH SPUR THE ENGLISH TO RENEWED ACTIVITY

FOR fifty years, the Company had been paying dividends that never went lower than 7 per cent. and generally averaged 10. These dividends were on capital that had been twice trebled. The yearly fur sales yielded from £20,000 to £30,000 to the Adventurers—twice and three times the original capital, which—it must be remembered—was not all subscribed in cash. French hunters had been penetrating America from the St. Lawrence. Bering had discovered Alaska on the west for Russia. La Vérendrye had discovered the great inland plains between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri, for France. It was just beginning to dawn on men's minds what a vast domain lay between the plantations of the Atlantic seaboard and the Western Sea. It was inevitable that men should ask themselves

whether Charles II. had any right to deed away forever that vast domain to those court favorites and their heirs known as the Hudson's Bay Company. To be sure, Parliament had confirmed the charter when the Stuart House fell; but the charter had been confirmed for only seven years. Those seven years had long since expired, and the original stock of the fur company had passed from the heirs of the original grantees to new men—stock speculators and investors. With the exception of royalty, there was not a single stockholder of the Hudson's Bay Company by 1740, who was an heir of the original men named in the original charter. Men asked themselves—had these stockholders any right to hold monopoly against all other traders over a western domain the size of half Europe? The charter had been granted in the first place as a reward for efforts to find passage to the South Sea. What had the Company done to find a passage to the Pacific? Sent Knight and his fifty men hunting gold sands in the North, where they perished; and dispatched half a dozen little sloops north of Chesterfield Inlet to hunt whales. This had the Adventurers done to earn their charter, and ever since sat snugly at home drawing dividends on twice-trebled capital equal to 90 per cent. on the original stock, intrenched behind the comfortable feudal notion that it was

the manifest design of an All Wise Providence to create this world for the benefit of the few who can get on top and exploit the many to the profit of the aforesaid few.

We, whose modern democracy is working tenfold worse injustice by favors to the few against the many, must have a care how we throw stones at that old notion. Feudalism in the history of the race—had its place. It was the system by which the bravest man led the clan and ruled because he was fittest to rule as well as to protect. Of all those rivals now yelping enviously at the Company's privileges—which could point to an ancestor, who had been willing to brave the perils of a first essay to Hudson Bay? We have seen how even yet the Company could obtain servants only by dint of promising bounties and wives and dowries; how the men under command of the first navigators balked and reared and mutinied at the slightest risk; how—in spite of all we can say against feudalism—it was the spirit of feudalism, the spirit of the exclusive favored few, that faced the first risks and bought success by willing, reckless death, and later fought like demons to hold the bay against France.

It was one Arthur Dobbs, a gentleman and scholar, who voiced the general sentiment rising against the

privileges of the Company. Dobbs had been bitten by that strange mania which had lured so many and was yet to lure more brave seamen to their death. He was sure there was a Northwest Passage. Granted that; and the sins of the fur traders became enormities. Either they had not earned their charter by searching the Northwest Passage, or if they had found it, they had kept the discovery a secret through jealousy of their trade. Dobbs induced the Admiralty to set aside two vessels for the search. Then he persuaded Captain Middleton, who had for twenty years navigated Hudson Bay, to resign the service of the Company and lead the government expedition of 1741–2.

Around this expedition raged a maelstrom of ill feeling and false accusations and lies. The Company were jealous of their trade and almost instantly instructed their Governing Committee to take secret means to prevent this expedition causing encroachment on their rights. This only aroused the fury of the Admiralty. The Company were given to understand that if they did not do all they could to facilitate Middleton's search, they might lose their charter. On this, the Company ordered their factors on the bay to afford Middleton every aid, but judging from the factors' conduct, it may be surmised that secret instructions of another nature were sent out.

When Middleton came to Churchill in July on *The Furnace Bomb* and *Discovery*, he found buoys cut, harbor lights out and a governor mad as a hornet, who forbade the searchers to land, or have any intercourse with the Indians. Taking two Indians as guides, Middleton proceeded north as far as 66°—in the region of Rowe's Welcome beyond Chesterfield Inlet. Here, he was utterly blocked by the ice, and the expedition returned to England a failure.

It was at this point the furor arose. It was charged that the Company had bribed Middleton with £5,000 not to find a passage; that he had sailed east instead of west; that he had cast the two Indian guides adrift at Marble Island with scant means of reaching the main shore alive; and that while wintering in Churchill he had been heard to say, "That the Company need not be uneasy, for if he did find a passage, no one on earth would be a bit the wiser." The quarrel, which set England by the ears for ten years and caused a harvest of bitter pamphlets that would fill a small library—need not be dealt with here.

Middleton knew there was no passage for commercial purpose. That the Admiralty accepted his verdict may be inferred from the fact that he was permanently appointed in the king's service; but

Dobbs was not satisfied. He hurled baseless charges at Middleton, waged relentless pamphlet war against the Company and showered petitions on Parliament. Parliament was persuaded to offer a reward of £20,000 to any one finding a passage to the Pacific. Dobbs then formed an opposition company, opened subscriptions for a capital of £10,000 in one hundred shares of £100 each for a second expedition, and petitioned the king for a grant of all lands found adjacent to the waters discovered, *with the rights of exclusive trade. Exclusive trade!* There—the secret was out—the cloven hoof! It was not because they had not earned their charter, that the Adventurers had been assailed; but because rivals, themselves, wanted rights to exclusive trade. To these petitions, the Company showered back counter-memorials; and memorials of special privileges becoming the fashion, other merchants of London, in 1752, asked for the grant of all Labrador; to which the Company again registered its counter-memorial.

The furor materialized in two things: the expedition of the Dobbs Company to find the Northwest Passage in 1746–47, and the Parliamentary Inquiry, in 1748–49, to look into the rights and workings of the Adventurers' charter.

The Dobbs galley, under Captain Moore was one hundred and eighty tons; *The California*, Captain

Smith, one hundred and forty tons; and to the crews of both, rewards for the discovery of the Passage to the South Sea were to be given ranging from £500 for the captains to £200 to be divided among the sailors. Henry Ellis went as agent for the Dobbs Company. The name of *The California* was indicative of where these argonauts hoped to sail. Oddly enough, that Captain Middleton, whom the Dobbs forces had so mercilessly belabored—accompanied the explorers some distance westward from the Orkneys on *The Shark* as convoy against French pirates. After leaving Middleton, one of the vessels suffered an experience that very nearly finished Arthur Dobbs' enterprise. "Nothing had occurred," writes Ellis, "till the 21st of June, at night, when a terrible fire broke out in the great cabin of *The Dobbs*, and quickly made progress to the powder room, where there were not less than thirty-six or forty barrels of powder besides other combustibles. It is impossible to express the consternation. Every one on board had every reason to expect that moment was their last. You might hear all varieties of sea-eloquence, cries, prayers, curses, scolding, mingled together. Water was passed along by those who still preserved their reason, but the crew were for hoisting out the boats. Lashings were cut, but none had patience to hoist them out. The ship was head

to wind, the sails shaking and making a noise like thunder, then running right before the wind and rolling, every one on deck waiting for the blast to put an end to our fears."

The fire was put out before it reached the powder, but one can guess the scare dampened the ardor of the crew. Very little ice was met in Hudson Straits and by August 19, the vessels were at Marble Island. The season was too late to go on north, so the ships sailed to winter at York (Nelson) on Hayes River. Here, the usual quarrels took place with the Hudson's Bay people—buoys and flag signals being cut down as the ships ran through the shoals of Five-Fathom Hole, five miles up Hayes River. A fort called Montague House was built for the winter on the south side, the main house being a two-story log-barracks, the outbuildings, a sort of lean-to, or wooden wigwam banked up with snow, where the crews could have quarters. The harbor was frozen over by October 8. Heavy fur clothing was then donned for the winter, but in spite of precautions against scurvy—exercise, the use of spruce beer, out-door life—four men died from the disease before ice cleared from Hayes River in June.

It need not be told here that no passage was found. As the boats advanced farther and farther north of Rowe's Welcome toward Fox Channel, the hope-

lessness of the quest became apparent. Before them lay an ice world, "As gloomy a prospect," writes Ellis, "as ever astonished mortal eyes. The ragged rocks seemed to hang above our heads. In some places there were falls of water dashing from cliff to cliff. From others, hung icicles like the pipes of a vast organ. But the most overwhelming things were the shattered crags at our feet, which appeared to have burst from the mountains through the power of the frost—amazing relics of the wreck of nature." In October of 1747, the ships were back on the Thames.

If Dobbs' Expedition had found a Northwest Passage, the history of the Adventurers would close here. With the merchants of London a unit against the charter and the Admiralty open to persuasion from either side, there can be no doubt that the discovery of a way to China through Hudson Bay would have sounded the death knell of the Company. But the Dobbs Expedition was a failure. The Company's course was vindicated, and when the Parliamentary Committee of 1748–49 met, affairs were *judiciously* and I must believe *intentionally steered* away from the real question—the validity of the charter—to such side issues as the Northwest Passage, the state of the Indians, whether the coun-

try could be inhabited or not, questions—it will be noticed—on which no one was competent to give evidence but the Company itself. Among other evidence, there was quietly laid on the table the journals of one Joseph La France, a French woodrover who had come overland from Michilimackinac to Hudson Bay. This record showed that France was already on the field in the West. La Vérendrye and his sons were on their way to the Rockies. Three forts were already built on the Assiniboine. Such evidence could have only one influence on Parliament. If Parliament took away the charter from the Company—declared, in fact, that the charter was not legal—who would hold the vast domain against France? The question of the abstract right did not come up at all. Does it ever in international affairs? The question was one for diplomacy, and diplomacy won. It was better for England that the Adventurers should remain in undisturbed possession; and the Company retained its charter.

Meanwhile, that activity among the French fur traders stirred up the old Company as all the home agitation could not. Each of the forts, Churchill farthest north, York on Hayes River, Albany, and Henley House up Albany River, Moose (Rupert lay

dismantled these years) and Richmond Fort on the east side of the bay, were strengthened by additions to the garrisons of from thirty to fifty men. Each of the four frigates sent out by the Company had a crew of fifty men, among whom was one young sailor, Samuel Hearne, of whom more anon. Every year took out more cannon for the forts, more builders for Churchill, now a stone-walled fort strong as Quebec. Joseph Isbister, who had been governor at Albany and made some inland voyages from Churchill, was permanently appointed, from 1770, as agent at Quebec to watch what rival fur traders were doing; and when he died, Hugh Findlay succeeded him. A new house was rushed up on Severn River in 1756, to attract those Indians of Manitoba where the French were established. Lest other merchants should petition for Labrador, the Slude River Station was moved to Richmond Fort and Captain Coates appointed to survey the whole east coast of Hudson Bay, for which labor he was given a present of £80. Poor Coates! This was in 1750. Within a year, he is hauled up for illicit trade and dismissed ignominiously from the service; whereat he suicides from disgrace. Eight years later, Richmond Fort is closed at a loss of £20,000, but it has shut the mouths of other petitioners for Labrador.

It is in 1757, too, that the Company inaugurates

its pension system—withholding 5 per cent. of wages for a fund. As if Joseph La France's journal had not been alarming enough, there comes overland to Nelson, in 1759, that Jan Ba'tiste Larlée, a spy whom the English engage and vote a wig (£1 5s) "*to keep him loyal.*"

At Henley House up Albany River, pushing trade to attract the Indians away from the French, is that Andrew Graham, whose diary gives such a picture of the period. Richard Norton of Churchill is long since dead. Of his half-breed sons educated in England, William has become a captain; Moses, from being sailor under Middleton, wins distinction as explorer of Chesterfield Inlet and rises to become governor at Churchill. Among the recruits of the increasing garrisons are names famous in the West —Bannister's and Spencer's and Flett's. By way of encouraging zeal, the Company, in 1770, increases salaries for chief traders to £130 a year, for captains to £12 a month with a gratuity of £100 if they have no wreck. Each chief trader is to have added to his salary three shillings for every twenty beaver sent home from his department; each captain, one shilling sixpence for every twenty beaver brought safely to England. As these bounties amounted to £108 and £150 a year, they more than doubled salaries. I am sorry to say that at this period,

brandy began to be plied freely. French power had fallen at Quebec in 1759. French traders were scattered through the wilds—birds of passage, free as air, lawless as birds, too, who lured the Indians from the English by the use of liquor. If an English trader ventured among Indians, who knew the customs of the French, and did not proffer a keg of watered brandy, he was apt to be forthwith douched "*baptized*"—the Indians called it.

But the greatest activity displayed by the English at this time was inland from the bay. If Joseph La France could come overland from Lake Superior, English traders could be sent inland. Andrew Graham is ordered to keep his men at Severn and Albany moving up stream. One Isaac Butt is paid £14 for his voyaging, and in 1756 the Company votes £20 to Anthony Hendry for his remarkable voyage from York to the Forks of the Saskatchewan—the first Englishman to visit this now famous region. Hendry's voyage merits a detailed account in the next chapter.

Notes to Chapter XVII.—The list of governors at this period is: Sir Bibye Lake, 1712–1743; Benjamin Pitt, 1743–1746, when he died; Thomas Knapp, 1746–1750; Sir Atwell Lake, 1750–1760; Sir William Baker, 1760–1770; Bibye Lake, Jr., 1770–1782.

The controversy between the Company and Dobbs fills volumes. Ellis and Dobbs need not be taken seriously. They were for the time maniacs on the subject of a passage that had no existence except in their own fancy. Robson is different.

Having been a builder at Churchill, he knew the ground, yet we find him uttering such absurd charges as that the Company purposely sent Governor Knight to his death and were glad "that the troublesome fellow was out of the way." This is both malicious and ignorant, for as Robson knew, the North-west Passage played a very secondary part in Knight's fatal voyage. The Company just as much as Knight was infatuated with the lure of gold-dust. Perhaps, it will some day prove not so foolish an infatuation. Gold placers have been found in Klondike. Indian legend says they also exist in the ices of the East.

The Parliamentary Report for 1749 is an excellent example of investigating "off the beat." The only thing of value in the report is Joseph La France's Journal. It is valuable not as a voyage—for this trip was well tracked from the days of Radisson and Iberville—but as a description of the French posts on the Saskatchewan, which Hendry visited—Pachegoia or Pasquia or the Pas and Bourbon—and as helping to identify the Indians, whom Hendry met.

La Vérendrye voyages are not given here, because not relative to the subject. His life will be found in "Pathfinders of the West."

The Canadian Archives give Hendry's name as Hendey. It is spelt Hendry in the H. B. C. minutes.

In 1746 the warehouse on Lime Street was purchased for £550. This year, too, comes a letter to the Company from Captain Lee of Virginia, warning that a French pirate of two hundred and fifty men, which captured him, is on the lookout for the fur ships.

Sharpe was the lawyer who engineered the Parliamentary Inquiry of 1749. I find his charges in the Minutes £250 and £505.

John Potts was the trader of Richmond, when Coates was captain.

In 1766, Samuel Hearne's name appears as on the pay roll of *The Prince Rupert*.

Whale fisheries were now flourishing on the bay, for which each captain received a bounty of 25 per cent. on net proceeds.

In 1769, the Company issued as standard of trade 3 marten, 1 beaver; 2 fox, 3 beaver; gray fox, 4 beaver; white fox, ½ beaver; 1 otter, 1 beaver.

CHAPTER XVIII

1754–1755

THE MARCH ACROSS THE CONTINENT BEGINS—THE COMPANY SENDS A MAN TO THE BLACKFEET OF THE SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN—ANTHONY HENDRY IS THE FIRST ENGLISHMAN TO PENETRATE TO THE SASKATCHEWAN—THE FIRST ENGLISHMAN TO WINTER WEST OF LAKE WINNIPEG—HE MEETS THE SIOUX AND THE BLACKFEET AND INVITES THEM TO THE BAY

NOTHING lends more romantic coloring to the operations of the fur traders on Hudson Bay than the character of the men in the service. They were adventurers, pure and simple, in the best and the worst sense of that term. Peter Romulus, the foreign surgeon, rubbed elbows with Radisson, the Frenchman. A nephew of Sir Stephen Evance—come out under the plain name, Evans—is under the same roof as a niece of the same governor of the Company, who has come to the bay as the doweried wife of an apprentice. Younger sons of the English gentry entered the service on the same level as the Cockney apprentice. Rough Ork-

ney fishermen—with the thick burr of the North in their accent, the iron strength of the North in their blood, and a periphery of Calvinistic self-righteousness, which a modern gatling gun could not shoot through—had as bedfellows in the fort barracks soft-voiced English youths from the south counties, who had been outlawed for smuggling, or sent to the bay to expiate early dissipations. And sometimes this curious conglomeration of human beings was ruled in the fort—ruled with the absolute despotism of the *little* king, of course—by a drunken half-breed brute like Governor Moses Norton, whose one qualification was that he could pile up the beaver returns and hold the Indians' friendship by being baser and more uncivilized than they. The theme is one for song and story as well as for history.

Among the flotsam and jetsam cast on Hudson Bay in the seventeen hundred and fifties was one Anthony Hendry, a boy from the Isle of Wight. He had been outlawed for smuggling and sought escape from punishment by service on the bay. He came as bookkeeper. Other servants could scarcely be driven or bribed to go inland with the Indians. Hendry asked permission to go back to their country with the Assiniboines, in 1754. James Isham was governor of York Fort at the time. He was only too glad to give Hendry permission.

Four hundred Assiniboines had come in canoes with their furs to the fort. Leather wigwams spread back from the Hayes River like a town of mushrooms. Canoes lay in hundreds bottom-up on the beach, and where the reddish blue of the campfire curled up from the sands filling the evening air with the pungent smell of burning bark, Assiniboine voyageurs could be seen melting resin and tar to gum the splits in the birch canoes. Hunters had exchanged their furs for guns and ammunition. Squaws had bartered their store of pemmican (buffalo) meat for gay gewgaws—red flannels and prints, colored beads, hand mirrors of tin—given at the wicket gate of the fort.

Young Hendry joined the encampment, became acquainted with different leaders of the brigades, and finally secured an Assiniboine called Little Bear as a guide to the country of the Great Unknown River, where the French sent traders—the Saskatchewan. It was the end of June before the Indians were ready to break camp for the homeward voyage. By looking at the map, it will be seen that Nelson and Hayes rivers flow northeast from the same prairie region to a point at the bay called Port Nelson, or Fort York. One could ascend to the country of the Assiniboines by either Hayes River or Nelson. York Fort was on Hayes River. The Indians at that time usually

ascended the Hayes River halfway, then crossed westward to the Nelson by a chain of rivers and lakes and portages, and advanced to the prairie by a branch of the Nelson River known as Katchawan to Playgreen Lake. Playgreen Lake is really a northern arm of Lake Winnipeg. Instead of coming on down to Lake Winnipeg, the Assiniboines struck westward overland from Playgreen Lake to the Saskatchewan at Pasquia, variously known as Basquia and Pachegoia and the Pas. By cutting across westward from Playgreen Lake to the main Saskatchewan, three detours were avoided: (1) the long detour round the north shore of Lake Winnipeg; (2) the southern bend of Saskatchewan, where it enters the lake; (3) the portage of Grand Rapids in the Saskatchewan between Lake Winnipeg and Cedar Lake. It is necessary to give these somewhat tedious details as this route was to become the highway of commerce for a hundred years.

Up these waters paddled the gay Indian voyageurs, the foam rippling on the wake of their bark canoes not half so light as the sparkling foam of laugh and song and story from the paddlers. Over these long lonely portages, silent but for the wind through the trees, or the hoot of the owl, or flapping of a loon, or a far weird call of the meadow lark—a mote in an ocean of sky—the first colonists were to trudge,

men and women and children, who came to the West seeking that freedom and room for the shoulder-swing of uncramped manhood, which home lands had denied. Plymouth Rock, they call the landing place of the Pilgrim Fathers. Every portage up Hayes River was a Plymouth Rock to these first colonists of the West.

On June 26, then, 1754, Hendry set out with the Assiniboines for the voyage up Hayes River. At Amista-Asinee or Great Stone Rock they camped for the first night, twenty-four miles from York—good progress considering it was against stream at the full flood of summer rains. Fire Steel River, Wood Partridge River, Pine Reach—marked the camps for sixty miles from York. Four Falls compelled portage beyond Pine Reach, and shoal water for another twenty-five miles set the men tracking, the crews jumping out to wade and draw the lightened canoes up stream.

July 1, Hendry was one hundred and thirteen miles from York. Terrific rains, hot and thundery, deluged the whole flotilla, and Hendry learned for the first time what clouds of huge inland mosquitoes can do. Mosquito Point, he called the camp. Here, the Hayes broke into three or four branches. Hendry's brigade of Assiniboines began to work up one of the northwestward branches toward the

Nelson. The land seemed to be barren rock. At camping places was neither fish nor fowl. The voyageurs took a reef in their belts and pressed on. Three beaver afforded some food on Steel River but "we are greatly fatigued," records Hendry, "with carrying and hauling our canoes, and we are not well fed; but the natives are continually smoking, which I find allays hunger." Pikes and ducks replenished the provision bags on Duck Lake beyond Steel River. Twenty canoes of Inland Indians were met at Shad Falls beyond Cree Lake, on their way to York. With these Hendry sent a letter to Governor Isham. It was July 20 before Hendry realized that the labyrinth of willow swamps had led into Nelson River. It must have been high up Nelson River, in some of its western sources east of Playgreen Lake, for one day later, on Sunday the 21st, he records: "We paddled two miles up the Nelson and then came to Keiskatchewan River, on which the French have two houses which we expect to see to-morrow." He was now exactly five hundred miles from York. "The mosquitoes are intolerable, giving us peace neither day nor night. We paddled fourteen miles up the Keiskatchewan west, when we came to a French house. On our arrival, two Frenchmen came to the waterside and in a very genteel manner invited me into their house, which I readily accepted. One

asked if I had any letter from my master and why I was going inland. I answered I had no letter and was out to view the country; that I meant to return this way in spring. He told me his master and men were gone down to Montreal with the furs, and that they must detain me until his return. However, they were very kind, and at night I went to my tent and told Little Bear my leader. He only smiled and said: "They dare not detain you." Hendry was at the Pas on the Saskatchewan. If he had come up the Saskatchewan from Lake Winnipeg, he would have found that the French had another fort at the mouth of the river—Bourbon.

From now on, he describes the region which he crossed as Mosquito Plains. White men alone in the wilderness become friends quickly. In spite of rivalry, the English trader presented the French with tobacco; the French in turn gave him pemmican of moose meat. On Wednesday, July 24, he left the fort. Sixteen miles up the Saskatchewan, Hendry passed Peotago River, heavily timbered with birch trees. Up this region the canoes of the four hundred Assiniboines ascended southward, toward the western corner of the modern province of Manitoba. As the river became shoal, canoes were abandoned seventy miles south of the Saskatchewan. Packs strapped on backs, the Indians starving for food, a dreary march

began across country southwest over the Mosquito Plains. "Neither bird nor beast is to be seen. We have nothing to eat," records Hendry after a twenty-six miles tramp. At last, seventy miles from where they had left the canoes, one hundred and forty from the Saskatchewan, they came on a huge patch of ripe raspberries and wild cherries, and luckily in the brushwood killed two moose. This relieved the famine. Wandering Assiniboines chanced to be encamped here. Hendry held solemn conference with the leaders, whiffed pipes to the four corners of the universe—by which the deities of North, South, East and West were called to witness the sincerity of the sentiments—and invited these tribes down to York; but they only answered, "we are already supplied by the French at Pasquia."

One hundred miles south of Pas—or just where the Canadian Northern Railroad strikes west from Manitoba across Saskatchewan—a delightful change came over the face of the country. Instead of brackish swamp water or salt sloughs, were clear-water lakes. Red deer—called by the Assiniboines *waskesaw*—were in myriads. "I am now," writes Hendry as he entered what is now the Province of Saskatchewan, "entering a most pleasant and plentiful country of hills and dales with little woods."

Many Indians were met, but all were strong

partisans of the French. An average of ten miles a day was made by the marchers, hunting red deer as they tramped. On August 8, somewhere near what is now Red Deer River, along the line of the Canada Northern, pause was made for a festival of rejoicing on safe return from the long voyage and relief from famine. For a day and a night, all hands feasted and smoked and danced and drank and conjured in gladness; the smoking of the pipe corresponding to our modern grace before meals, the dancing a way of evincing thanks in rhythmic motion instead of music, the drinking and conjuring not so far different from our ancestors' way of giving thanks. The lakes were becoming alkali swamps, and camp had to be made where there was fresh water. Sometimes the day's march did not average four miles. Again, there would be a forced march of fifteen. For the first time, an English fur trader saw Indians on horseback. Where did they get the horses? As we now know, the horses came from the Spaniards, but we must not wonder that when Hendry reported having seen whole tribes on horseback, he was laughed out of the service as a romancer, and the whole report of his trip discredited. The Indians' object was to reach the buffalo grounds and lay up store of meat for the winter. They told Hendry he would presently see whole tribes of Indians on horse-

back—Archithinues, the famous Blackfoot Confederacy of Bloods, Blackfeet, Piegans and Sarcees.

On the 15th of August, they were among the buffalo, where to-day the great grooves and ruts left by the marching herds can still be seen between the Saskatchewan and the Assiniboine Rivers toward Qu' Appelle. For the most part, the Indians hunted the buffalo with bow and arrow, and at night there was often a casualty list like the wounded after a battle. "*Sunday—dressed a lame man's leg and he gave me for my trouble a moose nose, which is considered a great delicacy among the Indians.*" "*I killed a bull buffalo,*" he writes on September 8, "*he was nothing but skin and bones. I took out his tongue and left his remains to the wolves, which were waiting around in great numbers. We cannot afford to expend ammunition on them. My feet are swelled with marching, but otherwise I am in perfect health. So expert are the natives buffalo hunting, they will take an arrow out of the buffalo when the beasts are foaming and raging and tearing the ground up with their feet and horns. The buffalo are so numerous, like herds of English cattle that we are obliged to make them sheer out of our way.*"

Sometimes more dangerous game than buffalo was encountered. On September 17, Hendry writes: "*Two young men were miserably wounded by a*

grizzly bear that they were hunting to-day. One may recover but the other never can. His arm is torn from his body, one eye gouged out and his stomach ripped open." The next day the Indian died.

The Assiniboines were marching southwest from the Pas toward the land of the Blackfeet. They were now three hundred miles southwest of the French House. To Hendry's surprise they came to a large river with high banks that looked exactly like the Saskatchewan. It was the South Branch of the Saskatchewan, where it takes the great bend south of Prince Albert. Canoes had been left far behind. What were the four hundred Assiniboines to do? But the Indians solved the difficulty in less than half a day. Making boats of willow branches and moose parchment skin—like the bull-boats of the Missouri—the Assiniboines rafted safely across. The march now turned west toward the Eagle River and Eagle Hills and North Saskatchewan. The Eagle Indians are met and persuaded to bring their furs to York Fort.

As winter approached, the women began dressing the skins for moccasins and clothes. A fire of punk in an earth-hole smoked the skins. Beating and pounding and stretching pelts, the squaws then softened the skin. For winter wear, moccasins were left with the fur inside. Hendry remarks how in

the fall of the year, the women sat in the doors of their wigwams "knitting moose leather into snow shoes" made of seasoned wood. It was October before the Indians of the far Western plains were met. These were the famous Blackfeet for the first time now seen by an English trader. They approached the Assiniboines mounted and armed with bows and spears. Hendry gave them presents to carry to their chief. Hendry notes the signs of mines along the banks of the Saskatchewan. He thought the mineral iron. What he saw was probably an outcropping of coal. The jumping deer he describes as a new kind of goat. As soon as ice formed on the swamps, the hunters began trenching for beaver—which were plentiful beyond the fur trader's hopes. When, on October the 11th, the marchers for the third time came on the Saskatchewan, which the Indians called Waskesaw, Hendry recognized that all the branches were forks of one and the same great river—the Saskatchewan, or as the French called it, Christinaux. The Indian names for the two branches were Keskatchew and Waskesaw.

For several days the far smoke of an encampment had been visible southwest. On October the 14th, four riders came out to conduct Hendry to an encampment of three hundred and twenty-two tents

of Blackfeet Indians "*pitched in two rows with an opening in the middle, where we were conducted to the leader's tent.*" This was the main tribe of which Hendry had already met the outrunners. "*The leader's tent was large enough to contain fifty persons. He received us seated on a buffalo skin attended by twenty elderly men. He made signs for me to sit down on his right hand, which I did. Our leaders (the Assiniboines) set several great pipes going the rounds and we smoked according to their custom. Not one word was spoken. Smoking over, boiled buffalo flesh was served in baskets of bent wood. I was presented with ten buffalo tongues. My guide informed the leader I was sent by the grand leader who lives on the Great Waters to invite his young men down with their furs. They would receive in return, powder, shot, guns and cloth. He made little answer: said it was far off and his people could not paddle. We were then ordered to depart to our tents which we pitched a quarter of a mile outside their lines.*" Again invited to the leader's tent the next morning, Hendry heard some remarkable philosophy from the Indian. "*The chief told me his tribe never wanted food as they followed the buffalo, but he was informed the natives who frequented the settlements often starved on their journey, which was exceedingly true.*" added Hendry. Reciprocal presents closed

the interview. The present to the Assiniboine chief was a couple of girl slaves, one of whom was murdered at York ten years afterward by an Indian in a fit of jealousy.

Later, Hendry learned that the Assiniboines did not want these Blackfeet of the far West to come down to the bay. Neither would the Assiniboines hunt except for food. Putting the two facts together, Hendry rightly judged that the Assiniboines acted as middlemen between the traders and the Blackfeet.

By the end of October, Hendry had left the plains and was in a rolling wooded land northwest of the North Saskatchewan. Here, with occasional moves as the hunting shifted, the Indians wintered; his journal says, "eight hundred and ten miles west of York," moving back and forward north and south of the river; but a comment added by Andrew Graham on the margin of the journal, says he was in latitude 59°. This is plainly a mistake, as latitude 59° is six degrees away from the Saskatchewan; but eight hundred and ten miles from York along the Saskatchewan would bring Hendry in the region between the modern Edmonton and Battleford. It is to Hendry's credit that he remained on good terms with the Assiniboines. If he had been a weakling, he would easily have become the butt of the children

who infested the tents like imps; but he hunted with the hunters, trapped with the trappers, and could outmarch the best of them. Consequently, there is not a note in his journal of that doleful whine which comes from the weakling run amuck of hard life in a savage land.

When he met Indians hunting for the French forts, with true trader instinct he bribed them with gifts to bring their furs down to Hudson Bay. Almost the entire winter, camp moved from bend to bend or branch to branch of the North Saskatchewan, heading gradually eastward. Toward spring, different tribes joined the Assiniboines to go down to York. Among these were "green scalps" and many women captives from those Blackfeet Indians Hendry had met. Each night the scalps hung like flags from the tent poles. The captives were given around camp as presents. One hears much twaddle of the red man's noble state before he was contaminated by the white man. Hendry saw these tribes of the Far West before they had met any white men but himself, and the disposal of those captives is a criterion of the red man's noble state. Whenever one was not wanted—the present of a girl, for instance, resented by a warrior's jealous wives—she was summarily hacked to pieces, and not a passing thought given to the matter. The killing of a dog or a beaver

caused more comment. On the value of life as a thing of worth in itself, the Indian had absolutely no conception, not so much conception as a domestic dog trained not to destroy life.

By spring, Hendry's camp had dwindled down to a party of twelve. He now had only two pounds of powder in his possession, but his party were rich in furs. As the time approached to build canoes, the Assiniboines began gathering at the river banks. Young men searched the woods for bark. Old men whittled out the gun'els. Women pounded pemmican into bags for the long voyage to the bay. The nights passed in riotous feast and revel, with the tom-tom pounding, the conjurers performing tricks, the hunters dancing, the women peeping shyly into the dance tent. At such times, one may guess, Hendry did not spare of his scant supplies to lure the Indians to York Fort, but he did not count on the effects of French brandy when the canoes would pass the French posts.

Ice was driving in the river like a mill race all the month of April. Swans and geese and pigeons and bluejays came winging north. There was that sudden and wondrous leap to life of a dormant world—and lo!—it was summer, with the ducks on the river in flocks, and the long prairie grass waving like a green sea, and the trees bleak and bare against

the vaporous sky now clothing themselves in foliage as in a bridal veil shot with sunlight.

The great dog feast was solemnly held. The old men conjured the powers of the air to bless them a God-speed. Canoes were launched on April 28, and out swung the Assiniboines' brigade for Fort York. It was easier going down stream than up. Thirty and forty miles a day they made, passing multitudes of Indians still building their canoes on the river banks. At every camp, more fur-laden canoes joined them. Hendry's heart must have been very happy. He was bringing wealth untold to York.

Four hundred miles down stream, the Blackfeet Indians were met and with great pow-wow of trading turned their furs over to the crafty Assiniboines to be taken down to York. There were now sixty canoes in the flotilla and says Hendry "not a pot or kettle among us." Everything had been bartered to the Blackfeet for furs. Six hundred miles from their launching place, they came to the first French post. This distance given by Hendry is another pretty effective proof that he had wintered near Edmonton, if not beyond it, for this post was not the Pas. It was subordinate to Basquia or Pasquia.

Hendry was invited into the French post as the guest of the master. If he had been as crafty as he

was brave, he would have hurried his Indians past the rival post, but he had to live and learn. While he was having supper, the French distributed ten gallons of brandy among the Assiniboines. By morning, the French had obtained the pick of the furs, one thousand of the best pelts, and it was three days before the amazed Hendry could coax the Indians away from his polite hosts. Two hundred miles more, brought the brigade to the main French post—the Pas. Nine Frenchmen were in possession, and the trick was repeated. "The Indians are all drunk," deplores Hendry; "but the master was very kind to me. He is dressed very genteel but his men wear nothing but drawers and striped cotton shirts ruffled at the hand and breast. This house has been long a place of trade and is named Basquia. It is twenty-six feet long, twelve wide, nine high, having a sloping roof, the walls log on log, the top covered with willows, and divided into three rooms, one for trade, one for storing furs, and one for a dwelling."

Four days passed before the Indians had sobered sufficiently to go on, and they now had only the heavy furs that the French would not take. On June 1, the brigade again set out for York. Canoes were lighter now. Seventy miles a day was made. Hendry does not give any distances on his return voyage,

but he followed the same course by which he had come, through Deer Lake and Steel River to Hayes River and York, where all arrived on the 20th of June.

To Hendry's profound disgust, he was not again permitted to go inland. In fact, discredit was cast on his report. "Indians on horseback!" The factors of the bay ridiculed the idea. They had never heard of such a thing. All the Indians they knew came to the fort in canoes. Indeed, it was that spirit of little-minded narrowness that more than anything else lost to the Company the magnificent domain of its charter. If the men governing the Company had realized the empire of their ruling as fully as did the humble servants fighting the battles on the field, the Hudson's Bay Company might have ruled from Atlantic to Pacific in the North, and in the West as far south as Mexico. But they objected to being told what they did not know. Hendry was "frozen" out of the service. The occasion of his leaving was even more contemptible than the real cause. On one of his trading journeys, he was offered very badly mixed brandies, probably drugged. Being a fairly good judge of brandies from his smuggling days, Hendry refused to take what Andrew Graham calls "such slops from such gentry." He quit the service in disgust.

The Company, as the minutes show, voted him £20 gratuity for his voyage. Why, then, did the factors cast ridicule on his report? Supposing they had accepted it, what would have been entailed? They must capture the furs of that vast inland country for their Company. To do that, there must be forts built inland. Some factor would be ordered inland. Then, there would be the dangers of French competition—very real danger in the light of that brandy incident. The factors on the bay—Norton and Isham—were not brave enough men to undertake such a campaign. It was easier sitting snugly inside the forts with a multitude of slave Indians to wait on their least want. So the trade of the interior was left to take care of itself.

Notes on Chapter XVIII.—Hendry's Journal is in Hudson's Bay Company's House, London. A copy is also in the Canadian Archives. Andrew Graham of Severn has written various notes along the margin. If it had not been for Graham, it looks much as if Hendry's Journal would have been lost to the Company. Hendry gives the distances of each day's travel so minutely, that his course can easily be followed first to Basquia, then from Basquia to the North Saskatchewan region. Graham's comment that Hendry was at 59° north is simply a slip. It is out of the question to accept it for the simple reason Hendry could not have gone eight hundred and ten miles *southwest* from York, as his journal daily records, and have been within 6° of 59°. Besides his own discovery that he had been crossing branches of the Saskatchewan all the time and his account of his voyage down the Saskatchewan to the Pas, are unmistakable proofs of his whereabouts. Also he mentions the Eagle Indians repeatedly. These Indians dwelt between the north and south branches of the Saskatchewan. Whether the other rivers that he crossed were the Assiniboine or the Qu'Appelle or the Red Deer of Lake Winnipegosis—I do not know.

I had great trouble in identifying the Archithinue Indians of Hendry's Journal till I came on Matthew Cocking's Journal over the same ground. Dec. 1, 1772, Cocking says: "This tribe is named Powestic Athinuewuck, Waterfall Indians. There are four tribes or nations which are all Equestrian Indians, viz:

(1) Mithco Athinuwuck, or Bloody Indians.
(2) Koskiton Wathesitock, or Black Footed Indians.
(3) Pegonow, or Muddy Water Indians.
(4) Sassewuck, or Woody Country Indians.

CHAPTER XIX

1770–1800

EXTENSION OF TRADE TOWARD LABRADOR, QUEBEC AND ROCKIES—HEAKNE FINDS THE ATHABASCA COUNTRY AND FOUNDS CUMBERLAND HOUSE ON THE SASKATCHEWAN—COCKING PROCEEDS TO THE BLACKFEET—HOWSE FINDS THE PASS IN ROCKIES

WHILE Anthony Hendry, the English smuggler, was making his way up the Saskatchewan to the land of the Blackfeet—the present province of Alberta—the English Adventurers were busy making good their claim to Labrador. Except as a summer rendezvous, Rupert, the oldest of the Company's forts, at the southeast corner of the bay—had been abandoned, but far up the coast of Labrador on the wildest part of this desolate shore, was that fort which the Company was shortly forced to dismantle at great loss—Richmond. When Captain Coates was sent to cruise the east coast of Hudson Bay, thirty men under John Potts and Mr. Pollexfen, had been left on Richmond Gulf to build a fort. There was no more dangerous region on the bay. It was here Hudson's crew had been attacked

by the Eskimos, and here the Eskimos yearly came to winter and hunt the white whale. Between the rugged main shore and the outer line of barren islands was usually open water. Camped on the rocky islets, the timid Eskimos were secure from Indian foe, and if the white whale fisheries failed, they had only to scud across the open water or portage over the ice to the mainland and hunt partridge on Richmond Gulf. From one hundred and fifty to three hundred Eskimos yearly wintered within trading distance of Richmond.

Quickly, storehouses, barracks, wareroom and guardroom were erected just inside the narrow entrance from Hudson Bay to Richmond Gulf, and round all thrown a ten-foot palisade. This was in 1749. Coates had been attracted to Richmond Gulf —which he calls Artiwinipack—by its land-locked, sheltered position and the magnificent supply of lumber for building. The Eskimo whale fisheries were farther south at Whale River and East Main, with winter lodges subordinate to Richmond. The partridges of the wooded slopes promised abundance of food, and there was excellent fox and beaver trapping. Compared to the other rocky barrens of northern Labrador, Richmond Harbor seemed Paradise, "*but oh, my conscience,*" wrote Captain Coates, "*there is so profound silence, such awful precipices,*

no life, that the world seems asleep. The land is so tremendous high that wind and water reverberate between the cliffs entering two miles to our gulf. Inside are mountains, groves, cascades and vales adorned with trees. On the Hudson Bay side nothing is seen but barren rocks. Inside, all is green with stately woods. . . . On the high mountains is only snow moss; lower, a sort of rye grass, some snow drops and violets without odor, then rows of evergreens down to the very sea. On the right of the gulf is Lady Lake's Grove under a stupendous mountain, whence falls a cascade through the grove to the sea. In short, such is the elegant situation of Richmond Fort that it is not to be paralleled in the world."

Such were the high hopes with which Richmond Fort was founded. To-day it is a howling wilderness silent as death but for the rush of waters heard when white men first entered the bay. Partridge there were in plenty among the lonely evergreens, and game for trapping; but not the warmest overtures of Chief Factor Potts and Mr. Pollexfen and Mr. Isbister, who yearly came up from Albany, could win the friendship of the treacherous Eskimos. They would not hunt, and the white men dare not penetrate far enough inland to make their trapping pay. Potts kept his men whale fishing off Whale River, but in five years the loss to the Company had

totaled more than £24,000. The crisis came in 1754. Day and night, the stealthy shadow of Eskimo spies moved through the evergreens of the gulf. In vain Potts gave the chiefs presents of gold-laced suits, beaver hats with plumes, and swords. "They *shaked* my hands," he records, "and hugged and embraced and smiled"; but the very next trapper, who went alone to the woods, or attempted to drive his dog train south to Whale River, would see Eskimos ambushed behind rocks and have his *cache* rifled or find himself overpowered and plundered. One day in February, Mr. Pollexfen had gone out with his men from Whale River trapping. When they returned in the afternoon they found the cook boy had been kidnapped and the house robbed of every object that could be carried away—stores of ammunition, arms, traps, food, clothes, even the door hinges and iron nails of the structure.

Waiting only till it was dark, the terrified hunters hitched their dog sleighs up, tore off all bells that would betray flight, and drove like mad for the stronger fort of Richmond. Potts hurriedly sent out orders to recall his trappers from the hills and manned Richmond for siege. It was four days before all the men came under shelter, and nightly the Eskimos could be heard trying to scale the palisades. The fort was so short of provisions, all hands were

reduced to one meal a day. Potts called for volunteers, to go to the rescue of the kidnapped cook—a boy, named Matthew Warden; and thirteen men offered to go. The Eskimos had taken refuge on the islands of the outer shore. Frost-fog thick as wool lay on the bay. Eskimos were seen lurking on the hills above the fort. A council was held. It was determined to catch three Eskimos as hostages for the cook's safety rather than risk the lives of thirteen men outside the fort. Some ten days later, when a few men ventured out for partridges, the forest again came to life with Eskimo spies. Potts recalled his hunters, sent two scouts to welcome the Eskimos to the fort and placed all hands on guard. Three Indians were conducted into the house. In a twinkling, fetters were clapped on two, and the third bade go and fetch the missing white boy on pain of death to the hostages. The stolid Eskimo affected not to understand. Potts laid a sword across the throats of the two prisoners and signaled the third to be gone. The fellow needed no urging but scampered. "I had our men," relates Potts, "one by one pass through the guardroom changing their dresses every time to give the two prisoners the idea that I had a large garrison. They seemed surprised that I had one hundred men, but they spoke no word." The next day, the fettered prisoners drew knives on their

guard, seized his gun and clubbed the Company men from the room. In the scuffle that followed, both Eskimos were shot. The danger was now increased a hundredfold. Friendly Montagnais Indians, especially one named Robinson Crusoe, warned Potts that if the shooting were known, nothing could save the fort. The bodies were hidden in the cellar till some Montagnais went out one dark night and weighting the feet with stones, pushed them through a hole in the ice. How quickly white men can degenerate to savagery is well illustrated by the conduct of the cooped-up, starving garrison. Before sending away the dead bodies, they cut the ears from each and preserved them in spirits of alcohol to send down by Indian scouts to Isbister at Moose with a letter imploring that the sloop come to the rescue as soon as the ice cleared. For two months the siege lasted. Nothing more was ever heard of the captured boy, but by the end of May, Isbister had sent a sloop to Richmond. As told elsewhere, Richmond was dismantled in 1778 and the stores carried down to Whale River and East Main.

Important changes had gradually grown up in the Adventurer's methods. White servants were no longer forbidden to circulate with the Indians but encouraged to go out to the hunting field and paid

bounties on their trapping. Three men had been sent out from York in January, 1772, to shoot partridges for the fort. It was a mild, open winter. The men carried provisions to last three weeks. Striking back through the marsh land, that lies between Hayes and Nelson Rivers, they camped for the first night on the banks of the Nelson. The next morning, Tuesday, the 7th of January, they were crossing the ice of the Nelson's broad current when they suddenly felt the rocking of the tide beneath their feet, looked ahead, saw the frost-smoke of open water and to their horror realized that the tidal bore had loosened the ice and they were adrift, bearing out to sea. In vain, dogs and men dashed back for the shore. The ice floe had separated from the land and was rushing seaward like a race horse. That night it snowed. The terrified men kept watch, hoping that the high tide would carry the ice back to some of the long, low sandbars at Port Nelson. The tide did sway back the third day but not near enough for a landing. This night, they put up their leather tents and slept drifting. When they awakened on Friday the 10th, they were driving so direct for the shore that the three men simultaneously dashed to gain the land, leaving packs, provisions, tent and sleighs; but in vain. A tidal wave swept the floe off shore, and when they set back for their camp, they were appalled

to see camp kit, sleds, provisions, all—drive past afloat. The ice floe had broken. They were now adrift without food or shelter, James Ross carrying gun, powder bag and blanket over his shoulders as he had risen from sleep, Farrant wearing only the beaver coat in which he had slept, Tomson bereft of either gun or blanket.

This time, the ebb carried them far into the bay where they passed the fourth night adrift. The next day, wind and the crumbling of the ice added to their terrors. As the floe went to pieces, they leaped from float to float trying to keep together on the largest icepan. Farrant fell through the slush to his armpits and after being belted tightly in his beaver coat lay down behind a wind-break of ice blocks to die. Their only food since losing the tent kit had been some lumps of sugar one of them had chanced to have in his pockets. During Saturday night the 11th of January, the ice grounded and great seas began sweeping over the floe. When Ross and Tomson would have dragged Farrant to a higher hummock of the ice field, they found that he was dead. On Monday, the weather grew cold and stormy. Tomson's hands had swollen so that he could not move a muscle and the man became delirious, raving of his Orkney home as they roamed aimlessly over the illimitable ice fields. That night, the seventh they

had been adrift, just as the moon sank below the sea, the Orkneyman, Tomson, breathed his last.

Ross was now alone. A great ice floe borne down by a wash of the tide, swept away Tomson's body. Ross scrambled upon the fresh drift and hoping against hope, scarcely able to believe his senses, saw that the new icepan extended to the land. Half blinded by sun glare, hands and feet frozen stiff, now laughing hysterically, now crying deliriously, the fellow managed to reach shore, but when the sun set he lost all sense of direction and could not find his way farther. That night, his hands were so stiff that he could not strike a light on his flint, but by tramping down brushwood, made himself a bed in the snow. Sunrise gave him his bearings again and through his half-delirium he realized he was only four miles from the fort. Partly walking, partly creeping, he reached York gates at seven that night. One of the dogs had followed him all the way, which probably explains how he was not frozen sleeping out uncovered for nine nights. Hands and feet had to be amputated, but his countrymen of Orkney took up a subscription for him and the Company gave him a pension of £20 a year for life. The same amount was bestowed on the widows of the two dead men. It is not surprising that Hudson Bay became ill-omened to Orkneymen who heard

such tales of fur hunting as have been related of Richmond and York.

But the Company was now on the eve of the most momentous change in its history. Anthony Hendry had reported how the French traders had gone up the Saskatchewan to the tribes of equestrian Indians; and Hendry had been cashiered for his pains. Now a new fact influenced the Company. French power had fallen at Quebec, in 1759. Instead of a few French traders scattered through the West, were thousands of wildwood rovers, half-Indian, half-French, voyageurs and bush-lopers, fled from the new laws of the new English régime to the freedom of the wilderness. Beyond Sault Ste. Marie, the long hand of the law could not reach. Beyond the Sault, was law of neither God nor man. To make matters worse, English merchants, who had flocked to Montreal and Quebec, now outfitted these French rovers and personally led them to the far hunting field of the *Pays d'en Haut*—a term that meant anything from Lake Superior to the Pole. The English Adventurers sent more men up stream—up the Moose toward Quebec as far as Abbittibbi, up the Albany toward what is now Manitoba past Henley House as far as Osnaburg, across what is now Keewatin toward Lake Superior as far as New Brunswick House. The catch of furs showed a decrease every

year. Fewer Indians came to the bay, fewer hunters to the outlying fur posts. Dividends dropped from 10 to 8 and from 8 to 6 and from 6 to 5 per cent. Instead of 100,000 beaver a year there came to the London market only 40,000 and 50,000 a year.

To stand on the rights of monopoly conferred by an ancient charter while "interlopers and pedlars," as the Company called them—ran away with the profits of that monopoly, was like standing on your dignity with a thief while he picked your pockets. The "smug ancient gentlemen," as enemies designated the Company, bestirred themselves mightily. Moses Norton, governor of Churchill, was no more anxious to fight the French Canadians on the hunting field now than he had been in the days of Anthony Hendry, but being half-Indian he knew all the legends of the Indians—knew that even if the French already had possession of the Saskatchewan, north of the Saskatchewan was an unclaimed kingdom, whence no white man had yet set foot, as large again as the bounds of Hudson Bay.

Besides, the Company had not forgotten those legends of minerals in the North which had lured Captain Knight to his death. Chippewyan Indians still came to Churchill with huge masses of amorphous copper strung on necklaces or battered into rough pots and pans and cooking utensils. Whence

came that copper? Oddly enough, the world cannot answer that question yet. The Indians said from "a Far-Away-Metal River" that ran to a vast sea where the tide ebbed and flowed. Once more hopes of finding a Northwest Passage rose; once more hopes of those metals that had led Knight to shipwreck. Norton suggetsed that this time the search should be made by land. Serving as a clerk on a brig at Churchill was a well-educated young Englishman already mentioned—Samuel Hearne.

The yearly boats that came to Churchill in 1769, commissioned Hearne for this expedition, whose ostensible object was the finding of the Metal River now known as the Coppermine but whose real object was the occupation of a vast region not yet preempted by the Canadians. The story of Hearne's travels would fill a volume. Norton, the governor, was a curious compound of ability and sham, strength and vice. Born of an Indian mother and English father, he seemed to have inherited all the superstitions of one and vices of the other. He was educated in England and married an English woman. Yet when he came to the wilderness, he had a seraglio of native wives that would have put a Mormon to the blush. These he kept apart in rudely but gorgeously furnished apartments to which he alone possessed the keys. At the mess-room table, he wearied

the souls of his officers by long-winded and saintly sermons on virtue which were expounded as regularly as the night supper came round. Did some blackleg expiating dissipations by life in the wilds judge Norton's sermons by his conduct and emulate his example rather than his precepts, Norton had the culprit tied to the triangle and flogged till his back was raw. An Indian is never a hypocrite. Why would he be? His code is to do as he wishes, to follow his desires, to be stronger than his enemies, to impose on the weak. He has no religion to hold a higher example up like a mirror that reflects his own face as loathsome, and he has no science to teach him that what religion calls "evil" means in the long run, wretchedness and rottenness and ruin. But the hypocrisy in Norton was the white man strain—the fig leaf peculiar to civilized man—living a lie so long that he finally believes the lie himself. Knowledge of white man's science, Norton had; but to the Indian in him, it was still mystery; "medicine," a secret means to kill an enemy, arsenic in medicine, laudanum in whiskey, or poison that caused convulsions to an Indian who refused either a daughter for the seraglio or beaver at Norton's terms. A white man who could wield such power was to the Indians a god, and Norton held them in the hollow of his hand. Equally successful was the half-breed

governor managing the governing committee of the Hudson's Bay Company in London; for he sent them enormous returns in beaver at small outlay.

Seven great guns roared their God-speed as the fort gates opened and Hearne sped out by dog train for his inland trip north on November 6, 1769. Norton waved a farewell and Hearne disappeared over the rolling drifts with two Indians as guides, two white men as packers to look after provisions. Striking northwest, Hearne was joined by other traveling Indians. Bitterly cold weather set in. One Indian guide deserted the first night out and the other proved himself an impudent beggar, who camped when it was cold and camped when it was wet and paused to hunt when it was fair, but laid up no stock of provisions, giving Hearne plainly to understand that the whole Indian cavalcade looked to the white men's sleighs for food. The travelers did not make ten miles a day. At the end of the month Hearne wakened one morning to find his stores plundered and gales of laughter ringing back as the Indians marched off with their booty. Not even guns were left. Rabbit and partridge-snaring saved the three white men from starving as they retreated. They were safe inside the fort once more by December 11. Hearne's object setting out in midwinter had been to reach the North before

summer, and nothing daunted, he again set forth with five fresh guides on February 23, 1770, again depending on snares for food. April saw the marchers halted on the borders of the Barren Lands, scouring the wide wastes of treeless swamps and rock for game. Caribou had retreated inland and not yet begun their traverse to the bay. Until wild fowls came winging north, the camp lived on snow water, tobacco and such scraps of leather and dried meat as had not already been devoured. A chance herd of wandering deer relieved the famine till June, when rations were again reduced; this time, to wild cranberries. Then the traverse of the caribou herds came—a rush of countless myriads with the tramp of an army and the clicking of a multitude of horns from west to east for weeks. Indians had gathered to the traverse in hundreds. Moss served as fuel. Provisions were abundant. Hearne had almost decided to winter with the wandering Chippewyans when they again began to plunder his store of ammunition. Wind had smashed some of the survey instruments, so he joined a band of hunters on their way to the fort, which he reached on November 25.

Hearne had not found "Far-Away-Metal-River," nor the copper mines, nor the Northwest Passage, but he had found fresh tribes of Indians, and these were what Norton wanted. December 7, 1770, less

than a month from his home-coming, Hearne was again dispatched by Norton. Matonabbee, a famous guide of the Chippewyans, accompanied the explorer with a retinue of the Indian's wives to draw sleds and handle baggage. Almost as notable as Norton was Matonabbee, the Chippewyan chief—an Indian of iron constitution and iron will, pitiless to his wives, whom he used as beasts of burden; relentless in his aims, fearless of all Indians, a giant measuring more than six feet, straight as an arrow, supple as willow, hard as nails. Imperturbable and good-natured Matonabbee set the pace at winged speed, pausing for neither hunger nor cold. Christmas week was celebrated by fasting. Matonabbee uttered no complaint; and the white man could not well turn back when the Indian was as eager for the next day's march as if he had supped sumptuously instead of going to bed on a meal of moss water. Self-pity, fear, hesitation, were emotions of which the guide knew nothing. He had undertaken to lead Hearne to "Far-Away-Metal-River," and only death could stop him.

In the Barren Lands, caribou enough were killed to afford the whole company provisions for six months; and the marchers were joined by two hundred more Indians. Wood became scarcer and smaller as they marched north. Matonabbee halted

in April and ordered his wives to camp while the men made dugouts for the voyage down stream. The boats were heavy in front to resist the ice jams. If Hearne had marveled at the large company now following Matonabbee to a hard, dangerous hunting field he quickly guessed good reasons when wives and children were ordered to head westward and await the warrior's return at Lake Athabasca. Women are ordered away only when there is prospect of war, and Hearne could easily surmise whence the Chippewyans annually obtained eleven thousand of their best beaver pelts. The sun no longer set. It was continual day, and on June 12, 1771, the swamps of the Barrens converged to a narrow, rocky river bed whence roared a misty cataract—"Far-Off-Metal-River"—the Coppermine River, without any sign of the ebbing tide that was to lead to the South Sea. When Hearne came back to his Indian companions from the river bed, he found them stripped and daubed in war paint, gliding as if in ambush from stone to stone down the steep declivity of the waterfall. Then far below the rapids, like the tops of big bowlders, appeared the rounded leather tent-peaks of an Eskimo camp. The Eskimos were apparently sound asleep, for it was midnight though as light as day.

Before Hearne could collect his senses or alarm

the sleeping victims, he had been left far to the rear by his villainous comrades. Then occurred one of the most deplorable tragedies in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company. Such of the horrors as are tellable, I have told elsewhere in the account of Hearne's travels. The raiders fell on the Eskimos like wolves on the sheepfold. Not content with plundering the camp of beaver pelts, they speared, stabbed, bludgeoned, men, women, children, old and young, till the river ran red with innocent blood. Rushing forward, Hearne implored Matonabbee to stop the slaughter. Matonabbee's response was a shout of laughter. What were the weak for but to be the victims of the strong? What did these fool-Eskimos toil for but to render tribute of their toil to him, who had the force to take? The doctrine was not a new one. Neither is it yet old; only we moderns do our bludgeoning with financial coercion, competition, monopoly or what not, instead of the butt end of a gun, or stone spear; and it would be instructive to know if philosophers in a thousand years will consider our methods as barbarous as we consider the savages of two hundred years ago.

The tortures of that raid have no place in a history of the Hudson's Bay Company. They are told in Hearne's life, and they haunted the explorer like a bloody nightmare. One day later, on July 17,

Hearne stood on the shores of the Arctic ocean—the first white man to witness the tossing ice floes of that green, lone, paleocrystic sea; but his vision was not the exaltation of an explorer. It was a hideous memory of young girls speared bodily through and through and left writhing pinioned to the ground; of young boys whose hearts were torn out and devoured while warm; of old men and women gouged, buffeted, beaten to death. It does not make a pretty picture, that doctrine of the supremacy of strength, the survival of the fit, the extermination of the weak—it does not make a pretty picture when you reduce it to terms of the physical. How quickly wild-beast savagery may reduce men to the level of beasts was witnessed as Hearne rested on the shores of the Arctic—a musk ox was shot. The warriors tore it to pieces and devoured it raw.

Retreating up the shelving rocks of the Coppermine twenty miles, Hearne found what he thought were the copper mines from which the Indians made their metal weapons. The company then struck westward for the famous Athabasca region where the wives were to camp for the winter. Athabasca proved a hunter's paradise as it has been ever since Hearne discovered it. Beaver abounded in the swampy muskegs. Buffalo roamed to the south. Moose yards were found in the wooded bluffs; mink,

marten, fox, every fur bearer which the English Adventurers sought. In spring, a flotilla carried the Indians down to Churchill, where Hearne arrived on June 30, 1772.

The geographical importance of Hearne's discovery—the fact that he had found a region half the size of European Russia and proved that not a narrow strip of land lay between the Atlantic and Pacific but a vast continent—was eclipsed by the importance of his discoveries for the fur traders. The region must be occupied by the English Company before the French Canadians found it. Old Moses Norton sick unto death hastened to send word to the governing committee in London, and the governing committee voted Hearne a present of £200, £10 a year for a valet, £130 a year as a salary, and promotion as governor on Norton's death, which occurred on December 29, 1773.

The death of Norton was of a piece with his life. The bully fell ill of some deadly intestinal trouble that caused him as excruciating tortures as ever his poisons had caused his victims. Calling the officers of the fort, he publicly made his will, leaving all his savings to his wife in England but directing that she should yearly set aside £10 for the clothing of his Indian wives at Churchill. As the Indian women stood round the dying tyrant's bed his eye detected

an officer whispering to one of the young Indian wives. With a roar, Norton leaped to his feet in the bed.

"You —— —— ——," he roared, "I'll burn you alive! I'll burn you alive——"

The effort cost the bully his life. He fell back dead—he whose hand had tyrannized over the fort for fifty years, a mass of corrupting flesh which men hurriedly put out of sight. Hearne was called from the Saskatchewan to become governor and undertake the opening of the inland trade. Hearne's report on his trip to the Coppermine and Athabasca was received at London in November, 1772. In May of 1773, the minutes recorded "that the company having under consideration the interruptions to the trade from the Canadian Pedlars as reported by Isaac Batts at Basquia, do decide on mature deliberation to send Samuel Hearne to establish a fort at Basquia with Mr. Cocking." They were accompanied by Louis Primo, John Cole and half a dozen French renegades, who had been bribed to desert from the Canadians—in all seventeen men. Hearne did better than he was instructed. Leaving Batts, Louis Primo and the Frenchmen at Basquia to compete against the Canadians, he established Cumberland House far above, on the Saskatchewan, at Sturgeon Lake, where the Indians could be intercepted before

they came down to the French posts. Traders inland were paid £40 a year with a bounty of £2 when they signed their contract and a bonus of a shilling for every twenty beaver.

When Hearne was recalled to Churchill to become governor, Matthew Cocking was left superintendent of inland trade. Cocking had earned laurels for himself by a voyage almost as important as Hearne's. The very week that Hearne came back to Churchill at the end of June, 1772, from the Athabasca, Cocking had set out from York for the South Saskatchewan. He accompanied the Assiniboines returning from their yearly trip to the bay. By the end of July he had crossed the north end of Lake Winnipeg and gone up the Saskatchewan to Basquia. Louis Primo, the renegade Frenchman, was met leading a flotilla of canoes down to Hudson Bay, and it must have afforded Cocking great satisfaction to see that the activity of the Hudson's Bay Company had forced the French Canadians to desert both their posts on the lower Saskatchewan. He passed the empty houses on the banks of the river where the leaders of the French-Canadians had had their forts, Findlay's and Frobisher's and Curry's. Leaving canoes somewhere eastward of the Forks, Cocking struck south for the country of the Blackfeet at the foothills of the Rockies, near what is now the Inter-

national Boundary. The South Saskatchewan was crossed at the end of August in bull-boats—tub-like craft made of parchment stretched on willows. In the Eagle Hills, Cocking met French traders, who had abandoned civilized life and joined the Indian tribes. The Eagle Hills were famous as the place where the Indians got tent poles and birch bark before crossing the plains to the east and south. Cocking spent the winter with the Blackfeet and the Bloods and the Piegans and the Sarcees, whom he names as the Confederacy of Waterfall Indians, owing to the numerous cataracts on the upper reaches of Bow River. He was amazed to find fields of cultivated tobacco among the Blackfeet and considered the tribe more like Europeans than any Indians he had ever met. The winter was spent hunting buffalo by means of the famous "pounds." Buffalo were pursued by riders into a triangular enclosure of sticks round a large field. Behind the fences converging to a point hid the hunters, whose cries and clappings frightened the herds into rushing precipitately to the converging angle. Here was either a huge hole, or the natural drop over the bank of a ravine, where the buffalo tumbled, mass after mass of infuriated animals, literally bridging a path for the living across the bodies of the dead. The Blackfeet hunters thought nothing of riding for a

hundred miles to round up the scattered herds to one of these "pounds" or "corrals." All that Hendry had said of the Blackfeet twenty years before, Cocking found to be true. All were riders—men, women, children—the first tribes Cocking had yet met where women were not beasts of burden. The tribe had earthen pots for cooking utensils, used moss for tinder, and recorded the history of the people in rude drawings on painted buffalo robes. In fact, Cocking's description of the tribal customs might be an account of the Iroquois. The Blackfeet's entire lives were spent doing two things—hunting and raiding the Snakes of the South for horses. Men and women captives were tortured with shocking cruelty that made the Blackfeet a terror to all enemies; but young captives were adopted into the tribe after the custom followed by the Iroquois of the East. Of food, there was always plenty from the buffalo hunts; and game abounded from the Saskatchewan Forks to the mountains.

When Cocking tried to persuade the Blackfeet to come down to the fort with furs, they were reluctant. They did not understand canoe travel and could not take their horses, and why should they go down? The Assiniboines would trade the furs for firearms to be brought to the Blackfeet. Cocking pointed out that with more firearms, they could be

masters of the entire country and by dint of presenting cocked hats and swords and gold-laced red coats to the chiefs, induced them to promise not to trade with "the Canadian Pedlars." "We have done all in our power to keep them from trading with François or Curry, who lie at the Portage (the Rapids) of the Saskatchewan to intercept the natives coming to us."

On May 16, 1773, Cocking set out to return to the fort. For the first time, a few young Blackfeet joined the canoes going to York. At the Forks, two rival camps were found, that of Louis Primo who had come over to the Hudson's Bay from the French, and old François working for the French Canadians. The English traders had no liquor. Four gallons of rum diluted with water won the Indians over to old François, the Canadian, who picked out one hundred of the rarest skins and was only hindered taking the entire hunt because he had no more goods to trade. François' house was a long log structure divided into two sections, half for a kitchen and mess room, half for a trading room, and the furs were kept in the loft. Outside, were two or three log cabins for François' white men, of whom he had twenty. Round all ran ten-foot stockades against which lay the great canoes twenty-four feet long, twenty-two inches deep, which carried the furs to

Lake Superior. Cocking, who was used to factors ruling like little kings, was shocked to find old François "an ignorant Frenchman, who did not keep his men at proper distance and had no watch at night. It surprises me," he writes, "to observe what a warm side the natives hath to the French Canadians."

Down at Grand Rapids near the mouth of the Saskatchewan, Cocking received another shock. Louis Primo and those Frenchmen bribed to join the Hudson's Bay, who had gone on from the Forks ahead of Cocking, were to join him at the last portage of the Saskatchewan to go down to York. He found that they had gone back to the French bag and baggage with all their furs and goods supplied by the Hudson's Bay and were already halfway down to Lake Superior. Spite of being only "an ignorant old Frenchman," François had played a crafty game. By June 18, Cocking was back at York.

But the Company did not content itself with occasional expeditions inland. Henceforth "patroons of the woods," as they were called, were engaged to live inland with the Indians and collect furs. Fifty-one men were regularly kept at Cumberland House, and a bonus of £20 a year regularly paid to the patroons. Whenever a Frenchman could be bribed

to come over to the Hudson's Bay traders, he was engaged at £100 a year. Bonuses above salaries amounted to £200 a year for the factors, to £40 for the traders, to £80 for traveling servants. The Company now had a staff of five hundred white men in the field and ten times as many Indians. In 1785, Robert Longmore is engaged to explore inland up Churchill River as far as Athabasca, where, in 1799, Malcolm Ross is permanently placed as chief trader at £80 a year. In 1795, Joseph Howse is sent inland from York to explore the Rockies, where he gives his name to a pass, and "it is resolved that forts shall be erected in this country too." John Davidson explores the entire coast of Labrador on the east; and on the west of Hudson Bay Charles Duncan reports finally and, as far as the Company is concerned, forever—*there is no navigable Northwest Passage.* In all, the Company has spent £100,000 seeking that mythical passage, which is now written off as total loss. Up at Marble Island, the sea still takes toll of the brave, and James Mouat, the whaler, is buried in 1773, beside Captain Knight. At this stage too, I am sorry to say, 12,000 gallons of brandy are yearly sent into the country.

It was in 1779 that *The King George* ship beat about the whole summer in the ice without entering York and was compelled to unload its cargo at

Churchill, for which Captain Fowler was suspended and lost his gratuity of £100.

Such strenuous efforts brought big rewards in beaver, seventy, and eighty, and ninety thousand a year to London, but the expenses of competition had increased so enormously that dividends had fallen from 10 to 5 per cent. I suppose it was to impress the native mind with the idea of pomp, but about this time I find the Company furnished all its officers with "brass-barreled pistols, swords with inlaid handles, laced suits and cocked hats." A more perfect example of the English mind's inability to grasp American conditions could not be found than an entry in the expense book of 1784 when the Company buys "150 tracts on *the Country Clergyman's Advice to Parishioners*" for distribution among North American Indians, who could not read any language let alone English.

It was no longer a policy of drift but drive, and in the midst of this came the shock of the French war. All hands were afield from Churchill but thirty-nine white servants one sleepy afternoon on August 8, 1782, and Governor Hearne was busy trading with some Indians whom Matonabbee had brought down, when the astounding apparition appeared of a fleet at sea. No appointed signals were displayed by the incoming ships—they were *not* Company ships,

and they anchored five miles from the fort to sound. Churchill had not heard of war between France and England. No alarm was felt. The fort had been forty years in building and was one of the strongest in America, constructed of stone with forty great guns and an outer battery to prevent approach. Probably intending to send out a boat the next morning, Hearne went comfortably to bed. At three in the morning, which was as light as day, somebody noticed that four hundred armed men had landed not far from the fort and were marching in regular military order for the gates. Too late, a reveille sounded and bells rang to arms. Hearne dashed out with two men and met the invaders half-way. Then he learned that the fleet was part of the French navy and the four hundred invaders regular marines under the great officer—La Perouse. Resistance was impossible now. The guns of the fort were not even manned. The garrison was too small to permit one man to a gun. At six in the morning, the British flag was lowered and a white tablecloth of surrender run up on the pole. Hearne and the officers were taken on board prisoners of war. Then the rough soldiery ran riot. Furs, stores, documents—all were plundered, and a second day spent blowing up the fortifications. Buildings were burned but the French were unable to do serious damage to

the walls. Matonabbee the great chief looked on in horror. He had thought his English friends invincible, and now he saw his creed of brute strength turned upon them and upon himself. No longer he smiled contemptuously at the horror. It was one thing to glory in the survival of the strong—another to be the under dog. Matonabbee drew away outside the walls and killed himself. Old Norton's widows and children were scattered. On one the hardships fell with peculiar harshness. His daughter Marie he had always nurtured as a white girl. She fled in terror of her life from the brutal soldiery and perished of starvation outside the walls.

Hearne has been blamed for two things in this surrender, for not making some show of resistance and for not sending scouts overland south to warn York. For thirty-nine men to have fought four hundred would have invited extermination, and Hearne did not know that the invaders were enemies till he himself was captured and so could not send word to York. What he might have done was earlier in the game. If he had sent out a pilot to guide the ships into Churchill Harbor, it might have led the enemy to wreck among reefs and sandbars.

On the third day, the three French men-of-war set sail for York, leaving Churchill in flames. Outward bound, one of the Company ships was sighted

coming into Churchill. The French gave chase till seven in the evening, but the English captain led off through such shoal water the French desisted with a single chance volley in the direction of the fleeing fur ship.

On August 20, the Company ship lying at York observed a strange fleet some twenty miles off shore landing men on Nelson River behind York, which faced Hayes River. From plans taken at Churchill, La Perouse had learned that York was weakest to the rear. There were in the fort at that time sixty English and twelve Indians with some twenty-five cannon and twelve swivel guns on the galleries. There was a supply of fresh water inside the fort with thirty head of cattle; but a panic prevailed. All the guns were overset to prevent the French using them, and the English ship scudded for sea at nightfall.

The French meanwhile had marched across the land behind York and now presented themselves at the gates. The governor, Humphry Martin, welcomed them with a white flag in his hand. Umfreville, who gives the account of the surrender, was among the captured. His disgust knew no bounds. "The enemy's ships lay at least twenty miles from the factory in a boisterous sea," he writes, "and could not co-operate with the troops on shore. The troops had no supplies. Cold, hunger and fatigue

were hourly working in our favor. The factory was not in want of a single thing to withstand siege. The people showed no fear but the reverse. Yet the English governor surrendered without firing a gun."

The French did not attempt to occupy the forts, which they had captured, but retired with the officers as prisoners, and with the plunder. By October the Company had received letters from the prison at Dinan Castle, France, asking for the ransom of the men. By May, the ransomed men were in London, and by June back at their posts on the bay.

Notes to Chapter XIX.—As stated elsewhere, Cocking classified the Blackfeet Confederacy as Waterfall Indians, composed of Powestic Athinuewuck, Mithco Athinuewuck, (Blood); Koskiton Wathesitock (Blackfeet); Pegonow (Piegan); Sassewuck (Sarcee). Cocking's Journal is in the Hudson's Bay Company House, London, and in the Canadian Archives, Ottawa.

The account of Hearne's Voyages will be found in "Pathfinders of the West," or in the accounts by himself, (1) the report submitted to the H. B. C., (2) his published journals in French and English, of which I used the French edition of 1799, which is later and fuller than either his report to the H. B. C. or the English book.

I find the beaver receipts of this period as follows:

A. F. (Albany Fort)	21,454
M. R. (Moose)	8,860
E. M. (East Main)	7,626
YF. & SF. (York & Severn)	37,861
C. R. (Churchill)	9,400

Churchill and York, of course, included the inland trade.

In 1777, the minutes record the dismissal of Thomas Kelsey for ill behavior at P. of Wales (Churchill); the last of Henry Kelsey's line.

In 1779, December, the warehouse of Lime Street was burned and all the records without which this history could not have been written—narrowly escaped destruction.

In 1797, communication was opened by way of London with the Russian fur traders of the west coast. In this year, too, 95,000 beaver was the total.

The sums paid to ransom the officer, ran all the way from £6,000 to £4,000, so that it is no wonder, though receipts were large, there were no dividends this year.

I find in the minutes of 1777, Samuel Hearne orders £20 yearly to *Sarah La Petite*, from which one may guess that Samuel had personal reasons for giving such a black picture of Moses Norton.

In 1780, Andrew Graham, whose journals give a great picture of this period, asks that his Indian boy be sent home.

In 1782, the following names, famous in Manitoba history, came into the lists of the officers of the Company: Clouston, Ballantine, Linklater, Spencer, Sutherland, Kipling, Ross, Isbister, Umfreville.

It was in 1787 that the fearful ravages of smallpox reduced the Indian population. This year of plague deserves a chapter by itself, but space forbids. No "black death" of Europe ever worked more terrible woe than the contagion brought back from the Missouri by wandering Assiniboines.

The account of the siege of Richmond by the Eskimos is taken from Pott's report to the Company. A copy of this the *Winnipeg Free Press* recently published as a letter. The description of Richmond is from Captain Coates' account. Strange that this Richmond should have gone back to the state of desolation in which Coates found it. It was Coates who named all the places of this region.

Nearly every great mineral discovery of America was preceded by the predictions of the fur trader. It will be interesting to watch if Hearne's copper mine is ever re-discovered.

The story of Ross and Tomson and Farrant, I found first in the minutes of H. B. C. House and then in Umfreville's account of life at York.

I have throughout referred to Prince of Wales Fort as Churchill, as the constant changing of names confuses the reader.

From the records it is impossible to tell whether the post Whale River was Little Whale, or Great Whale. Judging from the fact that the journey was performed by dog-sled in a night, to Richmond, it must have been the nearer post.

I have not referred to the mistake in latitude made by Hearne in his journey North, for which so many critics censure him. It would be interesting to know how many men would have been in a condition to take any observation at all after a week's sleepless marching and the horrors of the massacre.

Hearne's picture will be found in "Pathfinders of the West."

CHAPTER XX

1760–1810

"THE COMING OF THE PEDLARS"—A NEW RACE OF WOOD-ROVERS THRONGS TO THE NORTHWEST—BANDITS OF THE WILDS WAR AMONG THEMSELVES—TALES OF BORDER WARFARE, WASSAIL AND GRANDEUR—THE NEW NORTHWEST COMPANY CHALLENGES THE AUTHORITY AND FEUDALISM OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

LA PEROUSE'S raid on Churchill and York was the least of the misfortunes that now beset the English Adventurers. Within a year from the French victory, the English prisoners had been ransomed from France and the dismantled forts were rebuilt. It was a subtler foe that menaced the Hudson's Bay Company. Down at Abbittibbi, halfway to Quebec—in at Henley House and Martin's Falls and Osnaburg House on the way from Albany to the modern Manitoba—up the Saskatchewan, where Cocking and Batts and Walker held the forts for trade—between Churchill and Athabasca, where Longmore and Ross had been sent on Hearne's trail—yes, even at the entrance to the Rockies,

where Mr. Howse and the astronomer Turner had found a pass leading from the headwaters of the Saskatchewan, constantly there emerged from the woods, or swept gayly up in light birch canoes, strange hunters, wildwood rovers, free lances, men with packs on their backs, who knocked nonchalantly at the gates of the English posts for a night's lodging and were eagerly admitted because it was safer to have a rival trader under your eye than out among the Indians creating bedlam by the free distribution of rum.

"Pedlars," the English called these newcomers, who overran the sacred territory of the Hudson's Bay Company as though royal charters were a joke and trading monopolies as extinct as the dodo. It was all very well to talk of the rights of your charter, but what became of your rights if interlopers stole them while you talked about them? And what was the use of sending men to drum up trade and bring Indians down to the bay with their furs, if pedlars caught the Indians halfway down at portage, carrying place and hunting rendezvous, and in spite of the fact that those Indians owed the English for half-a-dozen years' outfit—rifled away the best of the furs, sometimes by the free distribution of rum, sometimes by such seditious talk as that "the English had no rights in this country anyway and the

Indians were fools to become slaves to the Hudson's Bay Company?"

This was a new kind of challenge to feudalism. Sooner or later it was bound to come. The ultimate umpire of all things in life is—Fact. Was the charter valid that gave this empire of trade to a few Englishmen, or was it buncombe? "The Pedlars" didn't talk about their rights. *They took them.* That was to be supreme test of the English Company's rights. Somebody else took the rights, and there were good reasons why the Hudson's Bay Company did not care to bring a question of its rights before the courts. When the charter was confirmed by act of Parliament in 1697, it was specified for only seven years. At the end of that period the Company did not seek a renewal. Request for renewal would of itself be acknowledgment of doubt as to the charter. The Company preferred "to have and to hold," rather than risk adverse decision. They contented themselves with blocking the petitions of rivals for trade privileges on the bay, but the eruption of these wildwood rovers—"The French Canadian Pedlars"—was a contingency against which there seemed to be no official redress.

It remained only for the old Company to gird itself to the fray—a fight with bandits and freebooters and raiders in a region where was law of

neither God nor man. Sales had fallen to a paltry £2,000 a year. Dividends stopped altogether. Value of stock fell from £250 to £50. The Company advertised for men—more men. Agents scoured the Orkneys and the Highlands of Scotland for recruits, each to sign for five years, a bounty of £8 to be paid each man. Five ships a year sailed to the bay. Three hundred "patroons" were yearly sent into the woods, and when their time expired—strange to relate—they did not return to Scotland. What became of them? Letters ceased to come home. Inquiries remained unanswered. The wilderness had absorbed them and their bones lay bleaching on the unsheltered prairie where the arrow of Indian raider inspired by "the Pedlars" had shot them as they traversed the plains. No wonder service with the Hudson's Bay Company became ill-omened in the Orkneys and the Highlands! In spite of the bounty of £8 a man, their agents were at their wits' ends for recruits.

When Hendry had gone up the Saskatchewan in 1754, he had seen the houses of French traders. French power fell at Quebec in 1759, and the French wood-rovers scattered to the wilds; but when Cocking went up the Saskatchewan in 1772, what was his amazement to find these French rovers organized under leadership of Scotch merchants from Montreal

—Curry, and Frobisher, and McTavish, and Todd, and McGill, and McGillivrays.

Under French rule, fur trade had been regulated by license. Under English rule was no restriction. First to launch out from Montreal with a cargo of goods for trade, was Alexander Henry, senior, in 1760. From the Michilimackinac region and westward, Henry in ten years, from 1765 to 1775, brought back to Montreal such a wealth of furs, that peltry trade became a fever. No capital was needed but the capital of boundless daring. Montreal merchants advanced goods for trade. One went with the canoes as partner and commander. Three thousand dollars worth of goods constituted a load. Frenchmen were engaged as hunters and voyageurs—eight to a canoe, and before the opening of the century, as many as five hundred canoes yearly passed up the Ottawa from Montreal for the *Pays d' en Haut*, west of Lake Superior, ten and twenty canoes in a brigade. In this way, Thomas Curry had gone from Lake Superior to Lake Winnipeg, and Lake Winnipeg up the Saskatchewan, in 1766, as far as the Forks, bribing that renegade Louis Primo, to steal the furs bought by Cocking for the Hudson's Bay, and to lead the brigade on down to Montreal. One voyage sufficed to yield Curry $50,000 clear, a sum that was considered a fortune in those days,

and enabled him to retire. The fur fever became an epidemic, a mania. James Finlay of Montreal, in 1771, pushed up the Saskatchewan beyond the Forks, or what is now Prince Albert. Todd, McGill & Company outfitted Joseph and Benjamin Frobisher for a dash north of the Saskatchewan in 1772–5, where, by the luckiest chance in the world, they met the Chippewyan and Athabasca Indians on their way to Churchill with furs for the Hudson's Bay Company. The Frobishers struck up friendship with "English Chief"—leader of the Indian brigades—plied the argument of rum night and day, bade the Indians ignore their debts to the English company, offered to outfit them for the next year's hunt and bagged the entire cargo of furs—such an enormous quantity that they could take down only half the cargo that year and had to leave the other half cached, to the everlasting credit of the Indian's honesty and discredit of the white man's. Henceforth, this post was known as Portage de Traite. It led directly from the Saskatchewan to the Athabasca and became a famous meeting place. Portage "of the Stretched Frog" the Indians called it, for the Frobishers had been so keen on the trade that they had taught the Indians how to stretch skins, and the Indians had responded in mischief by tacking a stretched frog skin on the door of the cabin. Push-

ing yet farther toward Athabasca, the Frobisher brothers built another post norwestward, Isle à la Crosse, on an island where the Indians met for the sport of lacrosse.

Besides the powerful house of McTavish, Frobisher, Todd, McGill and McGillivray, were hosts of lesser traders who literally peddled their goods to the Indians. In 1778, these pedlars pooled their stock and outfitted Peter Pond to go on beyond the Frobisher posts to Athabasca. Here, some miles south of the lake, Pond built his fort. Pond was a Boston man of boundless ambition and energy but utterly unscrupulous. While at Athabasca, he heard from the Indians rumors of the Russian fur traders on the Pacific Coast and he drew that famous map of the interior, which was to be presented to the Empress of Russia. He seems to have been cherishing secret designs of a great fur monopoly.

Fur posts sprang up on the waterways of the West like mushrooms. Rum flowed like water—50,000 gallons a year "the pedlars" brought to the Saskatchewan from Montreal. Disorders were bound to ensue. At Eagle Hills near Battleford, in 1780, the drunken Crees became so obstreperous in their demands for more liquor that the three terrified traders cooped up in their house tried to save themselves by putting laudanum in the liquor. An Indian

was drugged to death. The sobered Crees sulky from their debauch, arose to a man, rammed the doors, stabbed the three whites and seven half-breed traders to death, burnt the fort and sent coureurs running from tribe to tribe across the prairie to conspire for a massacre of all white traders in the country. Down on the Assiniboine at what is now known as Portage la Prairie, where the canoemen portaged across to Lake Manitoba and so to Lake Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan, were three strong trading houses under two men called Brice and Boyer. With them were twenty-three Frenchmen. Three different companies had their rendezvous here. The men were scattered in the three houses and off guard when one night the darkness was made hideous by the piercing war cry of the Assiniboines. Before lights could be put out, the painted warriors had swooped down on two of the houses. The whites were butchered as they dashed out—eleven men in as many seconds. The third house had warning from the shots at the others. Brice and Boyer were together. Promptly, lights were put out, muskets rammed through the parchment windows and chinks of the log walls, and a second relay of loaded weapons made ready. When the Assiniboines attempted to rush the third house, they were met with a solid crash of musketry that mowed

down some thirty warriors and gave the assailants pause. With checked ardor, the Indians retreated to the other houses. They could at least starve the white men out, but the white men wisely did not wait. While the Assiniboines rioted, drunk on the booty of rum in the captured cabins, Brice ordered all liquor spilt in his house. Taking what peltries he could, abandoning the rest, Brice led a dash for the river. Darkness favored the fugitive whites. Three only of the retreating men fell under the shower of random arrows—Belleau, Facteau, Lachance. Launching canoes with whispers and muffling their paddles, the white men rowed all night, hid by day, and in three days were safe with the traders at the Forks, or what is now Winnipeg.

Up at Athabasca, Pond, the indomitable, was setting a bad example for lawless work. Wadin was his partner; Le Sieur, his clerk. No greater test of fairness and manhood exists than to box two men in a house ten by ten in the wilderness, with no company but their own year in, year out. Pond was for doing impossibles—or what seemed impossibles at that day. He had sent two traders down Big River (the MacKenzie) as far as Slave Lake. The Indians were furiously hostile. Wadin, the Swiss partner, opposed all risks. Lonely, unstrung and ill-natured, Pond conceived that hatred for his

partner which men, who have been tied too close to an alien nature, know. The men had come to blows. One night the quarrel became so hot, Le Sieur withdrew from the house. He had gone only a few steps when he heard two shots. Rushing back, he found the Swiss weltering in his blood on the floor. "Be off! Never let me see your face again," shouted the wounded man, catching sight of Pond. Those were his last words. It is a terrible commentary on civilization that the first blood shed in the Athabasca was that of a white man slain by a white man; but the Athabasca was three thousand miles away from punishment and the merry game had only begun. Later, Pond was tried for this crime, but acquitted in Montreal.

Roving Assiniboines had visited the Mandanes of the Missouri, this year. They brought back with them not only stolen horses, but an unknown, unseen horror—the germ of smallpox—which ran like a fiery scourge for three years, from Red River and the Assiniboine to the Rockies, sweeping off two-thirds of the native population. Camp after camp, tribe after tribe, was attacked and utterly destroyed, leaving no monument but a heap of bleaching bones scraped clean by the wolves. Tent leather flapped lonely to the wind, rotting on the tepee poles where Death had spared not a soul of a whole encampment.

In vain the maddened Indians made offerings to their gods, slew their children to appease this Death Demon's wrath, and cast away all their belongings. Warriors mounted their fleetest horses and rode like mad to outrace the Death they fancied was pursuing them. Delirious patients threw themselves into the lakes and rivers to assuage suffering. The epidemic was of terrible virulence. The young and middle-aged fell victims most readily, and many aged parents committed suicide rather than live on, bereft of their children. There was an end to all conspiracy for a great uprising and massacre of the whites. The whites had fled before the scourge as terrified as were the Indians and for three years there was scarcely a fur trader in the country from the Missouri to the Saskatchewan.

During the interval, the merchants of Montreal had put their heads together. Division and internecine warfare in the face of Indian hostility and the Hudson's Bay traders steady advancement inland, were folly. The Montrealers must unite. The united traders were known as the Northwest Company. The Company had no capital. Montreal partners who were merchants outfitted the canoes with goods. Men experienced in the trade led the brigades westward. The former gave credit for goods, the latter time on the field. The former acted as

agents to sell the furs, the latter as wintering partners to barter for the furs with the Indians. To each were assigned equal shares—a share apiece to each partner, or sixteen shares in all, in the first place; later increased to twenty and forty-six and ninety-six shares as the Company absorbed more and more of the free traders. As a first charge against the proceeds were the wages of the voyageurs—£100 a year, five times as much as the Hudson's Bay Company paid for the same workers. Then the cost of the goods was deducted—$3,000 a canoe—and in the early days ninety canoes a year were sent North. Later, when the Nor'Westers absorbed all opposition, the canoes increased to five hundred. The net returns were then divided into sixteen parts and the profits distributed to the partners. By 1787, shares were valued at £800 each. At first, net returns were as small as £40,000 a year, but this dividend among only sixteen partners gave what was considered a princely income in those days. Later, net returns increased to £120,000 and £200,000, but by this time the number of partners was ninety-six. Often the yearly dividend was £400 a share. As many as 200,000 beaver were sold by the Nor'Westers in a year, and the heaviest buyer of furs at Montreal was John Jacob Astor of New York. Chief among the Eastern agents, were the two Frobisher brothers,

Benjamin and Joseph—McGill, Todd, Holmes, and Simon McTavish, the richest merchant of Montreal, nicknamed "the Marquis" for his pompous air of wearing prosperity. Chief among the wintering partners were Peter Pond, the American of Athabasca fame, the McGillivrays, nephews of McTavish; the MacLeods, the Grants, the Camerons, MacIntoshes, Shaws, McDonalds, Finlays, Frasers, and Henry, nephew of the Henry who first went to Michilimackinac.

Not only did the new company forthwith send ninety canoes to the North by way of Lake Superior, but one hundred and twenty men were sent through Lake Ontario and Lake Erie to Detroit, for the fur region between Lake Huron and the Mississippi. It was at this period that the Canadian Government was besieged for a monopoly of trade west of Lake Superior, in return for which the Nor'Westers promised to explore the entire region between the Great Lakes and the Pacific Ocean. When the Government refused to grant the monopoly, the Nor'Westers stopped asking for rights. They prepared *to take them.*

In Montreal, the Nor'Westers were lords in the ascendant, socially and financially, living with lavish and regal hospitality, keeping one strong hand on their interests in the West, the other hand on the

pulse of the government. Some of the partners were members of the Assembly. All were men of public influence, and when a wintering partner retired to live in Montreal, he usually became a member of the governing clique. The Beaver Club with the appropriate motto, "Fortitude in Distress," was the partners' social rendezvous, and coveted were the social honors of its exclusive membership. Governors and councillors, military heroes and foreign celebrities counted it an honor to be entertained at the Beaver Club with its lavish table groaning under weight of old wines from Europe and game from the *Pays d'en Haut.* "To discuss the merits of a beaver tail, or moose nose, or bear's paw, or buffalo hump"—was the way a Nor'West partner invited a guest to dinner at the Beaver Club, and I would not like to testify that the hearty partners did not turn night into day and drink themselves under the mahogany before they finished entertaining a guest. Most lordly of the grandees was, of course, "the Marquis," Simon McTavish, who built himself a magnificent manor known as "the Haunted House," on the mountain. He did not live to enjoy it long, for he died in 1804. Indeed, it was a matter of comment how few of the ninety-six partners lived to a good old age in possession of their hard-earned wealth.

"No wonder," sarcastically commented a good bishop, who had been on the field and seen how the wealth was earned, "when the devil sows the seed, he usually looks after the harvest."

But it was not all plain sailing from the formation of the Company. Pond and Pangman, the two Boston men, who had been in the North when the partnership was arranged, were not satisfied with their shares. Pond was won over to the Nor'Westers, but Pangman joined a smaller company with Gregory, and MacLeod, and Alexander MacKenzie, and Finlay. MacKenzie, who was to become famous as a discoverer, was sent to Isle a la Crosse to intercept furs on the way to Hudson Bay. Ross was sent up to oppose Peter Pond of the Nor'Westers in Athabasca. Bostonnais Pangman went up the Saskatchewan to the Rockies, with headquarters at what is now Edmonton, and the rest of what were known as the Little Company faithfully dogged the Nor'Westers' footsteps and built a trading house wherever Indians gathered.

Failing to establish a monopoly by law, the Nor'-Westers set themselves to do it without law. The Little Company must be exterminated. Because Alexander MacKenzie later became one of the Nor'-Westers, the details have never been given to the public, but at La Crosse where he waited to barter

for the furs coming from the North to the Hudson's Bay, the Nor'Westers camped on his trail. The crisis in rivalry was to meet the approaching Indian brigades. The trader that met them first, usually got the furs. Spies were sent in all directions to watch for the Indians, and spies dogged the steps of spies. It was no unusual thing for one side to find the Indians first and for a rival spy to steal the victory by bludgeoning the discoverer into unconsciousness or treating him to a drink of drugged whiskey. In the scuffle and maneuver for the trade, one of Alexander MacKenzie's partners was murdered, another of his men lamed, a third narrowly escaping death through the assassin's bullet being stopped by a powderhorn; but the point was—MacKenzie got the furs for the Little Company. The Nor'Westers were beaten.

Up at Athabasca, Pond, the Nor'Wester was opposed by Ross, the Little Company man. Hearne, of Hudson's Bay, had been to Athabasca first of all explorers, but Pond was the first of the Montreal men to reach the famous fur region of the North, and he did not purpose seeing his labors filched away by the Little Company. When Laroux brought the Indians from Slave Lake to the Nor'Westers and Ross attempted to approach them, there was a scuffle. The Little Company leader fell pierced by

a bullet from a revolver smoking in the hand of Peter Pond. Did Pond shoot Ross? Was it accidental? These questions can never be answered. This was the second murder for which Pond was responsible in the Athabasca, and ill-omened news of it ran like wildfire south to Isle à la Crosse and Portage de Traite where Alexander MacKenzie and his cousin Roderick were encamped. Nor'Westers and Little Company men alike were shocked. For the Montreal men to fight among themselves meant alienation of the Indians and victory for the Hudson's Bay. Roderick MacKenzie of the Little Company and William McGillivray of the Nor'Westers decided to hasten down to Montreal with the summer brigades and urge a union of both organizations. Locking canoes abreast, with crews singing in unison, the rival leaders set out together, and the union was effected in 1787 by the Nor'Westers increasing their shares to admit all the partners of the Gregory and MacKenzie concern. Pond sold his interests to the MacGillivrays and retired to Boston.

The strongest financial, social and political interests of Eastern Canada were now centered in the Northwest Company. There were ways of discouraging independent merchants from sending pedlars to the North. Boycott, social or financial, the pulling of political strings that withheld a gov-

ernment passport, a hint that if the merchant wanted a hand in the trade it would be cheaper for him to pool his interests with the Nor'Westers than risk a $3,000 load on his own account—kept the field clear or brought about absorption of all rivals till 1801. Then a Dominique Rousseau essayed an independent venture led by his clerk, Hervieux. Grand Portage on Lake Superior was the halfway post between Montreal and the *Pays d'en Haut*—the metropolis of the Nor'Westers' domain. Here came Hervieux's brigade and pitched camp some hundred yards away from the Nor'West palisades. Hardly had Hervieux landed when there marched across to him three officers of the Northwest Company, led by Duncan McGillivray, who ordered the newcomers to be off on pain of death, as all the land here was Northwest property. Hervieux stood his ground stoutly as a British subject and demanded proof that the country belonged to the Northwest Company. To the Nor'Westers, such a demand was high treason. McGillivray retorted he would send proof enough. The partners withdrew, but there sallied out of the fort a party of the famous Northwest bullies—prize fighters kept in trim for the work in hand. Drawing knives, they cut Hervieux's tents to shreds, scattered his merchandise to the four winds and bedrubbed the little men, who

tried to defend it, as if they had been so many school boys.

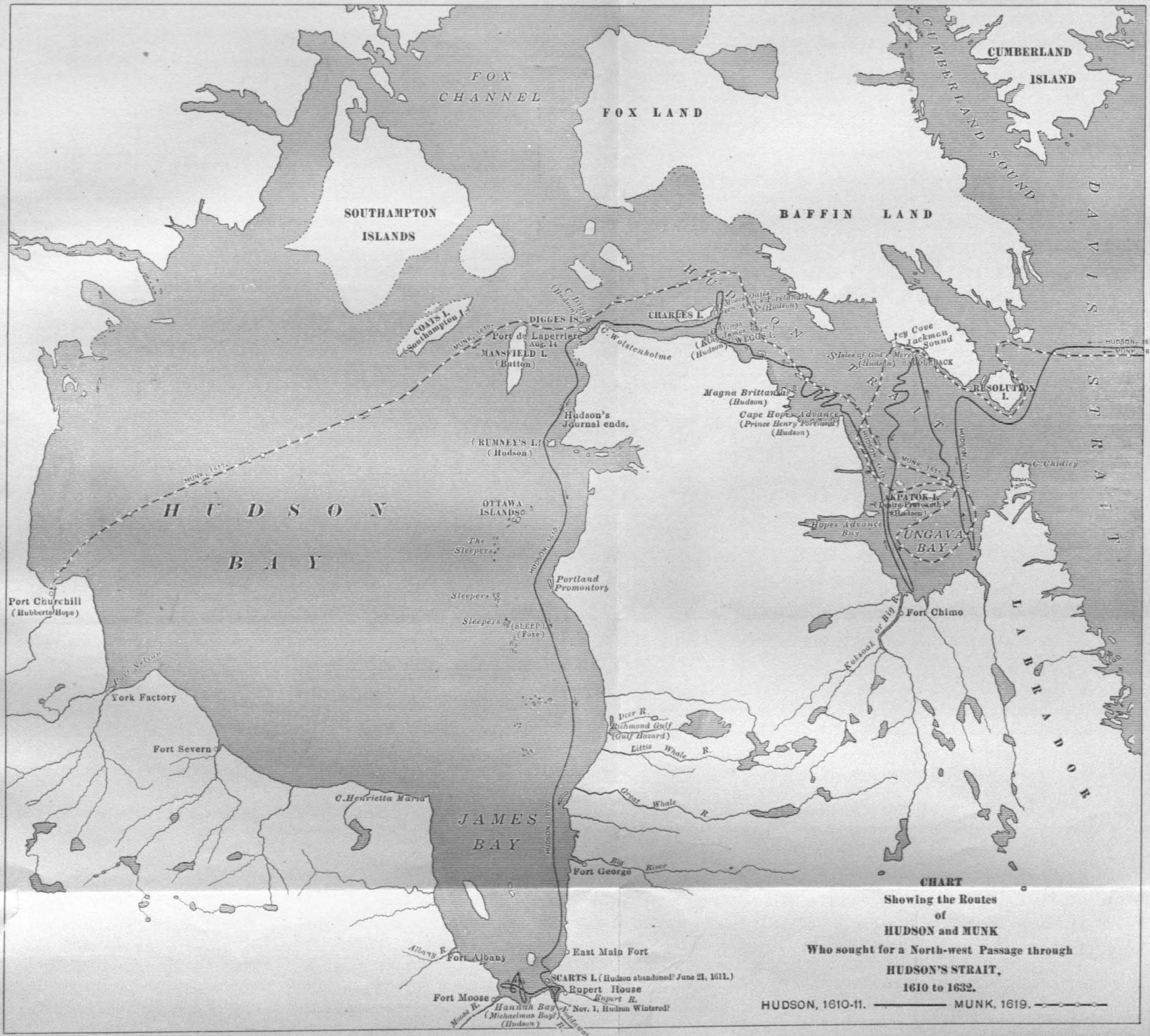
"You demand our title to possession? You want proofs that we hold this country? Eh? Bien! Voila! There's proof! Take it; but if you dare to go into the interior, there will be more than tents cut! Look out for your throats."

Totally ruined, Hervieux was compelled to go back to Montreal, where his master in vain sued the Nor'Westers. The Nor'Westers were not responsible. It was plain as day: they had not ordered those bullies to come out, and those bullies were a matter of three thousand miles away and could not be called as witnesses.

Determined not to be beaten, Rousseau attempted a second venture in 1806, this time two canoes under fearless fellows led by one Delorme, who knew the route to the interior. He instructed Delorme to avoid clashing with the Nor'Westers by skirting round their headquarters on Lake Superior, if necesssary by traveling at night till beyond detection. Delorme was four days' march beyond Lake Superior when Donald McKay, a Nor'Wester, suddenly emerged from the underbrush leading a dozen wood-rovers. Not a word was said. No threats. No blustering. This was a no-man's-land where there was no law and everyone could do

as he liked. McKay liked to do a very odd thing just at this juncture, just at this place. His bushlopers hurried on down stream in advance of Delorme's canoes and leveled a veritable barricade of trees across the trail. Then they went to the rear of Delorme and leveled another barricade. Delorme didn't attempt to out-maneuver his rivals. At most he had only sixteen men, and that kind of a game meant a free fight and on one side or the other—murder. He sold out both his cargoes to McKay at prices current in Montreal, and retreated from the fur country, leaving the sardonic Nor'Westers smiling in triumph. These were some of the ways by which the Nor'Westers dissuaded rivals from invading the *Pays d'en Haut.* On their part, they probably justified their course by arguing that rivalry would at once lead to such murders as those in the Athabasca. In their secret councils, they well knew that they were keeping small rivals from the field to be free for the fight against the greatest rival of all—the Hudson's Bay Company.

Footnote to Chapter XX.—The contents of this chapter are taken primarily from the records of the Hudson's Bay House; secondarily, from the Journals of the Nor'West partners as published by Senator Masson, Prof. Coues, and others; also, and most important, from such old missionary annals as those of the Oblates and other missionaries like Abbe Dugas, Tassé, Grandin, Provencher and others. In the most of cases, the missionary writer was not himself the actor (there are two exceptions to this) but he was in direct contact with the living


FOX CHANNEL
FOX LAND
CUMBERLAND ISLAND
CUMBERLAND SOUND
SOUTHAMPTON ISLANDS
BAFFIN LAND
DAVIS STRAIT
COATS I. (Southampton I.)
DIGGES IS.
Port de Laperriere Aug. 14
MANSFIELD I. (Button)
C. Wolstenholme
CHARLES I.
EGGS I.
Icy Cove Jackman Sound
HUDSON 1610
MUNK 1619
RESOLUTION I.
Magna Brittania (Hudson)
Cape Hopes Advance (Prince Henry Foreland) (Hudson)
Hudson's Journal ends.
RUMNEY'S I. (Hudson)
C. Chidley
HUDSON BAY
OTTAWA ISLANDS
The Sleepers
Sleepers
Sleepers
SLEEP I. (Foxe)
Portland Promontory
AKPATOK I.
Hopes Advance Bay
UNGAVA BAY
Port Churchill (Hubberts Hope)
Fort Chimo
Kaksoak or Big R.
LABRADOR
Port Nelson
York Factory
Fort Severn
Deer R.
Richmond Gulf (Gulf Hazard)
Little Whale R.
Great Whale R.
C. Henrietta Maria
JAMES BAY
Big River
Fort George
Albany R.
Fort Albany
East Main Fort
SCARTS I. (Hudson abandoned? June 21, 1611.)
Rupert House
Rupert R.
Fort Moose
Moose R.
Hannah Bay (Michelmas Bay) (Hudson)
Nov. 1, Hudson Wintered?
Abitibi R.
CHART
Showing the Routes
of
HUDSON and MUNK
Who sought for a North-west Passage through
HUDSON'S STRAIT,
1610 to 1632.
HUDSON, 1610-11.
MUNK, 1619.

actor and took his facts on the spot, so that his testimony is even more non-partisan than the carefully edited Masson essay and records. I consider these various missionary legends the most authentic source of the history of the period, though their evidence is most damning to both sides. These annals are exclusively published by Catholic organizations and so unfortunately do not reach the big public of which they are deserving.

The exact way in which the N. W. C. was formed, I found very involved in the Masson essay. A detailed account of all steps in the organization is very plainly given in the petitions of the Frobisher Brothers, Peter Pond and McGill to Gov. Haldimand for a monopoly of the fur trade. The petitions are in the Canadian Archives. A curious fear is revealed in all these petitions—that the Americans may reach and possess the Pacific Coast first. As a matter of fact that is exactly what Grey and Lewis and Clarke did in the Oregon region.

From the H. B. C. Archives I find the following data on this era: Batts and Walker and Peter Fidler held the mouth of the Saskatchewan for the English; one Goodwin worked south from Albany almost to Lake Superior and west to modern Manitoba; half a dozen French run-aways from the N. W. C. were engaged as spies at £100 a year; the Martin Falls House is built inland from Albany in 1782; in spite of ignominious surrender, Hearne and Humphrey Martin go back as Governors of Churchill and York; Edward Umfreville leaves the H. B. C. (wages £141) and joins the N. W. C.; Martin and Hearne, La Perouse's prisoners, were dropped at Stromness in November, whether on the way to France or back from France, I can't tell; their letters do not reach the H. B. C. till March, 1783; William Paulson is surgeon at East Main; no dividends from 1782 to 1786; Joseph Colen succeeds Martin at York in '86; William Auld succeeds Hearne at Churchill in '96; James Hourie is massacred by the Indians of East Main; H. B. C. servants from the growing dangers become mutinous, six are fined at East Main for mutiny; four at York fined £4 each, namely Magnus Tait, Alex. Gunn, John Irvine, Benj. Bruce, two at Churchill £20 each, Robert Pexman and Henry Hodges. Andrew Graham, the old factor of Severn, being now destitute at Edinburg, is given thirty guineas in 1801.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME II

PART III—(*Continued*)

CHAPTER XXI

CHAPTER XXII

CHAPTER XXIII

CHAPTER XXIV

CHAPTER XXV

CHAPTER XXVI

CHAPTER XXVII

CHAPTER XXVIII

CHAPTER XXIX

PART IV

CHAPTER XXX

CHAPTER XXXI

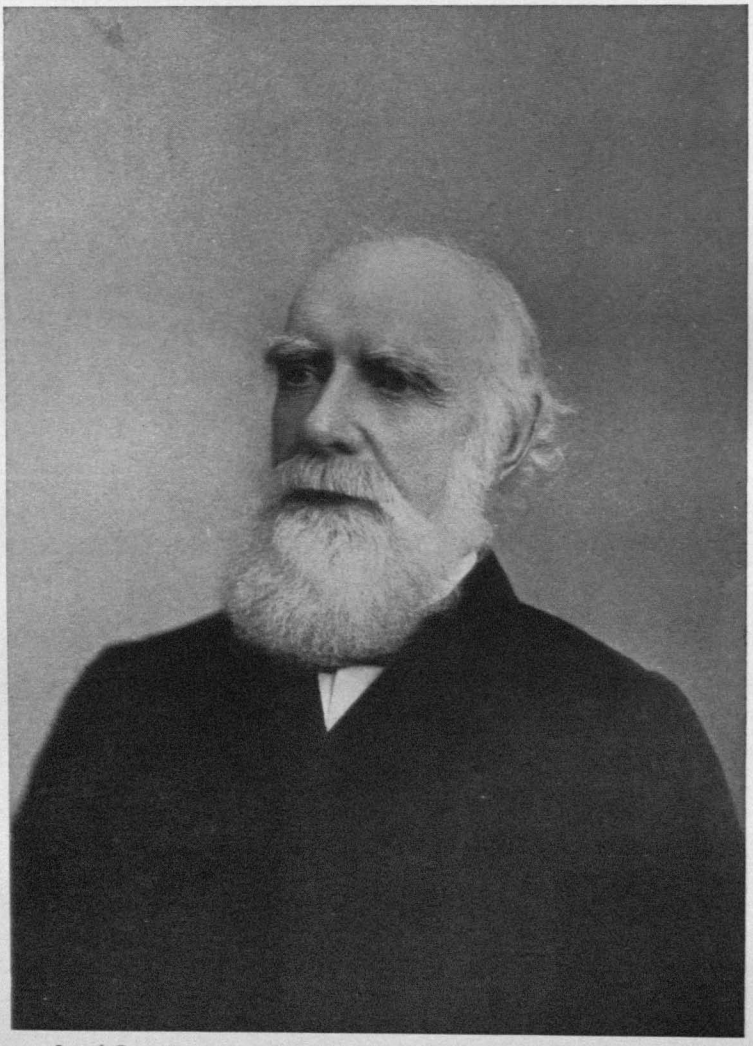
CHAPTER XXXII

CHAPTER XXXIII

CHAPTER XXXIV

PART III—*Continued*

THE CONQUEST OF THE GREAT NORTHWEST



Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, formerly Donald Smith;
Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.

THE CONQUEST OF THE GREAT NORTHWEST

CHAPTER XXI

1760–1810

"THE COMING OF THE PEDLARS" CONTINUED—VOYAGE UP TO FORT WILLIAM, LIFE OF WILDWOOD WASSAIL AND GRANDEUR THERE—HOW THE WINTERING PARTNERS EXPLOITED THE NORTHWEST—TALES OF THE WINTERERS IN THE PAYS D'EN HAUT

IT WAS no easier for the Nor'Westers to obtain recruits than for the Hudson's Bay Company. French habitants were no more anxious to have their heads broken in other men's quarrels than the Orkneymen of the Old Country; but the Nor'Westers managed better than the Hudson's Bay. Brigades were made up as the ice cleared from the rivers in May. For weeks before, the Nor'Westers had been craftily at work. No agents were sent to the country parishes with clumsy offers

of £8 bounty, which would be, of itself, acknowledgment of danger. Companies don't pay £8 bounty for nothing. Not agents were sent to the parishes, but "sly old wolves of the North"—as one parish priest calls these demoralizers of his flock—went from village to village, gay, reckless, daredevil veterans, old in service, young in years, clothed in all the picturesque glory of beaded buckskin, plumed hats, silk sashes, to tickle the vanity of the poor country bucks, who had never been beyond their own hamlet. Cocks of the walk, bullies of the town, slinging money around like dust, spinning yarns marvelous of fortune made at one coup, of adventures in which they had been the heroes, of freedom—freedom like kings to rule over the Indian tribes—these returned voyageurs lounged in the taverns, played the gallants at all the hillside dances, flirted with the daughters, made presents to the mothers, and gave to the youth of the parish what the priest describes as "dizziness of the head." It needed only a little maneuvering for our "sly wolves of the North" to get themselves lionized, the heroes of the parish. Dances were given in their honor. The contagion invaded even the sacred fold of the church. The "sons of Satan" maneuvered so well that the holy festivals even seemed to revolve round their person as round a sun of glory. The curé might

preach himself black in the face proving that a camp on the sand and a bed *à la belle étoile,* under the stars, are much more poetic in the telling than in life; that voyageurs don't pass all their lives clothed in picturesque costumes chanting ditties to the rhythmic dip of paddle blades; that, in fact, when your voyageur sets out in spring he passes half his time in ice water to mid-waist tracking canoes up rapids, and that where the portage is rocky glassed with ice, you can follow the sorry fellow's path by blood from the cuts in his feet.

What did the curé know about it? There was proof to the contrary in the gay blade before their eyes, and the green country bucks expressed timid wish that they, too, might lead such a life. Presto! No sooner said than done! My hero from the North jerks a written contract all ready for the signature of names and slaps down half the wages in advance before the dazzled greenhorns have time to retract. From now till the brigades depart our green recruit busies himself playing the hero before he has won his spurs. He dons the gay vesture and he dons the grand air and he passes the interval in a glorious oblivion of all regrets drowned in potions at the parish inn; but it is our drummer's business to round up the recruits at Montreal, which he does as swiftly as they sober up. And they usually sober

up to find that all the advance wages have melted in the public house. No drawing back now, though the rosy hopes have faded drab! A hint at such a thought brings down on the poltroon's head threats of instant imprisonment—a fine ending, indeed, to all the brag and the boast and the brass-band flourish with which our runaway has left his native parish.

Crews and canoes assemble above Lachine, nine miles from Montreal, ninety or one hundred canoes with eight men to each, including steersman, and a pilot to each ten canoes. Thirty or forty guides there will, perhaps, be to the yearly brigade—men who lead the way and prevent waste of time by following wrong water courses. And it is a picturesque enough scene to stir the dullest blood, spite of all the curé's warning. Voyageurs and hunters are dressed in buckskin with gayest of silk bands round hair and neck. Partners are pompous in ruffles and lace and gold braid, with brass-handled pistols and daggers in belt. In each canoe go the cargoes—two-thirds merchandise, one-third provisions—oilcloth to cover it, tarpaulin for a tent, tow lines, bark and gum for repairs, kettles, dippers and big sponges to bail out water. As the canoes are loaded, they are launched and circle about on the river waiting for the signal of the head steersman. The chief steersman's steel-shod pole is held overhead. It drops—

five hundred paddles dip as with one arm, and there shoots out from the ninety-foot canoes the small, narrow, swift craft of the partners, racing ahead to be at the rendezvous before the cargoes arrive. Freight packers ashore utter a shout that makes the echoes ring. The voyageurs strike up a song. The paddles dip to the time of the song. The deep-throated chorus dies away in echo. The life of the *Pays d'en Haut* has begun.

Ste. Anne's—the patron saint of canoemen—is the last chapel spire they will see for many a year. The canoemen cross themselves in prayer. Then the Lake of the Two Mountains comes, and the Long Sault Rapids and the Chaudiere Falls, of what is now Ottawa City, and the Chat Rapids and thirty-six other portages in the four hundred miles up the Ottawa from Montreal, each portage being reckoned as many "pipes" long as the voyageur smokes, when carrying the cargo overland in ninety-pound packs on his back. Leaving the Mattawa at the head-waters of the Ottawa, the brigades strike westward for the Great Lakes, down stream through Nipissing Lake and French River to Lake Huron; easier going now with the current and sheer delight once the canoes are out on the clear waters of the lake, where if the wind is favorable, blankets are hoisted for a sail and the canoes scud across to the Sault. But it is

not always easy going. Where French River comes out of Nipissing Lake, ten crosses mark where voyageurs have found a watery grave, and sometimes on the lake the heavily laden canoes are working straight against a head wind that sends choppy waves ice-cold slapping into their laps till oilcloth must be bound round the prow to keep from shipping water where a wave-crest dips over and the canoe has failed to climb. Even mounting the waves and keeping the gun'els clear of the wash, at every paddle dip the spray splashes the voyageur to his waist. The "old wolves" smoke and say nothing. The bowman bounces back athwart so that the prow will lighten and rise to the climbing wave, but the green hands—the gay dons who left home in such a flush of glory—mutter "*c'est la misère, c'est la misère, mon bourgeois,*" *bourgeois* being the habitant's name for the partners of the Company; and misery it is, indeed, if ice glasses the canoe and the craft becomes frost-logged. They must land then and repair the canoe where the bark has been jagged, new bark being gummed on where the cuts are deep, resin and tar run along all fissures. And these Nor'Westers are very wolves for time. Repairs must be done by torchlight at night. In fair weather, the men sleep on the sand. In bad weather, tarpaulin is put up as a wind-break. Reveille is sounded

at first dawn streak—a bugle call if a partner is in camp, a shout from the chief steersman if the brigades have become scattered—"Levé! Levé!" By four in the morning, canoes are again on the water. At eight, the brigades land for breakfast. If weather be favorable for speed, they will not pause for midday meal but eat a snack of biscuit or pemmican as they run across the portages. Night meal comes when they can see to go no farther, and often relays of paddles are put on and the brigades paddle all night. The men have slim fare—grease and barley meal and pemmican, and the greenhorns frequently set up such a wail for the pork diet of the home table that they become known as the "*mangeurs de lard*," "*the pork eaters*," between Montreal and Lake Superior, or "the comers and goers," because the men on this part of the voyage to the Up Country are freighters constantly coming and going. At each fresh portage the new hand must stand for treats to his comrades, or risk a ducking, or prove himself a better wrestler than they. At the hardest places and the hardest pace, the bourgeois unbends and gives his men a *régale*, which means rum.

The Sault at the west side of Lake Huron leading up to Lake Superior is the last military post—the outermost reach of the law's arm. Beyond the Sault—as the priests had warned—is law of neither

God nor man. Beyond the Sault, letters from home friends to the voyageurs bear the significant address, "*Wherever He May Be Found.*"

At the Sault on the north side, the Nor'Westers constructed a canal with locks, for they had two sailing vessels patrolling the lakes—*The Otter* and *The Beaver*—one bound for the Detroit trade, the other from the Sault across Lake Superior. As the superstitious half-breeds passed from the Sault to Lake Superior, it was an Indian custom to drop an arrow on the shore as an offering to keep the devil from doing them harm on the boisterous waters of Lake Superior. Many a canoe was swamped by head winds crossing Lake Superior. To avoid risk, the brigades skirted close to the north shore, till they came to the Company's headquarters at Fort William, formerly known as Grand Portage.

Grand Portage was eighteen hundred miles from Montreal and lay at the foot of a hill, the buildings engirt by eighteen-foot palisades. It was here rival traders were usually stopped. When the Montreal merchants first went to the Northwest, their headquarters had been Michilimacinac, but this was too close to rival traders. The Frobishers and McGillivrays and McTavishes decided to seek some good location on the north shore of the lake leading directly to the Up Country. Grand Portage on

Pigeon River leading up to the height of land drained by Rainy River, was chosen for the fort, but when the American Boundary was specified by treaty, it was found that Grand Portage was in foreign territory. The partners looked for an eastern site that would still be on waterways leading toward Rainy River. The very year, 1785, that the Nor'Westers had petitioned the government for monopoly, they sent voyageurs seeking such a site. The man who led the voyageurs was that Edward Umfreville, who had been captured by the French on Hudson Bay, in 1782, and had now come to join the Nor'Westers. Umfreville found a chain of waterways leading up from Lake Superior to Lake Nipigon and from Nipigon west to Winnipeg River, but later, in 1797, Roderick MacKenzie found the trail of the fur traders in the old French régime—by way of Kaministiquia; and to the mouth of the Kaministiquia headquarters were moved by 1800, and the post named Fort William in honor of that William McGillivray who had bought out Peter Pond.

The usual slab-cut palisades surrounded the fort. In the center of the square stood the main building surmounted by a high balcony. Inside was the great saloon or hall—sixty feet by thirty—decorated with paintings of the leading partners in the full flush of ruffles and court costume. Here the partners

and clerks and leading guides took their meals. Round this hall were the partners' bedrooms; in the basement, the kitchen. Flanking the walls of the courtyard were other buildings equally large —the servants' quarters, storehouses, warerooms, clerks' lodgings. The powder magazine was of stone roofed with tin with a lookout near the roof commanding a view of the lake. There was also a jail which the voyageurs jocularly called their *pot au beurre*, or butter tub. The physician, Doctor McLoughlin, a young student of Laval, Quebec, who had been forced to flee west for pitching a drunken British officer of Quebec Citadel on his head in the muddy streets, had a house to himself near the gate. Over the gate was a guardhouse, where sentry sat night and day. Inside the palisades was a population of from twelve hundred to two thousand people. Outside the fort a village of little log houses had scattered along the river front. Here dwelt the Indian families of the French voyageurs.

Here, then, came the brigades from Montreal—seven hundred, and one thousand strong, preceded by the swift-traveling partners whose annual meeting was held in July. A great whoop welcomed the men ashore and they were at once rallied to the Canteen, where bread, butter, meal and four quarts of rum were given to each man. About the same time

as the canoes from the East arrived, the fur brigades from the West came in smaller canoes, loaded to the waterline with skins valued at £40 a pack. To these also was given a *régale*. Then twenty or a dozen kegs of rum were distributed to the Indian families; "and after that," says one missionary, "truly the furies of Hell were let loose." The gates were closed for reasons that need not be given, and the Nor'Westers often took the precaution of gathering up all the weapons of the Indians before the *boisson* or mad drinking bout began, but the rum-frenzied Indians still had fists and teeth left, and never a drinking bout passed but from one to a dozen Indians were murdered—frequently wives and daughters because they were least able to defend themselves—though the Indian murderer when sobered was often plunged in such grief for his deed that he would come to the white men and beg them to kill him as punishment. The stripping of all restraint—moral, physical, legal—has different effects on different natures. Some rise higher in the freedom. Others go far below the level of the most vicious beast. Men like Alexander MacKenzie and Doctor McLoughlin braced themselves to the shock of the sudden transition from civilization to barbarism and rose to renown—one as explorer, the other as patriot; but in the very same region where

Alexander MacKenzie won his laurels was another MacKenzie—James—a blood relative, who openly sold native women to voyageurs and entered them as an asset on the Company's books; and in that very Oregon where McLoughlin won his reputation as a saint, was his son McLoughlin, notorious as a sot. Perhaps the crimes of the fur country were no greater than those committed under hiding in civilization, but they were more terrific, for they were undisguised and in open day where if you would not see them you must close your eyes or bolt the gates.

Inside the bolted gates where the partners lived, the code was on the whole one of decency and high living and pomp. In the daytime, the session of the annual meeting was held in secret behind barred doors. The entire Up Country was mapped out for the year's campaign. Reports were received on the past season, men and plans arranged for the coming year, weak leaders shifted to easy places, strong men, "old winterers," "the crafty wolves of the North," dispatched to the fields where there was to be the hardest fighting against either Indians or English, and English always meant Hudson's Bay.

But at night the cares of the campaign were laid aside. The partners dressed for dinner—ruffles and gold lace and knee breeches with gold-clasped garters and silver-buckled shoes. Over the richly laden

dinner table was told many a yarn of hardship and danger and heroism in the Up Country. The rafters rang with laughter and applause and song. Outside the gates among the voyageurs the songs were French; inside among the partners, Scotch. When plates were cleared away, bagpipes of the beloved Highlands, and flutes, and violins struck up and "we danced till daylight," records Rod. MacKenzie; or "we drank the ten gallon kegs empty," confesses Henry; it was according to the man. Or when more wine than wisdom had flowed from the festive board, and plates were cleared, the jolly partners sometimes straddled wine kegs, chairs, benches, and "*sauted*," as one relates it—shot the rapids from the dining table to the floor ending up a wild night with wild races astride anything from a broom to a paddle round and round the hall till daylight peeped through the barred windows, or pipers and fiddlers fell asleep, and the servants came to pilot the gay gentlemen to bed. Altogether, it wasn't such a dull time—those two weeks' holidays at Fort William—and such revel was only the foam ("bees' wings" one journal calls it) of a life that was all strong wine. Outside the gates were the lees and the dregs of the life—riot and lust.

It was part of the Nor'Westers' policy to encourage a spirit of bluster and brag and bullying among the

servants. Bluff was all very well, but the partners saw to it that the men could back up their bluff with brawn. Wrestling matches and boxing bouts were encouraged between the Scotch clerks and the French voyageurs. These took place inside the walls. Half the partners were Catholics and all the voyageurs. The Catholic Church did not purpose losing these souls to Satan. Not for nothing had the good bishop of Quebec listened to confessions from returned voyageurs. When he picked out a chaplain for Fort William, he saw to it that the man chosen should be a man of herculean frame and herculean strength. The good father was welcomed to the Fort, given ample quarters and high precedence at table, but the Catholic partners weren't quite sure how he would regard those prize fights.

"Don't go out of your apartments to-morrow! There's to be a *régale!* There may be fighting," they warned him.

"I thank you," says the priest politely, no doubt recalling the secrets of many a confessional.

From his window, he watched the rough crowds gather next day in the courtyard. As he saw the two champions strip to their waists, he doubtless guessed this was to be no chance fight. Hair tied back, at a signal, fists and feet, they were at it. The priest grew cold and then hot. He began to strip off gar-

ments that might hinder his own shoulder swing, and clad in fighting gear burst from his room and marched straight to the center of the crowd. No one had time to ask his intentions. He was a big man and the crowd stood aside. Shooting out both his long arms, the priest grabbed each fighter by the neck, knocked their heads together like two billiard balls, and demanded: "Heh? That's the way you bullies fight, is it? Eh? Bien! You don't know anything about it! You're a lot of old hens! Here's the way to do it! I'll show you how," and with a final bang of cracking skulls, he spun them sprawling across the courtyard half stunned. "If you have any better than these two, send them along! I'll continue the lessons," he proffered; and for lack of learners withdrew to his own apartments.

It is now necessary to examine how the Nor'-Westers blocked out their Northern Empire over which they kept more jealous guard than Bluebeard over his wives.

Take a map of North America. Up on Hudson Bay is the English Company with forts around it like a wheel. Of this circle, the bay is the hub. Eastward are the forts in Labrador; southward, Abbittibbi toward Quebec; westward, three lines of fur posts extending inland like spokes of the wheel—1st,

up Albany River toward the modern Manitoba—(*Mine*, water; *toba*, prairie, that is, country of the prairie water), along the valley of Red River to modern Minnesota (*Mine*, water; *sotar*, sky-colored, that is, country of the sky-colored water), and up the winding Assiniboine (country of the stone boilers where the Assiniboines cooked food on hot stones) to the central prairie; 2nd, up Hayes River from York (Nelson) to the Saskatchewan as far as the Rockies; 3rd, up Churchill River from Churchill Fort to Portage de Traite and Isle a la Crosse and far-famed Athabasca and MacKenzie River.

The wheel that has for its hub Hudson Bay, has practically only five spokes—two, eastward; three, westward. Between these unoccupied spokes are areas the size of a Germany or a Russia or a France. Into these the Nor'Westers thrust themselves like a wedge.

Look at the map again. This time the point of radiation is Fort William on Lake Superior. Between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay northward for seven hundred miles is not a post. Into these dark, impenetrable, river-swamped forests the Nor'-Westers send their men. Dangerous work, this! For some unaccountable reason the Indians of these shadowy forests are more treacherous and gloomy than the tribes of the plains. Umfreville passes

through their territory when he tries to find a trail westward not on American soil. Shaw, the partner, and Long, the clerk, are sent in to drum up trade. The field is entered one hundred miles east of Fort William at Pays Plat, where canoes push north to Lake Nipigon. First, a fort is built on Lake Nipigon named Duncan, after Duncan Cameron. Long stays here in charge. Shaw, as partner, pushes on to a house half way down to Albany on Hudson Bay. The Indians call Mr. Shaw "the Cat" from his feeble voice. A third hand, Jacque Santeron, is sent eastward to the Temiscamingue Lakes south of Abbittibbi. The three Nor'Westers have, as it were, thrust themselves like a wedge between the spokes of the Hudson's Bay Company from Moose River to Albany; but a thousand perils assail them, a thousand treacheries. First, the Frenchman Santeron loses courage, sends a farewell written on a birch-bark letter down to Long at Nipigon, and deserts bag and baggage, provisions and peltries, to the Hudson's Bay at Abbittibbi. Determined to prevent such loss, Long tears across country to Temiscamingue only to find Santeron's cabins abandoned and these words in charcoal on bark: "*Farewell my dear comrade; I go with daring and expect a good price for my furs with the English. With the best heart, I wish you luck. My regards to my*

partners. Good-by." But desertion and theft of Company goods are not the worst of it. Down at Nipigon, Long hears that the Indians of the North are going to murder "the Cat"—Mr. Shaw—probably to carry the plundered furs down to the Hudson's Bay. Long rushes to the rescue to find Shaw cooped up in the cabin surrounded by a tribe of frenzied Indians whom he tried in vain to pacify with liquor.

"My God! But I'm glad to see you," shouts Shaw, drawing Long inside the door. For a week the Indians had tried to set fire to his house by shooting arrows of lighted punk wood at it, but every window and crevice of the cabin bristles with loaded muskets —twenty-eight of them—that keep the assailants back. The Indians demand more liquor. Shaw gives it to them on condition they go away, but at daybreak back they come for more, naked and daubed with war paint from head to foot.

"More," shouts Long. "Come on then," throwing the doors wide open and rolling across the entrance a keg of gunpowder from which he knocks the lid. "One step across the door and we all perish together," cocking his pistol straight for the powder. Pell-mell off dashed the terrified Indians paddling canoes as fast as drunken arms could work the blades. Another time, Long discovers that his

Indian guide is only awaiting a favorable chance to assassinate him. A bottle of drugged liquor puts the assassin to sleep and another Indian with a tomahawk prevents him ever awakening. When Long retires, Duncan Cameron, son of a royalist in the American Revolution, comes to command Nipigon. Cameron pushes on up stream past Nipigon two hundred miles to the English post Osnaburg, where the Hudson's Bay man, Goodwin, welcomes the Nor'Wester—a rival is safer indoors than out, especially when he has no visible goods; but Cameron manages to speak with the Indians during his visit and when he departs they follow him back to the place where he has *cached* his goods and the trade takes place. Henceforth traders of the Nipigon do not stay in the fort on the lake but range the woods drumming up trade from Abbittibbi east, to Albany west.

Meanwhile, what are the brigades of Fort William doing? Fifteen days at the most it takes for the "goers and comers" of Montreal to exchange their cargo of provisions for the Northerners' cargo of furs. When the big canoes head back for the East at the end of July, the Montreal partners go with them. Smaller canoes, easier to portage and in more numerous brigades, set out for the West with the wintering partners. These are "the wolves of

the North"—the MacKenzies and Henry and Harmon and Fraser and a dozen others—each to command a wilderness empire the size of a France or a Germany.

By the new route of Kaministiquia, it is only a day's paddling beyond the first long portage to the height of land. Beyond this, the canoes launch down stream, gliding with the current and "somerseting" or shooting the smaller rapids, portaging when the fall of water is too turbulent. Wherever there is a long portage there stands a half-way house—wayside inn of logs and thatch roof where some stray Frenchman sells fresh food to the voyageurs—a great nuisance to the impatient partners, for the men pause to parley. First of the labyrinthine waterways that weave a chain between Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg is Rainy River, flowing northwest to Lake of the Woods, or Lake of the Isles as the French called it. On Rainy River are the ruins of an old fort of the French traders. Here the Northbound brigades often meet the Athabasca canoes which can seldom come down all the way as far as Fort William and go back to Athabasca before winter. Again an exchange of goods takes place, and the Athabasca men head back with the Northbound brigades.

Wherever the rivers widen to lakes as at Lake

Francis and Lake of the Woods, the canoes swing abreast, lash gun'els together by thwarting paddles, hoist sails and drift lazily forward on the forest-shadowed, placid waters, crews smoking, or singing with weird cadences amid the loneliness of these silent places. In this part of the voyage, while all the brigades were still together, there were often as many as five hundred canoes spread out on the lakes like birds on wing. Faces now bronzed almost to the shade of woodland creatures, splashes of color here and there where the voyageurs' silk scarf has not faded, blue sky above with a fleece of clouds, blue sky below with a fleece of clouds and all that marked where sky began and reflection ended the margin of the painted shores etched amber in the brown waters—the picture was one that will never again be witnessed in wilderness life. Sometimes as the canoes cut a silver trail across the lakes, leather tepee tops would emerge from the morning mists telling of some Cree hunters waiting with their furs, and one of the partners would go ashore to trade, the crew camping for a day. Every such halt was the chance for repairing canoes. Camp fires sprang up as if by magic. Canoes lay keel up and tar was applied to all sprung seams, while the other boatmen got lines out and laid up supplies of fresh fish. That night the lake would twinkle with

a hundred fires and an army of voyageurs lie listening to the wind in the pines. The next day, a pace would be set to make up for lost time.

Lake of the Woods empties into Winnipeg River through a granite gap of cataract. The brigades skirted the falls across the Portage of the Rat (modern Rat Portage) and launched down the swift current of Winnipeg River that descends northward to Lake Winnipeg in such a series of leaps and waterfalls it was long known among the voyageurs as White or Foaming River. Where the river entered the southeast end of Lake Winnipeg, were three trading posts —the ruins of the old French fort, Maurepas, the Nor'Westers' fort known as Bas de la Riviere, and the Hudson's Bay Post, now called Fort Alexander —some three miles from the lake.

This was the lake which Kelsey, and perhaps Radisson and Hendry and Cocking, had visited from Hudson Bay. It was forty days straight west from Albany, three weeks from York on the Hayes.

At this point the different brigades separated, one going north to the Athabasca, one west up the Saskatchewan to the Rockies, one southwest across the lake to Dauphin and Swan Lake and what is now northwestern Manitoba, two or three south up Red River destined for Pembina at the Boundary, Grand Forks, the Mandanes on the Missouri, and the posts

along the Assiniboine River of the middle West. Look again to the map. What kind of an empire do these Nor'Westers encompass? All of the great West, all except the unknown regions of the Pacific Coast. In size how large? The area of the Russian Empire. No wonder Simon McTavish, founder of the Company, wore the airs of an emperor, and it is to be remembered that Nor'Westers ruled with the despotism of emperors, too.

Let us follow the different brigades to their destinations.

Notes to Chapter XXI.—The contents of Chapter XXI are drawn from the Journals of the Northwest partners as published by Senator Masson, from Long's Voyages, from private journals in my own collection of manuscripts, chiefly Colin Robertson's, and from the Abbé Dugas' inimitable store of Northwest legends in several volumes. The story of the recruiting officers and of the holy father comes chiefly from Dugas. Umfreville's book does not give details of his voyage for the N. W. C. to Nipigon, but he left a journal from which Masson gives facts, and there are references to his voyage in N. W. C. petitions to Parliament. Cameron tells his own story of Nipigon in the Masson Collection. The best descriptions of Fort William are in Colin Robertson's letters (M. S.) and "Franchere's Voyage." In following N. W. C. expansion, it was quite impossible to do so chronologically. It could be done only by grouping the actors round episodes. For instance, in Nipigon, Long was there off and on in 1768, '72, '82. Cameron did not come on the scene till '96 and did not take up residence till 1802 to 1804. To scatter this account of Nipigon chronologically would be to confuse it. Again, Umfreville found the Nipigon trail to the Up Country, in 1784. Rod. MacKenzie did not find the old Kaministiquia road till the nineties. Or again, Grand Portage was a rendezvous till 1797 and was not entirely moved to Fort William till 1801 and 1802. Why separate these events by the hundred other episodes of the Company's history purely for the sake of sequence on dates? I have tried to keep the story grouped round the main thread of one forward movement—the domination of the Up Country by the N. W. C.

CHAPTER XXII

1790–1810

"THE COMING OF THE PEDLARS" CONTINUED—HENRY'S ADVENTURES AT PEMBINA—THE FIRST WHITE WOMAN IN THE WEST—A STOLEN CHILD AND A POISONER AND A SCOUT—HOW HARMON FOUND A WIFE—THE STORY OF MARGUERITE TROTTIER.

STRIKING across Lake Winnipeg from Winnipeg River, the southbound canoes ascend the central channel of the three entrances to Red River, passing Nettley Creek on the west, or River au Mort, as the French called it, in memory of the terrible massacre of Cree families by Sioux raiders in 1780, while the women and children were waiting here for the men to return from York Factory. South of Lake Winnipeg, the woodland banks of the mud-colored river give place to glimpses and patches of the plains rolling westward in seas of billowing grass. It was August when the brigades left Fort William. It is September now, with the crisp nutty tang of parched grasses in the air, a shimmer as of Indian summer across the horizon

that turns the setting sun to a blood-red shield. Bluest of blue are the prairie skies. Scarcely a feathering of wind clouds, and where the marsh lands lie—"sloughs" and "muskegs," they are called in the West—so still is the atmosphere of the primeval silences that the waters are glass with the shadows of the rushes etched as by stencil. Here and there, thin spirals of smoke rise from the far prairie—camp fires of wandering Assiniboine and Cree and Saulteur. The brigades fire guns to call them to trade, or else land on the banks and light their own signal fires. Past what is now St. Peter's Indian Reserve, and the two Selkirk towns, and the St. Andrew Rapids where, if water is high, canoes need only be tracked, if low the voyageurs may step from stone to stone; past the bare meadow where to-day stands the last and only walled stone fort of the fur trade, Lower Fort Garry—the brigades come to what is now Winnipeg, the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine.

Of the French fur traders' old post here, all that remains are the charred ruins and cellars. Near the flats where the two rivers overflow in spring are the high scaffoldings of a Cree graveyard used during the smallpox plague of the eighties. Back from the swamp of the forks are half a dozen tents —Hudson's Bay traders—that same Robert Good-

win whom Cameron tricked at Osnaburg, come up the Albany River and across country to Manitoba—forty days from the bay—with another trader, Brown.

The Nor'West brigades pause to divide again. A dozen canoes go up the Assiniboine for Portage la Prairie and Dauphin, and Swan Lake, and Lake Manitoba and Qu'Appelle, and Souris. Three or four groups of men are detailed to camp at the Forks (Winnipeg) and trade and keep an eye on the doings of the Hudson's Bay—above all keep them from obtaining the hunt. When not trading, the men at the Forks are expected to lay up store of pemmican meat for the other departments, by buffalo hunting. Not till the winter of 1807–8 does MacDonald of Garth, a wiry Highlander of military family and military air, with a red head and a broken arm—build a fort here for the Nor'Westers, which he ironically calls Gibraltar because it will command the passage of both rivers, though there was not a rock the size of his hand in sight. Gibraltar is very near the site of the Cree graveyard and boasts strong palisades with storage cellars for liquors and huge warehouses for trade. Not to be outdone, the Hudson's Bay look about for a site that shall also command the river, and they choose two miles farther down Red River, where their cannon can sweep all

incoming and outgoing canoes. When this fort is built a few years later, it is called Fort Douglas.

Two brigades ascend the Red as far south as Pembina south of the Boundary, one to range all regions radiating from Grand Forks and Pembina, the other to cross country to the Mandanes on the Missouri.

Charles Chaboillez sends Antoine Larocque with two clerks and two voyageurs from the Assiniboine and the Red to the Missouri in 1804, where they meet the American explorers, Lewis and Clarke, with forty men on their way to the Pacific; and, to the Nor'Westers' amazement, are also Hudson's Bay traders. The American officers draw the Canadians' attention to the fact—this is American territory. British flags must not be given to the Indians and no "*derouines*" are to take place—a trade term meaning that the drummers who come to beat up trade are not to draw the Indians away to British territory. Charbonneau, the Northwest voyageur, ignores his debt to the Company and deserts to become guide for Lewis and Clarke.

"I can hardly get a skin when the Hudson's Bay trader is here," complains Larocque, "for the Englishmen speak the Mandan language." Nevertheless Larocque dispatches to the bourgeois Mr. Chaboillez on the Assiniboine, six packs worth £40

each. Charles MacKenzie, the clerk, remains three years trading among the Mandans for the Nor'-Westers, and with true trader's instinct chuckles within himself to hear Old Serpent, the Indian Chief, boast that if he had these forty Americans "out on the plains, his young warriors would do for them as for so many wolves."

Two main trails ran from the Red River to the Missouri: one from Pembina, west; the other from the Assiniboine, by way of Souris, south. The latter was generally followed, and from the time that David Thompson, the Northwest surveyor, first led the way to the Mandans, countless perils assailed the traveler to the Missouri. Not more than $3000 worth of furs were won a year, but the traders here were the buffalo hunters that supplied the Northern departments with pemmican; and on these hunts was the constant danger of the Sioux raiders. Eleven days by pony travel was the distance from the Assiniboine to the Missouri, and on the trail was terrible scarcity of drinking water. "We had steered to a lake," records MacKenzie of the 1804 expedition, "but found it dry. We dug a pit. It gave a kind of stinking liquid of which we all drank, which seemed to increase our thirst. We passed the night with great uneasiness. Next day, not a drop of water was to be found on the route and our distress

became unsupportable. Lafrance (the voyageur) swore so much he could swear no more and gave the country ten thousand times to the Devil. His eyes became so dim or blurred we feared he was nearing a crisis. All our horses became so unruly we could not manage them. It struck me they might have scented water and I ascended the top of the hill where to my great joy I discovered a small pool. I ran and drank plentifully. My horse had plunged in before I could stop him. I beckoned Lafrance. He seemed more dead than alive, his face a dark hue, a thick scurf around his mouth. He instantly plunged in the water . . . and drank to such excess I fear the consequences."

In winter, though there was no danger of perishing from thirst where snow could be used as water, perils were increased a hundredfold by storm. The ponies could not travel fast through deep drifts. Instead of eleven days, it took a month to reach the Assiniboine, one man leading, one bringing up the rear of the long line of pack horses. If a snow storm caught the travelers, it was an easy matter for marauding Indians to stampede the horses and plunder packs. In March, they traveled at night to avoid snow glare. Sleeping wrapped in buffalo robes, the men sometimes wakened to find themselves buried beneath a snow bank with the horses

crunched up half frozen in the blizzard. Four days without food was a common experience on the Mandane trail.

Of all the Nor'Westers stationed at Pembina, Henry was one of the most famous. Cheek by jowl with the Nor'Westers was a post of Hudson's Bay men under Thomas Miller, an Orkneyman; and hosts of freemen—half-breed trappers and buffalo runners—made this their headquarters, refusing allegiance to either company and selling their hunt to the highest bidder. The highest bidder was the trader who would give away the most rum, and as traders do not give away rum for nothing, there were free fights during the drunken brawls to plunder the intoxicated hunters of furs. Henry commanded some fifty-five Nor'Westers and yearly sent out from Pembina one hundred and ten packs of furs by the famous old Red River ox carts made all of wood, hubs and wheels, that creaked and rumbled and screeched their way in long procession of single file to waiting canoes at Winnipeg.

Henry had come to the wilderness with a hard, cynical sneer for the vices of the fur trader's life. Within a few years, the fine edge of his scorn had turned on himself and on all life besides, because while he scorned savage vices he could never leave them alone. Like the snare round the feet of a man

who has floundered into the quicksands, they sucked him down till his life was lost on the Columbia in a drunken spree. One can trace Henry's degeneration in his journals from cynic to sinner and sinner to sot, till he has so completely lost the sense of shame, lost the memory that other men can have higher codes, that he unblushingly sets down in his diary how, to-day, he broke his thumb thrashing a man in a drunken bout; how, yesterday, he had to give a squaw a tremendous pommelling before she would let him steal the furs of her absent lord; how he "had a good time last night with the H. B. C. man playing the flute and the drum and drinking the ten-gallon keg clean." Henry's régime at Pembina became noted, not from *his* character, but from legends of famous characters who gathered there.

One night in December, 1807, Henry came home to his lodge and found a young Hudson's Bay clerk waiting in great distress. The Nor'Wester asked the visitor what was wanted. The intruder begged that the others present should be sent from the room. Henry complied, and turned about to discover a young white woman disguised in man's clothes, who threw herself on her knees and implored Henry to take pity on her. Her lover of the Orkney Islands had abandoned her. Dressed in man's garb, she had joined the Hudson's Bay service and pursued him

to the wilderness. In Henry's log cabin, her child was born. Henry sent mother and infant daughter across to Mr. Haney of the Hudson's Bay Company, who forwarded both to the recalcitrant Orkneyman —John Scart, at Grand Forks. Before her secret was discovered, according to legend, the woman had been in Hudson's Bay service of Red River Department for four years. Mother and child were sent back to the Orkneys, where they came to destitution.

At Pembina, there always camped a great company of buffalo hunters. Among these had come, in the spring of 1806, a young bride from Three Rivers —the wife of J. Ba'tiste Lajimoniere, one of the most famous scouts of the Hudson's Bay Company. J. Ba'tiste had gone down to Quebec the year before and cut a swath of grandeur in the simple parish of Three Rivers that captured the heart of Marie Anne Gaboury, and she came to the wilderness as his wife.

To the Indian wives of the Frenchmen in the freemen's camp, Madame Lajimoniere was a marvel—the first white woman they had ever beheld. They waited upon her with adoration, caressed her soft skin and hair, and handled her like some strange toy. One, especially, under show of friendliness, came to Marie's wigwam to cook, but J. Ba'tiste's conscience took fright. The friendly squaw had

been a cast-off favorite of his own wild days, and from the Indians he learned that she had come to cook for Marie in order to poison her. J. Ba'tiste promptly struck camp, packed his belongings and carried his wife back to the safety of the fort at Pembina. There, on the 6th of January 1807, the first white child of the West was born; and they called her name Reine, because it was the king's birthday.

When Henry moved his fifty men from Pembina up the Saskatchewan, in 1808, among the free traders who went up with the brigades were the Lajimonieres. Word of the white woman ran before the advancing traders by "moccasin telegram," and wherever pause was made, Indians flocked in thousands to see Marie Gaboury. Belgrade, a friend of Ba'tiste's, thought it well to protect her by spreading in advance the report—that the white woman had the power of the evil eye; if people offended her, she could cause their death by merely looking at them, and the ruse served its purpose until they reached Edmonton. This was the danger spot—the center of fearful wars waged by Blackfeet and Cree. Marauding bands were ever on the alert to catch the traders short-handed, and in the earliest days, when Longmore, and Howse, and Bird, and Turner, the astronomer, were commanders of the Hudson's Bay

fort, Shaw and Hughes of Nor'Westers, the dangers from Indian attack were so great that the rival traders built their forts so that the palisades of one joined the stockades of the other, and gates between gave passage so the whites could communicate without exposing themselves. Towers bristling with muskets commanded the gates, and many a time the beleaguered chief factor, left alone with the women while his men were hunting, let blaze a fire of musketry from one tower, then went to the other tower and let go a cross fire, in order to give the Indians the impression that more than one man was on guard. This, at least, cleared the ambushed spies out of the high grass so that the fort could have safe egress to the river.

Here, then, came Marie Gaboury, in 1808, to live at Edmonton for four years. Ba'tiste, as of old, hunted as freeman, and strange to say, he was often accompanied by his dauntless wife to the hunting field. Once, when she was alone in her tepee on the prairie, the tent was suddenly surrounded by a band of Cree warriors. When the leader lifted the tent flap, Marie was in the middle of the floor on her knees making what she thought was her last prayer. A white renegrade wandering with the Crees called out to her not to be afraid—they were after Blackfeet. Ba'tiste's horror may be guessed when he came

dashing breathless across the prairie and found his wife's tent surrounded by raiders.

"Marie! Marie!" he shouted, hair streaming to the wind, and unable to wait till he reached the tepee, "Marie—are you alive?"

"Yes," her voice called back, "but I—am—dying —of fright."

Ba'tiste then persuaded the Crees that white women were not used to warriors camping so near, and they withdrew. Then he lost no time in shifting camp inside the palisades of Edmonton. The Abbé Dugas tells of another occasion when Marie was riding a buffalo pony—one of the horses used as a swift runner on the chase—her baby dangling in a moss bag from one of the saddle pommels. Turning a bluff, the riders came on an enormous herd of buffalo. The sudden appearance of the hunters startled the vast herd. With a snort that sent clouds of dust to the air, there was a mad stampede, and true to his life-long training, Marie's pony took the bit in his mouth and bolted, wheeling and nipping and kicking and cutting out the biggest of buffaloes for the hunt, just as if J. Ba'tiste himself were in the saddle. Bounced so that every breath seemed her last, Marie Gaboury hung to the baby's moss bag with one hand, to the horse's mane with the other, and commended her soul to God; but J.

Ba'tiste's horse had cut athwart the race and he rescued his wife. That night she gave birth to her second daughter, and they jocularly called her "Laprairie." Such were the adventures of the pioneer women on the prairie. The every day episodes of a single life would fill a book, and the book would record as great heroism as ever the Old World knew of a Boadicea or a Joan of Arc. We are still too close to these events of early Western life to appreciate them. Two hundred years from now, when time has canonized such courage, the Marie Gaboury's of pioneer days will be regarded as the Boadiceas and Joan of Arcs of the New World.

There was constant shifting of men in the different departments of the Northwest Company. When Henry passed down Red River, in 1808, to go up the Saskatchewan, half the brigades struck westward from the Forks (Winnipeg), up the Assiniboine River to Portage la Prairie and Souris, and Qu' Appelle and Dauphin and Swan Lake. Each post of this department was worth some £700 a year to the Nor'Westers. Not very large returns when it is considered that a keg of liquor costing the Company less than $10 was sold to the Indians for one hundred and twenty beaver valued at from $2.00 to $3.00 a skin. "Mad" McKay, a Mr. Miller and James Sutherland were the traders for the Hudson's

Bay in this region, which included the modern provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Among the Nor'Westers, McLeod was the wintering partner and his chief clerks were the mystic dreamers—Harmon, that Louis Primo, who had deserted from Matthew Cocking on the Saskatchewan, and Cuthbert Grant, the son of a distinguished Montreal merchant and a Cree mother, who combined in himself the leadership qualities of both races and rapidly rose to be the chosen chief of the Freemen or Half-Breed Rangers known as the *Bois Brulés*—men of "the burnt or blazed woods."

The saintly Harmon had been shocked to find his bourgeois Norman McLeod with an Indian spouse, but to different eras are different customs and he presently records in his diary that he, too, has taken an Indian girl for a wife—the daughter of a powerful chief—because, Harmon explains to his own uneasy conscience, "if I take her I am sure I shall get *all* the furs of the Crees," and who shall say that in so doing, Harmon did either better or worse than the modern man or woman, who marries for worldly interests? Let it be added—that, having married her, Harmon was faithful to the daughter of the Cree chief all his days and gave her the honor due a white wife. In the case of the fur traders, there was a deep, potent reason for these marriages

between white men and Indian women. The white trader was one among a thousand hostiles. By marrying the daughter of a chief, he obtained the protection of the entire tribe. Harmon was on the very stamping ground of the fights between Cree and Sioux. By allying himself with his neighbors, he obtained stronger defense than a hundred palisaded forts.

The danger was not small, as a single instance will show. Until May each year, Harmon spent the time gathering the furs, which were floated down the Assiniboine to Red River. It was while the furs were being gathered that the Sioux raiders would swoop from ambush in the high grasses and stampede the horses, or lie in hiding at some narrow place of the river and serenade the brigades with showers of arrows. Women and girls, the papoose in the moss bag, white men and red—none were spared, for the Sioux who could brandish the most scalps from his tent pole, was the bravest warrior.

Among the hunters of Pembina was a French Canadian named Trottier married to a Cree woman. The daughter—Marguerite, a girl of sixteen—was renowned for her beauty. Indian chiefs offered for her hand, but the father thought she would be better cared for as the wife of a white man and gave her in marriage to a hunter named Jutras, who left Pem-

bina with Henry's brigades in 1808. Jutras went up the Assiniboine. A year later, Daniel MacKenzie appointed him and five others to take the Qu' Appelle furs down the Assiniboine to Red River. As usual, some of the partners accompanied the brigades for the annual meetings at Fort William. Daniel MacKenzie and McDonald of Garth—the bourgeois—were riding along the river banks some distances behind the canoes. Marguerite Trottier was in the canoe with Jutras, and the French were advancing, light of heart as usual, passing down Qu' Appelle River toward the Assiniboine. A day's voyage above the junction of the two rivers, the current shoaled, and just where brushwood came close to the water's edge, Jutras was startled by a weird call like a Sioux signal from both sides. Another instant, bullets and arrows rained on the canoes! Four of the six voyageurs tumbled back wounded to the death. Jutras and the remaining man lost their heads so completely they sprang to midwaist in the water, waded ashore, and dashed in hiding through the high grass for the nearest fort, forgetting the girl wife, Marguerite Trottier, and a child six months old. MacKenzie and McDonald of Garth sent scouts to rally help from Qu' Appelle to recover the furs. When the rescue party reached the place of plunder—not very far from the modern

Whitewood—they found the four voyageurs lying on the sand, the girl wife in the bottom of the canoe. All had been stripped naked, scalped and horribly mutilated. Two of the men still lived. MacKenzie had advanced to remove the girl's body from the canoe when faint with horror at the sight—hands hacked, an eye torn out, the scalp gone—the old wintering partner was rooted to the ground with amazement to hear her voice asking for her child and refusing to be appeased till they sought it. Some distance on the prairie in the deep grass below a tree they found it—still breathing. The English mind cannot contemplate the cruelties of such tortures as the child had suffered. Such horrors mock the soft philosophies of the *life natural*, being more or less of a beneficent affair. They stagger theology, and are only explainable by one creed—the creed of Strength; the creed that the Powers for Good must be stronger than the Powers for Evil—stronger physically as well as stronger spiritually, and until they are, such horrors will stalk the earth rampant. The child had been scalped, of course! The Sioux warrior must have his trophy of courage, just as the modern grinder of child labor must have his dividend. It had then been suspended from a tree as a target for the arrows of the braves. Hardened old *roué* as MacKenzie was—it was too much for his blackened

heart. He fell on his trembling knees and according to the rites of his Catholic faith, ensured the child's entrance to Paradise by baptism before death. It might die before he could bring water from the river. The rough old man baptized the dying infant with the blood drops from its wounds and with his own tears.

Returning to the mother, he gently told her that the child had been killed. Swathing her body in cotton, these rough voyageurs bathed her wounds, put the hacked hands in splinters, and in all probability saved her life by binding up the loose skin to the scalp by a clean, fresh bladder. That night voyageurs and partners sat round the wounded where they lay, each man with back to a tree and musket across his knees. In the morning the wounded were laid in the bottom of the canoes. Scouts were appointed to ride on both sides of the river and keep guard. In this way, the brigade advanced all day and part of the following night, "the poor woman and men moaning all the time," records McDonald of Garth. Coming down the Assiniboine to Souris, where the Hudson's Bay had a fort under Mr. Pritchard, the Nor'Westers under Pierre Falçon, the rhyming minstrel of the prairie—the wounded were left here. Almost impossible to believe, Marguerite Trottier recovered sufficiently in a month

to join the next brigade bound to Gibraltar (Winnipeg). Here she met her father and went home with him to Pembina. Jutras—the poltroon husband—who had left her to the raiders, she abandoned with all the burning scorn of her Indian blood. It seems after the Sioux had wreaked their worst cruelty, she simulated death, then crawled to hiding under the oilcloth of the canoe, where, lying in terror of more tortures, she vowed to the God of the white men that if her life were spared she would become a Christian. This vow she fulfilled at Pembina, and afterward married one of the prominent family of Gingras, so becoming the mother of a distinguished race. She lived to the good old age of almost a hundred.

Another character almost as famous in Indian legend as Marguerite had been with Henry at Pembina and come north to Harmon on the Assiniboine. This was the scout, John Tanner, stolen by Shawnees from the family of the Rev. John Tanner on the Ohio. The boy had been picking walnuts in the woods when he was kidnapped by a marauding party, who traded him to the Ottawas of the Up Country. Tanner fell in good hands. His foster mother was chief of the Mackinaw Indians and quite capable of exercising her authority in terms of the physical. Chaboillez, the wintering partner, saw the boy at the Sault and inquiries as to who he

was put the foster mother in such a fright of losing him that she hid him in the Sault cellars. Among the hunters of Pembina were Tanner and his Indian mother, and later—his Indian wife. He will come into this story at a later stage with J. Ba'tiste Lajimoniere.

Notes to Chapter XXII.—I have purposely hung this chapter round Henry as a peg,. because his adventures at Pembina, whence journeys radiated to the Missouri and the Assiniboine, merge into his life on the Saskatchewan and so across the Rockies to the Columbia—giving a record of all the N. W. C.'s departments, as if one traveled across on a modern railroad.

Henry's Adventures are to be found in his Journals edited by Dr. Coues and published by Francis P. Harper. Several reprints of Harmon's Journals have recently appeared. Harmon was originally from Vermont and one of his daughters until recently was prominent in Ottawa, Canada, as the head of a fashionable school. I can imagine how one of the recent reprints would anger Harmon's family, where the introduction speaks glibly of Harmon having taken a "native wife *ad interim*." What those words "*ad interim*" mean, I doubt if the writer, himself, knows—unless his own unsavory thought, for of all fur traders Harmon was one of the most saintly, clean, honorable, and gentle, true to his wife as to the finest white woman.

I have referred to Daniel MacKenzie as an old *roué*. The reasons for this will appear in a subsequent chapter on doings at Fort William.

The adventures of Tanner will be found in James' life of him, in Major Long's travels, in Harmon, and in the footnotes of Coues's Henry, also by Dr. Bryce in the Manitoba History Coll., most important of all in the Minnesota Hist. Collections, where the true story of his death is recorded.

The adventures of Marguerite Trottier are taken from two sources: from McDonald of Garth's Journal (Masson Journals) and from the Abbé Dugas' Legends. I hesitated whether to give this shocking and terrible story, for the most thoughtless reader will find between the lines (and it is intended) more than is told. What determined me to give the story was this: Again and again in the drawing rooms of London and New York, I have

heard society—men and women, who hold high place in social life—refer to those early marriages of the fur traders to native women as something *sub rosa*, disreputable, best hidden behind a lie or a fig leaf. They never expressed those delicate sentiments to me till they had ascertained that tho' I had lived all my life in the West, I had neither native blood in my veins nor a relationship of any sort to the pioneer—not one of them. Then some such expressions as this would come out apologetically with mock modest Pharisaic blush—"Is it true that So and So married a native woman?" or "Of course I know they were *all* wicked men, for look how they married—Squaws!" I confess it took me some time to get the Eastern view on this subject into my head, and when I did, I felt as if I had passed one of those sewer holes they have in civilized cities. Of course, it is the natural point of view for people who guzzle on problem plays and sex novels, but what—I wondered—would those good people think if they realized that "the squaws" of whom they spoke so scornfully were to Northwest life what a Boadicea was to English life—the personification of Purity that was Strength and Strength that was Purity—a womanhood that the vilest cruelties could not defile. Then, to speak of fur traders who married native women as "all wicked" is a joke. Think of the religious mystic, Harmon, teaching his wife the English language with the Bible, and Alexander MacKenzie, who had married a native woman before he had married his own cousin, and the saintly patriot, Dr. McLoughlin—think of them if you can as "wicked." I can't! I only wish civilized men and women had as good records.

In this chapter I wished very much to give a detailed account of each N. W. C. department with notes on the chief actors, who were in those departments what the feudal barons were to the countries of Europe, but space forbids. It is as impossible to do that as it would be to cram a record of all the countries of Europe into one volume.

I have throughout referred to the waters as Hudson Bay; to the company as Hudson's. This is the ruling of the Geographical societies and is, I think, correct, as the charter calls the company "Hudson's Bay." The N. W. C. were sometimes referred to as "the French."

Charles MacKenzie and Larocque in their Journals (Masson Coll.) give the details of the Mandane trade. Henry also touches on it.

CHAPTER XXIII

1780–1810

"THE COMING OF THE PEDLARS" CONTINUED—THIRTY YEARS OF EXPLORATION—THE ADVANCE UP THE SASKATCHEWAN TO BOW RIVER AND HOWSE PASS—THE BUILDING OF EDMONTON—HOW MACKENZIE CROSSED TO THE PACIFIC.

WHILE fifty or a hundred men yearly ascended Red River as far as Grand Forks, and the Assiniboine as far as Qu' Appelle, the main forces of the Nor'Westers—the great army of wood-rovers and plain rangers and swelling, blustering bullies and crafty old wolves of the North, and quiet-spoken wintering partners of iron will, who said little and worked like demons—were destined for the valley of the Saskatchewan that led to the Rockies.

Like a great artery with branches south leading over the height of land to the Missouri and branches north giving canoe passage over the height of land to the Arctic, the Saskatchewan flowed for twelve hundred miles through the fur traders' stamping ground, freighted with the argosies of a thousand

canoes. From the time that the ice broke up in May, canoes were going and coming; canoes with blankets hoisted on a tent pole for sail; canoes of birch bark and cedar dugouts; canoes made of dried buffalo skin stitched and oiled round willow withes the shape of a tub, and propelled across stream by lapping the hand over the side of the frail gun'els. Indians squatted flat in the bottom of the canoes, dipping paddles in short stroke with an ease born of lifelong practice. White men sat erect on the thwarts with the long, vigorous paddle-sweep of the English oarsman and shot up and down the swift-flowing waters like birds on wing. The boats of the English traders from Hudson Bay were ponderously clumsy, almost as large as the Mackinaws, which the Company still uses, with a tree or rail plied as rudder to half-punt, half-scull; rows of oarsmen down each side, who stood to the oar where the current was stiff, and a big mast pole for sails when there was wind, for the tracking rope when it was necessary to pull against rapids. Where rapids were too turbulent for tracking, these boats were trundled ashore and rolled across logs. Little wonder the Nor'Westers with their light birch canoes built narrow for speed, light enough to be carried over the longest portage by two men, outraced with a whoop the Hudson's Bay boats whenever they encountered each other on the

Saskatchewan! Did the rival crews camp for the night together, French bullies would challenge the Orkneymen of the Hudson's Bay to come out and fight. The defeated side must treat the conquerors or suffer a ducking.

Crossing the north end of Lake Winnipeg, canoes bound inland passed Horse Island and ascended the Saskatchewan. Only one interruption broke navigation for one thousand miles—Grand Rapids at the entrance of the river, three miles of which could be tracked, three must be portaged—in all a trail of about nine miles on the north shore where the English had laid a corduroy road of log rollers. The ruins of old Fort Bourbon and Basquia or Pas, where Hendry had seen the French in '54, were first passed. Then boats came to the metropolis of the Saskatchewan—the gateway port of the great Up Country—Cumberland House on Sturgeon Lake. Here, Hearne had built the post for Hudson's Bay, and Frobisher the fort for the Nor'Westers. Here, boats could go on up the Saskatchewan, or strike northwest through a chain of lakes past Portage de Traite and Isle a la Crosse to Athabasca and MacKenzie River. Fishing never failed, and when the fur traders went down to headquarters, their families remained at Cumberland House laying up a store of dried fish for the winter. Beyond Cumberland

House came those forts famous in Northwest annals, Lower Fort des Prairies, and the old French Nipawi, and Fort a la Corne, and Pitt, and Fort George, and Vermilion, and Fort Saskatchewan and Upper Fort des Prairies or Augustus—many of which have crumbled to ruin, others merged into modern cities like Augustus into Edmonton. On the south branch of the Saskatchewan and between the two rivers were more forts—oases in a wilderness of savagery—Old Chesterfield House where Red Deer River comes in and Upper Bow Fort within a stone's throw of the modern summer resort at Banff, where grassed mounds and old arrowheads to-day mark the place of the palisades.

More dangers surrounded the traders of the South Saskatchewan than in any part of the Up Country. The Blackfeet were hostile to the white men. With food in abundance from the buffalo hunts, they had no need of white traders and resented the coming of men who traded firearms to their enemies. There was, beside, constant danger of raiders from the Missouri—Snakes and Crows and Minnetaries. Hudson's Bay and Nor'Westers built their forts close together for defence in South Saskatchewan, but that did not save them.

At Upper Bow Fort in Banff Valley, in 1796, Missouri raiders surrounded the English post, scaled

the palisades, stabbed all the whites to death except one clerk, who hid under a dust pile in the cellar, pillaged the stores, set fire, then rallied across to the Nor'Westers, but the Nor'Westers had had warning. Jaccot Finlay and the Cree Beau Parlez, met the assailants with a crash of musketry. Then dashing out, they rescued the Hudson's Bay man, launched their canoes by night and were glad to escape with their lives down the Bow to Old Chesterfield House at Red Deer River.

Two years later, the wintering partners, Hughes and Shaw, with McDonald of Garth, built Fort Augustus or Edmonton. Longmore was chief factor of the Hudson's Bay at Edmonton, with Bird as leader of the brigades down to York Fort and Howse as "patroon of the woods" west as far as the Rockies. With the Nor'Westers was a high-spirited young fire eater of a clerk—Colin Robertson, who, coming to blows with McDonald of the Crooked Arm, was promptly dismissed and as promptly stepped across to the rival fort and joined the Hudson's Bay. Around Edmonton camped some three hundred Indians. In the crowded quarters of the courtyards, yearly thronged by the eastern brigades so that each fort housed more than one hundred men, it was impossible to keep all the horses needed for travel. These were hobbled and turned outside the palisades. It

was easy for the Indians to cut the hobbles, mount a Company horse, and ride free of punishment as the winds. Longmore determined to put a stop to this trick. Once a Cree horse thief was brought in. He was tried by court martial and condemned to death. Gathering together fifteen of his hunters, Longmore plied them with liquor and ordered them to fire simultaneously. The horse thief fell riddled with bullets. It is not surprising that the Indians' idea of the white man's justice became confused. If white men shot an Indian for stealing a horse, why should not Indians shoot white men for stealing furs?

From the North Saskatchewan to the South Saskatchewan ran a trail pretty much along the same region as the Edmonton railroad runs to-day. In May the furs of both branches were rafted down the Saskatchewan to the Forks and from the Forks to Cumberland House whence Hudson's Bay and Nor'Wester brigades separated. In 1804, McDonald of Garth had gone south from Edmonton to raft down the furs of the South Saskatchewan. Hudson's Bay and Nor'Westers set out together down stream, scouts riding the banks on each side. Half way to the Forks, the Nor'Westers got wind of a band of Assiniboines approaching with furs to trade. This must be kept secret from the Hudson's Bays.

Calling Boucher, his guide, McDonald of Garth, bade the voyageurs camp here for three days to hunt buffalo while he would go off before daybreak to meet the Assiniboines. The day following, the buffalo hunters noticed movements as of riders or a herd on the far horizon. They urged Boucher to lead the brigade farther down the river, but Boucher knew that McDonald was ahead to get the furs of the Assiniboines and it was better to delay the Hudson's Bay men here with Northwest hunters. All night the tom-tom pounded and the voyageurs danced and the fiddlers played. Toward daybreak during the mist between moonlight and dawn, when the tents were all silent and the voyageurs asleep beneath inverted canoes, Missouri raiders, led by Wolf Chief, stole on the camp. A volley was fired at Boucher's tent. Every man inside perished. Outside, under cover of canoes, the voyageurs seized their guns and with a peppering shot drove the Indians back. Then they dragged the canoes to water, still keeping under cover of the keel, rolled the boats keel down on the water, tumbled the baggage in helter-skelter and fled abandoning five dead men and the tents. When the raiders carried the booty back to the Missouri they explained to Charles MacKenzie, the Nor'Wester there, that they were sorry they had shot the white traders. It was a

mistake. When they fired, they thought it was a Cree camp.

From Edmonton was an important trail to Athabasca, ninety miles overland to what is now known as Athabasca Landing on Athabasca River and down stream to Fort Chippewyan on Athabasca Lake. This was the region Peter Pond had found, and when he was expelled for the murder of two men, Alexander MacKenzie came to take his place. Just as the Saskatchewan River was the great artery east and west, so the fur traders of Athabasca now came to a great artery north and south—a river that was to the North what the Mississippi was to the United States. The Athabasca was the south end of this river. The river where it flowed was called the Grand or Big River.

Athabasca was seventy days' canoe travel from the Nor'Westers' headquarters on Lake Superior. It was Alexander MacKenzie's duty to send his hunters out, wait for their furs, then conduct the brigades down to Rainy Lake. Laroux and Cuthbert Grant, the plains ranger, were his under officers. When he came back from Lake Superior in '88, MacKenzie sent Grant and Laroux down to Slave Lake. Then he settled down to a winter of loneliness and began to dream dreams. Where did Big River run beyond Slave Lake? It was a river

broader than the St. Lawrence with ramparts like the Hudson. Dreaming of explorations that would bring him renown, he planned to accompany the hunters next year, but who would take his place to go down with the yearly brigades, and what would the other Northwest partners say to these exploring schemes? He wrote to his cousin Rory to come and take his place. As to objections from the partners, he told them nothing about it.

The first thing Rory MacKenzie does is to move Pond's old post down stream to a rocky point on the lake, which he calls Chippewyan from the Indians there. This will enable the fort to obtain fish all the year round. May, '89, Alexander MacKenzie sees his cousin Rory off with the brigades for Lake Superior. Then he outfits his Indian hunters for the year. Norman McLeod and five men are to build more houses in the fort. Laroux's canoe is loaded for Slave Lake. Then MacKenzie picks out a crew of one German and four Canadians with two wives to sew moccasins and cook. "English Chief" whom Frobisher met down at Portage de Traite years ago, goes as guide, accompanied by two wives and two Indian paddlers. Tuesday, June 2nd, is spent gumming canoes and celebrating farewells. June 3rd, 1789, at nine in the morning, the canoes push out, Mr. McLeod on the shore firing a salute

that sets the echoes ringing over the Lake of the Hills (Athabasca). Twenty-one miles from Chippewyan, the boats enter Slave River on the northwest, where a lucky shot brings down a goose and a couple of ducks. It is seven in the evening when they pitch camp, but this is June of the long daylight. The sun is still shining as they sit down to the luscious meal of wild fowl. The seams of the canoes are gummed and the men "turn in" early, bed being below upturned canoes; for henceforth, MacKenzie tells them, reveille is to sound at 3 A. M., canoes to be in the water by four. Peace River, a mile broad at its mouth, is passed next day, and MacKenzie wonders does this river flowing from the mountains lead to the west coast where Captain Cook found the Russians? Slave River flows swifter now. The canoes shoot the rapids, for the water is floodtide, and "English Chief" tells them the Indians of this river are called Slaves because the Crees drove them from the South. Sixty miles good they make this day before camping at half-past seven, the Indian wives sewing moccasins as hard as the men paddle, so hard indeed that when they come to a succession of dangerous rapids next day and land to unload, one canoe is caught in the swirl and carried down with the squaw, who swims ashore little the worse. This is the place—Portage des Noyes—where Cuthbert

Grant lost five voyageurs going to Slave Lake three years before. June 9th, mid fog and rain and floating ice and clouds of mosquitoes, they glide into the beaver swamps of Slave Lake. Wild fowl are in such flocks, the voyageurs knock geese and ducks enough on the head for dinner. Laroux drops off here at his fort. The men go hunting. The women pick berries and Alexander MacKenzie climbs a high hill to try and see a way out of this foggy swamp of a lake stretching north in two horns two hundred miles from east to west. There was ice ahead and there was fog ahead, and it was quite plain "English Chief" did not know the way. MacKenzie followed the direction of the drifting ice. Dog Rib Indians here vow there is no passage through the ice, and the cold rains slush down in torrents. It is not dark longer than four hours, but the nights are so cold the lake is edged with ice a quarter of an inch thick. MacKenzie secures a Red Knife Indian as guide and pushes on through the flag-grown swamps, now edging the ice fields, now in such rough water men must bail to keep the canoes afloat, now trying to escape from the lake east, only to be driven back by the ice, west; old "English Chief" threatening to cut the Red Knife's throat if he fails them. Three weeks have they been fog-bound and ice-bound and lost on Slave Lake, but they find their way out by

the west channel at last, a strong current, a stiff wind and blankets up for sail. July 1st, they pass the mouth of a very large river, the Liard; July 5th, a very large camp of Dog Rib Indians, who warn them "old age will come before" MacKenzie "reaches the sea" and that the wildest monsters guard Big River. MacKenzie obtains a Dog Rib for a guide, but the Dog Rib has no relish for his part, and to keep him from running away as they sleep at night, MacKenzie takes care to lie on the edge of the filthy fellow's vermin-infested coat. A greenish hue of the sea comes on the water as they pass Great Bear Lake to the right, but the guide has become so terrified he must now be bodily held in the canoe. The banks of the river rise to lofty ramparts of white rock. Signs of the North grow more frequent. Trees have dwindled in size to little sticks. The birds and hares shot are all whitish-gray with fur pads or down on their feet. On July 8th, the guide escapes, but a Hare Indian comes along, who, by signs, says it is only ten days to the sea. Presently, the river becomes muddy and breaks into many channels. Provisions are almost gone, and MacKenzie promises his men if he does not find the sea within a week, he will turn back. On the 11th of July, the sun did not set, and around deserted camp fires were found pieces of whalebone.

MacKenzie's hopes mounted. Only the Eskimos use whalebone for tent poles. Footprints, too, were seen in the sand, and a rare beauty of a black fox—with a pelt that was a hunter's fortune—scurried along the sands into hiding. The Hare Indian guide began talking of "a large lake" and "an enormous fish" which the Eskimo hunted with spears. "Lake?" Had not MacKenzie promised his men it was to be the sea? The voyageurs were discouraged. They did not think of the big "fish" being a whale, or the riffle in the muddy channels the ocean tide, not though the water slopped into the tents under the baggage and "the large lake" appeared covered with ice. Then at three o'clock in the morning of July 14th, the ice began floundering in a boisterous way on calm waters. There was no mistaking. The floundering ice was a whale and this *was* the North Sea, first reached overland by Hearne of the Hudson's Bay, and now found by Alexander MacKenzie.

The story of MacKenzie's voyages is told elsewhere. He was welcomed back to Chippewyan by Norman McLeod on October the 12th at 3 P. M., and spent the winter there with his cousin, Rory. Hurrying to Lake Superior with his report next summer, Alexander MacKenzie suffered profound disappointment. He was received coldly. The truth

is, the old guard of the original Nor'Westers—Simon McTavish and the Frobishers—were jealous of the men, who had come in as partners from the Little Company. They had no mind to see honors captured by a young fellow like MacKenzie, who had only two shares in the Company, or $8000 worth of stock, compared to their own six shares or $24,000, and found bitter fault with the returns of furs from Athabasca, and this hostility lasted till McTavish's death in 1804. MacKenzie came back to pass a depressing winter ('90–'91) at Chippewyan when he dispatched hunters down the newly discovered river, which he ironically called "River Disappointment." But events were occurring that spurred his thoughts. Down at the meeting of the partners he had heard how Astor was gathering the American furs west of the Great Lakes; how the Russians were gathering an equally rich harvest on the Pacific Coast. Down among the Hare Indians of MacKenzie River, he had heard of white traders on the West coast. If a boat pushed up Peace River from Athabaska Lake, could it portage across to that west coast? The question stuck and rankled in MacKenzie's mind. "Be sure to question the Indians about Peace River," he ordered all his winter hunters. Then came the Hudson's Bay men to Athabasca: Turner, the astronomer, and Howse,

who had been to the mountains. If the Nor'Westers were to be on the Pacific Coast first, they must bestir themselves. MacKenzie quietly asked leave of absence in the winter of '91–'92, and went home to study in England sufficient to enable him to take more accurate astronomic observations. The summer of '92 found him back on the field appointed to Peace River district.

The Hudson's Bay men had failed to pass through the country beyond the mountains. Turner and Howse had gone down to Edmonton. Thompson, the surveyor, left the English Company and coming overland to Lake Superior, joined the Nor'Westers. It was still possible for MacKenzie to be first across the mountains.

The fur traders had already advanced up Peace River and half a dozen forts were strung up stream toward the Rockies. By October of '92, MacKenzie advanced beyond them all to the Forks on the east side and there erected a fort. By May, he had dispatched the eastern brigade. Then picking out a crew of six Frenchmen and two Indians, with Alexander McKay as second in command, McKenzie launched out at seven o'clock on the evening of May 9, 1793, from the Forks of Peace River in a birch canoe of three thousand pounds capacity.

If the voyage to the Arctic had been difficult, it

was child's play compared to this. As the canoe entered the mountains, the current became boisterously swift. It was necessary to track the boat up stream. The banks of the river grew so precipitous that the men could barely keep foothold to haul the canoe along with a one hundred and eighty-foot rope. MacKenzie led the way cutting steps in the cliff, his men following, stepping from his shoulder to the shaft of his axe and from the axe to the place he had cut, the torrent roaring and re-echoing below through the narrow gorge. Sulphur springs were passed, the out-cropping of coal seams, vistas on the frosted mountains opening to beautiful uplands, where elk and moose roamed. An old Indian had told MacKenzie that when he passed over the mountains, Peace River would divide—one stream, now known as the Finlay, coming from the north; the other fork, now known as the Parsnip, from the south. MacKenzie, the old guide said, should ascend the south; but it was no easy matter passing the mountains. The gorge finally narrowed to sheer walls with a raging maelstrom in place of a river. The canoe had to be portaged over the crest of a peak for nine miles—MacKenzie leading the way chopping a trail, the men following laying the fallen trees like the railing of a stair as an outer guard up the steep ascent. Only three miles a day were made.

Clothes and moccasins were cut to shreds by brushwood, and the men were so exhausted they lay down in blanket coats to sleep at four in the afternoon, close to the edge of the upper snow fields. MacKenzie wrote letters, enclosed them in empty kegs, threw the kegs into the raging torrent and so sent back word of his progress to the fort. Constantly, on the Uplands, the men were startled by rocketing echoes like the discharge of a gun, when they would pass the night in alarm, each man sitting with his back to a tree and musket across his knees, but the rocketing echoes—so weird and soul-stirring in the loneliness of a silence that is audible—were from huge rocks splitting off some precipice. Sometimes a boom of thunder would set the mountains rolling. From a far snow field hanging in ponderous cornice over bottomless depths would puff up a thin, white line like a snow cataract, the distant avalanche of which the boom was the echo. Once across the divide, the men passed from the bare snow uplands to the cloud line, where seas of tossing mist blotted out earth, and from cloud line to the Alpine valleys with larch-grown meadows and painters' flowers knee deep, all the colors of the rainbow. Beside a rill trickling from the ice fields pause would be made for a meal. Then came tree line, the spruce and hemlock forests—gigantic trees, branches interlaced,