

Page 58 - John Cabot's Landfall, 1497 - "It WAS Cape Breton!"

ISSUE: <u>Issue 70</u>

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1996/6/1

age, to "convey and lede to the londe and isles of late founde by the said John." Two maps which have special importance for an investigation of the Cabot voyage of 1497 are the Cosa map of 1500 [see page 55] and the Sebastian Cabot map of 1544. The celebrated map of Juan de La Cosa, associate of Columbus and Ojeda, famous pilot and well-known map-maker, has been described as "the most interesting Geographical Drawing that we have inherited from the Middle Ages." It is of particular in? terest here because the outline of the northeastern part of Ameri? ca in it seems to have been based upon John Cabot's chart of his first voyage. At any rate in July 1498 Pedro de Ayala, joint Spanish ambassador at London, informed his sovereigns that he had procured and would for? ward Cabot's chart; and in his map of 15(X) La Cosa marked a portion of the northeastern coast of America with English flags and the legend, "Mar descubierto por ingleses" (Sea discovered by the English). No English but the Cabots and their asso? ciates had been there. If Cava de Ynglaterra on this map be Cape Race, as some authorities claim, then of necessity the named coasdine is the south coast (as seems clear from the world map of La 4. ?? AMIoPQifgPluat SAF-WAY AUTO PARTS LIMITED AUTOMOTIVE -INDUSTRIAL BODY SHOP SUPPLIES SYDNEY **NEW WATERFORD 45610THST.** 539-99701862-6491 539-0707 Fax 539-9741 TOLL FREE 1-800-565-5044 JOIN US AT Granville Green (PRESENTED BY STATIA) Granville Green Bandshell • Port Hawkesbury This summer, for some of Canada's top performers. On Sundays, come to the Granville Green. CONCERT TIME 7:00 p.m.) IN CASE OF RAIN, concerts will be held at the Strait Area Education Recreation Centre (SAERC) PERFORMER SPONSOR Brakin' Tradition Tri Mac Toyota Laura Smith Seaboard Tire Ceilidh on the Green Royal Bank Central Home Improvement Warehouse Louisiana Pacific Can. Ltd. DATE June 30 July 7 July 14 July 21 July 28 August 4 August 11 August 18 August 25 Damhnait Doyle Richard Wood r Great Big Sea ' Tanglefoot | AacKeel Spirit of Nova Scotia stora Evans and Doherty Canso Ford Port Hawkesbury Recreation Strait Supplies September 1 Highland Heights Shoppers Drug Mart Coordinated with the assistance of the Port Hawkesbury Recreation Department, CIGO, and The Reporter. For information: 625-2591. Cosa itself), not the eastem coast, of Newfoundland, and Cavo descubierto is west of Cape Race. In that case, notwithstanding the efforts of some to rotate a section of La Cosa's map ninety degrees. Cape Bonavista, on the eastem coast of Newfoundland, could not be Cayo descubierto, and Cape Breton Island may be indicated as the discovered cape and Cabot's landfall. The likelihood that this map contains the testimony of John Ca? bot that his landfall of 1497 was at Cape Breton Island receives additional support from the Sebastian Cabot map of 1544. On that map, which he made or assisted in making, Sebastian Ca? bot indicated that the landfall was at Cape Breton. Moreover, Hakluyt has preserved the inscription on a map attributed to Se? bastian Cabot, which he saw in the gueen's gallery at Westmin? ster, but which has since disappeared. It appears from this in? scription that there was an island opposite the first land seen, and that Cabot named this island St. John. Furthermore, on Mi? chael



Lok's map, published in 1582, the name I. Cabot appears near Cape Breton in Cape Breton Island, with St John (S. Joha) for the island nearby (Scatari). Thus, while the contemporane? ous verbal accounts of John Cabot's first voyage may differ in detail, the independent testimony of John and Sebastian Cabot, as seen in the Cosa and Sebastian Cabot maps, points to Cape Breton Island as Cabot's landfall. Nevertheless, the fact that Cabot's journal is not available, to? gether with the vagueness of at least the verbal evidence regard? ing the landfall, provided room for speculation. The result has been that various theories have been advanced; some writers contend that the landfall was at Labrador; others that it was at Newfoundland; and still others that it was at Cape Breton Island. Little attention will be given here to the view that Cabot reached Labrador first That theory now receives less support than for? merly, because of the disentangling of the Cabot voyages, as well as of the inability to reconcile land, ocean and fishery con? ditions with the evidence relating to Cabot's first voyage.... Some have argued that the name 'Newfoundland' is an indica? tion that Newfoundland was the site of Cabot's landfall. But that argument is apparently neither sound nor irrefutable. Cabot had claimed his reward for finding the empire of the Grand Khan; in 1501 Henry Vn issued a patent to a group of Bristol Merchants and Azorean navigators, conferring upon them the monopoly of trade with any new lands they might discover; in 1501 and 1502 these men undertook voyages of discovery; and later on Henry VII granted them rewards or pensions for ex? ploring in "the New Found Land." That phrase was significant; for in 1502 there was no suggestion of Asia, "the empire of the a 'fV'fV'fW''']'''i'|fVWWWWVW't''W'f'''lif'iF'S'fW't'f'ffti i Feel the Excitement .be a part of the ACTION! HARNESS RACING Tack Room Restaurant Home-Cooked Meals Reasonable Prices ~ SPECIALS ~ CANTEEN SERVICE AVAILABLE * LIVE SIMULCASTING! * i **CALL FOR RACING TIMES** ci'A OVI'IT! and SIMULCASTING SCHEDULE: OD4"o4DO 58