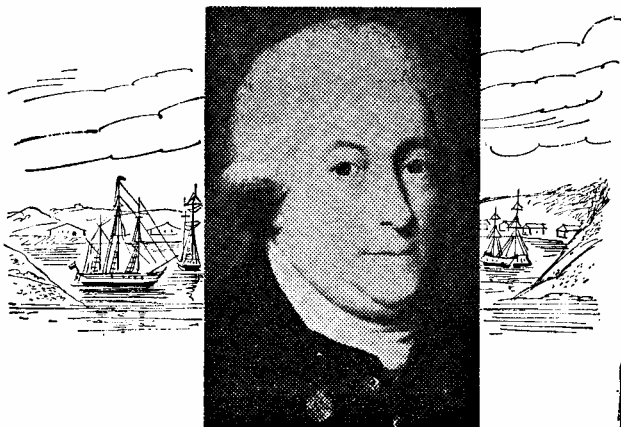


FAMOUS LETTERS IN CANADIAN HISTORY



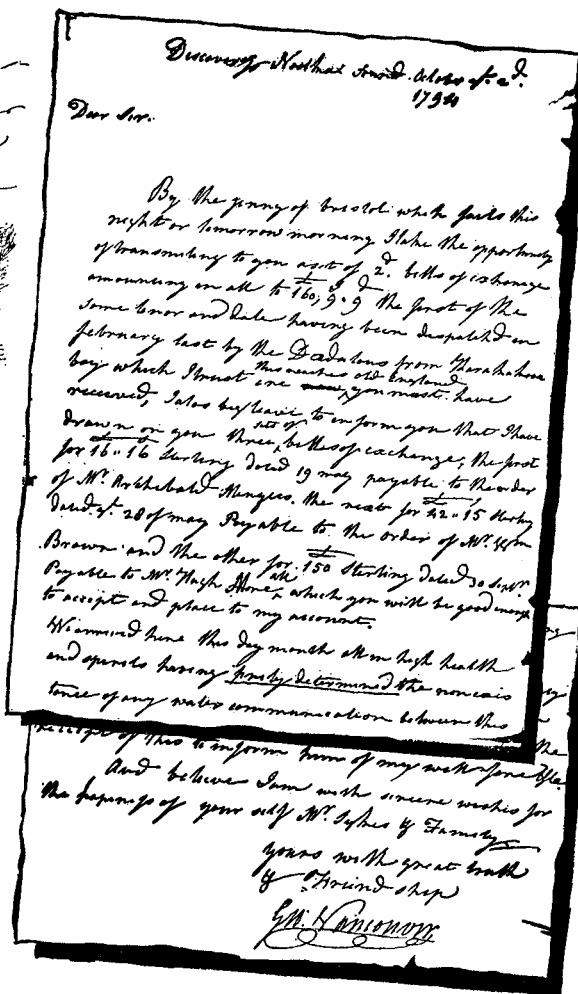
Just a Dream

The dream of an inland passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific had tantalized explorers from the days of LaSalle.

To find out whether it existed was one of the instructions given Captain George Vancouver when he was sent out in 1790 to survey the whole British Columbia coast and recover the British possessions on Nootka Sound from the Spaniards.

In this historic letter, the original of which is owned by the City of Vancouver, he tells James Sykes, his naval agent in England, that there is no northwest passage.

Captain Vancouver was one of the great geographers of his age. He had sailed with Captain Cook on his historic expeditions and wrote this letter from Cook's former vessel, the *Discovery*, which he was commanding.



Shortly afterwards he returned to England where he spent several years preparing the journals of his expeditions.

Vancouver Reports No Inland Passage

Discovery, Nootka Sound,
October 2nd, 1794.

Dear Sir:

By the jenny of Bristol which sails this night or tomorrow morning I take the opportunity of transmitting to you a set of 2d bills of exchange . . .

We arrived here this day month, all in high health and spirits, having truly determined the non existence of any water communication between this and the opposite side of America, within the limits of our investigation, beyond all doubt or disputation hence I expected no further detention on this hemisphere, not doubting but the business respecting these territories must have been settled a sufficient length of time for a vessel to have arrived by whom we

might be relieved and proceed on our route towards old England in hopes to partake of some share of the glorious and honorable cause her fleets and armies are at present engaged, but in these expectations we were disappointed no vessel having arrived from England . . .

Thus you see my good friend I am once more entrapped in this infernal ocean and am totally at a loss to say when I shall be able to quit it . . .

Believe me I am with sincere wishes for the happiness of yourself, Mr. Sykes and family.

Yours with great truth
and friendship,

GEO. VANCOUVER.