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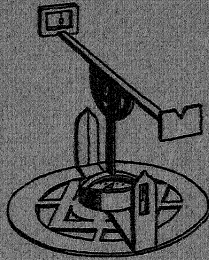
# Swaine and Drage

*A Sequel to*

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&  
INDIAN TRADERS

*By*

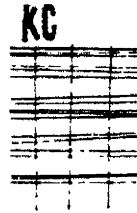
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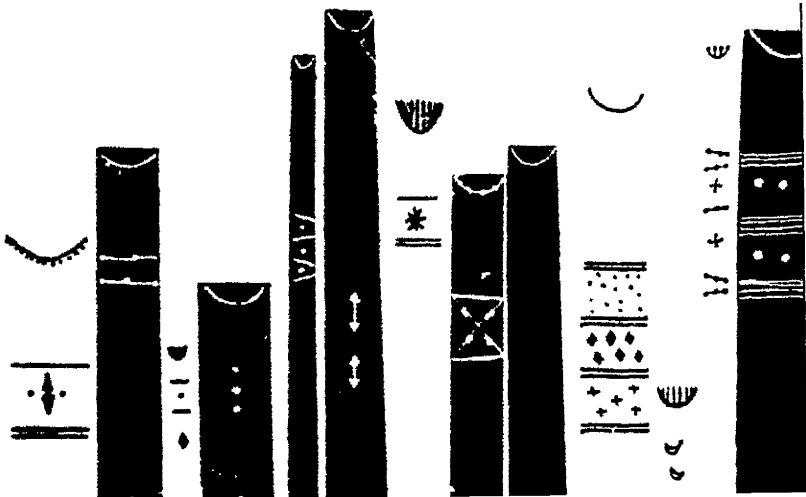
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A SEQUEL



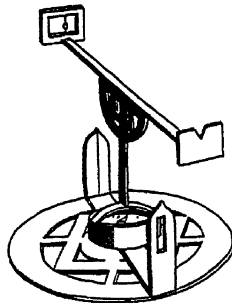
# Swaine and Drage

*A Sequel to*

## MAP MAKER & INDIAN TRADERS

*By*

Howard N. Eavenson



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## *Swaine and Drage—A Sequel*

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ALTHOUGH the writer when completing "Map Maker and Indian Traders" had been thoroughly convinced that the letter written by the author of "The Great Probability of a Northwest Passage" to the Earl of Hillsborough about the dedication of that book to him would give much information as to the identity of the actual writer of that book, no trace of such a letter had been found, and its existence was not at all certain. No one who had seen existing papers of the Earl of Hillsborough had any recollection of any letters written to him by either Charles Swaine or Theodorus Swaine Drage.

Within less than a month after the publication of "Map Maker and Indian Traders" a letter was received from Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., of London, enclosing a small pamphlet catalogue of letters D and E of the catalogue of the Harmsworth Trust Library, one of the largest collections of Americana still in England, and which was being sold by auction. There were two books listed under Drage, one the "Voyage of the California," and the second "The Great Probability of a Northwest Passage," and the description of the latter work stated there was a seven-page autograph letter of the author addressed only to "My Lord" loosely placed in it. Examination of the letter showed it to be signed Theodorus Swaine Drage, and as its contents referred to the dedication to Wills Earl of Hillsborough of "The Great Probability . . . .," it was evident that this letter was the one long sought.

At the ensuing auction sale the book and letter were purchased. Its provenance could not be definitely established beyond the fact that it had been acquired many years ago by the library, loosely inserted in another copy of "The Great Probability." Upon the acquisition of the copy now being sold, the letter was

removed to this last acquired copy and the first one sold. No records are available to tell from whom either of the two copies was purchased. The letter is certainly authentic as there are a number of other letters and papers existing in this country in the same penmanship and known to be that of Theodorus Swaine Drage.

Each of the two sheets,  $10\frac{3}{8}'' \times 16\frac{5}{8}''$ , is watermarked L V G under the fleur-de-lis, the same as on page 216\*, and the same size. There is only the one watermark on each sheet.

After the receipt of the letter from London a careful perusal of it proved disappointing. Not only does it indicate that Drage wrote both of the books mentioned above, a fact which this writer did not believe—and still does not—but it included some new facts of Drage's life not before known and such a great number of events known to have happened to Charles Swaine as to cast doubt on the occurrences in which probably only Drage participated.

As usual in both the books and the letters of Swaine and Drage very few names are mentioned, leaving much to conjecture. Probably the easiest way to compare the statements in the letter with known facts is by parallel columns, and this method will be used. Unless otherwise indicated all references are to "Map Maker and Indian Traders."

\* "Map Maker and Indian Traders"

(A)

My Lord<sup>1</sup>

As you have done me the Honour to permit me to dedicate this work to your Lordship, my motive for presenting the following lines is to give you the Satisfaction that it is not a person void of merit on whom you bestowed that honour, but on one who hath on all Ocasions showed a zealous and distinterested<sup>2</sup> regard for the Service of His Majesty.

(B)

An Intelligence given of a French Fleet

On my passage from Lisbon to London with an acquaintance who was Captain of a Privateer, was taken by the Tonant man of war Comodore Peusan, who had a Squadron of eight said under his command. In regard to the Polite Treatment I received and the honour I had of knowing so fine a Gentleman, it was no very disagreeable stroke of Fortune; was kept at Sea from April to June, than carried to the Island of D'aix off Oleron, afterwards at my own request sent to Rochel, and was the Second person exchanged from thence. Having an opportunity to procure Intelligence, on my return to London, I freely communicated to the Lords of the Admiralty, besides other interesting particulars, an exact account of a French fleet

A<sup>1</sup>

Earl of Hillsborough to whom "The Great Probability" is dedicated. He is said to have been a schoolmate of Drage's. Dedication of "The Great Probability" is in Appendix 1.

A<sup>2</sup>

It is evident that this letter was written when the letter of dedication was, or was sent with a copy of the book. Drage intended to show how important he had been, and what a fine record he had made.

preparing for Martinico and Domingo. On which their Lordships sent an express to Comodore Townsend than in the west Indias; who intercepted that part of the fleet bound to Martinico, and Comodore Mitchel was censured for not doing the same as to that part bound for Domingo. I drew a Memorial at the desire of his Grace the Duke of Bedford and the other Lords at which they expressed great satisfaction. I received no other reward, for all the recompence I proposed, was the doing so acceptable a Service.

(C)

Make the voyage for Discovery of a Northwest Passage

My Friend whom I came with from Lisbon at the particular desire of some merchants in the City engaged with Captain Smith to go with him on the Discovery of a Northwest Passage; who pressed me promising me a genteel Treatment to go along with them; as unitedly we should be able to Compleat the Discovery, which we absolutely expected, or to give a faithful Account of the Voyage, and to this Union the world is indebted to a just Account of that Expedition.

(B) Par. C. indicates that the events mentioned in this paragraph all took place before the "California" sailed on her voyage in May, 1746. Hostilities broke out between France and England in 1744, but the books about that period do not mention this occurrence.

In the Archives Nationales in Paris, Marine B3433 folios 47-48 is a letter from de Clairambank, commissioner of the Navy at Port-Louis to the Count de Maurepas, Minister of the Navy, dated May 28, 1745 in which he says, "by the King's squadron commanded by M. le Chavalier de Poisin, who was then cruising at the coasts of Portugal; that that same squadron "captured

on April 14 an English privateer called the "Hussar" from London armed with 26 guns and with a crew of 175 men." Later he reported that the squadron was to go to Ile d'Aix for repairs.

An entry in the naval records of Rochelle mentions some prisoners of war detained there from M. de Poisin's squadron taken from the privateer the "Hussar" from London, including "James Holden," gone out of the prisons July 29, 1745 to be exchanged "for the captain of a French privateer."

"Theodorus Drage gone out July 8 to be exchanged against Pierre Forgerie a pilot from Bordeaux." It is probable that James Holden was the captain of the "Hussar" as he was exchanged for a privateer captain; as Drage was exchanged for a pilot of the "Hussar," he may have been a pilot. The ship's home port was probably London and she may have been returning there from a cruise along the coast of Portugal. Charles Swaine's name was not mentioned in any of the records found.

There were several large French convoys sent to the West Indies in 1744-45, and it is impossible to trace the one to which Drage refers. The Admiralty records in London do

not show any such occurrence as Drage describes nor do the Bedford papers which were examined for these years. There is no such memorial now in the naval archives.

The Captain Smith was Captain Francis Smith, in command of the "California" in the voyage of that ship and the "Dobbs" in search of a northwest passage. The ships sailed in May, 1746, and the occurrence mentioned must have happened, if at all, late in 1745 or early in 1746.

This paragraph was intended to give the Earl the impression that Drage did go on the voyage, to give a faithful account of it, and that his friend of the privateer was particularly needed. However, it does not definitely say these things. We do know that Swaine was the clerk of the "California," but we do not know that he had been on the privateer, nor that any one actually on the privateer was on this voyage. It is hardly likely that Drage would go on the voyage merely to write the account of it, especially as Ellis was on the "Dobbs" as the official representative of the backers of the expedition. The last statement implies that Drage at least helped write the books, but it does not definitely say so.

(D)

Go to  
America to  
persue the  
Discovery  
of a  
Northwest  
Passage

The Adventures differing amongst themselves on settling their accounts, all designs for a further Expedition was dropped, and no application to Parliament as was proposed for an allowance towards the Expence. As the Peace was making with Spain, an application to Government to fit out another expedition was thought not to be consistent, but it was hinted to me particularly that the Americans were an enterprizing People, and if a Thing was done it could not be undone. On this representation, an Opertunity offering I immediately repaired to America solely with the purpose of making this Discovery. My Plan was approved of by Governor Ogle of Maryland who recommended it to Mr. Francklyn to make it known to the respective Provinces. Merchants of the Several Provinces induced by the Probability there was of Success, and the disinterested manner in which the proposals were formed, fitted out two Expeditions attended with this publick advantage, the Discovery of a large fishing bank, a country more convenient than Newfoundland for the curing of Fish, and valuable in itself on account of a Fur Trade, and other advantages.

(D) The first statement in this paragraph is correct, as the results of the voyage were so disappointing to its promoters that a public inquiry into its management was held. The next statements until the one about Braddock relate to events in which Charles Swaine, and not Drage, was the actor. No published statements of the purpose of the "Argo" voyages implied that it was other than it purported to be—an expedition to discover a northwest passage, to trade in that country if the Hudson Bay Company would so permit, and to promote the colonial interests at much less expense than could any expedition sent from the homeland. We have found no other suggestion of Drage having been in the colonies before 1758, as stated by him to the Bishop of London.<sup>1</sup> Swaine made the application to Governor Ogle and was granted a permit to undertake the expedition.<sup>2</sup> Franklin interested others in the undertaking.<sup>3</sup> The statements about the results of the "Argo's" voyages were published in the newspapers at that time, and were available to all.

The statements about the Braddock expedition in the remainder of this paragraph are

1. p. 207

2. p. 72

3. p. 168

Services  
done in  
General  
Braddocks  
campaign

When General Braddock came into America he was disappointed, and could not march for want of an assurance of being subsisted in the woods. It was undertaken by the Governor of Pennsylvania and two others to supply him with such subsistence, but they were at a loss for a person of Fidelity and Capacity to execute such a Trust. I was sent to and desired to undertake it, thereon General Braddock had notice that he might march, as he accordingly did. Every thing was ready in time to answer the Generals demands collected in a Magazine which had been made up on the Frontier at a place which the General approved of on my remonstrance. Though there was a defeat the Troops were subsisted on their return from such magazine and in a manner which gave great satisfaction to the commanding officer, and the other officers. Procured them waggons without the least difficulty or Inconvenience, and gave them other assistance which was very acceptable to them on their March.

(E)

The  
Frontier of  
Pennsyl-  
vania  
preserved

After the defeat of General Braddock, the westernmost Frontier of Pennsylvania where the Magazine was, was put under my care as to delivering arms to

entirely false, as far as Drage is concerned, and silly in saying that the march could not begin until Drage was appointed. Charles Swaine was appointed Commissary to handle supplies for Braddock's army on June 9, 1755, and stationed at Shippenburg, Pennsylvania,<sup>4</sup> and he remained there until Colonel Dunbar's force withdrew through that town after the defeat. Thomas Penn directed Governor Morris to thank Swaine for his services.<sup>5</sup> The procurement of wagons mentioned by Drage as being done without difficulty actually required great efforts on the parts of Benjamin Franklin and the colonial authorities.

(E) The statements in this paragraph, so far as Drage is concerned, are without any foundation. Late in July, 1755,

4. p. 73

5. pp. 74, 75



the Inhabitants, getting them to associate and stand on their defence, which was done. By building a Fort by order of the Governor, allowed by the Engineers to be the best they had seen in any of those parts, and tenable almost against any body of People with small arms, Kept all the People from deserting their habitations in that part of the Country, encouraged them to stay and Secure their corn than in the ground, and to thresh out their Summer grain. From my conduct at that time, they continued in their habitations afterwards, and supported themselves against the Indians all the war. Had they at that time given way the whole Country had been deserted until within eighty miles of Philadelphia, or the River Susquehanna, at furthest made the Frontier, to the imediate lose of the wheat, which was in their barns, the corn that was growing in the Fields, and no future cultivation; that it must have occasioned a great Scarcity through the Province, which would have rendered it almost impossible to have executed the subsequent Expeditions, as well that to reduce Fort Le Quesne, as other Expeditions. As a recompence for which services I was scarce paid my moderate Expences,

Governor Morris directed Charles Swaine to build a fort at Shippensburg and he selected a site and began preparations for building. On August 7 Colonel Burd was placed in charge of construction and the Fort was completed late in the autumn of that year. Its site was said to have been the best natural location of any fort along the Blue Ridge Mountains.<sup>6</sup> Swaine's name is on a list of rangers in that section,<sup>10</sup> but Drage's name is not mentioned in any of the colonial papers now extant for that period.

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6. p. Pa. Col. Archives 6-493  
10. p. 79

my accounts found fair on the strictest examination, my conduct approved, and the pretence was they had no more of the Kings money in their hands.

(F)

Detained by Mr. Denny, than Governor to Stay in Philadelphia

Being in the West Indias on private affairs, when Mr. Denny came over Governor of Pennsylvania, on my return Mr. Denny desired my continueing in Philadelphia, as we were former acquaintance that he might have my advice and assistance, as the Proprietary People and the Assembly made their contest about Power the principal Object of their attention and each party expected that he should comply only with such measures as were subservient to their particular views.

(G)

made Prothonitor of the county of Northampton

Was after sometime made Prothonitor of the County of Northampton a Frontier county to the Northward, which being harassed by the Indians, at the request of the Governor with a Captain and four men I reconnoitred the parts most exposed and fixed on such posts for the Soldiers, which were approved of, that I thereby formed a line such as the Indians would not venture within, and the Inhabitants were secure that they could live on and did cultivate their Lands for a whole Summer

(F) No record can be found about this. A "Miss Drudge" is mentioned as having been with Mrs. Denny (the governor's wife) on December 31, 1757.<sup>7</sup>

(G) Charles Swaine and not Drage was made prothonotary late in 1757; no record can be found of Drage in any of the papers of that time.<sup>8</sup>

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7. p. 77

8. p. 76

without any Accident. By which measure as well as by those measures taken after General Braddocks defeat to westward, I may be said to have effected the Preservation of the greatest part of the Frontier of the Province.

(H) My residence was at Easton where the Indian Treatys were held, and was much concerned in bringing about that peace unitedly with Mr. Croghan at Mr. Denny's desire which was made in 1759, and if the advice and Intelligence I procured in 1756 had been attended to and not suppressed by the than Governor and his Secretary, when exactly the Same Terms were proposed on which the Peace was made in 1759 the Province had in all probability never been struck by the Indians, which Peace greatly contributed to the Success of General Forbes in the taking of Fort le Quesne.

concerned  
in making  
the Indian  
peace in  
1759

(I) The application of the Merchants in Philadelphia to Mr. Denny for Flags of Truce was intirely unknown to me and when a particular friend desired me at the first to apply to Mr. Denny for that purpose and said he had French Prisoners, whom on further Enquiry I found were only French Neutrals, who

not concerned in  
the Flags of Truce  
granted  
at Philadelphia

(H) No record can be found of Drage's presence at the Indian treaty negotiations at Easton, Pa. in 1758, but Swaine had a great deal to do with the preparations and his name is signed to two of the final papers.<sup>9</sup> Swaine then or shortly afterward, owned the house in which much of the negotiations were conducted.<sup>11</sup>

(I) No record can be found of any such occurrence.

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9. pp. 77. 78

11. p. 83

were to represent Prisoners I dropped the application, thereby lost my friend and also declined making a considerable pecuniary Proffit.

(J)

Removed  
from the  
Prothon-  
itors  
place

On Mr. Denny's being removed and another Governor comeing in, I was soon after removed from my Prothonitors place. The principal reason for having advised Mr. Denny agreeable to the remonstrance of General Amhurst to him to sign the bill for taxing the Proprietary Estate, and a person not agreeable to the than Governor nor in the interest of the Proprietary, greatly to the dissatisfaction of the whole County who offered to go down with a Petition to the number of Six hundred and desire my continuance as an Act of Justice due to the People of the County. This would by no means permit, tho I had a promise of holding the place for life when I entered on it, and legaly might have done so, but thought it best not to contest it, contenting myself with the Satisfaction of being gratefully remembered by the People, whereas if I kept my place I should be in constant broils with the persons in power, as I must have been, had I due respect to the administring of Justice and behaved myself as it

(J) As already stated, Swaine and not Drage, was the public official at Easton. Swaine married there in 1758; there is no record of Drage's marrying while in Pennsylvania. Charles Swaine Drage, undoubtedly a son, was married in Philadelphia in 1759.<sup>12</sup>

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12. p. 191

became me to do, therefore retired quietly after having purchased a house, married and been at the Expence of carrying a Family there.

(K)

Settle a Store on the Frontier

To introduce my son who came from England into business, set up a Store on the Frontier for Indian trade with Mr. Croghan the Indian Agent, with whom I had a long acquaintance, and to supply the Garrison of Pittsburgh in a wholesale way with liquors in which article they had been greatly imposed on, and to prevent liquors agreeable to a plan fixed by the General and Sir William Johnston being sold to the Indians. After building a house and making a good Settlement the last Indian war broke out, when I was obliged to retire to be under the Protection of the Garrison at Bedford, Colonel Bouquet proposed, as I supplied the Garisons by wholesale, I would take the Troops under my care, with which he was going up to relieve Fort Pitt as to supplying them with liquors on their march, as the sobriety of the Troops was of great consequence to him and would have no concern with any Suttlers who would only debauch his People, which was complied with at a great Expence and haz-

Supply the troops at Colonel Bouquets request

Drage's name cannot be found in any records of that time as owning any property in Easton.

(K) Both Swaine and Drage were traders at the time of Colonel Bouquet's expedition in 1763,<sup>13</sup> though probably not in partnership. Swaine was in Pittsburgh during its siege by the Indians in 1763, while Drage was with the relieving force.<sup>14</sup>

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13. pp. 88, 90

14. pp. 81, 192-198

ard, as there was a necessity to make journeys down to the inhabited parts to fetch up proper Supplies, where troops could not be spared to escort them Provisions were also procured for the Officers. The whole was conducted in such a manner as at the End of the Campaign the Colonel expressed his approbation and the formal thanks of each Regiment was given by the first Captain in behalf of the officers and private men. No great advantage was proposed to be made on my part, but was willing to give all assistance in my power and expected to be reinstated in the Trade, as before the war.

(L)

Inspect the Provisions at the request of the Commissary Genl

The next campaign Colonel Bouquet again engaged me to Supply him as before. Mr. Leake the Commissary General for Stores and Provisions who had made a contract on part of the Crown with Some persons to Supply Provisions to the Garrisons, and the Troops which were to be employed that Campaign, without my Privity fixed on me as Inspector for the King of such Provisions, which when he informed me of I excepted against, but from the intimacy there was from the time of Bradocks campaign he insisted on it, as it would interfere very

(L) No record of any of these transactions can be found. It is probable that the statement about his unpopularity "among a lawless people" refers to both Croghan and Wharton, as well as to others.<sup>15</sup> If in his dealings in business he handled the truth as loosely as he did in this letter one can hardly wonder at the above statement.

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<sup>15</sup>. p. 94

little with my other business, and said his whole dependance on their due execution of the contract was my doing that part for him. I had just reason to except to a very considerable Quantity of Flour, and as to the weight of the Cattle, as we were going far into an Enemys Country, where we were Sure of no Supplies, only to subsist from what we carried with us, our distances we were to go, and our stay uncertain, should the operations of the Campaign be any way interrupted through a defect in the Provisions, I should have been considered as the person chiefly culpable. Nevertheless what I thought would have commanded a particular acknowledgement on the part of the Commander, cancelled in great measure my former merit, and we were but upon just speaking terms. My mistake was in not letting the contractors put off what was not Flour for Such and which those who were to bake it at the Garrisons and attended at the Inspection said they could not make bread off, that was wholesome for the present and in three months would bake alone by itself, whereas the contractors were all owed fourteen Shillings a hundred, and the Stuff they bought and delivered at Seven and Nine Shil-

lings a hundred. I was also faulty in not passing off four hundred head of cattle to be computed at Sixty weight each more than they weighed. Mr. Leakes purpose was answered, their was good Provisions both on the march and in the Garisons, he made a proper remonstrance of these proceedings at head Quarters, disqualified those who had contracted for ever being concerned for the Crown any more. The contractors they would not pay the millars and the People of the Country, but laid the fault on me, who were determind to take their Revenge. Therefore when the Campaign was over and Peace being made the Garisons to be reduced, I thought it not worth while to revive my store again more especially as I was become obnoxious by false misrepresentations amongst a lawless People, I Quitted those parts. Though not discouraged my Lord to Serve the Crown should occasion call, though hitherto it had not turned out to my advantage.

If my Lord this Memorial is either impertinent or improper, I hope it will be excused, in your Lordships

London  
July. 7<sup>th</sup> 1768.

Most Obedient  
and Obliged Servant  
Theodorus Swaine Drage



The real purpose of this letter is undoubtedly expressed in its last sentence, as Drage was indirectly asking for a government job of some kind, and wanted to show as good a past record as he could. Nearly all of these occurrences, with the exception of those in the first few years, were in Pennsylvania and would require time and trouble for his Lordship to verify, which apparently he did not do, although his influence was probably helpful in securing Drage's appointment to North Carolina nearly a year later.

A careful restudy of all of the known record including this lengthy letter has not changed the writer's opinion that Charles Swaine and *not* Theodorus Swaine Drage wrote both of the books under discussion.

It has been suggested that Swaine and Drage were the same man, as the latter was frequently referred to as Theodorus Swaine or Mr. Swaine, but the several times they were in different places at the same time, and the great difference in penmanship indicates the improbability of such an assumption. An expert in the study of handwriting in Pittsburgh has expressed his opinion that one man could not have written this manuscript letter and the other papers undoubtedly written by Drage and the letters known to have been written by Charles Swaine, as the style of the two writings is very different.

There are no records in Philadelphia or Easton now showing a will of Charles Swaine or administration of his estate, and none of his departure from Philadelphia for England, of his death or burial. This letter of Drage's does not indicate that Charles Swaine had died between the sale recorded in Easton in 1766 and the date of the letter, July 7th, 1768, as otherwise Drage would hardly have made the statements that he did, so freely. Perhaps Swaine died on the voyage to England, after having completed the manuscript of "The Great Probability . . . ," and was buried at sea, after which Drage, who may have been his companion, took possession of the work and arranged for its printing.

A careful search of existing records in the Land Office and counties has failed to find any reference to the tracts purchased on Shover's Run. This is not really surprising, however, for

many such transactions were not recorded in the early days.<sup>16</sup>

This letter certainly confirms the opinion that Theodorus Swaine Drage was a very odd character, and at least during its writing he was a very active member of the order of Ananias.

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16. Private letter from W. J. Daniels, Director, Land Office, June 28, 1950.

## Appendix 1

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Dedication of: "The Great Probability of a Northwest Passage"

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
WILLS EARL OF HILLSBOROUGH,

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE,  
FIRST LORD COMMISSIONER OF TRADE AND PLANTATIONS,  
ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE  
PRIVY COUNCIL, AND F. R. S.

The Discovery of a North-west Passage having deserved the particular Attention of that great Minister of State Sir Francis Walsingham, with the Approbation of the greatest Princess of that Age, I presumed to ask the Permission to inscribe the following Sheets, on the same Subject, to your Lordship, wrote with no View of setting any further Expeditions on Foot, or with respect to any particular System, but as a candid and impartial Enquiry, to shew the great Probability there is of a North-west Passage. The Importance of the Subject, treated with the greatest Regard to Truth, are the only Pretensions I have to merit your Patronage.

Your Lordship will appear, to the latest Posterity, in the amiable Light of being zealous for the Glory of his Majesty, the Honour of the Nation, for promoting the commercial Interests, the Happiness of his Majesty's Subjects in general, and of those in America in particular. I therefore have the most grateful Sense of your benevolence and Humanity in condescending to grant me this Favour, as it will be known for Part of that Time that I had the Honour to be

YOUR LORDSHIP'S  
MOST HUMBLE AND  
OBEDIENT SERVANT,  
  
THE AUTHOR.

