

Studies in Documents

The Royal Proclamation Charter for the Company of Adventurers¹

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RÉSUMÉ Le libellé de la *Royal Proclamation Charter for the Company of Adventurers* (2 mai 1670) est bien connu grâce aux sources imprimées. Les droits et pouvoirs octroyés à la Compagnie de la baie d'Hudson par la Charte ainsi que leur contestation ont été étudiés en profondeur. D'autres caractéristiques de ce document nous sont moins familières. Cela s'applique aux procédures administratives formelles et informelles entourant la création de la Charte comme telle, son style documentaire, sa forme, sa taille, son langage, sa calligraphie, son ornementation et son sceau. L'article décrit et commente ces caractéristiques.

ABSTRACT The text of the Royal Proclamation Charter for the Company of Adventurers (2 May 1670) is well known from printed sources. The rights and powers granted to the Hudson's Bay Company by the Charter, as well as challenges to these, have been thoroughly studied. Other features of this document are less familiar. These include the formal and informal administrative procedures which led to the physical production of the Charter, the Charter's documentary form, shape and size, and its language, calligraphy, decoration, and seal. This paper sets out to describe and comment on these features.

Introduction

This paper is an examination of the Royal Proclamation Charter for the company of Adventurers and of the administrative and other related factors which gave rise to and influenced its creation, manner of production, physical form and shape, and language, calligraphy, decoration, and seal. The Charter (**Figure 1**) is the earliest surviving Hudson's Bay Company document; the rest of the records from the company's early years disappeared in the late 1600s. Hudson's Bay Company minutes of 1694 reported that all the

* I wish to acknowledge the initiative and support of the Hudson's Bay Company, particularly Mr. David Mitchell, then Governor, and Mr. Brian Grose, then Secretary of the Company, without whose vision and enthusiasm the important project, of which the research presented here forms part, would not have been accomplished. Parts of the text are copyright Hudson's Bay Company, 1997, and reprinted with its permission.

Figure One



*First page, Royal Proclamation Charter for the Company of Adventurers
(Photograph courtesy of the Canadian Conservation Institute)*

company's "bookes and papers" from the first years of its existence were gone, "having been lost and carried away by one of their servants" – the loss having been so great that the company could not "give any account of any transaction or Trade for the first four yeares of [its] trade and dealings." The Charter remains unique today in other respects as well. Although assigned Hudson's Bay Company Archives catalogue number "A.37/1," it has never been part of the archives, except formally. Since 1974, when the Charter was sent from London, England to the company head office in Tor-

onto and the company archives were deposited in the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, the connection between the Charter and the archives has grown even more remote.¹

The Royal Proclamation Charter is a *letters patent*: a form of document to which the term “charter” has often been loosely applied.² Letters patent, so-called from being issued “open” with the Great Seal of England pendant, announced royal acts, generally of a very diverse nature.³ These included grants both of material things, such as land, and of immaterial things, such as privileges, given by one person or body to another.⁴ The Royal Proclamation Charter for the Company of Adventurers was both a formalization of a grant and an announcement that a grant had been made. While the signature of the reigning monarch, Charles II, does not appear on the Charter, his Great Seal was appended and carried an equivalent authoritative force. (Charles had earlier signed a royal warrant, authorizing the creation of the Charter.)

The Charter was uniquely important and a significant reflection of British economic policies of the period. The founding of the Hudson’s Bay Company took place in an economically expansive mercantile society. The power of venture capital was increasing and the state and private individuals or groups typically worked together to promote English economic policy. The grant of wide territory and rich resources that occurred under the Charter was no mere favouritism. Its purposes fitted in perfectly with the objectives of colonial and economic development in the period 1660 to 1688: the monarchy and its attendant councils directed trade policies in a way that would allow private investors to minimize their risks and maximize their profits. What set the Royal Proclamation Charter apart from similar documents, however, was the formidable extent of the territory it knowingly granted.⁵ The Charter gave the company the Hudson’s Bay drainage basin (almost forty percent of modern Canada) and played a crucial role in making a large part of North American territory British and later, Canadian.

The text of the Royal Proclamation Charter is well known from printed sources. The rights and powers granted to the company by the Charter, as well as challenges to these, have been exhaustively researched and commented upon in numerous studies.⁶ Other aspects of this document, however, are less familiar: these include the informal and formal administrative procedures and other related contextual factors that gave rise to the Charter’s physical production, documentary shape and form, constituent materials and elements, and its language, writing, and decoration. Our object here is to describe and explain these features in their historical and administrative setting.

Seeking the Charter: Historical Background

In the mid-1660s, an influential group formed around King Charles II; many of its members were already involved in furthering England’s trade with its

colonies. Two French *coureurs de bois* – Pierre Esprit Radisson and the Sieur de Groseilliers, Médard Chouart – had developed a plan to open up a trade route by Hudson Strait to the fur region south of Hudson's Bay, but had failed to interest the authorities of New France or France in their project. In time they were placed in touch with an interested group of Englishmen who gave them direct contact with King Charles II. Despite this it was some years before an exploratory voyage could be arranged. Nevertheless, in 1668 the situation changed. Among state papers for 1668 are instructions by Prince Rupert, the Duke of Albemarle, the Earl of Craven and three others to Captain William Stannard, Commander of the ketch *Eaglet*,⁷ and Captain Zachariah Gillam, Commander of the ketch *Nonsuch*, for a voyage to Hudson's Bay to investigate trade possibilities and discover a north-west passage. The ships sailed from Gravesend on 3 June 1668 and on 9 October 1669 the *Nonsuch* returned having, alone, successfully completed the journey. (A description of its expedition is preserved in the State Papers of Charles II.)⁸

On 23 June 1669 the influential group of investors who had organized and underwritten the expedition obtained a *grant of privilege*, taking the form of a request that a bill be prepared "for our Royall Signature to passe Our Greate Seale, containing our Grant [of a trade monopoly] unto them." A document was prepared, but was not the final version. The copy of the grant, preserved at the Public Record Office in England, has been struck through with lines to invalidate it, and the document is annotated: "Memorand this Warrant was afterwards altered as in page 129."⁹ One author has suggested that the group's increasing knowledge of the geography of the Bay required that the terms of this grant be altered after the return of the *Nonsuch*.¹⁰ On 21 October 1669, the grant of privilege was renewed.¹¹ The State Papers record the form of the renewal as a grant to Sir Edward Hungerford, Sir John Robinson and four others,

who have undertaken an expedition to Hudson's Bay for discovery of a new passage into the South Sea, and for finding trade in fur, minerals, &c, which may be advantageous to the Kingdom – of the seas, straits, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks, &c, within the confines thereof, not now occupied by the subjects of any Christian Prince; granting them the sole commerce of the said places, all mines and minerals ... and other fishing there. To be held as of the manor of Greenwich, on the rent of two elks and two black beavers yearly.¹²

This second version of the grant was fuller and more precise in its terms, but it was not yet the definitive Royal Proclamation Charter. Nor did it mention by name all those who would be included. The adventurers had already begun seeking a royal charter, which would bequeath more permanence and authority, deemed necessary to secure the trade for themselves. This quest now continued.¹³ Their desires were compatible with wider interests: only a powerful corporation actively supported by the English government could protect English trade and land rights from the claims of the French.¹⁴

Preliminary Procedures

The first formal step towards actually obtaining a charter was a *royal warrant* or *bill*, which was signed by the King. Warrants signified the royal pleasure that something should be done. In this case the warrant would provide the authority for the English Chancery to issue the Royal Proclamation Charter under the Great Seal and prescribe the words to be used.¹⁵ A series of processes began. In the seventeenth century the preparation of a bill for the King's signature involved a very elaborate and exacting procedure. Practices had become increasingly complicated during the 1500s owing to royal concerns over trends towards unauthorized creation of documents under the monarch's name.¹⁶

A number of preliminary stages in the creation of a warrant have been outlined by Maxwell-Lyte, though not always followed.¹⁷ First a petition was made to the Crown through the Secretary of State. Next the petition was referred by the Secretary of State to one or both incumbent officials termed *Law Officers*, who were responsible for reporting on the petition to the Secretary of State. Finally, the Law Officers made or approved drafts of the warrants and examined the finished drafts to see that clerks had prepared them correctly.

In the case of the Charter, creation of the warrant followed another route. In April 1670 Prince Rupert (1619–1682) presented a petition containing a draft charter to the Privy Council on behalf of the adventurers. The Prince was not the majority stockholder among the charter members of the syndicate. However, because of his position as cousin to Charles II, he became the focal point of the enterprise, having been drawn into the project possibly in 1665 or 1667 (the documentary sources are unclear) when Lord Arlington introduced Groseillers to him. Prince Rupert was not active in politics, but was otherwise interested in promoting England's welfare. He may also have been attracted to this venture because of straightened financial circumstances.¹⁸

Since a petition, such as Prince Rupert's, sometimes functioned as a means for approaching the Privy Council directly to have an instrument issued under the Great Seal,¹⁹ it appears that in this instance the petition was not sent through the Secretary of State and Law Officers for review. The text of the grant of privilege of the previous October, rather than wording produced by the Law Officers, functioned as the draft for the warrant. Other factors may have expedited the process: the Chancellor was normally one of the Privy Council's principal members, his presence connecting the Council directly with the Chancery. In response to Prince Rupert's petition, a letter under a lesser seal, the *signet*, was addressed to the Keeper of the Privy Seal, requiring him to prepare a warrant or bill under that seal.²⁰

Warrants or bills usually began with the words: "Our will and pleasure is that you forthwith prepare a bill for our royal signature, to pass our great Seal."²¹ Warrants were submitted to the King for his signature by whoever

prepared it. In the seventeenth century warrants were accompanied by a summary of its contents known as the *docquet*. In some cases the docquet was stitched onto the bill, but it often proved more convenient to enter the summary on the bill itself, near the lower left corner.²² Because Prince Rupert's petition had included the draft charter, the wording was essentially his. Prince Rupert's "docket on Hudson's Bay" was sent to the Council on 13 April 1670. It read, in part, "An Incorporacion of Prince Rupert [and seventeen others] into one body politique by the name of Governour and Adventurers trading to Hudsons Baye," granting "them and their successors all the lands and the sole trade into the seas and creeks lying within the entrance of Hudson Streights."²³ The King could, if he chose, read more than the brief docquet submitted for his signature and, if he did so, was free to amend the bill.²⁴ Here he did not. The bill was signed by the King and countersigned by the Secretary of State, Charles acting "in virtue of his royal prerogative" and without consulting Parliament, as was the practice in Stuart times.²⁵ The bill authorizing the issuing of the Charter received the Privy Seal on 18 April 1670.²⁶

The sealed bill or warrant was next sent to Chancery and its text entered onto the Chancery rolls. Enrolment in Chancery was mandatory and used the text of the warrant, not the final instrument.²⁷ The Chancery rolls were prominent among the administrative records of the Chancery office: Chancery rolls contained official copies of documents issued under the Great Seal of England. (The copy of the Royal Proclamation Charter can be found today in the Public Record Office at Kew in the Chancery rolls on Patent Roll. 22, Chas. II, Pt. 3, No. 21.) Document copies were closely inscribed on parchment sheets, sewn head to tail, forming long rolls that could be compactly and economically stored.²⁸

At the same time, with the Royal Warrant signed by the king at hand, physical preparation of the Charter could proceed, as transmission of the sealed bill to Chancery was usually enough to permit preparation of instruments issued under the Great Seal to begin. Where the exact form of the document was already contained in the warrant, there was no need to draft anything further. Sometimes, however, it was necessary for Chancery officers to look precedents up or insert further details, which undoubtedly originated, in most cases, with grant beneficiaries or their agents.²⁹ In the case of the Charter, its contents bore a close relation to the earlier grants of privilege of June and October 1669, but were worked out and phrased more carefully and explicitly.³⁰

The Text of the Charter

The essential formulae of English royal charters had already been fully developed by the beginning of the thirteenth century.³¹ The Royal Proclamation Charter begins with the King's *style*, which describes Charles II as "King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland." This title was present at the begin-

ning of all instruments issued in a reigning monarch's name and under his or her Great Seal.³² The *notification*, which directly follows the King's style, was worded in the customary and general form: "to all whom these presents shall come, greeting."³³

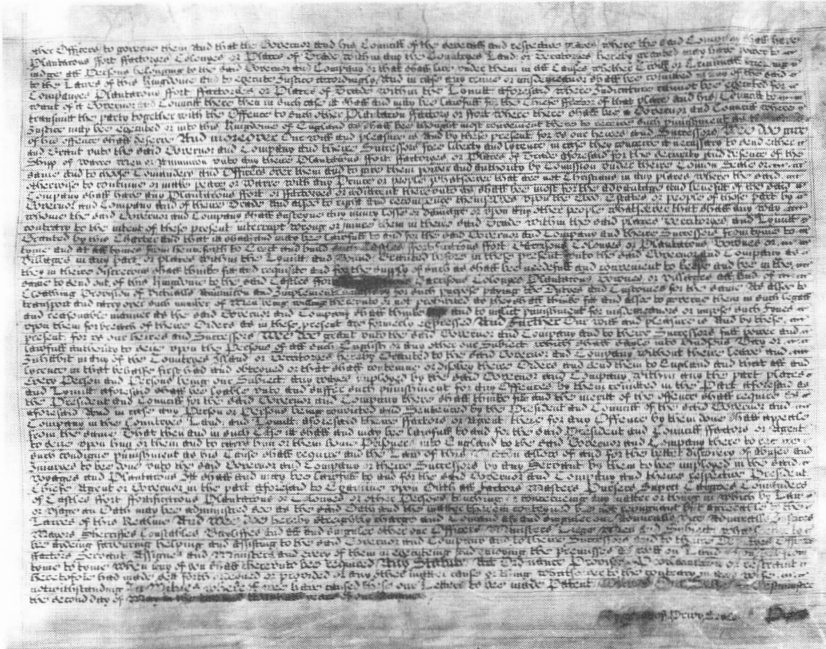
Most of the main body of the Royal Proclamation Charter which follows consists of closely worded text presenting the terms of the grant issued on 2 May 1670. First comes the *exposition*; this considers the merits of the grant and its recipients, which it names. Next comes the *disposition* containing the "words of concession" which indicate the nature of the grant, defines its conditions, and determines its extent.³⁴ The Charter, through the disposition, gave Prince Rupert and seventeen noblemen, gentlemen, and merchants³⁵ the right to incorporate a company, the present Hudson's Bay Company, with the exclusive privilege of establishing settlements and carrying on trade at Hudson's Bay.³⁶ The Charter's contents – at least in so far as its provisions for a monopoly were concerned – differed little from those of many similar royal charters.

At the end of the main text of the Charter, the *final protocol* was placed; it includes the phrase "Witness ourself." This phrase was customary and intended to signal that the King had attested personally to the document.³⁷ After this follows the *place-date* "at Westminster," and *time-date*, given as "the Second Day of May in the Two and Twentieth Year of Our Reign" (rather than as a calendar year).³⁸ It was usual until the late seventeenth century to place-date instruments prepared for the Great Seal at the location to which the originating Royal Warrant was delivered even though the King was not necessarily there.³⁹ After the mid-fifteenth century no letters patent carried a time-date anterior to the date when the warrant was delivered to Chancery to be issued. The time-date on the Royal Proclamation Charter could, however, be not only the day on which the warrant was received "in Chancery," but also when the form of the instrument to be issued was finally settled in Chancery and the instrument was engrossed or sealed.⁴⁰ It was also customary by the later seventeenth century to insert the surname of the officer primarily responsible for production of the letters patent at the bottom right corner of the document – "Pigott" in the case of the Royal Proclamation Charter. (Sir Richard Pigott was the Clerk of the Crown and the Master of the Patent Office.)⁴¹

Preparation and Embellishment of the Royal Proclamation Charter

The final instrument was *engrossed* by a *scrivener*, that is, a professional scribe. When a document was a final version of an instrument prepared for the Great Seal, engrossing was normally undertaken at the Letters Patent Office or at the Crown Office.⁴² Charter production was usually a utilitarian enterprise resulting in a plain, business-like document, carefully laid out and enscribed but devoid of ornament. Sheets two through five of the Royal Proclamation Charter (**Figure 2**) present excellent examples of this style. However, begin-

Figure Two



Fifth and last page, Royal Proclamation Charter for the Company of Adventurers
(Photograph courtesy of the Canadian Conservation Institute)

ning in the reign of Henry VIII practices began to diverge: charters were often embellished at the discretion and at the cost of the beneficiaries. Once again the Charter provides an excellent example, with its highly decorated first page.⁴³ Artists of standing assisted or collaborated with scribes in decorating important documents, although in most individual cases it has not been determined which precise persons were responsible.⁴⁴

The Charter was written on parchment. Conservatism in administrative procedures and document formats meant that the use of parchment for instruments authenticated under the Great Seal continued through the seventeenth century and later. Traditionalism was the explanation: the parchment does not appear to relate to parchment's alleged greater permanency when compared to paper. Nor was it a matter of supply: paper was widely available and used in England by Stuart times.⁴⁵

At the same time, innovations were appearing reflecting a growing attention to efficiency in document production and the need to avoid delays. During Charles II's reign, enterprising London stationers began to supply

government offices with sheets of parchment specially prepared for the engrossment of letters patent. (One such enterprising stationer was "N. Pinder at the Peacock in Chancery Lane.") Stationers first engraved two, three, or four copper plates. These were then used to print ornamental borders which would flank three sides of a document's text when the text was added. The wide upper and the two narrower side margins were typically decorated with printed coats of arms and devices, heraldic beasts, and emblems, a definitive scheme of decoration which had been established by the early sixteenth century (although at that time it had still been executed by hand).⁴⁶

The first engraving on the Charter appears on the top left hand corner. Here the stationers used a copper plate engraved with a large capital C enclosing a portrait of Charles II and adorned with flourishes, strapwork, and trellises. This feature, including Charles' portrait, undoubtedly added to the authoritativeness of the Charter. (Indeed, the enlargement and decoration of the first and principal initial is one of the main features of the marginal decoration of letters patent.) The image of the king is a printed adaptation of Samuel Cooper's painted *Miniature of Charles II* (1665).⁴⁷ Cooper (1608–1672), one of the most important artists working in England during the seventeenth century, was appointed the king's *limner* (painter) in 1663.⁴⁸ The miniatures of Charles II by this artist were among the most important portraits of the king; copies in various media were extremely common.⁴⁹ There was little unusual about the use of Charles' portrait in the Charter. The use and adaptation of portrait paintings by famous artists for heraldic and ceremonial ornamentation on legal documents had been known in England from the fifteenth century, although inclusion of the royal portrait on letters patent did not become the rule until the sixteenth century. The particular format of the portrait of the monarch on the Royal Proclamation Charter, a half-length bust enclosed in an oval frame, first appeared during the reign of Charles I (1625–49).⁵⁰

A second engraved plate provided the marginal decoration for the top edge of the first sheet of the Charter, including the remaining enlarged text of the first line which, along with the decorated C, created the phrase "Carolus Dei gratia." The decoration featured scroll-work, heraldic insignia, and other ornaments. Because the text on the plate was in Latin and because the contents of the Charter were written in English, use of the engraving meant that some of the pre-printed letters had to be scraped off the parchment so that the English "Charles by the Grace of God" (**Figure 3**) could be substituted – all but the C being added by hand.⁵¹ Use of this particular form of decoration is by no means unique. An identical engraved initial C, royal portrait, and vertical embellishments are found on a grant by Charles II in 1678 of £200 *per annum* to the Hon. Jane Widdrington, maid of honour to Catherine of Braganza.⁵² Many more examples doubtless survive.

Like the pre-printing of the border embellishments and King's portrait, the advance execution of certain scribal preliminaries reflects a growing interest

Figure Three



Detail of embellishment of the top margin, first page. The portrait of Charles II, initial C, and the heraldic devices along the top margin are printed from an engraved plate. Parts of the first line of text are printed and parts are manuscript (Photograph courtesy of the Canadian Conservation Institute)

in efficiency in production of English administrative documents. Close visual examination using a low power stereo binocular microscope reveals horizontal ruled blind stylus lines underlying the body of the manuscript text, their ends overlying the printed borders. The evidence indicates that the sheets selected for the Charter, including those devoid of ornament, had been ruled in advance to establish the layout of the text. In addition to the blind stylus lines there are scarlet lines, drawn in ink with a pen, separating the individual lines of text. The binocular reveals that these lines were similarly executed before the text was added (although there are red ink lines in the margins which *overlie* the text, clearly added later). Moreover, some but not all of the horizontal scarlet lines within the text are underdrawn with graphite lines, executed using the forerunner of today's lead pencil. (Lines in lead point have been found on other comparable documents.) In all probability the stationers stocked ruled versions in readiness. The fact that most charters are about the same size and similarly ruled would support this hypothesis. The horizontal ruling of the Charter was executed between pinholes made down each side with a parchment runner.⁵³

The developing administrative apparatus of the modern state demanded that, likewise, the *text* of documents such as the Royal Proclamation Charter likewise be efficiently inscribed. As the English bureaucracy began to flourish in the sixteenth century, growth of the state apparatus required staffing of new offices. A demand arose for secretaries who could speak more than one language, who could handle voluminous correspondence, who could write quickly and clearly when taking dictation, and who could draft documents at short notice. A clerk (*clericus*) was no longer a tonsured cleric educated at a

Church School. Clerks by then generally received a secular commercial education from a writing master.⁵⁴

Accordingly, the script of the body of the Royal Proclamation Charter text reveals a concern for efficiency and uniformity. The text was executed in an English business hand known as *Court Hand*.⁵⁵ It included the style of writing used in ordinary business, as well as numerous specialized forms of script used in particular administrative applications.⁵⁶ Court Hand encompassed both *set* and *free hands*. Set writing, used for the Charter, was a highly standardized and formal form of script practised by the growing class of professional scribes, who prized rapidity highly.⁵⁷ This neat, rapid hand was written with a square-edged pen held at an angle of about forty-five degrees. Characteristics of Court Hand as a whole are neatness and compactness, short *descenders* (meaning, for example, the tail strokes in *q* and *g*), regular verticality of all strokes, and uniform spacing of lines. Strict conventions and use of set hand imposed discipline on the execution of minuscule writing. Letters were executed within the confines of the pre-inscribed horizontal lines which, as discussed earlier, had been drawn by stationers. These lines appeared in groups of four. The inner pair of lines were the "lines of writing" between which the *body* of each letter was written – the "body" meaning, for example, the lower half of a letter *b* or whole of the letter *e*. Outer lines marked the boundaries of descenders and *ascenders* (the latter being the long strokes standing up above the body of letters, as in *b* or *d*). Special terms existed for many other strokes. In the case of majuscules, however, discipline was relaxed in favour of personal expression and writers were freer to display individual skill, verve, and invention. Virtuosity showed itself in contrasts of thick and thin lines and in the exaggerated twists and flourishes added to some letters. This helped create what one writer termed a "pleasing contrast" between the regularity of the minuscule text and the freedom of the interspersed capital letters.⁵⁸

The inks employed reflected the need to keep the Charter's textual contents inviolable. Analyses were undertaken at the Canadian Conservation Institute but did not attempt to survey the entire document to determine the constituents of inks used for all the manuscript text and embellishments; a minimum of sampling was undertaken. But iron gall ink was identified in the text areas where sampling occurred. It was not the only ink available in Stuart England; but because it included both a dye and a pigment, it was difficult to efface or tamper with texts written using the compound. As a result it was more secure than other black and brown inks available at the time.⁵⁹

Act of Sealing

The final element within the Charter was the seal. The act of sealing consisted of making a "significant" mark upon a soft material using an engraved *matrix*: a die or mold made of a harder substance. This typically consisted of two

moulded silver plates which were engraved with appropriate designs. Attaching a seal to a document was and remains a way of expressing one's intentions to be bound by its terms. The seal had a double function: it provided evidence that the written promise or agreement is genuine and rendered the terms of the transaction indisputable. The *Great Seal of England* affixed to the Charter was and is the symbol of the Chancellor's office and a principal tool in conducting the office's business. Its use originated in the Middle Ages when documents were officially authenticated not by a signature but by a seal. The seal used today is recognizably the same sort of seal as that used in the Norman period to seal royal letters. The Great Seal has always been affixed in a Chancery Office or the Court of Chancery itself.⁶⁰

Concern for safeguarding the evidentiary integrity of the Charter is also evident in certain physical features of the seal. The Great Seal of England has an image or device surrounded by a legend on both the obverse and the reverse and, accordingly, has always been *hung* from documents so that both sides of the seal can be inspected. The impression that the seal matrices made on the reverse of larger pendant seals such as the Great Seal of England functions as a *counterseal*. Its presence made tampering with the seal more difficult and helped safeguard the security and authenticity of the sealed document. Normally, as an additional security feature, the one half of the matrix was provided with projecting pegs which fitted into corresponding hard metal loops on the other half to ensure accuracy of register.⁶¹ Matrixes were kept in a bag in the care of the Lord Chancellor during his tenure in office.⁶²

Usually one Great Seal was issued during a reign; however, Charles II went through four. The particular version of the Great Seal of England attached to the Charter was the third Great Seal of Charles II; this was in use from 17 June 1663 to 19 April 1672. The Charter's Great Seal is round, measures 148 millimetres in diameter and is approximately ten millimetres thick. It bears conventional devices on both sides, designs which have been adopted unchanged in practically every reign down to the present. On the obverse of the seal (**Figure 4**), the sovereign is represented enthroned and, on the reverse, on horseback, in Roman armour galloping to the right.⁶³

Analysis has identified the composition of the Great Seal as a combination of beeswax and rosin (called colophony), a mixture typical for its date.⁶⁴ Features of the seal's makeup, as well as physical form, have an important evidentiary role. Chemical analysis has revealed that the now dark brown seal was once a semi-translucent green colour, as indicated by the presence of copper salts, which probably created a copper resinate pigment. (Notably, it is possible to confuse a green which has darkened with age with natural coloured wax, which can also darken over time.) From the reign of King John (1199–1216) onward, English royal charters were usually sealed with green wax. (Red wax or wax-resin, coloured with vermillion pigment, was rarely used to seal charters in the Royal Chancery until modern times.) Green signified a grant in perpetuity.⁶⁵

Figure Four

Obverse, Great Seal of England, Royal Proclamation Charter of the Company of Adventurers) Photograph courtesy of the Canadian Conservation Institute)

The Great Seal of England was attached to the Royal Proclamation Charter by laces which hung down from the center of the document's lower edge. This method of sealing, used in the English Royal Chancery, had a special administrative significance: seals on grants in perpetuity, such as the Royal Proclamation Charter, were usually appended on laces or cords. These denoted the grant's permanence.⁶⁶ The laces for the Charter consisted, as usual, of two cords made of domesticated silk threads, one in this case an undyed or natural colour and the other a red obtained from brazilwood dye.⁶⁷ (The colours appear to have had no particular legal or administrative significance and may have been the choice of the beneficiaries.)

Not only did the use of laces signify permanence: the manner in which the cords were attached to the document helped ensure that the document, its con-

tents, and its evidentiary value would remain intact over time. The two cords were inserted through three holes or eyelets cut in a triangular formation through the center of a doubling or folding of the lower edge of the first text page. This double thickness of parchment (called the *plica*) was intended to reduce the strain exerted by the weight of the large seal. The lower edges of the other four sheets, folios two through five, were inserted into the fold of the plica before lacing and the cords passed through these sheets as well.⁶⁸ Usually the projecting ends of the laces were next plaited together at the foot of the document, that is, at the lower edge or fold of the plica.⁶⁹ The plait was then placed between two cakes of the warm wax resin which were subjected to pressure within the seal matrix to enclose the laces within the body of the resulting seal, with their ends passing out of its bottom edge. Tampering with the seal to free the laces in order to add or remove sheets would cause obvious damage. As well, because of the fragility of the wax-resin material and the legal importance of preserving the integrity of the seal, seals were traditionally enclosed in boxes, called *skippets*, as a final step after being affixed to documents.⁷⁰

Conclusion

The Hudson's Bay Company gained great benefits by the Royal Proclamation Charter, including control over a vast area of North America. In the late 1680s competition from interlopers and French rivals threatened to undercut the Company's position.⁷¹ Yet, in 1690 its privileges were further confirmed and strengthened by an Act of Parliament. These privileges remained fundamentally unchanged until the Company's territorial rights and imperial role came to an end in 1870.⁷²

The Charter remains an important document in North American and Canadian history. The research presented here was undertaken at the instigation of the Hudson's Bay Company as part of a larger initiative to ensure the Charter's continuing preservation. As part of this project, the Company, to its credit, set out to see the Charter's precise physical condition scientifically established. Being a conservator, the author's research was initially intended primarily to clarify the influences that the Charter's materials, fabrication, and (as described in the postscript) subsequent history might have had on its present condition.

Unexpectedly, close visual examination of the Charter and other evidence also shed light on the ways in which documents were produced within the English Chancery in 1670 and on some larger contextual influences affecting their form and manner of creation. The replacement of embellishments drawn and often painted by hand by repeatable printed decoration, the numerous scribal preliminaries undertaken on the parchment sheets by enterprising independent stationers in advance of purchase, and the pragmatic if somewhat

crude method of adapting pre-printed Latin sheets to an English text all clearly attest to a growing interest in the second half of the seventeenth century in increasing efficiency and cost effectiveness in document production – as does the rise of a class of trained clerks and development of the Court Hand. This was, at the same time, achieved within the restraints imposed in respecting the many time-honoured conventions relating to procedures, materials, and document formats. Other features, including the use of skippets and ingenious manner in which the document was laced and seal appended, testify to concerns over protecting the document's evidentiary integrity and value.

Postscript: The Charter's Subsequent History and Preservation

Until 1870 the Hudson's Bay Company had every reason to guard the Charter with care. It was the company's sole defence in the case of challenges to the privileges that the Charter granted. One indication of the value attached to the Charter was the precaution taken (though fairly common) of obtaining a duplicate of the sealed Charter when it was first issued. This formed an additional copy over and above the unsealed "archive" copy on the Chancery rolls. The Minutes of the General Court of 30 November 1670 record the Adventurers' concern about keeping the Charter safe.⁷³ After 1668 the Prince became Constable and Governor of Windsor Castle; for a while during this time the Charter may have been kept there in his apartments.⁷⁴

Nevertheless, despite company concerns over security, the company lost custody of the Charter at least twice. The early finances of the Company did not run smoothly. Sir Robert Clayton, Lord Mayor of London, advanced it £3,200 in June 1679 and – together with his partner, Alderman John Morris – retained the Charter as security. (At the same time, company minutes for 28 November 1679 record the decision that a copy of the Charter was to be kept constantly available for inspection in the Committee Room.)⁷⁵ Because Clayton refused to take his money back or to return the Charter until the year-long term of the loan was finished (and the loan had earned its full interest), the Company did not recover its Charter until May 1680. The Company then ordered the Charter deposited in a strong box.⁷⁶ Yet this was not the last time the Charter left the company. Once again in 1681 the Charter was used as security for a loan.⁷⁷

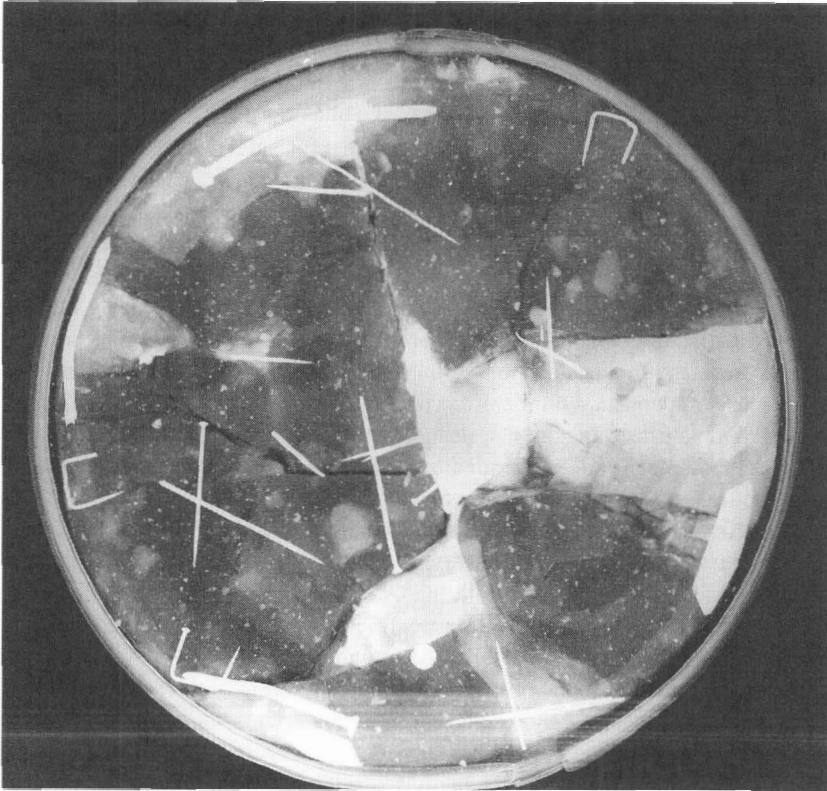
Certainly, in its early years the Charter found many homes. Committee meetings and general courts of the company were held at various places until 1682, when the company moved to Noble Street and leased Scrivener's Hall (which came to be called "Hudson's Bay House").⁷⁸ There it resided until new premises were obtained in Fenchurch Street in 1696.⁷⁹ This lease ended in 1794 and a transfer was made to premises on the south side of the same street.⁸⁰ The precise location of the Charter becomes, for a time, uncertain. Inventories of fixtures and other items, made at the latter premises in 1821 and

at Dr. Key's property at the same address in 1823, make it clear that by then a variety of iron chests were being used to store the Company's documents; however, it is not possible to identify which chest was used for the Charter's safe keeping.⁸¹

By 1920 the picture is clearer: evidence now indicates that the Charter was preserved in the principal Board Room of Hudson's Bay House, London.⁸² Although the Charter was sent into the country for safe storage for the duration of World War II and the seal, which was very fragile, was placed separately in a special container, by 1946 both were back at the Archives Department in the Company's London Office.⁸³ Until this time, the Charter had been stored loose; then a few months prior to the visit of Queen Elizabeth to Beaver House, it was placed in a special cabinet in the Governor's suite.⁸⁴ When the Charter was moved to Toronto, storage arrangements changed again. According to a description dating from the 1980s, the Charter was kept under glass at a constant temperature in the Hudson's Bay Company's boardroom.⁸⁵ The latest arrangements, designed in 1997, include the development of a special display module intended both to provide superior presentation and more secure long-term preservation for the document.⁸⁶

The Charter has not remained inviolate. The results of physical analyses undertaken at the Canadian Conservation Institute in 1997 have indicated beyond a doubt that in the past both the Charter and Great Seal have been the objects of conservation or restoration treatments.⁸⁷ Archival research has been less helpful in determining details. Although the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in Winnipeg today holds many records relating to the preservation of the archives collections, a thorough search of documentation both there and at the Public Record Office at Kew has turned up few records which specifically deal with the care of the Charter or its Great Seal.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, it is clear that sometime before the transfer to Canada, wormwood (a herb used in medicine and in the preparation of vermouth and absinthe) was applied to the last page to bring up the lettering. The wormwood likely functioned satisfactorily in the short term but eventually changed the treated words into the black, illegible blotches visible today.⁸⁹

The seal may also have been repaired at this time. Evidently to protect the Charter's legal integrity, this appears to have been done in a manner intended to indicate clearly that the seal had been broken – that is, that no deception had been attempted.⁹⁰ The X-radiograph of the seal made at the Canadian Conservation Institute (**Figure 5**) provides evidence for up to three campaigns of repair over a longer period of time – one made with long straight-headed pins, another where pins cross these first pins, and a third made with large nails.⁹¹ Finally, during the 1997 analysis of the Charter at the Canadian Conservation Institute, a modern, plastic coating of poly (vinyl acetate), applied as an earlier conservation measure, was detected on all five pages. The coating was mapped on the first page using non-sampling infra red microspectroscopy analysis. The

Figure Five

X-radiograph of the Great Seal of England (Photograph courtesy of the Canadian Conservation Institute)

results suggested a relationship between an uneven darkening discolouration and the thicker areas of the coating.⁹² The Charter had not survived unchanged.

Notes

- * The author also wishes to thank the kind assistance of the following persons: Ken Lockwood, Dorset Conservation Inc., Toronto; Gregory Young and David Hanington, Canadian Conservation Institute, Ottawa; Judith Beattie, Anne Morton, Debra Moore, and Ala Rekrut, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg; Mario Aleppo and Alan Alstin, Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey; Wojtech Jirat-Wasiutynski, Queen's University, Kingston; H.E.Paston-Bedingfield, The College of Arms, London; G.P. Dyer, Royal Mint, Llantrisant; Nancy Bell, Oxford Conservation Consortium, Oxford; Janet Cowan, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto; Shirlee Anne Smith, Winnipeg; Heinz Archive and Library,

National Portrait Gallery, London; British Library, London; Library of the Courtauld Institute of Art, London; Interlibrary Loan, Stauffer Library, Queen's University, Kingston; Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul. For Dr. Letty S. Burns, in loving memory.

- 1 E.E. Rich, ed., *Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1671–74* (Toronto, 1942), p. ix; written communication Anne Morton, Head, Research and Reference, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, to author, 10 May 1997.
- 2 One reason for this use of terminology is that prior to 1516 this type of royal grant had been made by charter.
- 3 This type of document is distinguished from *letters close*, which won their name because they could only be opened by breaking the seal or severing the long narrow tongue (to which the seal was appended) close to the tongue's root. This protected the document's contents from prying eyes. The document was folded into a small package and wrapped with the tongue; this was looped around the document and through itself so that the seal, when affixed, was situated very close to the loop. Access to the contents of the document without obvious tampering was impossible.
- 4 Letters patent covered grants and leases of lands, appointments to offices, licences, pardons, denizations of aliens and presentations of ecclesiastical benefices.
- 5 B. Gough, "The Adventurers of the England Trading Into Hudson's Bay: A Study of the Founding Members of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1665–1670," *Albion* 2, no. 1 (1970), pp. 35–66; Arthur S. Morton, *History of the Canadian West to 1870–71* in Lewis G. Thomas, ed. (Toronto, 1973), p. 57; Peter Newman, *The Great Company* (London, 1987), p. 114.
- 6 E.E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company: 1670–1870* 1 (Toronto, 1960), pp. 54–56.
- 7 The *Eaglet* was lent for purposes of the expedition from the royal fleet through the good offices of the king. Grace Lee Nute, "Radisson and Groselliers' Contribution to Geography," *Minnesota History* 16, no. 4 (1935), p. 419.
- 8 M.A. Everett, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series* (October 1668 to December 1669) (London, 1894), p. 139; Rich, *Minutes*, p. xxvi; Andrew Browning, ed., *English Historical Documents: 1660–1714* (London, 1953), p. 577.
- 9 Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company* 1, p. 52; Nute, "Radisson," p. 416.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 416; Glyndwr Williams, "The Granting of the Charter," *The Beaver* (1970), p. 7.
- 11 Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company* 1, p. 52.
- 12 *Calendar of State Papers*, p. 543; see also Rich, *Minutes*, p. xviii.
- 13 Gough, "The Adventurers," p. 37.
- 14 Morton, *History*, pp. 53–54.
- 15 Maurice Bond and David Beamish, *The Lord Chancellor* (London, 1977).
- 16 Sir H.C. Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes on the Use of the Great Seal of England* (London, 1926), p. 93.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 94.
- 18 Gough, "The Adventurers," p. 46, note 24; Morton, *History*, p. 60; Mood, "The London Background," p. 397; Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company* 1, p. 53; Hubert Hall, *Studies in English Official Historical Documents* (Cambridge, 1908), pp. 264–65. From medieval times a considerable number and variety of instruments were warranted by the Privy Council, a body whose powers, size, and membership varied according to the political situation. See Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 79.
- 19 Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 224.
- 20 Hall, *Studies*, p. 264.
- 21 Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 94.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 92.
- 23 Nute, "Radisson," p. 424, note 13: "This item in Sir Edward Dering's 'Privy Seal Docquet-Book' is listed in *The Manuscripts of J. Eliot Hodgkin, Esq., F.S.A., of Richmond, Surrey* 11 (Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Fifteenth Report*, Appendix, part 2 – London, 1897)."

- 24 Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 97.
- 25 Morton, *History*, p. 55.
- 26 Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company* 1, p. 53; Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 20.
- 27 This answers a query in a letter of 28 August 1941 from the Canadian Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company to the Governor and Committee, London, which notes "that the ending of the Royal Charter as copied for us by the Public Record Office in 1923, differs from that in our photostat of the Company's copy. In the Record Office copy the ending is as follows: 'In witnesse etcetera witness the King att Westminster, the second day of May & tre de privato sigillo.' There is no signature and the word 'Piggot' which occurs in the Company's copy is missing." Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Hudson's Bay Company Archives (hereafter PAM, HBCA), RG20/4/39. Because the copy was made from the enrolment, its text replicated that of the warrant not the complete final text of the Charter.
- 28 Lawes, *Chancery Lane*, p. 7.
- 29 Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 224.
- 30 Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, 1, p. 52.
- 31 Hall, *Studies*, p. 235.
- 32 In 1604 James I had proclaimed the form of the style to be, from then on, "King of Great Britaine" but the administrative officers concerned with preparing charters and other documents adhered to the antiquated formula until after the *Act of Union* in 1707. See Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, pp. 239–40.
- 33 Hall, *Studies*, p. 136.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 236.
- 35 Listed by name in Beckles Willson, *The Great Company: 1671–1871* (Toronto, 1900), pp. 46–47.
- 36 For the full text of the Charter see, for example, *The Royal Charter for Incorporating the Hudson's Bay Company: Granted by His Majesty Charles the Second in the Twenty-Second Year of His Reign* (London, 1865), pp. 5–24.
- 37 Catalogue of an Exhibition of Borough Charters on the Occasion of the Annual Conference 1959 (London, 1959), pp. 14–15.
- 38 Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 242.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 265. See Lionel Munby, *Reading Tudor and Stuart Handwriting* (Chichester, 1988), pp. 14–15, for precautions to observe in interpreting the regnal year.
- 40 Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 242.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 266.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 267. The beneficiaries' role in introducing embellishment is suggested by the irregular manner in which decorated charters occur. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
- 44 C.F. Bell and Mrs. R.L. Poole, "English Seventeenth-Century Portrait Drawings in Oxford Collections, II," *Walpole Society* XIV (1925–6), p. 45.
- 45 Sir Hilary Jenkinson, *A Guide to Seals in the Public Record Office* 2nd ed. (London, 1968), p. 22. The primary material of the charter is probably calfskin, the traditional raw skin from which parchment was prepared in England in the early modern period. Animal skins were dehaired by the action of a lime or enzyme bath followed by scraping. Scraping (*scudding*) also removed fat material from the flesh side of the skin. The skin was washed, neutralized and then stretched on a wooden frame, called a *herse*. While the skin dried and shrank under tension, the three-dimensional fiber network of the dermal layer of the skin reorganized into a two-dimensional laminal structure. At the same time, the surface of the tensioned skin was peeled (*punched*) using a round-edged knife to obtain a "silky smooth" surface on both sides of the skin. Punching also determined the opacity and flexibility of the sheet. Further shaving, after controlled drying, could enhance the receptiveness of the surface to writing and printing. To smooth the surface further, skins were polished with an abrasive powder such as pumice. It was

important for the Chancery to have sufficient parchment constantly on hand so that there would be no undue delay in issuing documents. The very few primary sources readily available suggest that professional scribes would not have made their own parchment. See Michael Gullick, "How Fast Did Scribes Write? The Evidence from "Romanesque Manuscripts," *Making the Medieval Book: Techniques of Production, Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of the Seminar in the History of the Book to 1500* (Oxford, 1995), p. 40. The manufacturing process required time and skill and it was undoubtedly carried out by professional parchmenters. See Michael Gullick, "From Parchment to Scribe: Some Observations on the Manufacture and Preparation of Medieval Parchment Based Upon a Review of the Literary Evidence," in Peter Rück, ed., *Pergament. Geschichte, Struktur, Restaurierung, Herstellung* (Sigmaringen, 1991), p. 145. See also Gullick, "How Fast," p. 40. Maxwell-Lyte has informed us that the accounts of the Keepers of the Hanaper record, year after year, show the purchase of large quantities of parchment, presumably to be used for documents. Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 265.

- 46 Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 270. There are few historical accounts of printing on parchment. In an article in *The Paper Conservator*, Penny Jenkins reviews what is known about fine art printing on parchment, particularly later, in the nineteenth century. Penny Jenkins, "Printing on Parchment or Vellum," *The Paper Conservator* 16 (1992), pp. 31–39. To produce the printed areas of the decoration, the engraved copper plates were inked up and applied under pressure to the parchment. Parchment is not an ideal printing surface because it is relatively abrasive and unpliant and will quickly wear down the delicate engraving on the copper plate. Parchment does not absorb ink readily so that there is a danger of over-inking the copper plate and blotting the ink during printing. To prevent this the inked-up plate can be printed first on paper; then, without re-inking, the residue on the plate is printed on the parchment.

We do not know whether Chancery documents were printed on damp or dry skins. Damp skins are more receptive to inks than dry skins; however, achieving the exact amount of dampness was both complex and critical. If the skin was allowed to become too damp or remained damp too long without restraint it cockled and buckled, becoming impossible to print on. Printing on dry parchment avoided problems resulting from the hygroscopic nature of parchment (meaning its tendency to absorb moisture) but resulted in ink which, once dry, was particularly vulnerable to abrasion.

Before printing, the parchment's surface was prepared by sanding with an abrasive powder, often pumice, to obtain as smooth a surface as possible. An uneven skin meant that pressure from the printing press would be unevenly received. Individual skins vary as well, with hardly any two being of exactly the same thickness. A pressman needed experience and good judgement to work successfully with this material.

The ink in the printed areas of the Charter was identified at the Canadian Conservation Institute as carbon black probably mixed into a boiled linseed oil binding medium, although the latter was not determined analytically. Gregory Young et al, *Analysis of the 'Royal Proclamation Charter of the Company of Adventurers, 2 May 1670,' Part I: Final Report* (Canadian Conservation Institute, Analytical Research Laboratory, Report ARL No. 3595) (Ottawa, 9 June 1997), p. 13. A carbon-based woodcut ink with a linseed oil base is still, today, the preferred ink for printing on parchment. This type of ink is dense with finely ground pigment and relatively stiff so that it prints sharply and cleanly; it is highly appropriate for the unabsorbent surface of parchment.

- 47 The crescent-shaped flourishes surrounding Charles' miniature were a typical feature of manuscript scribal decoration from the fifteenth century on, here translated into engraving. Interlace was a great favourite and survives in occasional examples to a very late date.

Within the first initials of certain embellished Crown grants, from Henry VIII to William IV, are found portraits of the reigning monarch and, occasionally, of queen consorts. Some of these portraits are richly illuminated and of high quality.

The original painted miniature of Charles, now at Goodwood in Sussex, is rectangular in

shape. It is signed with Cooper's monogram, "SC," and dated "/1665." Fairly large for a miniature (190 mm × 162 mm), it shows the king, wearing a lace jabot and the sash and order of the Garter, before a curtain and a landscape background. Portraits of Charles II in his Garter robes were popular because he was responsible for reviving the Garter ceremonial. An autograph oval variant (also in watercolour on parchment), signed in monogram "SC" and dated "/1665," is now in the Mauritshuis, The Hague. This work measures 165 mm × 134 mm. Scholars have argued about which version is the primary miniature, though this need not concern us here. A third version of this image is a rectangular miniature in graphite on parchment by David Paton after Cooper, now in the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch. See J.J. Foster, *Samuel Cooper and the English Miniature Painters of the XVII Century* (London, 1914–16), p. 80. It is rectangular in shape and signed "D.Paton fecit 1669/ S.Cooper invenit 1665." David Paton was a Scottish artist active between 1650 and 1700. It is possible that a black and white linear copy of Cooper's miniature, rather than a coloured one, was used as an intermediate stage from which to engrave the copper plate. The graphite miniature of Charles II in the collection of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives is less closely related to this group stylistically and is not the drawing from which the copper plate was engraved. PAM, HBCA, Picture Collection, Ref. No. P. 326, plumbago drawing on vellum of Charles II attributed to David Loggan, oval, 145 x 115 mm.

- 48 Lindsay Stainton and Christopher White, *Drawing in England from Hilliard to Hogarth* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 110.
- 49 David Piper, comp., *Catalogue of the Seventeenth-Century Portraits in the National Portrait Gallery: 1625–1714* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 68–69.
- 50 Erna Auerbach, *Tudor Artists: A Study of Painters in the Royal Service and of Partraitive on Illuminated Documents from the Accession of Henry VIII to the Death of Elizabeth I* (London, 1954), p. 29.
- 51 The language of the Royal Proclamation Charter is English. According to Munby, from the early fifteenth century English began to intrude into the texts of English documents, but Latin and French continued to appear in certain legal documents until the Act of 1731. Munby, *Recording Tudor*, p. 5. During the Commonwealth period of the mid-seventeenth century, English superceded Latin; but Latin was reintroduced at the Restoration. The Chancery assumed a knowledge of Latin on the part of all the King's ministers, from chief officers down to local bailiffs. Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 238. Usually the final instruments were issued in Latin even when based on warrants in another language. This resulted partly from the power of convention and prejudice and partly from inertia. The use of English in the text of the Royal Proclamation Charter must have been a specific request of the merchant adventurers.
- 52 F.J.A. Skeet, *Stuart Papers, Pictures, Medals and Books in the Collection of Miss Maria Widdrington* (Leeds, 1930), p. 6.
- 53 Mario Aleppo and Alan Alstin, Conservation Department, Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey, verbal communication, 29 May 1997. Early documents reveal that a pointed *stylus* alone was used to prick holes down either edge of the parchment sheets; a straight edge laid horizontally across the sheet from left-hand prick mark to corresponding right-hand prick mark would then be used to rule blind, lead point or graphite lines. By the fifteenth century ruling could be executed quickly by means of a rake or board. For more detail see J.P.G. Gumbert, "Ruling by Rake and Board," in P. Ganz, ed., *The Role of the Book in Medieval Culture I* (1986) pp. 41–54. The pigment in the red ink on the Charter, often called *medieval scarlet ink*, was identified in analysis as containing the ground mineral cinnabar or the ground synthetic vermillion. The binding medium was not identified. Young et al, *Analysis*, p. 13.
- 54 Payments for inscribing text were usually made to the scribe who prepared the first draft or drafts, to the Clerk of Chancery for writing them out in the appropriate form, to a law officer for making corrections, to another Clerk for recopying, and so on. Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical*

- Notes*, p. 265. The records of the Hudson's Bay Company indicate that the Charter and its duplicate cost 169 pounds 14 shillings and 6 pence. Rich, *Minutes*, Appendix C (Ledger Accounts), p. 171, 28 May 1670. This sum may or may not include all ancillary expenses incurred by the beneficiaries, such as the cost of obtaining legal advice or of presents to influential persons. Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 358.
- 55 The other major division of letter forms and writing styles is *text* or *book hand*, reserved for what became printed books. The separation of the two hands was completed by the fourteenth century, according to Hilary Jenkinson. See Jenkinson, *The Later Court Hands in England from the 15th to the 17th Century I* (New York, 1927), p. 12.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 57 The origins of italic or *Chancery hand*, a set hand used in the English Chancery, go back to Carolingian times. Charlemagne encouraged the monasteries to develop a clear upright hand, not unlike our traditional lower case Roman type. During the Dark Ages this was superseded by Gothic script. In the fourteenth century during the revival of learning, the Carolingian script was revived because of its clarity. "When the revived Carolingian script was written with the appropriate instrument, a square-edged pen held at about 45 degrees, ... a neat rapid hand, known as the humanistic cursive, evolved." This hand was adapted for both formal and informal uses. The Chancery hand was fully developed by the seventeenth century. See Jenkinson, *The Later Court*, p. 68ff, for further information on the Chancery hand.
- 58 A.S. Osley, *Handbook of the Chancery Hand in the Sixteenth Century* (London), pp. 20, 22. This style of majuscule writing resulted in part from technological change: improvements to the rolling mill allowed copper plates to be made which were suitable for having scribal texts engraved on their face, using a sharply pointed tool called a *burin*. Printed instructional writing books began to appear at the same time. Scribes were tempted to capture with the pen the exaggerated flourishes and the regular effect of letters formed by the engravers's burin. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.
- 59 Young et al, *Analysis*, pp. 12–13.
- 60 Bond and Beamish, *The Lord Chancellor*, pp. 20–22.
- 61 Another, older type of seal, used in other contexts, was the single-faced *en placard* or *applied* seal which was affixed to the face of the document. A.B. Tonnochy, *Catalogue of British Seal-Dies in the British Museum* (London, 1952), pp. xii–xxiii.
- 62 The matrix for the third seal was given to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal from 1667 to 1672, who had it melted down – the matrix having been made of the traditional silver – and formed into a cup engraved with a reproduction of the Bag and Royal Coat of Arms. Royal Mint, Llantrisant, The Earl of Bradford to the Deputy Master and Controller, The Royal Mint, 19 April 1973. (Brought to my attention by G.P. Dyer, Librarian and Curator, Royal Mint.) Forming a cancelled seal matrix into a chalice was a traditional practice. Tonnochy, *Catalogue*, p. xli.
- 63 Jenkinson, *Guide*, p. 24; Allan Wyon, *The Great Seals of England* (London, 1887), p. 105–106. More detail about the iconography may be found in Wyon, *The Great Seals of England*. The image on the obverse of the Royal Proclamation Charter is unusual, if not unique, in its orientation. The image is reoriented through ninety degrees so that the king gallops charterward rather than to the right, as is customary (Figure 4). Probably the two halves of the matrix were misaligned inadvertently during the process of forming this particular impression.
- 64 Young et al, *Analysis*, pp. 13–14; Don Robins, Alan Alstin, et al, "The Examination of Organic Components in Historical Non-Metallic Seals with C-13 FT-NMR Spectroscopy," *ICOM Committee for Conservation: Preprints of the Sydney Meeting* (1987), pp. 87–92.
- 65 Jenkinson, *Guide*, p. 13; John Dalton, *The Archbishopal and Deputed Seals of York 1114–1500* (York, 1992), p. 26; Young et al, *Analysis*, p. 14. Earlier technical writings on seals describe the colouring material of green seals as *verdigris*, a copper acetate pigment. It is possible that pigment nomenclature was used more loosely in earlier centuries. However, copper

- acetates do react with proteinaceous media or resins to form transparent copper-protein compounds or copper salts of resin acids. Hermann Kühn, "Verdigris and Copper Resinate: B. Copper Resinate (Transparent Copper Green)," in Ashok Roy, ed., *Artists' Pigments: A Handbook of Their History and Characteristics* 2nd ed. (New York and Oxford, 1993), p. 149. Government departments, including the Chancery, needed large supplies of wax and rosin on hand for sealing. Apparently much of the wax and rosin used in English seals came from Poland. Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, p. 309. Notably, seals were often removed from earlier documents so that the wax could be melted and reused; reheating could certainly cause the wax or wax-resin to darken in colour. Jenkinson, *Guide*, 41.
- 66 Jenkinson, *Guide*, p. 17.
 - 67 Young et al, *Analysis*, p. 15.
 - 68 Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes*, pp. 300–301. This technique for sealing, the "three-eyelet method of sealing," is one of several variations found, see Dalton, *The Archiepiscopal*, p. 26. The laces are usually threaded through the eyelets as follows: "a" passes through the right eyelet from the back, through the top eyelet from the front, then through the left eyelet from the back; "b" passes through the left eyelet from the back, the top eyelet from the front, and the right eyelet from the back.
 - 69 In addition, a thread of flax fibers was used to bind the end of the silk cord to form the tuft of threads at the lower end. To further secure the document, the plica is held in place at either side of the document by parchment thongs which are laced through holes in all sheets and knotted.
 - 70 The bottom half of an earlier skipket for the Charter's Great Seal was preserved under the red pyroxylin (bookcloth) covering of the skipket displayed until recently with the Charter in the Board Room in the Head Offices of the Hudson's Bay Company in Toronto. Under the red fabric a cardboard skipket made of chemical hardwood paper pulp, covered in black leather, was found. (Young et al, *Analysis*, p. 18.) The composition of the paper pulp places its earliest possible date in the later nineteenth century.
 - 71 Gough, "The Adventurers," p. 45, note 16.
 - 72 See Morton, *History*, pp. 825–52 for a summary of events leading up to the Deed of Surrender.
 - 73 Since the first business headquarters for the General Court of the Hudson's Bay Company were in the premises of Sir Robert Vyner, a goldsmith and banker in Lombard Street, it is probable that one copy of the Charter was initially kept there. Gough, "The Adventurers," p. 4.
 - 74 P.H. Hulton, "Prince Rupert: Artist and Patron of the Arts," *The Beaver* (Winter 1960), p. 9; Rich, *Minutes*, p. 13.
 - 75 Rich, *Minutes*, p. 13: PAM, MBCA, A.1/2, fo 2d (28 November 1679), "Rules and Orders for Governing the Company," No. 15.
 - 76 E.E. Rich, ed., *Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1679–1684, First Part, 1679–1682* (8) (London, 1945), p. xxix; HBRS (8), pp. 59–60, 66.
 - 77 HBRS (8), pp. 104, 106, 111; (9), pp. 120–121. The Committee was informed on 11 July 1683 of the return of "the Compa. pattent inclosed in a black box."
 - 78 Rich, *Minutes*, p. 1, note 1; Joan Craig, "300 Years of Records," *The Beaver* (Autumn 1970), p. 66, HBRS (9), p. 17, note 2.
 - 79 Craig, "300 Years," p. 66.
 - 80 *Ibid.*, p. 67.
 - 81 PAM, HBCA, A.37/43, fols. 15–18, Deeds relating to Hudson's Bay Company premises in England 1682–1913. Other documents are equally of little help. A ledger recording a *List of Papers in the Strong Room* (undated) notes the presence of two copies of the Company's Charter in "no.2 box, no.1 packet," one being a "Rolls Copy of the Comp^ys charter" and other being a "Notarial Copy" of the same, but no original. PAM, HBCA, A.64/32, p. 2 recto. The original Charter document was presumably still kept in an iron chest, but its whereabouts have

- not been recorded. Nor is the Charter among the records listed in the first catalogue of the Company's records, dated 1796, presumably because it was considered a different kind of record than post journals, ships logs, and so on, not because it was lost. Written communication, Anne Morton, 17 January 1997.
- 82 Sir William Schooling, *The Governor and Company of the Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay During Two Hundred and Fifty Years 1670–1920* (London, 1920), p. 6.
- 83 PAM, HBCA, RG20/4/39, J. Chadwick Brooks to the Canadian Committee, 3 October 1941, and J. Chadwick Brooks, Secretary, to C.B. White, 26 September 1946.
- 84 PAM, HBCA, RG20/4/30, Alice McGrath to S.A. Smith, 19 October 1975, and Smith to the Public Relations Officer (History), Winnipeg, 7 May 1974.
- 85 Newman, *The Great Company*, p. 120.
- 86 *The Study, Analysis and Preservation of the Royal Proclamation Charter for the Company of Adventurers*, "Final Report – Phase Three: The Development, Design and Fabrication of the Display Module," prepared for the Hudson's Bay Company by Dorset Conservation, Inc., Kenneth D. Lockwood, President, 28 June 1997.
- 87 Young et al, *Analysis*, p. 17.
- 88 Documentation relates mostly to cleaning and boxing prior to the transfer of the Charter from London to Toronto in 1974, PAM, HBCA, RG20/2/54, S.A. Smith to Barry Brown, 30 July 1974.
- 89 PAM, HCA, RG20/2/54, S.A. Smith to B. Leech, Royal Ontario Museum, 6 September 1975. The restoration use of wormwood is undocumented.
- 90 PAM, HBCA, RG20/2/54, letter of 30 July 1974.
- 91 Verbal communication, Alan Alstin, 29 May 1997.
- 92 Young et al, *Analysis*, p. 17.