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21L.463 Renaissance Literature
Fall 2008

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Johan Day to the Most Magnificent and Most Worthy Lord the Lord Grand Admiral

J ... Your Lordship will know that [Cabot] landed at only one spot of the mainland, near the place where land was first sighted, and they disembarked there with a crucifix and raised banners with the arms of the Holy Father and those of the King of England, my master; and they found tall trees of the kind masts are made, and other smaller trees, and the country is very rich in grass. In that particular spot, as I told your Lordship, they found a trail that went inland, they saw a site where a fire had been made, they saw manure of animals which they thought to be farm animals, and they saw a stick half a yard long pierced at both ends, carved and painted with brazil, and by such signs they believed the land to be inhabited. Since he was with but a few people, he did not dare advance inland beyond the shooting distance of a crossbow, and after taking in fresh water he returned to his ship. All along the coast they found many fish like those which in Iceland are dried in the open and sold in England and other countries, and these fish are called in English “stockfish;” and thus following the shore they saw two forms running on land one after the other, but they could not tell if they were human beings or animals; and it seemed to them that there were fields where they thought there might also be villages, and they saw a forest whose foliage looked beautiful. They left England toward the end of May, and must have been on the way 35 days before sighting land They spent about one month discovering the coast and from the above mentioned cape of the mainland which is nearest to Ireland, they returned to the coast of Europe in fifteen days It is considered certain that the cape of the said land was found and discovered in the past by the men from Bristol who found “Brasil” as your Lordship knows. It was called the Island of Brasil, and it is assumed and believed to be the mainland that the men from Bristol found....

I kiss your Lordship’s hands,

Johan Day

[ca. 1497-98]