

1730: RIVER OF THE WEST RISES NEAR LAKE SUPERIOR

[Letter of Beauharnois to the French Minister, dated Oct. 15, 1730, accompanying a map designed to endorse the project of La Vérendrye.¹ MS. in archives of Ministère des Colonies, Paris; press-mark, "Canada, Corresp. gén., vol. 52, c. 11, fol. 218."]

MONSEIGNEUR—I have the honor to Send you a Copy of a Map of the course of the river of the west, made by the savage Ochagac and others.

If the account of these savages is accurate that river must discharge above California. The Sieur Chaussegros has traced, from the Sieur de l'Isle's² map on a flying sheet, the course of that river reduced according to the map. He finds that the River discharges toward the Entrance discovered by Martin Daguiar.³ He has also reduced the Savages' map on which there are three Scales while his is drawn to one only and shows

¹Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, sieur de la Vérendrye, was the son of a Canadian colonist and Marie Boucher, sister of Perrière and Montbrun. He was born in 1685, and crossing to Europe served in the War of the Spanish Succession, and was severely wounded at Malplaquet. In 1726 he was again in New France, serving at a small post north of Lake Superior. There he met Indians, whose description of a great river to the west fired his zeal for exploration. He sent two memorials to the governor on this subject, the second of which is printed in Sulte, *Histoire des Canadiens Français* (Montreal, 1882), vi, pp. 145-150. In this he speaks of a map made by the savage Ochagac, to which Beauharnois alludes in this document, and which we here present in reduced facsimile. For the later history of Vérendrye's explorations, see Parkman, *Half Century of Conflict* (Boston, 1892), ch. 16; Winsor, *Mississippi Basin* (Boston, 1895), ch. 10.—Ed.

²Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry was a noted engineer, who built the walls of Quebec. The Delisles, Claude and Guillaume, father and son, were the most noted French cartographers of their day. In 1703 they issued their first map of New France, of which there were numerous re-issues, corrected to date.—Ed.

³Martin Aguilar was a Spanish discoverer, who explored the California coast early in the 17th century. An inlet toward the north (possibly the mouth of the Columbia) was called by his name in the maps of the period.—Ed.