

HENRY HUDSON

At the same time that Champ-lain was founding Quebec for France, Henry Hudson was making claims for Holland just to the south. Hudson had the unique distinction of claiming land in America for two different countries.

Henry Hudson was an Englishman who made four trips to the New World. Working first for his native England, he set sail in 1607 in his ship, the *Hopewell*, hoping to find the Northwest Passage by way of the North Pole. He failed. He made a second attempt in 1608 and failed again.



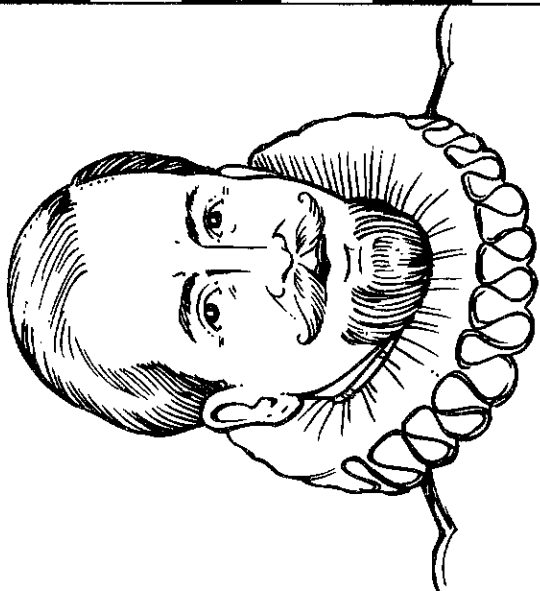
In 1609 Hudson was hired by the Dutch East India Company to again search for the Northwest Passage. He left Amsterdam, Holland, in April of that year and set sail for the northeast coast of America. After searching near Greenland for a way to the Pacific, he turned south to what is now the area of New York State.

In his ship, the *Half Moon*, Hudson sailed 140 miles up a river that we now know is 306 miles long. This river is the Hudson and is, of course, named for the explorer. Hudson sailed to a point where Albany is today. Here the Dutch would later build a fort. Because of Hudson's expedition, Holland laid claim to land in North America. In 1625 they founded New Amsterdam, which would become the city of New York after it was taken over by the English. All of the territory in America claimed by the Dutch came to be called New Netherlands.

The following year, Hudson was once again working for England. In April 1610 he set out on his fourth and last trip to the New World. Again, his goal was to find the Northwest Passage. This time he came upon a large body of water in Canada that would later be named for him. Hudson Bay was some 900 miles long and 500 miles wide. Because of this discovery, England claimed the rich lands around the bay.

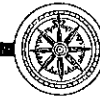
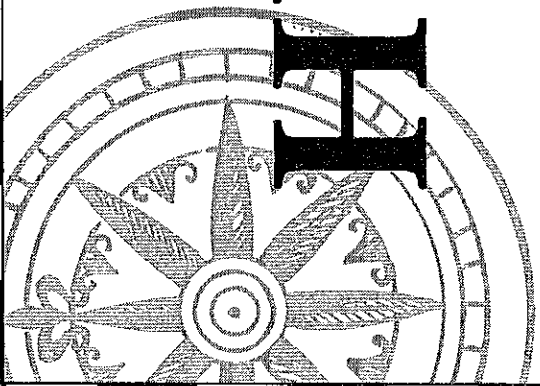
Henry Hudson was convinced that he had found the way to the Pacific. But after traveling south in his ship, the *Discovery*, the water turned to ice. The *Discovery* was ice-bound in James Bay, as the southern part of Hudson Bay is called. Hudson and his crew were forced to spend a terrible winter trapped on the ice. His young son was also among those stranded.

In June 1611 the ice melted, and Hudson planned to continue his search for the Pacific. But his crew, desiring to return to Europe, mutinied and took over the ship. What followed is one of the most shameful incidents in English history. Hudson, his son, and seven loyal and sick crewmen were put adrift in a small boat. They were given no food, water, or weapons. They were never heard from again.



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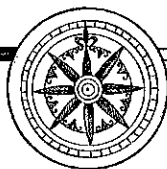


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FAST FACTS

- Henry Hudson's date of birth is unknown. Date estimates range from 1550 to 1575—quite a difference!
- Hudson had three sons. His son John sailed on all four of Hudson's voyages.
- Hudson sailed as far south as present-day North Carolina. He also explored Chesapeake Bay and Delaware Bay.
- When the *Discovery* survivors reached England, they were imprisoned.
- Hudson's wife, Katherine, persuaded the Dutch East India Company to send a rescue ship to find her husband and son. The ship never found a trace of the men.
- Katherine sought compensation from the Dutch East India Company for the loss of her husband and son. Company records called her "that troublesome and impatient woman."
- Katherine tried unsuccessfully to have a monument erected to honor Hudson.

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ABOUT HENRY HUDSON

By the 1600s, Europeans had found southern routes to the Indies. However, they had not found a northern route.

In 1602 the Dutch started a trading business called the Dutch East India Company. One of their goals was to search for a Northwest Passage to the Indies. The company found an experienced sailor named Henry Hudson to lead the search.

In 1609 Hudson set off from the Netherlands with a crew of 20. They sailed in a ship called the *Half Moon*. As they traveled north, the weather grew colder and colder. Hudson abandoned his search for the Northwest Passage, turned the ship around, and sailed southwest toward America.

The *Half Moon* sailed past Newfoundland and down the eastern coast of America. Where New York is today, Hudson found a harbor and a river that flowed into it. Thinking the river might be the Northwest Passage to the Pacific Ocean, Hudson sailed up it. When the river became too shallow, he realized it was not the passage. He turned the *Half Moon* around. While he sailed along this river, Hudson traded metal for furs from local Indian tribes. The Dutch soon set up



trading posts along this river, which was later named the Hudson River.

In 1610 England hired Hudson to find the Northwest Passage. Hudson sailed off to northern Canada in a ship called the *Discovery*. He was sure he had found the Northwest Passage when he discovered a 450-mile-long passageway. The passageway, later called Hudson Strait, led to a

large bay, now called Hudson Bay. Hudson kept searching the shores of the bay for a water route to the Pacific Ocean. When winter set in, the bay froze over. The *Discovery* froze in the ice. Hudson and his crew spent a hard winter in a log hut.

In June of 1611, when the weather warmed, Hudson set sail. The crew thought Hudson was sailing back home to England, but they soon realized he was sailing west to continue searching for the Northwest Passage. Wanting desperately to go home, the angry crew put Hudson, his son, and seven other loyal crewmen into a small boat with no oars, and left them in the bay. Hudson and the others in the boat were never heard from again.

Name: _____ Date: _____

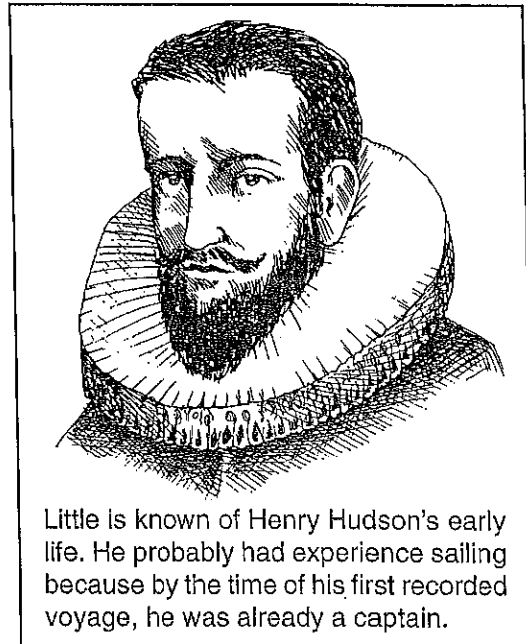
Meet Henry Hudson

Born: about 1570 in England
 Died: date unknown, possibly 1611

Henry Hudson was commissioned by the English Muscovy Company in 1607 to find a shortcut from England to "the islands of spicery." Some geographers theorized that since the days were longer the further north you went, once you got to the Arctic, the sun would be warm enough to melt the ice, and you would eventually reach open water.

As they sailed north, the magnetic needle of the compass was affected, leading crewmen to believe it was caused by an evil spell. They threatened to mutiny.

Hudson sailed to Greenland and north, searching for a passage through the Arctic Ocean to the Far East. Hudson failed in his first two attempts when he ran into ice floes, but he did sail farther north than any other previous explorer—about 577 nautical miles from the North Pole.



Little is known of Henry Hudson's early life. He probably had experience sailing because by the time of his first recorded voyage, he was already a captain.

1. Use a dictionary. What is an ice floe? _____

On his second voyage for the Muscovy Company in 1608, Hudson sailed through the Arctic waters north of Russia as far as Novaya Zemlya. Again, ice blocked the ship, and he had to return to England.

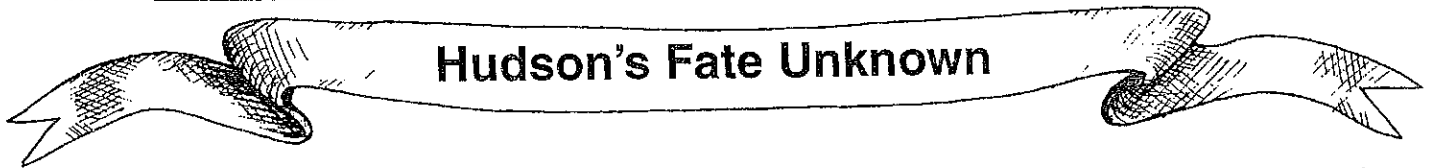
2. Find Novaya Zemlya on a world map. If it hadn't been for the ice floes, would it have been possible for Hudson to reach India if he had continued in that direction?

3. Would that route be longer or shorter than sailing around the southern tip of Africa to reach India?

4. Use a world map. If it weren't for the ice floes, would it be possible to sail from England, around Greenland, and on to India?

5. Would that route be longer or shorter than sailing around the southern tip of Africa to reach India?

Name: _____ Date: _____



Hudson's Fate Unknown

The Dutch East India Company of the Netherlands, which had a monopoly on trade with the Orient, also wanted to shorten the lengthy and expensive route around the southern tip of Africa. They hired Hudson in 1609, provided a ship, the *Halve Maan* (*Half Moon*), and a crew of Dutch and English sailors. Again Hudson tried sailing east, north of Norway, but soon turned his ship around and headed for the New World.

Hudson sailed to North America and explored the river later named for him, going as far as present-day Albany, New York, before the river became too shallow to continue. Because Hudson had been sent by a company from the Netherlands, the Dutch later laid claim to land in this area.

When he returned to England, he was arrested for sailing under another nation's flag. The *Half Moon* and its Dutch crew went home. Hudson was commanded to serve only England.

1. Even before Columbus, it was common for captains from one country to sail for a foreign monarch. Why do you think England finally decided not to allow any Englishmen to sail under another country's flag?

The following year, a group of wealthy London merchants sent Hudson on another voyage as captain of the *Discovery*, still in search of a northwest passage. Hudson sailed to Iceland, into the Hudson Strait, and on to Hudson Bay. Trapped by ice in James Bay, the crew was forced to winter there. Over the winter, the crew mutinied and set Hudson, his son, and seven others adrift in a small open boat in 1611. They were never seen again.

2. On another sheet of paper, write a fictional story about the fate of Henry Hudson and his companions who were set adrift in 1611.

Three years later, at the insistence of his wife, Katherine, the Dutch East Indies Company sent a ship to look for Hudson and his men, but no trace of them was ever found. Hudson and his wife had three sons: Richard, John, and Oliver. John was abandoned with his father. Several of Richard's children later migrated to the New World.

Check It Out:

Beyond the Sea of Ice: Voyages of Henry Hudson by Joan Elizabeth Goodman