

Name: _____

Henry Hudson

by Kelly Hashway



Before planes, people traveled by boat. And getting goods from one place to another took a long time, especially when ships had to sail around continents. In the early 1600s, European trading companies were looking for faster routes to sail to India and Asia.

In 1607, British explorer Henry Hudson led two failed voyages to find a northeast passage across the Arctic Ocean to Asia. He was searching for a route above the Arctic Circle, and his biggest problem was navigating around icebergs, which blocked his path. After failing twice, Hudson couldn't get a British company to fund his next voyage. He had to persuade the Dutch East India Company to back his third expedition.

Hudson left Amsterdam on April 4, 1609 aboard a ship named the *Half Moon*. Once again he was searching for a northern water passage, and just like on his previous trips, icebergs blocked his path and made his crew threaten mutiny. Hudson soon realized that a northeast passage across the Arctic would be nearly impossible. He decided to change directions and search for a water route to Asia through the New World instead. Hudson and the *Half Moon*'s crew headed southwest across the Atlantic Ocean to America.

After several months, Hudson landed on small islands near Newfoundland, Canada. He sailed the *Half Moon* along the coast in search of a northwest passage across the continent of North America. He arrived in the New York Harbor and sailed up a body of water that is now named the Hudson River. He thought the river might lead to the Pacific Ocean. But he was wrong, and he was forced to turn back to Europe. He had explored new lands, but did not find a route to Asia.

Hudson made one final attempt in 1610, on a new ship named *Discovery*. He sailed *Discovery* across the northern Atlantic, along the coast of Greenland, and into Canada. He discovered a large

body of water that became known as Hudson Bay. Unfortunately, the Hudson Bay did not lead to Asia. Furthermore, Hudson's luck had run out. Winter weather hit the region and *Discovery* had become trapped in thick ice. Hudson's crew became angry. They wanted to return to Europe, but Hudson wanted to continue searching for a passage to Asia. When spring came, the crew revolted and took control of the ship. They put Hudson, his son, and a few men who stayed loyal to Hudson on a small boat somewhere in Hudson Bay. The crew sailed *Discovery* back to Europe and Henry Hudson was never seen again.

Although Henry Hudson failed his attempts to find a northern water route to Asia, he is credited with being the first European to sail up the Hudson River. He also claimed new land for the Netherlands and had several areas named after him, including the Hudson River, Hudson Bay, the Henry Hudson Bridge, and Hudson County in New Jersey.

