

Henry Hudson: “The Greatest Explorer Who’s Dreams Never Came True”



Why the Fame?

Henry Hudson was a British explorer who sailed in search of an easy route from Europe to Asia

He sought the “Northwest Passage”, a theoretical water route that would provide easy access to the resource-rich continent of Asia

After four voyages, Hudson never found what he was looking for.....

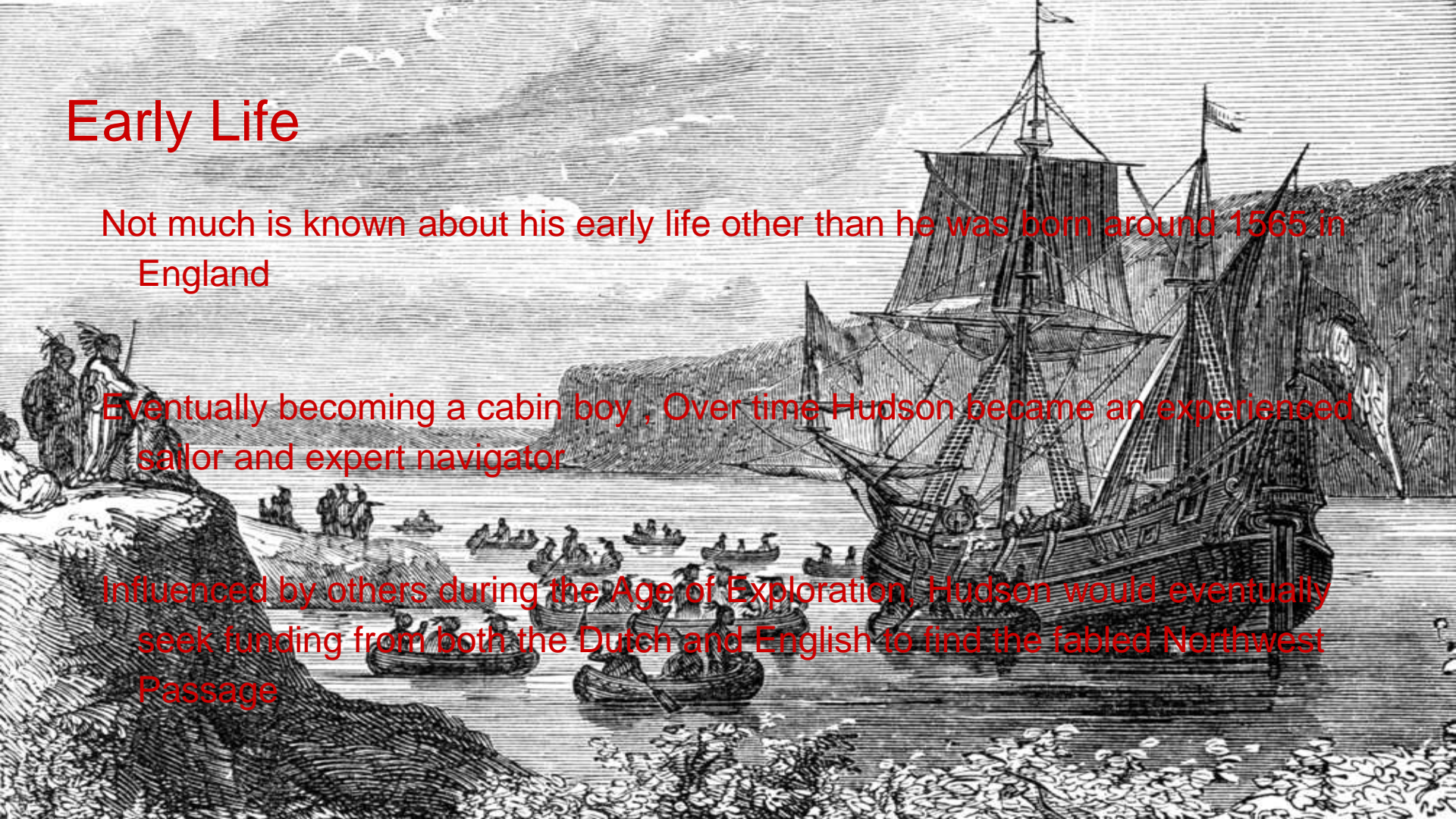
However his discoveries in present day New York and Canada would make it so he'd be the explorer with the most amount of water named after him!

Early Life

Not much is known about his early life other than he was born around 1565 in England

Eventually becoming a cabin boy , Over time Hudson became an experienced sailor and expert navigator

Influenced by others during the Age of Exploration, Hudson would eventually seek funding from both the Dutch and English to find the fabled Northwest Passage



1607 and 1608 Voyages

The British Muscovy company commissioned Hudson as the captain of the Hopewell,

He began seeking a passage to Asia above the North Pole (to no avail both voyages)

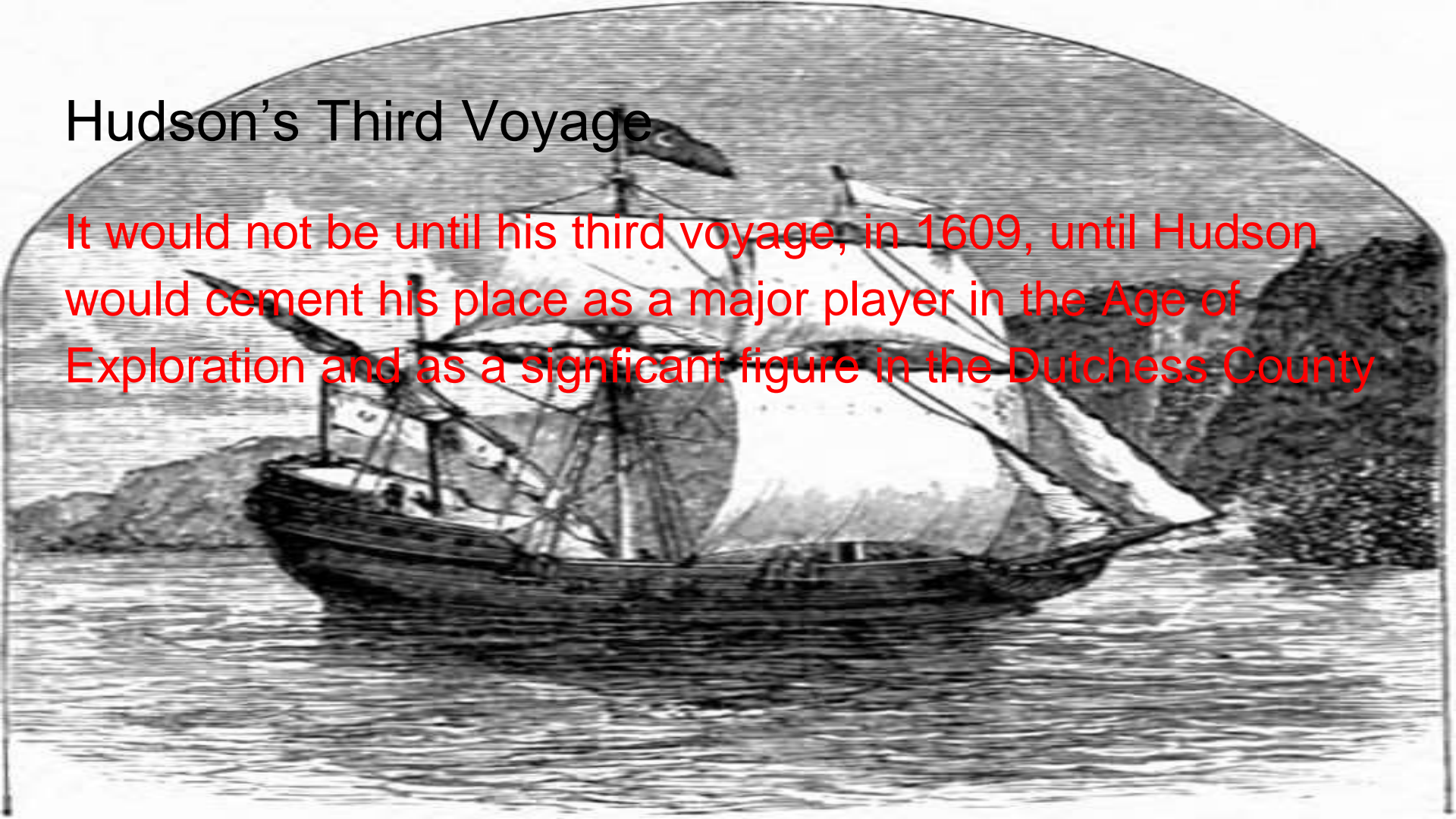
The 1607 voyage brought Hudson North near Greenland where he discovered numerous pods of whales (a worthwhile commercial industry back then)

In 1608 Hudson would sail again on the Hopewell reaching north of Russia. Unfortunately he did not make any major discoveries, leaving the British unwilling to explore north



Hudson's Third Voyage

It would not be until his third voyage, in 1609, until Hudson would cement his place as a major player in the Age of Exploration and as a significant figure in the Dutchess County



1609 Voyage

Without the support of any of his nation's financiers , Hudson would branch out to the Dutch(Britain's biggest trading rival!)

The Dutch East India Company wanted to meet Hudson paid for him to get to Holland. The Company, which had a monopoly on trade with the Orient, wanted to shorten the lengthy and expensive voyage around the Cape of Good Hope to the source of the spices...

Although met with some hesitation, the board granted Hudson the voyage and commissioned the famed Half-Moon ship and a crew.

Map of the Far North

It was around this time that Hudson met with Jodocus Hondius, an engraver. Hudson and him would work together to create the famous Map of the Far North, which would be used by sailors for centuries to come when exploring the Arctic Circle

(please note this is not the aforementioned map but another sample of Hondius' work)



The Voyage Begins

After a short stint travelling back to the northeast, and yet again discovering nothing significant, Hudson's men threatened mutiny. This brought Hudson to sail west

After months of sailing the came to the mouth of a river previously discovered by Italian explorer, Verrazano

Hudson, thinking it may provide a passage through the continent sailed up the mouth of the river about 150 miles on the river that would eventually bear his name when Europeans would settle the area...



Along the River...

While exploring the now named Hudson Valley Hudson had fairly friendly trading interactions with the natives who had dubbed the river “The River that Flows Both Ways”

There were a couple incident involving native attacks however Hudson found himself invited by a chief who broke his arrow to signify peace

Along the way Hudson discovered areas such as Schenectady and the strategic location that would eventually become the military stronghold of West Point

Stopping near where Albany is today, Hudson

West Point Today



Hudson and the Natives



The Fourth Voyage and Mutiny

Impressed by his discovery of the new region known as New Amsterdam, the Muscovy(British) Company gave Hudson another chance to find the passage to Asia

Seeking what was called the “Furious Overfall”, Hudson would set sail in a dangerous strait, later to be named after him. The icy paths off the coast of Greenland made the trip harrowing

450 miles in Hudson arrived in a Bay on the northeast coast of future Canada. The magnetic pull from the poles made compasses useless

After a winter of being stuck in Ice in the Hudson Bay, Hudson refused turn back when the summer brought a thaw. His crew then decided to mutiny and left him and 8 of his loyal companions in the Bay as they took the ship “The Discovery” back to England. Hudson was never heard from again.



Other Interesting Facts About Hudson

- It is thought that Hudson had 3 sons, one who was left when the Discovery Crew Left him in the Hudson Bay
- Before returning to Amsterdam from his 3rd voyage, Hudson went to his home in England and was arrested. Sailing for a different country back then was considered treason
- Unfortunately(although evidently) Hudson was never good and keeping control of his men. This is evidenced when several of his sailors raided Native American villages in New England during his Third Voyage