**THE DREAM OF PRINCE HENRY**

Prince Henry's friend looked at him in surprise. “Do you mean to tell me you are giving up all that you have for well, for a dream?”

“Call it that if you want to,” the prince replied. “Yes, that is what I intend to do.”

His friend sputtered, “But, you are the son of the king of Portugal. You have just led an Army in North Africa. Your victories, your bravery, news about them has spread to other countries of Europe. You can have a full life of excitement at the king's court, you can have riches and power.”

“I know. I know.” Prince Henry said.

“You are hardly 20, the friend went on. How can you be sure of what you want? When you are away from the life of the Royal Court, you will change your mind. You will stop following this dream and come back.”

What was this dream of Prince Henry's and would it ever come true?

A few years before this time, young Prince Henry had led an army from Portugal against the Muslims in Africa. While there, Henry was caught up in the excitement of the strange land. He tried to find out all he could about Africa. From Muslim soldiers, he learned many new things and heard many exciting stories. They told of an ocean beyond Africa on which ships could sail to lands of the East.

One story was about the finest Sailors of ancient times: The Phoenicians. The story told how the Phoenicians had once traveled south from the holy land around Africa and North to the Mediterranean Sea again. Was the story true? No one knew for sure.

Since the time of the Phoenicians many ships at try to sail around Africa, but none had come back.

After Prince Henry returned from Africa to Portugal, he thought about the stories the Muslims had told. He had a reason... Portugal wanted to trade with the East.

When men of Henry's day spoke of trading for the riches of the East, they thought only of sailing on the Mediterranean Sea

The Mediterranean was a calm sea, and not too large. Ships from Venice and Genoa in Italy traded with the Muslim cities at the Eastern end of the Mediterranean.

Portugal did not face the Mediterranean instead, it faced the Atlantic Ocean, called “The Sea of Darkness.” Men spoke in frightened tones of sailing on the Atlantic.

They told strange stories of

* huge storms with terrible winds,
* ocean boiling under a hot tropical sun,
* serpents and other monsters giving out poisonous mists,
* ships going too far and falling off the edge of the sea.

How could anyone sail the sea of darkness and return home safely?

But how else could Portugal ever hope to share in the rich trade with the East? Unless, and this is what Henry dreamed about, a new route to the east could be found. He believed that ships could sail Southward around Africa and then to the east. Such a route would let Portugal trade with the east. Europe would no longer have to depend on the Muslims for trade. Christianity, too, could be spread to the new lands. Scientists would learn more about the world. All of these were apart of Henry's dream. Prince and moved from his father's Court to a lonely Harbor on the Atlantic coast. There, he studied and planned. He gathered all the wise man he could. Astronomers mathematicians and mapmakers. They knew how to use stars and new inventions to guide ships. They could teach the ship captains to find their way on the Open Sea. There were other problems to solve. The small ships that sailed the Mediterranean would be smashed by the storms of the Atlantic.

Prince Henry helped to make a new kind of ship, the caravel. These caravels could sail far out to sea and catch the winds for look voyages, yet they returned safely.

In 1421, Prince Henry began to send out ships to find a way around Africa. The brave sailors he sent out did not believe the stories about the Sea of Darkness. Farther and farther along the coast of Africa they sailed. They discovered the Azores islands and the Cape Verde Islands.

Each Captain return to tell Henry of new discoveries and facts about the route. For almost 40 years Prince Henry gathered these facts from the captain's.

In 1460 he died, still not knowing whether a new route to the east could be found. Only time will tell whether Prince Henry stream could come true



**The Dream of Prince Henry**

1. Prince Henry was the son of the King of what country?

2. How did Prince Henry learn about Africa?

3. According to legend, which ancient civilization supposedly made the voyage around

 Africa?

4. What did sailors call the Atlantic ocean?

5. What fears did they have about that ocean?

 List several

6. How did Henry prepare his country to make the voyage around Africa?

 List several things he did

7.  What is a "caravel?"

8.  What discoveries did Portugal make on these voyages?

9. What happened to Prince Henry?  Did he succeed in finding his "dream?"