**European Exploration**

**Narrator**: Welcome to our show. Come with us on a journey back in time. Let’s go back 20,000 years ago when the world was quite different. During the Ice Age, there was a Land Bridge that connected Asia with North America. The first people to arrive to North America were Stone Age Hunters who crossed over this bridge.

**Hunter #1**: Boy, it sure is cold out here.
**Hunter #2**: I’m hungry.
**Hunter #3**: Do you see any animals out there for us to hunt?

(A mammoth walks by.)

**Hunter #1**: Look! There’s an animal.
**Hunter#2**: Hey, our dinner is getting away!
**Hunter#3**: Let’s follow it!

**Narrator**: For many years people crossed over this land bridge and migrated throughout the New World. They went down to what today is known as North America, Central America, and South America. During this time, Earth’s climate was changing. It was getting warmer and the ice was melting. People could no longer get to the New World by foot. The people who were left in the New World were called Native Americans. Now we begin our look at the early explorers who sailed to this New World.

**Leif Ericsson**: Hello, I am Leif Ericsson. The year is 1,000. I am a Viking and captain of my ship.

**Crew**: Land ho! Land ho!

**Leaf Ericsson**: We have discovered a new land!

**Narrator:** The Vikings had actually landed on an island off the coast of Canada. Today we call it Newfoundland.

**Leaf Ericsson**: Let us try and set up our own colony here.

**Native**: Why do you try and take over our land?

**Narrator**: The Vikings had a difficult time at their new land. They sometimes fought with the native people and their life was harsh and isolated. The Vikings finally gave up and left.

**Leaf Ericsson**: We’re outta here!

**Narrator**: For the next 500 years, no new explorers seem to have come to the Americas. Few people in Europe knew about the Viking discoveries in North America. There was poor communication between distant places. During this time, Europeans had little interest in taking long sea voyages to faraway lands. They were too busy at home, fighting wars among themselves, battling disease, and traveling to the Middle East. The Silk Road provided Europeans to trade goods, however it was very expensive. These goods were silk from China and spices from India. When the Ottomans blocked the Silk Road in 1453, Europeans decided to explore water routes to Asia.

**Prince Henry the Navigator:** Hello I’m Prince Henry the Navigator and I established a school for the study of the arts of navigation, mapmaking, and shipbuilding. During 1444-1446, I intensified the exploration of the African coast which eventually lead to Portugal’s involvement in the African slave trade. Although I never sailed on the expeditions, the voyages that I helped paid for helped launch Portugal into the front of the race to find a sea route to India.

**Dias**: Hello, I am Dias. The year is 1488. I am looking for a sea route to India. I have sailed from Europe to the tip of Africa.

**Narrator#7**: Today this is known as the Cape of Good Hope. Other explorers followed his path.

**Vasco da Gama**: Hello, I am Vasco da Gama. Starting in 1497, I sailed to the tip of Africa where Dias had reached and continued on to sail to India. I was the first explorer to make it from Portugal to India in 1498.

**Christopher Columbus**: Hello, I am Christopher Columbus. I believe there must be an easier way to sail to China and India. Instead of sailing around Africa, I believe that if I sail west across the Atlantic Ocean, I will reach India. But I need money for my voyage from Queen Isabella of Spain.

**Narrator#8**: After many years, the Queen finally agreed to help Columbus. In 1492, Christopher Columbus set sail with his three ships, the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria across the Atlantic Ocean.

**Crew**: Land Ho!

**Christopher Columbus**: At last I reached India. Look! Here come some Indians.

**Narrator#8**: Well, actually, Columbus did not reach India. He actually was in the Bahamas and the people he met were Native Americans.

**Native**: Here is some of our food. We call this maize.

**Christopher Columbus**: This food is delicious. I must write to Queen Isabella and tell her all about my discoveries. I have made detailed maps of the Caribbean and Central America that will help us with further explorations that will lead to great wealth!

**Narrator:**  With the detailed maps of the Caribbean and Central America, Spanish conquistadors (Latin American soldiers) were able to conquer two major civilizations, the Aztecs and the Incas. Hernan Cortez conquered the Aztecs in 1519 and Francisco Pizarro conquered the Inca’s in 1532.

**John Cabot**: Hello, I am John Cabot and I was hired by the British to explore the New World. I made two voyages in 1496 and 1497. I claimed part of Canada for the British and helped make Britain a strong force in North America.

**Vasco de Balboa**: Hello, I am Vasco de Balboa. The year is 1513. Our crew has set sail from Europe in search of new land.

**Crew**: Land ho!

**Vasco de Balboa**: At last, we have reached land. Come on crew; let us explore this new land.

**Narrator**: Balboa and his crew landed in Panama.

**Crew**: Oh, it is difficult going through these jungles and climbing these mountains!

**Vasco de Balboa**: Look! Look crew! An ocean!

**Narrator**: Balboa was the first European to see the Pacific Ocean from the American Shore.

**Ferdinand Magellan**: Hello, I am Ferdinand Magellan. The year is 1519. I believe that if I sail west across the Atlantic and then go down the coast of South America, I will find a sea passage to India.

**Narrator**: Ferdinand Magellan had reached the tip of South America and reached the New Ocean, which he called the Pacific. Today, this is known as the Strait of Magellan. Magellan continued to sail on having no idea how large the Pacific Ocean was. Magellan sailed as far as the Philippine islands. Unfortunately Magellan was killed in a battle between two native tribes.

**Del Cano**: Hello, I am Del Cano. My captain, Ferdinand Magellan, was just killed. My crew and I are determined to complete our journey across the Pacific…Ah after several more months, we did it! We have reached Spain. We have completed the first round-the-world journey!

**Jacques Cartier:** In 1541, I, Jacques Cartier sailed the St. Lawrence Seaway in the name of France. I hoped that this river would reach Asia, however I was not correct.

**Narrator**: Many more European explorers sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World to claim new land, wealth through gold and spices, spread of Christianity through missionaries, and to gain insight into cultures from other countries. They did not care that these already belonged to the Native Americans. Unfortunately, many Native Americans lost their freedom and could not fight the powerful weapons the Europeans had brought with them. The Europeans had also brought with them diseases that killed many of the natives. Although the European explorers were brave sailors, the people and land of the Americas would be forever changed.

**The End**