



## History 101

### Henry Hudson

Henry Hudson (c. 1565 – 1611) was an English sea explorer and navigator during the early 17th century, best known for his explorations of present-day Canada and parts of the northeastern United States.

In 1607 and 1608, Hudson made two attempts on behalf of English merchants to find a rumored Northeast Passage to Cathay (China) via a route above the Arctic Circle. In 1609, he landed in North America and explored the region around the modern New York metropolitan area, looking for a Northwest Passage to Asia on behalf of the Dutch East India Company. He sailed up the Hudson River, which was later named for him, and thereby laid the foundation for Dutch colonization of the region.

Hudson discovered the Hudson Strait and the immense Hudson Bay on his final expedition, while still searching for the Northwest Passage. In 1611, after wintering on the shore of James Bay, Hudson wanted to press on to the west, but most of his crew mutinied. The mutineers cast Hudson, his son, and seven others adrift; the Hudsons and their companions were never seen again.

Besides being the namesake of numerous geographical features, Hudson is also the namesake of the Hudson's Bay Company that explored and traded in the vast Hudson Bay watershed in the following centuries.

The gulf or bay discovered by Hudson is twice the size of the Baltic Sea, and its many large estuaries afford access to otherwise landlocked parts of Western Canada and the Arctic. This allowed the Hudson's Bay Company to exploit a lucrative fur trade along its shores for more than two centuries, growing powerful enough to influence the history and present international boundaries of Western North America. Hudson Strait became the entrance to the Arctic for all ships engaged in the historic search for the Northwest Passage from the Atlantic side (though modern voyages take more northerly routes).

Along with Hudson Bay, many other topographical features and landmarks are named for Hudson. The Hudson River in New York and New Jersey is named after him, as are Hudson County, New Jersey, the Henry Hudson Bridge, the Henry Hudson Parkway, and the town of Hudson, New York.

Hudson and his marooned crewmates appear as mythic characters in the famous story "Rip Van Winkle" by Washington Irving. He also appears in the time-travel novel *Torn* by Margaret Peterson Haddix. [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\\_Hudson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Hudson)]

