

INTRODUCTION

Bartolomeu Dias (Bartholomeu Dias, Bartholomew Diaz) was born in Portugal, probably in 1450.

Bartolomeu Dias and his crew were the first Europeans to sail around the southern tip of Africa. His discovery, which he described to his king in the presence of Christopher Columbus, opened up the sea route around Africa to India and the rest of Asia.

On his return, Bartolomeu Dias could have been considered the world's greatest discoverer. However, his discoveries did not cease there. Bartolomeu Dias was to take part in more important voyages of discovery than any other explorer.

Prior to his voyage to the southern tip of Africa, Bartolomeu Dias participated in voyages and discoveries along the west coast of Africa with Diogo da Azambuja.

After Christopher Columbus made voyages of discovery, Bartolomeu Dias organised and accompanied Vasco da Gama's fleet on its voyage to India. The voyage was only possible because of the earlier discovery of Bartolomeu Dias.

Because of the voyages of Bartolomeu Dias and Vasco da Gama, Portugal became mistress of the lucrative sea-route around Africa to India.

Bartolomeu Dias finally captained a ship in the fleet of Pedro Cabral, which was one of the largest fleets that had ever sailed the Atlantic. It included the discovery of Brazil as one of its achievements. It was the longest voyage in history up to that time, and one of the greatest and most influential voyages of discovery ever made.

On passing the site of his discovery of the southern route around Africa Bartolomeu Dias had taken "leave of it as from a beloved son whom he never expected to see again".

However, Bartolomeu Dias did return to the site of his greatest discovery, which unfortunately became the site of his greatest tragedy.

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CHAPTER 1

THE EARLY LIFE OF BARTOLOMEU DIAS

Bartolomeu Dias is thought to have been born in Portugal in around 1450. Several Portuguese historians claim that he was a relative or descendant of João Dias who sailed around Cape Bojador in 1434, and of Dinis Dias who is said to have discovered the Cape Verde Islands in 1445. He was married and had two children : Simão Dias de Novais and António Dias de Novais. However, little is known for certain of the early life of Bartolomeu Dias.

There can be no doubt that Bartolomeu Dias was a seaman of considerable experience. It may have been our Bartolomeu Dias whom King João, in 1478, when still crown-prince, in consideration of 12,000 reis expended in the purchase of a slave, exonerated from payment of the usual royalty on the ivory bought on the Guinea coasts.

When Prince João, on August 26th 1481, ascended the throne of his father Afonso V to become King João II of Portugal, he found the royal treasury empty, and his ambitious nobles, jealous of their feudal privileges, ever ready to defy the authority of their king. However, King João II was strong and energetic where his father had been weak and vacillating, and cautious, where he had been rash and regardless of consequences. Wise measures of administration again filled the royal coffers, and a strong hand crushed the nascent conspiracy of the nobles.

He entered with zeal into the views of his predecessors and of his uncle Prince Henry. Before he came to the throne, a part of his revenues had been derived from the African trade, and the fisheries connected therewith, so that he had every inducement to prosecute its extension. With this view he not only ordered the completion of the Fort of Arguin, which had been commenced years before, but resolved on the construction of another, on a larger scale, at São Jorge da Mina.

The gold traffic had at first been carried on at a place called Saama, discovered in 1472, by João de Santarem and Pedro do Escover, in the service of Fernão Gomez, but São Jorge da Mina was now selected for

CHAPTER 2

THE FIRST VOYAGE OF DIOGO CÃO (1482-1484)

When King João had attended to what he conceived to be his more immediate duty as a king and ruler, he took up the long neglected work of his uncle Henry, for he was both "a good Catholic, anxious for the propagation of the faith, and a man of an inquiring spirit, desirous of investigating the secrets of nature".

Diogo Cão, whom the king selected to initiate this work of exploration, was a "man of the people". Genealogists have provided him with a noble pedigree, but he was in truth the descendant of one Pedro Affonso Cão, or Cam, who, in the days of King Diniz (1279-1324), had been one of the bailiffs of Villa Real in Traz os Montes, and of his wife, Briolanja da Nobrega. In the patent of nobility of 1484, by which the king "separated him from the common herd", the past services of the recipient of the honour are referred to, and also those of his valiant father, Badalhouse, and of his grandfather, Gonçalo Cão, who may have fought in the famous battle of Aljubarrota in 1385, when the Castillian pretender was routed, and the king, duly elected by the Cortes, got his own. Among the services rendered by Diogo Cão himself may be instanced the capture of three Spanish vessels on the Guinea coast in 1480.

Bartolomeu Dias may have been given the command of one of the vessels. However, none of the names of any of the officers have been placed on record. When we turn to ancient maps, we meet with a Rio do Infante, a Golfo de Alvaro Martins, a Cabo de Pero Dias, a Rio de Fernão Vaz, an Angra de João de Lisboa, an Angra de Ruy Pires, and a Serra de Corte Real. There can be no reasonable doubt that the names attached to these bays, capes, or rivers are those of persons who were with one or more of the expeditions engaged in the discovery of these coasts.

Of João Infante, Alvaro Martins, and Pero Dias, we know that they were part of the crew of Bartolomeu Dias, and may have previously been with Diogo Cão. João de Lisboa won great distinction in the

CHAPTER 3

THE SECOND VOYAGE OF DIOGO CÃO (1485-1486)

The materials for writing a history of Diogo Cão's second expedition are even less complete than those available for the first. There are the *padrão* of Cape Cross with its inscription, an important legend on the chart of Martellus Germanus, and the narrative of Martin Behaim, who claims to have commanded one of the vessels. Apart from these, we are dependent upon the accounts given by Ruy de Pina and João de Barros, for none of the later historians seem to have had access to original sources.

The narrative of Behaim, as gathered from the legends on his famous globe, and a paragraph in Schedel's "Liber Chronicorum", printed at Nürnberg in 1493, during Behaim's presence in that town, is written as follows :

"In 1484 King João sent two vessels to the south, one being commanded by D. Cão, the other by Martin Behaim. They carried, in addition to goods for barter, eighteen horses with splendid harness, intended as presents for Moorish (i.e. Negro) kings. They traded with the Jolof and on the Gambia, visited King Furfur's land [Benin], 1200 German leagues from Lisbon, where the Portugal pepper grows, and came to a country where they found cinnamon. They also discovered Prince's island, S.Thomé and Martin [Behaim's!] islands (i.e. Annobom). On January 18 they set up a column on Monte Negro (Cão's third pillar in 15° 40'). Having sailed 2300 leagues, they set up another pillar on Cape Ledo. They were again with their king after an absence of 19 (16 or 26) months, having lost many men from the heat, and bringing pepper, grains of paradise, and many other things in proof of the discoveries they had made."

We have elsewhere considered the trustworthiness of this account of Diogo Cão's expedition, and arrived at the opinion that Behaim did not accompany Diogo Cão, but may have been on the Guinea coast with an expedition such as that of João Affonso d'Aveiro.

CHAPTER 4

THE VOYAGE OF BARTOLOMEU DIAS (1487-1488)

No sooner had Diogo Cão's vessels returned to the River Tagus than King João, whose curiosity had been excited by the reports about the supposed Prester John, brought home by d'Aveiro, determined to fit out another expedition to go in quest of him by doubling Africa. Friar Antonio of Lisbon and Pero of Montaroyo had already been dispatched on the same errand by way of Jerusalem and Egypt.

The command of this expedition was conferred upon Bartolomeu Dias de Novaes, a cavalier of the king's household, who, if we may trust Fernão Lopez de Castanheda, held at the time the appointment of superintendent of the royal warehouses (*almoxarife dos amazons*).

In writing the accounts of the voyages of Diogo Cão and Bartolomeu Dias, we have largely profited by a few contemporary maps. These maps, unfortunately, are on a very small scale. This compelled their compilers to confine themselves to a selection among the place-names that they found upon the sailing charts at their disposal, and this selection may not in all cases have been a judicious one.

The appointment of Bartolomeu Dias seems to have been made in October 1486. For on 10th October 1486, King João, "in consideration of services that he hoped to receive," conferred upon Bartolomeu Dias, the "patron" of the *S. Christovão*, a royal vessel, an annuity of 6000 reis. We shall see presently that ten months were allowed to elapse before the expedition actually left the Tagus.

The account that João de Barros has transmitted to us of the remarkable expedition that resulted in the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope is fragmentary, and on some points undoubtedly erroneous.

Until now, no official report of the expedition has been discovered. However, there are a few incidental references to it that enable us to amplify, and in some measure to correct, the version put forward by the great Portuguese historian.

CHAPTER 5

THE FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS (1492-1493)

On his return, Bartolomeu Dias could have been considered the world's greatest discoverer. However, that title was soon to be taken away from him by Christopher Columbus, who was present when Bartolomeu Dias described his voyage of discovery to the King of Portugal.

Christopher Columbus took a particular interest in Bartolomeu Dias' discovery of the sea route to the east. Columbus owned one of the few remaining references to the voyage, which is in his own handwriting.

Despite his voyages of discovery, Bartolomeu Dias took no part in the voyages of Christopher Columbus. Bartolomeu Dias was to wait his turn before facilitating further discoveries.

Whilst Bartolomeu Dias had been pioneering an eastern sea route to Asia, Christopher Columbus had been trying to arrange a voyage to Asia via a western sea route.

Although Christopher Columbus had been invited by the King of Portugal to Lisbon in 1488, in time to see the return of Bartolomeu Dias, his discussions with the Portuguese government did not facilitate his voyage to Asia via a western sea route. So Christopher Columbus returned to Spain.

Unable throughout 1490 to get a hearing at the Spanish court, Christopher Columbus was in 1491 again referred to a junta, presided over by Cardinal Mendoza. However, this junta, to Columbus' dismay, once more rejected his proposals. The Spanish sovereigns merely promised him that when the Granada war was over, they would reconsider what he had laid before them.

Columbus was now in despair. He at once betook himself to Huelva, a little maritime town in Andalusia, north-west of Cadiz, with the intention of taking ship for France. He halted, however, at the monastery of La Rabida, near Huelva, and still nearer Palos, where he

CHAPTER 6

THE SECOND VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS (1493-1496)

After several delays the fleet weighed anchor on the 24th September 1493 and steered westwards. It consisted of three great carracks (galleons) and fourteen caravels (light frigates), having on board over 1500 men, besides the animals and materials necessary for colonisation.

Twelve missionaries accompanied the expedition, under the orders of Bernardo Buil or Boil, a Benedictine. Columbus had already been directed on 29th May 1493 to endeavour by all means in his power to Christianise the inhabitants of the islands, to make them presents, and to “honour them much”. All under him were commanded to treat them “well and lovingly,” under pain of severe punishment.

On 13th October the ships, which had put in at the Canaries, left Ferro, and on Sunday 3rd November, after a single storm, “by the goodness of God and the wise management of the admiral” an island was sighted to the west that was named Dominica. Northwards from this the isles of Marigalante and Guadalupe were next discovered and named, while on the north-western course to La Navidad those of Montserrat, Antigua, San Martin, Santa Cruz and the Virgin Islands were sighted, and the island now called Puerto Rico was touched at, hurriedly explored, and named San Juan Bautista.

On the 22nd November Columbus came in sight of Hispaniola, and sailing westward to La Navidad, found the fort burned and the colony dispersed. He decided on building a second fort. Coasting onwards east of Monte Cristi, he pitched on a spot where he founded the city of Isabella.

The climate proved unhealthy. The colonists were greedy of gold, impatient of control, proud, ignorant and mutinous. Columbus, whose inclination drew him westward, was doubtless glad to escape the worry and anxiety of his post, and to avail himself of the instructions of his sovereigns as to further discoveries. On the 2nd of February 1494 he

CHAPTER 7

THE VOYAGE OF VASCO DA GAMA

Bartolomeu Dias had found the sea-gates of the Orient. It remained for some mariner of equal daring to force them open. Wars with Castile and the death of King João II had delayed this venture for a decade, but King Manoel, who succeeded to the throne in 1495, did not long hesitate to resume the historic mission bequeathed to his country by Prince Henry the Navigator. This had now come to mean the search for a sea route to India.

The twofold purpose of the quest was explained with admirable brevity by the first Portuguese sailor who disembarked on Indian soil. "Christians and spices", he replied, when asked what had brought him and his comrades so far.

All those who still cherished the crusading ideals of a bygone age dreamed of an alliance with Prester John's empire and with the other Catholic powers that were believed to exist on the other side of the world. This accomplished, the chivalry of Portugal would lead the united hosts of European and Asiatic Christendom in a campaign for the destruction of Muhammadanism. Others hoped to divert for their own profit the trade in Indian wares, and especially in spices, which had hitherto filled the treasuries of Genoa, Venice and Ragusa.

Shortly after his accession, King Manoel summoned to his court at Estremoz the son of a certain Estevão da Gama, who had been chosen to lead the way to India but had died while the preparations for the voyage were still incomplete. His third son Vasco was appointed in his stead to the office of Captain-Major (Capitão-Mór) or Commander-in-chief. Castanheda states that the honour was first offered to Vasco's eldest brother, Paulo da Gama, who declined it on the ground of ill-health.

When Vasco da Gama was chosen for the Indian voyage, he was already an expert navigator, and was unmarried. Courage, ambition, pride and unwavering steadfastness of purpose were the bedrock of his

CHAPTER 8

THE FLEET OF VASCO DA GAMA

All authorities agree that the fleet, or armada, fitted out for the voyage numbered four vessels, but they are not agreed as to the names that these vessels bore. We are not, however, likely to be misled if we accept the unanimous testimony of the author of our Roteiro, of João de Barros, Lopez de Castanheda, Pedro Barretto de Rezende, and Manuel Faria y Sousa, according to whom the names of the ships and of their principal officers were as follows : -

São Gabriel (the flagship) - Vasco da Gama was the captain-major. Pero d'Alenquer was the pilot. Gonçalo Alvarez was the master. Diogo Dias was the clerk.

São Rafael - Paulo da Gama was the captain. João de Coimbra was the pilot. João de Sá was the clerk.

Bérrio - Nicolau Coelho was the captain. Pero Escolar was the pilot. Alvaro de Braga was the clerk.

Store-ship - Gonçalo Nunes was the captain.

Correa and the unknown author of the *Jornal das Viagens* call the "Bérrio" São Miguel, and make the São Rafael the flagship. L. de Figueiredo de Falcão substitutes a São Miguel for the São Rafael. It is just possible that the vessel popularly called Bérrio, after its former owner, had been re-christened São Miguel.

The Bérrio was one of those swift lateen-rigged vessels for which Portugal was famous from the thirteenth century. Their burthen did not exceed 200 tons, and they had two or three masts, and occasionally even four. The Bérrio is stated to have been a vessel of only 50 tons. She was named after her former owner and pilot, of whom she was purchased expressly for this voyage. The store-ship was of more considerable size. Sernigi says she measured 110 tons. Castanheda credits her with 200 tons. She may have been a so-called *caravela*

CHAPTER 9

THE CREW OF VASCO DA GAMA

The officers and men in the armada were carefully selected. Several of them had been with Bartolomeu Dias around the Cape. All of them justified by their conduct, under sometimes trying circumstances, the selection that had been made.

Authorities widely differ as to the number of men who embarked. Sernigi says there were only 118, of whom 55 died during the voyage and only 63 returned. Galvão says there were 120, besides the men in the store ship. Castanheda and Goes raise the number to 148, of whom only 55 returned, many of them broken in health. Faria y Sousa and San Ramon say there were 160, and the latter adds that 93 of these died during the voyage, thus confirming a statement made by King Manuel in his letter of 20th February 1504, to the effect that less than one-half returned. According to Barros there were 170 men, including soldiers and sailors. Correa raises the number to 260, for he says that in each of the three ships there were 80 officers and men, including servants, besides six convicts and two priests. He says nothing of the store-ship. By the time Vasco da Gama had reached the Rio da Misericordia only 150 out of this number are said to have been alive.

Correa, no doubt, exaggerates. On the other hand, Sernigi's numbers seem to us to err quite as much on the other side. It is quite true that a Mediterranean merchantman of 100 tons, in the sixteenth century, was manned by 12 able and 8 ordinary seamen, but in the case of an expedition sent forth for a number of years and to unknown dangers, this number would no doubt have been increased. We are, therefore, inclined to believe that the number given by De Barros - namely, 170 - may be nearer the truth, namely 70 men in the flagship, 50 in the São Rafael, 30 in the caravel, and 20 in the store-ship. The men in the flagship may have included 1 captain, 1 master, 1 pilot, 1 assistant pilot, 1 mate (contramestre), 1 boatswain (guardião), 20 able seamen (marinheiros), 10 ordinary seamen (grumetes), 2 boys (pagens), 1 chief gunner or constable, 8 bombardiers, 4 trumpeters, 1 clerk or purser (escrivão), 1 storekeeper (dispenseiro), 1 officer of justice (meirinho), 1

CHAPTER 10

THE VOYAGE TO CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

The King was at Montemór o novo when he despatched Vasco da Gama and his fellow commanders upon the momentous expedition that was to place Portugal for a time in the forefront of maritime and commercial powers. With them went a caravel commanded by Bartolomeu Dias, whose destination was São Jorge da Mina. He had been made captain of the mine there as a reward for his many services.

It was summer, and His Majesty did not, therefore, desert the beautiful hills of Monfurado for the stifling heat of the capital, in order that he might witness the embarkation of his “loyal vassal” who, on account of his proved valour and past services he had deemed worthy of the honourable distinction of being entrusted with the conduct of so important an enterprise.

When all was ready, Vasco da Gama and his three captains went down to the chapel of Our Lady of Bethlehem (Belem), which Prince Henry the Navigator had built for his mariners, on the right bank of the Tagus. They all kept vigil there during the night of Friday 7th July 1497. On the following morning, which was Saturday 8th July 1497, they started in solemn procession for the place of embarcation, Vasco and his officers leading the way, with lighted candles in their hands, while a body of priests and friars followed, chanting a Litany. A vast concourse had assembled on the mud-flats that then lined the estuary. They stood bare headed in the blazing July sunshine, murmuring the responses to the Litany, and moving with the procession as it wound slowly across the foreshore, down to that landing place that Barros calls “a beach of tears for those who depart, a land of delight for those who arrive”.

As the procession halted beside the margin of the river, the whole multitude fell on their knees in silence, while the vicar of the chapel received a general confession and granted absolution to all who might lose their lives on the voyage. Then Vasco da Gama and his comrades took leave of the weeping crowd and were rowed out to their ships. The royal standard was hoisted at the maintop of the São Gabriel. The

CHAPTER 11

THE VOYAGE TO INDIA

The accounts of Vasco da Gama's remarkable voyage across the Southern Atlantic are of so scanty a nature that it is quite impossible to lay down his track with certainty. What we learn from the "Journal" may be condensed into a few words. The little armada left São Thiago on 3rd August 1497. Vasco da Gama stood south-east and parallel to the African coast until, in about 10° N., he reached the region of calms and encountered evil weather. When the wind blew at all, its direction was contrary. Sudden squalls arose from time to time and rushed down upon the fleet with tropical fury.

On the 18th August, when 200 leagues (680 miles) out at sea, the mainyard of the flagship sprung in a squall. This necessitated laying to for a couple of days and a night. To escape at once from the doldrums and from the baffling winds and currents of the Gulf of Guinea, Vasco da Gama conceived the bold and original idea of fetching a wide compass through the South Atlantic, so that, if possible, he might reach the Cape of Good Hope after circling round the tract in which the experience of Diogo Cão and Bartolomeu Dias had shown that unfavourable weather might be expected. He crossed the equator in about 19° W. and steered south-westward into an unknown Ocean.

In September, the fleet reached its westernmost limit, within 600 miles of South America, and then headed round for the Cape, beating slowly back against the south-east trades until, in higher latitudes, a west wind arose and carried the explorers on their way.

On November 4th, at 9am, the mainland of Africa was sighted, probably about 150 miles to the north of St. Helena Bay (30° S.), in what is now the Western Cape of South Africa.

On the 7th of November they dropped anchor in an inlet to which the commander-in-chief gave its present name of St Helena Bay. Since leaving the Cape Verdes his fleet had spent ninety-six days in the South Atlantic and had sailed fully 4,500 miles. No navigator of whom there

CHAPTER 12

THE VOYAGE OF PEDRO CABRAL

When Vasco da Gama returned to Lisbon from India in 1499, he was received with great honour. He was made Count of Vidigueira and given an irrevocable commission to act as the chief of any future fleet to India, should he so desire.

Alvaro conceding to Dom Vasco da Gama the chief captaincy of all the ships departing for India during his lifetime, the king not being able to intervene in this matter, etc. :

“We, the King, make known to all to whom this our alvará may come, that in consideration of the very great and signal service that Dom Vasco da Gama of our council did to us and to our kingdoms in the discovery of India, for which reason we should give him all honour, increase and reward, and because of this, it pleases us that we grant him by this present alvará that of all the armadas that in his life we shall order made and shall make for the said parts of India, whether they be only for the trade in merchandise or whether it is necessary to make war with them, he may take and takes the chief captaincy of these, so that in the said armadas he has to go in person, and in them to serve us, and when he thus wishes to take the said captaincy, we may not place in them nor appoint another chief captain save him, because of his honour, and we confide in him that he will know very well our service; it pleases us that we grant and we in fact grant this reward and privilege as is said. Furthermore, we order to be given to him this our alvará by us signed, that we order shall be in every way kept and guarded, as in it is contained our reward, without impediment or any embargo that might be placed upon it. And it pleases us, and we wish that it be as valid as a letter by us signed and sealed with our seal, and passed by our Chancellery, in spite of our ordinance, even though it may not be passed by the officers of the Chancellery. Done.”

To the Portuguese people Vasco da Gama's voyage was accomplished by the will of God, who had destined them for the control of the East, and, regardless of obstacles, they must continue. So the preparations

CHAPTER 13

THE FLEET OF PEDRO CABRAL

An inscription on the South America of the Cantino Chart alleges that Pedro Cabral had fourteen vessels in his fleet. It runs thus : “A vera cruz + chamada p. nome aquall achou pedraluares cabrall fidalgo da cassa del Rey de portugall & elle a descobrio indo por capita moor de quatorze naos que o dito Rey mandaua a caliquet en el caminho indo topou com esta terra aqual terra se cree ser terra firma em aqual a muyta gente de discricam & andam nu os omes & molheres como suas mais os paria[m] sam mais brancos que bacos tem os cabellos muyto corredios foy descoberta esta dita terra em aera de quinhentos.”

Cabral's fleet consisted of both ships and caravels. There is no official document that tells how many belonged to each class, and the only authors who give us exact statements are Castanheda, who says that there were three round ships, and the rest were ships (probably meaning caravels), and Gaspar Corrêa, who states there were ten large ships of 200 to 300 tons and three small ones. In the account of the voyage written by a Portuguese pilot and published by Ramusio, Pedro Cabral is said to have commanded thirteen vessels. Barros also avers that the fleet comprised thirteen sail. Castanheda, who gives the best narrative of the voyage and usually refers to the vessels as caravels, was probably right. Corrêa had the classes reversed. This uncertainty in the description of the vessels is due to the inexact way in which ships were then designated. The Capitania, or flagship, and the ships of Simão de Miranda and Sancho de Tovar were undoubtedly naos redondos, or round ships. The remaining vessels were probably small ships and caravels, with possibly a few caravelas redondas that combined the two types. There is no description of any of the ships of Cabral's fleet. The illustration of the fleet shown in the Livro das Armadas da India was made long after the voyage, and was derived from references to the ships as given by the historians. It is therefore of little real value. The ships must have been similar to those in Vasco da Gama's fleet and to other vessels of the early sixteenth century.

The “round ships” were so called because when viewed from the front

CHAPTER 14

THE CREW OF PEDRO CABRAL

There was no difficulty in securing men for Pedro Cabral's voyage. For this reason it was felt wise to determine their pay in advance. The king in consultation with Vasco da Gama, Pedralvarez Cabral and Jorge de Vasconcellos, superintendent of the royal store-houses, (Provedor dos almazens do Reyno) fixed the salaries and wages to be paid to the officers and men.

The Chief Captain was to receive ten thousand cruzados, five thousand of which were paid in advance. The captains, including Bartolomeu Dias, were to receive one thousand cruzados for every hundred "toneis" of their ships and one thousand cruzados of the total amount was to be paid in advance. One year's wages, one hundred and thirty cruzados, were to be paid in advance to the married able-bodied seamen, and sixty-five cruzados to the unmarried. Six months' wages, sixty-five cruzados, were to be paid in advance to the ordinary seamen, if married, and thirty-two cruzados and a half to those who were not married.

Gaspar Corrêa tells us that "What was decided was that the chief captain of the armada should have for the voyage 10,000 cruzados and 500 quintals of pepper, paid for from his salary of 10,000 cruzados at the price at which the king might purchase it, on which he should not pay taxes, except the tenth to God for the monastery of Nossa Senhora de Belem; and to the masters and pilots 500 cruzados for the voyage and thirty quintals of pepper and four chests free; and to the captains of the ships 1,000 cruzados for each 100 tons, and six chests free, and 50 quintals of pepper for the voyage; and to the mariners 10 cruzados per month and ten quintals of pepper for the voyage and a chest free; and to every two ordinary seamen, the same as one mariner; and to every three pages, the same as to one ordinary seaman; and to the mates and boatswains, as to a mariner and a half; and to the official men, that is, in each ship two caulkers, two carpenters and two rope makers, a steward, a bleeding barber, and two priests, the third of that of two mariners; and to the men at arms, five cruzados per month and three

CHAPTER 15

VASCO DA GAMA'S MEMORANDUM

There is a memorandum supposed to have been furnished by Vasco da Gama, regarding the conduct of the fleet at sea before reaching the Cape of Good Hope.

Since Vasco da Gama had sailed to the Cape of Good Hope by the direct route, his advice to Cabral, who was to follow a similar course, would have been of assistance. Such advice was evidently secured and incorporated in Cabral's instructions.

Varnhagen, in his search for early documents in the Archives of Portugal, discovered the most important portion of Cabral's instructions. A short time later he found one leaf of a memorandum, apparently by Vasco da Gama, at a sale of old papers. This, he inserted in facsimile in the first edition of his *Historia geral do Brasil*. He there claimed that the document had been sent to the Torre do Tombo for preservation. However, there is no record that this was ever received, nor can it be found there. In spite of this cloud on its authenticity, the memorandum may still be accepted with some degree of confidence, for the instructions for later voyages resemble portions of it almost exactly.

It does not seem to have been written by Vasco da Gama but more probably, as Dr. Antonio Baião suggests, by the Secretary of State, Alcaçova Carneiro, during an interview with Vasco da Gama.

These notes were evidently those incorporated in the official instructions that Pedro Cabral probably issued to the captains of the various ships.

Vasco da Gama was impressed with the necessity for preventing the loss of convoy by the ships, since he probably had some difficulty in this respect during his voyage.

The methods he suggested were not new. Whenever ships went

CHAPTER 16

THE DISCOVERY OF BRAZIL

On the 8th of March 1500 the fleet of thirteen vessels, including Bartolomeu Dias as captain of one of the ships, was assembled in the Tagus, some three miles below Lisbon, near the small hermitage of Restello, where the monastery of the Jeronimos now stands.

Before their departure, pontifical mass was said with great solemnity. The king was there, and gave his last instructions orally to the young commander and presented him with a banner carrying the royal arms.

The ships were decked with many coloured flags. Musicians with their bagpipes, fifes, drums, and horns added to the liveliness. The people, both those who were to sail and those on shore, were dressed as for a fête. All Lisbon had come to see them off and to wish them good fortune, for this was the first commercial fleet to sail for India. The way had been found, and it was this voyage that was to bring back a rich reward in jewels and spices and pave the way for even greater wealth to follow.

On the following day, Monday the 9th of March 1500, the fleet left the mouth of the Tagus and departed from the Bay of Cascaes. All sails were set, and on them was displayed the red cross of the Order of Christ, for Cabral's fleet also went to bring the true Faith to the people of India. The conversion of the heathen was not only the desire of Dom Manuel, but it was an obligation imposed by the Pope. The bulls of 1493, granted by Alexander VI as the head of the Church, had given spheres of influence over non-Christian countries with the implied duty of bringing them under the guidance of Rome. This was shown in the bull addressed to Dom Manuel in June 1497. In it the Pope granted the request of the king and permitted him to possess the lands conquered from the infidels, provided no other Christian kings had rights to them, and prohibited all other rulers from molesting him. At the end he requested him to endeavour to establish the dominion of the Christian religion in the lands that he might conquer. This may explain the religious tone of the king's letter to the Zamorin of Calicut.

CHAPTER 17

PERO VAZ DE CAMINHA'S ACCOUNT OF THE DISCOVERY

Pero Vaz de Caminha had accepted the position of writer in the fleet under Pedro Cabral's command. He sailed in Pedro Cabral's flagship with other writers. One of the two letters sent by Pedro Cabral to the King of Portugal relating their discovery of Brazil was written by him on 1st May 1500. It is the first document describing the discovery of Brazil, and has sometimes been called the first page in the history of Brazil. It was kept in the Torre do Tombo, and classified as Corpo Chronologico, gaveta 8, maco 2, no. 8.

“Senhor : Although the chief captain of this your fleet, and also the other captains, are writing to Your Highness the news of the finding of this your new land which was now found in this navigation, I shall not refrain from also giving my account of this to Your Highness, as best I can, although I know less than all of the others how to relate and tell it well. Nevertheless, may Your Highness take my ignorance for good intention, and believe that I shall not set down here anything more than I saw and thought, either to beautify or to make it less attractive. I shall not give account here to Your Highness of the ship's company and its daily runs, because I shall not know how to do it, and the pilots must have this in their charge.

And therefore, Senhor, I begin what I have to relate and say that the departure from Belem, as Your Highness knows, was on Monday, the 9th of March, and on Saturday, the 14th of the said month, between eight and nine o'clock, we found ourselves among the Canary Islands, nearest to Grand Canary; and there we remained all that day in a calm, in sight of them, at a distance of about three or four leagues. On Sunday, the 22nd of the said month, at ten o'clock, a little more or less, we came in sight of the Cape Verde Islands, that is to say, of the island of Sam Nicolao, according to the assertion of Pero Escolar, the pilot. On the following night, on Monday at daybreak, Vasco d'Atayde with his ship was lost from the fleet without there being there heavy weather

CHAPTER 18

THE ANONYMOUS NARRATIVE

One of the earliest and the most complete contemporary accounts of the voyage of Cabral was written by a member of the fleet. From what is known of the voyage of Cabral from other sources the Anonymous Narrative is substantially accurate.

It was written by somebody who took part in the voyage and who lived to return. It thus ranks second only to the letters of Pero Vaz de Caminha and Master John as an authoritative source. The author is unknown, but he was without doubt a Portuguese. From the careful and concise manner in which the account was written it appears to have been either an official record of the voyage or a narrative intended for publication.

Some clue as to the identity of the Portuguese author may be obtained from the narrative itself. He was on Pedro Cabral's ship or that of Simão de Miranda or Pedro de Ataíde after the storm, and he returned either with Pedro Cabral or Simão de Miranda. He seems to have been present when Pedro Cabral met the Zamorin and was on shore at the time of the massacre and was among those saved. Since Pedro Cabral was on board his ship during the uprising, he could not have been the author.

Only Frei Henrique, Nuno Leitao da Cunha, and a sailor are mentioned, of the twenty who escaped. It may have been the work of some nobleman who went with the fleet, but it seems more probable, from the careful manner with which it was written, that it was composed by someone whose duty it was to make this record, possibly one of the writers.

The only one holding this position whose name is known and who might have been the author is João de Sa, who had gone with Vasco da Gama as a writer and undoubtedly held a position of trust under Pedro Cabral. His duties would take him ashore at Calicut, and he returned with the fleet. Since Ravenstein considers that de Sa may have been the

CHAPTER 19

THE FINAL VOYAGE OF BARTOLOMEU DIAS

Barros asserts that Pedro Cabral's fleet set sail to resume the intended voyage on 3rd May 1500. If so, one might find therein the explanation of his bestowal of the name Terra da Santa Cruz upon the newly discovered country for the Festival of the Invention of the Holy Cross falls upon that day. Bartolomeu Dias was the captain of one of the ships.

When the fleet left the coast of Brazil it took its course to the Cape of Good Hope, with the evident intention of making a stop at São Bras. This sea had never been sailed previously, and this voyage from Brazil to the African coast may have been longer than any that had hitherto been made without sighting land.

The fleet continued with light winds. A comet was seen on the 12th of May that was in view for ten days. This was to the crew an ill omen.

The Anonymous Narrative had described these events : "The following day, which was the 2nd of May of the said year, the armada made sail on its way to go round the Cape of Good Hope. This voyage would be across the gulf of the sea, more than 1,200 leagues, that is, four miles to a league. On the 12th day of the said month, while on our course, there appeared a comet with a very long tail in the direction of Arabia. It was in view continuously for eight or ten nights."

On the 23rd of May, according to Barros and Castanheda, on the ninth of that month according to Osorio, as the fleet was proceeding on its way in a high sea and with the wind astern, the wind suddenly veered to the contrary direction and, before the sails could be lowered, four ships were overset by the violence of the wind and their crews thrown into the sea and drowned.

The Anonymous Narrative had described these events : "On Sunday, which was the 24th day of the said month of May, as all the armada was sailing together with a favourable wind, with the sails half set and