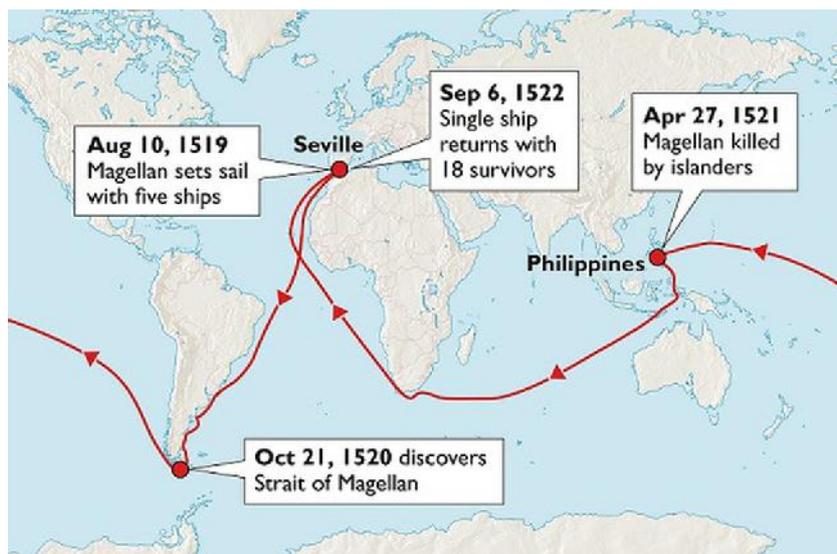


Today I am going to tell you about two more explorers, beginning with FERDINAND MAGELLAN (pronounced 'Mag - ell - un'). You may remember that the whole point of CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS' sailing West in 1492 was to find a new way of getting to Asia and the rich markets in China and India. But by sailing West, Columbus had (though he didn't know it) discovered a huge landmass in the way of getting to Asia - which landmass ended up being named America, after AMERIGO VESPUCCI. So the question now was - how easy would it be to sail West and sail AROUND America and sail on to Asia. That's what Ferdinand Magellan wanted to find out. He got the Spanish King to fund an expedition (pronounced 'ex - ped - ish - on') to sail from Spain, to America, and then down, down, down to the bottom of South America ('TIERRA DEL FUEGO' - which means 'Land of fire' and is pronounced 'Tee - air - ah del fway - go') and around the bottom and then up, up, up and across the Pacific Ocean, and then into the Indian Ocean, and then down, down, down to the bottom of Africa (the 'Cape of Good Hope') and around the bottom, and then up, up, up the west coast of Africa back to Spain. If Magellan succeeded he would become the leader of the first voyage all the way around the Earth. He estimated the journey would take two years. And he set out, in a fleet of five ships, in 1519 - 27 years after Columbus' first journey to America. Did he



make it? Not quite - he managed to get round America and sailed into the Pacific but in 1521, he was killed in a battle on the Philippine Islands, which are really close to South East Asia. But one of the ships in Magellan's fleet, called THE VICTORIA (appropriate name, as 'Victoria' means 'victory') managed to make it home to Spain in 1522. So even though Magellan didn't make it back alive, he was in charge of the first successful attempt to travel all the way around the Earth.



So who was the first ship captain who did manage to make it all the way around the Earth and come back alive? That would be our second explorer, the English hero FRANCIS DRAKE. Drake was born in 1540 – which is 19 years after Magellan died. That just goes to show you how long it took for someone else to try to travel all the way around the Earth. By the time Drake was a young man, ships were regularly sailing out to America, and bringing back to Europe all kinds of riches, especially gold. A lot of these ships were Spanish ships because it was the Spanish that had originally paid for people like Columbus, Vespucci and Magellan to explore America, and they wanted to see a return on their investment. So once Drake got command of an English ship, he started raiding Spanish ships that



were transporting gold, focussing his attention on ships sailing around PANAMA, in Central America. Panama is located at the bit of Central America where it gets really thin and there isn't a big distance between the Atlantic Ocean on the right, and the Pacific Ocean on the left. And it was while he was out in Panama, in 1572, that Drake walked to the west coast of Panama, bordering the Pacific Ocean, and became the first ever Englishman to see the Pacific Ocean. He hoped to be able to come back to sail across that ocean, and he got his chance 5 years later in 1577 - 58 years after Magellan had set out from Spain to sail round the world - when QUEEN ELIZABETH THE FIRST gave Drake the job of raiding Spanish ships in the Pacific. He set out in six ships and took three years to sail round the world, coming back in 1580 with a huge amount of gold that he had obtained from Spanish ships. The Queen knighted Drake after he got back, in 1581, on board his ship THE GOLDEN HIND.



You would have thought that after all of that, Drake would just want to put his feet up, but six years later, in 1588 he was called into action to defeat the SPANISH ARMADA (pronounced 'Ah - mard - ah'), which KING PHILIP THE SECOND of Spain had launched to invade and take over England. As Drake was one of the reasons why Philip II hated England - because Drake would not stop raiding Spanish ships even towns - that was fair enough. The story is told that when the Armada was spotted sailing towards England, Drake was playing a game of bowls in Plymouth, a city that is on the southern coast of England. Drake said to his companions, 'We've got time to finish the game, and then we'll deal with the Spanish.' And deal with them he did, inflicting a humiliating defeat on the Spanish that ensured they would never try to invade England again.

And even after doing that, Drake would not put his feet up and retire and take things easy. Instead, when he was in his 50's he was still commanding ships and raiding the Spanish. But things caught up with him in the end, and while he was back out in Panama, fighting the Spanish, he fell ill and died. This happened in 1596, when Drake was 56 years old. He was buried at sea, in his full armour, and in a coffin that was lined with lead, to ensure that it lasted a very long time even though it was underwater. And despite everyone knowing where his coffin was dropped into the water, nobody has ever been able to find it. So he's still out there somewhere, in the waters off Central America - one of the greatest heroes in English history.