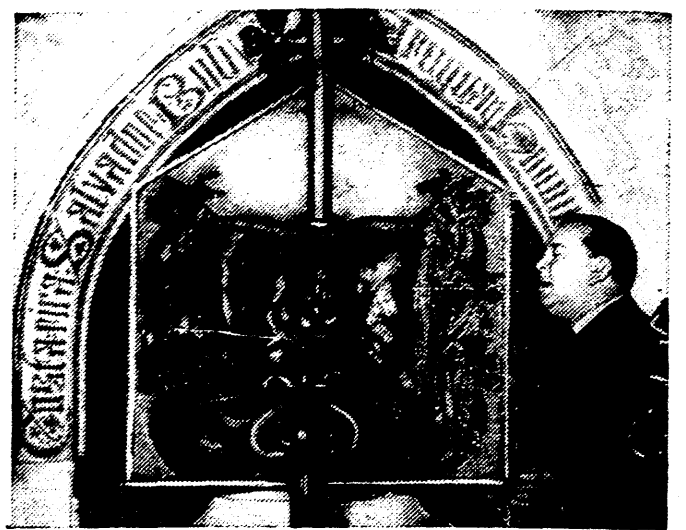




Flags first planted on the shores of the New World by Christopher Columbus are shown in this sketch of the historic landing in 1492. The friendly Indians are shown behind the trees as they approach to greet the seafaring Spaniards, who treated them brutally later.



This is one of more than five hundred portraits of Columbus that have been made.



Maybe the United Nations will decide. Here's Trygve Lie, secretary of the United Nations, at the New World's tomb of Columbus in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Experts See Double Over Columbus Ghost Spain and Indies Claim Remains of Explorer

FOR the father of his country, there are appropriate ceremonies at the tomb in Mount Vernon on Washington's birthday.

For the savior of his country, flowers are laid at the grave in Springfield on Lincoln's birthday. But for the man who discovered America, you take your choice Tuesday, Columbus Day. You may lay a wreath at the grave of Christopher Columbus in Santo Domingo (Ciudad Trujillo), Dominican Republic, or at the grave of Christopher Columbus in Seville, Spain.

In the two places three thousand miles apart, there are two graves, two coffins, two sets of mortal remains both bearing the name of the great voyager. But which is the right one?

That's a question still not settled although old Chris has been dead these 442 years. And if one is Columbus, who is the other?

Experts like Samuel Eliot Morison, recognized authority on Columbus, say the weight of evidence favors the Dominican claim. But the Spaniards have never officially given up the ghost.

But before you run to the U. N. with this problem, let's start first with the known, the undisputed facts, as summed up by Mr. Morison.

Chris, a tired old admiral by then, died May 20, 1506, in Valladolid, Spain. He was first buried in the Church of San Francisco at Valladolid but in 1509 the body was removed by order of his son, Don Diego, to the Carthusian monastery of Santa Maria de las Cuevas in Seville.

The son, also an admiral, also was buried there later. Well, in or about 1541, by Don Diego's wishes, his body and that of his father were removed to Santo Domingo, where Columbus had set up the first Spanish settlement in the new world. The bodies were interred before the high altar of the Santo Domingo Cathedral on the gospel side.

Off Republican Soil

APPARENTLY any monument or inscription was removed or covered up because by 1780 visitors could find no information on the exact site of the remains except that they were somewhere under the pavement.

In 1798, when Santo Domingo was ceded to France, the Duke of Veragua didn't like the idea of his ancestor's remains remaining on French Republican soil.

Excavations were dug near the high altar on the gospel side and a small, stone vault was unearthed, containing human remains and some lead plates about a foot long which evidently were those of the casket.

All this was placed in a new lead coffin, on the assumption it was Columbus's and transferred with elaborate, solemn ceremony to Havana and reinterred in the cathedral there. Then in 1898, when Spain lost Cuba the casket was moved again, this time back to the cathedral in Seville. This was just 50 years ago last month. But—

Another Coffin Found

SOMETHING had happened in 1877. The Spaniards apparently had refused to believe it.

The presbytery of the Santo Domingo Cathedral was being enlarged and another vault was found, along the wall on the gospel side of the altar. Inside was

a lead casket, 42 by 21 centimeters, which contained some bones, dust and a small lead bullet.

On its front and the ends, the casket had the letters "CCA," which experts thought stood for "Cristobal Colon Almirante," which is the Spanish way of saying "Christopher Columbus Admiral."

On top of the coffin lid was the inscription:

"D. de la A. Per. Ate." This has been interpreted as, "Descubridor de la America Primer Almirante," or "Discoverer of America, First Admiral."

A year later, a small plate, which had previously gone unnoticed, was found. This, says Mr. Morison, evidently was the original coffin plate and it, too, had a set of abbreviations interpreted as "Last (or sole) remains of the first admiral, Christopher Columbus, Discoverer."

All these pronouncements in 1877 and 1878 caused quite a fuss between Spain and Santo Domingo.

For Mr. Morison, the answer is quite definite. In 1795, he says, the first tomb found actually contained the remains of Don Diego, the second admiral and son of the discoverer, and it is his ashes which now repose in Seville.

But proof positive is still lacking, you take your choice.

Where Was He Born?

YOU can take your choice on a lot of other details concerning Columbus. Probably nobody will argue with you if you say "Tuesday is Columbus Day, the anniversary of Columbus's first landing in the Western Hemisphere."

Without fear of contradiction, you probably can even go so far as to repeat the old rhyme:

"In fourteen hundred and ninety-two Columbus sailed the ocean blue."

But if you say another word about Columbus somebody might pick a fight. Hardly an item in the Columbus story has not aroused controversy among scholars.

According to most well-informed college professors, Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy, in 1451.

On the other hand, a lot of learned men say:

"Ah! no! His name was Cristobal Colon, and he was born of Jewish parents in Pontevedra, in the province of Galicia, Spain."

This theory was first announced in 1898 by a Spanish scholar, Don Garcia de la Riega.

Dr. Charles C. Tansill, professor of American history at Georgetown University in Washington, D. C., says that the great majority of reputable scholars find the theory flimsy. It's based chiefly on the fact that in Pontevedra there were a lot of Colons—Spanish translation of Columbus.

Riega pointed out that Columbus was fond of quoting the old Jewish prophets and for his signature used a peculiar mystical symbol which to Riega seemed to recall some Jewish doctrine.

Riega reasoned that Columbus covered up his Jewish ancestry for fear of the Inquisition.

As for the date of the discoverer's birth, scholars used to argue about it, placing it anywhere from 1436 to 1456. Neither Columbus nor any of his early biographers mentioned the date. The guess is he didn't want people to know how young he was when he was drum-

ming up interest in his big enterprise.

The whole date question, however, Dr. Tansill says, was settled to the satisfaction of practically all scholars when a document was discovered by Henry Vignaud in the Genoa archives proving he was born in 1451.

Middle Class Boy

WELL, to go on: It's generally believed that Columbus came from a family of lower middle class wool weavers and had very little formal education.

Friendly biographers who wrote shortly after the great man's death described Columbus' folks as nobility, but modern scholars practically all agree that the early biographers were just trying to be nice.

Another big argument is over Columbus' purpose in making his great voyage: To find a western route to the Indies, according to many high academic sources.

"No! No! No!" said Vignaud, one of the most eminent Columbian scholars. Vignaud was an American who lived in France, wrote in French and died in the 1920's.

Vignaud said that apparently after Columbus returned he suspected he had reached Asia and tried to give the impression that that was what he had planned to do all along.

The record shows, said Vignaud, that his proposal was merely to search for undiscovered islands.

The tale of the unknown pilot fits in here. Columbus supposedly befriended a pilot who had been blown off his course until he landed on unknown islands far to the west. The pilot was said to have died after giving Columbus the directions.

She Didn't Pawn Jewels

NOW about the money for the voyage—many textbooks say the King and Queen of Spain provided the money.

But Prof. Charles H. McCarthy of Catholic University in Washington says the truth is that much of the money was put up by the Santa Hermandad (Holy Brotherhood), a Spanish society formed to suppress brigandage.

As for Queen Isabella's pawning her jewels, she actually did offer to do so, but it was never necessary. Such is the conclusion of Prof. Samuel Eliot Morison of Harvard, one of the best known American Columbians.

Many a scholar has wondered whether perhaps most of the credit for the expedition ought not to have gone to Martin Alonso Pinzon, commander of the Pinta, one of Columbus' three vessels.

Pinzon was a member of a rich and prominent family of mariners. When Columbus was having trouble recruiting a crew, Pinzon influenced sailors to sign up.

He helped to suppress mutiny and gave Columbus advice on navigation. Some say Columbus himself was ready to turn back until Pinzon persuaded him to sail on.

Pinzon died almost immediately after his return to Spain, so he never had a chance to argue his case.

So you're pretty safe if you say "Columbus discovered America."

He Returned in Chains

YOU'D think that discovering a place like America would put a man on easy street.

That's what Columbus thought as he sailed full speed back to Spain. But Christopher was due for a rude jolt; his troubles had only begun.

While he was away, his foes were working to undermine his favor with Ferdinand and Isabella. They did a good job, for Columbus and his brother were brought back to Cadiz in chains in 1500 at the end of the third voyage.

At the end of 10 months, Ferdinand and Isabella freed him and did give him some damages, but in many respects this fell short of what he felt to be his rights and privileges.

Delays and repeated disappointments made Columbus despondent and in debt. Finally he became fearful that the disfavor of the Spanish rulers should go so far as to bring into question the validity of his original grants.

These included his titles of Admiral of Castile and of the Indies, made hereditary. He was also alarmed by intimations that since he was not a native of Spain such grants were void. He foresaw the probability of a contest to dispossess his heirs.

Columbus expected soon to be sent on his fourth voyage and, smelling a rat, decided to play safe by amplifying the evidence of his rights and placing it in friendly hands. All his grants and titles were written documents. He had the originals and he decided to have copies made which he might deposit in safe places.

So on January 5, 1502, he summoned to his house at Seville two city judges and three notaries and had transcribed and attested what he deemed a substantial statement of his rights and privileges.

Among these 35 documents were the discoverer's charters as admiral, viceroy and governor-general, his warrant to equip vessels, to share in the expense and profits of the voyages to the Indies, to adjudicate and distribute lands, and several letters from the Spanish sovereigns expressing indebtedness for his service.

Included also was his pathetic letter, written in 1500 on his arrival from the Indies in chains, to the nurse of Prince Don Juan, beginning:

"Most Honorable Madam: If my complaint against the world is new, its custom of ill-treating me is old." Then he gave a full recital of the wrong he had suffered.

Three Copies Survive

THE documents make it clear that there were, in all, four sets of transcripts. The originals were deposited in the monastery of Las Cuevas, near Seville, and now are believed to be owned by the family of the Duke of Veragua.

One of the paper copies was lost. But the other three, which were made on parchment paper and are known now as the Columbus Codex, have somehow survived. The story of their survival is a good one.

The three copies remained in the hands of the Oderigo family in Columbus's native Oderigo family in 1670, and then they disappeared. One of them turned up in Genoa in 1816 and was turned over to the city. Now it reposes in a marble column in the municipal palace.

The other two copies were missing from 1670 to 1880. One was discovered in the Office of Foreign Affairs archives in Paris by E. F. Stevens and Henry Harrissee.

Its appearance in Paris was

traced to Napoleon. The French dictator in 1809 had decided to bring to Paris the archives of the French Empire. Soon his soldiers were streaming to Paris with cartloads of precious documents taken from dusty depositories in Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Spain. The French are still hanging on to it.

Saved by 'Miracle'

THE other copy on parchment now is safe in the Library of Congress, and is in excellent condition. Apparently it was the one used in the celebrated litigation over the Columbus inheritance in the Sixteenth Century.

In 1818, Edward Everett, famed New England orator, found it while rummaging through an old book shop in Florence, Italy. Once it was miraculously saved when the Everett home was swept by flames. It was sold to the Government for a nominal sum.

Uncle Sam belatedly has become an avid collector of Columbus lore. The Columbus Codex is the headliner in public interest, but the Library of Congress has amassed a very fine collection of Columbus manuscripts and books which has been little publicized.

The Library has the first press notice on the Columbus voyage. It is an oration delivered by Cardinal Bernadine Carvajal, Spain's Ambassador to Rome before Pope Alexander VI in 1493, reporting the discovery of the New World. The oration was published in Rome later that year in a thin, crudely printed volume.

Indians Suffered Most

COLUMBUS had plenty of troubles of his own, but they were small compared to what he and his successors caused the friendly Indians who greeted the Spaniards on our shores.

The Spaniards thought they had liquidated the Lucayan tribe which met them so hospitably, but now it appears that Christopher and his cohorts slipped up somewhere.

Historians have believed for some time that a few descendants of the Lucayans live in the depths of Andros Island, just one hundred miles off the coast of Florida.

Some of the men at the National Museum in Washington now are studying a linguistic tie, recently discovered, between the original Lucayans of the Bahamas and a handful of Yuchi Indians in Oklahoma.

More mystery shrouds the background and origin of these Yuchis than any other tribe of American Indians. It is known, however, that they were settled in Oklahoma after living for many long years in Georgia and South Carolina. It is known also that the Indian name for the "Columbus Indians" is Yucaí.

The present natives of Andros Island believe implicitly that the center of the island is inhabited by a strange race of men who have secreted themselves from prying eyes, and who hunt by night with bow and arrow.

And it is close enough to the mainland so that, years later, it would have been very easy for some of those Indians to have sailed their light, swift vessels to the Florida shores. Then they could have struck out, unseen, for the interior, bringing with them the few things they needed to start life here and a name—Yucaí—which science now thinks may be the key to the riddle of the lost race.