



Magna Charta

June 1215 A.D.

The charter of English rights granted by King John at Runnymede under pressure from English barons. The first cornerstone of liberty in the western world, it would later prove to inspire the American Constitution.



Iroquois League

c 1400s A.D.

A Native American confederacy known as the Five Nations, consisting of Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca peoples. It became the Six Nations when the Tuscarora tribe joined in 1722. Their native name is Haudenosaunee, "People Building a Longhouse."



Amerigo Vespucci

1454-1512 A.D.

Italian explorer and navigator who, upon exploring the American mainland and the South American coast, concluded that Columbus' discovery was actually a new world. It was named "America" in his honor.



Juan Ponce de Leon

1460-1521 A.D. Spanish explorer who accompanied Columbus on his second voyage and later discovered Florida on his search for the legendary fountain of youth.



Leif Eriksson

1000 A.D. Norwegian son of Erik the Red who continued the legacy of navigation. According to Norse sagas, while in search of land to the west, his ship was blown off course, thereby discovering North America and naming it "Vinland" due to its vines of grapes.



Tenochtitlan

c. 1325 A.D. Discovered at the site of present-day Mexico city, this ancient Aztec capital was destroyed by the Spanish in 1521.



Francisco Pizarro

1475-1541 A.D.

Spanish conquistador and explorer who conquered the Inca Empire of Peru, establishing the city of Lima as its capital.



John Cabot

1450-1498 A.D.

Venetian explorer and navigator for the English whose expedition discovered the North American mainland in 1497, while seeking a route to Asia.



Vasco Núñez de Balboa

1475-1517 A.D.

Spanish conquistador and explorer. While investigating the coast of Columbia, he sighted the Pacific ocean and claimed it for Spain.



Christopher Columbus

1451-1506 A.D. Of questionable descent, Columbus was a navigator and explorer in the service of Spain (Ferdinand & Isabella) who, by sailing west in search of a trade route to Asia, discovered the New World in 1492. He made subsequent voyages in 1493, 1498, and 1502, exploring the Caribbean, and coasts of Central and South America.



Montezuma II

c. 1466-1520 A.D.

The Aztec Empire's last emperor in Mexico, he was held hostage at the hands of the Spanish conquistador, Hernando Cortés, and is believed to have been killed by the Spaniards.