

**The History of the Life and Actions  
of Admiral Christopher Colon, and of  
his Discovery of the West Indies, called  
the New World. Written by his own son  
Don Ferdinand Colon.**

**The Author's Preface**

I being the son of the Admiral Christopher Colon, a person worthy of eternal memory, who discovered the West Indies, and having myself sailed with him some time, it seemed to me but reasonable, that among the other things I have writ, one and the chiefest should be his life, and wonderful discovery of the West Indies or New World; because his great and continual sufferings, and the distempers he labored under, did not allow him time to form his notes and observations into a method fit for history...For this reason I resolved to undergo the labour of this task, thinking it better I should lie under the censure my skill and presumption shall be subject to, than to suffer the truth of what relates to so noble a person to lie buried in oblivion... I promise to compose the history of his life of such matter only as I find in his own papers and letters, and of those passages of which I myself was an eye-witness. The author informs the reader before he enters upon the work, that in it he will find all the reasons which induced the admiral to such an undertaking; he will see how far he proceeded in person upon the discovery in four several voyages he made; how great and honourable the articles were upon which he entered into the discovery, and which were afterwards confirmed to him by those two famous Princes, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabel; how basely they were all violated, and he, after such unparalleled services, most inhumanly treated; how far he settled the affairs of the island Hispaniola, what care he took that the Indians should not be oppressed, but rather by good usage and example, prevailed upon to embrace the Christian faith; also the customs and manners of the Indians; their opinions and practice as to religious worship; and, in a word, all that can be expected in a work of this nature, the foundation whereof was laid by so great a man as was the admiral and finished by his own son, who had all the education that could contribute to make him capable of writing so notable a life...

I believe he was particularly chosen by Almighty God for so great an affair as that was he performed; and because he was to be so truly His apostle as, in effect he proved it was His will he should in this part be like the others, who were called to make known His name from the seas and rivers, and not from courts and palaces, and to imitate himself, **whose progenitors being of the blood royal of Jerusalem, yet it pleased Him, that his parents should not be much known. Therefore, as God gave him all the personal qualities for such an undertaking, so He would have his country and origins more hid and obscure...** His proper name being Christopher, it might be known he was a member of Christ, by whom salvation was to be conveyed to those people...so the Admiral Christopher Colon, imploring the assistance of Christ in that dangerous passage, went over safe himself and his company, that those Indian nations might become citizens and inhabitants of the church triumphant in heaven; for it is believed that many should which the devil had expected to make a prey of...were by him made inhabitants and dwellers in the eternal glory of heaven.