Realities of Explorers

-Early explorers did not sail into the unknown without some idea of their final destination.

-they often were surprised at what they discovered.

-Sometimes the country they were seeking was only known in legend or rumor.

-The explorers were usually captains who were not always an experienced seaman, usually they had a desire for wealth or political favor

-Captain needed a sponsor to fund the trip and lots of men as they knew many would die on the voyage

Little cooking was done at sea. Food stores often consisted of pickled or dried meat and ship's biscuits (made from flour with a little water to make them hard).

-By the end of the voyage, these biscuits would be full of black insects called weevils.

-Other foods included cheese, onions, dried beans, and salted fish or recently caught fresh fish.

-Without fresh fruit and vegetables, which contain vitamin C, sailors suffered from a fatal condition called scurvy.

-Water supply was another serious problem.

-Fresh water did not always keep in barrels and wine turned sour.

-Fresh water was the first thing the crew looked for whenever the ship reached land.

Life At Sea: Sores, Scabs, Scurvy and other Diseases

The following are some common diseases that sailors had during sea voyages.

**Dysentery** - chronic diseases of the large intestines from an amoeba.

symptoms - diarrhea with blood and severe abdominal cramps.

**Malaria** - fever from a parasite transmitted by mosquitoes.

symptoms - fever, chills, and sweating. Untreated the attacks continue to recur.

**Malnutrition** - the lack of proper vitamins in diet.

symptoms - Lack of energy, sleepiness, vulnerability to colds and flu. Can be fatal.

**Syphilis** - infectious disease caused by bacteria transmitted by sexual contact.

symptoms - sores appear on infected area, after six weeks a rash appears. Fever, sores, and headaches continue until 12 weeks. The last stage can last 20 to 30 years. Internal organs will be infected, the brain or blood vessels enlarge, and the person dies.

**Scurvy** - disease from a deficiency of vitamin C.

symptoms - weakness, spongy and inflamed gums, loose teeth, and

ruptured blood vessels. If not reversed will eventually result in death.

**Sea Sickness** - being off balance on board ship.

symptoms - Upset stomach, vomiting, and headache. Can cause

dehydration. Usually goes away after a few weeks at sea.

**Typhus** - contracted from body lice.

symptoms - 10 days after being bitten: high fever, pain in the muscles, headaches. After 5 days a dark-red rash appears, the second week the victim becomes delirious and dies. If the victim survives the first 2 weeks, he or she will recover.