

## CHAPTER III

**Ancestry and some details of the life of Vasco da Gama following the genealogy by Jacintho de Pina Loureiro, corroborated by the studies of Lucas de S. Joaquim Pinheiro and annotated with various official documents.**

**I Alvaro Annes**, a nobleman who lived in Olivença in the time of King Affonso III (count of Bolonha). He served in the conquest of the Algarve, and was nicknamed "*the da Gama*" (doe) supposedly for having domesticated one of these animals, although this seems unlikely as the surname *Gama* existed previously in Castile. Said to be married, but not known to whom, he had two children:

**2 João Alvares da Gama** (continues below)

**2 Bertoleza da Gama**, wife of Estevão Cogominho, native of Evora, with descendants.

**II João Alvares da Gama**, *fl.temp.* King Diniz and Dom. Affonso IV, with whom, being already old, he was involved in the battle of Salado in which the Portuguese helped the Spanish against the greatest force seen up to then of Moors and Moroccans. He married Guiomar Cogominho, sister of his brother-in-law Estevão Cogominho. Their son was:

**III Alvaro Annes da Gama**, who was with his father at the battle of Salado and later served with king Fernando. He married Maria Annes Barreto (of unknown ancestry), with whom he had:

**IV Estevão Vaz da Gama**, *fl.temp.* kings Fernando and João I. Many noble families can trace their descent from this Estevão. He was married in Elvas (where he also died) to Catharina Mendes who, being widowed at 28, lived a long and exemplary life of virtue and honesty. It was she who founded the hermitage of Our Lady of Grace, in Elvas. They had two sons:

**5 Vasco da Gama** (continues below)

**5 Alvaro da Gama** who was said to have married in Olivença to a lady heiress of the estate of Val de Moreno, from which marriage was born Leonor da Gama, heiress of said estate and wife of Thomé Lobo, with issue.

There was a bastard son:

- 5 Gonçalo Esteves da Gama**, cleric who had 5 daughters by Luiza Ayres, namely: Margarida, Brites, Ignez, Martha and Eliannes; all legitimized by D. João I in 1427.

**V Vasco da Gama**, squire (*escudeiro*) in the time of kings Duarte and Affonso V. He was born in Elvas where he also died. Confused by some authors with his famous grandson of the same name, he is the best-proven ancestor of the Gama lineage. King Affonso V granted him the inheritance of Alcanam de Maljar, on the borders of Elvas, in 1474 for services in Tangiers and other expeditions. João I confirmed this favour in a decree of 1482 citing his services, which must have been those in Fez and Tangiers in 1479. He married Thereza da Silva, whose ancestry has not been worked out, and their children were:

- 6 Estevão da Gama** (continues below)
- 6 Ayres da Gama**, married Mecia Garcia, daughter of Fernão Garcia Bocanegra. Their son was Estevão da Gama, captain in India in 1502 in the company of his cousin Vasco da Gama. With issue.
- 6 João da Gama**, married to Leonor de Pina, daughter of the chronicler Ruy de Pina. Their son was Diogo da Gama husband of Maria Sotil, daughter of the bishop of Çafim, João Sotil. Their son was João Sotil da Gama, with issue.
- 6 Paulo da Gama**, married Constança Gil, daughter of Gil Vasques de Altero. With issue.

**VI Estevão da Gama**, entered when still very young into the service of King Duarte who recognised his excellent capability by naming him as servant to his son, the infante Fernando, 1<sup>st</sup> duke of Vizeu. When the infante wanted to follow family traditions and extend the territories overseas, he turned his eyes toward Africa and chose Estevão da Gama to go under cover to sound out the scale of the military forces in the town of Anafé. As this risky mission was competently and courageously carried out, he was again chosen in 1468 by king Affonso V to accompany the said infante to the siege of that African stronghold.

Affonso V recommended him particularly as guardian of his brother, above all that he did all possible to prevent him committing any recklessness due to his heated and rash spirit, with fatal consequences. Estevão da Gama carried out this honourable mission to everyone's satisfaction.

The infante Fernando died in 1470, leaving, as well as his successor Diogo, another son born in 1469 named Manuel, the future and first king of this name.

*[pp.33-35, biographical details of the life and fortunes of Estevão da Gama]*

Estevão da Gama married Izabel Sodré, sister of Vicente Sodré, and both daughters of João de Rezende of Santarem and his wife Maria. They had the following children:

- 7 **Paulo da Gama**, *[summary biographical detail]*. Accompanied his brother Vasco to India, and died on his return to the kingdom in 1499 in the Azores where he was interred in the monastery of San Francisco.
- 7 **Ayres da Gama**, also studied for the priesthood. He went to India in 1511 and 1518, and died in 1522 having been married to Joanna de Castello Branco, daughter of Pedro de Castello Branco. Their son and heir was Antonio da Gama who went to India in 1533 as captain of the galleon San Salvador. He died 1566.
- 7 **Vasco da Gama** (continues below)
- 7 **Theresa da Gama**, had a pension of 20,000 reales in 1509 in order to marry Lopo Mendes de Vasconcellos.
- 7 **Izabel da Gama**, a nun in Chellas
- 7 **Estevão da Gama**, died 1499 without issue.

**VII Vasco da Gama**, born Sines in 1469, son, as already stated, of Estevão da Gama

*[remaining text, pp.37-41, not yet translated – biographical details of Vasco da Gama.]*