

Thorfinnsson: The first european child born in North America



Snorri Thorfinnsson, also known by his Icelandic name Snorri Þorfinnsson, is a captivating historical figure born between 1004 and 1013, and who died around 1090. He is the son of the renowned explorers Thorfinn Karlsefni and Gudrid Thorbjarnardottir and is considered the first European child born in North America, in a region called Vinland.

This significant event marks an important milestone in Viking exploration and the earliest known European contact with the North American continent, predating Christopher Columbus by centuries.

Birth in Vinland

According to the Icelandic sagas, specifically the Saga of Erik the Red and the Saga of the Greenlanders, Thorfinn Karlsefni and Gudrid Thorbjarnardottir embarked on a journey to Vinland, a land west of Greenland, which is believed to be part of present-day North America, possibly Newfoundland. It is in this region that Snorri was born, making him the first known European child to be born on North American soil. This fact is a tangible testament to the early interactions between European cultures and the New World and highlights the adventurous spirit and exploration prowess of the Vikings.

Return to Iceland

When Snorri was about three years old, his family returned to Iceland, settling in Glaumbær, a location in the Skagafjörður region. Glaumbær became the place where Snorri grew up and established his own family. This farm has since become a significant historical site, illustrating the life of early Nordic settlers in Iceland.

Descendants and Legacy

Snorri Thorfinnsson had two children: a daughter, Hallfrid, and a son, Thorgeir.

- **Hallfrid Snorradottir**: She was the mother of Þorlákur Runólfsson, who became the bishop of Skálholt, one of the most important religious figures in medieval Iceland. Þorlákur played a crucial role in the religious and cultural history of Iceland, contributing to the organization of the Icelandic Church.
- **Thorgeir Snorrason**: He was the father of Saemundur, who in turn was the father of Brandur Sæmundsson, who became the bishop of Hólar. Snorri's lineage shows a lasting influence on Icelandic religious and cultural life, with several members of his descendants holding prominent ecclesiastical positions.

Archaeological Discoveries

In 2002, American archaeologists discovered the remains of a longhouse approximately 1000 years old in northern Iceland. This discovery, located in the Glaumbær area, corresponds to the period when Snorri and his family lived there. It is therefore likely that these remains are those of Snorri Thorfinnsson's farm, providing concrete insights into the daily life and social organization of early Icelandic settlers.

Sources

- fr.wikipedia.org

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