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***SAGA  
OF THE GREENLANDERS***

**John Sephton, Arthur Middleton Reeves**

# **Saga of the Greenlanders**

**Including “Erik the Red”**

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# **A Brief HISTORY OF ERIC THE RED**

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There was a man named Thorvald, a son of Osvald, Ulf's son, Eyxna-Thori's son. Thorvald and Eric the Red, his son, left Jaederen [in Norway], on account of manslaughter, and went to Iceland. At that time Iceland was extensively colonized. They first lived at Drangaron Horn-strands, and there Thorvald died. Eric then married Thorhild, the daughter of Jorund and Thorbiorg the Ship-chested, who was then married to Thorbiorn of the Haukadal family. Eric then removed from the north, and made his home at Ericsstadir by Vatnshom. Eric and Thorhild's son was called Leif.

After the killing of Eyiulf the Eoul, and Duelling-Hrafn, Eric was banished from Haukadal, and he took himself westward to Breidafirth, settling in Eyxney at Ericsstadir. He loaned his outer dais-boards to Thorgest, and could not get these again when he demanded them. This gave rise to broils and battles between him-self and Thorgest, as Eric's Saga relates. Eric was backed in the dispute by Styr Thorgrimsson, Eyiulf of Sviney, the sons of Brand of Alptafirth and Thorbiorn Vifilsson, while the Thorgesters were upheld by the sons of Thord the Yeller, and Thorgeir of Hitardal. Eric was declared an outlaw at Thorsnessting. He there-upon equipped his ship for a voyage, in Ericsvag, and when he was ready to sail Styr and the others accompanied him out beyond the islands. Eric told them that it was his purpose to go in search of that country which Gunnbiorn, son of Ulf the Crow, had seen, when he was driven westward across the main, at

the time when he discovered Gunnbioms-skerries; he added, that he would return to his friends, if he should succeed in finding this country. Eric sailed out from Snaefellsjökull, and found the land. He gave the name of Mýdalsvík to his landfall; this is now called Blacksand. From thence he proceeded southward along the coast, in search of habitable land. He passed the first winter at Ericsey, near the middle of the Eastern-settlement, and the following spring he went to Ericsfirth, where he selected a dwelling-place. In the summer he visited the western uninhabited country, and assigned names to many of the localities. The second winter he remained at Holmar by Hrafnsgnipa, and the third summer he sailed northward to Snaefell, and all the way into Hrafnsvík; then he said he had reached the head of Ericsfirth. He then returned and passed the third winter in Ericsey at the mouth of Ericsfirth. The next summer he sailed to Iceland, landing in Breidafirth. He called the country, which he had discovered, Greenland, because, he said, people would be attracted thither if the country had a good name. Eric spent the winter in Iceland, and the following summer set out to colonize the country. He settled at Brattahlíð in Ericsfirth, and learned men say that in this same summer, in which Eric set out to settle Greenland, thirty-five ships sailed out of Breidafirth and Gorgarfirth; fourteen of these arrived safely, some were driven back and some were lost. This was fifteen years before Christianity was legally adopted in Iceland. During the same summer Bishop Frederick and Thorvald Kodransson went abroad [from Iceland]. Of those men, who accompanied Eric to Greenland, the following took possession of land there:

Heriulf, Heriulfsfirth, he dwelt at Heriulfsness; Ketil, Ketilsfirth, Hrafn, Hrafnfirth, Solvi, Solvadal; Helgi Thorbrandsson, Alptafirth; Thorbiom Gleamer, Siglufirth; Einar, Einarsfirth; Hafgrim, Hafgimsfirtheand Vatnahverfi; Arnlaugsfirth; while some went to the Western settlement.

## **LEIF THE LUCKY BAPTIZED.**

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After that sixteen winters had lapsed, from the time when Eric the Red went to colonize Greenland, Leif, Eric's son, sailed out from Greenland to Norway. He arrived in Drontheim in the autumn, when King Olaf Tryggvasson was come down from the north, out of Halagoland. Leif put in to Nidaros with his ship, and set out at once to visit the king. King Olaf expounded the faith to him, as he did to other heathen men who came to visit him. It proved easy for the king to persuade Leif, and he was accordingly baptized, together with all of his shipmates. Leif remained throughout the winter with the king, by whom he was well entertained.