

# *From the Desk of Write Field Services*

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Axe of Iron: The Settlers  
By  
J.A. Hunsinger

In his novel, *Axe of Iron*, author J.A. Hunsinger takes readers back to the year 1008 and tells a Viking tale of exploration and adventure. The story centers on two Northmen explorers, Halfdan Ingolfsson and his second in command, Gudbjartur Einarsson, who lead an expedition to explore and establish a settlement along the coast of North America. Their journey takes them from Greenland to what is now known as Baffin Island, Canada, and then entering Hudson Bay, via the Hudson Strait. Their voyage terminated on the east coast of James Bay, at the extreme south end of Hudson Bay, where the settlement, Halfdanssonfjord, was built.

The plot of the story concentrates on the trials and tribulations facing the settlers as they try to make a life in the new world. The journey is filled with many deadly challenges such as the brutal force of nature, encounters with the native peoples of North America, as well as social struggles among the settlers. Themes that develop include: the role of family and women, loyalty, betrayal, slavery, religious practices, as well as learning to work with the Native peoples instead of fighting them.

As historical fiction, the author successfully captures a glimpse of the life of the Norsemen. It becomes quite clear that a great deal of research went into creating the story. The attention to detail is quite remarkable. That is, the author's descriptions of Norse ships, Norse customs, dress, the day to day struggles to survive that include hunting techniques, food preparation, weapons, and tools. As well, Hunsinger provides a detailed historical perspective of the time period, a glossary, and a map to assist readers in following the journey. The author clearly shows his knowledge and expertise on the subject.

For readers who enjoy the historical fiction genre, *Axe of Iron* is a must-have. The descriptive writing makes you feel as though you are a part of the journey. The novel is an entertaining story that will give readers an appreciation of the brutal life endured by the Norsemen.

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Publisher: Vinland Publishing Llc (August 1, 2008)  
ISBN-10: 0980160103