

The Tome Traveler's Weblog
Book Review
Axe of Iron: The Settlers

By the year 1008, the warm temperatures of the previous two hundred years had melted much of the ice in the northern seas, allowing the Vikings the opportunity to expand and explore. Their success as a people had led to overpopulation of their native lands, the oldest son would inherit the family land, and no additional land was available for younger sons. The land that was available had become over-used and could not feed the large population. So groups of Northmen, or Norse, left their ancestral homes in search of new lands where they could settle.

This is the fictional account of Halfdan Ingolfsson, his second in command Gudbjartur Einarsson and their group of 315 settlers searching for a new homeland. They leave Greenland in six large wooden ships and sail south, headed for the outpost of Leifsbudir on the east coast of North America. During a ferocious storm they are blown off course and end up in the previously unexplored Hudson Bay.

They have brought with them everything they need to start life in a new place. They have livestock and provisions, tools and craftsmen. They are a hearty people well used to the hard work of daily life. And Halfdan is a leader with revolutionary ideas. Though the Northmen are renowned for their battle ability, Halfdan wants to befriend the native people and live in harmony with them, avoiding the wars that have been the downfall of previous attempts at settling new lands.

This novel is extremely well researched and provides great historical detail about the daily life of the Vikings, their sources of food and methods of cooking, tool making, hunting, and sailing. I enjoyed the story and the character development; the author did a good job of portraying the social tapestry of this hearty group of people. Packed with fascinating information about this little known time period, readers of historical fiction, nautical fiction and adventure novels would all enjoy this book.

[Axe of Iron](#) is the first book of a planned five book series. Published by Vinland Publishing, ISBN 9780980160109.