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Confrontation: An Axe of Iron Novel

By

J.A. Hunsinger

‘Confrontation: An Axe of Iron Novel’ is J.A. Hunsinger’s second novel that is a continuation of his first Viking adventure, ‘Axe of Iron,’ that takes place in the year 1008. Hunsinger continues the adventures of Norsemen explorers Halfdan Ingolfsson and his second in command, Gudbjartur Einarsson, who have lead an expedition and established a settlement named Halfdanssonfjord, located along the coast of North America on the east coast of James Bay, at the south end of Hudson Bay.

The Viking adventures continue with the settlers struggling to make a life in Halfdanssonfjord. The focus of the adventure is the relationship between the settlers and the indigenous people. Readers will not only experience the lives of the Norsemen, but also the lives of the natives that include the Naskapi (Cree), Anishinabeg (Ojibwa), and the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois). The story delves into the confrontations with the natives. Readers will not only experience life and death confrontations, but also the relationships between the settlers and natives. When Gudbjartur is on a scouting trip, he is captured and becomes a prisoner of the Naskapi tribe, and is then taken to their village. Through his eyes, readers will learn about the native peoples’ lives through a chronicling of their practices, customs, burial rituals, execution rituals, hunting methods, and cooking methods. Readers will experience how tough life is in the wilderness and the brutal conditions both the natives and Viking settlers endure.

Despite the harsh conditions and brutal confrontations, a major theme of the story is how the native and Norsemen learn about each others way of life and the friendships and mutual respect that develop. For instance, Gudbjartur becomes a part of the tribe and learns from them. He reflects, “These warriors, I guess they are my warriors too. I have been accepted as one of them.” As well, his son, Ivar Gudbjartarsson, also experiences life as a prisoner of the Haudenosaunee.

Hunsinger successfully builds on his first novel and adds even more action and adventure. As with the first novel, the story is rich in historical details which clearly show the careful attention paid to historical accuracy which allows the reader to peer through a window into the past and experience an important historical period. He incorporates the fictional tale with historical details which makes reading the story not only fun, but also engaging. Readers will root for Gudbjartur as he struggles with his Norsemen fighting spirit and his desire to make peace with the native people. I highly recommend ‘Confrontation: An Axe of Iron Novel’ as an entertaining addition to the historical fiction genre. Readers will find the story and characters so compelling that they will not realize that they are learning as they read.

Tracy Roberts, Write Field Services