

## Why the Interest in the Vikings?

by J. A. Hunsinger

I have had a lifelong infatuation with the Vikings of medieval Greenland. After reading everything available, one is left with a nagging question. What happened to them? It is difficult to study them because they wrote nothing down. Everything we know comes from archaeological research and the Norse sagas. The Saga of the Greenlanders and Eirik the Red's Saga both tell stories about them, although centuries after the fact, but we know nothing about the people themselves. I decided to tell their tale using fiction because I wanted to convey to my readers what a lifetime of research has led me to believe regarding the abandonment of the two known Norse settlements on Greenland and the disappearance from history of every single settler. Nobody ever saw them again and nobody knows to this day, what happened to them. In spinning my *Axe of Iron* series of tales, I give my characters personalities, to make them as we are. No other author has ever told their story as I do.

One of my book reviewers, Melissa Levine, [IP Book Reviewers](#) had this to say: 'It's the details that grab the reader's attention in J. A. Hunsinger's historical novel, *Axe of Iron: The Settlers*. The book is the first installment in a planned series of stories about the migration of the Greenland Norse to North America. From the introduction, which provides background information, to the brutal ending, Hunsinger uses his extensive knowledge of the history and culture of Norsemen to craft a story that exposes the lives of an ancient people with an admirable sense of adventure and value for community. Hunsinger teaches with the details that he infuses into this story. The reader will learn what the Norsemen ate; how they set-up temporary camps and permanent residence; how they conducted themselves in battle; and the manner in which men and women fell into intimate relationships. The importance of respect and loyalty in the culture is represented by the relationship between Halfdan and Gudbj. Their bond that is stronger than that often seen between blood brothers. There is an intense trust between them that provides the level of security needed to lead their followers while exploring a new land, surviving severe storms at sea, and battling against natives. The love and admiration between the two men is so overwhelming it frequently makes Gudbj uncomfortable. But their feelings for each other do not diminish them as men. Halfdan and Gudbj are so secure in their masculinity that they are not intimidated by the strength of their women who work as hard and love as strongly as they do.

*Axe of Iron: The Settlers* is a hearty, adventure-packed history lesson. I highly recommend it.'

I am pleased with her assessment of my tale. The saga continues with *Axe of Iron: Confrontation*. The second book of the continuing tale of the Greenland Norse people and their adventures in North America will be published in June 2009.