

During the Viking Age, there was continuous expansion westward and into the North Atlantic Isles. This was driven by a need for land, political factors, and opportunities abroad, forming an emigration movement with permanent settlements to Shetland/Orkney (c.800), Faroes (c.825), Hebrides (c.825–850), Ireland (840–841), Iceland (c.870), Isle of Man (c.875–900), Greenland (c.985–986), Newfoundland (c.1000; not permanent) (Haywood, 64–68, 86, 90–92, 96, 98, 128–132; Wallace, 434, 606–608; Sigurðsson, 563, 566; Wilson, 385–386; Arneborg, 588).

While the Northern Isles saw a near-complete cultural replacement, the expansion into the Western Isles and the Isle of Man became a blend of Norse and Celtic traditions (Haywood, 96–97, 121; Wilson, 388–389; Barrett, 412). In Ireland, Vikings acted as traders, raiders, and mercenaries, founding the island's first towns (Haywood, 97; Ó Corráin, 430–432; Wallace, 434). Ireland is genetically significant in this context (Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, 571), but not a part of the North Atlantic Isles.

Shetland and Orkney: The powerful Earldom of Orkney was at its height under Earl Thorfinn the Mighty (1014–1064), who controlled the Northern Isles, the Hebrides, and parts of mainland Scotland (Haywood, 128).

The Faroe Islands: According to the *Faereyinga Saga*, an Irish Viking colonist, Grímur Kamban, drove out the Irish hermits who had inhabited the islands a century earlier, as recorded by the Irish monk Dicuil in *Liber de mensura orbis terrae*. Archaeological evidence shows that farming (oats, sheep) was present on the islands as early as 600–650 (Haywood, 90; Ó Corráin, 428). Farm excavations at Toftanes in Leirvík prove Viking connections (Arge, 580–581).

The Hebrides (Western Isles) and the Isle of Man: There was a Norse-Gaelic mixed population (*Gall-Gaedhil*) (Haywood, 76). Politically, the region was often unified under the Kingdom of Man and the Isles, formally united by Godred Crovan in 1079 (Haywood, 128).

Iceland: Ingolf and Hjørleif led the first-ever permanent settlement (Haywood, 92; Sigurðsson, 563). Tephrochronology indicates that the settlement period (*landnámsöl*) was c.871–930 (Sigurðsson, 571). The male elite were predominantly Norwegians. However, recent DNA evidence reveals a highly mixed population: approximately 60% of the founding women and 20% of the men were of Gaelic origin (Sigurðsson, 563).

Greenland: Eiríkr the Red settled permanently (east, *Brattahlíð*), after he was exiled from Iceland (Haywood, 96; Arneborg, 588; Sigurðsson, 566). At its peak around the year 1200, Greenland had a population of over 2,000 and about 500 farms (Arneborg, 591). Greenlanders traded walrus tusks (ivory) for iron (Arneborg, 590) and probably timber (Sigurðsson, 568). Unlike Iceland, no pagan graves have ever been found in Greenland (Sigurðsson, 566–567). The *Historia Norwegie* describes hostile encounters with people whom they called Skraelings. Material evidence shows that complex Inuit trade and interaction also occurred (Sutherland, 613–615).

Newfoundland: Leif Eiríksson and other explorers from Greenland attempted to settle the lands they called Vinland, establishing a short-lived base at L'Anse aux Meadows on the northern peninsula of Newfoundland (Haywood, 68, 98; Sigurðsson, 563; Wallace, 606–608).

Evidence comes from archaeology, tephrochronology, ice-core samples, zooarchaeology, paleoentomology, and isotopic/DNA analysis (Buckland, 598–600; Sigurðsson, 563–566), and Icelandic text sources of the 12th–13th centuries, including Ari the Learned's *The Book of the Icelanders* (*Íslendingabók*) and *The Book of Settlements* (*Landnámabók*), which detail the land claims and family trees of the original settlers (Sigurðsson, 563, 571). The voyages further west are recorded in the *Vinland Sagas* (*Grænlendinga saga*, *Eiríks saga rauða*) (Wallace, 604).