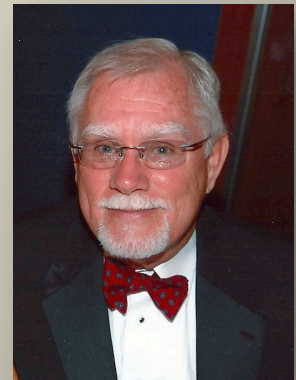


# Pre-Columbian Trans-Atlantic Crossings

Presented by Jim Siebold  
[www.myoldmaps.com](http://www.myoldmaps.com)



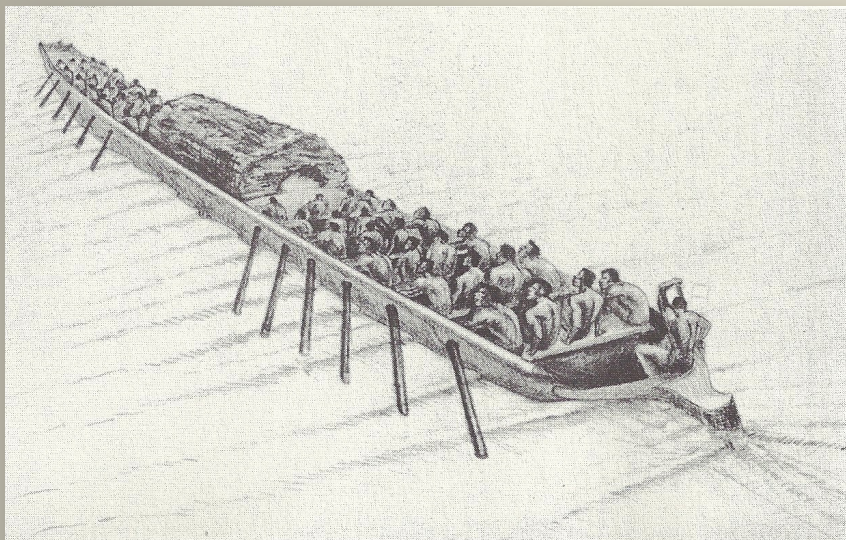
- Where are your ancestors from?
  - Ireland
  - Scotland
  - Italy
  - Portugal
  - China
  - Africa
  - Denmark
  - Norway
  - Middle East

# PRE-COLUMBIAN ATLANTIC CROSSINGS

- West Africans, 800 B.C.E. – 1311 C.E. (*recreated by Dr. Alain Bombard, 1952 & Hannes Lindemann, 1955*)
- The Phoenicians, 480 B.C.E. (*recreated by Thor Heyerdahl in 1970*)
- The Romans, 64 A.D./C.E.
- The Irish, 565 A.D./C.E. (*recreated by Tim Severin, 1976*)
- The Vikings, 982 – 1355 (*recreated by W. Hodding Carter, 1997-98*)
- Prince Madoc of Wales, 1171
- Prince Henry Sinclair & the Zeno Brothers, 1395
- Chinese Admiral, Zheng He, 1421
- João Vaz Cortereal, 1472



# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #1



When? 800 B.C.E. – 1311 C.E.

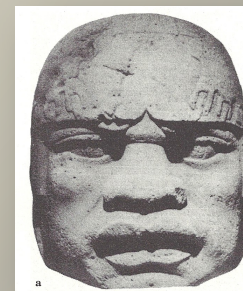
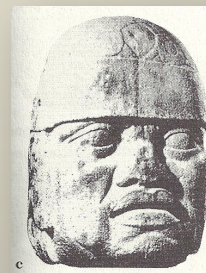
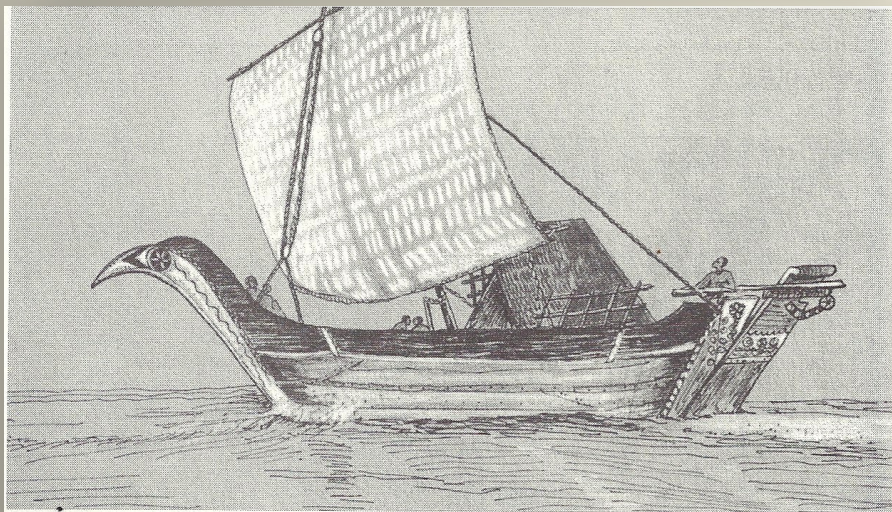
Who? West Africans - Mandingos (*multiple voyages from 800 B.C.E. through Abubakari II in 1311 C.E.*)

From-To? Starting from the Mali Empire in West Africa (*modern-day Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea and Mali*) to the Caribbean Islands, Mexico, and Peru

## Evidence:

- ✓ Large number of African stone faces dating from 800 B.C.E. (some are 6-9 feet high; 10 tons)
- ✓ Skeletal remains, diffusion of African plants
- ✓ Pre-Columbian Peruvian tales/traditions
- ✓ Recreated in a rubber raft by Dr. Alain Bombard (1952) and a wooden dugout canoe in 1955 by Hannes Lindemann

Impact: reception of Cortez, Pizarro as the return of *Quetzalcoatl*



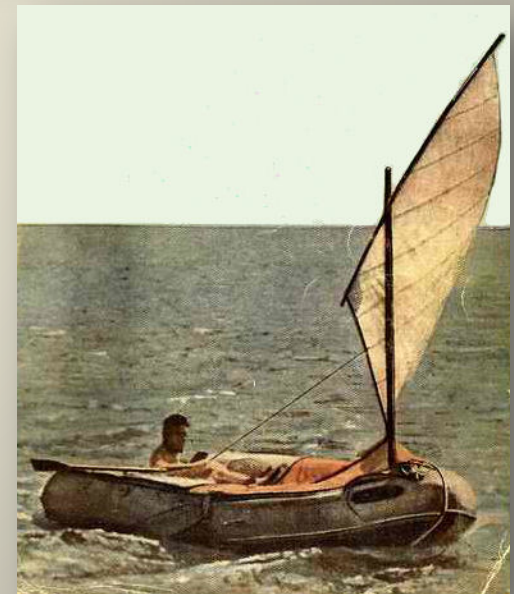
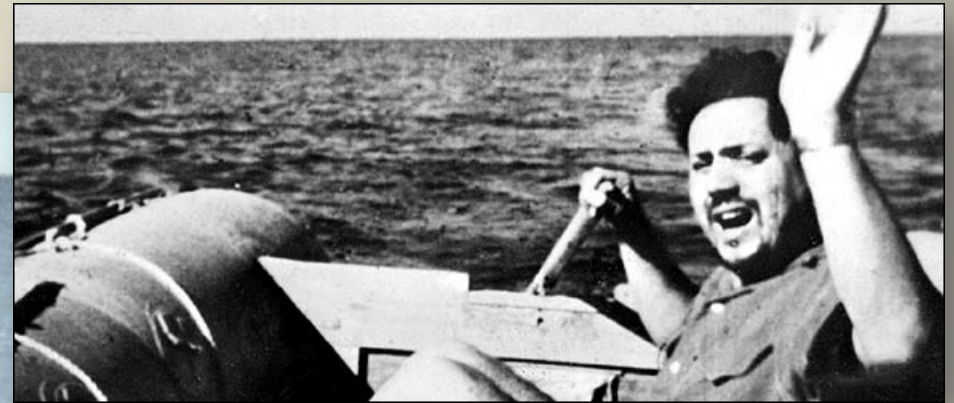




At least 17 of these huge stone heads have been uncovered in the region in Mexico occupied by the OLMEC

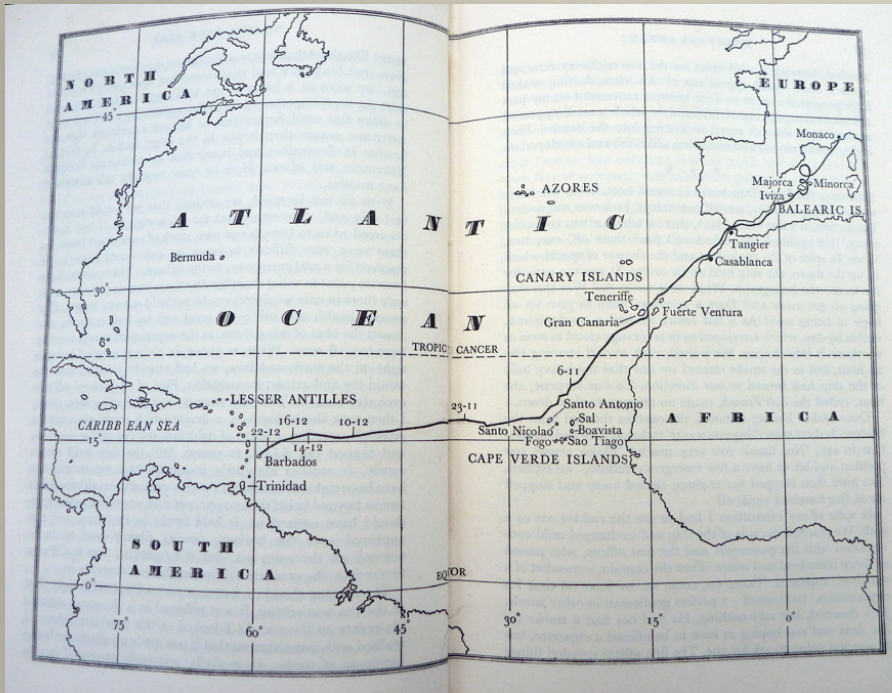


# Alain Bombard's Crossing in 1952

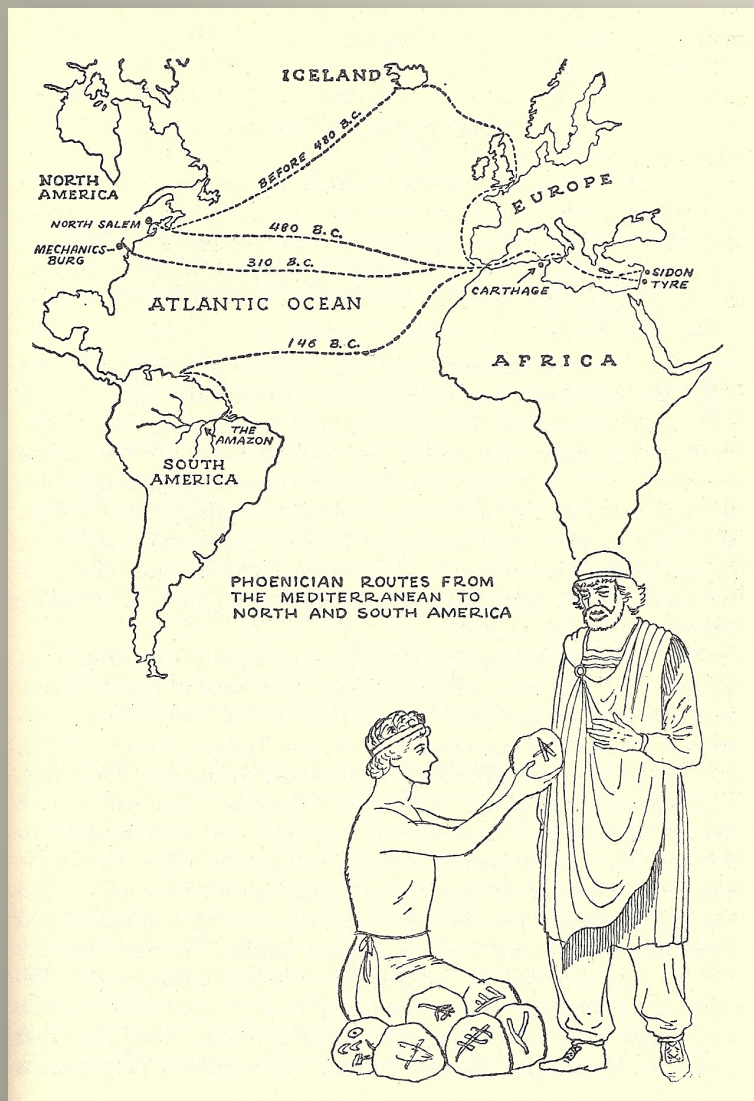


65 days in a lifeboat with no provisions - subsisting on plankton, saltwater and raw fish

# Recreated twice, in a wooden dugout canoe in 1955 and a folding kayak, by Hannes Lindemann



# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #2



**When?** 480 – 146 B.C.E.

**Who?** The Phoenicians/Carthaginians (*multiple voyages, some were escaping the Greek – Phoenician 300 year war*) – *secretive routes*

**Where?** Starting from Phoenicia to North & South America [present-day New Hampshire (*North Salem, Caves of Pattee*); Susquehanna, Pennsylvania, Mechanicsburg; and Brazil using the same North Equatorial Current/Southeast Trades]

**Evidence:** “America’s Stonehenge” (YouTube)

- ✓ Stone ruins in New Hampshire
- ✓ A sacrificial tables, dolmens, 20-ton megaliths, etc.
- ✓ Carthaginian coins
- ✓ Rock inscriptions and grooved stones in Pennsylvania
- ✓ Rock inscriptions in Brazil
- ✓ Bronze shields, daggers and swords
- ✓ A “Phoenician” ship carved in a Massachusetts stone
- ✓ An unfinished Doric pedestal and rosettes carved in the Guilford rocks.

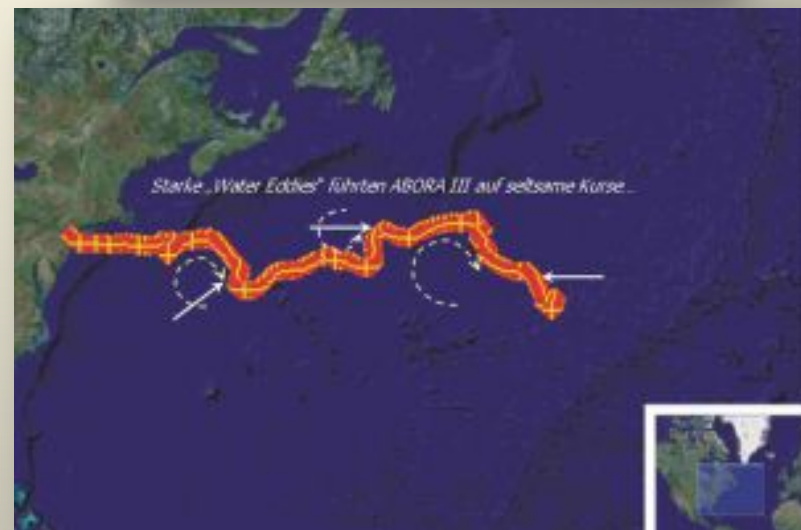


The “*Ra II Expedition*” by Thor Heyerdahl, on 17 May 1970, the African-made reed boat *Ra II* set sail from Safi in Morocco on course for Barbados. Thor Heyerdahl wanted to prove that one could have used this type of vessel to cross the Atlantic Ocean in ancient times. 57 days and 3,270 nautical miles, 6,100 km.

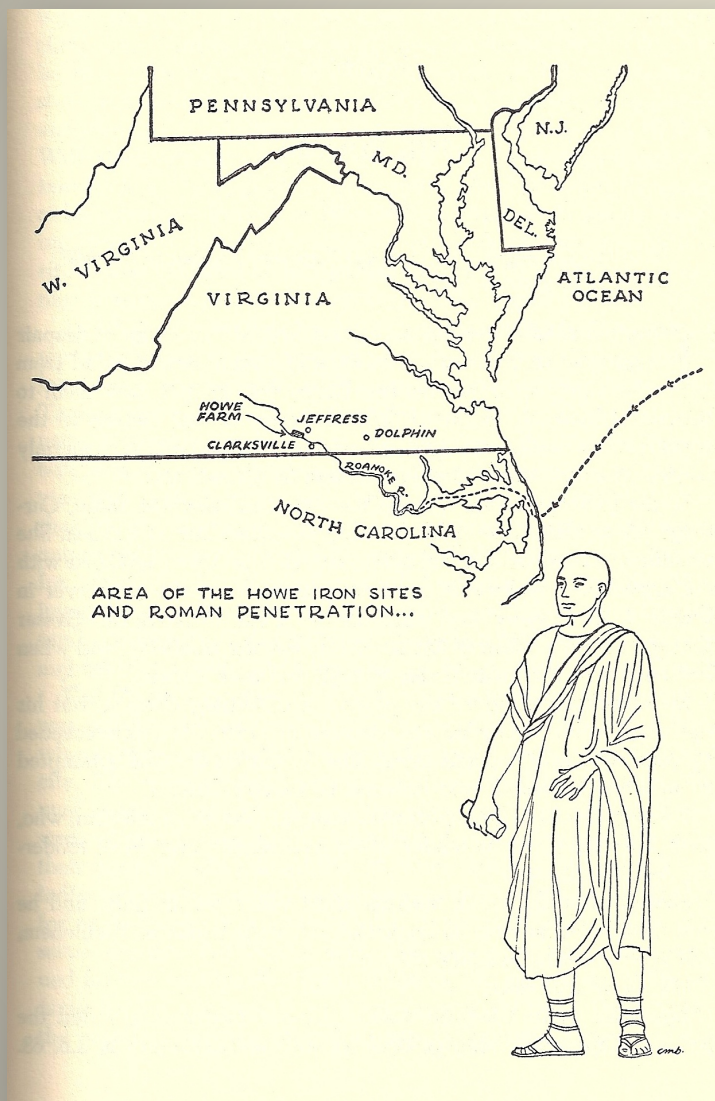


# Dominique Görlitz

Setting sail in the *Abora 3*, a 41-foot-long (12.5-meter), 12-foot-wide (3.7-meter) boat made completely out of reeds and rope, from New York on July 11, 2007 and hoping to land in Spain within 65 days. Due to extremely bad weather, the ship was heavily damaged and the voyage was ended 550 miles from the Azores



# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #3



**When?** 64 A.D./C.E.

**Who?** The Romans (*Christians escaping Nero's persecution*)

**Where?** Starting from Rome, Italy to North America [present-day North Carolina and Virginia: Cape Hatteras Island, Clarksville, VA.]

**Evidence:**

- ✓ ancient iron, bronze work and inscriptions
- ✓ all nearly identical to comparable Roman artifacts found throughout Europe

# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #4

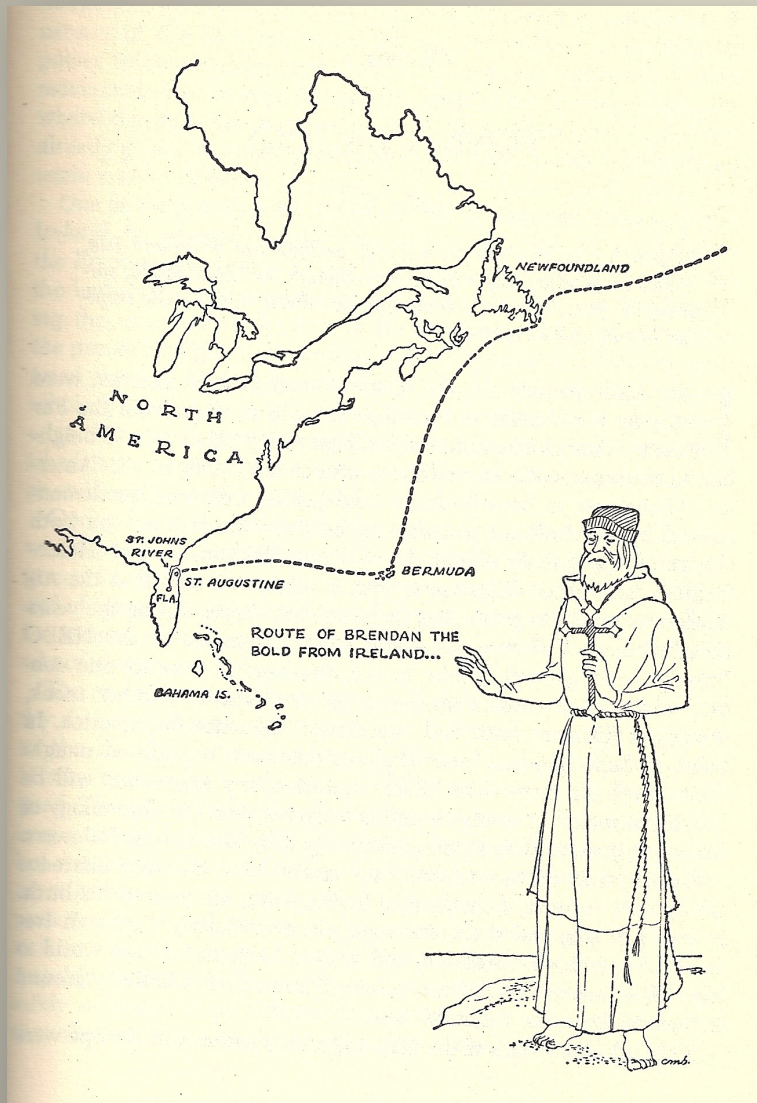
**When?** 565 A.D./C.E.

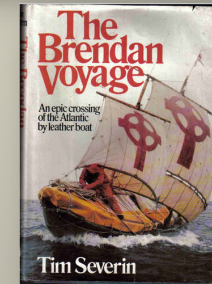
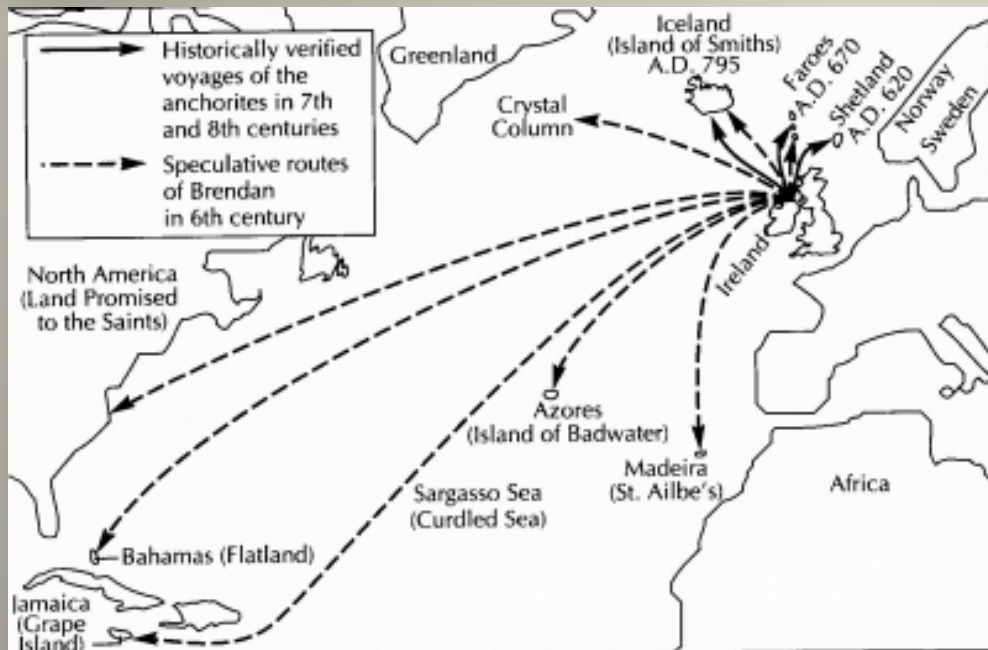
**Who?** Irish Monks (Brendan the Bold, Brenaind Moccu Alti, St. Brendan of Ciarraide, Luachra, Brendan the Navigator, the Monk of Clonfert and many others)

**Where?** Starting in Ireland to North America [present-day Bermuda, St. Augustine, FL]

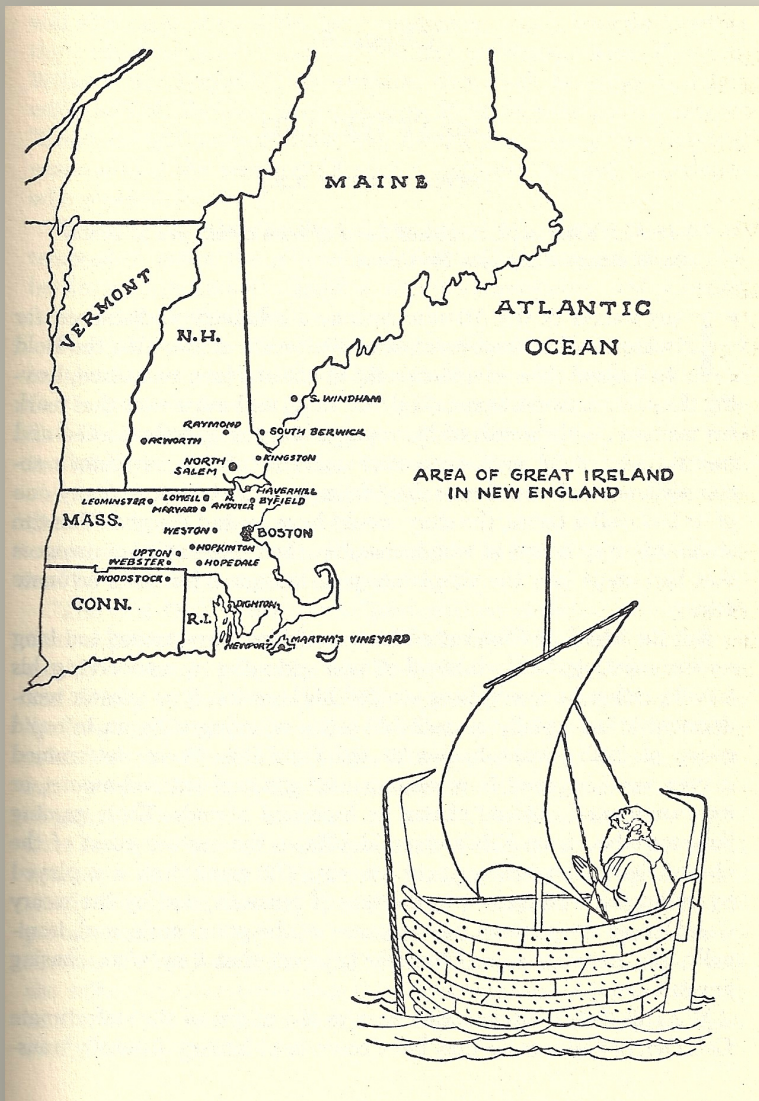
**Evidence:**

- ✓ oral tradition and written accounts over 900 years
- ✓ Tim Severin's 1976 re-creation, proof-of-concept





# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #5



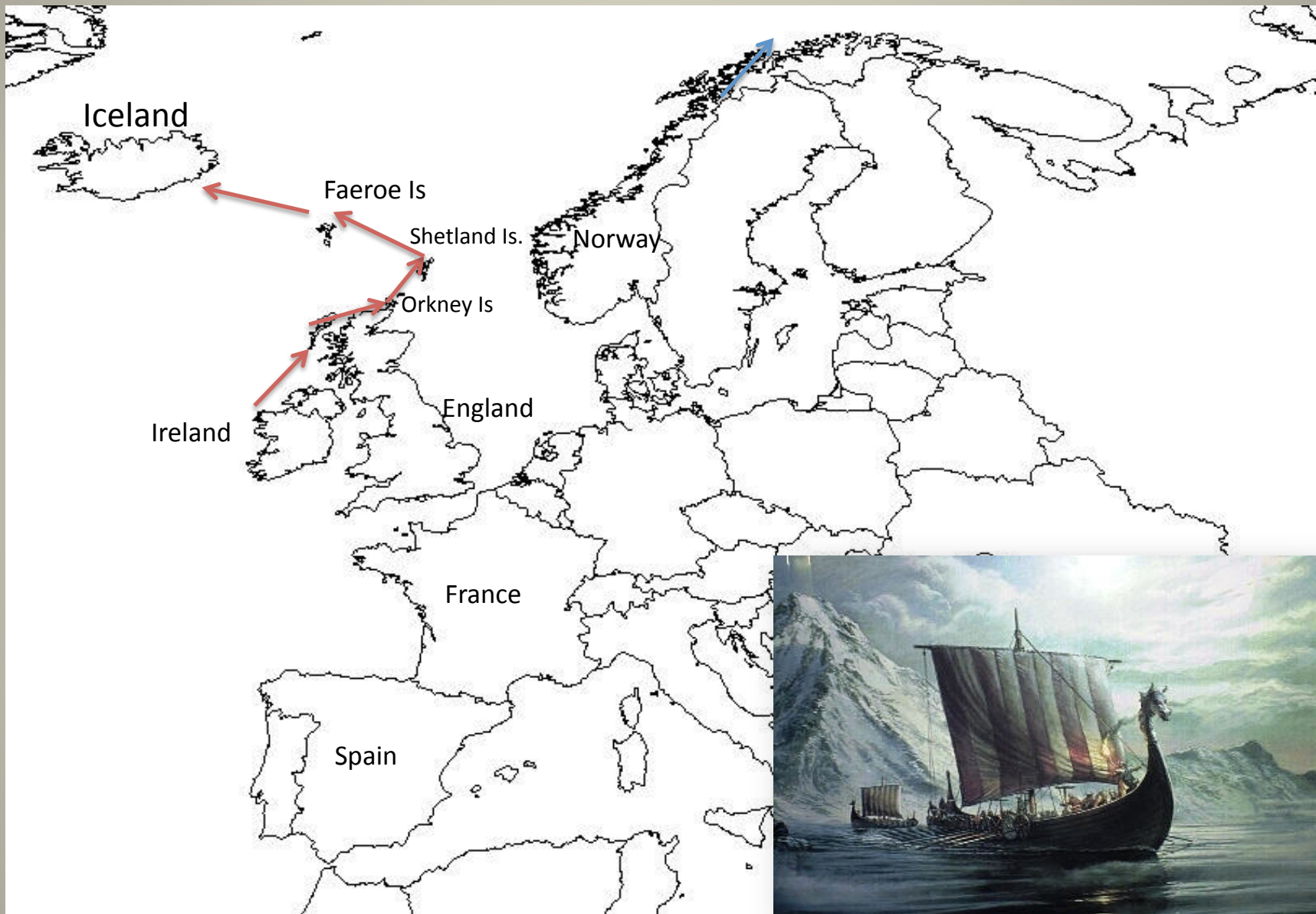
**When?** 795 A.D./C.E.

**Who?** *Celi Dei* [Servants of God]/Culdees  
Irish Monks trying to out-run the Vikings

**Where?** Starting in Ireland, via the Orkney, Shetland and Faeroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland to "Great Ireland" [present-day New England; Pattee's Cave, NH, North Salem]

**Evidence:**

- ✓ Many locations
- ✓ ancient iron, bronze work and inscriptions
- ✓ Icelandic Sagas (*Landnamaabok* and the *Flateyjarbok* 13<sup>th</sup> century)
- ✓ Dicuil's *History of the World*, 830 A.D.



**Irish Monks (Celi Dei) Voyages**



*Carta marina et Descriptio septentrionalium terrarum ac mirabilium rerum in eis contentarum, diligentissime elaborata Anno Domini 1539 Veneciis liberalitate Reverendissimi Domini Ieronimi Quirini*  
Olaus Magnus , 1539



CARTA MARINA ET DESCRIPTIO

SEPTENTRIONALIVM



ERRARVM · AC · MIRABILIVM · RERVM · IN · EIS · CONTENTARVM · DILIGEN

17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36



*Carta marina et Descriptio septentrionalium terrarum ac mirabilium rerum in eis contentarum, diligentissime elaborata Anno Domini 1539*

*Veneziis liberalitate Reverendissimi Domini Ieronimi Quirini Olaus Magnus, 1539*



# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #6

**When?** 982- A.D./C.E.

**Who?** Ari Marson (a Viking merchant & his crew from Iceland, captured by Celi Dei settlers)

**Where?** Starting from Iceland to:

“Great Ireland” or

“Hvitramannaland”, or

“Albania” or

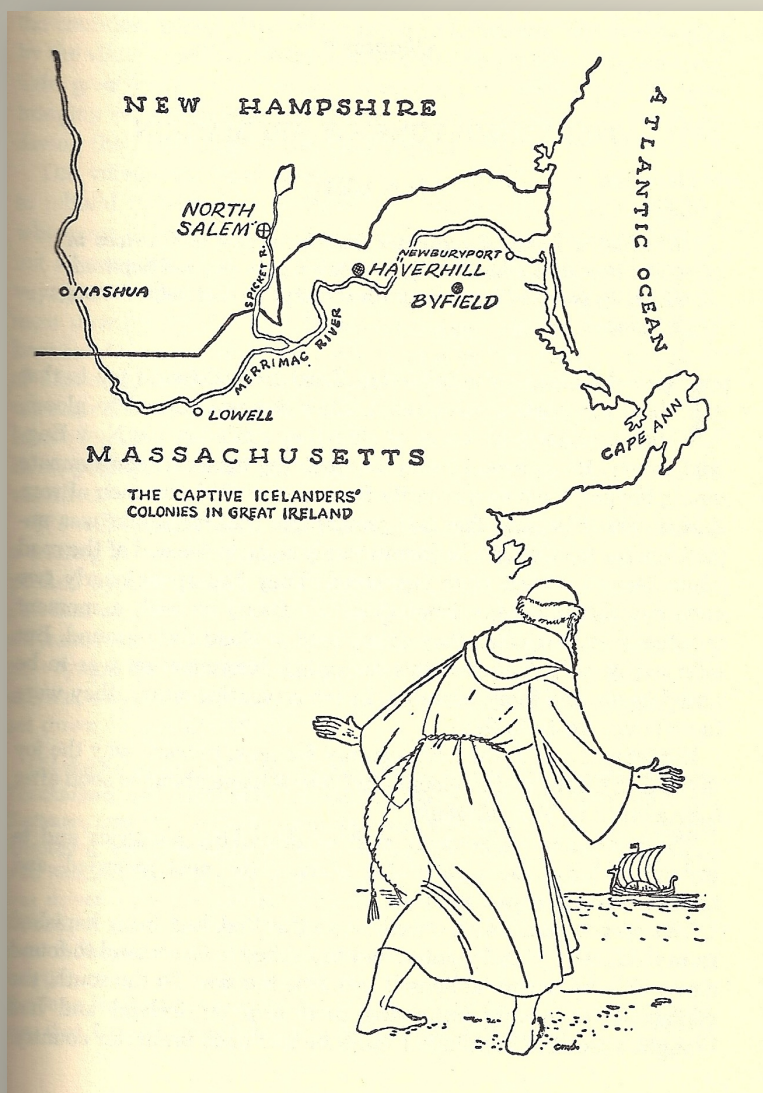
“White Man’s Land” or

“Norumbega”

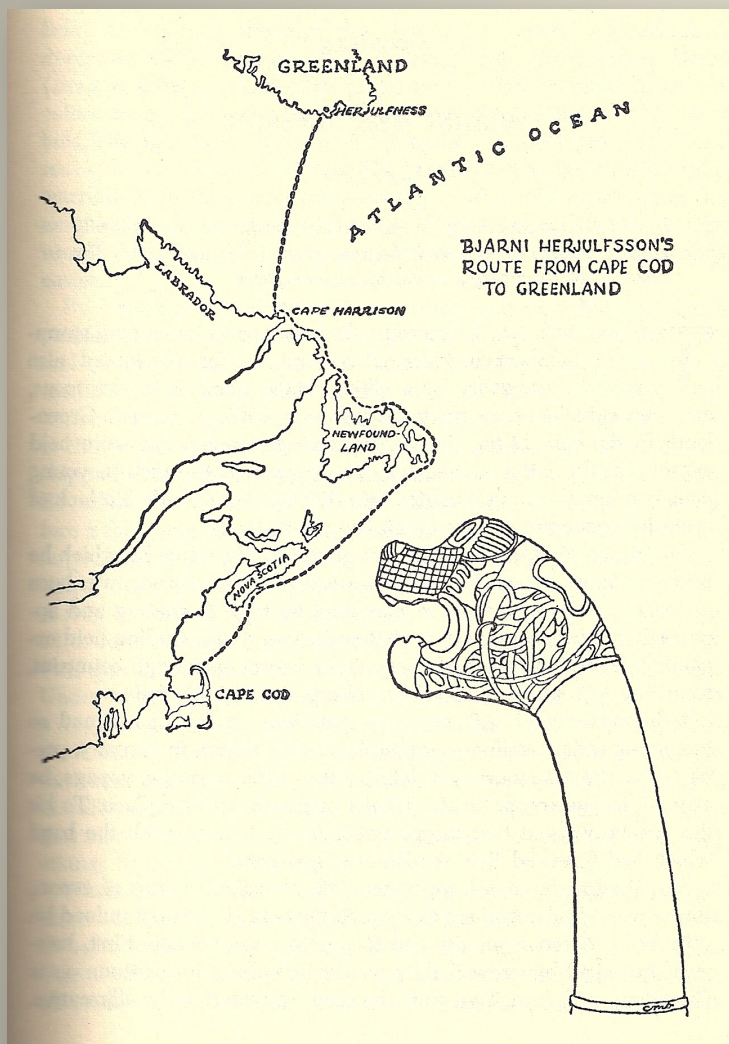
[present-day New England; Pattee’s Cave, NH, North Salem, Byfield-Haverhill, MA]

**Evidence:**

- ✓ ancient iron, bronze work and inscriptions (rune stones)
- ✓ Viking Sagas (*Landnamabok*)
- ✓ Dighton Rock



# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #7



**When?** 986 A.D./C.E.

**Who?** Bjarni Herjulfsson (*a Viking merchant & his crew from Iceland, looking for his father Herjulf*)

**Where?** Starting from Iceland to *Cape Cod, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Labrador*

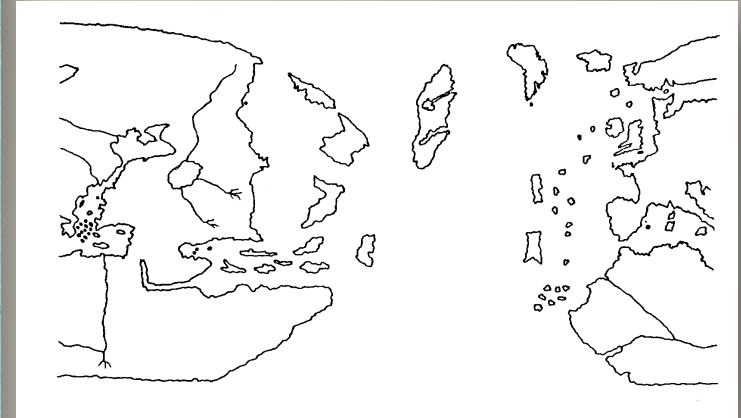
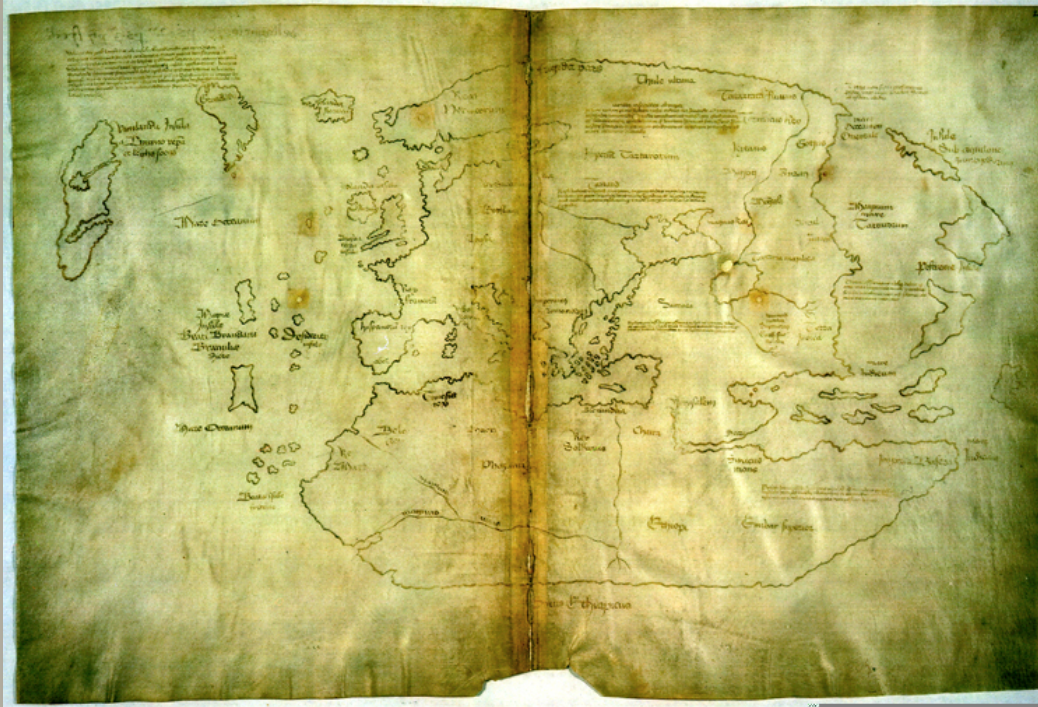
**Evidence:**

✓ Viking Sagas  
(*Flateyjarbook*)

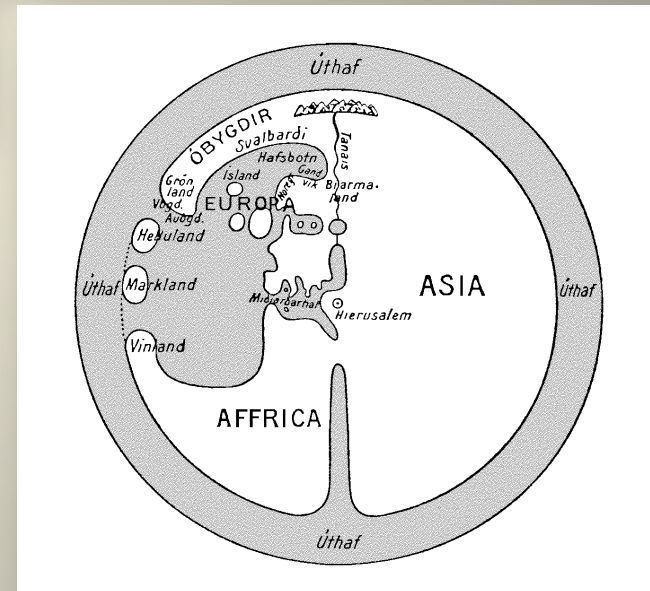


Bjarni's ship was a "trading ship", not a Viking war ship, clinker-built, 70 feet long, 18 foot beam with a crew of 35

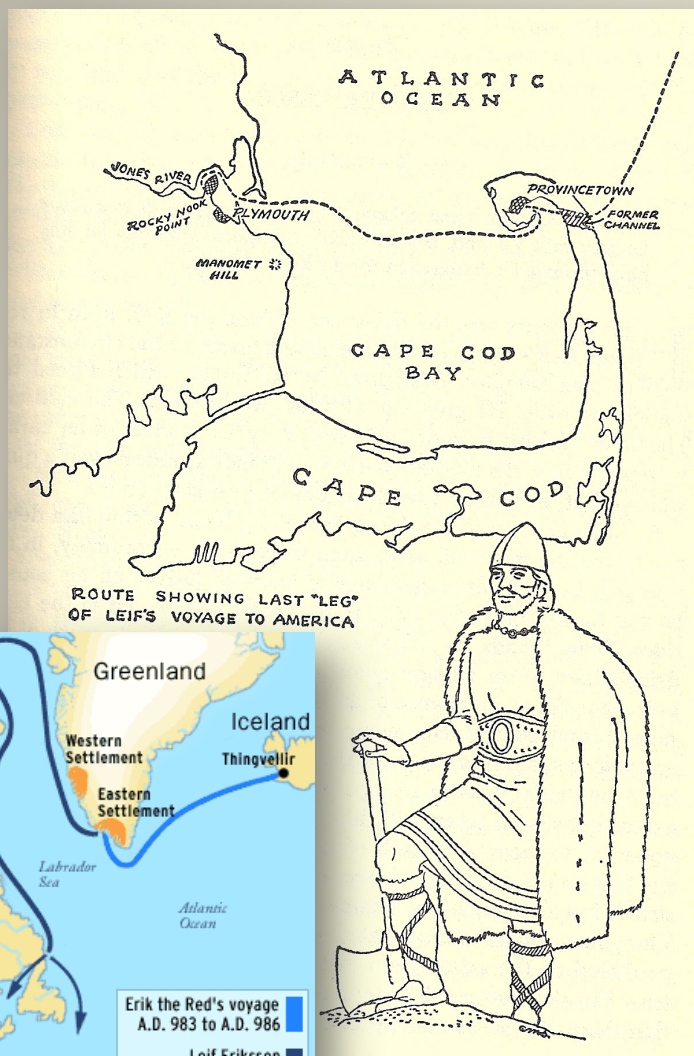
# THE VINLAND MAP 1440



A reconstructed  
12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century  
Norse world map  
after A.A. Björnbo  
in *Cartographia  
Groenlandica*



# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #8



**When?** 1003 A.D./C.E.

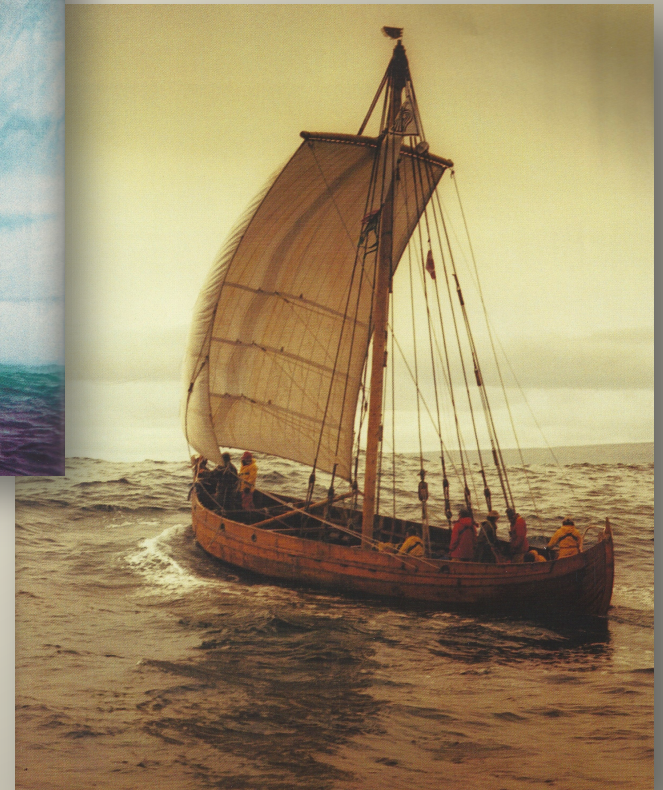
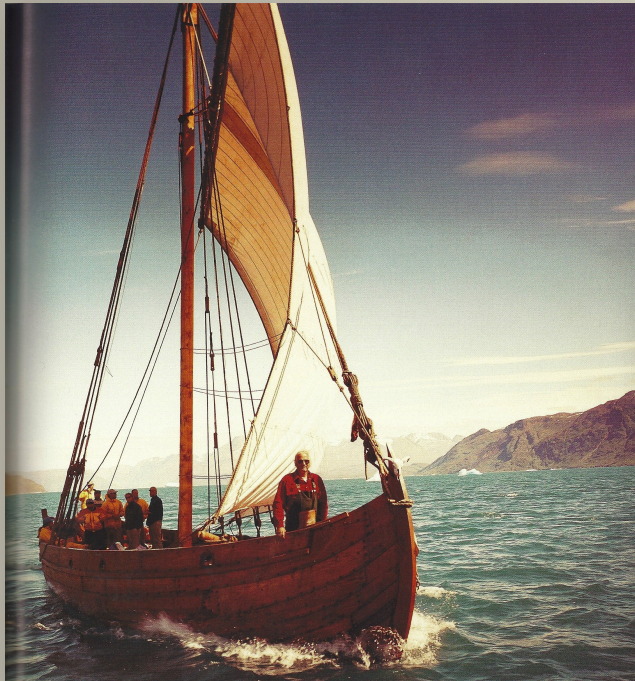
**Who?** Leif Ericsson (*oldest son of Eric the Red*) a.k.a. *Leif the Lucky*

**Where?** Starting from Greenland following Bjarni's previous excursion Leif named: *Helluland* [Flat-rock Land - Labrador], *Markland* [Woodland - Nova Scotia] and *Vinland* [Wineland - Cape Cod? or L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland]

**Evidence:**

- ✓ Viking Sagas (*Flateybook*)
- ✓ Helge Ingstad structural excavations of Kingston, MA (Rocky Nook Point)

# W. Hodding Carter's 1998 re-tracing of Leif's voyage



From Brattahlid, Greenland to  
L'Anse aux Meadows [The Bay by the  
Meadows], Newfoundland

# The Skálholt Map, 1590

Sigurd Stefansson/Thord Thorláksson

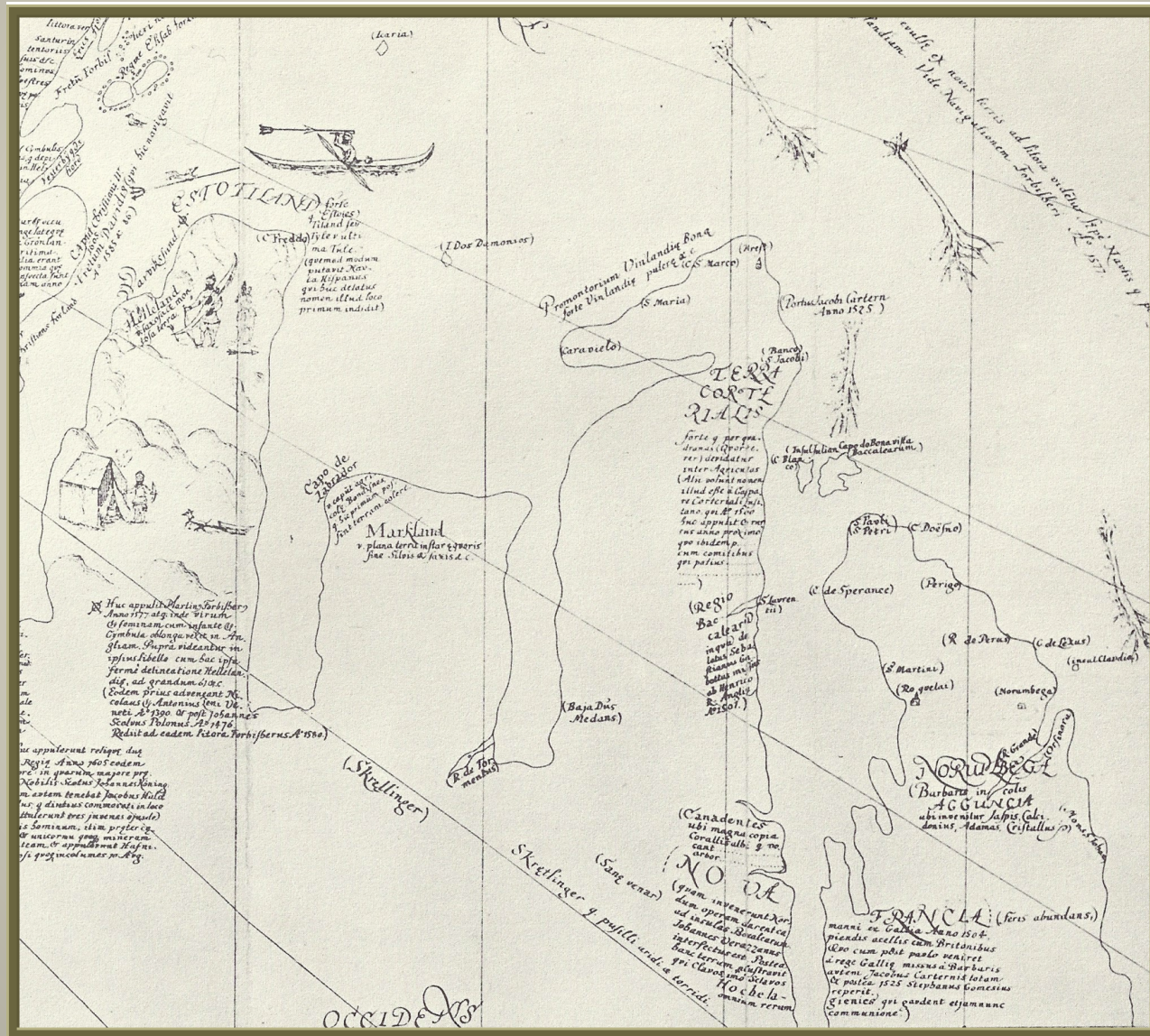


# The Skálholt Map, 1590

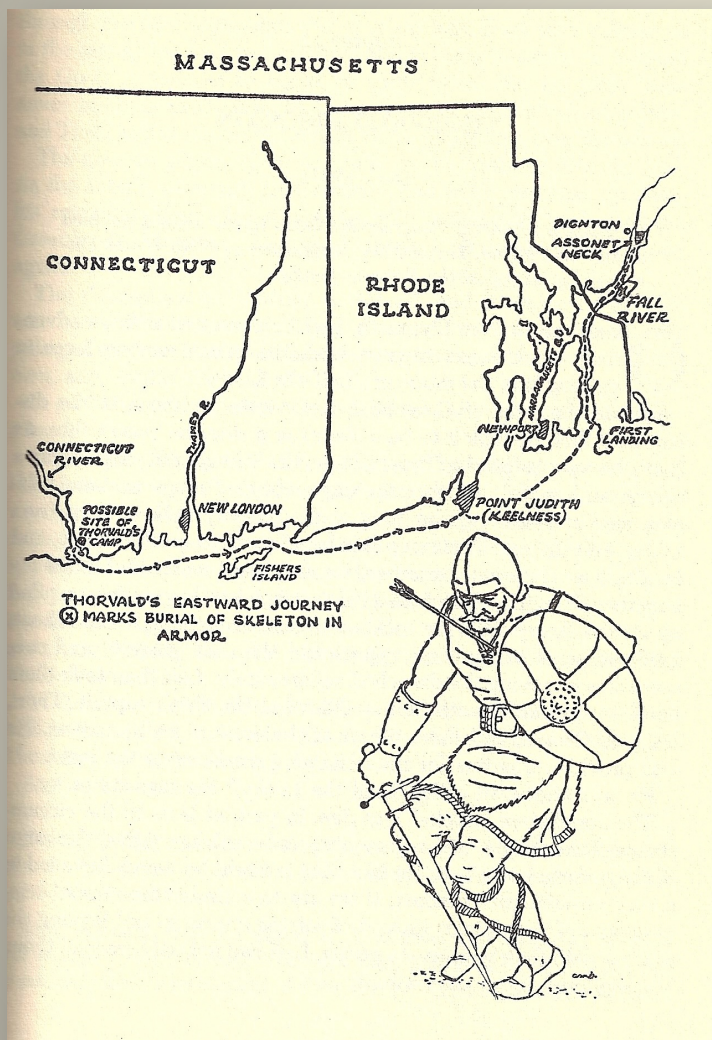
Sigurd Stefansson/Thord Thorláksson



Detail of the 1605 Rosen map showing (from left [North]-to-right [South])  
**Helleland, Markland and Vinland**



# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #9



**When?** 1007 A.D./C.E.

**Who?** Thorvald Ericsson  
(second son of Eric the Red)

**Where?** Starting from Greenland following Leif's previous excursion – *present-day* southern New England, Connecticut, Thames River

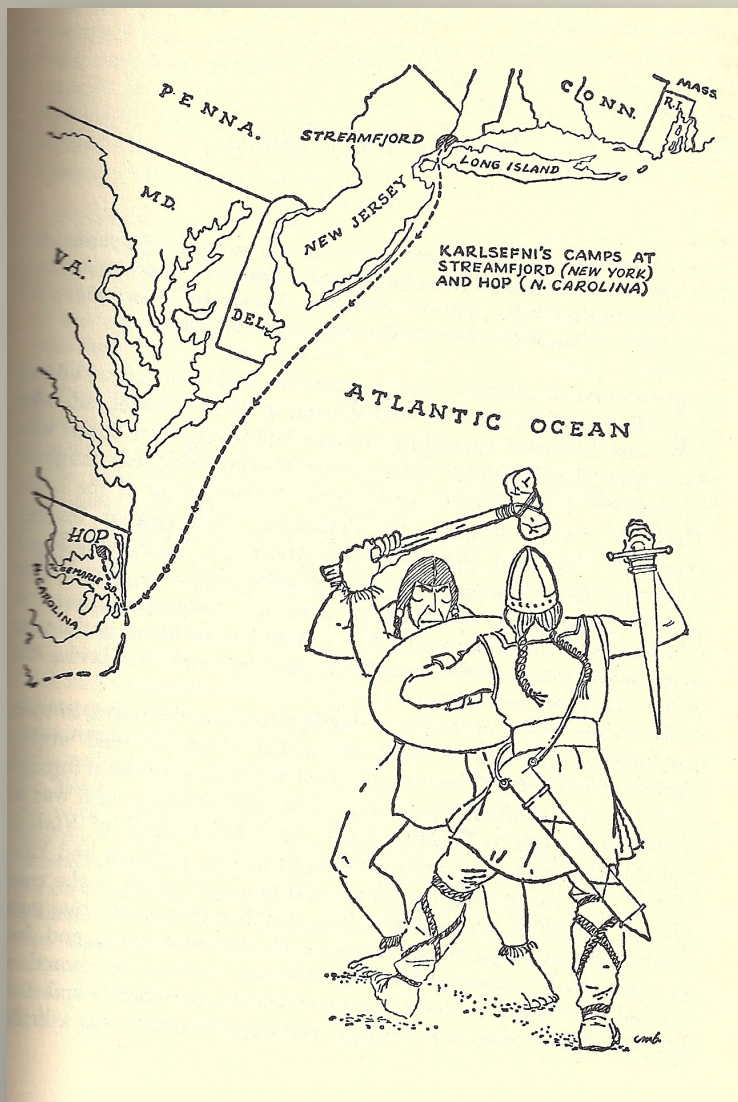
## **Evidence:**

- ✓ ancient iron, bronze work and inscriptions
- ✓ Viking Sagas (*Flateybook*, *Hauk's Book*)
- ✓ Newport Tower
- ✓ Skelton-in-Armor



Re-enactment in 2000

# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #10



**When?** 1010- A.D./C.E.

**Who?** Thorfinn Karlsefni

**Where?** Starting from Greenland following Leif's previous excursion – present-day Southern New England, Long Island, North Carolina (*with his wife Guidrid, his son Snorri was the the first known European born in America*)

**Evidence:**

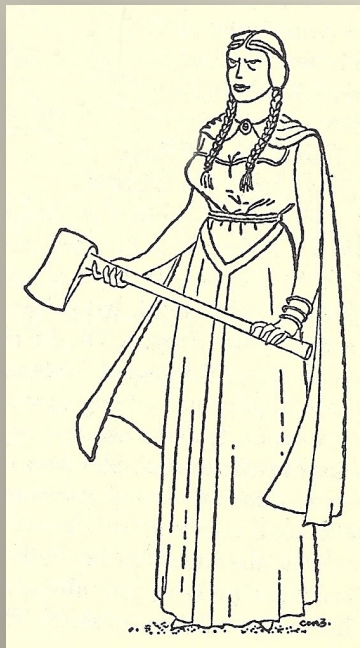
- ✓ ancient iron, bronze work and stone inscriptions
- ✓ Viking Sagas (*Flateybook, Hauk's Book in the Saga of Eric the Red*)

**Followed by:**

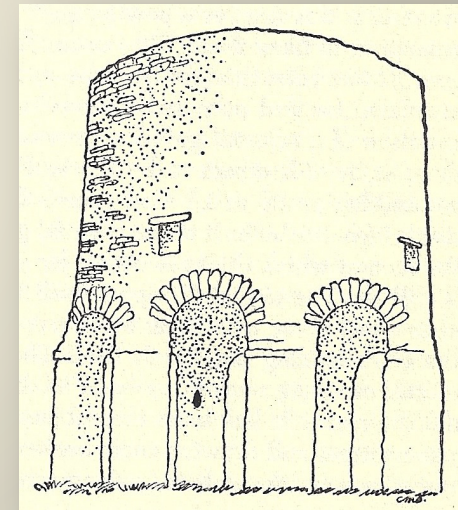
Freydis (Leif's daughter) in 1014 – *Greenland to Vinland*

Bishop Eric Gnutsson, 1121 – *Greenland to Newport, Rhode Island (the "Newport Tower")*

Paul Knutson, 1355, *from Norway to Minnesota, the "Kensington Stone"*



Freydis, Leif's daughter who, in 1014, slaughtered her own partners (men & women) in Vinland and ended future voyages by Vikings to America



The "Newport Tower" in Newport, Rhode Island attributed by some to Bishop Eric Gnutsson, and by Menzies to the Chinese.

# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #11

**When?** 1010 A.D./C.E.

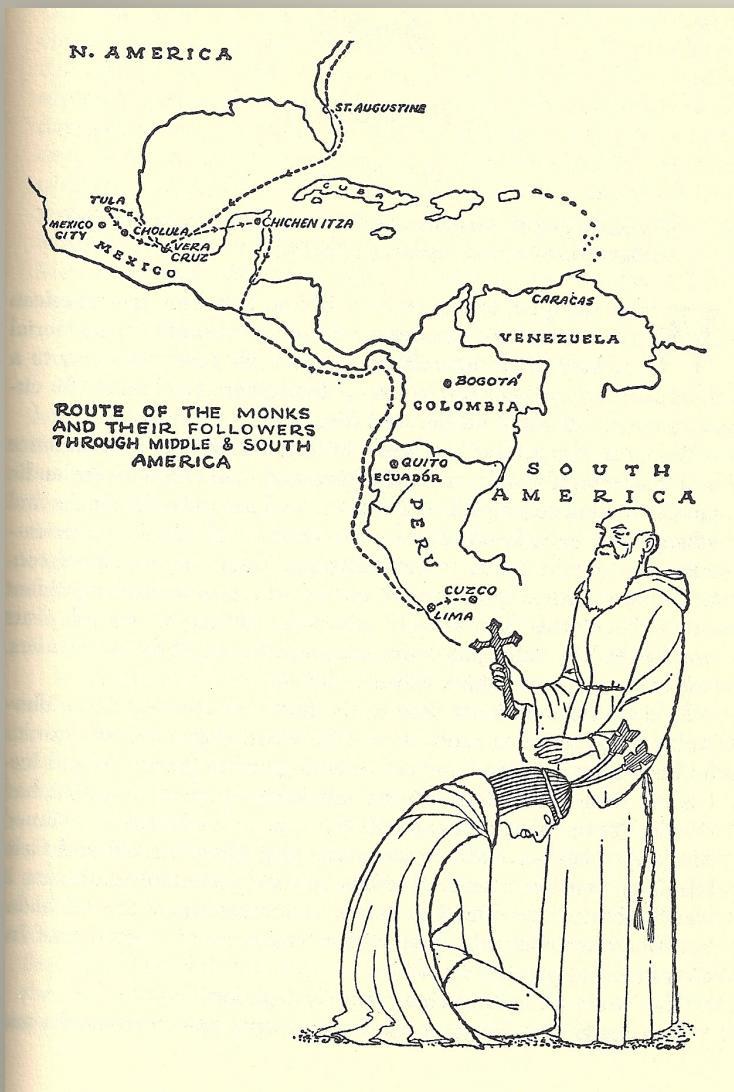
**Who?** Irish Abbot from Celi Dei: in Tula, Mexico known as “*Quetzalcoatl*” [Plumed/ Bird Serpent], “*Kukulcan*” in Maya; “*Kon Tiki Viracocha*” in Aztec/Inca and his followers “*Nonoalca*” [people who who cannot speak correctly]

**Where?** Starting from New Salem, NH to Florida, Mexico, Peru, and Polynesia

**Evidence:**

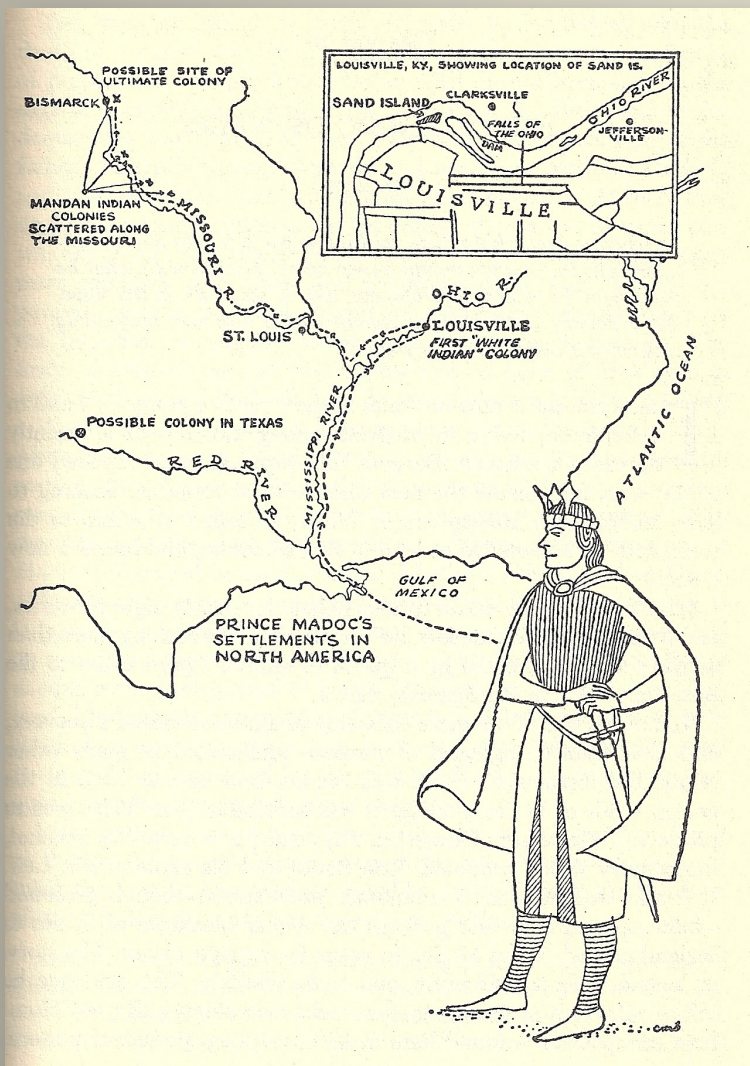
- ✓ Tula, Maya, Aztec, Inca legends
- ✓ Stone crosses, statues and traditions found by the first Spanish explorers in Mexico, Peru

**Impact:** reception of Cortez, Pizarro as the return of *Quetzalcoatl* and *Viracocha*





# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #12



**When?** 1171 A.D./C.E.

**Who?** Prince Madoc [Madawc] from Wales (Harlech Castle), two trips

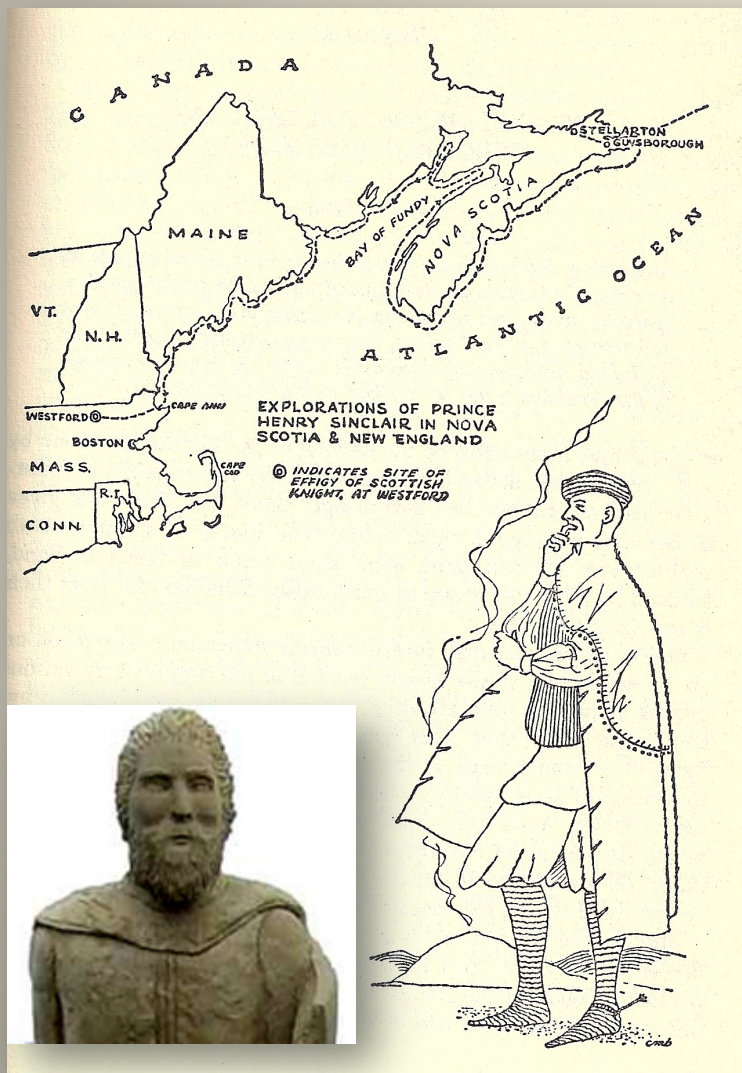
**Where?** Starting in Wales (UK) to present-day Kentucky, South Carolina, Texas, Upper Missouri River

**Evidence:**

- ✓ Hakluyt's *Voyages*, 1582
- ✓ Welsh looking and speaking Indians (Mandan, Paduca)
- ✓ Welsh inscribed tombstone dated 1186 at the Falls of Ohio
- ✓ George Catlin, *The Manner, Customs and Conditions of the North American Indians*, 1857



# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #13



**When?** 1395 - 1406

**Who?** Prince Henry Sinclair of Rosslyn the Earl of Orkney and of Caithness in northern Scotland, and Venetian brothers Niccolò and Antonio Zeno

**Where?** Starting in the Faeroe Islands to *Estotiland* and *Drogio*. Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Westford, Massachusetts

**Evidence:**

- ✓ Letters to Venice from the Zeno brothers and Zeno's descendant's 1558 book
- ✓ Stone engraved with a Knight in full armor and shield bearing the Sinclair heraldry in Westford

Carta da navegar de Nicolo et Antonio Zeni. Furono in Tramontana l'Anno MCCCLXXX

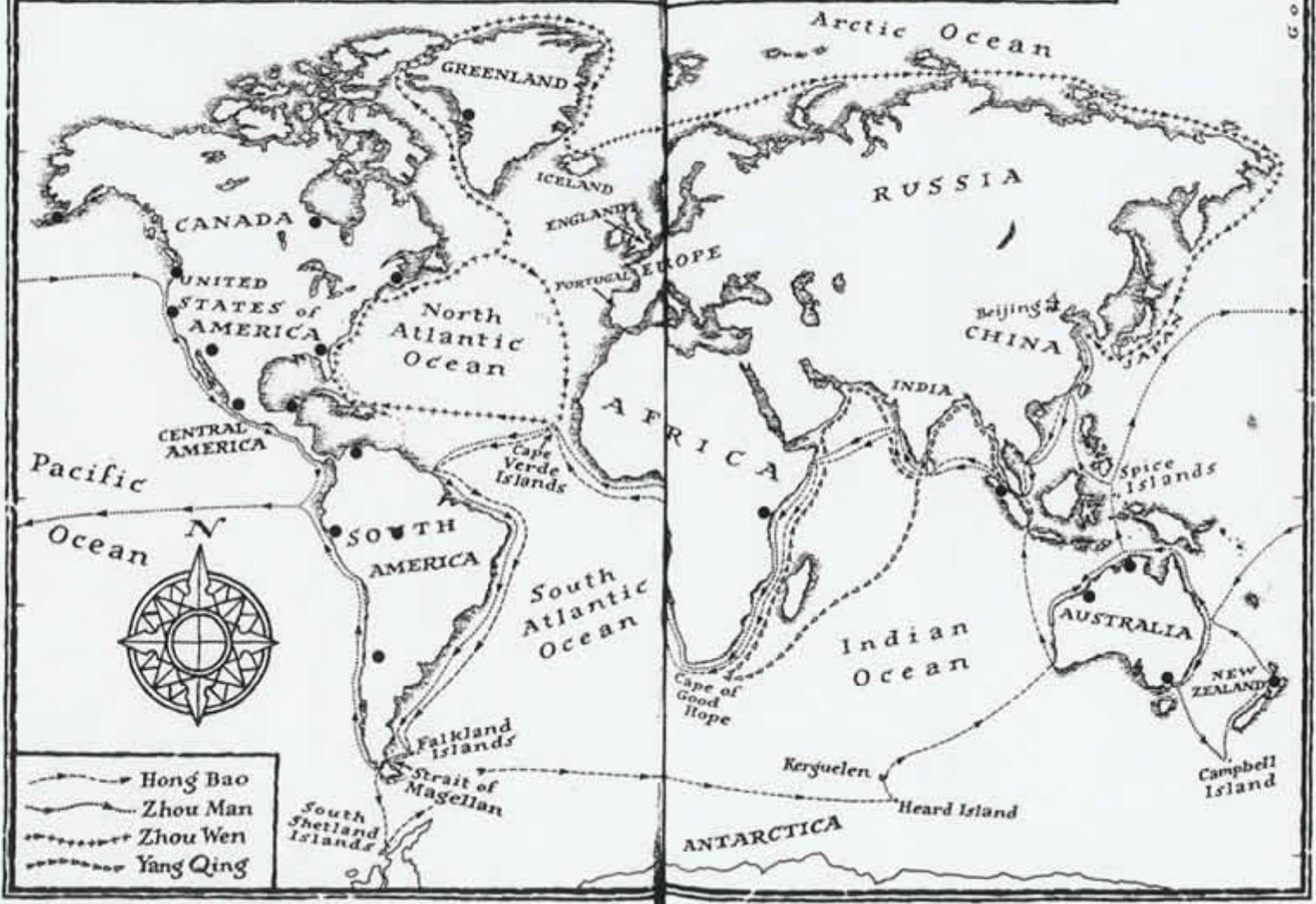




Abraham Ortelius, 1570. North Sea full of islands that come from old, most imaginary travelogues: *Groeland*, *Icaria*, *Drogeo*, *Fresh Country*, *Gris Country*, *Neome*, *Podalida*, and, above Norway, *Santi* and *Rustene*. The peninsula on the mainland of America, formerly called *Bacalaos* called here *Estotiland*. Between Iceland and Greenland lies the rocky islet *Witsarc*.



# Voyages of the Treasure Fleets, 1421~3



● settlements where Chinese people live today

G. O. W. E. F.



The Chinese “Treasure Ships”, or *bao chuan*, were more than 400 feet long with a crew of 300 hundred with silk red sails (Columbus’ *Santa Maria* was 85 feet long with a crew of 40). Zheng He’s armada included 250 vessels with 28,000 crew members.

# Zheng He's Voyages

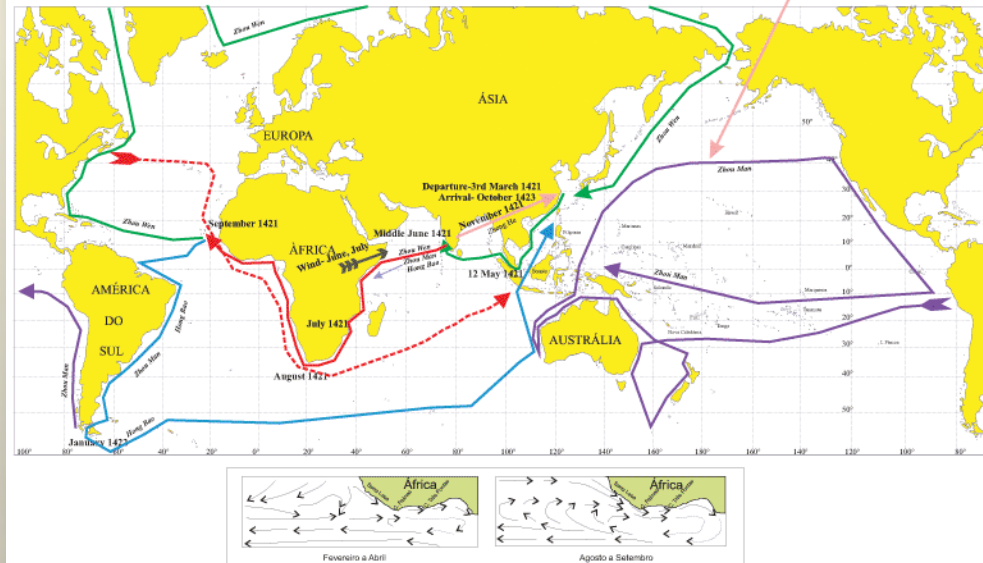


## Zheng He's ship compared with Columbus'



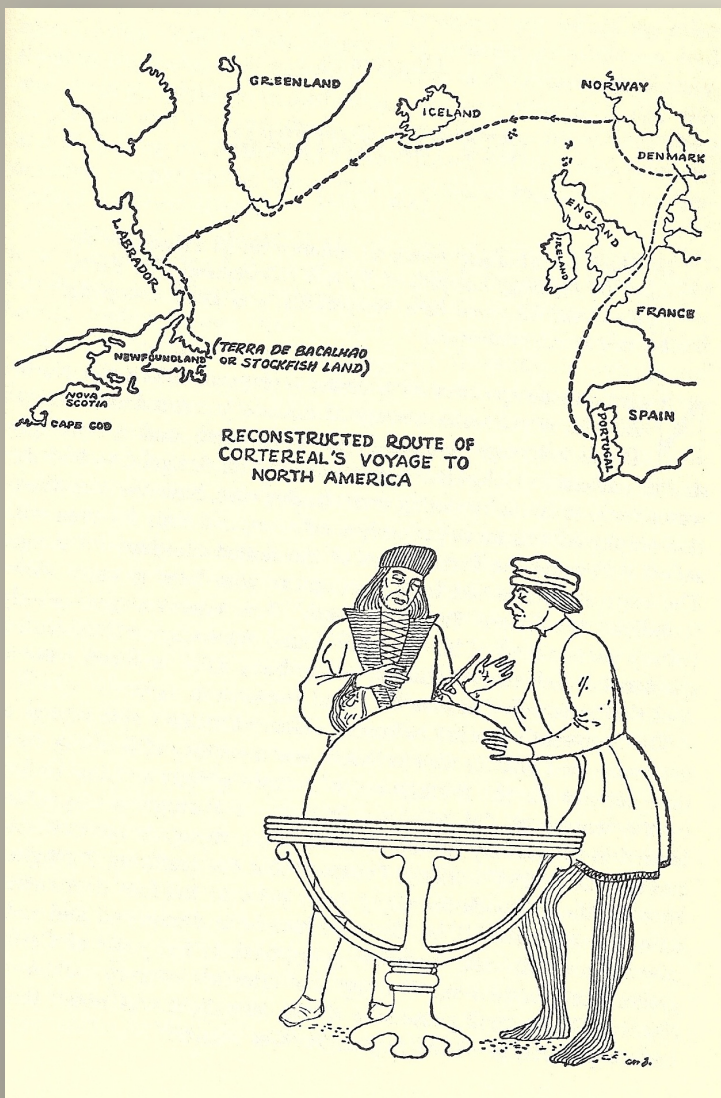
Chinese voyages between 3rd March 1421 till October 1423, according with Gavin Manzies

(Zhou Man- aprox. 73 000 miles in 940 days- 3.3 knots)



Average currents in the Gulf of Guinea

# THE EARLIEST CROSSINGS - #14



**When?** 1472

**Who?** João Vaz Cortereal (Portugal) at the request of King Alfonso V and Didrik Pining and Hans Pothorst (Danes)

**Where?** Starting in Portugal and Norway or Denmark to Greenland and Newfoundland – looking for a Northwest passage to Asia

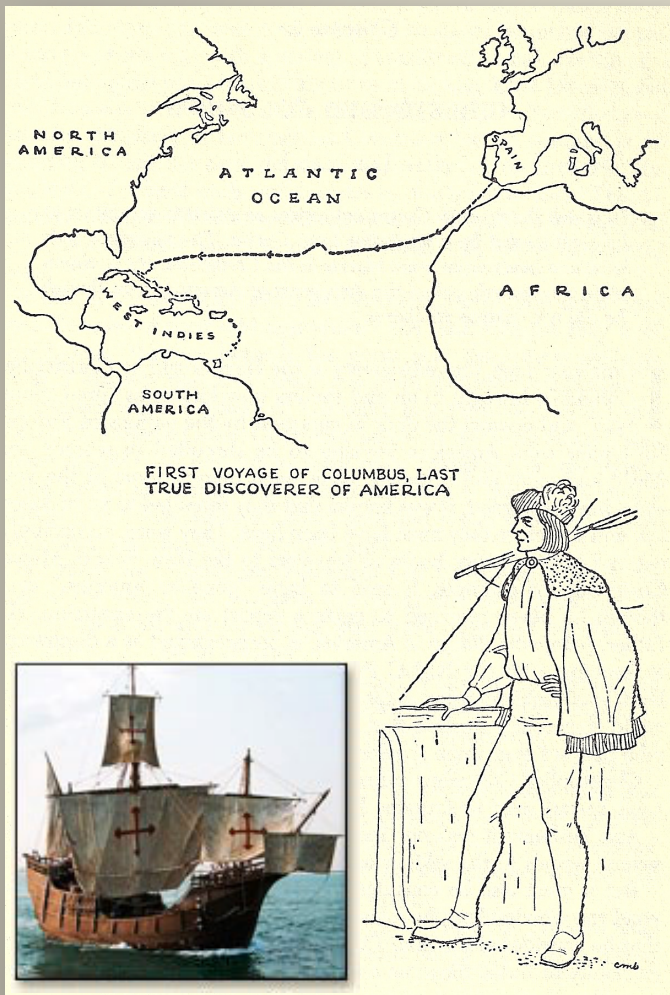
**Evidence:**

- ✓ Such voyages were considered “top secret” by the Portuguese
- ✓ Contemporary Maps (Behaim’s Globe 1492, Kunstmann Atlas 1571, King Hamy, 1502)
- ✓ Follow-up voyages by his sons Miguel and Gaspar
- ✓ *Historia Insula*, 1474, by P, Antonio Cordeyro

# King Hamy Map, 1502

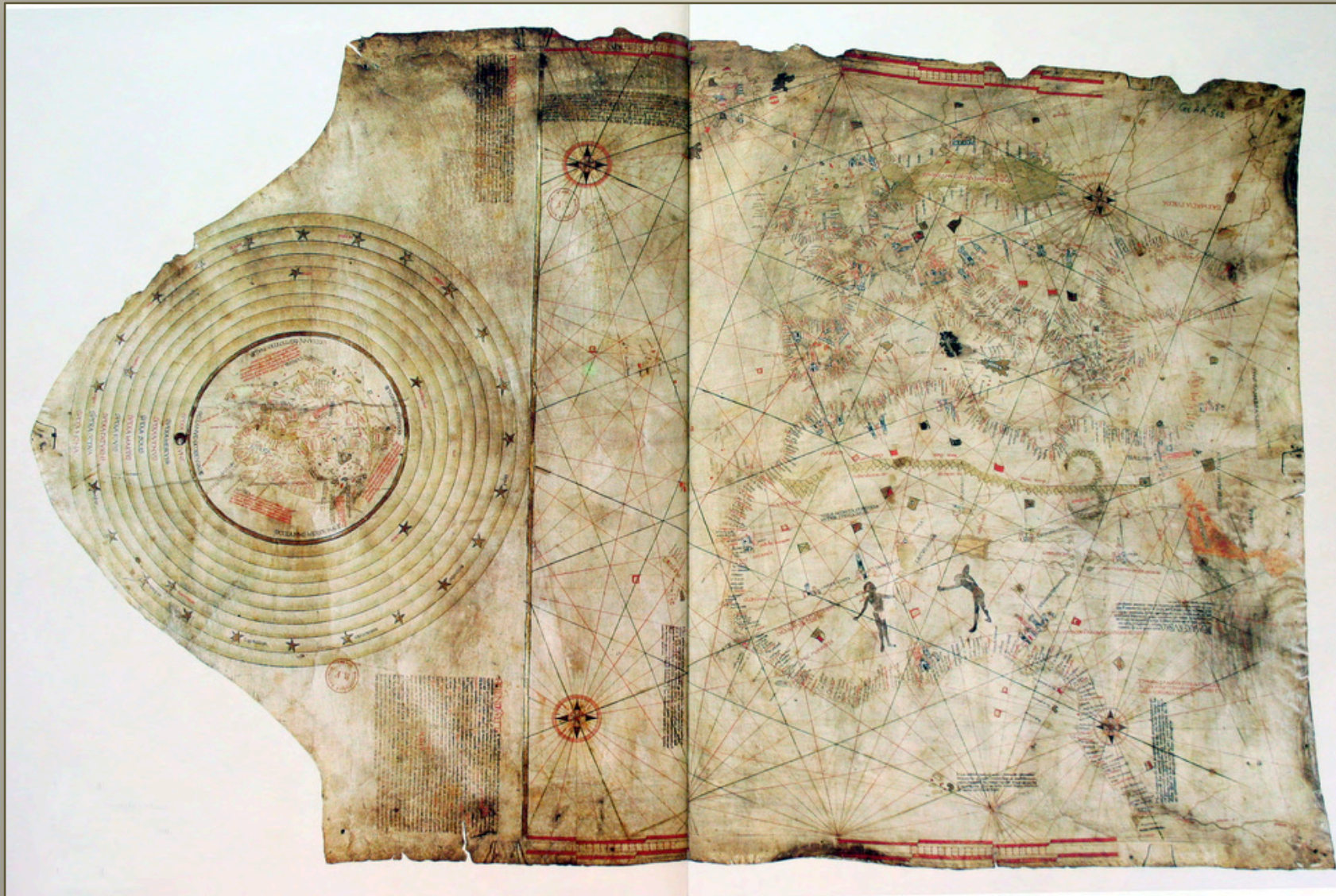


# CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS



- ✧ Was Columbus aware of the many previous Atlantic crossings?
- ✧ Did Columbus prove the world was round?
- ✧ What was he looking for?
- ✧ Why did he sail West?
- ✧ How could he be so wrong?

# Columbus' Map, 1490(?)

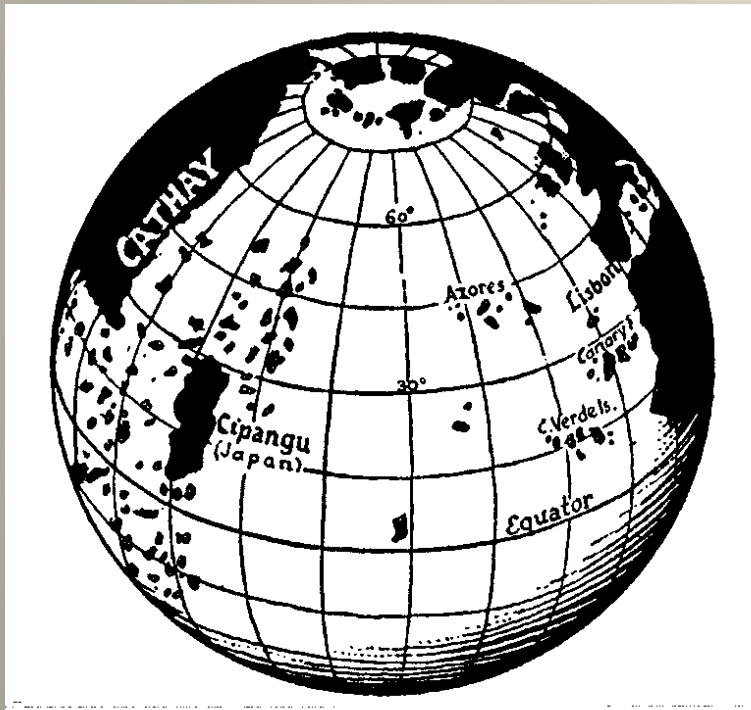




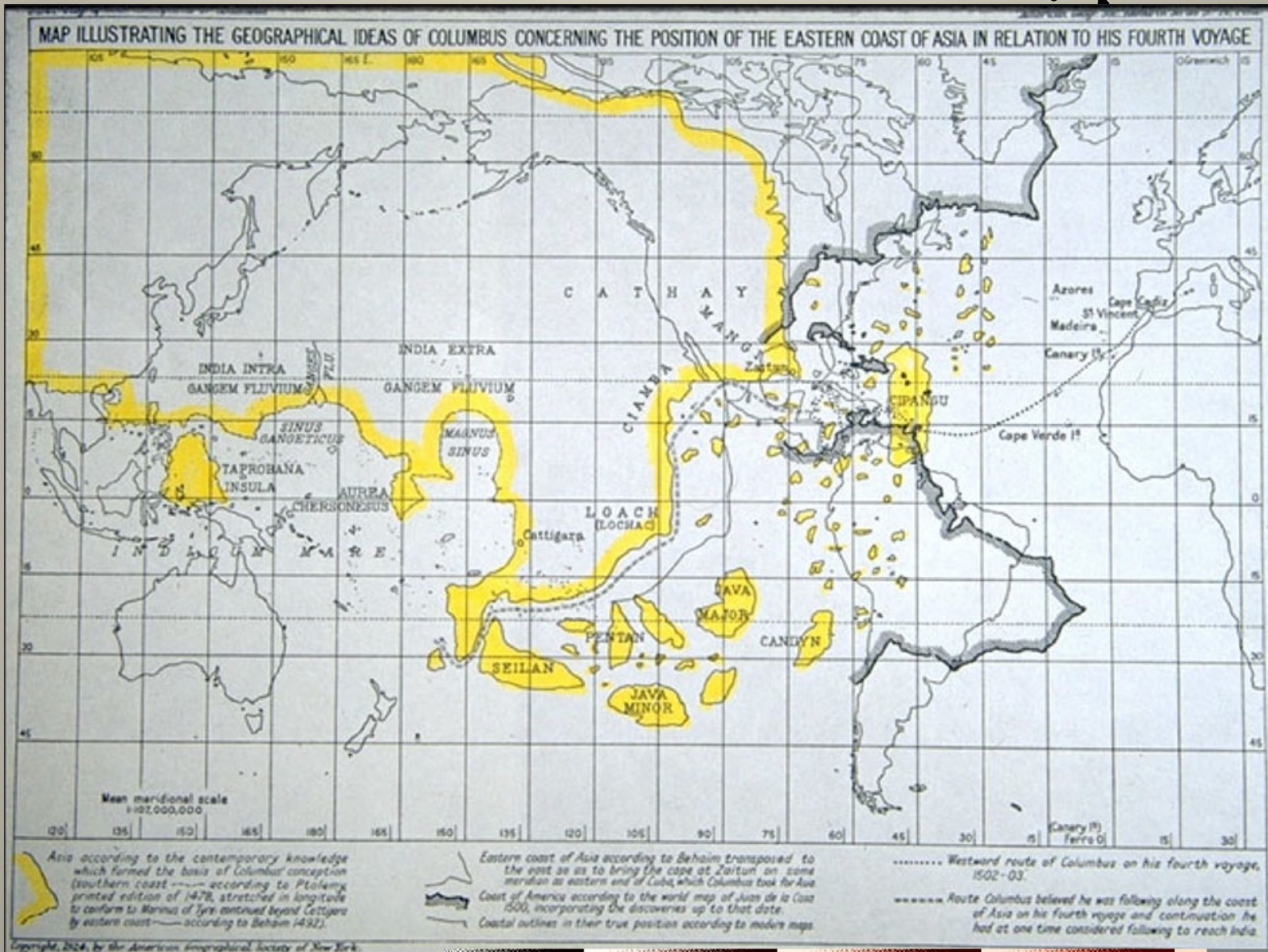
# Columbus' View of "the West"



# Martin Behaim's Globe 1492



# Columbus' World Concept



# Debunking Myths

*The shape & size of the world*



World view of Homer, 900 B.C.E.



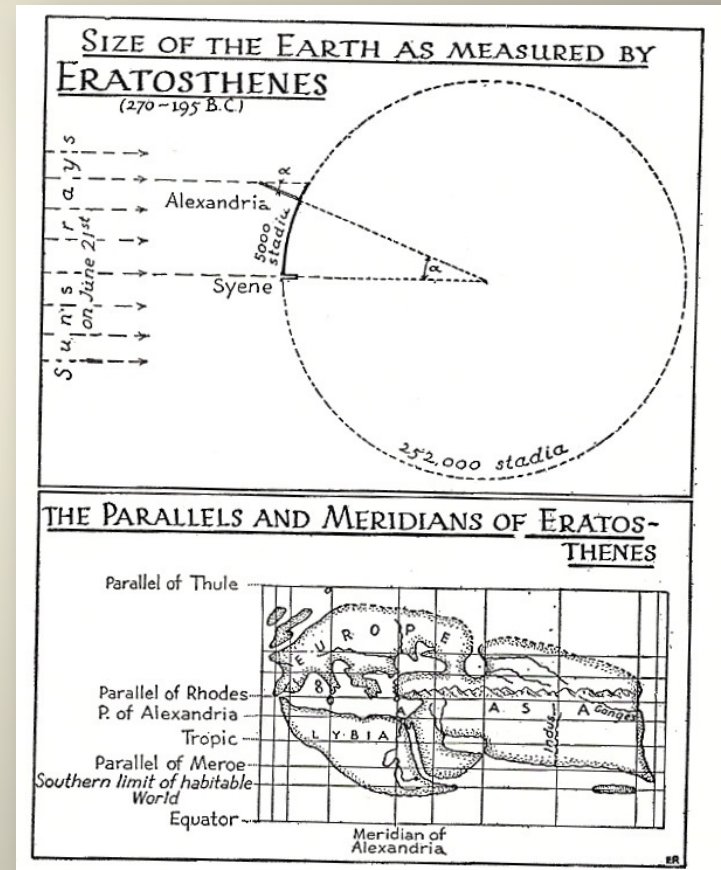
# Debunking Myths

## *The shape & size of the world*



Crates of Mallos' Globe  
180-150 B.C.E.

Centuries before Christ, Greek philosophers and mathematicians such as Pythagoras and Aristotle advanced the concept that Earth was a sphere, and Eratosthenes (276-196 BC) made a reasonable calculation of Earth's circumference.







Ireland

Azores

Portugal

Zipangu  
[Japan]

Africa

Antilia

Canary  
Islands

St. Brendan

# Why India or Asia?

## What was the Attraction?

- “Asia” (China and India) offered all of the luxury items desired by the ever-affluent European states: spices only available from this part of the world, pepper, fruits, fragrances, oils, porcelain, gold, silver, shells, glass works, brass, pearls
- Trade with Asia had been controlled by the “Middle Men” Arabs and the Venetians (either over the Silk Road (*until recently controlled by the Mongols*), or by sailing through the Indian Ocean)
- The Spanish, Portuguese, Danish, French, British all wanted to avoid the “Middle Men” and looked to sailing around Africa, Northwest or West of Europe to find a direct route to the Far East - to trade, colonize and convert

# Further Reading

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- Johnson, Donald S., *Phantom Islands of the Atlantic*, 1994.
- Levathes, Louise, *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Fleet of the Dragon Throne, 1405-1433*, 1994.
- Menzies, Gavin, *1421, The Year China Discovered America*, 2003.
- Pohl, Frederick, *Atlantic Crossings Before Columbus*, 1961.
- Severin, Tim, *The Brendan Voyage*, 1978
- Van Sertima, Ivan, *They Came Before Columbus, the African Presence in Ancient America*, 1976
- Wulffson, Don, *Before Columbus: Early Voyages to the Americas*, 2007.
- Over 230 books have been written addressing this topic
- For a collection of ancient and medieval maps see my website:  
[www.myoldmaps.com](http://www.myoldmaps.com)