

THE NORTHMEN SPREAD TO NORTH AMERICA

Away up in the Northland (Scandinavia), where the ice and snow never melt, lived little Prince Eric.

He did not live in a palace, as the princes in fairy stories do. In the summer he lived in a hut on the hillside; and in the winter he lived in a cave in the mountains.

Eric liked the winter. For then the men built roaring fires in the caves, and sat and told wonderful songs.

1. Where did Eric live in the winter?

- a. boat**
- b. cave**
- c. hut**
- d. palace**

They told stories of the sun and the moon, and of the thunder

and the lightning. They told stories of the rainbow, and of the frosts and the snow.

"Why does the warm summer go away?" Prince Eric asked one day. "And why does the long, cold winter come?"

"It is because the Summer and the Frost Giants have had a battle," Eric's father said. "The Frost Giants have won the battle and have put Summer to sleep. But by and by Summer will wake. Then he will whisper to the trees and to the flowers, and they will send out their leaves to make the world glad again. He will breathe upon the brooks that are covered with ice, and they will dance and sing. Then the Frost Giants will have to run away to their homes in the ice mountains for they cannot live here when Summer is awake."

2. Who will whisper to the trees and to the flowers, so that they will send out their leaves to make the world glad again?

- a. Frost Giants
- b. Prince Eric
- c. Summer
- d. Winter

Little Prince Eric liked a storm. He liked to hear the thunder roar, and to see the lightning flash.

"The rumble of the thunder is the voice of the god Thor," his father said. "And the lightning is the flash of his eye."

3. The rumble of the thunder is the voice of the what god?

One day Prince Eric saw a beautiful rainbow. He had never seen one before, and it was very wonderful to him. "Tell me the story of the rainbow," he cried.

Then one of the storytellers sat down before the fire and sang to

the little prince the story of the rainbow.

"It is a bridge," the storyteller sang. "And down the bridge good Odin comes. Odin loves the earth children, and comes to us often as we sleep in our caves. We cannot see him, but he watches over us always. Sometimes he lets us see his beautiful rainbow bridge. Sometimes the Frost Giants try to climb up the bridge to the home of Odin. Then the great god Thor is angry! We can hear his voice roaring among the clouds. We can see his eyes flash fire, and we can hear the Crash! Crash! Crash! of his great hammer as he throws it across the sky."

4. Who crosses the rainbow bridge to visit earth?

By and by, when Prince Eric had grown to be a man, he built for himself a great ship and sailed out into the open sea.

"I will find new lands," he said.
As he sailed away, his men
sang:

*I am the god Thor!
I am the god of war!
I am the god Thor!
I am the god of war!*

Eric sailed and sailed till he came to the island of Iceland. Here he made a new home for himself and his people.

By and by Eric had a little son. He named him Leif, but the people always called the child Eric's son.

5. Where did Leif grow up?

- a. Greenland
- b. Iceland
- c. Northland
- d. Vineland

Now Leif Ericson was a brave little prince. He liked to listen to the stories that his father told about the old home in the Northland. He liked to hear about the wonderful voyage his father had made, across the sea. He was proud that his father was so great a hero.

"I will be a hero," Leif said, as he grew older.



So when he became a man, he too set out upon the sea with a crew of brave Northmen. He sailed out into the west till he came to Greenland. Then he sailed on and on till he came to a long shore that reached north and south as far as he could see. This was the shore of North America, and these Northmen were the first Europeans that had ever come to it.

"This must be a large island," Leif said. So he drove his big ship toward the shore and landed.

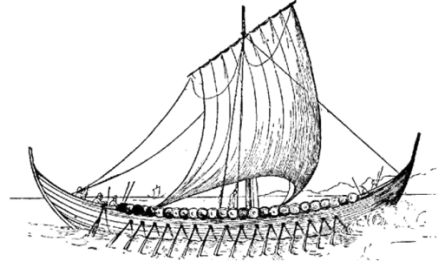
The Skrellings, as Leif called the Native Americans, because of the squealing noises he heard in their language, came down to the shore to see what this strange ship was, and why it had come.

6. What did Leif call the Native Americans?

"It is a big dragon!" the Skrellings said. "See its head and its tail. How they shine in the sunlight!"

It is no wonder the Skrellings thought that it was a dragon; for a Northman's ship in those days was built to look like a dragon. The front of the ship was high, and had a fierce-looking head upon it. The stern of the ship, too, was high, and was built in the shape of a dragon's tail. The head and tail were covered with gold, and the gold shone in the sunlight like fire.

How strange the dragon ship must have looked as it sailed along upon the water! Is it any wonder the Skrellings were afraid when they saw it coming into their harbor?



7. The Northmen's ship looked like what mythical creature?

8. Write "harbor."

9. Write "Leif Ericson."

But the Skrellings could frighten the Norsemen sometimes. One day they came down to the shore with long poles. On the ends of the poles were big, blue balls,

which made a whizzing noise as the Skrellings whirled them about.

The Northmen had never seen anything like them, and swam away to their ships as fast as ever they could.

On this first visit to North America the Northmen found more wild grapes growing on vines than they could eat or carry away. They had never seen so much fruit in all their lives. So when they went back to their own land, Leif Ericson said, "Behold, we have found a wonderful country across the waters; and we have named it Vineland!"

10. Why did the Northmen name North America "Vineland"?



On the map, label the following:

- 11. Atlantic Ocean**
- 12. Greenland**
- 13. Iceland**
- 14. Northland (Scandinavia)**
- 15. Vineland (North America)**