

VIKINGS SETTLE IN THE HUDSON VALLEY



by **Jack Collier Freeboard**

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A research paper published by Cornell University Cooperative Extension written by Dr. Daniel Van Hooenstien MBA, PHD, Head of Historical Studies Dept. has disclosed new and irrefutable proof that Viking Explorers settled in the Lower Hudson Valley.

An unexpected result of the mapping of the Hudson by GE for the core sampling study has been the location of wrecks pinpointed by GPX/ Side Scan Sonar.

The location of these wrecks is being kept secret in order to protect the sites from looting. However one site was accidentally located at Chelsea, about 500 feet offshore in a shallow mud flat off of River Road. While hauling moorings a piece of wood approximately 10" x 12" x 5" was snagged in a mooring chain. The wood was intricately carved with designs which seemed to be of Nordic origin. Photographs of the carving and a small sample of the wood were sent to Cornell University where they were examined by Dr. Van Hoetenstein. The carvings were very similar to the carvings on the Gogstaag ship which

is on display in the Antiquities Museum in Oslo Norway.

Carbon dating fixed the age of the wood at between 960 AD and 1040 AD. This is the time period when the sagas tell of the explorations of Eric The Red.

Dr. Van Hoetenstein traveled to Chelsea with a small group of Graduate Interns to examine the site in 2002. The wreck measured 67 ft. long by 22 feet wide. It was completely submerged in the mud except for a small piece of the bow which was recovered. GE released the Side Scan Sonar images of the wreck to Cornell University to aid in the research.

The research team used a specialized suction dredge to explore the site for artifacts hidden in the debris of the buried ship. A number of artifacts were recovered before the ice ended the research for the season. Pewter cups and bowls were dated to the same time period and hammered iron spear heads were also recovered. Work at the site will resume on or about April 1, 2003 providing the ice is gone from the river. It has always been a theory of many experts in the field that the "Vineland" of the sagas was actually located in the lower Hudson Valley and that Eric the Red actually started settlements in the area between Cold Spring and Poughkeepsie.



Now there is irrefutable proof. Careful examination of a large fragment of material recovered from the wreck proved to be part of an undergarment of red dyed wool. The initials ERT can clearly be seen monogrammed on the waistband.

Arrangements will be made to create a permanent display aboard the sloop Clearwater, so that as the Clearwater travels up and down the river, visitors will be able to view Eric The Red's drawers and know that the true "Vinland" was right here in the Hudson Valley.

