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From the Icelandic Annals

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From the Icelandic Annals

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## FROM THE ICELANDIC ANNALS<sup>1</sup>

### ANNALES REGII

A.D. 1121. Bishop Eric<sup>2</sup> of Greenland went in search of Vinland.

### FROM THE ELDER SKALHOLT<sup>3</sup> ANNALS

A.D. 1347. There came also a ship from Greenland, less in size than small Icelandic trading vessels. It came into the outer Stream-firth.<sup>4</sup> It was without an anchor. There were seventeen men on board, and they had sailed to Markland,<sup>5</sup> but had afterwards been driven hither by storms at sea.

<sup>1</sup> Besides the Annales Regii, which are the most important, there are several other Icelandic annals. All have, under the year 1121, the entry given here, (facsimile in Rafn). It is the only information that they give concerning Vinland, and is the last surviving mention of Vinland in the older Icelandic records. It must be remarked, however, that there were no contemporary annals as early as 1121; the earliest entries on Scandinavian events are gleaned from various sources, especially the early historians.

<sup>2</sup> According to the *Landnama-bok* he was an Icelfander, his full name being Eric Gnipson. He is also known as Eric Uppsi. He was, according to some accounts, the first bishop of Greenland. The exact date of his consecration is not known; but the Lawman's Annals have, under date of 1112, these words: "Bishop Eric's expedition," referring no doubt to his departure from Iceland. There is no record of his consecration at Lund (Sweden), the seat of the primate at that time, as in the case of his successor, Bishop Arnold. In regard to Bishop Eric's seeking Vinland, there is no indication anywhere why he went, or whether he ever returned. At any rate, the Greenlanders applied for a new bishop, and, according to the annals, one was consecrated in 1124; this was Bishop Arnold, and he reached Greenland the following year. See "The Tale of the Greenlanders," in *Origines Islandicæ*, II. 748.

<sup>3</sup> So called because the manuscript was found at Skalholt, in southern Iceland. This entry (facsimile in Rafn) is corroborated, in abbreviated form, by the Annals of Gottskalk, in these words: "A ship came then from Greenland, which had sailed to Markland, and there were eighteen men on board."

<sup>4</sup> Stream-firth is on the western coast of Iceland.

<sup>5</sup> One of the new lands mentioned in the sagas of the Vinland voyages.