

Why didnt the vikings get credit for discovering america essay



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Who discovered America? When most people think about this, the first thing that comes to mind is Christopher Columbus. When Columbus returned from the Antilles in 1493, he was not the first European to have stepped foot on the New World. What if I were to say that the Vikings were the ones who actually discovered America? However, they didn't get credit for it because of the bad things that they have did. Leif Eriksson set out from Greenland towards the west and first reached Baffin Island which he named Helluland or Land of Stone.

From there he sailed south to Labrador and into the Gulf of St. Lawrence region which he named Vinland or Land of Wine for the wild grapes that were found there. He created a town at L'Anse aux Meadows, which served as the base of exploration during his time in eastern North America. He collected wood and other valuable things from the land and returned to Greenland. This was one of the many voyages by the Vikings. The latest evidence confirms that Scandinavians reached the North American continent almost 500 years before Columbus.

By accident Bjarni Herjolfsson arrived at the Canadian coast but didn't stop. He was on his way to Greenland to see his parents when he was drifted west because of a storm. Bjarni was son of Bard Herjolfsson and Thorgerd. His parents lived in Iceland but went to Greenland. His findings of land was known in Greenland and in Norway but they didn't find interest in it until about 10 years later. Although they didn't land in North America, they were the first to make it out. After a few days the area turned more mountainous and glacial and departing to the east they found Greenland and Erik's colony.

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One of Erik's son got very interested in the story by Bjarni, especially that the frozen Greenland wood was hard to achieve, while Bjarni was counting about a forested country. Around 1000, Leif Eriksson took Bjarni's boat and him and 35 other men left in the search of the land discovered by Bjarni. Leif first met the Baffin Island, covered by glaciers and without pastures. Going to the south, they found a forested plain, with beaches of white sand they named Marklandia, in today's Labrador. A few days later, the Vikings found an even better territory.

The only problem that remains is why didn't the Vikings remain in America? Maybe they tried to, but were unsuccessful, due to the difficult conditions and Native Americans, or as they referred to them, " skraelings" whose forces were superior. There is the possibility that the Vikings tried to claim all of the Native Americans land, and in defense of their land, they fought back. They may have planned many attacks, to make the Viking leave the land. After, when the Vikings decided to expand both their territory and wealth, they looked across the ocean, and one of places they saw was England.

From 793 to 1066, England was terrorized by Viking warriors. The attack on Lindisfarne monastery in 793 was one of the most important attacks, announcing the beginning of frequent raids on coastal communities, with churches and monasteries being particularly targeted because of their wealth. Sporadic raiding gradually turned to more significant assaults, as war-bands joined, and took on a more political aim. What made these raids particularly worst part was the element of surprise. Nobody knew exactly when, where or how the Vikings were going to attack next.

The broad bottom of the Viking ships allowed them to land on any sandy beach without the need of a harbor or pier. Therefore, they could land virtually anywhere including places where an attack was virtually impossible. The Vikings first raided an English church, Lindisfarne in 793. In 865, the Great Heathen Army attacked East Anglia (England). After that invasion failed, they attacked England once again in 1066, but were defeated at the battle of Stamford Bridge. The Vikings attack England again during the Reign of Canute the Great Again in 1066, the Normans invaded and conquered England.

The Vikings could not defeat Paris but the King was so impressed that he gave me land. I believe that the Vikings were in fact the first to discover America. The key word is “ Discover” for the native Americans did not discover America, they just lived there. Also the Vikings were not very creative and named things very obviously, so why would they call the new land Newfound Land, if it was inhabited by people, it wouldn't be new. The only reason that they don't get credit for it is because of the things they did like attacking England.

They were disliked by just about all countries, so why give them credit for discovering America? If you were in England's shoes, wouldn't you try to erase them from history. Why not give some one else from Europe the credit for discovering America. Being that both England and Scandinavia are both in Europe, why make Europe look bad? Why not just let someone who is from Europe and who is sent from the king and queen of Spain get the credit. This way making people forget about the Vikings, and still showing how great and how high of a place Europe is. Shirah Vargas10/3/09
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