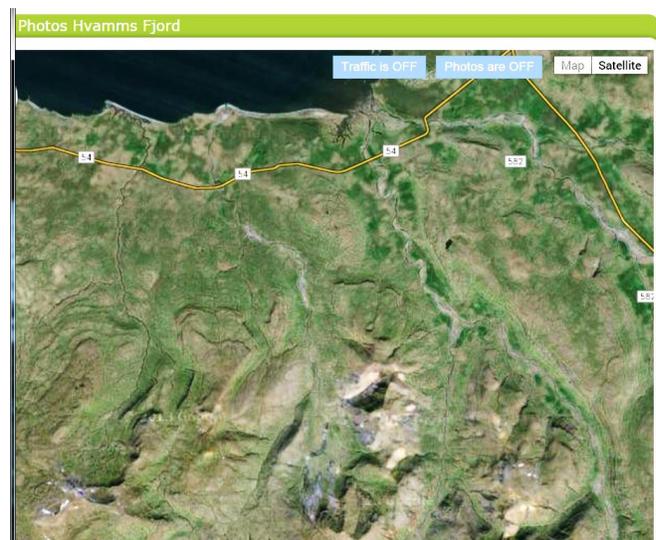


How was Aud's flight north a "domino", that helped to show Leif Eiriksson's character?

Consider **Aud (the Deep-minded) Ketilsdottir**, her British slave **Vifil**, and Vifil's granddaughter **Gudrid**:

- (a) Aud (a/k/a Unn) is a native of Norway; with her father she immigrated to the British Isles.
- (b) In Ireland she marries Dublin's king Olaf (having at least one son thereby, Thorstein the Red), but strife between her father (Ketil Flat-nose, who once served as a tax-collecting governor in the Hebrides, on behalf of his royal son-in-law Olaf) and her royal husband (Olaf the White) leads to a violent family feud, and ultimately results in her divorce, so she leaves Ireland.
- (c) Aud moves to Scotland, and lives with her son Thorstein (who is a "warrior king" allied with Orkney's Earl Sigurd the Mighty), but the heydays in northern Scotland end with a very strange death to Sigurd, followed by an ambush-facilitated killing of Thorstein the Red.
- (d) Aud prepares for and accomplishes (with the help of family and slaves) a secret flight to Iceland, with wintering stops (and granddaughter deposits) at Orkney and the Faeroes, along the way.
- (e) Upon arriving in Iceland, Aud's group of immigrants winters with Aud's generous brother Bjorn (the Easterner) Ketilsson, in Breidafjord (WNW Iceland).
- (f) Aud's household of immigrants (including slaves/servants) then settle in/near Lax River valley.
- (g) Aud emancipates some of her slaves, the 4th being Vifil – and she gives him land, which becomes "Vifilsdale" (Vifil's valley, in the southeast corner of Hvatmsfjord, south of the Lax River).
- (h) Vifilsdale is home to Vifil's descendants; this same Vifil was *farfar* to **Gudrid Thorbjornsdottir (who is the same Gudrid who at one point was shipwrecked with her first husband, Thorir, and rescued by Leif; as a widow she later married Thorstein Eiriksson, Leif's older brother).**
- (i) Thorbjorn Vifilsson, an ally of Eirik the Red, was known as a Christian who disliked pagan sorcery; Thorbjorn migrated from Iceland to Greenland, settling in Stokkaness (a piece of land that Eirik gave him); at this time Thorbjorn's daughter Gudrid also had a public testimony as a Christian.
- (j) Leif and his crew visit Vinland; Thorstein bought Thorbjorn's ship and used it to try to visit Vinland. Also, Leif's other brother (Thorvald) visited Vinland, using Leif's boat.
- (k) Thorstein died of sickness; later his widow (Gudrid) marries Thorfinn Karlsefni (who was an F5 descendant of Ireland's King Kjarval).
- (l) Karlsefni and Gudrid (and others) visit Vinland for about 3 years; their son Snorri is born on American soil! Eventually Karlsefni and Gudrid resettle in Iceland. Another son is born to them, Thorbjorn. Karlsefni dies; Gudrid is a widow for the 3rd time – she lives on in Iceland with Snorri's family; she also founded a church there, in Glaumby (Glaumbær), Iceland. ><> JJSJ



HOW GUDRID & OTHERS WERE RESCUED BY LEIF EIRIKSSON:

Gudrid's family relocated to Greenland, with problems from the very beginning — Thorbjorn's group was immediately struck by a sickness that killed many, including Gudrid's pagan foster-parents (Orm and Halldis). But life in Greenland got better. After living in Greenland for some time, Gudrid married a Norwegian emigrant named Thorir the Easterner. Little is reported of their life together until Thorir and Gudrid become shipwrecked near Greenland, and were rescued by none other than Leif Eiriksson, as Leif was returning from his historic discovery (and temporary settlement) of "Vinland the Good", in North America. *The Grænlandinga Saga* recounts this event as follows:

. . . Leif said to his men [who were then exploring in Vinland], "Now we have two tasks on our hands. On alternate days we must gather grapes and cut vines, and then fell trees, to make cargo for my ship." This was done. It is said that the tow-boat was filled with grapes. They took on a full cargo of timber [which was quite valuable in Greenland]; . . . in the spring they made ready to leave and sailed away. Leif named the country after its natural qualities and called it *Vinland*. They put out to sea and had favourable winds all the way until they sighted Greenland and its ice-capped mountains. [Now comes the part where Leif's character as a Christian Viking is displayed.] Then one of the crew spoke up and said to Leif, "Why are you steering the ship so close to the wind?" "I am keeping an eye on my steering," replied Leif, "But I am also keeping an eye on something else. Don't you see anything unusual?" Now they caught sight of it, and said it was a reef. But Leif's eyesight was so much keener than theirs that he could now make out people on the reef. **"I want to sail close to the wind in order to reach these people,"** he said. **"If they need our help, it is our duty to give it; but if they are hostile, then the advantages are all on our side and none on theirs."** They approached the reef, lowered sail, anchored, and put out another small boat they had brought with them. Tyrkir [Leif's foster-father] asked the men who their leader was. The leader replied that his name was Thorir [i.e., Gudrid's 1st husband], and that he was a Norwegian by birth. "What is your name?" he asked. Leif named himself in return. "Are you a son of Eirik the Red of Brattahlid?" Leif said he was. "And now," [Leif] said, "I want to invite you all aboard my ship, with as much of your belongings as the ship will take." They accepted the offer, and they all sailed to Eiriksfjord thus laden. When they reached Brattahlid they unloaded the ship. Leif invited Thorir and his wife Gudrid and three other men to stay with him and found lodgings for the rest of the ship's company, both Thorir's men and his own crew. Leif rescued fifteen people in all from the reef. From then on he was called Leif the Lucky. He gained greatly in wealth and reputation. [Quoting *Grænlandinga Saga*, ¶ 4 (Magnusson & Pálsson transl.; Penguin, 1965)]

Through this crisis experience, Thorir and Gudrid get to know Leif's family. That winter a sickness invaded Eirik's settlement at Brattahlid (Greenland), causing many deaths (including Eirik the Red). Leif then leads the Brattahlid settlement. Also, Gudrid's husband (Thorir) dies, leaving Gudrid a widow, so Leif's family provides for her. Soon, Leif's older brother, Thorstein, proposed marriage to Gudrid. This is not surprising, for we learn: "Gudrid was of striking appearance; she was very intelligent and knew well how to conduct herself amongst strangers." Gudrid married Thorstein; they settled at Thorstein's place near Eirik's farmstead ("Brattahlid"), near Eiriksfjord. Soon Leif's other brother (Thorvald) dies in Vinland; an attempted voyage to recover his body (by Thorstein with Gudrid) is met with severe weather; soon Thorstein dies of sickness. Gudrid remarries (again!), this time to Thorfinn Karlsefni, they become parents of Snorri (in Vinland) and Thorbjorn (in Iceland). ☺