

L'ANSE AUX MEADOWS - ORIGINAL VIKING SETTLEMENT LURES TRAVELERS



At the northernmost tip of Newfoundland, Canada, a rare site is to be found. One which proves North America had been visited by European folk hundreds of years prior to Columbus. L'Anse Aux Meadows is the original Viking settlement, dating back a thousand years.

Whether it is the mythical Vinland, a settlement of the Vikings which appears in so many legends, or just a simple village, remains an enigma. On the other hand, the mere existence of L'Anse Aux Meadows has shattered our understanding of history. **Nearly 500 years after Columbus, it became clear that North America had been visited by Europeans long before.**

In 1960, a Norwegian explorer Helge Ingstad and his wife Anne Stine, an archeologist, visited the site and after careful observation detected clear similarities between the characteristics of this site and artifacts found in Greenland and Iceland dating back to roughly 1000 A.D. Soon, the excavation works started and indeed, their estimates were confirmed.

The settlement was established around 1000 A.D. Several buildings were found, identified as both dwellings and workshops; excavation works uncovered artifacts which suggest iron work, carpentry, and even boat repair were conducted here. L'Anse Aux Meadows, which is a corrupted pronunciation of the French L'Anse-aux-Méduses or "Jellyfish Cove", was not inhabited for long. Among the possible reasons why the settlement was abandoned may have been bad weather, food, even raids by local inhabitants. Sadly, the truth remains unclear.

The site was added to the List of UNESCO World Heritage sites in 1978 and presents a great attraction. Naturally, the original settlement needed to be protected and thus has been covered and replaced by convincing replicas. Visitors have a unique chance to explore the area, admire local wild nature and the art of the Vikings. They may learn about the fantastic discovery of this site, as well as the Viking lifestyle, their traditions as well as history.

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