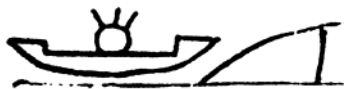
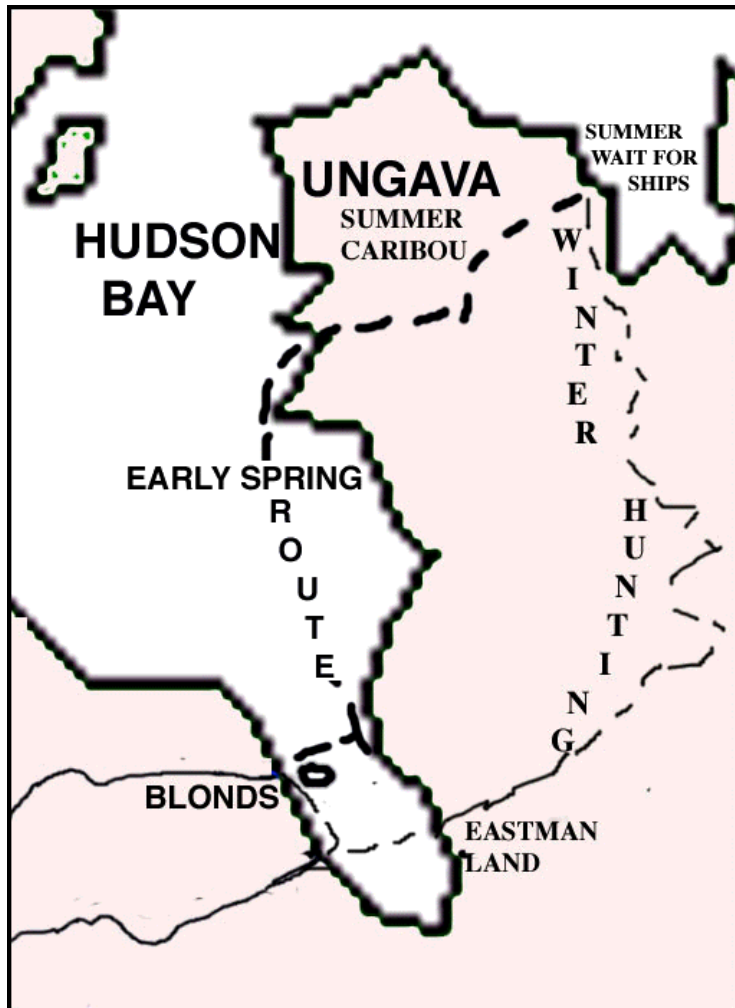


STORIES
of
MAALAN AARUM
TALERMAN



E. S. 3.,13

The TRAVELS of TALERMAN.



Trapped by the warm weather of 1342 -45, Talerman and the beaver heads hunted, walked, and talked with the Akoman peoples. They made three circuits of the route shown above.

TALERMAN

After Bjarni's thirty-second birthday, the climate turned cold again. Styk was able to walk home over the ice to the Ranga Fjord just before the new year. Bishop Arne had come to the Northern Settlement for the Christmas season. He said Christmas mass at all four kirkes in the Northern Settlement during Christmas week.

But the real reason for his trip to the Northern Settlement in wintertime was to talk to Styk, Bjarni, Tjalve, and a group of other beaver-heads. He met with them at the Sandnes Kirke, after the Sunday morning mass on Christmas day.

Bishop Arne said that he had heard from returning beaver-heads to the Eastern Settlement that the climate in Akoman had turned very cold eight years ago and remained so for five straight years. But the Akoman hunters had learned long ago, that cold winters with snow meant good hunting. So they preferred the cold. The cold had been worse than normal, yet the Akoman villages had fared better than the villages in Einarsfjord during the same period. Bishop Arne asked if his information was correct. Several beaver-heads nodded to show that their personal experiences were similar.

Bishop Arne then asked the assembled beaver-heads, "If the cold stays, do you think your families would have a better life in Akoman?"

The question took the beaver-heads by surprise. They were silent. They eyed each other to see who would speak first. Then a beaver-head's wife who had been listening in a corner stepped forward and said, "Bishop Arne, I have three young boys. I think they are eating well but they are thin. Each time my husband comes back from Merica, he is in better shape than they are. I want my two eldest sons to go to Merica with him, even if they never come back."

The verbal dam was broken. For the rest of the evening, all the beaver-heads and a few of their wives expressed opinions. Just before he gave the parting benediction, Bishop Arne said, "I hear many men saying they might prefer to be in Akoman during a cold climate. Please do some serious thinking. Would you and your families be content if you left the Northern Settlement for the rest of your lives?"

After Bishop Arne's service at the Anavik Kirke, Bjarni invited him home to stay a few sleeps. New Year's Day was a good day for the old friends to visit. That New Year's Day at Bjarni's house on the remote farm was remembered as being one of the most pleasant in nine years. Styk, Halldis, and their children

came to visit with Bishop Arne. That New Year's Day was also remembered because of Bishop Arne's baptism of Styrk and Bjarni's children.

That night when everybody else was settling down to sleep, Bishop Arne and Bjarni and Styrk stayed up. They huddled close to the boiling pot speaking softly. Bjarni asked, "Arne, what were you doing in the meeting at Sandnes? Now the beaver-heads will be talking around every campfire or boiling pot about taking families to Akoman."

Arne responded, "I have been dreaming lately. Do you remember Moses?"

"I think you told the story when we were in Akoman. He was a man who led his people through the sea to the land that God gave to them to possess."

"Good. If God were to give you a land to possess, where would you want it to be?"

"Wherever Arnora and the children are."

"Where would you wish they were?"

"You know that answer. I wish they were in Akoman. I could have been with them during the year I was stranded there. Akoman is warmer. There are more fish, birds, and animals. There is no end of wood. Do you have any doubt?"

"I have no doubt. Take them to Akoman when the next cold spell comes."

"I am not sure Arnora would want to leave. Bjørn is still a child, and I do not know where we would go in Akoman."

Arne said:

That is the reason I brought the subject up. If the cold spell lasts, you and the other beaver-heads can find a place in Akoman. No one in the Northern Settlement or Einarsfjord will just get up and leave. They have to know they have a land to possess and a way to get there.

The following summer, Only about twenty-five Northern Settlement men took the boats to Merica. They expected to be there through winter. The rest of the men in the Northern Settlement and Einarsfjord were caught unprepared when the weather suddenly grew colder, because the last summer had been the only really warm summer in eight years. They were expecting three or more warm summers in a row. When the unexpected cold returned, Bjarni, Styrk, and Tjalve went from house to house checking for the men wanting to walk to Merica. When the sea ice froze before the new year, a larger group men then ever before made the walk to Merica. Most including Bjarni and his friends came back walking on the ice in early spring. The following summer the boats from the Northern Settlement did get through to carry several men including Bjarni's group to Merica.

When they got off the boat in Merica, the men loaded the prepared pemmican to ship home to the Northern Settlement onto the boats. After the boat left, Bjarni thought the first efforts should be made toward getting more pemmican ready to send to the Northern Settlement by sled in the fall when the ice froze. The rest of the summer passed swiftly as they hunted caribou and made pemmican. The ice began to form in early fall. Then seal-taking became the main focus.

The sea ice became solid in the fall. In Merica Styrrk made a scouting trip and returned with word that the ice looked solid enough to walk all the way to the Northern Settlement. The first group of men from Merica arrived in the Northern Settlement a moon before the end of the year. The men made two more roundtrips, one in winter and one in spring.

This was the winter that Hallgrim suggested a change in operations. The size of the group of sleds pulling from Merica to the Northern Settlement was about forty sleds. The group pulling from Merica to the Eastern Settlement had over fifty sleds. During the winter trip, sick or lame pullers slowed both groups. The biggest problem was that a sick man who could not get out of the sled kept two of the pullers from their necessary sleep. The resulting rancor and forced delays caused one death among the men pulling the Eastern Settlement sleds.

So Hallgrim suggested a three-man team pulling a utility sled. The sled would be loaded with only a thirty-sleep supply of pemmican to make the load lighter. The beaver-head leader plus two other healthy men would pull the utility sled. They would be the leadership team for ten sleds, more or less. When necessary, they would take a sick person from a six-man sled. The sick person could rest as necessary in the extra space on the utility sled. The innovative idea of a utility sled for every ten sleds was quickly adopted.

During the winter hunts there was time for the men in Merica to discuss things around a boiling meal. The men made comments to each other when they could. The comments covered the same topic that Bjarni had asked about, "What was Bishop Arne trying to say to the beaver-heads at Sandnes?"

Before they started home from Merica to the Northern Settlement, Tjalve had listened to the various comments. Once he was on the frozen trail home, Tjalve sorted through the things he heard. Then, after a few sleeps, Tjalve told the other pullers on his utility sled that he wanted to catch up with Hallgrim's sled which was with the sleds ahead of them.

Later as Tjalve's sled team pulled up to walk beside Hallgrim's sled, Tjalve asked, "Hallgrim, how many beaver-heads are still living?"

Hallgrim did mental calculations and said, "My guess is less than one hundred. Another hundred men have been to Akoman, but did not get a beaver cap."

Tjalve asked another question, "How many men do you think have never left the Northern Settlement and the Einarsfjord area?"

Hallgrim responded swiftly, "I have already thought about that. My guess is one man for each house has stayed home. So about 300 men."

Tjalve had yet another question, "So, how many men have walked the ice to Merica, but never made the trip to Akoman?"

Hallgrim had anticipated Tjalve's question. His answer came without hesitation, "About 700 men and 500 women."

Tjalve wanted to clarify the last answer. He asked, "Most of the women never slept on the ground in Merica. They just loaded their sleds and started back to the Northern Settlement or the Einarsfjord area without breaking the sleeping routine on the sleds. A lot of the men did the same. How many of those 700 men actually spent a moon's time in Merica?"

Hallgrim mentally calculated for several moments. He said, "My best guess is somewhere between 350 and 400 men. Now tell me what this is all about."

Tjalve explained, "Some of the sled pullers have started to talk about Bishop Arne's advice to think about moving to Akoman. Many of the men are strongly opposed to the idea."

Hallgrim commented, "I cannot say I blame them. I have never been in a battle, but staying at the open-water marvels seems to be similar to sleeping on a battlefield for many moons."

Tjalve agreed, "Yes, the men who have stayed in those miserable camps and seen the carnage have a bad image of Merica. They outnumber the beaver-heads four men to one. If we were to hold a *Thing* right here on the ice, the beaver-heads would be standing outside the ring.

Hallgrim said, "I think I see what you mean. Let us go back to visit with Bjarni when we stop for necessary things.

During the break for necessary things, Bjarni listened to Tjalve and Hallgrim. Then he said:

Let me see if I understand this correctly. Most of the beaver-heads would like to convince their families to move because they know what Akoman is like. But when they start discussing the method, the other men become very opposed because they do not know what Akoman is or even how to get there.

Tjalve nodded saying, "That is close."

Bjarni said:

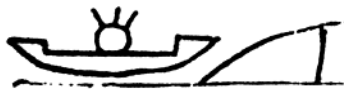
There are many things to talk about before we can ever make a decision to move either the Northern or the Einarsfjord people to Akoman. If people who have not walked the frozen trail talk about these things before knowing about our thoughtful preparation, they may decide the whole idea cannot be done. From another viewpoint, if the beaver-heads do not talk about things, the people may be forced by the cold climate to move without a plan. It would be best if the beaver-heads could continue to talk about things without stirring up unnecessary violent opposition. What do you want me to do?

Hallgrim smiled and said, "You could pull up to the front set of sleds, where Styrk is, and repeat your last statement to each set of sleds as they pass you."

So Bjarni did talk to each set of eleven sleds. The beaver-heads and the other men agreed that their talking about going to Akoman had been tentative discussions only. They all agreed that talking about the subject when home in the Northern Settlement should be just a private affair between man, wife, and older children.

After talking to the other forty-three sleds, Bjarni met with Styrk, Hallgrim, and Tjalve before they returned to their normal roles in the sled column. Bjarni said:

Once in my life, I waited too long to act on good advice. This time I want to prepare us all in time. When we cross back to Merica this spring, let us start by taking four sleds on to Akoman. We will stay through the summer to talk things over with our friends there.



That spring when they walked back to Merica Bjarni was thirty-three years old. Bjarni had been accepted as the trail leader, with Styrk, as the pathfinder, his second-in-command. Hallgrim and Tjalve served their usual roles as the planner

and the human counselor. As was his custom, Bjarni was with the last group to come off the ice at Pamiok Island.

While his teammates carried their sled over the exposed earth at Pamiok Island, he noticed a group of young dark-eyed men in buckskin clothes. A beaver-head approached the dark-eyed group. They talked a little and then the beaver-head pointed at Bjarni. Two of the young men immediately walked toward Bjarni.

"I am Aslakson," said the taller of the two young men. Aslakson had the black hair and eyes of his mother. But his nose was big, with a bump in it. His cheekbones were high on the face. Aslakson was slightly whiter than his friend. He was about a half a head taller too. Bjarni saw that the tall man looked enough like Aslak to justify the name Aslakson.

Bjarni said, "We invite you and your friends to feast with us tonight."

After good food and good feelings of friendship, about the time when the stories should have started, Aslakson said:

My father sent me to tell you to send many of your men right back Ranga Fjord. Do not hesitate. These two years of cold are not normal. They are happening when the weather should be warmer. My father says the sky has been darker than normal for two years. Now the sky grows brighter. The warm climate is returning.

Bjarni said, "I have not noticed the sky. But if what your father says will be true, and yet we do not send the men home, there may be many lonely wives in Ranga and Lyse Fjords for many years."

"And too much unused pemmican in Merica," commented Styrk.

Bjarni trimmed the boiling pot wick. Some of the best meat was put into the pot. Four beaver-heads went to the other campfires inviting the men to come to Bjarni's campfire. Many of the beaver-heads knew of Aslak. They respected the warning of Aslakson. An old beaver-head asked the direct question to Bjarni.

"Are you going back?"

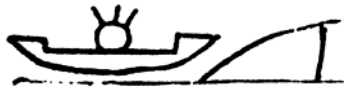
Bjarni answered:

Styrk, Tjalve, and I all are. Hallgrim plans to walk to the Blond Area to see his wife and children. Then he will go on to Akoman. He offers to take up to twenty-three men who would like to see Akoman for the first time.

The discussion quickly turned to the best allotment of men to stay and men to go back to the Northern Settlement. In the dawn, Aslakson and the group of dark-

eyed men watched most of their blue-eyed friends move out onto the ice. When Bjarni's sled began to move, Aslakson's group, Hallgrim, and twenty-three men from the Northern Settlement turned to go west. There was no waving. Coming and going was a part of everyday life in Merica. Aslakson knew his father would be pleased that his knowledge about the weather and his earned reputation had influenced his friends' decisions. Hallgrim was thinking about other things.

When Aslakson told of the meeting with Bjarni, Aslak was pleased. As time passed everyone in the Northern Settlement and even in the Einarsfjord area knew Aslak was correct once again. The weather made a rapid switch from a climate where the sea ice was frozen solid for nine moon's time to a warmer climate where the sea never froze solid but numerous icebergs kept the water cold. The churning pack ice mixed with towering icebergs dominated Davis Strait.



That spring on the way home Styrk picked the fastest path through the pressure ridges. They were racing the melting ice showing signs of coming apart. Men sometimes walked through puddles of icy water on the surface. To save time Bjarni did not let the men stop to hunt seal that were popping up in open seams. Following Hallgrim's advice Bjarni encouraged the sleds to move straight east on the same notch as Merica instead of slanting east by north. Once again Hallgrim had judged correctly. The southern route kept them away from the icebergs cast off the breast of Hel into the cold flow. Once again after they passed beyond the cold flow, they saw the icebergs behind them tearing up ice.

That summer Bjarni and his friends were pleased to be back in Ranga Fjord. At home in a warm climate, the returning men and beaver-heads settled into the old routines of the Ranga Fjord farmhouse. Life was good and getting better. The good life lasted four years.

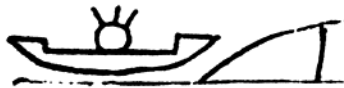
During the third of those four years the warm climate had subsided. A few boats were getting into Merica once more. After loading the boats with pemmican many of the younger Northern Settlement sailors, mostly second, third,

or fourth sons, left the boat to make an over-winter tour of Eastman Lands or to go court the girls on the west side of James Bay.

Bjarni, Styrk, and Tjalve were able to talk many young men, especially from the houses where no one had been as far as Akoman, into going there for the adventure. They found beaver-heads willing to be guides. The boats got through to Merica only during the last two years of the warm weather. But the Northern Settlement and Einarsfjord men who saw Akoman increased by seventy-seven. Of the seventy-five men, fourteen new beaver-heads returned to the Einarsfjord area. Five new beaver-heads wore their caps home to proudly show their mothers who were living in earth banked houses in the Northern Settlement.

All seventy-five men described the richness of life in Akomen. When questioned about the "blood and gore" of Merica, all the men answered that the blood and gore was caused by the people in the Northern Settlement and the Einarsfjord area who stayed home and expected their meat to be delivered to them.

Unfortunately after four warm years, the topic of moving to Merica was rarely mentioned in neither the Northern Settlement or Einarsfjord homes, except after the people listened to Bishop Arne's latest sermon. His preaching about the coming end of the good years was getting tiresome. Many of the more astute men who sat through those impassioned pleas to move to a better land compared Bishop Arne more to John, the Baptist, crying in the wilderness than to Moses.



On a Sunday afternoon in late summer Bjarni, Styrk, Tjalve, and Arne sat around the lamp boiling caribou bones. The three women had gone inside to talk about weaving. The kids were frolicking in the pasture, out of hearing range but in sight.

Tjalve said, "Seems like old times, doesn't it? What has it been? Twenty years since we walked to Akoman together?"

Arne replied, "Yes, twenty years this fall. I remember the songbirds best. We could hear birds everywhere in Akoman then. I do not hear many birds here this summer."

Styrk added, "And the fire was bigger. We had wood all around."

Bjarni smiled, "Those were good times. I am glad we can remember them together. Akoman is a good land. Hallgrim is still there."

"A land given by God for us to possess," said Arne as he cleaned his nails with a pointed stick.

Bjarni replied "You sure preach that theme over and over it seems."

"Yes, I do. I have discovered people must hear a message many times. They must think on the message a long time before God inspires them to act. I dream about standing on the shore and watching my people go to the land they can possess. I want them to act when the time comes again."

Tjalve answered, "Maybe you dream about the land we can possess because you talk about it all the time."

"I pray about that thought often," Arne said:

But I was having the dreams for a year before I started preaching about Moses. God has given me a role. I may never be written into a book, but I can discern God's will for my people. The cold of Einarsfjord is becoming oppressive, similar to the oppression of the people in Moses' time. In Akoman there are warmer places, more food and more space. God is pointing us to it. I am his spokesman. You will be his guides. Our people can reach the land we can possess in forty sleeps, not forty years.

Styrk looked west toward the sunset saying, "The climate has to get a lot colder before we walk the ice again, let alone guide someone."

Arne said, "Aslak said there will be five warm years and nine cold ones. The cold years should be coming."

Bjarni shook his head with doubt:

Actually, this is the end of six warm years, with two very cold years in the middle. Aslakson said his father did not understand why the cold years came except that the sky was darker. We may get cold years, but I am not sure they will be cold enough or last long enough to get many men across to the open-water marvels. The last cold spell did not last long.

Arne argued back:

We can at least make plans. If we have plans, then we can go when God signals. If we do not plan and God signals us to act, we may act too late. Then we all will be condemned to Hel in this God forsaken cold country. I always believed the damnation of sinners was in a place that is too hot, but now I am sure sinners who stay in Einarsfjord are condemned to the everlasting cold of Hel. God must surely condemn any country where the main food -- seals -- has black hearts. What do the beaver-heads think about moving their families over the ice?"

Styrk was quick to say:

Most of them are in favor. The subject has been discussed often in the farmhouses. Many of the men who have seen only Merica are opposed to the move, but most of us now agree on the method to get families to Akoman. We just need to know with certainty that the ice to Merica will be in place at least two years in a row."

"Are there beaver-heads from every one of the eighteen kirkes?" asked Arne.

"I think so. I have met men from many kirkes. Why?" inquired Tjalve.

Arne explained,

"If men who have been to Akoman came back to their kirkes to tell the rest what Akoman is like and to offer to guide them over the ice, more people would be willing to leave this land for that land.

"I have a problem with my priests. None of them have ever walked the ice, as I have. Most of them preach the virtues of staying near the kirke, even when the permafrost makes burial difficult. One or more beaver-heads in each kirke might be able to talk sense to the priests and the people."

Bjarni asked, "You said we would be the guides while you stood on the shore. What did you mean by that?"

Arne smiled and said, "Let me ask our two friends: If you had to choose someone to lead you onto the ice, would it be Bjarni, myself, or someone else?"

Styrk and Tjalve indicated Bjarni.

"Now," said Arne, "if you had to choose someone to exhort your relatives to go to a better land they can possess, would you choose Bjarni, myself, or someone else?"

Styrk said, "Only you have the opportunity to speak freely throughout the Einarsfjord area and the Northern Settlement."

Arne responded:

"In the Bible inspiring people to go to a land they could possess was in God's hands, but Moses had to make it happen. My mouth, Bjarni's guidance, and your legs must take us to the land we can possess.

"One of the reasons I am good in my role as Bishop is that I study people. I have watched leaders of people big and small. I think I know things that make a good leader. Can you guess one of them?"

The two friends looked at each other. They had accepted Bjarni as the leader long ago. They called him Bold Bjarni in Merica twenty years ago. Tjalve said, "Boldness, like Bold Bjarni."

Arne smiled and answered:

A leader needs courage. At times courage can look like boldness. But boldness without intelligence is often foolishness. You called Bjarni "bold," but I cannot ever remember him being foolish.

Tjalve said, "You are right. One of the reasons I chose to be here today is because Bjarni does not do foolish things"

Big Raven replied, "You have just mentioned one of the most important things about a leader."

"I did?"

"Yes. The most important thing a leader can do is to recruit his partners wisely. The leader must be extremely careful."

Tjalve chimed in, "We think Bjarni is our leader, but he did not recruit us. We all selected him."

Arne replied:

I invited him to visit me twenty-two years ago because I thought I saw a unique boy. Later, I discovered he was a leader too. So, in a way, he also recruited me by his competence, his prudence, his speaking ability, his

polite and friendly manner, his hospitality, his insight, his inner strength, his charity, his meekness, and his decency.

All of those are needed in a leader

Bjarni looked at Arne with amazement. No one, not even Arnora had ever mentioned more than two of those traits. He was uncomfortable with the whole discussion. He tried to think of something to change the subject. The only thing he could come up with was, "If recruiting the best people defines a leader, these men and Hallgrim make me a great one."

Arne said:

Moses was a great leader in very trying times. Bjarni you are a great leader in very trying times. Thanks to your natural abilities, great people have joined your team. So I think you do need a new name. I want to baptize you again as Talerman, the speaker of the people.'

Bjarni sighed, "I am always ready to do as you ask. But it is up to God to create a colder climate again. When he does, we, beaver-heads, know how to get the people to a land they can possess."



As summer faded into fall, the weather turned colder. By Talerman's thirty-eighth birthday, the condition of the ice was solid evidence that God had sent the cold again. Talerman and Tjalve led the beaver-heads and men from the Northern Settlement to Merica. Styrk went south to guide the Eastern Settlement group to Merica.

Hallgrim met Talerman and Tjalve at Pamiok Island. He brought his black-eyed wife and their three children with him. They were keeping house in a tepee in a bay west of Pamiok Island.

Talerman and Tjalve set up base camp in a tepee located near Hallgrim's tepee. When Styrk arrived in Merica with the Eastern Settlement men, he joined Talerman and Tjalve.

The cold climate routine of harvesting of the open-water marvels and increased slaughtering of the caribou herds returned. The only major change in the routine was a deliberate rotation of men to Akoman for the summer. Many new beaver-heads returning from Akoman were more than willing to lead other men from Einarsfjord into the rich lands in the south for another summer's adventure.

Even though the ice was solid for only four moon's time at the most, the beaver-heads thought:

This may be a long cold spell. Let us choose a beaver-head from each Northern Settlement and Einarsfjord area kirke to be our spokesman. Next year, they will talk to the people in the kirkes about moving to Akoman. Talerman will lead them.

In the year Talerman turned forty, the largest group of men yet had gone on the Akoman summer pilgrimage. Hallgrim and Tjalve were among the beaver-head guides. The summer Norse boats were able to get in and out of Merica. The first winter walks to both the Northern Settlement and the Einarsfjord area left, as usual, on the moon before the new year. Three sleds of beaver-heads, one man from each Northern Settlement and Einarsfjord kirke, were in the rear with Talerman.

He sensed that the temperature was not as cold as usual. As the sleds pulled past the Akpatok Island, he noted open water. More pressure ridges than usual and occasional spans of open water slowed the journey.

When they were five sleeps out of sight of land, the towering icebergs from the breast of Hel formed a stunning vista. They had already crashed through the pack ice in their path. Styrk had found frozen ice behind the first icebergs. But as more icebergs crashed through, the pack ice was becoming very difficult to cross.

Talerman scaled an iceberg to survey the situation. When he came down he said:

"Men, I do not advise any one of you to go into the mess to the east. I do not think it is safe. Your families need the seals, I am sure.

"I know we desperately want to start the migration to Merica. We have planned for that move all fall. But your families need you alive more than

anything else. I am going back. I encourage all of you to go back with me.

They all did. Nobody was able to walk from Merica to even the Northern Settlement that spring. One set of boats from the Northern Settlement did get through to Merica in late summer. They brought word of desperate food shortages in both the Northern Settlement and the Einarsfjord area. The Merica hunters loaded the boats to the maximum with pemmican and blubber. Some of the crew were willing to stay in Merica to give a spot to a few men wanting to go home.

On the last boat of the season, there was one open crew spot left. Talerman said to Styrk, "Last time you let me go home in the summer. It is your time today."

Styrk responded:

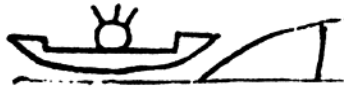
Last time, I walked home only a few winters later. But this weather is unusual. The temperatures are getting warmer when they should be getting colder. If they get too warm and the melting dumps too many icebergs into the sea, you may not get home until the climate changes again. That could take years.

Talerman replied:

Obviously, God has not yet sent a signal for us lead the people across the ice. But, maybe, he has chosen a better path for me. If I must stay here, the other beaver-heads and I will travel to parley with people in Akoman who can help us. Hug Arnora. Tell her I miss her and I will be walking all the time I am in Akoman. But leave the kissing for me."

Two of the next three years were the warmest for two decades. The icebergs and loose pack ice in Davis Strait prevented the boats from getting through. Walking the ice was not even thinkable.

During those years whenever the sun was visible, waiting Arnora watched it set in the west. Somewhere in Akoman before he went into a strange wigwam to parley, Talerman also watched Gee Hiz settle into the night boat. He often thought, "I sure miss Arnora. So tonight I will keep talking and tomorrow I will keep on walking."



The climate turned warm again when Talerman was forty-one years old. The average year-round temperature was higher than it had been for nineteen years. Despite the icebergs caused by the warmth, the ships from Norway finally got through to Gardar in the Einarsfjord area.

After the Norway ships had left Gardar that summer, Bishop Arne lifted the tea water from the fire and carried it to his guest, Ivar Bardarsson, saying, "More tea for Your Eminence."¹~

"Pour it out and tell your cook to brew a new batch with fresher tea."

Bishop Arne replied, "I am the cook. This is the best tea I have. It just came on the ship."

"Oh well, at least I can swallow it and it is warm. I will take another cup to warm my hands."

"Did Your Eminence sleep?" inquired Bishop Arne.

"Not very well. I should think you could have provided a better room. It is so cold and dark."

Bishop Arne made a slight bow saying, "It was my room until you came."

"I do not care. Find me a better one."

Bishop Arne replied, "To my knowledge, this is the second best room in Gardar. Asvald insisted I live here. The only better room belongs to Asvald himself."

"Who is Asvald?"

Bishop Arne remained polite as he said, "He is the head of the family that built the Gardar Kirke and these rooms."

"Only a stone mason? Tell him to exchange rooms with me."

Bishop Arne tried to explain, "He also is in charge of the land these buildings set on."

"Oh, a caretaker? I will still exchange with him if his room is better."

Bishop Arne could hardly hold his smile, but he replied, "No, Your Eminence, I cannot tell Asvald to exchange rooms with you. We would not be here except for his graces."

¹ Ivar Bardarsson

"We are the ones to give grace. If you will not tell him, I will order it done myself. Where is he?"

Captain Gunnbjørn entered the doorway. The Captain had come directly from his boat. His hair was unkempt and the fur on his coat was wet and pressed flat. Bishop Arne, facing the Captain in the doorway, saw a nod and hand gestures which he interpreted to mean, "Come, with me, outside." Bishop Arne nodded slightly. Captain Gunnjorn correctly understood the nod as, "Please wait". He leaned against the door jam, crossed his arms, and rested his eyes.

Bishop Arne continued his conversation, "As you wish, he was the big man with red hair carrying your trunks from the boat. He lives..."

"Are you talking about that tall, foul-smelling man with the scowling forehead?"

"The same, Your Eminence. He had hoped you would be more appreciative of his efforts instead of noticing his defects," Bishop Arne responded with another slight bow.

"Hmmm, I can deal with the room arrangements later. From the talk I heard I assume the summer *Althing* is about to take place. I also assume you will provide me with raised seating next to the King's agent."

Bishop Arne explained even more, "The King's agent is not in Einarsfjord at the moment."

"Then who called the *Althing*. Did you?"

"No, this is an old tradition. The *Althing* time is always set at the last *Althing*," replied Bishop Arne.

"Is there no one in control?"

Bishop Arne said:

Each group of farms sends sakkyndigs. The farm groups are often the same as kirke people. But in four cases, the groups were formed before the kirkes were built. The sakkyndigs of the farm groups are the controlling body.

His Eminence showed his displeasure as he said, "The people are in control? That has got to stop! The reason I was sent here, to the Eastern Settlement first, was to record the land owned by each kirke. to establish a working system of collecting tithes, and to collect the income from the benefice of Greenland because we thought you had died. Although, obviously, you present evidence to the contrary. I will also collect the King's taxes and send them on to Norway.

Bishop Arne asked, "Did you say 'Here, to the Eastern Settlement first?'"

"Yes, I did. Do you have a problem with that too?"

Bishop Arne responded quickly:

No, Your Eminence. I am just surprised the Popa assigned you to survey the Western Settlement too. I thought the King of Norway controlled it. We, Bishops of the Ro--Church in France, never go there anymore.

His Eminence, Ivar Bardarsson, said with an arrogant tone of voice:

I represent the King of Norway also. I know the Western Settlement is where Old Haakon the fourth built the kirke in a place called Haakon's See in a land called Haakon's Man. But that was just his description. He died for his evil acts. Now, the Pope and the current King of Norway are working together for each other's benefit. When I am finished here, one of your boats will take me to the Western Settlement."

Bishop Arne said, "We have heard those names, Your Eminence, but I am not sure the men in charge of our boats know how to get to the Western Settlement."

His Eminence asked with surprise:

What? I was hoping to find the route from you or some of the Einarsfjord boatmen. The man in charge of the boat sailing from Norway to here did not say much. He said he could get me to Einarsfjord. Then he was going back to Norway.

"Didn't you get sailing directions in Norway?" Asked Bishop Arne.

His Eminence stomped his foot and said:

"Why are you so troubling to talk to? Only a few people in Norway have even heard of the church with the stone tower, or Haakon's See, or a land called Haakon's Man. Most people in Norway say King Haakon never sailed beyond the isles where he died. So how could there be a land named after him?

"A very, very few, mostly churchmen, say that Adam of Bremen wrote of a settlement further west as early as three centuries ago. The sagas from Iceland, which are just now becoming known, imply Norse from Einarsfjord also settled briefly somewhere west of here.

"Some people in Norway, who also know the Einarsfjord area. are positive the furs sent for tithes and the falcons sent for gift exchanges could not have come from the Eastern Settlement. So another of my tasks is to go to the Western Settlement."

Bishop Arne asked, "There you will also record kirke land and collect tithes and taxes for the people in Norway?"

"Of course."

Bishop Arne said, "I find it hard to believe the Popa is already naming another Bishop to replace me."

His Eminence moved his arms apart, opened his hands palms up, scowled, and said, "Bishop Arne, the Popa has not received a tithe from Greenland kirkes since the 1317. Also the last message from you came in 1324 when you complained about the Trondheim merchants on the Greenland knarrs. You did not send the papal tithes at that time. There has been a recurring rumor, by drunken sailors, that you went into the Indrawing Sea and drowned."

Bishop Arne took a deep breath and let it out slowly before saying, "The people here have had a very difficult quarter-century. We needed every scrap of food just so some of us could survive. Messages asking for even more food would have been sent on the other ships that the King of Norway did not send!"

His Eminence crossed his arms and, still scowling, said:

Your insolent behavior has strengthened my resolve to report you derelict in your duties as Bishop beginning with the first warm period lasting until 1324 instead of the latest warm weather cycle of 1334 through 1337. Some of your old friends wanted to give you the benefit of the doubt. Well, I have no doubt.

Bishop Arne gave an exasperated sigh and said:

"What difference does it make if you report me derel--? Oh, now, I remember.

"This is about that little business of the Popa getting the net revenue of a Bishop's benefice between the death, or removal, of one Bishop and the installation of the next Bishop.¹~ Even before I came here, the Popa's agents were dragging installations out.

¹ Benefice

"The Popa is not even satisfied with income from the years past. He wants the installation postponed for a few more years while you collect the annual income of the benefice for him. That is why the new Bishop, who is to replace me, is still in Norway.

Also, you are here to calculate and collect income of the benefice for as many years as you can prove that I was dead or not doing my duties. Declaring me derelict in my duties for two decades will increase the payment due the Popa. You will get a big reward from the Popa. You want to take from the starving people in frozen Greenland so the Popa can buy new dresses for his mistress in sunny France!"

The fury in His Eminence's face showed Bishop Arne that he had better change the subject before he lost his role as a Bishop. Bishop Arne was trying to think of a way out of the discussion when Captain Gunnbjörn shifted position in the doorway.

Bishop Arne saw Gunnbjörn's movement and said, "Your Eminence, the man in charge of a fishing boat which just arrived, has signaled me. Apparently, one of the crew is very sick. He wishes me to go with him."

His Eminence, Ivar Bardarsson, turned to look at the man with dirty mangled fur and unkempt hair. "Does he not see we are engaged? Send one of your other kirke men."

Bishop Arne replied, "They are all busy getting ready for the *Althing*. Would you like to accompany me? We can talk on the way."

"I have had my fill of smelly boats. Go on. I have my trunks to unpack. I guess I have to do it myself."

Bishop Arne had seen Captain Gunnbjörn's face and his boat before. They walked with long strides toward the boat landing. But as soon as they were out of sight of Bishop Arne's house, he touched Captain Gunnbjörn's arm and came to a stop. Bishop Arne asked, "I hope you have messages from Talerman."

Gunnbjörn's eyes did the smiling as he said:

The message may be as good as circumstances permit. To the best of my memory, these are Talerman's exact words: 'I may have to stay in Akoman. Aslak says, maybe, for three more warm years. The beaver-heads here have a plan to build enough shelter for about 600 people

coming to Merica. The Tunit are willing to help harvest all the caribou we will need. Hallgrim, Tjalve, forty Norse men, and I are on our way to Akoman. Hallgrim, who now lives in Akoman, thinks we will be able to talk the people of Akoman into helping us too.

When Bishop Arne returned to His Eminence, Ivar Bardarsson asked where he had gone. Bishop Arne replied, "I went with the man in charge of the boat to hear about plans. There is a weather delay but he expects clear sailing."

The summer *Althing* was a short affair with little obvious business. Ivar, sitting on his chair above the crowd, was disgusted. He considered the whole affair a complete waste of time. What he saw happening on the fringes of the crowd convinced him the *Althing* was also sinful in the eyes of God.



Talerman, with a large group of Norse men staying in Merica, hunted with the Tunit during the spring migration of caribou. Then the Norse men returned to the shores of Ungava Bay to wait for the summer migrations of caribou. Day after summer day they watched the tidal sea sweep in and then ebb away. They hoped to see sails come up from the eastern horizon. None did.

Talerman and the men helped the Tunit with the caribou kills during the summer migration. Then after the fall caribou migration, the men divided into eight smaller groups. Each group joined a hunting village that was leaving Ungava Bay to hunt their way south.

Talerman had rehearsed the key points of the Norse message with the beaver-heads. In the evenings, after the hunts, they parlayed long and skillfully.

The beaver-heads sometimes met at random spots in the forest where two hunting groups chose to camp. Then the beaver-heads were able to compare the people's responses. They concluded the people in Eastman Lands were willing to help, but they were afraid five hundred new families would swamp their territories. However, the village sakhims told them that to the south where things had been chaotic there were vast areas of unclaimed land. Also most of the sakhims wanted to have more friendly hunters in the south to buffer Eastman Lands from the wolfpacks. Talerman passed on a message that went from beaver-

head to beaver-head. The message was, "Agree that the Norse will move through the Eastman Lands to settle on land to the south."

In the later phase of the moon of the suckers, Talerman and several of the beaver-heads came out of the forest on the east shore of James Bay and crossed over the ice to the Blond Area on the other shore.

The blond people on the west side of James Bay were more receptive to additional Norse families. They were especially pleased that there would be more opportunities for marriage. The forest to the west could absorb some new families in new villages, but not five hundred of them.

Talerman and most of the beaver-heads hurried to get back to Tunit country on Ungava Peninsula before the first caribou migration after the spring thaw.

The Tunit, always friendly, said they were willing to assist with caribou drives and meat curing for a big group of travelers. Knives and beads would be appreciated in return.

This traveling cycle for Talerman and the beaver-heads repeated for two more years. During the second year Talerman's groups patiently answered questions, re-promised that the Norse people would be just passing through the Eastman Lands, and stressed all the Norse relationships the people already had.

Before the winter traveling season started for the third year, Talerman told the gathered beaver-heads, "Tjalve is getting a sense that most people are almost eager for the Norse to come here. They seem to want our plan to happen. They think it will be something new, but not menacing, in their lives. So, do not over play the migration. If they ask, tell them it will happen when the cold comes and change the subject if you can. Everybody will know when the cold comes. The best thing we can do this year is to grow solid friendship. You all know how that is done. You listen to their stories. You help where you can."

One of the older beaver-heads added, "You leave contented men and yearning virgins behind."

The warm years occurred in the middle of a period that Aslak thought should be cold years. In the third warm year when Talerman, age forty-three, visited old Aslak he found him troubled.

Aslak said:

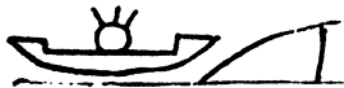
My five warm years and nine cold years' theory is not useful to predict the climate today. I thought it was. The theory did work for three cycles since

my father was a child.¹~ But now it does not seem to be helpful. The only thing I can tell you is that during the last twenty years, warm spells did not last more than three or four years. This is the third year of this warm spell. Then there should be a very cold period of many years. So, if the second cold year is also cold enough to walk the ice, move your people.

Talerman gained recognition by walking or canoeing from Merica to Eastman Lands to the Blond Area and back to Merica each year. His presence around the campfire was desired because he was able to tell the leading men of each village the happenings beyond their trees. His name Talerman meaning, "the speaker of the people" became known. He was accepted as the speaker of the people by all he visited.

Each summer on Ungava Bay away from the people, Bjarni watched for sails. But at summer's end he just had to hope that Arnora was still waiting.

With that hope, Bjarni kept walking.



¹. Ice core climate

Vignette fifteen

IN THE LIGHT

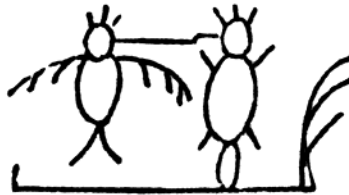
Pitolo worked his way across the stepping stones over the muddy waterway. Before starting up the stairs he pulled an engraved stick from his waistband and handed it to Azon. He also signaled with his open palm for Azon's sticks. He studied Azon's effort for the Talerman story.



Then Pitolo said:

I like your engraving of the man in the canoe. It is simple and clear. I see you played on words. We say a rich man is 'in the light'.¹~ You have shown the canoe and man as light enough to float above the water. I did not even think of that. Clever.

Then Pitolo looked at the second engraved stick.



After studying the stick awhile Pitolo said, "Your engraving of the big raven and the beaver-head will be chosen. I like the touch where you added the three hairs to the beaver-head to show he was from the land to the east where they did not have beaver. I found it is difficult to engrave two men talking and we had so little time."

Azon said:

"I know that I was rushed too. I could not really work on it until after your story late last night.

¹ In the Light

"You did a great job especially at the end where you skipped around your three cornered path and pretended to look out to sea. Then you hopped slowly around the path and looked sadly out to sea. Then you limped very slowly around the path. When you pretended to look out to sea, you had the most pathetic look. I saw a few women brush something from their eyes.

Your engraving of the Big Raven and the Head Beaver is adequate."

"Adequate, yes, not artistic," Pitolo replied.

Azon asked, "Are you disappointed because grandfather chooses my carvings more than yours?"

Pitolo paused, then said, "No, I would make the same choices. Besides, Maalan Aarum says you have the carving skill and I can combine words. Let us climb the stairs."

As they rested at the top of the stairs, Azon said "I am astounded how you can choose the words to say, so briefly, what grandfather talks about for half of Gee Hiz's passage."

"Choosing words for a verse is a trait long practiced by our people."

"I know but some, like you, practice with better talents. What is your verse of yesterday's stories?"

Pitolo said:

*"Floating up the streams in their canoes,
our fathers were rich.
They were in the light
when they were at these Islands."*

Azon said, "I will tell grandfather your words are much better than mine."

Pitolo replied, "If we hurry, there may be some Gee Hiz left when Maalan Aarum finishes this afternoon. I am not seeing enough light to feel rich."

"Yes, we need to hurry. Grandfather had a difficult night. He may not live for seven more sleeps."

Pitolo swung his stick forward and began to step with a fast pace:

Let us go then. Perhaps he will live too long. I prefer a natural death. After our brief but continuous time with him I do not want to see them set him outside to die. They will have to, if he lives too long. He cannot live through the move to winter hunting grounds.

Azon replied, "None of the elders have talked as if we need to move yet. I think it is because of grandfather. They may think what he is doing with us is worth extra hardship next moon."

Pitolo stopped for a moment and said:

I do not know about that. Already some of the women have been storing food caches up the trails. This move will be a long one. They do not want to carry the wigwam stuff and food too. Some young hunters are already staying at the new camps. They are not returning even for the Big House celebration.

Azon and Pitolo continued up the path. Azon said, "I know. My elders have chosen the site for grandfather's grave, a pretty place under the trees looking over the lake."

Pitolo stepped off the path and stopped. He turned to look at the Big House and his village beyond. He reflected, "Apparently my people are going a different way than your people. My people are talking about moving east, toward the rising Gee Hiz. They want to see the great sea again."

Azon stepped up beside Pitolo and looked at the Big house also. Then both turned back to the path. Azon said:

My village is planning to go south to find better ground to grow corn. So maybe the villages will divide into hunters and farmers again, just like grandfather said about the time before his grandfather's grandfather. The past may repeat as the future.

To the left in the sunlight Azon saw his sister and the quiet maiden sitting on a deer hide. They had beads spread on the hide between them. Both were sewing beads into patterns on jackets. The maidens glanced at them and smiled. To the right Pitolo heard the "thwack" of an arrow hitting a rush target. The two young hunters who were guarding the palisade gate were practicing with bow and arrows. Pitolo said:

Remember the leaders chose both of us because they knew the villages were going to use two different paths. We both will carry a set of engraved sticks. I will call mine the 'Maalan Aarum'. In the future, we both will engrave the year's events for our villages. Because the villages will go different ways, there will be a better chance of one set of the engraved sticks lasting until our grandsons have grandsons.

They reached the landing before the entrance to the palisade. The young hunters continued to aim at the target. Pitolo took the lack of interest as permission to enter. He moved faster now. He chose the closest path between tepees and headed toward the firepit in the center of the palisade.

Azon's mother and two younger sisters were standing before their tepee. Azon noticed the sadness on their faces. He thought, perhaps, he saw a tear in his younger sister's face. He stepped past Pitolo and stopped before the low doorway in the tepee. Azon said:

Yes, grandfather has worked on the engraved sticks for a long time. I hope we can pass them on to our grandsons. Duck your head now. Let us see if grandfather can still talk.

The white-haired Maalan Aarum was resting against his backrest to the left of the altar. He waved for the boys to sit in Azon's sleeping area. Azon took the bowl of half-eaten food from his hand.

After setting the bowl near the fire, Azon recommended Pitolo's words. Maalan Aarum listened to the brief verse. He said:

"Even better than I dreamed, Pitolo. But, you need to be aware. We understand the words "in the light" to mean having good fortune. But your grandson's might not use the same words for 'good fortune'. Let me see the sticks.

After looking at the engravings on both sticks, he handed Pitolo's stick back to him saying:

"You have done well, Pitolo, but I choose Azon's today. The Big Raven talking to a Head Beaver should be clear to your grandson's grandsons. We know the Big Raven is a token of a powwow and the beaver is a token of a leader for many villages in Akomen.

"The beaver on the engraved stick is Talerman, my grandfather's grandfather. Because Azon is my grandson, the beaver-head is his ancestor. He is also your ancestor Pitolo.

"The Big Raven really looks like the powerful shaman he was. In the land toward the rising Gee Hiz, powerful shamans always wore black. According to grandfather, they appeared to walk like a bird too, because their black robes hung near to the ground like a woman's dress.

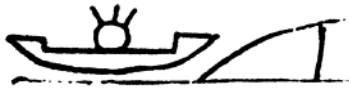
"As you have heard, Big Raven was an offspring of an even more powerful Big Raven, further across another sea toward where Gee Hiz raises. So it was important to get the Big Raven's blessings. If anything was going to happen that might change people's behavior in the land toward the east, the Big Raven had to approve."

The gray-haired Maalan Aarum sat straighter. He pushed his back against the backrest and smiled:

"I will describe the stick to make for tomorrow after I finish the story for today.

"Today, I will tell of a meeting, a reunion really, of the Big Raven and the Head Beaver, Talerman. The story starts in the land toward the dawn when my grandfather's grandmother, Arnora, was in a house with two children in a lonely place near mountains of ice.

"My grandfather liked to tell this story. He liked the emotional plot. So do I. Pay close attention so you can, once again, make the important words sing"



Engraved stick 3:13

*"Floating up the streams in their canoes,
our fathers were rich.
They were in the light
when they were at these Islands"*

FACTUAL FICTION

BENEFICE

A benefice is a position that provides a clergyman with his income.

THE CHURCH AT NADIR: 1307-1417

"Every ecclesiastical appointee was required to remit to the papal Curia ...half the income of the office for the first year and thereafter annually a tenth or tithe. ... On the death of any ... bishop ... his personal possessions reverted to the papacy. In the interim between the death of an ecclesiastic and the installation of his successor, the popes received the net revenues of the benefice, and were accused of prolonging this interval. (Durant, Vol. VII, 1957) **(Return to benefice place.)**

ICE CORE CLIMATE

The GIS P-2 ice core provides data for the Greenland climate from the years 1300 to 1360. (See The Birth) These data were used with care in this story. When the climate was ten degrees below normal (twenty-four out of sixty years), Davis Strait would have frozen solid enough to walk upon for at least five months of the year. When the climate was minus twenty degrees below normal, (fourteen of the twenty-four cold years), Davis Strait was frozen at least nine months of the year and the Northern Settlement had only one month during the summer when the maximum high temperatures averaged as high as 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Outside water, melted by the sun, would have refrozen every night of the year. . (Fitzhugh/Ward, 2000) **(Return to ice core climate place.)**

IN THE LIGHT

The Lenape syllables "Wapa" can have three different understandings. "Wapa" can mean light, rich, or east. These meanings derive from three different Old Norse phrases that sound similar to "Wapa".

The story was composed using Brinton's translation of *Walam Olum* 3:13. A later effort to translate this verse using Sherwin's Old Norse words, results in a verse where the man in the canoe is telling about the good lands, "the beating rice land" (the marsh area to the west of James Bay.), "the East Land" (Eastman Land) and Akomen. Akomen must be the land to the south. **(Return to In the Light place.)**

IVAR BARDARSSON

Ivar Bardarsson is a historical man. He was a churchman of Bergen. In 1341 he received a mandate from Bishop Haakon to go to Greenland on business. He was in Greenland until 1364. He was appointed the Bishop's deputy at the episcopal seat of Gardar, probably from 1348 to 1364. (Ingstad, 1966)

The personality and detailed actions of Ivar Bardarsson are fictional. **(Return to Ivar Bardsson place.)**

WORD MEANING

NOTE:

[Words can be viewed via the BOOKMARKS Click on the triangle in front of WORD MEANING. If the definition of a word is too long, point at the word and hold . A definition should appear. Other comments related to the word can be viewed in the list below. Click on the word in bookmarks to see the full comments. You can return to the bookmarks section by clicking on BOOKMARKS, but you cannot return directly to a place in text.. To return to a place in the text, enter the word in the EDIT(FIND) function.]

"Asvald" is "Ás," a god, and "vald," a ruler, meaning, "the one with power."

"Bardarsson" means, "Son of Bard." "Bard" was a frequently used name in the 1337 to the 1350 period. Could also be spelled as "Bardarsson."

"Ivar" was on the list of most frequently used Norse names from 1337 to 1350.