

Straum-fiord, or Bay of Streams, and which, it is probable, was what is now known as Buzzard's Bay. Here, finding good pasturage for their cattle, they disembarked, and passed the winter. Soon after their landing, a son was born to Thorfinn and Gudrid. This child, Snorri Thorfinnson, probably the first born in America of European parents, became the founder of a long line of distinguished descendants. Among these may be mentioned the learned bishop Thorlak Runolfson, his grandson, who probably compiled the accounts of these voyages, and Thorwaldsen, the famous sculptor of our own day.

A singular incident illustrates the superstition of the age and the recency of the conversion of these people to Christianity. The god Thor, for the first and perhaps the last time, was worshipped in the Western Hemisphere. It happened in this wise. There had sailed in the expedition, says the ancient narrative, one "Thorhall, commonly called the Hunter, who had, for many years, been the huntsman of Eirek during the summer, and his steward during the winter. This Thorhall was a man of gigantic stature and of great strength, and swarthy in complexion; he was a man of very few words, and when he did speak, it was chiefly in a railing way; to Eirek he had ever given evil counsel; and he was besides a very indifferent Christian. He possessed, however, much knowledge of uninhabited lands."

The winter proving severe, the colonists endured much suffering from scarcity, and all their prayers appeared vain. In this time of famine, Thorhall disappeared, and for three days fruitless search was made for him. "On the morning of the fourth day," proceeds the narrative, "Thorfinn and Biarni Grimolfson found him lying on the top of a rock. There he lay, stretched out, with his eyes open, blowing through his mouth and nose, and mumbling somewhat to himself. They asked him why he had gone there. He answered that it was no business of theirs—that he was old enough to take care of himself without their troubling themselves with his affairs. They asked him to return home with them, which he did. A short time after, a whale was cast ashore, and they all ran down eagerly to cut it up; but none knew what kind of whale it was; even Thorfinn, though well acquainted with whales, did not know it. The cooks dressed the whale, and they all eat of it, but were all taken sick immediately afterwards. Then said Thorhall, 'Now you see that Thor is more ready to give aid than your Christ. This food is the reward of a hymn which I composed to Thor, my god, who