

V.

EVIDENCE OUTSIDE THE SAGAS

There is evidence outside the Sagas which support **Cape Breton Island** as the location of Vinland.

1) The first evidence outside the Sagas is **North Atlantic map drawn by Sigurdur Stefansson in Iceland in c. 1570**. Only a copy of it made in 1690 has survived and now is in the collections of the Danish Royal Library. It is also known as Skálholt Map.

≈ Fig. 29. North Atlantic map drawn by Sigurdur Stefansson in Iceland in c.1570



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sk%C3%A1lholt>

On North Atlantic map is a succession of lands from north to south as following: 1] Greenland, 2] Helluland, 3] Markland, 4] Skrælinge Land (land of the indigenous people). **The headland of Vinland is depicted south-east from Markland and east across the bay from Skrælinge Land**, with the tip of the headland on the same latitude as southern Ireland. The inscription says: “Next to them (the indigenous people inhabiting mainland who were reached by English people) lies Vinland, which is called The Good because of the fertility of the land and its abundant produce of useful things. Our historians have wanted to make the ocean its southern boundary, but from more recent accounts I deduce that it is separated from America either by a strait or a bay.” (MP p. 120) In other words, Icelandic historians had thought that the headland of Vinland was part of North America with the ocean as its southern boundary, but based on more recent accounts (of contemporary explorers), Sigurdur Stefansson deduced that Vinland was separated from North America either by a strait or a bay.

Let's consider the north – south succession of the lands Greenland, Helluland, Markland and Skrælinge Land. Its north – south equivalent on contemporary maps is as following: 1] Greenland, 2] Baffin Island (Helluland), 3] Labrador Peninsula (Markland), and 4] the Maritimes and Gaspé Peninsula (Skrælinge Land). The headland of Vinland on Sigurdur Stefansson's map is south-east from Labrador Peninsula (Markland) and east across the bay from the Maritimes and Gaspé Peninsula (Skrælinge Land), which points to the major headland of **Cape Breton Island** as the beginning of Vinland.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maritimes>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gasp%C3%A9_Peninsula

I have doubts that Sigurdur Stefansson had Cape Breton Island (separated from North America by the Strait of Canso) on his mind when he wrote about his deduction that Vinland was separated from America either by a strait or a bay. One major reason is that he drew the tip of the headland of Vinland on the same latitude as southern Ireland. This is no coincidence. In his mind, Vinland was today's Newfoundland Island. From recent accounts (of contemporary explorers), he learned that land with the tip of promontory on the same latitude as southern Ireland was separated from America by a strait or a bay. In reality, Newfoundland Island is separated from America by two bodies of water – St. Lawrence Gulf in the west and Cabot Strait in the south. Sigurdur Stefansson's information was not completely clear, therefore he wrote “either by a strait or a bay,” and on his map he attempted something between a bay and a strait which separates the headland of Vinland in the east from the North American continent in the west.

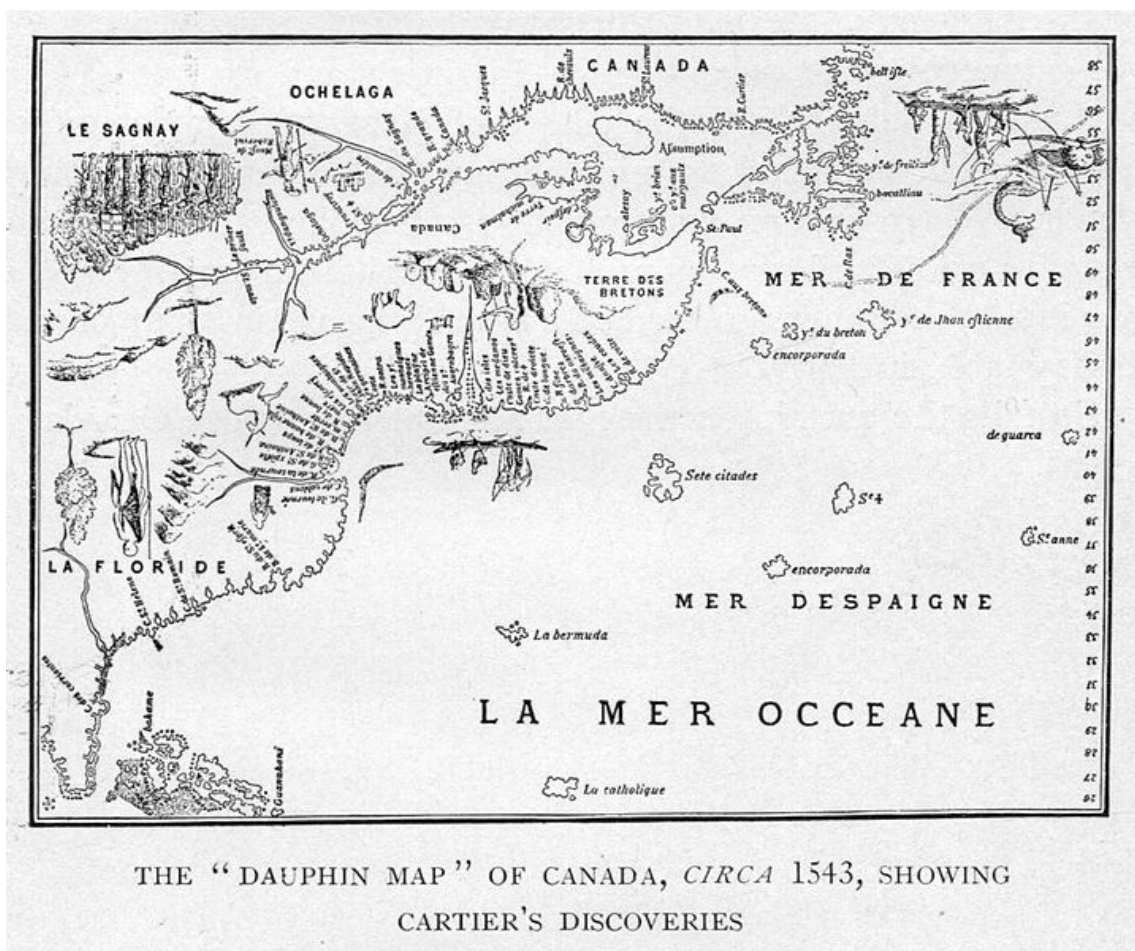
Sigurdur Stefansson's **Winlandiæ** – Fertile-Land is not Leif's **Vinland** – Wine-Land, because no grapes grow that far north on Newfoundland Island. I do not believe however, that Sigurdur Stefansson is to be blamed for the transition from Cape Breton Island to Newfoundland Island, but I believe that his confusion has roots in the beginning of the 11th century after Leif's base was abandoned. Yet two clues on his map reveal the original tradition of the location of Vinland that is in harmony with the Sagas. One clue is that although the promontory of Newfoundland Island should be next to Markland (Labrador Peninsula), it is south-east of Markland (Labrador Peninsula) next to Skrælinge Land (the Maritimes and Gaspé Peninsula), which points to the major headland of **Cape Breton Island** as the beginning of Vinland, not Newfoundland Island. Another clue is that the promontory of Newfoundland Island, which should be separated from the North American continent, is on his map actually connected with the North American continent, which points again to the headland of **Cape Breton Island** as the beginning of Vinland (the explanation follows below).

Sigurdur Stefansson's map alone proves that Vinland begins with the major headland of Cape Breton Island.

2) The second evidence outside the Sagas is **Dauphin Map of eastern Canada from 1543**, with the discoveries of the French explorer Jacques Cartier that is now in the collection of maps in the Parliamentary Library at Ottawa.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Dauphin_Map_of_Canada_-_circa_1543_-_Project_Gutenberg_etext_20110.jpg

≈ Fig. 30. Dauphin Map of eastern Canada from 1543



Near the center of Dauphin map is a land with **the headland of Terre Des Bretons south-east, south, south-west from Labrador Peninsula (Markland)**. Terre Des Bretons is depicted as a part of the mainland (Skrælinge Land/the Maritimes and Gaspé Peninsula) and at the same time located **east across the bay from the western part of the mainland (Skrælinge Land/the Maritimes and Gaspé Peninsula)**. North-east of the headland of Terre Des Bretons is Newfoundland Island. Newfoundland Island is located across the strait from Labrador Peninsula (Markland).

Cape Breton Island is not drawn as an island on this map, but cartographer joined it together with the mainland Nova Scotia and made it look like one big headland. Only the name Terre Des Bretones the Land of Bretons indicates that this is supposed to be Cape Breton Island. On the other hand, it is easy to tell that Newfoundland Island is an island and that it is separated from the mainland Labrador Peninsula (Markland) by a strait. This shows that c. 27 years before Sigurdur Stefansson drew his map, Newfoundland Island was depicted on Dauphin map as an island separated from the American continent, but Cape Breton Island, which is much smaller and much closer to the American continent, was not depicted as an island, but as a part of the North American continent. This is just like Sigurdur Stefansson's promontory of Vinland was depicted as a part of the North American continent.

In 1570, Sigurdur Stefansson could well have some information about Newfoundland Island from recent accounts (of contemporary explorers), but either did not have any information about Cape Breton Island, or if he had it, he did not consider it to be relevant to his map.

A comparison of North Atlantic map and Dauphin map shows that they partly overlap in regions depicted by them. Both maps show Labrador Peninsula (Markland). Both maps show St. Lawrence Gulf partly separated by Gaspé Peninsula from another body of water (St. Lawrence River). Both maps show a headland east of the mainland (Skrælinge Land/the Maritimes and Gaspé Peninsula) and south-east of Markland (Labrador Peninsula). One of the maps calls the headland “Winlandiæ,” while the other map calls it “Terre Des Bretons,” which on current maps is Cape Breton Island. This proves again that Vinland begins with the headland of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia.

3) The third evidence outside the Sagas which supports **an island** as the location of Vinland and Leif's base, is in Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum finished by Adam of Bremen around 1075. Here he wrote information which he gained from Danish King Svein Ulfsson (who was the nephew of King Canute the Great – ruler over Norway, Denmark, parts of Sweden and England) that there was another **island** in that part of the ocean which had been discovered by many and was called Vinland, because grapevines grow wild there and produce excellent wine...”. This paragraph points to Cape Breton Island as Vinland because of grapevines growing there.

Danish King Svein Ulfsson also told Adam of Bremen that beyond this island, were no more inhabitable islands in the Ocean. Everything farther out is covered by immense masses of ice and perennial fog. This paragraph points to Newfoundland Island as Vinland, because north-west from it (on the known course to Vinland) is Baffin Island, which partly matches the description of immense masses of ice.

This shows that the confusion of Newfoundland Island with Cape Breton Island and their fusion in the minds of people into one hybrid had its root already in the 11th century, after Leif's base was abandoned.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinland>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gesta_Hammaburgensis_ecclesiae_pontificum