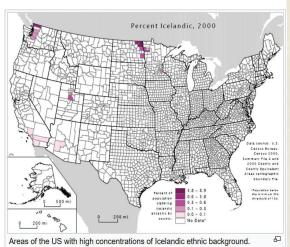
ICELANDERS

History

Icelandic Americans are of Icelandic descent or Iceland-born people who reside in the United States. Icelandic immigrants came to the United States primarily between 1873–1905 and after World War II. There are more than 40,000 Icelandics according to the 2000 U.S. census and most live in the Upper Midwest and Pacific Northwest. The United States is home to the second largest Icelandic diaspora community in the world after Canada. Icelandic Americans tended to follow similar settlement patterns as Norwegian Americans but to a much smaller scale, especially in the Northwest where many Americans of Scandinavian and German descent reside. There were also some who converted to Mormonism (like many Danish Americans) and settled in Utah.

Notable historic Icelandic settlements include Spanish Fork, Utah, the first permanent Icelandic settlement in the United States, and Washington Island, Wisconsin, the second Icelandic settlement and one of the largest outside of Iceland.

In the State of Washington, Blaine on the Canadian border; see https://blaineicelanders.com/ is a focus point, along with the 2 Norwegian centers of Ballard and Stanwood.



Minner fra Lofoten Arnolda Nessiøy Berntsen

Ethnobotanical Gardens

Native plant "starts" from Bonhoeffer Gardens (to your SW, by the I-5) illustrate 99 foods and materials available to the American peoples who lived here 10,000 years without the need to develop agriculture. Planter boxes contain:

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Legends & Lessons

Icelanders were the first Europeans to reach North America. Leif Erikson arrived in North America via Norse settlements in Greenland around the year 1000. Norse settlers from Greenland founded settlements in what is now Newfoundland, Canada.

These pioneers failed to establish a permanent settlement because of conflicts with indigenous people and their personal conflicts within the Norse community. This is an underlying theme among the Norse, the ubiquitous agreement being to always disagree within the ranks. We (this writer) are almost the opposite of Germans; perhaps this is the answer, our roots grow from among the soil of the most difficult of the outcast! The most outcast and the furthest north are from the Lofoten Islands. Icelandic ancestors' DNA is Lofoten, a place with much in common with Iceland's climate.

As the writer of these histories, I hope the reader accepts the apology of showing a great grandfather's fishing boat that plied the North Atlantic in search of needed protein. Forty foot waves (taller than the trees behind you) were/are commonplace in the North Atlantic!