

# St Brendan's voyage

1. Illustrations by D. Rooney, *Brendan the Navigator. Exploring the Ancient World*, G.O. Simms, O'Brien Press, 1989, 0-86278-241-4



*This is Brendan's sea, and yonder Brendan's mountain, cloud-encompassed, stands lonely in the sky.*

1. Mount Brandon, the highest peak in the mountain range that stretches along the Dingle peninsula in Kerry, rises majestically from the water. Beyond, and further to the west, lie the Blasket Islands and the broad Atlantic Ocean.



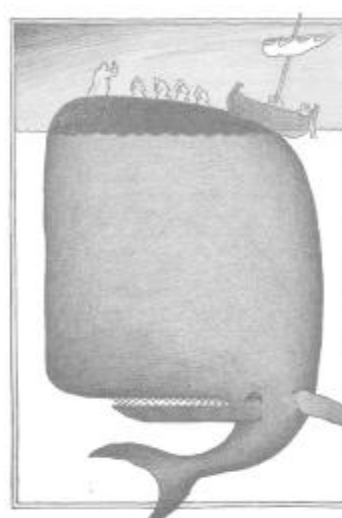
2. Brendan visits Enda on the island monastery of Aran to learn more about the monastic way of life.



3. The monks prepare their boat. A wooden frame is covered with skins just like the currachs of today. However, the monks added sails and covered over the top, making the boat seaworthy on very long journeys.



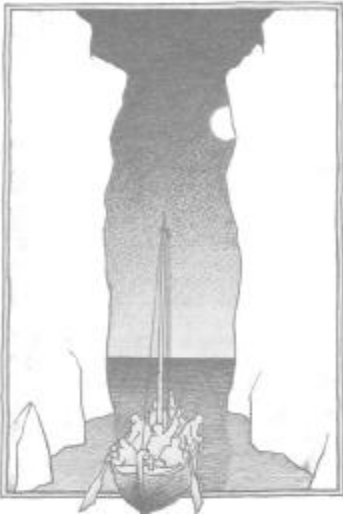
4. A bird flew down from its rocky nest and perched on the edge of the boat, with a message for Brendan, telling him about the voyage ahead.



5. This is Jasconius, the fishy name given to a friendly whale. The voyagers mistook his bulky form for an island.



6. St Ailbe greets Brendan and his companions by washing their feet in remembrance of Christ washing the feet of his disciples.



7. The sparkling pillar, soaring to the skies, strikes wonder into Brendan and his crew. The beauty and grandeur of God's creation was an experience never to be forgotten.



8. A mighty, fire-breathing creature rescues Brendan and his companions from the jaws of a monster fish.



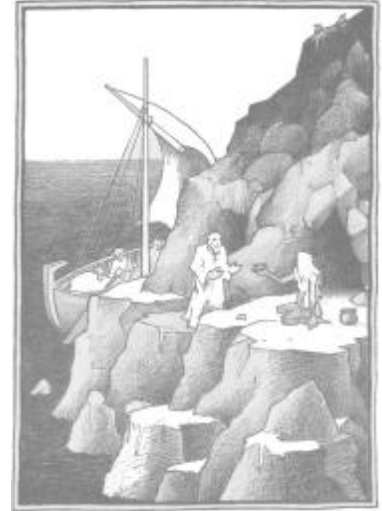
9. Brendan and his companions bravely face attack from the gryphon who hovers over the boat, poised for a downward swoop. Luckily, another bird comes to the rescue and drives away the frightening enemy.



10. Brendan comforts the monks while smoke and flames burst from the volcano. One has perished in the clutches of the threatening enemy.



11. Judas, who betrayed Jesus, was tortured by demons. Brendan feels compassion for unhappy Judas, and drives away the ferocious creatures who wheel around trying to snatch him away.



12. Paul the hermit had come from Ireland many years earlier. We see him sitting outside his cave on a ledge of the steep cliff above the waves. Brendan, after a difficult landing, receives a warm welcome and much encouragement for his journey from this wise old man.

2. Older illustrations, *Brendan the Navigator. Exploring the Ancient World*, G.O. Simms, O'Brien Press, 1989, 0-86278-241-4



13. A twelfth-century picture of Brendan's ship alongside Jasconius, the friendly whale.



14. Brendan's story told in the Dutch language five hundred years ago.



15. A nature book, dated 1475, shows all sorts of fishy creatures filling the sea. These are the creatures later fifteenth century artists thought Brendan saw on his journey across the Atlantic.



16. Plans for Brendan's great voyage into unknown seas are discussed. Fifteenth-century German woodcut



17. One of the creatures who befriended Brendan and his crew was Jasconius, a whale. They met several times, and at first mistook him for an island. They celebrated the eucharist on his back! This is how a fifteenth century artist drew these events.



18. In this old woodcut, a monk finds shelter on the fish island.



19. This was how a fifteenth-century illustrator imagined a gryphon, seizing one of the crew and, holding him fast with his sharp talons, attempting to devour him.

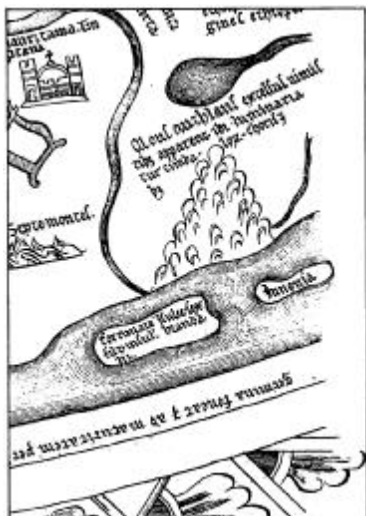


20. Brendan ponders the meaning of his wonderful voyage. Fifteenth-century woodcut

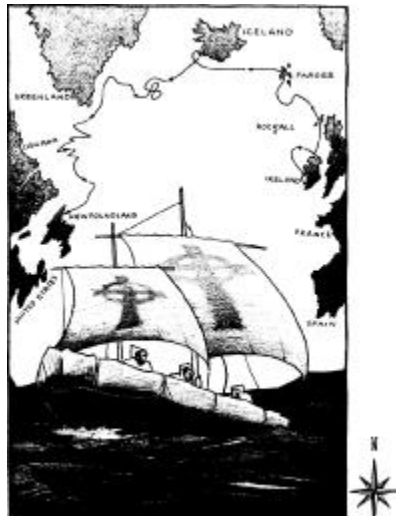


21. Brendan and his crew receive inspiration on this peaceful island of the community of Ailbe.

3. Miscellaneous illustrations, *Brendan the Navigator. Exploring the Ancient World*, G.O. Simms, O'Brien Press, 1989, 0-86278-241-4



22. This section of the Hereford Map of the World (Mappa Mundi) shows an island off the north-west coast of Africa, bearing Brendan's name (Brandani).



23. In the 1970s, Tim Severin built a boat like Brendan's and sailed off into the Atlantic. His journey took him to Iceland, Greenland and eventually to Newfoundland.



24. A model of Brendan's ship, made in the 1940s, a thousand years after his famous voyage.