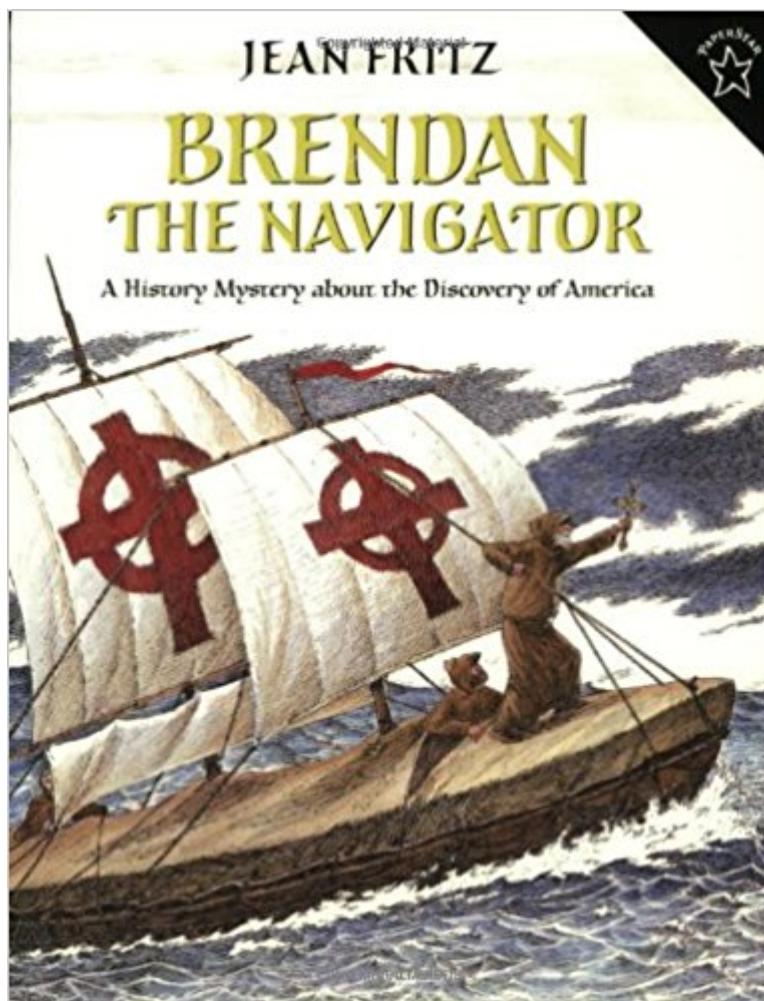


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# Brendan The Navigator



## **Synopsis**

If you ask children in Ireland who really discovered America, you may get this surprising answer: "St. Brendan, of course." He left Ireland 1,500 years ago in a leather boat to find paradise. Tales of the wonders he and his crew saw and the Monster Territory they encountered during their trip have become part of Irish legend. And legend also says that the island of unsurpassed beauty that St. Brendan called paradise was actually America. "A lively, provocative 'history mystery.' " &#151; Publishers Weekly "The author, with her ability to breathe new life into historical facts and fancies, retells the legend of St. Brendan. . . . Unusually inviting." &#151; The Horn Book

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 680L (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Puffin (February 15, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 069811759X

ISBN-13: 978-0698117594

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.1 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #808,349 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #315 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Exploration & Discovery #498 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Europe #1187 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Biographies > Saints

Age Range: 7 - 9 years

Grade Level: 2 - 4

## **Customer Reviews**

Acclaimed biographer, Jean Fritz, was born in China where she lived until the age of thirteen. She tells her story in *Homesick, My Own Story*, a Newbery Honor Book. Ms. Fritz is the author of forty-five books for children and young people. Many center on historical American figures, gaining her a reputation as the premier author of biographies for children and young people. Among the prestigious awards Ms. Fritz has garnered are: a medal from the National Endowment for the Humanities, a May Hill Arbuthnot Lecture, a Laura Ingalls Wilder Award, an American Book Award, a Christopher Award, a Boston Globe-Horn Book Non-Fiction Award, a New

York Times Notable Book of the Year, and many ALA Notable Books of the Year, School Library Journal Best Books of the Year, and ALA Booklist Editors' Choice Awards.

Longer book for slightly older kids. Another great tale of St. Brenden! My kids all enjoyed it, they are 5 and 4 (and 1- who can't sit still yet)

Nice little read. Fritz is a good storyteller. Durable binding and paper as well. The story of Brendan is an intriguing adventure for youth.

### Interesting

Jean Fritz is a wonderful historical author for children. Her books are incredibly fanciful and fun in the way that they presents historical figures to children. It is clear that she has done her research as you read her stories objectively, but the way that she tells it is the most enjoyable way that I have ever read history! She introduces Brendan to her readers, which she primarily sees as being children telling about incidents in his life which will draw the children to relate to Brendan. Then she tells an incredibly fanciful rendition of what happened on his journey to America. She finishes with 4 pages of a more historical accounting of which and how these tales may relate to what could have historically happened. The pictures that she has included are throughout and wonderful as well. For a more historical account of Brendan's journey you may want to read the chapter on Saint Brendan in Robert Reilly's book "Irish Saints". (You can read my review of that where you can find my other reviews). But if you want to provide a child with a combination of fanciful tale and historical fact, this book will fill the bill.

My family attends a church named after St. Brendan, so I wanted to purchase a book for my son (and the grown-ups) to learn about him, how God worked in his life, and why he was canonized. I am relatively unfamiliar with any details of the St. Brendan story excepting that he traveled in a boat wherever the wind would take him. This book may or may not portray the historical facts about St. Brendan based upon the best literature available. My impression of St. Brendan after reading the book is that he was a grumpy, self-centered man, who happened to be stubborn and single-minded enough to sail in a boat for seven years until he discovered America. I didn't find much in the book that would lead me to believe that he should have been canonized, and I am disappointed that the book did not illuminate whatever qualities he may have had to be considered a saint. On a separate

note, the language in the book is somewhat advanced. It would not be appropriate for a beginning reader, but rather for a child who can read on his or her own for some time (there are lots of words on the pages and a wide vocabulary).

Imagine my surprise when I discovered in my daughter's history book that St. Brendan from Ireland could have possibly discovered America before even Leif Erickson! When I found this little story, full of wonder and in the Irish tradition of the tall tale, I was delighted, and so were my four year old and ten year old. The illustrations provided a magical feel that went well with the story. This story would be great animated. We loved it!

This book does a great job of telling the story as a legend. We do not know what of this tale is truth and what is fiction. There is a spirit of discovery about it and evidence that it is based in truth. Also, it clearly shows St. Brendan as flawed, holy but flawed. Too often we think of saints as "perfect people." I love cranky saints. They give me hope.

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