

# Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.archaeology/2005-06/msg00605.html>

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- *From:* Philip Deitiker <[Donevenask@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:Donevenask@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Wed, 08 Jun 2005 19:28:22 GMT
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Tom McDonald <[tmcDonald2672@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:tmcDonald2672@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> says in [news:TOHpe.14838\\$mZ2.8653@xxxxxxxx](mailto:news:TOHpe.14838$mZ2.8653@xxxxxxxx):

> m\_zalar@xxxxxxxx wrote:

>>

>> Alaca wrote:

>

> <snip>

>

>>>In the light of the story on the stone,

>>>it is not the most obvious place.

>>>

>>

>>

>> It was on my first vist to the hill where I first began to  
>> think the runestone story might be true. I had done a number  
>> of military history papers (primarily on fortifications) during  
>> my college years. This was a nearly perfect natural defensive  
>> position, and reminded me of an overlarge motte (as in the  
>> motte and baily type of castle). There are several distinct  
>> advantages of the location which a band in hostile territory  
>> would find advantageous. The hill is steep sided, providing a  
>> strong position in case of attack; it is surrounded (or nearly  
>> surrounded) by water, making a direct assault difficult; and it  
>> has unobstructed lines of sight in all directions so that  
>> surprise attack would be impossible. In short a group under  
>> the conditions given on the stone, would have found this  
>> location irresistible for setting up a campsite.

>

> For a fortified campsite with fighters enough to repel  
> attackers, you may be right.

>

> However, given the situation where Indians (or other  
> Europeans;

> let's dream big) are present in strength enough to massacre 10  
> of their number and force the rest to flee, the very things that  
> make the location a good one for defense would also make it a  
> trap.

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- >
- > Recall that the technological advantage later Europeans had
- > against American natives didn't exist at this time. Iron and
- > steel weapons would be superior in some ways; but stone-tipped
- > arrows, stone knives, stone and wooden clubs, etc., would have
- > been a match for them except in the closest of close combat, in
- > a situation where the Norse were awake, armed and ready. If
- > taken unawares, their weapons would have made nice trophies.
- >
- > The native folk would have the advantage of knowing the
- > ground.
- > You talk about clear fields of vision. However, that would not
- > have been true for people who tracked and stalked skittish game
- > for a living. We've all seen topo maps of the vicinity; it's not
- > at all devoid of places one couldn't see from the hill.
- >
- > There would also not have been any real vision at night,
- > except
- > under significant moonlight. Even then, nervous Norse, like
- > people today, would have often seen movement where there was
- > none, and missed it where there was. This would have favored
- > stealthy approaches by Indian hunters. An attack under those
- > conditions would have largely negated whatever superiority the
- > Norse might have had in arms and armor.

The Kranakua at Matagorda apparently tormented the french for nights on end, getting close enough to make pot shots but basically engaging in psychological warfare against the unprepared french, trapping them inside their fortifications. I am sure the Kranks thought it was all great fun.

The most effective place to be is on the water moving, that advantage being you move out of one groups territory before the next group knows you are coming. Impressions alone, but that major waterways were generally uncontested (probably because of their use in trading).

Natives in the southwest frequented bowl shaped plateaus because they had good observation points and could hide villages in the depressed parts.

The other thing is that noone knows what the vegetation was like on Runestone hill in 1362, it could have been heavily forested, making any point of view less that tree top obstructed. From that point of view personal opinion about what makes a good fortification in a farming community is a moot point.

The flip side is that the region may have been a part of a manmade fire ecology zone.

If I were under attack by native peoples as I penetrated deeper into a continent, the risk of even more attacks would increase as a function of distance I had traveled. It would suffice to learn about fewer cultures and try to negotiate a peace, rather than traveling

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deeper inland. Therefore if I had the ability to return from whence I came, that would be the route. So that there appearance on a hill in a land of small potentially trapping lakes is not wise. The best route is on watercraft moving with the flow down river. Traveling south and east from the red river will not get one to siberia. lol. A more likely scenario for a hoard of 1362 norse is that the misjudged something and they lost their watercraft. Having past through the territory of a dangerous indigeonous people they were probably fleeing that people when they were cut-off and surrounded. In that case the runestone would have been their last act.

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Philip

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\_\_\_\_Groups\_\_\_\_

Mol Anthro <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DNAanthro/>

Pal Anthro <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Paleoanthro/>

Arch. Aux <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sciarchauxilliary/>

Gliadin Sci <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/GliadinScience/>

\_\_\_\_Sites\_\_\_\_

Mol. Evol. Hominids <http://home.att.net/~DNAPaleoAnth/>

Evol. of Xchrom. <http://home.att.net/~DNAPaleoAnth/xlinked.htm>

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• *Follow-Ups:*

◆ ***Re: Kensington runestone Vegetation)in the Scandinavian press***

◇ *From:* Alaca

◆ ***Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press***

◇ *From:* Alaca

• *References:*

◆ ***Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press***

◇ *From:* David Johnson

◆ ***Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press***

◇ *From:* Daryl Krupa

◆ ***Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press***

◇ *From:* David Johnson

◆ ***Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press***

◇ *From:* Alaca

◆ ***Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press***

◇ *From:* Eric Stevens

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◇ From: Eric Stevens
- ◆ **Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press**  
◇ From: Philip Deitiker
- ◆ **Re: Kensington runestone in the Scandinavian press**  
◇ From: m\_zalar@xxxxxxxxxxxx
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