

Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone

Source: <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.archaeology/2005-08/msg00320.html>

- *From:* Philip Deitiker <Donevenask@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Thu, 18 Aug 2005 21:20:41 GMT
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nospam@xxx says in
news:3qj9g15ecp9j5pc9g80s3h5qnmurrbs1gv@xxxxxxx:

- > Philip – as I am mainly posting for other people as I don't
- > believe Philip is capable of self-realisation – is claiming the
- > Norse were travelling up to 250 miles most of the time and that
- > they would rarely achieve their max limit of about 500 miles,
- > and would require an established route even to do this. I say
- > this is totally underestimating the capacity for the Norse to
- > sail long distances.

Once again you missed the point, once you have traveled a route on numerous occasions you can take a more direct route, as the Norse obviously did, but if you are going to set out in an unknown direction, what kind of fool goes 2000 miles, particularly in the harshest of climates. There is no proof that the Norse traveled 2000 miles off Greenland to Alaska or Siberia, simply no proof what so ever. And MY POINT was that after traveling 250 or 500 miles west from Baffin Island a logical person after reviewing what was to the left and right of them, would conclude that further expedition was to what end? More cold intolerable climate with an inability to support pastoral herding. Do you see an abundance of livestock on the islands west of Baffin Island.

- > My figures, based on the saga records with references to Disko
- > Bay, Baffin Island (Helluland) and the Labrador coast
- > (Markland), and of course "L'Anse aux Meadows" and the like,
- > are:

This is sheer and utter speculation. There is no basis for this, if you ask 10 different people about where these places were, you will get 10 different answers, and worse, you know it. This discussion makes the point Horace is making, you are clueless on what constitutes a valid premise or claim, and it is unclear to yourself when you are trying to confuscate the issue with meaningless and strawman facts. The simple, let me repeat SIMPLE basis of the argument is that the sciences can accept any notion with a provision of a consistent set of facts. Let the facts talk, no archaeologist

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can deny that it is possible that some group of kooky Norse set out to cross from Baffin to Murmanck, and who knows if climate was tolerant during some period that might allow such a journey. However, it is certainly also possible that they traveled to the south pole, however, improbable that is. What the sciences are looking for is what a physicist would regard as the impartment of some sort of energy, some evidence that an effort was made to claim a region, or if not, we assume they find the region of no value to them and they turned around and left. One aspect of that decision that seems reasonable is they found as a result of the travels more unfriendly nature than they knew on Greenland, people who already knew of them and that might have been prepared to take them on. This issue takes on importance as they move into more densely populated regions to the south.

So let me restate this again, being a bit of a seaman myself and thinking somewhat the way a seaman thinks. I am in a boat, I take off from Baffin, I travel along the northern continental coast, I get out and find marsh, bog and tundra, to the other side the occasional barren island, I keep going, on, to the front all I see is more of the same, occasionally I spot an encampment of Inuit, scraping an existence out of the land, I keep going, more of the same, more endless wasteland. In the mind of the seaman you look at your supplies, currents, etc and you estimate the risk of going further versus the risk of being stranded without food in that wasteland, at some point you make the decision to return home. When you are traveling an open temperate sea there is a good risk you will find a gem unoccupied by no men, but when you are traveling against a shore on a coast where the dismal prospects are obvious to you, don't have seas opening up to you, you have limited degrees of freedom and limited numbers of outcome, your decision is then to return and mark off what you didn't find. Note, no reports ever of the Norse returning from Greenland from the east. The density of artefacts interpretable as being Norse drop markedly past Baffin Island, this you should take as evidence of what valued to the west. Again, I am not trying to crap on this line of thinking as impossible or implausible, but unless you can show me an encampment with evidence they were exploiting something (musk OX, polar bears, seals, arctic fish, Eskimo dung, whatever) that it is genuinely hard for me to give credence to the idea that they made a habit out of traveling 1000s of miles west, and I am not going to rule out the occasional kook that tried and never to return, after all a whole bunch of western Greenlanders suddenly disappeared. It is obvious from being in this group that there are no absence of kooks living in Scandinavia that might try such a thing, the only real archaeological concern is whether by some latent skill or luck, it turned out to be productive in some TANGIBLE kind of way. As you will recall Scott tried to make a trip to the south pole, he did make the trip, however neither him or his men returned.

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- **Follow-Ups:**

- ◆ **Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone**
◇ From: Eric Stevens
- ◆ **Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone**
◇ From: nospam

- **References:**

- ◆ **Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone**
◇ From: nospam
- ◆ **Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone**
◇ From: Doug Weller
- ◆ **Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone**
◇ From: Eric Stevens
- ◆ **Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone**
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- Prev by Date: **Re: furthering the irrelevant**
- Next by Date: **Re: furthering the irrelevant**
- Previous by thread: **Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone**
- Next by thread: **Re: Challenge for naysayers of the Kensington Runestone**
- Index(es):
 - ◆ **Date**
 - ◆ **Thread**