

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.archaeology/2006-02/msg00298.html>

- *From:* "Steve Marcus" <smarcus_spamout_@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 3 Feb 2006 18:11:20 -0500
-

"Eric Stevens" <eric.stevens@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:45i7u19da3n12b5n8trsvqlf1bqlu6cj4@xxxxxxxx

On Fri, 3 Feb 2006 11:36:10 -0500, "Steve Marcus"
<smarcus_spamout_@xxxxxxx> wrote:

"Eric Stevens" <eric.stevens@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:jbd5u11jasfs8bnou46p62fkb1ucn64oal@xxxxxxxx

On Thu, 2 Feb 2006 18:27:16 -0500, "Steve Marcus"
<smarcus_spamout_@xxxxxxx> wrote:

"Eric Stevens" <eric.stevens@xxxxxxxx>
wrote in message
news:1bo4u1dhu4kvj5aviqrphgvkhf5phutja8@xxxxxxxx

On Thu, 2 Feb 2006
05:39:02 -0500, "Steve
Marcus"
<smarcus_spamout_@xxxxxxx>
wrote:

"Eric
Stevens"
<eric.stevens@xxxxxxxx>
wrote in
message
news:ass2u1pmq8mk9bm5kbjp9qhctdfv1o6mqv@xxxxxxxx

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

On
Wed,
1
Feb
2006
17:37:33
-0500,
"Steve
Marcus"
<smarcus_spamout_@xxxxxxx>
wrote:

snip

The
KRS
was
discovered
buried
in
soil
that
one
might
safely
predicate
was
a
bit
"swampy"
or
"boggy";
that
condition
was
used
to
support
consideration
of
Runestone
Hill
as
fitting
the
term
"island"
which

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

appears
on
the
KRS.

Aren't
you
jumping
to
a
conclusion
here?
The
runestone
was
found
on
the
side
of
a
hill
of
'glacial
till'.
Somebody
(Daryl?)
has
already
pointed
out
that
the
term
'glacial
till'
covers
a
wide
range
of
possible
materials
but
I
am
not
aware
that
anyone

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

has
suggested
that
the
particular
site
ever
was
swampy
or
boggy.
As
far
as
I
know,
the
description
of
swampy/boggy
has
been
applied
to
the
conditions
at
the
foot
of
the
hill
but
not
the
hill
itself.

LOL.
Wasn't the
argument
that the hill
was "this
island" (as
which is
how
the
inscription
reads)
because the

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

land is
boggy and
swampy?

I don't know why you feel
the urge to 'LOL'. Are you
trying to
minimise my point?

Not at all. I'm simply trying to engender a
discussion. The LOL was at
the
caveat that begins the last sentence. Oughtn't
we to know the answer,
since
Wolter clearly knows what the pH is on
Runestone Hill?

What is there about a discussion of your claim that the hill
was
swampy or boggy that justifies a switch to a discussion of the
pH?

First, let me preface this post with noting that you are the one who
always
takes a position that questions must always be asked and answered, even
when
evidence tilts strongly in one direction. You are constantly going on
about
how you do this in the course of working in your professional capacity.
Your foot dragging on this sort of issue is, quite frankly, very telling.

One of the differences between us is that I prefer to deal with a
problem one item at a time while you tend to respond with a whole
cloud of issues. There is a term for this ...

All of this started when you wrote

"The KRS was discovered buried in soil that one might safely
predicate was a bit "swampy" or "boggy";"

Sorry, you're incorrect. This started when someone posted Peter posted
information re decay and control mechanisms and you argued that his article
dealt with rocks other than granite or slate, and I asked why you felt that
it didn't matter that Wolter was comparing greywacke to slate in order to

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

date the greywacke. My posts re acid encouraging biotite erosion (which is stated in the book itself) preceeded my posts vis-a-vis comparing biotite erosion on two different types of rock.

The KRS was found near the top of a hill and I have never previously heard the point of discovery discovered as either swampy or boggy.

Blegen, for example has it that the KRS was discovered on a knoll "above swampy ground." The issue is whether the knoll itself has acidic soil, which may be a result of mechanisms associated with the swampy ground. It's not as though we are discussing finding the KRS at a 1,000 foot elevation above a swamp.

I then suggested that you might be jumping to a conclusion here and gave my reasons why. (see above)

You then asked me:

"LOL. Wasn't the argument that the hill was "this island" (as which is how the inscription reads) because the land is boggy and swampy?"

In another stage of this discussion (see below) part of this discussion I wrote:

If you wan't to continue to claim that someone has argued that the hill was boggy and swampy, I suggest that you get up off the floor and find a credible source for that allegation. otherwise it makes no sense."

You responded:

"I feel otherwise."

I in turn replied:

"So, you are prepared to introduce the claim that the hill was swampy and boggy without you being under any obligation to introduce evidence to that effect. We are not discussing a work of fiction you know. I suggest you apply the same standards of evidence to yourself that you generally requite of others."

At this point you introduce a whole cloud of obscuring issues – as follows:

No. At this point I introduced the following:

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

"7. The authors state that the Maine tombstones showed evidence of lichen growth and that acid produced by the lichens accelerates biotite weathering.

8. Bogs and swamps are typically acidic.

9. Runestone Hill is thought to have been an island surrounded by boggy or swampy land.

10. Aren't *you* curious what the pH of the soil in which the slate tombstones were erected is, and how it compares to the pH of Runestone Hill?" and then later stated:

"Let's modify the claim by saying that the hill is at least adjacent to land that, historically, was acidic."

Now I'll lay it out for you very simply:

1. The authors state that they originally intended to take below ground samples of the tombstones.
2. From this I infer that they originally intended to compare those samples with the above ground samples and with the KRS (which the authors believe to have spent at least 30 years below ground).
3. From this I infer that the authors felt that there was some value to making that comparison.
4. The authors did not take those samples due to the fact that the ground in which the tombstones were embedded was frozen and covered in a foot of snow.
5. The authors subsequently changed their minds about collecting the below ground samples because of "the difference in pH of the soil in Hallowell, Maine (?? do they mean in the cemetery located in Hallowell) and the Kensington Rune Stone discovery site." Page 39.
6. The data by which the authors determined that the KRS is at least 200 years old had to do with the weathering of biotite.
7. The authors state that the Maine tombstones showed evidence of lichen growth and that acid produced by the lichens accelerates biotite weathering.
8. Bogs and swamps are typically acidic.
9. Runestone Hill is thought to have been an island surrounded by boggy

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

or
swampy land.

10. Aren't *you* curious what the pH of the soil in which the slate tombstones were erected is, and how it compares to the pH of Runestone Hill?

11. Aren't *you* curious as to why the difference in pH indicated that taking below ground samples in Hallowell was no longer necessary?

If you answered 10 or 11 "no", why? I would like to be educated.

If you wan't to continue to claim that someone has argued that the hill was boggy and swampy, I suggest that you get up off the floor and find a credible source for that allegation.
otherwise it makes no sense.

I feel otherwise.

So, you are prepared to introduce the claim that the hill was swampy and boggy without you being under any obligation to introduce evidence to that effect. We are not discussing a work of fiction you know. I suggest you apply the same standards of evidence to yourself that you generally requite of others.

... and finally you got to the point where you in effect admitted that you had no evidence to support your suggestion that the place where the KRS was found was either swampy or boggy.

But, nevertheless, the question remains. For example, is precipitation in the area typically acidic as a result of evaporation off the swamp being acidic? I don't know. You apparently don't want to know. More to the point, Wolter apparently does know the pH of the soil in which the KRS was buried. But he isn't telling, at least not in the book. Your explanation is that he didn't want to put his readers to sleep. As Bob Dylan wrote,

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

"You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows."

Okay. Let's modify the claim by saying that the hill is at least adjacent to land that, historically, was acidic.

You don't really know that either. I have already referred to http://www.agviselabs.com/tech_art/grdsolph.php which suggests that the subsoil pH is likely to be >6 and possibly in excess of 8.

I read the page, and it says nothing about the soil pH in Kensington, or of Runestone Hill.

That is, it may range from weakly acidic to weakly basic. In other words it is approximately neutral subject to the normal range of natural variation.

Try a google search on swamps and bogs and pH. Then reread your page wherein it's stated:

"In the glacial till areas of North Dakota, where the average field pH is

8.0, it is not unusual to find areas in each field with a pH of 6.0 or

lower." Didn't you tell me that Kensington's soil is "glacial till"?

See the above enumerated items 7–9, and especially the items numbered 10 and 11. Don't you think that they deserve to be answered before one simply accepts Wolter's dating? If not, I have to ask whether you're feeling okay, because your typical (and self promoted) bulldog approach to tie everything up 100% completely, even when the evidence seems 95% certain, suddenly seems to be lacking.

We've already discussed most of the points of your question and I see no point in going around them again.

Undoubtedly others will see the point, even if you refuse to acknowledge that you do.

Assuming
that
the hill was
not swampy
or boggy,
doesn't a
rigorous
analysis
demand
comparison
of below
ground
samples
from the
Maine
tombstones
with the
KRS?

No useful conclusion could
be drawn from such a study
if the
conditions are significantly
different, as they seem to be.

How can you claim this without taking a
crack at explaining why the
original
intent was to obtain samples of the slate
tombstones from below ground,
if
those samples were of no value to the
weathering issue, and why minds
got
changed about that importance due to
different pH values between
Hallowell
and Kensington.

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Don't you think that *if* an acidic pH accelerates weathering, that it might be important to compare both samples of the rocks being compared taken from below ground, and test the soils in which they were found for pH values? Or do you know that being buried for 30 years in acidic soil cannot possibly account for an acceleration of the weathering of the KRS? If so, please cite the passage in the Nielsen/Wolter book that so states.

We don't know the pH values.
We don't know which is the more acid soil.

But Nielsen/Wolter know. Wouldn't you like to know too, given the enumerated items above?

Read my past posts.

They don't answer the question. It seems that you don't care that Wolter hasn't given you all of the data to support his conclusions, even where it is indicated in the book that the data was initially thought to be important. Again, "you don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows."

I agree it would be nice to know this but it is one of the many items of technical information which the authors omitted from what was intended to be a book rebutting the idea that the KRS was a forgery.

Well first, it's clear that the authors have this data. And second, it's but one of several omitted items that are critical to their conclusion. It's no good saying that it's "technical information", thereby implying

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

that
it doesn't belong in a "popular" book intended for laymen. People interested in the book's topic are not confined to people uninterested in technical science (even if currently ignorant of the details regarding certain aspects thereof). If you are implying that the authors withheld information that would have supported their technical conclusions, I think that you ought not to defend them having done so. I know beans about geology, but when given $A+B \Rightarrow \text{Conclusion } C$, I have enough mental capacity to understand when $A+B$ don't necessarily imply C without consideration of certain other variables, and I am not afraid to have the information regarding those variables supplied, explained, and shown to C .

How about you?

Apparently, you lack the mental capacity to recognize when a conclusion is reached based upon factors that don't entirely explain the conclusion, or else you just don't wish to quarrel with this particular conclusion.

It's about time, isn't it, for you to "put me on ignore"? Perhaps that's for the best, because there will be some questions arising re Nielsen's linguistic analysis and the conclusions reached therefrom. I'm sure that you will find those questions unpalatable too.

Eric Stevens

Steve

Steve

—

The above posting is neither a legal opinion nor legal advice, because we do not have an attorney–client relationship, and should not be construed as either. This posting does not represent the opinion of my employer, but is merely my personal view. To reply, delete `_spamout_` and replace with the numeral 3

Eric Stevens

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)