

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.archaeology/2006-02/msg00374.html>

- *From:* "Steve Marcus" <smarcus_spamout_@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 4 Feb 2006 09:57:55 -0500
-

"Eric Stevens" <eric.stevens@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:4lo8u1hmpd271b3jvi9bqrc2ovnbh37msf@xxxxxxxx

On Fri, 3 Feb 2006 18:11:20 -0500, "Steve Marcus"
<smarcus_spamout_@xxxxxxx> wrote:

"Eric Stevens" <eric.stevens@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:45i7u19da3nl2b5n8trsivqlf1bqlu6cj4@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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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@xx>

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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

predicate
was
a
bit
"swampy"
or
"boggy";
that
condition
was
used
to
support
consideration
of
Runestone
Hill
as
fitting
the
term
"island"
which
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?)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

has
already
pointed
out
that
the
term
'glacial
till'
covers
a
wide
range
of
possible
materials
but
I
am
not
aware
that
anyone
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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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
land
is
boggy
and
swampy?

I
don't
know
why
you
feel
the
urge
to
'LOL'.
Are
you
trying
to

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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.

You are fudging.

No. I don't know what "safely predict" means. It is clear from a site that you linked that the soil, glacial till notwithstanding, might well be acidic.

The discussion re sandstone, limestone ect vs greywacke is a different sub-thread. In this particular branch I have been trying to pin you down and get you to give a source for your claim that "The KRS was discovered buried in soil that one might safely predicate was a bit "swampy" or "boggy";"

You have not been able to do that and now you want to pretend we have really been talking about something else entirely.

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 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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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."

See – when provoked, you can provide a source. Do you really think
that this is evidence that the knoll itself is boggy? I very much
doubt that it is.

But the point, my dear Eric, he of the "there's always more questions to be
asked", is that it would appear that Wolter knows, at least the pH of the
soil, but didn't tell us, notwithstanding that something about the pH of the
soils in Hallowell and Kensington caused him to abandon a planned protocol.
Probably, there's an innocuous reason for this. But I'm amazed that you, the
biggest skeptic posting to this newsgroup, a fellow who won't accept the
equation "anatase of type X, having a certain crystalline size range and
shape to the exclusion of other sizes and shapes, dates no earlier than
1910, anatase of type X was found only in certain inked areas of the Vinland
Map, but the VM could still be an authentic 15th century artifact", doesn't
care to find the answers here.

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:

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

If you want 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 require of others."

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

No. At this point I introduced the following:

"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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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 require 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.

<http://tinyurl.com/87k4x>

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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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.

It does tell you something of the pH of the soil based on glacial till.

Yep. "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." (Assuming areas of North Dakota have ought to do with Minnesota, that says that acidic pH is not unusual.)

It also says:

"In southern Minnesota, Eastern South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa and other areas with low soil pH, crop production will increase when lime is applied to areas within fields with low soil pH in the topsoil. Soils in these areas usually have acidic sub-soil." Kensington, last time I looked, was a bit closer to southern than northern, although it's more accurate to say it's in central Minnesota. See:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kensington,_Minnesota

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:

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

"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"?

I've already corrected that. This suggests that the soil of the hill where the KRS was found will be far from acidic.

Why?

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.

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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.

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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.

Don't you
think that
if an
acidic pH
accelerates
weathering,
that it might
be
important to
compare
both
samples of
the

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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?

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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 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

Re: Geology Question (KRS related)

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.

I don't want to follow you into the metaphorical swamps of you hypothetical arguments.

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.

Its not the questions that I find unpalatable. Its what you tend to do with them.

Eric Stevens