

The Kensington Rune-Stone Is Genuine: Linguistic, Practical, Methodological Considerations

Robert Anderson Hall

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The Kensington Runestone is a 200-pound slab of greywacke covered in runes on its face and side, believed to have been created in modern times to claim that Scandinavian explorers reached the middle of North America in the 14th century. It was found in 1898 in the largely rural township of Solem, Douglas County, Minnesota, and named after the nearest settlement, Kensington. Almost all Runologists and experts in Scandinavian linguistics considered the runestone to be a hoax. The possibility of a Scandinavian provenance for the Runestone was renewed in 1982 when Robert Hall, an emeritus Professor of Italian Language and Literature at Cornell University published his position questioning the methodology of its critics. He asserted that the odd philological problems in the Runestone could be the result of normal dialectal variances in Old Swedish during the purported carving of the Runestone. Further, he contended that critics had failed to consider the physical evidence, which he found leaning heavily in favor of authenticity.



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