

Vikings in the Midwest

Researchers are trying to establish why 15 ancient Viking ships have been found along one Midwest waterway over the past 200 years. Here's what our investigation revealed.

BY WILLIAM WHITE

Since the 19th century, a total of 15 ships, believed to be Norse longships from no later than the 14th century, have been found in Minnesota and the Dakotas. Yet evidence of these finds has not been entered into the official history books, largely in concession to the sentiments of so-called native Americans (actually Mongoloid Aleuts, Inuits/Inupiat/Yupiks—better known as Eskimos—and Indians). These so-called natives claim, under federal law, ownership of everything found in America from before 1492.

This is despite the presence of ancient white people such as Kennewick Man (to name just one) who were here earlier than the Mongoloids, and various white groups that visited or settled in the Americas long before Christopher Columbus.

The time has come for a revision of the official, establishment version of ancient American events and an acknowledgement of Norse settlement of Minnesota during the Middle Ages.

The first alleged sighting of a Viking ship in Min-



While much more research needs to be done to clarify all the facts, it has become clear that the Vikings were present in olden North America, and much more extensively than just the cluster of houses found at L'Anse aux Meadows. Longship remnants have turned up along the Red River Valley in Minnesota, North Dakota and Canada, along with other artifacts. Patricia Sutherland, an archeologist at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa, proposes the Norse seafarers traded with the Eskimos and Indians for furs and walrus ivory, and she has assembled a mountain of evidence proving the Viking presence. For instance, she has found what she says is a Norse shelter on Baffin Island, along with various Viking artifacts. Sutherland's work has been described by Peter Pope, head of the department of archeology at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland as "very significant and fascinating." Above: Painting by Christian Krohg of Leif Eiriksson discovering America, created in 1893.

nesota has become a local folk legend—the discovery of a longship by settlers near Mary Lake, just west of Minnesota, in the late 19th century. As the story goes, the area experienced a dry spell just before the turn of the century, and the old lake mostly dried up, its water level falling to record lows. And, as children went playing on the old lakebed, they found the remains of a ship partially buried in what had been the lake's bottom. They showed their parents, and the story of the Mary Lake boat began. Then, in the 1930s during the dustbowl when drought hit much of the midwestern United States, Mary Lake dried up again—and the ship was again brought to light. But there was no interest in excavating it, as there was little organized support for research into

Nordic colonization of America before Columbus.

The return of the lake once again submerged the ancient vessel.

In isolation, this could be a colorful piece of folklore; but it is one of 15 such stories that researcher Steven Hilgren has collected from Minnesota and the Dakotas of similar finds—lore that has caused him and other scholars to believe that these lost Viking longships are evidence of a larger Viking settlement in the northern-central part of the United States.

Hilgren grew up in Minnesota with tales of the ship sunken in Mary Lake, but never pursued it until one day, while researching his family's genealogy, he came upon an old book, Mason's *History of Ottertail County*,

which mentioned that during the Great Depression two other similar Viking ships had been found in the vicinity of Kensington, Minnesota. Reflecting on this, Hilgren remembered the legend of the Viking ship that he had heard in his youth and became determined to get to the truth of the matter.

He started by going to Mary Lake and interviewing local residents and farmers. Many didn't want to talk about the finds, afraid that they would be ridiculed by scholars at local universities, but eventually, they came to trust Hilgren, and directed him to Lily Stephans, the granddaughter of one of the men who had first found the ship. Stephans was around 10 years old when the ships surfaced for a second time, during the drought that accompanied the Great Depression, and well remembered the incident when she and a group of other girls 10 to 12 years old found the submerged ship.

Armed with these stories, and with several artifacts Hilgren has found himself from Viking times—and which scholars have dismissed rather irrationally as

“family heirlooms brought to the area from Norway by some Norwegian farmer”—Hilgren began opening a booth at local fairs and Nordic cultural events. And it was at these fair booths that he began collecting other pieces of local lore—of buried Viking ships and lost Viking settlements—that he has collected into his list of 15 suspected Viking vessels in the Minnesota and Dakota area.

Various local legends place similar ship findings at Perham, Elbow Lake, Greenbush, Ulen, Alexandria, two at New York Mills, two at Big Cormorant Lake and a third one near Kensington, as well as one in each of the Dakotas.

Hilgren is now working on recovering the ships. He has been systematically installing underwater video cameras in Mary Lake to map the lake bottom, and is now working his way with scuba equipment through an area heavily choked with algae. Other scuba expeditions have begun exploring other sites where Viking longships are rumored to be sunken. And the efforts of

Kensington Rune Stone Decoded: Vikings, Templars & Goths in America in 1362



WHEN A SIMPLE IMMIGRANT FARMER discovered what seemed to be an ancient stone with “Viking-style” runes inscribed on it in Minnesota, people said he was crazy or lying. He endured a lifetime of ridicule for digging the stone up and presenting it to scientists for analysis. But more than 100 years later, additional discoveries have proved the stele was indeed the real McCoy, although left there by Knights Templar in the company of Norsemen in the 1300s. Interest-

ingly, the location of the Kensington rune stone was just about exactly where some postulate an ancient Viking presence from much earlier may have been focused. (See accompanying story in this issue.) Find out more in the January/February 2010 collector's issue of TBR. One copy is \$10. No S&H inside the U.S. Outside the U.S. add \$13 S&H. Order from TBR, P.O. Box 15877, Washington, D.C. 20003 or call TBR toll free at 1-877-773-9077 to get your copy. See also www.barnesreview.com.

Norse Mythology

By John Lindow, a specialist in Scandinavian medieval studies and folklore. Giants, elves, black elves, dwarves, Fenrir the gigantic wolf, the sea serpent of Midgard, the Valkyries, Odin and his eight-legged horse Sleipnir, Thor, Loki, Freya, Baldr, Askur and Embla, the shield maidens, Heimdal, Hagbard, Starkad, Ragnar Lodbrok, Harald Hildetand—no culture can match the Norse in the richness of their mythological imagery. A great reference book to pass on to children and grandchildren who may have little knowledge of the beliefs of our pre-Christian ancestors. Softcover, #339, 364 pages, **\$19** minus 10% for TBR subscribers. Add \$5 S&H inside the U.S. Add \$13 S&H outside the U.S. Order from TBR, P.O. Box 15877, Washington, D.C. 20003 or call TBR toll free at 1-877-773-9077 to charge. See also www.barnesreview.com.

A circular map of the world from the 16th century, showing the Americas, Europe, and Africa. The map is titled 'MUNDUS' and includes a compass rose and a small inset map of the North Pole.

Nicholas of Lynn and the *Inventio Fortunata*

“Based on wood decay rates, if the original observer saw rotted wood, then the ship was probably Norse,” Paine told THE BARNES REVIEW. “But if the original observer had made an observation based on color and the texture of the soil, ballast stones and/or rust showing where metal had been, then the ship might have been from millennia ago.”

Paine's interest in Nordic settlement of the northern Midwest developed in 1975, after he read a 1974 book by Astri Stromsted, *Ancient Pioneers, Early Connections*, claiming 4,000 Greenlanders had colonized the Americas in medieval times. Stromsted's work is based on an ancient Nordic text, the Lenape Epic, which many believe to be historical in content, not mythical, as other scholars argue. Paine then encountered the works of Hjalmar Holand, who explored and studied the Minnesota Waterway in 1928, gathering the geological evidence that eventually proved that the ancient waterway had been robust enough to carry larger ships. His book, *Explorations of America Before Columbus*, was an early venture into what later researchers proved—the Nordic exploration and colonization of what is now the

TBR • P.O. BOX 15877 • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20003

United States in the 11th through 14th centuries.

While based on folklore, the “Viking longboats in Minnesota” theories are not as wild as many mainstream scholars would have one believe. Prior to the 14th century, the Earth was warmer than it is today, and the waterways of the far north were much more accessible to travelers, just as the lands of the northern United States and Canada were much more fertile and suitable for settlement than they are today. Further, contrary to popular belief, submerged wood does not generally rot unless it is eaten by aquatic creatures. Decay requires oxygen, which submerged wood is denied.

This general fact explains why docks can be built with wooden pylons and why entire cities, such as Venice, can exist on wooden supports. It allows submerged wooden sailing vessels to be preserved for centuries. And, when supported with other evidence of Viking settlement of the north-central United States, it is very plausible that the ships that the Viking settlers utilized would still be lying, submerged, somewhere under the Minnesota and Dakota lakes.

Though it took many decades to be acknowledged, it is now widely accepted that Scandinavians left Greenland and settled in the Americas before Columbus “discovered” the continents for the Spanish crown. This settlement of what was called Vinland and Markland is chronicled, in part, in the saga of Erik the Red, which tells of the exploration of America by a group of Greenlanders under the famous Viking Leif Eriksson, and then its colonization by Thorfinn Karlsefni. Additionally, there is the Lenape Epic, which Paine cites.

Because these tales contain mythical elements, for many decades they were derided as total myths by scholars—until archeological evidence of Viking settlements in Newfoundland proved that the ancient tales had been correct, and that America had been discovered and settled by Europeans long before the voyages of Columbus.

The first archeological find of Viking settlement in America was made in 1960 by Helge Ingstad and his wife, Anne Lee Ingstad, who discovered a Viking community dating from A.D. 1000 in Newfoundland, but

whose work was attacked at a time when the deification of minorities and sensitivity to so-called native Americans was coming into vogue.

Because the political implications of white Europeans in America prior to Columbus were broad—the claims of many Indian groups to their lands and to various cultural sites is based almost entirely on the legal fiction, encoded in American federal law, that no whites had settled the continent prior to 1492—an effort was made to reject the findings. But further evidence of settlement quickly accumulated, and few today deny the scientific fact that white Scandinavians were in the Americas—and sometimes at war with the “skraelings,” the Viking name for the so-called native Americans—centuries before the law permits Americans to believe.

But the new evidence of the Viking longships in Minnesota and the Dakotas combines with another piece of evidence—the Kensington rune stone—to support the proposition that Viking settlement of the Americas was much more widespread and extended much farther West than mainstream historians and American Indian activists would like the general public to believe. [See, among others, TBR issues from March/April 2002 and January/February 2010.—Ed.]

The new evidence of the Viking longships in Minnesota and the Dakotas combines with other evidence to indicate the Vikings did settle there.

The Kensington stone, found in 1898, is a stone that the 10-year-old son of farmer Olaf Ohman found buried on their farm in Kensington, Minnesota, and contains a runic inscription commemorating a 1355 voyage by Paul Knutson, on behalf of the king of Norway, first to Iceland, and then to the “Western Settlement,” part of an effort to reestablish communication with what the Norwegians believed was a “lost colony” in the region. Ten men died on the voyage, and, in 1362, as they were about to depart and return to Norway, the Kensington stone was left on the dead men’s grave.

After its discovery, the Kensington rune stone was attacked and derided as a “hoax” for many decades, until the discovery of new information about the language of the Scandinavian North in the 14th century, and geological analysis of the stone itself, debunked claims that the stone had been “forged” and proved that it was, in fact, quite authentic.



Some Viking Artifacts in the U.S.

Clockwise from upper left: 1. Unlike the Kensington rune stone, the so-called Roseau rune stone, found in the 1920s in Roseau, Minnesota, is tiny, only about an inch in diameter (1.18 inch by 0.83 inch). It seems to be girdled by two bands of “runes” or lettering, each letter being about 0.1 inch wide. 2. Found buried in an American Indian rubbish pile was this out-of-place object, a Norwegian silver penny, identifiable as being from the reign of Olaf Kyrre, also known as Olaf III Haraldsson (born 1050; ruled 1067-93). Did the Vikings visit what is now the state of Maine, where the mystery penny was found? Or is it an elaborate hoax as critics suggest? 3. This is tentatively identified as a Viking mooring stone, characterized by the rounded but slightly triangular hole in its center. A number of such stones have been found, but their actual function is unknown at this time. This specimen was found on July 4, 2006 along with four others. 4. This artifact, said to be a portion of a metal Viking harpoon tip, was found in northern Minnesota and measures six inches long.

Paine believes that the Viking colony in Minnesota was wiped out by drought after eight or nine decades of existence:

Most of the western U.S. experiences a severe drought about once every 84 years. The Maalan Aarum records that there were 11 chiefs between the rune stone episode and the drought. If the average reign was five years, the span of time between the high water episode of the rune stone and the drought episode of the Minnesota Caves would fit into the western weather cycle. When the drought came, contact between the Norse and their kin, the Lenape, would have been diminished. The black plague in Norway followed by the Hanseatic League blockade took the Norse out of American history for centuries. The Lenape continued to migrate and create their history.

In addition to the rune stone, 15 campsites showing distinctive marks of Viking settlements, particularly the cutting of triangular-shaped mooring holes into rocks, have been found in an area ranging from the Hudson Bay to Northern Minnesota, indicating Viking settlement there. At these campsites various relics, later authenticated as 14th-century and Scandinavian in design, were also found, including fire-steel, a device for lighting fires, a ceremonial halberd, a 16-inch head of a battle axe, a lighter battle axe, a spearhead, a Nordic sax—a type of single-edged butcher-knife-like sword or dagger—and mooring pins.

And there is the rumored Verendrye rune stone, a stone similar to the Kensington stone, and found in 1783 near Minot, North Dakota by a French explorer named Verendrye, that was shipped to France and lost during the chaos of the French Revolution.

These settlements are believed to have played a sig-

nificant role in the development of the Mandan Indian tribes, who are said to have interbred with ancient whites and were discovered by European explorers to have blue eyes, to be knowledgeable of Christianity and to live in houses of Nordic European design.

Some also believe that knowledge of these settlements returned to Europe as a product of commerce between the homeland and the colonies in North America. Hilgren points to the Skaholt map, a monastic product of the 16th century, that indicates an island of "Vinland" that Hilgren believes is Minnesota and not Newfoundland as often claimed.

Some believe that the settlements in America have a more occult origin—that they are the shelter to which the Teutonic Knights fled after the destruction of their order in much of Europe early in the 14th century. The Teutonic Knights, who are claimed by modern Freemasonry as the ancestors of their occult order, are said to have fled to the Americas in the first decades of the 13th century after the destruction of their base at La Rochelle by the French king and the pope. Those who follow this theory believe that the Knights Templar were led to Minnesota by Nicholas of Lynn, an English astronomer who later returned to Europe, supposedly carrying with him information about the New World. Proponents of this theory point to an occult mark made

on one letter in the Kensington rune stone as proof.

But theories about the Knights Templar are not needed to substantiate what has long been known and what even now is resisted by the increasingly multicultural elite that inhabits the ivory towers of modern universities—that there was extensive settlement of the Americas by Nordic peoples prior to the appearance of Columbus. The folklore about Viking longships buried in the lakes of Minnesota and the Dakotas is one part of this history and heritage—and it is the neglect of this folklore, which no one can doubt exists, that is one of the greatest failings of an intellectual elite seeking to promote everything "native" while degrading everything white and European. ♦

WILLIAM WHITE is the former commander of the American National Socialist Workers Party and is currently completing a degree focused on Classical and Near Eastern studies. Currently he is working on a commentary on the first nine books of Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum* and is providing weekly content for AMERICAN FREE PRESS newspaper in Washington, D.C. You can write to Bill c/o TBR, P.O. Box 15877, Washington, D.C. 20003. He is under court order not to post on the Internet, so if you upload his material to the Net, please make it clear to everyone that it is not he who is doing so. Bill's new book, *The Centuries of Revolution: Communism, Zionism, Democracy*, is available from TBR BOOK CLUB for \$25 plus \$5 S&H. See page 64 for order form.

ADVERTISEMENT

JOIN GIDEON'S ELITE: PREPARE YOURSELF FOR SERVICE

**Hear Pastor Pete Peters daily on WWCR shortwave radio.
24 hours a day; seven days a week – Daily internet streaming:
www.ScripturesForAmerica.org**

**For a FREE newsletter with complete broadcast schedule,
write to: Scriptures for America, POB 766, LaPorte, CO 80535, USA.**

The Mandans

Is mystery of the white Indians of the Dakotas finally solved?

BY WILLIAM WHITE

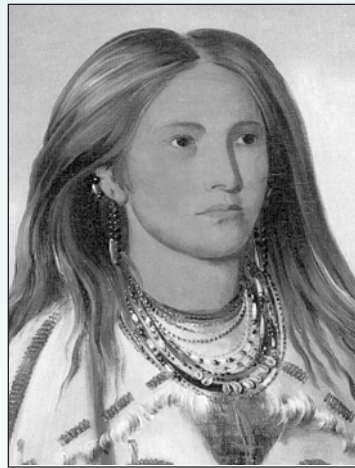
It has been believed by some folks, since the 18th century, that a Cymric (Welsh) explorer named Prince Madoc or Madog ab Owain Gwynedd landed somewhere in America in the 12th century (probably 1170). Different locations for the alleged landing(s) have been proposed—from Mobile, Alabama (where an ancient harbor, predating the Columbian discovery, has been found) to Hudson Bay.

If this prince existed at all, which is uncertain, he would have been the son of Owain Gwynedd (d. 1170), prince of Gwynedd in northwest Wales. Gwynedd was an independent kingdom from the end of the Roman era until the 13th century.

One American tribe that has become inextricably linked with the Madoc legend is the Mandan Indians of the western Dakotas, “discovered” by Welsh explorer George Catlin in the last decades of the 18th century.

Catlin published a book claiming that the Mandan Indians spoke Welsh—a claim that has been difficult to substantiate, as most of the Mandans were wiped out by smallpox 40 years later. It is indisputable, though, that the Mandan Indians were white skinned, blond haired and blue eyed—racial traits that have also linked them to ancient Norse (or possibly ancient Welsh) exploration of the area.

Several Welsh-American and American Indian activists have been demanding DNA testing of the remaining Mandans to determine whether they are, in fact, evidence of white settlement of what is now the northern-central United States before Columbus. One American Indian activist—a Shawnee “wisdom keeper” named Ken Lonewolf—not a Mandan—has had himself “DNA tested” and was found to possess Welsh DNA. Not sur-



Left, a painting of a Mandan Indian girl by George Catlin, created in 1832.

prisingly, critics have accused Lonewolf of having racial admixture from post-Columbian, not pre-Columbian, settlers.

The Mandans themselves have been resistant to DNA testing, largely because they fear being iden-

tified as partly “paleface” from ancient times—a finding that would further erode the American legal principle that every inhabitant of the Americas before 1492 is a so-called “native American,” and upset their solidarity with the other, more Mongoloid, tribes.

Testing on ancient human remains has also been problematic, as American Indian activists have the legal right to any remains found on American soil that are dated prior to 1492, and such activists have jealously guarded the DNA of these remains. The premise that the white settlers “stole” the United States from peaceful Mongoloid “natives” is one of the foundational myths justifying the semi-autonomous political existence of American Indian tribes within the borders of the U.S.

White DNA—DNA from the N haplogroup—has been found in many American Indians, and the dominant theory is that these groups represent a white-Asian admixture prior to the migration of proto-American Indians from Asia across the Bering Strait, which occurred during the last ice age. The American Indian haplotype is generally considered a subset of the M haplotype, which is the defining DNA haplotype of the Asian or “yellow,” Mongoloid race.

Anyone with eyes to see can tell that the eastern American Indian tribes—called the Algonkians (Abenaki, Penobscot, Lenape, Mohican, Seminole etc.)—are racially, culturally and linguistically much different from the heavily Mongoloid-featured Athabaskans (Eskimo, Inuit, Navaho, Tlingit, Haida and other Northwest coast Indians, Apache, Mescalero, Chiricahua etc.). ♦