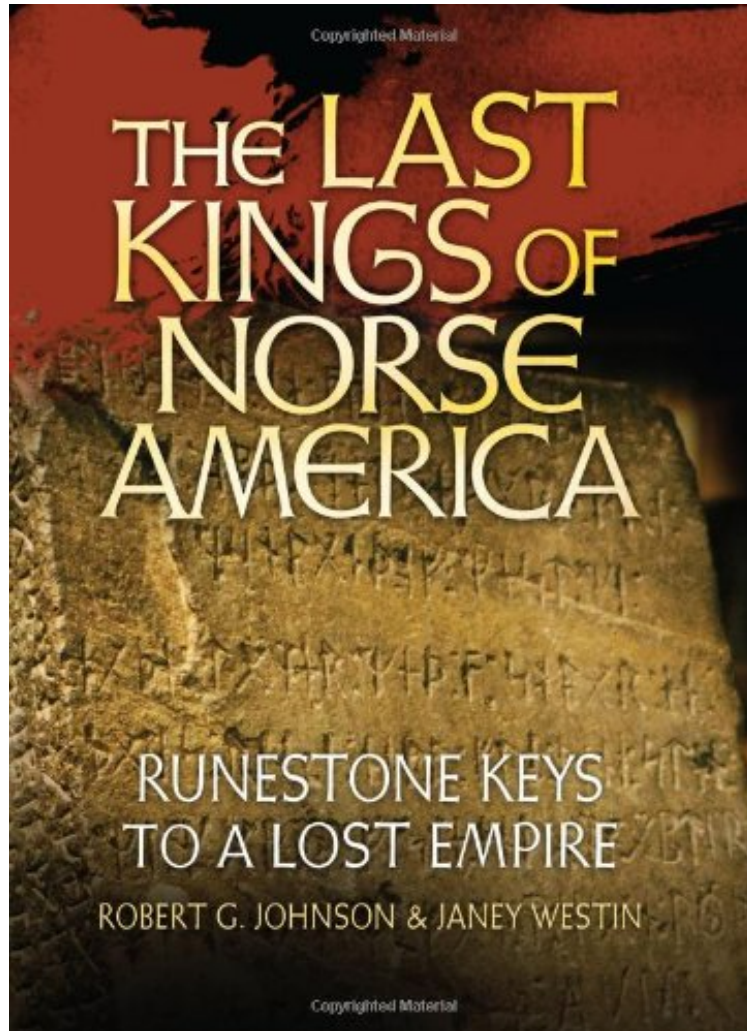


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## The Last Kings of Norse America: Runestone Keys to a Lost Empire

*Robert G. Johnson, Janey Westin*  
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**Robert G. Johnson, Janey Westin : The Last Kings of Norse America: Runestone Keys to a Lost Empire** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Last Kings of Norse America: Runestone Keys to a Lost Empire:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. This is the best explanation of the Kensington Runestone and the Spirit Pond ...By Erik S Rurikson This is the best explanation of the Kensington Runestone and the Spirit Pond Runestone ever written. The authors have placed the American evidence into the context of Scandinavian history and royal intrigues of the time. The Paul Knutson Expedition of the late 1350s is tied in with the dynatic politics of Sweden and Norway. Kings Magnus and Hakkon are connected to the American runstones and the Newport Tower in a convincing way. The authors' detailed translation of the difficult Spirit Pond Runestone has won me over from a total

skeptic to a believer. I had originally dismissed it as a modern fraud committed by someone who enjoy unsolvable riddles. Unlike the Kensington Runestone, with its rather clear message, the Spirit Pond stone used abbreviations and poetic language to obscure its meaning. It was most likely a memory tool for a court poet; not a memorial meant to be understood by all who read it. I am even more impressed by their solution to the vexing problem of the so-called mooring hole stones in Minnesota and South Dakota. Rather than being tie-up points for boats (though some clearly serve that purpose) the authors prove that the majority of the holes were boundary markers for farms. They are identical to those used to avoid border disputes in Iceland and Gotland. This may indicate that Greenlanders settled the north-eastern edge of America's prairie lands for hundreds of years before "disappearing into the local Native American population. Some readers will enjoy the easy reading found in the first 1/2 of this book. A historical narrative approach is intermixed with relevant evidence and clear explanations that even the novice to the Vinland mysteries can follow. The rest is a bit more technical. It presents how the authors came to their conclusions and developed their storyline out of fresh interpretations of the evidence for Northmen settling and exploring North America in the 1300s. I urge anyone truly curious about the Nordic origins of our country to read "The Last Kings of Norse America." 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Neat (and convincing) story By Roger L. Hooke Here, finally, is a rational hypothesis that weaves together into a coherent whole the mystery of the Kensington and Spirit Pond runestones. It is based on careful research, both in the field and in the library, and draws not only on the author's first-hand knowledge of the landscape in Minnesota but also on historical data from Scandinavia. While written for the lay person, this immanently readable volume contains appendices with detailed scholarly analyses of the runes on the two stones. It should stimulate further archeological work along the proposed path followed by the Norsemen; such study could provide further support for the authors' hypothesis. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Read if you're love forgotten History By Laura Sullivan Long on conjecture amid scintillating historical facts with a decent translation of the Rune stones thrown in. Its a great movie that I would buy the rights to.

These are the first words in a rigorous translation of the 1362 memorial poem inscribed on the Spirit Pond runestone, found on the coast of Maine in 1971. This translation climaxed a decade of historical investigations by authors Johnson and Westin in which they address a 450 year-gap in North American history between the 1492 voyage of Columbus and the Vinland voyages of Leif Eriksson and Thorfinn Karlsefni shortly after 1000 ad. After the Vinland voyages the Greenlanders developed a lucrative trade in North American furs, marketed in Norway and taxed by the king. But after 1300 a cooling climate caused the Greenland merchants to migrate to North America and the trade died. To regain the trade and expand his empire, in 1356 King Magnus of Norway and Sweden sent his son, young King Haakon VI, on an expedition to North America with Commander Paul Knutson. The inscriptions on the Spirit Pond and Kensington runestones enable the authors to reconstruct the fascinating story of Magnus and his expedition, more than a century before Columbus left the shores of Spain.

Epic in scope, insightful, imaginative, venturesome, and provocative--if this groundbreaking book about the Norse in America before Columbus does not cause a paradigm shift in your thinking, you need to check your pulse. --Herbert R. Cederberg, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of History, University of Wisconsin About the Author Robert G. Johnson received his Ph.D. from Iowa State University. After a puzzle-solving career in industrial research, he joined the Department of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Minnesota to work on the mystery of past climate variations. The American runestone controversy was just another perplexing problem with a solution that resulted from a joint ten-year effort with co-author L.J. (Janey) Westin. Johnson has published many research papers and one book: *Secrets of the Ice Ages: the Role of the Mediterranean Sea in Climate Change* (Glenjay Publishing, 2002). Initially a professional calligrapher, Janey Westin pursued paleographic studies of medieval manuscripts, stone inscriptions, the structure of letterforms, and the tools and materials of the trade. This work expanded into stone letter carving and sculpting. She has carved letters smaller than an inch and up to two feet high in limestone, marble, granite, quartzite, bluestone, sandstone, slate, and more. Westin is a longstanding Portfolio member of The Colleagues of Calligraphy, her regional guild. She has taught calligraphy, letter carving, and sculpting at international calligraphy conferences, at stone sculpting symposiums in Colorado and Indiana, and at local venues in Minnesota. Westin attended the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and has a B.A. in Japanese from the University of Minnesota. Her studio, Paper Stone, is located in Edina, Minnesota.