

Prof. Rafn's opinions were published. It is but charitable to assume that Prof. Anderson never heard of the results of this inquiry, although they have repeatedly been published. It will be noticed that Prof. Anderson indirectly admits that if the Dighton Rock does not confirm the Norse discoveries, then there is doubt concerning the presence of Norsemen at Taunton river.

The more judicious and better informed De Costa, in his chapterless volume, entitled *Pre-Columbian Discoveries of America*, although, apparently he has exhausted the evidences bearing on his theme, devotes but little space in the body of his work to the American monument, but his references, where made, are mostly in the form of foot notes. In one of these notes, concerning Dighton Rock, he affirms that "whoever compares this inscription with those of undeniably Indian origin found elsewhere, cannot fail to be impressed with the similarity.

* * Just over these letters is a character, supposed to be Roman also, which may signify NA, or MA, the letter A being formed by the last branch of M. Now MA in Icelandic is used as an abbreviation of *Madr*, which signifies the original settler of a country."†

By competent observers the Dighton Rock has been described as a large angular block of greenstone trap, presenting a smooth inclined line of structure, or natural face towards the channel. It lies on a large flat in the bend of the river, and is exposed or laid bare at ebb-tide, but covered with several feet of water at the flow, submerging the rock, with its inscription. The action of the tide, thus diurnally assailing the inscription, which has continued for a great length of years, has tended to obliterate the traces of all pigments and stains, which the aborigines are known to have employed to eke out their rock-writings or drawings. The effect of disintegration from atmospheric causes have been probably less, under this action of the water, than is usual in dry situations. But as the tide deposits upon its surface a light marine scum, which necessarily renders any scientific examination of the inscription unsatisfactory without a thorough removal of all recremental or deposited matter.

Washington, who was well versed in Indian matters, on being shown a delineation of the rock, pronounced the drawings aboriginal. In 1839, Mr. Schoolcraft employed Ching Wauk, an intelligent Algonkin chief, well versed in Indian pictography, to decipher the inscription from the engravings of the rock that appeared in "Antiquities Americanæ," one of which was made in 1790, and the other in 1830. Selecting the former he pronounced it Indian, that it related to two nations, and consisted of two parts. All the figures to the left of a line drawn through it which would not touch any part of the figures related

†*Pre-Columbian Discovery*; p. 66.