

cuneatics, or the trilingual Rosetta Stone, ever received more faithful study. After inspecting the rude scrawls of which it chiefly consists, it is pleasant to feel assured of this, at least : that when learned divines, professors and linguists thus perseveringly questioned this New England sphinx for upwards of a century and a half, we have good proof that no more valuable inscriptions have been allowed to perish unrecorded. But the most curious matter relating to this written rock is, that after being thus put to the question by learned inquisitors for a hundred and fifty years, it did at length yield a most surprising response.

The description given by Prof. Greenwood of his own process of copying, and by Prof. Winthrop of the method pursued by his colleague, Mr. Sewall—as well as the assiduity and zeal of other copyists—would, under all ordinary circumstances, have seemed to render any further reference to the stone itself superfluous. But no sooner do the Danish antiquaries write to their Rhode Island correspondents, with a hint of Leif Erikson and other old Norsemen's New England explorations than the Dighton Rock grows luminous; and the Rhode Island Commission sends a new drawing to Copenhagen, duly engraved, with all the others, in the *Antiquitates Americanae*, from which the learned Danes, Finn Magnusen and Charles C. Rafn—as indeed the most unlearned of English or American readers may—discern the name of Thorfinn, with an exact, though by no means equally manifest enumeration of the associates who, according to the saga, accompanied Karlsetne's expedition to Vinland in A. D. 1007. The annals of antiquarian exploration record many marvellous disclosures, but few more surprising than this.\*

The Dighton Rock inscription having been so well received in Copenhagen, Dr. Webb, the Secretary of the Rhode Island Society, again essayed to enlighten the Danes, so sent them a drawing of the circular stone mill at Newport, along with some metallic implements found in conjunction with a skeleton at Fall River. These new evidences were published in the Supplement to *Antiquitates Americanae*, which appeared in 1841. Much learning was employed to prove by analogies that these also were of Norse origin. That the Round Tower at Newport, Rhode Island, is of Scandinavian origin rests on no other foundation than that of bold assertion. And yet the idea has found its way into our school books, and a picture of it is given, in attestation of the early visit of the Icelanders. This structure, which has so forcibly been pressed into service to do duty in substantiating an unhappy theory, stands on an eminence in the center of the town of Newport, being about twenty-four feet high and twenty-three feet in diameter, circular in form. It

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\*Prehistoric Man, pp. 403-406.