

STONE OF POWER: DIGHTON ROCK, COLONIZATION, AND THE ERASURE OF AN
INDIGENOUS PAST

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the historiography of Dighton Rock, one of the most contested artifacts of American antiquity. Since first being described in 1680, the forty-ton boulder on the east bank of the Taunton River in Massachusetts has been the subject of endless speculation over who created its markings or “inscription.” Interpretations have included Vikings, Phoenicians and visitors from Atlantis. In its latest incarnation the rock is celebrated in a dedicated state park museum as an artifact of a lost Portuguese explorer, Miguel Corte-Real. I accept the Indigenaiety of its essential markings, which has never been seriously contested, and show how antiquarians and scholars into the twentieth century pursued an eccentric range of Old World attributions. I contend that the misattribution of Dighton Rock (and other Indigenous petroglyphs, as well as the so-called Mound Builder materials) has been part of the larger Euro-American/Anglo-American colonization project and its centuries-long conceptualization of Indigenous peoples. As with colonization itself, the rock’s historiography is best understood through the criteria of *belonging*, *possession* and *dispossession*. The rock’s historiography not only reflects that colonization project and its shifting priorities over time, but its interpretation has also played a significant role in defining and advancing it. By disenfranchising Indigenous peoples from their own past in the interpretations of Dighton Rock and other seeming archaeological puzzles, colonizers have sought to answer to their own advantage two fundamental questions: to whom does America belong, and who belongs in America?

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This dissertation began with four case studies, but in grappling with the sheer volume of material I narrowed its focus to one organizing subject, Dighton Rock. By then, I had conducted a considerable amount of research (and drafted a small mountain of material), employing resources at various institutions that did not factor in this final draft. I would feel remiss in not acknowledging the assistance of staff that helped me to locate materials that ultimately were not used, although these sources overall informed my general understanding and in some cases contributed to conference papers I delivered in the course of my studies. These institutions included the Royal Ontario Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, Trent University Archives, Peterborough Museum and Archives, and Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections at Washington State University Libraries. For this dissertation, I thank the staff of the Old Colony Historical Society of Taunton, Massachusetts, and the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston

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Introduction: A Lost Portuguese Explorer's American Boulder



View of Dighton Rock, 1864.

“...every man will see something different from every other.”

—Edward Augustus Kendall, “Account of the Writing-Rock in Taunton River,” in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 1809

“...it is easy to imagine as present on the rock almost any desired letter of the alphabet, especially of crude or early forms; and that, starting with almost any favored story, he can discover for it, if he looks for them eagerly enough, illustrative images to fit its various features, and initial letters or even entire words or names.”

—Edmund Burke Delabarre, “Recent History of Dighton Rock,” 1919.

On Saturday, September 24, 2011, several hundred New England residents of Portuguese descent gathered on the shaded grass of Dighton Rock State Park in Berkley, Massachusetts on the east bank of the Taunton River to celebrate “500 years in southern New England” for the Azorean people. The rallying point of the festivities, organized by the government of Portugal’s autonomous region of the Azores in cooperation with the park’s Dighton Rock Museum and local Portuguese-American groups, was Dighton Rock, a forty-ton boulder housed within the park’s shoreside museum.¹ Its western face, eleven feet long and five feet high, is covered in enigmatic inscriptions said to record a 1511 visit by Miguel Corte-Real. A lost Portuguese explorer from the Azorean island of Terceira, Miguel was last seen sailing into the Atlantic in 1502, probably in the direction of Newfoundland and Labrador, in search of his brother, Gaspar, who had disappeared on a similar voyage in 1501.² No one knew what had become of Miguel until February 1919, when Edmund Burke Delabarre, a psychology professor at Brown University in nearby Providence, Rhode Island, announced he had detected amid the boulder’s tangle of lines, figures, and fissures the date 1511, along with Corte-Real’s name (and on further study, a short Latin inscription indicating he had become a leader of the local Indians). Now, 500 years later, the Azorean government and the sizeable Portuguese-American community of southeastern New England were dedicating a day of celebration to the rock, and to Miguel’s appearance by means unknown on the upper reaches of the shallow, somnolent Taunton River, a tidewater tributary of Narragansett Bay, some thirty miles north of the Atlantic Ocean. As the “500th anniversary” celebration proclaimed, Miguel Corte-Real had placed the Portuguese in New England more than a century before the Pilgrims had set foot on the other famous rock of Massachusetts, at Plymouth.

¹ Quotes and details of the day’s events are from Marc Larocque, “Celebrating 500 years of Azores history,” *Taunton Daily Gazette*, September 25, 2011.

² See Chapter 9 for a discussion of the Corte-Real voyages.

Among the attendees watching Portuguese cultural groups from around New England perform traditional folk dances to live music was Manuel Luciano da Silva. Eighty-five years of age, the retired medical doctor from Bristol, Rhode Island was saluted, along with his wife, Silvia Jorge, for their many years of research into the connection between Dighton Rock and Miguel Corte-Real. Da Silva long had been the leading figure in promoting Dighton Rock as proof of a visit by the lost Corte-Real expedition, and the day marked the sixtieth anniversary of the creation of the non-profit Miguel Corte Real Memorial Society, which da Silva had co-founded in 1951. Da Silva complained to visitors during the celebration that no governor of Massachusetts had ever visited the museum, not even when it was opened in 1978. The museum, he told them, could become a better-known landmark, and needed more support.³ Da Silva was never satisfied with the degree of recognition the rock received as a relic of Corte-Real and a symbol of Portuguese greatness. He was still attacking doubters (living and dead) of the Corte-Real connection with trademark abrasiveness through a website (www.dightonrock.com) dedicated to his Dighton Rock researches when he died after a short illness in October 2012. Nevertheless, da Silva had managed, at times almost singlehandedly, through books, his website, and hundreds of free public lectures (he delivered by his own count his 511th lecture in late August 2012, two months before his death) to convince Portuguese-Americans, and people in general worldwide, that Dighton Rock and its little museum deserved to be a shrine to Portuguese daring. He brooked no wavering of belief in the Corte-Real attribution. Jane Hennedy, a staff member of the Old Colony Historical Society, in a public lecture at Dighton Rock Museum on the history of the rock's interpretation in May 2012, acknowledged the numerous theories for whoever carved the rock. Even though Hennedy stated she was inclined to accept the Delabarre theory of the Corte-Real connection, it was not enough for da Silva, who charged on his website "she did not have the GUTS to affirm that the Phoenician and Viking theories are two BLUNT

³ Larocque, "Celebrating 500 years of Azores history."

FRAUDS.”⁴ He criticized no less than Delabarre (without whose research da Silva would never have known of the rock, let alone have been able to advance the Corte-Real theory) for overlooking four large Portuguese crosses that da Silva insisted were carved in its face, for proposing a key Latin inscription that da Silva said didn’t exist, and for being so “scared” of fellow academics that he had felt obliged to critically weigh all the other theories in his monumental evaluation of the rock’s convoluted historiography.⁵

But the idea that Dighton Rock is a Portuguese relic has never been unanimously held in the Portuguese-American community, much less among Portuguese historians. Deep fissures were exposed within the community in the struggles over the rock’s nature and fate, and da Silva himself, as I will address in Chapter 9, was loathed by Delabarre’s devoted son-in-law, Abelio Aveiro de Águas, a leading figure in the Portuguese-American community. Yet da Silva outlasted considerable frictions, not to mention his enemies, and on that Saturday in September 2011 was able to witness a new generation of Portuguese Americans embracing the rock as a rallying point of cultural pride and continuity, even if it cannot be said for certain they all regarded it without question as a 500-year-old talisman of the brave if doomed Miguel Corte-Real. A woman who had emigrated to New England from São Miguel in the Azores at age ten said: “This is the first time for me at Dighton Rock, and bad on me because I was born in St. Michael. I love the music and the folk dancing here. I do love the festival. It’s great roots and great heritage. I hope my kids keep up with the Portuguese language and the customs.”⁶

⁴ Manuel Luciano da Silva, ““Old Colony Historical Society of Taunton’ visited Dighton Rock!” <http://www.dightonrock.com/oldcolonyhistoricalsocietyoftaun.htm> (accessed Dec. 10, 2014).

⁵ Manuel Luciano da Silva, “Professor Delabarre was afraid of being criticized!” <http://www.dightonrock.com/professordelabarrewasafraid.htm> (accessed Dec. 4, 2012). See Chapter 9 for details of da Silva’s criticisms of Delabarre’s Corte-Real theory.

⁶ Larocque, “Celebrating 500 years of Azores history.”

Serving as an ethnic rallying point was not a new role for the contested rock. After its markings were first described in 1680, its provenance was debated for centuries to wildly varying ends, the arguments supported by drawings that could never agree on what was inscribed in its surface. Depending on how finely the theories are sliced, anywhere from twenty to more than thirty proposals of who made the carvings have included Phoenicians, pirates, the Lost Tribes of Israel, Egyptians, an expedition from Atlantis, and Norsemen. The 1837 publication *Antiquitates Americanae*, issued by the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries of Denmark, made the first comprehensive case for an eleventh-century Norse presence in eastern North America by locating the name of Thorfinn Karlsefni on Dighton Rock and in the process supported a Gothicist interpretation of American history that made the hardy, freedom-loving Norse the ancestors in spirit and ethnic fact of Anglo-American New Englanders (see Chapter 6). As I show in Chapter 9, da Silva's version of the rock's Portuguese provenance was in large part a repurposing of arguments that had been brought to bear in favour of the earlier Norse one. The Norse attribution never found widespread critical favour, and by the end of the nineteenth century the Karlsefni theory was committed by most serious enquirers, including the RSNA, to a scrap heap of daring voyagers associated with the rock. Such transoceanic migrationist (and other, more eccentric) explanations by the mid-nineteenth century largely had given way to the Indigenous attribution, which might have continued to hold broad sway until today, were it not for Delabarre's Corte-Real theory of 1919 (see Chapter 8). This Portuguese reading dominated popular interpretation thereafter, providing the impetus for the creation of a state park in 1954 and driving the interpretive scheme (overseen by da Silva) of the museum established in 1978.

In the spirit of the late Manuel da Silva's remonstrance not to lack "guts" where Dighton Rock's provenance is concerned, I will state that da Silva and Delabarre and all who have shared their essential view were (and are) wrong in attributing Dighton Rock to Miguel Corte-Real—as wrong as the Danish scholar Carl Christian Rafn was to attribute its markings to Thorfinn Karlsefni in *Antiquitates Americanae*. These theories were as wrong as every other theory has been, save one: the markings, as they were initially observed in 1680, were made at some unknown point(s) in the past, to an end that may

never be fully understood, by Indigenous people—if not specifically the Wampanoag who lived in the rock’s vicinity in the seventeenth century, then the collective Algonquian-speaking peoples of southern New England, the *Ninnimissinuok*, or their ancestors.⁷ That this position might strike some as radical or contrarian illustrates how deeply invested Western inquiry, both fringe and academically mainstream, has been in arriving at a non-Indigenous “translation.”

I base my pronouncement of an Indigenous provenance not on any expertise on my part in interpreting glyphs, or on some exciting technological breakthrough in recording the rock’s surface, but on noting that this provenance was apparent from the beginning of European and Euro-American inquiries, was the least cumbersome and most plausible explanation, and was repeatedly asserted by individuals who were familiar with comparable Indigenous glyphs and inscribed stones in eastern North America. Advocates of alternate theories have had more than 300 years to make an interpretation stick to the satisfaction of scholarly peers, and have failed repeatedly and resoundingly. As Harvard historian Samuel Eliot Morison memorably quipped in 1954, if given enough time he could find “Kilroy Was Here” or “To Hell With Yale” inscribed upon the boulder. The only recent academic effort that supported

⁷ Kathleen J. Bragdon in *Native Peoples of Southern New England, 1500–1650* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996) chose the Indigenous term *Ninnimissinuok*, “a variation on the Narragansett word *Ninnimissinnûwock*, which means roughly ‘people,’” for the collective peoples of southern New England, as it “connotes familiarity and shared identity” and “avoids not only the awkwardness and inaccuracy of the use of multiple ‘tribal’ labels, but also the troublesome fact that these names were sometimes tags applied to the inhabitants of this region by others, including non-Natives.” (xi). In *A Key into the Language of America* (London: 1643), Roger Williams reported: “I cannot observe, that they ever had (before the coming of the *English, French, or Dutch* amongst them) any *Names* to difference *themselves* from strangers, for they knew none; but two sorts of *names* they had, and have amongst *themselves*. First, *generall*, belonging to all *Natives*, as *Ninnuock, Ninnimissinûwok, Eniskeetompaûwog*, which signifies *Men, Folke, or People*. Secondly, particular *names*, peculiar to severall *Nations* of them amongst *themselves*, as, *Nanhigganêuk, Massachêuk, Cawasumsêuk, Cowwesêuck, Quintikôock, Quinnipiêuck, Pequuttôog, &c.*” (4) I have followed historical convention and employed tribal labels as understood within the context of King Philip’s War, and referred to the local people as the Wampanoag and Metacom as their leader. The identity of local groups nevertheless varies in colonial records. In the agreement to surrender “all my English arms” that Metacom signed with his mark at Taunton on April 10, 1671, he is identified as Philip, “chief sachem of Pocanoket,” in Duane Hamilton Hurd’s *History of Bristol County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis & Co., 1883), 740. In the section devoted to Dighton, Hurd further stated that the Native Americans who had occupied a village and tended crops in the vicinity “were undoubtedly the Pocassets; this tribe also inhabited the territory that is now covered by the towns of Tiverton, Somerset, Swansea, and a part of Rehoboth. Like the Wampanoags, the Namaskets, and the Nansets, they were under the authority of Massasoit, and after him, of his sons, Alexander and Philip.” (213)

a Portuguese reading was that of George F. W. Young in 1970, which inspired the interpretive approach of the museum, but as I state in Chapter 9, I do not consider his analysis complete or authoritative. While I do not believe he meant Indigenous peoples any ill will, his analysis entirely ignored the case for Indigeneity. For more than 300 years, the rock has not only been studied, it also has been vandalized by graffiti and its inscriptions probably have been altered by people making them clearer for illustration and photography, seeking clues to buried treasure, or for their own amusement. Offending graffiti in the past was chipped away, and the surface was further damaged in 1955 by a chain in an abortive attempt to drag the boulder to higher ground in creating the state park. The greatest damage, however, has been inflicted on its Indigenous provenance, and on Native Americans in general through the explanatory theories.

Theories about the Dighton Rock inscriptions are not unlike the original state of the rock itself. When the rock was in its natural setting on the east shore of the Taunton River, it was completely submerged twice daily at high tide, and investigators had to scrub away marine growth and dirt to get a proper look at the shallow markings. Today it is necessary to scrub away the surficial arguments to see beneath the ostensibly rational hypotheses and facts and recognize the harsh presumptions behind many interpretations. It is not possible within the limits of this dissertation to assess the historiography of Dighton rock in full detail; Edmund Burke Delabarre alone produced hundreds of pages of analysis.⁸ But I am less concerned with the minutiae of the many theories than I am with the thread of disdain towards

⁸ Edmund Burke Delabarre's main investigation of Dighton Rock was a three-part report for the Massachusetts Historical Society: "Early Interest in Dighton Rock," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, vol. 18, Transactions 1915–1916, 235–298 (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1917); "Middle Period of Dighton Rock History," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* vol. 19, Transactions 1916–1917, 46–158 (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1918); and "Recent History of Dighton Rock," reprinted from the *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, vol. 20, 1918–19 (Cambridge: John Wilson & Son for The University Press, 1919); and "Dighton Rock: the Earliest and Most Puzzling of New England Antiquities," *Old-Time New England* 14, no. 2 (Oct. 1923): 51–72. Delabarre consolidated his earlier efforts and made his definitive case for the Corte-Real provenance in *Dighton Rock: A Study of the Written Rocks of New England* (New York: Walter Neale, 1928). He revisited his researches in "The Rock-Inscriptions of New England—Miguel Cortereal in Massachusetts, 1511," *The Journal of American History* 26, no. 2 (2nd quarter, 1932): 69–110; "A Petroglyphic Study of Human Motives," *The Scientific Monthly* 41, no. 5 (Nov. 1935): 421–429; and "Miguel Cortereal: The First European to Enter Narragansett Bay," *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections* 29 (Oct. 1936), reprint.

and lack of interest in Indigenous people that runs through them. I have sometimes thought of Dighton Rock as a pool of liquid mercury, in which theorists have seen whatever they desired. It also has been a mirror that reflects the prejudices and ignorance of everyone who has preferred not to see what is actually here. One of the more extraordinary aspects of the long history of misinterpretation of Dighton Rock was that Delabarre, who concocted the Corte-Real theory, enjoyed international renown in the new field of experimental psychology and was a pioneer in ink blot tests. Delabarre never appreciated that with Dighton Rock he was staring at the greatest ink blot he had ever encountered, and that he was conducting a revealing study on his own cultural prejudices, as I discuss in Chapter 8.

As a thought experiment, let us suppose that I am wrong in my stance that Dighton Rock is an Indigenous artifact, augmented by graffiti and perhaps a few Anglo-American messages that Delabarre claimed to locate: that lurking in its contested markings is in fact a Portuguese, Norse, Phoenician, or (we might as well embrace all possibilities) Atlantean record.⁹ Even if, amid the many Indigenous glyphs that even the most ardent supporters of alternate theories have conceded are there, a few markings could be translated into a Portuguese message or an Old World script as proof of ancient, pre-Columbian voyagers to America, the premise of this dissertation would remain unchanged. Studying how Dighton Rock has been interpreted allows us to understand how Indigenous peoples have been conceptualized, marginalized, and disenfranchised from their own past.

I must stress that this dissertation is not concerned with interpreting Dighton Rock as an Indigenous artifact. Although I make reference to other examples of rock art, and offer indications of the

⁹ Delabarre claimed to find several inscribed messages in English, one of which he supposed was left by an English fisherman in 1598, another that provided directions to a local spring (see Chapter 8). That Dighton Rock also was a magnet for graffiti artists is well documented, and some graffiti can still be seen. There seems little doubt that colonists and settlers made their own contributions to rock art. Edward J. Lenik allows that “Euroamericans may have produced some petroglyphs” (9) in *Pictured Picture Rocks: American Indian Rock Art in the Northeast Woodlands* (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 2002). James L. Swauger in *Petroglyphs of Ohio* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 1984) concludes 24 investigated examples were of Euro-American origin. (250). Markings made by colonists however are an entirely different category of inscription than ones purportedly made by pre-Columbian visitors.

rock's Indigeneity and of the possible nature of some of its imagery, I make no effort to determine a concrete meaning. My ontological concerns with such "translation" attempts are multifold, as I describe below. It may be impossible to know for certain what the people who carved glyphs intended the rock to say—if they intended it to say anything equivalent to a Western concept of a record or message. (See also my discussion of "Voices" below.) Australian rock art researcher Robert G. Bednarik has criticized scholarly efforts to interpret images worldwide, observing that the readings by researchers are themselves of interest to a scientist because from them we can learn "the perception of the person interpreting the art."¹⁰ In the spirit of Bednarik's proposal, I examine the European and Anglo-American scholarship and folklore constructed around Dighton Rock (and other Indigenous rock art) and analyse both the ethnographic reactions to an alien material culture and the utility of those reactions within an overarching framework of colonization.

Archaeologist Stephen Williams has called Dighton Rock "the most frequently documented artifact in American archaeology" and argued it "has something of the quality of litmus paper for testing the tides of current archaeological interpretation."¹¹ Indeed, as my examination of the succession of theories shows, Dighton Rock's ever-changing interpretation was in lock step with the shifting perspectives of Western (European and Euro-American, chiefly Anglo-American) inquiry into Native American origins. If you examine how Dighton Rock was being interpreted at any particular time—regardless of what you choose to believe is inscribed in the rock—you will also have a good idea of how American antiquity and Indigenous peoples in general were being interpreted. Dighton Rock was incorporated into a broader analysis through which Westerners conceptualized Indigenous people. Robert Berkhofer Jr. has asserted that whites in North America in the early period of contact "invented the Indian

¹⁰ Robert G. Bednarik, "Creating Futile Iconographic Meanings," <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~auranet/interpret/web/icono.html> (accessed December 13, 2013).

¹¹ Stephen Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology: The Wild Side of North American Prehistory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 214, 213.

as a conception.”¹² By this he meant that a single identity, a racial and cultural monotype called the Indian, was crafted out of culturally and geographically diverse peoples in North America. I am interested in how the theorizing in which Dighton Rock was enlisted conceptualized Indigenous peoples as a collective, but I also show that they were conceptualized as discreet, identifiable tribal peoples, such as “Algonquin,” “Huron,” and “Iroquois.” Conceptualization at the tribal level assigned groups of people physical, intellectual, and cultural characteristics with analogues in presumed Old World root populations, in support of multiple-migration theories for their origins on the Asian side of the Bering Strait. Conceptualized *both* as tribes and as a collective, Native Americans were assigned a past, a racial identity and a place so low in the pecking order of humanity’s march toward higher civilization that they did not qualify for inclusion in the grand-narrative approach to the history. Most important, they were assigned a place so undesirable in American antiquity as to disqualify them for a role equal to whites in the American present.

I do not mean to accuse the proud Portuguese Americans who gathered at Dighton Rock State Park on September 25, 2011 of any particular malice towards Indigenous people. It is possible to be proud of one’s ethnic heritage without denigrating the heritage of others. Nevertheless, the history of Dighton Rock’s interpretation—up to and including the state of interpretation in its museum at the time of my visit in July 2013—has been a long and corrosive exercise in denying Indigenous provenance, and in demeaning and otherwise ignoring Indigenous cultures and peoples in advancing alternative theories. As with exotic theories that preceded it, the Corte-Real provenance of Delabarre, modified and amplified by da Costa and others, has been grounded in notions of the cultural if not the racial inferiority of Indigenous peoples. Plymouth Rock may have been where the Pilgrims landed, but Dighton Rock was the departure point for many pseudohistorical and hyperdiffusionist notions still among us, and for learned notions that

¹², Robert E. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man’s Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to Present* (1978; New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 29.

Native Americans were descendants of barbarian hordes that had nothing to do with the antiquities of a young nation, and as such should make way for white colonizers.

Dighton Rock can tell us much about how a colonizing society (foremost through its most educated and politically empowered elite) has conceptualized Indigenous people at both the biological and cultural level. Rather than learn from contemporary Indigenous people about the culture that produced the rock art, the approach of the vast majority of researchers and theorists identified in this dissertation imposed their prejudices, at times highly racialized, on the rock art, to reinforce conceptions of Native Americans and to construct theories of non-Indigenous origins for cultural artifacts in a process that often served the larger project of colonization. I need also stress that Dighton Rock should not be regarded solely as a reflection of a colonizing perspective and agenda, or a passive lens through which they can be viewed. As with other investigations of material culture (and languages) by antiquarians and their successors in archaeology and anthropology, the study of Dighton Rock was active in the colonizing process and the conceptualization of Indigenous peoples.

Conceptualization also applies to our efforts to portray colonizers. Patricia Seed in *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World* cautions against conceiving of a single, homogenous “European” colonizing identity, observing that every European nation to arrive in the Americas—mainly the English, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish—brought to bear a “different set of cultural histories, even different domains of history—science, religion, warfare, agriculture, theater, navigation” in creating their rights to rule.¹³ I am concerned with how Dighton Rock and other examples of rock art, and the associated relics attributed to Mound Builders, were enlisted in a process of colonization that continued for centuries after the first arrivals of explorers and settlers, in the transcontinental expansion of the English colonies that became the United States in 1783. Most theorists I discuss fall into the

¹³ Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 6.

intertwined categories of English, British, Euro-American, and American. While antiquity of the Americas (and Dighton Rock) did engage a variety of European theorists, their ideas were incorporated into a particular Anglo-American discourse. Those colonizers also conceptualized themselves through the Gothicist concept of a superior northern European race and culture, which they positioned in opposition to the inferior Other of Native Americans.

Ian J. McNiven and Lynette Russell have critiqued their discipline of archaeology from an Australian perspective, but still draw broadly applicable conclusions about archaeology and colonialism. They contend that the discipline of “prehistoric” archaeology, “as practiced upon Indigenous cultures, is founded upon and underwritten by a series of deep-seated colonialist and negative representational tropes of Indigenous peoples, developed as part of European philosophies of imperialism over the last 2,500 years.”¹⁴ McNiven and Russell acknowledge the foundational work of Canadian anthropologist and ethnohistorian Bruce G. Trigger, who defined “colonialist” archaeology in 1984 in terms that inform my analysis, in particular where interpretations of Dighton Rock and the Mound Builders are concerned. Trigger identified colonialist archaeology as:

that which developed either in countries whose native population was wholly replaced or overwhelmed by European settlement or in ones where Europeans remained politically and economically dominant for a considerable period of time. In these countries, archaeology was practised by a colonising population that had no historical ties with the peoples whose past they were studying. While the colonisers had every reason to glorify their own past, they had no reason to extol the past of the peoples they were subjugating

¹⁴ Ian J. McNiven and Lynette Russell, *Appropriated Pasts: Indigenous Peoples and the Colonial Culture of Archaeology* (New York: Altamira Press, 2005), 2.

and supplanting. Indeed, they sought by emphasising the primitiveness and lack of accomplishments of these peoples to justify their own poor treatment of them.¹⁵

I submit that Dighton Rock's interpretations have been a tour de force of colonization. The rock was heralded as a territorial claim marker—a statement of conquest—in the Norse interpretation of *Antiquitates Americanae*, while other arguments have seen the European newcomers who allegedly created its inscriptions colonize the gene pool and the Algonquian languages of Indigenous people in what I call “White Tribism” (Chapter 1). To the legalistic enclosures that removed the rock from Indigenous territory I add its capture by the epistemology of Western rationalist inquiry, an enquiry that has used a veneer of objectivity and scientific and scholarly method in the service of colonization and disenfranchisement. That epistemology also causes Western enquirers to struggle to accept an irresolvable ambiguity and instability of form and identity in a broadly “Algonquian” or Eastern Woodlands Indigenous ontology.

Voices heard and ignored

Researchers have long operated with an expectation that rock art can speak to them of the past, in much the same way that the physical artifacts of archaeology through interpretation can yield narratives of peoples. Dighton Rock does not speak in this dissertation in the sense of conveying a message from an Indigenous antiquity. Rather, it speaks in the voices of its many Western interpreters, in what amounts to transcultural ventriloquism, a throwing of voice by Western enquirers. Only rarely, if we listen carefully, can we hear Indigenous voices, as in the case of the story of the four Mohawk sachems in Chapter 4, or in Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's interpretation of the reading by the Anishinabe spiritual and political leader

¹⁵ Bruce G. Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist,” *Man*, n.s. 19, no. 3 (Sep. 1984): 360.

Shingwauk in Chapter 7. Even then, Indigenous voices are heard through a Western voice, and we cannot be confident the original message was clearly understood by its Anglo-American recipients, or has been presented accurately. Sometimes Indigenous voices (as in the case of the story of the wooden ship related in Chapters 1 and 4) appear spurious, a colonialist tradition. There is no evidence any European or Anglo-American theorist ever consulted a member of the Indigenous communities of southern New England, in particular of the Wampanoag, in whose historic territory the rock resided. No unfiltered Indigenous account of the meaning or purpose of the rock's markings is available (see Methodology, below), and the many reasons are at the heart of this dissertation's analysis.

The rock's message as conveyed by Western enquirers seems to shift and contradict itself over time—here the rock's markings are a Phoenician record, there a claim-stake by Vikings. The message can also be multilayered, or esoteric, with hidden meanings, as in the case of Edward Augustus Kendall's cryptically masonic interpretation in Chapter 4. All Western readings involving a non-Indigenous attribution (and even some involving an Indigenous one) are esoteric in a subtextual sense. More than 330 years after the rock was first described by colonists, I believe the priority in its study should not be an attempt to construct (or reconstruct) an original Indigenous message—which may be beyond knowing or recovery—but rather an effort to listen to the transcultural ventriloquists and understand what they have been making the rock say on their behalf. The message has with rare exceptions been one of Indigenous biological and cultural inferiority within the larger context of a colonizing project.

Belonging, Possession and Dispossession

Dighton Rock's interpretation speaks to three related themes inextricable from colonization: *belonging*, *possession*, and possession's necessary corollary, *dispossession*. At the most fundamental level, the longstanding dispute over Dighton Rock's authorship has been one of attribution: to what people, what culture, and perhaps what event, do its markings belong? *Belonging* however operates on multiple dimensions, as do possession and dispossession, in this study, and they form a continuum that ranges from scholarly attribution to private property to identity theft. Foremost, the process of attribution has

been dependent on possession and dispossession, a fact can be applied widely and defined in broad dimensions in ethnographic study.¹⁶ Access to an artifact might facilitate study, but *control* of an artifact ensures unfettered interpretation and attribution. A forty-ton boulder like Dighton Rock is not easily carried away to an anthropology department or a museum collection, in the manner of human remains, as was the case with Indigenous skulls measured to fit the race theories of Samuel George Morton and the Fall River Indigenous burial turned into a European, a “knight in armor” celebrated by Longfellow, as I discuss in Chapter 7. Nevertheless, plans were hatched in the late nineteenth century to ship Dighton Rock to Copenhagen and Boston (see Chapter 8), and ultimately, after a failed attempt to move it onto higher ground by dragging it, the boulder was elevated and had its museum built around it, sealing it within a non-Indigenous interpretation, as I discuss in Chapter 9. Long before experiencing a physical repositioning that disconnected it from a tide-washed riverside location that may have been critical to its Indigenous significance, Dighton rock was an object whose interpretation was inseparable from its possession, and by “possession” I mean a range of conditions that arose through conquest and colonization. These conditions include the incorporation of the surrounding countryside into the future states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island following King Philip’s War and the removal of the Wampanoag in 1676 and the subsequent legal ownership of the rock and the surveyed property on which it rested. By the twentieth century, possession of legal title to the rock and the surrounding and adjacent lands had become a key factor (perhaps *the* key factor) in determining to whom the enigmatic markings belonged in the sense of attribution, as scholarship was consigned a role secondary to physical possession, political power, and the place-making that Keith Basso observed through the Navajo relationship with the

¹⁶ See Aileen Moreton-Robinson for “possession” and the white conceptualization of race, which she ties to the Western conception of property and the construction of inferior races as a means of appropriating lands. “Race Matters: The ‘Aborigine’ as a White Possession,” in *The World of Indigenous North America*, ed. Robert Warrior (New York: Routledge, 2015), 471–473.

land, which I extend to the rock's role in New England colonization and the twentieth-century Portuguese-American immigrant experience.

Dispossession was (and remains) the operative concept of colonization, and was grounded in the idea of *terra nullius*, or no-man's land, which predated the European arrival in America and can be found in the papal bull *Romanus Pontifex* of 1454, which granted Portugal rights of conquest over Muslims.¹⁷ Where my analysis of Dighton Rock is concerned, dispossession extends beyond the recognized tools of colonization in the Americas—violence, coercion, and failed treaty promises—and engages it as a process of erasure. I am going beyond Roy Harvey Pearce's contention in *Savages of America* that following the War of Independence Americans determined the Indian “belonged in the American past and was socially and morally significant only as part of that past...He belonged in American prehistory, or in the non-American history of North America.”¹⁸ In the historiography of Dighton Rock, Indigenous peoples are not so much consigned to the past as disenfranchised from their own past by being denied their ancestral relationship to archaeological materials, while also being denied an existence in their own present. They are rendered invisible in southern New England, never consulted on the rock's possible meaning, in accordance with the “firsting and lasting” of local historians described by Jean O'Brien, as I address in Chapter 1, which presumed their vanishing as identifiable peoples by the nineteenth century. Theorists also dispossessed Indigenous peoples of their integral identity and culture by transforming them into their oppressors in what amounted to cultural and biological identity theft. Early theorists of Native American origins began this process by conceptualizing tribes as the descendants (and living analogues) of Old

¹⁷ The concept of *terra nullius* in the 1454 bull “resides in the right to dispossess all Saracens and other non-Christians of all their goods (mobile and immobile), the right to invade and conquer those peoples' lands, expel them from it and, when necessary, to fight them and subjugate them in a perpetual servitude...and expropriate their possessions.” Valentin Y. Mudimbe, “*Romanus Pontifex* (1454) and the Expansion of Europe,” in *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View*, eds. Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 60–61.

¹⁸ Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization*, rev. ed. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1965), 160.

World groups such as the Scythians and Tartars. Through what I call White Tribism, theorists turned Indigenous peoples in whom they detected intellectual and cultural capabilities into whites, or at least into Indigenous peoples improved by the superior cultures, technologies, and blood of Europeans. White Tribism also qualifies as a form of possession, in which the bodies and cultures of ancestral Native Americans are colonized by newcomers, in a process that reflects the gendered narrative of conquest defined by Philip J. Deloria, as I also address in Chapter 1.

Belonging is at the root of the most essential questions that studies of Dighton Rock have posed, or have been enlisted to answer. The fundamental question of to whom America originally belonged is of longstanding interest to ethnology and anthropology (and its sub-discipline of archaeology), as I will explore. Theories for the peopling of the Americas have evolved and been contested since Columbus set foot in the Bahamas in October 1492 and called the Arawakan people *Indios*. Belonging became an urgent question in the late eighteenth century, after the United States became an independent republic. Settlement pressures west of the Appalachians forced Americans to justify incursions into lands already peopled by Native Americans. Settler encounters with impressive and puzzling archaeological sites in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys coincided with fresh theorizing on the Bering Land Bridge theory of Indigenous origins inspired by the north Pacific findings of the third Cook expedition. This dissertation does not attempt to critique (let alone refute) the Beringia migration theory as it is understood today. Rather, my intention is to show how, in the formulation and misuse of the theory, colonization used the language and methodology of science to turn the displaced into the original displacers, the victims of conquest into the original aggressors, and to justify their removal. The Welsh naturalist Thomas Pennant's articulation in 1784 of a theory of multiple migrations out of Asia across the Bering Strait led to the construction by antiquarians and politicians (who were sometimes one and the same people) of an innovative solution to the problem of the justness of American settlement. As I show in Chapter 3, Dighton Rock was an elemental stepping stone in this process. Inspired by Pennant, in 1786 a prominent Anglo-Irish antiquarian, Charles Vallancey, held that the rock's markings were the work of a more advanced, initial migration out of Asia that gave way to a brutish Tartar "horde," the ancestors of present-

day Native Americans. Inspired American antiquarians (and their nineteenth-century successors in the emergent field of scientific American archaeology) then conceptualized a vanished founding people, the Mound Builders, who had been displaced by a savage horde of later arrivals, the ancestors of Native Americans. Ergo, America did not belong to Native Americans because their ancestors had violently seized it from a superior people. This scientific certitude was expressed most explicitly through the Jacksonian policy of forced removal that led to the Trail of Tears and the deaths of thousands of Cherokee in 1838.

The idea that the Mound Builder theory serviced colonization is not new. Bruce Trigger considered Mound Builder theories of the nineteenth century a classic expression of colonialist archaeology. Drawing on Robert Silverberg's *Mound Builders of Ancient America*, Trigger recognized that early archaeologists posited ancestors of Native Americans as a migrant group that "wilfully destroyed" the superior Mound Builder civilisation, "which made their own destruction seem all the more justifiable."¹⁹ In my approach to Dighton Rock theories and the associated interpretations of the Mound Builders, I apply Trigger's colonialist framing of early American archaeology, but extend its colonialist nature into the specifics of methodology while taking account of what Stephen Conn has described as its "object based epistemology," as I discuss in Chapter 5. I argue that the emergent American scientific archaeology was militarized in perspective and methodology, born out of conquest of Indigenous lands and allied with their surveying and settlement. I also delineate tensions between Conn's object-based epistemology and the semiotics of would-be inscription decipherers, and place the emergent archaeology within the context of an associated emergent ethnology that drew its cross-cultural evidence from the ethnographic souvenir-hunting of America's global seafaring after the War of Independence.

¹⁹ Bruce G. Trigger, "Alternative Archaeologies," 361. In a similar vein, anthropologist Alice Beck Kehoe has charged: "From its inception, American archaeology has been politically charged, legitimating domination of North America by capitalists imbued with British bourgeois culture." *The Land of Prehistory: A Critical History of American Archaeology* (New York: Routledge, 1998), xi.

The biological question of *belonging* for Native Americans was intertwined with the issue of who had the right to possess the continent. (While analysis in this dissertation focuses mainly on the American experience, the Canadian one arises as well in Chapter 7, through the opinions of University of Toronto archaeologist and president, Daniel Wilson, who held forth in the late nineteenth century on the provenance of Dighton Rock and the necessity of Indigenous people yielding to the settlers of a superior race and civilization.) As I show in Chapters 1 and 2, Europeans from the earliest stages of the exploration, conquest, and settlement of the Americas fretted over the nature of its Indigenous peoples in terms dictated by Christian theology. Were they fully human, descended from Adam? Did they qualify as “natural” slaves in the Aristotelian model, intrinsically (and irreversibly) inferior and subservient to Europeans? As the eighteenth-century Enlightenment began to consider humanity in more ostensibly scientific terms, we could see two competing arguments of belonging. The monogenic one, true to scripture, posited humanity as one species descended from the Creation of Genesis, with Native Americans one of several variants or races. The polygenic one, claiming freedom from religious dogma, argued on the purported basis of scientific evidence that monogenism’s races were in fact distinct human species that arose in different geographic locales. The monogenism-polygenism dispute, as I show in Chapter 7, informed and complicated the mid-nineteenth-century debates surrounding Dighton Rock and the Mound Builders. I also show that within this dispute, a line of demarcation cannot be drawn neatly between the opposing camps where attitudes to the nature of (and prospects for) Indigenous peoples are concerned.

Belonging and *possession* were further expressed in theories explaining the overspreading of the Earth (after the Biblical Flood) by a monogenic humanity, and in theories positing a root wisdom at the heart of all civilizations. The mechanisms of *migrationism* (population movements) and *diffusionism* (the spread of cultural traits) endure as concepts in modern anthropology, and I show how migrationism especially was used to trace modern populations to root stocks derived from Noah’s sons, from the so-called Lost Tribes of Israel, and from the Canaanites driven out of the Holy Land in accordance with divine will. Theorists employed migrationism to argue for racial privilege—white privilege—for those

peoples determined to belong to the descendants of Japheth, the most-favoured son of Noah, and conversely for racial subservience for those peoples—among them Native Americans—who could be assigned to the ranks of the Canaanites or the descendants of Noah’s grandson, Ham, both cursed in their own enduring way. Diffusionism, which is used to explain the geographical spread of language, technology, religion, and knowledge over time, was enlisted in earnest in the eighteenth century, as I discuss in Chapter 2, in theories of a “golden age” from which all civilization emerged. Theorists sought affinities between Indigenous peoples of the Americas and Old World cultures through language and cultural practices. They debated whether Native Americans ever received this diffusion of wisdom in ages past, or had possessed it only dimly and imitatively, or had once been privileged by it but through degeneration (cultural as well as biological) had lost their grip on it. As I explain in Chapter 2, this idea of a root wisdom turned esoteric in the eighteenth century, as the concept emerged of an exceptional Northern European people linked both to the Japheth migration and root-civilization diffusionism, which would give rise to Gothicism and eventually to Aryanist white supremacy. At the same time, freemasonry (which as I show was enormously popular among the leading citizens of colonial and early Republican America) advanced the idea of an ancient knowledge possessed and perpetuated by a secret order. Through freemasonry and related esoteric initiatives, the root culture shared by all peoples, as advocated by Jean-François Lafitau in the early eighteenth century, became a foundational knowledge of civilization’s arts in the possession of a privileged and secretive few and of the greatest benefit to whites who preserved and propagated it among themselves. Kendall, as I show in Chapter 4, argued by appropriately esoteric means that, contrary to the beliefs of American freemasons, Dighton Rock indicated ancestors of Native Americans had at least been exposed to the ancient brotherly wisdom at the heart of all great civilizations, but he was doubtful they ever possessed it.

The historiography of Dighton Rock also allows us to appreciate how another question of belonging was being posed and answered: who belongs in America? This was a multidimensional issue that engaged divine will, race destiny, constructions of ethnicity, and in the twentieth century, U.S. immigration policy. As articulated in Chapter 3 by Ezra Stiles, the foremost eighteenth-century student of

Dighton Rock, in his Election Sermon of 1783, the rock's inscription was part of the evidence that pointed to multiple pre-Columbian migrations of descendants of Japheth (Norse, Welsh, Phoenicians) that culminated in white New Englanders fulfilling God's will to create a New Canaan in America and displace the Indians/Canaanites they found in their way. Stiles' Japheth migrations thus answered the questions of to whom America belonged, as well as who belonged in America: it was a place of white destiny that fulfilled Biblical prophecy, where there was no place in the future of the young republic for Native Americans (or African Americans). I show how a parallel Gothicist project strove to create a privileged and exceptional northern European (white) people variously identified as Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Norman. The Gothicist project was extended to North America in the works of leading American academics Benjamin Smith Barton (c. 1787) and Thomas Latham Mitchill (1817), in which Gothicist adventurers attempted a colonization that in Mitchill's case could be cited as a rightful European claim to America that predated the arrival in New York State by ancestors of Native Americans. The extension of the Gothicist project to America occurred foremost in the efforts to place Vinland of the Icelandic sagas in southern New England, with Dighton Rock reinterpreted as a record of the expedition of Thorfinn Karlsefni in one of the most influential historical works of the nineteenth century, *Antiquitates Americanae*. In the late nineteenth century, as I show in Chapter 8, an enthusiasm for the Gothicist idea that Americans shared with Norse adventurers a freedom-loving spirit and daring, a commitment to republicanism, as well as a shared racial heritage, resulted in a plan by leading New England citizens to move Dighton Rock to Boston as part of a memorial to Leif Eiriksson. This plan failed, but the question of who belonged in America as revealed by Dighton Rock was becoming more explicitly associated with (and dictated by) who possessed the rock in a firm legal sense. The rock's deeded title, which had been granted to Denmark's Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries in 1860, was transferred to the Old Colony Historical Society of Taunton, Massachusetts, in 1887. In the twentieth century, as I discuss in Chapter 9, the question of belonging in America was informed by eugenicist concerns over the nation's racial fitness and addressed by the immigration quota system introduced in 1924 that favoured northern Europeans. In the course of reasserting the Gothicist connections between

Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians through celebrations of Norse and Icelandic heritage, Scandinavian-Americans abandoned claims to Dighton Rock as a Vinland relic, and left it open to a fresh claim of belonging. For Portuguese-Americans, who effectively were declared second-class citizens and undesirable immigrants by immigration reforms of 1924, Edmund Burke Delabarre's Corte-Real theory became the means by which they could assert a role as the original Europeans discoverers (and colonizers) of America. Portuguese-Americans belonged in American because Dighton Rock's inscription proved that America by discovery originally had belonged to them. In both Delabarre's and da Silva's theorizing, these Portuguese newcomers also colonized the Native Americans, creating a mixed-blood population superior in character and capability to the original inhabitants.

A final question of belonging asks: who belongs in history? Historians of the nineteenth century, as I discuss, were confident Indigenous people lay outside of it, both in their own pasts and their present experiences. Michel-Rolph Trouillot has remarked on the classification of all non-Westerners as "fundamentally non-historical," which he says is tied to the assumption that history "requires a linear and cumulative sense of time that allows the observer to isolate the past as distinct entity." Trouillot rejects the presumption that populations not educated in the Western epistemology lack this proper sense of time or evidence.²⁰ In the context of Dighton's Rock's historiography, the concept of *prehistory* (coined by the Scottish Canadian academic Daniel Wilson) placed Indigenous cultures beyond the interests of academic history because they did not meet the evidentiary criteria of the profession's objective of describing humanity's progressive ascent to civilization. If living Native Americans had any relationship with civilization, it was their presumed degeneration from a semi-civilized people in antiquity. Dighton Rock's

²⁰ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, Kindle edition), location 221. However, I would add to this observation Bruce Trigger's insight, in reflecting on nineteenth-century oral traditions gathered from the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) by Arthur C. Parker: "Parker stated something that should have been noted long before: that the Iroquois and Iroquoian prehistorians were not interested in the same kind of history. For the Iroquois, 'history' was a guide to the social, political and moral order in which they lived; to the latter it was a literal account of what had happened in the past. Clearly 'history' that has been created to satisfy the first aim cannot be used uncritically to satisfy the second." Bruce G. Trigger, "The Strategy of Iroquoian Prehistory." *Ontario Archaeology* 14 (1970): 18.

repurposing as a relic of an Old World peoples was consistent with a Western view of history that only considered the rock interesting if it could be related to a people like the Phoenicians, the Norse, or the Lost Tribes of Israel.

Indigenous peoples also have been determined not to belong to history because they cannot account for their presence in it to the satisfaction of Westerners (who often would prefer they were not there anyway), as we see in cases where Indigenous peoples are said not to know anything about the Mound Builder relics or rock art. They also do not belong because their version is not heard. Noenoe K. Silva in *Aloha Betrayed* refutes one of the “most pernicious and persistent” myths of Hawaiian history, that the Kanaka Maoli (Indigenous Hawaiians) “passively accepted the erosion of their culture and the loss of their nation.”²¹ She cites Haunani-Kay Trask’s characterization in *From a Native Daughter* of Hawaiian historiography as “the West’s view of itself through the degradation of my own past.” Silva attributes the myth of non-resistance in part to a failure of mainstream historians to consider a wealth of material written in Hawaiian.²² Silva’s work has parallels in the New England myths of the vanished Indian, as I address in Chapter 1, but I would also suggest this dissertation provides another way of considering the question of the colonizer’s degradation of an Indigenous past. In my examination of historiography surrounding Dighton Rock and other Indigenous cultural materials, the degradation does occur in part through wilfully ignoring available Indigenous evidence (or failing to consider seeking that evidence as a legitimate and necessary line of enquiry), but mainly by Westerners constructing a preferred American antiquity not only alien to the colonizers, but to the cultural reality and heritage of Indigenous peoples. The view of itself constructed by the West in this dissertation is one that erases altogether the Indigenous past and replaces it with one in which colonization is inevitable and desirable and its own

²¹ Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 1.

²² Haunani-Kay Trask, cited by Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 2.

actions are entirely justifiable. In its final phase of self-regard, the view satisfies Euro-American priorities of belonging and identity within the immigrant experience.

Western and Indigenous World Views: A Difference of Ontologies

I submit that the Western mode of rationalist enquiry of the Enlightenment and Post-Enlightenment has always been ill at ease with the idea of the permanently and intrinsically unknowable, of transcendent ambiguity. This ambiguity with rock art can be due to interpretive uncertainty—a circle image might be a mégis shell used by healers, an egg, or a solar or lunar symbol—and because we do not know the artist’s intentions or his/her specific culture, we cannot be sure which one of them it is. This ambiguity might also be deliberate and metaphoric, reflecting the instability of the artist’s ontology, as I describe below. But even when an acceptance of ambiguity is the most plausible interpretation, at least some element of Western curiosity will strive to “solve” or “decipher” the markings and produce a specific solution. And so in the history of Dighton Rock we confront many avenues of interpretation that offer fixed, literal, and unambiguous readings. The rock’s interpretive history has been dominated by Western efforts to offer a precise decipherment that invariably has been non-Indigenous, based on perceptions of images that may never have been gouged in the rock by Indigenous people as a unified message, and for which a single, unambiguous interpretation may never be found.

Westerners considered markings like those on Dighton Rock to be analogous with the Old World inscriptions that captivated Orientalists. Because living Native Americans were not known to possess any alphabetic or glyphic writing system, investigators of Dighton Rock naturally gravitated toward interpretations that detected characters with which they were familiar in Old World scripts and glyphs. Such interpretations could only lead to (if they had not already arisen from an expectation of) a narrow set of explanations. One explanation was that ancient Native Americans must have possessed knowledge of Old World writing systems, thus making ancient Native Americans either the diffusionist recipients of these systems from migrating Old World peoples or the descendants of those Old World peoples. The

other explanation was that Old World peoples left behind inscriptions after reaching the Americas, mainly through transatlantic voyages.

The literalist approach, which assumes specific marks having fixed meanings encoded in a writing system, has some support in symbolic conventions found in Anishinabe song scrolls, which since Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in the mid-nineteenth century have been applied by some researchers to rock art thought to belong to the same or a related shamanic complex. I state my misgivings with such research (including Schoolcraft's) below, under "Methodology." These image conventions in song scrolls were highly individualistic and intended to serve as mnemonic devices for a Midéwiwin or Grand Medicine Lodge member, and efforts to "read" rock art based on Midéwiwin scrolls will encounter a multitude of possible interpretations for a single form—a zigzag line, for example, could be a snake, a journey, a bolt of lightning, or a transference of spiritual or medicinal power. The literalist approach is also at odds with Indigenous worldviews rooted in non-Western acceptance of ambiguity, instability, and the importance of variable identity.

Anthropologist Mary B. Black constructed an ontology ("an inventory of the things people perceive to exist in the world"²³) based on a foundation of Algonquian language structure and ethnographic fieldwork among the Anishinabe Ojibwa by herself and by A. Irving Hallowell. Working from Hallowell's efforts to construct an Ojibwa worldview, Black noted an essential instability in taxonomy of what we would consider living and non-living things. Whether or not particular stones, animals, or trees are *other-than-human persons* (spiritual beings, mythological characters, and elements such as the sun, moon, and winds) depended on the experience and perception of an individual. All living entities, she explained, have the ability, or at least the potential, to change form. The Ojibwa worldview according to Black is anchored in the unreliability of appearance, the power of living thing to control their

²³ Mary B. Black, "Ojibwa Taxonomy and Percept Ambiguity," *Ethos* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1977): 92. She also published as Mary Black Rogers.

appearance, and the primacy of individuals to perceive that appearance. *Other-than-human persons* might have some physical form ascribed to them, but are actually rarely seen directly. As an example, Black explained that a hunter might kill a pelican and hang it in a tree. When a storm ensued, “consequences validation” would indicate to the hunter that the pelican actually was a Thunderbird.²⁴ If we were to find what appeared to be a pelican in rock art made by Black’s hypothetical hunter (as Selwyn Dewdney did in a rock painting at Crooked Lake in northern Minnesota²⁵), we would have no way of knowing if he had portrayed a pelican, or a Thunderbird in the guise of a pelican. Within this ambiguous, unstable taxonomy (and provided the rock art in question was a product of this ontology), it may be impossible to know precisely what a symbol in rock art represented, at any particular time, to the person that created it, and how many levels of deliberate ambiguity in identity and form an image contained.²⁶ Further, worrying about whether a particular image such as a bear was intended to depict a physical animal or a spirit being is a failure to appreciate that in this ontology there *is* no distinction. (What is more, such a bear image instead may have been a clan symbol, or a personal *doodem*, or *dodem*.) Anthropologist Dean R. Snow similarly stressed the ambiguity of identity in his study of Maine’s Solon petroglyphs, which he associated with the Peterborough petroglyphs and the “general distribution of Algonquian languages, a widespread and ancient language family to which we can safely assume the carvers of the petroglyphs

²⁴ Black, “Ojibwa Taxonomy and Percept Ambiguity,” 103.

²⁵ Selwyn Dewdney and Kenneth E. Kidd, *Indian Rock Paintings of the Great Lakes* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 30–31.

²⁶ Cross-cultural reinterpretation (or misinterpretation) has occurred in rock art research, as when Selwyn Dewdney was told a ladder-like form and handprints in a pictograph in Whitefish Bay at Sioux Narrows recounted “a raid on Ladder Lake by the ‘Red Hand,’ a band of marauding Indians in Minnesota in the 1880’s or 90’s.” (Dewdney and Kidd, *Indian Rock Paintings of the Great Lakes*, 54.) Dewdney’s informants were “non-Indians” and Dewdney did not challenge this reading. Grace Rajnovich would contend that recurring ladder-like “lattice” images were a Midewiwin symbol identifying the artist as a member of the society. See Grace Rajnovich, *Reading Rock Art: Interpreting the Indian Rock Paintings of the Canadian Shield* (Toronto: Natural Heritage/Natural History, 1994), Fig. 21.

belonged.”²⁷ Seeking clues to meanings of the Maine petroglyphs in Penobscot traditions of shamans and their associated ontology, Snow noted: “there is no list of distinct beings, or even a consistent description of one of them, something that may be frustrating to folklorists but not to the Penobscot. The point is that when dealing with the supernatural there is no need for either precision or permanence, because the entities described are capable of endless transformation. This characteristic of traditional Penobscot belief makes shambles of modern efforts to impose a rigid structure upon it. It must also be kept in mind in any analysis of petroglyph motifs.”²⁸ Accompanying this physical ambiguity is metaphoric richness in language, including in sacred songs. According to Grace Rajnovich: “The Ojibways emphasize the shape-changing capacity of both manitous and powerful medicine men and women through the generous use of metaphor, a poetic figure of speech whereby one object becomes another.”²⁹ An image such as a boat can have multiple meanings. As Rajnovich notes, it could be a boat, a journey and a vision quest, all at the same time.³⁰

Methodology

This dissertation is a work of historiography and intellectual history, concerned with non-Indigenous perceptions of Indigenous cultural materials and peoples. In striving to understand how Indigenous people were conceptualized in and through Western interpretations of Dighton Rock and related materials, I have relied on original published works (mainly in digitized format) that disseminated ideas about such material culture as well as contextual issues such as race, nationalism, and human migrations. My

²⁷ Dean R. Snow, “The Solon Petroglyphs and Eastern Abenaki Shamanism,” in *Papers of the Seventh Algonquian Conference*, ed. William Cowan (Ottawa: Carleton University, 1976), 282.

²⁸ Snow, “The Solon Petroglyphs,” 285.

²⁹ Rajnovich, *Reading Rock Art*, 20.

³⁰ Rajnovich, *Reading Rock Art*, 19.

intention is to show how such ideas emerged, were distributed, perpetuated and evolved, and how supposedly rational Western inquiry served the colonizing project. Biography is an important component of this dissertation, as I feel it is critical to understand the granularity of individual lives of theorists, including personal relationships (and antagonisms), and the social, political, and cultural context of their convictions. I have employed archival resources of the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Old Colony Historical Society of Taunton, Massachusetts to document institutional as well as individual contributions to this inquiry. For the letters and diaries of some individuals, such as Ezra Stiles, I have relied on published, annotated transcriptions, as cited. I am indebted to the numerous cited scholars whose books and articles have provided insights into events, the lives of individuals, and contextual issues.

I have made clear this dissertation is not concerned with “explaining” or interpreting Dighton Rock and similar cultural materials from an Indigenous perspective. James L. Swauger, who began researching rock art in the Ohio valley in the 1950s for Pittsburgh’s Carnegie Museum of Natural History, was refreshingly forthright in admitting not to knowing the meaning of the many glyphs he recorded. Noting that in his previous work *Rock Art* (1974) he stated “I don’t know yet,” in addressing his own posed question of meaning, he wrote in his summarizing work, *Petroglyphs of Ohio* (1980): “I can only say that I still do not know.”³¹ My seeming lack of interest in determining an Indigenous meaning has occasionally elicited surprise from people in the course of my research, and I believe this perplexity or even disquiet is rooted in a Western conviction that if I cannot “explain” or “translate” Dighton Rock’s meaning as an Indigenous artifact, then its provenance remains open to rival interpretations, however eccentric they seem. As this dissertation shows, Indigenous expressions of uncertainty as to origin or meaning for cultural materials has long been the basis for theorists to assign artifacts to other cultures. I have stated my concerns about Western enquiry and Indigenous ontology above. Attempting to secure or provide an Indigenous “reading” of Dighton Rock does not advance the objectives of this dissertation,

³¹ James L. Swauger, *Petroglyphs of Ohio*, 274.

and may even be counterproductive, as I suspect the markings adhered to an ontology at odds with a Western desire for the concrete and literal in the manner described above by Black, Hallowell and Snow.

At best, I can point out affinities with other examples of Indigenous imagery (see below for my discussion of various categories and terms, including “rock art”), or cite the historic observations of individuals who were familiar with such imagery and considered Dighton Rock to be of a kind. As the most likely creators were an Eastern Woodlands Algonquian people, any concrete meaning would be elusive, owing to the ontology I described above, in which an unreliability of form or appearance defies Western desires for fixed identities and singular interpretations. I am reluctant to accept the assertions of academic experts as to the absolute meaning of particular glyphic forms, as the history of rock art analysis is riddled with educated guesswork. Australian rock art researcher Robert G. Bednarik has stated of studies in general: “By far the most common interpretation of meaning in rock art is the iconographic interpretation of motifs by the observer. We are told what the beholder of the art thinks it depicts. In many cases, the motif has such outstanding diagnostic features that these identifications do sound convincing, but in many other cases the picture is not at all clear-cut. Moreover, many researchers define various aspects of the motif in an entirely subjective fashion: they tell us that the subject is running, falling, swimming, pregnant, praying, dead or whatever else they happen to perceive in the art.”³² Much analysis of Algonquian rock art has relied on the nineteenth-century work of Schoolcraft on Ojibwa song scrolls of the western Great Lakes region, and his reliability as an ethnographer as I show in chapter 7 ought to be more seriously questioned. I am also mindful of the Anishinabe anthropologist John Norder’s important distinction between “maker/meaning” and “user/caretaker” in framing contemporary interpretations of pictographs in northwestern Ontario. According to Norder, “the Aanishinaabeg of the region understand that the landscape is an historic palimpsest, with memories already inscribed upon it through stories that

³² Robert G. Bednarik, “Creating Futile Iconographic Meanings.”

are either known, yet to be learned, relearned, or even to remain a mystery.”³³ Norder argues: “Rock art sites, while a known phenomenon in the region I worked, are typically not remembered in terms of their specific meanings or even origins. Their importance emerges as part of the historicity and agency of landscape. These sites are remembered as places of engagement between people and the spirits, and remain within social memory as places of power where contemporary First Nations peoples can still go to in order to pray and re-engage with these spirits through these places.”³⁴ Rock art, in short, does not consist of “texts” awaiting a fixed and historically verifiable translation for researchers. Much like oral traditions, they fulfill an important social utility for contemporary Indigenous communities, with interpretations that are dynamic and adaptive. The role rock art fulfills in contemporary Indigenous communities may be distinct from whatever purpose it served when created. The fact that contemporary Indigenous people may not be able to “read” the rock art in a manner convincing to anthropologists does not make it any less Indigenous, or any less meaningful to them today. Nor does the fact that a present-day Indigenous interpretation or use of the art might disagree with what the archaeological record suggests make the current interpretation “wrong” or invalid.

Indigenous peoples have been disenfranchised from Dighton Rock for so long that I am not aware of any contemporary attempt to interpret it from their cultural perspective, apart from a highly problematic one in Edward J. Lenik’s *Pictured Rocks*.³⁵ According to Kathleen J. Bragdon, “Petroglyphs

³³ John Norder, “The Creation and Endurance of Memory and Place Among First Nations of Northwestern Ontario, Canada,” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 16 (2012): 395.

³⁴ Norder, “The Creation and Endurance of Memory and Place,” 398.

³⁵ In 1998 Lenik corresponded with and later visited a man in New Hampshire who called himself Manitonquat, or Medicine Story, and who claimed to be Wampanoag. Lenik accepted in good faith his status as “an elder, storyteller, and spiritual leader of the Assonet Band of the Wampanoag Nation.” (*Pictured Rocks*, 133) Note that while there are various online claims that the state of Massachusetts recognizes additional Wampanog tribes to the federal ones of Mashpee and Gay Head, including one allegedly at Assonet, the only state-recognized tribe not on federal rolls is Nipmuc Nation. See National Conference of State Legislatures, “Federal and State Recognized Tribes,” updated Apr. 2014, <http://www.ncsl.org/research/state-tribal-institute/list-of-federal-and-state-recognized-tribes.aspx> (accessed Nov. 16, 2014). Manitonquat related to Lenik an elaborate story regarding the meaning of Dighton Rock, which he said he had learned from his grandfather. Lenik reported the story in *Pictured Rocks*, 133–

in southern New England have received little scholarly attention. Their age is unknown, and no ethnographic accounts survive that explain their meaning or creation.”³⁶ Dean R. Snow’s *The Archaeology of New England* (1980) only addresses one example of rock, the Solon petroglyphs in Maine.³⁷ Nor am I aware of any attempts to formally reassert Indigenous sovereignty over the rock, although to that end it must be remembered that the two federally recognized Wampanoag tribes, of Gay Head (Aquinnah) and Mashpee, only secured recognition in 1987 and 2007 respectively. I remained satisfied that affinities can be drawn between some images on Dighton Rock and motifs elsewhere we know to have been Indigenous, and that clues to its sacred nature may be contained in the siting and orientation of similar inscribed or painted stones, or large “sacrifice” stones. I advance with caution in Chapter 4 the possibility that the horned quadruped repeatedly recorded by researchers since the eighteenth century may have depicted Mishipeshu of Eastern Woodlands cosmology. (Lenik conversely argues that it “may represent a deer or elk drawn in x-ray style, showing its ribs and perhaps internal organs.”³⁸) I do so to make the point that possible Indigenous interpretations were open to researchers and theorists who preferred to find Phoenician letters or Norse runes. While I believe we (scholars in the Western rationalist tradition) must be satisfied with a determination of cultural affinity without ever being certain of absolute meaning, I am certain that the siting of Dighton Rock was fundamental to its spiritual

134. However Lenik’s source has been the subject of intense scrutiny from Native American activists on the Forum of the website NAFPS (New Age Fraud and Plastic Shamans), who have tabled evidence that Medicine Story is Francis Story Talbot, a white man passing himself off as a Wampanoag spiritual authority, who they also charge has been associated with cultish psychotherapy/counseling groups in Europe. See the topic “Francis Talbot AKA Medicine Story AKA Manitonquat,” on the Forum at NAFPS (newagefraud.org). The evidence assembled at NAFPS is sufficiently troubling that the Dighton Rock interpretation Lenik attributes to Talbot/Medicine Story is not worth repeating.

³⁶ Bragdon, *Native Peoples of Southern New England, 1500–1650*, 209.

³⁷ Dean R. Snow, *The Archaeology of New England* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 64–65.

³⁸ Edward J. Lenik, *Pictured Rocks*, 132. Lenik adds: “Other glyphs on Dighton Rock may represent female genitalia, serpents, and additional zoomorphic and anthropomorphic beings. These types of glyphs appear on permanent and portable petroglyphs throughout the Northeast.” (132)

significance. Its physical relocation, as I describe in Chapter 9, could be considered an act of cultural chauvinism, disrespect and even vandalism, no matter how well-meaning those who advocated raising it out of the river in order to preserve it may have been.

Terminology

Nations, Tribes, Peoples: This dissertation acknowledges the right of Indigenous peoples to be identified according to their own terminology, and to not be misidentified by terminology they consider inappropriate, alien, archaic, and demeaning. My efforts to respect this right are complicated by conflicting standards of terminology between Canada and the United States, which is further complicated by the fact I am a Canadian, writing a dissertation at a Canadian university, on a subject that is substantially American in its scope. I have adhered to Canadian standards in avoiding the term “Indian” (which is acceptable in the United States but frowned upon in Canada) except in the context of where it is being employed in the historiographical record. Collectively I call the original inhabitants of the Americas (North, Central and South, as well as the Caribbean) *Indigenous peoples*, and pluralize the label in recognition that these peoples, in the past as well as the present, represent a multiplicity of cultures. I also use the accepted term *Native Americans* for Indigenous peoples within the geopolitical bounds of the United States.

I have long struggled in writing this dissertation with how to resolve the difficulties of tribal labels—beginning with the fact that “tribe” or “tribal nation” is a standard collectivity in the United States but in Canada has been supplanted by “nation” and “First Nation” in (most) modern discourse. Generally I have favoured the term *peoples*. Historic names for tribes or nations may be considered inappropriate by present-day peoples (and may have been considered inappropriate by historic peoples). As Gordon M. Sayre has written, “There is no one set of accurate, politically sensitive, widely recognized names for

American Indian groups.”³⁹ The solution would seem to be to replace “old” terminology with “new,” or to at least parenthetically include modern terminology where historiographical material is quoted. This would mean for example adding the modern term *Haudenosaunee* wherever historic terms such as “Iroquois” and “Five Nations” appear in reference to the confederacy. However, I have qualms about swapping old terminology for new, at least in the context of this dissertation, because I am addressing how Indigenous peoples were conceptualized in the historiographical record. In many cases, labels were applied to peoples, including *Iroquois*, whom theorists had never met, and whom they were conceptualizing in terms of race, ethnicity and analogues with Old World peoples as an explanation of the origin and more often than not their inferior nature. I am of the same mind as Sayre who in explaining his use of historic terminology in *Les Sauvages Américain*, stated: “I wish to preserve the colonial authors’ perceptions, representations, or prejudices.”⁴⁰ I feel there is value in isolating historic Western conceptualizations of peoples, which were often constructions of prejudice and ignorance, from the heritages and identities known to the peoples themselves. If an eighteenth-century European writer who may never have set foot in North America chose to describe a people he called the *Huron*, the *Iroquois*, or the *Sioux*, I have retained their terminology in the context of their analysis. Where it has seemed appropriate, I have added the modern term recognized by peoples themselves, as an acknowledgment that peoples being discussed in historiography, however accurately or fairly, are ancestors of peoples identifiable today by different, preferred terminology. I am also mindful of the fact that “old” terminology coexists with new in different communities and circumstances. The Wahta Mohawks of Ontario, for

³⁹ Gordon M. Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997; Kindle edition), location 117.

⁴⁰ Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains*, location 117.

example, employ the term “Iroquois Confederacy” as well as “Haudenosaunee” (and do not refer to themselves as a “First Nation”).⁴¹

For Algonquian-speaking peoples, I have retained historic tribal/national identities such as Ojibwa (alternately Ojibwe, Ojibway, Chippewa) where they are stated in the historical record, mindful of the fact that much terminology has been replaced and that such identities even where retained are collectivized under the umbrella term *Anishinabe* (alternately Aanishinaabe, Nishnawbe and other orthotic variants, pluralized as Anishinabeg or Anishinabek), while Ojibwa also serves as a label for an Algonquian dialect. Where appropriate, I have provided clarification within the text.

Rock “art”: “Terminology in rock-art has been a touchy subject in rock-art for as long as rock-art has been studied, and there is no evidence of that changing any time soon,” write Carol Diaz-Granados and James R. Duncan in their introduction to *The Rock-Art of Eastern North America* (2004).⁴² The very term “rock art” (hyphenated or unhyphenated) for images carved into or drawn on or painted on stone, whether by living or ancestral Indigenous peoples, or humans who lived tens of thousands of years ago in Ice Age Europe, is a touchy subject. Alicia Colson for example would prefer the term “rock images,” or petroglyphs and pictographs, rather than “rock art,” because rock art “suggests that these images have primarily a decorative value and no intrinsic value or meaning of their own. It also implies classification of these images according to Western notions of high or low art, or, perhaps, a craft.”⁴³ Thomas Heyd in contrast has ventured: “Most marks on rocks that are considered ‘rock art’ were made by people with very

⁴¹ Wahta Mohawks, “Our History,” <http://wahtamohawks.ca/our-history/> (accessed Nov. 16, 2014).

⁴² Carol Diaz-Granados and James R. Duncan, “Introduction,” in *The Rock-Art of Eastern North America: Capturing the Images and Insight*, eds. Carol Diaz-Granados and James R. Duncan (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), xxviii

⁴³ Alicia M. Colson, “What Do These Symbols Mean? A Critical Review of the Images Found on the Rocks of the Canadian Shield with Specific Reference to the Pictographs of the Lake of the Woods,” *Revista de Arqueología Americana* 25 (2007): 108.

different ways of perceiving, imagining, and thinking from those of people rooted in mainstream historical European cultures,” but concludes “the aesthetic approach to marks on rocks is both eminently appropriate and generally desirable”—rock art, in other words, deserves to be considered art by the Western criteria of aesthetics.⁴⁴ According to Germaine Warkentin, petroglyphs “can be approached through the categories of art, though the persistent question remains of whether their signs are conventionalized or pictorial.”⁴⁵ I am not about to resolve the issue here, and have chosen to follow the widely used standard and retain the term “rock art” for the collective categories of painted (pictographs) and carved (petroglyphs) images. I also address images carved into trees (dendroglyphs) and anthropomorphic figures in earthen mounds (geoglyphs). Birch-bark song scrolls tend to be a class apart in terminology, even though their imagery has been relied upon for interpreting Eastern Woodlands rock art. Selwyn Dewdney referred to them as “inscriptions” and “picture-writing.”⁴⁶ As I describe in Chapter 7, glyphic communications comparable to dendroglyphs and song scrolls, employing sheets of birch-bark that were set on poles for others to find and read, were documented by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in the early nineteenth century. The Abenaki word *awikhigan*, from the root *awigha*, meaning to draw, to write, to map, was extended from its original description of such birch-bark messages, maps, and scrolls to include books and letters.⁴⁷ Whether or not such message systems should be considered true “writing” is an issue beyond the scope of this dissertation, although I am partial to Germaine Warkentin’s recognition

⁴⁴ Thomas Heyd, “Rock Art Aesthetics and Cultural Appropriation,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 61, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 40, 44.

⁴⁵ Germaine Warkentin, “In Search of ‘The Word of the Other’: Aboriginal Sign Systems and the History of the Book in Canada,” *Book History* 2 (1999): 10.

⁴⁶ Selwyn Dewdney, in Selwyn Dewdney and Kenneth E. Kidd. *Indian Rock Paintings of the Great Lakes* (1962), 12.

⁴⁷ Daniel Heath Justice, “Indigenous Writing,” in *The World of Indigenous North America*, ed. Robert Warrior (New York: Routledge, 2015), 294.

of glyphic forms within an Indigenous “mediascape.”⁴⁸ Where rock art is concerned, I have avoided the word “inscription” and used instead “markings,” unless I am conveying a perspective within the historiography, and have referred to individual images or symbols as glyphs. “Inscription” implies a unified textual message made by a person or group at a particular time in accordance with an alphabetic or glyphic writing system. As this dissertation shows, a fundamental problem with the efforts to interpret Dighton Rock was the wont of investigators to equate the markings on Dighton Rock with Old World inscriptions in stone such as Egyptian hieroglyphics or Norse runes. The expectation that the rock bore such an inscription made it easy to reject an Indigenous provenance because Native Americans were not known to create such records.

⁴⁸ Germaine Warkentin, “Dead Metaphor or Working Model?: The ‘Book’ in Native America,” in *Colonial Mediascapes: Sensory Worlds of the Early Americas*, eds. Matt Cohen and Jeffrey Glover (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014, Kindle edition). See also Chapter 4, “Clothing, Money, and Writing,” in Gordon M. Sayre’s *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) for a discussion of Indigenous communications and their relationship to Western ideas of “writing.”

(1)

First Impressions: Colonists encounter Dighton Rock, 1680–1714**Introduction**

Euro-Americans learned of Dighton Rock because of the Native American rebellion that colonists called King Philip's War. The rock's contested interpretation is inseparable from the way in which New Englanders encountered it, and from how they viewed and interacted with Native Americans in a theatre of ongoing violence. In this chapter I address the first few decades of Euro-American experience with Dighton Rock, from about 1680 to 1714, during which the provenance of its enigmatic markings was considered open to speculation, as was the nature and origins of Native Americans. Attribution of the rock's markings—to whom authorship of the markings belonged—was inseparable from dispossession—to whom the rock and its surrounding lands now belonged, as colonial territory and private property. Theorists had also inherited a longstanding discourse over the nature of Native Americans that asked where—and if—they belonged in the human family. By 1714, an Indigenous attribution for the rock's markings was on the verge of vanishing, just as Native Americans of southern New England who had risen up against colonists thirty years earlier were coming to be viewed as vanished peoples.

Dighton Rock and King Philip's War

Dighton Rock was a prize of war. When the Native American rebellion of King Philip's War was put down in 1676, the New Plymouth colony seized from the Wampanoag people the 1,100-acre triangle of land at the confluence of the Taunton and Assonet rivers called Assonet Neck.¹ In 1677 the land was sold to defray the colony's obligations to men who defended it during the uprising. Six men in the adjoining

¹ The land on the west side of the Taunton River, opposite Assonet Neck, had been purchased in 1672 from Philip (Metacom, Pumetacom). Called the Taunton South Purchase, it became the site of the town of Dighton. Hurd, *History of Bristol County*, 216.

township of Taunton, Massachusetts purchased it, and divided it among themselves.² (The land would be added to the township in 1682.) One of the purchasers was James Walker, a prominent Taunton citizen whose house burned in the opening days of King Philip's War.³ His share was at the north end and fronted on the east bank of the Taunton River where it widens for a spell, opposite the town of Dighton. Along his shore was a large boulder, a glacial erratic, that twice daily was submerged by the tide. At some point, someone—presumably Walker himself—discovered that when the tide receded, the side of the boulder facing the river was covered in strange markings.

Precisely how the news of this wonder reached the colonizers' world is a quagmire of discursive debate. According to a letter written in 1730 by a Harvard professor, Isaac Greenwood, the markings came to the attention of someone named Reverend Danforth. This Reverend Danforth made the first known drawing of it, which came into the hands of Greenwood's mentor, Cotton Mather, the leading Puritan minister and pastor of First Boston Church. [Fig. 1] Edmund Burke Delabarre, who expended hundreds of words of his first study of Dighton Rock on the mystery of the Reverend Danforth, believed he was John Danforth, who would begin ministering in the Boston suburb of Dorchester in 1682.⁴ I am not entirely persuaded, but in the end, which of the Danforth candidates made the first visual and verbal description of the boulder, in precisely which year, is not important. We need only understand that soon

² Edmund Burke Delabarre, "Early Interest in Dighton Rock," 248; Lewis A. Carter memo, n.d., Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

³ Walker's public services included turns as a constable of Taunton, a deputy, a member of the board of selectmen and of the town council, an excise officer, and an inspector of ordinaries. Hurd, *History of Bristol County*, 781.

⁴ The artist who created the first known drawing of Dighton Rock around 1680 could not have been the Reverend Samuel Danforth of Taunton, because he died in 1674, but Samuel had two sons, Samuel the younger, and John, who both became ministers as well. Samuel the younger would minister at Taunton, but not until 1687, and he was only 13 in 1680. His older brother John seems a better candidate, as he was 20 in 1680, had been made a fellow of Harvard College in 1677, and entered the ministry in the Boston suburb of Dorchester in 1682, where he remained in the parish's service for the rest of his life. Edmund Burke Delabarre made his case for John Danforth in "Early Interest in Dighton Rock," 249–253. It is possible, however, that the 1680 date cited by Greenwood was an error, in which case the Reverend Samuel Danforth of Taunton could have made the drawing after assuming the ministry at Taunton in 1687, but no later than 1689, when Cotton Mather plainly used it as the basis for his woodcut published in 1690. See also the entry for Rev. John Danforth in John Joseph May, *Danforth Genealogy* (Boston: Charles H. Pope, 1902), 30.

after King Philip's War, the boulder now known as Dighton Rock became one of the most enigmatic relics of American antiquity.

As an artifact in its own right, Dighton Rock became an artifact machine that churned out artistic renderings, photographs, alleged Indian lore, eyewitness descriptions, and above all, theories as to what the markings meant, and who made them. People who never came within 1000 miles of the boulder made confident pronouncements on their nature, offering interpretations based on the interpretations of others. No two drawings would ever be the same: every rendering, from the Reverend Danforth's forward, was an act of interpretation, as was every photograph, for what was perceived depended on lighting and especially on decisions made in chalking (or painting) the markings that the artist or the camera then recorded. Edmund Burke Delabarre, who was a psychology professor educated at Harvard, Freiburg, and the Sorbonne, would appreciate the essential subjectivity of interpretation, which nevertheless would not save him from his own misadventure of decipherment. But not even Delabarre seemed to appreciate that the succession of image recordings were more than idiosyncratic impressions: they were very likely documenting to some degree physical changes in the markings, beyond natural physical processes of erosion. Over time the markings would have been reshaped subtly by repeated chalking and cleaning of the tide- and ice-scoured rock, and doubtless more insistently by people with sharp instruments who wanted to clarify the muck-encrusted incisions—that is, when people weren't vandalizing the rock with their own contributions. The Danforth drawing, then, as the first evidence of Dighton Rock's markings, should have been its best evidence, its best hope of being understood, or at least of being recognized for what it was—a Native American petroglyph of uncertain antiquity. Danforth also happened to be the only person who, for a considerable time, was apparently prepared to accept the rock as an Indigenous artifact. A drawing sent by Isaac Greenwood to a fellow of the Royal Society of London in 1730, accompanied by a slip of paper with a brief description, may be original Danforth documents, which had passed to

Greenwood via Cotton Mather.⁵ (See Chapter 2 for a discussion of Greenwood.) As the slip of paper accompanying the drawing explained:

The Uppermost of y^e Engravings of a Rock in y^e river Assoonet six miles below Tau[n]ton in New England. Taken out sometime in October 1680. by John Danforth. It is reported from the Tradition of old Indians, y^t y^r came a wooden house (& men of another country in it) swimming up the river Asonet, y^t fought ye Indians, & slew yr Saunchem. &c.

Some recon the figures here to be Hieroglyphicall. The first figure representing a Ship, without masts, & a meer Wrack cast upon the Shoales. The second representing an head of Land, possible a cape with a peninsula. Hence a Gulf.⁶

Danforth's description was a mass of ambiguity. He reported "the Tradition of old Indians," yet it is not clear if he collected that tradition from them, or if it was instead received second-hand from colonists. The latter seems to have been the case, as the "some" who would have reckoned the inscription to be "Hieroglyphicall" would have been colonists. (It is possible this "wooden house" story was transposed to the Taunton River from a notorious incident on the Connecticut River in 1633, in which the Pequots attacked and killed the crew of eight of a trading vessel that had come upriver.⁷) In sum, Danforth appears to have executed a crude drawing with an interpretation of some markings as representative of a wrecked ship and a cape with a gulf, based on information provided by colonists, who would have justified their

⁵ Delabarre discusses the provenance of the Danforth materials in detail, and provides a photographic reproduction of the Danforth drawing and the brief description on an accompanying slip of paper, preserved in the British Museum, in "Early Interest," 275–296.

⁶ Transcription by Delabarre, "Early Interest," 291. For photo reproduction of the original slip, see the plate between 288 and 289.

⁷ David Silverman, *Red Brethren: The Brothertown and Stockbridge Indians and the Problem of Race in Early America* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), 18.

interpretation by citing “the Tradition of old Indians.” Nevertheless, at the dawn of its history of interpretation, Dighton Rock was treated as a Native American artifact.

The cause of comprehending Dighton Rock as an Indigenous relic, however, was lost almost as soon as it had begun, and not only because of the ever-changing drawings that tried to keep up with ever-changing markings and the ever-changing interpretive inclinations of theorists. When the Reverend Danforth drew it, the people who knew it best had just been defeated in the bloody and traumatizing insurrection led by Metacom (Pumetacom, Metacomet), or King Philip, a sachem of the Wampanoag. The war had pitted Wampanoag traditionalists under Metacom, who were allied with neighbouring Narragansett and some Nipmuck and Pocumtuck from western Massachusetts, against the colonists of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven, who were supported by Mohegan and Sakonnet as well as Christian converts.⁸ The region around Dighton Rock had figured prominently in the uprising. Metacom initially had agreed to a peace with colonists in 1671 in the town of Taunton, six miles upstream from the rock, and the land that formed the town as well as the greater township had been purchased alternately from Metacom and his father, Massasoit.⁹ A number of Taunton residents lost their lives in the uprising or like Walker had their homes torched. Metacom was killed in August 1676 near Mount Hope, about twelve miles downstream from Dighton Rock, where the Taunton River reaches Narragansett Bay. Anawan Rock, about six miles west of Taunton, was where tradition holds Metacom’s chief captain, Anawan of the Wampanoag, was captured, two weeks after Metacom’s death, thus ending

⁸ William Scranton Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes: Indian History and Folklore, 1620–1984* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1986), 17. For an overview of the wars between colonists and Native Americans of southern New England in the seventeenth century, foremost King Philip’s War, see David J. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 11–27.

⁹ See Hurd, *History of Bristol County*, 729–736.

the uprising.¹⁰ The severed head of Weetamoe, the widow of Philip's brother Alexander, was displayed on a pole in Taunton, while Metacom's head was staked on a pole in Plymouth.¹¹

Most of Metacom's closest followers were killed, but several enclaves of pro-English groups and converts remained throughout southeastern Massachusetts as well as in the islands offshore. Beginning in the late seventeenth century, these enclaves either coalesced or disappeared, leaving two principal concentrations of Wampanoag, one at Gay Head at the west end of Martha's Vineyard and the other at Mashpee on Cape Cod, where there was already a township of Christian Indian freemen.¹² In the absence of the defeated and banished Wampanoag, the inscribed rock was discovered. No one, in more than 300 years of debate over the nature of the rock's markings that followed the Danforth drawing and description, including Edmund Burke Delabarre, its most thorough and obsessed investigator, apparently ever sought out the remaining Wampanoag and asked them what they thought or knew of it. Nor would Delabarre, in the course of hundreds of pages of analysis of the rock and its historiography of interpretation, consider how King Philip's War might have affected the way colonists responded to questions of its provenance and meaning. When the Reverend Danforth examined it, the atrocities of King Philip's War were all too fresh, for colonist and Native American alike. Although accounts of the war that almost immediately began to see publication focused on the suffering of colonists at the hands of pagan savages, Native Americans had been traumatized and violently displaced. As Christine DeLucia has observed, Great Swamp near West Kingston, Rhode Island, in December 1676 was the site of a massacre "in which colonial militia shot or burned to death hundreds of Narragansett warriors, elders, women, and children, along with Wampanoag refugees." The immediate aftermath of the war for Indigenous people,

¹⁰ I visited the park on Route 44 containing Anawan Rock on July 18, 2013. A sign erected by the Rehoboth Historical Commission reads: "Site of the capture of the Wampanoag Indian Chief Anawan by Captain Benjamin Church on August 28, 1676, thus ending King Philip's War."

¹¹ For Taunton casualties and Walker's house burning, see Hurd, *History of Bristol County*, 741–45. For the display of Metacom's head, see Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Alfred E. Knopf, 1998), 174.

¹² Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 17–18.

she adds, “was chaotic, with prisoners being sold into slavery, widows and children begging for subsistence, wounded and dead unaccounted for.”¹³ According to David J. Silverman, colonists wiped out about 70 percent of the people allied with Metacom, and as many as 1,200 were enslaved.¹⁴ When Weetamoe’s head was put on display in Taunton, in the words of Bristol County historian Duane Hamilton Hurd, “the sad and barbarous spectacle caused great lamentations among the Indian prisoners, her former subjects.”¹⁵ According to Jill Lepore, “How these Algonquians who survived King Philip’s War commemorated and remembered the war is, sadly, mere speculation.”¹⁶ The surviving Wampanoag would have had little interest in sharing with colonists their traditions or insights regarding Dighton Rock after their own traumas of war and removal.

Even before war with colonists had traumatized Indigenous populations, epidemics had devastated their numbers and doubtless imperiled collective cultural memories. According to Bragdon, a “virgin-soil epidemic” centering on Massachusetts Bay from 1616 to 1619 reduced Indigenous numbers by as much as 90 percent around northern and central Massachusetts Bay. A smallpox epidemic, centered on the Connecticut River in 1633, may have claimed 700 lives just among the Narragansett population. Susceptibility to European diseases throughout the seventeenth century was “less dramatic but nonetheless lethal,” notes Bragdon. “By 1650,” she adds, “most scholars estimate that Native population was thus reduced to one-tenth of its former strength...”¹⁷ Some stories conveying traditional culture endured among the Native Americans of southern New England and would be recorded in the early twentieth century, but Christianity became the cultural norm. “Although Christian Indians of

¹³ Christine DeLucia, “The Memory Frontier: Uncommon Pursuits of Past and Place in the Northeast after King Philip’s War,” *The Journal of American History* 98, no. 4 (March 2012): 980.

¹⁴ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 23.

¹⁵ Hurd, *History of Bristol County*, 745.

¹⁶ Lepore, *The Name of War*, 184.

¹⁷ Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England, 1500–1650*, 27–28.

Massachusetts had been literate in their own language from the seventeenth to the late eighteenth centuries,” William Scranton Simmons has noted, “they limited their writing mainly to public records and did not record folklore. Only one Algonquian-speaker from the whole southern New England region, Fidelia Fielding of Mohegan, wrote of religious experience and folklore in her native language.”¹⁸ Whatever cultural traditions might still have been attached to James Walker’s boulder were lost to ethnographic neglect and submerged in successive tides of Euro-American interpretation.

DeLucia has asked: “How do individuals and communities reckon with a past of almost unspeakable cruelties and dispossessions, the effects of which have persisted through centuries of racialized thinking and policy making? How do they—we—conceive of ourselves as complicit in these violences, or as witnesses, victims, survivors of them?”¹⁹ In the immediate aftermath of King Philip’s War, the reckoning for colonists involved the erasure of a defeated enemy—removal, enslavement, and condemnation, with redemption only possible through their conversion to Christianity. As time passed and with it the firsthand experiences of the horrors of King Philip’s War, the theorists who ventured an array of interpretations of Dighton Rock would not have considered seeking interpretations from surviving Wampanoag because in the narrative of the triumphant colonies, Native Americans like the Wampanoag had ceased to exist, despite evidence to the contrary in surviving communities. According to Simmons, “The theme of the extinction of New England Indians has appealed to writers since the colonial period, and Squanto, King Philip, Uncas, and many others since have been portrayed as the last of their people. New England town historians often reserve a nostalgic paragraph for the last Indian to have lived in that vicinity and characteristically mention how he or she earned a humble living by making and peddling brooms, splint baskets, and home remedies among whites.”²⁰ According to Thomas L. Doughton,

¹⁸ Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 5; Lepore, *The Name of War*, 184–185.

¹⁹ DeLucia, “The Memory Frontier,” 975.

²⁰ Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 3-4.

Imagining Native experience only across variations of a ‘disappearance’ model, the ‘authorized’ version of New England history is deaf to the voices of individual Indian men and women, blind to actualities of multiple layers of social and political interactions constituting regional Indian community... The authorized version alleges that what it calls ‘traditional’ culture is gone... Or, as even some contemporary scholarly texts put it, regional Indians are ‘disappeared,’ a people who vanished in the wake of Metacombet’s Rebellion.²¹

Doughton adds: “Despite a droning chorus of regional and national commentators telling them they were ‘vanishing,’ the area’s nineteenth-century Natives were ‘living proof’ in contradiction of the spurious ‘extinction’ of their peoples.”²² Jean O’Brien has referred to this assumed rather than actual extinction of the Indigenous peoples of New England as “firsting and lasting.” In southern New England, she contends, colonists and their historians made the boldest claims to “firsting,” which “in essence asserts that non-Indians were the first people to erect the proper institutions of a social order worthy of notice.”²³ “Lasting” was the penchant (which Simmons had identified) of local historians to treat Native Americans as a vanished people. “Local narrators took up the histories of the exact places their audiences lived, and they rooted stories about Indians in those places,” O’Brien states, “The overwhelming message of these narratives was that local Indians had disappeared. These local stories were leashed to a larger national narrative of the ‘vanishing Indian’ as a generalized trope and disseminated not just in the form of

²¹ Thomas L. Doughton, “Unseen Neighbors: Native Americans of Central Massachusetts, A People Who Had ‘Vanished,’” in *After King Philip’s War: Presence and Persistence in Indian New England*, ed. Colin Gordon Calloway (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1997), 208.

²² Doughton, “Unseen Neighbors,” 211.

²³ Jean M. O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), xii.

the written word but also in a rich ceremonial cycle of pageants, commemorations, monument building, and lecture hall performance.” Thus was “created a narrative of Indian extinction that has stubbornly remained in the consciousness and unconsciousness of Americans.”²⁴ One consequence of “lasting” according to O’Brien has been to deny Indians a place in the modern world, to “purify the landscape of Indians.”²⁵ Colonists thought of Natives as timeless, as incapable of change; it was colonists who brought change and modernity to the western hemisphere. If there was no place for Indians in the modern world, then they could not possibly be there.²⁶ As Roy Harvey Pearce has written, “The Indian belonged in the American past and was socially and morally significant only as part of that past. He belonged in prehistory, or in the non-American history of North America.”²⁷

For O’Brien, “The assertion of modernity is made through the seemingly mundane erection of churches and roads, entirely eliding the dynamic world of Indian spirituality and elaborate network of trails and place-names rooted in history.”²⁸ Dighton Rock in my view stands apart from this eliding. “Modernity” has not smothered it—on the contrary, Anglo-Americans have transformed and celebrated the rock—and its appropriation began a century before the American Revolution, long before colonization had reshaped the landscape. The rock’s cumulative and contrary misinterpretations may qualify as an act in constructing the narrative of the “vanished Indian,” but this act has operated at a far more insidious level than the post-conquest tropes of local nostalgia identified by Simmons, the narratives of disappearance and assimilation described by O’Brien, or the isolation of Native Americans within the past noted by Pearce. The many learned men (and they were all men) who began to study and pontificate on the nature of Dighton Rock soon after the end of King Philip’s War overwhelmingly did not adhere to the

²⁴ O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, xiii

²⁵ O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, 107

²⁶ O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, 106–07.

²⁷ Pearce, *The Savages of America*, 160.

²⁸ O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*, 107.

standard script of departed savages. Had they done so, they would have recognized the rock as an Indigenous artifact and included it in their narratives of vanquished peoples who belonged in a pre-contact age. Instead, most of them denied Indians any responsibility for it, and in the process made them vanish from their own cultural history. In this exercise in post-conflict erasure, these Euro-Americans displaced Indians not only from the landscape, but from their own past as well. Not even antiquity was a safe haven. Such revisionism was (and continues to be) a retroactive ethnic cleansing of the Americas.

Dighton Rock was not the only petroglyph that Euro-Americans discovered in New England, or in the northeastern United States. Other boulders and rock faces in similar waterside locales would be found, including others in the general vicinity of Narragansett Bay, that were marked with peculiar visual symbols, or glyphs, that may still defy the absolute interpretation sought by semioticians, but because of their sinuous lines and anthropomorphic and zoomorphic forms they seem to be all of a kind, which some rock-art scholars have placed in the category of “Eastern Woodlands” and generally associated with Algonquian-speaking peoples.²⁹ But Dighton Rock was the largest, the most complex, and the first such set of markings to be found *and* described. The fact that for about a century it was the only petroglyph known in New England added to its exceptionality and gave it cultural momentum that left similar regional petroglyphs behind. Dighton Rock’s fame made it a natural attractor for students of American antiquity that tended to consider it in isolation from similar artifacts, even after they became known as well. As I will show, the rock’s Indigenous provenance was periodically and authoritatively asserted, but ultimately to no avail.

²⁹ See for example the Introduction to Carol Diaz-Granados and James R. Duncan, editors, *The Rock-Art of Eastern North America*. “Eastern Woodlands” is given as a phenomenological region (xxv), which overlaps with the anthropological category of “Woodlands” peoples of prehistory. Inscribed rock art (petroglyphs) and painted rock art (pictographs) of eastern North America have generally been considered “Algonquian,” in part because Iroquoian peoples were not known to make such images, beyond markings in trees (dendroglyphs).

First Descriptions of Dighton Rock

Until the rise of American scientific archaeology (see Chapter 5) as well as ethnology (see Chapter 7) in the nineteenth century, the men who took an interest in Dighton Rock and other ancient puzzles of the Americas belonged to the ranks of students of antiquities known as antiquaries or antiquarians. The first English dictionary, Robert Cawdrey's *A Table Alphabeticall* of 1604, defined *antiquarie* as "a man skilled, or a searcher of antiquities."³⁰ A typical practitioner was the Englishman John Tyne (d. 1581), who collected Romano-British coins, pottery and glass and studied earthworks and megaliths.³¹ Tyne's interests remained the staple of antiquaries into the nineteenth century. The first dictionary of English slang, published in 1699, skewered the *Antiquary* as "a curious Critick in old Coins, Stones and Inscriptions, in Worm-eaten Records, and ancient Manuscripts; also one that affects and blindly doats, on Relicks, Ruins, old Customs, Phrases and Fashions."³² Among the men who instilled the antiquarian enthusiasm in the new American colonies was the Reverend Cotton Mather, who made the first published mention of Dighton Rock in *The Wonderful Works of God Commemorated* in 1690. This collection of two sermons from 1689 and other materials was prefaced by "The Epistle Dedicatory," addressed "To the Right Worshipful Sir Henry Ashurst, Baronet," a London merchant who supported the proselytizing of Puritan missionary John Eliot. Near the end of the dedication, Mather veered onto the subject of Dighton Rock:

³⁰ John Simpson, Introduction, *The First English Dictionary 1604: Robert Cawdrey's A Table Alphabeticall* (Oxford UK: Bodleian Library, 2007): 51.

³¹ Bruce G. Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 85.

³² From *A New Dictionary of the terms Ancient and Modern of the Canting Crew, In its several Tribes, of Gypsies, Beggars, Thieves, Cheats, &c*, reprinted as John Simpson, Introduction, *The First English Dictionary of Slang 1699* (Oxford UK: Bodleian Library, 2010): 10.

Among the other Curiosities of *New-England*, One is that of a mighty *Rock*, on a perpendicular side whereof by a River, which at High Tide covers part of it, there are very deeply Engraved, no man alive knows *How* or *When*, about half a score *Lines*, near Ten Foot *Long*, and a foot and half *broad*, filled with strange Characters; which would suggest as *odd Thoughts* about them that were here before us, as there are *odd Shapes* in that Elaborate Monument; whereof you shall see, the *first Line*, Transcribed here.³³

Mather was wrong in saying the markings were organized into anything like ten horizontal lines of text. His illustration was a crude, thick-lined woodcut a little more than three inches wide, which scarcely did justice to markings that filled the face of a boulder eleven feet wide. Delabarre reasonably would conclude it was based on the Danforth drawing (which would not be published until 1787), because of the basic similarities and Delabarre's reasonable doubt that Mather saw the rock himself.³⁴ Mather offered no further comment on who might have created it or to what end, and his comments in the same volume's "Memorable Providences" illustrate why someone like Mather would have had no interest in seeking out a Native American explanation. He decried the "miserable heathen" who had risen up against the colonists and reserved particular venom for Metacom:

The Ringleader of the last Warr which the *Indians* afflicted the *English* in this Land withal, was *Philip* the Prince of the *Wompanoags*. That gracious and laborious Apostle of the *Indians*, the Reverend *John Eliot*, made a Tender of the Gospel to this Monster, who after the Indian mode of joining *signs* with *words*, pulling off a Button on the good man's

³³ Cotton Mather, *The Wonderful Works of God Commemorated* (Boston: S. Green, 1690): 7–8 (unpaginated).

³⁴ Delabarre, "Early Interest," 256–57. For the first publication of a version of the Danforth drawing, see Rev. Michael Lort, "Account of an antient Inscription in North America," in *Archaeologia*, vol. 8, 290–301 (London: The Society of Antiquaries of London, 1787). For a discussion of the Lort article, see Chapter 3.

Coat, told him, *He did not value what he said so much as that:* and he moreover hindred his subjects from embracing the Christian Religion through a fear which he expressed, *That it might obstruct something of their Civil absolute unlimited Obedience to him.*³⁵

As Jill Lepore has remarked on the aftermath of King Philip's War, English colonists in New England defined themselves against two 'others,' the savage Indians and the cruel Spaniards of the Americas: "between these two similar yet distinct 'others,' one considered inhumane and one human, the English in New England attempted to carve out for themselves a narrow path of virtue, piety, and mercy. Out of the chaos of war, English colonists constructed a language that proclaimed themselves to be neither cruel colonizers like the Spaniards nor savage natives like the Indians."³⁶ The idea that English Protestants would treat Indigenous peoples of the Americas in a more Christian manner than the Spanish actually was ingrained from the beginning of colonization efforts. Richard Hakluyt the Elder in proposing in 1585 the settlement of what would become known as New England, argued that Indians "may be drawn by all courtesie into love with our nation; that we become not hatefull unto them, as the Spaniard is in Italie and in the West Indies, and elsewhere, by their maner of usage: for a gentle course without crueltie and tyrannie best answeeth the profession of a Christian, best planteth Christian religion..."³⁷ Native Americans were equated with European barbarians of yore, in Theodore de Bry's 1590 reprint of Thomas Harriot's *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia* (1588).³⁸ De Bry popularized

³⁵ Mather, *The Wonderful Works*, 121.

³⁶ Lepore, *The Name of War*, xiv.

³⁷ Richard Hakluyt (the Elder), "Inducements to the Liking of the Voyage Intended towards Virginia in 40. and 42. Degrees" (1585), in *Envisioning America: English Plans for the Colonization of North America, 1580–1610*, ed. Peter C. Mancell (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1995), 40.

³⁸ For the art of John White and De Bry's engraved versions, see Kim Sloan, *A New World: England's first view of America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007). See also "Selections from Theodor de Bry's engravings," in *Envisioning America: English Plans for the Colonization of North America, 1580–1610*, ed. Peter C. Mancell, 85–106 (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1995). See also "Early Images of Virginia Indians: The William W. Cole Collection," Virginia Historical Society, <http://www.vahistorical.org/collections-and-resources/virginia-history-explorer/early-images-virginia-indians-william-w-cole> (accessed Aug. 3, 2014); and

Harriot's work with a folio edition that included engravings of John White's original paintings of peoples of "Virginia" (now North Carolina) and of ancient Britons ("Pictes") "to shoue how that the Inhabitants of the great Bretannie have bin in times past as sauuage as those of Virginia."³⁹ The implicit message was that if the English had once been as savage as the people of the New World, then surely Native Americans could be improved and a harmonious English presence in eastern North America established. Harriot proposed "there is good hope that they may be brought through discreete dealing and government the embracing of the trueth, and consequently to honour, obey, feare and love us."⁴⁰ After King Philip's War, J.H. Elliott notes, there was "a growing consensus" among colonists "that the Indians were, and always had been, degenerate barbarians..."⁴¹ As Elliott explains:

King Philip's War undid much of the work done by [John] Eliot and other apostles to the Indians in establishing in the English mind the worthiness of native Americans to be considered for eventual inclusion within the fellowship of the visible saints. For the Indians, the war was a disaster. Large numbers of those who had surrendered or been captured were sold into foreign slavery on the pretext, still much used by Spaniards on the fringes of empire, that they had been taken captive in a 'just war'. Eliot's seems to have been the sole voice raised in moral protest...⁴²

"Theodore de Bry's Engravings," Virginia Historical Society, <http://www.vahistorical.org/collections-and-resources/virginia-history-explorer/early-images-virginia-indians-william-w-cole-1> (accessed Aug. 3, 2014).

³⁹ "Selections from Theodor de Bry's engravings," 103. For White's original paintings of ancient Britons, see Sloan, *A New World*, 152–163.

⁴⁰ Thomas Harriot [Hariot], "A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia" (1590), in *Envisioning America: English Plans for the Colonization of North America, 1580–1610*, ed. Peter C. Mancell (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1995), 82.

⁴¹ J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492–1830* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 78.

⁴² J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World*, 78. See also Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 22–29, for the implications of King Philip's War in colonists' attitudes towards Indigenous peoples. Roy Harvey Pearce in *The Savages of America* argued that the idea of the Indian as a "European manqué," capable of improvement, had failed by the

Both Cotton Mather and his father, the Puritan minister Increase Mather, wrote histories of the conflicts with Indigenous people of New England. Increase Mather's *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England* of 1676 was drenched in the blood of colonists as he catalogued (or, rather, propagandized) the barbarity and cruelty of the people who rose up under Metacom.⁴³ The seventh volume of Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana, or Ecclesiastical History of New-England* of 1702, titled *A Book of the Wars of the Lord*, recounted the history of conflicts with Indigenous people, including the Pequot War of 1637, King Philip's War, and the most recent actions of King William's War.⁴⁴ Cotton Mather depicted King Philip's War as a triumph by colonists favoured by God: "The Evident Hand of Heaven appearing on the side of a People, whose Hope and Help was alone in the Almighty Lord of Hosts, extinguished whole Nations of the Salvages at such a Rate, that there can hardly any of them now be found under any Distinction upon the Face of the Earth."⁴⁵ So it was that Cotton Mather, who made the first recorded description of Dighton Rock, also asserted that Native Americans had all but vanished from southern New England. Displacement was coincident with discovery, not only in terms of the historical record of the Wampanoag's loss of the lands at Assonet Neck on which the rock was found, but also in terms of the process of determining provenance that Cotton Mather largely initiated. Removed from the land, Native Americans became strangely invisible to Mather in pondering the authorship of Dighton Rock's markings.

1770s and was replaced by a theory of a new order in America, in which Native Americans could have no part, as they belonged to the past. (4) As Silverman and others have shown, New Englanders had already been through much the same exercise in the late seventeenth century.

⁴³ Increase Mather, *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England* (Boston: John Foster, 1676).

⁴⁴ Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana, or Ecclesiastical History of New-England* (London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1702).

⁴⁵ Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, book 7, 60.

Dighton Rock's interpretation and the attitude towards Native Americans of men like the Mather also must be understood in the context not only of their particular remembrance of King Philip's War and early conflicts, but also of the ongoing outbursts of war on the British colonial frontier, in which Indigenous nations to the north, acting in their own interests and in alliance with the French, were an ever-present source of terror and targets of retribution in a campaign of guerrilla warfare that embroiled frontier communities. As David J. Silverman has written, King Philip's War "permanently broke the back of Indian power in southern New England and reinforced English suspicions that Indians were irredeemable savages. It also set the terms for a postwar racial order in which repeated wars and war scares on the frontier and the colonists' subjugation of New England's surviving Indians hardened racial identities."⁴⁶ Between 1688 and 1698, Native American raiders who either lived with or were allied with the French to the north attacked settlements in the Connecticut valley some thirty times. When the North American colonies were drawn by their metropolises into the European conflict known as King William's War, in the winter of 1690 the French struck from Canada with Native American allies at Schenectedy in New York, Salmon Falls in New Hampshire, and Casco in Maine (which already had been warring with the Abenaki for two years and had built a fort with eight cannon). After a siege of five days, the English in Casco, who numbered about seventy men along with women and children, agreed to a surrender with a guarantee of safe passage from the French, but the Abenaki (with whom Massachusetts had been forced to sign a peace treaty in 1678, acknowledging their sovereignty over traditional lands in Maine and New Hampshire⁴⁷) ignored it, making prisoners of the occupants and killing anyone who resisted. About 125 men, women and children were killed in these raids, and more than 150 prisoners had little chance of

⁴⁶ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 17.

⁴⁷ W.J. Eccles, *Canada Under Louis XIV 1663–1701* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964), 171–177. John Mack Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Tragic Story of the Expulsion of the French Acadians from their American Homeland* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 83.

survival.⁴⁸ (Cotton Mather wrote of these raids in *Magnalia Christi Americana*, and his work was used for an anti-Catholic and anti-Indian volume relating the capture of Hannah Swanton at Casco that was published by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society in 1837.⁴⁹) In the spring of 1690, Massachusetts conscripted a force of a few hundred men for a revenge attack on Port Royal and Quebec; a fleet departed Boston Harbor on May 9 under Sir William Phips, a veteran of the “brutal fighting” on the Maine frontier. Port Royal was burned and looted, and in August Phips was sent out again by Massachusetts for an action against Quebec, which was a disaster; he shelled the fortified city without result and when smallpox struck his forces, he returned to Boston with losses of more than 400 men. The French responded by organizing raids on frontier settlements by combined forces of Abenaki, Maliseet, and Mikmaw allies from an outpost fifty miles up the St. John River in what is now New Brunswick.⁵⁰ During these years of conflict, the Indian College at Harvard, established in 1655 to educate and assimilate Native American children, was considered a failure, and was torn down in 1693.⁵¹ It was in this climate of terror, retribution and abandoned hopes of assimilation that Cotton Mather had delivered and then published his sermons, along with his drawing and description of Dighton Rock.

In 1691, Dighton Rock was mentioned in the letter book of Samuel Sewall, who would be appointed justice of the superior court of judicature in Massachusetts in 1692 and participate in the Salem witch trials that year. (He was the only judge to ever recant and ask the public for forgiveness for his role.⁵²) Sewall had been a participant, perhaps reluctant, in the atrocities that followed the defeat of

⁴⁸ Louise Dechêne, *Le Peuple, l'État et la Guerre au Canada sous le Régime français* (Montréal: Boréal, 2008), 167–170, 183.

⁴⁹ Cotton Mather [attr.], *Hannah Swanton, the Casco captive, or, The Catholic religion in Canada, and its influence on the Indians in Maine* (Boston: Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, 1837).

⁵⁰ Faragher, *op. cit.*, 86–93. Eccles, *Canada Under Louis XIV*, 193–196.

⁵¹ Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World*, 74–75.

⁵² Mary Adams Hilmer and Samuel Sewall, “The Other Diary of Samuel Sewall,” *The New England Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (September 1982): 356.

Metacom. After an Indian captive was executed in Boston, Sewall participated in his dissection, at which one of the men reached into the split body cavity, fetched the heart, and mockingly declared it to be the stomach.⁵³ Sewall nevertheless stood out as an advocate for the rights of Native Americans in the aftermath of King Philip's War, lobbying successfully against a Massachusetts bill that would have prevented them from marrying Whites, a measure he feared would inhibit their acceptance of Christianity.⁵⁴ Sewall's entry for February 24, 1691 read: "Memorand. to write to Mr. Danforth to take the writing off the Rock and send it."⁵⁵ This could only have been a reference to Dighton Rock. Delabarre would remark: "It may be that [Sewall] sought for evidence in support of the theory that the American Indians were descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel...Sewall's Letter-Book shows traces of adherence to this view, though nowhere advocating it without reserve."⁵⁶ Thus it happened that Dighton Rock, within a year of being described publicly for the first time, by Cotton Mather, was conscripted into a debate that has still not ended: the Euro-American dispute over the origins of Native Americans.

Land Bridges and Lost Tribes

The origins of the Indigenous peoples of the Americas had fascinated and perplexed Europeans from the earliest days of exploration. Columbus on his first landfall in the Bahamas in October 1492 called the Arawaks *indios*, as the concept of India at the time stretched from Ethiopia to China.⁵⁷ Columbus went to his grave believing his New World discoveries were in easternmost Asia, and as Carla Rahn Phillips has

⁵³ Lepore, *The Name of War*, 178.

⁵⁴ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 25.

⁵⁵ Delabarre, "Early Interest," 259. I imagine Sewall was referring to the Reverend Samuel Danforth who had been ministering since 1687 at Taunton, a few miles from the rock, rather than his son, the Reverend John Danforth of Dorchester. Why Sewall would not have called him Reverend Danforth is a complicating matter.

⁵⁶ Delabarre, "Early Interest," 259–60.

⁵⁷ For a discussion of the concept of India in Columbus's time, see Helen Nader, ed. and trans., *The Book of Privileges Issued to Christopher Columbus by King Fernando and Queen Isabel 1492–1502*, vol. 2 of *Repertorium Columbianum*, gen. ed. Geoffrey Symcox (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock, 1996), 19.

summarized, “It took years and dozens of other voyages for Europeans to recognize that the lands Columbus discovered were not part of Asia, but were instead a world unknown to ancient and medieval geography.”⁵⁸ The relationship between Asia and North America remained uncertain in the sixteenth century. Giacomo Gastaldi’s world map of 1546 showed Asia and North America as a contiguous continent, and Paulo di Forlani, in modeling his world map of 1565 on Gastaldi’s effort, perpetuated this configuration.⁵⁹ [Fig 2] However, the idea that the eastern reaches of Asia lay very close to, but were separated from, North America soon became fixed in the worldview of geographers, long before the actual configuration of eastern Siberia, Alaska and the Bering Strait was known. The Grynaeus world map, attributed to Hans Holbein the Younger, from *Novus Orbis*, printed at Basel in 1555, already depicted Asia as distinct from a protean North America (*Terra de Cuba*).⁶⁰ The Bolognino Zaltieri map of North America in 1566 was the first printed map to apply the label *Anian* to a speculated narrow strait between Asia and North America.⁶¹ [Fig. 3] In 1576, the relationship between Asia and America remained sufficiently contested that Sir Humphrey Gilbert felt obligated to argue in favour of their separation in a published discourse advocating a search for a Northwest Passage to Cathay and the East Indies.⁶² In 1648, the Russian explorer Semyon (Semen) Dezhnev sailed southward through the strait

⁵⁸ “Columbus continued to believe, until his death, that he had found islands of the eastern coast of Asia.” Robert S. Weddle, “Early Spanish Exploration,” in *A New World Disclosed*, vol. 1 of *North American Exploration*, ed. John Logan Allen (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 190. Carla Rahn Phillips, “Columbus, Christopher,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Maritime History* vol. 1, ed. John B. Hattendorf (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 451.

⁵⁹ The Gastaldi and Forlani maps can be inspected at “Archive of Early American Images,” The John Carter Brown Library, <http://jcb.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet> (accessed July 15, 2014).

⁶⁰ W. P. Cumming, R. A. Skelton, D.B. Quinn, *The Discovery of North America* (New York: American Heritage Press: 1972), 64–65.

⁶¹ Cumming, Skelton and Quinn, *The Discovery of North America*, 103.

⁶² Humphrey Gilbert, *A Discourse of a Discoverie for a New Passage to Cataia* (London: 1576), reprinted as “A Discourse Written by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Knight, to Proue a Passage by the Northwest to Cathaia, and the East Indies,” in Richard Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, ed. Edmund Goldsmid, vol. 12, <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/h/hakluyt/voyages/v12/chapter15.html> (accessed Aug. 3, 2014).

without realizing what he had discovered.⁶³ The strait would not be confirmed as a gap between Asia and America until the second voyage of Vitus Bering (for whom the strait was finally named) in 1741.⁶⁴

The Spanish Jesuit José de Acosta considered the puzzle of how humans reached the New World in 1590, in *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*, which English-speaking readers came to know through translation in 1604.⁶⁵ Acosta concluded “that the true and principall cause to people the *Indies*, was, that the lands and limits thereof are ioyned and continued in some extremities of the world, or at the least, were very neere.”⁶⁶ The English were in the midst of their first concerted colonizing effort in eastern North America when the Acosta translation was published. These efforts included three voyages to what would become known as New England: by Bartholomew Gosnold in 1602, Martin Pring in 1603, and George Waymouth in 1605, which were followed by the first colonizing effort for Virginia, which established Jamestown in 1607.⁶⁷ The English learning curve on Indigenous peoples was steep: in an early example of White Tribism (see below), Waymouth brought along a Welshman, likely in the event that the stories of a twelfth-century Welsh colony founded by Prince Madoc in the land called Norumbega were

⁶³ For Dezhnev’s little-known voyage, see Raymond H. Fisher, *The Voyage of Semen Dezhnev in 1648* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1981).

⁶⁴ The second voyage of the Danish navigator Vitus Bering, in the service of the Russian government, was an epic undertaking. Bering needed ten years, from 1731 to 1741, just to complete the overland route from St. Petersburg across Siberia, to begin exploring with two vessels from the east coast of Kamchatka. His second-in-command, Alexei Chirikov, sighted the American coast. Bering landed briefly at Kayak Island on the Alaska coast, but was wrecked near Kamchatka on the return voyage and died with many of his men. “The American landfalls of Bering’s second expedition are among the defining moments in world geography, although this was clearer in retrospect than at the time, when the failure to publish reliable accounts and charts of the voyage led to much confusion about the significance of the Russian discoveries.” Glyndwr Williams, “Americas: Exploration Voyages, 1539–1794 (Northwest Coast),” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Maritime History*, ed. John B. Hattendorf, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 44.

⁶⁵ Joseph Acosta, *The naturall and morall historie of the East and West Indies*, trans. E.G. [Edward Grimeston] (London: Printed by Val: Sims for Edward Blount and William Aspley, 1604).

⁶⁶ Acosta, *The naturall and morall historie*, 78.

⁶⁷ See David B. Quinn and Alison Quinn, *The English New England Voyages 1602–1608* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1983).

true and the Indians spoke the language.⁶⁸ In 1614, the same year Captain John Smith of the Virginia Colony made a voyage to what is now Maine and Massachusetts and coined the label *New England*, Robert Brerewood publish in London *Enquiries Touching the diversity of Languages, and Religions, through the chiefe parts of the World*, by his uncle, the antiquarian Edward Brerewood, who had died the previous year.⁶⁹ *Enquiries* encapsulated the view of the peopling of the Americas that would prevail for two centuries. In Brerewood we also have the first gleaming of a basis for the Bering Land Bridge (Beringia) migration theory that would prevail among archaeologists and anthropologists: in its twentieth-century form, the Americas were peopled by hunters, defined by the appearance of Clovis tool technology, who walked over from Siberia, probably following game animals, and then down an ice-free corridor between the Laurentide and Cordilleran ice sheets towards the end of the last ice age roughly 13,000 years ago.⁷⁰

Acosta had suspected that northernmost America approached or was attached to Northern Europe and so could have provided a migratory route, in addition to a Beringian connection.⁷¹ Brerewood

⁶⁸ Quinn and Quinn, *The English New England Voyages*, 277n7.

⁶⁹ See University of Nebraska Digital Commons for an online electronic text edition of John Smith's *A Description of New England* (1616) as well as a digital version of his "New England" map. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/4/> (accessed June 10, 2014). Edward Brerewood, *Enquiries Touching the diversity of Languages, and Religions, through the chiefe parts of the World* (1614; repr., London: John Norton, 1635).

⁷⁰ Beringia was "the geographic area of more than 1,000 kilometers in width (Bering Land Bridge) located in North America and Asia: eastern Beringia lies in North America and western Beringia lies in Asia. Prehistoric Asian hunters, probably following game herds, are hypothesized to have entered the Americas by this route." "Words to Remember," *Archaeology* 38, no. 2 (March/April 19, 1985): 10. The "Clovis First" theory prevailed until evidence of a human presence in the Americas prior to 13,000 BP began to find wide acceptance in the archaeological community around 2008. For the Clovis-first position, see Gary Haynes, *The Early Settlement of North America: The Clovis Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). For the controversy surrounding institutional archaeological resistance to pre-Clovis evidence, see Elaine Dewar, *Bones: Discovering the First Americans* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2001). Sources on pre-Clovis evidence include Nelson J.R. Fagundes, et al, "Mitochondrial Population Genomics Supports a Single Pre-Clovis Origin with a Coastal Route for the Peopling of the Americas," *The American Society of Human Genetics* 82, no. 3 (Feb. 28, 2008): 583-592; Tom. D. Dillehay, et al, "Monte Verde: Seaweed, Food, Medicine, and the Peopling of South America," *Science* 320, no. 5877 (May 9, 2008): 784-786; M. Thomas P. Gilbert, et al, "DNA from Pre-Clovis Human Coprolite in Oregon, North America," *Science* 320, no. 5877 (May 9, 2008): 786-789.

⁷¹ "For towards the Articke or Northerne Pole, all the longitude of the earth is not discovered, and many hold, that above *Florida*, the Land runnes out very large towards the North, and as they say, ioynes with the *Scithike* or

believed that Native Americans could not be from Africa or Europe and instead must have been from Asia, and specifically Tartary—“Because in America there is not to be discerned, any token or indication at all, of the arts or industry of China, or India, or Cataia, or any other civill region, along all that border of Asia.”⁷² Long before the original Native Americans acquired the favored anthropological form of paleoindian hunters downing mastodon with Clovis spear points, theorists like Brerewood judged them to have been be Tartars (Tatars) from Tartary or Tartaria in central Asia. The French from the earliest days of their New World experiences around the Gulf of St. Lawrence had presumed Tartary lay somewhere to the west and was directly accessible overland. Jean Alfonse, pilot to the 1542 colonizing expedition to the St. Lawrence River of the Sieur de Roberval, had advised (as 16th-century English historiographer and chronicler Richard Hakluyt preserved): “These landes lye ouer against Tartarie, and I doubt not but that they stretch toward Asia, according to the roundnesse of the world.”⁷³ The Grynaeus world map of 1555, which as noted separated Asia from the Americas, located *Tartaria Magna* (*Terra Mongol*) in easternmost Asia, north of Cathay. In Europe, “Tartar” according to the OED was first applied to “the mingled host of Mongols, Tartars, Turks, etc., which under the leadership of Jenghiz Khan (1202–1227) overran and devastated much of Asia and Eastern Europe.”⁷⁴ This association of the first Indigenous

Germaine Sea. Others affirm, that a Ship sayling in that Sea, reported to have seene the coast of *Bacalaos* [Newfoundland, from the Spanish and Portuguese *bacalao*, or cod], which stretcheth almost to the confines of *Europe*.” (Acosta, *The naturall and morall historie*, 67)

⁷² Brerewood, *Enquiries*, 96–97. Humphrey Gilbert before him, however, in *A Discourse* (1576) argued that North America was an island, separate from Asia, because no evidence of Scythians or Tartars had been found there. Gilbert expected that if Asia and North America were connected, or only narrowly separated, “the Scythians and Tartarians (which often times heretofore haue sought farre and neere for new seats, driuen therevnto through the necessitie of their cold and miserable countreys) would in all this time haue found the way to America, and entred the same, had the passages bene neuer so straitte or difficult; the countrey being so temperate pleasant and fruitfull, in comparison of their owne. But there was neuer any such people found there by any of the Spaniards, Portugals, or Frenchmen, who first discovered the Inland of that countrey: which Spaniards or Frenchmen must then of necessitie haue seene some one ciuill man in America, considering how full of ciuill people Asia is; But they neuer saw so much as one token or signe, that euer any man of the knowen part of the world had bene there.” Gilbert, “A Discourse.”

⁷³ Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages*, vol. 13, pt. 2 (“America”), “[The Voyages of Jacques Cartier],” ch. 19.

⁷⁴ OED, s.v. “Tartar | Tatar, *n.2* and *adj.*”

peoples of the Americas with Mongol hordes that terrorized urbanized Old World cultures would figure significantly in Western theories about Native American origins and character and the truth of American antiquity.

It was a given for Acosta, Brerewood and ensuing theorists that the original inhabitants of the Americas arrived from elsewhere, because the story of humanity was migratory and rooted in Biblical literalism. As English readers learned in the 1604 Acosta translation: “The reason that inforceth us to yeeld, that the first men of the Indies are come from Europe or Asia, is the testimonie of the holy scripture, which teacheth us plainely, that all men came from Adam.”⁷⁵ As my examinations of the interpretations of Dighton Rock and the identity of the “Mound Builders” will show, for Protestant Anglo-American scholars in particular, well into the nineteenth century, the Old Testament narrative based on successive generations descending from Noah’s three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, formed the armature on which human history had to be arranged. Olive Patricia Dickason credits the sixteenth-century German humanist Johann Boem with advancing the idea of the origins of all humans, post-Deluge, from the sons of Noah, in *Omnium gentium mores*. Boem identified the Tartars as the descendants of Japheth, but did not connect the Tartars to Native Americans, although he described Tartars in similar terms to those being used for Native Americans.⁷⁶ Joyce E. Chaplin has summarized: “Orthodox Christian (like Judaic) belief stressed that the peoples of the world were descended from the sons of Noah who had repopulated the world after the Deluge. Each son was interpreted as traveling to a different part of the globe.”⁷⁷ Provided one adhered to the concept of monogenesis (that all living peoples,

⁷⁵ Acosta, *The naturall and morall historie*, 64.

⁷⁶ Olive Patricia Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage: And the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1984), 32–33.

⁷⁷ Joyce E. Chaplin, “Race,” in *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 178. For a discussion of ambiguity in Genesis and evolving interpretations of the sons of Noah, see Benjamin Braude, “The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, vol. 54, no. 1 (Jan. 1997): 103–142. See also the discussion by Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage*, 29–35.

regardless of race, had a common origin in the Eden of the Book of Genesis), every human being since Noah (ten generations removed from Adam) was a child of the drama of the Flood, and of the ensuing re-peopling of the habitable world. In the seventeenth century, as northern European countries like England and the Netherlands accelerated their colonization efforts, Protestant newcomers closely considered the origin of Native Americans. In addition to the questions raised by the Flood and Noah's offspring, a key line of enquiry took up the fates of the Israelites, of all members of the twelve tribes descended from the twelve sons of Joseph, grandson of Abraham, who was eleven generations removed from Noah. For some theorists, Native Americans solved the problem of whatever had become of ten of the tribes of Israel—the “lost” tribes that disappeared after the conquest of the northern Kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians in 722 B.C., leaving behind the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which constituted the Southern Kingdom of Judah, as well as the tribe of Levi.⁷⁸

In 1642, the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius published a 12-page dissertation, *De origine gentium Americanarum dissertatio*, one of the most influential works in the growing syllabus of speculations over the origins of Native Americans.⁷⁹ Grotius was skeptical that Tartars or Lost Tribes populated the Americas, and instead believed the New World had been peopled from a multitude of directions: North America north of the isthmus of Panama had been populated almost entirely by Norwegians or Norsemen (*Noruegiae* in the original Latin text⁸⁰) and Yucatán from Africa (*Aethiopia*⁸¹), as Grotius noted the early sixteenth-century Columbus chronicler, Pietro Martire D'Anghiera (Peter Martyr), had supposed. (Martire had exaggerated the report by Columbus that Native Americans at the same latitude as Ethiopians were

⁷⁸ Louis Isaac Rabinowitz, “Ten Lost Tribes,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, eds. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 2nd ed., vol. 19 (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 639-640.

⁷⁹ Hugonis Grotii, *De origine gentium Americanarum dissertatio* (Paris: [s.n.], 1642). For an English translation, see Hugo Grotius, *On the Origin of the Native Races of America: A Dissertation*, trans. Edmund Goldsmid (Edinburgh: [s.n.], 1884), 7–20.

⁸⁰ Grotii, *De origine*, 39.

⁸¹ Grotii, *De origine*, 43.

not the same colour, stating: “The Ethiopians are black and have curly, woolly hair, while these nations are on the contrary white and have long, straight, blond hair.”⁸²) While Grotius was amenable to the idea that south Asians from the region of Java and New Guinea had crossed the Pacific to populate South America, the advanced state of Peruvians (a reference to the Inca) convinced him they arrived separately, from China. Grotius’s influence lay less in his specific conclusions than in his methodology. He furthered his case for a Norwegian settlement of most of America by claiming that place names like Cimatlan, Coatlan, and Guecoslan, which the Spanish had adapted from Indigenous peoples, were all Germanic in origin and hence were Norse; Grotius considered the Norse a Germanic people, as Norse is a Germanic language. Spaniards had modified the original Germanic words by dropping the last letter. (Grotius didn’t say which letter, but it would have been ‘d’; Cimatlan thus would have been Cimatland.)⁸³ He also found parallels between German or Norwegian and the Indigenous language of Mexico, as well as shared customs.⁸⁴ Grotius was not the first person to make such language comparisons. For example, Thomas Morton, who had arrived in New England in 1622 (and was deported to England, unsuccessfully, in 1628 by the Plymouth colony on charges of selling firearms to Native Americans⁸⁵), assured readers of *New English Canaan* in 1637 that Native Americans “doe use very many wordes both of Greeke and Latine, to the same signification that the Latins and Greekes have done.”⁸⁶ Morton supposed “the Natives of New England may proceede from the race of the Tartars, and come from Tartaria into those partes, over the

⁸² Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage*, 44–45, quoting Martire from Pietro Martire D’Anghiera, *De Orbe Novo: The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D’Anghera* [sic], trans. Francis Augustus MacNutt, vol. 1 (New York and London: G. Putnam’s Sons, 1912), 1:133.

⁸³ Grotius, *On the origin*, 11.

⁸⁴ “Teut, the god of Germany, is the same also among those nations, Ba-god, the lesser, an imaginary god; Guarua, Waiert, the lash; Top-hos, the covering of the head; Lame, Lam, the lamb. Places situated beside streams end in Peke, or Beke, which is stream among Germans.” Grotius, *On the origin*, 12.

⁸⁵ Matt Cohen, *The Networked Wilderness: Communicating in Early New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 31.

⁸⁶ Thomas Morton, *New English Canaan, or, New Canaan: containing an abstract of New England* (Amsterdam: [s.n.], 1637), 18–19.

frozen Sea,”⁸⁷ but also ventured that they might have crossed the Atlantic as “scattered [sic] Trojans.”⁸⁸ Joannes (Johan) de Laet, a director of the Dutch West India Company, which oversaw the Dutch colony of New Netherlands centered on Manhattan, criticized Grotius’ analysis in a 1643 rebuttal that ran to more than 200 pages and made extensive comparisons of words in a variety of New and Old World languages.⁸⁹ The details of de Laet’s own theory on Native American origins are not important.⁹⁰ What matters is that by the mid-seventeenth century Grotius had established firmly the practice of employing what would become several core tools of prototypic ethnology, or comparative ethnography: interrogating place names, probing languages for affinities (and dissimilarities), and citing shared cultural practices. While none of these tools were necessarily incorrect, in time some results would be discredited by the theorists’ disregard of advances in language studies and their ignorance of (and willful disinterest in) Indigenous culture. It was easy for a theorist to assert European origins for Indigenous languages and place names when he did not understand the grammar and polysynthetic root-stem structure of languages like those of the Algonquian group. As I will show, cherry-picking words in Indigenous languages to make strained phonetic analogies with purported European sources was discredited by Albert Gallatin’s structural and grammatical approach to the comparative study of Indigenous languages in 1836⁹¹ and was

⁸⁷ Ibid., 18–19.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 20.

⁸⁹ Joannes de Laet, *Johannis de Laet Antwerpiani Notae ad dissertationem Hugonis Grotii De origine gentium Americanarum : et, Observationes aliquot ad meliorem ...* (Amstelodami [Amsterdam], 1643). For an account of the feud between Grotius and de Laet, see Herbert F. Wright, “Origin of American Aborigines: A Famous Controversy,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 3, no. 3 (Oct., 1917): 257–275.

⁹⁰ “De Laet’s contention, therefore, was briefly this: the Scythian race furnished the predominant population of America; the Spaniards went to the Canaries and thence some of their vessels drifted to Brazil; the story of Madoc’s Welshmen is probably true; it is not unlikely that the Polynesians may have floated to the western coast of South America; and minor migrations may have come from other lands.” Wright, “Origins of American Aborigines,” 269.

⁹¹ See Albert Gallatin, “A Synopsis of the Indian Tribes of North America,” in *Archaeologia Americana* vol. 2, 1–421, (Cambridge: Printed for the Society at the University Press, 1836).

condemned by Alexander von Humboldt in Volume 2 of *Cosmos* in 1847,⁹² but it persisted as a pseudohistorical tool into the twentieth century, when it was wielded by Manuel da Silva in the 1960s in support of the Corte-Real provenance for Dighton Rock, as I discuss in Chapter 9.

In 1650, Thomas Thorowgood, an Anglican priest in Norfolk, England, published *Iewes in America, Or Probabilities That the Americans are of that Race*,⁹³ which enjoyed a sequel effort, *Jews in America*,⁹⁴ in 1660. De Costa had already dismissed in 1590 the idea that Native Americans were wandering Jews, but that did not deter Thorowgood.⁹⁵ According to Richard W. Cogley, *Iewes in America* “may have been the first published endorsement of the theory of the lost tribes written in Old or New England. Even if he was not the first English author to embrace the Israelite-origins view in print, he was surely the first to publish a sustained argument for it.”⁹⁶ Thorowgood never visited America, but in forming his ideas he corresponded with theologian Roger Williams, who in 1636 had purchased land for his Rhode Island colony from the Wampanoag leader Massasoit, father of Metacom. Williams supported Thorowgood’s theory that Native Americans were descended from the Ten Lost Tribes, and among those Thorowgood influenced was the missionary to the Indians, John Eliot.⁹⁷

Thorowgood articulated the main points that would frame debate over the origins of Native Americans, and showed how energetic and varied that debate already was. He noted how Grotius

⁹² Humboldt in vol. 2 of *Cosmos* (published originally in German, as *Kosmos*, in 1847) observed how arguments in support of a “race of Celto-Americans” had “disappeared since the establishment of an earnest and scientific ethnology, based not on accidental similarities of sounds, but on grammatical forms and organic structures.” Alexander von Humboldt, *Cosmos: A Sketch of a Physical Description of the Universe*, translated by E.C. Otté (London: George Bell and Sons, 1900), 2: 609.

⁹³ Thomas Thorowgood, *Iewes in America, Or Probabilities That the Americans are of that Race* (London: Printed by W.H. for T. Slater, 1650).

⁹⁴ Thomas Thorowgood, *Jews in America, or, Probabilities, that those Indians are Judaical, made more probable by some additional to the former conjectures* (London: Printed for Henry Brome, 1660).

⁹⁵ Acosta, *The naturall and morall historie*, 74–77.

⁹⁶ Richard, W. Cogley, “The Ancestry of the American Indians: Thomas Thorowgood's *Iewes in America* (1650) and *Jews in America* (1660),” *English Literary Renaissance* 35, no. 2 (March 2005): 306.

⁹⁷ Cogley, “Ancestry,” 306–07.

“conceiveth these Americans to have come out of Europe” working their way westward across the landfalls of the North Atlantic, while others thought they were probably Tartars who had come from Asia; still others proposed they were Carthaginians, or Jews, or from Plato’s Atlantis.⁹⁸ Thorowgood cited Brerewood on the Tartar theory and the proximity of Asia to America. While many (if not most) theorists would continue to hold that Native Americans were Tartars from Asia, Thorowgood preferred that the ten lost tribes reached the Americas by the same route, without an intermediary step of becoming Tartars. He believed that like the Jews the Indians were “a very sinful people” and “grand offenders” who had abandoned their beliefs and were also “transcendent sufferers,” most egregiously under Spanish conquest and the oppression of the Church of Rome.⁹⁹ It was the God-given destiny of Native Americans to be conquered and saved by Christianity, as their own traditions allegedly foretold, which he attributed to Pietro Martire D’Anghiera: “And the Americans have a tradition among themselves, that white and bearded Nations shall subdue their Countries, abolish all their rites and ceremonies, and introduce a new religion.”¹⁰⁰ Thorowgood however racialized a tradition specific to Hispaniola that originated with an Anchorite friar, Ramón Pané (or Pane), who had visited Hispaniola with Columbus in 1494: neither Pané’s account, nor Martire’s version of it, said the conquerors would be “white and bearded.”¹⁰¹ There

⁹⁸ Thorowgood, *Jewes in America*, 2–3, 24.

⁹⁹ Thorowgood, *Jewes in America*, 26–27.

¹⁰⁰ Thorowgood, *Jewes in America*, 26.

¹⁰¹ In Book IX of his first *Decade* (1516), Martire related a story arising from Columbus’s arrival at (and brutal occupation of) Hispaniola. Two caciques through fasting had foretold that “within a few years a race of men wearing clothes would land in the island and would overthrow their religious rites and ceremonies, massacre their children, and make them slaves. This prophecy had been taken by the younger generation to apply to the cannibals; and thus whenever it became known that the cannibals had landed anywhere, the people took flight without even attempting any resistance. But when the Spaniards landed, the islanders then referred the prophecy to them, as being the people whose coming was announced.” Pietro Martire D’Anghiera, *De Orbe Novo*, 1:176. Martire was repeating more or less what an Anchorite friar, Ramón Pané, who had visited Hispaniola with Columbus in 1494, had set down in a *relación*. Pané reported that a fasting cacique had consulted the supreme being of the Arawaks, Yocahu, who “announced to the cacique that those who succeeded to his power would enjoy it only a short time because there would come to his country a people wearing clothes who would conquer and kill the Indians.” The Arawaks initially thought that this prophecy referred to their Carib enemies, but later, “reflecting that cannibals only robbed and then went away, they decided he must have meant some other people. That is why they now believe that the idol prophesied the coming of the Admiral [Columbus] and the people who came with him.” See “The relación of Fray

was also a millennial streak to Thorowgood's reasoning as he observed that the return of the lost tribes to Israel would trigger the end times. Bringing Christianity to Native Americans would achieve this reunification symbolically and cause the return of the Messiah.¹⁰²

Coincidentally and independently, Menasseh ben Israel of Amsterdam's Jewish community devised his own Lost Tribes theory for the peopling of the Americas, as set forth in *The Hope of Israel*, first published in 1650, which was most concerned with convincing Cromwell to permit Jews to return to England.¹⁰³ Menasseh differed from Thorowgood in that he thought Native Americans were not the Lost Tribes, but rather Tartars. He believed some of the Lost Tribes had reached the Americas and continued to exhibit their Judaic culture, some of which had been adopted by neighbouring, Tartar-derived Indians. Menasseh according to Cogley unearthed accounts by Europeans who claimed to have encountered "white and bearded men in the New World," and other stories of "travelers who had found ruins of ancient buildings resembling synagogues..."¹⁰⁴ Menasseh was particularly taken by Antonio de Montezinos, who arrived in Amsterdam in 1644 from New Spain and told Menasseh and other Jewish leaders that he had encountered in the Andes "a group of Israelites who recited the Shema ["Hear, O

Ramón Pane" at <http://faculty.smu.edu/bakewell/BAKEWELL/texts/panerelacion.html> (accessed June 10, 2014). I also discuss Pané's account in *The Race to the New World*, 142.

¹⁰² See Chapter 7, *Jewes in America*, for Thorowgood's contention that "The Jewes before the end of the world shall be converted, and that "These Indians have not yet heard of Christ." (20). Note that the Jesuit Acosta had rejected the Lost Tribes explanation for Native American origins in 1590, at a time that according to Ronald Sanders apocalyptic fervor gripped some Christians in the New World. These included a Dominican friar, Francisco de la Cruz, who had "declared himself the Messiah of New World Christianity which had to fight a war to the death against the Indians in order to bring on the final redemption, because they were the Lost Tribes of Israel." He was burned at the stake by the Inquisition in 1578. Ronald Sanders, *Lost Tribes and Promised Lands: The Origins of American Racism* (1978; repr. New York: Harper Perennial, 1992), 188.

¹⁰³ Cogley, "Ancestry," 316. See also, Ronald Sanders, *Lost Tribes and Promised Lands: The Origins of American Racism*. (1978; repr. New York: Harper Perennial, 1992), 363–372, for a discussion of Menasseh ben Israel's writings. See also Cecil Roth and A. K. Offenber, "Manasseh (Menasseh) ben Israel," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, eds., vol. 13, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007): 454-455.

¹⁰⁴ Cogley, "Ancestry," 327.

Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD,” Deut. 6:4 A.V.], practiced various Mosaic rites, and claimed to belong to the lost tribe of Reuben.”¹⁰⁵

White Tribism

Menasseh’s ben Israel’s evidence foreshadowed a longer (and ongoing) tradition of strangers in a strange land that I call *White Tribism*. Thorowgood’s hypothesis considered Native Americans *en masse* to be the Lost Tribes, while Menasseh believed members of the Lost Tribes endured in pockets of New World populations, observing Judaic law and living apart from Tartar-derived Native Americans. Turning racial (and largely northern European Protestant) in character in the nineteenth century, White Tribism would feature cryptic evidence, including relics—Dighton Rock among them—that purportedly revealed travelers and adventurers moving in the shadows of the unrecorded past. White Tribism for the most part would be uninterested in missing Israelites, instead contending small groups of visitors (chiefly Nordic, Celtic or Aryan, but also Portuguese in the case of Dighton Rock) endured in the bloodlines of certain Native American groups through interbreeding. Evidence persisted in physical features such as blond hair and blue eyes, but also cultural traits—chiefly Indigenous vocabulary and place names, in the manner of Grotius’s analysis—that could only have arisen through contact with a superior outside culture.

White Tribism reflects in part the gendered narrative of the conquest of Native Americans, as Philip J. Deloria has described in *Indians in Unexpected Places*:

In one set of narratives, Indian women, linked to the land itself, gave themselves metaphorically to colonizing white men, engendering a peaceful narrative of cross-cultural harmony in which whites became Indigenous owners of the continent through sexualized love and marriage stories such as that of Pocahontas. Another set of

¹⁰⁵ Cogley, “Ancestry,” 309.

narratives—and sometimes the two could be woven together—relied on the masculinist imagery of violent conflict.¹⁰⁶

In brief, the newcomers bred with the women and fought with the men; the men were defeated, and the women gave themselves, and metaphorically their lands, over to the conquerors. In White Tribism, the gendered encounter narrative exhibits an explicitly racial (and racist) agenda. It constructs a lost encounter, one previous to the standard colonizing history that concerns Deloria, and is determined to show that any supposed advancement in Native Americans beyond heathen savagery detected by European newcomers in recorded history—including physical beauty, the alleged result of improvement through interbreeding—was due to some past interaction with more civilized adventurers.

Cotton Mather's Broadside and Letters to the Royal Society

Cotton Mather maintained an unresolved fascination with Dighton Rock. In November 1712 he wrote thirteen letters on a variety of subjects pertaining to the natural history of New England, seven to John Woodward, professor of physics at Gresham College, and six to Richard Waller, secretary of the Royal Society of London. Waller was sufficiently impressed to propose Mather as a candidate for membership in the society, and wrote him in December 1713 to notify him he had been admitted.¹⁰⁷ The letters were immediately summarized in the January 1, 1714 edition of *Philosophical Transactions*, the society's unofficial house organ.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 20.

¹⁰⁷ George Lyman Kittredge, "Cotton Mather's Election into the Royal Society," *The Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, vol. 14 (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1912), 85–87.

¹⁰⁸ Cotton Mather, "An Extract of Several Letters from Cotton Mather, D.D. to John Woodward, M.D. and Richard Waller, Esq.," *Philosophical Transactions* 29 (1714–1716), 62–71.

Amid Mather's observations on plants, lightning, thunder, earthquakes, birds, the bones of antediluvian giants near Albany, "Antipathies, and the Force of the Imagination," and "*monstrous Births*," he made occasional mention of Native Americans.¹⁰⁹ Mather also alerted the society to:

some very ancient Remains, at a Place call'd Ammuskeag [Amoskeag], a little above the hideous Falls of *Merimack* River. There is a huge Rock in the midst of the Stream, on the Top of which are a great number of Pits, made exactly round, like Barrels or Hogsheads of different Capacities, some so large as to hold several Tuns; the Natives know nothing of the Time they were made; but the Neighbouring *Indians* have been wont to hide their Provisions in them, in their Wars with the Maqua's [Mohawk]; affirming, God had cut them out for that use for them. They seem plainly to be artificial.¹¹⁰

Noteworthy here is Mather's assertion of Indian ignorance, which would become a constant refrain in assessments of enigmatic antiquities. If Native Americans could not provide a satisfactory explanation of a relic, then they did not belong with it in a past in which antiquarians preferred to find remnants of ancient civilizations. J.W. Meader, in *The Merrimack River* (1869), took stock of Mather's "curious communication" on what he called "some of the natural curiosities still to be seen at the Falls," and concluded: "This is an illustration of the explosion of mere theories, showing that the belief of saint and sinner alike, unsustained by evidence, will certainly dissolve before the bright rays of the sun of knowledge and of truth."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Among them: "that the Indians often perform very great Cures with their Plants," and "That the Indians have no Division of Time, except by Sleeps, Moons and Winters. Altho' the Indians have not divided or distinguished the Stars into Constellations, yet it is observable that they call the Stars of Ursa Major, Paukunawaw, that is, the Bear; and this long before they had any Communication with Europeans." There was also rattlesnake lore that Mather assured was "constantly affirmed by the Indians."

¹¹⁰ Cotton Mather, "An Extract of Several Letters from Cotton Mather," 70.

¹¹¹ J.W. Meader, *The Merrimack River; Its Source and Its Tributaries* (Boston: B.B. Russell, 1869), 191–92.

Mather followed his description of the rock cavities at Amoskeag Falls with one of Dighton Rock. As he described in his original letter:

At o^r *Taunton* by the side of a Tiding River, part in, part out, of the River, there stands a large Rock; on the perpendicular side of which Rock next to the River, there are seven or eight Lines, seven or eight foot long, and about a foot wide, each of them in unaccountable characters. It is generally taken for granted that they are Artificial; and there they stand *Graven in the Rock forever*; but no man as yett has been a Zaphnath Poaneah enough to know any more what to make of them, than *who* it was that *graved* them. I have not yett been able to gett all y^e Lines; which, I hope, ere long I shall, when they will be at your Service. But will here give you two of them.¹¹²

The woodcut of the two lines was printed in *Philosophical Transactions*, along with an abridged version of the letter. [Figs. 1, 4] The top part of the illustration was much the same as the one Mather had printed in 1690. It is unclear where Mather got his information for the lower part. Delabarre did not believe Mather ever saw the rock, and suspected it was “the work of some extraordinarily poor draughtsmen,” perhaps “some unskilled farmer of the neighborhood.”¹¹³ Delabarre would later determine that this appended area had been printed upside-down, in both *Philosophical Transactions* and a broadside Mather printed around this time. If Mather never saw the rock himself, it is easy to understand how he made such a major error in reproduction. As his 1712 letter indicated, he was persuaded the petroglyph was organized into lines of script, and his broadside presented the drawings (as the label read) as “TWO Lines of Un-accountable Characters.” [Fig. 4]

¹¹² Transcribed by Delabarre in “Early Interest,” 261.

¹¹³ Delabarre, “Early Interest,” 262.

Mather's letter and broadside created an air of mystery as to the makers of the "script"; he neither raised nor dismissed the possibility that it was Indigenous in origin. The fact that he could not assert Native American ignorance of it (as he did with the rock at Amoskeag Falls) reinforces the impression that no one had asked a member of the southern New England peoples for their opinion. Mather had illustrated and discussed an inscription he had never seen that was made by a people he had never consulted. His mention of "Zaphnath Poaneah," which did not survive the abstraction process for *Philosophical Transactions*, was a Biblical reference: "And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah." (Gen. 41:45 [AV]). The name (which the Old Testament did not explain) is considered alternately to mean "the man to whom mysteries are revealed," "one who reveals mysteries," and "a finder of mysteries."¹¹⁴ This preacher's literary allusion may only have been appropriate to what was thought to be an undeciphered alphabetic or hieroglyphic script, but it also placed the puzzle of Dighton Rock's meaning within the context of ancient Israel, and Mather was familiar with Thorowgood's ideas about Native Americans representing the Lost Tribes. Already Mather's description of the rock at Amoskeag Falls suggested God had created the indentations for the benefit of local Indians, to protect them from their enemies.

Conclusion

When Cotton Mather first described Dighton Rock in 1690, the issues of belonging, possession and dispossession were in abundant evidence, both for the provenance of the rock and for Native Americans. The process of erasing Native Americans from the landscape of southern New England was already underway. Devastated by epidemics earlier in the century, Indigenous communities in southern New England were crushed and scattered by King Philip's War, which made the rock a possession of colonists as Wampanoag land at Assonet Neck was seized and redistributed. The idea that America belonged

¹¹⁴ *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1906), s.v. "Zaphnath-Panneah." Online transcription at JewishEncyclopedia.com <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/15167-zaphnath-paaneah> (accessed June 25, 2014).

providentially to colonists, and without a place for irredeemable savages, was hardening. The process of “firsting and lasting,” as described by Jean O’Brien, began writing Native Americans out of existence in the unfolding colonial narrative. Interpretations of Dighton Rock would rapidly move in the direction of denying its Indigenous provenance. Even as Native Americans began to be written out of existence in southern New England, conflicts with Indigenous peoples on the frontiers of colonial settlement were ample reminders that the Indian had far from disappeared from the larger geopolitical picture. The atrocities of those conflicts would only have reinforced the impression of Native Americans as savages, and as violence persisted into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on the ever-moving frontier of colonization, it would become easier to pronounce them incapable of having produced markings that theorists were determined to treat as an alphabetical or hieroglyphic inscription.

Dighton Rock was being conscripted into answering the main questions of human arrival in the Americas, which hinged not only on an emergent European understanding of global geography but also on determining to which Old World source population Native Americans belonged. The essential Bering Strait/Beringia theory for humanity’s arrival in the Americas was established by the early seventeenth century while allowing for possible additional transatlantic visits by Mediterranean peoples of classical antiquity, a combination that proved durable. Hugo Grotius in 1642 employed a fundamental template for comparative inquiry, encouraging theorists to seek Old World precedents in Indigenous languages, place names and cultural practices that demonstrated where Native Americans originated. Cotton Mather’s allusions to the Lost Tribes of Israel arose from that longstanding origins debate, and cross-cultural comparisons tended to override autonomous Indigenous identity and made Native Americans inferior or degraded versions of Old World peoples. English colonial proselytizers like John Eliot and Cotton Mather, who suspected Native Americans were descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes in accordance with John Thorowgood’s 1650 proposition, had hoped to convert them to Christianity, to transform in spiritual belief what already existed in body and soul. King Philip’s War, and the ongoing frontier violence, had turned many colonists against the proselytizing endeavour. Theorists considering the provenance of Dighton Rock would wonder who else other than Native Americans already had visited the New World,

perhaps even changing them for the better. The ensuing theories that I call White Tribism were a form of possession that would seek retroactively to turn the conquered into the conquerors from within, to prove that long before English colonists arrived in the New World, Europeans had established an occupational beachhead within Native American societies that was cultural as well as biological.

(2)

**“Altogether Ignorant”: Denying an Indigenous Provenance
and Constructing Gothicism, 1730–1770**

Introduction

I begin this chapter with Isaac Greenwood’s estimation of Dighton Rock in 1730, which set an intellectual tone for theorists on its markings into the twentieth century. The Harvard professor and Cotton Mather protégé denied a Native American provenance on the basis of what I call the “too stupid and lazy” theory, and legitimized the idea of an Old World provenance, which in the eighteenth century favoured the Phoenicians. Greenwood’s voice was one of many being voiced on the nature as well as the origins of Native Americans on both sides of the Atlantic realm during the eighteenth-century intellectual revolution known as the Enlightenment. Not all of the discourse was necessarily rational, and in this chapter I address several key concepts that emerged from those debates: migrationism, diffusionism, hyperdiffusionism and Gothicism. I show the importance of Jean-François Lafitau, foremost known for a prototypic ethnology that has been dismissed as anti-rationalist, in articulating a multiple-migration scenario across the Bering Strait in which the most advanced people crossed first. While many intellectuals (foremost Paul-Henri Mallet and the baron de Montesquieu) continued to be of the armchair variety, published works by travellers, among them Pehr Kalm in North America and Philipp-Johann von Strahlenberg in Siberia, aided in crafting and disseminating two crucial concepts of Native Americans: one was of their racial and cultural degeneration, the other of their arrival in the Americas across the Bering Strait in multiple migrations from Asia, a probability reinforced by the discoveries of the Bering expedition of the 1740s. I show that where the colonizing project was concerned, theorists were assembling an arsenal of evidence in which ostensibly scientific observation was intermingled with apocryphal Biblical literalism and mytho-poetic assertions of White supremacy and destiny.

Isaac Greenwood Rejects a Native American Provenance

After Cotton Mather's Royal Society communication and broadside around 1714, the next significant episode in Dighton Rock's history came in December 1730, when twenty-eight year-old Isaac Greenwood, Harvard's first Hollisian professor of mathematics and natural philosophy, wrote to John Eames, a fellow of the Royal Society.¹ Greenwood was a protégé of Mather, who in a diary entry in July 1724 resolved to treat Greenwood as a son.² David C. Leonard has called Greenwood an important transitional figure between the puritanism of Mather and "the heterodox deism of [Benjamin] Franklin, [Thomas] Jefferson, and [Thomas] Paine at the end of the century." Greenwood was "the first professor of science at America's foremost educational institution. He gave the first series of public lectures in colonial America. His mathematics text was the first written in English by a native-born American. He was also the first mathematics professor to teach calculus in the colonies."³ The London merchant and Harvard benefactor, Thomas Hollis, endowed the chair to which Greenwood was elected as its first holder in May 1727, and Greenwood's historic mathematics text, *Arithmetick Vulgar and Decimal*, was published in 1729.⁴ Greenwood became intrigued by Dighton Rock the following year, and unlike his

¹ Greenwood and Eames probably were known to each other through John Robie, who was Greenwood's tutor at Harvard. Robie compiled annual almanacs that popularized discussions of Newtonian physics by Royal Society members with whom he corresponded. Eames would be remembered as "a very useful member of the Royal Society, besides a general and profound scholar, being deeply skilled in all branches of learning," who had been introduced to the Royal Society by his friend, Sir Isaac Newton. Charles Hutton, George Shaw, and Richard Pearson, *The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, vol. 7 (London: C. and R. Baldwin, 1809), 176. And so it seems possible Eames was one of Robie's correspondents.

² David C. Leonard, "Harvard's First Science Professor: A Sketch of Isaac Greenwood's Life and Work," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 29, no. 2 (April 1981), 143; "Resolving to treat *Isaac Greenwood*, as a sort of a Son, I am writing such things unto him, as may be of the last Importance for him." July 15, 1724, in Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather 1709–1724*, Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, 7th ser., vol. 8 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1912), 741.

³ Leonard, "Harvard's First Science Professor," 135.

⁴ For the endowment of the Hollisian chair in mathematics and natural history and the election of Greenwood, see Josiah Quincy, *The History of Harvard University*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: John Owen, 1840), 14–19. See also Leonard, "Harvard's First Science Professor," 147. Isaac Greenwood, *Arithmetick vulgar and decimal: with the*

mentor Mather, Greenwood visited and sketched it himself, in September 1730. He had made previous contributions to *Philosophical Transactions*, and when he wrote Eames that December he referenced the earlier Mather letter and illustration published in *Philosophical Transactions* in 1714. Greenwood's letter to Eames was the first detailed discussion of the rock's provenance.⁵ He included a drawing that depicted it partly submerged, with the markings more finely delineated than Danforth or Mather had managed, albeit with the lower part of the inscribed surface hidden under water. [Fig. 5] Where Mather's noncommittal opinion had opened the possibility that the inscription was not by Native Americans and made allusions to a Hebraic origin, Greenwood in 1730 was the first of many learned men who would firmly assert that it was not the handiwork of Indians on the basis of purported deficiencies in their character and nature.

Greenwood's main objective I believe was not to solve the riddle of an inscription but to defend his mentor's reputation in countering William Douglass, a Boston physician from Edinburgh, who did not think the rock's markings were made by any human hand—or at least was prepared to say so to humiliate Mather. Douglass's interest in the rock appeared due the fact he had made a lifelong enemy of Mather (and most likely Greenwood) nine years earlier over Mather's initiative to introduce inoculation against smallpox in Boston when an outbreak panicked the city in 1721. Among more than 100 Bostonians to be inoculated by Dr. Zabdiel Boylston in November 1721 was Isaac Greenwood, who had graduated from Harvard the previous spring.⁶ Greenwood injected himself into the resulting pamphlet war in February

application thereof to a variety of cases in trade and commerce (Boston: Printed by S. Kneeland and T. Green for T. Hancock, 1729).

⁵ Isaac Greenwood to John Eames, Dec. 8, 1730. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁶ Inoculation had been known in parts of Asia and Africa for several centuries, but only reached Europe in the early eighteenth century. The practice in Constantinople (Istanbul) was described in *Philosophical Transactions* in 1714 (Emanuel Timonius and John Woodward, "An Account, or History, of the Procuring the SMALL POX by Incision, or Inoculation; as it has for some time been practiced at Constantinople," *Philosophical Transactions* 29 (1714–1716): 72–82). In 1716 Mather wrote the Royal Society recounting how his "Coromantee" slave, Onesimus, had told him of having been inoculated against the deadly disease. See Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 32. When smallpox reached Boston via a slave ship in April 1721, Mather circulated among Boston's physicians a letter (which he shared with the Royal Society) recommending they consider inoculation, and included an abstract of two letters of endorsement by English physicians. Leonard ("Harvard's First

1722 with his first publication, *A Friendly Debate*, which defended Mather and Boylston and savaged their opponents in a work of thinly veiled pseudonyms. “Greenwood’s little tract was not even-handed or subtle,” according to Leonard: “He characterized Douglass as a semi-literate Scotchman.”⁷ Greenwood had made himself a powerful friend and mentor in Mather, under whom he began studying theology in the fall of 1722, but he was now also joined to him as an enemy of Douglass.⁸ Thus Greenwood’s letter to Eames and the Royal Society regarding Dighton Rock in 1730 ought to be considered a continuation of the vicious and enduring enmity between Mather and Douglass born of the inoculation controversy. Douglass would publish in 1747 an attack on Mather’s interpretation of Dighton Rock that had appeared in *Philosophical Transactions* in 1714, but I do not believe Douglass’s opinions were so belatedly formed.⁹ Greenwood’s 1730 letter is structured like a response to the future Douglass diatribe, and so it is seems likely Greenwood was defending Mather from criticisms already being circulated by Douglass that would only take on a published form seventeen years later.

In his opinion printed in 1747, Douglass maintained the inscriptions in Dighton Rock were an entirely natural phenomenon. The Indians, he argued,

Science Professor,” 137–38) states these letters of endorsement appeared in *Philosophical Transactions*, but I can find no such endorsements, other than the December 1713 account of inoculation in Constantinople written by Emanuel Timonius and conveyed to the Royal Society by John Woodward, published in 1714. Mather was able to persuade Dr. Zabdiel Boylston to begin inoculating Bostonians, against the orders of the city’s selectmen, but the initiative was strongly opposed by a faction of physicians led by Douglass. Supported by Boston’s spiritual leaders, including Mather, Bolyston began inoculating Bostonians. See Kittredge, “Cotton Mather’s Election,” 103. Douglass had attacked Mather in a letter to Dr. Alexander Stuart, a member of the Royal Society in London, on September 21, 1721, questioning what English physicians thought of the “rash practice” of inoculation, which was read before the society on November 16. An additional letter to Stuart, dated December 20, 1721, was issued as a pamphlet by Douglass in early 1722; he called Mather “a Man of *Whim* and *Credulity*” who had seen the smallpox outbreak “a fit Opportunity to make Experiments on his Neighbours, (which in his Vanity he might judge acceptable to the Royal Society).” See Kittredge, “Cotton Mather’s Election,” 103.

⁷ Leonard, “Harvard’s First Science Professor,” 139–40.

⁸ Leonard, “Harvard’s First Science Professor,” 139–40. Douglass went so far as to question Mather’s right to call himself a fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) and it is certainly curious that despite having been informed by Waller in December 1713 that he had been elected by the Council as well as the Body of Fellows, Mather was not actually formally elected until April 11, 1723. Kittredge, “Cotton Mather’s Election,” 111.

⁹ Delabarre assumed that Greenwood was “induced” by Eames to make a fresh investigation of Dighton Rock, but it is not clear how Delabarre came to this conclusion. See Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 58.

had no Characters, that is, *Hieroglyphics*, or letters; they had a few Symbols or Signatures, as if in a *Heraldry* way to distinguish Tribes, the principal were the *Tortoise*, the *Bear*, the *Wolf*.¹⁰ There was not the least Vestige of Letters in *America*; some Years since a certain credulous Person, and voluminous Author, imposed upon himself and others; he observed in a tiding River, a Rock, which, as it was not of an uniform Substance, the ebbing and flowing of the Tide made a Sort of *vermoulure*, Honey-combing or etching on its face; here he imagined, that he had discovered the *American Indian* Characters, and overjoy'd, remits some Lines of his imaginary Characters to the Royal Society in *London: See Philosophical Transactions, No. 339*. [Douglass quoted here from Mather's contribution to the 1714 *Philosophical Transactions*]. This may be supposed wrote *Anno 1714*: At present *Anno 1747* by the continued ebbing and flowing the Honey-combing is so altered as not in the least to resemble his Draught of the Characters.¹¹

Douglass may have misstated Mather's position, as Mather did not credit the Indians with the inscription. Mather expected someone familiar with "Oriental characters" to have made the markings, although if Mather suspected the Indians were descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel, such characters

¹⁰ The bear, wolf, and tortoise were the three clans of the Mohawk and Oneida, and every Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) confederacy village had segments of at least one of these clans. Daniel Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1992), 21, 45. Olive Patricia Dickason notes that where the Mohawk and Oneida had three clans, the Seneca, Cayuga and Onondaga had at least eight. See *The Myth of the Savage*, 120. Douglass evidently gleaned his "heraldry" insight from the account of the death of the Jesuit missionary Isaac Jogues in 1646 at the hands of the Mohawk, as described by Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix in Vol. 1 of *Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France*: "La lettre au Sieur Bourdon ajoutait que cette perfidie étoit l'oufrage de la seule Tribu de l'Ours; que celles du Loup & de la Tortuë avoient fait tout leur possible pour sauver la vie aux deux François..." (italics original, 428). *Histoire* was published in 1744, three years before Douglass wrote his letter, and was a popular source for eighteenth-century writers on Native Americans. While Douglass's allusion to Charlevoix places the composition of his printed attack on Mather after 1744, I nevertheless believe it likely Douglass was circulating his essential case against Mather at the time of the Greenwood letter in 1730.

¹¹ Delabarre, "Middle Period," 48.

would have been expected. Yet a Douglass attack—unpublished at that point—must have been Greenwood’s motivation for visiting the rock himself (which neither Mather nor, I believe, Douglass ever did), making a fresh and detailed drawing, and rallying to Mather’s cause through what had become a favorite medium for both sides: letters to prominent members of the Royal Society of London. The American colonies would not have a comparable fellowship until Benjamin Franklin established the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia in 1743, possibly at the instigation of his friend, the Quaker botanist John Bartram.¹²

Greenwood began his letter to Eames by rejecting the idea the marks were entirely natural, a contention Douglass would publish in 1747.¹³ Some people “look upon it as the work of Nature,” Greenwood explained, but they “are little acquainted with her Operations and have made but a cursory Observation hereof.” Surely that was payback for Douglass’s unkind characterizations of Mather. Two popular opinions remained, according to Greenwood. The first was that the markings were “the undersigning and artless Impressions of some of the Nations, out of meer [sic] curiosity or for some particular Uses.” The second was they were “a Memorial in proper Sculpture of some remarkable Transactions or accident.” Greenwood doubted the Indians (“Nations”) would have created the inscription out of “mere Curiosity,” as they were “altogether ignorant of Sculpture & the use of Iron. And tho’ they had some Stone Instruments none that ever I have seen are capable (in much better hands than theirs) of forming so accurate an Inscription.” Even if they were capable of such work, Greenwood expected there would be “other Sketches of the same or a like Nature” in New England, which he assured Eames was not the case. As Greenwood elaborated later in the letter, in dismissing the possibility that the marks were the result of Indians sharpening their arrows or axes: “If this were their usual Custom, we should find these Traces & Indentions very probably on many Rocks of the same Nature as this; and if it was political (a

¹² Francis D. West, “John Bartram and the American Philosophical Society,” *Pennsylvania History* 23, no. 4 (Oct. 1956): 465-466.

¹³ Isaac Greenwood to John Eames, December 8, 1730. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

customary preparation to confirm & encourage one another in their Intention or prosecution of War) no doubt but kindred & confederate Tribes would have had their respective Standards.” Further, if Indians were to make any markings or drawings, “One would think their Curiosity would have lead them to the Representation of Birds, Bears, Fishes, Trees &c which we have since found to be their prevailing Genius, & not to figures quite different from the Objects of their Senses.”

Greenwood’s trump argument against an Indigenous provenance was that Indians “were a Nation too idle and irresolute for a work of so much Industry and appeared Design.” In addition to Indians lacking the necessary characteristics of civilized people, he as much as said that they lacked the mental capacity to conceive of the inscription. Greenwood was the first to table the “too lazy and stupid” argument against the idea that Indigenous people inscribed Dighton Rock, but he would not be the last, and as I will explore further, the idea that Native Americans were an inferior race was hardly unique to Greenwood. In the place of Indians as the rock’s authors, Greenwood had no particular suggestion, but he did echo Mather in noting the inscription’s “Oriental Characters.” Greenwood and Mather made their “Oriental” suggestions at a formative period of Western interest in what Edward Said has called the academic discipline of Orientalism. “By and large, until the mid-eighteenth century,” Said has written, “Orientalists were Biblical scholars, students of Semitic languages, Islamic specialists, or, because the Jesuits had opened up the new study of China, Sinologists. The whole middle expanse of Asia was not academically conquered for Orientalism until, during the later eighteenth century, Anquetil-Duperron and Sir William Jones were able intelligently to reveal the extraordinary riches of Avestan and Sanskrit. By the middle of the nineteenth century Orientalism was as vast a treasure-house of learning as one could imagine.”¹⁴ Greenwood’s Orientalism was rooted in the tradition of Biblical studies. Where Mather had suggested someone with the capacity of the Old Testament’s Joseph to reveal mysteries was required to understand the inscription, Greenwood advised a resolution to the puzzle would require “the extraordinary Skill and Ingenuity of Mr. La Croze in the alphabet both ancient & modern of the Oriental Tongues.”

¹⁴ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 51.

Mathurin Veyssière de La Croze, whose *Histoire du christianisme des Indes* was published in 1724,¹⁵ was a former Benedictine monk who converted to Calvinism after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; most of his volume was a polemical attack on the Jesuits' treatment of the Nestorian Christian communities of southern India.¹⁶ His comparison of "superstitions" of Indians and Egyptians insinuated that Roman Catholicism drew superstitions from the same pre-Christian source.¹⁷

Greenwood was partial to what he said was the second popular opinion on Dighton Rock's inscription: it was "a Memorial in proper Sculpture of some remarkable Transactions or accident." Greenwood suspected that whoever made it was at the heart of a "tradition" held by Indian elders related by the Reverend Danforth in 1680; the Danforth drawing and description likely were passed to Greenwood by his mentor, Mather. Greenwood quoted from the first part of the Danforth description: "That there came a wooden house (and men of another Country in it) swimming up the River of assoonet (as this was then called) who fought the Indians with mighty success etc." Danforth had gathered this tradition from an unknown source, but as noted in Chapter 1 I suspect it came from colonists rather than the Wampanoag. As ethnography, the ship anecdote, even as related by Danforth, scarcely qualifies as second-hand, but this tradition of a "wooden house (and men of another Country in it)" coming up the Taunton River to battle the Indians led Greenwood to spin a novel interpretation: "This I think evidently shews that this Monument was esteemed by the oldest Indians not only very antique, but a work of a different Nature from any of theirs."¹⁸ Greenwood had intimated the inscription actually was made by the invaders in some distant age.

¹⁵ Mathurin Veyssière de La Croze, *Histoire du christianisme des Indes* (La Haye: Vaillant et N. Provost, 1724).

¹⁶ Sylvia Murr, "Indianisme et militantisme protestant: Veyssière de la Croze et son *Histoire du christianisme des Indes*," *Dix-Huitième Siècle* 18 (1986), 304–306.

¹⁷ Murr, "Indianisme et militantisme protestant," 309.

¹⁸ Isaac Greenwood to John Eames, Dec. 8, 1730. Dighton Rock collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

As little as Greenwood knew about Native Americans, especially about the cultures that preceded the devastations of the seventeenth century, by his forthright analysis he deemed it to be enough. The rock's inscription was not an enigma that spurred him to advance his knowledge of the people who were the most obvious candidates for its creation, as by his own admission the area around Dighton Rock "was one of the most considerable Seats of Indians in this part of the World, and River remarkable for all sorts of Fowl & Fish."¹⁹ Greenwood's analysis affirmed that an Indigenous provenance had to be discounted before some other candidate for the inscription's creation was advanced, and Greenwood did so by declaring Native Americans incapable of its authorship. Their tools, their minds, and their characters were not up to the task.

Greenwood offered to make a more detailed study of Dighton Rock if Eames thought it worthwhile, but nothing came of his initiative. The first letter of 1730 went awry, and a replacement copy in 1732 did not lead to anything appearing in *Philosophical Transactions*.²⁰ Greenwood's investigation of Dighton Rock having been abandoned, his analysis and drawing were forgotten for some fifty years, until made public by Michael Lort (along with the Danforth materials) in *Archaeologia* in 1787.²¹ Greenwood's career was soon placed in jeopardy by his drinking: he was censured by the Harvard Corporation in 1737 and removed from his chair in 1738, replaced by his best student, John Winthrop.²² After attempting to establish a private academy with the assistance of Benjamin Franklin, his downward spiral ended with a chaplaincy in the Royal Navy; discharged from service in Charleston, South Carolina in May 1744, he drank himself to death five months later.²³

¹⁹ Greenwood to John Eames, Dec. 8, 1730.

²⁰ See Delabarre's discussion of the Danforth materials and Greenwood's letters in "Early Interest," 275–296.

²¹ Lort, "Account of an antient Inscription in North America."

²² Leonard, "Harvard's First Science Professor," 159. Quincy, *The History of Harvard University*, vol. 2, 11–13.

²³ Leonard, "Harvard's First Science Professor," 162.

An attribution of Dighton Rock to Native Americans would have its champions, but once Indigenous people were accepted to be physically, mentally and culturally inferior to Euro-Americans, in accordance with Greenwood's reasoning, other avenues of argument opened to theorists.²⁴ The deemed inferiority of Native Americans could be leveraged by White Tribism: any sign of advanced capability, which would otherwise negate the inferiority argument, could be used as proof that some superior outside civilization had changed them for the better. Greenwood may not have been the first person to question the intelligence of Native Americans, but he earns the distinction of having been the first person to go on record asserting they were incapable of making marks in a boulder.

Migration and Diffusion

At this point in the narrative of Dighton Rock's interpretations, two concepts in observed cultural change emerge: *migration* and *diffusion*. They are critical to understanding the unfolding misinterpretation of the rock as well as the misunderstanding and denigration of Native Americans. Migration and diffusion endure as legitimate concepts for ethnohistorians, linguists and anthropologists. Migrationism uses population movements to explain observed cultural changes at a local level in the archaeological record; diffusionism concerns transferences of traits, particularly language, between cultures. The concepts are not mutually exclusive. For example, diffusion requires some contact between peoples of different cultures, which can be interpreted as evidence of migration; instances of migration can give rise to diffusion of cultural traits among encountered or neighboring populations.

The relative importance of migration and diffusion has been an enduring source of debate and controversy in anthropology. In assessing theories of Iroquoian prehistory, Bruce Trigger in 1970 critiqued the "dendritic, or branching, model of cultural development." In this form of migrationism he saw a model based on inherited traits: cultural attributes were passed down through generations and

²⁴ Robert E. Berkhofer in *The White Man's Indian* notes how White colonists employed "description by deficiency." Colonists stressed "laziness" and set Indians apart from Whites through the contrast of "indolence rather than industry" as they "invented the Indian as a conception." (27–29)

traveled with them geographically. While this migrationist model might be “useful for describing language relationships, or the relationship between biological species, the dendritic model is clearly inadequate in the cultural field because it ignores the important role played by diffusion.” Trigger traced the origin of the dendritic migrationist model where the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) are concerned back to Father Jerome Lalement and the Jesuit *Relation* of 1641. The model “has had a long history in Western thought” and Trigger ventured,

it is no accident that Lalemant and others found it so congenial. It seems to be derived from Biblical sources, especially those sections of Genesis where the nations known to the ancient Hebrews are traced in a genealogical fashion to some extent descendant of Noah or Adam. Each nation is descended from a particular man and nations that are closely related, geographically, culturally or politically, are attributed to founders who are genealogically closely related, while more remote nations are separated by greater genealogical distances. This approach, in turn, seems to be a reflection of the Semitic segmentary kinship system. The influence of these Biblical traditions upon Western thought, even as late as the nineteenth century, should not be under-estimated. They created a strong unconscious bias in favor of the dendritic migratory model of human history.²⁵

As for diffusionism, archaeologist Kenneth L. Feder has noted that the idea of a single culture or civilization serving as the root source of advances in an array of unrelated, far-flung populations (generally called *hyperdiffusionism*) characterized mainstream anthropology and archaeology in Britain in the early twentieth century. Grafton Elliot Smith, the Australian-born professor of anatomy, Egyptologist

²⁵ Trigger, “The Strategy of Iroquoian Prehistory,” 7–8. Trigger discusses diffusionism and migrationism in *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 217–223, but strictly in a late nineteenth and twentieth century context of archaeological theory.

and anthropologist, believed “human beings were, in general, dull, unimaginative, and uninventive,” Feder explains. “From this, Smith deduced that most ancient human groups were, in large measure, culturally static and, if left on their own, would have changed very little through time.” Smith and likeminded diffusionists “maintained there had only been one, or, perhaps, a very few ‘genius’ cultures in antiquity. The cultural precocity of such a group or groups was ascribed by some diffusionists to their superior genetic endowment and by others to their location in a privileged, exceptionally generous natural habit.” For Smith, the single genius culture was ancient Egypt. Smith believed Egypt produced “most, if not all, of the key inventions that made civilized life possible... In the diffusionist view, these cultural inventions spread like ripples on a still pond, emanating from Egypt and moving across the face of the earth.” Smith included Mesoamerican societies among those whose development of complex civilizations was due to contact with Egypt and their adoption of its advanced technology.²⁶

After the Second World War, migrationism *and* diffusionism fell out of favour among anthropologists for explaining local change in prehistoric populations. In their place arose the “in situ” model. As Trigger observed in 1970, “Since 1945 there has been growing disillusionment with migratory explanations of cultural change in different parts of the world and an effort has been made to perceive evidence of continuous cultural development in different regions.” Trigger further noted “a growing number of archaeologists are taking the stand that one should assume continuous local development unless evidence to the contrary can be produced.” This local development, or in-situ, model

²⁶ Kenneth Feder, *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology*, 8th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2014), 246–247. Paul Jordan calls Smith “a sort of [Ignatius] Donnelly without Atlantis, who thought there had indeed been a seminal ancient civilization to which all the rest of the world’s civilizations owed their inspiration: it was Egypt itself, without benefit of any prior example.” Paul Jordan, “Esoteric Egypt,” in *Archaeological Fantasies*, Garrett G. Fagan ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 125. See also Michael J. Blunt, “Smith, Sir Grafton Elliot (1871–1937),” *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/smith-sir-grafton-elliott-8470/text14895> (published in hardcopy 1988, accessed online June 30, 2014). Trigger discusses the hyperdiffusionism of Smith in *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 220–221. See also Henrika Kuklick’s discussion of Smith in the context of “Orthodox diffusionism and its denominations” in *The Savage Within: The Social History of British Anthropology, 1885–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 125–133.

essentially empowered prehistoric populations by assuming they could develop cultural advances on their own. Trigger identified an “anti-migratory bias” in the in-situ model.²⁷

With explanations for America’s antiquity surrounding the Dighton Rock narrative, it is possible to distinguish four broad strains that fall to varying degrees into the migrationist and diffusionist camps. The first strain is a deep-time migrationism based on (or arising from) apocryphal Biblical literalism²⁸, which explains the post-Flood repopulation of the earth according to epic movements of peoples descended from sons of Noah as well as the later wanderings of Lost Tribes of Israel associated with the descendants of Abraham, in a manner consistent with Trigger’s criticism of the dendritic branching model. The Tartarians as a Lost Tribe crossing the Bering Strait to become Native Americans adheres to this migrationist model, as does the less Biblically explicit Tartarians who are *not* a Lost Tribe, and Menasseh ben Israel’s enclaves of practicing Jews in South America, as I discussed in Chapter 1. A second strain is closely related. The same processes of human wandering occur over an extended series of generations and intermediary changes in identities of peoples. The resulting movement of cultural traits from the Old World to the New thus amounts to a hybridized migration-diffusion.

A third strain is a form of migrationism that may also draw on apocryphal Biblical tradition for historic timelines and population movements but is generally transoceanic, mostly (but not exclusively) transatlantic, and places movements in more recent, even recorded history—or at least in history as

²⁷ Trigger, “Strategy,” 27. Prior to the Second World War, migration theory accounted for the appearance of Iroquoian culture in its classic-phase territories of southern Ontario and upstate New York. Archaeologists posited a southeastern origin for Iroquoians, as well as a St. Lawrence lowlands one. Perhaps the leading advocate was Arthur C. Parker, who in 1916 imagined the ancestral Iroquoians taking their leave of the so-called Mississippian culture around the mouth of the Ohio River. See Dean R. Snow, “Migration in Prehistory: The Northern Iroquoian Case” *American Antiquity* 60, no. 1 (January 1995): 61. Not until Snow’s 1995 paper was a migratory explanation reasserted for the appearance of Iroquoian culture in southern Ontario. Snow in “More on Migration in Prehistory: Accommodating New Evidence in the Northern Iroquoian Case,” *American Antiquity* 61:4 (Oct. 1996) would call migration theory a “taboo subject” (792) in his profession.

²⁸ I have used the term “apocryphal Biblical literalism” in this dissertation. Literalism denotes an acceptance of the Bible as an historical record. Where the term “Biblical literalism” falls short is in not recognizing that many aspects of such literal belief are not literally found in the Bible. The Old Testament for example offers little textual support to ideas about the repopulating of the earth after the Flood by Noah’s descendants, and for the associated theories of human racial origins.

written by such classical scholars as Pliny and Diodorus. This strain where Dighton Rock is concerned incorporates a variety of ocean-crossing adventurers, from Phoenicians, Egyptians and Palmyrenes of the Mediterranean world to Celts and Norsemen of Northern Europe. Note that this third strain can be responsible for a bout of diffusionism once these strangers are in the New World, as their cultural traits are introduced to Native Americans. The interpretive phenomenon I have called White Tribism is essentially migrationist, as it imagines a specific people arriving in America and either becoming or intermingling and interbreeding with (and improving) a Native American group.

A fourth strain is hyperdiffusionist and imagines the influence of a root civilization in the manner of Grafton Eliot Smith's Egyptians. While such hyperdiffusionist theories can include some migrationist movements (and may incorporate catastrophism, the idea that a major calamity such as a flood or a vanishing continent forced an ancient people like the residents of Atlantis to seek out a new home), they are most concerned with the global diffusion of an ancient wisdom that, as I will show in Chapter 3, can be esoteric or hermetic in nature, a vestige of a lost Golden Age of humanity before recorded history.

Joseph-François Lafitau, *premier temps*, and Degeneration

In 1724, the French Jesuit Joseph-François Lafitau, who had spent about five years living among the Christian Mohawks at Caughnawaga (Kahnawake) near Montréal, published a landmark work of ethnography and comparative ethnology, *Moeurs des sauvages Américains, comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*.²⁹ Lafitau's work in Anthony Pagden's estimation was an "antirationalist defence of the Christian faith."³⁰ By demonstrating the cultural unity of humanity, Lafitau aimed to prove a higher truth,

²⁹ Joseph-François Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages Américains, comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*, 4 vols. (Paris: Saugrain l'ainé..., Charles-Etienne Hochereau..., 1724). Citations for volume 1 are from the edition digitized by Canadiana.org. The pagination differs from another 1724 edition of volume 1 in the Bibliothèque nationale de France available in digital format through its Gallica website, although the wording is the same.

³⁰ Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the origins of comparative ethnology* (1982; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 208. Trigger similarly casts Lafitau's *Moeurs* as being "in opposition to modernity," in *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 111.

of the existence of the Supreme Being.³¹ According to Lafitau's modern editor and English translator, William Nelson Fenton, to Lafitau, *premiers temps*, or the "First Times," was the great age of antiquity in which humanity shared a belief in one true God, a heritage which underpinned a "uniformity of sentiments of all nations."³² By the time Lafitau's work was published, according to Fenton, European intellectuals had become accustomed to relating ancient and modern paganism. Lafitau's particular cross-cultural comparison was "its most influential formulation for the Eighteenth Century," according to J.B. Bury.³³ His comparative-study approach, explains Fenton,

which sought to discover similarities in customs, practices and usages of diverse peoples who were widely separated by continents and centuries, was neither historical nor evolutionary in the strict sense of these terms, but trans-migrationist or extreme-diffusionist—(The Scyths and the Huron-Iroquois alike took heads and scalps of prisoners, which, in this view, documented the ethnic origin of the Woodland Indians)—and often implied a genetic connection between the practitioners.³⁴

³¹ Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 199. For Pagden's full discussion of Lafitau, see 198–209.

³² William Nelson Fenton, preface to Joseph-François Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians Compared with Customs of Primitive Times*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. William Nelson Fenton (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1974), xlv.

³³ J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 116, cited by Fenton, preface to Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians* 1:xliii.

³⁴ Fenton, preface to Lafitau, *Customs*, 1:xliv–xlv. The Scyths, or Scythians, were first compared to peoples of the Americas in Martire's *De Orbe Novo* in the context of the 1499–1500 voyage of Vicente Yañez Pinzón, one of the three Pinzón brothers who had accompanied Columbus on his 1492–93 voyage. (See Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage*, 33–34.) Pinzón made landfall on a cape in the northeastern corner of Brazil and as Martire related, encountered a wary and hostile people: "The Spaniards describe these people as a vagabond race similar to the Scythians, who had no fixed abode but wandered with their wives and children from one country to another at the harvest seasons." (Martire, *De Orbe Novo*, 1:161.) The Pinzón voyage is summarized in Louis-André Vigneras, *The Discovery of South America and the Andalusian Voyages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press for the Newberry Library, 1976), 69–75.

Lafitau refuted notions that ancient Europeans, Mediterraneans, or any culture that belonged in the Oriental category had anything to do with colonizing the New World, as Native American languages bore no resemblance to virtually any known languages of the Old World: Hebrew, the Oriental languages, Latin and Greek, or any living languages of Europe. Lafitau asserted a few people in Novaya Zemlya in the Russian arctic spoke “la Huronne,” which along with “l’Algonquine” he considered the two mother tongues of Native Americans east of the Mississippi.³⁵ In his diffusionist analysis, the greater part of the Native American population, and perhaps the Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy (Haudenosaunee) and the Iroquoian-speaking Huron (Wendat) in particular, were descended from early Greeks (“Pélasgiens & d’Helléniens”), but had lost their root language over a long period of movement from the Old World to the New.³⁶ Lafitau proposed there were striking similarities between some Iroquoian words and those of the ancient Thracians, and made a strained attempt to draw links between cultures based on survivals in vocabulary. For example, he proposed that *Orontes*, who according to Virgil was a leader of the Lycians, was a name related to *Orente*, a river and a mountain in Syria, as well as to an Iroquoian name derived from *Garonta*, a great tree.³⁷

Gordon M. Sayre has associated Lafitau with a “*premier temps* trope,” a “backward-looking historical view that placed the *sauvage américain* in comparison with various peoples of the ancient world.”³⁸ Lafitau in Fenton’s estimation was,

an extreme transmigrational diffusionist; on matters of diversity he relied on the doctrine of degeneration. Men had originally one religion and one set of God-given values, but as they migrated to the margins of the earth, coped with new environments, and time passed,

³⁵ Lafitau, *Moeurs*, 4:185.

³⁶ Lafitau, *Moeurs*, 4:171.

³⁷ Lafitau, *Moeurs*, 4:179.

³⁸ Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains*, Kindle location 2428.

they tended to forget, their stock of cultural ideas degenerated, and they lost touch with the one true religion and culture. In his researches on the Indians he was constantly on the prowl for evidences of similarities that would link them with the ‘First Times.’ This kind of thinking was already two centuries old when Lafitau published in 1724.³⁹

Cross-cultural comparisons had already been employed by Acosta and by Grotius; Thorowgood, in arguing the Indians were the Lost Tribes of Israel, had also made a case for degeneration in *Iewes in America* (1650), citing Old Testament scripture in arguing that the Jews had begun a religious decline while still in Asia, and were in a “dark & darkned [sic] condition” in the Holy Land during the time of Christ. In America, Thorowgood asserted, the “rudenesse and incivility and irreligion” of the lost tribes had increased over time, to the point that “it will not seem strange if they be wholly barbarous.”⁴⁰ Lafitau’s articulation of degeneration in an influential work of the eighteenth century would play an important role in the interpretation of Dighton Rock and the associated Euro-American perception of Native Americans. Perhaps more important was Lafitau’s idea of how and when the Americas were populated. Lafitau noted that most theorists believed Native Americans migrated from Asia, and he agreed this was probably correct. He ventured they arrived soon after the Deluge, using a land bridge that had once joined the easternmost lands of Tartary with North America. By comparing the customs of Native Americans with Asians, Thracians and Scythians, he ventured to prove that America had been peopled by migrants from easternmost Tartary.⁴¹ Lafitau also proposed that this crossing of what would

³⁹ Fenton, preface to Lafitau, *Customs*, 1:xlvii.

⁴⁰ See Cogley, “The Ancestry of the American Indians,” 314; quotes from Thorowgood, *Iewes in America*, 53.

⁴¹ “L’opinion la plus universellement suivie & a plus probable, est celle qui fait passer toutes ces Nations dans l’Amérique par les terres de l’Asie. Il y a des motifs d’une très-grande probabilité, qui persuadent que l’Amérique est jointe au Continent de la Tartarie Orientale quoique jusqu’à présent on y ait supposé quelque Détroit qui l’en sépare... j’espère que de la comparaison des Mœurs des Américains avec celles des Aiatiques & des Nations comprises sous les noms des Peuples de la Thrace & de la Scythie, il résultera dans la suite de cet Ouvrage come un espèce d’évidence, que l’Amérique a été peuplée par les Terres les plus Orientatles de la Tartarie.” Joseph-François Lafitau, *Moeurs*, 1:31–32.

later be dubbed Beringia had been made by different nations at different times, with the more recent arrivals pushing their predecessors forward, which accounted for the oldest and most “civilized” (*policée*) societies being found in Mexico and Peru.⁴² Lafitau had articulated a profoundly important and consequential idea about the peopling of the Americas: they had arrived across the Bering Strait from eastern Asia, in multiple migrations, with less sophisticated, more recent arrivals driving before them the more sophisticated, older migrant nations.

Ezra Stiles and the Phoenicians

In the fall of 1766, Dighton Rock captured the imagination of thirty-nine-year-old Ezra Stiles, a Congregationalist minister at Newport, Rhode Island, after he was shown a copy of the Mather broadside of 1714. A respected intellectual and educator, Stiles was the main author of the charter for Rhode Island College in Providence, forerunner of Brown University, in 1764, solicited funds for the restoration of Harvard Library after it burned down that same year, received a doctorate of divinity from Edinburgh University through the influence of Benjamin Franklin in 1765, and declined the presidency of Yale University in 1766, a post he would accept in 1778.⁴³

Dighton Rock, the Ten Lost Tribes and Native Americans likely were intertwined in Stiles’ mind from the beginning of his investigations. He visited and drew what he called the “Writing Rock,” which was about twenty-five miles north of Newport, three times in the summer of 1767, after he had become determined in May to learn Hebrew from members of the Jewish community in Newport, in particular

⁴² “Le passage qu’ont fait en Am[é]rique les différentes Nations qui y ont pénétré, s’est fait probablement en divers temps. Les plus récentes ont poussé les autres devant elles, les contraignant de leur céder la place. Il semble qu’on voye comme une espèce de preuve, en ce que les plus barbares & les plus incultes ont été obligées de gagner les bords de la Mer du Nord; que les plus policées au contraire comme sont les habitans du Pérou & du Mexique...” Lafitau, *Moeurs*, 1:37–38.

⁴³ “The Founding,” Exhibits at Brown University Library. http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University_Library/exhibits/education/founding.html (accessed June 29, 2014). Abiel Holmes, *The Life of Ezra Stiles* (Boston: Thomas & Andrews, 1798), 106, 109.

from a chazzan, Isaac Touro; by early 1768 he was able to translate Genesis and Exodus.⁴⁴ His interest in Hebrew seems to have arisen from a concern with the fate of the Ten Lost Tribes, which had compelled him to write J.Z. Holwell, author of *Interesting Historical Events Relative to the Provinces of Bengal and the Empire of Industan*, for assistance, in 1766.⁴⁵ He also became familiar at some point with Menasseh ben Israel's ideas of Lost Tribes in the Americas, as he praised Menasseh's character in lamenting the death of a Jewish merchant in Newport in 1782.⁴⁶

Stiles was the first person to study inscribed rocks in southern New England—the first person to be aware that Dighton Rock was not an anomaly—and was chasing them down in 1767 and 1768. On June 17, 1767, for example, he visited a rock at Portsmouth: “And find there Inscriptions of the same kind as those at Assonet, tho not so distinct & well done.”⁴⁷ Some stones proved to have colonial inscriptions, and one he examined on July 8, 1767 around Price's Cove featured “a number of seeming Incisions of the Wedge or Runic Kind, but evidently the Work of Nature only.”⁴⁸ Native Americans also captured his interest: in 1761, according to the 1798 biography by his son-in-law, Abiel Holmes, he “began those enquires, respecting the number of Indians in North-America, their national customs, and religious rites, which he long prosecuted with ardent curiosity, and unwearied diligence.”⁴⁹ Although Stiles believed Native Americans had to adopt a colonist's way of life and then be converted to Christianity, he made considerable notes about Indigenous life and culture for a book he never did write.⁵⁰ He took a census of

⁴⁴ Holmes, *The Life of Ezra Stiles*, 128–30; Edmund S. Morgan, *The Gentle Puritan: A Life of Ezra Stiles 1727–1795* (1962; repr., Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 142.

⁴⁵ Holmes, *The Life of Ezra Stiles*, 112.

⁴⁶ Ezra Stiles, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter, vol. 3 (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1901), 24.

⁴⁷ Ezra Stiles, *Extracts from the Itineraries and Other Miscellanies of Ezra Stiles, D. D., LL. D., 1755-1794 with a Selection from his Correspondence*, ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter (Cambridge: Yale University Press, 1916), 233.

⁴⁸ Stiles, *Extracts*, 230.

⁴⁹ Holmes, *The Life of Ezra Stiles*, 102.

⁵⁰ Morgan, *The Gentle Puritan*, 138.

the Niantic of the western shore of Narragansett Bay on October 7, 1761 and sketched the floor plan of wigwam, for example, and also observed that year: “Ninigret’s Tribe mourn 3 Mos. for a King, then wash off the Mourning, assembling in a Dance which they hold about a Week”.⁵¹ He showed a personal interest in members of the Narragansett tribe, probably teaching some of them to read and write and otherwise sending them to instructors in Newport. Once they had learned to read, he started them on Bible instruction.⁵²

After his second visit to Dighton Rock on June 6, 1767 he recorded in his letter book: “Spent the forenoon in Decyphering about Two Thirds the Inscription, which I take to be in Phoenician Letters & 3,000 years old.”⁵³ Jean-Jacques Barthélemy’s decipherment of Phoenician script in 1754 had given antiquarians a new diagnostic tool in probing purported inscriptions for ancient mysteries.⁵⁴ After sketching the rock’s markings on July 15, 1767 [Fig. 6], he enlisted the aid of Elisha Paddack of Swansea in hope of securing a full-size drawing. In a letter to Stiles in August 1767 recounting his efforts to comply, Paddack referred to the “Phoenitian rock.”⁵⁵ It is important here to understand what antiquarian enthusiasts like Stiles meant by “Phoenician,” “Carthaginian,” “Punic” and “Tyrian,” as the terms will continue to crop up in migrationist-diffusionist theories. Phoenician was both a language and a people, who some believed were descendants of the Canaanites of the Old Testament.⁵⁶ Before Enlightenment fascinations were fully captured by ancient Egypt as a result of Napoleon’s campaign in 1798, the

⁵¹ Stiles, *Extracts*, 130–31. Ninigret I was a Narragansett sachem who died in the late eighteenth century. Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England 1670–1775* (Norman OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 84.

⁵² Morgan, *The Gentle Puritan*, 126–27

⁵³ Stiles, *Extracts*, 234–35. See also Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 50.

⁵⁴ Barthélemy’s decipherment is noted by Trigger in *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 70.

⁵⁵ Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 55.

⁵⁶ “...Canaanite and merchant became synonymous terms. To the Greeks this nation was known by the name of *Phoenicians*...” Johann Reinhold Forster, *History of the Voyages and Discoveries made in the North* (London: Printed for G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1786), 3–4.

Phoenicians and their descendants were considered the first great Western civilization of maritime trade and colonial expansion. From its ancient city of Tyre (hence Tyrians) in what is now Lebanon, its merchants and seagoing adventurers moved westward in the Mediterranean, and these migrants intermingled with Berbers of North Africa to create the Punic, whose empire included the north African city of Carthage in what is now Tunis, hence the references to Carthaginians.⁵⁷ They were considered daring, enterprising and ruthless. As the baron de Sainte-Croix wrote of their expansion from the metropole of Tyre, in a work published in French in Philadelphia in 1779 that drew on such classical sources as Herodotus, Thucydides, Diodorus and Strabo: “Their ships will soon cover the Mediterranean. In frequenting its ports, numerous members of their crews will stay and form colonies and civilize the neighbouring nations.” Wherever these navigators were resisted, their opponents were massacred: “And so the unfortunate interests of trade thus were made to float on great waves of human blood!”⁵⁸

In June 1768 Stiles visited Harvard, lodging with Stephen Sewall, who had been appointed the Hancock Professor of Hebrew and Other Oriental Languages in 1765; he also spent an hour with John Winthrop, who in 1739 had succeeded Isaac Greenwood as the Hollisian Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy.⁵⁹ Stiles was close to both men: Winthrop according to Stiles’ son-in-law was “a most valuable friend and correspondent.”⁶⁰ Surely Stiles discussed with them his consuming interest in inscribed stones of the past two years. Stephen Sewall, in addition to being the son of Judge Sewall,

⁵⁷ Baron de Sainte-Croix called these melded people “Liby-Phoeniciens.” Citing Herodotus, he wrote: “Carthage s’étant unie aux Libyens, le chassa avec sa colonie, trois ans après son arrivée.” Guillaume-Emmanuel-Joseph Guilhem de Clermont-Lodève, baron de Sainte-Croix, *De l’état et du sort des colonies, des anciens peuples : ouvrage dans lequel on traite du gouvernement des anciennes républiques, de leur droit ...* (Philadelphia: [s.n.], 1779), 39.

⁵⁸ “Leur vaisseaux couvrirent bientôt la Méditerranée. En fréquentant ses ports, plusieurs personnes de leurs équipages s’y arrêterent, formerent des colonies & civiliserent les nations voisines. Lorsque ces navigateurs se trouvoient contrariés dans leurs vues, par les peuples du pays, ou que ceux-ci refusoient de trafiquer avec eux & génoient leurs établissemens, ils les massacroient par tout où ils abordoient. De tout tems ces malheureux intérêts de commerce ont donc fait couler à grands flots le sang humain!” Sainte-Croix, *De l’état*, 9.

⁵⁹ Stiles, *Extracts*, 237.

⁶⁰ Holmes, *The Life of Ezra Stiles*, 258.

whose interest in Dighton rock surfaced in his letter book in 1691, was a specialist in languages that Stiles was now attempting to learn. A scholar in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, Sewall compiled *An Hebrew Grammar* for instruction at Harvard in 1763, on which Stiles must have relied in his Hebrew studies.⁶¹ Winthrop had his own history with Dighton Rock. At an unknown date John Eames, Isaac Greenwood's correspondent, made a request of a fellow Royal Society member, Timothy Hollis, whose family oversaw the fund for the Hollisian chair at Harvard. Hollis was to ask Greenwood's Hollisian successor, John Winthrop, to visit Dighton Rock and make a fresh drawing of it "at the desire of a gentleman at Berlin, or some part of Germany, of great learning and knowledge in languages," according to an account by the Rev. Michael Lort read before London's Society of Antiquaries on November 23, 1786.⁶² This request must have been made after January 2, 1739, when Winthrop was inaugurated as the new Hollisian professor. Timothy Hollis never heard back, and Eames died in 1744, the same year as Greenwood. Winthrop did visit the rock around the time of Greenwood's death and made a drawing he found unsatisfactory.⁶³ Now, some 24 years later, his friend Ezra Stiles was captivated by the rock. In September 1768, three months after Stiles called on Winthrop and Sewall at Harvard, Sewall visited Dighton Rock with four local men and made a life-size drawing of the markings, perhaps achieving for Stiles what Paddack could not. [Fig. 7]

What is striking about Stiles' investigations of Dighton Rock and other inscribed stones around Narragansett Bay is that nowhere in his diaries does he mention asking the various Native Americans he met and even tutored what if anything they knew of the inscriptions. His fascination with inscribed rocks seemed to be contained within his newfound interest in Hebrew and other ancient scripts, and he was persuaded from the beginning that Dighton Rock was the work of Old World visitors. Not everyone in

⁶¹ Stephen Sewall, *An Hebrew grammar, collected chiefly from those of Mr. Israel Lyons, teacher of Hebrew in the University of Cambridge; and the Rev. Richard Grey, D.D. Rector of Hinton, in Northamptonshire* (Boston: Printed by R. and S. Draper, for the honorable and reverend president and fellows of Harvard-College, 1763).

⁶² Lort, "Account of an antient Inscription in North America," 295.

⁶³ Delabarre, "Middle Period," 65.

Stiles's intellectual circle shared his Phoenician conviction. John Winthrop in November 1774 at last reported back to the Royal Society, informing them that he had gone to see the rock "above 30 years ago, and then took an imperfect copy of the inscription, and saw it again last spring." Rather than send along his old, imperfect rendering, Winthrop in 1774 enclosed a scaled-down copy of the lifesize drawing Stephen Sewall made in 1768—"the most exact copy of [the rock's markings], that I believe was ever taken." Winthrop had no doubt the inscription was man-made, as there seemed to be human figures (which Greenwood's 1730 drawing first suggested), as well as "some resemblance of a quadruped with horns." He thought the inscription was weathering: "According to the best of my remembrance, the characters do not appear so plain now as they did about thirty years ago."⁶⁴ Greenwood had reported the same weathering phenomenon.⁶⁵

Contrary to Greenwood's estimation and his friend Stiles' Phoenician theory, Winthrop in 1774 was sure that Native Americans were responsible for the markings: "Whether this was designed by the Indians as a memorial of any remarkable event, or was a mere *lusus* [game] at their leisure hours, of which they have a great number, I cannot pretend to say. 'Tis certain it was done before the English settled in this country."⁶⁶ The Phoenicians however remained strong contenders for the rock's authorship.

⁶⁴ Winthrop quotes from Lort, "Account of an antient Inscription in North America," 295.

⁶⁵ As Greenwood had stated in his 1730 letter to Eames: "I traced with chalk, all such places I believed were really indentures; and passed over many, which did not seem to have been originally indented; and I must take notice, that the figures are not all so well defined as I have expressed them. Time has gradually impaired them; and an old man of the town told me, he remembered them more perfect." Quoted by Charles Vallancey, in "Observations on the American Inscription," read before the Society on February 9, 1786, in *Archaeologia*, vol. 8 (London: The Society of Antiquaries of London, 1787), 302.

⁶⁶ Lort, "Account of an antient Inscription in North America," 296–97.

Forster, Kalm, La Vérendrye's Inscribed Stone, and Strahlenberg's Siberia

John (Johann) Reinhold Forster translated and annotated the first English version of Swedish naturalist Pehr (Peter) Kalm's account of his journeys in North America in 1748–49, *En Resa til Norra America*.⁶⁷ Forster's version of Kalm was published as *Travels into North America* in 1770.⁶⁸ Forster and Kalm were crucial to the evolving ideas of Native American origin. Forster's family may have been British at some point, but had long been settled on the Baltic coast of Polish Prussia. A Lutheran pastor with scientific ambitions, Forster visited St. Petersburg in 1765 and according to biographer Ian Boreham secured a commission "to undertake an extensive tour of southern Russia...for the Imperial Academy of Sciences." He was "an honourable unrepentant disaster," and after initially visiting London in 1766, Forster settled there and worked as a translator.⁶⁹ Building connections with the scientific and scholarly communities, he became a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and the Royal Society. In 1772 he was engaged as a naturalist aboard the *Resolution* for James Cook's second circumnavigation, on which he made a poor impression. John Cawte Beaglehole, editor of Cook's journals, called Forster "one of the awkward beings of the age...There is nothing that can make him other than one of the Admiralty's vast mistakes...Dogmatic, humourless, suspicious, pretentious, contentious, censorious, demanding, rheumatic, he was a problem from any angle."⁷⁰

⁶⁷ "En Resa til Norra America. På Kong. Swenska Vetenskapsacademiens befallning, och Publici kostnad, I-III, Stockholm, 1753–1761." Cited as the first edition by Adolph B. Benson, "Pehr Kalm's Writings on America: A Bibliographic Review," *Scandinavian Studies and Notes* 12, no. 6 (May 1933): 91.

⁶⁸ Peter [Pehr] Kalm, *Travels into North America*, trans. John Reinhold Foster, 3 vols (Warrington UK: William Eyres, 1770). Forster in settling in London worked as a tutor for the unconventional Warrington Academy, and Eyres of the academy was the publisher of *Travels*. Foster brought out his own edition of *Travels* the following year in London, as Benson ("Pehr Kalm's Writings on America," 92) notes an abridged two-volume edition from T. Lowndes in 1772. Benson also asserts the Kalm translation "was in reality done by Forster's precocious sixteen-year-old son, Johann George Adam Forster (1754–1794). We may assume, however, that his father superintended the job and supplied the prefaces and notes." (92)

⁶⁹ Ian Boreham, "John Reinhold Forster," *Cook's Log* 8, no. 3 (1985): 368. Reproduced electronically at the Captain Cooke Society, <http://www.captaincooksociety.com/home/detail/john-reinhold-forster> (accessed June 30, 2014).

⁷⁰ Graham Jefcoate, "Forster, (Johan) George Adam (1754–1794," also including, (Johann) Reinhold Forster (1729–1798), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford

Pehr Kalm was a friend and student of the great botanist Carl de Linné, *aka* Linnaeus, and was named a docent of botany in 1746 and a professor of economy in 1747 at the University of Åbo in what was then Sweden (now Turku, Finland).⁷¹ Kalm traveled to the British colonies of North America in 1748 to serve as the “eyes and ears” of Linnaeus, under instructions from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, which had admitted him as a member in 1746.⁷² Kalm was to study the colonies’ natural history, with an emphasis on Canada, as its climate was thought to be most similar to Sweden and Finland.⁷³ “His *Resa til Norra America* is one of the largest and most reliable source-books for American history of the eighteenth century that we have,” Adolph B. Benson has asserted, adding: “In some respects it is the best that we possess.”⁷⁴ In Forster’s translation, Kalm stated the history of North America before the arrival of Europeans “is more like a fiction or a dream, than any thing that really happened. In later times there have, however, been found a few marks of antiquity, from which it may be conjectured, that *North-America* was formerly inhabited by a nation more versed in science, and more civilized, than that which the *Europeans* found on their arrival here; or that a great military expedition was undertaken to this continent, from these known parts of the world.”⁷⁵ As evidence of a military invasion by a known people, Kalm offered what he had learned from Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, sieur de La Vérendrye (“Monsieur Verandrier” in the original Kalm text, “de Verandriere” in Forster’s translation) at Quebec in

University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2009.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/view/article/9909> (accessed July 2, 2014).

⁷¹ “Kalm, Pehr,” in *Biographical Dictionary of American and Canadian Naturalists and Environmentalists*, ed. Keir B. Sterling, Richard P. Harmond, George A. Cevaso, Lorne F. Hammond, 421–423 (Westport CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1997).

⁷² Daniel F. Merriam, “Pehr Kalm: A Swedish Naturalist’s Geological Observations in North America, 1748–1751,” abstract, *Earth Sciences History* 25, no. 1 (2006).

⁷³ Richard A. Jarrell, “KALM, PEHR,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 4, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kalm_pehr_4E.html (accessed June 30, 2014).

⁷⁴ Benson, “Pehr Kalm’s Writings on America,” 90.

⁷⁵ Kalm, *Travels into North America*, 3:123.

August 1749 of his explorations beyond Lake Superior.⁷⁶ According to Kalm's account, the French encountered "on a large plain, great pillars of stone, leaning upon each other." They also found "a large stone, like a pillar, and in it a smaller stone was fixed, which was covered on both sides with unknown characters. This stone, which was about a foot of French measure in length, and between four or five inches broad, they broke loose." They took it back to Canada, "from whence it was sent to France," and given to Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, comte de Maurepas, the secretary of state. Nothing more was heard of this stone, which in Kalm's telling was assumed still to be in the comte de Maurepas's possession, but Jesuits in Canada "unanimously affirm, that the letters on it, are the same with those which in the books, containing accounts of *Tataria*, are called *Tatarian characters*, and that, on comparing both together, they found them perfectly alike."⁷⁷

La Vérendrye left behind nothing that would support the Kalm anecdote. Lawrence J. Burpee, editor of the journal and letters of La Vérendrye and his sons, reproduced Kalm's account of his conversation with La Vérendrye and called it "interesting, although he seems to have misunderstood some of the things La Vérendrye or others said to him."⁷⁸ Burpee left it at that.⁷⁹ Kalm's anecdote helped to fuel the White Tribism ideas that would plague accounts of the Mandan peoples, which also may have been inspired in part by Samuel de Champlain's allegations of light-skinned, fair-haired people that resembled

⁷⁶ For the original published Kalm discussion, see *En Rasa til Norra America*, 3:401–403. Kalm also addressed the enigmatic stone in his unpublished travel journal, on which he drew for *En Rasa til Norra America*. See Pehr Kalm, *Voyage de Pehr Kalm au Canada en 1749*, trans. Jacques Rousseau, Guy Béthune, Pierre Morisset (Montréal: Pierre Tisseyre, 1977), 185–186, 226. These journal entries did not mention La Vérendrye by name. The journal included an entry for August 20, 1749 omitted from *En Rasa till Norra America* as well as the Foster translation. In this entry, Kalm recounted meeting a Jesuit priest at Baie-Saint-Paul on August 20, 1749, who had traveled greatly in the country and told him of another inscribed stone that supposedly had once been a pillar. (*Voyage de Pehr Kalm au Canada en 1749*, 347–348.)

⁷⁷ Quotes from Kalm, *Travels into North America*, 3:124–26.

⁷⁸ Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye, *Journals and letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye and his sons*, ed. Lawrence J. Burpee (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1927), 27.

⁷⁹ For difficulties with La Vérendrye's records and their interpretation by historians, see also Orin G. Libby, "Some Verendrye Enigmas," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 3 (1916-1917): 143–160, although Libby does not address the standing stones. I am not yet aware of any scholarly investigations of the Kalm account.

Europeans living some distance beyond Lake Huron.⁸⁰ As for the inscribed stone, it is possible La Vérendrye saw Anishinabe or Dakota grave markers, which were planks of wood inscribed with glyphs and would be documented in the nineteenth century by Henry Schoolcraft, but Kalm's account, with its standing stones and reference to "Tatarian characters," had a strange resonance in the inscribed standing stones of Siberia recently documented by Philipp-Johann von Strahlenberg. [Fig. 8] A Swedish military officer (likely born in Germany) who was captured by the Russians in the Great Northern War and spent thirteen years in western Siberia as a prisoner of war,⁸¹ Strahlenberg published *Das nord- und ostliche Theil von Europa und Asia*, in High German, in Stockholm in 1730; it appeared in English in London in 1738 as *An Historo-Geographical Description of the North and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia*. Its illustrations included inscribed rocks and standing stones, which would find their way into the interpretation of Dighton Rock. It is peculiar that Kalm would show no awareness of a significant work that had been published in Sweden (beyond a vague reference to "books, containing accounts of Tataria") and also tentatively proposed affinities between Siberian and Native American languages. Strahlenberg

⁸⁰ The information was gathered by Champlain during his 1615–16 travels in what is now Ontario, from "the savages to whom we have access," who in turn learned of these people from war prisoners taken some 100 leagues (about 300 miles) to the west of Lake Huron. Champlain's account could have been a third- or fourth-hand account of the Spanish far to the southwest. See Samuel de Champlain, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain, Vol. 3: 1615–1618*, ed. H. P. Biggar (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1929), 119. Kalm recorded in his journal (but not in his published account) a story similar to Champlain's, which Kalm gathered at Montréal in September 1749. A nation that had never seen Frenchmen informed La Vérendrye of a vast sea to the west as well as a people who were blond like the French, rode large animals, and had great ships. The French presumed they were Spaniards. Kalm, *Voyage de Pehr Kalm au Canada en 1749*, 432–433.

⁸¹ Mark Bassin, "Russia between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geographical Space," *Slavic Review* 50, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 6. Biographical information on Strahlenberg is elusive. I cannot find a single scholarly article dedicated to him. Strahlenberg does mention "by my third Year of my thirteen Years Captivity, I was far advanc'd in the Country, I there made all diligent Enquiry into the ancient as well as modern State thereof..." Philip John [Philipp-Johann] von Strahlenberg, *An Historico-Geographical Description of the North and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia...* (London: W. Innys and R. Manby, 1738), 5. Having published the original work in High German, it seems clear he was of German origin. He also remarked: "I must own, that when I first was carried Captive into these Countries, I knew just as much of the State of them, as an Ostiac knows of Germany." (5) In 1891, three Russian scholars asserted Strahlenberg actually was a Swedish prisoner of war named Fabbert, but provided no references: "Le prisonnier suédois Fabbert publia en 1730 un livre signé du nom de Strahlenberg qu'il s'était donné." I. [Ivan] Tolstoj, N. P. [Nikodim Pavlovich] Kondakov, Salomon Reinach, *Antiquités de la Russie méridionale* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1891), 370. As well, in "L'Exploration de la Sibirie," *Dix-huitième siècle* 18 (1986), Miguel Benitez gave a variation on this: "Ph. J. von Strahlenberg, dont le nom de famille était Tabbert, officier suédois qui explora la Sibérie en 1721–22." (note 4, p199). Again, no source was cited.

published a table that compared various languages, but omitted the vocabularies of two Native American languages from Pennsylvania and the former colony of New Sweden on the Delaware River, which had been given to him by a minister who had been in New Sweden “whose name I have forgot.”⁸² Had he included them, Strahlenberg proposed, “one might have judged, whether these Nations have any Relation to those in Kamtschatki, with Respect to their Language; Because only the Straits of Davis and Anian [Bering] separate these Nations.”⁸³ This early attempt to link Siberian and Native American languages has been acknowledged by modern scholars.⁸⁴ *An Historico-Geographical Description* was the first ethnographic resource that would make it possible to propose an affinity between the shamanic complexes of Siberia and the Americas, as contended by A. Irving Hallowell in his classic study of bear ceremonialism, by Åke Hultkrantz in his study of Indigenous religions, as well as by Ramos and Joan Vastokas in their study of the Peterborough Petroglyphs.⁸⁵

However much Strahlenberg was ignored or overlooked, Forster was inspired by Kalm’s La Vérendrye story to make his own contribution to speculations about the origins of Native Americans. In a footnote to Kalm’s account of the stones, Forster proposed that ships of the Kublai-Khan sent eastward to

⁸² Strahlenberg in *An Historo-Geographical Description*, 80.

⁸³ Strahlenberg further noted: “The Peruvians hang their Dead on Trees, which some in Kamtschatki do likewise; Also in Kamtschatki, as well as in the West Indies, they live in Houses or Hutts built in the Air, upon four Posts, into which they ascend by a ladder. But there being no Room for [the Native American languages] in the Table, and these latter Languages being published; Any one, who is curious, may easily procure them, and compare them with these.” Strahlenberg in *An Historo-Geographical Description*, 80.

⁸⁴ “The affinity between the Paleosiberian peoples of Kamchatka and neighbors beyond the seas was already noted by the Swede Strahlenberg ([*Das Nord- und Ostliche Theil von Europa und Asia*], p. 71 f.)...” Roman Jakobson, “The Paleo-Siberian Languages,” *American Anthropologist*, new series, vol. 44, no. 4, pt. 1 (Oct.-Dec., 1942): 603.

⁸⁵ A. Irving Hallowell, “Bear Ceremonialism in the Northern Hemisphere,” *American Anthropologist*, n.s. 28, no. 1 (Jan.-Mar. 1926):1–175; Åke Hultkrantz, *The Religions of the American Indians*, trans. Monica Setterwall (1967; trans. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 84–102, and Vastokas and Vastokas, *Sacred Art of the Algonkians*, 121–127. See also Joan Vastokas, “The Peterborough Petroglyphs: Native or Norse?” in *The Rock-Art of Eastern North America: Capturing the Images and Insight*, ed. Carol Diaz-Granados and James R. Duncan (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004): “Similar styles and iconographic images were distributed throughout the northern hemisphere among indigenous hunting, gathering, and herding societies from Scandinavia across Eurasia to Siberia and from Alaska to the eastern Atlantic seaboard. Archaeologists and ethnologists have attested to the commonalities shared among these far-flung northern societies in terms of economy, social organization, religion, and material culture (e.g., Hallowell 1926).” (279)

conquer Japan, as mentioned by Marco Polo, had carried on across the Pacific and erected the stones La Vérendrye allegedly had seen, then turned south and founded the Aztec empire in Mexico. Forster asserted there was “a great familiarity between the figures of the *Mexican* idols, and those which are usual among the *Tartars*, who embrace the doctrines and religion of the *Dalai-Lama*, whose religion Kublai-Khan first introduced among the *Monguls*, or *Moguls*.”⁸⁶ Most important, Forster did not think the “savage Indians of North-America” were from the same migration. It seemed to him they had “another origin, and are probably descended from the *Yukaghiri* and *Tchucktchi*, inhabitants of the most easterly and northerly part of Asia, where, according to the accounts of the Russians, there is but a small trajet to America. The ferocity of these nations, similar to that of the Americans, their way of painting, their fondness of inebriating liquors...and many other things, show them plainly to be of the same origin.”⁸⁷

Both Forster and Kalm appear to have drawn on *The American Traveller*, which had been published without an author attribution in London in 1743—three years before Kalm arrived in London to prepare for his trip to America.⁸⁸ Initially issued as an unfinished numbered series in 1741, this orphaned intellectual work offered a complex, multiple-migration scenario for the peopling of the Americas. As Lafitau had, it implicitly rejected polygenesis (the idea that distinct races had experienced separate creations, as opposed to being descended from a single common ancestor, as per monogenism⁸⁹),

⁸⁶ Forster footnote in Kalm, *Travels into North America*, 125–127.

⁸⁷ Forster also followed in the tracks of Strahlenberg (and ultimately Grotius) in writing that the “*Esquimaux* seem to be the same nation with the inhabitants of *Greenland*, the *Samoyedes*, and *Lapponians*.” South America “and especially Peru,” Forster suggested, was “peopled from the great unknown fourth continent, which is very near *America*, civilized, and full of inhabitants of various colours: who therefore might very easily be cast on the American continent, in boats, or proas.” (Forster footnote in Kalm, *Travels into North America*, 125–127.) By this “great unknown fourth continent,” Forster probably meant Africa, as Buffon, who considered skin tone a key component of human diversity, had remarked on the great variety on that largely unexplored continent.

⁸⁸ *The American Traveller: being a new historical collection carefully compiled from original memoirs in several languages, and the most authentic voyages and travels, containing a compleat account of that part of the world, now called the West Indies, from its discovery by Columbus to the present time* (London: Printed and sold by J. Fuller, 1743). See “Notes” on the digital edition at Sabin America for its origins as an incomplete series in 1741.

⁸⁹ See my further discussion of monogenism arising from Linnaeus in Chapter 5. Stephen Jay Gould defined polygenism and monogenism in *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), 39. Adrian Desmond and James Moore in *Darwin’s Sacred Cause: Race, Slavery and the Quest for Human Origins* (2009; repr. London:

declaring “the notion of the AMERICANS having been *Aborigines* to be entirely groundless, as well as contradictory to Scripture,” as the “whole Earth was overspread” by the sons of Noah.⁹⁰ *The American Traveller* proposed the initial migration had come from China or Japan, directed by Noah himself, and that trade existed between those nations and America for many ages before Europeans discovered it.⁹¹ Several waves of migration came to America, up to a few centuries before the Spanish arrived, including the Phoenicians. Scythians or Tartars also came, whether by sea or by a land bridge to either the east or west of America; some of them came perhaps before the Phoenicians, but the greatest Scythian migration occurred about 400 AD.⁹² The name *Canada*, it explained, came from *Cunadi*, one of the Scythian tribes; likewise the *Hurons* were the *Huyrones*, neighbours of the Moguls. The *Iyrcae* of Herodotus it suggested were probably the *Iroquois*.⁹³ Pages of cultural comparisons between Tartars and New World peoples followed. Kalm’s idea of a military invasion, and Forster’s more specific reference to a Mogul fleet invading Japan before sailing on to America, was anticipated by *The American Traveller*, which offered a story from Diodorus of an invasion fleet of 15,000 Tartar ships⁹⁴

In echoing *The American Traveller* and popularizing Kalm with an English translation, Forster made a significant advance in the multiple-migration theory for the Americas, at least in its intellectual currency, if not its veracity. Forster’s idea lacked the simplicity of Lafitau’s multiple migrations

Penguin, 2010) note that the terms *polygenists* and *monogenists* were created by the proponents of polygenism, Josiah Clark Nott and George R. Gliddon, in a “rebranding exercise” in *Indigenous Races* of 1857. (288) Desmond and Moore prefer the earlier terms, pluralists and unitarists. By calling themselves and their allies (who provided pseudoscientific support to American slavery) “polygenists,” Nott and Gliddon implied they were an “up-to-the-minute scientific group.” (288) Although the terminology had odious beginnings, as Desmond and Moore observe, even Darwin (and Gould) was compelled to adopt the terminology, and thus I have used the *polygen-* and *monogen-* terms throughout the dissertation.

⁹⁰ *The American Traveller*, 99.

⁹¹ *The American Traveller*, 103–105.

⁹² *The American Traveller*, 118, 123.

⁹³ *The American Traveller*, 124–125.

⁹⁴ *The American Traveller*, 134.

exclusively via a Bering land bridge (as well as his concept of degeneration), with its successive waves causing the displacement of more established populations that made civilized progress when they moved south. Forster instead followed Kalm in proposing differentiation between inferior and superior migrants from Tartary, with an ancient migration of primitive Tartarians and a more recent military invasion by a Mogul fleet. Most important for future theorizing, Forster's multiple migration model made contemporary Native Americans the "savage" descendants of eastern Siberians, distinct from a more recent Tartarian (Mogul) invasion judged responsible for the more advanced cultures of the Americas. Kalm's *Travels into North America* also gave the antiquarian world the peculiar standing stones attributed to the explorations of La Vérendrye. The ongoing problem with the alleged find was that no one could testify to having actually seen the stones, and no drawing existed of them, especially the small one featuring Tartarian characters that was supposedly taken to France. While these stones would continue to attract commentary into the next century, the leading antiquarians would need a more concrete relic on which to pin their migration-diffusion theories. Dighton Rock would continue to fulfill that role.

The Rise of Gothicism and Montesquieu's Tartarian Slaves

In the eighteenth century, a heroic and racialized view of human history, championing the innate superiority of northern Europeans, began to inform Enlightenment theories that would figure critically in European and Anglo-American approaches to American antiquity, and would dominate the interpretation (and appropriation) of Dighton Rock in the nineteenth century.⁹⁵ Called Gothicism (or European Gothicism), its roots lay in the work of the Swedish physician and scholar Olf Rudbeks (or Rudbeck), who wove in the four-volume *Atland eller Manheim (Atlantis, or Manheim)* (1677–1702) a version of antiquity in which all classical myths originated in Scandinavia, which was Plato's Atlantis, the true home

⁹⁵ Reginald Horsman provides a broad overview of the European roots of Gothicism and its appeal in nineteenth-century America in *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 25–42.

of the descendants of Noah's son, Japheth, and the source of global wisdom.⁹⁶ According to Pierre Vidal-Naquet, Rudbeks created a national myth comprising two separate elements: the quest for Noah and his heirs, and the Gothic myth, although Vidal-Naquet notes Rudbeks' debt to the sixth-century historian Cassiodorus.⁹⁷

To understand Rudbeks (and other apocryphal biblical literalists such as Ezra Stiles where migration theories are concerned), we must visit the Old Testament. Genesis 9 states that after the Flood, God had commanded Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. Ham's son, Canaan, was cursed by Noah after Ham laid eyes on his father, drunk and naked:

⁹⁶ Rudbeks (also known as Olaus Rudbeck, among other variants) was a trained physician and a pioneer in the study of the lymphatic system. His eclectic interests extended to archaeology, which led him to compose *Atland Eller Manheim*, "a gigantic reconstruction of the history of old Sweden from the times of the Flood, through the era of vast conquests including Russia and the Mediterranean region, supposed to have take place in the third and second millenium B.C. Rudbeck mingled philological methods and mythological explanations with excavations and natural history to reach his phantastic [sic] conclusions." G. Eriksson, "[Olaus Rudbeck as scientist and professor of medicine]," English abstract, *Sven Med Tidskr* 8, no. 1 (2004): 39-44. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16025602> (accessed Aug. 8, 2014). See also Karen Oslund, *Iceland Imagined: Nature, Culture, and Storytelling in the North Atlantic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 128.

⁹⁷ Pierre Vidal-Naquet, trans. Janet Lloyd, "Atlantis and the Nations," *Critical Inquiry* 18, no. 2 (Winter, 1992): 316. In 511 AD in Constantinople, the romanized Goth historian Jordanes composed *De origine actibusque Getarum* (generally known as *Getica*, or *Gothic History*). Jordanes incorporated an abridgement of another six-century work (the only version of the original 12-volume work that survives), Cassiodorus's *History of the Goths*, which created the myth of the Goths as a Nordic people. Jordanes, citing Cassiodorus, had the Goths originating on an island called Scandza in the Northern Ocean, which has been associated with Sweden, and migrating to Europe around 1490 BC. See Arne Søby Christensen, *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths*, trans. Heidi Flegel (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2002), 8. For a close analysis of the biography of Jordanes (including a firm date of 551 AD for his composition of the *Getica*), see Brian Croke, "Cassiodorus and the *Getica* of Jordanes," *Classical Philology* 82, no. 2 (Apr. 1987): 117–134. See Walter Goffert, "Jordanes' 'Getica' and the Disputed Authenticity of Gothic Origins from Scandinavia," *Speculum* 80, no. 2 (Apr. 2005): 379–398, for a discussion of persistent scholarly beliefs in the truth of the out-of-Scandinavia narrative for Gothic origins and countervailing doubts about the historicity of Jordanes himself.

²⁵ And he said, Cursed *be* Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

²⁶ And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

²⁷ God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.⁹⁸

Genesis is far from clear on the descendants of the sons of Noah; their association with particular geographic areas—and races—has evolved, at times as justification for slavery. For someone like Rudbeks, the descendants of Shem (Shemites, or Semites) were considered to be the Jews, the descendants of Japheth to be Indo-Europeans, most favourably whites, and the descendants of Ham (including the cursed descendants of Canaan, the Canaanites) included the darker races.⁹⁹ Rudbeks took the apocryphal Biblical literalism of races, favored and otherwise, descended from the sons of Noah and harnessed them to a pseudohistorical mythology of Scandinavia as the root source of all human civilization.

As Karen Oslund has observed, early modern historians already had employed the Icelandic sagas “as part of their documentation of a unified northern people, the ‘Goths’...”¹⁰⁰ While the sagas were recorded in Iceland, they included events in Greenland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark, and so these historians used them “as evidence of linguistic and cultural unity between Iceland and mainland Scandinavia.”¹⁰¹ This school of historical interpretation, Gothicism, extended the relevance of the Icelandic sagas beyond the Scandinavian world to apply more generally to Northern Europe, and as

⁹⁸ Gen. 9:25–27 [AV].

⁹⁹ For a discussion of ambiguity in Genesis and evolving interpretations of the sons of Noah, see Braude, “The Sons of Noah,” 103-142.

¹⁰⁰ Oslund, *Iceland Imagined*, 128.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Oslund explains, “advanced a twofold image of these people: on one hand, they were considered a people of great primitive genius arising from the pure environment of the North; but on the other, they were also the barbarians who destroyed the remnants of the decaying classical world. This understanding divided the world symbolically between a northern freedom and purity and a southern tyranny and corruption, a myth repeated later by Montesquieu in his *L’esprit des lois* [sic] in 1748.”¹⁰²

Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu, was respectfully aware of Rudbeks, even if he did not have a copy of *Atland eller Manheim* to consult, when he proposed his ideas of inherently superior northern peoples in *De l’Esprit des loix* of 1748: “I don’t know if the famous *Rudbeck*, who, in his *Atlantis*, has so glorified Scandinavia, spoke of this great privilege that must place the Nations there above all the world’s people; they have been the source of the Liberty of Europe, that is to say, of nearly all of it today among men.”¹⁰³ Montesquieu further noted that the sixth-century Romanized Goth historian Jordanes (who was a key source for Rudbeks) had called northern Europe *Humani generis officinam*, or *la fabrique du Genre-humain*—the factory of the human race. “I would rather call it the factory of the instruments that broke the shackles forged in the South,” Montesquieu wrote, thus binding Northern Europe, in place and racial stock, with humanity’s highest qualities as he saluted the defeat of Imperial Rome by these northern freedom-fighters.¹⁰⁴

Montesquieu employed environmental determinism to argue for innate differences in peoples and nations, and adhered to polygenism. According to Montesquieu, heat enervated the strength and courage of peoples, whereas cold climates exerted an influence on the body and spirit that made northern peoples

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Translated from Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *De l’Esprit des loix* (Geneva: Barrillot & fils, 1748), 1: 440-441.

¹⁰⁴ Translated from Montesquieu, *De l’Esprit des loix*, 1: 441.

capable of actions that were extended, physically demanding, grand, and bold.¹⁰⁵ Montesquieu also used differences in local geography to explain why Europeans were superior to peoples from Tartars in the same climatic zone in Asia, and referenced Rudbeks in making northern peoples innately freedom-loving rather than innately enslaved.¹⁰⁶ Montesquieu's view of Tartars harkened back to sixteenth-century European debates about whether or not Native Americans qualified as "natural slaves," which comprised (as Joyce Chaplin notes) "an inferior category of humanity that Aristotle had postulated as lying outside civil society."¹⁰⁷ Natural slaves "had deficient intellectual and moral capacities that required true citizens to rule them by force."¹⁰⁸ Anthony Pagden draws the important distinction in the Greek world of Aristotle between civil and natural slaves. Where civil slaves were property, and civil slavery "merely a social institution," the term natural slavery, as Aristotle defined it, "referred not to an institution but to a particular category of man."¹⁰⁹ The natural slave was a man "whose intellect has, for some reason, failed to achieve proper mastery over his passions."¹¹⁰ Where a civil slave was fully a man, a natural slave according to Pagden was at the "bestial end of the human scale" and was "condemned to a life of

¹⁰⁵ "Nous avons déjà dit que la grande chaleur énerve la force & le courage des hommes, & qu'il y avoit dans les climats froids une certaine force de corps & d'esprit qui rendoit les hommes capables des actions longues, pénibles, grandes & hardies." Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des loix*, 1:433.

¹⁰⁶ Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des loix*, 1:439–441.

¹⁰⁷ Joyce E. Chaplin, "Race," 180. Bernard de Las Casas had argued before his king, Ferdinand (Fernando) of Spain, in 1520 and in his *Historia III* that Christianity was suitable and available to all nations of the world, "and taking from none its freedom nor sovereignty, it puts none in a state of servitude, on the excuse of a distinction between free men and serfs by nature." Las Casas, quoted in Tzevetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 162–163. In the sixteenth-century Spanish debates over the nature of Indians we can find harbingers of attitudes held in colonial (and post-Revolutionary) America of the essential character of Native Americans as natural slaves: childlike, given to passion rather than reason, incapable of participating fully as members of civilized society and receiving the Gospel. For a full discussion of the origins of the concept of natural slavery and the debates surrounding its applicability to Indigenous peoples of the Americas, see the chapter, "The theory of natural slavery," 27–56, in Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*.

¹⁰⁸ Chaplin, "Race," 180.

¹⁰⁹ Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 41.

¹¹⁰ Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 42.

perpetual servitude.”¹¹¹ Montesquieu had little to say about Indigenous peoples of the Americas: his chapter *De l’Afrique & de l’Amérique* totaled sixty-seven words.¹¹² Montesquieu only stated that what he had written about Asia and Europe with respect to the climatic influence on the character of nations applied equally to Africa and America. Montesquieu thus failed to connect the Tartars via the well-established Bering-crossing theories with Indigenous peoples of the Americas, possibly because he had not yet learned of Vitus Bering’s discovery of his namesake strait (as Bering’s expedition only concluded in 1743).¹¹³ *De l’Esprit des loix* nevertheless made Tartars inferior to Europeans and inherently enslaved, gave environmental determinism an influential airing, and left abundant room and inspiration for others to ruminate on the Americas and their Indigenous peoples. I venture Montesquieu’s polygenic ideas of the innate inferiority of Tartars and their natural state of enslavement (and the applicability of these ideas to peoples of the Americas) would have been absorbed by the many American (and European) intellectuals who read him for his wisdom on the evolution of law and constitutional government.¹¹⁴ They tended to be the people in positions of authority wondering how to deal with—or wondering how to justify the way they dealt with—Indigenous peoples in the course of America’s westward expansion.

¹¹¹ Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 43.

¹¹² Montesquieu, *De l’Esprit des loix*, 1:443.

¹¹³ The second voyage of the Danish navigator Vitus Bering, in the service of the Russian government, was an epic undertaking. Bering needed ten years, from 1731 to 1741, just to complete the overland route from St. Petersburg across Siberia, to begin exploring with two vessels from the east coast of Kamchatka. His second-in-command, Alexei Chirikov, sighted the American coast. While Bering landed briefly at Kayak Island on the Alaska coast, he was wrecked near Kamchatka on the return voyage and died with many of his men. “The American landfalls of Bering’s second expedition are among the defining moments in world geography, although this was clearer in retrospect than at the time, when the failure to publish reliable accounts and charts of the voyage led to much confusion about the significance of the Russian discoveries.” Glyndwr Williams, “America: Exploration Voyages, 1539–1794 (Northwest Coast),” 44.

¹¹⁴ As Donald S. Lutz has written, “If there was one man read and reacted to by American political writers of all factions during all the stages of the founding era, it was probably not Locke but Montesquieu.” Lutz’s survey of American literature found that in the 1760s, Locke and Montesquieu together accounted for over 60 percent of all references to Enlightenment thinkers. During 1770s, they accounted for over 75 percent, with Montesquieu particularly prevalent on the subject of constitutional form. Donald S. Lutz, “The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought,” *The American Political Science Review* 78, no. 1 (Mar. 1984): 190.

The foremost proponent of Gothicism during the mid to late eighteenth century was Paul-Henri Mallet, a French Swiss scholar born in Geneva in 1730, who was a professor of belles-lettres at the royal academy at Copenhagen from 1752 to 1760 and a preceptor to the future king, Christian VII, from 1755 to 1760.¹¹⁵ The presiding king, Frederick V, engaged Mallet to write a history of Denmark, in French, published at Copenhagen as the two-volume *Histoire de Dannemarc* in 1758. Mallet prefaced the main work with two additional volumes. The first, *Introduction à l'histoire de Dannemarc, ou l'on traite de la religion, des loix, des moeurs et des usages des anciens Danois*, published at Copenhagen in 1755, included a chapter summarizing the Icelandic sagas generally known as the Vinland sagas, which recounted the Norse exploits around 1000 AD in searching for and attempting to colonize lands to the west of Iceland and Greenland.¹¹⁶ Mallet's second volume, *Monumens de la mythologie et de la poesie des Celtes, et particulièrement des anciens Scandinaves*, published in 1756, posited a "Religion Celtique" shared by ancient Britons, French Gauls, Germanic peoples, Scandinavians and Scythians, based on a translation of the Icelandic saga *Snorra Edda*.¹¹⁷ Both prefatory works were further popularized in a 1770 English translation by Ireland's Thomas Percy, bishop of Dromore, that was issued as the two-volume *Northern Antiquities*.¹¹⁸ Mallet's advocacy of a "Religion Celtique" in *Monumens* hewed to

¹¹⁵ Jean de Senarclens, "Mallet, Paul-Henri," *Dictionnaire historique de la Suisse*, <http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/f/F25673.php> (accessed Aug. 8, 2014).

¹¹⁶ For references and sources on the sagas and the Norse voyages, see Chapter 6.

¹¹⁷ Paul-Henri Mallet, *Monumens de la mythologie et de la poesie des Celtes, et particulièrement des anciens Scandinaves...* (Copenhagen: Claude Philibert, 1756). Mallet wrote that the Celtic religion was followed by "la meilleure partie des Gaules & de la Bretagne, la Germanie, la Scandinavie, & les vastes contrées de la Scythie..." (6) In a third edition, published as *Edda, ou Monumens de la mythologie & de la poésie des anciens peuples du nord* (Geneva and Paris, 1787), Mallet dropped the Scythians (9–10). As for his chosen term, *Religion Celtique*, he explained in the original edition: "Que les Savans appellent cette Religion, en France Galoise, en Angleterre Britannique, en Allemagne, Germanique &c., il import peu. On avoue aujourd'hui partout, qu'elle était la même dans tous ces pays, du moins quant aux dogmes fondamentaux. Comme je la considere toujours ici pa ce qu'elle avoit de général, j'employe le terme de *Celtique*, comme le plus universel, sans prétendre entrer dans toutes les disputes auxquelles ce mot a donné lieu, & qui ne viennent, je pense, que de ce qu'on ne s'entend pas." (6)

¹¹⁸ Paul-Henri Mallet, *Northern antiquities: or, a description of the manners, customs, religion and laws of the ancient Danes, and other northern nations; including those of our own Saxon ancestors. With A Translation of the Edda, or System of Runic Mythology, and Other Pieces, From the Ancient Islandic Tongue*, trans. Thomas Percy, 2 vols. (London: T. Carnan, 1770).

Montesquieu's division between northern and southern Europe. Mallet continued to pursue his theories; a third edition of *Monumens* (issued as *Edda, ou Monumens de la poésie des anciens peuples du nord*), was published in Paris and Geneva in 1787. A fresh printing of the Percy translation in Edinburgh in 1809 testifies to Mallet's enduring popularity.¹¹⁹

Mallet's *Introduction* and *Monumens* were influential on several fronts. Éric Schnackenbourg has echoed Ernest Tonnelet in calling Mallet's *Monumens* the decisive publication in delivering Icelandic literature true renown in Europe in general and in France in particular in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹²⁰ Margaret Clunies Ross has credited Mallet with conceiving the "empirically ridiculous but extremely popular theory that the early Scandinavians were the true inventors of concepts of chivalry and the literary genre of the romance..."¹²¹ Mallet through Percy's English translation broadened the appeal of the romance of Gothicism, which celebrated the northern Europeans Mallet collectivized as "Celts" as hardy, adventurous, freedom-loving peoples, much as Montesquieu had done for northern Europeans. H. Arnold Barton has called Mallet's version of Nordic antiquity "largely mythical" and credited him (along with his translator Percy) with "giving rise to a pre-romantic 'Gothic' cult in European literature."¹²²

Conclusion

In the eighteenth century, understanding of Dighton Rock seemed to go more awry, the more that erudite Europeans and Euro-Americans studied it. It also seemed that the more these men claimed to know about

¹¹⁹ Paul-Henri Mallet, *Northern Antiquities...* (Edinburgh: C. Stewart, 1809).

¹²⁰ Éric Schnackenbourg, "L'île des confins: les représentations de l'Islande et des Islandais dans la France moderne (XVII^e–XVIII^e siècles)," *Histoire, Économie et Société* 29, no. 1 (Mar. 2010): 36. Schnackenbourg does not cite Tonnelet, but in 1935 Tonnelet stated Mallet's *Introduction* and *Monumens* "sont les premiers qui aient fait connaître au public de langue française—et même à une grande partie du public européen—les passé religieux et littéraire des pays du Nord. A dater de ce moment les publications relatives aux anciens Scandinaves sont devenues fréquentes." E[rnest]. Tonnelet, "Romantisme et Scandinaves," *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* 7, no. 35 (Sep. 30, 1935): 501.

¹²¹ Margaret Clunies Ross, "The Intellectual Complexion of the Icelandic Middle Ages: Toward a New Profile of Old Icelandic Saga Literature," *Scandinavian Studies* 69, no. 4 (Fall 1997): 445.

¹²² H. Arnold Barton, "The Discovery of Norway Abroad," *Scandinavian Studies* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 27–28.

antiquity, the less they understood the inscription's true nature as an Indigenous artifact. Dighton Rock had entered the Euro-American sphere as a war prize, and became an antiquarian prize too precious to waste on an Indigenous attribution. Ezra Stiles, who unlike most theorists had firsthand experience with and an active interest in Native Americans and their cultures, showed no inclination to analyze the inscribed rocks of New England within an Indigenous cultural context. While theorists with alternative explanations understood an Indigenous provenance first had to be discounted, in Isaac Greenwood's influential case this encouraged a derogatory portrait that would endure into the twentieth century, of Native Americans as too stupid, too lazy, too incapable of creating marks in a boulder. Even the theorists who were prepared to accept an Indigenous attribution, Harvard's John Winthrop and Stephen Sewall, deployed the same Latin word, *lusus* (game), to describe the inscription's purpose. They could not imagine deeper meanings to the markings or motivations for making them, presumably because (as I will explore in Chapter 3) in the analysis of leading intellectuals such as the comte de Buffon and Corneille de Pauw, Native American minds were incapable of harboring deeper meanings or complex motivations.

In the writings of Jean-François Lafitau and Pehr Kalm (with John Reinhold Forster), we find being debated the main questions of human arrival in the Americas. In the meantime, Lafitau's multiple migration scenario of 1724, positing successive waves of declining cultural sophistication out of easternmost Tartaria into North America across a land bridge that would become known as Beringia, awaited a champion in the English-speaking world. Kalm gave the world the mysterious inscribed Tartarian stone of La Vérendrye, which found a wider audience through the 1770 English translation by Forster. In a speculative note within his translation of Kalm, Forster took up Kalm's idea that the inscribed stone was evidence of a Mogul invasion a few centuries before the arrival of Europeans. The lasting importance of Kalm's theorizing and Forster's variation thereon was in advancing the notion that contemporary Native Americans were descendants of savage Tartarians, distinct from other, superior Asian migrants who were responsible for America's enigmatic antiquities. Within two decades of Forster's translation of Kalm, Lafitau's Beringian multiple-migration theory, with its waves of

increasingly less sophisticated migrants displacing older, superior peoples, would begin to find its English-speaking champions.

Meanwhile, the line of Gothicist theorizing extending from Rudbeks through Montesquieu and Mallet was shaping conceptions of Whites and Native Americans that reinforced the justness of colonization and dispossession. Both racialized groups were assigned a past that impacted on their present. Whites were the providential sons of Japheth who rose from civilization's northern roots and as natural sons of liberty enjoyed a God-ordained right and duty to overspread the earth. Native Americans, on the other hand, belonged to a Tartarian root-stock of natural slaves. Both groups had converged on the Americas, but only one was entitled to possess it. Refining and articulating that entitlement, and the necessary dispossession of Indigenous lands, would become a major enterprise under the colonization project, and antiquarians on both sides of the Atlantic would play a key role, enlisting Dighton Rock along the way.

(3)

Multiple Migrations: Esotericism, Beringia, and Native Americans as Tartar Hordes, 1770–1787**Introduction**

In the late eighteenth century, rationalist Enlightenment convictions as to the origins of Native Americans were buttressed by British surveying of the north Pacific during the third Cook expedition of 1776–1779 (after Cook’s death in Hawaii). The Cook expedition’s findings in the Bering Strait, as I show in this chapter, were key to naturalist Thomas Pennant’s influential advocacy in 1784 of an idea indebted to Lafitau in 1724: ancestral Native Americans had arrived from eastern Asia in multiple migrations, exclusively across the Bering Strait, by employing now-submerged islands or an ancient land bridge.¹ At the same time, these rationalist enquiries into humanity’s history were operating alongside (and sometimes were entwined with) a mytho-poetic approach to antiquity concerned to varying degrees with an ancient root-race, the incipient Aryanism known as Gothicism, the idea of a lost Golden Age, and apocryphal Biblical literalism, all of which was giving rise to an esotericism that has been called the Dark Enlightenment. In this chapter I examine how such seemingly disparate strands of enquiry converged on the question of Native American origins and American antiquities and enlisted Dighton Rock to contrary ends. The French mythographer Antoine Court de Gébelin in 1781 turned Dighton Rock into a Phoenician relic. Ezra Stiles in his “Election Sermon” of 1783 upheld Court de Gébelin’s Phoenician attribution, but employed Dighton Rock in a Gothicism fantasy steeped in apocryphal Biblical literalism, in which multiple migrations of Whites to America justly displaced Native Americans that qualified as natural slaves. On another front, the Anglo-Irish antiquarian Charles Vallancey in 1786 leveraged the multiple-migration Beringia argument of Thomas Pennant and enlisted Dighton Rock to depict present-day Native Americans as descendants of inferior Tartarian hordes who had displaced a more advanced people. The brutishness of Vallancey’s Native Americans was consistent with two major, inflammatory

¹ For a synopsis of Cook’s voyages, see Alan Frost, “Cook, James,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Maritime History*, ed. John B. Hattendorf, vol. 1, 492–495 (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 2007).

works addressing the inferior, degenerate (and degenerative) nature of Indigenous people, by the comte de Buffon and Corneille de Pauw. Vallancey's theory for Dighton Rock proved to be a handy stepping-stone to a solution to the emerging archaeological mystery of the Mound Builders. Benjamin Smith Barton turned the Mound Builders into Danish colonizers in a circa 1787 work he immediately regretted, and spent the rest of his career as an American academic and scientist striving to assert the Indigeneity of the mounds and the capability of Native Americans to recover from their presumed cultural degeneration. The multiple-migration Beringia theory had acquired an enduring and insidious form by the end of the eighteenth century.² America did not belong to Native Americans because they had seized it from a more civilized, earlier migrant group.

Antoine Court de Gébelin and the Phoenicians of Dighton Rock

A migrationist link between Phoenician and Native Americans, based on the Dighton Rock inscription, was already circulating at least privately among American antiquarians, as the diary and correspondence of Ezra Stiles has shown, but Antoine Court de Gébelin in 1781 was the first person to make the assertion in print. Court de Gébelin embodied a convergence of rational enquiry and mystical or occult interests that has been called the “Dark Enlightenment,” because of the association with dark arts, but which Dan Edelstein and other scholars have proposed to recast as the “Super-Enlightenment” on the basis that its participants “saw themselves as engaging in the same intellectual projects as their more conformist peers.”³ Court de Gébelin belonged to the esoteric movement, a search for new modes of spiritual enlightenment that arose in tandem with the moral and philosophical Enlightenment that began in early eighteenth-century France. Court de Gébelin was the son of a Swiss, Antoine Court, who was dedicated to

² The earliest use of the term “Beringia” in the journal *Archaeology* appears in 1967, in an advertisement for *The Bering Land Bridge*, edited by D.M. Hopkins (Stanford University Press), which states the volume addresses “the problems and the lessons of Beringia.” *Archaeology* 20, no. 3 (June 1967): 233.

³ Humanities at Stanford, “Dark Side of the Enlightenment,” Stanford Humanities Center <http://humanexperience.stanford.edu/supere>. (accessed July 1, 2014).

re-establishing and reorganizing Protestantism in France following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Antoine Court established a seminary at Lausanne in 1729, from which his son (who appended “de G belin” to his name, from his maternal grandmother) graduated in 1754.⁴ Court de G belin taught at the Lausanne seminary and worked with his father in furthering the revival of the reform church in France, but relocated to Paris in 1763 to focus on literature. He published that year *Les Toulousaines*, which condemned the persecution of Protestants by the parliament of Toulouse, in particular the merchant Jean Calas, who was executed in 1762 after being accused of murdering one of his children who had reputedly converted to Catholicism; Calas’s case was also taken up by Voltaire, and his posthumous innocence was declared by the Conseil du roi in 1765.⁵

Joscelyn Godwin defines the terminology of the esoteric movement: “*esoteric* and its derivatives *esotericist*, *esotericism*, always presuppose the existence of a corresponding *exoteric* body of knowledge or doctrine, such as a scriptural text or a religious ritual. The esotericist’s object is to penetrate the surface meaning in order to reach a secret and superior knowledge.”⁶ It should not surprise us that Dighton Rock’s inscription would come to be probed for an esoteric knowledge beneath the exoteric markings. The strange coincidence is that Westerners were misreading (more to the point, co-opting) an inscription that may have embodied esoteric Indigenous knowledge, such as those preserved in shamanic practices of the Anishinabe Jessakids and the Mid wiwin or Grand Medicine Lodge. Godwin defines the occult sciences as “astrology, alchemy, ritual magic, practical Kabbalah, certain breathing and sexual practices, and various forms of divination. Some developments of Mesmerism and spiritualism may also be

⁴ Mus e virtuel du Protestantisme, “Antoine Court (1695–1760),” <http://www.museeprotestant.org/Pages/Notices.php?scatid=144&cim=0¬iceid=552&lev=1&Lget=FR> (accessed July 1, 2014).

⁵ Mus e virtuel du Protestantisme, “Antoine Court de G belin (1724 ou 1728–1784),” <http://www.museeprotestant.org/notice/antoine-court-de-gebelin-1724-ou-1728-1784> (accessed July 1, 2014). Mus e virtuel du Protestantisme, “L’Affaire Calas,” <http://www.museeprotestant.org/Pages/Notices.php?scatid=139&cim=0¬iceid=560&lev=1&Lget=FR> (accessed July 1, 2014).

⁶ Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), xii.

included.⁷ Court de Gébelin's interests included astrology and divination, and he died in failing health in 1784 in the Paris home of the healer Franz Anton Mesmer, who promoted the concept of animal magnetism, and for whom *mesmerism*, popular in fin-de-siècle British occult revivalism, is named. Court de Gébelin was also a prominent French freemason; he joined the Paris lodge of Neuf soeurs around 1776, when it was founded as a learned society, which Voltaire and Benjamin Franklin also joined.⁸ As the master of the Philadelphia grand lodge, Franklin had helped to establish freemasonry in America by publishing an edition of the basic manual of the English grand lodge in 1734.⁹ Franklin was in Paris in the late 1770s to secure financial and military assistance for the Second Continental Congress when he became involved in Enlightenment and local Masonic activities. Franklin was elected master of Neuf soeurs in May 1779 and served until 1780.¹⁰ At Voltaire's induction in 1778, the French philosopher was guided blindfolded by Franklin, and Court de Gébelin delivered a short lecture on ancient and modern masonic ceremonies.¹¹ In 1781 the Neuf soeurs lodge opened a *musée* (aka Musée de Paris) under Court de Gébelin's direction that offered students a program in the humanities, at which he taught ancient philosophy.¹² The *musée* and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, chartered by the

⁷ Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment*, xii.

⁸ Musée virtuel du Protestantisme, "Antoine Court de Gébelin (1724 ou 1728–1784)." R. William Weisberger, *Speculative Freemasonry and the Enlightenment* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 78.

⁹ James A.M. Anderson and Benjamin Franklin, *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons: containing the history, charges, regulations, &c., of that most ancient and right worshipful fraternity: for the use of the lodges.* [Philadelphia] ; London : Printed, 5723 [i.e., 1723] ; Philadelphia : Re-printed [by Benjamin Franklin] by special order for the use of the brethren in North-America, in the year of masonry 5734, [i.e. 1734]. See also James A.M. Anderson, Benjamin Franklin, and Paul Royster, "The Constitutions of the Free-Masons (1734). An Online Electronic Edition." (1734), Faculty Publications, UNL Libraries, Paper 25 <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libraryscience/25> (accessed July 1, 2014). Editor and depositor Paul Royster in the editorial note states Benjamin Franklin was admitted to the St. John's Lodge in Philadelphia in January 1731 and rose to Master of Masons of Pennsylvania in June 1734, the year in which he published this "fairly faithful reprinting of the London original of eleven years earlier." (93–94).

¹⁰ Weisberger, *Speculative Freemasonry*, 86–87.

¹¹ Weisberger, *Speculative Freemasonry*, 84.

¹² Weisberger, *Speculative Freemasonry*, 90.

Massachusetts legislature in 1780, were “virtually twins,” according to Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie Manuel, as Court de Gébelin, who was admitted to the American Academy in 1781, promoted close ties with Franklin’s support.¹³ I will address freemasonry’s association with attempts to decipher Dighton Rock in greater detail in Chapter 4. For now, I will note Margaret C. Jacob’s definition of the “mentality” of official masonry in Europe during the Enlightenment: “its taste for science, its craving for order and stability, its worldly mysticism, as expressed in fanciful rituals, passwords and mythology, its love of secrecy, and above all its religious devotion to higher powers, be they the Grand Architect, the king or the grand master.”¹⁴

Court de Gébelin advocated a *monde primitif*, by which he meant a root or primal age preceding the recorded history of the Greeks and Romans that was the source of global culture and knowledge. This hyperdiffusionist concern with a primal or golden age was also expressed in Court de Gébelin’s esotericism, which in association with his freemasonry included a belief that solar worship was the foundational religion. Beginning in 1773, Court de Gébelin produced a series of volumes for subscribers, under the title *Monde primitif*, in which he was determined to reconstruct the golden age through language, mythology and symbology. Court de Gébelin would best be remembered for turning the old French card game of tarot into a system of prognostication in the eighth volume of *Monde primitif*, published in 1781, on the basis that the card symbols were (to his mind) rooted in Egyptian mythology.¹⁵ In that same volume he compared Native American and Old World languages in an attempt to show that all of the world’s languages shared a deeper root that pointed back to the *primitif*, or primal, age. Court de Gébelin also knew Lafitau’s scholarship, as he cited him as a source on Indigenous languages of

¹³ Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie Manuel, *James Bowdoin and the Patriot Philosophers*, Memoir 247 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2004), 199.

¹⁴ Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 133.

¹⁵ Antoine Court de Gébelin, *Monde primitif, analysé et comparé avec le monde modern*, vol. 8 (Paris: 1781).

Canada.¹⁶ The similarity between Lafitau's concept of *premier temps* and Court de Gébelin's *monde primitif* is impossible to overlook, particularly when Lafitau had compared the role of the sun in Indigenous beliefs and Old World classical mythology.¹⁷ However distant the worldview of a Masonic Protestant with occult interests might otherwise have been from that of a French Jesuit (whose order, in a fresh round of politically motivated expulsions, had suffered a series of bans that became global under Clement XIV in 1773), Court de Gébelin must have known he shared with the late Lafitau an interest in proving a golden age at the root of all human culture.¹⁸

Assisted by the Marquis François de Barbé Marbois, the French embassy official in Philadelphia who provided to Thomas Jefferson at this time the questionnaire that inspired *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Court de Gébelin sought the assistance of American scholars in composing *Monde primitif*.¹⁹ Harvard's Stephen Sewall sent him at an unknown date a copy of his 1768 drawing of Dighton Rock and nominated him for his American Academy of Arts and Sciences membership in 1781.²⁰ Court de Gébelin quoted the letter (in French) that accompanied Sewall's drawing in the eighth volume of *Monde primitif*.²¹ Sewall stated the convenience of the anchorage and the ease with which the Taunton River (which Court de Gébelin misread as "Jaunston") could be navigated, made Sewall think the inscription was the work of Phoenicians who had been blown there from European shores. Others, Sewall said, thought that the

¹⁶ Court de Gébelin, *Monde primitif*, 8:499.

¹⁷ Lafitau, *Moeurs*, 1:130–137.

¹⁸ The Jesuit order was banned in Holland in 1705, Portugal in 1758, France in 1764, Spain and the Two Sicilies in 1767, Parma and Malta in 1768, and finally globally by Clement XIV in 1773. See Table 1, in Bertrand M. Roehner, "Jesuits and the State: A Comparative Study of their Expulsions (1590–1990)," *Religion* 27 (1997).

¹⁹ Manuel and Manuel, *James Bowdoin*, 197.

²⁰ Manuel and Manuel, *James Bowdoin*, 198.

²¹ For Court de Gébelin's discussion of Dighton Rock, see "Si les Phéniciens ont connu l'Amérique," 57–59, and "Observations sur le monument Américain," 561–568, in *Monde primitif*, vol. 8.

inscription was hieroglyphic rather than alphabetic, and so perhaps was the work of Chinese or Japanese voyagers.²²

Sewall's opinion that Dighton Rock was Phoenician is surprising. On his own drawing of 1768 appeared the words: "I imagine it to be the work of the Indians of North America," created he thought for amusement rather than any serious purpose.²³ In 1769, he had written Ezra Stiles, who was convinced the inscription was Phoenician: "For my part, I confess I have no faith in the significancy of the characters. There is indeed in some of the figures an appearance of design:—I mean that some of the figures seem to be representations of some things that the engraver previously had in mind; for instance, of human faces, & bodies, &c. But the strokes in general appear to me to be drawn at random: So I cannot but think the whole to be a mere *lusus Indorum* [an Indian game]."²⁴ The mutual friend of Sewall and Stiles, John Winthrop, expressed the same Native *lusus* conclusion in 1774. However, a damaged transcription of a lost label, once attached to Sewall's full-size drawing when it hung over the door of Harvard's department of mineralogy, was so near to Court de Gébelin's transcription (albeit minus the Phoenician reference) in its decipherable phrasing that it seems possible Sewall came around to the Phoenician interpretation, if only temporarily.²⁵ A complicating factor in what Sewall thought of Dighton Rock at any given time was his alcoholism, which as had been the case with Isaac Greenwood, doomed his Harvard career. Sewall's dependency became public after the death of his wife in 1783, and he was stripped of his professorship in 1785.²⁶

²² "... 'Cette Inscription attire les curieux depuis un demi-siècle. La commodité de la rade & la facilité qu'on a de naviger sur la riviere jusqu'ici, fait croire que c'est un ouvrage de Phéniciens, qui furent poussés ici de dessus les Côtes de l'Europe: d'autres jugent que c'est une Inscription plutôt hiéroglyphique qu'en caracteres alphabétiques, & qu'ainsi elle peut être l'ouvrage de Navigateurs Chinois ou Japonois.'" Court de Gébelin, *Monde primitif*, 8:59.

²³ Delabarre, "Middle Period," 60.

²⁴ Delabarre, "Middle Period," 60.

²⁵ Delabarre, "Middle Period," 61–62.

²⁶ Harvard University Archives, "Sewall, Stephen, 1734-1804. Papers of Stephen Sewall, 1764-1797: an inventory," Harvard University, <http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~hua57010> (accessed July 1, 2014).

Court de Gébelin assured his readers they would be surprised by the striking similarity between Dighton Rock and the Phoenician inscriptions he reported to have been discovered at Mount Horeb (*aka* Mount Sinai), where Moses was believed to have received the Ten Commandments. He rejected the idea that the inscription might be the work of Indians because the nations of Canada, from what he understood from the writings of Jean de Thévenot (he probably meant André Thévet) and Baron de Lahonton, had nothing approaching an alphabet.²⁷ Court de Gébelin thus applied a simple proof: the marks on Dighton Rock were alphabetical; Indians did not have an alphabet; therefore Dighton Rock was not the work of Indians. Yet Court de Gébelin proceeded to translate it not by reading the Sewall drawing as an alphabetical inscription, but rather as a tableau of pictographic glyphs intermingled with a few alphabetical letters. His glyphs qualified as semasiography, or writing by signs. This is a “languageless” system, comparable to road signs warning of falling rocks with silhouettes of tumbling boulders, which could be interpreted by anyone.²⁸

Court de Gébelin’s reading of Dighton Rock has more details than I need to review. [Fig. 9] He imagined (that is the only word) the rock as a triptych, with panels devised by the Phoenicians in right-to-left order devoted to the past (their arrival in America), the present (their alliance with the people of the country), and the future (their plans to return home). He found an owl, which he explained was the symbol of Minerva, Isis and Astarte, deities of wisdom and the arts. There was also a hawk, which he said symbolized to the Egyptians and Phoenicians the north wind, which would be needed for the return voyage from America to Europe. A bull—John Winthrop and Stephen Sewall had thought there was a quadruped with horns—symbolized agriculture. (I will return to the issue of the horned quadruped in Chapter 4.) On the far left, near a ship preparing to depart, was a bust of the Oracle, on whose right arm

²⁷ Court de Gébelin’s reference to Jean de Thévenot was possibly an error, as he was a mid-seventeenth-century Orientalist who wrote about the Middle and Near East. Gébelin may have been thinking of the sixteenth-century French royal geographer, André Thévet, who did write about New World peoples.

²⁸ See Michael D. Coe, *Breaking the Maya Code* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 18–19, for a discussion of semasiography, including its relation to road signs.

was a butterfly, symbol of resurrection and return. In the centre panel Court de Gébélín could detect a vessel, complete with prow, mast, stern deck and steering rudder. He somehow teased from the lines of Sewall's drawing symbols for each nation: a horse (which was also linked to Neptune) for the Phoenicians, and a beaver for the local people; the two animals were carrying banners or streamers that floated in the wind.

There is something endearing about the way Court de Gébélín's interpretation was wholly unlike the approaches taken by other Western interpreters. The learned men of New England stressed the ignorant savagery of Indians, and were intrigued by a second-hand story of a battle between Indians and strange men in a floating house on the Taunton River. Court de Gébélín, as wrongheaded and misguided as he was, had approached the inscription in a way no one had. He saw no violence, instead amity and equal standing between the two groups. The goodwill between the horse and the beaver, he explained, was proof of the intelligence of both nations. The favourable welcome of the strangers was due to the hospitality and virtue in all nations, as well as to how wondrous these strangers appeared in the eyes of *des Sauvages de l'Amérique*. So it was, Court de Gébélín lectured, that when the Spanish arrived, these same *sauvages* regarded them as gods, but these Spaniards were beneath those who left us this rare monument.²⁹

Although a disaster of scholarship, Court de Gébélín's interpretation can be read as an expression of Rousseauian idealism in the way it portrayed Native Americans as peace-loving, intelligent, and noble in their goodwill. Yet with Court de Gébélín's attack on the Spanish in the New World, one can also read the entire translation effort for Dighton Rock as an elaborate anti-Catholic diatribe, which would not have been out of character for a Protestant Mason who had condemned the persecution and execution of Calas.

²⁹ "...mais que ces Espagnols sont au-dessous de ceux qui nous ont laissé ce rare Monument!" Court de Gébélín, *Monde primitif*, 8:563.

Ezra Stiles, Gothicism, and “God’s American Israel”

Antoine Court de Gébelin’s decipherment of Dighton Rock as a Phoenician relic in 1781 was brought to the attention of Ezra Stiles, who had become president of Yale College in 1778; he was also made a counsellor of the American Philosophical Society and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in January 1781.³⁰ Samuel Williams, who held the Hollisian chair at Harvard (Stiles’ friend John Winthrop had died in 1778), asked Stiles for his thoughts on Court de Gébelin’s opinion that the inscription was Punic or Phoenician. Stiles noted his reply in his diary in May 1782: “I doubt it, hav^g compared it with all the oriental Paleography.”³¹ Stiles presumably had accepted his late friend John Winthrop’s assessment of 1774 that it was plausibly Native American. This was, however, a momentary reversal, as he returned to the Phoenician attribution, one year later, in delivering his “Election Sermon” (*aka* “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor”) to the general assembly of Connecticut, on May 8, 1783.³² Stiles incorporated Dighton Rock into his vision of “God’s American Israel”³³ as a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. (The idea that America was God’s chosen land, a New Jerusalem, of course was not new. Increase Mather, for example, in 1676 called New England “the English Israel, which is seated in these goings down of the sun.”³⁴) Stiles was regarded as a tolerant man for his time and place, at least where diversity of faith was concerned, but there was a limit to his inclusivity.³⁵ America, now free of

³⁰ Holmes, *The Life of Ezra Stiles*, 272.

³¹ Stiles, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, 3:19–20.

³² Ezra Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” ed. Reiner Smolinski, Paper 41, Electronic Texts in American Studies, Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/41> (accessed July 1, 2014).

³³ Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” 7.

³⁴ Increase Mather, *A Brief History of the War with the Indians in New-England* (1676), reprinted in Increase Mather, *The History of King Philip’s War* (Boston: Samuel G. Drake, 1862), 46.

³⁵ Morgan, *The Gentle Puritan*, 111.

Britain, was where the vanguard of the most favoured children of Noah's son Japheth (or Japhet, as Stiles preferred), the white Protestants of Europe, were multiplying, and the Indians, cursed as the children of Canaan, were meant to live in servitude. Stiles had crafted a theory of American antiquity that brought Rudbeks' and Mallet's Gothicism to bear on the nature of Native Americans and the God-given destiny of the new American republic.

Stiles explained that Scythia had been the residence of the family of Japheth. One branch spread westward into Europe, while another branch became the ancient kingdoms of Media and Persia. The prophecy also was being fulfilled in "a new enlargement in the country *where Canaan shall be his servant*, at least unto tribute."³⁶ This new enlargement for Japheth was the colonization of America. As for the subservient Canaanites: "I rather consider the American Indians as Canaanites of the expulsion of Joshua."³⁷ But how did the American Indians become the cursed Canaanites? After all, according to the book of Deuteronomy, when God called his people out of slavery in Egypt to reclaim the Promised Land, he commanded them under Joshua to kill all members of seven nations, the Canaanites included, occupying it.³⁸ As it happened, the idea that the Indians might be Canaanites was an old one. Marc Lescarbot in 1609 recounted the idea that Native Americans were Canaanites punished by God. When driven from their lands by the children of Israel, they took their boats and at the mercy of the seas were tossed to America.³⁹ Thorowgood similarly had written in 1650 how some thought the Indians were "a remnant of those Cananites that fled out of that Land when the feare of Israel approaching thither fell upon them."⁴⁰ According to Stiles, one branch "of the canaanitish expulsions might take the resolution of

³⁶ Stiles, "The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783)," 10.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ "And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them." Deut. 7:2 [AV]

³⁹ Marc Lescarbot, *History of New France [Works]*, vol. 1., ed. W.L. Grant (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1907), 234.

⁴⁰ Thorowgood, "Americans are Jews," in *Jewes in America*, 3.

the ten tribes.”⁴¹ In other words, some of the Canaanites were not destroyed, but instead were dispersed in the manner of the Israelites who later disappeared with the Assyrian conquest of northern Judea. Native Americans were *not* these ten lost tribes, but they conformed to the migrationist description of lost-tribe theorists like Thorowgood. Stiles may have been influenced by the work of James Adair, an Irish-born trader who spent several decades among nations of the American southeast, and in 1775 published *The History of the American Indians*, more than 200 pages of which was given over to his exhaustive arguments for their Israelite origin, based on comparisons of religious practices, civil and martial customs, and language. Adair argued for a migration “in early times, before sects had sprung up among the Jews, which was soon after their prophets ceased, and before arts and sciences had arrived to any perfection.”⁴² Adair cited the Russian discoveries under Vitus Bering as proof that Asia and North America were narrowly separated, and argued that by negotiating this strait “it was very practicable for the inhabitants to go to this extensive new world.”⁴³

It was important to Stiles to herd all Native Americans into the role of Canaanites cursed by Noah to be subservient to the whites, and not be descendants of the lost tribes. To that end he sent his Canaanites along the same route others thought the lost tribes used to reach America. Some became “the Tchuschi and Tungusi Tartars about Kamschatka and Tscukotskoinoss in the north-east of Asia: thence, by water, passing over from island to island through the northern Archipelago to America, became the scattered Sachemdoms of these northern regions.”⁴⁴ All American Indians, Stiles held, from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego, were one kind of people, and they were the same as the people still found in northeast Asia. Other Canaanites became Phoenicians, and struck out westward in the Mediterranean. Some of

⁴¹ Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” 11.

⁴² James Adair, *The History of the American Indians* (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1775), 218.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 219.

⁴⁴ Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” 11.

them “wafted across the Atlantic, land in the tropical regions, and commence the settlements of Mexico and Peru.”⁴⁵

Stiles added a novel twist of Gothicism to the idea of colonizing migrations to America. The multiple migrations of interest to him were made not by ancestral Native Americans, but rather by ancestral whites of northern Europe. Stiles recounted several waves of Japheth: the visit of the Welsh prince Madoc in 1170, “the certain colonization from Norway, A.D. 1001, as well as the certain Christianizing of Greenland in the ninth century,” and the most recent colonization from Europe.⁴⁶ He also remarked on

the visit of still greater antiquity by the Phoenicians, who charged the Dighton rock and other rocks in Narragansett-bay with Punic inscriptions, remaining to this day. Which last I myself have repeatedly seen and taken off at large, as did Professor Sewall. He has lately transmitted a copy of his inscription to M. Gebelin of the Parisian academy of sciences, who comparing them with the Punic paleography, judges them punic, and has interpreted them as denoting, that the ancient Carthaginians once visited these distant regions.⁴⁷

Although Stiles did not specifically say so, he was describing and justifying a *second* expulsion of the Canaanites by Joshua, this time in the promised land of “God’s American Israel.” He stopped short of calling for the genocide that God had commanded Joshua to inflict upon the original Canaanites, in the original promised land, and limited himself to the idea of their subservience due to the curse of Noah

⁴⁵ Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” 10–11.

⁴⁶ Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” 12. The printed version of Stiles’s sermon gave the date of 1001 for Madoc but this was likely a misprint.

⁴⁷ Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” 12–13.

upon Ham's son, Canaan, in the manner of natural slavery described by Aristotle and imposed upon Tartars (and their New World analogues) by Montesquieu. Stiles was certainly a literalist where Indigenous subservience was concerned. On June 11, 1782, Stiles noted in his diary: "This day my son brought home an Indian boy from Killingworth bound to me till aet, 21." In the indenture drawn up on June 10, Ruth Waukeet (or Wauket), "an Indian Squaw Widow," agreed to bind her nine-year-old son Aaron to Stiles.⁴⁸

Stiles was also a land investor, and as he assured his audience, "The protestant Europeans have generally bought the native right of soil, as far as they have settled, and paid the value ten fold; and are daily increasing the value of the remaining Indian territory a thousand fold; and in this manner we are a constant increasing revenue to the Sachems and original Lords of the Soil. How much must the value of lands, reserved to the natives of North and South-America, be increased to remaining Indians, by the inhabitation of two or three hundred millions of Europeans?"⁴⁹ Although Stiles estimated that the blood of whites had been "transfused" into two million Native Americans, he was confident that the demographic growth of whites would overwhelm them, as well as blacks. Stiles had published an anti-slavery pamphlet, *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans*, in 1776, but owned until 1778 a West African slave whom he had acquired as a ten-year-old boy in 1756 through shipping rum to the Guinea coast. (Stiles freed the slave, who he had named Newport, when he became president of Yale in 1778, but when Newport approached him for a servant's position in 1782, Stiles hired him on the condition that Newport's two-year-old son was bound to him until age twenty-four; Newport was still working for Stiles when Stiles died in 1795.)⁵⁰

"We are increasing with great rapidity; and the Indians, as well as the million Africans in America, are decreasing as rapidly," Stiles preached to the Connecticut assembly. "Both left to

⁴⁸ Stiles, *Literary Diary*, 3:25.

⁴⁹ Stiles, "The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783)," 8–9.

⁵⁰ Morgan, *The Gentle Puritan*, 125.

themselves, in this way diminishing, may gradually vanish: and thus an unrighteous SLAVERY may at length, in God's good providence, be abolished and cease in the land of LIBERTY.”⁵¹ One cannot help but conclude that Stiles was looking forward to the day when blacks and Native Americans would vanish from America, leaving it a promised land for the white descendants of Japheth. In his deeply racialized history of the peopling of North America, the multiple migrations that mattered were those of Japheth's white European progeny, which had begun long before Columbus.

Lort Rebuffs Court de Gébelin; Vallancey Helps Reshape American Antiquity

On May 16, 1783, eight days after delivering his Election Sermon, Stiles noted in his itinerary: “Visited Dighton Rock charged with Inscriptions & Character which M. Gebelin of the Acad^y of Paris says is Phoenecian or Carthaginian.”⁵² The Reverend Michael Lort, a member of the Royal Society and a vice-president of the Society of Antiquaries of London, mounted an assault on the Phoenician attribution with a paper read before the Society of Antiquaries on November 23, 1786.⁵³ Lort knew nothing about Ezra Stiles' support for the idea; he was chiefly concerned with Court de Gébelin's interpretation in *Monde primitif* in 1781. Lort confessed that when he first saw Court de Gébelin's printed interpretation of Sewall's drawing, “I own I could conceive of it as nothing more than the rude scrawls of some of the Indian tribes, commemorating their engagements, their marches, or their hunting parties, such as are to be seen in different accounts of these nations, and very lately exhibited to this Society by a member of it.”⁵⁴ Lort was referring to a letter from William Bray read before the Society of Antiquaries on March 1, 1781,

⁵¹ Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” 14.

⁵² Stiles, *Literary Diary*, 3:72.

⁵³ John D. Pickles, “Lort, Michael (1724/5–1790)”, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004. Online edn. 2007. <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/view/article/17022> (accessed July 2, 2014).

⁵⁴ Lort, “Account of an antient Inscription in North America,” 297.

which discussed a dendroglyph made on a tree trunk by a Delaware warrior.⁵⁵ [Fig. 10] Lort dismissed Court de Gébelin's interpretation of the rock, proposing the Frenchman had been in the midst of his researches to prove the Phoenicians reached all parts of the globe when he received the drawing and letter from Sewall: "He therefore falls into raptures on receiving this additional proof and support of his system."⁵⁶ Lort, in contrast, heralded the efforts to decipher Dighton Rock by Charles Vallancey, "a learned member of this Society."⁵⁷

Even by the relatively liberal theorizing standards of the late eighteenth century, Charles Vallancey held eccentric historical ideas. According to Norman Vance, who contributed his entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* in 2004, despite Vallancey being elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1784, and the politician Henry Flood wanting him to be the first holder of an endowed chair of Irish at Trinity College, Dublin, many contemporaries doubted his scholarly judgment and Phoenician notions: "The great orientalist Sir William Jones, who gave him assistance with Indian matters [ie. pertaining to India], privately thought his work 'very stupid'."⁵⁸ Norman Moore, who wrote Vallancey's entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography, 1885–1900*, dismissed entirely his works on Irish history: "Their facts are never trustworthy and their theories are invariably extravagant." Moore consigned him to a school of writers "who have had some influence in retarding real studies, but have added nothing to knowledge."⁵⁹ Vallancey also developed a reputation for treating his critics arrogantly. In 1802 Edward Ledwith wrote a fellow Irish antiquarian, Mallet's translator, Thomas Percy, despairing of "Vallancey's

⁵⁵ William Bray, "Observations on the Indian method of Picture-Writing," in *Archaeologia*, vol. 6, 159–162 (London: The Society of Antiquaries of London, 1782).

⁵⁶ Lort, "Account of an antient Inscription in North America," 298.

⁵⁷ Lort, "Account of an antient Inscription in North America," 299.

⁵⁸ Norman Vance, "Vallancey, Charles (c.1726–1812)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/view/article/28051> (accessed July 2, 2014).

⁵⁹ Norman Moore, "Vallancey, Charles (1721–1812)," *Dictionary of National Biography, 1885–1900*, vol. 58.

ungentlemenlike treatment of every writer dissenting from him, and his monstrous absurdities.”⁶⁰ Vance nevertheless proposed that while Vallancey was often wrongheaded, he was not always wrong: “Modern scholarship has given him some credit for anticipating more scientific theories of Indo-European culture and for realizing the value of myth as a form of historical evidence.” Most important, Vallancey commanded the attention of his scholarly contemporaries, was admitted to the leading philosophical, scientific and antiquarian societies, and, as I will show, influenced the perceptions of Native Americans in the nineteenth century. That influence was far from salutary.

Vallancey spent his entire professional life in the British military as an engineer, rising to the rank of lieutenant-general in 1798. As an ensign in the 10th regiment of foot, Vallancey had been sent to Ireland around 1750, where he settled for life and developed a romantic attachment to the past of his adopted land.⁶¹ Vallancey never visited North America, but he held a membership in the American Philosophical Society and was convinced of pre-Columbian connections between the Old World and the New. In 1772 Vallancey published at Dublin *An Essay on the Antiquity of the Irish Language*, which he updated the following year with *A Grammar of the Ibero-Celtic or Irish Language*.⁶² In *An Essay*, Vallancey argued for the Phoenician roots of the Irish language, the result of Ireland’s invasion by Carthaginians. He made a more ambitious case in *A Grammar* for “Ibero-Celtic” being a basis for languages worldwide, including the Algonquian language family. It’s possible Vallancey was encouraged to revise his ideas in *An Essay* by adding the Phoenician materials in *A Grammar* by the appearance of

⁶⁰ Ledwitch to Percy, Aug. 28, 1802, in John Bowyer Nichols ed., *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 7 (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1848), 824. The opening sentences of the Dedication of *A Grammar* of 1773 captured Vallancey in his highest state of dudgeon: “The repeated indignities of late years cast on the history and antiquities of this once famed and learned island, by many writers of Great Britain, have involuntarily drawn forth the following work. The puerile excuse heretofore offered by the invidious critics, of the want of means to learn the language of the country, whose history they presumed to censure, must from henceforth be rejected.” Charles Vallancey, “Dedication to Sir Lucius O’Brien, Bart., President of the Society of Antiquaries in Ireland, in *A Grammar*, unpaginated.

⁶¹ For biographical details, see Monica Nevin, “General Charles Vallancey 1725–1812,” *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 123 (1993): 19–58.

⁶² Charles Vallancey, *An Essay on the Antiquity of the Irish Language* (Dublin: S. Powell, 1772); *A Grammar of the Ibero-Celtic, or Irish Language* (Dublin: R. Marchbank, 1773).

Samuel Mather's pamphlet, *An attempt to shew, that America must be known to the ancients*, which was published in Boston in 1773 and advocated a Phoenician visit to America.⁶³ Vallancey at least asserted in *A Grammar* familiarity with Lafitau's *Moeurs des sauvages américains*: "Father Lafitau has endeavoured to show, from an affinity, or rather an agreement of customs, that some of the Americans are descended from the *Pelasgi*; which is still coming to the same point, for the *Pelasgi* were of Phoenician extract."⁶⁴ This Vallancey sentence however was a near-verbatim lift from "A Dissertation on the Peopling of America," in *Additions to the Universal History* of 1750.⁶⁵ If Vallancey actually read Lafitau, he did not heed his warnings about the reliability of Indigenous vocabularies in Baron de Lahontan's *Mémoires de l'Amérique septentrionale* of 1703, which according to David M. Hayne provided "a lively geographical account of New France, followed by an anthropological study of its Indian inhabitants and completed by a linguistic commentary and glossary of the Algonquian language."⁶⁶ Vallancey relied on Lahontan in

⁶³ Samuel Mather, *An attempt to shew, that America must be known to the ancients; made at the request, and to gratify the curiosity, of an inquisitive gentleman* (Boston: J. Leverett and H. Knox, 1773). Samuel Mather was the son of Cotton Mather. He reviewed the assortment of pre-Columbian theories of arrivals in America, with particular attention to the case for the Phoenicians. He thought it "not at all improbable" the idea that "some of them might in Process of Time come to America by the Way of the Sea and settle here: For they were mightily for Navigation and Trade and Commerce." (10) Annette Kolodny has argued Mather's pamphlet outlined a "justifying providential history" for revolution on the eve of the American rebellion. *In Search of First Contact: The Vikings of Vinland, the Peoples of the Dawnland, and the Anglo-American Anxiety of Discovery* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 26–31.

⁶⁴ Vallancey, *A Grammar*, vii.

⁶⁵ "Father Lafitau has endeavoured to shew, from an affinity, or rather an agreement of customs, that some of the Americans are descended from the *Pelasgi*, or first planters of Greece, who were probably of Phoenician extraction." *Additions to the Universal history, in seven volumes, in folio* (London: printed for T. Osborne, in Gray's-Inn; A. Millar, in the Strand; and J. Osborn, in Pater-Noster Row, 1750), 243. Vallancey even mentioned the support for a Phoenician origin by "the *Universal History*" in *A Grammar* (vi). *Additions to the Universal History* considered it probable that some Native Americans were descended from Phoenicians or Egyptians and conducted cross-cultural comparisons that appear indebted to *The American Traveller* of 1743 (*Additions to the Universal History*, 242).

⁶⁶ David M. Hayne, "LOM D'ARCE DE LAHONTAN, LOUIS-ARMAND DE, Baron de Lahontan," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 2, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/lom_d_arce_de_lahontan_louis_armand_de_2E.html (accessed January 20, 2014). Lafitau found Lahontan's additional glossary of about fifty Huron words terse, and most of the examples mangled. Lafitau thought Lahontan's Algonquian glossary, however much longer it was than his Huron one, was no more accurate, and proposed Lahontan had included it in *Mémoires* to give the public the impression he understood perfectly the languages and customs of the *sauvages*. Lafitau, *Moeurs*, 2:483–84.

compiling a comparison between Irish words and the language “understood by all the Indian nations, except two,” to prove that Algonquian was related to the old “Iberno-Celtic, or *bearla feni*,” which in turn he asserted was derived from Phoenician. “The Algonkins say, they are the most ancient and most noble tribe on that continent: their name in Irish indicates as much, *cine algan*, or *algan cine*, i.e. the noble tribe; *all gain cine*, i.e. the most renowned nation, which is derived from three Phoenician words of the same signification...*al gand gins*.”⁶⁷

Lafitau had been agreeable to the idea that the Phoenicians had reached the Americas, which he inferred from the writings of classical scholars (Thorowgood in 1650 had also noted the theory of a Phoenician arrival), but Lafitau did not see them as the progenitors of the Indigenous inhabitants. Lafitau thought it possible humankind had peopled the Americas before the Flood, and was certain that the Americas were occupied soon after it, long before any Phoenicians came along.⁶⁸ Unlike Lafitau, Vallancey was initially leaning toward a cultural connection that was fundamentally migrationist rather than root-civilization diffusionist. Seconding the opinions of the German scholar Georgius Hornius (Georg Horn) in *De originibus Americanis* (The Hague: 1652), and the Dutch scholar Roberti Comtei Nortmanni (Robert Comte) in *De Origine Gentium Americanarum Dissertatio* (Amsterdam, 1644) that the Phoenicians made several voyages to America (as *Additions to the Universal History* noted in the case of Hornius), would prove awkward for Vallancey in the 1780s.⁶⁹ In *A Grammar*, Vallancey included Pehr Kalm’s observations from the Forster translation (which had appeared in 1770), paraphrasing him: “That North America was formerly inhabited by a nation more versed in science, and more civilized than the present, is certain from the late discoveries of Mons. Verandrier and his companions...” Kalm’s descriptions of the stone pillars “perfectly answers to our Clogh-oirs, at this day visible all over Ireland,”

⁶⁷ Vallancey, *A Grammar*, iv.

⁶⁸ Thorowgood, *Jewes in America*, 24. Lafitau articulated his main ideas about the peopling of the Americas in *Moeurs*, 1:27–41.

⁶⁹ *Additions to the Universal History*, 241. For Robert Comte’s dissertation, see Wright, “Origin of American Aborigines,” 273, fn52.

and Vallancey went on to recount the discovery of the smaller inscribed stone that was sent to France for study.⁷⁰ Vallancey wasn't quite sure yet what to make of all this, and he had experienced a theoretical near-miss with Lafitau. If he read Lafitau closely, it was volume 4, which made cross-cultural comparisons based on language, but Lafitau in the first few dozen pages of volume 1 had made his case for multiple migrations out of Asia across a Bering land bridge, with newcomers displacing more sophisticated, earlier arrivals.

By 1786, Vallancey had significantly revised his ideas, with Dighton Rock as his inspiration. "Observations on the American Inscription" was read before the Society of Antiquaries on February 9, 1786 and printed in the eighth volume of *Archaeologia* in 1787. (It is unclear whether the paper was read by Vallancey or on his behalf, perhaps by Lort.) Vallancey was at the height of his scholarly authority: he had received an LL.D from Dublin University in 1781, was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1784 and a fellow of the Royal Society in 1786.⁷¹ Vallancey launched a rejoinder to Court de Gébelin's Phoenician theory for Dighton Rock by raining contempt on him, and by making a major error. He could not believe the French mythographer had read Isaac Greenwood's 1730 letter that accompanied his drawing of Dighton Rock, "or M. Gebelin would not have hazarded an explanation so repugnant to all history. Many letters passed between me and Gebelin on this subject; at length he acknowledged his doubts; in short, tacitly gave up the point."⁷² But Court de Gébelin had worked from Stephen Sewall's 1768 drawing, not Greenwood's of 1730. There is also reason to doubt that Court de Gébelin ever capitulated to Vallancey, as Court de Gébelin died in 1784 and therefore was in no position to refute Vallancey's haughty and triumphant contention in 1786. It is difficult even to imagine a lively exchange of "many letters" between Vallancey in Ireland and Court de Gébelin in France between the publication of *Monde primitif* in 1781 and Gébelin's death in 1784, in the midst of the American

⁷⁰ Vallancey, *A Grammar*, vii.

⁷¹ Nevin, "General Charles Vallancey 1725–1812," 30.

⁷² Vallancey, "Observations on the American Inscription," 302–303.

Revolution, when Britain and France were enemies, and when Vallancey was engaged as a British military engineer in ensuring Ireland was prepared for a French invasion. Court de Gébelin otherwise left behind no misgivings about his Dighton Rock interpretation. During their exchange, Court de Gébelin, according to Vallancey, wrote: “You have proved the Algonkin language of America (now almost lost[?]) to have been the same with the old Scytho-Irish, and *that* you have proved to be Punic; ergo the Punic and the Algonkin were the same.” The argument, Vallancey stated, “is futile and puerile.”⁷³ This was extraordinary, as Court de Gébelin had just summarized Vallancey’s own argument in *A Grammar* in 1773, a work Vallancey had reissued unaltered in 1782.

Vallancey probably felt he had no choice but disown his own work, including his endorsement of Hornius’s assertions of Phoenicians having sailed to America (and was loathe to admit he had changed his mind) as he was confronting the considerable critical and popular success of volume 1 of *Arctic Zoology*, published in 1784 by Thomas Pennant, a renowned Welsh antiquarian, naturalist and travel writer.⁷⁴ Pennant had been elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1754 and of the Royal Society in 1767, and his major works (first editions) included *British Zoology* (1766), *Indian Geology* (1769), *Synopsis of the Quadrupeds* (1771; revised as *A History of the Quadrupeds* in 1781), *Genera of Birds* (1773) and *Arctic Zoology*. Published in three volumes, from 1784 to 1787, *Arctic Zoology* according to Charles W.J. Withers “was one of the first major studies of the zoology of the northern hemisphere and was widely acclaimed: French and German editions appeared in 1787 and 1789. Pennant was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society in 1791 for his contribution to American zoology.”⁷⁵ Pennant argued that because of the recent discoveries of the third voyage (1776–1779) of Captain James Cook in the north Pacific, “every other system of the population of the New World is now overthrown...[I]n the place of

⁷³ Vallancey, “Observations on the American Inscription,” 302–303.

⁷⁴ Thomas Pennant, *Arctic Zoology*, vol. 1 (London: Henry Hughs, 1784).

⁷⁵ Charles W. J. Withers, “Pennant, Thomas (1726–1798),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., October 2007. <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/view/article/21860> (accessed July 9, 2014).

imaginary hypotheses, the real place of migration is uncontrovertibly pointed out.”⁷⁶ Pennant was not the first theorist to posit a multiple-migration scenario, or to conclude the ancestors of Native Americans had reached the New World via the Bering Strait, but he packaged these ideas as a scientifically respectable proposition, shorn of Biblical allusions. Pennant leveraged Cook’s discoveries in asserting there was one route, with multiple migrations, and there were no wandering Israelites. While leaving open the possibility (as Lafitau had) that a few migrants may have arrived from other routes, including Japan, Pennant argued the Americas could only have been populated via the Bering Strait, whether by boat or across a land bridge he proposed was later destroyed by volcanism, and only by waves of migrants from different Old World nations: “The inhabitants of the New [World] do not consist of the offspring of a single nation: different people, at several periods, arrived there; and it is impossible to say, that any one is now to be found on the original spot of its colonization. It is impossible, with the lights which we have so recently received, to admit that *America* could receive (at least the bulk of them) from any other place than eastern *Asia*.”⁷⁷ Pennant made the same ethnographic comparisons between scalping practices of Scythians and Native Americans that Lafitau had in 1724, but relied additionally on observations made of the “newly-discovered *Americans* about Nootka Sound,”⁷⁸ which had been visited by Cook’s third expedition in 1778 and described in Captain James King’s official voyage account in 1784.⁷⁹ Pennant suggested the “Five Nations” (Haudenosaunee) derived from the *Tschutski*, who were “from that fine race of Tartars, the Kabardinski, or inhabitants of Kabarda.”⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Pennant, *Arctic Zoology*, 1:clxvii

⁷⁷ Pennant, *Arctic Zoology*, 1:clxi.

⁷⁸ Pennant, *Arctic Zoology*, 1:clxi.

⁷⁹ James Cook and James King, *A voyage to the Pacific Ocean . . .* 3 vols. and atlas (London, 1784). Cook was credited posthumously with volumes 1 and 2; volume 3 was credited to King.

⁸⁰ Pennant, *Arctic Zoology*, 1:clxiii.

Arctic Zoology was a formidable rebuke to transatlantic migrationist theorists and their reliance on classical authors like Diodorus, and (without addressing it) to the progeny-of-Japheth multiple migration of European whites extolled by Stiles in 1783. *Arctic Zoology*'s enthusiastic critical reception may have been why Vallancey so bizarrely disowned his own support of a Phoenician arrival, which he had republished in 1782, in his published rebuke of Court de G ebelin. Having missed or failed to grasp the utility of the multiple-migration Beringia scenario when Lafitau proposed it in the first volume of *Moeurs*, Vallancey presumably took inspiration from Pennant and forged a fresh explanation for the origin of Dighton Rock. First, he had to deal with the nuisance of Court de G ebelin's Phoenician theory. Vallancey unearthed the crude Mather woodcut from the 1714 issue of *Philosophical Transactions* and observed: "In this drawing there are no human figures, or any thing that could possibly lead M. Gebelin to the explanation he has given. It is evidently an inscription free from hieroglyphics." He then took note of the story of the wooden house full of strangers coming up the Taunton River, which he thought must have referred to the arrival of the English rather than Phoenicians.⁸¹

Having absorbed the opinion of Isaac Greenwood that Native Americans were too stupid and lazy to have carved the inscription, Vallancey formulated a compatible theory that recalled Pennant's (and Lafitau's) fundamental proposal of multiple migrations across the Bering Strait from Asia: the inscription was "the work of a race of people who arrived on this great continent prior to the present race of Indian savages." Vallancey disingenuously buried his own work in remarking, "I have read somewhere of an obelisk and inscription having been discovered many days journey N. W. of Quebec," which was a reference to his own quotation in *A Grammar* of Pehr Kalm's La V erendrye story. Had he cited *A Grammar*, which he had so recently reprinted, he might well have triggered antiquarian memories of his Algonquian-Phoenician theory that Court de G ebelin had flung back at him. Vallancey moved on to a recording of an "inscription made by a priestess of the Michmac Indians" that had been copied in 1766, which was further proof "that letters or characters did once flourish with this people." Vallancey floated

⁸¹ Vallancey, "Observations on the American Inscription," 302-03.

the possibility that the Mi'kmaw pictographic system may have been created by proselytizing Jesuit missionaries, but he believed the hieroglyphic aspects originated with the Mi'kmaq and evidently thought this pointed in the direction not of Egyptian visitors but rather to a diffusionist Old World heritage borrowed from a learned people who had migrated across the Bering Strait and left the script behind for the Mi'kmaq to use.⁸²

Vallancey maintained that Armenian-Scythians spread eastward into Tibet and then into Siberia, eventually crossing over to America from Kamchatka. Pennant too had pointed to the Scythians and a crossing from eastern Siberia, but Vallancey was mute on this precedent. As well, rather than grant the Welshman an iota of credit where the application of Cook's discoveries were concerned, Vallancey claimed to have discussed them directly with Captain James King, which seems doubtful, as King had relocated to Nice in 1783, before the appearance of *Arctic Zoology*, to seek relief for his tuberculosis, and died there in November 1784.⁸³ Vallancey then moved on to Strahlenberg, selecting one plate from his book "which bears so strong a resemblance of the New England inscription" that "there can be little doubt of their being written by the same people. These are also written on perpendicular rocks, forming the banks of rivers; a strong instance of that people having been navigators."⁸⁴ Beyond the fact that the

⁸² Much pseudohistorical ink has been spilled on similarities between Mi'kmaw pictographic writing and Egyptian hieroglyphics. I believe it is possible that Jesuit missionaries in the late seventeenth century, familiar with the eccentric published efforts of their contemporary Jesuit scholar Athanasius Kircher to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs (*Oedipus Aegyptiacus* appeared in three volumes from 1652 to 1654), melded Kircher's examples with existing Mi'kmaw glyphs to create a script for the Mi'kmaw language. For Kircher's deciphering efforts, see Daniel Stolzenberg, *Egyptian Oedipus: Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). David L. Schmidt and Murdena Marshall discuss the origin of the Mi'kmaw writing system, in *Mi'kmaq Hieroglyphic Prayers: Readings in North America's First Indigenous Script* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 2006). They cite Mi'kmaw oral tradition that the glyph system, *komqwejwi'kasikl*, existed before the arrival of Europeans and was used for inscribing maps and tribal records (4), but do not address the possibility that the Jesuit priests may have drawn on Kircher to add symbols for terms and concepts required for their proselytizing. This to me is a far simpler explanation for quasi-Egyptian glyphs in the Mi'kmaw glyphic system than a visit to Atlantic Canada by ancient Egyptians.

⁸³ J. K. Laughton, "King, James (*bap.* 1750, *d.* 1784)," rev. Andrew C. F. David, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2014, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/view/article/15567> (accessed July 6, 2014).

⁸⁴ Vallancey, "Observations on the American Inscription," 305.

inscription in the selected Strahlenberg plate bore no resemblance to Dighton Rock, Vallancey lacked the ethnographic resources from America to notice the resemblance between Native American pictographs and Strahlenberg's illustration of a Siberian shaman's drum in Table 6.⁸⁵ [Figs. 11, 12]

Vallancey concluded that Dighton Rock was not made by Phoenicians or Carthaginians, or by the ancestors of living Native Americans, "but by the same race of people, who formerly possessed Siberia, and passed from hence to the great continent of America; and that these were a lettered people, and skilled in all the sciences of those ages, but have been mostly destroyed, in the northern part of America, by great hords [sic] of rambling Tartars, who followed them, and now form the savage Indians; and that many of the original people are to be found in South America."⁸⁶

Vallancey had not strayed far from Lafitau's idea that the most advanced migrants to the Americas were the first to arrive, but I suspect he also was familiar with the work of Montesquieu, as Vallancey's Tartar hordes might have wandered out of *De l'Esprit des loix* on another binge of brutish, enslaved and enslaving conquest. Vallancey also surely would have been familiar with the major work by Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon, a giant of natural history elected to the Académie française in 1753. In the third volume of his *Histoire naturelle* (1749) Buffon took up Montesquieu's ideas on environmental determinism and ventured into fresh terrain on the degeneration theory.⁸⁷ Buffon's theory was proto-evolutionary, holding that life forms, including humans, could degenerate under different climates.

Buffon decided that light-skinned, civilized peoples found between latitudes 40 and 50 north in Europe

⁸⁵ According to Michael Oppitz, "If one were to picture a drum drawing most characteristically 'shamanic,' a figuration would probably come to mind similar to the one published in 1730 by von Strahlenberg, the Swedish traveler to Siberia: a microcosmic rendering of a tripartite universe, applied in horizontal strata onto the circular surface of the drum's membrane." This signature style of drum (labeled *D* in Table 6 of Strahlenberg) "was prevalent among the Turkic Barabins of the southwestern Siberian steppe, and with slight modifications, it was also prevalent among the peoples of the Altai Mountains." Michael Oppitz, "Drawings on Shamanic Drums," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 22 (Autumn 1992): 63.

⁸⁶ Vallancey, "Observations on the American Inscription," 306.

⁸⁷ Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon, *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière, avec la description du cabinet du roy*, vol. 3 (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1749). For his essential biography, see "Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon." Académie française. <http://www.academie-francaise.fr/les-immortels/georges-louis-leclerc-comte-de-buffon> (accessed June 30, 2014).

were the ideal human form. This allowed him to ignore the British Isles and Scandinavia, but naturally to include France.⁸⁸ Buffon in contrast with Montesquieu was a monogenist and did not doubt that Native Americans were “the same as us,” at least in being human.⁸⁹ Their resemblance to Tartars suggested they left this Asian population long ago, and the recent discoveries made by Vitus Bering, Buffon advised, left no doubt as to the possibility of a migratory connection between the continents, although he also imagined transpacific migrations.⁹⁰ The Tartars according to Buffon were a degenerated type; the ones that lived around latitude 55 along the Volga River were “rude, stupid, and brutal,” and had almost no concept of religion.⁹¹ Native American groups from which they were descended might vary in being “more or less savage, more or less cruel, more or less brave,” but they were all “equally stupid, equally ignorant, equally lacking arts and industry.”⁹² Buffon believed that as Native Americans only had a very small number of ideas, they also only had a very small number of expressions, so that they could only deploy the most general words and address most common subjects.⁹³ Buffon appeared to be distorting, without citation, Lafitau’s observation in *Moeurs* that missionaries faced difficulty teaching the gospel to

⁸⁸ “Le climat le plus tempéré est depuis le 40me degré jusqu’au 50me, c’est aussi sous cette zone que se trouvent les hommes les plus beaux & les mieux faits, c’est sous ce climat qu’on doit prendre l’idée de la vraie couleur naturelle de l’homme, c’est-là où l’on doit prendre le modèle ou l’unité à laquelle il faut rapporter toutes les autres nuances de couleur & de beauté, les deux extrêmes sont également éloignés du vrai & du beau: les pays polices situés sous cette zone, sont la Georgie, la Circassie, l’Ukraine, la Turquie d’Europe, la Hongrie, l’Allemagne méridionale, l’Italie, la Suisse, la France, & la partie septentrionale de l’Espagne, tous ces peuples sont aussi les plus beaux & les mieux fait de toute la terre.” Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, 3:528.

⁸⁹ “...la même que la nôtre...” Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, 3:515.

⁹⁰ Buffon did not name Bering, but his reference to recent Russian explorations was to the second Bering voyage noted earlier.

⁹¹ Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, 3:378.

⁹² Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, 3:490.

⁹³ Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, 3:491–492.

Native Americans because their languages lacked European concepts.⁹⁴ The climate and their diets in the Americas varied little, and so they had no means to degenerate, or to improve.⁹⁵

Buffon's theories were amplified and distorted by Cornelius (Cornelis, Corneille) de Pauw, a Dutch intellectual who served for short periods at the court of Prussia's Frederick the Great. As historian Henry Ward Church observed: "in modern times few writers have risen so high, and then sunk so completely out of sight, as did the abbé Corneille De Pauw."⁹⁶ In *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains* of 1768–69, de Pauw made an ostensibly thorough survey of literature relating to the Americas, but did little more than expand on the rhetoric and ignorance of Buffon.⁹⁷ Neither de Pauw nor Buffon (nor Montesquieu) ever crossed the Atlantic Ocean, but de Pauw asserted the climate was deleterious to any plant or animal species or race of human being introduced to North America. In de Pauw's scenario, a great deluge altered the land and the climate, and left it in the possession of a young, inferior savage people who could never improve.⁹⁸ To his limited credit, de Pauw noted the resemblance between *Schames* (shamans) of Siberia and the *Jongleurs* (shamans) of Native American spiritual complexes.⁹⁹ De Pauw otherwise possibly exceeded Buffon's arrogance in portraying its Indigenous peoples as a race with all the faults of infants, a

⁹⁴ Lafitau, *Moeurs*, 2:481.

⁹⁵ Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, 3:514.

⁹⁶ Henry Ward Church, "Corneille De Pauw, and the Controversy over his *Recherches Philosophiques Sur Les Américains*," *PMLA* 51, no. 1 (Mar. 1936), 178.

⁹⁷ Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains, ou Mémoires intéressants pour servir à l'Histoire d'Espèce humaine*, 2 vols (Berlin: George Jacques Decker, vol. 1, 1768; vol. 2, 1769). De Pauw is discussed by Oullet and Tremblay in "From the Good Savage to the Degenerate Indian: The Amerindian in the Accounts of Travel to America," in *Decentring the Renaissance: Canada and Europe in Multidisciplinary Perspective*, Germaine Warkentin and Carolyn Podruchny eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 167, but do not mention the precedence and inspiration of Buffon.

⁹⁸ "Les peuples de l'Amérique étoient donc, en ce sens, plus modernes que les nations de l'ancien monde: ils étoient plus foibles, parce que leur terre natale étoit plus mal-saine; & on conçoit maintenant pourquoi on les a tous surpris dans un état sauvage, ou à demi sauvage. Les temps de se policer entièrement n'étoit pas encore venu pour eux: leur climat devoit avant tout s'améliorer, les vallées & les campagnes devoient se dessécher davantage, leur constitution devoit s'affermir, & leur sang s'épurer. La fertilité de leur pays ne les retenoit pas dans la vie agreste..." De Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques* (1770) 1:106–107.

⁹⁹ De Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques* (1770), 1:141.

degenerated form of the human species, cowardly, helpless, physically weak, without an elevated mind.¹⁰⁰ De Pauw portrayed Native Americans as having been reduced to near-sterile idiocy by the climate and the humid terrain. They could not emerge from a state of infancy, and it was impossible to elevate them to a civilized state.¹⁰¹ They were more like orangutans or apes than human beings.¹⁰² De Pauw expanded on Buffon's distortion of Lafitau and advised it was impossible to translate any work of a metaphysical or abstract nature into a language of the Americas, as there wasn't a single language in which one could count above three.¹⁰³

De Pauw's work ignited outrage, as it portrayed the continent as unsuitable to European colonization. *Recherches philosophiques* invited a harsh rebuke even from Buffon, who in 1777 charged that de Pauw's portrayal of the weakness and general inferiority of Native Americans had "no foundation."¹⁰⁴ Buffon for his part earned an acute rebuke from Thomas Jefferson in *Notes on the State of Virginia* in 1787.¹⁰⁵ De Pauw may have written *Récherches philosophiques* as a for-hire hatchet job at the behest of Frederick of Prussia in order to help stem the flow of capital and emigration to America.¹⁰⁶ De

¹⁰⁰ "...une race d'hommes qui ont tous les défauts des enfants, comme un espèce dégénérée du genre humain, lache, impuissante, sans force physique, sans vigueur, sans élévation dans l'esprit..." *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains, ou Mémoires intéressants pour servir à l'Histoire d l'Espèce humaine. Par Mr. de P***. Avec un Dissertation sur l'Amérique & les Américains, par Don Pernety. Et la Défense de l'Auteur des Recherches contre cette Dissertation* (Berlin, [n.s] 1770) 1:xiii.

¹⁰¹ De Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques* (1770), 1:98

¹⁰² De Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques* (1770), 1:35.

¹⁰³ Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains* (London: 1771), 2:153–54.

¹⁰⁴ De Pauw was rebuked by Buffon in a supplementary fourth volume to *Histoire naturelle* in 1777. "A l'égard des autres nations qui habitent l'intérieur du nouveau continent, il me paroît que M. P. prétend & affirme sans aucun fondement..." M. le Comte de Buffon, *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière, Supplement, Tome Quatrième*. (Paris, 1777), 525.

¹⁰⁵ Jefferson read Buffon in the original French and took him to task at length in *Notes on the State of Virginia* (2nd English ed., London: Printed for John Stockdale, 1787, 72–73), a rejoinder that according to John C. Greene earned him "the everlasting gratitude of his countrymen." ("American Science Comes of Age," *Journal of American History* 55, no. 1 (June 1968): 35.

¹⁰⁶ As biologist and author Lee Dugatkin has argued, "As a confidant to Frederick the Great, who did not want Prussians leaving for opportunities in the New World, De Pauw most likely had personal motives for such propaganda." See Lee Dugatkin, "Jefferson's Moose," *Scientific American* [serial online] 304, no. 2 (Feb. 2011): 84-

Pauw's work was still raising hackles in 1815, as *The North American Review* complained, "the most perverse use is made of his materials, and his ignorance of the real character of the Indians is most profound."¹⁰⁷ Degeneracy in whatever theoretical form nevertheless remained a popular explanation for the perceived inferiority of Native Americans. The discovery of the so-called Mound Builder antiquities of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys made both pressing and consequential the question of from whom Native Americans had degenerated.

Confronting (and Constructing) the Mound Builders Mystery

Thomas Jefferson participated in mound excavations in Virginia, but the findings did not affect his ideas on Native American origins. He was more intrigued by the implications of the third Cook expedition in the Pacific, and by the diversity of Native American languages. In *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson (like Pennant) reflected on the third Cook expedition's survey of the Kamchatka Peninsula of eastern Siberia, and he essentially repeated the position of Edward Brerewood of 1614 in suspecting it more likely that Native Americans had migrated from Asia than from Europe.¹⁰⁸ One of the earliest notices of mounds west of the Appalachians was made by a Moravian missionary, David Zeisberger, who

87. (Available from: Business Source Premier, Ipswich, MA. Accessed October 19, 2014). Dugatkin went further in a podcast interview with *Scientific American* in asserting de Pauw "was hired by Frederick, who was the King of Prussia at the time, to head a bureau in Prussia whose sole goal was to figure out ways to stop Prussians from taking their money and coming over to the New World. So the king picked someone who specialized in this degeneracy idea as the person to head a bureau to stop people from moving to the New World with their money." Quoted by Steve Mirsky, "Jefferson's Moose: Thomas's Fauna Fight against European Naturalists," *ScientificAmerican.com*, Jan. 26, 2011. <http://www.scientificamerican.com/podcast/episode/jeffersons-moose-thomass-fauna-figh-11-01-26/> (accessed Oct. 19, 2014).

¹⁰⁷ [Comte de Buffon], *Natural history, general and particular: The history of man and quadrupes* : Translated with notes and observations by William Smallie. London: T. Cadell, 1812. "Review, Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains," *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal*, vol. 2, no. 4 (November 1815).

¹⁰⁸ According to Jefferson, "the resemblance between the Indians of America and the eastern inhabitants of Asia, would induce us to conjecture, that the former are descendants of the latter, or the latter of the former," with the exception of "Esquimaux," who were presumed to originate in Greenland and which was considered a peninsula of the Old World. However, based on what he perceived to be radical differences between Native American languages, he presumed the "red men of America" were "of greater antiquity than those of Asia," thus raising the possibility that the ancient migration had occurred in reverse and leaving unanswered what he thought of the relationship of Native Americans to humankind in general. *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 103–05.

came upon the Marietta earthworks as he laid out a settlement near present-day New Philadelphia, Ohio, in 1772, for a group of Christian Indians he had led west from Pennsylvania.¹⁰⁹ Zeisberger had no difficulty associating present-day Native Americans with an ancestral people who created the mounds.¹¹⁰ However, as Euro-American settlement spread westward following American independence, doubts about affinity grew as colonizers confronted more mounds, some of them cones or platform and ridge pyramids, some of them animal-shaped, some of them with burials and grave goods, along with other odd earthen constructions. “Though few of these earthen heaps were impressive as individual sights,” according to Robert Silverberg, “they had a cumulative effect. There were so many of them—ten thousand in the valley of the Ohio alone—that they seemed surely to be the work of a vanished race that had thrown itself into the task of construction with obsessive fervor.”¹¹¹

We now consider these archaeological survivals to be the remnants of several different cultural complexes ranging across a vast area and many centuries. They include the massive geometric earthworks of Louisiana’s Poverty Point (1000–700 BC), the numerous sites of the Adena culture (600 – 200 BC) and its successor, the Hopewell (200 BC – 400 AD), whose heartland was in southern Ohio, and the sprawl of Mississippian and related cultures that ranged as far east as Georgia and as far north as Minnesota from about 500 to 1500 AD, although the Fort Ancient culture of the Ohio River region is

¹⁰⁹ Robert Silverberg, *Mound Builders of Ancient America: The Archaeology of a Myth* (Greenwich CT: New York Graphic Society, 1968), 25. Silverberg stated Zeisberger discovered mounds “and mentioned them in his *History of the North American Indians* [sic].” However, this work was not published (in an English translation from an original German manuscript), until 1910, and so it seems doubtful to credit Zeisberger with popularizing knowledge of the mounds. See David Zeisberger, *David Zeisberger’s History of the Northern American Indians*, ed. Archer Butler Hulbert and William Nathaniel Schwarze (Columbus: Press of F.J. Heer for Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1910). Zeisberger asserted that mounds were built as defensive works (31).

¹¹⁰ As Hulbert and Schwarze noted in their preface to *David Zeisberger’s History of the Northern American Indians*, “The antiquarian and archaeologist will find in this volume interesting additional proof of the relationship of the so-called ‘Moundbuilders’ and the earlier Indians, the implication being exceedingly strong that they were one and the same race; the reference to mounds, arrow-heads, stone hatchets, etc., etc., being illuminating.” (8)

¹¹¹ Silverberg, *Mound Builders of Ancient America*, 3.

considered to have persisted until about 1750.¹¹² In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, these earthworks (and the cultural materials buried within them) struck antiquarians as the remnants of a single mysterious, ancient culture. Whoever these people were, they appeared to have been far more sophisticated, far more *civilized*, than present-day Indians. The erroneous idea that the Mound Builders were expert metallurgists, arising from a misunderstanding of items worked in pure copper, persisted until 1883.¹¹³ Not until the publication in 1894 of a comprehensive report on the mounds for the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology by Cyrus Thomas would the disciplines of archaeology and ethnology discard the idea there had been a single “Mound Builder” culture, unrelated to contemporary Indians.¹¹⁴

One explanation for the existence of the mounds—and the apparent nonexistence of their creators—was that the Native Americans known to colonists had degenerated from the people who had created the earthworks. However, learned Euro-Americans, apparently following Vallancey’s lead, began to abandon the degeneracy model and to disenfranchise Native Americans from their past, by coming up with candidates other than ancestral Native Americans to fill the role of the ancient people known as the Mound Builders.

Vallancey, Stiles, Parsons, and the Mound Builder Solution

The essence of Vallancey’s Dighton Rock theory was applied with remarkable simultaneity to the Mound Builders question. Vallancey’s paper had been read before the membership of the Society of Antiquaries in London in February 1786. That same month, Samuel Holden Parsons, who had been a major general in the Continental army and was a member of the Connecticut general assembly, had a plan made of the

¹¹² See Sally A. Kitt Chappell, *Cahokia: Mirror of the Cosmos* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 37–48, for a discussion of cultures associated with mounds.

¹¹³ Silverberg, *Mound Builders of Ancient America*, 65–67.

¹¹⁴ Silverberg, *Mound Builders of Ancient America*, 216. Silverberg erroneously dates the appearance of Cyrus Thomas’s “Report on the Mound Explorations of the Bureau of Ethnology” to 1892. It was published in J. W. Powell, *Twelfth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1890–91*, 17–722 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894).

earthworks at the future site of Marietta. Parsons had been sent west that winter as an Indian commissioner, as the United States claimed lands as far west as the Mississippi by right of conquest. With Richard Butler he compelled the Shawnee to accept under threat of arms the Treaty of Fort Finney in January 1786, by which they surrendered all their land in what is now southern Illinois and southeastern Ohio.¹¹⁵ In the course of his journey Parsons visited the Grave Creek mound as well as the Marietta earthworks. On April 26, 1786, Parsons called on Ezra Stiles, who was serving as president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and showed him his Marietta plan, of which Stiles made a copy.¹¹⁶ [Fig. 13] The affinity between contemporary Native Americans and the creators of these earthworks, so plain to the Moravian missionary Zeisberger in 1772, was inconceivable to Parsons. Parsons assured Stiles the mounds, which he interpreted as military works, long predated the coming of Europeans, and in a letter he provided to Stiles the following day, added: “The present Inhabitants having no Knowledge of the Arts or Traditions respecting the fortifications leaves a Doubt whither the former Inhabitants were Ancestors of the present.”¹¹⁷

Stiles recalled in his diary that Parson was “convinced that the Region thereabout has once been inhabited by a civilized People different from the present Indian Inhabitants in this country.” Stiles went on in a progeny-of-Japheth, multiple-migration vein, drawing parallels with the lost Greenland colony, once inhabited by “civilized people” but “destroyed & obliterated by the aboriginals,” and the conflicts in New England in the seventeenth century, including King Philip’s War, in which the Indians “resolved to extirpate” the English colonists. Stiles then ventured that a settlement by the Welsh Prince Madoc in

¹¹⁵ Colin G. Calloway, *One Vast Winter Count: The Native American West before Lewis and Clark* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 372. Ohio History Central, “Samuel H. Parsons,” Ohio Historical Society, http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/index.php?title=Samuel_H._Parsons&oldid=28394 (accessed July 9, 2014). Ohio History Central, “Treaty of Fort Finney (1786),” Ohio Historical Society, [http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/index.php?title=Treaty_of_Fort_Finney_\(1786\)&oldid=32505](http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/index.php?title=Treaty_of_Fort_Finney_(1786)&oldid=32505) (accessed July 9, 2014).

¹¹⁶ “The General also showed me a Drawing, which I copied on the precedg pages, of certain Aggeres or Works of Earth, one of wc half a miles square the biggness of New Haven, furnished with twelve Gates.” Stiles, *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, 3:215.

¹¹⁷ Parsons to Stiles, April 27, 1786, in Stiles, *Extracts*, 549–550.

Kentucky “might have at length alarmed surround^g Indians & been attended with an Extirpation.” A remnant group of Welshman escaped up the Missouri, “where it is s^d there is a Tribe that speak Welch to this day & have a Writing rolled up in Skins. Gen. Parsons however goes into none of these Ideas, but believes there have been civilized People at Muskingham in former & very distant past ages.”¹¹⁸ In Stiles’ reckoning, Native Americans had been committing ethnic cleansings of superior (white) peoples for ages, and continued to do so, as Stiles’ days were marked by stark reminders of attacks by British-allied Indigenous forces during the American Revolution.¹¹⁹

As Stiles was an active antiquarian with a longstanding interest in Dighton Rock, he could have learned quickly of Vallancey’s new theory tabled in February 1786 in London. However, Stiles’ diary makes no mention of Vallancey or Dighton Rock in association with the Parsons visit of April 1786, and it does seem that at this stage Vallancey, Stiles and Parsons had tapped a zeitgeist of complementary ideas about Native Americans as primitive exterminators of superior peoples. Parsons moreover did not go as far as Vallancey in linking his superior peoples and their inferior conquerors specifically to multiple migrations out of Asia in the Pennant model: Parsons’ Mound Builders could have been transatlantic colonizers. As a founding member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1780 and its current president, Stiles likely elicited from Parsons his longer missive to the corresponding secretary of the

¹¹⁸ Stiles, *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, 3:216.

¹¹⁹ About two weeks before Parsons called on him, on April 13, 1786, Stiles was visited by “a young Miss Kennedy of New York,” about 17 years old. Apparently an imposter, she claimed to be the orphaned daughter of one Colonel Kennedy, a member of the British Army who supposedly had joined the American rebels and moved his family from New York to Schoharie, which was all but destroyed by British forces and Mohawk allies. Stiles wrote: “the Indians beset his Family. He was killed, & the Children captivated & all killed but this Daughter, who was three years with the Mohawk Indians, being seven years old when captived.” See entry for April 13, 1786. Stiles, *Literary Diary*, 3:213. A parenthetical addition by editor Dexter noted: “[An imposter.]” There was according to Stiles’ diary entry an estate inheritance in question. Dexter provided no further details. Guy Park, the residence of the British Indian superintendant Guy Johnson, was occupied by a man named Henry Kennedy and his family after Johnson abandoned it in 1775. Jephtha Root Simms, *History of Schoharie County, and Border Wars of New York*, vol. 3 (Albany: Munsell and Tanner, 1845), 117. That November, Stiles noted giving his name to an English boy, now ten-and-a-half years old, who had been captured by the Seneca at Susquehanna when he was two-and-a-half during the Revolution. “He remembers to have seen his Father shot down by the Indians in the Stoop of his Door, & his Mother after being carried half a mile he saw killed, & some Children’s Brains dashed out...” Entry for November 7, 1786, Stiles, *Literary Diary*, 3:245.

academy in October 1786, which would be published in 1793 (four years after Parsons' death).¹²⁰ Writing of Grave Creek, Parsons concluded: "The Indians have no tradition what nation ever buried their dead in the manner we discovered them... On the whole, I am of [the] opinion, that country has been thickly peopled, by men to whom the necessary arts were known in a much greater degree than to the present native Indians of that region."¹²¹ Parsons ventured that the usurpers arose from a Lost Tribes or implicitly Canaanite migration out of Asia, an idea he may have absorbed from Stiles.¹²²

Benjamin Franklin ventured to Stiles that the mounds might have been the work of the sixteenth-century Spanish expedition of Hernando de Soto, a belief promoted by Noah Webster (which Webster later recanted) in the December 1787 issue of *The American Magazine*.¹²³ Stiles was back at Dighton Rock in October 1788, making a new drawing.¹²⁴ Unsatisfied with his effort, he turned to the Reverend John Smith of Dighton to arrange for another one. Smith wrote Stiles in July 1789 with a progress report. While Smith's analysis could have been inspired by an enterprising reading of Lafitau, Vallancey's Dighton Rock theory, published in 1787, was the far more likely influence. Smith speculated in terms that parroted Vallancey, down to the South American refuge for the more advanced, original arrivals: "Was N. America once inhabited by a people from Asia who were skilled in hieroglyphicks, who used the shield and helmet, who worshiped on high places & who gradually receding before the more northern tribes from Siberia settled themselves in the southern continent?"¹²⁵ Stiles for his part was still keeping a candle burning for an advanced culture from the Mediterranean. In June 1790 he drafted a manuscript addressing

¹²⁰ Morgan, *The Gentle Puritan*, 162.

¹²¹ General [Samuel Holden] Parsons, "Discoveries made in the Western Country," in *Memoirs of the American academy of arts and sciences*, vol. 2, pt. 1 (Boston: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1793), 125.

¹²² "The customs prevailing in some of the tribes, bear an affinity to the customs prevailing among the Jews (perhaps the same, or nearly might have been practised in early times by other eastern nations.)" Parsons, "Discoveries," 126.

¹²³ Silverberg, *Mound Builders of Ancient America*, 26–27.

¹²⁴ Stiles, *Extracts*, 330, 402. See also Delabarre, "Middle Period," 73–74.

¹²⁵ Rev. John Smith to Ezra Stiles, July 1789, quoted by Delabarre, "Middle Period," 86.

the inscribed rocks of New England, which he provided his friend (and dismissed Harvard professor) Stephen Sewall, who in turn forwarded it that July to James Bowdoin, a former governor of Massachusetts and a founder and first president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.¹²⁶ In his manuscript, Stiles held that the letters *IHOWOO* could be discerned on one end of Dighton Rock (to what purpose he did not explain), and he looked to the ancient Mediterranean and the colonizers of Atlantis, under their first king, Atlas, as the source of the markings:

There was a period previous to the Age of Atlas, when the maritime shores of Europe, on this side the pillars of Hercules, around up to the Baltic, were colonized by all the various languages of *Scythia & Japhet*, & some Phoenician Navigators of the Derivation of Shem. It was in this period I conjecture those navigated over to America who made these Inscriptions... There seems to be a mixture of Phoenician or antient *Punic* letters, with symbol, & perhaps *ideal character*, in the inscriptions at Narraganset. ATLAS, after the first discovery of his great insular Continent, sent over four ships of settlers to colonize upon it; which on their return, carried back the report, that the island was overwhelmed & *submersa ponto*. One of these Vessels of *Atlas* might have been shipwreckt at Narragansett.¹²⁷

Thus in his final analysis Ezra Stiles espoused a fusion of ideas about transoceanic migration that were not inconsistent with Antoine Court de Gébelin's wandering Phoenicians and the Punic language roots of Algonquian in Charles Vallancey's *A Grammar*. Stiles was so blindered to an Indigenous attribution by this point that he was willing to enlist instead the apocryphal lost Atlantis that had entered

¹²⁶ Ezra Stiles to Stephen Sewall, June 1790, quoted by Delabarre, "Middle Period," 95, and by Manuel and Manuel, 198.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

Gothicism through Rudbeks. This 1790 summation of Stiles' life's work on New England's inscribed stones was never published by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Meanwhile, the idea pre-Columbian visitors unrelated to present-day Native Americans were responsible for America's perplexing antiquities continued to gain momentum.

Benjamin Smith Barton, Gothicism, and the Idea of Recuperative Degeneration

Benjamin Smith Barton was born into an intellectually rarefied American family: his father, the Reverend Thomas Barton, corresponded with Linnaeus and was a member of the American Philosophical Society; his maternal uncle was the second president of the society; his older brother William, a lawyer, preceded him in securing a society membership.¹²⁸ Barton was a professor of materia medica (pharmacology), natural history and botany at the University of Pennsylvania, securing his initial appointment when he was 21, and he held memberships and fellowships in organizations such as the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Philosophical Society, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Barton also corresponded with Jefferson, dedicated a book to him, and served as an advisor to the Lewis and Clark expedition.¹²⁹

In the post-Revolutionary era, according to John C. Greene, “the medical profession formed the main link between American and British science,” and Barton was among the leading figures in American medicine that trained abroad, in his case mainly in Edinburgh and London, although he never received a medical degree.¹³⁰ While still a medical student at Edinburgh University from 1786 to 1788, Barton

¹²⁸ Francis W. Pennell, “Benjamin Smith Barton as Naturalist,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 86, no. 1 (Sep. 25, 1942): 109.

¹²⁹ For Barton's essential biographical details, see Pennell, “Benjamin Smith Barton as Naturalist”; Frank Spencer and Benjamin Smith Barton, “Two Unpublished Essays on the Anthropology of North America by Benjamin Smith Barton,” *Isis* 68, no. 244 (Dec. 1977): 567–573; and Theodore W. Jeffries, “Barton's Unpublished Materia Medica,” *Pharmacy in History* 17, no. 2 (1975): 69–71.

¹³⁰ John C. Greene, “American Science Comes of Age, 1780–1820,” 27. Frank Spencer also notes Barton never received a medical degree from Edinburgh University, “or at Gottingen, as is so often reported in the literature.” (“Two Unpublished Essays,” 567.) Barton nevertheless sported the honorific M.D. in his publications.

published in London around 1787 a pamphlet, *Observations on Some Parts of Natural History*.¹³¹ The pamphlet was published as Part I; a further four parts, to be issued in a single octavo, were promised. The pamphlet did not address natural history at all, and instead was given over entirely to the mystery of the Mound Builders. The timing was auspicious: Thomas Pennant had just published *Arctic Zoology*; Charles Vallancey had just circulated his latest solution to Native American ancestry, inspired by Pennant, of multiple migrations and Tartar hordes wiping out an earlier, more advanced culture that had carved Dighton Rock; Samuel Holden Parsons had just shared his observations on Grave Creek and the Marietta earthworks with Ezra Stiles and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; and Thomas Jefferson had just published *Notes on the State of Virginia*. The influence of all of these works is plain. Barton's pamphlet opened with a discussion of Pehr Kalm's account of La Verendrye's stone monuments and inscriptions, which recently had engaged Vallancey. He also spared a few words of invective for Corneille de Pauw, "the most angry and most petulant of philosophers."¹³² Unlike Jefferson in his rebuttal of Buffon, however, Barton had nothing good to say about present-day Native Americans, instead taking (in truth, appropriating) the position of Parsons, whose work he did not acknowledge. Barton was "disposed to think, [the mounds] are the workmanship of a people differing, in many respects, from the present savage nations of America."¹³³ He proposed "there has formerly existed in some of the *higher* (as well as in the *lower*) latitudes of AMERICA, a people who had made advances towards civilization, and improvements in war, as an art, unknown to the present NATIVE inhabitants of those regions."¹³⁴

¹³¹ Benjamin Smith Barton, *Observations on some parts of natural history : to which is prefixed an account of several remarkable vestiges of an ancient date, which have been discovered in different parts of North America : Part I*. (London: C. Dilly, c.1787).

¹³² "I shall further remark, that Mr. de Paw, the most angry and most petulant of philosophers, is at continual war with the most respectable authorities on the subject of the natural and civil history of the NEW WORLD,—is perpetually laying down positions of his own construction, the weakness of which is equalled by nothing but by their frivolity and their fallacy." Barton, *Observations*, 53.

¹³³ Barton, *Observations*, 17.

¹³⁴ Barton, *Observations*, 30.

Ezra Stiles deserves recognition as a key conduit for the rapidly evolving theory of multiple migrations. Stiles obviously shared with Barton his copy of Parsons' plan of the Marietta "fortress," as Barton included an unattributed copy in *Observations*, attempting to hide his appropriating tracks by redrawing it upside-down and contriving a different scale, in poles or perches rather than the chains of the original; Parsons' plan was otherwise never published.¹³⁵ [Fig. 14] Echoing Parsons' opinion, Barton maintained that Native Americans lacked the capacity to have conceived of or constructed the Ohio relics. When Europeans discovered America, they found the Indians "attentive MERELY to the necessaries of life... and hence the minds of the savages continued PASSIVE, perhaps for ages."¹³⁶ In the final pages Barton made a daring stab: the Mound Builders were roving Danes. Barton had enlisted the Gothicism of Ezra Stiles's Election Sermon as a new means for disenfranchising Native Americans from their past.

Barton compared Ohio earthworks with examples from Ireland that he understood were constructed by invading Danes between the eighth and twelfth centuries A.D.¹³⁷ He imagined a band of Danish adventurers landing in Labrador and over the course of several centuries working their way toward Mexico, leaving monuments such as the Ohio earthworks behind.¹³⁸ Barton also pointed out the "amazing similitude of the *Iroquois* to some of the nations inhabiting the north-east parts of Asia,"¹³⁹ which likely came from Pennant.

Barton left behind a manuscript in Edinburgh on the nature of Native Americans that criticized contemporary European scholars who were "content to meditate in their closets." None of them, he contended, "had ever seen either the country or its inhabitants whose history they have attempted to give

¹³⁵ The plan is inserted between pages 30 and 31 of *Observations*. Barton's description made it plain he had not visited the site himself and while he allowed that the "annexed plan is a copy" of an original drawing (34), he did not state who made it. It is obviously the Parsons plan copied by Stiles.

¹³⁶ Barton, *Observations*, 39–40.

¹³⁷ Barton, *Observations*, 65.

¹³⁸ Barton, *Observations*, 66–67.

¹³⁹ Barton, *Observations*, 66.

us.”¹⁴⁰ But as Frank Spencer has observed, “though Barton would have his audience think otherwise, in all probability his experience of American aborigines was largely secondhand.”¹⁴¹ Barton never published this item, which would have been more to his credit than the problematic *Observations*, as in it he also attacked Lord Kames, who in the mid-1770s published a variety of works on both sides of the Atlantic that supported polygenic origins for the world’s races. Polygenesis had been a minority opinion of eighteenth-century intellectuals such as Lord Kame, Voltaire, Montesquieu and David Hume, but was gaining popularity at the end of the century.¹⁴² Barton derided Kames’s theory as “a melancholy monument of his ignorance of Natural History.”¹⁴³ As for *Observations*, Barton so regretted his precocious effort that he apologized to his brother, William, to whom it was dedicated, and abandoned plans for further installments.¹⁴⁴ He would never again speak *quite* so ill of Native Americans.

Barton’s *Observations* elicited a letter from Ezra Stiles on Dighton Rock, which Barton had not addressed.¹⁴⁵ The letter does not survive, and whatever Stiles wrote failed to motivate Barton to include Dighton Rock when he returned to the subject of American antiquity in *New Views of the Origins of the Tribes and Nations of America* in 1797.¹⁴⁶ Barton quoted Strahlenberg in the preliminary discourse on the importance of languages of north Asia to understanding the “nice and ticklish Point” of the “transmigration of Nations,” acknowledged “my learned and much-valued friend Mr. Pennant” and *Arctic Zoology* in the introduction, criticized the “superficial” theorizing of Voltaire on the origins of races and

¹⁴⁰ Spencer and Barton, “Two Unpublished Essays,” 568. Spencer did think it possible Barton met some Native Americans when he accompanied his uncle, David Rittenhouse, on his survey of the western boundary of Pennsylvania. *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Spencer and Barton, “Two Unpublished Essays,” 569.

¹⁴² Spencer, in Spencer and Barton, “Two Unpublished Essays,” 571.

¹⁴³ Spencer and Barton, “Two Unpublished Essays,” 570.

¹⁴⁴ Pennell, “Benjamin Smith Barton as Naturalist,” 110.

¹⁴⁵ Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 74.

¹⁴⁶ Benjamin Smith Barton, *New Views of the Origins of the Tribes and Nations of America* (Philadelphia: John Bioren, 1797).

built on Pennant's limited comparative ethnography as he abandoned his own idea of Danish Mound Builders. Barton instead turned his attention to Beringia to posit multiple migrations for the arrival of Native Americans, based on his interpretation of relative cultural advancement and language similarities, but also language differences.¹⁴⁷ In contrast with Vallancey's brutish Tartarian invaders scenario for the fate of the peoples that carved Dighton Rock, however, and his own previous postulations in *Observations*, Barton believed Native Americans were a degenerative cultural form of the Mound Builders, and that they could recuperate. "Let it not be said," he wrote Jefferson (president of both the United States and the American Philosophical Society) in the dedication, "that they are incapable of improvement."¹⁴⁸ As historian Steven Conn has explained, Barton was part of a generation of American intellectuals who in the eighteenth century "perceived history to work in ever-repeating, ever-oscillating cycles of rise and fall."¹⁴⁹ Natural history, Barton continued in the dedication,

teaches us, a mortifying truth, that nations may relapse into rudeness again; all their proud monuments crumbled into dust, and themselves, now savages, subjects of contemplation among civilized nations and philosophers. In the immense scheme of nature, which the feeble mind of man cannot fully comprehend, it may be our lot to fall into rudeness once more. There are good reasons for conjecturing, that the ancestors of many of the savage tribes of America are the descendants of nations who had attained to a much higher degree of polish than themselves.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Barton, *New Views*, i, vii, xvi.

¹⁴⁸ Barton, *New Views*, v.

¹⁴⁹ Steven Conn, *History's Shadow: Native Americans and Historical Consciousness in the Nineteenth Century* (2004; repr. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 24–25.

¹⁵⁰ Barton, *New Views*, v.

Two years after publishing *New Views*, Barton reiterated to the Reverend Joseph Priestley his case for cultural degeneration, maintaining the American earthworks had been created by “the ancestors of some of the present races of Indians.”¹⁵¹ Later in life, Barton revealed himself to be both a hyperdiffusionist and a fence-sitter on polygenesis. As Barton explained in an 1809 letter to Dr. Thomas Beddoes, “I do not positively contend...that all mankind constitute but *one species*.”¹⁵²

Barton’s conception of a Native American rise-and-fall was a precursor to a dawning sense of American historical exceptionalism. Barton upheld Native Americans as living proof of civilization’s predilection for collapse, but as Steven Conn has noted: “Perhaps, some Americans began to reason, the very act of establishing the nation itself represented a break from the inexorable cycle of history’s rise and fall.” America could achieve linear progress, “rather than a cycle with its decline and decay.” By the mid-nineteenth century, according to Conn, “a dominant view had come to prevail that the Greek and Roman past, far from being models to emulate, represented examples to be avoided.”¹⁵³ The same presaging role could have been assigned to the Mound Builders, as Barton envisioned, had other theorists not uncoupled living Native Americans from their past. At the end of his life, Barton was far removed from the process rooted in Vallancey’s Dighton Rock theory, of labeling Native Americans as the barbaric and unworthy usurpers of a vanished greatness rather than as its direct descendants, whatever one thought of their present condition and their capacity for recovery or improvement.

¹⁵¹ Benjamin Smith Barton, “Observations and Conjectures concerning Certain Articles Which Were Taken out of an Ancient Tumulus, or Grave, at Cincinnati...” in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 4 (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, 1799), 197. Barton’s comparative linguistics, based on phonetics, would not withstand long-term scrutiny, but as a process of investigation his breakthrough had come in 1796 when the Reverend Joseph Priestley, who had emigrated from England to America in 1794, gave him a rare copy of a work in Russian by the German naturalist Simon Pallas, that provided the Russian phonetic equivalents for the pronunciations of basic words in 200 European and Asiatic languages. John C. Greene, “Early Scientific Interest in the American Indian: Comparative Linguistics,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 104, no. 5 (Oct. 17, 1960): 511.

¹⁵² Benjamin Smith Barton, “Hints on the Etymology of Certain English Words, and on Their Affinity to Words in the Languages of Different European, Asiatic, and American (Indian) Nations...” in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 6 (Philadelphia, Baltimore, Petersburg and Norfolk: 1809), 145.

¹⁵³ Conn, *History’s Shadow*, 25–26.

Conclusion

The antiquities of the New World were a New World of their own to eager theorists who rushed to colonize them with their varied learned scenarios, and who negotiated the same narrow land bridge of prejudice and ignorance. Alone in his interpretation of Dighton Rock, Antoine Court de Gébelin had been willing to grant Native Americans equal moral and intellectual standing to an Old World civilization. His eccentric reading of the inscription as Phoenician would not withstand scrutiny, and his elevated view of Indigenous people vanished with it in the ongoing debate over American antiquities. Ezra Stiles's faith that Dighton Rock was Phoenician may not have withstood close inspection for long, either, but his Election Sermon showed how deeply rooted ideas of racial supremacy and fulfillment of Biblical prophecy were in the conscience of the new nation, and how inextricable antiquarian logic was from apocryphal Biblical literalism. Stiles had brought the Gothicism of Rudbeks and Mallet across the Atlantic to cast Protestant whites of northern Europe as descendants of Japheth who in the New World were fulfilling the command of Noah to enlarge their territory, while Native Americans were the children of Canaan, condemned to eternal servitude. Charles Vallancey, in adapting Thomas Pennant's ideas on multiple migrations (and perpetuating Montesquieu's derogatory view of Tartars), encouraged antiquarians to think of Native Americans as brutish usurpers of an earlier, semi-civilized migration from Asia that had carved Dighton Rock. Vallancey's ideas proved to be readily transferrable from Dighton Rock to the much larger antiquarian puzzle of the Mound Builders. Benjamin Smith Barton strove to make amends for the youthful indiscretion of his Danish mound builder theory in asserting the Indigeneity of the mounds and (contrary to the derogatory Enlightenment bunk of Buffon and de Pauw) the recuperative potential of Native Americans. However, Vallancey's ideas, backed by Pennant's value-neutral theory on Beringian multiple migrations, were too useful to the colonizing project to be overcome. Present-day Native Americans belonged to an Old World, Tartarian horde, while the mounds (and Dighton Rock) had once belonged to a more advanced trans-Beringian people. With westward expansion placing the mounds as firmly in the colonizers' possession as Dighton Rock had become through King

Philip's War, the support that the "hordes" theory lent to justifying Native American displacement was irresistible.

(4)

**Stones of Power: Edward Augustus Kendall's Esoteric Case for Dighton Rock's
Indigeneity, 1807–1809**

Introduction

With the investigations of Edward Augustus Kendall, published in 1809, the debate over the nature of Dighton Rock, now more than a century old, appeared to find a firmly rationalist footing that could steer the provenance debate clear of Gothicism and eccentric musings of Dark Enlightenment esotericists. However, as I discuss in this chapter, Kendall's outwardly rationalist approach, which lucidly championed an Indigenous provenance, was not a clean break from imaginative eccentricities. Kendall's analysis shows how pervasive esotericism was in intellectual circles at the turn of the nineteenth century. His initial writing on Dighton Rock was steeped in a masonic esotericism that has gone unnoticed, and his analysis brought the rock, and with it Native Americans, into a masonic world view of the diffusion of ancient hermetic knowledge. Kendall did so in association with prominent antiquarians who were well-known masons in the American lodges. In this chapter I begin to outline the peculiarly American relationship between freemasonry and science, as well as education, which will figure in Chapter 5 in my discussion of American theories of the origin of Native Americans in the formative years of American archaeology. I also address the horned quadruped glyph, first recorded by Stephen Sewall in 1768, and its potential significance in Eastern Woodlands cosmology, and through the direct experience of Kendall explore the notion that Native Americans had disappeared from southern New England.

Kendall and the Masonic Perspective

Amidst the stream of migrationist and diffusionist theories for Dighton Rock that dominated discourse in the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth century, a few prominent voices were heard in support of an Indigenous attribution. While visiting Harvard in October 1789, George Washington viewed a drawing of the rock, which was probably the one by Stephen Sewall hanging above the entrance to the mineralogy

department.¹ Washington's guide, John Lathrop, launched into an explanation of the Phoenician theory.

When Lathrop was done,

the President smiled, and said he believed the learned Gentlemen whom I had mentioned were mistaken: and added, that in the younger part of his life, his business called him to be very much in the wilderness of Virginia, which gave him an opportunity to become acquainted with many of the customs and practices of the Indians. The Indians he said had a way of writing and recording their transactions, either in war or hunting. When they wished to make any such record, or leave an account of their exploits to any who might come after them, they scraped off the outer bark of a tree, and with a vegetable ink, or a little paint which they carried with them, on the smooth surface, they wrote, in a way that was generally understood by the people of their respective tribes. As he had so often examined the rude way of writing practiced by the Indians of Virginia, and observed many of the characters on the inscription then before him, so nearly resembled the characters used by the Indians, he had no doubt the inscription was made, long ago, by some natives of America.²

John Lathrop recalled Washington's confident comparison of Dighton Rock to Native American birch-bark messages in a letter in 1809 to John Davis, who had served Washington as a comptroller of the treasury, and was appointed a federal district court judge for Massachusetts by President John Adams in

¹ Recalling the event twenty years later, Lathrop attributed the drawing to James Winthrop, son of the late Hollisian chair, John Winthrop. See "John Lathrop D.D., to Judge Davis," August 10, 1809, in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 1867-1869*, 114-116 (Cambridge: John Wilson and Son, 1869). James Winthrop made a life-size drawing in 1788 that has disappeared, but a version was published in 1804 by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. I suspect Lathrop was mistaken in recalling the Winthrop drawing as the one Washington saw, as Stephen Sewall's lifesize drawing is known to have hung in a prominent place at Harvard.

² Lathrop, "John Lathrop D.D., to Judge Davis," 114-116.

1801. Judge Davis was also a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Philosophical Society, and served as the recording secretary of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; in 1800 he delivered a eulogy on Washington before the academy.³ Davis too was persuaded Dighton Rock's inscription was Indigenous, as he made clear in a letter around 1809 to Samuel Webber, who held the Hollisian chair in mathematics and natural philosophy at Harvard from 1789 to 1806 and served as the college's president from 1806 until his death in 1810.⁴

In his letter to Webber, Davis mentioned "Mr. Kendal's drawing."⁵ Edward Augustus Kendall (or Kendal, in his early publishing years) was an Englishman who had become captivated by the mystery of Dighton Rock and other inscribed rocks while touring the American states east of the Hudson River in 1807–08. Davis assisted Kendall in his researches, and as recording secretary of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences elicited from Kendall in October 1807 a letter outlining his initial thoughts on Dighton Rock, published by the academy in 1809 as "Account of the Writing-Rock in Taunton River."⁶ Kendall revisited and summarized his ideas in *Travels Through the Northern Parts of the United States* (1809), the three-octavo record of his tour.⁷ Kendall agreed with Davis on cultural affinity, and made the

³ John Lauris Blake, "Davis, John, LL.D.," in *A Biographical Dictionary : comprising a summary account of the lives of the most distinguished persons of all ages, nations, and professions*, 13th ed. (Philadelphia: H. Cowperthwait & co., 1856), 350. For the eulogy, see John Davis, *An eulogy, on General George Washington...* (Boston: W. Spotswood, 1800).

⁴ Biographical details of Samuel Webber from Harvard Library, "UAI 15.878, Webber, Samuel, 1759-1810. Papers of Samuel Webber: an inventory," Harvard University, <http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/deepLink?collection=oasis&uniqueId=hua06005> (accessed July 9, 2014). In Davis's letter to Webber, Davis wondered if the inscription depicted a hunting scene; one prominent triangular shape suggested to Davis the enclosures used to entrap moose, deer and caribou, as described and illustrated by Pierre-François-Xavier De Charlevoix in the English edition of his work, *Journal of a Voyage to North America* (1761), which in turn drew on the writings of Samuel de Champlain. For the letter to Webber, see John Davis, "An Attempt to Explain the Inscription on the Dighton Rock," in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 3, pt. 1, 197–205 (Cambridge MA: Hilliard and Metcalf, 1809).

⁵ Davis, "An Attempt," 199.

⁶ Edward Augustus Kendall, "Account of the Writing-Rock in Taunton River," in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 3, pt. 1, 165–191 (Cambridge MA: Hilliard and Metcalf, 1809).

⁷ Edward Augustus Kendall, *Travels Through the Northern Parts of the United States, in the Years 1807 and 1808*, 3 vols. (New York: I. Riley, 1809).

most detailed and persuasive case of any investigator for the rock's Indigenous provenance, yet he also seeded his initial assessment of 1807 with masonic allusions.

Freemasonry was not so much a secret society as it was a society with secrets, although it is not possible to confirm that everyone involved in Dighton Rock's Kendall episode, including Kendall himself, belonged to the fraternal order.⁸ There is no doubt as to the membership of many prominent Americans. Benjamin Franklin, as noted in Chapter 3, helped to establish English freemasonry in the American colonies and was a master of the Neuf soeurs lodge in Paris. Membership proved popular with the Continental army: at least 42 percent of the generals commissioned by the Continental Congress belonged to or became members of the fraternity.⁹ George Washington was the most prominent American mason, eulogized by lodges in published addresses on his death in 1800.¹⁰ At the dedication of the United States Capitol building in 1793, Washington wore the masonic apron and placed a silver plate on the cornerstone, covering it with the masonic symbols of corn, oil and wine.¹¹ Senior lodge members who published masonic discourses are easy to identify, as in the case of two figures involved in Kendall's researches of Dighton Rock. One was the Unitarian minister William Bentley of Salem, Massachusetts, a "passionate defender of Masonry and a Freemason himself," according to J. Rixey Ruffin.¹² Bentley was a prominent member of the seaport's Essex lodge, established in 1791, and his diaries are riddled with

⁸ For our purposes, "freemasonry," "freemasons," "masonry" and "masons," capitalized and noncapitalized, all refer to the same fraternal movement and its members.

⁹ Steven C. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730–1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 122.

¹⁰ One such address was delivered in Windham, Connecticut by Moses Cleaveland, master of the local Moriah lodge, on February 22, 1800. Of Washington, he said: "Early initiated into the masonic order; not deceived in the purity of it[s] principles nor a hypocrite in his profession; an acknowledged patron of the order, he exhibited to the world, the true Mason." Moses Cleaveland, *An oration, commemorative of the life and death of General George Washington, delivered at Windham, (Connecticut,)...* (Windham CT: 1800), 14.

¹¹ Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood*, 137.

¹² J. Rixey Ruffin, *A Paradise of Reason: William Bentley and the Struggle for an Enlightened and Christian Republic in America, 1783–1805* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 125.

references to lodge business.¹³ The other figure was Thaddeus Mason Harris, chaplain to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, an active antiquarian whose published works included *Ignorance and prejudice shewn to be the only enemies to Free Masonry* (1797).¹⁴

Kendall was a prolific writer, but we know virtually nothing about his personal life, beyond the fact that he died in Pimlico in central London in 1842 at age 66. He may have had Irish Protestant roots, and he spent a few years in Canada, probably after publishing his account of his tour of the northeastern United States in New York in 1809.¹⁵ Although nothing came of the initiative, he also formed in 1817 The Patriotic Metropolitan Colonial Institution, “for assisting new Settlers in His Majesty’s Colonies,” which took special interest in “establishing New and Distinct Colonies for the Relief of the Half-Casts of India, and Mulattoes of the West Indies.”¹⁶ Most of his early books were for children; some remained in

¹³ Bentley’s diary entry of July 15, 1804 notes of his Essex lodge: “We have but one Lodge in Salem, which has a good character, but this is not derived from masonic zeal or masonic duty. It is an association of sober men, who admit no liquor into the Lodge & want none out of it. The severe scrutiny & the frequent rejection of Candidates keeps the number small...” William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 4 vols (Salem MA: The Essex Institute, 1905–1914), 3:99. Bentley delivered numerous discourses at other lodges; among those he published was one delivered at Roxbury, Massachusetts in 1796 before the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, whose master was “The Most Worshipful Paul Revere.” *The Diary of William Bentley*, 1:xxxvii.

¹⁴ Thaddeus Mason Harris, *Ignorance and prejudice shewn to be the only enemies to Free Masonry* (Leominster, MA: Printed by Brother Charles Prentiss, A.L. 5797 [1797]).

¹⁵ In *An argument for construing largely the right of an appellee of murder, to insist on trial by battle : and also for abolishing appeals, etc.*, 3rd ed. (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy and Clarke and Sons, 1818), first issued in 1817, Kendall discussed the Dublin Charter (126) and critiqued a letter to the editor in a “Dublin newspaper” (207–08, 231, 253). More pointedly, he published the Irish anti-Catholic tract *Letters to a Friend, on the State of Ireland, the Roman Catholic Question, and the merits of constitutional religious distinctions* (London: James Carpenter and G.B. Whittaker, 1826). The only clue to his Canadian years is his entry, “Kendall, Edward Augustus” in John Watkins’ *A Biographical Dictionary of the Living Authors of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Henry Colburn, 1816), 187, which states he was “lately employed in a civil capacity in Canada.” The dictionary references the “literary calendar” of 1814 for its entries. Guy Arnold’s Oxford DNB entry for Kendall asserts he was employed in Canada previous to his American tour, based on the *Biographical Dictionary* entry. See Guy Arnold, “Kendall, Edward Augustus (1775/6–1842),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/view/article/15344> (accessed Feb. 1, 2014). But there is no reason to conclude this, and a spell in the civil service in Canada immediately following the publication of *Travels in New York* in 1809, with a return to England perhaps encouraged by the outbreak of war in 1812, better aligns with the “lately” qualification of Watkins. Kendall may have been employed in Lower Canada, as he was familiar with the perpetuation of the custom of Paris there in the civil code (*An Argument*, 249).

¹⁶ Notice in *The Literary Chronicle* no. 7, Monday, May 11, 1818.

print long after his death, and today these anchor his reputation.¹⁷ His obituary in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1842 however made no mention of his works for children, instead noting publications such as "Travels in America and Canada" (a reference to *Travels Through the Northern Parts of the United States*) and other "works on political economy and jurisprudence, besides many translations from the French in prose in verse."¹⁸ His *Gentleman's Magazine* obituary credited him with originating the "popular race of weekly issues from the press" that included *The Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review* (1818–28¹⁹) and *Olio* (1823–33), which according to the 1892 *Dictionary of National Biography* were conceived with "the object of providing cheap and good literature for the people."²⁰ For those interested in life in the northeastern United States in the early years of the republic, his main literary legacy is *Travels Through the Northern Parts of the United States*.

The association between Dighton Rock investigations and masonic esotericism must be understood within the context of the fraternal society's history on both sides of the Atlantic. Writing of eighteenth-century freemasonry in Europe, Margaret C. Jacob has placed masonic identity within a rhetorical framework that was "British in origin as well as invariably civic, hence political, and most frequently progressive. Central to masonic identity was the belief that merit and not birth constitutes the foundation for social and political order." It was "most easily identified with the English republican tradition that crystallized in the 1650s."²¹ Steven C. Bullock has argued that American freemasonry was more concerned with promoting a universal fraternal brotherhood than it was with esoteric knowledge,

¹⁷ Among these popular works for children were *Pocket Encyclopedia; or, A dictionary of arts, sciences, and polite literature: compiled from the best authorities* (London: Printed for W. Peacock and Sons ..., 1802).

¹⁸ DEATHS. 1842. *The Gentleman's Magazine: and historical review*, July 1856—May 1868 (12): 670-675.

¹⁹ The Oxford DNB entry for Kendall gives the initial year of publication for *The Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review* as 1819, but issues from 1818 survive.

²⁰ Gordon Goodwin, "Kendall, Edward Augustus (1776?–1842)," *Dictionary of National Biography* vol. 30 (London: Smith, Elder, & Co.; and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1892).

²¹ Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 9.

and that its “links to impenetrable mysteries” were “virtually ignored by colonial brothers.”²² Even Benjamin Franklin, as prominent as he appeared to be in fraternity matters on both sides of the Atlantic, according to Bullock made only a “slight emotional investment” in membership.²³ American freemasonry was unique in striving to identify the fraternity with the scientific knowledge of learned men of the past, as opposed to the esoteric wisdom and ancient mysteries favored by English brethren. According to Bullock: “The new language of Masonic science first placed the fraternity into the accepted genealogy of learning and civilization, giving it a central role in the lineage of progress.”²⁴ The masons with whom Kendall associated in New England, the Reverend Bentley in particular, adhered to utopian ideals they shared with the eighteenth-century English tradition described by Jacob: “Masonic oratory extolled religious toleration, reason, and science, as well as discipline and order, within lodges possessing a constitutional government.”²⁵

These civic-minded American freemasons nevertheless embraced esoteric knowledge and practices, especially in communicating amongst themselves. “The knowledge of Masonry is not contained in any of the present known languages of the world (for as I observed, it has a language peculiar to itself) but in emblems, hieroglyphics, signs, tokens and words,” explained Abraham Lynsen Clarke, rector of St. John’s Church in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1799. He continued: “All the eastern and ancient nations were peculiarly fond of metaphors, bold allegories and sublime allusions—even the prophets of the *Most High God* conveyed important instructions, under emblematical representations, and in a language, highly figurative and picturesque.”²⁶ Clarke’s references to metaphor, allegory and allusion are significant, as I

²² Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood*, 77.

²³ Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood*, 77.

²⁴ Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood*, 143.

²⁵ Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment*, 54.

²⁶ Abraham Lynsen Clarke, *The secrets of Masonry illustrated and explained; in a discourse, preached at South-Kingstown, before the Grand Lodge of the State of Rhode-Island; convened for the installation of*

will show, where Kendall's first accounting of Dighton Rock is concerned. Kendall's effort to understand the rock—and to express that understanding—precisely reflected the masonic penchant for rational inquiry alongside esoteric beliefs and obscured or metaphorical communication. Kendall was concerned with what could be perceived and described, what might be lurking within the obscure or hidden that was of an esoteric or hermetic nature, and what should remain obscure to all but initiates in the brotherhood. In the best practice of freemasonry, Kendall engaged in discourse that conveyed subtextual meaning to anyone familiar with masonic concepts.

The most important aspect of masonic doctrine where Dighton Rock is concerned is that its imaginative version of human history was a blend of diffusionism and migrationism, concerned with the spread (and preservation) of a universal root wisdom as well as the movements of ancient peoples, in accordance with the repopulating of the earth by the descendants of Noah. *Diffuse* is a word that regularly crops up in masonic literature of this period and Kendall employed the concept as well as the term in his writings. Josiah Bartlett, grand warden of the Massachusetts grand lodge and an associate of Bentley in Boston, held in a 1793 discourse how masonry flourished successively in Assyria, Judea, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Italy. From there it “diffused” through the greater part of Europe and Asia, “and is not unknown in the more informed kingdoms of Africa.” Absent from this ancient diffusion of the order's wisdom were the Americas. The founding fathers, Bartlett explained, settled an “inhospitable wilderness.”²⁷ With his investigation of Dighton Rock, Kendall was about to challenge the idea that the “Royal Art” only arrived in America with the English colonists.

Washington-Lodge, September 3d, A.L. 5799. By Abraham Lynsen Clarke, A.M. Rector of St. John's Church, Providence. (Providence, [1799]), 7–8.

²⁷ Josiah Bartlett, *A Discourse on the Origin, Progress and Design of Free Masonry* (Boston: Thomas and John Fleet, 1793), 9–10.

Kendall and the Inscribed Rocks of America

Irrespective of Gordon Goodwin's dismissal of *Travels* as "a somewhat dull account" in the 1892 volume of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Kendall's writing revealed a fine analytical mind. His assessment of Dighton Rock was certainly not the longest the artifact would ever receive, but Chapter 53 of Volume 2 of *Travels*—sixteen pages, most of which were devoted to the rock—remains the most perceptive. Kendall's appraisal was augmented by what appears to have been a well-executed oil painting that would enter the collection of Harvard's Peabody Museum, where it unfortunately has gone missing, the image preserved only through two different nineteenth-century engravings.²⁸ [Figs. 15, 16] (While Kendall plainly was a gifted artist, no biographical account mentions this aspect of his talents.) Before publishing *Travels* in 1809, Kendall produced his "Account" for Judge Davis and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, written in October 1807 and published in 1809. While "Account" bears many similarities to the chapter in *Travels*, the former is a distinctly masonic interpretation that all but confirms a fraternity membership for Kendall, and his writing embodies the tension between the mystical and the rational in the English masonic tradition. As Jacob has remarked on eighteenth-century English masonic literature: "Uniformly these writers claim to represent an ancient, generally Egyptian and Hermetic wisdom, rediscovered and augmented by the new useful learning of their age."²⁹ Kendall was fully charged with the energy and ephemera of Egyptology when he arrived in America, as he had contributed

²⁸ Personal communication from David DeBono Schafer, Senior Collections Manager & Interim Director of Collections, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, February 12, 2014: "According to our database, the Peabody does/did have an 1807 oil painting by E.A. Kendall of the Dighton Rock. (The ID# is 967-28-10/45477) However, there is no storage location for this object, no true acquisition info either, and a note from a 1967 paper catalog records says 'Found in the attic and accessioned in July 1967. See Bureau of Ethnology Vol. 10, plate LIV.' We currently don't know where this painting is and there is no photograph or image of it at the Peabody (or even if it was truly part of the museum's collection). In the late-1990s we did a complete catalog and inventory of our Prints, Drawings & Paintings collection, so if this painting was in museum storage, we would have a location and digital photograph of it. (We do have an 1860s oil painting by Bower, and an 1853 pencil drawing by Seth Eastman of the Dighton Rock: 976-12-10/53074 & 41-72-10/169) It's probably [sic] that this was part of a professor's research material, since there are other Dighton Rock-related objects found in this 1967 accession. (cf. 967-28-10/45474, 967-28-10/45475A, 967-28-10/4547B, 967-28-10/45476; "Cloth copy of the inscription on Dighton Rock" & "Enlarged photograph of Dighton Rock, taken 1920 by professor").

²⁹ Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment*, 56.

an essay on the French invasion of Egypt to an English translation of Vivant Denon's official account of the associated scientific discoveries.³⁰

Kendall never explained why he made his tour of American states, but seeking out inscribed rocks may have been his primary motivation. His curiosity could have been piqued by James Winthrop's 1788 drawing, which had been published as a foldout by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1804.³¹ When he began his tour in New York in May 1807, he set out for Connecticut to witness election day. It was to the Connecticut assembly coincidentally that Ezra Stiles had delivered his Election Sermon of 1783, and Stiles's investigations of inscribed rocks became part of Kendall's researches. Judge Davis arranged for Kendall to examine Stiles' unpublished papers at Yale, and Kendall strove to see firsthand the inscriptions Stiles documented. Kendall realized, as Stiles had, that Dighton Rock was not an isolated phenomenon: there were numerous other inscribed rocks, including examples recently reported across the Appalachians and even painted rocks observed by Canadian fur traders. "My own wish is to visit all the sculptured rocks," Kendall informed Davis, although he admitted: "This I may never be able to accomplish."³²

Over the course of about one week Kendall inspected Dighton Rock (and chipped away a sample), compared the inscription to four previous drawings dating back to Cotton Mather (of which he

³⁰ Denon's account, *Voyage dans le Basse et la Haute Égypte, pendant les campagnes du Général Bonaparte* (1802) immediately appeared in English translation in a multitude of editions in London and New York; WorldCat lists 18 editions in 1803 alone. Kendall appears to have contributed his essay at least to Vivant Denon, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt: during the campaigns of General Bonaparte*, trans. Arthur Aikin, "with an historical account of the invasion by the French, by E. A. Kendal[l]," 2 vols. (London: B. Crosby, 1802, and Cundee, 1803; New York: Heard and Forman, 1803).

³¹ James Winthrop described his effort to pull a life-size impression of the Dighton Rock inscription using printer's ink in a letter to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, November 10, 1788. He ventured no interpretation of the inscription's meaning or origin. The letter was accompanied by a foldout of a drawing he derived from the ink impression. See James Winthrop, "Account of an Inscribed Rock, at Dighton, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, accompanied with a copy of the Inscription" (Cambridge, Nov. 10, 1788), in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 2, no. 2, 126–129 (Charlestown: Samuel Etheridge, 1804). See also Delabarre, "Middle Period," 77–81.

³² Kendall, "Account," 176.

thought Stephen Sewall's was the best, although it was "performed with a feeble and hesitating hand"³³), executed a fine oil painting, and recorded local traditions. The unlearned, he reported, "believe that the rock was sculptured by a pirate, either Captain Kyd or Captain Blackbeard, in order to mark the site of buried treasure; and the shore, for more than a hundred fathom on a side, has been dug, in hope of a discovery."³⁴ The learned "are more attached to a Phoenician origin."³⁵ The idea that the rock was associated with buried treasure was new, and it arose from a more widespread phenomenon in the northeastern United States.³⁶ According to historian Alan Taylor, "backcountry folk insisted that troves of pirate treasure guarded by evil spirits pockmarked the New England countryside even in locales far from the coast."³⁷ Tales of lost Spanish mines were another inspiration, and treasure hunting was steeped in supernatural practices and fears. Taylor found more than forty accounts of rural residents using occult practices to seek buried treasure, most of them between 1780 and 1830.³⁸ During his travels Kendall encountered the aftermath of treasure-digging fever that had gripped Maine's Kennebec valley in 1804.

³³ Kendall, *Travels*, 1:227.

³⁴ Kendall, *Travels*, 1:223. Fathoms measure ocean depths, and it is not clear if Kendall was playfully exaggerating the depth of excavations or saying the shoreline on both sides of the river had been excavated for a distance of 600 feet.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Delabarre in "Middle Period" (108) ventured that there might have been some historical basis to piracy being associated with the area around Dighton Rock. Two of the six lots on Assonet Neck in 1688 were purchased by Henry Tew of Newport, Rhode Island, and John O. Austin in his *Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island* thought he was perhaps the brother of the pirate Thomas Tew. Delabarre made Thomas Tew a resident of Newport as well, but there is no reference to Newport in the profile he cites ("Captain Tew," 67–90), in Captain Charles Johnson's *The History of Pirates* (Haverhill MA: Thomas Carey, 1825), a much reissued collection of adventurous biographies that may have been in part the work of Daniel Defoe and first appeared as *A General History of the Pyrates* in 1726. Delabarre cited (without reference pages) an 1814 edition. Delabarre failed to mention that according to the 1900 federal census, his next-door neighbour on Arlington Avenue in Providence was Lillie Tew, the widow of a jeweller, P. George Tew. Delabarre most certainly gathered the family pirate lore from his neighbours. I am dubious of any connection between Tew and the pirate-treasure stories heard by Kendall, for if there was local lore about Tew, Kendall surely would have heard it, rather than fanciful references to Kidd and Blackbeard.

³⁷ Alan Taylor, "The Early Republic's Supernatural Economy: Treasure Seeking in the American Northeast, 1780-1830," *American Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 7.

³⁸ Joseph Smith in Manchester, New York was one of the more notorious practitioners, employing a seeing stone and dowsing rods (and reputedly slitting the throats of sheep or dogs to lay out protective magic circles) before following the advice of an angel, Moroni, and unearthing two golden plates in 1827; his decipherment of them produced the Book of Mormon in 1830. Taylor, "The Early Republic's Supernatural Economy," 10–12.

"The settlers of Maine, like all the other settlers in New England indulge an unconquerable expectation of finding money buried in the earth," he explained.³⁹ He also witnessed treasure fever while pursuing an "Ethiopian inscription" in Rutland, Vermont, that was mentioned in *The American Universal Geography*:⁴⁰ Kendall's effort to find the inscription provided a comedic narrative turn with Rutland tavern patrons who had never heard of their own celebrated stone. Suspecting Kendall had some business with counterfeit notes, they wondered whether his talk of an "Ethiopic inscription was not conjectured to mean *Vermont bank-paper*: if not, it was at least supposed that I had dreamed of a money-chest, and that unless well watched, I should carry it out of the town."⁴¹ When Kendall finally found farmer White's inscription, in a barn foundation of unmortared stone, it proved to be a natural line of white quartz interspersed with black crystals in a chunk of granite.

Unbeknownst to Kendall, in Dighton, notions of buried pirate treasure with supernatural associations and occult search methods extended beyond the rock. The Richmond house was said to be haunted, and more than one party dug up the cellar under the direction of clairvoyants who said large sums of money were buried there.⁴² Kendall gathered a number of local stories that supposedly accounted for the rock's inscription, beyond pirate treasure. One held that that one of the first English vessels to visit America spent a winter anchored there, and its crew made the rock's markings; another proposed that an English vessel was stranded there and recorded the disaster on the rock. In support of both stories was still another story, of ship's timbers and an anchor once seen on the shore. There was also a more elaborate

³⁹ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:86.

⁴⁰ "In Rutland, on the farm of Mr. W. White, has lately been found a large stone, on which is a line of considerable length, in characters, which our correspondent supposes to be Ethiopian. They are regularly placed, and the strokes are filled with a black composition nearly as hard as the stone." Kendall had read of the stone in the 1805 edition. This quote is from the 1812 edition (p332). Jedidiah Morse, *The American universal geography: or, A view of the present state of all the kingdoms, states, and colonies in the known world...* vol. 1, 6th edn. (Boston: Thomas and Andrews, 1812).

⁴¹ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:231.

⁴² Hurd, *History of Bristol County*, 223–24.

version of the purported Indian tradition related by Greenwood: “that in some ages past, a number of white men arrived in the river, in a *bird*; that the white men took Indians into the *bird*, as hostages; that they took fresh water for their consumption at a neighbouring spring; that the Indians fell upon and slaughtered the white men at the spring; that, during the affray, *thunder* and *lightning* issued from the *bird*; that the hostages escaped from the *bird*; and that a spring, now called White Spring, and from which there runs a brook, called White Man’s Brook, has its name from this event.” Dighton Rock thus was “a monument of the adventure of the slaughter of the white men of the *bird*.”⁴³ As it happened, a bird, supposedly a crane, figured prominently in a drawing of the rock made under the supervision of a local citizen Kendall met, “Judge Baylies,” who was likely Dr. William Baylies, a judge of the county court of common pleas since 1784.⁴⁴ This drawing was the one on which the Reverend John Smith of Dighton reported to Ezra Stiles in 1789. In his report, Smith gave a different pedigree for the bird: “Capt Walter Haley who has resided seven years in China, not knowing our conjectures, declared the bird to be the

⁴³ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:230.

⁴⁴ The identification of the men named Baylies involved in investigations of Dighton Rock is confusing, as is the creation of the Baylies-Goodwin drawing of 1790 in *Antiquitates Americanae* (1837), as discussed in Chapter 6. Kendall mentions both “the Honourable Judge Baylies” who possessed one of the drawings he examined (*Travels*, 2:226) and “Major Baylies, a gentleman of the most pleasing and polished manners, and to whom I owe no less for his personal attentions, than for his zealous assistance in all my undertakings and enquiries concerning the Writing Rock.” (*Travels*, 2:232) The latter was Major Hodijah Baylies, a Harvard graduate in 1777 who served as an aide-de-camp to Washington. He would be known as “Judge Baylies” later in life, but did not receive an appointment as judge of probate for Bristol Country until 1810, three years after Kendall met him. His brother, Dr. William Baylies, graduated from Harvard in 1760 and was named a judge of the county’s court of common pleas in 1784. He was presumably the “Judge Baylies” responsible for the drawing Kendall examined, and also would have been the “Dr. Baylies” who was part of the team that had assisted Stephen Sewall in making his lifesize drawing in 1768. The Reverend Bentley, in his October 13, 1807 diary entry recounting his meeting with Kendall, noted that Kendall has seen “the figures from the two Baylies, who have been attentive to the Dighton rock & live not far from the spot on which it stands.” (Stiles, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles* 3:322–23). Delabarre for some reason thought these two Baylies were Dr. William Baylies and one of his sons. (Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 91.) As well, Thomas Webb provided a drawing for *Antiquitates Americanae* (1837) that was identified as the work of “Dr. Baylies and Mr. Goodwin’s 1790.” Presumably this involved “Judge Baylies” (Dr. William Baylies). To confuse matters, a writer for the *Newburyport Herald* of May 4, 1819, “recollects about the year 1791 or 2, of seeing two copies of the writing on the Rock, taken by two gentlemen of Dighton, one by Dr. H. Baylies, the other by Mr. William Goodwin.” (Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 90.) This writer appears to have fused Hodijah Baylies and William Baylies into a single new entity, “Dr. H. Baylies.” For the biographies of the Baylies family, see Hurd, *History of Bristol County*, 233–235. Going forward, the Baylies drawing I discuss is the one identified in *Antiquitates Americanae* as having been created by Baylies and Goodwin in 1790.

Casur or Casuar of China; one of which he saith he owned several years.”⁴⁵ The bird figure presumably supported Smith’s echo of Vallancey, in proposing the rock was carved by a more advanced Asiatic people who had moved on to South America after the Tartar hordes arrived. Despite discussing the bird with Judge Baylies and inspecting the rock over the course of six or seven days, Kendall recounted, “I was never able to discern this figure. Gentlemen, also, by whom I was more than once accompanied, were equally unable to discern this figure.”⁴⁶

As for the spring, it was about a quarter-mile northeast of the rock, on the property of a farmer, Asa Shove: the farm had been in his family since George Shove had acquired the land as one of the original purchasers of Assonet Neck. Kendall could learn nothing there about the so-called Indian tradition. Shove’s son instead told him the spring and the brook had been named in memory of a white hunter, a colonist who “being heated with the chace [sic], drank freely at the spring, and died in consequence, upon the spot. In regard to the spring, one neighbour had told me that it was a hot spring; and another, that it was remarkable for its intense coldness; and I found it neither warmer nor colder than springs in general.”⁴⁷

Kendall was the first person to understand the perceptual challenge in depicting the inscription. James Winthrop’s use of printer’s ink in 1788 to lift an impression “shows only the congeries of disjointed members; whereas in the original, the whole is connected and complete,” according to Kendall. Chalking the inscriptions he continued “is deceitful in its promises of accuracy; I tried it myself, and found that I falsified the figures at every touch.”⁴⁸ Kendall did not claim in *Travels* that his own effort was “in all respects accurate,” but he did adhere to two useful principles that he said his predecessors did not follow: “the first is that of aiming to make the copy neither worse nor better than that of the original; the other,

⁴⁵ Quoted by Delabarre in “Middle Period,” 87.

⁴⁶ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:228.

⁴⁷ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:230–31.

⁴⁸ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:227.

that of being content to leave obscure and nearly indistinct in the copy, that which is obscure and nearly invisible in the original...My wish is, not to show what the same design would have been, in the hands of a skilful [sic] artist, furnished with proper tools; but what it really is, in the hands of the artist that performed it.”⁴⁹ In October 1807 Kendall took his painting to Salem, Massachusetts, to show to the prominent freemason, the Reverend William Bentley. Kendall in turn was made aware of a revival (or perpetuation) of Stiles’s Hebrew theory for the rock’s inscription, advanced by a young Bostonian and Bentley protégé, Samuel Harris, whose scholarly genius was thought to bear the greatest promise of the age.

Samuel Harris Revives the Hebrew Interpretation

It is difficult to know what to make of the extravagant claims for Samuel Harris’s brilliance, any more than one can be comfortable with extravagant claims for his friend and mentor, the Reverend William Bentley, pastor of East Church in Salem, Massachusetts. According to Judge Joseph G. Waters’ biographical sketch of Bentley in 1868, Bentley “read with facility more than twenty different languages, and he was very familiar with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic and Persian. He wrote and spoke in most of the popular languages of Europe.”⁵⁰ In addition to his prominence in freemasonry, Bentley was keen on natural history as well as a collector of coins and rare books. His diaries reveal him to have been well acquainted with the leading educators and antiquarians of greater Boston. In Salem, he kept close watch on the comings and goings of its ships, which ranged the world, gathering from them artifacts he displayed in a cabinet of curiosities, which he would bequeath to the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester. Arising from the seventeenth-century European tradition of the *Wunderkammer* (cabinet of curiosity), such collections of objects according to John R. Grimes ranged in scale from display cabinets

⁴⁹ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:227–28.

⁵⁰ Judge Joseph P. Waters, “A Biographical Sketch of Rev. William Bentley,” ix–xxi, in William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, vol. 1 (Salem MA: Essex Institute, [1905]), xviii.

to entire rooms. When the Treaty of Paris of 1783 opened the world to American shipping, the globe's "curiosities" (which in the eighteenth century according to Grimes denoted items "of wondrous quality, meriting appreciation and study, as opposed to the contemporary connotation of the odd or strange") fueled an American enthusiasm for these displays.⁵¹ Bentley also contributed specimens to the cabinet of curiosities of the East India Marine Society (which became the Peabody Essex Museum).⁵² In October 1805 Bentley was visited by one of those far-ranging American sea captains, Obadiah Rich, who was accompanied by Samuel Turell (or Turrell), who had opened a cabinet in Boston stocked in part with Native American materials loaned to him in 1802 by the Massachusetts Historical Society.⁵³ Bentley had toured Turell's cabinet in 1803: "At Turell's I see something like taste, & science, but a man impoverished by his genius & industry."⁵⁴ After Turell and Rich called on Bentley in September 1805, Bentley remarked in his diary that Turell's cabinet was "the best ever shewn in that capital." As for Rich, he was "a Naturalist who has in his East India voyages paid great attention to the subject...Mr. Rich has a great Collection in Conchology & some very valuable publications which had not been before seen in this part of America."⁵⁵

⁵¹ John R. Grimes, "Curiosity, Cabinets, and Knowledge," in *A Perspective on the Native American Collection of the Peabody Essex Museum*. <http://www.pem.org/aux/pdf/mission/Grimes-Cabinets-Curiosity-Knowledge-sm.pdf> (accessed Aug. 14, 2014).

⁵² This benevolent organization, formed in Salem in 1799, was open to ship captains and supercargoes who had rounded Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope, and they brought home a wealth of material culture from the northwest coast of America, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and India, among other locales. Peabody Essex Museum, "About PEM." http://pem.org/about/museum_history (accessed Aug. 14, 2014).

⁵³ Bentley had known Rich for about twenty years—he is first mentioned in Bentley's diary in 1786, and another entry in 1791 captures Rich returning to Salem from Bengal, after which he relocated to north Boston. See entries for May 13, 1786 and July 9, 1791 in Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 1:37, 274.

⁵⁴ Entry for Oct. 7, 1803, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:52.

⁵⁵ Entry for Sep. 18, 1805, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:191. Obadiah Rich's son of the same name was a U.S. consul in Valencia and Madrid who established himself in London as a prominent book dealer. See "Obadiah Rich collection, 1450–1843," New York Public Library Archives and Manuscripts, <http://archives.nypl.org/mss/2570> (accessed Nov. 21, 2014).

Turell told Bentley he wanted to propose a young friend, Samuel Harris, for membership in the Massachusetts Historical Society. Harris was 22, an engraver who lived in Boston's north end, as did Rich.⁵⁶ Harris would be said to have attended two schools at age ten, such was his thirst for learning, but his modest background had denied him a higher education.⁵⁷ Even before meeting Harris, Bentley was primed to expect greatness from the young man: "Who can say that I shall not see American genius ripen in my own times?"⁵⁸ Bentley noted after the visit by Rich and Turell that Harris "has displayed taste in his profession & an inclination for Oriental Literature."⁵⁹ Harris, Turell and Rich were part of a circle whose members "form a little club and assist each other in their enquiries," Bentley noted. "They have all engaged the public notice by their efforts without a public education."⁶⁰ After Joseph T. Buckingham launched *The Polyanthos*, an illustrated miscellany, in Boston that December, Harris began contributing portraits.⁶¹

There was a clear yearning for an American genius in the hopes Bentley expressed for Harris before he had even met him. Americans had been stung by the criticisms of Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, who in 1774 contended that America had not produced a good poet, a clever mathematician, or a man of genius in a single art or science. There were skills aplenty, but no decided talent in anything.⁶² Raynal's

⁵⁶ According to *The Boston Directory* of 1807, an engraver named Samuel Harris, Jr. lived on Spring Lane (p12), which was two blocks from Turell's museum at 3 Tremont St. (p148). Digitized by Boston Athenaeum, <http://cdm.bostonathenaeum.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16057coll32> (accessed Dec. 10, 2014)

⁵⁷ "NOTICE OF MR. SAMUEL HARRIS," *The Harvard Lyceum*, July 28, 1810.

⁵⁸ Entry for Sep. 18, 1805, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:191.

⁵⁹ Entry for Sep. 18, 1805, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:191

⁶⁰ Entry for Oct. 5, 1805, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:194.

⁶¹ Preble portrait, *The Polyanthos* (1805-1814) Jan. 1, 1806. Winthrop portrait, for "Sketch of the Life Of John Winthrop, Esq.: First Governour Of Massachusetts," *The Polyanthos* (1805-1814), Jun. 1, 1806.

⁶² "On doit être étonné que l'Amérique n'ait pas encore produit un bon poète, un habile mathématicien, un homme de génie dans un seul art, ou une seule science. Ils ont presque tous de la facilité pour tout; aucun ne marque un talent décidé pour rien." Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissemens & du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, vol. 7 (La Haye: Gosse fils, 1774), 130.

denigration of America (which echoed de Pauw and Kalm in declaring Europe's domestic animals degenerated in the Anglo-American colonies, due to the climate⁶³) earned him a rebuke from Jefferson in *Notes on the State of Virginia*, the condemnation of the young Benjamin Smith Barton in his unpublished 1787 essay on Native Americans, as well as a published rebuttal by Thomas Paine in 1791.⁶⁴ Harris thus strikes one as something of a project, a virgin-soil genius to be elevated and refined as a living rejoinder to the slander of Raynal. Harris's chief supporter was soon the Reverend Bentley, as Rich died November 25, 1805, mere weeks after alerting Bentley to Harris's great promise.⁶⁵ As for Turell, he had a serious falling out with the Massachusetts Historical Society when he refused to return the Native American items it had loaned to him. The society wrote Turell on August 25, 1807, demanding their return, without result; it finally expelled him from the membership in 1811.⁶⁶ When *The Polyanthos* ceased publication for five years, following the July 1, 1807 issue, Harris set his sights on Harvard. Around September 1807 he began "studies preparatory," supported by "a number of individuals," of which Bentley must have been one, that had offered to fund him so that he could leave his engraving work and focus on his education.⁶⁷ Surely Bentley (who had been a tutor in Latin and Greek during his own Harvard studies) assisted him in his preparations for the admission examination he would undergo in 1808.

⁶³ "Les boeufs, les chevaux & les brebis, ont dégénéré dans les colonies Septentrionales de l'Angleterre, quoique les especes en eusses été choisies avec précaution. C'est, sans doute, le climat; c'est la nature de l'air & du sol, qui s'oppose au succès de leur transplantation." Raynal, *Histoire philosophique*, 7:112–113.

⁶⁴ Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 97–100. Spencer and Barton, "Two Unpublished Essays," 568. Thomas Paine, *A letter addressed to the Abbe Raynal, on the affairs of North-America: in which the mistakes in the Abbe's account of the revolution of America, are corrected and cleared up* (London: S. Jordan, 1791).

⁶⁵ Rich's death is noted in Evelyn Rich, "Richard Rich of Eastham on Cape Cod and some of his descendants," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 84, no. 37.

⁶⁶ Mary Malloy, *Souvenirs of the Fur Trade: Northwest Coast Indian Art and Artifacts Collected by American Mariners, 1788-1844* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 91.

⁶⁷ The quotes are from *The Harvard Lyceum* article ("NOTICE OF MR. SAMUEL HARRIS," July 28, 1810), which states that he was admitted to Harvard "after only about one year's application." Delabarre, who had access to registry records, indicated he prepared for thirteen months. Delabarre, "Middle Period," 99.

Edward Kendall called on the Reverend Bentley on October 13, 1807. “He gave me the best view I had ever had of the Dighton Rock,” Bentley noted of Kendall’s painting in his diary. “He exhibited the shape of the rock, of the fissures & the shade of the figures that such as were most visible might be easily known.”⁶⁸ Bentley in turn shared with Kendall a drawing and a written explanation by Samuel Harris. Kendall was unimpressed. Harris had never seen the rock, instead relying on James Winthrop’s rendering, which Kendall considered a poor representation. Kendall left Harris nameless, identifying him only as a “Hebrew scholar, in Boston” in *Travels*. Perhaps this was merciful, for Harris had produced an interpretation (now lost to us) as fanciful as the Phoenician triptych of Court de Gébeline. As Kendall recounted, “he shows that one of the figures is a king; another, his throne and canopy; a third a priest; a fourth an idol, a fifth a foreign ambassador, &c. and, in the intervening parts, he points out Hebrew characters, composing words, which words explain the figures; as *the king—the priest—the idol*. But this gentleman has misemployed his ingenuity, and a single glance at the rock would have robbed him of all disposition to support the hypothesis. There is not, in reality, the smallest reason to doubt, that these sculptures are of Indian work.”⁶⁹ In his diary entry, Bentley stated: “I shewed [Kendall] Mr. Harris’ letter & the authority of the Palmyrine Characters to which the Marks were compared. Mr. Kendall saw no resemblance of the letters.”⁷⁰ By “Palmyrine,” Bentley meant the script of an Aramaic dialect associated with the Palmyrene Empire of the third century A.D. ruled by Queen Zenobia, which gives some clue as to who Harris thought carved Dighton Rock, and when.

Kendall may not have thought much of Samuel Harris’s interpretation of Dighton Rock, but the young Boston engraver could have been responsible for the engraving of Kendall’s painting that was published in 1809. The engraving accompanied the letter Kendall wrote to Judge Davis on October 29,

⁶⁸ Entry for Oct. 13, 1807, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:322–23.

⁶⁹ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:224–25.

⁷⁰ Entry for Oct. 13, 1807, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:322–23.

1807—sixteen days after Kendall met with Bentley—when it was published in 1809 as “Account of the Writing-Rock in Taunton River” by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. This initial engraving is less refined than the later one made for the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the differences underscore the essential problem with all rock art of achieving an objective representation that does not resort to interpretation. Both engravings, in black and white, were interpreting a painting that in turn was an artistic interpretation of the rock; the painting was in colour, and being executed in oils, it allowed Kendall to revel in murk. The engravings disagreed on how to render some of the markings that Kendall rendered with atmospheric obscurity. Kendall in his “Account” noted: “If you find yourself obliged to approach close to some of my figures, and can at last arrive at no certainty as to their outlines, I must beg you to remember, that this will always be your situation, when examining the rock itself.”⁷¹ As for the striking differences between various renderings, including his own, Kendall advised they were not always “to be attributed to the fault of the copyists, but often to the obscurity of the sculpture, in which every man will see something different from every other. Under these circumstances no perfect copy can ever be made.”⁷²

Bentley showed Kendall a recent book by Thaddeus Mason Harris, who apparently was no relation to Samuel Harris. Thaddeus Harris graduated from Harvard in 1787 and was poised to become the private secretary of George Washington on graduation when he was disqualified by a bout of smallpox. He returned to Harvard to earn a theology degree in 1789, served as Harvard’s librarian from 1791 to 1793, and became the Unitarian minister of the First Parish Church in Dorchester.⁷³ As noted, he served as chaplain to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts and published a defense of freemasonry in 1797. Harris visited the Ohio country in 1803 and produced an early account of its mounds as well as its

⁷¹ Kendall, “Account,” 184.

⁷² Kendall, “Account,” 189.

⁷³ Noah Sheola, “The Harris Family,” Boston Athenaeum, <http://www.bostonathenaeum.org/node/861> (accessed Sep. 12, 2014).

petroglyphs.⁷⁴ His journal, published in Boston in 1805, was a commercial flop. (“Mr. Harris with me from Dorchester,” Bentley noted in his diary on May 24, 1806. “His journal to Ohio, he tells me does not sell. Few copies, unless to subscribers, have been disposed of.”⁷⁵) An excerpt was published in the first issue of *The Polyanthos*, on December 1, 1805, describing the mounds at Grave Creek in West Virginia. He wondered at their maker (“some renowned prince or warrior”) and concluded: “we cannot but regret that the name and the glory it was designed to perpetuate are gone—LOST IN THE DARKNESS OF THE GRAVE!”⁷⁶ Bentley mentioned in the diary entry for his meeting with Kendall, “the Ohio rocks with marks are in the same position” as Dighton Rock, meaning along a river’s edge, and further asserted “these rocks [Kendall] intends to visit.”⁷⁷

In December 1808, Thaddeus Harris would write a curious letter to John Quincy Adams, the Boston lawyer, one-term American president and now the corresponding secretary of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, which touched upon the Ohio mounds and rock art, Dighton Rock, and Native American origins. Thaddeus Harris claimed to have come upon road workers in Medford, Massachusetts in 1787, who had turned up a cache of “square copper coins” under a stone.⁷⁸ Their design purportedly was that of Tartary coins illustrated in Strahlenberg’s volume. Coins rank among the most easily faked archaeological finds, readily available through numismatists (indeed, Harris’s friend Bentley was a coin collector) and simple to plant. Harris’s find alternately could have been a legitimate oddity of discovery during a period of copper coin counterfeiting and numerous copper minting schemes in the

⁷⁴ Thaddeus Mason Harris, *The journal of a tour into the territory northwest of the Alleghany Mountains; made in the spring of the year 1803. With a geographical and historical account of the state of Ohio...* (Boston: Manning & Loring, 1805):

⁷⁵ Entry for May 24, 1806, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:228.

⁷⁶ “The Journal of a Tour into the Territory North-West of the Alleghany Mountains. REV THADDEUS M HARRIS,” *The Polyanthos* (1805-1814); Dec. 1, 1805.

⁷⁷ Entry for Oct. 13, 1807, Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley*, 3:322–323.

⁷⁸ Thaddeus Mason Harris, “Account of Copper Coins, Found in Medford, Massachusetts,” in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 3, pt. 1 (Cambridge MA: Hilliard and Metcalf, 1809), 195.

former colonies following the Revolution.⁷⁹ Wherever the coins originated, they allowed Harris to assert connections between the Siberian/Tartarian peopling of America, the Ohio mounds, and “inscriptions on rocks on the banks of the Ohio and at Taunton,” by which he meant Dighton Rock.⁸⁰

Kendall’s letter to Judge Davis amounted to a preliminary report on what he thought of Dighton Rock, and many elements would be repeated in *Travels* in 1809. The letter differed in being so steeped in masonic allusions that it might as well have been a discourse to a lodge membership rather than to the Academy. (There may in fact have been little distinction between the ranks of freemasons and fellows of the Academy, given the interest of American masons in science and education.) In “Account,” Kendall deployed masonic metaphors, allegories and allusions. Of the rock he wrote: “I was greatly struck with the regularity of its features. Three of the sides, as I have already described, are uniformly inclined...”⁸¹ And so Kendall placed the reader in the presence of a flat-topped, three-sided pyramid. Even before the excitement generated by Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1798, pyramids were *ne plus ultra* expressions of the masonic craft.⁸² Kendall also remarked that a few inches beneath the sand the rock “is terminated suddenly by an horizontal ledge...Precisely indeed, as every block of stone, partly exposed, and partly hidden, is treated by a mason.”⁸³ Kendall’s analysis included references to the nature of chisel marks with terminology such as *en creux* (intaglio, or sunk below the surface, as opposed to cut with what he assured was a chisel cut’s triangular or prismatic form). Moreover, his awkward analogy of linked elements of the inscription as being *joining-hand* in nature is a dead-giveaway to freemasonry’s symbol of two clasped hands and its various handshakes of recognition between members. Kendall also ventured less opaquely:

⁷⁹ “The Coins of Colonial and Early America,” Department of Special Collections, University of Notre Dame, <http://www.coins.nd.edu/ColCoin/index.html> (accessed Sep. 12, 2014).

⁸⁰ Harris, “Account of Copper Coins,” 196.

⁸¹ Kendall, “Account,” 166.

⁸² “The *Pyramids of Egypt* are among the most astonishing specimens of ancient genius.” Josiah Bartlett, *A Discourse on the Origin, Progress and Design of Free Masonry*, 7.

⁸³ Kendall, “Account,” 168.

“if, as there may be reason to believe, the pyramid is a figure in masonry, originating in Egypt out of local circumstances,” then the fact that that the rock was a hand-crafted pyramid “may be made to give support to theories, false or true, of the transatlantic origin of the inscription...”⁸⁴ While he decided the rock’s shape was instead a work of nature, he ventured it had been selected for the inscription because it was in a ready-made pyramidal form.

Kendall observed in “Account” that the authorship of the rock’s inscription came down to two candidates: Native Americans (“the savage follower of the fishery and the chase...the inhabitants of the surrounding forests”) or migrationist voyagers (“learned circumnavigators...sojourners from the ancient seats of arts and civilization”).⁸⁵ Kendall argued that Dighton Rock, like other inscribed rocks he had seen or read about, were incontrovertibly the work of Indians, and that the inscription was “of antiquity considerably higher” than a date merely preceding the European arrival in America.⁸⁶ Still, taking note of the inscription’s “curvilinear figures,” Kendall proposed “the design has proceeded from an artist not unacquainted with pen or pencil; or at least from one, whose taste has been influenced, though possibly without his knowledge, by the use of those instruments, in other hands than his.”⁸⁷ There was more in this vein of cryptic influence. He detected “the tincture of imitative” and “consequently of the implied previous and known existence of other works of art,” observing that three figures with human heads “may be observed to stand upon a foot or pedestal.”⁸⁸ Whoever inscribed the rock “was not unacquainted with works of art, of a better and higher character,” and he reiterated the artist’s “imitations” of “pen writing, drawing, and statuary.” The artist “has evidently intended to describe equilateral angles, planes parallel to the horizon, and right and perpendicular lines; but he has failed in almost every instance.” He “wished to

⁸⁴ Kendall, “Account,” 169.

⁸⁵ Kendall, “Account,” 174.

⁸⁶ Kendall, “Account,” 173.

⁸⁷ Kendall, “Account,” 171.

⁸⁸ Kendall, “Account,” 172.

imitate figures, determined with the precision of the rule and compasses.”⁸⁹ Kendall could not have been more blatant about invoking the core masonic symbols of the compass and square, and alluding to masonic traditions of a root wisdom. The Indians were not practicing masons, but Kendall had proposed the artist had mimicked examples of ancient arts whose meaning he did not understand. This was the degeneration theory for Native Americans in its most esoteric form, and for all his criticism of the undisciplined imagining of other investigators, Kendall had succumbed to seeing evidence of a Native American’s imitation of arts dear to freemasons. Kendall did not explain how these arts had come to be mimicked by ancient savages, beyond dismissing a role for migrationist voyagers of the sort championed by Samuel Harris. The only possible conclusions were that the secret arts of the ages past, now preserved by freemasons, had once been known to the Indians’ forebears, or that the Indians that carved Dighton Rock were imitating more ancient works left behind by the original, more advanced migrants from Asia to America, to whom they were unrelated. It was no wonder Kendall intended to head west, in the direction of the mysterious mounds and petroglyphs that Thaddeus Harris had described.

Kendall and the “Mohawk” Interpretation

In his letter to Judge Davis of October 1807, Kendall mentioned an alleged reading of the inscription by “some Mohawk Indians” who were shown a drawing of the inscription while in Boston. Kendall had no dates or names to offer, nor did he reveal where or from whom he gathered the anecdote. The Mohawks “declared its meaning to be, that a dangerous animal, represented by the animal on the rock, had been killed at the place immortalized; that the human figures represented the persons, whom the animal killed; and that the others denote other parts of the affair.”⁹⁰ Kendall did not doubt that the animal was depicted: “its character is strongly, and it may be presumed faithfully marked. Its body is crossed, in near equal divisions, with bars or stripes. It is spotted. Its head is long and delicate. It wears horns. Its feet are

⁸⁹ Kendall, “Account,” 181.

⁹⁰ Kendall, “Account,” 182.

paws.—Already we see reason to suspect, that this is a creature of fancy, made up of the members of different animals; and this assuredly must be the case, if the line above its back, and which is wanting in all the previous draughts, forms, as it strikes the eye, the wing of an insect.”⁹¹

As Isaac Greenwood’s drawing of 1730 only depicted the top half of the inscription (the rest being under water when he visited), the first surviving drawing to show this animal was Stephen Sewall’s of 1768, and every rendering that followed, including the engravings of Kendall’s painting, depicted it in similar style. [Fig. 17] Delabarre called it one of the few images on the rock of which viewers were certain.⁹² Delabarre also proposed that a drawing had been shown to “the four Mohawk chiefs who were entertained in Boston in 1744.”⁹³ When Britain declared war against France in 1744, a delegation of Haudenosaunee, led by four sachems, did visit Boston. Hendrick Peters Theyanoguin, a Mohawk, was accompanied by two Cayugas, remembered as James and Jonathan, and an Onandaga, Joseph.⁹⁴ While this was too early for a viewing of the 1768 Sewall drawing, it was around 1744 that John Winthrop attempted his own drawing, now lost to us. Winthrop in his 1774 letter to Timothy Hollis noted: “on the lower side, near the middle, there seems to be some resemblance of a quadruped with horns.”⁹⁵ Presumably Winthrop depicted this animal figure in his circa 1744 attempt, and an examination of his drawing by these Haudenosaunee delegates may have been why Winthrop was open to an Indigenous attribution.

⁹¹ Kendall, “Account,” 183.

⁹² “Only a few of the pictographs are unquestionable. A large human figure midway between centre and left end, two smaller ones at extreme right, two complex figures made up of triangular forms at the top, and a peculiar quadruped with horns, near the centre, are about all that nearly everyone sees alike.” Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 166.

⁹³ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 70.

⁹⁴ See Eric Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks: Unraveling a Mohawk Mystery* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 161.

⁹⁵ Lort, “Account of an antient Inscription,” 296.

Edmund Burke Delabarre was unable to trace Kendall's account of a Mohawk interpretation to its source and left it unexplored, categorizing it as one of "an extraordinary collection of theories clustering about the old rock like barnacles."⁹⁶ Neither Kendall nor Delabarre knew enough about Indigenous traditions to recognize the potential significance of this account. Most theorists concluded the drawing depicted a deer, but Kendall, who inspected it closely, as noted called the animal a chimeric "creature of fancy," which denoted its hybridity. It may have portrayed the Great Cat (or Panther or Lynx), a major figure in the cosmology of Eastern Woodlands peoples. The fact that the drawing was hidden from Greenwood by tidewater when he drew the rock in 1730 may be in keeping with the Great Cat's position in Eastern Woodlands cosmology. To Anishinaabeg the Great Cat was Michipeshu, who was depicted with horns (which signified power) and traveled in the company of a horned snake.⁹⁷ Grace Rajnovich in *Reading Rock Art* has identified these paired *manitous* (*manidoog*) as the "Great Lynx (Mishipizheu) and Horned Snake (Ginebik) of the underground and underwater realms."⁹⁸ In other traditions, the Great Cat and the Horned Snake were manifestations of the same spirit. According to F. Kent Reilly, Eastern Woodlands peoples divided the world into at least three levels: the Above World, the Beneath World, and the Earthly Plane: "The Great Serpent not only dwelt in the Beneath World as the master of beneath and underwater creatures but reigned as Lord of the Realm of the Dead. This powerful supernatural presence was envisioned as a netherworld being who could assume the form of a Great Panther. With its elongated tail, this Great Panther could roil the waters of lakes, rivers, and ponds into whirlpools and thus caused many deaths among humankind. Nevertheless, this fearsome creature's power could help an individual

⁹⁶ Delabarre, "Middle Period," 110.

⁹⁷ Thor Conway, *Spirits on Stone: Lake Superior Ojibwa History, Legends & the Agawa Pictographs* (Sault Ste. Marie ON: Heritage Discoveries, 2010), 36–37.

⁹⁸ Rajnovich, *Reading Rock Art*, 36. Rajnovich's categorization of these manitous as "evil," while common, reflects a Christian duality rather than the complex, ambiguous ontology as articulated by Mary B. Black in "Ojibwa Taxonomy and Percept Ambiguity." As Michael Pomedli also notes, to the Ojibwa, "serpents had ambivalent characteristics: on the one hand, they were sources of disease and dread, and on the other...they exhibited curative powers." In *Living with Animals: Ojibwe Spirit Powers* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 186.

courageous enough to seek and channel it.”⁹⁹ The noticeably long tail in the Sewall drawing, in this riverside location, does give the viewer pause and would seem to discount a deer, as does Kendall’s confidence it had wings.¹⁰⁰ Dighton Rock’s stripe-bodied horned quadruped was not unlike the Great Cat depicted in 1830 by an American interpreter at Sault. Ste. Marie, John Tanner, in the song of an Ojibwa shaman, Chi-ah-ba. [Fig. 18] As Tanner explained: “The wild cat here figured has horns, and his residence is under the ground; but he has a master, Gitche-a-nah-mi-e-be-zhew (the great under-ground wild cat,) who is, as some think, Matche-Manito himself, their evil spirit, or devil.”¹⁰¹ Variants in the form assumed by the underwater spirit or Cat Monster in Mississippian rock art include winged, antlered serpents and long-tailed quadrupeds.¹⁰²

With the detection of a horned quadruped on the face of Dighton Rock that was covered for parts of the day by tidewater, the first opportunity arose to understand the significance in Eastern Woodlands cosmology of such marked stones, which occupied the spiritually powerful intersection of the sky world, the middle world on the surface of earth and water, and the underworld or beneath-world, which was within rock and under the waves. The Mohawk anecdote Kendall heard was likely garbled by colonists, and perhaps had not been understood to convey a deadly encounter with a major spirit entity. A Mohawk man seeing the drawing would have understood the Eastern Woodlands cosmology, even though ethnography tends to place their own cosmology well outside it. Through the so-called Beaver Wars of

⁹⁹ F. Kent Reilly III, “The Great Serpent in the Lower Mississippi Valley,” in *Visualizing the Sacred: Cosmic Visions, Regionalism, and the Art of the Mississippian World*, eds. George E. Lankford, F. Kent Reilly III, and James F. Garber (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 119. See Michael Pomedli, *Living with Animals*, 168–192, for a discussion of “water creatures,” including horned serpents and cats, in Ojibwa cosmology.

¹⁰⁰ I inspected the rock in July 2013 (see Chapter 9). While the nature of its presentation and the state of its markings made it impossible for me to be confident about much of what was on its surface, the horned quadruped was clearly visible. See Fig. 17.

¹⁰¹ John Tanner, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner, (U.S. Interpreter at the Saut de Ste. Marie,) During Thirty Years Residence Among the Indians in the Interior of North America* (New York: G. & C. & H. Carvill, 1830), 378.

¹⁰² See Carol Diaz-Granados, “Early Manifestations of Mississippian Iconography in Middle Mississippi Valley Rock-Art,” in *The Rock-Art of Eastern North America: Capturing the Images and Insight*, ed. Carol Diaz-Granados and James R. Duncan (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 90-91.

the seventeenth century, Haudenosaunee communities experienced a huge influx of Algonquian peoples through capture and adoption. By the mid-1660s, several contemporary observers estimated that at least two-thirds of the people in some Haudenosaunee villages were adoptees, who came from Algonquian populations, in addition to other Iroquoian peoples.¹⁰³ Teiaiagon, a village of the Haudenosaunee's Seneca at Baby Point in present-day Toronto, yielded to archaeologists a comb dated to the 1680s that depicted the Great Panther.¹⁰⁴ The Mohawk interpretation of "a dangerous animal" that had killed several people depicted elsewhere on the rock's surface would have been consistent with Michipeshu. As well, the apparent X shapes above and to the left as well as other hourglass shapes could have depicted the thunderbeings (*animikiig*, thunderbirds) of the sky world, which appear in hourglass or triangular form in Anishinaabeg craft items like clothing and bags and typically appear in relationship to the beneath-world *manidoog*. As Heidi Bohaker has explained, the presence of both *animikiig* and beneath-world *manidoog* on the same side of a craft item "evokes narratives of the great cosmic struggles between underwater and upper-world *manidoog*, even as at the same time these two images together represent the important Anishinaabe cultural priorities of balance, harmony and reciprocity."¹⁰⁵

Kendall however doubted the Mohawk interpretation, for to his artistic eye the horned figure occupied too insignificant an amount of the inscribed surface to be the centre of a dramatic narrative. He did not understand that if the horned quadruped depicted a beneath-world *manidoog*, its location may have been deliberately placed below the tideline, in defiance of a Eurocentric notion of pictorial composition. Kendall claimed to have asked for explanations of the rock: "Indians themselves, even those of the same language and country as those by whom it was probably executed, are unable to offer any

¹⁰³ Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 65–66.

¹⁰⁴ Cath Oberholzter, "The Living Landscape," in *Before Ontario: The Archaeology of a Province*, ed. Marit K. Munson and Susan M. Jamieson (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), Fig. 11.4, p156–157.

¹⁰⁵ Heidi Bohaker, "Indigenous Histories and Archival Media in the Early Modern Great Lakes," in *Colonial Mediascapes: Sensory Worlds of the Early Americas*, Matt Cohen and Jeffrey Glover eds. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), Kindle e-book, location 1846.

explanation of its meaning. From such Indians, I have in such instances obtained conjectures as to particular parts, but never any satisfactory glimpse of the whole.”¹⁰⁶ Were it not for his determination to hear a unified translation of the entire surface, Kendall might have gathered useful insights for individual glyphs, or groups of glyphs. Instead, he disregarded whatever he heard, sharing none of it in *Travels*.

Kendall and the “Psycho-Theology” of Paganism

Whatever his plans, Kendall never made it to the Ohio territory to see its inscribed rocks and earthen mounds. His ideas had evolved significantly when he published *Travels* in 1809. His account of Dighton Rock was drained of all masonic allusion and innuendo; not even its alleged pyramidal form was worthy of mention. Instead, Kendall incorporated Dighton Rock into a theory of a “psycho-theology” of paganism. Kendall was concerned with the role of stones worldwide in supernatural beliefs, and his discussion of these stones began with an account of the “Sacrifice Rocks” in Massachusetts. As Kendall explained:

Two Sacrifice Rocks are on the side of the road leading from Plymouth to Sandwich. One of them may be six feet high, and the other four; and both of ten or twelve feet in length: and they differ in nothing, as to their figure, from the masses of granite and other rock, which are scattered over the surface of all the adjacent country. All that distinguishes them is the crowns of oak and pine branches which they bear, irregularly heaped, and of which some are fresh, some fading, some decayed. These branches the Indians place there, from motives which they but obscurely explain, and for doing which their white neighbours therefore generally suppose that they have no reason to give. When questioned, they rarely go further than to say, that they do so because they have been taught that it is the right to do it, or because their fathers did so before them: if they

¹⁰⁶ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:214.

add any thing to this, it is, that they expect blessings from the observance of the practice, and evils from the neglect.

But, to whom is this worship offered? To a *manito*; and by *manito*, through the religious prejudices of the whites, is usually understood *a devil*.¹⁰⁷

On the road from Plymouth to Sandwich, Kendall had passed through the Native American community at Herring Pond, one of several Pokanoket (Wampanoag) communities on upper Cape Cod that were under the guidance of Christian missionaries and Indigenous ministers and teachers.¹⁰⁸ As Kathleen Bragdon has noted, “No history of the Native peoples of the upper Cape, the Pokanoket nation, is available.”¹⁰⁹ Kendall’s visit, however brief, thus stands as a rare firsthand account of these so-called Christian Indians only a few decades after the American Revolution. Kendall was challenged in his perceptions of what a North American Indian ought to be. He noted that, as throughout Massachusetts, the Indians here “are said to be mixed, that is, to have the children of Europeans and Africans among them.” He met several on the road to Sandwich, “particularly women, half Indian and half negro,” who were not recognizably “Indian” to him: they were well dressed with “even good and clean shoes and stockings” and one woman he fell into conversation with appeared to him more black than Indigenous, in both physical

¹⁰⁷ Kendall, *Travels*, 2:49–50. Kendall likely learned about these particular rocks between Sandwich and Plymouth from the papers of Ezra Stiles to which John Davis gave him access, as Stiles in *Extracts* discusses them in similar (but not identical) terms. See Stiles, *Extracts*, 160–161. See also Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness*, for a discussion of “Sacrifice Rocks” and similar heaps of stones and sticks: “Maintaining heaps of stones or sticks seems to have been most common among Algonquian-speaking peoples in New England near the Hudson River and in the Virginia-Carolina region... The heaps were religious shrines but also historical markers.” (27). Avocational archaeoastronomy researchers James W. Mavor Jr. and Byron E. Dix in *Manitou: The Sacred Landscape of New England’s Native Civilization* (Rochester VT: Inner Traditions International, 1987) advanced the case that apparent standing stones, stone structures and earthworks in New England were not the work of colonial settlers or Bronze Age transatlantic migrationists, but rather of Indigenous peoples. They included a photo of one of the Sacrifice Rocks discussed by Stiles and Kendall (Fig 6–1) and noted: “There are at least three known donation boulders, called sacrifice rocks, on which branches were piled as donations, along the Old Sandwich Road south of New Plymouth opposite Telegraph Hill and Morey’s Hole.” (149)

¹⁰⁸ Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England 1650–1775*, 176. Ives Goddard and Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusetts* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, c1988), 1:5.

¹⁰⁹ Goddard and Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusetts*, 1:5.

appearance and conviviality, “for the unmixed Indian is what he has often been described, serious and taciturn, and shy of access.” His walking companion “descanted on the condition of her *nation* (for it is thus the Indians always denominate their communities) in that language of submission to the evil that is inevitable, and of enjoyment of the good that offers, which appears to me to characterize the negro; but proclaimed herself an Indian, at the same time.”¹¹⁰ Here was an empathetic Westerner captured in the full confusion of a confrontation with a living Native American of New England who defied his expectations of what an “Indian” should be. In spite of being in the extended conversational presence of a member of the Pokanoket Wampanoag, Kendall did not report any conversation about the Sacrifice Rocks, or about Dighton Rock, which was located in the lands occupied by the Pokanoket before the diaspora caused by King Philip’s War.¹¹¹ The only question he recorded asking her was “whether or not she thought that the Indians were really more disposed to drunkenness than the whites, or only more easily affected by liquor.”¹¹²

Instead, Kendall questioned the “aged missionary of Mashpee” (Mashpee) on Nantucket about the Sacrifice Rocks. Gideon Hawley was a Yale graduate who had been Mashpee’s missionary and pastor since 1758 under the sponsorship of England’s Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians. Hawley had briefly served at a missionary station to the Haudenosaunee at Ononhaghwege (Onondaga) before the outbreak of the Seven Years War, and would shortly die at age 80 on October 3, 1807.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Kendall, *Travels*, 2:47.

¹¹¹ As Kendall was en route to Sandwich when he met the Pokanoket woman, and thus had not yet encountered the Sacrifice Rock, he likely expected to examine it as part of his interest in enigmatic stones, and so it would not have been unreasonable for him to query Native Americans en route about it. As noted earlier, Kendall also claimed in *Travels* to have questioned a number of Native Americans on Dighton Rock’s meaning. If they were “people of the same language and country” (*Travels*, 3:214) as the rock, we would expect that they would have been Pokanoket, as this woman was. It is possible he showed her a sketch and, not receiving the interpretation he desired of the entire inscription, disregarded what she shared.

¹¹² Kendall, *Travels*, 2:48. Kendall’s walking companion replied: “...she frankly answered, that for herself, when she wanted to be sober and fit for work, she did not dare to taste any liquor whatever; a very small quantity overpowering either her strength or her prudence.” (2:48)

¹¹³ For a detailed account of Gideon Hawley’s career and missionary service at Mashpee, see Frederick Freeman, *The History of Cape Cod Vol. 1: The Annals of Barnstable County, including the District of Mashpee*

Hawley recounted having once seen “two Indian women dragging a young pine-tree, and setting about to lay it on the rock. It was so large and heavy, that the undertaking almost exceeded their strength: however, they persevered.”¹¹⁴ The missionary, Kendall reported, “saw the Indian sacrifices as they ought to be seen. They are offered to the overruling providence, wherever it may reside, and by whatever name it may be called.”¹¹⁵ Nancy Shoemaker has stated: “Maintaining heaps of stones or sticks seems to have been most common among Algonquian-speaking peoples in New England near the Hudson River and in the Virginia-Carolina region...The heaps were religious shrines but also historical markers”¹¹⁶ The German traveller Johann Georg Kohl in *Kitchi-Gami*, which recounted his experiences around Lake Superior in the late 1850s, would report a stone called *rocher de Otamigan*. A young Ojibwa, Otamigan, had paused to rest on a trail, and as he “regarded the rock opposite him, it seemed as if it were oscillating, then advanced to him, made a bow, and went back again to its old place...he straightaways felt the greatest veneration for the rock, and ever after considered it his ‘protecting god.’ Now, I am told, he never goes past it without laying some tobacco on the rock as a sacrifice...”¹¹⁷ Kendall found an account of a place of offering in the writings of the eighteenth-century fur trader and explorer, Alexander Mackenzie., Mackenzie had reported Portage du Bonnet at the south end of Lake Winnipeg “derives its name from the custom the Indians have of crowning stones, laid in a circle on the highest rock in the portage, with

(Boston: Printed for the author, 1858), 682–697. Gideon Hawley’s journal and letterbook have been digitized by the Congregational Library and Archives, but unfortunately their entries end in 1806, and so can provide no insight into Kendall’s encounter with him in 1807, shortly before his death. See “Hawley, Gideon. Journal and Letterbook,” Congregational Library and Archives, <http://www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/series2/HawleyGideon1237> (accessed June 11, 2014).

¹¹⁴ Kendall, *Travels*, 2:50.

¹¹⁵ Kendall, *Travels*, 2:50–51.

¹¹⁶ Nancy Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness: Becoming Red and White in Eighteenth-Century North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 27.

¹¹⁷ J. G. Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Wanderings Around Lake Superior* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1860), 59.

wreaths of herbage and branches.”¹¹⁸ Kendall thus was confident that the practice he had seen at the Sacrifice Rocks between Plymouth and Sandwich was part of a larger Algonquian cultural tradition. Governing conventions of traditional sachemships survived the transformation under Anglo-American colonization into Christian “praying towns” or “plantations.”¹¹⁹ Cultural practices evidently had endured as well, as Kendall discovered. Despite his own reticence to engage Native Americans directly on questions of their enduring culture, Kendall’s writing revealed that some 130 years after the trauma and dislocation resulting from King Philip’s War, not only Native Americans, but their traditional beliefs as well, could be discovered in southern New England, if one looked for them.

Kendall left unaddressed the long and unhappy experience of Native Americans corralled onto the island “plantation” administered by Hawley, where their freedoms had been repeatedly restricted and rescinded by the state.¹²⁰ Native self-rule had “become more circumscribed in the middle decades of the eighteenth century, as government-appointed guardians were granted increasing powers over the Indian communities,” according to Goddard and Bragdon. “Massachusetts had designated the surviving natives wards of the state by the end of the century and by the mid-nineteenth century had classified their communities as Indian districts.”¹²¹ Local historian Frederick Freeman was capable of acknowledging in 1860 that the imposition of a Board of Overseers at Mashpee in 1788 meant “the ‘Indian, mulatto and negro proprietors and inhabitants of Mashpee’ were deprived of their civil rights, and left entirely under the control of men in whose selection they had no choice.”¹²² One of those board members was the

¹¹⁸ Alexander Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in 1789 and 1793, with an Account of the Rise and State of the Fur Trade*, vol. 1 (New York: Barnes and Co., 1903), xcix.

¹¹⁹ Goddard and Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusetts*, 1:6.

¹²⁰ For a general description of the development and governance of these Christian communities, see Goddard and Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusetts*, 1:5–6. David J. Silverman addresses the Brothertown and Stockbridge communities in *Red Brethren*.

¹²¹ Goddard and Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusetts*, 1:5.

¹²² Freeman, *The History of Cape Cod, Vol. I*, 689–690.

Reverend Hawley, who also received at the time a “donation” of 200 acres from the Mashpee Indians.¹²³ Freeman also observed that in later protesting their treatment under Hawley, the Mashpee Indians charged that “not an Indian was taught to read, nor a single Indian converted.”¹²⁴ For all his sympathies to their maltreatment, Freeman nevertheless contributed to the general perception of vanishing. In 1811, when Hawley’s successor was installed at Mashpee, “there were very few Indians remaining of unmixed blood, and very few who could speak their native dialect. Some few, however, still existed, aged, and destined soon to give way to a race of half-breeds, negroes, mulattoes, and Hessians.”¹²⁵ Freeman alleged “the evidence of an incubus resting upon the Indians’ ambition to excel, and betokening their final extinction, has been sadly apparent. The Indian language, and the pure Indian blood, extinct, a promiscuous race of colored people, in diminished numbers, now constitute the population of Mashpee.”¹²⁶ Kendall may have absorbed the wisdom of Hawley as to the degenerative state of his Indian charges, as Hawley once recalled how on his arrival at the Mashpee mission, “The Mashpee Indians were clad according to the English mode: but a half-naked savage was less disagreeable than Indians who had lost their independence.”¹²⁷ If Kendall’s acceptance of the Pokanoket as genuine Indians was at best reluctant, one

¹²³ Freeman further noted that in February 1796 “still other laws were passed that were regarded by the Mashpees as additionally oppressive, although ostensibly designed to secure to the natives their woodland and other possessions against the possibility of alienation. Thus they were doomed to a continuance for at least half a century of their civil disabilities before they should find any relief.” (*The History of Cape Cod, Vol. I*, 690)

¹²⁴ Freeman, *The History of Cape Cod, Vol. I*, 697.

¹²⁵ Freeman, *The History of Cape Cod, Vol. I*, 698–700.

¹²⁶ Freeman, *The History of Cape Cod, Vol. I*, 701.

¹²⁷ Quoted by Freeman, *The History of Cape Cod, Vol. I*, 684. The issue of Indigenous cultural authenticity in EuroAmerican eyes remains contested. Maureen Konkle criticizes the “rhetoric” of Jill Lepore’s *A Is for American* (2002) in describing the Cherokee of the early nineteenth century as (in Konkle’s words) “the slavish imitators of white, desiring the ‘trappings’ of a society, down to the worst of that society’s practices, slavery... To conflate slavery and ‘civilization’ as Lepore appears to be doing, without accounting for the complexity of historic change, is to inadvertently evoke the position common in the nineteenth century that Indians who come into contact with EuroAmerican civilization will inevitably only pick up its worst vices...As Arif Dirlik points out, culturalist scholarship gives Native peoples no choice: they must produce their cultural difference in an acceptable fashion or be judged failures and reprobates.” Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827–1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 46.

can appreciate how New Englanders could persuade themselves that there was nothing genuine about such mixed-blood (especially *negro* mixed blood) communities, and that these communities were not worth protecting or preserving. The Wampanoag at Mashpee would at last secure federal tribal recognition in 2007, after the Wampanoag at Aquinnah (Gay Head) achieved the same in 1987.¹²⁸

Kendall and the Stones of Power

The Sacrifice Rocks launched Kendall into six discursive chapters in which he presented his ideas on the universalities of paganism as expressed in elements such as “Stones of Power” and stone circles. Kendall was captivated by the *Poems of Ossian*, which had also charged Charles Vallancey’s enthusiasm for the Celtic past. This popular epic cycle, first published in the 1760s by James Macpherson, allegedly was based on a manuscript Macpherson discovered and on oral traditions he gathered from Scottish Highlanders. They were Scotland’s answer to the Icelandic sagas embraced by late-eighteenth-century Gothicism, and they raised immediate suspicions of fakery.¹²⁹ Macpherson died in 1796, but a new, two-volume edition of his “translation” of the poems from the “Galic” had been published in London in 1807, and Kendall may have been inspired by this fresh release.¹³⁰ The Ossian poems gave Kendall the “Stone

¹²⁸ For the recent history of tribal recognition in the United States, with particular attention to the case of the Mashpee Wampanoag, see Amy E. Den Ouden and Jean M. O’Brien, “Recognition and Rebuilding,” in *The World of Indigenous North America*, ed. Robert Warrior, 215–237 (New York: Routledge, 2015).

¹²⁹ Samuel Johnson pronounced the poems fakes. “I suppose my opinion of the poems of Ossian is already discovered. I believe they never existed in any other form than that which we have seen. The editor, or author, never could shew the original; nor can it be shewn by any other; to revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence, with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt.” See Samuel Johnson, *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1775), 273–74. See also William Shaw’s *An enquiry into the authenticity of the poems ascribed to Ossian* (Dublin: Pat. Byrne, 1782). See also Fiona Stafford, “Dr. Johnson and the Ruffian: New Evidence in the Dispute Between Samuel Johnson and James Macpherson,” *Notes and Queries* 36 no. 1 (Mar. 1989): 70–77, for an overview of the dispute between Johnson and Macpherson as to the authenticity of the *Ossian* poems. However, James Mullholland has stated: “It is impossible to confirm the veracity of Macpherson’s claim that his Ossian poems originate in Scotland’s oral traditions, but there is ample evidence for the continued existence of these traditions during the eighteenth century.” James Mullholland, “James Macpherson’s Ossian Poems, Oral Traditions, and the Invention of Voice,” *Oral Tradition* 24:2 (Oct. 2009): 396.

¹³⁰ James Macpherson, translator. *The Poems of Ossian*, 2 vols (London: Cadell and Davies, etc.), 1807.

of Power” at the center of megalithic circles, which he associated with other hallowed stones of antiquity, including the Black Stone at Mecca, the stone that Jacob used for a pillow in his dream of a ladder to heaven, and the sacred stone of Delphi.¹³¹ If Kendall was building a case for a golden-age source from which all human knowledge migrated or diffused, he failed to articulate it precisely, although he did declare that Stones of Power and stone circles “are of a remoter date than the druids themselves, and of a much wider diffusion.”¹³² Druids were favorites of European Gothicism as well as freemasonry, but Kendall never claimed Native American examples of stones with sacrifices or offerings had an Old World or root-civilization origin.¹³³ Rather, Kendall’s statement that “paganism teaches what may be called a psycho-theology” suggests the essence of his argument.¹³⁴ The supernatural power vested in stones was a universal human response to the natural world. Kendall may have been far ahead of his time in proposing a theory of parallelism, of independent origins of similar beliefs and cultural practices, based on fundamental human psychology, that precluded the need for migrationist or diffusionist explanations.¹³⁵

¹³¹ “The spirit of Loda was not acknowledged as a deity by Fingal; he did not worship at the stone of his power.” (147); “Their words are not in vain, by Loda’s stone of power...” (228). In James Macpherson, translator. *The Poems of Ossian*, vol. 1.

¹³² Kendall, *Travels*, 2:58.

¹³³ Margaret C. Jacob notes that John Toland’s *Pantheisticon* (1720) “was probably used or intended to be used as a ritual for Masonic meetings.” Toland conceived its Latin text as the basis for a “ritualistic civic and universal religion which, Toland claimed, resembled that practiced by the ancient Egyptians and the Druids.” Thomas Paine, who according to Jacob may have been a freemason, “argued that Masonry was derived from ‘the religion of the ancient Druids who like the magi of Persia and the priests of Helipolis in Egypt, were priests of the sun,’ while radical republicans in the new American republic were known to set up Druidical lodges.” (*The Radical Enlightenment*, 153–54.) See also Joscelyn Godwin on Godfrey Higgins and his landmark work of masonic esotericism, *The Celtic Druids* of 1829 (*The Theosophical Enlightenment*, 76–91).

¹³⁴ Kendall, *Travels*, 2:103.

¹³⁵ With respect to Kendall’s possible prescience on parallelism, consider that in 1944, Marian W. Smith would declare himself “convinced” that neither the similarities in the conjuring complexes of the Saulteaux Ojibwa in North America and the Semang of the Malay Peninsula, nor a so-called “east-west river belt” of such complexes in North America, “can be adequately understood only in terms of migration or of diffusion of elements.” Anthropologists, Smith wrote, had not yet taken full advantage of the concept that “intellectual processes of human minds are comparable. Actually, such a concept underlies, or is included in, any acceptance of parallel development. It has, however, hardly been used as a methodological tool for establishing parallelisms.” This was stated 135 years after Kendall’s apparent advocacy of what amounted to parallelism. See: Marian W. Smith, review of *The Role of Conjuring in Saulteaux Society* by A. Irving Hallowell, *American Anthropologist*, n.s. 46, no. 1, pt. 1 (Jan.–Mar. 1944): 126.

We will never know, as Kendall did not return to the subject. Despite being a fellow of London's Society of Antiquaries, he never contributed to *Archaeologia*. An oddity of Kendall's extended discussion of Stones of Power is that he did not address the standing stones allegedly found by La Vérendrye, as Pehr Kalm had related, despite being aware of (and citing) Kalm's *Travels Into North America* on the subject of Fort Saint-Frederic in volume 3.¹³⁶

Kendall appears to have had an epiphany at Bellows Falls in Rockingham, Vermont (which he had not yet visited when he wrote the "Account" letter to Judge Davis), where petroglyphs, first noticed by the Reverend David McClure in 1789, provided "conclusive evidence" that Dighton Rock was a Native American artifact.¹³⁷ "Unlike the sculptures of the [Dighton] Writing Rock," Kendall wrote, "they are parts of no connected work, but are scattered over the face of the rock, in the most even and eligible places."¹³⁸ Why Kendall did not also regard Dighton Rock as a gathering of unconnected images is a mystery. Where Isaac Greenwood had thought Dighton Rock was beyond the capability of idle, primitive people without higher motivations, Kendall now argued that only such primitive people would have produced such inscriptions. The markings at Bellows Falls were "too rude, too insignificant, and too evidently without depth of meaning, to be attributed to Phoenicians or Carthaginians. No person will carry European vanity so far, as to contend, that there is any thing here, above the level of Indian genius. But, if Indians were the authors of these sculptures, then Indians were the authors of the [Dighton] Writing Rock also. The style of drawing is the same; the style of sculpture is the same."¹³⁹ A further lesson was that "ancient Indians had instruments with which they were able to cut even granite," as at Bellows Falls, "and consequently, that to complete the history of North America, there is nothing, in the

¹³⁶ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:240.

¹³⁷ Bellows Falls Island Multiple Resource Area. <http://www.crjc.org/heritage/V06-62.htm> (accessed Dec. 10, 2014). Kendall, *Travels*, 3:205.

¹³⁸ Kendall *Travels*, 3:205.

¹³⁹ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:205–06.

Writing Rock, which compels us to seek for its occupation, however temporary, by any other race of men than the single one, consisting in the known aborigines of the country.”¹⁴⁰

In his initial assessment of the rock in 1807, Kendall ventured “it was wrought on some solemn occasion, or for some solemn purpose, either civil, military, or religious. It may be a memorial, a monition, or an offering of piety.”¹⁴¹ Kendall in *Travels* still believed the markings “are very ancient” but would not hazard a guess at any meaning or purpose.¹⁴² He now argued Native Americans made them for reasons known only to themselves. “Though the Writing Rock is a monument as rude as it is unintelligible, yet it deserves attention, as well for what it really is, as for what various observers have supposed it to be: it is not a monument of the Phoenicians, nor of the Carthaginians, nor of the lost tribe of Israel, nor of Prince Madoc, nor of Captain Blackbeard, nor of Captain Kyd; but it is a monument of the sculpture of the ancient inhabitants of America, whether Narragansetts or others.”¹⁴³ He added: “There is not, in reality, the smallest reason to doubt, that these sculptures are of Indian work.”¹⁴⁴ Kendall would say no more. Whether he still believed more than that, is another matter.

Conclusion

Edward Augustus Kendall found Dighton rock fully immersed in Yankee folklore. In ascribing meanings to its markings, Euro-Americans were behaving like Native Americans who interpreted elements of their landscape in the process Keith Basso has called “place making.” With this universal tool of the imagination, historical knowledge is produced and reproduced; historical understandings are altered and

¹⁴⁰ Kendall, *Travels*, 3:206.

¹⁴¹ Kendall, “Account,” 173.

¹⁴² Kendall, *Travels*, 2:221.

¹⁴³ Kendall, *Travels*, 2:221.

¹⁴⁴ Kendall, *Travels*, 2:224–225.

recast. This widespread form of imaginative activity, says Basso, is also a form of cultural activity.¹⁴⁵ In the case of Dighton Rock, the process of Euro-American place making was also a form of appropriation. The landscape (including the rock) that was once a locus of the Wampanoag people had been seized by colonists, and along with physical and legal possession came an ongoing process of cultural dispossession. The rock was being reimagined and denuded of Indigenous significance, save for “Indian traditions” that may only have been colonial fictions and as such were an erasure of actual cultural memory.

The efforts by Kendall and Judge Davis to interpret the rock as an Indigenous artifact underscored the ongoing issue of the distinction between affinity and meaning: it was possible to be correct (in a general sense) about the identity of the culture that produced such rock art, that it was Indigenous, without necessarily being correct in one’s interpretation of the inscription—in Davis’s case, that it depicted a hunting scene. I will return to this issue of affinity/meaning in Chapter 5. While Kendall was correct in his assessment of affinity, to make his case in *Travels* that the markings were Indigenous he resorted to the same stereotype of Native Americans that had served Greenwood in arguing to the contrary. Like those before him, Kendall allowed his ignorance of Indigenous culture to lead him to conclude Indigenous people themselves were ignorant, and that there was no culture worthy of inquiry behind the images. Because he expected the rock to bear a single, unified inscription, he ignored whatever Native Americans he questioned told him about individual elements. The significance of the horned quadruped eluded him, as it did everyone else who recorded it. In Kendall’s painting and account, Michipeshu may well have surfaced, only to disappear unrecognized, much like the image on Dighton Rock was revealed for parts of every day by a diurnal tide.

Initially, in “Account,” Kendall had stressed: “Whatever be its origin or signification, it belongs to the history of America, and perhaps to that of the world,” and he urged that the rock be removed to

¹⁴⁵ Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 5-7.

Boston for preservation and further study. “The rock and its inscription are but little valued in their own neighborhood,” he assured his readers, and proposed treasure hunters might dynamite it in search of pirate gold. Failing that, he feared it could be buried beneath a wharf or shipyard.¹⁴⁶ Kendall was the first person to argue for the rock’s relocation, but two years later, in *Travels*, there was no such pleading. “The Writing Rock is by far the most important of the sculptured rocks in New England,” he concluded in *Travels*, but left unanswered *how* it was important. I suspect Kendall thought that if it was an Indian inscription, then it was rude, unintelligible and uninteresting. But if it was an imitative record of esoteric knowledge possessed by an ancient people—who were either the ancestors of the Indians, or a superior culture they once encountered in ages past—then to his mind Dighton Rock mattered. Kendall left an impression that would become more explicit in historical enquiry by the turn of the twentieth century: Native Americans had no history worth recording or preserving, and in fact could not possess a history as they lacked G.W.F. Hegel’s preconditions of written records and a state.¹⁴⁷

For all his faults, Kendall deserves credit for coming closer than anyone to grasping the relationship between markings and stone in Dighton Rock, to understanding that there might be something sacred about the stone itself. With every other reproduction but that of Kendall before the advent of photography, the artist aimed to lift an inscription from a rock’s surface and present it as black lines on paper, thereby treating it as challenge for translation that might as well have been written on an old parchment. Kendall in contrast saw a boulder that existed in three dimensions in a particular environment, from which the markings were inseparable.

In his “Account” of 1807, Kendall wondered about the significance of marks being made on rocks in riverside locations that were at times submerged, and that seemed to face in the same direction, but he did not pursue these intriguing commonalities as he gave over his analysis to Stones of Power in *Travels*.

¹⁴⁶ Kendall, “Account,” 190–91.

¹⁴⁷ Allan Megill, *Historical Knowledge, Historical Error: A Contemporary Guide to Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 189.

A mind less inclined to conclude the markings “evidently were without depth of meaning” might have asked what significance there could be in these sites, as we now understand the sacred significance of places where rock, sky, and water converge in Eastern Woodlands cosmologies. As much as he recognized the persistence of an “Algonquin” practice of “sacrifice” of branches at sacred rocks in Massachusetts, too little was known about Indigenous belief systems for Kendall to make the leap across the threshold at which he was perched. Kendall left Native Americans of the past as ignorant savages without a history worth contemplating, and the ones of the present-day in southern New England as perplexing mulattoes. He handed Dighton Rock back to Native Americans in *Travels* because it was beneath the arts and minds of more civilized peoples who were heirs to an ancient root wisdom embodied by freemasonry. But because Native Americans were not on hand at Dighton to receive or defend the rock, other theorists would step forward with fresh acts of place making.

(5)

**Colonization's New Epistemology: American Scientific Archaeology
and the Road to the Trail of Tears, 1812–1838**

Introduction

In the second decade of the nineteenth century, American archaeology began to find its form as a modern discipline, based overwhelmingly on the excavations, surveying, and artifact gathering at thousands of earthworks attributed to the Mound Builders.¹ This chapter examines the rise of the modern discipline, associated with the founding of the American Antiquarian Society in 1812 and the publication of its first volume of *Archaeologia Americana* in 1820. I expand on Steven Conn's idea of a new object-based epistemology to delineate the components of the emergent discipline, in support of Bruce Trigger's conception of "colonialist archaeology." While ostensibly scientific in its methods and objectives, this nascent archaeology perpetuated and buttressed eighteenth-century theories on Native American origins and character. As I discussed in Chapter 3, Gothicism had been introduced to the American antiquarian discourse by Benjamin Smith Barton through the roving Danes of his circa 1787 *Observations*. Barton had promptly disowned the idea, but as I explore in this chapter, his theory was resurrected by Samuel Latham Mitchill in the pages of *Archaeologia Americana* to assert heroic Europeans of ages past, not Native Americans, were the true original settlers in western New York. This initial phase in the formation of modern American archaeology was crucial to the colonizing project, as arguments for multiple

¹ Alice Beck Kehoe, in *The Land of Prehistory* dates the founding of the discipline of archaeology several decades later: "Archaeology as a science, the *systematic* study of the human past, was constructed in the mid-nineteenth century..." (1) She dates the beginning of the history of the discipline of prehistoric archaeology to the late 1840s and "its formal construction for English speakers" by Daniel Wilson, a Scotsman who rose to the presidency of the University of Toronto. (xiii) She places "the effective foundation of scientific archaeology in nineteenth-century bourgeois culture, and more specifically, in Scottish bourgeois culture." (xii) Her study does not consider the activities of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including the role played by investigations of mounds across the Appalachian divide, the founding of the American Antiquarian Society in 1812 and the publication of the first volume of *Archaeologia Americana* in 1820. Nor does she consider the role of any of the key figures I describe in this period where theories of American prehistory are concerned, including Thomas Pennant, Charles Vallancey, Thomas Smith Barton, De Witt Clinton, Samuel Latham Mitchill and Caleb Atwater. In overlooking this earlier period, Kehoe is unable to trace properly the development of migration and diffusion theories with roots reaching back to the seventeenth century.

migrations in American antiquity would underpin President Andrew Jackson's case in 1830 for the removal of the Five Civilized Tribes and the resultant loss of thousands of Cherokee lives on the Trail of Tears of 1838.

The Death of Samuel Harris and the Birth of the American Antiquarian Society

Samuel Harris passed his Harvard entrance exam and was admitted with advanced standing as a Junior Sophister in October 1808.² His eccentric reading of Dighton Rock had no apparent bearing on his reputation—perhaps it was even enhanced—and he was on the verge of graduating, with an oration in Hebrew assigned to him for Commencement, when he drowned while bathing in the Charles River on July 7, 1810.³ The Reverend Bentley was devastated by the loss of his protégé. “I expected in him the Greatest Orientalist our Country has ever produced,” Bentley wrote that day. “From no man had I greater expectations as my attentions during his life abundantly prove. In a moment our thoughts perish.”⁴ When Harris's body was recovered and buried three days later, Bentley noted: “The public mind is not insensible to the real worth of this man & scholar.”⁵ Eight days later, Bentley was still reeling: “Mr. Harris had more genius than could be found in the government of the University.”⁶

This extraordinary regard for Harris was not limited to Bentley. When *The Polyanthos* resumed publishing in 1812, a portrait of Harris appeared on the cover, and a tribute to him published in *The Harvard Lyceum* of July 28, 1810 was reprinted. The *Lyceum*'s article was rapturous in its estimation of Harris. His language skills defied belief, and there was no area of study in which the *Lyceum* would not

² Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 99.

³ “This day proved the melancholy day of the exit of my young friend Samuel Harris. He was drowned when bathing this morning in the Charles near the Colleges. He was to graduate this Commencement & had a Hebrew oration assigned him.” Bentley, *Diary*, 3:530.

⁴ Bentley, *Diary*, 3:530.

⁵ Bentley, *Diary*, 3:530–531.

⁶ Bentley, *Diary*, 3:532.

place Harris at the highest rank.⁷ He was a master of both modern and ancient astronomy, for example, and one has the sense Harris was working in the hyperdiffusionist vein of root-civilization advocates like Antoine Court de Gébelin and Charles Vallancey, with some Hebraic/Phoenician wandering reminiscent of Ezra Stiles (and early Vallancey) in the mix. Most intriguing to this end was the *Lyceum*'s accounting of his known enthusiasms and personal papers: "As a historian, he was intimately acquainted with every important fact in the chronology of Asia, Europe, and America. His conjectures respecting the migrations and settlements of ancient nations were extremely ingenious, and seldom unsatisfactory." He left behind "the transcripts of thousands of inscriptions. Among his papers, there are some facts respecting American antiquities, which are peculiarly valuable, and whose loss would probably be irretrievable."⁸

Native American languages, the *Lyceum* article continued, had claimed "a considerable share of his interest and attention. He employed much time in comparing and elucidating them; and had he lived, the result of his labours in this department would have been a copious and systematical grammar of the Indian languages of North America. The specimen he has left of this intended work, is a proof of his success in these investigations."⁹ Bentley to the contrary observed on July 18, 1810: "I am told that Mr. Harris had prepared a Hebrew Grammar for the press as the first part of his researches."¹⁰ While I can only speculate, the Hebrew and Native American grammar projects may not have been unrelated, when his Dighton Rock fantasies are considered. Delabarre searched for Harris's papers in Harvard's library a

⁷ "Of the oriental tongues, the following were no less familiar to him than his own, viz. the Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriack, and Arabick. It is a fact, that not a dialect, a word, or a variation, throughout these four languages, escaped his knowledge. He has repeatedly perused the Old Testament in its original, and has even been known to search it from beginning to end, for the application of some general rule, which he wished to establish in the grammar of the language. With the Persian, Ethiopick, Samaritan, Bengalese, Turkish, and Hindustanee, he had a very thorough acquaintance...It would be tedious to enumerate the languages with which had had a moderate acquaintance, and could read with the assistance of a dictionary...The European languages, in which he had attained perfection, were the Latin, Greek, French, and Italian; he could read the Spanish, Portugese [sic], and the modern Greek." ("NOTICE OF MR. SAMUEL HARRIS," *The Harvard Lyceum*, July 28, 1810.)

⁸ "NOTICE."

⁹ "NOTICE."

¹⁰ Bentley, *Diary*, 3:532.

century after his death, and could find nothing of the supposedly copious materials devoted to America, save a single worksheet devoted to his Dighton Rock interpretation.¹¹ As the sheet included a column of runic symbols, perhaps Harris had been attempting to enlist European Gothicism as popularized by Percy's translation of Mallet into his eclectic decipherment as well.

Samuel Harris's genius may have been as much a hallucination as his Dighton Rock interpretation, a product of almost hysterical wishful thinking on the part of mentors like the Reverend Bentley, who had hoped to answer the criticisms of Raynal with a virgin-soil American genius. Harris's death also came when interest in philology (the structure, historical development, and relationships of languages) and semiotics (the study of signs and symbols), and especially decipherment, were at an apex. Napoleon's army had charged the intellectual world with its Egyptian discoveries, above all with the Rosetta Stone in 1798. Michael D. Coe has compared the ensuing race to decipher the Rosetta Stone to the highly competitive research of the 1950s that led to the discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA and the race to the moon that animated the 1960s.¹² As Coe explains, the French had Count Silvestre de Sacy, the Swedes Johan Åkerblad (both of whom had scored early successes with the stone by 1802), while England had a brilliant polymath, Thomas Young, working on the puzzle. The eventual champion, the Frenchman Jean-François Champollion, who would publish his Rosetta Stone breakthrough in 1822, was already an expert in Oriental languages when Harris began his preparatory studies for Harvard, and was named a professor of ancient history at the University of Grenoble in 1809 when he was only eighteen.¹³ Had Harris lived, he may have outgrown his youthful exuberance in much the same way Barton put his regretted *Observations* behind him, but he may also only have done further harm to an already problematic understanding of Native American culture and antiquity. Harris died two

¹¹ For Delabarre's account of Samuel Harris, see "Middle Period," 97–104.

¹² Coe, *Breaking the Maya Code*, 38. See also Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 68.

¹³ "Champollion," Musée Champollion, <http://www.musee-champollion.fr/decouvrir-le-musee/champollion/> (accessed August 9, 2014).

years before the formation of the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1812. Its library received a bequest of more than 900 volumes from Harris's champion, the Reverend Bentley, who also furnished its cabinet with curiosities.¹⁴ Given Harris's friends and mentors, he would have been a prime candidate to contribute to the society's influential *Archaeologia Americana*, and I expect his ideas of Native American origins would have engaged the Mound Builders with "a certain ingenuity and originality of conjecture." In the absence of Harris, theories of American antiquity, some of which incorporated Dighton Rock, still managed to strike out in adventurous new directions, building on recent theoretical foundations for multiple migrations out of Beringia laid by Charles Vallancey and Thomas Pennant, and reviving Benjamin Smith Barton's Danish Mound Builders.

***Archaeologia Americana* and the Rise of Scientific American Archaeology**

The American Antiquarian Society was the first American historical organization with national aspirations, as it included corresponding members from various states. Clifford K. Shipton has explained that the society differed from its established sister organizations, the American Philosophical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in being focused on "the creation of a library and museum, and the use of them, rather than periodical meetings to exchange ideas." It also was concerned with what are now called the humanities, rather than furthering "practical and useful knowledge," as its sister organizations were. The American Antiquarian Society according to Shipton "played a larger part than any other institution in the beginnings of American anthropology," although it would yield the field to organizations like the Smithsonian Institution and the Peabody Museum.¹⁵ Inspired by the Antiquarian Society of London and its publication *Archaeologia*, the American society's first volume of "transactions

¹⁴ *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1 (Worcester MA: American Antiquarian Society), 1820, 2–3.

¹⁵ Clifford K. Shipton, "The American Antiquarian Society," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 2, no. 2 (Apr. 1945): 164–166.

and collections,” *Archaeologia Americana*, published in 1820, captured the overwhelming preoccupation of nascent American archaeology with the ancient earthworks that settlers were confronting.

Steven Conn considers the appearance of *Archaeologia Americana* a seminal event: “The year 1820 marked the beginning of American Archaeology.”¹⁶ Contributions on the Mound Builders dominated the volume, and Conn has described Caleb Atwater’s report as “the lengthiest, most scientific consideration of mounds to date,” allowing the volume to serve “as the scientific starting gun for the greatest pursuit of nineteenth-century American archaeology: the hunt for the Mound Builders.”¹⁷

American archaeology however did not make a standing start on the Mound Builders in 1820, nor do I believe that American archaeology as a modern discipline can be definitively attributed to *Archaeologia Americana*’s appearance that year, in part because the volume was a compendium of reports that had been written in previous years. In 1930, Ohio archaeologist Henry Clyde Shetrone proposed that the detailed survey of the Marietta earthworks for settlement purposes around 1788 by Brigadier General Rufus Putnam on behalf of the Ohio Company “may be regarded as the genesis of the science of archaeology in the United States.”¹⁸ While Robert Silverberg felt Shetrone “was speaking perhaps too grandly,”¹⁹ I would argue the earlier Parsons survey of the Marietta earthworks in 1786, appropriated by Benjamin Smith Barton for his *Observations* of around 1787 (and otherwise unpublished), is as noteworthy as Putnam’s effort for its devotion to surveying precision. Dating a start to scientific archaeology in America in short is difficult. The formation of the American Antiquarian Society in 1812, with the overwhelming focus on archaeological matters that would be expressed in the first volume of *Archaeologia Americana* in 1820

¹⁶ Conn, *History’s Shadow*, 118. Bruce G. Trigger argued that scientific archaeology “originated early in the nineteenth century in Scandinavia and diffused from there to Scotland and Switzerland and eventually throughout Europe,” while “Prehistoric archaeology developed in America within the context of an awareness of what was happening in Europe...” Bruce G. Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist,” *Man*, n.s. 19, no. 3 (Sep. 1984): 357.

¹⁷ Conn, *History’s Shadow*, 120.

¹⁸ Silverberg, *Mound Builders of Ancient America*, 29.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 29.

(but perhaps significantly, not in the second volume, of 1836, which was largely given over to Albert Gallatin's study of Native American languages), is a reasonable point of convergence for trends in the creation of a methodological discipline that could leave behind the longstanding, gentlemanly consideration of historical texts and cabinets of curiosities known as antiquarianism. However, if archaeology as an emerging discipline was fundamentally about establishing rigorous processes of excavation and site recording, the men who practiced it (or held forth on its results) still hewed to established trends in interpretation, and were indebted to late-eighteenth-century works addressing multiple migration by Thomas Pennant and Charles Vallancey, neither of whom ever put a shovel in America soil, let alone trod upon it.

De Witt Clinton, Masonic Science, and the Mound Builder Mystery

Best known perhaps for his promotion and completion in 1825 of the Erie Canal (America's "grandest public works project of the nineteenth century," according to Evan Cornog), De Witt Clinton was a United States senator from New York from 1802 to 1815 and governor of New York from 1817 until his death in 1828.²⁰ He was also a prominent mason who had joined the Holland lodge in 1790, and the political and masonic aspects of his life were not unrelated. Clinton "exploited the appeal of magic and the occult," according to Craig Hanyon. "With the occult majesty of Freemasonry, Clinton publicly buried metal plates, an act that made him seem at once the architect of the 'canal system' and a magician who promised to make treasure spring from the earth."²¹ He pronounced freemasonry in 1806 "co-

²⁰ Evan Cornog, *The Birth of Empire: De Witt Clinton and the American Experience, 1769-1828* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 9. For biographical sketches of De Witt (DeWitt) Clinton, see "De Witt Clinton (1769–1828)," New Netherland Institute, http://www.newnetherlandinstitute.org/history-and-heritage/dutch_americans/dewitt-clinton/ (accessed Aug. 9, 2014); "Clinton, De Witt, (1769–1828)," Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=C000525> (accessed Aug. 9, 2014). See also the Introduction to Craig Hanyon, with Mary L. Hanyon, *De Witt Clinton and the Rise of the People's Men* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), and the Introduction to Evan Cornog, *The Birth of Empire*.

²¹ Hanyon, *De Witt Clinton*, 5.

extensive with the enlightened part of the human race.”²² Such enthusiasm for science and education saw brethren sponsor educational endeavors that reached beyond the lodge ranks, in pursuit of a post-Revolutionary vision of “an enlightened society built around equality and openness,” according to Bullock.²³ Clinton’s support of the public good through voluntary organizations was “fanatical,” according to Cornog.²⁴ He was a founding member of the New-York Historical Society in 1804, and by 1815 was president of the Literary and Philosophical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Free School Society, second vice-president of the New-York Historical Society, a director of the Humane Society, and a trustee of New-York Lying-In Hospital. His interest in natural sciences and archaeology earned him memberships in the Linnaean Society of London, the Wernerian Society of Edinburgh, and the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.²⁵

Clinton’s educative efforts included American archaeology’s most pressing mystery, the Mound Builders, on which he was a hyper-migrationist.²⁶ In his archaeological speculations, according to Cornog, Clinton “wanted to discover for the New World, if not to invent, some indigenous counterpart of the classical past. And he also saw in the example of Rome a cautionary tale for the nation he was helping to build.”²⁷ Clinton was working against the grain of the wisdom of James Madison, the first Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Virginia, who had published in 1809 in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* an 1803 letter to Benjamin Smith Barton in which he refuted the idea the mounds were military fortifications; Madison could only see evidence that indicated ancestors of Native Americans were their

²² Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood*, 145, 153.

²³ Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood*, 145.

²⁴ Cornog, *The Birth of Empire*, 5.

²⁵ Cornog, *The Birth of Empire*, 5-6.

²⁶ “Historical Sketch of the Society,” in New-York Historical Society, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society*, 2nd ser., vol. 1 (New York: H. Ludwig, 1841), 458–459.

²⁷ Cornog, *Birth of Empire*, 123.

creators.²⁸ Clinton was of a much different mind. In an 1811 address to the New-York Historical Society, he harkened back (unacknowledged) to the comparative ethnology of Thomas Thorowgood (which he likely absorbed from Thomas Pennant's *Arctic Zoology*) in asserting the Scythians were "in all probability, the ancestors of the greater part of our red men."²⁹ Antiquarians like Clinton could not bring themselves to reject transatlantic migrationism, a door on the east Lafitau had left open, in explaining the origin of at least some Native Americans, although Clinton was willing to slam it on Gothicism. Clinton thought it "not improbable, considering the maritime skill and distant voyages of the Phoenicians and Carthagenians [sic], that America derives part of its population from that source by water."³⁰ He called "incorrect and fanciful" the ideas that ancient earthworks in western New York and the Ohio country had been made by Spaniards, Welshmen or any other Europeans, asserting they were erected "a long time before the discovery of America," some of them along an ancient Lake Erie shore that was much higher than at present, and that "their form and manner are totally variant from European fortifications."³¹ However, "It is equally clear that they were not the work of the Indians."³²

Clinton had much to say about the oratory and other cultural attributes of the Haudenosaunee that was outwardly admiring, as he saluted them as the "Romans of this western world" of New York State.³³ He cited the "perspicacious and philosophical Pennant" in attributing Iroquois origins to the Tschutski of

²⁸ James Madison, "A Letter on the Supposed Fortifications of the Western Country, from Bishop Madison of Virginia to Dr. Barton," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 6 (1809): 132-142.

²⁹ De Witt Clinton, "Address Before the New-York Historical Society on the Iroquois or Six Nations," in *The Life and Writings of De Witt Clinton*, ed. William W. Campbell (New York: Baker and Scribner, 1849), 222.

³⁰ Clinton, "Address," 222-223.

³¹ Clinton, "Address," 260.

³² Clinton, "Address," 260.

³³ Clinton, "Address," 210. Clinton further noted: "There is a striking similitude between the Romans and the [Iroquois] Confederates, not only in their martial spirit and rage for conquest, but in their treatment of the conquered." (217)

Asia,³⁴ and elaborated on Pennant in venturing that the Iroquoian-speaking Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat were a superior group of Indians who “were descended from an Asiatic stock, radically different from that of the great body of Indians who were spread over North America.”³⁵ He also attributed to them the “old Scythian propensity for wandering from place to place, and to make distant excursions.”³⁶ Nevertheless he perpetuated the “too stupid and lazy” approach to Dighton Rock of Isaac Greenwood in stating the earthworks were “beyond the reach of all [Native American] traditions, and were lost in the abyss of unexplored antiquity. The erection of such prodigious works must have been the result of labor far beyond the patience and perseverance of our Indians.”³⁷ Clinton took up the accumulating theories that favoured multiple migrations from Asia across the Bering Strait, with their hierarchies of civilization and barbarity, and contrived a dramatic narrative. At some remote age, “A great part of North America was then inhabited by populous nations, who had made considerable advance in civilization. These numerous works could never have been supplied with provisions without the aid of agriculture. Nor could they have been constructed without the use of iron or copper: and without a perseverance, labor, and design, which demonstrate considerable progress in the arts of civilized life.”³⁸ Clinton cited Pennant on multiple migrations,³⁹ but appeared to owe an unspoken debt to Vallancey in arguing there was an initial arrival in America of people who lived in peace and developed an advanced civilization: “In course of time, discord and war would rage among them, and compel the establishment of places of security. At last, they became alarmed by the irruption of a horde of barbarians, who rushed like an overwhelming flood from the North

³⁴ Clinton, “Address,” 244.

³⁵ Clinton, “Address,” 246.

³⁶ Clinton, “Address,” 253.

³⁷ Clinton, “Address,” 261.

³⁸ Clinton, “Address,” 264.

³⁹ Clinton, “Address,” 264.

of Asia.”⁴⁰ “Horde” was a term from Vallancey’s “Observations,” and to Clinton, present-day Indians, including the Haudenosaunee, were those barbarians. Clinton elaborated on his theory for the ancient earthworks in western New York in an 1820 address to the Literary and Philosophical Society of New-York (of which he was president), which was published to provide maximum educative benefit:

The old fortifications were erected previous to European intercourse. The Indians are ignorant by whom they were made; and in the wars which took place in this country it is probable that they were occupied as strongholds by the belligerents...It is remarkable that our ancient forts resemble the old British and Danish....The Danes as well as the nations which erected our fortifications, were in all probability of Scythian origin. According to Pliny, the name of Scythian was common to all the nations living in the north of Asia and Europe.⁴¹

While this observation recalled Benjamin Smith Barton’s circa 1787 idea of Danish Mound Builders, Clinton’s ideas have been misconstrued as advocacy of a Norse presence in the heart of America.⁴² Clinton never proposed any such thing, and he was firm in rejecting pre-Columbian European arrivals. He stated in his 1820 *Memoir* these fortresses only *resemble* Danish and British examples

⁴⁰ Clinton, “Address,” 265.

⁴¹ De Witt Clinton, *Memoir on the Antiquities of the Western Parts of the State of New-York* (Albany NY: E. & E. Hosford, 1820), 8–9.

⁴² Robert Silverberg has stated “the highly respected” Clinton appeared before the New-York Historical Society in 1811 to “speak on behalf of the theory that [the mounds’] builders were Scandinavian in origin” and that Clinton amplified his ideas in his 1817 paper and 1820 *Memoir*, “again affirming his belief that the mounds had been erected by errant Vikings.” (*Mound Builders of Ancient America*, 53–54.) Clinton never mentioned Scandinavians in his 1811 address, and as I point out, Clinton never meant to say that Danes actually visited America and built the mounds. Silverberg fell short in understanding the evolution of migration and diffusion theories (as his error with respect to Clinton’s arguments shows), nor did he recognize the role of Dighton Rock and Charles Vallancey in the formulation of a multiple-migration theory in which primitive Tartars eliminated or displaced the more advanced Mound Builders. Bruce Trigger relied on Silverberg in repeating the error that Clinton (who Trigger made a mayor of New York) attributed mounds to Vikings (*A History of Archaeological Thought*, 159).

because Danes *as well as the nations which erected our fortifications* shared a Scythian heritage. The nations that had populated the Americas arrived from Asia, across the Bering Strait, as Pennant had argued. Clinton's scenario was consistent with Vallancey's theory in "Observations" of the Armenian-Scythians having branched in two directions, one into Europe and the British Isles, the other into Asia and eventually the Americas. The distinction between diffusionist similarities in fortification types and transoceanic migrating Danes was lost on Samuel Latham Mitchill, a member of Clinton's inner circle, a congressman and former senator from New York, and an original member of the New-York Historical Society's standing committee.⁴³ Through Mitchill the beachhead for European Gothicism in American antiquarianism, established by Stiles, reestablished and then abandoned by Barton, would be reoccupied in the emergent American archaeology, using Barton's own disowned theorizing.

Samuel Latham Mitchill, Danish Adventurers, and the Atlanteans of Dighton Rock

Samuel Latham Mitchill bore impeccable intellectual credentials: trained as a physician in Edinburgh and then as a lawyer in America; a professor of chemistry and natural history at Columbia College from 1792 to 1801 and at the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons from 1808 to 1820, and of botany and materia medica from 1820 to 1826; co-founder (and chief editor for more than 23 years) in 1797 of a leading scientific journal, *The Medical Repository of Original Essays and Intelligence, Relative to Physic, Surgery, Chemistry, and Natural History*; and founder and president (1817 to 1823) of the Lyceum of Natural History of New York City.⁴⁴ Mitchill was "an avid dabbler in many areas of science, from

⁴³ "For Clinton and his circle (John Pintard, David Hosack, Samuel Latham Mitchill) the real measure of New York's success was not the affluence of its citizens but the richness of its cultural life." Cornog, *Birth of Empire*, 62.

⁴⁴ "Mitchill, Samuel Latham," Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=m000831> (accessed Aug. 9, 2014). See also "Biography," Samuel Latham Mitchill Papers, 1802–1815, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/clementsmss/umich-wcl-M-2015mit?view=text> (accessed Aug. 9, 2014).

chemistry and mineralogy to biology and a host of applied sciences,” and his own research led to improvements in gunpowder, detergents, and disinfectants.⁴⁵

Around 1816, Mitchill’s insatiable and varied curiosity confronted the puzzle of the Mound Builders. In a discourse delivered at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in November 1816, reproduced in volume 1 of *Archaeologia Americana*, Mitchill recounted how a recent conversation with Clinton had inspired his theory of a dramatic clash of cultures in what until recently had been the territory of the Onondaga in western New York.⁴⁶ Mitchill knew this territory well: in 1788 he had been appointed a commissioner by the state of New York to negotiate the acquisition of the six-million-acre tract.⁴⁷ Clinton according to Mitchill believed “a part of the old forts and other antiquities at Onondaga and the adjacent territory, were of *Danish* character.”⁴⁸ While that did not mean Clinton thought they were of Danish *origin*, Mitchill nevertheless recounted: “In the twinkling of an eye, I was penetrated by the justness of his remark. An additional window of light was suddenly opened to me.”⁴⁹ Neither Clinton nor Mitchill had conducted any archaeological field work or formal surveying of the mounds of western New York, but Mitchill experienced a transatlantic migrationist epiphany, an unacknowledged flashback to Barton’s idea of Danish Mound Builders, and he ignored the earlier objections of Pennant and Clinton to such theorizing and Barton’s own abandonment of the idea. We should also recognize that Barton, who so regretted his youthful *Observations*, had only recently died, in late 1815. With this leading academic and antiquarian safely removed, Mitchill may have considered Barton’s disowned Danish-invaders scenario free for the taking.

⁴⁵ “Biography,” Samuel Latham Mitchill Papers.

⁴⁶ Samuel Latham Mitchill, “Letter from Dr. Samuel L. Mitchill” (Jan. 13, 1817), in *Archaeologia Americana* vol. 1, 313–344 (Worcester MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1820).

⁴⁷ See Mitchill biographical sources above.

⁴⁸ Mitchill, “Letter,” 341.

⁴⁹ Mitchill, “Letter,” 341

Mitchill had also been apprised of another strange theory that had emerged in France for Dighton Rock, more bizarre than that of Antoine Court de Gébelin's Phoenician scenario. Charles-Léopold Mathieu had published at Nancy in 1816 a purported translation of a Chinese poem in a 28-page monograph, *Le printemps*, into which Mathieu insinuated the Dighton Rock inscription.⁵⁰ Mathieu's effort might have remained buried in antiquarian obscurity, but for the attentions of Mitchill, who discussed it in his College of Physicians and Surgeons discourse in November 1816, then addressed it in the August 1817 issue of *The American Monthly Magazine and Critical Review*.⁵¹

Mitchill may have apprised himself of this obscure French tract through his interest in mineralogy and explosives, as there was a Charles-Léopold Mathieu who was a French expert in mining, gunpowder and pyrotechnics.⁵² This individual was unlikely to have been the author of *Le printemps*, as le comte Paul Durrieu in 1920 (researching a different aspect of the life of the Mathieu of *Le printemps*)

⁵⁰ This publication was so rare that I cannot find any library catalog reference for it. Its contents with respect to Dighton Rock are only known through the transcription of the original French and an English translation provided by "ART. 3. Le Printemps, premier chant du Poeme Chinois, Des Saisons..." *The American Monthly Magazine and Critical Review* (1817-1819), Aug. 1817: 257. De Witt Clinton and Samuel Latham Mitchill were prominent contributors to this short-lived New York magazine, issued from 1817 to 1819, and as Mitchill included this unsigned item on *Le Printemps* in a collection of his items he forwarded for inclusion in Volume 1 of *Archaeologia Americana*, it is as good as certain that he wrote it. For the history of *The American Monthly Magazine and Critical Review*, see Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741-1930* (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1958), 297-298. *Le printemps* is so obscure that I could not find a record for it in any library, including the digitized French online collection Gallica. Delabarre was similarly stymied in attempting to locate a copy. The only version of it that appears to be readily accessible is the transcription of the portion relevant to Dighton Rock in *The American Monthly*, which includes an English translation, presumably made by Mitchill. The full title of *Le printemps*, according to both Mitchill in *The American Monthly Magazine* and Paul Durrieu ("Miniatures pour l'illustration d'une oeuvre du roi René retrouvées à Metz," *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 64e année, N. 1, 1920: 6) was *Le printemps, chant du poème chinois des Saisons, traduit en vers français et mêlé d'allusions au règne de Louis XVIII*. Mitchill noted its publication at Nancy, by Haener, and its length as 28 pages. Durrieu assigned it the publication date of 1816.

⁵¹ Mitchill, "ART. 3. Le Printemps."

⁵² One Charles-Léopold Mathieu wrote an article on a quarry for strontium sulfate (a raw ingredient for nitrates used in pyrotechnics), "Description de la carrière de sulfate de strontiane, Située dans la glaisière de la tuilerie de Bouveron," *Journal de physique, de chimie, d'histoire naturelles et des arts*. Nivose, an 6. [Janvier 1798]: 199-202. He was identified in the article as a resident of Nancy and a former adjunct commissioner of "poudres & salpêtres de la république," in the departments of Vosges, La Meurthe, La Moselle, and La Meuse, as well as a correspondent of the French republic's mining journal. He was also the author of *Code des Mines* (Paris: 1803).

recorded a separate career trajectory for the Dighton Rock theorist.⁵³ But as they shared a name, were both from Nancy, and the gunpowder expert evidently was an older man, they could have been father and son. The Charles-Léopold Mathieu of *Le printemps*, born in 1756, was a deputy of the Parlement de Nancy under the pre-revolutionary monarchy, a professor at the *écoles centrales* of Tulle and Autun, and a lawyer at the royal court of Nancy under the Restoration of 1814 (which returned France to a constitutional monarchy under Louis XVIII) and *la monarchie de Juillet* of 1830. This Mathieu earned the honorific *homme de lettres* by publishing at Paris and Nancy between 1799 and 1834 a series of brochures, *Le Printemps* among them, that were in Durrieu's estimation "rather ridiculous... a heap of veritable nonsense."⁵⁴ Mitchill, alert to the works of Charles-Léopold Mathieu the explosives expert, probably happened upon the pseudohistorical fantasies of Charles-Léopold Mathieu the lawyer and Louis XVIII acolyte.

Mathieu made no mention of his countryman Court de Gébelin's interpretation of Dighton Rock, relying instead (as Samuel Harris had) on James Winthrop's 1788 drawing published in 1804.⁵⁵ Winthrop had not offered an opinion as to its provenance or meaning, an omission Mathieu rectified with an extravagance not yet witnessed in the history of the rock's interpretation. Like Ezra Stiles in his unpublished 1790 paper, Mathieu enlisted the myth of the lost continent of Atlantis. In an explanatory note to his translation of the Chinese poem (it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to determine whether the original Chinese poem existed) Mathieu contended the Chinese numerical system was the same as that employed in Atlantis. An Atlantean expedition led by In, the son of In-dios, king of Atlantis, had created the Dighton Rock inscription in the year of the world 1902. The Atlanteans had arrived at the

⁵³ Durrieu, "Miniatures."

⁵⁴ "...pour avoir publié, soit à Paris, soit surtout à Nancy, depuis 1799 jusqu'en 1834, une série d'opuscules ou de brochures, hélas ! plutôt ridicules, tant l'auteur y accumule, sous le rapport historique, un amas de véritables billevesées." Durrieu, "Miniatures," 6. As Durrieu noted, these other brochures included *Ruines de l'ancien château de ludre et du camp romain, dit la Cité d'Affrique, qui l'avoisine sur la côte de Ludre* (1829) and *Ruines de Scarpone, l'antique Serpanc, et histoire de cette ville* etc. (1834).

⁵⁵ James Winthrop, "Account of an Inscribed Rock."

rock “for the purpose of concluding a treaty of ‘commerce and amity’ with the Americans,” as Mitchill explained Mathieu’s interpretation in *The American Monthly*—which sounded like Court de Gébelin’s memorial to peace and friendship between the Phoenicians and the Native Americans. (Mathieu used Dighton Rock for ulterior objectives, which also may have been an intention of Court de Gébelin. Where Court de Gébelin appears to have deployed his Phoenician reading as a condemnation of Catholicism in the Americas, Mathieu’s interpretation, as its full title indicated, ultimately was an elaborate paean to the Bourbon king, Louis XVIII.) According to Mathieu, Prince In of Atlantis went on to found a distinguished family in China, and was still alive in the time of Yao, “in the year 2296, being 48 years after the utter submersion of the island of Atlantis in the *Ogygian* deluge,” according to Mitchill’s translation.⁵⁶ There was more in this vein, and as Mitchill remarked in *The American Monthly*, “We may safely recommend it to the reader to believe as much of it as he can.”

The Epistemologies of the Emergent Archaeology and Anthropology

Samuel Latham Mitchill’s response to Charles-Léopold Mathieu’s interpretation of Dighton Rock was understandably incredulous, although his own Mound Builder ideas were no more credible. Leaving aside the theoretical shortcomings, their approaches to evidence are instructive. Mitchill belonged to an emergent tradition that employed archaeology, ethnography, physiognomy, and material culture—in short, what was to become the academic profession of anthropology. Steven Conn has identified two important shifts in the study of Native Americans in the “turn toward archaeology” of the early nineteenth century. One was “a new reliance on objects as the place where knowledge inhered,” or what he has called an “object-based epistemology.” The other “was the conviction that objects constituted a permanent record of Native American history, while language disappeared with the speakers, and that by the middle of the nineteenth century, those speakers did indeed seem doomed to disappear.”⁵⁷ I would add

⁵⁶ Mitchill, “ART. 3. Le Printemps.”

⁵⁷ Conn, *History’s Shadow*, 9–10.

that this emergent, object-based concern with physical artifacts, with ruins and grave goods and skeletons, was distinct from what I would call the semiotic tradition, to which Mathieu belonged, which asserted historical revelations through the study (however idiosyncratic) of inscriptions.⁵⁸ As I have shown, semiotics (and associated philological comparisons of diverse languages in search of cultural connections, such as the Algonquian-Phoenician efforts of Vallancey) had dominated the interpretation of Dighton Rock, and led to theories of wider implication for the peopling of the Americas and the nature of Native Americans. While such inscriptions might come to light through archaeology (in Egypt, with the Rosetta stone, and soon in Central America, with Mayan glyphs), the translation, decryption, or code-breaking was divorced from site work and could be performed on drawings treated as puzzles that were essentially textual rather than object-based. (An exemplary case of this divorce between code-breaking and so-called “dirt archaeology” was that of Yuri Knorosov, a Russian ethnologist who in 1952 recognized Mayan glyphs had a phonetic component, without ever having left the Soviet Union to visit Mayan sites.⁵⁹) Interpretation of drawings inspected at great distances from actual artifacts and their physical context was well established in the case of Dighton Rock, as the interpreters proposed to distill Hebraic, Aramaic, Phoenician, Tibetan, Egyptian, and Runic messages (to name a few scripts and glyphs) from the drawings of others. These semiotic concerns with inscriptions largely presupposed an Old World diffusionist or migrationist origin or influence for Indigenous markings, and practitioners employed a related and soon-to-be discredited strategy of “word hunting” to draw phonetic similarities between Old World and New World languages in support of their cultural assignments. Most critically, these semiotic investigators presumed that the markings *were* inscriptions, as opposed to an array of symbols or glyphs that may have

⁵⁸ Bruce Trigger argued that scientific archaeology “originated early in the nineteenth century in Scandinavia and diffused from there to Scotland and Switzerland and eventually throughout Europe as whole.” Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies,” 357. See also Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 129–137, for the development and spread of Scandinavian archaeology. I am arguing here for the rise of a particular American archaeology, allied with ethnology and based on the object-based epistemology defined by Conn. I address Trigger’s categorization of American archaeology as “colonialist” in the Introduction and later in this chapter.

⁵⁹ Coe, *Breaking the Maya Code*, 145–152.

been created at different times by different peoples within a single culture or from successive ones, without any intention of “writing” a unified message. An important part of this semiotic tradition was its wont to deduce cultural affinity well ahead of (or entirely absent of) understanding an inscription’s meaning. While an Indigenous cultural affinity can be pronounced for rock art without certainty as to its precise meaning, this is not a double standard where Old World scripts are concerned. Hebrew, Norse, Greek, and Phoenician scripts (to name a few) were known alphabetical conventions intended to convey concrete messages. Investigators like Ezra Stiles and Stephen Sewall could be excused for declaring affinity without meaning if they were encountering scripts or glyphic systems not yet cracked by semioticians. However, as I have shown, they were prepared to identify Hebrew or Phoenician script in Indigenous rock art—and thus the presence in America of ancient peoples who spoke and wrote those languages—without actually deciphering it, in the broad sense of stating what an inscription said, in plain English. By “decipherment” it seems that Stiles really only meant that he had identified and transcribed letters he attributed to Old World cultures. This willingness to pronounce Old World cultural affinities in rock art (and relics in general) in the absence of decipherment would achieve absurdity with the Grave Creek stone of 1838, a fraud that contained letters from an array of Old World writing systems that amounted to gibberish and yet many (including Henry Rowe Schoolcraft) still considered genuine, as I will explain in Chapter 7.

We also must recognize within this semiotic tradition a streak of esoteric code-breaking. One of its enthusiasts was Thomas Pownall, a British parliamentarian who had served as governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony from 1757 to 1760. Pownall wrote a treatise on Native American “picture writing,” which had been read before the Society of Antiquaries on January 18, 1781 and was published by Pownall as part of a larger volume in 1782.⁶⁰ Pownall gave a generalized account of how Native

⁶⁰ Thomas Pownall, “A Treatise on Picture Writing, Hieroglyphic and Elementary Writing,” in *A treatise on the study of antiquities as the commentary to historical learning...*, 177–234 (London: J. Dodsley, 1782).

Americans “draw or paint some visible characteristic objects.”⁶¹ Although he was fairly uninformed and offered no concrete examples (nor was he aware of Dighton Rock), he at least granted Native Americans the ability to produce the first level of writing in his progressive scheme. Pownall’s treatise gave no hints that he thought Native American pictography was esoteric, but it does indicate he was corresponding with Charles Vallancey, and that both men were busy with the sort of pseudo-epigraphy surrounding Irish ogham script that would surface in Barry Fell’s detection of ogham at the Peterborough Petroglyphs two centuries later.⁶² (Pownall also contributed a 1781 letter to the 1786 volume of Vallancey’s *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, which was devoted to Irish antiquity.⁶³) Pownall claimed to have found at Ireland’s Newgrange barrow characters that were a cipher for a secret script he called “Ogmian, for their being precisely the same as the secret characters used by the ancient Irish, and called by them the Ogham, which colonel Vallency [sic] has, by a combination of erudition and knowledge peculiarly his own, so accurately explained.”⁶⁴ Vallancey took up the idea of Ogham being an esoteric script in a June 1784 letter to the Society of Antiquaries. Vallancey asserted the name Ogham “implies a secret and sacred character” and was derived from the Chaldaic or Phoenician *ocham*.⁶⁵

The emergence of a scientific archaeological tradition, as a sub-discipline of the emergent discipline of anthropology, was driven in America by the exploitation of the vast resources attributed to the Mound Builders. The Ohio Valley’s mysteries alone were made use of “by a veritable Who’s Who of American science in the nineteenth century,” according to Stephen Williams.⁶⁶ Investigators relied on

⁶¹ Pownall, “A Treatise,” 179.

⁶² For Barry Fell’s “ogham” interpretation of the Peterborough Petroglyphs, see Barry Fell, *Bronze Age America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), *passim*.

⁶³ Thomas Pownall, “An Account of the Ship-Temple,” in *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, ed. Charles Vallancey, vol. 3, 199–204 (Dublin: Luke White, 1786).

⁶⁴ Pownall, “A Treatise,” 218.

⁶⁵ Charles Vallancey, “Observations on the Alphabet of the Pagan Irish, and of the Age in which Finn and Ossin lived,” in *Archaeologia*, vol. 7, 276–285 (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1785).

⁶⁶ Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology*, 31.

physical experience of and interaction with evidence.⁶⁷ Theorists like Mitchill were also active in natural history and mineralogy, which entailed gathering, describing, and categorizing specimens; additionally, the medical training of Mitchill and others (including Barton) required them to diagnose illness based on directly observed symptoms. Already, as I have related, cabinets of curiosity were being filled with global material culture gathered by travelers, especially American seafarers. Having these materials in hand, in combination with the excavated findings in mounds, made possible intuitive leaps in ethnology (comparative ethnography) that drew connections between Indigenous cultures on a global scale and supported migrationist and diffusionist theories for the peopling of the Americas.

Another important aspect of the emergent American archaeology and anthropology was the reliance on surveying: on maps of sites and drawings of excavations, including cross-sections, which suggest an additional epistemology, of observational precision, which approached a fetishist faith in the ability of to-scale representations to preserve and reveal historical truths. This dedication to two-dimensional verisimilitude had already been seen in the eighteenth-century efforts of Stephen Sewall and James Winthrop to map the inscribed surface of Dighton Rock at full scale, and then reduce the master drawing for reproduction. Such refined recording and observation was the close cousin of land surveying (Ezra Stiles produced numerous maps and plans, in addition to drawings of marked rocks⁶⁸), and we must recognize the role of military conquest and associated surveying in the emergent archaeology and theories about Native American origins. Modern scientific archaeology had been established in the early nineteenth century in Denmark, in surveys and precisely documented excavations of barrows and ring

⁶⁷ In spite of Kehoe's failure to recognize the contribution of these early investigators to the formation of American archaeology in *The Land of Prehistory*, Kehoe does credit archaeology's mid-19th century creation to "men committed to an interpretation of history untrammelled by the authority of texts." (1) She also cites the importance of the "testimony of things" (as noted by Stephen E. Toulmin and June Goodfield in 1965) in the character of archaeology as science. (1) "For well over a century, this transparent mystification of the process of writing history accorded archaeology a powerful status supporting the imperial aspirations of the Western bourgeoisie. The very innocence of things, their enduring presence underneath the winds and storms of politics, carried their mute witness over the suspect claims of conventional authors. (1)

⁶⁸ See digitized examples from his *Itineraries* at the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale. <http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu>.

forts. Charles Vallancey as noted was a military surveyor, for whom the barrows and ring forts of Ireland helped to stimulate his interest in antiquities. Those European barrows and ring forts in turn were natural analogues to the Mound Builder relics, and American theorists, as Benjamin Smith Barton's *Observations* shows, were influenced by works such as Richard Twiss's *A Tour of Ireland* (London: 1776) and James Douglas's *Nenia Britannica*, published in twelve volumes between 1786 and 1793. In the Ohio country, the early surveys of the Marietta earthworks—Parsons' in 1786, Putnam's around 1788—were not only military in interpretation, but in character and consequence as well, defining and apportioning for settlement land that had only recently been wrested, by violence and by treaties signed under duress, from Native Americans. American archaeology thus arose to a significant degree from military conquest, and accompanied colonization, dispossession and displacement. As with Dighton Rock, the interpretation of the mounds was an act of possession, an assertion of domain, both legal and intellectual. Having secured dominion over the landscape on which the mounds rested, Euro-American antiquarians and educators reserved the right to determine to whom these relics belonged in an ethnographic sense.⁶⁹

Notwithstanding the treasure hunters who took spades to the Taunton River's shoreline, Dighton Rock (and other immovable inscribed stones) differed from the Mound Builder sites in the lack of investigation by excavation, the essence of archaeology. What further set the Mound Builder materials apart from Dighton Rock was the curious lack of inscriptions in the barrows and tumuli, in defiance of interpretations that posited a lost civilization superior to Native American cultures that was supposedly ancestral to the urbanized societies of Mesoamerica and Peru that did leave glyphic inscriptions behind.

⁶⁹ In broad strokes this agrees with Bruce Trigger's treatment of what he defined as "colonialist" archaeology as practiced in the United States, although his definition was more attitudinal than methodological, as I have tried to sketch here. Trigger depicted American colonialist archaeology arising from the presumption that Indigenous people were "inherently unprogressive and incapable of adopting a civilized pattern of life," with archaeology from the beginning assuming it would reveal little evidence of change or development. When evidence of cultures strikingly different from peoples known in historic times was found, as in the case of the Mound Builders, they were assigned to a "lost race" that was distinct from North Americans and had been either destroyed or driven out of North America by them. "Archaeology thus identified the Indians not only as being unprogressive but also as having willfully destroyed a civilization; which made their own destruction seem all the more justifiable." Trigger, "Alternative Archaeologies," 361. Trigger's definition was most concerned with the colonial mentality, while here I am proposing archaeology as an intrinsic part of the colonizing project, reflecting its military and surveying character, for example.

The object-based epistemology of the new archaeology thus did not so much reject the code-breaking semiotics of Rosetta Stone decipherers and the eccentric interpretations of Dighton Rock and other petroglyphs as it did cope with the perplexing absence of Mound Builder materials inscribed with anything that resembled writing. This evidentiary vacuum, and a longing for proof among some antiquarians, would be filled by forgeries, as in the case of the Grave Creek stone of 1838, the Newark holy stones of 1860, and the Davenport tablets of 1877, all of which were purportedly inscribed in ancient, Old World scripts that encoded esoteric messages.⁷⁰ In a related fraud, the naturalist Constantine Samuel Rafinesque (a fellow contributor of Mitchill and Clinton to *The American Monthly* who also provided illustrations of a mummified burial and grave goods for Mitchill's article in *The Medical Repository* of 1817) used a Lenape tradition gathered by eighteenth-century missionary John Heckewelder to engineer in 1836 a bogus Lenape origins story, the Walam Olum, in support of a migration out of Siberia, based on inscribed wooden tablets no one else ever saw.⁷¹ In the absence of genuine inscribed artifacts beloved by semioticians, investigators took evidentiary refuge in other, abundant, cultural materials. The lack of inscriptions did not matter when you had a bounty of relics you

⁷⁰ The Grave Creek stone has long been dismissed as a fraud by archaeologists. See Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology*, 82–87. In October 2008, anthropologist David M. Oestreicher presented evidence at the annual meeting of the West Virginia Archaeological Society that the stone's confusing mix of ancient alphabets was taken from an 18th century book on “‘unknown letters that are found in the most ancient coins and monuments of Spain.’ According to Oestreicher, ‘everything on the stone,’ including ‘impossible sequences of characters with the same mistakes,’ can be found in this book.” (Bradley T. Lepper, “Great find in West Virginia nothing more than a fraud,” *The Columbus Dispatch*, Nov. 11, 2008.) Oestreicher had not yet published his findings at the time of this dissertation's writing. “I do have a forthcoming book on the Grave Creek Stone hoax,” Oestreicher informed me. (Personal communication, email, Oestreicher, Dec. 31, 2013.) Kenneth Feder acknowledges Oestreicher's exposé and agreed the stone was “most certainly a fraud” in *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries*, 167. For the nineteenth-century inscribed-stone hoaxes related to the Mound Builders, including the Davenport Tablets and Newark Holy Stones, see Feder, *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries*, 167–171, and Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology*, 77–97. See also the case of the “Michigan relics,” which involved hundreds of faked artifacts between 1890 and 1920 (Feder, *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries*, 170–171; Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology*, 176, 180–185.) See my discussion of the Grave Creek stone in Chapter 7.

⁷¹ David M. Oestreicher exposed the Walam Olum as a fraud perpetrated by Rafinesque, who in 1836 claimed to have discovered them ten years earlier. See David M. Oestreicher, “Unraveling the *Walam Olum*,” *Natural History* 105:10 (Oct. 1996): 14–21.

could excavate, including mummified remains and skeletons waiting to be measured to determine racial affinity, and material culture from elsewhere in the world with which you could make comparisons.

Mitchill and the Return of European Gothicism to American Antiquities

Samuel Latham Mitchill argued the irrelevancy of semiotics and philology in disentangling the truth of American antiquity in his dismissal of Charles-Léopold Mathieu's Dighton Rock interpretation during his November 1816 address to the College of Physicians and Surgeons: "But what need is there of all this etymological research and grammatical conjecture? The features, manners and dress, distinguishable in the North American natives of high latitudes, prove the [Native American] people to be of the same race with the Samoieds and Tartars of Asia. And the physiognomy, manufactures and customs of the North American tribes of the middle and low latitudes, and of the South Americans, show them to be nearly akin to the Malay race of Australasia and Polynesia."⁷² Mitchill however shared Ezra Stiles' priority of advancing the idea of pre-Columbian migrations of white people out of Europe, and he reintroduced European Gothicism to American antiquarianism, after Benjamin Smith Barton made and then abandoned his case for Danish Mound Builders. As I have shown, the Norsemen and the Welsh of the fabled Prince Madoc, who had supposedly reached America in 1170 AD, were included in the Japheth migrations of Ezra Stiles. Barton in *Observations* took his cue directly from Pennant in discounting the Madoc story, contending the likelihood the Welsh prince performed such a voyage and established a colony "will appear very feeble indeed."⁷³ Clinton too had rejected the Madoc notion where the origin of earthworks was concerned in 1811.⁷⁴ Moses Fiske of Tennessee, in an 1815 letter to the society published in

⁷² Samuel Latham Mitchill, "Heads of that part of the Introductory Discourse delivered November 7, 1816, by Dr. Mitchill, in the College of Physicians at Newyork, [sic] which relates to the Migration of Malays, Tartars, and Scandinavians to America," in *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1 (Worcester MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1820), 339–340.

⁷³ Barton, *Observations*, 45.

⁷⁴ Clinton, "Address," 259–260.

Archaeologia Americana, ridiculed the idea that the Mound Builders originated in Wales.⁷⁵ But Madoc was not to be denied. An Englishman, John Williams, had popularized the Prince Madoc story in 1791 and introduced White Tribism to this narrative by arguing that the Delaware and Tuscarora as well as some tribes west of the Mississippi, including the Mandan, were of Welsh descent, the result of interbreeding with the 120 men who had crossed the ocean with Madoc, or *Madog*, as Williams called him.⁷⁶ (A White Tribism role for the wandering Welsh had already been proposed by Stiles in his unpublished manuscript of 1790.) The idea of a Madoc colonization of America had more recently been romanticized by Robert Southey in an epic poem in 1805 that found a popular audience in the United States; Southey prefaced his poem with the assertion: “There is strong evidence that [Madoc] reached America, and that his posterity exist there to this day, on the southern branches of the Missouri, retaining their complexion, their language, and, in some degree, their arts.”⁷⁷ Mitchill however, was willing to include in this “band of adventurers” Madoc’s band of Welsh colonizers, along with Scandinavians who, having colonized Iceland and then Greenland in the ninth and tenth centuries, had pressed on for the New World.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ “It is absurd to suppose that they were Welsh.—We ought, at least, to observe some plausibility in assigning their pedigree to any particular nation. Welch [sic] Indians are creatures of the imagination. I met with people when I first came to the country, who had been among them. In what latitude or longitude we are still ignorant!” Moses Fiske, “Conjectures respecting the Ancient Inhabitants of North America,” in *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1 (Worcester MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1820), 305.

⁷⁶ Williams cited a letter published in *Gentleman’s Magazine* in 1740, allegedly written in 1685 by a Welshman named John Jones living in New York, who recounted being taken captive by the Tuscarora while he was a soldier in the Virginia colony in 1660. Jones claimed his life was spared when he was heard to speak Welsh, as it turned out his Tuscarora captors were fluent in it. John Williams, *An Enquiry into the Truth of the Tradition Concerning the Discovery of America, By Prince Madog ab Owen Gwyned About the Year, 1170* (London: J. Brown, 1791), 21–24.

⁷⁷ Robert Southey, *Madoc*, 2 vols (London: Longman Rees and Orme, 1805), 1:viii.

⁷⁸ Daniel Wilson would attribute notions of a Madoc colonization to confusion arising from an early nineteenth century Welsh colony in Ohio. He recounted attending a dig at a mound in the vicinity of Newark, Ohio, in 1874, and learning of a large Welsh community nearby that had been settled in 1802. “Such a perpetuation of the languages and traditions of the race, in a quiet rural district, only required time and the confusion of dates and genealogies by younger generations, to have engrafted the story of Prince Madoc on the substantial basis of a genuine Welsh settlement. Southey’s epic was published in 1805, within three years after this Welsh immigration to the Ohio valley. The subject of the poem naturally gave it a special attraction for American readers; and it was speedily reprinted in the United States...” Daniel Wilson, *The Lost Atlantis: And Other Ethnographic Studies* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1892), 38–39.

Mitchill's band reached the St. Lawrence River, where they left "Peunic inscriptions."⁷⁹ Mitchill thus was not averse to relying to some degree on semiotics and comparative languages, regardless of his disdain of "etymological research and grammatical conjecture." While he did not explain why medieval northern Europeans would carve messages in a Phoenician script, surely he was familiar with the work of Vallancey, who had posited that the Celtic languages had Phoenician roots. Mitchill's adventurers presumably had brought Vallancey's Ibero-Celtic script with them. As for the stone inscribed on the St. Lawrence River with "Peunic," here Mitchill was making a hash of any number of possible sources on Pehr Kalm's account of La Vérendrye's discovery, including Vallancey as well as Barton, who opened *Observations* with it. Where an inscribed stone was supposedly discovered by La Vérendrye far to the west and brought back to Quebec, Mitchill had the stone inscribed *at* Quebec. In any event, Mitchill's newcomers carried on until they reached the country south of Lake Ontario, and along the way they gathered up an additional identity as "Esquimaux," on which he did not elaborate.⁸⁰ (One cannot help but notice that Barton in *Observations* had cited Pennant in refuting a linguistic connection between the Welsh and the Esquimaux.⁸¹ The more one considers Mitchill's scenario, the more it seems that he reworked the recently-departed Barton's 1787 proposition, keeping whatever he found interesting, regardless of the objections Barton had mounted within it.)

An explanation for the Esquimaux identity can be found in a letter Mitchill wrote to Clinton in March 1816, included in *Archaeologia Americana*, in which he articulated his theory of the structure of the human race and the peopling of America, decrying Raynal and de Pauw along the way.⁸² Mitchill

⁷⁹ Mitchill, "Heads of that part of the Introductory Discourse," 341.

⁸⁰ Mitchill, "Heads of that part of the Introductory Discourse," 342.

⁸¹ Barton, *Observations*, 46–47.

⁸² Samuel Latham Mitchill, "The Original Inhabitants of America shown to be of the same family and lineage with those of Asia, by a process of reasoning not hitherto advanced" (New York, March 31, 1816), composed as a letter to De Witt Clinton, in *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 325–332 (Worcester MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1820).

adhered to the monogenic idea that human beings comprised a single species, albeit with racial variants, a concept first given formal expression by Sweden's Linnaeus in the tenth edition of *Systema naturae* in 1758. Linnaeus identified within a single species of humankind, which he named *Homo sapiens*, racial subgroups for Asians, Africans, American Indians, and Caucasian Europeans. As David Hurst Thomas notes, Linnaeus's racial categories included subjective assessments of character. Asians were "pallid, dour, and governed by opinion," Africans were "black, wily, and ruled by whimsy," American Indians were "reddish, singleminded, and guided by tradition," and Caucasian Europeans were "white, gracious, and governed by reason."⁸³ Johann F. Blumenbach, an anatomy professor at the University of Göttingen, used an assemblage of skulls in his 1775 dissertation, *De generis variatate nativa*, published in 1776 as *On the Natural History of Mankind*, to create what Thomas has called "the first scientific classification of human races: Mongoloid, Caucasoid, Negroid, plus a couple of intermediate 'oids.'"⁸⁴ Although (as I will discuss in Chapter 7) polygenism would enjoy a resurgence in the mid-nineteenth century with a large assist from the scientific racism of skull-collector Samuel George Morton, Western scientists in the nineteenth century generally would consider humanity to be composed of one species with five races: Caucasian, Ethiopian, Mongolian, Aboriginal American, and Malay.⁸⁵

Mitchill had another racial scheme, which made "Tawny man" the root of humanity. (He even toyed with the idea, ventured by Jefferson in *Notes on the State of Virginia*, that humanity had originated in the Americas and spread to Asia.⁸⁶) "Tawny man" comprised "the Tartars, Malays, Chinese, the

⁸³ David Hurst Thomas, *Skull Wars* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 37. Note that William Stanton in *The Leopard's Spots: Scientific Attitudes toward Race in America 1815–59* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 3, incorrectly places Linnaeus's identification of the species *Homo sapiens* in the first edition of *Systema naturae* of 1735, as does Robert E. Berkhofer, Jr. in *The White Man's Indian* (39).

⁸⁴ Thomas, *Skull Wars*, 37.

⁸⁵ Ann Fabian, *The Skull Collectors: Race, Science, and America's Unburied Dead* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 31.

⁸⁶ "...the resemblance between the Indians of America and the Eastern inhabitants of Asia, would induce us to conjecture, that the former are the descendants of the latter, or the latter of the former: excepting indeed the Eskimaux, who, from the same circumstance of resemblance, and from identity of language, must be derived from

American Indians of every tribe, Lascars, and other people of the same cast and breed.”⁸⁷ From this group arose “two remarkable varieties.” One of them was “the *white* man, inhabiting naturally the countries in Asia and Europe, situated north of the Mediterranean Sea; and, in the course of his adventures, settling all over the world. Among those I reckon the Greenlanders and Esquimaux.”⁸⁸ Mitchill thus adhered to the idea, which can be traced to Buffon and at least as far back as Grotius in 1642, that Greenlanders, and the people of Davis Strait and Labrador, were descended from (or the same race as) Lapps, which made them Scandinavians.⁸⁹ The other group to arise from Tawny man was “the black man, whose proper residence is in the regions south of the Mediterranean, particularly toward the interior [sic] of Africa. The people of Papua and Van Dieman’s Land, seem to be of this class.”⁹⁰

Mitchill had kept himself apprised of discoveries made in burials in mounds, barrows and caves west of the Appalachians, as did the American Antiquarian Society—a mummified female body from one such burial was housed in the society’s cabinet of curiosities.⁹¹ Mitchill shared news of these findings

the Groenlanders, and these probably come from some of the northern parts of the old continent.” Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 163. Mitchill’s racial concept is also discussed by Stanton in *The Leopard’s Spots*, 9.

⁸⁷ Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants of America,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 332.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ In his third volume of *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière*, Buffon held that Greenlanders and Eskimos were the same northern race as Lapps, Danes, Swedes, Muscovites, Novaya Zemlyans, Samoyeds, Tartars and others: “...les Lapons Danois, Suédois, Moscovites & Indépendans; les Zembliens, les Borandiens, les Samoïedes, les Tartares septentrionaux, & peut-être le Ostiaques dans l’ancien continent, les Groenlandois & les Sauvages au nord des Esquimaux dans l’autre continent, semblent être tous de la même race qui s’est étendue & multipliée le long des côtes des mers septentrionales dans des deserts & sous un climat inhabitable pour toutes les autres nations...” (371–373) A few pages later, he supposed that Lapps, Samoyeds, Borandians, Novaya Zemlyans, and perhaps Greenlanders and the “Pygmies of North America” were the most degenerated form of Tartars: “...les Lapons, les Samoïedes, les Borandiens, les Zembliens, & peut-être les Groenlandois & les Pygmées du nord de l’Amérique, sont des Tartares dégénérez autant qu’il est possible.” (378).

⁹⁰ Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 332.

⁹¹ Noted by Mitchill in “The Original Inhabitants of America consisted of the same Races with the Malays of Australasia, and the Tatars of the North,” *The Medical Repository of Original Essays and Intelligence, Relative to Physic, Surgery, Chemistry, and Natural History*, Feb. 1, 1817, 187. Although this article did not carry his byline, and referred to Mitchill in the third person, Mitchill was the journal’s editor and he plainly wrote it. He included it in a package of materials supplied to the American Antiquarian Society, which reprinted it in *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 321–25.

(and his interpretations of them) with readers of *The Medical Repository* in February 1817. Mitchill merged the emergent American archaeology based on the Mound Builder mystery with the established cabinet-of-curiosities practice of gathering material culture from around the world through American shipping, and ventured into comparative ethnography. Of grave goods in American burials, including woven matting or fabric, from Copperas Cave in Tennessee and Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, Mitchill asserted: “they all have a perfect resemblance to the fabricks of the Sandwich, the Caroline, and the Fegee [Fiji] islands.”⁹² Mitchill had acquired animal specimens gathered at the island of “Toconroba” in the Fiji group by a Captain Henry Hose, who was the likely source of Indigenous artifacts, including woven materials, that Mitchill said came from Toconroba and matched the American grave goods.⁹³ Mitchill was using the new object-based epistemology to make superficial comparisons of material cultures plucked out of their ethnographic context in the Old World and the New, in a manner not dissimilar to the wont of philologists like Vallancey and Barton to draw links between far-flung languages based on the phonetics of gathered specimens of words. Mitchill divided Native Americans into two Asiatic subgroups that conformed to a multiple-migration/conquest scenario. Departing from the Beringia model, the more

⁹² Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants of America consisted of . . .,” *The Medical Repository*, reprinted in *Archaeologia Americana*, vol.1, 323.

⁹³ In the narrative of the 1806–08 voyage of the ship *Hope*, in Edmund Fanning, *Voyages to the South Seas, Indian and Pacific Oceans, etc.*, 4th ed. (New York: William H. Vermilye, 1838), Toconroba is the name given for the “main island” of Fiji (42). Today the main island is called Viti Levu. Regarding Captain Hose, De Witt Clinton stated in *An Introductory Discourse, Delivered before the Literary and Philosophical Society of New-York, on the Fourth of May, 1814* (New York: David Longworth, 1815): “I have also seen in dr. Mitchill’s possession a real amphishaena, or coluber biceps, having two heads at one end of the body, diverging from the same vetebral column. It is between four and five inches long, and the colour is a light brown. It was presented to the doctor by John G. Bogert, esq, of this city, who procured it from captain Henry G. Hose, who brought this and two others of a similar kind from Toconroba, one of the Fejee islands, to this city.” (127) Mitchill in his report in *The Medical Repository* mentioned discoveries at Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, which had been gathered from the cave’s owner by “Mr. Bogert.” This appears to have been John G. Bogert, of New York City, “a lawyer of that city, and for many years the Russian Consul for the port.” See “1820, Cornelius Robert Bogert”, son of John G. Bogert, in *Obituary Records of Graduates of Yale College, Deceased from June, 1870, to June, 1880*, New Haven: Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor, 1880), 288. Bogert thus was a source of relics from Mammoth Cave as well as the Fiji Islands. According to the February 1817 article in *The Medical Repository*, “After the termination of the war in the island of Toconroba, wherein certain citizens of the United States were engaged as principals or allies, many articles of Fegee manufacture were brought to New-York by the victors. Some of them agree almost exactly with the fabrics discovered in Kentucky and Tennessee.” Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants of America consisted of . . .,” *The Medical Repository*, reprinted in *Archaeologia Americana*, vol.1, 324.

advanced group was from the south and crossed the Pacific, while the less advanced, warlike group was from the north and swept across the Bering Strait. Regardless of the distances now separating these populations, Mitchill counseled,

it is impossible not to look back to the common ancestry of the Malays who formerly possessed the country between the Alleghany mountains and the river Mississippi, and those who now inhabit the islands of the Pacific ocean. All these considerations lead to the belief, that colonies of Australasians, or Malays, landed in North-America, and penetrated across the continent, to the region lying between the Great Lakes and the Gulph of Mexico. There they resided, and constructed the fortifications, mounds, and other ancient structures, which every person who beholds them admires.

What has become of them? They have probably been overcome by the more warlike and ferocious hordes that entered our hemisphere from the north-east of Asia. These Tatars of the higher latitudes have issued from the great hive of nations, and desolated, in the course of their migrations, the southern tribes of America, as they have done to those of Asia and Europe. The greater part of the present American natives are of the Tatar stock, the descendants of the hardy warriors who destroyed the weaker Malays that preceded them. An individual of their exterminated race now and then rises from the tomb.⁹⁴

Mitchill's term "hive" had a crucial dendritic heritage. As noted in Chapter 2, the sixth-century romanized Goth historian Jordanes had called northern Europe *Humani generis officinam*—the factory of the human race—which was taken up by Olf Rudbeks in positing Scandinavia as the Gothicist root of

⁹⁴ Mitchill, "The Original Inhabitant of America consisted of..." *The Medical Repository*, reprinted in *Archaeologica Americana*, vol. 1, 324–325.

civilization. Montesquieu had cited Jordanes in hailing northern Europe as *la fabrique du Genre-humain*—the factory of the human race, but also the factory that forged the instruments that broke the shackles of enslavement formed in the south. Thomas Pennant made a veiled nod to these sources when he proposed: “I see no reason why the Asiatic north might not be an *officina vivorum*, as well as the European.”⁹⁵ By this Pennant likely meant that, just as northern Europe had been the *Humani generis officinam*, or factory of humanity, discharging from Sweden the outmigration wave of Goths, so too northern Asia had been the *officina vivorum*, the living factory, that produced the outmigration of Tartars (and a variety of animal species) to the Americas. Clinton in his 1811 “Address” cited this passage from Pennant’s *Arctic Zoology* to argue that Europe became a factory of humanity supplying the New World, just as Asia once had been.⁹⁶ Clinton thus constructed two contrasting, even oppositional factories in the peopling of the Americas: the original one, which had churned out multiple migrations of Indigenous peoples in eastern Asia according to Pennant’s Bering-Strait analysis, and the European one, which had given the world the Gothicist civilization through Anglo-American colonization. Mitchill echoed this clash of migrations in his scenario for the colonization of New York: “And thus the northeastern lands of North America were visited by the hyperborean tribes from the northwesternmost climates of Europe; and the northwestern climes of North America had received inhabitants of the same race from the northeastern regions of Asia.”⁹⁷ By “same race” Mitchill probably meant that all of these migrants had roots in his “Tawny man,” but this was a rare comingling of European and Asian migrants by him. Mitchill categorized the Asian factory as a *hive*, which carried the connotation of a menacing swarm, an idea that was closely allied with Vallancey’s *horde*. To satisfy himself descendants of the swarming Tartars were present-day Native Americans, Mitchill’s object-based epistemology turned to human anatomy as he inspected “seven or eight” Chinese sailors from a ship that had arrived in New York harbour from Macao.

⁹⁵ Pennant, *Arctic Zoology*, vol. 1, clx.

⁹⁶ Clinton, “Address,” 264.

⁹⁷ Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants,” *Archaeologia Americana* vol. 1, 341–342.

He was satisfied they resembled the Mohegans and Oneidas.⁹⁸ Sidi Suleiman Melli Melli, the Tunisian envoy to the United States, Mitchill further assured, “in 1804 [sic], entertained the same opinion, on beholding the Cherokees, Osages, and Miamies, assembled at the city of Washington, during his residence there. Their Tartar physiognomy struck him in a moment.”⁹⁹ Coincidentally, the 1810 profile of Samuel Harris in *The Harvard Lyceum* recounted how Melli Melli visited Boston for several months, during which time Harris befriended a member of his retinue, “a young man of the name of MOHAMED, who possessed an intimate acquaintance with several of the oriental languages. This was an opportunity for instruction, which Mr. Harris could not escape, without attempting to derive some improvement.” Harris accordingly visited “the young Turk” daily for three months, and “became intimate with the Persian and Arabick languages. He was likewise taught the principles of a number of others.”¹⁰⁰

Mitchill had built on Vallancey’s idea of a Tartar horde descending on the original Asiatic migrants, in proposing the Tartars exterminated the Mound Builders, who in his estimation were a

⁹⁸ Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 327.

⁹⁹ Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 327. According to Gaye Wilson, Melli Melli arrived in Washington in November 1805, and was fascinated by Native American delegations in the capital. He asked whether they followed Mohammed, Jesus Christ or Moses, and when told none of them, that they worshiped a Great Spirit, he pronounced them “vile hereticks.” See Gaye Wilson, “Dealings with Mellimelli, Colorful Envoy from Tunis.” *Monticello Newsletter* 14, no. 2 (Winter 2003): 3. Having foreign visitors remark on the similarity between Native Americans and Tartars was not a new experience for Americans. In 1792 Ezra Stiles would sit for a portrait in Newport by the Scottish artist John Smibert, newly arrived in America. Stiles had explained in his “Election Sermon” that Smibert previously was employed “by the grand Duke of Tuscany, while at Florence, to paint two or three Siberian Tartars, presented to the Duke by the Czar of Russia.” When Smibert arrived in Newport, he “instantly recognized the Indians here to be the same people as the Siberian Tartars whose pictures he had taken.” See Ezra Stiles, “The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor (1783),” 11–12. Benjamin Smith Barton also related this Smibert story in *New Views of the Origins of the Tribes and Nations of America*, which he had gathered from a 1785 edition of Stiles’ sermon. Barton, *New Views*, xvi–xvii.

¹⁰⁰ According to Wilson, “Mellimelli and his retinue left Washington in May 1806 and traveled up the East Coast to Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, raising many eyebrows along the way. The ambassador sailed home from Boston in September.” (“Dealings with Mellimelli, Colorful Envoy from Tunis.”) Melli Melli spent several months in and around Boston in the summer of 1806. The envoy’s retinue included a man named Hadki Mahomet; in a letter to Secretary of State James Madison from Marblehead on September 23, 1806, Melli Melli explained he had sent Mahomet and another member of his party to New York in an attempt to retrieve three of his retinue who were attempting to remain in America. “To James Madison from Sidi Suleiman Melli Melli, 20 July 1806,” Founders Early Access, The University of Virginia Press. <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/> (accessed Sep. 12, 2014).

transpacific migration by the Malays and otherwise had been driven into cave refuges in Kentucky and Tennessee, “where their bodies, accompanied with the cloths and ornaments of their peculiar manufacture, have been repeatedly disinterred and brought to us for examination.”¹⁰¹ Mitchill believed the nation known as the Erie had been of this Malay migration. There was a crucial timing issue in Mitchill’s theory: his Celtic-Welsh-Scandinavian-Esquimaux newcomers arrived south of Lake Ontario *before* the ferocious Tartars showed up. The Tartars, having conquered the Malay/Erie, had

probably a much harder task to perform. This was to subdue the more ferocious and warlike European colonists, *who had already been intrenched [sic] and fortified in the country, before them.* [italics added] There is evidence enough that long and bloody wars were waged among the tribes. In these, the Scandinavians or Esquimaux seem to have been overpowered and destroyed in Newyork [sic]. The survivors of the defeat and ruin retreated to Labrador, where they have continued secure and protected by barrenness and cold.¹⁰²

Mitchill marveled at “what a memorable spot is our Onondaga, where men of the Malay race from the southwest, and of the Tartar blood from the northwest, and of the Gothick stock from the northeast, have successively contended for supremacy and rule; and which may be considered as having been possessed by each before the French, the Dutch, and the English visited the tract, or indeed knew any thing whatever about it.”¹⁰³

It is easy to mock Mitchill’s sweeping generalizations and evidentiary chasms. Lest this needs reiterating, Mitchill, like so many other theorists I have discussed, was one of the most learned and

¹⁰¹ Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 342.

¹⁰² Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 342.

¹⁰³ Mitchill, “The Original Inhabitants,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 343.

intellectually influential men of his time, and his fanciful theorizing was neither idle nor harmless. I believe his theory was conceived not to solve an historical puzzle but to rationalize a contemporary ethical dilemma of Indigenous displacement. Mitchill escalated the savagery of Tartarian Native Americans by having them destroy or displace not only the Malay Mound Builders but the original pre-Columbian European settlers as well. Mitchill also ensured that these original Europeans had reached Western New York before the Tartarian Native Americans did. Mitchill implicitly was assuring himself (and his audience) the six-million-acre acquisition of Onondaga land in western New York was a just displacing of the displacers. It is important to note in this regard that White Tribism did not factor in Mitchill's theory. The Europeans who had arrived with their Esquimaux brethren were vanquished militarily by the Tartar savages and forced to retreat to Labrador. There was no chance that a drop of white blood might have been left behind among the savages who were ejected from their lands by the later wave of European arrivals of recorded history.¹⁰⁴ The Tartars' descendants were now being removed, militarily as well as by treaty and purchase, by the descendants of the whites whom the Tartars had earlier repelled from western New York. Mitchill's scenario was an argument of just desserts, foundational in the construction of the idea that Native Americans had an unworthy claim to their lands, and prescient of theories of early Caucasian arrivals in the New World (including the controversy surrounding Kennewick Man in our time¹⁰⁵) that negated Indigenous assertions of sovereignty.

¹⁰⁴ The terminology for stages of society and culture would be formalized later in the nineteenth century by Sir Edward Taylor and Lewis Henry Morgan. Savagery was reserved for hunter-gatherers, barbarism referred to peoples with agriculture, animal husbandry, and clans, and civilization for more advanced societies. See Coe, *Breaking the Maya Code*, 25.

¹⁰⁵ The 9,000 year-old skull of Kennewick Man discovered in Washington State in 1996 was touted as a Caucasian, based on a preliminary assessment by an archaeologist that the skull was "caucasoid," as David Hurst Thomas explores in *Skull Wars*.

Caleb Atwater and the Mound Builders

The 1820 volume of *Archaeologia Americana* was dominated by Caleb Atwater's 154-page illustrated report on the earthworks of Ohio and other locales. Cobbled together by the American Antiquarian Society's publishing committee out of a series of letters from Atwater, "Description of the Antiquities Discovered in the State of Ohio and other Western States" was the first concerted study of so-called Mound Builders.¹⁰⁶ In the words of Francis P. Weisenburger, Atwater was "a rather aggressive, eccentric Circleville lawyer,"¹⁰⁷ Circleville, Ohio, having been named for its Hopewellian formations. Atwater's expertise was diverse if elusive on the anthropological front: born in Massachusetts, he was the proprietor of a school for young women while he was studying theology, and was ordained as a Presbyterian minister; he was also ruined financially by a glass factory venture and admitted to the New York bar. After relocating to Ohio in 1815 he initially attempted to build a law practice before securing a postmaster's appointment in 1817; he was elected to the state house of representatives in 1821.¹⁰⁸ In 1826 the visiting duke of Saxe-Weimar, after spending an evening in Atwater's company, would write: "He is a great antiquarian, and exists more in the antiquities of Ohio, than in the present world."¹⁰⁹ Atwater was convinced Native Americans (or at least their ancestors) had nothing to do with the mounds, declaring in *Archaeologia Americana*: "The skeletons found in our mounds never belonged to a people like our Indians. The latter are a tall, rather slender, strait limbed people; the former were short and thick."¹¹⁰ The

¹⁰⁶ Caleb Atwater, "Description of the Antiquities Discovered in the State of Ohio and other Western States," in *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 105–268 (Worcester MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1820).

¹⁰⁷ Francis P. Weisenburger, "Caleb Atwater: Pioneer Politician and Historian," *Ohio History Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (Jan. 1959): 19.

¹⁰⁸ Weisenburger, "Caleb Atwater," 19–20.

¹⁰⁹ Weisenburger, "Caleb Atwater," 21.

¹¹⁰ Atwater, "Description," 209.

bones “resemble the Germans, more than any Europeans with whom I am acquainted.”¹¹¹ Atwater thus appeared to be a devotee of European Gothicism, but he also believed some artifacts indicated Hindu worship. European (particularly English) studies of the languages, culture and religions of India were beginning to blossom. Sir William Jones, who had arrived in India in 1783, produced an initial work of mythography, “On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India,” in 1784, that was published in the first volume of *Asiatic Researches* in 1788. Trigger identifies William Jones’s identification of the Indo-European language family as “the beginning of comparative philology.”¹¹² This new fascination with India (and in particular Hinduism, captured by the Rev. Thomas Maurice’s seven-volume *Indian Antiquities* of 1793–1804 and Edward Moor’s *Hindu Pantheon* of 1810) extended longstanding ideas of cross-cultural influences in ancient civilizations in a rich Oriental direction and would lead to the foundation of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1823.¹¹³ Atwater posited that northern Tartars, who were ancestors of present-day Native Americans, arrived first and settled on the Atlantic coast. The Hindus and southern Tartars, which possessed more advanced cultures—a variant on the Malays of Mitchill’s theory—followed and became the Mound Builders of North America. Through further migration the Mound Builders became the Aztecs of Mexico and the Inca of Peru.

Atwater viewed the idea that all American antiquities belonged to ancestors of present-day Indians (which Barton had championed) as a flawed rejoinder by American theorists to Europeans—he did not even have to name Buffon, de Pauw and Raynal—who contended “our climate was debilitating in its effects upon the bodies and minds of the people of America, and that nature belittled every thing here.”¹¹⁴ Americans in general likely were far less concerned with defending the reputation of Indigenous people (as Jefferson did) than they were with refuting de Pauw’s idea that their continent was

¹¹¹ Atwater, “Description,” 210.

¹¹² Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 114.

¹¹³ Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment*, 15–18; Said, *Orientalism*, 77–79.

¹¹⁴ Atwater, “Description,” 209.

fundamentally hostile to civilization and prosperity. In Atwater's mind, allowing Indians to lay ancestral claim to the archaeological marvels of the mounds would only provide further support to a poisonous European view of the Americas, as the low state of modern Indians could be seized as proof that the climate had caused them to degenerate from more advanced ancestors. Far better for a proud American like Atwater in a newly settled state like Ohio that Indians arrived on the continent fully degenerate as barbaric Tartarians who had displaced a more refined people responsible for the impressive antiquities. Benjamin Smith Barton had scarcely been buried, and his defense of living Native Americans as descendants of the Mound Builders was being buried with him.

The Enduring Phoenician Theory

Antiquarians continued to be fascinated with Dighton Rock as a Phoenician relic after the appearance of *Archaeologia Americana*, while also engaging the Mound Builders mystery. The most influential Phoenician advocates were John Vann Ness Yates and Joseph W. Moulton, who gave over a large part of their first volume of *History of the State of New-York* (1824) to theories on pre-Columbian arrivals in America.¹¹⁵ Yates was the American secretary of state and Joseph W. Moulton was a lawyer, and they were sympathetic to the theories for the Mound Builders advanced by their fellow members of the New-York Historical Society, Clinton and Mitchill. The authors had visited Dighton Rock in 1821, and declared a trident of Neptune "plainly visible," advising: "we are inclined to believe that the Dighton inscription is of Phoenician origin."¹¹⁶

In 1831 Ira Hill (who in 1823 had published *An Abstract of a New Theory of the Formation of the Earth*) released *Antiquities of America Explained*, in which the Phoenicians (he preferred Tyrians, for the city of Tyre), descendants of Noah's son Shem, migrated in every direction and served as the root of all

¹¹⁵ John V.N. Yates and Joseph W. Moulton, *History of the State of New-York*, vol. 1, pt. 1 (New York: A.T. Goodrich, 1824).

¹¹⁶ Yates and Moulton, *History of the State of New-York*, 1:85.

the world's civilizations.¹¹⁷ He acknowledged the resemblances between antiquities in Asia and North America that led many writers to believe Native Americans had arrived across the Bering Strait, but said this conclusion was wrong. The Tartars who so resembled Native Americans were simply another company of wandering Phoenicians and had never crossed to America. Phoenicians, or rather a combination of Tyrians and Jews (as in his estimation, wherever Tyrians went, Jews went with them), crossed the Atlantic together three thousand years earlier, in the time of Solomon. They made their colony at Nova Scotia or New England, and Dighton Rock “must have been at, or near their head quarters.”¹¹⁸ From there, they populated the Americas through further migrations. In addition to accounting for the identity of the Mound Builders, these Tyrian-Jews created all of the petroglyphs known in eastern North America. Hill explained: “From lake Champlain to the Potomac river, at every important pass, and on every conspicuous place, there are figures carved on the rocks indicative of their march, and a hand pointing to the West, showing the direction of their journey.”¹¹⁹ For Hill, Dighton Rock was a commemoration of the original crossing from Tyre, and his interpretation was as imaginative as anything preceding it. The record in stone was so detailed that Hill was able to determine that “in the second month of the tenth year of the reign of Solomon, the Tyrians and Jews formed a bond of union on the American shore, one year and two moons after they left their native shores.”¹²⁰ Here was another interpretation of Dighton Rock as a record of amity in the Court de Gébélain vein, only now the expressed amity was between two peoples who had just arrived. Another part of the inscription indicated that, after suffering three months of tyrannical rule in the New World, the colonists killed their king with an arrow to the head.¹²¹ Hill resorted to a standard tactic of White Tribism in providing a list of about fifty words from

¹¹⁷ Ira Hill, *Antiquities of America Explained* (Hagerstown MD: 1831).

¹¹⁸ Hill, *Antiquities*, 42.

¹¹⁹ Hill, *Antiquities*, 44.

¹²⁰ Hill, *Antiquities*, 75–76.

¹²¹ Hill, *Antiquities*, 76.

“various dialects or tongues” of Native Americans that corresponded with Hebrew.¹²² As for why the Indians encountered by European newcomers otherwise bore so little cultural resemblance to his adventurous Tyrian-Jews, Hill resorted to degeneration: “the Indians which filled our forests when our predecessors first came to these shores, were but the relics of a more powerful and enlightened people who had gone before them, and who had long since left these realms for milder climes.” All that remained were “wandering barbarous tribes, that filled our forests, and dragged out a miserable existence in the wilds of America.”¹²³

Conclusion

The epistemology of the new American archaeology may have been scientific, but in function it reflected and served the colonizing agenda of the new American republic, and interpretation remained beholden to eighteenth-century antiquarian interpretive frameworks. A leading theorist like Samuel Latham Mitchill could skewer the esoteric nonsense of Charles-Léopold Mathieu’s Atlantean theory for Dighton Rock while mounting his own Gothicist nonsense in elaborating on the Danish Mound Builder theory abandoned by Benjamin Smith Barton. Vallancey’s Dighton Rock theory had categorized the ancestors of Native Americans as a brutish “horde” sweeping into America from Siberia and displacing more sophisticated, earlier migrants. The process of cultural erasure peculiar to New England in the early history of the rock’s interpretation became a national one of disenfranchisement in the early nineteenth century, as some of America’s leading educators and political leaders, in concert with new learned societies devoted to public education, applied the Vallancey scenario to the Mound Builders. The preface to volume 1 of *Archaeologia Americana* considered “confirmed” the fact the earth works of the Mound Builders “were erected by a race of men widely different from any tribe of North American Indians,

¹²² Hill, *Antiquities*, 83.

¹²³ Hill, *Antiquities*, 33.

known in modern times.”¹²⁴ If *Archaeologia Americana* marked the beginning of American archaeology, as Steven Conn has asserted, then the discipline at best was founded on a serious misinterpretation that gave comfort to the ongoing process of displacing and disenfranchising Indigenous peoples, and at worst was a seminal moment in the history of scientific racism and state-sponsored genocide. For Native Americans, theories of their ancestry were more than points of debate for society drawing rooms, lecture halls, and church pews. In puzzling over the identity of Dighton Rock’s inscribers and the Mound Builders, learned and influential men on both sides of the Atlantic were assigning Native Americans to precarious roles in the narratives of both humanity and the United States—if they were willing to grant them full membership in the human race. Native Americans became but one of a succession of immigrant groups to the Americas, and as a Tartarian horde the least admirable one at that, in a self-justifying thread of logic in support of colonizing dispossession.

On May 28, 1830, ten years after the appearance of the first volume of *Archaeologia Americana*, containing Mitchill’s and Atwater’s learned opinions on the fate of the Mound Builders (and pre-Columbian European colonizers) at the hands of Tartarian hordes, President Andrew Jackson signed into law the Indian Removal Act, which empowered him to grant tribes unsettled land west of the Mississippi in exchange for their lands within settled states.¹²⁵ In making his case for removal of the Five Civilized Tribes in his second annual address before Congress on December 6, 1830, Jackson stated:

Humanity has often wept over the fate of the aborigines of this country, and Philanthropy has been long busily employed in devising means to avert it, but its progress has never for a moment been arrested, and one by one have many powerful tribes disappeared from the earth. To follow to the tomb the last of his race and to tread on the graves of extinct

¹²⁴ “Preface,” *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 3–4.

¹²⁵ The Library of Congress, “Primary Documents in American History: Indian Removal Act,” <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Indian.html> (accessed Aug. 9, 2014).

nations excite melancholy reflections. But true philanthropy reconciles the mind to these vicissitudes as it does to the extinction of one generation to make room for another. *In the monuments and fortifications of an unknown people, spread over the extensive regions of the West, we behold the memorials of a once powerful race, which was exterminated or has disappeared to make room for the existing savage tribes.* [italics added]¹²⁶

A multiple-migration theory that Charles Vallancey had contrived to explain Dighton Rock, which had then migrated to the Mound Builder mystery, had brought armchair intellectual enquiry to the doorstep of genocide. Without ever setting foot in America, Vallancey had turned Native Americans into descendants of brutish Tartarian hordes, which perfectly suited the needs of the republic's colonization project. Brian W. Dippie argues a "humanitarian rationale" was the cornerstone of the general removal policy, which predated Jackson.¹²⁷ Jackson's presidential predecessor, James Monroe, had stated in 1825 that removal "would not only shield...[Native Americans] from impending ruin, but promote their welfare and happiness."¹²⁸ Nevertheless, Jackson (a former Indian fighter) could contend, with the support of the emergent American archaeology, that Native Americans had been displacers of a more advanced people, and that their own time had come for a more progressive displacement. In the ensuing forced relocation west of the Mississippi under Jackson's Indian Removal Act, some 4,000 of 13,000 Cherokee are estimated to have died on the Trail of Tears in 1838.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ The American Presidency Project, "Andrew Jackson, VII President of the United States: 1829–1837, Second Annual Message, December 6, 1830." <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29472> (accessed Aug. 9, 2014).

¹²⁷ Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1982), 60–61. In critiquing the American removal program (57–78), Dippie does not recognize the role of Mound Builder theorizing in official justification.

¹²⁸ Monroe, quoted by Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 61.

¹²⁹ Thomas, *Skull Wars*, 21.

(6)

Vinland Imagined: The Norsemen and the Gothicists Claim Dighton Rock, 1825–1844**Introduction**

In the late 1820s, American antiquarians began to learn of a striking new scholarly project. As the November 28, 1828 edition of *Niles' Weekly Register*, published at Baltimore, reported (reprinting a notice in Philadelphia's *National Gazette and Literary Register*),

A distinguished savant of Copenhagen has addressed a letter, containing very curious historical information, to a gentleman of this city. He is engaged in the composition of a work on the voyages of discovery to North America, undertaken by inhabitants of the north of Europe, before the time of Columbus. They furnish various and unquestionable evidence, not only that the coast of North America was discovered soon after the discovery of Greenland, towards the close of the tenth century, by northern explorers, a part of whom remained there, and that it was again visited in the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries, but also that Christianity was introduced among the aborigines.¹

This announcement seemed all the more surprising as it challenged the idea of Columbus as discover of the New World just as Washington Irving published his popular (if factually unreliable) biography of the admiral.² The unnamed correspondent was Carl Christian Rafn, secretary of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries of Copenhagen, which Rafn had organized in 1825 with the historian and linguist

¹ "Discovery of America. *From the National Gazette*," *Niles' Weekly Register* 35, no. 895 (Nov. 8, 1828), 165.

² Washington Irving, *A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (New York: G. & C. Carvill, 1828). For Irving's biography and the coincident enthusiasm for locating Vinland, see Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 114.

Rasmus Christian Rask under the sponsorship of Frederick VI.³ Rafn was seeking assistance from American scholars and antiquarians in compiling evidence of a Norse presence in eastern North America. The result of his labours, *Antiquitates Americanae* (1837), was one of the most important scholarly works on American antiquity of the nineteenth century. In 1892, Daniel Wilson, the prominent Scottish professor of history and English literature at the University of Toronto who rose to the university's presidency, proclaimed *Antiquitates Americanae* the cause of "a revolution," adding "some five centuries to the history of the New World. From its appearance, accordingly, may be dated the systemic aim of American antiquaries and historians to find evidence of intercourse with the ancient world prior to the fifteenth century."⁴ Douglas R. McManis in 1969 heralded *Antiquitates Americanae* as the beginning of modern scholarship on Vinland. Since its publication "no important critic has argued that the voyages were mere folk myth, as George Bancroft had done."⁵ McManis further noted: "Rafn's work has profoundly influenced the course of later Vinland investigations. The type of evidence which he considered acceptable and his interpretations of data provoked rebuttals and launched controversies which continue down to the present day."⁶ Rafn's foremost scholarly accomplishment was producing in concert with an Icelandic expert, Finnur (Finn) Magnússon, transcriptions of the relevant Vinland sagas in their original Old Norse, as well as in Danish and Latin. However, for all the praise Rafn and Magnússon secured for legitimizing the idea of a Norse presence in the Americas some 500 years before Columbus,

³ David Lowenthal, "G. P. Marsh and Scandinavian Studies," *Scandinavian Studies* 29, no. 2 (May 1957): 46.

⁴ Wilson, *The Lost Atlantis*, 41–42.

⁵ Douglas R. McManis, "The Traditions of Vinland," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 59, no. 4 (Dec. 1969): 797–798. McManis acknowledges that F. Nansen in *In Northern Mysts* (1911) argued that Norse voyages from Greenland to America were a certainty but had nevertheless felt the Vinland sagas were "historical romances" that could not be relied upon for facts. (McManis, 798) The eminent American historian, George Bancroft, indeed had dismissed the historicity of the sagas in the first edition of his oft-revised and republished *A History of the United States* in 1834—"The geographical details are so vague, that they cannot even sustain a conjecture"—and considered Vinland "but another and more southern portion" of Greenland." George Bancroft, *A History of the United States*, vol. 1 (Boston: Charles Bowen, 1834), 6. As McManis notes (798), Bancroft's skepticism disappeared from subsequent editions. See also Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 117, on Bancroft's reversal.

⁶ McManis, "The Traditions of Vinland," 798.

they overreached in striving to prove the historicity of the sagas by firmly locating Vinland on the American shore. Dighton Rock acquired a new guise, as a Norse inscription declaring possession of the lands. White Tribism marred the researches pursued by Rafn and American members of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquities, as an assortment of supposed curiosities in New England (which were not very curious at all and included Native American remains and artifacts) secured an enduring place in the pseudohistorical canon through their initial miscasting as Norse relics. In this chapter I explore how Dighton Rock became a centerpiece of a major scholarly enterprise that was in fact an elaborate Gothicist project. Rafn's Norse adventurers did more than temporarily colonize New England: in this White Tribism version of pre-Columbian history, the Norse remained for centuries, intermarried with the Indigenous peoples, and improved them, and moreover were preceded by Irish Christians who occupied a colony that sprawled all the way from Chesapeake Bay to Florida, called White Men's Land.⁷

The Sagas and the Search for Vinland

"There is not a Vinland; there are many Vinlands," Douglas R. McManis wrote in 1969 of the longstanding quest to prove an historic Vinland.⁸ The idea that an historic Vinland existed somewhere in North America was not radical when Carl Christian Rafn began his researches in the late 1820s. Paul-Henri Mallet made a curious promise in his *Introduction* of 1755 that Pehr Kalm was about to propose Vinland was somewhere around the Strait of Belle Isle, between Newfoundland and Labrador. While Kalm never published to this effect, Mallet's promise was made known to English readers through his translator, Percy, in 1770, and the location hunch was a remarkable foreshadowing of Helge Ingstad's discovery of Norse ruins at L'Anse Aux Meadows in 1960.⁹ Like Ingstad in his search, Kalm may have

⁷ For an overview of the *Antiquitates Americanae* episode in the misinterpretation of Dighton Rock, see Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 103–112.

⁸ McManis, "The Traditions of Vinland," 797.

⁹ Mallet asserted Pehr Kalm had considered the question of Vinland's location in volume 2 of *En Resa til Norra America*. As the Percy translation of Mallet stated: "According to him, the colony of VINLAND was in the island of

been inspired by the “Skálholt Map” of 1570, which depicted *Promontorium Winlandiae* as a northward-jutting peninsula that strongly suggested northern Newfoundland.¹⁰ Mallet in his *Histoire de Dannemarc* of 1756 thought Vinland was a Norse colony in Newfoundland or Labrador, but said attempting “to ascertain the exact fate, extent and fortune of the establishment, would be a fruitless labour.”¹¹ Like Mallet, Thomas Pennant did not doubt the Norse reached America, but he was certain for reasons unexplained they did *not* colonize it, or that they saw more of it than “barren” Labrador.¹² The idea of a Norse voyage to the Americas thus was plausible but abstruse to eighteenth-century writers: it mattered little to the construction of a Gothicist sensibility in Europe, or to the self-identification of Anglo-Americans with this hardy, freedom-loving heritage. The historicity of a Norse arrival, based on saga accounts, also was irrelevant to Anglo-Americans and their English cousins who were concerned with the larger questions of the peopling of the Americas. If a Norse arrival happened, it was too far north, in Labrador or Newfoundland, without any resulting colony (according to the influential Pennant) to matter

Newfoundland, which is only separated from the continent of Labrador by a narrow streight of a few leagues called BELLE-ISLE. This he has undertaken to prove in a part of his work not yet published.” (Mallet, *Northern Antiquities*, 1:303) This was a curious assertion on two counts. Kalm’s volume was not officially published until 1756, the year after Mallet’s *Introduction* appeared, and Mallet’s paraphrase went far beyond what Kalm actually wrote about Vinland on the cited page. In agreeing that copper mines found in North America were undoubtedly the work of Indians, Kalm floated an alternate idea: “may we be allowed to suspect that our old Normans, long before the discoveries of Columbus, came into these parts and met with such veins of copper, when they sailed to what they called the *excellent Wineland*, of which our ancient traditional records called *Sagor* [sagas] speak, and which undoubtedly was *North America*. But in regard to this, I shall have occasion in the sequel better to explain my sentiments.” As well as apparently inspecting Kalm’s volume before it was formally published (as the page number cited is correct), Mallet must have discussed Vinland’s possible location with Kalm. Unfortunately, while both Kalm in volume 2 and Mallet in *Introduction* promised Kalm would return to the subject of Vinland’s location, Kalm only ventured in the third and final volume of *En Resa til Norra America* (as translated by Forster) that “vine land” actually referred to fields of wild wheat or grass. Kalm described seeing fields of *sea-lyme grass* along the St. Lawrence near Quebec, which from a distance resembled cornfields. He was assured it grew plentifully in Newfoundland and on other North American shores, “which might explain the passage in our northern accounts, of the *excellent vine land*, which mentions, that they had found whole fields of wheat growing wild.” (Kalm, *Travels into North America*, 3:210–11).

¹⁰ For the map, see Wallace, “An Archaeologist’s Interpretation of the Vinland Sagas,” in *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga*, ed. William W. Fitzhugh and Elizabeth I. Ward (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), Fig. 15.3.

¹¹ Mallet, *Northern Antiquities*, 1:305. See Chapter 4 for a full discussion of Mallet’s ideas. Kolodny notes the influence of Mallet on speculations about Vinland in *In Search of First Contact*, 113–114.

¹² Pennant, *Arctic Zoology*, 1:clxv.

to the contested narrative of America, where Anglo-Americans were pursuing their long-term colonization plans. For Gothicism to factor concretely in speculations about America's past, the explorations and colonization efforts of the Norse of the Vinland sagas would have to be located much further south, in the continental United States.

Around 1823 the Scottish professor of geology and mineralogy, John Finch, visited Canada and the United States, and offered his own Gothicist solution to American antiquity. Finding America lacking a storied past comparable to that of Europe, in an 1824 article in the *American Journal of Science and Arts* he proposed the means for Americans to "elucidate the history of their native country" more effectively than the "genius of Buffon."¹³ It was the duty of Americans, he counseled, to refute the "groundless accusation" that America had no antiquity worth mentioning, "and at the same time fill up a chasm in the early history of their country."

"Who is there within the limits of the wide world, that has not heard of the name and fame of the Druids, of their religious sacrifices, and of their instruments of gold, with which they severed the sacred mistletoe from the venerable father of the forest, the wide-spreading oak," Finch asked. He proposed antiquarians repurpose Native Americans as descendants of ancient Celts, for the good of America. Having read Kendall's descriptions of the sacrifice rocks and "the figured rock at Dighton," in addition to several other accounts of "sculptured rocks," sacred stones, tumuli and barrows, Finch detected abundant raw material for asserting a Celtic past. This was a deep-time, migrationist-diffusionist past in the Vallancey vein of the spread of the Ibero-Celtic language to the New World across Beringia. Finch asserted Native Americans were descended from "all the tribes who departed from the land of Scythia," and imagined "in ages long since past, perhaps at the same instance of time, though under different skies, the Druids of England, and the priests of Cuzco, the astronomers of Ireland, Hudson, and Winnipigon, seated upon the lofty hills, and surrounded by their sacred circles of stone, were calculating the progress

¹³ All quotations from John Finch, "Antiquities: Art. XX—On the Celtic Antiquities of America," *American Journal of Science and Arts* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 1, 1824).

of the seasons, the revolutions of the planets, and the eclipses of the sun, by the same formulae which their ancestors had first practiced in the central plains of Asia.”¹⁴

Americans however were not interested in embracing as long-lost Druidic cousins the Native Americans they were displacing. Finch abandoned the Druidic fantasy himself when he published *Travels in the United States and Canada* in 1833.¹⁵ If Finch still believed Indians were long-lost cousins of Druidic Celts, they were cousins the present family could not be expected to accommodate. “A thousand white men will live where an Indian would find a scanty subsistence; and no one would wish the former dispossessed that the latter might return. This would be, in effect, as if an Englishman should desire that the painted Celts and Picts should take possession of the flourishing islands of Britain, erect their huts of wood, feed their cattle in the fertile valleys, and amuse their leisure hours by making war upon the neighboring tribes. Such a state of things would not be desirable in England, neither would it be in America.”¹⁶ Extending the reach of Mallet’s Gothicist ideas of a Celtic race to North America thus was left overwhelmingly to the Norsemen, and to Rafn and his collaborators.

Rafn’s coincident quest to prove the historicity of Vinland, of *his* particular Vinland, must be understood in the context of what Bruce Trigger has called “nationalist archaeology,” for which nineteenth-century Danish efforts were exemplary. According to Trigger, Denmark’s national pride had taken a drubbing during the Napoleonic period and would suffer further in conflicts with Germany. The Danes “turned to history and archaeology to find consolation in thoughts of their past national greatness.

¹⁴ Finch’s idea of a Druidic-Celtic past, preserved in sacred stones, foreshadowed the twentieth century’s pseudohistorical obsession with an alleged Bronze Age Celtic presence in North America that gave rise to the Early Sites Foundation in 1954 and the New England Antiquities Research Association (NEARA) in 1964. Finch differed critically from most of his twentieth-century antecedents in proposing Native Americans were part of a root-culture global diffusion; latter-day theorists like Barry Fell were only satisfied with actual Bronze Age Celts crossing the Atlantic and leaving their standing stones and ogham inscriptions behind, while also leaving Native Americans in the *chasm* of prehistory that Finch had attempted to fill by making their ancestors a worthy foundation to a young nation’s history.

¹⁵ John Finch, *Travels into the United States and Canada, Containing Some Account of their Scientific Institutions, and a Few Notices of the Geology and Mineralogy of those Countries* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Browne, Green, and Longman, 1833).

¹⁶ Finch, *Travels*, 173.

In particular, they took pride in the fact that Denmark, unlike its southern neighbours, had not been conquered by the Romans. They were also powerfully attracted to the Viking period.”¹⁷ Rafn’s Vinland quest must also be understood in contrast with events and circumstances that some 130 years later produced irrefutable, archaeological proof of a Norse presence in the New World. After investigating Norse ruins in Greenland in 1953, Helge Ingstad, a Norwegian researcher and traveller who was also a lawyer and a former Norwegian governor in Greenland and Svalbard, became determined to prove the Greenland Norse reached North America.¹⁸ Ingstad was convinced the sagas recounted verifiable details of voyages in northern latitudes. Given the centuries of unresolved speculation over Norse voyages to North America, Ingstad located Norse ruins in a remarkably short time, in a single summer, at L’Anse Aux Meadows at the northern tip of Newfoundland in 1960.¹⁹ From 1961 to 1968, international teams

¹⁷ Bruce G. Trigger, “Alternative Archaeologies,” 358.

¹⁸ Helge Ingstad’s son, Benedicte, recounted his father’s eclectic career in his preface to *The Apache Indians: In Search of the Missing Tribe* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, i–xvi), a translation of the original work in Norwegian published in 1945. Helge Ingstad had lived out a youthful dream of adventure by abandoning a legal career as a young man to live for four years as a trapper among the Chipewyan at Great Slave Lake. (See Helge Ingstad, *Land of Feast and Famine*, Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992). He was fascinated by traditions that Athapaskan-speaking peoples had migrated centuries earlier to the American southwest, and set out to find a “lost” Apache tribe in the Sierra Madres.

¹⁹ According to his son, Benedicte, who as a teenager accompanied his father on the search, Helge Ingstad believed that Norse settlements would be found along the coasts of southern Labrador or northern Newfoundland. (Benedicte Ingstad, preface to *The Apache Indians*, by Helge Ingstad, xv.) Ingstad nevertheless started his search to the south, covering off years of speculations that dated back to *Antiquitates Americanae*. After scouting New England and Nova Scotia he moved on to the north coast of Newfoundland, and at Ship Cove he began to hear from local residents about ruins at nearby L’Anse Aux Meadows at the province’s northern tip. When he saw the overgrown elevations, he recalled, “There was no doubt about it, these must be sites of houses, and very old ones.” Helge Ingstad, *Westward to Vinland* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969), 114–115. See also Helge Ingstad, “The Discovery of a Norse Settlement in America,” in *Vikings in the West*, edited by Eleanor Guralnick, 24–30 (Chicago: Archaeological Institute of America, 1982). Others already had thought to look in the immediate area and came achingly close. In 1914, a Newfoundland history enthusiast, William F. Munn, had published a series of articles in the *St. John’s Daily Telegram*, proposing Leif Eiriksson made landfall at L’Anse Aux Meadows and settled a few miles west, in Pistolet Bay. Arlington H. Mallery, an American engineer and Norse enthusiast with migrationist-diffusionist ideas of Vikings and an even older and advanced Old World civilization having once thrived in North America, came within about five miles of locating the L’Anse Aux Meadows site, as he published in 1951, but focused wrongly on Pistolet Bay. Mallery laid out his evidence in *Lost America: The Story of Iron-Age Civilization Prior to Columbus* (Columbus OH and Washington D.C.: The Overlook Company, 1951). A Danish archaeologist, Jørgen Meldgaard, conducted a test dig at Pistolet Bay in 1956 and planned to return for further investigations, but could not raise the necessary funds. Birgitta Linderoth Wallace summarizes these early searches in “The Viking Settlement at L’Anse Aux Meadows,” in *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga*, ed. William W. Fitzhugh and Elizabeth I. Ward (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 208–209. Wallace credits Meldgaard’s 1956 dig and

under the direction of Ingstad's spouse, archaeologist Anne Stine Ingstad, unearthed the L'Anse Aux Meadows evidence of the Norse occupation, circa 1000 AD. In his ensuing book, *Westward to Vinland*, Helge Ingstad made the case for his interpretation of the Vinland sagas. Ingstad was sure Helluland (flat-slab land) was eastern Baffin Island, Markland (forest land) was the Labrador coast, and Vinland (vine-land, or pasture-land) was Newfoundland. Ingstad's locations for Helluland and Markland have not been seriously disputed, while Vinland has remained contested. Ingstad presented L'Anse Aux Meadows as Leifsbúdir (Leifsbooths, or Leif's Houses, *búdir* meaning a collection of temporary shelters), the settlement established by Leif Eiriksson. Ingstad believed it was employed by all of the saga voyagers that reached the western lands.

As for the sagas, the chief source and inspiration of all searches for Vinland, there were two family narratives, called *Graelendinga Saga* (Greenlander's Saga) and *Eiriks Saga Rauda* (Eirik the Red's Saga).²⁰ They told—with varying degrees of concurrence, contradiction, and fantasy—the adventures of Bjarni Herjolfsson and three sons of Eirik the Red, Leif, Thorvald, and Thorstein, as well as a daughter, Freydis. There was also a wealthy Icelandic merchant, Thorfinn Thordsson *karlsefni* (a nickname or byname meaning “the stuff a man is made of”), generally known as Thorfinn Karlsefni.²¹ All

further plans with alerting local people to the interest in finding Norse ruins, which then benefited Helge Ingstad in his search.

²⁰ Literature on the sagas is rife with variations in names for the works. McManis in “The Traditions of Vinland” gives a helpful overview of the many names as well as their character and scholarly debates over their reliability, both as historical records in general and in contrast with one another on specific voyages. The introduction to Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Pálsson's *The Vinland Sagas* (Harmondsworth UK: Penguin, 1965) also provides a useful review of the history of the sagas as oral traditions, documents, and works of literature. Chapter 2, “Contact and Conflict,” of Annette Kolodny's *In Search of First Contact* is an interpretive reading of the sagas that applies literary criticism to their structure and seeks historicity in the accounts of meetings with Indigenous peoples. For additional overviews of the sagas and related Icelandic sources, including the various medieval books composed in Iceland alluding to Vinland, see Kirsten A. Seaver, *The Frozen Echo: Greenland and the Exploration of North America ca A.D. 1000–1500* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 14–43; Cumming et al, *The Discovery of North America*, 45–51; Alan G. Macpherson, “Pre-Columbian Discoveries and Exploration of North America,” in *A New World Exposed*, vol. 1 of *North American Exploration*, ed. John Logan Allen (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 24–61; and Gísli Sigurdsson, “An Introduction to the Vinland Sagas,” in *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga*, ed. William W. Fitzhugh and Elizabeth I. Ward, 218–221 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000).

²¹ See Seaver, *The Frozen Echo*, 15, for a discussion of the name Thorfinn Thordsson *karlsefni*.

of the key figures in the Vinland sagas, except Karlsefni, were Greenland Norse. Bjarni was the first to sight the new lands, but did not go ashore. After Leif Eiriksson followed Bjarni's example and returned from his discovery and temporary settlement in Vinland, his brother Thorvald attempted his own voyage and was killed (and buried) somewhere in the new lands at a headland called Krossaness, or Cross-Ness. Next, Thorstein failed to reach the new lands, and after returning to Greenland died and left a young widow, Gudrid. Gudrid married Thorfinn Karlsefni and joined him on a new voyage of colonization, whose three ships, 160 colonists, and cattle reached the new lands and after an initial stay at Straumfjord, settled at a place called Hóp, an unknown sailing distance to the south. The colonists battled with the local people, or *skraelings*, the settlement was abandoned and the colonists returned to Iceland and Greenland.²² While Icelandic records suggest lands to the west may have been visited by Greenland Norse into the fifteenth century, accounts of the known or suspected voyages are limited to the Vinland sagas and all took place around 1000 AD, soon after Eirik the Red established a Greenland colony around 985.²³

The two sagas devoted to Vinland were not written down until more than two centuries after the described events. Different versions of the individual sagas survive, and they otherwise provide discordant accounts of voyages.²⁴ The Norwegian oceanographer and arctic explorer Fridtjof Nansen did

²² For a concise summary of these voyages, see Seaver, *The Frozen Echo*, 25–27. For an examination of the concept of *skraelings*, see Kirsten A. Seaver, “Pygmies’ of the Far North,” *Journal of World History* 19, no. 1 (2008): 63–87.

²³ See Gwyn Jones, “Historical Evidence for Viking Voyages in the New World,” in *Vikings in the West*, ed. Eleanor Guralnick (Chicago: Archaeological Institute of America, 1982), 8–10. Magnussen and Pálsson include a chronological table in *The Vinland Sagas*, 119.

²⁴ *Graelendinga Saga* for example has Thorvald Eiriksson and Thorfinn Karlsefni voyaging together, while *Eiriks Saga Rauda* assigns them separate voyages and grants the lion's share of credit for discovering, exploring and settling these new lands to Karlsefni, not Leif Eiriksson. See Jones, “Historical Evidence for Viking Voyages in the New World,” 10. There are also confusing place names. Kjalarnes, or Keelness, is mentioned in the accounts of Leif Eiriksson's and Thorfinn Karlsefni's voyages, and may be two different places. Although he was writing after the Ingstads' discovery and excavation of the Norse site at L'Anse Aux Meadows (which Helge Ingstad insisted was Leif Eiriksson's Leifsbúdir—Leifsbóoths, or “Leif's Houses”), Douglas R. McManis remained skeptical of the ability of the sagas to yield irrefutable truths. “Every internal analysis of the sagas has concluded that each version contains nonhistorical, mythical, and interpolated materials, but has asserted that this condition does not invalidate the sagas as documentary evidence. There has been, however, no agreement on which passages may be identified as extraneous and which ones are validly descriptive of the voyages.” (“The Traditions of Vinland,” 801–802)

not doubt that the Norse reached North America, but considered the sagas to be fictions rooted in Irish traditions.²⁵ Scholars have accepted that the sagas, although a mass of contradictions and filled with elements of legend, are based on historical events and that L’Anse Aux Meadows was a circa 1000 AD Norse site, but without necessarily accepting Helge Ingstad’s contention he had found Leifsbúdir and that Newfoundland was Vinland. Birgitta Wallace, who excavated L’Anse Aux Meadows with Anne Stine Ingstad and then oversaw the site’s archaeology program for Parks Canada from 1973 to 1976, has argued that the site was both Eiriksson’s Leifsbúdir and Karlsefni’s Straumfjord, but was not Vinland. It rather was a materials processing center in Markland that served as gateway to Vinland, a “vast hinterland” to the south, in New Brunswick, with Miramichi Bay a strong candidate for Hóp.²⁶

Just as Heinrich Schliemann would rely on Homer’s *Iliad* to locate an historical Troy, Carl Christian Rafn, long before Schliemann (and Ingstad), was certain the Vinland sagas could lead him to an historic Leifsbúdir. But unlike Schliemann and Ingstad, Rafn conducted his search for a distant fabled place from the comfort of Copenhagen. Rafn was no Ingstad, who was an energetic traveler and outdoorsman who had spent four years as a trapper at Great Slave Lake.²⁷ Even had Rafn wanted to investigate evidence for the Norse voyages in northern latitudes firsthand, he would have had to go to far more heroic lengths than Ingstad, who had reached L’Anse Aux Meadows by a hospital boat of the

²⁵ “I look upon the narratives somewhat in the light of historical romances, founded upon legend and more or less uncertain traditions,” Fridtjof Nansen advised in *In Northern Mists: Arctic Exploration in Early Times*, vol. 1 (London: William Heinemann, 1911), 314. He argued the sagas’ description of Vinland was based on the medieval legend of *Insulae Fortunatae*, or the Fortunate Isles (352). See Chapter 9 (312–384) for Nansen’s critical analysis of the sagas.

²⁶ Birgitta Linderth Wallace in “An Archaeologist’s Interpretation of the *Vinland Sagas*,” addresses the three settlement sites: Leifsbudir, Straumfjord, and Hóp. Leifsbudir, occupied by Leif Eiriksson in the *Greenlander’s Saga*, and Straumfjord, used by Thorfinn Karlsefni in *Eirik the Red’s Saga*, were similar in being “gateways to Vinland. Resources were sought from a vast hinterland and brought back to the base to be shipped to Greenland.” (227) The L’Anse Aux Meadows site was “a well-planned and rigorously structured outpost capable of housing up to 90 people.” (227) Wallace notes that the site bears similarities to descriptions of both Leifsbudir and Straumfjord, and “is in fact Straumfjord.” (227) As she also notes that the *Greenlander’s Saga* “indicates clearly that all expedition used the same base,” (227) we can presume based on her analysis that L’Anse Aux Meadows is both Leifsbudir and Straumfjord, although she does not explicitly say so. As for Hóp, “there is no doubt in my mind” it was in eastern New Brunswick, likely Miramichi Bay. (230)

²⁷ See Ingstad, *The Land of Feast and Famine*.

Grenfell Mission. The northern geography of the sagas was scarcely explored; the British Admiralty only had resumed the search for the Northwest Passage in 1818, sending a two-ship expedition under John Ross to verify the contours of Baffin Bay (which included Helluland of eastern Baffin Island), as last explored by William Baffin in 1617.²⁸ Rafn's investigations thus were shaped, and compromised, by several factors: the scholarly novelty of the sagas; the inaccessibility and limited knowledge of geography in pertinent northern latitudes; Rafn's determination to conduct his geographical and archaeological research from the comfort of Copenhagen; and his reliance on American antiquarian informants for gathering research materials. These informants were clustered in urban centers of the eastern United States and were prone to providing him with potential evidence from their immediate surroundings. Moreover, these antiquarians already had produced an inventory of mysteries in seeking Old World explanations for the continent's past. As well, because *Antiquitates Americanae* was an editorial project that relied on subscribers, American subscribers were far more likely to fund it if its Vinland evidence pointed to the United States. As it happened, Rafn's Gothicist impulse was to link the northern Protestants of the Old World with their descendants and relatives in the New World along America's populous eastern seaboard. All of these factors drove Rafn's Vinland search into the heart of southern New England, more than 1,000 miles southwest of L'Anse Aux Meadows. White Tribism would figure prominently in an evidentiary search that transformed Indigenous cultural materials, including Dighton Rock, into Norse relics, and Native Americans into hybridized Norse.²⁹

²⁸ See Elizabeth Baigent, "Ross, Sir John (1777–1856)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/view/article/24126> (accessed September 4, 2014).

²⁹ For a good overview of missteps and hoaxes in efforts to prove a Norse presence in North America, beginning with *Antiquitates Americanae*, see Birgitta Linderöth Wallace and William W. Fitzhugh, "Stumbles and Pitfalls in the Search for Viking America," in *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga*, eds. William W. Fitzhugh and Elizabeth I. Ward, 374–384 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000). See also Chapter 3, "Anglo-America's Viking Heritage," in Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*.

George Perkins Marsh, Henry Wheaton, and the Dawn of American Interest in Scandinavian Antiquity

Rafn was assisted and encouraged in producing *Antiquitates Americanae* by George Perkins Marsh, who began studying Scandinavian languages in 1820–21 as a professor of Greek and Latin at a military academy in Vermont. Marsh wrote Rafn in 1833, securing his help in his studies, and conveyed to Rafn an ethnocentric fascination in line with Rafn’s Gothicist project. Marsh’s enthusiasm according to David Lowenthal was rooted in part in “analogies between the solemn grandeur of Scandinavia and stern and rockbound New England, and between the moral excellences of the Goths and the Puritans,” which “evoked in Marsh, as in some of his fellow-countrymen, both national and regional pride, and encouraged them to steep themselves in a stew of Gothic romance and Scandinavian antiquities.”³⁰ I am persuaded however that Rafn was at least initially assisted by Henry Wheaton, who had arrived in Copenhagen in 1827 as the first dedicated ambassador (more correctly, chargé d’affaires) of the United States to Denmark.³¹ Wheaton appeared when Scandinavian interest in their ancient literature “ran high,” according to Adolph B. Benson, as in 1826 the *Lodbrokar Saga* was published in the original Icelandic and Latin, and Rafn issued (in Danish, Latin, and French), an edition of the popular *Lodbrokar-Quioa*.³² Wheaton was smitten with Icelandic literature and Scandinavian history. Learning Danish (he already knew French), he quickly became one of their most scholarly proponents. As a lawyer, a former reporter of the United Supreme Court, and an expert on the laws of nations, Wheaton’s scholarship was

³⁰ Lowenthal, “G. P. Marsh and Scandinavian Studies,” 44–45. Kolodny addresses Wheaton in *In Search of First Contact*, 114–116.

³¹ The most detailed overview of Wheaton’s career is “Introductory Remarks by the Editor,” by William Beach Lawrence, in Henry Wheaton, *Elements of International Law*. See the sixth edition (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1855), xiii–clxxxiv.

³² Adolph B. Benson, “Henry Wheaton’s Writings on Scandinavia,” *The Journal of English and German Philology* 29, no. 4 (Oct. 1930): 547.

exhaustive.³³ Wheaton was elected an honorary member of both the Scandinavian Society and the Icelandic Literary Society in 1830, with Rafn's colleague Rasmus Rask praising "his proficiency in the language, and his zeal in promoting the literature of Scandinavia."³⁴ Wheaton according to Benson corresponded with Rafn and Magnússén, and as Benson concluded, "We may assume that he eventually came to know these leaders of culture in person also."³⁵ Wheaton was a member of the Philadelphia-based American Philosophical Society, and as the notice of Rafn's request for assistance from Americans initially appeared in Philadelphia's *National Gazette and Literary Register*, it seems likely that Wheaton directed Rafn to the society's membership for assistance. Rafn had also contacted the Massachusetts Historical Society, which elected him as a corresponding member in February 1829.³⁶ In June 1829, Rafn contacted the Rhode Island Historical Society in Providence, similarly seeking assistance, and Wheaton again may have been the conduit: he was born in Providence in 1785, graduated there from Brown in 1802, and practiced law in the city from 1806 to 1813.³⁷

Evidence for the relationship thereafter between Wheaton and Rafn where *Antiquitates Americanae* is concerned, is elusive, if nonexistent, which might have been due to differences in their

³³ "Wheaton made an honest effort to consult all the best authorities available a century ago in his chosen avocation," Benson has observed, "and his sources, ancient and modern, make a very impressive list." Benson, "Henry Wheaton's Writings on Scandinavia," 554. Wheaton published his first article on Scandinavian literature, ostensibly a review of four publications of Rask, in *The American Quarterly Review*, in June 1828, which was followed in January 1829 in *The North American Review* by another wide-ranging review of recent scholarly works that included an edition from Magnússén of part 3 of the *Edda*. Henry Wheaton, "Art. VIII.—Scandinavian Literature," *The American Quarterly Review* 3 (June 1, 1828): 481; "Art. II.—1. *Edda Saemundar hins Froda...*" *The North American Review* 29 (Jan. 1829): 62.

³⁴ Benson, "Henry Wheaton's Writings on Scandinavia," 547. See also William Beach Lawrence, "Introductory Remarks by the Editor," in Wheaton, *Elements of International Law*, lxii.

³⁵ Benson, "Henry Wheaton's Writings on Scandinavia," 546–547.

³⁶ See the account of the February 19, 1829 meeting in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 1 (1791–1835), 418.

³⁷ Rafn's letter to the Rhode Island Historical Society was "misaid" by its secretary, Thomas H. Webb, but it is referenced in the response by Webb reproduced in Carl Christian Rafn, ed., *Antiquitates Americanae sive scriptores septentrionales rerum ante-columbianarum in America* (Hafniae [Copenhagen]: Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, 1837), 356–361. For Webb's recollection, see Thomas H. Webb, "February Meeting. Letter of James Sullivan; Professor Rafn," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 8 (1864–1865), 189.

approaches to Scandinavian history. Rafn's Gothicism was bent on drawing Britain and Anglo-America into the broad family that Mallet had cast as Celtic. (Rafn also planned a volume called *Antiquitates Britannica*, but it never materialized.) Wheaton generally agreed that Anglo-Americans enjoyed some broad measure of Scandinavian roots, for as he wrote in *The American Quarterly Review* in 1828, "even to us, the literature of the North must have its interest,—since we deduce our origin, our language, and our laws, from the Scandinavian and Teutonic races."³⁸ Moreover, in an article in *The North American Review* in 1831, Wheaton referred to "we Scandinavians" in addressing fellow Americans.³⁹ Wheaton however was not interested in promoting a pan-European Gothicism in the manner of Mallet's Celtic religion, or in the broad terms asserted by Rafn in the introduction of the 1836 *Report* of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries to its British and American members.⁴⁰ (Wheaton also believed that runic writing originated with the Phoenicians, a conviction that echoed Vallancey's certainty that the Celtic language of Ireland was a Phoenician import.) Wheaton was fundamentally "a historian of culture," as Benson summarized, concerned with the roots of law and tradition.⁴¹ In the well-regarded *History of the Northmen, or Danes and Normans*, published at Philadelphia in 1831, Wheaton devoted only 10 pages to the Vinland sagas and their historicity and saying little more than what Mallet had.⁴² Had Rafn (and Magnussén) been forced to rely solely on Wheaton's cooperation, the most controversial aspects of *Antiquitates Americanae* (and the successive articles published in the *Mémoires* of the Royal Society of

³⁸ Wheaton, "Art. VIII.—Scandinavian Literature."

³⁹ Quoted by William Beach Lawrence, "Introductory Remarks by the Editor," xlvii–liii.

⁴⁰ Rafn waxed romantic on the ancient connections between Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Scandinavians and Scottish Highlanders, with a further assertion that "people of Gotho-Germanic or northern Teutonic origin were already settled in certain portions of Britain, which now form part of the kingdom of England, long before the Anglo-Saxon conquest." The introduction further asserted that Christianity had arrived in Norway from England, which would mean that the Christian Norse of Greenland who reached America in the sagas owed their soul's salvation to the English. Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, *Report Addressed by the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries to its British and American Members* (Copenhagen: Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, 1836), vi–viii.

⁴¹ Benson, "Henry Wheaton's Writings on Scandinavia," 549.

⁴² Henry Wheaton, *History of the Northmen, or Danes and Normans, from the Earliest Times to the Conquest of England by William of Normandy* (Philadelphia: Carey and Lea, 1831), 22–31.

Northern Antiquaries) would never have come to pass.⁴³ But Rafn had been able to connect with the antiquarians of Rhode Island, likely with Wheaton's assistance, and through them American antiquity was changed, in many ways for the worse, and with Dighton Rock as the evidentiary centerpiece.

Thomas Hopkins Webb and the Gothicist Project of Vinland

George. P. Marsh joined the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries in 1834 and served as its American secretary, with Rafn relying on him to find subscribers for *Antiquitates Americanae*.⁴⁴ However, in researching *Antiquitates Americanae*, Rafn already was being assisted by another American, whose contributions were so significant as to qualify him as a collaborator. As secretary of the Rhode Island Historical Society, Thomas Hopkins Webb made the initial response to Rafn's 1829 inquiry, and assumed the task of chairing a society committee to assist Rafn in his researches.⁴⁵ Official correspondence from Webb to Rafn was reproduced in *Antiquitates Americanae*, but additional letters from Rafn to Webb, preserved by the Massachusetts Historical Society, from May 30, 1833 to April 6, 1843, show Webb was even more indispensable to Rafn's quest to locate Vinland in southern New England than the reproduced letters indicate.⁴⁶ They also show Webb took the lead in engineering a popular and critical reception of

⁴³ I have employed the general title *Mémoires* in reference to the first two volumes, 1836–1839 and 1840–1844.

⁴⁴ Lowenthal, "G. P. Marsh and Scandinavian Studies," 47.

⁴⁵ John Russell Bartlett would recall for the Rhode Island Historical Society, in a letter published in the 1872–73 *Proceedings*, that contact was initiated with Rafn by himself and Thomas H. Webb after they saw a circular letter by Rafn in newspapers in 1829. Webb wrote Rafn and told him about Dighton Rock. Rafn made a "prompt" reply, and the matter was then taken up by a committee of the historical society comprised of Webb, Bartlett and Greene. However, Bartlett's recollection is flawed and compressed, as this chapter makes clear. Delabarre's use of society correspondence indicates Rafn initiated the contact with the society in 1829; as well, the committee Bartlett mentions was not formed until 1833. As stated, I believe Rafn may have been directed toward the society for assistance by Wheaton in Copenhagen. See *Proceedings of the Rhode Island Historical Society 1782-3* (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1873), 70–76, for an account of the society's dealings with Rafn, including a transcription of Bartlett's letter. Note that the society was founded as the Rhode-Island Historical Society, but now has an unhyphenated name. I have used the unhyphenated style, except when citing any publications in which the name was hyphenated.

⁴⁶ Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae* (356–372) transcribes four letters (inclusive of addenda under the same dates) from Webb to Rafn, dated September 22, 1830; November 30, 1834; September 14, 1835; and October 31, 1835. The Rafn letters, 19 in all (counting individually the ones written at different dates within the same letter), are

Rafn's work in America. Through Webb, the inscribed rocks of southern New England, foremost Dighton Rock, were brought to Rafn's attention. As I will explain, Webb also bore some responsibility for the unfortunate farce of a Native American burial at Fall River, Massachusetts, a few miles from Dighton Rock, being misinterpreted as a European from antiquity, and for the ruin of a seventeenth-century windmill in Newport becoming a Norse Christian church. Rafn's correspondence with Webb also reveals, to a degree that *Antiquitates Americanae* does not, Rafn's reliance on White Tribism to assert a Norse presence in New England.

When J. P. Quincy contributed a memoir of Webb to the June 1882 *Proceedings* of the Massachusetts Historical Society, he confessed: "To say the truth, I find that the sixteen years which have elapsed since his death have somewhat blurred his personality even to eyes that are in search of it."⁴⁷ Quincy's recollections left the impression of Webb as an enabler rather than an independent scholar or thinker. He was born in Providence in 1801 and after earning his medical degree from Harvard in 1825 established practice in Providence, although his passions lay beyond medicine. He joined the Franklin Society, founded at Brown University in Providence in 1824, which was dedicated to literary and learned matters, and made reports on local mineralogy to *The American Journal of Science, and Arts*.⁴⁸ Webb was not yet 28 when Rafn wrote to the Rhode Island Historical Society. Webb initially responded to Rafn's enquiry in 1830 as the society's secretary on behalf of a committee composed of two other senior

preserved by the Massachusetts Historical Society (Carl C. Rafn Papers, N-767). They are dated May 30, 1833; April 16, 1835; November 19, 1835; July 9, 1836; July 20, 1837; August 2, 1837; June 5, 1838; April 26, 1839; June 29, 1839; October 17, 1839; April 21, 1840; May 4, 1840; January 1, 1841; April 29, 1841; October 22, 1841; and April 6, 1843.

⁴⁷ J. P. Quincy, "Memoir of Thomas Hopkins Webb, MD," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 19 (1881–1882), 337–338.

⁴⁸ For the Franklin Society, see Martha Mitchell's *Encyclopedia Brunonia: Franklin Society*, http://www.brown.edu/Administration/News_Bureau/Databases/Encyclopedia/search.php?serial=F0260 (accessed August 13, 2014). Webb's contributions to *The American Journal of Science and Arts* (published by Benjamin Silliman, a professor of chemistry at Yale) included "Notice of Fluor Spar" and "New Localities of Tourmalines and Tale," vol. 7 (1824), 54–55, and "Notices of Miscellaneous Localities of Minerals," coauthored in part with Steuben Taylor, vol. 8, no. 2 (August 1824), 225–229. For Webb's essential biography, see Quincy, "Memoir of Thomas Hopkins Webb, MD," 336–338.

members, trustee William E. Richmond and William R. Staples, who had preceded Webb as secretary. Webb would then chair the society's Committee on the Antiquities and Aboriginal History of America, struck in April 1833 to address Rafn's mounting questions.⁴⁹

Webb's fellow members of the Antiquities and Aboriginal History committee were two other younger members of the society from Providence, Albert Gorton Greene (b. 1802) and John Russell Bartlett (b. 1805). Greene does not figure significantly in the records of the committee's activities.⁵⁰ Bartlett had a limited education but had worked his way up from a position in his uncle's dry goods business to become prominent in banking in Providence. Bartlett like Webb was a member of the Franklin Society, and Webb, Greene and Bartlett were all involved in running the Providence Athenaeum, a privately held library and reading room established in 1831 where Bartlett indulged his love of books as its first treasurer, librarian and cataloguer.⁵¹ By 1833 the trio were senior figures in the historical society: Greene had been Cabinet Keeper of the Northern District since at least 1826, and was also a trustee and a

⁴⁹ Delabarre, "Recent History," 292. Delabarre covers the details of correspondence between the Rhode Island Historical Society well in "Recent History," 288–300. He had access to a few letters and records in the society's collections I could not inspect, as during the research and writing of this dissertation, the society's library was closed until further notice. Most of the relevant correspondence was available to me through their reprinting in *Antiquitates Americanae* and through the Rafn letters to Webb preserved in the collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Delabarre did not have access to (or perhaps was not aware of) the crucial Rafn letters to Webb at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

⁵⁰ A lawyer who served as attorney-general of Rhode Island, Greene was also a poet and a leading figure in local literary circles. Greene, like Webb, was a graduate of Brown, and had been a founding member of the Rhode Island Historical Society in 1822. His poem, "Old Grimes is Dead," published in the *Providence Gazette* in 1822, reflected the Gothicism and chivalry popularized by Walter Scott, and among the titles in Greene's massive personal library (which he accumulated as a book reviewer) that would form the Harris collection at Brown were epic poetic works like Timothy Dwight's *The Conquest of Canaan* (first published in Hartford, Connecticut in 1785) and Joel Barlow's *Vision of Columbus* of 1787 and its nine-book successor, *The Columbiad* of 1807. See Brown University Library. "Leaves of an Hour: The Harris Collection: The Original Collectors: Albert Gorton Greene." http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University_Library/exhibits/leaves/harrearly.html (accessed Aug. 19, 2014).

⁵¹ For Bartlett's concise biography, see the Historical Note for the John Russell Bartlett Papers (MSS 286, Rhode Island Historical Society), <http://www.rihs.org/mssinv/Mss286.htm> (accessed Aug. 18, 2014), and "About John Russell Bartlett," The John Russell Bartlett Society of Brown University, http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/John_Carter_Brown_Library/jrb/about.html (accessed Aug. 18, 2014). See also "John Russell Bartlett," in John Russell Bartlett, *Genealogy of that branch of the Russell Family, which comprises the descendants of John Russell of Woburn, Massachusetts, 1640–1878* (Providence RI: private printing, 1879), 128–133. Note that no descent is noted from Josiah Bartlett, grand warden of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge mentioned in Chapter 5.

member of the publishing committee; Webb was the society's secretary and Bartlett its treasurer. By 1835, Webb had joined Greene as a trustee. Bartlett occasionally wrote Rafn directly (although the letters do not survive⁵²), and as I will explain in Chapter 7, he would have a more prominent role in investigations of American antiquity in the 1840s, as an essayist and co-founder of the American Ethnological Society. Webb, as chair of the Rhode Island Historical Society's committee, took on the leading role of dealing with Rafn, who would concentrate on three strategies of proof for Vinland's location in southern New England: interpreting Indigenous rock art as Norse, asserting Norse origins for Indigenous place names and legends; and assuming that Norse intermarriages during a longstanding presence in America were the basis of Indigenous intellectual capabilities and skills. Rafn's Gothicist project, in short, was fundamentally reliant on appropriating Indigenous material culture and identity as Norse in much the same way that Finch had wanted to make them Druidic.

Webb would claim in May 1854 that he had proceeded with "the greatest caution" in his fact gathering for Rafn, foremost in trying to determine "whether Indians were, or had been, in the practice of making Rock Inscriptions." He recalled writing letters to the few authorities he could identify, among them Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and Lewis Cass, to whom I will return in Chapter 7. Webb reported "They all sent similar replies; which were in substance that they knew of, and to the best of their opinion and belief there existed no Indian Rock Inscriptions."⁵³ Webb's lengthy response to Rafn's June 1829 request for assistance, however, written in September 1830, made no mention of such consultations, and if they happened I suspect they came later. Webb was forthright in a manner Schoolcraft never would have been, especially in disassociating living Native Americans from American antiquities. Webb assured Rafn: "That the existence of the Continent of America was known to European Nations at a period anterior to

⁵² The bulk of the John Russell Bartlett Papers is devoted to materials after 1848. None of the correspondence addresses events relating to *Antiquitates Americanae*.

⁵³ Thomas H. Webb to John Ordranax, May 27, 1854, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

the Voyages of Columbus has long been the received opinion of many of our most learned Antiquaries.”⁵⁴

Webb also testified to the “numerous and extensive mounds” similar to ones in Scandinavia, Tartary and Russia, as well as fortifications “that must have required for their construction, a degree of industry, labour and skill, as well as an advancement of the Arts, that never characterized any of the Indian tribes.”⁵⁵ There were also inscribed rocks, “the constituent parts of which are such as to render it almost impossible to engrave on them such writings, without the aid of Iron, or other hard metallic instruments. The Indians were ignorant of the existence of these rocks, and the manner of working with Iron they learned of the Europeans after the settlement of the Country by the English.”⁵⁶

Webb’s initial committee had visited Dighton Rock in February 1830, and as Webb explained to Rafn, “No one, who examines attentively the workmanship, will believe it to have been done by the Indians. Moreover, it is well attested, that no where, throughout our wide spread domain, is a single instance of their recording or having recorded their deeds or history, on Stone.”⁵⁷ In support of his position that Native Americans had nothing to do with the storied mounds, Webb had the temerity to cite Benjamin Smith Barton, who actually had argued a Native American provenance for them.⁵⁸ Webb relied heavily on the researches of Ezra Stiles on the inscribed rocks of New England, and otherwise was indiscriminate in relating possible evidence, drawing Rafn’s attention to the so-called Ethiopian inscription that Edward Kendall had already investigated and dismissed as a natural crystalline feature in *Travels* in 1809; Rafn would still be asking Webb about it in April 1835.⁵⁹ Among the other bits of scattergun evidence Webb offered was Thaddeus Mason Harris’s account of copper coins found at

⁵⁴ Thomas H. Webb to C.C. Rafn, Sep. 22, 1830, quoted in Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*, 356.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 356.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 356.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 358.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 356.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 360. Rafn to Webb, April 16, 1835, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

Medford, Massachusetts whose designs resembled Tartarian characters illustrated in Strahlenberg. Webb lamented to Rafn the loss of many inscribed rocks. The farmer who cleared wild lands “sees in those rocks nothing but unmeaning scrawls of, as he supposes, the idle Indian, who has spent his time in this lazy manner.”⁶⁰ Rafn could not have found a more likeminded, more enabling and more cooperative collaborator than Webb in appropriating an Indigenous past so as to locate the events of the Vinland sagas in southern New England.

Placing Vinland in Southern New England

Henry Wheaton made a tentative effort to locate Vinland in *History of the Northmen* in 1831, as he brought to bear two slender reeds of evidence Mallet had not addressed. Rafn or Magnussén probably shared with Wheaton both items in the early stages of their own researches for *Antiquitates Americanae*. One was the idea that Christianity had arrived in the Gulf of St. Lawrence long before Europeans did in the sixteenth century. Wheaton relied on Conrad Malté-Brun’s *Universal Geography* of 1826; Malté-Brun in turn relied on *Nouvelle relation de la Gaspésie* of 1691, which recounted Chrestien LeClercq’s experiences as a Récollet missionary to the Mi’kmaq of the Gaspé region. LeClercq described an “ancient cult and the religious usage of the Cross.” The Mi’kmaq “had received in the past the knowledge of the Gospel and of Christianity, which was lost, by the negligence and debauchery of their ancestors.”⁶¹ LeClercq had no idea how they had gained the knowledge, but he would have had to be poorly informed not to know that in neighboring Acadie, intermarriage between French colonists and Mi’kmaq, solemnized by missionaries, had been occurring since at least the 1630s.⁶² Malté-Brun looked to a mention in Icelandic records of the bishop of Greenland heading west in 1121 A.D. to Christianize the

⁶⁰ Webb to Rafn, Sep. 22, 1830, Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*, 361.

⁶¹ Translated from Chrestien LeClercq’s *Nouvelle relation de la Gaspésie* (Paris: 1691), 40–41.

⁶² See Faragher, *A Great and Noble Scheme*, for marriages solemnized and baptisms performed by missionaries in Acadie in the 1630s (37–38) and the *métissage* of intermarriages between French Acadians and Mi’kmaq from the 1630s through the 1650s and 1660s (46–50).

people of Vinland as a possible explanation.⁶³ Wheaton repeated Malté-Brun's speculation about an evangelizing visit by the bishop of Iceland.⁶⁴ Rafn was following Malté-Brun's reasoning by 1828, for as the notice in the *National Gazette* of Philadelphia in 1828 related Rafn's hypothesis: "The northern adventurers had their principal station at the mouth of the river St. Lawrence; and Gaspe bay is a prominent rendezvous." Neither Malté-Brun nor Wheaton nor Rafn was aware of the longstanding presence in the gulf region of European fisherman, whalers, and walrus hunters, in the case of the Basques dating back at least to the second decade of the sixteenth century, and that Indigenous people in Atlantic Canada had been brought to St-Malo in France as early as 1584 in an effort to forge closer ties between them and French traders.⁶⁵ In 1627 Charles Lalemant, superior of the Jesuit mission in Canada, reported from Quebec of the Naskapi (Montagnais) along the St. Lawrence River: "They call the Sun Jesus; and it is believed that the Basques, who formerly frequented these places, introduced this name."⁶⁶ There was no need to invoke a cryptic twelfth-century mission by a Greenland bishop to explain Indigenous knowledge of Christianity in the late seventeenth century in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I would be remiss not to note that Birgitta Wallace is adamant that Karlsefni's Hóp was in eastern New Brunswick

⁶³ Conrad Malté-Brun, *Universal Geography* (Boston: Wells and Lilly; New York: E. Bliss and White, 1826), 5:135.

⁶⁴ Wheaton, *History of the Northmen*, 31.

⁶⁵ See Bruce Trigger, *Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 118–144, for early European contacts in the Atlantic region.

⁶⁶ Rueben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791*, Vol. 4: Acadia and Quebec (Cleveland: The Burrow Brothers, 1898), 200. Online transcription at <http://puffin.creighton.edu/jesuit/relations/> (accessed June 25, 2014). Pehr Kalm noted in his journal on August 20, 1749 a conversation with a Jesuit priest at Baie-Saint-Paul who was presently proselytizing among the Indigenous peoples near Tadoussac. As noted in Chapter 2, fn77, this priest claimed knowledge of an inscribed pillar in addition to the one in the La Vérendrye story. The priest also told Kalm that he knew of no evidence to indicate Indigenous peoples were once Christians, nor was he aware of any monuments that would prove Europeans had visited North America before the known arrivals. (Kalm, *Voyage de Pehr Kalm au Canada en 1749*, 348–349.)

and was most likely at Miramichi Bay, where Jacques Cartier encountered Mi'kmaq in 1534.⁶⁷

Nevertheless, nothing in the Vinland sagas would assure us there was any Christian proselytizing.

Wheaton's second bit of evidence was key to the project of locating Vinland in southern New England. In a footnote, Wheaton made the offhand observation that if the sun rose at 7:30 and set at 4:30 in Leif Eiriksson's Vinland, as the sagas indicated, "it must have been in the latitude of Boston."⁶⁸ The idea that the length of the day mentioned in the sagas could be determined in hours, and that a latitude could be distilled from it, had been around for more than a century.⁶⁹ As Finn Magnussén would make a detailed explanation of this speculative method of locating Vinland in the *Mémoires* of the Society of Northern Antiquaries, the result specifying Boston may have been his doing, and would have been arrived at and shared with Wheaton close to Wheaton's publication date of 1831.⁷⁰ In 1828, when Rafn sought to enlist the aid of American antiquarians, he had cast a reasonably wide net as to the location of Vinland, from the Gaspé peninsula to the Carolinas, but by 1831, we can conclude the location had narrowed to the latitude of Boston. I suspect that Magnussén's astronomical analysis did not lead Rafn to the Boston area, but rather that Rafn's determination to place Vinland in the Boston area led Magnussén to produce a supportive latitude interpretation. Rafn in 1830 had received his first (and highly detailed) response from Thomas H. Webb about the possible evidence carved into stones around southern New England,

⁶⁷ Wallace, "An Archaeologist's Interpretation," 230.

⁶⁸ Wheaton, *History of the Northmen*, 24.

⁶⁹ The idea dated back to Thormoder Thorfaeus's proposal in *Historia Winlandiae Antiquae* of 1705 that the day mentioned was eight hours long, which led Thorfaeus to argue Vinland aligned with Newfoundland; Wheaton's observation at least in part reflected the nine-hour day arrived at by Gerhard Schöning in *Historia Regum Norvegicorum* of 1777, which indicated a more southern location for Vinland. See George Bancroft, *A History of the United States*, 1: 5–6.

⁷⁰ The astronomical evidence would be discussed in *Antiquitates Americanae*, 435–438, and explained by Finn Magnussén in a supportive essay, "On the Ancient Scandinavians' Division of the Times of Day," in *Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord, 1836–1839*, 165–192 (Copenhagen: Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, 1839). Rafn revisited the issue briefly in "Astronomical Evidence for the Site of the Chief Settlement of the Ancient Scandinavians in North America," in *Mémoires de la société royale des antiquaires du nord, 1840–1844*, 128–130 (Copenhagen: Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, 1844). See also Ludlow North Beamish, *The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1841), 64–65, for an explanation of Rafn and Magnussén's reasoning.

especially in the long-debated Dighton Rock, about 30 miles south of Boston. Webb's September 1830 letter thus was fundamental in directing Rafn's researches. Once Rafn had decided southern New England and Dighton Rock presented his best hope for making a definitive case for an historical Vinland, he (and Magnússén) focused on producing evidence that fit the theory, and where need be, on making that evidence fit.

Manufacturing an American Vinland

After receiving Webb's letter of September 1830, Rafn let several years lapse in silence, not acknowledging receipt of the previous materials (which included a few extant drawings of Dighton Rock, sent at unknown dates) until September 1833.⁷¹ In May 1834 Rafn resurfaced, informing Webb he was confident he could decipher Dighton Rock and submitting a mass of questions about the rock and the surrounding geography, flora, and fauna, which were inspired by details in the saga account of Thorfinn Karlsefni's expedition.⁷² Webb responded to twenty-five questions on November 30, 1834, and as this response indicates, Rafn also had asked for "a view of the rock (the side of it where the inscription is) as seen when highest out of the water, with a view to its being engraved for our work."⁷³ The Rhode Island society had already provided Rafn with two unpublished drawings, the one that would be attributed to Baylies and Goodwin in 1790 and a more recent one by a local farmer, Job Gardner, made in 1812. In complying with Rafn's request, Webb's committee produced two drawings: one was of the inscription, and the other, by Bartlett, depicted the rock in its natural setting.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Delabarre, "Recent History," 292.

⁷² Rafn's May 1834 letter is referenced by Webb in his response of November 30, 1834, which includes Rafn's questions; Webb's response is transcribed in Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*, 361–372. Delabarre adds Rafn's assertion of confidence he could decipher the rock's inscription, Delabarre, "Recent History," 292.

⁷³ Webb to Rafn, Nov. 30, 1834, quoted in Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*, 363.

⁷⁴ The November 30 letter was not sent until it was included (along with the drawings) to Rafn on or soon after January 19, 1835, and that package included copies of other known drawings. Delabarre, with a zeal for specificity, consulted tide tables and concluded the drawing of the inscription at low tide was most likely created "on or about

The provision of drawings by Webb's committee, original and extant, was critical in the transformation of Dighton Rock into a Norse relic, as I will explain, but equally critical was a comment Webb made in an addendum to his November 30, 1834 letter: "Mount Hope, or *Haup* as the Indians termed it..."⁷⁵ Mount Hope lies on the west shore of Mount Hope Bay, within present-day Bristol, Rhode Island, where the Taunton River widens a dozen miles downstream from Dighton Rock. Webb must have gathered the fact that Hope allegedly derived from *Haup* from Jedidiah Morse's *The American Universal Geography* (which also was Webb's likely source on the Ethiopian inscription at Rutland that Kendall had already debunked), as the source is otherwise unknown.⁷⁶ Morse described both *Mount Haupe bay*

September 4," 1834. ("Recent History," 299) He also noted a final visit to the rock by Webb's committee in society records on December 11, 1834, with the possibility that a final version was made then, which would have been sent after the November 30, 1834 letter from Webb to Rafn was written and approved by the society. For the timing of the letters, see Delabarre, "Recent History," 292–293. Delabarre noted Webb's committee sent on January 19, 1835 ("or shortly thereafter") the various letters dating back to November 30, 1834, along with copies of the drawings by Winthrop of 1788, Kendall of 1807, Sewall of 1768, and Danforth of 1680. ("Recent History," 293)

⁷⁵ Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*, 372. In responding to a series of queries by Rafn on November 30, 1834, Webb had explained: "The first land that Mariners make, as they approach our waters, is Mount Hope; it cannot, however, be considered much of a hill, far less a mountain. (*Antiquitates Americanae*, 370) Rafn had also wanted to know: "Does any remarkable feature characterize the débouchement of the River Taunton? [D]oes it pass through a lake on its way to the ocean? Are there any large banks on its mouth?" Webb explained that the Taunton River emptied into Narraganset Bay through Mount Hope Bay, that Mount Hope was on the west bank of the bay, and that "The Northern extremity of the beautiful Island of Rhode-Island, the Eden of America, as it has been styled, is situated near the junction of Mount Hope Bay with the Narraganset." (370) Rafn also wanted to know if there was enough water in the Taunton River for a European vessel of the Middle Ages to navigate it. Webb assured him ten feet of water could be found in the channel to Dighton. (370)

⁷⁶ Edward Everett, in his review of *Antiquitates Americanae*, observed: "We have seen no proof that there is any such Indian word as Mountaup; and if there be, it lies a wide way off from Hop." (Edward Everett, "Art. IX.—*Antiquitates Americanae*..." *The North American Review* 46, no. 98 (Jan. 1838): 181.) Hurd's 922-page *History of Bristol County*, although it addresses Bristol County, Massachusetts and not the neighbouring Bristol, Rhode Island, which contains Mount Hope, nevertheless makes numerous references to Mount Hope but has nothing to say about an original name of *Haup*. There is also no mention of *Haup* as the original name for Mount Hope or Mount Hope Bay in Samuel Greene Arnold's *History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* (New York: D. Appleton, 1859–1860). Arnold states the Wampanoag leader Metacom 'had several residences, the principal of which, in the town of Bristol, was called Sowams by the Wampanoags, and Pokanonet by the Narragansetts, and by the English Mount Hope.' (1:386) The Old Colony Historical Society's transcription of a 1685 deed confirming land purchases forming the township of Taunton specified: "The first settlers, proprietors & some of ye inhabitants haveing also purchased ye sd. lands of Woosoquequen [alias Ousamequin, Massasoit] the then Cheefe Sachem of Mount Hope, and the Pokanket Countrey and since confirmed unto them by Philip his son..." Henry Williams, "Was Elizabeth Pool the First Purchase of the Territory, and Foundress, of Taunton?" in *Collections of the Old Colony Historical Society, No. 2* (Taunton: Old Colony Historical Society, 1880), 70–71. I wonder if this *haup* was a corruption of the German *haupt*, whose meanings include head, or leader, and peak, all of which would have been consistent with Metacom's main residence on a prominent rise of land.

and *Mount Haup*, which “was once the capital of the Wampanoags, and the residence of Philip [Metacom].”⁷⁷ For Rafn, this was such an astounding revelation that about two weeks after receiving Webb’s November 1834 letter, he wrote back for assurance that *Haup* was indeed a Native American name for the bay and the hill.⁷⁸

Rafn had been scouring modern maps since at least 1828 for place names that might preserve a presence of Norsemen among the Indigenous peoples, for as the notice published in Philadelphia and repeated in Baltimore asserted: “In the names of the northern American places, traces of the Scandinavian descent of the early settlers are found.” Whether or not Rafn received confirmation from Webb (if he did, it does not survive), he would assert in *Antiquitates Americanae* that *Hope* was a corruption of the Native American *Haup*. Rafn then had to turn a Native American term, possibly corrupted by English colonists, into a Native American version of a Scandinavian term, *hóp*, which made a critical appearance in the Vinland sagas. As Rafn explained, *hóp* “may either denote a small recess, or bay, formed by a river from the interior, falling into an inlet from the sea, or the land bordering on such a bay.”⁷⁹ The sagas tell us that after Karlsefni spent an initial winter at a place called Straumfjord (“Current Fjord”) somewhere north of

⁷⁷ Morse, *The American Universal Geography*, 344.

⁷⁸ “You mention several times in your report Haupe bay and Mount Haup. We take the liberty to ask whether this name is (as we may presume) of Indian derivation or if there are any trustworthy accounts of its having been given to these places in recent times. Are there no traditions preserved among the Indians about this name.” Rafn to Webb, April 16, 1835, Carl C. Rafn Papers. Rafn received the November 30, 1834 letter on March 30, 1835. As Webb had asserted to Rafn that Haup was an Indigenous name in his letter of November 30, 1834, this was a curious query, but Rafn was probably seeking confirmation. The issue may have been a map Webb had enclosed, for as Webb had explained, “The names, printed in back hand on the Map of Rhode Island, are Indian.” (Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*, 363) This map was *A Topographical Map of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* (1831), on which Mount Hope Bay and Mount Hope were labeled in standard style, not in the back-slanting capital letters of Native American places names like POKANONET, the land on which Mount Hope was located.

⁷⁹ Carl Christian Rafn, *America Discovered in the Tenth Century* (New York: William Jackson, 1838), 19. (This publication was a separate printing of the English language abstract that appeared in *Antiquitates Americanae*.) Helge Ingstad would concur: “Hop means a bay or lake, with a narrow channel or river through which the tide rises and falls.” Ingstad, *Westward to Vinland*, 55. There is an exemplary *hóp* in Iceland, called Lake Hóp, which meets precisely Rafn’s and Ingstad’s definitions: it is a tidal lake (an embayment or lagoon) on the Skagafjörður of the north shore of Iceland, fed by a river, and separated from the sea by a bar. Coincidentally, according to Seaver (*The Frozen Echo*, 27), Thorfinn Karlsefni’s family farm was in the Skagafjörður region.

Vinland, he sailed southward along the land for a long time until reaching a *hóp* where a river flowed down from the land and into a lake separated from the sea by large sandbars.⁸⁰ Karlsefni appropriately named the place Hóp and made a settlement here, but abandoned it after fighting with the skraelings. The sagas tell us nothing about how far or in which direction Karlsefni had sailed, and so there is still plenty of leeway for speculation, although as noted Birgitta Wallace ventures it probably was Miramichi Bay. At least half a dozen bays that roughly meet the definition of a *hóp* are clustered along just six miles of coast between New Bedford, Massachusetts and the approaches to Narragansett Bay, and Rafn could have done worse than to choose any one of them to place the saga accounts in southern New England.⁸¹ However, it must have seemed almost too good to be true to Rafn that the body of water through which the Taunton River flowed to the sea, so close to Dighton Rock, originally was called *Haup* by Native Americans. Rafn was also impressed by the tradition that Dighton Rock commemorated a battle between Native Americans and strangers who came up the river in a wooden boat. But Mount Hope Bay, which is some fifteen miles from the sea, only dimly qualifies as a *hóp*, provided we can imagine that one of its outlets, the narrows at Tiverton at Aquidneck Island, once created a partial embayment at a time when sea levels were lower than today. Rafn also made Leif Eiriksson's Leifsbúdir and Karlsefni's Hóp one and the same place, on the western shore of Mount Hope Bay.⁸² However, no reading of the sagas would agree with this

⁸⁰ I have relied on the translation by Magnusson and Pálsson, *The Vinland Sagas*, for the essential timeline of events (which are highly contested) related in the sagas, as well as for orthography of names of individuals and places and their English equivalents.

⁸¹ Ingstad however visited Rhode Island in the course of his researches and “could not find any river or lake which might fit the description of Karlsefni's ‘Hop.’” (Ingstad, *Westward to Vinland*, 101)

⁸² “It was at this Hópe [a spelling variant by Rafn] that Leifsbóoths were situate; it was above it, and therefore most probably on the beautiful elevation called afterwards by the Indians, Mont Haup, that Thorfinn Karlsefne erected his dwelling-houses.” Rafn, *America Discovered in the Tenth Century*, 19–20. Whether Hóp and Leifsbúdir were one and the same place is contestable, as they are mentioned in different sagas—Hóp in Eirik the Red's Saga and Leifsbúdir in the Greenlander's Saga. Ingstad believed Karlsefni's Hóp was some sailing distance to the south of Leifsbúdir, although as noted, scholars have been reluctant to accept Ingstad's contention that Leifsbúdir was at L'Anse Aux Meadows. Conflating Leifsbúdir and Hóp was not a fatal scholarly error, as placing Hóp in southern New England was at least plausible. Magnussen and Pálsson noted Hóp was “believed to be somewhere in New England, probably well to the south.” (*The Vinland Sagas*, 116.) Helge Ingstad was willing to consider the possibility Hóp was in Rhode Island. Although he could not find a location around Narragansett Bay that met the requirements of Karlsefni's Hóp, he concluded it was possible the Norsemen reached this far south, “but I do not

concordance of Leifsbúdir and Hóp; Wallace, as I have noted, indicates that Leifsbúdir and Straumfjord were one and the same, on the evidence of the Greenlander's Saga, but Hóp lay a good sailing distance to the south.

To Rafn, *Helluland* was Newfoundland, *Markland* was Nova Scotia, but more broadly New Brunswick and Lower Canada, and Vinland was in the vicinity of Cape Cod.⁸³ Kjalarness ("Keelness") to Rafn's eye matched Cape Cod's configuration. *Furdustrands* ("marvel strands," a great stretch of beach) aligned with Nauset Beach, Chatham Beach, and Monomoy Beach along the east shore of Cape Cod. *Straumfjord*, where Karlesefne initially overwintered, was Buzzard's Bay, and *Straumey*, an island in that fjord, was Martha's Vineyard. *Krossaness* (Cross-Ness), where Thorvald Eiriksson was killed by an arrow fired by the "skraelings," the Indigenous peoples of the sagas whose identity has long fueled ethnographic speculation, was probably Gurnet Point, at the entrance to Plymouth Bay. (Rafn was so confident of his conclusions that he suggested to the Massachusetts Historical Society that future maps of the New England should include "such local names as we know with certainty were given in the beginning of the eleventh century." For a time in the late nineteenth century, a burst of local Norse

believe that they covered the immense distance from Greenland to New England in one stage. They must have had a more northerly headquarters." (*Westward to Vinland*, 101) Ingstad was intrigued by a discovery in the 1930s of a lump of anthracitic coal in the hearth of a farm at Sandnes in Greenland associated with Karlsefni. According to Seaver, Karlsefni is thought to have owned a half-share of the Sandnes settlement. (*The Frozen Echo*, 26.) The nearest known source on the entire eastern seaboard of North America for such coal was on the south shore of Mount Hope Bay, where it was mined at the north end of Aquidneck Island at Portsmouth and had been known since at least 1760. See George Ashley, *Rhode Island Coal*, bulletin 615, United States Geological Survey (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1915), 7. Subsequent testing has shown that Rhode Island's anthracitic coal is a red herring. The results have never been published, but I discussed them by email with Jørgen A. Bojesen-Koefoed, senior scientist, Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS) and geologist Henrik I. Peterson, who conducted testing in 1992. "I have found the original data and I have talked to Henrik," Bojesen-Koefoed informed me, Aug. 26, 2104. "He analysed the Sandnes coal and compared it to samples of coals that could be source candidates. These included coals from Brora in Scotland, from Glyngwernen and Llanelli in Wales, from Ireland, and from Portsmouth (Aquidneck Island). The American coal differs widely from the Sandnes coal, as do the Scottish coals. The Welsh and Irish coals are much closer although not perfectly matching, and since the Welsh coals are found in open exposures very close to Viking settlements in Wales they were picked as the best candidates. Although there is not a perfect match to the Welsh coals, the Rhode Island coals can certainly be ruled out. They have absolutely no relation to the Sandnes sample."

⁸³ Rafn, *America Discovered in the Tenth Century*, 17.

enthusiasm saw Wood's Hole on Cape Cod renamed Wood's Holl⁸⁴) Rafn's deductions all tracked toward Mount Hope Bay. Citing the statement in the Greenlander's Saga about the length of the midwinter day in Vinland, Rafn (or rather Magnussén) determined a nine-hour day and concluded with astounding precision that Vinland lay in the vicinity of 41 degrees, 24 minutes, 10 seconds latitude north, which aligned with the ocean's entrance to Narragansett Bay.⁸⁵ The evidence allowed Rafn to reinforce his contention that the key saga events involving Leif Eiriksson and Thorfinn Karlsefni had occurred at Mount Hope Bay, downstream from Dighton Rock.

Dighton Rock's Norse Inscription

The identification of Dighton Rock as Norse rested with Finn Magnussén, who was interpreting the inscription largely on the basis of the Baylies-Goodwin drawing of 1790 before the drawings made by Webb's committee had arrived. *Antiquitates Americanae* would devote nineteen pages to analysis by Magnussén that safely can be called fevered and of a piece with the pictographic fantasies of Antoine Court de Gébelin, Samuel Harris, Charles-Léopold Mathieu and Ira Hill.⁸⁶ Magnussén detected a tableau

⁸⁴ Carl Christian Rafn to Charles Lowell, Oct. 19, 1837, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 2 (1835–1838), 98. Joseph Story Fay, in a terse monograph, *The Track of the Norsemen* (Boston: C.C. Roberts, 1876), engaged in linguistic White Tribism to assert that Wood's Hole—for that matter, all of the places with Hole in their name along the New England shore—derived from the Norse *höll*, for hill. The seaside town's residents, led by Fay, had already applied to the United States Post Office Department in 1875 to change the name to Woods Holl. The town was known as Wood's Holl until 1896, when it was changed in the Post Office guide to Woodsholl, before reverting to Woods Hole in 1900. See Oscar J. Falnes, "New England Interest in Scandinavian Culture and the Norsemen," *The New England Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (Jun. 1937): 232.

⁸⁵ The methodology involved converting the saga comment into the system of ancient Scandinavian day divisions, called *eykt*, then converting the *eykt* into modern timekeeping, and finally, using astronomical calculations agreeing with daylight hours for the winter solstice to arrive at a specific latitude. It was hardly the sort of evidence that should have led to a precise latitude reading without any margin of error, but many scholars have attempted to determine a location for Vinland from this sentence in the saga. Magnussen and Pálsson concluded from their translation of the passage ("on the shortest day of the year, the sun was already up by 9 a.m., and did not set until after 3 p.m.") that Vinland could have been located anywhere from latitude 50 North and north of latitude 40 North, or between the Gulf of St. Lawrence and New Jersey. (*The Vinland Sagas*, 56.) Helge Ingstad recounted nine different efforts to locate Vinland using this phrase. The results ranged everywhere from 31 North (southern Georgia) to 55 North (the Labrador coast above Hamilton Inlet). Ingstad, *Westward to Vinland*, 77–78.

⁸⁶ *Antiquitates Americanae*, 378–396.

of images relating to the Karlsefni voyage. For example, Karlsefni had taken cattle to Hóp, and to Magnussén the horned quadruped figure recounted the saga episode of one of Karlsefni's bulls frightening away the skraelings. Magnussén also saw Karlsefni being showered with skraeling arrows, the figure of Karlsefni's wife, Gudrid, and their child Snorri (the first European born in the New World), a shield with an inverted helmet that symbolized peace, a ship, and figures of skraelings.

Foremost, Magnussén found an inscription, a combination of Roman letters and runic writing. He teased from a horizontal XXX pattern "CXXXI," for the number of people in Karlsefni's company. The sagas however told of a party of 160 (including five women), whereas the Roman numerals only totaled 131. Magnussén decided the "C" represented the Scandinavian "great hundred" of twelve decades to the hundred, or 120, and so the total was actually 151. As nine members of Karlsefni's party led by Thorhall the Hunter sailed off on their own in Eirik the Red's Saga, subtracting them from 160 neatly arrived at 151, the true number of Karlsefni's company at Hóp. Magnussén however miscounted: Thorhall left *with* nine men, and so Magnussén should have subtracted ten from 160, which would have left him at 150. Magnussén's efforts to place Karlsefni's name in the rock are too complex to relate here, but suffice to say that he found the runic and Latin letters ÞRFIŪS, or Thorfins. Other letters, some of them abbreviations, allowed Magnussén (and Rafn) to extract a message: "Thorfins and his 151 companions took possession of this land."⁸⁷ They also examined a drawing Webb had supplied of the inscribed rock at nearby Tiverton, and found runic letters indicating Leif Eiriksson and a German companion, Tyrkir the Southerner, left their single-initial marks.⁸⁸

Edmund Burke Delabarre's analysis of Magnussén and Rafn's Norse interpretation of Dighton Rock is the strongest aspect of his investigations. Delabarre proved that the published version of the Rhode Island Historical Society's 1834 inscription was not faithful to the original sent by Webb. [Figs.

⁸⁷ Delabarre gives an effective account of Magnussén's convoluted inscription decipherment in "Recent History," 305–312.

⁸⁸ See Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*, 396–405, and Delabarre, "Recent History," 310.

19, 20] Securing a photograph of the original drawing in the collection of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, Delabarre showed that Magnussén and Rafn had modified it, as well as mislabeled it as a product of the historical society in 1830. Their treatment of this drawing fell short—barely—of scholarly fraud. The Scandinavian scholars had borrowed elements from other drawings to create a composite they called the Rhode Island Historical Society drawing to support their detection of the inscription. In 1854, Thomas H. Webb would reveal in a letter how the society’s drawing was composed, with “dots and cross lines” used to distinguish indistinct features from the solid lines indicating clear features.⁸⁹ Delabarre’s photograph of the original drawing by Webb’s committee showed that Magnussén and Rafn added critical elements, especially alphabetic ones, without making clear that they were publishing a composite. The Danish scholars used some shading to add features, but in engraving and printing the drawing, all distinction was lost between what was original and what was added, and the subtleties of dotted lines and shading were either lost or discarded. However, there is no record of a member of the Rhode Island committee objecting to the printed version. When given the opportunity to disown the drawing in 1854, Webb said nothing about the discrepancy that created a Norse inscription where his own committee had not delineated one.

The Danish scholars had followed the same flawed and questionable methods with the Dighton Rock drawings as they did in interpreting the sagas. They borrowed, combined and compressed different elements from the Greenlander’s and Eirik the Red’s sagas to arrive at a single narrative that was hobbled by incongruities.⁹⁰ *Antiquitates Americanae* created what amounted to a third narrative version, and the

⁸⁹ “In the drawing transmitted to the R.S.N.A., portions are represented in different ways, three modes are resorted to, according to the distinctiveness or faintness of the original and much was so extremely indistinct (as I stated) that we deemed it advisable to leave the spaces, thus conditioned, blank. What is figured was carefully examined by four individuals, each inspecting for himself, & subsequently confirming with the others; & nothing was copied unless all agreed in relation to it; the degree of doubt by us entertained being indicated as above noticed.” Webb to Ordroneaux, May 27, 1854, Dighton Rock collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁹⁰ *Antiquitates Americanae* as noted located Leifsbúdir and Hóp in the same place. Rafn and Magnussén also combined two different references to Kjalarness in the Greenlander’s and Eirik the Red’s sagas into a single place that agreed with neither. Kjalarness in the Greenlander’s Saga was where Thorvald Eiriksson’s ship was damaged and its keel erected as a monument; in Eirik the Red’s Saga, Karlsefni found a ship’s keel and named a headland after it. (Magnussen and Pálsson, *The Vinland Sagas*, 116.) One might reasonably combine these into a single place,

approach to the Dighton Rock drawings was no different. No extant drawing, on its own, made possible the detection of Karlsefni's name. And unlike the sagas, based on an irrecoverable past, Dighton Rock could be inspected for confirmation of Rafn's and Magnussén's interpretation. As Delabarre would write: "Opinion is almost unanimous that there is nothing there that at all resembles ThORFINS."⁹¹

Unfortunately for scholarship on American antiquity, the truth as to the Rhode Island Historical Society's drawing would not emerge through Delabarre's research until some eighty years after its publication in *Antiquitates Americanae*. Such was the excitement generated by the idea Dighton Rock was a Norse relic that a new theory tabled in 1838 by France's Moreau de Dammartin, proposing the inscription was an Egyptian sky map ("a fragment of the oriental celestial sphere, or an astronomical theme for a given moment, i.e., for December 25th at midnight, epoch of the winter solstice") sank more promptly than it might have otherwise.⁹² Despite the skepticism among learned American reviewers and antiquarians (see Chapter 7), the Norse claim *Antiquitates Americanae* staked on Dighton Rock—by making it a Norse claim-staking to America—proved lasting, aided by the popularizing English-language works based on *Antiquitates Americanae* written by members of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, Joshua Toulmin Smith and Ludlow North Beamish, which accepted Rafn's and Magnussén's interpretation of the rock's inscription.⁹³ The most enduringly influential popularization, by Beamish, *The Discovery of America by the Northmen, in the Tenth Century*, summarized the Dighton Rock evidence in less than four pages, although the controversial drawing was included and Beamish assured readers: "Professor Rafn

but Rafn and Magnussén made it a keel-shaped landfall that they identified with Cape Cod. Wallace in "An Archaeologist's Interpretation" proposes Kjalarness was one of the many peninsulas near Sandwich Bay on the Labrador shore, south of Hamilton Inlet. (229)

⁹¹ Delabarre, "Recent History," 312.

⁹² Dammartin based his analysis on the Gébélín drawing. Delabarre addressed Dammartin's theory in far more detail than I need to, in "Middle Period," 131–146. Quotation from Dammartin translated by Delabarre, 132.

⁹³ Joshua Toulmin Smith, *The Northmen in New England, or, America in the Tenth Century* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Co., 1839), issued in revised form in England as *The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century* (London: Charles Tilt, 1839.) See Chapter 7 in this dissertation for Smith's rebuttal of George Catlin's defense of Dighton Rock's indigeneity. Beamish, *The Discovery of America by the Northmen, in the Tenth Century*. See Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 112, for her discussion of Toulmin-Smith, and 125–129 for Beamish.

has gone into elaborate dissertation upon this inscription, proving by unanswerable arguments its Scandinavian origin.”⁹⁴ As Beamish’s late-nineteenth-century biographer Henry Manns Chichester praised, “Beamish’s modest volume not only popularised the discovery by epitomising the principal details in Rafn’s great work, ‘*Antiquitates Americanæ*’ (Copenhagen, 1837), but it contains, in the shape of translations from the Sagas, one of the best summaries of Icelandic historical literature anywhere to be found within an equal space.”⁹⁵ Beamish’s volume was reissued by The Prince Society of Boston in 1877, and it may deserve the lion’s share of credit for the widespread acceptance of the idea not only that the Norse reached North America, but also that Vinland was in southern New England, with Dighton Rock providing incontrovertible proof.

Manufacturing White Men’s Land

Rafn established an enduring strain of White Tribism by turning dubious saga references to Hvíttrammanaland, or White Men’s Land, into an historical fact. In Eirik the Red’s Saga, Karlsefni’s party on their return journey to Greenland capture two skraeling boys in Markland, who tell them “there was a country across from their own land where the people went about in white clothing and uttered loud cries and carried poles with patches of cloth attached. This is thought to have been Hvíttrammanaland.”⁹⁶ The Hauksbók version of Eirik the Red’s Saga made the additional note that Hvíttrammanaland was also called Greater Ireland.⁹⁷ White-Men’s Land also appeared in the story of Are Mársson in the Landnámabók (the book of land-taking), the saga describing the settlement of Iceland. Marsson’s ship is blown by storm to

⁹⁴ Beamish, *The Discovery of America by the Northmen*, 122.

⁹⁵ Henry Manns Chichester, “Beamish, North Ludlow (1797–1872),” *Dictionary of National Biography, 1885–1900*, vol. 4.

⁹⁶ Magnussen and Pálsson, *The Vinland Sagas*, 103.

⁹⁷ Magnussen and Pálsson, *The Vinland Sagas*, 103, fn 1.

this land, and Mársson is baptized there.⁹⁸ Rafn ignored the fact that Hvíttrammanaland was a mere six days from Ireland in the Mársson story. Casting it as *the Land of the White Men* or *Great Ireland*, settled by Irish Christians prior to 1000 AD, Rafn gave the colony a sprawling locale, from Chesapeake Bay south to Florida. In support, Rafn alluded to an alleged Shawnee tradition “that Florida was once inhabited by white people, who were in possession of iron implements.”⁹⁹ The tradition, which had been related by John Johnston, an Indian agent at Piqua, Ohio, in volume 1 of *Archaeologia Americana*, held the Shawnee had migrated to Ohio from west Florida only sixty-five years earlier. Furthermore,

The people of this nation have a tradition that their ancestors crossed the sea. They are the only tribe with which I am acquainted, who admit of a foreign origin. Until lately, they kept a yearly sacrifice for their safe arrival in this country. From whence they came, or at what period they arrived in America, they do not know. It is a prevailing opinion among them that Florida had once been inhabited by white people, who had the use of iron tools. Black Hoof affirms, that he has often heard it spoken of by old people, that stumps of trees covered with earth, were frequently found, which had been cut down by edged tools.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ See Macpherson, “Pre-Columbian Discoveries and Exploration,” 52, for the Mársson voyage tale.

⁹⁹ Rafn summarized the evidence for Hvíttrammanaland in the English abstract at the beginning of *Antiquitates Americanae*, published separately as *America Discovered in the Tenth Century* (New York: William Jackson, 1838), 23–24; quotation, 24. The Hvíttrammanaland evidence was discussed in the Latin text of *Antiquitates Americanae* on 162, 163. 183, 210, 212, 214, 447, 448, as per John T. Short, *The North Americans of Antiquity: Their Origin, Migrations, and Type of Civilization Considered*, 3rd edn. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882), 152. For the purported Shawnee tradition, see John Johnston, “Account of the Present State of the Indian Tribes Inhabiting Ohio,” in *Archaeologia Americana*, vol. 1, 269–277 (Worcester MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1820). Johnston’s account was composed as a letter to Caleb Atwater in 1819.

¹⁰⁰ Johnston, “Account of the Present State of the Indian Tribes Inhabiting Ohio,” 273.

Johnston subscribed to the Ten Lost Tribes explanation for Native Americans origins, which undermines the credibility of his tradition account, which otherwise has no apparent ethnographic basis.¹⁰¹ Subsequent scholarship in the nineteenth century (and thereafter) has been near-unanimous in regarding Hvíttrammanaland as most likely a fiction based on an Irish tradition that had insinuated itself into the narrative of Eirik the Red's Saga. Scholars who felt there might be a grain of truth to White Men's Land in the earlier Irish tradition suggested the Azores as a more likely landfall six days from Ireland, although there were no known human inhabitants there when Portuguese sailors first reached islands in the archipelago in 1427.¹⁰² White Men's Land nevertheless became a staple of popular and pseudohistorical

¹⁰¹ Johnston cautioned: "it is somewhat doubtful whether the deliverance which they celebrate, has any reference than to the crossing of some great river, or an arm of the sea." (276) He also advised Atwater: "All the Indian nations are divided into tribes, after the manner of the Jews" (275), and further noted: "That the Indians are descended from the people of the east is, I think, incontestably proved, by their religious rites, ceremonies and sacrifices." (276) John Witthoft and William A. Hunter paid no regard to Johnston or an oral tradition of a recent arrival from Florida in "The Seventeenth-Century Origins of the Shawnee," *Ethnohistory* 2, no. 1 (Winter 1955): 42–57. "Earlier students usually took their name, 'southerners,' at face value, and gave them a home in the Southeast," they state (42). Witthoft and Hunter instead concluded, based on eighteenth-century sources, "the Shawnee were indigenes of the Ohio and are to be equated with at least a part of the Fort Ancient archaeological culture." (42) Fort Ancient, as noted in chapter 4, was a late expression of the mound-building cultures that may have persisted in the Ohio Valley until about 1750. Stephen Warren similarly makes no mention of John Johnston's "Account" or an oral tradition of a recent arrival from Florida in *The World the Shawnees Made* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014). Warren instead presents evidence in line with Witthoft and Hunter that the Shawnee emerged from the Fort Ancient culture of the Ohio Valley. "Material artifacts recovered from Petersburg, Madisonville, and Lower Shawnee Town suggest that there are basic continuities between historically known tribes such as the Shawnees and the Fort Ancient villagers of the Middle Ohio Valley." (29) James L. Swauger in *Petroglyphs of Ohio* proposes a "proto-Shawnee" people produced the rock art there between 1200 and 1750 AD (273).

¹⁰² See B. F. De Costa, *The Pre-Columbian Discovery of America by the Northmen* (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1868), 86–88, for an early skeptical view of the treatment of Hvíttrammanaland in *Antiquitates Americanae*. De Costa notes the Azores theory therein. For the discovery and colonization of the Azores, see Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America* (1971; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 94–97, and Macpherson, "Pre-Columbian Discoveries and Exploration," 63–64. As Helge Ingstad in *Westward to Vinland* observed of Hvíttramannaland, the late nineteenth-century Norwegian historian Gustav Storm "has decisively shown that this is a purely legendary account that has nothing to do with Vinland." (29) Fridtjof Nansen asserted Hvíttramannaland was "an Irish mythical country," but complicated the case against its historicity by arguing Vinland was mythical as well. (*In Northern Mists*, 1:354; see Chapter 9, "Wineland the Good, the Fortunate Isles, and the Discovery of America" in volume 1 for his arguments against the historicity of the sagas.) Magnussen and Pálsson in their translation of Eirik the Red's Saga note: "The concept of a country of White men (Albania-land) occurs in Icelandic versions of medieval European works of learning and was associated with Asia, somewhere to the north of India." (*The Vinland Sagas*, 103, fn 1). They suggest a connection between the story of Hvíttrammanaland and the *Tír na bhFear bhFionn* (Land of the White Men) of Irish legend. (Ibid.) Kirsten Seaver in *Maps, Myths, and Men: The Story of the Vinland Map* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004) advises Hvíttrammanaland "probably has more in common with Irish tales than with actual Norse peregrinations at any time in history." (43). "White Men's Land" in an Irish tradition also could have been Iceland, which is believed to have been visited by Irish hermits prior to Norse

accounts of pre-Columbian discovery, perhaps the most literal expression of the colonizers' opinion of to whom North America truly belonged.¹⁰³

Word-hunting for Scandinavians in the Native American Past

The publication of *Antiquitates Americanae* in 1837 was only the beginning of Dighton Rock's new role as a Norse antiquity anchoring a Gothicist enthusiasm for a pre-Columbian presence in North America.

As Carl Christian Rafn wrote Thomas H. Webb on July 9, 1836, the publication of *Antiquitates Americanae* "will undoubtedly give rise to a series of additional researches."¹⁰⁴ With the volume at the bindery in July 20, 1837, Rafn informed Webb: "The researches concerning the ancient Monuments and concerning the points of resemblance in the language of the Indians may now be considered as commenced, but by no means finished."¹⁰⁵ The further investigations and speculations about Norsemen (and early Europeans in general) in North America were captured and promoted by the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries' *Mémoires*.

colonization. For evidence for Irish hermits, see Orri Vesteinsson, "The Archaeology of Landnám," in *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga*, eds. William W. Fitzhugh and Elizabeth I. Ward (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 164–165.

¹⁰³ William Brownell Goodwin, a retired insurance executive in Hartford, Connecticut, scoured New England in the 1930s for evidence that would prove the Norse visit promised by Rafn's *Antiquitates Americanae*. Puzzling over structures of unmortared and uncut field stone, including semi-subterranean chambers with corbeled "beehive" roofs, Goodwin concluded he had solved another mystery in Rafn's work: the location of Hvíttrammanaland. Goodwin summarized his contention that Irish Culdee monks had colonized New England in *The Ruins of Great Ireland in New England* (Boston; Meador, 1946). Seaver in *Maps, Myths, and Men* notes that Luka Jelic (who she considered a candidate for the forgery of the notorious Vinland map purchased by Yale in 1957) believed Hvíttrammanaland was part of a medieval Greenland Norse colonization of North America that stretched all the way from Labrador to Florida. (263) Frederick Pohl was adamant that the Hvíttrammanaland stories proved the Norse "reached North America, and when they got there they found that Irishmen had arrived there before them." Pohl, *Atlantic Crossings Before Columbus* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1961), 44. See also Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 1251–131, for the efforts of William Gilmore Simms in 1841 to leverage *Antiquitates Americanae* and Hvíttrammanaland to assert an a priori White claim to the southern United States.

¹⁰⁴ Rafn to Webb, July 9, 1836, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹⁰⁵ Rafn to Webb, July 20, 1837, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

Rafn had much unfinished business in his White Tribism inclinations in 1837. Rafn suspected more place names than Mount Haup were Norse and had been remembered imperfectly by Native Americans and then adopted by English colonists. In his April 16, 1835, letter to Webb, Rafn wanted to know if Brattleboro, in Vermont, Truro, at the northern tip of Cape Cod (and Cape Cod itself) and Assonet, the site of Dighton Rock, were Indian names.¹⁰⁶ While he did not include his list of purported Norse place names in *Antiquitates Americanae*, he began revisiting it with Webb in 1839, hoping to publish an article in the society's *Mémoires*.

Rafn was fluent in Danish, English and French and wrote scholarly works on runes, but his ignorance of Indigenous languages was profound. In June 1835, Rafn sent Webb a variety of publications, including “some minor publications in the Greenland tongue. It may perhaps be worth while to direct attention to the language spoken by the Esquimaux of Greenland, with a view to a comparison between it and the Esquimaux dialect of America.”¹⁰⁷ That Rafn thought there was an *Esquimaux* dialect that would have bearing on place names in New England was revealing. On Rafn's death, Webb would recall sending Rafn *A Key into the Language of America* by Roger Williams, published in London in 1643, assuredly in the form of its reprinting by the Rhode Island Historical Society as the first volume of its *Collections* in 1827.¹⁰⁸ As Williams did not discuss place names in his rough assembly of Algonquian words and phrases, Rafn probably did not consider Williams of much use.¹⁰⁹ Of Rafn's efforts to enlist his help in proving the Norse roots of Algonquian place names, Webb recalled: “It is hardly necessary for me to remark, that the Danish Society labored under a serious mistake in supposing that we had scholars among us familiar with the language and dialects of the Indians, who readily could and cheerfully would

¹⁰⁶ Rafn to Webb, April 16, 1835, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹⁰⁷ Rafn to Webb, June 20, 1835, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹⁰⁸ Roger Williams, *A Key Into the Language of America*, vol. 1 of *Collections of the Rhode-Island Historical Society* (Providence: John Miller, 1827).

¹⁰⁹ Thomas W. Webb, “February Meeting,” 190.

aid its members in their philological and linguistic inquiries, and solve the question whether the similarities referred to constituted an additional evidence of the Scandinavian visits, and of an intermixture of the Northmen with the Red men at that period inhabiting New England, or whether they were accidental, though very singular, coincidences.”¹¹⁰

Webb nevertheless turned to one of the foremost experts on Native American languages, John Pickering, who had overseen the republication of Roger Williams’ *A Key into the Language of America* for the Rhode Island Historical Society. Pickering was a Harvard-trained lawyer and jurist in Boston who served as Harvard’s Hancock Professor in Hebrew and other Oriental languages, declined a professorship in Greek at Harvard, and was elected president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1839.¹¹¹ Pickering proposed a standard orthography for the study of Native American languages in 1818.¹¹² Albert Gallatin in his landmark synopsis of Indigenous languages published in 1836 cited the work of Pickering, in particular his publication of the Abenaki vocabulary manuscript by the seventeenth-century Jesuit missionary Sébastien Rasles.¹¹³ Pickering also published the manuscript for Josiah Cotton’s *Vocabulary of the Massachusetts (or Natick) Indian Language* and oversaw the scholarly republication of several key historic lexicons: John Eliot’s *The Indian Grammar Begun* (1666) and Jonathan Edwards’ *Observations on the language of the Muhhekaneew Indians* (1789), in addition to Williams’ *A Key Into the Language of America* for the Rhode Island Historical Society.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Webb, “February meeting,” 198.

¹¹¹ Mary Orme Pickering, *Life of John Pickering* (Boston: private monograph, 1887), 460.

¹¹² John Pickering, “On the adoption of a uniform Orthography for the Indian Languages of North America,” in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* vol. 4, pt. 1, 319–360 (Cambridge: Hilliard and Metcalf, 1818).

¹¹³ Sébastien Rasles [Rale], “A Dictionary of the Abnaki Language, in North America; by Father SEBASTIAN RASLES. With an Introductory Memoir and Notes, by John Pickering,” in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, n.s. vol. 1, 370–574 (Cambridge: Charles Folsom, 1833). Gallatin, “A Synopsis of the Indian Tribes of North America,” 32.

¹¹⁴ Josiah Cotton, *Vocabulary of the Massachusetts (or Natick) Indian Language* (Cambridge MA: E.W. Metcalf, 1820). John Eliot, *A Grammar of the Massachusetts Indian Language: A new edition, with notes and observations by Peter S. du Ponceau and an introduction and supplementary observations by John Pickering*

Pickering was “the only scholar hereabouts, within my knowledge, properly qualified to sit in judgment on the case,” Webb recalled. “I communicated Professor Rafn’s conjectures, which struck him with much surprise. He said that the subject was one deserving a thorough, critical examination. I consequently furnished him with a copy...”¹¹⁵ We can only guess at the degree of disbelief Pickering experienced in examining Rafn’s ideas. In a letter to Webb on April 26, 1839, Rafn asserted that place names ending in *-et* (a suffix that signified a place in the Algonquian dialects of southern New England) were Norse. As well, all of the place names with the suffix *-nessit* or its variants, including Nauset, became *Nesit* in old Norse or *Nassit* in modern Danish (whose meaning he did not explain, although how the Danish word for “messy” or “goeey” should have applied defies understanding). According to Rafn, *Pocconaset* derived from a proper name, Pocka, which could be found in records of Iceland, Greenland and Norway. *Poppinnessit* or *Poponesset* was possibly derived from Poppa, “one of the earliest preachers of Christianity in Denmark... which name has subsequently been given to many persons in our northern countries.” Rafn’s discussion of place names consumed most of three dense pages in this single letter, and included an assertion Mashpee was *Másby*, “from *Más*, the name of a man, gen. *Más*, and byr, by, a town or farm,” and Assonet was *Esiones*, “from *esia*, gen. *esio*, a marshy district.”¹¹⁶ The place names were a point of extended discussion between Rafn and Webb. Rafn wrote on April 21, 1840: “You ask me if I consider the names Moswetuset and Aquiday to be of Old Danish original. I think it not unlikely that they may be.” Rafn turned *Moswetuset* into *Mosveduset*, a combination of the words *Másvidr* (“Mar’s wood”)

(Boston: Phelps and Farnham), 1822; based on John Elliot, *The Indian Grammar Begun* (Cambridge MA: Marmaduke Johnson, 1666). Jonathan Edwards, “Doctor Edwards’ observations on the Mohegan language,” in *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, ser. 2, vol. 10, 81-160 (Boston, 1823); based on J. Edwards, *Observations on the language of the Muhhekaneew Indians* (London: W. Justins, 1789). See also Daniel Appleton White, “Eulogy on John Pickering, LL.D., President of the American Academy,” *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 3, li–lii; died May 5, 1846, viii.

¹¹⁵ Webb, “February meeting,” 198–199.

¹¹⁶ Rafn to Webb, Apr. 26, 1839, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

and *húset* (“the house”) and Aquiday into Hvítay (“pronounced nearly a *Kvitay*”), meaning “on white island.”¹¹⁷

Rafn was also willing to find traces of Norse influence in Native American traditions. Webb had sent Rafn a number of volumes on New England history, which Rafn evidently mined to gain some knowledge of Indigenous lore, and he combined this with his word-hunting in explaining the origin of Seaconnet in his letter of April 26, 1839. The name was judged proper Old Norse, although Rafn had to bend it first into *Seáconunesit*, which meant Mermaid Cape. Rafn then related the name to “a popular tradition among the Indians at [Martha’s] Vineyard, about the warrior Maushop’s wife, who for a length of time dwelled on this promontory, and exacted tribute from all those who passed it by water, but afterwards was transformed into a rock. Her whole figure was to be seen for many a year; but on the arrival of the English some of them broke off[f] the arms and the head; nevertheless the greater part of the body is still to be seen to this day. From the above mentioned Maushop the Indians often received presents of whales, and he was looked upon by them as a sort of Demigod.”¹¹⁸ Rafn was crafting his own version of the well-known Indigenous tradition of the giant Maushop and his wife, Squant, who were associated with Nantucket and whaling. In a variation related by James Freeman in 1815, Maushop retreated to parts unknown at the arrival of the English, and threw his wife onto Seaconnet Point, where she became a misshapen rock.¹¹⁹ Rafn was en route to equating Maushop with the pagan Thorvhall the Hunter of the *Karlsefni* voyage. In *Eirik the Red’s Saga*, Thorvall performs a rite atop a seaside cliff, and boasts to the starving expedition that a whale that has washed ashore to feed them was a reward from his namesake, Thor.¹²⁰ Thorvall soon disappeared from the saga, departing with nine companions to seek

¹¹⁷ Rafn to Webb, Apr. 21, 1840, Carl. C. Rafn Papers.

¹¹⁸ Rafn to Webb, Apr. 26, 1839, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹¹⁹ See William Scranton Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 172–234, for the many variations on the Maushop and Squant tradition over time. For the Freeman account, see 178.

¹²⁰ See Kolodny for an explanation of this episode in *Eirik the Red’s Saga*, *In Search of First Contact*, 84–85.

Vinland. The saga has them swept away by a storm to Ireland, where they are enslaved. The Maushop story however seemed to suggest to Rafn the White Tribism influence of the Norse. If Thorvall was Maushop, and he had a wife, then Thorvall must have remained among the Indians, sired progeny with Norse blood, and been worshipped at least in memory.

Rafn suspected a much more extensive and extended presence of the Norse among Native Americans. As his April 21, 1840 letter to Webb concluded: “As far as I can judge, these local names furnish a proof that the ancient Northmen have during several centuries inhabited your district.”¹²¹ Rafn expanded on his White Tribism convictions on October 22, 1841: “As the Scandinavians were settled for a considerable time in your country, and as it is highly probable that the Indians of Massachusetts and Rhode Island were a mixed race partly derived from them, it becomes easy to explain how skill in the cutting and delineating of inscriptions was transmitted from this race to the other tribes and thus diffused over North America, assuming as we may do, that the pure Indian races acquired the art from that which was mixed with the Scandinavians.”¹²² In short, while the Norse newcomers did not create all of the rock inscriptions to be found in North America, the example provided by the Norse, and the racial improvements afforded by an infusion of their blood, made Native Americans capable of creating them.

On April 21, 1840, Rafn wrote Webb: “I anxiously expect the promised elucidation of my Explanation of Indian local names. I wish that nothing should be published on the subject until we arrive at a greater degree of certainty.”¹²³ Rafn continued to press Webb for Pickering’s verification, and Webb’s own opinions, in letters on May 4, 1840, January 1, 1841, and October 22, 1841. Rafn and Webb were still waiting for Pickering to comment when Pickering died in 1846, and we might conclude that Pickering’s repeated assurances that he would get to Rafn’s ideas when he could secure “a release from a

¹²¹ Rafn to Webb, Apr. 21, 1840, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹²² Rafn to Webb, Oct. 22, 1841, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹²³ Rafn to Webb, Apr. 21, 1840, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

portion of his professional and other duties” cloaked a mortified response to Rafn’s linguistic ignorance and eccentricity.¹²⁴

Rafn’s Lost Tribism where Native American place names were concerned might have remained far from public consumption, were it not for Webb’s devotion to the Danish scholar’s enquiries and larger Gothicist project after Rafn’s death in October 1864. In writing of his experiences with Rafn in the production of *Antiquitates Americanae* and in further researches, Webb unearthed Rafn’s letters to him detailing his ideas about place names and quoted from them at considerable length in the Massachusetts Historical Society’s *Proceedings* of 1864–65.¹²⁵ Rafn wisely had never published this material, never having secured the informed scholarly opinion he had desired. Webb however considered the material too interesting not to share with the public, without any comment as to its validity, and so the Lost Tribism word-hunting that saw transatlantic Gothicist adventuring preserved in the amber of Native American words finally found a way to daylight.

The Skeleton in Armour of Fall River

The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries created a potent supply-demand relationship with Norse evidence. Archaeology was sufficiently established in America through the Mound Builders that antiquarians were accustomed to excavating literal mounds of buried evidence for mysterious peoples of the pre-Columbian era. Rafn and Magnussén through a new committee of the society, devoted to the Ante-Columbian History of America, encouraged investigations for such evidence where early European visitors were concerned, but also created the demand for it, for without such additional physical proofs, it was difficult to sustain the idea of a prolonged and influential Norse presence. The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries’ *Mémoires* thus became an important propagator of pre-Columbian fringe history, as Rafn was prepared to give a credulous airing to any evidence directed his way.

¹²⁴ Webb, “February meeting,” 199.

¹²⁵ Webb, “February meeting,” 193–198.

The purported Norse evidence brought to Rafn's attention included a grave containing a sword hilt on Rainsford Island in Boston Bay, an account of which was given in the first volume of *Mémoires*.¹²⁶ A Boston physician reported that the grave had been found some fifty years earlier, and in addition to the sword hilt a skull was unearthed that did not appear Native American. Webb apparently was skeptical of the story, as Rafn wrote him with typical intransigence: "May I beg of you to let me know more precisely if you look on the whole affair as an entire fabrication, which however I think can scarcely be your opinion."¹²⁷ Rafn and Webb were far more likeminded about the Old Stone Mill of Newport, Rhode Island, which would become better known to fringe history as the Newport Tower. In a series of letters that Webb began writing to Rafn in May 1839 and were published that year in *Mémoires*, Webb asserted the stone structure, a cylinder-shaped ruin with Romanesque arches at its base, "has, for a long time, been an object of wonder to beholders, exciting the curiosity of all who visit it, and giving rise to many speculations and conjectures, among both the learned and unlearned. But nothing entirely satisfactory has ever been decided about it; it still remains shrouded with mystery..."¹²⁸ Nothing better illustrates the fact that this "mystery" was a recent product of either local enthusiasms for *Antiquitates Americanae* or Webb's own imagination than the complete lack of interest shown in the tower by Ezra Stiles, who lived in Newport and was determined to prove ancient Old World visitors had trod this very ground. Rafn nevertheless in his commentary and through illustrative plates turned the shell of the old mill into a Norse church. Charles Timothy Brooks demolished this idea in 1851 in a work that linked the mill to Rhode Island's seventeenth-century governor, Benedict Arnold, and all but proved it was built no earlier than 1657 when Arnold succeeded Roger Williams as president of the Rhode Island colony; Brooks showed

¹²⁶ Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, *Mémoires de la Société royale des antiquaires du Nord, 1836–1839*, 11.

¹²⁷ Rafn to Webb, Oct. 17, 1839, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹²⁸ Thomas H. Webb, in Thomas H. Webb and Carl C. Rafn, "Account of an Ancient Structure in Newport, Rhode-Island, the Vinland of the Scandinavians, communicated by Thomas H. Webb, M.D., in Letters to Professor Charles C. Rafn; with Remarks annexed by the latter," in Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, *Mémoires de la Société royale des antiquaires du Nord, 1836–1839*, 361.

that its Romanesque design was strikingly similar to a mill built in Chesterton, England in 1632, a few kilometers from where Arnold grew up.¹²⁹ There is no cause to doubt, in spite of persistent and increasingly fanciful speculations, that the tower was anything other than what Webb said it was called locally, an old stone mill, as it has been firmly dated to the colonial era by the presence of seventeenth-century materials beneath its foundation.¹³⁰

More pertinent to the White Tribism inclinations of Rafn was the so-called “skeleton in armour” (as it would be immortalized by Longfellow; see below) discovered at Fall River, only a few miles downriver from Dighton Rock, in April 1831. Jared Sparks drew attention to the burial in an article in the *American Monthly Magazine* of January 1836.¹³¹ [Fig. 21] The Harvard-educated Sparks was the only American historian, in the judgment of an 1867 memoir, to equal the scholarly efforts of George Bancroft.¹³² He would be appointed McLean Professor of Ancient and Modern History at Harvard in

¹²⁹ Charles Timothy Brooks, *The Controversy Touching the Old Stone Mill, in the Town of Newport, Rhode Island* (Newport RI: Charles E. Hammett, Jr., 1851).

¹³⁰ As the Newport mill does not engage the fundamental Indigenous issues addressed in this dissertation, I need not go into detail on a controversy that has been impressively resilient to explanatory scholarship. The best effort in that regard may be William S. Godfrey, “The archaeology of the Old Stone Mill in Newport, Rhode Island,” *American Antiquity* 17, no. 2 (Oct. 1951): 120–129. See also William S. Godfrey, “Vikings in America: Theory and Evidence,” *American Anthropologist* n.s. 57, no. 1, pt. 1 (Feb. 1955): 35–43. Among Godfrey’s evidence for its seventeenth-century origin included artifacts beneath the foundation that dated to the colonial era. For a summary of (mis)interpretations, see Stephen Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology*, 217–219, and Kenneth Feder’s *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries*, 149–50. In its latest pseudohistorical incarnation, the tower is a relic of Templar Knights, as argued by Scott F. Wolter in *The Hooked X: Key to the Secret History of North America* (St. Cloud, MN: North Star Press, 2009) and *Akhenaten to the Founding Fathers: The Mysteries of the Hooked X* (St. Cloud, MN: North Star Press, 2013).

¹³¹ Jared Sparks, “Antiquities of North America,” *The American Monthly Magazine*, Jan. 1836: 67.

¹³² Brantz Mayer, *Memoir of Jared Sparks, LL.D* (Baltimore: printed for the author by J. Murphy, 1867). See Mayer for the essential biographical details of Sparks, as well as Lester J. Cappon, “Jared Sparks: The Preparation of an Editor,” in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 3rd ser., vol. 90 (1978), 3–21. Sparks was a leading historian of the American Revolution, and in addition to launching the 25-volume *The Library of American Biography* in 1830, he produced a series of major works in the 1830s, including his 12-volume *The Writings of George Washington* (Boston: American Stationers’ Company, John B. Russell, 1834–1837), *The Life and Treason of Benedict Arnold*, vol. 3 of *The Library of American Biography* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, 1835), *The Life of George Washington* (Boston: F. Andrews, 1839), and the ten-volume *The Works of Benjamin Franklin* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Co., 1836–1840). He was the editor of the *North American Review* from 1817 to 1819 and after purchasing it in 1823 served as its editor from 1824 to 1830. Founded in 1815, the *North American Review* was practically the house organ of Harvard faculty members, who wrote almost three-quarters of its articles during the

1839, and was later elected president of Harvard. Sparks' standing as an American historian and intellectual is important to bear in mind when reading his article on the Fall River skeleton, as he fully subscribed to the multiple-migration idea that cast Native Americans as brutish usurpers of the superior original inhabitants, which President Andrew Jackson had cited in justifying his Indian Removal Act of 1830: the tragedy of the Trail of Tears was but two years away.¹³³ Sparks appears to have been privy to an early copy of C. S. Rafinesque's two-volume *The American Nations, or Outlines of Their General History* of 1836, in which he related his epic creation story of the Delaware, or Lenni-Lenape, the Walam Olum, which long has been controversial and proven to be a fraud in 1996 (see Chapter 5). For intellectuals like Sparks, the Walam Olum's out-of-Siberia narrative reinforced the idea that (as Sparks described) "this country, America, was peopled from Central Asia...that the people brought with them the manners, arts, and civilizations of Central Asia; perhaps the very manners, arts, arms, and modes of warfare described in the Homeric poems; and that, some time after America was separated from the other continent, immense hordes from the North of Asia crossed Behring's Straits, and gradually took possession of the country."¹³⁴ To Sparks, the reports by Cortes of Mexico and the Mayan ruins at Palenque in Chiapas pointed to Central Asia as the origin of the advanced original inhabitants.¹³⁵ The

magazine's first fifty years. See Ronald Story, "Harvard and the Boston Brahmins: A Study in Institutional and Class Development, 1800–1865," *Journal of Social History* 8, no. 3 (Spring 1975): 104.

¹³³ "That the Indians found here by the discoverers were not the original inhabitants, has, we believe, never been disputed; on the contrary, it has ever been acknowledged that there was a distinct race anterior to them... The Indians found here by the discoverers, in fact never pretended to be the original inhabitants; but had a tradition, that their forefathers came into the country across the sea—probably Behring's Straits—that they found the country inhabited—that with the inhabitants they waged a long war, and ultimately drove them south into the sea. Such was the tradition—the fact probably was, that the conquered people retired to Mexico." Sparks, "Antiquities of North America." As well, Kolodny remarks on the relationship between American enthusiasms for *Antiquitates Americanae* and forced removals of the Seminole and Cherokee, *In Search of First Contact*, 128–129. See also her discussion of Gothicist race politics in antebellum America, 131–150.

¹³⁴ Sparks, "Antiquities of North America."

¹³⁵ The Mayan ruins of Palenque in Chiapas (a province of the Spanish colony of Guatemala that was ceded to Mexico in 1824) had been investigated in 1787 by an official colonial party led by a military captain, Antonio del Rio, who was accompanied by an artist, Ricardo Almendárez. Their report, which included excellent drawings by Almendárez and an extravagant interpretation of them by Paul Felix Cabrera, a physician in the city of New Guatemala, languished in Spanish colonial files until a copy was secured and published in translation in London in

body at Fall River belonged either to “one of the race who inhabited this country for a time anterior to the so called Aborigines, and afterwards settled in Mexico or Guatamala [sic], or to one of the crew of some Phoenician vessel, that, blown out of her course, thus discovered the western world long before the Christian era.”¹³⁶ Sparks preferred the Phoenician interpretation, and noted that the burial was in “the immediate neighborhood of ‘Dighton Rock,’ famed for its hieroglyphic inscription, of which no sufficient explanation as yet been given.”¹³⁷ Sparks stated that near the rock “brazen” (brass) vessels had been found, which was a novelty in the Dighton Rock historiography. Sparks ventured that these Phoenician mariners, “the unwilling and unfortunate discoverers of a new world—lived some time after they landed; and have written their names, perhaps their epitaphs, upon the rock at Dighton, died, and were buried by the natives.”¹³⁸

John Russell Bartlett plainly read Sparks’ article and alerted Rafn to this skeletal find. In July 1836, Rafn wrote Webb, asking him to investigate.¹³⁹ Webb reported back in April 1838, having made a creditably thorough investigation in association with two local men, one of whom had made the discovery.¹⁴⁰ The details were much as Sparks had stated. The remains had been found in a sandbank in 1831, and today we would recognize the burial as a typical Indigenous one of the 1620–1670 period in

1822, with engravings by Jean Frédéric Waldeck. *Description of the Ruins of an Ancient City, Discovered near Palenque, in the Kingdom of Guatemala, in Spanish America. Translated from the original manuscript report of Captain Don Antonio del Rio: Followed by Teatro Critico Americano; or, A Critical Investigation and Research into The History of the Americans, by Doctor Paul Felix Cabrera, of the city of New Guatemala.* (London: Henry Berthaud, 1822). See Coe, *Breaking the Maya Code*, for an account of Palenque’s study by del Rio and the publication of *Description of the Ruins of an Ancient City*, 73–74.

¹³⁶ Sparks, “Antiquities of North America.”

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Rafn to Webb, July 9, 1836, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas H. Webb and Carl Christian Rafn, “Accounts of a Discovery of Antiquities Made at Fall River, Massachusetts, communicated by Thomas H. Webb, M.D., in letters to Charles C. Rafn, Secretary, with Remarks by the latter,” *Mémoires de la Société royale des antiquaires du Nord, 1840–1844*, 104–119.

southern New England.¹⁴¹ The body was found seated, in a flexed posture, wrapped in a cloth of woven cedar bark, and among the artifacts were a number of brass items, including a “breast plate” on the chest that was about fourteen inches long and six inches wide, arm bracelets, and an apparent belt formed from a series of tubes about four-and-a-half inches long and less than a quarter-inch in diameter, made of elderwood and covered in sheet brass. A dozen arrows were also found, with arrowheads of the same metal. (Sparks also mentioned a bark quiver, which disintegrated when unearthed.) The body was not quite a skeleton: in many places, flesh, including muscles, was well preserved. “That the body was not one of the Indians, we think needs no argument,” Sparks had declared.¹⁴² Webb reported he and his fellow investigators could not decide if this was an Indian burial, but he did note that nothing of European manufacture was found. Another note from Webb to Rafn on December 29, 1839, revealed that additional bodies had been discovered in the location.¹⁴³ Webb sent Rafn samples of the tubes as well as an arrowhead and most of what survived of the breast plate.¹⁴⁴ [Fig. 22]

Rafn responded to Webb’s report with intransigent conviction in *Mémoires*. “What principally characterizes this discovery is the curious belt, which bears a great resemblance to belts that have been found in our regions of the North in connexion with antiquities from the times of paganism.”¹⁴⁵ He had the piece of so-called breast plate analyzed, which returned an analysis of 70 percent copper and 28

¹⁴¹ “The overwhelming majority of southern New England Indian burials from the period 1620 to 1670 were performed according to a logic that owed nothing to Christianity... The corpse, in its flexed posture with its hands drawn up near or even in its mouth, was often wrapped in wool blanks or reed matting... Many burials included grave goods. Goods were placed either on the body as adornment—as in necklaces, bracelets, and earrings—or in front of the body as it lay on its side, or in a position resembling how the item was used in life, as a pipe placed between the fingers. Most goods were European...” Eric R. Seaman, *Death in the New World: Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492–1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 170–171.

¹⁴² Sparks, “Antiquities of North America.”

¹⁴³ Webb and Rafn, “Accounts of a Discovery of Antiquities Made at Fall River,” 110.

¹⁴⁴ These items would enter the collection of the Ethnographiske Museum in Copenhagen; two of the brass-covered wood tubes were then acquired in Copenhagen and presented to Harvard’s Peabody Museum by Dr. Samuel Kneeland in 1886. See Charles Clark Willoughby, *Antiquities of the New England Indians* (Cambridge MA: The Peabody Museum, 1935), 232–244, for a discussion of the Fall River artifacts and similar finds.

¹⁴⁵ Rafn, in Webb and Rafn, “Accounts of a Discovery of Antiquities Made at Fall River,” 110.

percent zinc. The metal indeed was brass, and so could not have been smelted by Native Americans. But Rafn was oblivious (or hostile) to the most logical explanation: given the Indigenous nature of the burial and the fact that flesh still remained on the bones, the body would have dated from the early colonial period of the seventeenth century, before King Philip's War. (Sparks ventured the body may have been preserved by embalming, or "the accidental result of the action of the salts of the brass during oxydation."¹⁴⁶) The brass materials would have been secured through trade from the European newcomers and fashioned into traditional items that prior to contact had been made of annealed North American copper. A metal plate or plaque, suspended around the neck, would have indicated a man's high status. Gabriel Archer's account of the 1602 Gosnold voyage to New England, published in Samuel Purchas's *Pilgrimes*, vol. 4 of 1625, described an encounter with Native Americans on upper Cape Cod, among them a man who "had hanging about his necke a plate of rich Copper in length a foot, in breadth half a foot for a brest-plate."¹⁴⁷ The artist John White had portrayed a Roanoke chief or *werowance* wearing such a rectangular plaque, made of copper, in the late sixteenth century. Rafn (or anyone else) could have consulted Theodore de Bry's popular engraved version of White's painting in Thomas Harriot's *A Brief and True Report* (1590) and seen this particular rectangular plaque for himself.¹⁴⁸ [Fig. 23] John Brereton's *A Briefe and true Relation* (1602) on the Gosnold voyage offered an extensive inventory of Indigenous copper items, including arrowheads and chains that sounded precisely like the one recovered from the Fall River burial. These chains were formed from "many hollow pieces semented together, ech piece of the bignesse of one of our reeds, a finger in length, ten or twelue of them together on a string, which they weare about their necks."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Sparks, "Antiquities of North America."

¹⁴⁷ See "Gabriel Archer's "Account of Captain Bartholemew Gosnold's Voyage to 'North Virginia' in 1602," in Quinn and Quinn, *The English New England Voyages 1602–1608*, 122.

¹⁴⁸ "Portrait of an Indian chief (possibly Wingina)," in Kim Sloan, *A New World*, 138–139.

¹⁴⁹ "They haue also great store of Copper, some very redde, and some of a paler colour; none of them but haue chaines, earrings, or collars of this metall: they head some of their arrows herewith much like our broad arrow

Sparks had asserted the method of constructing the arrows from copper “was never practiced by the Indians,” but Rafn admitted the metal arrows bore no resemblance to anything found in Europe.¹⁵⁰ Rafn nevertheless asserted their ancient European affiliation and was not going to leave this burial to the Phoenicians, as Sparks proposed. Rafn stressed that Fall River “is situated precisely at the spot which, in the Map of the Vinland of our ancestors, I have assigned as the position of Leifsbúdir.”¹⁵¹ Exactly how these items came to be part of a burial at Fall River remained a puzzle, but the most reasonable explanation to Rafn lay with White Tribism: “on many occasions such antiquities may reasonably be assumed to originate from the descendants of the ancient Scandinavian colonists, who, on the cessation of all communication with the mother country, would naturally get intermingled with the wild natives. In this view, we are not on all occasions to suppose that the articles, so found, are actually Scandinavian, but more frequently that they have been fabricated after Scandinavian prototypes.”¹⁵²

The Fall River skeleton and the Newport Tower were immortalized through the Gothicist enthusiasms of Henry Wordsworth Longfellow, who had studied at Göttingen and was a professor of German literature at Harvard. Longfellow had visited Scandinavia in 1835–36 and as George L. White, Jr. has written, “was a student, a man intent on the process of saturating his mind with all that

heads, very workmanly made. Their chains are many hollow pieces semented together, ech piece of the bignesse of one of our reeds, a finger in length, ten or twelue of them together on a string, which they weare about their necks: their collars they weare about their bodies like bandolieres a handfull broad, all hollow pieces, like the other, but somewhat shorter, four hundred pieces in a collar, very fine and euenly set together. Besides these, they have very large drinking cups made like sculles, and other thinne plates of copper, make much like our boare-spear blades, all of which they so little esteeme, as they offered their fairest collars or chaines, for a knife or such like trifle, but we seemed little to regard it; yet I was desirous to vnderstand where they had such store of this metall, and made signes to one of them (with whome I was very familiar) who taking a piece of Copper in his hand, made a hole with his finger in the ground, and withall pointed to the maine from whence they came.” John Brereton, *A Briefe and true Relation* (1602), in Quinn and Quinn, *The English New England Voyages 1602–1608*, 155–156.

¹⁵⁰ Sparks, “Antiquities of North America.”

¹⁵¹ Rafn, in Webb and Rafn, “Accounts of a Discovery of Antiquities Made at Fall River,” 116.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

Scandinavia was.”¹⁵³ David Lowenthal less charitably has called Longfellow “one of these Arctic aficionados who took very little meat in his soup of romance. Walter Scott, a summer in Sweden, and the Icelandic sagas gave him a rude pagan imagery and a good physical setting for Acadia in ‘Evangeline,’ but his concern with the North was wholly romantic; Celts, castles in Spain, and the cult of the medieval corrupted his adoration of the brave but disembodied Vikings of an earlier, sterner age who floated through the northern mysteries.”¹⁵⁴ Longfellow met Rafn in Copenhagen, recalling him as “a very friendly, pleasant man” who taught him some Icelandic; he also joined the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries.¹⁵⁵ In May 1838, Longfellow wrote to his father of his plan to write “a series of ballads or a romantic poem on the deeds of the first bold viking who crossed to this western world, with storm-spirits and devil-machinery under water. New England ballads I have long thought of.”¹⁵⁶ Around this time he visited the local museum in Fall River, where the skeleton was on display.¹⁵⁷ In May, 1839, Longfellow informed Cornelius Felton of his plan to write “a heroic poem on the Discovery of America by the Northmen, in which the Round Tower at Newport and the Skeleton in Armor have a part to play.”¹⁵⁸ His

¹⁵³ George L. White, Jr., “Longfellow’s Interest in Scandinavia During the Years 1835–1847,” *Scandinavian Studies* 17, no. 2 (May 1942): 70. See Chapter 4, “The New England Poets of Viking America and the Emergence of the Plastic Viking,” in Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, for a discussion of the efforts by Longfellow and others to romanticize a Norse past for New England.

¹⁵⁴ David Lowenthal, “G. P. Marsh and Scandinavian Studies,” 45.

¹⁵⁵ Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 154. Longfellow was listed as a society member in 1836 as printed in *Mémoires* of 1836–39, but he did not appear in the 1837 list and was not among the original subscribers to *Antiquitates Americanae*. He appears as a member of the American section in the second volume of *Mémoires*, issued in 1844. These membership-related pages are unpaginated in the *Mémoires* volumes. In the July 1837 issue of *The North American Review*, Longfellow flexed his new Scandinavian knowledge with an article on a new edition of Frithiofs Saga by Easas Tegnér; Rafn had published a version in 1829. Henry W. Longfellow, “Art. VII.—1. Frithiofs Saga of Easais Tegnér...” *The North American Review* 45, no. 96 (Jul. 1837): 149–185.

¹⁵⁶ Longfellow to Stephen Longfellow, in Samuel Longfellow, *Henry Wordsworth Longfellow*, vol. 1, 251, quoted by George L. White, Jr., “Longfellow’s Interest in Scandinavia,” 73.

¹⁵⁷ Longfellow to Samuel Ward, Dec. 1, 1840, in Samuel Longfellow, *Henry Wordsworth Longfellow*, vol. 1, 366, quoted by George L. White, Jr., “Longfellow’s Interest in Scandinavia,” 75.

¹⁵⁸ Longfellow to Cornelius Felton, May 24, 1839, in Samuel Longfellow, *Henry Wordsworth Longfellow*, vol. 1, 323, quoted by George L. White, Jr., “Longfellow’s Interest in Scandinavia,” 74.

poem “The Skeleton in Armor” was completed by December 1840, when Longfellow informed Samuel Ward it “is connected with the Old Round Tower at Newport. The skeleton in armor really exists. It was dug up near Fall River, where I saw it some two years ago...I suppose it to be the remains of one of the old Northern sea-rovers, who came into this country in the tenth century. Of course I make the tradition myself; and I think I have succeeded in giving the whole a Northern air.”¹⁵⁹ In a preface to the poem, published in 1842, Longfellow made clear his indebtedness to Rafn and the material on the Newport Mill in the first volume of *Mémoires*.¹⁶⁰ Longfellow’s poem may not have proved important over the long term to historical theories of early New World visitors (not even pseudohistorians today appear willing to embrace the skeleton in armour), but it was crucial in fusing romantic Gothicism with the scholarly efforts by Rafn and likeminded Americans such as Webb and in popularizing the idea of daring Old World visitors to New England. ‘The Skeleton in Armor’ outlived the skeleton that inspired it, as it was destroyed in a museum fire around 1843.

Conclusion

Through *Antiquitates Americanae*, Gothicism brought hardy northern European Christians into the Taunton River more than 600 years before Metacom’s uprising was defeated, to inscribe on the stone a statement of claim (“Thorfins and his 151 companions took possession of this land”), which became an *a priori* assertion of European entitlement to this new land. Rafn’s arguments for an earlier Irish Christian colony called White Men’s Land in eastern North America was as clear a statement as could be made about entitlement and belonging. An Indigenous inscription on Dighton Rock was recast as a Norse commemoration of Indigenous savagery, as arrows flew against Thorfinn Karlsefni’s colonists and forced them to retreat to Iceland and Greenland. A burial at Fall River of an Indigenous leader (who likely would

¹⁵⁹ Longfellow to Samuel Ward, Dec. 1, 1840, in Samuel Longfellow, *Henry Wordsworth Longfellow*, vol. 1, 366, quoted by George L. White, Jr., “Longfellow’s Interest in Scandinavia,” 75.

¹⁶⁰ Henry Wordsworth Longfellow, “The Skeleton in Armor,” in *Ballads and Other Poems*, 29–41 (Cambridge MA: John Owen, 1842).

have known Dighton Rock) became a Scandinavian one, or at least evidence of the Norse improvement of the skraelings. Mount Hope, where Metacom was cornered and killed in 1676, became Hóp, the homestead of the Karlsefni colony as well as the site of Leif Eiriksson's Leifsbúdir. By Rafn's logic, the people led by Metacom during King Philip's War, called the *Pocanoket* in a 1671 document, some of whose descendents were the Pokanoket of Cape Cod whom Kendall met, were sporting a Norse name that indicated a Norse bloodline.¹⁶¹ Indigenous lands and identity thus were possessed by their Gothicist superiors, which in both cases could only mean improvement of the original migrant stock from Asia across the Bering Strait. Metacom's ancestors, the skraelings of the sagas, may have succeeded in driving away Karlsefni in Rafn's version of American antiquity, but the northern European strangers returned in much larger numbers as English, in a fresh wave of the Japheth migration that asserted possession over the land as well as over the past. Karlsefni had been at Mount Hope and left behind the markings on Dighton Rock because Anglo-Americans who claimed through Gothicist romanticism to have sprung from the same root-stock as Karlsefni were prepared to agree with Rafn it was so, and because they possessed the rock, its surrounding territories, the great institutions of learning and the publishers that disseminated their convictions.

¹⁶¹ For the 1671 document, see Hurd's *History of Bristol County*, 740. I discussed Kendall's encounter with a Pokanoket woman in Chapter 5.

(7)

**Shingwauk's Reading: Dighton Rock and Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's
Troubled Ethnology, 1818–1862**

Introduction

In this chapter I examine the only firmly documented case in the historiographic record of Dighton Rock being interpreted by an Indigenous person. Shingwauk (Shingwaukonse) was an Anishinabe Ojibwa leader and Midéwiwin shaman in the central Great Lakes, whose interpretation was secured by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, a major figure in nineteenth-century ethnology and Native American linguistics. I argue that while Shingwauk's recognition of the Dighton Rock markings as Indigenous can be accepted, his interpretation remains contestable, foremost because it came to us through Schoolcraft. To understand Shingwauk's interpretation, we must understand Schoolcraft (as well as Shingwauk). This chapter assesses Schoolcraft's writings on Indigenous matters and places them in the context of evolving theories and practices of ethnology and especially of the unresolved questions as to Native American origins, all of which bore on Schoolcraft's theories about Dighton Rock. I examine the implications of frauds of the late 1830s, especially the Grave Creek inscription, on interpretations of American antiquity within Schoolcraft's intellectual milieu of the New-York Historical Society and the American Ethnological Society, where fellow members, including Albert Gallatin, Ephraim George Squier, and John Russell Bartlett, espoused conflicting ideas about pre-Columbian America, Native American origins, and polygenism and monogenism. My discussion culminates in Schoolcraft's final pronouncement on the Indigeneity of Dighton Rock in 1854 and Thomas H. Webb's efforts to defend the Norse interpretation that same year. I conclude with archaeologist Daniel Wilson's synthesis of a Native American attribution for Dighton Rock with the standard multiple-migration theory for the Mound Builders to produce a Gothicist justification for America's ongoing colonization by whites.

The Ethnographic Education of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft

Born in 1793 in upstate New York, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft was privately tutored in chemistry, geology and mineralogy while receiving what Richard G. Bremer has called a “smattering” of a formal education.¹ Schoolcraft’s life was marked by repeated efforts to secure (and retain) political appointments and favours. He was able to attach himself as a mineralogist to the 1820 expedition of Lewis Cass, appointed governor of the Northwest Territory in 1818, in reconnoitering what is now northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. Schoolcraft’s *Narrative Journal of Travels Through the Northwestern Regions of the United States* (1821) recounted his first experience with Indigenous people living in uncolonized lands (as opposed to more settled and acculturated peoples in the eastern United States such as the Oneida) as he traveled with Anishinabe Chippewa (Ojibwa) guides and met a variety of peoples, including Dakota, with whom the Chippewa were sporadically at war.

In this formative period of his opinions of Native Americans, Schoolcraft was in the company of Cass, who became a close friend. Cass served as governor of the Michigan territory from 1813 to 1831 and would publish in 1823 *Inquiries Respecting the History, Traditions, Languages, Manners, Customs, Regions, etc., of the Indians*, which David R. Wilcox and Don D. Fowler have praised as “a detailed ethnographic and linguistic manual reflecting his extensive knowledge of Indian cultures and languages.”² Cass was also a polygenist who in an article in *The North American Review* in 1830 reversed his position on allowing the tribes of the Old Northwest to remain on their lands. He now supported Andrew Jackson’s plan for the forcible relocation west of the Mississippi of the Five Civilized Tribes in favour of Anglo-American settlement (and would be appointed Jackson’s Secretary of War, with oversight of

¹ For Schoolcraft’s early life in upstate New York, see Richard G. Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar: The Life of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft* (Mt. Pleasant MI: Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University, 1987), 4–15. Bremer gives a concise accounting in “Henry Rowe Schoolcraft: Explorer in the Mississippi Valley, 1818–1832,” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 66, no. 1 (Autumn 1982): 40.

² David R. Wilcox and Don D. Fowler, “The Beginnings of Anthropological Archaeology in the North American Southwest: From Thomas Jefferson to the Pecos Conference,” *Journal of the Southwest* 44, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 129.

Indian matters), expressing some of the lowest possible opinions of Native Americans.³ The two races on the continent, whites and Indian, Cass wrote, “cannot exist in contact, independent of each other.”⁴ Cass believed in a divinely ordained destiny in the manner of the Japheth migration: “the race of pale men *should increase and multiply*, and *they did increase and multiply*.”⁵ Schoolcraft for his part advocated Indian removal as early as 1829.⁶ Arranging and encouraging the removal of tribes would become Schoolcraft’s objective as an Indian agent and superintendent in the 1830s.

Schoolcraft returned from his journey with Cass with his own low estimation of Indigenous people: “The savage mind, habituated to sloth, is not easily roused into a state of moral activity, and is not at once capable of embracing and understanding the sublime truths and doctrines of the evangelical law.”⁷ He was uninterested in their songs and dances: “It is perhaps all we could expect from untutored savages, but there is nothing about it which has ever struck me as either interesting or amusing, and after having seen these performances once or twice, they become particularly tedious, and it is a severe tax upon one’s patience to sit and be compelled, in order to keep their good opinions, to appear pleased with it.”⁸ The one aspect of Indigenous culture that impressed him was the use of pictographs for communication. On decamping on the morning of July 11 in northern Minnesota, he recounted,

³ Lewis Cass, “Art. III.—Documents and Proceedings relating to the Formation and Progress of a Board in the City of New York, for the Emigration, Preservation, and Improvement of the Aborigines of America. July 22, 1829,” *The North American Review* 30, no. 66 (Jan. 1830): 62-121. The article is unsigned but is attributed to Cass by Robert E. Bieder in *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820–1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology* (1986; repr. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 154. See Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, for Cass’s early career and his conviction (which he shared with Schoolcraft) that drunkenness was a biological deficiency of Native Americans (35–36).

⁴ Cass, “Art. III,” 94.

⁵ Cass, “Art. III,” 107.

⁶ Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 190.

⁷ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels through the Northwestern Regions of the United States extending from Detroit through the great chain of American lakes, to the sources of the Mississippi River...* (Albany: E. & E. Hosford, 1821), 92.

⁸ Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels through the Northwestern Regions of the United States*, 186.

the Indians left a memorial of our journey inscribed upon bark, for the information of such of their tribe as should happen to fall upon our track. This we find to be a common custom among them. It is done by tracing, either with paint or with their knives upon birch bark, (*betula papyracea*) a number of figures and hieroglyphics which are understood by their nation. This sheet of bark is afterwards inserted in the end of a pole, blazed, and drove into the ground, with an inclination towards the course of travelling. In the present instance the whole party were represented in a manner that was perfectly intelligible, with the aid of our interpreter, each one being characterized by something emblematic of his situation or employment.⁹

The birch-bark message conveyed information about events on their journey and their anticipated arrival at Sandy Lake in three days. “I had no previous idea of the existence of such a medium of intelligence among the northern Indians,” Schoolcraft confessed. “All the travellers of the region, are silent on the subject. I had before witnessed the facility with which one of the lake Indians had drawn a map of certain parts of the southern coast of Lake Superior, but here was a historical record of passing events, as permanent certainly as any written record among us, and full as intelligible to those for whom it was intended.”¹⁰ Later, Schoolcraft’s party encountered a similar birch-bark message left by a party of Dakota who had hoped to negotiate a peace agreement with the Chippewa.¹¹

⁹ Schoolcraft was depicted as a figure with a hammer. Earlier in the journey, his Chippewa companions had called him *Paw-gwa-be-caw-e-ga*, which Schoolcraft said meant “destroyer of rocks,” a name inspired by his method of gathering mineral samples. Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels through the Northwestern Regions of the United States*, 211–212.

¹⁰ Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels through the Northwestern Regions of the United States*, 212–213.

¹¹ Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels through the Northwestern Regions of the United States*, 282.

Schoolcraft's response revealed his lack of reading in the subject area, as by 1820 there had been several examples of such pictography in the antiquarian and scientific literature.¹² The birch-bark messages nevertheless indicated to him the essential intelligence and capability of Indigenous people, whatever else he absorbed from Cass and cared to assert of their sloth and natural resistance to the teachings of Christ. Rich oral traditions were another surprise. He briefly recounted two legends in *Narrative Journal*, but the breadth and depth of traditions only became clear after he secured (with Cass's help) his appointment as the U.S. Indian agent at Sault Ste. Marie in 1822. Schoolcraft boarded with John Johnston, a prosperous Irish fur trader who had arrived in 1793 and married Oshauguscodaywayqua, the daughter of a prominent Anishinabe Ojibwa leader, Waubojeeg (Wahb Ojeeg, the White Fisher, who according to Schoolcraft died at Chegoimegon, now Ashland Bay, Wisconsin, on Lake Superior in 1793¹³). In 1823, Schoolcraft married Jane, one of eight Johnston children, who brought with her a substantial dowry of 2,000 pounds, or about 10,000 dollars.¹⁴ An additional asset was Jane's knowledge of Ojibwa culture, augmented by her mother's generous expertise. Jane and her siblings gathered, translated into English and vetted for Schoolcraft the traditional knowledge of the many Ojibwa visitors to the Johnston home, which was the center of social life in the community. Schoolcraft had long harbored literary as well as political ambitions, and the untapped reservoir of Ojibwa traditions promised publishing success that to date had been denied to him, not to mention impoverished him. As he never

¹² Examples of pictographs had been published as early as 1724 by Lafitau, who included an illustration of dendroglyphs in *Moeurs*, 3:38. As previously noted, William Bray's "Observations on the Indian method of Picture-Writing" appeared in *Archaeologia* in 1782. Fred E. Coy, Jr. shows dendroglyphs were well known in eighteenth-century America, in "Dendroglyphs of the Eastern Woodlands," in *The Rock-Art of Eastern North America: Capturing the Images and Insight*, ed. Carol Diaz-Granados and James R. Duncan, 3–16 (Tuscaloosa AL: University of Alabama Press, 2004). See also Heidi Bohaker, "Indigenous Histories and Archival Media in the Early Modern Great Lakes," for a discussion of "non-alphabetic semiotic systems."

¹³ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Narrative of an Expedition through the Upper Mississippi to Itasca Lake, the actual source of this river...* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1834), 130.

¹⁴ Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 96–97.

mastered Ojibwa and was a stranger to the community, Schoolcraft would not have managed on his own the degree of access he enjoyed to Indigenous culture that Jane and her family provided.¹⁵

In 1827 Henry and Jane Schoolcraft were devastated by the death from croup of their child, Willy, after only a day of illness.¹⁶ While two more children followed, their relationship, which appears to have been a close and happy one, never recovered from the loss. Schoolcraft took refuge in a forthright embrace of Presbyterianism in 1830 and paid for the revival of a ministry in Sault Ste. Marie in 1831. He ascribed the death of Willy to God's punishment for their "idolatry" in loving Willy too much.¹⁷ The following years were especially hard on Jane; he questioned her upbringing and moved the family to Michilimackinac so the children could attend a Presbyterian school. As a "half-breed" Jane was shunned there by White women and Henry lost most of their money in land speculation when real estate values collapsed around Detroit as part of the larger 1837 financial crisis.¹⁸ He began to look down upon their children's Indigeneity, or at least consider certain desirable traits alien to Native Americans. As he explained to Jane in a letter in 1839, he rested his hopes for his children in "that mixture of the Anglo-Saxon blood which they derive from their father, with the *eastern mind* so strongly exemplified in the Algic race. Without the *former*, the result is a want of *foresight*, and *firmness*—two traits that man cannot spare and excell in the sterner duties of human life..."¹⁹

¹⁵ For Schoolcraft's indebtedness to his wife Jane and her family, see Jeremy Mumford, "Mixed-Race Identity in a Nineteenth-Century Family: the Schoolcrafts of Sault Ste. Marie, 1824–27," *Michigan Historical Review* 25, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 12–13. Bieder notes that linguist Peter Stephen (Pierre Étienne) Du Ponceau was impressed with Schoolcraft's apparent expertise in Chippewa in his *Narrative* of 1834, assuming he had been fluent for a long time. But as an Indian agent and superintendent he always employed interpreters, and relied on his wife Jane and brother-in-law, George Johnston, for vocabulary. (*Science Encounters the Indian*, 158.)

¹⁶ Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 101.

¹⁷ Mumford, "Mixed-Race Identity," 19.

¹⁸ Mumford, "Mixed-Race Identity," 19–20.

¹⁹ Quoted by Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 218–219. See below for Schoolcraft's coining of the term "Algic."

Schoolcraft overcame the suspicion he expressed in 1821 that the Indigenous mind was inured to proselytizing, and contrary to Cass's avowal of hopelessness in 1830, now believed Christianity held out the only hope of salvation for the Ojibwa and other peoples. His religion became the lens through which he viewed their cultures, but his faith at least may have saved him from a serious scholarly misstep. While polygenism enjoyed a resurgence of scientific respectability among Schoolcraft's peers in the 1840s, he could never accept the idea that Indians were a distinct human species, as he remained firm to the Biblical model of an Adamic origin and a post Deluge diaspora around the globe from the progeny of Noah. Schoolcraft's faith did mean he could accept racial degeneration as an explanation for the condition and character of Indigenous peoples, as he found and judged them.²⁰

In 1831 Schoolcraft joined another expedition to the Old Northwest under the office of Indian Affairs of the federal War Department. The resulting volume, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Upper Mississippi to Itasca Lake*, was a marked change from his 1821 *Narrative Journal*: he was far more engaged in relating details of Indigenous lives. But the new Schoolcraft was fully in evidence. His hazy grasp of the indigenous worldview was coloured (as it always would be) by the Christian dualism of good and evil, and he urged an increase in missionary work: "Their institutions, moral and political, are so fragile, as to be ready to tumble on the application of the slightest power."²¹ He advised the War Department to support missionary work, education, and a conversion to farming as a means of ending conflict between the Chippewa/Ojibwa and Dakota and lessening the strife that could arise along the frontier from the White settlement push he supported.²² According to Richard G. Bremer, "Schoolcraft's

²⁰ Schoolcraft may be a textbook example of the "overwhelming majority of Whites who remained orthodox Christians," for whom Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment ideas about humanity "had to be grafted onto or reconciled with the traditional scriptural history or be rejected," according to Robert E. Berkhofer, Jr. "Degeneration therefore remained a powerful analytical tool in White discussion of the Indian well into the nineteenth century for the orthodox, scholar and non-scholar alike, even for those persons called the founders of modern American ethnography." Robert E. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian*, 37–38.

²¹ Schoolcraft, *Narrative of an Expedition through the Upper Mississippi to Itasca Lake*, 68.

²² Schoolcraft, *Narrative of an Expedition through the Upper Mississippi to Itasca Lake*, 249.

basic distaste for the Indians themselves remained subordinated to his belief in the moral obligation of the white man to provide them with a fair compensation for their lands together with the opportunity to embrace civilization and Christianity.”²³

The Esoteric Nomenclature of Schoolcraft’s Philology

In 1837 Schoolcraft secured a new appointment as superintendent of Indian affairs for the Michigan territory and published a highly favorable review of Albert Gallatin’s “A Synopsis of the Indian Tribes of North America” in *The North American Review*.²⁴ The review allowed Schoolcraft to argue the value of philology over the object-based epistemology of archaeology in understanding the Indigenous past: “it cannot be denied, that by far the most enduring ‘monuments’ which our native tribes possess, are to be sought in the sounds and syntax of their languages,” he wrote, and cited Jefferson’s belief that Indigenous vocabularies could be used “to construct the best evidence of the derivation of this part of the human race.”²⁵

Schoolcraft’s choices in labeling Indigenous languages (and the people that spoke them) are an unappreciated aspect of how he interpreted American antiquity. He differed with Gallatin’s nomenclature: Gallatin introduced “Algonquin-Lenape” for what is now generally called Algonquian, which Schoolcraft called a “compromise term.”²⁶ Schoolcraft asserted in the review his own term, *Algic*, and gave “Ojibwa” as its “most populous and best characterized branch...”²⁷ Schoolcraft explained *Algic* was an

²³ Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 214.

²⁴ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, “Art. II—*Archaeologia Americana*...” *North American Review* 45, no. 96 (Jul. 1837): 34–59, 258. Although unsigned, the style is unmistakably Schoolcraft’s, and the reviewer’s use of the term “Algic,” as I explain in this chapter, can only point to Schoolcraft.

²⁵ Schoolcraft, “Art. II—*Archaeologia Americana*,” 35.

²⁶ Schoolcraft, “Art. II—*Archaeologia Americana*,” 39.

²⁷ Schoolcraft, “Art. II—*Archaeologia Americana*,” 44. Schoolcraft had a habit of attempting to impose his own nomenclature and ignoring or disparaging the work of predecessors. In his first major article on Indigenous language and culture, he called the compound structure of Chippewa words “transpositive,” a term he asserted was provided by the “older philosophers,” ten years after Peter Stephen Du Ponceau had introduced the definitive term

adjective “derivative from *Algonquin*, and is introduced for brevity’s sake.”²⁸ In 1839, Schoolcraft formally introduced the term to his own work with the two-volume *Algic Researches*.²⁹ Devoted to “Indian Tales and Legends,” the work drew on unattributed contributions by Jane to a family literary journal that had been privately circulated at Sault Ste. Marie. Schoolcraft was determined to forge a literary career in mythology, accomplishing with Native American lore what James Macpherson had with (alleged) Celtic oral traditions in *Poems of Ossian*. With the publication of *Algic Researches*, according to A. Irving Hallowell, Schoolcraft’s reputation “as an authority on American Indian myths, legends, and tales was established.”³⁰

Schoolcraft gave a peculiar explanation for his term *Algic* in *Algic Researches*: “Derived from the words Alleghany and Atlantic, in reference to the race of Indians anciently located in this geographical area, but who, as expressed in the text, had extended themselves, at the end of the 15th century, far towards the north and west.”³¹ By using the *Algic* label, Hallowell would propose in 1946, “I think Schoolcraft wished to indicate that the stories were not exclusively Ojibwa or Ottawa, in a local sense, but

“polysynthetic.” (For Du Ponceau, see “Report of the historical and literary committee to the American Philosophical Society. Read, 9th January, 1818,” quoted by Mary R. Haas, “Grammar or Lexicon? The American Indian Side of the Question from Duponceau to Powell,” *International Journal of American Linguistics* 35, no. 3 (Jul. 1969): 239–240.) Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, “La Découverte des Sources du Mississippi...,” *The North American Review* 27, no. 60 (Jul. 1828): 104. The article was supposed to be a review of J. C. Beltrami’s *La Découverte des Sources du Mississippi, et de la Rivière Sanglante*, which Schoolcraft could not have read, as he did not know any European language other than English. Schoolcraft is identified as the reviewer by Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 236. Du Ponceau admired the materials on the Chippewa language that Schoolcraft included in his *Narrative* of 1834, informing a friend, Dr. Edwin James, “his description of the composition of words in the Chippewa language is the most elegant that I have yet seen. At the same time he appears to be (as far as his book shews) a selfish, morose man...It seems he wishes to occupy the whole ground alone.” Peter Stephen Du Ponceau to Edwin James, Nov. 10, 1834, quoted in Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 237–38.

²⁸ Schoolcraft, “Art. II—*Archaeologia Americana*,” 44.

²⁹ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches, Comprising Inquiries Respecting the Mental Characteristics of the North American Indians*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1839).

³⁰ A. Irving Hallowell and Henry R. Schoolcraft, “Concordance of Ojibwa Narratives in the Published Works of Henry R. Schoolcraft,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 59, no. 232 (Apr.–Jun. 1946): 139.

³¹ He elaborated in the text that *Algic* applied to “all that family of tribes who, about A.D. 1600, were found spread out, with local exceptions, along the Atlantic, between Pamlico Sound and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, extending northwest to the Missinipi of Hudson’s Bay, and west to the Mississippi.” Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, 1:13. Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, 1:12–13.

had a wider range among Algonkian peoples.”³² But a clue to Schoolcraft’s actual intentions was his curious insistence in *Algic Researches* on lumping Iroquoian speaking groups (“Tuscaroras, Iroquois and Wyandots”) into “a generic language, which we shall denominate Ostic.” This rebranding of the recognized Iroquoian group derived, he contended, from the Algic word *Oshtegwon*, “a head, &c.”³³ Neither explanation by Schoolcraft of his Algic and Ostic terminology is convincing, Ostic least of all. He also created the term *Abanic*, which he said applied to Siouxan peoples and claimed denoted “occidental. From Kabeyun the west...”³⁴ This etymology was even less credible than the ones he offered for Algic and Ostic.

Schoolcraft’s coining of labels appears not unlike C. S. Rafinesque’s eccentric efforts, for example calling the “Huron and Iroquois” the *Ongwi* in *The American Nations* of 1836.³⁵ Schoolcraft however was playing subtextual word games, constructing esoteric meanings beneath his exoteric nomenclature. Schoolcraft had wondered aloud about Sioux origins in *Narrative Journals through the Northwest* of 1821, comparing them to the Chinese, especially in the sound of their language (how much Chinese had Schoolcraft heard?).³⁶ I suspect Schoolcraft then looked south in Asia for his Sioux root stock, as his *Abanic* may have been inspired by *abangan*, a Javanese term that was short for *wong abangan*, “red people.” Schoolcraft’s knowledge of *abangan* would have been unusually early, but its use

³² Hallowell and Schoolcraft, “Concordance of Ojibwa Narratives,” 137.

³³ Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, 1:13.

³⁴ Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, 1:13.

³⁵ Constantine Samuel Rafinesque, *The American Nations; or, Outlines of A National History; of the Ancient and Modern Nations of North and South America. First Number or Volume: Generalities and Annals* (Philadelphia: published by the author, 1836), 24. Rafinesque had previously published a fantastical pre-Columbian history of North America, full of names of ancient peoples and transoceanic migrations of the Atlanteans without any documentary support. See *Ancient History, or Annals of Kentucky, with a Survey of the Ancient Monuments of North America* (Frankfort, KY: printed for the author, 1824).

³⁶ Schoolcraft called the Sioux “a distinct race of people” whose practices such as “burnt offerings” and “preparation of incense” offered “too striking a coincidence with the Asiatic tribes before the commencement of the christian era,” while their “paintings and hieroglyphics” closely resembled those of the “Azteeks of Mexico.” Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal through the Northwest*, 309–310.

would have been consistent with ideas of a transpacific Malay origin of the Mound Builders expressed by Samuel Latham Mitchill in *Archaeologia Americana* in 1820.³⁷

As for *Algic* denoting Algonquian-speaking peoples, we have met already a term suspiciously similar in Charles Vallancey's argument the Algonquian language was derivative of Ibero-Celtic, which in turn came from Phoenician. Schoolcraft shared Vallancey's fascination with the Ossian poems, and as Vallancey stated in *A Grammar*: "The Algonkins say, they are the most ancient and most noble tribe on that continent: their name in Irish indicates as much, *cine algan*, or *algan cine*, i.e. the noble tribe."³⁸ We might consider this correlation between Schoolcraft's *Algic* and Vallancey's *algan* a mere coincidence, given that both men were working from the same inspiration of Algonquin/Algonkin, but for how Schoolcraft portrayed his Algics and Ostics. He most certainly got his term *Ostic* from the literature devoted to allegedly brutish Old World peoples and their possible connections to New World Indians. Both Buffon and Strahlenberg called a warlike subgroup of Tartars the Ostiaks.³⁹ Strahlenberg pronounced the *Ostiaki* "one of the most stupid Nations in Siberia, dwelling on the Rivers Oby and

³⁷ "abangan, n.". OED Online. June 2014. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/view/Entry/83?rskey=MLMg2G&result=5&isAdvanced=false> (accessed September 07, 2014). M.C. Ricklefs in "The Birth of the Abangan," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 162, no. 1 (2006): 35-55, traces the emergence of *abangan* as a term for "a category of people who were defined by their failure—in the eyes of the more pious—to behave as proper Muslims." (35) The earliest references Ricklefs could find to such a use were in 1855 (40), but the first edition of the standard Javanese-Dutch dictionary in 1847 defined *abang* as "red." (36–37). An 1858 missionary report mentioned the "'red population' (*bangsa abangan*)." (40) More research is required to determine if Schoolcraft was aware of any ethnographic work prior to 1839 that used *abangan* to denote ethnic Malaysians or Javanese.

³⁸ Vallancey, *A Grammar*, iv.

³⁹ Buffon went on at length about the Ostiaks, in *Histoire naturelle* and Schoolcraft would have known the condensed English translation, *Barr's Buffon: Buffon's Natural history, containing a theory of the earth, a general history of man, of the brute creation, and of vegetables, minerals, &c*, 10 vols. (London: J.S. Barr, 1792). Buffon considered them "a less ugly and taller branch of the Samoiedes. They live on raw fish or flesh, and for drink they prefer blood to water. Like the Laplanders and the Samoeides they are immersed in idolatry; nor are they known to have any fixed abode. In fine, they appear to form a shade between the race of Laplanders and the Tartarians; or, rather, indeed, may it be said, that the Laplanders, the Samoeides, the Borandians, the Nova-Zemblians, and, perhaps, the Greenlanders, and the savages to the north of the Esquimaux-Indians, are Tartars reduced to the lowest point of degeneracy; that the Ostiaks are less degenerated than the Tongusians, who, though to the full as ugly, are yet more sizeable and shapely." Buffon, *Barr's Buffon*, 199-200. The Barr translation is fairly faithful to Buffon's original text in *Histoire naturelle*, 3: 378–379.

Irtiseb.”⁴⁰ Schoolcraft would incorporate Strahlenberg’s illustrations into volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Description* (see below), and was in essential agreement with Strahlenberg’s assertion (seconded by Barton) that languages were key to linking Native Americans to an Asiatic root population.

Leaving the Abanic Sioux to the west, Schoolcraft organized the Indigenous people of eastern North America into two clashing, contrasting races, Algics and Ostics, for in his assessment language was equated with race. Schoolcraft’s conception of Native American origins was in accord with the variation on Pennant’s multiple-migration thesis by Vallancey, in which a more advanced people arrived first, only to be displaced by brutish hordes. Schoolcraft was also largely in sympathy with Benjamin Smith Barton’s ideas of Native Americans as degenerated descendants of the Mound Builders. Barton’s conviction that Native Americans could be traced back across the Bering Strait to Biblical lands, through alleged traces of Persian in their language, was echoed in Schoolcraft’s proposal the Algie were descended from “a race of shepherds or pastoral nomades” while the Ostic were “from a line of adventurers and warlike plunderers.” The Algie race was “mild and conciliating,” the Ostic “fierce and domineering.”⁴¹ Algie pictographs, or “hieroglyphics,” bore “quite a resemblance to the Egyptian” and the language was “of a strongly Semitic cast.”⁴² Schoolcraft’s assurance that Algie was Semitic undermined his purported linguistic expertise, and defied his praise of Gallatin’s insights in “Synopsis” two years earlier in *The North American Review*. Schoolcraft’s references to Semitic and shepherds also suggest he harbored Lost Tribe convictions of Native American origins, which were widely held in the Lake Superior region, where Schoolcraft served as an Indian agent and superintendent, and further suggests the wide influence of the trader James Adair’s *The History of the American Indians* of 1775. In travelling in the Superior region in the 1850s, Johann Georg Kohl would remark: “It is very curious that I

⁴⁰ Strahlenberg, *An Historico-Geographical Description*, 4.

⁴¹ Schoolcraft, *Algie Researches*, 1:16–17.

⁴² “There is nothing whatever in this system analogous to the Runic character. Nor does there appear to be, in either language or religion, anything approximating either to the Scandinavian or to the Hindoo races.” Schoolcraft, *Algie Researches*, 1:25.

meet so many persons here still adhering to the belief in the Jewish descent of the Indians, not merely among the American clergy, but also among the traders and agents.”⁴³

Schoolcraft at this point was also a degenerationist and environmental determinist, as one crucial passage about the origins of the Algic people in *Algic Researches* captured:

...while [Algics] fell into a multiplicity of bands from the most common causes, they do not appear to have advanced an iota in their original stock of knowledge, warlike arts, or political tact, but rather fell back...It may be doubted whether the very fact of the immensity of an unoccupied country, spread out before a civilized or half civilized people, with all its allurements of wild game and personal independence, would not be sufficient, in the lapse of a few centuries, to throw them back into a complete state of barbarism.⁴⁴

Schoolcraft’s version of Native American history, after the initial multiple arrivals from Asia, aligned somewhat with Alexander von Humboldt’s influential ideas. After his five-year exploration of Spanish America, Humboldt published *Researches Concerning the Institutions and Monuments of the Ancient Inhabitants of America* (1810; English translation in 1814), in which he proposed the Mound Builders (and possibly the Iroquois) were Toltecs from Mexico.⁴⁵ Schoolcraft did not engage directly the Mound Builders mystery in *Algic Researches*, but in his 1839 review of *Antiquitates Americanae*, to

⁴³ “Many cannot be persuaded out of this curious idea, though it seems to me to be more deeply-rooted among the Anglo-Saxon Protestants than the French Catholics. Perhaps this arises from the fact that the former employ themselves so much more in reading the Old Testament, the history of the Jews and, above all, the final fate of the lost ten tribes. The latter they insist on finding her in America, and detect all sorts of Jewish customs among the Indians, which are, in truth, no more than the resemblances they bear to all other peoples that live in a similar nomadic state.” Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 134.

⁴⁴ Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, 1:25–26.

⁴⁵ For Humboldt’s ideas and influence, see Wilcox and Fowler, “The Beginnings of Anthropological Archaeology in the North American Southwest,” 132–133

which I will next turn, he rejected the idea anyone other than Native Americans was responsible for the mounds. In *Algic Researches* he implicitly identified the Mound Builders as ancestors of the Algics, who had entered the modern boundaries of the United States from the southwest and were “followed by the Ostic, the Muskogee and the Tsallanic [Cherokee] hordes.” The Ostics, in the first wave, were the invaders by whom the Algics “were driven, scattered, and harassed, and several of the tribes not only conquered, but exterminated.”⁴⁶ After driving off the Algics, the Ostics initially occupied the Ohio valley before assuming “a most commanding and central position in Western New-York...”⁴⁷ The key fact of Schoolcraft’s impression of pre-Columbian history in North America, as conveyed in *Algic Researches*, was a narrative of ceaseless conquest and displacement, with his “warlike and jealous” Iroquoian Ostics the progenitors of territorial change.⁴⁸ As for cultural change, there was none, except in the direction of degeneration.

Schoolcraft’s *Antiquitates Americanae* Review

In April 1839, Henry Schoolcraft reviewed *Antiquitates Americanae* in *The American Biblical Repository*.⁴⁹ He entered the intellectual fray about a year late, as major, supportive reviews had already been organized in large part by Thomas H. Webb, foremost by the brothers Edward and Alexander Everett and by George Folsom.⁵⁰ These reviewers generally were complimentary, persuaded of the

⁴⁶ Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, 1:21.

⁴⁷ Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, 1:21–22.

⁴⁸ Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches*, 1:22.

⁴⁹ *The American Biblical Repository* was a “learned and weighty” monthly magazine, according to Frank Luther Mott, published in Congregationalist Andover, Massachusetts by Absalom Peters. Mott, *A History of American Magazines*, 1:372.

⁵⁰ Edward Everett, “Art. IX.—*Antiquitates Americanae*...” *The North American Review* 46, no. 98 (Jan. 1838): 161–203. Alexander H. Everett, “The Discovery of America by the Northmen,” *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*,” April 1838, in *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, vol. 2 (Washington: Langtree and O’Sullivan, 1838), 85–96; and “The Discovery of America by the Northmen, article second,” *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*,” May 1838, in *The United States Magazine and Democratic*

historicity of the saga accounts and that Vinland was in southern New England. However, they left an impression that Rafn and Magnussén had overreached in asserting the Norse provenance of Dighton Rock. As Edward Everett wrote: “We own that we remain wholly unconvinced in reference to [the society’s drawing’s] interpretation by the learned and ingenious commentaries of our friends in Copenhagen. The representations of the human figures and animals appear to us too rude for civilized artists in any age, erecting a public monument.”⁵¹ All three reviewers were regrettably convinced that the Rhode Island Historical Society drawing of Dighton Rock as published in *Antiquitates Americanae* was the most accurate one yet. Still, suspicions were circulating that Webb’s Rhode Island Historical Society committee had concocted a drawing that would satisfy the Danish antiquarians’ desire to locate the name of Thorfinn Karlsefni. Thomas H. Webb would recount how one opponent to the decipherment “boldly & shamelessly asserted, that knowing what the Danish Society wished to find there, or to make out, we, the suppliant tools, formed & fashioned characters accordingly.”⁵²

Schoolcraft used the review to advance his ideas about the Algonquian language and race in *Algonquian Researches*, which was published that year. Leaving aside Schoolcraft’s ulterior motives of self-promotion, his review was a reasoned rebuttal of the Norse provenance for Dighton Rock. As with the previous reviewers, Schoolcraft accepted the broadest assertions of *Antiquitates Americanae*: “it seems to place beyond doubt that the Northmen made repeated voyages into the northern Atlantic, early in the 10th century, and visited and wintered at various points on the New England coast.”⁵³ But he was unsatisfied with the volume’s Indigenous evidence. He assumed that the skraelings in the sagas were the “Esquimaux

Review, vol. 2, 143–158. George Folsom, “Article IV—*Antiquitates Americanae*...” *The New York Review*, vol. 2, no. 4 (April 1838), in *The New York Review*, vol. 2 (1837–1842): 352.

⁵¹ Edward Everett, “Art. IX.—*Antiquitates Americanae*,” 197–198.

⁵² Thomas H. Webb to John Ordranax, May 27, 1854, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁵³ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, “Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” in *The American Biblical Repository*, Apr. 1839, in *The American Biblical Repository*, 2nd ser., vol. 1 (New York: Gould, Newman and Saxton, 1839), 435.

race,” and doubted (with good reason) they ever lived in New England. At the time of the Pilgrims’ arrival, he asserted, “the Algic race possessed the entire coast.” (In a footnote he reiterated that Algic “is a derivative from the words Alleghany and Atlantic.”⁵⁴) He rejected the idea that “Hope” derived from the Scandinavian *Hóp*. While accepting *Mounthaup* was an Indigenous term, he thought it to be “rather a derivative from the name of one of the gods of Algic mythology,” without explaining which god that might be.⁵⁵ He was more on the mark when he observed: “is it reconcilable with our experience of the dogged attachment of the Indians to their own terms, to suppose that they had thus adopted a foreign name, and that too, from an enemy, whom they had fought and driven from their coast?”⁵⁶ Schoolcraft could not know that Rafn harbored a White Tribism notion that the Norse had remained in the country for centuries, intermarrying with Native Americans and altering their culture.

As for the inscription on Dighton Rock, Schoolcraft did not reference (and may not have known at this time) the artist George Catlin’s December 1838 letter to the *New-York Mirror*. Catlin was establishing himself as an artist specializing in portraits of Native Americans, and met Edward Everett (who was the governor of Massachusetts and an historian trained in Germany at Göttingen) when his tour of paintings took him to Boston in 1838. On December 1, the *Mirror* reported that at one of Everett’s Boston lectures on *Antiquitates Americanae*, Everett recounted asking Catlin whether he had ever seen inscriptions similar to those on Dighton Rock “in the Indian country.” Catlin purportedly had replied “he had seen hundreds of them on white quartz rock, and that if he had copied all of them, they would have filled a volume of more than a thousand pages.”⁵⁷ Catlin wrote to the *Mirror* from Philadelphia on

⁵⁴ Schoolcraft, ““Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 437.

⁵⁵ Schoolcraft, ““Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 440–441.

⁵⁶ Schoolcraft, ““Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 441.

⁵⁷ “[Article 2—No Title], “A theory knocked in the head,” *The New-York Mirror*, Dec. 1, 1838, 183.

December 11, wishing to clarify and elaborate on the comments Everett had attributed to him.⁵⁸ Catlin's letter, published December 29, 1838 is an unacknowledged first recorded reference to the Jeffers petroglyphs in a quartzite outcrop on the eastern edge of the Great Plains at Couteau des Prairies in southwestern Minnesota.⁵⁹ Catlin did not want to categorically refute all theories as to the origins of Dighton Rock, but he did want to address the idea that its inscription was "an *anomaly* which needs to be explained and understood." Catlin quashed two treasured antiquarian conceits: that Native Americans did not make rock carvings, and moreover that carvings were made in rocks too hard to be worked with anything other than metal tools, and so could not have been made by people that did not possess them.⁶⁰ Of Dighton Rock, Catlin ventured: "These inscriptions (I should think myself entirely safe in saying) are the works of Indian hands. I advance this opinion with confidence, because I have met many similar productions in the western country, and I have seen the Indians busily *at work*, recording *his own totem*, or mark, among those of his ancestors."

⁵⁸ George Catlin, "Letters from Correspondents. The Dighton Rock," *The New-York Mirror*, Dec. 29, 1838, 213.

⁵⁹ See Robert Alan Clouse, "Pattern and Function at the Jeffers Petroglyphs, Minnesota," in *The Rock-Art of Eastern North America: Capturing the Images and Insight*, edited by Carol Diaz-Granados and James R. Duncan, 110–125 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004). Clouse states the site was "first historically documented in 1885." (111) Presumably this refers to Thomas Donaldson's report on the George Catlin Indian Gallery, which formed Part 5 of the *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution...to July, 1885, Part 2* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886). Catlin described his 1835 experience visiting the sacred pipestone quarry in exhibition catalogue materials quoted by Donaldson (241–253). Catlin in Donaldson's report however only mentioned nearby rock art in passing. Catlin's 1838 letter to the *New-York Mirror* in contrast discusses this major petroglyph site in detail. Catlin's observations are consistent with modern archaeological theory on the Jeffers petroglyph. According to Clouse, "The site likely represents multiple use episodes or occupations by different cultures over a relatively long period of time—possibly as long as 5,000 years." I do find it puzzling that Clouse makes no reference to the nearby pipestone quarry, which Catlin stressed was a sacred site, in the course of his discussion of the Jeffers petroglyphs.

⁶⁰ Catlin did not report on the method used to make the markings in the especially hard quartzite at Couteau des Prairies, but archaeologists in the 1970s determined the makers used the common strategy of pecking or percussion with another hard stone. See Clouse, "Pattern and Function at the Jeffers Petroglyphs, Minnesota," 112. At the Peterborough Petroglyphs, Joan and Romas Vastokas recovered a number of gneiss hammer stones and abraders used to peck and grind the images into the crystalline limestone. Vastokas and Vastokas, *Sacred Art of the Algonkians*, 17–18. I am not aware of any study on the methodology at Dighton Rock, but the same strategy would have been used.

Catlin's account of his visit to the Jeffers petroglyph is a remarkable firsthand report of a major petroglyph site that includes testimony from Native Americans still contributing markings. Catlin also provided a plausible explanation of the nature of Dighton Rock. The inscriptions at Coteau des Prairies "have, undoubtedly, been made during centuries past, by the thousands and tens of thousands of Indians of different tribes who have been in the habit of performing a sort of pilgrimage there, for the purpose of supplying themselves with stones for their pipes." Although some of the figures might represent historic events or traditions, Catlin was sure most were totems (*doodems*; *dodems*) of individuals, families, and tribes, a kind of tagging by visitors to the sacred quarry over the course of centuries. Catlin estimated there were five hundred such figures of animals and birds forming "perhaps, the greatest number and greatest variety of Indian marks and inscriptions that can be seen at any place in America." (About 2,000 glyphs were catalogued in the 1970s.⁶¹) Catlin examined the petroglyphs with several Dakota men, "who took great pleasure in pointing out their own marks or *totems*, and also those of their friends. Quite an old man (and a *medicine-man* withal) took great pains to show me the totems of the Chippeways, his enemies; but he revered their marks, for 'those (said he) are *wakons*,' (spirit or medicines.)" Catlin proposed Dighton Rock "had been, perhaps, the site of an ancient Indian town, or famed for some battle or other remarkable scene, and this rock, having a conspicuous position and a suitable surface for such marks, became gradually covered on its face with the strange and unintelligible entries which we now find upon it, and about which a thousand different theories may be formed, and each one for ever resting, in my humble opinion, on evidence equally vague and uncertain."⁶²

Catlin was subjected to an outrageous assault by Joshua Toulmin Smith in his popularizing, unabashedly enthusiastic take on *Antiquitates Americanae*. An English barrister who was living in Roxbury, Massachusetts, when he prepared the book, Smith constructed *The Northmen in New England*

⁶¹ Clouse, "Pattern and Function," 111.

⁶² Catlin, "Letters from Correspondents."

in the form of dramatic dialogues by fictional characters in Newport, Rhode Island.⁶³ Smith's characters have the following exchange about Dighton Rock that put Catlin in his place:

But I have heard it stated, observed Mr. Cassall, that Mr. Catlin says it is an Indian inscription.

Mr. Catlin! exclaimed the doctor, in amazement; do you mean Mr. Catlin, the Indian traveller ?

The same.

What, in the name of goodness, has he to do with anything about inscriptions?⁶⁴

Smith avowed he meant no disrespect to Catlin ("For Mr. Catlin himself he entertains a high personal regard..." he stressed in a footnote.⁶⁵) Nevertheless, in a flight of rhetoric he deftly maneuvered Catlin *in absentia* into expressing an opinion he never held: that Dighton Rock most certainly was not the work of Indians.⁶⁶ Smith dismissed the relevance of Catlin's opinion with a firm conclusion from one of his characters, Dr. Dubital, that the Dighton Rock inscription was Norse: "how any body could seriously

⁶³ Webb, "February Meeting," 188. Webb recalled that Smith brought out his London version of *The Northmen in New England* in 1841 as a revised edition of the original Boston publication. The London version, *The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century*, published by Charles Tilt, is indeed a revision, 344 pages versus 364 of the Boston edition. The London edition however, bears a date of 1839 and does appear to have been released that year. For Smith's discussion of Dighton Rock, see *The Northmen in New England*, 310–322.

⁶⁴ Smith, *The Northmen in New England*, 311–12.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 312.

⁶⁶ Smith claimed he had "positive and immediate knowledge of the fact, that Mr. Catlin distinctly stated, to two highly respectable gentlemen, by whom the question was directly put, that *he never had seen any Inscription like the Assonet Rock.*" On that unverifiable hearsay, Smith proposed Catlin's true opinion must have been "misrepresented." *The Northmen in New England*, 311–312. To the contrary, Catlin's opinion, issued to clarify what he understood Edward Everett had said, was plain to understand in his letter published in the *New-York Mirror*: "These inscriptions (I should think myself entirely safe in saying) are the works of Indian hands." Smith knew Catlin's letter, as he wrote at length about Catlin's observations of the petroglyphs at the pipestone quarry.

quote [Catlin's] authority with respect to an inscription asserted to be Runic, is past my comprehension to understand."⁶⁷

Catlin's observations survived the eccentric slander of Smith. They are most valuable in indicating that a complex example of rock art like Dighton Rock, as with the pipestone quarry petroglyphs, could be a palimpsest of glyphic images, recorded by different individuals over a lengthy span of history. They also could be individuals from different tribal peoples separated considerably in time or actively contesting the site's control, as the Dakota and the Anishinabe Chippewa had at Coteau des Prairies. In such a case there could be no single, coherent *message* that qualified as an inscription awaiting decipherment. In assessing Dighton Rock's provenance Schoolcraft too could draw on personal experience with Indigenous pictography—as like Catlin he had traveled in the Old Northwest in the contested frontier of Dakota and Chippewa territories, and had seen the diplomatic messages on birch-bark, among other glyphic examples.

Schoolcraft examined the nine drawings reproduced in *Antiquitates Americanae*. The earliest three (Danforth, Mather, and Sewell) he pronounced “of no historical value, unless it be to denote how the preconceived theories of men may lead them to distort facts, even where the data, if properly recorded, would not militate against such theories.”⁶⁸ Like every other reviewer, he was unaware of the doctoring of the Rhode Island Historical Society drawing when he remarked: “It is only to be regretted that the care and precision bestowed upon the latter, could not have been applied, in getting an accurate impression, a century earlier.”⁶⁹ But he rejected the idea that any part of the inscription was of Norse origin: “We consider the characters hieroglyphics of the Algic stamp. They are not Runic characters...”⁷⁰ Schoolcraft

⁶⁷ Ibid., 311-312.

⁶⁸ Schoolcraft, ““Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 442–443.

⁶⁹ Schoolcraft, ““Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 444.

⁷⁰ Schoolcraft, ““Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 444. He reiterated the point by deciding to “pronounce the inscription Algic and not Runic.” (445)

ventured the letters R, I, N and X first appeared in an engraving of Kendall's painting of 1807, and as for how they came to be on the stone, "we think it would be hazarding little to suppose that some idle boy, or more idle man, had superadded these English, or Roman characters, in sport. These alphabetical marks certainly spell nothing in the ordinary Runic, either backward or forward."⁷¹ Schoolcraft called Magnussén's interpretation "far-fetched, in some respects cabalistic, and thoroughly overstrained; and after all, nine tenths of the whole inscription is unintelligible, and is left unexplained. We admire his learning and ingenuity, but rise from the perusal unconvinced."⁷²

In support of his Algic interpretation, Schoolcraft made one of his first extensive comments on Native American pictographic forms. Nothing was "more characteristic of the mental peculiarities of the Algic race, than their mythology and the system of hieroglyphics, by which they appear, at all times, to have perpetuated events and names."⁷³ He explained how personal glyphs were carved into or painted on cedar posts or other materials to mark the graves of chief and warriors, and how symbols were blazed into trees or recorded on birch-bark. Schoolcraft also revealed he had inspected as well as collected a large number of glyphs of the type seen on Dighton Rock, made on wood and bark—a reference in part to the birch-bark song scrolls from which he would extract copious illustrations and analysis in volume 1 of his magnum opus, the six-volume Congressional report, *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*.⁷⁴ As a mineralogist, Schoolcraft noted (citing Webb from his November 30, 1834 letter to Rafn in *Antiquitates Americanae*) Dighton Rock was "a species of fine-grained graywacke—a rock so much inferior in hardness to most of the silicious stones, that there could have been but little difficulty in making the impressions with sharp

⁷¹ Schoolcraft, "Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America," 444–445.

⁷² Schoolcraft, "Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America," 445.

⁷³ Schoolcraft, "Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America," 446.

⁷⁴ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, 6 vols. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Company, 1851–57).

pieces of hornstone or common quartz, such as arrow-heads were chipped with.”⁷⁵ And as similar inscriptions had been found elsewhere in the eastern United States, Schoolcraft was confident Native Americans were capable of making them. In his travels, Schoolcraft also had seen stones in waterside locations employed as shrines: “It was very common to set up water worn boulders [sic] of a particular figure, in spots supposed to be the residence of spirits, and to decorate them, in various ways. Sacrifices of tobacco, etc. were offered at these rude shrines. This is still the custom of the more westerly and northerly of these bands.”⁷⁶ In his *Narrative of an Expedition through the Upper Mississippi to Itasca Lake*, Schoolcraft recounted seeing at Lac Travers in 1832 a gneiss boulder marked with a red circle, which his companions called Shingaba Wossin, which he translated as Image Stone.⁷⁷ “Offerings are usually left at such rude altars,” he explained.⁷⁸

Schoolcraft betrayed the limits of his knowledge of Algonquian dialects in his Shingaba Wossin account, and also experienced a near-miss in reinforcing the Indigeneity of Dighton Rock in his review of *Antiquitates Americanae*. The second word, Wossin, was actually *assin* (or *asin*, among other English spelling variants), which means stone.⁷⁹ Dighton Rock was located on Assonet Neck, and Assonet could be translated as “the stone place,” or “the place of the stone.” The name was strong evidence that Dighton

⁷⁵ Schoolcraft, “Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 447.

⁷⁶ Schoolcraft, “Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 446–447.

⁷⁷ I am uncertain of Schoolcraft’s recording of “Shingaba.” He may have misunderstood *masinibiigan* (picture) or *masinitchigan* (image). See the translations by Frederic Baraga, a Catholic missionary to the Ojibwa, in *A dictionary of the Otchipwe language explained in English : this language is spoken by the Chippewa Indians, as also by the Otawas, Potawatamis ...* (Cincinnati: Jos. A. Hemann, 1853), 525, 570. Schoolcraft may have been transposing to the Lac Travers anecdote the name of Shin-ga-ba-was-sin, the leader at the Sault Ste. Marie rapids of the Ojibwa until 1828, whose name he translated as “The Image Stone.” See Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:357, for a discussion of the chief he called Shin-ga-ba-was-sin. See also Janet E. Chute’s description of “Shingabaw’osin” in *The Legacy of Shingwaukonse: A Century of Native Leadership* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 13.

⁷⁸ Schoolcraft, *Narrative of an Expedition through the Upper Mississippi to Itasca Lake*, 46.

⁷⁹ See the translation of stone as *assin* by Baraga, 619. J. A. Cuoq in his *Lexique de la langue algonquine* (Montréal: J. Chapleau: 1886) translated stone as *asin*, and further noted *asin* in *Asinibwan* (Assiniboine), the name given the Stone Sioux, *Bwan* denoting the Sioux (62, 77).

Rock long had been an important part of the local landscape for the Wampanoag. Schoolcraft noted in the review that the rock was located “one the shore of ‘Assonet Neck,’ so called.”⁸⁰ That he did not recognize the significance of the place name “Assonet” was a telling statement on his knowledge of Algonquian dialects.

Shingwauk Interprets Dighton Rock

In the summer of 1839, Henry Schoolcraft showed drawings of the markings on Dighton Rock to an Indigenous man, in hope of securing a translation or explanation.⁸¹ For his interpreter, however, Schoolcraft did not turn to a member of the Wampanoag or another southern New England Indigenous community. Instead he chose Shingwauk (Chingwauk, The White Pine; alternately Shingwaukonse, The Little White Pine) a prominent figure among the Anishinabe Ojibwa around the American post at Sault Ste. Marie.⁸² Shingwauk was a member of the prominent Crane clan (which Schoolcraft misunderstood to be a local tribe), while his personal *dodem* (*doodem*; totem), attained through a vision quest, was the plover.⁸³ Schoolcraft first met Shingwauk in 1822, and as Schoolcraft would recall, he was renowned as a

⁸⁰ Schoolcraft, ““Article IX. The Ante-Columbian History of America,” 441.

⁸¹ For Schoolcraft’s full discussion of Dighton Rock and Shingwauk’s interpretation, see *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:108–120. For the life of Shingwauk(onse) up to his interpretation of Dighton Rock, see Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwaukonse*, 1–90.

⁸² Shingwauk is sometimes referred to as Shingwaukonse (The Little White Pine). Schoolcraft in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information* called him both Chinguak and Shingwaukonse. J.G. Kohl gathered a story, on visiting Shingwauk’s grave at Rivière au Désert soon after his death, in which he has a dream that compels him to change his name from “Shinguakonsge” with its “very trivial meaning of ‘The Little Pine,’” to “Sagadjive-Osse, which means almost identically, ‘When the sun rises.’” (*Kitchi-Gami*, 377). For Kohl’s full account of Shingwauk, see 373–384. Kohl’s account of Shingwauk’s vision is discussed by Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwaukonse*, 22–24. Shingwauk’s descendants, Fred Pine and Dan Pine, explained to archaeologist and rock art researcher Thor Conway that both Shingwauk and Shingwaukonse were appropriate names for their celebrated ancestor. Their usage was rooted in shamanic practices. He had a personal shamanic name, Sah-Kah-Odjew-Wahg-Sah, meaning “Sun Rising Over the Mountain.” This name conveyed to him the power of the moment of sunrise. He would be called Shingwauk from noon to early evening, and then the diminutive Shingwaukonse from early evening to sunset to indicate the sun’s waning power. Conway, *Spirits on Stone*, 91–94.

⁸³ Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwaukonse*, 20. Shingwauk had an unknown European father—his descendant, Fred Pine, Sr., would assert Shingwauk’s father was no less than the son of Napoleon Bonaparte, with another

war chief, a councilor and an orator; he was also a *djiskui*, a practitioner of the shaking-tent ritual, and a member of two medicine societies, the Midéwiwin and the Wabano.⁸⁴ Shingwauk had figured prominently in often-tense negotiations between the Americans, including Schoolcraft, and the Ojibwa at the Sault rapids, where the Anishinabeg did not trust the expansionist ambitions of the United States. As Janet Chute has written, some of the chiefs at the Sault “seemed to demonstrate a Machiavellian flair for diplomacy which won Schoolcraft’s grudging respect.”⁸⁵ By the late 1830s, political maneuvering in the upper Great Lakes (and Shingwauk’s own failure to assert himself as a leader of a Lake Superior Ojibwa nation as well as a spokesman for Odawa and Podawadami) had made Shingwauk a chief on the British side of the international border, at St. Mary’s. At a distribution of presents in August 1838 Shingwauk embraced Christianity, a move that perhaps was as much politically as spiritually motivated, and his lodge became a site for Anglican prayer meetings.⁸⁶ It was in this new role for Shingwauk, as a Christianized “good Indian” in the eyes of the British, that the American Schoolcraft sought his aid in interpreting Dighton Rock.

“Naturally a man of a strong and sound, but uncultivated mind, he possesses powers of reflection beyond most of his people,” Schoolcraft would write of Shingwauk. “He has also a good memory, and may be considered a learned man, in a tribe where learning is the result of memory, in retaining the accumulated stores of forest arts and forest lore, as derived from oral sources.”⁸⁷ He seemed the ideal candidate to decipher the rock, for as Schoolcraft related, in assuming his Indian agency post in 1822, “I

tradition recorded by J. G. Kohl making him a British military officer of Scottish birth. Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwauk*, 21. Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 374.

⁸⁴ Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwauk*, 11. See also Schoolcraft’s description of him in *Historical and Statistical Description*, 1:112.

⁸⁵ Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwauk*, 9.

⁸⁶ Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwauk*, 75–79.

⁸⁷ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:112.

observed this man to be expert in drawing the Indian signs and figures.”⁸⁸ Schoolcraft had taken a copy of *Antiquitates Americanae* to Michilimackinac with him in the summer of 1839, and sent Shingwauk an invitation to visit him. When Shingwauk arrived with four companions, Schoolcraft showed him two drawings of Dighton Rock in the volume, the one by Baylies and Goodwin of 1790 that had inspired Magnussén, and the so-called Rhode Island Historical Society drawing. Schoolcraft claimed to provide only basic information: the inscription was on a rock in New England, the rock was washed by twice daily by tide and might have had some figures obliterated, and the drawings were made at different times. As Schoolcraft recounted, he asked Shingwauk: “Was the inscription made by Indians, or by others? What is your opinion?”⁸⁹

Schoolcraft would not share that opinion with the world for another twelve years, in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information* in 1851. Those intervening years were major ones in the development of American ethnology and Schoolcraft’s ideas on American antiquity.

Between Shingwauk Interviewed and Shingwauk Published: Schoolcraft in the 1840s, the American Ethnological Society, and the Grave Creek Stone

Between Shingwauk’s interpretation of Dighton Rock for Schoolcraft in 1839, and Schoolcraft’s publication of it in 1851, Schoolcraft’s life passed through a series of traumas and dislocations. *Algic Researches* sold well, but Schoolcraft had assumed the financial risk and the work failed to turn a profit.⁹⁰ Worse, in 1841 he lost his position as superintendent of Indian Affairs at Michilimackinac; Schoolcraft, an ardent and active Democrat, was dismissed after the Whig candidate, William Henry Harrison, won the

⁸⁸ “I saw in his hands tabular pieces of carved wood, called music-boards, on which were curiously carved and brightly painted, in the lines of sculpture, the figures of men, birds, quadrupeds, and a variety of mixed and fabulous mythological devices, which were said to be the notations of songs. Such was the man whom I employed and paid, to be my teacher in unravelling these devices, and to instruct me in the several modes of employing their pictographic art.” Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:112.

⁸⁹ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:113.

⁹⁰ Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 249.

1840 presidential election. The Schoolcrafts relocated to New York and Henry traveled to England in unfulfilled hopes of securing a publishing deal for a multivolume study of Native American ethnography, *Cyclopedia Indianensis*. While he was away, his wife Jane, who had contracted whooping cough in 1835 and become dependent on laudanum, died suddenly in 1842.⁹¹ Schoolcraft returned to New York and entered the circle surrounding Albert Gallatin in the New-York Historical Society. That circle included John Russell Bartlett, who had relocated from Providence to New York in 1836 to work for the Dry Goods Commission House. The business failed in the financial crisis of 1837 and Bartlett struggled for a few more years in business with one of the partners, “barely able to make a living,” according to the historical note of the John Russell Bartlett Papers. He then turned to his love of books, inculcated in the Providence Athenaeum, and established a book business in New York with Charles Welford. Bartlett & Welford in the Astor House was a bookstore, a dealer in British and other foreign titles, and a publisher, and the store became an informal salon for men interested in ethnology and archaeology.⁹² Among the men who gathered at Bartlett & Welford were Gallatin and Schoolcraft, as the business was an invaluable source of new publications in ethnology, and together these men founded the American Ethnological Society in November 1842.⁹³ The society operated practically as an adjunct of the New-York Historical Society, with Gallatin, Schoolcraft and Bartlett holding leading positions in both organizations.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 253–256.

⁹² “Historical note, John Russell Bartlett Papers.” Wilcox and Fowler, “The Beginnings of Anthropological Archaeology in the North American Southwest,” 134.

⁹³ Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian*, 43–44. For Schoolcraft’s role in founding the American Ethnological Society, see Chase S. Osborn and Stellanova Osborn, “Schoolcraft and the American Ethnological Society,” *Science*, n.s 97, no. 2511 (Feb. 12, 1943): 161–162.

⁹⁴ Bartlett was secretary and Gallatin president of the American Ethnological Society at its founding. Bartlett was the foreign corresponding secretary of the New-York Historical Society from 1845 to 1849, while Gallatin was its president from 1846 to 1849, during which time Schoolcraft was vice-president. For officers of the society, see Robert Hendre Kelby, *The New-York Historical Society 1804–1904* (New York: Published for the Society, 1905), 83–91. Note however that while Kelby lists Gallatin as president for 1848–49, *Proceedings of the New-York Historical Society, 1846* indicates Gallatin was president that year (“Officers of the Society, elected 1846,” front matter).

Antiquitates Americanae initially enjoyed Bartlett's support, but by October 1841, Bartlett had drifted away from Rafn's ongoing project to prove a Norse presence in New England, as Rafn informed Webb he had not heard from Bartlett for "a long time."⁹⁵ Bartlett may have broken with Rafn over the surprising interpretation of Dighton Rock in *Antiquitates Americanae*, which had included altering both drawings submitted by the Rhode Island Historical Society—the inscription drawing that Bartlett had helped to create, and less manipulatively the view of the rock that Bartlett had drawn. In an address on the "progress of ethnology" read before meetings of the New-York Historical Society in November and December 1846, Bartlett stated: "I am aware that many believe the sculptures on the Dighton rock to contain several alphabetic characters. Prof. Rafn in his learned and ingenious memoir on this inscription, supports this view."⁹⁶ Bartlett however did not. Late in life, Bartlett would provide the Rhode Island Historical Society with a recollection of his involvement in the society's committee chaired by Webb that assisted Rafn. Bartlett remained confident that Norsemen had visited North America and that Narragansett Bay was a good fit for Vinland. As for the infamous inscription, "although I was instrumental in calling the attention of the Danish savans to the Dighton Rock, I never believed that it was the work of the Northmen or of any other foreign visitors. My impression was, and is still, that it was the work of our own Indians..."⁹⁷

During his New York years Schoolcraft lobbied for the federal support for his *Cyclopedia Indianensis*, which finally bore fruit as the *Historical and Statistical Information* study, authorized through an act of Congress in March 1847 under the aegis of the Secretary of War.⁹⁸ The study, based in

⁹⁵ Rafn to Webb, Oct. 22, 1841, Carl C. Rafn Papers. Bartlett was one of the American contacts for subscribers to *Antiquitates Americanae*, as well as a proposed contact for subscribers to a stillborn English translation. He had delivered George Folsom (a subscriber) his review copy and also arranged to have Rafn's English-language abstract from the volume printed separately in New York in 1838. (A curiosity of Rafn's English language abstract was that it made no mention of Dighton Rock.) Bartlett as noted also had alerted Rafn to the Fall River skeleton in 1836.

⁹⁶ New-York Historical Society, *Proceedings of the New-York Historical Society, 1846*, 160.

⁹⁷ Rhode Island Historical Society. *Proceedings of the Rhode Island Historical Society, 1872–3*, 75.

⁹⁸ See "Message of the President of the United States," *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:iii.

part on statistical data from Native American populations, was issued in six rambling volumes between 1851 and 1857.⁹⁹ Volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information* would be Schoolcraft's first opportunity to publish on Dighton Rock and use the 1839 interpretation from Shingwauk, although he may have tried to persuade the Royal Society of Northern Antiquarians to include an article in its *Mémoires*. In spite of the harsh terms of his *American Biblical Repository* review of *Antiquitates Americanae* in 1839, Schoolcraft joined the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries.¹⁰⁰ Schoolcraft may have already been in contact with Thomas Webb, if Webb's 1854 assertion that he consulted Schoolcraft at the beginning of his researches on Dighton Rock can be trusted. The Northern Antiquarian society's concerns with mytho-poetic tradition, the historicity of the sagas, and runic writing were too close to Schoolcraft's interests in Native American oral traditions and picture writing to ignore, and leading American figures in antiquarian and philological studies were also society members, whatever misgivings they might have had over some of the evidentiary interpretations of *Antiquitates Americanae*.¹⁰¹ Schoolcraft was in contact with Thomas H. Webb about Dighton Rock in 1840 or 1841, as Rafn in a letter to Webb on October 22, 1841 refers to Schoolcraft and his apparent idea that the rock depicted a battle or some other kind of encounter: "Mr. Schoolcraft's explanations will, I have no doubt, be accompanied with remarks by you... Mr. Schoolcraft's explanation of the figures in Assonet Rock agrees with the opinion expressed by me, that a representation is intended of a battle (a meeting or a convention) between

⁹⁹ "Due to his own declining health, his lack of system, and the rapid publication schedule mandated by Congress, he produced a study that was too disorganized to be of much use to either scholars or administrators. It won him fame but little respect." Mumford, "Mixed-Race Identity," 21. Dippie notes the volumes cost the federal government about \$100,000 and "were untidy compilations of Indian miscellanea flawed by Schoolcraft's own enthusiastically eclectic approach to ethnology." Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 74.

¹⁰⁰ Schoolcraft is among the members listed at the front of volume 2 of *Mémoires*, covering 1840 to 1844, with Detroit given as his location. He thus joined around the time he wrote the 1839 review.

¹⁰¹ Fellows of the society's American section, listed in the *Mémoires* of 1844, included Peter Stephen Du Ponceau, president of the American Philosophical Society; John Howland, president of the Rhode Island Historical Society; Henry W. Longfellow of Harvard; philologist John Pickering; Peter G. Stuyvesant, president of the New-York Historical Society; and Henry Wheaton, then the U.S. "minister plenipotentiary" in Berlin.

the Scandinavians and Aborigines.”¹⁰² By then Schoolcraft had shown the Dighton Rock drawings to Shingwauk. It is not clear if Schoolcraft proposed the rock represented a Norse-Indian encounter, or if Rafn had put his own typical spin on evidence presented to him. If Schoolcraft made an overture to write about Dighton Rock, Rafn did not take him up on it. Instead, Rafn chose to publish (and comment upon) letters from Schoolcraft in *Mémoires* that addressed the Grave Creek stone. Schoolcraft’s fascination with the Grave Creek stone and his overture to write about Dighton Rock in *Mémoires* may not have been unrelated, and be cause to question the reliability of the Dighton Rock interpretation he would attribute to Shingwauk in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Description* in 1851. Schoolcraft circa 1841 could have been inclined to offer an interpretation of Dighton Rock that also accounted for whichever Old World adventurers allegedly left behind the Grave Creek stone.

Schoolcraft was a leading and unwitting champion of the Grave Creek fraud, after visiting the excavation and examining the inscribed stone for himself in 1838. [Fig. 24] He gave notice of the find to the Royal Geographic Society in London in 1841 and wrote Rafn in January and June 1842; Schoolcraft’s letters and Rafn’s comments were published in volume 2 of *Mémoires* in 1844.¹⁰³ Schoolcraft then published a larger report on Grave Creek, which incorporated his analysis of the stone in *Mémoires* as well as Rafn’s essential comments, in the first volume of *Transactions of the American Ethnological Society* in 1845.¹⁰⁴ Schoolcraft assigned its 22 characters, crudely inscribed in three lines, to eight different Old World scripts, which in his *AES* report were given (in ascending order of letter congruence) as ancient Greek, Etruscan, Runic, ancient Gallic, Old Erse, Phoenician, Old British, and Celtiberic. The script aligned most closely (but not exclusively) with Celtiberic. Rafn agreed it most resembled

¹⁰² Rafn to Webb, Oct. 22, 1841, Carl C. Rafn Papers.

¹⁰³ Henry R. Schoolcraft and Carl Christian Rafn, “Brief Notices of a Runic Inscription Found in North America, communicated by Henry R. Schoolcraft in Letters to Charles C. Rafn, Secretary, with Remarks annexed by the latter,” *Mémoires*, 2:119–127.

¹⁰⁴ Henry R. Schoolcraft, “Observations Respecting the Grave Creek Mound,” in *Transactions of the American Ethnological Society*, Vol. 1, 368–420 (New York: Bartlett & Welford, 1845).

Celtiberic, and ventured it was evidence of a pre-Norse visit to America by “tribes from the Pyrenean peninsula, who in very remote ages may be supposed to have visited the Transatlantic part of the world; or to inhabitants of the British Isles sojourning in this remote country before the close of the 10th century.”¹⁰⁵ As Schoolcraft stated in *Transactions*: “The early and common impression of the preoccupancy of the country, by a people having some further claims to civilization and art than the existing Red Race, is thus revived and strengthened.”¹⁰⁶

The stone may have shaken, but it did not topple, Schoolcraft’s conviction that the mounds of the Mississippi and Ohio valleys were the work of the ancestors of Native Americans.¹⁰⁷ As to how the anomalous inscribed stone got into the Grave Creek mound, Schoolcraft was convinced (in his florid literary manner) “there was a period of adventure and migration to this continent, having its impulse from the East, towards the Atlantic coasts—that it proceeded from the European coasts, in the infancy of navigation, and was born hither on the Western breeze.”¹⁰⁸ But this early migration “was evidently limited in numbers, and went down, either by the sword or amalgamation in the more powerful native races.”¹⁰⁹ This explanation made more sense to him than proposing Native Americans had degenerated from such a high plateau of culture that they had once possessed Old World alphabets.¹¹⁰ Schoolcraft supposed the inscribed stone arrived at its final resting place through the captivity of its makers or its inheritance as a treasure.¹¹¹ Schoolcraft was steadfast in his views that Native Americans were not a product of an ancient,

¹⁰⁵ Schoolcraft and Rafn, “Brief Notices of a Runic Inscription Found in North America,” 127.

¹⁰⁶ Schoolcraft, “Observations Respecting the Grave Creek Mound,” 370.

¹⁰⁷ “It is impossible indeed, after surveying all the evidences of former occupancy existing here, to bring to mind the conclusion, that the tribes differed generically from the existing race of Red Men.” Schoolcraft, “Observations Respecting the Grave Creek Mound,” 418.

¹⁰⁸ Schoolcraft, “Observations Respecting the Grave Creek Mound,” 415.

¹⁰⁹ Schoolcraft, “Observations Respecting the Grave Creek Mound,” 416.

¹¹⁰ Schoolcraft, “Observations Respecting the Grave Creek Mound,” 416.

¹¹¹ Schoolcraft, “Observations Respecting the Grave Creek Mound,” 418.

transatlantic culture, and that the mounds could not have been left behind by such a foreign culture.¹¹² Schoolcraft considered it no great feat of civilization to arrange large volumes of dirt into tidy piles.¹¹³ Cultural materials otherwise indicated to him a period of widespread exchange in eastern North America. “They indicate no art or degree of civilization superior to that possessed by the present race of Indians. They give no countenance to the existence, in these regions of a state of high civilization.”¹¹⁴

Schoolcraft deserves some credit for holding to his convictions, in spite of the distraction of the Grave Creek inscription, that Native Americans were descendants of the Mound Builders, especially as Ephraim George Squier was setting new standards in American archaeological rigour while committing significant interpretive errors, the most egregious being the idea that Native Americans not only were no relation to the Mound Builders, but also did not even belong to the same human species as them—or as white Americans. Squier (a newly arrived newspaper editor in Chillicothe, Ohio) and Edwin Hamilton Davis (a local doctor) excavated 200 mounds and surveyed about 100 earthworks from 1845 to 1847, and their report, *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley*, was the first monograph in the *Contributions to Knowledge* series issued by the Smithsonian institution (founded by the federal government in 1846), in 1848.¹¹⁵ “The event conferred recognition upon its authors, upon the fledgling Smithsonian, and upon the newly-emerging discipline of American archaeology,” Terry A. Barnhart has observed. “The work of

¹¹² The evidence of material culture interred in mounds, he wrote in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information*, “denote the mounds themselves to be the work of the semi-hunter races, before they or their descendants had fallen into their lowest state of barbarism, or that type in which they were found by the colonists between 1584 and 1620. There is little to sustain a belief that these ancient works are due to tribes of more fixed and exalted traits of civilization, far less to a people of an expatriated type of civilization, of either an Asiatic or European origin, as several popular writers have, very vaguely and with little severity of investigation, imagined.” (1:62).

¹¹³ “There is nothing, indeed, in the magnitude and structure of our western mounds, which a semi-hunter and semiagricultural population, like that which may be ascribed to the ancestors or Indian predecessors of the existing race, could not have executed.” Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:62.

¹¹⁴ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:105.

¹¹⁵ Ephraim George Squier and Edwin Hamilton Davis, *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley, from the Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge* (New York: Bartlett & Welford; and Cincinnati: J.A. & U.P. James), 1848. Terry A. Barnhart, “The Iroquois as Mound Builders: Ephraim George Squier and the Archaeology of Western New York,” *New York History* 77, no. 2 (Apr. 1996): 127.

Squier and Davis long served as a model of empirical observation and reporting.”¹¹⁶ Steven Conn has noted that their study “quickly became the standard reference work on the topic of mounds, displacing Caleb Atwater’s ‘Description,’” and that *Ancient Monuments* “still stands as a remarkable archaeological achievement.”¹¹⁷ Their methodology in excavation, surveying and recording was superior to anything yet demonstrated in the object-based epistemology of the new American archaeology. Unlike Schoolcraft, Squier and Davis doubted the authenticity of the Grave Creek stone.¹¹⁸ Their sprawling study included a survey of petroglyphs, and one such example near Steubenville, Ohio, impressed them with the “striking resemblance” of figures on the lower right-hand face with figures in the same position on Dighton Rock.¹¹⁹ [Fig. 26] They noted how numerous inscribed rocks of similar character “are scattered over the West, occurring chiefly upon or near the banks of streams.” The well-known examples at Dighton and Tiverton in Massachusetts, as well as at Portsmouth, Rhode Island, “do not seem to differ materially from those already described...it must be very apparent that they are all the work of the same race: there is a family likeness in their style and workmanship, and a coincidence in position, which admits of no dispute, and seems to be conclusive at this point.”¹²⁰ Squier and Davis could not believe the Mound Builders were the same race as the Native Americans that carved Dighton Rock and other petroglyphs. Mound Builder cultural materials were too sophisticated to their eyes: the “elaborate and laborious, but usually clumsy and ungraceful, not to say unmeaning, productions of the savage can claim but a slight approach.”¹²¹ They viewed the “mound-builders” (a term they employed and thus perpetuated through the notoriety of their volume in the nineteenth-century) as a single people, “essentially homogeneous in customs, habits,

¹¹⁶ Barnhart, “The Iroquois as Mound Builders,” 128.

¹¹⁷ Conn, *History’s Shadow*, 124.

¹¹⁸ Squier and Davis, *Ancient Monuments*, 274.

¹¹⁹ Squier and Davis, *Ancient Monuments*, 298.

¹²⁰ Squier and Davis, *Ancient Monuments*, 300.

¹²¹ Squier and Davis, *Ancient Monuments*, 242.

religion, and government,” and proposed they were connected to semi-civilized peoples of Mexico, Central America and Peru.¹²²

Squier adhered to polygenism, which was enjoying a surge of fresh interest and scientific respectability through the researches of the skull-measuring naturalist Samuel George Morton, who had published in 1839 *Crania Americana* on Native Americans and pronounced with confidence on Indian moral and mental deficiencies¹²³ Theoretical allegiances in the New York circle of the AES (which Squier joined) under its firmly monogenist president Gallatin were complex and contradictory.¹²⁴ Schoolcraft’s personal life exemplified the complexities and accommodations: In 1847, the monogenist Schoolcraft

¹²² Squier and Davis, *Ancient Monuments*, 301.

¹²³ Morton declared in a paper read before the annual meeting of the Boston Society of Natural History in April 1842 that “the American race is essentially separate and peculiar, whether we regard it in its physical, moral, or its intellectual relations. To us there are no direct or obvious links between the people of the old world and the new.” See *An Inquiry into the Distinctive Characteristics of the Aboriginal Race of America* (Boston: Tuttle & Bennett, 1842), 13. Further, “they are not only averse to the restraints of education, but seem for the most part incapable of a continued process of reasoning on abstract subjects.” In *Crania Aegyptica*, published under the imprint of the American Philosophical Society in 1844, Morton tabled cranial evidence purporting human races had been unaltered since antiquity, which pointed to separate creations. See Fabian, *The Skull Collectors*, 107. Stephen Jay Gould in *The Mismeasure of Man* accused Morton of “a patchwork of fudging in finagling in the clear interest of controlling a priori convictions,” although he found no evidence of “conscious fraud.” (54) Gould’s contention has been disputed by Jason E. Lewis et al.: “Samuel George Morton, in the hands of Stephen Jay Gould, has served for 30 years as a textbook example of scientific misconduct... But our results falsify Gould’s hypothesis that Morton manipulated his data to conform with his a priori views. The data on cranial capacity gathered by Morton are generally reliable, and he reported them fully. Overall, we find that Morton’s initial reputation as the objectivist of his era was well-deserved. That Morton’s data are reliable despite his clear bias weakens the argument of Gould and others that biased results are endemic in science.” Jason E. Lewis, David DeGusta, Marc R. Meyer, Janet M. Monge, Alan E. Mann, Ralph L. Holloway, “The Mismeasure of Science: Stephen Jay Gould versus Samuel George Morton,” *PLoS Biology* 9, no. 6 (June 2011): 5–6. In 1846 the Swiss-born naturalist Louis Agassiz, a specialist in fossil fish, arrived in America. Revolted by his first encounter with African American hotel waiters, he made a crucial change in his position on humanity. Where he had previously argued humans were a single species whose different races had arisen in specific geographic locales, he now argued these races arose locally as their own species. “The ‘hideous’ sight of black people had pushed America’s premier zoologist into Morton’s arms,” Desmond and Moore in *Darwin’s Sacred Cause*, 232–233. According to Ann Fabian, Agassiz would “help to pull Morton’s work through the 1850s, smuggling its racial science past the Civil War and setting it to work in post-emancipation America.” Fabian, *The Skull Collectors*, 112.

¹²⁴ Bieder asserts: “Gallatin gathered around him ethnologists who generally shared his monogenetic views and his belief in progress (only after his death did the polygenists launch an unsuccessful attempt to take over the society.” *Science Encounters the Indian*, 44. However, the fact that Bartlett could expound quasi-polygenic and White Tribism views while holding a senior position in the AES under Gallatin challenges the idea that the society was securely monogenist in outlook during Gallatin’s presidency.

married Mary Howard, a Southern slave owner who adhered to polygenism.¹²⁵ Bartlett supported Schoolcraft in viewing the Grave Creek stone as authentic, but otherwise was a transatlantic diffusionist with undertones of polygenism, and agreed with Squier that the Mound Builders were not the ancestors of Native Americans.¹²⁶ The discovery of the Grave Creek stone had opened a new field of enquiry for philologists, Bartlett advised, “and we may here seek for the means to unravel one of the most difficult questions connected with the origin of the American race, and the means by which they reached this continent, for we never have been among those who believed that America derived the mass of her population, her men and animals, from Asia, by the way of Behring’s Straits.”¹²⁷ Bartlett did not say *where* he thought Native Americans came from, if indeed they came from anywhere, and he appears to have embraced polygenism. Bartlett looked back across the Atlantic for the source of advanced Mound Builders cultures, citing works published in France that the Grave Creek stone’s inscription was Phoenician, or was consistent with inscriptions in the heart of Africa, as well as in Algiers and Tunis.¹²⁸ Bartlett also delivered a paper before the AES on evidence for the Welsh visit by Prince Madoc in

¹²⁵ For Schoolcraft’s marriage to Howard, see Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 284–291.

¹²⁶ In a paper delivered before the society in two parts in 1846, Bartlett (the society’s foreign corresponding secretary) called the Grave Creek stone “the only relic yet discovered in North America, of an inscription bearing alphabetical characters, which have been satisfactorily identified as such.” Bartlett remarked in a footnote: “I am aware that many believe the sculptures on the Dighton rock to contain several alphabetical characters. Prof. Rafn in his learned and ingenious memoir on this inscription supports this view.” John Russell Bartlett, “Observations on the Progress of Geography and Ethnology, with the historical facts deduced therefrom. Read at the meetings in November and December, 1846,” *Proceedings of the New-York Historical Society for the year 1846* (New York: Press of the Historical Society), 160. A final version of this paper was published as *The Progress of Ethnology, an account of recent archaeological, philological and geographical researches in various parts of the globe...* (New York: American Ethnological Society, 1847).

¹²⁷ Bartlett, *The Progress of Ethnology*, 15.

¹²⁸ Bartlett, *The Progress of Ethnology*, 13–14. Bartlett cited Eugene Vail, *Notice sur les Indiens de l’Amerique du Nord* (Paris: 1840), stating Vail asked the French traveller Edme-François Jomard for his opinion on the Grave Creek stone in 1839 and he replied “they were of the same character with the inscriptions found by Major Denham in the interior of Africa, as well as in Algiers and Tunis.” (Bartlett, *The Progress of Ethnology*, 14.) Bartlett also cited a paper forwarded to him by Jomard (cited by Bartlett as “Second Note sur un pierre gravée dans un ancien tumulus Americaine, et a cette occasion, sur l’idiome Libyen”) delivered before the Academie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres in Paris in 1845, in which Jomard “hints at their Phenician origin.” (Bartlett, *The Progress of Ethnology*, 14.)

1170.¹²⁹ He ventured further into White Tribism with stories of blond-haired and “white” Indians in the western United States, including a trapper’s tales of a tribe, called the Mawkeys, that “had ‘light, flaxen hair, blue eyes and skins of the most delicate whiteness.’”¹³⁰

Polygenism and monogenism did not fall into neat categories where attitudes towards Native Americans and other ethnic (non-White) populations were concerned. A monogenist could hold Japheth-migration convictions that produced harsh racist views of peoples who were not favored, or were even cursed, by God, and were preordained to be subservient to whites. For all their claptrap pseudoscience, advocates of polygenism derived much intellectual mileage from attacking the monogenism of men like Schoolcraft who accepted on unscientific faith that humanity descended from the sons of Noah.¹³¹

Monogenists also could harbor ideas (to which Schoolcraft subscribed) of degeneration of certain racial stocks. On the other hand, it was possible for Squier to be a polygenist and view the different branches of the human family as equals. As Robert E. Bieder has written, Squier “saw all mankind (all the different ‘species of man’) as endowed with the same ‘mental and moral’ constitutions or ‘psychical sentiments,’ which progressed unilinearly, modified only by environmental factors. All ‘human species’ were equal and capable of progress,” and Squier “was sharply critical of the derogatory and pessimistic views that

¹²⁹ “On the historical evidence adduced by the Welsh in favor of the discovery of America by Madoc ap Owen Gwinedd, in the XII century. By John R. Bartlett.” In “Papers Read before the American Ethnological Society,” *Transactions of the American Ethnological Society*, vol. 1, [unnumbered].

¹³⁰ Bartlett, *The Progress of Ethnology*, 15–17. Bartlett cited an additional story about the “Munchies” (Mawkeys), related by “a New Englander.” Bartlett was referring to a freshly published second edition of *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains, and in Oregon, New Mexico, Texas, and the Grand Prairies*, by Rufus B. Sage (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1847). In a chapter dedicated to “White Indians,” Sage wrote: “The Munchies are a nation of *white aborigines*, actually existing in a valley among the Sierra de los Mimbros chain, upon one of the affluents of the Gila, in the extreme northwestern part of the Province of Sonora.... Their features correspond with those of Europeans, though with a complexion, perhaps, somewhat fairer, and a form equally if not more graceful.” (199)

¹³¹ Henry S. Patterson, a professor of materia medica at the University of Pennsylvania and an ardent supporter of polygenism, wrote in 1854: “The men who, in the middle of the nineteenth century, can still find the ancestors of Mongolians and Americans among the sons of Japhet, or who talk about the curse of Canaan in connexion with Negroes, are plainly without the pale of controversy, as they were beyond the reach of criticism.” Henry S. Patterson, “Notice of the Life and Scientific Labors of the Late Samuel Geo. Morton, M.D.,” in Josiah Clark Nott and George R. Gliddon, *Types of Mankind: or, Ethnological researches, based upon the ancient monuments, paintings, sculptures, and crania of races*, 8th edn. (1st edn. 1854; Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, and London: Trübner & Co., 1857), xliii.

polygenists held of Indians.”¹³² Squier found denials of the Indian’s ability and potential to progress, according to Robert E. Bieder, “particularly obnoxious.”¹³³

Schoolcraft Investigates Dighton Rock and Publishes his Shingwauk Reading

There was little reason to suspect Schoolcraft would ever change his opinion that Dighton Rock was the work of Indians. In his anniversary address to the New-York Historical Society in November 1846, Schoolcraft (a member of its executive committee) declared: “With the single exception of the inscription stone, found in the great tumulus of Grave Creek, in Virginia, in the year 1838, there is no monument of art on the continent, yet discovered, which discloses an alphabet, and thus promises to address posterity in an articulate voice.”¹³⁴ Yet Dighton Rock appeared to be unfinished business—perhaps not proven to be an alphabetic inscription, but not entirely disregarded, either. In November 1846, the NYHS adopted Schoolcraft’s resolution that a committee be appointed “to investigate the character and purport of the ancient pictorial inscription of symbolic figures of the (so called) Dighton Rock,” and to report back “at the earliest convenient time.”¹³⁵ The committee was comprised of Schoolcraft, Bartlett and Marshall S. Bidwell, and Schoolcraft visited the rock in August 1847.¹³⁶ If Schoolcraft reported back, there is no

¹³² Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian*, 126, 137.

¹³³ Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian*, 137.

¹³⁴ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Incentives to the Study of the Ancient Period of American History: An address, delivered before the New-York Historical Society, at its forty-second anniversary, 17th November, 1846* (New York: Press of the Historical Society, 1847), 8.

¹³⁵ *Proceedings of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1846*, 28.

¹³⁶ Born in Stockbridge, Massachusetts in 1799, Marshall Spring Bidwell was raised in Upper Canada and as a lawyer and a member of the Reformers was embroiled in the controversies of representative government. He fled to the United States in 1837 after William Lyon Mackenzie’s attempted insurrection. He became a leading lawyer in New York, lectured at Columbia’s law school, and received a doctorate of laws from Yale in 1858. G. M. Craig, “BIDWELL, MARSHALL SPRING,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bidwell_marshall_spring_10E.html (accessed September 25, 2014).

record of it. Instead, he saved his analysis for his forthcoming multivolume Congressional report project, *Historical and Statistical Information*, which was approved by Congress in March 1847.

Like everyone engaged in ethnology, Schoolcraft was struggling with the puzzles (and frauds) American antiquity was serving up. In volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information* he would pronounce the “skeleton in armor”—actually, all of the burials found at Fall River—to have been “Indians who may possibly have lived during the time of Philip’s wars, or a few years earlier,” which was a sound conclusion that archaeologists and ethnologists would agree with today.¹³⁷ He was aware of a burgeoning trade in fakes (some of which he attributed to the Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith), but assured “these pretended discoveries have been so bunglingly done as not for a moment to deceive the learned, or even the intelligent portion of the community.”¹³⁸ The bungling was not as easy to detect as he thought, as he continued to treat the Grave Creek stone as genuine in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Description*, in terms that rendered the discoverers innocent of hoax.¹³⁹ Nor was he aware that the most authoritative drawing of Dighton Rock was a deceptive pastiche, or that Rafn, upon whose opinion he was relying in determining the authenticity and cultural affinity of the Grave Creek stone, was partly responsible for it.

Of Dighton Rock, Schoolcraft wrote in volume 1: “It has been easy, at all times, to distinguish the true from false objects of archaeology, but there is no object of admitted antiquity, purporting to bear antique testimony from an unknown period, which has elicited the same amount of historical interest, foreign and domestic, as the apparently mixed, and, to some extent, unread inscription of the Dighton Rock.”¹⁴⁰ Schoolcraft knew nothing of the long historiography of the rock’s interpretation, as he alleged, “It is certain that it was not regarded in any other light than the work of Indian hands” before the Royal

¹³⁷ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:129.

¹³⁸ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:109.

¹³⁹ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:120–124.

¹⁴⁰ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:109.

Society of Northern Antiquaries took interest in it.¹⁴¹ Visiting the rock for himself, he was rowed across the Taunton River by a youth who had helpfully chalked in some of the markings for him. “The first impression was one of disappointment,” Schoolcraft confessed. “As an archaeological monument, it appeared to have been over-rated.”¹⁴²

In Volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information*, Schoolcraft at last published the interpretation Shingwauk had provided in 1839, based on the drawings in *Antiquitates Americanae*. As Schoolcraft related, Shingwauk had studied the drawings for some time with his Anishinabe companions, before making a preliminary judgment: “It is Indian; it appears to me and my friend, to be a *Muz-zin-nabik*, (i. e., rock writing.) It relates to two nations. It resembles the *Ke-ke-no-win-un*, or prophetic devices of an ancient class of seers, who worshipped the snake and panther, and affected to live underground. But it is not exactly the same. I will study it.” Schoolcraft did not explain, but Shingwauk was referring to the two major figures of the Anishinabe cosmology’s beneath-worlds, the giant serpent Chignebik and the Great Cat (or Panther or Lynx), Michipeshu, who traveled in company. Shingwauk and his companions returned the next morning with a final pronouncement. Shingwauk’s reading (assisted mainly by a hunter named Zha-ba-ties) was as elaborate as anything offered by Court de Gébelin and the other interpreters maintaining an Old World provenance. Without saying why, Shingwauk relied on the Baylies and Goodwin drawing, and explained it was a unified one, albeit divided into two scenes. To Shingwauk, the drawing was the product of a shamanic vision as well as a record of an historical event, both of which belonged in a category of picturing writing he called *Kekeenowin*, as I will outline below. The imagery involved a war between two nations of *Un-ish-in-á-ba*, or Indian people. (By this Shingwauk did not mean they were specifically Anishinabe in a modern political-cultural sense, but rather that neither party depicted was non-Indian.) On the left side of the drawing Shingwauk identified “an ancient prophet and war captain,” accompanied by his sister, “his assistant and confidant in some of his prophetic arts.” She

¹⁴¹ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:108.

¹⁴² Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:109.

is also “held out, as a gift, to the first man who shall strike, or touch a dead body in battle.” There was a shaman’s lodge, a war club, dots represented the passage of time in moons, “an anomalous animal, which probably appeared in his fasts to befriend him,” a figure denoting the number forty, next to a dot denoting skulls, a sun that served as the clan symbol of the prophet, a loon that represented the prophet, named Mong, a war camp, “a wooden idol, set up in the direction of the enemy’s country, and within sight of the prophet’s lodge,” and more. On the right side were two human figures, representing the enemy (“drawn without arms, to depict their fear and cowardice”) three decapitated men, a belt of peace, and symbols denoting boasting, doubt and preparation for war.¹⁴³ As for the horned quadruped, Shingwauk read the Baylies-Goodwin version as “a symbol of the principal war-chief of the expedition against the enemy. He led the attack. He bears the totemic device of the Pizhoo, which is the name of the northern lynx. (L. Canadensis.)” Schoolcraft added: “The same word, with a prefix denoting great, is the name of the American cougar, or panther.”¹⁴⁴ Schoolcraft seemed not to understand that the “great panther” was not a Linnaean classification for a species but rather was Michipeshu, the major cosmological figure. Schoolcraft proposed Shingwauk’s reading might be related to a tradition gathered by Schoolcraft’s brother-in-law, George Johnston, of a Nipigon war leader, the king-fisher, or Kish-kemanisee, who pursued a course of war that carried him all the way from northern Lake Superior to the Atlantic coast. “His hieroglyphics have been discovered on one of the islands in Boston Bay,” Johnston related, and in printing this narrative in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information*, Schoolcraft noted: “This may possibly be an allusion to the inscription on the Dighton Rock.”¹⁴⁵

It is difficult to know what to make of Shingwauk’s elaborate reading, being problematic on multiple levels. To begin, Shingwauk could only “read” what had been drawn by Anglo-Americans. Translation was another problem. Schoolcraft’s lack of fluency in Ojibwa was underscored by the fact

¹⁴³ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:114–117.

¹⁴⁴ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:115.

¹⁴⁵ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:304.

that he made sure he had on hand a translator, Henry Conner, “the most approved interpreter of the department,” in addition to two members of Schoolcraft’s family (probably his spouse and brother-in-law, George), “all well versed in the Chippewa and English languages.”¹⁴⁶ Even if these interpreters were faithful to Shingwauk’s words, before the information reached the printed page it had to be filtered through Schoolcraft, who was a storyteller foremost, an issue to which I will return.

We also need to consider the perspective and motivations of Shingwauk. I suspect Shingwauk and his companions were not *translating* an inscription, but rather infusing with meaning a set of pictographs of an unknown antiquity, far from where they lived. As I have discussed in the Introduction, archaeologists and ethnographers recognize that Indigenous peoples confronted with cultural materials like rock art of unknown origin can give them fresh relevancy by assigning them interpretations that fulfill cultural objectives in memory and place-making. An important factor in assessing whether this “re-quickening” or reinterpreting was at work with Shingwauk’s reading is that Dighton Rock was not the only example of glyphic marks Schoolcraft had Shingwauk interpret for him. Shingwauk provided birch-bark drawings of Lake Superior rock paintings that he explained depicted a prophet and war chief named “Myeengum, or the Wolf of the Mermaid,” who dispatched canoes on a successful war party and recorded his success on both sides of the lake. Reading Schoolcraft’s account of Shingwauk’s Myeengum reading in the same volume, one is struck by the thematic similarities to Shingwauk’s Dighton Rock interpretation.¹⁴⁷ Further, when another sculptured rock was discovered on Cunningham’s Island in Lake Erie, Schoolcraft had a drawing made and presented to Shingwauk for interpretation. [Fig. 25] Shingwauk’s reading for Schoolcraft was of a kind with the Dighton Rock interpretation: a multipart composition involving chiefs who were also shamans, and depicting war narratives.¹⁴⁸ As such, these

¹⁴⁶ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:118.

¹⁴⁷ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:406–408.

¹⁴⁸ Shingwauk divided the Cunningham’s Island petroglyphs into three parts. He saw two figures he thought were brothers “surveying the scene of carnage and battle...No. 27 holds his pipe (28) reversed, as if despairing and agonized. No. 84, on the contrary, sits calmly viewing the sanguinary field, with his foot removing a skull and the

readings, including the Lake Superior pictographs, were a reflection of Shingwauk's life and standing. These readings may also fall into a pattern of "militarized" interpretations of cultural materials, including rock art and earth works, by Indigenous people in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which may reflect both a gender bias in researchers collecting interpretations from men, and the honoring of past military feats being a cultural priority at a time of great dislocation.

We must also question how much of Shingwauk's reading of Dighton Rock and other glyphic works was shaped by what Shingwauk suspected Schoolcraft wanted to hear. Shingwauk as noted was a shrewd politician, and although he had settled on the British side of the border, he may have wished to make himself useful to the American superintendent. Schoolcraft's vision of American antiquity was of multiple migrations and bloody clashes, and depictions of warfare between different Indigenous groups would have been made to order for him.

Finally, we must question how much of Shingwauk's readings actually were the work of Schoolcraft. Schoolcraft's shaping (and reshaping) of his Indian legends for publication (and republication) has been explored by a number of scholars.¹⁴⁹ There should be little doubt that he took the information he gleaned from Shingwauk and composed a literary narrative as much as an ethnographic report. Nothing Shingwauk is quoted saying should be considered a verbatim record. More problematic is the possibility that Schoolcraft injected his own interpretations into Shingwauk's explanations, in hope of

remains of a body. These are wild forest Indians, as they are drawn without hats." Among the other figures was a great chief, wearing a medal, whose "intercourse with Europeans, and consequent condition, are denoted by the square symbol for a hat on the head." There was also a "chief and necromancer" shown with an ornament in a slit ear, wearing a hat and three gorgets. "He is evidently a man of consequence and power, which is further denoted by No. 119, a wand." Finally, Shingwauk's reading indicated a road, block by serpents, "symbolizing enemies, trouble, misery, and pain of the most pointed and stinging character." Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 3:88.

¹⁴⁹ For discussions of the "authenticity" of Schoolcraft's legends and scholarly tensions between ethnography and literature, see Hallowell and Schoolcraft, "Concordance of Ojibwa Narratives in the Published Works of Henry R. Schoolcraft;" Susan Hegeman, "Native American 'Texts' and the Problem of Authenticity," *American Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (Jun. 1989): 265–283; Richard Bauman, "The Nationalization and Internationalization of Folklore: The case of Schoolcraft's 'Gitshee Gauzinee,'" *Western Folklore* 52, no. 2/4 (Apr.–Oct. 1993): 247–269; and William M. Clements, "Schoolcraft as Textmaker," *The Journal of American Folklore* 103, no. 408 (Apr.–Jun. 1990): 177–192.

making them clearer or more authoritative, or simply to suit his own preferred reading. For example, Shingwauk's detection of hats on acculturated Indians, to distinguish them from "wild forest Indians," in his explanation of the Cunningham's Island petroglyph, recalls Schoolcraft's recounting (and facsimile drawing in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information*) of the 1820 birch-bark message in which white men are distinguished by giving them hats. We must also keep in mind that considerable time—twelve years—passed between Schoolcraft gathering Shingwauk's reading of Dighton Rock and publishing his account.

There is ample reason to question how much of the interpretation of the Cunningham's Island petroglyph should be attributed to Shingwauk. Schoolcraft made passing mention of this petroglyph in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information* in 1851, and published drawings by Seth Eastman along with a preliminary description in volume 2, of 1852 (which was submitted for publication to the commissioner of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior in August 1851).¹⁵⁰ Shingwauk's interpretation, reminiscent of his previous glyphic readings and of Schoolcraft's own knowledge of birch-bark messages, did not appear until the third volume, in 1853 (submitted August 30, 1852).¹⁵¹ Schoolcraft did not interview Shingwauk personally, as the men were now far removed from each other. Shingwauk was deeply involved in difficult negotiations with the Canadian government over territorial rights on the north shores of Lake Superior and Lake Huron, was seriously ill, and died in March 1854.¹⁵² Schoolcraft did not return to the upper Great Lakes after his dismissal as Indian superintendent in 1841. After a paralytic stroke in 1845, Schoolcraft had difficulty traveling, and rarely visited even the Indian Office in Washington, D.C., where he lived, after 1851.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:334, 2:vii, 2:86–88

¹⁵¹ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 3:v.

¹⁵² See Chute, *Legacy of Shingwaukose*, 152–159.

¹⁵³ For Schoolcraft's declining health, see Bremer, *Indian Agent, Wilderness Scholar*, 297–298. His second wife, Mary Howard, in her dedication to *The Black Gauntlet: A Tale of Plantation Life in South Carolina* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1860), wrote: "For twelve years that you have been imprisoned at home by a

Schoolcraft wrote in volume 2 that as a drawing of the Cunningham's Island petroglyph was awaiting interpretation by Shingwauk, "It would be premature, therefore, to attempt its reading in the present state of the question."¹⁵⁴ But Schoolcraft already seemed to have decided what it portrayed:

Its leading symbols are readily interpreted. The human figures—the pipes; smoking groups; the presents; and other figures, denote tribes, negotiations, crimes, turmoils, which tell a story of thrilling interest, in which the white man or European, plays a part... The whole inscription is manifestly one connected with the occupation of the basin of this lake by the Eries—of the coming of the Wyandots—of the final triumph of the Iroquois, and the flight of the people who have left their name on the lake.¹⁵⁵

In volume 3 Schoolcraft revealed the intermediary in securing Shingwauk's reading was Schoolcraft's brother-in-law, George Johnston, "a gentleman well versed in the Indian language, manners and customs..."¹⁵⁶ (As to the "gentleman" assurance, Johnston had been an itinerant trader whose employment with the Indian department was undermined by bouts of drinking.¹⁵⁷) We must consider what Schoolcraft conveyed to Johnston in way of an expectation of how Shingwauk should interpret the petroglyph, how accurately Johnston reported the reading by Shingwauk, and how accurately Schoolcraft reported whatever he learned from Johnston. The fidelity of Johnston's reportage is unknowable, but I suspect Schoolcraft primed Johnston to secure a reading (as he promised in volume 2) that reflected the

stroke of paralysis..." (ix) Bremer's biography of Schoolcraft, while detailed in many respects, has nothing to say about his Dighton Rock interpretations or Shingwauk.

¹⁵⁴ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 2:88.

¹⁵⁵ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 2:88.

¹⁵⁶ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 3:85.

¹⁵⁷ Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 219.

history of the Erie. Schoolcraft volunteered in volume 3 that the symbols “related to tribes and transactions [Shingwauk] knew little or nothing of.”¹⁵⁸ Shingwauk nevertheless purportedly “expressed the opinion that he believed the inscription related to the wars and history of the Eries, after the Indians became acquainted with the white.”¹⁵⁹ I suspect Schoolcraft not only presented the drawing of the glyphs to Shingwauk as a record of Erie events as promised in volume 2, but he also filled in interpretive blanks. As Schoolcraft assured readers of volume 2 that the Cunningham Island petroglyph’s “leading symbols are readily interpreted” before he had even received Shingwauk’s reading, Schoolcraft likely interpreted the symbols himself in volume 3, with some regard to Shingwauk but in accordance with the story of “thrilling interest” he had already promised in volume 2. Schoolcraft had intimated he was qualified to interpret images on his own in volume 1, as he recounted how Shingwauk came to instruct him in the “medicine and mystical songs” and the meaning of song scroll images: “he consented to explain the meaning the meaning of each figure, the object symbolized, and the words attached to each symbol. By this revelation, which was made with closed doors, I became, according to his notions, a member or initiate of the Medicine Society, and also of the Wabeno Society.”¹⁶⁰ We need to consider, then, the possibility that Schoolcraft interpreted the Cunningham’s Island petroglyph largely himself, and attributed the reading to Shingwauk, which he could have justified if challenged by saying he had learned the meanings of glyphs from Shingwauk, as an initiate in the medicine societies. Shingwauk’s readings of Dighton Rock and the Cunningham’s Island petroglyph, moreover, were at odds with Schoolcraft’s general attitudes towards oral traditions and pictographs. As Robert E. Bieder has noted, Schoolcraft

¹⁵⁸ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 3:85.

¹⁵⁹ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 3:86.

¹⁶⁰ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:339. Schoolcraft’s assertion that he was an initiate was likely overdramatized. John Tanner, who was raised by the Saultaux and the Odawa, served as an interpreter under Schoolcraft and made important early recordings of song-scroll images, never wrote about the Midéwiwin. George Woodcock suspected Tanner was excluded from the society. See George Woodcock, “TANNER, JOHN,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/tanner_john_7E.html (accessed September 24, 2014). Schoolcraft’s apparent ignorance of Michipeshu, which was such a fundamental figure of the beneath-world, casts further doubt.

“lamented that Indians had no history because they had no historians; they had no records that could throw light upon their past before European contact. Schoolcraft considered their legends too fabulous and their picture writing insufficient for constructing real histories.”¹⁶¹ In that light, we might conclude that Shingwauk’s readings of these pictographs as recordings of dramatic historical events were more than a little shaped by Schoolcraft to address a deficit that, as Bieder notes, he found exasperating. Schoolcraft may have been fooled by Rafn and Magnussén’s reworking of the Dighton Rock drawing attributed to the Rhode Island Historical Society, and by the perpetrators of the Grave Creek fraud, but he may also have fooled untold others with the interpretations of Dighton Rock and the Cunningham’s Island petroglyph.

Schoolcraft’s explanation of the Cunningham Island petroglyph was superficially reminiscent of Samuel Latham Mitchill’s theory of conquest in western New York. Schoolcraft must have known Mitchill’s theory, for in addition to its popularization through *Archaeologia Americana*, Schoolcraft had had been raised and educated in New York State and had been made an honorary member of the New-York Historical Society in 1819, at the height of Mitchill’s theorizing.¹⁶² Mitchill, as I reviewed in Chapter 5, thought the Erie were the Mound Builders, of Malay descent. They were defeated by the Tartar-descended Iroquois, who then attacked and drove off the Danish adventurers who built the mounds as defensive works in Western New York. Schoolcraft did not make clear in volume 2 if he thought the white men or Europeans in the Cunningham Island petroglyph were the early Europeans of Mitchill’s scenario, or were the known Anglo-American and Dutch colonists, only that they would “play a part” in the thrilling narrative. As Schoolcraft remained in the thrall of the Grave Creek stone, which he thought might be a relic of a band of Old World adventurers defeated by Indians, this petroglyph may have presented an opportunity to explain the Grave Creek find and the Mound Builder mystery in one neat and dramatic package on par with Rafinesque’s *Walam Olum*. (We should also recall Rafn’s comment to Webb that Schoolcraft agreed with his interpretation of Dighton Rock as an encounter between Norse and

¹⁶¹ Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian*, 206–207.

¹⁶² For Schoolcraft’s honorary membership, see Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 253.

Indians. Schoolcraft once may have been prepared to associate the Grave Creek find with Dighton Rock.) However, when it came time to deliver Shingwauk's alleged reading of the Cunningham's Island petroglyph in volume 3, Schoolcraft placed the events in a conventional historical setting, after the arrival of the Dutch and other Europeans in the seventeenth century. He presented the petroglyph as a record of events related to the Iroquois's expulsion of the Erie, who he proposed in retreat became the Catawba.¹⁶³

Understanding Shingwauk's (purported) readings, and Schoolcraft's reportage of them, are critical not only to the longstanding dispute over Dighton Rock's provenance, but also to the entire field of rock-art study in North America. Schoolcraft's efforts to document examples, especially images in Ojibwa song scrolls, in volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information*, were an important milestone in ethnographic study, a comprehensive attempt to document, explain and draw connections between rock art, song scrolls, and gravesite pictographs, which included references to (and reproductions of) Strahlenberg's recorded images from Siberia, among them a shaman's drum and inscribed stones (plates 66, 67). Schoolcraft proposed a cognitive root in China for the pictographs and favored the Bering crossing theory: "Idle, indeed, would be the attempt, at this day, to look for the origin of the American race in any other generic quarter than the eastern continent."¹⁶⁴ His drawings of song-scroll "hieroglyphs" were admired by J.G. Kohl, who made his own recordings of song-scroll images and interpretations (including a number explained to him by Shingwauk's son) in *Kitchi-Gami*.¹⁶⁵ Schoolcraft's depiction and explanation of glyphs continue to be relied on by researchers, and Garrick Mallery, in his major survey, "Pictographs of the North American Indians," published in 1886, noted a case of forgery in which a

¹⁶³ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 2:85–86.

¹⁶⁴ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:343.

¹⁶⁵ Kohl mentioned Schoolcraft's "large and valuable work on the Indians" with its "specimens of pictures and figures," a reference to volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Information*, in *Kitchi-Gami*, 285. Kohl was also familiar with, and an admirer of, *Algie Researches* (87), and adopted Schoolcraft's term "Algie" as an encompassing cultural label for the Ojibwa people he met.

ceremonial pipe stem was created by someone using images “very skillfully copied from the numerous characters of the same kind representing Ojibwa pictographs, and given by Schoolcraft.”¹⁶⁶

Through Shingwauk, Schoolcraft proposed nomenclature for Indigenous rock art. Rock art (or as Schoolcraft put it, rock writing) was known as *Muzzinnabik*, and picture writing in general fell into two classes: *Kekeewin*, which consisted of images understood by everyone and incorporated messages written in the course of travels; and *Kekeenowin*, which was an esoteric system reserved for shamanic practices and encompassed (as Schoolcraft defined them) medicine, necromancy, revelry, hunting, prophecy, war, love, and history.¹⁶⁷ While the general term for rock paintings, *mzinabiginigan*, has retained currency among the Anishinabeg, the nomenclature set down by Schoolcraft generally has not endured.¹⁶⁸ In a meeting of the Anthropological Society of Washington, D.C. on October 18, 1881, Garrick Mallery delivered a paper, “Dangers of Symbolic Interpretation.”¹⁶⁹ Mallery wished to “protest against the misapplication of symbols in studies of North American ethnology. Few writers on the pictographs, customs or religious rites of the North American Indians have successfully resisted the temptation to connect them, through a correspondence of symbols, with those of certain peoples of the eastern hemisphere,” he charged. Among his transgressors were Schoolcraft, whose “ponderous tomes are rich in symbols of the most abstract character, such as ‘power,’ ‘deity,’ and ‘prophecy.’”¹⁷⁰ In his major survey,

¹⁶⁶ Garrick Mallery, “Pictographs of the North American Indians,” in J.W. Powell, *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1882–83* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), 248–250.

¹⁶⁷ See “Elements of the Pictorial System,” in Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:350–366.

¹⁶⁸ Isaac Day, in “Rock Paintings: The Quest for Medicine and Knowledge,” in *Anishinaabewin Niswi*, ed. Alan Corbiere, Deborah McGregor and Crystal Migwans (M’Chigeeng ON: Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, 2012), states rock paintings are called “mzinabiginigan in our language” (86). Day does not include *kekeewin* or *kekeenowin* in his glossary (101).

¹⁶⁹ An abstract of Mallery’s paper appears in *Transactions of the Anthropological Society of Washington, for the First, Second, and Third Years of its Organization. Vol. 1. February 10, 1879, to January 17, 1882* (Washington: Printed for the Society, 1882), 71–79. I have quoted from the paper as published by Mallery as “Spurious Symbolism” in *The International Review*, Jan. 1882: 45.

¹⁷⁰ Mallery, “Spurious Symbolism,” 45. Mallery was overly harsh, as “power,” associated with medicine, remains a valid concept in interpretations of shamanic glyphs.

“Pictographs of the North American Indians,” published in 1886, Mallery made limited use of Schoolcraft and ignored his terminology.¹⁷¹

Schoolcraft’s Icelandic Pronouncement for Dighton Rock

In volume 1 of *Historical and Statistical Description*, Schoolcraft noted minor discrepancies between the Baylies-Goodwin drawing of 1790 and the so-called Rhode-Island Historical Society drawing of 1830.

The letters shown in the latter drawing were “either imprecise or wholly wanting.” Nevertheless, Schoolcraft came to a confounding conclusion: “there were two diverse and wholly distinct characters employed, namely, an Algonquin and an Icelandic inscription.”¹⁷²

Schoolcraft apparently had accepted—belatedly—a rejoinder to his *American Biblical Repository* review of *Antiquitates Americanae* of April 1839, which appeared in the publication’s July issue of the same year.¹⁷³ The Reverend A. B. Chapin of New Haven, Connecticut challenged Schoolcraft’s conclusion that the Roman lettering on Dighton Rock was likely a schoolboy prank.¹⁷⁴ Chapin pointed out that the letters CXXXI at least in portions had appeared in several earlier drawings, and must be genuine. Chapin proposed that the inscription at the center of the rock relating to Karlsefni was made by the Norse, and that the Indians added their drawings later, around it.¹⁷⁵ Irrespective of the Reverend Chapin’s advice, Schoolcraft had firm grounds on which to continue to reject the Norse origin of the inscription. Shingwauk had told him that the three X shapes in the Baylies-Goodwin drawing (which became CXXXI

¹⁷¹ Garrick Mallery, ““Pictographs of the North American Indians,” in J.W. Powell, *Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1882–83* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886).

¹⁷² Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:109.

¹⁷³ A. B. Chapin, “Article XI. Ante-Columbian History of America. Dighton Rock,—Language of Skroellings, etc.,” *The American Biblical Repository*, July 1, 1839: 191.

¹⁷⁴ Schoolcraft’s initial interpretation and Chapin’s rejoinder are discussed by Kolodny in *In Search of First Contact*, 121–125.

¹⁷⁵ Chapin, “Article XI,” 191.

in the doctored Rhode-Island Historical Society drawing) represented decapitated bodies. This was a plausible interpretation, inasmuch as Schoolcraft's own examples of pictographs in volume 1 (including his own portrait in the 1820 birch-bark message) showed the X was a common core form for depicting human bodies, and for body shapes in general, including figures like the thunderbird. When Schoolcraft had pointed out to Shingwauk the C and I and a compound character for "men" before and after the Xs in the doctored drawing, Shingwauk "promptly threw them out, saying that they had no significancy in the inscription." But Schoolcraft put them right back in, along with the Xs: "It would seem by every fair principle of interpretation, that these six characters should be construed together." Schoolcraft's strange logic was that denying Shingwauk the three Xs as Indigenous symbols only cost Shingwauk's interpretation "the adjunct fact of an acknowledged loss of three men in the attack, while it restores to the Scandinavian portion, what is essential to it." This Solomonic wisdom, which divided the inscription between Native and Norse as if it were contested property, was hardly scholarly, but it upheld Magnussén's core reading of "CXXXI men," with the inscription below being "manifestly either the name of the person or the nation that accomplished this enterprise." Yet Schoolcraft not only admitted he could not find the name "Thorfins" as the Rhode Island society drawing promised, but also observed that the runic figure for *Th* "is some feet distant from its point of construed connection [to "orfins"], and several other pictographic figures intervene." Regardless, Schoolcraft called this area "the presumed Icelandic part of the inscription," and advised further scrutiny was invited.¹⁷⁶

I suspect Schoolcraft reversed himself and accepted that at least part of the rock's markings—the most important part where a Norse attribution was concerned—was "Icelandic" to restore his good relations with those (including Rafn and Magnussén) who believed in the Karlsefni reading. The reversal also may have been due to the souring of his friendship with E.G. Squier. Their relationship had managed to rise above their differences on polygenism and monogenism, but in *Transactions of the American*

¹⁷⁶ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 1:118.

Ethnological Society in 1848, Squier suggested the Grave Creek stone may be a hoax and offered a sarcastic theory for how it might have gotten there:

...it is quite feasible, by a single effort of imagination, to transport a sturdy Celt across a trackless ocean, through a wilderness infested by savages and wild beasts, and upon the banks of the Ohio invest him with a chieftaincy among the mound-builders; who, it is also easy to suppose, in memory of so renowned an adventurer, reared over his remains a huge earth structure,—a mode of sepulture eminently congenial to an individual accustomed to similar practices in his native land!¹⁷⁷

Squier did not name Schoolcraft as one of the true believers in the Grave Creek stone, but Schoolcraft was offended that Squier had been permitted to express this opinion in the publication of a society in which Schoolcraft was a leading member.¹⁷⁸ Schoolcraft finally broke with Squier over Squier's publication in early 1851 of *The Serpent Symbol*. Squier had been inspired by Schoolcraft's collections of Native American traditions to explore religion and mythology in *The Serpent Symbol*, but Squier angered Schoolcraft by advancing polygenism and condemning the influence of dendritic Biblical family branching on ostensibly scientific explanations of human racial differences and the peopling of the Americas.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ Ephraim George Squier, "Observations on the Original Monuments of the Mississippi Valley," *Transactions of the American Ethnological Society*, vol. 2 (1848), 202.

¹⁷⁸ Schoolcraft complained to Squier's leading supporter in the AES, Bartlett, who shared Schoolcraft's belief in the authenticity of the Grave Creek stone. Schoolcraft condemned the "gross inflation & reckless assumption with which the young writer presumes to speak of the labour of others. The whole style of the pamphlet from page 75 is offensive to truth...If the Ethnological Society does not owe it to me, as one of its founders, members & officers to protect me from such publications in its formal Transactions, it at least owes this degree of respect to itself." Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to John Russell Bartlett, Jan. 14, 1848, quoted by Bremer, *Indian Agent, Wilderness Scholar*, 315. Despite this protest, Richard G. Bremer notes, Schoolcraft wished Squier and Davis well in the same letter to Bartlett. Bremer, *Indian Agent, Wilderness Scholar*, 315.

¹⁷⁹ Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian*, 139–140. For Bieder's full discussion of *The Serpent Symbol*, see 132–140.

In April 1851, soon after the publication of *The Serpent Symbol*, Squier was condemning the ideas promoted by the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries in his rebuttal to a paper delivered to the American Ethnological Society by Christian Augustus Adolph Zestermann of Leipzig. Zestermann unwisely employed Davis and Squier's *Ancient Monuments* to argue the mounds and artifacts were evidence of a visit by ancient Europeans, who taught arts and religion to the Indians.¹⁸⁰ Squier began his retort to this Gothicist fantasy by noting the recent theories for a Norse arrival in the New World. The evidence put forward by "the Antiquaries of Copenhagen" for a Norse presence in Rhode Island "is incapable of supporting a critical analysis; and the stress which has been laid upon it has contributed to weaken, rather than to sustain, the original proposition." Dighton Rock, Squier assured, "has almost exact counterparts in various parts of our country, which are well known to be of Indian origin: the Fall River Skeleton, in its mode of burial, cranial characteristics, and in the ornaments found with it, is clearly that of an Indian; and the 'Old tower' at Newport, it is now demonstrable, has an antiquity of not more than two hundred years."¹⁸¹ If Squier insisted there was nothing Scandinavian about Dighton Rock, then Schoolcraft may have been prepared to consider that perhaps there was. In volume 4 of *Historical and Statistical Information* in 1854, Schoolcraft conducted his own housecleaning of untenable ideas in American ethnology and archaeology, condemning Squier and *The Serpent Symbol* along the way.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Christian Augustus Adolph Zestermann, *Memoir on the European Colonization of America in Ante-Historic Times, by Dr., of Leipsic, with critical observations thereon, by E. G. Squier, Esq., from the Proceedings of the American Ethnological Society, April 1851* (S.I. : s.n., 1851).

¹⁸¹ Ephraim George Squier, "Observations on the Memoir of Dr. Zestermann, relating to the Colonization of America in Pre-Historic Times," in Zestermann, *Memoir on the European Colonization of America in Ante-Historic Times*, 20–21. Squier mentions the recent publication of *The Serpent Symbol* on page 23.

¹⁸² Squier "abruptly entered the field of American archaeology, by a paper for the Smithsonian Institution, published in its contributions for 1838, which created high expectations of future promise. These are not sustained by his work on the Serpent Symbol, which there is no possibility of a considering a contribution to American archaeology." Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 4:116.

Thomas Webb, the Rock Art of the West, and Schoolcraft's 1854 Reversal

On April 28, 1854, John Ordranax of Taunton wrote Thomas H. Webb, posing five questions about the preparation of *Antiquitates Americanae* and more specifically about the interpretation of Dighton Rock.¹⁸³ Ordranax was a law student who would become a professor of law and medical jurisprudence at Columbia College in New York; he had been elected corresponding secretary of the Old Colony Historical Society of Taunton when it was founded in May 1853, and presumably he was interviewing Webb on behalf of the new organization, although nothing was published.¹⁸⁴ Ordranax's questions were an interrogative bookend to the questions Carl Christian Rafn had submitted to the Rhode Island Historical Society in June 1829. Webb's confident initial response of 1830 had launched Dighton Rock into its most recent and contested incarnation, as a Scandinavian relic; twenty-four years later, Webb was defensive over his reasoning and researches, recounting the early advice he allegedly received from Cass, Schoolcraft and others that there were no Indian rock inscriptions in America.¹⁸⁵

Webb's life since the publication of *Antiquitates Americanae* had undergone dislocations and traumas to rival those of Henry Schoolcraft. Webb had married in 1833 and moved to Boston around 1839, to follow the example of John Russell Bartlett in New York in entering publishing with the house of Marsh, Capen, & Lyon in the field of popular education while working on the *Common School Journal* under editor Horace Mann.¹⁸⁶ Something went terribly awry in his life, but J.P. Quincy went no further

¹⁸³ Ordranax's letter does not survive, only Webb's responses, dated May 9 and 27, 1854. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

¹⁸⁴ Samuel Hopkins Emery, *History of Taunton, from its Settlement to the Present Time* (Syracuse NY: D. Mason & Co., 1893), 695–696. For Ordranax and the founding of the Old Colony Historical Society, see also Samuel Hopkins Emery, "Historical Sketch of the Old Colony Historical Society," in *Collections of the Old Colony Historical Society. Papers Read before the Society during the Year 1878*, 5–11 (Taunton MA: Published by the Society, 1879).

¹⁸⁵ All quotations of Webb herewith are from the second letter from Webb to Ordranax, May 27, 1854. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

¹⁸⁶ Quincy, "Memoir of Thomas Hopkins Webb, MD," 337.

than to recount: “Financial and family troubles, unnecessary to particularize, followed hard upon this new occupation; they gave Dr. Webb that experience of the tests and trials of life which it is probably not wholesome altogether to escape.”¹⁸⁷ In 1850, Webb’s old friend, the politically connected Bartlett, who had just moved back to Providence, came to his aid. Bartlett secured from U.S. president Zachary Taylor the post of American commissioner for the United States and Mexico Boundary Commission. Bartlett hired Webb as his secretary, and Webb performed additional duties as one of four collectors in Bartlett’s biology unit, although Webb’s focus was on mineralogy.¹⁸⁸ Webb served on the commission for the duration of its existence, from 1850 to 1853, exploring the American southwest on horseback.

The most remarkable part of the letter from Webb to Ordranax of May 27, 1854, was Webb’s recollections of his experiences with rock art in the American southwest. “I traversed a section of the country extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Coast at California. In various portions of this vast tract, I saw many rocks in situ, and many boulders, whose surfaces & perpendicular sides were highly charged with markings. Most of these were isolated forms or figures, and may have been Indian figures.” On the passage through Hueco Tanks, a dramatic uplift about 30 miles southeast of El Paso, he saw on a rock face “a very extensive inscription, painted in colors,” that depicted men on horseback in pursuit of game, an “enormous serpent,” and other images. “The idea flitted through my mind was, that these were the work, through thoughtlessness, or by way of a joke, of some emigrant who had journed [sic] that way.” Webb had all too briefly seen one of the major rock-art sites in North America: over 3,000 images, which were not formally studied until 1939, have been documented at Hueco Tanks State

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. Quincy further noted that Webb had married Lydia Athearn of Nantucket, and that he died without leaving any children in 1866. (337)

¹⁸⁸ Bartlett reported “a large collection of minerals was made by Dr. Webb, including silver ores from New Mexico and Chihuahua, and other ores from various places along the line, which have reached home in safety. Among these mineralogical treasures is a fine specimen of bituminous coal.” John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua*, vol. 1 (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1854), ix. For Webb’s role, see viii–ix.

Historic Site.¹⁸⁹ Webb also recounted seeing petroglyphs along the River Gila in passing through Yuma territory, and he showed them to Bartlett. Bartlett drew the rock art at the River Gila, adding it to the collection of drawings he had already made at Hueco Tanks. [Fig. 28] Examples from both sites would be included in Bartlett's two-volume account of his travels as commissioner. As Bartlett wrote of the River Gila petroglyphs: "I found hundreds of these boulders covered with rude figures of men, animals, and other objects of grotesque forms, all pecked in with a sharp instrument...A few only seemed recent; the others bore marks of great antiquity."¹⁹⁰ Bartlett attributed little value to them and speculated about their creation.¹⁹¹ But where Bartlett was convinced they were the work of Indians, which helped to reinforce his certainty that Dighton Rock was an Indian monument, Webb remained stubborn about denying any Native American attribution for rock art, anywhere he found it. Every example Webb saw in the southwest appeared very old to him. "Very probably, most, if not all of these, like those spoken of by Catlin [in his 1838 letter describing the pipestone quarry petroglyphs], were the work of the former inhabitants, or earlier wanderers thro' these regions. But I have yet to learn that any Indian of the present day has made such inscriptions, and if the reverse be the fact, it far from settles the great question at issue." Webb ignored Catlin's statement that he had witnessed Dakota making glyphs at the pipestone quarry, and contrary to Webb's contention that the images at Hueco Tanks were of great antiquity, they are considered to be Mescalero Apache paintings, which were still being created at the time of Webb's visit.¹⁹² Webb had been granted a privileged early view of some of the most extensive Indigenous rock

¹⁸⁹ See: Kathy Sutherland, *Rock Paintings at Hueco Tanks State Historic Site* (Texas Park and Wildlife, 2006).

¹⁹⁰ John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents*, 2:195.

¹⁹¹ "Like most of the rude Indian sculptures or markings which I have seen, I do not think these possess any historic value, as many suppose. Where an ingenious Indian, for want of other employment, cuts a rude figure of a man or an animal on a rock in some prominent place which his people make it a practice to resort to, others, with the example before them, endeavor to compete with their brother artist, and show their skill by similar peckings. One draws an animal such as he sees; another makes one according to his own fancy; and a third amuses himself with devising grotesque or unmeaning figures of other sorts. Hence we find these sculptured rocks in large numbers in prominent places." Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents*, 2:195–196.

¹⁹² The art described by Webb and sketched by Bartlett at Hueco Tanks is attributed to Mescalero Apache warriors and dated to 1500 to 1879 AD. Sutherland, *Rock Paintings at Hueco Tanks State Historic Site*, 23.

art in the United States, to complement what he had seen in Dighton Rock and other New England examples, and he still could not be shaken from his conviction that few if any Native Americans had produced such works.

Webb objected to Squier's assertion in *Ancient Monuments* of the similarity between the petroglyphs near Steubenville, Ohio, and Dighton Rock—"it is a fancied one, merely"—and went on to frown on an address Squier had given to a British association in which (according to the account Webb read) he "commented somewhat severely, if not unhandsomely, upon the doings of the Royal Society of North. Antiq. and its collaborators. He of course considered the Assonet Inscription no great affair, & decided it to be the work of Indians..."¹⁹³ After a lengthy condemnation of Squier, Webb cited Schoolcraft's "great Work," the first volume of *Historical and Statistical Description*. Webb may not have been happy that Schoolcraft had used the testimony of an "Algonquin Chief...who professes to have decyphered as Indian, all but that portion which Prof. Magnusen conjectured to be Runic," but at least an Icelandic attribution for Dighton Rock had survived Schoolcraft's scrutiny. Webb also thought Schoolcraft's remarks on the Fall River skeleton in the volume "are not altogether, tho' perhaps in the main, correct." Webb then noted that while in Washington in March 1853 he met with Schoolcraft, who told him he was arranging to have a daguerreotype made of Dighton Rock. Webb informed Schoolcraft that he had arranged a daguerreotype himself in 1840.¹⁹⁴ What became of this extremely early American daguerreotype is unknown, but according to Webb, Schoolcraft explained he wanted a new one of his own, which Eastman would supervise. Webb promised to assist Eastman, but they failed to connect.

¹⁹³ Squier mentioned the "British Science Association," which was probably the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Webb also mentioned having read an item in the *National Intelligencer* about Squier's address. I have not been able to locate a record of this event. As the timing of Squier's remarks is unknown, they could have been made after the rift opened between Squier and Schoolcraft.

¹⁹⁴ Webb must have arranged a daguerreotype with one of the earliest practitioners in the United States, as the daguerreotype process had only been introduced, in France, in 1839. Albert Sands Southward and Joseph Pennell opened a studio in Cabotville (now Chicopee), Massachusetts, adjacent to Springfield, no later than May 1840, then moved their studio to Boston in April 1841. Beaumont Newhall, *The Daguerreotype in America* (New York: Dover Publications, 1976), 41–42. But it is possible Webb enlisted the services of another early practitioner.

Webb next revealed that in the very course of writing this letter, Schoolcraft's volume 4 had arrived. As that volume indicated, Eastman indeed visited the rock and enlisted a Taunton daguerreotypist, Horatio B. King, who took the first surviving photographs. [Fig. 27] When Schoolcraft examined the results, he could see no evidence for the Icelandic inscription he previously had persuaded himself was there. Schoolcraft thus reversed himself *again* on Dighton Rock in volume 4. The rock represented "a uniform piece of Indian pictography...It is entirely Indian, and is executed in the symbolic character which the Algonquins call Kekeewin,—i.e., teachings. The fancied resemblances to old forms of the Roman letters or figures, which appear on the Copenhagen copies, wholly disappear."¹⁹⁵

Webb now had to confront the disavowal by Schoolcraft of any connection between Norse explorers and Dighton Rock. Schoolcraft dismissed both Dighton Rock and the Newport tower (whose purported mystery Webb had thrust upon the world) as "fallacious proofs" of a Norse presence, thus bringing his opinions in line with those of Squier, although he was still accepting the Grave Creek stone as genuine.¹⁹⁶ Webb's apoplexy unfolded in real time as he continued the letter. Schoolcraft "thinks the question is now conclusively settled, that no Scandinavian or Runic record was ever made on the rock." To the contrary, Webb insisted that the daguerreotype published in the volume "settles nothing," condemning it as an "imperfect representation, and by no means a complete facsimile of the original. I regret more than ever that I did not accompany Capt. E." It angered Webb (not without cause) that the inscription had been chalked; none of the subtleties that his committee had striven to capture in their drawing could possibly be shown without proper lighting. After his tirade had run its course, Webb rationalized that Dighton Rock could be discarded as a Norse relic. The evidence for the Norse voyages to New England, he reasoned, was strong enough without it. He then made an extraordinary pirouette. Having tirelessly insisted Native Americans were not responsible for the many pictographs and petroglyphs he had seen, having never expressed a word of concern over appropriating a cultural heritage

¹⁹⁵ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 4:119–120.

¹⁹⁶ Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, 4:117, 118.

he had so steadfastly denied since 1830 (and indeed, right up until the argumentative preceding paragraphs in this letter), he delivered this burst of sentiment:

But allowing [Dighton Rock] to be an Indian Monument, it should be none the less highly prized, and carefully preserved, not only as a precious Aboriginal relic, & valuable specimen of the redman's pictography, but as the one which has aroused attention in the present day to this class of memorials and thus proved the means of rescuing from utter oblivion many such which otherwise would have been soon destroyed by the corroding tooth of time, or the more rapidly devastating march of modern "improvement," and the heavy blows unsparingly dealt to the right and left by the vigorous arm of young America.

Webb closed by briefly replying to Ordranax's fifth and final question: no, the Rhode Island Historical Society did not own a copy of Torfaeus; the only one he knew of, outside of Harvard College, was in the Astor Library. Thus ended the record of Thomas Hopkins Webb's involvement with transatlantic Gothicism and Dighton Rock.

Conclusion

Shingwauk pronounced on the Indigeneity of Dighton Rock because he was asked to by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, and we in turn must ask ourselves how much of Shingwauk's reading can be accepted. His confidence that the rock was the work of, and depicted only *Un-ish-in-á-ba*, deserves our own confidence. Beyond affinity, however, meaning remains contestible, and probably irresolvable, not only because of the ontology of the world the glyphs depict, but also because of Schoolcraft's reliability as a faithful recorder of Shingwauk's interpretation. For all its problems, Shingwauk's reading is a rare example of an Indigenous voice being heard, however garbled, in the studies of Indigenous material culture, including the Mound Builder relics. "The denial of America's Indian heritage implicit in the mound-builder myth

persisted in the face of an awesome burden of evidence to the contrary,” according to Brian W. Dippie.¹⁹⁷ Although Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, aided by Shingwauk, made an influential finding on the Indigeneity of Dighton Rock in 1854, winning over even Thomas H. Webb, this did not resolve the Mound Builder controversy (as much as Schoolcraft argued those relics too belonged to ancestors of Native Americans), or end the insidious utility of the multiple migration theory in deciding to whom America had once belonged, and now ought to belong. Men like John Russell Bartlett had employed the new disciplines of archaeology and ethnology to support a notion of an American prehistory with two distinct pasts. One past belonged to Native Americans’ ancestors: primitive, possibly a different strain of humanity entirely, and responsible for Dighton Rock and similar inscribed stones deemed to be of crude execution that were catalogued by Davis and Squier in *Ancient Monuments*. The other past belonged to an advanced people of an unknown origin, who had no relation to Native Americans, arrived on the continent before them, and left behind curiosities like the Grave Creek stone and possibly the entire Mound Builder cultural complex. Dighton Rock’s purpose in delineating American antiquity had reversed polarity. Charles Vallancey in 1786 had made the rock’s inscription evidence of a superior original culture that was displaced by a later wave of Tartar brutes from Asia. Now, Dighton Rock was the crude product of those brutes, and Shingwauk unwittingly had been enlisted into providing proof of that interpretation.

As Steven Conn has argued, “Americans in the antebellum period needed first to invent the Mound Builders and then to sever them from any connection to contemporary Indians. Not only did the Mound Builders help justify the dispossession of the Indians, not only did they populate the landscape with a race of ancient and wondrous people, but by insisting that Mound Builders did not degenerate into hopelessly unprogressive Indians, Americans could hold onto the legitimacy of the Bible as a historical source.”¹⁹⁸ Archaeologist Daniel Wilson was one of those scholars. He was a major figure in archaeology. He coined the term *prehistory* and popularized the three-age system of stone, bronze and iron ages

¹⁹⁷ Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 17–18.

¹⁹⁸ Conn, *History’s Shadow*, 132–133.

conceived by the celebrated Danish archaeologist Jens Jacob Asmussen (J. J. A.) Worsaae.¹⁹⁹ A Scot transplanted to Canada, Wilson struggled to hold onto the legitimacy of the Bible as a historical source, in the face of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), while also combatting the rise of pseudoscientific polygenism.²⁰⁰ As Ramsay Cook has noted, Wilson "was willing to accept almost the whole of evolutionary theory, but he insisted on keeping man distinct," and further argues: "Wilson's rejection of scientific naturalism, his determination to save religion and morality from the grasp of materialism, was an understandable and not illegitimate strategy."²⁰¹ Nevertheless, in his efforts to reconcile science with Christian morality Wilson produced a disparaging view of Native Americans, allied with a confidence in the innate superiority of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants like himself.

At the 1860 meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Wilson assigned Dighton Rock to the ancestors of modern Native Americans, and rejected a transatlantic migrationist origin for the Mound Builders.²⁰² Wilson still supported the standard multiple migration model of superior and inferior migrants across the Bering Strait. In his seminal work, *Prehistoric Man* (1862), Wilson looked for the origins of Native Americans to the regions of Central Asia "which have been for unrecorded ages the great hives of wild pastoral tribes, manifesting apparently no intrusion of

¹⁹⁹ For Wilson's popularizing of Worsaae's three-ages system, see Conn, *History's Shadow*, 137–138.

²⁰⁰ Trigger notes that Wilson applied the three-age system in *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (1851), the "first scientific synthesis of prehistoric times in the English language." (*A History of Archaeological Thought*, 133.) However, lacking the requisite academic credentials, Wilson was unable to secure a satisfactory university position in Scotland, and so moved to Canada in 1853 to teach English, history and anthropology at the University of Toronto (134).

²⁰¹ Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 14.

²⁰² Wilson derided claims to Old World scripts in American relics, saying the way in which the "aboriginal Indian...chronicles his own deeds of glory upon his buffalo robes by means of pictorial representation, and in like manner perpetuates the deeds of the illustrious dead upon their grave posts...is the same ingenious mode of primitive writing which the famous Dighton rock of this vicinity, is engraven." As for the Mound Builders: "we may surely ask, what is gained by the assumption of such foreign origins—Phoenician, Egyptian, or what not—for this native American civilization? Are we not cheating ourselves with names instead of facts or truths? What man could develop from its first primitive germ of thought in the Nile valley he surely was capable of accomplishing within the regions of Central America, where Art in other respects attained so high a development." "Third Day," *New York Times*, Aug. 6, 1860, 5.

civilizing arts or settled social habits on their rude nomade life.”²⁰³ The more advanced Mound Builders “were exposed to the aggression of barbarian tribes of the North-west,” as “the Mound-Builder differed in culture, in blood, and race from the progenitors of the modern Red Indian...”²⁰⁴ Having brought these wild pastoral tribes from the “hive” of Asia (there was that swarming term again), with a resulting change of manners and new modes of life, Wilson insisted on making them unchanged thereafter, living “just such a type of unprogressive life as the wild nomades of the Asiatic steppe. The Red-Indian of the forest of the North-West exhibits no change from his precursors of the fifteenth century,” and exhibited no capacity for change.²⁰⁵

On the essential character of Native Americans and the fate of the Mound Builders, there was little to choose between the ideas of the Christian monogenist Wilson and those of the leading polygenists, Josiah Clark Nott and George R. Gliddon, who had published *Types of Mankind* in 1854 and *Indigenous Races* (in which they coined the terms *polygenic* and *monogenic*) in 1857. As the latter stated in *Types of Mankind*, American antiquity had seen “one race, with the larger, though less intellectual brain”—ancestral Native Americans—“subjugating the unwarlike and half-civilized races”—the Mound Builders—“and it seems clear, that the latter were destined to be either swallowed up or exterminated by the former.”²⁰⁶ In reviewing Peter Stephen Du Ponceau’s work on Indigenous languages, Wilson asserted: “the range of the vocabularies furnishes a true gauge of the intellectual development of the Indian,” showing they are “incapable of abstract idealism,” a charge that recalled the condemnations of Buffon and de Pauw.²⁰⁷ Wilson assigned Dighton Rock to the culturally static, barbaric ancestors of Native

²⁰³ Daniel Wilson, *Prehistoric Man: Researches into the Origin of Civilization in the Old and New World*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1862), 1:9.

²⁰⁴ Wilson, *Prehistoric Man*, 1:458.

²⁰⁵ Wilson, *Prehistoric Man*, 1:11.

²⁰⁶ Josiah Clark Nott and George R. Gliddon, *Types of Mankind* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo, 1854), 279.

²⁰⁷ Wilson, *Prehistoric Man*, 1:12.

Americans, usurpers of the Mound Builders, who in turn were being surpassed by Anglo-American newcomers. Wilson championed the white Anglo-Saxons of Britain as humanity's greatest achievement and made an explicit Gothicist connection between the mother country and New England, as Native Americans necessarily gave way to colonists in a manner Ezra Stiles would have approved: "the old Englander becomes the New Englander; starts from his matured vantage-ground on a fresh career, and displaces the American red-man by the American white-man, the free product of the great past and the great present..." Considering America's westward expansion, Wilson further welcomed "the peaceful absorption and extinction of races who accomplish so imperfectly every object of man's being."²⁰⁸ His convictions would have been equally welcomed in Canada, as planning for westward colonization began to unfold in earnest in the 1860s.

In Wilson's worldview, granting Dighton Rock an Indigenous attribution was part of the process of damning its creators (and their descendants) as unprogressive, bereft of science, philosophy and moral teaching, as the product of a race that could not fulfill a single objective of humanity's purpose. If the progress of civilization in America, as conducted by white Anglo-Saxon Protestant colonists, proceeded fairly and justly, the Indians that yet remained could be rendered only a living memory of an imperfect, long night of ignorance. Dighton Rock would endure as proof of that banished ignorance. The makers of Dighton Rock belonged in prehistory, not in history, and not in the future of North America as colonization rolled westward on steel rails.

²⁰⁸ Wilson, *Prehistoric Man*, 1:4.

(8)

**“Meaningless Scribblings”: Edmund Burke Delabarre, Lazy Indians,
and the Corte-Real Theory, 1857–1936**

Introduction

In this chapter, Dighton Rock’s misinterpretation enters its final and enduring phase, miscast as a relic of the lost Portuguese explorer Miguel Corte-Real by Edmund Burke Delabarre. As I have frequently cited Delabarre as an authority on the historiography of Dighton Rock, he would appear to have been the least likely candidate for succumbing to a fringe explanation, all the more so because he was an international figure in experimental psychology who studied responses to ink blots. Delabarre’s capitulation to the temptations of misinterpretation may testify to Dighton Rock’s true dimensions as one of Edward Augustus Kendall’s Stones of Power: the compulsion to find an Old World inscription in its surface was almost irresistible, even for the leading expert on the follies of past theories. Delabarre’s descent into the fringe illustrates another overwhelming power: that of several centuries of racial theorizing that continued to cause Anglo-American scholars to view Native Americans in the harshest and most self-serving terms.

Dighton Rock after Schoolcraft: The Last Gasp of Anglo-American Gothicism

After Henry R. Schoolcraft concluded in 1854 that Dighton Rock’s inscription was entirely the work of Indians, the boulder entered more than a half-century of evidentiary limbo, or at least scholarly inconsequence, as its Native American provenance became the default presumption. However, in a last gasp of mainstream Gothicism romance, an attempt was made to enlist it in the promotion of Leif Eiriksson as the true discoverer and founding father of America. In the 1850s Dighton Rock captivated the Norwegian violin impresario Ole Bull, a passionate Norwegian nationalist who established a colony for freedom-loving Norwegians, New Norway, in Pennsylvania in 1852.¹ In an address to his colonists in

¹ The episode of Ole Bull’s involvement and the associated plans to move the rock to Copenhagen or Boston were recounted in three separate addresses to the Old Colony Historical Society: by Capt. J. W. D. Hall in April 1889, by Niels Arnzen in October 1889, and by George M. Young in October 1890. For Hall, see “Dighton Writing

September 1852, Bull aligned New Norway with the Vinland sagas and made clear his belief in the Norse authenticity of Dighton Rock and the Newport mill: "Upon looking over our records, we found that our countrymen, under Thorfin, had discovered that land more than eight hundred years ago, but that they were met by the cruel and savage Indians, and had left no record of themselves, excepting some traces of their sad history engraven in the rocks at Fall River; and one temple [the Newport Tower], which they had raised to God on an island at the mouth of Narragansett bay, all other record of them had passed away."²

Bull's New Norway colony failed in 1857 and he returned home disillusioned, but not before expressing a desire to own Dighton Rock. A Norwegian jeweler in Fall River, Niels Arnzen, in July 1857 purchased the rock and a sliver of adjoining shoreline on Bull's behalf for \$50, although Arnzen had to register the deed in his own name. One newspaper report in October 1857 asserted Bull would erect an iron fence around the rock to protect it.³ Bull however, did not complete the purchase, and one account alleges he could not legally hold the property because he was not an American citizen.⁴ On a trip to Scandinavia in 1859, Arnzen visited Bull, hoping to transfer title. Bull instead asked him to determine the cost of having the rock shipped to Copenhagen, as he wanted to donate it the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries.⁵ On the way home that August, Arnzen stopped in Copenhagen and called on Carl Christian

Rock," in *Collections of the Old Colony Historical Society, No. 4*, 97–100 (Taunton: Old Colony Historical Society, 1889). For Arnzen, see "Report of Committee on Dighton Rock," in *Collections of the Old Colony Historical Society, No. 5*, 94–97 (Taunton: Old Colony Historical Society, 1895). For Young, see the transcript of his address to the Old Colony Historical Society, October 1890, in Dighton Rock collection, Old Colony Historical Society. For Bull's Norwegian colony, see Norman B. Wilkinson, "'New Norway'—A Contemporary Account," *Pennsylvania History* 15, no. 2 (Apr. 1948): 120–132; and Norman B. Wilkinson, Robert K. Currin and Patrick A. Kennedy, "Ole Bull's New Norway." *Historic Pennsylvania Leaflet No. 14* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1995). Online at http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/places/4278/ole_bull's_new_norway/472266 (accessed Sept. 18, 2014).

² Ole Bull, quoted in "New Colony in Pennsylvania—Ole Bull. Oleana, Pottery County, Sept. 1852," *Lock Haven Democrat*, Nov. 2, 1852." Transcribed by Wilkinson, "New Norway," 127–128.

³ A damaged newspaper clipping from *The Republican* in October 1857 asserts this plan. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁴ J. W. D. Hall, "Dighton Writing Rock."

⁵ George M. Young address, October 1890.

Rafn, who was still secretary of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries. Rafn was surprised by, and amenable to, Arnzen's proposal to deed the rock to the society, if Bull did not complete the deed transfer himself by June 14, 1860.⁶ Bull did not do so, and on June 23, 1860, Arnzen received a letter from Frederick VII, king of Denmark and patron of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, thanking him for making a gift of Dighton Rock.⁷ While Rafn in accepting the deeded gift had imagined the rock becoming "a truly scientific ornament to the Cabinet of American Antiquary," the king made clear the rock should remain where it is.⁸

The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries was now the owner of a boulder that the American scholarly community had largely if not unanimously concluded was not a Norse relic. The *New York Times*, in reporting in 1861 the transfer of title to the Royal Society of Northern Antiquarians, observed: "since Mr. Schoolcraft's interpretation no one can doubt that it is simply aboriginal Indian."⁹ Samuel Foster Haven in "Archaeology of the United States," published by the Smithsonian in 1856, had reviewed the Norse evidence for Dighton Rock, as well as the Fall River skeleton and the Newport Tower, and found it all wanting:¹⁰ Haven saw no cause to disagree with Schoolcraft's Indian attribution of 1854. As noted in Chapter 7, Daniel Wilson too endorsed Dighton Rock's Indigeneity. Still, New England's

⁶ According to Arnzen, the rock's shipment to Denmark was arranged with the frigate *Shielland*, which was to take it aboard the rock on the way home to Copenhagen from Brazil and the West Indies: "I was to have the rock raised, shipped to that port, and placed on board the frigate. But in consequence of war breaking out between Denmark and Germany, it was found necessary, as Prof. Rafn wrote, 'to countermand the orders, as we need our whole war strength at home.'" Arnzen, "Report of Committee on Dighton Rock," 94. Arnzen's recollections, however, are not credible. If any such arrangement and countermand occurred, Arnzen did not preserve the correspondence. Moreover, war did not break out between Denmark and Germany until 1864.

⁷ For the applicable correspondence, see Rafn to Arnzen, Aug. 16, 1859; Rafn to Arnzen, March 7, 1860; Frederick VII to Arnzen, June 23, 1860. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁸ Rafn to Arnzen, Aug. 16, 1859. "A monument of this description only preserves its full value by remaining in the place it has kept from a remote antiquity, and hence the Society shall be glad to do all in its power to preserve it, supposing always that the inhabitants of the neighborhood and every visitor of the locality... will do their best to further and promote our measures, particularly in directing the public attention to the value of the said monument and to the importance of its future preservation." Frederick VII to Arnzen, June 23, 1860.

⁹ "Final Disposal of the Famous Dighton Rock," *New York Times*, Aug. 3, 1861, 4.

¹⁰ Samuel Foster Haven, "The Archaeology of the United States," Article II in *Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge*, vol. 8 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1856), 107.

Gothicist fascination with things Scandinavian remained strong in the years surrounding and following the appearance of *Antiquitates Americanae*. “Like their English and Scandinavian colleagues, whom they often parroted in this matter,” according to Oscar J. Falnes, “New England publicists devoted their highest praises to medieval Iceland. On this distant isle, romanticists liked to think, something of the old Germanic spirit had taken refuge from the debilitating effects of Latin and Mediterranean influences dominant everywhere on the continent.”¹¹ Americans also were attracted to the Althing, the assembly that had governed Iceland as a commonwealth from about 930 to 1262 AD, and was restored in 1843.¹² In this assembly New Englanders saw a historic precedent for their own republican model of government, which became cross-pollinated with the Gothicist romance of a shared cultural/ethnic origin and the appeal of heroic adventures of the Vinland sagas to their own shores.

Leading the effort to memorialize the Norse in Boston in the 1870s was Thomas Gold Appleton, a wealthy patron of the arts and a trustee of the Boston Public Library and Boston Museum of Fine Arts.¹³ He was also a brother-in-law of Longfellow (who was a friend of Bull), and Appleton’s own published writings were charged with White supremacist Gothicism.¹⁴ “Not without meaning, at the head of that swarm which beats and buzzes upon this new continent, God has placed what we call the Anglo-Saxon race,” he wrote in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1871, before lamenting the fact that the Norse were unable to found a successful colony in America: “The natives were too strong and many for them, and were not

¹¹ Falnes, “New England Interest in Scandinavian Culture and the Norsemen,” 217–218.

¹² Oslund, *Iceland Imagined*, 56. Oslund dates the start of the Althing to 1000AD, but a 900th anniversary was formally celebrated in Iceland in 1930 and Helgi Thorláksson agrees the assembly was founded around 930AD. For the history of the Althing, see Thorláksson, “The Icelandic Commonwealth Period,” in *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga*, eds. William W. Fitzhugh and Elizabeth I. Ward, 175–185 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000).

¹³ The best (indeed the only) scholarly biography of Thomas Gold Appleton is Lynn Gordon Hughes, “Thomas Appleton,” *Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography* <http://uudb.org/articles/thomasappleton.html> (accessed Sep. 14, 2014). See also his short biography, “Appleton, Thomas Gold,” in James Grant Wilson, John Fiske, eds., *Appleton’s Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, vol. 1 (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1887), 85.

¹⁴ Appleton’s spouse was Fanny Longfellow. Henry Longfellow was a close friend of Bull, and wrote him into “The Tales of the Wayside Inn.” Falnes, “New England Interest in Scandinavian Culture and the Norsemen,” 223.

providentially thinned by pestilence as for the Puritans before their arrival.”¹⁵ In 1875 Appleton espoused an environmental determinism in the vein of Buffon and de Pauw, only in his version of American colonization, the English thrived in the new climate where others failed due to their congenital “[e]nnui, indifference in matters of opinion, a certain torpor and dullness...” In contrast, “England is the master-race here. In an Anglo-American head all that has made America what it is has been thought out.”¹⁶ At the conclusion of his 1871 article in *The Atlantic Monthly*, Appleton floated the idea of a Boston memorial to the Norse discoverers of America. He imagined a fountain, surmounted with “the picturesque figure of Eirik or his son Leif...”¹⁷

Scheming over a suitable memorial arose at a reception on December 8, 1876 in Boston’s music hall for Ole Bull, who was on another American tour. In a reception address, Bull was adamant that the Fall River skeleton was Thorvald Eiriksson, and he made an imaginative effort to turn George Washington into a descendant of Thorfinn Karlsefni.¹⁸ Leading citizens at the reception, including Massachusetts Governor Alexander H. Rice, banded with Bull to create the Norse Memorial Committee, chaired by Appleton. The committee pledged itself to raising a Boston monument in honor of the Norse explorers, and to taking measures for “the protection of the Dighton Rock, now in the Taunton River.”¹⁹

¹⁵ Thomas Gold [T. G.] Appleton, “The Flowering of a Nation,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 28, no. 167 (Sep. 1871): 318.

¹⁶ Thomas Gold Appleton, *A Sheaf of Papers* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1875), 263.

¹⁷ Appleton, “The Flowering of a Nation,” 318.

¹⁸ “We find in the recent discoveries concerning [Washington’s] ancestors, that they came over in a ship, but that his ancestors’ name was Thorfinn. Well, Thorfinn is a Norwegian name, and it is not very easy to see how Thorfinn could be changed to Washington. But we see every day that strangers come here, and after some little time they change their names to some other taken from the new surroundings.” Report in the *Daily Advertiser*, quoted by Bull, *Ole Bull*, 274.

¹⁹ “Norsemen Memorial,” card dated Boston, Jan. 12, 1877, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society. Rasmus B. Anderson recounted details of the December 8, 1876 and January 12, 1877 meetings, in his preface to the second edition of *America Not Discovered by Columbus: An Historical Sketch of the Discovery of America by the Norsemen in the Tenth Century* (Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co.; London: Trübner & Co., 1877), 29–34. See also Sara C. Bull, *Ole Bull: A Memoir* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1883), 271–276, for an account of the December 8, 1876 concert, including addresses by the Rev. Edward Everett Hale and Ole Bull, as reported in the *Daily Advertiser*.

On December 28, 1876, a Dighton Rock subcommittee (also led by Appleton) wrote Arnzen, informing him “it was most advisable that the Dighton Rock and the land on which it is situated should be assigned to them in person.”²⁰ Meanwhile, the Prince Society of Boston was preparing to republish in 1877 *The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century* of 1841 by Ludlow North Beamish, who had died in 1872. Arnzen seems to have been amenable to the Appleton’s plan, unstated in the letter of December 28, 1876, to move Dighton Rock to Boston. Arnzen contacted the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries to see if it would agree to a transfer of title to the Boston group, which according to Arnzen was considering placing it in the city’s new art museum, which had opened in 1876, an idea that must have originated with Appleton.²¹

The *New York Times* was bemused by the news of the Bostonians’ plans, lampooning Appleton’s committee in an editorial, “The Boston Archaeologists,” published January 17, 1877.²² “The trophies of Schliemann disturb the sleep of the New-England antiquarians,” the editorial began. “A wild desire to go somewhere and dig up something is at present characteristic of every antiquarian, but the New-England lover of the antique is true to his protectionist prejudices, and prefers to dig at home rather than abroad... The so-called Dighton Rock is a stone in the Taunton River covered with a quantity of well-defined scratches which local antiquarians, who are interested in the hotel business, call an inscription.”²³

²⁰ Francis L. Hills to Niels Arnzen, Dec. 28, 1876. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society. The subcommittee under Hills consisted of Thomas G. Appleton, William Emerson Baker, E. N. Horsford, Edward E. Hale, Percival L. Everett, and Curtis Gillis.

²¹ Arnzen’s recollections tend to be unreliable, although he quoted from an undated letter from Thomas G. Appleton, chair of the Boston memorial society, to the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries: “We shall protect it and see that it receives no injury and perhaps have it placed in our new Art Museum in Boston.” Arnzen, “Report of Committee on Dighton Rock,” 95–96. He also asserted in this report that the Boston committee secured title to the rock from the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries in February 1877, but the letters Arnzen left to the Old Colony Historical Society make it clear no such thing happened.

²² “The Boston Archaeologists,” *New York Times*, Jan. 17, 1877, 4.

²³ The mention of the hotel business was a dig at committee member William Emerson Baker, who owned a sprawling 800-acre estate on the Charles River that featured boathouses, steam launches and a menagerie. It was open to the public for a small fee and included a hotel of more than 200 rooms. The hotel had stood at the Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876; Baker had it dismantled and shipped to the estate. See H.D.S. Greenway, “A Lost Estate,” *Boston Globe*, Apr. 8, 2010.

This alleged inscription is absolutely undecipherable and is hence said to be the work of early Norse explorers, who were deficient in education and consequently wrote very illegibly.” Opinions in Boston were no better (albeit less mocking) than those of the *New York Times*. The *Boston Daily Globe* on January 25, 1877, asked “Have We Any Norse Monuments?” and answered its own question in the negative.²⁴ The inscription on Dighton Rock “has been claimed to be composed of Phoenician, Scythian and Roman characters by different observers, and there certainly seems as much in favor of either of these hypotheses as in that of its Norse origin.” The *Daily Globe* also cited Schoolcraft (“the eminent authority on the aborigines of the country”) and the reading of his “Algonquin chief,” as well as the 1856 opinion of Samuel Foster Haven in supporting the Indian attribution. The *Daily Globe* argued “there can be no objection to the preservation of the Dighton Rock, but in view of the facts above presented it should be done in justice to the Indians, rather than to the Norsemen.”

The mockery of the *New York Times* and the skepticism of the *Boston Daily Globe* were followed by a dispiriting opinion from the Royal Society of Northern Antiquarians. The Society informed Arnzen on July 22, 1877 it had no objection to transferring the deed to the Boston committee “for its future protection and eventual removal, although the Society adheres to their opinion heretofore expressed that the removal of an Antiquarian object from its original place, is generally detrimental.”²⁵ However, the Danes threw cold water on the Boston committee’s plan to showcase the rock as evidence of the Norse arrival. Rafn had died in 1864, and any notion of the inscription’s Norse origin among the executive of the Northern Antiquaries had died with him. “As to the consideration to remove the Rock to Boston, and place it in intimate connection with a Monument to the Northern discoverers of America,” the Society advised Arnzen, “the Society must confess that the inscribed figures on the Rock, have according to the

²⁴ “Have We Any Norse Monuments?” *Boston Daily Globe*, Jan. 25, 1877, 4.

²⁵ Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries to Arnzen, July 22, 1877. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

later investigations, no connection with the Northmen's journeys of discovery or sojourn in America, but rather that it is the work of the original races of Indians."²⁶

Although a statue of Leif Eiriksson (anachronistically clutching a telescope) was erected in 1887, the plan to acquire and relocate Dighton Rock to Boston collapsed.²⁷ The practice of scouring the petroglyphs of America for evidence of Old World visitors and original inhabitants superior to Native Americans meanwhile had turned firmly pseudohistorical or pseudoarchaeological, unbecoming of a serious scholar or scientist. As Garrick Mallery had observed in his 1881 paper delivered at a meeting of the Anthropological Society of Washington, D.C.:

Alphabets, Runic, Akkad, Phoenician, and of all other imaginable origins, have been distorted from the Dighton Rock and multitudinous later precious 'finds,' while other inscriptions are photographed and lectured upon to exhibit the profound knowledge by some race, supposed to have existed some time in North America, in the arbitrary constellations of astronomy, and its familiarity with zodiacal signs now in current use. Our learned associations are invaded by monomaniacs, harmless save for their occupation of valuable time, who declare that every ancient cisatlantic object means something different from what is obvious to common sense; and their researches are gratified by frauds and forgeries, sometimes originating in mischief and sometimes in sordid speculation.²⁸

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Kolodny briefly addresses the plan to move Dighton Rock, and the erection of the statue, in *In Search of First Contact*, 230–231, but does not address the leading role of Appleton. For an image of the statue, which still stands at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Charlesgate East, see Kolodny, plate 8. For the late-nineteenth-century Gothicist enthusiasms for a Norse presence in New England, see Kolodny, Chapter 5, "The Challenge to Columbus and the Romance Undone."

²⁸ Mallery, "Spurious Symbolism," 45.

Convictions of some deep connection between the Norse and New England nevertheless endured. Charles Godfrey Leland was convinced the “myth lore” of the Penobscot and Passaquamoddy peoples of Maine derived from the Icelandic Edda, particularly in the Glooskap stories that he collected for *The Algonquin Legends of New England* (1884).²⁹ An undiscerning reader might not have appreciated that Leland did not attribute the similarities to a Norse presence or colonization in New England, or to a White Tribism transference. Instead, Leland suspected the Edda stories had diffused via the Inuit to Algonquian peoples who lived as far north as Labrador.³⁰ At the same time, the idea that the Mound Builders were a single mysterious people, distinct from and markedly superior to the ancestors of Native Americans, was in retreat. Cyrus Thomas’s decisive report to the Smithsonian, published in 1894, demonstrated that these ostensibly mysterious people who constructed the mounds “consisted of a number of tribes or peoples bearing about the same relations to one another and occupying about the same culture-status as did the Indian tribes inhabiting this country when first visited by Europeans.”³¹ Furthermore, Thomas concluded, “The testimony of the mounds is very decidedly against the theory that the mound-builders were Mayas or Mexicans who were driven out of this region by the pressure of Indian hordes...”³² The Mound Builders, in other words, were the ancestors of living Native Americans. By 1894 of course, living Native Americans had been alternately massacred and moved onto reservations, which were then greatly reduced under the General Allotment (*aka* Dawes) Act of 1887, by which Congress directed the president to negotiate allotment of reservation lands to Indians and sell the surpluses to the United States to open for homesteaders.³³ With the westward colonization plan having reached the Pacific, whether or not the

²⁹ Charles G. Leland, “The Edda among the Algonquin Indians,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, Aug. 1884: 222. Charles G. Leland, *The Algonquin Legends of New England: Myths and Folk Lore of the Micmac, Passaquamoddy, and Penobscot Tribes* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1884). The text is rife with comparisons to the Edda.

³⁰ Leland, *The Algonquin Legends of New England*, 232–233.

³¹ Cyrus Thomas, “Report on the Mound Explorations of the Bureau of Ethnology,” 17.

³² *Ibid.*, 18.

³³ Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 25.

Mound Builders were ancestors of Native Americans was a moot point from the perspective of continental manifest destiny.

The Old Colony Historical Society had initiated a plan to rescue the rock from the fiasco of the Boston Norse memorial (and the threat of physical removal) in 1879.³⁴ The transfer of title from the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries to the OCHS was finally accomplished on January 30, 1889.³⁵ With Dighton Rock's ownership repatriated and its Indigenous attribution now only challenged by fringe theorists, chiefly Anglo-American Gothicists and Scandinavian-Americans obstinately attached to a Norse founding narrative for America, more than two centuries of study and speculation appeared to draw to a close.³⁶ The provenance was all but settled: Dighton Rock as private property belonged to the OCHS, but its authorship belonged to the Native Americans of antiquity.

Edmund Burke Delabarre Encounters Dighton Rock

In 1910, Edmund Burke Delabarre, a psychology professor at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, purchased a 22-acre farm as a summer retreat on Assonet Neck.³⁷ The farm was about a mile south of Dighton Rock, and around 1913, America's most enigmatic archaeological relic caught his interest.³⁸ He was probably alerted to the stone by the commotion of efforts to protect it from vandalism.³⁹ A local

³⁴ A society member and local high school principal, Lucien Blake, wrote Arnzen: "The Boston Committee appointed in 1877 have accomplished nothing as you are aware. Thus it is our desire, in whose precinct the rock lies, to undertake immediately the preservation of the ancient memorial." Lucien Blake to Niels Arnzen, March 19, 1879, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

³⁵ Hall, "Dighton Writing Rock," 99–100.

³⁶ See Chapter 9 for Dighton Rock's role in immigrant place-making.

³⁷ Manuel Luciano da Silva dated the purchase to July 16, 1910. "Dighton Rock, what will happen to you after I die?" <http://www.dightonrock.com/dightorrockwhatwillhappentoyou.htm> (accessed Dec. 4, 2012).

³⁸ Delabarre, "The Rock-Inscriptions of New England," 81.

³⁹ Niels Arnzen in his 1889 report for the Old Colony Historical Society had recommended a sign be erected on the rock, as he was worried about the rock's vulnerability to "disfigurement by the thoughtless and the vandalism by evil-disposed persons... There are persons who write their names or cut their initials wherever they think people will see them. The rock has been somewhat defaced in that manner and it is important that means should be taken to put a stop to such mutilations." Arnzen, "Report of Committee on Dighton Rock," 97.

man, Donald G. Merrill, would recall taking down an iron sign on the rock around 1912 and accompanying a mason who “chipped off all the initials then appearing,” drilled a hole in the rock, and cemented in place a sign that quoted from a local statute regarding the defacement of monuments. The next year, 1913, Merrill found the sign removed, presumably carried away by ice. He reinstalled the sign on a pipe secured with molten lead. When he returned the following spring the pipe was bent at a ninety degree angle, and the sign stayed that way, the pipe too stiff to straighten yet not stiff enough to withstand winter ice.⁴⁰ Delabarre thus made his initial acquaintance with the rock in a context he never appeared to appreciate fully. Delabarre would attempt to sort out the many different contributions to its markings over time, but he never grasped the consequences of the fact that in addition to graffiti the markings had been chalked, painted, scrubbed, and more than likely clarified or improved with steel tools in the course of studies by people who wanted to see in it markings that were anything other than Indigenous. As an archaeological resource, it had been ruined. Garrick Mallery had recognized this unfortunate fact in limiting Dighton Rock to a paragraph in his 1886 study of pictographs, within his discussion of frauds. He briefly recounted the attempts to cast its markings as Scandinavian and Hebrew before noting: “this inscription has been so manipulated that it is difficult now to determine the original details.”⁴¹

Delabarre’s study of Dighton Rock was a paradox of obsessive detail and blindness to the fact that the markings had been so interfered with and mutilated they were likely beyond the point of affording any useful lesson of antiquity or ethnography. The markings were also a mirror that reflected back at the viewer whatever expectations and prejudices he brought to the task of decipherment. While Delabarre’s initial three-part investigation of the historiography of Dighton Rock for the Colonial Society of Massachusetts remains a valuable if not definitive source, the most informative aspect of his enquiries is what they tell us about Delabarre, and about the wont of men of letters to succumb to their own

⁴⁰ Donald G. Merrill, West Hartford, Conn., to Walter A. Merrill, Taunton, Mass. [n.d.] Accompanied by an invoice Sep. 25, 1913 from monument maker John B. Sullivan & Son of Taunton to the Old Colony Historical Society for “cutting hole and setting sign on Dighton Rock.” Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁴¹ Mallery, “Pictographs,” 250.

imaginations and to expose unpleasant Anglo-American opinions of Native Americans. In Delabarre's investigations, historiography becomes inseparable from his own biography to a degree unsurpassed in the history of the rock's studies.

The Delabarre episode of Dighton Rock's interpretation recalls the late nineteenth-century efforts of Eben Norbert Horsford to assert Massachusetts Bay as the locus of Viking activity in the New World, in that both men were esteemed professors associated with Harvard who wandered outside their fields of expertise and abandoned the scholarly rigour otherwise expected of them. Horsford served for sixteen years as the Rumford Professor of chemistry at Harvard before securing independent wealth through the Rumford Chemical Works. Horsford had been a member of Appleton's memorial committee, and his eccentric archaeological efforts placed Leifsbúdir on a bend of the Charles River, near Harvard Square.⁴² He also resorted to White Tribism in asserting "there were white people through the territory of New England... It is recorded of the whites that they had blue eyes and red hair, and that they maintained habits eminently characteristic of the Northmen."⁴³ Horsford was an amateur philologist who was at least familiar with Indigenous vocabularies, and paid to publish *Vocabularies by Zeisberger* from manuscripts held by Harvard in 1887. Horsford nevertheless went word-hunting, as he alleged white colonists of pre-Columbian America preserved their traditions in sagas, and were known as saga-men. He asserted the term found its way into Indigenous languages for leaders and orators, who were identified by Lescarbot as *Sagamos* and later by New England historians as *Sagamores*.⁴⁴ To Horsford, the Wampanoags of Philip

⁴² For a discussion of Horsford's Norse enthusiasms, see Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 231–241.

⁴³ Eben Norbert Horsford, *The Landfall of Leif Erikson A.D. 1000 and the Site of His Houses in Vineland* (Boston: Damrell and Upham, 1892), 108.

⁴⁴ Horsford asserted that *Sachem* had a common root with *Sak*, which he said was Old Norse for "prince." The great Seneca orator, Red Jacket, he claimed, was known as *Saguoa-ha*. "It was sometimes written *Sago-ye-wah-ta*,—of which the phrase a *rousing orator* would be an idiomatic equivalent." *The Landfall of Leif Erikson*, 109–110. Horsford could also find Norse origins in Indigenous placenames, such as Nauset, which he said was a combination of the Norse *Naes* and the Algonquian suffix *et*, and meant "near the Cape." (108)

and his father Massasoit were the people of Wampanakka, which was “Indian for ‘White-man’s land,’—Huíttra-manna-land.”⁴⁵

As Oscar J. Falnes remarked of Horsford: “It almost takes one’s breath away to see with what unbridled imagination and what leaves in the deductive process, he—a one-time Rumford Professor trained in the empirical discipline of chemistry—could take his point of departure in prosaic and ordinary materials and proceed until he was ready to describe in superlative terms the medieval Norse life on the Charles. He visualized nothing less than a flourishing Norse colony.”⁴⁶ Delabarre’s interpretive misadventure as a trained academic is even more arresting than the case of Horsford—or of Barry Fell, the Harvard marine biologist who in the 1970s veered into detecting European Bronze Age standing stones and ogham script in rocks throughout North America. The ironies within the Delabarre episode abound, but foremost is the fact that Delabarre was a psychology professor who specialized in studies of human visual perception and was a pioneer in the use of ink blots in clinical research. Dighton Rock was an ink blot in the form of a boulder, an analogy that eluded Delabarre until 1932, in spite of the fact that James Winthrop’s rendering published in 1804 was based on an impression pulled from the rock with printer’s ink in 1788.

Delabarre was like his own Cassandra, repeatedly issuing warnings about the perils of interpreting the inscription, which he ultimately failed to heed. “Its history illustrates almost every variety of scientific error, almost every type of psychological process,” he advised in “Middle Period” in 1918. “As a study in the correct method and common errors in science, and as a subject for illustrating the natural psychology of perception and belief, there is nothing more instructive... Whoever will take each drawing, and, giving free rein to his selective imagination, find it fully justified in the Burgess photograph [made without chalking in 1868], as can be done with practically every one of the originals.”⁴⁷ Delabarre

⁴⁵ Horsford, *The Landfall of Leif Erikson*, 108.

⁴⁶ Falnes, “New England Interest in Scandinavian Culture and the Norsemen,” 236.

⁴⁷ Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 70–71.

was describing (without using the term) the phenomenon he studied with ink-blot tests, called pareidolia, in which someone viewing an amorphous shape or pattern suddenly discerns something significant, such as an elephant in the clouds or the face of Jesus in slice of toast. Leonardo da Vinci had advised that a stain-spotted wall could provide a painter with the inspiration to create landscapes, figures in combat, facial expressions, outlandish costumes, and more.⁴⁸ Delabarre called Gébeline, Hill, Magnussén and Rafn, and Dammartin “of the type in whom the possession of a theory, the imagining of the presence of a particular figure, creates a blindness to all other possibilities.”⁴⁹ In further criticizing the previous interpreters of Dighton Rock in “Recent History” in 1919, Delabarre remarked: “it is easy to imagine as present on the rock almost any desired letter of the alphabet, especially of crude or early forms; and that, starting with almost any favored story, he can discover for it, if he looks for them eagerly enough, illustrative images to fit its various features, and initial letters or even entire words or names.”⁵⁰ Yet at the conclusion of “Recent History,” Delabarre did precisely that, detecting an inscription that pointed to the lost expedition of Miguel Corte-Real.

Delabarre the Academic

Born in 1863 in Dover, Maine, Edmund Burke Delabarre was one of six children of Edward Delabarre, an immigrant from Belgium, and Maria Hassel, who was born in Dover.⁵¹ Edward Delabarre owned wool mills in Blackstone and Conway, Massachusetts between 1853 and 1892, when he retired and closed his

⁴⁸ See Leonardo Da Vinci, *Leonardo Da Vinci's Notebooks, Arranged and Rendered into English with Introductions*, trans. Edward McMurdy (New York: Empire State Book Co., 1923), 172–173.

⁴⁹ Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 71.

⁵⁰ Delabarre, “Recent History,” 311.

⁵¹ “2979. Delabarre, Edmund Burke,” *Amherst College Biographical Record, Centennial Edition (1821–1921)*. <http://acbiorecord.yanco.com/1886.html#delabarre-eb> (accessed Sep. 24, 2014). This record contains essential information about Delabarre’s education, family members, professional appointments and 1907 marriage. It is the same as the information for Delabarre’s entry in Alberta Lawrence’s *Who’s Who Among North American Authors* (Los Angeles: Golden Syndicate Pub. Co, 1921). See also “Delabarre, Edmund B.” in *Encyclopedia Brunoniana*.

mills in Conway.⁵² Delabarre received his undergraduate education at Brown University and Amherst College. After receiving a bachelor's degree from Amherst in 1886, he began studies in a young field, experimental psychology, under its leading international practitioners. After studies at the University of Berlin in 1887-88, he received a master's degree in 1889 from Harvard under William James, who had established one of the first experimental psychology laboratories in the world at Harvard in 1875.⁵³ Returning to Europe, Delabarre in 1891 earned his doctorate in psychology at Freiburg in Baden, Germany, under Hugo Münsterberg, who had established a laboratory there in 1888.⁵⁴ Delabarre was appointed an associate professor of psychology at Brown in 1891, becoming the university's first professor in the subject, and pursued further studies at the Sorbonne (University of Paris) in 1891-92. He established a psychology laboratory at Brown in 1892 (there were only nine in the country in 1891), and in 1894 reported in the first volume of *L'Année psychologique* on the state of psychology laboratories in the United States: "The new research methods in psychology have been adopted with more fervor perhaps in America than anywhere else."⁵⁵ Delabarre was promoted to full professor at Brown in 1896, and in 1896-97 spelled off Münsterberg as director of Harvard's laboratory. Leonard Carmichael of Tuft's praised Delabarre in an obituary in *The American Journal of Psychology* as "a brilliant, meticulous, and studious psychologist."⁵⁶

⁵² For the Delabarre mills, see J.D. Van Slyck, *New England Manufacturers and Manufactories*, vol. 1 (Boston: Van Slyck and Co., 1879), 392-393; and Charles Stanley Pease, *History of Conway (Massachusetts) 1796-1917* (Springfield MA: Springfield Printing and Binding Co., 1917), 114.

⁵³ Robert S. Harper identifies the laboratories at Harvard and Leipzig in 1875 as the first two in the world. See Robert S. Harper, "The First Psychological Laboratory," *Isis* 41, no. 2 (Jul. 1950), Table 1.

⁵⁴ For the Freiberg laboratory's establishment, see Harper, "The First Psychological Laboratory," Table 1.

⁵⁵ Translated from E. B. Delabarre, "Les laboratoires de psychologie en Amérique," *L'Année psychologique*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1894). "Les nouvelles méthodes de recherche en psychologie ont été adoptées avec plus d'ardeur peut-être en Amérique que partout ailleurs." (209) Delabarre's definition of a psychological laboratory was more generous than that used by Harper in 1950, as Delabarre counted 27 in America by 1894 (216), where Harper counted 21 by the end of the year ("The First Psychological Laboratory," Table 1).

⁵⁶ Leonard Carmichael, "Edmund Burke Delabarre, 1863-1945," *The American Journal of Psychology* 58, no. 3 (Jul. 1945): 406.

Delabarre's clinical studies were pioneering as well as controversial. During his Harvard duties in 1896–97, Delabarre devised a set of ink-blot tests to study imagination in relation to personality types.⁵⁷ Delabarre's main research for 38 years, from 1893 to 1931, was on the effect of cannabis on perception, although he only published one paper, in 1899.⁵⁸ He used *Cannabis indica* and *sativa* (and its derivative, hashish), self-dosing in recording the effects on visual perception but also on most every conceivable effect of the drug: reaction times, pain, memory, detection of high-pitch sounds, direction of sounds, taste, smell, muscular reactions, subjective feelings and “bodily states.”⁵⁹ As a memorial minute by the faculty of Brown remarked of Delabarre in 1945: “Some of his experiments, especially those upon eye movements and upon the effects of small doses of powerful drugs such as *Cannabis Indica*, seemed to involve personal risk of a sort that invited rather sensational publicity. This annoyed him for he was a sincerely modest man who scorned such notoriety and was prompted only by eager desire to establish the factual basis of his theory and its utmost implications.”⁶⁰

The only book-length work Delabarre published, other than *Dighton Rock* in 1928, was an offset print of his report on the Brown-Harvard scientific expedition to northern Labrador in 1900.⁶¹ Carmichael would remember Delabarre as “a man keenly interested in nature” who also possessed “a remarkable physical stamina. At one of the outdoor picnics over which he loved to preside I once saw him at the age

⁵⁷ Carmichael, “Edmund Burke Delabarre, 1863–1945,” 407.

⁵⁸ See Edmund Burke Delabarre and John A. Popplestone, “A Cross Cultural Contribution to the Cannabis Experience,” *The Psychological Record* 24 (Winter 1974): 67–73, in which Popplestone reconstructs some of Delabarre's findings from the Delabarre Papers (M260) at the Archives of the History of American Psychology, University of Akron. The finding aid indicates his self-administered drug experiments extended to peyote, or mescal buttons, and cocaine. See “Folder (AHAP): Notebooks.”

⁵⁹ See “Folder (AHAP): Notebooks,” in Archives of the History of American Psychology, University of Akron, Finding Aid, Delabarre Papers (M260).

⁶⁰ Quoted in “Delabarre, Edmund B.,” in Martha Mitchell, *Encyclopedia Brunoniana*.

⁶¹ Edmund Burke Delabarre, “Report of the Brown-Harvard Expedition to Nachvak, Labrador, in the Year 1900,” *Bulletin of the Geographical Society of Philadelphia* 3, no. 4 (April 1902): 65–212. Offset print, *Report of the Brown-Harvard Expedition to Nachvak, Labrador* (Providence RI: Preston & Rounds Co., 1902).

of seventy laughingly stand and walk some distance on his hands.”⁶² Delabarre by his own account was “nominally leader” of the Labrador expedition, despite “the absence of material sufficient to occupy him largely in his own specialty.”⁶³ With nothing psychological to concern him, he collected plants.⁶⁴

In 1907, Delabarre married Dorothea Cotton. He was forty-three and she was nineteen, a former “special” or day student at Brown. By 1910 they had two children, Maria and Edmund, Jr.; Maria would figure significantly in the Dighton Rock story through her marriage. (See Chapter 9.) The Delabarres had a house on Arlington Avenue, opposite the Brown campus, and in 1910 they added their summer retreat, the farm on Assonet Neck. With the purchase of the farm, the focal point of the rest of Delabarre’s intellectual life was set, as Dighton Rock consumed his interest. His research into the rock’s historiography dominated three volumes of *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* from 1917 to 1919: 64 pages of volume 18, 113 pages of volume 19, and 263 pages of volume 20. “For several years I entertained no notion that I could contribute anything to its interpretation,” he would write in *The Journal of American History* in 1932, “but became absorbed in revising the history of investigation and discussion of it, current accounts of which I found exceedingly defective and untrustworthy.”⁶⁵ Only late in his researches, in December 1918, with the third and final installment of his Colonial Society of Massachusetts articles being prepared for publication in February 1919, did Delabarre’s researches leap in a radical new direction. Delabarre was examining what he considered the best available photograph, taken by Charles A. Hathaway, Jr. in 1907, when he saw something entirely new. As Delabarre wrote in “Recent History”: “It may well be imagined with what astonishment, on examining the Hathaway

⁶² Carmichael, “Edmund Burke Delabarre, 1863–1945,” 406, 409.

⁶³ Delabarre, “Report of the Brown-Harvard Expedition,” 70.

⁶⁴ The expedition may be noteworthy otherwise for the fact that it encountered Ramah chert deposits. Only in the 1970s would these deposits (including a source at the locale the expedition named Delabarre Bay) be identified as a quarry that through long-distance trade provided the raw material for lithic (stone) tools found in Maine, New York, Delaware and even Florida. See M. E. Colleen Lazenby, “Prehistoric Sources of Chert in Northern Labrador: Field Work and Preliminary Analyses,” *Arctic* 33, no. 3 (Sep. 1980): 628–645. The extent of Ramah chert tools is discussed on p. 632. For chert deposits at Delabarre Bay, see p. 633.

⁶⁵ Delabarre, “The Rock-Inscriptions of New England,” 81.

photograph for the hundredth time on December 2, 1918, I saw in it clearly and unmistakably the date 1511. No one had ever seen it before, on rock or photograph; yet once seen, its genuine presence on the rock cannot be doubted.”⁶⁶ As he would recall in 1932: “This started an endeavor to see if I could not find some name to go with it.”⁶⁷ His historiographic study in its concluding moments became another quest to hammer a square peg of European colonization into the round hole of an Indigenous artifact.

Delabarre’s Motivations for a Non-Indigenous Attribution

Although Delabarre was a pioneer in experimental psychology, not an historian, his overall analysis and dedication to verifying sources were of a high caliber, better than in most any previous investigation, with the possible exception of Kendall, whose effort he admired, even if he did not detect its masonic subtext. Delebarre’s investigation of Dighton Rock was also an education for him. The process of learning extended beyond mastering the evidence and circumstances of previous theories: it also included absorbing the perspectives and prejudices of earlier theorists, if some aspects were not already borne by him and exposed through his own theorizing. By the time he completed his second installment, on the “Middle Period,” Delabarre had absorbed two important points. The markings were probably Indigenous, and if they were Indigenous, they were of no interest to history, or most any other field of study, as the cultural anthropology championed by Franz Boas had not penetrated his worldview. Boas may have founded the first comprehensive graduate program in anthropology at Columbia University, and he and his students may have come to dominate the profession by the First World War, when Delabarre was deep into his Dighton Rock researches, but these were early days.⁶⁸ Delabarre was a nineteenth-century New Englander, born and raised in a part of the country where authentic Indians were no longer considered to exist, and when last encountered in their unsubjected state were considered bloodthirsty savages. A

⁶⁶ Delabarre, “Recent History,” 411.

⁶⁷ Delabarre, “The Rock-Inscriptions of New England,” 81.

⁶⁸ Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian*, 62–63.

paradoxical aspect of Delabarre's extracurricular studies was the interest he took in Indigenous archaeology, with two papers and a research note accepted for publication by *American Anthropologist*. In 1920 he coauthored a paper on "Indian corn-hills" in Massachusetts, the mounds used by Native Americans for mass plantings, which survived as landscape features on Assonet Neck (including on Delabarre's farm) to an extent that impressed Delabarre.⁶⁹ In 1925 he published a paper on a "possible Pre-Algonkian culture in southeastern Massachusetts," based on his excavations of a site he thought might be 1,000 years old. The site was on Grassy Island, a rise of land now submerged under seven or eight feet of water at high tide in the widening of the Taunton River, about 1,000 feet from Dighton Rock.⁷⁰ He followed up his Grassy Island report with a note published in 1928 on cremated human remains found on the site.⁷¹ Delabarre's active interest in Indigenous archaeology may seem baffling in the face of his indifference in defending Dighton Rock as a purely Indigenous artifact, until one considers the nineteenth-century division I have described between the object-based epistemology of archaeologists digging into mounds and the semiotic interest of philologists and code-breakers in inscribed rocks. Indigenous corn plantings, bones and arrowheads intrigued Delabarre; unintelligible markings made by people considered to have lived well shy of the minimal standards of civilization did not.

"Considered simply as a rude scrawl of unknown meaning made by uncultured Indians, Dighton Rock would be worthy of but scanty notice," Delabarre wrote in "Middle Period." This had been Kendall's opinion at the start of the nineteenth century, and by the end of that century, the opinion remained among leading historians that Daniel Wilson's *prehistory* was precisely before recorded history, with nothing to be gained for their field from trying to understand Indigenous oral traditions or relics, with the possible exception of the confounding glyphs of Palenque and other Mesoamerican sites whose

⁶⁹ Edmund Burke Delabarre and Harris H. Wilder, "Indian Corn-Hills in Massachusetts," *American Anthropologist*, n.s. 22, no. 3 (Jul.–Sep. 1920): 203–225.

⁷⁰ Edmund Burke Delabarre, "A Possible Pre-Algonkian Culture in Southeastern Massachusetts," *American Anthropologist*, n.s. 27, no. 3 (Jul. 1925): 359–369.

⁷¹ Edmund Burke Delabarre, "A Prehistoric Skeleton from Grassy Island," *American Anthropologist*, n.s. 30, no. 3 (Jul.–Sep. 1928): 476–480.

temple ruins suggested a semi-civilized state. The Mound Builders as a superior original people had been banished from scholarship just as Delabarre began his career as a psychologist, but the view that nothing edifying could be found in the Native American past endured. If the “rude scrawl” of Dighton Rock was outside of the purview of proper historical study and the human arts, then Delabarre was left to make a case for why it absorbed so much of his time and energy. He decided that his ongoing study’s utility lay in what it could reveal about a progressively refined scientific enquiry and the pitfalls awaiting learned men along the way: “As the centre of interest around which has raged a storm of controversy; as the leading motif in a developing symphony that passes through many movements to a final clarity and harmony of many subordinate motifs; as the plot which has involved in an unfolding story a multitude of strange and varied actors; as a mystery which has led through crude and errant stages at last to a sound scientific understanding—Dighton Rock is unsurpassed in its appeal. Its history illustrates almost every variety of scientific error, almost every type of psychological process.”⁷²

Much as Daniel Wilson’s archaeological/historical model was progressive, moving through stone, bronze and iron ages to the Christian age, Delabarre’s historiographical model for Dighton Rock was one of scientific progressivism: the investigative methods of men of letters gradually improved, as did their interpretations, with his own investigation serving as the crowning achievement. But the history of Dighton Rock’s interpretation was hardly progressive in the way Delabarre proposed. As his own scholarship showed, it had moved through different phases of Euro-American enthusiasms, none entirely supplanting another, each one illustrating how highly educated men could persuade themselves (and others) of nonsensical interpretations based on ostensibly scholarly erudition. If anything, the earliest opinion, circa 1680, of the Reverend Danforth—that the rock was the work of unknown Native Americans—was the soundest one. The more time the rock was left to the devices of European and American scholars, the more its provenance became bogged down in delusion. Nor did Delabarre, as the author of what remains the most thorough and scholarly consideration of the rock’s historiography, bring

⁷² Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 70.

the symphony to a final clarity and harmony as he promised. As a professor specializing in perceptual psychology, he succumbed to the foible he deftly perceived in the efforts of his predecessors: it was possible to stare at the rock's markings and see most any character or symbol the viewer wished. In perpetuating the centuries of scholarly misadventure by instigating a new phase of misattribution, Delabarre made one of the most forceful denigrations of Indigenous capability.

Delabarre well knew where his study was bound as he drafted "Middle Period," the second installment of his three-party study. Having banished from serious contention every eccentric theory to have come along, the only reasonable explanation left was that the inscriptions were Indigenous: "In spite of the poetic appeal of theories that plausibly ascribe [the rock's markings] to some people or other of long ago and far away, we have had to recognize repeatedly that accumulating evidence is removing more and more completely all objections urged against the Indian hypothesis, and that all competent archaeological authorities now agree that there are no sound reasons for rejecting it."⁷³ Delabarre however may have been nagged by the realization that if his crowning achievement of Dighton Rock's study left the rock's markings in the undecipherable provenance of "uncultured Indians," the world of letters would be left with an indigenous inscription that was not worth anyone's time, and Delabarre would have conducted an exhaustive proxy study of progressive scientific method of limited interest. Surely if he detected an inscription from a more culturally worthy source, a source that would propel the study into the realm of legitimate history, then his efforts would surpass the bounds of psychology and command interest from a much broader audience, both general and academic. I am wandering into Delabarre's own field of psychology in proposing that there was at least a subconscious desire by Delabarre to arrive at a solution more satisfying than "rude scrawls" by "uncultured Indians." He also probably found it impossible to resist the longstanding Western intellectual determination to decipher an inscription (if it might indeed be decipherable) where so many others whose work he had critiqued had failed. When he

⁷³ Delabarre, "Middle Period," 118.

convinced himself in the final stage of his studies he could see in a photograph a date, 1511, it was an eleventh-hour epiphany that was also a kind of deliverance.

We will probably never know if or how Delabarre's longstanding investigations of the effects of drugs on visual perception entered into his Dighton Rock researches. From December 10 to 12, 1918, about a week after he noticed the date 1511 in the Hathaway photo, Delabarre conducted experiments on himself to evaluate the effect of cannabis indica on hyperaesthesia, or hypersensitivity, recording reactions to "taps, heat suggestibility, stuttering, colors, sound."⁷⁴ If Delabarre sought some heightened perception through drugs in examining Dighton Rock, he did not record it, or admit it. Delabarre was rightly dissatisfied with the way researchers since the mid-nineteenth century had used paint or chalk to highlight the markings for photography. He likely took to heart Edward Augustus Kendall's warnings about the way such highlighting caused the viewer to prejudge what was there. Searching for the inscription that would explain "1511," Delabarre mounted a powerful flashlight on a ladder apparatus to illuminate the rock from an angle that would cast revealing shadows. Delabarre's methodology appeared to be in accord with the scientific objective of gathering data untainted by human influence or weakness. In Delabarre's clinical studies, he had designed one of the first long-paper kymographs, an apparatus that made tracings of minute muscular movements over many hours of observation.⁷⁵ With his Dighton Rock study, the camera apparatus would only reveal in photographic prints what light and shadow indicated, rather than the photographer first marking up the rock with paint or chalk and using the camera to record his handiwork. However, a photograph still had to be interpreted, and in this regard Delabarre was as subjective and as prone to pareidolia any investigator before him.

⁷⁴ "Folder (AHAP): Notebooks. Can. Ind. (III) = IV, V, VI, Record Book 2, c Hyperaesthesia, Subject – Delabarre and Recorder – Manly, Kymograph, 12/10/-- - 12/18/--, seven tables of reactions, tabs, heat suggestibility, stuttering, colors, sound." Archives of the History of American Psychology, University of Akron, Finding Aid, Delabarre Papers (M260).

⁷⁵ Carmichael, "Edmund Burke Delabarre, 1863–1945," 407.

Dighton Rock and the Canals on Mars

Delabarre's ability to see an inscription in the unmarked surface of the boulder had a compelling corollary in the mania for canals on Mars, which were first detected on a photographic plate by Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli in 1877 and championed especially by the American amateur astronomer Percival Lowell, who built his own observatory and began mapping what he asserted were artificial waterways in 1894.⁷⁶ Until the use of "scientific" photographs, the mappers of Mars' canals had drawn what they thought they could see through a telescope. The process of mapping these sensational Martian features recalled the efforts by Rafn and Magnussén to contrive a Norse inscription from several extant drawings of Dighton Rock, as the influential maps of the Martian surface composed by Schiaparelli, Lowell, the Royal Astronomical Society and the British Astronomical Association were composites of many individual sketches, sometimes from different observers.⁷⁷ The image of Mars produced by the canal mappers, according to K. Maria D. Lane, "assumed a mantle of scientific objectivity despite admissions that no one had ever actually seen the canal network as a whole."⁷⁸ Photography introduced "a new standard of objective representation that made the diverse maps of astronomers appear positively subjective in comparison."⁷⁹ The French astronomer Eugène Antoniadi initially championed the support that Lowell's 1905 and 1907 photographs gave to the canal theory. However in 1909, when Antoniadi observed the planet using the largest observatory telescope in Europe, "the linear appearance of the canals dissolved into an intricate mess of smaller, irregular details..."⁸⁰

Lane notes that Lowell's Mars maps rarely appeared in scientific journals after 1907, and that by 1910 "the astronomical communities of Europe and North America had largely abandoned their thirty-

⁷⁶ K. Maria D. Lane, "Mapping the Mars Canal Mania: Cartographic Projection and the Creation of a Popular Icon," *Imago Mundi* 58, no. 2 (2006): 199.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 201.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 208.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 206.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 207.

year flirtation with the idea of an inhabited Mars and returned to a naturalistic mapping style that closely resembled the pre-1877–1878 maps.”⁸¹ It was as if planetary mappers had learned the lessons of Kendall, who had chosen to depict Dighton Rock in oils, in all the rich ambiguity of light, shadow, granularity and colour, rather than reduce the rock to a black-and-white line drawing of the purported inscription. The mania for Mars canals among the world’s leading astronomers was perhaps the most celebrated example of observational failure (and academic pareidolia) at the time of Delabarre’s studies in human visual perception, yet he appears to have paid the phenomenon no attention. He picked up where the discredited Mars mapping efforts had left off, examining and producing photographs in which slanting light revealed his own version of canals: Roman numerals and letters. On February 27, 1919, Delabarre appeared before a meeting of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, as the third installment of his Dighton Rock study was published by the society, to announce that he had found the inscriber of the 1511 date: “the name Miguel Cortereal could be read upon the rock with a fair degree of plausibility.”⁸²

Finding a Worthy European Explorer for the Dighton Rock Inscription

“The discovery of the date 1511 led me to reflect upon the early explorers who might by any possibility have been in this vicinity at that time,” Delabarre recounted at the conclusion of “Recent History,” in which he revealed his Corte-Real finding.⁸³ The Columbus anniversary of 1892 had instigated a fresh wave of archival-based scholarly research into early transatlantic voyages, and provoked works on the Cabots and the Corte-Reals by Henry HARRISSE, Charles Raymond Beazley, Samuel Edward Dawson and Henry Percival Biggar.⁸⁴ Delabarre’s researches into early explorers however was minimal. He noted that

⁸¹ Ibid., 206, 208.

⁸² Delabarre, “The Rock-Inscriptions of New England,” 81. Note that spellings vary of Corte-Real, and include Corte Real and Cortereal.

⁸³ Delabarre, “Recent History,” 169.

⁸⁴ Henry HARRISSE, a wealthy American lawyer based in Paris, produced important works on John and Sebastian Cabot and the brothers Gaspar and Miguel Corte-Real. *Les Corte-Real et leurs Voyages au Nouveau Monde* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1885) was followed by *Jean et Sébastien Cabot* (1882), which was published in translation as *John*

the first known (actually, suspected) visit to Narragansett Bay was by Giovanni di Verrazano in 1524 when he anchored in a place he called Port de Refugio. That was thirteen years after the rock's date of 1511. "It soon became evident that none of the known explorers could have been here in 1511, except one of the two Cortereals, Caspar and Miguel," Delabarre avowed. "There could have been unrecorded visits by others, for the Banks fisheries were already in vigorous operation, and some of those who pursued them might have wandered farther than we know. But of men known to have been on this side of the Atlantic by 1511, the two Cortereals are the only ones who could possibly have been responsible for our inscription."⁸⁵

Little is known about the Corte-Real expeditions, which involved the brothers Gaspar and Miguel Corte-Real. They were the sons of João Vaz, who had been granted a captaincy for settlement rights on the Azorean island of Terceira in 1474. The late sixteenth-century Portuguese chronicler Gaspar Frutuoso would assert that around 1472 to 1474, João Vaz Corte-Real and Antao Martins made a voyage from the Azores to the northwest and discovered Terra do Bacalhau, the "codfish land," in return for which they received Terceiran captaincies, but nowhere in the award documents is such a discovery mentioned.⁸⁶ The discoveries in 1497 by John Cabot, a Venetian sailing in the service of England's Henry VII, inspired the

Cabot, the Discover of North America, and Sebastian his Son (London: Benjamin Franklin Stevens, 1896). Samuel Edward Dawson published a Royal Society of Canada paper as a monograph, *The Discovery of America by John Cabot in 1497* (Ottawa: The Royal Society of Canada, 1896). The British historian Charles Raymond Beazley published *John and Sebastian Cabot: The Discovery of North America* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898). The Canadian government archivist Henry Percival Biggar published *The Precursors of Jacques Cartier 1497–1534: A Collection of Documents Relating to the Early History of the Dominion of Canada* (Publications of the Canadian Archives, No. 5. Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1911), a key assemblage of evidence for European voyages prior to Jacques Cartier, beginning with the Cabot voyages for England of the late 1490s and including the known Portuguese voyages.

⁸⁵ Delabarre, "Recent History," 169.

⁸⁶ I have written about the Corte-Reals in *The Race to the New World: Christopher Columbus, John Cabot, and a Lost History of Discovery* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). For the captaincy award of João Vaz Corte-Real, see 114–115. For an overview of documents related to the Corte-Real family and their voyages, see Harisse, *Les Corte-Real et leur Voyages au Nouveau Monde*. See also David Beers Quinn, "The Northwest Passage in Theory and Practice," in *A New World Exposed*, ed. John Logan Allen, vol. 1 of *North American Exploration* (Lincoln NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 292–343, for a discussion of the Corte-Real voyages in the context of the search for a northern route to Asia. For a short overview of the Corte-Real voyages, see Morison, *The European Discovery of America*, 213–217, and Biggar, *The Precursors of Jacques Cartier 1497–1534*, xiv–xxi.

Corte-Real voyages. Gaspar Corte-Real sailed from Lisbon in 1500 for northeastern North America, and visited a land of great trees he called Terre Verde, which may have been Newfoundland. After returning to Lisbon in the autumn of 1500, Gaspar departed again in the spring of 1501 with three ships. In the southern part of Terre Verde he abducted about 57 Indians, who may have been Beothuk from Newfoundland. Corte-Real had found a new supply of slaves. Seven captives arrived in Lisbon as two of the Corte-Real ships returned, but Gaspar and his crew (along with some fifty captives) were never heard from. In 1502, Gaspar's brother Miguel sailed with two or three ships to the new lands his brother had explored and scoured for slaves. Miguel and his flagship vanished, and the details of his voyage remain thin and uncertain. As Samuel Eliot Morison recounted, Miguel "was lost, with all hands, and we have not the slightest idea of how it happened..."⁸⁷ If the sole, brief (and second-hand) accounts written by chroniclers Antonio Galvam in 1563 and Damiam de Goes in 1566 can be believed, Miguel's flotilla (Galvam said there were three ships, De Goes, two) reached Terra Verde in the summer of 1502. The ships split up to explore the many rivers, and were to rendezvous on August 20. When Miguel did not reappear, the remaining ship(s) returned to Lisbon.⁸⁸

Delabarre was wrong in asserting that the Corte-Reals were the only possible candidates for a 1511 European inscription. In "Recent History" he ignored the candidacy of the second John Cabot voyage, of 1498, and never gave it any consideration in subsequent writings. Five ships on Cabot's 1498 voyage left Bristol for eastern North America and were generally believed to have all vanished.⁸⁹ The Cabots (John and his son Sebastian) were far better known than the Corte-Reals in Delabarre's time, because the 1497 Cabot voyage was the basis of the English claim to North America. Notwithstanding the

⁸⁷ Morison, *The European Discovery of America*, 216.

⁸⁸ HARRISSE, *Les Corte-Real*, 167. For HARRISSE's transcriptions of Galvam and de Goes in the original Portuguese, see Appendices XXXIV and XXXV, 232–235.

⁸⁹ Research by The Cabot Project, led by Evan Jones at Bristol University to investigate the unpublished researches of the late Alwyn Ruddock, determined several ships from the 1498 Cabot flotilla likely returned, and that records suggest John Cabot was still alive in London in 1500. See Douglas Hunter, "Rewriting History," *Canada's History* 90, no. 2 (April/May 2010): 19–25, 26. See also Evan Jones, "Alwyn Ruddock: 'John Cabot and the Discovery of America,'" *Historical Research* 81, no. 212 (May 2008): 224–254.

fact that Cabot was a Venetian citizen, his 1497 arrival was a more concrete Anglo-American challenge to the discovery narrative of Christopher Columbus celebrated in 1892 than the saga adventures of Leif Eiriksson circa 1000 A.D., and accordingly generated much attention in Canada, where his landfall and initial coastal explorations of 1497 (Labrador and Newfoundland, with some theories extending the possibilities south to Cape Breton) presumably were made. Delabarre managed to ignore the recent scholarly works on the Cabots and also overlook H. P. Biggar's *The Precursors of Jacques Cartier*, in which the Cabot and Corte-Real voyages were featured. Delabarre would mention the Cabot voyages in *Dighton Rock* of 1928, but only in the context of general evidence of early voyages to the New World, not to propose them as candidates for the 1511 inscription.⁹⁰ Delabarre's ignoring of Cabot and his assertion that the Corte-Reals were the only possible candidates suggests an *a priori* process: having found what looked like a date of 1511, Delabarre turned to a handful of letters others in the past thought they could make out, and went to work shoehorning them into the only candidate that he thought could accommodate them: Miguel Corte-Real.⁹¹ In this regard he was no different than Rafn and Magnussén had been in forcing the Karlsefni inscription onto Dighton Rock, once they had decided the rock was the best evidence for a Norse visit to New England.

⁹⁰ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 181.

⁹¹ It is telling that Delabarre, the indefatigable Dighton Rock researcher, never addressed the candidacy of John Cabot or some master of a ship in the 1498 flotilla for the inscription. At the time of Delabarre's Dighton Rock research, scholars understood that, according to the unreliable evidence of Sebastian, who was not claimed by the 1498 voyage, John Cabot or Sebastian himself had explored as far south as Florida and the Gulf of Mexico. Surely, if Delabarre was weighing candidates for a lost European expedition prior to the Verrazzano voyage of 1524, the five lost ships of Cabot in 1498 were as compelling as the one lost ship of Gaspar Cortereal in 1501 and the other lost ship of his brother Miguel in 1502. We can wonder how Delabarre's Dighton Rock readings might otherwise have turned out, had he known one of the ship's masters in the 1498 Cabot flotilla was Giovanni Antonio de Carbonariis, as he probably could have made the rock's inscription yield "Carbonariis" as readily as it did "Cortereal." In 1954, a Miami geographer, David O. True, proposed John and Sebastian Cabot were the discoverers of Florida; True was also intrigued by the similarity between the name Carbonariis and the placename Carbonear on Newfoundland's Conception Bay. James A. Williamson in *The Cabot Voyages and Bristol Discovery under Henry VII* (Cambridge: Published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1962), 93, referenced True and aired the idea that Carbonariis may have been associated with Carbonear on the 1498 or some subsequent voyage. Alwyn Ruddock believed Carbonariis, an Augustinian friar, established a settlement with a church at Carbonear on the 1498 voyage. See Douglas Hunter, *The Race to the New World*, 248.

Finding a Corte-Real name on Dighton Rock was not easy. Delabarre initially could only point out some of the alleged letters. All he could propose in “Recent History” in February 1919 was an M, followed by CORTE, and these were some distance to the right of the alleged date of 1511. With his flashlight photography, Delabarre winnowed away at the problem. By 1923, as he reported on his latest discoveries in *Old-Time New England*, the presence of the letters MIGV and CORTER “was proven beyond question by our photographs.”⁹² The remaining letters were either in his estimation obscured by overlying Indian glyphs or eroded by ice, but nevertheless to his eyes were there.⁹³

Delabarre required little time to spin an imaginative tale of Corte-Real’s adventures. Two months after finding the date 1511, along with the letters M and CORTE, he had a scenario, offered in “Recent History,” for how Miguel Corte-Real washed up in the upper reaches of the Taunton River, nine years after being last heard from, probably in Newfoundland. Delabarre proposed that after some misadventure, possibly shipwreck, in Newfoundland, Miguel attempted to reach the Spanish territories far to the south. His progress would have been slow, because he had to get past “fierce” and “hostile” tribes in Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.⁹⁴ “It is conceivable that by patience and tact Miguel Cortereal may have worked his way through these dangers after a long delay. If we concede that we have reason for suspecting his presence in southern New England in 1511, it would not lack in plausibility on account of the nine years that had elapsed since his shipwreck.”⁹⁵ In 1923, Delabarre revealed more findings—a Latin phrase, above a heraldic symbol of Portugal: V. DEI hIC DVX IND.⁹⁶ As Rafn and Magnussén had done with their Norse inscription, Delabarre resorted to abbreviation to coax a coherent message from the stone.

⁹² Delabarre, “Dighton Rock,” 63. *Old-Time New England* was published by The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, whose founder, president and bulletin editor was William Sumner Appleton, nephew of Thomas Gold Appleton. See Bertram Kimble Little, “William Sumner Appleton,” *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 3rd ser., vol. 69 (Oct. 1947–May 1950), 422–425.

⁹³ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 170–171.

⁹⁴ Delabarre, “Recent History,” 415.

⁹⁵ Delabarre, “Recent History,” 415.

⁹⁶ Delabarre, ““Dighton Rock,” plate 14.

Expanded, Delabarre's phrase presumably read, "Voluntate Dei hic Dux Indorum," which provided the following complete inscription: "Miguel Cortereal. 1511. By the will of God, leader of the natives of India in this place."⁹⁷ [Fig. 29]

White Tribism in Delabarre's Corte-Real Theory

With his assertion of the inscription "Voluntate Dei hic Dux Indorum," Delabarre's fashioned his Corte-Real theory through extravagant White Tribism. He incorporated the story of the battle with the men in the wooden vessel that was related by the Reverend Danforth and heard in a more elaborate version by Kendall, which included the White Man's Spring. After a battle there, in which the Indians' sachem was killed, "Cortereal escaped, and probably one or two others who had remained in the boat with him. Undermanned, they could voyage no farther, and were thus forced to conciliate the natives, who may have been angered or frightened by some occurrence at the spring, rather than seriously hostile. With firearms in his possession, sufficient companions to help, and high qualities of tact and leadership, he may have been able to seize and hold the place of their dead sachem." Corte-Real settled in the area, and wrote his name on the rock in hope of attracting the attention of other European explorers who could carry him home: "the statement that he was leader of the native inhabitants would tell them where to make enquiries in order to find him. Improbable as the whole story sounds at first thought, yet no one can impartially examine our illustrations and escape the conclusion that a high degree of probability belongs to it."⁹⁸

Having turned Miguel into a leader of the Wampanoag, Delabarre took his White Tribism into the predictable territories of racial improvement in *Dighton Rock* (1928), attributing to anonymous reviewers of his earlier writings assertions of a beneficial infusion of Portuguese blood:

⁹⁷ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 173, 181.

⁹⁸ Delabarre, "Dighton Rock," 69. Delabarre offered a more elaborate version in 1928 in *Dighton Rock*, 177–178.

‘Who can say,’ says one of them, ‘that the blood of this Portuguese adventure’—or, we should add, of one of his younger companions—‘was not coursing in the veins of King Philip himself some 150 years later?’ Another supports the same suggestion in these words: ‘No trace of European blood was ever noted among the Indians of Assonet Neck. But of course none was ever looked for in the early days when it might have been noted. A trace of Latin blood, a sign of a race marked by black eyes and hair and olive complexion, after a few generations is less easy to find than a Nordic strain that gives a distinct new trend to type.’ Apart from this possibility of blood descent, a third reviewer has said something that may well be true: ‘It is not unreasonable to suppose that Cortereal’s influence was that which resulted in the Wampanoag’s place in history—that of the most intelligent tribe of Indians in America, a tribe that, faced with extermination, preferred to die fighting.’⁹⁹

Here was belonging, possession and dispossession practiced at an unprecedented conjectural level. Rafn might have turned Dighton rock into a Norse claim-staking and Native Americans into hybridized Gothicist Norse; Delabarre went one better and turned the Wampanoag’s seventeenth-century rebellion against their Anglo-Saxon colonizers into an act attributable to their earlier biological improvement by Corte-Real and his companions. Delabarre was unconcerned with longstanding convictions in Gothicist/Aryanist theorizing that the Portuguese—southern European and Catholic—were an inferior breed to the preeminent racial stock of northern Protestant White Europeans. He seemed satisfied that any European newcomer would have been superior to a Native American.

Delabarre moved on to word hunting in *Dighton Rock*. “Suppose that the Indians among whom Cortereal found a home were particularly impressed by two things about their foreign leader and the

⁹⁹ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 179.

‘magic’ that he had cut into the rock...”¹⁰⁰ One “thing” was the first part of his name, *Corte*, which impressed the Indians for reasons Delabarre did not explain. The other “thing” was the heraldic symbol of Portugal that Delabarre found on the rock, for which he gave a muddled explanation. [Fig. 30] A blue shield with five dots, the central image of the Portuguese coat of arms, is called the *quina*. Delabarre explained that each dot was called a *quina* and collectively were the “five quinas or ‘five spots.’”¹⁰¹ Delabarre had found two small, roughly triangular shapes, one inside the other, with a dot at the center. He argued this was the Portuguese arms, a small shield within a larger shield, with the single dot standing in for the normal five-dot arrangement of the *quina*. He suggested the single dot was a compromise due to a lack of space, as on the 1502 Cantino chart there was a shield with only two dots; on this point he was wrong, as in *Dighton Rock* he showed a drawing of a square *quina* from the Cantino chart with all five dots.¹⁰² Alternately there may have once been all five dots, but a person unknown had obscured them with a single, more deeply carved one.¹⁰³ Delabarre gave no reason why Corte-Real would have found himself more pressed for space than a cartographer when he had a blank rock surface eleven feet long to work with and resorted to rendering the Portuguese heraldry at such a small scale they he could not depict a proper five-dot *quina* shield. In any case, Delabarre thought the *quina* would have symbolized for the Indians the country Corte-Real had come from, and so they learned to call him *Corte-quina*. “Then, according to frequent European custom, this name might have been passed on to later sachems, and have reappeared a hundred years later in the name of Massasoit’s brother, Quadequina. White men heard Indian names very inexactly, and spelled them in numerous varying ways; so that the difference in spelling here does not invalidate this derivation.”¹⁰⁴ Delabarre presented to William Brooks Cabot, an expert on

¹⁰⁰ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 179–180.

¹⁰¹ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 173.

¹⁰² Delabarre, “The Rock-Inscriptions of New England,” Fig. 12.

¹⁰³ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 173–174.

¹⁰⁴ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 180.

Indigenous New England place names, his theory that the suffix *-quin* in a number of Indian proper names originated in this convoluted manner with Corte-Real.¹⁰⁵ Delabarre admitted he received no support: “William B. Cabot, of Boston, to whose judgment we must accord much weight, can feel nothing but plain Indian in these names.”¹⁰⁶ Delabarre nevertheless tabled his *quina* speculations: “these resemblances, in view of all the other circumstances, constitute a very curious coincidence that is worth considering as having been possibly more than mere coincidence.”¹⁰⁷ He was still arguing in favor of his interpretation of this “curious circumstance” in the *Journal of American History* in 1932.¹⁰⁸

Delabarre’s Miguel Corte-Real scenario recalled Carl Christian Rafn’s notion of the Norse remaining among the Native Americans of southern New England for centuries (which had been repeated by Horsford), inspiring their descendants and neighbours to create all the rock art in eastern North America. Delabarre’s Miguel also brings to mind the character Dan (and his accomplice, Peachey) in Rudyard Kipling’s novella *The Man Who Would Be King*, published in 1888, as well as the plot of Joseph Conrad’s *Lord Jim*, both of which were inspired by the story of James Brooke, who arrived in Borneo from England in the midst of a rebellion, and for his services in its suppression was made a Rajah by the Sultan of Brunei in 1841 and awarded Sarawak.¹⁰⁹ Dan and Peachey, as Jeffrey Meyers has summarized, are “uneducated and corrupt adventurers, unscrupulous confidence men, common frauds, blackmailers and drunkards, who have spent most of their fifteen years in India as soldiers and have knocked about in

¹⁰⁵ After retiring from a Boston civil engineering firm in 1908, Brooks turned to studying the life and cultures of the Naskapi and Inuit in Labrador, publishing *In Northern Labrador* (London: J. Murray, and Boston: The Gorham Press, 1912). He also produced an unpublished manuscript, “Indian Place Names of Massachusetts,” dated to 1923. Biographical notes from “Cabot, William B. (William Brooks),” Social Networks and Archival Context (SNAC), University of Virginia, <http://socialarchive.iath.virginia.edu/ark:/99166/w6p27h3x> (accessed Oct. 3, 2014).

¹⁰⁶ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 180.

¹⁰⁷ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 180.

¹⁰⁸ “Delabarre, “The Rock-Inscriptions of New England,” 92.

¹⁰⁹ Jeffrey Meyers, “The Idea of Moral Authority in ‘The Man Who Would Be King,’” *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 8 no. 4, Nineteenth Century (Autumn 1968): 714.

various odd jobs, both legal and illegal, since their release from the army.”¹¹⁰ They seize power in “Kafiristan,” an eastern province of Afghanistan, when Dan’s freemasonry causes him to be hailed as a living god. As Meyers explains, the adventurers’ view of the natives in the stories of Kipling and Conrad “is that they are meant to fight with, conquer and rule. The natives are expendable, inferior to the white man, easily dominated, and gullible—for after their forceful conquest, as [Conrad’s] Dravot realizes, ‘They think we’re Gods.’ The ‘kings’ associate right with might, and believe that the white race is superior and has a right to dominate ‘inferior’ ones.”¹¹¹ Delabarre’s Miguel Corte-Real also recalls the idea Rafn was advancing, that Thorvall the Hunter of the Karlsefni expedition remained among the Indians and was worshipped in memory as the giant Maushop. For Delabarre, Miguel securing the leadership of the Wampanoag was the logical outcome of the appearance among them of white strangers with firearms and the “magic” of rock carving.

The Holes in Delabarre’s Corte-Real Theory

Delabarre’s theory abounds with so many problems that objections can be raised almost at will, *ad infinitum*. The theory suffered foremost because of Delabarre’s selective reading of the Corte-Real story. He neglected to incorporate the fact that Miguel’s brother, Gaspar, had been raiding North American Indigenous communities for slaves, and that Miguel also had slaving in mind, as a contemporary letter on Miguel’s voyage by a Venetian in Lisbon, Pietro Pasqualigo, mentioned that the Portuguese king was pleased by the idea that Terre Verde could provide “plenty of men slaves, fit for every kind of labour.”¹¹² The Corte-Reals did not sound like people who would readily enter into happy relations with any Indigenous people, or who would be welcomed by them on Miguel’s follow-up voyage in search of more

¹¹⁰ Jeffrey Meyers, “The Idea of Moral Authority,” 712–713.

¹¹¹ Meyers, “The Idea of Moral Authority,” 715. As Meyers further argues, the adventurers in Kipling’s and Conrad’s stories “do not recognize that the hill tribes may have a viable life and culture of their own.” (715) If Delabarre knew these popular stories, he was inured to this critique—as was Kipling for that matter, who Meyers stated was essentially sympathetic to the imperialist ambitions of the roguish Dan and Peachey. (711)

¹¹² Morison, *The European Discovery of America*, 216.

slaves as well as his missing brother. Delabarre addressed the Corte-Reals' slaving only in a footnote in "Recent History," acknowledging George Patterson thought "more than likely" that Miguel Corte-Real and his shipmates "should have fallen victims to the vengeance of the friends or clansmen of the kidnapped, or perhaps been overpowered in an attempt to capture more."¹¹³ Delabarre discounted this theory as "no more probable than the one that I make."¹¹⁴ Delabarre in his 1923 accounting (which made no mention of slaving) incorporated deadly conflict at White Man's Spring, but whatever its cause, it had nothing to do with slave raiding. In revisiting his scenario in *Dighton Rock* in 1928, Delabarre asserted that in Narragansett Bay, Miguel "found a race that was kind, gentle, courteous, friendly, according to the testimony of all early voyages. His record seems to indicate he settled among them."¹¹⁵ Delabarre was unconcerned that "kind, gentle, courteous, friendly" were never terms that would have been applied to the Corte-Reals in their own attitudes to Indigenous people. And there was no such "record" for Miguel's doomed voyage, beyond what Delabarre could read with his flashlight on the side of Dighton Rock. Delabarre offered no explanation of how such a small and hostile force (of slavers, if they behaved anything like Gaspar) could have come to "seize power" and command fealty, with Miguel elevated to a sachem in the populous and semi-sedentary agrarian society Verrazano encountered; of how the Wampanoag (or neighboring Narragansetts) could forget the details of Miguel's leadership but remember the initial battle; even while preserving a garbled version of Corte-Real's name. As well, Delabarre had torqued the limited details of Miguel's voyage, asserting that after splitting up with his other ships in Terra Verde, he sailed south. But Galvam (who is the sole source on the details of this independent surveying and rendezvous plan) said nothing about which direction Miguel had sailed. Delabarre did not pause to wonder how Miguel had enough gunpowder and ammunition after nine years in the wilderness

¹¹³ George Patterson. "The Portuguese on the North-East Coast of America, and the first European attempt at Colonization there. A lost chapter in American History," in *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, ser. 1, vol. 8 (1890), 133.

¹¹⁴ Delabarre, "Recent History," 415.

¹¹⁵ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 175.

to fight the Wampanoag and command their obeisance. More critically, Delabarre never addressed how the inscription was made. The standard rejection of its Indigenous origin was that the markings were made by metal tools, yet Delabarre never presented evidence that the markings attributed to Corte-Real differed in composition from the pecked markings he conceded were made by Indians in other rocks.

There was also the enormous problem of why, if the inscription was meant to alert future explorers to Miguel's presence in his hope of returning home, he chose to inscribe a boulder in the obscure reaches of a tributary of Narragansett Bay, about twenty-five miles inland from the sea, that spent large parts of every day completely submerged. Surely if Miguel wanted to attract the attention of passing seafarers he would have organized something more prominent and much closer to, if not at, the entrance to Narragansett Bay. And why would Corte-Real have written the Latin inscription that supposedly instructed Europeans how to find him in a brain-teasing abbreviated form? Similarly, why would he have rendered the Portuguese shield at such a small and obscure scale? Delabarre also had to explain why the Indians whom Verrazano met in 1524, only thirteen years after the inscription, would make no mention of an amazing white man who had appeared among them and come to lead them, let alone why they would agree to be led by him, rather than some other capable member of the Wampanoag in the place of the leader the Corte-Real party supposedly had slain at White Man's Spring.¹¹⁶ And while Delabarre proposed a White Tribism infusion of Portuguese blood around 1511, he did not say why none of these offspring just thirteen years later would not have been recognizable through their appearance, remnants of clothing and arms from their fathers (and where were their fathers?) and a creole of Algonquian-Portuguese words. The silence of Verrazano's account on Miguel's remarkable presence was a significant problem, and Delabarre ventured: "it is not very surprising that Verrazano tells us nothing about him, for his narrative implies that he explored to a distance of not more than five or six leagues beyond Newport, and if the natives tried to inform him about the strange white man who had recently dwelt and died among

¹¹⁶ For Verrazano's voyage account, see Giovanni da Verrazano, "Cellère Codex," translated by Susan Tarrow, in Lawrence C. Wroth, *The Voyages of Giovanni da Verrazano, 1524–28* (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Pierpont Morgan Library, 1970).

them, he would have understood nothing of what they were trying to say. By the time the next white visitors arrived and gained power to converse with the natives, about three-quarters of a century later, the Indians had apparently retained but little memory of the incident.” Delabarre insisted a “fragmentary and distorted part of the story did persist” among the Indians, however, in the tale of the wooden ship and the battle at the spring.¹¹⁷

Delabarre Explains Indigenous Markings on Stone

In “Recent History,” Delabarre counseled that theorists were wrong to think that “Indians were too lazy and idle to have been capable” of carving Dighton Rock.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, Delabarre’s core attitude towards Native Americans had begun to surface while writing “Middle Period,” in which for the first time he referred to Indigenous rock markings as “scribblings” in discussing Kendall’s researches. Calling images that had to be methodically pecked into stone “scribblings” was ridiculous, but it conveyed the lazy, inconsequential haste Delabarre would consistently assign to Indigenous efforts throughout the rest of his writings on Dighton Rock and rock art in general. Delabarre embraced a presumption embedded in the history of Dighton Rock’s interpretation as far back as Isaac Greenwood in 1730: Native Americans were inferior in moral and intellectual character to whites.

As Delabarre advanced his Corte-Real theory, he still had to explain most of the markings on Dighton Rock, as well as similar markings on rocks across North America. His flashlight-assisted photography of the rock had turned up several examples of what he asserted was Anglo-American graffiti.¹¹⁹ Plainly, though, Indians had been inscribing images on Dighton Rock, as the stone was covered

¹¹⁷ Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 175–176.

¹¹⁸ Delabarre, “Recent History,” 418.

¹¹⁹ Late in his preparation of his 1923 paper (Delabarre had a penchant for eleventh-hour publishing discoveries), he claimed to have detected an arrow with the word SPRING, presumably a set of colonial directions. He suspected there was an entire phrase: “Injun Path To Spring In Swomp Yds 167 in the direction of the arrow.” (“Dighton Rock,” 69–71.) More sensationally, he then turned up “Thacher 1598,” which he supposed was the record

in them. Delabarre for example thought he could detect a second horned quadruped, drawn in the same style, next to the known one, which he believed were deer. In writing “Middle Period,” Delabarre was somewhat sympathetic to the idea there might be an intellectual substance to the markings, should they be Indigenous. “If we do not like to believe that the rock presents nothing more than idle and meaningless scribbles” by Indians at various times, he counseled, “then probably we must agree that Kendall was right in saying that without knowing the exact story in advance there is no possibility that the intended meaning can be restored.”¹²⁰ Delabarre however found the reading of the four Mohawk chiefs related by Kendall “too trivial and unappealing for acceptance,” and while Shingwauk’s reading “is plausible enough...it stands exactly on par with nearly a score of rival readings.”¹²¹ Delabarre encountered nothing that would persuade him of an Indigenous meaning worthy of anyone’s time, and apparently made no effort to learn more about the cultural traditions to which they might have belonged.

Delabarre’s explanation of the Dighton Rock’s inscription was the same as that advanced by the Reverend Chapin in 1839, which was borrowed (before being abandoned) by Schoolcraft in 1851. A European visitor made the initial inscription, and the Indians filled in the rock around it—and in the case of Delabarre’s interpretation, right over parts of the European handiwork. Where Delabarre differed was in asserting that Native Americans had no inclination or ability to make markings on rocks until they saw Europeans do so. Delabarre’s theory was derivative of Thomas H. Webb’s opinion; perhaps he read Webb’s correspondence with Ordronaux in the OCHS files. His theory also may have reflected a misapplication of Daniel Wilson’s popular *Prehistoric Man*, in which Wilson asserted Native American visual arts were uniquely imitative of natural forms when compared to prehistoric European efforts.¹²² Wilson was wrong about Native American art being exclusively concerned with natural forms, but from

of an early English expedition to the New England cod fishery. (*Dighton Rock*, 181.) If authentic, this was a remarkable find, but historians declined to embrace his revelation.

¹²⁰ Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 118.

¹²¹ Delabarre, “Middle Period,” 118.

¹²² Wilson, *Prehistoric Man*, 1:451–452.

this assertion (and its implication of intellectual limitation) it would have been easy to conclude that Indians were incapable of conceiving abstract concepts, not only in visual arts but in written language as well, and that when Europeans arrived the Indians imitated whatever forms they saw, including writing.

In “Recent History” in 1919, Delabarre’s attitude toward Native Americans, their intellectual capabilities, and culture was one of dismissive contempt:

On New England rocks, the writer has found Indian carvings that almost beyond question were meaningless haphazard scribblings, the product of an impulse to be active anyhow, as some people slash at shrubbery in passing; further encouraged, no doubt, by finding that their artistic efforts aroused the interest and admiration of watching companions. In some cases, probably, such childish scribblings might be the result of an endeavor to imitate, without knowing how, the white man’s marvelous art of writing. In other cases, ornamental and geometrical designs are carved, still without meaning, but satisfying an urge for more pleasing artistic expression and eliciting greater applause from the onlookers. The wide-spread urge to make crude pictures of familiar objects, men, animals and trees, is also evident, again due to both motives and still having no wider meaning.¹²³

Delabarre’s opinion recalled John Russell Bartlett’s dismissive opinion of rock markings (and the people that made them) in the American southwest: historically of no value, and crude and idle in execution.¹²⁴ In his 1923 paper, he revisited the issue of Native American imitation in milder yet still demeaning terms. He thought it “highly improbable” Indigenous people made markings prior to Corte-Real. “Many of the carvings [on Dighton Rock] are unquestionably later than [Corte-Real’s]. Study of the

¹²³ Delabarre, “Recent History,” 428.

¹²⁴ Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents*, 1:195–196.

half-dozen other petroglyphs scattered about Narragansett Bay argues for the belief that they, at least, were motivated by the examples of the whites of Colonial days. It seems unquestionable that it was Cortereal's example, reinforced by more intimate acquaintance with white men's writing after 1600, that led to the first attempts of the local Indians to imitate as well as they knew how so wonderful a process."¹²⁵ He came to a useful conclusion—inspired perhaps by George Catlin's 1838 opinion—that it was “practically certain that the Indian contributions do not form a connected story, and that they were made by many different individuals and on different occasions extending very probably into Colonial times.” But he was adamant that the markings were inspired by whites, and moreover they were not worth studying, as it was “not at all likely that any important meaning or message attaches to any of their glyphs.” He wavered in suggesting they were of no less interest than had they been made by “Phoenicians or Northmen, or by other people whose possible wanderings may intrigue the uncritical imagination.” Yet he concluded: “Many of them are probably meaningless scribblings, others merely trivial pictures. Some may possibly have had a more elaborate symbolic purpose, but anything of that sort would have been probably so local and temporary that we are not likely ever to discover what particular objects and ideas their authors had in mind.”¹²⁶

Rock art study as a scholarly discipline in North America scarcely existed in the 1920s and 1930s, and would not begin to grow until after the Second World War.¹²⁷ Delabarre thus was able to fill a scholarly void, albeit with eccentric and demeaning ideas about Native Americans. (An unsigned review

¹²⁵ Delabarre, “Dighton Rock,” 72.

¹²⁶ Delabarre, “Dighton Rock,” 72. Delabarre summarized in similar terms in *Dighton Rock*, 185.

¹²⁷ “Works dealing with general topics (such as terminology; design classification; techniques and materials involved in producing, recording or reproducing rock art, style, and cultural affiliations; conservation of rock drawings; and reports on rock art activities or the history of rock art research), all virtually nonexistent before 1950 and still rare between 1950 and 1970, enjoyed much greater relative popularity among writers after 1970.” Klaus F. Wellman, “Trends in North American Rock Research: A Quantitative Evaluation of the Literature,” *American Antiquity* 45 no. 3 (Jul. 1980): 535. Wellman identified 114 works addressing rock art before 1930 and 143 between 1930 and 1949; output increased to 364 between 1950 and 1969 and 479 between 1970 and 1979. Almost half of the scholarly output (479/1100) was produced in the 1970s. See Table 4, p535. Before 1950, the main subject matter of the literature (75.1%) was dominated by site reports; none of the works in Wellman's estimation addressed “terminology,” “techniques and materials for making rock art,” or “style.” See Table 5, p. 536. Eastern Woodland sites were addressed by 25 works before 1930 and just 14 works between 1930 and 1949. See Table 6, p537.

of *Dighton Rock* in the *New York Times* advised: “Professor Delabarre’s interpretations, although they appear to be sound and are certainly persuasive, are in part hardly less romantic” than the efforts of Rafn and Court de Gébelin. “There are many Indian drawings, the significance of which he does not pretend to know. He considers them of no great consequence.”¹²⁸) After the appearance of *Dighton Rock* in 1928, Delabarre continued to publish on the Corte-Real theory, and on rock art in general, as he was accepted by journals as an expert on petroglyphs.¹²⁹ In March 1935, the New Bedford *Standard-Times* published his analysis of a petroglyph at Aptucxet on Cape Cod, known today as the Bourne petroglyph.¹³⁰ The stone was said to have served as the doorstep of a Native American church or mission around Great Herring Pond, with a series of symbols protected from wear on its underside. While fringe theories would propose the symbols were Norse runes in 1940 and a southern Iberian script in 1975, Delabarre concluded they were a Native American record, made some time after 1658, and were mostly meaningless.¹³¹ The article provided Delabarre the opportunity to disseminate his standard argument that Native Americans had no written language of their own, or even made markings on rocks, before Whites arrived, and that even then “a large proportion of their carvings were nothing more than meaningless scribblings or ornamental patterns.”¹³²

Delabarre’s reputation as a petroglyph scholar was abetted by the anthropologist Charles C. Willoughby, director of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard. In

¹²⁸ “Dighton Rock,” *New York Times*, Dec. 23, 1928.

¹²⁹ See for example Edmund B. Delabarre and Charles W. Brown, “The Runic Rock on No Man’s Land[,] Massachusetts,” *The New England Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (Sep. 1935): 365–377.

¹³⁰ Edmund B. Delabarre, “Moonlight Pact with White Man Seen Recorded On Ancient Indian Rock Preserved at Aptucxet,” *New Bedford Standard-Times*, March 17, 1935.

¹³¹ See Lenik, *Picture Rocks*, 138–139, for a discussion of the Bourne petroglyph, including the Norse and southern Iberian theories. Barry Fell argued it contained a southern Iberian script in a 1975 publication of his Epigraphic Society, which he repeated in *America B.C.: Ancient Settlers in the New World* (1976; repr. New York: Pocket Books, 1978), 160–161. Lenik argues that the symbols “appear to resemble Indian identity marks or signatures that are well documented in Historic-period deeds and records,” and probably date to the last half of the seventeenth century. (*Picture Rocks*, 139)

¹³² Delabarre, “Moonlight Pact.”

1929, Willoughby published a kindly review of *Dighton Rock* in *American Anthropologist*, calling it “a valuable contribution to New England archaeology, whether or not the reader is able to accept all the author’s conclusions, which are presented in a clear and interesting manner.”¹³³ The two men knew each other, as Delabarre acknowledged Willoughby’s advice in his 1925 paper on Grassy Island for *American Anthropologist*.¹³⁴ Willoughby was a leading expert on Indigenous archaeology and cultural materials of northeastern North America, and gently reproached Delabarre for concluding in his final paragraph (as Willoughby quoted in part): “Their designs were trivial scribblings and pictures, made only for pastime and attendant admiration.”¹³⁵ Willoughby remarked: “This opinion is hardly in accordance with what is generally accepted by ethnologists. Would the author apply the same reasoning to the many other pictographs in America?” Delabarre had received a kid-gloves treatment appropriate to his standing as a major academic figure at Brown (and Harvard). Where others might have considered Willoughby’s question a polite scholarly rebuke, Delabarre took it as a sign to extend his theorizing to the rest of the known rock art in the United States.

In the *Journal of American History* in 1932 Delabarre was willing to grant the possibility that Indians elsewhere in America made drawings on rocks of symbolic complexity, but the people of southern New England remained a special case of ignorance. By then Delabarre was positioned as an expert on Indigenous rock art, which the *Journal of American History* enabled. Most of the rock inscriptions he had studied “were made by Colonial Indians, between 1620 and 1675, after white men had set them the example. A great majority of their inscriptions are idle scribblings and trivial pictures, with

¹³³ Charles C. Willoughby, review of *Dighton Rock: A Study of the Written Rocks of New England*, by Edmund Burke Delabarre, *American Anthropologist* n.s. 31, no. 3 (Jul.–Sep. 1929): 521.

¹³⁴ “The gouge is stained on one edge with sulphate of iron, and Mr. Willoughby tells me that he believes that this is due to its having once lain close to a firestone of iron pyrites in a grave.” Delabarre, “Pre-Algonkian Culture in Massachusetts,” 365.

¹³⁵ Willoughby, review of *Dighton Rock*, 521. Delabarre’s full statement was: “Their designs were trivial scribblings and pictures, made only for pastime and attendant admiration of their companions, in crude imitation of what they had seen done by white men. For the most part they had no significance at all, although in a few cases it seems likely that they may have had something more than merely pictorial meaning to the individual who made them, not discoverable by anyone else unless he explained it.” *Dighton Rock*, 312.

perhaps a few mythological symbols and untranslatable depictions of individual adventure. There is no indication that they approach the complexity of symbolism exhibited in petroglyphs in some other parts of the country.” His conviction as to the nature of Dighton Rock had not wavered: “This inscription was carved in 1511, and records in Latin words the fact that Miguel Cortereal, a native of Portugal, had become, ‘by the will of God, leader of the natives of India in this place.’”¹³⁶

Delabarre’s reputation as a rock-art expert was upheld by Willoughby in *Antiquities of the New England Indians*, which the then-director emeritus of the Peabody Museum published in 1935. Willoughby devoted about five pages to examples of petroglyphs, and while he generally admonished past theories of a non-Indigenous origin for Dighton Rock, and pointed out its Indigenous motifs, he ignored Delabarre’s Corte-Real theory and blundered in his historiographical analysis.¹³⁷ Willoughby included a version of the *Antiquitates Americanae* drawing that had been attributed to the Rhode Island Historical Society, copying a version published by Garrick Mallery.¹³⁸ While Willoughby redated the original RIHS drawing to 1834 as per Delabarre’s analysis, his reproduction perpetuated the “Thorfins” inscription Delabarre had persuasively shown was not there, the caption noted “portions...of the group shown near the center are obviously of European derivation.” He praised Delabarre’s petroglyph investigations, recommending to readers Delabarre’s 1928 volume *Dighton Rock* as “an excellent detailed account of this and other New England petroglyphs...Dr. Delabarre has made an exhaustive study of the many letters and numbers which he attributes to Europeans, and those interested in the subject are referred to this book.”¹³⁹ Willoughby left unchallenged Delabarre’s fundamental contention that New England petroglyphs were meaningless scribbles by Indians inspired by European newcomers. Any reader following Willoughby’s recommendation to consult *Dighton Rock*—the only source he

¹³⁶ Delabarre, “The Rock-Inscriptions of New England,” 110.

¹³⁷ Willoughby, *Antiquities of the New England Indians*, 166–170.

¹³⁸ Willoughby, *Antiquities of the New England Indians*, Fig. 93, “The Dighton Rock Inscription,” 168.

¹³⁹ Willoughby, *Antiquities of the New England Indians*, 166–67, 168.

recommended on New England petroglyphs—could be forgiven for concluding that the retired director of the Peabody endorsed the ideas Delabarre advanced not only about Corte-Real and Dighton Rock but about the brutish, imitative, and childish Native American character.

A Delabarre article in *The Scientific Monthly* later that same year continued speculations he had made in *Dighton Rock* on what caused people to make inscriptions in rocks. Much of “A Petroglyphic Study of Human Motives” was given over to educated guesses as to why people crafted hoaxes such as the No Man’s Land runic inscription he investigated in Massachusetts.¹⁴⁰ As with his other writings on rock inscriptions and psychology, Delabarre never turned his analysis back upon the observer to ask why people like himself were wont to see whatever they desired in markings, and especially why they were so prepared to dismiss an Indigenous provenance. Delabarre continued to allow for an Indigenous origin for some New England inscriptions on the most limited and derogatory terms, repeating near-verbatim in *The Scientific Monthly* his assertion in “Recent History” in 1919 that rock carvings in New England attributable to Indians were “meaningless haphazard scribblings, the product of an impulse to be active anyhow, as some people slash at shrubbery in passing. In some cases, probably, such childish scribblings might be the result of an endeavor to imitate, without knowing how, the white man’s marvelous art of writing.”¹⁴¹

Delabarre returned a final time to his Corte-Real theory in “Miguel Cortereal: The First European to Enter Narragansett Bay,” a paper read before the Rhode Island Historical Society in February 1936. Delabarre repaid Willoughby’s compliments in *Antiquities of the New England Indians* by citing Willoughby’s contention that the masses of Native American copper observed by early visitors to the coast, including Verrazano in 1524, “must have been obtained from previous explorers of whom we have no definite account; for although an occasional implement and a few beads wrought from native copper have been found, nothing in the way of metal plates has been recovered in New England which was not

¹⁴⁰ See Edmund Burke Delabarre and Charles W. Brown, “The Runic Rock on No Man’s Land[,] Massachusetts,” *The New England Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (Sep. 1935): 365–377.

¹⁴¹ Delabarre, “A Petroglyphic Study of Human Motives,” 428.

made of European copper or brass.”¹⁴² Willoughby discussed the Fall River burial’s brass breastplate, and was clear that the Fall River and similar New England burials were of Native Americans, not wandering Norsemen (or Portuguese). While Willoughby attributed foreign metals in grave goods to burials made in the sixteenth century, as I have noted in Chapter 6, the Fall River burial was consistent with seventeenth-century Native American burials in southern New England that contained grave goods crafted in part from European trade materials. For Delabarre, Willoughby’s opinion offered further traction to his Corte-Real theory. If copper items Verrazano saw on his visit to Narragansett Bay originated with Europeans, even from “previous explorers of whom we have no definite account,” as Willoughby ventured, then Corte-Real was a perfect source for the Fall River skeleton’s metals and the adornments worn by people encountered by Verrazano.¹⁴³

Delabarre’s 1936 lecture was mostly dedicated to his White Tribism ideas, as he continued to insist on the Portuguese roots of Native American terminology that he outright invented, based on his pretzel logic of the linguistic influence of the *quina* symbol on the Portuguese flag. Delabarre defied the objections of anthropologist Frank Speck in insisting that there could have been a term, *Quade-kin*, that “might...mean ‘great chief,’” which would have been inspired by Corte-Real.¹⁴⁴ Speck, as Delabarre related, had objected to his idea, saying the Indians would not have combined the terms *kehte* (which Delabarre bent into *Quade*) and *kin* in a single word, as they both meant “large,” but Delabarre countered by arguing that the Indians may have followed a practice known to Germans, “of piling up successions of superlatives,” and so had arrived at a term that meant “heap big chief.”¹⁴⁵ Delabarre continued to portray the Wampanoag as a people improved biologically by interacting and interbreeding with the Corte-Real party: “The Wampanoags were a superior race, a fact which might well be accounted for by early white

¹⁴² Willoughby, *Antiquities of the New England Indians*, 230.

¹⁴³ Delabarre, “Miguel Cortereal,” 2–3.

¹⁴⁴ Delabarre, “Miguel Cortereal,” 13.

¹⁴⁵ Delabarre, “Miguel Cortereal,” 13.

influence and admixture of white blood. It was Wampanoags whom Verrazano found at Newport ‘most civilized in customs’ and with ‘two kings beautiful in form and stature’...Verrazano was greatly impressed by them and ‘formed a great friendship with them;’ whereas the nearest other Indians whom he met he speaks of as rude, barbarous and unfriendly.’¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Delabarre, “Miguel Cortereal,” 7.

Conclusion

Edmund Burke Delabarre's study of Dighton Rock endures as a meta-study of scholarly folly: invaluable in understanding the interpretive errors of the past, yet a major error in its own right. Delabarre deserved to be hoisted on his own intellectual petard. In "Recent History" in 1919, he condemned the "many wise-acres in this country and Europe whose zeal far outstrips their wisdom and who endeavor to make up for want of knowledge in bold assertions and wholesale statements...in their self-conceit and gross ignorance, they have deemed themselves amply qualified to sit in judgment...At one time these 'Know-Everythings' labored most vigorously to break the Dighton Rock to pieces."¹⁴⁷ Delabarre then assured: "To be acceptable, a scientific hypothesis must take into account every single one of the pertinent indubitable facts, fit each into its definite place in a harmonious system, account for all distinctions and variations and conditions...There is but one account of the facts which, while it has not solved all problems, is yet inherently capable of accomplishing the task."¹⁴⁸ Delabarre may have thought only his Corte-Real theory met his standard of a satisfactory scientific hypothesis, but it was in truth as satisfactory an example as one can find of a Western inquiry into an Indigenous artifact that failed to meet the minimal standards of its own hallowed methodology. Delabarre likely would have demolished the Corte-Real theory, had anyone else tabled it.

In 1932, Delabarre admitted: "It may be said with some justice that anyone can read anything he wants to find upon this rock. I have myself made such a claim as a result of a critical historical study of the many drawings and chalkings and translations. An attitude of unrestrained imagination, like that which finds pictures in clouds and in ink-blots, has led men to an almost limitless variety of ill-supported interpretations of these markings. But an attitude of critical and attentive scrutiny can test the validity of such imaginative perceptions. We have adopted that attitude."¹⁴⁹ To the contrary, Delabarre's own

¹⁴⁷ Delabarre, "Recent History," 426.

¹⁴⁸ Delabarre, "Recent History," 427.

¹⁴⁹ Delabarre, "The Rock-Inscriptions of New England," 89.

published photography leaves a viewer straining to see how he fit particular letters into the rock's markings. Delabarre's greatest failing was his insistence on the triviality and meaninglessness of any rock art attributable to Native Americans. As he wrote in 1932, Catlin, Squier, Schoolcraft, and Mallery "gave evidence that examples of pictures, symbols, signatures, and meaningless scribbles cut into rocks were to be found in almost all parts of the country and were undoubtedly executed by the Indians."¹⁵⁰ But none of these authors used the words "meaningless scribbles." The wonder, and the tragedy, of Delabarre's theory was that instead of being consigned to the scrap heap of Euro-American migrationist-diffusionist and White Tribism notions that Delabarre had assembled in his investigation for the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, his Miguel Corte-Real theory inspired the most celebrated and enduring possession of Dighton Rock.

¹⁵⁰ Delabarre, "The Rock-Inscriptions of New England," 72.

(9)

American Place-Making: Dighton Rock as a Portuguese Relic, 1919–2013**Introduction**

In this concluding chapter, I examine the final phase of Dighton Rock's history as an object of belonging, possession, and dispossession, as the Corte-Real interpretation tabled by Edmund Burke Delabarre became the dominant theory and inspired the creation of a state park and museum. In this final phase, the utility of Dighton Rock shifts to immigrant place-making, as the Portuguese-American community rallies to the rock as both a symbol and a proof of their rightful place in American society: they belong in America, because Dighton Rock proves America originally belonged to them. In promoting his own interpretation of Dighton Rock, Manuel Luciano da Silva, the driving force behind the Dighton Rock Museum, brings to bear every strategy of possession and dispossession I have described in the centuries-old efforts to define Native Americans and articulate a European entitlement to North America, foremost the White Tribism tropes of word hunting and improvement through interbreeding.

Place-making in the American melting pot

Dighton Rock Museum in Dighton Rock State Park was open by appointment only in July 2013. A visitor was asked to call ahead (48 hours notice was preferred) and leave a request on an answering machine at Freetown State Forest.¹ The park, which occupies 85 quiet acres within the town limits of Berkeley, Massachusetts, includes frontage on the Taunton River, where you find the museum and the much-disputed boulder housed within it. The museum is constructed as two conjoined, single-story octagonal structures. [Fig. 31] The octagon nearest the water is dedicated to the rock, which was raised up from its

¹ For basic park information, visit "Dighton Rock State Park," Energy and Environmental Affairs, Government of Massachusetts. <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/region-south/dighton-rock-state-park.html> (accessed Dec. 10, 2014).

original position in the river's tidewater in 1963. The octagon the visitor initially enters is the museum proper, devoted to the rock's interpretation.

One can only imagine what Edmund Burke Delabarre might think of this museum, which would not exist had Delabarre not determined a lost Portuguese explorer had inscribed his name, a date, and a Latin message upon the rock. Delabarre died in 1945, 33 years before the museum opened, but not before Portuguese-American enthusiasms for his findings had reached a commemorative pitch that alarmed him. There is no indication Delabarre had cultivated support in the considerable Portuguese-American community of southeastern New England for his theory, and his claim initially showed as little hope of shifting Dighton Rock's provenance as Delabarre would have had of moving the forty-ton boulder with his bare hands. *The Geographical Journal* of Britain's Royal Geographical Society did address his October 1923 article in *Old-Time New England* in its December issue that year.² While praising Delabarre's innovative lighting for photography, the journal advised his interpretations "call for a good deal of faith for their acceptance."³ The so-called Portuguese markings "do not stand alone but are picked out from a mass of other lines which are arbitrarily set aside as of later date."⁴ The review also noted the inscription bore no stylistic resemblance to a known Portuguese rock inscription, left by Diogo Cão at the mouth of the Mpozo River during his exploration of the Congo River in West Africa in 1485.⁵ [Fig. 32] In contrast with Delabarre's crude and cryptic Latin inscription (for if anyone left a lazy scribbling on Dighton Rock, it was Corte-Real), Cão's inscription in a riverside rock face was neatly executed in Portuguese in lower-case script, and did not include a date. In addition to a clear message (*Aqi chegaram*

² "A New Interpretation of the Dighton Rock Inscription, Massachusetts," in "The Monthly Record," *The Geographical Journal* 62, no. 6 (Dec. 1923): 470–471.

³ "A New Interpretation," 470.

⁴ "A New Interpretation," 471.

⁵ "A New Interpretation," 471. *The Geographical Journal* had published a paper that included a photo of the Cão inscription, which had been discovered by a Swedish missionary in 1906. See Thomas Lewis, "The Old Kingdom of Kongo," *The Geographical Journal* 31, no. 6 (Jun. 1908): 590–591. The Rev. Lewis presumed Cão made the inscription in 1482, but as Harry J. Johnston explained in 1913, details in the coat of arms indicated it was made on Cão's second voyage to the Congo, in 1485. See Harry H. Johnston, *A History of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races*, 2nd edn. (1913; repr. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 80.

os navios do esclarecido Rey Dom Joam ho sego de Portugall—“Here arrived the ships of the enlightened King Dom Joam the second of Portugal”) that included numerous names of crew members, Cão’s effort featured a large Portuguese coat of arms (a shield with proper *quina*), as well as a prominent outline of one of the cross-shaped stone pillars, called *padrões*, that Cão and other contemporary Portuguese explorers erected.

With Delabarre’s theory otherwise raising not a ripple of interest among historians, the Corte-Real chapter in Dighton Rock’s annals of misinterpretation might have ended quickly, had there not been a resurgent interest in America in Viking voyages. That interest was driven by a new urgency of belonging in America, into which the rock would be enlisted in a fresh round of place-making.

In the late nineteenth century, the Gothicist project dear to Anglo-American New Englanders like Thomas G. Appleton became a particularly Scandinavian-American one. Rasmus Björn Anderson, a prominent member of America’s Scandinavian immigrant community who was born in Wisconsin and was friend of Ole Bull, promoted the ideas of Rafn and Magnússén and propagandized the myth of a Nordic ancestry for the American republic through works like *America Not Discovered by Columbus* (1874). Anderson insisted on the Norse authenticity of Dighton Rock and the Fall River skeleton (which he proposed was Thorvald Eiriksson).⁶ He corresponded with Elisha Shade, a resident of Bristol County, Massachusetts, who provided him in 1875 with a stereoscopic view of Dighton Rock and in 1876 assured him the boulder’s markings were Norse. As Shade informed him: “I cannot believe they were made by the lazy Indian of Schoolcraft.”⁷

Scandinavian-American place-making however soon shifted away from the New England relics of *Antiquitates Americanae* championed by Anderson. Just as Anglo-American New Englanders allied with Rafn and besotted with Gothicism drew Vinland towards themselves in the early nineteenth century,

⁶ Anderson, *America Not Discovered by Columbus*, 4th edn., 20–23. See Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 225–231, for a discussion of Anderson.

⁷ Elisha Shade to Rasmus B. Anderson, March 13, 1876, in Anderson, *America Not Discovered by Columbus*, 4th ed., 23.

so too did Scandinavian-Americans in the states of the Old Northwest in the late nineteenth century.⁸ The 1898 discovery of an inscribed stone on the farm of Olof Ohlman near Kensington in Douglas County, Minnesota, opened fresh terrain for Norse exploits in North America. The so-called Kensington runestone was declared a fake by scholars in 1899 (and repeatedly thereafter), but has proved to be a hoax that refuses to die. Its most ardent proponent, a Norwegian immigrant to Wisconsin named Hjalmar Holand, learned of the stone in 1907, in the course of researching the history of local Norwegian settlement, and acquired it from Ohlman⁹. Holand brought some scholarly respectability to a renewed case for the runestone's authenticity; in 1949 he would receive a Guggenheim fellowship of \$2,500 to fund runological and linguistic studies in Norway.¹⁰ In a pamphlet in 1919 (expanded into a full book in 1932), Holand insisted on the runestone's authenticity as the record of a fourteenth-century colonizing expedition led by Paul Knutson that sailed into Hudson Bay and reached the site of the runestone by portages via the Nelson River and Lake Winnipeg.¹¹ Holand had created a new pre-Columbian Norse presence deep in North America, where Scandinavian immigrants had flocked in the nineteenth century.

In the twentieth century, artifact and ethnicity merged in the cause of belonging, as Scandinavian immigrants asserted their rightful place in a republic that had embraced eugenics, a pseudoscientific perversion of Darwin's evolutionary theories. Eugenics produced an American obsession with racial

⁸ Kolodny has remarked that the phenomenon of bogus discoveries of Norse relics in Minnesota and the nearby Midwest "was like antebellum New England all over again, with Viking 'finds' everywhere, but with even more fantastical stories about how and why they got there." *In Search of First Contact*, 329.

⁹ The story of the Kensington runestone has been repeatedly and exhaustively explored. Notwithstanding Alice Beck Kehoe's radical proposal of its authenticity in *The Kensington Runestone: Approaching a Research Question Holistically* (Long Grove IL: Waveland Press, 2005), runic experts and archaeologists have consistently declared it a fake. For a good overview, see Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology*, 194–206. See also Wallace and Fitzhugh, "Stumbles and Pitfalls in the Search for Viking America," 381–384, and Kolodny, *In Search of First Contact*, 327–330.

¹⁰ For Holand's basic biography, see "Biography/History" in Hjalmar and Harold Holand Papers, 1922-1972, Wisconsin Historical Society. <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/wiarchives.uw-whs-gb0060> (accessed Oct. 19, 2014).

¹¹ Hjalmar Rued Holand, *The Kensington Runestone* (Menasha WI: 1919); *The Kensington Stone: A Study in Pre-Columbian American History* (Menasha WI: 1932).

fitness, as state and federal laws were passed to defend biological (white) purity against degeneration.¹² Eugenacists feared (among other things) that less desirable Europeans would dilute the optimal white Anglo-Saxon stock that White Tribism theories maintained had improved inferior Native Americans. The National Origins (aka Johnson-Reed Immigration) Act of 1924 restricted annual immigration from foreign countries to two percent of the number of people identified according to national origin in 1890. The new immigration quota system, along with literacy standards, tipped the immigration balance towards northern Europe and away from southern and eastern Europe while essentially debarring Asians.¹³

Although Scandinavians were favored by the 1924 immigration reforms, nativist sentiments considered Norwegian immigrants to be hyphenated Americans who had opposed American participation in the First World War.¹⁴ To counter these suspicions, in 1925 the Norse American Immigration Centennial Celebration was held, marking the anniversary of the arrival of the first ship of Norwegian immigrants in 1825.¹⁵ This national event was hosted by Minnesota's state fairgrounds; president Calvin Coolidge spoke to a crowd estimated at more than 80,000 (more than 160,000 tickets were sold to attendees from Canada and the United States) and Congress approved a commemorative silver medal that depicted Leif Eiriksson as a Viking chieftain setting foot in America.¹⁶ The fairground's "Pageant of the Northmen" included a textbook example of firsting-and-lasting, as actors portraying Norwegian

¹² For an overview of the American eugenics movement in the early twentieth century, see Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) 10–23.

¹³ Stern, *Eugenic Nation*, 67–68.

¹⁴ April Schultz calls World War I "a moment of profound crisis in the Norwegian-American community. The high-profile ethnic activity among the Norwegians and their well-known opposition to the war made them particularly vulnerable to nativistic attacks, both from the larger Americanization movement and from assimilationists in their own community." See April Schultz, "'The Pride of the Race Had Been Touched': The 1925 Norse-American Immigration Centennial and Ethnic Identity." *The Journal of American History* 77, no. 4 (Mar. 1991): 1273.

¹⁵ Henry J. Cadbury, "The Norse-American Centennial," *Bulletin of Friends Historical Association* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1926): 21.

¹⁶ Cadbury, "The Norse-American Centennial," 21; Schultz, "'The Pride of the Race,'" 1265, 1287–1288.

immigrants, “American” pioneers and Native Americans shared a meal, after which the Indians peacefully if regretfully withdrew, to make way for Norwegian settlement.¹⁷ Less sentimentally, Dr. H. G. Stub, head of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, summarized the main pests confronting Norwegian newcomers in a keynote address, asserting the immigrants “fought Indians and grasshoppers.”¹⁸ The celebration was an exercise in revisionist Gothicism, as the hated German enemies of the war were excluded from the ideal White northern European population, as represented foremost by Anglo-Saxon Britons who had been infused with higher Norse qualities by the Norman invasion of 1066. Norwegian Americans in this arguably assimilationist celebration, which was laden with Viking imagery, positioned themselves as members of the shared Gothicism ethnicity, with the centennial intended (according to one bulletin of the organizing committee) to revitalize a “heroic Norwegian past” within the present Norwegian population as well as to demonstrate “the contribution our race has made to American history, ideals, art, music.”¹⁹

The rise of eugenics and the immigration restrictions of 1924 were experienced in a far different way by Portuguese-Americans. The area of southern New England near Dighton Rock was one of the most populous Portuguese immigrant communities in the United States. Portuguese emigration, which began in 1820, was initially associated with the whaling industry, as New England ships routinely called on the Portuguese Azores.²⁰ Portuguese immigration began to increase in the 1860s during the boom years of the whaling trade; as whaling declined, employment in New England’s mills emerged in the late nineteenth century as a fresh enticement to immigration. Mass-migration of families, which began in the

¹⁷ Schultz, “The Pride of the Race,” 1286–1287.

¹⁸ Dr. H. G. Stub, June 8, 1925 keynote address, quoted by Schultz, “The Pride of the Race,” 1284.

¹⁹ See Schultz for Lowell’s argument the centennial was “essentially assimilationist” (1271), and for the objectives expressed in the organizing committee bulletin (1278).

²⁰ Center for Policy Analysis, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, “Portuguese-Americans in the Massachusetts Power Structure: A Positional Analysis,” Sep. 2005, 2. Bela Feldman-Bianco, “Multiple Layers of Time and Space: The Construction of Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism among Portuguese Immigrants,” in *Community, Culture and the Makings of Identity: Portuguese-Americans Along the Eastern Seaboard*, eds. Kimberly DaCosta Holton and Andrea Klimt (North Dartmouth: University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2009), 58.

Azores and expanded to include Madeira and mainland Portugal, reached its peak in 1910, when the immigrant community provided 40 percent of mill workers.²¹ By 1930, an estimated eighty percent of Portuguese in New England were cotton mill workers.²² This labour force made Portuguese-Americans a significant proportion of a mill city like Fall River, which was only a few miles from Dighton Rock: a notice on the masthead—in English—of the Portuguese language daily *Diário de Notícias* in the 1920s informed potential advertisers: “A third of the population of New Bedford and Fall River is Portuguese—therefore you can not cover the field without this newspaper.”²³ Overall Portuguese immigration to the United States reached a peak of 89,732 in the 1910s before crashing to 3,329 in the 1930s as the more restrictive immigration regimen introduced in 1924 placed Portuguese and other southern Europeans at a disadvantage to northern Europeans, Scandinavians included.²⁴

The fact that Delbarre’s Corte-Real theory was not immediately embraced by the sizeable Portuguese-American community when first announced in February 1919—evidently because the community was unaware of it—speaks to a considerable cultural divide between the Portuguese mill-worker underclass and establishment New Englanders who held a membership in the Old Colony Historical Society and read Delabarre’s Dighton Rock articles in the transactions of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. (Delabarre’s family once may have employed Portuguese immigrants, but as noted his father retired and closed his mills in 1892.) The Corte-Real theory finally found traction in 1926: on August 29, Delabarre posed for a photograph on the front page of *The Sunday Standard* of New Bedford, standing beside Dighton Rock at low tide and pointing to the alleged 1511 date for the benefit of local

²¹ Feldman-Bianco, “Multiple Layers of Time and Space,” 58.

²² Feldman-Bianco, “Multiple Layers of Time and Space,” 58.

²³ For digitized editions of *Diário de Notícias* and its predecessor, *A Alvorada*, see the Portuguese-American Digital Newspaper Collections at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, <http://www.lib.umassd.edu/PAA/portuguese-american-digital-newspaper-collections> (accessed Dec. 10, 2014).

²⁴ Center for Policy Analysis, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, “Portuguese-Americans in the Massachusetts Power Structure,” 2–3.

author Clara Sharpe Hough, who reclined atop the boulder.²⁵ Hough had just published a novel, *Leif the Lucky*, dramatizing the purported Norse visits to New England, and the photo directed readers to a full article on Delabarre's ideas by Hough in the feature section that day.²⁶ The following day, the feature was noted by a front-page article in *A Alvorada* (*The Dawn*), the Portuguese-language daily newspaper founded in New Bedford in 1919, which by 1926 had expanded operations to Fall River; its name would be changed to *Diário de Notícias* (*Daily News*) in 1927.²⁷ On September 3, a two-page translated version of Hough's article, copiously illustrated, appeared in *A Alvorada*.²⁸ The Portuguese-language daily newspaper was founded in New Bedford in 1919, and by 1926 had expanded operations to Fall River; its name would be changed to *Diário de Notícias* (*Daily News*) in 1927.²⁹ Championed by *A Alvorada*, Dighton Rock became a Portuguese-American sensation. On September 9, 1926, *A Alvorada* announced it was organizing a commission to meet with Delabarre and inspect Dighton Rock.³⁰ About three dozen men and a few boys, most of them Portuguese-Americans, visited the rock on Sunday, October 10, to have the inscription revealed and explained by Delabarre, and an illustrated article dominated the front page of *A Alvorada* the following day. [Fig. 33] The article began by stating that Sunday's date ought to be marked

²⁵ "A Savant Points the Way," *The Sunday Standard* (New Bedford), Aug. 29, 1926.

²⁶ Clara Sharpe Hough, *Leif the Lucky: A Romantic Saga of the Sons of Erik the Red* (New York and London: The Century Co., c. 1926).

²⁷ "CORTE REAL, UM PORTUGUEZ, FOI O PRIMEIRO EUROPEU QUE SE ESTABELECEU NA AMERICA DO NORTE," [Corte Real, a Portuguese, was the first European to settle in North America], *A Alvorada*, Aug. 30, 1926.

²⁸ Clara Sharpe Hough, "ESTARÁ' GRAVADO NA PEDRA DE DIGHTON O NOME DUM NAVEGADOR PORTUGUEZ ?" [Is the name of a Portuguese navigator engraved in Dighton Rock?], *A Alvorads*, Sept. 3, 1926. For digitized editions of *A Alvorada* and *Diário de Notícias*, see the Portuguese-American Digital Newspaper Collections at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, <http://www.lib.umassd.edu/PAA/portuguese-american-digital-newspaper-collections>.

²⁹ For an account of the role of *A Alvorada*/*Diário de Notícias* in Portuguese-American politics and culture, see Rui Correia, "Salazar in New Bedford: Political Readings of *Diário de Notícias*, the Only Portuguese Daily Newspaper in the United States" in *Community, Culture and the Makings of Identity: Portuguese-Americans Along the Eastern Seaboard*, ed. Kimberly DaCosta Holton and Andrea Klimt, 227–246 (North Dartmouth: University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2009).

³⁰ "Pregerinação a' Pedra Dighton," *A Alvorada*, Sept. 9, 1926. "Pregerinação a' Pedra Dighton," *A Alvorada*, Sep. 20, 1926.

in gold letters in the history of the Portuguese colony in New England, for its high and great significance.³¹

Delabarre's most ardent supporter in the Portuguese-American community was Abilio de Oliveira Águas, the Portuguese consul in Providence. Born in 1890 in mainland Portugal, Águas had served as a Portuguese government official in its colonial territory of Mozambique. He arrived in Providence in January 1924, and was appointed consul in the city in 1925.³² In November 1926 Águas was busy translating Delabarre's *Old-Time New England* article of 1923 in hope of having copies placed aboard the S.S. *Asia* and delivered to the Portuguese government, the Academy of Scientists of Lisbon, the National Geographic Society of Lisbon, and the director the National Library in Lisbon. Delabarre was also being touted as a candidate for one of two Portuguese civilian honours, the Order of Christ or the Military Order of San Thiago do Espada.³³ Delabarre's article would appear in *Boletim Da Agência Geral das Colónias* in two parts in 1927, and he would be made an officer of the Military Order of San Thiago do Espada in 1933.³⁴ Águas became not only a champion of Delabarre's work but his son-in-law as well, marrying his daughter, Maria, in 1930s.³⁵ Águas remained devoted to his father-in-law's reputation well after Delabarre's death in 1945, becoming a critical player in a heated postwar struggle over the rock's preservation and interpretation.

³¹ "O dia de hontem Domingo, deve ficar assignalado, em letras de ouro, na Historia da Colónia Portugueza da Nova Inglaterra, pelo seu alto e grandioso significado." "A PEREGRINAÇÃO A DIGHTON ROCK," *A Alvorada*, Oct. 11, 1926.

³² Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Providence, RI, 1911-1943; Series: T1188; Roll: 24. Social Security Death Index; Number: 050-09-0239; Issue State: New York; Issue Date: Before 1951. Gilberto Fernandes, "Of Outcasts and Ambassadors: the Making of Portuguese Diaspora in Postwar North" (PhD diss., York University, Sep. 2014), 304.

³³ "Lisbon may Honor Brown Professor," *Providence Journal*, Nov. 19, 1926.

³⁴ Edmund Burke Delabarre, "A Rocha de Dighton e Miguel Côte Real," *Boletim Da Agência Geral das Colónias* 3, no. 20 (Feb. 1927): 143–166; and no. 30 (Dec. 1927): 44–58.

³⁵ Fernandes, "Of Outcasts and Ambassadors," 304, fn977, gives the marriage date as 1934, but without citation, and was unable to provide me with a reference. (Personal email communication, Nov. 2, 2014.) I have not been able to secure a marriage license to verify the date. A private listing for Abilio D. Águas on Ancestry.com lists his marriage to Maria Elizabeth Delabarre on November 28, 1936 but provides no supporting information.

The Portuguese-American embrace of Dighton Rock was steeped in diaspora politics and culture. In addition to this embrace coming soon after the 1924 changes to U.S. immigration laws that essentially labeled the Portuguese an undesirable class of American citizens, it also coincided with the collapse of Portugal's First Republic and the establishment of the *Estado Novo*, which ruled Portugal under António de Oliveira Salazar until the democratizing revolution of 1974. Bela Feldman-Bianco has observed that in the 1920s and 1930s Portuguese migrants to the United States were considered second-class citizens in both their new country and their old one, and were confronted with "two conflicting and highly charged ideologies." On the one hand the pressure of the melting-pot philosophy of the United States stressed "the superiority of American society and ways of life," which encouraged cultural assimilation; on the other hand Portuguese colonial policies and ideologies of the home country were based on "the superiority and pride of the Lusitan race, which cast aspersions on those who left Portugal, and emphasized the exclusive maintenance of Portuguese culture and language."³⁶ The shift in Dighton Rock's attribution from Scandinavian to Portuguese, then, involved a precipitous descent from a European culture with most-favored status in America. It was an immigrant community searching for ways to assert its pride and its rightful belonging in an adopted country that seemed to regret having admitted them.

The divisions within the Portuguese-American community in events surrounding Dighton Rock would invite a dissertation of its own, especially as Águas was terminated as a Portuguese consul in 1929 after criticizing the Salazar regime. Águas remained in the United States as a businessman and became a leading, politically well-connected opponent of the *Estado Novo*, serving as chair of the anti-Salazarist Committee Pro-Democracy in Portugal (CPDP).³⁷ It is difficult to know if divisions and rivalries that

³⁶ Feldman-Bianco, "Multiple Layers of Time and Space," 52.

³⁷ See Fernandes, "Of Outcasts and Ambassadors," 303–310, for Águas's political activities in opposition to Salazar. According to Fernandes, four years after being appointed Portuguese vice-consul in Providence, "Águas was removed of his duties as a diplomat after having denounced the French shipping company Fabre Line, endorsed by Salazar, for transporting Cape Verdean immigrants in their ships' cargo holds. After this, Águas became an outspoken critic of the regime and its neglect of Portuguese emigrants, voicing his opinions in the pages of Providence's *News-Tribune*, and lecturing in various community halls. He also helped found Rhode Island's Portuguese American Civic League and was involved in a number of civic initiatives and heritage campaigns." (304) Águas was also "one of the most respected and better connected Portuguese immigrants in Washington's political circles, with such illustrious friends as President Harry Truman. After the war, Águas became involved with the

emerged within the Portuguese-American community over Dighton Rock after the Second World War mirrored those in the political realm. Initially at least, Delabarre's theory, coming soon after the shocks of U.S. immigration quotas and the *Estada Novo*, appears to have been broadly embraced, tapping a complex concept of Portuguese pride, heritage and belonging called *saudade*. Most pertinent to the embrace of Dighton Rock within *saudade* is the way "collective temporal memory is invariably linked to the discovery era and to the subsequent history of navigation." according to Feldman-Bianco.³⁸ Dighton Rock became a rallying point of *saudade*, a means by which Portuguese-Americans could celebrate a nostalgic reverence for a distant era of daring explorers like the Corte-Reals. As an exercise in place-making, Dighton Rock would become another Plymouth Rock, the means by which Portuguese-Americans could assert a new respectability by claiming an ancestral role as the original European founders of their adopted country, in much the same way that the rock as a Norse relic had allowed Scandinavian-Americans and their Anglo-American allies in the previous century to promote a Gothicist foundation to the American republic. Delabarre had also elevated the Portuguese to the role of white improvers of Indians at a time that U.S. immigration policy and eugenics treated the Portuguese as an inferior and undesirable racial stock.

Delabarre was initially pleased and even bemused by Portuguese-American interest in Dighton Rock. Delabarre wrote Frank W. Hutt, secretary of the Old Colony Historical Society, which still held title to the rock, on September 18, 1927, informing him: "My Portuguese friends are rather eager to take some steps for the better protection of Dighton Rock." Delabarre supported the Portuguese-American

Democratic Party, first as the president of the Portuguese section in the party's Nationalities Directory." (304–305). He would be receiver the Order of Freedom from the Portuguese government in 1980. (304)

³⁸ According to Feldman-Bianco, *saudade* originated in the sixteenth-century and has been associated with an unending Portuguese "wanderlust." While it can be loosely translated as "longing" or "nostalgia," Feldman-Bianco advises it is "in fact a cultural construct that defines Portuguese identity in the context of multiple layers of space and (past) time." Feldman-Bianco also cites Benedict Anderson in noting *saudade* has been considered representative of "the collective memory of Portugal," reconstituted as "the essence of Portuguese national character and the basis of imagined political community." Feldman-Bianco, "Multiple Layers of Time and Space," 51. Fernandes, writing on the folk genre of Portuguese music called *fado*, notes: "Its style and lyrics are characterized by a brooding melancholia, tales of sorrow, loss and longing, and other themes connected with the Portuguese concept of *saudade*. Some forms of *fado*, however, are festive and humorous, particularly those that sing about the lives of working people." ("Outcasts and Ambassadors," 223.)

Civic League's suggestion to move the rock onto higher ground, clear of the ravages of winter ice, and he recounted their plan to purchase a right-of-way so that visitors could reach the rock. In a follow-up letter on September 23, Delabarre agreed with Hutt that the OCHS should never relinquish title to the rock and that any property acquisitions by the Portuguese-Americans should be donated to the OCHS.³⁹ But as it became clear that the PACL was planning to make and retain its own land acquisition adjacent to the rock, Delabarre became concerned. He rejected the civic league's proposal to raise the rock vertically from its tidewater position to build a protective cofferdam around it and establish a "shrine" in Corte-Real's honour, doubtless uneasy about the leading role of Catholic clergy in the PACL initiative.⁴⁰ "Under these circumstances I consider it exceedingly fortunate that our Society owns the rock and a small bit of adjoining beach," Delabarre wrote the OCHS secretary on December 11, 1934. Delabarre vowed he would "seriously oppose any project to make the place a 'shrine' of any sort, whether with a religious cast to it or one which emphasized any foreign nationality. For that reason I hope that the adjacent land might never come into ownership of a Portuguese organization; although over that matter our Society has no control. But I should also vigorously oppose permitting the Portuguese to purchase the Rock, or to do anything at all on the plot owned by our Society, as Portuguese... Whatever is done, the Rock and adjacent land ought to remain forever under ownership and control either of our Society, or of the State, or of the Federal Government."⁴¹ Delabarre moved to block access to the rock directly from the shore side by any possible Portuguese-American purchase. On January 23, 1935, Delabarre acquired a small plot of land with 250 feet of frontage on the Taunton River, 125 feet to either side of Dighton Rock, extending

³⁹ Delabarre to Hutt, Sep. 18, 1927, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁴⁰ See for example "Pastor Believes Dighton Rock Should Be Preserved as Shrine," *New Bedford Standard-Times*, June 19, 1927, transcribed in Joseph D. Fragoso, *A Historical Report of Twenty-eight Years of Patriotic and Dramatic Efforts to Save Dighton Rock* (New Bedford MA: Joseph D. Fragoso/Miguel Corte-Real Memorial Society, Inc., 1954), 6–7. This pamphlet, in the Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society, contains transcriptions of newspapers articles dating back to the 1920s that are interlaced with arch commentary by Fragoso.

⁴¹ Delabarre to Secretary, Old Colony Historical Society, Dec. 11, 1934. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

back 250 feet.⁴² This lot, totaling 1.36 acres, was exclusive of the portion described in the deed from Thomas F. Dean to Niels Arnzen, by which Dighton Rock had been purchased and conveyed first to the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries and then to the Old Colony Historical Society. The purchase included a right of way over adjoining land to Bay View Avenue. On Delabarre's death in 1945, the lot and its right of way became the property by bequest of the OCHS. For a time, the prospect of a Portuguese shrine had been thwarted.

After the Second World War: The Creation of a Portuguese Shrine

The dissensions and legal and political maneuverings that marked the transformation of Dighton Rock into a Portuguese relic in a museum within a dedicated state park after the Second World War are far more complex than I can possibly relate. In brief, the park and its museum came about through the populist will of a politically powerful ethnic community and in defiance of the expertise of leading historians, and without any apparent consultation with Native American communities, who would not be formally recognized as federal tribes until long after the rock had been physically relocated and enclosed in a dedicated museum.⁴³ Despite Delabarre's receipt of a Portuguese knighthood in 1933, Portuguese historians generally rejected his Corte-Real theory. An attempt by Portuguese-Americans to persuade the Portuguese government to fund a land purchase adjacent to the rock in the 1930s purportedly led nowhere because according to the Fall River *Herald-News*, Portugal's "leading archaeologist" dismissed Delabarre's Corte-Real theory.⁴⁴ As well, Portuguese-Americans tried to donate a casting of Dighton

⁴² Quitclaim deed, Elizabeth Wentworth Patterson to Edmund B. Delabarre, Jan. 23, 1935, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁴³ The only two Wampanoag communities to have received federal tribal recognition, as noted in the Introduction, are Aquinna (Gay Head) in 1987 and Mashpee in 2007, both on islands off Cape Cod. Neither tribal nation to my knowledge has attempted to assert a cultural provenance for Dighton Rock.

⁴⁴ "Portuguese American Civic League Plans for Preservation of Famed Dighton Rock," Fall River *Herald-News*, Nov. 22, 1934, transcribed in Fragoso, *A Historical Report*, 15–16. This "archaeologist" was likely the Portuguese expert in epigraphy, José Maria Cordeira de Sousa, who in an article in *Arquivo histórico de marinha* in 1934 cast doubt on Delabarre's interpretation based on letter-forms. See George F. W. Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock* (Taunton MA: Old Colony Historical Society, 1970), 76. Young cites Corderio de Sousa's article, "A inscrição da pedra de Dighton," *Arquivo histórico de marinha* (Lisbon: 1934), 111–115.

Rock (presumably using a mold produced by Delabarre, with Águas's assistance, in 1929) to the city of Lisbon but were rebuffed in 1935, due to the lack of historical evidence for Delabarre's claims.⁴⁵

Delabarre's Corte-Real theory nevertheless was largely free of competing claims for some other Old World provenance, as the Norse case for Dighton Rock had all but collapsed. Hjalmar Holand would turn his Kensington runestone convictions into a series of books on pre-Columbian New World voyages, respecting in them Delabarre's contention that Dighton Rock was the work of Miguel Corte-Real. Holand otherwise left the Vinland of southern New England as proposed by Rafn largely intact, including the role of the Newport Tower as a fortified Norse church.⁴⁶ By 1930, as the one-thousandth anniversary of Iceland's Althing was celebrated by international dignitaries and the American Geographical Society published Matthias Thórdarson's *The Vinland Voyages*, Dighton Rock was reduced to a phantom influence in placing Vinland in southern New England. Thórdarson summarized continuing support for the idea that Mount Hope was the Hóp of the Karlsefni voyage, without mentioning Dighton Rock.⁴⁷ In short, the fascination with Vinland and pre-Columbian voyages in general endured in eastern North America and remained alive in New England even as the Kensington runestone drew the Norse deeper into the American hinterland. Norse theorists no longer had a use for Dighton Rock—in fact, they replaced it with the so-called Northmen's Rock on Mount Hope Bay.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ "Lisbon officials question value of Dighton Rock," *Providence Journal*, July 28, 1935, transcribed in Frago, *A Historical Report*, 33–34.

⁴⁶ Holand would support the popular American historian Frederick J. Pohl's contention that Leifsbúdir was at Follin's Pond on the south shore of Cape Cod. Pohl steered clear of Dighton Rock altogether in his popular speculative histories on pre-Columbian voyages. See Hjalmar Rued Holand, *Explorations in America Before Columbus* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1956), 42–43. For Pohl's contention, see Frederick J. Pohl, *The Lost Discovery: Uncovering the Track of the Vikings in America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1952), passim.

⁴⁷ For Matthias Thórdarson's discussion of theories as to the location of Hóp, see *The Vinland Voyages* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1930), 38–45. William H. Babcock, in *Early Norse Visits to North America*, Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, vol. 59, no. 19 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1913) favored an Indigenous interpretation for Dighton Rock (44), yet supported Rafn's contention that Mount Hope Bay was Hóp: "Dr. Rafn was so absurdly wrong as to so many things—in spite of the real service he rendered—that they will reflect in some minds injuriously on one point, as to which he may happen to be right. That is, the identification of Mount Hope Bay, Rhode Island, with Thorfinn's Hóp." (136)

⁴⁸ The rock was considered to bear a runic inscription and the image of a ship. According to Delabarre, in a June 1919 ceremony overseen by the Rhode Island Historical Society, the rock was "dedicated with picturesque

Harvard's Samuel Eliot Morison, a leading historian of transatlantic exploration, recounted in a letter to the *Boston Herald* in May 1954 how Delabarre gave him a personal tour of the Dighton Rock inscription. Delabarre, he said, "would chalk this alleged inscription when the Rock was dry. That, of course, made it stand out and was quite convincing: but I always felt that with a little work I could just as easily find 'Kilroy Was Here' or 'To Hell With Yale' on the rock."⁴⁹ Morison granted it was possible that Miguel Corte-Real had visited this coast, and it was "very gratifying to our Portuguese citizens to feel that one of their heroes was here more than a century before the Pilgrim Fathers. But there are a good many arguments against accepting Professor Delabarre's interpretation as authentic. The alleged Portuguese arms on the Rock look to me more like a crude attempt of an Indian to draw a human face, and the '5' of the '1511' is evidently intended for a little man, as it has two legs and a face." Morison also noted that Delabarre's interpretation is not "generally accepted by Portuguese scholars."

By the time Morison made public his objections to the Corte-Real theory, the state park was a *fait accompli*. Portuguese-Americans may still have been second-class citizens by the measure of persistently restrictive immigration policies and their limited presence in the state power structure, but they

ceremony and with appropriate addresses, and was christened in the ancient manner with corn, wine and oil, receiving the name 'Lief's Rock.'" (Delabarre, *Dighton Rock*, 191.) (Delabarre seemed unaware this was a standard Masonic anointing ceremony.) Delabarre argued it was not Norse, but rather a nineteenth-century inscription in a syllabic writing system invented by a Cherokee, George Guess, in 1821. Whoever executed it had used the system's phonetic equivalents in the Algonquian language to write a message: "Great Metacomet, Chief Sachem," in tribute to the leader of Philip's War, who had been killed at nearby Mount Hope. Delabarre proposed the inscription could have been created by a party of visiting Penobscots, either in 1833–34 or 1860, but he was "convinced almost to a certainty" it was made in 1833–34 by a "half blooded" Cherokee, Thomas C. Mitchell, who had moved to the area and married a Wampanoag woman, Zerviah Gould, whose family claimed descent from Massasoit, Metacomet's (Philip's) father. Jill Lepore discusses Northmen's Rock at length in the Epilogue of *The Name of War* and found Delabarre's translation effort credible, in part because an expert on Cherokee syllabary told her it was possible Delabarre's rendering of the inscription "is a sequence of badly executed Cherokee syllabics." (230). Lenik in *Picture Rocks* rejects both the Norse and the Delabarre scenario. Lenik argues the glyphs were made by an unknown Wampanoag during the 1600s. (153) "Perhaps the boat is a symbolic representation of the coming of Europeans to Mount Hope Bay. Alternatively, the entire composition of boat and symbols may be Indian identity marks or signatures." (154) I would be remiss not to note that Barry Fell thought the inscription was "Tartessian" (a Phoenician script from Iberia) and read "Mariners of Tarshish this rock proclaims." (*America B.C.*, 99–100)

⁴⁹ Samuel Eliot Morison, "'Kilroy Was Here' on Dighton Rock?" Letter to the editor, *Boston Herald*, May 24, 1954. Joseph Damaso Fragozo transcribed the letter in his pamphlet "Is Samuel Eliot Morison Prejudicial to the Portuguese Nautical History?" self-published in 1955 (Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society). See also "No One Agrees on Meaning of Dighton Rock Markings," *Boston Globe*, Oct. 14, 1956, for a revisit of Morison's "Kilroy Was Here" quip.

represented a considerable bloc of voters in the Portuguese archipelago and had the support of Portuguese-American legislators such as congressman Joseph Martin and state senator Edmund Denis in pursuing the dream of turning Dighton Rock into a public shrine to Corte-Real. Having the rock protected and celebrated within a state park was also an amenable option to the OCHS and Abelio Águas, as they had tried and failed in association with the Portuguese-American Civic League and Martin to secure the rock's status as a national historic site.

The efforts to create a state park however clashed with the ambitions of the Miguel Corte-Real Memorial Society, which was incorporated in New York City in September 1951 by Joseph Damaso Fragoso, who had emigrated from the Azores in 1920 and was a Portuguese language instructor at the City College of New York.⁵⁰ Delabarre was a guest of Fragoso in New York in May 1930 when he addressed the Vasco da Gama Society; in 1931 Fragoso was serving as the society's president.⁵¹ After the war, Fragoso moved into a leading role of asserting the Corte-Real theory for Dighton Rock and arguing for the rock's preservation and veneration. In 1950 Fragoso founded a publication, *The Portuguese World*, through which he could lobby for the creation of a park along with a shrine to enclose the rock, which he argued should be raised from the tidewater and protected by a coffer dam, as the Portuguese-American Civic League originally proposed in 1927. Fragoso also claimed in *The Portuguese World* in 1950 to have found on the rock at least three fragmentary portions of large renderings of the Portuguese cross of the Order of Christ that Delabarre somehow overlooked.⁵² Beside the date 1511, he contended, was a tall version of the cross, surmounted by a five-dot *quina* shield, in perfect accordance with the Portuguese stone *padrões* used in Corte-Real's time to mark territorial claims in Africa and Ceylon; this

⁵⁰ Manuel Luciano da Silva reproduced the document of incorporation, dated Sep. 25, 1951, in "Dighton Rock, what will happen to you after I die?"

⁵¹ Joseph D. Fragoso, "O Club Vasco da Gama de New York promove uma importante sessão a 23 do corrente," *Diário de Notícias*, Aug. 15, 1931.

⁵² Fragoso mentions his articles in *The Portuguese World* in *A Historical Report of Twenty-eight Years of Patriotic and Dramatic Efforts to Save Dighton Rock*, 7. Manuel Luciano da Silva outlined Fragoso's theory of the crosses as stated in *The Portuguese World* in his self-published *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock: The First Chapter in American History* (Bristol RI: 1971), 57–58.

drawing also coincided with the positioning of the pillar drawing on the left side of the 1485 Cão inscription. Fragoso promptly alienated the OCHS and various members of the Portuguese-American community (including Abelio Águas, the Dighton Rock preservation committee of the Portuguese-American Civic League and João Rocha, the editor or director of *Diário de Notícias*) by staging a fundraising concert in New Bedford in February 1952 to purchase about fifty acres of land Fragoso said “surrounded” the rock, when the holding in fact was adjacent to the lands held by the OCHS. When the OCHS wrote letters to the editor noting that the land on which the rock rested belonged to the society and was not for sale, Fragoso’s organization responded with a letter from a Manhattan attorney demanding a retraction, a request with which the OCHS with good reason refused to comply.⁵³ Fragoso’s MCRMS completed the land acquisition in November 1952, but in December 1955 the society’s land was secured through eminent domain—over Fragoso’s objections—by an act of the legislature sponsored by Senator Denis in July 1955, thereby providing most of the land for the state park.⁵⁴ Already on January 7, 1955, the OCHS had made a public presentation to the state of its deed to the rock and the associated 1.36 acres bequeathed by Delabarre so that the park could be created. *The Herald News* of Fall River reported that the state would develop the rock as a “shrine,” and in a few months would be moving it to higher ground and placing it in a cupola of sixteenth-century Portuguese architecture.⁵⁵ Although Delabarre’s son-in-law, Abilio Águas, was on hand for the formal transfer of the deed, the late professor surely would have been mortified that the Portuguese “shrine” he had feared was coming to pass through his bequest to the OCHS.

⁵³ See: Fundraising letter, Miguel Corte Real Memorial Society Inc., Nov. 7, 1951, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society. “O Concerto Musical De Ontem na High School de N. Bedf.,” *Diário de Notícias*, Feb. 25, 1952. W. Wallace Austin to João R. Rocha, March 10, 1952, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society. W. Wallace Austin to *The Standard-Times* (New Bedford), March 12, 1952, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society. “O que se passa de verdade com a famosa e célebre ‘Pedra de Dighton?’” *Diário de Notícias*, March 12, 1952. Harry Neyer to OCHS, March 17, 1952, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society. OCHS to Harry Neyer, March 21, 1952, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁵⁴ Acts, 1955. Chap. 538. An Act authorizing the department of natural resources to acquire certain land in the town of Berkley. Approved July 13, 1955.

⁵⁵ “State Given Dighton Rock for Development as Shrine,” *The Herald News* (Fall River), Jan. 8, 1955.

Fragoso clearly could be vexatious and did not enjoy the confidence of a large part of the Portuguese-American community.⁵⁶ Yet in his own peculiar way, Fragoso may have been the relic's best friend in these years. In 1955, the state awarded a low-bid contract to move the rock to higher ground, as the OCHS supported, and the contractor attempted to drag the boulder with chains. In securing a temporary injunction against further attempts to move it, Fragoso would present photographic evidence in 1956 that chains had scored and chipped part of the inscribed surface.⁵⁷ The legal and legislative battles over the rock's fate dragged on until 1963, when the state finally adopted the option Fragoso had long advised, using a crane to raise the rock eleven feet and place it in its original shoreside position and orientation atop a jetty surrounded by a cofferdam, thus permanently removing it from the river. By then, the case for the Corte-Real provenance had become synonymous with Dr. Manuel Luciano da Silva, whose long association with the rock's celebration as a Portuguese relic dated to his co-founding of Fragoso's Miguel Corte-Real Memorial Society.

The Interpretive Era of Dr. Manuel Luciano da Silva

When Manuel Luciano da Silva arrived from mainland Portugal in the United States as a teenager with his mother in January 1946, he had already heard of Dighton Rock from a high school teacher in Portugal. Da Silva would recount making his first pilgrimage to Dighton Rock in August 1948, while living and attending school in New York City. As an undergraduate student in biology at New York University, da

⁵⁶ A letter from the Portuguese consul in New Bedford to the Portuguese ambassador in Washington on May 15, 1953, noted that Portuguese-Americans were becoming suspicious of Fragoso's true intentions in fundraising and were reluctant to donate as they had thought they would be buying the actual rock and not the surrounding land—although the land Fragoso's society did acquire in November 1952 did not surround the rock, either. They also thought Fragoso's request for thousands of dollars was too great for his project to be achieved. Vasco Antunes Villela to Amb. Luis Fernandes, May 15, 1953, 1951–1959 Miguel Corte-Real Memorial Society (Pedra Dighton) PEA M181, Arquivo Histórico-Diplomático do Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros (Portugal). Transcribed by Gilberto Fernandes.

⁵⁷ "Dighton Rock Controversy Rages as New Court Hearing Looms," *Taunton Daily Gazette*, March 24, 1956. An additional temporary injunction, restraining any removal, was awarded to a taxpayer group headed by Elva D. Alves of Fall River, according to the *Boston Herald* of April 17, 1956 (see clipping, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society). The Alves group brought the suit charging the action of the legislature in creating the park did not authorize the removal of the rock from the river.

Silva cofounded with Fragoso the Miguel Corte-Real Memorial Society, serving as its secretary. Da Silva was absent from the United States for most of the battles over the park's formation and the rock's relocation of the 1950s, as he returned to Portugal to study medicine in 1952. While in Portugal, he continued to investigate the rock through photographs and documents and began to write a book. Da Silva returned to the United States around 1958 to complete internships in Boston and New Bedford before establishing a practice in Bristol, Rhode Island in 1963.⁵⁸ In November 1959, he again visited Dighton Rock. Assisted by Portuguese-American colleagues at St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford, da Silva used white paint or chalk to mark up the rock in a manner entirely different from Delabarre's version, and propped atop the rock three interpretive drawings depicting Portuguese national symbols. Their photo clearly depicted the name MIGVEL CORTEREAL on the rock, four Portuguese crosses of the Order of Christ, the date 1511, and the tiny shield Delabarre had delineated. Fragoso as noted had proposed three of the crosses in 1950, and da Silva had surmised a fourth, above Corte-Real's name, from photographs while in Portugal.⁵⁹ In addition to tidying up the Corte-Real name and adding four crosses Delabarre had never detected, da Silva's rendering erased the entire Latin phrase that Delabarre said indicated Corte Real had served as the leader of the local Indians.⁶⁰ The photo appeared in *The Herald News* of Fall River on November 3, 1959, and would become the new interpretation of the Corte Real inscription.

In September 1960 da Silva was able to secure accreditation as one of eight American delegates (the only non-academic) to the Congresso Internacional de História dos Descobrimentos, a Lisbon symposium organized by the Salazar regime to mark the 400th anniversary of the death of Prince Henry

⁵⁸ For this early biographic information, see Manuel Luciano da Silva, "Manuel Luciano da Silva, M. D. Biography. http://www.dightonrock.com/biografia_luciano.htm (accessed July 22, 2013).

⁵⁹ See Manuel Luciano da Silva, "My dates with Dighton Rock!" <http://www.dightonrock.com/mydateswithdightonrock.htm> (accessed July 22, 2013).

⁶⁰ The credit for this version of the Corte-Real inscription remained contested. George F. W. Young, in reproducing the 1959 photo, would call it the "Fragoso—da Silva Rendition of the Corte-Real Inscription, 1959," George F. W. Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, plate 16, 146. Da Silva in *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock* would acknowledge Fragoso's discovery of three examples of the cross of the Order of Christ "was the decisive contribution to the Corte Real theory," but added "the author must criticize his adherence to Delabarre's non-existing Latin message," as well as Fragoso's "failure" to locate the fourth cross. (58)

the Navigator.⁶¹ In his presentation, “Prince Henry the Navigator and Dighton Rock,” da Silva claimed the Portuguese discovered North America in 1424 and made his case for the Corte-Real provenance of Dighton Rock. Da Silva may have eliminated the Latin inscription that Delabarre said indicated Corte-Real had become the leader of the local Indians, but Da Silva retained the essential White Tribism assertion that the Portuguese had remained in America and improved Native Americans, biologically and culturally—which was the same assertion made for the Norse by Rafn and later by Anderson, using much the same evidence. Da Silva informed the assembly that Native Americans “have Portuguese blood,” because his original investigations showed “the first civilized language that the Wampanoag Indians spoke was Portuguese, before Columbus arrived in America.” Da Silva embarked on the usual word hunting that had been around at least since Hugo Grotius thought he could find Germanic words in Indigenous place names. If not from the Portuguese, da Silva posed, from whom did American Indians learn such words as *bacalhau* (codfish), *canada* (narrow passage), *abrigada* and *abrigador* (bay, shelter), *saco* (sac), *curvo* (curve), *akoa* (water), *fogo* (fire), *brigs* (fight) “and so many other words typical of the old Portuguese.” As further proof of Portuguese blood in Native Americans, Da Silva tabled his “original discovery” that they had Portuguese names. Plainly taking his inspiration from Delabarre’s tortuous efforts to turn the sachem name Quadequina into a remembrance of Corte-Real and the *quina* shield symbol, da Silva outlined his own assertions surrounding the presence of *quina* in Algonquian names. Da Silva would come to argue that *Algonquin* was Portuguese in origin, a combination of the suffix *quina* and one of two Portuguese terms: *Algarve*, the southern province of Portugal “where Prince Henry the Navigator developed his school of Navigation at Sagres, and where the Corte Real family originated,” or

⁶¹ Da Silva recounted the events at the Congress, including his presentation details, on his website, employing in part his own English translation of an account in the *Diário de Notícias* of Portugal, Sep. 9 1960. See “My historical communication to the First Internacional Congress of the History of Discoveries in 1960,” <http://www.dightonrock.com/myhistoricalcommunicationtothefir.htm> (accessed July 28, 2013).

algo, “a person who is important or prominent.”⁶² Lest we forget, Charles Vallancey was certain *Algonquin* originated with the Phoenicians.

White Tribism became the essence of da Silva’s arguments and researches. He devoted a chapter of his book *Portuguese Pilgrims of Dighton Rock*, “White American Indians,” to his word hunting and scouring of atlases for phonetically promising place names in New England, in a manner no different from Rafn. Along with historic accounts of light-skinned natives da Silva included material from Theodosius Dobzhansky’s *Mankind Evolving*, which proposed the Mendelian combinations behind *mestizo* mulattoes of Mexico, to account for a similar “mulatto” or “half breed” population in New England. “If the Wampanoag Indians had indeed such genetic and cultural intercourse with white men,” da Silva wrote, “we would expect that, besides the imprint of civilized manners and light skin color, the language of the newly arrived race must also have been assimilated by the aborigines.”⁶³ As for how this mulatto population came about: “Motivated by a sense of brotherhood—or perhaps, simple promiscuity—[the Portuguese] mixed with the natives, imparting their language and physical characteristics,” he explained. “This Portuguese manner of civilization is succinctly expressed by Gilberto Freyre, a Brazilian philosopher: ‘God created the white and the negro, and the Portuguese made the mulatto!’”⁶⁴

Da Silva was no more accepting than Delabarre of Portuguese slaving during the heroic age of exploration, refusing to consider its role in the Corte-Real voyages. In a fundraising letter issued under his name by the newly formed Miguel Corte Real Memorial Society on November 7, 1951, da Silva vilified a

⁶² Da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock*, 72. Da Silva also tried to derive Saugus, an Algonquian name for a town north of Boston, from Sagres. “In addition to its phonetic similarity to Sagres, it also meant in Indian ‘wet by overflow,’ which is somewhat descriptive of Sagres, where the Promontory is always wet by the splashing of waves.” (73)

⁶³ Da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims of Dighton Rock*, 68–69.

⁶⁴ Da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims of Dighton Rock*, 67. It was telling perhaps that da Silva relied on the writings of a Brazilian intellectual who had constructed a national identity for Brazil based on hierarchical racial domination. Jeffrey D. Needell argues that the efforts of the Brazilian intellectual Freyre to create a national identity involved “an image of hierarchical racial domination that was explicitly gendered...his embrace of a patriarchal, racial domination as essential to the Brazilian tradition was also a personal identification with seigneurial heterosexuality toward women of color that allowed him to resolve ambiguities in his own sexual orientation.” Jeffrey D. Needell, “Identity, Race, Gender, and Modernity in the Origins of Gilberto Freyre’s *Oeuvre*,” *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 1 (Feb. 1995): 51.

children’s encyclopedia for saying Gaspar Corte-Real seized a number of Indians on the coast of Labrador and sent them back to Lisbon to be sold as slaves. “The ‘Book of Knowledge’ does not present the true facts,” da Silva wrote. “These and other published insults against the Portuguese certainly would not be tolerated if they were printed against any of the other racial groups living here.” He suggested Portuguese Americans “who have inherited from their fathers one of the noblest cultures of the World, do not seem to care if their forefathers are maliciously labeled as ‘murderers, robbers, rapists and slave-traders.’”⁶⁵ Yet Da Silva’s own book quoted without comment Alberto Cantino’s 1501 account of Gaspar Corte Real’s abduction of about 50 Indigenous people, as well as the Venetian Pietro Pasqualigo’s 1501 letter from Lisbon indicating the Portuguese king was pleased to learn the new land to the west offered (in da Silva’s uncredited translation) “slaves fit for any work.”⁶⁶ In da Silva’s rubric, Portuguese voyages followed three progressive stages: discovery, exploration and colonization. Slaving did not exist, as an activity or an objective. America had already been discovered by the Portuguese, and the Corte Real brothers were making voyages of exploration, “in preparation for the third stage: Colonization.”⁶⁷

Da Silva was in conflict with the mainstream historical community before he had even completed his 1960 presentation in Lisbon, as Spanish delegates withdrew from the hall to discuss his pre-Columbian Portuguese contentions. After the presentation, he clashed on stage with Francis M. Rogers, a Harvard professor of romance languages and literature. Born in New Bedford, the descendant of Azorean immigrants, Rogers was prominent in celebrations of Portuguese history and heritage, hosting a series of lectures at the Boston Public library in support of the Prince Henry the Navigator anniversary as well as serving as the keynote speaker at a 600-seat banquet in Boston in October 1960 commemorating the

⁶⁵ Miguel Corte Real Memorial Society fundraising letter, Nov. 7, 1951, Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society. It is not clear what if any publication da Silva was quoting when he referred to references to the Portuguese as ‘murderers, robbers, rapists and slave-traders.’”

⁶⁶ Da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock*, 30–31.

⁶⁷ Da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock*, 82.

anniversary that was attended by American and Portuguese dignitaries.⁶⁸ Rogers would write in *Atlantic Islanders of the Azores and Madeiras*: “Although the cult of the Age of Maritime Exploration goes back a long way [in Portugal]...Salazar’s New State was its greatest promoter...the government gave the Portuguese at home and abroad—and even Americans of Portuguese descent and birth—a sense of national pride and at the same time made of Continental Portugal a most attractive country for the historically-minded tourist from abroad.” Rogers added: “the cult of the Portuguese past, when carried to excess, with the same details repeated ad nauseam, became very boring indeed to younger Portuguese, who referred to it as the ‘História Bomabástica de Portugal’ (Bombastic History of Portugal).”⁶⁹ Rogers drew the line at Dighton Rock in his own participation in this cult of the Portuguese past, endorsing Samuel Eliot Morison’s dismissal of Delabarre’s findings. When Rogers suggested onstage at the Lisbon conference that da Silva had overreached in his assertions and asked where he got his proof for the Portuguese origin of Native American names and words, da Silva tapped Rogers’ shoulder and replied: “I got this information from the old books that exist in the catacombs of the University [Harvard] where you teach Portuguese!” and added: “When we refer to Plato or Aristotle do we ask them if they have the title Professor?”⁷⁰ Rogers and da Silva clashed again at a state Senate hearing in January 1961 on plans to reposition Dighton Rock atop a coffer dam, which da Silva supported and Rogers opposed. “I feel just as strongly as Dr. da Silva does that the rock should be preserved,” Rogers said, but added it should never become the property of a “hyphenated group.”⁷¹

⁶⁸ See “Várias conferências integradas nas Comemorações Henriquinas,” *Diário de Notícias*, Feb. 11, 1960; “Discoveries Under Prince Henry Commemorated by 600 here,” *Boston Globe*, Oct. 9, 1960. For Rogers’ ancestry, see Francis M. Rogers, *Atlantic Islanders of the Azores and Madeiras* (North Quincy MA: The Christopher Publishing House, 1979), 17–19.

⁶⁹ Rogers, *Atlantic Islanders of the Azores and Madeiras*, 293–294.

⁷⁰ See Manuel Luciano da Silva, “My historical communication to the First Internacional Congress of the History of Discoveries in 1960,” <http://www.dightonrock.com/myhistorialcommunicationtothefir.htm> (accessed July 28, 2013).

⁷¹ Earl Banner, “The Doctors Still Disagree: Dighton Rock Row Up Again,” *Boston Globe*, Jan. 15, 1961.

Da Silva and Fragoso fell out irrevocably after Da Silva's Lisbon presentation. According to da Silva, Fragoso called on him in December 1960, "taking a furious attitude against me, saying that he was the one that should have gone to the International Congress of History in Lisbon, that he suspected I was taking sides with his enemies, etc. I immediately saw that he was not mentally well, that he had become paranoid, and I told him that I was sorry, but I could never again work with him on matters dealing with Dighton Rock. I bade him goodbye forever. I never spoke with him again since that date. I realized immediately that if I wanted to preserve the Dighton Rock I had to do it my way."⁷² Da Silva delighted in his outsider's role, telling the *Boston Globe* in 1966: "I used the bullfight technique. I say, harrooomph, let he go, (he whisks an imaginary cape through the air) ha, ha, until she cools off." Asked to comment on Da Silva's language ideas, Harvard historian Oscar Handlin told the *Globe*: "I don't take any of that very seriously. We get reports of Croatians settling in Virginia in the 15th century because the Indians there had words similar to Serbo-Croatian. But nobody really has a very good idea of what those Indians spoke like. If you start reaching for little bits of information, you can attempt to prove anything." In reply, da Silva said: "I don't need any big professor to tell me how to do this kind of thing. If I didn't have the scientific method, I couldn't be a doctor."⁷³ Like other amateur practitioners of fringe history, da Silva claimed superior insights through the scientific method he asserted was the basis of his professional life. "Everyday I had to use the scientific methods of making medical diagnoses," he would claim. "I also applied these scientific methods to my historical researches and because of this I was able to discover new things that the so called professional historians missed."⁷⁴

⁷² Manuel Luciano da Silva, "My 'impossibles' with Dighton Rock!" <http://www.dightonrock.com/myimpossibleswithdightonrock.htm> (accessed July 28, 2013).

⁷³ Sara Davidson, "Battle at Dighton Rock: Who Came First[:] Pilgrims or Portuguese," *Boston Globe*, Aug. 14, 1966.

⁷⁴ Da Silva, "My 'impossibles' with Dighton Rock!"

Abelio Águas loathed da Silva. He saved a clipping of the 1966 *Boston Globe* profile, drawing a red box around the photo of da Silva and writing beneath it “CHARLATAN.”⁷⁵ For Águas, da Silva’s interpretation of Dighton Rock might as well have been another form of vandalism the rock had suffered, with Delabarre’s interpretation overwritten and otherwise erased. Águas wrote to reporter Walter Hackett, objecting to Hackett’s article in *The Christian Science Monitor* of August 20, 1969 that espoused the Bristol doctor’s ideas and featured the 1959 photo of da Silva’s version of the markings.⁷⁶ Águas recounted how on a visit to the rock two years earlier he “unexpectedly came upon Dr. Silva, clad in hip rubber boots, his camera upon a tripod facing the petroglyph[h], busily chalking grooves to which only his imagination gave form. We stopped to watch the embarrassed [sic] ‘archaeologist’ and I told him that the figures he had drawn there were not on the rock.” Águas contended “the Bristol physician’s unsubstantiable fallacy may indirectly and adversely affect, if only temporarily, the authentic value of the Portuguese Navigator Miguel Corte Real’s message as honestly and scholarly deciphered by Professor Delabarre...”⁷⁷

Da Silva may have been of a particular type drawn to fringe ethnohistorical causes, but I believe he modeled his approach to advocating the Corte-Real provenance on the precedent of Rasmus B. Anderson. Paul Knaplund has described Anderson as “a compound of many traits strangely mixed,” a “born crusader” who was “fearless, pugnacious, and zealous.”⁷⁸ Anderson’s popular writings on the Norse in America were boisterous, polemical rather than scholarly, and peppered with exclamation marks, all of which appear in abundance in da Silva’s efforts. Da Silva parroted the obstinate attitude of Anderson to contrary evidence and the primacy of his own interpretation. In the preface to a new edition of *America*

⁷⁵ Águas-Delabarre collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁷⁶ Walter Hackett, “Were Portuguese the first white settlers in New England? *The Christian Science Monitor*, Aug. 20, 1969.

⁷⁷ Abelio de Oliveira Águas to Walter Hackett, Aug. 26, 1969. Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society.

⁷⁸ Paul Knaplund, “Rasmus B. Anderson, Pioneer and Crusader,” *Norwegian-American Studies* 18 (Jan. 1, 1954): 23.

Not Discovered by Columbus (1877), Anderson declared: “until sufficient proof of some other origin of the Newport Tower and the Dighton Rock inscriptions are given, we shall persist in claiming them as relics of the Norsemen.”⁷⁹ It cannot be a coincidence that in describing his researches to the *Boston Globe* in 1966, da Silva recounted: “I saw the name of the town, ‘Saugus,’ and I said: This is Portuguese until proven otherwise.” The *Globe*’s Sara Davidson called this a “pearl of chauvinistic reasoning.” Da Silva titled the fourth chapter of his self-published book on Dighton Rock “Discovered by the Portuguese Until Proven Otherwise.” Until proven otherwise, Da Silva was going to claim Dighton Rock, the Newport Tower (as well as a colonial-era fort at Ninigret), and an array of Native American place names and personal names as Portuguese, in the same way that Anderson (and Horsford) had insisted such evidence pointed to the Norse, regardless of what experts thought to the contrary. When da Silva died in October 2012, no one had come close to proving otherwise, in his judgment.

Dighton Rock Museum and Public Interpretation

For ten years after Dighton Rock was raised and set on its shoreside berm, it was protected behind a chain-link fence. In 1973 the rock was enclosed within its protective octagonal structure—which, while not quite the sixteenth-century Portuguese cupola envisioned in 1955, was an unmistakable echo of the eight-sided Newport Tower that supporters of the Corte Real interpretation like da Silva insisted was a Portuguese relic. The adjoining octagonal museum structure and its interpretive materials opened in 1978, and would soon house an interpretative display conceived and constructed by The Friends of Dighton Rock Museum, Inc., a charitable non-profit organization Manuel Luciano da Silva established in 1963; da Silva was the first and only president until 2011, after which he served as a director until his death in October 2012. (Da Silva also assumed from Fragozo the presidency of the Miguel Corte-Real Memorial Society.)

⁷⁹ Anderson, *America Not Discovered by Columbus*, 2nd edn., 21.

A second Portuguese immigration wave, following the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which eliminated the quota system and gave preference to immigrants who could demonstrate family relations in the United States,⁸⁰ proved critical in the acceptance and promotion of Dighton Rock as a Portuguese relic. In the 1970s, Portuguese immigration reached an historic decadal peak of 101,710 before entering another sharp decline.⁸¹ A “Portuguese Archipelago” was affirmed in southeastern Massachusetts, centered on the major cities of Attleboro, Fall River, New Bedford and Taunton. In the 2000 U.S. census, 30.5 percent of residents of this archipelago were of Portuguese heritage, peaking at 49.6 percent in Fall River, where a statue of Prince Henry the Navigator was erected in 1940. New Bedford was 41.2 percent Portuguese-American, Dighton, across the river from the fabled rock, was 33.2 percent, and Taunton was 28.3 percent.⁸² In spite of the surge in immigration in the 1970s, Portuguese-Americans in that decade were still viewed according to Feldman-Bianco as “the invisible minority” and the “case of the disappearing ethnics.”⁸³ Dighton Rock’s museum became one answer to reasserting and celebrating an ethnic identity within the American melting pot. When *National Geographic* published a feature article on the Portuguese-American community of southern New England in 1975, it included a photo (captioned “Forty-ton calling card?”) of da Silva posing with the rock, pointing to the purported date of 1511, which was accompanied by an illustration of da Silva’s interpretation of the Corte-Real inscription.⁸⁴

Da Silva equated the Corte-Real arrival at Dighton Rock with the American space program. Just as the Portuguese had been in a race with Spain to reach India in the fifteenth century, he lectured in his

⁸⁰ Center for Policy Analysis, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, “Portuguese-Americans in the Massachusetts Power Structure: A Positional Analysis,” 3.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 4–5.

⁸³ Feldman-Bianco, “Multiple Layers of Time and Space,” 72.

⁸⁴ O. Louis Mazzatenta, “New England’s ‘Little Portugal,’” *National Geographic* 147, no. 1 (Jan. 1975): 98.

1972 book, so too the United States had become engaged in a race to the moon with Russia.⁸⁵ “Dighton Rock was the last stepping stone of the period of discovery,” da Silva told the *Boston Globe* in August 1966, at the height of the Gemini program’s flights.⁸⁶ “Five centuries ago, the Portuguese explored the unknown seas with as much courage and dedication as the American astronauts demonstrate today. The Americans are taking up where the Portuguese left off.”⁸⁷ After the American flag had been planted on the moon, da Silva wrote in his book: “The courage in face of the unknown is a characteristic of both the Portuguese explorers and the American astronauts,” adding: “Just as long ago the Portuguese planted landmarks in the lands they discovered, the astronauts will place on the planets, planet-markers with American National Symbols.”⁸⁸ The Portuguese symbols on Dighton Rock were the first statements of claim in America’s reach for the stars.

The museum’s interpretive approach was based on a monograph by George F. W. Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, published by the Old Colony Historical Society in 1970. Young was a lecturer in history at the State University of New York in Buffalo in the late 1960s when he undertook the monograph while completing doctoral dissertation research at Harvard, where he had earned his bachelor’s degree.⁸⁹ Young’s dissertation, for which he would earn his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1969, was on German immigration and colonization in Chile from 1849 to 1914, but in planning a course on Portuguese exploration at SUNY he wrote da Silva in August 1967,

⁸⁵ Da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock*, 92.

⁸⁶ Gemini IX flew June 3–6, Gemini X July 18–21, Gemini XI September 12–15, and Gemini XII (the final Gemini mission) November 11–15. John F. Kennedy Space Center, The Gemini Flight Summary, <http://www-pao.ksc.nasa.gov/history/gemini/flight-summary.htm> (accessed Jan. 4, 2015).

⁸⁷ Da Silva, quoted by Sara Davidson, “Battle at Dighton Rock.”

⁸⁸ Da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock*, 92.

⁸⁹ Young would become a professor of history at St. Mary’s University. See the biographical/historical note of the George F. W. Young papers at the Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8w37xsr/> (accessed Oct. 31, 2014). Nothing in his papers relates to his Dighton Rock monograph. Young’s dissertation was published as *The Germans in Chile: Immigration and Colonization, 1849–1914* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1974).

expressing his fascination with da Silva's research.⁹⁰ Young was in contact with a number of key figures in the Dighton Rock controversy in the course of producing the monograph while at Harvard in 1968, including Delabarre's daughter Maria, her husband Abelio Águas, and Francis M. Rogers. "The truth is that without Professor Rogers' stimulation this book would never have been written," Young stated in his Acknowledgments.⁹¹ Given Rogers' scraps with da Silva, the resultant monograph may be surprising. Young methodically dismantled and dismissed Delabarre's White Tribism arguments and judged his Latin inscription "doubtful," with "very little evidential value," thus providing academic support to da Silva's not-unfounded insistence it didn't exist.⁹² Young however found the presence of the crosses as identified by Frago and da Silva credible: "there might very well be two, if not four, Crosses of the Order of Christ engraved on Dighton Rock..."⁹³ He also concluded "there is very little doubt that the letters M...V...COR (T) ER... and the date 1511 are indeed incised upon the Rock."⁹⁴ For Young, the evidence of Miguel Corte Real's name "ought now to be regarded as a verifiable fact," and he was satisfied the rock's inscription indicated "Miguel Corte-Real, or a part of his 1502 expedition, passed some time at Assonet Neck."⁹⁵

Young organized the investigations of Dighton Rock into four periods: the Puritan period (17th century), the Phoenician period (18th century), the Viking period (19th century) and the Portuguese period (20th century). Young cautioned in his Introduction: "Of course it should be remembered that throughout the four 'periods' of Dighton Rock history there has always been a groundswell of opinion

⁹⁰ Young's letter of August 23, 1967 to da Silva apparently was forwarded by da Silva to Portuguese authorities in the course of soliciting support for a museum at Dighton Rock and was filed in Pedra de Dighton (PEA M333), Arquivo Histórico-Diplomático do Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Portugal. Transcription provided by Gilberto Fernandes.

⁹¹ Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, 8.

⁹² "...very little evidential value should be attributed to it in support of the Corte-Real theory." Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, 99.

⁹³ Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, 96.

⁹⁴ Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, 100.

⁹⁵ Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, 102.

that has held that the local Indians, and they alone, were responsible for the Writing on Dighton Rock. Perhaps this, the simplest, is the sanest and most sensible theory of them all. We shall see.”⁹⁶ Yet the reader never does see. The volume is overwhelmingly devoted to exploring and defending the Corte-Real provenance, albeit while discarding most of Delabarre’s arguments. Young included in the slim volume’s appendix a nine-page excerpt from Edward Augustus Kendall’s *Travels*. It was the only one of thirteen documents in the appendix that didn’t involve Portuguese exploration, which complemented twelve transcribed documents at the beginning of the volume related to the Corte-Real voyages. The *Travels* excerpt included Kendall’s belief the rock was “a monument of the sculpture of the ancient inhabitants of America, whether Narragansetts or others,” and further: “There is not, in reality, the smallest reason to doubt, that these sculptures are of Indian work.”⁹⁷ Young offered no comment on these conclusions. He relied on Kendall only for the stories he gathered of the “white bird,” an English wreck, and the spring, and for his painting, which Young was able to inspect at the Peabody Museum before it disappeared.⁹⁸ To Young’s eye, the painting clearly showed several alphabetic letters. Young did not consider the Indigeneity of the many glyphs on the rock’s surface, the phenomenon of riverside “sacrifice” rocks Kendall addressed, or recognize any of the past arguments supporting an Indigenous provenance by the likes of George Washington, George Catlin, Ephraim Squier and Edmund Davis, Henry Schoolcraft and Shingwauk, and Garrick Mallery.⁹⁹ Young went so far as to suggest that the quina shield supposedly atop the cross found on the left side of the rock by Fragozo only appeared to be a face made of three dots (eyes and mouth) in the manner of the petroglyphs at Bellow’s Falls because Indians “retouched” the

⁹⁶ Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, 13.

⁹⁷ Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing-Rock*, 121, 124, quoting Kendall, *Travels*, 2:221, 224–225.

⁹⁸ Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing Rock*, 51–56, 71.

⁹⁹ Young only acknowledged Schoolcraft and Shingwauk in a footnote (fn26, p73) to make the point that Shingwauk did not think two “central alphabetical characters” belonged with the rest of the glyphs the Anishinabe leader interpreted as Indigenous. Schoolcraft and Shingwauk thus served to advance Young’s case that there was alphabetic writing attributable to Corte-Real.

Portuguese inscription.¹⁰⁰ This purported defacement was the sole Indigenous contribution that Young recognized. One is left with the impression that, so long as the case for some alphabetic inscription attributable to Corte-Real (or another early European visitor) could be argued, the Indigenous evidence was irrelevant and unimportant.

The museum's interpretation is organized in a series of numbered wall panel displays that reflect Young's system of periods. Installed in 1982 with labour provided by local members of the Portuguese-American community, the panels were composed and created by the directors of The Friends of Dighton Rock Museum: Manuel and Silvia da Silva, T. Steven Tegu (born in Greece, a professor of romance languages at Rhode Island College) and Nelson Martins (a clinical psychologist who also edited da Silva's book), along with Roswell Bosworth Jr., publisher of the *Bristol Phoenix*. After display 1 explains how the rock came to be housed within the museum, four more numbered displays guide the visitor through Young's theory periods, with one crucial modification. Display 2, rather than being labeled the Puritan period, is labeled "American Indian, 17th Century." [Fig. 34] In addition to defying Young's caution that the Indigenous provenance was proposed through all four periods, the interpretation is implicitly progressive. Each display moves from one century to another, from "American Indian" (17th) to "Phoenician" (18th) to "Norse or Viking" (19th) to Portuguese (20th).

The first two panels in the American Indian (17th Century) display are devoted to the Danforth drawing and description of 1680. The third panel addresses the petroglyphs at Bellow's Falls in Vermont, and the fourth panel reproduces the 1853 daguerreotype of Seth Eastman sitting on Dighton Rock, and points out similarities between glyphs at Bellow's Falls and on Dighton Rock, albeit without presenting Young's suggestion that these similarities indicated Indians defaced the Portuguese inscription at Dighton Rock. Consistent with Young's monograph, there is no mention of other examples of Indigenous rock art known in southern New England, or indeed in eastern North America.

¹⁰⁰ Young, *Miguel Corte-Real and the Dighton Writing-Rock*, fn92, 95.

The Portuguese theory display includes several plaques devoted to da Silva's interpretation, including one showing the rock as marked up by da Silva in 1959 (re-photographed in 1971¹⁰¹), labeled "The Complete Corte Real Theory." [Fig. 35] It is almost impossible to resist the conclusion that Dighton Rock is a Portuguese relic—not only because of the implicitly progressive scheme of the interpretive display and the da Silva materials therein, but also because the museum has so much Portuguese seafaring content as to qualify as a cabinet of curiosities of historic Lusitanian navigation. In the center of the small museum are two cases containing large ship models: the *São Gabriel*, Vasco da Gama's flagship on his 1497 voyage to India around the Cape of Good Hope (a gift of the Prime Minister of Portugal, Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo); and the *Victoria*, the Spanish flagship of the Portuguese navigator Fernão de Magalhães (Fernand Magellan) on the first circumnavigation voyage of 1519–1522 (the model a gift of Don Juan Carlos, the King of Spain, with the display case sponsored by the Banco Espírito Santo of Lisbon). [Fig. 36] Walking towards the adjoining octagon containing the rock, a visitor passes beneath a large wooden carving of a cod, suspended from the ceiling. When this "sacred cod," commissioned by da Silva for the museum, was installed in August 2011, da Silva explained to the *Taunton Daily Gazette* the cod "is the crown, the motif, the inspiration for why navigators came to these lands."¹⁰² To the left, before you enter the rock's octagon, is a shrine within the shrine, a display case largely devoted to memorabilia related to Dr. da Silva. I gathered there a printed handout in Portuguese, "Musea da Pedra de Dighton," which has the unmistakable style of da Silva and was issued with his website address, www.dightonrock.com. Both the Phoenician and the Viking theory are pronounced a *fraude*. The Portuguese theory, it asserts, was discovered more than 93 years ago, and has never been refuted.¹⁰³ (In

¹⁰¹ "On the rainy night (9 p.m.) of May 2, 1971, Prof. Steven Tegu, his assistant Nelson Martins, Joseph L. Brum, electrician, and myself, all congregated around Dighton Rock to make the *final* photographic study of the inscriptions." Manuel Luciano da Silva, "Casting light on Dighton Rock." http://www.dightonrock.com/pilgrim_credits.htm (accessed July 22, 2013).

¹⁰² Casey Nilsson, "Cod almighty: The history and industry of state's most celebrated fish," *Taunton Daily Gazette*, Aug. 14, 2011.

¹⁰³ "A Teoria Portuguesa foi descoberta há mais de 93 anos e até à data ainda ninguém a refutou."

the introduction to da Silva's book, T. Steven Tegu, who as noted helped to compose and create the museum's interpretive panels, wrote: "The history of America is now correct and complete.")

At the right side of the entrance to the rock's octagon is a gift of the Gulbenkian Foundation of Portugal: a tall stone replica of one of the Portuguese *padrões*, of the sort that Fragoso identified on the left side of the rock's face. [Fig. 36] Entering the octagon, you confront a four-foot by eight-foot mosaic of natural stone, an "Indian Lithocollage" made of pieces of New England slate. [Fig. 37] Commissioned by The Friends of Dighton Rock Museum, it depicts in the left background Profile Rock of Freetown, Massachusetts, a stone outcrop that is said to resemble a Native American face and embodies the idea of the noble Vanished Indian. In the foreground, six Native Americans emerge head-and-shoulders from the ground, like petrified stumps.¹⁰⁴ The label says it is "an allegorical portrait of the Indians of North Eastern America." The collage was made in 1976 by Andriana Chipi Tegu, the daughter of T. Steven and Katherine Tegu, both founding directors of The Friends of Dighton Rock Museum.¹⁰⁵ (Their son, Steven Tegu, created six molded replicas of Dighton Rock that can be found in the Azores and mainland Portugal.¹⁰⁶) T. Steven Tegu had visited the Wampanoag community in Mashpee with da Silva to photograph residents in order to ensure the ethnic authenticity of the portraits in stone, and da Silva would assert they depicted "real Indian people."¹⁰⁷ In recalling this research trip, da Silva did not say if they told the Wampanoag what they were doing or asked their permission, let alone queried them on what they might have to say about Dighton Rock or da Silva's published assertion they were mulattoes descended from promiscuous Portuguese voyagers. In an article in the *Taunton Daily Gazette* in June 1972, Professor Tegu largely dismissed Dighton Rock's utility as an ethnohistoric resource, asking: "what can

¹⁰⁴ In addition to the display label, see William K. Gale, "Dighton Rock Slates Tribute," *The Providence Sunday Journal*, June 27, 1976.

¹⁰⁵ Da Silva recounted the founding of The Friends of Dighton Rock Museum in "Dighton Rock, what will happen to you after I die?"

¹⁰⁶ Manuel Luciano da Silva, "Dighton Rock, what will happen to you after I die?"

¹⁰⁷ "All the 5 [sic] faces on this monument are of real Indian people because Professor Tegu and I went to [the] Mashpee Tribe on the Cape Cod and photographed them!" Manuel Luciano da Silva, "Dighton Rock, what will happen to you after I die?"

an isolated rock with a few incoherent petroglyphs tell us about the history of the indigenous people of New England? What can a few figures, scratched on a boulder tell us about the Indians? When the settlers arrived, the Indians were present and it did not require any deciphering of petrographs to learn something about them, all the settlers needed to do was to ask the Indians. I do not advocate abandoning research on the petrographs on the rock. However, regardless of their age, they can tell us very little, because they are the products of a civilization in a primitive state of development.”¹⁰⁸ Tegu’s opinion was in essential agreement with Delabarre’s in 1923: it was “not at all likely that any important meaning or message attaches to any of their glyphs.”¹⁰⁹

At last, the visitor reaches the long-contested boulder. [Fig. 38] In front of the inscription are four plaques, visual references for the interpretations of the museum display: American Indian, Phoenician, Norse or Viking, and Portuguese, with the latter showing da Silva’s version of the inscription. Two of them, we have been told by the Portuguese-language handout, are frauds. One of them has not been disproven in 93 years. The rock’s present circumstance invokes criticisms of the province of Ontario’s construction in 1984 of a glass-walled, climate-controlled building to shield the Peterborough Petroglyphs from environmental degradation and vandalism. Dagmara Zawadzka in 2008 contended the building “fails to reflect Indigenous ideas regarding spirituality and sacred locales where connection with the natural setting is important. It also promotes a static vision of the place.”¹¹⁰ The Peterborough Petroglyphs at least are officially recognized and employed as a sacred Anishinabe site. Dighton Rock—declared the official Explorer’s Rock by the state of Massachusetts in 1981—is enclosed in a bunker-like, windowless

¹⁰⁸ T. Stephen [sic] Tegu, “The Talking Rock[:] What Does It Say?” *Taunton Daily Gazette*, Jun. 2, 1972.

¹⁰⁹ Delabarre, “Dighton Rock,” 72.

¹¹⁰ Dagmara Zawadzka, “The Peterborough Petroglyphs/Kinoomaagewaabkong: Confining the Spirit of Place.” Conference paper, 16th ICOMOS General Assembly and International Symposium: “Finding the spirit of place—between the tangible and the intangible,” Sep. 29–Oct. 4, 2008, Quebec, Canada, 5. http://www.international.icomos.org/quebec2008/cd/toindex/80_pdf/80-W9Fu-143.pdf (accessed Dec. 10, 2014).

cinderblock octagon, surrounded by glass and lit unnaturally from below.¹¹¹ It has been raised eleven feet from the tidewater river that once immersed it twice a day. The sun does not rise behind it every morning or set on its face every evening. If its top ever served as a recipient of offerings, no one can reach it to place them there anymore. The horned quadruped is still plainly visible.

Conclusion

While the mass of Portuguese material displayed in the little museum is overwhelming, the visitor experience likely would have been much the same, had the committee of Thomas G. Appleton succeeded in moving the rock to Boston. A Boston interpretation would have been a visual riot of Norse and Gothicist memorabilia, delivering its own multilayered message of cultural belonging. The inscription belonged to newcomers who staked a claim to the land with it, and while those newcomers led by Leif Eiriksson may have then left, as with Corte-Real, their descendants had returned, to reassert the primacy of their claim. As in the state park museum, the message of Norse belonging in Boston would have been made possible by the particular circumstances of its possession. Susan Roy has written that “the history of the lost of cultural objects to anthropological and nationalistic projects is part and parcel of colonialism.”¹¹² Dighton Rock is a reminder that control of any object in a museum environment affords powers of interpretation, and that colonialism in that regard extends beyond a culture’s loss of objects to include the message such objects are made to speak to the world. Where the interpretive presentation of such apprehended objects might deliver ethnological messages about Indigenous peoples that uphold the colonizing culture’s superiority, Dighton Rock is exceptional in having been captured by the colonizers and transformed from an Indigenous artifact into the very statement, the very proof, of colonization.

¹¹¹ The building was constructed with small windows, over the objections of da Silva, who was concerned “humidity from the river would increase the oxidation” of the rock’s face. “It took twenty more years for the State to close those small windows!” They are now boarded up. Manuel Luciano da Silva, “Dighton Rock, what will happen to you after I die?” <http://www.dightonrock.com/dightorockwhatwillhappentoyou.htm> (accessed July 22, 2013).

¹¹² Susan Roy, *These Mysterious People: Shaping History and Archaeology in a Northwest Coast Community* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010), 5.

Conclusion

“Celebrations straddle the two sides of historicity,” according to Michel-Rolph Trouillot. “They impose a silence upon the events that they ignore, and they fill that silence with narratives of power about the event they celebrate.”¹ For more than 300 years, Dighton Rock has attracted an array of explanations through which power has been narrated as well as actively exercised. In its latest expression, this power has distilled the history of its own exercise within a museum display. As an interpretation of interpretations, the museum is a crowning exercise of that power. The interpretive scheme at Dighton Rock Museum, as I have discussed, reduces the many theories to four implicitly progressive ones: Native American (seventeenth century), Phoenician (eighteenth century), Norse (nineteenth century) and Portuguese (twentieth century). As I have shown, the theories—the Native American theory above all—cannot be so neatly assigned to particular centuries. Nor are the theories progressive in the way Edmund Burke Delabarre proposed they showed increasing improvement in scientific method, culminating in his own Corte-Real solution. The theories instead can be organized in three categories, freed from specific time periods: Native American, Semi-Civilized Barbarian, and Old World. With these categories, we can better understand how Indigenous cultural materials like Dighton Rock have been leveraged in the ongoing service of colonization. They also allow us to appreciate how the issue of to whom provenance of an artifact like Dighton Rock should be assigned was a proxy question that served larger ones of to whom America belonged, who belonged in America, and if Native Americans belonged in the monogenic human family descended from the Biblical sons of Noah.

The intimation by Cotton Mather in 1714 that the inscribers of Dighton Rock had a Lost Tribes connection reflected suspicions among New England Puritans that Native Americans might have some distant, migrationist-diffusionist connection to Old World Biblical peoples. However, optimism that Indians could be welcomed to the Christian fold already had soured after the brutalities of King Philip’s War in 1676, which also had brought Dighton Rock and its surrounding lands into the possession of

¹ Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 118.

colonizers. Even if present-day Indians were descended from the Lost Tribes peoples that carved the rock, in the wake of Metacom's uprising they were judged irredeemably degenerative and an obstacle to the Puritan objective of establishing a New Canaan for the white progeny of Noah's son, Japheth. With Isaac Greenwood's analysis of 1730, we encounter the conviction that Native American ancestors were too lazy and stupid to have made the rock's markings. Condemnation flowed forward and backward in time. As Indigenous cultures were considered at best static and unchanging when left to their own devices, present-day Native Americans were considered no less backward than their forebears. Native Americans of ages past could not have carved the rock's markings because no living Native Americans had the capacity or inclination to produce such work. Greenwood's attitude, which persisted into the analysis of Edmund Burke Delabarre in the early twentieth century, helped to direct provenance theories away from Native Americans and towards migrationist Old World candidates like the Phoenicians, disenfranchising Indigenous peoples from their own past.

Greenwood's "too lazy and stupid" theory also gave enduring support to the phenomenon I have called White Tribism. Stories of fair-skinned, blond-haired Indians became a broader phenomenological explanation for any presumed moral, intellectual or physical improvement beyond uncultured savagery among Indigenous peoples or their ancestors. Moral, cultural and technological advancements belonged to whites, or to Old World peoples with whom they shared dendritic roots in Japheth's progeny and a diffused higher civilization rooted in a Golden Age conjured by Enlightenment thinkers. Where Native Americans were not improved by interbreeding with white newcomers, they achieved semblances of civilization through slavish imitation. The Norse and Portuguese theories for Dighton Rock were built on foundations of White Tribism, and even Edward Augustus Kendall's advocacy of the rock's Indigeneity suggested its makers imitated higher arts of unknown civilized or semi-civilized visitors. White Tribism's greatest utility to the power narrative of colonization lay in its ability to assert an a priori colonization of America by whites, long before known historical events and even before the arrival of Native Americans.

Theories of biological and cultural degeneration tabled by the comte de Buffon and Corneille de Pauw in the mid- to late-eighteenth century may have scandalized American colonists with assertion of

the feeble state of nature in the New World (and the enfeebling influence of its climate on humans and animals), but convictions that Native Americans had either arrived from Asia in a degenerated state (Buffon) or suffered degeneration when they reached the New World (de Pauw) were of a kind with the general conviction (which had been advanced in 1724 in the *premier temps* diffusionism of Lafitau) that Indians were a degenerated form of humanity. Debate persisted over their capacity for recovery, or improvement, not to mention if they were worth the effort. Lafitau at the same time had proposed the influential idea that the Americas had been peopled in multiple migrations, most likely across the Bering Strait, with the most advanced peoples arriving first. While Lafitau advanced an anti-rationalist idea of humanity's shared global antiquity and universal monotheism, a countervailing idea of race privilege, of white northern European racial and cultural supremacy, was being crafted, beginning in the late seventeenth century with Olf Rudbeks and continuing in the eighteenth century with Paul-Henri Mallet and the baron de Montesquieu. Through a combination of Japhethian migration and environmental determinism, the root wisdom of civilization and the highest qualities of humanity belonged to this northern European root stock, which by Biblical prophecy was destined to overspread the world. The baron de Montesquieu in 1748 equated Native Americans with Tartarian barbarians, who were naturally enslaved and enslaving, and his ideas would have been influential among American political philosophers who looked to his writings on the laws of nations for inspiration in drawing up federal and state constitutions. Even as Native Americans were being pronounced naturally subservient, degenerate and perhaps irredeemable, northern white Europeans embraced the Gothicist theory of the innate supremacy of northern white Europeans like themselves. When the foremost student of Dighton Rock, Ezra Stiles, delivered his Election Sermon in 1783, he placed Dighton Rock in a scenario that combined both strains of racialized thinking where Native Americans and white newcomers were concerned, in support of the colonizing project of the new republic. Assigning Dighton Rock to the Old World Phoenicians, as the French esotericist Antoine Court de Gébelin had in 1781, Stiles tabled a white version of multiple migrations, asserting successive waves of Gothicist visitors in pre-Columbian antiquity as he proclaimed a God-given right of the progeny of Japheth to colonize the New World. America belonged by

migrationist precedent and divine will to whites. Stiles assigned to Native Americans the role of subservient natural slaves who would, god willing, eventually vanish from the continent.

Thomas Pennant in 1784 made a key articulation, shorn of apocryphal Biblical literalism, of the multiple-migration theory across the Bering Strait. Charles Vallancey in 1786 enlisted Pennant's insight to argue Dighton Rock was carved by semi-civilized barbarians, the original Asian inhabitants of North America, who were then driven southward by brutish Tartarian hordes. Those hordes, recognizable from Montesquieu's writings, were the ancestors of modern Indians. By 1788, Vallancey's Dighton Rock theory was being adopted as an explanation for the provenance of the mounds and other cultural materials in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys that the westward press of American colonization was revealing as the landscape was claimed by conquest and coercive treaty surrender. The semi-civilized barbarians that carved Dighton Rock carvers became the semi-civilized Mound Builders, as the three provenances to which I have assigned the Dighton Rock theories now drove speculations over the much larger mystery of the mounds. This theorizing became the interpretive framework for the emergent scientific archaeology in America of the nineteenth century, which I have argued was an agent of colonization, active in the process rather than merely reflective of its collective cultural mentality. In this Anglo-American scheme of antiquity, the past was property: it comprised surveyed landscapes, objects (including mummified remains) displayed in cabinets of curiosity, inscriptions in stone, and texts (including the Bible) in which truths were fixed. The very process of history was proprietary: it belonged to the self-defined civilized, and was concerned with the rise of civilization. While everyone else was excluded from having a proper history, they were not immune to proper history's utility. If Native Americans and their ancestors could not make markings in a boulder, surely they were incapable, by inclination or ability, of creating a mound complex like Marietta or Cahokia. And if Dighton Rock and the mysterious mounds of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys did not belong to ancestors of Native Americans, and instead were the work of earlier, semi-civilized barbarian or transatlantic Old World migrationists, living Indigenous peoples were in danger of losing their ability to assert that the vast tracts of land coveted by colonists to the west of the Appalachians by right of original occupation belonged to them.

The narrative crafted for the migrant groups of American antiquity justified the republic's present and made its expansionist future attainable with a clear conscience, as the Indigenous displaced were turned into the original brutish displacers of both semi-civilized barbarians (who moved on to Mesoamerica and South America in the Vallancey model) and transatlantic Old World migrationists. Around 1787 Benjamin Smith Barton had proposed, and promptly withdrew, the idea of a pre-Columbian Gothicist arrival in North America, but it was revived in 1817 by Samuel Latham Mitchill and widely distributed in *Archaeologia Americana* of 1820. In Mitchill's version of the ancient history of western New York, the displacing white newcomers like himself were allied by blood descent with the original Gothicist inhabitants, who settled the area before ancestors of Native Americans arrived. America thus belonged to whites as much by right of prior occupation as by divine will and innate racial superiority. President Andrew Jackson used the Mound Builder theory to justify the forced removal of the Cherokee, who died by the thousands on the Trail of Tears in 1838. Just as Native Americans had arrived as conquering hordes to displace the original semi-civilized inhabitants, so now it was time for them to give way (more justly) to humanity's highest civilization.

Gothicism established its most enduring Old World beachhead in North America through the Norse arrivals of *Antiquitates Americanae*, published by Denmark's Royal Society of Northern Antiquarians in 1837, with Dighton Rock as the evidentiary keystone. Dighton Rock's role as a Norse relic would not endure, and was doubted by learned American critics who nevertheless supported the idea that New England was Vinland and were captivated by the idea of a cultural and racial affinity between the Puritans (and Anglo-Americans in general) and hardy, freedom-loving Scandinavians. In the mid-nineteenth century, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in 1854 used the Anishinabe leader Shingwauk's problematic reading to establish Dighton Rock's Indigenous provenance, reversing his earlier consideration that a Norse inscription might also be found on its face, as *Antiquitates Americanae* had concluded. While Schoolcraft was also confident the Mound Builders similarly were ancestral Native Americans, the new American scientific archaeology, as best exemplified by the work of Ephraim George Squier and Edwin Hamilton Davis published by the Smithsonian in 1848, continued to disenfranchise

living and historic Native Americans from their own past by insisting Native Americans had nothing to do with the mounds. Squier and Davis nevertheless assigned Dighton Rock to ancestors of Native Americans, and so made an important reversal in Dighton Rock's antiquarian and archaeological polarity. Where Vallancey had argued the rock was inscribed by a semi-civilized Asiatic people who were then displaced by the invading Tartarian hordes ancestral to Native Americans, Dighton Rock was now the work of those invading and displacing Tartarian hordes. Archaeologist Daniel Wilson in 1862 further asserted this polarity reversal while also perpetuating Squier and Davis's disassociation of the Mound Builders from living Native Americans. In Wilson's respected scholarly reasoning, Shingwauk's declaration of the Indigeneity of Dighton Rock only served to illustrate the unlettered primitivism of Native Americans, whose crude and indecipherable markings had nothing to do with civilized writing. Native Americans in Wilson's learned estimation comprised a race that could not fulfill a single objective of humanity's purpose, being unprogressive and bereft of science, philosophy and moral teaching. For Wilson, their displacement or assimilation was justified as America expanded westward on steel rails. Wilson's sentiments in the widely read *Prehistoric Man* would have exerted a reassuring influence in his own country as Canada embarked on its own transcontinental expansion by railway, which entailed the displacement, subjugation, marginalization, and anticipated eradication through assimilation of Indigenous peoples.

A plan to move Dighton Rock to Boston in the late 1870s, to anchor a Gothicism tribute to the Norse as the founding (white) peoples in American colonization, failed to come about. Not even the Royal Society of Northern Antiquarians believed in the rock's Norse attribution any more, and the society, which had been granted title to the rock in 1860, transferred ownership in 1889 to the Old Colony Historical Society of Taunton, Massachusetts. Around the same time, Garrick Mallery recognized Dighton Rock's utility as an archaeological resource had been all but ruined by centuries of manipulation. Cyrus Thomas formally quashed the Mound Builder theory in his report to the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology published in 1894, affirming the mounds were the work of ancestral Native Americans and that there was no basis to the idea the Americas had been colonized by waves of superior and inferior Asian peoples. By

the end of the nineteenth century, Dighton Rock's Indigeneity was accepted by mainstream authorities, and as it now enjoyed the legal protection of the OCHS, the rock appeared to be safe from any future relocations or fringe Old World misattributions. As it happened, the society would be an active participant in enshrining the rock in its enduring guise, as a relic of Portuguese exploration.

As an Indigenous artifact, Dighton Rock had been placed beyond the interest of history by the measure of G. W.F. Hegel's precondition of written records and a state. Its potential as an object of intellectual curiosity had always depended on the markings belonging to some Old World culture, which did not change as it fell under its most intensive consideration, by Edmund Burke Delabarre, in the early twentieth century. Delabarre was well aware in the course of writing his second of three historiographical studies of the rock for the Colonial Society of Massachusetts that the evidence strongly pointed at an Indigenous provenance. I have argued that by the end of his third study the Brown professor of psychology was succumbing to a perceptual fantasy borne of the realization that without an Old World attribution the hundreds of pages of analysis he had produced would have been in the service of an apparently unintelligible Native American relic that was of little to no interest to scholars. Finding the date "1511" on the eve of publishing the third and final instalment of his study was a kind of deliverance for Delabarre, who quickly fashioned a Corte-Real narrative while searching for additional Portuguese markings that he inevitably found.

Old World attributions for Dighton Rock had always fallen within the vague bounds of recorded history, in that the rock's markings were attributed to known civilized peoples, who by default came with a history. With the Norse attribution, Dighton Rock's provenance had rested on the threshold of recorded history as scholars debated the historicity of the Icelandic sagas that recounted the Vinland voyages. Carl Christian Rafn and Finn Magnussén had striven to forge (quite literally forge) from the rock's markings both a claim-stake and a historical document recounting the saga events of Thorfinn Karlsefni's Høp. The problematic Shingwauk reading, as related by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, was similarly concerned with making the rock an historical record of an Indigenous battle. With the Corte-Real provenance, Delabarre brought the rock into a demonstrably historic Old World time frame, but his supportive records for

Miguel Corte-Real's presence on the Taunton River were more ephemeral than the saga evidence that Carl Christian Rafn had employed to place Karlsefni's Høp in nearby Mount Hope Bay. Beyond the markings revealed by his flashlight photography, Delabarre's evidence was a conjectural abuse of Native Americans and their cultures. Perpetuating the "too lazy and stupid" theory of Greenwood from 1730, Delabarre used standard tactics of White Tribism, including word-hunting and presumptions of innate Indigenous inferiority to white Europeans. To support his Corte-Real theory, Delabarre had to render the Native Americans of New England incapable of producing any rock art until Corte-Real revealed the "magic" of writing on rock, and even then, their efforts were no better than childish scribbles.

Colonization within the contiguous forty-eight states did not end with Frederick Jackson Turner's declaration of the closing of the American frontier in his 1893 essay, "The Frontier in American History." The future of Native Americans within the republic remained contested, and derogatory opinions expounded by an Ivy League scholar like Delabarre would have confounded the message of contemporary reformists who joined with John Collier in founding the American Indian Defense Association (AIDA) in 1923. AIDA's mission according to Colleen Boyd was to "preserve and protect Indigenous cultures, practices and religious beliefs—an entirely different model than the one envisioned by nineteenth century social reformers. What assimilationists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had hoped to eradicate, Collier's organization sought to save."² Even as Collier oversaw a paradigm shift in federal policy as Franklin Roosevelt's commissioner of Indian affairs through the "Indian New Deal" of 1933, Delabarre continued to expound his ideas on ignorant savagery and childish scribbles. In the final phase of Dighton Rock's history as an Old World relic ushered in by Delabarre, colonization's issue of belonging saw Dighton Rock take on a new role, as an object of place-making for Portuguese-American immigrants. Gothicists (including Scandinavian-Americans) may have given up on Dighton Rock as a Norse relic, but the rock found fresh place-making utility as Gothicism combined with post-Darwinian

² Colleen Boyd, "'The Indians Themselves are Greatly Enthused': The Wheeler-Howard Act and the (Re)-Organization of Klallam Space," *Journal of Northwest Anthropology* 43:1 (2009): 12.

race theory to create eugenicist obsessions with the biological fitness of the American population. Deemed second-class citizens and undesirable immigrants by the U.S. immigration reforms of 1924, the substantial Portuguese-American community of southeastern Massachusetts embraced Delabarre's Dighton Rock theory as proof they were the true founding peoples of America. Dr. Manuel Luciano da Silva, the foremost proponent of the rock's Portuguese interpretation after the Second World War, revised Delabarre's theory and expanded on its White Tribism ideas. In making the case that the Portuguese deserved a leading place in American society, da Silva perpetuated and amplified Delabarre's contention that Native Americans were an inferior people that Portuguese adventurers had improved, biologically and culturally. In da Silva's version of American history, an array of Algonquian words (including "Algonquin"), proper names and place-names became Portuguese and the Wampanoag were transformed into a *mullato* Native American/Portuguese population that, within a generation of Corte-Real's appearance, had impressed the explorer Verrazano with their civility.

My hope for this dissertation where ethnography, ethnology and anthropology are concerned is that it will further interest in and understanding of the shift from Enlightenment philosophies of the eighteenth century, which were rooted in textual evidence and what I would call wisdom-at-a-distance, to the more object-oriented and experiential epistemology of the nineteenth century. I have shown that the former did not simply give way to the latter. Instead, speculations of the eighteenth century that advanced the idea of multiple migrations and a Bering Strait crossing provided the intellectual foundation for the emergent scientific American archaeology of the nineteenth century. As well, I have added to the growing literature concerned with the "Dark Enlightenment," to show how esotericism as a close ally of Gothicism informed outwardly rationalist enquiries into American antiquity, particularly in the case of Edward Augustus Kendall but more generally in the generation of men that was involved in launching American scientific archaeology.

Historians, anthropologists, and archaeologists need to better understand this transitional period from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries. Histories of anthropology tend to glaze over (and misunderstand) the earliest formative years, or ignore them altogether. They are seen as a Dark Ages

of theory and practice, a preamble hurriedly considered, when considered at all. My dissertation shows that this period saw considerable activity in formulating ideas on migrationism, diffusionism, degeneration, monogenesis and polygenesis. This period involved figures crucial to foundational concepts of the archaeology and ethnohistory of the Americas whose contributions are scarcely recognized. Charles Vallancey and Thomas Pennant are entirely missing in Bruce Trigger's *A History of Archaeological Thought* (a work additionally peculiar in devoting only six of its more than five hundred pages of text to the Mound Builders, the central obsession of nineteenth-century American archaeology). Nor do Vallancey or Pennant appear in Robert Silverberg's standard reference work, *Mound Builders of Ancient America*, or most anywhere else. Alice Beck Kehoe's *The Land of Prehistory: A Critical History of American Archaeology*, only begins around 1850, with the transplanted Scottish Canadian, Daniel Wilson. It is as if the history of American archaeology has a prehistory of its own that has gone largely unexplored, for much the same reason that nineteenth-century historians considered Native Americans beyond the concerns of proper history. Native Americans were ignored because they were not considered part of the progressive narrative of the rise of civilization. The antiquarian prehistory of archaeology presumably has been neglected because its ideas are not considered part of the progressive narrative of the rise and refinement of a scientific discipline. The works of antiquarians when recognized tend to be trivialized and poorly understood (in fact, misunderstood, in the case of De Witt Clinton in the works of Silverberg and Trigger), their importance unrecognized in an evolving colonialist enterprise aided and abetted by scientific enquiry. This neglect I believe arises in part from an over-reliance on the appearance of a precise methodology in so-called "dirt" archaeology to define its beginnings, when as I have shown, the dirt archaeologists were beholden to ideas of Beringian multiple migrations and displacements advanced by men like Pennant and Vallancey in the eighteenth century. Theories that are now deservedly considered fringe such as Mitchill's pre-Columbian European visitors to New York State are placed beyond the concerns of historians interested in the rise of scientific archaeology because they are considered wrongheaded, eccentric dead-ends, and because Mitchill performed no actual spadework on the state's mounds. As I have shown, such fringe ideas were advanced by bonafide members of the

intellectual and educational mainstream, and their arguments, if untenable, still invite careful reading, not only to avoid misunderstanding them, but also to appreciate the dendritic roots of their ideas and the branches that would sprout from them, even within a “scientific” discipline. Through neglect of these theories and theorists, Ephraim George Squier can be hailed as a modern scientific archaeologist for the surveying precision of his Mound Builder study with Davis in 1848 without grasping the extent of the eighteenth-century basis for their analytical failure as they concluded Native American ancestors had nothing to do with these cultural materials. Being attuned to the repetitive usage of a word like “horde” or a concept like a “factory of humanity” in nineteenth-century works, as I have shown, allows us to trace ideas back to sources as deep as the sixth-century Romanized Goth, Jordanes, and to align purportedly impartial scientific enquiry with Gothicist ideas of white racial supremacy.

I have taken up Trigger’s conception of colonialist archaeology (which Trigger himself did not do in *A History of Archaeological Thought*, after tabling his thoughts in the journal *Man* in 1984) and extended its characteristics and implications. Trigger proposed colonialist archaeology as the scientific product of a colonizing culture that could use its conclusions to justify colonization. I have argued further that colonialist archaeology was a direct, immediate result of conquest through possession. Archaeology’s practices were correspondingly militarized in surveying and in the penchant to view mound materials as military fortifications. Practitioners conceptualized the past in the same terms as the colonizing culture’s perception of the present: as clashes between the civilized, semi-civilized and uncivilized. If *Archaeologia Americana* of 1820 marked the beginning of American scientific archaeology, it did so with a highly racialized agenda that served the colonizing project by justifying the displacement of Native Americans by turning them into the brutish displacers of the continent’s original inhabitants.

The insights I have provided will be of service to ethnohistorians and other scholars interested in the histories of science, archaeology (and more broadly anthropology), Indigenous-colonialist relations, American manifest destiny, and race theory. There are important parallels for example between the (mis)interpretation of Dighton Rock and the studies of archaeological resources of the Musqueam of British Columbia as related by Susan Roy in *These Mysterious People*. Roy argues the history of the

Marpole Midden “has relevance that extends beyond the boundaries of this place.”³ While the timeline of investigation was shallower than in the case of Dighton Rock, Roy examines how archaeological investigations beginning in the late nineteenth century were drawn into the debates around the origins of humankind in North America. Researchers “were all interested in the theoretical questions of the identity (whether biological, racial, cultural, or ethnological) of the peoples who had lived there. Often, they theorized that the contemporary Aboriginal peoples of the area had settled there in the remote past and displaced earlier, pre-Salishian peoples. Such theories of ancient migration and displacement, whether they were true or not, informed popular perceptions of local history that disassociated contemporary Aboriginal peoples from their traditional homelands.”⁴ Although Roy’s study does not address this aspect, it is striking how the Musqueam experience with disassociation mirrors the earlier, nineteenth-century anthropological obsession with the Mound Builders. The Musqueam case shows how the use of an ostensibly scientific displacement scenario to disenfranchise Indigenous peoples from their past (and their lands) outlived its principle example, the Mound Builders theory. My dissertation provides the crucial back-story to how theories of displacement arose, and also helps us understand the continuing appeal of fringe or historical interpretations of American antiquity, up to and including the idea that the 9,000 year-old skull of Kennewick Man in Washington State was a Caucasian, as David Hurst Thomas explores in *Skull Wars*.⁵ This dissertation shows that ideas today considered fringe have roots in theories developed and propagated by leading figures in science, education, and politics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. My work thus complements that of Sumathi Ramaswamy, who in *The Lost Land of Lemuria* shows how eccentric ideas of a lost continent cherished by Theosophists and other Euro-American occultists, which were leveraged into popular works by Albert Churchward about the lost continent of Mu

³ Roy, *These Mysterious People*, 7.

⁴ Roy, *These Mysterious People*, 8.

⁵ Thomas, *Skull Wars*, passim.

in the 1930s, were grounded in once-respectable scientific assertions of the nineteenth century.⁶ Indeed, with an additional allocation of pages, this dissertation could have explored how Churchward's writings had an unfortunate effect on lay researcher Harold J. Cundy's efforts to record Columbia River plateau petroglyphs in the 1930s, before many were lost to construction projects, as Cundy succumbed to seeing and preserving imagery of Churchward's fabulous Mu.⁷ Misinterpretations of Indigenous rock art, as Cundy's example shows, have not been limited to Dighton Rock. I have also mentioned the gross miscasting of the Peterborough Petroglyphs as ogham script by Barry Fell, among others.⁸ Prior to Cundy, a retired Scandinavian logging camp laborer named Oluf Opsjon passed himself off as a professor and garnered global media coverage in the 1920s with claims the petroglyphs of the Columbia River plateau were the work of Norsemen, in a tall tale that plainly had roots in Dighton Rock's interpretations. There are many such cases of petroglyphs and pictographs being appropriated by misguided and misinformed researchers, and the phenomenon needs to be understood within the context I have described through Dighton Rock's historiography of belonging, possession, and dispossession.

My concluding analysis of Dighton Rock Museum will inform the established debates over how Indigenous cultural resources are displayed and interpreted in museums and art galleries. Dighton Rock to be sure is an extreme case, in which the Indigenous affinity is marginally addressed and otherwise subsumed within an overwhelming progressivist interpretation that advocates a Portuguese provenance. It is also exceptional in that this marginalization has occurred without, to my knowledge, any overt effort by Indigenous peoples to reclaim the rock and demand an interpretation more respectful of its character. The reasons the Wampanoag have not (yet) made such a request are beyond the scope of this dissertation, although I would attribute a large part of that lack of engagement to the fact that the two federally

⁶ Sumathi Ramaswamy, *The Lost Land of Lemuria: Fabulous Geographies, Catastrophic Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

⁷ See William D. Layman, "Drawing with Vision: Harold J. Cundy's Pioneering Investigations into the Rock Art of North Central Washington," *Columbia Magazine* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 23–32.

⁸ For a rebuttal of the chief proponents of a non-Indigenous interpretation, see Vastokas, "The Peterborough Petroglyphs: Native or Norse?"

recognized Wampanoag tribes, at Aquinnah (Gay Ahead) on Martha's Vineyard and at Mashpee on Nantucket, are some distance removed from Dighton Rock and only recently (1987 and 2007 respectively) secured federal recognition. More pragmatically, even as I write, the Mashpee Wampanoag are pursuing a controversial plan for a casino in Taunton, Massachusetts that has faced both local and state votes in order to stay alive. In a region heavily Portuguese in ancestry, the Mashpee Wampanoag would not be doing their casino cause any favours by contesting the Corte-Real provenance. It would not surprise me if the Mashpee Wampanoag have avoided asserting the Indigeneity of Dighton Rock while choosing other cultural sites for their public assertions of historical connectivity to the lands lost through King Philip's War, in order to secure federal permission to turn a Taunton property earmarked for the proposed casino development into a new reservation. Since the death of Manuel da Silva, Friends of Dighton Rock Museum at least has hosted several public events dedicated to Native American subjects, although the general programming approach has been one of "all possibilities" for the rock's interpretation. For example, a presentation on April 13, 2014 was dedicated to "the history of the drum and its cultural significance to the Phoenicians, Vikings, Portuguese, and Native Americans."⁹

Dighton Rock raises an important issue of permission or entitlement where Indigenous cultural materials are concerned. The absence of Indigenous voices raised in their defense—understandable in the case of Dighton Rock, where voices were silenced by war and forcible removal—does not absolve an acquisitive society from asking if its interpretation is thorough or fair, or if its motives are free of larger cultural or political agendas. These questions must be asked by (or put to) society in general, and not only to professionals normally seconded to gather and interpret such materials, for as Dighton Rock Museum demonstrates, celebration and interpretation in the realm of public history can be the domain of special interest groups, volunteers, politicians and private societies. As well, I have every confidence that another front will open within public history as fringe historians claim Dighton Rock as a Templar relic. Since the publication of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* in 1982 by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry

⁹ April 7, 2014 posting on Friends of Dighton Rock Museum Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfDightonRockMuseum> (accessed Dec. 28, 2014).

Lincoln, but more so since the appearance Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* and the feature film it inspired, fringe history enthusiasts have been reinterpreting earlier Gothicist interpretations of New England antiquities as evidence of visits by Templar Knights.¹⁰ I remain amazed that while such crypto-enthusiasts as Scott Wolter have incorporated the Newport mill into their theorizing, they have not yet discovered nearby Dighton Rock. After all, according to Dighton Rock Museum's interpretive display, the rock is inscribed with four Portuguese crosses of the Order of Christ, and this symbol was adapted from the Maltese cross of the Templar order, as da Silva himself explained.¹¹ This fresh round of appropriation however may already be under way. On March 9, 2014, Dighton Rock Museum hosted a public program called "CSI BERKLEY: Solving a 600 Year-Old Murder Mystery." The Friends of Dighton Rock Museum promised: "Steve Voluckas will lead us on a trail of clues stretching from Nova Scotia to Narragansett Bay to reveal who may have made the inscriptions on Dighton Rock and why!" The presentation by a member of the fringe-enthusiast New England Antiquities Research Association sounded suspiciously like an attempt to link Dighton Rock to the dominant strain of Templar adventurism in the New World, the spurious voyage to Nova Scotia of Henry Sinclair, earl of Orkney, in 1397.¹²

In closing, I ask the reader to reflect on the utility of the past. I began this Conclusion by quoting Michel-Rolph Trouillot on how celebrations "impose a silence upon the events that they ignore, and they fill that silence with narratives of power about the event they celebrate." I have argued that in the cases of Dighton Rock and related cultural materials like the so-called Mound Builder relics, this power has been exercised in the course of narration to satisfy larger objectives of colonization. In its latest phase of

¹⁰ Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln, *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* (London: J. Cape, 1982). Published in the United States as *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1982). Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

¹¹ Da Silva, *Portuguese Pilgrims and Dighton Rock*, 46–47.

¹² March 3, 2014 posting on Friends of Dighton Rock Museum Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfDightonRockMuseum> (accessed Dec. 28, 2014). The fabulous nature of the Sinclair voyage is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The best demolition of its historical and Templar/Masonic conceits is by Brian Smith, "Earl Henry Sinclair's fictitious trip to America," *New Orkney Antiquarian Journal* 2 (2002), an amended version of which was posted online at the website of Alastair Hamilton, <http://www.alastairhamilton.com/sinclair.htm> (accessed July 1, 2013).

interpretation, Dighton Rock as a captive Indigenous artifact has been enlisted by a subset of newcomers in an internal struggle within colonization over claims to belonging. As a work primarily concerned with historiography, this dissertation has excavated several centuries of theorizing, to show that these seemingly disparate ideas are built upon a shared foundation of Indigenous disenfranchisement, and have employed presumptions and strategies of reasoning, foremost White Tribism, that are as old as Europe's experiences of the lands they called the New World and the people they called Indians. The energies expended by theorists to unearth the past have in truth served to bury it, to the advantage of their present and their ambitions for their own future.

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- Dighton Rock Collection, Old Colony Historical Society, Taunton RI.
- Aguas–Delabarre Collection, Old Colony Historical Society, Taunton RI.

Illustrations

Chapter 1

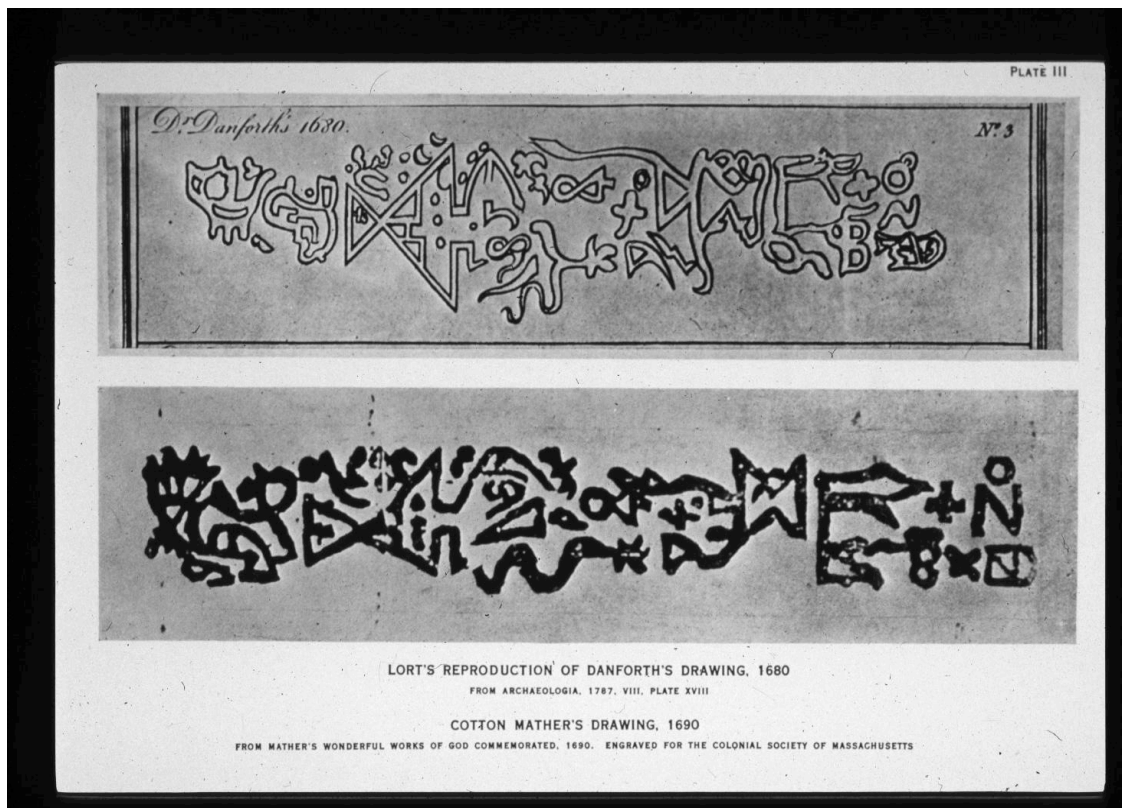


Figure 1. Top: reproduction of Danforth's drawing of 1680. Bottom: Cotton Mather's drawing of 1690. Plate III, Delabarre, "Early Interest in Dighton Rock."

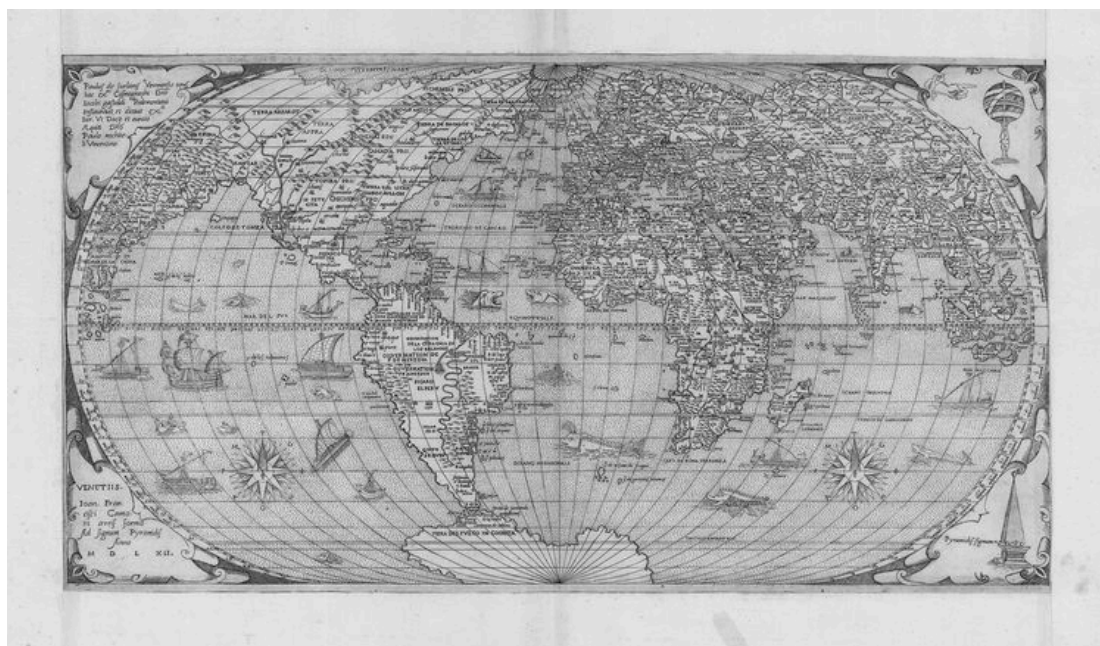


Figure 2. The Forlani world map of 1565 depicted Asia and North America as a contiguous continent.

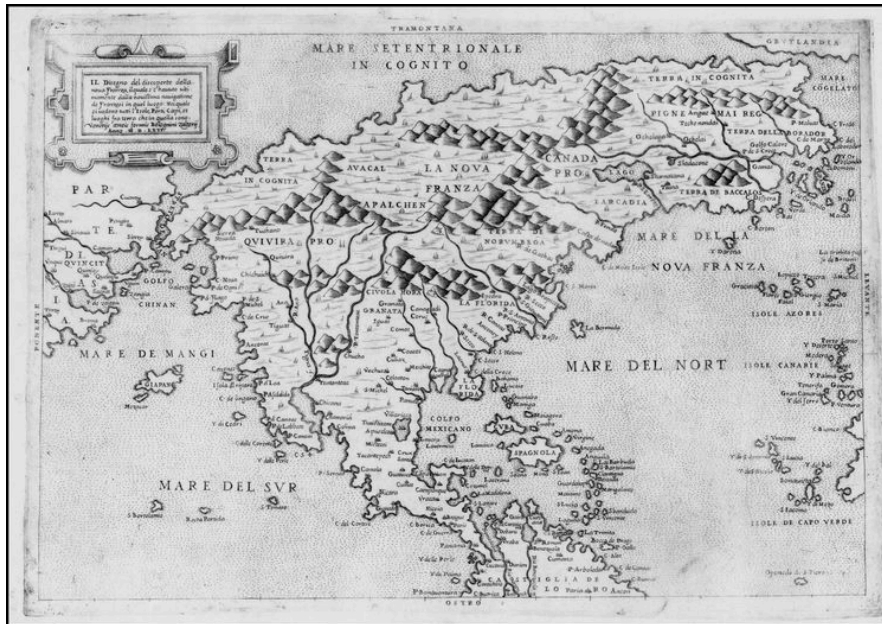


Figure 3 The Bolognino Zaltieri map of North America (1566) was the first printed map to include the strait labeled “Anian” between Asia and North America.

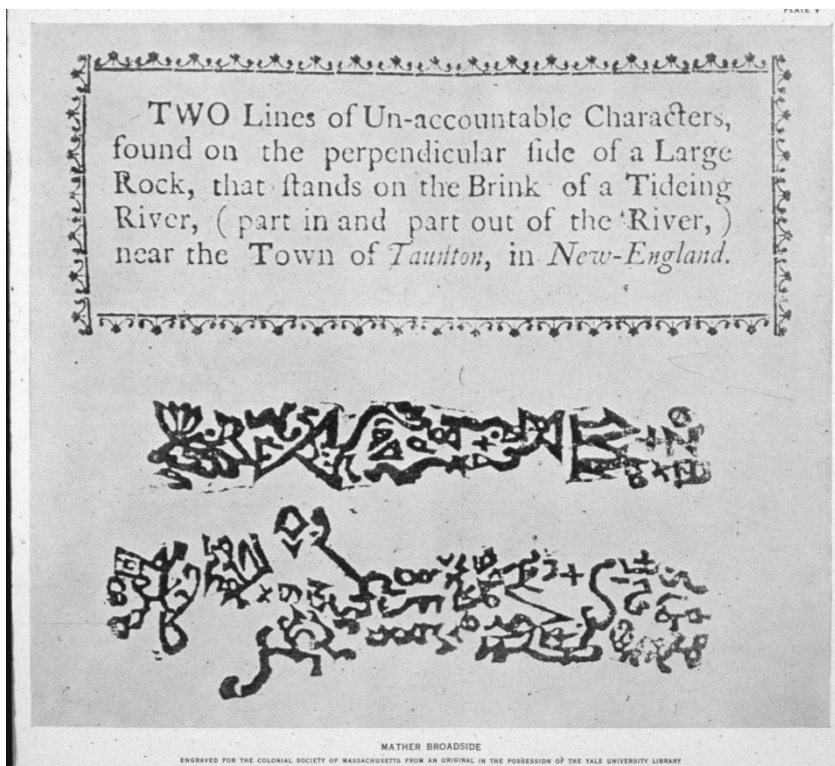


Figure 4 Cotton Mather broadside, c. 1712.

Chapter 2

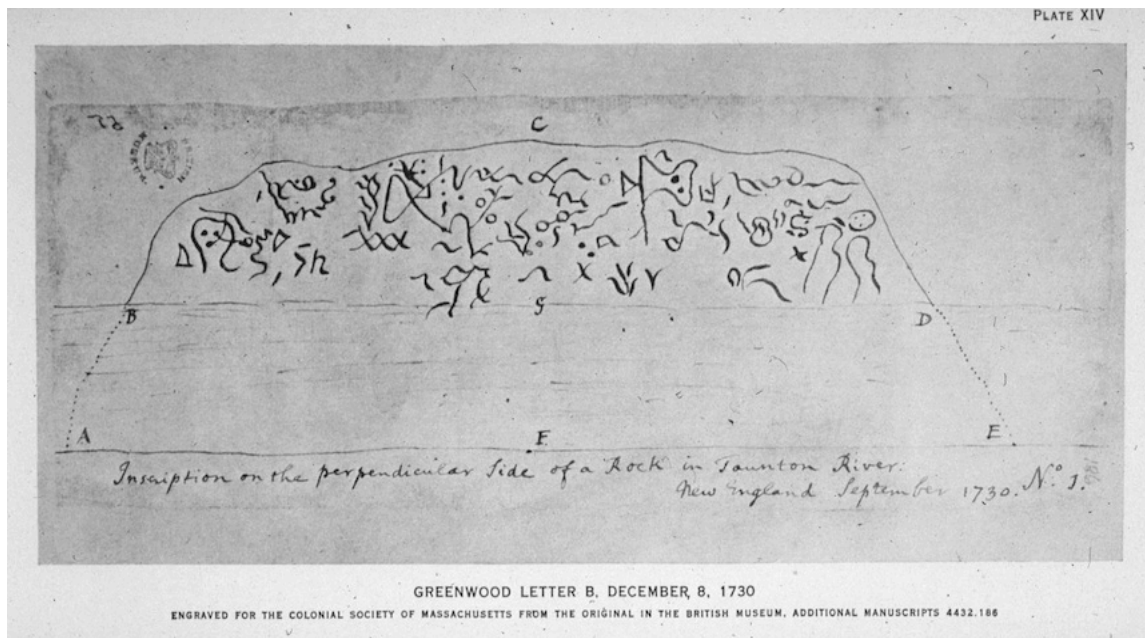


Figure 5. Isaac Greenwood's drawing, from letter to the Royal Society, December 8, 1730. Engraved for the Colonial Society of Massachusetts from the original in the British Museum. Plate XIV, Delabarre, "Early Interest in Dighton Rock."

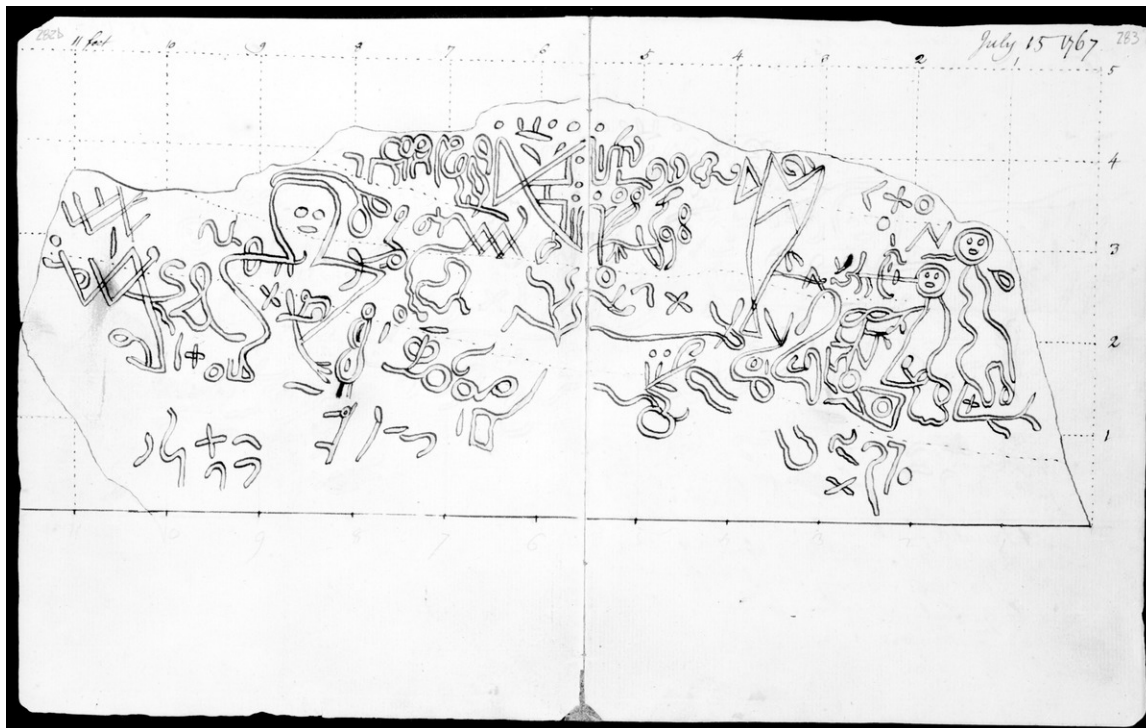


Figure 6. Ezra Stiles' drawing of Dighton Rock, July 15, 1767, from *Itineraries II*. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3766911?image_id=3737970. Accessed June 16, 2014.



Figure 7. Stephen Sewall drawing, 1768 (Plate XXII, in Delabarre, "Middle Period.")

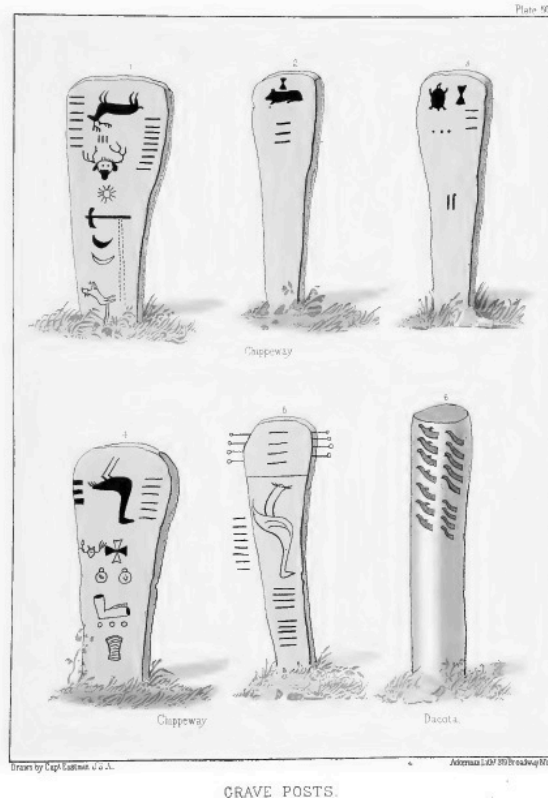
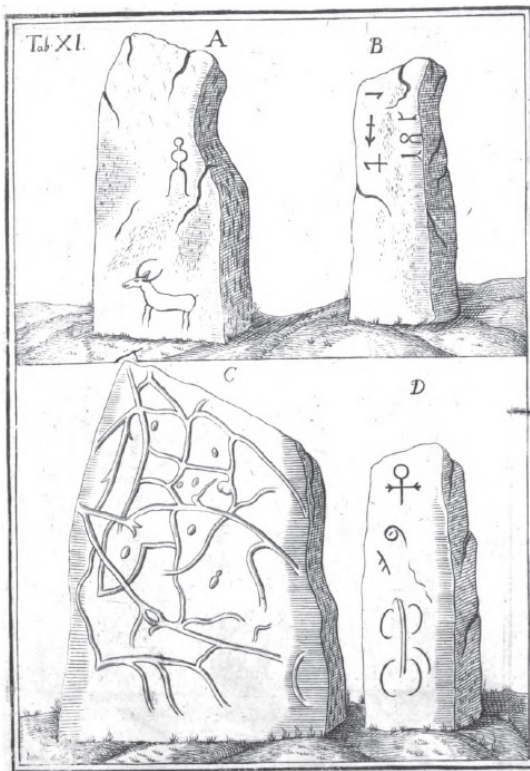


Figure 8. Inscribed standing stones, Table 11, Strahlenberg, *An Historico-Geographical Description of the North and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia* (left); "Chippewy" and "Dakota" grave posts, plate 50, Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, vol. 1. (right).

Chapter 3

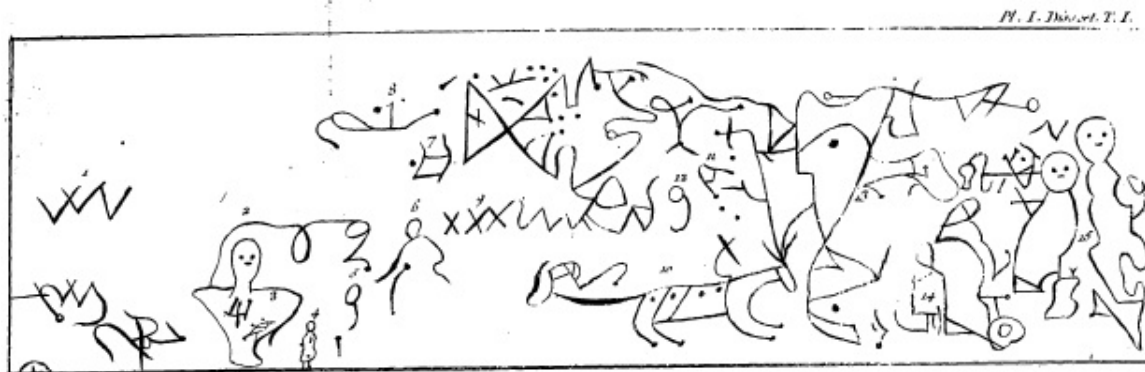


Figure 9 Court de Gébelin's version of Sewall's drawing (with numerals added as references) in *Monde primitif*, vol. 8, 1781.

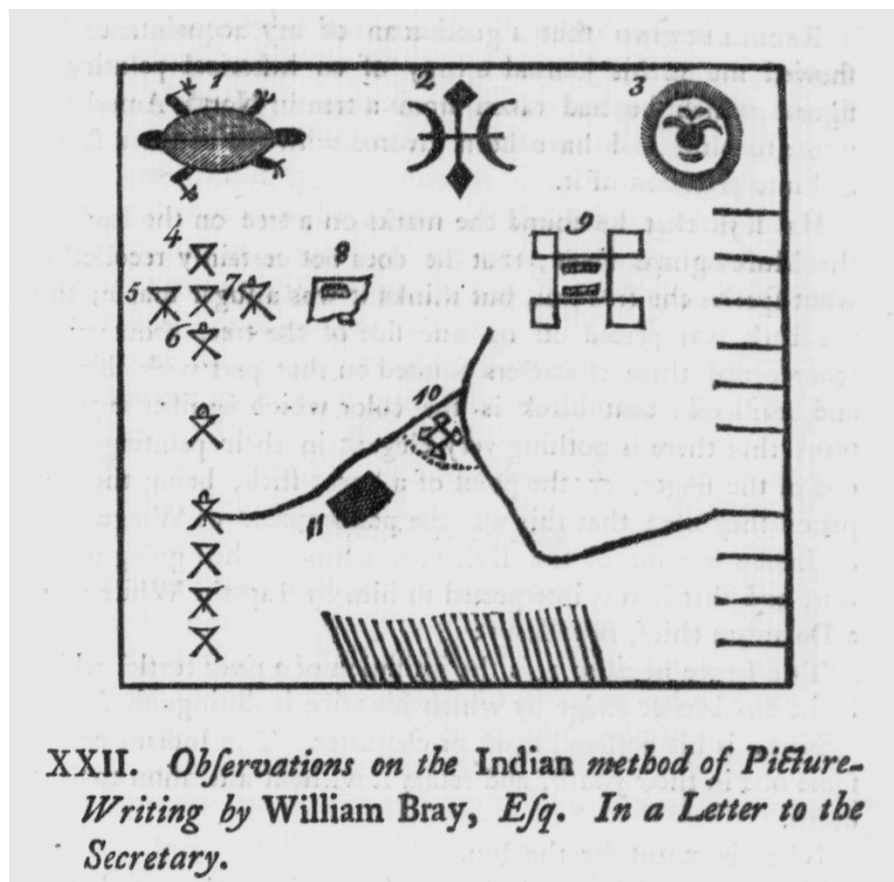


Figure 10. Illustration of Delaware birch-bark picture writing, in William Bray, "Observations on the Indian method of Picture-Writing," *Archaeologia*, vol. 6 (1782).

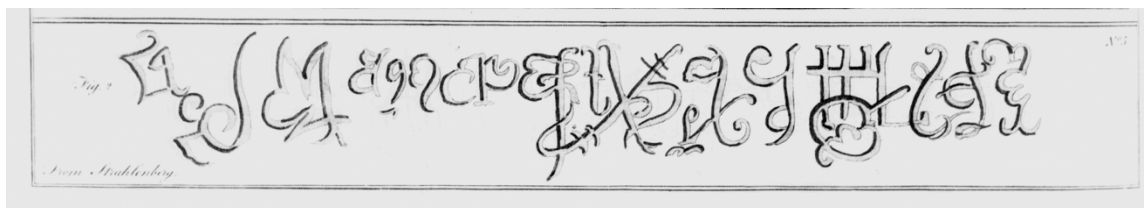


Figure 11. Illustration from Strahlenberg, *An Historico-Geographical Description of the North and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia*, chosen by Charles Vallancey as a comparative to Dighton Rock for “Observations on the American Inscription,” *Archaeologia*, vol. 8 (1787).

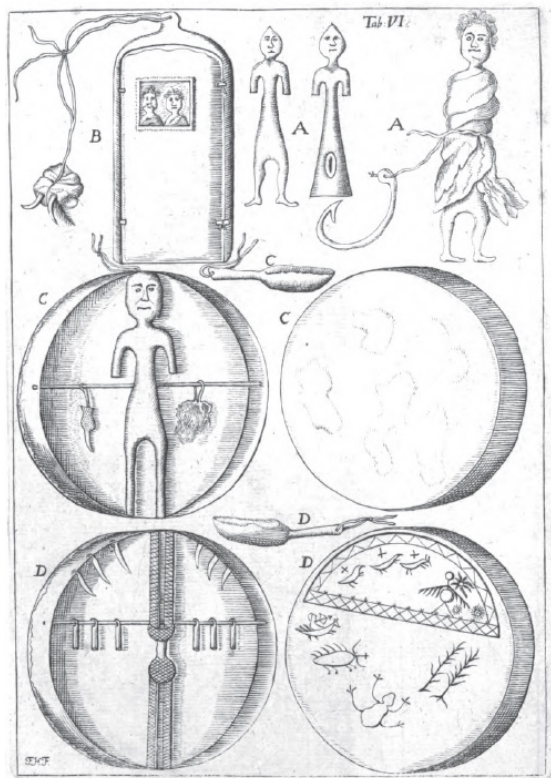


Figure 12. Shaman's drums and other artifacts, Table 6, Strahlenberg, *An Historico-Geographical Description of the North and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia*.

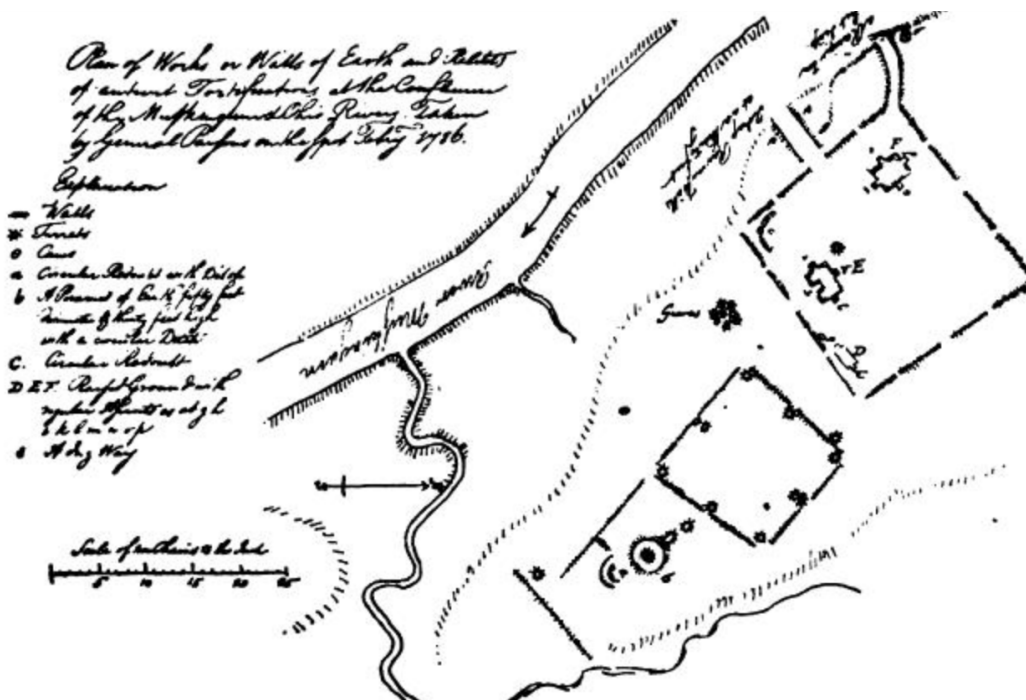


Figure 13. Copy by Ezra Stiles of Parsons' plan for the Marietta earthworks. From Stiles, *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, vol. 3, p 215.

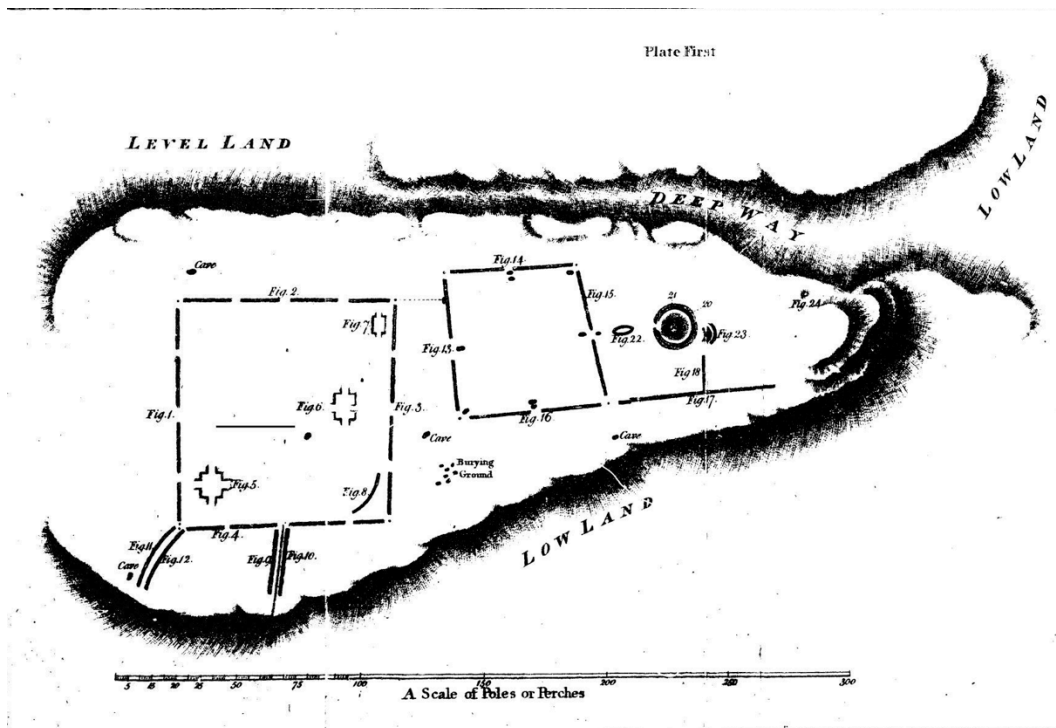


Figure 14. Benjamin Smith Barton's copy (unattributed and rendered upside-down, with a different scale) of Parsons' Marietta plan, as published as Plate First in *Observations on Some Parts of Natural History*.

Chapter 4

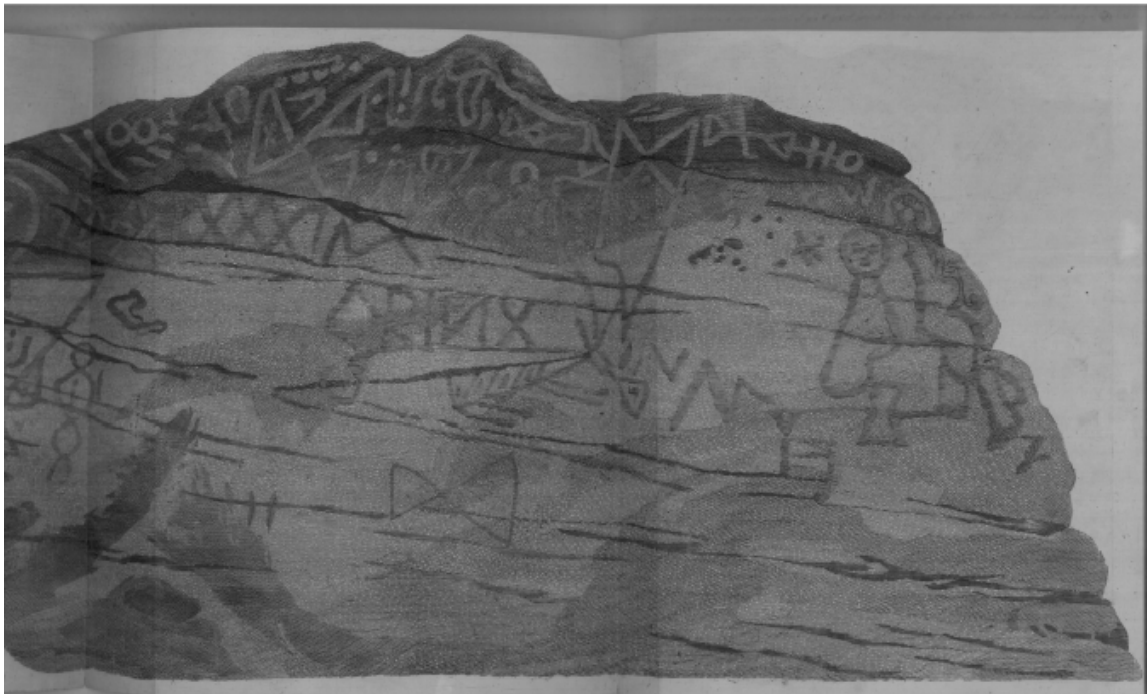


Figure 15. Engraving of Kendall painting (detail) that accompanied his "Account" in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 1809.

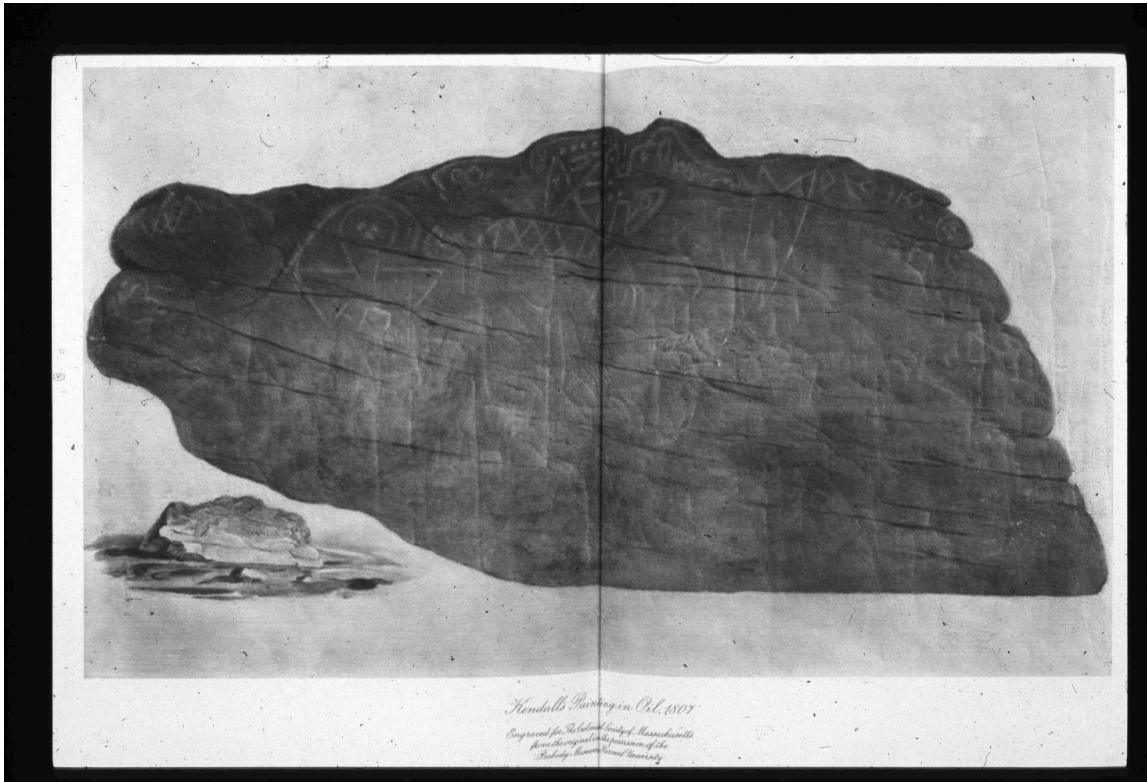


Figure 16. Engraving of Kendall oil painting for Massachusetts Historical Society, 1817.

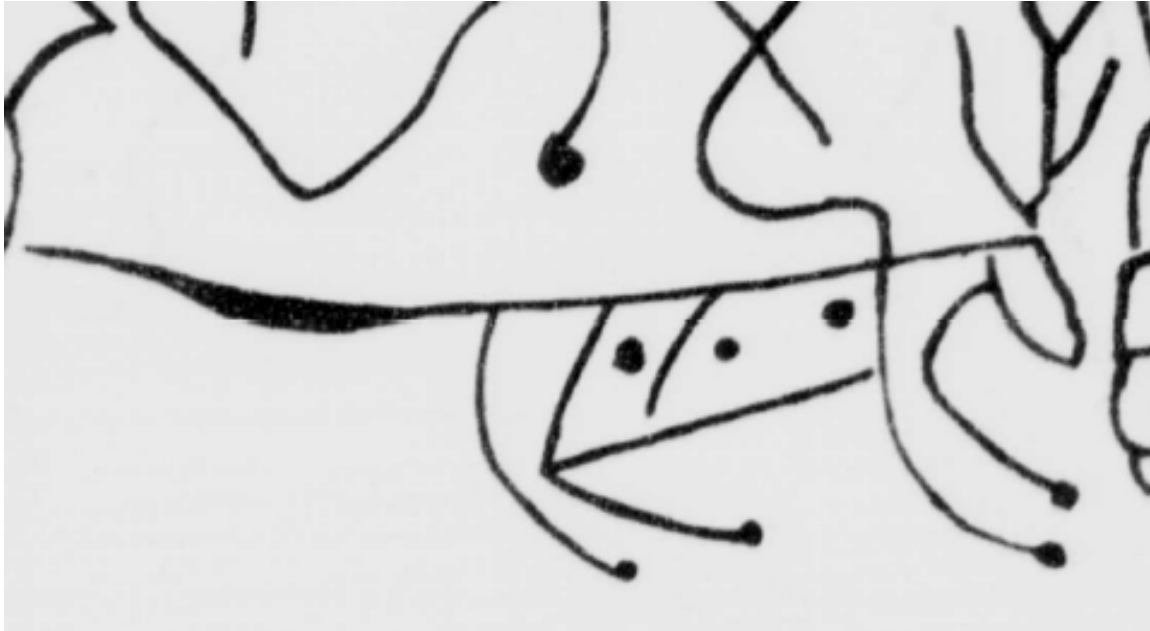


Figure 17. Above: Horned quadruped in Stephen Sewall's drawing of 1768. See also depiction in engraving of Kendall painting, Figure 15. Below: photo of horned quadruped by Douglas Hunter, July 18, 2013.



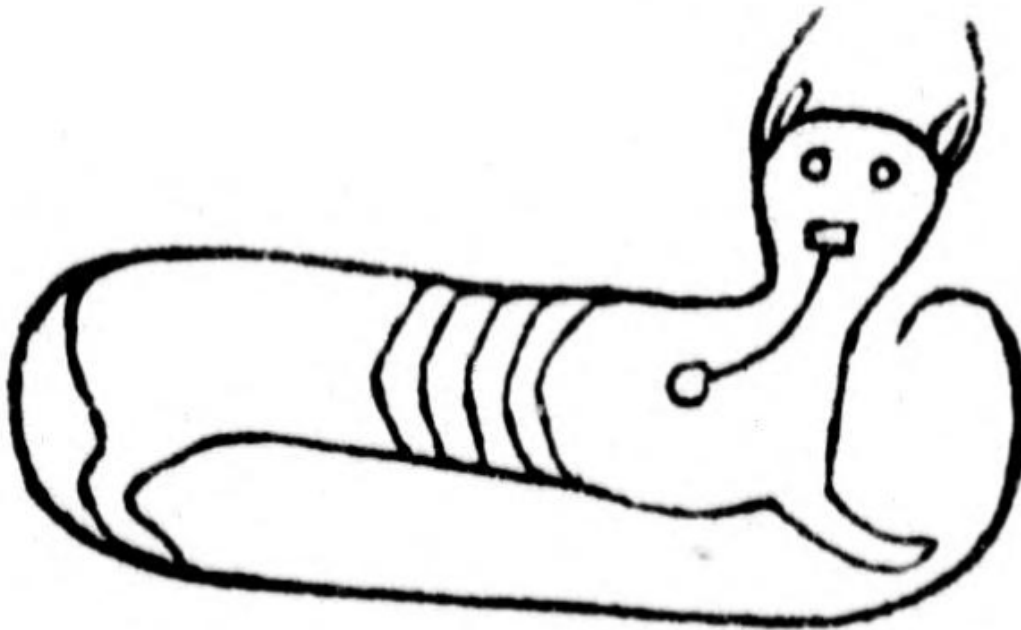
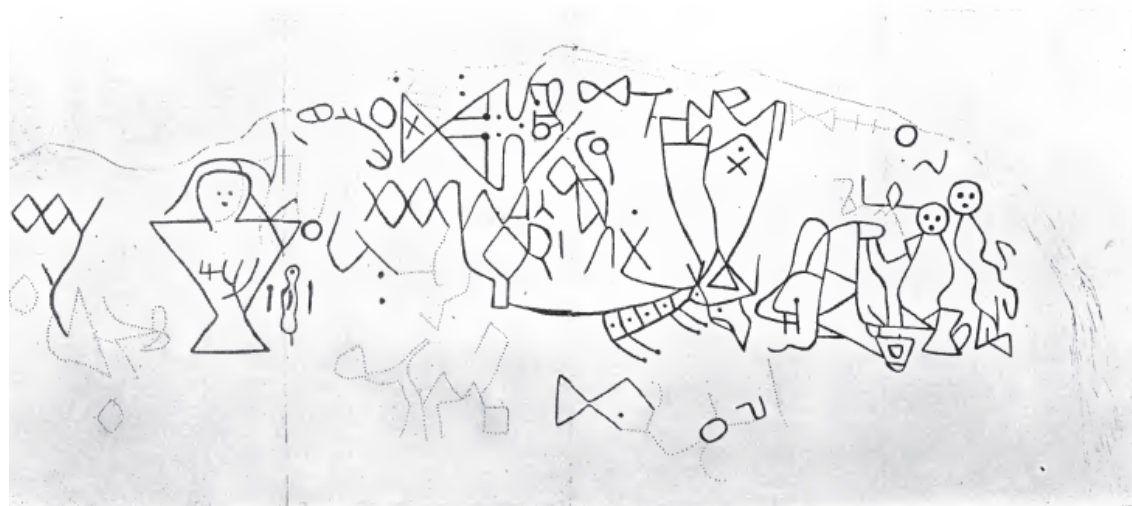


Figure 18. The “under-ground wild cat” depicted in a transcription of a song of the Ojibwa shaman Chi-ah-ba, in John Tanner, *A narrative of the captivity and adventures of John Tanner*, 377.

Chapter 6

PLATE XXXIV



RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S DRAWING, 1834
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE ORIGINAL IN THE ROYAL LIBRARY, COPENHAGEN

Figure 19. The Rhode Island Historical Society drawing of 1834, as photographed and reproduced by Delabarre in "Recent History of Dighton Rock," plate 34.

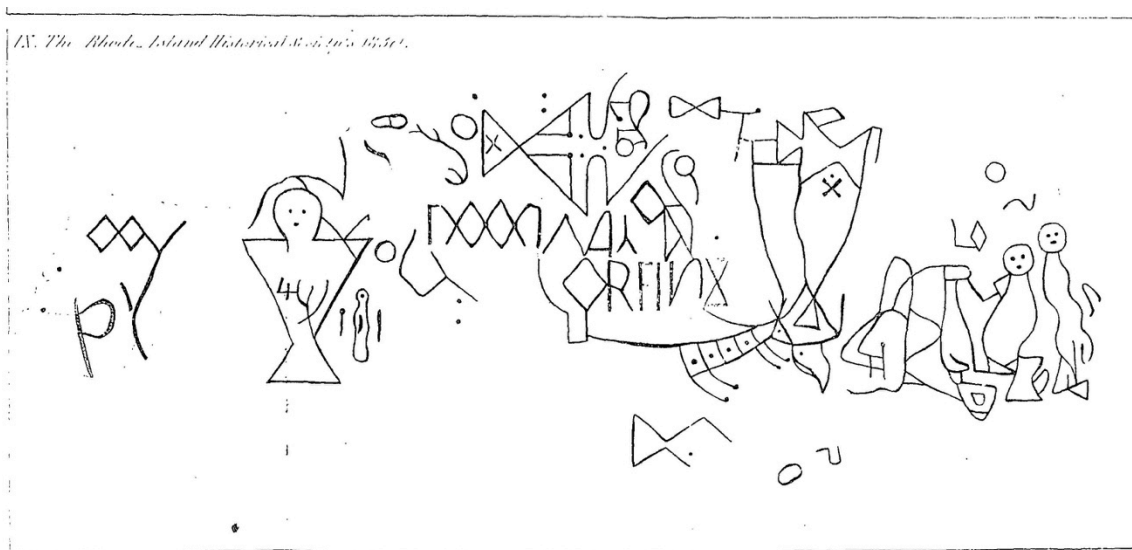


Figure 20. The Rhode Island Historical Drawing as modified (and dated to 1830) in *Antiquitates Americanae*.

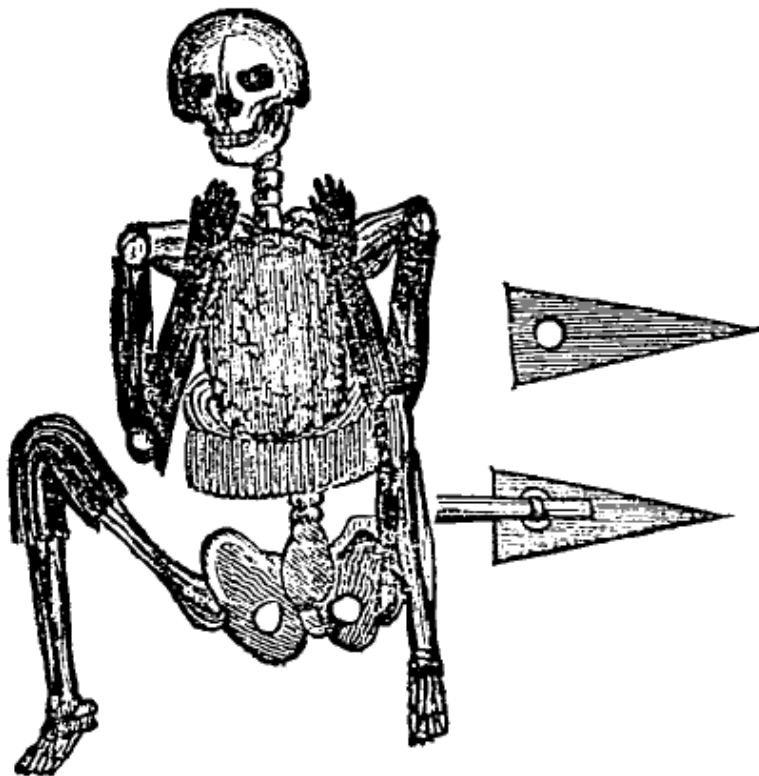


Figure 21. The "skeleton in armor" as illustrated in Jared Sparks, "Antiquities of North America," *The American Monthly Magazine*, Jan. 1836, 67.

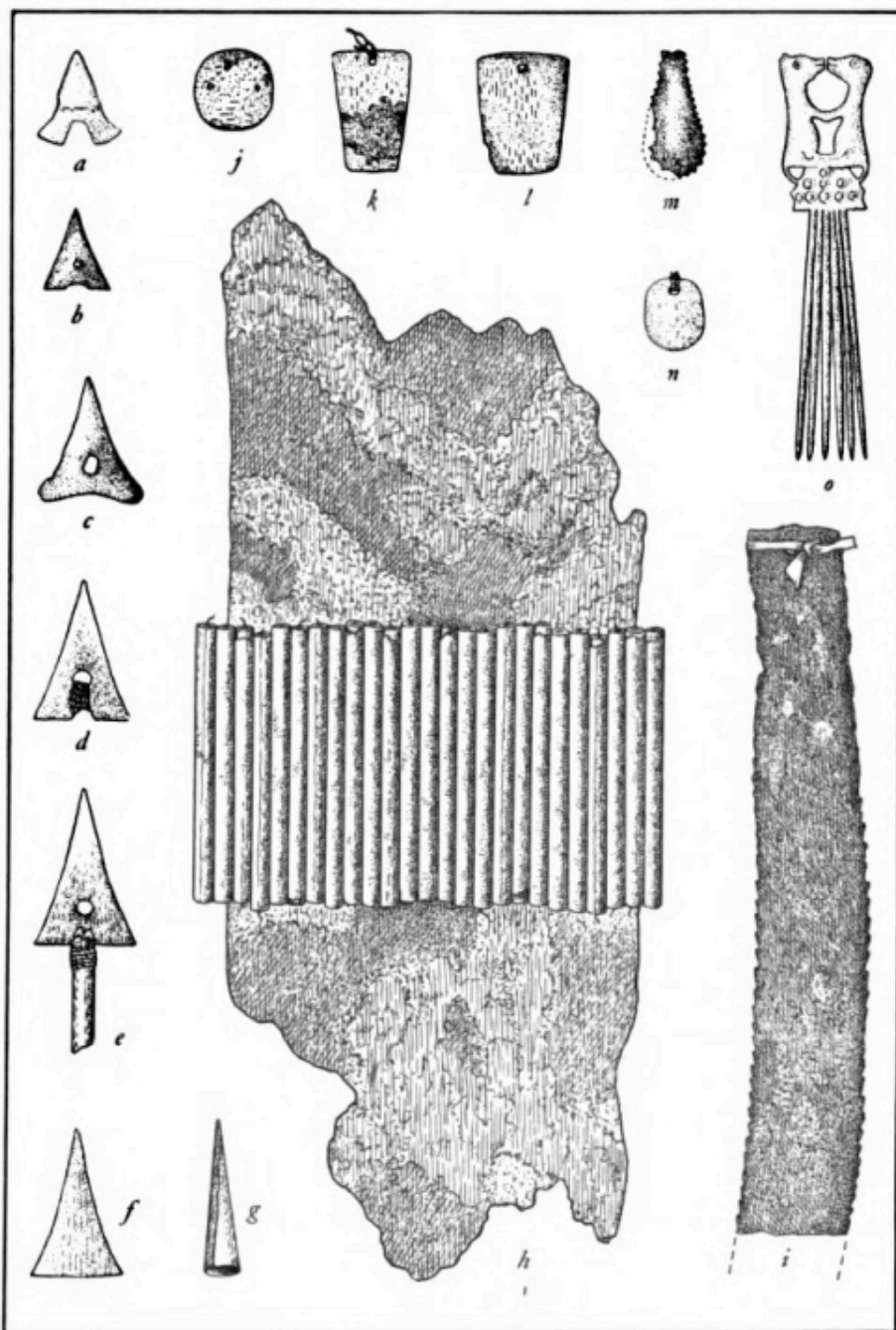


Figure 126. Personal Ornaments and Arrowpoints of European Metal. a, b, g, i, m, Sheet copper; c, d, e, f, h, j, k, l, n, sheet brass; o, cast brass. a, b, g, o, Graves in Rhode Island, after H. M. Chapin; d, e, h, Fall River, Mass. d, h, and probably e, also, are from the grave of the *Skeleton in Armor*, immortalized by Longfellow. This was, of course, the skeleton of an Indian accompanied by the usual objects of sheet metal. c, f, n, Grave at Revere, Mass.; j, k, l, grave at Winthrop, Mass.; i, m, grave at Vassalboro, Me. (1/3.)

A cheiff Lorde of Roanoac. VII.



He cheefe men of the yland and towne of Roanoac reace the haire of their crownes of theyr heades cutt like a cokes cōbe, as thes other doe. The rest they wear lōge as woemen and trust them opp in a knott in the nape of their necks. They hange pearles stringe copper a threed att their eares, and weare bracelets on their armes of pearles, or small beades of copper or of smoothe bone called minsal, nether pain-tinge nor powncing of them selues, but in token of authoritye, and honor, they wear a chaine of great pearles, or copper beades or smoothe bones about their necks, and a plate of copper hinge vpon a stringe, from the nauel vnto the midds of their thighes. They couer themselues before and behynde as the woemē doe with a deers skynne handfōmley dressed, and fringed, More ouer they fold their armes together as they walke, or as they talke one wjth another in signe of wisdome.

The yle of Roanoac is verye pleisfant, ond hath plaintie of fishe by rea-son of the Water that enuironeth the same.

Figure 23. "A cheiff Lorde of Roanoc," possibly portraying the chief, Wingina, with a copper plate suspended around his neck, pl. VII in Thomas Harriot's *A Brief and true report* (1590). Engraving by Theodor de Bry, after John White.

Chapter 7



Figure 24. Grave Creek stone, plate 38, in Henry R. Schoolcraft's *Historical and Statistical Information*, vol. 1.

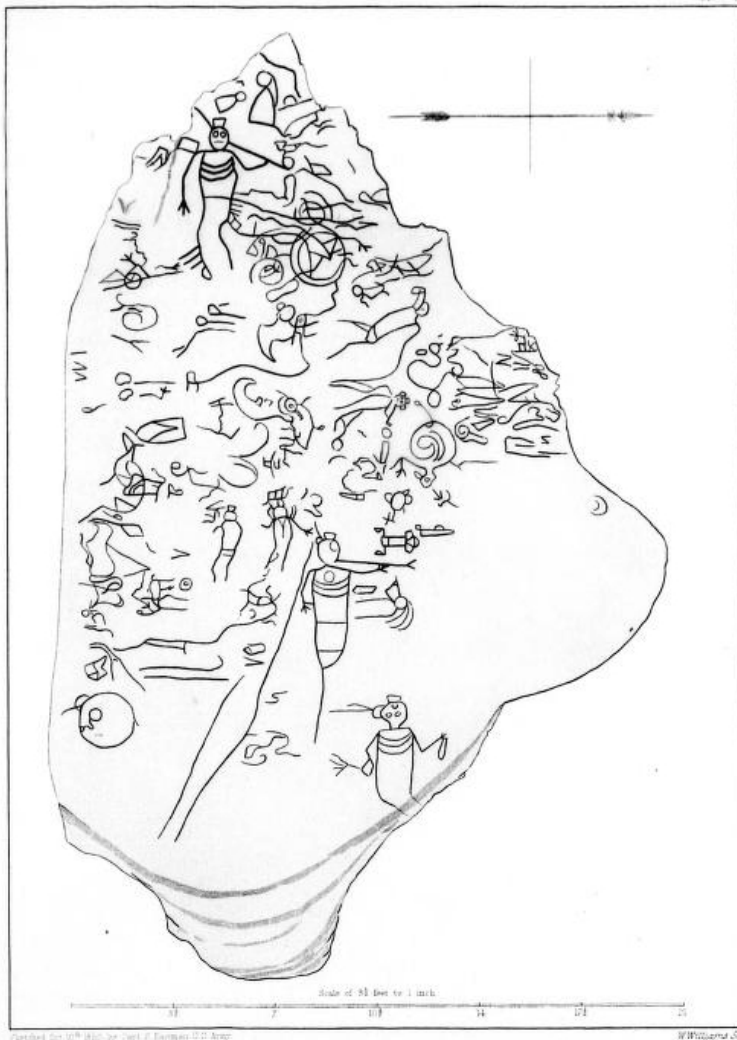


Figure 25. Cunningham's Island Petroglyph, plate 35, Henry Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information*, vol. 2.

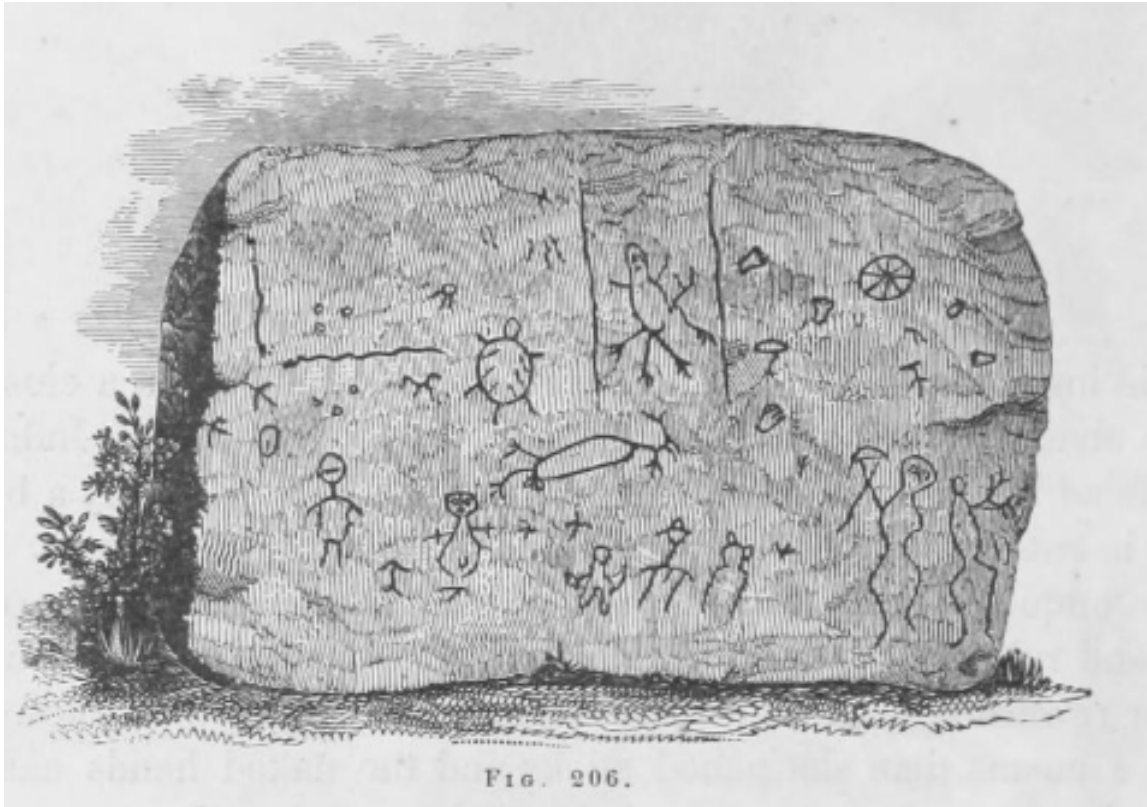


Figure 26. Petroglyph near Steubenville, Ohio, Fig. 206 in Davis and Squier, *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley* (p. 298). Compare figures on lower right with figures recorded by Gardner in 1812 on the lower right of Dighton Rock (below).

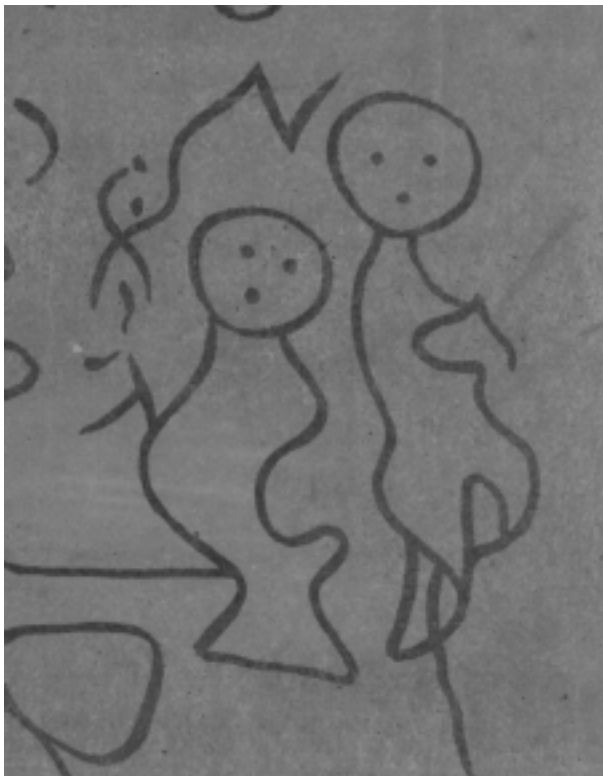
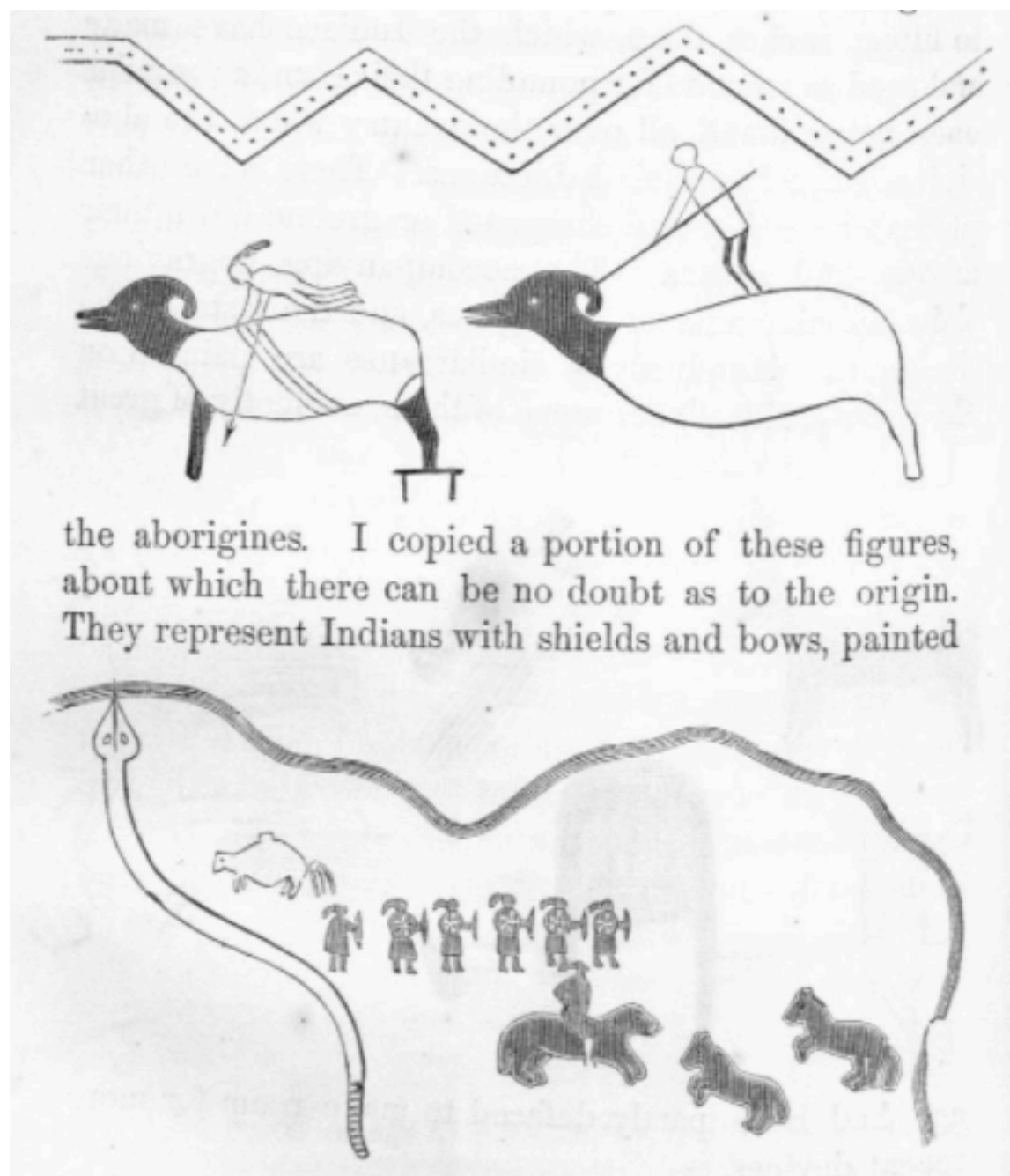




Figure 27. Capt. Seth Eastman posing on Dighton Rock in a daguerreotype taken by Horatio B. King of Taunton, Mass., July 7, 1853. Note that the daguerreotype is a mirror image. Collection: The J. Paul Getty Museum.



the aborigines. I copied a portion of these figures, about which there can be no doubt as to the origin. They represent Indians with shields and bows, painted

Figure 28. John Russell Bartlett's illustration of rock art at Hueco Flats, which include riders on horseback and "a huge rattlesnake," which correspond with the description in Thomas Webb's letter to John Ordronaux of May 27, 1854. John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua*, vol. 1 (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1854), 172.

Chapter 8

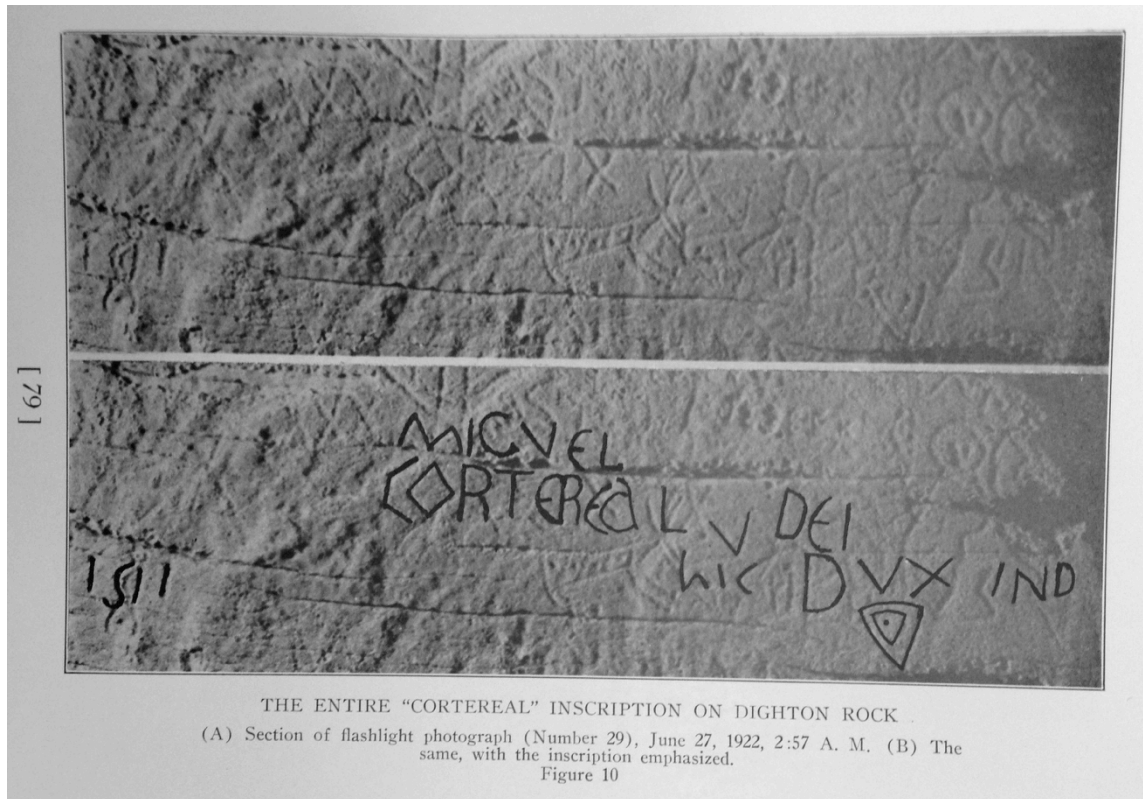


Figure 29. Delabarre's Corte-Real inscription, including the date 1511 and the alleged triangular symbol of Portugal, in his *Journal of American History* article of 1932.

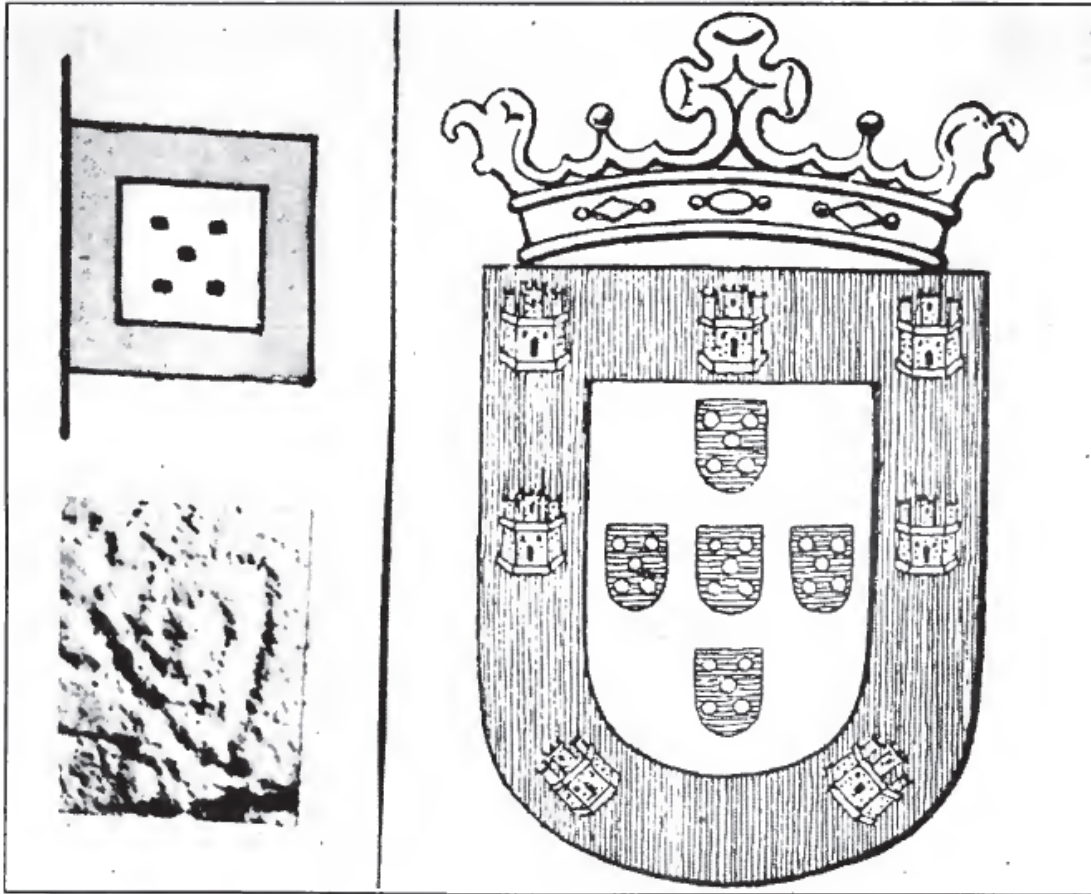


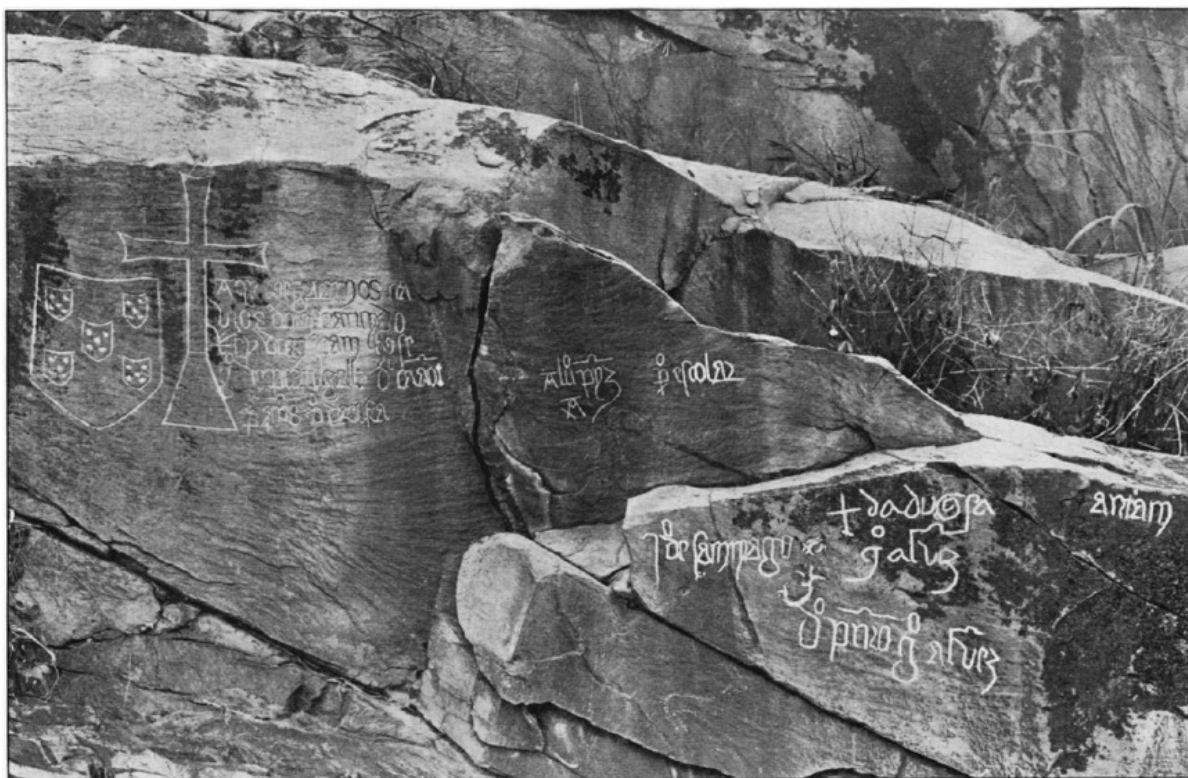
Fig. 29. The Coat-of-Arms of Portugal
 a. As adopted in 1485
 b. As depicted on the Cantino chart, 1502
 c. As inscribed on Dighton Rock

Figure 30. Delabare's "quina" evidence, Fig. 29, *Dighton Rock* (1928).

Chapter 9



Figure 31. Dighton Rock Museum, July 18, 2013. Photo: Douglas Hunter



THE DIEGO CAÕ INSCRIPTION AT THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER MPOZO.

Figure 32. Diego Cão inscription of 1485, in Thomas Lewis, "The Old Kingdom of Kongo," *The Geographical Journal* 31, no. 6 (Jun. 1908): 591.

This is a Portuguese Daily With a Circulation in New Bedford and Fall River Larger Than all Portuguese Weeklies Combined

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Nublado esta noite e amanhã, pequena mudança na temperatura, vento do N. com velocidade de 5.00 a 5.09. O sol nasce ás 5.52; põe-se ás 5.09. Acendam os faróis dos automóveis ás 5.39.

A Alvorada

A third of the population of New Bedford and Fall River is Portuguese—therefore you can not cover the field without this newspaper.

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NUMERO AVULSO EM NEW BEDFORD, 3 CENTS

ANO VIII — No. 2270

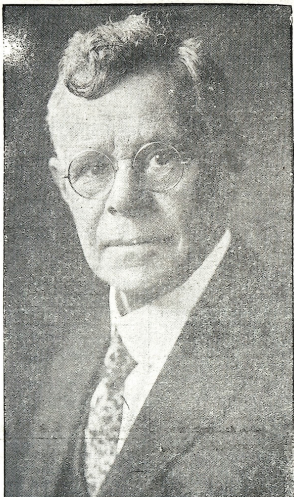
SEGUNDA FEIRA, 11 DE OUTUBRO DE 1926.

NUMERO AVULSO EM FALL RIVER, 4 CENTS

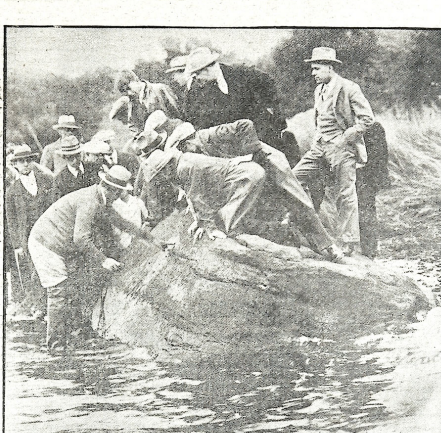
A PEREGRINAÇÃO A DIGHTON ROCK

Sob os auspícios da "Alvorada" realizou-se hontem uma excursão ás margens do rio Taunton onde o sabio professor Delabarre explicou a algumas das pessoas mais proeminentes da colonia a forma porque encontrou marcada na pedra de Dighton o nome de Miguel Corte Real, navegador portuguez perdido.

O dia de hontem, Domingo, deve ficar assignalado, em letras de ouro, na Historia da Colonia Portuguesa da Nova Inglaterra, pelo seu alto e grandioso significado.
Nas excursões...



0 Professor Edmond Delabarre



As aguas das visitantes examinando atentamente as marcações na pedra de Dighton.

Alguns desses de automóveis buscarem a cavidade da Alvorada, o local das margens do rio Taunton, onde se encontra o improvisado padário de 1911, que confere aos nossos condescentes a honra de serem os mais antigos hospedes desta fértil e admirável região.
De convidados officiaes deste jornal, a quem reconhecimentos, neste momento, apresentamos os seguintes: Sr. Dr. Delabarre, mestre de estudos, Sr. Dr. Delabarre, mestre de estudos, Sr. Dr. Delabarre, mestre de estudos...



Vista geral dos visitantes á pedra de Dighton, onde aparece o nome de Miguel Corte Real, navegador portuguez.

De acordo com o eminente professor Delabarre, o piloto espiritual da romagem, foi esta marcada na pedra, três horas da tarde. Menos lhe custa a conhecer, por certo, as alterações do leito do rio, que era fútil, ora paleteia a fêmea da rocha, do que doctos e lúgubros os seus habitantes. A hora indicada no programa da visita era servida, que, como se tornava necessário o melhor delbarre a pedra para ser admirada.
O illustre professor Delabarre tem a sua casa de campo, que é a sua casa de estudo, nas proximidades da ilha de Taunton onde se dá a história de um Assouet Neb se dirigiram, pois, todos os convidados, seguindo dali a romagem em direção ao rio, por entre vegetação exuberante.
O dia amanheceu pouco promissor. Diversos carregados tomavam o horizonte. E quasi á hora da peregrinação, desforçavam-se em aguçado regatista, mais felicitamente rápido. O tempo voltou a segurar-se, correndo todavia, uma grande corrente.
Fotos camilhões, de todas as direções, chegavam automóveis.
Ficamos desorientados. A pé Dighton o itinerario fora bem, mas dali por diante começava o labirinto. Havia que parar a cada instante a notar a rota. Nas imediações do local, os carros já andavam em grupos, em busca do verdadeiro caminho.
Estas hesitações arrastaram um pouco a visita e quasi á um precipício porque os fenomens marítimos não tem contempatância...

para ignorantes nem para retrógrados.
E as aguas tranquilas do rio, sereno e lentamente, continuavam a sua marcha ascensional, assegurando o ritmo e impedindo a vista da pedra.
Mr. Delabarre aguardava os peregrinos. Junto de sua casa estacionava já numerosos carros. Plasmavam-se as primeiras felicitações dos portugueses.
Aguarda-se ainda os trematidos. Mas hora sacrificada aos que descompõem estes caminhos. Chegam constantemente novos carros. Resolvidamente os carros, Resolvidamente os carros, Resolvidamente os carros, Resolvidamente os carros...

aparear da distancia, e dos primeiros a comparecer: Segue-se-lhe o Sr. Pereira Martins, conselheiro de Bristol, que chega acompanhado por sua esposa e pelas Sras. D. Ana Pontes e D. Amélia Soares. Bodo presentes os Srs. Dr. Madureira e Castro, conselheiro de New Bedford, Dr. Carlos de Sá Miranda, conselheiro de Fall River e Albino Aguiar, conselheiro de Providence.
Com o Dr. Pita, decano venerando da colonia, vem o vice-consul do Brasil, em Boston, que assim manifesta o seu sentimento fraterno neste momento de gloria portuguesa.
Depois, os nomes em destaque na colonia constituem uma lista enorme.
Posto o cortejo em movimento, em breve se alinha o local para além do qual já as carruagens não podiam seguir.

ministerio da marinha lusitana, para esse dia o nosso autocrático agricultor, como hontem para ele fo o prelo da admiração de todos os que tomaram parte na romagem á pedra de Dighton.
A seguir damos os nomes de varias pessoas convidadas pela "Alvorada" que ill vinhos, além das já mencionadas:
William Ritchie, da Camera de Commercio de New Bedford; James M. de Almeida, vice-consul do Brasil em Boston; professor Manuel Sá Couto, de Fall River; Dr. Theodoro Ross, de Fall River; Dr. Arthur Taveira, e família de New Bedford; Dr. João Paulo Lage, de New Bedford; José Pacheco Correia de New Bedford; Antonio P. Casca, Antonio Pereira e João d'Almeida, de New Bedford; Antonio Forte, representando o independente; João Baptista Machado, representando o jornal "As Novidades" da Fall River; Rev. Manoel Augusto da Silva, pastor da igreja de São Cristóvão de Fall River; Dr. João C. da Silva Pita e família; Aníbal da Silva Branco, secretario do Conselho em Boston; advogado Francisco Carrero, de Fall River; José Rocha, de New Bedford; Alfredo Nogueira Botelho, de New Bedford; José Almeida e Antonio Graca de New Bedford; representantes dos jornaes americanos "The Evening Standard" e "Times" de New Bedford; do "Fall River Herald" e "Providence Journal".

EM PROL DOS SINISTRADOS DO FAYAL

A festa de amanhã no Monte Pio e as duas recitas no Colonial Theatre

E' já amanhã que se realiza a anunciada festa de caridade no salão do Monte Pio, em que tomam parte muitos dos aplaudidos artistas do nosso meio, bem como as recitas, de tarde e á noite, no Colonial Theatre, promovida pelo Grupo Dramatico Micaelense, a favor das victimas do terremoto do Fayal.
O programa da festa do Monte Pio sofre duas alterações. Em primeiro lugar, será impossível ao Sr. Cozeiro Cristiano de J. Borges, devido ao seu precario estado de saúde, fazer a allocução de abertura na qualidade de Presidente da Grande Comissão Organizadora de Desastros a favor das victimas do Terremoto do Fayal, segunda substituição pelo primeiro vicepresidente Sr. Dr. João C. S. Pita. A segunda alteração foi feita nos programas em que tomaram parte tanto o Sr. João Rias como sua Esposa. Já não ha dias informaram a comissão que lhes seria impossível comparecer.
Mas apesar de infelizmente se terem dado estas importantes alterações, o programa continua ainda tão completo como é de esperar.
Tanto para a festa de caridade como para as duas recitas, o Sr. Delabarre tem havido grande procura de bilhetes, contido o conveniente que todos os portugueses de alguma idade tenham para desvendar segredos de ainda que se extinguem, nas sombras do tempo, não está perdida a immortalidade do seu nome. Revive mais brilhante hoje, na festa solitaria, que a agua acética, como se eternamente brilhasse os pés de indomito bombardeador de mar.
E, porque foi o professor Delabarre, que projectou nova luz, sobre o...

Figure 33. Portuguese-Americans visit Dighton Rock for the first time, Oct. 10, 1926. As reported on the front page of Al Alvorada, Oct. 11, 1926.



Figure 34. "American Indian, 17th Century" display, Dighton Rock Museum. Photo: Douglas Hunter



Figure 35. "Portuguese, 20th Century" display, Dighton Rock Museum. Photo: Douglas Hunter

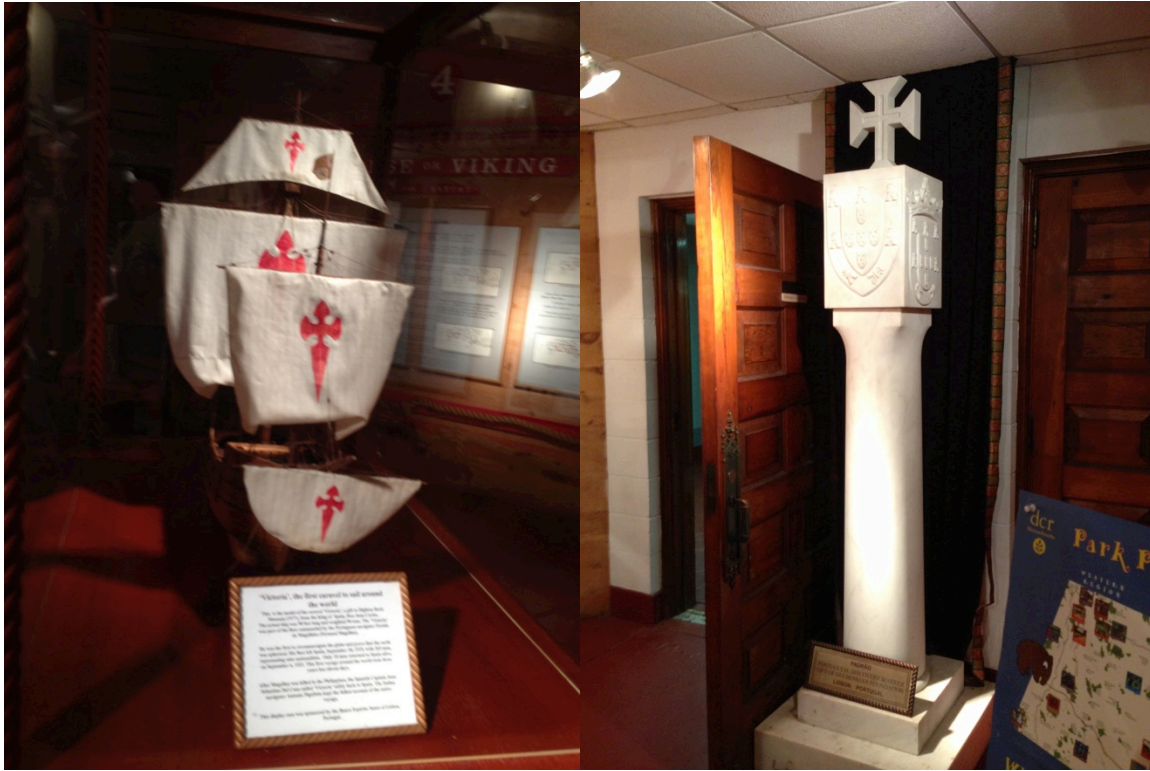


Figure 36. Model of *Victoria* and replica of *padrão*, Dighton Rock Museum. Photos: Douglas Hunter



Figure 37. "Indian Lithocollage," Dighton Rock Museum. Photo: Douglas Hunter



Figure 38. Dighton Rock, Dighton Rock Museum. Photo: Douglas Hunter