

Dear Reader,

I never knew my grandfather, Olof Ohman. He died eight years before I was born. For those who don't know me, please take a moment to read "about this site." The site's purpose is to present the evidence and educate about the Kensington Rune Stone. But it has also become a journal of the strange trip I have been on since I became immersed in the KRS and its story. I've learned that by taking the positions I felt were right, I have angered some people I used to think of as colleagues. I try not to get angry, but at times I must speak when spoken against, both as an individual and as a representative of the Runestone Museum. In the wake of Henrik Williams' "Statement" which he published on his website, this will be one of those times.

I first met Henrik Williams at a forum in Stockholm in 2004. That evening, during dinner, Henrik apologized to me on behalf of the Ohman family, for how my family had been treated in the past. He also stated that Olof Ohman couldn't have carved the Rune Stone. This meant a lot to me and I have a lot of respect for Henrik in doing so. We have had several phone conversations over recent years, and they were very enjoyable. He has always stressed honesty and integrity, and made it clear that they were of utmost importance to him.

The first time I recall discussing any real issues with Henrik was about 4 years ago at the time something of a feud emerged between Scott Wolter and Dick Nielsen. Nielsen was making a number of accusations against Wolter, and Henrik told me he was trying to determine which of them was telling the truth. He said that if he could determine that one of them was lying, he would no longer associate with that person. He asked me if either Dick or Scott had ever lied to me. I answered that no, neither had to my knowledge.

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I don't believe I had another conversation with Henrik until last fall, when he and Dick Nielsen were doing their "tour" of several colleges where Henrik was giving lectures. They had intended to jointly examine the rune stone, and have a nice photo-op. However, the museum had informed Dick that he was not eligible to examine the rune stone because he had not shared the data from a study he had been permitted to do a few years earlier. Henrik was calling me to ask if I could intervene on Dick's behalf with the museum, and allow him to be admitted. He also asked again if Dick had ever lied to me. I declined to answer the question, but I said I would try to act as an intermediary between Dick and the museum. I hoped it might be an opportunity for both sides to resolve their differences.

When I approached the museum board, they agreed and expressed the hope that if they clarified to Dick what they wanted from him, perhaps he would agree and then he could be admitted with Henrik. So the museum sent a letter to Dick explaining their position. They heard nothing further from him, and neither did I.

A few days before the planned examination of the KRS (late September, 2010), Henrik gave an evening lecture at the University Of Minnesota. I attended this lecture and enjoyed it very much. Afterward I visited with Henrik in the hallway for a bit. I mentioned that I had not forgotten his question about whether Dick had ever lied to me, and I needed to answer that, regrettably, Dick had not always been honest with me. It was obviously the wrong answer. Henrik became agitated and said that I had better have examples of the dishonesty. I surely did but due to the time constraint, I suggested that we talk about that after he returned to Sweden, and he agreed. But he then turned the conversation to "how could I have a relationship with Scott Wolter?" He seemed angry that I would be friendly with Scott, who has always been honest with me, and who has done much for the Rune Stone and continues to do so. I was somewhat shocked that he would pressure me with something so schoolyard as "if you play with him you can't play with me." I then left and reminded him that we would talk more when he got home.

I attended the Alexandria presentation given in late September by Henrik and Dick. We did not talk but I sat in the audience with Scott and Jim Adam. Clearly by then Henrik had decided that I had made the wrong choice, and seeing me with Scott and Jim apparently angered him even further.

On October 10, 2010, I received the following email from Henrik:

*Darwin, When I met you in Minneapolis we agreed to talk after my lecture tour was over. I am now back, but I feel no desire to talk. When I contacted you before the tour I hoped that you would be instrumental in easing the unnecessary conflicts between the RSM and Dick, something you are in a unique position to do. As far as I can tell, nothing good came from this and it probably made the situation even worse. As you know the inspection was sabotaged and will most likely never take place now. I am at a total loss to understand what the RSM thinks it gained from this. Your actions the same night shows plainly that you ally yourself with Scott, as you have indeed done consistently ever since he started cultivating you many years ago. You claimed to me that you "could not remember" seeing the evidence that he has been lying, but it seems to me that you are not very prepared to accept facts as they are. My compiling all the correspondence relevant to my RSM visit was left without comment by you, although (sic) it plainly shows that the agreement was binding. Why you choose to continue to be loyal to a person who has physically damaged the KRS itself, been proven a liar and falsifier of the truth, as well as behaving outrageously and threateningly (sic) in public, is beyond me. Do you not see that he is using your name for his own purposes? I had planned to, once again, apologize during the ATC lecture for what some of my predecessors have accused your grandfather of, but since I have never heard you recognize that I did this to you personally already in 2009, and in print again this year, I felt enough is enough when I saw you in the far back with Scott and Jim Adam, another person who has smeared me with lies. If you think the means justify (sic) the ends I can only be sorry for your lack of integrity. Until you have clearly and publicly denounced the lies perpetrated by Wolter and Adam I wish to have no futher (sic) contact with you. I do not offer to send you the plain evidence again. If it did not affect*

*you the first time it's not likely to do it now, and I am sick and tired of wasting my time with people more interested in smear campaigns than in the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Henrik*

I was understandably shocked when I received this email. I had done nothing to Henrik except give him an honest answer to his question. He did want an honest answer, didn't he? The following things about this email stand out in my mind:

1. He acknowledges that we had agreed to talk but says now he doesn't want "to talk." I find this interesting because he goes on from there with paragraphs of diatribe. So apparently, he "did" want to talk, he just didn't want to listen to anything I had to say.
2. He says the inspection was sabotaged and will most likely never happen now. While the second part of that is true, the inspection was "not" sabotaged, it was declined by the museum for good cause, and that good cause was Dick Nielsen's actions that were prejudicial to the best interests of the rune stone.
3. From there on, the email descends further into an almost manic attack on Scott Wolter and Jim Adam. I invite you to read it again, and ask yourself if this were the behavior you would expect from the gentleman-scholar Henrik presents himself as being.
4. Then he concludes, "I am sick and tired of wasting my time with people more interested in smear campaigns than in the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." Aside from the slightly creepy over-dramatization, that is a remarkable case of the pot calling the kettle black.

Anyone interested in the KRS and wishing to follow the events around it carefully must now wonder about these comments by Prof. Williams. It seems to me that he is a bit of a loose cannon. I have already shown how he made the bizarre claim that the museum had never explained why Nielsen would not be allowed to view the stone, and how that claim is totally false. Add to that the childish, tantrum-throwing email above; do you see a clear pattern of behavior?

But it doesn't end there. This pattern of questionable behavior and judgment goes deeper still. This is someone who holds himself up as a great professor of international renown to whom we should look for guidance on all things runic (and apparently all things geologic as well). According to Henrik, we should await HIS word on the KRS, and he will decide what is and what is not "relevant research." Here are a few more examples, and remember this, he is not one of us "ordinary folk."

### **An account of Williams' visit to the Runestone Museum**

A museum board member, Jim Adam, was present for these events and is the source for this description of them. Henrik became very upset while visiting the RSM even though he knew that Nielson would not be allowed to join him

for the examination. Members of the Board present the day of Henrik's visit have told me they did everything possible to make the inspection productive, including granting permission to have Loraine Jensen and two photographers into the Discovery Room with Henrik.

The RSM, in advance of Henrik's visit, offered to sponsor a reception for him so the Museum members would have an opportunity to meet and greet Henrik in Alexandria. The offer was declined! The day of the inspection, Henrik seemed on a mission to condemn the Museum and everyone associated with it. When he arrived he immediately stated he wanted to talk with Carol Meyer, the President, and then insulted the board members present by not even allowing the most basic introduction to take place. Instead, he demanded that Carol Meyer allow Dick Nielsen access, and made his threatening tone loud enough for everyone to hear.

Carol tried to explain that the board had passed a resolution barring Dick Nielsen, and that Henrik was informed weeks before his scheduled visit. (this fact is documented in the addendum at the end of this statement.) Henrik rejected any explanation and proceeded to further insult and demean the museum. He said the museum was a poor steward of the stone. Despite Henrik's clear hostility, museum personnel went out of their way to accommodate him with everything he needed, including special lighting for his examination.

After Henrik completed his examination he once again asked to see Carol Meyer, his hostile demeanor remaining the same. Then, in completely over-the-top theatrics, Williams loudly proclaimed himself the top runologist in the world and the only one who could "solve" the KRS. With that, he walked over to a picture of himself on the Discovery Room and ripped it down, demanding that the museum never again display a photo of him. We still marvel that he apparently believes he has control over such things. Henrik then stormed from the museum, scowling and saying that he had never been treated so poorly in his entire professional career.

The museum has been silent on what really happened that day until now.

### **The "lecture" in Alexandria**

The evening of the museum visit, Henrik gave a talk in Alexandria in which he continued his diatribe against the museum. He repeated the claim that neither he nor Dick knew in advance that Dick would not be admitted, and said he had never been treated worse. Within the community of Alexandria, the museum has long been known for the hospitality they offer. Visitors have grown accustomed to being treated openly and honestly whenever they visit the museum, and the hospitality extended to Henrik was no different. The reaction of the audience when Henrik made these claims was one of total

shock that someone would come to Alexandria presented as a distinguished scholar, and then insult the museum and in fact, the community, with a series of claims these people instinctively knew were not true.

### **Henrik's response to the "reply to all" fiasco in February of 2011:**

Scott had sent E-mail to Dr. Nils Hasselmo, the former president of the University of Minnesota, suggesting that he participate in a public KRS forum or debate. A week later, Dr Hasselmo responded and Henrik was cc'd. Henrik responded to Dr. Hasselmo with a message highly derogatory of Scott, but mistakenly hit "reply to all." Scott then forwarded the message to a Scandinavian friend for translation. The next day, Scott received an email from Henrik demanding that he not forward the email to anyone and delete all copies. When Scott told him he was too late, you can't just shoot someone in the back then demand that they overlook it, Henrik issued the following statement:

*"To whom it may concern,  
By mistake Scott Wolter received a private letter, and in a language he does not understand. Furthermore, he was immediately asked to delete it. The way he has handled the matter speaks for itself. He objects to what I have to say privately. It is interesting, condidering (sic) what he writes most publicly about me on the Internet."*

Note that it is portrayed as Scott's mistake for having received the email, rather than Henrik's mistake in sending it.

The translation of what Williams said about Scott follows:

*Hello Nils*

*You could not have written that in a way that would suit me better, except I would never address him as "Scott," he doesn't deserve it.*

*I am working on a long letter with attachments to Bob Horten with you, Dag and others for information. I feel I must document the most important of Wolter's crimes now as he starts approaching the top people in the society, and already has succeeded in building contacts with schools.*

*According to my plans I will return to the USA next fall for another lecture tour. Maybe something also could be done in Arizona? If you agree I will ask Loraine Jensen, my American "manager" to contact you soon for your opinion.*

*Best greetings*

*Henrik*

## **And that wasn't Henrik's only attack on Scott Wolter....**

In Henrik's recent "Statement," he said this of Scott: ***"He is a petrographic technician with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Geology, but with no academic degree on a graduate level, and he has not published a single article in a scientific medium, nor even written a peer-reviewed report, although he alleges that he has."***

In fact, Scott has published eight books, dozens of scientific articles, and written thousands of peer-reviewed, technical reports. He is a licensed geologist and was called to head the study of the concrete in the Pentagon after the 9/11 attacks. In recent years he has won three grand awards from the ACEC for geological work on the KRS. The most recent was in 2007, an award for his geological research on the KRS. The real difference between Scott and Henrik, is that Scott is not an academic, he is a working professional.

That concludes my review of examples of a behavior pattern that should be troubling to anyone contemplating a professional or business association with Henrik Williams. Gross over-estimation of his own authority and control over others, disdain for everyone in an organization except who he regards as the top person, and bizarre theatrics and tantrums seem to often recur. I often wish the museum had never had any association with Henrik, but now that they have and now that he is determined to be so hostile, we have no recourse other than to respond in the best way possible - by telling the true story to anyone who will listen, and allowing them to judge for themselves.

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This whole experience has been dream-like, and more of a nightmare. I don't want to fight with anyone and I didn't want to take sides until I was forced to. But now I "have" taken sides, I'm completely confident in the side I have chosen and I am prepared to fight with a sense of duty to my family, and to that stone which has become so much a part of my life. I will not enjoy it, but I will do my best.

I read where bystanders to all this proclaim the situation as sad, and wonder why we all can't just get along. Easy words, but they are completely empty. Of course it is sad and of course it would be easier if everyone were of one mind. That goes without saying, but it's unrealistic. Whenever there is money, recognition, and power to be had, there will be conflict and competition.

This is one of the saddest times in my life. I can now imagine how my grandfather felt when he would pick up the newspaper and read another article proclaiming him a liar and the mastermind of an elaborate hoax. I now clearly understand why my uncles were reluctant to discuss the KRS. I do believe that honesty and integrity are of utmost importance. That is why, after years of trying to remain neutral in KRS conflicts, I've come to see that if I have any small role to play in the history of the Rune Stone, it is to carry on the family name in the spirit of honesty and integrity. How do I do that? At this juncture, I believe it is by taking a stand against those who

have demonstrated an intention to use the Rune Stone for personal agenda rather than seeking the truth.

Darwin Ohman, May 20, 2011

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**The following is detail on the false claim that Dick Nielsen had not been informed that he would not be permitted to examine the rune stone:**

I will begin with Henrik's curious claim in his "statement" of May 5, 2011, that the Runestone Museum was less than forthcoming about its position on Dick Nielsen, and their intent to prohibit his access to the Rune Stone. It is unfortunate that I have to address this issue, but I will. This is very upsetting to me but the truth must be known.

I received an e-mail from Henrik in mid-September asking for support with his planned examination scheduled for late Sept. 2010, during his visit to the U.S. We then talked by phone. At that time, we discussed some other issues. Henrik asked me if Dick had ever lied to me. I hesitated a while before answering the question. My response was: "Henrik, you are really putting me on the spot." I finally declined to answer the question. The "no comment" should have spoken volumes.

It became apparent that Dick did not have formal approval to participate in the examination, and Henrik was asking for my help in removing that barrier. I agreed and forwarded the details of the planned study that Henrik had sent me to the Runestone Museum (RSM) to see what could be done to remove this barrier. I talked to the museum board and it was decided that they would document their issues in writing and that I would submit the document to both Dick and Henrik, giving Dick an opportunity to respond.

What follows is the text of that document, sent to me in an email by RSM board member Jim Adam on 9/17/10:

*The RSM has lost trust in Dick Nielsen as a result of his actions over the last couple years. The unfortunate result is that we can no longer believe or trust what Dick says and now find it necessary to hold Dr. Nielsen at "arm's length" and validate everything he says and writes. For recent evidence, refer to the July letter from the Information Committee, asking questions about Dick's recent publications and Dick's September response including the accusation that the questions raised by the Committee were sourced from outside the Committee, the condescending tone of the response and the lack of responsiveness to the question.*

*To pinpoint the start of the relationship problem you need to go back to 2008, and*

*understand the structure of the agreement regarding 3D imaging and the Accurex contract. The RSM always understood from discussions with Dick that the 3D imaging of the KRS would be the joint property of Dick Nielsen and the museum, and that Dick would be granted a period of exclusive access to perform research and write articles (the Board originally understood that exclusivity period would be about 6 months, but Nielsen claims no such agreement ever existed and that he needed more time which was reluctantly granted).*

*The RSM has always had the intention of making the results of the 3D imaging available publicly for anyone to access for further research; however, we found out over the last 2 years that Dick's intentions were very different from the ones he articulated to the RSM and that he had no intention of allowing the 3D imaging results to be made available to the public, let alone the RSM. After two years of being misled, Dick has now advised the RSM that he interprets the agreement between us as referring only to images from the 3D imaging project he decides to publish as being part of the joint ownership right and that the database from which the images are drawn is not jointly owned. Well you can imagine the surprise when the Museum learns from Dick he is making a distinction between the 3D imaging electronic database and the hardcopy images produced from that database. Our view is that Dick has chosen to interpret and define certain language in the agreement with the Museum to suit his purpose and simply doesn't give a damn about the rights of the Museum. We further feel that once again Dick has put us in the middle of his dispute with Scott Wolter and is intentionally withholding database access to prevent Mr. Wolter from performing research that may challenge some of Dick's findings. We have had it with the petty unprofessional behavior and simply will not participate in this craziness any longer.*

*Darwin, like you, I would like to see the Nielsen relationship repaired so we can get back on a productive research track incorporating all interested researchers whether or not we may personally agree with their research. The Museum is interested in supporting all views, not just a chosen few. I believe Dick Nielsen has a shot at repairing the relationship with the Museum, but it won't be easy since there is no quick fix to this matter. I believe the Board members are justified in not allowing Dick access at this point so it will take something very significant on Dick's part to get the Board to even consider changing its position. I don't know if this would be enough, but at a minimum I think if Dick did the following at least the Executive Committee might consider readdressing the access question and supporting access with the Board. Here is what I propose:*

- 1. Dick Nielsen would make a private and special appeal to the Board apologizing for misleading the RSM on the 3D imaging project.*

- 2. Dick Nielsen, Henrik Williams and Scott Wolter would draft a letter signed by all three stating that they are prepared to set aside their differences, not put the RSM in the middle of their personal disputes, act with each other, the research community and the museum professionally and in the best long term interest of the KRS and keep the*

*museum informed as research progresses.*

*3. Dick would commit now and agree to draft a plan within the next 30 days to make the 3D database publicly available to any interested third party and have that plan in place within 30 days thereafter.*

*4. Henrik Williams' inspection request would be expanded to allow Williams, Nielsen and Wolter to jointly conduct the inspection on the 30th with a written report draft to be issued to the Museum by year end (the Museum will hold the draft confidential at the request of the group for a reasonable period of time if requested to allow for publications).*

*Jim Adam*

I forwarded this immediately to both Williams and Nielsen the same day, September 17, almost two weeks before the scheduled event at the museum. Clearly, not only is the claim that the museum did not advise Dick in advance of its position patently false, but they even laid out steps that could "still" be taken at that point to repair the relationship, and permit the examination of the Stone.

Obviously, Dick chose not to take those steps and thereby sealed his fate with regard to the museum and the Rune Stone. I often wonder why he was willing to risk so much in order to keep the 3D data private. The only explanation that makes sense to me is that full disclosure of the data would not support the conclusions he was determined to draw. Even at that time, which is now seven months ago, I found it hard to believe that Dick would show such a lack of academic integrity and betray the fundamental principles of scholarship. But since then I have seen other examples of similar disingenuousness to the point where, as Jim Adam noted back in September, I now find it necessary to keep Nielsen at arm's length and doubt everything he says or writes.

Darwin Ohman