

# Letter to the Landowner (rev.)



In 1909 & 1910, Minnesota State Geologist Newton H. Winchell (*Wikipedia*: [Newton H. Winchell](#)), at the request of the Minnesota Historical Society, made three trips to examine the Kensington Runestone and the discovery site. Unfortunately, his handwritten field notes were lost in the Minnesota Historical Society archives until they were found in 1968; almost no one has looked at them since, (**But I Have!**) He wrote the following:

**"Mounds in Douglas Co. Mr. Olof Ohman told me that about in his farm in several places, in the woods, are "mounds" in groups, the largest he has noticed being about six-feet-high, with smaller ones round about. This is in Section 14, Solem township in Douglas Co."**

Winchell assumed the Indian mounds were located on the Ohman Farm in **Section 14**. My wife Sonia and teenage grandsons, and I have made three trips last year to the Runestone County Park, walking for hours looking for any signs of the mounds or Indian inhabitation on the county park property, and that includes former property of Olof Ohman. I can say with certainty there are none.

Olof Ohman's **"about in his farm in several places, in the woods"** & **"with smaller ones round about."** I now know this refers to the woods and the field next to the County Park's north side. That is not on **"Section 14"** but on **Section 11, that's on your property.**

## Fact:

There are basically **NO "six-feet-high"** Indian mounds in western Minnesota. Mounds are always in groups, mostly less than a foot in height and a very few to a height of four feet. **"with smaller ones round about" "in groups."**

## Fact:

In Scandinavia, tens of thousands of earthen burial mounds and mound groups are recorded. The deceased were buried in the ground, and the earth was placed on top of the grave, thus forming the mound. Some mounds are built as high as thirty-five feet. Most dated from pagan times. In early Christian times, this same method of interment was used, with some mounds having an inscribed stone mounted on top.

In 1362 Scandinavians were Catholic Christian. The deceased was buried in the consecrated ground of a church cemetery, typically if they were important individuals had a headstone. The 1362 Expedition had no church-consecrated ground to bury their ten comrades, and a traditional burial mound had to do. Certainly, they warranted having a large burial mound, and a Latin or Runic inscribed stone (Memorial Stone) mounted on the top

# Your Property Timeline

## 1866

The original land survey map shows the field as woods (timber).

## 1910

The land survey map shows the field as woods (timber).

## 1911 to 1938

Most of the trees were removed, and the field was then plowed. The Indian burial **mounds** were plowed under. Possibly some **mounds** remained untouched in the woods next to the field. (**mounds**) (**smaller ones round about**) (**mounds in groups**) Viewed in a **1938** low resolution aerial photo.

## 1938 to 1951

There was a tree covered **six-foot-high mound** in the middle of the field (barely visible in a 1938 photo). The landowner would plow around the **six-foot-high mound** because they lacked the excavating equipment to remove it. When first constructed, the **mound** was probably closer to eight to ten feet high; throughout the centuries, it sank and flattened out to a height of **six-foot-high**.

As shown in the **1951** photo.

## 1952 to 1965

The landowner got weary of plowing around the annoying tree-covered **six-foot-high mound**. So now with excavating equipment removed the **mound** that covered the communal burial. Then relocated the earth and trees that were part of the **mound** to the field's edge. Plowing would not disturb the burial, that would most likely be about one to two feet below the original surface level.

As shown in the **1965** photo.

## 2022 Searching for the Memorial Stone & Burial Site

- The field and surrounding woods are visually inspected for any signs of Indian **mounds** and artifacts.
- A visual search is done of the area for a possible Memorial Stone. (The Memorial Stone is someplace!) probably within a few hundred feet of the burial site.
- Test holes are dug to find skeletal remains and any artifact in a radius of about 10-15 feet of GPS. **45.8156XXX, -95.6669XXX** (10 men buried (6 feet x 2 feet each) in two rows of 5 men each would cover an area of about 12 feet x 10 feet). If skeletal remains are found, we contact the Douglas County Sheriff.

## Photo 1951



Ohman's Farm

## Photo 1965



Ohman's Farm

## Photo 2020



### Burial Site



Icelandic Christian burial mound from the 1200s with a Memorial stone.