10-Be surface exposure ages of late-Holocene Arctic ice- sheet and glacier variability

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The gradual decline in boreal summer insolation across the Holocene drove Arctic ice-sheet and glacier advance, usually culminating in a glacier maximum during the Little Ice Age (LIA; 1400-1900 C.E.). However, in several locations, glacier and ice-sheet margins may have reached pre-LIA late-Holocene maxima, suggesting a more complex picture of Arctic climate variability. Here we date two such maxima in southern Greenland near Narsarsuaq and western Svalbard in Linnédalen with 10-Be surface exposure ages. Southern Greenland and west Svalbard ice margins reached a greater or equivalent extent as their LIA extent and retreated at 1.5±0.1 ka (n=10) and 1.6±0.2 ka (n=16), respectively. These periods of ice-margin retreat are concurrent with changes in ocean surface currents near southern Greenland and western Svalbard, suggesting a climatic forcing of glacier variability. A much larger network of 10Be-dated glacier margin variability will help elucidate how the Arctic cryosphere responded to late-Holocene climate change and would establish a baseline against which current ice-margin retreat can be compared.