

## Recent finds: Old English Runic Objects

### 1. BACONSTHORPE PAGEHOLDER/PAGETURNER

Present location: Norwich Castle Museum, accession no. 2016.358.12.

Find year: 2009

Date: AD 750–800 [Hines 2011:291]

Publications (in chronological order):

- Hines, John (2011), "New Light on Literacy in Eighth-Century East Anglia: A Runic Inscription from Baconsthorpe, Norfolk", *Anglia* 129, 281–96.
- Waxenberger, Gaby (2012), "The New Sign ʃ in the Baconsthorpe Inscription", *Anglia* 130, 177–194.
- Bammesberger, Alfred (2012), "The Sequence <bęæu> in the Baconsthorpe Runic Inscription", *Anglia* 130, 533–536.
- Pestell, Tim (forthcoming), "Runic Finds from the Kingdom of East Anglia and Their Archaeological Contexts", eds. G. Waxenberger & K. Kazzazi, *Old English Runes: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Approaches and Methodologies*, Berlin: de Gruyter.



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### 2. BINHAM BRACTEATES (3 B-Bracteates)

Present location: Norwich Castle Museum

Find years: 2005-2015

Date: ca. AD 475–525

Runic Inscription: B-Bracteates

Autopsy by *RuneS*: Gaby Waxenberger (preliminary autopsy; second autopsy planned for autumn 2018)

Publications (in chronological order):

- Heizmann, Wilhelm & Axbøe, Morten eds. (2011), *Die Goldbrakteaten der Völkerwanderungszeit – Auswertung und Neufunde*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 32 (IK 604).
- Behr, Charlotte & Pestell, Tim & Hines, John (2014), "The Bracteate Hoard from Binham: An Anglo-Saxon Central Place?" *Medieval Archaeology* 58, 44–77.
- Pestell, Tim, (forthc.), "Runic Finds from the Kingdom of East Anglia and Their Archaeological Contexts", eds. G. Waxenberger & K. Kazzazi, *Old English Runes: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Approaches and Methodologies*, Berlin: de Gruyter.



BINHAM-I B  
Accession no.:  
NCM 2005.756  
IK 604,1  
Found: 2004

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BINHAM-III B  
Accession no.:  
NCM 2013.67.3  
IK 604,2  
Found: 2011

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BINHAM-VI B  
No accession no. yet  
IK 604,3  
Found: 2014

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### 3. EYE FRAGMENT

Present location: Suffolk Archaeology, Needham Market, identification no. EYE 083 SF 1118

Find year: 2007

Date: see below excerpt

Autopsy by *RuneS*: Gaby Waxenberger: see below for excerpt from the *RuneS Edition of the Pre-Old English Runes Inscriptions* [not yet published].



© Suffolk Archaeology, Needham Market

Excerpt from: Gaby Waxenberger, *Edition of the Pre-Old English Runes Inscriptions*

### **OBJECT**

The object is a "strip of copper alloy" (Find Report Summary 2015:4), "possibly from a belt plate, which includes a faint Runic inscription" (Ian Riddler, Find Report Summary 2015:8); the measurements are: "16mm (length), 12mm (width) and it weighs 1.01g" (email from Richenda Goffin, Suffolk Archaeology, of April 1, 2015.)

### **DATE**

The object has not yet been dated, as the archaeological context makes dating difficult: "The main dating evidence comes from the Anglo-Saxon small finds and pottery, often difficult to date accurately, which suggest occupation from the 5th to 7th centuries, but with the most intense activity in the 5th and 6th centuries. However, absolute dating techniques will be critical in determining the phasing and development of the Hartismere settlement." [Find Report Summary 2015:3]

If the last rune is a bind-rune, consisting of **þ** + **i**, this may indicate a dating before 650 on linguistic grounds (see below **READING**)

### **INSCRIPTION**

The inscription consists of three, possibly four runes.

### **RUNES**

According to John Hines (email June 3, 2011), the three runes are "perfectly clear"; however, he finds the third "a bit unusual", but thinks it may well be "just an elaborated version" of the rune **þ**.

### **DESCRIPTION OF RUNES**

Rune 1: **g**

Rune 2: **u** narrow type. A second line starts slightly below the top of the rune at the right main stave, meeting the left main stave approx. halfway. A second short line can also be seen parallel to the lower part of the right main stave.

Rune 3: **þ** with a pointed pocket.

Possibly the last rune is actually a bind-rune, consisting of **þ** + **i**, with the latter being marked by a descender to the left of the main stave of **þ**.

### **TEXT**

#### **TRANSLITERATION**

**lguþl**

If Rune 3 is bind-rune:

**guþi**

#### **NARROW TRANSCRIPTION**

[gu:θ] or possibly [gy:ðI]

**READING**

According to John Hines (email to Richenda Goffin, June 3, 2011), the three runes "could well be the beginning of a masculine personal name (for instance like Guthlac), although the syllable can occur in the middle of a few words, and the word 'gūþ' exists as a simple noun, meaning 'battle'."

*gūþ* 'hostile encounter' [*DOE* online (2016:s.v. *gūþ* no. 1)] and also 'as an element in personal and tribal names' [*DOE* online (2016:s.v. *gūþ* no. 2)].

In the case of a bind-rune, it would be as follows:

*gūþi* (< \**gunþjō* [Müller 1901:§74])

This interpretation, however, has a significant effect on the dating, since the umlaut-inducing *-i* would still be there and the spelling for allophonic [y] would be <u>. This would suggest a dating clearly before 650 (= phonemicization of *i*-umlaut: see Waxenberger (forthc.)).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- *DOE* online = *Dictionary of Old English* online: see diPaolo Healey, A.
- Healey DiPaolo, A. et al., eds. (2016), *Dictionary of Old English* online 2016, Toronto: <http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca>.
- Müller, R. (1901), *Untersuchungen über die Namen des nordhumbrischen Liber Vitae*, Palaestra 9, Berlin.
- Waxenberger, G. (forthc.), *A Phonology of Old English Runic Inscriptions with a Concise Edition of the Pre-Old English Inscriptions and a Concise Edition of the Old English Inscriptions and an Analysis of Graphemes*, *Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, Berlin/New York.

## Archaeological Publications:

- Caruth, Jo & Goffin, Richenda (online), *Land South of Hartismere High School Eye, Suffolk EYE 083, Post-excavation Assessment Report*, SCCAS Report No 2012/067, Suffolk County Council, (online source: oasis reference: SuffolkC1-125805).
- Pestell, Tim (forthc.), "Runic Finds from the Kingdom of East Anglia and Their Archaeological Contexts", eds. G. Waxenberger & K. Kazzazi, *Old English Runes: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Approaches and Methodologies*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

**4. MARCH PLAQUE/PLATE**

Present location: Norwich Castle Museum, accession no. 2010.112

Find year: 2009

Date: ?

Autopsy by *RuneS*: Gaby Waxenberger (preliminary autopsy; second autopsy planned for autumn 2018)



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Publications (in chronological order):

- Hines, J. (2017), "The Anglo-Frisian Question", *Frisians and their North Sea Neighbours, From the Fifth Century to the Viking Age*, eds. J. Hines & N. IJssennagger, Woodbridge, 25–42.
- Pestell, Tim (forthc.), "Runic Finds from the Kingdom of East Anglia and Their Archaeological Contexts", eds. G. Waxenberger & K. Kazzazi, *Old English Runes: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Approaches and Methodologies*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

### 5. ST. BENET LEAD PLATE

Present location: Norwich Castle Museum; accession no. NCM 2003.54.

Find year: 2003

Date: ?

Autopsy by *RuneS*: Gaby Waxenberger (preliminary autopsy; second autopsy planned for autumn 2018)



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Publications:

- Pestell, Tim (forthc.), "Runic Finds from the Kingdom of East Anglia and Their Archaeological Contexts", eds. G. Waxenberger & K. Kazzazi, *Old English Runes: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Approaches and Methodologies*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

## 6. BILLESLEY COPPER ALLOY FRAGMENT, WARWICKSHIRE

Present Location: ?

Find year: 2006

Date: EARLY MEDIEVAL (AD 850 - AD 1066)

Expertises: J. Hines, J. Knirk, G. Waxenberger, *Portable Antiquity Scheme WAW-4CA072* ([www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)).

## 7. IPSWICH BELT BUCKLE / STOKE QUAY BELT BUCKLE

Present location: Pre-Construct Archaeology, London, identification no. IPS-683 (5266) SF5039

Find year: 2012

Date: ?

Left Piece

Right Piece



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Publications:

- Waxenberger, G. (2016), "Graphemes: (Re)construction and Interpretation", *Variation Within and Among Writing Systems, Concepts and Methods in the Analysis of Ancient Written Documents*, LautSchriftSprache / ScriptandSound 1, eds. P. Cotticelli & A. Rizza, Wiesbaden: Reichert, 353–370.
- Pestell, Tim (forthc.), "Runic Finds from the Kingdom of East Anglia and Their Archaeological Contexts", eds. G. Waxenberger & K. Kazzazi, *Old English Runes: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Approaches and Methodologies*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

## 8. IPSWICH WHALEBONE FRAGMENT / GREYFRIARS ROAD WHALEBONE FRAGMENT

Present location: ?

Find year: before 1994, but runic inscription not discovered until recently

Date: see below: excerpt from the *RuneS Edition of the Old English Runes Inscriptions*

Autopsy: *RuneS* Gaby Waxenberger: see below for excerpt from the *RuneS Edition of the Old English Runes Inscriptions* [not yet published].

No photograph available at present.



**OBJECT****PROVENANCE**

"The Greyfriars Road whale bone piece comes from a context of c 870 - 950 and MAY have been cut in the settlement, but that is also the period at which a reasonable amount of Scandinavian material has also been found in Ipswich (some of it from Greyfriars Road) and that makes things even more interesting..." (personal communication: Email from Ian Riddler 10.9.2012)

**MEASUREMENTS**

Minimum length: ca. 2.3 cm; maximum length ca. 4.9 cm; width: ca. 2.0 cm; thickness: ca. 0.6 cm

Side A = side with runes

The object is a fragment of a mount made of whalebone. It has two holes, one on each of the long sides; around the hole on the longer side there is a cavity caused by fragmentation. The piece is broken off on both shorter sides in a slant, the result being a trapeze. The two longer sides are smooth and show no signs of fracture.

**RUNES**

There are two or three runes located on Side A right at the top edge of the longer side, where the piece is broken off.

Rune 1: *þ*

The lower part of the main stave of the *þ* has been truncated by the fragmentation. The pocket must have been in the middle, judging by rune 3, and is pointed.

Rune 2:

The second sign may be an *i*, although the incision is thinner and possibly a little shorter than runes no. 1 and no. 3.

Rune 3:

*s* type 3 (cf. Waxenberger 2010).

Rune *s* type 3 was used between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries which may be diagnostic for the dating of this object by its rune-forms and fits the archeological dating well.

**TRANSLITERATION**

*þ s*

or

*þ i s*

**READING**

*þis*

OE (demonstr. pronoun nom./acc. neuter sg.)

**TRANSLATION**

'this'

Publications:

- Pestell, Tim (forthc.), "Runic Finds from the Kingdom of East Anglia and Their Archaeological Contexts", eds. G. Waxenberger & K. Kazzazi, *Old English Runes: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Approaches and Methodologies*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

### 9. HONINGTON TWEEZERS

Present location: The Collection Museum, Lincoln

Find year: 2011

Date: The inscription is "very likely of the period A.D. 750–800" [Hines 2015:268]

Publications (in chronological order):

- Hines, John (2015), "The *Benedicite* Canticle in Old English Verse: An Early Runic Witness from Southern Lincolnshire", *Anglia* 133, 257–277.
- Bammesberger, A. (2016), "A Problematic Form in the Runic Inscription on the Honington Clip", *Notes and Queries* 63, 521–522.

No photograph available at present.

### 10. ROUGHTON DISC

Present location: on loan at Norwich Castle Museum, accession no. 2016.468

Find year: no information available yet

Date: ?

Expertise: G. Waxenberger for *Portable Antiquity Scheme* (not yet in the database)

No photograph available at present.

### 11. DUNTON LEAD PLAQUE

Present location: returned to finder

Find year: 2015

Date: Middle Saxon to Late Saxon [*Portable Antiquities Scheme* no: NMS-63179C]

Publications:

Waxenberger, Gaby (2015), extended by Hines, John (2017) *Portable Antiquities Scheme* no: NMS-63179C [<https://finds.org.uk/>]

For photograph see *Portable Antiquities Scheme* no: NMS-63179C



## 12. SEDGEFORD RUNIC HANDLE/LADLE

Present location: ?Norfolk Historic Environment Service

Find year: 2017

Date: AD 8th to the 10th century (cf. Waxenberger 2017a:627); AD 8th – 9th (John Hines: private communication)



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Publications (in chronological order):

- Waxenberger, Gaby (2017a), "A New Character on the Sedgeford Runic Handle/Ladle: Sound Value Wanted", *Anglia* 135/4, 627–640.
- [Waxenberger, G. (2017b), "A New Character on the Sedgeford Runic Handle/Ladle", *Portable Antiquity Scheme* [<https://finds.org.uk/database>]]