

The *Sandwich stone*. Royal Museum, Canterbury. Figs. 26, 27.

Two stones of roughly the same dimensions were found about 1830 near *Sandwich*, Kent. Both have inscribed panels, but only on one is the inscription now legible. This latter *stone* measures 1 ft. 4 in. in height, 6 sq. in. at the top and 4 sq. in. at the base.

The *runes* read RƿNFƿNƿ *ræhæbul*, most probably a personal name. The rough nature of the *stone*, the absence of any Christian marks or ornamentation, as well as the archaic nature of the name, preserving intervocalic *h*, speak for an early date, certainly before the middle of the seventh century. Equally archaic is the form of the *h*-rune (cf. *Vadstena*), which in normal Anglo-Saxon usage has the form *h*.

It is therefore quite possible that we have here the only likely English example of a heathen sepulchral *stone*, probably originally intended for the inside of a grave. Its size and shape speak against its having been used or intended as a 'pillow-stone' like those of *Hartlepool* (see below), and it is possible that the name *Ræhæbul* was that of the rune-master rather than of the deceased. That the inscription originated where it was found, in Kent, may be legitimately assumed.

Another probably heathen runic *stone* was actually found inside a tumulus at 'Pippin Castle' (near Harrogate, Yorks) in 1901, but its inscription *sunu* is in Scandinavian *runes* and probably no earlier than the tenth century.