

# Stone Object Assessment

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

A small assemblage of stone objects was submitted for identification and assessment. Jet, amber, semi-precious stone, sandstone, lavastone, schist, chalk and limestone objects were identified and were dateable to the Roman to medieval period.

## 2.0 CATALOGUE

### **Carnelian**

Find No 4236 F381 C1861

Oval carnelian intaglio with satyr playing instrument. Reported on by Martin Henig (see separate report). Damage to one edge presumably from removal from setting. Possible non-ferrous metal-working evidence.

### **Amber**

Find No 4458 F520 C1811 (YBB)

Globular lathe-turned dark amber bead. 9 x 6.5mm. Illustrate and photograph.

Find No 4456 F388 C1857 (YBB)

Large piece of raw amber. Smooth crust with a patch of small conchoidal fractures at one end. Rich orange colour with streaks of opaque material. 95 x 63 x 35mm. Photograph.

Find No 4457 F109 C1641 (YBB)

Grains of fragmented and degraded amber.

### **Schist**

Find No 4431 C1166 (YBB)

Irregular oblong whetstone. 103 x 15.5 x 13.5mm.

Find No 905 F177 C1335 (YFH)

Fragment of oblong whetstone. 40 x 13 x 7.5mm.

Find No 4442 U/S (YBB)

Irregular oblong whetstone. 104 x 20 x 19mm.

Find No 4428 F381 C1858 (YBB)

Small rectangular whetstone. 63 x 18 x 13mm.

Find No 4430 F416 C1900 (YBB)

Small cross-sectional fragment of trapezoidal whetstone. 4.5 x 11.5 x 10mm.

Find No 4413 F208 C1767 (YBB)

Two fragments of schist probably from whetstone. Not conjoining but probably from same object, one fragment has worn facet. Fragment 1 140 x 24 x 10mm, Fragment 2 32 x 24 x 11mm

Find No 4415 F208 C1769 (YBB)

Irregular rectangular whetstone. 103 x 25 x 20mm.

## **Sandstone**

Find No 4434 F256 C1574 (YBB)

Fragment of oblong whetstone. 67 x 34 x 24mm.

Find No 4409 F408 C1892 (YBB)

Fragment of irregular whetstone with areas of worn edge and sharpening grooves on upper and lower faces. 129 x 73 x 22.5mm.

Find No 4419 F353 C1449 (YBB)

Complete oblong whetstone. Metallic residues visible on all sides. 119 x 39 x 27mm.

Find No 4432 F162 C1315 (YBB)

Rubber stone damaged and incomplete. Lower surface polished smooth. c.97mm diameter x 39mm.

Find No 4448 F13 C1147 (YBB)

Small possible oblong whetstone. 54.5 x 18 x 15mm.

Find No 4422 F13 C1865 and Find No 4445 F13 C1065 (YBB)

Two conjoining fragments of ?rectangular whetstone. Sheared along bedding plane and discoloured by fire. Fragment 1 46 x 39 x 6mm, Fragment 2, 75 x 40 x 6mm

Find No 4447 F458 C2031 (YBB)

Small fragment of possible rectangular whetstone. 51 x 33 x 13.5mm.

Find No 4443 F219 C1427 (YBB)

Fragment of whetstone. 99 x 74 x 28.5mm.

Find No 6123 F198 C1442 (YBB)

Rubberstone or slickstone, broken. 78.5mm diameter, 29mm thick.

Find No 4429 F245 C1548 (YBB)

Small rubberstone or slickstone, signs of polishing on underside. 60 x 54 x 28.5mm.

Find No 4407 F381 C1836 (YBB)

Large ?slickstone or whetstone. Area of metallic residue visible as well as area of fire-reddening. 197 x 86 x 63mm.

Find No 4423 F13 C1064 (YBB)

Fragment of large whetstone. Signs of fire-reddening. 67 x 56 x 45mm.

## **Limestone**

Find No 4427 F241 C1526 (YBB)

Smooth limestone pebble with areas of wear on both sides.

### **Millstone grit**

Find No 5291 F516 C2109 (YBB)

Three fragments of millstone grit rubber stone, conjoining, 58mm thick.

### **Lava stone**

Find No 4412 F13 C1881 (YBB)

Fragment of lavastone quern with central or handle hole partially intact, some tooling of grinding surface visible. 25mm thick. Illustrate.

Find No 285 F4 C1040 (YBB)

Fragment of lavastone quern with roughly tooled grinding surface, other side is worn, possibly turned over for reuse. 20mm thick. Illustrate.

Find No 4410 F13 C1881 (YBB)

Fragment of lavastone quern with rough tooling and sooting, no diagnostic features present. 22mm thick. Illustrate.

Find No 4440 F381 C1851 (YBB)

Small lump of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 283 F13 C1026 (YBB)

Small piece of upper stone with thong hole partially intact. 29mm thick. Illustrate

Find No 6165 F546 C2175 (YBB)

Small lump of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 6166 F13 C1145 (YBB)

Small lump of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 286 F4 C1006 (YBB)

Eight small lumps of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 4433 C1169 (YBB)

Two small lumps of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 6126 C1255 (YBB)

Small lump of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 4437 F13 C1144 (YBB)

Ten small lumps of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 907 F64 C1339 (YFH)

Two small lumps of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 6126 C1255 (YBB)

Seven small lumps of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 912 F64 C1120 (YFH)

Small lump of lavastone quern, no diagnostic features present. 31mm thick.

Find No 914 F250 C1464 (YFH)

Small lump of lavastone quern, no diagnostic features present. 23mm thick.

Find No 911 F64 C1120 (YFH)

Small lump of lavastone quern, handle hole partially intact. 25mm thick.

Find No 908 F64 C1344 (YFH)

Eleven small lumps of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 913 F64 C1348 (YFH)

Small lump of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 909 F64 C1345 (YFH)

Eight small lumps of lavastone, no diagnostic features present.

Find No 4411 F13 C1065 (YBB)

Thick lump of lavastone, no diagnostic features present, but minimum of 70mm thick, ?waste.

Find No 4425 F150 C1335 (YBB)

Thick lump of lavastone, no diagnostic features present, but minimum of 77.5mm thick, ?waste.

Find No 907 F64 C1339 (YFH)

Iron pyrites

Find No 4490 F388 C1845 (YBB)

Tiny lump of ?iron pyrites.

Find No 4450 F520 C1820 (YBB)

Tiny lump of ?iron pyrites.

## **Jet**

Find No 4238 F245 C1546 (YBB)

Equal-armed jet cross pendant with ?silver inlaid ring and dot on each arm and a double ring and dot central to cross. 11th to 12th century. 15.00 x 14.5 x 5mm.

Find No 4196 F122 C1604 (YBB)

Annular lathe-turned jet rosary bead. 6.5 diameter x 5mm.

Find No 4237 C1182

Victorian jet button with central eight-pointed star in roundel, surrounded by eight three-pointed crowns. Brass eye intact on reverse. 20.00mm diameter.

## **Chalk**

Find No 4406 F66 C1200 (YBB)

Fragment of limestone mortar. Base intact, walls missing, traces of three original lobes intact. 198.0mm diameter, 91mm in height.

Find No 4426 F200 C1387 (YBB) Find No 4424 F200 C1387 (YBB)

Five conjoining fragments of smoothed chalk ?weight. Circular drilled hole at top with signs of wear. 31mm thick; 12mm long; minimum 108mm wide. Illustrate.

Find No 4421 F198 C1283 (YBB)

Smooth chalk pebble with incised crosses on both sides.

## Erratics

Find No 904 F125 C1239 (YFH)

River pebble spindlewhorl, drilled with central hole. 27mm diameter, 24.5mm in height.

Find No 4207 C1312 (YBB)

Small lathe-turned globular stone bead, possibly pale opaque amber. 4.5 x 4.5mm. Illustrate.

Find No 4416 F381 C2063 (YBB)

Small rounded white quartzite pebble.

Find No 4417 F381 C1859 (YBB)

Small rounded white quartzite pebble.

Find No 4420 F555 C2209 (YBB)

Small red jasper pebble.

## 3.0 ASSESSMENT

### 3.1 ROMAN

The carnelian intaglio as a stand alone item is of superb quality. Perhaps more importantly, the context of reuse is more significant. A workshop at Ribe is thought to have been recycling Roman jewellery and a number of damaged intaglio were found in the workshop floor levels. The example from Blue Bridge Lane is also damaged presumably by being prized from its gold setting. The item now sits alongside other evidence for the trade in Roman jewellery as evidenced at 46-54 Fishergate by the emerald bead and onyx cabochon, both of which would have had gold settings which would have been prized more highly than the semi-precious stones.

### 3.2 ANGLIAN

The Anglian stone objects are comparatively mundane and, apart from the amber bead, are represented by fragments of lavastone querns and whetstones. Nevertheless, the stone objects are evidence for trade networks with other sites in Britain and the continent. The range of whetstones may be an indicator of some craft-working activity, for example, the hone with sharpening grooves may relate to needle-making or sharpening and textile-working.

The large lump of raw amber is also of note since it may relate to the working of amber at the site during Anglian occupation. As such, it is a rare find. Even if the piece was intended for trade, the link to the east coast, the most likely source, is noteworthy.

### 3.3 MEDIEVAL

Medieval objects, for example, the stone mortar and jet pendant are paralleled at sites in northern England and beyond. The small jet cross is of note since some discussion as to dating of the pendants exists for published examples from York. An almost identical example was recovered from 11th to 12th century dumping at Coppergate, as well as a larger but similar pendant, and both were considered to be possibly residual. Three

examples from excavations at Whitby are published as 12th century in date. The Blue Bridge Lane example was recovered from a 11th to 12th century deposit adding another example of the post-Conquest period. The majority of published examples date to the 12th century, and the Blue Bridge Lane example is no exception. The emerging distribution of such pendants confirms Whitby as the most likely source and since finished examples have been found at the Abbey, the most likely producer site too. Other devotional finds include a single jet rosary bead and a smooth chalk pebble marked on both sides with incised crosses.

Stone mortars are common finds and several examples have been recovered from York, Hull, and Beverley (Watkin 1987, 190; Foreman 1991 107; Foreman 1992, 123; Foreman 1996, 168-170; Ottaway and Rogers 2002, 2799-2081, FAS\_hbl02). Like this example, broken mortars are often reused as building stone, a phenomenon noted in Beverley and York (Foreman 1992, 123; Ottaway and Rogers 2002, 2803). Mortars are thought to be introduced from the 13th century onwards and while Find no 4406 was recovered from a context dated to the post-medieval period, it was recovered from a context of reuse and is likely to date to the 13th to 14th century.

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