

# MEDIEVAL GRAFFITI IN THE WAVENEY VALLEY

July 28, 2013 Waveney Valley Community Archaeology Group Community Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2013, Medieval, Post Medieval, Public Archaeology Archaeology, Community Archaeology, Graffiti, Norfolk, Waveney Valley Community Archaeology Group



I'm Andrew. I'm not an archaeologist. There, that's got that out of the way.

Sometime around November last year I started seeing lots of posts on Twitter about starting an archaeology group in the Waveney Valley in Norfolk & Suffolk, where I live. These posts, it turned out, were Lorna's first attempts to get the word out about community archaeology in the Valley. I was interested and we batted ideas about over the winter and into spring of this year.

On March 23rd the [Waveney Valley Community Archaeology Group](#) had its first meeting in a snowstorm in Bungay. One hundred and four people turned up. After the meeting we took a deep breath and went to the pub, where much good work has since been done.

Since that first snowy meeting one of the most popular activities we've been involved in has been hunting for medieval graffiti in the churches in the valley. We've been working with (and inspired by) Matt Champion of the [Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey](#) to find, photograph and record medieval and post medieval graffiti, which brings me neatly to the 2013 Day of Archaeology.

On Friday July 26th Helen and I went for a bumble round the churches of the Hempnall group in South Norfolk, and on Saturday 27th July about 20 of our members looked over churches in Broome, Ditchingham, Hedenham and Earsham, and I guess between us from those two days we've got literally hundreds of pictures of graffiti from early medieval times through to the 1940s and later. I've picked out some of the more unusual and quirky ones here (I was going to say off the wall ones..) to give you a flavour of what's there to be found.

Some of them are likely very common, but based on my massive seven or eight weeks experience of medieval graffiti I still like them, so there.



Fritton church, a star of David, two crosses, a spear and some hatching.



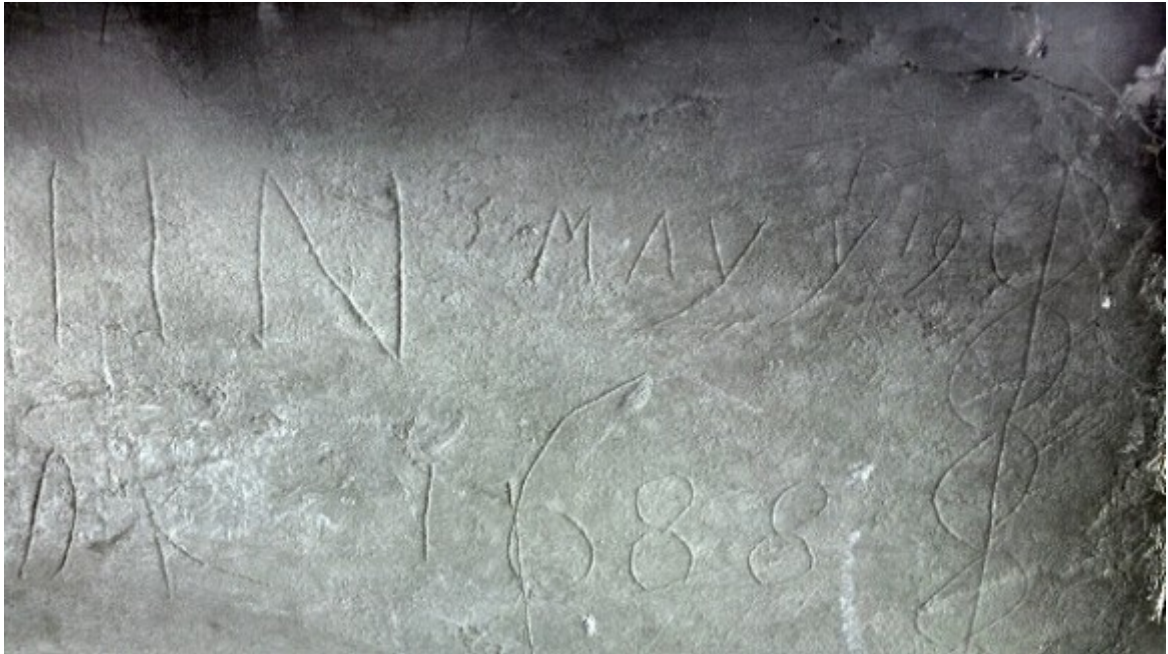
Fritton church, a spear



Fritton church, two linked circles, similar to later linked circles on a tomb at Hardwick.



Shelton church, a possible merchant's mark



Hardwick church, May 19th 1688 and four linked circles on an alabaster tomb. 1688 was the year of the Glorious Revolution, so maybe more research needed here.



Hardwick church, a hex mark on the head of an angel or cherub on the same tomb.



Ditchingham church TS 1727(?) carved by the west door. The S is back to front.

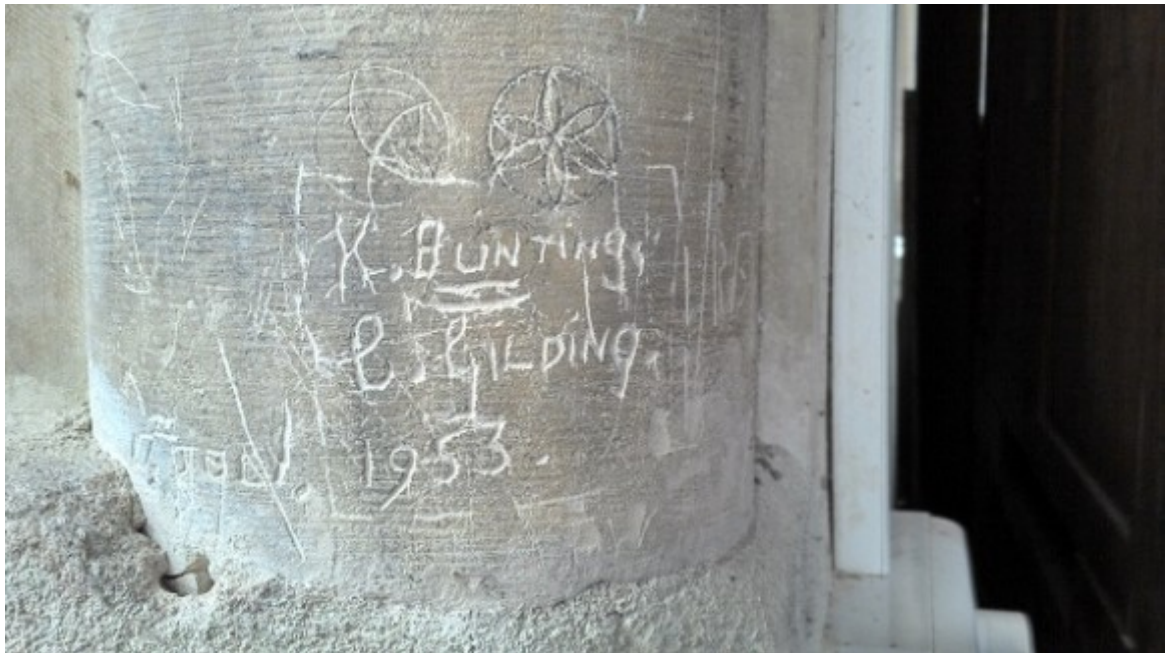




Hedenham church Face of a bearded man



Earsham church Hitler



Earsham church Sweethearts of 1953?



Earsham church – A bicycle