

The Shawnee Runestone: A Sneaky Little Riddle

B.L. Freeborn © January 2023, Updated January 2025.



Photo by Heironymous Rowe at Wikipedia.

The Shawnee Runestone was found in 1969 by three children in Shawnee, Oklahoma. It is on display at Robert S. Kerr Museum near Poteau, Oklahoma.

The stone is round-oblong and out of the right side there is an ark shaped chip. (The chip is assumed to be original and not the work of some expert who chipped it away to prove the age of the stone as has been done to the Spirit Pond Stones, the 'In Camera' stone and the Kensington Stone which was bored through.)

The shape and ark suggests a pagan / Baalist origin. The chipped ark shape is seen on the Kensington just below the first line.

The inscription is to the casual observer just five runes. There are two suggested readings: MLDOK and MIDOK.

The present decipherment began with MLDOK. Observe the words: DO ⇒ do, LOK ⇒ look, MK ⇒ make. From previous experience, 'look' suggests a shift cipher which was attempted with no results. So looking again, one sees the L might actually be an E or I. It is unusually connected to the first rune and the third. This forms three connected runes followed by two detached runes. This suggests 32 which implies 5.65². ✓ This is significant since its validity lies substantially with certain numbers appearing. The reader is directed to *Validating North American Runestones* (PDF) for a better understanding. With respect to numbers, 56 and 792 must be present in a Baalist inscription. They are typically found by



Arc cut into Kensington Stone.

studying the number values of the runes (gematria). The numbers 76, 51, 90 and 86 are often found as well. They may also have an Easter Calendar date imbedded (see Landsverk) which provides a year. The true rune master was able to encode his/her name as well. Can these five letters produce? Absolutely!

Alf Mongé felt the I was an E. His decipherment can be found in Syverson (pg. 94). He was primarily interested in dates so his decipherment did not comment on anything else for this stone.

If it is an I then it is MIDOK. The small words I DO MaKe can be found. If an E, MEDOK, then it is ME DO MaKe. If it is an E, another obvious word is formed that is very surprising. Runes are read from both right to left and left to right. Read it from the left and it says ME DO and from the right it says clearly KODE so that it reads: ME DO CODE.

A closer look is now required. Note the top of the O in the photo above is not fully connected. The photo in Syverson actually looks like a complete single rune. (This is probably why Mongé did not see the possibility that this is two runes.) As two separate runes it is an X and ^ which are G and K respectively. This makes the inscription:



K
MEDGK.

M E H D O K
G

This is now 5 runes with a 6th on top or 56✓ and KG ⇒ keg which is another typical Baalist word. But there is more...

Note that the mysterious second letter is actually an H. It is a bindrune with the D. This makes the inscription: M(HE)DGK and K. Now the words HE ⇒ he, HEM ⇒ hem, and MED ⇒ made, are apparent. Looking further while including the O note KOME ⇒ come.

Using Elder Futhark number substitution (See charts at end.):

K						K
M E D GK	vs.	M E D O K	vs.	M H E D O K	vs.	M H E D GK
6						6
20,19,23,7,6	vs.	20,19,23,24,6	vs.	20,9, 19,23,24,6	vs.	20, 9, 19, 23,7,6
						20, and 51/ 76
Sum = 81	vs.	92	vs.	103	vs.	90✓

Only the final sum is good. ✓

Then in MHDGK/K or 20,9,23,7,6,6 sum from H to end is 51.✓ This is the only 51 found.

As a bindrune HD does not have to appear in that order. It can just as easily be DH but the H is attached to the M. If all three can switch then perhaps it becomes DMHGK/K or numerically: 23,20,9,7,6/6. The three underlined form 7920 in reverse.✓ The sum then becomes 65 / 6 which is very similar to 56.5.✓

Since reversals have been noted, MHDOK sums to 82 or 28 in reverse. (28 x 2 = 56)✓

Mongé obtained the date 1024 from the inscription. The more likely date is 1124 based on the Long Inscription Stone from Spirit Pond, the Newport Tower and Vinland Map. His date of 1024 is easily explained. He used Day Letter (DL) 6 and Rati (Line #) 15. He saw the O (24) as the year. He did not see it as separate runes since in his image it looks joined.

The easily read MEDOK is 20,19,23,24,6. Here see line #19 which begins at year 1112 so ⇒ years 1123 and 1124 with day letters 7 and 6.✓

Such is the hazard of pinpointing dates by this method. The final decision lies with the reader.



Upside down U rune between M, E and H. Two 'daggers' and X marks the spot at the Arc.

And yet there appears to be more... Notice that the MEH hides another rune. There is a U !! Now the Baalist riddle is complete with a hem, hidden cup, two daggers, X marks the spot and an ark all on a round stone. Surely this cannot have been created by any 'modern' person!

It then translates as:

*A hem surrounds the hidden cup from the two daggers.
There are kegs where it came. At the arcs.
Do go 1124*

References

Gordon, Cyrus, *Riddles in History*, Crown Publishers, Inc. New York, 1974.

Landsverk, O.G., *Runic Records of the Norsemen in America*, Erik J. Friis, Publisher, Rushford, MN, 1974.

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Mongé, Alf & O.G. Landsverk, *Norse Medieval Cryptography in Runic Carvings*, Norseman Press, Glendale, California, 1967.

Syversen, Earl, *Norse Runic Inscriptions: with their Long-forgotten Cryptography*, The Vine Hill Press, Sebastopol, California, 1979.

Liestol, Aslak - Derogatory article of Alf Mongé's work:

<http://collections.mnhs.org/MNHHistoryMagazine/articles/41/v41i01p034-042.pdf> and...

.... Landsverk responded to these comments in *Ancient Norse Messages* pg. 126-129; and often in *Runic Records of the Norsemen in America*

The following two tables are copied from Mongé pages 221 and 224.

PERPETUAL EASTER TABLE

Dominical		7	2				4				6				1				3				5						
Letters: ⇒		6	5	4	3	1	7	6	5	3	2	1	7	5	4	3	2	7	6	5	4	2	1	7	6	4	3	2	1
1)	1140	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2)	1168	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
3)	1196	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4)	1224	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
5)	1252	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6)	1280	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
7)	1308	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6
8)	1336	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9)	1364	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5
10)	1392	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11)	1420	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4
12)	916	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
13)	944	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3
14)	972	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
15)	1000	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2
16)	1028	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
17)	1056	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1
18)	1084	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
19)	1112	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19

In the Julian versions of Luni-solar perpetual calendars and Easter tables, The Demonical (Sunday) Letters (DL) are normally represented by the first seven letters in the alphabet. In this table, however, the DL's (top lines) for any and all years are indicted by the equivalent numbers 1 to 7 inclusive, i.e. 1 = the FIRST of the seven DL's; 2 = the second, etc. (Double numbers are for Leap Years: Top number for January and February only, bottom numbers for March to December inclusive.)

The Golden Numbers (GN) (within the rectangle), which in Latin calendars are usually represented by Roman numerals, and in Runic calendars by Runic and/or other symbols, are shown as numbers from 1 to 19 inclusive. Each line in the rectangle shows the GN for twenty-eight years, beginning with the year shown at left of the line, hence AD 1140 (line 1) has assigned to it GN - 1, and DL - 7/6; AD 1141 has GN - 2, and DL - 5, etc. The table repeats itself in 532 years."

Further comments:

- This table from Mongé's book begins in year 916 and ends in year 1447. Since it repeats every 532 years it is possible to renumber the table to run from 1447 forward.
- The information contained in the table was carried on a Primstav which is the equivalent of a slide rule for calculating such dates.

Number of Days to December 24

Day#	JAN K	FEB K	MAR K	APR K	MAY K	JUN K	JUL K	AUG K	SEP K	OCT K	NOV K	DEC K
1..	357	326	298	267	237	206	176	145	114	84	53	23
2..	356	325	297	266	236	205	175	144	113	83	52	22
3..	355	324	296	265	235	204	174	143	112	82	51	21
4..	354	323	295	264	234	203	173	142	111	81	50	20
5..	353	322	294	263	233	202	172	141	110	80	49	19
6..	352	321	293	262	232	201	171	140	109	79	48	18
7..	351	320	292	261	231	200	170	139	108	78	47	17
8..	350	319	291	260	230	199	169	138	107	77	46	16
9..	349	318	290	259	229	198	168	137	106	76	45	15
10..	348	317	289	258	228	197	167	136	105	75	44	14
11..	347	316	288	257	227	196	166	135	104	74	43	13
12..	346	315	287	256	226	195	165	134	103	73	42	12
13..	345	314	286	255	225	194	164	133	102	72	41	11
14..	344	313	285	254	224	193	163	132	101	71	40	10
15..	343	312	284	253	223	192	162	131	100	70	39	9
16..	342	311	283	252	222	191	161	130	99	69	38	8
17..	341	310	282	251	221	190	160	129	98	68	37	7
18..	340	309	281	250	220	189	159	128	97	67	36	6
19..	339	308	280	249	219	188	158	127	96	66	35	5
20..	338	307	279	248	218	187	157	126	95	65	34	4
21..	337	306	278	247	217	186	156	125	94	64	33	3
22..	336	305	277	246	216	185	155	124	93	63	32	2
23..	335	304	276	245	215	184	154	123	92	62	31	1
24..	334	303	275	244	214	183	153	122	91	61	30	0
25..	333	302	274	243	213	182	152	121	90	60	29 ^{New Year}	364
26..	332	301	273	242	212	181	151	120	89	59	28	363
27..	331	299	272	241	211	180	150	119	88	58	27	362
28..	330	299	271	240	210	179	149	118	87	57	26	361
29..	329	-	270	239	209	178	148	117	86	56	25	360
30..	328	-	269	238	208	177	147	116	85	55	24	359
31..	327	-	268	-	207	-	146	115	-	54	-	358

NOTE: This table shows the number of full days remaining in the medieval Norse calendar year which ended on December 24. When the cryptographic KEY (Column K above) is applied, the true date of the inscription is shown on the left (Column D). For example: KEY - 231. The true date is May 7.

Table after Mongé page 224.



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

The Younger Futhark: Danish long-branch runes and
Swedish/Norwegian short-twig runes. Transliteration
and numbers shown below.

Grouped by aett.

ƿ f 1	ʀ u 2	ɔ þ 3	ʁ a 4	ʀ r 5	< k 6	X g 7	ʀ w 8
N h 9	ʀ n 10	i 11	ʁ j 12	ʀ i 13	ʀ p 14	ʀ z 15	ʀ s 16
ʀ t 17	ʀ b 18	M e 19	ʀ m 20	ʀ l 21	ʀ ŋ 22	ʀ d 23	ʀ o 24

Older Futhark: symbol, transliteration and number. Grouped by aett.