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ABBREVIATIONS OF COUNTIES AND EPNS COUNTY SURVEYS

Co	Cornwall
Ha	Hampshire
He	Herefordshire
K	Kent
La	Lancashire
Nb	Northumberland
Sf	Suffolk
So	Somerset
Wt	Isle of Wight

CPNE	*Cornish Place-Name Elements*
EPNE	*English Place-Name Elements*, Parts **1** and **2**
PN BdHu	*The Place-Names of Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire*
PN Brk	*The Place-Names of Berkshire*, Parts **1**, **2** and **3**
PN Bu	*The Place-Names of Buckinghamshire*
PN Ca	*The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely*
PN Ch	*The Place-Names of Cheshire*, Parts **1**–**5**
PN Cu	*The Place-Names of Cumberland*, Parts **1**, **2** and **3**
PN D	*The Place-Names of Devon*, Parts **1** and **2**
PN Db	*The Place-Names of Derbyshire*, Parts **1**, **2** and **3**
PN Do	*The Place-Names of Dorset*, Parts **1**–**4**
PN Du	*The Place-Names of County Durham*, Part **1**
PN Ess	*The Place-Names of Essex*
PN ERY	*The Place-Names of the East Riding of Yorkshire and York*
PN Gl	*The Place-Names of Gloucestershire*, Parts **1**–**4**
PN Hrt	*The Place-Names of Hertfordshire*
PN Le	*The Place-Names of Leicestershire*, Parts **1**–**7**
PN Li	*The Place-Names of Lincolnshire*, Parts **1**–**8**
PN Mx	*The Place-Names of Middlesex* (apart from the *City of London*)
PN Nf	*The Place-Names of Norfolk*, Parts **1**–**3**
PN Nt	*The Place-Names of Nottinghamshire*
PN NRY	*The Place-Names of the North Riding of Yorkshire*
PN Nth	*The Place-Names of Northamptonshire*
PN O	*The Place-Names of Oxfordshire*, Parts **1** and **2**
PN R	*The Place-Names of Rutland*
PN Sa	*The Place-Names of Shropshire*, Parts **1**–**6**
PN Sr	*The Place-Names of Surrey*
PN St	*The Place-Names of Staffordshire*, Part **1**
PN Sx	*The Place-Names of Sussex*, Parts **1** and **2**
PN W	*The Place-Names of Wiltshire*
PN Wa	*The Place-Names of Warwickshire*
PN We	*The Place-Names of Westmorland*, Parts **1** and **2**
PN Wo	*The Place-Names of Worcestershire*
PN WRY	*The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire*, Parts **1**–**8**

Wenhaston

John Insley

WENHASTON is situated between Halesworth and Blythburgh in the hundred of Blything in north-east Suffolk. The name is difficult. Eilert Ekwall (DEPN 506) gave the forms *Wenadestuna* 1086, *Wenhaestun* 1199 (1319) and *Wenhaueston* 1197 and 1230. He took the name to be a compound of an unrecorded Old English personal name **Wynhæþ* and OE *tūn* 'village, estate, homestead'. The more modern dictionary of Victor Watts follows Ekwall's interpretation, but adds that the modern form *Wenhaston* is attested from 1254 onwards (CDEPN 662). In her unpublished Sheffield MA thesis of 1952, Cynthia Baron (1952: 49) suggested an OE personal name **Wenheard* as a possible alternative. In his recent dictionary of Suffolk place-names, David Mills (2014: 94–95) accepts the traditional derivation from the personal name **Wynhæþ*, but supplies a local pronunciation 'wenner-st'n' (i.e. [wenəstən]). The fullest collection of forms now available in print is those provided by the new dictionary of Suffolk place-names by Keith Briggs and Kelly Kilpatrick (2016: 150) and by Briggs in his article of 2015 (30). The early forms given by Briggs and Kilpatrick in their dictionary are as follows: *Wenadestuna* 1086, *Wenhawestune* 1199 (1428), *Wenhastone* 1254, *Wenhakeston* 1250, *Wenhaston* 1286, 1783, *Wenaxstone* 1327, *Wennaston* 1364, *Wenaston* 1457, 1535, *Weneston* 1674. Briggs and Kilpatrick interpret the first element of the name as an unrecorded OE personal name **Wynhafoc*. Given the difficulties presented by the name, it would seem appropriate to utilize more early spellings from local sources and I have chosen to use the following forms, mostly taken from the Sibton Abbey charters and cartularies and from the cartulary of Blythburgh Priory. The forms are as follows:

> *Wenadestuna* 1086 DB
> *Wenhageston'* 1320 (14th) Sibton
> *Wennachestun*, *Wenhachetun* 112th (13th), *Wennachestun'* (p) 1200–
> 11 (13th) Sibton

Wenhakestun' 1200–11 (13th), c.1230 (13th), 1230–35 (13th), *-ton'*
   1251 (15th) Sibton
Wenhaweston' c.1230–35 (original), *-tun'* (p) c.1240 (13th) Sibton
Wenhaueston' l12th/e13th (13th), c.1200 (13th), c.1230 (13th), *ante*
   1235 (13th), c.1240 (13th), *ante* 1245 (13th), *-ton'* (p) e13th
   (13th), c.1230 (13th), *-tun'*, c.1230, c.1230–35 (13th), c.1240
   (13th), 1242–45 (13th), *-tun'* (p) c.1225–35 (13th), *ante* 1235
   (13th), *Wenhauest'* (p) c.1240–50 (13th) Sibton
Wenhaeston (p) 1199 (14th) Blythburgh
Wenhast(oun) (p) e13th (14th) Blythburgh
Wenistun (p) 1157–74 (14th), *Wenist(on)* (p) before 1196 (14th),
   Weniston (p), *Weniston*, eidem ecclesie de *Weniston* 1216–27
   (14th), *Wenistoun* (p) before 1230 (14th). *Wenistown* (p) before
   1212, prob. l12th (14th), *Wenistown*, *Wenistown* (p) e13th (14th),
   m13th (14th), Cum medietate ecclesie de *Wenistown* 1281 (14th)
   Blythburgh

The primacy of the Domesday Book form is implicit in Ekwall's
interpretation. If we were concerned with OE **Wynhæþ* here, the
intervocalic <-d-> of the Domesday form would stand for the voiced dental
fricative [ð] (see Feilitzen 1937: 101 [§ 108]). Ekwall's explanation fails
to appreciate the significance of the crucial form *Wenhaueston*. This is all
the more remarkable, given Ekwall's unparalleled skills as an etymologist,
when one sees that his examples are from early original sources, namely, a
fine of 1197 and the Pipe Roll of 1230. However, he did not have access to
the Sibton Abbey and Blythburgh Priory records which, as we shall see,
are essential for the elucidation of the name. The newly published
Briggs/Kilpatrick dictionary (2016: 150) gives more forms, but these are
arranged in roughly chronological order and not according to a formal
hierarchy following phonological criteria. Strangely enough, the early
spellings from the Blythburgh Priory cartulary and the Sibton Abbey
documents have not been utilized in the entry for WENHASTON, though
these sources are listed in the bibliography and Briggs utilized the Sibton
Abbey records in his article of 2015.
   As is indicated above, Briggs and Kilpatrick (Briggs 2015: 30–32;
Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016: 150) take WENHASTON to be a compound of
an unrecorded OE personal name **Wynhafoc* and OE *tūn*. That the second
element is OE *tūn* is clear enough and requires no further discussion, but a
personal name **Wynhafoc* is an improbable formation, since the bird-name
OE *h(e)afoc* m. 'hawk' is not used to form the second element in dithematic
personal names of the 'primary' type, that is, meaningful compounds

related to the *kenningar* of the poetic language, e.g., OE *H(e)aðuwulf* 'battle-wolf', or of the 'secondary' type which is characterized by the arbitrariness and semantic emptiness of its composition, e.g., OE *Wulfstān* 'wolf-stone'.[1] In this context, it should be remarked that the personal name *Spearh(e)afoc* is an original byname belonging to the substantive OE *spearh(e)afoc* m. 'sparrowhawk'.[2] Similarly, the personal name *Goldh(e)afoc*, attested from the late eleventh to the early thirteenth century (Feilitzen 1945: 81) is also an original byname comparable to *Goldrauen* < OE **Goldhræfn*, a name attested in the late-eleventh-century Feudal Book of Abbot Baldwin of Bury St Edmunds (Feilitzen 1945: 82), whose second element belongs to OE *hræfn* m. 'raven'.

The postulated OE **Wynhafoc* also does not fit the early forms of WENHASTON. However, we are certainly concerned with a personal name in *Wyn(n)-* (< Germanic **wun-jō*), here with South-Eastern [e] for OE [y] (see Jordan 1968: 63 [§ 40.1]; Kristensson 1995: 71–75). Personal names containing OE *Wyn(n)-* are attested in medieval East Anglia, cf. Seltén 1979: 184–86, *s.nn. *Wyndæg, Wynfriþ, Wyngi(e)fu / Wyngeofu, *Wynhild, *Wynleof, Wynsige, Wynstān*. Crucial to the interpretation of the second element of the personal name are the Middle English spellings in <-ach->, <-au-> and <-aw->, though, as is shown by the forms from the Blythburgh Priory cartulary, reduction of the second syllable through loss of stress was already well advanced in the thirteenth century. The spelling <au> in the usual thirteenth-century form *Wenhauestun', -ton'* stands for the [au]-diphthong which is the continuation of OE [a]+[ɣ] in ME (see Jordan 1968: 115–16 [§ 112]). <aw> is merely a variant of this spelling. In early ME, the voiced velar fricative [ɣ] is normally rendered by <ʒ>, but also appears as <ʒh> and later as <gh> (see the full discussion of Dietz 2006: 55–79, 112–31, 323–24). The spelling <-ch-> is difficult to explain, though Dietz (2006: 118–19) has noted the sporadic appearance of <ch> for intervocalic [ɣ] in sources from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Domesday Book form has <d> for [ð] which has been substituted for [ɣ], probably by a French-speaking scribe. In this context, it should be noted that Vulgar Latin primary intervocalic [d] and secondary intervocalic [d] < [t] became [ð] in early Old French, and, though it began to disappear from the end of the ninth century onwards, this fricative was only completely lost towards the end of the eleventh century (see Fouché 1966: 600–603). The surviving

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[1]   For the distinction between 'primary' and 'secondary' dithematic personal names in Germanic, the standard text is still that of Schramm (1957). Briggs does not go into these questions, but is content to remark (30) that '*hafoc* "hawk" is not a deuterotheme in traditional dithematic Anglo-Saxon names'.

[2]   For original bynames, see Feilitzen 1937: 15, 16–18.

<g> form in the record of 1320 appears to be a fossilized spelling. The document in question is a copy of a Letters Patent of Edward II recording earlier land transactions. Forms in <k> probably reflect scribal confusion during the process of despirantization. Since the first element of WENHASTON would have been semantically opaque by the thirteenth century, there is no need to assume sound substitution of [k] for [ɣ] on the part of French-speaking scribes. The early spellings indicate that there must have been a temporary coexistence between 'conservative' and 'progressive' forms in the first half of the thirteenth century, though ultimately the diphthongized *Wenhauestun*, *-ton* and then the modern *Wenhaston* became usual.

In the light of these considerations, we can therefore suggest an unrecorded OE dithematic personal name *Wynhēah*, genitive singular *Wynhēaʒes*, as the first element of WENHASTON. If the place-name had been formed already in the prehistoric period of OE (i.e. prior to c.700), its phonological development would involve early shortening of OE [æːɑ] (< Germanic [au]) > [æə], a process induced by weak stress in a medial position. This [æə] would have been subsequently monophthongized to [æ] as a result of Anglian 'smoothing', with subsequent retraction to [a] in the late eleventh century (see Feilitzen 1937: 60 [§ 27]). If the place-name were formed later (i.e. in the period 800–1050), we have to reckon with a side-form of the personal name, *Wynhæh*, in which the long diphthong of the second element had undergone shortening as a result of lack of stress and then been subject to 'smoothing' (Feilitzen 1937: 60 [§ 27]). Early spellings for OE *Ælfhēah* illustrating this development are: *Ælhæh* [minister] (beside *Ordheh* [minister] and *Þulfheh* [minister] in the same witness list) 934 (s. x med.) S 425; *Ælfæh* 972 (s. x/xi) S 786 Ms. 1 (see Feilitzen 1937: 60 [§ 27]); *Ælfag*, *Alfag* 1066 DB (Nottinghamshire), *Alfah*, *Alfahcu*s ib. (Norfolk), *Alfahc* [liber homo], *Alfac* [liber homo] ib. (Suffolk), *Elfag* ib. (Derbyshire), *Elfac* ib. (Shropshire) (Feilitzen 1937: 174). Since the voiced velar fricative is unvoiced in final positions already in OE (Jordan 1968: 166, 168 [§§ 184, 187]; Dietz 2006: 55), we are concerned with reflexes of [χ] in these nominative forms. It might be objected that the second element of the genitival *Wynhæʒes* has a palatal vowel, [æ], and that this would lead to secondary palatalization of the following [ɣ] > [j]. If this were the case, it would render my interpretation of WENHASTON invalid, because this interpretation turns on the fact that we are concerned with ME [au] as a continuation of OE [æ] + [ɣ]. However, Luick (1914–40: 944 [§ 709. 4]) has pointed out that after [æ] resulting from 'smoothing' the velar [ɣ] was preserved, or, in cases where it had been palatalized in such positions, was restored in the course of the change

[æ] > [a]. Without giving precise reasons, Briggs (2015: 32 n. 7) summarily dismisses derivation of the first element of WENHASTON from OE *Wynhēah* in the following terms:

> One might consider a personal name *Wynhēah*, but this would be expected to have genitive *Wynhēages*, not compatible with the spellings of Wenhaston. Parallels of place-names with a *-hēah* name as first element seem to be virtually non-existent, but a likely one is Odstone in Berkshire, from *Ordhēah* (*Ordhēages* gen.) + *tūn* (PN Brk 346). The palatal *-g-* here shows up in the recorded forms as *Ordegeston* DB, *Ordeiston'* 1220 etc.[3]

In fact, other examples of personal names in *-hēah*, genitive *-hēaȝes*, have been noted from Anglo-Saxon boundary clauses. For example, in Berkshire, OE *Ælfhēah* occurs in [*on*] *ælfheaȝes ȝemære* 948 [? for 947] (s. xiii in.) S 542 [bounds of Stanmore in Beedon, PN Brk 651] and OE *Cynehēah* in [*on*] *cyneeahes*[4] *treop* 953 (s. xiii in.) S 560 [bounds of Curridge, PN Brk 655]. In the case of ODSTONE, the Domesday form implies a late-eleventh-century form *Ordēȝestūn*, and this is confirmed by the subsequent forms *Ordeiston'* 1220, 1242–43, *Ordeystona* 1224–25, *Ordeieston'* 1247–48, *Ordeyston'* 1284 (PN Brk 346). The early forms make it clear that at least at the time of the formation of the place-name, the second element of the personal name must have retained vowel length and, since we have a palatal environment here, medial <-ȝ-> must stand for the voiced palatal fricative [j]. This is in direct contrast to the second element of *Wynhēah* in WENHASTON which, as is noted above, lost vowel length on account of weak stress and retained the velar quality of medial <-ȝ->.

Briggs (2015: 31–32) justifies his derivation of the first element of WENHASTON from the personal name *Wynhafoc* in the following terms:

> The phonological development suggested here is that the complex medial cluster *-f(o)c(e)st-* /vkst/ was simplified in two different ways:

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[3]   In keeping with the conventions of normal academic discourse, it would have been incumbent on Briggs to mention that the interpretation of the first element of WENHASTON as the personal name *Wynhēah* was first proposed by the present writer *coram publico* in a reply to Briggs' paper 'Some Suffolk place-name puzzles' which was presented at the 24th Spring Conference of the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland in Norwich on 28 March 2015.

[4]   In this name, <-h-> in the genitive form has been substituted for the usual <-ȝ-> by analogy with the nominative.

to *-cst-* giving the *Wenhakeston* type, and also to *-fst-* giving the *Wenhaueston* type, later bilabialized to /w/ (cf. Euston < *Efes-*). The occasional *Wenhagheston* type is then understandable as a reverse spelling motivated by the ME change /ɣ/ (usually written *-gh-*) > /w/; a similar change to *-gh-* is seen in the name of Wroughton (< *Worf-*) in Wiltshire (PN W 278). Thus all the widely varying (and at first sight, incompatible) forms are accounted for.

This is an arbitrary and erroneous interpretation of the medieval spellings. The forms simply do not fit the etymology proposed by Briggs. His comparative reference to EUSTON Sf (< OE **Efestūn* 'Efi's farmstead or estate' [Mills 2014: 48]) is beside the point, while that to WROUGHTON W only serves to confuse the issue. A ME phoneme '/ɣ/' does not exist. In late OE and ME, the voiced velar fricative is an allophone of the phoneme /χ/. WROUGHTON's etymology is 'farmstead or estate on the River Worf ', *Worf* being the old name for the RAY (PN W 278). Relevant early forms include *Worfton* 1196 *et freq* to 1385, [*Nether*] *Wrofton* 1418, [*Nethyr*] *Wroghton* 1428, [*Over*, *Nether*] *Wroughton* 1466 (PN W 278). Spellings in <-gh-> show associative interference from words in which late OE, ME final [χ] has developed to [f] in late ME, e.g. Modern English *dwarf* < OE *dweorʒ*, *dweorh*, ModE *rough* < OE *rūh*. ModE *trough* < OE *troʒ*, *troh*, etc. (Ekwall 1956: 96–97 [§ 163]). If the first element of WENHASTON were an OE personal name **Wynhafoc*, we would expect ME spellings of the type **Wenhauekestun*, *-ton*, **Wenhaukestun*, *-ton*, but this is not the case. The etymology of WENHASTON turns on the interpretation of the ME <-au-> spellings as representing the continuation of late OE [æ] + [ɣ]. Therefore, its first element must be an unrecorded, but perfectly regular, OE 'secondary' dithematic personal name **Wynhēah*.

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