

A CROSS-BASE AT WINCHESTER.

NOTE.—The Cross-base, described and illustrated in the following article by Mr. W. G. Collingwood, is at present in the garden of Prior's Barton, the residence of Lieut.-General Sir Edward Altham. A few months ago General Altham very kindly allowed me to inspect this stone, and to examine it a second time in company with Mr. O. G. S. Crawford. With General Altham's permission I had the stone photographed, and Mr. Crawford sent the photographs to Mr. Collingwood, who has ably interpreted them.

It is believed that the stone was removed from the churchyard of St. Faith, which is only a hundred yards distant.

COYTBURY,
WINCHESTER.

C. F. CLOSE.

28th March, 1922.

The photographer's difficulty with the details of this weathered and lichened cross-base must be my excuse for the tentative sketches. I have tried to follow the patterns as far as they can be made out from the photograph, without knowledge of the original. The parts less clear to me are scribbled over with rough shading; the rest is fairly plain, and easy to be understood by the analogy of similar cross-carving. If the stone were cleaned and cast, or photographed with each side in a raking light, no doubt the whole of the details could be made out, and the sketches corrected.

But enough is seen to give an idea of the designer's intention. On the first side are two of the strange beasts which are often found on such crosses; for a parallel, there is a curious pig on the stone at Barwick-in-Elmet: and confronted animals are common in all styles of pre-Norman design. Here their horns intertwine to make the plait above, with the effect of symmetry, without being strictly symmetrical; this arrangement was favoured in work of the late ninth century and afterwards.

The second side has a tree-scroll, also quasi-symmetrical. The tree-scroll is an Anglian motive from early times; it is seen in the greatest regularity and neatness of drawing on one of the eighth century stones at Jedburgh, carved when Jedburgh was an Anglian abbey. Another early example, very neatly and prettily executed, is at Croft, near Darlington. The Cundall-Aldbrough shaft, probably early ninth century, shows the pattern, still regular, but simplified. Later in the ninth century, the same motive appears at Dewsbury and Sheffield. Later still, probably of the tenth century, is the great cross-base at Walton, near Hartshead, S.W. Yorks, with a tree-pattern. The smaller cross-base at Rastrick (near the last place) seems to be considerably later, but it shows the tree-scroll still in use; and the Thrybergh

(S. Yorks) cross has the motive Normanized, in post-Conquest times. The pattern is well-known, and differs from period to period only in its treatment. Here the florid character of the boughs—in which as much variety as possible has been introduced—suggests the eleventh century, when the greater regularity of pre-Danish Anglian and the non-naturalistic taste of the tenth century had given place to more desire for picturesqueness.

The third side seems to have a band of running pattern at the foot; and above a very irregular plait, which came into use in the tenth century, there may be a kind of tree, and possibly dragon or beast heads (one seems to be traceable, but all this part is obscure in the photographs) with more plait above. This "kind of tree-pattern" may be based on a Danish motive; though the whole is not Danish, but Anglian in origin, altered to suit the taste of the eleventh century, when the Danish element was strong throughout England.

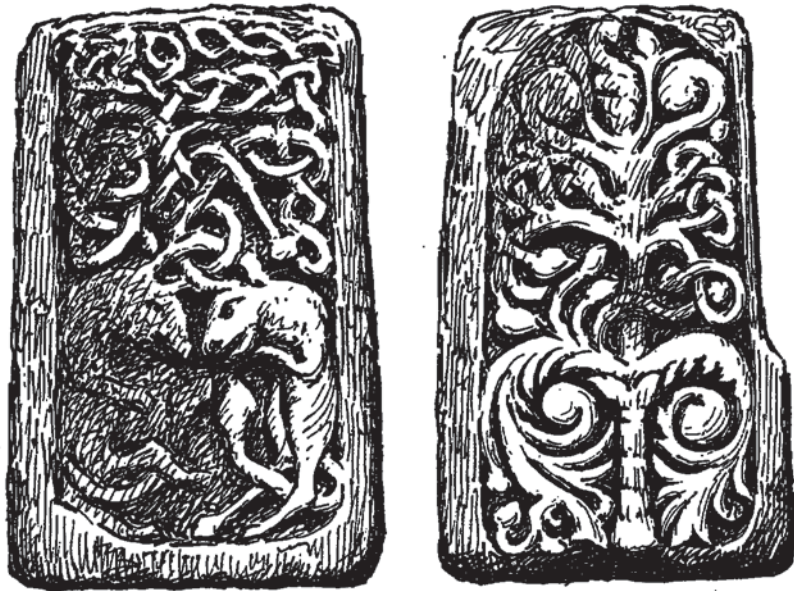
The fourth side has a simpler tree, with a couple of its boughs ending in beast heads. This side is best preserved and the pattern is pretty clear in all its parts.

A cross-shaft of much the same character, though better seen in its details, is at Gloucester, believed to be from the pre-Norman priory of St. Oswald there. It has similar confronted beasts and irregular plaits, but no tree-scrolls, and is probably rather earlier, as well as of a more distinctly Danish type in the drawing of the animals. The Winchester stone, like many in Southern England, suggests traditions derived from the Anglian work of Northumbria, varied or developed to meet the preferences of the eleventh century in this district. I should infer its date to be not long before the Norman Conquest.

What its relations may be to other art-work carried on at Winchester in that period is a question that will be asked; but I think it must be remembered that stone-carving on a monumental scale was a separate art from ivory-carving, just as, later, fresco and miniature were carried on by members of different guilds. Monumental masons had traditions of their own, and the old formulæ of the forefathers of the craft can be shown to have persisted in the various schools or workshops originating in Northumbria and finding their homes in all parts of Britain.

W. G. COLLINGWOOD.

THE WINCHESTER STONE.



Scale $1\frac{1}{2}$ Inches - 1 Foot



W.S.C.
March,
1922

THE WINCHESTER STONE.



Scale $\frac{1}{8}$ Inches = 1 Foot

W.F.C.
March,
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