

## CHAPTER V

### MONUMENT TYPES (FORMS)

#### EARLY 'BRITISH' CARVED STONES

In the Corpus volume for the South-West of England, Rosemary Cramp was confronted with a problem not previously encountered in the Corpus — early stone carving that belonged to the 'British' tradition rather than the Anglo-Saxon but that lay within the confines of the study area (Cramp 2006). The western fringes of the area covered by the present volume also contain a scatter of 'British' stones, some of which have been recorded in the Welsh carved stone corpus for South-East Wales and the English Border (Redknapp and Lewis 2007).

The earliest, the Cunorix Stone from Wroxeter (Wroxeter Roman Town 1, Shropshire) is a reused Roman carved stone which carries an inscription that has been dated to the fifth/sixth century (p. 318, Ill. 571). A second slab, of sandstone, which bore a sixth-century inscription was recorded (with a drawing) at Olchon House, Llanveynoe (Herefordshire) but has subsequently been lost (p. 291, Ills. 521–2). Two small sandstone slabs with simple incised crosses, built into the external walls of the church of St Peter at Llanveynoe (nos. 4–5, p. 290, Ills. 517–20), are probably seventh to ninth century in date. Another lost slab, bearing an incised cross, from Walterstone, Herefordshire (no. 1, p. 300) may have been of seventh-century date, but may also have been carved as late as the eleventh century (Redknapp and Lewis 2007, 536).

Two stones from Garway, Herefordshire, incised with crosses with crosslets on the arms, are tapering rather than square and may be grave-markers of seventh-/ninth-century date (nos. 1–2, p. 295, Ills. 532–3). However, recent research into the techniques of carving has led to the suggestion that the stones may belong to the twelfth/thirteenth century (Redknapp and Lewis 2007, 555–6).

One final stone falls within the 'British' group and that is the reused Roman altar from St Briavels, Gloucestershire, that carries carved letters on all four faces (p. 241, Ills. 417–25). The only decipherable word

*fecit* is in Latin and this, together with the similarity of some of the letter-forms, might indicate that the St Briavels 1 stone is an early medieval memorial similar to stones found in south-east Wales. The inscription cannot, however, be dated more closely than fifth to ninth century.

#### GRAVE-MARKERS AND GRAVE-COVERS

The earliest Anglo-Saxon grave-covers and grave-markers begin to appear with the sudden explosion of stone carving that occurs across much of the area, and particularly in Gloucestershire, in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. This corresponds to the second half of the reign of Offa and the reign of Coenwulf, and was a time of continuing Mercian political supremacy which presumably led to increased wealth. Even then, however, in contrast to the stone crosses there are few specifically funerary pieces that can be confidently assigned to the early part of the period.

At Deerhurst, Gloucestershire, a ninth-century grave-cover with narrow panels of interlace had been reused as part of a triangular doorhead by the late ninth or tenth century (Deerhurst St Mary 2, p. 162, Ills. 129–31). A small, triangular-headed grave-marker from Edgeworth, Gloucestershire, is carved with a 'rustic' version of the ninth-century opposed-birds motif (no. 2, p. 198, Ill. 241).

By the tenth century the situation had changed somewhat with sumptuously carved, probably royal, grave-covers occurring at Gloucester (Gloucester St Oswald 5–8, all carved in relief with foliate ornament, together with plain, perhaps painted, grave-covers nos. 9–10). All are flat and tapering with chamfered edges (Ills. 292–307). Flat grave-covers with carving in shallow relief also occur in Shrewsbury, Shropshire (Shrewsbury St Mary 3, 4, carved with ring-headed crosses, Ills. 553–6), Whitchurch, Warwickshire (nos. 2, 3 carved with interlace, Ills. 608–14), Coln St Aldwyn 1, Gloucestershire (interlace with knot-pattern, Ill.

99), and possibly at Cradley, Herefordshire (no. 3 carved with a ring-headed cross, Ill. 531). A tapering, rather rounded slab from Llanveynoe, Herefordshire, carved with an incised cross and inscription, is also dated to this period (Llanveynoe St Peter 1, p. 287, Ills. 509–11).

The small, coped grave-cover from Avening, Gloucestershire (no. 2, Ill. 5) carved with median-incised interlace and triquetra, is of a form unique to the area and probably belongs to the late tenth or early eleventh century, as does a tapering grave-cover from Bibury, Gloucestershire (no. 3, Ills. 33–4) and a sharply tapering slab carved with a cross from Atcham, Shropshire (no. 2, Ill. 541).

Small round-headed or square-headed grave-markers of tenth-century or early eleventh-century date are found at North Cerney, Gloucestershire (no. 1, carved with a crucifixion, Ills. 413–14), and Shrewsbury, Shropshire (Shrewsbury St Mary 1, carved with a cross and radiating lines on each face, Ills. 548–50, and Shrewsbury St Mary 2, a roughly rectangular grave-marker with chamfered upper corners and a cross carved in shallow relief with a raised boss at the centre of the head, Ills. 551–2).

Grave-markers that are probably eleventh-century in date have been found at Atcham, Shropshire (no. 1, carved with a cross, Ills. 538–40), Diddlebury 3, Shropshire (carved with a ringed-cross, Ills. 577–8), and Brimpsfield 1, Gloucestershire (carved with a cross, Ills. 85–6). An eleventh-century interlace-decorated stone that was originally a grave-marker or a small cross has been reused as a block on which to carve a twelfth-century capital on the south side of the doorway at Stoke Prior, Worcestershire (no. 1, Ills. 658–9).

The huge, cross-incised marker slab at Kenderchurch, Herefordshire (no. 1, Ills. 434–5), has recently been dated to the eleventh or twelfth century (Redknap and Lewis 2007, 530–1), while the window head at Barton-on-the-Heath, Warwickshire (no. 1, Ill. 617), may originally have been an eleventh-century grave-marker carved with a ring-knot.

At Haresfield, Gloucestershire, an eleventh-century child's grave has survived intact just to the south of the church (Haresfield 1a–c, Ills. 379–81). Here both headstone and footstone are round-headed and carved with crosses in shallow relief. The grave-cover is flat and straight-sided.

In the more intensively-studied county of Gloucestershire, grave-covers dated to the eleventh century have been identified which draw on a wide range of styles and motifs. A flat grave-cover, which has been reused as a lintel above the south doorway in the chancel at Ampney St Mary, carries a flamboyantly

carved figure-of-eight, foliated motif (no. 1, Ill. 3). A more austere, sharply tapering grave-cover, incised with a Tau cross, has been found at Bisley (Bisley All Saints 5, Ill. 450). Two large fragments of a later eleventh-/early twelfth-century grave-cover, with pelleted and looped knots on the face and arcading along the sides, were recovered from a rockery in Bisley (Bisley Parish 2 and 3, Ills. 452–5). At Elkstone there is a flat, tapering grave-cover carved in high-relief with a large lozenge down from which trail twisted ribbons (Ill. 469). A simple, straight-sided cross standing on a rounded base is carved in high-relief on what is almost certainly part of a grave-cover at Naunton (Ill. 478), while a wheel-headed cross with a round boss on the stem is incised on a flat slab reused as a window head in the early Norman tower at Swindon Village, near Cheltenham (Ill. 484).

In the first half of the eleventh century, in the area around Cirencester, Gloucestershire, there is a group of grave-markers and -covers that are very similar and may be the work of a single craft centre working stone from the Taynton Limestone and White Limestone beds of the Great Oolite Group (see Chapter IV, p. 41). Motifs such as linked circles and rounded lozenges, pelleting, and figure-of-eight knots and designs are found at Bibury (nos. 2, 4, 5, Ills. 29–30, 33, 40), Bisley (All Saints 1, Ills. 45–9), Broadwell (Ills. 87–8 — this might be a gravestone or the decorated jamb of an opening), and Ampney St Mary (see above). These motifs are in turn linked to stones with Ringerike-style animal carving at Bibury (no. 1, Ills. 27–8) and Somerford Keynes (no. 1, Ills. 426–8 — a pierced grave-marker or a piece of church furniture).

In 1912 a small carved slab that is neither a grave-marker nor a grave-cover, but is certainly funerary, was found in a grave immediately to the north of St Mary's church in Newent, Gloucestershire (Newent 2, p. 236, Ills. 401–12). This stone, only 20.3 cm by 16.5 cm and 3.2 cm thick, is carved on both faces and bears an inscription in raised letters around all four narrow faces. It is usually referred to as a 'pillow stone', on which the head of the deceased was placed. In this instance, the actual relationship of the stone to the skull is unclear. However, the iconography of the stone (the Crucifixion on one face and the Harrowing of Hell and/or Christ in Glory on the other face), together with the names of the four evangelists inscribed around the edge and what are probably skeuomorphic rivet holes on one face, has led Victoria Thompson to suggest that the stone should be interpreted as a stone gospel book (Thompson 2004, 90–1). The name Edred is carved with those of the evangelists around the edge of the 'book' and repeated on one face, and it seems

most probable that the stone, which can be dated with reasonable certainty to the first half of the eleventh century, was placed with Edred when he was buried.

#### CROSS-SHAFTS AND BASES

There are thirty-eight stone crosses in the study area. Some survive only as very small fragments or as cross-heads (see below), but the earliest, the eighth-century Lypiatt Cross (Bisley Lypiatt 1, p. 143, Ills.

54–7, 60–6), still stands to perhaps two-thirds of its original height (180 cm) and probably close to its original location near the village and possible early minster site of Bisley in Gloucestershire (Bryant 1990). This once magnificent cross-shaft is unusual among the oolitic limestone crosses in that it is carved from a single stone. Although heavily weathered, it is still possible to see the outlines and some details of the tall, graceful figures, standing under round arches, that are carved on three faces (Fig. 16). These figures, Christ flanked by two evangelists or perhaps by St



FIGURE 16  
The eighth-century Lypiatt Cross (Bisley Lypiatt 1), Gloucestershire

Peter and St Paul, are unlike any others from the area and have been compared to the figures on the high crosses at Bewcastle, Cumberland, and Ruthwell, Dumfriesshire (Bryant 1990, 33–5, and see below, Chapter VIII, p. 92). On each side of the figure of Christ, close beside his body, are rows of drilled holes. As suggested for Sandbach, Cheshire, and Reculver, Kent, these are probably the fixing holes for metal ornamentation (Peers 1927, 254–5; Kozodoy 1986, 70–3; Tweddle *et al.* 1995, 151, 156–7; Hawkes 2002, 146–7). In addition, the socket on the Bisley Lypiatt cross, in the place where Christ's head should be, may indicate a metal halo or a head carved from a different type of stone. On all faces of the shaft smaller panels are carved above the principal figures, divided from them by horizontal borders, and on face D the bottom of a third tier of panels survives. The stone has been reused at some stage as a parish boundary marker, and it may still be on its original base, although there are photographs from 1929 which show the shaft, with the lower end in the ground, standing beside the rather tilted base stones (Ills. 64–6). The cross-head is lost, together with the upper part of the shaft.

The Bisley Lypiatt shaft is rectangular in section and slightly tapering, and this shape is common from the eighth to the eleventh centuries and throughout the oolitic limestone and Worcestershire sandstone areas. Like Bisley Lypiatt 1, most of these crosses are divided vertically into panels, and normally have single or double edge-mouldings — plain or cable decorated. At Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, one of the panels on a mid ninth-century cross (no. 1) has been hollowed out to form a rectangular recess, in the bottom of which there is a smaller deeper vertical slot (p. 365, Ills. 661, 665). This was probably designed to contain a holy relic (Cramp 2001, 152, fig. 1d; Bridges 2005, 222). A reliquary placed in the deeper slot could have then been covered with a removable panel (of stone, wood or perhaps even metal) that was big enough to fit the whole recessed area, thus allowing the relic(s) to be taken out for display during relevant festivals. Such an arrangement, together with the evidence for applied decoration on Bisley Lypiatt 1, serves as a reminder that many of the stone crosses would not only be richly decorated but also dynamic focal objects within their locality.

These shafts are decorated with plant-scrolls and other foliate forms, birds, reptiles, real and heraldic animals, human figures, and interlace panels (see Chapters VI and VII). There is one example of a small shaft covered with diagonal key fret (Prestbury 1, Gloucestershire, Ills. 415–16).

Parts of four cross-shafts were found together at St Oswald's Priory, Gloucester, and these show the development of carved motifs from the late eighth to the mid ninth centuries (see Fig. 17). One of the St Oswald's cross-shafts (Gloucester St Oswald 2, Ills. 274–7) draws on another (no. 1, Ills. 265–71) for various elements of its decorative schemes, but there are errors in, for example, the layout of the carpet of interlace, and what had been on no. 1 a beautifully observed plant-scroll becomes on no. 2 an un-pruned disorder. The carver of Gloucester St Oswald 2 appears to have been trying to copy no. 1, but not always succeeding. These two crosses could have stood quite close to each other, and it seems probable that, by the middle of the ninth century, all four of the St Oswald's Priory crosses stood together on this site (pp. 207–11).

A variation on the tapering, rectangular-sectioned shaft is the collared shaft found on an early ninth-century example at Wroxeter, Shropshire (Wroxeter St Andrew 1–3, pp. 314–17, now dismantled and reused, but shown still standing in eighteenth-century sketches; see Ills. 562–9, 792–3); and another example dated to the first half of the ninth century from Newent, Gloucestershire (Newent 1, p. 232, Ills. 392–400). As the name suggests, this type has a wider collar part-way up the shaft, from which the upper part of the shaft rises. At Newent the shaft and collar are carved from a single stone, while at Wroxeter the collar was probably jointed onto the lower shaft and had a socket in its upper face into which the upper part of the shaft was mortised. It is normally assumed that such jointing techniques are borrowed from carpentry and that the design of these crosses is based upon earlier wooden originals (Collingwood 1927, 8; Cramp 1993, 69–70; Lang 2001, 24, 40, 170, 229; for examples drawn from the High Crosses of Ireland and Scotland see Kelly 1992, 105–45).

The font at Deerhurst, Gloucestershire (Deerhurst St Mary 3a–b, Ills. 132–44) consists of a round bowl set on a round stem. Elsewhere in this chapter (p. 62) and in the discussion section of the catalogue entry (p. 163) it is suggested that the bowl may have originally stood on the ground or a low plinth and that the present stem may originally have been part of a round-shafted cross. This form of shaft is not uncommon in the Anglo-Saxon period, but it would be unique to the study area.

In western Herefordshire, along the Welsh border, the natural bedding of the sandstones has given rise to tall, narrow, short-armed crosses, like the tenth-century cross from Llanveynoe (no. 3, Ills. 514–16), and rectangular or more rounded 'panel' crosses, for

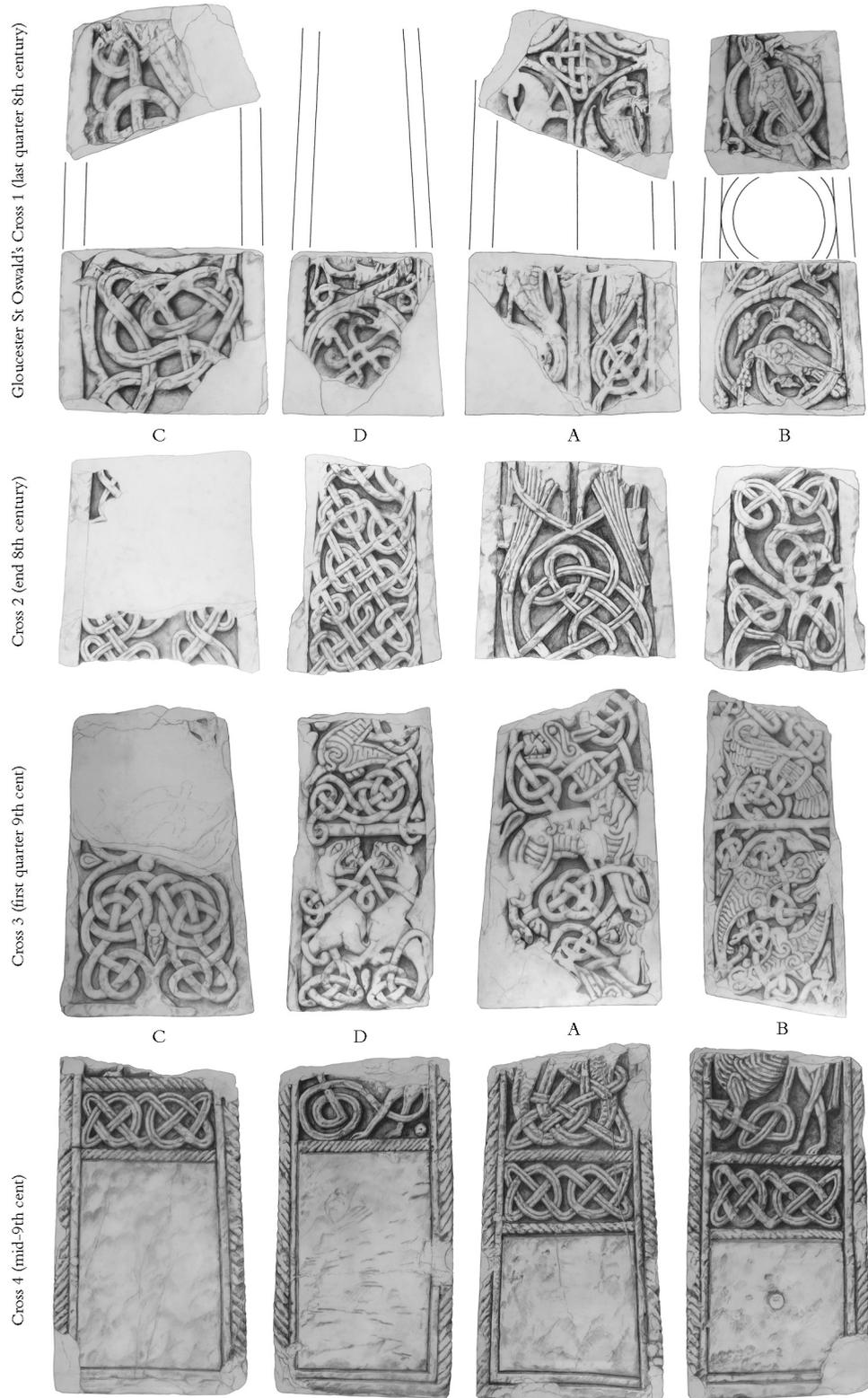


FIGURE 17  
 The development of style and decoration on the crosses 1–4 from St Oswald's Priory, Gloucester  
 (late eighth to mid ninth century)

example Llanveynoe 2 (Ill. 512) and probably Clifford 1 and 2 (Ills. 503–5, both tenth or eleventh century). These sandstone crosses are carved from single stones, as are the monuments on the other side of the border. However, the large cross-shaft at Kinwarton, Warwickshire (Ills. 592–6), that was carved from the compact, hard Bromsgrove sandstone (from the extensive outcrops in the Droitwich–Bromsgrove area) was probably carved from at least two, jointed stones (p. 339 and Chapter IV, p. 37).

The Bisley Lypiatt 1 and Newent 1 crosses (Gloucestershire) show that the oolitic limestone beds could also provide stones big enough for the carving of a complete cross-shaft. However, on many of the larger limestone pieces there are holes drilled up through the centre of the stone from the jointing faces which indicate that the crosses were often made from several stones dowelled together with metal or wooden pins. Some fragments also have drilled holes that run in at a downward angle from one of the carved faces to join the vertical drilled holes (see Ill. 368). These are probably holes down which lead or perhaps a thin mortar slurry could be poured to secure the jointing dowel.

The shafts were presumably located on their bases by means of large stone tenons in sockets, but only the Newent 1 shaft offers an actual example, and this can only be seen on the photographs taken at the time when it was removed from the churchyard, before it was set in its present base (see p. 232, Evidence for Discovery).

There are three bases extant or recorded in the area which may be original Anglo-Saxon cross-bases. However, none has diagnostic features that might confirm such a date. The base of the Bisley Lypiatt cross has already been mentioned. It consists of a stepped square base of two tiers. The 1929 photograph shows a square socket in the centre of the upper stone. At Belbroughton, Worcestershire, all but the top tier of the square, four-tier, red sandstone base in the churchyard may be Anglo-Saxon (no. 2, Ill. 721). It is recorded that an Anglo-Saxon cross was still standing here until the late nineteenth century, and a fragment of such a cross still survives in the church (no. 1, Ills. 618–20). At Wroxeter a cross-base is recorded as being on the ‘rockery’ next to the vicarage (now the Wroxeter Hotel). Recent exploration failed to find this (p. 326), but an Anglo-Saxon cross certainly stood in the churchyard until the eighteenth century and parts of the shaft and collar still survive built into the south wall of the church (Wroxeter St Andrew 1–3, see above). A fourth base, a large, square-socketed stone called the Wroth Stone, survives on a mound on top of Knightlow Hill, just south of Ryton-on-

Dunsmore, Warwickshire. This stone, associated with the payment at Martinmas of a local tax known as ‘wroth silver’ (Salzman 1951, 1–2), has been claimed to be Anglo-Saxon but there is nothing to suggest that it supported a cross of such an early date (p. 348).

One other stone should be mentioned here and that is the fragment from Upton Bishop, Herefordshire (Ills. 523–8). This stone is carved with figures standing in deep recesses under semi-circular arches. The piece is dated to the ninth century and has been described as part of a frieze. This is possible, but one side of the stone slopes outwards at an angle like that of the sloping base on the St Andrew Auckland cross, Co. Durham (Cramp 1984, 37–40, pls. 1, 2 and 5), and the present author has suggested that the Upton Bishop stone could be part of a similar cross-base (p. 292).

The stone at Elmstone Hardwick, Gloucestershire (Ills. 242–7), has clearly been used as the base of a (possibly wooden) cross, but this is a later reuse of part of what was originally a standing cross (p. 198). Never the less the socket in the top of the stone may have held a jointing tenon on the original shaft.

## CROSS-HEADS

Considering the number of fragments and surviving sections of stone crosses from the area, the small number of cross-heads is rather surprising. There are six, possibly seven, and of these only one is complete.<sup>1</sup>

Cross-head fragments have been recorded from Abson, Gloucestershire (no. 2, Ill. 2) where a B6 wedge-shaped arm (Cramp 1991, xvi, fig. 2) is probably from the same mid to late ninth-century cross as Abson 1 (Ill. 1); Bisley Parish, Gloucestershire (no. 1, Ills. 58–9), a wedge-shaped lower arm (with a narrower necking) from an eighth-/ninth-century B11 cross-head with the figures of a man and woman side by side within a recessed panel on face A; Deerhurst St Mary 1, Gloucestershire (Ills. 123–8), part of a small, ninth-century, painted, encircled cross-head (similar to E11 in form) carved with open seed-pods and interlace, and probably from an interior furnishing in the church; a worn, sandstone fragment of a tenth-/eleventh-century encircled cross-head from Belbroughton, Worcestershire (no. 1, Ills. 618–20); and what is probably the lower arm of a late tenth-/eleventh-century type C12 cross-head

1. The descriptive terminology used here is that of the *Grammar of Anglo-Saxon Ornament* (Cramp 1991). A digital version of this is presently available on the Corpus website <<http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk>>.

from Whitchurch, Warwickshire (Ills. 603–7), with closed-circuit lozenges enmeshed in diagonal interlace strands.

The tapering upper arm of an eighth-/ninth-century A1 type cross-head (or possibly a finial), with curving, out-turned ‘horns’, is part of the collection in Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire (Berkeley Castle 1, Ills. 13–16). The piece is carved on one side with a twin-stemmed plant that rises through a collar flanked by down-turned leaves, before terminating in open seed-pods which curl out to fill the horn-like terminals. The pods are similar to those at Deerhurst. On the reverse is a crudely carved, egg-shaped head set within a recessed panel. The difference in the quality of carving on the two faces suggests that the two sides of the stone were carved at different times, with the face, probably part of a figure of the crucified Christ, being added as an element of the reuse of an earlier carving.

With so few examples to draw upon, it is especially fortunate that the only complete example is of high quality. The early ninth-century cross-head from Cropthorne, Worcestershire (p. 353, Ills. 621–33), is carved on both faces and around the edge from a single block of limestone. All four arms are double-cusped and the arm-pits are curved to form a classic type D9 cross-head (Cramp 1991, xvi, fig. 2). In the centre of face A is a circular hole, *c.* 8 cm in diameter, which appears to be part of the original design and was probably the seating for a raised boss made from stone or perhaps metal. There is a double edge-moulding around both broad faces, the inner moulding being plain, and the outer moulding a cable with an incised line down the centre of each twist. Across the neck, below the slightly downward curving inner moulding, there is a row of large, squarish pellets. The sides of the cross carry broad, incised meanders, while both faces are carved with naturalistic birds and rather more stylized beasts set within sinuous plant stems that terminate in broad curling leaves and fruit clusters. This splendid cross-head is part of a group of early ninth-century carvings which lie at the beginning of the widespread ninth-century fashion for animal carving that covers much of south-west Mercia and Wessex (see Chapter VI, p. 67).

#### LOST CROSSES FROM WORCESTER (M.H.)

In addition to the surviving remains described in this volume, it should be noted that a literary source mentions two lost crosses from Worcester (Hearne 1723, II, 321–4; Sawyer 1968, no. 1185); the source

is a narrative passage inserted in a forged charter preserved in Hemming’s cartulary, which was compiled at Worcester in the late eleventh century (Tinti 2010, 137–47). The passage describes how a cross stood in the cathedral cemetery at Worcester, commemorating benefactors of the cathedral community called Wiferd and Alta, who were buried beneath it. According to Hemming, Bishop Oswald (961–92) preached beside the cross during the construction of the new monastic cathedral of St Mary. The cross was destroyed when Æthelric, the brother of Bishop Brihteah (1033–8), enlarged the presbytery of the original cathedral church of St Peter during the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042–66); the stone was incorporated in the new structure. A further cross, known as ‘The White Stone’, is also recorded as having stood one mile to the north outside the city; this cross was destroyed in the reign of William I (1066–87) and used as building stone for the monks’ lavatorium.

The passage will be discussed in more detail elsewhere (Hare forthcoming c), but it is of particular interest that Hemming describes the cross erected over the grave of Wiferd and Alta as having been built *more antiquorum*, ‘in the manner of the ancients’. The art-historical evidence certainly tells us that the use of crosses was in decline by the second half of the eleventh century in the western Midlands. Of the thirty-eight crosses listed in this volume, only fourteen belong to the tenth or eleventh centuries, and none of these is an impressive production to set alongside such fine eighth- and ninth-century crosses as Bisley Lypiatt 1, Cropthorne 1, Wroxeter St Andrew 1–3 and the various Gloucester St Oswald crosses (nos. 1–4). It is nevertheless instructive to find it explicitly stated in writing by a member of the Worcester community that crosses were considered old-fashioned in the late eleventh century.

#### ARCHITECTURAL CARVING

Evidence for stone churches begins to appear shortly after the first of the stone crosses, the buildings now often betrayed only by the survival of small carved fragments and pieces reused as building stone in later phases. The carvings consist of imposts, hood-mouldings, string-courses, jambs, window-heads and door-heads (Figs. 18 and 20). There are also animal-head label stops, and figured panels.

The earliest pieces, part of a stepped impost and a hood-moulding both carved with diagonal key-fret, come from Berkeley, Gloucestershire (Berkeley

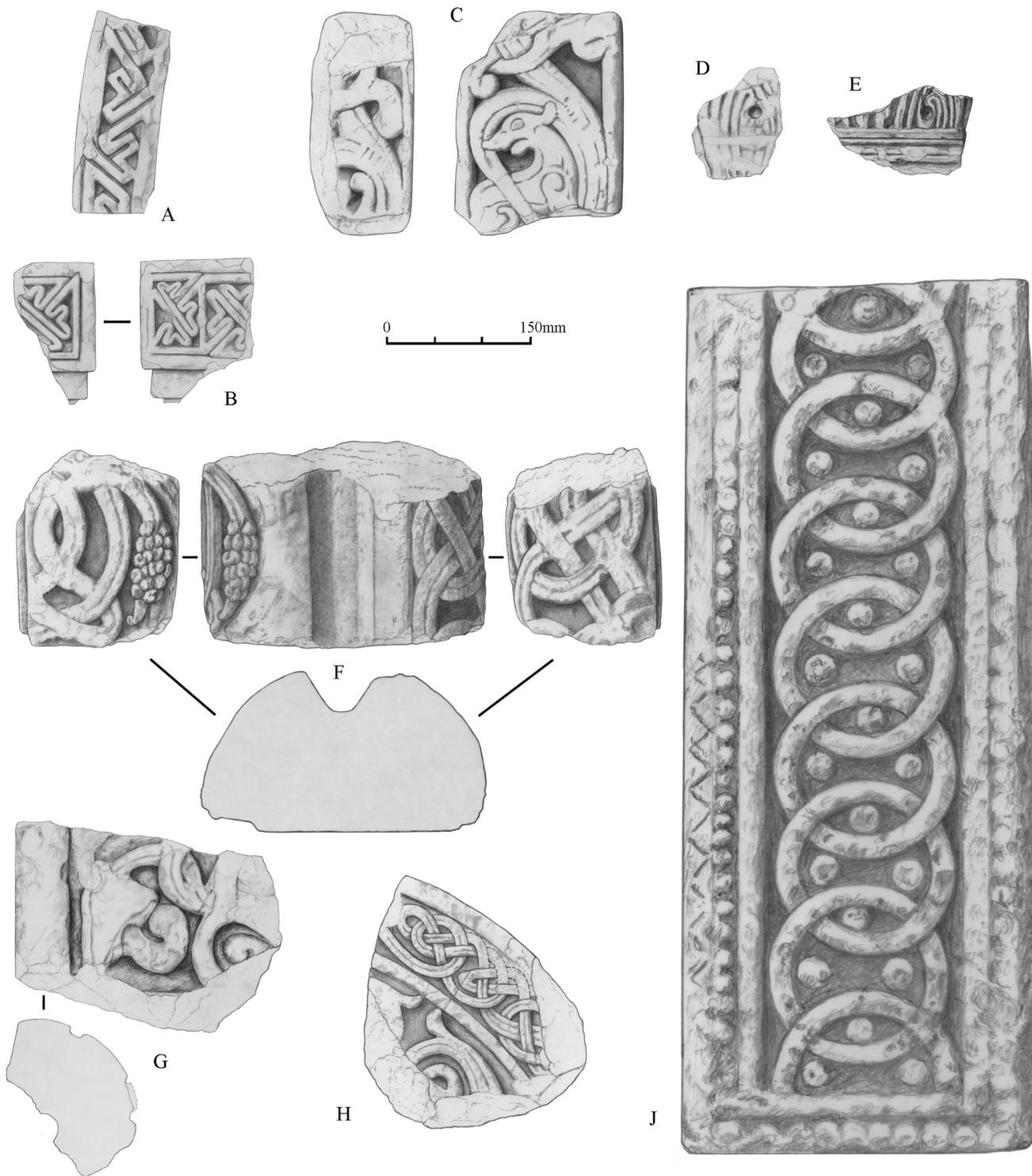


FIGURE 18

Architectural decoration (*late eighth to eleventh century*): A – Berkeley St Mary 2; B – Berkeley Castle 4; C – Coventry 1; D, E, G – Gloucester St Oswald 14, 13, 15; F – Worcester Cathedral 2; H – Gloucester Westgate Street 1; J – Bibury 5

St Mary 2 and Berkeley Castle 4, Figs. 18A, 18B, 21B, Ills. 10–12, 21–4) and are late eighth or early ninth century in date. A similarly dated section from a string-course, carved with a row of geese or chickens pecking at S-shaped worms or snakes, survives reused in the base of the twelfth-century south respond of the chancel arch at Wroxeter in Shropshire (Wroxeter St Andrew 4, Figs. 20F, 24L, Ill. 570). Part of a carved panel with opposed birds (Berkeley Castle 2, Fig. 24F, Ills. 17–18) is also of the late eighth or early ninth century.

A ninth-century carving from Upton Bishop, Herefordshire, with two figures standing in deep niches under round arches has been identified as part of a frieze (Ills. 523–8), but see above, p. 51.

A ninth-century jamb, carved with an inhabited plant-scroll, from Coventry, Warwickshire, was discovered being reused as 'part of a street some depth below the present ground level' close to the west front of the medieval priory of St Mary (Coventry 1, Fig. 18C, Ills. 585–8). St Mary's was established as an abbey of Benedictine monks by Earl Leofric of Mercia, probably in 1043 (see catalogue entry, p. 337). There are various traditions which suggest that there was an earlier nunnery on the site, possibly associated with St Osburg, and excavations have produced evidence for pre-Conquest burials and possibly for a stone structure of late Anglo-Saxon date (Rylatt and Mason 2003). Other churches stood beside St Mary's, including Holy Trinity and St Michael's, and it seems very likely that this architectural fragment came from a Middle Saxon phase of one of these churches.

In Gloucester Cathedral (the former St Peter's Abbey) part of a large, double-sided panel survives (Gloucester Cathedral 1, p. 203, Ills. 252–8). One face is carved with the figure of Christ set within a large roundel with a border of Carolingian-inspired voluted crockets. This motif and the style of the carving indicates that the panel is of ninth-century date. Christ is carved in high relief, with a cruciform halo and the figure of a bird (the Eagle of St John?) at his right shoulder, while below the roundel, to the figure's left, there is part of another carved border — perhaps part of a second roundel or a ribbon scroll. On the back, the panel is covered with a dense carpet of interwoven plant stems with serrated leaves, perhaps a Tree of Life. It seems very unlikely that this carving of Christ was designed to be used at floor level like the chancel closure-slabs or screens found widely in Carolingian Europe (for example, from St Pierre-aux-Nonnains, Metz: Hubert *et al.* 1970, 28–33, ill. 24–8, 266–7; Duval *et al.* 1991, 256–9). Instead the

Gloucester carving was probably set at high level, in or on an epistyle supported by columns as part of an open screen.

A second, smaller panel with a figure carved in a similar sharp-edged style, is found at St Andrew's, Pershore, Worcestershire, and is of similar date (Pershore 1, p. 360, Ills. 646–7). The upper part of the panel, with the figure's head, is missing, but the body is covered with heavy robes and seems to depict a pope or archbishop wearing a pallium which is held twisted around in both hands and wrapped over the figure's right thumb.

Also from Worcestershire and of early ninth-century date comes the wonderful double-sided carving from Hanley Castle (the 'Lechmere Stone', which was perhaps also designed to be set on an epistyle beam — see below under Church Furnishings, p. 61). This stone has the figure of Christ on one face and a wheel-headed cross with a baluster stem on the other, while around the edge the stone carries a beautiful plant-scroll (Hanley Castle 1, p. 357, Ills. 635–45).

There is one significant survival from the first half of the ninth century, where a profusion of carving is still to be found *in situ* within an almost complete Anglo-Saxon building. This is the church of St Mary at Deerhurst, Gloucestershire (see Fig. 19 for the location of the sculpture). Here there are large *prokrossoi* above the doorways (Deerhurst St Mary 9–10, 15, Ills. 153–64, 188–90). The semi-circular door arches carry square-section hood-mouldings, finished with elaborately carved animal-head label stops (nos. 11–14, 16–19, Ills. 165–87, 191–210). The chancel arch springs from engaged half-round shafts. The large animal heads that terminate the chancel-arch hood-moulding still carry their ninth-century red, yellow, white and black paint, while the arch itself retains traces of a ninth-century painted vine-scroll and bands of red and yellow colour (see Chapter X, p. 112). In the western porch, above the archway, there is a narrow, carved panel which originally depicted the Virgin and Child (no. 5, Ills. 147–9). This carving also retains fragments of the original paint, although the Virgin's face and the *clipeus* bearing the Christ child, which were painted onto especially prepared and burnished surfaces, have sadly been lost. On the outside face of the remaining southern bay of the eastern apse there is a carved panel depicting an angel or archangel (no. 4, Ills. 145–6). The panel is set at a high level within the triangular head of a panel of strip-work pilasters. At the west end of the nave there is an intricately carved font (no. 3, see below under Church Furnishings, p. 62) which is contemporary with the ninth-century

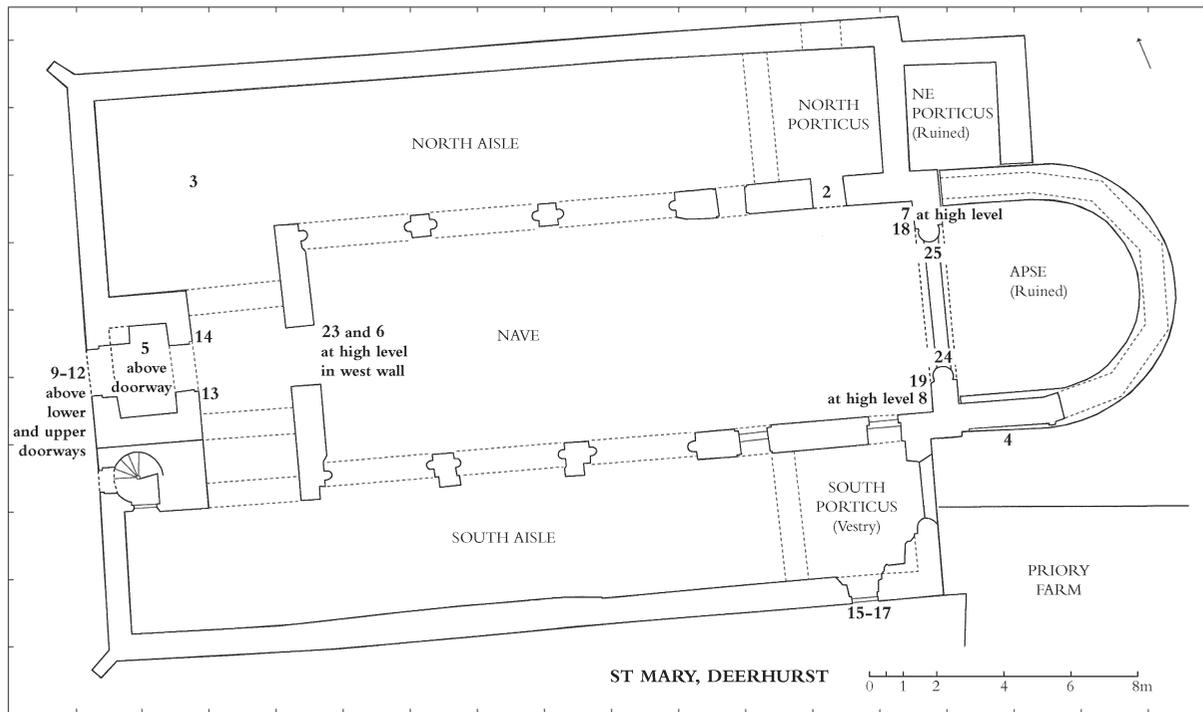


FIGURE 19  
Plan of St Mary's, Deerhurst, Gloucestershire, showing locations of sculpture.  
The numbers refer to the catalogue entries.

carvings. A great, stepped string-course surrounds the nave at high level (no. 20, Ills. 211–12). The capitals of the chancel arch are carved with what might be Corinthian-style foliate tiers that have been abstracted to little more than sharp-edged mouldings, while the 'corner' leaves and volutes have been turned into vertical mouldings that looks rather like the keel rising up to the bow of a ship (nos. 24–5, Fig. 21A, Ills. 218–25). In the later ninth century, or perhaps in the early tenth century, a double opening was cut high in the west wall of the nave. This opening has triangular heads and imposts carved with fluting that still bears traces of red paint (no. 23, Fig. 20B, Ills. 215–17). Two sections of a string-course, of similar date and carved with median-incised interlace, are reused in the west wall of Priory Farm (nos. 21–2, Figs. 20G–H, Ills. 213–14). Later in the tenth century two triangular-headed panels were set high in the east wall above the chancel arch (nos. 7–8, Ills. 151–2). One of the panels still carries the painted figure of a saint (Fig. 32F, p. 93).

Elsewhere sections of tenth-century string-course, carved with interlace, survive at Bisley, Gloucestershire (Bisley All Saints 2, 3, 4, Figs. 20K–M, Ills. 50–3),

and Shrewsbury, Shropshire (Shrewsbury Mardol 1–3, Figs. 20N, P, Q, Ills. 557–9, probably reused from Old St Chad's). Eleventh-century stepped pilaster-bases survive *in situ* at Coln Rogers, Gloucestershire (nos. 3, 4, Ills. 97–8), a section of an eleventh-century frieze has been reused in the tower at Cradley, Herefordshire (no. 1, Fig. 20J, Ill. 507), and eleventh- or early twelfth-century arcaded string-course sections have been reused in the tower of Bridgenorth, Shropshire (nos. 1–3, Ills. 572–4).

A tenth-century decorated window-head and a decorated arch with foliated spandrel were found in the excavations at St Oswald's Priory in Gloucester (Gloucester St Oswald 16, 17, Figs. 20C–D, Ills. 321–3, 324–5), and a voussoir carved with foliage and interlace came from an excavation in Westgate Street (Gloucester Westgate Street 1, Fig. 18H, Ills. 363–4). A *prokrossos* in the form of a muzzled bear was found when the Tolsey, also in Westgate Street, was demolished in 1893–4 (Gloucester Tolsey 1, Ills. 371–8). The Tolsey was on the site of All Saints' Church, and it is possible that the last two items came from this church.

A narrow, stilted arch carved with two concentric

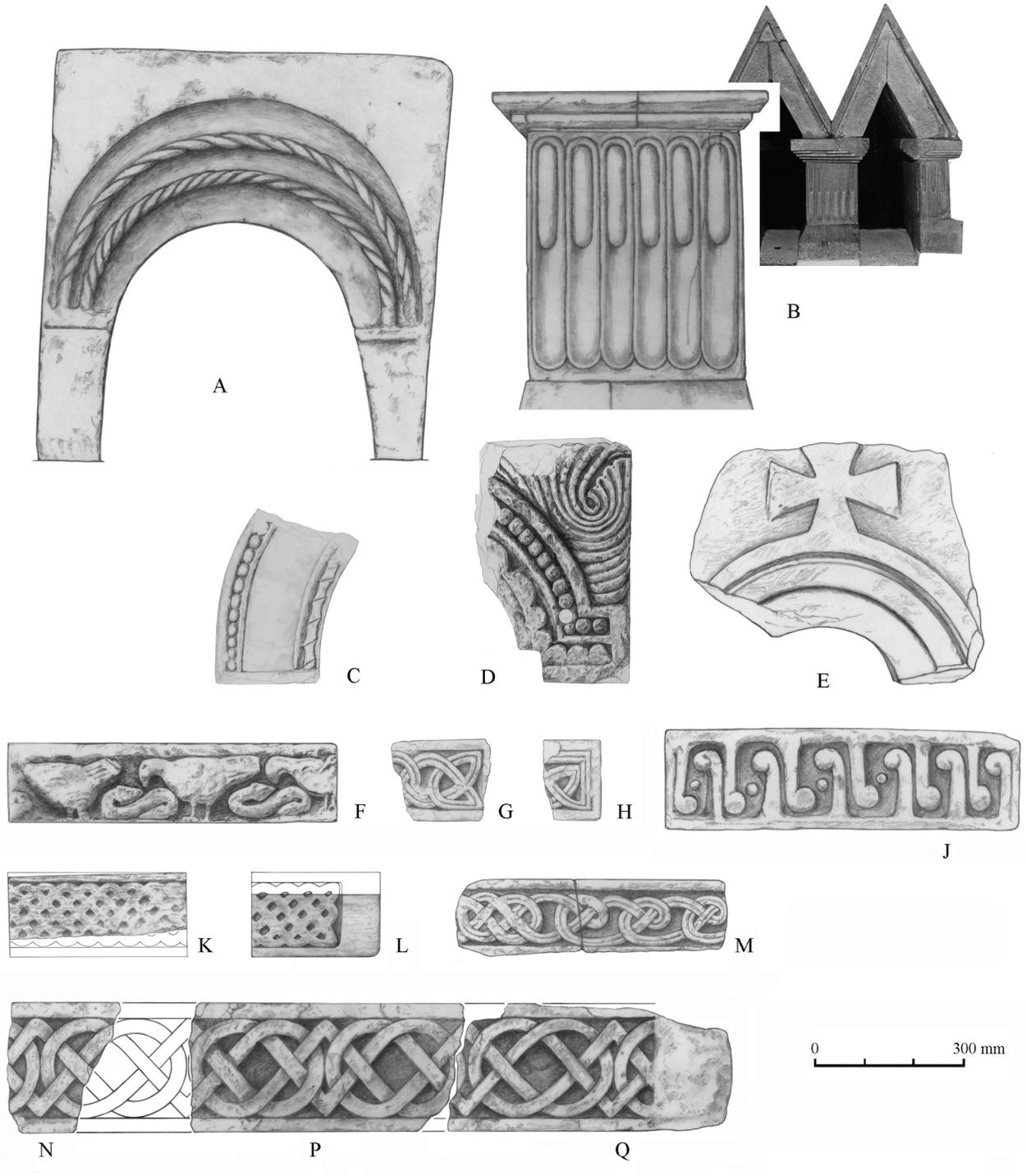


FIGURE 20  
 Openings and string courses (*ninth to eleventh century*): A – Somerford Keynes 2; B – Deerhurst St Mary 23; C, D – Gloucester St Oswald 17, 16; E – Coventry 2; F – Wroxeter St Andrew 4; G, H – Deerhurst St Mary 22, 21; J – Cradley 1; K, L, M – Bisley All Saints 3, 2, 4; N, P, Q – Shrewsbury Mardol 2, 3, 1

rows of cable-mouldings above the narrow south doorway at Somerford Keynes, Gloucestershire (no. 2, Fig. 18A, Ills. 431–3), is also dated to the tenth century.

A tenth- or early eleventh-century window-head (or possibly part of a screen) from Coventry, Warwickshire (no. 2, Fig. 20E, Ills. 589–91) is decorated with an arch surmounted by an equal-arm cross, all in shallow relief. The face of the arch is divided into three concentric bands by two broad grooves rather similar to those on the imposts at Miserden (see below).

Animal-head label stops of late tenth- or early eleventh-century date survive at Ripple 1–2 and Wyre Piddle 1–2, both Worcestershire (Ills. 648–51, 702–12). A small snarling animal-head label stop, together with a fine label stop in the form of a dog's head and fragments of another were recovered during the St Oswald's excavations. The small head is of tenth-century date (Gloucester St Oswald 18, Ills. 326–9), while the other fragments (nos. 27–9, Ills. 470–6) could be of any date from the tenth century to the twelfth century. Two eleventh-century animal-head label stops have been reset either side of the south doorway at South Cerney, Gloucestershire (nos. 3–4, Ills. 480–3).

An eleventh-century stone from Barton-on-the-Heath, Warwickshire, has been re-cut partly across the earlier carving to form a thirteenth-century window-head (no. 1, Ill. 617). This stone may have already been reused before this date (see above under Grave-markers, p. 47). The south doorway in the tower at Cradley, Herefordshire, has a curved stone lintel incised with non-radial false-voussoirs which suggests that this is a reused eleventh-century lintel (no. 2, Ill. 508), while small windows carved from single stones at Ampney St Mary 2 and Coln Rogers 5 (both Gloucestershire) are probably also similar in date (Ills. 95–6).

One of a group of carved stones dated to the first half of the eleventh century from Bibury, Gloucestershire (no. 5, Fig. 18J, Ill. 40) is now set in a pilaster on the north side of the nave. This stone is normally said to be a gravestone, but it is narrow and straight-sided and may instead be a carved panel from the jamb of an opening. A similar stone from Broadwell, Gloucestershire, may also be a carved jamb stone (no. 1, Ills. 87–8).

Carved capitals and bases, together with shafts, imposts and abaci, have been found in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, but none was recorded in the other three counties (Figs. 21 and 22). This must, in part, be related to the small quantities of any

sort of architectural carving found in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Warwickshire, but this in turn is simply a reflection of the relative quantities of carving across the study area (see Chapter III, The Distribution of the Sculpture, p. 23).

A tenth-century foliate capital, in the shape of an inverted cone, survives at Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire (no. 3, Fig. 21E, Ills. 713–20). Stepped abaci were found in the St Oswald's excavations in Gloucester (Gloucester St Oswald 19–22, Figs. 21C–D, Ills. 330–45), together with acanthus-decorated sections of imposts or friezes (nos. 13–14, Figs. 18D–E, Ills. 313–15), an engaged half-round shaft covered with a broad-leaved plant-scroll (no. 15, Fig. 18G, Ills. 316–19), and an engaged, bellied, baluster shaft with tapering capital and base (no. 23, Ill. 346). In Worcester Cathedral a suite of twenty-four tenth-century capitals and bases (nos. 3a–x, Figs. 21F–J, Ills. 677–701) have been reused in the south slype. They are all lathe-turned and are rounded or shaped like inverted cones, with horizontal mouldings and bands of fine, vertically incised hatching. Each has a narrow collar or astragal between the capital or base and the engaged shaft, and the whole ensemble, together with reused sections of hood-moulding, almost certainly came from one of the late Anglo-Saxon cathedral churches on the site.

Also from Worcester Cathedral comes a small animal head (no. 1, Ills. 668–71) that was originally part of a larger carving, perhaps a late tenth- or early eleventh-century panel or the adapted volute of a Corinthian-style capital. A final carved stone from Worcester Cathedral (no. 2, Fig. 18F, Ills. 672–6), reused as foundation material for a column base, is part of a tenth-century foliate- and interlace-decorated engaged shaft with a central, V-shaped groove designed to hold what was probably the vertical panel of a screen. An interlace-decorated stone shaft with a similar groove down one side survives at Llantwit Major in south-east Wales, together with a piece of a second, similar stone, and these might also be the supports for a screen (Redknap and Lewis 2007, 390–4, cat. and ill. G67 and G68).

Standing in the churchyard at Syde, Gloucestershire, on the north side of the church, there is the upper part of a heavily weathered, slender column with an integral capital carved with two tiers of foliate decoration, probably eleventh-century (Syde 1, Fig. 22G, Ills. 441–5). Three capitals found in a late-medieval pigeon house at Frocester Court, Gloucestershire (Frocester 1–3, Figs. 22E–F, Ills. 248–51) are parts of an eleventh-century church (probably

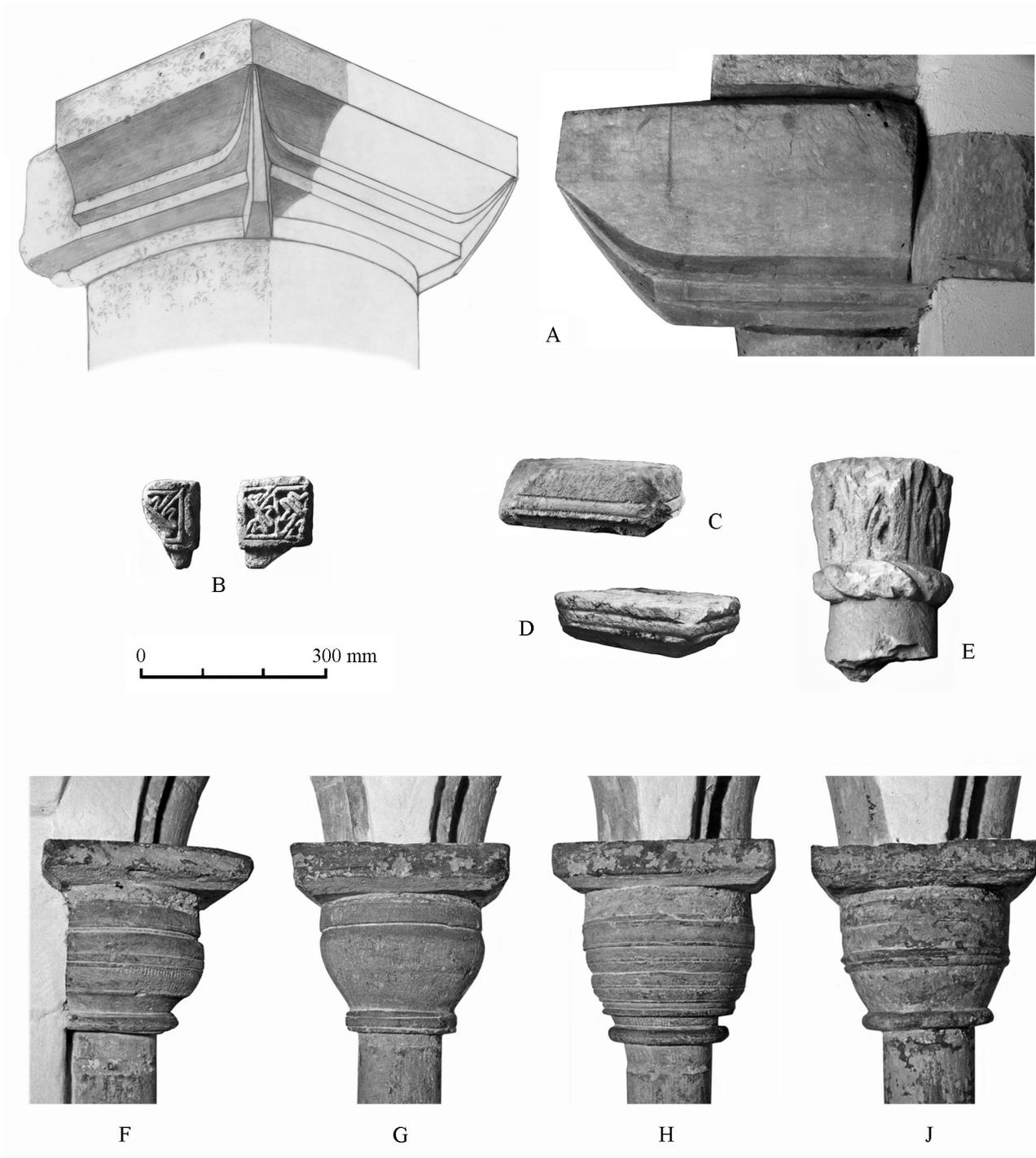


FIGURE 21

Capitals, imposts and abacii (*late eighth to tenth century*): A – Deerhurst St Mary 24; B – Berkeley Castle 4; C, D – Gloucester St Oswald 19, 20; E – Wyre Piddle 3; F, G, H, J – Worcester Cathedral 3a, 3b, 3c, 3f

from the ancient parish church of St Peter's) and two are carved with palmettes on one face. At Miserden, Gloucestershire, the hood-mouldings and voussoirs of the arches above the eleventh-century north and south doors are carried on wide, flat imposts carved with broad, shallow horizontal grooves (nos. 1–2, Fig. 22L, Ills. 386–91). At Bibury, Gloucestershire, the capitals of the chancel arch (nos. 8–9, Figs. 22A–B, Ills. 43–4) are trapezoidal and carved with spreading fans of broad-leaved plants, while at Coln Rogers and Daglingworth (both Gloucestershire) the chancel capitals are square at the top and chamfered on the lower edge, and are decorated with heavy, round pelleting (Coln Rogers 1–2, Fig. 22K, Ills. 89–94; Daglingworth 5–6, Fig. 22J, Ills. 107–9, 113–15). The capitals of the south doorway at Daglingworth (nos. 7–8, Figs. 22C–D, Ills. 110–12, 116–18) are similar in shape, but are carved with wheat-ear ornament.

Eleventh-century sundials survive at Coln Rogers 6, Daglingworth 11, Saintbury 2 and Stowell 1, all Gloucestershire (Ills. 490–5), Castle Frome 1, Herefordshire (Ill. 537) and Pirton 1, Worcestershire (Ills. 730–1) This last has incised letter-forms around the lower edge.

In Clodock, Herefordshire, there is a tenth-/eleventh-century incised inscription on a small panel, now preserved above the pulpit (no. 1, p. 285, Ill. 506). There are mid eleventh-century dedicatory inscriptions on panels from Odda's Chapel, Deerhurst, Gloucestershire (Deerhurst Odda's Chapel 1 and 2, pp. 190–7, Ills. 226–31, 232–3), and there is also a panel that probably carried a painted inscription of late tenth-century date high in the west end of St Mary's church (Deerhurst St Mary 6, Ill. 150).

The final group of architectural carvings are those on panels. The ninth-century panels from Gloucester Cathedral and St Andrew's, Pershore have already been mentioned (p. 54), but a large tenth-century fragment from St Oswald's Priory (Gloucester St Oswald 12, Ills. 310–12), on which survives a section of the border of a large roundel, is also probably from a panel. The late tenth-/early eleventh-century ring-knot at Lower Swell, Gloucestershire (no. 1, Ill. 477), now set beside the eastern splay of a window, is carved on the face of a stone which is so deep that it may have originally been part of a panelled façade decoration. At Beverstone, Gloucestershire, there is a large, wedge-shaped panel of late tenth-century date, bearing a carving of Christ with delicate, floating drapery and carrying a long-stemmed cross (Beverstone 1, Ills. 25–6). This panel is now set high in the south wall of the twelfth-century tower, but originally it must have been elsewhere.

The tapering shape looks like an over-sized keystone, and this may be an indication that the carving was originally set centrally over an archway, perhaps the chancel arch.

There is a crucifixion panel of late tenth or early eleventh-century date at Wormington, Gloucestershire (no. 1, Ills. 447–8), which is now set in the south aisle and from which the hands are missing. This last — and the large feet of the figure which create a sense of exaggerated perspective — suggests that the carving, on a larger panel or more likely on more than one panel, was originally designed to be set at a high level, perhaps above a doorway or above the chancel arch.

On the west face of the east gable of the nave at Bitton, Gloucestershire, in just such a position as posited for the Beverstone and Wormington carvings, there are the remains of a similarly dated, larger-than-life rood. The feet, on a sloping *suppedaneum* above a writhing sea-serpent, still survive *in situ* (Bitton 1, Ill. 67) Elsewhere in the church, recovered from the blocking of a later doorway, there is an arm of the crucified Christ (no. 2, Ills. 68–75) and the head of one of the supporting figures, a woman who is almost certainly Mary (no. 3, Ills. 76–83). All the elements are carved in high relief and the original rood must have been very dramatic. To the right of the *in situ* feet there is a panel, now set under the sloping edge of the present roof, which carries traces of a head and shoulders with radiating lines around the head (no. 4, Ill. 84). This might be the supporting personification of *Luna*.

Two elements of a similar, large-scale rood survive on the wall above the chancel arch at Bibury, Gloucestershire. These are also late tenth/early eleventh century in date and consist of the cut-back remains of a tall narrow figure, seemingly with both hands raised, on the north side (Bibury 6, Ill. 41), and a two-celled building carved onto a panel on the south side (no. 7, Ill. 42). The walls of this fictive building were originally outlined with pilasters. The roofs are steep, and the sloping gable of the lower roof carries an elaborate, curving, foliated finial.

At Bromyard, Herefordshire, there is a small tenth-/eleventh-century panel carved with the figure of St Peter (no. 1, Ill. 502). This panel is now set fairly high above the south door beside a cross in relief that might be a consecration cross or part of a gravestone (no. 2, Ill. 530). The St Peter panel is essentially rectangular and bounded by a plain moulding, but the lower border is carefully curved upwards to the left of St Peter's feet. This suggests that the panel, probably with other carved panels of similar size, was originally

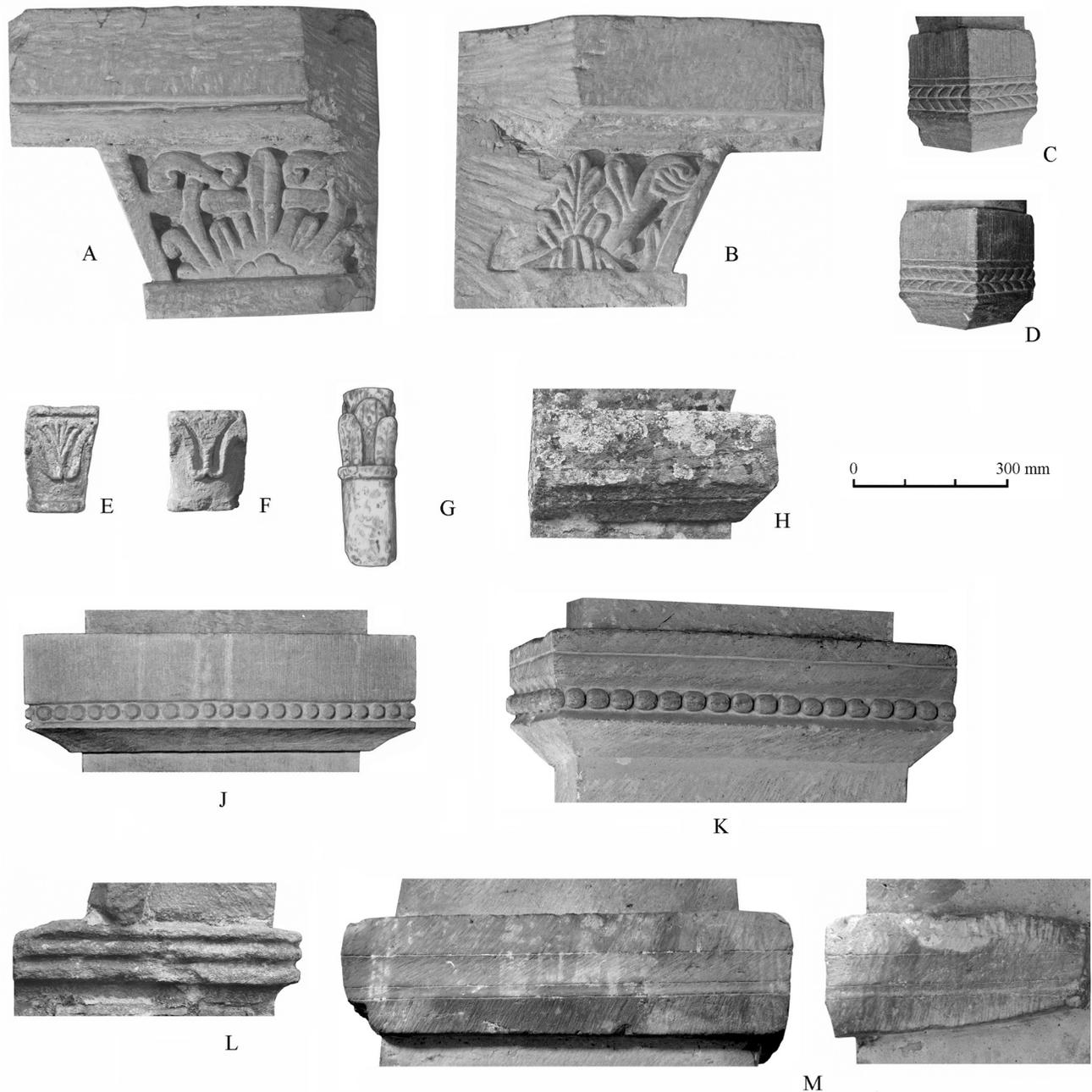


FIGURE 22

Capitals and imposts (*first half eleventh century*): A, B – Bibury 9, 8; C, D – Daglingworth 8, 7; E, F – Frocester 1, 2; G – Syde 1; H, J – Daglingworth 9, 5; K – Coln Rogers 2; L – Miserden 2; M – Deerhurst Odda's Chapel 4

set closely above an arch in a screen or, as with the previous carvings, above the chancel arch.

At South Cerney, Gloucestershire, a panel has been set within a separate twelfth-century arched frame to create a false tympanum above the south door. The

panel is, however, clearly earlier than the frame and has been trimmed down a little to fit (no. 2, Ills. 437–40). The panel carries the carving of a Christ in Majesty within a mandorla supported by two bearded figures (presumably Moses and Elijah or St Peter and St Paul)

above a second image of Christ Harrowing Hell and rescuing the elect. This lower figure, in particular, is very similar to a late Anglo-Saxon manuscript example in the Tiberius Psalter, and it seems probable that the panel should be dated to the first half of the eleventh century like the similar Harrowing of Hell from Bristol Cathedral (Cramp 2006, 145–6, ill. 198).

One set of panels remain, at Daglingworth, Gloucestershire. These are now set into the walls of the nave and have been given a wide range of dates, some as late as the twelfth century. However the context in which they were discovered shows that they must be of early eleventh-century or late tenth-century date (see Chapter IX, p. 108). There are three large panels, two depicting Christ — one crucified and one in majesty — and a third showing St Peter with keys (Daglingworth 2–4, Ills. 101–2, 103–4, 105–6). A fourth, rather smaller crucifixion panel, was, until comparatively recently, set high in the external face of the chancel's eastern gable (no. 1, Ill. 100). The three large panels were all cut-down for reuse in the jambs of the late Anglo-Saxon chancel arch, and must therefore belong to an earlier phase of the church. The most likely explanation is that the panels were set in a screen across the chancel which was removed when other changes were made to the church around the middle of the eleventh century, and replaced by a more normal arch.

Like the Wormington 1 crucifixion panel (see above) and the Virgin and Child panel from Inglesham, Wiltshire (Cramp 2006, 217–19, ill. 453–4), aspects of the Daglingworth carvings appear to be awkward or out-of-scale. It is suggested elsewhere (Chapter III, *The Distribution of the Sculpture*, p. 27) that all these carvings (Daglingworth, Inglesham and Wormington) may be the work of one carver who used distortion to create emphasis.

## CHURCH FURNISHINGS

Within the survey area there are a small number of carved objects that are best described as church furnishings. The largest group consists of fonts (see below, p. 62), but there are also fragments, including the small painted cross-head from what might be an elaborate tomb at Deerhurst, Gloucestershire (Deerhurst St Mary 1, Ills. 123–8); the eleventh-century carving of opposed, Ringerike-style animal heads from Somerford Keynes, Gloucestershire (no. 1, Ills. 426–8), that is probably a grave-marker but might perhaps be the high back of an ornate throne; and

the fragment of a small bowl of eleventh-century date from Bisley, Gloucestershire (Bisley All Saints 6, Ills. 732–4) carved with figures under arcade arches and too small to be a font.

The well-known carving from Hanley Castle, Worcestershire (the 'Lechmere Stone') also falls into this category (Hanley Castle 1, p. 357, Ills. 635–45). As noted above, this round-headed stone is of ninth-century date and carries a carving of Christ on one face and a wheel-headed cross with a baluster-shaped shaft on the other, flanked by curving, foliated stems. On the narrow faces and across the curving top of the stone there are finely carved plant-scrolls with lobed leaves and berry bunches very similar to the plant-scrolls around the top and bottom of the bowl of the Deerhurst font (no. 3, Ills. 134, 137). The Lechmere Stone is normally described as a gravestone or grave-marker, but it is complete with nothing to hold it in the ground and no jointing-socket in the base. It is also largely unweathered, indicating that it was originally set up inside a building. From the front and back the shape certainly looks like a grave-marker, but from the side it can be seen that the stone has been carefully flared-out at the base for additional stability. Rather than a grave-marker, this carving should be understood as something designed to stand on an interior flat surface. Such a surface might be provided by a pedestal or raised platform, a screen, or a flat-topped epistyle beam. Baldwin Brown compared its general form to a classical antefix (Brown 1931, 226–8). The fact that the plant-scrolls on the sides of the stone rise to meet across the top might suggest that this carving was designed to be seen from a relatively low level, but the curving surface of the top of the stone means that some of the upper part of the plant-scrolls can in fact be seen even when viewed obliquely from below. The present author believes that the Lechmere Stone is best seen as a three-dimensional sacred image, presumably originally painted and set either behind the altar (perhaps in a similar position to many reliquary shrines in the early Carolingian period — Crook 2000, 68–79; Hare and Kneen forthcoming), or in front of the altar on something like an epistyle beam, part of a screen defining the western limits of the sanctuary or the choir. Two recent articles by Richard Gem and Tomás Ó Carragáin offer valuable insights into the links between liturgical requirements and the structural remains, especially the internal divisions, of Anglo-Saxon and Irish early-medieval churches (Gem 2005; Ó Carragáin 2009). Richard Gem has also described 'a beam carrying the images of the saints' set above the entrance to the presbytery of St Peter's in

Rome, work carried out in the mid 770s by Pope Hadrian (Gem 2011, 27).

Three carved stones are probably parts of stone shrines or altars. Berkeley Castle 3, Gloucestershire (Ills. 19–20), consists of a large, rectangular block with three deeply carved, mandorla-shaped recesses across the front surmounted by similar but circular recesses. The recesses are outlined with half-round borders. Between the recesses, there are inward-curving panels which contain spreading fans of broad leaves growing from spiral volutes above loosely twisted cable ornament. The fans of leaves are somewhat similar to those on a small panel from Turkdean, Gloucestershire (Ill. 489), although the latter are more slender and do not have the volutes. Half of a fourth recess survives on the right-hand edge of the stone, indicating that the complete panel was originally formed from two stones and that there were probably originally seven recesses. It is suggested that this was the side panel of a shrine or perhaps an altar frontal of late tenth-century date, although Jeffrey West (pers. comm.) believes that elements of the foliate decoration both at Berkeley and at Turkdean might indicate a later date.

A small tenth-century fragment from St Oswald's Priory (Gloucester St Oswald 11, Ills. 308–9), carved with interlocking circles, may also be part of a shrine.

At Rous Lench, Worcestershire, there is a large, damaged, rectangular block with spiralling swirls of broad-strand interlace on one end and a scene of rampant foliage across the front (no. 1, p. 363, Ills. 652–7). In the middle of all this lush profusion walks the small figure of a man, with a sickle in one hand, and he reaches up with his other hand to feed two large, long-tailed birds, probably peacocks, with a fruiting stem (or an ear of corn) that he has cut. Across the top of the stone there is a large, serpentine shape. The image would seem to be a depiction of Adam before the Fall, or perhaps Christ the Harvester gathering the wheat from among the weeds and sharing the harvest with the elect. Two faces of the block are badly damaged and no carving survives, but the other two faces seem to be largely complete, and this indicates that little of the height of the block has been lost. This being so, the lack of even the lower part of a socket in the top suggests that this could not have been a cross-base. Rather it would seem to be a pedestal, perhaps for an altar, and it is eleventh century in date.

#### FURTHER THOUGHTS ON FONTS

In the discussion section of the Deerhurst font (Deerhurst St Mary 3a–b, p. 163, Ills. 132–44) it is suggested

that the bowl of the font might originally have stood on its own, perhaps on a low platform similar to the eleventh-century circular plinth excavated in the middle of the nave at St Mary de Lode church in Gloucester (Bryant and Heighway 2003, 117–22, figs. 15–17). This suggestion assumes that the present stem of the font was originally part of a round-shafted cross (see above, p. 49). On the early ninth-century coped slab from Wirksworth in Derbyshire there is a scene in which just such a bowl stands on the floor, with a disciple standing in it while Christ washes his feet (Hawkes 1995, fig. 4). Richard Bailey, in a paper that included an analysis of the iconography of the Wirksworth slab, wrote about the linking of the foot-washing with baptism and with the Eucharist in early Christian thought (see catalogue discussion, p. 167; Bailey 1990, 7–8, 12–14; but also Hawkes 1995, 247–9, 262–4).

There has been much debate about the presence or otherwise of fonts in Anglo-Saxon churches. In 2006 Rosemary Cramp offered a detailed summary of the case for the pre-Conquest dates of a western group of four fonts and suggested that the scarcity of Anglo-Saxon fonts in general might be explained by 'the continuation of use of lead or other metal forms, like the so-called lead tanks of the Roman period ... Alternatively baptism could have utilised wooden tubs' (Cramp 2006, 38). More recently John Blair has added considerably to the debate by exploring various strands of the 'prehistory' of English fonts (Blair 2010). With the help of Scandinavian parallels Blair seeks to surround the precociously early Deerhurst font with vessels of wood or metal as well as stone.

Three of the fonts included in Cramp's summary are Potterne (Wiltshire), Wells (Somerset), and Deerhurst 3 (Gloucestershire). Table 1 below compares the sizes of these three fonts, together with several early fonts from Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Warwickshire, plus the fragment of a bowl with figures under arches from Bisley All Saints, Gloucestershire (no. 6, Ills. 732–4) to show why this is probably *not* a font (see p. 381). Also included are four Roman column bases, a Roman capital and a Roman column that have all been reused as fonts, with one at Woolstaston, Shropshire (Ills. 756–7) being possibly an early affusion or aspersion font, while another at Kenchester, Herefordshire (Ills. 735–6) is so small that it is suggested that this, like the Bisley fragment, might first have been used as a stoup or a lavabo bowl (see p. 382) or perhaps as a stand for a larger detachable bowl, as suggested by Blair with reference to several other vessels including Poltimore (Devon), Lulsley (Worcestershire) and two fragments from Godalming

(Surrey) (Blair 2010, 164–70, figs. 8b–c, 10c–d). In the table (and in Appendix K, pp. 381–91) the three vessels that were probably stoups have been listed first, followed by the fonts in chronological order by form (cylindrical tub fonts; square tub fonts; tapering or cone-shaped fonts and bowl-shaped fonts). It is

suggested that the majority of fonts listed belong to the tenth or more probably the eleventh century. Some clearly belong to the Overlap period but are included because they show continuity of form and decoration into the later decades of the eleventh century and beyond.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Height of bowl</i>	<i>Internal depth of bowl</i>	<i>External diameter or width</i>	<i>Internal diameter of bowl at rim</i>
<b>Stoups and possible stoups</b>						
Bisley 6 (frag)	11th cent	Glos.	19.5cm	unknown	60cm (est.)	33.5cm (est.)
Kenchester 1 reused Roman column	11th cent or earlier	Heref.	55cm	13cm	44cm	27.5cm
Michaelchurch reused Roman altar	11th/12th cent or earlier	Heref.	46cm	12cm	39 × 25cm	22 × 18cm
<b>Cylindrical tub fonts</b>						
Deerhurst 3	9th cent	Glos.	51.4cm	36cm	75cm	60cm
Wells	10/11th?	Som.	61cm	c.35cm	73cm	58cm
Bosbury 1	11th cent or earlier	Heref.	38cm	26cm	75 × 66cm	58 × 51cm
Edgmond 1	11/12th	Shrop.	68.5cm	c.30cm	74cm	46cm
Preston 1 reused Roman column base	11/12th	Glos.	52cm	25cm	72cm	50cm
<b>Square tub font</b>						
Staunton 1	mid- to late-11th	Glos.	72.5cm	30cm	59.5 × 57cm	50 × 45cm
<b>Tapering or cone-shaped fonts</b>						
Potterne	10/11th	Wilts.	67cm	36cm	88cm	66cm
Hatfield 1	11th?	Heref.	68cm	27cm	64cm	49cm
Smethcott 1 reused Roman capital	11th cent or earlier	Shrop.	54cm	30cm	94 × 62cm	62.5 × 44.5cm
<b>Bowl-shaped fonts</b>						
Woolstaston (lower font) Roman base reused as very shallow bowl	first reuse possibly 6th cent?	Shrop.	50cm	8.5cm	95.5 × 97cm	71.5 × 73cm
Curdworth 1 (lower font)	11th?	Warks.	41cm	unknown	76.5 × 78cm	unknown
Claverley 1	11th?	Shrop.	48cm	36cm	77cm	54cm
Shrewsbury Abbey reused Roman base	mid-11th or earlier	Shrop.	46cm	21cm	113cm	57cm
Bucknell 1	11th/12th	Shrop.	50cm	26.5cm	72–74cm	53cm
<b>Bowl fonts with short stems</b>						
Wroxeter 5 reused Roman column base	10th/11th	Shrop.	73cm	38cm	111cm	73cm

TABLE 1

Dimensions and shapes of some early fonts from the western Midlands showing how they compare to the ninth-century Deerhurst font and to two other possible Anglo-Saxon fonts from Potterne and Wells. The fonts include reused Roman column bases and capitals. All of these fonts could originally have been set on the ground or on low plinths. The font from Woolstaston (Shropshire) is so shallow that it might be an affusion or aspersion font for adult baptism. The table also shows the dimensional differences between the fonts and three vessels that are probably stoups.

Some of the examples are similar in form to early bowl-shaped fonts found in the Celtic West, such as Boscastle and Tintagel (Cramp 2006, 38, quoting Ann Preston-Jones). Furthermore, the carved surfaces of the bowls at Wells and Deerhurst are divided into eight panels (for a discussion of the symbolic relationship of the number eight to baptism and resurrection see Bailey 2005, 21–3). The font in a ninth-century ivory depicting the baptism of Clovis is probably a half-sunken/half-raised structure similar to that, for example, at Fréjus in south-east France which has steps down inside and a low, parapet wall (Duval *et al.* 1991, 70–1). However, two ivory panels from the cover of the contemporary Drogo Sacramentary and two baptismal scenes incorporated into a large initial letter from folio 51v of the Sacramentary show straight-sided tub fonts that are entirely above ground (Hubert *et al.* 1970, 233–6, ill. 214; Duval *et al.* 1991, 84–5). With the exception of the stoup recut from a Roman altar at Michaelchurch, Herefordshire (Ills. 737–9) and the probable stoups from Bisley and Kenchester (see above), all of the vessels included in the table below could have been set on raised platforms or on the ground just like domestic wooden or metal bowls,

tubs and barrels, or like the more formal examples in the Drogo Sacramentary. Such an arrangement also appears on the lower panel of an eighth-century Anglo-Saxon ivory carving now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. On this panel John the Baptist is shown bending over to baptise Christ, but Christ is not an adult but a child sitting in a round tub on the ground. An angel looks on approvingly in the background (Beckwith 1972, 119, cat. 5, ill. 20).

If Anglo-Saxon fonts were set on the ground or on a low platform, this might offer one explanation for their wholesale replacement with the stemmed fonts of the late eleventh/twelfth century. Such a change would have been an understandable, if rather belated, response to the fact that for some centuries infant baptism had become the norm and a higher level font would, therefore, have been more liturgically convenient. It is inconceivable that the Deerhurst font was the only font in ninth-century England, but if most of the contemporary baptismal vessels were made from wood or metal, as proposed by Cramp and Blair, then this would offer another good reason for their very low rate of survival.