

## NOTES

*Some lost Anglo-Saxon inscriptions from St. Nicholas' church, Ipswich.*<sup>1</sup> It is the purpose of this note to examine some recently found drawings of inscribed stones from St. Nicholas' church, Ipswich (Plates VII and VIII). With one exception (see below) the stones illustrated in these drawings are now lost. There are, however, some Anglo-Saxon inscribed stones still preserved in St. Nicholas' church. The history of these, and also the texts inscribed on them, will be described in order to give the likely context of the stones now lost. The artistic affinities and dating of the remaining stones were discussed in an article by Miss K. J. Galbraith, 'Early Sculpture at St. Nicholas' Church, Ipswich' in these *Proceedings*, Vol. xxxi, part 2 for 1968, pp. 172-84 and Plates XXIV-XXVII (hereafter referred to as Galbraith). A fuller description of the existing stones than is possible here, with a comprehensive bibliography, will appear in the present author's Hand-list, from which the numbers Ipswich I, II, etc. are taken.<sup>2</sup>

As early as 1764 there were two Anglo-Saxon inscribed stones known in Ipswich.<sup>3</sup> They were Ipswich I, containing a carving of St. Michael and the dragon with appropriate descriptive texts, and Ipswich II, containing a carving of a boar with what was probably a dedication text (Galbraith, Pl. XXIV-XXVI). Ipswich II has a cross carved on its reverse, and this can be seen in Plate VIII, lower figure. In 1848 church alterations were being undertaken, during which Ipswich III was found. It consists of three stones forming a group of figures, probably apostles (Galbraith, Pl. XXVII). Two of the stones now contain incomplete descriptive texts and the third may have done so before being broken.

These new finds of 1848, along with an account of the removal of the two earlier stones, were described by Dr. H. P. Drummond.<sup>4</sup> He also described other inscribed stones found in 1848, and his account deserves quoting in full:

Beside those represented in the plate I possess sketches of some other fragments which although of no great value will

<sup>1</sup> I should like to express my thanks to Miss K. J. Galbraith of Birkbeck College, University of London, for bringing these sketches to my attention. I am also most grateful to Miss P. M. Butler, Curator of Ipswich Museums, for her co-operation and help over these drawings and for permission to reproduce the plates.

<sup>2</sup> *Hand-list of Anglo-Saxon Non-runic Inscriptions*. Cambridge University Press. (Cambridge, 1971).

<sup>3</sup> J. Kirby, *The Suffolk Traveller* . . . 2nd ed. (London, 1764), p. 46.

<sup>4</sup> H. P. Drummond, 'Church of St. Nicholas, Ipswich', *Suffolk Archaeological Association Original Papers*, Part III, Nov. 1848, pp. 21-8.

be preserved by being inserted in the walls of the church.\* These figures seem, from the inscriptions on them, to be intended to represent some of the apostles, one of them probably St. James the Less. They were coloured red, purple, and green. I think they were originally arranged around a tympanum, in the manner represented in Rickman's Gothic Architecture, belonging to Brinsop Church, Herefordshire. The top of the stones were once semi-circular, as I found the letters L.V.S. in the same characters on a fragment of such form amongst the rubbish.

\*We are indebted to my brother-in-law Dr. Edward Clarke, for the accompanying spirited and accurate drawings, transferred by Mr. Cowell's Anastatic Press, in this town, which affords great facility for the diffusion of antiquarian sketches, at a moderate cost.<sup>5</sup>

The illustrations in the article are, however, only of those three inscribed stones which still exist, Ipswich I, II, III, along with some architectural fragments and the earthenware jug (see below).

It seems likely, however, that some at least of Drummond's other sketches are among the newly found drawings, although the stones he described with texts 'L.V.S.', and S in the form of a Greek sigma, do not appear to be amongst them. These newly found drawings came to light in 1969 in the Cuming Museum, Southwark, London S.E.17. They were found in a box together with some labels from the pre-war display. They are likely to have been packed up with miscellaneous documents and labels of specimens just after the last war.<sup>6</sup> The drawings are now preserved in Ipswich Museum.

An examination of these drawings does not make clear whether they were copied from the original stones or from published illustrations. The two objects illustrated in the newly found drawings which also appear in Drummond's article (the back of Ipswich II and the earthenware jug) are so similar as to suggest either that the drawings were traced from the article, or that the woodblocks for the article illustrations were made from the drawings. However the handwriting of the captions does not appear to be identical in both, and certainty is not therefore possible. Nor is it clear whether or not Drummond ever published his other sketches. There is no mention of these in likely periodicals around 1850, nor in contemporary books on Ipswich or Suffolk topography or antiquities.<sup>7</sup> Although it

<sup>5</sup> Drummond, *op. cit.* p. 25.

<sup>6</sup> I am grateful to Miss G. Johnson, Curator of the Cuming Museum, for this information.

<sup>7</sup> The following periodicals have been checked without success: *Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers*; *Norfolk Arch.* . . . ; *Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.* . . . ; *Arch. Jour.*; *Jour. Brit. Arch. Assoc.*; *Trans. Essex Arch. Soc.*

seems probable that Drummond's other sketches were not published, this cannot be accepted as finally proved.

Drummond further reported the discovery of some earthenware in the foundation of part of a wall which was removed.<sup>8</sup> One piece, a brown-glazed jug of gritty greyware, is also illustrated in his article. It is there stated to be in the possession of one Mr. Ringham. It was bequeathed to the Ipswich Museum in 1891 by Mr. William Brown of Gippeswyk Hall (reg. no. 1920-53.70). It is now handleless but is illustrated in one of the newly found drawings with its handle still intact (Pl. VIII).

The texts of the stones on the newly found drawings can best be interpreted in the light of the existing inscriptions. These texts are therefore transliterated first.<sup>9</sup> Ipswich I reads: i. (: ) *her : s̄ce (m)iha(e)l : feht pið ðane : draca : (or dracā :)*, 'Here St. Michael fights (or fought) against the dragon'. ii. (*sc*)*e (m)ihael :*, 'St. Michael'. Text i describes the whole scene, text ii the left hand figure, and text iii might have been expected to describe the right hand figure, but is now illegible. Ipswich II reads + *in dedi:cat(ione) : e(cl)e(sie) : om(n...)r(v)m* —, and is perhaps to be translated, '+ At the dedication of the church of all (?saints)'. Ipswich III reads: — *to(l)us(:)* and, — *ostolus*, presumably the endings of *apostolus*, preceded by personal names of differing lengths. The texts are complete as they stand and the rest must have been on stone now lost. There is too little remaining of the third stone to tell whether or not it was also inscribed.

The texts of the stones on the newly found drawings are as follows:

#### PLATE VII

No. 1: — *DEI : // DEXTE // (...)ED // (...) // NAOS // AREN—*

This reads, — *dei : dexte(...)ed(...) naosaren—*. It appears to begin with *dei dexter* 'right hand of God' and might contain *naosaren(us)* 'the Nazarene', although such a spelling of the latter is unparalleled. The phrase *dexter dei*, in various cases, appears with some frequency in the Vulgate, but it is not recorded in the reverse

<sup>8</sup> Drummond, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

<sup>9</sup> Transliteration of the texts of the newly found drawings is according to the following system: the letters are transliterated as capitals with abbreviation marks appearing as '—' and punctuation as ':'. Ends of lines of texts, and ends of complete texts are shown by '//'. 'A' indicates a letter damaged but legible; '(A)' a damaged letter where the restoration is fairly certain; '(...)' four etc. letters lost; '(...)' an indefinite number of letters lost in the text; '—' complete loss of text at the beginning or end. The second transliteration into words (and the only transliteration of Ipswich I, II and III) is based on the foregoing in that bracketed letters remain so and no punctuation is inserted; for convenience, however, obvious contextual letters are inserted.

order, *dei dexter*; nor is it found in conjunction with *Nazarenus*. It may be, of course, that the letters should be read in a different order, but this does not seem to make any better sense. The significance of this fragment appears, therefore, to be conjectural. An Anglo-Saxon date is quite in accordance with its epigraphic evidence.

No. 2: —TOLV—

No. 3: +IA—

These are obviously part of a similar text, or perhaps of similar texts, to Ipswich III. If they are from one text they can be read, + *ia(...)*tolv—, possibly + *ia(cobus apos)*tolv(s) to fit in with Drummond's remark already quoted, that one of the fragments probably represents St. James the Less. Alternatively they could be part of two texts naming apostles. By comparison with Ipswich III, these texts are likely to be of Anglo-Saxon date.

The other drawing on this plate (un-numbered) comes from Coddendam church, Suffolk. It is stated to be from the battlements of the north aisle and these battlements, complete with carvings, still exist. They date from the late 15th century. It is difficult, without scaling the church wall, to ascertain whether it is a drawing of one of the carvings *in situ*, or whether the carving came originally from there, was removed and then copied, and has now been replaced by another stone. The drawing of the carving is perfectly consistent with a late 15th century date.

#### PLATE VIII

The jug and the lower stone (the reverse of Ipswich II) have already been discussed.

No. 4: —RIA(...) // ACOR—

This reads: —*ria (...)*acor—. This text is too fragmentary to be meaningful, although one could conjecture that —*ria* might be the ending of a word (e.g. *Maria*), while *acor*—, or *cor*—, might be the beginning of a new word.

No. 5: IVD(. ...) // MAR(...) // M(.)—

This reads: *ivd(...)* *mar(...)* *m(.)*—. The first word could be one of several (e.g. *ivda*, *ivdea*, etc.), as could the second, supposing that *mar*— does begin a word (e.g. *marcus*, *mare*, *maria* etc.). As with the other text on this plate, however, its significance is unclear. The dates of these texts are uncertain, but again the epigraphic evidence is in accordance with an Anglo-Saxon date.

From the foregoing account it will be obvious what an important discovery these new drawings are. They are also tantalising

in that they, taken together with Drummond's account, suggest that there were many other finds made in 1848 which are now lost. It seems unlikely that any more drawings will turn up, except by a similar chance; nor does there seem to be any sign of further stones in the fabric of St. Nicholas' church. It is a humbling exercise to question, as we must, how many of the present assumptions about Anglo-Saxon inscriptions would remain valid if all 19th century finds had been preserved.

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*Heraldic Carvings in Yaxley Church.* On a visit to this church my attention was drawn by the organist, Mr. William Cornelious, to three wooden carvings stored in the room over the north porch. The largest, 3 ft. 3 ins. wide by 1 ft. 9 ins. high by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ins. thick, contains in its centre a shield, 14 ins. by 11 ins., showing the arms of Yaxley, quarterly of six, impaling Bedingfield, quarterly of twelve (Plate IX). There are signs that there was once a fitting on top, presumably a crest. The other two carvings, 1 ft. 9 ins. wide by 1 ft. 7 ins. high by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ins. thick, each have an oval medallion, 9 ins. by 7 ins. in the centre, one showing the Yaxley quarterings only (Plate X, a), the other those of Bedingfield (Plate X, b).

The paint has disintegrated in places and some of the tinctures are unrecognisable. The Yaxley quarterings on both shield and medallions have the appearance of greater age than those of Bedingfield but this may be due to separate painters for each family arms using different materials. The carved surroundings are coated with a rough silicate type of covering, effectively simulating stone, but this may not be original as in one or two places there are indications of gold underneath.

I have only been able to find three references to them. The *East Anglian Notes & Queries*, 1st ser., 1, March 1863, p. 313, states that the three shields were on an altar tomb in the south aisle and mentions the Yaxley and Bedingfield crests but not their positions. A photograph taken in 1867 and reproduced in Munro Cautley's *Suffolk Churches* shows two of the carvings on top of a large canopied memorial. It is not sufficiently clear to say whether the fitting on the large shield comprises the Yaxley crest of a bull's head and the Bedingfield crest of a demi-eagle. The memorial was dismantled in 1868 but parts of the canopy and pillars were used to make cupboards in a new south porch and are still there. The third reference is a pamphlet about the church dated 1928, now in the possession of Mr. Cornelious, which mentions the presence of the carvings by a window at the east end of the south aisle with a painted Yaxley pedigree on wood. We found this pedigree re-erected under the window and now hidden by an altar.