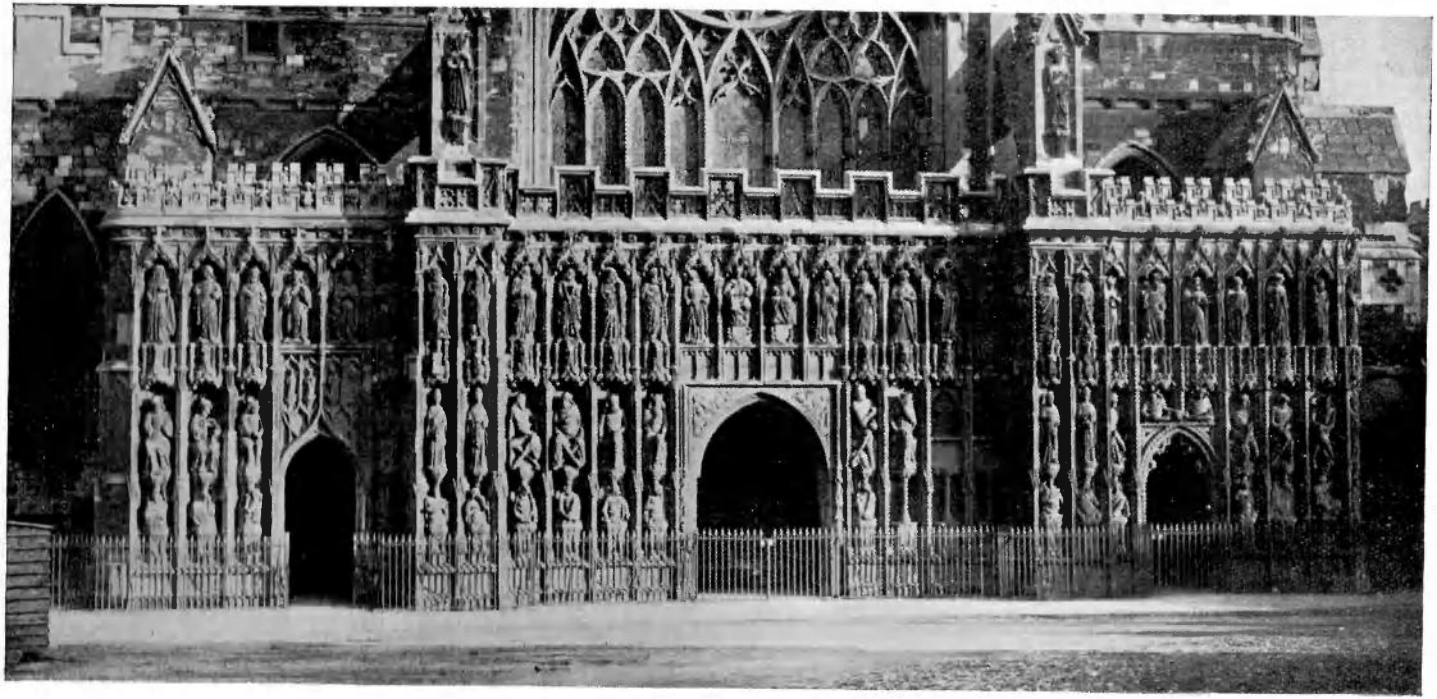
PLATE I.



THE WEST FRONT OF EXETER CATHEDRAL CHURCH.

To face page 1.

THE FIGURE-SCULPTURE OF THE WEST FRONT OF EXETER CATHEDRAL CHURCH.[1]

By Miss E. K. PRIDEAUX.

Seeing that the preservation of the external sculpture of our cathedrals has hitherto baffled the resources of man, all that is now left to those who revere and admire the great works of the middle ages is to obtain accurate and detailed records of what still remains of them, before they become shapeless masses of crumbling stone, or, worse still, are "renovated" by modern hands. As a small contribution to such an object the following photographs have been taken from the west front of Exeter cathedral church, where nearly all the original triple series of full-size figures still retain their places, although in a state of deplorably progressive ruin.

The total number of these figures is eighty-eight, including two set on the faces of the pinnacles surmounting the buttresses; and besides these there was a set of four small figures over the northern doorway, of which three remain.[2]

There are, amongst the whole eighty-eight, only three that are entire modern substitutions,[3] besides the heads of a few others; and of the ancient figures many still preserve enough of their original beauty and detail to make them most valuable and interesting studies of fourteenth-century English sculpture. But it will not long be so.

The much-challenged efforts of the present authorities to preserve what is left by the repair of the canopies that shelter the figures can, at best, only effect a very temporary retardation of the decay that makes yearly advances; and hence the importance of securing such records as are

[1] Read before the Institute, 3rd May, 1911.

[2] Another set of four occurs in the carvings of the jambs of the great central doorway; but these are in too decayed a condition to be worth illustrating.

[3] Nos. B10, C16, and C23 on fig. 1.

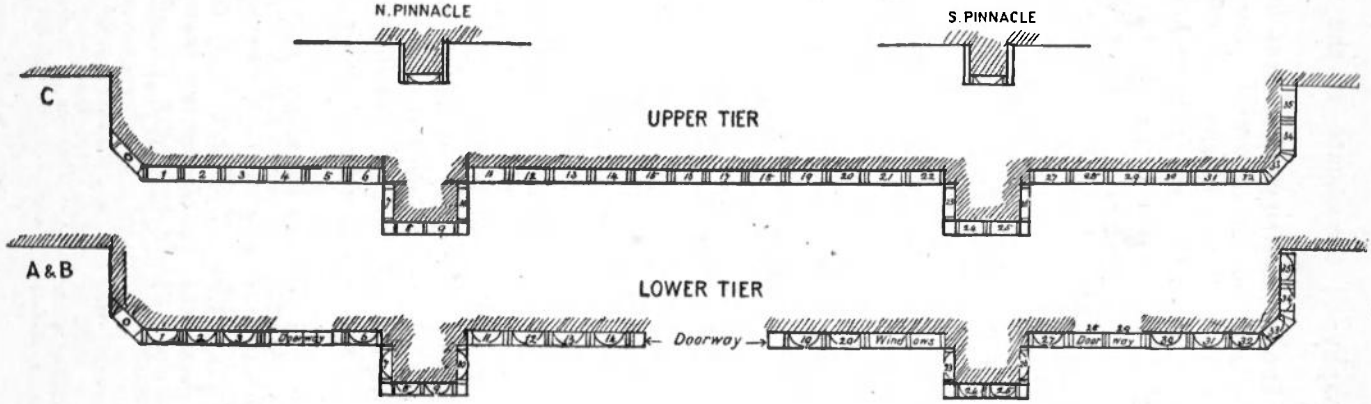


FIG. I.

EXETER CATHEDRAL CHURCH

PLAN SHOWING ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES ON THE WEST FRONT

possible by photography of their state at the present time.

In Carter's well-known *Specimens of ancient Sculpture and Painting in England* we have careful drawings of this west front sculpture as it was in the year 1792, and by comparison with the detail he gives we learn how great has been the loss from the actual figures in the course of little more than one hundred years. It is to be regretted that Carter limited himself to the lower series of figures.

The recognised and obvious cause of so much decay is the humidity of the prevalent south-west winds, coming off the sea scarcely twelve miles distant, and acting upon a stone[1] not well qualified to withstand it when deprived of its original protection of colour and gilding.[2] But besides such a natural and unavoidable cause there have been others at work that are quite typical of the neglect of such treasures of art common to the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries. Foremost among these causes was the custom of using the open space immediately before the west front of the cathedral church as a site for the vast annual bonfires of the fifth of November. This custom was so popular among the citizens of Exeter that several attempts to suppress it proved ineffectual, and it has only gradually died out within the last fifteen or twenty years under the influence of the increasing attractions of the annual "carnival."

In the contemporary records of all the city disturbances connected with these bonfires, the point most noteworthy in its bearing on our subject is that not one word occurs referring to the safety of the cathedral. The reasons for the attempts to suppress the bonfires never include any consideration for the noble fabric of which it might

[1] Salcombe stone.

[2] There are no traces now remaining of the colour and gilding referred to, but it is mentioned as having existed by the Rev. G. Oliver, D.D. at page 182 of his *Lives of the Bishops of Exeter and History of the Cathedral* (pub. 1861), though he does not specify whether he is speaking of what was then visible, or merely of what had been previously recorded. But, apart from this reference, it would be safe to conclude from the analogy of the exterior of similar buildings that such colour and gilding was a part of the original decorative scheme. At Wells traces of the original colour have been visible within a few years. At Lichfield also, Professor Lethaby tells us, the original scheme of figure-sculpture was thus enriched, and he cites Chartres, Reims and Lausanne as still affording visible evidence of colour on both figures and shafts; while the gold and colour ornament of the west front of Notre Dame, Paris, is mentioned in a record of the time of Charles VIII. (See *Mediaeval Art*, by Prof. Lethaby, 232, ff.)

be supposed the citizens were at all times justly proud; and the dean and chapter never figure *ex officio* in the complaints reported. Shopkeepers, bank officials, and private householders were inconvenienced by having to barricade all their windows and doors for two days previous to 5th November, and so they complained. Serious accidents became numerous at these celebrations, and the expense of providing the materials was a large factor in their discontinuance. Popular feeling gradually turned against the custom, but, apparently, not for one moment did the preservation of the cathedral west front weigh with either the authorities or the populace as an argument against permitting these fierce conflagrations to be kept up for hours at only some seventy or eighty feet distance from it. Eye-witnesses bear record to the intensity of the heat having been such that it was impossible to hold one's hand against the stone of the west front, and the cathedral firemen were on duty all night with the engine in readiness to save the structure should it catch fire, while one record says that "every morning after the bonfire a large quantity of debris, including particles of the stone of which the figures on the west front are composed, was swept up inside the rails." Many years of the disintegrating forces of a damp climate would have less effect in splitting and cracking the stone than a few recurrences of such baleful fires.

Another potent factor in the destruction of the lowest tier of sculptures, the supporting angels, which are far the most mutilated, was the superstitious belief that chips of a consecrated fabric held an infallible virtue as a remedy for many maladies, especially sore legs. This belief, once nearly universal among the uneducated classes, was maintained by country-folk into such recent days that people living can recall the time when on market days in Exeter it was quite common for the country people, as they passed the unguarded west front, to pinch and knock off fragments of stone, which they took home and pounded into powder. Of this ointments were made, held to possess mysterious and unlimited efficacy for a variety of ailments.

Out of reach of this cause of defacement, the sculptures, and carvings generally, have suffered from

injurious lodgments in their crevices, such as birds, nests, fluffs, and litter carried by the wind, holding the damp and thus producing decay in many unseen portions, from which has often resulted the fall of small pieces of the carvings.

The general aspect and arrangement of the entire west front is too familiar to need any special study (plate 1), and the accompanying ground plan of its surface-decoration (fig. 1) will serve to show the disposition of the figures, with the numbers appended to them for reference in the text and illustrations. Although in the illustrations the scale of the figures is not always the same, there is not, of course, in reality this variation of size.

In the lower tier the width occupied by each figure on the main wall is 2 feet 1 inch, and their height is 5 feet 10 inches; and on the west face of the buttresses their width is 1 foot 5 inches, and the height 5 feet 5 inches. In the upper tier their width on the main wall is from 1 foot 11 inches to 2 feet, and the height 5 feet 1 inch; and on the west face of the buttresses the width of the figures is 1 foot 8 inches, and their height 4 feet 10 inches, the difference in height being made up with extra depth of canopy.[1] The angels uniformly measure 2 feet 6 inches in height.

All the images are hollowed out at the back, as is frequently found to be the case in mediaeval figure-sculpture, partly no doubt for lightness,[2] but primarily this hollowing out was probably to afford space for a passage of air behind the figures to assist in drying them after rain.[3] The fourteenth-century figures removed from the spire of the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, and now standing in the old Congregation House adjoining that church, are examples of this practice.

The lower tier of figures at Exeter, from no. 8 on fig. 1 to no. 31 inclusive, are each carved from one block

[1] For these measurements I am indebted to Mr. Luscombe, the contractor at work on the cathedral, who kindly had them taken specially for me.

[2] See the monograph on the west front of Wells cathedral church, by Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, and Professor Lethaby, *Archaeologia*, lix, 149, 164.

[3] This cause was kindly pointed out to me by Mr. Aymer Vallance. Mr. Harbottle, the surveyor of Exeter cathedral, has told me that unfortunately these cavities had been allowed until quite recently to get entirely choked with birds' nests, etc; so that they acted as reservoirs of damp instead of as drying passages.

of stone; but some of the early numbers, and the last four of this tier, and all the upper tier with the exception of the pair on the west face of the northern buttress, are composed of two blocks. The joint occurs in these at various parts of the figures, regulated, generally, so as to be concealed as much as possible by the disposition of the draperies.

The date of the carving of the original figures is not the same throughout, the greater part of the lower series being earlier by many years than the upper series, although all fall well within the fourteenth century. But the scheme and plan of all their subjects and positions must have been a part of the original conception of this great work as a whole, for there is nothing really heterogeneous in their arrangement nor haphazard in the selection of persons represented.

The subjects of the figures are grouped so as to correspond with the different structural sections of the façade, forming, however, a completely interwoven scheme when considered as a whole. The interpretations of these subjects commonly quoted in guide-books are very erroneous and misleading, and the true signification of the whole assemblage was only pointed out somewhat recently by Professor Lethaby.[1]

Exeter comes late in the day among the great external schemes of sculpture in which first the French and then, in a few cases, the English mediaeval cathedral-builders incorporated a part, or parts, of "a body of doctrine" to which, as M. Emil Mâle points out, "we see all artists submitting themselves from one end of Europe to the other,"[2] during the middle ages. The very lateness of its date however, as a piece of work of this class, c. 1345–1380, gives it a special interest, as showing during what an extensive period ecclesiastical art was governed by the same theological ideas.[3] Most of the best known and

[1] *How Exeter Cathedral was built*, *Architectural Review*, vol. 13.

[2] *L'Art religieux du xiii· siecle en France*, by Emil Mâle, p. 13.

[3] The fabric rolls having almost ceased between 1350 and 1371, no indisputable records remain of the work on the west front during that period; but some entries just prior to it, when the completion of the nave was being pushed on under bishop Grandisson (1346) certainly seem to indicate that it was in hand that year, although archdeacon Freeman, at p. 83 of the *Architectural History of Exeter Cathedral*, has interpreted these as merely referring to surface decoration on the interior of the "porches" which he infers were a part of the original Norman west front. It is noteworthy that some of this sculptured work is referred to in the fabric rolls as being prepared by workmen at Wells.

elaborately developed of such schemes of sculpture belong to the thirteenth century, as, for instance, the west front of Nôtre Dame, Paris, the north and south portals of Chartres, Amiens, and Reims, in France; and the west fronts of Wells and Lichfield, in England; but they began well back in the twelfth century, as seen in the doorways of Saint Denys, Angers, Le Mans, Senlis, Provins, and Laon, and our own west doorway of Rochester. Here we have the same kind of conception and set of ideas produced in the middle of the fourteenth century. Some of the subjects grouped together at Exeter frequently appear separately in later work, especially the apostles and prophets, as on the fifteenth-century Albi quire-screen, and the sixteenth-century windows of Auch,[1] but it is as a whole that it stands as perhaps the latest example of the early mediaeval method of concentrating a well-ordered scheme of sculpture on the west front, or other principal entrances of a cathedral, which presents some of the important central doctrines taught by the church, and embodied in the decoration of her chief edifices, both inside and out.

As in the great French cathedrals,[2] and our own west front of Wells, and the earlier west doorway of Rochester, there is at Exeter a meaning and purpose connecting every part of its imagery, a central subject of special interest, and appropriate subjects of more or less significance surrounding this.

Although, to quote M. Mâle again, "the art of the middle ages is an art eminently symbolical," in which "the form was almost always but the light clothing of the spirit,"[3] yet these forms were more or less directed by an orderly convention, the gradually developed expression in art of the current theology, which exercised its dominating influence over the greater part of Europe. Similarity of subject and ideas must therefore be looked for among all such works, without necessarily trying to establish that any one in particular is borrowed from any other.

[1] The Coronation and Enthronement of the Virgin also was continuously a subject of ecclesiastical decoration on into the sixteenth century; e.g. on the pyx, dated 1434, by the Florentine, Maso Finiquera; on a French ivory-carving of the fifteenth century, quoted by Mrs. Jameson in her *Sacred and Legendary Art;* and on the Pourtour of Chartres in 1520.

[2] Cf. Chartres. Saint-Denys, Angers, Le Mans, Senlis, Laon, Paris, Amiens, and Reims.

[3] Loc. cit. 36.

Thus in England, when tracing French influences in the work of our own mediaeval sculptors, we are not so much concerned to show how in any one particular case one man, or school of sculpture, actually borrowed from another, as to recognise that this over-mastering tradition of mediaeval religious thought and doctrine had been much earlier and more fully developed and expressed in northern France than in any other part of Europe, and that, owing to this fact, it was naturally from France that the strongest stream of influence emanated, governing the arrangements and conventions of ecclesiastical sculpture in England and other countries where these arts were later in developing.

In the statuary of Exeter, both inside and out, there is no reason to suppose that any but English minds directed and English hands executed the work, but this does not preclude the existence in the designs and ideas of strong French influence in the sense just mentioned. As a matter of fact it is only by referring to the French work that had preceded both Wells and Exeter that we get the key to the ideas expressed in this array of figures. As Professor Lethaby has pointed out in the monograph on Wells west front, referred to above, our very earliest example of this kind of scheme of sculpture in England, that of Rochester west doorway, was "certainly an offshoot of the Chartres school, reaching us probably by way of Le Mans and Angers, with both of which our relations were so intimate in the latter half of the twelfth century." And Wells west front also was undoubtedly a scheme founded on those of Chartres and Amiens. By the time the Exeter west front sculpture was designed there were so many well-known foreign examples of such schemes that it is not likely that any one was specially taken as a model for its arrangement.

To read it intelligently we must first realise that originally this cathedral was dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Peter, although now and ever since its completion under Grandisson it is always spoken of as the cathedral church of St. Peter only.[1] Consequently we find that in its west front it most nearly

[1] *Architectural History of Exeter Cathedral*, by Archdeacon P. Freeman, 80, 86.

PLATE II.

To face page 9.

B1.

B2.

A1.

A2.

follows the schemes of such French churches as were likewise dedicated to the Virgin, such as the façades of Paris, Chartres, Amiens, and Reims. It is in these churches that one of the special features reproduced at Exeter is to be found, namely, the series of the chief persons of the royal lineage from which the Virgin's descent was traced, who, as M. Mâle points out,[1] were so represented as much for the honour of the Virgin as for that of the Son. This succession of persons of the royal line of Judah, a kind of Jesse tree, occupies the lower tier of niches in the Exeter scheme, broken only by the four subjects on the western faces of the two buttresses.[2] Then, in the upper tier was placed the central subject, the key to the whole scheme, the Coronation, or Enthronement, of the Virgin.[3]

All the remaining subjects fall in as appropriate contributions to the meaning and glory of this great central idea, which has unfortunately been much obscured by the erroneous substitution of a seated figure of Richard II in the niche where the figure of the Virgin was originally seated.

The identification of the different members of the kingly series is now impossible, owing to the loss of so much of their distinguishing detail. They are twenty-three in number, counting the two demi-figures over the southern doorway, which are evidently part of the series, and of these all are seated except three,[4] and all are crowned except one mitred figure and two who are in full armour. The attitudes of the arms and hands, or what was left of them in Carter's time, indicate that at least seventeen of them originally carried either sceptres or "a rod from the stem of Jesse."[5]

[1] Loc. cit. 203.

[2] Unlike the lists generally given in guide books, where these lower tier figures are named as Saxon and Norman kings and nobles of England, in one old history of Exeter (a compilation from the works of Hoker (1583) Izacke (1676), and others, and itself dated 1765), they are mentioned as including kings of Judah.

[3] It is noteworthy that, in the interior of the cathedral on one of the vaulting shaft corbels Jesse himself appears, lying beneath the Madonna and Child, with the vine issuing from his body; and above, in the uppermost portion of the same carving, the scene of the Coronation of the Virgin is given; the idea is evidently the same as that of the west front, and this corbel being one of the latest, a part of Grandisson's finishing work in the interior, it seems to show that he had a very definite aim of linking in one scheme the decoration of the interior and the exterior.

[4] Nos. B23, 33, and 35, on fig. 1.

[5] Isaiah xi, i.

The lower part of the niches in which they sit, under very beautifully carved canopies, is occupied by a series of supporting angels, resting on panelled and battlemented pedestals which start from the mouldings of the plinth. These angels and the richly capitalled shafts with which they are associated in the support of the figures above, form a very interesting series of sculptures in themselves, of the same date as the kings, and therefore they are here given with the figures they support.

It is evident from the structure of the niches and canopies alone that the whole sculptural work was carried out during a sufficiently long period to allow of alterations and modifications having arisen in the design of the details, though the whole, as a scheme of images, was doubtless designed completely at one time. Apparently the work of the lower tier ran from north to south, and probably the figures of the central division were those first executed. There are, indeed, certain indications which suggest that the earliest figures are those numbered B11 and 12 in fig. 1, as will be seen later, for, to avoid confusion in numbering, the illustrations begin at the northernmost extremity. The angle-niche here is vacant, and there are no signs of its ever having been otherwise; in Carter's survey it is shown as empty and smoothly finished apparently as at the present time.

The first three kings are much damaged, but still retain their individuality; and the dignity of their pose and bearing is very impressive. Even in Carter's time the first (B1, plate 11) had lost some of his face and both his hands.

His supporting angel-figure (A1, plate 11) is placed facing straight outwards with its arms folded across its chest.

King B2 (plate 11) is doubtless David, as indicated by the outline of a harp which is still traceable, but the instrument and the arms of the king were already gone in Carter's time, though his head and face and crown were then perfect.

So also was his angel-supporter (A2, plate 11), whose graceful, half-turned attitude is almost all that is now left to distinguish it. Originally it appeared asleep with its slightly-bowed head resting on its left hand.

B3.

B6.

A3.

A6.

PLATE IV.

To face page 11.

B7.

B10.

A7.

A10.

And the next (B3, plate III), which now shows so little feature, and neither hands nor feet, has, in Carter's sketch, all these uninjured. We can still see that his right hand was in a position that suggests the holding of a sceptre.

His vigorous supporter (A3, plate III) fortunately still retains its characteristic attitude of clasping the foremost of the three shafts, as though truly bearing up the weight above, a conceit that is repeated in two other niches.[1] In Carter's time this figure was perfect.

Over the northern doorway, which here interrupts the series, are the small crowned figures set in flat traceried panels, representing the four cardinal virtues (plate XI), the last of which had been lost before Carter's drawings were made. The first is Justice with the remains of her scales, and the second Fortitude with shield and lance still quite discernible; the third is identified by Carter as Discipline from "wearing a religious habit" and carrying a "hart" in her hands. Whatever she carried is now entirely lost, and even in Carter's sketch is extremely undefined. The emblems of the four cardinal virtues are, however, too varied and numerous to be very certain clues to their identity. Here, also, the vices they trample under foot are almost too much mutilated to be any guide. The first might well be a dethroned tyrant; the second is a crouching being whose attitude accords well with the idea of cowardice, and the third seems to be an unclothed human being lying on one side, which would agree with some mediaeval representations of Folly, as naked. The fourth panel was doubtless occupied by Temperance.

South of the doorway above which these small figures stand, the kingly series is continued in the same style as before. The next figure (B6, plate III) has a long beard, and wears a remarkably high crown; he still retains his left hand which, from its position, seems to have held a sceptre.

The angel (A6, plate III) in this case is again embracing one of the supporting shafts, but with a less lively action than the last: the wings are brought forward and crossed

[1] Nos. B6, and 23, on fig. 1.

in front. This shows more clearly in Carter's drawing, where the whole figure is practically perfect.

Next comes the figure on the north face of the northern buttress (B7, plate IV), which has lost its crown, nose, and hands. That it was a crowned figure we know from Carter's sketch, in which both crown and face are shown uninjured. The angel of this niche (A7, plate IV), however, must have met with some special disaster, as in Carter's time it was headless and armless as now. He says it seems to have held a musical instrument, but there is no more evidence of this in his sketch than in the figure in its present condition. Only one shaft is employed in this niche, which is also the plan on the west face of the buttress, doubtless on account of the lessened width of the niches, which measure barely 1 foot 9 inches across; on the southern buttress this plan is not adhered to, although the widths are the same, and there all the niches contain triple-shafted supports.[1]

Had not the pair of ecclesiastics (B8 and B9, plate V) standing on the face of this buttress been headless in Carter's drawings, their present self-conscious and dummy-like faces would still have proclaimed these heads as restorations; but the date of this work is not on record. It would seem from their ecclesiastical garments that they may have been two of the four Fathers of the Church, their appearance here, beneath the four Evangelists, who occupy the same position in the upper tier, being quite appropriate.[2] Carter gives them both with small scrolls in their left hands, and shows a long, knotted cord hanging from the waist of the southernmost, of which only slight traces now remain: this detail may be meant to represent the scourge frequently given as an emblem to St. Ambrose.

[1] The niche on the south face of this northern buttress also has three shafts now, but as they are a part of the modern work by Stephens, and Carter's sketch shows but one shaft, it may fairly be concluded that it was originally of the same plan as the other northern buttress niches.

[2] M. Emil Male in *L'Art religieux de la fin du moyen age en France*, 235, shows that this association of the four Evangelists with the four Fathers is a product of a later age than that in which they were coupled with the four chief prophets, as in the Chartres windows, and he points out that it was not the outcome of any deeply rooted idea of connexion between the two quartets: a settled code of correspondence between the several persons never arose, some artists coupling one Evangelist, and some another, with the same Father. He dates the appearance of this new kind of coupling of characters in the fourteenth century.

To face page 12.

B8. B9

A8. A9.

To face page 13.

BII.

BI2.

AII.

AI2.

These figures are on a smaller scale than the royal ancestors.

The two angels beneath them are musicians, the only ones in the whole series so characterised. The first (A8, plate v) is playing on a cittern, and the other (A9, plate v) on a viol or rebec. The action of the hands is still unmistakable, and in Carter's drawings both are shown perfect except for the loss of the bow in no. 9.

The modern figure on the south side of the buttress (B10, plate iv) is by Stephens,[1] and was executed in 1865. He followed the then current theory of identifying these royal personages as kings and nobles of England, and produced here his idea of William the Conqueror, preserving, however, in his attitude that of the original figure. Carter gives this one in a good state of preservation, with head and crown quite complete, and it was not primarily decay, but an accident, that led to its disappearance.[2]

The angel (A10, plate iv), though not destroyed, seems to have suffered great damage, probably from the same accident. It was perfect in Carter's time, and had its wings folded over tightly in front.

The next figure (B11, plate vi) appears to be among the earliest that were carved in the series. One reason for coming to this conclusion is the arrangement of the supporting shafts below on a plan which only occurs once again, namely, in the next niche. It seems to have been tentative, and discarded as unsatisfactory after these two trials. In the majority of cases the supports, as we have seen, are formed of triple detached shafts, arranged on a triangular plan of two at the back and one in front, each having a separate capital engaged centrally to the others,[3] but in these two niches the shafts are two in number, placed on a line centrally, one in front of the other,

[1] Edward Bowring Stephens, A.R.A. 1815–1882, a native of Exeter and a pupil of Baily.

[2] During some public function, when it was desirable to secure a good view over the heads of the crowd, a man tried to climb up on the pedestal in this niche; but when raising himself by thoughtlessly catching hold of the seated king, he pulled the whole image over, and was himself killed by its fall, while it was irreparably shattered. Evidently the carved capital beneath him fell also, as the present one is obviously modern work and differs very considerably in design from that drawn by Carter.

[3] A few exceptions occur where a single shaft and capital were more convenient for obvious reasons; namely, nos. 7, 8, and 9 on the northern buttress, and 20, 21, and 22 in front of the small windows of St. Radegunde's chapel.

and from the hindermost shaft two capitals branch out in a rather clumsy fashion. Carter draws them erroneously as the remains of mutilated shafts, which from a distance they are apt to appear, but on closer examination there is no difficulty in seeing that this is not the arrangement, as the next illustration makes fairly clear. It is illogical and clumsy, and was probably rejected as such.

The angels of this and the next figure are now much mutilated, but we can still trace in A11 (plate VI) the veil that gracefully draped the head and shoulders, and the position of the arms holding down an open book in front, details clearly shown by Carter. But A12 (plate VI) was headless and had lost its right hand even in his time; its left wing is drawn over in front.

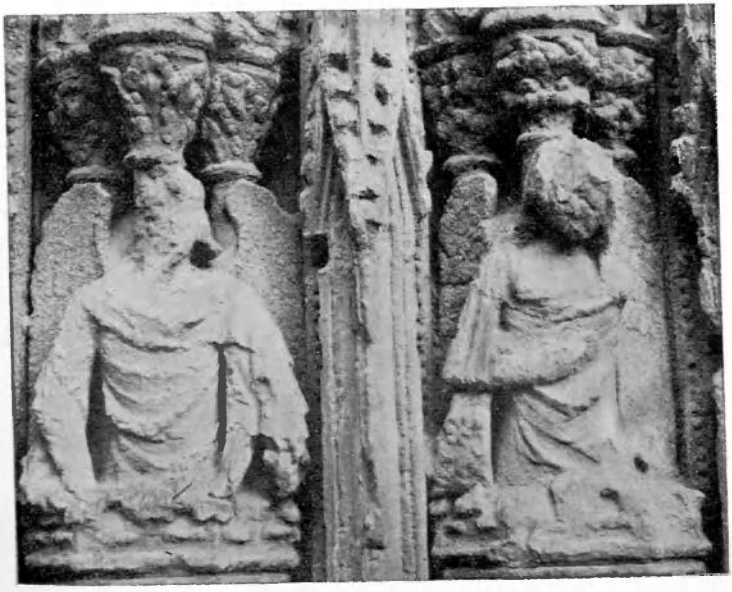
No. 12 (B12, plate VI) of the royal line is in much the same style as the last. Both these are very perfect in Carter's drawings, where their long pointed shoes, and leg-coverings seamed or fastened up the front, are very clear. Their robes are shorter than those of any others of the robed kings. No 12 probably held a sceptre in his raised right hand.

The next two (B13 and B14, plate VII) are also rather a pair in the matter of dress. They wear tight-fitting inner garments, and their mantles, without apparently any hood, or fastening in front, barely come round their shoulders, but fall in ample folds over their knees and feet. No. 13 has broad bands across the chest and waist of his inner garment, and round the upper part of the arms. Carter shows him in almost perfect condition and with the hilt of a sword in his right hand. His supporter (A13, plate VII) is shown in the same illustration with that of the next king. The following figure (B14) is also perfect in Carter's sketches, with the exception of slight damage to his crown. He strokes the end of his long beard, an action associated in ancient times with power and authority. The hair of his head is very abundant, and falls in thick curls upon his shoulders.

The angels (A13 and 14, plate VII) of these two last kings both carry their wings half-extended behind, and the feathers of no. 14 are still very clearly visible. Their bodies are much and gracefully draped, but their heads do not seem to have been veiled. No. 13 originally held

B13.

B14.



A13. A14.

PLATE VIII.

To face page

B19.

B20.

B23.

A23.

an open book, and the left hand of no. 14 was grasping the edge of the pedestal below. Both are shown as perfect by Carter.

The great central doorway here makes a gap of four niches in the sequence of the numbers as carried on continuously in the upper tier. The next two figures are therefore B19 and B20 (plate VIII). The northernmost (no. 19) is the first figure in full armour, and enough of it is left to show how rich it was. Carter gives us a detailed description of the ornament, as no damage but the loss of the right foot had occurred in his time.[1]

The armour is mediaeval, of the transitional kind worn just previously to 1350, but it is probably intended to indicate a king of Judah specially noted for his war-like qualities, and being the eleventh in the twenty-three given in this series, it may well have been intended for Hezekiah, who, in St. Matthew's genealogy, is the eleventh in order from Jesse.[2] This figure is of greater height by some inches than most, and this might be an indication that it represented a more than ordinarily mighty monarch. The dog between his legs is a frequent accompaniment of royal or noble persons. Dr. Oliver says that this figure may be recognised as St. George, "by his escutcheon on his cyclas (argent, a cross gules)"; [3] but very probably this is merely his own explanation of the cross on his breast, shown by Carter, and still faintly discernible.

The supporting angel, not illustrated here, is now a shapeless ruin, but in Carter's drawing the figure is uninjured, and the left side is concealed by a mass of drapery.

B20 (plate VIII) is of quite a different type, more resembling the very hirsute king, no. 14; for he also strokes his ample beard, and wears his hair flowing on to his shoulders. In Carter's drawing the details of his dress are interesting; his hands and wrists are covered with long gloves, a sign of royalty in this and earlier times,

[1] Carter says, "His helmet is ornamented, he has the mail armour round his neck" (this should rather be bascinet and camail); "has the cross on his breast, and part of the armour fastened at the side with large flowers serving as clasps; the girdle ornamented, and below it the mail is seen; on his thighs and legs the plated armour much decorated, and on his left thigh is an uncommon kind of armour composed of wires and studs; his gauntlets are plain."

[2] 2 Kings, xviii.

[3] *Lives of the Bishops of Exeter and History of the Cathedral*, by Rev. G. Oliver, D.D. published 1861, p. 181.

but these are securely fastened by buckles or rosettes of some kind in an uncommon fashion down on to the nearly-tight sleeves of his inner garment. His long-toed shoes have a broad strap across the instep.

In order to allow of the entrance of light through the windows of the chapel of St. Radegunde in the wall behind there is only a single supporting shaft to this figure and no angel. A similar arrangement is followed in the next two niches: here, indeed, these shafts might have been altogether omitted, as there are no figures for them to support, the space being kept entirely clear for the windows (see plate I).

The next figure occurs on the north side of the southern buttress (B23, plate VIII). It calls for special consideration, for, unlike its companions, it is standing, and has a prostrate figure at its feet. The head and shoulders are entirely gone, and it is just as much mutilated in Carter's drawing as we see it now. All that can still be seen is the orb in the left hand, and very long robes concealing the feet. That the head and upper part of the figure were at some time wilfully broken, or sawn off, is suggested by the way in which the stone has been levelled down: it looks as if a distinct purpose of removing the head beyond repair had been carried out here, and, adding to this the very feminine disposition of the robes, the idea of its having been a figure of the Virgin seems a reasonable conclusion. In that case we should also conclude that the prostrate figure at her feet had been either a dragon or serpent as the symbol of the evil that was trodden under foot by the birth of Christ, or it might have been the "lion of the tribe of Judah."[1] But there is another possible identification of both the upper and under figures, which is worth considering, although it has no connexion with, and altogether interrupts, the series of royal ancestors. The niche is immediately outside the chapel of St. Radegunde, formed in the original west wall of the ancient Norman cathedral, and renovated and enriched by the bishop Grandisson as a mortuary chapel for himself, apparently before he began the work on the exterior of the west front. It would not have been very surprising

[1] Revelation, v, 5.

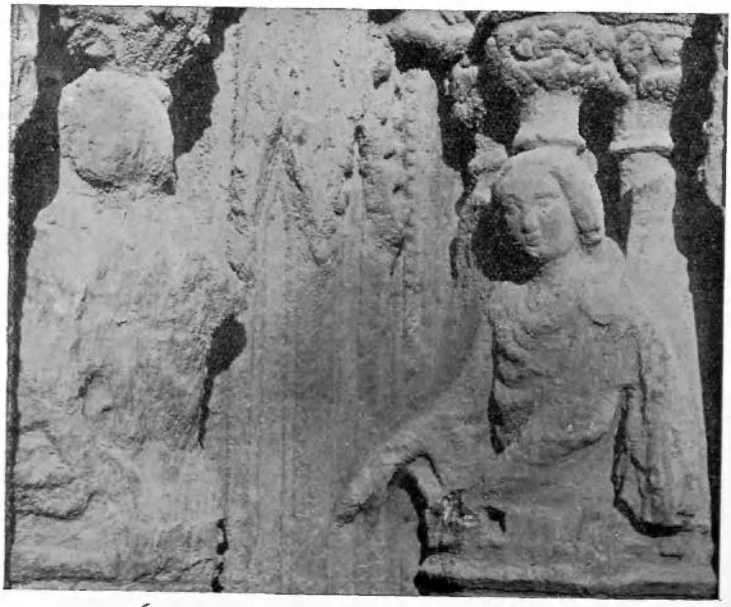
B24. B25.

A24. A25.

To face page 1

B26.

B27.



A26.

A27.

if he had thought it desirable to place here a statue of the saint to whom the chapel is dedicated close beside its windows. St. Radegunde was celebrated as the rescuer of prisoners, whose chains and fetters fell off at her prayers. She was a queen, wife of Clothaire V, king of France c. 564, and later took the religious habit and founded a monastic house for nuns at Poitiers. Might not this figure have been that of St. Radegunde, with a prisoner lying at her feet? It is true that Carter's sketch shows the prostrate figure as a headless quadruped, but with a rope or chain round its body, and there are still quite discernible traces of this detail in the present shapeless mass of stone. There are several slight inaccuracies in Carter's details, so that his showing this small and already much mutilated figure as a quadruped is not at all convincing, and the rope or chain about its body is quite unexplained: moreover, he does not even represent it as under foot, but as lying on the ground before the feet of the standing figure. As far as any detail now remains in the prostrate figure, it appears that there are decided indications of its being a human body, lying face downwards, with the left knee projecting over the edge of the pedestal. St. Radegunde is usually accompanied by a small figure in chains, in the representations of her, and she also wears a crown and long veil. Here the orb indicates her position as queen, and the severe straight robes might be a part of her monastic habit. Another and perhaps the strongest argument against this figure having been a statue of the Virgin is its very inconspicuous position. Where the royal lineage or the tree of Jesse lead up to and culminate in a figure of the Virgin, as is often the case, she naturally occupies a prominent and exalted position. Sometimes she is placed centrally, as in a window at Chartres, and on the centre mullion of the Jesse window at Dorchester, and on the reredos in Christchurch, Hants. More usually, she is placed at the apex of the series of figures, as in the interior of a chapel at Grantham illustrated in Carter's *Specimens*, plate XLVI, and in an English thirteenth-century psalter in the British Museum (MSS. Add. 21926). But here, this niche facing north, always more or less in deep shadow, and not even visible from many points of view, would have been the

very last chosen for the honoured and glorified Virgin, the queen of heaven in the scheme of sculpture on the façade of a cathedral actually dedicated to her. However, even if the identity of this figure as St. Radegunde should be correct it is still quite probable that it was mistaken for one of the Virgin at the time when the defacement of such images was regarded as a pious act, and that it was therefore mutilated in such an uncompromising manner.[1]

It is noteworthy that the angel beneath (A23, plate VIII) is in fairly good condition now, and was quite perfect in Carter's time, which is another support to the theory that the upper part of the main figure was purposely removed. The mass that now looks like drapery over the right arm of the angel is shown in Carter's drawing clearly as a wing brought forward.

On this buttress, as before mentioned, the triple-shafted plan of support is maintained in all the niches, and it is from this point that alterations in the work and designs, indicative of a later date, are observable. The canopies are no longer cinquefoiled, but are only trefoiled. But the more considerable changes occur later, where they will be duly noticed.[2]

On the face of this buttress stands another pair of ecclesiastical figures (B24 and 25, plate IX), corresponding to those on the face of the northern buttress (B8 and 9, plate V). Fortunately one of these (no. 24) has retained his original head and face, which presents a marked contrast to the dummy-like vacuity of expression of the other three. Both these hold long scrolls, and are doubtless the other two of the four Fathers.

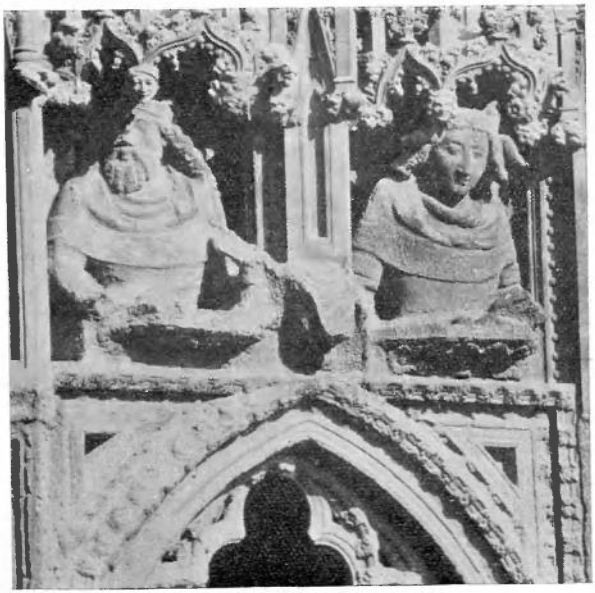
Their angel supporters (A24 and 25, plate IX) face straight outwards, and no. 25 has its head draped. That of no. 24 had already disappeared before Carter's time, but otherwise they were both perfect.

B26 (plate X), again a king, has suffered more defacement

[1] Elizabeth's visitors ransacked and defaced all the interior of St. Radegunde's chapel, and would in all likelihood have included the statue outside in their pious depredations.

[2] The groining within the canopies had already changed at no. 20, the alteration being from ten ribs to only eight. This continues to no. 26, after which there follow four canopies of totally different design, having complex lierne groining with no central boss such as there is in all the others. The last five are again groined in the earliest style of ten ribs.

SMALL FIGURES OVER NORTHERN DOORWAY.

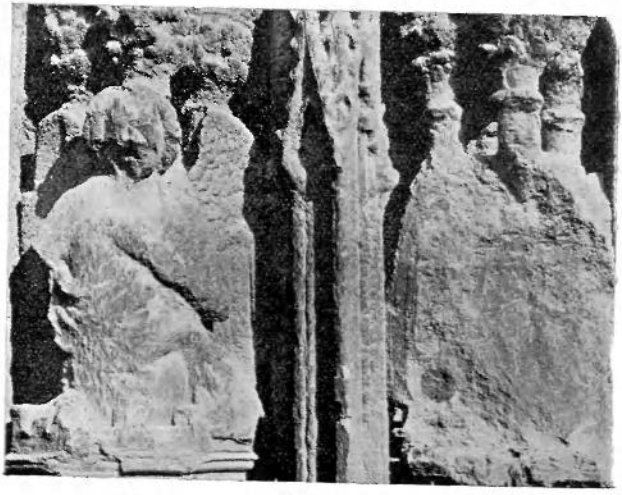


B28. B29

To face page 19.

B30.

B31.



A30. A31.

than most, doubtless owing to the fact that this niche, facing the south and having no other projecting buttress further south to protect it, received a larger share of the moisture-laden winds than those in any other position. The figure above it (C26, plate XXIII) is an even more shapeless mass. Carter shows this king as nearly perfect, his left hand raised, and with merely a little damage about his crown. Both in Carter's drawing, and in the remains of the image as it now is, there is a suggestion of something, such as a crouching animal, beneath the king's feet, but not defined enough to afford ground for any certainty.

The angel of this niche (A26, plate X) has suffered equally with the king, and is now so decayed as to be scarcely worth illustrating. Carter, however, shows it also as perfect except for the loss of the left forearm, and in his drawing the left shoulder is bare.

The next king is evidently intended for a very splendid monarch (B27, plate X). He wears a close-fitting tunic, which, according to Carter's sketch, leaves his neck bare to the shoulders, and is sumptuously enriched with an embroidered device of spread birds. Hardly any trace of this now remains, nor of the sword, whose hilt is shown by Carter in his right hand. In his left hand he still holds the end of a sceptre. He had lost his feet before Carter made his sketch.

The remains of his supporter (A27, plate X) show it to have been a singularly graceful figure, both as to pose and drapery. Turned slightly towards the north, its arms and hands are extended as though having originally held out something; but although the figure is perfect in Carter he shows nothing in the hands. The head and throat are bare, and the drapery is brought forward loosely across the chest to the left shoulder, over which it falls in ample folds.

This and the three following niches are surmounted by canopies of design entirely different to those preceding. It is true they are cinquefoiled, like the earliest ones, but in other respects are quite dissimilar. The intention seems to have been to produce something richer in ornament, and it may all have been part of a gift from some noble or wealthy contributor to the cathedral whilst these west-front sculptures were in progress. The groining

of these four exceptional canopies is of an advanced lierne design.

The space occupied by the southern doorway, which follows here, is not allowed to break the sequence of kings. Two demi-figures (B28 and 29, plate XI) occupy the niches over this doorway, and are on the same scale with the rest of the series. Formerly there was a border of rich embroidery on the edge of the hooded cape, or "chaperon" which they each wear brought round their necks in front, and traces of this are still visible. The northernmost is bearded and has the flowing locks so fashionable at the time these sculptures were in progress. The other has a youthful beardless face, while very curious springy ringlets stick out on either side of his head. Between them, where the present shapeless lump of stone is seen, was formerly, according to Carter, a griffin, with upraised eagle-head and wings and the hind-quarters of a lion. Most likely this animal is not, however, connected with the kings at all, but was more probably the cognisance of some great or rich family who contributed largely to the work on the west front at this point.[1]

B30 (plate XII) is again a full-length figure of a king. He wears a somewhat close-fitting upper garment, with a hooded cape on the shoulders, and a long mantle fastened across in front by a long chain from which hangs, apparently, a heavy ornament upon his chest. His right hand and leg were both gone before Carter sketched him, but he then retained rather more of the hawk on his left wrist, a sign of nobility or royalty, of which now barely more than the tail survives.

The angel beneath (A30, plate XII) has lost much more in the interval, the right arm being the only part gone in 1792. It had no head-drapery, and, as is still clear, faced straight outwards with the two wings at the back. In this same illustration appears the formless mass of stone which is all that is left of the angel below the next figure (A31, plate XII). It must apparently have met with its destruction from some unrecorded

[1] Cockerell insists (1851) that this creature was a double-necked swan, not a griffin, in which case Prof. Lethaby suggests that it was the badge of the Bohuns.

B32.

B33.

A32.

A33.

To face page 21.

B34. B35.

A34. A35.

violence, as it was in the same condition when Carter's sketch was made.

The king above in this same niche (B31, plate XII) was, however, then practically in a perfect state. He is the last of the warrior figures, and wears a helmet or bascinet instead of a crown, and a rich suit of armour, the details of which are now unfortunately nearly obliterated but the traces of the cross on his breast and the sword over his left arm are still discernible.[1] Carter's sketches end with this king.

The next figure (B32, plate XIII) is one of two selected from this series for illustration in the very interesting articles on *English Mediaeval Figure Sculpture*, by Prof. E. S. Prior and Mr. A. Gardner, in the *Architectural Review* of a few years ago; and it is there referred to as one of the kingly series dating previously to 1350. But, by some oversight, no mention is made there of the fact that it is only part of this figure that can claim to belong to that period. No record that I have met with exists to prove that this is a fact, but the testimony of the obvious inferiority of the head and upper part of the body appeared to me to be overwhelming from the first, and on closer examination may be seen, much concealed by dirt, a joint in the stone, across the body just above the waist, and across the arms a few inches above the elbows.[2] The type of features, and modelling of the whole face is so stupid, crude, and inartistic, that it cannot even rank with the three following figures which complete the series, evidently of later date than those up to no. 32, showing much of the general inferiority that characterises the decadence of mediaeval figure sculpture in the latter part of the fourteenth century. Hence it may fairly be concluded that this head and shoulders of no. B32 was a repair at some still later date, though before Carter's survey was

[1] The canopy of this niche returns approximately to the original design, even to the detail of having ten ribs in the groining, and this continues to the end of the series. It would seem that this was a matter of copying from the earlier numbers of the sculptures, and discarding the gradually evolved alterations that had naturally taken place in these details. This is a testimony to the later date of the work from this point, for it is not usual to find imitation or copying set in until there has been a definite break in any work of this kind.

[2] Since writing the above Mr. Luscombe, the contractor at work on the cathedral, has kindly inspected the figure for me at close quarters and reports that the joint of the repair is as described above.

made, as in the elevation of the so-called "screen"[1] he shows the whole figure much as it is now. The masonry of the niche behind the head is much fresher and smoother than that of those on either side of it, strongly suggesting refacing, or scraping, and the pedestal on which the angel supporter is awkwardly crouching is not only in singularly sharp condition, but is also different in design from every other, and much coarser in execution.

There is indeed no doubt as to the angel itself (A32, plate XIII) being a piece of late and very inferior work. It contrasts most painfully with its predecessors, as much in the exaggerated contortions of its pose as in the type of its face and the execution of the carving. None of the others are truly more than demi-figures, not extending to the legs, but this one, in its unbroken state, had its knees doubled up in a most awkward position, with the right hand grasping the right leg just above the ankle. The carving of the capitals of the triple shafts behind is also very stiff and meaningless.

In the next niche, that of the south-west angle (B33, plate XIII), is a standing figure wearing a mitre and ecclesiastical robes. It appears to be of the original date of this portion of the west front sculptures. The exceptional attitude and dress of the figure suggests that it is not intended for one of the royal line of ancestors, but for Melchisideck, the priestly ancestor of Christ, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life."[2] He is frequently introduced into the groups of types of Christ in the sculptural schemes of the French cathedrals, and here the reason for placing him among the royal ancestry may have been that in mediaeval theology he occupies the unique position of being both type and spiritual ancestor, and therefore this conspicuous angle-niche was chosen as a suitable place for his doubly-important figure.

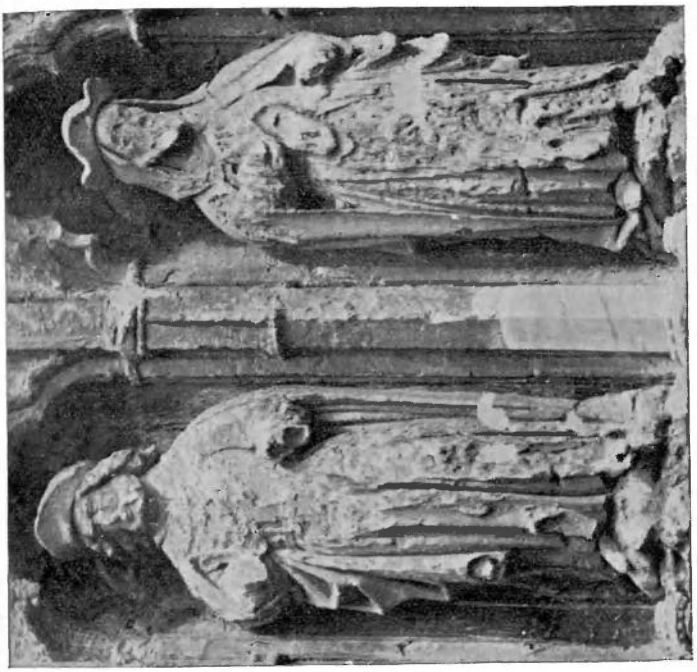
The angel (A33, plate XIII) beneath him is somewhat stiff and uninteresting, though free from the painful exaggerations of expression shown in the last. Very distinct signs of the loss of the earlier vigour and grace

[1] Plate VII, Lyttleton's edition.

[2] Hebrews, vii, 16.

To face page 22.

PLATE XV.



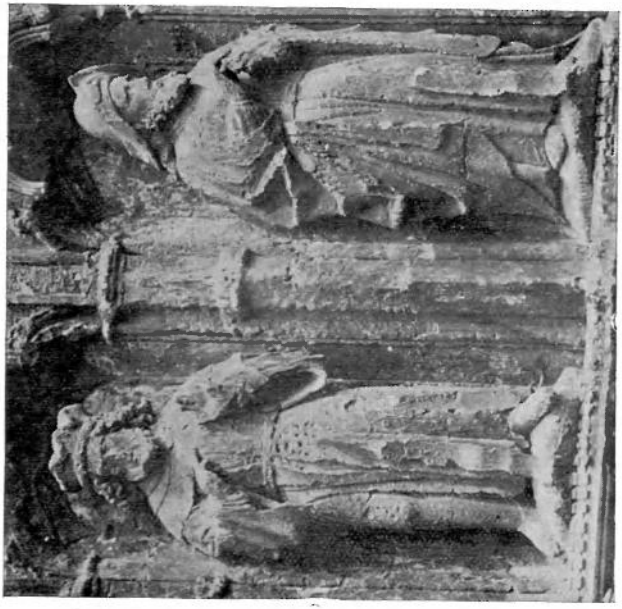
C3.

C2.

C1.

To face page 23.

c7. c6.



c5. c4.

are to be observed in this and all the rest of the figures of the lower tier.[1]

There are but two more niches, and these are on the south return of the wall (B34 and 35, plate XIV). This side was, in its lower stages, a good deal sheltered until comparatively recent times by the dwelling houses that even within the last fifty years were crowded up to this end of the cathedral and cloister; and hence this otherwise most exposed portion of the sculptures retains its original detail in better condition than that of most other parts. The figures in the corresponding two niches above (C34 and 35, plate XXIII) show by their extra decayed condition what the damp south-west winds naturally effected where no shelter was avavilable.

It is not clear why the last figure (B35) is a standing one. Its niche is narrower than the rest, and it has altogether the appearance of being much crowded up against the wall; possibly it was considered easier in this limited space to accommodate a standing figure than one in a seated position.

The angels of these niches (A34 and 35, plate XIV) have retained more of their features than any of their predecessors, doubtless owing to the same shelter that preserved the kings above; and some of the capitals of the supporting shafts appear almost too sharp to be original.

These finish the lower-tier series of figure-sculptures; and for the upper series it will be best first to look at those of the central portion instead of returning to the northernmost extremity, as in all probability these central figures were the next executed as being of the chief importance in the scheme.

All the upper-tier figures are of later date than the

[1] As mentioned above (p. 6) the four final figures of this tier (32–35) are carved from two blocks of stone, instead of from one block, as in nearly all the preceding figures. This alone would be indicative of a change in date and workmanship. Cockerell asserts that in his time (1851) the three last niches were empty. This, however, is quite inaccurate, and he must have jumped to this conclusion after a hasty survey and from observing that Carter's sketches, in *Specimens of Sculpture*, did not include any figures from these niches. But, as a matter of fact in his *Survey* (1797), in both plate III and plate VII Carter shows the south angle niche (no. 33) occupied by a figure, and it is also quite obvious to the most casual observer that these now standing are not work of a date subsequent to 1851. The surveyor to the cathedral, Mr. Harbottle, has also informed me on the best evidence that these figures are certainly quite ancient, and have had to be bolted through to the wall behind to prevent them from falling, as have a great many of the others.

first thirty-one of the lower series, having probably been that portion of the work which, with the cresting and the pinnacle figures, was executed during the episcopacy of bishop Brantyngham (1370–1394).

As mentioned before[1] the subjects of the upper tier are divided into three, in accordance with the structural divisions of the west front, and indeed of the whole cathedral, for this so-called "screen," unlike the façades of Lincoln, Salisbury, and Wells, is in no sense a screen, but a truthful outer face to the internal divisions of nave and aisles.

This division, therefore, gives a large central portion, in which the chief subject, the Coronation, or Enthronement of the Virgin, occupied the most important position, over the middle of the great doorway, flanked by the apostles on either hand. It is therefore this central portion that we will next consider, the illustrations of which will be found on plates XVII to XX.

We observe that, in accordance with the mediaeval conventions of art, the apostolic figures, unlike any others but one in this assemblage, are all represented with bare feet, this distinguishing feature being limited to representations of the Trinity, angels, the apostles, and St. John the Baptist.[2]

The first of the apostolic figures (C10, plate XVII) is now absolutely unrecognisable, but in Cockerell's list of them (1851)[3] it is identified as St. Philip, and described as carrying loaves of bread. It occupies the niche on the south side of the northern buttress, and was therefore more exposed to the damp south-west winds than were its fellows.

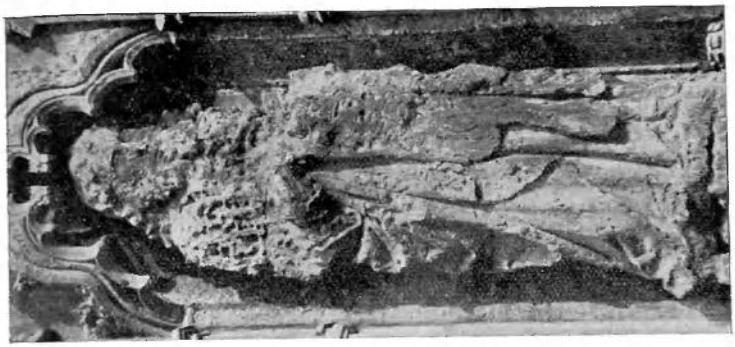
The next, St. Bartholomew (C11, plate XVII), is still easily identified by the skin he is holding over his left arm, in which the features of his face are still discernible, especially if the illustration is reversed, as the face is upside-down to the figure. Probably he held a knife in his now shattered right hand.

The next (C 12, plate XVIII) is said, in the same list, to be St. Matthew. He carries the book of his gospel

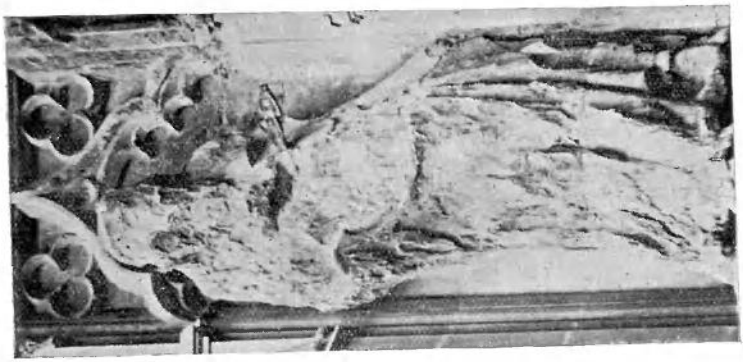
[1] See page 6.

[2] See Didron's *Christian Iconography*, i, 279, 322, ii, 104.

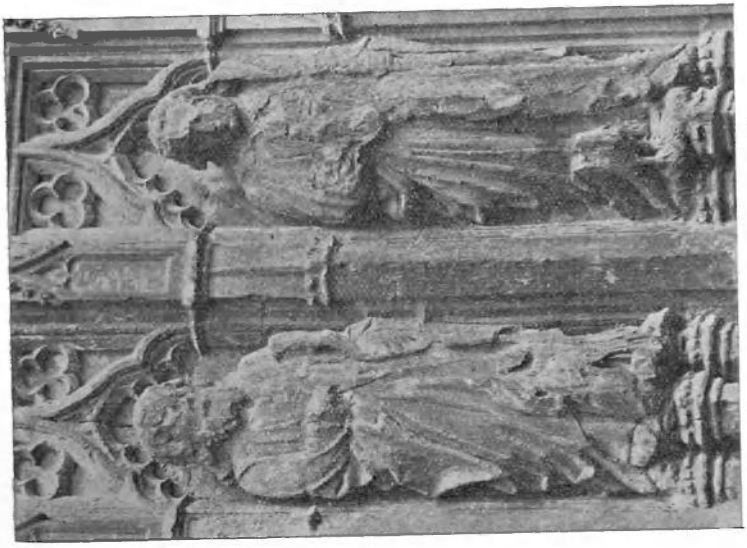
[3] *Iconography of Wells Cathedral*, app. B, 23–33, 28.



CII.



CIO.



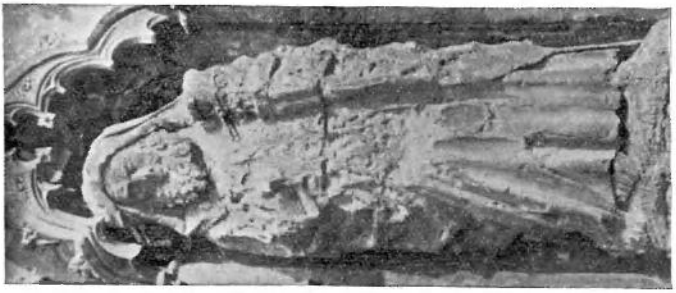
C9.

C8.

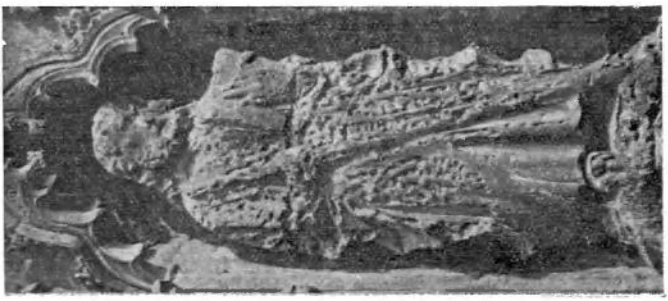
To face page 25.

C15.

C14.



C13.



C12.

open in his left hand, and a staff in the other. These two emblems occurring together are, however, generally used to distinguish St. Barnabas, but the only ground on which he could have a claim to appear here among the apostolic assembly would be that of his companionship with St. Paul in his ministry, from which circumstance he has been given the title "the apostle Barnabas." St. Matthew might possibly have been omitted here as having just before appeared (on the northern buttress) in his other character of evangelist, and, in that case, St. Barnabas is introduced to supply his place; the open book, as an emblem of St. Barnabas, is still the gospel of St. Matthew, to which St. Barnabas is traditionally reputed to have been devoted.

Next follows (c 13, plate XVIII) one who has been called St. Thomas, probably from the assumption that the now shapeless erection he carries on his left hand refers to the palace which, as tradition records, he undertook to build for Gondoforus, king of the Indies. In Carter's survey it is certainly represented as the model of a building, circular, and somewhat palatial in style. In a list in the cathedral chapter house[1] this figure is called St. Philip, doubtless from this little model having been taken for a pile of loaves.

There is no doubt as to the identity of c14 (plate XVIII) as St. Andrew, grasping his large cross saltire. He is a somewhat rough and homely figure, and represents a man of advanced age, as is usual in mediaeval work. He is appropriately placed next his brother, Simon Peter, to whom he bears a distinct resemblance of feature.

In the next niche stands St. Peter (c15, plate XVIII). Although he has lost the key, or keys, which doubtless he once held, his position on the right hand of the Virgin, originally one of the two central figures, is sufficient evidence of his identity, especially here, on the façade of a cathedral dedicated in honour of the Virgin and St. Peter. Also his head and face adhere closely to the type accepted for this apostle.

We might altogether omit c 16 (plate XIX) were it not rather instructive as a foil to the ancient figures. It is

[1] Quoted in Murray's *Handbook*, 198.

the work of one John Kendall[1], an architect, who was engaged during some years early last century on the repair of the cathedral. It was in 1818[2] that this figure of his was placed in the then empty niche. There is no record of when the original figure was lost or destroyed, but the niche was empty before Carter's survey was made. In all probability its destruction was wilfully accomplished by the iconoclasts, either during Elizabeth's reign, or at the time of the Puritan occupation of the cathedral, as there is no doubt that a seated figure of the Virgin originally filled the niche. The present foolish image is intended to represent king Richard II, in accordance with the belief common at the time of its production that English kings and nobles were the principal subjects of the west front sculptures. The shield below bearing the arm of Richard II served, it was considered, as a conclusive guide to the identity of the former occupant of the niche. In reality this doubtless merely signified the reigning king at the time of the completion of the work.

On the same theory of English kings, the next figure (c 17, plate XIX) is confidently named king Athelstan in the explanatory lists of the figures quoted in Murray's and other hand-books. The shield below bearing the arms attributed to Leofric, impaling those of the see, indicates nothing beyond the desire to display fully the arms most closely associated with the cathedral. As Athelstan and Leofric were not contemporaries by more than a hundred years, it would have been a rather far-fetched mode of distinguishing the figure of the earlier benefactor to give him the coat-of-arms of the later.

Fortunately, on closer consideration, this figure proclaims itself as representing Christ, crowned and seated on a throne in heaven, with bare foot resting on the globe, and either in the act of holding up the crown about to be placed on the head of the Virgin, or, more probably, with right hand merely raised in the act of benediction after the actual crowning has taken place. The loss of

[1] John Kendall (1766–1829) was employed from 1808–1830 on the restoration of the lady chapel and the chapter house, *Dict. of National Biography.*

[2] Dr Oliver's *History of Exeter Cathedral*, 18.

c19.

c18.

c17.

c16.

the main part of the forearm, and hand, leaves it doubtful as to the exact manner in which it was employed. The left hand originally held a book, which survives in Carter's survey. If the right hand was in the act of benediction, this scene would be, strictly speaking, not the Coronation of the Virgin, but the Enthronement, or representation of her as queen of heaven, after the coronation had taken place.[1] The actual coronation scene, however, was one frequently chosen from early times as a prominent subject for sculpture on many French cathedrals,[2] and it is also the subject of the group in the niche above the central doorway of the west front of Wells cathedral church, c. 1240. In the interior of Exeter, it occurs no less than four times. First of all it forms the subject of the large boss occupying the most honoured position in the high vault over the high altar;[3] secondly, it is carved on the seventh vaulting-shalf corbel on the north side of the quire; thirdly, on a later boss in the first bay eastward of the nave north aisle; and lastly, on the westernmost corbel of the south side of the nave.[4] This repetition of the same subject in one building is significant, and emphasises the original dedication,[5] and a comparison of the different instances is interesting. All have in common the same relative position of the figures, and almost exactly the same attitudes and gestures, though no one is copied from another. The Virgin, of course, sits always on the right hand, apparently on the same throne or dais with Christ, and turned slightly towards him, her head bowed, and her hands folded together in the attitude of devotion. Christ, turning towards her, is placing the crown on her head with the right hand while in the left he holds a book. In one case, at least, his bare foot is resting on the globe.

This disposition of the figures is that very usually found in work of this period, but it was in existence much earlier in England, as is seen in the twelfth-century example sculptured on the tympanum of the south doorway

[1] It is given very similarly in the twelfth-century portal of Senlis cathedral, and at Laon and Chartres (thirteenth century).

[2] At Paris, Sens, Auxerre, etc.

[3] Early fourteenth-century; see *Bosses and Corbels of Exeter Cathedral* by E. K. Prideaux and G. R. Holt Shafto; pp. 39, 137, 190, 205.

[4] See p. 9, footnote 3.

[5] In Nôtre Dame, Paris, it occurs three times.

of Quenington church, Gloucestershire, to which Mr. G. C. Druce has kindly drawn my attention.[1] In that instance the central figures of Christ and the Virgin are arranged much as in the fourteenth-century examples in the interior of Exeter, though with the addition of the four evangelistic symbols round them, seraphim and cherubim on either side, and a building, probably representing the heavenly Jerusalem, standing beside them.[2]

To return to the remains of the scene on the west front of Exeter, Jenkins[3] describes the surviving figure as holding "in his right hand a crozier, and in the left a book"; but as it is quite possible that at that date the right hand held a sceptre, Jenkins probably mistook this for a crozier. Cockerell mentions the sceptre, but speaks of it as an addition of later times. The crown given to this figure, it will be observed, is of an entirely different type to those worn by the kings in the lower tier.

On the left hand of this scene stands St. Paul (c18, plate XIX), characterised by his bald head, long face and beard, and the sword of his martyrdom. In reference to his journeyings he carries a scrip or purse, hanging from his girdle in front, made in the correct pattern of a fourteenth-century gypcière.

Next to him (c19, plate XIX) comes St. John, distinguished by his youthful beardless face, and the chalice in his left hand, towards which his raised right hand was apparently in the act of pointing. This is a very graceful figure, with a refined and beautiful face; the hair, in both this and the next figure, is in positive ringlets, a trait repeated in several cases, probably as an indication of the typical Jewish type, but here perhaps emphasised in order to signify the near kinship of these two apostles.

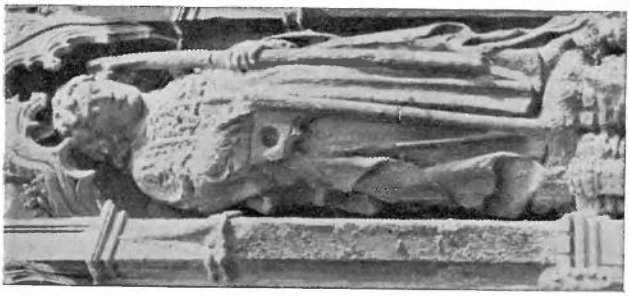
[1] Illustrated at p. 266 of *Early Christian Symbolism*, by J. Romilly Allen.

[2] M. Male, at p. 302 of *L'art religieux du xiiie siècle en France*, states that this form of the scene appeared in France about 1250, as seen at Sens, Auxerre and Reims, previous forms having introduced an angel as performing the actual office of placing the crown on the Virgin's head. In still later times, however, in manuscripts of late fifteenth-century and sixteenth-century date, which Mr. G. C. Druce has kindly examined for me in the British Museum, the crowning by an angel or angels is also often found, but with a great alteration of the central figures, the Virgin being frequently represented as kneeling, either before Christ who is shown as an old man in papal attire, or before the three Persons of the Trinity.

[3] *The History and Description of the City of Exeter and its Environs, etc.* by Alexander Jenkins, 1806.

C23.

C22.

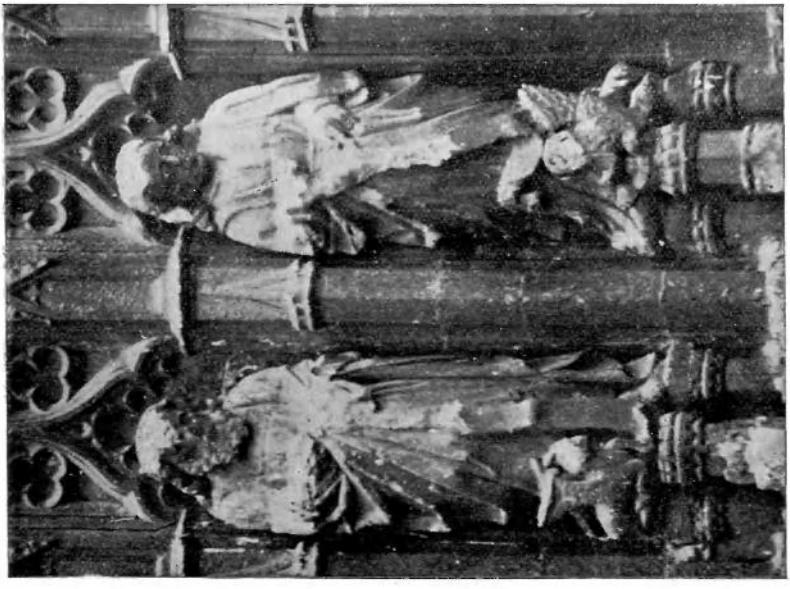


C21.

C20.

To face page 29.

c28. c27.



c25. c24.

St James the Greater follows next in order (c20, plate xx), unmistakable with his pilgrim's staff and hat, the shell on the latter still plainly visible, and by his side his scrip, also adorned in one corner with the shell; what he carried in the left hand is now no longer discernible; very probably it was his ampulla or leathern water-bottle.

The next (c21, plate xx), another very fine figure, is called in some lists St. Simon, and in others St. Thomas, while yet other lists of the apostles and their emblems assert that where, as in this case, the saw and the club both appear, they signify St. James the Less.[1] In a sixteenth-century picture by Agostino Caracci, St. Jude has a saw as well as St. Simon.[2] The fact is that at the date of the Exeter sculptures a good deal of confusion and uncertainty had arisen respecting the apostolic emblems. Still later this confusion became greater, but even here there is distinct evidence of some loss of the more ancient definiteness of sacred types and attributes.

The next figure (c22, plate xx) carries a club only, which, according to some iconographists[3] serves to identify the apostle Jude, though, in Cockerell's list this one is called St. James the Less. This is a less dignified figure than most of the series, but there is a great deal of beauty of expression in the face.

The last apostle (c23, plate xx), occupying the niche on the north side of the southern buttress, whether originally St. Matthias, St. Jude, or whoever had been omitted from the roll of the twelve, is now a modern figure by Stephens, the sculptor of the William the Conqueror in the lower tier (B10, plate iv). For whom he intended this c23 is not clear, as there is no complete emblem left visible.

It is noticeable that in these fourteenth-century representations of the apostles a distinct characteristic individuality is aimed at, over and above the quite conventional matter of emblems. The kings below are now almost too featureless to allow of any opinion being formed as to their amount of individuality and variety of face,

[1] M. Walcot's *Sacred Archaeology*, 258.
[2] Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*.
[3] Walcot and Hulme.

though that there is variety can still be discerned; but it would seen, as far as it is possible to judge, that there was one grand type, to which they more or less conformed, a type displaying as its chief distinction great solemnity expressive of authority and responsibility. But among the apostles we meet with a variety of types used, even for those which are scarcely able to be individualised by any well-accepted personal characteristics. They are, in fact, an assemblage of human beings as diverse as any twelve might be who belonged to one period and one country, and had in common the one conspicuous quality of nobility of character. The vivid personality given in the scriptures to the apostles Paul, Peter, and John, naturally produced in art an unmistakable character of face and figure in portraying them; and it would therefore generally be quite easy to identify them, apart from their emblems. But the variety shown in the faces of the rest of the twelve is mostly free from convention and was dependent upon the imagination and skill of the workman and designer himself. In the Exeter apostles there still survives a good deal of the independent artistic skill in translating thoughts and ideas into forms that had reached its height in the thirteenth century. There is nothing slavish or stereotyped about them, and it is evident that the hand of the sculptor, or sculptors, who produced them was inspired by the conceptions of his subjects with which he, personally, was possessed.

On the western faces of the buttresses in the upper tier, above the four Fathers of the Church stand the four Evangelists (plates XVII and XXI).[1] The figures are on a smaller scale than those on the main wall, the niches are much shallower, and the canopies treated in a different style. St. Matthew and St. John (c8 and 9, plate XVII) occupy the niches on the northern buttress. The former had the symbolic angel kneeling at his feet when Carter's survey was made, where now nothing remains but a scar; and little more than the legs and claws of St. John's eagle is left undamaged.

St. Luke and St. Mark are on the southern buttress (c24 and 25, plate XXI). They have received much

[1] See page 12.

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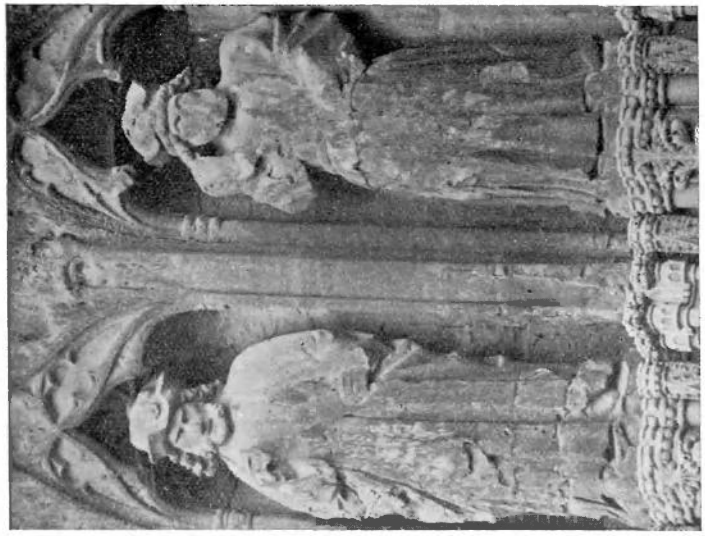
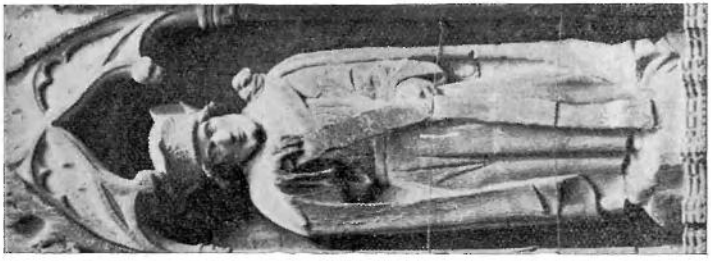


c32.

c31.



c30.

c29.

damage to their heads, but their symbolic animals are still quite recognisable. All four formerly held scrolls.

Ranging with them and the apostles, on the northern and southern wings of the façade, are a company of Jewish patriarchs, prophets, and doctors of the law, to judge from their apparel and gestures (c1 to 7, plates xv and xvi; and c26 to 35, plates xxi, xxii, and xxiii). Among the thirteenth-century schemes of religious sculpture, and also in the mystery-plays of mediaeval times, certain Old Testament characters to whom the Fathers of the Church had assigned the position of types or prefigurers of Christ, were often selected to appear, and took their places either in special groups, as representative types, or else in conjunction with the prophets. Probably this latter arrangement was the one followed here. The figures have now lost all distinguishing marks; the scrolls they all once bore, and of which many are still clearly visible, no longer retain any trace of their inscriptions, which doubtless were either the names, or passages from the writings, of the persons they represent. But of one (c7, plate xvi) it is recorded[1] that a few years prior to 1806 the name Noah was still legible on his scroll. Noah was one of the types of Christ alluded to above, as being the one just man, and having built the ark, which symbolised the church, for the salvation of mankind. He is seen among the patriarchs in the arch of the St. Honoré porch, at Amiens, and his appearance here gives reason to conclude that among these nameless figures others of the patriarchs are probably included.

However, in their present state it would be quite hopeless to attempt to identify them, and in Carter's elevation the figures are naturally on too small a scale to afford much help in the way of detail.

c6 (plate xvi) is a figure which at first sight might easily be taken for that of a woman, and, as such, is identified in the confident lists already quoted, as Deborah; but on closer inspection this appears to be a very doubtful conclusion, and the smooth face may well be merely the method of signifying the youthfulness of the prophet represented, very probably Daniel.

[1] Jenkins, loc. cit. 34.

With c7 the northern wing ends, and the rest of the illustrations are from the southern wing.

It is noteworthy, by the way, that the dramatic style of representing such typical figures, which we find in earlier work,[1] is by this time superseded by a much less imaginative manner of presenting the same subjects. Instead of Adam digging, Noah working on the construction of his ark, Abraham raising the knife over Isaac's head, the theological artists of this period are contented with producing for these subjects images scarcely differentiated from one another, their individuality being revealed only by means of the explanatory inscriptions carved upon the scrolls they carry. A few conventionally accepted attitudes or details of apparel were retained and made use of in this connexion, as we can note herein our groups of prophets, but as a whole the figures have lost the vigorous picturesqueness of action, and vivid imaginativeness of the preceding century.

The prophets, who, as M. Mâle points out,[2] were the apostles of the ancient law, and announced the same events and truths under slightly different forms, are therefore most appropriately associated with them in these theological schemes of sculpture; and we may be sure that they are here, in this series, and were once to be identified by their scrolls. In fact, the head-dresses usually ascribed in mediaeval times to Jewish persons of authority, and also the gesture of one hand raised with the index finger extended, significant of teaching or expounding, are unmistakeable indications of their office as prophets.[3] Their faces are often very interesting and expressive, and in this series may still be observed that dignity and reticence which are characteristics so often lacking in later work. The pervading expression of their countenances is naturally one of gravity to the point of solemnity, and there is, moreover, a very pronounced type of face employed again and again in this series, to which c 2, 4, 5 (plates xv and xvi) and c 27, 29, 30, and 31 (plates xxi and xxii) manifestly conform. Straight brows over rather small deep-set eyes, long noses, and long upper lips, are the

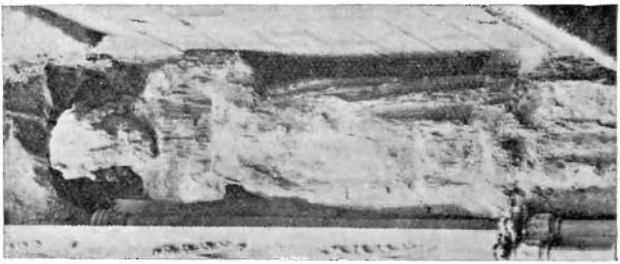
[1] As at Amiens, and at Wells in the quatrefoils south of the great doorway.

[2] Loc. cit. 192.

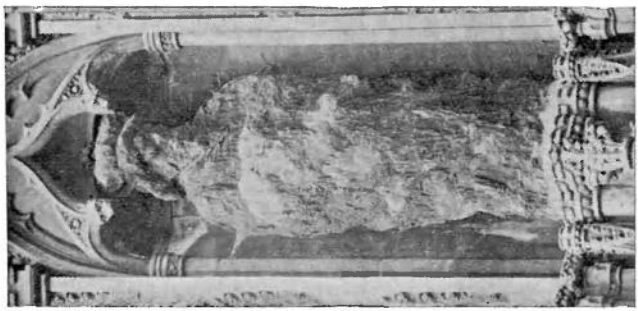
[3] See c 4 and 31 (plate xvi and xxii).

PLATE XXIII.

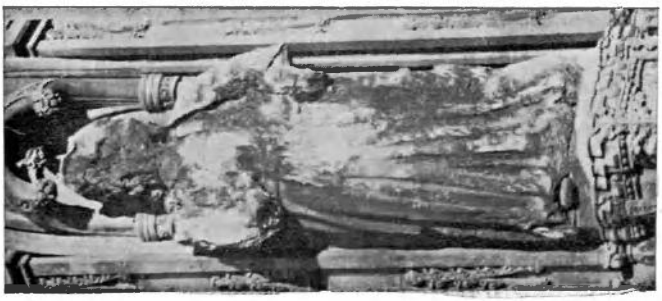
c26.



c35.



c34.



c33.

special characteristics of this type, the lips particularly being very well cut and expressive. The frequent occurrence of so distinct a type suggests its having been taken from a living person whom the sculptor adopted as a suitable model for his work. The same type is not found among the apostles in the central section, who are, as we have observed, much more individualised, although, of course, only in agreement with the usual traditions and conventions current concerning them.[1]

It seems not at all unlikely that these northern and southern sections of the façade were executed by another hand, after the central section was finished.

Of this later series of Old Testament characters many, as we have seen, are in fairly good condition, but c32 (plate XXII) and 26, 33, 34, and 35 (plate XXIII) are decayed to a lamentable extent, these four being all placed in more or less south-facing niches. The angle figure c33 (plate XXIII) was once, according to tradition, feathered; which would indicate that it was intended for St. Michael, who might naturally be included among the holy assemblage connected with the coronation of the Virgin as one of the guardians of the heaven. In Carter's survey it is dimly shown to be holding a large shield with its point resting on the ground.

To crown the whole composition, numbers of the attendant angelic host appeared in the crenellated cresting of the wings of this portion of the façade. Many held musical instruments, which is a usual feature in representations of the Coronation of the Virgin, in whose honour the celestial musicians assemble to give forth their united symphony of praise.

Unfortunately, all this ancient work has disappeared, and what is now in its place, more or less carrying out the same design, is not of sufficient interest to be worth illustrating.

Also the two figures in the niches on the western faces of the buttress pinnacles, shown in plate I, were

[1] M. Mâle observes, in connexion with this lack of individuality in representations of the prophets, noticeable even in the thirteenth century, that it is due to the fact that they were only regarded as having a place in these theological schemes of sculpture as the "Shadows of the apostles," and were treated as "symbols, whose chief value was drawn from their connexion with Christ and the apostles." loc. cit, 193.

contributed in 1822 by the same architect and sculptor, John Kendall, who produced the central figure below of king Richard II.

Carter tells us that in his day the northern one held a deed in his hand which a kneeling monk was ready to receive. This was evidently not reproduced by Kendall,

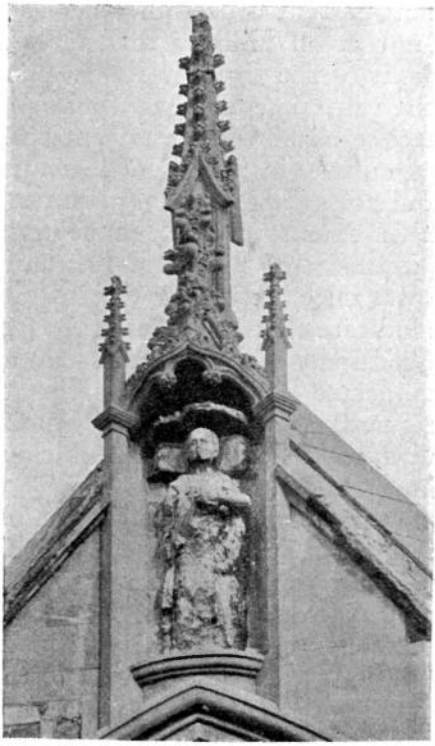


FIG. 2. FIGURE OF ST. PETER ON THE GABLE OF WEST FRONT.

as the present one bears no traces of such a design. The arms on the shield below are those of Athelstan,[1] and as he is the traditional founder of the see, and certainly of the monastic church that preceded the present cathedral, probably the orginal figure was intended to represent him.

[1] Dr. Oliver.

The present southern figure seems to hold the orb, and a sceptre, in his left hand and a sword or staff in the right. As the arms below are those of Edward the Confessor, in whose reign the seat of the bishopric was moved from Crediton to Exeter, this figure of Kendall's doubtless represented that monarch.

The only other figure on the west front, though not distinctly connected with the lower sculptures, yet must probably have been a part of Grandisson's finishing work (fig. 2). It is a figure of St. Peter, and is placed in a niche in the apex of the western gable. It has been thought[1] that the head and face were a portrait of Grandisson, but any weighty evidence for this suggestion is not forthcoming. Time and decay have so obliterated all distinguishing features in it that its likeness to anyone could scarcely now be traced.

[1] Stated by Sir H. C. Englefield in the text accompanying Carter's survey.