

ART. IV.—*A Cross-socket, Aumbry-niche and Piscina at the Parish Church of Holy Trinity, Millom. Cumberland.* By the Rev. R. D. ELLWOOD, Vicar of Millom.

Read at Penrith, September 7th, 1917.

A CROSS-SOCKET in the Churchyard has features of interest and difficulty. It has for several years been lying in the Churchyard, about two yards to the south of a sundial post, which is situated about five yards from the south-east corner of the south aisle of the church. According to the Parish Clerk, the cross-socket formerly stood about four yards further south, that is about nine yards from the church.

The measurements of the socket are as follows :—height, 16 inches ; length of larger side, 20 inches ; length of shorter side, 19 inches ; the actual socket place is $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches across. It is impossible to say if the socket place has been a perfect square as one side has been broken away. The depth of the socket place is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the distance between the outer edge of the stone and the edge of the socket place at the unbroken end is 6 inches, at each side 4 inches.

The chief interest lies in the figures carved on the corners of the stone. That most distinct is of a human being with folded hands, clean-shaven face, but with a great deal of hair ; at first sight the figure reminds one of a Buddha. It may be the figure of a woman ; there seems to be some attempt at representation of ornament round the neck. The features are worn and no nose or mouth is discernible, but there are indentations as for eyes.

The other figure is that of a bearded man. It is much worn and the part below the beard has been broken off,

so the hands are gone, but there is a suggestion of shoulders. In the case of the other two corners of the stone the indentations suggesting shoulders are the only carved parts now remaining, as the stone is so much broken ; but it looks as if there has been the figure of a human being at each corner. There is no evidence of any other carving on the stone.

The Ordnance Maps put down the site of a cross where the sundial now stands. In a note on the church in Whellan's *History of Cumberland* (1860), it is stated " in the churchyard are the remains of a cross the shaft of which is charged with four shields." This must be the sundial-post, the head of which has four shields. The sundial-post is identified with the cross in other notices of the church.

The sundial-post has a large base of a light-coloured hard stone, similar to the stone in the interior Gothic arches of the church, and in this base is set a shaft of red sandstone similar to the stone of the cross-socket under consideration. The shaft is 28 inches high ; the sides 11 inches and 10 inches ; the corners chamfered nearly to the base. On the top of this shaft is set a large, four-sided, clumsy-looking head with a shield on each side, bearing arms :—(1) Hudleston (of Millom Castle) with label, as on the Millom font ; (2) Chaucer ; (3) Hudleston ; (4) Broughton of Broughton. On the top are the remains of the lead fittings of a sundial plate.

It is surmised that this dial-post cannot be of later date than A.D. 1495, for in that year the family of Broughton became extinct. There are several instances of early cross-shafts being used for dial-posts, and one presumes it may have been done in this case and that the bit of shaft supporting the dial-head with shields is part of the shaft that has originally been held by the cross-socket.

To what period the cross-socket is to be assigned I do

not attempt to determine. The bearded man might be Thor, but there is no hammer, though it might have been represented in the part broken off. Part of Millom church is of early Norman date; there have been no discoveries recorded of any sculptured stones of unquestionably pre-Norman date. But the name Millom is said to be Norse, *mel hólmr*, "the sandy isle in the creek." * This name accords well with the small eminence on which the church and castle stand. It is now 32 feet above sea-level and is surrounded on all sides by level land which was formerly tide-washed.

A piscina and an aumbry-niche were found in the south wall of the chancel of the church while some repairs were being carried out in July, 1917. The piscina is a small shallow bason of red sandstone, covered by a rounded arch of a harder and lighter stone; at the back is a stone, sloping to meet the arched stone and acting as a cover from behind; the drain runs into the wall. The bason-stone is $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches by 10 inches, the arch is $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, the arch-stone is about 6 inches in thickness; it has a chamfered edge, but the face of the right side of the arch has been broken off.

The aumbry-niche is nearer the east wall and is formed of a shelf stone inserted in the wall; there is no arch or lintel over it but the stones in the wall act as an uneven head for the niche.

The height of the aperture is 11 inches, the width 12 inches; the stone forming the bottom of the niche is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness, of a similar kind to the arch of the piscina, the depth from front to back is $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The piscina may have been built into the wall when the wall was erected; the aumbry niche seems to have been inserted after the erection of the wall. The niche

* Prof. Sedgefield favours a derivation from *mylna*, "mill," and *hólmr* (*Place-names of C. & W.*, p. 79), but this is doubtful. Millholm is another place in West Cumberland (Dr. J. Wilson's *St. Bees*, pp. 555, 562).

is very rude and follows the lie of the stones in the wall and its shape seems to be dependent on them ; there is an opening upwards at the back, apparently the bed of a stone.

No marks of wood plugs as for door fastenings were noticed when the plaster was removed.

There is another piscina in Millom church on the south side of the great east window in the south aisle or Hudleston chapel, near the Hudleston effigies. This piscina has an aumbry-shelf contained in the space over the bason.

This chapel is a Gothic structure and is thus of later date than the chancel. The north wall of the chancel contains an early Norman window ; the south wall wherein the piscina and aumbry-niche were found has windows of later date, but they seem to have been inserted after the building of the chancel walls.

A flint flake was found in the Vicarage garden at Millom in March, 1917. It is red flint with a bit of white edging. It measures $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches by $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches, and weighs $\frac{7}{16}$ oz. The cutting or scraping edges are chipped and the point has been broken off. It is now in possession of the author.