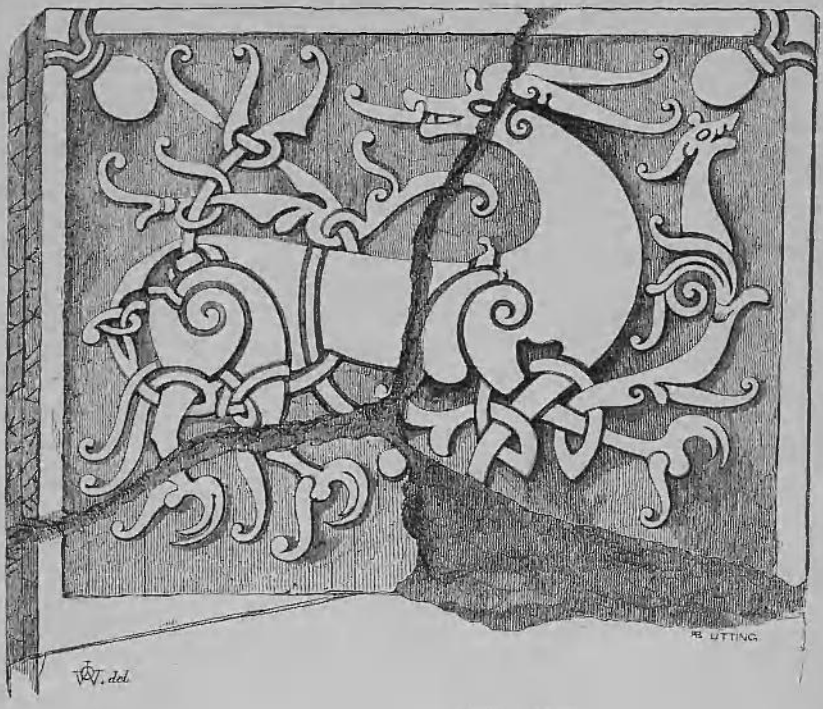
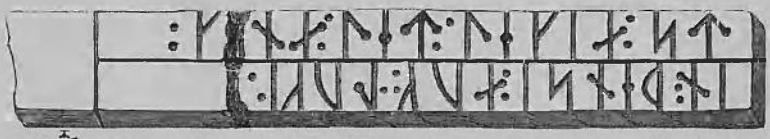


Stone found in St. Paul's Churchyard, London.

: k o n a : l e t : l e k i a : s t



: i k : t u k : i : a u s : þ e n : i

Runic Inscription on the edge of the above Stone.

"SCANDINAVIAN" OR "DANISH" SCULPTURED STONES FOUND IN LONDON AND THEIR BEARING ON THE SUPPOSED "SCANDINAVIAN" OR "DANISH" ORIGIN OF OTHER ENGLISH SCULPTURED STONES.

By the REV. G. F. BROWNE, B.D.

I propose to use the words "Danish" and "Scandinavian" almost indiscriminately in this paper, instead of the more cautious phrase "Scandinavian or Danish." While there are marked differences between the art work of Norway and Sweden on the one hand and of Denmark on the other, I do not wish to profess to discriminate between the two styles so dogmatically as to say of a tenth century or eleventh century stone that it is Scandinavian and not Danish, or Danish and not Scandinavian. The word in ordinary use in the connection which now concerns us is "Danish."

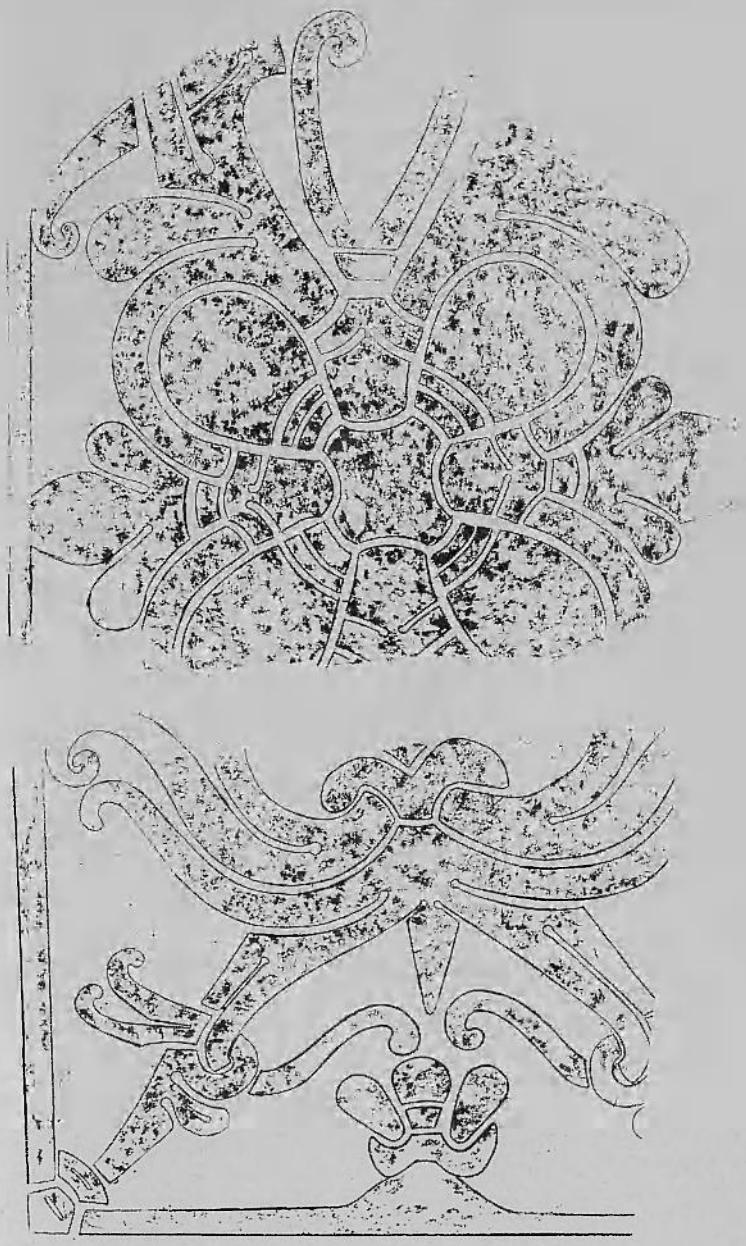
In August, 1852, a remarkable stone was dug up in the course of excavations for a new warehouse on the south side of St. Paul's Churchyard. It was found about twenty feet below the present surface. The architect, Mr. James T. Knowles, junior, addressed a letter describing the discovery and the stone to the Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord in December, 1852, and this letter was embodied in a very interesting paper by Charles C. Rafn, "Remarks on a Danish Runic Stone from the eleventh century found in the central part of London." The paper was published separately, in a pamphlet form. It is also to be found in the "Mémoires" of the Society, in the volume for 1845-1849, however contradictory the date may appear. It is accompanied by three illustrations, one giving a very good representation of the stone itself, and the other two shewing two sides of the memorial stone of Gorm the Old, the last heathen king of Denmark, for the purpose of comparison[1]. The stone is carefully preserved in the Guildhall Library, cased in wood and glass. I have pleasure in recording the great readiness with which the Librarian sent for a workman and had the case taken off, to enable me to make a rubbing of the stone and its inscription. Though this stone is not the special subject of my paper, and has already been fully described, it is necessary for my present purpose to call attention to its characteristics (see Plate I).

It will be seen that the stone is the upper part of a standing stone, which has been in appearance something like a modern rectangular headstone in a church yard, but a good deal lower than most of our modern stones. It bears in a sunk panel the figure of a non-descript animal, less

[1] Tracings of these were shewn, and a rubbing of the stone.

unlike a horse than anything else, with fantastic claws and a head horned and tusked looking backwards. A dragon-like creature coils round its fore legs and rears itself in front of its chest, cleverly filling up that end of the panel. The hind legs also are hampered, and in the void space above the back there is an intricate arrangement of volutes which appear to have some connection with harness. The upper corners of the rectangular panel are occupied by an ornament closely resembling a turnip. On the edge of the stone is an inscription, reading upwards from the level of the bottom of the panel to the top, and then turning downwards and reaching nearly to the bottom of the panel again. The runes of which the inscription consists are very deeply and regularly cut, very different from the mere scratches of some Anglian inscriptions, and their meaning is quite clear—Kona let lekia stin thensi auk Tuki: Kona and Tuki caused lay this stone. A complete discussion of the inscription will be found in Mr. Rafn's paper.

In 1884, Mr. A. W. Franks asked me to look at two large and heavy fragments of sculptured stones, which had been in his possession for some years. He had recently placed them in the Anglo-Saxon room at the British Museum, and he has now presented them to the Museum. They are respectively about 15 in. by 20 in. and 20 in. by 21 in. and about 8 in. thick. I had seen no stones in any way resembling them, nor had I, at that time, seen any engravings that bore upon their ornamentation. But it happened that I had that morning examined for the first time the stone in the Guildhall Library, in its case, and I had observed on it that when the stone-cutter wished to make a groove, he seemed to have begun by drilling a hole at the furthest point to which the groove was to run. This feature, I saw at once, was a characteristic of the British Museum stones also. Proceeding on this hint, I observed further that in more than one place the "turnip" ornament of the Guildhall stone appeared on the British Museum stones. Further, some of the characteristic features in connection with volutes were to be found on the Museum stones. I came to the conclusion that, though it would be difficult to imagine two monuments more unlike at first sight, the Guildhall stone and the British Museum stones were of the same nationality and character, probably by the same workman, possibly parts of the same monument, the former acting as the head-stone of the grave, the latter being fragments of the body-stone laid on the surface of the ground. The detailed examination of the three stones which followed some time after, when I took rubbings and put in the outlines, convinced me of the close relation between the two. In further confirmation of this I made a most unexpected and unlikely discovery, that one of the British Museum stones, which we had been handling so long, bore on one edge two very bold runes and a full stop, and that the runes were KI, the concluding runes of the Guildhall inscription, suggesting that Tuki had to do with both monuments. Mr. Franks then informed me that the men from whom he obtained the two stones told him they came from the City, and thus the whole series of surmises seemed to hang together. The outlined rubbings of the two stones will be found reproduced on Plate II. It may be well to add that Rafn identifies the Guildhall Tuki with Tokig, a minister of King Canute, while after the KI of the British Museum stone is an incision which may represent a rune for *g* at a period when it was almost becoming *y*. Professor G. Stephens



G. F. Browne del.

Sprague & C° Photo-litho. London.

TWO FRAGMENTS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM,
FOUND IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

examined the stone when he came over to receive an honorary degree from the University of Cambridge, and he told me there was no doubt about the runes. I shew a rubbing of this edge of the stone, and I would call attention to the fact that here as on the Guildhall stone a deep groove runs along the middle of the edge, evidently prepared for the inscription, the Guildhall runes standing on the two sides of this groove as their base, the British Museum runes, there being abundance of room to spare, being run right across the central groove and forming an inscription of one line only.

Having arrived at these conclusions, which seemed to me of some importance beyond the particular case, I naturally looked further into the matter, and I found two things which interested me very much. The first was that T. G. Repp had argued from the phrase, "caused *lay* this stone," instead of the usual "*raised* this stone," that the Guildhall stone was the head-stone of a greater monument of the nature of a body-stone, and that while the head-stone recorded the persons who provided the monument, the body-stone would no doubt bear an inscription setting forth the name of the deceased. This "horizontal tomb-stone below," he added, "in the course of eight centuries most likely has been broken into many pieces and then mouldered to atoms." The coincidence of the conclusions from very different data, and the confirmation of T. G. Repp's surmise, are very remarkable.

The other result of my further enquiries was that the ornamental work on the British Museum stones, of which I had seen no other example though it seemed like a reminiscence of some of the patterns on Scandinavian fibulæ of the later iron age, was in many of its parts almost identical with a large number of the ornamental crosses—scarcely recognisable as crosses—inscribed on Scandinavian monumental stones as figured in Goransson's *Bautil* (Stockholm, 1750), while the Guildhall animal is evidently of the same type with animals which appear on the Scandinavian stones.[1] This at once not only set at rest all doubt as to the close connection between the two London monuments, so far as style and period are concerned, but further emphasised the probability that these two monuments, each up to the present time unique in England so far as I know, may be parts of one and the same memorial—it may be supposed to some very important personage who died in London in the course of the century preceding the Norman Conquest.

It will be of some interest to state that I have had an opportunity of shewing my rubbings of the two stones to Professor Westwood, of Oxford. I laid them before him, hiding the rubbings of the Guildhall stone, and remarking that the ornamentation was I thought unique in England. 'Except,' he rejoined, 'on one stone, a stone found in St. Paul's Churchyard, which I published in the Proceedings of the Archæological Institute thirty years ago.' It was with great satisfaction that I removed the rubbings, and shewed, lying under his hand, my rubbing of the Guildhall stone, his admirable engraving of which will be found in the *Archaeological Journal*, vol. x, page 83, and is reproduced on Plate I. This immediate and independent identification seems to me to be of great importance in the argument which follows

[1] Tracings of these were shewn.

We are told in various localities that English sculptured stones are "Danish." The common people call them so, and it is worth enquiring whether this is an old tradition. The alternative is more likely, that visitors with some archæological knowledge have pronounced them to be Danish and the verdict has been locally stereotyped. I have seen several 'Danish' stones this year, notably in Staffordshire. They bear no resemblance to anything shewn in Göransson or Olaus Wormius, and they naturally suggest the question, why should the Danes, or other Northmen, erect in England monuments so very unlike the monuments they erected in such large numbers at home? With some archæologists, the great mass of early sculptured stones in the North of England are almost to a stone "Danish" or later copies of "Danish." And yet it may be said I think with perfect truth that there is not one known stone in the North of England which does not differ in a striking manner from every stone figured in the books referred to. That the two classes of stone may be descended from some far off common ancestor, that they are distant cousins, may be true, but that they are the work—so far as their art is concerned—of the same men, the one class designed at home the other designed abroad in England, contradicts experience. The difference is not in style of art only, or in shape of stone, though these are marked enough; there is a much more serious difference, namely, that while the stones in Denmark and Scandinavia are very loquacious, telling us usually in long runic inscriptions the names of the person to whom the stone was erected and the person who erected it, there is not, so far as I know, a single scrap of an inscription on any one of the English stones now called "Danish." It may be added that while the Danish and Scandinavian stones thus carry inscriptions, their number being very large—already in Göransson's time some 1,700 being figured, and these runic inscriptions are almost all of them cut on the body of a serpent or a pair of serpents twining about on the face of a rough unhewn and unshaped stone, there is not, so far as I know, a single stone in England with an inscription in runes or in any other character on the body of a serpent, nor is there to my knowledge any unshaped stone bearing the interlacing bands and ornamented panels and the other features we find on our early sculptured stones.

It might be argued that the Danes when in England did as the English did, that is to say, when they wished to carry out their national practice of erecting a stone monument, they erected a monument of English fashion. This argument, if it could be substantiated, would leave us in doubt as to any stone of pre-Norman type, and of about the period when the Danes were here; it might be Danish, it might be English, so far as the ordering it and paying for it was concerned. I shew a panel, which I have named the Völund panel, on the Leeds cross, where a saga scene is combined with the evangelists and other characteristics of English stones, so that Scandinavian ideas were carried out by Anglian artists. But the stones which are now under consideration shew quite conclusively that it was possible for Danes to have a thoroughly Danish monument in England if they so desired, and there is no other evidence of this. This strikes a serious blow at the "Danish" theory of the origin of the large number of stones which are as different as anything can well be from Danish stones in Denmark. These stones shew also, I think, two things of great importance. Their style, though intensely Scandinavian,

is, both in design and in workmanship, superior to anything I can find figured on Danish and Scandinavian stones; from which we may argue that the art of sculpturing designs on stones was at the time of the Danish residence here in a more advanced stage than in Denmark itself, and this makes against the theory that the English stones are late Danish. Further, the fact that here are very interesting and effective sculptured stones in the heart of London, of a type easily reproduced as compared with the difficult intricacies of interlacements, and yet that these stones are, so far as we know, altogether without progeny, have left no known attempt at imitation, is an argument against the theory held by many persons, that those of our sculptured stones which are not Danish are late English copies of Danish stones erected here. With regard to the head-stone of these London stones, there can, I think, be no doubt that the Dane, who set it up copied an English form. I have heard of no head-stone of this character, or of anything like this form, in Scandinavia or Denmark. On the other hand we have in England early head-stones, some with runes, of which I shew one from Thornhill, and one very curious stone at Whitchurch in Hampshire, with a semi-circular top on the surface of which the inscription (in Latin) is cut, in front, a female bust in a sunk panel, and on the back a very pretty symmetrical ornament of spiral type, a rubbing of which I shew. Again, there is no evidence of the existence of body-stones of this form in Scandinavia or Denmark, while, though there is not to my knowledge in these islands any body-stone at all resembling this, we have plenty of early body-stones. The so-called hog-backed stones are, of course, familiar to all who are likely to hear or read these words. But there is a class of body-stones less familiarly known, and at the same time more closely akin to this London body-stone. Several were found under the Norman walls of Cambridge Castle when they were removed early in this century. They are figured in the Archæologia, vol. xvii, and Mr. Cutts has given two in his Manual. The Cambridge Antiquarian Society, of which I have the honour of being President, possesses one, and I shew an outlined rubbing of it, a stone 5¼ feet long, tapering towards the foot from 19 inches to 12 inches, with four sunk panels leaving the surface to form a Latin cross, the panels filled with simple interlacing bands. You have a portion of a stone much like this in the Guildhall Museum. There is one in the south wall of St. Mary Bishophill the Less in York, 4 feet long, of which I shew an outlined rubbing. Another has just been found under Peterborough Cathedral. I shew a fragment of another, 3ft. long, from the York Museum, with no cross on the surface but divided up the length by one line, on each side of which is a dragon with interlacing bands for limbs. I shew for purposes of comparison a pretty little standing stone from Thornhill, near Dewsbury, with dragons which are closely related to the York dragons, and with a runic inscription. There is a very interesting fragment of a stone, recently found at York, with two panels, in each of which is a very good dragon engaged in the usual unsatisfactory and unsatisfying occupation of eating its own or some other dragon's tail. I believe that this stone is the upper part of a body-stone with four panels. There are several early stones in Yorkshire and Durham which may have been body-stones. Among them I must mention the stone which I feel to be the most beautiful I have seen. It is built into the external wall of the west end of the nave of Kirkdale

Church, on the north side of the tower. It is perishing miserably, may almost be said to have perished. The local photographer has had an order from me for more than two years to photograph it in the largest possible size. Years ago runes could be read on it, *To King Oithilwald.* Now only one rune can be seen, though others are detected in a careful rubbing. I shew a rubbing of what remained three years ago of this exquisite piece of sculpture.

The theory that English and Scottish and Irish sculptured stones are mainly Danish is probably due to the fact that some of our earliest writers who have touched upon the question were in communication with learned Danes, and heard from them of stones with strange interlacements and with runic inscriptions existing in Denmark and in Sweden. It was natural to suppose that the origin of the two classes of stones was the same, and that the Danes who set them up in Denmark were the race who set them up in England and in Ireland, in parts of both of which countries they were for a time the ruling race.

Sir Henry Spelman had a correspondence[1] with Olaus Wormius on this and cognate subjects, in which, by the way, the runes on the missing head of the Bewcastle Cross are set forth and discussed. It is difficult to see what other view was tenable in the then state of knowledge, above all at a time when the exquisite art of the manuscripts produced in early times in these islands was practically a sealed book. Professor Westwood's labours in the reproduction of some of the marvellous pages of the MSS., a reproduction as marvellous in its way as the pages themselves, have enabled every one interested in the matter to realise the fact that a new and highly important element has been introduced into the question since the early county historians labelled our English stones as Danish. In one case, it is well known, a very ludicrous result was produced by the Danish theory. The runic inscription on the wonderful monument at Ruthwell, in a part of Scotland which was for a short time under Anglian rule in the early days of the kingdom of Northumbria, was treated as Danish, and the beautiful stanzas of the poem in early "Anglo-Saxon"—

> Christ was on the Cross,
> Yet thither hastening
> Came from afar
> The nobles to the sufferer.
> With missiles wounded
> There laid we him limb weary,

were made to mean that 'a font with ornaments of eleven pounds weight was offered by the authority of the Therfusian fathers for the devastation of the fields and thirteen cows as an expiation for injury.' The evidence in this case every one can appreciate. The evidence from the character of the art is not accessible to all, even of those who are interested in the matter, and we cannot expect it to be so ludicrously conclusive as in the Ruthwell case.

I have selected one or two examples of "Danish" stones in England, as illustrations of the sort of evidence we possess. There is nothing unfair in the selection, in this sense—that I know of no stones called "Danish" in England which are any less unlike the Scandinavian stones than these.

[1] Ol. Worm. Mon. Dan. III. 13.

There are in England a number of sculptured columns, mostly cylindrical but in some cases with slightly oval section, which are commonly called Danish. I have called attention to some of these in a paper which the Derbyshire Archæological Society did me the honour of accepting, on the Font at Wilne. The whole question of these columns is much too large to be dealt with on the present occasion. I shew rubbings of one of the finest of them, the pillar in the church-yard at Leek, in Staffordshire. The principle of all is the same. The column tapers slightly upwards, and after a time it is cut as if one were making the first four cuts at a new lead pencil. This gives four faces, each with a curvilinear base and with sides sloping gently inwards. On these four faces the sculptures are placed. It has been believed that these pillars never terminated in a cross at the top. The pillar at Leek terminates in something which the historian of the town likens, *horribile dictu*, to a pine-apple. It is, however, part of the cross in which the pillar once terminated. This is set quite at rest by a pretty little pillar in the church-yard at Ilam, where the cross-head is sufficiently preserved for all purposes of argument.

At Leek, as the rubbings shew, a fillet runs round the pillar immediately below the curvilinear bases of the sculptured panels, and this fillet is ornamented with a simple and pretty interlacement of bands. It will be noticed that the pattern is not continuous, as it might so easily have been, but comes to an end at the N.E. corner and begins again. This is probably due to the designer having drawn the working design on paper or on a board or a flat stone, as a long narrow panel of interlacing work, 7 inches broad and $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft. long, in which case he might naturally bring each end to the conclusion usual on panels. Below the fillet is a very unusual and effective ornament, a heart-shaped pattern on three sides, descending in a triangle, and on the fourth side a Maltese cross, carrying in its centre a smaller cross, perhaps a Latin cross, probably another Maltese. The four faces have (1) the key pattern, (2) a series of ten "Stafford knots" formed by an endless band, (3) a piece of ordinary interlacing work, with two puzzling departures from the conventional "over and under" alternation, (4) a stiff scroll of fruit and leaves. Of these, (1), (3), and (4), are almost *de rigeur* on these columns. Below the fillet the surface is unsculptured to the ground, about six feet. The Leek sexton told me that their local name for the Stafford knot is "hang three rogues at once," an improvement on the simple halter which made me as a Yorkshireman almost envious of their local requirements.

The next "Danish" stone I will take is one which I believe is not described anywhere. It is at Stapleford, in Nottinghamshire, close on the borders of Derbyshire. It is a very remarkable stone, with exquisite patterns. I trust that the Institute will be willing to have it photographed on a large scale and in full detail, and to accept a paper on it, illustrated by autotype copies of the photographs and by photolithographs of my rubbings, without which no one not practised could form a guess at the law of the interlacements.

This beautifully sculptured pillar is about 12 feet high, and it is said that a considerable portion of the shaft is sunk in the masonry which supports it; that the sculpture continues below the lowest visible point is evident. Every portion of it is covered with sculpture. It is divided by bands into two cylindrical portions, each 2 feet 3 inches high; how much longer the lower is cannot be determined. Above these are the four

faces similar to those I have described, and the pillar is on so large a scale that these faces are themselves divided, and a second panel of each commences a few inches below the point where the whole is broken off, shewing the remains of interlacing work. I shew rubbings of all the four faces up to the division, and of three fourths of each of the lower cylindrical portions. The faces have, (1) a cornucopia scroll, (2) a well executed system of twofold Stafford knots, (3) a very pretty arrangement of 17 rings with endless bands running through them, (4) what is called a Danish bird. This last object has both ears and horns ; it has extended wings ; on either side are what may be portions of snakes ; and I think there are signs of a spear. The legs may be the legs of a bird. The arrangement of the head possibly points to St. Luke. The upper cylindrical surface is covered with intricate interlacing work the details of which are much decayed in places. A portion of the work is very unusual ; other portions are as good as the very best manuscript or stone work in existence. The lower cylindrical surface has been very fine. The west side could hardly be surpassed in the beauty of the concentric circular interlacements. The south side has all but perished. The north repeats a portion of the upper panel on a bolder scale, and the east repeats and amplifies the system of rings on one of the faces. It is interesting to note that, so far as I know, we have not this pattern on English stones, beyond a ring or two on a Northumbrian stone. On Scottish stones it is equally rare, except in one part—you find it on one stone after another in Wigton and Galloway.[1]

I shew another of these pillars, on a much smaller scale, the pillar in the church yard of Ilam. Its features are in the main the same. It has, curiously enough, just the same departure from due alternation as the Leek stone has. It has what the others have not, a scroll of fruit and leaves on the fillet below the four faces. I shew also a photograph of the well-known pillar of Eliseg at Valle Crucis, near Llangollen. In its form it exactly accords with what we have seen. It is well known that this pillar carries a long inscription in barbarous Latin, naming British kings of a period anterior to any date at which the 9th century Danes could possibly have influenced lapidary style. There are two examples of these pillars at Bakewell and four at Macclesfield.

It is unnecessary for me to say that what we have so far seen of "Danish" stones is entirely unlike the Danish and Scandinavian stones they know so well in Denmark &c. We have not seen a sign of those great snakes which border their ornaments and carry their inscriptions. Nor will you find on any stone in those parts anything approaching to any of the details I have shewn. What I have now to add, in concluding my examples of "Danish" stones in England, is more striking still in itself-and only not more unlike Danish stones because it could not be more unlike. The specimens I shew of what I may designate as "basket-work men," come from two stones at Checkley in Staffordshire. They are "battle stones," and "Danish," in popular estimation and in the county history. I had supposed the marvellous creatures on them to be quite unique till I found a stone I shall describe next. The bodies of the men, of whom there are, I think, about two dozen in threes, are formed of an endless interlacing band, the legs projecting as a separate design, and the two ends of the band projecting from the shoulders and forming upraised

[1] Tracings of these ring patterns were shewn.

arms, in some cases passing round the head and forming an arcade or a nimbus. I shew tracings of a crucifixion from the "Irish Psalter" at St. John's College, Cambridge, with an approach to this basket-work arrangement; also of a basket-work-bodied "elephant" symbol from Brodie. I also shew other details of these most remarkable stones. I trust that the local society will enable me to have the stones fully photographed and published with my outlined rubbings as interpretations.

Finally, last Easter, when I was collecting materials for a paper on the Derbyshire stones, to be read, if all be well, at the meeting of the Institute in Derby next autumn, I went to Ilam, at the mouth of Dovedale but in Staffordshire. There, too, I found a "battle stone," a very massive rectangular shaft, looking as if very many centuries must have gone in its perishing. When the lichen was got rid of, there stood revealed the indications of what I think no one not acquainted with the race of "basket-work" men at Checkley could have interpreted, "basket-work" men in threes, almost exactly like the "Danish" battle stones at Checkley, while on the sides were just the same Stafford knots and concentric circles which I have shewn among the Checkley details, only on a larger scale. I shew rubbings of these. I am glad to say that the discovery of these curious things, and the light I was able to throw upon two crosses in the churchyard, have moved the vicar to undertake the publication of all sides of all of them, both in autotype and with photolithographs from my rubbings.

I have had a two-fold object in venturing to make this communication. First, I have desired to call attention to the details of the important question of the relation between the art of the stones in these islands and of those in Denmark and Scandinavia; with which question the origin and influence of the art of the so-called Irish manuscripts is inseparably bound up. And secondly, I have desired to excite interest in the whole question of our English sculptured stones, stones as interesting in their art and their antiquity as the stones of Scotland and of Ireland, and greatly more interesting in their inscriptions. I have great hopes that the University Press of Cambridge will undertake to commence and to carry on a great work on these stones, where each shall be reproduced by some autotype process. Both on the account of the expense, and on account of the labour, and on account of the knowledge required, such a work—which would be a national work—is impossible without the active aid both of local and of central Archæological Associations. I shall be exceedingly thankful if I succeed in moving to sympathy and active co-operation so all-important a body as the Archæological Institute.