

ANCIENT CROSS-HEAD DISCOVERED AT ROWSLEY.

(See illustration).

The stone illustrated above was found some years ago in the River Wye and has since lain in the churchyard without attracting any special attention among archaeologists. The writer photographed it several months ago and submitted the print to a number of authorities, among these being Mr. W. G. Collingwood of Coniston, Lancashire. That gentleman replied that it is very unusual in respect of the volute terminals of the arms,¹ but as to the expanded ends, certain illustrations in his above-named work showed related forms, i.e., page 88, Kirkby Wharfe, Fig. 107 and Dewsbury, Fig. 106. These also showed similar knot-work and central boss.

No definite reply has yet been received from other correspondents but it has been stated that there is considerable interest in the style of the stone. The problem of its period is being looked into. The volutes or scroll endings to the arms are obviously the main problem. No similar example occurs in Kermodé's *Manx Crosses*, nor has it yet been possible to trace the motive among Irish, Cornish or other groups.

Mr. Collingwood suggests an eleventh century date, but does so with reservation. The knot-work and central boss would warrant a much earlier attribution but the finished curvilinear style of the work opens out several lines of speculation not at present safe to embark upon. The relief sculpture is of the same pattern on both sides.

The local aspect of the question has also its special interest, the newness of the type among our many midland examples being the first consideration. Another point is,

¹ Prof. G. Baldwin Brown in the *Antiquaries Journal*, vol. XI, 1931 p. 226, (this is in the Society's library), describes a carved stone, "The Lechmere Stone," which on one side has in high relief a cross very similar to the Rowsley one, with expanding arms ending in volutes, Prof. Brown places it in the early half or middle of the 10th c.—Ed.

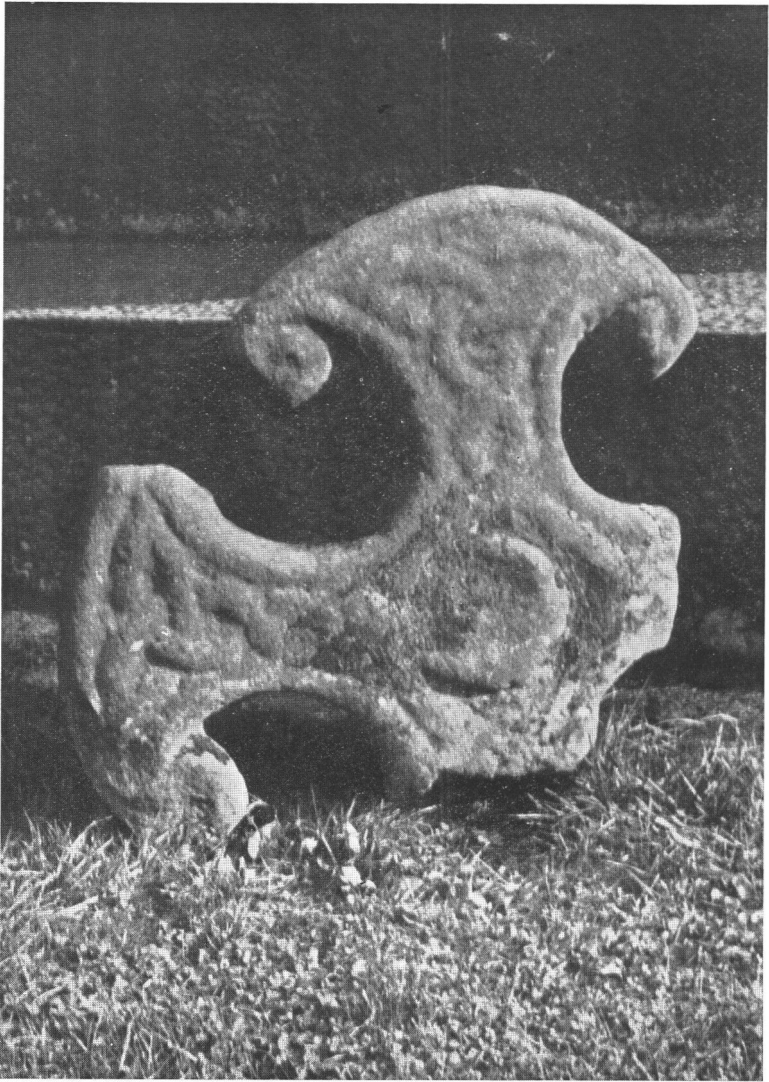


Photo. by T. L. Tudor.

PLATE X.—Fragment of a pre-Norman Cross-head at Rowsley.

where did the cross stand originally, for no doubt has been thrown on the natural conclusion that the stone is the head of a standing cross. History records no ancient sanctuary at Rowsley, but is this part of an ancient preaching cross which stood in the village in those distant centuries, but which was not succeeded by an early church? Or was it a wayside sign of the faith for the traveller approaching the Derwent crossing, from the west country? Where the road lamp stands to-day another old road strikes off across the Wye, making for Stanton and Birchover. The ancient cross may very well have stood at this point.

A tablet beside the stone at the present time calls it a preaching cross of the "seventh century." This, as we see, is not proven. Canon Prior who has taken care of the stone will probably have it removed into the church.

T. L. TUDOR.

THE BURBAGE CROSS-SHAFT.

(See illustration).

On the modern road for Leek and Macclesfield from Buxton, through Burbage, a little before the fork for those destinations is a row of tallish dark gritstone dwellings at the foot of the immense spoil heap from the Grinlow quarries and opposite the near end, a long mile from Buxton Crescent, a slip stile opens on a path leading from this to the old Macclesfield road ("Cat and Fiddle" Inn). The cheek or jamb-stone of this stile is the fragmentary shaft of a pre-Norman ecclesiastical cross which does not seem to have been recorded hitherto.

Returning last March from the high moors about the Danehead, the curious tooling on this stone struck me as I passed and I examined it and was satisfied it was the extremely weathered remains of a decorated surface. From enquiries I couldn't learn it had been recorded, so