

Notes and News

AN ANGLO-SAXON INSCRIPTION FROM ALL HALLOWS, BARKING-BY-THE-TOWER, LONDON (PL. XXIX, A, B)

An inscribed stone was found in December, 1951, underneath the nave of the church of All Hallows, Barking-by-the-Tower. The only published accounts of it appeared in newspaper articles, notably in *The Times* of 12 December, 1951, which states: 'This new find was made about a foot beneath the floor of the nave . . . The stone lay face downwards . . . Some of the piers [i.e. Norman work] were built into the later church (thirteenth to fifteenth century), and it was against one of these that the Saxon cross was found, protected under a piece of building stone of the same material. It had thus lain undisturbed since 1087.' Unpublished notes by Dr. C. A. Ralegh Radford and Mr. Norman Cook, written shortly after the discovery and now preserved in the church, suggest that it may have been reused in medieval building.¹ Pieces of another Anglo-Saxon stone, found in the same church in 1941,² are elaborately carved and contain the text: (.).erh(e).porrd, perhaps a personal name. Both stones are preserved in the crypt of the church.

The stone found in 1951 (PL. XXIX, A) is in two pieces which form the upper part of a wheeled cross-head, D. 0.61 m. It is dressed all over and inscribed, but bears no decorative carving. Originally it may have stood on a shaft and it has been so restored (PL. XXIX, B). No other Anglo-Saxon wheeled cross-head exists with an inscription on the face; there is, therefore, some doubt whether this inscription originally continued round the entire head. Wheel-headed crosses are associated with areas of Anglo-Saxon England under Celtic or Scandinavian influence. In London the latter is considerably more probable; we may compare the stone from St. Paul's churchyard bearing Ringerike ornament.³

Traces of black paint remain on the uninscribed face of the stone. Dr. Radford's notes suggest that these formed an interlace pattern, painted where other stones are carved. Dr. Bruce-Mitford, however, describes the paint as traces of a band of ornament around the perimeter of the cross and around one of the triangular perforations.⁴ The inscribed face of the stone appears to have borne some red paint, both on the letters and on the central plain portion.

Direct evidence for the practice of painting Anglo-Saxon carved and inscribed stones is slight. Paint has been described on stones from Burnsall, Stonegrave and Kirklevington (Yorkshire),⁵ Lancaster,⁶ Deerhurst (Gloucestershire, the 'Deerhurst Virgin'),⁷ Reculver (Kent),⁸ Ipswich (Suffolk, the 'Apostles' stone'),⁹ and London (the

¹ C. A. Ralegh Radford, *The Appreciation of the New Discovery at All Hallows-by-the-Tower* (unpub. 1951-2); N. Cook, *An Appreciation of the New Discovery at All Hallows-by-the-Tower* (unpub. 1951-2).

² C. A. Ralegh Radford and T. D. Kendrick, 'Recent discoveries at All Hallows, Barking', *Antiq. J.*, xxiii (1943), 14-18, pls. v-vi.

³ Now in the Guildhall Museum, London. Illustrated in T. D. Kendrick, *Late Saxon and Viking Art* (London, 1949), p. 99, pl. lxvii.

⁴ In a personal communication.

⁵ W. G. Collingwood, 'Anglian and Anglo-Danish sculpture in the West Riding . . .', *Yorks. Archaeol. J.*, xxiii (1915), 289.

⁶ Collingwood, *loc. cit.* in note 5.

⁷ D. Talbot Rice, *English Art 871-1100* (The Oxford History of English Art, II, Oxford, 1952), p. 107.

⁸ C. R. Peers, 'Reculver: its Saxon church and cross', *Archaeologia*, lxxvii (1927), 251-3.

⁹ H. P. Drummond, 'Church of St. Nicholas, Ipswich', *Suffolk Archaeol. Assoc. Original Papers*, III (Nov. 1848), 25.

stone found in 1941 at All Hallows and the St. Paul's stone).¹⁰ Without exception these stones date from the late Saxon period, that is, from the 10th or 11th centuries. The only inscriptions known to me with paint on the lettering are the two Anglian runestones from Kirk Maughold, Isle of Man,¹¹ and the font from Little Billing (Northamptonshire), though the present paint may not be original.

The legend on the stone is incised between margins around the perimeter of one face. Word-divisions are not indicated. The script is Anglo-Saxon capitals employing one ligature, H/E, and rounded forms of S, þ; V representing *w* may also be used. The consistent serifing is mainly effected by chiselled dots, though some full and line serifing also occur. The use of small legs on the forms of E and L cannot be paralleled on Anglo-Saxon inscriptions except in the case of coin-legends, where a serif can sometimes give the effect of a 'leg'. The upper margin is largely worn away, but the lower remains, and most of the letters touch it. The text is rather deteriorated, but the dot serifing enables some of the letters to be restored. The text reads:¹²

—¹Š¹⁰ T A N þ⁵ E L V(¹⁰)¹⁰ R L E T S¹⁵ Ē (. . . . F) E R H/²⁰Ē R E —

On examination, letter 5 seems to be þ, though D and þ appear possible readings from the photograph. Letter 9 is probably A, though I is possible. The letter preceding 16 is contextually probably O. It is uncertain how much, if any, text is lost at the beginning. Symmetry would demand at least three or four letters, to correspond with the second element of *Here*—.

The reading is thus: —*stan þelv(a)r let se(. . . of)er here*—, probably to be translated 'þelv(a)r had (this) stone set up over Here'. The text lost at the beginning probably contained a demonstrative, that in the middle the rest of a verb, and that at the end the second element of a name. The text is obviously memorial in nature, though it appears to be in prose and does not employ the frequent Old English poetic memorial formula, a complete example of which is the runic stone from Great Urswick (Lancashire), +*tunwini setæ æfter toroʒtrede bekun æfter his bæurnæ gebidæs þer saulæ*.¹³

The first four letters can be read in three ways. That given above is the most probable, although there remain some difficulties of interpretation. *Stan* is not recorded in the sense 'grave-stone' until the 14th century¹⁴ though a sense 'standing-stone' occurs in charters and in place-names.¹⁵ ON *steinn* occurs frequently on Scandinavian runestones with the meaning 'grave-stone'. *þelv(a)r* is not recorded as a name, though both elements occur separately. *þel-* may be from OE *wel*, or be a form of the element *wæl*-shewing south-eastern raising of *æ* to *e*.¹⁶ The names *Welgist* and *Welric* occur amongst the moneyers of Aethelred II (978–1016).¹⁷ *-v(a)r* may be a late spelling of *-weard*, cf. *DB Eluuar*, etc., or of *-waru*, *-wær*, cf. *DB Wluuare* < *Wulfwaru*.¹⁸ Alternatively it may be from the ON element, later *-vqr*.

However, the words may be divided: *stanþel v(a)r let*, 'V(a)r had (this) standing-stone set up', though *stanweall* is not recorded in this sense, and *V(a)r* could only be a

¹⁰ Radford and Kendrick, *op. cit.* in note 2, p. 14; Kendrick, *op. cit.* in note 3, p. 99.

¹¹ R. I. Page, *The Inscriptions of the Anglo-Saxon Rune-Stones* (unpub., Nottingham, 1959), pp. 301–7. Paint is not mentioned in P. C. Kermodé, *Manx Crosses* (London, 1907), pp. 110, 217 ff.

¹² Transliterated according to the following system: A indicates a letter damaged but legible; (A), a damaged letter which can be read with some certainty; (. . .) etc., about four, etc., lost letters; —, lost text; A/B ligatured letters.

¹³ R. I. Page, 'Language and dating in OE inscriptions', *Anglia*, LXXVII (1959), 402.

¹⁴ *OED*, s.v. 'stone' sb. 5, d.

¹⁵ E.g. the 9th-century charter of Aethelwulf; *BCS* 451, *KCD* 260. See also A. H. Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, II (English Place-Name Society, xxvi, Cambridge, 1956), 143–5.

¹⁶ A. Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford, 1959), § 288.

¹⁷ H. A. Grueber and C. F. Keary, *A Catalogue of English Coins in the British Museum: Anglo-Saxon Series*, II (London, 1893), 201, 240.

¹⁸ O. von Feilitzen, *The Pre-Conquest Personal Names of Domesday Book* (Nomina Germanica, 3, Uppsala, 1937), pp. 99, 181 (though loss of *d* here may be due to Anglo-Norman influence); 409, 425.

form of the rare name *Wor*. The other possible reading is: *stanþel v(a)rlet*, 'V(a)rlet set up (this) standing-stone'; however, added to the difficulty of *stanweall* in this sense, the name is unrecorded and difficult to explain.

The other point of linguistic interest is the use of (*of*)*er*. All extant Old English memorial formulae use *æfter*.¹⁹ Danish runic inscriptions generally use *eptir*, but a few examples are recorded with *yfir* (~OE *ofer*), one from the 11th to 12th century.²⁰ The runic inscription in ON on a stone from Iona reads, *+kali (b)uluis sunr lapi stan þinsi ubir fukl brupur*—.²¹ The usage on the All Hallows stone may shew Scandinavian influence.

This Scandinavian influence, seen possibly also in *stan* meaning 'grave-stone', in the element *-v(a)r* from ON *-vpr*, and in the wheel-head of the cross, suggests a late 10th- or 11th-century date for the stone. This is further borne out by the fact that all stones bearing traces of colour, with the exception of those from Kirk Maughold, are from this late period. Mr. R. Bailey suggests that this sort of cross-head was popular in the 10th and 11th centuries and is unlikely to be earlier.²² There is very little evidence for dating the text. Linguistically, if *-v(a)r* is not from ON *-vpr*, it may suggest a late date on analogy with the *DB* example. The epigraphic evidence is inconsistent: the early forms *Ǻ* and *Ǻ* for A, N are used beside the probably late rounded forms of S and Þ, and the typically late lack of insular forms. Such inconsistencies in script can occur in texts of any date. Mr. Cook and Dr. Radford both favoured a 10th- or 11th-century date, and this seems most probable.

Note

This article is based on personal examination of the stone in December 1963 and April 1964. I am grateful to the Rev. P. T. B. Clayton, formerly vicar of All Hallows, for permission to examine the stone and to reproduce the photograph in PL. XXIX, A. Dr. C. A. Raleigh Radford and Dr. R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, who examined the stone in 1951, have kindly agreed to my publishing it. My thanks are also due to Dr. R. I. Page for his help, and for his permission to reproduce PL. XXIX, B.

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A DECORATED AXE-HEAD OF VIKING TYPE FROM COVENTRY

(PL. XXX, A, B; FIG. 72)

An iron axe-head (museum acc. no. 49/227/280) was amongst a large miscellaneous collection of material—mostly medieval—discovered by the late Mr. John Shelton in foundation-trenches, bomb-sites, etc., over a long period in Coventry, and given to the Herbert Museum, Coventry, in 1949. Its precise provenience is not recorded.

When found it was in very bad condition. Little more than half of the original blade remains, but the socket which has two small wings on each side, is in better preservation. The maximum length of the axe-head (restored) is 17 cm., the breadth at the cutting edge is 18.2 cm. and the blade increases in thickness to 2 cm. where it meets the socket. It belongs to the 11th-century type Jan Petersen M,²³ Rygh 560,²⁴ and Wheeler VI.²⁵ Parallels have been found elsewhere in Britain at Loch of Doon, Kirkcudbrightshire,²⁶ in Dumfriesshire,²⁷ near Ely,²⁸ and in London.²⁹

¹⁹ Thornhill no. 2 ('eadred') has *æfte*.

²⁰ E.g. L. Jacobsen and E. Moltke, *Danmarks Runeindskrifter*, I (Copenhagen, 1942), nos. 74, 111, 354. The last is 11th to 12th century, the others 12th to 14th century.

²¹ A. C. Thomas, 'Iona', *Discovery and Exploration* (1962), pp. 10–11.

²² In a personal communication.

²³ J. Petersen, *De Norske Vikingesverd* (Videnskapsselskapets Skrifter, II, Hist.-Filos. Klasse, no. 1, Kristiania, 1919), p. 46.

²⁴ O. Rygh, *Antiquités Norvégiennes* (Kristiania, 1885).

²⁵ R. E. M. Wheeler, *London and the Vikings* (1927), fig. 6.

²⁶ H. Shetelig, *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland* (1940), II, fig. 69.

²⁷ *Op. cit.* in note 26, II, fig. 70.

²⁸ *Op. cit.* in note 26, IV, fig. 34.

²⁹ *Op. cit.* in note 26, IV, figs. 44, 53, 55; *op. cit.* in note 25, figs. 3, 4, 9 no. 3, 10 no. 4, and 11.