

PREFACE

This, the twelfth volume of the British Academy's Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, covers the hitherto little-known material from Nottinghamshire. Although Nottinghamshire was a border area between the two Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria, very little pre-Viking Age sculpture has previously been reported from the county. Now, this book provides for the first time an authoritative listing, description and illustration of all types of decorative sculpture up to the Norman Conquest. The authors conclude that Nottinghamshire has a distinctive identity in the pre-Conquest period, with strong connections both to the Mercian state to its south and with the Northumbrians to the north. The exploration of the historical background to the sculpture here demonstrates the new contribution which this category of material can make to an obscure and under-investigated period in Midlands history.

Much of the sculpture of south-western Mercia was catalogued in Volume X of the Corpus and, together with the material presented here, provides firm evidence to support the growing academic emphasis on the importance and power of the area in the pre-Conquest period. This is a picture which we hope to build upon with the publication of the next volume of the Corpus, which will cover Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Nottingham itself was one of the main fortresses of the Danelaw and it is, therefore, hardly surprising that the sculpture of the Viking period is so rich in this region. The political and ecclesiastical structure of Nottinghamshire (particularly in relation to neighbouring Lincolnshire, treated in Volume V of the series) is both complicated and interesting, and this volume helps in some measure to throw light on this difficult subject.

The Corpus Committee is very conscious of the energy, knowledge and insight provided by Paul Everson and David Stocker, the joint authors of this important volume, and would convey to them our deep gratitude for completing such a difficult task so promptly and in grand style. Graham Lott of the British Geological Survey has provided an excellent chapter on the petrology of the stones, and we are also grateful to David Parsons for his commentary on the lost inscription from Rolleston. The Committee would also very much like to thank Yvonne Beadnell for her commitment to the project through her excellent drawings, which help (as in so many volumes of the Corpus) to ease our understanding of the stones. The production of this book could not have proceeded without the meticulous editing and careful indexing of our Research Fellow, Derek Craig, and Richard Bryant's professional help with its layout. Their work has served us well — and also helped to bring the book's price down to a reasonable level! We owe them both our deepest thanks, but most particularly we must thank Derek for his hard work and attention to detail. Sarah Semple has again shared the burden of administration with Rosemary Cramp, the General Editor of the series. For their efforts we are deeply grateful.

The main funder of the Corpus is the Headley Trust, whose generosity, understanding and continuous interest we most enthusiastically acknowledge. Without their financial backing



we would be unable to continue our work. The British Academy has continued to be our strong supporter; not only do they publish the Corpus series, but by an annual grant, have defrayed our travelling expenses and funded some of the photographic work. Finally, the Committee must again record our thanks for the outstanding support of Durham University, and particularly that of the Department of Archaeology, who have provided us with space, library facilities and discreet help throughout the life of the Corpus. Their backing, and indeed that of the whole university, cannot be overestimated.

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