



PREFACE

THIS, the thirteenth volume of the British Academy's Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, covers the material from Staffordshire and Derbyshire and provides for the first time a survey, though its sculptures, of the heartland of the important and powerful kingdom of Mercia. This northern sector of the kingdom filled a crucial role between Northumbria and the gradually expanding power of Wessex. Its written history is often hard to disentangle in that it is largely dependent on sources written down outside the kingdom, particularly as it was fought over and greatly influenced by the settlement of Scandinavian land-takers in the late ninth and tenth century. The physical remains recorded in this catalogue are, therefore, important as they provide a firm basis for an understanding of the particularly opaque record of what was once a major kingdom. The last survey of the Staffordshire monuments was published in the 1940s, and a survey of the monuments in Derbyshire appeared in both a national and a local journal in 1937, but the Anglo-Saxon sculpture of the two counties has not previously been thoroughly catalogued as a whole.

Kendrick, in two surveys of Anglo-Saxon art in 1938 and 1949, provided a coherent and ground-breaking study of Mercian sculpture, placing it in its English context. And in 1943 Stenton's *Anglo-Saxon England* provided a proper study of Mercia from an historian's point of view. On such foundations the study of all aspects of the complicated history and culture of Mercia has since blossomed. Interdisciplinary studies have flourished, conferences have been held and papers and books published; excavation, particularly at Repton, Lichfield and Derby, has thrown new and fascinating light on the sculpture of the two counties treated here. Thus our knowledge of Mercia and England as a whole has increased almost exponentially.

The Corpus Committee is deeply grateful to the main authors of this volume, Jane Hawkes and Philip Sidebottom, who have expended a great deal of energy on preparing what has not been an easy catalogue to produce; their persistence and enthusiasm have been enormous and we thank them in all sincerity for all their dedication and hard work. In this context we must also thank Barbara Yorke who, at short notice, helpfully produced a substantial chapter on the history of the region.

Martin Biddle has written an important chapter on the key site of Repton. His excavation of this church and of the fortified Danish camp at Repton is well known and has had a great influence on our knowledge of both the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian period in England as a whole. The sculptures from this site in their excavated context form a key section in the book. While we are extremely grateful to him, it is impossible not to also acknowledge the work of his late wife, Birthe Kjølby-Biddle, who formed a strong partnership with her husband and worked with him, not only at Repton, but also at many other archaeological sites in England, and in particular at Winchester, published in Volume IV of this series.

The geologists, in their production of a coherent account of the petrology and geology of the stones, have added a great deal to our understanding of the sculptures, and for this

work we are most grateful. We must particularly thank Roger Bristow, who took over the completion of the geological parts of the volume on the resignation of Robert Toynton and identified much of the petrology, as well as writing the chapter on the geology. He also drew all the maps in this volume. The commitment of Roger to this and earlier volumes of the Corpus is inestimable; we would have been lost without him. Yvonne Beadnell, who, as with so many of the volumes in this series, has provided the line drawings which add so much to the appearance of the book, must also be warmly thanked. And thanks are due to David Parsons who wrote on the runic inscriptions at Bakewell and Leek. Lastly Jane Hawkes deserves especial thanks for her role as coordinating editor of the main text of the volume, sometimes at moments of difficulty.

The Corpus team at Durham, led by the General Editor, Rosemary Cramp, is *sans pareil*. Sarah Semple, amid an extremely busy academic life, has shared Rosemary's responsibility as administrator and fund-raiser with elan. Thank you. The Research Fellow for the Corpus, Derek Craig, has once again edited the whole text with meticulous care, collated and enhanced the photographic illustrations, and compiled the index, thereby saving escalating costs and keeping the price down. Without his help we would be nowhere. Thank you Derek. The text and illustrations have been set by Richard Bryant with his customary skill and efficiency.

Our warmest thanks must go to our major sponsors for this volume, The Headley Trust: without their generous help the project could not have maintained its momentum, and since their support for the post of Research Fellow, the output of the series has accelerated markedly. The British Academy has also continued to support us generously. As publishers of the Corpus they have brought each copy to the market and funded some of the photographic work and travel costs. To them we offer our best thanks. Finally, it is a pleasant duty to thank once again Durham University, who have furnished us with space, library facilities and discreet help throughout the project. For all their assistance, many thanks.

DAVID M. WILSON
*Chairman, British Academy Committee for
the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, 2017*