ASPECTS OF ART LECTURE

1066 AND ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE

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THE innocent reader, wishing to learn something about the artistic effects of the Norman Conquest, will soon discover a puzzling diversity of views in works published during the last thirty or forty years. In the first place, there is no agreement in the assessment of the artistic achievements of the Anglo-Saxons. For instance, in the field of architecture, they are accused of lacking 'the true architectural sense', and consequently 'their work is restless and uncertain'.[1] A quite contrary view was expressed only five years later by an equally great authority: 'It is often assumed that Saxon architecture was a poor stunted growth, without the seeds of expansion. . . . In the major art of architecture it is not unreasonable to suppose that, left to themselves, the Saxons would have travelled along the same road as their Rhineland kinsmen and, given peace and prosperity, would have produced an architecture not unlike the Carolingian Romanesque of the great cathedrals and abbey churches of that province.'[2] A few years later, the same author became less complimentary towards the Saxons as builders: 'The Saxon spirit was an uncreative one, which required from time to time an infusion of fresh ideas to galvanise it into activity.'[3] Shortly afterwards the same scholar expressed his most enthusiastic approval of the Anglo-Norman School 'as perhaps the most advanced and progressive of all the branches of northern Romanesque'.[4] It is, therefore, with some bewilderment that one reads a recent statement by a student of English art: the Saxons 'knew more about architectural construction than the Normans, though they often built in wood. Where their stone buildings

[1] G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, vol. ii, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, London (1925), p. 379.

[2] A. W. Clapham, *English Romanesque Architecture before the Conquest*, Oxford (1930), p. 77.

[3] A. W. Clapham, *English Romanesque Architecture after the Conquest*, Oxford (1934), p. 1.

[4] A. W. Clapham, *Romanesque Architecture in Western Europe*, Oxford (1936), p. 138.

survive . . . they create a sense of space and elegance more impressive than many much larger Norman buildings.'[1]

By and large, however, it is admitted that the superiority of the Romanesque architecture of Normandy was recognized even by the Saxons, and that shortly before the Conquest, Romanesque elements were beginning to be incorporated into English buildings. The final verdict on Anglo-Saxon architecture was given by Edward the Confessor when, building Westminster Abbey, he modelled it not on any local structure, but on Jumièges Abbey, newly completed in Normandy.

In the field of painting, following Professor Wormald's studies, it is now generally accepted that the Norman Conquest created no complete break with Anglo-Saxon traditions,[2] and that there was a certain continuity of style after 1066, facilitated by the fact that the style of painting introduced from Normandy was itself full of Anglo-Saxon elements.[3]

When we turn to views on Anglo-Saxon sculpture and the effect of the Conquest in this field, we seem to leave the realm of scholarship and enter one that is charged with emotions.

For instance, it is claimed that pre-conquest England was 'in the forefront as a centre of religious sculpture' and 'that it was likewise the home of a number of innovators to whose experiments the great achievements of the twelfth-century sculptors of France are perhaps to some degree to be attributed'.[4] Unfortunately, this lofty claim is not supported by any examples of what these innovations are.

The same author attributes to Anglo-Saxon sculpture the following characteristics: 'lightness, delicacy and the feeling for drawing which are lacking in contemporary art of the continent, especially in the Ottonian world'.[5] This last observation is truly astonishing in view of the great wealth and high quality of Ottonian sculpture in ivory, metal, and wood. It is sufficient to

[1] J. Betjeman, 'Architecture of the Conquerors' in *Weekend Telegraph*, no. 68 (14 Jan. 1966), p. 18.

[2] F. Wormald, 'Decorated Initials in English MSS. from A.D. 900 to 1100' in *Archaeologia*, vol. xci (2nd series vol. xli) (1945), pp. 107 ff.

[3] C. R. Dodwell, *The Canterbury School of Illumination, 1066–1200*, Cambridge (1954). The relevant chapter 'The Norman Incursion', pp. 6 ff.

[4] D. T. Rice, *English Art, 871–1100*, Oxford (1952), p. 81.

[5] D. T. Rice, 'Essai de classification de la sculpture anglo-saxonne des x^e^ et xi^e^ siècles' in *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, III^e^ Année, no. 2, avril–juin 1960, pp. 206–7.

compare, for instance, the Langford cross[1] in Oxfordshire with the Gero cross in the Cathedral of Cologne[2] (Pl. I*a* and *b*) to see the great difference in the quality of the two works. And yet, the love for Anglo-Saxon antiquities is such, that an eminent authority did not hesitate to write about the Langford Christ that 'even in its mutilated condition its dignified simplicity seems to us to make it one of the great architectural sculptures of all time'![3]

High praise for Anglo-Saxon achievements, especially in book illumination, metalwork, ivory and stone carving, and at times even in architecture, is, of course, well deserved; but it is necessary, in order to be objective, to study Anglo-Saxon art not in isolation, but by comparing it with appropriate art movements on the Continent. When Sir Alfred Clapham claimed rather optimistically that if there had been no Conquest, Anglo-Saxon architecture would have developed similar forms to those used in the great cathedrals of the Rhineland, he knew that late-Saxon architecture was inspired by Carolingian and Ottonian models, and he equally recognized the debt of late-Anglo-Saxon sculpture to the Ottonian revival.[4]

Late-Anglo-Saxon sculpture is not, however, merely an offshoot of Ottonian art, for it was also influenced by centuries-old local traditions as well as by an influx of Scandinavian styles, introduced by the Viking invaders.

Thus Anglo-Saxon England was the home of an extraordinary mixture of sculptural styles. The Romsey Rood, for instance, can serve as an example of a German-inspired work. Taking into account the difference in the materials in which they were executed, and in their size, the Romsey Rood can well be compared in its modelling and type to Carolingian ivories (Pls. II and III).[5] The celebrated angels at Bradford-on-Avon, and the

[1] A. W. Clapham, 'Some Disputed Examples of pre-Conquest Sculpture' in *Antiquity*, no. 100, Dec. 1951, pl. III.

[2] J. Beckwith, *Early Medieval Art*, London (1964), p. 150, ill. 141 and 142.

[3] H. M. Taylor, *Our Anglo-Saxon Heritage* (Inaugural lecture as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Keele, 20 Feb. 1962). Published by the University of Keele.

[4] Clapham, *Romanesque Architecture in Western Europe*, pp. 18–19 and 181.

[5] For instance the Crucifixion illustrated by A. Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen*, vol. i, Berlin (1914), pl. XV, 31, and dated by him to the late ninth or tenth centuries. The current view is that this and related ivories are ninth-century works of the Palace School—see Catalogue of the Charlemagne exhibition at Aachen (1965), no. 531. For discussion of Carolingian crucifixes see C. Beutler, *Bildwerke zwischen Antike und Mittelalter*, Düsseldorf (1964), pp. 34 ff.

Bristol *Harrowing of Hell*, are not inspired by three-dimensional models. They are quite clearly enlarged versions in stone of illuminations of the Winchester School.[1] These and some other reliefs testify to the competence, sometimes even to the great accomplishment of Anglo-Saxon sculptors, but it would be a mistake to regard them as great innovations in European sculpture. On the contrary, they belong to the last chapter of the story, which started in the Carolingian period, with such works as the decoration of Cividale, Müstair, and Malles.[2]

This art of stone or stucco reliefs and of sacred images in the round must have been produced by highly competent, professional artists who were capable of carving in stone and ivory, working in metals, painting murals, and illuminating manuscripts. Such artists were still active in the twelfth century, one of the best known personalities being Magister Hugo of Bury St. Edmunds.[3] The ability to work in so many different media explains the close stylistic relationship that often exists between works in different materials and sizes.

Amongst late-Anglo-Saxon stone sculptures, the most numerous are not religious scenes, but reliefs on tombstones and crosses which display the Scandinavian styles, the Ringerike and the Urnes, consisting of flat interlacing motifs, human, animal, and floral, often so stylized as to appear almost abstract. This barbaric art, of which the Guildhall tomb-slab[4] is the best example in England, had one thing in common with the sculpture of Ottonian and Winchester inspiration: it was rarely, if ever, applied to architecture in a logical way. A relief such as, for instance, a stone crucifix, can be inserted into a wall above the chancel arch without being optically incorporated into that wall

[1] For illustrations and bibliography see L. Stone, *Sculpture in Britain—The Middle Ages*, Harmondsworth (1955), pls. 20A (the Bradford angel) and 24 (the Bristol Christ). The Bradford angels should be compared to the angels in the Crucifixion from *Sherborne Pontifical*, see M. Rickert, *Painting in Britain—The Middle Ages*, Harmondsworth (1954), pl. 24. The Bristol Christ has been convincingly compared to the mid-eleventh-century drawings in the Psalter, British Museum Cotton MS. Tib. C. VI, especially folio 10v, by F. Saxl and R. Wittkower, *British Art and the Mediterranean*, London–New York–Toronto (1948), pl. 23, figs. 4 and 5.

[2] For the latest studies on these and other related monuments, see *Stucchi e mosaici alto medioevali* (Atti dell'ottavo Congresso di studi sull'arte dell' alto Medioevo), Milano (1962).

[3] M. R. James, *On the Abbey of St. Edmund at Bury*, Cambridge (1895), pp. 7, 128, 134, 199.

[4] Stone, op. cit., pl. 23 (the date given under the plate as 1130–40 should, of course, read 1030–40).

and the arch below. It can, on the other hand, by means of frames, string-courses, or other devices, be made to form an integral part of the building.

The Anglo-Saxons, while very fond of using sculpture to decorate architecture, had little regard for the way in which the embellishment was applied to the building. The tower of Barnack[1] shows how symmetry, for instance, in the placing of openings, pilaster-strips, and carved panels, was not considered worth while. Everything is casual, almost accidental (Pl. IV).

At Sompting, an Anglo-Saxon church, though of post-Conquest date since it is partly built of Caen stone, the pilaster-strip on one face of the tower does not form a continuous vertical line; at the string-course level it becomes a semi-column and is no longer aligned with the rectangular pilaster of the lower stage. The capitals of these semi-columns are placed roughly half-way up, but they are not in any way related to the nearby windows.[2] However, the fact that the pilasters divide the tower walls roughly into halves is an improvement on the earlier method.

At Langford,[3] another church built about the time of the Conquest, there is also a pilaster down the middle of the tower wall. The carved panel of two figures supporting a sundial is inserted into the pilaster below the windows in a casual way, unrelated to the string-course or the windows (Pl. V).

When the Anglo-Saxons attempted to enrich with sculpture the interior features of churches such as, for instance, chancel arches, the results were similar. The lions flanking the arch at St. Benet's, Cambridge,[4] do not form part of the decoration of the capitals. These are plain, while the lions are placed above, superimposed on the arch, as a brooch is pinned to a dress.

An even stranger use of sculpture is found at Bibury in Gloucestershire, where the capitals of the chancel arch are copied from a Winchester School manuscript, and retain the two-dimensional quality of the model.[5] It is surprising that it was thought worth while to make such capitals in stone, for they could have been painted at less expense and would have had an identical effect.

If the general tendency is to praise, almost excessively, everything Saxon, the Norman contribution is, on the other hand,

[1] H. M. Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, Cambridge (1965), vol. ii, pl. 371.
[2] Ibid., vol. ii, fig. 272.
[3] Ibid., vol. i, fig. 167.
[4] Clapham, *English Romanesque Architecture before the Conquest*, pl. 45.
[5] G. Zarnecki, 'The Winchester Acanthus in Romanesque Sculpture' in *Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch*, vol. 17 (1955), pp. 211 ff.

minimized and regarded as an unwelcome foreign intrusion. Although few students of the subject would endorse the statement that the Saxons 'knew more about architectural construction than the Normans', they are practically unanimous in considering the influence of the Conquest on sculpture as a disaster.

Sir Alfred Clapham singled out Bernay Abbey and Durham Castle chapel as examples to show 'how entirely untrained and barbaric were the Norman masons in the art of sculpture'.[1]

'Crude and of barbarous deformity' and 'an almost childish crudity of drawing and an entire ignorance of anatomy',[2] 'of the crudest possible description . . . absurdly childish in comparison with the Saxon production of the Winchester School',[3] 'absolute lack of any feeling for sculpture',[4] 'striking evidence of his (Norman mason's) immaturity'[5]—these are some of the opinions expressed by leading students of English sculpture, about the earliest work of Norman sculptors in England, the capitals of Durham Castle chapel. This adverse assessment of Norman sculpture is not restricted to English scholars alone. In France, too, with only one or two exceptions, Normandy is condemned for showing contempt for sculpture or for favouring only geometric decoration.[6] In this case it is not 'the entire ignorance of anatomy' which is criticized, but the lack of figure-sculpture. When, however, figure-sculpture does appear, as at Bayeux or Rucqueville, this is attributed to artists from outside the Duchy.[7]

These curious arguments completely ignore the striking difference between the early sculpture of Normandy, which by any eleventh-century Romanesque standards, was outstanding, and the later, which is admittedly rather dull.

It is easy to ridicule the 'entirely untrained and barbaric' masons who carved the capitals of Bernay, by comparing them to, say, the Romsey Rood or the tympanum of Moissac. Yet, the comparison is quite irrelevant. Looking back on the development of medieval sculpture, it is obvious that sculpture of a non-architectural character such as the Romsey Rood could not develop in such a way as to produce Moissac. It is entirely

[1] Clapham, *Romanesque Architecture in Western Europe*, p. 148.
[2] Ibid., pp. 152–3.
[3] A. Gardner, *English Medieval Sculpture*, Cambridge (1951), p. 52.
[4] Rice, op. cit., p. 145. [5] Stone, op. cit., p. 54.
[6] For a typical view see, for instance, L. Lefrançois-Pillion, *L'Art roman en France*, Paris (n. d.), p. 74.
[7] P. Deschamps, *French Sculpture of the Romanesque Period. Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Firenze–Paris (1930), p. 80.

through modest experiments, chiefly on capitals such as at Bernay, that Romanesque sculpture developed its extraordinary unity with architecture, which constitutes one of its principal merits. Far from being the work of entirely untrained masons, the capitals of Bernay (Pl. VI), especially those by Britus, are, as demonstrated by Professor Grodecki, full of structural logic, based on the earliest Romanesque experiments at St. Bénigne at Dijon.[1] They also show elements based on Byzantine models, probably derived from Italy. These early essays in sculpture, both at Dijon and Bernay, are remarkable for the attempt to preserve the structure of the Corinthian capital, but to enliven it by so adapting animal, human, and foliage motifs as to fit them into various parts of the capitals. The resulting arbitrary deformations, contortions, and exaggerations were to be one of the characteristics of Romanesque art as a whole. To expect correct anatomy in Romanesque sculpture of the eleventh century is to show a lack of any understanding of its aims.

Bernay, together with Dijon and one or two other centres, stands at the head of Romanesque sculptural development in the first half of the eleventh century. Another Norman monument of the middle of that century, Jumièges Abbey, was decorated with capitals, which were carved with figures, inhabited foliage, and interlaces, but the decoration of these capitals was applied to each face separately, as to the page of a book (Pl. VII*a*). Professor Saxl was the first to notice some connexion between these capitals and the decoration of the manuscripts of the Winchester School.[2] However, perhaps it was Norman manuscripts, which were saturated with elements of the Winchester School style, that were copied on these capitals. Nevertheless, these capitals, which are later in date than those at Bernay, are less Romanesque, as if the intervention of the Anglo-Saxon manuscript motifs acted as a conservative, restrictive force.

Amongst the capitals of the next two or three decades, which were so vital, since it was then that the political and artistic invasion of England took place, the most important are those of Bayeux, dating from before 1077.

These gigantic capitals from the crossing were described as 'treated flatly with no attempt to mould or round the forms, as though the surface had been cut away to leave the silhouettes on

[1] L. Grodecki, 'Les Débuts de la sculpture romane en Normandie—Bernay' in *Bulletin Monumental*, vol. cviii (1950), pp. 7 ff.

[2] Ibid., p. 64, n. 4.

which details of faces and drapery were then marked by incised lines'.[1] It is true that if the relief is compared to the sculpture of some fifty years later, then, of course, it will appear flat. But, on the other hand, if these capitals are compared to contemporary work elsewhere, it will be seen that they are, on the contrary, rather advanced. The way in which the outstretched wings of the seraphim, their hands and the folded wings, are placed layer upon layer, to give the impression of three-dimensional quality to the figure, is quite impressive for this period (Pl. VII*b*). The curved lines of the folded wings give a convincing suggestion of the roundness of the body they cover.

The iconography of these capitals is quite complex, and it should be borne in mind that there are not many historiated capitals of that period in existence. One capital is thought to show *Christ receiving a Soul* (Pl. VII*b*), but perhaps it is in fact the *Trinity*, as it is represented, for instance, at the beginning of Harley MS. 603.[2] Even closer iconographically are two Spanish Romanesque tympana at Soria and at Tudela.[3] The second capital, showing the *Incredulity of St. Thomas* (Pl. VIII*a*), is, like the first, badly damaged, but the missing parts can be visualized, thanks to a copy of it at nearby Rucqueville (Pl. VIII*b*). This three-figured composition fits admirably into the Corinthian-type capital and enhances its structure. The heads of St. Thomas and St. Peter, who is on the other side of Christ, are placed under the angle volutes as if to emphasize their importance.

The Bayeux capitals were not the result of local development, and did not evolve naturally from Bernay or Jumièges. Of all the historiated capitals of the eleventh century, those which seem to be closest to them are at Fleury (Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire), which were themselves probably influenced by Tours.[4] The

[1] T. S. R. Boase, *English Art, 1100-1216*, Oxford (1953), p. 48.

[2] E. H. Kantorowicz, 'The Quinity of Winchester' in *Art Bulletin*, xxix (1947), p. 84. See also T. S. R. Boase (op. cit., p. 83), where he rightly suggests that the tympanum at Fownhope in Herefordshire might have been intended as a Trinity.

[3] For Santo Domingo, Soria, see: A. Kingsley Porter, *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads*, Boston (1923), figs. 795 and 796. For San Nicolás, Tudela, see: J. Gudiol Ricart and J. A. Gaya Nuño, 'Arquitectura y escultura románicas' in *Ars Hispaniae*, vol. v, fig. 295.

[4] For the brief review of literature on the eleventh century in the Loire region see L. Grodecki, 'La sculpture du XI^e siècle en France, état des questions' in *L'Information d'histoire de l'art*, 3^e année, septembre–octobre, 1958, p. 107.

simple Corinthian capital with two doves at Bayeux confirms this suggestion that the influence came to Normandy from the Loire region. This work is a simplification of a fine capital at Fleury or its variant at St. Hilaire at Poitiers, both dating from between 1040 and 1050. The same origin can also be attributed to the acanthus capitals at Bayeux and Rucqueville.

These last are much later and of poorer quality than the Bayeux capitals. They are, nevertheless, well worth a little attention, for they confirm the links which must have existed between Normandy and the artistic centres in the Loire region and even further afield.

The scene of the *Flight into Egypt* (Pl. IX*b*), for instance, is a simplified version of the same subject at Fleury (Pl. IX*a*). The Rucqueville sculptor was obviously a much-travelled man, for his capitals include two which he copied from those at Saint-Sernin at Toulouse (Pls. X and XI) which must have been ready for the dedication of that church in 1096.[1]

The study of sculpture which is so often dismissed as crude and childish is nevertheless rewarding. It is, for instance, of interest to learn that one of the sources for the earliest and simplest capitals at Caen was Mozarabic Spain (Pl. XII), and that the even less expected origin of the transept arch at Montivilliers was the Islamic method of decoration which was employed at Cordoba (Pl. XIII) and elsewhere in Spain.[2]

The restless spirit of the Normans, their frequent travels and conquests, put them in touch with practically the whole of Europe. Their contacts with Spain were numerous, but the most obvious opportunity, which came at a significant time, was the massive Norman participation in the Spanish crusade of 1063, which resulted in the short-lived conquest of Barbastro.[3]

[1] For the most recent study of that church see: M. Durliat, 'La construction de Saint-Sernin de Toulouse au XI^e siècle' in *Bulletin Monumental*, vol. 121 (1963), pp. 151 ff., and 'L'Atelier de Bernard Gilduin à Saint-Sernin de Toulouse', by the same author, in *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, vol. 1, Barcelona (1964), pp. 521 ff. In addition to the illustrated capitals of Rucqueville, there is yet one more, decorated with two fighting warriors, which is based on the capital of the ambulatory at Toulouse. This last is illustrated by Professor Durliat ('La construction de Saint-Sernin de Toulouse au XI^e siècle', fig. 5). The shields of the two combatants have characteristic cruciform bosses and these are copied very accurately at Rucqueville.

[2] It is enough, for instance, to compare such capitals as those of Santa Maria de Lebeña (M. Gómez-Moreno, *Iglesias Mozárabes*, Madrid (1919), pl. CVI) with the capitals of St. Étienne at Caen (M. Anfray, *L'Architecture normande*, Paris (1939), pl. XLIX) to be convinced of their direct relationship.

[3] M. Defourneaux, *Les français en Espagne aux XI^e et XII^e siècles*, Paris (1949), pp. 132 ff.

At the same time, Norman power in southern Italy was extending, and the knowledge of the Italian developments in the field of sculpture, modest though they were, could have reached Normandy through political and ecclesiastical contacts and frequent travel. The presence of Lanfranc (of Pavia) and Anselm (of Aosta) in Normandy, their prominence in the ecclesiastical and political life of the Duchy, and their friendship with William the Conqueror, must have been important factors in providing the links which undoubtedly existed between Normandy and Italy. The marked simplification of form and reduction of figures to almost basic geometric shapes, which became characteristic of Norman sculpture from about 1060 onwards, is also found in so many Italian works that it is tempting to see a connexion between the two.

Thus at the time of the Conquest, Norman sculpture, though not of anything like the same importance as local architecture, was full of vitality and could not be said to have existed in isolation, since the sculptors there obviously had contact with numerous centres in other regions of France and elsewhere. The strength of this sculpture was its intimate connexion with architecture. It was not made in the workshops of craftsmen such as Magister Hugo of Bury St. Edmunds, but in the mason's yard on the building site. Norman sculpture had a certain naïve quality, but it did not lack strength or vigour. The Conquest of England provided marvellous opportunities for the further development of this sculpture.

At first Norman carvings in England were indistinguishable from those in the Duchy. The St. Eustace capital at Durham is a slightly modified version of a hunting scene in St. Gervais at Falaise. The simple capital in the choir of Norwich Cathedral was carved from the same pattern in a sketch-book as one at Cérisy-la-Forêt (Pl. XIV). Another Durham capital, with a mask placed on a chip-carved sunk-star background, can be compared closely with capitals at La Trinité, Caen, and at Graville-Sainte-Honorine (Pl. XV). These are only a few of many dozens of examples illustrating the very close dependence of early post-Conquest sculpture on Norman models.

Unfortunately, there are no traces of contacts with the more interesting workshops, such as existed at Bayeux and Rucqueville. In most cases it was a very elementary human or animal form which was used. However, such sculpture was peculiar to practically all early Romanesque buildings in Europe, with the exception of two or three centres, such as Léon and Fleury,

where more ambitious works were being produced. The Durham capital on which two animals face each other, their heads placed at the angle replacing the usual volute (Pl. XVI*a*), was a theme which preoccupied many sculptors of the eleventh century. This simple composition is found to have been used not only in Normandy, but also in other regions of France (Vignory *c.* 1050) (Pl. XVI*b*), and in Italy (Modena *c.* 1100). Thus, although the Norman sculpture introduced into England was of a very simple kind, it was neither better nor worse than elsewhere.

However, this sculpture held great promise. If the sculptural traditions which existed in pre-Conquest England had been combined with the robust strength of the Norman works, and the understanding of how to apply sculpture to architecture, the results could have been very happy indeed. We know, alas, that architectural Romanesque sculpture in England had no masterpieces comparable to the best work in France, Spain, and Italy. What was the reason for this? For most historians the answer is simple. Norman patrons in England had no taste for any other sculpture than their own. Others even go as far as to suggest that the Anglo-Saxon craftsmen 'fled westwards from 1066 onwards in face of the new continental fashions'.[1]

As it happens, it is precisely in the opposite direction, at Ely, that we find undoubted proof that Anglo-Saxon sculptors not only were not despised by the Normans, but that they found employment, not in some modest village church, but in a very important cathedral. The Ely capitals of *c.* 1090 are volute-shaped, as was the custom in Normandy, but the sculpture applied to them hardly takes account of their shape and structure.[2] The robust Norman relief is replaced here by a flat design in the tradition of the Guildhall slab; the relief is so low that there is hardly any difference between it and the painted patterns supplementing the decoration (Pl. XVII*a*). The foliage and the animals (Pl. XVII*b*), similar to those filling the borders of the Bayeux Tapestry (Pl. XVII*c*), are, as on the Tapestry, two-dimensional. It has been demonstrated that the Tapestry, although produced for Norman patrons, was made by and in the style of the Anglo-Saxons.[3]

[1] Rice, op. cit., p. 153.

[2] G. Zarnecki, *The Early Sculpture of Ely Cathedral*, London (1958), pp. 10 ff., pls. 2–4, 6, 8, 10–12.

[3] See the chapter 'Style and Design' by F. Wormald, in F. Stenton (ed.), *The Bayeux Tapestry*, London (1957), pp. 25 ff.

If the result of this Anglo-Saxon–Norman co-operation at Ely is disappointing, at least we learn that the belief that the Normans had a deep contempt for Anglo-Saxon sculpture is simply not true. After all, they could have easily destroyed the Romsey Rood, but instead, they saved it and built it into their transept wall, when the Saxon church was pulled down.

The Ely capitals are in a building which is so thoroughly Romanesque that nobody has ever claimed that they are Anglo-Saxon. But works in a similar style are frequently but mistakenly taken to be pre-Conquest. This is understandable in view of their un-Romanesque character.

One such monument is Milborne Port church in Somerset, which has been the subject of much recent research. From this it was concluded that the building was of pre-Conquest date, except for the doorway, which is said to have been inserted by the Normans.[1] In my view, the building and the doorway are post-Conquest, dating from about 1090 or even a little later, though their style is essentially Anglo-Saxon. Everybody agrees that the doorway of this church is post-Conquest. The tympanum (Pl. XVIII*a*) and the enclosing orders are Romanesque in form, and could not possibly have been made before the last quarter of the eleventh century. However, the details of the decoration reveal Anglo-Saxon workmanship. The motif of confronted animals is similar to one on an Ely capital (Pl. XVII*b*) and very close to the animals on the Bayeux Tapestry (Pl. XVIII*b*).

The faint inscription on the lower edge of the Milborne Port tympanum[2] is disappointing in that it only gives the name of St. John the Evangelist as the patron saint of the church, and contains no date or other helpful information. But the script includes the lozenge-shaped letter 'O', used four times. Professor Wormald has pointed out to me that this form is essentially a Saxon feature, but that the inscriptions on the great seals of William the Conqueror also have such 'O's.[3] It is significant, however, that on the second seal, of 1070, the round 'O' appears as well. On the evidence of seals, the lozenge-shaped 'O' went out of use some time between 1070 and 1087. Since the dates of the relevant comparative material for the tympanum, namely the Bayeux Tapestry and the Ely capitals, are about 1070 and

[1] Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, vol. i, pp. 424 ff.

[2] The existence of the inscription was unknown until it was revealed by my camera's telescopic lens in early morning light four years ago.

[3] I am greatly indebted to Professor Wormald for his help and advice.

1090 respectively, there is a very strong likelihood that a more provincial work, such as the Milborne Port doorway, dates from the end of the eleventh century. Miss Elizabeth Barty, who has made a special study of stone inscriptions, examined the tympanum recently and confirmed the late-eleventh-century date for the inscription as the most likely.[1]

Of the two original capitals of this doorway, one is block-shaped and carved with a mask and foliage (Pl. XX*a*) based on Anglo-Saxon manuscripts of the Winchester School (Pl. XX*b*). The other capital has the Bayeux Tapestry type of animal and warrior motif and a Norman type angle volute (Pl. XIX*a*). Thus in one and the same doorway one capital is almost Romanesque while the other is quite archaic in form.

The four arches under the central tower of this church are enriched with thirty carved capitals. It has been frequently alleged that some of these capitals are made of stucco, and are thus close in their technique to Carolingian traditions. A recent restoration and study revealed, however, that all the stucco capitals are nineteenth-century restorations, and that all the original work is of stone. Out of the sixteen original capitals, only two can be claimed to be Romanesque in form and decoration, and they are the westernmost, and thus presumably the last to be carved (Pl. XIX*b*, the left-hand side and the middle capitals). Otherwise, the shapes and motifs, consisting of handsome foliage scrolls, are thoroughly Anglo-Saxon. However, this foliage is exactly like that which frames the tympanum, suggesting that all these works were executed at one time. The study of the peculiar form of the leaves on the doorway capitals and on some of the capitals inside the church (for instance the right-hand side capital on Pl. XIX*b*) confirms this, and since it is generally accepted that the doorway is post-Conquest, it follows that the interior capitals are post-Conquest also. Even the most Saxon-looking easternmost capitals are post-Conquest in date, and so are the pilaster-strips of the chancel. In other words, although Milborne Port church dates from about 1090, it is still essentially Saxon in form and decoration. Only the presence of the tympanum and two voluted capitals betrays the Norman influence.

It is well known that the introduction of the carved tympanum on the Continent occurred some time in the second half of the eleventh century. The earliest figural tympanum in

[1] I should like to acknowledge with gratitude Miss Barty's help in deciphering the inscription, which I trust she will publish shortly.

Burgundy is at Charlieu (*c.* 1094), and in Languedoc no tympanum is earlier than the beginning of the twelfth century. The simple tympanum with geometric patterns found at Chepstow Castle, built by William FitzOsbern, the Earl of Hereford, before 1071, must be one of the earliest in existence.

As if unaware of these facts, a number of writers attribute numerous English tympana to the first half of the eleventh century. Yet, in every case, it is the Anglo-Saxon style of the carving that leads to this misunderstanding. Sir Thomas Kendrick demonstrated in a brilliant way that the tympanum at Water Stratford (Pl. XXIV*b*) was carved in a purely Winchester School style in the twelfth century.[1] That tympanum is part of a Romanesque doorway and therefore no great mistake in dating it was possible. But the same scholar insists on a pre-Conquest date for say, the Southwell Minster tympanum (Pl. XXIV*a*),[2] although, except for the purely Urnes dragon, it is similar in style to the sculpture at Water Stratford. There are late-twelfth-century capitals with the Urnes ornament in Yorkshire,[3] and there is absolutely no reason why the same feature could not have been used in Nottinghamshire (at Southwell and at Hoveringham) in the first years of the twelfth century.

The disputed tympana, which include the well-known examples at Knook, Castor, and St. Nicholas', Ipswich, come from regions where Viking and Anglo-Saxon elements could be expected to have survived longest.[4] But it is something of a shock to discover that even at Canterbury, the metropolitan church of England, sculpture using Anglo-Saxon motifs was

[1] T. D. Kendrick, *Late Saxon and Viking Art*, London (1949), p. 143, pl. XCVI.

[2] Ibid., p. 121.

[3] Ibid., p. 120, pl. LXXXIV. Sir Thomas dates Kirkburn church to late eleventh century, but this is too early. The church surely dates from the second half of the twelfth century.

[4] The Ipswich tympanum has recently (March 1966) been removed from its inaccessible position in the north aisle. The removal revealed an interesting cross carved on the other side of the stone. From this it must be concluded that the tympanum was visible from both sides, and that it was unlikely to have been used over a doorway in the outer wall of the church. It is possible that the Ipswich tympanum was not a tympanum in the ordinary sense of the word, but that it was part of a screen. This would best explain why it is carved on both sides as well as the reason for its small size (40 in. at base, maximum height 22 in.) which is more suitable for a small doorway in the screen than a door in the wall of the church. This suggestion was made to me by my colleague, Mr. Christopher Hohler. It is my belief that the Ipswich tympanum is of post-Conquest date, possibly as late as *c.* 1100.

thriving. Some of the capitals in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral are based on the same Winchester acanthus as the pre-Conquest capitals at Bibury or those at Milborne Port, though here they are applied to cushion capitals. Having thus acquired official recognition, this type of decoration spread across the country, north as far as Durham and west as far as Worcester.[1]

No wonder, therefore, that even in those English churches which belonged to Norman monasteries, such sculpture is to be found. Steyning church in Sussex, for instance, given to Fécamp Abbey by William the Conqueror in 1085 (and possibly also given to that Abbey earlier by Edward the Confessor)[2] has capitals which combine the Winchester acanthus, modified by the Scandinavian Ringerike style, with the more Romanesque motif of lions, arranged in pairs, each pair having a common head placed at the angle of the capital (Pl. XXII*a*). This favourite Romanesque theme is used here without any understanding of its purpose. Instead of being a part of the structure of the capital, the lions are used simply as surface decoration. The Normans already knew how to carve capitals of that type in the 1060s and 1070s when they decorated the two ducal abbeys at Caen and the Durham Castle chapel (Pl. XVI*a*). Steyning is some fifty years later, and yet it is less Romanesque than the early Norman work.

However, there are still more unexpected developments, for it can be shown that in Normandy too, flat Anglo-Saxon decoration became quite fashionable. In Saint-Georges-de-Boscherville, there is a capital (Pl. XXII*b*) which is practically a copy of that at Steyning. The original church of William of Volpiano at Fécamp was rebuilt between 1082 and 1106, and from this new building one chapel of the ambulatory still survives. Amongst the capitals of this chapel, there are numerous examples which illustrate that in Normandy, clearly under English influence, manuscript illuminations were copied in stone. The manuscripts in this case are Norman, but were strongly affected

[1] Zarnecki, 'The Winchester Acanthus in Romanesque Sculpture', p. 215. I have suggested links between the sculptural decoration of Durham Cathedral and that of Canterbury in *English Romanesque Sculpture 1066–1140*, London (1951), p. 23. At Worcester, the capitals (partly restored) of the south transept show indebtedness to those of Canterbury.

[2] Whether Steyning was given by Edward the Confessor to Fécamp Abbey is somewhat doubtful, but in 1085 William the Conqueror confirmed the gift. (D. Matthew, *The Norman Monasteries and their English Possessions*, Oxford (1962), p. 21.)

by pre-Conquest English styles.[1] Of course, manuscripts were one of the principal sources of inspiration for Romanesque sculpture everywhere. But while in France, for instance, manuscripts supplied motifs which the sculptor incorporated into the structure of his capitals or tympana, in England and then, about 1100, in Normandy, sculptors still used block capitals and treated sculpture as a surface enrichment.

To what extent the sculptors of Fécamp lost sight of the early aims of Norman Romanesque sculpture can be seen in the use of a mask on capitals (Pl. XXIII*a*) made not to replace angle-volutes (the method used throughout the Romanesque world) but placed at a point which is quite meaningless, namely at the bottom of the capital, just above the astragal. The illogical use of this motif was the result of a slavish copying of illuminated initials where masks perform different functions from those on capitals (Pl. XXIII*b*).

It is ironic to think that the sculpture of William of Volpiano which (by analogy with Bernay), one can assume, existed at Fécamp in the early eleventh century, was probably more Romanesque than the work executed at the end of the same century. A similar retrograde development, under English influence, can be seen to have taken place at Saint Bertin Abbey, a monastery linked with England and especially with Canterbury, by numerous close ties. There too, the few capitals surviving from the late-eleventh-century structure show an unmistakable dependence on Anglo-Saxon models and a complete disregard for Romanesque methods of decoration (Pl. XXI).

These reflections are an attempt to dispel the belief that Anglo-Saxon sculpture died a heroic death at Hastings, or that the unwanted and neglected Anglo-Saxon sculptors had to take refuge in remote regions, away from centres of Norman activity. On the contrary, these sculptors found employment and favour with the Normans. Anglo-Saxon designs and methods of decoration proved to be more popular than the early Romanesque ones introduced from across the Channel. A few geometric designs which were in use in eleventh-century art in many regions of Europe, when introduced by the Normans into England, developed prodigiously, for the tendency to change all natural forms into abstract designs was deeply rooted in England and the Romanesque geometric ornament was therefore not only acceptable but welcome.

[1] Zarnecki, 'The Winchester Acanthus in Romanesque Sculpture', pp. 212 ff.

While travelling on the Continent in the twelfth century, English patrons and artists must have seen many great works of Romanesque sculpture. They must have admired them sufficiently to want to imitate them at home. There are many sculptures in England based on a variety of foreign models. But all these English imitations have one thing in common: that which was monumental in the original becomes merely decorative and picturesque when transferred to England. Compared with its Burgundian prototypes the tympanum of the Prior's doorway at Ely or that at Water Stratford (Pl. XXIV*b*) is no more than a delightful engraving in stone.[1]

Not only was the full development of monumental Romanesque sculpture in England prevented by the deeply rooted traditions of Anglo-Saxon art, but the English example and influence affected twelfth-century Normandy and other regions of northern France.

It is interesting to observe that after 1066, the art of illumination in England followed a very different path from that of sculpture. After an initial period during which the Anglo-Saxon style still lingered on, Anglo-Norman artists evolved a fully Romanesque style or even styles. In architecture and in painting, England's contribution to twelfth-century art was enormous. In sculpture, the best surviving examples are those which formed part of the church furnishings such as screens. But these works were clearly the products of artists, like Magister Hugo, who were not members of the mason's workshop and thus had little influence on architectural sculpture.

In discussing the Water Stratford tympanum, Sir Thomas Kendrick singled out its low relief as a particular merit of the work:

> The obviously outstanding quality of the composition is that the figures are not heavy sculptured masses, but lightly poised surface-designs, just engraved silhouetted forms rather than carvings in the round, and this at once distinguishes the work from the full-bodied and on the whole rather Frenchified versions at Rochester and Barfreston.

And he continues:

> When we ask why it stands out so conspicuously as a work of an entirely different character, the explanation seems to be that this Water Stratford tympanum is a carving of an English sculptor who was still inspired by the living tradition of his Saxon forefathers' Winchester art.[2]

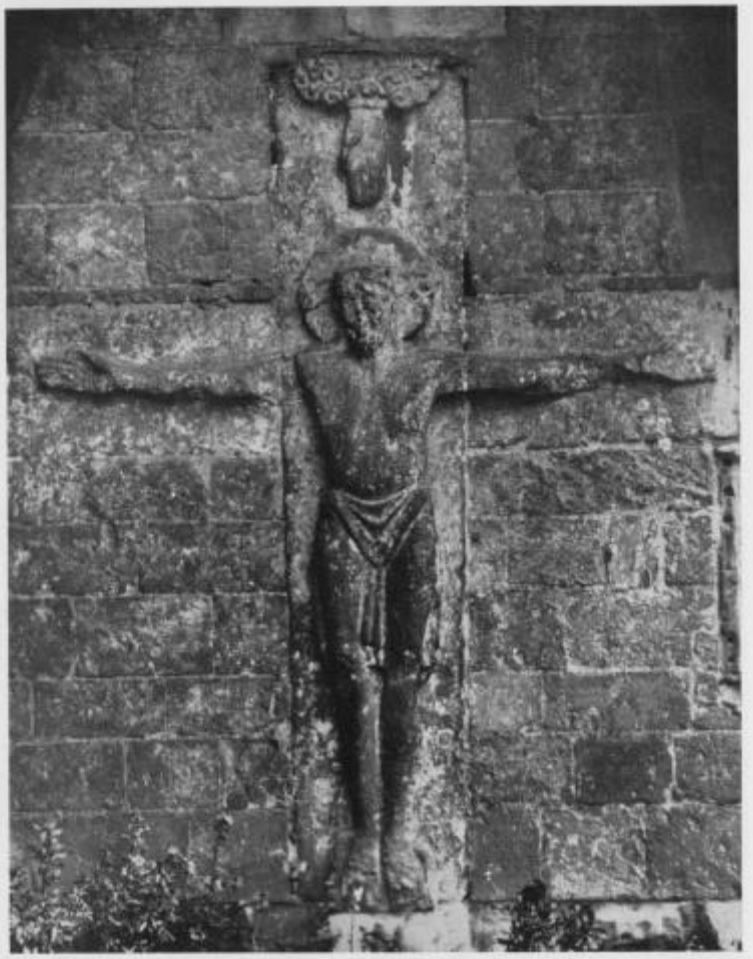
[1] Zarnecki, *The Early Sculpture of Ely Cathedral*, pls. 40 and 47.
[2] Kendrick, op. cit., pp. 143 ff.

Even today, so many centuries later, the Englishman's almost affectionate preference for the flat Anglo-Saxon style as opposed to the Continental-inspired more sculptural forms, is unmistakable. Is it, therefore, surprising that Romanesque sculpture could not develop fully in England?

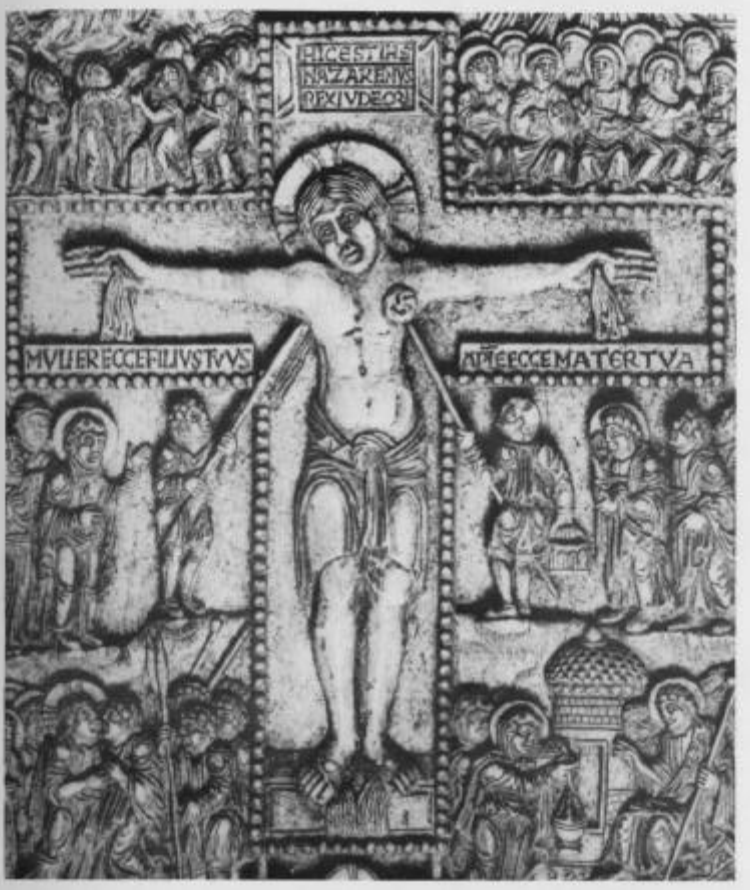
a. Langford (Oxfordshire). Draped Crucifix, *c*. 1050

b. Cologne Cathedral. The so-called Gero Crucifix, late Xth century

PLATE II

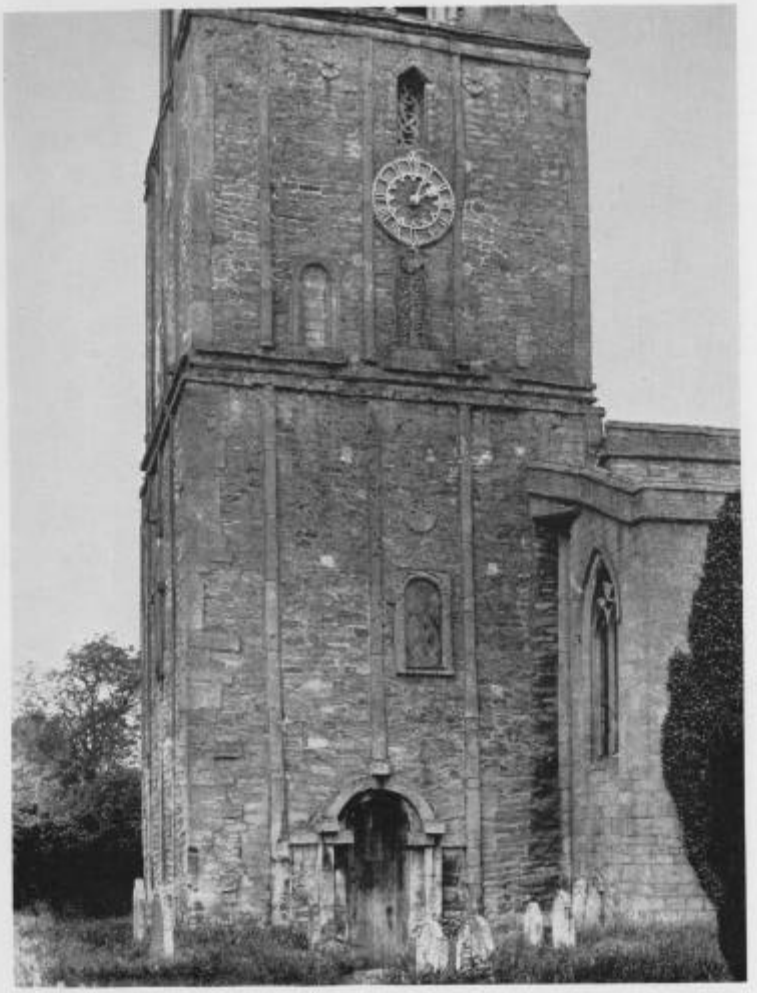


Romsey Abbey (Hampshire). Anglo-Saxon Crucifix built into the XIIth-century south transept



Narbonne Cathedral, Carolingian ivory book-cover

PLATE IV



Barnack (Northamptonshire). Tower, first half of the XIth century

Langford (Oxfordshire). Detail of tower, *c.* 1060

PLATE VI

a. Bernay Abbey (Normandy). Capital showing a man being devoured by a monster with one head and two bodies. Second quarter of the XIth century

b. Bernay Abbey (Normandy). Capital with angle heads, signed by Britus. Second quarter of the XIth century

a. Jumièges Abbey (Normandy). Capital in the Abbey Museum, *c*. 1050

b. Bayeux Cathedral (Normandy). Trinity (?) on a capital from the crossing, *c*. 1075

PLATE VIII

a. Bayeux Cathedral (Normandy). Doubting Thomas, on a capital from the crossing, *c*. 1075

b. Rucqueville (Normandy). Doubting Thomas, copy of the previous capital, *c*. 1100

a. Fleury (Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire). The Flight into Egypt, before 1067

b. Rucqueville (Normandy). The Flight into Egypt, copy of the previous capital, *c*. 1100

PLATE X

a. Toulouse, Saint-Sernin, Porte des Comtes. The Soul of Poor Lazarus carried to heaven by two angels, before 1096

b. Rucqueville (Normandy). Soul within a mandorla supported by two angels, copy of the previous capital, *c*. 1100.

a. Toulouse, Saint-Sernin, Porte des Comtes. The Soul of Dives tormented by devils with hooks

b. Rucqueville. Side view of Plate X*b*, copied from the previous capital

PLATE XII

a. Caen, La Trinité. Decorative capital of the nave, *c.* 1060

b. San Miguel de Escalada. Decorative capital in the porch, early Xth century

a. Montivilliers (Normandy). Decorative arch in the transept, *c*. 1100

b. Cordova. Great mosque, decorative arch, mid-XIth century

PLATE XIV

a. Norwich Cathedral. Capital in the south transept, late XIth century

b. Cérisy-la-Forêt Abbey (Normandy). Capital, late XIth century

a. Durham Castle Chapel. Capital in the crypt, *c*. 1072

b. Caen, La Trinité. Capital, *c*. 1060

c. Graville-Sainte-Honorine (Normandy). Capital, *c*. 1100

PLATE XVI

a. Durham Castle Chapel. Capital in the crypt, *c*. 1072

b. Vignory (Haute Marne). Capital, mid-XIth century

a. Ely Cathedral. Capitals of the south transept, *c*. 1090

b. Ely Cathedral. Capital of the south transept, *c*. 1090

c. Bayeux Tapestry. Detail from the border, *c*. 1070

PLATE XVIII

a. Milborne Port (Somerset). Tympanum of the south doorway, *c*. 1090

b. Bayeux Tapestry. Detail from the border, *c*. 1070

a. Milborne Port. East capital of the south doorway, *c*. 1090

b. Milborne Port. Westernmost group of capitals of the tower pier on the north side, *c*. 1090

PLATE XX

a. Milborne Port. West capital of the south doorway, *c*. 1090

b. British Museum, Harley MS. 2904. Detail from an initial, f. 4*r*, late Xth century

a. Capital from Saint-Bertin Abbey in Saint-Omer Museum, *c*. 1100

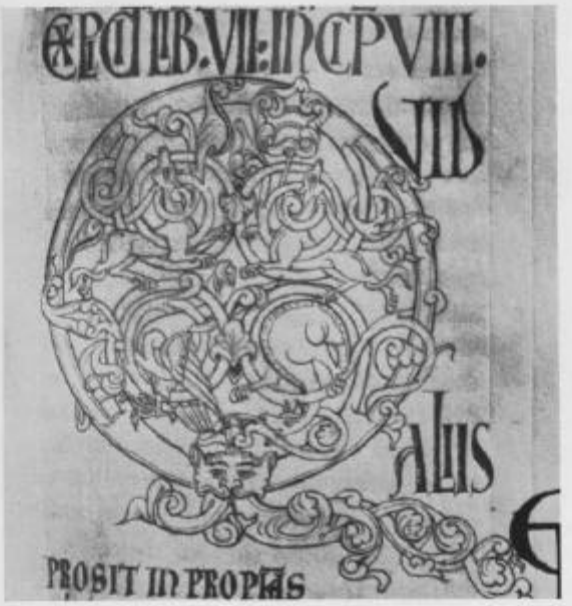
b. Capital from Saint-Bertin Abbey in Saint-Omer Museum, *c*. 1100

PLATE XXII

a. Steyning (Sussex). Capital, early XIIth century

b. Saint-Georges-de-Boscherville (Normandy). Capital, *c*. 1120

a. Fécamp Abbey (Normandy). Capitals, *c.* 1100



b. Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. 445, fol. 72, late XIth century

PLATE XXIV

a. Southwell Minster. Tympanum with St. Michael killing the dragon, early XIIth century

b. Water Stratford (Buckinghamshire). Tympanum with Christ in Majesty, *c*. 1130