

THE ROOF BOSSES IN THE NAVE AISLES, WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL

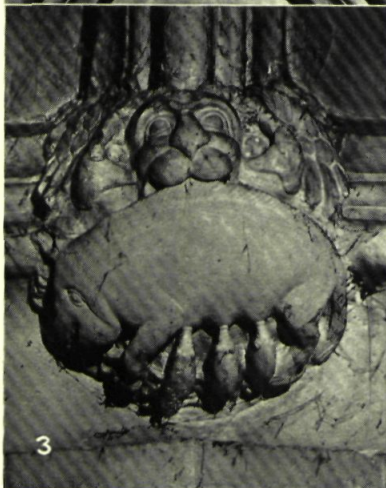
By C. J. P. CAVE, M.A., F.S.A.

THE roof bosses in the high vaulting of the nave of Winchester Cathedral are not of any very great interest. There are a number of quite good foliage bosses, and a number of heraldic bosses, but the latter consist of repetitions of a plain cross, the Royal Arms (some with France ancient, some with France modern), the arms of Wykeham, and those of the diocese. I had supposed that the bosses in the aisles were of much the same type, but on a closer examination I found that they were much more interesting. They seem to have been almost entirely overlooked; the figures of Adam and Eve and the shield with the Prince of Wales's feathers in Bay 9 had been noticed, and the sow with sucking pigs in Bay 4 is occasionally pointed out to sightseers, but it had not been realised that the sow itself was being carried by a lion. The rest seem to have been quite unnoticed, but many of them are of great interest and some of them are excellent examples of 14th century carving. There are a number of fine heads of men, the finest being in the 5th bay of the south aisle; there are quite a number of foliated heads with stems proceeding from the mouth, the best ones being in the south aisle in the 5th and 8th bays, that in the last-named bay has acorns coming from the mouth; most of the foliage is made up of oak leaves, and acorns are of frequent occurrence. The Adam and Eve dressed in skins (south aisle, bay 9) is worthy of notice as a rather unusual representation, and in the same bay the Prince of Wales's feathers, the Shepherd playing on the pipes, and the charming little figure holding his cloak round him, should all be noticed. The 10th bay of the south aisle has a number of good bosses: the dog saying office with the monks, the bull-baiting, the angel with the citole, the cowed head, and the supposed head of Christ are all good. In the 12th Bay of the same aisle attention may be called to the very extraordinary boss of the dragon in the courtyard of a castle. In the north aisle there are much fewer figure bosses; the bagpipe player in the 5th bay may be mentioned, and also the arms of the Saxon Kings in the 4th and 7th bays, with the martlets all turned inwards.

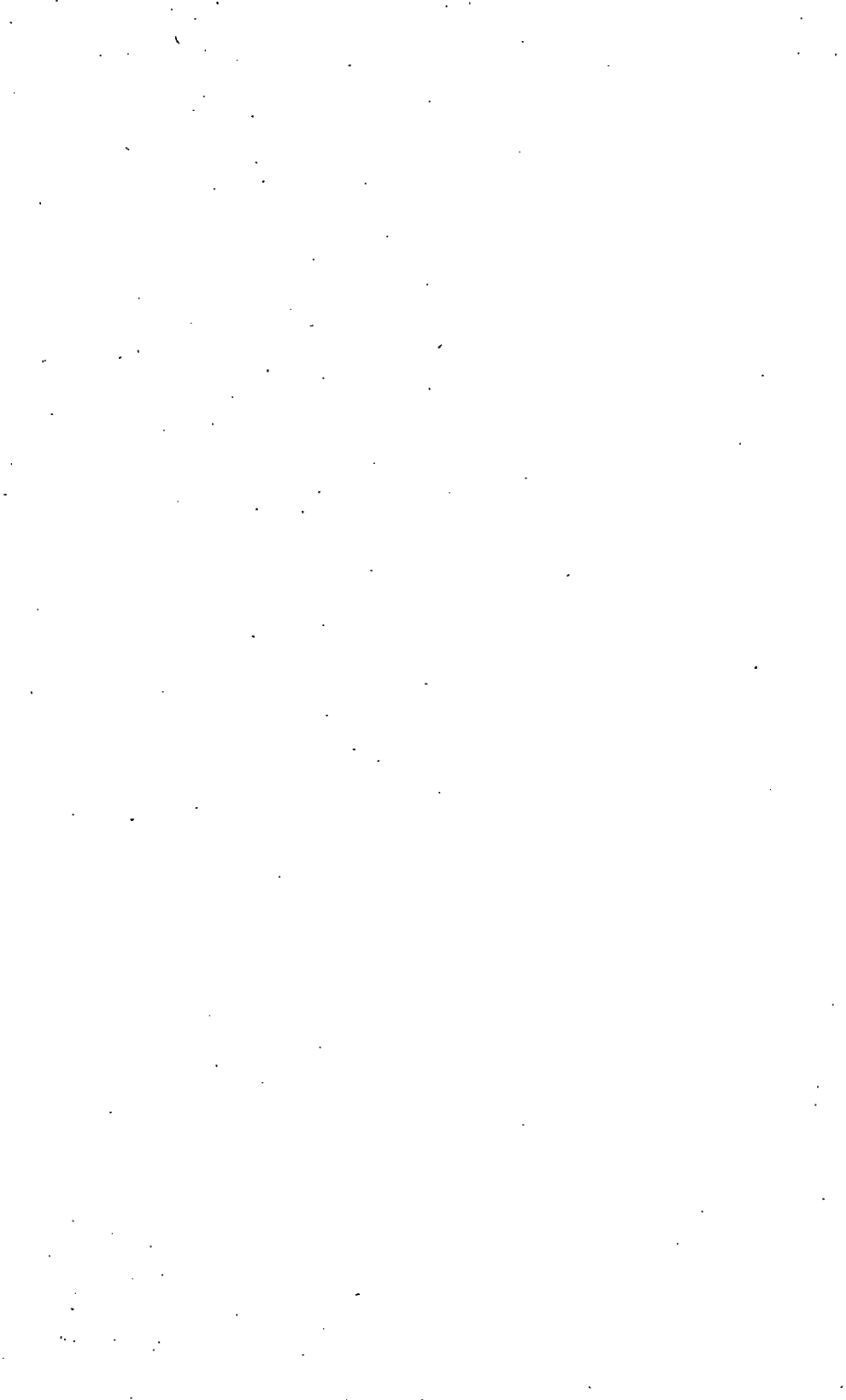
The following is a list of the bosses other than foliage ones:—

NORTH AISLE.

Bay 4. A shield of arms held by an angel; the arms are a cross fleury between four martlets; these are the legendary arms



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of the Saxon Kings. The peculiarity about the arms on this boss is that the martlets all face inwards towards the cross. (Fig. 1.)

Bay 5. A demi figure playing bagpipes ; the instrument has one drone, which is made in two pieces and spreads out at the end like a trumpet ; the mouthpiece is rather slender ; the chaunter is short and the tube is hidden by the fingers so that it is not possible to see the number of holes. The figure has long hair with a curl at the side of the face ; there appear to be sleeves, very full at the shoulders, but this is probably intended for an outer cloak. (Fig. 2.)

A grotesque head with forefinger of each hand placed in the mouth so as to pull the lips out horizontally.

Bay 6. A frame, made up of a circle and leaves outside it, enclosing a head and bust ; the hair is very long and curly, and a garment is worn which fits very high up the neck and has large square buttons down the front.

Bay 7. The arms of the Saxon Kings carried by an angel ; the martlets all face inwards as in the boss in Bay 4.

Bay 8. The arms of William of Wykeham carried by an angel.

Bay 9. The same ; the angel has masses of curly hair. Head of a beast with protruding tongue, and tusks.

Bay 10. A shield surrounded by leaves bearing a lion rampant gorged and crowned.

Bay 11. A shield surrounded by oak leaves bearing the arms on a cross engrailed five roses ; these are the arms of Bishop Edington, and this bay is one of those which was begun, at any rate by that Bishop when the rebuilding of the nave was commenced.

A grotesque head with protruding tongue, and the middle finger of each hand placed in the mouth so as to pull the lips out horizontally. In place of hair the crown of the head is covered with oak leaves and acorns.

Bay 12, lower vaulting. A face surrounded by rather conventional foliage ; the leaves are probably meant for oak ; leaves come from the mouth.

Bay 12, upper vaulting (Consistory Court). Shield surrounded by leaves bearing the arms of the Diocese of Winchester, the sword being in bend dexter ; in base is a six-pointed star.

A grotesque head and arms ; the tongue is protruding and the middle finger of each hand is placed in the mouth so as to pull the lips out horizontally.

SOUTH AISLE.

Bay 3. Shield, with a little foliage round it, bearing the arms of William of Wykeham.

Bay 4. A sow with three sucking pigs ; the sow is being carried by a lion whose head is visible over the sow's back. (Fig. 3.)

A head with a forked beard and long, drooping moustaches.

Bay 5. A head with beard and long flowing moustaches, and long, rather curly, hair ; this is a very fine head, carved with much spirit. (Fig. 4.)

A head, clean shaven, with two large oak leaves proceeding from the mouth, and with two more leaves coming from the top of the nose. (Fig. 5.)

A face surrounded with four flowers which hide all the head except the nose, eyes, forehead and part of the mouth.

A head with protruding tongue and stems coming out of the mouth and surrounding the head so that only the face is visible.

A head with forked beard, long drooping moustaches and long hair.

Bay 6. A shield with some foliage round it bearing the arms of William of Wykeham.

A lion with protruding tongue ; the beast is in a crouching attitude, possibly about to spring.

A woman with a close-fitting head-dress, fitting also close under the chin ; no hair is visible ; round the head are oak leaves and acorns. (Fig. 6.)

A head with a short beard and long, drooping moustaches and long, wavy hair.

Bay 7. A head with beard, moustaches and long, wavy hair ; the head is represented as on a circular disc, which may be meant for a halo across which the central ridges of the vaulting ribs are continued as slightly raised lines, thus forming a cross ; if the disc is meant for a halo and the lines for a cross, as seems to be the case, the head must be meant for that of Christ or of God the Father. (Fig. 7.)

Demi figure of an angel robed in an alb with apparels at the neck ; the alb is girded at the waist but, as it folds over, the cord cannot be seen. The angel holds a four-stringed citole by the neck and is striking the strings with a plectrum ; the citole has a carved head on the upper end.

An angel bearing the shield with the arms of William of Wykeham. Two other heads appear one on each side of the shield ; their bodies apparently are meant to be covered with feathers, but only a very small part of each is visible ; thumbs and forefingers are seen at the base of the shield, but whether they



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are meant to belong to the large angel whose head appears above the shield, or to the two angels at the side, is not apparent. A little tab hangs over each upper corner of the shield, part, apparently, of the large angel's costume.

An angel holding a shield with the arms of France, ancient, and England quarterly; the shield is held at the mouth level so that only the upper part of the face is visible; at the sides part of the hands and the indication of a wing are visible.

An eagle holding a lamb in its beak and talons; the lamb has its legs doubled up beneath it.

A lion in a crouching attitude with its head touching one of the hind legs.

A head with oak leaves in place of hair, beard and moustaches; an oak leaf also proceeds from the outer corner of each eye.

Bay 8. The head apparently of a man, surrounded by oak leaves and acorns, and with two acorns held in the mouth. (Fig. 8.)

A head with a beard and oak leaves and stems proceeding from the mouth; the stems proceed upward to the top of the head, and partly hide the hair at the sides, but the hair on the top of the head is visible.

A head, probably of a woman, with a close-fitting head-dress like that in Bay 6; leaves closely surround the head.

An angel carrying a shield bearing the arms of Edward the Confessor; the martlet at the base is turned towards the dexter, the others are turned inwards towards the cross.

A hart lodged, gorged with a coronet, and chained; the chain is attached to a small oak stem with oak leaves and acorns; the hart is rather crudely carved, the head being out of proportion and in an unnatural position.

Bay 9. Two demi figures, Adam and Eve clothed in skins; both are bareheaded. Eve has her right arm round Adam, with the right hand resting on Adam's right shoulder; with her left hand she is holding Adam's left arm; Adam carries an apple in his right hand. (Fig. 9.)

An angel holding a shield on which are the Prince of Wales's feathers, three feathers with a scroll across each quill. (Fig. 10.)

A demi figure playing on a double pipe, each branch being held in the hands; the figure has a close-fitting cap which comes down under the chin; over the plain garment is a short tippet on the shoulders. On each side of the boss is a head; the one on the dexter side also shows a hand which is holding a scroll which goes across the lower part of the demi figure. At the base are two sheep. The design is probably meant to represent one of the shepherds at the Nativity (Luke ii, 8 *et seq.*). (Fig. 11.)

A demi figure, bareheaded and with a beard ; the figure wears apparently a hood which is turned back, leaving the head bare, and a short tippet over the shoulders, and below a full garment with wide sleeves ; with each hand he is clutching this garment across his breast ; the forehead is much puckered. Round the figure are oak leaves. (Fig. 12.)

A demi figure with a beard, with a hood over the head and coming down under the chin ; there is a short tippet, or turned-down collar with scalloped edge, and with two buttons on the front ; the under garment also shows two buttons at the front, and the close-fitting sleeves are also buttoned at the wrists ; the two hands are holding some small object ; on the dexter side is a small oblong object which looks something like a box.

A head with beard and long, flowing hair ; the features are very regular with a straight nose.

Two beasts, one of which is winged, and one is biting the other on the back ; the design is rather confused.

Bay 10. Two monks with hoods, and very full sleeves, with their hands on a book which is between them on a book-rest ; between the two figures is the head of a dog also with a hood, and with one paw on the book. (Fig. 13.)

An angel with a shield on which are the arms of the diocese, the keys being in bend dexter.

Four birds, one twice the size of the others ; only their backs are visible and their heads are in an attitude as though picking up food ; the large bird has fully extended wings, the other three have the wings less extended. There are two or three oak leaves. (Fig. 14.)

The demi figure of a man dressed in a hood, a short collar with two buttons at the front, and a pleated garment ; he holds in his hands a rope which is attached to the horns of a bull ; a dog is attacking the bull. This is possibly a representation of bull-baiting. (Fig. 15.)

A demi figure of an angel robed in alb and amice, with wings extended ; a four-stringed citole is held horizontally, and a plectrum is visible in the right hand. (Fig. 16.)

The head of a man, bearded, with long, flowing moustache and with long, flowing hair. The lips are open and the teeth are shown clenched ; there is a look of pain and distress about the face ; round the head is a plaited garland. It seems possible that this is meant for the head of Christ with the crown of thorns. (Fig. 17.)

A hooded head. The face is very finely carved ; a slight frown is shown ; the upper lip is shown in a curious way, it is



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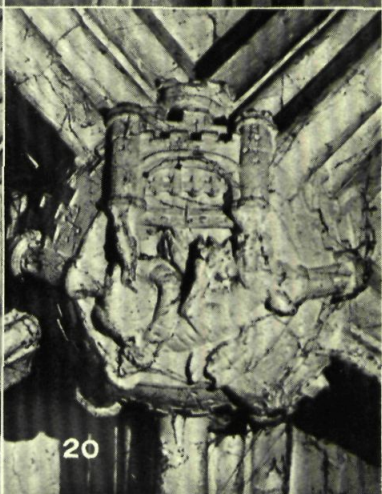


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seemingly drawn up to show the upper teeth, and evidently the face is meant to picture pain or disgust. (Fig. 18.)

A rather grotesque head with slightly open mouth, and what is probably meant for clenched teeth ; the eyes are very large ; in place of hair, oak leaves spring from the top of the forehead, and in place of a beard two oak leaves spring from the point of the chin.

A foliate head ; the features are rather fine ; leaves grow out of the mouth, from the outer corners of the eyes, and from the middle of the forehead.

A demon with scaly body and head, pointed ears, and with the mouth open showing a set of pointed teeth, the middle one of which in the top row is broken off ; bats' wings spring from somewhere behind the head and droop down over the arms on each side ; the hands clutch at the waist.

A demi figure of an angel holding a viol in the left hand and a bow in the right ; the viol is held vertically with the head downwards, and the bow is lying across the strings ; the latter are represented by a band down the centre of the instrument and are not shown individually. The angel is represented in a garment which fits close round the neck and has full sleeves, but it appears that this is only a quite short garment, and another seems to be shown below.

A man with beard and long hair holding a stem apparently of a vine, for there are two clusters of fruit which look like grapes ; on the other side of the stem is an animal which may be meant for a pig. (Fig. 19.)

The head of a man with beard and long hair ; a slight frown is shown.

Another head rather similar to the last, but not nearly so well executed.

Head of a man with beard and long hair ; the lips are just parted and the forehead is puckered ; the head is emerging from oak leaves at the base, and these are also continued up at the sides of the head.

Bay 12. The gateway of a castle flanked by two towers, and with a larger tower over the centre of the gate ; the gateway has a portcullis ; from the flanking towers a curtain wall runs round the boss, and is interrupted by four other towers ; in the centre of the courtyard thus formed is a dragon (four legs and two wings). This very remarkable boss is carved with an entire disregard of perspective. (Fig. 20.)

Head of a man with long hair and beard.