

## The Medieval Crosses of Oxfordshire

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THIS paper is an attempt to survey the Medieval churchyard and wayside crosses of Oxfordshire. The boundaries of the county are to be altered so that New Oxfordshire will include part of the present Berkshire. While the paper is concerned with Old Oxfordshire, for the sake of completeness the additional crosses which will fall within the new boundaries are added at the end of the county list. All references to other counties are to them as they were before the boundary revision.

The practise of erecting crosses goes back to early Saxon times, and many examples of these crosses, usually decorated all over with a variety of carvings, are found especially in the north and west of the country. None, however, appears to exist in Oxfordshire. The most prolific period for the construction of crosses was probably the 14th and 15th centuries, though some are considerably more recent. Because of the lack of surviving detail it is difficult to determine their dates. At the Reformation, wholesale destruction of crosses was ordered and carried out, and very few now retain their heads, since these carried the sacred images and so attracted the iconoclasts. The stump which remained when the head had been broken off was in many cases adapted for use as a sundial, but today the metal parts of these have usually been torn away.

At one time probably every churchyard had a cross, but there is some doubt as to the function which they performed. They may have been erected as religious symbols in the burial ground at a time when individual memorials were uncommon, but they also seem to have formed a station, or halting place, for the procession on Palm Sunday. Often they are referred to as preaching crosses, but it is unlikely that this was a primary function except perhaps in the early days of Christianity. A few town crosses may have been specially designed as pulpits, but this is unusual.

Crosses also occur beside roads, at crossroads and in the streets and squares of towns and villages. These again may be objects for religious veneration, or they may mark the boundary of ecclesiastical land, and sometimes they are memorials. In towns they are referred to as market crosses, and, though this may not have been the reason for their erection, no doubt those with goods for sale would gather round and sit on the steps of the cross, and the presence of the symbol might add strength to the bargains. A whole series of forms intermediate between a simple cross and a market hall can readily be found. A middle stage in this series is seen at Witney, where there is a square gabled roof carried on pillars and having in the centre a pillar supported on steps, corresponding to the cross.

The scope of this paper is restricted to Medieval crosses in Oxfordshire, excluding market crosses with roofs. Only existing remains are described and

no attempt has been made to discover documentary evidence concerning them.

The literature dealing with crosses is not very extensive. There seem to have been six county surveys, and there is one book, that by Vallance<sup>1</sup>, dealing with the subject in general. From these, and from inspection of a variety of reference and guide-books, it would seem that there are probably extant the remains of some 2,000 crosses. They are by no means evenly distributed over the country and are notably deficient in the south-eastern counties. In this connection it must be remembered that we are only dealing with the remnants of what were once more numerous, and the intensity of puritanical iconoclasm may have been different in different areas. Vallance states that 'numbers and numbers of Kentish churchyard crosses are positively known, through mention of them in wills, to have been standing in the Middle Ages', yet the remains of only two crosses now survive in Kent. Wooden crosses are known to have existed, and perhaps these predominated in the south-east and were easily destroyed. In the region of the Jurassic Ridge, where building stone was easier to come by, there may have been less incentive for stone robbers to remove the remains of the old cross, and so here we are left with the steps and bases though the heads may have been broken off. The density of crosses is low in the north, though this is the region where the tradition for erecting stone crosses has its longest history. This may merely be due to the lower population. The county with the greatest number of crosses is Somerset with 175, followed by Herefordshire and Yorkshire with 117, while there are 8 other counties having between 50 and 100. Oxfordshire has 58.

The general structure of a Medieval cross is very stereotyped, but when one comes to examine a number of them, minor variations become apparent. Before discussing the structure it is necessary to establish a number of descriptive terms which will be used here. The important part of the cross is, of course, the *head*, as it displayed the sacred symbols. As a rule it is not cruciform but is a rectangular tabernacle with sculpture on each face, one normally being a a crucifixion scene. The top is finished with a gabled roof or pinnacle. The head is carried on a tall, slender, monolithic *shaft* which has a more or less ornamental *capital* at the top. Sometimes a shaft is compound, having a carved block halfway up. The lower end of the shaft is fitted into a socket-hole in a large block of stone, the *base*, which stands on top of a set of *steps*. The lower end of the shaft is usually fixed firmly in the socket-hole by pouring melted lead around it. Sometimes the steps are supported on a foundation, here referred to as the *plinth*. Different authors sometimes use different descriptive terms. The capital may be called the knop. The base is often referred to as the socket or socket-stone, sometimes as the pedestal, and by base one author meant both the steps and the socket-stone. The set of steps, decreasing in size upwards, is often called the calvary.

The best preserved part of a cross, and the one which shows the greatest

<sup>1</sup> A. Vallance, *Old Crosses and Lychgates* (1920). See also E. Marshall, 'Wayside, Churchyard and Market Crosses', *Oxfordshire Archaeol. Soc. Reports*, xxxvii (1897-8), 28-39.

variety of form, is the base. Occasionally it is quite simple, a more or less cubical block wider than high, or an octagonal prism. By far the commonest base, however, is one which has a square section at the bottom and an octagonal one at the top. It is convenient to refer to this as a *4-8 base*. The geometry at the corners of the square, where it is transformed into the octagon, affords the greatest variety of form to be seen in this type of base. Several terms, such as steps, angle stops or broaches, have been used in describing this part of the base, but the one adopted here is the *stop*. To cut off the angle formed by the meeting of two planes is to bevel or chamfer it. The term *bevel* will be used if it is a horizontal angle which is involved, while the term *chamfer* will be reserved for vertical angles. By the stop of the base is here meant the transition between the square and octagonal parts. The stop may be a plane surface, horizontal or inclined, but it is often drawn up into a variety of domed or rounded forms. The commonest form, however, is the pointed stop, the point being a hemi-pyramid extending some or all the height of the octagonal part. Occasionally the stop may be adorned with a sculptured head or figure, or have a free or partially attached pedestal, but, whatever elaboration is found, the basic structure of the 4-8 base is a square transformed into an octagon. These geometrical shapes are difficult to describe but may easily be appreciated from the figure (FIG. 1).

When the details of the structure of crosses from different districts are compared, some regional types become apparent. Most striking is the frequent

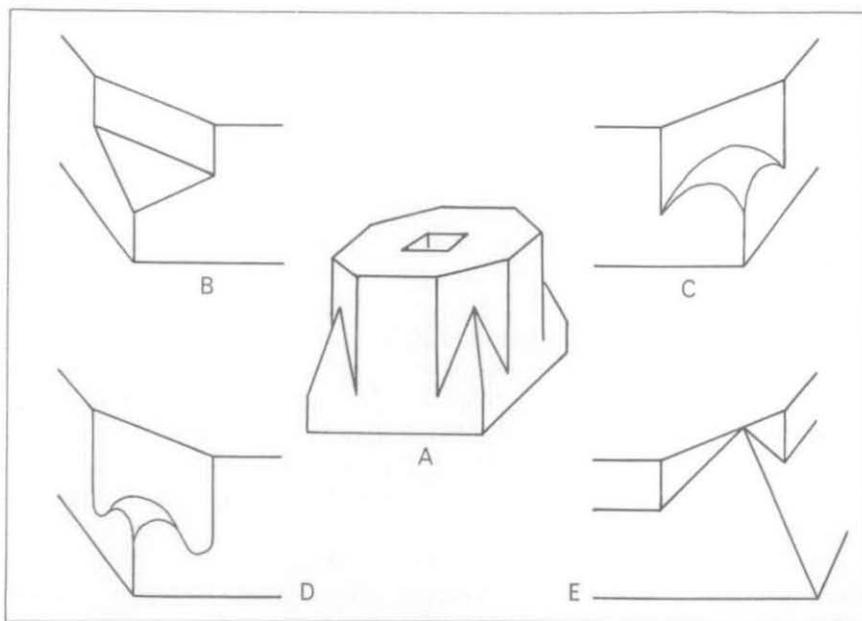


FIG. 1

Details of the bases of crosses. A. 4-8 base with pointed stops. B. A plain sloping stop. C. A rounded stop. D. A saddle-shaped stop. E. The combination of a large bevel with a pointed stop as seen at Great Rollright and at Launton.

occurrence, in Somerset and Dorset, of carved figures on the shaft and of corner pedestals on the base. Another regional peculiarity is the presence of a small niche in the base, found in the Hereford region. Oxfordshire crosses do not have any marked regional peculiarities.

Crosses may be situated in the churchyard, or outside in the village, or beside a road in the country. In Oxfordshire 62% are in churchyards, and this seems to be an average figure. Extremes are Herefordshire with 88% of 117 crosses in churchyards, and Norfolk with only 23% of 71. In the churchyard the cross is almost always near the south porch of the church. About one in five of the Oxfordshire churches still possesses a cross. Of the 22 found outside a churchyard some are in the village close to the church, as at Eynsham or Woodeaton. Some are where there is no church, as at Thrupp, and some are away from a settlement altogether, as at a road junction near Dean, or beside a road near West End. The particulars of every cross are given in a later section, to which reference should be made. Here structural features of interest will be discussed in general terms.

Oxfordshire is very poorly off for the heads of crosses. Only one, that at Oddington, has what appears to be an old head, and this is said to have been placed there when the shaft was repaired. The origin of this head, and whether it belongs to the base, seems to be unknown. It has an unusual quatrefoil shape with a crucifix on one side and a figure of the Virgin and Child on the other. In the church at Duns Tew there is what seems undoubtedly to be the remains of the head of a cross, the rest of which has vanished. It seems to have been of the usual tabernacle shape with the Crucifixion on one side, the Virgin on the other, and figures on each end.

Only 3 crosses, apart from the exceptional one at Eynsham, have retained a complete shaft and capital, those at Waterperry, Woodeaton and Thrupp, which are roughly 200, 250 and 350 cm. high respectively. Shafts are usually 25-30 cm. square at the bottom and are changed into octagonal section a few centimetres up by means of pointed stops. At Woodeaton the shaft is changed from square to hexagonal, a most unusual arrangement known to me elsewhere only at Calmsden in Gloucestershire. The cross at Sarsden has an octagonal shaft which is 100 cm. high and does not, as is usual, have any taper. On top is a square block each face of which is provided with a gable. There is a large round mortise-hole on top of this block, and it may have formed the mid point of a composite shaft. A very similar arrangement is seen also at Somerton. At Chastleton an octagonal shaft rests loosely in a square socket-hole and is probably the upper part of a broken shaft. It is unusual in being ornamented with two raised quatrefoils on each alternate face of the octagon. Similar ornaments are seen on the ornate shaft at Eynsham, but not, as figured by Vallance, at Yarnton.

Plain octagonal bases are found at Chipping Norton, Iffley and Cassington. The socket-hole at Cassington, which is 25 cm. square, is 24 cm. deep and has sharply cut outlines. One wonders whether it carried a wooden shaft. It is the only base in the county which suggests this, though Watkins<sup>2</sup> mentions

<sup>2</sup>A. Watkins, *The Old Standing Crosses of Herefordshire* (1930).

several in Herefordshire. Socket-holes are usually relatively shallow and rounded at the bottom. The base at Sarsden is also octagonal, but it is unique in its elaborate decoration. There is a pilaster up each angle and these are linked by a gable over each face, the panels so formed having trefoiled heads. The base is now rounded at the top, but this seems to be due to wear as the ridges from the gables have almost vanished. Headington has an octagonal base which is peculiar in being formed of 2 stones. The lower one is reduced at the corners by ornamental bevels. The upper one is tall, with a moulding at the top and bottom and with sunken quatrefoils on the faces.

There are some bases which appear to be plain squares, but this appearance may be due to the top having been worn away. An example of this is at Middleton Stoney. At Somerton each corner of the base is carved into a face. Sometimes a square is reduced to a smaller square by a bevel part of the way up, as at Cottisford or Fritwell, sometimes by mouldings as at Chastleton. The commonest form of the base is 4-8, where the square is changed to an octagon by some form of stop. This is found in 67% of Oxfordshire crosses, and of these 45% have pointed and 34% have rounded stops. Pointed stops seem slightly more common here than in other counties, but this feature is not predominant enough to form a clear regional character. Usually the 4-8 base is plain, but it may be bevelled at the top and sometimes have mouldings, as at Shifford or Souldern. At Launton and Great Rollright, the square is reduced by a bevel before the transition to the octagon (FIG. 1E). The height of the points is quite variable, as is also the shape of the rounded stops. At Stratton Audley only the base remains. It has rounded stops, above which it is circular with a half-round moulding. Above the circular part, which is 8 cm. high, are two low octagonal steps. Nothing quite like this has been seen elsewhere.

The steps of a cross are often lost or damaged and may have been completely reconstructed, so that the data concerning them are unsatisfactory. Of the 28 which remain in the county, four have one step, 13 have two, eight have three, and two have four. One, the wayside cross at Sarsden, has six steps. One set of steps, that at Yarnton, is circular, three are octagonal and the rest are square. Octagonal steps are relatively much more common in Herefordshire, and still more so in Somerset where 60% are of this shape. Gloucestershire resembles Oxfordshire in the form of the steps.

There are two remarkable crosses which closely resemble one another and are quite unlike any others in Oxfordshire. These are the ones at Eynsham and Yarnton, both of which are figured by Vallance. They are richly carved and are among the most highly ornamented examples in the whole country. Unfortunately, they are so badly weathered, especially the one at Eynsham, that it is difficult to make out the details. The one at Eynsham stands in the square beside the church. The base is carved with a standing figure at each corner and has moulded gables over the figures and over each face. The tall shaft has a rounded pilaster at each corner, an ornamented swelling halfway up and a capital supporting a cube at the top. Each face of the shaft has at the bottom a standing figure under a crocketed canopy. At Yarnton the cross is in the

churchyard, standing on two circular steps. Each face of the base has a kneeling figure over which are moulded arches. The shaft has an ornamented swelling at the top, but presumably only half of the original height remains. It has a rounded pilaster at each corner and on each face is a standing figure under a crocketed canopy.

In the church at Combe, a few miles from Eynsham and Yarnton, is an object which has been described as a font or a well-head. It is 4-8 with a rounded top near the bottom. One face of the octagon has a kneeling figure under an arch, the others are covered with arcading. Though the details are different it is very reminiscent of the crosses at Eynsham and Yarnton, and it seems possible that it is the base of a cross of the same type as these, altered for some other use.

In the cathedral at Oxford there is a carved stone known as the Jew's Cross. Vallance gives photographs of three sides of it and relates the story of how the Jews of Oxford were forced to erect a cross as penalty for an act of desecration of a crucifix, committed in 1268. The stone was found in 1837 embedded in the base of a buttress. It is roughly cubical and is carved on all sides in high relief. At each corner is a winged creature, head downwards, with the tail formed of foliage-like curls, curving over and spreading out at the top. Below the bases of the tails the stone is pierced right through. The heads of the creatures are too worn to show any details, but they have two legs which spread out on each side of them. Each face of the block is framed by a rounded ridge on which the sides of the tails and the legs of the beasts rest at the corners. Scenes are portrayed on each face of the stone. One shows the sacrifice of Isaac. He is seated on a rectangular altar which has four legs, with his head bent forward and a fire behind him. He is fully robed. Abraham is bearded and fully robed. He stands on the right with a sword raised, and a hand from the clouds grasps its blade. On the left is a tree with the ram caught in it. On the opposite face of the block the right side has been cut away. All that remains in the lower centre is a kneeling bull whose head is missing. On the left is part of a robed standing figure, and in the centre at the top a hand projects from the clouds holding an open book. This scene has been interpreted<sup>3</sup> as showing the giving of the law, and the golden calf. It seems unusual to represent the calf kneeling at the feet of Moses, and it is unfortunate that this face has been so mutilated. Another face shows Adam and Eve standing on each side of the tree of knowledge, which presumably has the serpent in it but this is not now obvious. The opposite face has in the centre a robed seated figure apparently holding an open book on its left knee and something obliquely in the right hand. On each side is a robed figure walking away from the central one. Each seems to have a curious prognathous face, what Vallance described as 'grotesque heads like apes'. This appearance might be produced by a rounded beard if the head is tilted backwards. The top of the block has an unfinished appearance, as if it had once been covered. In the middle is a hole 16½ cm. square and 28 cm. deep, on each side of which is a smaller irregular hole. This square hole seems relatively too small to be the socket of a cross shaft designed to match the base. This object seems to have little or nothing in common with the crosses which we are considering, and it

<sup>3</sup> R.C.H.M., *Oxford* (1939), 45-6.

seems possible that it was originally the base of a 12th century font. The socket-hole could have been added later to support a wooden crucifix, and the two smaller holes beside it could have supported the attendant figures of the Virgin Mary and St. John.

### LIST OF THE CROSSES OF OLD OXFORDSHIRE

In order to save space the following descriptions are standardized as far as possible, and certain special terms are used. These are more fully discussed in the text. The parts of the complete cross are the steps, the base, the shaft and the head, but in very few examples are all present. Occasionally the steps are supported on a plinth. The length of the side of the bottom step only is given. The base usually has a square section at the bottom and an octagonal one above, expressed as 'base 4-8'. The corners of the square are cut off to form the octagon. This transition is here referred to as the stop, and it may be a horizontal or inclined plane surface, or it may be drawn up into a rounded or pointed shape (FIG. 1). When a horizontal edge is cut away it is referred to as a bevel. Only the extreme width and height of the base are given. The shaft also usually has a square section at the bottom, transformed a few centimetres up into an octagonal one by means of pointed stops. The width at the bottom and the present total height are given. The top is usually missing but was originally a moulded capital supporting a carved head. Unless otherwise stated the cross is in the churchyard. Measurements are given in centimetres, w being the width and h the height.

- AMBROSDEN. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, w 71, h 46. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 30, h 86. Set in lead.
- BEGBROKE. Base 4-8 with plain flat stops, w 68, h 56. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 25, h 79.
- BROADWELL. Village, near the church. An octagonal plinth projecting at top and bottom. Four octagonal steps, side 126. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, w 84, h 68. The corners of the square are cut off and so the points, which start near the bottom, have 3 triangular faces instead of 2. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 25, h 159.
- BUCKNELL. The shaft and head restored and the base apparently cut through horizontally. Two square steps, the lower with the corners cut off, side 174. Base 4-8 with rounded stops hollowed at the sides so as to be rather saddle-shaped. w 61, h 46.
- CASSINGTON. Base octagonal, side 38, h 43. Near the top there is a moulding above which is a concave bevel. The socket-hole, 25 square, 24 deep, is sharply cut and may possibly have taken a timber upright.
- CHARLTON ON OTMOOR. Three square steps, side 255. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, w 89, h 61. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 30, h 304.
- CHASTLETON. Two square steps, side 126. Base square, w 60, narrowed by a moulded bevel to a smaller square, w 52. There is a loose octagonal stone on top, which may be a later addition. The socket-hole is 24 square. In it rests an octagonal shaft whose faces are 7 and h 111. Each alternate face is ornamented with 2 quatrefoils in relief. This is probably part of the upper end of the original shaft. The head is modern.
- CHIPPING NORTON. Beside the market hall. Base a rough octagon, side 35. Fixed on top is a pillar from the old market hall.
- COMBE. In the church. This object, which was discussed in the text, may have been

the base of a cross altered to form a well-head. It recalls the crosses at Eynsham and Yarnton, though less ornate. The hole, diameter 61, which passes right through it, is rather roughly bored out as compared with the careful carving on the surface, and may be secondary. The general form is 4-8 with rounded stops near the bottom. One main face has a kneeling figure, while the others have 2 tiers of arcading whose arches have trefoiled heads. w 81, h 68.

COTTISFORD. Two square steps, side 207. Base square, w 73, reduced by a plain bevel to w 66, h 35. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops. w 28, h 119.

CROPREDY. On the roadside in a housing estate. Extremely worn base which seems to have been 4-8 with plain sloping stops near the bottom. The tall octagonal part, which is slightly smaller than the square, might once have had decorated faces. w 76, h 51. The stump of the shaft has been rubbed round and round wearing the socket into a basin.

CUDDESDON. Four square steps, side 243. The lowest has an illegible inscription which seems recent. Base square, w 35, h 38. Shaft square with a low triangular projection at the bottom of each face, not tapering. w 25, h 129. The upper part of the shaft and the head are recent.

DEAN. Where the road from Dean meets the road from Chadlington to Spelsbury. No church near. Base 4-8 with rounded stops. w 73, h 51. Socket-hole square, side 33.

DORCHESTER. Two octagonal steps, side 84. Base 4-8 with rounded stops each having a horizontal bar above it, moulding at the top. w 79, h 43. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, set in lead. w 30, h 275. Head recent. The shaft is inserted diagonally with respect to the square part of the base. This is an exceptional arrangement found principally in Dorset and Somerset, but occasionally elsewhere.

DUNS TEW. There is no sign of a cross in the churchyard or village, but inside the church is what seems to be a fragment of the head of a cross. On one side is a crucifix, the figure wearing a loincloth and drooping to the left. The feet are placed side by side. On the other side is a standing figure in a long robe which spreads out at the bottom. Enough of one end remains to show part of a standing figure in a long robe. There are traces of red paint in the hollows of the robe of the main standing figure. The stone was pierced through on the left of the crucifix, but probably not on the right. All these details are commonly seen on the heads of crosses.

EYNSHAM. In the square near the church. Very ornate but so badly weathered that the features are almost indistinguishable. One square step. Base square tapering upwards, much of the top worn away. A standing figure under a moulded arch at each corner, and an arch over each side. Owing to wear the tops of the figures and arches are missing. Shaft set in lead. Square with rounded pilasters at the corners, and each face with a standing figure, h about 60, under a pointed arch with a crocketed canopy. An ornamented swelling half-way up and a carved capital. Rosettes in relief on each face above the canopies. On top is a cube which must have been a sundial. This cross is very similar to the one at Yarnton. For a possible third example see Combe.

FRITWELL. Two square steps, side 178. Base square, w 71, reduced by a bevel to w 63, h 28. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 28, h 157. The upper part of the shaft and the head are recent.

GAGINGWELL. At a road junction, no church near. Three square steps, side 228, restored on a concrete base. Base 4-8 with low rounded stops near the top. Top edge bevelled. Shaft possibly 4-8 with pointed stops, but the height is now only 23. w 35. This cross is similar to Salford 1.

GARSINGTON. In the village. Very worn and restored with concrete. Four square steps, side 294. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, top restored. w 81.

GREAT ROLLRIGHT. One square step, side 129, on a square plinth with an overhang. The step is made of only 4 large stones and the base is now placed excentrically upon it.

Base square reduced by a bevel on each face. The upper part is 4-8 with pointed stops so arranged that the corner ridges between the bevels become the ridges of the points and extend the full height of the base. w 86, h 63. The geometry of this base is the same as that at Launton, but the proportions are different. (FIG. 1E.) Shaft broken off flat at h 15 and with some dowel holes on the top. w 35.

HEADINGTON. Two square steps, side 243. Base in 2 parts. The lower, h 25, is octagonal with sides 20 and 73, the short sides being reduced by ornamented concave bevels. The upper part is a tall octagon with mouldings at top and bottom and sunken quatrefoils on the faces. h 71. The cross is said to be 15th cent. with a modern shaft and a 17th cent. sundial on top.<sup>4</sup>

HORSPATH. In the church is an object which has been interpreted as a stoup or the base of a cross. It consists of a tall octagonal stone, reduced by a moulded bevel half-way up, and with a moulding at the top. The lower part is shaped so as to fit against the wall. On top is a shallow octagonal socket-hole. Though it might have been used as a stoup it does not seem designed for this purpose, and moreover it is on the west instead of the east of the door. It does not seem to be part of a churchyard cross and might have been the base for a statue.

IFFLEY. Base plain octagonal with a slight bevel at the top, side 33, h 76. Shaft 4-8 with plain sloping stops, w 33, h 243. The head is recent.

KELMSCOTT. In the village. Three square steps, side 216, the lowest overhanging a plinth. Base 4-8 with rounded stops, w 68, h 51. Shaft set in lead, broken off flush with the base, w 25.

LANGFORD. Three square steps, side 222. Base 4-8 with plain stops, w 66, h 53. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 28, h 99. Set in lead.

LAUNTON. Two square steps, side 198. Base square reduced by a large bevel on each face, above which it is 4-8 with pointed stops. w 76, h 53. The corner ridges between the bevels continue as the ridges of the points to the top of the base. The geometry of this base is similar to that at Great Rollright, but the proportions are different (FIG. 1E). Shaft square, w 25, h 23.

LEAFIELD. In the village. Restored in 1873 as thanksgiving for an escape from a smallpox epidemic. The steps and only the lower part of the base seem old. Three square steps, side 267. Base w 76.

LEW. Roadside. Two square steps on a platform, side 220. Base square quite plain, w 79, h 48. The top corners cut off with small sloping chamfers. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 28, h 63.

LITTLE ROLLRIGHT. Base 4-8 with a very unusual stop. Instead of the usual hemipyramidal point there is a curved-edged ridge, with a basal angle of about 60°, arising from a more or less horizontal surface. It is in effect an attenuated point. w 73, h 41. The shaft is square below and round above, but it has probably been altered as there is a mortared joint between the two parts. w 25, h to the join 23, diameter above 18, total h 66.

MERTON. Base 4-8 with rounded stops, w 71, h 46. There are deep holes, measuring 5×8, on each face of the base 18 from the top. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 30, h 106. Set in lead.

MIDDLETON STONEY. Near the church, inside the castle bailey. Base square, w 73, h 66. It is very worn at the top and there is a slight suggestion that it may originally have been 4-8. Shaft 4-8 with plain stops, w 28, h 66.

MINSTER LOVELL. In the village. Base 4-8 with low rounded stops, the octagon reduced by a bevel, w 71, socket-hole square side 30.

NORTHMOOR. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, w 77, h 46. The socket-hole is now rather basin-shaped but was probably about 25 square and 23 deep.

ODDINGTON. Three square steps, side 220. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, w 76, h 61.

<sup>4</sup> R.C.H.M., *Oxford* (1939), 151.

Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 33, h 106, the upper part being restored. The head is a quatrefoil having a crucifix on one side, the figure with legs crossed and head inclined to the right. On the other side is the Virgin and Child. The Virgin is crowned and fully robed, the left arm holding the Child on the left knee, the right holding a breast. This head is said to have been in the possession of a former vicar and was placed on the cross when this was restored. It is unfortunate that its history should be uncertain as it is the only complete head in the county.

OVER KIDDINGTON. In the village. Two square steps, side 216. Base almost a cube, but the top very much worn, w 81, h 79. Shaft 4-8 probably with tall pointed stops, but too worn for certainty, w 33, h 237.

OVER WORTON. Near, but outside, the churchyard, restored as a war memorial. Base 4-8 with pointed stops. Slightly rectangular 73 x 66, h 48.

OXFORD. In the cathedral is what is said to be the base of the Jew's Cross of 1268. This has been described in the text. It is carved all over with figures in high relief and may be of 12th cent. or earlier date. On top is a small deep socket-hole and 2 smaller irregular ones. It is perhaps the base of a font later used to support a wooden crucifix and its 2 attendant figures. w 68, h 58.

RADCOT BRIDGE. The corbelled-out projection on the eastern parapet supported a cross. The shaft, set in lead, is square, w 28. Only 4 other bridge crosses seem to be recorded.

SALFORD 1. Two square steps, side 198. Base 4-8 with low rounded stops. w 79, h 68. Top edge bevelled. This base is similar to that at Gagingwell. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 33, h 41.

SALFORD 2. Roadside, on A44 near the village. One square step, side 142. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, w 86, h 68. Socket-hole square, side 30.

SANDFORD. Base 4-8 with plain stops, a moulded bevel to the top, w 76, h 48. Shaft, set in lead, square, w 28, h 28.

SANDFORD ST. MARTIN. In the village at a road junction. Three square steps, side 255, seem to be old. They are raised on a brick foundation, and the base, shaft and head seem to be modern. Lying alongside is the lower part of a shaft which also seems to be modern.

SARSDEN. At a road junction, no church near. Six irregular, octagonal steps, sides of the lowest, 178, 152, 284. The base is octagonal and now has a rounded bevel at the top, but this is probably due to wear, w 38, h 56. There is a pilaster at each angle, and each face is crowned by a gable below which is a trefoil formed by 2 cusps on each side. The shaft, set in lead, is octagonal, each face 12, h 101. On top is a square stone, w 41, h 38, each face of which carries a gable with a rounded ridge, having below it a trefoil formed by one cusp on each side. There is a round socket on top of this stone, so it may have been halfway up a composite shaft or perhaps carried a tall cruciform head. A similar arrangement is seen at Somerton.

SHIFFORD. Base square with a moulding, then reduced by a concave bevel above which it is 4-8 with saddle-shaped stops. Higher still there is another moulding, and on top a smaller, very shallow octagon. w 81, h 53. Shaft, set in lead, 4-8 with pointed stops, w 27, h 53.

SHIPTON ON CHERWELL. Square plinth, side 243, and 2 square steps. Base 4-8 with pointed stops and a bevel to the top, w 79, h 68. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, probably with bars above, w 33, h 213. Capital and small cross head probably recent.

SOMERTON. Square plinth, side 304, and 3 square steps. Base square, w 89, h 41. Each corner shaped into a large face whose height is about three-quarters that of the base. Each is bordered by a flat band grooved more or less horizontally, perhaps a halo. Shaft, set in lead, with tall pointed stops, w 23, h 105. On top is a cube, w 30, carved on each face with a kneeling figure and having on top a square socket-hole side 18. This may have been halfway up a composite shaft. A similar arrangement is seen at Sarsden.

SOULDERN. Steps now merely overgrown debris. Base 4-8 with the stops as saddle-

shaped depressions leaving upstanding points at the corners. The octagonal part with mouldings. w 76, h 43. Socket-hole square side 30., depth 25.

SOUTH NEWINGTON. Base 4-8 with rounded stops, w 86, h 61. Shaft 4-8 with tall pointed stops, w 38, h 56. An iron dowel set in lead on the top. The socket hole is larger than the shaft, w 46.

STEEPLE ASTON. Two square steps, side 184. The lower is raised on a plinth and is bevelled below. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, the octagon reduced by a bevel and perhaps moulded. w 73, h 61. Shaft square, set in lead, w 29, h 53. It tapers slightly and is then rounded off and some iron is set in the top.

STRATTON AUDLEY. Near the north door of the church, in the churchyard. Base square with rounded stops above which is a circle, h 7. Above this are 2 low octagonal steps. w 73, h 42. Socket-hole square, side 25.

TASTON. In the village, no church. Three square steps, side 274. Base square, very worn, w 84, h 56. Shaft, set in lead, without definite stop, w 35, h 76.

THRUPP. Roadside, no church near. One square step, side 129, on a built up plinth. Base square reduced by a bevel and then 4-8 with plain sloping stops at the top, w 79, h 46. Shaft, set in lead, 4-8 without definite stops, w 28, h about 366. It is complete as it swells out into a capital at the top, and it is notably tall.

TOOT BALDON. One square step, side 171. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, w 68, h 51. The octagon has unequal sides, 38 and 20, and the top edge is bevelled. Shaft w 30. Shaft and head recent.

WARBOROUGH. Two square steps. Base 4-8 with small rounded stops and a bevel at the top, w 71, h 51. Shaft, set in lead, 4-8 with pointed stops, w 33, h about 300. Several iron hooks projecting part of the way up.

WATERPERRY. Two square steps, side 183. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, the top edge with a concave bevel, w 76, h 51. Shaft 4-8 with sloping stops, w 30, h about 213. Octagonal capital with double moulding. The head cruciform with trilobed ends to the arms, which are joined by a pierced square with trilobed corners. The head has apparently been renewed as Vallance figures one with a crocketed pinnacle.

WESTCOT BARTON. Two square steps, side 152. Base square reduced by a bevel part way up. At the top a flat stop makes an octagon only 2 high, w 63, h 43. Socket-hole square, w 30, depth 21, with a rounded bottom.

WEST END. At a bend in the road, 1 mile west of Bablockhythe Ferry. Base only in the ditch on the south side of the road near a power pole. 4-8 with plain sloping stops, w 84, h 63. Socket-hole 33 square, 10 deep at the edges. Bottom concave.

WOODEATON. On the green near the church. Three square steps, side 267. Base 4-8 with rounded stops, w 76, h 51. Shaft square reduced to a hexagon, a most unusual arrangement. w 30, h about 275. The shaft is complete but the capital is weathered and shows no detail.

WORTON 1. In a garden, no church near. Base only, 4-8 with plain sloping stops, w 86, h 43. Socket-hole 38 square.

WORTON 2. In the same garden. Base only, 4-8 with plain sloping stops, w 73, h 43. Socket-hole 25 square.

YARNTON. Two circular steps, diameter 200. Base elaborately carved. The lower part is circular, h 12 and diameter 89. Above this square with a semicircular projection extending the full height of each face. There is a double pilaster over each re-entrant angle carrying pointed arches over the corners and rounded ones over the projections. On each projection is carved a figure. All seem to be kneeling on one knee with a sword extending obliquely down behind, except the one on the south face which may be carrying a shield on the left arm. h 58. The shaft, set in lead, is rectangular, 28 x 23. The present height is 152, presumably about half the original. There is a rounded pilaster at each corner and a decorated band round the top. Each face has a standing figure below a pointed, crocketed canopy. Above the canopies and between the pilasters the faces of the shaft are convex. Height of the figures 63, height to the top

of the canopies 101. This cross is very similar to the one at Eynsham, and they are by far the most elaborate in the county. For a possible third example see Combe.

*New Oxfordshire*

The following 18 additional crosses, at present in Berkshire, will come to be in New Oxfordshire when the boundaries are changed.

**BOURTON.** At a road junction in the village. Three square steps, side 259. Base 4-8 with a sloping stop, 76, h 68. Shaft complete. 4-8 with probably pointed stops, w 30, h about 360.

**CHARNEY BASSET.** Village, now war memorial. Extremely worn. Base square, w 76, h about 40. Shaft probably 4-8 with pointed stops, w about 13, h 36.

**COLESHILL.** Village green. Two irregular steps, side 152. Base 4-8 with sloping stops, w 86, h 53. Shaft, set in lead, 4-8 with sloping stops, w 33, h 25.

**COMPTON.** Base 4-8 with pointed stops, w 53, h 46. Socket-hole square, side 28, depth 10.

**COSCOTE.** At road junction. Base octagonal, sides 41, embedded in the ground. Shaft, set in lead, 4-8 with sloping stops, w 30, h 56.

**CUMNOR.** Three square steps, side 240. Base 4-8 with saddle-shaped stops (FIG. 1), moulded bevel at the top, w 79, h 76. Shaft, set in lead, 4-8 with pointed stops, w 28, h 23. Upper part modern.

**DENCHWORTH 1.** Two steps, one level with the ground, side 240, the other cross-shaped made of 4 large stones. Base rounded square, w about 86, h 68. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 30, h 96. Head modern.

**DENCHWORTH 2.** At road junction at the east end of the village. Base irregular, embedded in the ground, w 76. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 30, h 150.

**DRAYTON.** Steps, shaft and head modern. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, then reduced by a bevel and with an overhanging moulding at the top, w 79, h 67. The new shaft is set diagonally with respect to the square part of the base, an unusual arrangement, see Dorchester.

**EAST HAGBOURNE 1.** Village street. Plinth, side 340, and 4 square steps. Base essentially 4-8 with pointed stops, but one axis is extended so that it is rectangular, 76 x 58. Very worn, at least 15 missing at the top. In the extension there is a niche, w 30, h about 30, depth 7. It had a pointed top but this is worn away. Shaft, set in lead, w 29, h about 275. In the shaft, 33 up, is another niche with a pointed top, w 7, h 25, depth 5. Niches in crosses are unusual, and they have been discussed elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> Of the 49 which are known, 37 are in Herefordshire, and the others, with the single exception of that at East Hagbourne, are close to its borders. This cross is unique in having 2 niches, and there is only one other example having a niche in the shaft. This is at Great Malvern, Worcestershire. The shaft at East Hagbourne now carries a cubical sundial and a ball.

**EAST HAGBOURNE 2.** At crossroads at the east end of the village. Base octagonal with a large bevel at the top, side 35, h about 43. Shaft only a worn stump, 4-8 with pointed stops, w 28, h 43.

**GOOSEY.** Base embedded in the ground, apparently 4-8 with pointed stops. Shaft, set in lead, 4-8 with pointed stops, w 28, h 126.

**LETCOMBE REGIS.** Base 4-8 with pointed stops and bevel at the top, w 73, h 57. Holes, diameter 3 and 38 deep, running obliquely downwards into the base above the points. Shaft 4-8 with pointed stops, w 33, h 122.

**LONG WITTENHAM.** At road junction west of the village. Mostly restored. Four square steps, and lower part of the base, w 68, perhaps original.

**NORTH HINKSEY.** Three square steps, side 314. Base square, w 89, reduced by a bevel with a groove below to w 73, then 4-8 with sloping stops and a moulding at the top.

<sup>5</sup> B. J. Marples, *Trans. Woolhope Nat. Field Club.* (In press.)

h 68. Shaft, set in lead, square with rolls at the corners, w 25, h 280. Vallance gives figures showing the stops of the base as saddle-shaped, no trace of which is visible now, and fragments of a gabled head with floriated cross.

SOUTH HINKSEY. Three square steps, side 257. Base 4-8 with rounded stops, w 68, h 38. Socket-hole square, side 28, depth 23.

SPARSHOLT. Now a war memorial with new steps, shaft and head. Base 4-8 with pointed stops, bevel at the top, w 84, h 76. Shaft, set in lead, 4-8 with sloping stops, w 39, h of old part 58.

STEVENTON. Two square steps, side 210. Base square, w 89, reduced by an almost horizontal bevel to w 72, then 4-8 with, on 2 corners, low rounded stops each with a diagonal groove. Above one is a shield with a cross and above the other a four-leaved flower. The other 2 corners of the base have irregular pointed stops with doubtful traces of ornament, perhaps a trefoil, above one. Base h 81.