

Finch & C^o



AN ENGLISH MEDIEVAL LIMESTONE SCULPTURE OF A CROWNED LION

AN ENGLISH MEDIEVAL LIMESTONE SCULPTURE OF A CROWNED LION WITH A SMILE AND BULGING EYES

CIRCA 1300 – 1320

SIZE: 28.5 CM HIGH, 25.5 CM WIDE, 21.5 CM DEEP – 11¼ INS HIGH, 10 INS WIDE, 8½ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

YORK MINSTER IS THE LARGEST GOTHIC CHURCH NORTH OF THE ALPS. BUILT MAINLY OF MAGNESIAN LIMESTONE FROM TADCASTER IT WAS FOUNDED ON THE SITE OF A ROMAN FORTRESS BY EDWIN KING OF NORTHUMBRIA IN 627 AD. THERE WERE TWO FIRES AT YORK MINSTER IN THE 19TH CENTURY. IN 1829 THE CHOIR WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED AND SUBSEQUENTLY REBUILT AND RESTORED BY SIR ROBERT SMIRKE IN 1832. IN 1840 THE NAVE WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE AND REBUILT BY SYDNEY SMIRKE.

THE CHOIR WAS BUILT IN 1361 – 1405 LARGELY DISPLACING ABBOT ROGER OF PONT L'ÉVÊQUE'S NORMAN CHOIR. HOWEVER, PART OF THIS CHOIR REMAINED IN USE UNTIL 1394 WHEN MUCH OF THE NORMAN WORK WAS THEN REUSED AS RUBBLE IN THE FOUNDATIONS. THESE FRAGMENTS WERE THEN FOUND IN THE RESTORATION OF THE CHOIR AFTER THE FIRE OF 1829. THE NAVE WAS BUILT IN 1291 AND WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED BY FIRE IN 1840 AND AFTER REBUILDING WAS RE-OPENED IN 1844.

AFTER EXTENSIVE RESTORATION FROM 1967 – 1972 ANOTHER FIRE CAUSED BY A BOLT OF LIGHTENING DESTROYED THE SOUTH TRANSEPT ROOF IN JULY 1984. AT A COST OF 2.25 MILLION IT WAS RESTORED. HOWEVER, IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT MORE PHYSICAL DESTRUCTION TOOK PLACE INSIDE THE MINSTER DURING THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH I THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME. TO ERASE THE LINGERING BELIEFS OF PRE-REFORMATION WORSHIP TOMBS, BRASSES, COATS OF ARMS, CARVINGS, PORTRAITS IN THE GLASS WINDOWS, AND MEMORIALS OF DEANS AND ARCHBISHOPS, TOGETHER WITH ALTARS, RELIQUARIES, HANGINGS AND VESTMENTS WERE REMOVED.