

**SYMBOLISM OF ANIMALS  
AND BIRDS  
REPRESENTED IN ENGLISH  
CHURCH ARCHITECTURE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649021345

Symbolism of animals and birds represented in English church architecture by Arthur H. Collins

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**ARTHUR H. COLLINS**

**SYMBOLISM OF ANIMALS  
AND BIRDS  
REPRESENTED IN ENGLISH  
CHURCH ARCHITECTURE**



SYMBOLISM OF ANIMALS  
AND BIRDS

SYMBOLISM  
OF  
ANIMALS AND BIRDS

REPRESENTED IN ENGLISH  
CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

BY  
ARTHUR H. COLLINS, M.A.

NEW YORK  
1914

NEW YORK  
McBRIDE, NAST & COMPANY  
1914

785768

1944

## CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	SOURCES OF ANIMAL SYMBOLISM . . . . .	1
II.	THE APE, ASS, BEAVER, BEAR, BOAR, CAMEL, DOG, ELEPHANT . . . . .	22
III.	THE FOX, GOAT, HART AND ANTELOPE, HYENA . . . . .	45
IV.	THE HEDGEHOG, LAMB, LION . . . . .	61
V.	THE OX, PIG, PANTHER, SALAMANDER . . . . .	81
VI.	THE SHEEP, TIGER, WHALE AND FISH, WOLF . . . . .	94
VII.	THE CHARADRIUS, COCK AND HEN, DOVE . . . . .	114
VIII.	THE EAGLE, GOOSE, PEACOCK, PELICAN, RAVEN . . . . .	133
IX.	THE BASILISK OR COCKATRICE AND CENTAUR . . . . .	145
X.	THE DRAGON OR SERPENT . . . . .	157
XI.	THE GRIFFIN, HYDRA AND CROCODILE, MANTICORA, MERMAID OR SYREN . . . . .	186
XII.	THE SPHINX, TERREBOLEN, UNICORN, SERRA, REMORA AND PHENIX . . . . .	204
XIII.	CONCLUSION . . . . .	229
	TABLE OF PHOTOGRAPHS . . . . .	231
	INDEX . . . . .	237



## LIST OF BOOKS LARGELY CONSULTED

1. Christian Symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland. By J. Romilly Allen.
2. Animal Symbolism in Ecclesiastical Architecture. By E. P. Evans. (Heinemann.)
3. Norman Tympana and Lintels. By C. E. Keyser. (Stock.)
4. Sacred and Legendary Art. By Mrs. Jameson. (Longman.)
5. Black Tournai Fonts in England. By C. H. Eden.
6. Fonts and Font Covers. By Francis Bond. (Oxford.)
7. Calendar of the Prayer Book. By James Parker.
8. Encyclopædia Britannica. Ninth Edn. Article on "Physiologus."
9. Early Drawings and Illuminations in British Museum. By W. de Gray Birch and Henry Jenner.
10. Dictionary of Architecture, article on "Animals." By W. J. and G. A. Audsley.
11. Treasury Magazine, June and July, 1911, articles on "Natural History in the Psalms." By Canon Horsley.
12. Guide to Early Christian and Byzantine Antiquities in the British Museum.
13. Epistles of S. John. Essay on the Relation of Christianity to Art. By Bp. Westcott.

# SYMBOLISM OF ANIMALS AND BIRDS

## REPRESENTED IN ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE

### CHAPTER I

#### SOURCES OF ANIMAL SYMBOLISM

No student of our ancient churches can fail to have noticed how frequently animals and other representations of natural history are to be found carved therein. The question will naturally occur: are these sculptures, or paintings, mere grotesque creations of the artist's fancy, or have they rather some meaning which patient investigation will discover for us? It is only during the last few years that a satisfactory answer to these questions has been discovered; though no doubt our grandfathers suspected that these animal carvings were not merely freaks of fancy.

Owing to a marked similarity in subjects of far different dates, and at far distant

## *SYMBOLISM OF ANIMALS IN*

places, they may have felt that there was some link to bind them together. This link has now been found in the natural history books of the Middle Ages, which were in more common circulation than any other book, save, of course, the Bible.

Such books are usually called Bestiaries. They are to be found in every great library, and can be studied by those who have the patience and requisite knowledge.

Let us understand first what a typical Bestiary is like, and then we may try to solve the more difficult problem of its origin. A Bestiary may treat of about thirty or forty animals and birds, real or mythical. It may be adorned by illuminated miniatures of each animal treated, and will give a description of its supposed habits and appearance. Again, the writer may have some tale to tell about the animal. But last (and not least, for this is the prominent feature of the Bestiaries) are given the religious and moral lessons which the animal's behaviour can teach.

Few books have entered more than the Bestiaries into the common life of European nations. Hence we may understand that the sculptors who beautified our churches were not slow to make use of such familiar material.