

ART. V.—*The Spurious “Julia Martima” Stone at Orchard Wyndham.* By E. T. TYSON.

*Read at Netherhall, June 16th, 1880.*

IN the well-known and valuable collection of Roman Antiquities at Netherhall, in this county, is a monumental tablet or slab, five feet in height, by two feet nine inches in breadth. It bears upon it the head and shoulders of a female, and an inscription. The head of the female is encircled with rays of glory, now very indistinct, and the inscription, which is underneath the block, runs as follows:—

DM  
IVL MARTIM  
A VIX AN  
XII IIID XXII

There is an engraving of it in Hutchinson, and it is there depicted as broken and part of the bust missing. Its height is given as four feet. It has been broken, but pieces are now put in where parts were missing, and it is supported by a piece of wood at the back, and restored to its original height. Its present state is shewn in an engraving in the *Lapidarium Septentrionale*, No 879, which, by the courtesy of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, is here reproduced.

Expanded, the letters read: “Dis manibus Julia Martima, (or Maritima, as Dr. Bruce reads it) vixit annos duodecim menses tres dies viginti duos,” the English translation of which is:—To the Gods of the shades Julia Martima lived 12 years, three months, and 22 days. Dr. Bruce however reads the years “x,” *i.e.*, ten, and the letters II he construes into M (menses\*). The inscription readily

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\* The present appearance of the stone may justify this reading: but see Horsley's rendering.

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supplies the key to the stone, which is a monumental tablet recording, with an affecting simplicity, the untimely death of a Roman maiden.

A spurious copy or forgery of this interesting stone has existed for some time past at Orchard Wyndham, in Somersetshire, where it is popularly called "Old Mother Shipton's Tomb." To the able exertions of Mr. George must be attributed a full and complete exposure of this audacious forgery. In a tract\* recently written and published by him the whole question is exhaustively gone into. The result of his researches will now be laid before you to enable the Society, should they so determine, to have a permanent record of the fabrication and of its exposure. In the kindest and most disinterested manner Mr. George has not only consented to my doing this, and making the fullest use of his pamphlet, but I am indebted to him for the use of the wood blocks with which his pamphlet is illustrated, and he has also obligingly presented the Society with a copy of the pamphlet itself.

The spurious stone is described as consisting of a tall slab about seven feet high, three and a-half wide, and about a foot thick, faced in front, but in its naturally rough state behind. It is firmly fixed in the ground, facing the Orchard Wyndham mansion, and about a hundred yards within the wood. On the front is a rude representation of the head and shoulders of a person, surmounted by a few deeply cut lines resembling rays, and underneath, in four lines of old-fashioned capital letters, the inscription:—

DM  
IVL MARTIM  
AV LXAN  
XII III DXXII

Below the inscription is a wreath.

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\* "On an Inscribed Stone at Orchard Wyndham, Somerset, called 'Old Mother Shipton's Tomb,'" with six illustrations, 8vo., 32 pages, 1/- post free. W. George, Park Street, Bristol, 1879.

"It



"It is noticeable," says Mr. George, in his pamphlet, "that there is nothing relating to the stone or the inscription in the Rev. John Collinson's History of Somerset, 1791, or the older history by the Rev. Thomas Cox, 1726, or in the useful Compendium of the history of that county by Samuel Tymms, F.S.A., published in 1832." Neither was there at that time any reference to it in the Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archæological Society, or in the Journal of the Royal Archæological Institute, though Orchard Wyndham appears to have since found a place in the Roman Map of Somerset, prepared by the Rev. Prebendary Scarth, M.A., and published in the last volume (1879) of the Proceedings of the former Society.

In Murray's Handbook for Somersetshire, however, at p. 406, of the new edition, under the head of "Williton," reference is made to it in these words:—

"In Blackdown Wood, near Orchard Wyndham, is a stone seven feet high, sculptured with a star and female head, and several Roman letters and numerals, popularly called 'Old Mother Shipton's Tomb.'"

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It was probably brought from Cumberland, where the Wyndhams had property. Camden, in 1637, describes such a stone in that county."

Reference is also made to it by the Rev. W. Phelps, in his Introduction to his "History and Antiquities of Somersetshire," under the heading "Roman Antiquities." He styles it a "Stone of Memorial to a young Roman lady, discovered in a wood near Orchard Wyndham," and gives a purely fanciful engraving of it, thus :



Camden, I may mention, died in 1623, but in the year 1599, he and Sir Robert Cotton, were both at Netherhall or, as it was formerly called, Alneburgh or Ellenborough Hall. In his "Britannia," the learned antiquary refers to this visit, and pays a high and apparently well-deserved compliment to his host, whose liberal tastes for antiquarian research have been happily transmitted to his accomplished and worthy lineal descendant, the present Mrs. Senhouse of Netherhall. Having stated that his companion and he were "entertained by that worthy gentleman, Mr. J. Senhouse," in whose fields many Roman "altars, statues, and slabs with inscriptions were dug up," and by him  
"very



MONUMENTAL STONE, NOW AT NETHERHALL.

The Society is indebted to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-on-Tyne for the loan of this block.

“very religiously preserved,” Camden proceeds to compliment Mr. Senhouse “not because he entertained us with the utmost civility, but because he had great veneration for antiquities (wherein he is well skilled) and with great diligence preserves such inscriptions as those which by the ignorant people in these parts are frequently broken to pieces and turned to other uses to the great damage of these studies.” One of these stones was the Julia Martima stone still at Netherhall. In the *Britannia* the inscription only is given as follows:—

DM  
IVLIA MARTIM  
A VIX AN  
XII IIID XXH

The next recorded account we have of this stone is in 1726, when Alexander Gordon published his “*Itinerarium Septentrionale*,” in which appears an engraving of it, but its inscription has been incorrectly transcribed by him. The stone at that time was at Netherhall, and he gives the inscription as:—

DM  
IVLMA RTIM  
AV LX AN  
XII III DXXII

Horsley, who also inspected the stone at Netherhall, points out in his “*Britannia Romana*,” published some six years later, that Gordon has omitted to give the true cut or dimensions of the letters. Horsley himself gives a sketch of the stone, the inscription of which is identical with that in the *Britannia*, excepting the word *Julia*, which Camden has written in full, and the last letter H, which is correctly transcribed by Horsley as two numerals—II.

Horsley, it will be seen, represents the last I of the  
three



three in the last line with the numeral stroke above it (i). He states that it appeared over that only, and that in his opinion the three III had been intended both for numerals and to include an M in them.

Messrs. D. & S. Lysons, in their *History of Cumberland*, 1816, also refer to the genuine stone at Netherhall, and correctly give the inscription upon it, but they say that "the Inscriptions in Gordon's Book are not by any means accurate copies." They however remark that whilst Horsley's sketches of the figures in *bas relief* "are mere scrawls," they testify to the "great accuracy" with which he copied the inscriptions on the Roman stones found in that county. On comparing Horsley's woodcut with that of the Orchard Wyndham stone it will be seen that they bear not the slightest resemblance to each other. The inscription in the engraving after Horsley is plain, unambiguous, and intelligible, and accords with that upon the stone which has been in the uninterrupted possession of the Senhouse family since Camden saw it in 1599 down to the present time. The inscription upon the Orchard Wyndham stone,

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on the other hand, tallies with Gordon's incorrect transcription, and, after the first two lines, is unintelligible.

It is evident, therefore, that the inscription on the Orchard Wyndham stone is a literal copy from Gordon's incorrect version of the inscription on the undoubted stone at Netherhall, and that a modern sculptor has been manufacturing an antique. As Mr. George says:—"Here then is the source from which was obtained the corrupt version of the inscription at Orchard Wyndham. That which was plain in the original, Gordon has made obscure, and the sculptor of the Orchard Wyndham inscription has faithfully reproduced Gordon's errors . . . . Besides these obvious differences there are others which," as Mr. George points out, "may as well be noted," and I therefore reproduce them:—

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| 1. The Ellenboro' stone did not exceed 5 feet in height.*   | 1. The Orchard Wyndham stone is 7 feet high above the ground.     |
| 2. The head gabled, as may be seen by the copy of Horsley's engraving.  | 2. The head of the stone does not appear to have been gabled.     |
| 3. The bust of the female was in <i>bas relief</i> .  | 3. The bust of the female is <i>incised</i> .                     |
| 4. The inscription upon it was so illegible, in 1599, that even Camden erred in copying two of the numerals.                            | 4. The letters of the inscription are clean cut and very legible. |
| 5. No wreath under the inscription.   | 5. Under it a wreath, as in wood-cut.                             |
| 6. There was a fracture through the whole width of the stone, as may be seen by Hutchinson's engraving, (Cumberland Vol. II., plate I.) | 6. The stone is not fractured, but sound throughout.              |

The pattern of the wreath has apparently been taken from Gordon also, for in Plate XIII of the *Itinerarium Septentrionale*, Mr. George draws attention to an engraving of a remarkable Roman altar found at Barhill Fort, Scot-

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\* Hutchinson's *Cumberland*, Vol. II., p. 248.

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land, which has a "corona triumphalis" upon it. "The modern sculptor finding that he had two feet more space to fill than his Roman brother, looked through his pattern book and alighted on this wreath, and filled the vacant space with the incongruous ornament. In this way," Mr. George assumes, "was the so-called 'stone of memorial to a young Roman Lady' decorated with a triumphal crown that was only



assigned to a successful Roman general."

The importance of Mr. George's exposure of the spurious copy at Orchard Wyndham of the genuine Julia Martima stone at Netherhall may be gathered from the circumstance that the learned Dr. Hübner, in his work "*Inscriptiones Britannicæ Latinæ*," had actually included in his list of engravings of the Martima memorial, the engraving of the *spurious* stone in the Rev. W. Phelps' work previously referred to. Hübner, however, does not appear to have been aware of the separate existence of the two stones, for he writes: — "Nunc in Netherhall—Bruce—In sylva quondam prope Orchard Wyndham—male Phelps." The spurious stone is not included in his list of "*Inscriptiones falsæ vel alienæ*."

Writing under date August 14th, 1879, to Mr. George, however, the learned Dr. says:—

"Your pleasant little pamphlet on "Mother Shipton's Tomb" has reached me at this place (Warnemundt, near Rostock). So far as I can see, without consulting my volume of "*Inscriptiones Britannicæ Latinæ*," you have neatly proved that the Orchard Wyndham copy of my number 408 is a modern forgery. I shall take notice with pleasure of your paper in my next addenda to the volume named."

Thus an impudent forgery, which had lead to a perplexing and contradictory antiquarian question, has been completely exposed for all time; and I am sure that you will agree with me that Mr. George is entitled to the best thanks of all true antiquaries for having so effectually laid "the shade of Mother Shipton" at Orchard Wyndham at last!

ART. VI.—*Robert Bowman's supposed Baptismal Register.*

By the REV. H. WHITEHEAD, Vicar of Brampton.

*Communicated at Workington, June 16th, 1880.*

IT is now nearly sixty years since Dr. Barnes first called attention to what he believed to be the baptismal register of Robert Bowman, the Irthington centenarian. Writing in 1821, whilst Bowman was still living,\* he said:—

Mr. Robert Bowman of Irthington, in Cumberland, who has completed his 115th year, was born at Bridgewood Foot, a small farm house, near the river Irthing, about two miles from his present residence. His birthday is not known, but he believes he was born about Christmas. As some doubts have been expressed respecting his age, to put it beyond dispute I have examined the register of his baptism at the parish church of Hayton. His name, and place of nativity, as well as the year of his baptism, which was 1705, are very legible; but from his name having been placed at the foot of the page the month and day are worn out. The baptism immediately preceding his was on the 23rd of September, and the next succeeding on the 28th of October: of course his must have been between these two periods; and if his own account be correct, which the register nearly confirms, he will be 116 years of age at Christmas next.—*Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, vol. iv., p. 67.

Dr. Barnes's belief that the Hayton register puts Robert Bowman's supposed age "beyond dispute" has been shared by a vast number of persons, some of whom have taken the trouble to pay a visit to Hayton for the express purpose of inspecting the register, and have returned confirmed in their faith.

On the other hand Mr. W. Thoms, writing to *Notes and Queries* in 1870, ventured to say:—

Dr. Barnes's account of Bowman, full as it is of interesting physiological details and personal anecdotes, does not contain one tittle of evidence on the point on which the whole case turns, viz.,

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\* He died in 1823.

the identity of the Robert Bowman baptized at Hayton in 1705 and the Robert Bowman living at Irthington in 1821.—*Notes and Queries*, 4th Series, Vol. vi., p. 222.

Mr. Thoms, who lives in London, could not personally examine the register. Had he been able to do so it would probably not have been left for me to throw any light upon the character of what has so long passed for Robert Bowman's baptismal register.

Having seen the entry of 1705, when shown to me one day as a curiosity by the vicar of Hayton, and having observed its precarious condition, as described by Dr. Barnes, I felt grieved to think that a time might come when it would entirely disappear. Yet still, I remembered, there would remain the transcripts in the diocesan registry at Carlisle. There, at all events, Robert Bowman's baptismal register was safe for the inspection of posterity; and, what was more, I might, by consulting those transcripts, recover a long-lost fragment of Bowman's history, the exact date of his baptism. Therefore, the next time I had occasion to go to Carlisle, I repaired to the office of the registrar, who courteously handed me the transcripts; but, alas, among the entries for the year 1705, I could not find what I sought. The baptism mentioned by Dr. Barnes as preceding, and the other as following, that of Bowman in the Hayton register, were there; but what should have separated them was not there. I ran my eye over the list for the whole year, and turned over the pages fore and aft, but to no purpose. No baptismal entry of Robert Bowman was anywhere to be seen. And that Hayton entry "at the foot of the page," so close to the foot as to have been curtailed by wear and tear! Could it be that what Mr. Wilkie Collins had imagined in fiction was here in fact? Was the far-famed Hayton entry a forgery? I did not jump to any such conclusion as this, but suspended my judgement until I should have an opportunity of again inspecting the register.

To

Jonathan, Son of John Maughan  
 of the New Bayt July 29<sup>th</sup>  
 Thomas Son of Thomas Maughan of 1667  
 Sept. Aug 11<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup>  
 Thomas Son of William Linton Capt  
 23<sup>rd</sup> of September  
 James & Daughter of John Graham  
 Captain & Capt's Boat 1<sup>st</sup> June 17  
 Robert Dawson of W. ...  
 ... of ...

FAC-SIMILE OF PAGE IN HAYTON REGISTER.

To Hayton, therefore, I returned, and found, not that the entry in question was a forgery, but that the information to be derived from it was by no means such as it had always been supposed to convey. After all its inspections, by Dr. Barnes and others, by successive vicars of Hayton, by myself when uncritically glancing at it, and after certificated copies of it as the baptismal register of Robert Bowman have been sent here and there, this much-examined entry turns out to be no baptismal register at all; nor does it mention the christian name or even the sex of the child to whom it has reference. Let the reader inspect it for himself in the accompanying fac-simile of "the foot of the page."

The missing word which once immediately followed "Brigwoodfoot" had doubtless already disappeared in Dr. Barnes's time; but the words "the birth of a child" enable us to recover it, as they suggest that the entry, when complete, ran thus:—

Robert Bowman of Brigwoodfoot *registered*  
the birth of a child.

What then is the meaning of this entry, the like of which is of rare occurrence in a parish register? Well, it is rare, but not singular; and an entry in the Brampton register of the year 1698 had prepared me to understand its import. The Brampton entry records the omission of one John Reay to give notice of the birth of a child "according to y<sup>e</sup> late Act of Parliament concerning birth, burials, &c." Turning to the "Statutes at large" I found that an Act of Parliament, "William III., A.D. 1698, c. 35," required parents, under penalty, to give notice of births to the clergy within five days of their occurrence, "certain rates and duties" having been imposed upon "all marriages, births, and burials, for carrying on the war against France with vigour." In marriages and burials there was of  
course

course no possibility of evading the tax, and a child if recorded as having been baptized had evidently been born. But if baptized elsewhere than in the parish church, or if not baptized at all, a child might escape the observation of the tax-collector. Hence the penalty inflicted upon parents failing to give notice of births to the clergyman, who also was subject to penalty if he neglected to register. This Act continued in force until August 1st, 1706 ; so that Robert Bowman's child, born in 1705, came under its operation, and was duly reported to Mr. Rickerby, then curate of Hayton, who certainly did not baptize it, else he would have had no occasion to mention its *birth* in the parish register ; and, not having baptized it, he had good reason to omit it from the transcript of the *baptismal* register.

Now Briggwoodfoot, a curiously situated place, looking as if by right it should belong to Hayton, is in Brampton parish. But the Brampton register, in which the name of Bowman not unfrequently occurs, never mentions Briggwoodfoot in connection with that name or any other name. Yet, under the same year, 1705, it contains an entry which, though it may possibly be nothing more than a remarkable coincidence, must not be passed over in the present inquiry. It is this :—

The son of Robert Bowman, bapt.

The Brampton register from 1703 to 1712 was carelessly kept. The then vicar, Mr. Culcheth, sometimes omitted the day, the month, the christian names of children, and the residences of their parents ; but oddly enough he was more particular about the transcripts than about the register, and the transcript entry of the baptism in question is this :—

*John*, the son of Robert Bowman, baptised *July 2, 1705*.

It by no means follows that, because this child was baptized *before* September 23rd, it was not the child the  
memorandum

memorandum of whose birth *follows* that date in the Hayton register; since that memorandum has the aspect of a note, perhaps transcribed from a pocket book, and inserted where there happened to be space for it, at the foot of the page, after the baptismal register for the year had been posted up. On the other hand, the residence of the father not having been recorded, it is not safe to assume that the infant John of the Brampton register was a Bowman of Briggwoodfoot.

Mr. Thoms, however, with whom I have been in correspondence on this subject, says:—

I venture to believe that John, baptized at Brampton, was the child registered by Robert, and the Robert who died in 1823 was John's son, named after his grandfather. Your Cumberland peasantry, I believe, marry early, and if John married at 23 to 25, and his son Robert was born reasonably soon after such marriage, he (Robert) would be a few years more than 90 when he died, a much more probable age than the 118 claimed for him.

In support of which theory it may be added that Robert the reputed centenarian—presumably in accordance with the practice prevalent among Cumberland yeomen of naming an eldest son after his paternal grandfather—called his eldest son John.

I have been asked whether I am prepared to prove that the following entry in the Hayton register does not belong to the Briggwoodfoot family:—

Mary daughter of Robert Bowman, Bapt., December ye 7th, 1706.

If I could prove that it *does* belong to the Briggwoodfoot family there would be a reason the less for hesitating to identify "John, son of Robert Bowman, baptized (at Brampton) July 2nd, 1705," with the Briggwoodfoot infant whose birth was notified in that same year to Mr. Rickerby, then curate of Hayton. A mere *birth* entry of that date may indicate that the child to whom it relates was of a family that did not belong to the Church of  
England.

England. But if "Robert Bowman of Briggwoodfoot" had a child baptized at Hayton Church in 1706, it becomes less unlikely that in 1705 he had a child baptized by a minister of the church of England; and as the Hayton register fails to show that it was baptized by Mr. Rickerby, then why not by Mr. Culcheth, vicar of Brampton, which after all was Robert Bowman's parish?

On which point more might be said. But it raises a question concerning the religion of the Briggwoodfoot family, which, like many other questions suggested by the story of Robert Bowman, cannot be satisfactorily dealt with within the limits of the present paper; the main purpose of which is to show that whatever other reasons may be advanced for supposing Robert Bowman, who died at Irthington in 1823, to have reached nearly six score years, the reason for such supposition hitherto deduced from his so-called baptismal register must now beset aside.

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