

ART. XXVII.—*Cresset Stone at Furness Abbey: A Correction.*

By the Rev. THOMAS LEES, M.A.

IN a paper read before this Society, at a meeting at Furness Abbey on August 16th, 1877, I described and assigned uses for three singular stones found—two in the ruins of Calder, and one in those of Furness. The first of the Calder stones I showed to be a portable altar, and the second to be a “cresset-stone”, but I stated my belief that the Furness stone, which contained three cup-shaped, and two cylindrical holes, was not a cresset-stone but an oil-stock or stand for the vessels containing the consecrated oils; and the photograph of this stone, labelled as an “oil-stock”, forms the frontispiece of the third volume of our Transactions.

The subsequent discovery of many examples of cresset-stones in England and Sweden, and the attention thus drawn to the subject, caused me to prepare a second paper thereon, which was read at the Carlisle meeting of the Archæological Institute in 1882. As many of the members of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society have had no opportunity of seeing or hearing this last production, it seems but right that they should learn from our own Transactions that the Furness stone is a “cresset-stone” and *not* an “oil-stock”. After describing the Furness stone before the Institute, I went on to say: “For a time I regarded it as having been used as a stand in which to place the ampullæ containing the holy oils for unction of the sick, and catechumens and chrism. These I thought would occupy the hemispherical cavities, and the flat-bottomed ones would be used to hold either the cruets containing wine and water for the ablutions after mass, or the vessels containing the salt and ashes  
used

used in benedictions. This idea the many examples recently discovered of cresset-stones compel me now to lay aside, and instead of calling this vessel, as I did formerly, an 'oil-stock', I now feel convinced it is a 'cresset-stone'. The flat-bottomed holes, instead of burning tallow, may have been used to hold candles, torches, or lamps, which formed the *portable* lights of the Church".

---