

ART. VI.—*Old Penrith and its Problems.* By ERIC
BIRLEY, F.S.A.

Read on the site, July 11th, 1947.

THIRTY-FIVE years ago the Society paid what seems to have been its first official visit to Old Penrith,¹ and on that occasion Haverfield communicated an admirable paper on the Roman fort;² his paper was subsequently printed in our *Transactions*, with an appendix listing the inscriptions and sculptures which had been found there up to 1912, and for the general character of the site and for a bibliography of earlier references to it in print it will be sufficient for me to refer you to it.³ But there are inevitably several fresh points which have come to light in the intervening period, both at Old Penrith itself and in a wider consideration of the Roman occupation of Cumberland; I propose to confine my attention to those points, and to some specific problems which seem to deserve particular attention at the present juncture: my own paper may therefore be regarded as a supplement to Haverfield's (to which it will constantly refer) rather than as a completely new survey.

First of all, I can carry the list of early visitors a little further back. Camden was the first such visitor noted by Haverfield: he came to Old Penrith as late as 1599, but he had already referred to the site, and given an incomplete reading of one of its inscriptions, in the first

¹ The following abbreviations are employed: CW 1, CW 2 = these *Transactions*, Old and New Series; C. = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, vol. vii; FH = F. Haverfield in CW 2, xiii.

² CW 2, xiii, p. 405.

³ CW 2, xiii, pp. 177-198.

edition of his *Britannia* (1586).⁴ The source of his information was not specified, but internal evidence proves that it was a manuscript entitled "Certaine verie rare Observations of Cumberland . . ." (Harleian MSS. 473), which was ultimately printed by M. A. Richardson at Newcastle in 1848 and included in the Miscellaneous volume of his Newcastle reprints issued in 1849. Richardson⁵ accepted the traditional attribution of the MS. to the Staffordshire antiquary, Sampson Erdeswicke (d. 1603), who has hence acquired the credit for an often quoted reference to Hadrian's Wall, which it contains;⁶ but there are cogent reasons for rejecting the attribution,⁷ and it will be safer for us to describe the writer as the *Anonymus*. The passage relating to Old Penrith is as follows:—⁸

"Within ij myle of New Pērith there is a place called Plomton with a park, and in the side of it, there appear the ruynes of an old town of a myle compas about, of the countrey called Old Perith, and digging up ther, they fownde stones fayr of every sorte—as for which inscriptions being like grave stones—as among others one thus inscribed—" (there follows a version of what is clearly Haverfield's no. 16 = C. 327, which Camden adopted for his earlier editions and only modified, after his visit in 1599, in that of 1600).⁹

It is clear from the MS. that the writer had not himself visited the district when he wrote it; he was merely

⁴ Pp. 455-456.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 11: "As touching Hadrians wall, begynning abowt a town called Bonus standing vppon the river Sulway now called Eden. . . The forsaid wall begynning there, and there yet standing of the heyth of 16 fote, for almost a quarter of a myle together," etc. Quoted by Bruce in all editions of *The Roman Wall* and of the *Handbook*, with the (incorrect) statement that Erdeswicke himself visited the Wall in 1574.

⁷ Cf. *Dict. Nat. Biogr.* XVII, p. 388 f.: the MS. is not in Erdeswicke's handwriting, and as a strict Roman Catholic he is hardly likely to have been (as the writer certainly was) a close friend of Archdeacon Threlkeld.

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁹ Pp. 701-702.

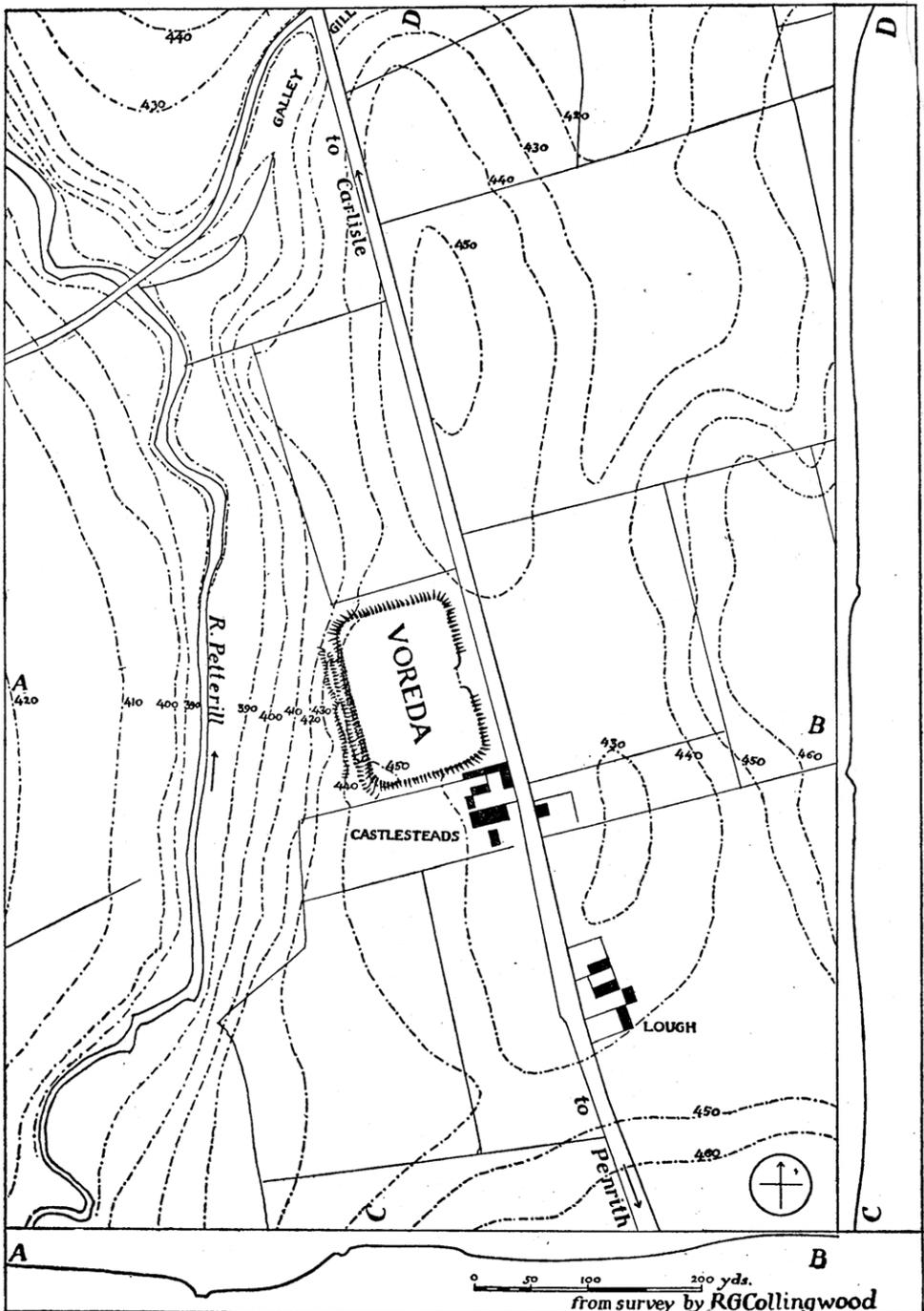


FIG. I.—ROMAN FORT AT OLD PENRITH : THE SITE.

making notes of the main items of information obtained in a visit, paid on 2 September, 1574 (a dozen years before Camden's first edition appeared), to Edward Threlkeld, LL.D., Chancellor of Hereford, at the latter's residence in that diocese; Threlkeld proposed to amplify that information at some future time, but it does not appear whether he ever did so. Edward Threlkeld not only bore a Cumbrian name but was a Cumberland man, born at Burgh-by-Sands and, since March, 1567/8, archdeacon of Carlisle and rector of Salkeld¹⁰—hence his familiarity with a number of Roman sites and antiquities in our district, to which the MS. bears witness.

At first sight it may seem strange that Threlkeld should have spoken of the ruins of an old town of a mile compass about; that seems to square rather badly with the three acres or so of the fort which we now see. But a glance at the early accounts will serve to explain and justify the description; Horsley, for example, writes:¹¹ "On the west side there is a descent, as usual, towards the river, and great ruins of a town. The ruins of buildings also on the other sides, particularly on the east and south, are very remarkable," and elsewhere he takes Old Penrith as an outstanding instance of an extensive external settlement.¹² To north and south, remains have come to light as far as a quarter of a mile, in each case, from the fort;¹³ a mile, therefore, will not be an unreasonable estimate of the perimeter of the Roman site, of which the fort itself was only the nucleus; and it will help to explain why in Elizabethan days people thought that this was where Penrith itself had once stood. Since

¹⁰ Cf. Nicolson & Burn, vol. ii, p. 308, and Appendix, pp. 181-182 below.

¹¹ *Britannia Romana*, 1732, p. 111.

¹² *Op. cit.*, p. 112.

¹³ Cf. Bruce, *The Roman Wall*¹, 1851, p. 359: a well about a quarter of a mile south of the fort; CW 2, xxxvi, p. 131 f.: a well about 100 yards north of the fort; CW 2, xlii, p. 232: a burial about a quarter of a mile north. Horsley, *op. cit.*, p. 112, indicates that buildings stretched some considerable way northwards towards Carlisle (cf. p. 180 below).

Horsley's time, however, improvements in agriculture have dealt hardly with the remains of the settlement; its stones have been largely dug up to make field-walls or for use in modern buildings—a process which had already begun before his day,¹⁴—the fields have been constantly under the plough, and it is only when draining or road-works open up the ground that traces of it come to light, as they have done on two or three occasions in recent years.¹⁵

The existence of so extensive a settlement may serve to raise a point to which Haverfield, I think, perhaps paid less attention than it deserved, namely why the Romans placed a fort just here. In terms of a day's march, Brougham was the first logical halting-point on the trunk road southwards from Carlisle, twenty Roman miles away; Old Penrith was no more than thirteen Roman miles from Carlisle, so that an explanation of its establishment merely by reference to the trunk road will hardly do.¹⁶ An older generation of antiquaries had no doubts as to the reason, even though they never posed the specific question; they noted that it was here that branch roads converged, one from Old Carlisle via Broadfield Common,¹⁷ another from Keswick via Threlkeld and Greystoke,¹⁸ and possibly one from Ambleside (though the course of this last does not seem to have been worked out in detail),¹⁹ and just as the modern town of Penrith owes its importance to its place in the modern system of communications, so it is logical to suppose the case to

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. III.

¹⁵ Cf. CW 2, xxxiv, pp. 217-218; xxxvi, pp. 132-141; xlii, p. 232.

¹⁶ So FH, p. 178 f.

¹⁷ Cf. Lysons' *Cumberland*, p. cxlvii.

¹⁸ Cf. West's *Guide to the Lakes*, 1780, quoted in Ferguson's *Cumberland*, 1890, pp. 45-46.

¹⁹ Cf. Horsley, *op. cit.*, p. 112: "there is a military way, tho' now much ruined, which goes out from *Old Penreth* towards *Keswick*, but not quite so far west. This, I take for granted has joined the other way, that passes from *Elenborough* by *Pap-castle* to *Ambleside*."

have been with its Roman predecessor. But it should be emphasized that the branch roads described by the early writers have yet to be examined in the light of modern knowledge; and convincing though West's account of

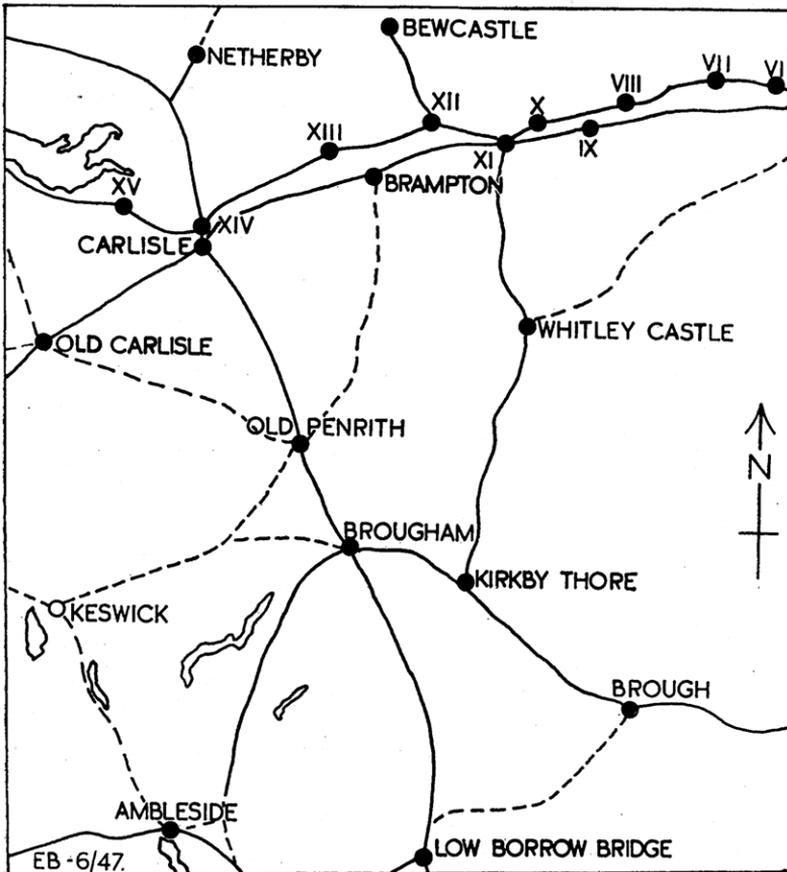


FIG. 2.—ROMAN FORT AT OLD PENRITH : THE SETTING.

the road from Keswick (for example) may be, there is urgent need for a new field-survey, and for the digging of sections across the reputed lines at selected points; until that has been done, and the Roman attribution of these

branch roads confirmed, they cannot be shown without a query on the map of Roman Cumberland. Here is a task which may be recommended to such of our members as live in the Penrith district, and have the leisure and the inclination to assist in investigating its early remains; the trenching of an ancient road is unlikely to yield small finds, but it is relatively simple to do, and a trench can be dug, recorded and filled in again in the course of a Saturday afternoon: in contrast to the excavation of a fort, or even of a small structure such as one of the turrets on Hadrian's Wall, research on roads calls for a minimum of effort in organization, and a minimum of previous experience—and if experienced advisers are needed, the Society is fortunate in being able to call on the services of our members Dr. I. A. Richmond and Mr. R. P. Wright, whose researches in this field give them an unsurpassed qualification in that respect.

In an examination of the road-system, it will be as well to bear in mind R. S. Ferguson's suggestion that Old Penrith had links to the east as well as to the west.²⁰ The link with the Maiden Way, which he postulated, seems hardly necessary; but it is difficult to suppose that the Romans made no provision for access to the Eden valley, or for patrolling the western foothills of the Pennine range beyond it, and a road via Ainstable and Castle Carrock to join the Stanegate at Brampton would meet that need—and help to explain the presence of the fort at Brampton Old Church

So much must serve for the road-system—at least until speculation worked out in the study can be superseded by field-surveys and spadework. As far as the fort itself is concerned, recent discoveries of pottery (already described in these *Transactions*²¹) indicate occupation beginning before the time of Hadrian, though we cannot yet say

²⁰ *Cumberland*, 1890, p. 47.

²¹ CW 2, xxxiv, pp. 217-218 xxxvi, pp. 135-141.

whether, like Brampton Old Church, this was a Trajanic addition to the Cumberland fort system, or whether the site had been occupied earlier still, at the first stage of Roman penetration into the district, under Cerialis or Agricola in the seventies of the first century. But, whatever the date of the earliest military occupation, there can be little doubt that the fort which we now see is not the original one. For one thing, the east gate—still impressive despite the worst that stone-robbers could do—comes almost exactly in the centre of its long axis; and that position presupposes a planning of the interior accommodation which is unmatched in forts of the second or third centuries, in which it is axiomatic that the side gates (*portae principales*) should come approximately one third of the way from the front, so that the *via principalis* which connected them separated the central administrative block of buildings (headquarters granaries and commandant's house) from the barracks in the front third of the interior, whilst the *via quintana* separated them from the barracks in the back third. At Old Penrith, by contrast, the interior buildings cannot have been given that symmetrical division into three blocks of approximately equal area; and an explanation of the exceptional planning thus indicated seems best sought in the late date at which the fort now visible was put up. There are other grounds, too, for suspecting that in its present form it is a relatively late structure: thus, the five sculptures²²—of Jupiter, Apollo, Mercury, Mars and Venus—which were found here in 1813 or shortly before, and in due course found their way to Abbotsford (where they still are), had been re-used in the core of the east wall; ²³ and one is reminded of the lavish use of inscribed and sculptured stones in the walls of the

²² FH, pp. 194-196, reproducing Lysons' illustrations.

²³ CW I, xv, p. 46 (Jos. Bell, writing 5 September, 1828), amplifying the account given by Lysons, p. clxxxviii, and suggesting a slightly earlier date for the discovery.

Constantian fort at Risingham in Redesdale, where too we have an analogous asymmetry of ground-plan, and comparable monumental masonry in the gateway giving access to the main road.²⁴ There is thus a fairly clear *prima facie* case for it being a Constantian fort which now represents the sole visible relic of the Roman *Voreda*; but a *prima facie* case, however strong it may seem, is something less than we can be satisfied with, and it is to be hoped that the possibility may arise, before long, of testing the point by excavation. A large-scale excavation of the fort, to recover its complete ground-plan and the full structural sequence, would involve far too much expenditure of time, effort and money to be a matter of practical politics for many years to come—and indeed it may be questioned whether such an excavation could be justified, unless the site had been selected for permanent display as an ancient monument in the custody of the Ministry of Works; but a brief trial excavation, to test the date of the visible structure and to determine the total number of structural periods, would be an entirely different matter; provided that it were done under skilled supervision (such as our Cumberland Excavation Committee can guarantee), that should be neither lengthy nor costly, and it is greatly to be hoped that it may be undertaken before long.

I have referred above to the question why a fort was placed here, and have suggested at least a partial answer in referring to its place in the road-system. But it should be noted that there is a further question for consideration, namely why a fort was retained here, and whether its occupation by the military was continuous (apart from the brief interruptions which separated the main structural periods of Hadrian's Wall and other northern sites) or intermittent. I have posed the question, but in the nature of the case I cannot at present

²⁴ Cf. *Northumb. County Hist.* XV, 1939, pp. 108-109.

provide an answer to it; the inscriptions attest occupation in the third century, at least from 213 to 244-249,²⁵ and we have deduced that the visible fort was built at the beginning of the fourth century: but there is as yet nothing to show how long the fourth-century occupation lasted (it will be remembered that *Voreda* is not listed in the Notitia), nor can we say whether the fort as opposed to the settlement was occupied throughout the second century. Here, too, a trial excavation may be expected to provide useful evidence; in the meantime there are a number of points which may be noted as significant or suggestive.

(a) *Pre-Hadrianic occupation.* Apart from the pottery to which reference has already been made, there is one inscription which seems assignable to the early years of the second century, and which implies a military garrison though it does not specify one, namely the tombstone of M. Cocceius Nonnus, who died at the age of six. Haverfield pointed out²⁶ that the occurrence of the formula *hic situs est* and the use of two tall I's (in the lettering of DI and HI) imply an early date; so does the writing out of *dis manib(us)*, soon normally abbreviated to its initial letters; we are therefore justified in postulating as early a date as possible for the inscription. The child's name provides a further clue; it shows that his father had received the Roman citizenship from the emperor Nerva, thus taking the latter's *praenomen* and *nomen*, Marcus Cocceius, which the son, too, acquired; in this outlying part of the empire, the grant can hardly have been made except to an auxiliary soldier, on completion of his twenty-five years' engagement, and Nerva's short reign (A.D. 96-98) provides exceptionally close dating for the grant. At that period, such grants invariably applied to children already born, as well as to the soldier himself, so

²⁵ FH, nos. 9 = C. 322 and 2 = C. 315.

²⁶ FH, no. 17 (= C. 328).

that it is unnecessary to suppose, for example, that the child was born in or after 96, and the tombstone therefore set up in 102 at earliest: 96 is our *terminus post quem*. By the same token, at that period such grants were sometimes made to soldiers who, though they had completed the twenty-five years for which they had enlisted, were still serving with the colours; and the occurrence of this tombstone at Old Penrith seems best taken to suggest that the child's father was still serving in the fort: for at that early period there can hardly have been sufficient amenities, or a sufficiently developed civilian settlement, to attract ex-soldiers to the place from elsewhere (as it did in a later period, when a former trooper of the *ala Petriana* settled here).²⁷

(b) *The second century, from Hadrian onwards.* Old Penrith itself has as yet produced no evidence one way or the other for continuity of military occupation or otherwise; but it may be noted that a large number of forts southward from Hadrian's Wall were given up either when that Wall was built, or at the time of the Antonine advance into Scotland, and that some of them were then re-occupied shortly before or shortly after A.D. 160. The military or political reasons for the changes of policy thus attested remain obscure, but they will serve to remind us that continuity of military occupation is not a necessary postulate on such a site as this.²⁸ The second-century pottery from the external settlement might represent a civilian population living on at *Voreda* after the withdrawal of its garrison for service in some more northerly fort.

(c) *The third century.* The earliest inscription of this period, now a mere fragment,²⁹ belongs to an

²⁷ Cf. FH no. 13 = C. 323.

²⁸ This point will be developed further in a forthcoming dissertation by Mr. J. P. Gillam, to whom I am indebted for a lucid exposition of the military implications of the Antonine advance.

²⁹ FH, no. 9 = C. 322.

exceptionally interesting series, erected by various units of the army of Lower Britain in A.D. 213 *pro pietate ac devotione communi*—to attest their unanimous loyalty and attachment to the emperor Caracalla; I have suggested elsewhere,³⁰ in discussing another inscription of the same series found at Chesterholm, that the protestation implies recent lack of loyalty to him, and attachment to his brother Geta (whose murder he had procured in February 212); this is a formal dedication on a specific military-political occasion, and not a building-record, but it shows that the site had already been re-occupied, either under Severus, *circa* 200, or after his death in 211 and the withdrawal of Roman garrisons from Scotland (which then ensued). The garrison in this period was the second cohort of Gauls, attested by four inscriptions from the site,³¹ all assignable to the third century, and no doubt once mentioned on the dedication of 213; its latest record is assignable to 244-249. Continued use of the trunk road (and no doubt of the fort itself) is proved by a milestone of Victorinus (268-270)³² which must once have stood by the road side a few yards north of the main east gate of the fort, though it was found inside the fort—perhaps (like the sculptures already referred to) it had been used as a convenient slab by the Constantian builders. The approximate position where that milestone once stood has been worked out with some precision,³³ and if ever an opportunity should offer, it would be well worth while to excavate for other milestones set up at the same point on the occasion of subsequent repairs of the road.³⁴

³⁰ *Arch. Aeliana*, 4th ser., xi, p. 129 f.

³¹ FH, nos. 2-4 and 12 = C. 315-317 and 324.

³² FH, no. 24 = *Ephemeris Epigraphica* ix, no. 1254.

³³ Cf. Percival Ross in CW 2, xviii, p. 220.

³⁴ The classic example of a group of milestones found together is that from Crindledykes on the Stanegate, one mile east of Chesterholm (*Arch. Aeliana*, 2nd ser., xi, pp. 130-136) for later milestones found between Old Penrith and Carlisle cf. CW 1, xiii, p. 437. For the texts cf. *Ephem. Epigr.* vii, 1108-1114 (Crindledykes) and ix, 1255 (Gallows Hill).

(d) *The fourth century.* It is possible that one of the inscriptions recorded by Camden, and lost before Horsley's time, may belong to the early years of the fourth century and record a new regiment in garrison here;³⁵ its text, according to Camden, was as follows:—

*d(is) m(anibus) Fl(avio) Martio sen. in c. Carvetior(um)
questorio, vixit an(nos) XXXXV. Martiola filia et
heres ponen(dum) curavit.*

It commemorates one Flavius Martius, and was set up by his daughter and heiress, Martiola; he died at the age of forty-five, and the text recorded his rank or position in life, but in an abbreviated form which has yet to receive an acceptable interpretation (and there is always the possibility that Camden's reading was inaccurate). The crux is *sen. in c. Carvetior(um)*. Haverfield took *sen.* to be an abbreviation of *sen(iori)*, in the modern sense, distinguishing the dead man from Flavius Martius Jr.; but in that case we should have expected to find the younger man mentioned as well as his father, and in any case the construction seems to call for a noun directly connected with the following words. An earlier suggestion³⁶ was *sen(ator) in c(ivitate) Carvetior(um)*—senator in the state of the Carvetii; but members of local councils were known as *decuriones*, the term *senator* being reserved for members of the senate at Rome—and on inscriptions the latter are distinguished, from the second half of the second century onwards, by the title *v(ir) c(larissimus)* and not by direct mention of the word *senator*. There remains the interpretation *sen(ator) in c(ohorte) Carvetior(um)*—senator in the cohort of Carvetii; in the army of the fourth century, *senator* was a non-commissioned rank, attested by literature and inscriptions,³⁷ and on balance it seems easier to take the *c.*

³⁵ FH, no. 14 = C. 325 (not quite a correct transcription of Camden's reading of the text).

³⁶ Horsley, *op. cit.*, p. 273, quoting Ward.

³⁷ Cf. Kromayer & Veitch, *Heerwesen und Kriegführung, etc.*, 1928, p. 585;

as an abbreviation for *c(ohorte)* rather than for *c(ivitate)*: in that case, the inscription will presumably give us the Constantian garrison of the fort.³⁸ That leaves *questorio* to account for. Its *prima facie* meaning is "a quaestorian," that is to say a man who has held the lowest office, as *quaestor*, in the senate at Rome or on the council of a chartered provincial community; but it appears once or twice on military inscriptions as a rank or appointment,³⁹ and that is what we may suppose it to signify in the present instance; bearing in mind the secretarial and financial duties of the magistrate so styled, one may be permitted to suggest "battalion quartermaster" as the approximate rendering in a military context. There the matter must rest for the moment; but the inscription, whatever its correct interpretation, adds a piquancy to the record of *Voreda* such as few Roman sites in Britain can claim.

(e) *The latest phase.* The site has yet to produce Crambeck pottery, the clearest indication of occupation in the last third of the fourth century;⁴⁰ and it has been pointed out above that it is not mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, so that some may prefer to think that it had been abandoned earlier than most Roman forts in our district. But the Roman fortlet on Barrock Fell, midway between Old Penrith and Carlisle, was certainly occupied in the second half of the fourth century, for the characteristic pottery found there was the Huntcliff or Knapton ware, which was only just coming into use on Hadrian's

Grosse, *Römische Militärgeschichte*, 1920, p. 119 f; the exact seniority of the rank is defined in a passage of Jerome, quoted by Dessau, *Inscr. Lat. Sel.* I, p. 553.

³⁸ It must be noted that in any case the Carvetii are otherwise unrecorded; but it is easier to fit a new tribe into the Roman army list than a new state into the map of Roman units of local self-government.

³⁹ Cf. Dessau, *ILS* 2630 (dated A.D. 186): *signifer et quaestor n(umeri) Brit(tonum)*.

⁴⁰ Cf. P. Corder and M. Birley in *Antiquaries Journal* XVII, 1937, pp. 392-413.

Wall at the close of period III, while it is predominant for cooking-pots in period IV;⁴¹ and as R. G. Collingwood pointed out, the Barrock Fell site must have been one link in a chain of signal-stations to connect the two places; it is therefore safe to infer occupation continuing at least until 367, and it may well be that the site was re-occupied by Count Theodosius a couple of years later: excavation alone is likely to produce decisive evidence (the importance of which, for assessing the completeness or otherwise of the Notitia lists, may serve to strengthen the case for undertaking such excavation).⁴² The latest recorded coin from Old Penrith seems to be one of Constantius;⁴³ but it may be noted that in 1912 Dr. Haswell exhibited a "minimum found 1907 outside the camp"⁴⁴ which might conceivably be of later date; it does not seem to have been submitted to a numismatist for identification.

(f) *The trunk road.* There is reason to suppose that the trunk road itself, like the visible fort, in its present form represents a relatively late period in the Roman occupation, for Horsley notes: "I was informed, that the pavement of the military way was sometimes found to be above the foundations of the houses, at a part that lies between the station and Carlisle."⁴⁵ Milestones attest road-works at various times in the third century and the first part of the fourth, and it was presumably at some time during that period that the line of the road was changed, and some of the buildings in the settlement were demolished to make way for it.⁴⁶

(g) *Miscellaneous points.* Attention may be drawn to the fact that two-thirds of the 24 inscriptions recorded

⁴¹ Cf. CW 2, xxx, p. 191; for the Barrock Fell fortlet cf. CW 2, xxxi, pp. 111-118.

⁴² Cf. CW 2, xxxix, pp. 194-210.

⁴³ FH, p. 197.

⁴⁴ CW 2, xiii, p. 406.

⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁴⁶ Cf. also CW 2, xxxvi, p. 133 and FH, p. 179.

by Haverfield are not now traceable; yet some of them may still be lurking somewhere in the neighbourhood, and it seems worth while to direct the attention of our members in the Penrith district to the need for a search. Incidentally, it may be noted that Jefferson⁴⁷ refers to the discovery, in 1817, of "a square well of excellent water, nearly opposite the station" and "within a few yards of it . . . a sepulchral tablet of stone with a long inscription, much defaced"; Haverfield took no account of this reference, but it seems possible that it may refer to his no. 18 = C. 328a (now at Lowther Castle), of which he writes that "the circumstances of the find are not recorded": otherwise it might constitute an addition to the list of inscriptions from the site, and to the total of stones no longer traceable.

APPENDIX:

A NOTE ON EDWARD THRELKELD, LL.D.

Reference has been made to Edward Threlkeld, LL.D., as the informant of the *Anonymus* whose note on Old Penrith has been quoted above; in a sense Threlkeld may be counted as the earliest known Cumberland antiquary, and for that reason it is to be hoped that a full-dress biography of him will be communicated to this Society in due course. The county histories are of little help; Nicolson and Burn record his appointment as archdeacon of Carlisle and rector of Salkeld in March, 1567/8, and that of his successor in 1588, but nothing more. But welcome details are added by W. Jackson's paper "The Threlkelds of Melmerby, and some other Branches of the Family," in CW 1, x, pp. 1-47: he was born at Burgh-by-Sands *circa* 1526, educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge (of which he was elected a Fellow in 1547), becoming B.A. 1548, M.A. 1552 and LL.D. 1562; he was "so much admired in that university for his excellent knowledge and eloquence, that he was thought to have the help of some good genius" (Antony a Wood, quoted by Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 6). In 1571 he became prebend of Cublington, Herefordshire, and in

⁴⁷ *Leath Ward*, 1840, p. 463.

1573 vicar of Tenbury; Jackson prints his will, dated 22 June 1588 and with a codicil of 30 August, and will and codicil were proved in London 6 November, 1588. His wife is said to have been one Mary Leighton, but there is no mention of her in the will, so that she may be supposed to have predeceased him, nor are any children mentioned. Jackson notes that he is said to have resigned the archdeaconry of Carlisle and rectory of Salkeld on becoming chancellor of Hereford, but the will includes a legacy to the poor of "Much Salkett" and a reference to his curate there, so that it is tolerably clear that he had retained that link with his native county, although his main interests were in the diocese of Hereford, and it was in Hereford cathedral that he arranged to be buried. His father was William Threlkeld, bailiff of Burgh (d. 1564); his grandfather Humphrey (d. 1526) was a brother of the Roland Threlkeld who appears frequently in the pages of Jefferson's *Leath Ward*.