

ART. X.—*An inscription from Pike Hill: CIL VII 836.*
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THE Roman watch-tower on Pike Hill was discovered in 1870, when the modern road over the hill was being lowered; in 1927 the late F. G. Simpson was able to demonstrate that it was an extra structure in the Wall-mile 52-53, coming some 200 yds. east of Turret 52a, and excavation in 1931 and 1932 showed that it had been built before the Turf Wall and athwart its line. For detailed references and an account of the tower and its significance, see my *Research on Hadrian's Wall* (1961) 140 f.; in the present note I am concerned with its epigraphic yield.

When word of the discovery in 1870 was first passed to Bruce, he made some comments, later rendered in *oratio obliqua* in CWI i (1874) 215, assuming the structure to have been a milecastle, specifically the one at Bankshead in which in 1808 had been found two altars to Cocidius, taken thence to Lanercost, and he added unthinkingly that another altar at Lanercost, that to Silvanus by the *venatores Bannieses*, had been found in it too. In CW2 xxxiii 238 ff. Professor Richmond pointed out the true attribution of these three altars, by reference to the Lysons brothers' account of the 1808 discovery and to the Rev. John Wilkin's letter to the *Carlisle Patriot* in 1821, recording the discovery of the Silvanus altar at Birdoswald; but he went further, supposing that there was another inscription also which had been assigned in error to Pike Hill, namely CIL VII 836, a rather crude fragment which in due course came to Tullie House with Robert Ferguson's collection — hence Haverfield's catalogue, CWI xv 473, no. 28 = 1922 ed. 37, no. 100. Yet a fuller study of the evidence shows that in this

case the attribution to Pike Hill must stand. It will be simplest to set forth Bruce's key references, in chronological order:

1. *Wallet-Book* (1863) 187: "The Wall next goes over a small hill called Pike. Here was discovered last year (1862) a broken slab, bearing the name of Antoninus Pius."
2. *Lapidarium Septentrionale*, Part ii (1871), no. 385: the inscription, then in Joseph Parker's possession, "was found in the autumn of 1862, when the farm tenant, being in want of stones, resorted to the accustomed quarry, the Roman Wall. It was found in the Bankshead mile-castle, near the foundation."
3. *Hand-Book*, 2nd edition (1884) 194: "The Wall next goes over a small hill called Pike. Here was discovered in 1862, a broken slab, bearing the name of Antoninus Pius. When the road was lowered some years ago a turret was found on the summit of Pike Hill."

The solution is evident: when writing about the inscription for his *Lapidarium*, Bruce was still influenced by the belief that it was a milecastle, and specifically that at Bankshead, which had been found in 1870 (though reference to Mac Lauchlan's account and map would have sufficed to show him that the milecastle was well to the east of Pike Hill); but when he made his thorough revision for the *Hand-Book* of 1884, Bruce slipped in the note that it was in fact a turret that had been found on Pike Hill, confirming the attribution to it of the fragmentary inscription. His source was without question Joseph Parker of Brampton, one of his chief helpers in that district, whose possession of the stone in this case, as in another,¹ links him with its discovery; Parker was an interesting and able antiquary, on whom I hope to contribute a study to a later volume of *Transactions*.

It was really Robert Blair who confused the issue again, in the fourth and subsequent editions of the *Hand-Book*, conflating Bruce's accounts of Bankshead and Pike Hill in a wholly misleading way:

¹ CIL VII 878=*Lap. Sep.* 427, cf. RW3 285.

4. HB4 (1895) 209: "We then arrive at Banks Head. The Wall next goes over a small hill called Pike Hill. At this place was discovered in 1862 a broken slab, bearing the name of Antoninus Pius. Here were formerly the remains of a mile-castle; but the traveller will have some difficulty in detecting them now. A limestone quarry has greatly interfered with it. In 1808 two altars to the local deity Cocidius, which are now at Lanercost, were discovered in it. When the road was lowered in 1870 this mile-castle was cut into."

The inscription is a very rough one, as Bruce pointed out in the *Lapidarium* (hence Haverfield in *Eph. Epigr.* IX, p. 600), but it does not necessarily follow that he was right in suggesting that it had originally been cut on the face of a quarry, and brought thence for incorporation in the tower. One might think of the possibility that it really recorded repairs to the tower — or to the adjacent Wall — in A.D. 158 or thereabouts when, as we note from an inscription found in Northumberland,² reconditioning of the Wall was in progress. If the record was cut on a stone already *in situ*, by a soldier who was not a trained epigraphist, it might well be a very rough and ready affair — like many of the Hadrianic centurial stones.

² CIL VII 563, cf. *Research on Hadrian's Wall* 249 f.