THE ROMAN COFFIN AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

SOME SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES ON ITS CONTENTS AND ITS DECORATION.

THERE occur certain special particulars in regard to the coffin of Valerius that seem to claim some careful consideration. We are much indebted to so obliging and intelligent an eye-witness as the author of the circumstantial relation of the discovery. It has been stated by Mr. Poole, that with the cranium and bones there lay fragments, as believed, of Roman brick, a portion also of a millstone of the dark grey trachyte or volcanic rock of the shores of the Rhine, quarried chiefly near Andernach, the Roman *Antonacum*. These stones, of which the broken remains constantly occur on Roman sites in Great Britain—in stations *per lineam valli*,[1] in Scotland also, and in all parts of the country where Roman vestiges exist—were chiefly obtained from Niedermennig; they are noticed by ancient authors as Rhenish millstones, and doubtless are such as were designated by Ovid, on account of their peculiar color, *puniceæ rotæ*.[2] The deposit of a piece of such volcanic stone within the coffin might have been regarded as accidental, had not similar discoveries occurred accompanying Roman burials or sepulchral memorials, in British barrows also, and in certain early burial-places of other periods. In a group of Roman sarcophagi brought to light at Bath, near a branch of the *Via Julia*, as described by Canon Scarth, the lower stone of a quern was found adjacent to a stone coffin that contained the remains of a child.[3] Mr. Thomson, in his addition to Stuart's Roman Antiquities of Scotland, has recorded the discovery, in one of the Stations on the Wall of Antoninus, of a mortuary tablet commemorating a soldier, and now in the Museum of the Scottish Antiquaries, upon which lay a millstone of very black color, similar to those from the volcanic quarries of Andernach.[4] I am indebted to Professor Rolleston for pointing out several remarkable instances of the occurrence of such relics in early interments. In a memoir on an ancient cemetery near Abingdon, recently published in the Archæologia, he describes the finding of fragments of volcanic rock in the grave of a child, and on another occasion in that of a woman,

[1] See Dr. Bruce's notice of their frequent occurrence, Roman Wall, p. 438, third edition.

[2] Ovid, Fasti, vi. 318. A perfect stone of this kind, found in London, is figured by Mr. Roach Smith, Roman London, p. 148. Another perfect example, in the Museum at Orleans, may be seen in his Coll. Antiqua, vol. iv. pl. xi. The Rhenish mill-stones are still exported to England, Russia, the East and West Indies.

[3] Proceedings, Somerset Arch. Soc., 1854, p. 56. See also Arch. Journ. vol. xi. p. 408.

[4] Caledonia Romana, by Robert Stuart; second edit., by David Thomson, p. 358, note.

ascribed to the Anglo-Saxon period. He considered these portions of lava as having been brought, in all probability, from Niedermennig; they might, he observes, have been thus deposited as fragments of millstones, implements of daily life.[5] Professor Rolleston had likewise received from Mr. Wickham Flower pieces of identical character found in a British barrow at Thetford, and near a barrow in Norfolk. He informs me that similar deposits of volcanic tufa in graves have been recorded by the German archæologist, Schaafhausen.[6] A remarkable instance of the occurrence of millstones in an interment at Winster, Derbyshire, is recorded by Mr. Bateman.[7]

Whatever may be our conclusions in regard to the coffin—the periods to which we should ascribe so perplexing an object, its contents, also, and the cross-slab that now covers it,—the remarkable facts brought under our consideration by Professor Rolleston must be received with interest. Not the least, indeed, of the points of difficulty connected with the first discovery of any Roman vestige on the "Isle of Thorns" consists in this anomalous circumstance, that whatever may have become of the original occupant of the *ossuarium*, transferred probably from one of the Roman cemeteries around Londinium—from Bow, or Moorgate, or some site described by Mr. Roach Smith in his Illustrations of Roman London,—certain minor relics, seemingly of undoubted Roman character, should have been suffered to remain within the ancient depository.

With these, however, another peculiarity occurred, as noticed in the memoir by the Dean, that seems in a remarkable manner conformable to certain mortuary usages of Roman times in Britain. There were, according to the description received through the kindness of Mr. Poole, the abbey mason, several masses of a pasty substance, like lumps of quick lime which time had slaked and made into a paste. Probably, Mr. Poole observed, the floor of the coffin had been strewed with lime. Future investigation may explain the introduction of lime and other substances thus strewed under or around the corpse in Roman interments. Several remarkable instances of the practice have occurred in this country. Amongst the vestiges of Roman London may be cited a discovery of a coffin of freestone brought to light, in 1865, at Bow. According to Mr. Franks' description the bones were covered with fine mould that may have infiltrated; and at the bottom of the coffin there was a layer apparently of lime.[8] Similar deposits had been previously found elsewhere, on Roman sites. In 1842, Mr. Clement T. Smythe communicated to the Society of Antiquaries a notice of a Roman cemetery at Sutton Valence, near Maidstone, in which a stone cist had been found, as described in the Archæologia (vol. xxix. p. 422), the bottom of

[5] Researches in an Ancient Cemetery at Frilford, Archæologia, vol. xlii., pp. 441, 470.

[6] Die Germanische Grabstatten am Rhein, 1868, pp. 122, 127.

[7] Ten Years' Diggings, p. 98; see also Horæ Ferales, p. 104. The two stones of the quern, which was of the millstone grit of Derbyshire, were found apart, accompanying two contiguous burials, one with each deposit. In one of these the moiety of the hand-mill had been exposed to a strong fire, with weapons and other objects, and the corpse laid on the ashes, but apparently not burnt. Mr. Ll. Jewitt, who has figured the quern in his manual entitled "Grave-mounds and their contents," p. 295, considers the interment to be Saxon, and observes that portions of grinders or triturating stones are occasionally found in the burial-mounds of various periods.

[8] Proceedings Soc. Antiqu., second series, vol. iii. p. 124.

which was strewed with quick lime. Gough has described several cists disinterred outside the Station at Great Chesterford, Essex, in which all the remains were incrusted with a white substance like plaster of Paris.[9] The occurrence, in 1760, of several coffins at York, in which the bodies were laid in lime, the skeletons being firm and entire, is recorded in the Minutes of the Society of Antiquaries.[1] Several other Roman coffins containing lime were subsequently brought to light near the same spot, outside the walls of York; in three instances it appeared that liquid plaster had been poured over the corpses, of which casts or impressions had thus been formed, in which personal ornaments were imbedded, and even the texture of the clothing is distinctly visible. These remarkable examples of a peculiar mode of Roman burial are preserved in the Museum of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society.[2] Similar interments, probably of the same period, had likewise occurred in Hertfordshire.[3]

It had been supposed that the substance employed in the tombs at *Eburacum* was lime. Analysis, however, recently made by Dr. Procter of York, has proved that in the majority of these remarkable deposits, if not in every instance, it is gypsum (sulphate of lime). A sample of the calcareous paste from the coffin at Westminster having been submitted to him, through the kindness of the Rev. John Kenrick, it proved to be carbonate of lime, with rather a large proportion of phosphate of lime, which may have been derived from mixture with disintegrated bones.

These facts seem deserving of consideration, although they may fail to suggest satisfactory conclusions, or even to aid our investigation of the mysterious subject of these remarks. As regards the mortuary usage to which I have last adverted—the bed of lime or of some absorbent or antiseptic substance strewed under the corpse—the discovery of Roman coffins at Bath, in which the corpses had been laid on fine sand, in one instance of a kind supposed to have been brought from a considerable distance, claims notice.[4] It will not be irrelevant to the subject under consideration to advert to the singular precaution, for some preservative purpose, probably, noticed by Mr. Octavius Morgan in a Roman interment at Caerwent. A stone coffin, in which another of lead was enclosed, was found within a grave or cist formed of slabs set edgeways. The intervening space around the sarcophagus was filled in with small coal tightly rammed; the leaden depository in which the skeleton lay was full of clear water, with some ochreous sediment.[5] On the Continent the introduction of lime in Roman or early interments, on the disuse of incineration, about the third century, although it seems rarely to have been noticed, has occasionally occurred. M. Jouannet, in his researches in a very extensive cemetery near Bordeaux, has described a burial in a coffin, in

[9] Sep. Monum., Introd., vol. ii. p. ix.

[1] Vol. viii. p. 273; Wellbeloved's Eburacum, p. 109.

[2] Wellbeloved, *ut supra*, p. 108; and Descriptive Account of the Museum of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, fifth edition, 1869, p. 76.

[3] In the Bury, near Ware, several stone coffins were found in 1802; they are figured Gent. Mag., vol. 72, part i. p. 393, with an account of the discovery by Gough; in three of these lime occurred. These were probably Roman interments; a coin of the Lower Empire lay near them. The coffins lay, however, east and west. Gough describes, *ibid*, another coffin found near Dartford Brent, containing the remains of a young female imbedded in white plaster, that retained the impression even of the features of the face.

[4] Journal Brit. Arch. Ass., vol. for 1861, p. 232.

[5] Arch. Journ., vol. xii. p. 76.

which the corpse had been placed on a stratum of "*mortier*," about 2 in. in depth, surrounded by the vases commonly there found accompanying interments by cremation.[6]

At the scientific congress held at Lyons, in 1841, the Abbe Croizet described the discovery of eighty sarcophagi in the department of Puy-de-Dome. In one of these lay a skeleton wrapped in linen, and covered with three layers, namely, of earth, lime, and charcoal, successively. The corpse had been placed on green and red clay, and aromatic herbs; rosemary and camomile were identified.[7]

I will only add that I have sought in vain for any instance of the like use of lime in Mediæval interments. Having consulted a friend, profoundly conversant with ancient mortuary practices, Mr. M. Holbeche Bloxam, he assures me that on no occasion has any calcareous stratum within a coffin of the Middle Ages come under his observation. He reminds me of a somewhat similar use, at a comparatively recent time, of an absorbent layer of bran. Claude De la Croix, in "Le Parfait Ecclesiastique," published in 1666, gives the following instruction in regard to the burials of priests:—"Dans le fond du cercueil il est a propos d'y mettre du son vers le milieu, afin que, si le corps se vuidoit, le son le put arrester; on y peut aussi mettre des herbes de senteur." Mr. Bloxam, however, has made known to me an instance of the mediæval use of sand, as related to him by Mr. Albert Hartshorne. It occurred in the grave of an archdeacon of Norfolk, William Sponne, interred in 1448 at Towcester, Northamptonshire. In 1835 the tomb with his effigy being lowered, the skeleton was exposed to view, in most perfect preservation, every bone being in place; it lay upon a bed of fine white sand.

In the examination of the *arca* or mortuary cist at Westminster, a feature of no slight value and interest is presented by the ornaments resembling the Parthian shield, that occur at each end of the panel in which the inscription is framed. These lunated shields, it may be observed, recall the numerous sculptures of the Antonine period, occurring in remarkable variety along the course of the Mural Barrier in Scotland; whilst the beautiful outlines and precision of the lettering on the coffin of Valerius would doubtless suggest to the eye critically skilled in epigraphy, that the inscription might safely be ascribed to the same period. On the Westminster coffin these ornaments, of which the form was doubtless suggested by that of the lunated *pelta*, are enclosed in small panels or compartments, of which the framing-margins are plain,—not worked with a finely-cut moulding, as in the frame-work of the panel that surrounds the inscription. It has been questioned whether the Parthian shield was really the motive that may have suggested a decoration, possibly, as has been imagined, merely capricious, or at least not associated with any direct military allusion. This must be left for future consideration and comparison with sculptured monuments of like character or period that may be found on the continent. It will be seen that each of the *peltæ* on the coffin found at Westminster has, as the *umbo*, an ornament that bears resemblance to a fleur-de-lys; in some other examples the trilobate fashion of the boss is even more distinctly marked; on a fragment of a Roman frieze found at *Clausentum*, the boss

[6] Memoirs of the Academy of Bordeaux, published in 1830.

[7] Gent. Mag., vol. xvi., N. S., p. 528.

of the shield-like ornament has the precise form of the fleur-de-lys.[8] Other examples of this occur. In several instances, as already mentioned by the Dean of Westminster, and especially on monuments that occur on the line of the Mural Barrier of Antoninus (*c.* A.D. 140), the extremities of the curves present eagles' heads, and in other instances roses or flowers; of these an admirably worked specimen is found in the slab disinterred at Carriden, Linlithgowshire, and now in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries at Edinburgh. It is a legionary tablet inscribed to Antoninus Pius, its date being probably between A.D. 139 and 161.[9] It is not needful to enumerate many examples of this lunate shield on Roman monuments in North Britain, Northumberland, and Lancashire; they have been figured by Gordon, Horsley, and Stuart; and more faithful representations will in many instances be supplied by Dr. Collingwood Bruce, in his *Lapidarium Septentrionale*. He has reminded me of a noble tablet inscribed by a cohort of the Gauls; it was found at Risingham, and is now at Trinity College, Cambridge.[1] Dr. Bruce figures another example, rudely carved, that claims notice; it was found at Netherby, and may be assigned to the reign of Elagabalus, in his second consulate, A.D. 219. The extremities are here fashioned as eagles' heads.[2] It may deserve notice in the *peltæ* on the Westminster coffin that on the round ornaments of the trilobate bosses the compass points, from which the circles were struck, may still be seen, as also a fine marginal line round the outline of the curves that adjoin the inscribed panel. These minute evidences of very careful workmanship are not unworthy of consideration in connection with the remarkable perfection and technical skill shown on the face of the sarcophagus, not less than in the admirable forms and finish of the letters, of which the delicately cut elongated serifs, with the regularity in spacing, are perhaps scarcely surpassed in any inscription that has occurred in Great Britain. It is probable that frequent instances of the lunated shield might be found on continental monuments. It occurs on a remarkable Christian sarcophagus at Autun, that has been figured by Mr. H. F. Holt in the Journal of the British Archæological Association; in this instance the *umbo* assumes the appearance of a fleur-de-lys; the lateral tablet is uninscribed; the ends of the coffin are round;[3] the massive lid is conformable in shape to that of the *arca;* it is likewise rounded in all directions, not ridged; there is, however, some rib or ornament, not distinctly shown in the engraving, extending along the great part of the summit; and on one of its sides appears, within a circle or garland, the Christian monogram (Chi and Rho) with

[8] It is figured, Journal Brit. Arch. Assoc., 1857, p. 210; Transactions at their Winchester Congress, p. 166.

[9] Proceedings Soc. Ant. Scot., vol. viii. p. 109, pl. vii. This tablet is possibly the finest relic of Roman work, of its class, hitherto found in Britain.

[1] Figured, Arch. Journ., vol. xii. p. 213; Bruce's Roman Wall, third edit., p. 333; a remarkable tablet found at Lanchester is there also figured, p. 347; it bears a garland flanked by *peltæ* held by winged genii. On several monuments the original type of the shield seems to be lost; the ornament assumes the character of a rudely curved capricious decoration at either end of the inscribed panel. Compare Bruce, *ut supra*, pp. 298, 369; Lapidarium, pp. 35, 68.

[2] This a dedication by vexillations of the second and the twentieth legions. Roman Wall, p. 412.

[3] This form of the Roman coffin is not common. An example, found at Binstead, Hants, is of greater width at the head than at the foot, which is rounded both externally and within. Arch. Journ., vol. xi. p. 12.

the alpha and omega, on either side a bird perched on a branch, and a richly ornamented Latin cross. This tomb is of marble; it was found near the abbey of St. Symphorien, at Autun, and has been ascribed to the "first Christian Period."[4]

The discovery of the memorial of Valerius has suggested questions of more than ordinary interest, perplexing as they are, in certain details, even to those most versed in the history of mortuary usages. It is, doubtless, in the coped covering and in the Christian symbol conspicuously thereon displayed that we find the feature of highest importance and difficulty. If it were possible to demonstrate satisfactorily that these may be regarded as coeval with the inscribed memorial, the recent exploration at Westminster would indubitably present a monument unequalled perhaps in archæological value by any relic brought to light in this country in our days. Such indeed, in regard to the character and date of the cross-slab has, I am informed, been the opinion of one of our most acute and energetic investigators of Roman remains in Britain—the Explorer of Silchester. Having been deprived of the privilege of listening to the arguments adduced by Mr. Joyce, in a discourse received by the Institute with most marked gratification, and being insufficiently acquainted with the evidence that has influenced his conclusions, I would here express any notions of my own with much deference to an opinion grounded on ample research. I anxiously await the promised publication of his memoir on a question to which no English antiquary can feel indifferent.

The supposition, on the other hand, that this remarkable symbol of Christian Faith in this instance combined, as Mr. Joyce is disposed to conclude, with that of the Anchor, has not found ready assent with certain archæologists who have devoted attention to the conventionalities of sepulchral memorials during mediæval times. The low coped covering of the coffin at Westminster, although comparatively rare, is not without precedent amongst grave-slabs of the twelfth century, and still earlier times. In its ridged form may be traced a tradition of Roman type that speedily was lost in the flat grave-slab with which we are most familiar, forming part of the level pavement, and thus modified, no doubt, for obvious requirements and convenience. It is scarcely needful to allude to the multiplicity of designs that occur on mediæval cross-slabs, bearing, in some instances, ornaments in low relief, but more commonly incised, frequently of great elegance in artistic design. In this capricious variety the cross, sometimes almost lost in a profusion of complicated accessories, is, with few exceptions, the conspicuous symbol. It is, however, remarkable that almost invariably the cross is of the Greek type, the long shaft being surmounted by a circular or wheel-shaped head, in which, however elaborately floriated or otherwise enriched, the cross of four limbs of equal length is the motive that may readily be recognised. The Latin type is comparatively rare, both in wayside or other erect crosses, in this country, and also on grave-slabs. Examples are, however to be found. To these it may be desirable to advert, because it has, I believe, been suggested that the long-shafted Latin cross with limbs pattée, of equal length, and

[4] Journal Brit. Arch. Assoc., 1870, pp. 61, 67. This very curious Christian tomb, it is believed, is copied by Mr. Holt from one of the numerous publications by M. de Caumont.

Grave-slab of Barnacle ragstone at Howell, Lincolnshire. Length 6 ft. 3 in. Breadth, at the head, 1 ft. 6 in., at the foot, 1 ft. 3 in. Thickness 10½ in.

From a drawing by the Ven. Archdeacon of Stow, F.S.A.

bearing resemblance to the cross occurring on reverses of Roman coins of the fourth or fifth century, is very rarely, if ever, found in Middle Age monuments. I may cite two coped slabs at Repps and Bircham Tofts, Norfolk, that may be ascribed to the eleventh or twelfth century: each bears a Latin cross, of which three of the limbs are dilated or pattee; the long shafts spring from singularly formed terminations at their bases.[5] The best example, however, known to me is here figured, through the kindness of Archdeacon Trollope, who states that it was lately found at Howell, near Sleaford, Lincolnshire, where it had long been used as a little bridge over a ditch adjoining the churchyard, the carved side being placed downwards. It bears three Latin crosses, of similar type, the limbs having dilated terminations; the shaft of the central cross springs from a tripod base. Two crosses, of smaller proportions and probably commemorating children, are remarkable as indicating, doubtless, the resting-place of several members of a family. The date is ascribed by the Archdeacon to the twelfth century, the period to which, according to some archæologists who have given special attention to such memorials, the cross-slab on the Roman sarcophagus at Westminster may probably be assigned. The interesting example found in Lincolnshire is here figured from a drawing by his accurate pencil.[6]

The like type of Latin cross, although comparatively uncommon, is exemplified likewise by certain other mediæval relics, such, for instance, as wayside or churchyard crosses. It may suffice to cite a remarkable mural painting, brought to light in 1868 in the church of Wisborough Green, Sussex, in which is to be seen a figure of St. James, as a pilgrim, holding a long-shafted cross, the three upper limbs of which are pattee, the lower extremity is pointed.[7]

The termination of the cross upon the coped lid of the sarcophagus at Westminster is unfortunately so greatly damaged that it is difficult, perhaps impracticable, to ascertain, beyond controversy, what may have been its precise fashion. In the representation previously given with the memoir by the Dean of Westminster, the utmost care has been bestowed by Mr. Utting in his reproduction of the trilobate ornament, and I have been unable, after very minute examination, to re-establish any more reliable outline of the defaced design. Mr. Kenrick, in a discourse on the sarcophagus delivered before the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, pointed out the resemblance of this trilobate decoration to that of one of the cross-slabs at Chelmorton Church, Derbyshire, figured in this Journal, with notices of that fabric, by Mr. Sprengel Greaves.[8] To this suggestion I am disposed to assent; the outline is, however, somewhat more floriated, and the lateral foliations are more extended than in the Westminster cross; but the type, so far as the foot of the shaft is concerned, seems very similar. Another example of the like trilobate foot occurs at Bakewell, and has been ascribed to the twelfth century.[9]

[5] Arch. Journ., vol. iii. p. 268. A slab with a Latin cross, the limbs fleur-delysées, exists at Brougham, Westmoreland, *ibid.*, vol iv. p. 59. Three or four other slabs with crosses of Latin type may be found in Mr. Cutts' Sepulchral Slabs.

[6] The under side of the slab is left quite rough, and the Archdeacon observes that it may have been intended to be placed over the grave, and not used as a coffin-lid. The nick or groove at the foot is probably not original.

[7] Sussex Archæological Collections, 1870, pp. 134, 140.

[8] Arch. Journal, vol. xxvi. p. 262, fig. 7.

[9] Manual of Cross Slabs, &c., by the Rev. E. L. Cutts, pl. xl. The capricious

We have been much indebted to the careful observation and practical knowledge of Mr. Poole in regard to many suggestive details, the value of which no one else could so fully appreciate. His remarks on the irregular fashion and inferior workmanship of the lid, as compared with the skilled execution of the coffin of Valerius, cannot fail to suggest the inference that the clumsy covering stone is of a later period, possibly not earlier than the twelfth or earlier part of the thirteenth century, as some have imagined. On these points, and they are of considerable interest, I hesitate to express any conclusions. Mr. Scott informs me that on comparing, with care, the coped coverings of the massive Roman coffins found at York, he is of opinion that such a cross as is found on the Westminster relic might readily have been carved in after times on the coped surface of a slab of such massive proportions.

It is doubtless possible that the coped lid, of Roman fashion, and of the same oolitic stone as the *arca* itself, however deficient in precise conformity of fashion, may have been of the same age and origin, transported also together from one of the ancient cemeteries around the Roman city to supply the secondary requirements of some interment within or adjacent to the fabric raised by the Confessor, and of which unfortunately so few vestiges have hitherto been traced. Future investigations may determine whether any portions of the ancient foundations brought to light near the sarcophagus, and so carefully planned by Mr. Poole, may have been of the earlier constructions; at present we look in vain for indications that would suggest any satisfactory conclusions as regards the precise period of the secondary deposit or the personage interred. If we should be disposed to imagine, from the fashion of the cross, in which antiquaries not unskilled in such questions have recognised the character of the twelfth century, that the pagan depository may have been brought to Westminster about that time,—either a new slab having been placed upon it, or the Christian symbol carved upon the original covering,—it may seem deserving of consideration that in the twelfth century a remarkable innovation had occurred in the mortuary usages of one of the principal Benedictine monasteries around the metropolis, that would doubtless be more or less generally followed in other establishments of the same order. Garinus, who succeeded as abbot of St. Albans in 1188, and died in 1195, ordained that interments, in all previous times made under the turf only, should thenceforth always be in sepulchres of stone, which appeared to him more seemly. Such deviation from the simple practice of earlier times appears to have given grievous offence to the sacrist, whose functions included the provision for an onerous extravagance that was inadequately supplied by some slender augmentations.[1]

These facts obviously suggest the probability that at the close of the twelfth century these costly *loculi* of stone may have been in increasing demand and sometimes not to be readily procured. The ancient monastic burial place of Westminster was within the cloisters. It seems, however, no improbable supposition, considering also the peculiar connection of the monastery with the palace, that on the northern side of the church a resting-place may have been sought for some person of note, whether

variations in these memorials are endless. Compare the much enriched foliated base, pl. xv.

[1] See the new Statutes of Abbot Warin. Matt. Paris, Hist. Major, edit. Wats; Vitæ S. Albani Abbatum, p. 95.

secular or religious it were hopeless to inquire, and that, through some emergency of the occasion, the depository inscribed by the filial piety of the Valerii became appropriated anew to another occupant, and hallowed, so to speak, by the sacred symbol that it now bears.

Whilst the foregoing observations have been in the printer's hands I have received, through the kindness of Mr. Wylie, communications on the sarcophagus by the Padre Garrucci, whose critical knowledge of the various questions involved in the inquiry is well known to the student of palæography, and also of Christian antiquities of every description. The substance of his letters have subsequently been published by the Society of Antiquaries in their Proceedings, vol. iv., second series, p. 468. The grounds of his conclusion that the inscription can only be assigned, at the latest, to the first half of the third century, and that the date cannot be carried much further back than the time of Caracalla, who was slain in 217, may there be found fully detailed. His observations on the type of the cross claim careful consideration; he remarks that "we must necessarily infer that the sarcophagus, with its lid, was used a second time, at a late period, and that the cross was then sculptured upon it."[2]

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[2] See in the same volume, p. 409, a brief notice of the discovery of the coffin.