

ART. XI.—*Lost and Re-found Roman Altars, with a Note on a Silver Coin found at Maryport.* By J. B. BAILEY, Maryport.

*Communicated at Cockermouth, August 24, 1899.*

SEVERAL years ago, whilst reading a guide-book to Barnard Castle, I came across the following statement—viz., that “Some Roman remains from Birdoswald in Cumberland are preserved at Rokeby Hall.” Being somewhat anxious to see these, I provided myself with a list of Birdoswald altars stated by Hutchinson to be at Rokeby,\* and then, on July 16th, 1881, I availed myself of the kind permission of R. A. Morrill, Esq., to carefully examine the altars. Of these there are five placed on a raised platform to the left of the carriage drive as we approach the Hall.

The first altar to be described is that on the extreme left of the photograph, which is sent herewith. There is not the slightest doubt but that it is No. 372 in the *Lapidarium Septentrionale*, and both Hutchinson and Dr. Bruce testify to its presence at Rokeby.† It is badly mutilated, a large portion having been chipped off the lower half of the right side.

The inscription is very incomplete, little being decipherable beyond the terminal letters of each line. So far as I was able to decipher it, the inscription varied but little from that given in Hutchinson’s *History of Cumberland*. It is :—

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\* *History of Cumberland*, vol. I, pp. 66, etc.

† No. 831 in the *Corpus* and 15 in *Hutchinson’s List*.

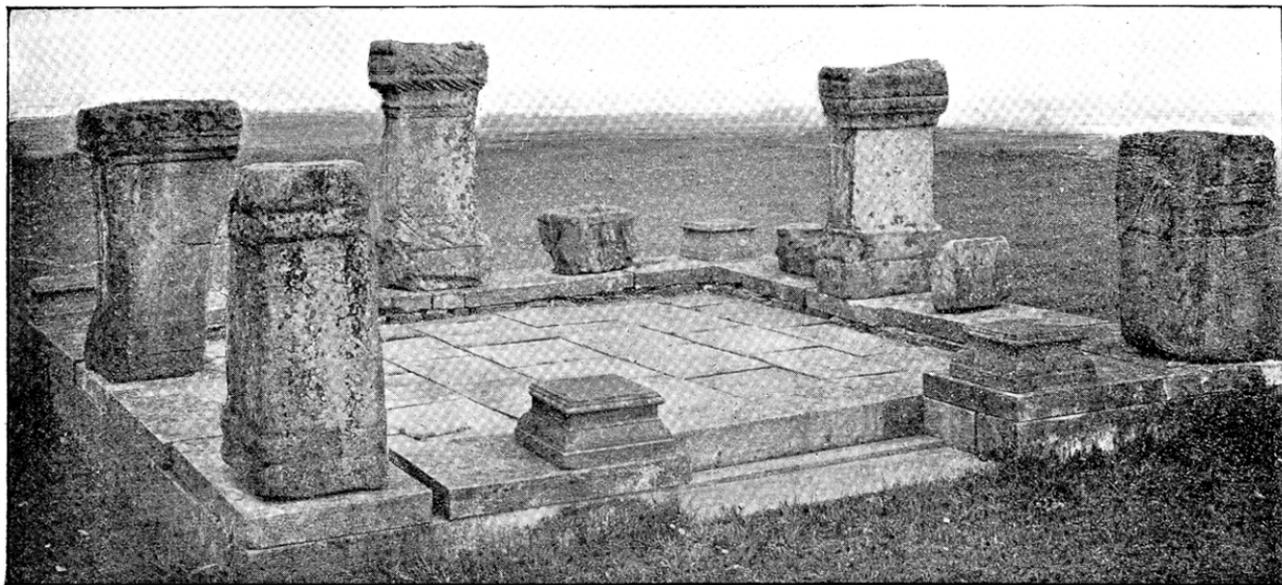
No. 5.

No. 4.

No. 3.

No. 2.

No. 1.



L. 372.  
C. 831.

L. 358.  
C. 807.

L. 356.  
C. 815.

L. 355.  
C. 813.

L. 354.  
C. 808.

LOST AND RE-FOUND ROMAN ALTARS.

(TO FACE P. 139.)

D (E) O (S) O L I  
 (I N V I C) T O  
 . . . . . M  
 . . . . . N  
 . . . . T V S  
 . . . . I V S

When I again examined this altar on December 30th, 1898, some of the letters had disappeared.

The next altar on the photograph was a puzzle to me. The inscription was exceedingly faint, but after considerable trouble, I had the satisfaction of making out the following:—

. . . . . M  
 . . . . .  
 A . . . V . . R  
 E S T . A M M  
 V I C T O R I N  
 T R I B

Had I read Hutchinson other than merely to compile the list to which I have already alluded, I would doubtless have recognized it as from Birdoswald, but not being sufficiently interested at the time, the inscription got no further than the pages of my note book.

A subsequent perusal, however, showed me that it was probably a Birdoswald altar, as Hutchinson records one such,\* with the following inscription:—

. . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 A M M  
 V I C T O R I N  
 T R I B

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\* No. 14 in his *List*, 358 in the *Lapidarium*, and 807 in the *Corpus*.

It

It will be noted that my reading is much fuller than the latter. Having some months ago obtained the loan of *Lapidarium Septentrionale*, through the kindness of H. P. Senhouse, Esq., of Netherhall, I first became aware of the fact that this altar was "missing." In order to satisfactorily clear up this apparent contradiction was the object of my subsequent visit of December 30th, 1898. I found the inscription much more difficult to decipher than on my previous visit in 1881; indeed, several of the letters had entirely disappeared. Still I was fully able to sustain the correctness of my reading. The altar itself is much damaged—especially the capital—though it possesses "a well or focus, roughly circular, and about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in depth."

That neither Hutchinson nor yet Dr. Bruce should have recognized this altar at Rokeby seems very strange, especially in the case of the former, who, living in Barnard Castle, would thus have had abundant opportunities of examining the altars. In his time the inscription must have been perfectly intelligible, to judge from the present rate of decay. If my reading be accepted, and I give it without any hesitation, it would appear as though we were again face to face with the missing altar, No. 358, *Lapidarium*.

With regard to the next altar on the photograph, there can be no doubt but that it is No. 356 in the *Lapidarium*.\* The inscription as given by Dr. Bruce is:—

I . O . M .  
C O H . I . A E L  
D A C . C V I  
P R A E . . .  
I G . . . . .

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\* No. 815 in the *Corpus* and No. 11 in *Hutchinson's List*.

Referring

Referring to this altar, Horsley, as quoted by Hutchinson, says that it stood on the walk in the garden at Naworth, and that it had a sundial fastened on the top of it. Although the letters on the altar are now for the most part illegible, the remains of the fastenings by which the sundial was attached are still to be seen—thus, in connection with my own reading, proving the identity.

The next altar in order—viz., the fourth from the left hand—was thickly covered with lichen on my first visit, and it was quite impossible to make out a single letter, nor was I any more successful on my second visit. We may well understand then why it should be unrecognized and marked as “missing,” even though it should in reality turn out to be a Birdoswald altar. The moulding was carried quite round the altar, but a portion some six or seven inches wide had been chiselled off the back from the top to the bottom to the depth of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Evidently this was for the purpose of hanging some light gate or other such purpose, the lead being still in evidence.

Under the following circumstances, this might almost be said to stamp it as a Birdoswald altar. Speaking of the altars at Naworth, Stukeley says:—“In the garden are many altars and inscriptions. I copied all these tolerably fair. With much regret, I saw these noble monuments quite neglected and exposed, some cut in half to make gateposts;” whilst Gough, speaking of the same altars, says that they “had been badly used, but that such as had survived this bad usage were given by the late Earl (*i.e.*, of Carlisle) to Sir Thomas Robinson, his brother-in-law, at that time proprietor of the Rokeby Estate.” The question is whether we should be justified in saying that even this indirect testimony favours the idea that the altar is from Birdoswald. It certainly answers to the above statement of Stukeley and Gough, and identically in the way indicated.

At

At least nine Birdoswald altars were in the garden at Naworth, as is evident from Horsley's list quoted by Hutchinson. Of these six have been traced to Rokeby either by Hutchinson or Dr. Bruce—viz., *Lapidarium*, Nos. 352, 354, 355, 356, 369, and 372—to which we may, I think, now add No. 358, making seven in all.\* Of the other two, No. 368 is at Corby; and No. 381, inferring from the above statement by Gough, would doubtless be left at Naworth by Sir Thomas Robinson. Of those traced to Rokeby, at least two are still to be accounted for—viz., Nos. 355 and 369. Can the altar we are discussing be either of these? To judge from the sketch given by Hutchinson, it could scarcely be No. 369, which is apparently either a mere slab, or at least only the portion of an altar with neither capital nor base. We thus seem left with No. 355,† which certainly bears a strong resemblance to No. 10 in Hutchinson's diagrams. Other considerations to which we need scarcely refer led me to think that here again we were on the track of the other "missing" altar.

With the idea of proving or disproving the case, some six months ago I approached Mrs. Donovan, of Rokeby Hall, who most kindly had the lichen carefully removed from the face of the altar. At the same time, Mr. E. Yeoman, of Barnard Castle, took an excellent photograph of the five altars. Hutchinson reported the letters on No. 355 as finely cut, and at the same time fair and distinct, the inscription being:—

I . O . M .  
 C O H . I . A E L  
 D A C . C . . P . .  
 S T A T . L O N . .  
 G I N V S . T R I B .

\* The respective numbers quoted in the *Corpus Index* a:e 819, 808, 813, 815, 826, 831, 807.

† No 813 in the *Corpus*.

A very careful examination of the photograph—not the one which accompanies this paper, by the way — with a powerful lens, has not been an entire success. Still, the following letters at times seemed fairly visible, viz. :—

. . . . . M  
 . . O . . . . .  
 . . C . C  
 S T A . . . . .  
 G . N . S . . . .

In order to test this further, I got a friend to examine the photograph, and, without any hesitation whatever, he pronounced that the last three lines were exactly as I have given them. Should this reading then be correct, the inference seems irresistible that this is the other “missing” altar—No. 355, *Lapidarium*. Probably another photograph may make the matter a certainty. This altar has a deep well-defined basin or elliptical focus, the axes being  $6\frac{1}{2}$  and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches, the depth being  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and the sides perpendicular.

Immediately in front of this altar is the Legionary Stone—No. 395, *Lapidarium*. The inscription is :—

L E G . V I  
 V I C . P . F .  
 F .

There was not the slightest difficulty in recognizing the last of the altars as No. 354, *Lapidarium*.\* This altar was examined for me by my brother, Dr. G. H. Bailey; and as he was able to add a few letters which do not appear in the *Lapidarium*, I give the new reading, having confirmed the additions. It is :—

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\* No. 808 in the *Corpus*. No. 9 in Hutchinson's list.

I . O . M .  
 (C O) H . I . A E L . D A C .  
 C (V I) P (R A E) E S T  
 (A V) R E L I V S . F A  
 (B I V) S . T R I B V N .  
 (P E R) P E T V O .  
 (E T . C O R N E L I A N O) C O S .

The altar itself is in a good state of preservation, but its base is wanting, and the scrolls on the capital are somewhat peculiar, not being parallel to the sides.

In conclusion, a short epitome of the Birdoswald altars recognized at Naworth by Horsley may be useful as tending to bring out the chief points in this paper, and to supply one or two additional, but necessary items :—

- No. 352 *Lap.*, 819 *Corpus*.—Although now “missing,” was undoubtedly at Rokeby when Mr. Mossman made the sketch from which the engraving in the *Lap.* is taken. It was 18 inches square, and shaped like a building stone, and may have been used as such since that date.
- No. 354 *Lap.*, 808 *Corpus*.—Is still on the platform at Rokeby (1).
- No. 355 *Lap.*, 813 *Corpus*.—Was seen at Rokeby by Hutchinson, but reported “missing” by Dr. Bruce. It is still apparently on the platform at Rokeby (2).
- No. 356 *Lap.*, 815 *Corpus*.—Is still on the platform at Rokeby (3).
- No. 358 *Lap.*, 807 *Corpus*.—Reported “missing” by Dr. Bruce. It is still apparently on the platform at Rokeby (4).
- No. 368 *Lap.*.—Is at Corby.
- No. 369 *Lap.*, 826 *Corpus*.—Was seen at Rokeby by Hutchinson. Is clearly “missing.”

No.

No. 372 *Lap.*, 831 *Corpus*.—Is still on the platform at Rokeby (5).

No. 381 *Lap.*.—Is “missing.”

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ON A SILVER COIN FOUND AT MARYPORT.

Towards the end of December, 1893, a fine Roman silver coin was found close to Maryport. Fortunately it passed into the hands of one who recognised its value. It is now at Netherhall. It is “a fine denarius of the Roman Republic. It has on the obverse the head of Rome helmeted, with the figure x behind it, and on the other side Diana in a biga galloping to the races—a crescent on her head. Under the horses are the letters T O D, with a bird perched on the crossbar of the T.”\*

Further, “the date of it is uncertain, but it may conjecturally be placed at the beginning of the 2nd century B.C. It is engraved in *Babelon's Monnaies de la République Romaine*, vol. I., p 55.”†

It has been suggested that it originally formed part of the treasures of some local (Roman) coin collector. It is in a wonderfully fine state of preservation.

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\* From a note furnished by R. Blair, F.S.A.

† From information supplied from the British Museum.