

ART. IX.—*A Hadrianic building-inscription from Hardknot, Cumberland.* By R. P. WRIGHT, F.S.A.

Read at Penrith, July 9th, 1965.

The following abbreviations have been used:

- BMC* H. Mattingly, *British Museum Coins.*
CIL Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.
EE Ephemeris Epigraphica.
JRS Journal of Roman Studies.
RIB The Roman Inscriptions of Britain, vol. I, cited by item-numbers.
RIC H. Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham, *Roman Imperial Coinage.*

THE fragments of the inscription here discussed were found by the Ministry of Public Building and Works during conservation-work directed by Miss D. Charlesworth, who has made the stone fragments available for study and has kindly agreed to let the present writer publish his article in advance of her main report. Work was undertaken for three periods in 1964, in April, June-July and September-October, at the double-portalled South-East Gate, or *porta praetoria*, of Hardknot fort. Fourteen fragments of the inscription were found on the north side of the roadway spread over an area stretching from 7 to 12 ft. south-east of the northern termination of the fort-wall. Two were found in clearing the surface in April, nine were added in June-July, when debris was moved for the insertion of a drain, and one was found in October. Of this total two may be disregarded as they carry no part of the text or prepared surface or edge. A third one carries a bevelled edge and seems to preserve part of the surface, though somewhat damaged. The stone will have measured, on the restoration pounded below, $37\frac{1}{4}$ in. in width by 25 in. in height.

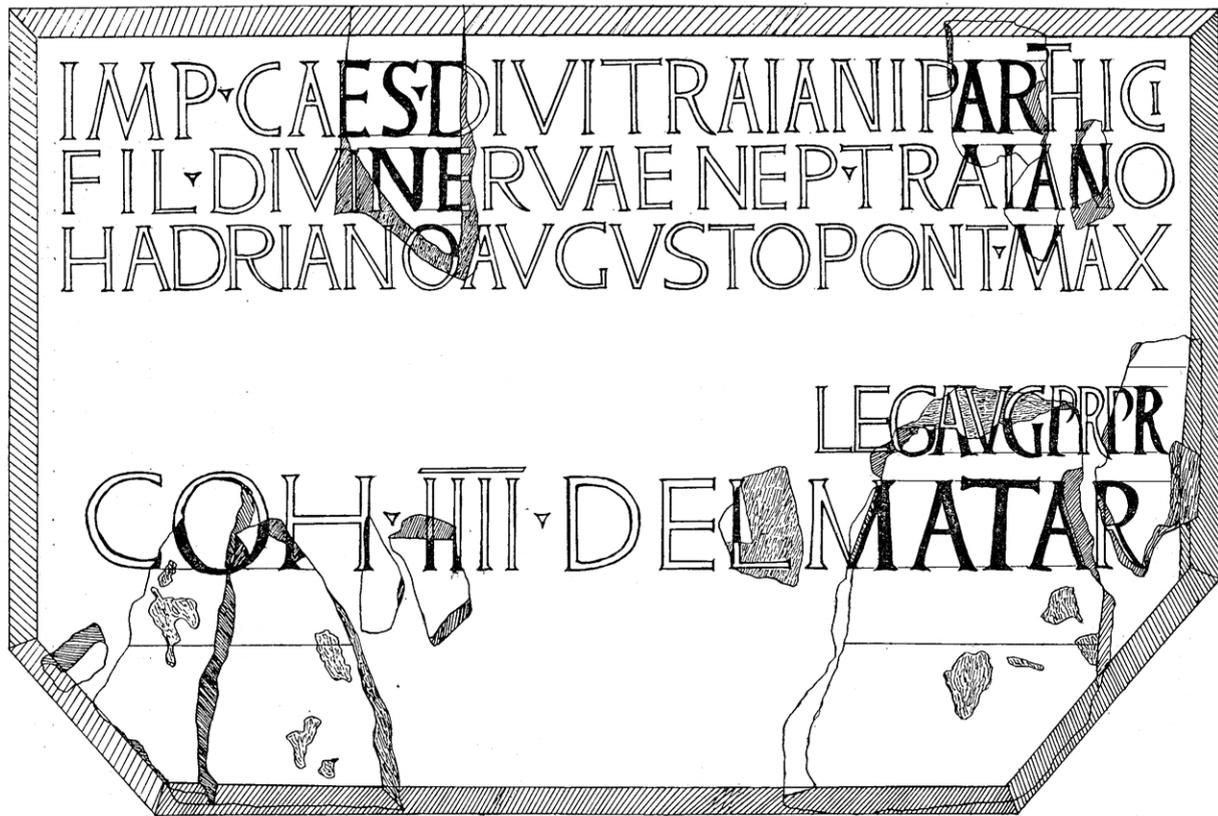


FIG. 1.—Reconstruction of a Hadrianic building inscription from Hardknott
(Scale 1:6)

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The fragment¹ from the upper left-hand portion is now one inch thick, and the others vary in thickness from $\frac{7}{8}$ ths down to half an inch. As no fragment retains any dressed surface on the back, the intact slab may have been thicker before it was broken up in stone-robbing.

The stone² used for the inscription is "green tuff, similar to the Borrowdale volcanic series". It could have been quarried within a few miles of this fort. The lettering has been skilfully cut and shows little sign of weathering. The guide-lines used by the cutter can still be seen in the spaces between the letters. In several instances the letters override the guide-lines and provide a bold rendering. The margins of the stone have been bevelled. The bevel measures $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. where best preserved, or $\frac{7}{8}$ in., when taken horizontally. One fragment from the right margin shows that the bevelled edge swung inwards about $\frac{3}{10}$ in. from the vertical line and narrowed the width. At the lower right-hand corner the angle had been cut back and bevelled; the guide-line for this operation is still preserved. At the lower left-hand corner, where no guide-line has survived, the angle has been cut back, apparently for a shorter distance, though most of the bevelled edge has sustained damage, and only a small part, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. long, is intact. It is unusual for the corners of Roman inscriptions to be chamfered away in the manner just described. The use of this procedure in only the lower corners suggests that it was done for a special purpose, probably to fit the slab into the spandrel between the two arches of the double gateway, in which the voussoirs need not have been of equal size, thus accounting for the difference between the two chamfers. A structural explanation of the chamfers is thus possible, but an epigraphic explanation seems also to be demanded

¹ Dedication-slabs on comparable stone were 3 in. thick at Gelligaer (*EE* IX 1031, *RIB* 397), and $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick at Caernarvon (*CIL* VII 142, *EE* IX p. 530, *RIB* 430).

² Mr M. H. P. Bott, M.A., Ph.D., F.G.S., of the Department of Geology, Durham University, kindly made this identification.

not only by the extension of the slab towards the bottom but by the guide-line visible at $2\frac{3}{8}$ in. below 1.6. This is not marked on the two surviving portions of the stone by a lower guide-line but one sufficient to suit a short word could have occupied the vacant space. In this case the word could hardly have been other than FECIT, in full or abbreviated form. It is not inserted in the drawing since the height of the letters, if they existed, is unknown.

Two fragments preserve part of the first two lines and retain the bevelled edge of the upper margin. The left-hand one, reading . . .]ES·D[. . . | . . .]INE[. . . | . . .] O[. . . , was found in April and appeared to date the text to the reign of Trajan, on the analogy of *RIB* 397 (*EE IX 1031*) from Gelligaer. But the right-hand fragment, found in June and made available in July, carried PART[HICI], here restored in the genitive. This title was conferred on Trajan on 20 February 116, and came last among his titles. The DIVI following CAES indicated that the preceding emperor had been cited, and the other titles of Trajan, even in abbreviated form, would have occupied much space and brought *Parthicus* to the second or perhaps third line. This showed that Trajan was not the emperor to whom the dedication had been set up. On the other hand this title could well be the chief one selected from those given to Trajan, if the regular formula for Hadrian were followed by citing him as D[IVI TRAIANI] PART[HICI FIL(IO)]. This gained support from the occurrence of]INE[in 1.2, which could mark Hadrian as DIV]I NE[RVAE NEP(OTI), followed by TR]AIAN[O] at the end of the line. In 1.3 part of an O survives below NE. This would fit [HADRIAN]O and would show that the names of the emperor had been cited in the dative as the person for whom the building had been erected.

It may seem needless to say so, but the excavators took great care of the several fragments recovered from the shattered slab. This brought its due reward, for a

small portion of ll.2 and 3 was found to conjoin with the right-hand fragment reading PARTHICI, and confirm the second A in TRAIANO, and give M below it in l.3. Beyond the A came a further fragment with the tip of a serif from H in PARTHICI, and with a narrowed N. The narrowed width of this letter, the ligature of TH and the probable insertion of a small I within the C in PARTHICI indicate that the draughtsman of the text was here forced to condense his letters.

In the third line the letters O and M, in the positions defined above, enable us to complete the line with HADRIANO AVGVSTO PONT.MAX. Apart from a vacant space of at least two letter-widths and possibly much more at the end of the line, no portion of the fourth line has survived. It may have included the emperor's tribunician power and even more probably his consulship. Hadrian was consul for the second time in 118, and for the third and last time in 119. Coins³ minted in the latter year indicate that a victory in Britain had relieved the province from disturbed conditions in preparation for Hadrian's reconstruction of the northern frontier. It is thus to the context of the third consulship at earliest that new building or rebuilding may be expected to belong and we may reasonably restore COS III in l.4. It is, however, impossible to restore with any certainty the other titles which may, or may not, have accompanied COS III, and there is no need to discuss them here.

Although some two-thirds of l.5 is lost, the evidence for this line and the final line (6) is substantial. The lettering in the final line is $2\frac{7}{16}$ in. high, in contrast to the average of 2 inches in lines 2, 3, and 5. Secondly, there is a space of $6\frac{3}{4}$ in. below it left uninscribed. These data made it possible to piece together much of the line. At the right-hand end the line has been inset by $1\frac{1}{2}$ in., and

³ Mattingly, *BMC* iii p. clxiii, Hadrian nos. 1216-18; Mattingly and Sydenham, *RIC* ii, Hadrian nos. 577, 596.

we may presume that there was an equivalent inset at its beginning. Part of COH and the second half of DEL]MATAR(VM) survive, and a fragment from a vertical stroke of one of these large-scale letters increasing in width towards the bottom would suit L as the third letter in this name. A fragment with the lower portion of two digits and two inches of uninscribed space below them shows that this cohort was at least the Second, but may have carried a higher number; this will be discussed in a later paragraph.

The use of the dative [HADRIAN]O in 1.3 and the stress laid on the unit by larger lettering inset for emphasis in 1.6 indicate that the work, presumably of building the fort, was done "for the emperor" by this Cohort, expressed in the nominative. Any mention of the governor would normally in this period be given in an ablative absolute. While LEG AVG P[R]PR gives the title of the governor, there is no evidence for his names. We have the names of four governors of Britain under Hadrian, which, expressed in the ablative, would read Q. Pompeio Falcone, A. Platorio Nepote, Sex. Iulio Severo, or P. Mummio Sisenna. These account for 15 or 14 spaces with a slight addition for two gaps. So spacing cannot exclude any of these. The name, or names, of the governor, or perhaps two governors, from about 126 to about 130, so far remain unknown.

Further discussion is now required of the identity of the unit. The spelling DELMATARVM has been adopted in this reconstruction as there are at least eight⁴ instances of this against three for DALMATARVM. The survival of two digits from the cohort's title excludes the First

⁴ For COH. I see *RIB* 810 (*CIL* VII 367), *RIB* 832 (*EE* III 93), *RIB* 847 (*EE* VII 076), *RIB* 850 (*CIL* VII 400) Maryport.

For COH. II see *RIB* 1795 (*CIL* VII 760) Carvoran, *JRS* XX (1930) 17 (*CIL* XVI 69) twice in the Brigetio diploma.

For COH. III see *CIL* XVI 48 (*CIL* VII 1103) the Malpas diploma of A.D. 103, *JRS* XX (1930) 18 (*CIL* XVI 69) the Brigetio diploma of A.D. 122.

For the spelling DALMATARVM see (for COH. I) *RIB* 831 (*CIL* VII 387) Maryport, *JRS* XLVII (1957) 229 Chesters, (for COH. II) *JRS* XVII (1927) 215 (*CIL* XVI 82) the Wroxeter diploma of A.D. 135.

Cohort. The Second Cohort was stationed at Carvoran in the 3rd and 4th centuries, on the evidence of *RIB* 1795 (*CIL* VII 760) and the *Notitia Dignitatum* (*Occ.* XL 43). But the fragment which carries the two digits, despite its weathering, shows that the lower serifs, now surviving, were not boldly developed and the digits were placed very close together. They make an unsatisfactory impression in the final line which otherwise was clearly designed by its ample spacing and larger gauge to emphasize the pride of the unit in the gate which it had built. A Fourth Cohort of Delmatians was stationed in Britain in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, as shown by two diplomas of A.D. 103, and 122 (*CIL* XVI 48, 69), and on the diploma of A.D. 105 (*CIL* XVI 51). The choice for restoration lies between the Second and Fourth Cohort.

The stages of the reconstruction have been expounded for each line, and the first three lines, restored at full scale, combine to fix the width for the whole text. Within this prescribed width the restoration of only two digits, to indicate the Second Cohort, provides a very unsatisfactory solution, and induces the present writer to restore COH·II[II DE]LMATAR(VM). The date for the text falls within the years A.D. 117-138, and presumably not before A.D. 119.

The text reads: [Imp(eratori) Ca]es(ari) d[ivi Traiani] Part[hici | fil(io) div]i Ne[rvae nep(oti) Tr]aian[o | Hadrian]o [Augusto pont(ifici)] m[ax(imo) | . . . co(n)s(uli) III . . . | (c. 15 spaces) le]g(ato) Aug(usti) p[r(o)] p[raetore] | coh(ors) II[II De]lmatar(um).

In translation: "For the Emperor Caesar Trajan Hadrian Augustus, son of the deified Trajan, conqueror of Parthia, grandson of the deified Nerva, pontifex maximus, . . . thrice consul, . . . , the emperor's propraetorian governor, the Fourth Cohort of Delmatians (set this up)."