

REMARKS ON  
THE STONE BEARING A ROMAN INSCRIPTION

FOUND AT CHICHESTER IN 1723, AND NOW AT GOODWOOD.

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READ AT GOODWOOD, JULY, 1853.

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On an artificial elevation in the grounds near Goodwood House, a building has been erected for the purpose of receiving a stone bearing one of the earliest Roman inscriptions in England. It was discovered in April, 1723, while digging the foundations of the Council Chamber in North Street, Chichester. It lay about four feet under ground, with the face upwards, and it unfortunately received some damage from the picks of the labourers in their endeavours to raise it. What was disinterred of the stone was thus broken into four pieces, besides defacing several letters, and a portion is altogether wanting. It seems to have been about six feet long by two and three quarters broad, and the letters on it are beautifully and exactly formed, three inches high.

A long account of this stone was given at the time in a paper by Roger Gale, Esq., F.R.S., with a plate, in the *Philosophical Transactions*, 1723, No. 379, vol. 32, and the inscription has been frequently copied since by other authors,<sup>1</sup> though with variations of reading, and of interpretation. Much error has often arisen from the common practice in Roman inscriptions of uniting two letters into one connected form, which no ordinary type<sup>2</sup> can represent, and from the

<sup>1</sup> Horsley's *Brit. Romana*, p. 132. Dalloway's *Rape of Chichester*;—Horsfield's *Sussex*, i, 41; Hay's *Chichester*, 1804; *Monumenta Historica Britannica*, cxix, 124; Mason's *Goodwood*; from the copy taken some years ago by the late antiquary Mr. King, the one in the text has

been taken, now again carefully collated with the original for the purpose of this paper by the Rev. M. Parrington.

<sup>2</sup> The Austrian Imperial Press has lately prepared types adapted expressly for this purpose.

usual abbreviations not being understood. It is not indeed the intention of this paper to discuss the historical importance attached to this stone, though few have justly excited so much interest and observation. It not only fixes the site of a heathen temple dedicated to two of the *Dii Majores*, and evidences a corporation of smiths, working perhaps Sussex iron, and wealthy enough to establish such a building, but it has also preserved to us the names of Cogidubnus, a native chieftain, mentioned by Tacitus, and of Pudens, the giver of the site, the namesake of the Roman husband of the British Claudia, whose beauty and talent, according to Martial, distinguished her among the polished circles of Rome. It will be remembered that St. Paul, writing from that city, sends the greetings of Pudens and Claudia to Timothy (2 Tim. iv, 21). It may therefore be acceptable to literary students here to reproduce the inscription, distinguishing by Italics what has been supplied by conjecture from the original, before proceeding to state the more restricted object of this paper.

NEPTVNO · ET · MINERVAE  
 TEMPLVM  
 PRO · SALVTE · DOMVS · DIVINAE  
 EX AVCTORITATE · TIB · CLAVD  
 COGIDVBNI · R · LEGAT AVG IN · BRIT ·  
 COLLEGIVM · FABROR · ET · QVI · IN · EO  
 A · SACRIS · D · S · D · DONANTE · AREAM  
 PVDENTE PVDENTINI · FIL · <sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> NE and VA in the first line are conjoined letters, and if *domus* is the right reading in the third line, MV must have been so also, there not being space for the two letters separate; AV of Claud in the fourth line, AV and IN in the fifth line are likewise conjoined. The first A and the first T in the fourth line, the first G and the V of *Aug.* in the fifth line, and the T of *et* in the sixth line are imperfect. There is a fragment of S of *domus* remaining in the third line.

The commencement of the seventh line has been variously supplied by Gale and others conjecturally, as *Sacerdotes sunt*—*A Sacris sunt*—*Honorati sunt*. The required words may have been descriptive of the workmen in the guild of artificers, such as *qui in eo (collegio) operantur or laborant,*

or indeed the chief officers of the guild might have been designated in the words missing, as *Præfecti sunt*. The *Fabri* were incorporated from the earliest times of the Roman republic, and there is little reason to think they were ship-builders only, as supposed by Gale. There were in the municipal towns of the Roman empire civil magistrates called *Præfecti Fabrum*, and also officers with the same title, under whom were the artificers of the army, such as *Cæsar* alludes to; “*Jam duo præfecti fabrum Pompeii in meampotestatem venerunt*”—*Cæs. Oppio*, ap. *Cic. Ep. ix*, 8. “*Reducitur ad eum deprehensus ex itinere Cn. Magius Cremona præfectus fabrum Cn. Pompeii*” *Cæs. de Bello, civ. i*; and *V. Paturculus* (2, 76) mentions his own relation as “*præfectus*

In the description above-mentioned by Gale, the letters are said to be cut upon a grey Sussex marble, and this statement has been followed by succeeding writers, adducing it as a proof that the Sussex marble was used in Roman times. Amongst others, the late Dr. Mantell, in his *Geology of the South East of England*, says of the Sussex marble that "there is historical proof of its having been known to the Romans." In Richardson's *Geology* this inscription is referred to as "a highly interesting proof of its employment by the Romans," and in vol. II, p. 63, of the *Sussex Arch. Collections*, the Rev. E. Turner also quotes it as "one remarkable instance of Sussex marble having been used by the Romans."

That the Sussex marble may have been known to the Romans, habitual lovers of ornament, is not improbable; but that this stone is a proof of it, is not the case, as it will be found on a careful examination to be of Purbeck and not Sussex marble.

When the slab was placed in its present position, the lost part was restored by a piece of Sussex marble, but being in juxtaposition, the difference of the two can be distinctly seen. The Sussex marble, so strikingly characteristic of the Weald clay, mainly consists of the fossil remains of freshwater univalves (*Paludina fluviorum*), formed by a calcareous cement into a beautiful compact marble, whilst the Purbeck marble is composed of a much smaller species of freshwater univalve (*Paludina elongata*), and has not yet been observed within the Wealds of Kent or Sussex. While geology was in its infancy, Mr. Gale's pardonable error was a very natural one, but as his authority has led later writers to make similar assertions apparently without any personal examination of the stone itself, it has been thought right not to neglect this opportunity, when the stone can be at once referred to, of pointing out the truth.

fabrum, vir nulli secundus." There are Roman inscriptions in which "*Præf. Fabr.*" occur. So that the whole might be freely translated, "The Guild of Artificers and their Prefects out of their own means have dedicated the temple to Neptune and Minerva for the

welfare of the Imperial family with the sanction of the Emperor Claudius and of King Cogidubnus, the Emperor's Lieutenant in Britain, the site being the gift of Pudens, son of Pudentinus."—*Note by W. H. Blaauw.*