

OBSERVATIONS ON A ROMAN INSCRIPTION AT COCKERMOUTH CASTLE.

BY THE REV. DR. BRUCE.

I HAVE examined with care the rubbing sent us from Cockermonth Castle by the Rev. Mr. Farmery, and I think I have made out the greater part of the inscription. The latter part of the fourth line seems to have met with some injury, intentional or accidental, and I suspect that an examination of the stone itself would alone afford a chance of deciphering it. I am not aware what portion of the altar has been lost. The upper part of it is gone, and this probably contained the name of the deity to whom it was dedicated, and perhaps also the occasion of the dedication. The inscription, as I make it out, is as follows:—

. . . AVG . . .
 NVM . FRISION
 VM ABALLAV
 ENSIVM
 . . XIII KAL ET XIII KAL
 NOV. GOR II. ET POMP . .
 COS ET ATTICO ET PRET.
 . . TATO COB. V.S.L.M.

The translation may be given thus:—" The troop of Frisians quartered at Aballava on the 14th of the kalends and the 13th of the kalends of November, Gordianus, for the second time, and Pompeianus being consuls, and Atticus and Pretextus being consuls."

It will be observed that I give up for the present the first line; but an inspection of the altar may enable us to make use of it.

The 14th of the kalends of November answers to our 18th of October, and the 13th of the kalends of November corresponds with the 19th of October.

Gordian and Pompeianus were consuls A.D. 241, and Atticus and Pretextatus were consuls in A.D. 242.

We have long been acquainted with the fragment of an altar found at Cockermonth Castle, of which the only legible portion mentions the 14th . . . and the 13th of the kalends of November, Gordian, for the second time, and Pompeianus being consuls.

Some important events must have occurred on these dates to warrant this double reference to them. Cokermonth Castle is about a mile distant from the Roman station of Papecastle, and the stones of which it has been built are supposed to have been derived from the Roman camp.

The reference to the troop who reared the altar is of a provoking character. The Roman names of the stations on the Wall west of Amboglanna have not been ascertained. An inscription that should give us any information upon this point would be peculiarly acceptable. The Notitia gives us this account of the 14th station:—"The præfect of a detachment (*numerus*) of Moors styled the Aurelian at ABALLABA." Horsley places ABALLABA at Watch Cross; Hodgson at Stanwicks. In this new inscription we have mention of a band of Frisian Aballavensians, but we have no indication of the precise locality of Aballava.

Again, the mention of the Frisians is puzzling. At VINDOBALA, the modern Rutchester, the Notitia places the first cohort of the Frixagi. As the Frixagi are not known to geographers, it is thought that we should read Frisiones or Frisiani. The Frisians are mentioned in the Sydenham rescript in the time of Trajan, and in the Rivingling rescript in the time of Hadrian. They are also mentioned on a stone found at Manchester, recorded by Camden. It is interesting to meet with yet another notice of them. On the whole, however, we could wish for more definite information.

MONTHLY MEETING, 5 DECEMBER, 1865.

John Hodgson Hinde, Esq., V.P., in the Chair.

DONATIONS OF BOOKS.—*From Publishing Societies.* Sussex Archæological Collections, Vol. xvii. — *Thé Canadian Journal*, September, 1865. — *Quarterly Journal of the Kilkenny Archæological Society*, April, 1865. — *From Mr. J. G. Forster.* Newcastle in the Olden Time: being 155 views reprinted from Richardson's Table Book. — *From Mr. Brockett.* The Hawks Memorial, reprinted from the "*Gateshead Observer.*" — *From M. Boucher de Perthes.* Antiquités Celtiques et Antédiluviennes, par M. Boucher de Perthes, Tome Troisième, 1864. — *Memoires de la Société Impériale d'Émulation d'Abbeville, 1861-2-3-4-5, première partie.*

LOCAL PRINTS.—*Mr. Edward Thompson* has presented the following, framed:—East view of All Saints' Church, Newcastle, Robt. Hardy