

XVI.—ON THE DISCOVERY OF ROMAN INSCRIBED  
ALTARS, &c., AT HOUSESTEADS, NOVEMBER, 1883.

(As the following five Papers and Appendix all relate to the same subject they are arranged continuously.)

(1.)—By Mr. JOHN CLAYTON, F.S.A., Vice President.

READ 27th DECEMBER, 1883.

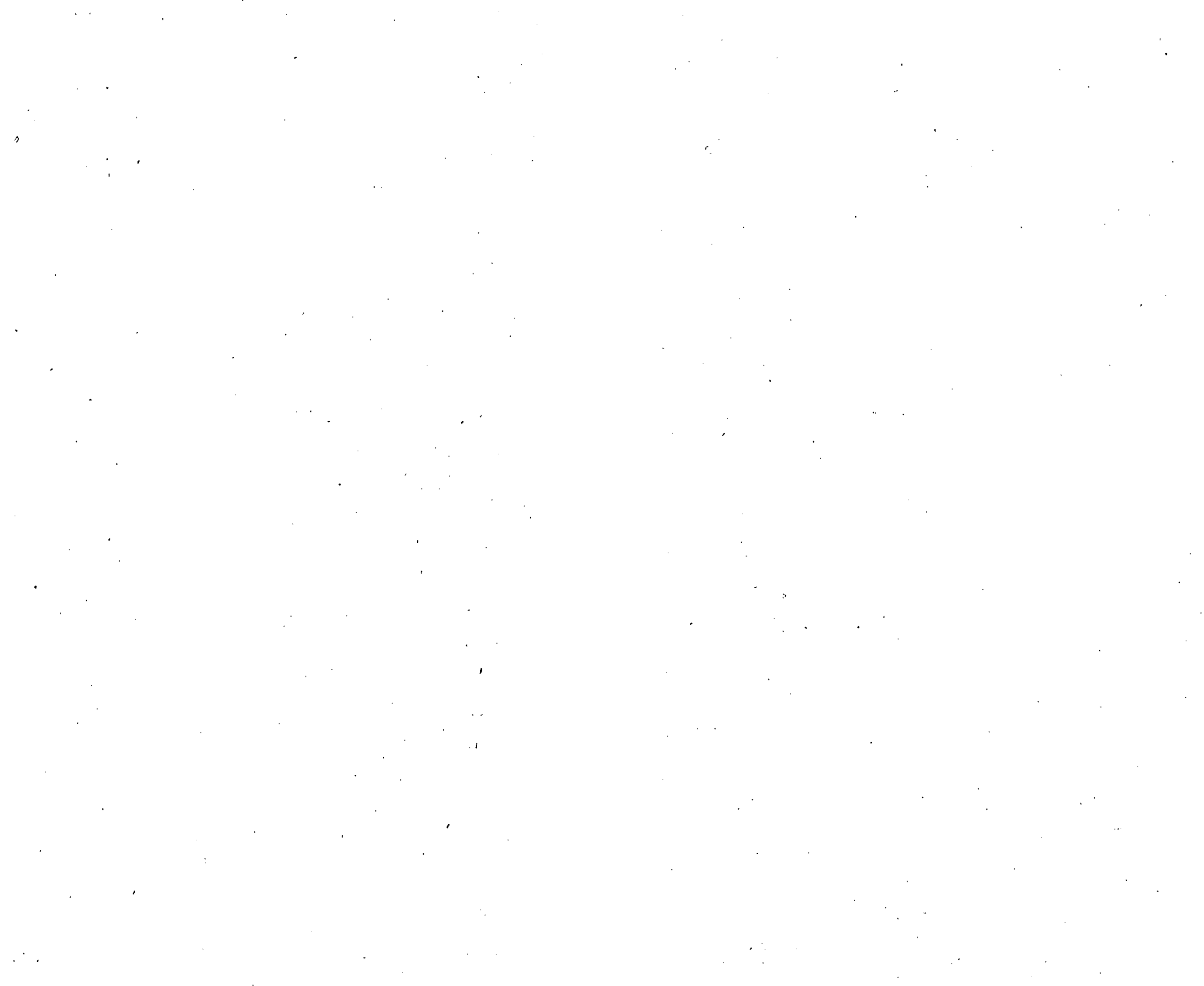
THE interest of antiquarian discoveries depends much upon the localities in which they are made, and upon the circumstances by which they are attended. For the last seventy years our Society has done much for securing and recording these particulars.

In the month of November last at the station of Borcovicus, a discovery was made of Roman objects of antiquity. Although the extent of the discovery and its final results have not yet been ascertained, it yet seems desirable that a record of what has been discovered should appear in the transactions of this Society, and by that means be correctly communicated to the antiquaries of the world.

The contour of the station of Borcovicus with its environs is familiarly known to antiquaries in general. The fortress itself stands upon a basaltic precipice facing the north, and towards the south the ground descends gently, and both above and below the surface of the slope may be traced the massive remains of a large Romano-British town, which grew up under the protection of the fortress. At a distance of more than a quarter of a mile south of the station, but within the limits of the town, there is a conical hill or knoll which is known amongst the inhabitants of the country as the Chapel Hill. Through the middle ages this name seems to have descended by tradition. In the beginning of the last century Borcovicus was visited by the celebrated antiquary, Dr. Stukeley, accompanied by Mr. Roger Gale of



SCULPTURED STONE FROM HOUSESTEADS.



Scruton in Yorkshire, much distinguished as an amateur antiquary, and we find the particulars of that visit described in a publication of Dr. Stukeley's, styled "Iter Boreale." Dr. Stukeley and his companion were much struck by the quantity and quality of the Roman remains in and about this station, and he says that "The farmer carried us up to a knoll in the middle of the meadow called Chapel Stead, where undoubtedly was a Roman Temple."

On its crest may be traced the foundations of a building, which have been assumed to have been a temple of the Persian sun-god Mithras. At the base of the western slope of this hill there runs a crystal stream, and by its side, in the year 1821, was discovered a cave containing altars to Mithras, and other emblems of the worship of that god. At the base of the northern slope of the Chapel Hill, in the month of November last, the shepherd employed on the Housesteads Farm was attracted by a carved stone which reached the surface of the ground, and he communicated with an experienced excavator at the station of Cilurnum, who, on the 17th November, dug up a sculptured stone and two altars to Mars, of which drawings from the pencil of our intelligent colleague, Mr. Blair, are now laid before the Society (see Plates I., II., and III.); and although the inscriptions on these altars have been somewhat damaged by time and exposure, yet every letter of them has, by means of the enlightened industry of Dr. Bruce and Mr. Blair, been ascertained to a certainty.

The climate of this lofty region prevents the prosecution of works of excavation till the summer months, when it is probable some other objects which adorned the temple of Mars will be found, of which a description will be laid before the Society. In the meantime, the study of the inscriptions upon the two altars which have been found may well employ the minds of antiquaries.

The first cohort of the Tungri garrisoned the station of Borcovicus during at least 200 years of the Roman occupation of Britain. The first cohort of the Batavi occupied the adjoining station of Procolitia for about the same period.

The inscriptions on these altars indicate the presence at Borcovicus of a *Cuneus* of Frisians;<sup>1</sup> but it must not be inferred that those troops

<sup>1</sup> The word *cuneus* in its common acceptation means a wedge; but it was adopted in the Roman military vocabulary as meaning a body of troops, which may perhaps be translated a "battalion."

were sent to supersede the Tungrian garrison. They were, no doubt, sent to Borcovicus to reinforce or strengthen the existing garrison on some occasion of emergency.

The country of the Frisians on the coast of Holland, is presumed to have comprised the modern Friesland, and on the map of Ancient Europe appears to have on the one side the country of the Batavi, and on the other that of the Tungri, and the position of the Frisian troops on the Wall of Hadrian by a singular coincidence was between the station of Procolitia garrisoned by the Batavi, and the station of Borcovicus garrisoned by the Tungri.

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(2A.)—BY MR. W. THOMPSON WATKIN.

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READ 30th JANUARY, 1884.

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FROM the photographs of these two altars, kindly sent to me by Mr. Clayton, and from other copies of the inscriptions, it seems certain that the latter should be thus read, divested of ligatures or tied letters:—

No. 1. (Plate II.)

DEO  
MARTI  
THINCSO  
ET · DVABVS  
ALAESIAGIS  
BEDE · ET · FI  
MMILENE  
ET · N · AVG · GER  
M · CIVES · TV  
IHANTI  
V S L M

No. 2. (Plate III.)

DEO  
MARTI · ET · DVABVS  
ALAEIAGIS · ET · N · AVG  
GER · CIVES · TVIHANTI  
CVNEI · FRISIORVM  
VER · SER · ALEXAND  
RIANI · VOTVM  
SOLVERV . . .  
LIBENT . . . .

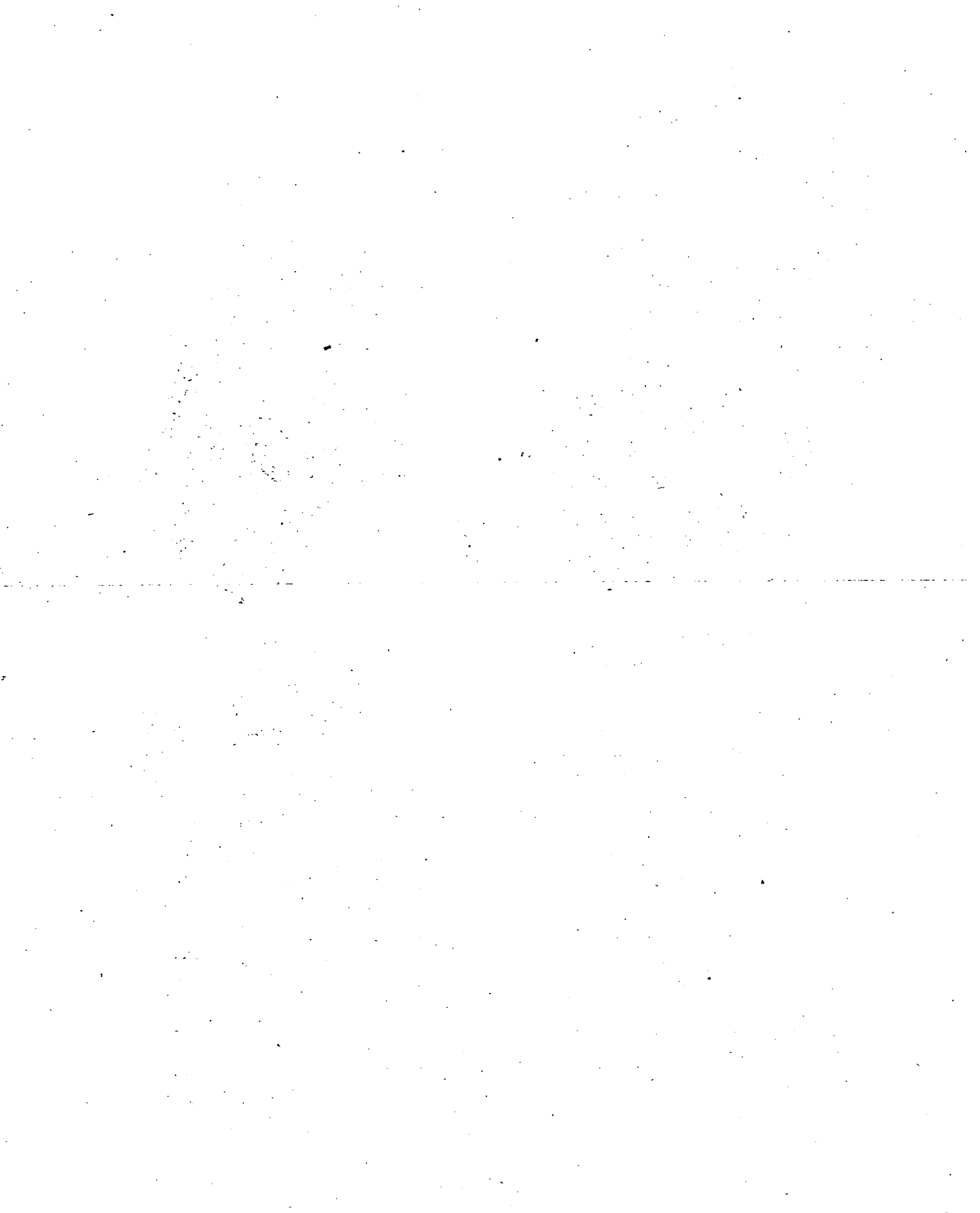


(FRONT.)



(SIDE.)

ROMAN ALTAR FROM HOUSESTEADS.





ROMAN ALTAR FROM HOUSESTEADS.





The only letters about which any doubt may exist are in the first inscription. In the seventh line, the letters resembling two Ms conjoined, at the commencement, may possibly be meant for NM or MIN.

Before proceeding to read the inscriptions on the altars, I think we should go into the questions of the Roman name of the station, and the nationality of its garrison, as they may throw some light on the subject. In the *Notitia* the *castrum* is plainly called *Borcovicus*. No other work of the Roman period names it, with the exception of the anonymous Chorographer Ravennas, and no inscription has been found on which its name occurs. Ravennas, however, tracing the stations on the Wall from East to West, names as the next station west of *Procolitia* a place which he calls *Velurtion*.<sup>2</sup> His orthography concerning the other stations on the Wall is so incorrect, that I have little doubt he has wrongly spelt the name of this one also. For instance, for *Segeduno* we have *Serduno*; for *Hunno* we have *Onno*; and for *Cilurno* we have *Celunno*. Judging by one of the inscriptions before us, instead of *Velurtion(e)*, I opine Ravennas should have written *Verlutione* (vel *Verlucione*.) The name of *Verlucio* occurs as that of a station in Wiltshire on the line of the 14th Iter of Antoninus, but we have numerous examples of two places bearing the same name—*e.g.*, there are three *Ventas*, two *Ischas*, two *Durobrivaes*, and, finally, whilst there is a *Magna* in Herefordshire, there is another on the Wall, within a few miles of *Borcovicus*. It seems probable that the Housesteads station has been known by the two appellations of *Verlucio* and *Borcovicus*. As to the garrison, both inscriptions and the *Notitia* agree in proving that the 1st cohort of the *Tungri* occupied the *castrum* for several centuries. It is necessary to keep this in mind, as, though the altars under notice do not bear the name of the cohort, the *Tungrian* element is clearly visible.

Both inscriptions are dedicated in the first place to *Mars*; in No. 1 he is called "*Mars Thincsus*." Into the appellation "*Thincsus*" we can hardly at present enter. It is evidently derived from some locality, and, unless my memory deceives me, has been found on another altar to *Mars*, discovered in Holland, though at the moment I cannot recall it. In the next place, each altar is dedicated "to the two *Alaisiagae*,

<sup>2</sup> Pinder and Parthey's Edition, p. 432.

or *Alaesiagae*." Who were they? No. 1 gives us their names, *Beda* and *Fiminilena*. The orthography of the last-named, owing to the ligulate form like two Ms, may not be quite correct; but that may ultimately be put beyond dispute by the recovery of other inscriptions.

The next point is, were these goddesses, mothers, nymphs, or local deities? The Tungrians seem to have been especially devoted to the worship of a large number of goddesses. At Cramond in Scotland we find the first cohort erecting an altar, "*Matribus Alatervis*," a name somewhat approaching that before us; whilst at Middleby we find dedications by the second cohort to *Harimella*, *Viradesthis*, and *Ricagma*, names equally as barbarous as *Fiminilena*, &c. The "mothers," under whatever name they occur, are generally represented as a trinity; hence I infer that we must simply look upon *Beda* and *Fiminilena* as local goddesses of Continental *pagi*. In the Itinerary of Antoninus a *vicus* named *Beda* is placed upon the road from Treves to Cologne, at twelve miles from the first-named town. It appears to be now represented by the modern Bidburg or Bitburg, but when, in A.D. 870, the territories of Lothaire were divided between Charles the Bald and Louis the German, the neighbourhood was called "*Pagus Bedensis*." Cologne (*Colonia Agrippina*) was a well-known city of the Tungri, and indeed it is probable that the greatest portion of the road named was in their territory. D'Anville tells us that several other tribes were comprehended under the name of Tungri, whilst Tacitus, in his *Germania* (c. 2), says: "Those who first crossed the Rhine and expelled the Galli are now called Tungri, but were then named Germani." He also tells us that the neighbouring tribes of the *Nervii* and *Treveri* were proud of their descent from the Germans. It has been thought by Mr. Roach Smith and others that the words *BEDAE PAGVS*, which form the second line of the above-named inscription to *Ricagma* (or *Ricagmabeda*) referred to this *Pagus Bedensis*; but it is more probable that Dr. Hübner's reading, *Ricagmabedae*, is the correct one. *Fiminilena* was doubtless so named from another portion of neighbouring Tungrian territory.

Both altars are next dedicated "to the divinity of the Emperor"—*ET NUMINI AUGUSTI*. Then follow the words *GERMANI CIVES TUIHANTI*. By this I understand that the dedicators were Gerinans, but *Cives Tuihanti* is introduced to express the particular branch of that nation.

to which they belonged. I am not aware that there is any other reference, lapidary or otherwise, to the *Tvuhanti*. The name, though barbarous, is not more so than that of other German tribes. If Tungrians, proud of German descent, they may have preferred to call themselves *Germani*. It has been suggested to me that GER may refer to one of the titles of the Emperor, and be read GERMANICI. This, however, I think most unlikely, if not unprecedented.

Before reaching the concluding *formula*, the smaller altar has several words and abbreviations which I would expand as follows:—CUNEI FRISIORUM VER*lutionensium* SEVERIANI ALEXANDRIANI. This is another proof of the esteem in which the Frisii were held by the Roman Emperors from the time of Nero downwards, for at Papcastle (*Aballava*) we find a *Cuneus Frisionum Aballavensium*, with an epithet derived from an Emperor following, but which is obliterated, though singularly enough (for the inscription is of the reign of Gordian) Dr. Hübner suggests for it *Severianus Alexandrianus*, and again at Binchester (*Vinovium*) we have, as I pointed out in the *Archæological Journal* (Vol. XXVIII., p. 131), a *Cuneus Frisionum Vinoviensium*. In fact, wherever a specially faithful garrison was required Frisians seem to have been selected. Hence the occurrence of three *Cunei* of that people in the neighbourhood of the Wall. The *Notitia* places the first *cohort* of the Frisii at *Vindobala* (Rutchester), but no trace of them has been found there, and the first lapidary evidence of their presence in Northumberland is on the altar I am at present describing. I at first thought that the R in VER, at the commencement of the sixth line, might be TR ligulate, and, therefore, that the *Cuneus* was styled *veteranorum*, but examination disproves the idea, consequently an ethnic adjective must be meant, and *Verlutionensium* is apparently the only one which will suit. I think, also, that I can detect a small v between the E and R in the next abbreviated word, SER, but whether it is there or not is immaterial.

The dedicators of No. 1 inscription may possibly have not belonged to the *Cuneus* (as it is not named) but to the 1st cohort of the Tungri, which formed the regular garrison. From the Frisian *corps*, bearing the name of Severus Alexander, we probably obtain an approximate date as to when the altars were erected, that Emperor reigning between A.D. 222-235. The female figure with outstretched arm on the side of No. 1 altar is probably intended for one of the goddesses,

to whom, in conjunction with another female deity, whose name commences NEM . . . . we have, I think, a third dedication, on a small altar, preserved in the Museum of the Society, and which also came from *Borcovicus*. It is not given in the *Lapidarium Septentrionale*, but is No. 654 in Dr. Hübner's work.

It is necessary to say, also, that in Orelli 1,964, and Henzen 5,614, we have dedications to a male deity named *Bedaius*; but this was probably derived from *Bedavium*, a town of Noricum.

From the foregoing remarks it will be seen that my expansions and translations of the inscriptions are as follows:—

No. 1. (Plate II.)

DEO MARTI THINCISO ET DVABVS ALAESIAGIS BEDÆ ET FIMINILENÆ  
ET *Numini* AVGVSTI GERMANI CIVES TVIHANTI *votum Solverunt Libentes*  
*Meritis.*

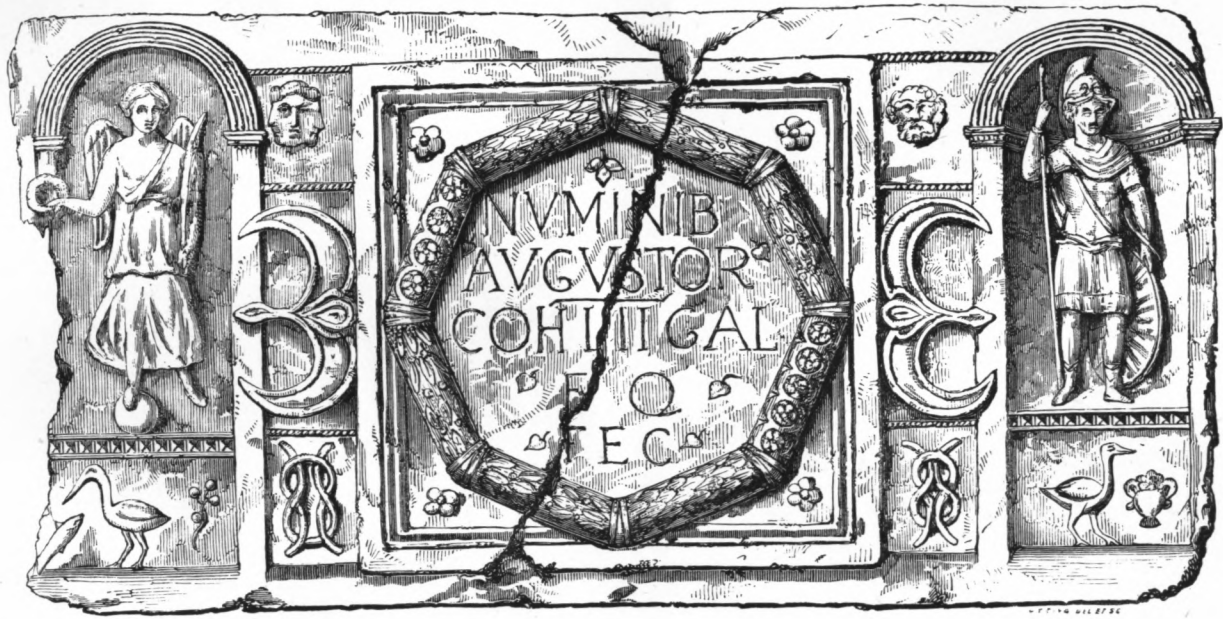
“To, the god Mars Thincsus and the two Alaesiae, Beda and Fiminilena, and to the divinity of the Augustus, the Germans (who are), Tuihantian citizens, perform their vow willingly to deserving objects.”

No. 2. (Plate III.)

DEO MARTI ET DVABVS ALAISAGIS ET *Numini* AVGVSTI GERMANI  
CIVES TVIHANTI CVNEI FRISIORVM VERLUTIONENSIVM SEVERIANI ALEX-  
ANDRIANI VOTVM SOLVERVNT LIBENTES *meritis.*

“To the god Mars, and the two Alaisiae, and to the divinity of the Augustus, the Germans (who are), Tuihantian citizens, of the Cuneus of Frisians, (styled) the Verlutionensian (and) Severianus Alexandrianus, perform their vow willingly to deserving objects.”

A few words regarding the portion of the semi-circular stone found with the altars: The central figure at first sight seems that of a Roman soldier, standing with spear and shield, &c., apparently flanked by Victories, each bearing a laurel wreath and palm branch. But may not the military figure be that of Mars himself in soldier's attire? One thing strikes me as singular; it is the figure of a bird, resembling a goose, at his feet. A similar bird appears at the foot of a figure of Mars on a tablet erected by the 4th cohort of the Gauls at Risingham (see Plate IV.); and again on the *umbo* of a shield found near Kirkham, Lancashire (*Roman Lancashire*, p. 207), Mars is seated with a similar bird in his front.



ROMAN INSCRIBED TABLET FROM RISINGHAM (see page 154).



I assume, of course, the Society is aware that though a *cuneus*, *cohort*, or *ala*, may be described as of a certain nationality in inscriptions, persons of other nationalities often served in them. Hence the reason for *Germani* being present in a Frisian *cuneus*. Another example is at Middleby where 100 *Raeti* (or *Rhaeti*) are named as serving in the 2nd Cohort of the Tungrians.

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(2B.)—BY MR. W. THOMPSON WATKIN.

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READ 26th MARCH, 1884.

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THERE is a possibility that the *Tuihanti* may be the same people as the *Tubantii* or *Tubantes*, a tribe which we first find traces of as inhabiting part of Gelderland in Holland. Early in the first century they appear to have moved rather more to the South, as Tacitus (*Annals* I., c. 51) places them about the Southern part of the modern Westphalia, whilst in the time of Ptolemy they would seem to have proceeded still further to the South East, for he names them as inhabiting the Eastern part of the Electorate of Hesse Cassel. They are apparently named by Strabo as *Subattii*, but this name has generally been considered erroneous and altered to *Tubattii* by German writers.

The smaller altar, in giving us an example of the word *Cuneus*, is very valuable. It is the earliest notice of a *cuneus* extant.

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(3.)—BY PROFESSOR EMIL HÜBNER, LL.D., Honorary Member.

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READ 26th MARCH, 1884, AND REVISED AND EXTENDED TO  
30th JULY, 1884.

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WHEN at the end of November, last year, the first notice (and, as it proved afterwards, a very correct and complete one) of the discoveries made at Housesteads reached me through the kindness of our distinguished friend Dr. Bruce, I instantly perceived that once more the zeal of that gentleman and of the venerable patron of all the antiquities



connected with the Wall, Mr. John Clayton, whose fine museum at Chesters now contains the new find, had been rewarded by a really important discovery. Still, it was not quite easy to get at its true value; the text of the two inscriptions being so much effaced and so difficult to read, that it yielded only to the combined and reiterated endeavours of Dr. Bruce and Mr. Blair, who by force of many copies made in different lights, by paper impressions, and photographs, at last succeeded in establishing a text which we may safely consider as correct in the main, though there remain yet some doubtful points. It is due to the keen eyes and long experience of these two gentlemen that we may take as granted the following reading of the two inscriptions:—

DEO  
MARTI  
THINGSO  
ET DVABVS  
ALAESIAGIS  
BEDE ET FI-  
MMILENE  
ET *Numini* AVGVSTI GER-  
MANI CIVES TV-  
IHANTI

*votum solverunt Libentes Merito.*

Which may be thus translated:—"To the god Mars Thingsus, and the two Alaesiagae Beda and Fimmilena, and the deity of Augustus, the Tuihanti, German citizens, dedicate this altar, in discharge of a vow, willingly, as they deserved."

DEO  
MARTI ET DVABVS  
ALAISIAGIS ET *Numini* AVGVSTI  
GERMANI CIVES TVIHANTI  
CVNEI FRISIONVM  
VER. . . SER. . . ALEXAND-  
RIANI VOTVM  
SOLVERVNT LIBENTES  
*Merito.*

"To the god Mars and the two Alaisiagae and the deity of Augustus, the Tuihanti, German citizens serving in the Frisian troop, styled the Ver . . . Ser . . . Alexandrian, erect this altar in discharge of a vow, willingly, as they deserved."

The dots following the two words VER SER in the second inscription indicate the only doubtful passage yet remaining; the rest

is sufficiently clear, and the expansions of abbreviated words need no excuse or further explanation, as the abbreviations are of common occurrence and of established value. We have, therefore, two nearly identical dedications made to the same divinities by the same persons; there is only some slight difference in the designation of the two essential parts, viz., the divinities and the dedicants. The divinities are Mars Thingsus and the two Alaesiagae (or Alaisiagae, which is a difference of spelling rather than of pronunciation), styled, in the first text, by their proper names, Beda and Fimmilena. Who is Mars Thingsus, whose name occurs here for the first time, as well as that of his two companion divinities? Mars with the Teutonic nations (and Germans the dedicators, most luckily for us, call themselves) is the Roman expression of their highest divinity, the god *Tiu*; Jupiter, the Teutonic *Donar*, the northern *Thorr* seems not to have found peculiar worship by Teutonic tribes. Hence the frequent occurrence of dedications to Mars found in Germany, in the adjacent regions of Gaul and Britain; hence, too, the frequent epithets given to Mars in those countries, derived from the names of native divinities, or of localities, or of some prominent quality of the god. Thingsus seems to be a name of Teutonic origin. I mentioned the matter to my colleague in this University—Professor Wilhelm Scherer—who, after the deeply lamented death of Karl Müllenhoff, which occurred a few days ago, is at the head of German antiquarian, linguistic, and literary science. He writes to me thus about Mars Thingsus:—

“Thingsus is the Latinised form of a German adjective, which does not now really exist in any of the Teutonic languages, but whose former existence may be traced without any difficulty. This adjective would be derived from a substantive which occurs in all Teutonic languages under the form of *thing* or *ding*, in the old Langobardic tongue under the form of *thinax*, and which is the Teutonic technical term for the old Teutonic *concilium* mentioned by Tacitus in the *Germania*, c. xi. and xii.” Thus the adjective transformed in Latin into *Thingsus*, must have signified “belonging to the assembly of the people—connected with the assembly of the people;” and we may call Mars Thingsus the assembly god, or *Mars comitalis*. But what is the relation which subsists between the god of war and the assembly of the people? We know that the old Teutonic *concilium* and *exercitus* are identical. Tacitus

(*Germ.* c. vii.) says, "Ceterum, neque animadvertere, neque vincire, ne verberare quidem, nisi sacerdotibus permissum; non quasi in poenam, nec ducis jussu, sed velut deo imperante, quem adesse bellantibus credunt." Jurisdiction is vested in the priests. It is theirs to sit in judgment on all offences. By them delinquents are put in irons and chastised with stripes. The power of punishing is in no other hands. When exerted by the priests it has neither the air of vindictive justice nor of military execution; it is rather a religious sentence, inflicted with the sanction of the god, who, according to the German creed, attends their armies on the day of battle. And also, speaking of the *concilium*, Tacitus c. xi. says, "Silentium per sacerdotes, quibus tum et coercendi jus est, imperatur." Silence is commended by the priests, who still retain their coercive authority. Therefore the priests punishing in the assembly of the people do so as authorised by a god ("velut deo imperante"). And this god, as we learn from our inscription, is the Teutonic Mars, that is to say Tiu or Tius, the direct descendant of the old Aryan Dyâus, the *Zeus* of the Greeks, who is also the assembly god, *Zeus Agoraios*. We first translated Thingsus by "belonging to the assembly of the people—related to the assembly of the people"; now we would say more exactly, Mars is probably called Thingsus as the president of the *concilium* in whose name the priests bade silence and punished. Thus, he is in near relationship with the Scandinavian *Forseti* (signifying president), the god of judgment. See Tacitus, *Germ.* c. xii., "Licet apud concilium accusare quoque, et discrimen capitibus intendere." In this council of the State accusations are exhibited, and capital offences prosecuted."

So far Professor Scherer. I adjoin a few words about the representation of Mars Thingsus on the third of the monuments discovered at Housesteads, a non-lettered one. The semi-circular sculptured stone, which may have formed an ornamental entrance into a small *adricula*, shows in the middle a standing warrior, whom we may take for Mars Thingsus as already pointed out very judiciously in Mr. Watkin's paper. He seems to bear (the photograph before me is not very clear) the usual Roman armour: lorica, helmet, shield, spear. Curious are the ornaments depending, so far as I can see, from the sides of his helmet; are they the crest of it? A careful examination of the original will explain, I am sure, the detail. Curious also is the

bird sitting at the foot of the god on the right hand side. Mr Watkin, also very judiciously, has paid attention to the Garstang *umbo*, now preserved in the British Museum, on which Mars, sitting on his throne, holds in the left hand a standard, on (or near to) which a similar bird is figured sitting. Whitaker, who first edited that curious monument, calls it "a bird which has more of the character of a goose than might have been expected in so dignified a situation." Mr. A. S. Murray of the British Museum, however, who was kind enough to examine the original for a paper of mine on "Roman Shields and their Umbones" (in *Archæologisch-Epigraphische Mittheilungen aus Oesterreich*, vol. ii., 1878, p. 112), calls it confidently a swan. The swan, especially the singing black swan, has many relations to old northern mythology. But I shall not enter into the details of them here. To form a correct judgment about the other two divinities the female figure on the left hand side of the larger altar may be examined, and the third of the monuments found at Housesteads—the semicircular bas-relief—may again be taken into consideration. The female figure on one side of the altar (there is none on the other side, though we might expect one), fully clothed in the Roman way, with a diadem on her head (so far as I can judge from the photograph), stands upon a pedestal, stretches out the right hand and has the left depending by her side, holding no emblem or symbol; she has no wings. The bas-relief shows, beside the Mars Thingsus, two figures in a state of suspension, but with no wings, each holding in the elevated hand what may have been intended for a sword, or a stick, or even a branch (it is rudely cut and only sketched), and in the depending hand a wreath. The figure on the right hand side, of which there is only remaining the right hand with the branch, was most likely intended to correspond exactly with that on the left, which is preserved in full.<sup>1</sup> I think it strange that it is represented entirely naked; or was it intended by the unskilful provincial sculptor to indicate in this way a thin, tight fitting, short garment?

<sup>1</sup> I take from a kind letter of Mr. Clayton, dated June 26th, 1884, the following note:—"The work of excavation in the locality [of the Housesteads find] was resumed last week. The missing portion of the sculptured stone was recovered in somewhat superior condition. The nude figure does not appear to be supported, but rather to be floating 'in the azure field of air,' and the garland or chaplet held in one hand is more distinctly shown than in the other part of the stone first discovered. The two portions have been re-united by a skilful artisan, and the whole is now satisfactory."

But who were the two *Alaesiagae*? There is a difficulty, in the first place, in the fact that besides the more general name of *Alaesiagae* they bore an individual name each. Instances of such a combination of a general with an individual name may perhaps exist, though up to the present time I am not aware of any. But there is no want of names of divinities, male and female, which have a very individual aspect. I quote a few females from British inscriptions, viz., the *dea Ancasta* of CLAUSENTUM, Bittern (C.I.L. VII, 4), the *Setlocenia* of UXELLODUNUM, Maryport (C.I.L. VII, 393; *Lapidarium*, No. 875; and see woodcut below), and especially the *dea Harimella*,



at the same Caledonian station of Birrens, where the *dea Ricagambeda* was worshipped by the *pagus Vellaus militans cohorte II Tungrorum* (C.I.L. VII, 1072), and the *dea Viradesthis* by the *pagus Condrustis militans cohorte II Tungrorum* (C.I.L. VII, 1073). It is highly probable that the two *Alaesiagae* were quite similar divinities. Their

names *Beda* and *Fimmilena* (the datives in *e* for *æ* are instances of a rustic spelling of the Latin declension not unfrequent, especially in provincial inscriptions, from the end of the second century downwards), together with *Harimella*, *Ricagambeda*, and *Viradesthis*, must remain for the moment unexplained. But it is by no means improbable, that further inquiry will succeed to explain the true meaning of their peculiar names and their original relation to Mars Thingsus. With *Beda* Mr. Watkin has compared the *pagus Bede* in Lower Germany.

Thus far the three divinities of the recently discovered monuments can be explained; there remain the dedicators. The *Germani cives Tuihanti* are to be reckoned amongst the not very large stock of ancient German tribes whose names survive in a slightly altered form. Professor Scherer, in writing to me about them, says:—“*Tuihanti* (pronounced *Twi-anti*), the *h* inserted as in *Baduhenna* (see Müllenhoff in the ‘*Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum*,’ 9, 241), is the name of a territory in the Netherlands, now called Twente or Twenthe (south-western part of the Dutch province of Over-Yssel, close to the Prussian frontier, with the towns Oldenzaal and Enschede).” This is a highly interesting addition to our knowledge of ancient Germany, for which we are indebted to Professor Scherer’s happy perspicacity.

As the Vellavi and the Condrustes, also Batavian tribes, serving as soldiers in the Tungrian cohorts, as a *pagus*, who worshipped their respective divinities, and as the *Texandri et Sunici vexillarii cohortis II Nerviorum* of an altar of PROCOLITIA (Ephem. Epigr. III, p. 134, n. 103), so the *cives Tuihanti* served in a corps of Roman soldiers, styled *cuneus Frisiorum Ver . . . Ser . . . Alexandrianus*. About the middle of the third century the great change in the organization of the Roman army, afterwards completed by Diocletian, begins just at this period to show itself in the names of some of the auxiliary troops. Instead of *cohortes* and *alae*, we find *numeri* and *cunei*. I shall not enter on this occasion into a discussion of the real meaning of this change of names, for the question has not yet been entered upon, and can be solved only after collecting the materials from all the provinces of the Roman empire. In Britain we have, for instance, a *cuneus Frisiorum Aballavensium* at Papcastle (C.I.L. VII, 415, 416, *Lapidarium* Nos. 906, 907; and see woodcuts, pp. 162 and 164) in the time of Gordianus (A.D. 242), which



assumed afterwards the surname of *Philippianus* (Ephem. Epigr. III. p. 130). Quite in the same way our *cuneus Frisiorum* assumed the honorary name *Alexandrianus*, which is written in full and admits of no doubt. But this name which supplies us with the date of our inscription—viz., the reign of Severus Alexander (A.D. 222–235)—is hardly ever given alone, but nearly always combined with the other surname of that Emperor, Severus. Therefore there can scarcely be any doubt that an abbreviation of this second name has been given, or at least was intended to be given, in the inscription before that of *Alexandrianus*. If there is really *SER* on the stone, as there seems to be, two ways of explanation for that unusual form are open. It may be considered either as a mere blunder of the stone-cutter for *Severiani*, or rather for *SEBERiani*—a rustic spelling not altogether unusual, or *Serianus* may also be taken as a rustic contraction from *Severianus*, to be compared with *consuerunt* for *con-sueverunt*, and *deinus* for *divinus*; as *v* between two vowels in Latin of the early and late epoch is often left out in pronouncing and spelling. Which of the two ways of explanation may be considered the safer must be left to grammarians for final decision. Now there remains the word *VER*. Mr. Watkin takes it for an abbreviation of a name which in the list of stations on Hadrian's Wall

is given by the anonymous geographer of Ravenna. This list of routes, taken from a Roman map of about the third century, similar to the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, but translated first into Greek, and afterwards, about the end of the seventh century, retranslated into Latin by an utterly ignorant writer, contains indeed an abbreviated list of the stations *per lineam Valli*, similar to that of the *Notitia Dignitatum*. In the *Notitia* (Occid. XL, p. 211, 39-41 in Seeck's edition) we have an index of the troops stationed there in this order:—

*Procolitia*

*Borcovicio*<sup>1</sup>

*Vindolana*.

The Ravennas<sup>2</sup> gives

*Brocoliti*

*Velurtion*

*Vindolande*.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that by his corrupt *Velurtion* he meant *Borcovicium*. That there was in the south of England, near *Aquæ Sulis*, Bath, a mansion named *Verlucione* in the Antoninian Itinerary, is of no consequence at all; for that a military corps, garrisoned at *Borcovicium*, should have assumed a local surname from a distant place, is quite inadmissible: if the *cuneus Frisiorum* stationed at BORCOVICIUM had such a name at all it must have been *Borcovicien-sium*, as another *numerus* of the same tribe stationed at ABALLAVA, Papcastle, bore rightly the name of *Aballavensium*. Mr. Watkin's explanation of the VER cannot be accepted (unless we suppose that an older form of the name of the station, *Vercovicium*, may have existed); it may be added that local names, generally, according to a very true feeling of convenience, are not abbreviated in epigraphical texts, except in the non-essential parts of the word. But I do not hesitate to confess that I do not know what it is. I thought of a blunder of the stone-cutter, who may have given VER.SER instead of SEVER; stone-cutters have occasionally strangely misinterpreted the texts

<sup>1</sup> This is, as I observed twelve years ago in the *Corpus*, the spelling of the best manuscripts. The inferior ones only give *Boreovitto* and *Borcovitto*; none *Borcovico* (familiar now to English antiquaries as the form given by the Italian editor of the *Notitia*, Pancirolus), as may be seen from Seeck's edition, the most recent and most correct, Berlin, 1876, p. 211.



given to them for incision. But I prefer, instead of indulging in still wilder fancies, to exercise the more difficult *ars nesciendi*. This is what I can say for the present about the new epigraphical texts, which are certainly highly important ones.

POSTSCRIPT.

A short time later, when this paper was only printed in the newspapers, I gave its substance for the first publication of the newly-discovered monuments in Germany to the *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst* (Vol. III, 1884, p. 120, under the title of



*Altgermanisches aus England*), and Professor Scherer explained his grammatical and historical opinions about the *Tuhanti* and the *Thingsus* and the *Alaesiagae* in a paper read before the Royal Academy of Sciences of Berlin (*Sitzungsberichte der Berliner Akademie*, 1884,

p. 571), in which he pointed out that *Beda* and *Fimmilena* had to be considered most probably as personifications of some of the prominent tasks imposed by Mars Thingsus, and therefore as his companions, the one signifying the bidding or command, the other the quick and clever achievement of the command. At the same time Professor Mommsen proposed the text of the two inscriptions, taken from the newspapers and from Mr. Watkin's article, in the philological journal *Hermes* (Vol. XIX., p. 231), in order to show that the name of *cuneus* given in these inscriptions and in that of Papcastle, which is only a few years younger (C.I.L. VII, n. 415—Ephem. Epigr. III, p. 130; and *Lapidarium*, p. 456, n. 907; and see woodcut, p. 164), to the number of Frisian horsemen, occurs here for the first time in Roman epigraphical and antiquarian tradition, long before the Constantinian reform of the Roman army. It seemed not accidental that Tacitus in his *Germania* (cap. VI.) says of the Germans: *acies per cuneos componitur*. To which Professor Scherer has added some more indications about the *cunei*, a designation of smaller numbers of cavalry not unfrequent in the *Notitia Dignitatum*. All these curious observations, together with some further explanations of the *numen Augusti* worshipped in Britain at the side of other, especially local, divinities, on the other names of the *cuneus Frisiorum*, which seem to have been only *Severianus Alexandrianus* (an explanation approved also by Professor Mommsen), and on the name of the station (*Borcovicium*, to be compared to *Longovicium*, not *Vercovicium*), are exposed in a second article of mine in the above-named periodical, the *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst* (Vol. III, 1884, p. 287), to which Professor Scherer has contributed a new and very interesting note, which I think proper to adjoin in his own words:—

“I am indebted to Professor *Heinzel* in Vienna for having shown me the right way to explain the names *Beda* and *Fimmilena*. *Beda* has to be referred to the *Bodthing*, *Fimmilena* to the *Fimelthing* of the Frisians. *Bodthing* is the general court of justice, to which there was given, with the Frisians, a bidding (*beda*, *bith*, afterwards *bod*, the German *Gebot*). *Fimelthing* is the ‘movable’ judgment, which did not take place regularly, but only when there was a special want for. It was also styled *Nachgericht*, or *Afterding*, and had some other names besides, as *Springding* (see *Thudichum*, *Gau- und Mark-*

*verfassung*, p. 62, and, respecting a possible relation of the Fimelthing to the well-known German *Vehme*, *Jac. Grimm's Rechts-Alterthümer*, p. 838). The two *Alaesiagae*, therefore, are representants of the reverence due to Tius Things in the national assembly; they are the divinities of the peace of the 'thing,' Beda for the Bodthing, Fimmilena (or rather Fimilena) for the Fimelthing. I gave a fuller explanation of this interpretation in a paper read before the Academy of Berlin, on May 29th, but this paper will not be printed; I think to give it a still fuller development and to publish it in the '*Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum.*'"

English readers will, I think, be thankful to Professor Scherer for the curious information about the unexpected illustration of old Teutonic institutions to be derived from the recently discovered Housesteads monuments.

E. HÜBNER.

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(4).—BY PROFESSOR GEORGE STEPHENS, OF COPENHAGEN,

(Honorary Member.)

F.S.A. London and Edinburgh; Hon. Dr. of Letters (Cambridge).

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MY DEAR MR. BLAIR,

Many thanks for the revise ("Roman Monuments at Housesteads") you so kindly sent me. It strikes me—thanks to Mr. John Clayton, Dr. Bruce, and yourself on the one hand, and to Professors Hübner and Scherer on the other—that these two costly stones are now understood, and will be greeted as of special interest in illustrating the god-lore of our Scando-Gothic forefathers.

Possibly I may be allowed to draw yet another little straw to the stack.

Besides a tiny nibble at *GERMANI*, which I think more likely to be *GERMANIÆ*, I would wish to say some words on *THINGSO* and the *Nymphs*.

In my late paper, "Scholia to Prof. Joh. Steenstrup's 'Danelag,'" (in Part 3 of 'Blandinger,' published here by the Universitets-

Jubilæets Danske Samfund) I have collected ancient *Runic* examples of the word ÞING (THING) used in the same sense as at Housesteads, namely, for BATTLE.

As the valuable linguistic publications of this Society are rare in England, I beg to extract the substance of these remarks.

“The Scando-Gothic word ÞING had many meanings, always fluctuating, as usual, in the different folk-lands. Among these in Scandinavia was the particular sense of MOOT, MEETING, in a friendly or unfriendly sense. Thus, on one side a *love-meeting*, *lovers' interview*; on the other a *foe-meeting*, *battle-moot*, combat. This latter signification is frequent in Icelandic, both singly and in compounds, but it has also been found on Swedish rune-stones. The first of these is the Kålstad stone in Upland, and it is one of the best preserved and most authentic in all the North. The inscription as given by me in the *Archæologia* (London, Vol. XLIII, p. 117) in 1871 was excellent. So good were my materials, among them R. Dybeck's Folio, No. 21, it has *only one* error. It has since been found that the E in ÞIKA-LIÞIE was a mistake, the last mark being a final stop (+), not a stung E (+). The whole rendering therefore is:—

“‘STERKAR AUK HIORUARÞE LETU REISA ÞESA STEIN AT FAÞUR SIN KEIRA, SUM UESTR SAT I ÞIKA-LIÞI. KUÞ HIALBI SALU.’

“‘STERKAR EKE HIORUARTH LET RAISE THIS STONE AT [to] FATHER SIN [their] KEIRI, SUM [who] out-WEST [= in England] SAT IN the-THING-LITH [the body-guard]. GOD HELP his - SOUL.’

“Again on the Hasle block, W. Gotland, Sweden [Lilj. 1327, Baut, 979):—

“‘BRANTE RISÞI STIN ÞINSI IFTIR AOSMU, BRUÞUR SIN.

SAR UARÞ ÞREBIN

O TUSTI TKI [= TIKI].’

“‘BRANT RAISED STONE THIS AFTER AOSMU [? = ANSMUND, OSMUND], BROTHER SIN [his].

SA [he] WORTH DREPEN [was slain]

ON [in] the-TUSTI-TING [fight].’

“The broken and defective Aska stone, Södermanland, Sweden (Dybeck, 8vo 17) ends:—

“‘[han anda.]ÞIS

AUSTR [AT ÞIKUM].’

“‘[he out-ONDED = died, fell]

out-EAST AT [in] the-THINGS [battles].’

“This is exactly paralleled by the Fredriksdal stone, Södermanland (Dybeck, 8vo No. 1):—

“KANUBHA LIÞ RAISA STAIN ÞINSA HIBTIB KULAIT, BRUÞUR SIN.  
HAN ANTAPJIS  
AUSTR AT ÞIKUM.’

“In the same way on the monolith at Husby, in Södermanland (Lilj. 935, amended by later drawings), we have:—

“I AUSÞIKI  
IN EAST-THING [*campaigns in Russia*].’

“We have also the Runish names ÞIKBURN [*Breda*, Upland], ÞIKFASTR [*Orsunda*, Upland], ÞIGSLA [*Arhus*, Denmark], as well as the parchment names THYGHULFUS (Dipl. Svec. 2, 602) THINGOLFUS (Dipl. Svec. 1, 700), undoubtedly, as I think, BATTLE-BEAR, FIGHT-FAST, WAR-SLAY [*bold*], COMBAT-WOLF.

“But this ÞINGA-LIÞ [*battle-troop*] can of course be shortened into LIÞ, or LIÞ can be used for the fuller ÞINGA-LIÞ. This we can see from the Täckhammar grave-pillar. Södermanland (Liljegren, No. 892, corrected by later transcripts):—

“AUBIRN RAISÞI STAIN ÞANSI AT KARI. HAN UARÞ TAUÞR OKLATI I LIÞI.’

“AUBIRN RAISED STONE THIS AT [*in minne of*] KARI. HE WORTH DEAD [*died, fell*] *in-ENGLAND*, IN *the-LITH* [*the household troop*].’

“Add a costly formula on the broken Vaksala stone, Upland (Lilj. 194, Baut. No. 394), it ends:—

“NIR [HAN] I L[LIÞ] STIKIR.’

“WHEN-AS HE IN *the-LITH* [*war-levy*] STEEGS [*steps, treads = when he joins the militia called out for foreign service*].’

“This last stone tells us that it was raised by the soldier to HIMSELF QUICK, as was often done. *Living* folk raised their own minne-stone, when they were not sure it would be done by other people— as when they had no near kin, etc.”

Thus, in my eyes, DEO MARTI THINGSO is more fully and exactly TO THE GOD TIW THE WARRIOR. If so, it confirms and clenches from Runic-Scandinavia the happy and masterly identification of Professor Wilhelm Scherer.

Perhaps I may also throw some light on the two Alæasian heroines, BEDE and FIMMILENE, both in the dative, the one a noun, the other formed as a Latin adjective.

BEDE, whose Latin nominative would be BEDA, I look upon as a feminine personification, and in fact the well known antique Scando-Gothic word, Ohg. BATU, BADU, PATU, PATA; O.-Engl. BEADU, BEADO (gen. BEADWE), Norse-Icelandic, BÖD (gen. BÖDVAR), *battle, strife*. We have a crowd of such names in the Eddas, &c., as borne by goddesses or nymphs of war, and some of them, such as HILD, GUNN, DIS, &c.; are common in other Scando-Gothic dialects. This BEDA will therefore quite simply be another synonym for *Bellona*.

As I think we may safely handle the -ENE in FIMMILENE as a mere Latin adjective ending, the word itself is FIMMIL. I take this to be another well-known olden Scando-Gothic vocable, the extinct N.-Icel. FIMBUL, *strong, mighty*. See the word in Cleasby-Vigfusson's Icel.-Engl. Dictionary, and compare the modern German FIMMEL, *an iron bar*, the modern Swedish FIMMEL, *a sledge-hammer*, &c. Consequently FIMMILENA would mean *the heavy spear wielder, the mighty mace-bearer*.

If this be right, both these nymphs were Old-Frisian or Old-Northern Walkyries, choosers of the slain, messengers of the war-god to and from Walhall.

In any case we here get fresh helps to understanding the Scando-Gothic mythology, and these two Romano-British altars thus become doubly valuable to ourselves, as well as to our Scando-Gothic kinsmen.

GEORGE STEPHENS.

*Cheapinghaven, Denmark,*

*April 30th, 1884.*

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(5).—BY MR. JOHN CLAYTON, V.P., F.S.A.

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READ ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 30TH, 1884.

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AT the monthly Meeting, held in December last, the writer of this paper brought under the consideration of this Society three objects of Roman antiquity then lately dug up at the station of Borcovicus. The first, a statuary group, of which, however, a considerable portion had been detached, the main feature being a statue in the garb of a Roman legionary soldier, and two altars apparently dedicated to Mars by

German soldiers serving in the Roman army in a Frisian battalion ; and inasmuch as a Teutonic epithet is applied to the god, and two Teutonic divinities are coupled with him, it seemed expedient to the Society to submit these objects to the consideration of the authorities of the University of Berlin. In the meantime, Mr. Thompson Watkin, of Liverpool, the author of *Roman Lancashire*, a diligent and persevering antiquary, favoured us with a paper on the subject, which was read at our monthly Meeting in January last. We subsequently received an exhaustive paper from Professor Hübner of Berlin, one of the learned men selected for the compilation of the great work the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, who writes English correctly, and speaks it fluently. His paper was read at our monthly Meeting in March last, and has since been revised by him and extended up to the present time.

In the month of June last the resumption took place of the work of excavation at Borcovicus, which was promised at our meeting in December last, when the first object discovered was the missing portion of the sculptured stone, being one side of it, which was found to be less injured by time and exposure than the other side, and it is now clear that the martial figure in the centre had on each side of him a nude figure apparently floating in air, holding in one hand a palm branch, and in the other a garland or chaplet. The pencil of our colleague and secretary, Mr. Blair, has supplied us with an accurate drawing of this portion of the group.<sup>1</sup>

The excavators next came upon a Roman well filled to the brim and to an extent of more than three feet above it, with accumulated earth, in which was found a copious spring of pure water, affording one of many examples of the appreciation by the Romans of the numerous springs which gush from every hill and flow through every valley of western Northumberland. The excavators then exhumed two altars of hewn stone very carefully finished, and ready to receive inscriptions. It seems to have been the practice of the priests of the Pagan temples to keep in store blank altars till they met with a customer who would pay for the privilege of inscribing them. It will be remembered that in the Well of the Temple of the goddess Coventina there were found a dozen blank altars.

<sup>1</sup> This fragment has been replaced and successfully reunited with that portion of the statuary group which was originally found, and which has enabled the engraver to complete the illustration.

On opening out the grass-grown ruins of the Temple of Mars, it was found that our utilitarian predecessors of the middle ages had removed for building purposes a large proportion of the building stones, leaving behind them some of the latter and a large heap of rubbish. The remaining stones have been removed and the rubbish examined, without meeting with other objects.

Several exploratory trenches were cut in various parts of the Chapel Hill, but no buildings could be found *in situ*, and the very foundation stones had been taken up and removed. After four weeks of labour, the excavators took a final leave of the Chapel Hill of Borcovicus.

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## APPENDIX.

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THE following is an abstract by Dr. Hodgkin, of Professor Scherer's paper referred to by Professor Hübner (p. 157):—

The paper, which is an important one, was contributed under the title of "Mars Thingsus" to the Royal Prussian Academy of Science at Berlin (8th May, 1884.)

The title of the paper is suggested by the two altars recently discovered at Borcovicus, and dedicated (1) "To the god Mars Thingsus, and the two Alaesiagae, Beda and Fimmilena, and the Numen of Augustus, by the German citizens, the Tuihanti." (2) "To the god Mars, and the two Alaesiagae, and the Numen of Augustus, by the German citizens, the Tuihanti, the Cuneus of the Frisians, named after Severus (?) Alexander."

Almost every word in these inscriptions is an enigma, but it is the opinion of several German experts that the solution of these enigmas is not hopeless, and may throw an interesting light on some questions of Teutonic Archæology.

1.—The CUNEUS of the Frisians. Scherer appears to agree with Hübner that the adoption of the term *cuneus* into the Roman army marks the influence of German military usages brought in by the *federati*, and in this point of view it is interesting that the first Cuneus that we read of in the Imperial army should be a *Cuneus Frisiorum*. For the employment of the Cuneus among the Germans, see Tacitus, *Germania*, VI. VII. Scherer thinks that in the barbarian armies each nationality (*Civitas*) furnished one Cuneus, larger or smaller of course, according to the size of the political unit which equipped it.

2.—The TUIHANTI, according to Scherer, occupied the district now known as *Twenthe* in the Netherlands. *Tui*=Two; *H* is a mere Roman corruption; *Anti* is as yet an unexplained termination, but is found also in the name *Thrianta*, which appears to be compounded with *Three* as *Tuihanti* with *Two*.



3.—The most interesting name in the inscriptions is that of *MARS THINGSUS*. Of this second word Scherer considers the root to be *thingsa*, a similar form to the Langobardic *thinæ*, but best known under the form *thing*, the almost universal Teutonic word for a *public meeting*. What our Saxon ancestors called a *Folk-mote*, was by most of the German tribes called a *Folksthing*. We know from Tacitus (*Germania*, c. VII.) that the public meeting of the tribe was placed under the special protection of the gods, and that the priests had a great share in conducting its deliberations. [This was probably done for the preservation of order, and to prevent the blood-feuds from leading to a "free fight" on such occasions.]

After a discussion, too long to be here reproduced, Scherer decides that *Thingsus* is not the name of a separate god, but an epithet of *Tius*, who, as is well-known, is the Teutonic equivalent of Mars (whence our *Tuesday* is the translation of *Dies Martis*). It is singular, however, to find the war-god made the custodian of the peaceable public meeting. This and other considerations lead Scherer to the conclusion that we have here the effects of a great religious revolution in the dawn of Teutonic history. In later times Odin is the All-father, the Supreme Ruler of gods and men, holding the place of the Greek Zeus. But in earlier times, as he contends, the Supreme Ruler was *Tius*, whose very name is connected with Zeus [and *Deus*?]; and it was in this capacity that he was probably made the president of the rude Parliament of his worshippers. When, afterwards, Odin (whom Tacitus looked upon as the German equivalent of Mercury) was elevated to the supreme place in the Teutonic Pantheon, and *Tius* was degraded to the secondary rank of a mere war-god, he still, as Mars, retained his connection with the popular assembly. Thus we get *Mars Thingsus*.

4.—As for the *ALAI SIAGAE*, Scherer is not able to offer any very definite conclusion. Philologically, the name may mean "the all-honoured ones." *BEDA* may be the personification of prayer [compare the German words *bitte* and *beten*, and our own *bedesman*.] *FIMMILENA*, for grammatical reasons, is very puzzling. He suggests, but with much hesitation, that it may be connected with an Old Norse word *FIMR*, "clever, skilful."

He looks upon the *Alaisiagae*, not as Valkyr-maidens, handmaids of slaughter, but as the all-honoured goddesses of order and eloquence, who ensure that the *thing* shall be held in a proper manner, and enforce the execution of its decrees [in fact a kind of deified "Usages of Parliament."]

He then discusses the effigies on the altars, which, he thinks, at least do not contradict his hypothesis. Of the two figures on either side of *Mars Thingsus*, one, according to Hübner, holds a wreath\*; this is the honour which the goddesses can bestow: the other a staff or sword; this represents the discipline which they enforce.

The writer modestly puts these conjectures forward for what they may be worth. He is assured by a Celtic scholar, Mr. Zimmer, that at least no safer footing for the interpretation of the names can be obtained from Celtic etymologies. Meanwhile "Stubborn doubt is in such matters better than over hasty belief."

\* Both figures hold wreaths.