

V.—A NEW ALTAR FROM WALLSEND DEDICATED TO
JUPITER.

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[Read on the 25th May, 1892; since added to.]

THE inscription discussed in the following note was found in May, 1892, in the newly-made Wallsend allotments ground, in garden 20 belonging to Mr. A. Arnott. This site, which is technically in Walker, though close to the Wallsend boundary, has only lately come under cultivation, and appears worthy of archaeologists' attention, as it has already yielded, besides the altar here to be noticed, a figure of Mercury with a fragmentary inscription beginning *D(eo) M(ercurio)*, and various carved and worked stones.¹ The altar now under notice is of local freestone, 35 in. high by 16 in. wide and deep; the letters in the first line are 2 in. high, in the last $1\frac{1}{2}$ in., in the other lines 1- $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. I am indebted to Mr. R. Blair, F.S.A., for a squeeze of the stone, which I have also examined myself. Descriptions have appeared in print in the *Newcastle Daily Journal* of May 17th, 1892, in the *Westdeutsches Korrespondenzblatt*, xi. par. 57, in the *Proceedings* of the London Society of Antiquaries (xiv. (1892) p. 171), and in those of this Society (v. 164, 166). The stone itself, I understand, remains in the possession of Mr. Arnott.

The reading, which appears to be beyond doubt, is:—*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) | Coh(ors) iiii Lin | gonum eq(uitata), | cui attendit | Iul(ius) Honor | atus (centurio) leg(ionis) ii | Aug(ustae) | v(otum) s(olvit) U(ibens) m(erito)*. There are several points of interest in this inscription:—

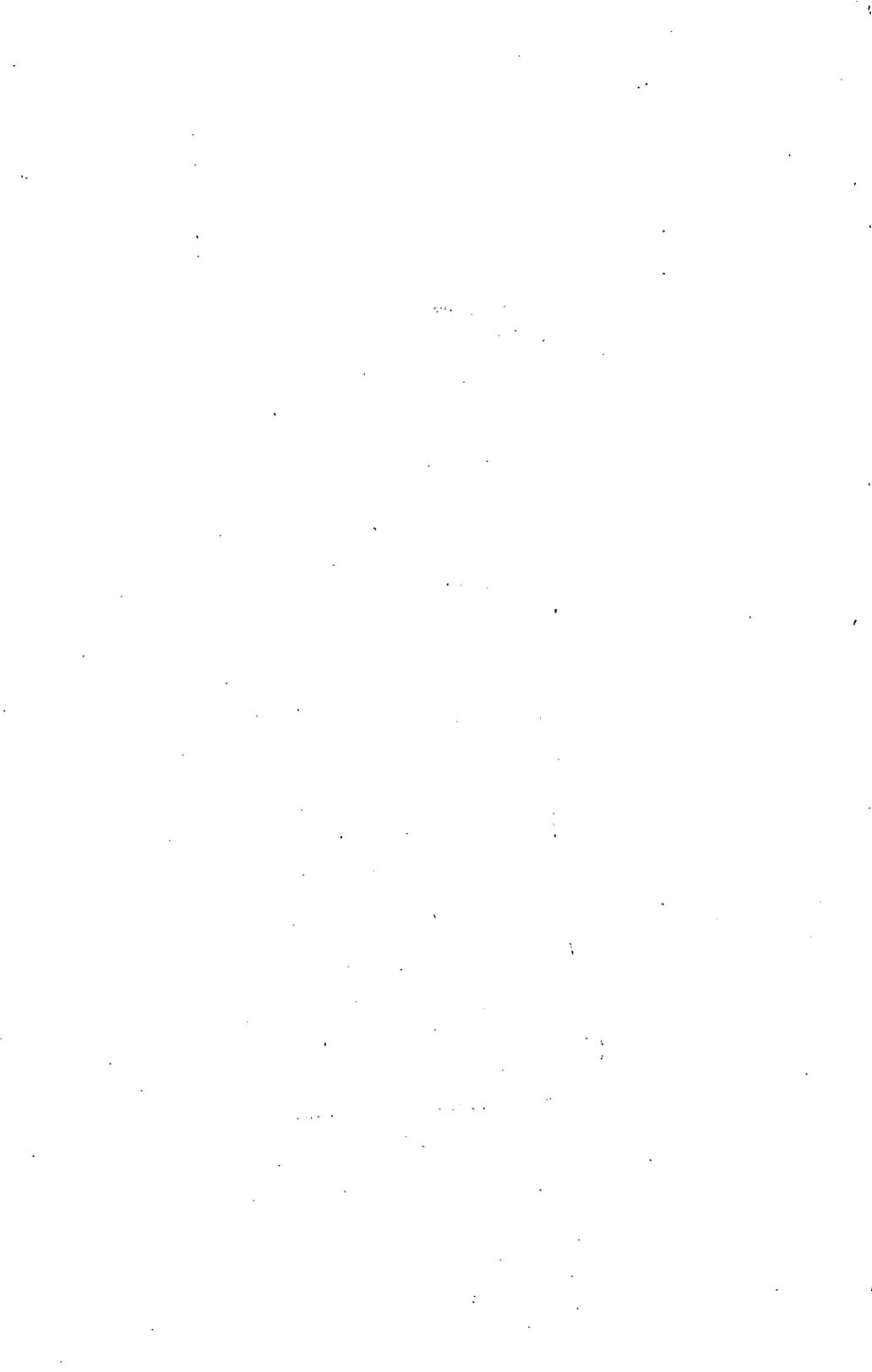
1. The altar was dedicated by the Fourth Cohort of Lingones, a regiment of auxiliaries of which we have some other mentions. We know from military discharges (*privilegia militum*) of January A.D. 103 and of A.D. 146² that it was in Britain at those two dates. We have a statement in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, the British portion of which

¹ *Proc.* v. pp. 166, 187.

² *C.I.L.* vii. 1193; *Eph.* v. p. 96, vii. No. 1117.



ROMAN ALTAR TO JUPITER,
Discovered at Wallsend.



was composed probably about A.D. 300, that it was stationed at SEGEDUNUM, or Wallsend, the most easterly fort along Hadrian's Wall (*Occ.* xl. 33, ed. Seeck); and we have an altar, dedicated to Jupiter by its *praefectus*, which was found a little east of Wallsend, at Tynemouth, in digging out the foundations of a building connected with the priory church. When the cohort came to Britain we do not know. The guesses of Urlichs and others, who try to find a place for it in the army of Agricola, are, and must remain, pure guesses; but we have no reason to suppose that the Roman garrison was increased during the years between the end of the governorship of Agricola, A.D. 85 and A.D. 103, and consequently we may suppose that this regiment, like many others, came to Britain tolerably early in the occupation and remained here till its end. It is, indeed, possible that it, or some soldiers from it, took part in Hadrian's Jewish war (A.D. 132-5). Statius Priscus Licinius, subsequently governor of Britain (A.D. 161-2) and commander in Armenia, began his career as prefect of this cohort, and, apparently while holding this post, was decorated by Hadrian for services *in expeditione Iudaica*, and hence Schürer and others assume, though the conclusion is not absolutely necessary, that the cohort was engaged in the siege.³ But this absence was, at the best, a temporary one.

2. The epithet *equitata* implies that the cohort included mounted men—roughly about a quarter of its number. This arrangement was often adopted for the Roman auxiliary infantry: thus, at least, six out of ten cohorts in Numidia were *equitatae*. It appears mainly on frontiers, and was doubtless intended to provide cavalry for an emergency and to facilitate rapid movement of infantry. It is, however, rare in other, later, armies, though there is a possible parallel in the Guides of our Punjaub Frontier Force. The epithet *equitata*, which seems to have become official about A.D. 120, is added or omitted in what seems to be a very arbitrary manner, and we can therefore draw no inference from the fact that it is omitted in our other mentions of the fourth cohort of Lingones.

3. The *Notitia* tells us the cohort was stationed at SEGEDUNUM,

³ *C.I.L.* vi. 1523; Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Christi*, i. 574, note 96.

which, as has always been fairly certain, was at Wallsend. The only question is, whether there was or was not a subsidiary fort at Tynemouth, where two inscriptions have been found: one of a soldier in the sixth legion, the other, already mentioned, of a *praefectus* of this cohort. There do not appear to be any real traces of a fort at the place; but Thomas Hodgson, and after him Dr. Bruce and Dr. Hübner, have accepted its existence as adequately proved by the commanding situation, and the occurrence of the two inscriptions mentioned.⁴ The case is perhaps not so strong as it looks. It is never safe to argue that a commanding site with a wide prospect must have been occupied by the Romans. Their ideas of suitable positions were vastly different from ours, and for defence of the river mouth the South Shields fort was surely enough. And there does not appear to be any serious objection to the supposition that the two stones were brought from Wallsend to Tynemouth. It may be easier and cheaper to-day to cut stone on the spot than to transport it from the neighbourhood; but in the times when, for instance, Tynemouth priory was built, carriage was cheap and stone-cutting comparatively difficult, and in this case, where water-carriage was available, it need not surprise us if two hewn stones, detached and of movable size, were moved some four or five miles for a new building. I am therefore inclined to believe that, as pretty certainly at Hexham and at Jarrow, so at Tynemouth, Roman stones have been moved to a medieval edifice. Of such transport by water we have perhaps a relic in the illegible altar found a few years ago in the Tyne near Hexham (C. C. Hodges, *Abbey of St. Andrew, Hexham*, p. 4), and now in Hexham abbey slype. One may recall, too, the story told by Bede of how St. Cuthbert brought safe to shore certain log-rafts which were being floated down the Tyne *usibus monasterii*, for a monastery near the mouth on the south bank, and were in danger of being blown out to sea.⁵ There are other early

⁴ Hodgson, *Arch. Ael.* i. (1822), 231; Bruce, *Iapid.* Nos. 1, 2; Hübner, *C.I.L.* vii. 493, 494.

⁵ Bede, *Vita Cuthberti*, 3; Green, *Making of England*, p. 316, in telling the story, says the wood was for 'the construction' of the monastery. It has been doubted whether Bede meant the Newcastle Tyne or the river by Tynningham (see Horsley, *Brit.* p. 104). In *The Metrical Life of St. Cuthbert* (Surtees Soc. 87, p. 34), recently edited by the Rev. J. T. Fowler, F.S.A., the place is identified with South Shields, as is clear from the mention in the following extract of the chapel of St. Hilda, now the parish church of that town:—

references, I believe, to the use of the Tyne for transport, and it may even be that rafts with inscriptions, brought down the stream when no saint was at hand, have drifted out to sea, and that their precious burdens are now lying deep in the North Sea. Further discoveries may establish the existence of a Roman fort at Tynemouth; at present the balance of evidence seems to me wholly and absolutely insufficient to prove it. The same seems to me the case with the camp which Dr. Bruce, on strength of the name, puts at Blake Chesters, between Wallsend and Tynemouth.

4. Of Julius Honoratus, so far as I can find, nothing more is known: but the description of him is worthy of notice. The phrase *cui attendit* appears to be unique, and is not very easy to explain, but the meaning is clear.⁶ We have here another instance of a legionary centurion commanding an auxiliary troop. The centurion, always an important officer in the legion, seems to have acquired additional power and prestige during the second century, and notably in the military reforms of Septimius Severus. Accordingly, we find the centurion, in a certain number of cases, detached from his legion and put over a cohort instead of the regular *praefectus*, just as conversely it became usual, after A.D. 200, to commence the equestrian career with the centurionate instead of the *praefectura cohortis*, which had formed the regular first step in the first two centuries. The rank of legionary centurion and auxiliary *praefectus* became equal, and the centurion sometimes takes the prefect's place. There may be a further significance in the change. For instance, Mommsen once suggested that we have examples in such cases of the tendency to appoint the

'In takenyng [token] of this thing we rede,
Be [by] the tellyng of saint bede,
how sometyne was a monastery
That eftir was a nonry,
Bot a litil fra tynemouth'
That mynster stode in to [rowards] the south'
Whare saint hilde chapell' standes nowe,
Thar it stode sometyne trewe.'

The date of this version (A.D. 1450) is too late to give much weight to its authority; but it is more reasonable to suppose that Bede meant the Newcastle river. Mr. Fowler leaves the question unsettled.

⁶ Presumably *attendere cohorti* means 'to look after a cohort,' but I can find no proper parallel. Nearest are the post-Augustan uses with the dative (e.g., *deus attendit votis*, 'listen to prayers' (Silius, viii. 591); and, especially that in Suetonius, *eloquentiae attendere*, 'to pay attention to, to study, eloquence, and the like).

higher officers from the ranks instead of from the upper classes ; but the evidence is as yet hardly sufficient to let us decide this point, though the tendency itself was undoubtedly at work from the middle of the second century onwards.?

It may be worth while to add the other instances in Britain of centurions commanding auxiliary troops:—

ELLENBOROUGH : *M. Censorius . . . Cornelianus, centurio leg. [x. f.] retensis, prae[positus] cohortis i. Hispanorum.*—*C.I.L.* vii. 371.

CHESTERS : *Aurelius Athenio (?) , centurio, curator alae ii. Asturum.*—*C.* 587.

BIRDOSWALD : *Cohors i. aelia Dacorum cuius curam agit Iulius Marcellinus, centurio legionis ii. Augustae.*—*Eph.* vii. 1071 ; *Arch. Ael.* xii. 288. On lately examining this inscription at Birdoswald farmhouse, I thought to detect a centurial mark before *leg. ii.* One had previously assumed that it had been omitted accidentally.

NETHER CRAMOND : *Cohors i. Tungrorum, instante Ulpio S . . . [centurione] legionis xx. Valeriae Victricis.*—*C.* 1084. The reading after *S* is uncertain ; but it is probable the centurion's mark stood there.

ROUGH CASTLE : *Cohors vi. Nerviorum c.e. Flavius Betto centurio legionis xx. v.v.*—*C.* 1092. The exact expansion of *c.e.* is unknown ; but it must mean much the same as *c.e.a.* in the Birdoswald inscription above, and may possibly be the same, *curam-agit* being (as seems sometimes to be the case) treated as one word.

5. I do not think it possible to fix the date of the inscription, though the occurrence of a centurion as auxiliary *praefectus* suggests something not earlier than the middle of the second century. The lettering is not specially careless, and Dr. Hübner's statement (*Proc.* v. 164) that there are no stops is incorrect ; but I should not be disposed to argue any date from these details. Still less am I inclined to refer it to some restoration of the Wall by Septimius Severus. We have yet to prove that Septimius Severus had any hand in extensive building operations along the Wall.

⁷ See Mommsen, *Archäologische Zeitung*, 1869 ; there are also rather inconclusive articles by Karbe (*Dissertationes Halenses*, iv. 305) and A. Müller (*Philologus*, xli. 482).