

XXVI.—ROMAN INSCRIPTIONS FROM AESICA.

By F. HAVERFIELD.

[Read on the 29th September, 1897.]

The excavations which were carried out last summer at Great-

chesters (*Aesica*) resulted in the discovery, among other objects, of seven inscribed stones, of which three are tolerably perfect and four fragmentary. All were found in the same quarter of the fort, in some rooms immediately south-west of the arched chamber opened in 1894, and nearly in the centre of the fort, though perhaps outside the actual *praetorium* to which that chamber doubtless belonged. The three most perfect stones, and one of the fragments (nos. 1-4), and a large illegible altar, were found inserted as building material into walls of Roman construction. The following readings rest on copies made by myself :—

1.—Red sandstone tombstone, twenty-four inches wide by fifty inches high with two and a half inch letters : the inscription is perfect, but the top, on which is an urn in low relief, is broken. It had been used as building material



No. 1. 4' 2" × 2' 0".

to form the foundation of a wall and the roof of a drain : the next two inscriptions were lying side by side with it, all of them face

upwards. Nos. 1 and 2 seem to have been more or less protected from damage, especially no. 2. No. 3 has apparently been exposed to the tread of feet, and formed part of a pavement.

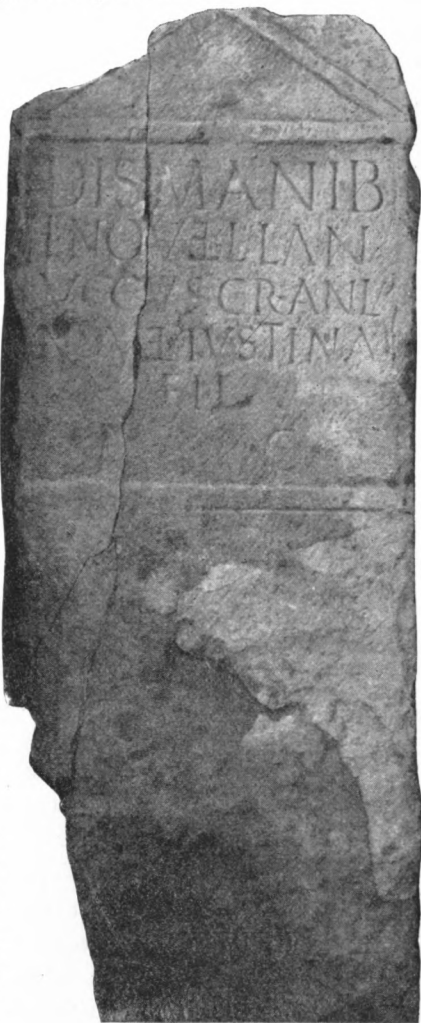
D M
AVRELIAE
CAVL . . .
AVR . LIA
S . . . ILLA
SORORI . .
RISSIME
VIXIT . AN .
XV M IIII .

*D(is) M(anibus) Aureliae
Caul , Aur[e]lia S . . illa
sorori [ca]rissim(a)e vixit
an(nos) xv m(enses) iii.*

‘Erected by Aurelia S
to the memory of her dear sister,
Aurelia Cau . . . who lived 15
years and 4 months.’

The two *cognomina* cannot be supplied with certainty. The first may have been *Caulia*, though that is properly a *nomen*, not a *cognomen*; for the second several choices are possible, *Salvilla*, *Sextilla*, *Sporilla*, *Syrilla*, and others.

2.—Red sandstone tombstone, twenty-four inches wide by sixty-three inches high, broken at the top. The inscription, in a panel twenty inches square, is perfect: the letters, which are very clear and well shaped, are three inches high in line one, two and one-eighth in the other lines. The stone was found lying between nos. 1 and 3, utilized in the same way as no. 1.



No. 2. 5' 3" × 2' 0".

*Dis · manib(us) L. Novel(lius) Llanuccus? c(ivis) R(omanus),
an(norum) lx. Novel(lia) Iustina fil(ia)
f(aciendum) c(uravit).*

‘To the memory of L. Novellius
Llanuccus, Roman citizen, aged 60 :
erected by his daughter, Novellia
Justina.’

D I'S M A N I B
L · NOVEL · LLAN
VCCVS · C · R · AN L^x
NOVEL · IVSTINA
F I L
F C

Novellius Llanuccus was probably a barbarian who acquired the Roman franchise, and retained, with his Roman *nomen*, his barbarian name as *cognomen*. The exact spelling of that name is open to a little doubt. According to the punctuation of the stone, it is Llanuccus. The initial double ‘Ll’ is familiar enough in modern Welsh, but I can find no ancient parallels, except two ogams from South Ireland, to which professor Rhys has called my attention. Ogams, however, are hardly near enough to Roman inscriptions to give certainty, and it is possible that the sculptor of our stone put his point wrong, writing ‘Novel · Llanuccus,’ but meaning ‘Novell · Lanuccus.’ Whatever the initial, the name appears to be Celtic : ‘-uccus’ is a common Celtic ending, seen, for example, in the potters’ names Caratuccus, Uniuccus, and comparable, probably, with the ending ‘-iccus,’ which appears in the correct spelling of Boadicea’s name, Boudicca. Lanus, as Dr. Holder tells me, occurs on a Rhenish inscription.

The lettering of the stone is good, and (if a guess be permitted) can hardly be later than the middle of the second century. Two other indications agree with, if they do not suggest, an early date. The name Novellius, common in Cisalpine Gaul, occurs often, perhaps most often, in the first century (see *e.g.* *C.I.L.* v. 2452, 5875), and the mention of Roman citizenship implies that the tombstone was erected at a date when Roman citizenship had not become universal or nearly universal in the provinces ; that is, that it is earlier, rather than later, than the second half of the second century.

3.—Fragment of a large ansate slab in red sandstone, now thirty-two inches long by sixteen inches at its highest. It once bore an imperial inscription in letters one and one-eighth inches high, but is now almost illegible. It was found lying next to No. 2 ; it had been utilized like it and No. 1, but belonged to the floor of the room more than to the wall. It can hardly be earlier in date than Pius, if PI is part of that name.

IM
PI
PI

4.—Red sandstone altar, forty inches high, twenty inches wide, having, in addition to other ornamentation at the top, a line of ‘dog-tooth’ ornament. The letters (two and one-eighth and two and one-fourth inches high) are in a panel of twenty by sixteen inches; they are very slender, IELT being almost identical, and the stops, if I have read right, are promiscuous. Mr. J. P. Gibson tells me he saw this stone unearthed: it formed part of the south wall of the room in which nos. 1, 2, and 3 had also been utilized as building material.

I O M
DOLICENOLV
CIVS · MAXIM
IVS GAE · T · VLIC
VS · LEG · XX · VV
V . . M

I(ovi o(ptimo)
m(aximo) Dolic(h)eno
Lucius Maximus Gae-
tulicus (centurio) leg(io-
nis) XX V. V., v(otum)
[s(olvit) l(ibens)]
m(erito).

‘Dedicated to Iup-
piter Dolichēnus by L.
Maximius Gaetulicus,
centurion of the Twen-
tieth legion.’



No. 4. 3' 4" × 1' 8".

I do not think it possible to date this inscription. Maximius is a moderately common name occurring in many places in the second and third centuries. The worship of Dolichenus belongs mainly to the same two centuries.

5.—Fragment of an imperial dedication, fifteen inches high by eighteen inches broad, with fairly well shaped letters: P CAES found lying loose near the room containing no. 1—4. MAX

Im]p Caes . . . Max[imus . . . p(ius) f(elix) A[ug? P F A

The inscription is plainly later than the middle of the second century: it might belong to Caracalla for instance, or to Severus Alexander, both of whom are well represented among the Wall inscriptions. Septimius Severus, of whom some might think, does not appear to have born the title 'Felix.'

6.—Top right-hand corner of an imperial dedication, now five and a half by five and a half inches, found lying loose near the other inscription. The stone is the local millstone grit. Some marks on the top suggest that it was the base of a statuette, or similar object. The surviving letters, one and five-eighth inches high, are:—



No. 6.

$5\frac{1}{2}'' \times 5\frac{1}{2}''$.

...EVERI
....SAR
.....SE

Severi is plain in line one; SAR may be the end of *Caesar* or beginning of *Sarmaticus*. The inscription plainly belongs to the first part of the third century, but whether to Septimius Severus, or to

Caracalla (*Severi fil*), or to Severus Alexander, cannot be determined. The third line is uncertain.

7.—Fragment of millstone grit, thirteen inches by fifteen inches, forming the lower right-hand part of an altar, with four lines of not very legible letters two and a half inches high. It was found lying loose inside a room a few feet west of the arched chamber.

*]nus (centurio) leg(ionis) [. . . curam] agens
curua . . . a]ram dicavit . . .*

NVS 5 LEG
AGENS CVRVA
RAM DICAUIT
| | | | M

The legionary centurion whose name ended in *-nus* was apparently in charge of the auxiliary troop garrisoning *Aesica*, according to a practice not uncommon in the second and third centuries (see *Arch. Ael.* vol. xvi. pp. 79, 80). The letters after *agens* are not quite certain, and their sense is obscure.

The most interesting feature in this epigraphic find is the occur-

rence of Roman tombstones and altars inserted as building material into walls of Roman construction. When the group of buildings near the centre of the fort, which was excavated this summer, was erected or re-erected, tombstones were brought in from the cemetery outside the fort, probably south of it, and, with stray altars, were used for walling and flooring. This use of tombstones is by no means unparalleled. The examination of the north city wall at Chester (Deva), some years ago, revealed the fact that the interior of the lower courses, which are of Roman construction, was full of Roman sepulchral slabs. Tombstones seem also to have been built into the Roman walls of London and Chichester. As M. Schuermans has told us, they have undoubtedly been utilized for the Roman walls of several continental towns in Gaul, and at Neumagen, near Trier, they have helped to provide material for a fourth-century fortress. Most of these instances belong to the end of the third and of the fourth century, when the barbarians were overrunning the western world; but Deva and Aesica may be earlier. With respect to Deva, epigraphic evidence shows that the use is not earlier than about A.D. 150, and prof. Hübner and myself have independently assigned it to Septimius Severus. This, of course, is little more than a guess: the one certainty is the *terminus a quo* of *circa* 150. With respect to the Aesica finds, there is even less evidence. The imperial inscription (No. 2) is tantalizingly illegible, as the important parts of inscriptions usually are, and the various indications noted above do little more than suggest that the inscriptions, as a whole, may belong to the second century. For the present, at any rate, it is safest to conclude that the building for which these stones were utilized was erected, or, it may be, re-erected, perhaps at the end of the second century, perhaps in the first half of the third century, for example under Severus Alexander, when building was undoubtedly done at Aesica. A later date, such as the age of Constantine, seems, under the circumstances, to be less probable.

ROMAN INSCRIPTION AT SOUTH SHIELDS.

Mr. Blair has asked me, as an appendix to my notes on the *Aesica* inscriptions, to describe a small inscription lately found at South Shields, of which he has sent me a drawing and a squeeze. It is an