

## XII.—ON AN ALTAR DEDICATED TO THE *ALAISIAGAE*.

[Read on the 26th April, 1922.]

1.—By R. C. BOSANQUET, F.S.A.

The Chapel-hill, a ridge of rock rising above the marshy valley to the south of the fort, seems to have been the religious centre of the Roman settlement at Housesteads. Altars and sculptures have been found on and around it from the seventeenth century onwards. The altar to be described was discovered early in October, 1920 by Mr. Thomas Thompson, the custodian of *Bor-covicus*, who has spent most of his life in the service of the late Mr. John Clayton and his successors. In the hollow north of the Chapel-hill, a few yards west of the spot where he helped to unearth the dedications to *Mars Thincsus* and the *Alaïsiagae* found in 1883,<sup>1</sup> he noticed a worked stone projecting from soft ground which had been trampled by cattle. It proved to be an altar bearing a much weathered inscription. He removed it to the wooden cabin within the fort, where it now is. In view of its exceptional interest it deserves a place in the museum at Chesters, where the companion monuments are preserved.

The discovery was reported in the *Newcastle Journal* (11 Oct., 1920) by our member Lieut. Col. G. R. B. Spain, who saw the stone still encrusted with mud but was able to read the first lines. In June, 1921, Mr. M. R. Hull copied the inscription and printed a note on it in the *Durham University Journal*, 1921, pp. 254-5. His version was not wholly satisfactory, and at the suggestion of Mr. Parker Brewis and Mr. Spain I visited Housesteads with them on 12 March, when Mr. Brewis took the excellent photograph

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. Ael.*, 2nd s., x, 148-172, plates i-iii, from careful drawings by our senior secretary, Mr. Robert Blair; *Eph. Epig.* vii, pp. 323-4, nos. 1040, 1041. See note in *Proc. Soc. Ant. Newc.* (Oct., 1920), 3 ser., x, p. 258, of the discovery; and also p. 288.

reproduced on the opposite page. I have had the advantage of comparing my reading with that of Mr. R. G. Collingwood, who examined the stone at my request and cleared up the difficult reading of line 8. I have also been in correspondence with Professor W. E. Collinson of Liverpool, and through his kind offices have received from Professor Theodor Siebs, of Breslau, the interesting notes printed on page 192), and a brief comment of his own (p. 197).

The altar is 34 inches high, the base and capital 14 inches wide. The material, a close-grained, yellowish freestone, resembles that of the monuments found in 1883. The letters are less well cut, and the A and L approximate to cursive forms, which may point to a slightly later date, no doubt in the third century.

1	D ABVS	<i>Deabus</i>
	ALAISIA	<i>Alaisia-</i>
	GIS·BAV	<i>gis Bau-</i>
	DIHILLIE	<i>dihillie</i>
5	Ɔ·FRIAGA	<i>et Friaga-</i>
	BI·Ɔ·N·AVG	<i>bi et n(uminibus) Aug(ustorum)</i>
	N·HNAV	<i>n(umerus) Hnau-</i>
	DIFRIDI	<i>difridi</i>
9	V·S·L·M	<i>v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).</i>

In l. 1 the first letter is rather far from the edge of the stone, owing to a flaw which is apparent in the photograph. The second letter is very faint, but is probably E rather than V.

In l. 3 the puncture after BAV seems to be accidental, not a stop. Stops in this and the companion altars are in line with the middle of the letters.

L. 8 is much worn and the letters FR are faint, but, I think, certain. We may translate 'Dedicated to the Goddesses Alaisiagae, Baudihillie and Friagabi, and to the divinity of the emperors, by the corps of Hnaudifridus.' The formula recalls that on the larger of the stones found in 1883, which runs: *Deo Marti Thincso<sup>2</sup> et*

<sup>2</sup> *Thincso* rather than *Thingso*; the G of lines 5 and 8 is quite different from this c. For this title of Mars see *Arch. Ael.*, x, 155, ff., and Professor Siebs's paper following mine.



*duabus Alaisiagis Bede et Fimmilene et n(uminibus) Aug(ustorum) Germ(ani) cives Tuihanti v.s.l.m.* = 'Dedicated to the God Mars Thincsus and to the two Alaisiagae, Bede and Fimmilene, and to the divinity of the Emperors, by Germans of the tribe of Tuihanti.'

You will observe that in place of the names *Bede et Fimmilene* the new altar gives the *Alaisiagae* two new appellations, *Baudihillie et Fria-gabi*, and that it omits Mars, who appears on both the other inscrip-

tions. It will be convenient to quote the second also: *Marti et duabus Alaisiagis et n(uminibus) Aug(ustorum) Ger(man)i cives Tuihanti cunei Frisiorum ver. ser. Alexandriani votum solveru[nt] libent[es]*. Here the 'Germans of the tribe of Tuihanti' are further described as '(soldiers) of the Alexandrian

troop of Frisians.' *Alexandrianus*, an honorary title derived from the name of the Emperor Severus Alexander (A.D. 222—235), is commonly coupled with *Severianus*, and it is probable that the puzzling abbreviations *ver. ser.* conceal this title. Either *ver. ser.* is a mistake for *Sever* or *ser.* is a mistake for *Sev.* In the latter case *ver.* may be a local title; Mommsen suggested *Ver(coviciani)*, Vercovicium being a possible variant of *Borcovicium*, the name of the fort. For another suggestion *ver(edarii) ser(vi)*, see *Arch. Ael.*, 2nd ser., XXV, 203, note 13. The Tuihanti who served in this Frisian corps were probably of German rather than Frisian stock; the district from which they came, still called Twenthe, lies just within the eastern frontier of Holland, near Oldenzaal.

A third monument was found with these two inscriptions and is figured on plate 1 of Mr. John Clayton's article (*Arch. Ael.*, 2nd ser., x, 148), a monolithic arch or door-head. When complete, it measured about 5 feet 8 inches horizontally, the breadth of the arch-stone at either side being  $12\frac{1}{2}$  inches and of the opening 3 feet 7 inches. It is square in section,  $12\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick as well as broad. Its surface is sculptured in relief, rising at the crown of the arch in a kind of niche which frames the figure of an armed god, evidently Mars, holding shield and spear and attended by a goose. To right and left are male genii. There is no doubt about their sex; I emphasize this because it has been suggested that they may represent the Alaisiagae grouped like attendant victories on either side of the god. Each holds a torch in one hand, raised towards the centre, and a wreath in the other. Their legs are crossed rather awkwardly; did the sculptor copy this pose from the torch-bearers in the adjoining sanctuary of Mithras?

So far as I know it has never been pointed out that the larger of the inscribed stones found with this arch, that bearing the name of Mars Thincsus, is a pillar rather than an altar. It is comparatively slender, 6 feet 1 inch in height, 2 feet wide across the capital,

1 foot 5 inches across the inscribed shaft. The top, which is only roughly dressed, shows no *focus*, but clear traces of a long dowel-hole, running parallel to the front, 10 or more inches long and 4 inches from back to front. Behind this sinking the back of the stone has been violently broken away, as may be seen on plate II of the original publication. Now if we examine the right-hand end of the arch-stone—the left-hand is missing—we find that it has been cut out to receive a similar dowel, and that the cavity is exposed on the outer edge by a large conchoidal fracture, once more the result of violence.<sup>3</sup> One is tempted to infer that the arch was supported by two such piers and that the second may still await discovery. But it is also possible that the *Thincsus* pillar supported a statue of the god and is quite independent of the arch. Mr. Thompson's recollection is that this stone and the *ver. ser.* altar were found lying flat, side by side, in the level ground at the foot of the hill, and the arch a few feet higher up the slope. This suggests that they had been overthrown by the enemy, and afterwards buried by Roman hands to preserve them from further injury. The new altar, which was found in a nearly upright position, may have been buried at the same time. The supplementary examination described by Mr. Clayton in a postscript to his paper (*A.A.* x, 170) extended as far as the well which lies 40 yards to the north-west, but the recent discovery shows that more may yet be found.

The interpretation of the new inscription is not easy. The meaning of the Germanic names is discussed below by Professor Siebs who in 1892 made an important contribution to the literature dealing with Mars *Thincsus* and the *Alaisiagae*,<sup>4</sup> and I leave

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Collingwood and I examined the stones together, and these remarks owe much to his kind help.

<sup>4</sup> *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie*, xxiv, 433—457. How extensive that literature is, few of us in this country are aware, for the German philological journals are only to be found in great libraries. A bibliography and summary of the whole discussion is given by Prof. Karl Helm in his *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* (1913), i, 366.

them to his competent handling. Something, however, must be said of the expansion *n(umerus)* which I have adopted in l. 7. It is open to the objections that units of the Roman army larger than a *centuria* or company were not officially known by the name of their commander, and that the irregular contingents known as *numeri* were normally commanded by regular officers, ex-centurions of a legion or ex-prefects of an auxiliary ala or cohort. But there had been a time when the irregular horse raised by Cæsar in Gaul were known by the names of their commanders, who were sometimes their tribal chiefs, and these names were retained when they passed into the permanent army; the *ala Petriana* on our own frontier is a familiar instance. The adjectival form is the usual one, e.g. *ala Atectorigiana*, named after a Gaulish chief, Atectorix; but we also meet with *ala Scaevae* in the genitive.<sup>5</sup> More than a hundred years after Cæsar's time Tacitus speaks of Batavian cohorts *quas vetere instituto nobilissimi popularium regebant* (*Hist.*, IV, 12), and it would not be surprising in such cases if the tribesmen called the unit by the name of the chieftain who led it. Cheesman has shown how the auxiliary regiments, 'transferred from one province to another, and recruited from different nationalities, gradually lost their original character,' and how in the second century, perhaps on Hadrian's initiative, 'the *numeri* were raised from the wildest of the border tribes, and not only encouraged to fight after the manner of their fathers, but even permitted to continue the use of their native tongues.'<sup>6</sup> In the third century we find regiments of the new type, mainly drawn from Germany, taking the place of the old auxiliaries on the British frontier. Such was the *vex(illatio) Sueborum Lon(govicianorum?) Gor(dianorum)* which dedicated an altar at Lanchester to the *deae Garmangabi*,<sup>7</sup> whose name has an element in common

<sup>5</sup> Cheesman, *Auxilia*, 24.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.* 93, 89.

<sup>7</sup> *A.A.*, 2nd ser., xvi, 313, 321; *Eph. Epig.* ix, p. 571.

with our *Friagabi*; like the *vexillatio Raetorum Gaesatorum*, which served at Cappuck in the Antonine period and appears also at *Habitancum* and *Aesica*, this was no temporary detachment, but an organized corps. That the organization was an elastic one is implied by the vagueness both of *vexillatio* and of another name *natio*, applied by Hyginus to irregular contingents in his imaginary field-force. *Numerus* is almost as vague, and came to be used in the period after Diocletian of any body of troops, large or small.<sup>8</sup> When such levies, conforming to the fashion which they found prevailing in their new quarters, proceeded to set up inscriptions, they naturally committed solecisms; in paying their respects to deities outside the Roman Pantheon they emphasized their own national soldiarity rather than their military status. Such a dedication as *Deae . . . adae curia Textoverdorum v.s.l.m.*<sup>9</sup> was presumably set up by soldiers, but says nothing of their regiment or rank. Our inscription exhibits a solecism of a different kind; instead of giving the tribal designation of the *numerus*, followed by the words *cui praeest* or *cujus curam agit Hnaudifridus*, it writes *n. Hnaudifridi*. If this interpretation is right, the appearance of a German clan-chief with an un-Roman name in command of a *numerus* is a significant fact. The alternative is to suppose that H. is the initial of a personal name, 'H. son of Naudifridus,' but such a suppression of the dedicator's personality is unlikely. It is also possible to expand it as *n(ostrorum)* in agreement with *Aug(us-torum)*, and to treat *Hnaudifridi* as a plural; but in answer to my question Professor Siebs tells me that it is in his opinion distinctly a personal name, not that of a family or a clan.

An inscription found at Brougham castle (*Brovacum*) has been supposed by several writers to contain the letters TVSTINGSO, which were interpreted as *Tius Thingso*. Hübner got this from

<sup>8</sup> Cagnat in Daremberg and Saglio, *Dict. des. Ant. s.v. numerus*.

<sup>9</sup> *Vindolana*, C.I.L., VII, 712; *Eph. Epig.* IX, p. 593.

the *Lapidarium* drawing, which is inconsistent with Bruce's reading in the text.<sup>10</sup> I learn from Mr. R. G. Collingwood that Haverfield examined the stone and confirmed Bruce's TINVS as against the supposed TINGSO. There is no evidence for the alleged mention of a *cuneus Frisiorum Germanorum* in the lines which follow. The stone should be omitted from future discussions of Thincsus and Tius.

2.—By PROFESSOR THEODOR SIEBS, Breslau University.

It is difficult to pronounce a final judgment upon the newly discovered inscription *Duabus Alaisiagis Baudihillie et Friagabi et N. Aug.* But I have gone into the matter with care and believe that, without giving undue weight to special views of my own, I may put forward the following conclusions as certain.

1. The inscription gives fresh support to the form *Alaisiagis* and makes it impossible to justify a conjectural emendation such as Weinhold had proposed.<sup>11</sup> Further, the names of the two goddesses are so indubitably Germanic that the word *Alaisiagis* also must be regarded as certainly Germanic (e.g. as against von Grienberger<sup>12</sup>). In particular there is as little reason to think of Frisian forms as there was in the case of the inscriptions previously found.

2. The newly discovered inscription once more attests the occurrence of a pair of Alaisiagae: the occurrence but not the existence. Rather in contradistinction to the *Bede et Fimmilen(i)e* already known to us two new Alaisiagae are named whom we have no right to identify with them. A phonetic comparison is impossible for *Bede* cannot have been developed as a familiar abbre-

<sup>10</sup> Lap. Sept. 807 = *Eph. Epig.* iii, p. 125, Hübner, *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift* iii, 12, etc. Scherer made use of it in a paper read before the Berlin Academy, summarized in *Arch. Ael.* 2nd ser., x, 171-2, and others followed. Helm was rightly sceptical (*Altgerm. Rel. Gesch.* i, 368).

<sup>11</sup> *Zeitschrift für Deutsche Philologie* xxi, 1-16.

<sup>12</sup> *Zeitschrift für Deutsches Altertum*, xxxviii, 189, ff.



viation out of *Baudihillie*, since the *i*-modification of *au* to *ē* (which appears only in Frisian) belongs of course to a much later period; moreover, the presumable meaning of the names allows of no connexion.

Whether we are to read DEABVS or DVABVS seems to me a matter of no great importance. If we read DVABVS we should have a clear fresh proof of the occurrence of the Alaisiagae in the dual number; the occurrence only, of course, for the two new names of our inscription prove that for these goddesses at least four names were known (*Bede*, *Fimmilen(i)e*, *Baudihillie*, *Friagabi*.)

The reading DEABVS, if only this one inscription were known, might lead to a conjecture that *Alaisiagis* was not a proper name denoting certain goddesses, but only a stock epithet in agreement with *deabus*, 'all-honoured' or the like. But that is contradicted by one of the previously-known inscriptions which names *duabus Alaisiagis* without the special proper names and must therefore have understood by *Alaisiagae* a distinct order of deities.

3. From the new names we may infer as a certainty that Heinzel's theory,<sup>13</sup> which would associate the Alaisiagae with the Frisian legal terms *bodthing* and *finelthing*, is completely disposed of; it had long been discredited in the eyes of most of those competent to judge.

So much for the definitely *certain* conclusions. My personal suggestions based on them are as follows:—

(1) The name *Baudihillie*<sup>14</sup> may be regarded either as a Latinized form with dative in *e* or as a nominative form. Names with the Germanic stem *hildiō* as their second element are so numerous that we may, with some confidence, place *Baudihildi* among them; all the more so as no word with *ll* is known, but the assimilation of *ld*

<sup>13</sup> *Arch. Ael.* 2 s. x (1885), 165; *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift für Gesch. u. Kunst*, III (1884), 287.

<sup>14</sup> We cannot admit the presence of a stop after *BAV*; apart from the fact that such a stop ought to be level with the middle of the letters, there is the material reason that *BAVDIHILLIE* is undoubtedly a complete Germanic name.

to *ll* is easily intelligible, and occurs often at a later period (from the eighth century onwards), cp. *Hillibodo*, *Hillibert* and others in Förstemann, *Altdeutsches Namenbuch* I, 819 ff. The first member of the name, *Baudi*, is frequently attested in Germanic names (*Baudigisil*, *Baudimund*, *Baudiricus*, also *Baudoaldus* from *Baudwaldus*), cp. Schönfeld, *Wörterb. d. altgerm. Personennamen*, p. 47; on the vowel in the junction of composite words see Kluge, *Urgermanisch Grundriss d. germ. Phil.* 1913, p. 201 ff. This name contains the root *beud*, 'bieten' i.e. 'bid, command' in the 'high grade' so that the meaning would be something like 'battle-commanding.' In German the forms with short *o* in the 'low grade' seem to be interchangeable with those which exhibit long *ô* from *au*. In Anglo-Saxon we should expect *béad*-, with *i*-mutation *bied*, *býd*, in Frisian *bád*- or *bêd*-.

It is noteworthy that the Anglo-Saxon name *Beadohild*, Old Norse *Bodvildr*, Old High German *Baduhilt*, pointing to a short Germanic *a* in *badwa*, 'battle,' as well as other names with the first element *Badu*-, has a wide distribution. Hence Jacob Grimm assumed a connexion between *baud* and *badu*, and a development from *a* by *u* mutation into *au*. Philologically this cannot be justified; but it is conceivable that in the inscription through some misunderstanding *Baduhildie* has become *Baudihillie*.

(2) It is suggestive that *-hild*- stands as the second member of the name: since it is borne by a divine being, one thinks at once of some kind of Valkyrie; whenever in Norse literature Valkyries are named, the name *Hildr* appears. Moreover, *Beadohild* (= *Bodvildr*), as a daughter of the envious storm-hero Nídhád, is associated with deities of the storm (E. H. Meyer; *Germ. Mythol.* 301, 302). Here it may be mentioned that I believe I have made it probable that *Bede et Fimmilene* too may be explained as goddesses of storm and battle (*Zeitschr. f. deutsche Phil.* xxiv, 433 ff.).

(3) In *Friagabi* (which seems to be a Germanic nominative,

though it might possibly stand for the Latinized dative *gabi*), the roots are clear: Germ. *\*frija* is 'dear' or 'free'; in *gabi* we have the root of Germ. *geb* at the stage at which it seems to present itself in the epithet of the Matres or Matronae, *Alagabiae*, and doubtless also in Old High German *\*gābi*, Middle High German *gæbe*, Old Norse *gæfr*, Frisian *iëve*. The word denotes both 'giving' and also 'what is given,' and then 'dear, good, pleasant, loved, honoured.' *Fria* might be a feminine abstraction (cp. Middle High German *vrie*) and the whole name might then mean 'Freedom-giving.' [I am not disposed to think of a connexion with the goddess *Fría*, which would give the meaning 'dear to Fria,' although this would be consistent with the rules of the language.] Should it be the case that we are dealing with Valkyries, it is quite thinkable that the 'Ruler of battle' had a counterpart 'The Giver of Freedom.' It needs no great effort of imagination to recall in this connexion the first of the 'Merseburg Charms.'<sup>15</sup>

(4) Now if we recognise Valkyries in the *Alaisiagae*, we may take account of the interpretation which I gave some years ago, as *\*alaisjagjôn*, 'gewaltig einherstürmende,' 'spirits of the vehement rushing storm' (*Zeitschr. für d. Phil.* xxiv, 442); but if we take them to be goddesses of some kind, we may interpret the name as 'helpful' (Kauffmann-Sievers, Paul u. Braune's *Beiträge* xvi, 201 ff., 257 ff.) or as 'bestowing honour in war' (van Helten, *Beitr.* xxvii, 147). In any case the new find rules out their function as goddesses of the law-court or the popular assembly. And thereby too, the interpretation of the name *Thingsus* is

<sup>15</sup> The first Merseburg charm:—Eiris sâzum idisi, sâzun hera duoder. Suma hapt heptidun, suma heri lezidun, suma clûbôdun umbi cuoniouuidi: 'insprinc haptbandun, invar viḡandun.' Once women sat, sat here and there. Some bound the bonds, some engaged the foe, some picked at the fetters. 'Escape from the bonds, flee from the enemy.'

[1st group bind prisoners in rear of the army they favour, 2nd group hinder the enemy, 3rd group free the prisoners taken by the enemy.]

affected to this extent, that we shall no longer think of a god of the law-court or the popular assembly, but either of the war-god Mars = Tius or of his earlier phase, the sky-god Tius.

The former sky-god Tius retained his old name, but became the war-god (*Týr*, *Tiu*, *Ziu*) among north and south Germans, and Mars in the *interpretatio Romana*; and for that reason the Anglo-Saxon *Tiwesdag* and High German *Ziestag* is *dies Martis*. It is, then, most natural to see in Mars Thingsus (whose name has been preserved to the present time in *Dingsdag*, *Dinxendach*<sup>16</sup>) just this war-god Things, who precisely like Tius had retained the name which originally belonged to him as god of the sky and weather. The view that the Alaisiagae associated with him are to be regarded as Battle-maidens, i.e. as Valkyries, receives strong support from the name *Baudihillie* on the new inscription.

*Lines 7, 8.* The name of the dedicator is undoubtedly a *personal* name, the name which is attested in Old High German in the eleventh century as *Nôtfred* and would take the form \**Niedfrid* \**Nýðfrid* in Old English and \**Nêðfreth*, \**Nêðfrith* in Old Frisian. The English-Frisian forms of the word 'Not' exhibit *i* modification and agree therefore with the form of the name which when Latinized would become NAUDIFRIDUS, and of which we must recognize the genitive singular (or possibly the nominative plural) in our inscription.

The H of the form HNAVDIFRIDI, owing to the absence of a stop denoting an abbreviation, cannot be the initial of a Latin word; it must be an example of the initial *h* wrongly prefixed, which often occurs; compare e.g. *Halaman*ni, *Hermin*ones, *Hermund*uri for *Alam*anni, *Ermin*ones, *Ermund*uri, with the *h* (conversely in *Ildirix*, *Ilderich* alongside *Hilderix*, *Roteldis Rudir*it in place of the forms compounded with Germanic *Hrôp*, the initial *h* has been lost). The form *Naudifridi* then offers no diffi-

<sup>16</sup> Dialect forms used in Old Dutch.

culties, and in comparison with it the reading *Hanaudifridi* or *Hantaudifridi*, which might be conceivable on epigraphic grounds, weighs light in the scales, for no Germanic interpretation of it could be given.

Whether the N before this name (which undoubtedly can only be a personal name, in no case the name of a clan or tribe or region) can be interpreted as *Numerus* and consequently the '*Numerus* of Nótfrid' be denoted as the dedicator, is a point on which I cannot pronounce judgment. My colleague Kornemann has kindly informed me that he thinks this not impossible; but he also throws out the suggestion that the N may be regarded as the abbreviation of a gentile name. In that case the dedicator's name might have been e.g. N (umerius?) son of Naudifridus.' It is not probable that *Naudifridi* is an abbreviation for a nominative *Naudifridius*, for many names in *-fridus* are recorded, none in *-fridius*.

### 3.—By PROFESSOR W. E. COLLINSON, Liverpool University.

The difficulty about the interpretation of Friagabi is due to the use of an apparently adjectival form *fria* as the first constituent of the compound. Old Engl. *freols-gefa* m. = manumissor (Bosworth-Toller) and Old Icelandic *frjáls-gjafi* m. = one that gives freedom (Cleasby-Vigfusson, ref. to the Grágás i.e. 12th cent. laws), contain the Germanic *\*frijahalsi-*, a substantive already compounded. It is noteworthy that the M.H.G. fem. abstract *vr̥e* in the sense of 'libertas' is supported by Lexer with only one reference to a gloss in Diefenbach's '*Glossarium Latinum-germanicum*.' M.H.G. also shows a rare abstract form in the neuter *daz vr̥i* (Lexer refers to the rhymed prefaces of the *Sachsenspiegel*). In Sweet's Students' dictionary of Anglo-Saxon there is the form *fr̥eo* f. = freedom, immunity ct. i.e. charter [unspecified]. The existence of this parallel to the M.H.G. *vr̥e* strengthens the case for Siebs's interpretation, in so far as the two together point to the possibility of a West Germanic abstract derived on the same lines.