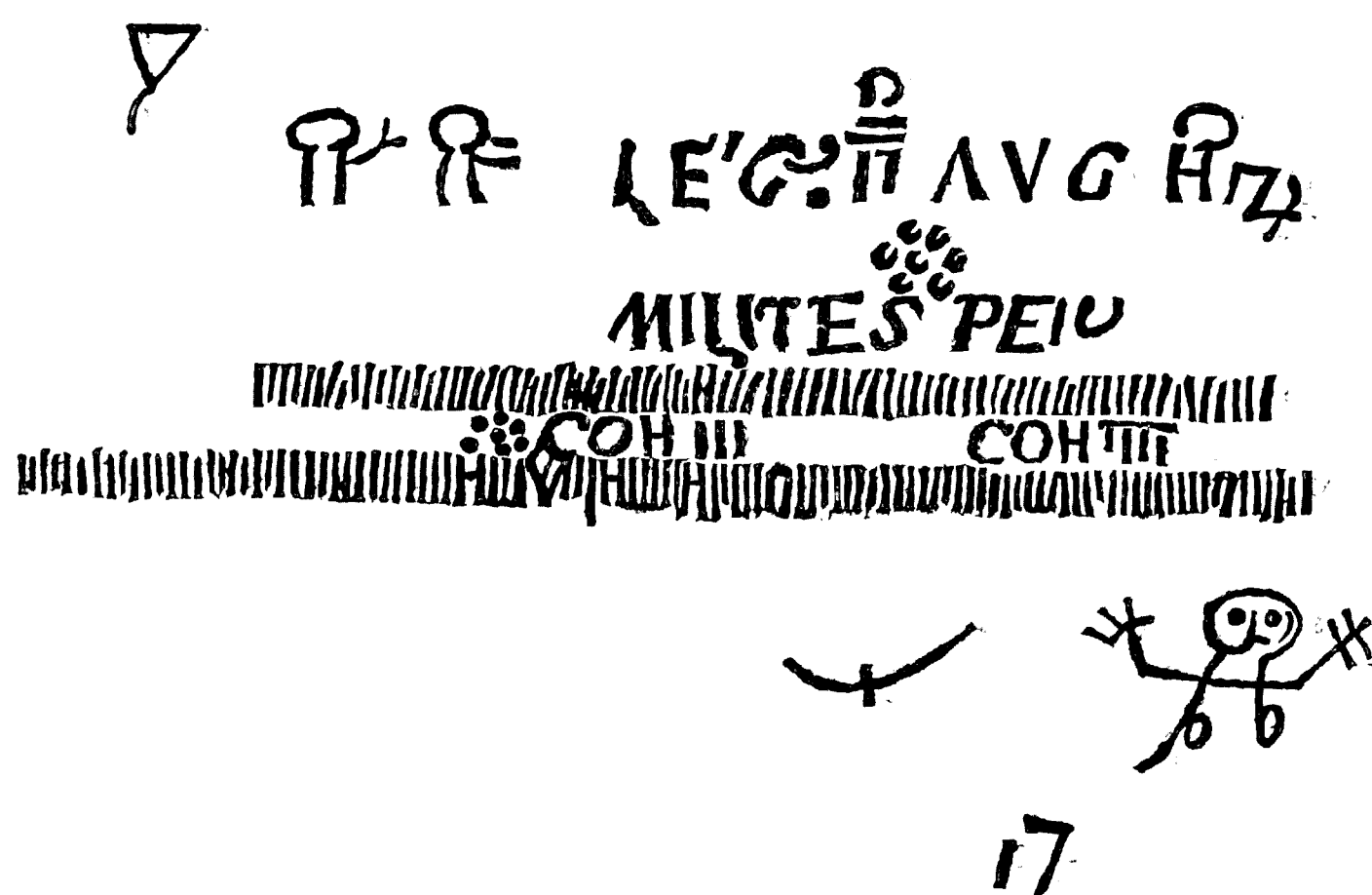


XLVII. *A Roman Inscription upon a Rock at Shawk Quarries, in Great Dalston, Cumberland; explained by Bishop Lyttelton, in a Letter to the Society.*

Read March 26, 1767.



GENTLEMEN,

Clifford-street, March 26, 1767..

THE drawing I now lay before you, contains a Roman inscription on a rock, situated at a place called Shawk Quarries, near Rose Castle in Cumberland, which has hitherto been overlooked by all our antiquaries, even by my famous predecessor Bishop Nicholson, though so near to his own mansion, and within his own manor of Dalston: I read it thus,

LEGIONIS SECVNDÆ AVGVSTAE
MILITES POSVERVNT.
COHORS TERTIA—COHORS QVARTA.

WHAT to make of the strange scrolls that accompany this inscription, and of the two lines chiefly consisting of perpendicular strokes

strokes that inclose the words; “cohors tertia, cohors quarta,” I know not; but certainly they were the work of a later age, and probably of men who laboured at these quarries, merely for amusement; though it seems to have been rather a laborious amusement, for this part of the rock is full five yards in height, accessible only by ladders, and the stone exceeding hard, in which these marks and lines are insculpt.

ROMAN inscriptions on rocks are very rare in Britain, and indeed throughout Europe, which renders this before you more worthy consideration. I know of none that have been discovered in England, except one at Helbecke Scar near Brampton in this county, and three at Crawdundale Wathe near Kirkby Thor in Westmorland. Another, indeed, is said, in the additions to Camden, to have been inscribed on a rock near Naworth in Cumberland, called Leage Crag; but Mr. Horsley tells us, upon enquiry after it, he learned that it was utterly defaced. We have all these inscriptions, except the last, faithfully described in Horsley; and the purport of them is so very similar to this at Shawk, that it would be loss of time to mention them particularly. Three out of the four appear to have been the work of the second Augustan legion, which, together with the twentieth legion, was employed under the Emperor Severus in building the Roman wall about the years 207 or 208, according to Mr. Horsley’s conjecture.

THE author of the additions to Camden concurs in opinion with Horsley, that the quarries at Helbeck Scar and Leage Crag afforded the Romans a supply of stones for building the famous wall; and the quarries at Crawdundale Wathe for their buildings at Kirkby Thor, where they had a very considerable station; and that upon these occasions, they left inscriptions behind them. This conjecture is much strengthened by the strong resemblance which Horsley observed, both as to nature and colour, between the stone of Helbeck quarry and that of the Roman wall throughout

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out great part of Cumberland. He also adds, that the inhabitants near the place continue to call it the *Old Quarry*.

I HAVE some suspicion, that if the old stone quarries situate in that part of Northumberland which lies contiguous to the Roman wall were carefully examined, similar inscriptions might be discovered; for the same motives which led the builders of the famous wall to leave their names and memorials on the Cumberland rocks and quarries, from whence the stone was procured, would induce them to do the like near that part of the wall which lies near Northumberland, where the stones for building were also in like manner procured.

THE quarries at Shawk, where this inscription remains, are at this day the most famous in all the country, and by the immense quantity of stones which appear to have been taken from them, must certainly have been worked for several ages. There is no doubt, therefore, but that the Romans used them; and if not for the building that part of the wall which lies towards Burgh, or Bulnesh, yet for their station at Olenacum, or Old Carlisle, near adjoining, or else for Luguballia, or the present Carlisle.

BEFORE I conclude this letter, I must observe, that the inscription on the Helbeck Scar is placed, like this at Shawk, a considerable height above the surface of the ground on which the rock stands, and consequently difficult of access, and yet, in Mr. Camden's time, who describes it, the words "*Officium Romanorum*" were legible just on the right side of the Roman inscription, though now indeed much defaced. This, like the scroll, &c. which accompanies the Shawk inscription, must have been the work of a later hand; and, by the form of the letter *m*, I should pronounce it of the early Norman age. A human face is insculped also just over the first word of the Roman inscription, which is represented both in Camden and Horsley far less rude than it really is; for it appears on the stone almost as barbarous

as that which we see just below the Shawk Inscription. I am,
Gentlemen, with the most perfect esteem and respect,

Your most obedient Servant,

CHA. CARLISLE.

XLVIII. *On the antient Camelon, and the Picts; by*
Mr. Walker.

In a Letter to the Bishop of CARLISLE.

Read May 28, 1767.

MY LORD,

SINCE my last, I have not had an occasion of seeing old Taylor; but he is still alive and well, and I hope soon to have an opportunity of visiting him, when I shall take care to have the fullest account of him I can possibly obtain [a].

I HAVE written to the minister of Falkirk, in whose parish are the remains of the antient city Camelon, to be informed concerning

[a] The following account of this old man was accordingly received from Mr. J. Walker and J. Wells, 9th April, 1767, and read to the Society:

“ John Taylor, son of Barnabas or Bernard (he calls him Barney) Taylor, by his wife Agnes Watson, was born in Garry Gill in the parish of Aldston in Cumberland. His father was a miner, and died when John was only four years old.

“ John, when only nine years old, was set to work at dressing lead ore, which he followed for two years at two-pence a day: he then went below ground to assist the miners in removing the ore and rubbish, and had been thus employed for three or four years, when the great solar eclipse, vulgarly called the *Mirk Monday*, happened, viz. on the 29th of March 1652; he being then at the bottom of a shaft or