

pleasure to be more intimately acquainted with him, are in doubt, which they should give the preference to, his knowledge and assiduity, or his piety and sincerity, and his good qualities in general; and which is most to be lamented, the loss, which the Academy has sustained, or that, which his family must suffer. He was born the 11th of July, 1711, at Pernau, after the decease of his father, Mr. William Richman, treasurer of the king of Sweden, who was carried off by the plague, at the close of the year 1710. Having laid the foundation of his learning at the Gymnasium at Revel, he prosecuted his studies at the Universities of Halle and Iena, where he always made the mathematics and philosophy the principal objects of them. He was made a member of the Imperial Academy in the year 1735; extraordinary Professor in 1741; and at last, in 1745, ordinary Professor of experimental philosophy. In his later years he married his present disconsolate widow, by whom he has had six children, three of whom died before him, but two sons and a daughter survive him.

XVII. *An Account of a Roman Inscription found at Malton in Yorkshire, in the Year 1753. By John Ward, LL. D. Rhet. Prof. Gresh. and V. P. R. S.*

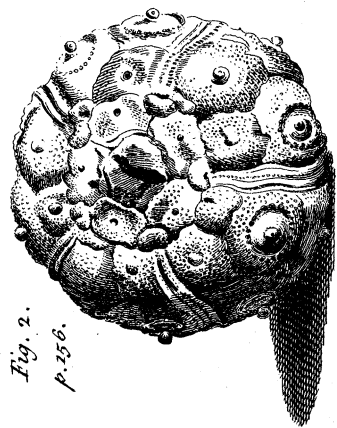
Read March 20, 1755. **T**HIS inscription was dug up in the Pye Pits, over against the lodge at Malton, a town situated on the river Derwent, in the

the North Riding of Yorkshire. Soon after its discovery, which was in the beginning of the year 1753, a copy of it, with the draught of the stone, was sent by the Reverend Mr. James Borwick, Minister of Whitby, in that county, to Mr. Francis Drake of York, a worthy member of this Society. But that copy not being accurately taken, Mr. Drake procured a more exact one from Mr. Percival Luccock of Malton, the present possessor of the stone. Both those copies were transmitted to me by Mr. Drake; the latter of which having been taken by laying a paper over the inscription, and tracing out the letters upon it, exhibits both their true size and form. That copy, with another drawn from it, but reduced by a scale of one fourth of the original, accompany this paper (1).

The shape of the stone, as delineated in the draught of Mr. Borwick, is given in the lesser of these copies, which shews it to have been broken off at the bottom. But Mr. Drake informs me, that nothing more was cut upon the stone, as may be concluded from the distance of the fracture below the writing; for had the inscription been continued farther, part of the letters at least of the following line would have appeared at the bottom. It is true indeed, that epitaphs written in this form usually end with the name of the person, who erected the monument; one example of which I shall produce from Montfaucon, as it relates to a soldier of the same character.

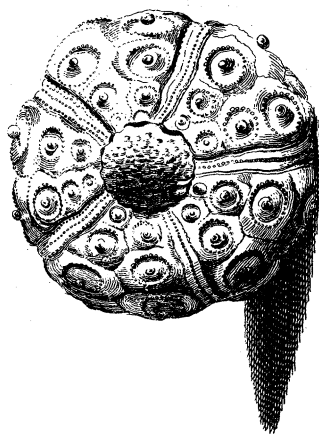
(1) The reduced draught, which has been engraved, may be seen in *Plate III. Fig. 1.* of this Volume.

Fig. 2. p. 71.



p. 256.

Fig. 3



D M

T· AVREL SVMMVS EQ
 SING· AVG· CLAUDIO
 VIRVNO NAT· NORIC (1)
 VIXIT ANN· XXVII MIL
 ANN· VIII· P· AELIVS
 SEVERVS HERES
 AMICO OPTIMO F (2)

But notwithstanding this appears to have been the usual method of composing such inscriptions, yet it was not always observed; and we meet with some few instances expressed with the like brevity, as that under consideration, which in words at length may be read in the following manner :

Diis Manibus. Aurelius Macrinus, ex equitibus singularibus Augusti.

The peculiarity of this inscription, and what renders it remarkable, is the character of the person, to whose memory it was erected. These *equites singulares* are often mentioned in Gruter, Fabretti, and other collectors of antient monuments; but this is the first instance of them, which has ever occurred in any of our British inscriptions. Modern writers have differed very much in their sentiments, concerning the particular office and duty of this part of the Roman cavalry; but I shall content myself with mentioning only, what appears to me most probable.

(1) The fourth line of this inscription may, I think, be read thus: *Viruno oriundus, natione Noricus.*

(2) *Diar. Ital. pag. 115.*

It is plain from Hyginus, who lived under the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, that these *equites singulares* made part of the emperor's body guards. For in describing the disposition of a Roman camp he says: *Equites praetoriani locum accipiunt latere dextro praetorii, singulares imperatoris latere sinistro; quorum si major numerus fuerit, utpote singulares DC, praetoriani CCC, poterunt CL singulares in striga praetorianorum tendere* (1). They are here called *equites singulares imperatoris*, as also in some inscriptions; but others for *imperatoris* have *Augusti*, as ours; and others again *Caesaris*, or *Domini nostri*; but that transcribed above from Montfaucon has *Augusto Claudio*; and some few only the general title of *equites singulares* (2). Reinesius therefore was of the opinion, that they not only attended the emperors themselves, but also the governors of the Roman provinces, in the like station (3); tho Fabretti, who has given us a large collection of these inscriptions, declares, that he had met with no sufficient evidence of this, either from antient writers or inscriptions (4). Schelius, in his notes upon this passage of Hyginus (5), thinks, that they were first instituted by Augustus; and that Tacitus refers to them, when he says: *Accessit ala singularium excita olim a Vitellio, deinde in partes Vespasiani transgressa* (6). And there is an

(1) Hygin. *gromat.* p. 4. col. 1. *vers.* 7. as the text is afterwards corrected by R. Herm. Schelius, *edit. Amstel.* 1660.

(2) Gruter. *passim*.

(3) Syntagm. *inscript. antiq. class.* 1. num. xvi. pag. 41.

(4) *Inscript. antiq.* pag. 357.

(5) Pag. 44.

(6) *Hist. lib.* iv. cap. 70.

inscription in Gruter, which mentions one of these *equites singulares*, as having served under Augustus in several of his wars, and been rewarded by him (1).

This account of the origin and station of that body of Roman horse may afford some light in settling the time, when this funeral monument of *Aurelius Macrinus* was erected. For if they always attended on the emperor himself, some one of the Roman emperors must then have been resident in Britain. And as there appears no probable reason for assigning it to any of them before Hadrian; so there are some circumstances relating to the inscription, as will be shewn afterwards; which do not suit with his time. And after him there was no other emperor in Britain, before the reign of Severus. Indeed Albinus, who then governed here, had been complimented by him with the title of Augustus, before he came over himself. But he was soon after defeated and slain by him in Gaul, and we have no other inscription hitherto discovered in Britain, which has any relation to Albinus; whereas we have several, in which the name of Severus is expressly mentioned (2). As Severus therefore resided here for about three of his last years, and died at York; it seems to me most probable, that this monument was set up within that time. And to this both the form of the letters on the inscription very well agree, and the ligature of the two letters *G* and *A* at the end of it. For tho

(1) *Pag. ccclxxi. num. 4.*

(2) *Camden. Britann. pag. 568. edit. 1607. Ibid. pag. 592. Horsley, Brit. Rom. Northumb. cix.*

such combinations of letters in the same word were long before not uncommon among the Romans, both on their coins and monuments; yet I meet with but one instance of it, where the two letters belong to different words, as they do here, before the time of Severus; and that was in the reign of Commodus, who was soon succeeded by him. That monument was erected in the consulship of Apronianus and Bradua, whose names are expressed in the inscription (1). But in after times such ligatures were more common, so that we meet with three or more letters sometimes combined in that manner (2).

Fabretti observes, that these *equites singulares* had a burying place allotted them at Rome, in the *Via Labicana*, not far from the sepulchre of the empress Helena. Several of their monuments have been found in that coemetery, adorned at the top with an human figure, lying on a couch; and below the inscription, a horse with trappings, and a boy holding a whip. And if any such are met with elsewhere, they have, as he supposes, been removed from thence (3). Montfaucon has given us a draught of one of those monuments, which contains the inscription recited above (4), and answers to this description of Fabretti, both as to the human figure, and that of the horse; the former of which has a *patera* in the left hand, and a mask is suspended at each end of the couch; and the boy, who is there

(1) *Horfley, Britann. Rom. Cumberl. lvii.*

(2) See *Britann. Rom.* in the *Table of ligatures*, pag. 189.

(3) *Ubi supra*, pag. 360.

(4) *Pag. 71.*

wanting, he found upon another (1). Those ornaments might very probably be omitted on such monuments, when erected in the provinces; and it is plain, there could not be room for the human figure above the inscription in this of Malton. At which place, as Mr. Borwick says in his letter, many urns, coins, and other remains of antiquity have been found, in and about the Pye Pits; from whence he supposes it to have been a coemetry for some Roman garrison.

P. S. Among the inscriptions in Gruter, relating to the *equites singulares*, there is one of them, where this title is used in a very different sense, from that given of it in the above discourse; for which reason I shall here transcribe it.

MARTI. CAMPESTRI. SAC
PRO. SAL
IMP. M. AVREL. COMMODI
AVG. ET. EQVIT. SING
T. AVREL. DECIMVS
7. LEG. VII. G. FEL
PRAEP. SIMVL. ET
CAMP. DEDIC. K. MART
MAMERT. ET. RVFO. COS (2).

In this inscription the emperor Commodus is himself called *eques singularis*, for the explication of which character recourse must be had to the accounts

(1) *Diar. Ital. pag. 115, 117.*

(2) *Pag. lvii. num. 12.*

given by historians of his life and actions. And among other instances of his base and infamous conduct, he is said to have demeaned himself to that degree, as to act a part in most of the public games, that were celebrated at Rome. Thus one of his diversions was to attack wild animals in the amphitheatre; at which exercise he was so expert, as never to miss his aim in killing them, either with a javelin or an arrow (1). He would often combat with the gladiators, and was so fond of that character, that he assumed the name of one of them, who had been very famous (2). At other times he would act as a charioteer in the *Circus* (3). He joined also in the athletic exercises, and was at last strangled by a champion, with whom he had formerly engaged (4). I do not find indeed, that he is ever mentioned by historians as a racer on a single horse, which is the character given him in the inscription; as appears from Isidore, who calls them *equites singulares*, as distinguished from the *defultores* (5). But that horse racing was also one of his recreations, we learn from a passage in Dion Cassius; who says, that Commodus came once to Rome on a suddain, when he was not expected, and exhibited a race of thirty horses in the space of two hours (6). It is not improbable therefore, that he might sometimes take a

(1) *Herodian. in vit. cap. 15.*

(2) *Ibid. Lamprid. in vit. p. 50. edit. Paris, 1620.*

(3) *Lamprid. pag. 47.*

(4) *Id. pag. 52.*

(5) *Orig. Lib. xviii. cap. 35.*

(6) *In vit. pag. 825. edit. Leunclav.*

part in that exercise, as well as in those above mentioned. And as he affected to have all his actions, however shameful or ridiculous, publicly recorded (1), this inscription might have been erected in compliment to him under that character. Mr. Hearne, who has published this inscription, seems to think, that Commodus might there be stiled *eques singularis*, like the Grecian and Trojan heroes in their single combats, who are described by Homer, as ἵπποσύνη τε καὶ ἀντοχήφι πεποιδότες (2). But the inscription is dedicated MARTI CAMPESTRI, which is a title given to that deity, not as a warrior, but as presiding over the public games in the *Campus Martius* at Rome. And agreeably to this sense of the word Horace sais,

Ludere qui nescit, campestribus abstinet armis (3).

J. W.

(1) *Lamprid. pag. 50, 51.*

(2) *Praef. ad Guil. Neuburg. Hist. rer. Angl. pag. liii.*

(3) *A. P. v. 379.*