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King Cogidubnus in Chichester: Another Reading of RIB 91

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ONE of the best-known inscriptions from Roman Britain was found in 1723 at Chichester. It is a dedication on a slab of Purbeck marble of which the left-hand portion is lost, and the remainder was broken into four pieces during recovery. These are now bound by concrete and built into the wall of the portico at the west face of the Council House in North Street at Chichester (pl. ix). There the inscription is protected by a sheet of plate glass.

According to RIB 91 (fig. 1) the text runs as follows: [N]eptuno et Minervae / templum / [pr]olo salute do[mus] divinae / [ex] auctoritat[e T(iberi)] Claudia(i) 5 / [Cog]idubni r(egis) leg[i] A ug(usti) in Brit(annia) / [coll]eg[ium fabror(um) et qui in eo / [sun]t d(e) s(uo) d(ederunt) donante / aream / . . . ]ente Pudentini f(i)li(o) = 'To Neptune and Minerva, for the welfare of the Divine House by the authority of Tiberius Claudius Cogidubnus, king, imperial legate in Britain, the guild of smiths5 and those therein gave this temple from their own resources, . . .]ens, son of Pudentinus, presenting the site'.

There is no reason to doubt that Tiberius Claudius Cogidubnus is the king mentioned by Tacitus, Agricola 14 as Cogidumnus:2 quaedam civitates Cogidumno regi donatae (is ad nostram usque memoriam fidiissimus mansit), vetere ac tam pridem recepta populi Romani consuetudine, ut haberet instrumenta servitutis et reges.

From the praenomen and nomen gentilicium of this monarch as they appear in the inscription it can be concluded that Cogidubnus was a Roman citizen and that he received this citizenship from the emperor Claudius. Not least the Chichester inscription is renowned for the problem presented by the fifth line containing muneris indication quae tot movit difficultates:3 as a British client-king Cogidubnus would seem to have been granted senatorial rank and in that position he would have become legatus Augusti, imperial legate in Britain. 'There is no instance of any other legatus Augusti not a senator. It seems hardly conceivable that Claudius could have conferred such a rank on a British king, however loyal and co-operative'.4

Many scholars have tried – with more or less ingenuity – to give an explanation of this legateship.5 In doing so they have always started from the assumption that line 5 had been read correctly in CIL vii 11 and RIB 91. In the present article an attempt will be made to prove that the reading is wrong. This study originated from surprise at the content of line 5 and at what the drawing in RIB (fig. 1) shows there.

2 Cf. A. Holder, Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz i (Leipzig 1896), 1061 s.v. Cogidubnus; Anderson (1922), 80; K. H. Schmidt, Die Komposition in gallischen Personennamen (Tübingen 1957), 95, 175, and 198 f.; Ogilvie-Richmond (1967), 189; Birley (1978), 244; Barrett (1979), 228, n. 5.
3 Hübner 1873, 105.
4 Birley (1978), 244; cf. Hübner (1873), 19, who speaks of dubitationes graves in re tam singulari, quam fortasse refersse licet ad Claudii imperatoris perversitates.
5 Birley (1978), 244 f.; Barrett (1979) with many references, to which add J. Wacher, Roman Britain (London 1978), 96 f.
The conditions under which the inscription is kept at Chichester today greatly hamper a fresh study of the text on the spot. The writer had the opportunity to inspect the inscription on 26 May 1977. Autopsy at Chichester, the drawing of RIB 91 (fig. 1) and new photographs of the inscription (pl. ix, x), kindly taken by Mr R. Wilkins and Mr N. Pollard of the Institute of Archaeology at Oxford, lead to the following remarks relating to line 5.

1. R as an abbreviation of r(egis) is without parallel. Here it is the more conspicuous since it abbreviates the title of Cogidubnus. One could expect that more attention would have been drawn to the latter.

2. As far as we can now judge, all the words (and abbreviations) in the different lines are separated by punctuation stops (there is perhaps one exception in line 8: before PVDENTINI). The dot after R(egis?), though it looks triangular, is much larger than the one following GIDVBNI and lies not at the same level but too high, also impinging on the hasta which follows. So it must be a result of damage and not a stop.

3. After R a ligature of an L and an E has been claimed. For this the left vertical stroke of the E has been lengthened at the top, as well as the lowermost horizontal stroke at its right-hand end. The normal ligature LE, however, consists only of an E with a somewhat lengthened horizontal stroke at the bottom. In the present case, to all appearance, the letter in question can only be an E or an L, damaged at the top. After GIDVBNI we should very probably read RE[ as the beginning of a word.

4. The Â of 'AVG' is entirely carved in concrete (pl. x). Following it there are two oblique lines, either / of V or \ of Â (or, possibly, x). The first, highest, stroke is an irregular groove, which goes too high and is probably not a part of a letter but the broken edge of one of the fragments of the slab. The other oblique line \ looks much better and is – before the G – clearly a part of an Â.

5. There is no stop between the G and the following N, the last hasta of which is lengthened

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6 cf. Hübner (1873), 19; Anderson (1922), 80; Ogilvie-Richmond (1967), 189 v.; ILS 840-61, 4454, 8957-62.
7 R. Cagnat, Cours d'épigraphie latine, 4th ed. (Paris 1914), 24: E = EL, LE and FL. In the drawing of RIB 91 (fig. 1) the fourth character of COLLEGIUM has to be corrected accordingly. A ligature of L and I (or I and L) could be formed by lengthening the hasta at the top; cf. Cagnat, op. cit., 25.
on top with a small i. Such a character (N) is known only as a ligature of N i; as a supposed ligature of N it would be without parallel. The spacing between G and N is narrower than between N and B, and there is a probable stop between these last two characters. This suggests that AGNı are all one word, the genitive singular of a substantive ending in -(i)us or -(i)um, or of an adjective ending in -us.

6. Taking into account the available space between R and AGNı and assuming that the Chichester [Co]gidubnus and the Cogidumnum rex in Tacitus, Agricola 14 are identical, there seems to be only one possibility for a satisfactory restoration of line 5: [Co]gidbni: REG(is). M]AGNı.BRIT(anniae or annorum?){9} (FIG. 2). In that case a temple was built at Chichester by the authority of Ti(berius) Claud(ius) Cogidubnus, great king in Britain, and the problem of king Cogidubnus as legatus Augusti in Britannia would be dispelled – only to be replaced by another, that of explaining how Cogidubnus as a Roman client-king came to be called on an inscription rex magnus Brit., an expression or title which at first sight appears odd, not to say ludicrous.

Before we go further into this question it is necessary – for possible corroboration of the reading here proposed – to examine how the text of line 5 has previously been read over the period since the discovery of the inscription. This is the more interesting as the slab seems to have sustained some damage in 1723 and perhaps later. During study of the history of the inscription after 1723 some important surprises came to light.

The stone was found in the beginning of April 1723, "in digging a cellar under the corner-house on the north side of St Martin’s Lane, now Lion St., at its junction with North St." ‘Legati Augusti in Britannia’ was read first by the antiquary Roger Gale11 who in September 1723 paid a visit from London to Chichester together with his friend Dr William Stukeley, after which he gave an account of his findings in the Philosophical Transactions vol. 32, 1723.12

But before this visit of Gale and Stukeley, Dr Edward Bayly, rector13 of Havant, Hampshire

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*a* Cagnat, op. cit. (note 7), 25: [N] = in and N = ni; cf. Hübner (1873), 18.

*b* cf. O. Gradewitz, Laterculi vocum Latinarum (Leipzig 1904), especially 332, 339, 489 and 507.

*c* RIB 91, after Gale (1723), 391.

*d* Dictionary of National Biography (cited hereafter as DNB) vii, 815 f.; he lived from 1672 to 1744.

*e* Gale (1723).

*f* Gough (1789), 193.
(c. 14 kilometres west of Chichester) went to that city on the afternoon of 7 May 1723, ‘on purpose to see this great Rarity (...) which I take to be inferior to none in Brittain for Antiquity’. That very day he sent a letter and a drawing of the inscription ‘to a friend of his’, probably Thomas Hearne, who inserted an extract of the letter together with the drawing (Fig. 3) in the appendix to the preface of his edition of *Adami de Domerham Historia de rebus Glastoniensibus* (1727). According to Bayly the stone ‘was found in digging a Cellar under an old House, belonging to Mr. Lodger, a friend of mine’. The text of the fourth and fifth lines (cf. Fig. 3) was expanded and read by Bayly (‘according to my poor conjectures’) as follows: 

\[ \text{EX AVCTORITATE IMP. TI. CLAVD. / ET COGIDVBNI REGIS MAGNI BRITANNORVM [vel Britannid].} \]

The transcription of line 5 in the drawing reads \[ \text{gidvbn]rg} \] \[ \text{gaj-brt}. \]

Gale’s above-mentioned account is dated ‘Octob. 31 1723’.

‘Being at Chichester in September last with Dr. Stukely [sic], we took an accurate View of this Marble, which is now fixed in the Wall under a Window within the House where it was found, and that we might be as sure of the true Reading as possible, wherever the Letters were defaced, we impressed a Paper with a wet Sponge into them, and by that Means found those in the fifth Line to have been as we have express’d them above [Fig. 4], and not as in other Copies that have been handed about of this Inscription’.

To judge from Gale’s drawing, the fifth line would run: \[ \text{co} \] \[ \text{gidvbn]rg} \] \[ \text{gaj-brt}. \]

Both in *CIL* vii 11 (with addit., p. 305) and in *RIB* 91 it is mentioned that, according to Gale, in the fifth line *BRIT* is preceded by N (not by N). This view is based on a handwritten version of

\[ DNB \text{ ix, 335–38: he lived from 1678 to 1735, was an historical antiquary who was especially active at Oxford (Bodleian Library) and ‘was in constant correspondence with very many of the antiquaries and literary men of his day’.} \]

\[ \text{Hearne (1727).} \]
Gale’s article, B.M. MS. add. 6357, especially the drawing on f. 2, which shows only an N before BRIT. This is, however, certainly not the original manuscript with the original drawing, but only a handwritten copy of Gale (1732).

It is remarkable that before 31 October 1723 Gale had seen copies which did not agree with his reading of line 5. Not long after the publication of Gale’s article in the Philosophical Transactions vol. 32, No. 379, ‘for the Months of September and October 1723’ Bayly sent his reaction to it to Hearne and this also has been inserted in Adami de Domerham Historia etc. From this it appears that ‘the Roman Inscription at Chichester, which first belonged to Mr. Lodger, (...) was lately purchased of him by his Grace the Duke of Richmond’. After that the stone was taken to Goodwood House, the seat of the Duke of Richmond, some 5 kilometres north of Chichester. As to Gale’s account, Bayly found,

‘that Gentleman has taken the Copy very exactly in every Line, except the fifth, where he varies from the Original in the following particulars.

1. There is no Point after the R to denote it’s being an intire word of it self, nor is the Space between that & the following Letter, greater than between any other two Letters belonging to one word.

2. As to the Alteration of the Letter next to the R, which the Author makes to stand for LE thus , I cou’d not discover any grounds for it on the Marble, the upper part of that Letter, which I take to be only an E, being so defac’d, that there is no tracing of it much above the middle.

3. The tacking of a v to the a in the following word, which he does thus a^g, is altogether groundless. For there is not the least appearance of any stroke joyn’d to the a in that manner, & besides, that Letter stands so close to the G, that there is no room for any such Addition.

In the writing of Rev William Hayley, rector of Brightling, Sussex. The manuscript forms part of ‘Collections towards a history of Sussex’ from the bequest of W. Hayley (B.M. MS. add. 6343–6361).

Hearne (1727), xxxix f.

See infra pp. 250 f. and pl. xi.
4. He places the G and N at a great distance from one another, as if those Letters belonged to different words, whereas they really stand as near to each other, as any Letters of the same word; nor is there any point or mark between them, to denote their being two distinct words.

Then follows 'The Publisher’s Discourse, concerning the Chichester Inscription', in which Hearne among other things remarks that Bayly’s copy

‘was taken by the learned Transcriber and Remarker a little while after the Chichester Stone was dug up. But when his Copy was seen by some, an Hypothesis was advanced, and the Inscription made to answer to that Hypothesis. The Transcriber had no Hypothesis to support. I shall, therefore, keep to his Copy, and have no regard to such as were taken several Months after by any Hypothetical Writers whatsoever’.

From this it must be concluded that Bayly’s transcription belonged to the copies which Gale had seen before 31 October 1723 and that Hearne seems to accuse Gale more or less of forgery or at least of Hineininterpretieren.19

Well before Hearne’s publication of 1727 Dr. W. Stukeley,20 who had visited Chichester in September 1723 together with Gale, referred to the inscription in his Itinerarium curiosum (1724).21 There Gale’s account is reprinted; in a postscript Stukeley subscribed to Gale’s view. Moreover he reproduced a drawing of his own of the inscription.22 When this is compared with Gale’s drawing there are some differences. According to Stukeley the fifth line reads [CO]GIVBN.R.EGAT[.]/AG.N.BRT – unlike Gale he shows the A of LEGAT and a dot before N.

Amongst those who found difficulty in accepting the whole of Gale’s reading of the inscription must apparently be included John Ward (1679?–1758), professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College, London.23 Some years after the publication of Gale’s article he seems to have applied for particulars of the inscription to Dr Thomas Sherlock (1678–1761), master of the Temple in London, who in November 1715 became dean of Chichester and on 4 February 1727–8 bishop of Bangor.24 Sherlock passed this request on to John Parke M.A., who in August 1723 had been elected a canon residentiary of Chichester Cathedral.25 Parke’s answer ‘To The Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of Bangor at his house in the Temple, London’, dated 18 (not 10, as RIB 91) February 1731 and accompanied by a drawing (fig. 5), forms part of Ward’s papers and is preserved in the British Library.26 The text of the letter, which may be used as a revealing explanation of Parke’s drawing, runs as follows:

My lord,

Inclos’d is an exact Copy of the Inscription, except that the letter e which is the last in the first line is brought too near the A preceding it. The character N in the fifth Line which the Gentleman particularly enquires about is not in the Stone. There is only one oblique stroke \ before the G, nor is there a point between the G & the N following it.27 Your Lordship will observe a great many

19 It is very possible that Hearne sent a copy of Bayly’s reading to Gale, ‘my good and kind friend’ (DNB vii, 815: 8 Oct. 1712).
20 He lived from 1687 to 1765; in May 1717 he removed to London and on 7 July 1719 took the degree of M.D. at Cambridge (DNB xix, 127 f.).
21 Stukeley (1724), 188 ff.; (1776), 196–201.
22 Stukeley (1724 and 1776), pl. 49, 3.
23 Since 1 September 1720; on 20 May 1751 the University of Edinburgh conferred upon him the degree of LL.D. (DNB xx, 778 f.).
24 DNB xviii, 93–5. In 1734 he was translated to Salisbury and in 1748 became bishop of London.
25 According to the Chapter Acts Books. In January 1720 John Parke STB was presented to the vicarage of St. Peter the Great alias Subdeanery, Chichester, and to the perpetual curacy of Funtington. He died shortly before February 1754. Mrs P. Gill, County Archivist, West Sussex Record Office, Chichester, kindly sent information about him.
26 B.M. MS, add. 6210 f. 114–16. Addition 6210 is a volume in folio containing ‘Letters of learned men to Professor Ward, chiefly upon subjects of Antiquity (...) bequeathed by Dr. John Loveday’; cf. DNB xii, 162.
27 The last remark cannot refer to Gale’s drawing, which does not have a dot between G and N, but is probably meant as an answer to a query of ‘the Gentleman’ (i.e. Ward).
other variations between these two Copies. The Length of the Stone is computed from the distance of the last m in Templum from one End of it, it being presum'd that the Letter p in the same word was at an equal distance from both Ends.

I am my Lord,

your Lordships most oblig'd
& most devoted humble Servant
John Parke

Presumably Parke had been asked by Sherlock – on behalf of Ward – to collate Gale's drawing with the original inscription at Goodwood. Further it is conspicuous that Parke made no attempt to restore the text. He would clearly first of all compare the copy of the inscription which had been sent to him with the original stone, and would consequently transcribe the real text as well as possible, perhaps without being conscious of the possible meaning of the entire inscription. Anyhow he did not give a complete reading, translation or interpretation of the text. Parke's version shows that there is no difficulty in reading line 5 as [co]gidvbni·reg

About one year after Parke sent his letter to Sherlock, John Horsley's Britannia Romana appeared in London. In this book, too, ample attention was paid to the Chichester inscription, and the author followed Gale's and Stukeley's views. On the drawing there published line 5 reads [gidvbni·r·ega ag·brit·]. Horsley inserted in his book not only Gale's account together with Stukeley's commentary on it but also

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28 On J. Horsley (1685–1732) see DNB ix, 1276 f.
29 Horsley (1732), 332–38 with drawing on 192, N. 76, Sussex 1.
'Mr. [John] Ward's remarks on the same inscription:30 "Mr. Gale's account of this inscription is so accurate and judicious, that one cannot but wish it was attended with no difficulties. But there are two things particularly, which to me appear very doubtful in that reading".'

Ward's objections are directed against

'the name Claudius, together with the title legatus Augusti, here said to be given to king Cogidubnus. (...) Nor does the title of legatus Augusti appear to me more suitable to the character of a sovereign prince, of which I believe no instance can be given in the Roman history'.

To remove the described difficulties Ward proposes the supposition that the inscription refers to a grandson of king Cogidubnus, [N(epotis) co]gidvbni, who 'might be appointed legatus Augusti in Britain, under Hadrian, or possibly as low as Antoninus Pius'.

It is curious that Ward in Horsley (1732) does not mention at all the conclusions one has to draw from Parke's letter (18 February 1731). This suggests the probability that Ward's remarks in Horsley (1732) date from before Parke's letter,31 unless, indeed, we suppose that Ward did not believe Parke or that he could not manage to restore line 5 according to Parke's version.

The next to write about the Chichester inscription was John Gough (1735-1809)32 in his edition of Camden's Britannia (1789), i, 193. On pl. xii, fig. 1 there was printed an engraving of the inscription which was 'made by the late Mr. Clarke of Chichester', i.e. William Clarke, from 1724 to 1768 rector of Buckstead (now Buxted) in Sussex. The original drawing is in the British Museum (MS. add. 6357 f. 1v).33 As appears from a note which is written under the drawing, William H(ayley) received it on 19 November 1783 from W. Clarke's son Edward, who succeeded his father in 1768 as rector of Buckstead.34 Line 5 in W. Clarke's drawing almost exactly corresponds with Gale's version ([co]gidvbni·r·ic[ ]·ci'gii'br, more or less similar to Bayly's reading. The authors record that the stone 'is still preserved at Goodwood, affixed to the wall of a temple erected in the gardens'; they do not supply a reading or translation of the complete inscription but refer in this connection to Gale (1723), Hearne (1727) and Horsley (1732).

Hübner (1873), in discussing the different copies of the inscription which were at his disposal, writes: Storeri et Rousii exempla neglegenter facta sprevi. This refers first to J. S. Storer and

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30 Horsley (1732), 337 f.
31 With regard to this question information is perhaps to be found in the copy of Horsley (1732) 'with additions by John Ward, LL.D.' in the British Museum (DNB ix, 1277). Britannia Romana was published after the death of Horsley on 12 January 1732; cf. E. Birley in his introduction to the 2nd edition of that impressive work (Newcastle upon Tyne 1974), v. [Postscript: this copy yields no further information.]
32 DNB viii, 279-82.
33 B.M. MS. add. 6357 forms part of the 'Collections towards a History of Sussex' bequeathed by W. Hayley; cf. note 16.
34 DNB iv, 449 f.: Clarke, William (1697-1771; in September 1727 made prebendary of Hova Villa in Chichester Cathedral, and in 1738 canon residentiary; in June 1770 installed as chancellor of Chichester; among Clarke's friends and correspondents was Bishop Sherlock); ibid., 420 f.: Clarke, Edward (1730-1786).
35 DNB iii, 398 f.: Dallaway, James (1763-1834). He took orders and was presented in 1799 to the rectory of South Stoke (Sussex) and in 1803 to the vicarage and sinecure rectory of Slinford (in the patronage of the see of Chichester). From 1811 to 1826 he held a prebend in the cathedral of Chichester.
36 According to CIL vii, 11 and RIB 91 the figure is from a drawing in the archives of the Society of Antiquaries of London. [See Postscript, p. 254]
J. Greig, *Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet* vi (London 1809), s.v. Chichester, where is to be found a very curious reading of lines 4 and 5: ex avctoritate cogidvbni. regis. legati. tiberii. clavdii. avgvsti. in. britannia. The second reference is to J. Rouse, * Beauties and antiquities of the county of Sussex* i (London 1825), 342 ff. and pl. cxxii, a drawing made by Rouse of the 'Ancient Tablet of the Temple of Neptune and Minerva, found at Chichester', as it was built at the time into 'the small and elegant temple of Neptune and Minerva (. . .) erected on a small artificial mount, opposite the back front of Goodwood, the seat of the Duke of Richmond'. Line 5 of the inscription is clearly legible on the drawing (pl. xi) as: gidvbni. regis. magni. britannorvm. Rouse's reading of the inscription thus agrees with Bayly's view in Hearne (1727), xxxviii.

In the publication of the Chichester inscription in *CIL* vii Hübner (1873), as he wrote himself, described the stone *cum cura*. At that time the slab was still in the temple at Goodwood.

In restoring the text, especially line 5, Hübner evidently was guided by Gale (1723). He also gave attention to the versions of the inscription in Stukeley (1724), Hearne (1727), Horsley (1732), Gough (1789) and Dallaway-Cartwright (1815) and to Parke's drawing (letter of 1731), which have been dealt with above. In doing so Hübner, however, proceeded rather loosely, as appears from the survey he gave of the versions of line 5 in the different drawings: hardly any reading has been reproduced entirely faultless.

In *JBAA* 43 (1887), 13-20, C. Roach Smith published an article entitled 'Roman Chichester'. Here too the Cogidubhus inscription is discussed, for the most part following Gale (after Horsley (1732)), 'who, together with Dr. Stukeley, carefully examined the inscription before it was removed to Goodwood'.

In 1907 the dedication-slab was presented to Chichester Corporation by Charles, seventh Duke of Richmond. Not long afterwards the stone was built into the west face of the Council House at Chichester, where, as mentioned above, the inscription is still visible through a glass plate.

To the period after 1907 (c. 1920?) belongs a remarkable document kept in the Chichester Museum. It is a postcard with a drawing of the 'Stone now inserted in Wall of the Assembly Rooms' (fig. 6). The representation has been influenced perhaps by Bayly's drawing (fig. 3). Line 5 of the inscription reads clearly [CO]GIDVBNI. RLG. [AGN. BRIT.]. Probably more conspicuous is the information on the face of the card: 'The "Pudens" Roman inscription of Chichester: connecting St. Paul with the City'; this is doubtless related to the proposed restoration of the last line of the inscription: [PVD]ENTE. PVDENTINI. FIL.. Moreover, on the reverse side of the card is to be read:

'**ST. PAUL & BRITAIN**: Notes on the Dedication Stone of the Temple of Neptune and Minerva, at Chichester, which connects the Roman Senator Pudens, the British Princess Claudia, and St. Paul with the City of Chichester'.

All this has clear reference to the 'hallucinationes' of those who have supposed a close connection of the *Pudens* of the Chichester inscription which the Pudens and Claudia mentioned by

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37 Note that on pl. cxxii (pl. 8) is to be seen, above the 'tablet', a bust of Cogidubnus with the inscription CLAVDIVS / COGIDVBNVNS.
38 cf. supra p. 246.
39 RIB 91.
40 Brought to our notice through the good offices of A. G. Down, director of excavations in Chichester.
St Paul at the end of his second letter from Rome to Timothy, bishop of Ephesus (4, 21), and with the British lady Claudia Rufina, Claudia peregrina and Pudens known from Martial, Epigr. xi, 53 and iv, 13. Against any such ideas Hübner was strongly and rightly opposed.41

In recounting the history of the reading of the Chichester inscription it must finally be mentioned that the drawing of RIB 91 (FIG. 1) originates in a drawing of R. G. Collingwood, which was made 'from a photograph, after a minute re-examination of the stone' by Collingwood and J. G. C. Anderson.42 For publication in RIB Collingwood's drawing was revised by R. P. Wright after examination of the stone in 1952.

From this review it appears that the expansion and reading of line 5 of CIL vii 11 and RIB 91 are based mainly on Gale. There exist, however, the readings of Bayly (who as far as we know was the first to transcribe and draw the inscription), of Parke (whose reading seems to have been made independently of Bayly's), and of Dallaway-Cartwright and Rouse. There is no reason to give preference to Gale and to the scholars who have followed him. On the contrary, the opposite view is the only one that is in entire agreement with the indications on the stone — indications which were noted at the first discovery of the stone in 1723 and which are still visible today.

It is not intended to study here the historical implications of Tacitus, Agricola 14 and the Chichester inscription; on these questions see A. A. Barrett's article above. It only remains to deal with the question of the meaning of Cogidubnus's title on the Chichester inscription: rex magnus Brit. The expression rex magnus is so far known only from two other Latin inscrip-

41 CIL vii, 11, p. 19, with further references; cf. Stukeley (1776), 200 = Horsley (1732), 336; Roach Smith (1887), 17. A reference to this question is perhaps also made in VCH Sussex iii (London 1935, reprinted 1973), 13: 'the description on the modern brass plate underneath the stone [now missing] is somewhat erroneous and fanciful'.

42 Anderson 1922, 79 f. with fig. 10.
tions, both discovered at Heliopolis (Baalbek): ILS 8957 and 8958. The first concerns either Agrippa I or his son Agrippa II, both of whom were kings in Palestine in the first century A.D.43

In the second inscription Sohaemus, who was king of Emesa and Sophene at the time of Nero and Vespasian,44 is called rex magnus. This Latin title is far less known than its Greek equivalent βασιλεύς μέγας, the title of many Parthian monarchs and – after their example – of some Hellenistic, oriental kings. This title was also borne by client-kings of the Romans. In the eastern part of the Roman empire and in the first century A.D. it was used by Agrippa I and II,45 Sohaemus of Emesa and Sophene,46 Polemo II of Pontus47 and Antiochus IV of Commagene.48

In the Hellenistic period the title βασιλεύς μέγας indicates only that its bearer held more than one kingdom.49 The same applies to the five kings mentioned above, whose realms were extended during their reign by cumulation of principalities. Cogidubnus’s title rex magnus might also have had such a meaning, and in this connection a passage in Tacitus, Agricola 14 is important: quaedam civitates Cogidumno regi donatae. It appears from the context that certain civitates must have been given to Cogidubnus before the arrival of Didius Gallus as governor of Britain in 52.50 The translation of Cogidubno regi presents a difficulty: ‘to king Cogidubnus’, ‘to Cogidubnus to be king over’,51 ‘to Cogidubnus in his capacity of king’:52 which is the correct version?

We know neither the origins and connections of Cogidubnus nor when he became king. Usually it is assumed that he had not begun to rule before the invasion. On the other hand it is very possible that he was a member of the old Atrebatic dynasty. If we may believe that before the flight of Verica to Claudius53 the Atrebates made a last stand in the Chichester region, it could be that after the invasion Cogidubnus became in a sense Verica’s successor and presumably in the first instance succeeded to an ancestral domain, perhaps the civitas, the tribe and the tribal area of the Reg(i)ni,54 in and around Chichester. To this kingdom the Romans may have added the territories of one or more former kingdoms, i.e. some tribal groupings and areas in the neighbourhood of the Reg(i)ni. In that way according to oriental ideas Cogidubnus would have been a βασιλεύς μέγας, a rex magnus. It has been suggested that Cogidubnus as a child may have been a refugee at the imperial court in Rome and that he may have been brought up there.55 If this supposition is right he could have become acquainted in Rome with the future ‘great kings’ Agrippa I and II and Polemo II.


44 PIR3 iv, 280 f., No. 582 (C. Julius Sohaemus); A. A. Barrett, American Journ. Philology 98 (1977), 153-9.

45 See note 43. The daughter of Agrippa I, sister of Agrippa II, Julia Berenice, bore the title basileus megalyne: PIR3 iv, 309 f., No. 651.

46 See note 44.


48 PIR3 iv, 138 ff., No. 149 (C. Julius Antiochus Epiphanes); Schürer, op. cit. (note 43), 448 v., n. 34 (i).


50 Barrett (1979), 233.


52 Barrett (1979), 232.

53 Cassius Dio lx, 19; cf. Barrett (1979), 228 f.

54 A. L. F. Rivet and K. Jackson, Britannia i (1970), 50 and 78 f.; Rivet, op. cit. (note 51), 165 f.