



A casual visit to the grounds of Nymans house at Handcross in Sussex in August 2007 brought to light the current location of two inscribed stones last recorded in Pozzuoli at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both are previously published, though their descriptions may now be improved. The text of the first, currently at the corner of the croquet lawn at Nymans and dedicated to Quintus Antistius Domitus, was published by Walter Dennison in 1898 on the basis of a report of the priest and antiquarian Giuseppe De Criscio (*AJA* 2 [1898], 375, no. 4). Dennison relates that it had been found in Pozzuoli in 1893 and he reproduced De Criscio's faithful report of the text. However he described the object as a marble tablet and could not give dimensions. As can be seen from the photo (no 1), it is in reality a substantial funerary altar (100.5 cm high x 48 cm wide x 42.5 cm deep). The form and decoration of the



1. Epitaph of Q. Antistius Q. f. Domitus

monument are entirely conventional: a rectangular pillar with moulded base and top, with 'pulvinated' crown, decorated with rosettes in relief. The left hand side of the pillar is decorated with a relief of an *urceus*, the right with a *patera*. The text, carved in monumental capitals of high quality, is quite formulaic:

D(is) · M(anibus) | Q(uito) · Antistio | Domito | vix(it) · an(nis) · XIII · m(ensibus) · XI | Q(uitus) · Antistius Domitus | et Lutatia | Eudia parentes | filio | carissimo fecerunt.

Although not unpublished, the text is relatively neglected. Only three of 67 texts published by Dennison were reproduced in *AE* 1899 (nos 33-35) but most belonged to De Criscio's private collection, which

passed to the Kelsey Museum at the University of Michigan, and have been republished recently by Steven Tuck.

The second text, which also passed through the hands of De Criscio, is better known. Another marble funerary altar, it is dedicated to Marcus Ulpius Proculus, house-born slave (*verna*) of Domitian and later freedman of the emperor Trajan and *tabularius* of the *Fiscus Alexandrinus*. This stone was seen by Paolo Orsi in De Criscio's collection in c. 1900 (*NdS* 1901, 20), having been excavated on the Via Campana 'a few years previously.' It is currently under trees outside the 'Wall Garden' at Nymans. This text was more shallowly carved and the surface has degraded:

*Dis Manibus
M(arci) Ulpi Proculi
tabulari fisci
Alexandrini
5 Domitiani Caesaris
vernae ++ Augustor(um)
liberto (!) qui
vixit ann(is) +++*

The grammatical slip (from genitive to dative) in line 7 may have been influenced by the form *vernae* (common to gen. and dat.) in the preceding line.



2. Epitaph of M. Ulpius Aug. l. Proculus

The workmanship and dimensions of the monument are very similar to that of Domitus. It also has *urceus* and *patera* and was no doubt originally also crowned by a stylised *pulvinar*, which appears to have been sawn off in antiquity, perhaps to facilitate its re-use as building material. Taking a squeeze may help to resolve the problematic line 6, which was read as *verna III Augustorum* by Orsi and plausibly interpreted as *vernae et Augustorum* in *AE* 1901, 171. Paul Weaver (2005: 214, 252-3) suggested that the formula *Augg. lib.* is influenced by the terminology under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus (from AD 161). If so, born into the household of Domitian, Proculus will have been aged at least 65, or even 80+, if *Caesar* is taken to refer to the period before Domitian became *Augustus*.

Exactly when both pieces came to ornament the country garden of the London stockbroker Ludwig Messel has yet to be determined, though perhaps soon after their discovery. Messel bought Nymans in 1890 and started developing its famous garden from 1895.

Also in August 2007, an inventory of the Greek and Roman epitaphs in the collections of University College London brought to light two texts that appear to have escaped proper publication. Both derive from the collection of the Earls of Lonsdale at Lowther Castle, near Penrith in Cumbria, but are certainly not of insular manufacture.



3. Epitaph to Helis by fellow-slave Helias

One is a marble tablet (22 cm high x 26 cm wide x 2.5 cm thick), inscribed in clear rustic capitals:

(hedera) *D(is) M(anibus)* (hedera)
*Aelias co<n>-
serva Ae-
liti bene*

(hedera) *m(erenti) f(ecit)* (hedera)

The orthography of the names is noteworthy. Both would appear to be Greek names on the theme of the sun (*Helios*). An anxiety about their proper spelling has led to the transformation of these well attested female names, (h)Elias and (h)Elis (Solin 2003: 397-8, 401), into their pseudo-Latin forms, reflecting a level of education perhaps unsurprising in the milieu of a dedication by one fellow slave to another.

The other epitaph is also a modestly sized marble tablet (22.5 cm high x 27.5 cm wide x 3 cm thick) but is rather crudely and shallowly carved in comparison. That either (or both) the dedicator and deceased were Christians is indicated by the *Chi-Rho* symbol inserted at the end of line 2:

*Secundina vix-
sit annis · XXV (chrismon)
Aelia Gemella
mater · pientiss-
ima (hedera) fecit.*

Both pieces are certainly Grand Tour souvenirs, plausibly from the environs of Rome.



4. Epitaph to Secundina by her mother Aelia Gemella

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