

## The Top of the *Lapis Primus*

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IN *Historia* 13 (1964) 129–134, I reported the results of my inspection of the top surface of fragments 1, 3, and 4 of the First Stele of the Tribute Quota-Lists. My inspection was made from the top of a ladder, whence no photographs were possible. In August 1965, the Director of the Epigraphical Museum, Dr Markellos Mitsos, kindly dismantled the upper part of the stele for me, and I studied and photographed the fragments in the open courtyard.<sup>1</sup>

PLATE 6, figure 1, shows the ridge as it appears on the top surface of fragment 4. PLATE 7, figure 3, shows at the left the smoothly dressed band, as it is preserved on fragment 3. PLATE 6, figure 2, is another photograph of fragment 4, this time from above, illustrating the band at the bottom of the picture with a cutting at the top. Only a small protruding knob of the ridge is preserved from the battered and heavily weathered surface of fragment 1, so no photograph of this piece is offered.

The measurements given in my earlier publication proved to be correct. The smooth dressed band measures *ca.* 0.032m. wide on all three pieces. The height of the curving ridge on fragment 3, where it is the best preserved, is *ca.* 0.03m. On fragment 4, the ridge has been battered and toward the rear is not original. Fragment 4 has two holes (0.01m. in diameter) cut rather recently, and fragment 3 one. I presume these holes were drilled when the stele was reconstructed by Lolling.

At the back of the right lateral fragment (no. 4), the stone is so fractured that at least one experienced epigraphist who looked at the stone with me thought that it looked like the edge of an ancient socket. The fractured area appears in shadow at the top of PLATE 6, figure 2. The surface is 0.22m. distant from the original right lateral

<sup>1</sup> My trip to Athens, although undertaken for a different project, was financed in part by a travel grant-in-aid from the American Council of Learned Societies. Expenses of photographs were borne by the Committee on Research of the University of California. The manuscript was typed by Mrs Miriam Ross.

face and 0.115m. from the front face. Although the fractured stone forms an exact 90-degree angle with a line running parallel to the inscribed face, the surface of the fracture does not appear darkened or weathered, as one might expect, and I doubt that it represents part of an ancient cutting. At the top, the maximum thickness of fragment 1 measures 0.093m.; fragment 3, 0.145m., and fragment 4, 0.128m. The original thickness of the stele was *ca.* 0.385–0.39m.

The smoothness of the dressed band can best be seen on fragment 3 (figure 3, PLATE 7) where there is little plaster. The surface is highly polished. One can, however, detect with a field lens traces of a chisel. This would in no way have prevented a tight join with a superimposed piece; for such traces can be seen on the bottom of a fragment of the Erechtheum building accounts of 408/7 B.C., where the join allowed the mason to inscribe the letters of one line partly on one slab and partly on another.<sup>2</sup> I referred to the marginal band as *anathyrosis*; but I realize now that the term is not relevant here.<sup>3</sup> The contact band illustrated in G. M. A. Richter's *Archaic Gravestones of Attica* (London 1961) figure 6, presents a far rougher surface than the band of fragments 1, 3, and 4; the so-called "rippling" did not interfere with a close fit.<sup>4</sup>

Neither the curving part of the rough-picked ridge nor the smooth-dressed band show any marked evidence of erosion, as can be seen, for example, on fragments 11 and 91 of the quota-lists.<sup>5</sup> The fragments have been chipped in places and subjected to rough treatment, but they exhibit no discoloration or wear in the undamaged portions which would tend to support any theory that the top of the stele was originally uncovered.<sup>6</sup> But, as I have explained elsewhere,<sup>7</sup> weathering

<sup>2</sup> Pritchett, *Hesperia* 9 (1940) 102–104.

<sup>3</sup> The noun is modern and is not found in ancient Greek. Dinsmoor (*Architecture of Ancient Greece* [London 1950] 387) defines *anathyrosis* as follows: "The smooth marginal dressing or contact band of a joint surface, of which the central portion is roughened and sunk to avoid contact. Being applied only to the top and two vertical edges of a vertical joint, it assumes the appearance of the trim of a door, hence the name." According to the relative clause of the first sentence, the word, so defined, would not apply to our fragment. The definition of *ἀναθυρόσω* in LSJ would limit the use of the word to vertical surfaces.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. also the "rippling" in Richter's figs. 69, 72, and 87. Fig. 134, however, seems to have a band as smooth as that on our fragments, as well as a dowel.

<sup>5</sup> Meritt, Wade-Gery, and McGregor, *Athenian Tribute Lists I* (1939) 15 and 44.

<sup>6</sup> Meritt (*CP* 38 [1943] 235) suggested that the *lapis primus* "was set up in a low portico." In this case, all of the weathering would have occurred after the demolition of the portico. Since all seem to be agreed that the stele was set up on the Acropolis (e.g., Hicks and Hill, *Greek Historical Inscriptions* [Oxford 1901] 48, and Tod, *Greek Historical Inscriptions* [Oxford 1933] 53), I am not sure what "portico" Meritt has in mind.

<sup>7</sup> *Marathon* (Berkeley 1960) 162 n.168.

in marble depends more on the microscopic fabric of the marble and the orientation of the calcite grains along a particular face than on any other factors; and an examination by a specialized geologist would be required for a positive verdict. But anyone who inspects the area of the band will see that water has not dissolved along the original surface, especially in the area where one might expect it, that is, where the contact band meets the base of the ridge.

Elsewhere, I have given my opinion that the purpose of the smooth-dressed band and of the ridge was to receive a superimposed piece.<sup>8</sup> Certainly no one can deny that the dressing and the ridge *may* have been for a finial and nowhere in Attic epigraphy have I seen similar architectural treatment for purely capricious purposes. With a stele weighing approximately four tons and having a height of at least 3.66m., such a superimposed piece of marble, possibly containing a sculptured panel, might be expected to weigh more than half a ton. As to how the upper piece was anchored, I do not know. Possibly the photographs and description offered here may stimulate suggestions on the part of others. There are few published photographs of the lower surfaces of heavy finials atop high-standing monuments. One appears in G. Richter's *Archaic Gravestones of Attica* (London 1961) figure 6, where the monument had a socket in the upper piece and a tenon in the center of the lower one. One might also entertain the idea that there was a socket in the lower (see the suggestion above, page 123) and a tenon in the center of the upper piece. Possibly a high ridge alone was enough to anchor a finial of such weight.

One could wish for exact parallels, but I know of none; and the ridge and smooth-dressed band are facts. However, I know of no occurrence in Attic epigraphy of a free-standing inscribed stele weighing four tons. One must bear in mind that, aesthetically speaking, a sculptured block above might have added a great deal to the appearance, especially in the first year, when the only inscribed part was at the top of the obverse and the right lateral faces of the stele proper. Athenian fifth-century stelai were often decorated at the top with some sort of sculptured relief, and it is not unlikely that the largest and one of the most important ones would have had some such adornment.

The question was raised whether the band and the conspicuous ridge could have been intended for some aesthetic effect. Such an idea

<sup>8</sup> *Historia* 13 (1964) 130-134, and *BCH* 89 (1965) 437.

seems to me entirely unlikely; and it would leave unexplained the highly polished surface of the band which was invisible from below. There are examples on the backs of stelai of purposeful rustication where the edges are smooth and the middle is roughened, but such designs were meant to be seen, and they do not present a high curving ridge. They afford no parallel.

I have gone to some pains to report discussions which took place in Athens while the fragments were accessible on the ground. The important question is whether or not the reverse face of a capping piece was available for inscribed text. An affirmative answer would mean the abandonment of belief in a "missing list" among the tribute quota-lists. A negative answer would return us to examination of what seems a highly unlikely theory advanced by scholars who, after they dismantled the stele and inspected the pieces on the ground, either failed to see the pronounced ridge or saw it but for some reason did not mention it in their publications.

The vertical space from the top of the inscribed obverse face (not including the ridge) to the top of the first preserved line on List 9, as preserved on fragment 11, measures *ca.* 0.24m.<sup>9</sup> This compares, for example, with a vertical space of *ca.* 0.38m. for List 1; *ca.* 0.362m. for List 2, and *ca.* 0.62m. for List 10. Meritt wrote about this as follows: "This upper space may have been left without inscription simply because the mason could not comfortably reach it. His ladder may have been too short, or the boxes and whatnot that formed his scaffolding may have been too low, or—within the range of possibility—the mason of 446/5 may have been a man of diminutive stature—say, five feet four—as contrasted with him of 441/0, who cut List 14 and may have measured six feet three. Perhaps one man could reach the top of the stone and the other could not."<sup>10</sup> The only parallel cited for beginning the text below the top was *IG I<sup>2</sup> 304*,<sup>11</sup> and we now know that this parallel does not hold.<sup>12</sup> Other arguments about List 8 were discussed in *Historia* 13 (1964) 130–134 and *BCH* 89 (1965)

<sup>9</sup> This figure is only an estimate because of the plaster, but it cannot be far wrong, if the present stele is correctly reconstructed. *ATL* gives no measurement; but Meritt (*CP* 38 [1943] 238) referred to the distance as a "few centimeters." See also Wade-Gery, *Hesperia* 14 (1945) 212 n.2.

<sup>10</sup> *CP* 38 (1943) 236. McGregor (*Phoenix* 16 [1962] 268 n.8) called Meritt's arguments of 1943 "devastating"; and indeed they are, though hardly in the way that McGregor meant.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Wade-Gery, *Hesperia* 14 (1945) 213.

<sup>12</sup> *BCH* 88 (1964) 457.



Figure 1. THE RIDGE ON FRAGMENT 4 OF *lapis primus*



Figure 2. THE TOP OF FRAGMENT 4 OF *lapis primus*

PLATE 7 PRITCHETT



Figure 3. THE TOP OF FRAGMENT 3 OF *lapis primus*



*Figure 4.* FRAGMENT 5, RIGHT LATERAL FACE

PLATE 9 PRITCHETT



*Figure 5.* FRAGMENT 4, RIGHT LATERAL FACE



437. Certainly the greatest probability is that List 8 was inscribed at the top of the obverse face, beginning on the back of the finial.

While the scaffolding was in place around the stele, I was given a better opportunity of studying the first preserved line of List 9.<sup>13</sup> This is seen at the top of fragment 11,<sup>14</sup> where there are possibly two letters preserved. Lewis and Forrest read the letter in the fourth space of col. II as an Attic *gamma* (undotted);<sup>15</sup> McGregor claimed that it was a *nu* (dotted) and that the letter preceding was an *epsilon* (undotted).<sup>16</sup> The original surface is eroded away, and the letters can be recovered only by an inspection of the deeply weathered surface. When water is applied, the discoloration in the marble clearly brings up an Attic *gamma*. The letter is as distinct as the *nu* and the *delta* in the line below. There is no trace of a left upright. In the preceding letter-space, water brings out an upright in the left part of the space. Lewis' reading of  $B\epsilon]_{\rho\gamma}[\alpha\iota\omicron\iota$  for the original text of this line would seem to conform to the evidence.

Fragments 4 and 5 were also studied in the sunlight, and photographs are offered in PLATE 8, figure 4 and PLATE 9, figure 5. These two fragments contain all that remains of the Postscript of List 1, as inscribed on the upper right lateral face. The result of my study was to confirm for the most part the text as established by Wade-Gery in his brilliant article in *BSA* 33 (1932/3) 104–106, but to disprove later readings.

The following comments are offered:

1. At the bottom of fragment 5, which contains line 11 of the *ATL* text, the circular letter is not a *phi*. The original surface is preserved in the center of the deeply eroded area, and there can have been no vertical bisecting the letter. This surface can be seen clearly in the photograph (PLATE 8, figure 4). To the right, the irregularities in the erosion would permit the space to be a battleground for almost any letter. Wade-Gery wisely read nothing. If the triangular depression at the very bottom of the stone is the basis for the *alpha* of *ATL* it is not in alignment with the other letters of the stoichos, and in any case is much too deep to afford any evidence for the ancient reading.

2. Line 11 begins on fragment 4.<sup>17</sup> What was read by Wade-Gery

<sup>13</sup> For my earlier report, see *Historia* 13 (1964) 132–133.

<sup>14</sup> *ATL* 1, fig. 13.

<sup>15</sup> *BSA* 49 (1954) 28.

<sup>16</sup> *Phoenix* 16 (1962) 272.

<sup>17</sup> This line was omitted in the transcription by West and Meritt in *SEG* V no.7.

as a *nu* (dotted)<sup>18</sup> and Meritt as a *kappa*, can be seen in PLATE 9, figure 5 in the fourth stoichos in the space to the right of the two interpuncts. There is nothing in the weathering that suggests either a *nu* or a *kappa*. Some who examined the stone with me thought there might be a deeply weathered *upsilon*; but it would begin in the right half of the stoichos. In any case, κ[ε]φά[λαιον] must be regarded merely as a restoration and one that contradicts the traces.

3. In line 11, third letter-space, within the weathering there is no suggestion of a *nu*, as read dotted by Wade-Gery and undotted by Meritt; but there are broken markings on the unweathered surface which might suggest any one of a number of letters, including a *nu*. Nor do I see the *epsilon* read in the preceding letter-space, unless the circular hole above but to the right of the *epsilon* in the line below is regarded as evidence.

4. My fourth observation concerns the letter in the fourth letter-space of line 13 as it is preserved in the lower part of fragment 4. Since this letter has been read at one time by West and Meritt as an Attic *lambda* (dotted),<sup>19</sup> at another time by Meritt as a *chi*, we can be sure that we are dealing with elusive traces. In PLATE 9, figure 5, the tip of the pencil is placed against the small nick in the marble which apparently has been taken as the *chi*; see the drawing in Meritt, *Documents on Athenian Tribute* 62, figure 11. But this notch—and there are similar ones on the preserved surface which have nothing to do with ancient letters—is 0.068m. from the left edge, whereas four lines above, the *chi* begins 0.064m. from the edge, as measured by using a straight edge.<sup>20</sup> There is little ground for reading anything outside of square brackets; but if a *chi* is to be read, it is worth noting that it is not in alignment with the *chi* of line 9.

5. Some letters and numerals have been read undotted on the basis of the eroded area, which often lies as deep as 0.004m. Furthermore, it is not always a matter of the complete shape of the letter in question being etched into the marble, but simply the general outline. For example, in line 9, in the 7th letterspace of the line (PLATE 8, figure 4 in the center of the picture), an H has been reported. But there

<sup>18</sup> The first strokes of the *nus* in this inscription slant.

<sup>19</sup> SEG V, List 7, line 5.

<sup>20</sup> By using straight edges and working with undisputed letters, the distance between stoichos 1 and 2, as measured on centers, is 0.02m.; between stoichos 2 and 3, and 3 and 4, 0.017m. Meritt's figure 11, therefore, is not true to the text. Dow (*CP* 37 [1942] 371–384) noted many irregularities in the spacing in other lists.

is no trace of the cross-bar. The erosion begins much higher in the stoichos and takes the form of two deep valleys. Conceivably, the sign for fifty drachmai might have eroded in the same way, depending on how deeply the vertical strokes were engraved. We cannot be sure what the numeral was. The same applies to the two letterspaces to the left. Too much imagination is involved in the reported readings.<sup>21</sup>

In conclusion, the reading κεφάλαιον in line 11 cannot stand, and there is sufficient doubt about some of the other letters and numerals to suggest that the text of the Postscript and the problem of the collection of 454/3 B.C. need restudy.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> It is noteworthy that according to the numerous examples of the word *stater* treated in Hiller's index to *IG I<sup>2</sup>*, the Athenian rule was to record the whole numbers by acrophonic numerals. The fractions of staters are given in *ἔκραι*. The *ATL* restoration would have the number of the staters spelled out in contrast with the numerals used for the drachmai a few lines above. Since in *ATL* 3 (1950) 6 and 266 the editors themselves changed their earlier figures, the whole matter of the totals for the quota, which have been tied to the restorations of this Postscript to List 1, may not be as secure as some have thought.

<sup>22</sup> Fragments 4 and 5 were heavily pencilled when removed from their position. Much of the graphite was sponged away before the photographs were taken; but some still appears and should not be taken as evidence.