

# The RAG

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A discovery announced last March suggests that a Celtic tribe called the Cornovii may have built a road, perhaps as long as 60 kms or so, in modern day Shropshire that has hitherto been classified as a Roman road. But whoever built the road, it is argued that it is pre-Roman and, if it is, that would (a) challenge the paradigm of an uncivilized pre-Roman Britain that required the Romans to introduce the idea of a structured road; (b) invite a consideration of whether there are other roads in Britain classified as 'Roman', but which are in fact pre-Roman; and (c) raise the possibility that the Romans learnt something from the pre-Romans in Britain about road construction.

There are three roads able to be seen in Shropshire today that have been classified as Roman: Watling Street, Watling Street West and a third road, once known as 'Forden Gaer' just south of Shrewsbury (see map below for location of Shrewsbury in Shropshire) that was thought to be Roman, but is now believed to be an Iron Age road with antecedents perhaps going back as far as the Bronze Age.



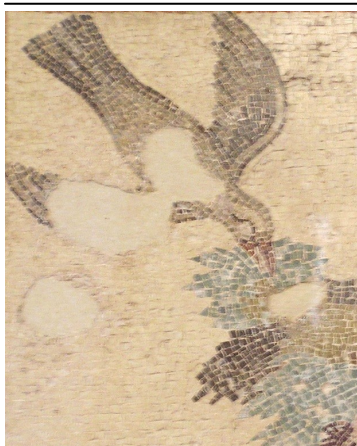
It is not suggested that the peoples of pre-Roman Britain did not create roads at all. They certainly created tracks, but what has been believed is that they had not constructed engineered roads. That is, that they had not dug a trench and filled it with layers of material to create a sound, durable, easily negotiated surface, sealed or cambered to minimize water corrosion, and extending over a considerable distance.

The putative pre-Roman road is thought to precede by perhaps as much as a century the Claudian invasion of Britain in AD 43.

The 400 meters of twice re-built road evidences a compacted cobbled surface overlying layers of elder wood and silt. It is some 6 meters wide and 1.5 meters deep, and built over a track that had been used as stock route from perhaps as early as the Bronze Age. It also appears to be cambered, and lined to secure its edges. It is argued that the Romans thought enough of the road's structural merits that they used it as a foundation for the road they built, thus effectively, though no doubt unconsciously, disguising the road as theirs. The discovery of the road was somewhat serendipitous—it was unearthed in a quarry from which stone for modern road construction is sourced.

Of course the construction of such a road suggests sophistication in the areas of social organization, technical skill and technology in general. Thus, it has to be considered that such a road can imply the use of wheeled carriage of people and goods, or at least the existence of a sense of socio-economic permanence in the minds of those who built it. Its construction would have required a high level of investment of time, resources, and confidence in the future. In short, it suggests that civilization had taken hold before the Romans arrived—perhaps long before. It is this implication that in part at least has given rise to scepticism, and an easy target for the sceptics is the dating method used. Optical or luminescence dating of mineral grains within the road gave a high probability of a pre-Roman date. This relatively new technique involves the calculation of a ratio of total absorbed solar radiation and solar radiation dose rate, and it thus involves assumptions concerning the extent of exposure of the mineral grains to solar radiation. However, the optical dating result was confirmed by radio-carbon dating of wood in the road's foundation.

The road and its appropriate dating will undoubtedly give rise to continuing scholarly debate.



A Maltese Falcon?  
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## The Romans in Malta and Gozo

*Norah Cooper*

*Until this year, probably the most-famous previous visitor to Malta was the Apostle Paul. Of course, he was shipwrecked there while our RAG Secretary arrived by a more traditional means.*

Malta, a small island (30 by 12 km) in the Mediterranean is historically famous for the victory of the Knights of St John (Knights Hospitallers) in the Great Siege against the Ottoman Turks in 1565, and for withstanding 154 days and nights of continuous bombing by the Italian and German Air Forces in 1942 - a heroic stand for which the people of Malta were awarded the George Cross. These were just two events in seven thousand years of Maltese history.



Malta has had a continuous and fascinating history since the first people arrived about 5200BC by boat or raft from Sicily. The early commercial and military fleets of Phoenicia, Carthage and Rome stayed close to coasts, mooring their craft whenever possible at night. Malta's strategic importance in the Mediterranean to all seafaring people until the present day is due to its magnificent harbours, and to its position: 80km south of Sicily and 400 km southeast of Carthage, modern Tunis.

Around 3600BC the famous Megalithic temples e.g. the temple at Mnajdra, near Zurrieq (photo below), were being built on Malta and its smaller, sister island of Gozo. These massive structures predate the Egyptian pyramids by about one thousand years.



By 2500BC these temple sites were abandoned and a different Bronze Age culture took over. Evidence for these people includes cemeteries and the intriguing *cart-rut* sites: parallel tracks, up to 60cm deep, made in exposed limestone outcrops by heavy loads (possibly soil for agriculture, or limestone blocks for building), probably carried on a type of sled pulled by beasts of burden. The ones pictured opposite are from "Clapham Junction" near Buskett Gardens (2 km south of Rabat) and well-signposted from there.

From 800-480BC, Malta was colonised by the Phoenicians, seafaring people who would have sheltered in Malta's many harbours including the famous Grand Harbour in Valetta. In fact, the Phoenician word for refuge - *malat*, may have been the origin of the name Malta. The Greeks referred to Malta as Μελίτη (*Melitē*) or honey-sweet, another possible origin for the name. This name was used by the Romans.

From 480-218BC, the Punic Period, Malta became part of the Carthaginian Empire, and Malta may have been the site of a Carthaginian naval base during the first Punic War with Rome (264-241BC).

Sicily, colonised by the Carthaginians and Greeks, was of more interest to the Romans than the relatively tiny and less fertile Malta, and sister islands (Gozo, Comino and Filfla).

However, Rome raided the Punic colony of Malta in 255BC and devastated the enemy countryside. In 218BC, there was a Carthaginian garrison of 2000 men which was unable to defend Malta against a Roman naval expedition. Malta now became part of the Roman commonwealth, and was included in the newly-formed province of Sicily – the first Roman province, and the start of her overseas empire.

From 218BC until late in the fourth century, Malta was part of the Roman Empire until after the “fall” of the western Roman Empire. Malta returned to Roman rule from about the time of the eastern emperor Justinian’s annexation of Sicily in 535 until the Arab conquest in 870.

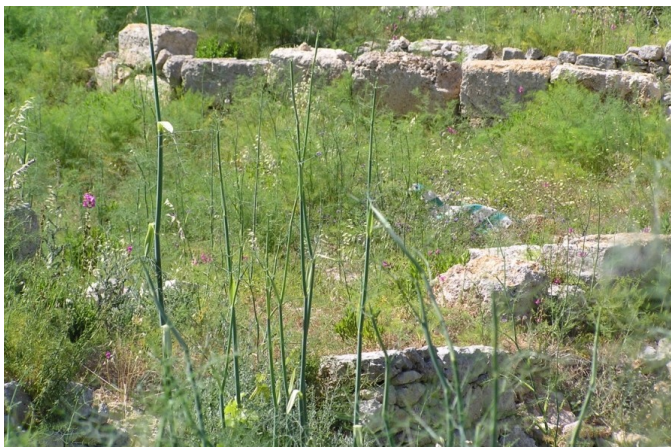
During the Roman period Malta featured in a number of written records. Cicero, for example, reports it as a winter base for pirates (until Pompey dealt with them in 67BC). Apart from the pirate incursions, Cicero describes Malta as a place of quiet prosperity. In fact at one point he favourably considered being voluntarily banished to the island. The Roman remains in Malta today are evidence of this prosperity; in particular the remains of *Domus Romana* in Rabat (the original Punic capital). This villa is the best remaining example of Roman architecture on Malta and Gozo.



The *Domus Romana* was originally discovered and excavated in 1881; the site was partially destroyed by road works in 1889. Further excavations in the 1920s of this Roman Republican domus (1<sup>st</sup> century BC) exposed much of the architectural structure and mosaics, including the famous mosaics *Doves of Sosos* (photo opposite) and *Autumn* (photo page 5), and many artefacts like the statue of Claudius (photo page 5), now on display in the museum built around the villa.

Apart from the *Domus Romana*, there are the remains of a maritime villa at Ramla Bay on Gozo, other villas under the church at San Pawl, Milqi and at Ta Kaccatura at Birżebbuġa not far from Ghar Dalam museum. Unfortunately many of these sites are inaccessible to the public, or are just small ruins e.g. the 2nd century Roman bath at Ghajn Tuffieha Bay - next to a natural water spring, 1.5 km from the beach (photo opposite).

The paucity of ancient remains reflects two thousand years of invasion, dense population growth and development in Malta (the present population of Malta is 400,000 on an island of only 316 km<sup>2</sup>).



One of the most important archaeological sites in Malta, Tas-Silġ (Google image below), is situated on a rounded hilltop overlooking Marsaxlokk Bay (which has always been an important small harbour), on the road to Delimara and on a back road to Zejtun. It is a multi-period sanctuary site covering all eras from 3000BC to the fourth century, and although it is not open to the public it can be viewed from over the site wall (photo below).



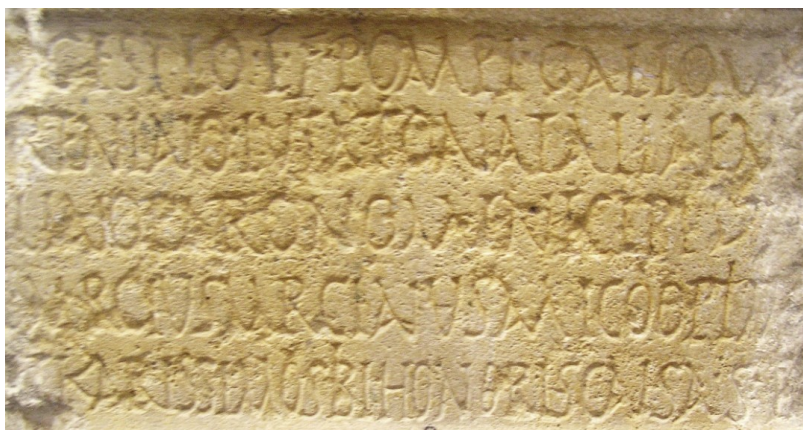
The Punic temple at Tas-Silġ incorporated remains of earlier temples and then what is thought to be the Roman sanctuary to Juno (the Phoenician goddess Astarte) mentioned in Cicero's *Verrine Orations*. The Verrines are a series of speeches Cicero wrote in 70BC for the prosecution of Caius Verres on corruption charges during his governorship of Sicily (73-71BC). This sanctuary of Juno at Tas-Silġ was renowned and revered, and Verres was accused of despoiling all its treasures.

*There is an island called Melita, O judges, separated from Sicily by a sufficiently wide and perilous navigation, in which there is a town of the same name, to which Verres never went, though it was for three years a manufactory to him for weaving women's garments. Not far from that town, on a promontory, is an ancient temple of Juno, which was always considered so holy, that it was not only always kept inviolate and sacred in those Punic wars, which in those regions were carried on almost wholly by the naval forces, but even by the bands of pirates which ravage those seas.....Not to dwell too long on this, he took care to have all these things taken down and carried off at one swoop by means of the slaves of the Venus whom he had sent thither for that purpose. Cicero Verr. II.4,103-104*



Other ancient Roman literary sources that refer to Malta, include works of Livy, Strabo, Ovid, Pliny the Elder, the geographer Ptolemy and Diodorus Siculus.

There are many Roman artefacts like the 1<sup>st</sup> century head found on the sea-bed off Gozo (photo below) and inscriptions in the Archaeological Museum, Gozo (photo below), and inscriptions on the old main gate of the citadel on Gozo. Further Roman inscriptions are in Mdina Cathedral, Malta. Unfortunately, the Punic and Roman section in the National Museum of Archaeology in Valletta is not yet open.



House of Domus  
mosaic entitled  
*Autumn* referred  
to on page 3.



The earliest alleged event in Malta during the imperial period is recorded by Luke in the New Testament (*Acts*, xxvii, 37-44, xxviii, 1-12). This is the shipwreck of St Paul in AD 60 on *Melite*. This probable event is deeply rooted in the Maltese culture. However, epigraphic evidence shows that until the third century the religion practised on Malta was the official Roman pagan one, although there was probably Christian worship practised clandestinely. Although the first written evidence for the presence of Christian communities in neighbouring Sicily is from the mid-third century, none of the Maltese Christian catacombs or hypogea, predate the fourth century. The St Paul/ St Agatha's catacombs in Rabat have a range of burial styles dating from Punico-Roman tombs to late Roman-Byzantine period. St Agatha's catacombs also have 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> century frescos. With the disruptions in the Western Roman Empire in the 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, Roman rule in Malta was interrupted when it was probably occupied by the Vandals (c. AD 445), and after them the Ostragoths around 477. In 535, Justinian I and his general Belisarius expanded the Roman empire of the east, re-incorporating Malta and Sicily. Therefore, Malta was under Roman rule almost continuously from 218BC to the invasion by Muslim Arabs in AD 870.

Malta is a lovely, fascinating island with a rich historical record that includes later invasions or colonisations by the Normans, the French under Napoleon and finally the British (during whose time it was declared by Act of Parliament to be part of Europe rather than Africa). In 1964 Malta became independent of Britain. In 1974 it became a republic and it joined the EU in 2004. The Roman era represents the longest period of colonisation of Malta.



Statue of  
Claudius referred  
to on page 3.



Detail from a  
*Domus Romana*  
mosaic

I thank both my sister Carolyn McGhee for her wonderful hospitality in Malta, and my husband, Roger, who is always an enthusiastic fellow traveller.

Anthony Bonanno. 2005. *Malta. Phoenician, Punic and Roman*. Heritage Malta is an invaluable guide to the classical period of Maltese history.

## What Happened to the WA Museum's Antique Casts?

Kevin J O'Toole

*The following is an abridged version of a paper I delivered last year at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, at an international conference on the fate of collections of casts of Graeco-Roman sculpture and other casts of works of art. I have in past issues of the RAG referred to the casts of the Parthenon Frieze in the Hellenic Gallery of the Western Australia, and at the Cornell conference I used that example to explore the reason why in Perth we no longer have at the Museum, or anywhere else in Perth for that matter, what was an excellent collection.*

From the mid-1890s, the Western Australian Museum and Art Gallery ("the Museum") had been acquiring casts of classical and later European art works by order from Brucciani & Co, cast makers in London.

The casts acquired were of two categories. The first category comprised a wide variety of casts (hereinafter 'the Statuary Casts') of ancient and modern works in the British Museum collection. The second category comprised casts of blocks from the Ionic Frieze of the Parthenon (hereinafter the 'Frieze Casts').

The official opening of a new annex to the Museum to exhibit the Statuary Casts, Frieze Casts and original art works, mainly paintings, took place on 25 June 1908 amid considerable publicity and ceremony.<sup>1</sup>

Of the original casts collection of the Western Australian Museum all that appears to remain are the Frieze Casts. What became of the Statuary Casts is not clear. They may have gone astray when the Museum, which from 1896 had been a combined museum and art gallery, gave up its role as an art gallery in 1979 upon the opening of a nearby purpose built art gallery, the Art Gallery of Western Australia. And yet the collection had been well regarded. Thus, the English artist Alfred James Daplyn, referring to the hall of the Museum below the Hellenic Gallery, stated in 1913 that it contained a "superb collection of casts . . . On the ground floor we find a collection of casts from the antique, which is decidedly in advance of any similar collection in Australia. The finest period of Greek art is illustrated by casts the size of the originals of Venus of Milo, Venus of Medici, The Discobolos, Aphrodite, etc., and busts of Homer, Pericles, Sophocles, Diogenes, and innumerable others." He referred also to the gallery displaying the Frieze Casts: "The walls are coloured dark red, which sets off to advantage a fine frieze, composed of bas-reliefs, after those in the Parthenon, and the size of the originals."<sup>2</sup>

Since 2004 the Hellenic Gallery of the Museum has been given over to a display of aboriginal art and artefacts, and an audio visual presentation of the history of the treatment of the indigenous people of Australia from the time of Western colonization. This permanent exhibition is called the 'Katta Djinoong': *First Peoples of Western Australia. Katta Djinoong*, meaning "to see and understand us", was originally housed in another part of the Museum and was inaugurated in April 1999 to launch a national aboriginal reconciliation policy.

The Hellenic Gallery is located in what is known as 'the Jubilee Building' of the Museum named to celebrate Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897. The foundation stone was laid by the Duke of Cornwall and York in 1901. These facts help to direct attention to the very deferential and uncontested demeanour of the ruling elites of early Western Australia with respect to the motherland. This outlook also governed the philosophy of the Museum. Hence, "The collections that were once housed in the Jubilee Building, together with the spaces made to accommodate them, typified the Victorian passion for eclectic collecting, cataloguing and viewing collections." The building is heritage listed pursuant to the *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990*, and the Frieze Casts contributed to the building's heritage listing: "The painting gallery or Hellenic Gallery remains largely untouched and with its Parthenon frieze is a space of high artistic merit."<sup>3</sup> The Frieze Casts are also considered to contribute to the building's social value. Thus, the Museum's collection "was aimed at a teaching role and in the early years, in the eyes of its curator at least, it was one of the most extensive in the country including electrotypes, casts and copies of famous works."<sup>3</sup>

The Hellenic Gallery today is darkened and sombre and the Frieze Casts are difficult to see. The Museum takes no effort to draw attention to them.

A question may thus be raised: why did the casts acquired by the Museum, thought so desirable to acquire that the substantial logistical difficulties at the time were not allowed to stand in the way, suffer the fate of either being thrown away, lost, or being left unnoticed and uncelebrated?

It may simply be a case of a change of tastes or interests—but whose tastes and whose interests? Those who acquired the Statuary Casts and Frieze casts, or who facilitated their acquisition, were part of a largely British born and educated cultural elite in Perth, most notably the Irish born and educated lawyer John Winthrop Hackett (later Sir John Hackett). It may be that the acquisition of the casts reflected not the tastes and interests of the cultural elite as a whole but principally the tastes and interests of Hackett, who as a newspaper proprietor and a member of parliament, had the power and wealth to satisfy those interests, and to promote them to the public at large. Yet even if that was the case, it can hardly be doubted that Hackett had enthusiastic and able followers.<sup>4</sup>

If there was a change in tastes and interests there are ready explanations for it. The Western Australian gold rush of the 1890s, Australia's (including Western Australia's) heavy involvement in two world wars, the depression of the 1930s, and massive post World War II immigration, first mainly from Europe and later from Asia (after some seven decades from 1901 of a 'White Australia' immigration policy), have contributed to a unique Australian socio-political consciousness that marks a sharp break with the outlook of the colonial ruling elites. Indeed, there was for a time in Australia a social divide, not least due to post colonial immigration from Ireland, re-

flected in anti British feeling in a significant part of the Australian population. It needs also to be remembered that Australia began as a penal settlement (Western Australia was a penal colony from 1850 and until 1868) and it is only in very recent decades that Australians of Anglo/Irish origin have in general thrown off a sense of cultural cringe with respect to the motherland, and Europe in general. Thus, there were a number of factors inuring to the development of an attitude amongst a significant proportion of ordinary Australians that associated European art and cultural interests as either alien or inaccessible, or at least as not properly belonging in Australia.

On the broader level, Australia has undergone a reorientation of its geo-political, and to a degree its cultural outlook, from Europe centred to Asia/Pacific centred; from a focus on Great Britain and the British Commonwealth, to a focus on the United States. In the Cold War, Australia was in the geographic East of an East/West world. In today's North/South world, Australia is again *prima facie* geographically misplaced. In light of an arguably unique set of factors, Australians in particular are a people who are sensitive to how they are perceived in the world at large.

And in addition to these things, and in part reflective of them, there is the matter of Australia's indigenous peoples. In respect of this there is a striking symmetry. It is just as unlikely that today there would be a celebration of the display of casts of classical or later European art works in Perth as there would in 1908 have been a celebration of indigenous art and artefacts. That is not to say that there was no interest in indigenous art and artefacts in *fin de siècle* Perth, rather it is that what interest there was had its source in the demands of cold scientific inquiry, and otherwise in an attitude of paternalism and disdain, an attitude for which there has been for some decades now, a deep and widespread sense of guilt in the Australian body politic. The matter rose to fever pitch as a result of an inquiry established by the Australian Government in 1995, and published as the *Bringing Them Home Report* in May 1997, into what has come to be known as the 'Stolen Generations' of Australian aboriginals. This is a reference to the forced removal over many decades of principally mixed-descent aboriginal children for adoption by non-aboriginals. In making a formal apology on 13 February 2008 the Australian Prime Minister stated that the apology was "to deal with this unfinished business of the nation, to remove a great stain from the nation's soul . . ."

Just two years before the opening of the Hellenic Gallery, the Western Australian parliament passed the *Western Australia Aborigines Act* 1905, an enactment that was in the same spirit as the then colony's *Aborigines Protection Act* 1886. Amongst other things it authorized the forcible separation of aboriginal children from their families, and Aboriginal people were put under the control of a so-called 'Chief Protector of Aborigines'. Attitudes had begun to change when in 1967 there was a successful referendum in Australia which amended the Australian Constitution to give the Government of Australia power to make laws with respect to Aborigines, and which removed from the constitution a provision expressly excluding aboriginal people from being counted in a census of the Australian population. There followed in 1992 the internationally celebrated Mabo decision of the High Court of Australia, a recognition that when Australia was colonized it was not *terra nullius*—a legal no man's land. Certain Aboriginal land title rights thus came to be recognized.

It was in this context of a powerful national movement for an

expiation of guilt, and the taking of steps to redress injustice, that in 2004 the Museum adapted the Hellenic Gallery to use for *Katta Djinoong*. But in doing that, the Museum engaged knowingly or unknowingly in an exquisite irony, in that it juxtaposed *Katta Djinoong* with the Frieze Casts.

The juxtaposition may be perceived as reflecting a state of contested heritage. Hence, it is by no means impossible that when the Hellenic Gallery was chosen for the new location of *Katta Djinoong* it was officially noticed that the Gallery was in its inception a celebration of European values. But how valid is this contested heritage perspective in relation to the Frieze Casts?

In the Hellenic Gallery the Frieze Casts, unlit and uncelebrated, look down upon the indigenous exhibits, a silent witness to a shift in cultural values since the day the Gallery's official opening was the occasion of great public celebration. If there is a sense of contest it is not a contest of the intrinsic value of one heritage over another—it is a contest of priorities and equities. The deliberately darkened Gallery and the sense of gloom are consistent with the significant part of the exhibition which is given over to the audio-visual presentation which plays continuously and audibly throughout the Gallery. The Frieze Casts may in this view be seen as consigned to the darkness above, indeed to be audibly rebuked, a discarded symbol of a colonial past that must stand back in deference to what had been a neglected and entirely disvalued indigenous cultural heritage—and a cruelly treated people. Consider in this context the perspective of Timothy W. Luke: "*museums exist, in part, to foster and fuel the civilizing qualities of conceptual and cultural clashes.*"<sup>5</sup> But in the Hellenic Gallery the juxtaposed cultural contenders, if that is what they are, are far from given an equal say. The Frieze Casts are effectively rendered mute.<sup>6</sup>

Yet the juxtaposition can also be seen as representing not a clash but rather complementarity between classical and indigenous traditions. Hence, the Frieze Casts and the exhibition of indigenous cultural artefacts need not detract from each other—the meaning of each can be seen as augmenting the other. Indeed, in this context there can be seen another irony. The spirit that led to the acquisition of the Frieze Casts is the same spirit that came to recognize, value, and to exhibit indigenous art, even if in a way, whether intentionally or not, it displaces whatever the Frieze Casts are taken to stand for. Whence came, for example, the values expressed in 2003 by the Museum's then director where he argued that the National Museum should be committed to principles that included 'Social Inclusion' so that museum programs should have a role "*in reconciliation and building community by being socially inclusive and representing all groups in society. They should acknowledge all aspects of a nation's past, including aspects which some people may not find comfortable, such as the Stolen Generations and conflict history.*"<sup>7</sup> Consider in this context also the aims of the Art Gallery of Western Australia: "*The Gallery aims to develop the pre-eminent art collection in Western Australia by acquiring, preserving, displaying and interpreting the visual arts from the past and present. Our emphasis is on Western Australian and Indigenous art, and the influences of both Australian and international arts which have informed local developments . . .*"<sup>8</sup>

Yet another possibility is that the fate of the Frieze Casts is to do not with any active attitude to them, but rather to passivity—an indifference stemming from ignorance. In that respect the Frieze Casts are now to be perceived as simply a decorative feature in the Hellenic Gallery; a mere cornice. As for the

Statuary Casts, they may have become lost simply because they had come to be perceived as worthless. An indication of a changing or changed attitude to casts even by 1928 can be seen in the following unattributed extract from an article in the West Australian Newspaper of 7 January of that year referring to the Museum's cast collection: "*although our gallery is insignificant in size, to assume that it has not some genuine treasures would be altogether a mistake. . . . Some of the Eastern States galleries, with merely a few pieces of modern marble and bronzework, and with apparently a healthy contempt for plaster casts, do not provide half such an insight into great sculpture as does our own gallery.*"

We should consider what reasons we have today not to regard such casts as essentially valueless, and to ask if such reasons would always have been apparent. Three of the more obvious reasons are: First, the casts are works of art in themselves. The importance of casts and the skills of casts making are widely celebrated, not least in such permanent exhibitions as that in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Secondly, in respect at least of the Parthenon art, the original marbles continue to deteriorate. Subject to how well the moulds were made; their condition when the Casts were made; and the skill with which the casts were made, the Frieze Casts may be an important record of the condition of the original art as it was well over a century ago. Thirdly, casts can afford an educational opportunity not always otherwise available where the original work is not easily accessible for one reason or another to public viewing and study.

It is distinctly possible and probably likely that the first two of these reasons would not have been readily apparent to the generations following the founders of the Hellenic Gallery, and in any event those reasons require that the original works which the casts copy are valued. As for the third reason, it clearly relates to the effects of cultural change. Experiencing, as they were, immense diversifying cultural change, and an ever widening range of interests, in a context in which knowledge of the relevant art was not widely or systematically disseminated, the following generations noticing the Frieze Casts and Statuary Casts, would have increasingly thought them alien, and at best an anachronistic interest. In all likelihood it is in this that we find the true reason why, apart from the Frieze Casts, the copies were destroyed, lost, or forgotten. There was no obvious reason why they should not have been. What they copied was less and less known, or less and less appreciated; correspondingly the use of the casts was less and less understood; and

simply, the Statuary Casts were increasingly perceived to be irrelevant to anything that was considered important.

As for the Frieze Casts, apart from helping to give legal protection to the building to which they are fixed, they may now be perceived to have a totally unwarranted use as a symbol which the unimaginative may think was a time for nothing but shame, instead of a time that was in the custody of those who though ill-informed in significant ways were nonetheless motivated to create institutions and cultivate values that have made today's shame realizable. The Frieze Casts have not been destroyed physically, but it may be argued that they *are* enduring a conceptual destruction.

### Conclusion

The casts that were collected for Perth were collected by people who valued the originals, and the casts were a means of communicating that value to the community. Subsequently, the communication seems to have failed, and the resultant ignorance rendered the Statuary Casts meaningless, while the Frieze Casts may now be serving a purpose quite unimaginable to those who acquired them.

### Notes

1. See for example the extensive report in the West Australian newspaper of 24 June 1908.
2. Sydney Morning Herald, 15 March, 1913.
3. Quotations from the Register of Heritage Places: Heritage Council of Western Australia.
4. Hackett's interests were not unique in Australia. The Australian Museum established in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century in Sydney was, upon the opening, the grateful recipient of a donation of the substantial collection of casts of antique sculpture by the British born and educated immigrant to New South Wales, the polymath, Sir Charles Nicholson.
5. Timothy W. Luke, 'The Museum: Where Civilizations Clash or Clash Civilizes', in Genoways, Hugh, H. (ed) (2006): *Museum Philosophy for the Twenty-First Century*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, pp. 19-25, at 21. See also, *loc cit*, Coxall, Helen, 'Open Minds: Inclusive Practice', pp. 139-149, esp., 143-145 (regarding the Western Australian Museum).
6. And in respect of the casts the visitors to the Gallery, who are given no information about them, are kept in the dark.
7. Dr. Gary Morgan in a submission to the National Museum of Australia Review of Exhibitions and Public Programs, 10 March 2003.
8. <http://www.artgallery.wa.gov.au/collections/index.asp>

*This is a photograph taken perhaps decades ago of what was then at least part of the University of Western Australia's collection of antique casts. What became of these casts is perhaps anyone's guess. It suffices to say that at one time such a collection was thought worth having but that at a later time it was decided to break it up or dispose of it —some of the pieces were last seen being loaded into a skip for delivery to a tip somewhere.*





## Villa Jovis

Sandra Ottley

In AD 27 the Roman emperor Tiberius left Rome for Campania in order to dedicate a number of temples. According to Tacitus (*Ann.* 4.67), Tiberius so detested the towns he visited and indeed the whole mainland that he took refuge on the island of Capri, where he would spend most of his time until his death in AD37. The island had twelve spacious, separately named villas in which Tiberius took up residence. The largest of these imperial villas was known as Villa Jovis or Jupiter's Villa (Suet. *Tiberius*, 65). A considerable amount of this imperial villa remains today although it is not well preserved. However, the size of the ruins gives the visitor not only an idea of the scale on which the emperor liked to live, but of the skill of the Roman architects and builders.

The location of Villa Jovis can only be described as spectacular, although it must have posed major problems for Tiberius' architects. It is situated some 334m above sea level in the very north east section of Capri on the top of *Monte Tiberio* (the second highest peak on Capri after *Monte Solaro* at 589m in Anacapri). The villa is situated in a very secluded spot on the island and even today access to the villa is only possible on foot and involves a walk of about two kilometers – all uphill – from Capri town. It is probably the same route over which the emperor himself must have been carried in his litter.



The ruins of Villa Jovis were largely uncovered during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. For many years it was believed that there was little remaining of the once splendid palace, and that what was visible was the foundations of the villa. However, Professor Amedeo Maiuri, then superintendent of Antiquities in Campania, was convinced that this was not the case. Professor Maiuri systematically excavated the ruins between 1932 – 36 and what he found substantiated his doubts - what had long been thought of as the foundations of the villa was in reality its top floor. The remains of three lower floors, all built around four massive cisterns which formed the core of the villa structure, were unearthed.



Villa Jovis was constructed in the first century AD and although only a few certain constructions of the Augustan (27 BC – AD14) and Tiberian (AD 14 – 37) periods have been identified, it is clear from what has been discovered that the villa, during Tiberius' residence, was indeed extensive. The entire complex spans several terraces which is unusual for the period but made necessary because of the terrain. The main block of the Villa Jovis covers approximately 5 400 square meters. In fact, the whole summit of the mountain is occupied by the central body of the villa. The *Domus Tiberiana* on the Palatine Hill in Rome, is some 16 000 square meters. Thus the main block of the Villa Jovis by itself was about a third the size of Tiberius' palace in Rome. If you count the many upper stories and terraces it covers closer to 7 000 square meters (1.7 acres). However, to that you can also add the woods, gardens and *nymphaea* (shrines to nymphs, usually incorporating fountains), *exedrae* (outside seats) for resting, and outside paths. There is a difference in elevation across the site of approximately 40 m. Aerial and ground photographs of the remains of the villa (pictures above) show it to be a remarkable testament to Roman architecture.

To the right of the main entrance of the villa is a sheer drop where the limestone cliffs fall straight down to the water. This is known as the *Salto di Tiberio* (Tiberius' Leap) and, according to our ancient literary sources (Tacitus, *Ann.* 6.20 – 21; Suetonius, *Tiberius* 62.3), is the place where Tiberius had his enemies hurled into the sea.

The entire villa was organized in sections and linked by corridors, stairs and passageways.

The north wing of the complex contained the living quarters (see photo top next page). This section of the villa was completely isolated from the rest of the building, but connected by ramps and stairways to the *triclinium* (dining room) and *loggia* (terrace). The *loggia* was a rectangular design 92 meters in length. It was primarily designed for taking the air and would have provided Tiberius with breathtaking views over the Gulf of Naples.



The south wing seems to have served an administrative function and also housed the baths. The baths would have been grand. A *praefurnium* (furnace room), an *apodyterium* (changing room), *tepidarium* (warm anteroom) and *calidarium* (hot bath room) can all be identified. In the latter room there were double walls through which the hot air circulated, and pipes for the hot water.

The east wing seems to have been dedicated to official functions and was the location of a great apsed hall. The west wing featured an open-walled hall which offered a scenic view towards Anacapri. It also seems to have been the location of the servants' accommodation and lavatories. There are few of the internal decorations remaining. Many of the findings unearthed have now been lost, although some may still be seen in the Archaeological Museum of Naples and in the Church of St. Stefano on Capri.



We know from inscriptions of imperial freedmen and slaves that the household staff active on the Palatine under Tiberius was very extensive, therefore we can probably infer that the staff on Capri was also large and diverse. This inference is well supported by the size of the kitchen which houses about a dozen stoves and a baker's oven – clearly there were a large number of people to feed.

One of the main problems the architects had to overcome was the collection and storage of water to supply the villa's baths and its estimated 3000 square meters of gardens. The solution was found in the construction of a complex canal system to transport rainwater into four large interconnecting cisterns dug into the rock and covered by vaults. The remains of the cisterns are clearly visible today (pictured below opposite).

South of the main buildings there are the remains of a lighthouse/watchtower which was used as a signal tower to communicate with the mainland. It would appear, from the remains, that there was a connection between the villa and the lighthouse. The lighthouse itself stood over 25 meters high. Suetonius (*Tiberius* 74) recounts how the lighthouse collapsed following an earthquake just days after the death of Tiberius. The lighthouse was later rebuilt by the emperor Domitian (AD 81 – 96) and remained in use until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. On the other side of the villa and reached by a short staircase is the ruined *specularium* (astronomical observatory).

The villa continued to be an imperial residence until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Subsequent modifications were made in medieval times when a chapel in honour of St. Christopher and St. Leonard was built. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century this chapel was transformed into the Church of Maria del Soccorso (pictured below).



The imposing remains of the Villa Jovis are now visited by relatively few people. There were no more than 8 other people walking around the villa on the day my husband and I visited. Yet for more than a decade this villa seems to have been the principal residence of the emperor of the Roman world, and the island of Capri, along with Rome, were the administrative centre of that world.

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- Fitzpatrick, M. C., 1949. 'Tiberius' Villa Jovis on the Isle of Capri,' *The Classical Journal*, Vol 45, No 2: 66 – 70.
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- Suetonius, 2001. *Lives of the Caesars*, Vol. 1, Translated by J. C. Rolfe, Loeb Classical Library, London: HUP.
- Tacitus, 2006, *The Annals*, Translated by J. Jackson, Loeb Classical Library, London: HUP.

## *Googling the Past ... in Iraq*

### David Kennedy

Archaeologists put together the winning combination of flight and the camera to produce a new and effective tool for prospection over a century ago. The First World War, however, was to drive the development of aeroplanes, cameras and aerial reconnaissance and the associated photography through military necessity and with abundant resources. It was not till 1919, therefore, something began to take shape that has come to be called Aerial Archaeology. Since then it has been exploited as a first class technique for discovering, monitoring, mapping and for researching entire landscapes. Sadly, most countries prevented its use and lost out on decades of development during which their archaeological remains were damaged or destroyed on a grand scale. Nowhere has that been more true than in the Middle East. Now, however, the ready availability of high-resolution imagery on Google Earth (and other virtual globes) has outflanked the censors and is allowing archaeologists both to make new discoveries and to monitor what has become of known sites. The results for the latter are often disheartening as the following example illustrates.

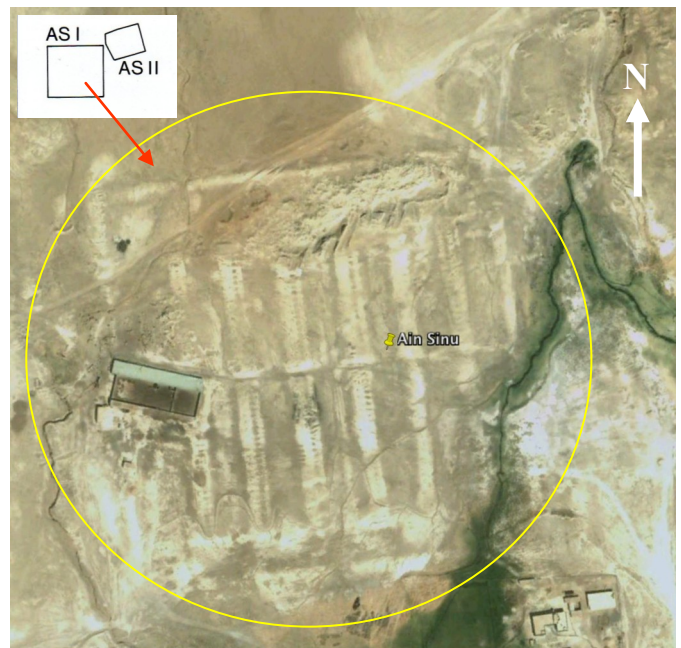
In 1938 Sir Aurel Stein undertook an aerial survey over the British Mandates of Iraq and Transjordan. His objective was to find and record the traces of the Roman military remains to complement what had been done by his French colleague, Père Antoine Poidebard in Syria. Both men were supported by their national air forces which flew them around. One of the sites recorded by Stein was at a place called Ain Sinu, 85 km west of Mosul on the Tigris and about 30 km east of the great Roman legionary fortress at Singara (modern Balad Sinjar). Stein died during the Second World War and before his book on his findings could be published and few of the sites he photographed and identified as Roman forts were ever investigated. One was – the very unusual site described here.

Ain Sinu is in fact two forts, in close proximity. In 1958, (later Prof.) David Oates of London University, undertook brief excavations on parts of both forts. What emerged was a date of early third century AD for both – i.e. probably the later part of the Severan period (193-235). The Emperor Septimius Severus (AD 193-211) had been responsible for a major expansion in this region culminating in a new province of Mesopotamia extending as far as the Tigris around modern Mosul. His son Caracalla (211-218) campaigned in Mesopotamia as did the last of the dynasty, Severus Alexander (222-235). So any one of them might have been responsible for the forts at Ain Sinu.

AS II is a fairly traditional fort that need not detain us. AS I, however, is virtually unparalleled anywhere in the Empire – the only similar examples are elsewhere in Mesopotamia and one in Palaestina. What is unusual about AS I apart from its considerable size (c. 342 x 310 m, 10.6 ha), is that while one expects barracks to take up a majority of the internal buildings, here there are ONLY barracks. Row after row but organized so as to create rectangular courtyards with a set of small rooms along one side and a set of large across the yard and facing it. The best interpretation is that this was a fort created to house a newly raised cavalry regiment. As it still had not formal independent existence it is thought to have been administered from the adjacent fort. The rooms around each of the 12 courtyards were

probably for the troopers on one side and their horses opposite.

AS II is remarkable fort, highly unusual amongst the hundreds of forts known and the only one of its kind ever excavated. As such it richly deserved protection and might now – with improved techniques, have benefitted from further investigation. I know of no one who has even visited the site since Oates' excavations half a century ago. In recent years this was not an area to travel in with ease under Saddam Hussein's tyranny and since the US invasion the entire region has become far too dangerous to visit, much less work.



When Oates worked at the site, it lay 3 km east of the modern village and scattered over a distance of about 1.5 km beyond some springs. No one lived there. The Google Earth image above, dated 4 October 2009, reveals the present situation. AS I (encircled) is still clearly visible but a large building overlies the West Gate area and another is encroaching on the southeast corner and a water channel from a spring now cuts across the same corner. A large part of the North wall and the adjacent interior has been bulldozed away. A scatter of further large modern buildings extends east of AS I where Oates had reported ancient (Roman and Islamic period) houses and a bath-building. Nothing of these extra-mural structures can be seen on the GE image. Even when Oates was at the site, AS II was less visible despite being built of stone – AS I was of mud-brick. Now only a single stretch of the North wall is visible. On the other hand, there is a large rectangular enclosure (not fully apparent in above image) north of AS I which is not mentioned by Oates. It may, of course, be recent.

What is clear, however, is that this important site is being destroyed and – given the pace of development throughout the Middle East, may be gone entirely within a few years.

Further Reading: D. Kennedy and D. Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier from the Air*, London, 1990: 213-5 for a short survey and further reading references.

# Roman Archaeology at UWA

# Membership of The RAG

## Fieldwork

A note from David Kennedy: *"While in Italy in May I had the opportunity to visit Prof Stefano Campana at the University of Siena. He heads a unit specialising in Aerial Archaeology and the university regularly hosts Workshops and Field Schools in the subject. During a break in an otherwise very rainy day, they included me in a flight over Lucca. From above you can see the clear outline in the centre of the ancient Roman city. The streets still run more or less straight and the outline of the oval amphitheatre is clearly preserved in the pattern of the modern houses.*

*I was delighted as we left that area to spot the line of an aqueduct on arches heading towards Lucca across the fields. Sadly it turned out to be 19<sup>th</sup> century ....*

*In London, several days spent in The National Archives at Kew produced amongst other things, the records of 'X-Flight', the aircraft assigned in 1917-18 to operate with Lawrence of Arabia and the Arab Army in southern Jordan, to conduct photographic reconnaissance and bombing. As most of the places the Turks were encamped were Roman archaeological sites, I am hopeful the photographs themselves will turn up one day to show how those places appeared almost a century ago. Also in the Archives were prints from almost 600 German aerial photographs of 'Palestine' of 1917-18. Copies of those and hundreds more 'Historical' aerial photos are now being prepared to go on The Aerial Photographic Archive for Archaeology in the Middle East to join the 40,000+ already there from my own flying in Jordan."*

## Aerial Archaeology over 'Arabia'

Following the recent use of Google Earth for the archaeological study of Saudi Arabia, an article on "The Works of the Old Men' in Arabia will appear shortly in the *Journal of Archaeological Science*.

The Packard Humanities Institute renewed its grant for 2011, including a component to allow the previous work on 'Arabia' to be developed.

## The Aerial Archaeology in Jordan

The project now has a full-time and three part-time research assistants. Matthew

Dalton took up the full-time position in June. He is Australian but laterally had been completing an MPhil at Cambridge; participating in excavations in the Sudan sponsored by the British Museum; and, working on all the illustrations for a book on the archaeology of Cyprus, to be published by Edinburgh University Press.

## RAG Winter Programme

### Luxury Houses in the Roman World

16<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Villas in Roman World

David Kennedy

Tea Break

Video on Villas

20<sup>th</sup> August 2011

Imperial Villas: Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli

Glens Wootton

Tea Break

Piazza Armerina, Sicily

Joanna Gentilli

17<sup>th</sup> September

Villas in Roman Gaul

Sandra Ottley

Tea Break

## AGM

Research in Roman Archaeology in 2011

David Kennedy

Venue: Social Science Lecture Theatre at 1.30

## Publications

Sandra Ottley has had an article accepted by *The Ancient History Bulletin* (Canada) arising from her doctoral thesis.

## Grants

The Packard Humanities Institute has made a grant of US\$400,000 to The Aerial Archaeology in Jordan Project for 2011.

\$25.00 Ordinary membership  
 \$35.00 Family membership 1 (2 adults; 1 copy of RAG magazine)  
 \$50.00 Family membership 2 (4 family members; 1 copy of RAG magazine)  
 \$50.00 School membership (2 copies of RAG magazine)  
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 Complete and post the form with this edition of the RAG or contact The Treasurer at the email address below.

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