

# THE INSCRIPTIONS OF THE AQUEDUCTS OF ROME: THE ANCIENT PERIOD

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## Introduction

There is no single collection of all ancient inscriptions having to do with water. Instead, there are many collections throughout which these inscriptions are scattered.

Although works on the aqueducts or baths of ancient Rome will all acknowledge that inscriptions are a main source of evidence, they hardly ever cite the primary information (either in appendices or in the text), preferring to present an already synthesized picture.

This website takes the first step of collecting and presenting examples of the primary evidence available for working with water in ancient Rome. Here, the focus will be the inscriptions of aqueducts. It is often difficult to gain a clear understanding of inscriptions, even for people with significant experience with Latin. This website, therefore, strives for a clear and simple presentation, introducing this material to students of many different disciplines and ability levels. You will find a summary of each class of inscription, a few examples of inscriptions in each class, and a translation of the sample inscriptions.

[Click here to immediately jump to information on aqueducts.](#)

## Bibliography and resources for further exploration

If you become interested in this topic and want to explore this material further, here are the resources to use:

### I. The main resources for Latin inscriptions<sup>1</sup>

**ILS: *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, ed. H. Dessau (Berlin 1892-1916; repr. 1962)**

This is an extensive, five-volume collection of selected Latin inscriptions from all over the ancient world. The inscriptions are organized by topics.

**CIL: *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, (Berlin 1863-present)**

This is the largest and most extensive collection of Latin inscriptions, begun by Theodor Mommsen and other renowned scholars in 1863. New fascicles are still being produced as more inscriptions are discovered. The corpus is arranged geographically: all inscriptions from Rome are contained in volume 6. This volume has the greatest number of inscriptions; volume 6, part 8, fascicle 3 was just recently published (2000).

**AE: *L'Année Epigraphique* (1888- present)**

This journal, published yearly, began as a supplement to CIL, serving as a central location for inscriptions discovered or edited after the publication of the Corpus. It compiles the publication information for all scholarly articles of that year that work with inscriptions. It also gives the text for any new epigraphic discoveries or newly edited inscriptions.

### II. Resources with a specific view to inscriptions concerning water

(for aqueducts):

**Harry B. Evans, *Water distribution in ancient Rome: the evidence of Frontinus* (Ann Arbor 1994)**

This is the most recent work on aqueducts and Frontinus. An introduction to CIL is included in the appendix.

**Rodolfo Lanciani, *I Comentarî di Frontino intorno le Acque e gli Aquedotti* (Rome 1880) = reprinted as: *Le Acque e gli Aquedotti di Roma antica* (Rome 1975)**

This work includes an extensive *Silloge Epigrafica Aquaria*, the only attempt made thus far to create a collection of water-related inscriptions from Rome.

Unfortunately, due to the early date of the work, the inscriptions are not listed with their CIL numbers. Rather, the inscriptions are organized according to the region in which they were found. Still, this is a terrific compilation if you want to find in one place a great quantity of material.

1. If a Latin inscription has been published, it should be listed in at least one of the following works.

**Thomas Ashby, *The aqueducts of ancient Rome* (Oxford 1935)**

Ashby and van Deman (following) are fundamental works in aqueduct studies. Ashby is also helpful in providing a chapter on the “Staff of the Imperial Water Board” (pp. 17-25). References to inscriptions are included throughout the text.

**Esther B. van Deman, *The Building of the Roman Aqueducts*, (Washington, D.C. 1934)**

Appendix A of this work offers a catalogue of the ancient references (mostly literary, but some epigraphic) to: 1) the builders of the aqueducts, and 2-12) each individual aqueduct. The passages are listed without translation or comment, but, collected in this Appendix, they are centrally located.

**John E. Sandys, *Latin Epigraphy: An Introduction to the Study of Latin Inscriptions*, 2nd ed. (London 1927).**

This textbook of Latin Epigraphy gives a short but helpful introduction to the inscriptions of aqueducts (pp. 129-131).

(for baths):

**Garret G. Fagan, *Bathing in Public in the Roman World*, (Ann Arbor 1999)**

One wishes there were many other works like this. The book is a treasure in itself, but, even better for our purposes, it includes an extensive appendix for the epigraphic evidence. In his 122-page “Epigraphic Sample,” Fagan gives a clear introduction to the material and lists 339 inscriptions, all with text, translation, and commentary.

(for *fistulae*):

**Christer Bruun, *The Water Supply of ancient Rome: a study of Roman imperial Administration* (Helsinki 1991)**

A comprehensive work, valuable especially for its thorough treatment of inscriptions on *fistulae*, the lead pipes used for water distribution. Bruun also contributes to the knowledge of the officials in charge of water administration.

## Aqueducts

Besides stamped pipes (*fistulae*), the largest class of inscriptions having to do with water in ancient Rome consists of the inscriptions of aqueducts. Aqueduct inscriptions are recognized as a specific class of inscriptions and are set off in a separate category in CIL (*inscriptiones aquaeductuum urbis Romae*). This allows a comprehensive list of these inscriptions to be made (CIL 6.1243-1261, 31558-31571, 37030-

37036, 40869-40881). Most of the big aqueduct inscriptions were catalogued in the first edition of CIL VI (1243-1261). Subsequent fascicles record the texts of later discoveries, including many texts of aqueduct cippi.

For additional information on aqueduct inscriptions outside the city of Rome, see ILS 5743-5796.

There are three types of inscriptions that relate to the aqueducts of Rome:

### 1. dedications and repair work

#### 1b. water concessions

### 2. cippi (boundary-stones)

### 3. inscriptions recording officials in charge of public works

## Dedications and Repair Work

This class of inscriptions -- those that commemorate dedications of aqueducts or repairs made to aqueducts -- are the inscriptions that convey the most information relevant to aqueduct studies. These are often monumental inscriptions put up by the emperors who brought new aqueducts into Rome or repaired existing ones. This website presents the text, translation, and commentary for the following inscriptions:

Reference Number	Type of Inscription	Location of Inscription
CIL VI 1256	Claudius dedicates the <b>Aqua Claudia</b> and the <b>Anio Novus</b>	Porta Maggiore
CIL VI 1257	Vespasian repairs the <b>Aqua Claudia</b>	Porta Maggiore
CIL VI 1258	Titus repairs the <b>Aqua Claudia</b>	Porta Maggiore
CIL VI 1244	Augustus repairs all aqueducts	Porta Tiburtina
CIL VI 1245	Caracalla repairs the <b>Aqua Marcia</b>	Porta Tiburtina
CIL VI 1246	Titus repairs the <b>Aqua Marcia</b>	Porta Tiburtina
CIL VI 1252	Claudius repairs the <b>Aqua Virgo</b>	
CIL VI 1260	Trajan dedicates the <b>Aqua Traiana</b>	Lateran Museum, as of 1876 (CIL VI)
CIL VI 1261	Document showing water concessions	

Where to go to look for aqueduct inscriptions in situ in Rome?

The best examples are found at the Porta Maggiore and the Porta Tiburtina.

### Aqueduct inscriptions *in situ*

The best places for viewing monumental aqueduct inscriptions in person are within the circuit of the Aurelian walls, at both the Porta Maggiore and Porta Tiburtina. In both locations, multiple aqueduct channels are stacked atop one another. The route of these aqueducts was later incorporated into the city walls of Aurelian (third century A.D.). A few arches of the aqueduct's arcade were left open to be transformed into a monumental city gate. In both places, the inscriptions are legible to someone standing on the ground.

### The Porta Maggiore: the Aqua Claudia and the Anio Novus

At the Porta Maggiore (fig. 1), the Anio Novus was run above the Aqua Claudia. Three dedicatory inscriptions record (from top to bottom): 1) the completion of the Aqua Claudia by Claudius, 2) repairs completed by Vespasian, and 3) subsequent repairs made by Titus.

*Hint: Inscriptions commemorating something done by an emperor (here, dedicating or repairing an aqueduct) often begin with a long list of the titles, powers, and honorary names of the emperor. The following inscriptions demonstrate such practice. To identify the emperor named by the long list of titles, go to the translation where the underlined name is the one by which we know the emperor.*

*Another hint: Public inscriptions in Latin were almost always inscribed in all capital letters. The text will be formatted this way, but the text with the translation and commentary will be presented in lower-case letters for ease of reading.*

### Aqueduct inscriptions at Porta Maggiore

(CIL VI 1256-58 = ILS 218):

TI. CLAVDIVS DRVSI F. CAISAR AVGVSTVS GERMANICVS PONTIF(EX) MAXIM(VS), | TRIBVNICIA POTESTATE XII, CO(N)S(VL) V, IMPERATOR XXVII, PATER PATRIAE, | AQVAS CLAVDIAM EX FONTIBVS, QVI VOCABANTVR CAERVLEVS ET CVRTIVS A MILLIARIO XXXXV, | ITEM ANIENEM NOVAM A MILLIARIO LXII SVA IMPENSA IN VRBEM PERDVCENDAS CVRAVIT.

IMP. CAESAR VESPASIANVS AVGVST(VS) PONTIF(EX) MAX(IMVS), TRIB(VNICIA) POT(ESTATE) II, IMP(ERATOR) VI, CO(N)S(VL) DESIG(NATVS) IIII, P(ATER) P(ATRIAE), | AQVAS CVRTIAM ET CAERVLEAM PERDVC(T)AS A DIVO CLAVDIO ET POSTEA INTERMISSAS DILAPSASQVE | PER ANNOS NOVEM SVA IMPENSA VRBI



FIG. 1. The Porta Maggiore, Rome (photo courtesy of Rabun Taylor, c. 2002)

RESTITVIT.

IMP. T. CAESAR DIVI F. VESPASIANVS AVGVSTVS PONTIFEX MAXIMVS, TRIBVNIC(IA) | POTESTATE X, IMPERATOR XVII, PATER PATRIAE, CENSOR, CO(N)S(VL) VIII | AQVAS CVRTIAM ET CAERVLEAM PERDVC(T)AS A DIVO CLAVDIO ET POSTEA | A DIVO VESPASIANO PATRE SVO VRBI RESTITVTAS, CVM A CAPITE AQVARVM A SOLO VETVSTATE DILAPSAE ESSENT, NOVA FORMA REDVCENDAS SVA IMPENSA CVRAVIT.

Text with translation and commentary for the Porta Maggiore inscriptions:

#### CIL VI 1256

Ti(berius) Claudius Drusi f(ilius) Caisar Augustus Germanicus pontif(ex) maxim(us), |

tribunicia potestate XII, co(n)s(ul) V, imperator XXVII, pater patriae, |

aquas Claudiam ex fontibus, qui vocabantur Caeruleus et Curtius a milliario XXXXV, | item Anienem novam a milliario LXII sua impensa in urbem perducendas curavit.

*Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, the son of Drusus, pontifex maximus (=chief priest), in his twelfth year of tribunician power, consul for the fifth time, imperator twenty-seven times, father of his country, saw to it that, at his own expense, the aqua Claudia be brought from the 45th milestone, from the springs which are called the Caeruleus and Curtius, and too the Anio Novus be brought from the 62nd milestone into the city of Rome.*

The titles of Claudius date this inscription to A.D. 52.

Note the spelling of Caesar in line 1 (Caisar). Claudius introduced a spelling reform, in an attempt to regain the

spelling employed in the Republic. The reform was not popularly embraced, however, and was abandoned after his reign.

Distances in ancient Italy (and the ancient world) were calculated by means of milestones. Augustus set up a golden milestone in the middle of the Roman Forum from which all points in the Empire could measure their distance from Rome.

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#### CIL VI 1257

Imp(erator) Caesar Vespasianus August(us) pontif(ex)  
max(imus), trib(unicia) pot(estate) II, imp(erator) VI,  
co(n)s(ul) desig(natus) IIII, p(ater) p(atriciae), |

aquas Curtiam et Caeruleam perductas a divo Claudio  
et postea intermissas dilapsasque | per annos novem sua  
impensa urbi restituit.

*The Emperor Caesar Vespasian Augustus, pontifex maximus, in his second year of the tribunician power, imperator six times, consul designate for the fourth time, father of his country, at his own expense restored for the city of Rome the Curtian and Caerulean waters that had been brought forth by the divine Claudius and subsequently had fallen into disrepair and had been interrupted for nine years.*

The titles of Vespasian date this inscription to 71.

That means the aqua Claudia had been built in A.D. 52 and functioned for only eleven years, before falling into disrepair and being abandoned nine years before Vespasian repaired it. Vespasian may have considered the repair of this aqueduct a priority, because he accomplished this early in his reign.

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#### CIL VI 1258

Imp(erator) T(itus) Caesar divi f(ilius) Vespasianus  
Augustus pontifex maximus, tribunic(ia) |

potestate X, imperator XVII, pater patriae, censor,  
co(n)s(ul) VIII |

aquas Curtiam et Caeruleam perductas a divo Claudio et  
postea |

a divo Vespasiano patre suo urbi restitutas, cum a capite  
aquarum a solo vetustate dilapsae essent, nova forma  
reducendas sua impensa curavit.

*The Emperor Titus Caesar Vespasian Augustus, son of the divine Vespasian, pontifex maximus, in his tenth year of the tribunician power, imperator for the seventeenth time, father of*



FIG. 2. The Porta Maggiore, Rome (photo courtesy of Rabun Taylor, c. 2002)

*his country, censor, consul for the eighth time, saw to it that, at his own expense, the Curtian and Caerulean waters that had been brought forth by the divine Claudius and afterwards had been restored for the city of Rome by the divine Vespasian, his father, since they had fallen into disrepair at the source of the waters from the very foundation because of age, be brought back again but in a new channel.*

The titles of Titus date this inscription to 80.

Titus gives credit to Claudius for dedicating the aqueduct and to his father, Vespasian, for repairing it. But again, only nine years after Vespasian's repair, the Aqua Claudia is in need of repairs again.

As is often the case with imperial inscriptions, the heading of the text which consists of the emperor's titles is inscribed in large letters. If subsequent lines carry more text, the letters are made smaller to fit. Here, the last line of text is inscribed in much smaller letters than the first two.

## The Porta Tiburtina: the Aqua Marcia, Aqua Tepula, and Aqua Iulia:

At the Porta Tiburtina, the Aqua Marcia, Aqua Tepula, and the Aqua Iulia converged and ran one above the other. Instead of commemorating the building of these aqueducts, however, the inscriptions inscribed on each course record rather the repairs to the aqueducts made by various emperors. The texts are here listed as they are inscribed on the aqueduct courses, from top to bottom. As will be seen from the content of the inscriptions, the texts were not inscribed in this order (top to bottom): Augustus first put up an inscription on the highest register (1); then Vespasian's repair was commemorated on the lowest register (3); the middle register (2) carries a text recording a repair of Caracalla and would therefore have been inscribed last.

### Aqueduct inscriptions at Porta Tiburtina

(CIL VI 1244-46 = ILS 98):

IMP. CAESAR DIVI IVLI F. AVGVSTVS  
PONTIFEX MAXIMVS, CO(N)S(VL) XII,  
TRIBVNIC(IA) POTESTAT(E) XIX, IMP(ERATOR)  
XIII,

RIVOS AQVARVM OMNIVM REFECIT.

IMP. CAES(AR) M. AVRELLIVS ANTONINVS PIVS  
FELIX AVG(VSTVS) PARTH(ICVS) MAX(IMVS) |  
BRIT(ANNICVS) MAXIMVS, PONTIFEX MAXIMVS,  
| AQVAM MARCIAM VARIIS KASIBVS IMPEDITAM  
PVRGATO FONTE EXCISIS ET PERFORATIS |  
MONTIBVS RESTITVTA FORMA ADQVISITO  
ETIAM FONTE NOVO ANTONINIANO | IN SACRAM  
VRBEM SVAM PERDVCENDAM CVRAVIT.

IMP. TITVS CAESAR DIVI F. VESPASIANVS  
AVG(VSTVS), PONTIF(EX) MAX(IMVS) |  
TRIBVNICIAE POTEST(ATE) IX, IMP(ERATOR) XV,  
CENS(OR), CO(N)S(VL) VII, DESIG(NATVS) IIX, |  
RIVOM AQVAE MARCIAE VETVSTATE DILAPSVM  
REFECIT | ET AQVAM QVAE IN VSV ESSE DESIERAT  
REDVXIT.

Text with translation and commentary for the **Porta Tiburtina** inscriptions:

#### CIL VI 1244

Imp(erator) Caesar divi Iuli f(ilius) Augustus  
pontifex maximus, co(n)s(ul) XII,  
tribunic(ia) potestat(e) XIX, imp(erator) XIII,  
rivos aquarum omnium refecit.

*The Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of the divine Julius, pontifex maximus, consul twelve times, in his nineteenth year of the tribunician power, imperator fourteen times, reorganized the courses of all the aqueducts.*

The titles of Augustus date this inscription to 4 B.C.

Among the many achievements of his career recorded in his *Res Gestae*, Augustus mentioned his renovation of the city's water supply. You can read more about the *Res Gestae*, the autobiographical list of his accomplishments in: *Res Gestae divi Augusti, the achievements of the divine Augustus*, (ed.s) P.A. Brunt and J. M. Moore (Oxford 1970).

For information on the inscription, discovered inscribed on the walls of a temple in Ancyra, Turkey, see CIL III, 2, p. 780.

Concerning the aqueducts, Augustus wrote:

rivos aquarum compluribus locis vetustate labentes refeci

*I renovated the channels of aqueducts that were collapsing in many places because of age,*

and

aquam quae Marcia appellatur duplicavi fonte novo in rivum eius inmisso

*I doubled in size the aqueduct which is called the aqua Marcia, by adding a new source to its channel.*

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#### CIL VI 1245

Imp. Caes(ar) M. Aurelius Antoninus Pius Felix Aug(ustus)  
Parth(icus) Max(imus) | Brit(annicus) Maximus, pontifex  
maximus, |

aquam Marciam variis kasibus impeditam purgato fonte  
excisis et perforatis |

montibus restituta forma adquisito etiam fonte novo  
Antoniniano |

in sacram urbem suam perducendam curavit.

*The Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Pius Felix Augustus (Caracalla), Parthicus Maximus, Britannicus Maximus, pontifex maximus, restored the aqua Marcia, since it had been disrupted by various problems. He cleaned up its source, cut through and pierced mountains, restored its channel, and even added a new 'Antoninian' source, and he saw to it that the aqua Marcia was restored to his sacred city.*

The titles of Caracalla date this inscription to A.D. 213-217.

Caracalla needed to bring additional water into the city for his monumental project known today as the Baths of Caracalla.

Concerning the dedicatory inscription, compare the length of Caracalla's name with the one for Augustus (CIL VI 1244). In the second and third centuries, in addition to one's imperial honors (such as emperor and consul, not even given here), emperors also often adopted an extra surname for the peoples whom they had conquered (here, Parthicus Maximus and Britannicus Maximus). Cf. also Trajan's dedication of the Aqua Traiana (CIL VI 1260).

Note also the spelling of Aurelius (for Aurelius) in line 1. This may have reflected a shift in pronunciation.

Reference to Rome as *sacra urbs* comes about in the Empire.

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### CIL VI 1246

Imp(erator) Titus Caesar divi f(ilius) Vespasianus Aug(ustus), pontif(ex) max(imus) |

tribuniciae potest(ate) IX, imp(erator) XV, cens(or), co(n)s(ul) VII, desig(natus) IIX, | rivom aquae Marciae vetustate dilapsum refecit | et aquam quae in usu esse desierat reduxit.

*The Emperor Titus Caesar Vespasian, son of the divine (Vespasian), pontifex maximus, in his ninth year of the tribunician power, emperor fifteen times, censor, consul for the seventh time, consul designate for the eighth time, renovated the channel of the aqua Marcia since it had fallen out of service from age and restored the water that was being funneled off illegally.*

The titles of Vespasian date this inscription to 77.

This repair then postdates his repair of the Aqua Claudia by six years. Vespasian also makes specific mention of the illegal channeling of water from the aqueduct by private individuals. This was a problem also tackled by Frontinus.

### The Aqua Virgo

Although the Aqua Virgo had been constructed only under Augustus, the epigraphic record shows that at least minor repairs were necessary already by the time of Tiberius. Several **cippi** (boundary stones) associated with this aqueduct bear Tiberius' name. More substantial repairs, however, seem to have been necessary under Claudius. His name also appears on certain cippi of the Aqua Virgo. In addition, the main dedicatory inscription preserved commemorates the repairs made by Claudius. This inscription (CIL VI 1252) reads:

Ti(berius) Claudius Drusi f(ilius) Caesar Augustus Germanicus | pontifex maxim(us), trib(uncial) potest(ate) V, imp(erator) XI, p(ater) p(atriciae), co(n)s(ul) desig(natus)

III, | arcus ductus aquae Virginis disturbatos per C. Caesarem | a fundamentis novos fecit ac restituit.

*Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, son of Drusus, pontifex maximus, in his fifth year of tribunician power, emperor eleven times, father of his country, consul designate for the fourth time, made new and restored from their foundations the arcades of the Aqua Virgo, since they had been knocked down by Gaius Caesar (Caligula).*

The titles of Claudius date this inscription to A.D. 45.

This inscription is all about specifics. Claudius makes specific mention only of repairing the arcades of the aqueduct, not its channel (*rivus* or *forma*) as is mentioned in other inscriptions of aqueduct repair. He also names the specific cause for the need for repairs, his predecessor, Gaius Caesar (Caligula).

### The cippi of the Aqua Virgo

Both Tiberius and Claudius are named on the cippi of the Aqua Virgo. Tiberius probably carried out minor repairs to this aqueduct; Claudius probably carried out more substantial repairs and repaired or replaced missing cippi at the same time. These cippi may look similar because both Tiberius and Claudius are Claudians (as in Julio-Claudians), but look carefully at the way each is named.

### CIL VI 40879

VIRG

Ti(berius) Caesar Aug(ustus),  
pontif(ex) max(imus),  
trib(uncial) pot(estate) XXXIIX,  
co(n)s(ul) V, imp(erator) VIII  
LXII  
p(edes) CCXL

*The Aqua Virgo -- Tiberius Caesar Augustus, pontifex maximus, in his 38th year of the tribunician power, consul five times, emperor eight times.*

(Marker) 62.

240 feet (to the next marker).

This text refers to Tiberius.

Note also that 8 can be written IIX.

## CIL VI 40880

VIRG

Ti(berius) Claudius

Drusi f(ilius) Caesar

Aug(ustus) Germanicus,

pontifex maximus,

tribunic(ia) potestat(e) IIII

co(n)s(ul) III, imp. VIII, p(ater) p(atriciae),

XI p(edes) CCXL

*The Aqua Virgo -- Tiberius Claudius*

*Caesar Augustus Germanicus, son of*

*Drusus, pontifex maximus, in his fourth*

*year of the tribunician power, consul*

*three times, imperator eight times,*

*father of his country.*

*(Marker) 11.*

*240 feet (to the next marker).*

*consul five times, father of his country, brought the Aqua Traiana into Rome at his own expense, after buying a tract of land thirty feet wide.*

The titles of Trajan date this inscription to A.D. 111.

*Hint: The brackets [ ] in the text show what text would be preserved if the inscribed stone were in better condition. The parentheses ( ) in the text show supplements of text, if, for example, words or titles are abbreviated. The brackets at the beginning of the text show that this stone has been damaged at the top, on both sides.*

Compare this with the dedicatory inscription of the Aqua Claudia (**CIL VI 1256**). The source of the aqueduct is not mentioned. Rather, the information communicated here refers to financial matters. Trajan had to purchase the land on which to build his aqueduct. Since he did this with his own money (*pecunia sua*), the aqueduct is clearly shown to be a gift of imperial munificence.

The measure of a width of thirty feet would have been visually communicated by the presence of cippi for aqueducts built in the early Empire, but by this time it seems the use of cippi had been abandoned.

To learn more about aqueduct cippi, click [here](#).

### An inscription showing aqueduct distribution (water concessions)

One inscription from Rome conveys much information about water distribution in a rather unusual manner for inscriptions -- visually. The text is set within a drawing that seems to represent a branch of an aqueduct. This inscription was seen in person by A. Fabretti, on private property in Rome. Unfortunately, the whereabouts of the inscription are unknown. A sketch of the extant fragment appears below (fig. 3) (**CIL VI 1261**).

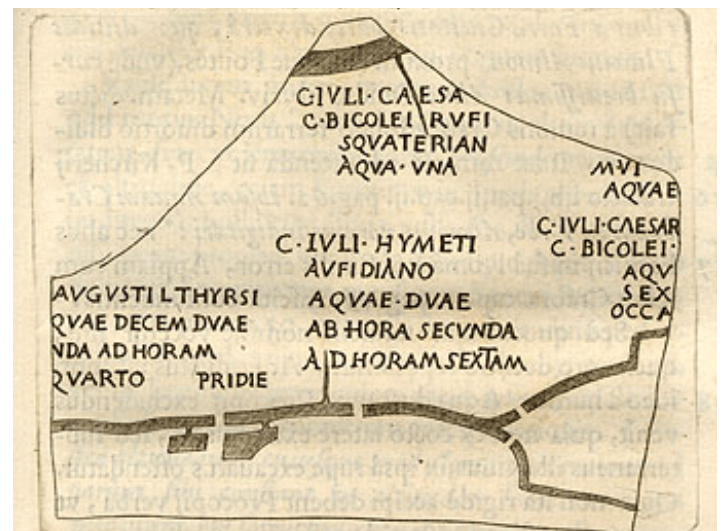


FIG. 3. A. Fabretti, CIL VI 1261

### The Aqua Traiana

Trajan added a new aqueduct to Rome's water supply, the **Aqua Traiana**. In contrast to the majority of aqueduct inscriptions, there are no known repair inscriptions for this aqueduct, but the dedicatory inscription fortunately is preserved (**CIL VI 1260 = 31567**):

[Imp.] Caesa[r]

[divi] Nervae f(ilius) N[erva]

[T]raianus A[ug(ustus)]

Germ(anicus) Dacic(us),

[po]nt(ifex) max(imus), tr(ibunicia) pot(estate) XIII,

imp(erator) VI, co(n)s(ul) V, p(ater) p(atriciae),

aquam Traianam

pecunia sua

in urbem perduxit

emptis locis

per latitud(inem) p(edum) XXX

*The Emperor Caesar Nerva Trajan Augustus Germanicus Dacicus, son of the divine Nerva, pontifex maximus, in his thirteenth year of the tribunician power, imperator six times,*

Much information can be gained from the limited text. It would appear that the branches that intrude upon the text at certain points indicate branches of the aqueduct that are serving a particular property. The information conveyed by the text is: property supplied, owner of the property, and units of water or time allotted.

Starting at the top and moving clockwise, the texts read:

C. Iuli Caesa[ris]	One unit of water for the Squaterian property of C.
C. Bicolei Rufi	Bicoleus Rufus, freedman?
Squaterian(o)	(or manager?) of C. Iulius Caesar
aqua una	
M. Vi[...]	? units of water, to the property of M. Vi[psanius Agrippa?...]
aquae	
C. Iuli Caesar[is]	? units of water, from the sixth hour to sundown, for the property of C. Bicoleus, freedman? (or manager?) of C. Iulius Caesar
C. Bicolei [Rufus?]	
aqu[a... ab hora]	
sex[ta ad]	
occa[sum solis]	
C. Iuli Hymeti	Two units of water, from the second hour to the sixth hour, for the Aufidian property of C. Iulius Hymetus
Aufidiano	
aquae duae	
ab hora secunda	
ad horam sextam	
[...] Augusti l(ibertus) Thyrsi	Two units of water, from the second hour to the ? hour, for the property of Thyrsus, freedman of Augustus, on the third day before and the day before (the beginning of each month).
[a]quae duae	
[...secu]nda ad horam	
[...] quarto pridie	

Each property is allocated a number of units of water and/or a time allotment, sometimes limited to certain days. This reveals a complex and organized system of water allotment.

It is interesting to note the names of Julius Caesar, Augustus, and Agrippa(?) present in each entry of this text. These names do not refer to the well-known historical figures, but rather to their freedmen who, as was customary, assumed the names of the masters who had manumitted them. These

properties were most likely owned or managed by imperial freedmen or overseers of imperial properties.

The name Bicoleus appears twice. He does not appear to be a freedman of C. Iulius Caesar because at his manumission he should have adopted the praenomen and nomen of his patron. He would then be called C. Iulius Rufus. He also does not appear to be a slave, since slaves had only one name. He may perhaps be a *vilicus* or overseer of the estate.

An inscription from Lamasba, in modern day Algeria, conveys similar information about the hours (and days) allotted for individual use of aqueduct water. It does not have a visual component, but is a very formal and comprehensive list. For the full text and further information, see CIL VIII 18587 and B. D. Shaw, in: *Antiquités africaines* (1982), 61-103. See also R. Taylor in: *Life of the Average Roman* (1999).

### Cippi (boundary-stones)

Cippi, or boundary-stones, were used for several different purposes in ancient Rome. Cippi were used to delimit the pomerium, or sacred boundary of the city. Cippi were also used to mark the banks of the Tiber river. In certain cases, cippi were used to mark the boundaries between public and private property.

In conjunction with aqueducts, cippi functioned as both boundary markers and milestones. The cippi marked both the course of the aqueduct and the boundary separating the space of the aqueduct and the public or private space beyond it. The space of the aqueduct was to be left clear of building (see **CIL VI 1260** where Trajan states he purchased land at a width of 30 feet in order to build his Aqua Traiana). Aqueduct cippi were also placed a standard 240 Roman feet from one another and were numbered, thus functioning like Roman milestones. For a full discussion on the aqueduct cippi, see Lanciani (1880) pp. 345-350 and CIL VI 1243.

The archaeological record preserves cippi for only four of Rome's aqueducts: the Anio Vetus, the Aqua Virgo, the Anio Novus, and the section of aqueduct where the Aqua Iulia, Aqua Marcia, and Aqua Tepula have all combined. No cippi predating the reign of Augustus have been preserved. It is likely that in his reorganization, Augustus added the cippi to at least certain aqueducts. Tiberius and Claudius are also recorded on cippi of the Aqua Virgo, evidence that they saw to some repairs for that aqueduct. Construction of cippi, however, does not seem to have been a long-lived institution. No cippi carry the name of an emperor later than Claudius.

The cippi of the Anio Novus are all uninscribed. Cippi for the other aqueducts, however, are standard in the information they convey: the name of the aqueduct, the name of the emperor in charge of repairs, mention that this took

place by decree of the senate (*ex senatus consulto*), the number of that particular marker, and the number of feet to the next cippus. This information will help you to read the two cippi presented below:

### CIL VI 1243a

(the cippus is broken at the bottom of the text):

ANI

IMP CAESAR

DIVI F AVGVST [ex] S C

LVI P CCXL

*The Anio Vetus -- The Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of the divine (Julius), by decree of the Senate (set this up). Number 56, 240 feet (to the next marker).*

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### CIL VI 1249b

(the right edge of the cippus is broken):

IVL(IA) TEP(ULA) MA[R(CIA)]

IMP CAES[AR]

DIVI F

AVGVSTV[S]

EX S C

XXV

PED CC[XL]

*The Aqua Iulia, Tepula, and Marcia -- The Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of the divine (Julius), by decree of the Senate (set this up). Number 25, 240 feet (to the next marker).*

### Officials of public works

Frontinus, whose work, *De Aquaeductu*, provides us with the majority of our information on the Roman water-distribution system, held the position of *curator aquarum*, the public official in charge of the water supply. In his work, Frontinus also provided information about his staff. Ashby (1935) collects this information and synthesizes it well, presenting an introductory chapter, "The Staff of the Imperial Water Board," 17-25. Bruun (1991) also has an extensive chapter on "The imperial *cura aquarum*," 140-206. On the basis of these sources, the hierarchy of officials in charge of the water supply of Rome can be reconstructed as the following:

curator (consularis)

*adiutor adiutor* (technical advisors)

### support personnel:

two lictors  
three *servi publici*  
architect

### administrative staff (aquarii):

*vilici* (overseers)  
*castellarii* (in charge of the castella)  
*scribae* (secretaries)  
*circitores* (inspectors)  
*librarii / libratores* (measurers, tested the size of the calix)  
*praecones* (heralds)

### financial staff (Imperial freedmen):

*tabularii aquarum*  
*rationes aquarum*  
*a commentariis aquarum*

### The Curator Aquarum:

Literary evidence supplies a good amount of information about the *curatores aquarum*, so that a detailed list of individuals who held this office can be reconstructed (see Ashby, pp. 17-23). There exist a fair number of inscriptions with reference to a *curator aquarum* as well. This was a high political office, so many of the inscriptions that mention a *curator aquarum* will often list the individual's entire *cursus honorum*, or the offices held throughout his political career.

### Other Staff:

In contrast to the *curator aquarum*, however, the individuals who held positions at lower levels were not upper-class political appointees. Therefore, the only source for information about them is inscriptions. Many of the inscriptions concerning these individuals are funerary, and so they don't often offer much information beyond the name of the deceased and his position. Nevertheless, they are a record of some of the individuals who held the positions above.

### *The Aquarii:*

The aquarii were public slaves who were in charge of the maintenance of public works. This group of public slaves was initially created when Agrippa left to Augustus in his will his 240 slaves. Augustus turned them over to the state and they became known as the *familia publica*, or more specifically *familia aquarum*. Claudius added an additional 460 slaves to this group, known as the *familia Caesaris*. This brought the total of public slaves to 700.

Workers of every type of position were included among this staff. They were in charge of general maintenance, daily upkeep, and small projects. Larger jobs were contracted out.

Some positions were assigned to particular aqueducts. Others had roving assignments. The epigraphic evidence links many of the *aquarii* with maintenance of the Anio Vetus (see **CIL VI 2343-2346** for examples). Here is one example (**CIL VI 2344**):

D(is) M(anibus)  
Soter, servos publicus  
castellar(ius) Aquae Annionis  
Veteris fecit coniugi bene-  
merenti et L. Calpurnius  
Flavianus matri bene-  
merenti sibi et suis  
posterisque eorum.

This is a funerary monument set up by Soter, a public slave, and L. Calpurnius Flavianus, probably a freedman. They dedicate the monument for their family (Soter for his wife, Calpurnius Flavianus for his mother), for themselves, and for their descendants.

Soter is specifically referred to as a public slave. As *castellarius*, he would be in charge of the *castella* of the **Anio Vetus** aqueduct.

trans. (**CIL VI 2344**):

*To the gods of the dead.*

*Soter, a public slave, a castellarius of the Anio Vetus aqueduct made (this monument) for his wife who was much-deserving, along with Lucius Calpurnius Flavianus who made it for his mother who well deserved it. They also made it for themselves and for their descendants.*