



ITINERARY 6

Area of the Seven Aqueducts

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Administrative Area: Rome Town Council

Web site: www.romacivica.net/tarcaf/storarc/lat_v.htm



1) Brickwork mausoleum

At the crossroads between via del Campo Barbarico and via Monte d'Onorio there is a brickwork tomb, of the "small temple" kind, dating from the second half of the II century A.D. It consists of two storeys and the façade has been completely redone, whilst the other sides are all original. The burial chamber has a large, rectangular niche, covered by an arch between two smaller niches. The upper floor, where funeral services were held, contains niches which are still preserved, with architectural framework in brick and an apse with remnants of various stucco work. Like other similar monuments in this suburb, this tomb - once the vault between the ground floor and first floor was demolished - was used in modern times as a hayloft.



2) Casale Rampa

Along the via di Tor Fiscale, on the corner with via del Campo Barbarico, stands an ancient "Casale" or farmhouse which incorporates the remains of a Roman tank and still preserves a few web-work wall sections.



3) Tor Fiscale

Along the road of the same name visitors can reach the Tower known as “Tor Fiscale”, which received its name through its XVII century owner, who was a papal treasurer, hence the appellation “fiscal”. The tower, which is about 30 metres high, is built according to the typical building techniques of the XIII century, using small blocks of tuff. This tower is a square structure with small, rectangular windows framed in marble, situated on the first of the two points where the arches of the Claudio and Marcio Aqueducts crossed, making use of the banking. The major arch, in blocks of Peperino stone and forming part of the Claudio Aqueduct, runs in an East/West direction, whilst the smaller one, which is transverse and belongs to the Marcio Aqueduct, runs in a South/East direction.

This structure, which served as a watch tower, was the centre element of a small castle owned by the Annibaldi family and which controlled the via Latina in the region of the “Campo Barbarico”.

4) Campo Barbarico

Inside a trapezoid area formed by the double intersection of the ancient Claudio and Marcio Aqueducts, shortly before the IV mile along the via Latina, in 539 A.D. the king of the Goths Vitiges, laying siege to the city of Rome, set up a fortified camp. He closed in the arches of the aqueducts using stone and earth, a proper, natural fortalice was thus achieved, with no less than 7,000 men encamped there, blocking the flow of supplies to the city from the via Appia and the via Latina. At the same time the besiegers interrupted the flow of water to the city by severing the aqueducts, which were never again to be restored.

From that time on this place is known as the “Campo Barbarico” (barbarian field). Today the arches of the Marcio Aqueduct are replaced by those of the Felice

Aqueduct, built by Sixtus V, whilst the arches in this section forming the Claudio Aqueduct are no longer preserved.



5) Claudio Aqueduct/Anio Novus

Work on both these aqueducts was started under Tiberius in 38 A.D. and completed by Claudio in 52 A.D. The *Aqua Claudia* collected water from a spring in the Aniene valley, a short distance away from the source supplying the Marcia. When the channel reached the Capannelle area, where the “piscine limarie” (decantation tanks) were, it resurfaced and then gradually rose above ground level, reaching the centre of Rome on archways continuing for almost 10 km. In the vicinity of the present-day via del Quadraro the arches reached their greatest height, approximately 28 metres. The materials used in their construction are Peperino stone, tuff and travertine. During the Imperial era the arches were reinforced using sub-arches made of bricks. At the points where the aqueduct surfaced above ground the *Anio Novus*, so called to distinguish it from the more ancient *Anio*, ran above the Claudio channel. Built in brickwork, the *Anio Novus* reached Rome at a height which surpassed all the other aqueducts, and several minor aqueducts led off from it, such as the one supplying the Quintili villa (which can be viewed from the Appia Antica at the VI mile).



6) Acqua Mariana Ditch

This artificial ditch was dug by Pope Callisto II in 1122 to supply the mills and irrigate the vegetable gardens belonging to the Basilica of St. John Lateran. It channels the water from the Roman aqueducts *Aqua Tepula* and *Aqua Iulia*, taken from springs at the foot of the Grottaferrata and Marino hills. It later skirts the Casale di Roma Vecchia farmhouse and then goes underground in the vicinity of the Furba Gate.

Its name derives from the natural stretch higher upstream, which ran inside a deep *Maranus*, which was already known in the Middle Ages. This gave rise to the vulgar “Marana” or “Marrana” (ditch), a term subsequently used to refer to all the ditches in the Roman suburb.



7) Villa delle Vignacce

In via Lemonia, on top of an artificial embankment running parallel to the road, stand the remains of one of the most extensive villas in the south-east suburb of Rome. Built in web-work and brick “Opus Mixtum” and “Opera Listata”, it consists of two main construction phases, dating respectively from the first half of the II and IV centuries A.D. Among the structures which remain, belonging to the thermal section of the villa, there is a vast circular hall, covered with a dome and surrounded by other small rooms in the form of apses. Here is preserved one of the most ancient examples of the use of amphorae to lighten the structure, a construction technique which is to spread during the Constantine era, its most significant example being the dome of the Elena Mausoleum on the via Casilina, called “Tor Pignattara” precisely because of the presence of the amphorae, i.e. “pignatte” (pots), forming part of the structure of the vault. On the basis of official markings on bricks and lead water ducts discovered in the villa, this complex is attributed to Q. Servilio Pudente, an important builder of brickwork who lived in the Hadrian era.



8) Tank of the Villa delle Vignacce

A short distance from the villa, alongside the Marcio Aqueduct- at this point replaced by the Felice Aqueduct- from which it was supplied, stands a two-storey tank in the

shape of an elongated trapezium, with two rows of semi-circular niches, in “Opus Mixtum” web-work and brick, which supplied the complex.



9) Felice Aqueduct

The Felice Aqueduct, so called using the baptismal name of Felice Peretti, Pope Sixtus V who had it built, was responsible for destroying a large part of the arches in the Marcio Aqueduct, tracing exactly the same course. Built between 1585 and 1590 and taking water from the springs of Pantano Borghese on the via Prenestina, it reaches as far as the Moses fountain by Domenico Fontana in largo Santa Susanna.



10) Tomb of the Hundred Steps

Between the Claudio Aqueduct and the railway, opposite the IV mile of the ancient via Latina, lies an underground tomb, so called because of its long, characteristic access stairway (there are in fact only 67 steps), reaching a depth of approximately 15 metres below the present-day floor. In the main funeral chamber, built in “Opera Listata” using small blocks of tuff and bricks and with a cross vault ceiling, large arched niches are used to accommodate the marble sarcophagi. It can be referred to the first phase in which the hypogeum was used, and therefore dates from the III century A.D. Side galleries, added at a later stage, branch out from the main cubiculum, with tombs of various kinds hollowed out along the tuff walls. These tombs can be placed as belonging to the first half of the IV century A.D. The hypogeum, which contains both pagan and Christian tombs together, is interpreted as a private, family burial place, belonging to individuals residing in the villas nearby.



11) Casale di Roma Vecchia

Situated between the IV and V mile along the ancient via Latina, between the Claudio and Marcio Aqueducts, stands the Casale di Roma Vecchia, consisting of a series of buildings, grouped round an inside courtyard. The main structure, dating from the XIII century, is built in small blocks of Peperino stone, flint-stone chips and fragments of re-used marble, incorporating the remains of buildings from the Roman era. Presumably this building originally belonged to the type of tower-farmhouses, a combination of the strategic control function provided by the tower and a baronial manor, subsequently transformed into a farmhouse for working the land. The name “Roma Vecchia” (Old Rome) for the estate which the structure belonged to comes from the presence in this part of the ruins of the Settebassi villa, considered in the 1700’s as a town in every sense of the word, because of their size.



12) Marcio Aqueduct

Behind the Casale di Roma Vecchia is preserved a section of the low arches in parallelepiped blocks of tuff and Peperino stone pertaining to the Marcio Aqueduct. The *Aqua Marcia*, brought to Rome in 144 B.C. by the praetor *Q. Marcius Rex*, covered 91 km. and starting from a spring in the upper valley of the river Aniene, between Arsoli and Agosta. In the late Republican era, to avoid building two new aqueducts right from scratch, the *Aqua Tepula* was constructed over the Marcio channel in 125 B.C. and the *Iulia* was later added in 33 B.C. The Marcio duct came out into the open in the vicinity of the Roma Vecchia, to continue on arches for about 9 km. as far as the Maggiore Gate, with the *Tepula* and *Iulia* channels running above it.

13) *Anio Vetus* Aqueduct

Built between 272 and 269 B.C. and financed with the spoils of the war against Pyrrhus, this is the most ancient aqueduct in the area. The channel is built in “Opus Quadratum” tuff with triangular roofing sections, each consisting of two slabs of limestone. The *Anio Vetus*, whose origin comes from the Aniene, turns towards Rome at Capannelle, to reach the Maggiore Gate again following an underground course. Its path is not visible in the area under consideration, but it runs continuously to the east of the other aqueducts and roughly underneath the via Lemonia, with the exception of the Vignacce area, where for a brief spell it lies between the Marcia and the Claudia.



14) “Del Sellaretto” Signalman’s house

In the point where the vicolo di Roma Vecchia turns towards the via Tuscolana stands a historical “signalman’s house”, belonging to the ancient railway line wanted by Pope Pius IX and which in 1862 connected Rome to Ceprano, referred to as “del Sellaretto”.



15) Settebassi Villa

After the Quintili villa at the V mile along the Appia Antica, the Settebassi villa is the most extensive in the Roman suburb, considered as a town in the full sense of the word, due to the extent of its ruins. For this reason the locality was called “Roma Vecchia” in the 1700’s. The villa, today standing alongside the course of the Tuscolana, was situated in ancient times opposite the VI mile of the via Latina and

connected to it by means of a side street. The grounds including the villa have recently been acquired by the State. The residential part of the complex consists of three adjacent building units, constructed in three distinct stages, even though almost at the same time. The first group of buildings consists of a residential villa with a vast peristyle, built at the beginning of the reign of Antonino Pio (who became Emperor in 138 A.D.). The second consists of representation rooms and richly decorated cubicles, added to the north side of the peristyle around 140-150 A.D. The third group, built around 160 A.D., at the end of the reign of Antonino Pio, again arose for reasons of luxury and features a large hippodrome garden built above ample artificial terracing overlooking the via Latina. A tree-lined park with pools, avenues with ornamental plants and a central water feature. Several buildings extended to the north-west, pertaining to the "rustic" part of the villa and including the rooms set aside for all production activities within the complex. In this section, which was isolated from the rest, in the modern-day agricultural farmhouse, visitors can find a small, rectangular-shaped brickwork temple, with the side walls extended to form a forepart, (*in antis* structure), dating from the end of the II century A.D. The Settebassi place name, known since the late Middle Ages, seems to have come from the name of Settimio Basso, the probable owner of the villa. A prefect in the time of Settimio Severo, or a consul who lived during the Constantine era.

Administrative area: Rome Archaeology Office

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