

# ROME

## ETERNAL CITY OR FLESHPOT CESSPOOL???

### THE OUT-OF-TOWNER'S GUIDE TO THE WORLD'S

# NO. 1 CITY!

AD100

#### ROME FACTS

We may have copied a lot of our architecture from the Greeks, but Rome makes Greek cities like Athens look like a provincial horse and cart station. Check out these Rome facts:

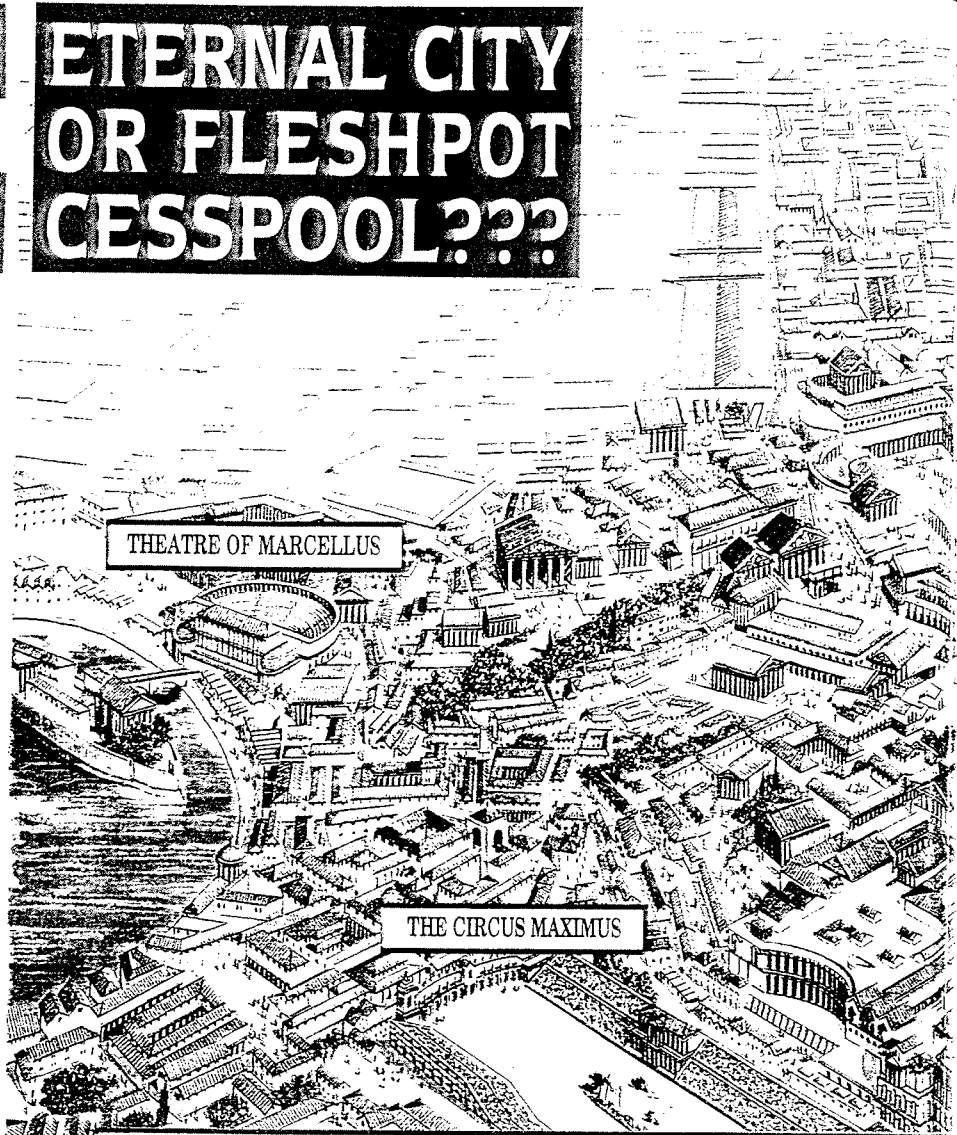
One MILLION Romans make this the biggest city in the world, and 400,000 of them are slaves! That means most of the other 600,000 of them get to sit on their fat behinds a lot, and bellow for more WINE and ENTERTAINMENT, especially when it's one of the city's 100 annual feast days

Fortune tellers say there won't be a European city this big again until Nineteenth century London.

Nineteen stone aqueducts keep those thirsty, dirty Romans supplied with constant fresh water.

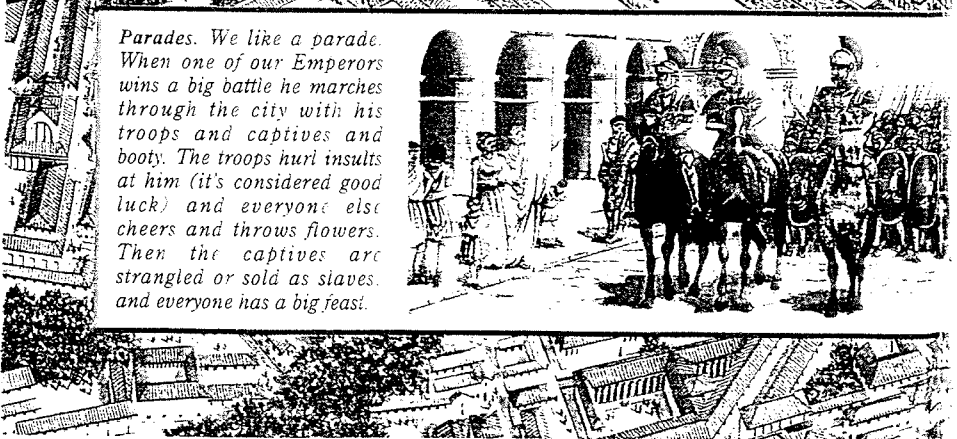
Okay. You've made a little money in Britannia or Gaul, and now you want to SPEND IT. Or maybe you're a poor carpenter from Ravenna who wants to make his fortune in the big city. Where better to go than ROME? Grander than Mount Olympus. More beautiful than Venus. More zing than one of Jupiter's thunderbolts. A glittering whirlpool of power, corruption, and crazy, crazy people - that's Rome. And what's more - all roads lead to it.

But be careful. Your wildest dreams could turn into your worst nightmares. When you visit Rome you're putting your head in the lion's mouth. It might just get bitten off!



THEATRE OF MARCELLUS

THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS



*Parades. We like a parade. When one of our Emperors wins a big battle he marches through the city with his troops and captives and booty. The troops hurl insults at him (it's considered good luck) and everyone else cheers and throws flowers. Then the captives are strangled or sold as slaves, and everyone has a big feast.*

#### LOOK AT THIS LOT!

Every Emperor wants to be remembered forever, and what better way than by ordering the construction of one of the most spectacular buildings in the world. Temples, public baths,

theatres, ornamental gardens, race tracks. Take your pick, we've got THE BEST

#### THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS

Maximus thrills and spills at the chariot racetrack with the highest death rate in the city. Room for 200,000 inside.

#### THEATRE OF MARCELLUS

We like a little culture too, you know. It's not just chariot races and gladiators here.

#### BATHS OF TRAJAN

Just one of the city's 11 public baths. Lollop in the hot pool. Shiver in the

**TOP TIPS FOR TOURISTS**

They say when in Rome do as the Romans do, so here's what you have to do to avoid standing out like the straw-chewing bumpkin you actually are...

**WHEELS**

Anything with wheels on is **BANNED** during the day. You can only bring your horse and cart into the city at night, and it's almost gridlock even then.

**LITTER**

If you can afford it, get yourself carried around in a litter, so you won't have to walk in the mud and sewage that coats the pavement. You can also look down on all the beggars, drunks, thieves and peddlers that will see you as **EASY PREY** if you're on their level.

**WASTE**

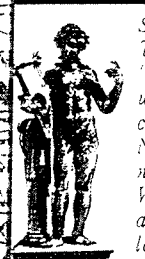
Try and avoid the narrowest streets. They're uncomfortably crowded **AND** people throw their waste out of windows. If you do get drenched by the contents of a chamber pot, just feel lucky it wasn't a brick or concrete beam. Plenty of them fall off the tops of buildings every day.

**FERRETS**

If you must go out at night, **DO** take some bodyguards. As well as ferretty bottom-of-the-heap poor people, who'll rob tourists like you quicker than you can say *Tempus fugit*, there are also gangs of posh kids, who think it's fun to go out and give an unsuspecting passer-by a good kicking.



*Basilica. No, not a type of plant, but a public building used as a law court or government office. Plenty of these in Rome.*



*Statues, we got THOUSANDS of 'em! This one was built by mad-cap Emperor Nero, as a likeness of himself. When he was assassinated they lopped the head off, and replaced it with Apollo the sun god.*

**FORUM OF AUGUSTUS**

**BATHS OF TRAJAN**

**THE COLOSSEUM**

**AQUEDUCT OF NERO**



*Arch. (See Parades). When an Emperor wins a battle he builds one of these to show how wonderful he is. Then he and his soldiers march under it.*



*Temple of the Divine Claudius. Rome has so many temples it's easy to get blasé about them. This one's quite nice though, with its gardens and everything.*

ld pool. Wander in the ol shade of the namental gardens. atch a boxing or estling match.

by building this aqueduct to carry water from the countryside into the city.

death in their thousands! (Frankly, it gets boring after the first ten or eleven.) See the senseless slaughter of wild and exotic animals on the very brink of extinction! See Christians being fed to the lions! **Sounds great doesn't it?** But it gets better - it's absolutely **FREE!!**

**FORUM OF AUGUSTUS**  
Stuffed with temples and law courts. Emperor Augustus turned Rome from shoddy bricks to gleaming marble, and this forum is one of his many building projects. Most cities have one forum. Rome has at least three.

**AQUEDUCT OF NERO**  
e may have been mad, d and dangerous to ow, but Emperor Nero i make himself useful

**THE COLOSSEUM**  
50,000 can cram in here to witness the most degrading, disgusting, deplorable spectacles money can buy. See Gladiators fight to the

# *LIFE IN ANCIENT ROME*

Work in groups of four and gather information on the following topics. You should be able to answer the questions stated below.

## **I) Roman homes**

Where did wealthy Romans live? In the city? In the country?

What did a typical Roman house look like? Rooms? Furniture? Decoration? Central heating?

Where did poor Romans live? In the city? In the country?

What did their apartments look like?

## **II) Food and eating habits**

What sorts of food were available to the rich on the one hand and to the poor on the other hand?

When and how were the meals taken?

What did Roman emperors do for the poorer citizens of Rome to become more popular?

## **III) A Roman household**

Who was the head of a Roman family and what were his rights?

What members did a Roman household include?

Mention a few important events in Roman family life (in growing up in a Roman family)?

What is there to say about Roman marriages?

What happened to unwanted children, especially female ones?

What reason might a Roman parent have had for allowing a girl child to die at birth? Why do you think those in power allowed it to happen?

Girls and women were treated as second class citizens in Roman society. Comment this statement.

## **IV) Education**

How were Roman children educated? What was a so-called "tutor"?

What kind of schools were there and what were they like?

What were the most important things a Roman kid had to learn? Why was "oratory" thought to be so important?

What were the differences between the education of girls and boys, the rich and the poor?

Find three important differences between education today and in Roman times.

## **V) Roman Religion**

How did Roman religion work?

Mention the most important Roman gods and goddesses. What were they responsible for?

Where/ Who did the Roman gods derive from?

The importance of "omens"? Chicken feed? Animals' livers? Birds' flights?

The Roman priests.

How did religion influence Roman everyday life? The importance of *sacrifice*?

What happened when Romans came across new gods in the provinces?

Who became human gods?

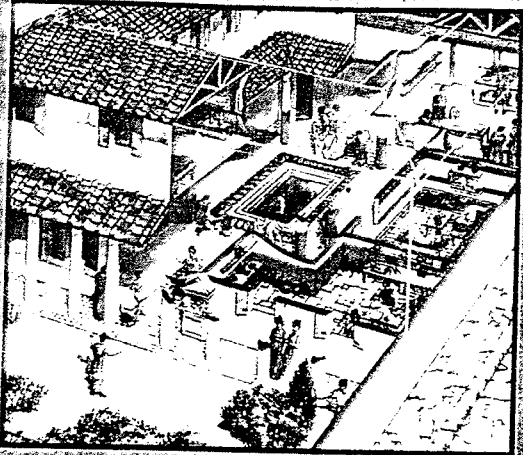


# EMPIRE ESTATES

34 AQUEDUCT AVENUE, ROME



## Luxury Town House



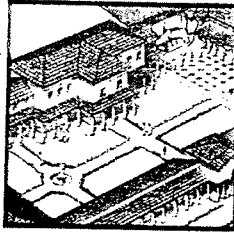
When only the best will do. A most elegant and centrally situated town house in Rome's choicest district. What more visible sign of authority could any senator, banker, businessman or general require?

- Impressive atrium for meeting and greeting guests.
- Decorative courtyard pool.
- Semi-transparent stone windows.
- Manageable walled garden.
- Most unusual and status-enhancing second floor, for family bedrooms.
- Shop at front of house, to rent out.
- Running water toilet.
- East facing study, giving bright morning light, and plenty of ventilation to prevent mildew occurring in paper and papyrus.

Potential buyers should note: This property has no bathroom, but there are public baths a short walk away.

## RURAL PROPERTIES

### VILLA



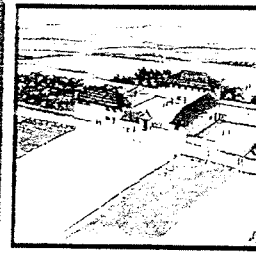
Only once in a century does a property as magnificent as this come on the market. "Dunrulin" in Etruria is the former home of a murdered and disgraced emperor, and Empire Estates is expecting a quick and competitive sale.

- Part of large estate producing olive oil and wine.
- Own baths, wine making area and granary.
- Beautifully decorated mosaics and murals.

### ALSO ON THE MARKET

#### LARGE FARM

Maximize your profits with this magnificent farm in Apulia. Comes complete with staff and 300 slaves. Specializes in figs and wheat.



#### SMALL FARM

Every Roman dreams of a place away from the squalor and bustle of the city. What better place to start than this comfy three-room farm in Umbria.



#### EVEN SMALLER FARM

A property that's within reach of even the most humble buyer. Would suit extremely capable carpenter



ALL PRICES ON APPLICATION

## BIG OLIVE APARTMENTS

The Forum Rome

There's no place like Rome, and what better place to live than in a Big Olive apartment block. Rome has got 46,000 of these insulae blocks, and we've just built another ten of them.

☀ No private toilets! But what better place to complain about the state of your bowels than the apartment's standard 12 seater, open-plan public toilet bench. Sympathy guaranteed!

☀ No running water! Get super-fit carrying buckets of water up five flights of stairs. A conveniently nearby fountain provides a constant supply.

☀ No peace! All apartments have shops or taverns on the ground floor.

### THE CONSUL DELUXE

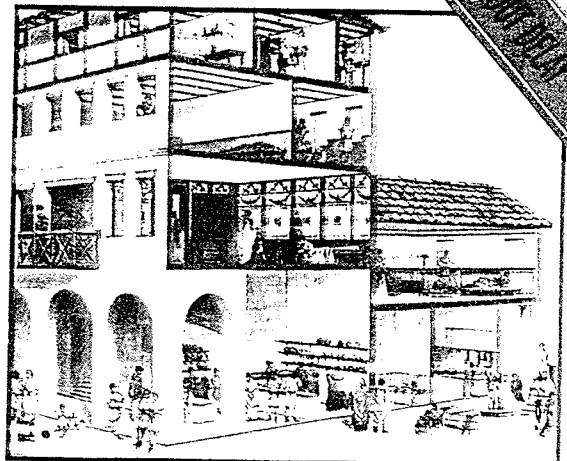
First floor, expansive, stone walls, luxurious, balcony (but watch out for refuse and sewage being thrown from upper floors.)

### THE CENTURION

Second floor standard accommodation, wood-burning braziers, big windows.

### THE TRADESMAN

Top floor, wooden living spaces, small easy-to-heat rooms.



Big Olive apartments take no responsibility for the upkeep and condition of their apartments, especially with regard to firehazard (extremely high), hygiene (extremely poor) and comfort (pretty chilly). Tenants are welcome on the understanding that their home may collapse at any moment.

# WARM AS TOAST

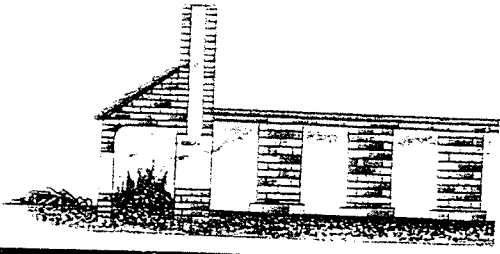
THAT'S WHAT THEY'LL SAY WHEN YOU  
BUY A HOUSE WITH

## HORATIUS CENTRAL HEATING

**ECONOMICAL** - Heat retaining pillars keep your house hot, even after the fires have gone out.

**EASY** - Just a few fires do all the work! Get your slave to keep them going.

**SAFE** - Say goodbye to the fire risk of an open grate and wooden floorboards.



Especially recommended for citizens  
in Britannia and Northern Gaul,  
where the sun doesn't shine quite  
like it does in good old Rome.

### IDEAL HOME!

BEAUTIFY YOUR HOME WITH  
COLOURFUL MOSAIC FLOORING.  
WE USE THE BEST QUALITY STONE  
OR GLASS PIECES, LAID INTO A  
HARD-WEARING PLASTER BASE.  
PATTERNS OR PICTURES -  
HUNTING SCENES A SPECIALTY.

THE DECORATORS, BESIDE THE  
THEATRE OF POMPEY, ROME

### SOME LIKE IT HOT!

Cold winters getting you down?  
Treat your toes to central heating -  
the fiery heat from a furnace,  
channelled beneath your floors.

*Free estimates*

The Hot House, Sacred Way, Rome.

### ELEGANT TOWN HOUSE FOR SALE

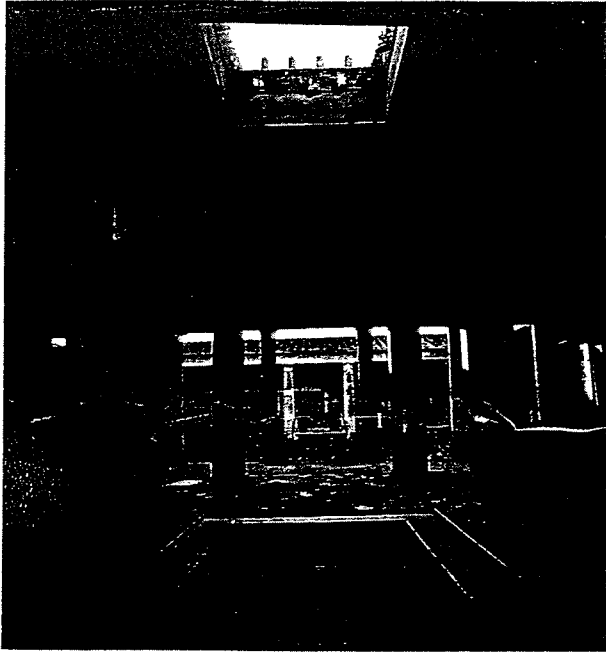
Traditional entrance room with ornamental pool, charming dining room,  
five bedrooms, and large garden with covered walkways  
dedicated to the household gods. Includes many luxury features  
- central heating, own water supply, kitchen and toilet.

Box No. 9210

# The typical house ⑦

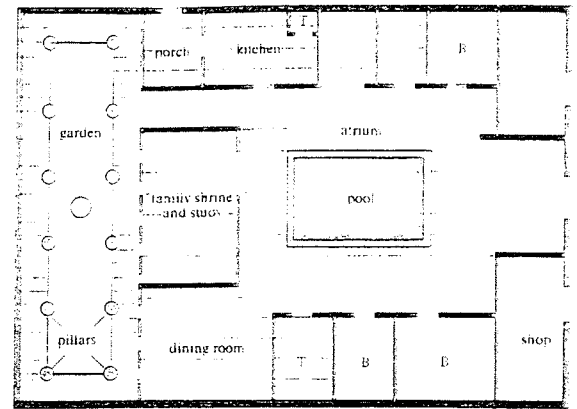
Source A shows a plan of a typical Roman house. The drawing is based on several houses found at Pompeii in Italy. Most Roman houses had an atrium. This was the central room. It was a partly covered courtyard with a pool in the middle to catch the rainwater.

Source B



The atrium in a Roman house at Pompeii

Source A Plan of a Roman house ⑧



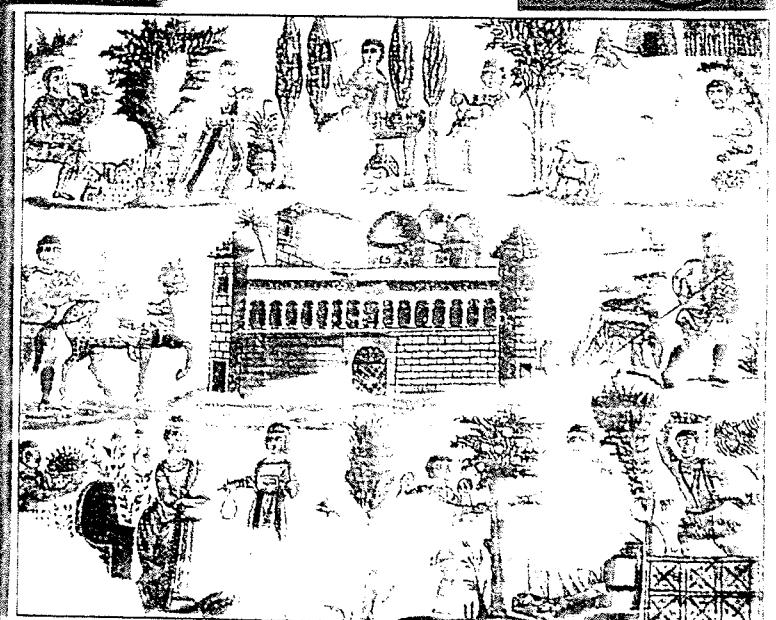
Most houses would have simple furniture. But rich people might decorate their rooms with expensive pieces. Cicero once paid one million sesterces for a special table.

As well as painting their walls, the Romans decorated their floors with mosaics. Mosaics were made out of small pieces of stone, glass and tiles called 'tesserae'. They were cemented together to make a picture. People would choose their design from pattern books provided by the mosaic cutter. Mosaics would often be found in dining rooms because they were nice to look at and easy to clean.

Much of what we know about Roman houses comes from findings at Pompeii, near Naples, and Ostia, the port at the mouth of the Tiber. In the centuries since the end of the Empire most Roman towns have been pulled down and built over. The ruins of a few, like Ostia, have been safely buried in thick layers of river mud. But the best preserved is Pompeii. On 24 August, A.D. 79, the volcano Vesuvius erupted, burying the town and most of its inhabitants under a shower of ashes and a great tide of volcanic lava.

Nearly 1,700 years passed before archaeologists began to dig out Pompeii. Gradually houses, squares and public buildings were uncovered. Among the bones of the dead and the rubble of fallen roofs lay furniture, statues, cups, plates and even remains of food on tables! These findings have greatly increased our knowledge of life in Roman times, especially of the homes people lived in.

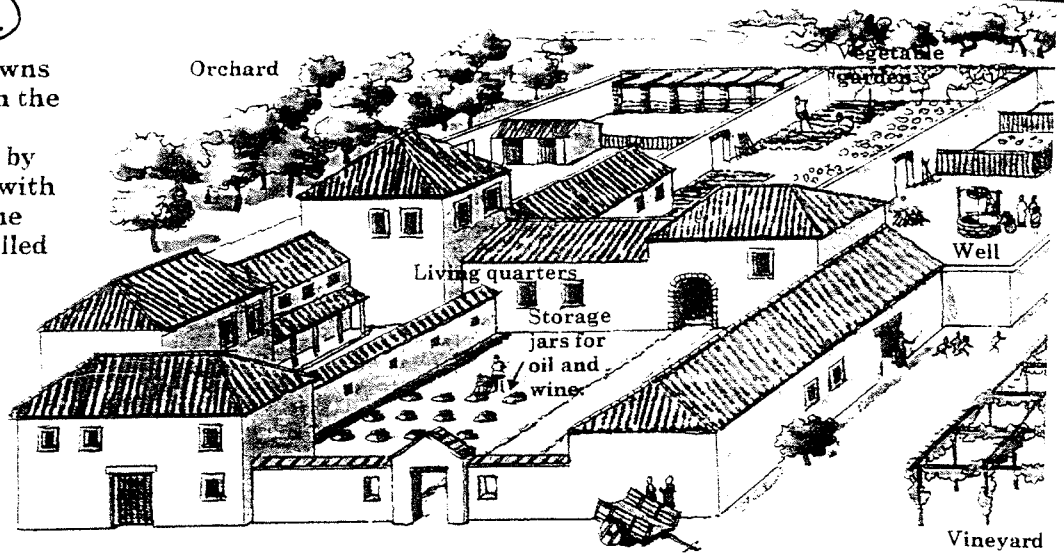
Roman mosaic of a villa ⑨



## Country life

12

Although there were many towns and cities, most people lived in the country. Rich men had large estates, looked after for them by farmers who paid them rents with money, food or animals. On the estates were grand houses, called villas, where the rich families lived with their servants and slaves. Workers on the estates grew vegetables, wheat, fruit, grapes for making wine, and olives for oil. They kept hens and geese, cows, sheep and goats. Oil and wine were stored in big pottery jars half-buried in the courtyard.



## The apartments of the poor

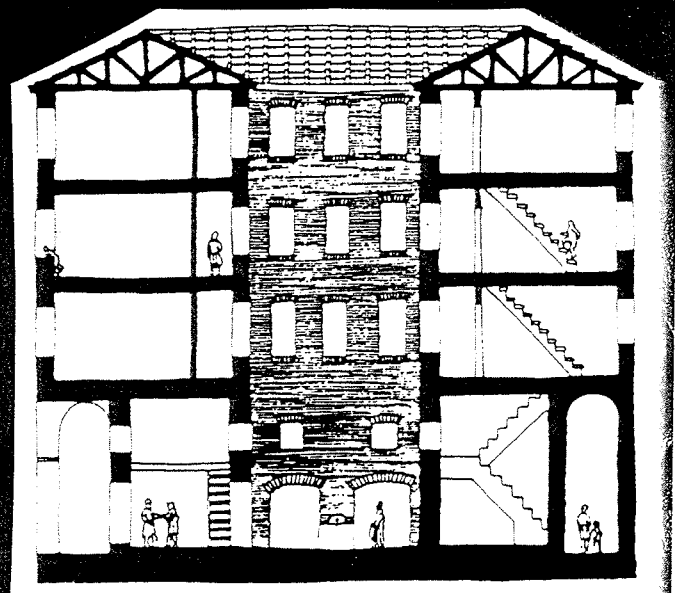
13

In the larger towns, like Rome and Ostia, only wealthy families could afford separate houses of their own. Poorer families usually rented one or two rooms in apartment houses—blocks of flats with long flights of stairs. Many of these people had no beds to sleep on. They had to make do with mats on the floor. Their only furniture was a table and benches or stools.

Flat dwellers fetched their water from the nearest public fountain. They also depended on public lavatories, although some families kept a pot under the table and emptied it out of the window after dark. It was unfortunate if anyone happened to be passing by at the time!

Windows in these houses had no glass. They were opened and closed with wooden shutters. When the weather was chilly people had to choose between a cold draught (if they opened the shutters) or darkness (if they closed them). The commonest form of lighting was an olive-oil lamp, but this was expensive. Most people preferred to go to bed early and get up before sunrise, to make full use of daylight hours.

There were no fireplaces or chimneys in apartment houses. For cooking and heating an open fire was lit in a brazier (a metal container, still used today by street workmen). This was very dangerous. One of the tenants carelessly knocked over his fire the whole building could burn down in a few minutes.



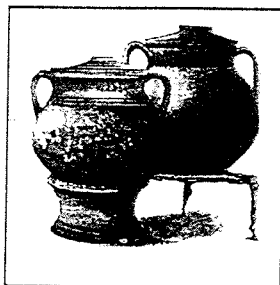
# WE'RE POTTY ABOUT THESE STANDS

## KITCHEN NEWS

Those lucky few readers who are rich enough to have a kitchen will be interested in these new utensils.

Increase the life of your cooking pots with these pottery and iron stands. Place directly between your hot charcoal stove and the pot of your choice, and hey presto, all the heat, with none of the wear and tear.

Strain those sauces with the all-metal Stranulus Strainer. Sturdy construction means it will survive



Pot stands. So simple!  
So convenient!

the attentions of even the clumsiest slave.



## RECIPE OF THE DAY

### 15 ANCHOVY DELIGHT WITHOUT THE ANCHOVIES

It's happened to us all. You want to do a nice tangy anchovy dish, but there's none to be found at the market.

Your guests are waiting,  
and they're getting impatient!

*What do you do? Here's what...*

1. Take a good size pan, and gently heat a fish sauce with a dash of pepper, a butter and flour roux, and a little olive oil.
2. Add four fillets of grilled fish (any white fish will do) and stir.
3. Gently fold in raw eggs to bind the mixture together.
4. Now - the magic ingredient. Add a good quantity of small jellyfish. (Much easier to get hold of than anchovies, and half the price.)

5. Simmer until well cooked.

6. Serve with ground pepper. No, one of your guests will guess you've run out of anchovies!

Today's recipe comes from Apicus's Cookbook, available in all good bookshops now



cut out and keep

## FREE FOR ALL 16

**EACH EMPEROR BELIEVES that handing out food to the citizens of Rome will make him more popular.**

**The Roman News talked to a man in the street, to find out what people really think about the emperors' gifts.**

WELL, I DON'T know about making emperors popular, but it certainly stops them from getting a knife in the back!

I mean it's alright for rich folk - they can afford to buy anything they want. Many of them have country farms and grow most of their own food, anyway.

But for the rest of us! There are so many people living in Rome these days that farmers just can't grow enough to feed us all.

Half the time we can't even find basic foods like bread and beans, or vegetables and fruit in the shops here, let alone things like fish and meat. Mind you, meat's so pricey! I just can't afford it often on my wages. I can tell you.

Let's face it, my family would go hungry if it wasn't for the emperor's monthly handouts. We get grain for making bread as well as pure oil and wine, you know. And they're even giving us pork now.

All this free food is probably costing the emperor a fortune, but there would be riots if he tried to stop it! And anyway, it's a tradition. Well, it's been going on for hundreds of years, hasn't it - since at least 58 BC.

I say, long live the emperor - well, as long as he carries on lending a helping hand to my family and me.



## Food and eating habits (17)

Ordinary families lived mainly on bread, made from wheat or barley. Olive oil was used instead of butter, and cheese was usually made out of goats' milk. Vegetables like broad beans, lettuces and cabbages were fairly plentiful, but potatoes and tomatoes were not yet known in Europe. The commonest fruits were apples, pears, cherries, plums and grapes. In earlier times meat was usually eaten on festival days only. But before long wealthier families began to eat large quantities of it. As well as beef, mutton and pork they liked the costly meat of flamingos, peacocks and storks! Above all they loved good quality fish. Wine was drunk by all classes, for there was no tea, coffee or cocoa.

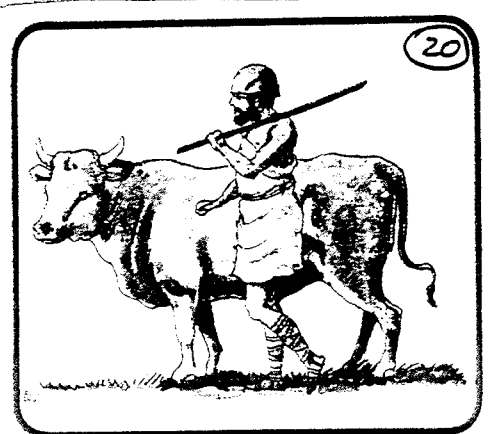
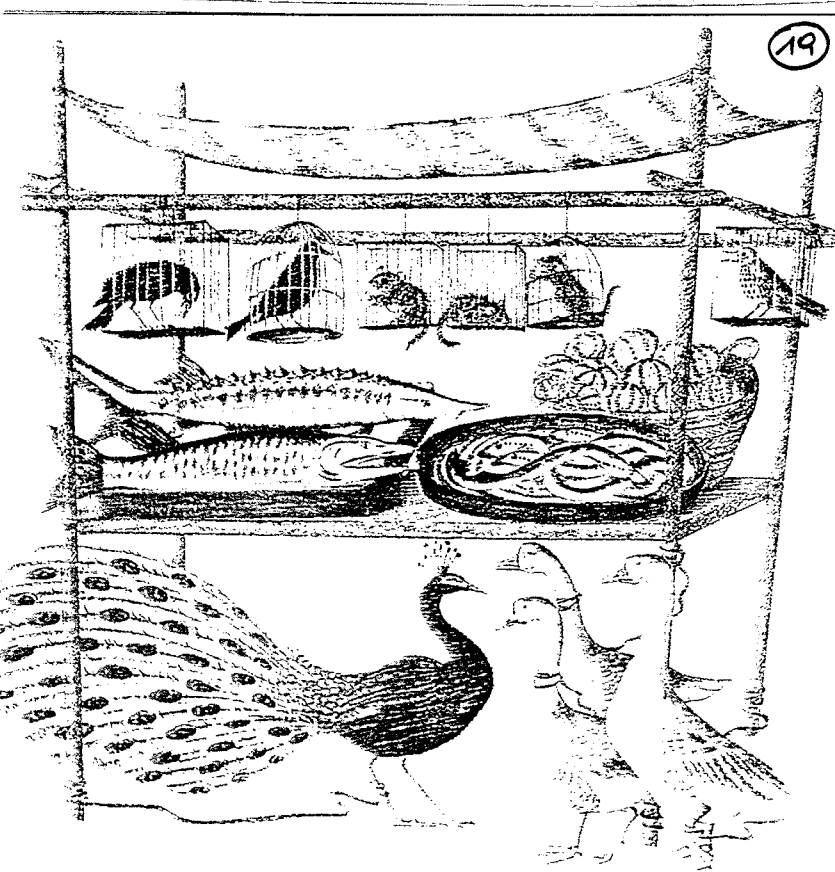
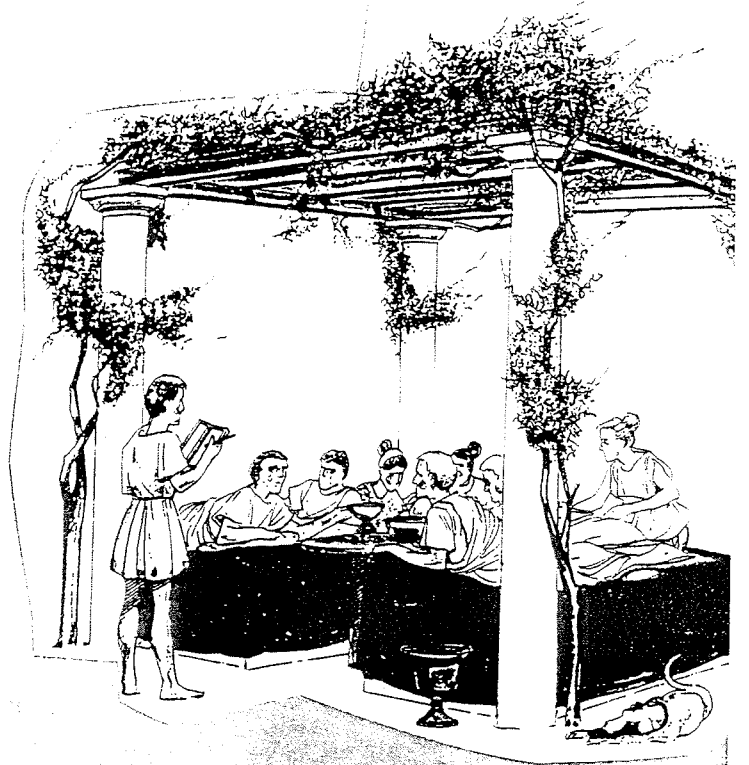
Most Romans had a light breakfast. There was always a great hurry to get to work at dawn, so a drink of wine or water and a little bread and cheese was about all they had time for. The first proper meal was at midday. It might consist of cold meat, vegetables, bread and wine, with fresh fruit to follow.

The main meal of the day was dinner, about four hours later. Wealthy families had several courses of meat or fish, with vegetables and fruit. The wine was usually warmed and diluted with about three times as much water. Slaves prepared and served the food. The stoves they used had hollows in the top filled with charcoal which was fanned into a fire beneath the cooking pots.

At one time the family sat on chairs round a table in the atrium. Later they had a separate dining room and copied Greek customs of eating. They lay on couches and helped themselves to the dishes on a low table in the middle. Spoons and knives were used but forks were unknown. Most of the eating was done with the fingers, so slaves carried napkins and finger bowls. In other ways Roman table manners were different from ours. For example, what was left of the dinner was thrown on the floor!

Sometimes friends and relations were invited to a dinner party. Unlike an ordinary family meal this might go on far into the night and there would be much more drinking. Between courses there were long and serious conversations, and special entertainments were often arranged for the guests. Slaves read poetry aloud, and there were sometimes musicians and jugglers, even acrobats or dancing girls.

The main meal was eaten from the ninth hour on. Romans lay on sloping couches to eat. The owner is dictating a letter to his secretary (18) while dining.



The ordinary people had very little of their own. They grew what food they could on rented land for their families and for sale. This man is driving his cow to a city market.

Creatures eaten by the Romans

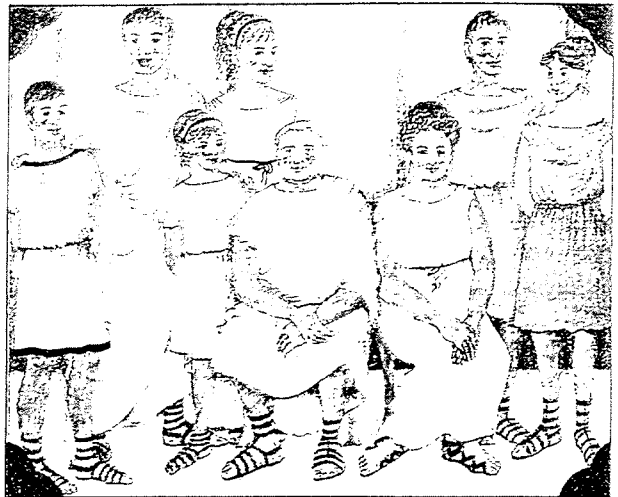
## The household

A Roman household included not only the members of the family but also the household slaves. All but the very poorest families would have slaves living in their houses.

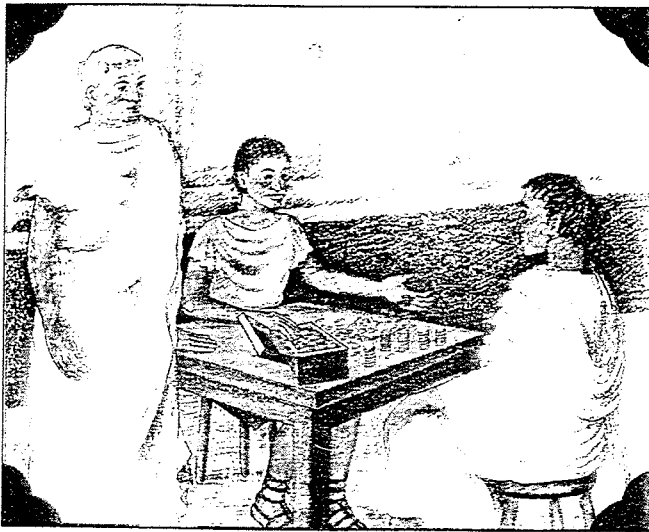
As with many families today, children would usually live with their parents until they were married. Source A shows a typical Roman household.

Source B shows the paterfamilias (the father of the family). He was the head of the household and had total control over family affairs. Everyone had to obey him.

Source A A Roman household



Source B The paterfamilias



The paterfamilias owned all the family's possessions - even those of his children who had grown up. No matter how old the children were, they remained under his control. The only exception was when a daughter married. She then had to obey her husband's paterfamilias.

The paterfamilias in Source B is telling a slave to count out the money which his grown-up son is allowed to spend on his own family.

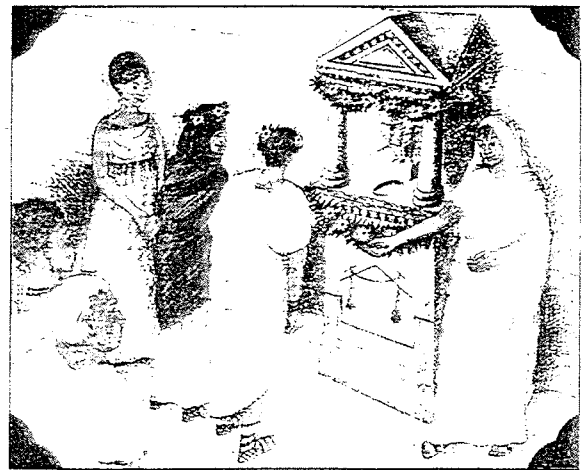
Source C shows a Roman marriage. Marriages were often arranged by the parents - at least amongst richer families. Sometimes an arranged marriage was made for political reasons - for example, Pompey married Julia, Julius Caesar's

daughter, in 60 BC to strengthen the bond between the two men.

Women were allowed to marry at the age of twelve. They might be engaged before that. The Emperor Claudius' daughter Octavia was engaged when she was just one year old.

The marriage ceremony took place in the bride's family home. There would be a feast. Then everyone would go to the husband's house. When they arrived, the bride rubbed fat on the doorposts and hung wool from them. Her husband then carried her into the house in case she slipped - which would be a bad omen.

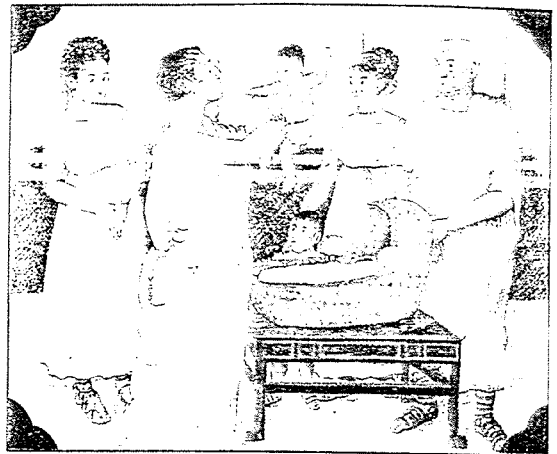
Source C A marriage ceremony



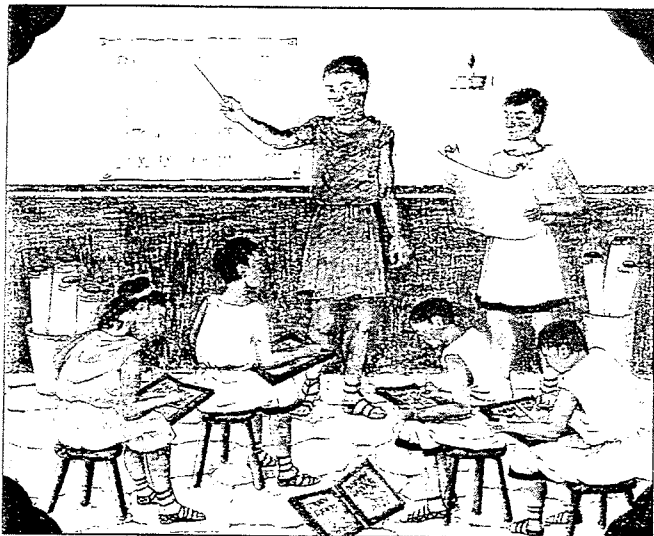
Source D shows the day a baby is born. The child was placed on a table in the main room. The father then lifted it up to show that he accepted it as a member of the family. On the eighth or ninth day, the child was named at a special ceremony.

Many children died young (especially those from poor families). Sometimes unwanted children were abandoned at birth. This was not illegal. However, they were often rescued by people who were childless or by people who would later sell them as slaves.

Source D The newborn child



Source E A Roman classroom



Source E shows a Roman classroom. Rich children might be educated at home but most went to school in the local town. Girls and boys would go to school between the ages of six and eleven. They were usually taught by slaves and would learn little more than how to read, write and add up.

Source F shows a boy at a special ceremony. He is putting on a special white toga to show that he is now an adult and a Roman citizen. The ceremony usually took place on March 17th in the year in which the boy was fourteen. There was no ceremony for girls.

Source F Growing up



# Activities

1. The pictures (Sources A-E) from the 'family album' show important events in Roman family life. What important family events are included in photo albums today? Apart from the costumes, would the pictures on these two pages look out of place in a modern family album?
2. Make a list of the similarities and differences between Roman family life and family life today. Use the following headings, a) The power of the father, b) Marriage, c) Birth, d) Education, e) Becoming an adult.
3. Girls and women in Roman times were treated as second class citizens. How does the information above show this?

# DOWN WITH SCHOOL!

Illustrated by ANGUS McBRIDE

**A WASTE OF TIME!** That's what one 12-year-old boy thinks about school. And he's written to *The Roman News*, listing his complaints.

"EVER SINCE my 7th birthday, a slave has taken me to school at the crack of dawn five days a week. Then I had to sit still all morning, and listen to my schoolteacher droning on, trying to teach me how to count, write and read — not just in our own Latin language, but in Greek, too.



But then after my 11th birthday things got even worse! My 12-year-old sister stopped going to school because she got married, but I was sent to another teacher, called a grammaticus.

of that old stuff. I have to learn everything off by heart, too, and answer endless questions. And if I make a mistake, my teacher whips me!

Most Roman children of my age don't go to school at all. They work alongside their fathers,

learning their trades. Why can't I?"

### RIGHT OF REPLY

At *The Roman News* we like to present both sides of a case, so we asked a teacher for his response to the lad's letter.

"Well, for a start, this youngster should understand how lucky he is to get any kind of education. Most children don't go to school at all, because their parents can't afford it. His father must be a wealthy man.

What this boy doesn't realize is that it isn't just reading the great Roman and Greek authors that's important — answering questions about their ideas teaches him the art of discussion.

This is the first step in learning how to speak in public — a vital skill if he wants to become a senator or some other politician one day."

So there you are, young man. School will help you to get a good start in life. Keep going to lessons, work hard, and stop grumbling!

22

## BACK TO SCHOOL?

WE SELL RE-USABLE WAX TABLETS AND HARD-WEARING BRONZE STYLOUSES FOR WRITING, AS WELL AS ABACUSES TO HELP YOU COUNT.

The School Suppliers  
Latin Gate  
Rome

22

## ROLL UP!

Best-selling plays, poems and history books now in stock. Written on the finest quality papyrus or goat-skin scrolls.

THE BOOK SHOP,  
beside the Temple  
of Isis, Rome

## Roman schooling

In the early years of the Roman republic there were few schools because most children were taught by their fathers. Apart from learning the 'Twelve Tables' of the law by heart, they did little more than basic reading, writing and counting. But after the conquest of Greece, in the second century BC, Greek methods of education became very popular. In the towns private schools were set up, many of them with Greek teachers.

Children of well-to-do parents were first taught at home by a private tutor (often a Greek slave). Then, at the age of about seven, boys went to an elementary school. Fees were charged, for there were no state schools like we have today. Girls usually continued their education at home, because learning to manage a household was an important part of it.

Most elementary schools were small, with perhaps 30 or 40 pupils and a teacher in one large room. They might be in the schoolmaster's home or in a rented room nearby. Classes normally began before dawn and ended around noon. So pupils carried lamps on their way to school. Their tutors went with them and sat at the back of the room while the teaching was going on.

Discipline was very strict. Some teachers flogged pupils, with a cane or strap, not only for disobedience but also for making the slightest mistake. At this stage most of the time was spent on reading, writing and counting. Capital letters were learned first (almost the same as the ones we use today). Then the children learned a joined-up style of writing. Sums were difficult with Roman numerals. As in Greece, younger pupils counted on the beads of an *abacus*.

When they were about twelve boys went to a 'grammar school', if their parents could afford the fees. Here they learned Greek and studied the works of well known Greek and Roman writers. Pupils had to write essays and compose their own poems. They were also taught some mathematics and a little history, but the main aim was to train them in *oratory* (the art of public speaking). Most of the important men in Roman life were lawyers and politicians, all of them skilful speakers. One such was Tacitus who, in about AD 100, had this to say about the value of oratory:

The more a man could influence others by his powers of speech, the quicker he would get into an important position ... the more he would be favoured by great men, gain the respect of the senate and fame with the common people. These were the men ... who even when out of office had power, because they could win over both the senate and the people by their advice.

To develop their powers of oratory, pupils learned and recited long passages of poetry and famous speeches from the senate. After the age of sixteen or so, those from the wealthiest families went abroad to continue their studies in Athens, Alexandria or one of the other great centres of learning.

## ROMAN RELIGION

The Romans did not believe in just one god, as for example Christians do. They worshipped many different gods and goddesses, each one concerned with a different aspect of life, such as love, war, or the weather.

These gods not only looked like people, they also behaved like people. In Roman myths they fell in love, fought wars, went to parties and had arguments just like people do. The main difference was that gods were immortal - they lived forever.

To the Romans the world was full of mysteries. Why was it that one year a farmer had bumper crop and another year the crops would fail? Why was it that someone who was perfectly healthy would suddenly become ill? Why would some ship sail across the sea without a hitch whilst others would be caught in a storm and wrecked?

Nowadays we try to use science to explain these things. The Romans did not. If something appeared to happen by chance, they often thought that it was the work of gods.

The Romans believed that the gods gave signs which told people whether or not they should do something. These signs were called omens. When an important decision had to be made Romans would look for omens. If the omens were good this meant that the gods liked the decision. Omens were usually found in nature. For example, if a group of birds flew across the sky from left to right during a sacrifice this might be seen as a good omen.

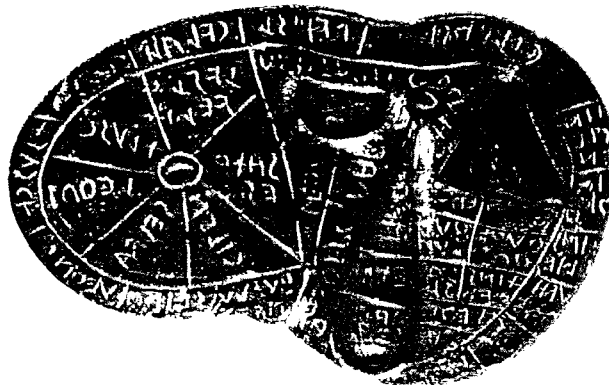
An animal's liver was very important in the search for omens. The shape, colouring and markings on a liver were used for finding out whether the gods were sending a good or bad omen. Source B shows a bronze liver. It was probably used as a model to help priests to "read" a liver. Source A shows the sacred chickens. If a priest wanted to find out whether the gods liked a decision, grain would be given to the chickens. The way in which the chickens ate the grain would show the priest whether or not the gods liked the decision.

Source A



Priest feeding the sacred chickens

Source B



A bronze liver

The Romans believed that success or failure depended on the support of the gods and that it was possible for people to win this support. They could do this by promising the god a gift. If people then had success, they would give the gift to the god.

A gift might be a sacrifice such as the one described on the FOCUS page. For example, a farmer might sacrifice a pig or a sheep in the hope of a good harvest. Or, a gift might be a special offering. Source C describes an offering of money to the god Jupiter made by a traveller who had returned home safely from a journey.

**Source C**

*To the divine Jupiter, I, Vassinus, made a vow before I left home on a journey. I promised to pay six denarii to the gods if they brought me home safely. Thanks to the gods I completed my journey unharmed. This inscription has been set up as a proof that I have paid what I owed.*

An offering made to Jupiter by a traveller after he returned home safely.  
Inscription found at Stony Stratford, Britain.

Thus, before taking an important step it was necessary to plead with the proper god.

It was almost certainly the Etruscans who introduced the gods and goddesses of Greece to the citizens of the seven hills. Many of them were simply taken over, merely changing the name to a Roman one.

In this way, the character of Zeus was adopted as *Jupiter* and Hera taken over as *Juno*. The Greek Artemis became *Diana* and Athena was renamed *Minerva*. From Ares, the Romans had *Mars* and Hermes changed into *Mercury*. *Venus* started in Greece as Aphrodite.

<i>Greek Gods</i> ⇒ <i>Roman Gods</i>	
Zeus	⇒ Jupiter
Hera	⇒ Juno
Artemis	⇒ Diana
Athena	⇒ Minerva
Ares	⇒ Mars
Hermes	⇒ Mercury
Aphrodite	⇒ Venus

The most important god of later times was *Jupiter*, god of light and king of the immortals. The specialities of some of the others were as follows: *Juno* (Jupiter's wife, queen of the gods and goddess of women and children), *Saturn* (agriculture), *Ceres* (crops), *Minerva* (wisdom), *Venus* (love and beauty), *Vulcan* (fire), *Neptune* (sea), *Diana* (moon and hunting), *Apollo* (sun and light), *Mars* (war), *Vesta* (hearth), *Manes* (the dead) and *Janus* (doorway - god with two faces).

As well as these, there were personal and family gods - the *Lares* looked after the home and the *Penates* the store cupboard. The father of every family set up, where possible, a shrine to these protectors and led whatever prayers were said. Most families kept a small altar in their home. There they prayed to the guardian spirits of the house, to the spirits of the country and to the spirits of their ancestors.



Jupiter, King of the gods



Minerva, goddess of wisdom



Juno, goddess of marriage

Because there were so many gods, the Romans had to be careful to promise the gift to the right one. If people asked a god for something but did not get it, this would not make them think that the gods did not exist. Instead they might think that they had made a promise to the wrong god, or they had not asked in the right way, or they had annoyed another god by mistake.

It was essential to get the words and actions right and to know what offerings to bring the gods and numen. The men who could remember all these things became the first priests. They weren't the spiritual leaders we expect our clergymen to be - they merely knew how to bribe for heavenly help and how to do it.

The worship of the gods was regulated by the government who appointed the priests. The high priest was known as "Pontifex Maximus". There were other kinds of priests, for example the flamines who were the burners of offerings and the augurs who could tell the future from the flashes of lightning, the flight of birds, or the livers of sacrificed animals.

Romans did not have regular church meetings with prayers; their visits to temples being more in the nature of bargains struck with the god - "You protect me on my journey and I'll give you an offering of food and wine."

Towns and cities throughout the Roman Empire had public temples and altars, where priests made sacrifices to the gods, to ask them for their blessing. In Rome's early days, human sacrifices had been common, but by Augustus's time animals and birds were killed instead.



## The sacrifice

The time is 63 BC.  
The scene is ancient Rome. Somehow we must get the gods on our side. If we fail, the mighty Roman Empire will crumble and fall. To succeed we must give the gods what they want. Blood must flow.

The new Consuls, Cicero and Antonius, wearing purple bordered togas, walk slowly up the Sacred Road to the temple of Jupiter, King of all the gods. The crowd falls silent. The Consuls take their places in front of the temple, sitting on ivory chairs.



**A bull about to be sacrificed**

Two snow white bulls are led forward to the altar in front of the temple steps. The bulls' horns have been

decorated with ribbons and painted gold. Once the bulls are in place a flute player begins to play so that no ill-omened sounds will be heard. The Chief Priest comes forward. He washes his hands and chants a prayer. He begins to sprinkle flour over the bulls and raises two knives towards the heavens. His words are spoken in a slow dull tone. Every word is exact - if he makes a mistake the ceremony will have to start again.

At last he is ready. He makes a sign to his assistant who shouts, 'I am about to strike'. With one move the assistant lifts a huge hammer and crashes it down onto the head of the first bull. He lifts it again and stuns the second. The Priest hands the knives to the Consuls and they walk calmly over to the fallen animals. Each Consul grabs the head of a bull and lifts it first upwards and then downwards. In unison they seize a bull by the chin and slit its throat. As the blood flows attendants collect it in bowls and the Priest makes a prayer to Jupiter. Within seconds the Consuls have also slit open the bulls' stomachs. They stand waiting for the Priest. The Priest examines the innards of each bull and pulls out the liver. He inspects it carefully and says it is suitable. This is a good omen.

The bulls' innards are thrown onto the altar fire as an offering to Jupiter. As the smoke drifts towards heaven and the smell of burning meat reaches the crowd, the bulls are cut up into steaks which are piled onto huge plates. Now that Jupiter has his share, the Roman people can enjoy a feast.

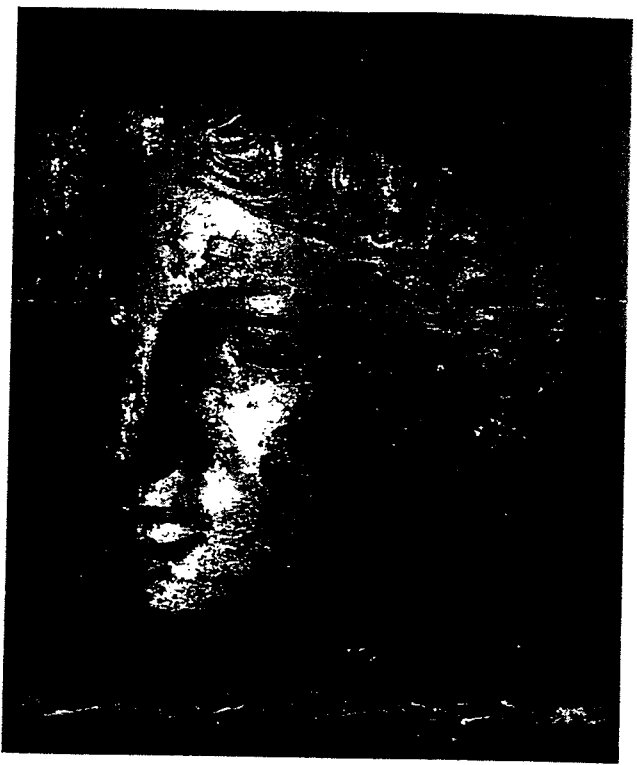
# Roman gods in the provinces

When the Romans invaded new lands, they found that the local people believed in gods that were new to them. Equally, the locals did not know of the Roman gods until they met the Romans. So, what happened when these different gods met?

Very often a god from the provinces was joined with a Roman god to make a new god. For example, Sulis was a British god and Minerva was Roman. At Roman Bath a new god Sulis Minerva was worshipped (Source B). Similarly, Antenociticus was a British god and Mars was Roman. At Benwell, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a new god Mars Antenociticus was worshipped.

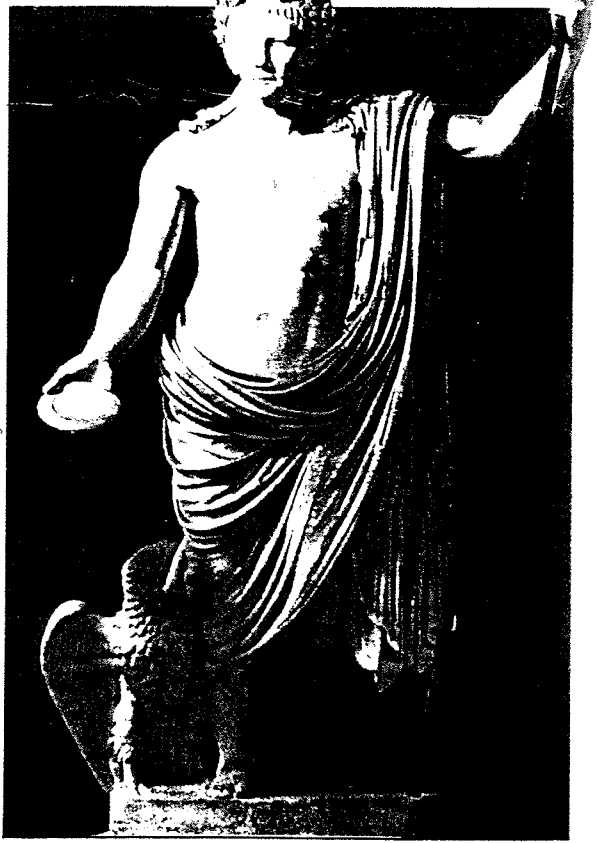
The Romans worshipped these new gods in the same way as they worshipped their own. As time went on, local people copied Roman customs and worshipped the gods in Roman style. They built temples and made statues. Before the Roman invasion, there were no temples or statues of gods in Britain.

Source B



Bronze head of Sulis Minerva found at Bath

Source E



Claudius as a god. The eagle next to him is a special sign usually shown with Jupiter, King of the gods.

## Human gods

The Romans thought that their gods looked like people. Every temple contained a statue of its god. The statues all looked like people.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the Romans believed that some people were god-like and became gods after their death. The first Roman to be worshipped as a god after his death was Julius Caesar. Augustus, the first Emperor, also became a god when he died in AD 14.

Many Emperors and their relatives (men and women) became gods after their death. Worship of them is known as the 'Imperial cult'. Like other gods they had temples and priests. Source E shows Claudius as a god. He became a god after he died in AD 54.

# TRADITIONAL GODS

- Jupiter:** chief of all the gods, and the sky god
- Juno:** chief goddess, goddess of women and of childbirth
- Minerva:** goddess of wisdom and handicrafts
- Mars:** god of war
- Neptune:** god of the sea and all water
- Apollo:** god of light and healing
- Diana:** goddess of the moon and also of hunting
- Venus:** goddess of love and beauty
- Saturn:** god of growth and farming
- Pluto:** god of the dead
- Mercury:** messenger of the gods, and god of merchants



JUPITER JUNO MINERVA DIANA NEPTUNE

# THE BEST GODS?

Illustrated by NICKY COONEY

**IT SEEMS AS IF every time our Empire conquers a new country, we learn of a new religion. But how do these foreign cults compare with our traditional gods? *The Roman News* gives both points of view.**

"The traditional gods are all we need!" stated the head priest of the god

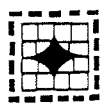
Jupiter, firmly. "Between them, these gods cover every part of our lives —

from Juno, the goddess of birth, through to Pluto, the god of the dead.

for them and keep them happy by offering up prayers and gifts.

And we shouldn't stint on these gifts, either. Pigs, sheep or oxen make the best sacrifices, of course, but offerings of wine, food or money are also well accepted.

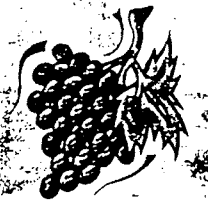
All of our gods will take good care of us, as long as we show respect



MITHRAS ISIS & SERAPIS BACCHUS CYBELE

## THE NEW CULTS

- Mithras:** god of darkness and light, good and evil, from Iran
- Isis and Serapis:** gods of the endless cycle of death and rebirth, from the East
- Cybele:** the Great Mother, goddess of fertility and life, death and rebirth, from Turkey



**Bacchus:** god of wine and all life-giving forces, from Greece

We should make sure we attend all of the gods' festivals and feasts, too, and the games held in their honour. If we look after our gods, they will look after us.

Of course, every man, woman and child in our Empire should worship the emperor, as well. He does so much for us, he's like a god on Earth.

I simply can't understand why any Roman should need to turn to

other religions — surely we've enough gods to satisfy everyone!"

### MORE LIFE WITH NEW GODS

But when we asked a Roman citizen what he thought, we heard a very different view:

"The traditional gods are so boring! All you have to do is pay for a sacrifice every now and then, and offer up the

odd prayer. Where's the excitement in that?

The new cults are a lot more interesting. Take the god Mithras, for example. His followers are all men and, although they're sworn to secrecy, I've heard they meet in dark underground temples to carry out all sorts of dangerous rites. It's no wonder so many of our soldiers follow Mithras.

Then there are Isis and Serapis. Their worshippers

have fabulous parades — as good as any theatre.

And as for Bacchus or Cybele, their ceremonies have to be seen to be believed. Their followers get totally drunk or dance themselves into a frenzy. Men and women alike!

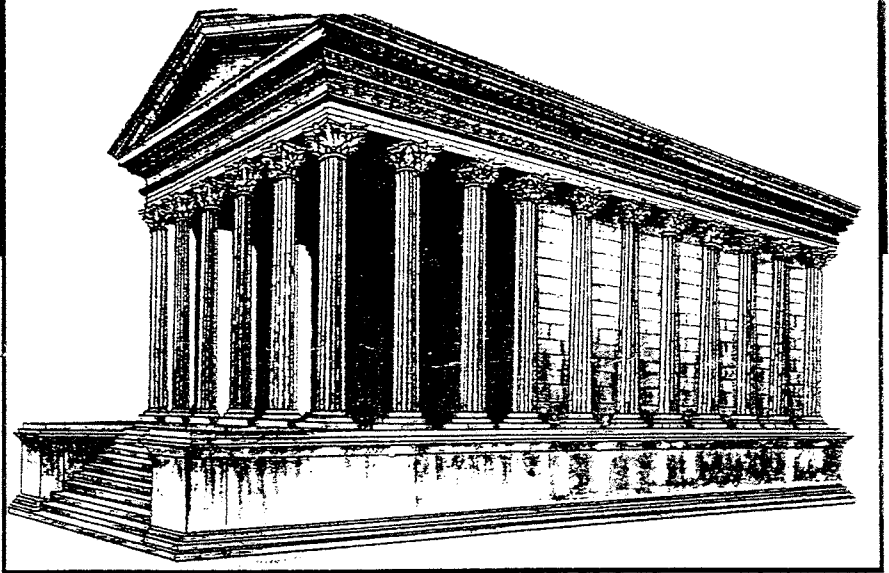
What's more, these new gods promise their followers life in the next world, after they die. Now that's something our Roman gods have never offered us!"

# THE OPEN-ALL-HOURS

# GOD SHOP

## HELPING YOU DECIDE WHO'S WORTH A WORSHIP

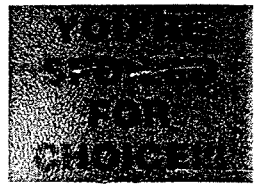
### VITAL FOR SURVIVAL



A standard-issue Roman temple. Remember, a sacrifice in time saves nine!

goddesses, and keeping them sweet is vital for the survival of Rome. Then we've got all sorts of other ones from the people we've conquered over the centuries.

We don't mind who else you worship, as long as you pay due respect to our state gods and the Emperor!



Religion in Ancient Rome has always been a pick-and-mix affair. We've got our own Roman gods and

## THE STATE RELIGION

Right or wrong? Of all our gods and goddesses the state deities are the ones you've really got to watch out for. We've got temples dedicated to them all over Rome and if you don't say the occasional prayer, or offer the odd sacrifice, they won't protect you as you go about your daily business.

There are 14 or 15 really famous ones, and a whole bunch of lesser ones. (True, some of them have been adapted from the Greek models but who cares! If the cap fits wear it!) Here's an overview of a few of the big ones to give you the general idea.

### JUPITER

He's king of the gods, and the deity in charge of thunder and lightning. He's exactly like the Greek god Zeus, right down to his thunderbolt hurling, and his disgruntled wife, who's mad at him for carrying on with other goddesses behind her back, the rat!



are going on a voyage and don't want your ship to sink in a storm.

### CERES

She's the goddess of agriculture, and the same as Demeter in Greece. You pray to her if you want your crops to flourish and your runner beans to sprout.



They're a great opportunity to let your hair down, get staggeringly drunk, and stuff your face with top quality nosh. Our fave festivals here at the Record are:

• **Anna Perenna** on March 15, which celebrates the goddess of the year. On this festival some Romans believe you'll live for as many years as you can drink glasses of wine.

• **Saturnalia** on December 17, which is devoted to the God Saturn. We celebrate this by swapping places with our slaves for a day, and waiting on them at the dinner table.

### NEPTUNE

God of the Sea, and identical to Poseidon in Greece. You pray to him if you



### HOLIDAY TIME

As you know, each year there are over 100 public holidays and ceremonies here in Rome, devoted to venerating and celebrating these gods.

## HOUSEHOLD GODS

These are a lot more affable than the state gods. Each family has its own personal guardian spirit - called the *genius* - and each part of the house has its own little domestic god. For example there's **Janus**, who's the god of the doorway, and **Vesta**, the god of the hearth. You keep these gods happy by praying to them and leaving small gifts of wine, bread or fruit at the family shrine. (Make sure you do too - otherwise the door will start to jam, and the fire will be impossible to light!)



### EXOTIC FOREIGN STUFF

Many Romans find the state gods a bit too distant, and not terribly reliable. After all, if you sacrifice an expensive sheep to Neptune to keep you safe at sea, and then your ship gets ravaged by pirates and you spend 30 years as a galley slave, it somewhat undermines Neptune's credibility. So, many Romans are turning to a variety of foreign gods and religions. Here are a few of them...

#### CYBELE

The ladies' choice. Cybele comes from Asia Minor and she's most concerned about fertility, healing and nature. Ceremonies to worship her include wild music and dancing, which sounds quite entertaining, and definitely more fun than leaving an over-ripe apple on the family shrine for the god of the doorway. (Is it any wonder he never takes it...?)



#### JESUS

Popular with poor people, Jesus promised his followers life after death. **This religion only believes in one god.** It's not a good one for anyone seeking a quiet life, as it's unpopular with the Roman government which requires citizens to worship the Emperor and state gods. Expect a lot of persecution.



#### ISIS

This one comes from Egypt. Isis became really popular in Rome when devotee Cleopatra came here in 45BC.

This religion involves paying homage to goddess Isis who rules heaven and earth and wheat and barley.

Lots of elaborate and mysterious ceremonies to keep you wondering what it's all about.

#### MITHRAS

Top god with soldiers. Mithras comes from Persia and offers his followers life after death, which is quite a comfort when you're facing 20,000 fired-up barbarians all determined to hack your head off with a blunt axe. No women allowed in this religion.

