

Franks Forages No32 The Gouache Paintings

The Gouache Paintings. These pictures were acquired by Bachelor George while in Rome in 1758. There were originally 20 paintings, 10 of which George brought back with him and 10 forwarded on some time later by the artist Charles Lucy whom he met in Rome. 14 of the paintings now hang in the Ebony Bedroom, the fate of the other 6 is unknown although said to have been stolen! The descriptions of the paintings are provided by Penny Goodman, lecturer in Roman history at Leeds University. These monuments still exist; many are in Rome itself while others are in the vicinity and one, Virgil's tomb, is near Naples. Many of the paintings were modelled on existing pictures; some based on engravings by the Venetian engraver Giovanni Piranesi who made over 200 engravings of Roman antiquities, some of which were copied by an unknown artist (or artists) and sold to the nobility on tour. On the right are the monuments as they are today. It is believed that they were glassed and framed in England.



Mausoleum of the Villa Gordiani. This round tomb was built around 300AD at a large estate on the Via Praenestina which runs east of Rome. The villa is roughly two miles outside the city and probably belonged to the Gordiani family. Three emperors bore the name; Gordian I, Gordian II and Gordian III who reigned from 238-44AD.



The Arcus Argentariorum (Arch of the money Changers) This monument is attached to the church of S. Giorgio al Velabro and was set up in 204AD by the bankers and cattle merchants who worked in the Forum Boarium in honour of Emperor Septimus Severus.



The Nymphaeum of Alexander Severus (222-235AD). Known as 'Marius' Trophies' after two large trophies which stood on either side. This was a large ornamental fountain built at the city end of one of Rome's aqueducts, probably the Aqua Claudia or the Aqua Anio Novus. It bears a distinct resemblance to a Piranesi engraving of 1761 with figures added by the artist!



Tempio della Tosse (Temple of the Coughs). This stands on the Via Tiburtina outside Tivoli about 25 miles east of Rome. It is not certain what this building was but could have been a nymphaeum, an temple or tomb monument. It is very similar to a Piranesi engraving of the building.



Forum Romanum. The view seen from the bottom of Capitoline Hill. This is what remains of the Temple of Saturn, one of the oldest temples in the Forum Romanum; dating from the 5th century BC and rebuilt several times. The picture is similar to but not identical to a later one by Ugeri.



The Pyramid of Caius Cestius. This tomb monument built c 18-12BC for Caius Cestius, a prominent Roman politician and priest reflects the fashion for things Egyptian after its conquest in 30BC. The view is from the north of the gate to the surrounding wall which was added about 272-5AD.





The Pantheon seen from the north-east. Other medieval buildings were adjoined to the Pantheon but were demolished in 1662 by order of Pope Alexander VII and alterations made in 1666-7. The original painting from which this one was copied was probably done after demolition and during renovation.



The Round Temple and the Triton Forum in the Forum Boarium. The temple was probably one of several dedicated to Hercules Victor. It dates from late 2nd or early 1st century BC and is an early example of white Greek Pentelic marble in Rome. As most temples of the time were of a grey travertine this would have stood out as a monument for somebody of prestige and good taste.



Tempio della Salute (Temple of Health). Though known for a long time as a temple, it was actually a 2nd century brick-built tomb near the Via Appia, about 3 miles south-east of Rome. This painting is modelled on a Piranesi engraving from 1748. Note the two pyramid-like shadows although nothing appropriate (Also in Piranesi) although there is nothing nearby to cast such shadows.



Sepolcro di Virgilio (Virgil's Tomb) near Naples. There is no concrete evidence that Virgil is buried here but it is a funerary monument from that era. There is a similar 18th century engraving from which this painting was probably copied. From an inscription above the frame bottom, the word Napoli is seen.



Viaduct arches which run into Rome between the via Appia and the via Latina outside the city. This is a copy of a Piranesi engraving from 1761. Waters from several different aqueducts run together here supported on the same arches.



The Porta Tiburtina (later known as the Porta San Lorenzo) was originally an arch built by Augustus in 5BC to carry three aqueducts across the Via Tiburtina, a major road into Rome. Repairs were carried out in 79AD and 212AD. The painting is similar to an engraving by Piranesi in 1761.



The two paintings in portrait format depict waterfalls on the river Anio at Tivoli. The one on the left is similar to one by Piranesi which can be verified by the presence of buildings. There are no clues as to the one on the right but can be assumed to be on the Anio.

The paintings photographed by me and the modern photographs obtained from websites. The descriptions condensed from information supplied by Penelope Goodman P.J.Goodman@leeds.ac.uk