

**A SKELETON OUTLINE OF
ROMAN HISTORY:
CHRONOLOGICALLY
ARRANGED**

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A Skeleton Outline of Roman History: Chronologically Arranged by P. E. Matheson

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ROMAN HISTORY

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED

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PREFACE.

AFTER all that has been said against "the corruptions and moths of history, which are epitomes," it remains true that even epitomes may be made to serve the true study of history. They may help to present the different stages in the life of a people in such a compass that they may be viewed together and as a connected whole, and so to preserve that sense of continuity without which all history is unintelligible. All such "brief abstracts" are, of necessity, more or less misleading. Aiming at brevity, they are in danger of losing the proper perspective of events, and of degenerating into mere chronological lists.

But after all, without a scaffolding of dates, it is hardly possible to build up a solid and secure knowledge of history. "Without geography and chronology," says Locke, "history will be very ill retained and very little useful, but be only a jumble of matters of fact, confusedly heaped together without order or instruction." If this Outline does something to assist the study of Roman History, not as "a jumble of matters of fact," but as the continuous life of a people and a constitution, it will have accomplished its purpose.

I am indebted throughout to Fischer's *Römische Zeittafeln*, on which these tables are mainly based, and to Zumpt's *Annales*, as well as to Mommsen's *History and Antiquities*. In the limits of time here adopted, I have followed Fischer. To omit the period of the kings is to run the risk of producing the impression that Rome sprang into life full-grown. We may be unable to fix the events of this period, but we cannot afford to leave it out of our reckoning. The death of Augustus is chosen as the lower limit, in order to include the establishment of the Principate without entering into its later history, which would have been too long a matter for this book. In constitutional questions I have followed, in the main, the guidance of Mommsen, but I have tried not to go beyond what the original authorities warrant. Here especially I am largely indebted to my friend Mr. J. L. Strachan Davidson, Fellow of Balliol; I wish to take this opportunity of thanking him for his constant and generous help.

P. E. M.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE present edition is a reprint of the first, with a few small additions and corrections. (For the chief, see B.C. 367, 123, 50.) I have to thank Mr. Wells, Fellow of Wadham College, for some useful suggestions.

P. E. M.

NEW COLLEGE, 1885.

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B.C. 753-510.

THE period of the Monarchy, marked

(1.) Internally by—

- i. The union of several communities to form a single city within one wall.
- ii. The rise of a Plebs, outside the body of free and equal citizens.
- iii. The establishment of a military organisation based on property.

(2.) Externally by the acquisition of a predominance in Latium, combined with the presidency of the Latin League.

The factors in politics are—

- I. The **King**, whose power (*imperium*) consists in—(i.) The command in war; and (ii.) the administration of justice. This power is derived from the people (*Populus*), but there exists no machinery for bringing him to account for its use. Still he is under the moral obligation of taking advice.
- II. The **Senate**, a nominee assembly of the King's, which he is bound to consult in important matters. This remains the only assembly with power of discussion.
- III. The **Populus**, or corporate body of the citizens, possessing sovereign rights, but only active on special occasions. Their social organisation is that of a group of families, in which the father (*pater familias*) has absolute power (*patria potestas*). The families are united in clans (*gentes*), and these in *curiae*. The *curia* is the unit for political and military purposes.

The assembled citizens (*Patricii*) in the **Comitia curiata**, as in all other **Comitia**, can only answer "yes" or "no" to the *rogatio* of the King.

Outside citizens and slaves arise the **Plebs**, consisting of—

- i. Clients, i.e. manumitted slaves, or protected strangers, dependent on the King or on private patrons.
- ii. Immigrants endowed with private rights by treaty with Rome.

The **Plebs** acquire an organisation of families and clans on the model of the Citizens (*Patricii*), and finally share in their assemblies.

The events of this period are by tradition ascribed to the following reigns and dates:—

B. C.	A. U. C.	
753-717	1-37	Romulus. Foundation of Rome on the Palatine— "Roma Quadrata," gradually extended to form the Septimontium, which includes three tribes—Ramnes, Tities, Luceres. Wars with Sabines, and with Fidenae and Veii.
715-673	39-81	Numa Pompilius , the Sabine. Reputed founder of religious institutions.
673-642	81-112	Tullus Hostilius. War with Fidenae and Veii, Sabines and Latins. Destruction of Alba , chief city of the LATIN LEAGUE , the headship of which passes to Rome. Primitive instance of <i>provocatio</i> in the case of Horatius. (Liv. i. 26.) Settlement of Alban families in Rome.
642-617	112-137	Ancus Martins. Wars with Latins, and immigration of Latins to Rome. Janiculum fortified. <i>Ostia</i> , first maritime colony.
616-579	138-175	L. Tarquinius Priscus. Etruscan immigration. Building of the Circus Maximus , Cloaca Maxima , and Temple of Jupiter .