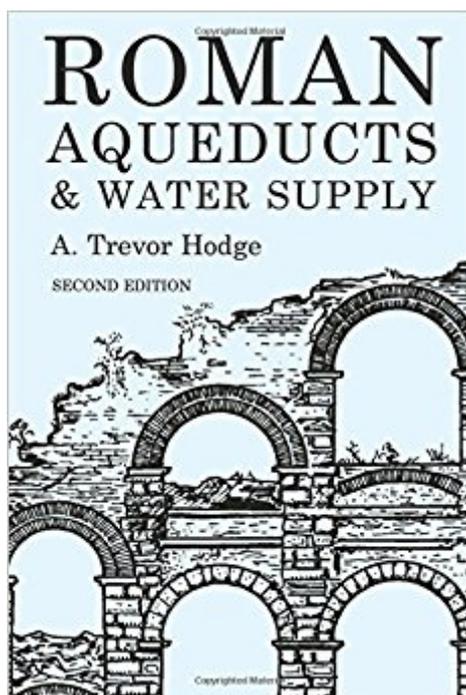


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Roman Aqueducts And Water Supply (Duckworth Archaeology)



Synopsis

How did a Roman waterworks work? How were the aqueducts planned and built? What happened to the water before it arrived in the aqueduct and after it left, in catchment, urban distribution and drainage? What were the hydraulics and drainage involved? In a comprehensive, generously illustrated study ranging through the Roman aqueducts of France, Germany, Spain, North Africa, Turkey and Israel as well as the Roman heartland of Italy, A. Trevor Hodge introduces us to these often neglected aspects of what the Romans themselves regarded as one of the greatest glories of their civilisation. Roman Aqueducts is now available for the first time in paperback, brought completely up-to-date with a new Preface and additional Bibliography.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'...brings together a vast quantity of information in a lively and highly readable form, with extensive notes and illustrations and a comprehensive bibliography. The index is particularly well done. Anyone seriously interested in the working of Roman aqueducts (and even the casually curious) will be using this valuable survey again and again.'--Harry B. Evans, American Journal of Archaeology

A. Trevor Hodge is Distinguished Research Professor of Classics at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.

An amazingly thorough and detailed work.

This is a well written, interesting book. The most interesting aspect was not the explanation of what is known, but rather the clear lack of understanding about exactly how the Romans went about building these monumental works. The book discusses in some detail the two surviving Roman texts which address aqueducts. Much is also derived from archaeological analysis of those structures that are still standing. This is adequate but cannot fully explain how the engineers went about building them. The section on surveying in particular left me wondering if we were not missing some critical piece of information. This book can only provide the information we have about aqueducts, and cannot be faulted for the limited data we currently have. It presents that which we do know in an informative, entertaining manner.

This book will appeal to two kinds of people: those who have engineering or technical backgrounds, and those who don't. My wife is in the second category. She found the history and details of the water supply gave a fascinating window into ordinary life in Roman times. The problem that every civilization must solve, obtaining and distributing potable water, solved in a characteristically Roman manner by efficient public construction. As an engineer, I became fascinated with the technical knowledge and skills demonstrated. Both civil engineering and hydraulic engineering expertise, achieving fine results with crude instruments. We marvel at Roman stonework, but keeping a constant slope over several kilometers is more technically difficult. I found that much of what one knows about aqueducts isn't true. Siphons to cross valleys, instead of more costly and difficult bridges. Manholes at frequent intervals, for manually cleaning out limestone deposits, the bane of the system. Concrete and polished hydraulic cement. Who knew? While the topics are technical, the writing is clear and self-explanatory, and the text is profusely illustrated. As long as you remember that water runs downhill, you'll be technically comfortable. The text follows the downhill flow of the water through the system, from the lakes or springs, to the cities, to the baths and fountains, to the sewers. My major complaint is poor availability. Despite 's current (August '05) "normally 3 to 5 weeks" to ship, I've now waited over 30 days for my second copy, and have been advised of at least another 30 day delay. My emailed enquiry to the publisher went unanswered. I want to share this book with friends, but not my copy. "There are two kinds of fools: those who lend books, and those who return them." So, order yours now. Maybe you'll get it by Christmas. Enjoy!

After seeing a small portion of an aqueduct in Rome, I wanted to know more. I knew they couldn't all

run on arcades above ground, nor just end in a fancy fountain. This book answers what we know about Roman aqueducts in a very readable form. There are plenty of figures, reminders of some principles of hydraulics (for those of us who only dimly remember our fluid mechanics), and good details throughout. I found the notes at the end to be quite interesting, and half wish that they had been footnotes instead of end notes for ease of reference. I recognize that this wouldn't suit most readers, though. From a historical perspective, I am delighted that the author says what isn't known or has been assumed just as much as he tells what is known and why. Too often, someone's pet theory becomes a "fact" through repetition, and (without having done any research in the field myself), I feel the author has tried to avoid all such gaffs. I heartily recommend this book to anyone with an interest in civil engineering or Roman history.

After reading "Pompeii: A Novel" (Robert Harris) I was keen to read more on the details of the aqueducts that starred in Harris' book and found this book. If you've even wondered "how did they do it" then this book will tell you. While sometimes a little lacking in punctuation the book flows well and is well illustrated. I was certainly left with a renewed respect for the Roman engineers after reading this. And apart from the engineering it gives you an insight into a completely different cultural perspective. Hodge makes the case that, contrary to popular belief, the aqueducts were primarily for what we might view as an extravagance given the cost - public & private baths and water features.

I'm fascinated by the infrastructure established by the Roman Empire. Reading this book is like listening to a very clever & learned friend enthuse on a subject close to their heart. Technical information is accompanied by diagrams and photographs which, together with the author's holistic approach to Ancient Rome's feats of engineering, make this book invaluable, especially for a lay person like me. Thanks to Professor Trevor Hodge, I'm even more in awe of what the Romans achieved.

I bought this book because it was one of the few recommended books about aqueducts to be recommended to me for my writing about Ancient Rome. I have no engineering experience, but found the book to be very easy to follow and enjoyable to read. All the questions I had about aqueducts were answered in this book and it gave me more than enough information on the subject. I wish my history professors in college would have used sections of this book during the discussions on aqueducts because we were taught so little about these engineering miracles.

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