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FRONTO  
CORRESPONDENCE  
VOLUME II



*Translated by*  
C. R. HAINES

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF  
MARCUS CORNELIUS  
FRONTO

WITH MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS,  
LUCIUS VERUS, ANTONINUS PIUS, AND  
VARIOUS FRIENDS

EDITED AND FOR THE FIRST TIME TRANSLATED  
INTO ENGLISH BY

C. R. HAINES, M.A., F.S.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES

II



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**THE CORRESPONDENCE OF  
M. CORNELIUS FRONTO**

## M. CORNELII FRONTONIS

ET M. AURELII, L. VERI, ALIORUMQUE EPISTULAE

*De Feriis Alsiensibus*,<sup>1</sup> (Naber, p. 223).

abr. 218

| MAGISTRO meo.

Ferias apud Alsium quam feriatas egerimus non scribam tibi, ne et ipse angaris et me obiurges, mi magister. Lorium autem regressus domnulam meam <leviter> febricitantem repperi. Medicus dicit, si cito nobis me . . . . tu quoque . . . .<sup>1</sup> <si tu> valeas, <ego> laetior sim. Nam oculis spero te iam utentem sanis visere . . . . Vale, mi magister.

*De Fer. Als. 2* (Naber, p. 223).

DOMINO meo Antonino Augusto.

Ferias Alsienses . . . . in novellae quid cantetur vineae atque . . . .<sup>2</sup> quid multarum rusticarum. Catonem quoque in oratione adversus Lepidum verbum cantari solitum commemorasse, quom ait *statuas positas Ochae atque Dionysodoro effeminatis, qui*

<sup>1</sup> About eight lines are lost.

<sup>2</sup> In these lacunae twelve lines are lost.

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<sup>1</sup> On the Etrurian coast, twenty-four miles from Rome.

# THE CORRESPONDENCE OF M. CORNELIUS FRONTO

MARCUS ANTONINUS TO FRONTO

162 A.D.

To my master.

In what holiday-wise we have kept our holiday at Alsium<sup>1</sup> I will not put on paper, that you may not be yourself troubled and scold me, my master. On my return to Lorium<sup>2</sup> I found my little lady<sup>3</sup> slightly feverish. The doctor says, if we soon . . . . . If you were well, I should be happier. For I hope to see you already enjoying the use of sound eyes . . . . Farewell, my master.

FRONTO TO MARCUS ANTONINUS

162 A.D.

To my Lord Antoninus Augustus.

Your Alsian holiday . . . . . of many rustic things. That Cato also in his speech *Against Lepidus* mentioned a word in everyone's mouth when he spoke of *statues*<sup>4</sup> *set up to such unmanly creatures as*

<sup>1</sup> Half-way to Alsium from Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Probably his daughter Cornificia.

<sup>4</sup> According to Plutarch, Cato preferred that statues of himself should be conspicuous by their absence.



## THE CORRESPONDENCE OF

*magistras facerent.* Id in . . . . velint post redire  
 . . . . facit. Opportune . . . . cantandi luden-  
 dique initium capiunt. Et . . . .<sup>1</sup> paravit.

*De Fer. Als.* 3 (Naber, p. 224).

abr. 217

| DOMINO meo Antonino Augusto.

1. Quid? ego ignoro ea te mente Alsium isse ut  
 animo morem gereres ibique ludo et ioco et otio libero  
 quatrimum universum operam dares? Nec dubito  
 quin te ad ferias in secessu maritimo fruendas ita  
 compararis: in sole meridiano ut somno oboedires  
 cubans, deinde Nigrum vocares, libros intro ferre  
 iuberis, mox ut te studium legendi incessisset, aut te  
 Plauto expolires aut Accio expleres aut Lucretio  
 delenires aut Ennio incenderes, in horam istic<sup>2</sup>  
 Musarum propriam, quintam; redires inde libris  
 . . . . eres diss . . . . mitteres; Ciceronis si ser-  
 mones ad te detulisset, audires; inde <de>vius  
 quantum potis ad<sup>3</sup> litus pergeres et raucas paludes  
 ambires; <tum> vel, si videretur, aliquam navem  
 conscenderes, ut<sup>4</sup> aethere tranquillo in altum <pro-  
 vectus> portisculorum et remigum visu audituque  
 te oblectares; actutum inde balneas peteres, corpus  
 ad sudorem uberem commoveres, | convivium deinde

abr. 234

<sup>1</sup> From *opportune* to *paravit* the Codex has eleven lines  
 not deciphered.

<sup>2</sup> Niebuhr *istam*; Rob. Ellis *istius*, i.e. of Ennius.

<sup>3</sup> For Mai's *poteras*.

<sup>4</sup> Buttmann for Cod. *vel*.



## M. CORNELIUS FRONTO

*Ocha and Dionysodorus who practised cooking . . . . .*  
*. . . . . a beginning*  
*of singing and playing . . . . .*

### FRONTO TO MARCUS

162 A.D.

To my Lord Antoninus Augustus.

1. What? Am I not aware that you went to Alsium with the intention of indulging yourself and there giving yourself up to recreation and mirth and complete leisure for four whole days? And I have no doubt that you have set about enjoying the holiday at your seaside resort in this fashion: after taking your usual siesta at noonday, you would call Niger<sup>1</sup> and bid him bring in your books; soon when you felt the inclination to read, you would polish your style with Plautus or saturate yourself with Accius or soothe yourself with Lucretius or fire yourself with Ennius, to the hour in that case appropriate to the Muses, the fifth<sup>2</sup> . . . . .  
. . . . .; if he had brought you treatises of Cicero, you would listen to them; then you would go as far as possible off the beaten track to the shore and skirt the croaking marshes; then even, if the fancy took you, get on board some vessel, that, putting out to sea in calm weather, you might delight yourself with the sight and sound of the rowers and their time-giver's<sup>3</sup> baton; anon you would be off from there to the baths, make yourself sweat profusely,

<sup>1</sup> Not mentioned again. He would most likely be the secretary or librarian of Marcus, possibly his anagnostes or reader.

<sup>2</sup> This seems a punning reference to Quintus, the praenomen of Ennius.

<sup>3</sup> The master of the rowers (something like our bo'sun) gave them the time by the beats of a hammer or baton.

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regium agitates conchis omnium generum, Plautino piscatu hamatili, ut ille ait, et saxatili,<sup>1</sup> altilibus veterum saginarum, matteis pomis bellariis crustulis vinis felicibus calicibus perlucidis sine delatoria nota.

2. Quid hoc verbi sit, quaeras fortasse: accipe igitur. Ut homo ego multum facundus et Senecae Annaei sectator Faustiana vina de Sullae Fausti cognomento *felicia* appello; calicem vero *sine delatoria nota* quom dico, sine puncto dico. Neque enim me decet, qui sim tam homo doctus, volgi verbis Faler- num vinum aut calicem acentetum appellare. Nam qua te dicam gratia Alsium, maritimum et volup- tarium locum, et ut ait Plautus, *loc<ul>um lubricum*<sup>2</sup> delegisse, nisi ut bene haberes genio, utique verbo vetere faceres animo *volup*.<sup>3</sup> Qua, malum! *volup*? Immo, si dimidiatis verbis verum dicendum est, uti tu animo faceres *vigil*—vigilias dico—aut ut faceres *labo* aut ut faceres *mole*—labores et molestias dico—. Tu umquam *volup*? Volpem facilius quis tibi quam voluptatem conciliaverit. Dic, oro te, Marce, idcir- cone Alsium petisti, ut in prospectu maris esurires? Quid? tu Lorii te fame et siti et negotiis agendis adfligere nequibas? In apopsi | . . . . iucundiores tibi esse videntur . . . . memini me ad . . . . pueros in balneis esse . . . . rescribas . . . . liber . . . . mare ipsum aiunt, ubi alcedonia sint, fieri feriatum. An alcedo cum pullis suis tranquillo otio

<sup>1</sup> Plaut. *Rud.* II. i. 10.      <sup>2</sup> Plaut. *Mil. Glor.* III. ii. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Plaut. *Asin.* V. iii 1. *cp. cael.* = *caelum*, *gau* = *gaudium* (Ennius), and *nol* = *nolueris* (Lucilius). *cf. Pal. Anthology*, VI. 85, and Elizabethan usage, *e.g. sor* = sorrow.

## M. CORNELIUS FRONTO

then discuss a royal banquet with shellfish of all kinds, a Plautine *catch hook-taken, rock-haunting*, as he says, capons long fed fat, delicacies, fruit, sweets, confectionery, felicitous wines, translucent cups with no informer's brand.

2. Perhaps you will ask what *do* you mean? Listen then! I as a man greatly eloquent and a disciple of Annaeus Seneca call Faustian<sup>1</sup> wines *felicitous* wines from Faustus Sulla's title; moreover when I speak of a cup without an informer's brand, I mean a cup without a spot. For it does not become a man so learned as I am to speak in everyday terms of Falernian wine or a flawless cup. For to what end can I say that you chose Alsium, a seaside and pleasure resort and, as Plautus has it, a *slippery spot*, if not to indulge yourself and, in ancient parlance, take your *pleasu*? How—the mischief!—*pleasu*? Nay, if the truth must be told in docked words, that you might to your heart's content indulge in *watchin'*—I mean watching—, in *labors*—I mean labours—, in *vexats*—I mean vexations. You ever indulge in *pleasu*? It were easier to reconcile you to a polecat than to pleasure. Tell me, Marcus, I beseech you, have you repaired to Alsium only to fast with the sea in sight? What, could you not wear yourself out at Lorium with hunger and thirst and doing business? With a fine view . . . . seem to you more delightful? I remember (telling) you . . . . .  
The very sea, they say, keeps holiday, when the halcyon broods.<sup>2</sup> Is a halcyon with her chicks

<sup>1</sup> The *ager Faustianus* was part of the Falernian district. Felix was a title of Faustus Sulla. Fronto is sarcastic in his allusion to Seneca, whom he disliked.

<sup>2</sup> See Plutarch *On Water Animals*, xxxv.

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dignior est quam tu cum tuis liberis? . . . .  
 <v>etere<s> <tyr>annos.<sup>1</sup>

3. At enim res plane iam postulat—num studium? num laborem? num <vigilias?> num munera?<sup>2</sup> Quis arcus perpetuo intenditur? Quae fides perpetuo substrictae sunt?<sup>3</sup> Oculi conivendo<sup>4</sup> <tantum> durant, qui uno obnixi obtutu interissent. Hortus qui crebro pangitur, ope <si> stercoris | indiget, herbas et holuscula nihili procreat; frumento vero et solidis frugibus requietus ager deligitur; ubertas soli otio paratur.

Ambr. 226

4. Quid maiores vestri qui rempublicam et imperium Romanum magnis auctibus auxerunt. Pro-  
 avus vester summus bellator tamen histrionibus interdum se delectavit, et praeterea potavit satis strenue. Tamen eius opera populus Romanus in triumphis mulsum saepe bibit. Avum item vestrum,<sup>5</sup> doctum principem et navum et orbis terrarum non regendi tantum sed etiam perambulandi diligentem, modulorum tamen et tibicinum studio devinctum fuisse scimus, et praeterea prandiorum opimorum esorem optimum fuisse. Iam vero pater vester, divinus ille vir, providentia pudicitia frugalitate innocentia pietate sanctimonia omnes omnium principum virtutes supergressus, tamen et palaestram<sup>6</sup> ingressus est et hamum<sup>7</sup> instruxit et scurras risit.

<sup>1</sup> These two words do not appear in Mai. Naber seems to have got them from du Rieu.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. illegible except for letter *u*.

<sup>3</sup> Mai has *suo strictae sono*. <sup>4</sup> Cornelissen for Cod. *coniugio*.

<sup>5</sup> Charisius (i. 127), who quotes this passage, adds *duum* (= *duorum*).



## M. CORNELIUS FRONTO

worthier of quiet ease than you with your children?

. . . . .

3. But you say that circumstances now plainly demand—not study surely? not toil? not wakefulness? not duties? What bow is for ever strung<sup>1</sup>? what chords for ever stretched? By winking alone can eyes keep their sight, which could not but fail if fixed in one unwavering stare. A garden repeatedly planted, if it lack the aid of manure, bears only weeds and stunted vegetables of no value; for corn, however, and staple crops land that has lain fallow is chosen; rest restores fruitfulness to the soil.

4. What of your ancestors who enlarged the state and empire of Rome with huge additions? Your great-grandfather, consummate warrior as he was, yet at times took pleasure in actors<sup>2</sup> and, moreover, drank pretty stoutly. Yet thanks to him the Roman people often drank mead at his triumphs. We know, too, that your grandfather, a learned ruler and a strenuous, loving not only to govern the world, but to go up and down in it, was yet devoted to music and flute-players, and was withal a right good eater of right rich banquets. Again, your father, that godlike man, who in his foresight, continence, frugality, blamelessness, dutifulness, and personal righteousness excelled the virtues of all rulers, yet visited the palaestra, and baited a hook and laughed at buffoons.

<sup>1</sup> Hor. *Od.* ii. x. 20.

<sup>2</sup> So *Princ. Hist. ad fin.*

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<sup>6</sup> Galen, vi. 406 (Kühn) says the same of Marcus.

<sup>7</sup> The margin of Cod. has *theatrum* twice, and implies that it was another reading. Capit. *Vit. Pii xi.* 2 says Pius was fond of fishing.

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5. Nihil de Gaio Caesare dico acerrimo Cleopatrae hoste <post moecho>,<sup>1</sup> nihil de Augusto Liviae viro. Romulum ipsum urbis huius conditorem, quom hostium ducem manu comminus conserta obtruncavit quomque spolia opima | Feretrio vexit, huncne tenui victu usum putas? Profecto neque esuriens quisquam neque abstemius animum induxisset virgines adultas de spectaculis rapere. Quid? Numa senex sanctissimus nonne inter liba et decimas profanandas et suovetaurilia mactanda aetatem egit, epularum<sup>2</sup> dictator, cenarum libator, feriarum promulgator? Saturatum et feriatum dico. E<x o>mn<ibus tu><sup>3</sup> esuriales ferias celebras? Nec Chrysippum tuum praeteribo, quem cotidie ferunt madescere solitum. Et pleraque . . . . Socratem <plane ipsum ex> Socraticorum *Symposiis* et *Dialogis* et *Epistulis* existimes hominem multum scitum et facetum fuisse—Socratem intelleges Aspasiae discipulum, Alcibiadi magistrum.

6. Iam si bellum indixti ludo otio satietati voluptati, at tu dormi saltem, quantum libero homini satis est. Intensius ad supremam . . . . ad luminis . . . .? <sup>4</sup> An tandem si ignem de caelo nemo sur-

<sup>1</sup> From the margin of Cod.

<sup>2</sup> Niebuhr *epulonum* for Cod. *epulorum*. Cicero (*De Orat.* iii. 19) says that the Epulones were instituted by the Pontifices.

<sup>3</sup> So Brakman. It would also be possible to read *dico eum*. *Num tu . . .* Before *Socratem* three lines are missing.

<sup>4</sup> Query *horam diei quom tu labores suscepisti, ad luminis adventum protrahes?* Cf. Suet. *Vitell.* 17.

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5. I say nothing of Gaius Caesar, Cleopatra's keenest foe and afterwards paramour, nothing of Augustus, the husband of Livia. As regards Romulus himself the founder of this city, when he slew the leader of the enemy in a hand-to-hand combat and brought the *Spolia Opima*<sup>1</sup> to Jupiter Feretrius, do you think he was content with half rations? Verily no hungry or ascetic man could have conceived the idea of carrying off grown-up maidens from a public festival.<sup>2</sup> What? did not the aged Numa, most holy of men, pass his life putting sacred offerings and tithes to secular uses, and sacrificing bulls, sheep, and swine, he the dictator of festivals, the inaugurator of banquets, the promulgator of holidays? I call him a gourmand and a holiday-maker. And do you of all men keep your holidays fasting? Nor will I pass over your own Chrysippus,<sup>3</sup> who used to get mellow, so they say, every day in the year. And very many . . . Plainly Socrates himself, as you may gather from the *Symposia*, the *Dialogues*, and the *Letters of the Socratics*, was a man of much shrewdness and wit—the Socrates, mark you, who was Aspasia's pupil and Alcibiades's teacher.

6. Now if you have declared war on play, relaxation, good living, and pleasure, yet do sleep as a freeman should. (When you have worked) hard till the last (hour of the day, will you continue your labours) till the dawn? Prithee, if no one had

<sup>1</sup> The choice spoils taken by a general from the general of the enemy slain in single combat.

<sup>2</sup> The rape of the Sabine women.

<sup>3</sup> So Diog. Laert. *Chrys.* 4. Horace (*Odes*, III. xxi. 11) says the same of Fronto's hero Cato.



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ripuisset, sol non esset tibi satis ad iudicandum? Nae <tu> cum animo tuo reputes<sup>1</sup> cotidiano te mendacio adstringi, quom te diem cognitioni dare ais et nocte cognoscis, | tum sive condemnes sive absolvas mendax futurus. Si quempiam condemnas, *parum cavisse uidetur*<sup>2</sup> ais: istuc quidem, si lucernae removeantur, nihil videri poterit.

mbr. 220

7. At tu obsecro vel ioco vel serio te exorari a me patere, ne te somno defraudes utique terminos diei et noctis serves. Agere de finibus <nondum divi><sup>3</sup>duis claros et nobiles Vesperum et Luciferum puta: utrique demonstrationem sui quisque limitis ostendunt. Horum cognitioni interesse postulat Somnus, nam se quoque<sup>4</sup> adfinem esse negotio et adtingi iniuria ait. Vellem autem tantum mihi vigoris aut studii adesse, quantum adfuit quom illa olim nugalia conscripsi, *Laudem Fumi et Pulveris*.<sup>5</sup> Nae ego somni laudem ex summis opibus conscripsissem.<sup>6</sup> Nunc quoque, si tibi fabulam brevem libenti est audire, audi.

8. Iovem Patrem ferunt, quom res humanas a primordio conderet, aevom vi<tae><sup>7</sup> medium uno ictu percussum in duas partes undique pares diffidisse: partem alteram luce, alteram tenebris amicisse, diem noctemque appellasse, noctique otium diei negotium tradidisse. Tum Somnus necdum natus erat et omnes pervigiles aetatem agebant;

<sup>1</sup> From the margin of Cod. for text *reputas*.

<sup>2</sup> A legal expression.

<sup>3</sup> Brakman.

<sup>4</sup> Orelli for Cod. *quisque*.

<sup>5</sup> See i. p. 38 (*Laudes*).

<sup>6</sup> He seems to have done so before: see i. p. 96.

<sup>7</sup> Heindorf.

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stolen fire from heaven, would not the sun suffice you for your judicial duties? Do realise in your conscience that you are tied to a daily falsehood, for, when you say that you “appoint the day” for trial of cases and yet try by night,<sup>1</sup> then you are bound to be untruthful, whether you condemn or acquit. If you condemn anyone, you say, *there appears to have been gross negligence*; where indeed but for the lights nothing could appear at all.

7. But do, I beseech you, in jest or earnest let yourself be persuaded by me not to rob yourself of sleep, and to keep the boundaries of day and night distinct. Imagine that two noble and illustrious litigants, Evening and Morning, are having a law-suit about boundaries not yet marked out. Each party puts in a description of his own frontier. Sleep claims to intervene in their trial, for he too is connected with the business, and declares that he suffers prejudice. Would that I had as much vigour and enthusiasm as I enjoyed when long ago I composed those trifles in praise of *Smoke* and of *Dust*. Verily I would have written a eulogy of Sleep to the top of my skill! Now, too, if you care to hear a short apologue on Sleep, listen.

8. They tell us that Father Jove, when at the beginning of things he was founding the human race, with one stroke clave asunder the continuity of man's life into two parts in every respect equal; the one he clothed with light, the other with darkness; called this day and that night, and assigned to night rest and to day work. As yet Sleep had not been born, and all men passed their whole lives awake.

<sup>1</sup> Dio, lxxi. 6, § 1 (of Marcus), *νυκτὸς ἔστιν ὅτε δικάζων*.