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## AN OLD LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN LATIN INSCRIPTIONS

Today I saw an inscription [on Twitter](#) (posted by Gareth Harney), and part of it left me baffled. Here it is:



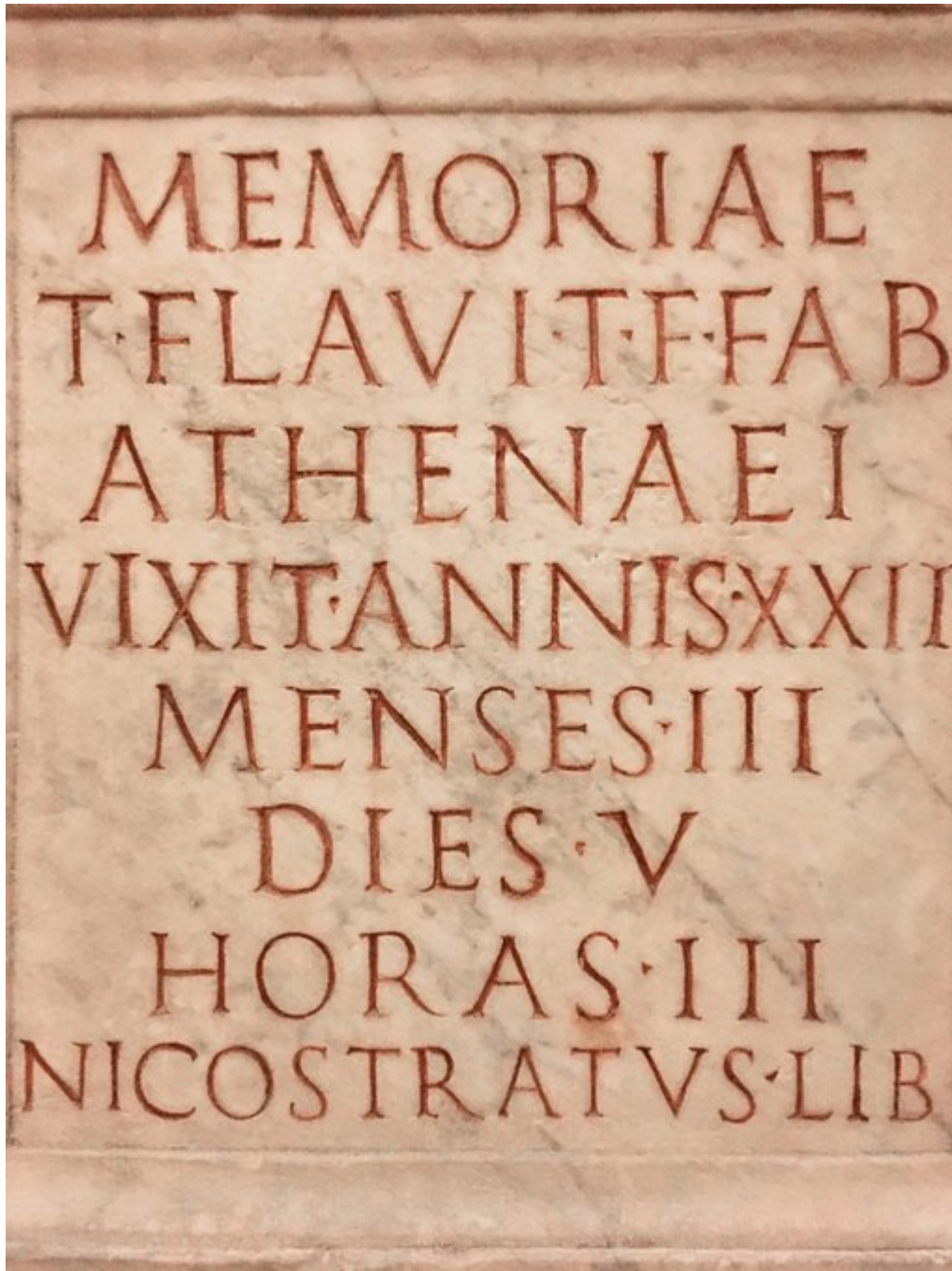
T. Flavius Athenaeus, funerary altar. Uffizi galleries, Florence. Early 2nd century.

This funerary altar was erected to the memory of T. Flavius Athenaeus, by his freedman Nicostratus, and records that he lived for 22 years, 3 months, 5 days and 3 hours:

Memoriae T. Flavi. **T. F. Fab.** Athenaei vixit annis XXII menses III dies V horas  
III Nicostratus. lib.

To the memory of T. Flavius Athenaeus, he lived for 22 years, 3 months, 5 days,  
3 hours. Nicostratus (his) freedman (libertus) (set this up).

But one bit gave me pause: "T.F.Fab."? Obviously it is a genitive, positioned before the noun "Athenaei" as is normal.



Latin inscriptions are full of abbreviations, and I never know most of them. But Google can surprise you sometimes, and I tried googling T. F. Fab.

What I got back did indeed surprise me. My first result was to a "Collection of pamphlets on the Latin language, volume 10", page 84 ([link](#)). This seems to be some university library's collection, and the item is actually an article by C. F. Liebtreu, "Onomastici Romani Specimen", *Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie und Pädagogik*, Berlin (1843), p.20.



261. Orell. 2179. prope Flaminiam: *T. Fennonius T. F. Stell(atina tribu)*, patronus et municeps Col. Aug. Laur(o-Lavinii), eq. Rom. etc. — *Fennonia* g. in inscr. et libris.
262. Grut. 474, 7. Patavii: *Titinnius, libertus*.
263. Grut. 406, 3. Narbone: *M. Fabius T. F. Fab(ia tr.) Aedilis*. Quamvis Aedilis vox saepissime munus indicet, cognomen tamen, ut hoc et sequenti loco, esse potest.
- 263a. Grut. 486, 2. Aug. Taurinorum: *T. Vetius Pol(lia tribu) Aedilis*. — *Vettia* g. in nom. inscr., libris. Interdum Vetius in inscr., Vectius apud scriptores. Coss. ab 81 p. Chr. in Fast. suppl.
264. Gell. N. A. 19, 9: *poeta epigramm*. Cf. Bähr l. l. p. 321.
265. Orell. 4212. Romae: *L. Volusius Aegialeus Syrrillus, librarius* (h. l. neque forensis, neque militaris, sed artifex ingenuus). De librariis cf. Becker l. l. Excurs. I ad scenam I p. 160 sq.
266. Mur. 1572, 4. Bononiae: *libertus*.
267. Orell. 35. Grut. 175, 9. Romae: *Aug. Lib. Procurator*.

This showed that in T.F.Fab, we should understand “Fabia tribu”, “from the Fabian tribe”. This was one of the thirty-five voting tribes into which the Roman people was divided.

My next result was more interesting still: to Robert Ainsworth, *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae Compendarius*. At the back of this volume is a series of unnumbered pages containing... Latin inscription abbreviations! ([Link](#))

EX. CON. C. ex consensu civitatis, vel consulum.  
EX. CONS. ORD. PAT. ex consul ordinarius patricius.  
EXCORRECT. excorrector.  
EX. COS. ex consul.  
EX. D. ex decreto. ex decuria. ex domo.  
EX. D. A. vel EX. D. AUG. ex domo Augusti, vel Augusti.  
EX. D. D. ex decreto decurionum. P. P. possidere. PROMAG. L. D. ex decreto decurionum promagistro locus datus.  
EX. DEC. AL. ex decreto alii. ex decurionibus alii.  
EX. DEC. DEC. MUN. MAL. ex decreto decurionum municipii Malacitani.  
EX. DISP. POS. ex dispositione posuit.  
EX. DO. A. EX. DO. AUG. vel EX. DO. AUG. ex domo Augusti, vel Augusti.

#### F.

**F. FACIUNDUM.** factum, familia. F. famula, factus dies. Februarius, fecit, feliciter, felix, femina, fides, fieri, filia, filius, finis, flamen, forum, frater, frons, fuit, fulvo, F. filia.  
F. A. filice amantissimam, filio amantissimo, FA. familia, femina, filia.  
**FAB.** faber, Fabia, Fabius, fabriū.  
F. AB. HEREDIS. TEST. FIE. JUS, factum ab heredibus testamentum fieri iussit.  
FABR. fabriū, falcorum, Fabricius.  
FABROR. NAVAL. UTRICLAR. fabrorum navalium utriculariorum.  
FABR. TIC. faber tignarius.  
FAC. faciundum, factum.  
FAC. B. factum bene.  
FAC. C. faciundum curavit.

FERAL. F. feriales feriae.  
FER. L. C. feriarum Latinarum causā.  
F. E. S. fecit et suo, fecit et sibi.  
F. ET. S. fecit et sacrauit, fecit et sibi.  
F. F. fabricaverunt, fieri fecit, filia fecit, vel filius, filius familiae, filii duo, stando feriundo, scdm fecit.  
FF. FF. fabricaverunt, fecerunt, fratres, fundaverunt.  
F. FA. F. FAM. vel F. FAM. filius familiae.  
FFB. fabricaverunt.  
F. F. C. filio faciundum curavit.  
FF. C. ferme centum.  
F. F. C. C. Flaviorum duorum conliberta.  
FFD. fundaverunt.  
F. FE. fortunae felici.  
F. F. E. fiat fides ejus.  
F. F. F. ferro, flamma, fame, Flavius, filius, fecit.  
F. FF. fabricaverunt.

“Fab” was confirmed. Naturally I scrolled down. And ... there was T.F. -

S. P. P. S. sacris publicis praestō sunt, suā pecuniā posuit sibi.  
S. P. P. S. F. suā pecuniā ponere sibi fecit, sumptu proprio sic procuravit fieri.  
S. P. Q. E. sibi posterisque ejus.  
S. P. Q. L. senatus populusque Lanvinus.  
S. P. Q. NOLAN. D. D. senatus populusque Nolanus dono dedit, vel dedicavit.  
S. P. Q. R. CL. V. senatus populusque Romanus clypeum vovit.  
S. P. Q. R. IMP. CAES. senatus populusque Romanus imperatori Caesari. OB. CIV. SER. ob cives servatos. OP. I RIN. senatus populusque Romanus optimo principi. PAREN.

ST. SN. sententiā senatus.  
S. T. T. L. sit tibi terra levis.  
STUPED. stipendiorum, U pro I.  
ST. XXXV. stipendii triginta quinque.  
S. V. sepulcrum voluit, sibi vivens, solvit votum.  
SU. sua, sua.  
SUA. PEC. DD. suā pecuniā dedicavit.  
SUB. Suburrana, tribus.  
SUB. A. D. vel S. A. D. sub aedili dedicavit.  
S. V. B. E. E. V. si vales bene est ego valeo.  
SUBPRAEF. CLASS. PR. MIS. subpraefectus classis praetoriae Misenenis.

TER. Terentina, tribus, tercenarius, Terminalia, tertia, tertium.  
TEREN. Terentina, tribus.  
TEN. N. P. Terminalia nefasti primo.  
TERT. tertium.  
TES. OB. Testatorum obsignatura.  
TESE. tessellarius.  
TEST. P. C. testamento ponendum curavit.  
T. F. testamento fieri, Titi filius.  
T. F. A. N. Titi filius Auli nepos.  
T. F. CN. N. Titi filius Cnati nepos.  
T. F. F. S. testamento fieri fecit sibi, vel titulum.  
T. F. I. EX. H. V. testamento fieri iussit et

T.F. - meaning

In this context, obviously “Titi filius”, “son of Titus”. So T. Flavii T.F.Fab. Athenaeii was in fact “of Titus Flavius Athenaeus, son of Titus, from the Fabian voting tribe”.

These few pages must be very useful. In fact I was rather surprised, on doing a quick Google search, to draw blank for any modern web page. This does not mean that one does not exist; only that I did not see it. (Please add any suggestions in the comments) I was not surprised.

Google is really becoming rather poor as a search engine, rather than a commercial portal. This was driven home to me last night when I did a vanity search on my own name. Over

the last 23 years I have uploaded thousands of pages to the web which contain my name on them somewhere. All Google gave me was 8 pages of results, and then finished! Bing was somewhat better. But the casual searcher will gain no real idea of the activity I have undertaken. This is ridiculous.

But at least these older volumes are becoming searchable on Google. That is indeed a blessing!

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