

Love letters from the Appia Antica



Subject

Letters found in 1999 inside two lead pipes buried under the Doric Tombs at the 4th mile of the Via Appia Antica. The papers prove a secret and passionate love story that the lover decided to protect in a “time capsule”. On the tubes we can see the initials U.H. and L.L. and a date in Roman numerals: 30th of September 1929.

Reading the letters we understand that Ugo H. and Letizia L. first met at work and they immediately fell in love, but Ugo, older than her, was already married. It was for this reason that, after three years of passionate letters, Ugo had to stop the compromising mailing, asking to be given back all the letters that he sent to her. Instead of destroying them, he buried the letters in an evocative place, under one of the most beautiful monuments of the Regina Viarum.

Accession number –

Paper, lead

Length of the pipes around 25 cm

1926-1929 A.D.

Provenance

Doric Tomb, 4th mile of the Via Appia Antica.

Placement

[Complex of Capo di Bove](#)

Credits

Archive of the Appia Antica Archaeological Park.

References

R. Paris, Le lettere d’amore sulla via Appia antica in M.P. Guermandi (ed.), Archaeology & Me. Pensare l’archeologia nell’Europa contemporanea, Catalogo della Mostra tenuta a Roma, Museo Nazionale Romana, Palazzo Massimo, dal 10 dicembre 2016 al 23 aprile 2017, Bologna 2016.