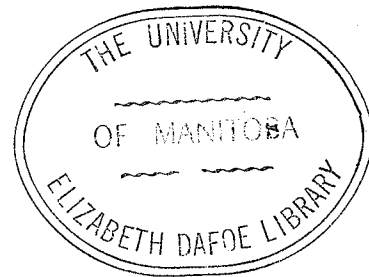


THE BROTHERS CICERO
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RELATIONSHIPS

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by
Margaret Mary Page
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To the memory of the late Professor W.M.Hugill this thesis, with its humble efforts, is gratefully dedicated.

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Abstract of Thesis

Cicero's Letters are, undoubtedly, the best available source of information for Cicero's family life and, particularly, for the relationships of the brothers Cicero. These Letters reveal the bold advocate, the timid and often vacillating statesman, the kind master, the warm-hearted friend, the fond husband, the affectionate father, and the loving and devoted brother.

Cicero believed very strongly in the importance of the family in society and the importance of the relationships within the family group. Despite his strong devotion to his family, most of his trials and troubles came from this same family. The chief troubles were his divorce from Terentia, the unfortunate marriages of his daughter Tullia, the failure of his son Marcus, and the disappointment of his nephew Quintus. Possibly the greatest trial of all was the bitter quarrel with Cicero's brother Quintus. Atticus was the only one close to Cicero who was a constant source of joy and consolation.

Cicero and Quintus were close friends and companions from their youth. Events at Pharsalus precipitated a bitter quarrel which lasted some two years. Various reasons have been offered for this quarrel or may be inferred from the letters.

Quintus' irascible nature and lack of self-control, his constant bickering with his wife, his disagreement with Atticus prior to going to his province - all these prepared the way for his eventual estrangement from his brother. The more immediate reasons may be considered to be Quintus' embitterment after Pompey's defeat and his general indebtedness dating from the period before he joined Cicero in Pompey's camp. It is likely, too, that Quintus felt some jealousy when Cicero and not he, was offered Pompey's command after Pharsalus. Furthermore, that Quintus had forfeited Caesar's goodwill by joining Cicero in this campaign must not be overlooked. No doubt, young Quintus, long experienced in family quarrels, seized this quarrel between his father and his uncle as an opportunity to avenge himself on his uncle for his past strictness towards him.

Both Cicero and Quintus were victims of their own inherent weaknesses. Cicero failed to realize his potential as a statesman because of his constant vacillation and faint-heartedness. If he could have made up his mind he could have left Italy and escaped the proscriptions of 43 B.C. Quintus was hampered by his irascible temper and lack of self-control even though he was considered an outstanding soldier and campaigner with Caesar.

Cicero blamed himself for his misfortunes. Quintus blamed others - Pomponia, young Quintus, Atticus, even Cicero.

The Cicerons left no progeny. Only young Marcus survived the proscriptions. He is reported to have died without an heir.

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INTRODUCTION

There are, perhaps, many interesting facets of Cicero's character as husband, father, and brother that could bear a more thorough study. Through the ages critics have defended or condemned, praised or maligned Cicero's conduct towards his family on different occasions and in varying circumstances. In the course of this study a conscientious effort will be made to view more closely some of these instances and to discuss the apparent reasons for the trials and difficulties that brought so much misunderstanding and grief to Cicero's domestic relationships. Particularly important to this study will be the quarrel with his brother Quintus, the probable reasons for it, the influence of family members upon it, and the eventual outcome of it.

Cicero's voluminous manuscripts and hundreds of letters have given readers an insight into his life and into the times in which he lived. The Letters, particularly, reveal Cicero the man with his strengths and his weaknesses, his successes and his failures. Here is the bold advocate, the timid and often vacillating statesman, the kind master, the warm-hearted friend, the fond husband, the affectionate father, and the loving and devoted brother.

Because the particular emphasis of this study will be upon Cicero's relationships with his brother both in public and in private life, the Letters will be necessarily the prime sources of information. The volumes of Ad Familiares translated by W.Glynn Williams, and the volumes of Ad Atticum translated by E.O.Winstedt, both from the Loeb Classical Library, will be the editions used throughout.

These letters numbering about one thousand are contained in thirty-six books of which sixteen are addressed to Atticus, sixteen to other friends, one to Marcus Brutus, and three to Cicero's brother, Quintus. They are strictly of a contemporary nature dealing as they do with events of Cicero's life from his thirty-ninth year to the end of his life, that is, from 68 to 43 B.C.

The three books Ad Quintum Fratrem cover a shorter period of six years from 60 to 54 B.C. Though these letters are interesting, they lack that complete abandon so characteristic of the letters to Atticus. Indeed the stately and respectful attitude of Cicero toward his younger and comparatively undistinguished brother in the first letter of his correspondence is more suited to that of a formal essay. Actually the letter itself was a treatise on provincial government and was intended as a return for the letter from Quintus to Cicero on the duties of a consular candidate.¹

The letters written to Quintus while in Caesar's camp show, understandably, less detail and frankness than

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the other letters addressed to him. Cicero himself remarked in one of them that he wrote less minutely to Quintus about public affairs because he was aware that everything, whether of little or great importance, was being reported to Caesar.² In another letter written a few months later he advised caution on Quintus' part. The reason he gave was the same one that prompted him to be careful in his own writings, namely, the possibility of his letter being intercepted and hurting someone's feelings.³

There are, unfortunately, no letters from the year of Cicero's consulship nor from the year of his canvass for the consulship, 64 and 63 B.C. There are only eleven in all from 68 to 65 B.C. There is no record of that crucial period of his life from the time of Clodius' election to the tribuneship in 59 B.C. to Cicero's banishment in 58 B.C. Another gap in the correspondence is the complete lack of written testimony from Atticus and from the women of Cicero's family.

What Atticus might have written can only be surmised at rare intervals from a chance reference to a letter received, a question asked, or, what is more usual, advice sought. However, there is one letter in Book IX which contains many quotations from one of Atticus' own letters. Here something of the rapport between the two friends can be sensed.⁴ What Terentia or Tullia might have written is impossible to determine. Since the correspondence with Terentia is more

limited than that with Atticus, not so much can be learned about Terentia from the letters. Yet the little that is known about Terentia and Tullia has been gathered largely from Cicero's Letters and Plutarch's writings.

However, apart from these limitations and gaps in the correspondence, Cicero has left an almost continuous record of Roman contemporary life. In his own characteristic style he has interpreted the political events of his own generation - a colourful period in the annals of civilization. He, too, has presented his own business, literary, and philosophical interests with ample detail. He has portrayed his close friends, his servants, and the members of his family. These portraits are often delineated with the utmost clarity and candour.

It is obvious that during his lifetime Cicero contemplated the eventual publication of his letters at least in part, for he said to Atticus when writing from Puteoli on July 9, 44 B.C.:

There is no collection of my letters, but Tiro has about seventy, and some can be got from you. Those I ought to see and correct, and then they may be published.⁵

There have been several theories advanced regarding the publication of these Letters. One of these theories is that of Jérôme Carcopino, who believes that the Letters were published to justify Octavian who allowed Cicero to be among the proscribed in 43 B.C.⁶

Carcopino declares that the Letters were published

during the period of the Triumvirate 43-31 B.C. He says that in their context and at the time they saw the light they served the cause of the Caesars, and lent support to their plan. He says, furthermore, that because the Letters convicted Cicero of having wished and welcomed Caesar's death they exonerated Octavian for having sacrificed Cicero. Octavian apparently considered the persecution of his adoptive father's assassins and would-be assassins a sacred mission imposed on him, as it was, by the will of Caesar's veterans, as well as by the filial piety he had sworn at the battle of Philippi.⁷

Tyrrell believes, on the authority of Cornelius Nepos, that Cicero's letters to Atticus did not appear before Atticus' death. He believes, too, that the letters to Quintus and Brutus were published with the letters to Atticus. He does not discuss the letters that supposedly show Cicero's biased views on Caesar.⁸ Shuckburgh declares that Cicero was "a human being with fiercely-beating pulse and hot blood", and thus seems to attribute Cicero's statements about Caesar to emotionalism. Shuckburgh, like Tyrrell, has made no mention of Cicero's so-called harm to Caesar in his letters.⁹ Nowhere in his wide research is there any mention of this matter.

Boissier believes that Cicero's letters must have been published in the interval that separates the period of proscriptions from the later period when books were burned indiscriminately. Boissier has made no mention of the

letters indicting Cicero for his opinions of Caesar. Rather Boissier states that the letters show that Cicero had dealings with all parties. Boissier admits it was a great fault in a politician and that for it Cicero was bitterly reproached by the shrewd people of his time. Yet he concedes that this fault of Cicero's profited posterity for, by it, all parties are represented in his correspondence.¹⁰

Carcopino alone, of the critics read, takes the view that Octavian felt vindicated by the publication of Cicero's Letters. It is necessary here to take into consideration Cicero's temperament. He was a highly emotional man who would naturally have felt strongly about the leading personalities of his day. As a private individual he should have been permitted the liberty to write freely to an intimate without the letters being used maliciously against him at a later date.

What was Cicero's opinion of Caesar as expressed in the Letters? On April 10, 44 B.C. Cicero had written to Atticus that the Ides of March consoled him even though all the world conspired against him and his associates.¹¹ On April 11 he affirmed that even though Caesar, the tyrant, had been killed, the tyranny continued. Cicero feared a sudden uprising of Caesar's followers. He reasoned that those who ought to have been hedged about and even honoured by the watchful care of the whole world, were only praised and admired and confined to their homes. He regretted, too, that they were happy while the state itself was in misery.¹² In

his letter to Atticus on April 12 he was even more bitter. He said:

For can there be a more wretched state of affairs than that we should keep up the things for which we detested him? Are we to have consuls and tribunes, too, for the next two years selected by him? I don't see how I can possibly take part in politics. For nothing could be more topsy-turvy than to belaud the slayers of the tyrant to the skies and to defend the tyrant's acts And in the meantime no senatorial decrees. For our policy is this, that we are afraid of the conquered party.¹³

Cicero reminded Atticus how, immediately after the assassination, he had cried aloud that the Senate should be summoned. The delay afforded ascendancy to the Caesareans.¹⁴ Cicero reminded Atticus, too, how he had exclaimed to Cicero that if Caesar's funeral took place the cause was lost.¹⁵

Yet despite Cicero's apparent sympathy with the assassins he had enjoyed friendly relations with Caesar. It would seem to be the power exercised and abused, rather than the individual who wielded it, he rejoiced to see gone. Cicero had respected and admired Caesar's literary achievement.¹⁶ He had entertained with pleasure Caesar and his retinue at Puteoli in December of 45 B.C.¹⁷

Caesar, on his part, had favoured Cicero. For Cicero's sake he had shown great consideration to Quintus when he returned to his camp after Pompey's defeat.¹⁸ Cicero owed to Caesar the valued leisure which enabled him to put forth some of his best literary works.¹⁹

Carcopino has a theory too, to account for the suppression of all letters written by Atticus. He maintains that

it was young Marcus, the owner of the volumina in which Cicero had bound Atticus' letters, who had the authority to publish or withhold Atticus' letters according to Atticus' own wishes. Carcopino concludes that the complete absence of all letters from Atticus in the compilation, which included letters from less important correspondents, is a proof of some understanding which must have reigned between Atticus and Marcus, the younger.²⁰ This statement must go uncontested for there is no proof that such was the reason for the suppression of Atticus' letters to Cicero.

Tiro is the one generally accredited with the publication of Cicero's correspondence. It was he who collected and edited the Letters.²¹ He was well qualified for publishing them, too, for who else had had such valued experience in taking down his master's dictation, reading aloud his fine works, and above all deciphering for copyists his almost illegible handwriting?²²

Despite Carcopino's conjecture of the agreement between Marcus and Atticus, he does admit that it was certain that Cicero's secretary had deposited Cicero's documents in some safe place; for he declares that the Ad Familiares include not only some letters which Tiro had received from Cicero, but a certain number which Quintus Cicero had addressed to Tiro.²³

That the Letters maintain a high level of artistry is only to be expected from the foremost prose writer of

the later Republican period. Not only are they examples of fine literary expression but they are courteous in tone and often truly charming. There is in them that urbanitas and humanitas for which Cicero is so noted. Plutarch maintained that in the entire correspondence there were only two examples of letters in which Cicero openly rebuked the addressees and employed a harsh tone. These are the letters written in Greek to Gorgias, the rhetorician, who was corrupting young Marcus while he was in Athens; and to Pelops of Byzantium who failed to procure for Cicero certain honours and public testimonials from the Byzantines.²⁴ No doubt it was Cicero's vanity that really prompted the latter.

In the extant correspondence Cicero, though he might have felt deeply annoyed or hurt, has managed to cloak his meaning diplomatically. An instance of this is the letter he sent to Marcus Antonius regarding the recall of Servius Clodius. That Cicero was deeply concerned, his words to Atticus attest:

But you can easily imagine the proposal is so unprincipled, so disgraceful, and so mischievous, that at times one almost wishes for Caesar back again.²⁵

Yet to Antonius he wrote:

So, since in making your request you say you will not use the power you have against my will, you may make this concession to the boy too in my name, if you will; not that a man of my age has anything to fear from a youth of his, or that a person of my position needs shrink from any quarrel, but that we may be more intimate than we have been as yet.²⁶

In Cicero's day letters were an almost indispensable

means of communication. They filled the place of the still non-existent newspaper. Frequently they were gossipy or just chatty. Sometimes they were a mere exchange of camaraderie as, for instance, this excerpt:

A bit of gossip is something after all, and, even if there is nothing to our talk, the mere fact of talking together has some charms.²⁷

Though Julius Caesar is credited with the establishment of the Acta Diurna it was not sufficiently well established then to replace the letter as a medium for circulating news. Circulation of letters was dependent upon the band of tabellarii who could travel great distances with the eagerly awaited news. More important documents were carried by private messengers. Cicero remarked in one letter to Atticus:

. . . but I have been rather slow about sending one, for lack of a safe messenger. There are very few who can carry a letter of weight without lightening it by a perusal.²⁸

These letters were written in ink with a reed pen on paper or parchment. Sometimes they were on tablets of wood or ivory covered with wax, the marks being cut with a stylus. Cicero was not always too careful to make his letters clear. In reply to a complaint from Quintus he said that he was not busy, nor upset, nor angry with anyone; rather it was his practice to use whatever pen he found in his hand as if it were a good one.²⁹ He promised to make an effort to be more careful in the future since Quintus could hardly read his last letter. He selected a good pen, well-mixed ink, and

ivory-polished paper.³⁰

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It is quite evident from the Letters that Cicero, when writing, devotes attention primarily to the details of political and judicial matters. Then, too, several are filled with the minutiae of the trial of Aulus Gabinius, the proconsul of Syria, accused of bribery. One such letter opens with an expression of disgust that Gabinius had been acquitted. Cicero declared that nothing on earth could have been more puerile than Gabinius' accuser, Lentulus, and those who endorsed his indictment, nothing more corrupt than the panel of jurors.³¹ This is followed by a detailed explanation of the trial.³²

The procession from Brundisium to Rome on Cicero's return from exile is described in vivid and glowing terms. Cicero said that when he came near the city there was not a soul of any class known to his attendant who did not come to meet him, except those enemies who could neither hide nor deny their enmity. When he reached the Capenan Gate, the steps of the temple were thronged with the populace. They exhibited their joy in loud applause. He declared that a similar crowd accompanied him to the Capitol, and that there was an extraordinary gathering in the Forum and on the Capitol, too.³³

Quite different is the treatment of family and domestic matters. Sometimes the briefest, often barest reference has to suffice; for instance:

I beg to inform you that on the very day that L. Julius Caesar and C. Marcus Figulus were elected to the consulship I was blessed with a baby boy; and Terentia is doing well. It is ages since I had a letter from you

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In another letter to Atticus, this one written after his return from exile, there is this hint of pending domestic difficulties:

My other anxieties may not be rashly mentioned. My brother and daughter are devoted to me. I am looking forward to your coming.³⁵

Frequently in letters to Atticus and occasionally in letters to Quintus or others Cicero employed Greek phrases. This would appear to have been done for one of two reasons: Cicero indulged in a bit of camaraderie and used phrases or quotations which he knew the addressee would fully understand and appreciate;³⁶ or, he wished certain expressions of opinion to be private. Having written them in Greek, he provided less likelihood of a chance viewer deciphering the meaning. A perusal of the Letters indicates that some intimate family matters and the occasional political detail were rendered in Greek.³⁷

It is fortunate, indeed, for this study that so many of Cicero's letters to Quintus are extant, for they sometimes deal at greater length with personal and family matters than do many of the others. It is to be hoped that by a thorough perusal of these along with the letters to Terentia, Tiro, Atticus, and others that a better understanding of Cicero's relationship with his brother will be realized. Why Quintus should quarrel so violently with Cicero, the events that precipitated the quarrel, the part played by other members of the family in the rupture, and the eventual reconciliation will be treated as fully as the Letters permit. That a

clearer picture of this episode will emerge as well as a better understanding of Cicero and Quintus in their public and private relationships will be the chief aim of this study.