

Memmius and Lucretius

Post by "Cassius" of July 20, 2021 at 9:13 PM

Tonight in our Twentieth discussions Martin and I talked briefly about the historical character of Memmius. We couldn't remember what details there were outside of Lucretius in regard to Memmius, but I thought there was something in Cicero and it appears there was - something about Memmius buying Cicero's house and wanting to raze it to build something new, to which the local Epicureans objected. Here's some of that material:



Here is the [Wikipedia reference](#):

Gaius Memmius (poet)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Spouse(s) [Fausta Cornelia](#)

Children [Gaius Memmius](#)

Gaius Memmius (died circa 49 BC, incorrectly called **Gemellus**, "The Twin") was a [Roman orator](#) and [poet](#). He was [Tribune of the Plebs](#) (66 BC), possibly a patron of [Lucretius](#), and an acquaintance of [Catullus](#) and [Helvius Cinna](#). His sister Memmia was married to [Gaius Scribonius Curio](#).^[1]

While at first a strong supporter of [Pompey](#), he later quarrelled with him and went over to [Caesar](#), whom he had previously attacked. In 54, as candidate for the consulship, he lost Caesar's support by revealing a scandalous transaction in which he and his fellow candidate had been implicated.^[2]

Being subsequently condemned for illegal practices at the election, he withdrew to [Athens](#), and afterwards, to [Mytilene](#). He died about the year 49. He is remembered chiefly because it was to him that Lucretius addressed the *De rerum natura*, perhaps with the idea of making him a convert to the doctrines of [Epicurus](#). It appears from [Cicero](#)^[3] that he possessed an estate on which were the ruins of Epicurus' house, and that he had determined to build on the site a

house for himself. According to [Ovid](#)[4] he was the author of erotic poems. He possessed considerable oratorical abilities, but his contempt for Latin letters and preference for Greek models impaired his efficiency as an advocate.[5]

Gaius Memmius was married to [Fausta Cornelia](#), the daughter of [Lucius Cornelius Sulla](#). [6] They had at least one son, [Gaius Memmius](#), [suffect consul](#) in 34 BC.

[1911 Encyclopedia Britannica:](#)

MEMMIUS, GAIUS (incorrectly called Gemellus, "The Twin"), Roman orator and poet, tribune of the people (66 B.C.), friend of Lucretius and Catullus. At first a strong supporter of Pompey, he quarrelled with him, and went over to Caesar, whom he had previously attacked. In 54, as candidate for the consulship, he lost Caesar's support by revealing a scandalous transaction in which he and his fellow candidate had been implicated (Cic. *Ad Att.* iv. 15-18). Being subsequently condemned for illegal practices at the election, he withdrew to Athens, and afterwards to Mytilene. He died about the year 49. He is remembered chiefly because it was to him that Lucretius addressed the *De rerum natura*, perhaps with the idea of making him a convert to the doctrines of Epicurus. It appears from Cicero (*Ad Fam.* xiii. 1) that he possessed an estate on which were the ruins of Epicurus' house, and that he had determined to build on the site a house for himself. According to Ovid (*Trist.* ii. 433) he was the author of erotic poems. He possessed considerable oratorical abilities, but his contempt for Latin letters and preference for Greek models impaired his efficiency as an advocate (Cic. *Brut.* 70). Another Gaius Memmius, tribune in 111 B.C., attacked the aristocrats on a charge of corrupt relations with Jugurtha. Memmius subsequently stood for the consulship in 99, but was slain in a riot stirred up by his rival the praetor Glaucia. Sallust describes him as an orator, but Cicero (*De oratore*, ii. 59, 70) had a poor opinion of him.

For Don, the Latin text! <https://www.uvm.edu/~jbailly/comme...oadfam13.1.html>