

Titus Pomponius Atticus - Main Biography

Post by “Cassius” of November 20, 2023 at 3:19 PM

[Titus Pomponius Atticus - Wikipedia](#)

Early life[[edit](#)]

Born Titus Pomponius in Rome c. November 110 BC,[[2](#)] Atticus' father was [Titus Pomponius](#), a wealthy businessman, and Caecilia.[[3](#)] His family were equestrians and likely had been members of the prestigious equestrians with public horse ([Latin](#): eques equo publico) for many generations.[[4](#)] He had a sister named [Pomponia](#).

Atticus' father supported his education. Among his school friends were three consuls: Cicero (consul in 63 BC), [Lucius Manlius Torquatus](#) (consul in 65), and [Gaius Marius the Younger](#) (consul in 82).[[5](#)] Cicero was educated by tutors chosen by the famous orator [Lucius Licinius Crassus](#); Atticus may have been part of this grouping as well.[[6](#)] He is said to have been an excellent student; his education, evidenced by his school friends' political careers, would have prepared him well for Roman public life.[[7](#)]

Atticus left Rome, probably to escape civil strife, in 86 BC. According to his biographer Nepos, Atticus was a distant relation of the plebeian tribune [Publius Sulpicius Rufus](#) – it is more likely that they were friends – which put him in danger when Sulla took the city.[[8](#)] Atticus went to Athens, transferring most of his wealth, and staying away from Rome until around 65 BC. The city was not doing well the aftermath of its capture by Sulla during the [First Mithridatic War](#).[9](#)] His love of Athens inspired his self-appointed nickname "Atticus", or "Man of [Attica](#)", which is mentioned in the fifth book of Cicero's [De Finibus](#).[10](#)] During his visit to Athens, [Julius Caesar](#) was Atticus's guest.[[citation needed](#)]

Career[[edit](#)]

[220px-Richard Wilson, Cicero with his friend Atticus and brother Quintus%2C at his villa at Arpinum_- _C](#)

[Cicero](#) with his friend Atticus and [brother Quintus](#), at his villa at [Arpinum](#). ([Richard Wilson](#), c. 1771)Atticus inherited family money, which he successfully invested in real estate, enhancing his wealth. Using his income to support his love of letters, he had trained [Roman slaves](#) as scribes and taught them to make [papyrus](#) scrolls, allowing Atticus to publish, amongst other things, the works of his friend Cicero. His editions of Greek authors such as [Plato](#), [Demosthenes](#), and [Aeschines](#) were prized for their accuracy in the ancient world.[11](#)] None of Atticus's own writings have survived, but he is known to have written one book (in [Ancient Greek](#)) on Cicero's consulship, the Liber Annalis (a work on Roman chronology), and a small amount of [Roman poetry](#).[12](#)]

In 65 BC, Atticus returned from Athens to Rome. In keeping with his [Epicurean](#) sympathies, he kept out of politics to the greatest extent possible, except to lend Cicero a helping hand in times of peril — for instance, when Cicero was forced to flee the country in 49 BC, Atticus made him a present of 250,000 [sesterces](#). All in all, his political activity was minimal, though we know that, like Cicero, he belonged to the [optimates](#) (the aristocratic party), and held generally conservative views. He was also a friend and partner of [Marcus Licinius Crassus](#), a member of the [First Triumvirate](#).[\[13\]](#)

Upon the death of his wealthiest maternal uncle [Quintus Caecilius](#), Atticus became his adopted son and heir, assuming the name Quintus Caecilius Pomponianus Atticus. [Lucius Licinius Lucullus](#), despite being his personal friend, resented Atticus's receiving an inheritance he felt he was entitled to for his association with the campaign against [Mithridates](#) and as [Governor](#) of [Syria](#).[\[14\]](#)

Atticus was friendly with the [Liberators](#) after the [assassination of Julius Caesar](#) but was not harmed following their defeat. According to [Cornelius Nepos](#), he took care of [Servilia](#) after the death of her son [Brutus](#) at the [Battle of Philippi](#).[\[15\]](#)