Ancient Art and its Commerce in Early Twentieth-Century Europe: The John Marshall Archive

A collection of essays written by the participants of The John Marshall Archive Project

edited by

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Guide to the Reader

The electronic database of the John Marshall Archive is accessible from the British School at Rome Digital Collections website at https://bsr.ac.uk/library-digital-collections/.

Throughout this publication all authors have adopted the cataloguing system created by the John Marshall Archive Project team when the collection of Marshall's photographs and writing was organised in the electronic database. Independently from Marshall's own indexing system, each object was assigned a unique numerical ID (referred to throughout this book by numbers in bold within parentheses).

Ackowledgements

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Introduction

Guido Petruccioli

In 2013 the British School at Rome launched a project to catalogue and assess a collection of photographs and documents in its archives. The collection was a bequest from an Englishman named John Marshall, who lived between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. In previous decades scholars and artists had taken an interest in the collection, particularly enticed by the quality of its photographic prints and negatives. Yet it was only after a systematic review of the material and its linkage with documents located in the United Kingdom that the significance and potential of the archive became apparent.

The photographs depict artworks, mostly Greek and Roman antiquities. Some artworks are immediately recognisable because they are now on display in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. However, these photographs have not been taken in museum galleries and they do not look like the work of an amateur. Many seem to have been taken in a photographer's studio and often depict sculptures from different angles, as only an art expert would have required. On the back of most prints a name, a year and a price are concisely handwritten.

John Marshall worked as a purchasing agent for The Metropolitan for more than twenty years, and his mission was to buy antiquities for the Department of Greek and Roman Art. The photographs at the British School at Rome belong to his personal archive, in which he collated images of antiquities and art objects that had been offered to him. Contained in those photographs is the story of a devoted connoisseur, a rising American museum and a thriving art market.

Who was John Marshall?

John Marshall (1862–1928) – not to be confused with the homonymous (and far more notorious) American statesman John Marshall (1755–1835) or the British archaeologist John Hubert Marshall (1876–1958) – is known only to a few people. The reason for his anonymity is that Marshall's name does not appear in the official literature, even though the antiquities he discovered are often highly renowned.

In 1923, a slightly larger-than-life-size bronze torso (**144**) (Figure 0.1) appeared in the *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* among the most recent acquisitions by the Classical Art department of The Metropolitan, on New York's Fifth Avenue.[1] Gisela Richter, the author of the article, did not mention where the piece had been found, but noted that it was 'so battered that one might well have despaired of bringing it back into shape', perhaps to justify the unusually long delay in its publication three years after accession.[2] This sensational acquisition had been known to Arduino Colasanti, the director general for Italian Antiquities and Beaux Arts, who however thought it still in the possession of a certain Bernardo Bona, director of the Mandela–Subiaco railway company. How, he wondered, could such an extraordinary object be allowed to leave Italy by any means, legal or illegal? A certain Mr N. N., entrusted with the task of investigating the matter, reported confidently to Colasanti: 'It is a fact that the intermediary was the

[1] MMA 20.194.
[2] Richter 1923. See also here, Chapter 6 (Barr-Sharrar).

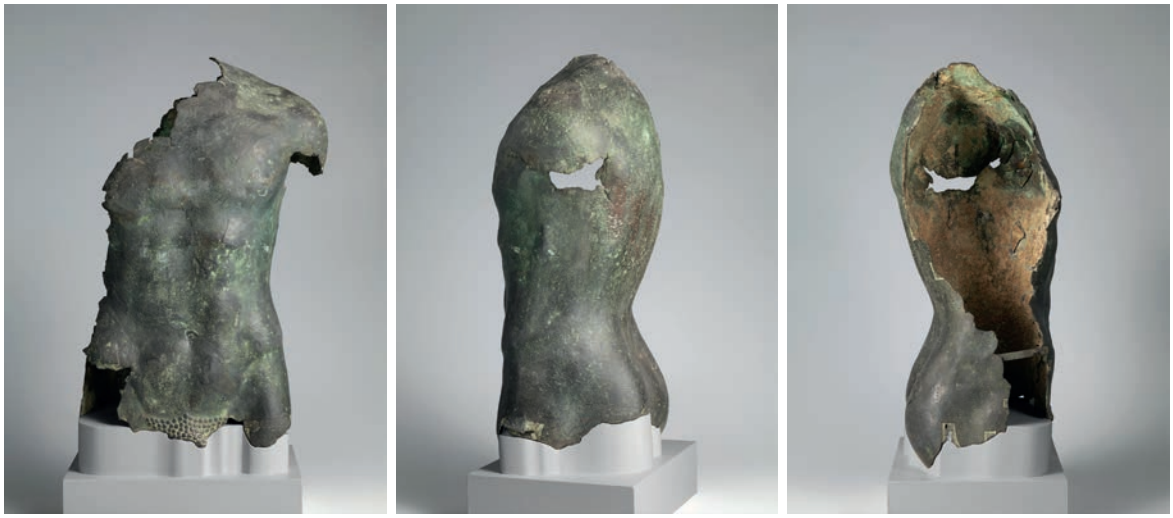


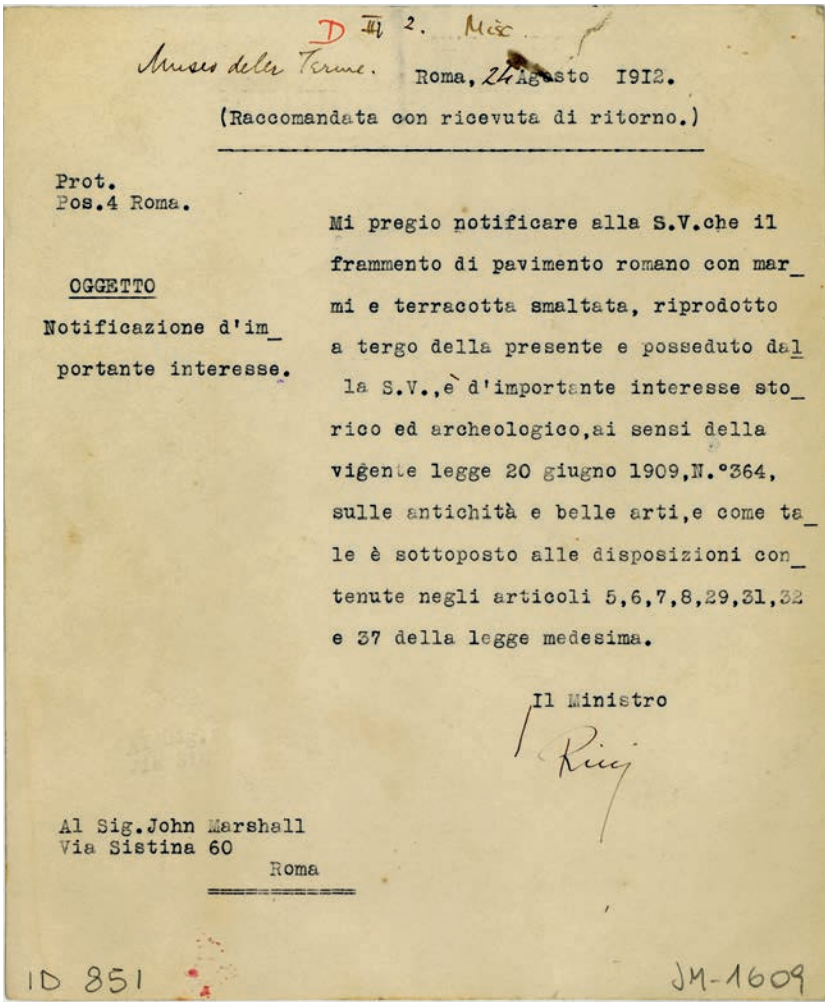
Figure 0.1. Life-size bronze torso, discovered in Central Italy. Since 1920 at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (MMA 20.194) (ph. The Metropolitan Museum, public domain).

notorious Mr Marschall [*sic*]' and suggested that Messrs Bona and Marshall be summoned immediately.[3] What happened afterwards is unknown; there is no documentary evidence that Marshall was even questioned on the matter. The fact that Marshall was referred to as 'notorious' – in Italian, *famigerato* has the same negative connotations – shows that he was well known to the authorities in his capacity of official agent for The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, a position he held between 1906 and the year of his death, 1928.

During his more than twenty years of service, Marshall purchased in Rome and elsewhere, through a wide network of professional and amateur dealers, a qualitatively and quantitatively impressive collection of antiquities. Surprisingly, though, his name can be found only twice more in the thousands of surviving documents (now at Italy's State Archive in Rome) written by the authorities in charge of monitoring the trade of antiquities in Italy and granting export licences for art objects.

Marshall's name first appeared in Italian governmental archives as the owner of a fragment of Roman floor, said to come from the Villa of Lucius Verus on the Via Cassia, and formerly in the collection of Count Gregory Stroganoff (1829–1910) (**851**).[4] On 12 December 1912 Marshall wrote to Edward Robinson, director of The Metropolitan, to lament that the government had seized his fragment of Roman floor from the offices of the shipping company Roesler Franz, claiming that Stroganoff's heir had already promised it to the Italian state as a gift.[5] Marshall was also notified that the fragment was officially declared a monument of national interest and therefore would have never been allowed to be legally exported (Figure 0.2). Eventually, Marshall had no choice but to sell it to the government for

[3] ACS, M.P.I., D.G., AA.BB.AA, Div. I 1908–1924 Busta 1109, Fasc. 1.
[4] Now Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, Terme, inv. No. 60327. ACS MIN. BB. CC. AA., Ufficio Centrale, BB.AA.AA.AA. AA.SS., Div. V, 4 Roma, Notifiche ecc., 202. I am very grateful to Varduì Kalpakcian and Simona Moretti for directing me to the Stroganoff dossier at Rome's State Archive. On Count Stroganoff and his collection see here, Chapter 2 (Moltesen).
[5] JMA, Oxford, Letter, MAR–ROB, 1912.12.12.



D 41 2. Mac

Museo delle Terme. Roma, 24 Agosto 1912.

(Raccomandata con ricevuta di ritorno.)

Prot.
Pos.4 Roma.

OGGETTO
Notificazione d'importante interesse.

Mi pregio notificare alla S.V. che il frammento di pavimento romano con marmi e terracotta smaltata, riprodotto a tergo della presente e posseduto dalla S.V., è d'importante interesse storico ed archeologico, ai sensi della vigente legge 20 giugno 1909, N.°364, sulle antichità e belle arti, e come tale è sottoposto alle disposizioni contenute negli articoli 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 31, 32 e 37 della legge medesima.

Il Ministro
Rocco

Al Sig. John Marshall
Via Sistina 60
Roma

ID 851 JM-1609

Figure 0.2. Letter sent to John Marshall, declaring that the fragment of mosaic floor, formerly in Count Stroganoff's collection, was of historical and archaeological interest for the Italian government and therefore banned from exportation (ph. JMA [PHP]-22-1609 verso).

2,000 lire, though he declared he had bought it for twice as much. It is now on display on the second floor of the Palazzo Massimo Museum in Rome, registered as a donation by John Marshall.[6]

Marshall's name reappears again in 1916, when he applied for a licence to export a Roman bronze, with the help of an Italian lawyer (a certain Pio Morelli). Roberto Paribeni, at the time in charge of issuing export licences on behalf of the Italian government, saw this miniature portrait supposedly of the empress Livia at Morelli's house and notified the Minister with great excitement:

[6] Gasparri & Paris 2013, 488 no. 355 (entry by Riccardo Fusco).

> 'I can affirm with confidence that I have never seen a more beautiful bronze. It is a stunning portrait of old and decrepit Livia, perhaps showing the effects of the facial paralysis that turned her austere and superb face disproportionate. None of the other portraits of Livia, in my view, conveys a more becoming depiction of the woman's pride, which perhaps can be described in equally appropriate terms only by the vibrant words of Tacitus: *gravis noverca populi romani*. Preservation is outstanding, pleasing very bright green patina, translucent and with the hue of malachite.'[7]

Paribeni ends his letter by communicating his intentions to deny the export licence and petitioning the Minister to initiate negotiations with Marshall for the accession of this 'precious specimen' into the state collections. At this point, just as with the bronze torso, the official documentation ends without revealing whether Marshall was ever questioned on the matter.

Just as with the bronze torso, the bust of Livia was known to the authorities long before Marshall tried to export it. In May 1902 the archaeologist Friedrich Hauser, on behalf of its owner Edward Perry Warren, asked for permission to export it – with the help of the same lawyer, Pio Morelli.[8] At the time Marshall was Warren's secretary, and presumably Hauser dealt with him rather than directly with Warren. Permission was obviously denied, and Hauser was warned that the bust would not have been allowed to leave Rome without ministerial permission. Later, in 1908, Marshall considered buying it for The Metropolitan, but refrained, because of the 'outrageous' price Warren was asking.[9] Nothing is known of the bust in the following eight years, during which it must have remained with Hauser in Rome. At some point after 1916, however, the bust made it to England, namely to Warren's manor at Lewes, East Sussex (Figure 0.3). On Warren's death, it was inherited by H. Asa Thomas, Warren's last secretary. And it was not until 1952, when the Lewes estate was auctioned, that the bust was finally acquired by The Metropolitan and brought to New York, as Marshall once desired.[10]

These three anecdotes pertain to only a few of the many important archaeological objects The Metropolitan managed to muster during the first quarter of the twentieth century through a powerful enterprise based on a wide network of European collectors, consultant specialists, shipping companies and local figureheads hired to divert the attention of the authorities. John Marshall was the mastermind behind this international operation. How was a young man with no academic training, the son of a wine merchant from Liverpool, capable of putting together what became one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of ancient art in North America? His success as an agent was certainly founded on connoisseurship and entrepreneurial skills, but also on solid connections and, not least, enormous funding (see Stephen Dyson in Chapter 1).

Marshall was a self-taught antiquities specialist, at a time in which Greek and Roman art was barely contemplated in the classics curriculum at English universities and photographs of art objects were scarce. His knowledge was built almost exclusively on first-hand observation. He visited archaeological sites in Italy, Greece and western Turkey and went to French and German museums, taking copious

[7] ACS, M.P.I., D.G., AA.BB.AA, Div. I 1908–1924 Busta 738 (Roma 1916–1919), Fasc. 41: 'Credo di poter affermare di non aver mai visto un bronzo più bello. E' un mirabile ritratto di Livia già vecchia, malata, forse colpita da paresi facciale che le ha reso profondamente dissimetrico il volto austero e superbo. Niun altro dei ritratti noti di Livia mi sembra dare un'immagine della fiera donna così viva come questo bustino. Solo forse le vibranti parole di Tacito sulla *gravis noverca populi Romani* io riterrei ugualmente alte e degne. Perfetta la conservazione, mirabile la patina verde chiarissima, traslucida, di consistenza e di aspetto quasi di malachite.'

[8] JMA, Sackler, Note, 1910.03.15: John Marshall quotes a letter from F. Hauser to E. P. Warren. On Friedrich Hauser see also here, Chapter 2 (Moltesen).

[9] JMA, Sackler, Letter, MAR–ROB, 1908.02.08.

[10] MMA 52.11.6. Alexander 1953. On the bust's provenance see Zanker 2016: 190, 197–98 no. 71.

Figure 0.3. Miniature bronze portrait bust of a Roman matron, once thought to be the empress Livia (MMA 52.11.6) (photographic prints formerly at Lewes House, now Ashmolean Museum. Image © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford).

notes on individual pieces and entire collections. He studied potential acquisitions with enthusiasm, consulting his private library for *comparanda* and sometimes establishing epistolary debates with high-calibre scholars. Most of all, he seems to have enjoyed searching for rare and unique antiquities, which he studiously researched. Very rarely, though, were the results of his studies consolidated into text – Marshall published only two articles and a few reports in his lifetime.

To fund his mission, Marshall received a yearly stipend and an impressive amount of money to purchase the antiquities he thought worthy. The industrialist Jacob S. Rogers (1824–1901) had endowed The Metropolitan upon his death with approximately $4.5 million, intended to be used for the purchase of 'rare and desirable objects'.[11] Until 1924, part of the accumulated interest of the Rogers Fund was the steady source financing John Marshall's purchases, as much as $200,000 a year (roughly $6 million in today's terms) – enough to buy antiquities by the container load.[12] No other collector at the time was capable of investing so much in purchasing art, or indeed willing to do so. In the following two years, the amounts from the Rogers Fund invested in antiquities became smaller and smaller, ending entirely in 1926, perhaps because the number of antiquities consigned to The Metropolitan dropped drastically and the money was channelled to other departments. Apart from one exception in 1930, the Rogers Fund never invested in acquiring antiquities thereafter. The reduction of the portion of the Rogers Fund allocated to the department of Greek and Roman Art was somehow counter-balanced by occasional borrowings from the Fletcher Fund that was established in 1917.[13] After Marshall, the department of Greek and Roman Art at The Metropolitan ceased having an agent in Europe on a stipendiary basis and

[11] Picón et al. 2007: 7.
[12] It is reported on the MMA website that in 1904 the 'endowment fund yielded over $200,000': https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/now-at-the-met/features/2011/this-weekend-in-met-history-july-2.
[13] de Forest 1917.

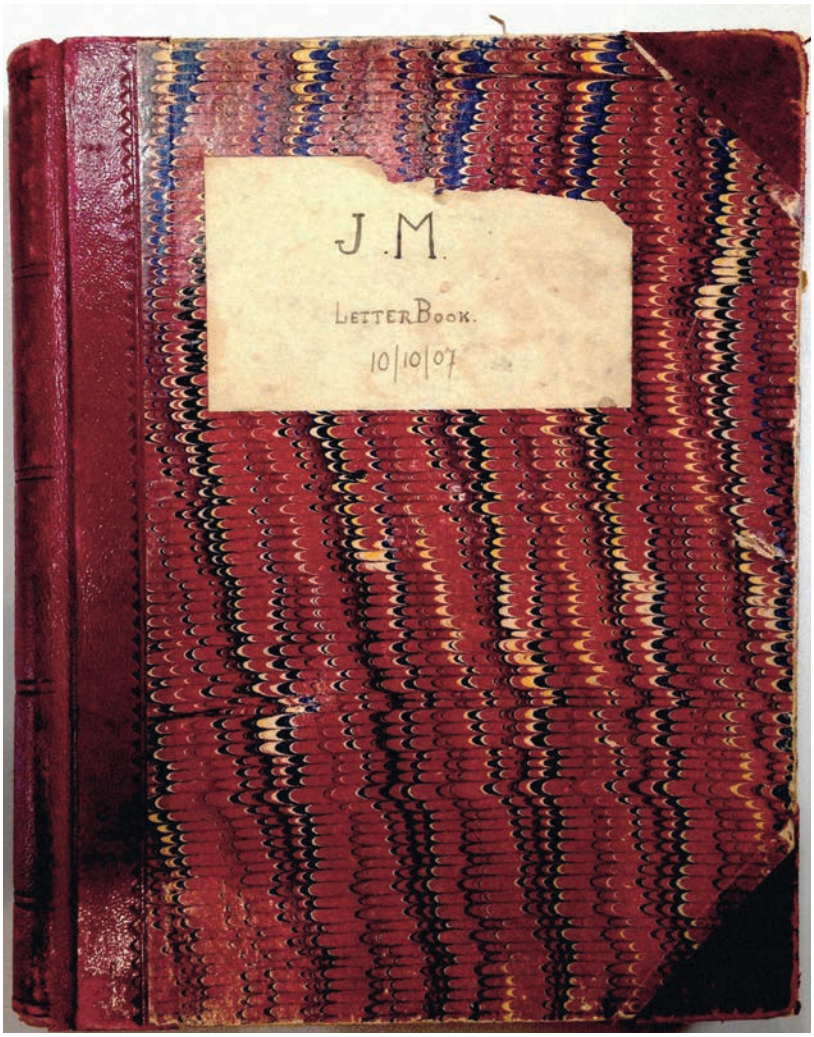


Figure 0.4. John Marshall's Letterbook. Oxford, Sackler Library (ph. Guido Petruccioli).

new acquisitions became sporadic. Marshall's role was important to The Metropolitan above all because of his personal abilities.

The John Marshall Archive

The title of the John Marshall Archive (from now on abbreviated as JMA) describes a collection of documents pertaining to John Marshall and his activity as an art agent that are currently at the British School at Rome and the Sackler Library at Oxford.

The Sackler Library holds seventy-two notebooks and three boxes of notes, letters and other written documents belonging to both Marshall and Warren. Thoughts on ancient art and museum collections, transcriptions of articles and books, Latin and Greek handwritten lexica, long quotations from ancient texts, reports on transactions with art dealers, addresses, descriptions of objects and prices, all are mixed together with no apparent order. Among the volumes there is a letterbook (Figure 0.4), in which are recorded summaries of letters and cables Marshall sent to Edward Robinson between 3 July 1907 and 26

November 1913, and the reports he wrote to T. D. Duncan (treasurer of The Metropolitan) between 25 March 1908 and 2 January 1914. Some of the telegrams are ciphered – a common procedure adopted at the time to save money on transmission costs.[14] Cables were charged by the word and so messages were encoded in strings of five-digit letters or numbers corresponding to whole sentences. Telegraphic ciphers proliferated, containing thousands of phrases and sentences for commercial or general correspondence, such as the Anglo-American telegraphic code created in 1891. The code used by Marshall and his correspondent is yet to be identified.

Annotations scattered in the remaining notebooks are dated to the period between 18 February 1908 and 4 May 1923. Marshall does not seem to have kept a diary, although he did write daily entries on the travels he made and the people he met between 12 October and 6 December 1913, and again between 15 October and 20 June 1916. Writings that can be dated to the following years are few: two notes dated to 1917, three to 1918, one to 1919 and one from 1923. No document written by Marshall and dated to the last five years of his life can be found at the Sackler Library.

On 15 February 1928, Marshall died in Rome of heart failure. It is likely that Warren inherited his notebooks, which he brought to England before his own death on 28 December of the same year. Subsequently, the collated documents of both Warren and Marshall came into the care of their friend Sir John Beazley (Lincoln Professor of Classical Archaeology and Art at Oxford from 1925 to 1956) and remained stored in his office, where they were inherited by succeeding professors until August 1972, when Prof. Martin Robertson entrusted the collection to the Ashmolean Library (later incorporated within the new Sackler Library) for safekeeping. This is the most likely reconstruction of the events as suggested by Dr Graham Piddock, librarian in charge at the Sackler until 2017.[15]

Provenience, provenance and the intrinsic limitations of the evidence

An important issue pertaining to the reliability of documentary sources, including the JMA, is the extent to which any information given by Marshall himself or by the sellers pertaining to their alleged *provenience* (original finding location) and *provenance* (subsequent ownership) can be trusted. With the exception of a few objects published in excavation reports and archaeological bulletins, the antiquities that were sold on the market had no certified provenience. Sometimes objects were said to come from a more or less confined geographical region (Rome or Campania, for example), were attributed to ancient monuments (the Gardens of Maecenas on the Esquiline) or were said to have been found in modern neighbourhoods (Trastevere in Rome).

An indication of provenience was crucial to the valuation of antiquities from both the dealer's and the collector's perspective: plausible and documented origins imbued an object with potential historical and archaeological significance, and might also have avoided legal difficulties. Often, though, dealers took advantage of the general lack of certified evidence to attribute finding locations to antiquities of unknown origins. Places or circumstances of discovery usually included well-known locations or large-scale building projects happening at the time, such as the construction of the railway connecting Rome with Ostia, begun in December 1918 and completed in August 1924.

[14] JMA, Sackler, Letter, MAR–DUN, 1911.06.17; 1911.06.19; 1911.07.04; 1912.01.17; MAR–ROB, 1907.12.14; 1909.02.08; 1909.06.11; 1909.12.15; 1910.01.03; 1910.05.27; 1911.01.07; 1911.03.06; 1911.12.19; 1912.11.12; 1912.12.16; 1913.02.08; 1913.05.13; 1913.06.17.

[15] To Dr Piddock I extend the deepest gratitude in the name of the John Marshall Archive Research Project team for his support.

Episodes of workmen stealing finds from archaeological areas or one of Rome's building sites are indeed attested.[16] Paul Hartwig bought the famous Flavian reliefs belonging to a large public building of the Flavian period (perhaps the *Tempum Gentis Flaviae*) from terrace-makers working on the Quirinal hill.[17] Similarly, Ludwig Pollak found Laocoon's missing right arm from the statue group now at the Vatican during one of his regular visits to a stoneworker's shop on the Via Labicana.[18] Many more were the cases of dealers capitalising on the widespread rumours to trace back the origin of the marbles they sold to places such as the Roman Forum or the Palatine hill.

Among the most popular spurious proveniences were contemporary foundations to build Rome's new infrastructure, such as the Tiber's embankments. Occasional findings of mostly ancient marbles and stones from the Tiber date back to the sixteenth century,[19] and during the building works between 1876 and 1926 the discovery of antiquities by the archaeological service was regularly reported.[20] At the same time, the Tiber and its environs became a plausible finding location for many forgeries, or else ancient objects that had been illegally excavated elsewhere.[21]

Similarly, fabricating the provenance of an object by attributing it to previous illustrious owners was a common procedure to increase the object's intrinsic value. The older the collection, the more difficult it was to verify the veracity of ownership claims, especially if the supposed owner, such as Count Gregory Stroganoff, published only a minimal part of the many art objects he had ever bought and sold.[22]

In the end, one must remember that even those dealers from whom Marshall bought – often intermediaries who received objects from small farmers, workmen or other dealers – might not have known precisely the provenience of the objects they sold. Ultimately, always with their own interests at heart, dealers were willing to go as far as fabricating fictitious proveniences to secure a sale, increase their profit, throw off suspicions of illegal activities, or simply protect their network of providers and intermediaries. It seems that Marshall rarely believed what dealers told him and often referred to objects as being 'said to be from…' – a formula still commonly used in museum reports. The same formula was used by Gisela Richter in her *Catalogue of Greek Sculptures* (1954) for most of the pieces whose alleged provenience she accepted with caution. Likewise, in the absence of reliable evidence – such as archaeological reports or governmental documents – every declaration of provenience should be treated as rumour, hint or even mere guesswork.

Marshall's photographic collection

Marshall had expressed to Warren the wish to entrust his collection of photographs and photographic negatives to the British School at Rome. Perhaps he thought that his photographs, along with no fewer than eight hundred books he donated to the library, would have been particularly useful to the members

[16] See, for example, ACS, M.P.I., D.G., AA.BB.AA, Div. I 1908–1912 Busta 74, Fasc. 1627: a marble head sold by the dealer Basile to Mr Luigi Grassi of Florence in 1908. On Luigi Grassi see here, Chapter 9 (Petruccioli). Basile was accused of having purchased the head from two workmen, Messers Calonio and Carletti, who at the time were working on the excavations of the Roman Forum.
[17] Hartwig 1904; Paris 1994.
[18] Pollak 1905; Merkel Guldan 1988: 55–57; Liverani & Nesselrath 2006: 192 no. 90.
[19] Lanciani 1988: 35–37.
[20] For a list of objects whose provenience from the Tiber can be certified because they were found in the context of official excavations or public works, see *Notizie degli scavi di antichità: Indici Generali 1876–1930* (1935) 95–96.
[21] Mau 1895: 38.
[22] Pollak & Munõz 1911–1912.

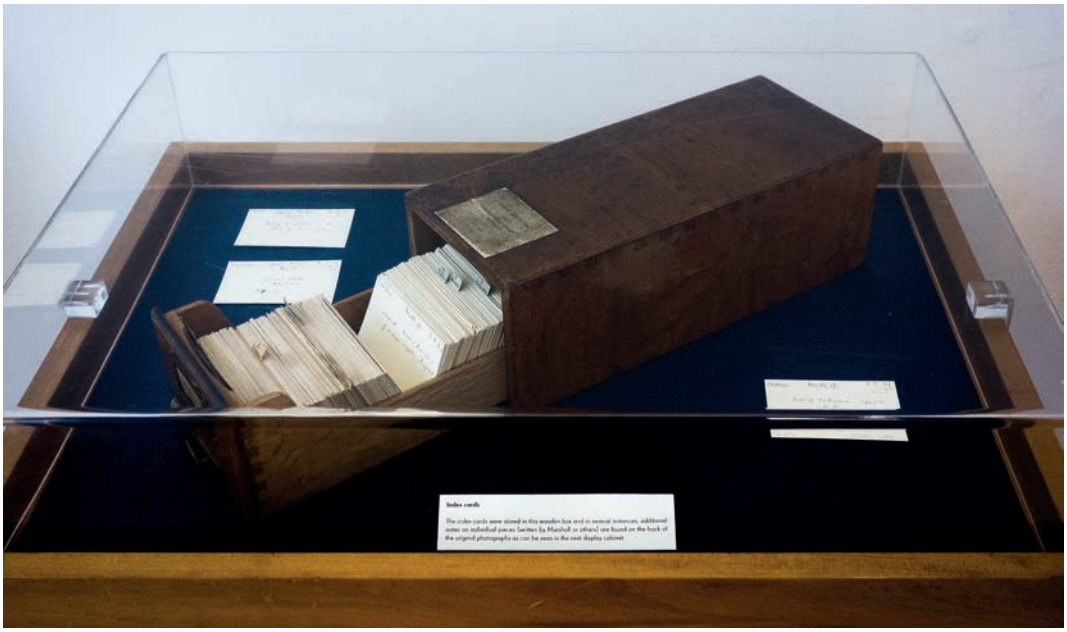


Figure 0.5. John Marshall's index card file. British School at Rome (ph. Guido Petruccioli).

of the School and to other British scholars working there.[23] The prints, which were officially acquired by the British School at Rome in 1928, depict art objects – ancient and post-classical – which, in one way or another, pertained to Marshall's task as an agent for The Metropolitan. Sadly, Marshall was not the most efficient of archivists; in his collection of photographs many objects that we know he purchased on behalf of The Metropolitan are not represented.

Approximately three-quarters of the photographic prints have inventory numbers written on the back. Each inventory number consists of a letter, a Roman numeral and a sequential number (for example, A. I. 1). The letter defined whether the object was purchased by the MMA (A), was offered to Marshall but not acquired (B), was a post-antique object offered (C), or was never offered to Marshall and was probably in the JMA for comparative and research purposes (D) – some sort of photographic database of *comparanda*. We named the last category the 'Study Collection'. The Roman numeral defined the material category of the object: marble and stone (I), bronze (II), terracotta (III) and other miscellaneous materials, including precious metals (IV). Forgeries, or objects of dubious authenticity, were marked with the subcategory 'a' (Ia, IIa, IIIa and IVa). Finally, the sequential number referred to the position of the photograph inside the box in which it was originally stored.

For each of the 767 inventoried objects, an index card was compiled with all the information that was available to Marshall, including a brief description, the name of the seller and year of offer, price requested, and sometimes the provenance of the object and the number of photographic prints available. Most of these index cards are still in Marshall's original wooden box at the British School at Rome (Figure 0.5).

[23] British School at Rome (1928) *Twenty-eighth annual report to the subscribers. 1927–1928*. Rome, British School at Rome: 1, 3.

Chronological sequence is not followed strictly in Marshall's photographic inventory, as objects offered earlier sometimes have higher inventory numbers than those offered or acquired later. It also seems that Marshall started his cataloguing system in 1913 and was not consistent in his record-keeping. Different handwriting and several spelling mistakes suggest that he was aided in compiling his archive by a non-English speaker, most likely his personal assistant Annie Rivier.

In format, Marshall's card file system is similar to that used by the Brummer Gallery Records, created by the dealers Joseph, Imre and Ernest Brummer, and containing entries for over fourteen thousand works that went through their New York and Paris galleries between 1916 and 1947.[24] The cards also feature the same information – description, seller name, purchase price, year of offer – in addition to the name of the buyer and the sale price.

Besides the great difference in size, the two archives differ quite starkly in the importance that they give to photography. To Brummer's cards were attached small photographic prints – a reference thumbnail – depicting each work from the front. Marshall's collection of photographs, however, contains prints of varying formats, from quarter plate (8 × 10 cm) or smaller to poster size (50 × 60 cm), with average dimensions of 18 × 24 cm. Most often, Marshall had photographs of objects taken from different angles, sometimes both before and after their restoration.

The photographs also differ in quality: some pictures he had commissioned from professional photographers, others were snapshots he received from collectors and dealers. The former are 'dressed-up', broadly lit depictions of artworks, generally placed against a solid dark backdrop to isolate their contours. Soft lighting from above or the side emphasised the volume of objects without dramatising the contrast between bright and shaded areas. It was essential to be able to reproduce as wide a range of tones and as many surface details as possible.

The points of reference here were photographs by mid-nineteenth-century photographers such as Giorgio Sommer, Giacomo Brogi, James Anderson, Nicholas Longworth Powers or the Alinari brothers.[25] These photographs were meant to be objective depictions of what artworks looked like. Any other visual element around the object was quite literally hidden, with the result that such objects most often look as if they are weightlessly floating. This is still the standard followed by professional photographers to document artworks, although a black background is now considered passé.

More foreign to the scholarly trained eye are those amateurish snapshots, of low quality and usually printed on small pieces of photographic paper, depicting objects individually or in groups, against makeshift backdrops or resting on the top of furniture. These are more revealing, yet more challenging, photographs. The edges of the frames, where the back wall of a sitting room appears behind a stretched-out tablecloth, or a book is used as a shim for a piece of sculpture, offer exciting clues to the keen observer. Their challenge lies in the nature of the medium itself – photography – and its potential for conjuring elaborate narratives (see Vinnie Nørskov in Chapter 3). For as tricky as it may be, one should not dismiss these photographs as simply cheap, shabby and confusing.

At first sight, one might question the deliberate nature of such snapshots and attribute any secondary visual element in the frame to chance, carelessness or haste. Often photographers did not even bother

[24] Freely accessible via the Metropolitan Museum of Art website, www.metmuseum.org. On the Brummer Gallery see Brennan 2015.
[25] Miraglia & Pohlman 1992; Berselli 1995; Cammilli 2001; Gronchi 2016: 33–47.

to place the objects in front of a solid background. Yet they could eventually hide unwanted details by masking the negatives, or by cropping or painting over the final prints, which they sometimes did. There is plenty of evidence arguing that these images are far from being sloppy snapshots. And our investigation should go beyond the immediate, to understand what they meant to those who commissioned such images, the intent of their creators and what they were supposed to communicate (or suggest) to the viewer.

By acknowledging the deliberateness of these 'staged' photographs, one can read them as one would analyse sophisticated pieces of advertising. Eventually it may become clear why sometimes archaeological terracottas of different provenience, age and typology were photographed together as a collection, neatly arranged in rows as if displayed in a cupboard. To what purpose, if not to suggest to the viewer how it would feel to own such a varied collection? For the same reason, marble statues were sometimes photographed as centrepieces of fancy living-rooms, and the most prestigious art galleries in Europe were located inside elegantly furnished palazzi. Dealers were masters of deception and harnessed the false sense of truthfulness that photography could give to mislead collectors. They photographed antiquities, still covered in dirt and incrustations, inside warehouses or gardens, so as to suggest that they had been newly unearthed, and to urge buyers to act fast before their competition. In the same way, forgeries were sometimes photographed to be made to look like genuine pieces.

Finally, there is one category of photographs in John Marshall's collection whose additional informative value lies in their physicality. These are photographic prints that make this connection between dealer and collector more tangible, by means of text handwritten on the image itself or on the back. The terms of interaction between image and text and their mutual influence has been the interest of photography historians since Roland Barthes introduced the topic in 'Rhetoric of the Image' in 1964. According to Barthes, these photographs should be considered as compositions, made of textual and visual elements working together to generate meanings that can be either immediate or implicit. Any other point of view disregards their full informative potential.

The John Marshall Archive and the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Marble sculpture is the largest category, amounting to almost half (45%) of the total number of objects offered to Marshall that are recorded in the photographic inventory or mentioned in Marshall's letterbook, followed by terracotta (20%), bronze (15%) and other materials (20%). In this book we agreed to tackle the evidence according to the criteria that Marshall used to subdivide artworks in his register, each author concentrating on one form of material: myself (Chapter 4) and Susan Walker (Chapter 5) on marble sculptures, Beryl Barr-Sharrar (Chapter 6) on bronze and Vinnie Nørskov (Chapter 7) on terracotta.

One of the distinguishing features of Marshall's catalogue is the variety of objects represented, ranging sometimes widely in typology, subject matter, provenience and workmanship. In particular, Marshall's archive includes objects that, because of their lack of historical value, poor aesthetic qualities or poor state of preservation, would not be considered worthy of a museum gallery or an art book. Because of its unedited nature, the JMA offers a more realistic idea of the sorts of antiquities available on the market at the time, and thus depicts more completely how diverse ancient art actually was then.

An example of the impact of nineteenth-century art-historical values on the construction of the idea of ancient art is the fascination of the period for the work of Greek masters mentioned in ancient Greek and Latin texts. In fact, these Greek 'masterpieces' have survived in the form of Roman copies, but in relatively small numbers in comparison to funerary monuments, works of ideal statuary and architectural sculpture, whose authors remain unknown. Marshall was familiar with most of those sculptures that had

been identified as the work of artists of the calibre of Kritios and Nesiotes, Pheidias, Skopas, Praxiteles, Kresilas and Polykleitos. Yet the selection criteria Marshall used, as well as the way in which those sculptures were eventually displayed in the newly built galleries of The Metropolitan, do not give more importance to Greek 'masterpieces' than to other types of anonymous creations (see Guido Petruccioli in Chapter 4).

A similar desire to connect sculptural remains with notable figures mentioned in the literary sources animated the earliest studies of Roman portraiture, whose primary goal was to identify the individuals represented or, when a certain identification was not possible, give them an approximate date. For a long time, since the sixteenth century, Roman portraits had been collected and studied as historical documents, a sort of compendium to ancient texts. On behalf of The Metropolitan Marshall bought thirty portraits: four of emperors and twenty-six of male and female Roman citizens without a name. Almost all of them are without provenience; they have little archaeological or historical significance. Marshall, contrary to the common judgement of his time, valued Roman portraits for their aesthetic qualities and their craftsmanship (see Susan Walker in Chapter 5).

The latest catalogue of The Metropolitan's ancient bronze collection was published by Gisela Richter (1882–1972) in 1915, and thus does not include any of Marshall's acquisitions for the following thirteen years.[26] Although virtually all The Metropolitan's holdings have been published in the *Bulletin*, only a handful of bronzes recur in art books and articles. The absence of a publication that includes all the bronzes acquired by Marshall made the need for Beryl Barr-Sharrar's comprehensive survey of them more urgent than ever (Chapter 6).

Terracotta statuettes and painted Greek vases had been among the most popular antiquities collected when Marshall began accompanying Warren in his purchasing tours of Europe in the 1890s. It was in the field of Greek vases that Marshall made his first steps in antiquities hunting. If one were to put together all the vases that Warren sold or donated to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and other institutions in Chicago, Bowdoin, Philadelphia, Bryn Mawr, Providence and Leipzig, many of which Marshall had found, it would make an awesome sight.[27] As in the case of stone sculptures and bronze objects, Marshall's main objective was to fill in the gaps in The Metropolitan's collection and expand its breadth. With the terracotta statuettes and painted vases he collected, Marshall has shown himself to be among the best connoisseurs on the subject, even though on several occasions he was duped by the many forgeries, false restorations and racketeering schemes of the time, as Vinnie Nørskov shows (Chapter 7).

Roberto Cobianchi (Chapter 8) studied the collection of objects dating between the fifth and nineteenth centuries that were offered to Marshall. Although of no interest to the department of Classical Art, some of these post-antique objects were nonetheless purchased by The Metropolitan, evidently on Marshall's suggestion. Since many of the European collectors and dealers putting forward such objects were the same as those dealing with antiquities, it is clear that all art was traded through one network only. The very eclectic nature of the post-antique objects that were made available to Marshall gives a snapshot of the diverse interests of contemporary collectors and their sophisticated taste for assembling and mixing works from different periods.

[26] Richter 1915b.

[27] For a survey and study of the impact of Warren's collections on the reception of Classical art in North America, see Murley 2012: 202–54.

The anatomy of the antiquities trade

The first twenty years of the twentieth century was a watershed in the history of the art market, because the two main sources of antiquities – historical collections and new archaeological excavations – had by then become hard to access legally.[28] The fin-de-siècle aristocratic collectors had died and their collections were soon after auctioned off and dismembered, with only a few pieces occasionally re-appearing for sale. By the time Marshall moved to Rome on assignment for The Metropolitan, the Italian state had taken over all major archaeological campaigns and introduced new and more restrictive, as well as economically disadvantageous, policies that virtually eliminated all private excavations.

The types of individuals interested in antiquities, and their social agendas, were also changing as the old-timer gentlemen indulging in cultured pastimes of this sort had died or lost their affluence. A new generation of foreign high-end antiquities collectors was rising: determined and wealthy enough to be considered competition for Marshall and The Metropolitan. Although quite knowledgeable in classical art, they usually partnered with well-known archaeologists to scout the market and purchase objects on their behalf (see Mette Moltesen in Chapter 2): Warren had Friedrich Hauser (1859–1917), Carl Jacobsen (1842–1914) had Wolfgang Helbig (1839–1915), Giovanni Barracco (1829–1914) had the Czech art historian and connoisseur Ludwig Pollak (1868–1943), while Paul Hartwig (1859–1919) was a freelancer. Advising collectors on the side was common practice among scholars at the time, and was not yet considered shameful. Hauser, Helbig, Pollak, Hartwig and indeed Marshall knew one another well and frequently met in Rome. But friends easily became rivals, as they often competed for the same pieces. The fiercest and most powerful of Marshall's rivals was, beyond doubt, the partnership of the Danish beer-maker and philanthropist Carl Jacobsen and the German scholar Wolfgang Helbig. They exchanged detailed letters, in which they discussed new acquisitions and tales about antiquities.[29]

By 1920, though, not only the Jacobsen–Helbig duo but virtually all of Marshall's competitors in Rome were dead. By then, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts had long stopped buying antiquities on a regular basis from Warren. Only Pollak, who after the death of Barracco continued working for various European clients, managed to outlive everyone. So Marshall had fewer rivals by the end of his career and was able to operate under somewhat reduced pressure.

Among the evidence available to the study of the antiquities trade at the beginning of the twentieth century are the writings of Pollak himself. Handwritten in twenty-five notebooks in German Gothic calligraphy, Pollak's diaries cover a period between 1886 and 1934, reporting his discoveries on the market, prices paid, provenances and thoughts about or discussions of individual dealers.[30] During the last three years of his life, Pollak also wrote his memoirs, which include many anecdotes about cultural institutions, antiquity dealers, intellectual circles, artists, architects and craftsmen, foreign collectors who came regularly to Rome shopping for antiquities, prices of excavated objects and the many forgeries that were circulating at the time.[31] The manuscripts are held at the Museo Barracco in Rome, where Pollak served as director between 1914 and his death, waiting to be fully transcribed. Margarete Merkel Guldan has written two monographs on Pollak's writings, including references and lengthy excerpts from the original texts. She also undertook the herculean task of indexing all the volumes of his diaries, creating

[28] Cagiano de Azevedo 2010: 57.
[29] Moltesen 2012.
[30] Merkel Guldan 1988.
[31] Pollak 1994; Hagg 1996.

a solid starting point for further exploration of this source that, because of Pollak's calligraphy, remains accessible to a very few.[32]

Stories about significant examples of antiquities or anecdotes about memorable dealers and collectors also appear in literary accounts published several decades after the events.[33] They often omit or exaggerate details or report them in a partisan way, and indulge in humorous tales based on hearsay and no corroborating evidence.[34] But the most entertaining accounts are in family memoirs. Augusto Jandolo (1873–1952) wrote openly about the collectors he worked for and the objects he and his family sold to them.[35] John Marshall was among their clients. Several of Jandolo's literary accounts, however, broadly disagree with Marshall's own notes. The deeds of the famous Neapolitan family of dealers the Canessas are also well known through the anecdotal and tendentious – but very entertaining – memoirs of their nephew Guglielmo.[36]

In the notebooks of Pollak, the Jacobsen–Helbig correspondence (held in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek of Copenhagen) and, indeed, Marshall's own notes, many individuals are named. Only a few are known international dealers: Paul Arndt (1865–1937) of Munich, Jacob Hirsch (1874–1955) from Switzerland, Feuardent Frères of Paris, the aforementioned Brummer Gallery, or the Canessa family, who owned galleries in Naples, Paris and New York. The rest are presented in this book for the first time. Marshall's archive, although in itself scanty in biographical references, remains the richest data set available, from which it is possible to reconstruct the full extent of his social network (see Guido Petruccioli in Chapter 9).

Heritage laws, nation-building and curbing antiquities exportation

A description of John Marshall's world would not be complete if not placed in its wider cultural context, in light of pre-World War I rising nationalistic sentiments and the establishment of heritage protection laws in Italy and Greece. In Italy in particular, the first decade of the twentieth century was characterised by ever-increasing efforts to preserve cultural heritage as a way of bolstering national identity. It was a question of ideology: Italy's national identity was founded on its unique, outstanding and priceless cultural history. Although the Italian government apprehensively accepted the commercialisation of antiquities as long as they remained on Italian soil, it could not tolerate a foreign country owning significant pieces of its history.

Before the institution of more restrictive regulations concerning the export of antiquities, dealers and collectors could easily overcome bureaucratic and legal obstacles and ship antiquities out of Italy. A few dramatic episodes happening at the end of the nineteenth century, involving important antiquities that were allowed to leave the country legally, brought to the attention of Italian public institutions the necessity for new laws. A case in point is the Monteleone chariot, discovered on 8 February 1902 and brought to Paris, where it was purchased by The Metropolitan the following year.[37] A national scandal exploded in Italy when the arrival of the chariot in New York became public. The Italian parliament initiated an investigation and the Head of State Giovanni Giolitti and Minister of Public Education Vittorio Emanuele Orlando were pointed to as directly responsible.[38]

[32] Merkel Guldan 1988: 311–83.
[33] See for example Muñoz 1944: 133–50 on Count Gregory Stroganoff and his circle of Italian and foreign collectors in Rome, with whom the author must have been in contact in his late twenties.
[34] See for example Bellini 1947 and Batini 1962.
[35] Jandolo 1935, 1938, 1947, 1949.
[36] Canessa 1966.
[37] MMA 03.23.1.
[38] See La Ferla 2007: 3–4.

In the previous thirty years, the task of national heritage preservation had been passionately debated in the Italian parliament, which was divided on the issue into two opposing factions. One considered antiquities, like any other private property, as a marketable good and believed that any governmental regulation of the trade was irreconcilable with their liberal ideals. The opposition sustained the primacy of nationalistic over private interests and pressed for a set of laws for the preservation of Italy's cultural heritage. At the dawn of the twentieth century, liberalism had lost many supporters in the Italian parliament, and eventually a new set of laws was passed rapidly, on 12 June 1902 (see Francesca de Tomasi in Chapter 10).

Guarding Italy's artistic and archaeological patrimony were the officials who monitored the antiquities market and controlled the exportation of the nation's historical heritage. Far from being mere bureaucrats, these archaeologists and art historians had been trained in Italian universities and chose to pursue careers in national museums and offices of the Ministry. Marshall must have known well the archaeologist Roberto Paribeni (1876–1956), who passionately opposed the exportation of the bronze bust of the so-called Livia mentioned above.[39] Director of the Museo Nazionale Romano between 1908 and 1928, and later director general of the Ministry of Antiquities and Beaux Arts, Paribeni was an ardent patriot and firm believer in the preservation of Italy's national heritage.[40] At the same time, he understood the antiquities trade well, recognising that, when it came to granting export permits, too restrictive a regimen would have alienated dealers and given them a pretext to take objects abroad illegally. While preventing unique artworks from leaving Italy, Paribeni granted export licences for ordinary antiquities. Alternatively, as Marshall eventually did with the Stroganoff mosaic, dealers had the opportunity to sell to a national museum those antiquities for which export was denied.[41]

The economy of the antiquities trade and future lines of enquiry

One aspect that Marshall's archive discloses better than any other known source is the financial significance of the antiquities trade. Generally, private museums and institutions do not reveal how much they paid for their individual acquisitions, and most scholars of classical antiquities do not consider monetary value as being of any relevance to the history of an art object. The fact that Marshall kept records of how much he paid for each individual object and his frequent remarks about prices suggest that money was indeed a very influential factor in his choices.[42]

One of the primary criteria defining the artistic significance of a piece is its rarity. Hence, prices can tell us indirectly what types of objects were commonly circulating in the art market at any given time. Marshall's records suggest that, in comparison to other art objects sold on the Italian market, antiquities were generally cheaper and less in demand. This is also confirmed by the fact that no dealer in Italy specialised in antiquities. The relative cheapness of antiquities in comparison with other artworks in other media or from later periods – such as paintings or modern art – is largely still true today. Collectors and dealers frequently sell items from their collection to buy something more desirable, so many objects reappear in the market a decade or more after they were first put on sale. Prices paid for the same object over time can then be used as raw data to assess patterns in the economy of the art trade, expanding and updating the work of Gerard Reitlinger.[43] Prices also make us better appreciate the exceptionality of some art works, since at the time monetary value quantified artistic significance. Marshall's expenditure

[39] Bruni 2012: 588–98.
[40] Romanelli 1956; Munzi 2016.
[41] See *BullArte* 8 (1914) 284.
[42] On this matter, see also Susan Walker's remarks in Chapter 5.
[43] Reitlinger 1982.

reports to The Metropolitan covering the years 1908–1913 give a range of market prices that antiquities could fetch, against which the prices of exceptional pieces can be compared.

For example, painted vases were cheaper than objects in bronze or marble sculptures.[44] This holds true nowadays too. Red- or black-figure Athenian pottery ranged between 350 and 800 lire.[45] Prices rose steeply for vases in an exceptional state of preservation, for those identified as the work of a particular Greek artist and for those coming from an illustrious collection. The highest-priced ceramic object in Marshall's archive is the red-figure calyx-krater attributed to the Nekyia painter, for which he paid £480 (= 12,000 francs/lire).[46]

Greek, Roman and Etruscan bronze figurines – along with coins, vessels and incised mirrors – were among the antiquities collected by most amateurs, because of their suitability for domestic settings, where they were traditionally displayed as decorative pieces. Beside the overwhelming popularity of certain subjects – naked Venuses have always been hugely popular – the value of bronze antiquities was generally determined by their size. A small (7 cm high) early Archaic statuette of a runner was 100 lire;[47] the statuette of an ephebe, 14 cm high, 800 lire.[48] Larger pieces were more expensive: a Venus (12.4 cm high without her lower legs) was bought for £70 (= 1,750 francs/lire),[49] a complete statuette of a sacrificing priest from Macedonia (**131**) (24.8 cm high) was £140 (= 3,500 francs/lire),[50] a Tyche of Antiochia (only 10.4 cm high, but supposedly from the Kircherian collection) was also 3,500 francs.[51] A quite rare assemblage of fourteen Etruscan bronze statuettes of farm animals, ranging in size between 5 and 7 cm, and a cart (**128**) was bought by Marshall for 7,250 lire.[52] This was low given the rarity of the group, but it shows how much size mattered for pricing. Large pieces of extraordinary craftsmanship did fetch much higher prices, such as £880 (= 22,000 francs/lire) for a sleeping cupid (**123** ; Plate XLIV) and £900 (= 22,500 francs/lire) for the statuette of a Greek philosopher at the time identified as Hermarchos (**126**; Plate XXXVII a)).[53] Thus completeness, traceable provenance, archaeological relevance or the historical significance of the subject depicted would contribute to defining the market value of each individual piece.

Unfortunately, there is not enough evidence in Marshall's records to make a reliable assessment of market prices for other categories of objects in bronze, such as vessels, mirrors, tripods or weapons. We can certainly, however, say more about marble sculptures.

The price of Roman marble portrait heads ranged between 1,750 and 4,000 francs/lire.[54] The portrait head of a man sporting long flowing hair at the back (**13**) was 7,500 francs/lire, perhaps on account of the rarity of his hairstyle.[55] The very fine portrait head of Marciana (**60**; Plate XXIX) also had a very high

[44] Marshall traded in British pounds, Italian lire and French francs. Lire and francs were used interchangeably as their exchange rate was approximately 1:1 throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century. Similarly, the GBP to lire or franc rate remained at 1:25.
[45] See for example the black-figure oinochoe (MMA 09.221.45): 350 lire; red-figure kylix (MMA 09.221.38): 400 lire; red-figure krater attributed to the Opileios painter (MMA 09.221.48): 600 francs; large eye kylix (MMA 09.221.39): 800 lire.
[46] MMA 08.258.21.
[47] MMA 08.258.6.
[48] MMA 12.235.1.
[49] MMA 11.140.10.
[50] MMA 13.227.6.
[51] MMA 13.227.8.
[52] MMA 09.221.20a–n.
[53] MMA 13.225.2; MMA 10.231.1.
[54] MMA 10.210.22; MMA 13.229.4.
[55] MMA 13.229.5. See also here, Chapter 5 (Walker)

price of 15,000 francs/lire, perhaps because it came from Greece and not Rome, where imperial portraits surfaced less frequently.[56] Prices for marble portrait busts ranged between 5,000 francs/lire for a piece missing its bust foot (**352**)[57] and 15,000–16,000 francs/lire (**5**) if fully preserved.[58] The first-century AD portrait bust of an old man (**3** , front and back cover) was bought for 23,500 lire, not only because of its ideal condition and craftsmanship, but also because Marshall knew that early imperial 'veristic' private portraits were hard to come by.[59]

The most valuable antiquities, though, were life-size or larger marble sculptures, including some remarkable pieces that Marshall bought at very high prices: for example, the Old Market Woman (**8** Plate LXXIX) was 36,000 lire,[60] the larger than life-size seated torso of Herakles (**1373** Plate XVIII) was 44,000 lire.[61] Classical or Hellenistic Greek originals were worth more than Roman copies: a fourth-century BC lion (**38**) was 60,000 lire,[62] a fourth-century Attic stele (**10**, **11**, **32**) 115,000 francs.[63] Perhaps the most expensive acquisition of all was the statue of the so-called Protesilaos that was sold to Marshall in 1925 – if we are to believe Ludwig Pollak – for £8,500 (= 212,500 francs/lire) (Figure 4.9); [64] a very high price indeed, but not outrageous in comparison to the 'Girl of Anzio' (still considered a Hellenistic original by some) that the Italian government bought for 450,000 lire in 1909.[65]

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This book is a collection of essays by the international group of scholars who took part in the John Marshall Archive Research Project. Our goal was to recount the achievements of John Marshall, provider of antiquities for The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and give a comprehensive description of the historical context in which he operated. We wrote this book as an introduction to and framing for the John Marshall Archive, to inform readers on contextual issues and advise them on how to interrogate the primary evidence.

We aimed to show how the JMA can be a rich source of information on antiquities and other post-antique art objects circulating on the market at the beginning of the twentieth century. In fact, since the vast majority of the antiquities for sale at that time did not come from documented archaeological excavations, the JMA is often the only source available. Thus, we call upon a re-evaluation of all the historical documents, which too many archaeologists generally ignore or too quickly dismiss.

People make history, and this book gives due credit to Marshall and his social network for their indirect impact on the historiography of classical art. We explore here the contemporary perception of the classical past that informed his decisions and, in turn, how a century later, Marshall's undertakings are still of great interest.

[56] MMA 20.200.
[57] MMA 12.232.3.
[58] MMA 13.115.2; MMA 10.231.2.
[59] MMA 12.233.
[60] MMA 09.39.
[61] MMA 11.55.
[62] MMA 09.221.3.
[63] MMA 11.100.2.
[64] MMA 25.116. See here Chapter 4 (Petruccioli).
[65] Rome, MNR, Terme, inv. No. 50170. See also L'opera delle Sovrintendenze dei Monumenti, delle Gallerie, dei Musei e degli Scavi (Quinquennio 1909–14). In *Cronaca delle Belle Arti* 1.10 (1914): 75.