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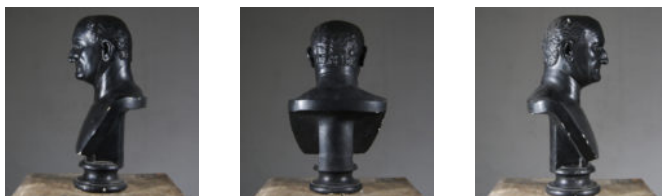


AN ENGLISH PLASTER BUST OF THE EMPEROR VESPASIAN,

with a painted black finish,

DIMENSIONS: 66cm (26") High, 38cm (15") Wide

STOCK CODE: 41510



HISTORY

Vespasian was the ninth emperor of Rome and succeeded in restoring peace and stability after a period of civil war. He founded the Flavian dynasty of emperors.

Titus Flavius Vespasianus, known as Vespasian, was born in 9 AD in Reate (Rieti), north west of Rome. He had a successful military career, commanding the second legion in the invasion of Britain in 43 AD and conquering the south west of England. He later rose in the senate to become consul in 51 AD and governor of Africa a decade later. He became a trusted aide of the emperor Nero and was put in charge of the suppression of the Jewish Revolt (66 AD – 70 AD). By 68 AD, most of Judaea was recovered, although Jerusalem remained to be taken.

During the rapid turnover of emperors following the death of Nero in 68 AD, Vespasian prepared his own bid for power. The legions of Egypt, Judaea, Syria and then the Danube all declared for him, and he sent his commander Primus ahead to secure Italy on his behalf. A major, and bloody, victory was achieved at Cremona, and Primus took Rome in December 69 AD. The senate passed a law conferring the powers of emperor on Vespasian and he arrived in Rome in the late summer of 70 AD, having left his elder son Titus in charge in Judaea. Jerusalem was taken in August 70 AD and the Jewish temple was destroyed.

Vespasian's major objectives during his reign were to restore Rome's finances after Nero's wasteful reign, to restore discipline in the army after the civil wars and to ensure the

succession of his son Titus. He was successful in all three. The immunity from taxation that Nero had given to the Greeks was revoked, and the Colosseum was begun in Rome with spoils from the conquest of Jerusalem.

Vespasian's relations with the senate were on the whole excellent and he set an example by living a relatively simple life. The Roman historian Tacitus observed that he was the first man to improve after becoming emperor.

Vespasian died in 79 AD.