

LOOKING BACK — MINTURNAE

The city of Minturnae, 50 miles from Naples, was built by the Romans in 295 BC as a fortified commercial center along the Appian Way. By the 20th century AD, the remains of several temples, a theater, an elaborate fountain, and baths were still visible, as well as the Minturnae aqueduct which ran from the city northeast to the mountains. In 1931, in cooperation with Italy's International Society for Mediterranean Research, the Penn Museum obtained permission from the Italian government to excavate the ancient site. The excavators, including Dr. Jotham Johnson from the Museum, uncovered a large walled Roman colony, as well as a smaller pre-Roman town (4th century BC). The earlier finds included an acropolis and temple, with numerous architectural terracotta sculptures and roof ornaments. From Roman-period Minturnae, excavations uncovered a large forum, more temples, and towers, along with pottery, coins, inscriptions, and other artifacts. A rich trove of fine sculptures was also discovered, several examples of which are on display in the Museum's Roman Gallery.

— *Alessandro Pezzati*

Agnes K. Lake washing a marble head of a Roman female found in the theater at Minturnae. Photograph by Jotham Johnson. UPM Image #144003

