



Where on earth did the dodgy title come from?

Well, it was a throw-away line from Adrian.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIND OF THE CENTURY:
THE ROMANS VISITED SYDNEY!**

Prime Minister Ton will address the nation tonight

Adrian *snorts*

Yeah, yeah ... The Romans did Sidders and the PM is giving himself a one-pumper ... Can anyone advise where we go from here?

Felix

Tell me again! What **were** your instructions from Australia's head honcho?

Adrian

He simply gave us a right royal spray. That's all. "Cease and desist!"

THE PLOT (as seen by the author).

Dr Anne Glenn is renowned as a balloon-breaker. If you are a historian intent on "bending" history, then Anne will uncover your fraud.

But here the tables are turned. Anne finds herself *proving* that what was thought to be a fraud turns out to be the dinkum oil.

I needed to get Anne to travel from London to current day Sydney, Australia such that she could become acquainted with Penne Danvers. There is a mystical thread of history whereby Anne takes on the character of Dame Audra of Martin Estate. And at her side Adrian Lannsing (a one-time Australian soldier) takes on the character of Gregor (her estate manager). This is dated at around 911 AD.

Audra and Gregor try to get by in what is now France during the time of the Frankish King Charles III. This is a very dangerous time for the Franks: Viking raids are frequent. The Normans were setting their bases on the coast of France.

It is recorded in fact that Rollo the Walker and his hangers-on attempted to raid what was to become Chartres Cathedral in 911 AD. A good deal of this movie (therefore) centres on Audra, Gregor, Rollo (as I have imagined him to be) and Hermann (Rollo's fictional scribe).

So where does Penne Danvers fit into this scheme?

Penne is basing her Master's Thesis on a journal purported to have been written by Rollo the Walker. It's English title is: "Rollo the Walker: His Defeat of The City of the Carnutes".

It is in fact written in Old Norse.

Not only does Penne have to wade through this tome, but she is up against scholarly prejudice. The journal is widely believed to be a fraud, a hoax. It may in fact have been written in the 16th century.

And here is the twist: Anne knows the truth because she has "gone off" as Audra. She is able to prove beyond doubt (with concrete proof) that Rollo's journal (although it claims to have represented the winning side) is a genuine product of 911 AD and that Rollo's skald (Hermann) was the author up until Rollo sacked him.

As the author I had this problem ...

Anne had to be dragged to Australia for some reason or other ... It's a helluva long flight from London to Sydney. You have to really want to undertake that ordeal.

The perfect ploy was to get Anne involved in the most bizarre, unfathomable find of the 21st century:-- Ancient Roman remains are found in a Sydney garden. The stars in our version of "Time Team" are called in. They find that this is a gigantic hoax. But Dr Anne Glenn is the ultimate umpire. And just as she comes down hard on the "Romans Did Sidders" plot, Anne accidentally bumps into Penne and her Master's Thesis. And thereby transmogrifies into Audra. QED.



Rollo the Walker was the great-great-great grandfather of William the Conqueror. Truly!

The author looked up Chartres Cathedral to see if it was at all possible for the Vikings (or Normans) to have made a raid on that site. And there it was: Rollo in 911 AD. The author said out loud "Shit-a-brick!"

A bit of History is called for:

ROLLO'S BLOODLINE LEVEL 1: ROLLO HIMSELF



Rollo was born in Scandinavia sometime between 835 and 850 AD and died in 933 in Normandy. His parentage is either unknown or under dispute.

ROLLO'S BLOODLINE LEVEL 2: WILLIAM LONGWORD

William Longsword Count of Rouen was the son of Rollo and his first wife Poppa of Bayeux. Probably born in England around 893 and died at Picquigny on the Somme 17th December 942.

ROLLO'S BLOODLINE LEVEL 3: RICHARD I OF NORMANDY

William Longsword's second wife (see note on *more danico* below) was Sprota. Their son was Richard I of Normandy. Born 28th August 982 and died 20th November 996 at Fécamp, Duchy of Normandy.

ROLLO'S BLOODLINE LEVEL 4: RICHARD II OF NORMANDY

The long-time mistress then wife of Richard I of Normandy ("Richard the Fearless") was Gunnor. Their son was Richard II of Normandy. Born 28th August 982 and died 20th November 996 at Fécamp, Duchy of Normandy.

ROLLO'S BLOODLINE LEVEL 5: ROBERT I DUKE OF NORMANDY

The son of Richard II was Robert the Magnificent or Robert I Duke of Normandy. His mother was Judith of Brittany. Born 22nd June 1000 and died in early July 1035 in Nicaea (during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem). It was with his concubine Herleva that he sired William the Conqueror.



ROLLO'S BLOODLINE LEVEL 6: WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

The son of the unmarried Robert the Magnificent was William.

William is known to History as William the Bastard, William the Conqueror and King William I of England. He was born at Falaise, Duchy of Normandy around 1028 and died 9th September 1087 in Rouen.

Having investigated these 6 levels of Rollo's descendants, I am now more than keen to follow up on the fascinating subject: *more danico*. That is to say, marriage in the Scandinavian fashion (as witnessed in medieval times). Abduction was often involved.

So let's recapitulate.

In brief, **THE ROMANS DID SIDDERS** is a drama with 2 main themes.



Firstly --

in current day, Dame Naomi Cutler has been pottering around in her Vaucluse garden when she comes across a brooch which would have been crafted at the time of Julius Caesar. Without considering the incongruity of such a find (in Sydney, Australia) Dame Naomi contacts famous TV dig team Lore Ancient Squad. At the Australian Prime Minister's insistence, Wannabee Associates (Sydney) and sister company

Reckondotstate P/L (London) finance the visit to Australia of the main members of the Lore Ancient Squad.

Of course it is a sham. Everyone agrees (except for the PM). And it is very easy to prove the fraud. However, there is an ugly side to the prank. Seven young men have been murdered to provide the necessary "bodies" of the Ancient Romans.

This part of the movie covers the hoax and its debunking, and the deleterious effects of this matter on the mental health of Australia's Prime Minister.



Secondly --

in the 16th century in France a scholar (Pierre-Mars Ruellin) found a manuscript. The title of this manuscript was "Rollo the Walker: His Defeat of the City of the Carnutes". It was written in Old Norse with a goose quill pen dipped in ink on vellum. Ruellin studied the manuscript and concluded that either Rollo had written it himself, or he had dictated to a scribe.

There were several clues which seemingly indicated a lack of authenticity for this manuscript. Scholars reckoned that in all probability Ruellin himself was the author. It could not have been written some 155 years before the Battle of Hastings, they argued. It just was not in the style of the Viking skald. The words were not glorious tributes to the saga: it was a flat (if not boring) prosaic commentary. Rollo was a warrior of a violent nature – hardly the kind of man to want to produce a diary of his raids. As well as all that, it seemed as if more than one person had had a hand in its progress.

So where does the Rollo journal fit in our scheme of things?

Penne Danvers (Sydney) is writing her master's thesis about this Rollo journal. She is determined to discover if it is (or is not) fair dinkum. She picks up a boyfriend along the way: Jack Cutler. He plays cricket with Penne's brother Gordon. Jack Cutler (as it happens) is the great-nephew of Dame Naomi Cutler (whom we met above). Jack is supposed to help his mother in caring for Dame Naomi during the difficult days of the Roman remains dig. However, his work will not allow Jack to take long leaves of absence. So, Penne steps in. She can just as easily write her thesis at *Garden of Persephone* as anywhere.

As already stated DR ANNE GLENN FROM OXFORD IS THE VITAL LINK BETWEEN THE ROMAN BURIALS MATTER AND THE VIKING JOURNAL.

Anne is the “debunker” who investigates frauds, scams, hoaxes and set-ups. She is called in by Wannabee Associates through the UK: Reckondotstate P/L.

Her expertise is needed to prove that the discoveries in Dame Naomi’s Vaucluse garden are fakes.

It has never been Anne’s duty to prove that a notable fraud is ***not*** a fraud at all, but a valid truth. However, that is just where she will find herself (for the first time) in relation to Penne’s master’s thesis. She is only able to do this due to her taking on the persona of Dame Audra of Martin Estate.

In relation to the Roman remains, Anne is able to debunk the ridiculous hoax as it was expected that she would.

Anne becomes involved with the Viking saga due to Penne’s being present at *Garden of Persephone* with Dame Naomi.



And a bit of Romance is called for:

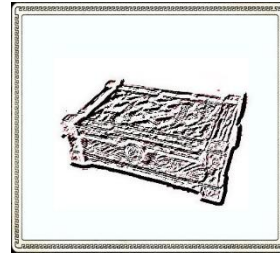
Anne begins to fantasize on the Vikings and Franks during the Siege of Chartres (911 AD).

She takes on the persona of Dame Audra of Martin Estate. As a lone woman, she protects herself by wedding her trusted manservant Gregor.

From her first encounter with life in medieval Chartres, Anne's personality changes and her rather abrasive, no-nonsense demeanour softens. Adrian is the first person to notice this.

[Note that Adrian does not return to medieval times with Anne/Audra -- he is represented to Anne as the reincarnation of Gregor.]

Anne cannot resist Adrian. They become lovers.



HERMANN'S WOODEN BOX

In order for Anne to be able to prove that Hermann's commentary of Rollo's adventures in Chartres was genuine, she would have to know of the existence of Hermann's prized wooden box (in which he stored all manner of objects).

This wooden box becomes the provenance: Anne can prove that the Hermann journal is authentic.

There are 3 loosely-connected movies in this set:

The Romans Did Sidders

Antarctica: Who Knew?

Riding My Chainsaw With You

Links to other movies:

The R. H. Dominic Lynier.

Dominic features in movie #2 and movie #3. He is a much-respected palaeornithologist.

He is introduced right at the very beginning of this movie #1 along with his brother Felix (a founding member of one of TV's favourite shows: Lore Ancient Squad).

We encounter geese flying. Dominic talks about birds flying in V-formation.

Felix is soon off to Sydney whereas Dominic is off to Antarctica.

We learn that Dominic is in a legal tangle with Eric Conway. This is an important feature in movie #3.

Uncle Dapto.

Uncle Dapto is a major character in movie #2 and a more minor character in movie #3.

Adrian.

Makes some appearances in movie #2.

Central Australia.

One of the main themes of movie #3 is the rumour of their being a large underground city in Central Australia, brimming with riches and treasure. In this movie #1, Adrian (in a throw-away line) suggests that the Roman remains hoax was also tied up with that. And in fact -- it was!

NOTES ON THE PLOT:

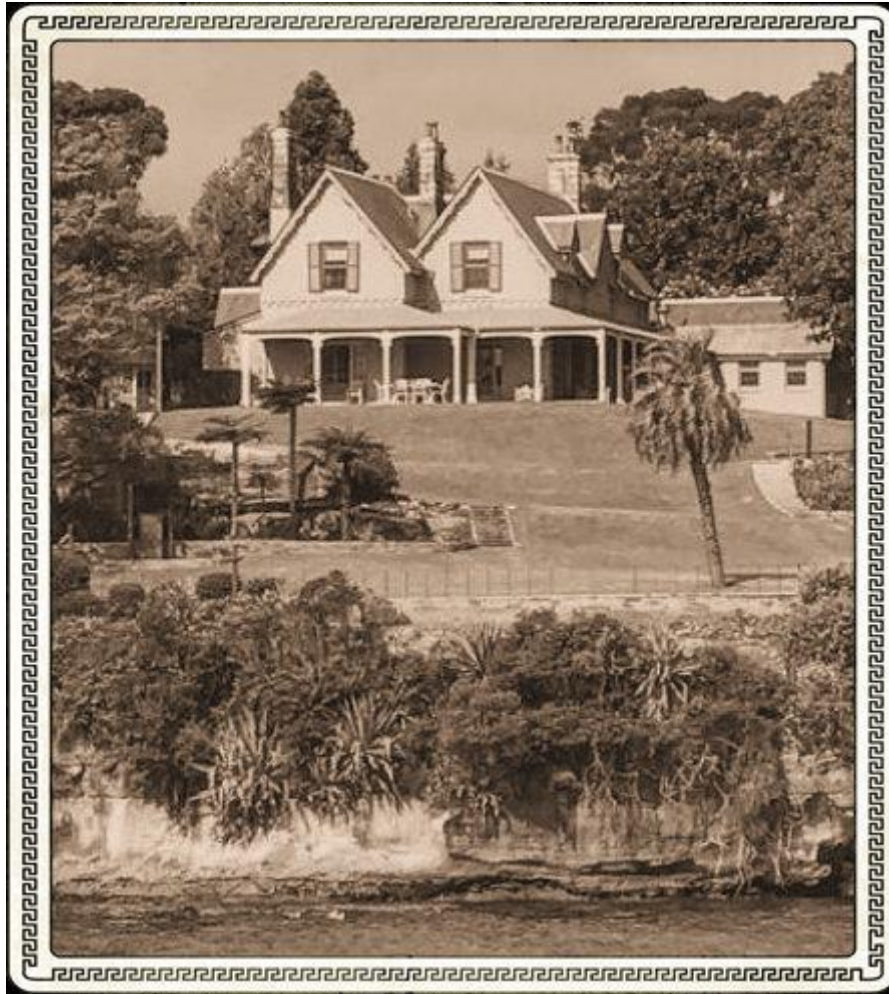
Felix is a member of Lore Ancient Squad which is headed to Sydney. And here is the crux: there are bodies of Roman legionaries buried in Sydney.

Adrian has to suffer a phone call from the PM. Then Adrian thrashes it out with Calvin (boss of Wannabee Associates). The whole thing is ludicrous and they know it.

Now the centre of attention is the garden belonging to Dame Naomi.

The Lore Ancient Squad are in position when Uncle Dapto arrives.

He has been called in because the PM repeatedly blames aboriginals for having murdered the Roman legionaries when they arrived on Australia's shore. Uncle Dapto not only negates aboriginal involvement but he also brings into the fray the notion that the bodies might have had red Maltese crosses on them (either branding or tattoos). This was in relation to jingoistic hatred of conscientious objectors during the First World War.



At Kirribilli House (the Sydney residence of the Prime Minister) Adrian meets with the PM and is shocked to find that the PM has been completely taken-in by the Roman scam. The PM makes some really absurd claims, ending by tossing everyone off the *Garden of Persephone* site. And that includes Dame Naomi, her daughter Valme and Penne. The Lore Ancient Squad are likewise frog-marched off by Army men. The PM even threatens to throw Uncle Dapto in jail as the PM is convinced that it was aboriginal warriors who speared the “brave boys from Rome” as they landed on Australian soil. Furthermore, the PM is hiring the services of Prof Llewelyn Judd in the erroneous belief that the professor will be the PM’s puppet and agree with everything the PM says.

Further investigation by Anne and Adrian uncovers the history of the Roman brooch. It was in Sydney just as the First World War began as part of a display. No-one can reveal its movements from there – except that it was dug up in the current day in the Vaocluse garden.



As for the Roman trireme and the aboriginal rock art depicting it, Uncle Dapto and Adrian conclude that the work was an attempt to represent aboriginal art.

This leads to Adrian meeting up with the male members of the Lore Ancient Squad, who are drowning their sorrows at an up-market Sydney bar.

A blaring newspaper headline causes the chaps to realize that they must come up with a way to stop the PM speaking on the TV (as he has promised).

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIND OF THE CENTURY:
THE ROMANS VISITED SYDNEY!
Prime Minister Ton will address the nation tonight**

Then they have a brainwave: if the PM speaks then it must follow that the Leader of the Opposition (the Shadow PM) has a right of reply.

Thus – just prior to the PM’s dreaded speech to the nation – Adrian, Anne and Prof Judd get themselves to the Sydney residence of the Right Honourable Ellyn MacMahon who is the Shadow PM.

They talk about the PM’s mental health. And then the PM’s appalling televised speech really shocks them. While their mobile phones ring off the wall, world leaders are seen to condemn the PM’s utterances. This is a huge, ghastly scandal.

Ellyn MacMahon has been convinced that her best action is to ignore the PM entirely and simply go on the television to deliver her rebuttal – telling the people of Australia what really occurred at the *Garden of Persephone*.

Adrian (hopeful that the info will surface very soon) promises to write the speech for Ellyn.

Luckily, the necessary info comes through.

The 7 bodies are accounted for. Anne receives a call relating the story of First World War conscientious objectors who were murdered. It is their bodies which are buried at Vaucluse. All this happened in early 1915.

Next Jack did some sleuthing of his own. He names the culprits of the hoax and confirms the date of early 1915.

The Leader of the Opposition reiterates the various proofs already provided (without once mentioning the PM) and effectively closes down the incident.

And more serendipity ...



Rollo the Walker provided even more joy!

There was a rumour doing the rounds that Frankish King Charles III insisted that Rollo kiss his foot (as per the demands of the Treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte.) Rollo refused. Instead, he would allow a proxy to perform the act of fealty.

The joke was that the proxy followed the instructions, lifting the King's foot in order to kiss it. The hapless King tumbled backwards.

Of course, this is long-standing myth. But it fitted beautifully into my story. I threw Gregor into this furphy in order that he himself could express his loyalty to the Frankish King.