CHAPTER XLIX
INNS AND WINESHOPS

Wineshops, cauponae, were numerous in Pompeii, and the remains are easily identified. Like the Italian osterie, they were at the same time eating houses, but the arrangements for drinking were the more conspicuous, and give character to the ruins. The Roman inn, hospitium, or simply cauponae, was a wineshop with accommodations for the night, provision being also made in most cases for the care of animals. Keepers of inns, cauponae, are frequently mentioned in Pompeian inscriptions, sometimes in election notices, more often in graffiti.

Several inns have been identified from signs and from scribblings on the walls within. At the entrance of one (west side of Ins. IX. vii) is painted Hospitium Hygini Firmi, 'Inn of Hyginius Firmus.' The front of the 'Elephant Inn' (west side of Ins. VII. i) was ornamented with the painting of an elephant in the coils of a serpent, defended by a pygmy. The name of the proprietor is perhaps given at the side: Sittius restituit elephanto[m], 'Sittius restored the elephant,' referring no doubt to the repainting of the sign. Evidently the owner, whether Sittius or some one else, was anxious to rent the premises; below the elephant is the painted notice: Hospitium hic locatur—triclinium cum tribus lectis,—'Inn to let. Triclinium with three couches.' The rest of the inscription is illegible.

The plan of another inn in the same region (west side of VII. xii) well illustrates the arrangements of these hostelries (Fig. 231). The main room (a), which probably served as a dining room, is entered directly from the street. At one side is the kitchen (b); six sleeping rooms (b-g) open upon the other sides. But the landlord did not provide merely for the entertainment of guests from out of town; he endeavored to attract local patronage also, by means of a wineshop (u), which opened upon the street and had a separate dining room (o). A short passage (i) led from the main room to the stalls (k), in front of which was a watering trough. The vehicles were probably crowded into the recess at m, or the front of a. The two side rooms (l and p) were closets.

The walls of several of the rooms contain records of the sojourn of guests. C. Valerius Venustus, 'a pretorian of the first cohort, enrolled in the century of Rufus,' scratched his name on the wall of e, to which also an affectionate husband confided his loneliness: 'Here slept Vebius Restitutus all by himself, his heart filled with longings for his Urbana.' Four players, one of them a Martial, passed a night together in the same apartment. In the next room (d) a patriotic citizen of Puteoli left a greeting for his native town: 'Well be it ever with Puteoli, colony of Nero, of the Claudian line; C. Julius Speratus wrote this.' This city, as we learn from Tacitus, received permission from Nero to call itself Colonia Claudia Neronensis. Lucifer and Primigenius, two friends, spent a night in room f, Luceceus Albanus of Abellium (Avellino) in g.

The arrangement of rooms here is so unlike that of an ordinary house that the building must have been designed at the beginning for a tavern. Sometimes a dwelling was turned into an inn, as in the case of the house of Sallust, which, as we have seen, in the last years of the city must in part at least have been used as a hostelry.

Inns near the gates had a paved entrance for wagons, interrupting the sidewalk. A good example is the inn of Hermes, in the first block on the right as one came into the city by the Stabian Gate (Fig. 232). On either side of the broad entrance (a), are winerooms (b, d). Behind the stairway at the right, which leads from the street to the second story, is a hearth with a water heater. On the wall at the left was formerly a painting with the two Lares and the Genius offering sacrifice; below was the figure of a man pouring wine from an amphora into an earthen hogshead (dolium), and beside it was written Hermes,
apparently the name of the proprietor. The wagons stood in
the large room at the rear \((f)\), with which the narrow stable \((k)\)
is connected; in one corner is a watering trough of masonry.
On the ground floor were only three sleeping rooms \((e, g,\) and \(h)\),
but there were upper rooms at the rear, reached
by a flight of stairs in \(f\); these were probably
not connected with the upper rooms of the front
part, which \((o\,r\,a\,d\,c)\), having a street
entrance, may have been rented separately.

The Pompeian inns were doubtless fair
representatives of their class in the different
Roman cities. Those of Rome must have been
numerous, but are rarely mentioned, and inn-
keepers are generally referred to in terms of
disrespect. The ordinary charges seem to have
been low, and the accommodations were of a
corresponding character. Owing to the univer-
sal custom of furnishing private entertainment to all with whom
there existed any ground of hospitality, places of public ent-
tertainment tended to become the resorts of the vicious.

The wineshop of which the plan is here given (Fig. 233) is on
the east side of Mercury Street, at the northwest corner of Ins.
VI. x. It was designed not only for the ac-
 commodation of guests who would go inside
to partake of refreshments, but also for the
sale of drinks over the counter to those who
might stop a moment in passing. This is evi-
dent from the arrangement of the main room
\(a\), which has a long counter in front, with a
series of small marble shelves arranged like stairs on one end of
it, for the display of cups and glasses; on the other is a place
for heating a vessel over a fire. Large jars are set in the counter,
in which liquids and eatables could be kept. In the corner
of the room, at the right as one enters, a hearth is placed. In
view of the provision for heating water, we are safe in calling
this a thermopolium, a wineshop which made a specialty of fur-
nishing hot drinks. The passage at the rear of the hearth \(e\)
is connected with a small room \((d)\) and also with the adjoining
house, which may have been the residence of the proprietor,
or may have been used for lodgings.

The long room with an entrance from the side street \((b)\, now
walled up) was in-
tended for the use of
those who preferred to
eat and drink at their
leisure. The walls are
decorated with a series
of paintings presenting
realistic scenes from
the life of such places.
We see the guests eat-
ing, drinking, and play-
ing with dice. Some
are standing, others sit-
ing on stools; it is the
kind of public house that
Martial calls a ‘stool-
ridden cookshop,’
in which couches were not provided, but only seats with
backs \(\text{Mart. Ep. V. lxx. 3}\).

In one of the scenes (Fig. 234) four men are drinking, about
a round table, while a boy waits on them; two of the figures
have pointed hoods like those seen to-day in Sicily and some
parts of Italy. Strings of sausage, hams, and other eat-
able
ables hang from a pole sus-
pended under the ceiling.

Some of the figures in the
pictures are accompanied by
inscriptions. Thus by the
side of a guest for whom a
waiter is pouring out a glass
of wine is written: Da fri-
dam pusillum, ‘Add cold water—just a little.’ In a similar
connection we read, Adde calicem Setiamum, ‘Another cup of
Setian!’ The Setian wine came from a town in Latium at the
foot of the hills bordering the Pontine Marshes, now Sezze; we infer that our wineshop sold not merely the products of neighboring vineyards, but choice brands from other regions as well. Wines from the locality were probably brought to town in amphorae; the delivery of a consignment from a distance is shown in a separate scene (Fig. 235), in which amphorae are being filled from a large skin on a wagon; the team of mules is meanwhile resting, unharnessed, the yoke hanging on the end of the pole.

The pictures present the life of a tavern from the point of view of the landlord; but occasionally we have a suggestion of the other side, as in the following couplet, the faulty spelling of which we can forgive on account of its pithiness: *Talio te fallant ut inam me[n]dacia, copo, Tu ve[n]des acenam et ibes ipse merum,*

'Landlord, may your lies malign
Bring destruction on your head!
You yourself drink unmixed wine,
Water sell your guests instead.'

The wineshop in which this graffito is found (I. ii. 24) is larger than that on Mercury Street, and has several dining rooms. Connected with it is a garden with a triclinium, once shaded by vines, which calls to mind the invitation of the barmaid in the *Copa*:

'Here a garden you will find,
Cool retreat, with cups and roses,
Lute and pipe, for mirth designed,
Bower that mask of reeds encloses.

'Come, weary traveller, lie and rest
'Neath the shade of vines o'er-spreading.
Wreath of roses freshly pressed
On your head its fragrance shedding.'

All the pictures found in Pompeian wineshops bear out the inference, based upon numerous allusions in classical writers, that such places everywhere were in the main frequented by the lower classes; among the adjectives applied to taverns by the poets are 'dirty,' 'smoky,' and 'black.' They were haunted by gamblers and criminals, and the life was notoriously immoral.