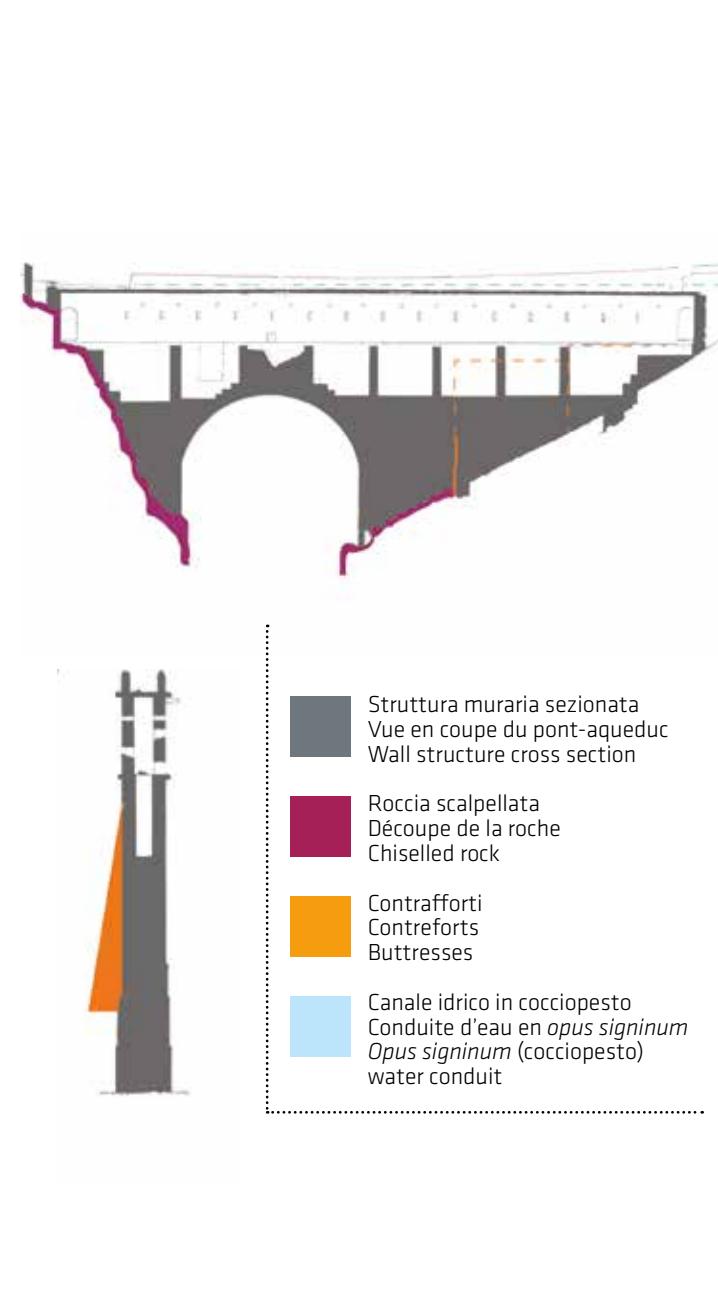




PONTE-ACQUEDOTTO DI PONT-D'AEL



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PONTE-ACQUEDOTTO DI PONT-D'AEL



Un capolavoro di ingegneria

L'imponente ponte-acquedotto di Pont-d'Ael, ancora perfettamente conservato, si staglia all'imbocco della Valle di Cogne col suo inconfondibile profilo, frutto dell'alta ingegneria di età romana. Alto 56 m dal livello del corso d'acqua e lungo più di 50, presenta una struttura ad un'unica arcata realizzata interamente in muratura e progettata con un duplice passaggio. Quello superiore, a cielo aperto, presenta un condotto idrico (*specus*) pavimentato con grosse lastre di pietra squadrate e rivestito di apposita malta idraulica, che consentiva lo scorrimento dell'acqua. Quello inferiore, coperto e illuminato da finestrelle, permetteva il transito pedonale ed era accessibile tramite due ingressi. Il manufatto faceva parte di un lungo acquedotto che aveva la sua opera di presa in località Chevril (975 m s.l.m.) e terminava ad Aymavilles, dove l'acqua veniva sfruttata per la lavorazione nelle cave di marmo bardiglio, un pregiato materiale di colore grigio-azzurro con cui, nel corso del I sec. d.C. venne monumentalizzata la città di *Augusta Prætoria*.

FRANÇAIS

Un chef-d'œuvre de génie hydraulique

Le profil incomparable de l'imposant pont-aqueduc de Pont-d'Ael, fruit du génie hydraulique de l'époque romaine, qui est encore parfaitement conservé, se découpe sur la route qui monte à Cogne. Construit à 56 mètres au-dessus du torrent qu'il enjambe, ce monument de plus de 50 mètres de longueur se distingue par sa structure à une seule arche, entièrement en maçonnerie et dotée d'un double passage. Sa partie supérieure, à ciel ouvert, est une conduite d'eau (*specus*) pavée de grosses dalles de pierre équarris et imperméabilisée par un mortier hydraulique, qui permettait aux eaux captées de s'écouler, alors que sa partie inférieure consiste en un passage couvert éclairé par de petites ouvertures et destiné au transit des hommes, auquel l'on pouvait accéder par deux entrées. Ce monument faisait partie d'un immense aqueduc - dont l'ouvrage de prise d'eau se trouvait au hameau de Chevril, à 975 mètres d'altitude - qui se terminait à Aymavilles, où les eaux captées servaient à extraire et à tailler le marbre bardiglio. En effet, ce type de marbre très prisé et reconnaissable à sa couleur gris bleu a été largement employé pour la construction des monuments de la cité romaine d'*Augusta Prætoria*, au I^{er} siècle après J.-C.



An engineering masterpiece

The unmistakable profile of Pont-d'Ael aqueduct bridge stands at the entrance to Cogne Valley. This perfectly preserved bridge is

a true engineering feat from the Roman era. Measuring 56 m from the river bed and over 50 m long, this structure is composed of one single arcade built in masonry and designed to have two passageways. The open upper passageway was a water conduit (*specus*) lined with large square stone slabs and coated with a special mortar as waterproofing. The lower covered passageway was lit by small windows and could be accessed on foot via the two entrances. The structure formed part of a long aqueduct, whose water intake was located at the village of Chevril (975 m a.s.l.), to such an extent that the masonry still bears the marks of maintenance work and frequent overhauling interventions.



and ended at Aymavilles where the water was required to process stone at the bardiglio marble quarries; this valuable grey-blue stone was used to create the monumental city of *Augusta Prætoria* during the 1st century AD.

An entrepreneur from Padua

The bridge, which carried water across the deep Grand Esvia gorge at its most convenient point, is anchored to the nearby rock by means of small foundation cavities and adheres to its contours in order not to create resistance and to adapt to its movements. During recent archaeological investigations, an empty structure was discovered below the pedestrian passageway; this is created from a series of hollowed out closed chambers that serve to lighten and render such a heavy, imposing

construction more flexible. The most prominent feature is an inscription on the monument's north face stating the year of construction (3 BC), the owner's name - *Caius Avillius Caimus*, a rich building entrepreneur from Padua - and importantly, the fact that it was a private construction, therefore access was restricted and probably limited to maintenance work on the bridge itself. Despite no longer being used as an aqueduct, this infrastructure continued to be used over the course of centuries, to such an extent that the masonry still bears the marks of maintenance work and frequent overhauling interventions.