



Cleaning and Controversy: The Cleaning of the Parthenon Sculptures, 1811-1939 (British Museum Research Publication)

Ian Jenkins

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In 1937-8, in preparation for a new gallery given by Lord Duveen, an unauthorised cleaning of the Parthenon Sculptures in The British Museum was carried out. Initially the incident was hidden from the public, but it soon got into the press and a scandal ensued. Sixty years later, in response to a revival of public interest in this episode, an international conference was organised by the Greek and Roman Department of The British Museum to re-examine the controversial cleaning and its aftermath. The aim of the conference was to examine documentary and visual evidence for the cleaning, to assess how and to what extent it had altered the surface of the affected sculptures, and to look at wider issues relating to the history and ideas of conservation. In this volume Ian Jenkins has gathered together all the relevant documents, including reports, eyewitness accounts, correspondence and newspaper cuttings. He has evaluated these documents against the history of the cleaning of the Parthenon Sculptures since they first came to London and the evidence of the sculptures themselves as they now appear.

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