Early Objects of Christianity

#5 First known picture made of Jesus.
The first of many...

1. First known church building.
5. First known picture of Jesus.
6. First known hymn.
7. First known archaeological evidence of crucifixion.
The first picture made of Jesus

… was graffiti carved into a wall intending to ridicule a god who ended up crucified.

It shows a soldier raising his hand to a crucified man with a donkey head.
Translation:
"Alexamenos worships [his] God"
The Alexamenos graffito (also known as the graffito blasfemo) is an inscription carved in plaster on a wall near the Palatine Hill in Rome, now in the Palatine Antiquarium Museum.

Discovered in 1857 in a building called the domus Gelotiana, a boarding-school for the imperial page boys. Later the street on which the house sat was walled remaining sealed for centuries.

It is alleged to be among the earliest known pictorial representations of the Crucifixion of Jesus.

It is not certain when the picture was made, but estimates surround the second century A.D.
The impact of seeing a figure on a cross could be compared with a hanging or execution in an electric chair.

What kind of hero could THAT be?
Jewish law showed the curse of sin in the symbol of someone being hanged...

"And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance."

Deuteronomy 21:22-23
Capital punishment for a Roman citizen was by beheading – quick and painless. Slaves, political enemies, and the lowest criminals were put to death by crucifixion - a slow and torturous method. The Roman writer Cicero famously wrote.

“Even the word ‘cross' must remain far, not only from the lips of the citizens of Rome, but also from their thoughts their eyes their ears.”
The accusation that Christians practiced donkey-worship seems to have been common at the time. It was based on the misconception of the Jews worshiping a God in form of a donkey. The source of this prejudice is not clear.

Tertullian, writing in the late 2nd or early 3rd century, reports that Christians, along with Jews, were accused of worshipping a deity with the head of an ass. He also mentions an apostate Jew who carried around Carthage a caricature of a Christian with ass's ears and hooves, labeled Deus Christianorum Onocoetes ("the God of the Christians begotten of an ass").
For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
(19) For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

(20) Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

(21) For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.
Ridiculed Christians

(22) For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom,

(23) but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,

(24) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

(25) For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.
(26) For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

(27) But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

(28) God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

(29) so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.
(30) And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

(31) so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."