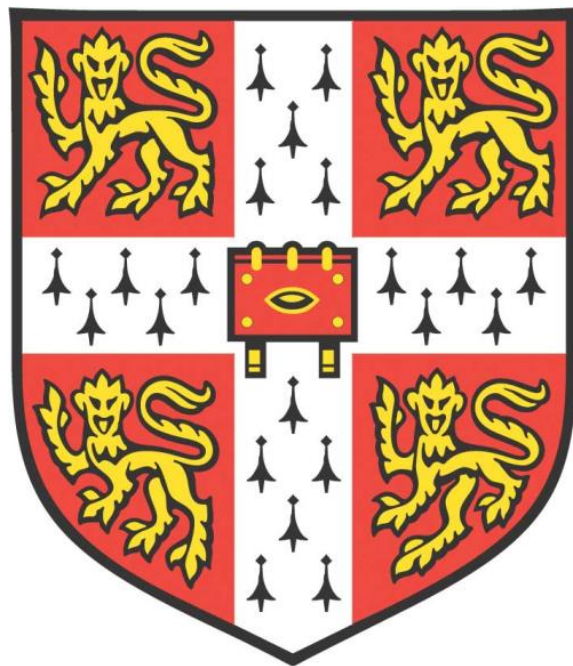


STANDING BY THE STANDARDS:
MILITARY RANK AND SOCIAL STATUS IN THE
ROMAN WEST FROM AUGUSTUS TO DIOCLETIAN



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DECLARATION

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted or is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

ABSTRACT

Standing by the standards

Military rank and social status in the Roman west from Augustus to Diocletian

This thesis broadly conceived is about the relationship between military and civil society in the time of the Roman Principate. It is about making sense of the tensions experienced by the soldiers and veterans of the Roman army between their lives as *milites* and as *cives*. This thesis weaves soldiers and veterans back into the wider social fabric of the Roman world – the social environments from which they commenced their military service, and into which they would settle upon their discharge. The problem is approached from three distinct angles, primarily through the lens of the centurionate: 1) variation in the legal privileges and restrictions upon the social lives of military personnel according to their rank; 2) the tensions and benefits resulting from the social heterogeneity of those accorded the same military rank; 3) the importance, or perceived importance, of the military factor in the status and reception of the soldier or veteran within their hometowns. The first and second case-studies are approached by contrasting the representation of the social position of centurions in a variety of documents: literary and legal, epigraphical and papyrological. The third case-study utilises a combination of statistical and prosopographical approaches to epigraphy to build up a general picture of soldier and veteran participation in local elite life. These case-studies restore agency to soldiers and veterans by contrasting their self-representation with the ways in which they are represented by others: by the equestrians and senators who commanded them; by the literary and senatorial elites who wrote about them; by the towns they called home and whose local offices they held. This thesis argues that soldiers and veterans were actively engaged with, and responding to, the construction and deconstruction of their identities by various external groups, ultimately positioning themselves as the crucial link between army, town and emperor.

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A recruit from Egypt to the Roman fleet at Misenum wrote a letter home to his family (*BGU* 423). He noted his receipt of travel expenses; thanked Serapis for being saved from danger at sea; sent best wishes to his friends; and offered gratitude to his family for his education. I cannot compare my toils at Cambridge to the dangers of a sea voyage, but at the end of my own journey in service to the Roman army I too must indicate my gratitude in kind. The last four years would have been an impossibility without the financial support of the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Pembroke College, which together provided a generous grant that covered the majority of my PhD and kindly offered further funds for academic opportunities within the UK and abroad. The Classics Faculty of Cambridge too demonstrated remarkable munificence in funding a term of my fourth year in addition to contributing to conference expenses. In John Patterson I found the most wonderful supervisor, who indulged my tendency to jump down academic rabbit holes and then stay to explore the warren, always rescuing me when necessary with the important question: “So what?” With each reading of the constituent parts of this thesis he had helpful observations and made connections that I had missed. It is with some embarrassment that I reflect upon the number of errors of all kinds he has had to catch in my work over the years; all that remain are my own responsibility. Other members of the faculty have been of great help in offering suggestions having read or listened to earlier versions of some of the material within this thesis, notably Christopher Kelly and Rebecca Flemming. Stimulating conversation and friendship were found in the Classics PhD cohort of 2016, who all made a sometimes arduous process enjoyable: Hanneke Reijnierse-Salisbury, Michael Loy, Ludovico Pontiggia, Robert Machado, Lea Niccolai, Ricarda Meisl, Chiara Monaco, Natalia Elvira, Tatiana Bur, Teresa Ro and Tulsi Parikh. There are other friends whose company has at various points during my PhD made a bad day better, and I hope no offence is given if I cannot cite them all, but special mention must go to Ellen Heyde and Pinky Lee. In September 2019 I took advantage of 6 months intermission to live and study in Tokyo, arranged through Pembroke College and with financial assistance from the Dowager Countess Eleanor Peel Trust through my *alma mater*, the Lancaster Royal Grammar School. I gained a much needed academic break, passable Japanese, and new friends. I returned to the UK in the midst of a global pandemic, and am fortunate to have been looked after with such kindness by my parents and brothers while waiting for the libraries at Cambridge to re-open. Finally, it is with sadness that one of the people to whom I am most indebted was unable to see the completion of my PhD, and so I dedicate this to my Granny, Barbara Scarborough.

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INTRODUCTION

Soldiers, Cities and Emperors

“And I can’t deny that in the time following the foundation of Rome, the Romans always set out for war from the city; but at that time they were not weakened by any luxuries (the youth washed away their sweat, brought on by running and training in the field, swimming in the Tiber). The same man was both soldier and farmer, but one who would exchange his farmer’s habit for weapons.”

Vegetius (4th/5th c. AD), *de re militari* 1.3

Not for nothing is a Roman military camp likened to a town. The architectural and social fabric conveyed as much to the ancient commentators, with the camps (*castra*) laid out in an urban rectilinear fashion along *viae*, centred around a headquarters (the *praetorium*) and encompassed by walls and gates, together giving the semblance of a “fortified city”; and not only in its institutions such as the morning ritual, in which soldiers and centurions would assemble before their superiors, reflecting the civic practice of *salutatio* where clients would gather to greet their patrons, but even in the very familiarity of the camp embodying “hearth and home” for the soldiers, the *milites*, resident there.¹ On occasion this visible separation of such military residences from those of the wider population, not to mention their resemblance in themselves to a body politic, lent itself to hysteria and hyperbole – and especially so during the febrile atmosphere of the collapsing late Republic, when accusations flew that the *castra* of rival generals had become alternative senates.² The narrative that the spheres in which *milites* properly operated should somehow be separate from wider public life is well-illustrated by the famous story from the Caesar mythology, in which Julius Caesar suppressed a mutiny

¹ For ancient descriptions of the Roman camp, the layout of which remained relatively static across a broad swathe of history, see e.g. Polyb. 6.41 (2nd c. BC), Jos. *BJ* 3.5.2 (1st c. AD). On the *castra* as a “fortified city”, see Veg. 1.21 (*quasi muratam ciuitatem*). On the morning ritual during the mid-Republic, see Polyb. 6.34; and under the Principate, Jos. *BJ* 3.5.3. See also Phang 2008: 86, with bibliography in n. 82, on the parallels between the civilian and military ritual. For the idea of the camp as “hearth and home” see Tac. *Hist.* 2.80 (*in modum penetium*), which details the anger of the legions of Syria at the idea of being transferred to Germany in AD 69 by the emperor Vitellius – as had been claimed by the Syrian governor Mucianus to sway the troops under his authority to support Vespasian’s campaign for the purple. Cf. Valerius Maximus’ description of theatres as *urbana castra* (2.4.1).

² Cic. *Phil.* 13.26 (20th March, 43 BC): “You call the camp of Pompey the senate,” taunts Antony. “Should we instead call *your* camp the senate?” responds Cicero (*castra Pompei senatum appellabatis. an vero tua castra potius senatum appellaremus?*).

of his troops in 47 BC with just one word, by addressing his soldiers as *Quirites* – as individual citizens – rather than as *milites*.³ Gone are the days idealised by Vegetius, above, when the same individual was expected to perform the roles of both soldier and farmer: this era of warlords and their personal armies that heralded the end of the Republic would serve as a harbinger for the “professionalization” of the Roman army under Rome’s first emperor, Augustus, allowing for military service to become a viable career option in its own right. It is this supposed dichotomy between *Quirites* and *milites* that drives the present study, a dichotomy in which soldiers are on the one hand recruited from and discharged into the civilian communities of the wider Roman empire, and on the other conceptually isolated from these very communities whose security it is their duty as soldiers to maintain.⁴ This, then, is one of the fundamental problems for those studying the Roman army and its place within society: how do we re-imbed the soldier back within the broader social contexts that defined him as an individual, as a citizen, and not just as a combat machine?

Modern histories that seek to locate the Roman army and its soldiers within the wider contexts of Roman society owe a conceptual debt to MacMullen’s influential work, *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire* (1963), which re-oriented studies of the Roman army towards its non-military aspects and activities, and especially towards questions about the relationships between military and non-military communities, and about the breaking down of barriers between soldier and civilian. What we might broadly term social histories of the Roman army had become a staple of the scholarly output by the end of the twentieth century, delving into the relationship of the army with such elements of the Roman world as the emperor, the economy, and politics.⁵ Questions about colonisation practices of the late Republic and Principate and their societal impact, as well as about the activities of veteran colonists, as

³ Suet. *Iul.* 70; Plut. *Caes.* 51; Tac. *Ann.* 1.42; App. *BC* 2.93; Dio 42.53. Chrissanthos 2001, acknowledging the popularity of the *Quirites* story both in ancient writings and in its modern reception, has argued compellingly that the mutiny of 47 BC was a far more serious affair than often credited, not only inconveniencing but seriously threatening Caesar’s authority, and resolved only through meeting some of the mutineers’ demands – presumably the usual Republican trifecta of money, land and early discharge.

⁴ No equivalent Roman term can be found for the modern concept of “civilians” as those who are not involved in military or similar (e.g. police) service. Rather, in the Roman world, those we might call civilians – whether *cives Romani*, *peregrini* (free non-citizens) or slaves – are simply the majority of the population that is not classified as *milites* or *veterani*. The term *Quirites*, applied to Roman citizens outside the military context – that is, as “civilians” – naturally excludes the *peregrini*, from whose number soldiers were also recruited for service in the army of the Principate, primarily for the fleets and auxiliary units, with the promise of citizenship upon honourable discharge if not before (though Wesch-Klein 2007: 442 stresses that the grant of citizenship remained the emperor’s prerogative). The practice of enfranchising non-citizens who completed military service appears to have been regularised by Claudius, under whom the earliest known diplomas (granting such rewards as citizenship and marriage rights) were issued. In times of emergency *peregrini* were transferred from fleets to legions and enfranchised (e.g. Forni 1953: 50). The diplomas will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

⁵ Emperor: Campbell 1984. Economy: Erdkamp 1998 and 2002. Politics: de Blois 1987.

farmers or as members of local government, received particular treatment in the 1980s.⁶ Given the nature of Roman expansion and colonisation practices, these works were concerned primarily with Italy and the western provinces of Europe and North Africa. The participation of soldiers and veterans in the local governance of the towns of these provinces produced further interest around the same period, both as a point of discussion in monographs variously about provinces, armies and civic elites, as well as in dedicated articles; and the situation in Italy was expounded, and the relevant inscriptions catalogued, around the first decade of the twenty-first century.⁷ This topic has, however, passed broadly under the radar in the Anglophone literature since Keppie's treatments of 1983 and 1984.⁸ The broad consensus remains that veterans were a visible presence in, and probably had some economic impact upon, their hometowns in Italy and the provinces of the west, but, with the exception of those who held equestrian commands or who became equestrian through service, contributed only minimally to the organs of local governance and administration.

The sorts of question that had principally concerned MacMullen – namely the interactions between soldiers and civilians, and the actions in their hometowns of soldiers and veterans as civilian inhabitants – found a new home in the 1990s in a series of monographs dedicated to the general theme of “soldier and society”, focussed principally on the eastern provinces, where veteran colonies were few and where the army was frequently based in the cities themselves, and on the frontiers.⁹ Whereas Alston suggested surprising levels of veteran integration within the civilian communities of Egypt, arguing that veterans' interactions beyond the army were not necessarily determined by their military experience, Pollard's account of the army in Syria saw soldiers and veterans defined by their military status, their interactions with civilians always coloured by their membership of a violent organisation something akin to a “total institution”.¹⁰ The debate on the relationship between soldiers, veterans and the wider communities they inhabited remains a fruitful one, not least in the extent

⁶ Late Republic and early Principate: Keppie 1983, 1984a. Principate: Mann 1983a. Mann seems less concerned with some of the broader questions about societal impact that occupy Keppie, and his work consequently feels more grounded within what might be defined as “Roman army studies”: a natural product of its development from a PhD thesis of 1956. It nonetheless provided a welcome complement to Forni's 1953 *Reclutamento*. Brunt 1971: 294-344 also gave early consideration to land allotments to veterans in Italy under the late Republic and Augustus; Brunt's interests are thus reflected in the work of Keppie, one of his DPhil students.

⁷ Provinces: Fentress 1979: 150-160; Jacques 1984: 626-629; Ardevan 1989; Mrozewicz 1989; Dupuis 1991; Królczyk 1999. Italy: Todisco 1999; Traverso 2006; Ricci 2010.

⁸ See the chapters by Ando and Wesch-Klein in Erdkamp 2007 for more recent discussion, and Chapter Four here.

⁹ Eastern provinces: Isaac 1990. Egypt: Alston 1995. Syria: Pollard 2000. Although frontier studies in the context of Roman history-writing grew out of the “Durham School” and its *Limes Congress* (1949-), an archaeology conference, for monographs on the frontiers we cite in particular Whittaker 1994 and 2004, and Cherry 1998. Fentress' 1979 work on Numidia provides an early precedent for these.

¹⁰ On viewing the army at Dura Europos in Syria as a “total institution”, see Pollard 1996.

to which the activities of soldiers and veterans within their hometowns, or in the towns in which they were settled, were affected by their history of military service; or how their experience within the military might itself be affected by the circumstances of their pre-service backgrounds. The present study is therefore interested in locating the soldiers and veterans of Rome's armies within the wider contexts of the Roman world, by investigating some of the ways in which pre-service social contexts might manifest themselves within the military sphere, and in which military service could itself affect the reception of a soldier or veteran both within his home community and within the wider social structures of the Roman empire. This thesis seeks to understand *milites* as *cives*.

Opening Salvo: studying soldiers and status

The sorts of problem that motivate the present study are illustrated by two ancient texts of distinct modes of production, one literary and one documentary, both composed within a fifty year period but describing events more than two hundred years apart, and both concerned with similar themes, but distinct in their application, one set in the Italian heart of Rome's empire and the other belonging to a distant provincial town. The first is a passage of Cassius Dio (49.14), senator in the second and third centuries and prolific historian, from his account of the turbulent final years of the Roman Republic. The second is an honorific inscription from the ancient Libyan town of Thaena dating to the final decade of the second century AD, a period contemporary with Dio's time as a senator and itself witness to the collapse of the long-lived Nerva-Antonine dynasty and the rise of the Severan dynasty under which Dio himself would gain prominence (*AE* 1949, 38). Both texts are fundamentally concerned with the sorts of institutions and agents, and the complex mesh of relationships between them, of which the modern historian of the Roman world and the place of the army within it must be cognizant, and which are of broad significance to the study of Roman history beyond the narrow confines of the specific events they detail.

Soldiers and Civic Society I: Dio and the Sicilian mutiny

The passage from Dio gives Octavian's purported response to a mutiny of his soldiers following his activity in Sicily in 36 BC:¹¹

¹¹ The Sicilian campaign had seen – in something of a coup for Octavian – both the collapse of the forces of the rebel "pirate" Sextus Pompey and the effective removal of Octavian's colleague and rival, Marcus Lepidus, from the Triumvirate – leaving Octavian and Marc Antony as the two principal powers within the *res publica*. On the Sicilian war, and the role of Sextus Pompey, see especially Welch 2012: 261-90.

προσποισάμενος οὖν εὐλογά τε αὐτοὺς ἀξιοῦν καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων δεῖσθαι, διῆκε πρώτους μὲν τοὺς ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀντώνιον πρὸς τὴν Μούτιναν στρατεύσαντας αὐτῷ, ἔπειτα δὲ ὡς καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι ἐνέκειντο, καὶ ἐξ ἐκείνων πάντας τοὺς δέκατον ἔτος ἐν τῇ στρατείᾳ ἔχοντας. καὶ ἵνα γε τοὺς λοιποὺς ἐπισχῇ, προσανεῖπεν ὅτι οὐδενὶ ἔτ' αὐτῶν, οὐδ' ἂν τὰ μάλιστα ἐθελήσῃ, χρήσεται. ἀκούσαντες δὲ τοῦτο οὐδὲν ἔτ' ἐφθέγγαντο, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάνυ προσέχειν αὐτῷ ἤρξαντο, ὅτι τοῖς τε ἀφειμένοις, οὐ πᾶσι, πλὴν τῶν προτέρων, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀξιοτάτοις, τὰ τε ἄλλα ὅσα ὑπέσχητο δώσειν καὶ χώραν νεμεῖν ἐπηγγείλατο, καὶ σφισι πᾶσι μὲν πεντακοσίας δραχμάς, τοῖς δὲ δὴ ναυκρατήσασι καὶ στέφανον ἐλαίας ἔδωκε. καὶ τούτου τοὺς τε ἄλλους πολλὰ ὡς ἐκάστους, καὶ τοὺς ἑκατοντάρχους ὡς καὶ ἐς τὰς βουλὰς αὐτοὺς τὰς ἐν ταῖς πατρίσι καταλέξων, ἐπήλπισε. [...] οὕτω μὲν τότε τοὺς στρατιώτας κατέστησε: καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀργύριον αὐτοῖς αὐτίκα, τὴν δὲ χώραν οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον ἔδωκεν.

Therefore, pretending that what they were demanding was reasonable and that their needs were only human, Octavian discharged first those who had taken to the field for him against Antony at Mutina, and then, because the rest were also standing firm, also all of those who were in their tenth year on campaign. And to make sure that he at least restrained the rest, he declared that he would no longer make use of those [who had been discharged] – not even though he might desperately wish to do so. When they heard this they said nothing further but began paying him total attention, because he announced that he would grant to those who had been discharged (not to all, beyond the first discharged, but to the most deserving) everything else he had promised, and would distribute land; and because he granted to each of them 500 *drachmae*, and to those actually victorious in the sea-battle an olive crown as well. And after this he filled the rest of them with an expectation for many rewards each, and the centurions that he would enrol them in the councils in their hometowns. [...] In this way he pacified his soldiers at that time. He gave the money right away; the land not much later.

Whereas the Caesar of legend could dispel a mutiny of his soldiers with charisma and a single word, Octavian, heir to Caesar's name, must use his ruthlessness and financial clout – *partim severitate, partim liberalitate*.¹² Accounts of the mutiny in Sicily are provided in four extant literary sources: Velleius Paterculus' early first century AD *Compendium of Roman History* 2.81.1-2; Appian's mid-second century *Civil Wars* 5.128-9 – from the part of his expansive

¹² Vell. Pat. 2.81, on the same event.

Roman History dealing with the civil wars; Cassius Dio's early third century *Roman History* 49.13-14, above; and Orosius' early fifth century *History against the Pagans* 6.18.33. Orosius deals with the mutiny in perfunctory fashion, simply giving his understanding of its motivation – land grants – and the number of troops discharged – 20,000, the same as the figure provided by Appian. Velleius Paterculus gives neither numbers nor motivations (although a number of those discharged are reported to be granted lands in Campania): the mutiny is not serious and is put to rest almost as soon as it had begun thanks to the actions of Octavian, described here rather prematurely as *princeps*.

The most substantial narrative accounts of the mutiny are proffered by Appian and Cassius Dio, the broad strokes of which are the same. But whereas in Appian the grievances seem genuine enough (that veterans of the Sicilian campaign should reap rewards equal to the veterans of Philippi), Dio has the soldiers revolt feigning desire for discharge while actually, prophesying conflict between Octavian and the other remaining triumvir Marc Antony, secretly hoping rather to drive up the price for their continued service. And whereas in Dio's account Octavian quashes the mutiny without too much difficulty by calling the mutineers' bluff and discharging them, while maintaining the loyalty of the rest through promises of land, money, *dona militaria* and (for centurions) enrolment as civic councillors, for Appian the affair is rather more troublesome. An initial attempt by Octavian to quell the mutineers through the promise of further rewards (*dona militaria* and, for centurions, the dignity of becoming civic councillors) falls on deaf ears – they want land and money, not “toys for boys” (παισὶν ἄθύρματα) – and it is only then that Octavian is forced to discharge substantial numbers of mutineers and pay a bonus to the remainder of his soldiers.¹³ This then is the fundamental distinction between these two narratives: that Appian makes the prospect of being a civic councillor, part of Octavian's opening salvo, the sort of misguided reward that has no real value to soldiers; while for Dio it is the final weapon in Octavian's arsenal to guarantee the continued service of his centurions. This passage therefore raises some important questions, both

¹³ For an account of the distinct approaches towards the Triumviral period of the Antonine Alexandrian Appian and the Severan senator Dio, see Gowing 1992 and review by Pelling 1994. Gowing somewhat rehabilitates the reputation of Appian, crediting him with a more objective approach to history-writing than Dio, and with being less exclusively focussed on Octavian (this latter point over-emphasised, Pelling states). For Cassius Dio's emphasis on the greed and misconduct of soldiers, see especially de Blois 1997 and 1998-9: 275ff. Although Appian also treats the importance of the army, Dio's particular concern with the dangers of soldiers is driven by his experience of the events of the third century, and the army's role within them – a concern shared with the roughly contemporary historian Herodian (e.g. Sidebottom 1998; de Blois 1998). Thus, in the contrasting narratives of the mutiny, Dio's soldiers are greedy, whereas Appian's have genuine grievances. Dio's Octavian is ruthless and cunning; Appian's must deal with an actual crisis. Finally, Appian's decision to end his treatment of his *Civil Wars* with the defeat not of Marc Antony but of Sextus Pompey makes it important to render the events in Sicily a “satisfying climax” (Pelling 1994: 225).

historical and historiographical, about the relationship between military rank and social status, particularly in the civic sphere, and about the significance – or perceived significance – of the integration of soldiers and veterans into the communities of their hometowns.

Although at least one veteran settled at Capua in the triumviral period is known to have become a civic figure,¹⁴ the idea that Octavian himself had the ability directly to foist centurions upon the councils of Roman towns is surely a fiction.¹⁵ The municipal laws that survive from the reign of Domitian (r. AD 81-96) allow for the emperor himself, having been named an honorary magistrate of a town, to select the individual who will represent him in the community as his *praefectus*,¹⁶ and from the late first century AD *curatores rei publicae* were sometimes appointed to oversee towns by the emperor;¹⁷ but there is nothing to suggest that even in the decade prior to the establishment of the Principate was it possible for councillors and magistrates to be forced upon local civic communities by external authorities. Dio himself gives the lie to the idea that it was Octavian's prerogative to grant civic positions to his soldiers: the reader learns that, of the various rewards promised to his soldiers, money is distributed in the immediate aftermath of the revolt and land follows later; civic honours are not mentioned in this context again. So why provide an account that denies agency both to towns and civic communities in determining the composition of their own councils, and to the soldiers themselves in driving their own social mobility? With Dio living in a 3rd century AD world where intervention by an emperor, or emperor-figure, in individual communities was less implausible (as with the *curator rei publicae*), we might suspect a rhetorical retrojection of his own concerns onto the triumviral period.

This concern brings us to the world of literary tropes that surround the themes of military-driven social mobility, and of the participation of soldiers and veterans in areas of society that go beyond the military sphere. Ancient accounts of the late Republic in particular

¹⁴ L. Antistius Campanus, *CIL* X 3903. Campanus' son was also one of the two chief magistrates of Capua, a *duumvir*, in 13 BC (*CIL* X 3803). Campanus appears to have served under both Caesar and Octavian (following Mommsen's restoration), and was perhaps settled in Capua in the very deductions of 36 BC that followed the Sicilian war (Vell. Pat. 2.82; Dio 49.14). On Campanus, see Keppie 1983: 108-9.

¹⁵ Then again, given the leadership roles of centurions and tribunes within the legions, it seems only natural that they might also be expected to take on leadership roles within the veteran colonial settlements. Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 14.27, which contrasts the Neronian veteran colonies at Tarentum and Antium, comprised of time-served men from across the legions, with earlier veteran colonies in which whole legions were supposedly deducted together, along with their centurions and tribunes. See Keppie 1983: 106ff on the role of the tribunes settled with the legions.

¹⁶ The archetypal Flavian municipal law is reconstructed from surviving tablets of the Flavian municipal law as it applied to three Spanish towns (the *leges Salpensana*, *Malacitana* and, most substantially, *Irnitana*). The inscriptions date to AD 91, although the archetypal law itself predates this by around a decade. See Gonzáles 1986; Lintott 1993: 140-5. The *praefecti Caesaris* were figures selected to represent the emperor when he himself had been appointed to an honorary magistracy in a town. For a more detailed discussion of these *praefecti*, see Chapter Four.

¹⁷ See especially Eck 1979: 190ff and Jacques 1983 and 1984.

suffer from the correlation that is drawn between military service and the unjust accumulation of wealth or positions of power. Marius, of course, is blamed for his role in transforming the army so that it depended upon the poorest members of society, whose loyalties could be bought by their generals.¹⁸ And so the senates of the two dictators, Sulla and Caesar, are stuffed full of former soldiers and other undeserving nobodies;¹⁹ their veterans come to dominate the elites of the communities in which they settle;²⁰ or else are failures in civilian life and join revolts;²¹ and the descendants of these veterans become major players on the political scene of the Principate.²² It should come as no surprise that a period of history made infamous by the pre-eminence of Rome's armies, both in the rapid expansion of the empire abroad and in the political discord at home, should continue to provide a paradigm according to which the key symptom of a state gone wrong was the involvement of the military in political spheres, and in which mere soldiers could themselves make their way into positions of political authority, whether in the towns or at Rome itself. This passage of Dio thus provides a singular starting-point for further discussion on the relationship between soldiers and society, and its particular presentation and colouring within the ancient literature. In particular, Dio's account introduces the idea of the emperor – for an emperor is what Octavian as *princeps* will become, and it is the Roman empire of the emperors that proffers the historical context for Dio's writing – as a mediator for the relationship between town and soldier.

Soldiers and Civic Society II: The court of Commodus

Advancing the narrative of Roman history some two hundred years forward, the second text focussed on here – an inscription – recalls for the modern reader one of the incentives for military service with which Dio's Octavian mollifies his recalcitrant soldiers, providing a

¹⁸ On allowing the *proletarii* / *capite censi* to enlist: Plut. *Mar.* 9.1; Sall. *Jug.* 86. On the enrolment of *capite censi*, and Marius' motivations, see Rich 1983. On the loyalties of such soldiers to the generals who paid them: App. *BC* 1.56-7 (Sulla's first march on Rome).

¹⁹ Sulla's senate: Dion. *Ant. Rom.* 5.77; Sall. *Cat.* 37; Caesar's senate: Dio 42.51.5; 43.20.1-2; 43.47.3; 48.34.4; 52.42.1. See Chapter Three for further discussion of such claims.

²⁰ See, for example, Horace *Sat.* 1.6.71-8 on the sons of centurions in the local school at Venusia.

²¹ On Sulla's veterans flocking to join the so-called Catilinarian conspiracy, see Sall. *Cat.* 16.4; Cic. *Cat.* 2.9.20. Cicero repeatedly claims that these veterans didn't know what to do with the farms they had gained upon their discharge: Cic. *Cat.* 2.6.14; 3.6.14; *Mur.* 24-49; *leg. agr.* 2.38-78. However, given that much of Rome's soldiery likely came from rural Italy at this time, farming was surely less alien to them than Cicero pretends. The veterans of the triumviral and early Augustan period also seem *au fait* with agriculture and managing the lands they were given in Italy. See Brunt 1971: 309-12 and Keppie 1983: 122ff.

²² Notably the emperor Vespasian (Suet. *Vesp.* 1): his grandfather, Titus Flavius Petro, had either been a Pompeian centurion or an *evocatus* before becoming a debt-collector; his father, Sabinus, may have been a *primipilaris* before becoming a tax-farmer, and married Vespasia Polla, the daughter of a military tribune and prefect, and the brother of a senator. Cf. C. Ateius Capito, the famed Roman jurist and suffect consul of AD 5, whose father had been an optimate tribune of the plebs in 55 BC and whose grandfather was a Sullan centurion (Tac. *Ann.* 3.75).

documentary example of a military centurion who, in a rather different historical context, had become a member of his hometown's civic elite (*AE* 1949, 38):

[... *Aemi*]lio *Q*(uinti) *fil*(io) *Pap*(iria) *Pudenti* / [*cent*]urioni legionis *III Aug*(ustae) / [*it*(em)] *leg*(ionis) *II Aug*(ustae) *it*(em) *iterum l*(e)*g*(ionis) / [*III A*]ug(ustae)²³ *it*(em) *leg*(ionis) *XI Claudia* / [*adl*]ecto in comitatu *Imp*(eratoris) / [*Com*][[*modi*]] *Aug*(usti) *Pii Fel*(icis) *Ilvir*/[*o q*(uin)*q*(uennali?)] *col*(oniae) *Thaenitanae* *fratri* / [*Q*(uinti) *Ae*]mili *Laeti praef*(ecti) *praet*(orio) *ob* / *singularem innocentiam* / *et in promerendis singulis* / *universisq*(ue) *civib*(us) *examina*/tam *adfectionem* *ordo Thaen*(ensium) / *statuam equest*(rem) *ponendam* / *de pub*(lico) *dec*(revit?) *d*(ecreto) *d*(ecurionum) *p*(ecunia) *p*(ublica)

To Aemilius Pudens, son of Quintus and a member of the voting-tribe *Papiria*, a centurion in the third legion *Augusta* and the second legion *Augusta* and in the third legion *Augusta* a second time and in the eleventh legion *Claudia*, appointed to the *comitatus* of the *Imperator* Commodus Augustus Pius Felix, a *duumvir* (*quinquennalis*?) of the colony of Thaena, brother of Quintus Aemilius Laetus the Praetorian Prefect. On account of his particular upstandingness and his tried and tested attachment to winning over each and every citizen, the council of Thaena decreed that an equestrian statue be erected at public expense. Done at the public expense by a decree of the decurions.²⁴

Located just to the north of the Gulf of Gabès – the feared “Syrtis of the lotus-eaters”²⁵ – the small Libyan town of Thaena had a long history in antiquity that mirrored the regional

²³ The transcription in the *AE* restores [*III A*]ugustae for the third legion in which Pudens cites service, presumably on the count of line length. However, it is odd that the inscription would tell us that Pudens served in “the second legion *Augusta* and in the second legion *Augusta* a second time (*item iterum*)”, unless perhaps this means that he held a different gradation of centurionate (on which see Chapter One). Given that it was possible to specify if this was the case (e.g. *CIL* VI 3584: *prom*(otus) / *in leg*(ione) *ead*(em)), I am inclined tentatively to suggest that we should instead read [*III A*]ugustae. Cf. *CIL* III 13360, where *iterum* is used to describe a centurion transferring back into a legion in which he had previously served – not to a transfer between grades within a single legion.

²⁴ On the legions, the articles (s.v. *legio*) in the *Pauly-Wissowa / Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (*RE*) by Ritterling 1925, and in its more recent update, *Der Neue Pauly* (*DNP*) / *Brill's New Pauly* (*BNP*) by Campbell 1999, remain helpful ports-of-call. For the *III Augusta* see also the dedicated monograph by Le Bohec 1989a. For a cursory accounting: 1) The third *Augusta* was the legion of Roman North Africa, stationed at Lambaesis from AD 128. The legion likely played a role in the civil war of 193 on the side of Severus, since it was awarded the titles *pia vindex* by Severus around the time he became emperor. 2) The second *Augusta* was one of the British legions, based in this period at Isca Augusta (Caerleon). The legion backed the governor of Britannia, Clodius Albinus, in the civil wars of 193 (when Albinus was nominally aligned with the victorious Severus) and 196-197 (against Severus). 3) The eleventh legion *Claudia* was at this time stationed at Durostorum in Moesia, and backed Severus against Pescennius Niger in the civil war of 193.

²⁵ Str. *Geog.* 17.17 on the Lotus connection. As an area feared by sailors see *Acts* 27.10-19.

transformations of political hegemony, evolving from Phoenician colony to Carthaginian town, to Roman *civitas* community and subsequently *colonia*,²⁶ and then to the seat of a Christian bishopric in late antiquity. Although the town itself appears only rarely in surviving ancient writings, it made an unwitting yet significant contribution to the political developments of the late second century through the success of one of its native children, the Praetorian Prefect and “regicide” Quintus Aemilius Laetus, credited by the Greek historians of the third century with the orchestration of the plot to assassinate Commodus at the close of 192 and with ultimate responsibility for the rapid assassination of Commodus’ short-lived successor Pertinax.²⁷ As if this were not enough, both ancient writings and modern scholarship have attributed to the influence of Laetus the elevation of another North African to the governorship of Pannonia Superior from 191: Septimius Severus, the ultimate victor in the civil war of 193 and founder of the Severan imperial dynasty.²⁸

Thaena was evidently keen to make the most of its connection with one of the most powerful figures in the Empire. At some point, probably early in the 190s, the town’s council decreed the erection of an equestrian statue,²⁹ funded by the public purse, in honour of Laetus’ brother – Aemilius Pudens, a legionary centurion and holder of the town’s chief magistracy, and a member of Commodus’ *comitatus*.³⁰ But as notable as Pudens must have been within the local sphere, the inscription that survives from the statue-base leaves the reader in no doubt that Pudens’ relationship with the Praetorian Prefect Laetus was at the forefront of the minds

²⁶ Under Roman authority from the resolution of the Punic Wars, Thaena later appears as one of the towns captured by Julius Caesar during his North African campaign (Str. *Geog.* 17.12). The town probably gained colonial status under Hadrian, and is attested in the epigraphic record of the mid-second century as Aelia Augusta Mercurialis.

²⁷ The third century narrative about the role of Praetorian Prefect Aemilius Laetus in the demise of Commodus and then Pertinax, and his death under Didius Iulianus, is found at Herodian 1.16-17, 2.1-2; Dio 73.19, 22, 74.1, 6, 8-9, 16. Accounts of these events are also given in the notoriously difficult *Historia Augusta: Comm.* 15, 17; *Pert.* 4, 5, 10; *Did. Iul.* 6.

²⁸ Ancient account: SHA *Sev.* 4. Modern acceptance: Picard 1963: 90, in his review of Pflaum 1960-1961; Jarrett 1963: 220-1; Birley, A. 1969, 1988: 83 and 2000: 191. Other notable North Africans prominent during the reign of Commodus who might owe their success to the influence of Laetus as Praetorian Prefect include the governor of Moesia Inferior, Severus’ own brother P. Septimius Geta, and the governor of Britannia and prospective usurper, D. Clodius Albinus.

²⁹ There is nothing to indicate that the statue was commissioned after the assassination of Commodus – or at least after news of the death of Commodus had reached the town – and it would surely have been unwise to mention this connection with Commodus after the assassination. Commodus was declared a public enemy by the senate and suffered memory sanctions (SHA *Comm.* 20). In this very inscription his name has been erased, and then re-inscribed, presumably following his rehabilitation by Septimius Severus (for an account of memory sanctions in the Greco-Roman world, see Flower 2006). But the justification for the statue of Pudens, *ob singularem innocentiam*, must in hindsight have seemed a very unfortunate choice of words.

³⁰ The *comitatus* refers to the imperial court, a *comes Augusti* one of its members. It is possible that in this period there was some equivalency between the *comitatus* and the *consilium principis*, or court council. See Gizewski and Tinnefeld 1997 (*DNP s.v. comes*) and, on the *consilium principis*, Crook 1955. Birley, A. 1988: 83 interpreted Pudens’ role within the court as that of a bodyguard. Other stories of centurions who had come into close contact with an emperor and gone on to hold local office will be presented in Chapter Four.

of the town's councillors. The text itself therefore throws up a number of important questions concerning the relationship between military rank and social status, and the involvement of military personnel within the urban and civic elites of the Empire.

First, the question of the sorts of ranks achievable – and within what sort of timeframe – by those of different social origins underpins the distinct successes of the two brothers, one of whom had risen no further than the centurionate, in which rank he had in any case perhaps begun his military career, while the other had obtained the most significant position open to equestrians, the prefecture of the Praetorian Guard.³¹ The inscription invites us to consider the consequences of a system which allowed both for such massive discrepancies in the achievements of those belonging not only to the same privileged social class but to the same family, as in the case of Laetus and Pudens, and for apparent parity in the positions that could be achieved by members of such different social classes, as in the rank of centurion shared by Pudens and the many others who had been promoted through the ranks.

Second, we are encouraged to consider the factors involved in Pudens' transition from military to civic responsibilities.³² That his career belongs this way around is suggested by the text, with service as a centurion presumably predating his time in Commodus' *comitatus* – it seems likely that the latter was dependent upon his brother Laetus' appointment as Commodus' Praetorian Prefect and, given that Laetus was probably only Prefect at the very beginning of the 190s, there is surely not enough time for Pudens to have held so many centurionates within a couple of years. His civic magistracy – in which context this inscription probably belongs – surely postdates his military service, and was the product of the potent combination of Pudens' military rank, equestrian status, membership of Commodus' *comitatus* and relationship with the prominent Laetus. We are fortunate to have the ability to piece together important components of Pudens' life, including his broader social position – but imagine an inscription with no information beyond a career-list citing military positions and civic roles. There are many such cases, and the temptation automatically to ascribe a civic success to distinguished military service must be countered. Pudens, whose most notable achievements – *duumvir* and

³¹ Picard 1963: 90 uses this inscription to argue that Laetus and Pudens were not equestrians, at least in origin, seemingly because Pudens was a centurion, and thereby challenges the suggestion (e.g. Pflaum 1960-1961: no. 213) that Laetus was related to an M. Aemilius Laetus, an equestrian, and a *studiis* (one of the offices in the imperial chancellery) to an emperor after procuratorships in Gallia Lugdunensis and Aquitania. It is clear that equestrians could and did begin their military careers as centurions (see Chapter One), and Picard's argument should be dismissed. Any relationship with the *procurator*, on whose career see Bellon et al. 2020, remains uncertain.

³² Pudens was a *duumvir*, one of the two annually appointed senior magistrates – and quite possibly a *duumvir quinquennalis*, the term for when every fifth year the senior magistrates would oversee the local census. For further discussion of the *duoviri*, and for bibliography, see Chapter Four.

comes Augusti – seem the result more of his brother’s influence than of his own career, teaches us otherwise.

Third, this does not mean that military background should be overlooked altogether, that the pendulum should swing too far in the other direction. If we consider the underlying reason for the *ordo* of Thaena to commemorate Pudens – and to do so in such a way that it recalls the reigning emperor Commodus, his Praetorian Prefect Laetus and his *comes* Pudens – we are drawn inexorably into an environment in which towns sought to establish ties with the emperor and the heart of the empire, whether for the sake of inter-city competition, self-presentation, or even in the hope of eliciting imperial benefactions. And what institutions are more associated with the emperor than the army, with its oath of loyalty (the *sacramentum*), with its legions named by and after the emperors, with its practice of carrying imperial likenesses (*imagines*), and with the very act of campaigning alongside the emperor? No matter the significance of Pudens’ social background, the town of Thaena was actively engaged in the promotion of his position as a centurion and his brother’s command over the Praetorian Guard. The context of each of these achievements remains very much in a military sphere, a sphere intimately associated with the emperor, and especially so in the case of the Praetorian Guard.

The themes extricated from this inscription thus relate to and expand upon those drawn from the Dio passage. Like no other surviving inscription, this text problematizes – through the contrast in the varied successes of two brothers and through the foregrounding of issues such as social pedigree, family ties and imperial connections – the questions of the correlation between prior social status and the military rank acquired, and between the military ranks held and status subsequently obtained, as well as locating the discussion within the broader context of the nature of the relationship envisaged between town and emperor.

The Marching Order

It is the broad theme of the interplay between military rank and social status that drives both the structure of the present study and the compilation of material upon which it relies. Selected as the primary military institution under the microscope is the centurionate – including its most illustrious subset, the primipilate – as a rare Roman organisation whose members came from vastly different social backgrounds, and whose alumni are significantly over-represented amongst local elites who also saw service in the armies of Rome. Chapter One will introduce the institution of the centurionate and set out some of the questions and debates that still surround it, especially its position and status within the military and wider society. In particular, it will underline the importance of the centurion’s receipt of the *stipendium* alongside the

regular *milites*, identifying both classes as long-term soldiers with many of the same privileges and restrictions based upon their requirement to serve a minimum term.

Chapter Two and its addendum will make case-studies of two technical questions – the applicability of the general non-recognition of military marriage, and the extension of pseudo-technical terms used to describe ordinary *milites*, also to centurions – to demonstrate some of the ways in which at a formal level centurions were both associated with, and differentiated from, the *milites*; and in which they themselves took pains to distinguish themselves from those who served only in the ranks. Through the general similarities in the legal statuses of most centurions and *milites*, the former were often closely identified with the latter as long-serving military professionals, ensuring that soldiers were not alienated by the privileges of their most immediate commanders.

Chapter Three will address the social composition of the centurionate and argue that, although equestrian centurions took pains to differentiate themselves from their colleagues promoted from the ranks (a status distinction perhaps reflected even in certain legal privileges), this heterogeneity served to align the centurionate as a class broadly with the interests of the Roman elite. Further, the formalities of the appointment of centurions, as well as their responsibilities and prospects once appointed and the sorts of career-path and opportunities for status upgrades open to veteran centurions, associated the centurionate particularly with the imperial family and the *domus divina*. However, the inclusion of former *milites* within the centurionate, not to mention the expected length of military service and the potential for influence at the side of the emperor (and, to a less formalised extent, the generals and warlords of the late Republic), rendered centurions targets of the political and literary elite. This “centurion-hysteria” made the centurionate a battle-ground for Roman elites to contest the relationship between the military and elite society. But the centurionate, through both its militarisation of Roman elites and its creation of new elites through military service, played a vital role in bridging the gap between army and citizen society.

By investigating the relationship between soldiers and veterans and the local civic elites of the towns of the western empire, Chapter Four will demonstrate the crucial role that military personnel played – or were at least presented as playing – in forging links between their towns, the emperor and the army. And that, through a combination of developments in both military and civic spheres, the nature of this relationship fundamentally changed during the course of the second and third centuries as the veterans holding civic office came increasingly from the junior ranks of the army below the centurionate. Although the specific focus of this study is the complex relationship between military rank and social status during the Roman Principate,

its wider contribution to the scholarly field of Roman history is therefore a history of the Roman soldier as the centre of the triangulation of influences between armies, emperors and cities. Even in their capacities as citizens and civilians, Rome's soldiers and veterans can never be separated entirely from the military world.

CHAPTER 1

Where Eagles Dare

Centurions in the hierarchy of the Roman Army

“They talked of officers promoted from the ranks. I asked the Duke whether they were not invariably harsh to those in the same order from which they had sprung? He answered in the negative, but said that their fault always was, not being able to resist drink - their low origin then came out - and you therefore could never perfectly trust them.”

Conversation, Wellington to the Earl Stanhope, 4th November 1831 (Sudbourn)

The centurion Cornidius leaps from the annals like a Roman Blackbeard, striking terror into his enemies not with “lighted matches under his hat” but “wearing on top of his helmet a brazier, fanned by his body in motion, [with which] he discharged an inferno from his head as if it were on fire”.¹ The Roman response, as preserved in Florus’ epitome of Livy, was one of impressed bewilderment at this “centurion of ample barbarous brutishness, which was in any case potent against men cast in the same mould”. Cornidius was able to out-barbarian the barbarians *par excellence*, the infamous Moesians.² But it was not just barbarian foes that centurions were intended to terrify: they were also unleashed upon their men, and centurions are almost uniquely associated with corporal punishment in their role as enforcers of *disciplina* and commanders of soldiers. It is no accident that the symbol that came to represent their class was the vine-staff – the *vitis* – with which they punished those under their command.³ The centurion’s right to administer corporal punishment to soldiers was legally protected: those who grabbed the *vitis* during their beating suffered a change in their terms of service (*militia*);

¹ Flor. 2.26: *non minimum terroris incussit barbaris Cornidius centurio satis barbarae, efficacis tamen apud tales homines stoliditatis, qui foculum gerens super cassidem, agitatum motu corporis, flammam velut ardenti capite funditabat*. The passage comes from Florus’ cursory reference to the campaign of M. Licinius Crassus (*cos.* 30 BC, grandson of the “triumvir”) against the Moesians during his proconsulship of Macedonia. For an ancient account of the campaign, see Dio 51.23-7. For the famous portrait of the pirate Blackbeard, see Johnson 1724: 87.

² Flor. *op. cit.*: *ipsorum etiam barbari barbarorum*.

³ E.g. Plin. *HN* 14.3; Ov. *Ars. Am.* 3.527. In the late first century AD, Juvenal describes the process of seeking a direct appointment as a centurion as “petition[ing] for the vine-staff” (*vitem posce*: 14.193). Cf. also Luc. *Phars.* 6.146 on the *vitis* as a symbol of the centurion’s rank. Beatings from the *vitis* allegedly conveyed honour (Plin. *HN* 14.3), since this was the prerogative of citizen soldiers (Livy *Per.* 57.4: *si Romanus esset, uitibus, si extraneus, uirgis*).

those who actually broke the *vitis* were punished in just the same way as if they had struck the centurion, with execution.⁴ Abusive centurions are well-represented in the literature, notably in the infamous case of the centurion Lucilius whose over-enthusiasm in breaking his *vitis* on the backs of the *milites* he punished won him first the moniker “*cedo alteram*” (“Bring another”: Tac. *Ann.* 1.23), and later an early death during the mutinies of the legions in Pannonia and Germany AD 14.⁵ Indeed, occupying a central position within the chain of command as intermediaries between the *milites* and the legionary *tribuni*, at times of mutiny centurions are made not only the immediate target of the anger of the rank-and-file but must also fear the wrath of the senior command once the mutiny has been suppressed.⁶ Tacitus asserts that in the aftermath of the mutiny of the Rhine legions there was a revision of the list of centurions (a *centurionatum*: *Ann.* 1.44) and only those who gained the approval of both rank-and-file and military tribunes could retain their position. It is in those very moments when *disciplina* has collapsed that the surprising fragility of the status of the centurion reveals itself.

Centurions, identified as the fundamental corps of experienced “officers”,⁷ have generally come off rather well in the various surveys of the Roman army since Domaszewski’s landmark *Die Rangordnung des römischen Heeres* (1908).⁸ Questions remain, however, over their position within both the military hierarchy and the command-structure.⁹ For Isaac and Ward, the key point is the gap between the centurions and the equestrian military tribunes; for Dobson it is their proximity.¹⁰ Gilliam has argued that centurions were broadly classified with members of the rank-and-file on the basis that they were *caligati*, an allegedly technical term

⁴ *Dig.* 49.16.13.4.

⁵ For an epigraphic parallel with the abusive Lucilius, see perhaps Minucius Lorarius (Minucius “the scourger”, appropriately holding a *vitis* in his right hand: *AE* 1982: 395). Seneca warns that centurion brutality might prompt deserters (*Clem.* 1.16.3).

⁶ Tacitus in particular distinguishes centurions as the class that most suffers at the hands of *milites* during mutinies: *hic tantum interfici centuriones, eici tribunos, includi legatos* (*Ann.* 1.42). See also: Tac. *Ann.* 1.20, 31–32. (AD 14 mutinies); Tac. *Hist.* 1.80, 82 (AD 69 mutiny in support of Otho). On centurions’ abuse of control over grants of furlough as a motivation to mutiny, see *id.* 1.17.

⁷ This thesis will steer away from the term “officer” as a descriptor for any of the various categories of Roman commander to avoid comparisons with modern militaries, the fallacy of which is revealed by the sheer variety of equivalencies drawn with centurions, from Parker’s “sergeant-major” (1928: 31) to Brand’s “captain” (1968: 52).

⁸ E.g. Syme 1939: 395: “The centurions provided the bone and nerves of the Roman army”; Gilliver 2007: 191: “Centurions provided not only the military experience that many elites lacked, but also continuity of practice and personnel, vital in a system in which the tribunes and legates held office usually for no more than three years”.

⁹ Isaac 1998b: 388: “While the former [military hierarchy] expresses a set of social relations in the barracks, the latter determines the way an army functions as an organised fighting force.”

¹⁰ Isaac 1998b: 395: “the existence of a complicated hierarchy within the group of centurions is of less significance than the gap between all of them and the equestrian officers”; Ward 2012: 37: “centurions during both the Republic and Principate were distinctly inferior in rank and social status to the legates and military tribunes”; Dobson 1972: 206 (cf. 1970: 100): “the gap between the centurions and the ranks was far greater than the gap between them and the tribunes, with whom in literary sources they are often seen acting, and suffering, in concert.”

denoting a class of professional soldier and named for the soldier's boot, the *caliga*.¹¹ Goldsworthy accords centurions a high status, based not only on their responsibilities but also on the assumption that a majority (and especially so for the senior centurion within each legion, the *primus pilus*) were directly appointed to their position.¹² Addressing this debate on the position of the centurion within the Roman army is more than just a footnote to the army's institutional history: it gets to the heart of the remarkable complexities of practice exhibited in the relationships between the military and wider social hierarchies. The present chapter will speak to the centurionate as an institution, locating the centurion's shifting position within the hierarchy and command structure of the Roman armies during the Principate. In so doing it will use the lens of the centurionate to proffer a brief history of the Roman army, introducing many of its key terms and features and providing the historical context necessary for the debates that underpin the subsequent chapters.¹³ This chapter will also argue that one of the defining features of centurions, at least those promoted through the ranks, was their requirement to complete a minimum number of years of service like regular *milites*. This does not however indicate parity of status with *milites*; rather it relates to their condition as professional soldiers dedicated to long-term service, as opposed to equestrian or senatorial commanders who normally spent only a few years in each post. This chapter lays the groundwork for the subsequent chapters, which investigate the dialogue between the centurionate and various social groups within the empire and demonstrate that centurions of all kinds were distinguished socially as a class unique within both the army and wider society: a class that, through the process of commanding soldiers and associating with equestrians, was forged into a new military elite.

The army of the Principate: hierarchy and command-structure

The formalisation of the standing army saw the maintenance of 28 citizen legions following Octavian's victory at Actium, a number kept roughly consistent throughout the Principate.¹⁴

¹¹ Gilliam 1946, *passim*.

¹² Goldsworthy 2003: 72.

¹³ For some of the most significant studies on the centurionate as an institution during the late Republic and Principate, see: Birley, E. 1988d, 1988e; Breeze 1993; Dobson 1955 (thesis), 1970, 1972, 1974, 1978, 2000; Dobson and Breeze 1969; Summerly 1992 (thesis); Richier 2004; Ward 2012 (thesis).

¹⁴ Following the Varian disaster at the Teutoburg Forest in AD 9 this would fall to 25 legions. See Tac. *Ann.* 4.5 on the number of legions under Tiberius (r. 14-37), 19 of which still existed when Dio was writing in the 3rd c. (55.23-4); under Septimius Severus (r. 193-211) the total number of active legions was around 33. For overviews of the army of the Principate, see Ritterling 1925, Webster 1979, Keppie 1984b, Le Bohec 1989b (= 1994), Goldsworthy 1996, Gilliver 2007.

Although levies remained a possibility, in general recruitment was to be on a voluntary basis.¹⁵ Terms of service were implemented: initially, in 13 BC, 16 years of active service, increased in AD 5 to 20 years of active service, probably followed by a period in reserve.¹⁶ In practice, however, soldiers might remain in active service for considerably longer, a complaint underlying the mutinies of AD 14; the epigraphy indicates that legionary service was normally around 25 years by the later first century.¹⁷ A paycheque, a *stipendium* paid every four months, and discharge bonus upon completion of the period of active service were guaranteed, set for ordinary *milites* at 225 *denarii* per year and 3,000 *denarii* respectively.¹⁸ An annual oath of loyalty, the *sacramentum*, was to be sworn to Augustus, and then to each successive emperor, and later the *imago*, the image of the current emperor, would be included amongst the military standards.¹⁹ To counter one of the dangers that had threatened the old Republic, the emperor, not the generals, was presented as the supreme patron of the armies. In addition to the citizen legions, non-citizen units of auxiliaries were instituted, supposedly similar in number but with greater flexibility in their creation or dismissal,²⁰ based on the *cohors* for infantry, containing centuries commanded by centurions, and the *ala* for cavalry, containing *turmae* commanded by decurions.²¹ Part-mounted cohorts, *cohortes equitatae* are also known.²² From the Flavians

¹⁵ Levies at times of crisis are indicated by Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.31, probably in the aftermath of the Varian disaster, and *Hist.* 2.57, 82 on the civil wars of AD 69) and Suetonius (*Aug.* 25, on Augustus levying slaves and freedmen for the defence of Pannonia and the Rhine).

¹⁶ *RGDA* 28; Suet. *Aug.* 49; Tac. *Ann.* 1.7, 17, 36, 78; Dio 54.25, 55.23, 57.6.5; Keppie 1997. Cf. Polyb. 6.19 for the maximum period of service during the mid-Republic set at twenty years. This maximum period was only applicable during times of crisis; otherwise normal service was sixteen years before the age of 46.

¹⁷ E.g. Keppie 1997: 92; 2003: 37.

¹⁸ 225 *denarii* was the figure set by Julius Caesar, when he apparently “doubled” (but probably simply increased) the pay of legionaries (Suet. *Jul.* 26 – virtually the only tangible military reform with which Caesar can be credited), and was probably maintained by Augustus. This is indicated by Tacitus’ statement (*Ann.* 1.17) that legionaries in AD 14 were paid ten *asses* a day (16 *asses* = 1 *denarius*; 3600 *asses* = 225 *denarii*). On the three instalments of 75 *denarii* (100 after an alleged increase by Domitian, r. 81-96) per year under the Principate, if not before, see Suet. *Dom.* 7; Dio 67.3.5; *P. Gen. Lat.* 4; Brunt 1950: 50-71; Alston 1994: 114.

¹⁹ On the emperor and the army, see especially Campbell 1984. The *sacramentum* was long-standing and, during the Republic, was overseen by the tribunes (Polyb. 6.21.2) and promised loyalty to the consuls, obedience to the laws, and steadfastness to the standards (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 10.18; 11.43). During the late Republic oaths might be co-opted by warlords such as Sulla (Plut. *Sull.* 27.3). Under the Principate the oath was to be sworn to the emperor (Tac. *Hist.* 1.55; Plin. *Ep.* 10.52) on the anniversary of their accession, or at the start of the year. On the *imagines* see Tac. *Ann.* 15.24, 29; *Hist.* 1.36, 41, 55; Suet. *Tib.* 48; Dio 62.23.3. In the legions and auxiliaries, *imaginiferi* were responsible for carrying *imagines* on a standard and depicted doing so on tombstones (e.g. *RIB* 521, 2nd-3rd c., Chester). See also Riccardi 2002, esp. 94-5.

²⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 4.5.

²¹ According to Josephus (*BJ* 3.6.2) a legion also contained 120 cavalrymen (cf. Veg. 2.6, 14). For much of the Principate these were, however, probably counted separately within the structure of the *centuriae* rather than grouped together into *turmae* like the auxiliaries (e.g. *CIL* III 11239 from Carnuntum in Pannonia Superior, early 2nd c.: *eq(ues) leg(ionis) XI C(laudiae) F(idelis) (centuria) Vindicis*). See Breeze 1969: 53-5.

²² Cavalry in an *ala* were however senior to cavalry in a *cohors equitata*. See Hadrian’s speech to the troops at Lambaesis, AD 128: *difficile est cohortales equites etiam per se placere difficilius post alarem exercitationem non displicere* – “it is tricky for part-mounted units to entertain even as they are, and even more difficult not to bore after a performance by a cavalry unit”. *AE* 2006: 1800 = *ILS* 2487, with commentary in Speidel 2006.

onwards citizens were found in the auxiliaries, and increasingly so during the second century; non-citizens must typically first be enfranchised to join the legions.²³ The *constitutio Antoniniana* of AD 212,²⁴ which enfranchised almost all free inhabitants of the empire as Roman citizens, would eliminate this distinction, although legions would retain their superior status: one father in Egypt expressed disappointment that his son had decided to transfer from the legions to a cavalry *ala*.²⁵ Augustus also established distinct military or paramilitary units of cohorts based at Rome – referred to here as the “Rome cohorts” when discussed as a collective: the Praetorian Guard, the urban cohorts, and the *vigiles*²⁶ – as well as the primary fleets stationed at Misenum and Ravenna, which received the title *praetoria* probably under the Flavians;²⁷ smaller naval forces were also deployed in the provinces.²⁸ Other more-specialised military organisations or arrangements of soldiers were employed during the course of the Principate, such as the *equites singulares Augusti*, which effectively became the cavalry wing of the Praetorian Guard following its establishment around the end of the first century AD, drawing its recruits from the auxiliary cavalry.²⁹ The various units maintained beyond the regular structure of the legions, auxiliaries and Rome cohorts will be introduced where relevant.

Senators and equestrians

From the time of Augustus the legion was as a rule to be commanded by a *legatus*, a senator appointed to his command by the emperor, beneath whom were six military tribunes, one *tribunus laticlavus*, a young scion of a senatorial family, and five equestrian *tribuni angusticlavii*.³⁰ The lengths of these commands are unknown, and were perhaps undefined

²³ On the recruitment of auxiliaries and their legal status, see especially Kraft 1951 and Haynes 2013. See also Cheesman 1914, Holder 1980 and, on the cavalry, Dixon and Southern 1992. In emergencies *peregrini*/non-citizens could be recruited into the legions and later gain citizenship. See Chapter Two n. 97.

²⁴ For a recent account, see Imrie 2018.

²⁵ *P. Oxy.* 14.1666 = *Select Papyri* 1.149, 3rd c.

²⁶ Crudely speaking, imperial bodyguards, city police and firefighters respectively, though it took some time for the distinct organisation and definitions of their roles to emerge (e.g. Ricci 2011). Urban cohorts are also known at the major cities of Lugdunum and Carthage. The urban cohorts and *vigiles* were not designed as combat units, although one or more of the urban cohorts accompanied Domitian in his Dacian War (Bérard 1988: 164-173; Ricci 2011: 491). Tacitus mentions the rarity of combat for both praetorian and urban cohorts during the civil war of AD 69 (*Hist.* 1.89). See also, on the Praetorian Guard: Durry 1938, Passerini 1939, Stöver 1994, Keppie 1996; Urban cohorts: Freis 1967; Ricci 2011; *Vigiles*: Reynolds 1926, Rainbird 1986, Sablayrolles 1996.

²⁷ *Suet. Aug.* 49. See Reddé 1986: 511-22 on dating the acquisition of the title *praetoria*.

²⁸ For accounts of the fleets, see also Starr 1960, Reddé 1986, papers on the *classis* in Forni 1992, and Hopkins 2014.

²⁹ On which see Speidel 1965, 1978 and 1994.

³⁰ Each legion was commanded by a *legatus legionis*, a praetorian senator, under the overall command of the governor of the province in which his legion was stationed. This is distinct from what would be called the *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, a senatorial governorship (of consular or praetorian status, despite the title, depending on the number of legions within the province) of one of the “imperial” provinces for which Augustus and successive emperors were officially responsible (within which, as a rule, the legions were stationed), as opposed to the “public” provinces for which the senate was nominally responsible, governed by proconsuls (on the division of empire, see

even in antiquity, but three years or so may have been normal for both legates and tribunes.³¹ A uniquely equestrian military *cursus honorum*, the *militiae equestres*, developed under Claudius (r. AD 41-54), virtually monopolising command of the auxiliary units within that order.³² From the middle of the first century AD a common order of progression took the equestrian appointee from command of an auxiliary cohort of infantry (*praefectus cohortis*) to a military tribunate in a legion and finally to command of an auxiliary unit of cavalry (*praefectus alae*).³³ The auxiliary units seem initially to have been quingenary (i.e. consisting of 500 soldiers), but by the end of the Julio-Claudian period milliary (i.e. 1,000 soldiers) units are known.³⁴ A milliary cohort was commanded by a *tribunus cohortis*, perhaps as an alternative to a legionary tribunate; command of a rare milliary cavalry *ala* (a Flavian creation) by a *praefectus* may have become a special fourth stage in the hierarchy.³⁵ But the progression was flexible, and in practice an equestrian might hold successive commands at the same level, or enter the military for a one-off command as a legionary tribune.³⁶ As the broader equestrian *cursus* developed, successful completion of the *militiae equestres* might be rewarded with an equestrian procuratorship (a non-magisterial office), including as fiscal-procurator under a provincial governor or as procurator-governor (i.e. an equestrian governor) in certain minor “imperial” provinces where there were no legions, or command of a fleet either in the provinces or in Italy.³⁷ Those especially favoured could go on to attain one of the four great prefectships

Suet. *Aug.* 47; Dio 53.12-15; Brunt 1984, esp. 432ff). When the province contained only one legion, the provincial governor was praetorian and also commanded the legion as its legate (i.e. as a *legatus Augusti pro praetore*). See Campbell 1975, Keppie 1984b. On the *tribuni angusticlavii*: Suet. *Otho* 10.1; *tribunus laticlavii*: Suet. *Dom.* 10.50.

³¹ On the lengths of service of legates and legionary tribunes, see Birley, E. 1988b: 95-6 (senators) and 1988c: 150-1 (equestrians).

³² On the equestrian commanders, see especially Birley, E. 1953c and 1988c (= 1953b), Keppie 1984b, Devijver 1989 and 1992, and Davenport 2019, esp. 253-298.

³³ Under Claudius the legionary tribunate was held after prefectship of an *ala*, privileging command of citizens over that of *peregrini*, but the positions were soon swapped to the order in which they would remain during the Principate (Suet. *Claud.* 25; Devijver 1970: 72-5). In the early Principate auxiliary commands had also been open to centurions and senators. At least under Augustus, when the auxiliaries were still in their infancy, *praefecturae alarum* were also available to young scions of senatorial families, each command to be shared in pairs (Suet. *Aug.* 38). On Claudius’ role as the first reformer of the Roman army since Augustus, see Thomas 2004. On the positions that could be held within the four stages of the *militiae*, see especially Devijver 1989: 59.

³⁴ Cf. Ps-Hyg. 16, 26-28 on the sizes of model auxiliary units.

³⁵ See Birley, E. 1988f: 350-6 on milliary *alae*, and 356-62 on milliary cohorts. Duncan-Jones 2016: 112 n. 34 has however demonstrated that Birley’s correlation between command of a milliary *ala* and a fourth *militia* is false: it is also held by those with fewer than three previous *militiae*, and if a fourth *militia* was held it need not be of a milliary *ala*.

³⁶ E.g. Davenport 2019: 262.

³⁷ See especially Davenport 2019: 312ff on the history of equestrian procurator-governors, with origins in the special treatment under Augustus of the special province of Egypt, placed under an equestrian *praefectus* and generally closed to senators and some equestrians without Augustus’ permission (see *id.* 172 on Tac. *Ann.* 2.59), and Sardinia, transferred from the governorship of a senatorial proconsul to that of an equestrian *praefectus* in AD 6, following raids by pirates. Claudius played a significant role in establishing further equestrian governorships,

reserved for equestrians: prefect of the *vigiles*, prefect of the *annona* (the grain supply), prefect-governor of Egypt, or prefect of the Praetorian Guard.³⁸ The prefect of the urban cohorts was, in contrast, a senator and magistrate.

The primipilate and the “primipilaris”

The establishment of the *militiae equestres* under Claudius was only half the story; around the same time legionary centurions, who in the early Principate had also been promoted into the positions that were now categorised within the *militiae equestres*, received their own distinct career-path. Tenure of the senior centurionate within the legion, as *primus pilus*, already important and prestigious in the armies of the late Republic,³⁹ became the primary route to a number of the commands that had been created under Augustus.⁴⁰ Each legion probably had only one *primus pilus* at a time, although exceptions are known.⁴¹ Their significance is indicated in a second-century AD guide to dream interpretation, Artemidorus’ *Oneirocritica* (*The Interpretation of Dreams*), according to which a mother who dreamt of giving birth to an eagle would bear a son who, if rich, might become emperor; if poor he would become the *primus pilus* of a legion:⁴² entering the primipilate is thus made the pinnacle of achievement for those not already members of Rome’s socio-economic elite. And no wonder, since those who completed their year or so in the post of *primus pilus* could call themselves *primipilares*, marking themselves out as an especially privileged class of veteran, who could leave the military for a comfortable retirement as an equestrian,⁴³ or alternatively embark upon a second career reserved for those holding that rare title. A *numerus* (an irregular unit) of *primipilares*

for which *procurator* became the standard title, except for Egypt, whose governor continued to be called a *praefectus*.

³⁸ Although the prefect-governor of Egypt was the senior prefectship until the Flavians (Davenport 2019: 303).

³⁹ The senior centurion of the Polybian army had the right to attend councils (6.24). Under Caesar and his generals this was perhaps also extended to the other centurions of the first cohort, the *primi ordines*, as at BG 5.28.

⁴⁰ The standard authority on the primipilate of the Principate remains Dobson (esp. 1955, 1974, 1978, 2000). The reconstruction of the *primipilaris* career-path that follows is derived from Dobson 1974.

⁴¹ E.g. CIL VIII 18065 (Lambaesis, AD 162), which names two *primi pili*. Perhaps one is a *primus pilus* in waiting.

⁴² 2.20.3. In the mid-third a *primus pilus* marked the end of his service symbolically by laying down his *vitis*, the vine-staff that symbolised his rank, at the *aquila*, the eagle standard that represented the Roman legion (*vitem posuit*: CIL VIII 2634 = ILS 2296, Lambaesis, 250s).

⁴³ The association between the primipilate and equestrian status is perhaps indicated at Martial 6.58 (*referes pili praemia clarus eques*: “you will bring back the rewards of the *primus pilus*, a distinguished equestrian” – unless of course the point is that this centurion was already an equestrian). It is thought that the discharge bonus was sufficient to qualify a time-served *primus pilus* as an equestrian, although the generally accepted figure, at 600,000 sesterces, is derived from a potential corruption in the manuscript tradition of Suetonius (*Gaius* 44). The context is Caligula’s stripping of elderly *primi pili* of their rank and reducing the discharge bonuses of “the rest” (*ceterorum*) to perhaps 600,000 HS (*sescentorum* in the transmitted text) or to 6,000 HS (Lipsius: *senum* or *sex*). Brunt 1950: 68 n. 115 rightly notes the lack of clarity in who is meant by *ceterorum*. But if 6,000 HS is preferred, the point must be that Suetonius is claiming Caligula halved the discharge bonus of regular *milites* (normally 12,000 HS, according to Dio 55.23): either nonsense, or indicative of Caligula’s craziness. On the textual problem see Kaster 2016: 172-3. On the discharge bonus of the *primi pili*, see especially Dobson 1972: 198, 1978: 116.

was maintained at Rome, providing a home to those waiting for further assignments.⁴⁴ An Augustan creation, the camp prefect / *praefectus castrorum* was to be third-in-command of a legion, ranking below only the senatorial *legatus* and *tribunus laticlavus*. At first open to both centurions and *tribuni angusticlavii*, it soon became the prerogative of the *primipilaris*. Normally as an alternative to becoming camp prefect, *primipilares* could receive promotion into the tribunates at Rome, working through the *vigiles*, urban cohorts, and Praetorian Guard. Following a tribunate in the Praetorian Guard a *primipilaris* could be appointed *primuspilus iterum*, perhaps performing the duties of a *praefectus castrorum* but with higher status,⁴⁵ before entering a procuratorial career: the sort of career someone who completed the *militiae equestres* might also go on to pursue. Dobson has estimated that the chances of a *primipilaris* gaining a procuratorship were one in fifteen, a great prefecture one in three hundred.⁴⁶ Alternative routes into the procuratorships include via a tribunate of the *equites singulares Augusti* or of the urban cohorts that were stationed in the provinces at Lugdunum and Carthage.⁴⁷ Other senior positions, for which experienced *primipilares* were particularly favoured, included the *praefectus* commander of a legion in Egypt – and later, under Septimius Severus (r. AD 193-211), also the Parthian legions.⁴⁸

The centurionate

The legion of the Principate was itself arranged into ten cohorts, as had been that of the late Republic. The historic shift from the manipular legion, consisting of three lines each of ten maniples – the *triplex acies* of young *hastati* at the front, experienced *principes* in the middle, and veteran *triarii* at the rear – to the cohortal legion of ten cohorts each of six centuries, is associated with the reforms of Marius during his series of consulships at the end of the second century BC.⁴⁹ But in spite of the death of the manipular legion, certain relics of the old system

⁴⁴ Dobson 1974: 399, 413.

⁴⁵ The position of *primuspilus iterum* is somewhat unclear, but could be held within a legion, perhaps indicating tenure of a position broadly equivalent to *praefectus castrorum*, or perhaps also at Rome. The title may have served to make clear that a *primipilaris* who had held tribunates at Rome and returned to the legions as acting *praefectus castrorum* was of a higher status than a regular one. See Dobson 1974: 420-1.

⁴⁶ Dobson 1974: 429.

⁴⁷ *Id.*: 420. On the provincial urban cohorts see Echols 1961, Freis 1967, *passim*, and, on the debate over the number of cohorts (and which ones) stationed in these cities, Ricci 2011: 493-6. See also Bérard 1991 and 2015 on the cohorts of Carthage and Lugdunum, respectively.

⁴⁸ See n. 37 on Egypt. Both the governor and the commanders of legions stationed there were equestrians. On the prefect commanders of the legions of Egypt, who were *primipilares* rather than ordinary equestrians, see Dobson 1974: 415-7. Septimius Severus' new *Parthica* legions (c. AD 195/6) followed a similar model, although strictly speaking the second legion *Parthica*, initially based in Italy, was commanded by a *praefectus* acting as a *legatus* (ILS 1356 and Strobel 2007: 272).

⁴⁹ Cohorts are attested, however, as early as the Second Punic War of 218-201 BC (E.g. Polyb. 11.23.1, 33.1 on Scipio's cohorts). On Marius and the cohorts, see esp. Keppie 1984b: 63-6 and Cagniat 2007: 85-6. Against the

survived even into the Principate, notably in the legionary centurionate. In the Polybian legion of the second century BC there had been two centurions per maniples, each commanding half.⁵⁰ the transition from three lines each of ten maniples to ten columns each of six centuries effectively switched the groupings of maniples/centuries from the horizontal to the vertical. Each centurion under the Principate held a distinct title according to their position within the cohort,⁵¹ the names of which were derived from this old manipular system: *hastatus posterior*, *hastatus prior*, *princeps posterior*, *princeps prior*, *pilus posterior*, *pilus prior* (the term *triarius* having fallen out in favour of *pilus*).⁵² Given the continued use of these centurial titles Speidel 2005 has argued that legions therefore continued to be organised in maniples under the Principate, and speculates that the *triplex acies* of the manipular legion may have remained a possible tactical formation even after the rise of the cohort. Indeed, the soldiers themselves may on rare occasion also be identified by their old manipular classes: Hadrian, in his speech to the soldiers at Lambaesis in AD 128, addressed separately the *pili*, *principes*, and *hastati*.⁵³ And as late as the time of Ammianus the contemporary 4th century legion was still described in terms of centuries, maniples and cohorts.⁵⁴ Although soldiers often identified themselves and their century by the name of the commanding centurion, they could also use the old manipulate title for their century.⁵⁵

idea that Marius was behind the general shift towards cohortal legions, see Bell 1965. On the various reforms associated with Marius and his consulships: Sall. *Jug.* 86; Plut. *Mar.* 9.1; Cic. *Pro Balb.* 20.46; Val. Max. 2.3.2; Plin. *HN* 10.5. On the cohortal army of the late Republic generally, see Smith 1958, Harmand 1967, Gabba 1973 = 1976, and Goldsworthy 1996.

⁵⁰ Polyb. 6.24. However, Polybius does not himself use the term *centuria* and he gives no indication that either half of the maniples was ever expected to operate independently.

⁵¹ A peculiar phenomenon is the development of a series of unique symbols, known primarily from early 3rd c. AD inscriptions at Mogontiacum and Lambaesis, which corresponded to the different titles of centurions or their centuries on inscriptions. It is thought that their shape references the position of each century within the battle- or parade-formation of its cohort. See especially Mann 1997, Speidel 2005 and Faure 2007 for discussion and further bibliography. Notably, Faure argues that these symbols are in fact related to the titles of the centuries themselves – and not the centurions – and were used for identification from the late second century onwards as the Roman command relied increasingly on vexillations operating independently from their parent legions. Speidel elsewhere supports the increasing importance of differentiating centuries as lines of battle, and specialisations within them, became increasingly important again in the third century (1990, esp. 137).

⁵² On the equation of *triarii* with *pilani*, see Livy 8.8; Varro 5.89. A *triarius prior* is named by the 4th/5th c. Vegetius 2.8 as (surprisingly) the most junior of the five centurions in the “*antiqua*” legion, but this is a garbled account reflecting no known stage of the legion of the Republic or Principate. An *optio*, Aurelius Gaius, who served during the reign of Diocletian (r. AD 284-305) is known from a Greek inscription to have held a series of different gradations of *optio*, and it is clear that the position of *optio triarius* (ὀπτίων τριάρης), was the most junior (AE 1981, 777, Cotiaëum, modern Ada Köy in Turkey). Presumably *triarius* was revived as a title for junior units or positions in the armies of the late third century.

⁵³ See n. 22, above.

⁵⁴ Amm. 21.13.9.

⁵⁵ According to Dio 67.10.1 soldiers under Domitian (r. AD 81-96) wrote their names and the names of their centurions on their shields for ease of identification. In the funerary epigraphy a soldier might indicate the centurion he served under, as with a legionary *miles* of the eleventh legion (CIL IX 42, Brundisium, early Augustan; AE 1909: 241, Lindum, Britannia, mid-1st AD). Soldiers could also be identified by their centurion in

The first cohort was pre-eminent, and its centurions were known as the *primi ordines*;⁵⁶ the most senior of them was the *primus pilus*. An inscription listing the *optiones* (a centurion's second) of the centurions of the first cohort suggests the order of seniority as follows, ascending: *hastatus posterior*, *princeps posterior*, (*pilus posterior*), *hastatus*, *princeps*, *primus pilus*.⁵⁷ The specific titles are slightly different in cohort one, but the general order of seniority was perhaps identical across the cohorts. The long absence of an epigraphically attested *pilus posterior* in cohort one lent credence to the idea that the first cohort in each legion was, by the late first century, comprised of five double-strength centuries. The idea of a double-strength first cohort, derived from two ancient military treatises, pseudo-Hyginus' *de munitionibus castrorum* (1st/2nd c.) and Vegetius' *de re militari* (4th/5th c.), receives some support from the epigraphy.⁵⁸ But the archaeology is difficult: although the legionary fortress at Inchtuthil (near Blairgowrie and Rattray in Scotland) provided ten barracks for the first cohort, and just six each for the other cohorts, other excavated fortresses provide only six barracks for the first cohort.⁵⁹ Breeze 1969 has suggested that extra barracks around the first cohort at Inchtuthil may have been for the legionary cavalry. Alternatively, Frere 1980 has argued that Inchtuthil reflects the legionary camp of the Flavians, which would not conflict with the evidence from pseudo-Hyginus' *de munitionibus castrorum* if a late first century date for the work is accepted. The case for five centuries as standard derives from a combination of Vegetius and the long-standing identification of only five titles for centurions of the first cohort in the epigraphy.⁶⁰ However, Vegetius also claims five centurions each for the other cohorts, which is evidently false. Moreover, one inscription gives seven centurions for the first cohort, including two *primi pili*, while another positively identified the previously unknown *pilus posterior* of the first cohort.⁶¹ In practice it seems likely that the number of centurions fluctuated, whether too few through absence or too many through being kept on the books as a centurion while waiting for

correspondence, as at the legionary camp at Vindonissa (AE 1996, 1127 = *SVindonissa* 16, 1st c. AD). For soldiers identified by the title of their century – indicating its place in the battle-line – a phenomenon which seems more common during the 3rd c. and for soldiers of the new Parthian legions (e.g. Speidel 1990: 136; Faure 2007), see e.g. AE 2014, 1416 (Alexandria, Egypt, Severus Alexander, a *miles* in the second legion *Traiana*).

⁵⁶ That the *primi ordines* were normally equated with the centurions of the first century is suggested by AE 1993, 1364 (Novae, Moesia Inferior, AD 196), on which see Sarnowski 1993. Le Bohec 1989b: 45 maintains the old view, based upon Tac. *Hist.* 3.22.8 (*occisi sex primorum ordinum centuriones*), that the *primi ordines* included more than just the six of the first cohort. But there is no reason Tacitus could not mean simply that all the centurions of the first cohort were killed.

⁵⁷ *CIL* VIII 2555 = 18072 = *ILS* 2446 (Lambaesis, Numidia, c. AD 250).

⁵⁸ Ps-Hyg. 3: *quoniam duplum numerum habet*; Veg. 2.6: *appellatur cohors milliaria*. On the epigraphy see *CIL* III 6178 (AD 134, Troesmis, Moesia inferior), listing significantly more discharged soldiers from the first cohort than from the others; cf. *CIL* III 14507 (AD 195, Viminacium, Moesia superior) for a similar situation.

⁵⁹ Petrikovits 1975: 38-43, 118ff.

⁶⁰ Veg. 2.8.

⁶¹ *CIL* VIII 18065 (AD 161, Lambaesis), on which see Balty and van Rengen 1993: 45, n. 19.

a century to become available for command, or perhaps even through ad hoc fluctuations in a legion's size owing to circumstance.⁶²

Vegetius 2.21 uniquely claimed that centurions worked up from the tenth cohort to the first, holding the same position within each cohort (i.e. *hastatus posterior*) before going back into the tenth cohort to hold the next position in seniority. This inspired an old scholarly past-time of re-constructing a complicated hierarchy within the centurionate according to which there were recognisable promotion patterns between centurionates of different titles or in different cohorts. It has been argued that, in lieu of any attested individual commander for each cohort, the *pilus prior* took charge as the senior centurion within the cohort.⁶³ One centurion identified himself as the *decimipilus*, perhaps equating his position within the tenth cohort to that of the *primus pilus* within the first.⁶⁴ No compelling conclusions have been yielded overall, however, and there is not yet sufficient evidence to offer a substantially different conclusion from Weegeleben's verdict of 1913, that centurions of cohorts two to ten were grouped together broadly as equals. We must suspect centurions were simply appointed to available positions, perhaps varying nominally in seniority, with real promotions reserved for entry into the *primi ordines* of cohort one and to *primus pilus*.⁶⁵ How much the *primi pili* differed from the other *primi ordines*, and how much the *primi ordines* from the mass of ordinary centurions, is unclear; but current understandings of military pay scales typically grant legionary centurions, *primi ordines* and *primi pili* fifteen, thirty and sixty times greater pay than ordinary legionary *milites*, respectively.⁶⁶ The *primi ordines* and *primi pili* were also eligible for more distinguished *dona militaria* (military decorations), granted the *hasta pura* (replica spear) in addition to the usual decorations – *torques*, *armillae*, *phalerae* and a *corona* (metal neck-rings,

⁶² On the problem of the first cohort, see especially Roth 1994: 358 and Campbell 2017.

⁶³ Parker 1928: 202; Grant 1974: 73 (Grant considers this a responsibility of the senior centurions – it is unclear whether he means the *primi ordines* of cohort one, or whether he includes the *pili priores* also amongst this number); Cagniat 2007: 86. Isaac 1998b: 388-402 argues against this, and posits that the cohort therefore had “no independent tactical function” (398).

⁶⁴ AE 1997, 1303 (Singidunum, Moesia Superior, 3rd).

⁶⁵ E.g. Radin 1915 and Parker 1926. Parker argued that the *primi ordines* also included the senior centurion of each cohort, as cohort commanders, but this view is no longer common. Birley 1988e, esp. 212, demonstrated (*contra* Domaszewski 1908: 95) that the transfer of centurions between legions was not necessarily about the promotion of centurions so much as about facilitating the transfer of vexillations, ad hoc legionary detachments, to meet military needs across the empire.

⁶⁶ Centurions of the mid-Republic were, however, paid only twice as much as legionaries (Polyb. 6.39), and both were paid less than cavalry soldiers. Cf. Livy 34.13.5 on the events of 195 BC, where centurions and cavalry are called into military council alongside prefects and tribunes. One of the key features of the army of the late Republic was the decline in use and status of citizen cavalry, and an increasing reliance upon allied cavalry. The relative pay under the Principate for centurions of different grades is generally accepted, although the paucity of evidence and the difficulty in matching varied literary and documentary references from different time periods and geographical regions demands caution. See esp. Dobson 1972, Jahn 1984, Speidel 1992, 2014a, Alston 1994, Rathbone 2007, Le Bohec 2009, Le Roux 2012.

though not worn as such, bracelets, discs and a crown) – available to centurions.⁶⁷ Beyond the battlefield, the *primi pili* – and perhaps also the *primi ordines* – might be distinguished visually: they wore white tunics alongside the tribunes and camp prefects during Vitellius’ victory parade into Rome in AD 69, while the rest of the centurions marched with their soldiers in battle-dress.⁶⁸

Below the centurionate

Legionary centurions could be directly appointed, transferred or promoted from the Praetorian Guard, or promoted through the ranks of the legion; the respective proportions are unknown.⁶⁹ The basic internal hierarchy below the centurionate of all unit-types – legions, Rome cohorts and auxiliaries – was the same, with the bottom rung the *miles*, variously known as *munifex*, *gregalis*, *gregarius*, *pedes* or *miles*⁷⁰ (or *eques* in a cavalry unit).⁷¹ A soldier who possessed specialist skills might become *immunis*, representing those whose possession of specialist skills earned them exemption from odious fatigue duties (hence the name) but not increased pay. The style *immunis* was more of a status than a rank, since it could be held as a temporary appointment before returning to *miles*, or could be indefinite; but soldiers seemed to consider it a promotion.⁷² Between the *milites* and the centurions were the *principales*, a broad term for a series of different positions on increased pay.⁷³ The *principales* fell into two broad classes:

⁶⁷ On Roman military decorations, see Maxfield 1981, esp. 184-209 on the centurionate and primipilate.

⁶⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 2.89.9: *ante aquilas praefecti castrorum tribunique et primi centurionum candida veste*. Whether *primi pili* or *primi ordines* is meant is somewhat unclear. Wearing a white parade uniform (the *albata decursio*) appears to have been a rare and special privilege that could be granted by the emperor. It was clearly not an automatic privilege for most centurions. For a centurion receiving this as an award, see *CIL* III 14387f (Heliopolis, Syria, AD 77-8) and Bennett 2006, 2007. Cf. *ZPE* 162, 263 (Galatia, Domitian); *CIL* III 14387i (Syria); *AE* 1998, 1435 (Syria, 2nd). The colours of Roman military clothing are the subject of heavy debate. Fuentes 1987 posits white tunics as standard for soldiers; Sumner 2009, in perhaps the most comprehensive survey, off-white for day-to-day use, but perhaps with the possibility of red for military activities (at 117).

⁶⁹ Domaszewski 1908: 30, 83-90, preferred Italian and praetorian origins for legionary centurions. Birley, E. 1988d argued that the majority came through the ranks of the legions, but allowed for praetorian veterans in the legionary centurionate finding better promotion prospects. Goldsworthy 2003: 71-2 argued that the frequency of centurions not citing more junior service was a reflection of high proportions of direct appointment rather than an obfuscation of their backgrounds. However, by parallel with the *primi pili*, for whom there is no evidence of direct appointment and the majority of whom omit service prior to the primipilate (Dobson 1974: 406), not stating service below the centurionate does not prove direct appointment. Consider C. Caesius Silvester, whom we will meet in Chapter Four: in one inscription (*CIL* XI 5696) his pre-primipilate career as a praetorian soldier and legionary centurion is detailed; but elsewhere he simply identifies himself as a *primus pilus* or *primipilaris* (e.g. *CIL* XI 5687, 5699).

⁷⁰ For *munifex* as the basic soldier, see Veg. 2.7, 19; *CIL* V 896, VI 2601. *Gregalis* is common in the diplomas granted to soldiers in units other than the legions. Tacitus refers to a *gregarius miles* at *Ann.* 1.22.

⁷¹ On ranks and pay-grades below the centurionate, see especially Breeze 1969, 1971, 1974a, 1974b, 1976.

⁷² It is difficult however to evidence the existence of *immunes* as a formally distinct class prior to the Hadrianic period (AD 117-38). See *Dig.* 50.6.7 (Paternus) and Watson 1969b: 75-9, esp. 77.

⁷³ Defined by Vegetius 2.7, whose list includes those positions named by Paternus (*op. cit.*) as *immunes*. Pay could be either one and a half times that of a *miles* (a *sesquiplicarius*) or double (a *duplicarius*). For a list of positions within the *principales* and their pay categories, see Breeze 1971: 134.

those whose position related to a century, such as a *signifer* (standard-bearer) or *optio* (commonly a centurion's second); and those who held a position in the staff (*officium*) of a provincial magistrate or the unit's commander, such as the *cornicularius*.⁷⁴ For those serving within the ranks of a legion, it might take as many as fifteen to twenty years to achieve promotion to the legionary centurionate, although rapid promotions are also known.⁷⁵

Beyond the legions

In the auxiliaries, centurions were variously appointed directly from civilian life (perhaps from leading local families), from the ranks (or *principales*) of the legions, or from the ranks of the auxiliary unit itself.⁷⁶ Legionary centurions or auxiliary decurions are even known on occasion to have commanded auxiliary units, normally with the style *praepositus*.⁷⁷ The senior centurion or decurion within an auxiliary unit was the *princeps*. As a rule, only veterans of the Rome cohorts could hold centurionates within them, with the exception of those who had been directly appointed to a legionary centurionate and then transferred to a centurionate in the Rome cohorts.⁷⁸ Centurionates in the Rome cohorts normally went to chosen veterans of the Praetorian Guard who had completed their 16 years of service and been retained in service as *evocatus*,⁷⁹ whose special status is suggested by their right to carry the *vitis*, like a centurion.⁸⁰ There was a common order of tenure, with a first centurionate to be held in the *vigiles*, followed by transfer to one in the urban cohorts and finally to one in the Praetorian Guard itself. The

⁷⁴ The *cornicularius* of the praetorian prefect features prominently in the epigraphy, and these *cornicularii* were particularly successful in going on to become legionary centurions (e.g. Dobson 1974: 404). There were various different kinds of *optio*, on which see Breeze 1976.

⁷⁵ Dobson 1970: 101-2. The centurion Petronius Fortunatus claims to have spent just four years below the legionary centurionate (*CIL* VIII 217 = 11301, Cillium, Africa Proconsularis, late 2nd/early 3rd, with Lassère 1991: 53-68).

⁷⁶ Gilliam 1957; Campbell 2018a.

⁷⁷ E.g. *CIL* III 1918 (Dalmatia, 2nd c.): *c(enturio) leg(ionis) I M(inervae) praepositus c(o)h(o)rtis I Belg(arum)*; *CIL* VII 371 = *RIB* 814 (Alauna [Maryport], Britannia, 2nd c.): *c(enturio) leg(ionis) / [X Fr]etensis prae[positus] coh(ortis) I m(iliaria) / Hisp(anorum)*. However, in the latter example *prae[fectus]* is a possible alternative for *prae[positus]*, and legionary centurions as *praepositi* of auxiliaries are rare. For a decurion *praepositus*, e.g. *AE* 1909, 1404 (Praesidium, Africa Proconsularis, late 2nd): *sub / cura Aemili Emeriti dec(urionis) al(ae) / praepositi coh(ortis) II Fl(aviae) Afr(orum)*.

⁷⁸ Dobson 1974: 405: "The exclusion of ex-legionaries from the Rome centurionates is a natural piece of corps-snobbery".

⁷⁹ Legionary *evocati* of various ranks are well attested under Caesar and Octavian (e.g. Caes. *BC* 1.17, 3.91 [a former *primus pilus*]; Dio 45.12, 55.24.8), and are occasionally found during the early Principate. A military tribune of the fourth legion *Macedonica*, based at Mogontiacum, describes his summoning to Britain for Claudius' invasion of Britain as *evocatus* (*CIL* XIII 5093, Aventicum, Germania Superior). However, during the Principate *evocatio* seems largely reserved for veterans of the urban and praetorian cohorts, and especially the latter who were often referred to as *evocati Augusti*, reflecting their strong association with the emperor. Inscriptions such as *CIL* III 3565 (Trajanic, r. 98-117, Aquincum, Pannonia: *evocato leg(ionis) / II Ad(iutricis)*) may therefore refer not to those given *evocatio* from a legion, but those *evocati* from Rome appointed to a legion in various roles (as per Birley 1981: 25-6). On the *evocati* of the Principate see Birley 1981, Campbell 2018b.

⁸⁰ Dio 55.24.8.

epigraphy attests to positions that might be identified as senior centurions within the units at Rome, the *trecenarius* and the *princeps castrorum*; but these remain somewhat opaque.⁸¹ A *miles* of the urban cohorts could be promoted into the Guard and find career advancement in just the same way. The *vigiles*, however, were historically comprised of freedmen (although citizens came to be included within their number); the origins of their centurions were normally therefore to be found in the citizen units of the Praetorian Guard and legions, rather than home-grown from their own bodies.⁸² It was also possible for serving *principales* of the Praetorian Guard to be promoted, and centurions transferred, into the legionary centurionate, through which the primipilate could be reached.⁸³

The centurionate of the third century

As a Roman institution the centurionate was long-lived. But its distinct character as a broad class of related positions nestled between the *milites* and the senatorial or equestrian commanders was not to survive much beyond the end of the Principate (27 BC – AD 284). This is not the place for a full accounting of the various changes that swept through the Roman armies of the third and fourth centuries (e.g. the rise of cavalry armies, *comitatenses*, *limitanei* and *scholae Palatinae*), but certain features relevant to the centurionate and primipilate are worth identifying.⁸⁴ During the second and third centuries centurions undertook a variety of functions beyond simple command of a *centuria* / *ordo* – such as outposted military police and regional overseers.⁸⁵ Those involved in the command of a *centuria* / *ordo* came thus to be identified increasingly by the later Principate simply as *ordinarii*.⁸⁶ Increasingly under the

⁸¹ Domaszewski 1908: 99 suggested that the *trecenarius* was named for command over the 300 *speculatores* (broadly-speaking scouts and bodyguards) in the praetorian camp, which remains the currently favoured definition (e.g. Le Bohec 1989b: 21). Dobson and Breeze 1969: 118-9 preferred to view the *trecenarius* as a praetorian equivalent of the *primus pilus*. For Mann 1983b the term signified the holding of all three centurionates within the Rome cohorts. Summerly 1992: 9 pondered whether, in the early Principate, three centurionates might be required before a primipilate, and connected this with the term *trecenarius*; although attractive this cannot be substantiated.

⁸² For bibliography on the *vigiles* see n. 26 above.

⁸³ Early promotion into the legions alone was also possible for soldiers of the Guard before completing their sixteen years. The *cornicularii* of the Praetorian prefects may have been virtually assured of a centurionate – in the legions, not the Guard, however, likely because they did not fulfil the expected sixteen years of service in the Guard (Dobson 1974: 404-5).

⁸⁴ On the late Roman army, see e.g. Hepworth 1963, Southern and Dixon 1996, Tomlin 2000, Campbell 2005a, Strobel 2007. Broadly speaking, the *comitatenses* were the new-style mobile field armies, the most elite of whom were the *palatini*; *limitanei* were the armies stationed on the frontiers; the *scholae palatinae* were elite cavalry, replacements for the *equites singulares Augusti*. Debate remains over the actor responsible for the formal split between field and frontier armies, Diocletian (r. 284-305) or Constantine (r. 306-37).

⁸⁵ On *regionarii* centurions and their role as military police, see Fuhrmann 2011: 222ff. See Alston 1995: 86-96 for ἐπὶ τῶν τόπων centurions (perhaps *regionarii*) in Egypt being petitioned by locals for help in criminal cases.

⁸⁶ Known in the third century (if not before) as *centuriones ordinarii*, they are frequently just named *ordinarii* in the fourth century. For the definition, see Gilliam 1940: 127-48, esp. 144. Even under the Republic to command as a centurion had been described as *ordinem ducere* (Cic. *Phil.* 1.8, 20).

Severans (193-235) equestrians – including *primipilares* – were appointed as legionary commanders. During the third century emperors came to rely upon *vexillationes* – units detached from a parent unit, often comprising soldiers brought in from multiple different legions – which would be commanded typically by equestrians as *praepositi*, although centurions are also known as commanders.⁸⁷ But just as the possibilities for a *primipilaris* increased, the uniqueness of the position decreased. The promotion prospects of soldiers became easier, able again to be promoted into the *militiae equestres*, and equestrian status could even be granted to the sons of ordinary soldiers.⁸⁸ The centurionate and primipilate were no longer the only way of creating equestrians through military service and, with the growth of more new equestrians and equestrian families of military origins alongside the increasing accessibility of both senior military commands and civil positions to equestrians, military interests could perhaps bleed more profusely into civil life.

Nonetheless, the centurionate continued to play a useful role, not only in commanding *vexillationes*, but also in creating future commanders: around the middle of the third century, perhaps under Valerian (r. 253-260) and Gallienus (r. 253-268) the *protectores* developed as a group loyal to the emperor, a bodyguard of sorts – consisting typically of legionary prefects or urban tribunes, with centurion members also known – that under Diocletian (r. 284-305) would become a distinguished group marked out for future command.⁸⁹ The legionary primipilate died out under Diocletian, the position of *primus pilus* having become increasingly associated with administrative duties and the military *annona* (the food supply), during the third century; eventually the title of *primipilaris* appears to have become hereditary and brought with it onerous and compulsory duties.⁹⁰ Although centurions continued to exist in the fourth century, the rise of the new-style field and frontier armies – for a while operating alongside the old before essentially supplanting them – brought with them distinct internal hierarchies. Gone is the *centurio*, replaced with the less understood *centenarius* and *ducenarius*: individuals in charge of 100 and 200 soldiers, respectively. The ratios of pay of these commanders, measured now in *annonae*, compared with those in the ranks were significantly less than that understood between the old centurions and *milites*; promotion was now based largely on length of service.⁹¹ And so disappeared the centurionate, distinct under the Principate as a class – not a rank – that

⁸⁷ *Vexillationes* had a long history, but they became especially prominent during the middle of the third century. See Campbell 2005a: 117.

⁸⁸ Davenport 2012.

⁸⁹ *Protectores*: *RE suppl.* XI, s.v. “*protector*” (Diesner 1968: 1113ff), de Blois 1976: 45, Southern 2001: 90, Campbell 2005a: 119, 122, Strobel 2007: 273-5, Mennen 2011: 227ff. See also Chapter Three.

⁹⁰ Dobson 1974: 429-31.

⁹¹ Southern and Dixon 1996: 82-3.

stood between the *milites* and the equestrian and senatorial commanders, a class that both received and created equestrians.

The *stipendium* and the status of the centurion

Centurions were long-term professional soldiers, their pay and years of service measured in *stipendia* like those of *milites*; those on the *militiae equestres* held each position for only a few years with no guarantee of advancing to the next, and are thought to have been paid in *salaria* like the senatorial and equestrian provincial officials.⁹² There is some suggestion that *evocati*, primarily praetorian, also received a *salarium*;⁹³ but elsewhere they include their service as *evocati* within their period of *stipendium*.⁹⁴ Similarly, one late third century *centurio ordinarius* appears also to describe his service in that rank as one in receipt of a *salarium*; but a contemporary legionary *centurio supernumerarius* (i.e. on the books but not commanding a century) uses *stipendium*.⁹⁵ In either case there is otherwise nothing to suggest a chronological shift in practice, and since both *stipendium* and *salarium* are used within the same timeframe this may simply have been a personal choice of self-description to reflect their distinct statuses. The primary distinction between the *salarium* and *stipendium* within the military setting, then, was the contrast between long-term professional soldiers, including centurions and perhaps even *evocati*, and members of the Roman elite on short-term service in military or administrative capacities: this is the context in which centurions are associated with *milites*. Upon joining the military as a *tiro*, a fresh recruit, the expectation was to fulfil the mandatory number of years of *stipendia* for the given branch. At least in the auxiliaries and the praetorian fleets, the fact that centurions (and decurions) received the diplomas setting out their discharge privileges only after completing the minimum number of *stipendia* required for a soldier in the same branch suggests that promotion into the centurionate did not override a commitment to the full term of service.⁹⁶ Although early promotion was possible (e.g. from *cornicularius praefecti praetorio* to legionary centurionate), praetorians generally received their centurionates following their completion of the compulsory *stipendia* of 16 years and *evocatio*. Within the legions centurionates might normally be achieved within the second decade of their service; however, there was no automatic age of retirement and centurionates could be held for

⁹² Dio 53.15, although Fronto (*Ad Ant. P.* 10) calls some of these payments *stipendia*.

⁹³ Dury 1938: 121, n. 4. Accepted in e.g. Gilliam 1946: 190 and Stoll 2001: 311.

⁹⁴ *Salarium*: CIL VI 2589, 2595, VI 3419. *Stipendium*: CIL III 3565, 13360; VI 2578, 2656; XIII 7556; AE 1990, 896; 1993, 166.

⁹⁵ CIL V 8275: (*centurioni*) *ordinar(io) leg(ionis) II Adi(utricis) salarior(um) XII*; V 8278: *centurio / supernumerarius / leg(ionis) XI Claudia / stip(endiorum) XXIII*.

⁹⁶ E.g. CIL XVI 29; AE 2016, 2016. The diplomas will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Two.

a considerable length of time. A centurion from the third century still held his rank at the age of seventy when he died, having served for fifty-two years, while another from the second had completed sixty-one *stipendia* by the time of his death at eighty-six.⁹⁷ The highest rank to cite receipt of *stipendium* is the primipilate. In AD 184, at Novae in Moesia Inferior, a *primus pilus* marked the completion of a vow he had made as a *tiro* some 57 years earlier.⁹⁸ Where legionary centurions of any grade indicate service of fewer years than the required 20-25 it is in the context of their premature deaths. There is insufficient evidence for whether those directly appointed to the centurionate were also mandated to fulfil a set period of service; but since they had never signed up as *tirones* and served as *milites* they were perhaps not obligated to do so. The potentially special position of these centurions is discussed further in Chapter Three.

The importance for all ranks, including centurions, of fulfilling the recommended period of *stipendia* is illustrated in the list of exemptions from the duty of *tutela*, or guardian, which was evidently considered burdensome. Honourably discharged soldiers were exempted in perpetuity from being appointed *tutor* to civilians, although they were only released from the tutelage of the children of soldiers or veterans for one year after discharge; a discharged soldier had complete exemption from the tutelage of the grandchildren of soldiers, since they were treated as civilians.⁹⁹ Only the former *primi pili*, the *primipilares*, received legal privilege beyond *milites* by merit of their rank: they were exempted from the tutelage of anyone other than the son of a *primus pilus*, and even this duty was resigned should they be recalled to military service.¹⁰⁰ Ordinary centurions and the *primi ordines* probably had the same rights as *milites* since they are not discussed separately under the laws for *tutela*. Following the intervention of Septimius Severus, those who held a tribunate in the Praetorian Guard, a position appointed from the cream of the *primipilares* since its inception, were exempt even from the tutelage of the children of their own colleagues.¹⁰¹ In a rare example of different privileges in the civilian world being accorded to veterans based upon their rank, it is the alumni of the primipilate, the most privileged subset of the centurionate, that benefit. In the regulations upon tutelage, the primary distinction made between veterans is the length of their *stipendia* and their branch of service: below five years *stipendia* grants no exemption; over five years grants one year exemption; eight years grants two; twelve, three; sixteen, four; and twenty years full exemption. Soldiers of the *vigiles* always only have one year exemption, but they are a

⁹⁷ AE 1997, 1303 (Singidunum, Moesia Superior); *TitAq* 499 (Aquincum, Pannonia Inferior).

⁹⁸ AE 1985, 735; Cf. *CIL* III 11031 (58 years).

⁹⁹ *Dig.* 27.1.8.

¹⁰⁰ *Id.* 27.1.8.12, 1.10.5.

¹⁰¹ *Id.* 27.1.9.

special category.¹⁰² With the exception of the *primipilares*, who were entitled to retire should they wish upon completing their term in post as *primus pilus*, both *milites* and centurions seem to be distinguished in law based not upon their rank or grade but by their *stipendium* – their completed period of military service. It is this definition of military service, in terms of a minimum mandatory period of *stipendia*, that associates most centurions with *milites* and distinguishes them from the equestrian commanders.

Conclusion

An institutional accounting illustrates the complexities in according status to the legionary centurionate of the Principate, a socially heterogeneous institution that: incorporated and created equestrians; contained its own internal hierarchy with significant differences in pay and prestige; found its position between *milites* and *militiae equestres* in a state of flux according to the whims of emperors and the needs of the empire; was separate from but in dialogue with the centurionates (and cavalry decurionates) maintained within the other branches of the army. There is little evidence to indicate whether the centurionate was distinct from, or in line with, the body of *milites* they commanded but from whose ranks they rose, or the equestrian prefects and tribunes with whom they are frequently found associating but into whose social class they seek promotion. The contention of this chapter is that the military status of centurions should be located within the context of their receipt of *stipendia* and, at least for those who were promoted from the ranks, the necessity of completing a minimum defined period of service. This is not to say that centurions held a low status; rather that they were the senior class of long-term professional soldiers.

¹⁰² *Id.* 27.1.8.3-4.

CHAPTER 2

A Very Long Engagement

The status of centurions (and their “wives”) in Roman law

“There are a good many young women who seem to think that to ‘keep company’ with, and afterwards to marry, a soldier is the acme of bliss. Yet there are but few, indeed, who have the remotest idea of what life as soldier’s wife is like. . . In spite, however, of many seeming advantages which the wife of the soldier enjoys over those of the civilians, we would say to the girl who has her eye on an army marriage –
‘Don’t’ . . .”

“Married Life in the Army” in *The Graphic*, Saturday 23rd September 1893 (p. 18)

Most soldiers serving in the Roman army were subject to a ban on marriage (or perhaps more accurately ‘non-recognition’ of marriage)¹ for at least the first two centuries of the Principate.² It is generally held that a marriage prohibition was introduced under Augustus and finally lifted by Septimius Severus c. AD 197, although it is clear from the epigraphic record that some soldiers nevertheless formed long-term relationships with women during this period.³ Military discipline features strongly in the literature – both ancient and modern – as the prime motivation for imperial attempts to regulate relationships between serving soldiers and

¹ Scheidel 2007: 418: ‘we do not know of any penalties for soldiers who established such relationships. Thus, “non-recognition” of marriage might be a more precise term than the traditional label “ban”’; and Phang 2001: 50: ‘we will speak of a marriage “ban” or “prohibition” only meaning that the effects of legitimate marriage were denied.’

² The most conclusive evidence for the ban on military marriage comes from the Cattaoui Papyrus (*P. Catt.*), which records a series of cases from the court of the Prefect of Egypt from AD 114 to 142 in which it is made clear that serving soldiers cannot marry and that their children born in this period are illegitimate, and from a missive from Hadrian conferring intestate inheritance rights for soldiers’ children born during their service (*P. Catt.* III.11-22; IV.1-15; IV.16-V.26; *BGU* 140 = *Select Papyri* II 213).

³ The ban was certainly in existence under Claudius, who appears to have exempted soldiers from the Augustan penalties for celibacy by granting them the privileges of married men (Dio 60.24.3: τοῖς τε στρατευομένοις, ἐπειδὴ γυναικας οὐκ ἐδύναντο ἐκ γε τῶν νόμων ἔχειν, τὰ τῶν γεγαμηκότων). Campbell 1978: 153-154 argues that the later Julio-Claudian emperors were so dependent upon their armies that it was probably Augustus who introduced the prohibition. See also Watson 1969b: 134; Campbell 1984: 301; Jung 1982: 335; Wells 1998: 180-190; Phang 2001: 16-17. That Severus lifted the ban is indicated by Herodian 3.8.5: τοῖς τε στρατιώταις . . . ἐπέτρεψε γυναῖξί τε συνοικεῖν. This has been challenged by Eck 2011 based upon the wording of third century fleet diplomas and an auxiliary diploma of AD 206. However, as this chapter will argue later this interpretation is not compelling. See also Libanius *Or.* 2.39-40 for the normality of military marriage in the fourth century.

women.⁴ The prohibition is unlikely to have affected equestrian or senatorial commanders, since they were subject to a separate regulation preventing provincial administrators from forming unions with the women of the province in which they were serving.⁵ However, all ranks up to the centurionate were affected by the prohibition; whether the centurions themselves were liable to its stipulations remains a point of contention.⁶ The answer is of importance to the wider situation of centurions within the Roman army: if they were subject to the marriage non-recognition their position was comparable to that of the ordinary *milites* and, despite their greater rank and pay, they suffered some of the same basic restrictions;⁷ on the other hand, if they were not, then their distinction from the rank-and-file was measured not just in terms of pay and status, but also by legal privilege. This chapter serves as a reminder that, even for Roman institutions as famous – in both public and academic spheres – as the centurionate, significant questions about their workings remain. It will assemble the evidence on the legal status of centurion marriage during the Principate and demonstrate that modern confidence in the right of centurions to conduct legal marriage is misplaced. The legal privileges of most centurions were technically in line with those of the common soldiery. It is plausible, however, that centurions who had completed the mandatory period of service normally required for a soldier to receive *honesta missio*, or who had been appointed directly from the equestrian order, if not also direct appointees from other groups such as local elite families, received different treatment. This chapter therefore connects the regulations on military marriage with the compulsory period of *stipendia* for which a *tiro* signed up. The benefits for centurions in a delayed legal marriage are multiple, not least in enabling them to secure good marriages later in life through the wealth accumulated during their service. But just as centurions came from different backgrounds and reached different grades within the centurionate, so too the backgrounds of the women they married (or “married”) were diverse: by examining some of these cases this chapter will also situate the centurionate within the wider

⁴ Herodian 3.8.5 and Libanius *Or.* 2.39-40 claim that the ability of (post-Severan) soldiers to marry has lowered their military efficiency; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 24 on Augustan military policy: *disciplinam severissime rexit*. See also Campbell 1978: 154, 165; Phang 2001: 344-383; 2008: 92-93.

⁵ *Dig.* 23.2.38, 63; 25.7.5; 34.9.2.1; *Cod. Iust.* 5.4.6; Grubbs 2002: 157-158; Phang 2001: 119-122. It has, however, also been argued that this restriction was only implemented around the time of the jurists and thus belongs to the period after AD 197 (Orestano 1942: 31-32).

⁶ The legality of centurion marriage remains so opaque that one of the most recent surveys on military families simply states: ‘there is increasing evidence, both implicit and explicit, that centurions’ families, and probably also decurions’ families, whether legitimate or illegitimate, and their households, lived inside military bases’ (Allison 2013: 26).

⁷ The children of an *iniustum matrimonium* were illegitimate and had no right to intestate succession. Although Hadrian attempted to mitigate the consequences of the ban by granting the right of intestate succession to soldiers’ children (*BGU* 140) they probably remained illegitimate. Grubbs 2002: 158; Phang 2001: 306-307.

social contexts of the empire, and demonstrate the distinct social possibilities open to the various individuals classified within the umbrella term “*centurio*”. Finally, although the position of centurions in law was broadly similar to that of ordinary *milites*, this chapter will also reveal the efforts to which centurions went to present themselves as distinct from the *milites* they commanded.

Centurions and the marriage question

As an accessory to the broader question of the existence of the non-recognition of military marriage, a not inconsiderable number of scholars have had occasion to address the issue of centurion marriage. A narrow majority of these, particularly amongst those of recent years, believe that centurions had the right to marry, or at least had the right before the ordinary *milites*. Meyer in his discussion on *die Inschriften und das Eherecht der römischen Soldaten* concluded that centurions, decurions, and even *principales* probably had the right to enter into legal Roman marriage, *iustum matrimonium*, at least by the end of the second century, whereas the *milites gregales* never did.⁸ By translating literally Herodian’s statement that Severus allowed soldiers γυναιξί. . . συνοικεῖν as *zusammenwohnen*,⁹ Meyer concludes that *milites* always remained under a marriage ban and had simply been granted the right to cohabit with a partner under Severus. Meyer argued that a distinction in marriage rights eventually developed, perhaps as late as Septimius Severus, between centurions and *milites*, which he understood as the result of the erosion of the status gap between equestrian officers and centurions. And despite significant differences in interpretations of the statement in Herodian and the dating of the repeal of the general non-recognition of military marriage, the existence of a distinction between the rights of *milites* and centurions have been maintained by other scholars. Renz attributed some of this confusion over the end-date of the military marriage non-recognition to a mistaken conflation of different sets of rules governing *gregales*, who were banned from

⁸ Meyer 1895: 103-107. This discussion is confined to the epigraphic evidence. The raw numbers of inscriptions involving “wives” were taken as indicative of the legal situation: 28 instances for centurions, decurions and *evocati*; 24 for *principales*; and only 11 for *milites gregales*, all of which were *veterani*. Meyer also took the common occurrence amongst the families of the *milites gregales* of soldier, wife and children all sharing a *nomen* as an indication that concubinage with freedwomen was the standard relationship configuration for the lower ranks. On the other hand, centurions *et al.* are attested as having freewomen wives and legitimate children in the epigraphy of the second century.

⁹ Campbell 1978: 160 provides probably the clearest argument for understanding γυναιξί. . . συνοικεῖν as a referral to a grant of the right to legal marriage. Phang 2001: 18 n. 7 seems to have misunderstood Meyer’s analysis (1895: 95-97), in which he argues that συνοικεῖν should be taken literally as “zusammenwohnen” and not as the more abstract “geschlechtlichem Beiwohnen”, and thus erroneously lists him amongst those who take Herodian’s συνοικεῖν to refer to “legitimate marriage”.

marrying, and “officers”, who were not.¹⁰ Cherry briefly cites literary evidence to support his belief that “the prohibition evidently did not apply to officers, at least not to those at or above the rank of centurion.”¹¹ Hoffmann concluded that “in view of their comparable social status [to the unaffected equestrians] and often very long periods of service, it seems possible that legionary centurions would also have been able to marry.”¹² Hassall adduced the size of centurions’ accommodation and the occasional archaeological finds of female apparel in the vicinity as evidence for “marriage-quarters”, and cited funerary monuments depicting centurions with their partners, and the appearance in the epigraphic record of children sharing the same *nomen* as their centurion fathers to support his claim that “officers, including the centurions, were allowed to marry even before the ban on marriage was relaxed under Severus.”¹³ Allason-Jones is so unequivocal in her assumption that centurions had always been able to marry that she even speculates that centurions’ wives were “amongst the most travelled women in the empire”.¹⁴ Even amongst the most recent scholarship on centurions we find those convinced of the likelihood of centurion marriage. Ward believes it probable that centurions could marry; Greene assumes that legionary centurions and decurions were allowed to marry, and that auxiliaries of these ranks probably could.¹⁵

On the other hand, Watson believed that a general military marriage ban applied to all ranks up to and including the centurionate, with equestrian/senatorial commanders exempted on the grounds that they were technically civilians.¹⁶ Jung distinguished the prohibition on marriage between equestrians in the *militiae equestres* and women of the province in which they were serving from the separate general prohibition of marriage for the *milites gregales*, implying that equestrian rank must have been the ceiling for the general marriage ban.¹⁷ This has been supported by Friedl, who believed that *primi pili* could only be exempted from a

¹⁰ Renz 1972: 74: “Perhaps the traditional injunction against soldiers marrying did not apply to officers. This would account for the confusion even among the jurists, since some citations might refer to the officers of the army while others might refer to the common soldiers.” See also Corbett 1930: 41–42: “As far as officers were concerned, even those of subaltern rank, the prohibition broke down much earlier. . . and the explanation of the statements made by the jurists may well be. . . that they refer to officers’ marriages”. However, Corbett follows Meyer in thinking that centurions *may* have been subject to the ban at least in the early period of its implementation, whereas Renz prefers that they never were. An inherent problem in this debate is the uncritical equation of centurions and equestrian officers together as “officers”.

¹¹ Cherry 1989: 128. In his earlier 1985 PhD thesis Cherry also found the larger percentage of centurions than *milites* who are attested with wives and children suggestive; the obvious response is that their significantly better pay enabled better odds in the marriage game, and a greater likelihood of commemoration.

¹² Hoffmann 1995: 110. Hoffmann believes that the comparative frequency and early date of references to centurions’ women as *uxores* in the epigraphic record is indicative of the legal situation (at 144).

¹³ Hassall 1999: 35.

¹⁴ Allason-Jones 2005: 49. See also 1989: 58 and 1999: 43.

¹⁵ Ward 2012: 177; Greene 2015: 1 n. 1.

¹⁶ Watson 1969b: 134.

¹⁷ Jung 1982: 340–341.

general marriage ban after they obtained equestrian status and the title of *primipilaris*: this view is noteworthy in seemingly exempting all equestrian military personnel, not just those serving in the *militiae equestres*.¹⁸ He doesn't, however, say what he thinks happened to centurions appointed *ex equite Romano*.¹⁹ Phang, in the most comprehensive analysis of the military marriage ban to date, leans towards centurions also being subject to the provisions of the general prohibition, citing their liability as relatively wealthy individuals for being penalised for celibacy under the *lex Iulia et Papia* prior to Claudius, were they not subject to the non-recognition, and their role as professional soldiers like the *milites* – in opposition to the short-term equestrian officers.²⁰ The same distinction between *milites* and equestrian officers also brings Southern to this side.²¹ There is, therefore, considerable weight on both sides of the argument.

Other options lie at hand. For instance, as first suggested, I believe, by Phang: “A plausible compromise would be that centurions were permitted legal marriage upon reaching the same length of service as that at which common soldiers were discharged: sixteen years for Praetorians, twenty to twenty-five years for legionaries.”²² Alternatively, perhaps a distinction might have been drawn between centurions appointed from the ranks, and those appointed *ex equite*. These latter may well have been married already, not to mention that their membership within Rome's elite made the question of inheritance a vitally important issue. These are difficult propositions to prove, but must be borne in mind as possibilities during this investigation.

The literary evidence

The literary evidence is particularly inconclusive. In his 1989 article Cherry referenced three literary texts which for him indicated that marriage was permitted to soldiers of the rank of centurion and above.²³ Of these, one refers to the wife of a serving legate (Tac. *Hist.* 1.48) and another to the wife of a military tribune (Plin. *Ep.* 6.31.4-6); only the third provides any

¹⁸ Friedl 1996: 255 n. 154: ‘Erst nach Ableistung des einen Dienstjahres eines *primus pilus* erwarten sie den Titel *primipilaris* und der Ritterang, der sie von dem Eheverbot enthob.’ For *primi pili* being subject to the marriage ban prior to obtaining equestrian status: ‘In ihrem Rang als *primi pili* einer Legion unterlagen auch diese, obwohl sie die Spitze des Zenturionats darstellten, eigentlich noch dem Eheverbot.’ (*Id.* 255). In this he follows Wilkes who, in his 1969 survey of Dalmatia, stressed that the epigraphic evidence was indicative of *primipilares* being subject to a marriage ban (at 129).

¹⁹ Note also Phang 2001: 131 n. 57: “It is not known whether men who were appointed centurions *ex equite Romano*, from equestrian status, lost the right to marry. It would have been a loophole to escape from the Augustan legislation, which many of the elite resented.”

²⁰ Phang 2001: 131-132.

²¹ Southern 2006: 144.

²² Phang 2001: 132. After all, what happened to *evocati* who re-enlisted as centurions? Greene 2015: 1 n. 1 seems to have missed the point of Phang's cautious proposal, and cites her simply as a proponent of auxiliary centurions being allowed to marry.

²³ Cherry 1989: 128.

evidence for the situation of centurions (Tac. *Hist.* 4.5): slim evidence indeed. This latter passage comes towards the start of Tacitus' account of the new Flavian dynasty when, as *praetor* elect, Helvidius Priscus made a speech to the senate which, while not overtly hostile to Vespasian, was evidently unenthusiastic.²⁴ Tacitus' subsequent digression into the early life of Helvidius informs us that he was born in Cluviae in Samnium, that his father had been a *primus pilus*, and that after holding the post of *quaestor* Helvidius married Fannia, the daughter of the noted senator Publius Clodius Thrasea Paetus.²⁵ Cherry's point is that someone who had served as a centurion was able to have a legitimate child who was eligible to enter the senate, and thus that centurions must have been exempt. But there is no guarantee that the marriage was actually contracted during the father's term of service as a centurion – Helvidius could have been born a legitimate equestrian after his father's discharge.²⁶ Moreover, if centurions who served for the number of years required to be eligible for honourable discharge, or who had been appointed *ex equite*, were granted the right to marry, then further solutions present themselves to us. All we can say with confidence about this passage is that Helvidius' father, a *primipilaris*, was sufficiently wealthy and of adequate social standing for his son to enter the senate and go on to achieve high office.

Cherry also draws the reader's attention to one other text, asking the reader to contrast the previous passages with Epictetus' enigmatic question: εἴτα στρατηγία μὲν ἢ σύνταγμα τινα ἀπείρξει γάμου ἢ παιδοποιίας καὶ οὐ δόξει οὗτος ἀντ' οὐδενὸς ἡλλάχθαι τὴν ἀτεκνίαν – “Shall military command or writing a composition keep a man from marriage or procreation? And shall such a man seem to have exchanged childlessness for nothing in return?” (Epict. [Arr. *Disc.*] 3.22.79). For context, Epictetus is discussing whether a Cynic should marry and rear children: a Cynic, he thinks, has no need to marry; the actions of a general, for instance, are as beneficial to society, if not more so, than procreation. Cherry can only have understood this passage as rhetorical and hypothetical; not as evidence for commanders, amongst whom he includes centurions, being *actually* unable to marry. On the other hand, Phang uses this same passage to suggest the opposite: for her, Epictetus is hinting at soldiers' exemption from the penalties on celibacy of the *lex Iulia et Papia*; and the reference to this applying to those with στρατηγία must mean centurions, since it is undisputed that equestrian commanders were

²⁴ Tac. *Hist.* 4.4.

²⁵ Tac. *Hist.* 4.5: *Helvidius Priscus regione Italiae Carecina e municipio Cluviis, patre, qui ordinem primi pili duxisset. . . quaestorius adhuc a Paeto Thrasea gener delectus.* On Fannia, see Plin. *Ep.* 7.19: *animus tantum et spiritus viget Helvidio marito, Thrasea patre dignissimus.*

²⁶ Perhaps the pluperfect subjunctive *duxisset* is used to express exactly this, implying a degree of historicity to the father's career at the time of Helvidius' birth. This, I think, is the most probable answer.

exempt from the general non-recognition of military marriage.²⁷ In this instance I must disagree with Phang: there is no indication that this passage has any bearing on the historical reality. Epictetus' point is simply that he does not believe marriage suitable for Cynics;²⁸ the σύνταγμα in the given quote does not need to refer to a military position (Phang translates it as “any other [military] post”), but could even describe the composition of a literary work;²⁹ στρατηγία is an unusual word choice if specifically centurions (and, perhaps, *principales*) are meant, and not also the equestrian commanders. The passage is inconclusive.

Two other literary texts deserve consideration beyond those already cited by Cherry. First, the sole explicit reference to a serving centurion getting married in the ancient literature is found in Martial's epithalamium to his friend Aulus Pudens.³⁰ Although Pudens is not specifically identified as a centurion here, he is undoubtedly the same Aulus Pudens said to be eagerly awaiting the rank of *primus pilus* in *Epp.* 1.31 and 6.58, who also crops up in several other epigrams as one of Martial's closest associates. However, even if we leave aside the controversy over the chronology of the epigrams – although the Books were largely ‘published’ in the order of their current numbering there is no way of knowing when the individual poems themselves were composed – this passage can hardly testify to the legality of centurion marriage.³¹ As with the father of Helvidius Priscus, it is possible that Pudens was already able to marry either as a centurion *ex equite* or as a reward for long service.³² With the reputation that *primipilares* had as sixty-year-olds,³³ we might expect the prospective *primus pilus* Pudens already to have completed a lengthy period of service. Alternatively, the attested ignorance of military personnel about the details of imperial legislation allows for the possibility that Pudens – and by extension Martial – was simply unaware that he was subject to marriage non-recognition.³⁴ Perhaps he knew and ignored it. This passage thus intimates the social cachet of

²⁷ Phang 2001: 131: “It is possible that Epictetus is referring in general to the marriage ban and soldiers' exemption from the *lex Iulia et Papia*, but the term ‘command’ suggests the centurionate.” See n. 3 here for Claudius' role in exempting the soldiery.

²⁸ Epict. (Arr. *Disc.*) 3.22.76.

²⁹ Thus *Id.* 3.22.78: καὶ Ὁμήρου πλείονα τῇ κοινωνίᾳ συνεβάλετο Πρίαμος ὁ πεντήκοντα γεννήσας περικαθάρματα ἢ Δαναὸς ἢ Αἴολος.

³⁰ *Ep.* 4.13: *Claudia, Rufe, meo nubit Peregrina Pudenti.*

³¹ For discussion on the dating of Martial's epigrams, see Citroni 1975: ix; 1989: 214.

³² Although 6.58 (*referes pili praemia clarus eques*) is normally cited as evidence for the association between the primipilate and gaining the equestrian census, it might alternatively indicate that Pudens was already an equestrian.

³³ *Juv. Sat.* 14.197.

³⁴ The Hadrianic edict granting the right of intestate succession to soldiers' children makes it clear that military personnel were assumed often to be ignorant of imperial legislation (*BGU* 140 = *Select Papyri* II 213): Ταύτην μου τὴν δωρεάν καὶ τοῖς στρατιώταις ἐμοῦ καὶ οὐετρανοῖς εὐγνωστόν σε ποιῆσαι δεήσει, οὐχ ἕνεκα τοῦ δοκεῖν με αὐτοῖς ἐνλογεῖν, ἀλλὰ ἵνα τούτῳ χρῶνται, ἐὰν ἀγνοῶσι. “It will be your responsibility to make my soldiers and veterans familiar with my allowance, not so that it seems appropriate to them to give me credit, but so that they may make use of it, if they do not know about it”.

the centurion, able to attract a wife praised by a member of the late first century literary elite, rather than providing any hard evidence for the legality of centurion marriage.³⁵

Second, a passage in Pliny is cited by Goldsworthy as proof that auxiliary centurions, as well as legionary centurions, were able to marry.³⁶ Although marriage in Roman law was valid only when *conubium* was possessed, and although peregrines – i.e. non-citizens, who formed the bulk of the auxiliaries – did not normally possess *conubium*, marriages between two peregrines were nonetheless acknowledged as unions between a husband and a wife.³⁷ But it is clear from the papyri that the marriages of serving auxiliary soldiers, even those between two non-citizens, were not recognised specifically because they involved soldiers.³⁸ The alleged evidence for the marriages of serving auxiliary centurions being recognised in law comes from an exchange of letters between the Younger Pliny, while governor of Bithynia and Pontus (c. 109-c. 112), and the emperor Trajan (r. 98-117).³⁹ The first letter was sent by Pliny as an accompaniment to an imperial petition from a centurion of an auxiliary unit concerning the status of his daughter; the emperor's brief reply is favourable, bestowing the Roman citizenship upon the centurion's daughter:

C. Plinius Traiano Imperatori

Rogatus, domine, a P. Accio Aquila, centurione cohortis sextae equestris, ut mitterem tibi libellum per quem indulgentiam pro statu filiae suae implorat, durum putavi negare, cum scirem quantam soleres militum precibus patientiam humanitatemque praestare.

C. Pliny to the emperor Trajan,

I have been asked, my lord, by a centurion of the sixth part-mounted cohort, P. Accius Aquila, to send to you a petition, through which he begs your favour in the question of his daughter's status. I found it difficult to refuse, since I know the usual extent of your indulgence and common courtesy towards the requests of soldiers.

Traianus Plinio

³⁵ Phang 2001: 130 n. 54.

³⁶ Goldsworthy 2003: 103. Goldsworthy does not, however, cite the evidence underlying his confidence that legionary centurions were permitted legal marriage.

³⁷ Phang 2001: 32; Cherry 1990: 247. Adultery could occur even in marriages that did not have *conubium* (Dig. 48.5.14).

³⁸ On which see especially the Cattaoui papyrus and Phang 2001: 23-38.

³⁹ Ep. 10.106 and 107.

Libellum P. Accii Aquilae, centurionis sextae equestris, quem mihi misisti, legi; cuius precibus motus dedi filiae eius civitatem Romanam. Libellum rescriptum, quem illi redderes, misi tibi.

Trajan to Pliny,

I have read the petition of P. Accius Aquila, the centurion of the sixth part-mounted cohort, which you sent. I have been touched by his request and grant Roman citizenship to his daughter. I have sent to you the edict to pass on to him.

For Goldsworthy, that there is “no mention of any bar on his having married” is indicative of the legality of marriage for even auxiliary centurions. But as with much of the literary evidence, the precise significance of this pair of letters is open to discussion; and the potential implications of these letters for the wider debate on centurion marriage cannot be overstated since this seems a rare real case concerning a currently serving centurion.⁴⁰ This centurion may already be a Roman citizen: he has the full *tria nomina*; from the second century some citizens opted to serve in the auxiliaries; citizenship could be granted to peregrine auxiliaries before they completed their period of service.⁴¹ Beyond that we know almost nothing about Accius Aquila. The mother of his child, however, was probably a peregrine. According to Roman law, a Roman citizen was unable to form a legitimate marriage with a peregrine – unless there had been a specific grant of *conubium*, as was the case for time-served auxiliaries (on which more below) – and any children resulting from this union would consequently be illegitimate and follow the status of the lower status parent.⁴² Since we know that Accius’ daughter was of non-citizen, presumably peregrine, status by birth, there are three options: both Accius and his

⁴⁰ It is most unlikely that P. Accius Aquila was a time-served veteran. For one thing, we would expect a time-served auxiliary to have acquired citizenship status not only for themselves but also for their children in this period. For another, the lack of any reference to Accius’ status as *veteranus* is conspicuous.

⁴¹ Because the diplomas were not discharge certificates so much as records of the privileges received by completing a defined period of service, 25 years for auxiliaries and 26 for soldiers in the fleets, they could be given to both serving soldiers and veterans until the normal maximum period of service was reduced to 25/26 years by the early second century; after around AD 110 the diplomas indicate that the recipients had been granted *honesta missio* (although they do not grant it themselves) and suggest that the recipients are veterans. See especially Alföldy 1968: esp. 217; Mann 1972; Mann and Roxan 1988: esp. 343-4. Because the diplomas are not, therefore, the official certificates of *honesta missio* itself, actual discharge certificates could be granted to veterans who desired such confirmation, notably for tax purposes in Egypt (Mann and Roxan 1988).

⁴² In a marriage where *conubium* existed, the children inherited the status of the father (*Rules of Ulpian* 5.8.): thus if the father was Roman and the mother non-Roman with *conubium*, the children were Roman, but if the mother was Roman and the father a non-Roman with *conubium*, the children were non-Roman (Gai. *Inst.* 1.56). Where *conubium* did not exist children historically followed the mother’s status (Gai. *Inst.* 1.78), but this was modified by the *lex Minicia* which ensured children born without *conubium* followed the lower status parent, thereby preventing the children of a Roman woman and a non-Roman without *conubium* from being Roman. See Cherry 1990.

partner were peregrines; Accius was a citizen and his partner a peregrine with whom he did not have *conubium*; Accius was a non-citizen and his partner a citizen with whom he had *conubium*. The last option is least appealing, and it was rare for non-citizens to have the right of *conubium*, or for citizens to have the right of *conubium* with a non-citizen.⁴³ If both Accius and his partner were peregrines, however, it is puzzling that Accius should assume that he could appeal for citizenship for his daughter, and even more puzzling that his appeal should be granted. Sherwin-White suspected that Accius was “seeking to anticipate the grant of family privileges usual on the retirement of auxiliaries”, and this is accepted by Phang.⁴⁴ Certainly, up to c. AD 140, the *diplomata* received after around 25 years of auxiliary service also granted citizenship to a soldier’s existing children.⁴⁵ In this case, either Accius was already a citizen, or was waiting to gain the citizenship upon completion of his terms of service. The latter is unlikely: how could Accius acquire citizenship after his daughter, given that it was on his own status that her claim to citizenship should depend? Sherwin-White assumed that Accius had been a citizen prior to service in the auxiliaries; but in that case it should not be assumed that such an individual would qualify for the rights conveyed in the auxiliary diplomas which non-citizens would expect to receive.⁴⁶ And if Accius were a citizen then his daughter should also be a citizen if he had *conubium* with her mother and was not subject to marriage non-recognition.

It is difficult to see why an appeal for an early grant of citizenship for his daughter might move the emperor. The assumption that Accius was making his appeal specifically because he thought that his daughter should already have citizenship status is tempting; a sense of entitlement that his daughter should inherit his existing status understandable. Perhaps Accius married (or “married”) his wife knowing that she was a peregrine, gambling that he could later secure the citizenship for their children; perhaps he did not know that she was a peregrine and was applying under the law preserved in the *Institutes* of Gaius 1.67 (although it is unclear whether it already existed under Trajan), whereby if a marriage between citizen and peregrine occurred through ignorance a decree of the senate could grant both partner and child

⁴³ Not to mention that the letters imply that the grant of citizenship to Accius’ daughter was an atypical reward for a soldier, and also suggest that it is on the soldier’s merit that the grant of citizenship was ultimately made.

⁴⁴ Sherwin-White 1966: 715. The privileges in this period might include citizenship for those auxiliaries who did not already have it, and for their children, as well as the right of *conubium* with one peregrine woman. See also Phang 2001: 80, with n. 104.

⁴⁵ E.g. Phang 2001: 75ff.

⁴⁶ Citizen units, such as those in the Praetorian Guard and urban cohorts, also received *diplomata* granting the right of *conubium* with Latin and peregrine women (e.g. Gai. *Inst.* 1.57; *CIL* XVI 143 [AD 226]; Eck and Roxan 1993; Phang 2001: 53ff). It has been argued that praetorians on occasion received diplomas to make it easier to dismiss them from service without repercussions. See Arnaud-Lindet 1977: 307 and Phang 2001: 67.

the Roman citizenship.⁴⁷ Perhaps Accius' daughter had been born prior to his enlistment, or during his service, and having himself gained the citizenship within this period he felt that his daughter should share in his new status. Perhaps the legality of his marriage stumbled not solely upon his partner's peregrine status but on the application of military marriage non-recognition even to centurions. After all, to rule against the restriction of *conubium* between citizen and peregrine could undermine the foundation of the empire's social hierarchy; whereas to grant the citizenship to someone whose only crime had been to be the child of a serving soldier would simply be a way for the emperor to acknowledge some of the impediments thrown in the way of soldiers' desires for a family life. If Trajan was prepared to ignore the former then surely he might also ignore the latter. Without the survival of the centurion's petition itself, or the emperor's response to the centurion, it remains difficult to use the evidence from Pliny to prove the debate one way or the other. Whether or not Accius was able to conduct marriage as a centurion, the stumbling block to his daughter's citizenship was most likely a lack of *conubium* with the daughter's mother. The letters are certainly not the convincing clinchers Goldsworthy claims them to be.

One final observation: it is clear that the grant of citizenship to Accius' daughter was a concession to one of the difficulties faced by soldiers and centurions, whether that difficulty was the non-recognition of marriages contracted during military service, or simply the struggle to find partners of appropriate status. Pliny and Trajan both acknowledged impediments thrust in the way of soldiers' attempts to provide for their children – impediments that surely hampered the idea of centurionates, auxiliary or otherwise, promoting social mobility. It is possibly under Trajan that the laws on soldiers' wills were relaxed, enabling them to institute peregrines and Latins as heirs, which allowed soldiers to make their otherwise illegitimate children or wives their heirs.⁴⁸ And the person credited with ameliorating the soldiers' lot – in regards to marriage – prior to the apparent scrapping of the custom of non-recognition by Severus, was Hadrian, who allowed soldiers' illegitimate children to inherit if there were no legitimate heirs. Perhaps Hadrian inherited his adoptive father's concern, a concern brought to his attention by Pliny.

⁴⁷ Although in this case we might expect the petition to concern the mother as well as the other child.

⁴⁸ Gai. *Inst.* 2.110; Campbell 1978: 158.

The papyri

The clinching evidence that the *milites gregales* were subject to a marriage ban came from the papyrological material;⁴⁹ no equivalent legal ruling has yet been found for centurions, and the papyri are generally ignored in attempts to answer this question.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, one papyrus fragment not yet used, I believe, in the context of this debate is worth discussion. This intriguing papyrus contains documents relating to two families: a copy of the settlement of a debt from AD 121 and an extract from the census register of AD 131/2 of one family, and extracts from the census registers of AD 117/8 and AD 131/2 of another family; the connection between the two families, if any, and the reason for the compilation of this document remain unclear.⁵¹ We are interested in the second of these families, centred around a certain Apronios, and in particular their census record from AD 131/2: “Copy from the census register incorporating descriptions of the 16th year of the divine Hadrianus, quarter Boutaphion, a 1/6 part of a house of his [Apronios’] mother Kronous on the strength of her own memorandum. . . It was made clear that his [Apronios’] other daughter, Sempronia, has married Marcus Valerius Rufus, a centurion of a cohort.”⁵² This statement is remarkable for being the only seemingly legal record of a marriage involving a centurion, and dates from around the same period as the Cattaoui papyri which made it so clear that *milites* could not marry in this period. In his analysis of the papyrus Sijpesteijn assumed that no military personnel could marry, and simply wrote: ‘although soldiers could not officially be married the verb *γαμεῖσθαι* is used for the connection between Sempronia and the *centurio cohortis*’.⁵³ Although it is of course possible that *γαμεῖσθαι* is here used to simply indicate cohabitation, after closer examination of the document another answer suggests itself. The record of the marriage between Sempronia and Marcus was not officially observed by the conductors of the census: instead, they had only been told of the marriage by Kronous (ἐξ ὑπομνήματος αὐτῆς), the grandmother of Sempronia. In the census of AD 117/8 Sempronia had been a recorded occupant of this house; her absence

⁴⁹ The Cattaoui papyrus made it clear that children born to a soldier – whether a legionary or an auxiliary – during his service were illegitimate, even if both parents were Roman citizens and should otherwise have *conubium*; that military personnel could not take a wife; and that dowries given to a soldier were not legally recognised as such. For further discussion, see Meyer 1897: 44-74 and Phang 2001: 23-38.

⁵⁰ Allason-Jones, who believes that centurions were always allowed to marry, references a letter from the centurion Paniscus to his wife (*Select Papyri* I 155), but this is late, dating from AD 293 (1999: 43, 2005: 49).

⁵¹ Sijpesteijn 1993: 283-291 = *P. Mich.* inv. No. 5806. Given the presence of θεὸς Ἀδριανός in the dating formulae, Sijpesteijn is surely right in dating the compilation of the document to after Hadrian’s death. On this text, see also Bagnall 1995.

⁵² Il. 23-41: ἀντί[γραφ(ον)] ἐξ εἰκονισμ(οῦ) ἰς (ἔτους) θεοῦ Ἀδριανοῦ ἀμφοδ(ου) Βουταφίου οἰκία<ς> ὡς μέρος τῆς μητρὸς Κρονοῦτος ἐξ ὑπομνήματος αὐτῆς. . . ἐδηλώθ(η) δὲ τὴν ἑτέραν αὐτοῦ θυγατεραν Σεμπρωνίαν γαμεῖσθαι Μάρκῳ Οὐαλερίῳ Ρούφῳ ἑκατοντάρχῃ σπειρής. (Translation from Sijpesteijn).

⁵³ Sijpesteijn 1993: 289.

in AD 131/2 was now explained to the authorities. Perhaps γαμεῖσθαι was used because that was how Kronous saw the relationship: she assumed that Sempronia and Marcus were married, as presumably did they;⁵⁴ the precise legality of the marriage did not affect the assessment for the poll tax liability, and thus it could go ignored or unchallenged. It should also be noted that the legal statuses of Marcus, as well as of Sempronia and her wider family, are unclear. The presence of several Egyptian names in Sempronia's family are suggestive of a non-citizen family, whereas Marcus Valerius Rufus with his *tria nomina* may already be a Roman citizen.⁵⁵ Regardless of any military regulations, this sort of marriage between citizen and non-citizen was already invalidated without a special grant of *conubium* and, according to the *lex Minicia*, any resultant children would not be citizens.⁵⁶ In all probability, therefore, the mention of a centurion's marriage in an official document occurs simply because it derives from a family member's personal testimony, and not from a formal assessment by a provincial administrator.

Archaeological evidence

A limited amount of archaeological material has also been used as an indication that centurions were permitted legal marriage.⁵⁷ The centurions lived in their own single apartments at the end of the barrack blocks within the camp, between the *contubernia* of the *milites* and the street;⁵⁸ that their quarters were larger than those of the regular *milites* is clear.⁵⁹ These buildings often had more luxurious furnishings, including a modest peristyle, kitchenette, bath, and mosaic floor.⁶⁰ It appears that the centurions of the *primi ordines* were entitled to even larger accommodation.⁶¹ Because of the relative size and quality of the accommodation provided to

⁵⁴ The shock of the soldier Octavius Valens on learning of the invalidity of his marriage (and thus the illegitimacy of his children) contracted during his service is particularly clear in *P. Catt.* IV.16-V.26 at V.21-22, when he complains to the prefect Eudaimon: “Τί ἥδίκησαν οἱ παῖδες;” (“What wrong have the children done?”).

⁵⁵ Sempronia is an obviously Roman name; Apronius (the name of her brother, father and paternal grandfather) is a Roman *nomen gentilicium*; Marcus, the name of her paternal grandfather (a ἵππεύς/*eques*), is of course an extremely common Roman *praenomen*. Although we would expect Marcus, as (presumably) a post-Claudian auxiliary *eques*, to have received the franchise for himself and his children, and the right of *conubium* with a peregrine, in lines 28-29 and 47 we find that his son, Sempronia's father, Apronios had been subject to the poll-tax, which is a marker that he was not a Roman citizen (Bagnall and Frier 1994: 12: “Roman citizens were exempted from the capitation taxes that were based on the lists derived from census declarations”; on the poll-tax, see also Rathbone 1993: 81-112). Perhaps Marcus died before achieving *honesta missio*. Sempronia's younger sister Kroniaine, mother Ammonus and Ammonus' ancestors, and paternal grandmother Kronous and Kronous' ancestors, all have Egyptian names.

⁵⁶ Cherry 1990: 244-266; Bagnall 1993: 25-28.

⁵⁷ E.g. Hassall 1999: 35.

⁵⁸ Petrikovits 1975: 62.

⁵⁹ Davison 1989: 627ff; Hoffmann 1995: 111.

⁶⁰ Petrikovits 1975: 62. The peristyle was “ein Ausdruck des Sozialprestiges”.

⁶¹ Hoffmann 1995: 108: “[The] houses of the *primi ordines* of the Flavian period and beyond. . . came more to resemble contemporary tribunes' houses, presumably reflecting the relative ranking of these officers.”

centurions, it has been theorised that these were married quarters.⁶² In this context it is worth noting the various finds of female artefacts in centurions' quarters, and even the discovery of late first / early second century child skeletons in a centurion's house at Vindonissa.⁶³ However, the presence of women inside the fort guarantees neither that centurions were permitted to live with their families, nor that they were able to contract legal marriages.⁶⁴ It is more likely that the size of centurions' quarters was simply a reflection of their status within the military hierarchy; the presence of female or children's artefacts – if the product of centurions having families inside the camp – may derive from the correspondingly more attractive proposition of a centurion as a partner than an ordinary *miles*, and the size of the quarters would make it easier to house the family within the camp.

Funerary epigraphy

Meyer conjectured that the significantly greater number of wives in the funerary epigraphy of centurions than of *milites* was a reflection of the actual *Eherecht*.⁶⁵ Hoffmann used the relative number and early date of appearances of *uxores* in centurion commemorations at Lambaesis to suggest that centurions were not included in the military marriage non-recognition.⁶⁶ And Hassall emphasised the appearance of children of centurions who shared the same *nomina gentilicia* as their father – often taken as an indicator of legitimacy.⁶⁷ However, it seems just as likely that the greater number of centurions attested with wives is simply a reflection of their superior social status and wealth. It would also be a mistake to assume that the handing down of a *gentilicium* to a child reflects its legitimacy: after all, we also find this for ordinary *milites* – whom we know to have been subject to marriage non-recognition. Rather, we should follow Phang's assertion that 'it is clear from the epitaphs that the unions were regarded as social marriages and that the children were socially legitimate'.⁶⁸ It is understandable that parents might ignore the technicalities of the law, especially if they did not themselves know that the children were illegitimate, as the Cattaoui papyrus implies happened not infrequently.

⁶² Hassall 1999: 35.

⁶³ Female artefacts: Allison 2013: 323: 'The evidence for the presence of centurions' families is essentially too limited to draw any conclusions, not least because so few of their residences can be identified in the sites in this study.'; children's skeletons: Trumm and Brogi 2008: 106-110. For the distribution of artefacts associated with women and children throughout Vindolanda (Britannia), see Driel-Murray 1995: 3-21. Note that, at Vindonissa in Germania Superior, the observed female presence inside the first century AD fortress may have been the product of women employed inside the camp, perhaps within a tavern (Speidel 1996: 55, 80, 186-7).

⁶⁴ Moreover, there is no indication that the right to marry would have included the right to cohabit inside the fort (Hoffmann 1995: 110).

⁶⁵ Meyer 1895: 103-104. See also Tassistro 1901.

⁶⁶ Hoffmann 1995: 110.

⁶⁷ Hassall 1999: 35.

⁶⁸ Phang 2001: 144.

It is unfortunate that the main surveys of the commemoration patterns of soldiers attested by the epigraphy fail to account for the complexities of the Roman centurionate and do not distinguish centurions as a category in their own right: in their survey of Lambaesis, Saller and Shaw define “officers” as “*principales*, centurions and above”; while Phang’s more wide-ranging survey groups together centurions, *principales* and *immunes* as “special ranks”.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, these surveys make clear the relative domination of the wealthiest soldiers, centurions, and other commanders in the epigraphic record, as well as the greater ability of such men to attract wives that they would commemorate, or by whom they would be commemorated. Saller and Shaw demonstrate that “officers” commemorated or were commemorated at substantially higher rates than *milites*.⁷⁰ Phang’s results indicate that the proportion of both *milites* and “special ranks” commemorated by “wives” rose from the first century to third century; that in all areas, time-periods and unit-types studied, the proportion of “special ranks” commemorated by their “wives” is greater – normally significantly so – than that of *milites*; that soldiers of all categories and time-periods generally married later than civilians, and “special ranks” possibly even later than *milites*.⁷¹ Although Phang’s survey makes it clear that epigraphically attested marriages are particularly rare for both *milites* and “special ranks” in the first century AD, investigation reveals that centurions’ “wives” – identified as *maritae*, *uxores* or *coniuges*⁷² – are virtually absent in the epigraphy that can be securely dated to this period, and almost exclusively connected with the primipilate.⁷³ Although circumstantial, the only centurion epigraphically attested with a *concubina* probably also dates to the first century.⁷⁴ This centurion served in the urban cohorts and was commemorated by his concubine and his brother’s wife. The children of centurions are also only rarely attested in this period,⁷⁵ often do not share the *nomina* of the father, and at the time

⁶⁹ Saller and Shaw 1984: 139; Phang 2001: 151.

⁷⁰ Saller and Shaw 1984: 140 n. 63.

⁷¹ Phang 2001: 153-4, 166-76, esp. 175 n. 86, 414-6.

⁷² Phang has also opted to include *libertae* amongst the “Wives”, because “*coniux et liberta* is common” (2001: 151). This is slightly puzzling since, regardless of the illegitimacy of a marriage, there is surely a crucial distinction between those couples who considered themselves married and those who did not.

⁷³ *CIL* X 4872: *primus ordo cohortium praetorianum, primus pilus, tribunus militum cohortum urbanae et praetoriae; uxor*; *AE* 1895, 124: *centurio speculatorum; uxor*; *CIL* IX 4122: *centurio, primus pilus; uxor*; *InscrIt* X, 3, 3: *centurio(?), tribunus militum; uxor*; *AE* 1984, 375: *primus pilus; uxor*. Other texts where a centurion is commemorated by a female suggest a relationship, but do not specify its nature, e.g.: Purser 1925: 31: C. Venelius Priscus: *miles legionis, evocatus, centurio cohortis vigilum*; Fabia Restituta. Note that those who served during the early Principate may have done so – or at least completed a significant period of service – prior to the introduction of marriage non-recognition, probably under Augustus.

⁷⁴ *CIL* VI 32734.

⁷⁵ An earlier version of this chapter had sought to compare the proportion of centurions commemorated by wives and children over the three centuries of the Principate, on the grounds that children might be produced whatever the status of the partnership, whereas “wives” might be more likely to be commemorated as such once marriages of that kind were legally recognised. Certainly, Phang’s survey provides some evidence that soldiers and “special

of attestation their fathers are largely older, senior or retired centurions.⁷⁶ Commemorations of centurions by non-kin are, however, in the first century more common. A further issue is that, since in the epigraphic record some centurions still style themselves as such even after they have obviously retired from the military, the appearance of the title does not itself indicate that the individual is still serving. The presence of centurions with “wives” in the first century does not mean that centurions were permitted legal marriage during their period of service. Instead, the virtual absence of wives during this period for those below the primipilate, the relatively advanced ages of those who have children, and even the existence of children whose names do not follow those of their fathers, all suggest that centurions were afflicted with a marriage problem of some kind in the first century, perhaps the product of being denied legal marriage.

Factors which have been proposed to explain the well-established lack of military marriages below the centurionate in the first century include the decrease in the recruitment of Italians (who might find it harder to find women of sufficient social status within the provinces) to the legions and the rise in provincial recruitment, where legionaries were recruited to serve from within their native province, and the move towards legions remaining attached to permanent bases rather than regularly being transferred in their entirety.⁷⁷ However, the literary evidence makes it clear that soldiers – including the ordinary *milites* – were still able to form relationships and have families during their service even in the first century. We have already considered instances of first century centurions who were “married” and/or had children, such as Helvidius Priscus and Martial’s Aulus Pudens. Other hints of first century military family formation are found in Tacitus’ account of the acclamation of Vespasian as emperor by the Syrian legions in AD 69: the general Mucianus is able to whip both the troops and the provincials into a state of fervour by claiming that Vitellius planned to have the legions transferred to the Rhine – many of the soldiers had formed relationships with provincial women.⁷⁸ Moreover, the argument that the general absence of first century marriages was due

ranks” were both increasingly commemorated by wives rather than children over the course of the Principate (2001: tables at 414-5). However, commemorations of first century centurions by either wives or children are so few that such a survey would not produce reliable results.

⁷⁶ *CIL* XI 390-1: L. Lepidius Proculus; *miles legionis, centurio, primus pilus*; Septimina, *filia*; *IIAfr* 162, 19: C. Iulius; *ex centurione*; Clodius, Quartus *filius*; *AE* 1997, 365: L. Tillius; *centurio legionis*; Castricia L. *f.* (his partner? See Ricci 2018-19: 16; or daughter?), L. Tillius, *filius*; *CIL* II 1681: C. Iulius Scaena; *centurio hastatus primus*; Laeta, *filia*; *AE* 1924, 85: L. Valerius Fronto; *centurio legionis missus honesta missione; heredes filii*; *AE* 1987, 618a: Q. Pentius(?); *centurio* (probably an auxiliary, as are his sons); Marcellus *et* Caius, *fili*; *AE* 2003, 1447: C. Iulius Maximus; *centurio cohortis VI Thracum veteranae*; C. Iulius Maximus *et* all. *fili* *et* *heredes*.

⁷⁷ Phang 2001: 154-159 provides a helpful summary of the arguments.

⁷⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 2.80.

to the more frequent transfer of legions surely stumbles.⁷⁹ soldiers continued to be transferred between legions even when the legions themselves remained stationary. This is especially true for centurions. Nor did transfer necessarily preclude long-term relationships: centurions were transferred from unit to unit and province to province, often multiple times, and still appear to have been able to form marriages.⁸⁰ Indeed, Greene's recent survey of the military diplomas has demonstrated, based upon shared *origines*, that some soldiers would be followed into service, and through several transfers, by their pre-existing partners.⁸¹ It is also difficult to believe that another possible factor, the rise in provincial recruitment, can entirely account for the first century pattern:⁸² the traditional view that this recruitment method only began under Hadrian has been vitiated by evidence that the trend was already established by the end of the first half of the first century AD.⁸³

Potential routes into the problem of centurion marriage already flagged up include the possibility that legal marriage was available to those who had served the period of compulsory *stipendia* for someone who enlisted as a *miles*, and to those directly appointed into the centurionate. Few inscriptions indicate whether a centurion married or had children within the period of compulsory *stipendia* (and those involving children are typically commemorations of a child's early death by relatively aged centurions). However, in inscriptions with partners and children where a centurion's age is specified, and which are datable to before the end of the Severan period, the overwhelming tendency is for them to have completed the period of service required for a *miles* of that unit, sometimes only by a year or so, but frequently by a significant margin.⁸⁴ Consider especially the life and career of the North African soldier M. Petronius Fortunatus who, after only four years of service as a *miles* was promoted into the centurionate, in which class he would serve in 13 different legions.⁸⁵ On the occasion of commemorating the premature death of his son, M. Petronius Fortunatus the younger, also a legionary centurion, at the age of 35, the elder Fortunatus gives his own age as eighty years

⁷⁹ For the establishment of more permanent garrisons in the second century, see e.g. Parker 1928: 171; Mann 1983a: 65.

⁸⁰ E.g. Petronius Fortunatus, below.

⁸¹ Greene 2015: 135ff, esp. 138-139.

⁸² Scheidel 2007: 421: 'This development may have been spurred by a rise in provincial recruitment that helped preserve links to the birth family and facilitated relationships with local women.'

⁸³ Kraft 1951: 139. Hadrian may simply have made a pre-existing practice the norm (Le Bohec 1994: 81). For the traditional view, that Hadrian introduced the practice, see Parker 1928: 171.

⁸⁴ Specifically within regular period of *stipendia*: *CIL* 2871 (Severan, 40 years old); *CIL* III 4327 (AD 213, aged 42 with a deceased 8 year old son); *ILJug* 1925 (2nd c., auxiliary of 21 *stipendia*); *AE* 1977: 467 (Severan, *ex equite*, 42 years old). Potentially beyond regular period of *stipendia*: *RIB* 491; *TitAq* 499; *CIL* III 1472 (with 12587), 6185, 6297, 14214,8, 14214,10; *CIL* VIII 2826, 2877, 2878, 2891, 16553; *CIL* X 3365, 3375, 6800; *CIL* XIV 3626; *AE* 1932: 30, 1944: 34, 1979: 160, 1982: 812, 2009: 1078.

⁸⁵ *CIL* VIII 217 (Cillium, Africa Proconsularis, late 2nd/early 3rd), with Lassère 1991.

old. Although he may well have been a veteran, there is no indication that he had retired from the centurionate. The wife of the elder Fortunatus, Claudia Marcia Capitolina was sixty-five at the same time. It is quite possible that the various ages have been rounded to the nearest five or zero.⁸⁶ However, according to the inscription Fortunatus the younger was born when his mother was around 30 and his father 45: around the age at which we expect the elder Fortunatus to have completed the mandatory number of *stipendia* for someone who enlisted as a *miles*. The date of the inscription has variously been suggested as Hadrianic or Severan, but all theories put the birth of Fortunatus the younger prior to the assumed formal lifting of the non-recognition of military marriage.⁸⁷ Given that the absence of *conubium* was primarily felt in the status and legitimacy of the children resulting from the partnership, for status-conscious centurions ensuring the legitimacy of a child – especially if they would otherwise lose the Roman citizenship – was surely a key consideration. The case is not entirely conclusive: even if there was no *conubium* because the elder Fortunatus was a serving soldier, Claudia seems surely from a citizen family, so the younger Fortunatus would in any case be a citizen. But the age of Fortunatus when his son was born might be a nod to his ability to contract marriage with *conubium* following 25 years in the legions. And although these inscriptions cannot rule out that centurions married or had children during their earlier military service, inscriptions like this are nonetheless suggestive that centurions, even if permitted legal marriage at all times, were waiting until late in their *stipendia* or even after to marry and raise children.

Inscriptions concerning centurions appointed *ex equite Romano* are also uncommon. But one *primipilaris* is known, appointed to a centurionate *ex equite Romano*, who commemorated with his partner their daughter who died aged almost eight. This is Cnaeus Marcius Rustius Rufinus, who reached the lofty heights of prefectships of the praetorian fleets at Misenum and Ravenna and of the *vigiles* under Septimius Severus.⁸⁸ His earliest attested position was as a centurion in the fifteenth urban cohort at Rome.⁸⁹ Reconstructions of his

⁸⁶ On which see Scheidel 1996: 97-116.

⁸⁷ Hadrianic: Dobson and Breeze 1969: 112; early Severan (Septimius Severus / Caracalla): Birley 1988e: 208; late Severan (Severus Alexander): Lassère 1991: 53-68, esp. 68.

⁸⁸ *CIL* VI 1056 (Rome); IX 1582 (Italy, Beneventum); XIV 4381, 4386 and 4387 (Italy, Ostia).

⁸⁹ *CIL* X 1127 (Italy, Abellinum): *p(rimo) p(ilo)[bis ab Imp(eratore) Aug]ust(o) ordinib[us] adscript(o) ex[equite] Roman[o exercitato]ri equit[um] praetorianor(um)] (centurioni) coh(ortis) I [praetoriae (centurioni) coh(ortis)] XV ur[ban(ae)]*. From *CIL* IX 1582 we know that he was *primus pilus* successively in the legions *III Gallica* and *III Cyrenaica*; from X 1127 that the primipilate came after centurionates in the fifteenth urban and then first praetorian cohort. On the reading *cohortis XV urbanae* instead of the previously understood *legionis XV Apollinaris*, see De Carlo 2009. It remains unclear why, in X 1127, the statement that he was made a centurion *ex equite Romano* comes between his Rome centurionates and his legionary primipilates. Perhaps we should understand what follows as an expansion and detailing of *ordinibus* (i.e. which centurionates he held). Cf. *CIL* III 1480 for a potential parallel for the order: final centurionate; *ordinem accepit*; other centurionates held. This

career suggest that he held his first centurionate in the period of the joint reign of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus (AD 177-180) or in the early years of Commodus' sole reign.⁹⁰ Rufinus' daughter died during the period of his tribunate of the *vigiles* around AD 190.⁹¹ If the reconstruction of his career is accepted, Rufinus' daughter was likely born either shortly before or shortly after his service as a centurion began. Rufinus and his partner, Salinatoria Augustina, feature together in another early third century inscription.⁹² It seems improbable that this equestrian either dissolved a legitimate marriage upon service, or contracted an illegitimate one producing illegitimate children, during his relatively short period of service as a centurion at Rome. He is surely a member of the same family who were listed as the wealthiest property owners in the territory of Ligures Baebiani, not far from Rufinus' home at Beneventum, with property mortgaged to the alimentary scheme at the beginning of the second century AD valued at half a million sesterces:⁹³ the total property of this family must therefore have been considerably higher.⁹⁴ This is precisely the kind of family for whom questions of legitimacy, inheritance and succession – the prime consequence of marriages lacking *conubium* – would be of utmost concern. Equestrian or other elite appointees into the centurionate, having never had to sign up to the required period of *stipendia* for an ordinary *miles*, were most likely exempt from any restrictions on soldiers contracting legal marriage.

Military diplomas

Not yet used in the context of this debate are the military diplomas, which recorded grants of privileges to certain soldiers after completing a defined period of service. These are typically bronze versions of imperial constitutions awarded to the veterans themselves, while the originals were displayed at Rome. The privileges bestowed upon the recipients might include the grant of citizenship (where appropriate), the right of *conubium* with (one) current or future partner (*conubium cum uxoribus*), even if of peregrine status, and, prior to the Antonine reforms

Rufinus was long held an early praetorian prefect of Caracalla (Pflaum 1960-1961: 625-9, esp. 629, no. 234), but this is no longer supported (De Carlo 2008: 492).

⁹⁰ De Carlo suggested first the joint reign, perhaps born c. 140/5, before preferring the start of Commodus' sole reign c. 180-4 (2008: 493; 2009: 302). The apparent reference to a single Augustus is suggestive.

⁹¹ *CIL* IX 1583; XIV 4378.

⁹² *CIL* IX 1582.

⁹³ The centrally organised scheme that encouraged Italian landowners to mortgage property for a loan from the imperial treasury, the interest on which the landowners paid into a fund for the provision of food-distributions. On the alimentary schemes, see Patterson 1987 and Woolf 1990. On the scheme at Ligures Baebiani, see especially Champlin 1981.

⁹⁴ This Rufinus was perhaps a relative of Marcius Rufinus at Ligures Baebiani, who is attested in possession of a sizeable property portfolio in the alimentary table of AD 101, cataloguing local landowners in receipt of state loans (*CIL* IX 1455). Marcius Rufinus is the wealthiest landholder attested, pledging estates to the value of 501,000 sesterces (calculations from Duncan-Jones 1974: 211 with Champlin 1981: 249).

of c. AD 140, citizenship for their existing children.⁹⁵ Veterans of the auxiliaries, fleet, and *equites singulares Augusti* received all of these privileges; veterans of the praetorians and urban cohorts, who were already citizens, received only the right of *conubium* with non-citizens.⁹⁶ The citizen legionaries, and the para-military and predominantly freedmen *vigiles*, are not normally believed to have been eligible to receive *diplomata*.⁹⁷ Veterans of the fleet – at least of the praetorian fleets⁹⁸ – continued after AD 140 to receive citizenship for their children born before discharge, perhaps because citizens continued to shun service in the fleets whereas they appeared increasingly in the auxiliaries and the *equites singulares Augusti* during the second century.⁹⁹ Given their inclusion of official grants of *conubium* these *diplomata* are a key source for military marriages, although the purpose of the grant of *conubium* is probably that it encompassed even peregrine women who normally did not have *conubium*. Thus Phang cautions: “It is generally agreed that the diplomas are evidence only for the veteran’s marriage with a non-Roman woman; that is, they imply but do not prove that marriage was prohibited during service.”¹⁰⁰ The diplomas of veterans of the praetorian and urban cohorts specify within the text that the grant of *conubium* covered marriage with peregrines – perhaps for the units based at Rome it was felt this concession had to be spelled out.¹⁰¹ Diplomas granting *conubium* continued to be issued even after the reign of Septimius Severus, who is traditionally held to have repealed the military marriage non-recognition c. AD 197, which should also indicate that the *conubium* awarded was specifically the right of marriage with non-citizens, and not just the

⁹⁵ In the early Principate veterans who received citizenship upon discharge were also granted the citizenship for their children, including those born during their term of service; after AD 140, however, only children born after discharge (to a legal marriage) would be eligible for the citizenship. On this change, see Waebens 2012.

⁹⁶ For discussions on the nature and extent of the diplomas, see e.g. Alföldy 1968; Mann 1972; Phang 2001: 61ff; Greene 2015: 130ff. See especially Roxan’s collections of diplomas of 1978, 1985, 1994, and 2003, completed by Holder in 2006.

⁹⁷ The grants to the veterans of Legions I and II Adiutrix in AD 68 and 70 are exceptional and connected to the civil wars – as these legions were raised as an emergency measure from peregrine soldiers of the fleet they were eligible for diplomas granting the privilege of citizenship (*CIL* XVI 7-9 and 10-11). See Forni 1953: 50 and, on the debate on how normal such privileges were for legionaries, Phang 2001: 68-75.

⁹⁸ From the end of the first century AD the provincial fleet received their privileges alongside the provincial auxiliaries (Phang 2001: 80).

⁹⁹ Waebens 2012: 14-17. In AD 158 the *civitas liberorum* ceased to be given to all children born prior to the veteran’s discharge, but only to those born in a permitted union (*concessa consuetudo*). See below.

¹⁰⁰ 2001: 59.

¹⁰¹ E.g. *AE* 2014, 325: *ius tribui conubii dumtaxat cum singulis et primis uxoribus ut etiamsi peregrini iuris feminae in matrimonio suo iunxerint proinde liberos tollant ac si ex duobus civibus Romanis natos* – “the right of *conubium* is permitted, provided that it is with the first and only wife, so that even if they married a woman of peregrine stock they might raise children as though from two citizens.”

mere right to marry.¹⁰² However, this has been challenged by Eck's interpretation of an auxiliary diploma from Syria dating to AD 206, which includes the following privileges:¹⁰³

civitatem Romanam qui eorum non haberent et conubium cum uxoribus quas tunc habuissent cum est civitas iis data aut cum iis quas postea duxissent dumtaxat singulis singulas praeterea praestiterunt filiis decurionum et centurionum quos ordinati susceperunt cives Romani essent

The Roman citizenship for those who do not have it, and *conubium* with the wives they already had when the citizenship was granted to them or with those whom they married afterwards, provided that they have only one each. Furthermore, they have made it so for the children of decurions and centurions, whom they fathered during their time in those ranks, that they are Roman citizens.

The particular formulation concerning centurions and decurions is unique for auxiliaries. But a similar formula occurs also for the fleet veterans, whose children born prior to discharge continued to be eligible for grants of citizenship even after the changes of AD 140. In AD 158 the diplomas for veterans of the praetorian fleet were altered to grant citizenship to the children of veterans born to women (here *mulieres* – not described as wives, in law or otherwise) with whom they lived in a permitted union (*concessa consuetudo*), a formula which was used into the middle of the third century.¹⁰⁴ Based upon these passages, Eck suggests that soldiers cannot have been permitted to conduct legal marriage by Septimius Severus: children born during service, even to centurions and decurions, do not automatically receive Roman citizenship.¹⁰⁵ Eck argues therefore that Herodian's reference to Severus allowing soldiers to live with their wives should be read literally – essentially a re-statement of Meyer 1895, that Severus permitted soldiers to cohabit with their partners, with whom a legal union could automatically evolve upon fulfilment of the *stipendia* and receipt of the privileges of the diplomas.

However, this argument produces no evidence that strongly contradicts the idea that Severus overturned the non-recognition of military marriage, and fails to account for the non-

¹⁰² E.g. Cherry 1985: 61.

¹⁰³ *AE* 2012: 1960 and Eck 2011: 63-77. Followed by e.g. Speidel 2013: 207, 2014b: 333; Greene 2015: n. 126, n. 11. On this diploma see also Eck and Pangerl 2012, esp. 180-1.

¹⁰⁴ E.g. *CIL* XVI 152 (AD 247): *ipsis filiisque eorum quos susceperint ex mulieribus quas secum concessa consuet[u]dine vixisse proba[v]erint civitatem Romanam dederunt et conub(ium) cum isdem quas tunc secum habuissent cum est civitas iis data* – “To them and their children, whom they had fathered with the women with whom they proved that they had lived in permitted cohabitation, they granted the Roman citizenship, and *conubium* with those with whom they were in a relationship when the citizenship was granted to them.” See Eck 2011: 75.

¹⁰⁵ Eck 2011: 75-7.

citizen status of most auxiliaries, including their decurions and centurions. In fact, the diploma of AD 206 may produce more evidence for intervention by Severus, not to mention providing us with some useful information about centurions. First, the fleet diplomas tell us little about the marriage ban: the reference to *concessa consuetudo* is essentially a feature unique to the diplomas of the praetorian fleet, and may be an acknowledgement of cohabitation, perhaps concubinage; it does not seem to indicate *iustum matrimonium*.¹⁰⁶ Given that the *concessa consuetudo* is not found outside the fleets, we might consider this a concession to the least prestigious branch of the Roman military, and a recognition of the composition and setting of the praetorian fleets.¹⁰⁷ Second, even if Severus granted *conubium* / legal marriage to serving soldiers, this would surely not override the fundamental principles of Roman marriage. Unless a special grant had been given, as found in the diplomas, *conubium* occurred between Romans. Even if auxiliaries could contract marriages as soldiers, they would rarely have *conubium* with their chosen partners: a citizen auxiliary would need to find another citizen for there to be *conubium*; and a non-citizen auxiliary would in any case not have *conubium* unless it had been specially granted. Even after the non-recognition of the marriage of serving soldiers was lifted, grants of *conubium* served to allow auxiliary veterans to conduct legal Roman marriage with their non-citizen partners. Centurions and decurions, therefore, who married after c. AD 197, would likely not father citizen children during their service, perhaps because they were non-citizens, and most likely because their wives were non-citizens. Even after the *constitutio Antoniniana* of AD 212 veterans continued to receive grants of *conubium* with peregrines:¹⁰⁸ in a world of Roman citizens, soldiers of most kinds continued to have the option to marry non-citizens upon completing their *stipendia*.¹⁰⁹ Finally, although special privileges are listed in the diploma for centurions and decurions, its recipient was in this case a veteran cavalryman, not a decurion, reflecting that rewards listed in the diplomas included those that were not always applicable to the individual discharged soldier.¹¹⁰ The diploma of AD 206 does not disprove that Severus permitted military marriage.

But why argue against Eck, not least when his argument is – although he does not say this – predicated on the assumption that auxiliary centurions, like *milites*, were not permitted legal marriage? Because it does in fact highlight a distinct change around the turn of the third

¹⁰⁶ Phang 2001: 80-2.

¹⁰⁷ I.e. as primarily non-citizens recruited from the provinces but based in Italy and with longer service requirements than the other branches of the military. See e.g. Starr 1960: 74-7 and Mason 2003: 31.

¹⁰⁸ E.g. *AE* 2013, 1252 (Sirmium, Italy, AD 245, praetorian cohorts).

¹⁰⁹ E.g. those who migrated into the empire.

¹¹⁰ *alae Herculanae ex equite M(arco) Antonio M(arci) fil(io) Valenti Apamia*.

century. The *diplomata* could of course be granted to centurions and decurions as well as to the *milites*. Individual centurions are recorded as having obtained the same benefits as their lower-ranking comrades: *civitas* for themselves and their descendants, and *conubium* with a single partner.¹¹¹ At least some auxiliary centurions and decurions could receive the citizenship for their children even after the reforms of 140, often on the condition that they first prove to the provincial governor that the children were indeed theirs.¹¹² Generally this grant of citizenship applies to children born before their father's term of service; notably, this unusual privilege was occasionally extended to the auxiliary *milites* – the only way in which auxiliary *milites* could acquire the citizenship for their children born prior to their *honesta missio* after 140.¹¹³ The extension of this privilege to *milites* was uncommon, attested only twice in the surviving corpus of military *diplomata* in texts dated to the first two decades after the change of 140.¹¹⁴ From these texts, two virtually identical variations of the formula can be reconstructed as follows:¹¹⁵

praeterea praestitit ut liberi decurionum et centurionum quos praesidi provinciae ex se item caligatorum antequam in castra irent procreatos probaverint cives Romani essent

praeterea praestitit filiis decurionum et centurionum item caligatorum antequam in castra irent procreatos praesidi provinciae probaverint ut cives Romani essent

Moreover he warranted that the children of decurions and centurions and also of ordinary soldiers, whom they have proven at the office of the governor were born before their coming to the camp, were Roman citizens.

The three categories of recipient are decurions, centurions, and *caligati* i.e. ordinary soldiers.¹¹⁶ A similar formula exists in other post-140 diplomas without the tripartite categorisation of types of soldiers, the earliest known dating to AD 142, which runs: *praeterea praestitit ut liberi eorum quos praesidi provinciae ex se antequam in castra irent procreatos probaverint cives*

¹¹¹ E.g. *CIL* XVI 12 (Macedonia, AD 71).

¹¹² E.g. *CIL* XVI 132 (Pannonia Inferior, AD 193). On these texts see especially Eck 2019: 245-52.

¹¹³ Variations of the formula *liberi. . . quos antequam in castra irent ex se procreatos*: centurions and decurions only: *ZPE* 198, 240 (AD 158-160, Provincia Incerta); including *caligati*: *AE* 2001, 2156 (AD 146, Provincia Incerta); *AE* 2001, 1648 (AD 155-156: Pannonia Superior). Although *CIL* XVI 132 does not specify that the children had to be born prior to service, Eck 2011: 74-5 argues that the gist must have been the same as the others of the second century, since it would be strange if Severus restricted a more generous grant (i.e. the diploma of 206).

¹¹⁴ *AE* 2001, 2156 (AD 146); *AE* 2001, 1648 (c. 155-6).

¹¹⁵ See also *AE* 2016, 2017 for a considerably more fragmentary text that suggests a similar variant.

¹¹⁶ Putting to rest the widely held belief that centurions were classified amongst the *caligati*, on which see this chapter's Addendum.

Romani essent.¹¹⁷ This makes clear that the original exception, allowing for children born prior to service still to become Roman citizens, was intended to include all categories of auxiliary soldier. But eventually such privileges would be reserved for the decurions and centurions, and the Syrian diploma of AD 206 confirms citizenship for the children who had been born during their period of service as decurions and centurions only: *quos ordinati susceperunt* – “whom they fathered while *ordinati*”.¹¹⁸ For the most part, auxiliary centurions and decurions received broadly similar rewards to the soldiers they commanded, and Rome appears just as happy regulating their marriages as it was those of the *milites* and *equites*; but gradually over the course of the latter half of the second century and the early third century the differences in status between soldiers and centurions, cavalymen and decurions, were reflected in increased legal privilege upon discharge from the military. The specific formulation seen in AD 206 was a special privilege for those who reached the positions of command below the *praepositi* or equestrian commanders, effectively making the grant of *conubium* retroactive to the beginning of a decurionate or centurionate and legitimising children born within this period.

During the second century, centurions and decurions – and sometimes even ordinary *milites* – in receipt of diplomas had occasionally been able to register their children born prior to their military service for grants of citizenship; that children born during their service were for the most part not included suggests a difference in treatment of unions within and without the service. This is perhaps a shadow cast by the non-recognition of military marriage. So when in 206 centurions and decurions can have, upon discharge, children born during their service registered as citizens, this too might indicate that military marriages were permitted – it was simply the *conubium* with peregrines that they lacked. Allowing military marriage meant virtually nothing to auxiliaries, at least prior to AD 212 and its aftermath, if *conubium* with peregrines was not granted. The diploma of AD 206 went someway to balance this out, enabling at least centurions and decurions to make the most of legal military marriage by effectively making the grant of *conubium* with peregrines retroactive to the beginning of their period in that rank. Perhaps it was considered a step too far to offer similar grants to the ordinary *milites*, who for several decades now had been generally unable to win citizenship for their children born prior to discharge; centurions and decurions, however, were often already in receipt of special privileges. Septimius Severus simply modified them to fix a glaring problem with his grant of legal marriage to non-citizen soldiers.

¹¹⁷ AE 2012, 1945. Cf. AE 2005, 1114; AE 2001, 1726.

¹¹⁸ On *ordinati* as centurions, see Gilliam 1940: 127-48.

Summary

To say that all centurions could always marry is the easiest solution – it is not strongly contradicted by any of the evidence and renders the entire institution satisfyingly cohesive and consistent as a distinct class with its own privileges. But the centurionate was diverse, with members pulled together of different ages, statuses, units and grades. And the ancient evidence is so full of confusions and contradictions that it is impossible to proclaim that all centurions were always permitted legal marriage. There are some indications that, at least in the early Principate, marriages and children were largely the preserve of the primipilate and older or time-served centurions. Centurions who were directly appointed from the equestrian order seem probably able to have married. Centurions and decurions of auxiliary units seem unable to contract legal marriage until the reign of Septimius Severus. Although not providing any evidence other than an appeal to humanity, Phang had pondered whether centurions might have been permitted legal marriage upon reaching the same length of service as that at which common soldiers were discharged.¹¹⁹ Based upon this survey, I am inclined to think that marriage rights were associated with the regular period of *stipendium* (16 for praetorians, 20-5 for legionaries, 25 for auxiliaries, and 26 for those in the fleet) and its completion rather than with the centurionate specifically – centurions who stayed on beyond this period, as well as those directly appointed into the centurionate, were able to conduct legal marriage. Analogies with imperial armies in more recent periods suggest that, where marriage was regulated for the rank-and-file, at least the more junior officers were also subject to some of the restrictions. Austrian officers required their commander's permission to marry after 1750, and Spanish officers during the 1760s required a royal license to do so, effectively prohibiting marriage for all but the wealthiest.¹²⁰ 'Subalterns must not marry, captains may marry, majors should marry, and colonels must marry', ran the unwritten rule for the British officers of the Victorian and Edwardian period.¹²¹ Perhaps a similar spectrum operated in practice amongst the junior and senior commanders of the armies of the Principate.

Conclusion: acme of bliss

The partners of centurions came from a variety of backgrounds, from freedwomen to the daughters of their comrades. One veteran centurion of the praetorian fleet at Misenum married

¹¹⁹ Phang 2001: 132.

¹²⁰ Hurl-Eamon 2014: 33-34.

¹²¹ Procida 2002: 30-31; Clayton 2006: 107.

his freedwoman.¹²² Another centurion, Tiberius Claudius Felix, who served in the legions of the early third century,¹²³ married the daughter of a fellow centurion, Sertoria Festa, and commemorated her death at Lugdunum.¹²⁴ Felix's unit was the first legion *Minervia*, which was based in Bonna in Germania Inferior for much of its history and, as one of the Rhine and Danube legions, supported Septimius Severus' campaign to become emperor and helped defeat his rival Clodius Albinus at Lugdunum in AD 197, after which at least part of the legion remained at Lugdunum for a while, perhaps providing the context for Felix's presence there.¹²⁵ Both Felix and Sertoria were from the city of Rome itself, where presumably they had met. Sertoria was just 17 when she died.

And then there are those rare centurions who seem to have smashed through any social barriers and married not just into equestrian families, but senatorial. Normally cited in this context is Minicius Iustus, a first century centurion.¹²⁶ The connection is not easy. A Minicius Iustus was *princeps* – that is, next centurion in rank after the *primus pilus* – in a legion in Egypt in the first century.¹²⁷ A man with the same name was the *praefectus castrorum* – a post typically held after being *primus pilus* – in the seventh legion *Gemina* (“*Galbiana*” in Tacitus)¹²⁸ in AD 69. This legion had been raised by Galba (r. 68-9) in Spain for his revolt against Nero, and a Minucius Iustus was presumably its first *praefectus castrorum*.¹²⁹ Iustus was withdrawn for being too much of a disciplinarian and sent to Vespasian. Another Minicius Iustus is acknowledged by the younger Pliny as one of his associates: this man's wife, Corellia, is the sister of Q. Corellius Rufus, a senator and suffect consul of AD 78.¹³⁰ Their son presided over Pliny's games during his praetorship in 93. Is this just history from namesakes?

Perhaps, but it is not the only possible example of a veteran centurion marrying into the world of the senatorial elite. Around 20 km east of the North African legionary fortress and later city of Lambaesis lay the city of Thamugadi, founded c. AD 100 as a Trajanic colony (the

¹²² *CIL* VI 3118 (2nd-3rd c.).

¹²³ The legions of both Felix and his father-in-law had the epithet *Antoniniana*, bestowed under either Caracalla during his period of sole rule (211-217) or Elagabalus (r. 218-22). It is possible that Felix's legion received its title from Elagabalus, after whose assassination the epithet falls out of use, whereas his father-in-law's legion, the third legion *Cyrenaica*, was honoured by Caracalla when it fought under him against Parthia.

¹²⁴ *CIL* XIII 1893. For parallels, cf. *AE* 1988, 1003 (Tomis, Moesia Inferior, 2nd-3rd), in which the daughter of a centurion and wife of a legionary *princeps*, the second most senior centurion, commemorates her deceased children; *CIL* III 10503 (Aquincum, Pannonia Inferior, 2nd-3rd), in which a centurion had married the daughter of a *primus pilus*.

¹²⁵ Dio 76(75).6.

¹²⁶ On the question of one or many Minicii Iustii, see: Syme 1958: 177; Sherwin-White 1966: 415; Davies 1973.

¹²⁷ Fink 1971: 197-200, no. 51.

¹²⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 3.7.

¹²⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁰ *Ep.* 7.11.

colonia Marciana Traiana). Probably in the early third century, a *flaminica* (priestess), Manlia Pudentilla, dedicated a votive offering of an elephant tusk to the *genius patriae*, the *dea Africa*.¹³¹ She was accompanied in her endeavours by her husband, L. Valerius Maximus, and her children, P. Flavius Pudens and L. Valeria Maximilla. Maximus was a legionary centurion as well as a civic *decurio*, a councillor, at Thamugadi. Maximilla was evidently his daughter with Manlia. Flavius Pudens, however, was not his natural son. In fact, he is called a *clarissimus vir*, just as Manlia is called a *clarissima femina* – markers of a senatorial family. It is probable that Manlia was the daughter of a senator and that her first marriage was to a member of a senatorial family. Manlia's son may be the third century senator from Thamugadi, P. Flavius Pudens Pomponianus, styled Vocontius, whose career culminated with the proconsulship of Crete and Cyrenaica.¹³² This the step-son of someone who rose no higher than the legionary centurionate. We do not know anything more about the backgrounds of Minicius Iustus or Valerius Maximus, and their social positions prior to the centurionate, but their stories fill out the picture outlined by Tacitus' account of Helvidius Priscus, a senator son of a *primus pilus*, given towards the start of this chapter.

These are extreme examples. But there were evidently merits in delaying the legal marriages of centurions who were not already members of the elite. By the time they were able to marry they would be sufficiently wealthy and carry enough clout to make themselves appealing prospects for a good marriage. Perhaps this was part of the point – the best soldiers who were promoted through the ranks into the centurionate would find that, upon becoming eligible for a legally recognised marriage, they were now in a much better position to secure a good match. And the local elites of the cities, and perhaps even the equestrian order, might receive into their ranks a new family that had been forged in the fires of war.

¹³¹ *AE* 2008, 1697. On this inscription, see Le Glay 1982: 772; Bassignano 2005: 418 no. 56; Hemelrijk and Woolf 2013: 90-91; Fentress 1984: 403-4.

¹³² *AE* 1987, 1078; *CIL* VIII 2391; *ILS* 8981.

Addendum: *caligae* on the ground

This chapter discussed a diploma that distinguished centurions and decurions from the mass of ordinary soldiers, called in the text *caligati* – a term derived from the *caliga*, the hobnailed boot that soldiers wore.¹³³ This diploma therefore provides significant evidence that centurions were not normally classified as *caligati* themselves, overturning a long-standing assumption. Phang had even used the status of centurions as *caligati* to support the idea that they could not contract legal marriage, like common *milites*, while for Isaac this justified the relatively low status he accorded centurions.¹³⁴ This question was the focus of a 1946 paper by Gilliam, the results of which have been somewhat incautiously taken by subsequent scholars to indicate that centurions were unequivocally members of the *caligati*. Based upon the evidence available, Gilliam had offered three alternative hypotheses: 1) all centurions were always *caligati*; 2) all centurions were *caligati* only up to the middle of the third century; 3) auxiliary centurions were *caligati* but legionary and praetorian centurions were not. Of the three suggested possibilities, Gilliam found the last hypothesis the least compelling. However, a re-evaluation of the evidence casts doubt upon the normal inclusion of any centurions within the *caligati*. Further, by understanding the contexts in which various parties used this term, from the writers of the *diplomata* to equestrian commanders to centurions themselves, it becomes apparent that the term was highly contested and formed part of a status battleground between centurions as a class and equestrians.

If the caliga fits

Associations between *caligae* and *milites* in the literature are commonly rhetorical, as with the claims that the republican warlord Marius was elevated from the *caliga* to the consulship, or the application of the style Caligula to the future emperor Gaius, who had grown up in the camps of his father Germanicus¹³⁵ – although supposedly Caligula later tried to dissociate himself from this name, and a *primus pilus* who continued to use it found himself in hot water.¹³⁶ Occasionally *caligae* appear in physical descriptions, as with the unfortunate

¹³³ AE 2012: 1960.

¹³⁴ Phang 2001: 132: “The long-service *milites* were called *milites caligati*, a term that seems to have included centurions.” Isaac 1998b: 394-395: “All centurions, including those of the first cohort, were *caligati* and thus of a lower class than all equestrian and senatorial officers.”

¹³⁵ Marius: Sen. *Dial.* 10.17.6; Sen. *Ben.* 5.16.2. Caligula: Tac. *Ann.* 1.41, 69; Suet. *Cal.* 9.1; Dio 57.5.6; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 3.4.

¹³⁶ Sen. *Dial.* 2.18.4.

centurion Julianus who, while fighting at Jerusalem (AD 70) during the Jewish War (c. 66-73), slipped in his hobnailed boots and fell, where he was killed.¹³⁷

τὰ γὰρ ὑποδήματα πεπαρμένα πυκνοῖς καὶ ὀξέσιν ἥλοις ἔχων, ὥσπερ τῶν ἄλλων στρατιωτῶν ἕκαστος, καὶ κατὰ λιθοστρώτου τρέχων ὑπολισθάνει, πεσὼν δ' ὕπτιος μετὰ μεγίστου τῆς πανοπλίας ἤχου...

He wore shoes packed with sharp nails in close array just like each of the other soldiers, and while running down the stone-paved street he slipped. He fell on his back to the accompaniment of the greatest clang from his armour.

That it is a centurion wearing what appear to be *caligae*, and that the author Josephus not only knew the centurion but appears an eye-witness to the events he describes, was suggestive to Gilliam.¹³⁸ And yet no reason to assume that simply wearing the *caliga* – an often practical combat-boot, albeit evidently not so well-suited to urban warfare – axiomatically rendered someone a *caligatus*. We know from the AD 301 price-edict of Diocletian (r. 284-305) that, at least around the end of the third-century, workmen and women sometimes also wore *caligae*.¹³⁹

Gilliam dismisses as broadly inconclusive the legal texts since, although the term evidently had a technical use by the late second century, they do not provide a definition of *caligatus*.¹⁴⁰ Being somewhat selective, however, in what evidence is accepted and what dismissed, Gilliam argues that Ulpian's definition of "someone who has been discharged from the military" allows for *centurio* to be understood as a subset of *miles caligatus*.¹⁴¹

Quod ait praetor: 'qui ab exercitu dimissus erit': dimissum accipere debemus militem caligatum, vel si quis alius usque ad centurionem, vel praefectum cohortis vel alae vel legionis, vel tribunum sive cohortis sive legionis dimissus est.

When the praetor says 'someone who has been discharged from the army', we ought to understand that a *miles caligatus* has been discharged, or anyone else who has been dismissed up to the rank of centurion, or a prefect of a cohort, cavalry squadron, or legion, or a tribune of a cohort or legion.¹⁴²

¹³⁷ Jos. BJ 6.85-6.

¹³⁸ Gilliam 1946: 186 with nn. 21 and 22; Jos. BJ 6.81ff.

¹³⁹ 9.5; 9.10. On the Edict, see e.g. Lauffer 1971, Giaccherio 1974, Corcoran 2000: 205-33.

¹⁴⁰ Gilliam 1946: 186-7, with nn. 24-5 for references to the legal texts.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* on Dig. 3.2.2.2.

¹⁴² The passage comes in the context of establishing who might incur *infamia*, a category of despised people that included those who had been discharged in disgrace from the military: *infamia notatur qui ab exercitu ignominiae causa ab imperatore eove, cui de ea re statuendi potestas fuerit, dimissus erit* (Dig. 3.2.1). Ulpian therefore goes

However, the reduplication of *vel* would suggest that, if the category of *caligatus* included centurions, then presumably it also included the various equestrian commanders, which seems untenable. This is not to mention that the *miles caligatus* is cited in a different grammatical construct from the rest of the ranks given: *dimissum . . . militem caligatum* is an accusative and infinitive construction / indirect statement dependent upon *accipere debemus*; the rest of the sentence is a subordinate clause within the indirect statement, *si (ali)quis alius . . . dimissus est*, with the indicative used as a statement of fact. *Centurionem* is in the accusative, dependent upon *usque ad*; it is presumed that this is also the case for all the equestrian ranks listed.¹⁴³ The formulation *miles caligatus* seems distinct from *centurio* and the equestrian commanders.

A papyrus from the town of Dura Europos in Roman Syria has so far been allowed to provide the evidence that clinches the debate.¹⁴⁴ The excavations of the garrison town, under Roman occupation from the latter half of the 2nd century to its capture by Sassanian forces c. AD 265, have revealed a host of remarkable finds, not least a stunningly well-preserved legionary shield, a semi-cylindrical *scutum*.¹⁴⁵ Part of the third-century garrison was a milliary part-mounted cohort, the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*.¹⁴⁶ A duty report from the reign of Severus Alexander (r. 222-235), *P. Dura* 82, catalogues all infantry members of the auxiliary cohort stationed at Dura Europos as *caligati*, including nine centurions:

vi Kal(endas) Apr[iles] n(umerus) p(urus) mil(itum) ca]l(igatorum) dccccxxi[i]i in his [o]rd(inati) viiii diupl(icarii) viii s[esq(ui)plicarius] i drom(adarii) xxxiiii in his sesq(ui)plicarius i eq(uites) ccxxiii in his dec(uriones) v dupl(icarii) vii sesq(ui)plicarii iii coh(ortis) xx [Palmyrenor(um) S]everianae Alexa[nd]rianae

27th March, total strength of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum Severiana Alexandriana*: 923 infantrymen (*milites caligati*), including 9 centurions, 8 *duplicarii*, 1 *sesquiplicarius*; 34 camel-riders, including 1 *sesquiplicarius*; 223 cavalrymen, including 5 decurions, 7 *duplicarii*, 4 *sesquiplicarii*.

on to define *qui ab exercitu . . . dimissus erit*, and cites Pomponius to suggest that the senatorial legionary commanders were also included in the group *qui ab exercitu dimissus erit*. On *infamia* see Chiusi 2013.

¹⁴³ For a similar use of *usque ad* / *ad* followed by a list of dependent accusatives separated with *vel*, see *Dig.* 45.1.1.6.

¹⁴⁴ On Dura Europos and the army, see Pollard 1996.

¹⁴⁵ The shield, found in thirteen pieces, has been reconstructed and displayed at Yale University Art Gallery (Yale-French Excavations at Dura-Europos, 1933.715). Painted circular auxiliary shields were also excavated. See e.g. Hopkins 1979: 187.

¹⁴⁶ On which see Fink 1947.

Although *duplicarius* and *sesquiplicarius* could indicate soldiers on double-pay and pay-and-a-half, the terms also seem in the auxiliary units to be used as equivalents for *optio* and *tesserarius* respectively, the second- and third-in-command of an infantry century or cavalry *turma*.¹⁴⁷ It is generally accepted that centurions were alternatively called *ordinarii* in the third century if not before, and the parallelism between *in his ordinati* for infantry and *in his decuriones* for cavalry is suggestive.¹⁴⁸ Another surviving duty-roster for the cohort from AD 239 (Gordian III, r. 238-44), *P. Dura* 89, also names one Aurelius Germanus the senior centurion of the cohort, as *princeps ordinatus*.¹⁴⁹ The description of a *cohors equitata milliaria* provided by pseudo-Hyginus gives a nominal strength of ten centuries of infantry;¹⁵⁰ the presence of only nine centurions in *P. Dura* 82 reflects the situation on the ground, and the significant difference in totals given in the later *P. Dura* 89 indicate that the strength and the size of the centuries and *turmae* of the cohort varied over time according to need and circumstance.¹⁵¹ By the time of the later papyrus the tribune of the cohort has been killed and the cohort placed under the command of a legionary centurion with the title *praepositus*.¹⁵² However, although the roster for soldiers in their winter quarters on (probably) 27th May might still have used the category of *milites caligati*,¹⁵³ the roster for 28th May appears to completely omit the term.¹⁵⁴ In another surviving duty-roster papyrus for a *cohors quingenaria equitata* in Egypt c. 213-6, during the reign of Caracalla as sole emperor (211-7), centurions are also included under the category of *milites*, although the term *caligatus* is absent.¹⁵⁵ And, in the Vindolanda Tablets, centurions are simply included within the total for the *cohors I Tungrorum*. As an infantry cohort there was evidently no need to specify the various different categories of soldier, which suggests the point of calling centurions *milites* or *milites caligati* elsewhere is to clarify their categorisation with the infantry rather than with cavalry or camel-riders.¹⁵⁶ Given the emphasis that Gilliam – and those who have followed his conclusions – have placed upon

¹⁴⁷ Fink 1947: 168-70 on *P. Dura* 100, with Breeze 1971: 130 n. 8 and 133. Although common amongst auxiliary units, there is no compelling evidence that the term *sesquiplicarius* was ever applied to legionaries in antiquity (Speidel 1991: esp. 109).

¹⁴⁸ Gilliam 1940.

¹⁴⁹ On the progression of his career within the cohort see Davies 1976: 257-60.

¹⁵⁰ Ps-Hyg. *De mun. cast.* 25-6.

¹⁵¹ Fink 1947: 164.

¹⁵² On reconstructing the sequence of events, see Davies 1976: 259.

¹⁵³ The crucial term in line 5 is virtually obscured by square brackets: *n(umero) p(uro) m[il(itum) caliga]t[o]r dcclxxi in his ordd(inati) vi*.

¹⁵⁴ Line 10: *n(umero) p(uro) d[c]clx[xxi] i[n hi]s ordd(inati) vi*. However, totals are subsequently given for the full number of *dromadarii* and *equites*, so it is possible that the omission of specifying that the first total was only that of the infantry was a mistake.

¹⁵⁵ Thomas and Davies 1977, at e.g. 52 on Col. II, 10-12: *reliq[ui] n p mil cccclvii in is 7 vi dec iv eq c drom xiii: "remainder, net number soldiers 457 among them centurions 6 decurions 4 cavalrymen 100 camel-riders 13"*.

¹⁵⁶ *TV* 154 = *AE* 1991, 1162; *TV* 857 = *AE* 2010, 807, with Birley 2009: 268.

P. Dura 82 as “an official document drawn up in the orderly room of a unit [that] is beyond question the most weighty and clearest piece of evidence for the meaning of *caligatus* we have”,¹⁵⁷ other duty reports indicate that the specific formulation *milites caligatus* to describe all ranks of infantry was neither used universally, nor always applied at Dura Europos itself, and that its purpose was perhaps to distinguish unit types.

The epigraphy provides strong indications that centurions were never considered *caligati*, especially in concert with the use of *caligati* in the technical diplomas. Gilliam’s take on the inscriptions was that *caligatus* was often used by those who became *evocati* to contrast their special new status with their old;¹⁵⁸ those who then entered the centurionate might again enter the category *caligati*.¹⁵⁹ Inscriptions that contrast *caligatus* with *centurio* he renders doubtful, and broadly dismisses with the papyri.¹⁶⁰ Although their evidence is discounted by Gilliam, a pair of second century texts from Auximum in Italy provide a useful definition of service in *caliga*.¹⁶¹ The first inscription (*CIL* IX 5839), dated to the consular year of AD 137, comes from a statue base that had been set up by the textile-dealing organisation of the *collegium centonariorum* of Auximum in honour of their patron, C. Oppius Bassus.¹⁶² Bassus was a veteran of the urban and praetorian cohorts, in which he had performed a number of duties, who had been made *evocatus* (with duties as a clerk: *ab actis foro*) and then obtained a centurionate in the fourth legion *Flavia Felix*. At some point he became a magistrate in his Italian hometown of Auximum and was appointed a town patron. Whether or not a break in military service was necessitated for his civic service, Bassus soon continued his military career, as is clear from a second inscription (*CIL* IX 5840) on another statue base erected an undefined

¹⁵⁷ 1946: 189.

¹⁵⁸ This is certainly the case with *CIL* III 7108 (Smyrna, Asia): *T(itus) Iulius T(iti) f(ilius) Voltin(i)a Paternus evocatus Aug(usti) militavit ann(os) in cal(iga) XVII incal(igatus) VII vixit*.

¹⁵⁹ 1946: 187-8.

¹⁶⁰ *CIL* VI 37264 (*mil(itavit) calig(atus) [a]n(nis) XXIII(III) (centurio?) ann[i]s III*) depends on the reconstruction of the centurial symbol. It is unclear whether the use of *caligatus* in *CIL* VIII 2848 ((*centurioni leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae) qui et Caligatus stip(endiorum) XIII*) is a *signum*, an alternative name, or a statement that the centurion had previously served as a *caligatus*. Both texts belong to the third century.

¹⁶¹ *CIL* IX 5839: *Posita VI K(alendas) Iul(ias) / L(ucio) Aelio Caesare II / P(ublio) Coelio Balbino co(n)s(ulibus) / C(aio) Oppio C(ai) f(ilio) Vel(ina) / Basso p(atrono) col(oniae) / pr(aetori) Auximo / (centurioni) leg(ionis) / IIII Fl(aviae) Fel(icis) evoc(ato) Aug(usti) / ab actis fori b(ene)f(iciario) pr(aefecti) pr(aetorio) / signif(ero) option(i) tesse(rario) / coh(ortis) II pr(aetoriae) mil(iti) coh(ortium) XIII / et XIII urbanarum / coll(egium) cent(onariorum) Auxim(atium) / patr(ono) ob merita eius / l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)*; *CIL* IX 5840: *C(aio) Oppio C(ai) f(ilio) Vel(ina) / Basso p(rimo) p(ilo) p(atrono) c(oloniae) / pr(aetori) i(ure) d(icundo) Aux(imi) / (centurioni) leg(ionis) IIII / Fl(aviae) Fel(icis) et leg(ionis) II Traianae For(tis) / evoc(ato) Aug(usti) ab act(is) fori / b(ene)f(iciario) pr(aefectorum) pr(aetorio) mil(iti) coh(ortis) II pr(aetoriae) / et coh(ortium) XIII et XIII urb(anarum) / omnibus officiis / in caliga functo / centuriones leg(ionis) II / Traianae Fortis / optimo et dignissimo / in cuius ded(icatione) cenam col(onis) ded(it) / l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)*.

¹⁶² A *collegium* of somewhat uncertain function, although a comprehensive survey into the guild by Liu 2009 identifies them with some confidence as a *collegium* involved in textiles, and certainly puts to rest the long-standing speculation that their duties may have included acting as a local fire-brigade.

period of time later. Bassus has now become a *primus pilus*. To save outlining his entire career again, he rolls up the three *principalis* positions he had held within the century (*signifer, optio, tessarius*) under the umbrella-heading *omnibus officiis in caliga functo* / “having fulfilled all the duties in the *caliga*”. The most junior position he does not cite within this category is as *beneficiarius praefectorum praetorio* – Gilliam assumes that this must also have been a *caligatus* position, and that it is not grouped with the positions said to be held *in caliga* indicates the lack of technical meaning.¹⁶³ However, although otherwise theirs was a *principalis* position the *beneficarii* held their post not within the hierarchy of the century but on the staff of an official – the position might be presented separately for this reason, or simply because the official Bassus served was the Prefect of the Praetorian Guard.¹⁶⁴ Setting aside the *beneficiarius* problem, the contrast between service *in caliga* with service both in the *evocati* and as a centurion is made clear in a funerary commemoration found near Comana Pontica (in Pontus, now northern Turkey), possibly dating to the mid-second century (AE 1990, 896):

M(arcus) Caesius / M(arci) f(ilius) Pol(lia) Verus / Pollentia (centurio) / leg(ionis) V Mac(edonicae) mili/tavit in coh(orte) IX / praetoria ann(is) / XVI ordinatus tubi/ce<n> item optio ad car/c<e>rem factus est mili/tavit evocatus annis / VII centurio factus / est in leg(ione) V Mac(edonica) fuit or/dine in sexta hastatus / posterior stipendia ac/cepit caligata XVI evo/cativa VII centurioni/ca IIII militavit annis XXVII vixit annis XXXXI / M(arcus) Caesius Atimetus et / M(arcus) Caesius Limen liberti et / heredes eius ex testamento f(aciendum) c(uraverunt)

Marcus Caesius Verus, son of Marcus, of the voting-tribe *Politia*, from Pollentia, a centurion of the fifth legion *Macedonica*. He served in the ninth praetorian cohort for sixteen years. Appointed trumpeter, he was also made *optio* with responsibility for the prison. He served as an *evocatus* for seven years. He was made a centurion in the fifth legion *Macedonica*. He was the *hastatus posterior* in the sixth cohort. He received the pay of a *caligatus* for sixteen years, of an *evocatus* for seven, of a centurion for four. He performed military service for twenty-seven years. He lived for forty-one years. Marcus Caesius Atimetus and Marcus Caesius Limen, his freedmen and heirs, saw that this was made in accordance with his will.

¹⁶³ 1946: 187-8.

¹⁶⁴ Compare AE 2014, 1031 (Scodra, Dalmatia, 3rd c.), in which a *primipilaris* describes his earliest rank as *caliga prima*. The next position he cites after his service “*caliga prima*” is *optio primipilariorum*, probably referring to a post as *optio* attached to the *numerus primipilarum* at Rome. See Lajtar 2014, esp. 275-7.

Verus splits his military career of twenty-seven years into three distinct terms of service: sixteen years as a *caligatus*, which includes his period as a musician (*immunis*)¹⁶⁵ and as an *optio (principalis)*; seven years as an *evocatus*; and four years as a centurion. If Verus considered the centurionate to be a position *in caliga* then we might expect him to have recorded twenty years of service as such.¹⁶⁶

Status and perspective

The word *caligatus* may not in fact have been a strictly technical word at all; or at least if it was, it was one which came to be understood differently by different people. Legal documents needed a short-hand to separate the mass of auxiliary soldiers, whether *gregales*, *immunes* or *principales*, from the auxiliary centurions and decurions who commanded them.¹⁶⁷ *Caligatus* served this function. Although *caligati* might seem normally to apply to foot-soldiers, and the term is used in that context to distinguish infantry from the cavalrymen in the Dura papyri, the diplomas nonetheless imply that ordinary cavalrymen would also be included within the umbrella-heading of *caligatus*. Within the funerary epigraphy, we no longer need to think that centurions were being incorrect, or obfuscating the realities, by considering only the period of mandatory *stipendia*, and only ranks up to the *principales*, as service *in caliga*. But the emphasis upon the different status earned as *evocatus* or as centurion hints at an attempt to forge a distinct and separate social identity for its members. Dio's claim that *evocati* might also carry the *vitis*, the symbol of the centurion, begins to sound less surprising.¹⁶⁸ So what do we do with the Dura papyri, the one set of sources that unequivocally categorises centurions (or rather, *ordinati*) as *milites caligati*? Perhaps it was simply a convenient way for the tribune and his *officium* to distinguish the infantry from the cavalry. Or perhaps a certain snide undertone can be detected, an equestrian tribune, aided by his staff bureau, othering these centurions.

¹⁶⁵ The *tubicen* is categorised as an *immunis* in an epigraphic catalogue of a legionary vexillation of the XI *Claudia* (CIL III 7449, Municipium Montanensium, Moesia Inferior, AD 155). Donaldson 1988: 351-2 argues unconvincingly against this on the grounds that little skill was required.

¹⁶⁶ For the sake of completeness, another inscription should be cited which may refer to *stipendia caligata*, in the commemoration of a centurion at Scampa in Macedonia during the reign of Antoninus Pius (ILAb 88 with Mitthof 2014: 275). M. Sabidius Ma[ximus?] had been a *miles* in the eleventh legion *Claudia*, in which he held a series of *principalis* positions, before going on to hold a series of centurionates. The right hand edge of the inscription is missing, but towards the bottom of the text an enumeration of his period appears to read: [---] / Ɔ KA . XX . CONTINUA . XL. Various resolutions have been offered, of which the most favourably received have been [*mil(itavit) st(ipendia)*] (*centurioni*)ca XX continua XL or [*mil(itavit) st(ipendia)*] (*centurionica*) ca(ligata) XX continua XL (Mitthof 2014: 275-6). In either case, the implication is that 20 years were spent both as *caligatus* and as a centurion. From the photographs the presence of a centurial symbol is compelling. The reading KA is plausible (and it is difficult to decipher what else it could be); its resolution uncertain. There are no good parallels, and this would also be the only epigraphic attestation of the total *stipendia* being referred to as *stipendia continua*.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. the lack of legal force behind the use of *uxor* in the diplomas, which is essentially used there to refer to a common-law wife.

¹⁶⁸ Dio 55.24.8.

With Caracalla's *constitutio Antoniniana* of 212 enfranchising free inhabitants of the empire the status gap between the legions and the auxiliaries was shrinking; and with an increasing liberality in grants of the equestrian census, especially to military families, existing equestrians might consider the privilege of their position under threat. This is not to say that the tribune, Julius Rufianus, was conscious in his bias; centurions, especially those in the auxiliaries, may simply have seemed a long way beneath him. But when around a decade later the cohort was placed under the command of a legionary centurion, the term *milites caligati* is dropped – used for the duty-roster one day, the next, in an entry by a second hand, it is gone. Perhaps a clerical error; or perhaps a change in practice, when a centurion had the offending terminology fixed.

CHAPTER 3

An Officer and a Gentleman

Negotiations of status between centurions and the Roman elite

“People talk of their enlisting from their fine military feeling - all stuff - no such thing. Some of our men enlist from having got bastard children - some for minor offences - many more for drink; but you can hardly conceive such a set brought together, and it is really wonderful that we should have made them the fine fellows they are. I have never known officers raised from the ranks turn out well, nor the system answer; they cannot stand drink.”

Conversation, Wellington to the Earl Stanhope, 11th November 1831 (Deal Castle)

When the governor of Syria, C. Ummidius Durmius Quadratus, dispatched in AD 54/5 a representative to collect hostages from the Parthian King Vologaeses I, he must have been happy with his choice of envoy: a centurion named Insteius who had had previous dealings with the King.¹ And collected the hostages were; but not by Insteius, whose mission was scuttled by politics. Gn. Domitius Corbulo, brother-in-law of emperor Caligula (r. 37-41) and recently appointed to a special command in Cappadocia and Galatia by the new emperor Nero (r. 54-68), had sent his own representative to take control of the hostages: a *praefectus cohortis*, Arrius Varus. In the conflict of authority between Varus and Insteius that followed it was decided that, in the interests of preventing a scene, the hostages themselves should determine their captor. Varus, as the representative of the illustrious Corbulo, was chosen. To limit the fallout between Corbulo and Quadratus, Nero himself would intervene and proclaim their joint success. As for Insteius and Varus, both continue their progression through the ranks of the army in their own ways. Insteius appears not much later, in AD 57, as a *praefectus castrorum* now in Corbulo's army, entrusted with control of a small fortress in Armenia.² Corbulo would come to regret the trust he had placed in Varus: in return for elevation into the primipilate in the late 60s, Varus lodged information against Corbulo that would feed Nero's suspicions and

¹ Tac. *Ann.* 13.9 on the events of AD 54/5.

² *Id.* 13.39. The *praefectus*, Insteius Capito, is surely the same man.

hasten Corbulo's death (AD 67).³ Varus went on to play his part in the chaos of civil war of AD 69, invading Italy with M. Antonius Primus as somewhat undesirable partisans of Vespasian, and briefly claiming for himself the prefectship of the Praetorian Guard before being diverted to the prefectship of the grain supply (*praefectus annonae*) by Vespasian's official representative, Mucianus.⁴

In Tacitus' account, a centurion and a *praefectus cohortis* were both deemed fit to represent their respective governors for the same duty; a centurion is allowed to compete with a member of the equestrian *militiae* on virtually equal terms. The victorious envoy owed his success not to his own rank, but to the status of his governor, and both winner and loser were able to continue their military careers. The pairing of Insteius and Varus, who must both have held the primipilate, encapsulates the curious position occupied by the legionary centurionate. This chapter investigates the complex relationship between the centurionate as an institution and Rome's equestrian and senatorial elite. It seeks to resolve the tension between equestrians serving within the centurionate, and the creation of equestrians from the centurionate, by arguing that the institution came to serve as a training ground for future generations of Roman elites, aligning the interests of its new members as much as possible with the old.

Equestrians and the centurionate

The centurionate stands out for its diverse and socially heterogeneous nature, counting amongst its members not only those promoted from the ranks but also those more connected individuals, sometimes already of equestrian status, who had been able to secure a direct appointment. Most famously, the future emperor Pertinax (r. 193), allegedly a son of a freedman and an erstwhile grammarian, suffers no censure for applying initially to the centurionate before taking up a post in the *militiae equestres* as a *praefectus cohortis* instead – although his relationship with the governor of Syria, under whom he was to serve, did not get off to a brilliant start:⁵

Sed cum in ea minus quaestus proficeret, per Lollianum Avitum, consularem virum, patris patronum, ducendi ordinis dignitatem petiit. dein praefectus cohortis in Syriam profectus Tito Aurelio imperatore, a praeside Syriae, quod sine diplomatibus cursum usurpaverat, pedibus ab Antiochia ad legationem suam iter facere coactus est.

³ Tac. *Hist.* 3.6 (Varus); Dio 62(63).17.5–6 (Corbulo's death). On the portrayal of Corbulo, see Syme 1970, Ash 2006.

⁴ Tac. *Hist.* 3. 16, 52; 4.2, 4, 11. On Varus, see Pavis d'Escurac 1976: 323.

⁵ SHA *Pert.* 1.1, 5–6.

But when he achieved little profit in that industry [i.e. as a grammarian] he sought the status of a centurial command, with the help of Lollianus Avitus, a former consul and his father's patron. Later, after he set out for Syria as a *praefectus cohortis*, in the reign of Antoninus Pius (r. 138-161), he was forced by the governor of Syria to make his way to his posting from Antioch on foot, because he had commandeered the relay network without official letters of permission.

The case of Pertinax is generally understood as evidence that some may have preferred the prospect of a long-service career as a centurion to the short-term tenure of positions within the *militiae equestres*.⁶ However, although *ordinem ducere* is a standard expression for a centurial command, the passage gives no other indication that Pertinax was thwarted in his desires, and his appointment as *praefectus cohortis* appears a natural result of his patron's influence. Given the date and unreliability of the *Historia Augusta*, it is also possible that *ordinem ducere* was simply used here to indicate an appointment to a military command.⁷ But other examples are known from the literature of the Principate, including another grammarian, M. Valerius Probus, who repeatedly tried to obtain an appointment as a centurion before eventually turning to academic pursuits.⁸ And Pliny, in a letter to Baebius Hispanus, writes of the mysterious disappearance of a fellow townsman of his, for whom he had obtained an appointment to the centurionate (*ordinem impetraveram*) as well as providing 40,000 sesterces for his equipment.⁹ The man, Metilius Crispus, and his slaves vanished; Pliny feared violence, either from bandits or from the slaves themselves. The wealth and opportunities available to those who become *primus pilus* are considered incentive enough for seeking a direct appointment into the centurionate. So Juvenal, in his fourteenth *Satire*, chastises as money-centric a father who encourages his son to petition for entry into the centurionate, in the hope that he will ultimately achieve the primipilate around the age of 60 and become rich.¹⁰

Equestrians who received direct appointments from the centurionate, or transferred from the *militiae equestres* into the centurionate, are well attested in the epigraphic record. Equestrian centurions can be identified by their claim to appointment *ex equite Romano*; those who transferred from the *militiae equestres* into the centurionate are identified through the

⁶ E.g. Dobson 1972: 196; Speidel 1992: 103; Ezov 2007: 46.

⁷ The modern consensus is that the work belongs to the late fourth century. On questions of authorship and date, see e.g. Barnes 1978, esp. 13-22; Honoré 1987: 156ff.

⁸ Suet. *Gram.* 24: *M. Valerius Probus, Berytius, diu centuriatum petiit, donec taedio ad studia se contulit.*

⁹ Plin. *Ep.* 6.25.

¹⁰ Juv. *Sat.* 14.193-8: *aut uitem posce libello. . . ut locupletem aquilam tibi sexagesimus annus adferat.*

order in which they list their military positions held.¹¹ Based upon the transfers known, including that of an equestrian *tribunus militum* into a legionary centurionate of unspecified grade,¹² it is now generally accepted that the three primary grades of the *militiae equestres* were paid a similar amount to, and possibly even less than, the three primary grades of centurion.¹³ This is possibly borne out by the common advancement of those *praefecti alae quingenariae* who were promoted into civil posts to sexagenarian (paid a *salarium* of 60,000 sesterces) procuratorships, but of *primi pili* into centenarian (paid 100,000 sesterces) procuratorships.¹⁴ Those rare equestrians who held a fourth *militia*, commonly as *praefectus alae* of a double-strength milliary cavalry unit, also then went into centenarian procuratorships. In terms of pay the hierarchy may have run: *militia prima* (*praefectus cohortis quingenariae* / *tribunus cohortis voluntariorum civium Romanorum*), *centurio legionis*, *militia secunda* (*tribunus militum legionis* / *tribunus cohortis milliariae*), *primus ordo*, *militia tertia* (*praefectus alae quingenariae*), *primus pilus*, *militia quarta* (*praefectus alae quingenariae*). It has been estimated that equestrians had an average income of somewhere above 40,000 sesterces per annum from returns on their estates, or around 20-24,000 if they held the minimum property qualification of 400,000 sesterces.¹⁵ Service in the *militiae equestres* or as a centurion came with an income that measured up well and possibly even better, depending on their rank and the wealth of their estates, than what might be gained in a year by way of return on an equestrian's estates; and an outstanding career in either branch of the army command could lead to a procuratorship that would fill the family coffers. However, for those on the *militiae equestres* there appears to have been little measurable difference in success rates at going on to win a procuratorship, regardless of rank held within the *militiae*, with the exception of those who reached a rare *militia quarta* and were marked as pre-eminent.¹⁶ Those on the *militiae*

¹¹ E.g.: *CIL* VIII 14698 (Africa Proconsularis, 2nd c.): *C(aio) Octavio / Q(uinti) fil(io) Cornel(ia) / Honorato (centurioni) / adlecto ex eq(uite) / R(omano) a divo Pio in / leg(ionem) II Aug(ustam)*; *CIL* II 2424 (Hispania Tarraconensis, 2nd c.): *L(ucio) Terentio / M(arci) fil(io) Quir(ina) Rufo / praef(ecto) coh(ortis) VI Britto(num) / (centurio) leg(ionis) I M(inerviae) P(iae) F(idelis) don(is) don(ato) ab / Imp(eratore) Traiano bell(o) Dac(ico) / p(rimo) p(ilo) leg(ionis) XV Apoll(inaris) / trib(un)o coh(ortis) II vig(illum)*. That directly appointed centurions did not lose their equestrian status, if they had it, has been demonstrated by Zwicky 1944: 90-3.

¹² *CIL* X 5829 (Ferentinum, Italy, early 2nd c.).

¹³ Dobson 1974: 408 and 1972: 200, with table at 203, prefers equal pay between the *militia prima* and the regular centurion, the *militia secunda* and the *primus ordo*, the *prima tertia* in a category on its own, and the rare *militia quarta* with the *primus pilus*. Speidel 1992: 103 places each step of the *militiae* below the equivalent gradation of centurion.

¹⁴ On the equestrian procuratorships, see especially Pflaum 1950, 1960-1961, 1974, Duncan-Jones 2016: 105-117 and Davenport 2019: 299-370. On *primipilares* and the procuratorships, see Dobson 1974: 421-6.

¹⁵ Davenport 2019: 329, with n. 174 on a possible reference in *Juv. Sat.* 9.140-1 on the wish for an annual income of 20,000 HS to remain equestrian. See also Scheidel and Friesen 2009: 76, table 6, for an estimated average equestrian fortune of over 600,000 HS and annual income of over 40,000 HS.

¹⁶ Duncan-Jones 2016: 110-3.

equestres also generally fared worse at going on to win procuratorships than equestrians with no military service, who appear an elite and better connected subset of equestrians.¹⁷ For equestrians seeking a career in public service but not part of this subset able to skip past military service, the possibility of entering the centurionate increased the positions available to them, perhaps doubling the number, at the beginning of their career.¹⁸ And with their combination of networks of patronage – the sort that might help them secure a military position in the first place¹⁹ – and educational background, should equestrians plump for the centurionate they might stand a strong chance of reaching the primipilate,²⁰ probably more so than an equestrian in the *militiae* had of reaching a *militia quarta*. For Duncan-Jones, service as a centurion must have been a “more arduous” and “less prestigious” route for an equestrian looking for a military career.²¹ Not necessarily. Service in the centurionate was no less a gamble than service in the *militiae*, and with the absence of an upper limit on the number of years that could be spent in the centurionate, the primipilate – prestigious even for equestrians – must have seemed an obtainable goal.

The attitude of equestrians to the dignity of the centurionate, as a series of ranks less socially exclusive than the equestrian *militiae* also open to them, is uncertain. Similarly, it is broadly unclear how far centurions appointed *ex equite* or transferred into the order from the equestrian *militiae* were, on the basis of their social background, accorded different treatment from those centurions promoted from the ranks of the legions or even the Praetorian Guard. What follows will demonstrate that equestrian centurions were keen to ensure the integrity of their status as equestrians, and to differentiate themselves from the mass of other centurions who had already spent a significant period, often a decade or two, in military service prior to their promotion. In particular, it was with the emperor that they sought to associate themselves.

Centurions “ex equite Romano” and the emperor

In the addendum to the previous chapter we came across the case of Marcus Caesius Verus, who categorised his *stipendia* into a trifecta of *caligata*, *evocativa* and *centurionica*.²² Such

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ It has been calculated that around 90 posts were available each year in both the *militia prima* and in the legionary centurionate, although perhaps as few as ten percent of legionary centurionates might go to direct appointees. See Dobson 1972: 195.

¹⁹ Appointments to the *militiae equestres* and centurionate were typically through the relevant provincial governor, in the case of the latter nominally with the approval of the emperor (Birley, E. 1988c: 157-8; Dobson 1972: 195).

²⁰ Although Dobson 1974: 405-6 suggests that if those directly appointed received obvious favour those centurions promoted through the ranks might be disinclined to continue striving for the primipilate.

²¹ Duncan-Jones 2016: 105 n. 4.

²² *AE* 1990, 896. Cf. *CIL* VI 2578 (Rome, 2nd) for another Praetorian separating *stipendia militar(ia)* from *stipendia evocat(iva?)*; and Purser 1925: 31 for a first century soldier who distinguished his legionary service

divisions are rare – far more common is simply to list all types of service in the centurionate and below within the same calculation. A Julio-Claudian *princeps* in the second cohort of the fourteenth legion *Gemina* had a total of forty-six years of *stipendia*, which he divided into sixteen *stipendia militaria*, four *stipendia curatoria veteranorum*,²³ and three *evocativa*.²⁴ His remaining twenty-three years as a centurion are not separately identified. Other than Verus, only one other centurion certainly refers to *stipendia centurionica*, an *ex equite* centurion from Beneventum, Sextus Pilonius Modestus, who died probably in the aftermath of Trajan's Dacian Wars of AD 101-2 and 105-6 (*CIL* III 1480):

Sex(tus) Pilonius / Sex(ti) f(ilius) Ste(llatina) Mode(stus) Benevento / (centurio) leg(ionis) IIII F(laviae) F(elicis) III hastatus / post(erior) ann(or)um XXXVII or/dine(m) accepit ex / equite Romano / militavit in leg(ione) / VII C(laudia) P(ia) F(ideli) et VIII Aug(usta) / XI C(laudia) P(ia) F(ideli) I Miner(via) P(ia) F(ideli) / stipendi(i)s centurio/nicis XVIII / h(ic) s(itus) e(st) s(it) t(ibi) t(erra) l(evis)

Sextus Pilonius Modestus, son of Sextus, of the voting-tribe *Stellatina*, from Beneventum, *hastatus posterior* centurion in the third cohort of the fourth legion *Flavia Felix*, 37 years of age. He received his appointment as centurion from the Roman equestrian order. He served in the seventh legion *Claudia Pia Fidelis*, the eighth legion *Augusta*, the eleventh legion *Claudia Pia Fidelis*, and the first legion *Minervia Pia Fidelis*. He received pay as a centurion for nineteen years. Here he lies. May the earth lie lightly upon you.

Pilonius' description of his service as *stipendia centurionica* is peculiar. In the case of M. Caesius Verus, service was differentiated between that *in caliga*, that in the *evocati*, and that as a centurion. But Pilonius has no other type of service from which to distinguish his centurionate within his own career. The answer likely lies in the normal practice of the majority of his colleagues in the centurionate not to differentiate the various aspects of their *stipendia*, but rather to provide a single total that included *stipendia* both *in caliga* and as centurions. Simply enumerating one's *stipendia* without clarification might imply unfavourable service also within the ranks. By specifying that his *stipendium* is that solely of a centurion, and by

from service as an *evocatus* and as a centurion: *milit(avit) leg(ione) VIII ann(is) XX evocatus an(no) I (centurio) an(nis) IIX consummatis stipendi(i)s XXIX*.

²³ On the *curatores veteranorum*, who were officials in the units (*vexilla*) of veterans that were maintained probably until the beginning of the Flavian dynasty, see Keppie 1973: 10ff, esp. 11 on this inscription. Augustus had demanded twenty years of regular service followed by five as a veteran; but over the course of the first century legionaries came to serve twenty-five years as standard, and the need for dedicated units of veterans faded.

²⁴ *CIL* XIII 7556 (Baudobriga, Germania Superior).

stating his appointment directly from the equestrian order, Pilonius is setting his own career – a privileged one, with no service *in caliga* – apart from that of his colleagues. Another feature of Pilonius’ funerary inscription is the emphasis upon his appointment into the centurionate directly from the equestrian order. There are comparatively few individuals in the epigraphic record who did the same – only eight centurions are known to have used the *ex equite Romano* formula.²⁵ Of these, two or three specifically credit the emperor with their appointment. In contrast, of the many more examples of centurions who were promoted through the ranks of the legions, auxiliaries and units at Rome, the total number who describe their appointment in similar terms, as the product of imperial beneficence, is not much different.

Caius Octavius Honoratus, who would eventually become *princeps prior* of the fifth cohort of the tenth legion *Gemina Pia Fidelis* received his appointment from Antoninus Pius.²⁶ The *primipilaris* Cnaeus Marcius Rustius Rufinus, whom we met in the previous chapter and who became prefect of the *vigiles* under Septimius Severus,²⁷ was granted a centurionate at Rome, probably by Commodus.²⁸ And a centurion of the third legion *Italica*, Quintus Eniboudius Montanus, gained his appointment from Caracalla,²⁹ in return for which he erected two altars to local deities for the health of the *domus divina*.³⁰ Each credits the emperor with their position, and Eniboudius’ erection of altars for the health of the imperial family were probably set up in consequence of his appointment. Rustius Rufinus in particular achieved phenomenal success, reaching the great prefectships of the empire, reflected in his gratitude to the emperor(s) responsible for his appointment. Rufinus’ service must have begun under the later Antonine emperors, whose memories were co-opted by Septimius Severus shortly after becoming emperor: bolstering his claims to legitimacy, Severus declared himself the son of

²⁵ *CIL* II 1030, III 1480, V 7865-6, VI 3584, VIII 1647, 14698, X 1127; *AE* 1977: 467. Although other inscriptions describe someone as a centurion and an *equus Romanus* or a possessor of the *equus publicus*, or indicate that the centurion was the sibling of an equestrian, there is no guarantee that the centurion had themselves been appointed directly from the equestrian order. Rather, they or their sibling may have obtained the equestrian census, perhaps through service. Admittedly, some were certainly equestrians prior to service (e.g. *AE* 1957: 249, an individual with the *equus publicus* and member of the five *decuriae* – panels of jurors, on which see Davenport 2019: 212-3 – who subsequently became a centurion and died in service in Britain), but the argument here is on the emphasis individuals place upon being a centurion appointed *ex equite Romano*.

²⁶ *CIL* VIII 14698 (Thuburnica, Africa Proconsularis): *adlecto ex eq(uite) R(omano) a divo Pio in leg(ionem) II Aug(ustam)*.

²⁷ *CIL* VI 1056 (Rome); IX 1582 (Beneventum, Italy); XIV 4381, 4386 and 4387 (Ostia, Italy).

²⁸ *CIL* IX 1582, 1583, X 1127 (on which see De Carlo 2009), XIV 4378.

²⁹ Gilliam 1940: 135 n. 31, following Mommsen (*CIL* V, p. 1158), understood Caracalla. Ritterling 1925: 1533 preferred Marcus Aurelius.

³⁰ *CIL* V 7865 and 7866 (Cemenelum, Alpes Maritimae): *ordinatus ex eq(uite) Rom(ano) a domino Imp(eratore) M(arco) Aur(elio) Antonino Aug(usto)*.

Marcus Aurelius and the brother of Commodus.³¹ There would have been no harm to Rufinus' career under the Severans in strengthening his own associations with the Antonines.

Non-equestrian centurions thank the emperor in a range of circumstances. A legionary centurion at the quarry of Mons Claudianus in Egypt indicated that he had been seconded there as *praepositus* by Trajan, in which context he made a votive offering.³² Some centurions thank the emperor for the grant of military decorations, such as L. Lepidius Proculus, who reached the primipilate and was rewarded by the emperor Vespasian for his actions in the Jewish War with metal bands (*torques* and *armillae*), discs (*phalerae*) and a "camp crown" (*corona vallaris*).³³ Others attribute their receipt of *honesta missio* and the *praemia / commoda militiae* (i.e. discharge and its attendant rewards) to the benevolence of the emperor, as was the case for T. Flavius Lucilius, who served in the prestigious *equites singulares*, was appointed auxiliary centurion of the seventh cohort of volunteers, and received honourable discharge under Hadrian.³⁴ Emperors are also thanked when they exercise their prerogative to grant as a rare reward the equestrian census even to centurions who have yet to reach the primipilate.³⁵

However, only rarely do they directly credit the emperor with their appointment into the order of centurions.³⁶ A military decurion in the prestigious *equites singulares*, M. Ulpius Martialis, set up an altar at Rome to Jupiter, Juno, Hercules and the *Campestres* for his elevation by Hadrian to a centurionate in the first legion *Minervia*.³⁷ A centurion in the eleventh legion *Claudia*, M. Sabidius Maximus, attributes his transfers to centurionates in different legions (*promotus in legionem*) to the emperors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius.³⁸ His transfer by Hadrian was from the eleventh legion *Claudia* to the third legion *Gallica*, and he received a

³¹ E.g. Dio 76(75).7.4. On the propaganda underpinning the Severan regime, see Baharal 1989, esp. 573ff on incorporating himself within "an imperial fictitious dynasty".

³² *CIL* III 25. See Hirt 2010: 170; 2015: 302-3.

³³ *CIL* XI 390-1. On these decorations, see Maxfield 1981: 79-80, 86-95. *Torques* were worn commonly awarded in pairs and strapped either side below the collarbone. *Armillae* were worn as bracelets. *Phalerae* might be worn strapped to a harness over the chest. The *corona vallaris*, also the *corona castrensis* (Gell. *NA* 5.6.17; Fest. 49 L) was awarded to the first man to break over the *vallum* of an enemy camp.

³⁴ *AE* 2006, 1013. On the side of the stone is an image of a centurion bearing a *vitis*. Given Lucilius' *nomina*, and given that his *origo* was a military camp (*castris*), Lucilius' father was an auxiliary soldier who received the Roman citizenship under the Flavians.

³⁵ *CIL* XI 5992 (Trajan); X 5064 (AD 208, Severus and Caracalla).

³⁶ Beyond those discussed here, another case that has been restored to indicate promotion into the centurionate by an emperor comes from *CIL* XIII 6728 (Mogontiacum, Germania Superior), from a second-century centurion whose early career had seen him a praetorian *miles* and *principalis* who, having perhaps been made *evocatus* and assigned to the twenty-second legion *Primigenia Pia Fidelis*, was promoted into the legionary centurionate as *pilus prior* or *posterior* of the tenth cohort. But this is history from square brackets.

³⁷ *CIL* VI 31158 (Rome). Although not specified, that he was in the *equites singulares* seems certain given that he held his decurionate in a cavalry unit at Rome. The *Campestres* were deities of the parade ground who may have had a particular connection with mounted units. See Irby-Massie 1996.

³⁸ *IIA1b* 88 (Scampa, Macedonia).

series of military decorations (*torques*, *armillae*, *phalerae*, and the *corona muralis*)³⁹ from the same emperor following victory in his Jewish War (the Bar Kokhba revolt c. 132-6). It is probably in this context that the transfer occurred.⁴⁰ Finally, an auxiliary decurion, Catulus, was also promoted to a centurionate in the third legion *Augusta*, garrisoned at Lambaesis in Numidia, by Marcus Aurelius in AD 174, following a recommendation by the provincial legate, Marcus Aemilius Macer.⁴¹ Few such promotions from auxiliary decurionate to legionary centurionate are known, but it appears that Catulus had successfully performed a mission of some description, perhaps catching lions for beast-hunts,⁴² with the aid of his colleagues – auxiliary decurions and *principales* – for which, presumably, he won his promotion. On the day of his promotion, Catulus set up an inscription for the health of the emperor and the legate, marking the fulfilment of a vow he must have made prior to setting out on the expedition that won him a legionary centurionate. In the case of Catulus, it is the legate rather than the emperor who is singled out as responsible for his promotion.

Overall, very few centurions formally credit the emperor with their rank. But, given how few inscriptions set up by or for centurions *ex equite Romano* survive, the proportion of these who credit the emperor with their advancement are striking. The provincial governor had some responsibility for the appointment of centurions to the units stationed within his province.⁴³ Although recommendations could come from the unit commanders, and although on occasion the soldiers of the unit are said themselves to select their preferred candidate,⁴⁴ the success of *principales* appointed to the governor's *officium* (particularly his *cornicularii* and *beneficiarii*) in obtaining centurionates suggests the benefit of holding those positions outside the regular structure of the *centuria* in the service of potential sponsors.⁴⁵ The names of appointed centurions were maintained at Rome by the *ab epistulis*, the office for imperial correspondence, and petitions for and appointments to the centurionate could also be handled centrally.⁴⁶ When Pliny obtained a position for his townsman, Metilius Crispus, it was perhaps

³⁹ Like the *corona vallaris*, n. 33 above, but for being the first to storm an enemy city rather than camp. Maxfield 1981: 76-9.

⁴⁰ At this time the eleventh legion *Claudia* was garrisoned at Durostorum in Moesia Inferior (Silistra, Bulgaria), but a vexillation of this legion and the fifth legion *Macedonica* (then garrisoned at Troesmis, Dacia) appear to have been used during the revolt (*CIL* III 13586, with Eck 2015: 268-70). The third legion *Gallica*, garrisoned in Syria, was intimately involved in the suppression of the revolt.

⁴¹ *CIL* VIII 21567 (El-Agueneb, Mauretania Caesariensis).

⁴² On this interpretation, and on the debate surrounding the meaning of the inscription, see Epplert 2001: 216-7.

⁴³ E.g. *P. Mich* 64 with Gilliam 1957: 155-68, esp. 158 on the appointment of auxiliary centurions.

⁴⁴ *CIL* VIII 217 on the career of Petronius Fortunatus the elder: (*centurio*) *factus ex suffragio leg(ionis)*.

⁴⁵ Birley 1988e: 207.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* For literary hints, see also Stat. *Silv.* 5.1.94-5; Juv. 14.195; Flor. *Verg. Or.* 5.3-6.1.

effected through this office.⁴⁷ Similarly, when seeking to ease the promotion of his contacts along the *militiae equestres*, Pliny could petition the emperor directly,⁴⁸ or the relevant provincial governor.⁴⁹ On occasion, the emperors themselves were involved in the selection and appointment of centurions, whether through the approval of petitions or direct intervention in the careers of favoured soldiers. Those who directly petitioned Rome, or on whose behalf their connected patrons made a petition, and those whose prior service in the units garrisoned at Rome had brought them to the emperor's attention, might be more likely to find imperial involvement in their appointment as a matter of practice rather than just principle. The assassin of Caracalla, praetorian *evocatus* Julius Martialis, supposedly joined the cause because of his anger that the emperor had not granted his request for a centurionate.⁵⁰ En route to Carrhae, Martialis stabbed Caracalla to death during a bathroom break. Opportunities for intervention by the emperor in the careers of legionaries might also arise when on campaign, in the same way that the centurion L. Aconius Statura was made an equestrian by Trajan for outstanding service in the Dacian Wars.⁵¹

The centurions considered above who attribute their rank to the emperor were centurions who received their appointments directly from the equestrian order and the praetorian cavalry, as well as an existing centurion whose transfers are attributed to emperors probably for distinguished service on campaign, and a centurion who credits his promotion from the auxiliaries in principle to the emperor but in practice to the governor. Reference to the involvement of the emperor in one's appointment into, or transfer within, the centurionate was a way to indicate a particularly favoured status, as either someone from the equestrian order whose petition for rank had been approved, or someone who had brought themselves to the special attention of the emperor. Those who explicitly stated that they had received their appointment from the equestrian order were most likely also to intimate their favour with the emperor, and ensure that they should never be mistaken for someone who had seen service in the ranks. If appeal was not made to the name of the emperor, alternatives were at hand, as with Pilonius' unique clarification that he had received only the *stipendia centurionica*. And of those who specify that they were appointed to the centurionate *ex equite Romano*, only one became a *primipilaris*, Rustius Rufinus, who went on to become the prefect of the *vigiles*. A degree of

⁴⁷ *Ep.* 6.25.

⁴⁸ *Id.* 10.87.

⁴⁹ *Id.* 3.8.

⁵⁰ Dio 79.5.

⁵¹ *CIL* XI 5992 (Tifernum Mataurense, Italy). Cf. *CIL* X 5064 (Atina, Italy) for a centurion in the Rome cohorts being granted the *equus publicus* by Severus and Caracalla.

over-compensation underpins the whole phenomenon. Those equestrians who reached the pinnacle of the centurionate, the primipilate, itself a creator of equestrians, might not feel the need to clarify their equestrian status: it was implied by the very title of *primipilaris*.

The centurionate and the creation of an elite

The first casualty of the siege of Placentia (AD 69) was the amphitheatre, the largest building in Italy at the time, located outside the city walls and collateral damage of the burning missiles fired between besiegers and besieged.⁵² Inside the city, a small loyalist army of three praetorian cohorts,⁵³ 1,000 *vexillarii*, and token cavalry, fighting under their general Spurrina for the survival of Otho's fledgling reign.⁵⁴ Outside the army of Aulus Caecina Alienus, fighting for Vitellius' campaign to become emperor, totalling 30,000 men at the outset of the campaign but worn down from earlier battles: the twenty-first legion *Rapax*, auxiliaries, and vexillations from the other Rhine legions.⁵⁵ It was the urban army, derided as soft and lazy by the veterans of the Rhine for their theatre-going, which would carry the day. For Caecina this was an embarrassing loss, but the day was not entirely against him: while removing his army towards Cremona to join the rest of Vitellius' forces, a collection of marines and cavalry surrendered to him.⁵⁶ Leading the cavalry was a *praefectus alae*, Julius Briganticus; the marines were under a *primipilaris*, Turullius Cerialis. Their choice to surrender to the rebel general was not difficult: Briganticus was by origin a Batavian,⁵⁷ the Germanic people who provided some of the auxiliaries in Vitellius' army; Cerialis had served in Germania as a centurion, and was personally acquainted with Caecina.⁵⁸ Tacitus' narrative of the civil war of 69 assumes a prominence given to centurions, and especially *primi pili*, within the legions that allowed them the opportunity to network with powerful members of Rome's established elite. And the shared experiences in Germania between invading general and defending commanders not only eased the surrender of Briganticus and Cerialis but perhaps secured their re-appointment within the armies of Vitellius who, following the victory of his forces at Bedriacum (near Cremona) and

⁵² Tac. *Hist.* 2.20-2.

⁵³ The new praetorian cohorts are said to be milliary under Vitellius (Tac. *Hist.* 2.93); whether they were quingenary or milliary previously is unclear. Dio 56.24 suggests the latter. On the debate, see Kennedy 1978.

⁵⁴ Tac. *Hist.* 2.18.

⁵⁵ *Id.* 1.61.

⁵⁶ These may have been the 100 cavalry and 1,000 marines previously intercepted by Caecina's vanguard auxiliary infantry (Tac. *Hist.* 1.17), but they could well be different. Otho's army included a substantial number of marines (*id.* 2.11), and the first legion *Adiutrix*, under Otho's command, had extraordinarily been enrolled in AD 68 from soldiers of the fleet (*id.* 1.6, 31).

⁵⁷ And the nephew of the Batavian rebel Civilis (Tac. *Hist.* 4.70, 5.21).

⁵⁸ Tac. *Hist.* 2.22: *ille primipilaris et Caecinae haud alienus, quod ordines in Germania duxerat*. It is tempting to see a pun on Caecina Alienus' name with "*Caecinae haud alienus*" ("he was no stranger to Caecina").

the suicide of Otho in mid-April, was left victor in the fight for the imperial title – that is, until Vitellius’ defeat to the forces of Vespasian later that year. Although Turullius Cerialis is not heard of again, Tacitus informs us that Briganticus was placed in charge of an *ala* that was formed from *equites singulares* under Vitellius but which switched to Vespasian’s cause;⁵⁹ the timing of Briganticus’ appointment is unknown. He died fighting for Rome during the revolt of the Batavians (AD 69-70) led by his uncle Civilis.⁶⁰

The revolt of the Batavians and its crushing does not end the participation of Batavians in the Roman army nor their relevance here. Batavian cohorts continued to feature in the Roman army, with a notable showing at Mons Graupius (c. AD 83/4) during the campaigns of Agricola, father-in-law of Tacitus, while governor of Britannia.⁶¹ Two cohorts of Batavians, the third and the ninth, who may have fought at Mons Graupius, are attested in the garrison of the early fort at Vindolanda.⁶² The ninth cohort probably formed the core of the garrison around the Nerva and early Trajanic period.⁶³ The commander of the cohort during this period was Flavius Cerialis, who may himself have been a Batavian, perhaps born to a Batavian noble who, like Briganticus, had remained loyal to Rome – his *nomina* recall two of the major events of the years 69-70 in the establishment of the Flavian dynasty, and the crushing of the Batavian revolt by the general Quintus Petillius Cerialis.⁶⁴ Adams has identified the linguistic footprints of an elite literary education in Cerialis’ writings preserved amongst the Vindolanda Tablets,⁶⁵ which include a request for a contact to represent him to the governor of Britain, Lucius Neratius Marcellus (gov. 101-4).⁶⁶ This is the same Marcellus whom Pliny successfully lobbied to have the future historian Suetonius made an equestrian military tribune; Suetonius had the position made available to one of his relatives instead, for which posterity is grateful.⁶⁷ Birley has argued that Cerialis’ petition might also have been to elicit a transfer or promotion up the *militiae equestres*, and that his very position as *praefectus* in Britain was itself the work of Lucius Neratius Priscus, the brother of Marcellus and governor of Germania Inferior, land of

⁵⁹ *Id.* 4.70.

⁶⁰ *Id.* 5.21.

⁶¹ Tac. *Agr.* 36. On auxiliaries at Mons Graupius, see Gilliver 1996. On the involvement of Batavians in the conquest of Britain, see Hassall 1970. In particular, the *cognomen* of Julius Briganticus is suggestive of someone whose father was involved in the early Roman occupation of Britain under Claudius and fought against the Brigantes (*Id.* 134).

⁶² A first cohort of Tungrians is attested garrisoning an early fort at Vindolanda in the 90s and 120s, and it is possible that the presence there of the unit, or at least part of it, during this period was continuous.

⁶³ Bowman and Thomas 1994: 23-4.

⁶⁴ Holder 1982: 64ff; Birley 1991: 97-8 with n. 48; Adams 1995: 129.

⁶⁵ 1995: 129.

⁶⁶ *TV* 225. For the identification of the writer of this tablet with Cerialis, see Bowman and Thomas 1994: 200-202, no. 225.

⁶⁷ *Ep.* 3.8.

the Batavians, during the preceding years (98-101).⁶⁸ The editors of the tablets see the petition simply as Cerialis attempting to secure a comfortable period of command in Britain.⁶⁹ In any event, at some point during Cerialis' tenure at Vindolanda, the governor paid a visit and had lunch.⁷⁰ Cerialis seems actively involved in establishing a position for himself amongst the elite of the Roman world, a social environment to which his family was relatively new.

His own social circle suggests both an island of the Roman elite – however new they may be to that status – within northern Britain, and the opportunities for those orbiting this rarefied world to build up their own networks of patronage. A probable commander based at the undetermined site of Briga, Aelius Brocchus, was in regular contact with Cerialis, and they seem to have visited each other when possible and gone on hunting trips together.⁷¹ Brocchus perhaps gave Cerialis advance warning of the governor's arrival.⁷² Their wives were also in communication with each other, and the most famous of the writing-tablets records a birthday invitation from Claudia Severa, wife of Brocchus, to Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of Cerialis.⁷³ The language of Severa is “elegant, colloquial, and syntactically correct”.⁷⁴ In environments where families of similar status – that is, commanders in the *militiae*, quite possibly equestrian – were few and far between, their social spheres must have taken on a particularly intimate dimension, with the most personal relationship attested in the writing-tablets that between commanding families in different garrisons. Within Vindolanda itself, the social circle of Cerialis and Lepidina includes [Cl]odius Super, who expresses his pleasure at spending time with Cerialis and may have been invited to a gathering of Lepidina's, perhaps her birthday.⁷⁵ In a separate text it is revealed that [Cl]odius Super is a centurion, possibly a *regionarius*, an outposted centurion with oversight of some policing and administration of a region.⁷⁶ Here Super requests from Cerialis clothing for his “boys” (*puerorum meorum*), perhaps his slaves if not men under his command. Super addresses Cerialis as *frater*, perhaps somewhat informally, and Bowman

⁶⁸ Birley 1991: 98.

⁶⁹ Bowman and Thomas 1994: 200-203. Nor do they see this as an example of *litterae commendaticae*, or letter of self-recommendation (as argued by Speidel and Seider 1988).

⁷⁰ TV 581 and 582.

⁷¹ Based at Briga: TV 292. That he was a fellow commander is suggested by CIL III 4360, a dedication from Pannonia superior (Arrabona) by a *praefectus alae*, C. Aelius Brocchus, to Diana. This is the only other known Aelius Brocchus, and the identification seems plausible. On the friendship of Brocchus, Cerialis, and their wives, see especially Birley 2010.

⁷² TV 248.

⁷³ On visiting: TV 292; birthday invitation: TV 291.

⁷⁴ Adams 1995: 129.

⁷⁵ TV 629.

⁷⁶ TV 255, on the reading of which see Bowman and Thomas 2003: 157, no. 255. The reading *reg(ionario)* is uncertain, but two other *centuriones regionarii* can be identified elsewhere in the writing-tablets TV 250, 653). The tablets provide the earliest attestations of *regionarii*.

and Thomas have suggested that he may be a centurion appointed *ex equite Romano*.⁷⁷ But given the relative importance of the legionary centurionate, from which the *regionarii* were typically selected, not to mention the frequency with which they operated alongside the commanders in the *militiae equestres* in both the auxiliaries and the legions, there is no need to assume that Super was himself an equestrian. In either case, centurions and *militiae equestres* worked alongside each other and found opportunities to foster cordial relationships. And service in military communities where members of Rome's upper orders were few on the ground, especially in such remote outposts as northern Britain where social hierarchies might appear especially imbalanced, may have contributed to an environment that encouraged the speedy development of cordial relations between commanders of the *militiae equestres*, their families, and centurions. Provided that boundaries weren't crossed, that is: Pliny tells of a legal case centred upon Galitta, wife of a military tribune who had an affair with a centurion.⁷⁸ Trajan had the centurion dismissed and banished; Galitta's husband was forced, against his will, to prosecute and divorce his wife under the relevant *lex Iulia*, which punished adultery with banishment.⁷⁹

The social environments within which centurions found themselves also served as training grounds for activities associated with elite culture. The educational aspirations – or pretensions – of centurions, not to mention the importance of education in their upbringing and in that of their children, are featured within the ancient literature. As we have seen, once and future grammarians Pertinax and M. Valerius Probus are said to have sought appointments as centurions.⁸⁰ Horace makes centurions locally significant figures eager to send their children to the best schools in their municipalities.⁸¹ Martial imagines hardy centurions thumbing his works out in the cold wilderness of the Danube.⁸² His friend, the centurion and prospective *primus pilus* Aulus Pudens, appears interested in his writings and even recommends

⁷⁷ Bowman and Thomas 1994: 227. On *frater* as a “cordial reference to colleagues”, see Tomlin 1998: 64. Super does not, however, describe himself as *collega*, as used by those of the same rank or unit (*ibid.* with nn. 144 and 145), perhaps lending weight to the suggestion that Super was a legionary and the reading that he was *regionarius*.

⁷⁸ The tribune was probably the sole senatorial *laticlavus* of the legion, rather than one of the equestrian *angusticlavii*, since he was about to stand for public office (*honores petituro*).

⁷⁹ *Ep.* 6.31. On the law see *Dig.* 48.5. Under Roman law of the Principate a cheating husband did not commit *adulterium* unless his affair partner was also married: legal *adulterium* was based upon the status of the woman in the affair.

⁸⁰ *SHA Pert.* 1.4-5; *Suet. Gram.* 24.

⁸¹ *Hor. Sat.* 1.6.71-8

⁸² *Mat.* 11.3: *meus in Geticis ad Martia signa pruinis a rigido teritur centurione liber* – “out in the Thracian frostlands my work is worn away next to the standards of war by the hardy centurion.” The description of the centurion as *rigidus* is surely deliberately multi-faceted, conveying the idea of roughness not only in the sense that they are hardy but also that they are unpolished; not to mention that *rigidus* is used also to indicate severity in enforcing military discipline (cf. *Val. Max.* 9.7, *mil. Rom.* 3: *disciplinam militarem rigidius adstringere*) hinting at one of the most famous facets of the centurion's job.

improvements.⁸³ The satirist Persius even has centurions engage in philosophy, of a kind. Brutish and overly muscular they may be, but for all that they are made to dismiss ethereal philosophy as an overly intellectual pursuit, they do so by themselves pontificating with wit on the perceived flaws of philosophical pursuits.⁸⁴ The epigraphy also attests to the literary ambitions of centurions, and an unknown *primipilaris* was responsible for a highly stylised and somewhat surreal inscribed work at Aquae Flavianae in the province of Africa Proconsularis (AE 1928: 37):⁸⁵

[O]ptavi Dacos tenere caesos tenui
 [opt]avi in sella pacis residere sedi
 [o]ptavi claros sequi triumphos factum
 optavi primi commoda plena pili hab[ui]
 optavi nudas videre Nymphas vidi

I wished to hold slaughtered Dacians: I held them.

I wished to sit in the chair of peace: I sat in it.

I wished to attend glorious triumphs: I did so.

I wished for the full rewards of the *primus pilus*: I received them.

I wished to see naked nymphs: I saw them.

The centurion fought in Trajan's Dacian Wars at the start of the second century AD. The desire to hold slaughtered Dacians recalls perhaps the Dacian king Decebalus who committed suicide in defeat, then had his head severed and brought to Rome;⁸⁶ or else the beheading of other Dacian warriors and the presentation of their heads to Trajan.⁸⁷ The centurion survived the conflict,⁸⁸ and the use of the plural *triumphos* may indicate participation in both triumphs of

⁸³ Ep. 4.29, 7.11.

⁸⁴ Pers. 3.77-87, with 5.189-91. On centurions and philosophy in these passages see Spaeth 1942; Connor 1987. Connor 1987: 66 sees the joke in the juxtaposition of "mindless body-building yobbos" with the "jewel of compression and wit". But Persius' caricature perhaps encapsulates the paradoxical facets of the centurionate, an institution of military professionals containing elites and lower orders, soldiers and grammarians.

⁸⁵ Although the lines do not scan as verse, on the quality of the text and on its poetic features see Adams 1999: 127.

⁸⁶ Dio 68.14.

⁸⁷ Trajan's column, scenes 24 and 72 for the presentation of heads to Trajan. Another soldier carries a head while climbing a ladder in 113. In all cases those presenting heads are, however, auxiliaries. Dacian heads are mounted on poles in the Roman camp (56), and *vice versa* (25).

⁸⁸ The closest the rest of the text gets to detailing the individual's career is the reference to becoming *primipilaris*. There is nothing to suggest that the *sella pacis* actually indicates any kind of military position, in spite of Speidel's claim that this implies an aspect of military service, either as *iudex* (judge) or *centurio regionarius* (2012: 183-4). The *sella pacis* may, far more prosaically, reference his survival of the Dacian Wars, and this is surely indicated by the position of the line between a line of conflict and a line of triumph. The formulation *sella pacis* is unique.

102 and 107.⁸⁹ The reference to seeing *nudas nymphas* is a long-standing puzzle, but since the stone that bears the inscription was found in the thermal pool of a bathhouse (although it may originally have been located elsewhere) a bathhouse environment makes sense, perhaps as interior decoration.⁹⁰ A cultic context celebrating the hot springs may also be appropriate, and the cult of the nymphs was celebrated in the same town by a legate and consul designate⁹¹ and by a tribune and municipal curator,⁹² as well as at other locations situated on hot-springs around the empire, such as at Aquae Iasae in Pannonia Superior,⁹³ and Germisara in Dacia.

The latter, a hot-spring with a garrison nearby, provides a late second century bilingual Latin-Greek poetic dedication, in mangled hexameters, to the local nymph that was also the work of a centurion, Caius Sentius Iustinus of the fifth legion *Macedonica*.⁹⁴ Other divinities associated with healing are mentioned: Aesculapius, Hypnus and Artemis. The centurion appears at the time to have been *praepositus* over a *numerus peditum singularium Britannicianorum* that is well-attested in the area.⁹⁵ The centurion describes himself metonymously as the *cristatus apex*: “he with the crested helmet” (l. 6). The Latin part of the inscription references the annual fulfilment of vows, and the undertaking of new ones, at the cultic site by the *numerus*.⁹⁶ The Greek text references healing treatments enjoyed at the spa. Shortly after Iustinus’ dedication, an *optio* of the same *numerus* thanked the nymphs for saving him from the threat of death: *mortis periculo liber(atus)*.⁹⁷ The purpose of Iustinus’ inscription itself is somewhat opaque, and it has been suggested that it might have accompanied the dedication of a statue.⁹⁸ Several other dedications to the cult of the nymphs (variously “the

⁸⁹ Speidel 2012: 183. On the triumph of 102, at which time Trajan received the epithet Dacicus, see the *Fasti Ostienses* XVI and XVII on 102: *de Dacis [triump]havit* (text from Vidman 1957); Dio 68.10. The triumph of 107 is not described as such in the literature, but 123 days of spectacles were given at Rome and Trajan at this time embarked on a massive building programme, including the famous column (Plin. *Pan.* 51; Dio 68.15-6).

⁹⁰ Dunbabin 1989: 16. A potential allusion to Catullus 64.16-7 has also been identified by Balland 1976: *viderunt . . . nudato corpore Nymphas*. See Wypustek 2015 for the recent argument that this is a mock epitaph alluding to the myth of the Argonaut Hylas, abducted by nymphs and perhaps undergoing apotheosis – the sort of eternal youth for which a *primipilaris* might yearn.

⁹¹ *CIL* VIII 17723 (AD 146).

⁹² *CIL* VIII 17722 (*numini [Ny]mphae et Draconi* – “to the divinity of the Nymphs and the Snake”).

⁹³ *CIL* III 10893 (Claudius-Nero): *nymphas salutare*; *CIL* III 4118 (Claudius-Nero): *sac(rum) Nymphae*; *CIL* III 4117 (AD 160s): *nymphis aug(ustis) sac(rum)*.

⁹⁴ *AE* 2015: 1186 (AD 183-5). On this inscription and its interpretation see Piso 2015.

⁹⁵ Another *praepositus* of the *numerus* was a centurion of the same legion in the mid-third century (*AE* 1967: 410). A *numerus* was a non-standard unit type not integrated into the regular structure of legionaries and auxiliaries, and the term itself is imprecise. On *numeri*, see especially Southern 1989.

⁹⁶ On understanding *miles Britannicus* (l. 3) as a metonym for the *numerus*, see Piso 2015: 58.

⁹⁷ *CIL* III 1396 (AD 186), from one P. Aelius Marcellinus, a *signifer* and *quaestor numeri Brit(annicianorum)*. This is surely not a *numerus Brit(tonum)*, as currently resolved, given the references to the *miles Brit(t)annicus* and the Βριττανεικὼν ἡγήτωρ (*praepositus* of the Britanni) in the inscription above, and to a *trib(unus) n(umeri) sing(ularium) / Brit(t)an(nicianorum)* at the same site (*AE* 2003, 1513).

⁹⁸ Piso 2015: 61.

sacred nymphs”, *nymphae sanctissimae*, and “the salvation-bearing nymphs”, *nymphae salutiferae*) have been found at Germisara, including by soldiers,⁹⁹ civic dignitaries,¹⁰⁰ and even the governor of Dacia in c. 157-8, Marcus Statius Priscus.¹⁰¹ Associations with the imperial cult may also have existed. The nymphs at Germisara are described as *nymphae sanctae Augustae* and associated with the goddess *Diana Augusta*;¹⁰² another dedication, erected by a *tribunus* of both the thirteenth legion *Gemina* and the *numerus Britannicianorum*, appeals to *Diana Augusta* for the health of the emperor Caracalla and his mother, Julia Domna;¹⁰³ and a third dedication at Germisara, by another centurion (also of the fifth legion *Macedonica*) and *praepositus* of the *numerus*, is made simply to Jupiter Optimus Maximus.¹⁰⁴ Outside the *numerus*, dedications to the imperial family are attested at Germisara from the mid-second century, such as to the *genius* of Antoninus Pius by the governor Priscus.¹⁰⁵ Whether or not Iustinus made the link between the local cultic site and the imperial cult, he appears to have been instrumental in establishing the link between his unit and the site – a link that would be maintained by future commanders of the *numerus*, and explicitly expanded to include also the imperial cult. His dedication remains the most remarkable found at the cultic site, not least in being the sole text to give a name to the local nymph, Odrysta. And the length of the text, its bilingualism, not to mention its hexameters and poetic features, ensures that it stands out against the rest. The editor of the text is sceptical that Iustinus, as a centurion (not to mention the lack of a dedicated library in the remote fort he would have called home), himself composed the content that went on the stone.¹⁰⁶ Given the involvement of centurions in *carmina epigraphica* elsewhere, and their attested literary ambitions, the idea that Iustinus was himself the composer should not be so readily dismissed. Even if only the commissioner of the text, not its author, Iustinus was nonetheless responsible for funding a grandiose inscription with literary aspirations. Sanctuary competition may play its part, in an attempt to outdo fellow dedicators – including legates – with his elaborate display. We may also suspect an attempt to cultivate relations between the cultic site and the military unit that he commanded, a topic to which we shall return in Chapter Four. Given that his rival dedicators were regularly men of

⁹⁹ *CIL* III 1396; *AE* 1993: 1341 (2nd-3rd) from an *optio* of the thirteenth legion *Gemina*; and *AE* 1992: 1487 (3rd), from a *tribunus* of the *numerus*.

¹⁰⁰ Probably or definitely from the Romano-Dacian town(s) of Apulum, garrison of the thirteenth legion *Gemina*: *AE* 1992: 1485 (180s); *CIL* III 1397 (2nd-3rd); *AE* 1992: 1486 (3rd).

¹⁰¹ *CIL* III 7882.

¹⁰² *AE* 1992: 1484.

¹⁰³ *AE* 2003: 1513.

¹⁰⁴ *AE* 1967: 410 (mid-3rd).

¹⁰⁵ *AE* 1993: 1342.

¹⁰⁶ Piso 2015: 64.

such standing as governors, equestrian commanders and civic magistrates and priests, and given that other known commanders of the *numerus* included not just fellow *praepositi* but also legionary tribunes, Iustinus' inscription crafts a world in which he is made the equal to, if not the superior of, his fellow dedicators and his fellow commanders.

A by-product of the involvement in this world of competition of those centurions whose previous exposure to the culture of Roman elites was minimal was their integration within it. Take the fort of Bu Ngem in Roman Tripolitania, founded around the turn of the third century AD and garrisoned first by a *vexillatio* of the third legion *Augusta*, until the dissolution of the parent legion in 238,¹⁰⁷ and then variously by a *numerus collatus* (which had already operated at the fort during the final years of the legionary vexillation),¹⁰⁸ an obscure *vexillatio Golensis*, and perhaps also by an auxiliary eighth cohort *Fida*.¹⁰⁹ The life of Bu Ngem as a military fort was short, abandoned around 263 and then occupied by squatters.¹¹⁰ During the period of the fort's life as a legionary outpost, several legionary centurions are identified as *praepositi* of the fort and the vexillation. Two of these, commanders some twenty years apart, appear to share not only their rank but their passion for poetry, both claiming authorship of an inscribed poem – literally so, since their names are given in acrostic. The poems were found in the very spots commemorated by the text: from the *frigidarium* comes praise of the merits of swimming in cool waters in the middle of a desert; and inscribed on the south gate is a commemoration of the effort involved in the gate's reconstruction. Both poems highlight the responsibility of the individual centurions not just as jobbing poets but also as *conditores*, as founders, of a bathhouse and a gate respectively. Surviving examples of verse epigraphy from centurions are uncommon,¹¹¹ and it is no coincidence that two of the most substantial examples come from the same small fort on the Tripolitanian frontier.

The work of the first centurion, Q. Avidius Quintianus, belongs to 202-3, was written in iambic senarii and includes literary language, although a number of substandard features can be identified alongside this.¹¹² Avidius may have had some tuition from a *grammaticus*, and it

¹⁰⁷ The legion was involved in the suppression of a revolt by the governor of Africa and his son, proclaimed Gordianus I and II, against the emperor Maximinus Thrax (r. 235-8). Although the revolt failed and both were killed, a month after the death of Maximinus the grandson of Gordianus I was proclaimed sole emperor, as Gordianus III (r. 238-44). As punishment for the deaths of the earlier Gordians the legion was disbanded and its name erased from some monuments; it was reconstituted in 253 by Valerian (r. 253-60). One inscription preserves both the erasure and the re-writing of the legion's name, reflecting its complicated history: *IRT* 913.

¹⁰⁸ On a *numerus collatus* as "soldiers grouped together for a specific purpose which was possibly only temporary", see Southern 1989: 84.

¹⁰⁹ Marichal 1992: 65; Le Bohec 1989a: 463.

¹¹⁰ Rebuffat et al. 1967: 71-84; 1970: 23-30.

¹¹¹ On the wider *carmina epigraphica* of centurions, see Adams 1999: 127-9.

¹¹² *IRT* 918-9. See Adams 1999: 117, 124-5.

has been argued that he was of Italian origin, although this is not conclusive.¹¹³ Avidius dedicated the bathhouse to Salus, a deity associated with health and water – compare the *nymphae salutiferae* at Germisara. Salus was in any case an appropriate divinity for the army, and military doctors are attested making dedications to Salus and other deities for the welfare of their unit or its commander.¹¹⁴ Salus could also serve as a homecoming deity, and a dedication set up at Deva (Chester) by the household of the legate, probably the senatorial commander of the twentieth legion *Valeria Victrix*, for his safe return was made to Fortuna *Redux* (“the homebringer”), Aesculapius and Salus.¹¹⁵ This aspect of Salus is also reflected in Avidius’ dedication, as the goddess is invoked not only in the foundation of the bathhouse but also in commemorating the fulfilment of a vow and the safe return of the unit, perhaps from an expedition outside the fort.¹¹⁶ By making his dedication to Salus, Avidius covers all bases for the well-being of the soldiers under his command and neatly ties this into his responsibility for the completion of the bathhouse at the fort. In this dedication he left in the fort a tangible imprint of his time as commander, presenting himself to future garrisons as a *conditor* and a patron, and as a military commander in tune with Rome’s elite.

The second poem from Bu Ngem dates to 222 and was the work of M. Porcius Iasucthan, who commemorated his responsibility for restoring a gate in the fort that had collapsed through age.¹¹⁷ Iasucthan’s origins are surely Punic, reflecting the cultural history of Tripolitania.¹¹⁸ There may be some Vergilian allusions in the poem and the spelling is broadly correct, but the work is metrically unsound (not a single line scans in full as hexameter) and deploys some unusual choices in idiom and syntax; Adams suspects the work of a second-language learner who had not had the benefit of training by a *grammaticus*.¹¹⁹ Nonetheless, Iasucthan had evidently been inspired by the actions and style of his predecessor Avidius, also adopting an acrostic to indicate his name. The shared responsibilities of centurions of all social backgrounds and promotion paths contributed to an environment in which they could both learn from and compete with each other. Caesar had famously encouraged the competition between

¹¹³ Rebuffat 1987: 102; Adams 1999: 117.

¹¹⁴ *CIL* XIII 6621 (Germania superior, Obernburg / Nemaninga, 1st-2nd): *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Apollini et Aesculapio Saluti Fortunae sacr(um)*; *RIB* 1028 (Britannia, Binchester / Vinovia, 1st-3rd): *[Aesc]ulapio [et] Saluti*.

¹¹⁵ *RIB* 445. The identity of the legate is somewhat confused, but is understood by Birley, A. 1981: 234-5 as the legionary commander. On this trinity of health deities and baths, Salus and Aesculapius are associated together with healing springs both in epigraphy and by Vitruvius (*De arch.* 1.2.7), while dedications to Fortuna have also been found in the baths of the fort at Chesters on the line of Hadrian’s Wall (*RIB* 1449).

¹¹⁶ 1. 3: *proque reditu exercitu*. See Rebuffat 1987: 96.

¹¹⁷ *AE* 1995: 1641. See Adams 1999: 113-124.

¹¹⁸ Rebuffat 1995: 97.

¹¹⁹ Adams 1999: 116, 123-4.

two of his centurions, Lucius Vorenus and Titus Pullo;¹²⁰ in the world of the “professional” army, competition and emulation was not found solely in combat contexts, but in activities such as literary composition and monumental building programmes. Not only in the organisation and commemoration of substantial building works, but also in the competition between past and future commanders, figures such as Avidius and Iasucthan present themselves engaging in the activities of the Roman elite.

Summary: the makings of a military elite

The connections fostered with Rome’s elite through service in the centurionate and primipilate could reap rewards in later life. A *primipilaris* and *praefectus castrorum*, Nymphidius Lupus, proved a vital aid to the younger Pliny during his stint as an equestrian *tribunus militum*. As a *primipilaris*, Lupus was reasonably in his forties or fifties; Pliny was in his early twenties. Around thirty years later, when governor of Bithynia and Pontus, Pliny induced the now aged Lupus to join him as an advisor and, in return, petitioned the emperor Trajan for the promotion of Lupus’ son, at that time a *praefectus cohortis*.¹²¹ The privileged world of the *primipilaris* and favoured centurions must have seemed a world away from the ordinary *milites* from whose ranks many of them had been appointed. But this privileged position that centurions occupied was not without its drawbacks: some equestrians might scorn the notion that centurions were much different from the *milites* they commanded; while those equestrians and other elites who had entered the centurionate directly might also seek to differentiate themselves from their colleagues of lower social origins, choosing to highlight such things as their equestrian status, or to emphasise the role of the emperor in their appointment. On the surface the image of the centurionate is a class of contradictions, with those promoted from the ranks trying to act like elites, while those who had received direct appointments try to distinguish their careers from those promoted from the rank-and-file. And yet it was this very environment that allowed ambitious newcomers a social training ground in which to network with elites and engage in elite pursuits. Exposure to the world of the elite not only aided the promotion prospects of the strongest candidates from the ranks; it enabled centurions operating separately from the structure of a legion – whether as *praepositi* of *vexillationes*, *numeri* and auxiliary units, or as *regionarii* – to present themselves in a manner similar to those equestrians in the *militiae*. These centurions were able to act similarly to equestrian commanders, ensuring that unit commanders maintained the guise of membership of Rome’s social elite. And centurions were able to

¹²⁰ Caes. *BG* 5.44.

¹²¹ Plin. *Ep.* 10.87.

operate alongside commanders in the *militiae equestres* in various capacities without fear of being ignored on the basis of their social background. Exposure to the social world of the elite could provide significant benefits within a military setting; but it was also of vital importance for a centurion's life beyond the standards. If pay and promotion prospects enabled the centurionate to promote upwards social mobility, it was the mixed social composition of the centurionate, and its position in relation to the equestrian commanders, that could prepare the centurion for life outside the military in a different social group – as an equestrian, member of the local elite, or simply a well-off citizen – from that in which he had begun his military career. By providing the tools to act like a member of the Roman Empire's urban elite, the centurionate seems as much a training ground for post-military life amongst the elite of their hometowns as it does for military command.¹²²

The new military elite and the senate

The equestrian order received centurions through both a conscious programme of recruitment via the primipilate and direct intervention by the emperor on behalf of a favoured candidate. Equestrians in the military tribunes and in the centurionate had already provided legionary centurions with some exposure to the equestrian order, and in this way their dramatic social promotion could be eased. It is difficult to identify any differences in attitudes towards equestrians who held that status before their centurionate, and those who received it through service within it. However, the third century senator and historian Cassius Dio distinguishes centurions who served in the ranks from those who were directly appointed. Following an attempt by a centurion to act as an informant, the emperor Tiberius is said to have prevented anyone who had served in the army, with the exception of equestrians and senators, from informing against anyone.¹²³ In light of a second passage, Dio must have meant the exception also to include centurions who had received their appointment from the equestrian order. This passage comes from what purports to be a record of a debate between Augustus' advisors, Maecenas and Agrippa, on how best to rule the Roman empire (52.25.6-7):

Ὅστις δ' ἂν τῶν ἱππέων διὰ πολλῶν διεξελθὼν ἐλλόγιμος ὥστε καὶ βουλευῆσαι γένηται, μηδὲν αὐτὸν ἢ ἡλικία ἐμποδίζετω πρὸς τὸ μὴ οὐ καὶ ἐς τὸ συνέδριον καταλεχθῆναι,

¹²² A mid-Republican parallel for military service providing an environment for the development of formative social bonds between distinct groupings exists in the *extraordinarii*, an elite unit of cavalry and infantry recruited from the Italian *socii* (allies). Since the soldiers of the *extraordinarii* would camp together, it has been argued that this military class allowed members of the local aristocracies from the towns of the Italian *socii* to network and form relationships. See Patterson 2012: 216-8.

¹²³ 58.21.6.

ἀλλ' ἐσγραφέσθωσαν καὶ ἐξ ἐκείνων, κἂν λελοχαγηκότες τινὲς ἐν τοῖς πολιτικοῖς στρατοπέδοις ᾧσι, πλὴν τῶν ἐν τῷ τεταγμένῳ ἐστρατευμένων. τούτων μὲν γὰρ τῶν καὶ φορμοφορησάντων καὶ λαρκοφορησάντων καὶ αἰσχρὸν καὶ ἐπονείδιστόν ἐστιν ἐν τῷ βουλευτικῷ τινὰς ἐξετάζεσθαι· ἐκ δὲ δὴ τῶν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἑκατονταρχησάντων οὐδὲν κωλύει τοὺς ἐλλογιμωτάτους αὐτοῦ μεταλαμβάνειν.

If any of the equestrians, who has gone through the many positions in succession, becomes notable enough to sit on the senate, do not let his age thwart him from actually being recruited into the senate. In fact, some of them should be enrolled even if they have commanded a century in the citizen legions, with the exception of those who served in the rank and file. It is both shameful and disgraceful that they should be counted within the senatorial order, when they have performed manual labour and carried baskets of charcoal. But nothing at all prevents those who served as centurions from the beginning from participating.

Cassius Dio has his Maecenas advise Augustus, in composing his new senate, to permit equestrians who had served as centurions to enter the senate provided that they had never served below the centurionate. Service as a simple *miles*, which the majority of imperial centurions had probably seen, is made an impediment to a political career. It is recommended that the *primipilares*, and others who began as *milites* and won the equestrian census through their service, are barred from infiltrating the senate. Dio permits the existence of equestrians within the centurionate, but this is not allowed to excuse the low origins of the majority of centurions. That is to say, it is not the centurionate as an institution that gives the elite Cassius Dio cause for concern: it is the presence within it of former *milites*.¹²⁴ In Dio's reckoning, the distinction between centurions of different backgrounds was not generally obvious or relevant during their *stipendium*; upon discharge, however, it becomes strikingly clear. Military promotion translates into social status within the civilian world only unevenly.

Beyond the debate presented by Dio, there is no evidence to suggest that former *milites* were ever formally prohibited from entering the senate during the Principate. But when the wider evidence for the Augustan era and the Principate of the first two centuries AD is considered, however, not a single senator can be identified who once served as a centurion. Certainly, we find instances of senators descended from centurions or soldiers, Vespasian

¹²⁴ On Dio's preoccupation with the relationship between the state and its coercive arm, the army, within both the Agrippa-Maecenas debate and elsewhere within his work, see de Blois 1998-9: 275-7.

perhaps being the most famous example.¹²⁵ We have already seen that one former centurion, Minicius Iustus, may even have managed the remarkable feats of both marrying the sister of a consul and befriending the younger Pliny. But to find evidence for the advancement of individuals from centurion to senate within the Principate we have to jump forward to Dio's own era and to the crisis-ridden third century AD. According to the epitome of Dio the emperor Macrinus (r. 217-8), who as praetorian prefect had been responsible for the assassination of the Severan emperor Caracalla (sole emperor 211-217),¹²⁶ "was censured because he named Adventus – who had received wages (μεμισθοφορηκότα) in the scouts and spies, left their ranks, then performed the duties of the couriers and been placed at the head of this body, and subsequently been elevated to a procuratorship – a senator, his co-consul (AD 218), and urban prefect (AD 217); though he was unable to see because of his advanced age, nor read because of a lack of education, nor do anything at all because of his lack of experience."¹²⁷ Dio particularly condemns the appointment of Adventus as urban prefect, both because this preceded his consulship, and because he had "served for pay and fulfilled the duties of executioners, scouts, and centurions" (ἐν τῷ μισθοφορικῷ ἐστράτευτο καὶ τὰ τῶν δημίων ἔργα καὶ προσκόπων καὶ ἑκατοντάρχων ἐπεποιήκει).¹²⁸ Dio's use of language typically associated with mercenaries (μισθόφορος / μισθοφορέω – "serving for pay") seems a derogatory way to describe someone who received a *stipendium*; this sentence also provides the sole evidence that Adventus may once have been a centurion. Although the precise origins of Marcus Oclatinus Adventus are unclear, the references to acting as a spy, scout and executioner have been thought to suggest the *speculatores*, and those to acting as courier the *frumentarii*.¹²⁹ The legionary *speculatores* were attached to the *officium* of the provincial governor,¹³⁰ and were sometimes based at Rome, probably in the *castra peregrina* on the Mons Caelius.¹³¹ Also at Rome were the *speculatores Augusti*, a special imperial bodyguard attached to the Praetorian Guard, possibly headed by the *trecenarius*, one of the senior praetorian centurions.¹³² The legionary *frumentarii*, although often associated with espionage, served as military messengers between emperor and the provinces, and therefore typically operated separately from their parent legion

¹²⁵ On the backgrounds of the emperor Vespasian and the consul C. Ateius Capito, see the Introduction, n. 22.

¹²⁶ Dio 79.3-6; Hdn. 4.13.

¹²⁷ Dio 79.14.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Rankov 1987: 244. On Adventus' career see also Pflaum 1960-1961: 992, no. 247. On *speculatores* as spies, see Austin and Rankov 1995: 54-60.

¹³⁰ Cf. AE 1917-18: 57, on the members of the *officium* of the legate of Numidia in the early 3rd c., which includes four *speculatores* and thirty *beneficarii consularis*.

¹³¹ Rankov 1990: 180.

¹³² Dury 1938: 108-10, 138-9. On the *trecenarius*, see Chapter 1 n. 81.

and were based at the *castra peregrina* while at Rome.¹³³ The *frumentarii* had their own association at Rome, the *numerus frumentariorum*, complete with their own centurions, the *centuriones frumentarii*. Associations between *speculatores* and *frumentarii* are apparent both at Rome and in the provinces.¹³⁴ The commander of the *castra peregrina*, and senior centurion of the *frumentarii*, was the *princeps peregrinorum*, and this position has plausibly been linked with the centurionate purportedly held by Adventus.¹³⁵ Adventus' route into the procuratorships following his military service is also unknown,¹³⁶ but he represented Septimius Severus and Caracalla as the governor of Britain c. 205-7.¹³⁷ Under Caracalla, he was praetorian prefect alongside Macrinus.¹³⁸ It is even claimed that Adventus almost became emperor. Herodian writes that Adventus was the military's first choice to replace Caracalla, but was ultimately ruled out due to his advanced age; Dio, playing up Adventus' poor character, alleges that Adventus had tried and failed to have himself proclaimed emperor. Dio gleefully suggests that Macrinus' appointment of Adventus as consul was simply to divert the senate's attention away from his own equestrian background; Herodian is less explicit but also renders Macrinus insecure, citing a letter he purportedly wrote in which he justifies his own elevation to emperor from the equestrian order.¹³⁹ The message is clear: the promotion into the senate of those who had served in the ranks was as unthinkable as an equestrian emperor. The short-lived senatorial career of someone who once served in the ranks does not seem so far-fetched in the context of the reign of Macrinus, the first praetorian prefect – and indeed the first equestrian – to become emperor. Remarkably, even after Macrinus was overthrown and replaced as emperor by Elagabalus, Adventus seems to have continued to serve as consul, at least for a time – nothing more is known of him or his striking career.¹⁴⁰

Having assumed the purple, Elagabalus (r. 218-222) had his own centurions to contend with. A certain Verus, supposedly enrolled in the senate from the centurionate, and made commander of the third legion *Gallica*, was amongst those who attempted unsuccessfully to have himself crowned emperor. "Everything was so confoundedly upside-down that these

¹³³ On the *frumentarii* see Mann 1988b and Rankov 1990. Against Mann, Rankov argues that *frumentarii* were not solely members of the *castra peregrina* but also a part of the provincial *officium consularis*.

¹³⁴ Reynolds 1923: 178.

¹³⁵ Rankov 1987: 244; Faure 2003: 404.

¹³⁶ He may never have held the primipilate. From an inscription dated to AD 284 (*CIL* VIII 2529) we learned of another *princeps peregrinorum* who was apparently elevated immediately to governor (of Numidia), although this belongs to the period when the importance of the primipilate was waning.

¹³⁷ *CIL* VII 1003, 1346; Rankov 1987: 243-9.

¹³⁸ Hdn. 4.14.2.

¹³⁹ Dio 79.14; Hdn. 5.1.5

¹⁴⁰ Dio 80(79).8.2.

commanders, one enrolled in the senate from the body of centurions, another the son of a doctor, conceived the idea of making an attempt at the Principate,” wrote Dio in outrage.¹⁴¹ If Verus was a centurion *ex equite Romano*, Dio was ignoring his own advice, as ventriloquized by Maecenas; but in any event, nothing could be so portentous as a one-time centurion attempting to become emperor. At least Verus, on account of his senatorial status, was allowed the courtesy of his name; another potential usurper, an unnamed son of a centurion, is credited with stirring up the same Gallic legion, ultimately with the same result.¹⁴² The veracity of these, and other, rebellions – indeed, of much of the events of Elagabalus’ reign – has frequently been questioned.¹⁴³ But it is through anecdotes such as these that Dio and his epitomisers present the moral turpitude to which the Rome of the third century has sunk: former centurions in the highest offices of state, even conniving to have themselves made emperor, are made symptoms of a state gone wrong. Within this context the fears of Dio’s Maecenas, that those who “have performed manual labour and carried baskets of charcoal” will use the centurionate to gain a foothold on the political scene, can be understood: Maecenas’ fear is the reality Dio claims.

Beyond the claims of the ancient literature, a single instance of a former centurion entering the senate of the third-century is epigraphically attested: an honorific inscription set up in the 260s AD, some thirty years after the death of Dio, by the council of the Italian town of Arretium, details the remarkable career of their patron, Lucius Petronius Taurus Volusianus, who rose from the centurionate to become consul.¹⁴⁴ Volusianus was in possession of the *equus publicus* and a member of the five *decuriae* of jurors, privileges likely held before a direct appointment into the centurionate. Volusianus’ first attested rank was *centurio deputatus*, a somewhat obscure position. With the exception of the text presenting Volusianus’ own *cursus* and one inscription from Thrace,¹⁴⁵ all known inscriptions involving *centuriones deputati* come from Rome.¹⁴⁶ One of these is named an equestrian and *centurio legionis deputatus*,¹⁴⁷ while two are explicitly connected with the *castra peregrinorum*.¹⁴⁸ These were perhaps senior centurions within the *castra peregrinorum* at Rome, who may on occasion have been seconded there from the legions.¹⁴⁹ Volusianus went on to become *primus pilus*; *praepositus* of the

¹⁴¹ Dio. 80(79).7.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ On the accounts of Elagabalus’ reign, see Kemezis 2016 and Osgood 2016.

¹⁴⁴ *CIL* XI 1836 (Arretium, Italy), with *CIL* XI 5749 and *SHA Gall.* 1.2 on the consulship of AD 261. On his career, see Pflaum 1960-1961: 901-5, no. 347; Jones et al. 1971: 980-981.

¹⁴⁵ *CIL* III 7326 (3rd).

¹⁴⁶ *CIL* VI 1110 (mid-3rd), 3557 (3rd), 3558 (mid-3rd), 32415 (mid-3rd), 36776 (2nd-3rd).

¹⁴⁷ *CIL* VI 3558.

¹⁴⁸ *CIL* VI 1110 and 36776 (fragmentary).

¹⁴⁹ Reynolds 1923: 175-6. See also Dobson 1974: 409-10 on the centurions of the *castra peregrina*.

equites singulares under joint emperors, presumably Valerian (r. 253-60) and his son Gallienus (r. 253-68); a legionary commander in an uncertain capacity; a tribune in the *vigiles*, urban cohorts and praetorian guard; senior praetorian tribune; *praefectus vigilum*; *praefectus praetorio*; and *consul ordinarius* in AD 261. Around 267 Volusianus is thought to have been appointed *praefectus urbi*;¹⁵⁰ it is not known whether he survived the murder of Gallienus orchestrated by the praetorian prefect Heraclianus.¹⁵¹ Volusianus' career recalls that of Dio's Adventus, who may also have spent part of his early military career in the *castra peregrina* before ultimately going on to hold the urban prefectship.

The third century was witness to significant developments in the composition, organisation and command-structure of the Roman army, notably including the prominence of equestrians in the senior command, and the increasing favour towards those units most associated with the emperor, whose soldiers were sometimes privileged with equestrian commands or with grants of equestrian status for their children.¹⁵² Notably, under Valerian and Gallienus tribunes of the praetorian cohorts and sometimes centurions of the new "field army"¹⁵³ were first privileged with the style *protector Augusti*. Those military personnel most associated with the emperors could be distinguished by this new title as their virtual clients,¹⁵⁴ and many of these favoured figures went on to become prefects and commanders of the legions as senatorial legates were phased out as senior military commanders in favour of equestrian *praefecti legionis*.¹⁵⁵ Although many of the features of the army under Gallienus were seeded by developments under the Severans and even during the second century, the scales had nonetheless tipped towards equestrians, and particularly to those made in the military. This is the context of Volusianus' career: whereas Adventus' entry into the senate is connected with the reign of Macrinus, a dramatic and short-lived shock to the system, Volusianus belonged to a world where promotion paths had changed such that a soldier could become a general. With equestrians taking on what were once senatorial legionary commands, the presence of an equestrian former centurion in the senate looks less out of place. And in this world, as a member of the municipal aristocracy prior to his military service, Volusianus must have seemed very much old money: compare contemporary *protectores* and *praefecti* in command of legions,

¹⁵⁰ E.g. Pflaum 1960-1961: 902, 904.

¹⁵¹ Zos. 1.40.2-3; SHA *Gall.* 14.

¹⁵² See Davenport 2019: 485-552, esp. 549-552.

¹⁵³ This "field army" was formed from legionary vexillations, especially from the second legion *Parthica*, which had been founded by Septimius Severus in AD 197 as a personal legion and functioned virtually as a new Praetorian Guard; it may even have come under the command of the praetorian prefect. Davenport 2019: 525.

¹⁵⁴ See de Blois 1976: 44-7; Christol 1977: 407; Davenport 2019: 533-4.

¹⁵⁵ Davenport 2019: 536ff, with 541-5 on the reasons for this, from senatorial deaths in the conflicts of the 260s to Gallienus' fear of usurpation.

who were otherwise evidently new men, such as Aelius Aelianus, son of a *custos armorum*,¹⁵⁶ and Traianus Mucianus, once an auxiliary *miles*.¹⁵⁷

The centurionate from the Julio-Claudians, especially Claudius, to the Severans had served as a training ground for Rome's future elite, whether as new equestrians or new local elites; and given the prospects of a *primipilaris*, with wealth and the potential for a procuratorial career, the centurionate appealed also to equestrians, especially those unable to achieve a public career through other means, allowing them an additional route to success. The centurionate of the mid-third century was the logical conclusion of this process, allowing for favoured centurions and *primipilares* formally to be included in a new military aristocracy through the development of the *protectores Augusti*.

Soldiers in the senate: a republican paradigm

With his death in the 230s, Dio missed these next steps in the development of the centurionate and the senior command of the army. But he lived through the years that laid the groundwork, with the beginnings of a field army, equestrians acting as governors in place of senators, soldiers' children becoming equestrians, the first equestrian emperor, Macrinus, and perhaps even one or more centurions in the senate.¹⁵⁸ On one level, the narrative of the relationship between centurionate and senate pushed by Dio in his debate between Augustus and Maecenas very much reflects his own world view, and the concerns that occupy his attention in the third century are retrojected onto the Augustan narrative: the centurionate, by dint of its very social heterogeneity, is made the ultimate battleground for debates on what it means to be elite, to be an equestrian, and even to be a senator in the changing world of the third century. On another level, this passage draws from historic concerns about the involvement of the military, and especially the rank-and-file – as represented by the long-serving centurion – in politics and the senate: Dio's fears about soldiers becoming senators cannot be understood in isolation.

Although for the first two centuries of the Principate not a single senator can be identified who once served as a centurion, the crisis years of the late Republic that preceded the Augustan settlement appear, in the ancient historians, an era parallel to the tumultuous third century: another age in which the military was able to exert undue influence upon politics; another age in which soldiers were claimed to infiltrate the senate. Sulla and Caesar, awarded

¹⁵⁶ *CIL* III 3529. The *custos armorum* was a position within a century associated with armoury. Although they are listed amongst the *immunes* in the *Digest* (50.6.7), they otherwise appear to be *principales* (Breeze 1971: 134, n. 53; 1976: 132).

¹⁵⁷ *IGBulg* III 1570. On Mucianus, see Christol 1977.

¹⁵⁸ See Davenport 2019: 485-552, especially table 11.1 at 492-4, on equestrians as governors.

dictatorships after victory in their respective civil wars, are both alleged to have populated their reformed senates with nobodies – not just those *homines novi* who came from families beyond those which traditionally populated the senate, but even men of the lowest ranks ready to seize the chance for a share in political power presented by a new regime. During these final decades of the Roman Republic, two former centurions are traditionally held to have swapped their soldiers' boots for the sandals and broad-striped toga of the senator. What follows is a re-evaluation of their careers, by understanding these figures not as accurately traced drawings of historical actors but as caricatures rooted in literary tropes distorted by the fears of the socially and politically elite authors who provide the sole evidence for their existence.

Sulla and Fufidius

Following his success during the civil war of 83-82 BC, Sulla was elected dictator around the end of 82 BC and embarked on a wide-ranging programme of constitutional reforms. The senate, depleted through attrition from the Social War, civil wars, and proscriptions, was repopulated and even increased in size. Although Appian and Livy are now assumed to be correct in claiming that Sulla's new senators were drawn from the *ordo equester*,¹⁵⁹ an alternative narrative is found in the first century BC histories of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Sallust, who respectively suggest that Sulla's reformed senate was comprised of "commonplace men" and "ordinary soldiers".¹⁶⁰ The bellicose and bombastic rhetoric directed by these authors at the alleged senatorial parvenus renders these alternative histories temptingly dismissable, and there is hardly sufficient evidence to take the claims seriously.¹⁶¹ Nevertheless, the identification of one particular ex-soldier, a certain Fufidius, as a member of Sulla's senate is generally accepted.¹⁶²

That Fufidius was a senator does not seem doubtful. Sallust in his *oratio Lepidi* has M. Aemilius Lepidus, in the year of his consulship – 78 BC, the year after Sulla had resigned his

¹⁵⁹ App. *BC* 1.100; Livy *Per.* 89.4. Which equestrians they mean is a different story. For a wider analysis of the issues surrounding the composition of Sulla's senate see the discussion and citations offered by Hill 1932, who concludes that Sulla's new senators were *equites equo publico*, a special subset of equestrians arranged into eighteen centuries (as opposed to those who met the property qualification prescribed for equestrian status, but had not yet been formally enrolled by the censors at a *lectio*), and more recently by Santangelo 2006 and Steel 2014, who suspect that the senators were drawn from both those equestrian families which did not populate the senate and from the young scions of senatorial families who, having not yet held magistracies, were technically still equestrians. Note that, prior to Sulla's dictatorship, election to *quaestor* did not automatically entail the right to sit in the senate – this would only be granted at the next *lectio* – so Sulla's "new" senators may even have included those who had previously been appointed *quaestor* but not yet formally enrolled in the senate.

¹⁶⁰ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 5.77: ἐκ τῶν ἐπιτυχόντων ἀνθρώπων; Sall. *Cat.* 37: *ex gregariis militibus*.

¹⁶¹ So conclude Wiseman 1971 and Santangelo 2006. See in particular Santangelo's appendices.

¹⁶² Hill 1932: 170ff; Gabba 1976: 61; Spann 1987; Konrad 1989.

dictatorship, and the year of Sulla's death¹⁶³ – launch a polemic against Sulla in which he complains, amongst other things, that Fufidius, “a vile slave-girl, a blemish on all public offices” could be promoted to a magistracy ahead of others.¹⁶⁴ When Sertorius began his doomed rebellion against Sullan authority in Spain, Fufidius was the unfortunate governor of Baetica who suffered an early rout by Sertorius' forces.¹⁶⁵ Beyond this almost nothing is known of his life. In Florus' *Epitome of Roman History*, Sulla's indiscriminate slaughter was challenged by a Furfidius who, having advised that some men should be kept alive so that Sulla still had people to govern, is indirectly credited with the creation of the bureaucratised murder of the proscription lists.¹⁶⁶ A somewhat similar story in Plutarch's *Life of Sulla* is attributed to the flatterer Aufidius (alternatively to a Metellus – Plutarch writes that both variants have their supporters), who asks Sulla to indicate whom he wishes punished.¹⁶⁷ Orosius' *History against the Pagans* states outright that a L. Fursidius was the author of the proscriptions.¹⁶⁸ In all three cases it is generally assumed that Sallust's Fufidius is the individual in question.¹⁶⁹

That Fufidius owed his senatorial career to his service in the military under Sulla is deduced from Orosius, who specifies that Fufidius was a *primipilaris* (*L. Fursidio primipilari*). There are no confirmed equestrians who received direct appointments as centurions under the Republic, although some individuals appear to have received centurionates – probably directly – through patronage under Caesar, as was the case for three men ultimately dismissed for incompetence and disloyalty during his civil war campaign in Africa in 46.¹⁷⁰ Sallust's description of Fufidius as *honorum omnium dehonestamentum*, and his complaint that Sulla's senate was composed *ex gregariis militibus*, might therefore be a nod to Fufidius' early military career as someone who worked their way through the ranks. On the other hand, by the time of

¹⁶³ The speech as given by Sallust is written as though Sulla was still alive. Gruen 1974: 13 n. 12 argues that the strength of the anti-Sullan rhetoric renders this implausible; but perhaps with Sulla retired and Lepidus consul such a speech would not be unthinkable during Sulla's lifetime (Burton 2014: 406).

¹⁶⁴ Sall. *Hist.* 1.55.21: *Fufidius, ancilla turpis, honorum omnium dehonestamentum*. This powerful obloquy continued to resonate into late antiquity, and Sallust's censure is repurposed by the *Historia Augusta* against the historian Gallus Antipater for his support of the usurper Aureolus (*Claud.* 5.4, *ancilla honorum et historicorum dehonestamentum*), and by Ammianus in his discussion of the usurper Procopius (26.6.16: *ad hoc igitur dehonestamentum honorum omnium ludibriose sublatus, et ancillari adulatione, beneficii allocuus auctores*). On the use of Sallust in Ammianus, see Fornara 1992: 429-433.

¹⁶⁵ Plut. *Sert.* 12; Sall. *Fr.* 1.95.

¹⁶⁶ Florus *Ep.* 2.9.25.

¹⁶⁷ Plut. *Sul.* 31.

¹⁶⁸ Oros. 5.21.3.

¹⁶⁹ Note that the name Aufidius also appears in Plutarch's *Life of Sertorius* 25-7 as one of the conspirators involved in the murder of Sertorius. Perhaps this was the source of Plutarch's – or a copyist's – mistake?

¹⁷⁰ Thus Caes. *Bell. Afr.* 54: *T. Salienus, M. Tiro, C. Clusinas, cum ordines in meo exercitu beneficio non virtute consecuti* – “T. Salienus, M. Tiro, C. Clusinas, you achieved your ranks in my army not through your valour but through my favour.” That T. Salienus was a centurion is made clear at *id.* 28, and by implication the others probably are too.

Orosius the term *primipilaris* – itself an anachronism when applied to the Roman Republic – had not only fallen out of use, but already by the late third century had come to refer to a hereditary and largely administrative position.

Centurions in the late Republic could certainly become relatively affluent. But most references to wealthy centurions come in the context of Julius Caesar and the 50s and 40s BC. In the early days of his civil war a cash-strapped Caesar asked for loans from both tribunes and centurions to pay grants to his soldiers, something that Caesar himself admits served as much to keep his centurions loyal through hope of repayment as it did to secure the backing of the *milites*.¹⁷¹ Supposedly the Caesarian centurions also offered each to fund a cavalryman from their own savings – although the point here is perhaps that they had become wealthy during Caesar’s long campaign as proconsul in Gaul.¹⁷² One Caesarian centurion, Scaeva, was granted 200,000 sesterces – perhaps half the equestrian census requirement at this time¹⁷³ – and made *primus pilus* for his ferocious role in the defence of a fort by only three cohorts against an entire enemy legion at Dyrrachium in 48 BC.¹⁷⁴ Cicero in a speech of 44 BC even implies that late Republican centurions were able to become equestrians and serve in the equestrian jury panel (below).¹⁷⁵ On the other hand, a rare reference to the centurions of Sulla himself, preserved in Asconius’ commentary on Cicero’s *Oratio in toga candida*,¹⁷⁶ indicates that a notorious Sullan centurion, L. Luscius, had benefitted from Sulla’s victory by acquiring property worth over 100,000 HS.¹⁷⁷ Given the context, Luscius’ supposed wealth seems oddly modest: it is the centurions of Caesar’s time, not Sulla’s, that are associated with wealth and privilege as a class.

Doubt must be expressed about the current consensus surrounding Fufidius. Although the lateness of a text alone is not sufficient grounds for concern, some suspicion should be aroused that Fufidius is recorded as a centurion nowhere else than the early-fifth century AD history of Orosius – especially given that by Orosius’ time the legionary centurionate and primipilate had long since fallen out of use and may well have been somewhat misunderstood. The title *primipilaris* might have seemed an appropriate designation for a member of an equestrian family who had served in the military – something akin to the ambiguous *virī militares* of Tacitus, probably referring to those of any social class or rank who “had chanced

¹⁷¹ Caes. *BC*. 1.36.

¹⁷² Suet. *Iul.* 68.1.2.

¹⁷³ See Davenport 2019: 36-7 for discussion on the introduction of a requirement of 400,000 sesterces by 67 BC, but possibly as early as the mid-second century BC.

¹⁷⁴ Caes. *BC* 3.53.

¹⁷⁵ Cic. *Phil.* 1.20.

¹⁷⁶ Given during his election campaign for the consulship of 63 BC, preserved only through Asconius’ commentary.

¹⁷⁷ Asc. 90C.

to make a reputation in warfare.”¹⁷⁸ Further, there is no need to assume that Sallust’s opprobrium of Fufidius has anything to do with his social origins rather than his profit from, and possibly even involvement in, the institution of the loathed proscriptions.¹⁷⁹ As it happens the Fufidii were a rather successful *gens* in the second and first centuries BC amongst whose number several equestrians and even one other senator are known – though the relationships between these members of the *gens* are unclear.¹⁸⁰ The senator is L. Fufidius, to whom Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, the renowned consul of 115 BC and *princeps senatus* (father of the house) until his death c. 89 BC, dedicated his autobiography.¹⁸¹ Pliny cites Fufidius as the dedicatee of Scaurus’ autobiography in the same breath as noting that he had been a senatorial *praetor*; Cicero names Fufidius alongside other orators who were consuls in the late second and early first centuries BC. Syme and Nicolet are probably correct to dismiss the notion that this L. Fufidius is the same as the supposed *primipilaris* L. Fufidius who is the subject of our investigation.¹⁸² It is incompatible for Fufidius to be a senator around the same time as Scaurus and also a Sullan centurion. It is accepted however that the latter, if indeed a centurion, could be a descendant, or junior relative, of the former. Following Scaurus’ death, his wife Caecilia Metella Dalmatica went on to become Sulla’s third wife.¹⁸³ The daughter of Scaurus and Caecilia, Aemilia Scaura, was married off to Pompey by Sulla during his dictatorship of 81 BC.¹⁸⁴ If Scaurus’ own wife married Sulla, and his daughter, at Sulla’s instigation, married the Sullan Pompey, perhaps Scaurus’ friends also took up Sulla’s cause. Moreover, Sallust is in his *Jugurtha* highly critical of Scaurus, and one wonders how far he is influenced by the connection between Scaurus and the despised Sulla.¹⁸⁵ Ties between Scaurus, Sulla and the Fufidii would certainly help explain Sallust’s hostility towards our L. Fufidius. And a connection of some kind between the families is not so unreasonable: Scaurus may have had connections with distinguished figures associated with Arpinum, the hometown of several of

¹⁷⁸ Campbell 1975: 12. This corrects Syme 1958: 50, according to which Tacitus was referring specifically to senators who saw rapid advance through military command.

¹⁷⁹ Thus Wiseman 1971: 76.

¹⁸⁰ E.g. Cicero’s *tribunus militum* in Cilicia, Q. Fufidius (Cic. *Fam.* 13.11.12), an *aedilis* at Arpinum, M. Fufidius (CIL I 1537 = ILS 5738), and an otherwise unspecified Fufidius mistreated by L. Piso (Cic. *Pis.* 86, *eques Romanus*). On these see also Nicolet 1967: 301–4 and Syme 2016: 120.

¹⁸¹ Cic. *Brut.* 112–3; Plin. *HN* 33.21.

¹⁸² Syme 2016: 120; Nicolet 1967. The identification has however been re-stated in Konrad 1989: 125–7, on the grounds that his period as a senator is not specified in the sources; that an elderly Scaurus might make a dedication to a young up-and-coming individual from an area of Italy with which he maintained connections, only after which did Fufidius enter the senate; and because Fufidius’ primipilate could date to a period before Sulla’s civil wars, perhaps the Social War or even earlier. But this does not account for the figures with whom Cicero groups Fufidius.

¹⁸³ Plut. *Sull.* 6.10–12.

¹⁸⁴ Plut. *Pomp.* 9.1–3; *Sull.* 33.3.

¹⁸⁵ Sal. *Jug.* 1.15.

the known Fufidii.¹⁸⁶ If this is indeed the family to which our man belongs – an equestrian family capable of producing senators – it becomes especially surprising to hear that, in this era, such a figure served as a centurion. Having established that there are grounds for doubting the modern consensus that the Sullan Fufidius was once a centurion, we will for now shelve the discussion and move our focus onto the second alleged centurion-senator of the late Republic.

Caesar and Fuficius

That other late Republican rebel-turned-dictator, Julius Caesar, is also alleged to have stuffed his senate full of soldiers and nobodies (and, worst of all, even with foreigners).¹⁸⁷ Although the paucity of solid evidence for the similar claims brought against Sulla urges caution, at least one individual, the notorious Gaius Fuficius Fango, is generally thought to have been raised by Caesar from the centurionate to the senate.¹⁸⁸ Almost all of what we know about Fango – and it is not much – comes from accounts of the Triumviral period.¹⁸⁹ Both Appian and Cassius Dio record that, following the establishment of the “second” triumvirate in 43 BC – according to which power and provinces were shared between Antony, Lepidus and Octavian – Octavian, who had received Africa and Numidia as his provinces, installed Fango as his governor there.¹⁹⁰ The previous governor, Titus Sextius, a partisan of Antony, initially accepted the decision and gave up the provinces, before being ordered (by Antony’s wife Fulvia, claims the joyfully libellous Dio) to resume his command. Having assembled a motley collection of forces, Sextius eventually defeated Fango, who committed suicide. In Dio’s hostile account, a ragged and frightened Fango took his own life after being startled by antelope and assuming them to be enemy cavalry.¹⁹¹ To complete the narrative, following the victory of Octavian and Antony over the *Liberatores* Brutus and Cassius at Philippi in 42 BC, the triumphant duo re-allocated the provinces, and the paltry Numidia and Africa were palmed off to a side-lined Lepidus, forcing a briefly triumphant Sextius to once again surrender control.

¹⁸⁶ Syme 2016: 120. See especially Nicolet 1967 on the connections between Arpinum and Scaurus, and on Cic. *Leg.* 3.36: Scaurus allegedly wished that Cicero’s grandfather, who was involved in municipal life at Arpinum, would aid the Roman *res publica* with the same spirit with which he contributed to his town.

¹⁸⁷ Dio 42.51.5; 43.20.1-2, 27.2, 47.3; 48.34.4; 52.42.1; Suet. *Iul.* 76.3; 80.2.

¹⁸⁸ Syme 1937: 128.

¹⁸⁹ *CIL* X 3758 records a Fango as aedile in Campania in this period, but it seems dangerous to draw any associations based solely on *cognomen*.

¹⁹⁰ The account that follows is derived from App. *BC* 5.26 and Dio 48.22-24.

¹⁹¹ Dio 48.23.

A hint about Fango's earlier life is given by Dio, who writes that "he used to serve in the mercenary force; many of those of such a kind had been adlected into the senate."¹⁹² The relevant part of this sentence is the phrase ἐν τε γὰρ τῷ μισθοφορικῷ ἐστράτευτο. We have already seen Dio describe military service in the Roman army with the almost identical phrase ἐν τῷ μισθοφορικῷ ἐστράτευτο in the case of the third-century Adventus; presumably here also this simply means that Fango served in the military in return for a *stipendium*. The implication is that Fango had previously been a centurion; but it is nowhere specified outright. The sole contemporary reference to Fuficius Fango is found in Cicero. Fango is almost certainly meant for Frango in Cicero's concern about Caesarian partisans eager to wipe out all their opponents: *redeo ad Tebassos, Scaevas, Frangones. hos tu existimas confidere se illa habituros stantibus nobis? in quibus plus virtutis putarunt quam experti sunt* ("I return to the likes of Tebassus, Scaeva, Frango. Do you think they are confident that they will maintain their gains while we are still standing?").¹⁹³ Scaeva is the centurion made wealthy and lionised by Caesar after his heroics at Dyrrachium, above. Tebassus is otherwise unknown. Münzer, influenced by knowledge of the later career of Fango, suggested that all three individuals were Caesarian senators; a sceptical Syme is probably right in viewing them instead as "merely a collection of Caesarian types – perhaps, but not certainly, senators".¹⁹⁴ By this logic, if Fango's eventual senatorial status cannot prove that the others were also senators, then surely Scaeva's role as a centurion cannot prove that Tebassus and Fango were also centurions. There is thus no conclusive evidence to indicate that Gaius Fuficius Fango was ever actually a centurion, and it is somewhat surprising that this claim has gone unchallenged in modern scholarship. Instead, all we have is a vague comment from Dio that Fango was a "mercenary" – hardly any different from Sallust's contumelious allegation that Sulla's senate was comprised *ex gregariis militibus*. Indeed, given this historiographical trope for insinuating that disliked senators were no more than common soldiers, it is a wonder that Dio's assertion has sustained such mileage.

In fact, it seems remarkable that the only two senators thought to have once been centurions in the late Republic should have such similar – not particularly common – names. To re-iterate, the sole evidence that the earlier Fufidius was a centurion comes from the late antique Orosius, who anachronistically names him a *primipilaris*; there is no specific evidence for the later Fuficius, simply an assertion in Cassius Dio that he had served for pay, and an

¹⁹² Dio 48.22.3: ἐν τε γὰρ τῷ μισθοφορικῷ ἐστράτευτο: πολλοὶ γὰρ καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἐς τὸ βουλευτήριον. . . κατελελέχατο. It is unclear whether Dio means these soldiers were elected to the Roman senate, or instead to local senates.

¹⁹³ *Ad Att.* 14.10.2 (44 BC).

¹⁹⁴ Münzer 1910: 200; Syme 1937: 128.

association in Cicero between him and Scaeva. Beyond this, there are general insinuations that the senates of Sulla and Caesar contained former soldiers. It is possible that aspects of the two figures were conflated in their second lives as actors within later Greco-Roman history-writing.

Cicero and the Roman Army

The aftermath of Caesar's assassination provided further opportunity for Cicero to suggest a state on the road to ruin through his presentation of centurions acting outside the military sphere. In the first of his *Philippics* denouncing the Caesarian Marc Antony, delivered to the senate on the 2nd September 44 BC, Cicero cites various instances where Antony had himself gone against the *acta Caesaris*, including Antony's attempt to reform the composition of the juries (Cic. *Phil.* 1.20):

At quae est ista tertia decuria? 'Centurionum' inquit. Quid? isti ordini iudicatus lege Iulia, etiam ante Pompeia, Aurelia, non patebat? 'Census praefiniebatur', inquit. Non centurioni quidem solum, sed equiti etiam Romano; itaque viri fortissimi atque honestissimi, qui ordines duxerunt, res et iudicant et iudicaverunt. 'Non quaero' inquit, 'istos. Quicumque ordinem duxit, iudicet'. At si ferretis, quicumque equo meruisset, quod est lautius, nemini probaretis; in iudice enim spectari et fortuna debet et dignitas.

But what is that third panel? 'Of centurions', he says. What? Was the judiciary not open to that order through the Julian law, and the Pompeian and Aurelian laws even before that? 'A property qualification was prescribed', he says. Not just for a centurion alone, but even for a Roman knight; and so extremely brave and honourable men, who have served as centurions, both serve as judges and have served as judges. 'I'm not looking', he says, 'for those men. Let anyone who has served as a centurion be a judge'. But if you were to propose [the same for] anyone who had served as a cavalryman, which is more prestigious, you would win no-one's approval; for both favour and dignity should be observed in a judge.

Following the *lex Aurelia* of 70 BC the Roman jury, previously comprised only of senators, had been reformed to consist of three *decuriae*, one of senators, one of *equites* (i.e. equestrians), and one of the still somewhat obscure *tribuni aerarii*. These latter were probably also equestrians, and this is how Cicero describes them, thus giving equestrians control of two-thirds of the jury.¹⁹⁵ Caesar, perhaps as confused as modern scholars about the precise nature

¹⁹⁵ Davenport 2019: 83, with 106-8 for a full discussion with references and bibliography.

of the *tribuni aerarii*, had abolished this panel;¹⁹⁶ following Caesar's assassination Antony now wished to reinstitute a third panel. Supposedly this new panel would be open, amongst others, to anyone who had served as a centurion. Cicero counters that the judiciary was already open to ex-centurions, assuming they met the property qualification; Antony clarifies that his opposition is to the property qualification, although it does not follow that he wished to abolish a property qualification altogether; Cicero retorts that cavalrymen, more prestigious than infantry centurions, follow the same rules. With his use of *equo meruisset*, presumably Cicero cannot mean that it would be ridiculous if everyone who was an equestrian had the right to serve as a juror: after all, surely that is exactly what a *decuria* comprised of equestrians must mean. Rather, he must be declaring the ludicrousness of everyone who had served as a cavalryman – for which *mereo equo* was the standard formula – being permitted to join a jury.

The higher status of the citizen cavalry over the infantry was long-standing. Historically the Roman citizen cavalry had been formed from the *equites* (i.e. equestrians) who, probably by the end of the third century BC, had a higher census requirement than the first class of the *pedites*.¹⁹⁷ Accounts of the mid-Republic frequently group cavalry together with centurions,¹⁹⁸ and cavalry typically receive greater pay than the centurions.¹⁹⁹ However, over the course of the second century BC, as Rome relied increasingly on allied forces for cavalry and as equestrians looked for alternatives to service as cavalrymen, notably as tribune and prefect commanders or as civilian money-makers and businessmen, the citizen cavalry dwindled.²⁰⁰ By the time of Caesar's proconsulship in Gaul, citizen cavalry is essentially absent. When in 58 BC Ariovistus demanded that Caesar bring only a cavalry escort to parley, rather than rely on the dubious allegiance of his Gallic cavalry, Caesar took their horses and mounted upon them loyal soldiers from his tenth legion; if Caesar still had citizen cavalry attached to his legions these would surely have been the logical choice of escort.²⁰¹ The historic status of cavalry would be reflected in the auxiliaries of the Principate in the seniority of a cavalry *ala* to an infantry *cohors* or part-mounted *cohors equitata*, and in military decurions being accorded first place in the diplomas in the formula *decurionum et centurionum . . . item*

¹⁹⁶ Suet. *Caes.* 41.

¹⁹⁷ On which see Davenport 2019: 35-7.

¹⁹⁸ E.g. Livy 34.13.5 (195 BC) on centurions and cavalry in council with the tribunes and prefects.

¹⁹⁹ All references from Livy. Centurions and cavalry both receive twice as much as infantry: 10.46.15 (on 293 BC); centurions and cavalry both receive thrice as much: 33.37.12 (196 BC); centurions receive twice as much, cavalry thrice: 33.23.8 (197 BC); 34.52.11 (194); 36.40.13 (191); 37.59.6 (189); 39.5.17 (187); 40.43.7 (180); 40.59.3 (179); 41.7.3 (178); 41.13.8 (177); 45.43.7 (167). Cf. 40.34.2 (181), the account of the foundation of the Latin colony of Aquileia, where infantry receive 50 *iugera* each, centurions 100 and cavalry 140.

²⁰⁰ Davenport 2019: 50ff.

²⁰¹ *Caes. BG* 1.42.

caligatorum. But in the context of the late Republic, Cicero's point about the prestige of cavalrymen relative to centurions seems an anachronistic relic.

The property qualification prescribed for Antony's new *decuria* was perhaps the *prima classis*, the first property class below the equestrian order.²⁰² The property qualification for this class remains controversial, with estimates varying from around 25,000 sesterces to 100,000 sesterces.²⁰³ In any event, some centurions and perhaps also favoured and long-serving soldiers might find themselves eligible now to serve on the juries.²⁰⁴ By changing the composition of the courts in such a way Antony could protect Caesarians from prosecution.²⁰⁵ As it was, Antony's legislation was repealed by the senate in 43 BC,²⁰⁶ although probably revived during the domination of the triumvirate;²⁰⁷ following Antony's defeat by Octavian, the latter would transfer this third *decuria* back to the equestrian order, and subsequently add a fourth *decuria* for civil cases with a property qualification of 200,000 sesterces;²⁰⁸ a fifth *decuria* with the same requirement was added by Caligula.²⁰⁹ The point is that the composition of juries was a vital concern for those involved in governing the Roman state; and that Cicero has skewed the account of Antony's *decuria* to focus upon its military characteristics and its accessibility by centurions. Cicero professes tolerance of those centurions who otherwise have sufficient wealth to make them worthy; their status as centurions alone is dismissed as a valid qualification. And his nod to the superiority of the citizen cavalry is to remove the centurions of the 40s BC from their contemporary setting and to re-characterise the institution in the context of an old world that was dying decades ago.

For Cicero, soldiers and centurions belonged solely within the military sphere – and even then he preferred to keep them at arms-length. His attitudes are further revealed in a letter from early 49 BC to Mescinius Rufus, who had served as his quaestor while he was governor of Cilicia in 51 BC (Cic. *Fam.* 5.20.7):

Quod scribis de beneficiis scito a me et tribunos militaris et praefectos et contubernalis dumtaxat meos delatos esse. in quo quidem me ratio fefellit; liberum enim mihi tempus ad eos deferendos existimabam dari, postea certior sum factus triginta diebus deferri

²⁰² Ramsay 2005: 31.

²⁰³ See Yakobson 1992: 44, with n. 61, for discussion and bibliography. Yakobson prefers the relatively low figure of 25,000 sesterces.

²⁰⁴ Ramsay 2005: 31, with n. 58.

²⁰⁵ *Id.* 22.

²⁰⁶ Cic. *Phil.* 12.12.

²⁰⁷ Ramsay 2005: 32-7.

²⁰⁸ Davenport 2019: 193; Suet. *Aug.* 32.3.

²⁰⁹ Suet. *Cal.* 16.2. From the Augustan era jury service seems increasingly to have been considered a burden by equestrians, perhaps explaining these two new sub-equestrian *decuriae*. See Davenport 2019: 196-7.

necesse esse, quibus rationes rettulissem. sane moleste tuli non illa beneficia tuae potius ambitioni reservata esse quam meae, qui ambitione nihil uterer. de centurionibus tamen et de tribunorum militarium contubernalibus res est in integro; genus enim horum beneficiorum definitum lege non erat.

As to what you write about the special rewards, let me tell you that I have sent in the names of my military tribunes and prefects, and military attendants – of my own at least. And there, indeed, I made a miscalculation; I was under the impression that the time given for recommending them was unlimited; I later gained clarification that I had to recommend them during the thirty days after I had submitted my accounts. I am deeply annoyed that these rewards were not saved up for your popularity rather than for mine, since I have no need for popularity. Anyhow, as regards the centurions and the military attendants of the military tribunes, the matter is untouched; for the character of these rewards had no legal time-limit.

Cicero attempts contrition as he tries to explain that he missed the deadline for recommending any of Rufus' personal staff while quaestor in Cilicia for honours, apparently not realising that quaestorial staff were subject to such a deadline. It probably came as no consolation to Rufus that Cicero had sent in the names of his own staff, military tribunes, and prefects on time. Curiously, Cicero mentions as an aside that he had also not yet submitted the names of any centurions, or any of the tribunes' staff, for honours, since no time limit existed in law for the recommendation of such individuals for honours. Centurions in this period are distinguished in law from the tribunes and prefects through the different formal processes a governor must follow to grant rewards for service from the public treasury: Cicero is happy to go along with this. And yet governors and their staff more invested in the military than Cicero could act more directly. Cicero's own brother, Quintus, while serving under Caesar, singled out for praise centurions and tribunes together.²¹⁰ Not only does Caesar praise soldiers himself; he praises his subordinate commanders when they too praise their soldiers. In this world – a polar opposite from that championed by Cicero – close relationships between soldiers, centurions and their senior commanders are actively encouraged. Attitudes towards soldiers are made not only a personal choice, but also a political and rhetorical one: Cicero's choice is clear. Notably one of the rare occasions on which he singles out soldiers and centurions for praise is when they are killed by Antony during the civil war: this is their singular purpose, to fight and die for the

²¹⁰ Caes. BG 5.52.4.

Republic.²¹¹ It is thus one of the ironies of history that Cicero was himself to be murdered by a centurion during the proscriptions of the triumvirate.²¹²

Conclusion: the myth of centurion-hysteria

The political stock of the Roman soldier, and particularly the centurion, in the literature functions as a bellwether of elite attitudes towards the health of the *res publica*. For Cicero, whose letters and speeches provide the most comprehensive conspectus of the state of the Roman Republic up to the time of his death, soldiers and centurions acting – and dying – as expected, solely in their capacity as members of a Roman army, are made recipients of his praise and seen as representative of Rome at its best, while those transgressing the boundaries of the military sphere are the self-serving pawns of the self-serving generals who threaten to topple the Republic. Cicero's politicised rhetoric, attitudes towards the military and general indignation at the quality of Caesar's senate, alongside Sallust's similar complaints about the state of the senate of Sulla, provided a first century BC paradigm according to which the key symptom of a state gone wrong was the presence of soldiers in the senate, a paradigm that could be repurposed and redeployed by future authors to fit the contexts of their own times. At the other end of the chronological spectrum, the third century AD senator and historian Cassius Dio, who had Cicero as a model, makes Augustus' staunch supporter Maecenas the mouthpiece for the notion that those who had seen service in the ranks of the army, however dramatic their military career trajectory, should never be permitted into the ranks of the senate. When Dio pontificates on the differences between centurions appointed *ex equite* and those promoted from the ranks, we are confronted with almost three hundred years of literary baggage – the sort of baggage with which equestrians of the Principate who opted to serve within the centurionate may be familiar, prompting their declarations of social pedigree. The same refusal, cited in the heading to this chapter and attributed to a 19th century British Prime Minister of extensive military experience, the Duke of Wellington, to value as the equals of directly commissioned officers those who had won advancement from the ranks, is a feature of the literary output of those elites of the Roman world who portrayed military-driven social advancement as a harbinger of a state on the path to ruin.

On the contrary, however, the social heterogeneity of the centurionate of the Principate went hand-in-hand with its ability also to create new Roman elites. Far from the social advancement of such “*virī militares*” as centurions and *primipilares* polluting the elite world

²¹¹ Cic. *Phil.* 3.30.18; 5.22; 12.12.12; 13.18.11.

²¹² Plut. *Cic.* 48.

with militarism, the unique circumstances of the centurionate encouraged centurions themselves to identify with this elite world. Through their service, centurions promoted through the ranks had the opportunity to develop long-lasting networks of patronage with equestrians and even to be inculcated with an equestrian worldview, not least in their presentation of their relationship with the emperor and the *domus divina*. In time the function of the centurionate as a training ground for new elites loyal to the emperor would be formalised through the development of the *protectores Augusti*. It remains to be seen how this new military elite interacted with the civilian world, and with the civilian elites of the towns in which they settled upon discharge from the army.

CHAPTER 4

The Monuments Men

Soldiers and Veterans in Roman Towns

“The Government and the Army are awake to their obligations. All over the portion of the Rhineland we hold time is every day set apart for the education of officers and other ranks to fit them for their duties on returning to civil employment, and last month 75,000 officers and other ranks of the Army of the Rhine were undergoing courses of educational instruction. This will be good news to many a parent. The Empire’s call caused a break in the education of millions of men, the student working up for the university as well as the apprentice to a trade.”

“Army of the Rhine, The Soldier’s Education, Preparing for Civil Life” in *The Daily Telegraph*, 5th July 1919

Although a soldier of the Principate was expected to spend a significant part of his life serving in the armies of Rome, his existence was never entirely separate from the civilian world. Upon enlisting and setting off for his determined unit he might leave behind in his hometown his parents, siblings, and wider family; during his term of service he might have a letter sent home,¹ or apply for a grant of furlough and take the opportunity to visit his family;² and upon retiring he might variously settle in a dedicated veteran colony, remain in the province in which he had been serving, or perhaps simply return to his hometown.³ These connections between military and civilian life are fundamentally private in nature. But even when soldiers or veterans acted as private individuals within their home communities, they nevertheless occupied a very public space within their local society. Through their privileges and exemptions veterans must have been known to the local authorities;⁴ and through their funerary commemorations military

¹ *BGU* II 423 and 632 for letters from the 2nd c. Egyptian fleet recruit Apion / Antonius Maximus.

² For family visits during furlough, see e.g. *P. Mich* 8.466 = Campbell 1994: 30-1, no. 36 (AD 107), and *P. Oxy.* 14.1666 = *Select Papyri* 1.149 (3rd c.).

³ On veteran settlement patterns of the Principate, see especially Mann 1983a: 49-66; Keppie 1984a.

⁴ See Alston 1999: 62-3 and Wesch-Klein 2011: 443 for summaries of the various privileges and exemptions granted to veterans. See also Garnsey 1970: 245-51 and 274-6 on the special status of veterans. The *Digest* 49.18 lists those privileges preserved in later law codes, including a status similar to civic decurions, by which they and their children were spared from degrading punishments such as forced labour, condemnation to the mines or beasts, and beatings by rods. During the triumphal period an edict of Octavian spared veterans – and their parents, wives

families would proudly declare their service to their communities. As Roman citizens with distinct privileges and inherently associated with the central authority of Rome and the emperor, the activities of veterans within their civilian home communities are of vital importance for understanding the social fabric of the Roman empire. But there is an inherent difficulty in locating the activities of veterans within the civilian sphere given the nature of the relevant ancient evidence, primarily derived from the epigraphic and papyrological records. Only occasionally do we hear of veterans involved in commerce, even though this must have been an attractive career for those with decent savings from their military life. Thus Vespasian's grandfather, an honourably discharged Pompeian veteran, having served either as *evocatus* or centurion, became a tax-collector.⁵ And one second century veteran from the Praetorian Guard was involved in the wine-trade, belonging to the *corporatus in templo fori vinarii importatorum negotiantium* at Ostia.⁶ These are isolated cases; the activities of most soldiers are virtually absent from the historical record between their discharge from the military and the time of their death. Rather, the sorts of activities that were attested in the epigraphy were those that involved interactions with the local civic community.

This chapter will demonstrate that the involvement of military personnel in the civic life of the Roman empire matters because they are military personnel, and in so doing will reveal the crucial role played by soldiers and veterans as a centre-point linking emperors, towns and armies. Just as centurions could be appointed directly from the equestrian order and become equestrians through service, so too could soldiers and veterans both come from families of, and themselves become, local elites – understood here as the curial class who held civic offices or served as civic councillors.⁷ The centurionate and primipilate especially stand

and children – various goods duties and otherwise compulsory *munera*, i.e. liturgies / obligations, within their hometowns (*BGU* II 628); similar privileges appear again in an edict of Domitian (*CPL* 104). These were perhaps exceptional. On these edicts see Alston 1999: 217 and Phang 2001: 69-72. Veterans' exemption from a number of *munera*, namely those personal liturgies that did not involve expenditure, are attested in law under Septimius Severus (*Dig.* 50.5.7). They were however still obliged to perform patrimonial liturgies, namely those which were levied upon properties and patrimonies to an individual's financial loss (*Dig.* 50.4.18.18-24, 50.5.7), and pay duties/taxes based upon their possessions (*Dig.* 49.18.4). Those veterans who became civic decurions, however, must discharge the associated duties and undertake *munera* (*Dig.* 49.18.2).

⁵ Suet. *Vesp.* 1.2.

⁶ *AE* 1940: 64 (Ostia Antica). The veteran in question, Lucius Caecilius Aemilianus, was also a *decurio* and *duumvir* of the African *colonia* of Aelia Uluzibbira. Perhaps owing to the strong trade between Ostia and the African ports, inhabitants of Roman Africa are well-attested in Ostia; and the most frequently found non-Ostian tribal affiliation in Ostia is the *tribus Quirina*, which is the most common *tribus* applied to the inhabitants of Roman settlements in Africa. Meiggs 1973: 214-5; Salomies 2002: 152-3; Terpstra 2013: 119. On Aemilianus in particular, see Van der Ploeg 2017.

⁷ Directly appointed centurions surely included members of local elites with wealth below the equestrian census. The subject of *CIL* X 1202 (Abella, Italy, mid 2nd) appears to have been a magistrate in his hometown before obtaining appointment as a centurion and ultimately becoming a *tribunus vigilum* at Rome. Finally, he was co-opted as civic patron of his hometown by the local senate.

out as a body that created new military elites – trained in the army; associated with and sometimes incorporated within the equestrian order; subordinated to the interests of the emperor – who could be deployed in the civic life of towns for the benefit of emperor, empire and the locality itself. In time more junior veterans, too, came to play their own roles. This chapter comprises both a quantitative survey and a prosopographical accounting of the stories preserved in the epigraphy of Roman towns. Together, this evidence will reveal the patterns and developments in the participation of soldiers and veterans in civic life, and demonstrate that military personnel, both serving and time-served, became a vital weapon in the arsenals of Roman towns as they sought to craft their relationships with their neighbours, with the armies, and with the emperor.

Soldiers and veterans in the civic elite

Soldiers and veterans of all ranks can be found holding civic offices and exercising influence in local communities. It is generally accepted that *primipilares* were accorded the wealth and status to become prominent figures in their communities; the extent of the involvement of soldiers who did not reach the primipilate is debated. Although the body of scholarship dedicated to the issue of the participation of soldiers and veterans in civic society is relatively small, and especially so in the Anglophone tradition, the conclusions that have so far been reached have a profound impact on our understanding of social mobility, local governance, and the relationships between the military and civic society.⁸ It is now believed that, although their overall social and economic contribution to many towns and cities must have been considerable, veterans amongst the civic elites were relatively few. Mrozewicz has shown that only 5.8% of the civic elite in the towns of the Rhine and Danube were veterans;⁹ Jacques found similar results for southern Numidia, at around 7%.¹⁰ Traverso demonstrated that, in Italy, clearly attested military personnel who participated in the civic elite were primarily equestrian commanders, especially legionary tribunes, although *primipilares*, centurions and more junior veterans, typically those from the Rome cohorts, are also known.¹¹ According to Ardevan although ordinary veterans are remarkably well-represented in the civic elite of Dacia they

⁸ See Introduction, n. 7.

⁹ Mrozewicz 1989: 67. There is, however, significant variation between the individual results for the older Rhine provinces of Germania (Superior, 1.5%; Inferior, 2.8%) and those for the provinces of the eastern Danube, annexed later (Moesia Superior, 8%; Moesia Inferior 7.1%; Dacia 9.4%).

¹⁰ Jacques 1984: 629.

¹¹ See the epigraphic catalogue in Traverso 2006. Around half of the cases identified by Traverso belong to the Julio-Claudian period. See also Ricci 2010 (tables at 55-59, largely derived from those of Traverso, with comment at 66-73) on the composition of cases below the primipilate.

tended to become only councillors, whereas equestrian commanders held magistracies, often in multiple towns.¹² Dupuis and Nelis-Clement, writing about veterans in Numidia, argued that where more junior veterans had civic careers after – or during – their military service, the reason may have been their genes, as members of existing local elite families, as much as it was their military service.¹³

The specific circumstances of each province and town, not to mention the nature of the military service of the veteran, must have contributed to the accessibility of civic office for veterans. Greater rank – complete with increased financial rewards – might translate more easily into civic success, just as civic positions might be more easily obtained in smaller or less competitive towns by veterans who were not already from local elite or equestrian families.¹⁴ It has however been argued that centurions who did not reach the primipilate are relatively uncommon in the civic elite across the empire, perhaps because of the extreme length of their military service.¹⁵ Although Mrozewicz identified ordinary legionary veterans and auxiliary *principales*, centurions and decurions amongst the civic elites of the Rhine and Danube, he found minimal evidence for ordinary auxiliary veterans:¹⁶ perhaps because the civic institutions of Roman towns were more alien to those who gained the Roman citizenship only through service,¹⁷ but perhaps also because soldiers in the auxiliaries were probably paid less than their colleagues in the legions.¹⁸ The unique circumstances of a town's history and location are also factors in veteran participation. Berard has argued that the presence of veterans in the civic elite of Lugdunum was a particular product of the town's military connections, serving as a base for the 13th urban cohort which contained a sizable proportion of Italians who, perhaps, were more aware of the organs of municipal governance.¹⁹ Conversely, in older towns with established civic elite families, and in towns removed from an immediate military context, such as the presence of garrisons nearby or recent histories as veteran colonies, the admittance of veterans into the civic elite may have seemed an unnecessary intrusion.²⁰ It is thought that

¹² Ardevan 1989: 88.

¹³ Dupuis 1991: 352-4 and Nelis-Clement 2000: 312 on veterans in the civic elites of Numidia.

¹⁴ E.g. Jacques 1999: 630 on Numidia and Africa Proconsularis. Nelis-Clement 2000: 312 argues that *principales* – particularly those who served on the staffs of governors and generals, such as the *beneficiarii* – might find an easier route to civic success than *immunes* or ordinary *milites*.

¹⁵ Dobson 1974: 427.

¹⁶ Mrozewicz 1989: 69 on the Rhine and Danube veterans.

¹⁷ Wesch-Klein 2007: 447.

¹⁸ M. A. Speidel 1992 used new evidence to revive the 1973 hypothesis of M. P. Speidel that *milites* in the auxiliaries received five-sixths the pay of those in the legions. This was defended against its critics (notably Alston 1994) in 2014. Alston prefers parity of pay between the infantry of both branches. The debate remains vexed.

¹⁹ Bérard 1992: 169 and 186-187.

²⁰ Wesch-Klein 2007: 447.

the apparent reluctance of veterans below the *primipilate* to enter civic life across the empire stems from a combination of the relatively advanced age at which veterans might be able to begin their civic careers;²¹ a desire to enjoy their privileges and not undertake *munera*; and an avoidance of the burdensome expenses and displays of munificence associated with a civic career, not least the payment of the *summa honoraria*, a sum of a few thousand sesterces required for election to a local magistracy, and perhaps even for entry into the council / *ordo decurionum*.²² Todisco argued that, in Italy, some junior veterans who hold local magistracies originally came from outside the community where they held office, suggesting an aim of facilitating integration into a new community rather than as an expensive exercise in vanity.²³

It is clear that soldiers and veterans played important roles in the economic and social life of their communities; but many historical studies either overlook the political and civic roles of veterans, or else dissociate them from their military service. More recent progress has been made in this regard by Ricci, who argued that involvement in civic activities was crucial and a way for Octavian / Augustus to encourage the reintegration of hardened soldiers back into civil society following the shattering of their dual identities as both soldiers and citizens during the civil war years of the late Republic.²⁴ This chapter will dissect the participation of soldiers and veterans in the civic life of the towns of the Roman empire and is interested not so much why some individuals who had served in the military should go on to seek civic office, but why such people might be desirable to towns, why even emperors might encourage their civic participation, and how the army itself might benefit from the involvement of its members in local civic spheres.

Towns and civic elites during the Roman Principate

The literature on Roman towns and cities is vast and the arguments well-rehearsed; it is not the place of this chapter to provide more than an overview.²⁵ The statuses of urban communities within the empire were defined and regulated by Rome, from non-citizen *civitas* communities that broadly followed their own systems of local governance to the two primary, formal civic

²¹ Todisco 1999: 215.

²² Dupuis 1991: 347; Todisco 1999: 215; Jacques 1999: 629. On the *summa honoraria*, see especially Duncan-Jones 1982: 147-55. On the fee for entry into the *ordo*, see Garnsey 1970: 243-4.

²³ Todisco 1999: 215.

²⁴ Ricci 2010: 99.

²⁵ For a useful summary of the urban framework of the western provinces under the Principate, see Edmondson 2006. On Republican *coloniae* and *municipia*, see Salmon 1969; Brunt 1971; Bispham 2007; Stek and Pelgrom 2014. On the same under the Principate, Dondin-Payre and Raepsaet-Charlier 1999 (Gaul and Germania); Zanker 2000. On towns in Italy under the early Principate, Patterson 2006. On the citizenship and towns, Sherwin-White 1973. On veterans and veteran colonies from Caesar to Augustus, Keppie 1983; during the Principate, Mann 1983a; Keppie 1984a. For a case-study of emperor and towns, see Boatwright 2000 on Hadrian.

constitutions of Rome, the *municipia* and the *coloniae*. Under the late Republic the *coloniae* were Roman foundations, settlements of Roman citizens, primarily veterans²⁶ either on new sites or installed alongside an existing community;²⁷ *municipia* became Rome's tool for integrating autonomous communities into its citizen body in the aftermath of the Social War that resulted in the bringing of the Italian peninsula to heel, but also the mass enfranchisement of the free population as Roman citizens.²⁸ That is, in the late Republic a *colonia* signified an addition of citizens to a site; a *municipium* the incorporation of a separate pre-existing community into the Roman polity. Under the emperors the foundation of Roman veteran colonies continued in the provinces,²⁹ primarily in the areas of legionary activity, although the practice of deducting new veteran colonies was wound down under Trajan and Hadrian;³⁰ existing *municipia*, however, and occasionally also peregrine communities twinned with existing *coloniae*,³¹ continued to be elevated to the status of a *colonia*, sometimes accompanied by the *ius Italicum*, the privilege of Roman Italy: exemption from Roman taxation.³² Urban centres in the provinces, non-citizen *civitas* communities as well as settlements that included large numbers of citizens (notably the towns that developed around military camps, the *canabae*), could also be favoured with the status of a *municipium*, which entailed a Roman municipal charter, the extension of certain privileges to residents of the *municipium*, and the right for those who completed a period of office as civic magistrates to become full Roman citizens.³³ These privileges were broadly based upon the *ius Latii*, or Latin right, which had

²⁶ Normally those within Italy were on citizen foundations, but outside Italy on non-citizen foundations. Occasionally colonies of deducted civilians are also found, identified as *coloniae civicae* (e.g. Augustus' settlement at Brixia in Gallia Cisalpina, *CIL* V 4212). On veteran colonies of the late Republic, see Keppie 1983.

²⁷ Down to the second century BC Rome deducted colonies with the status of either Roman citizens or Latins with the *ius Latii*, the Latin right, which signified a privileged class of non-citizens with some of the rights of private Roman citizens. On the probable last Latin colony, founded at Aquileia in 181 BC, see Livy 40.34.2 with Salmon 1933. Latin colonies in name are said to have been created subsequently, such as in northern Italy in 89 BC during the Social War when, through the actions of the famous Pompey's father, L. Pompeius Strabo, communities of the Transpadane region of Cisalpine Gaul received Latin status while those in the Cispadane region received the full citizenship (*Asc. Pis.* 3C). However, no Latin colonists had been deducted; rather, Latin rights, the *ius Latii*, were granted to existing peregrine communities. On Republican colonisation, see Stek & Pelgrom 2014.

²⁸ On the development and role of the Republican *municipia*, see especially Bispham 2007, *passim*.

²⁹ Occasionally colonies were established or re-established in Italy, notably under Nero (e.g. Antium: Suet. *Nero* 9 and Tac. *Ann.* XIV 27) and Vespasian. See especially Keppie 1984a.

³⁰ There is some evidence that veteran colonies were founded under Hadrian, but the practice ceased during his reign, perhaps because the bases of the legions were by now broadly immutable: sufficient colonies for each legion's veterans already existed, and with the major garrisons no longer being evacuated a potential source of new sites for veteran settlement had dried up (Mann 1983a: 65).

³¹ Iconium (Galatia), an Augustan veteran colony associated with a neighbouring peregrine community; the two were merged into a colony under Hadrian (*CIL* III 12136). See Mitchell 1979 and Boatwright 2000: 40-1 with n. 21.

³² On the *ius Italicum* see especially Sherwin-White 1973: 316-22.

³³ Much of the Flavian municipal law from Spain is preserved in the surviving charters from Malaca, Irni and Salpensa. See Gonz  les 1986 on the best preserved version, the *lex Irnitana*, and 2012 on the law generally.

historically designated a special class of non-Romans as Latins, and could serve as a stepping stone to full citizenship.³⁴ Grants of the *ius Latii* to a community typically accompanied or preceded – but did not guarantee – its elevation to a *municipium*.³⁵ From the early second century AD, the innovation of the *Latium maius*, “the greater Latin right”, allowed decurions as well as magistrates of a *municipium* to become Roman citizens if they were not already.³⁶ With the *constitutio Antoniniana* of AD 212, and the extension of the Roman citizenship across the empire, the *ius Latii* become functionally irrelevant, as it already had in Italy by the end of the Republic.³⁷ Because the status of an individual was a separate issue from the relationship between towns and Rome, a formerly peregrine *civitas* did not automatically become a *municipium* once its inhabitants were enfranchised, and *civitates* persisted. Even after AD 212 towns were still elevated to the status of a *municipium* or *colonia*.³⁸

Under the Principate the internal structure of governance of *coloniae* and *municipia* was broadly the same, with three key political institutions: magistrates, popular assembly and *ordo decurionum*. The *ordo decurionum*, or *curia*, was the legislative body and town council. In a well-known letter from the Younger Pliny to Romatius Firmus, the property qualification for becoming a decurion at Comum is given as 100,000 sesterces.³⁹ A reference in Petronius’s *Satyricon* to the fortune of a magistrate from Puteoli valued at 1,000 *aurei* (i.e. 100,000 sesterces: a *sestertius* was valued at one-hundredth an *aureus* under Augustus) might suggest the general applicability of this figure.⁴⁰ It is however probable that the actual figure was lower in smaller towns.⁴¹ Similarly, although significant towns such as Capua are known to have had around 100 decurions in their *ordo*, this figure varied according to a town’s size: the Spanish

³⁴ On the *ius Latii*, see e.g. Kremer 2006. Historically the *ius Latii* provided probably for both *conubium* and *commercium* (the right to conduct business according to Roman law with Roman citizens). It is not clear however whether grants of the *ius Latii* within the provinces automatically conferred *conubium* (Treggiari 1991: 45). Beyond the *ius Latii*, other elements of Roman civil law may also have been extended to the *municipia* (as suggested in the *lex Imitana* ch. 93, on which see González 1986).

³⁵ Sherwin-White 1973: 360-79; González 1986: 203. The whole of Spain received the *ius Latii* from Vespasian (IPlin. HN 3.30), but this does not mean that all towns automatically became *municipia*.

³⁶ Hadrian is associated with the granting of legal privileges to decurions (*Dig.* 48.19.15); he is therefore sometimes linked with the development of the *Latium maius*. See Boatwright 2000: 15, with n. 58 for further discussion and bibliography.

³⁷ A version of the Latin right was granted under Augustus to freedmen who had been manumitted without due process or contrary to law. The property of these *Latini Iuniani* / Junian Latins reverted to their former masters upon their death, and they were unable to contract *conubium* unless they obtained citizenship. On the ways for these freedmen to become citizens see Hirt 2018: 305ff. It was not until the 6th century and the reign of Justinian that this status was abolished. On the Junian Latins in law, see Gai. *Inst.* 1.16, 1.22-23, 3.56-76.

³⁸ E.g. *CIL* VIII 814 = *ILS* 508 (Abbir Cella, Africa Proconsularis, mid 3rd) for the elevation of Abbir Cella, previously a *civitas* (if the restoration of *CIL* VIII 893 is accepted), to a *municipium Iulium Philippianum* (after the emperor Philippus, r. 244-9).

³⁹ *Ep.* 1.19.2.

⁴⁰ *Petr. Sat.* 44. On the figure of HS 100,000 as a norm, see Duncan-Jones 1982: 243.

⁴¹ Patterson 2006: 202.

town of Irni had an *ordo* of just 36.⁴² Co-option into the *ordo* normally occurred every five-years, and membership was nominally for life; the *ordo* may, therefore, have commonly operated below capacity.⁴³ Historically entry into the *ordo* was allowed after holding a magistracy (as *quaestor* or *aedilis*);⁴⁴ but under the Principate non-magistrates were also able to enter the *ordo* in various capacities, much like entry into the Roman senate itself. Beyond the regular decurions we find also the *praetextati*, perhaps the sons of existing members of the curial order who were currently too young to join the *ordo* proper;⁴⁵ *adlecti*, those who were admitted *ad hoc* into the *ordo* without already having held magisterial office; and *pedani*, perhaps a later development formalising as a distinct group those who had been adlected without holding a magistracy.⁴⁶ These categories of decurion are known from an *album decurionum* (a list of decurions, both actual and honorary) of AD 223 – probably from Canusium in Italy, made a *colonia* in the mid-second century AD – and one of only two such documents to survive from antiquity, the second of which comes from the Numidian *colonia* of Thamugadi and postdates the Principate (AD 362/3).

The magistrates themselves – that is, the executives of a town – were the junior *aediles* and *quaestores* and the senior *duoviri* (*Ilviri*). In some towns the magistrates were *quattorviri*, of whom two were junior, *aedilicia potestate*, and two were senior *quattorviri iuri dicendo*.⁴⁷ Beyond the regular magistracies were the *quattorviri* / *duoviri quinquennales* who held the chief-magistracy every fifth year, when a census was conducted and membership of the *ordo* revised. Although the *quinquennales* had no additional powers beyond oversight of the revision of the *ordo*, this was a significant responsibility since they effectively controlled the ability for a newcomer to penetrate the ranks of the decurions. This is consequently thought a more prestigious position than the ordinary duumvirate or quattorvirate. Magistrates were typically elected by the popular assembly of the town, divided into voting districts or *curiae*.⁴⁸

⁴² See Castrén 1975: 55, and González 1986 on the *lex Irnitana* and constitution of Irni.

⁴³ Garnsey 1974: 242; Mouritsen 1988: 21.

⁴⁴ Salway 2000: 129 and n. 56.

⁴⁵ See *Dig.* 50.4.8 for 25 as the age of majority in the third century AD when these *praetextati* are attested.

⁴⁶ On the interpretation of these categories, see especially Salway 2000: 126-133.

⁴⁷ Historically towns in Italy normally had a quattorvirate or a duumvirate. New *coloniae* and *municipia* from the time of the late Republic onwards had duumvirates only, and over time many historic quattorvirates morphed into duumvirates. See Bispham 2007.

⁴⁸ On the *curiae*, see the Flavian municipal law, chapters 50, 53, 55, 56, 57 (with González 1986). In at least the early Principate the popular assembly could perhaps vote on certain issues other than elections, such as the voting of honours (González 1986: 204-5). On the civic assemblies under the Principate, see Lewin 1995. Note that the voting-districts termed *curiae* are distinct from the social organisations of the same name known from Roman North Africa, on which see below.

Someone who held a civic magistracy on behalf of the original appointee was termed a *praefectus*, and we find attested as *praefecti* in the towns both those who act as the representative of a non-local honorary magistrate – from Tiberius almost exclusively the emperor himself – as well as those who represent a regular local magistrate when they are absent from the town or otherwise incapacitated.⁴⁹ The former kind of *praefecti* (*praefecti Caesaris* or *principis*) can usually be identified by the presence of the name of the individual whom they are representing, and typically held office alone in place of the *quinquennales*. Certain *praefecti*, representing members of the imperial family but not the emperor himself, are explicitly said to be appointed *ex senatus consulto*.⁵⁰ However we know from the Flavian municipal law that, at least by the time of Domitian, and probably from early in the Principate, it was provided within the municipal charter for the emperor to select his own *praefectus*.⁵¹

Most recorded examples of *praefecti* representing the emperor or imperial family come from the Julio-Claudian era.⁵² This reflects a period in which the towns of the empire, and particularly within Italy, were attempting to come to terms with the new political system of the Principate, and their place within it, by establishing ties with the ruling *princeps* or with a member of his family or entourage: the offering of an honorary magistracy might elicit benefactions towards the town and its *ordo*, or else could be granted in gratitude for those already received. Even after the Julio-Claudians the phenomenon of naming the emperor to a civic magistracy and assigning a *praefectus* in his place continued, albeit at greatly reduced frequencies, until the reign of Marcus Aurelius.⁵³ These civic *praefecti* perhaps became less significant after the innovation of the *curatores rei publicae*, first securely attested under Domitian, who were civic officials centrally appointed – and typically not local – and imposed upon towns to oversee their finances.⁵⁴ Whereas the existence within the town of a *praefectus* of the emperor had been a cause for celebration, the imposition of a *curator* was more likely a reason for concern: this might in some circumstances have disincentivised towns from encouraging imperial interest in their community by appointing the emperor to a magistracy.

⁴⁹ The Flavian municipal law, chapters 24 and 25 respectively (*op. cit.*).

⁵⁰ *CIL* IX 3044 (Interpromium); XI 5224 (Fulginiae); and possibly also *CIL* XIV 2964 (Praeneste).

⁵¹ González 1986 on the *lex Irnitana* (ch. 24). See also Boatwright 2000: 66 and Veyne 1990: 458 n. 252.

⁵² Mennella 1988.

⁵³ An equestrian commander was *praefectus* of Hadrian at Berytus, Syria (*AE* 1912: 179). A member of the local elite was *praefectus* of, perhaps, Commodus at Ostia (*CIL* XIV 376, not extant). The text is concerned with a *praefectus L(uci) Caesar(is) Aug(usti) filii* and also refers to the deified emperor Antoninus Pius (*divus Pius*), so this is probably a *praefectus* of Commodus prior to the death of Marcus Aurelius in AD 180.

⁵⁴ On the *curatores*, see especially Eck 1979 and Jacques 1984 (with reviews in Purcell 1981 and Duncan-Jones 1987, respectively). The earliest known *curatores* date to the late Flavian period: a Domitianic *curator* is known from *CIL* III 291 = *ILS* 1017 (Antiochia Pisidia, Galatia).

Beyond the magistrates and councillors, another significant component of the civic sphere was the system of priestly colleges, of *flamines*, *pontifices* and *augures*. The 4th century *album* of Thamugadi lists the priests in this order below the *duoviri* of the year but above the *aediles*, perhaps reflecting their status relative both to each other and to the other civic elites.⁵⁵ The presumed sections about priesthoods are unfortunately missing in the Flavian municipal charter.⁵⁶ However, the *lex Ursonensis* (ILS 6007), the Flavian copy of the law behind Caesar's colony at Urso, preserves in chapters 66-8 the regulations governing the local *pontifices* and *augures* and their duties. Although the civic priesthoods stood outside the regular civic cursus, they were nonetheless prestigious roles, and especially that of the leader of the local imperial cult, commonly styled *flamen*.⁵⁷ There are however a wide variety of attested titles for municipal priests of the imperial cult, often varying according to province.⁵⁸ In the provinces of North Africa we commonly find *flamines perpetui*, indicating retention of the title for life. These are normally also understood as priests of the imperial cult, although the frequent absence of indication of the subject of worship of these *flamines* makes this unclear.⁵⁹ The *flamines*, and especially the *flamines perpetui*, were certainly significant civic positions. At Thubursicum Numidarum at the start of the third century, the *summa honoraria* for a decurionate or a duumvirate is given as 4,000 HS, whereas that for the flamine was 6,000 HS.⁶⁰ Bassignano has argued that the perpetual flamine was an honour commonly held by magistrates, whereas the ordinary flamine was held prior to a magistracy.⁶¹

Listed at the top of the surviving albums from Canusium and Thamugadi are the civic patrons of the communities, an indication of the prominence and status they were accorded by the towns they represented.⁶² Evidently civic patronage could be burdensome, and whereas the civic patrons of the late Republic had been drawn largely from the upper echelons of the senate, over the course of the Principate these patrons were increasingly co-opted from less prestigious groups, be they less notable senators, equestrians, or even members of the decurial class itself. By the late Principate towns often needed to rely upon recruitment of patrons from within, or

⁵⁵ Jarrett 1971: 523.

⁵⁶ González 1986: 200.

⁵⁷ The major study on the imperial cult in the Roman west remains Fishwick's monolithic series 1987-2005.

⁵⁸ McIntyre 2016: 67.

⁵⁹ *Id.* 70 and 89. See especially Bassignano 1974 on the flamine of Roman North Africa.

⁶⁰ ILS I 1236, on which see Duncan-Jones 1962: 103.

⁶¹ Bassignano 1974: 371.

⁶² The album from Thamugadi in fact begins with ten *virī clarissimi* (i.e. senators) of which the first five are also *patroni* and the second five are not; the reasons for the inclusion of the latter are unclear (Jarrett 1971: 521).

nearby, the client city itself, perhaps struggling to persuade prestigious external figures.⁶³ During the late Republic senatorial patrons had been valuable for the link they could help establish between Italian client cities and Rome. Under the Principate, links with the emperor or a provincial governor were favoured.⁶⁴ In all periods it was in the interests of towns to compete for the patrons who could best represent them. The prospective patron could only legally be co-opted by a majority vote of the decurions, conducted by ballot and subject to meeting a minimum requirement for quorum – illegal co-option of a patron was met with a substantial fine.⁶⁵ Although this was likely intended primarily to limit systematic abuses of the patronage system by local magistrates and to ensure it was the community as a whole that benefitted from the arrangement,⁶⁶ the result was to make the co-option of a patron a public and consensual decision – a significant local event. A decree – a *tabula patronatus*, in the form of a bronze plaque – would then be issued to the co-opted patron confirming that the community in question was entering their clientele.⁶⁷ A benefaction from the new patron might follow, in the form of cash or food distribution (*sportulae*), public banquet (*epulum*), or some other display of munificence, accompanied by the dedication of a statue and inscription in their honour: very public, very permanent declarations of mutual association and reciprocity between town and patron.

At the opposite end of the civic spectrum, beneath the curial order, belong the members of a municipal phenomenon attested primarily in the western provinces of the Roman Empire, which went by different names in different locales: the *seviri* / *Augustales* / *seviri Augustales*.⁶⁸ Abramenko demonstrated that although the organisation of *seviri* was somewhat distinct from the (*seviri*) *Augustales* their recruitment bases were similar, and that the former, broadly earlier (Julio-Claudian / Flavian), institution was phased out in favour of the latter.⁶⁹ Given the title, there was probably some connection between the *Augustales* and imperial cult, although its

⁶³ This transition in the nature of civic patronage is characterised as undergoing a decline by Eilers 2002, defended and re-iterated in a 2015 rebuttal of his critics; but is more persuasively seen as a transformation (for which see e.g. Patterson 2006: 215-9; Nicols 2009; 2014, esp. 318-9), with the character of civic patronage under the Principate distinct from that under the Republic, but nonetheless still an important aspect of civic life. See the second appendix at Bispham 2007: 457-461 for a list of high-status patrons under the Republic.

⁶⁴ On the potential benefits of a *patronus* under the Principate, especially in securing a status change for a town, see Salway 2000: 144.

⁶⁵ The laws that underpinned the co-option of patrons were set out in the colonial and municipal charters: the Julian *lex Ursonensis*, ch. 97 (*ILS* 6087); the Flavian municipal charter, ch. 61 (*lex Malacitana*, *ILS* 6089; *lex Irnitana*, *AE* 1986: 333, with González 1986). For a more comprehensive discussion of the processes, see Nicols 2014: 224-228, esp. at 225-6.

⁶⁶ Nicols 2014: 227: “They are designed to prevent individual magistrates from awarding the title on their own and thereby reaping the benefits that might accrue from securing the honor for a governor.”

⁶⁷ On which see Nicols 1980; 2014: 228-230; Dopico Caínzos 1988: 66-72.

⁶⁸ There are many regionalised variations, on which see Mouritsen 2006: 237-40.

⁶⁹ Abramenko 1993: 13-42.

nature is unknown.⁷⁰ However, the significance of this organisation is as a lower status *ordo* beneath the *ordo decurionum*.⁷¹ Freedmen – such as Petronius’ Trimalchio⁷² – were often *Augustales*, although the role was by no means exclusive to them; rather, given the restrictions on freedmen entering the *curia*, the institution of the *Augustales* was the avenue open for them to pursue their municipal political ambitions. Freeborn men are notably found in the organisation in northern Italy, including a few veterans;⁷³ veterans are otherwise absent from the order. However, Laird is perhaps wrong to argue that “most discharged soldiers lacked the requisite resources to qualify”.⁷⁴ Rather, a veteran who was prepared to disrupt his retirement with civic concerns might have favoured the decurionate.

Finally, although becoming a decurion, magistrate, priest or even patron of a town was the sort of activity often deemed worthy of commemoration, either publicly or privately, in stone inscriptions, and although holding civic positions was locally significant, the prestige of civic appointments beyond the local sphere varied from town to town. Juvenal questions the point of being a local magistrate when that magistrate is dressed in rags (*pannosus*) and lays down the law in somewhere as deserted as Ulubrae (*vacuis aedilis Ulubris*).⁷⁵ Cicero and Horace write of Ulubrae as the remote Italian town *par excellence*, complete with frustratingly noisy frogs.⁷⁶ Situated somewhere on the edge of the unhealthy *ager Pomptinus in Latium*, between Cori and Sermoneta in the territory of the modern *comune* of Cisterna di Latina – its precise location tellingly unknown – Ulubrae was a Republican *municipium* to which a *colonia* was added during the triumviral period. During the late first or second century AD, a veteran of the Praetorian Guard, one Marcus Petronius Montanus, was able to become a local *quaestor rei publicae*, a *duumvir*, and a civic decurion.⁷⁷ Montanus is one of the only magistrates known from the town about whom anything much can be said. Montanus was presumably not a native of Ulubrae but settled there following his service, since he belonged to the *tribus Collina* whereas Ulubrae’s inhabitants were ascribed to the *tribus Pomptina*.⁷⁸ Montanus at Ulubrae reminds us that the opportunity for veterans to embark upon a second career in the local civic elite is impacted not only by the rank they achieved but by the town in which they settled. So

⁷⁰ Duthoy 1978: 1298-1299; Ostrow 1990; Fishwick 1991: 609-16.

⁷¹ This is the central thesis of Abramenko’s 1993 *Die municipale Mittelschicht im kaiserzeitlichen Italien*. Similarly Bruun 2014: 67 refers to them as a “middle class”.

⁷² Petron. *Sat.* 29-30.

⁷³ *CIL* V 5100, 5713, XI 1058, *AE* 1999, 647.

⁷⁴ 2015: 143 and n. 21.

⁷⁵ Juv. *Sat.* 10.99-102

⁷⁶ Cic. *Fam.* 7.12.2; 7.18.3; Hor. *Epist.* 1.11.30.

⁷⁷ *CIL* X 6489, unfortunately now lost.

⁷⁸ On the voting-tribes, see especially Silvestrini 2010 and Taylor 2013.

much by way of introduction to the primary constitutions of Roman towns and their civic organs.

Epigraphic Survey

A catalogue was compiled from the epigraphic record of soldiers and veterans acting in the civic elites of Roman towns. This was restricted to the Latin inscriptions of the western provinces: new colonial foundations under the Principate are primarily a feature of these provinces and normally use Latin for public purposes; *coloniae* and *municipia* are comparatively rare in the Greek east, where the greater level of pre-Roman urbanisation, and density of towns, necessitated different solutions.⁷⁹ The catalogue was created using a combination of existing compilations in previous publications and the search functions of the online databases for Latin inscriptions.⁸⁰ Relevant inscriptions were checked using photographs where possible, the secondary literature consulted, and their dating accepted or modified. The results are tabulated in summary in Appendix One.

Using epigraphy

Reliance upon epigraphy frequently comes with its own pitfalls. At a social level, notable biases include significantly greater representation of the elite, aspirational, adult males, and urban inhabitants. Further distortions result from uneven distributions of texts geographically and chronologically, a result of both practice in antiquity – what has been termed the “epigraphic habit”⁸¹ – and patterns of excavation.⁸² With its focus on urban adult males of financial means, interested in two categories of individual particularly well-represented in the epigraphic record – soldiers and civic elites⁸³ – this survey avoids some of the hazards. Others remain, notably in the chronological densities of inscriptions, rising over the first two centuries of the Principate and falling off in the third;⁸⁴ the risk of “history from square brackets”, in

⁷⁹ See e.g. Levick 1987; Boatwright 2000: 41, and 172-203. See also Isaac 1990: 269-310 on the different relationship between army and city in the east, where the army was often based in cities themselves.

⁸⁰ Catalogues: *General*: Mann 1983a; *Italy*: Keppie 1983: 109; Todisco 1999; Traverso 2006; Ricci 2010: 55-9; *Dacia*: Ardevan 1989; *the Rhine and Danube*: Mrozewicz 1989; *Lyon*: Bérard 1992; *Spain*: Curchin 1990; *Africa*: Fentress 1979: 154; Jacques 1984: 626-9; *Urban cohorts*: Redaelli 2015; *Equestrians*: Demougin 1988; Pflaum 1960-1961. Online Databases: primarily the Epigraphic Database Clauss Slaby (EDCS); the Epigraphic Database Heidelberg (EDH); and the Epigraphic Database Roma (EDR).

⁸¹ On which see MacMullen 1982; Meyer 1990; Lloris 2014.

⁸² See e.g. Clauss 1973; Saller and Shaw 1984: 127; Hopkins 1987: 113-114; Parkin 1992: 5-19.

⁸³ On the epigraphy of the army and the civic elites of the west, see the chapters by Speidel and Mouritsen in Bruun and Edmondson 2014.

⁸⁴ E.g. MacMullen 1982.

which the editorial restorations of an inscription are used to write (or rather, re-write) history;⁸⁵ and in the inherent difficulties involved in dating much of the ancient epigraphic output.⁸⁶

For the most part, palaeography is a singularly unhelpful tool for dating inscriptions. The best indicator of the date of an inscription is the presence of a conventional dating formula such as the consular or imperial date. These are extremely rare in funerary epigraphy, but more common in the sorts of honorific monuments that might be set up to commemorate a civic figure. Of importance for our purposes, inscriptions involving members of the military are often easier to date than funerary texts involving only civilians, at least when reference is made to a soldier's unit or units. Such references can often indicate a rough date based upon two primary criteria: when the attested unit is known to have operated in the vicinity of the find site of the inscription; and variations in the epithet attributed to the given unit. However, these clues can only get the epigraphist so far: some units remained stationed in the area for so long that a close dating based upon unit and location is impossible, or the inscription may have been found far away from the normal operational area of the unit.

The given names provide some clues. A Roman name with all traditional components – *praenomen*, *nomen* (*gentilicium*), filiation, tribe, *cognomen* – suggests a first or early second century AD date. Filiation and tribe tend to drop out after the early imperial period, although could be retained for significantly longer (the *tribus* became essentially redundant as a marker of citizen status after the *constitutio Antoniniana*, but even then is occasionally found into the later third century).⁸⁷ The *praenomen* begins its slow fade from the epigraphical record during the first century AD, but its absence is only standard by the third century, and it was retained by elite families for significantly longer. The omission of the *cognomen* in otherwise typically Roman names (with e.g. a *praenomen* and filiation) is generally indicative of a date prior to the middle of the first century AD. Abbreviated forms of common *nomina gentilicia* generally begin to appear around the later first century, although are not frequent until the third century.

Changes in the funerary formulae are helpful, although there is significant geographical variation in the extent and speed of the spread of these developments. Generally, the name of the deceased in the nominative is more common in the earlier period; the name in the dative or genitive becomes more frequent from the second century. The formula *h(ic) s(itus) e(st)* is often indicative of a first century date. The famous *dis manibus* formula appears in Italy around the

⁸⁵ See especially Cooley 2012: 355-7.

⁸⁶ The major guides consulted for general trends in the Latin epigraphy were Bruun and Edmondson 2014: 14-17; Cooley 2012: 398-434; Haley 1991: 125ff; Manzella 1987; Thylander 1952. Cooley is particularly useful on the importance of regional factors, and varying rates and speeds of adoption of epigraphic changes in different locales.

⁸⁷ Cooley 2012: 413.

mid-first century AD and gradually spread into the provinces. Where the formula *dis manibus* (*sacrum*) is written in full an earlier date is likely; where the abbreviated form *d(is) m(anibus)* is found a date from the late first century is suggested; more elaborate variations such as *d(is) m(anibus) et memoriae quieti aeternae* are indications of a later date, perhaps in the third century. Formulae involving specific expressions of age, with variations of *vixit annis*, *mensibus*, *(diebus)* / *vixit annorum*, *mensium*, *(dierum)*, generally appear from the Hadrianic period. Superlative epithets such as *pientissimus* or *carissimus* are suggestive of a late second or third century date. Taken together, the various features of an inscription and its archaeological setting allow many texts with no obvious date to be situated within a century or half-century with some confidence.

Methodology

For the purpose of addressing chronological shifts, texts were dated as far as possible to a single century, from the first century BC (i.e. the late Republican or early Augustan texts) to the third century AD. In a number of cases, dating by dynasty is possible; but for the sake of consistency, and given the imbalance in dynasty lengths and epigraphic production with them, it was felt safest to date by century for the purposes of this survey. To allow for the inclusion of those texts which could date to anywhere within a couple of centuries, or which are ascribed to, for instance, a period from the second half of one century to the first half of the next, each inscription was weighted, with a text firmly dated to one specific century counting as 1 text for that century, while a text dated across multiple centuries was divided into equal fractions. Thus an inscription belonging to the first or second century would count as 0.5 for the first century and as 0.5 for the second. It is hoped that this allows all relevant inscriptions to be counted, acknowledges the difficulties involved in dating inscriptions and attempting to pigeonhole them into specific timeframes, and does not overly obscure the chronological trends.⁸⁸

To observe the effects of rank and military unit upon the achievement of civic office – and the sorts of civic office held – soldiers and veterans are categorised by their military background and their civic positions. The civic roles counted here are the decurions, magistrates,⁸⁹ priests and patrons. Given their exclusivity to northern Italy, the few veteran *seviri Augustales* are not counted towards the final results. Soldiers and veterans up to and

⁸⁸ This is a simplistic version of the broad approach taken to ascribing values to material dates over a broad and uncertain chronological range by Launaro 2011, esp. 95-7.

⁸⁹ We include here civic *praefecti*, as well as the pseudo-magistrates who were voted the *ornamenta* of a magistrate, since these are few and at least indicate status, even if the actual duties of a magistrate were not exercised. The few proto-magistrates of pre-municipal communities are also counted, as are the civic *curatores*.

including all those who ever held a centurionate are counted. To examine the position of those who held senatorial military offices – the *tribunus militum laticlavus* and *legatus legionis* – is here meaningless, since these commands were postings within the broader senatorial *cursus honorum*, and because individual military appointments were usually held for only a few years at a time, typically separated by stints holding offices outside the legions. In civic life senators are generally found at the level of *coloniae* and *municipia* only as civic patrons; the burdens of local leadership seem beneath their dignity. Those equestrians who served in the *militiae equestres* alone are also excluded since they were, as a rule, already in possession of the equestrian census, a level of wealth significantly greater than that required for membership of the local senate, and because their careers were not defined by their military service in the way that those of centurions were. All centurions are counted, including those appointed *ex equite*: securely identified *ex equite* centurions are uncommon, and their careers specifically wedded to the military. *Primipilares* are naturally counted by virtue of having held centurionates.

Those ranks included in this survey have been sub-divided into their own categories. The first category comprises *primipilares* – both those who reached the position of *primus pilus* and went no further and those who went on to serve in the various positions reserved for the *primipilares* – as well as those few soldiers and centurions, primarily serving in the pre-Claudian or late Severan armies, who were promoted to positions in the *militiae equestres*. The early cases reflect the fluidity of the Julio-Claudian military hierarchy before the primipilate and equestrian career tracks were separated; the latter the developments of the third century. The second category is for all those who were promoted or appointed into centurionates but did not become *primus pilus*. The third category is for those below the centurionate who assert their membership within the better paid *principales*, as well as those in the *immunes*. The final category is for those who declare simply that they were *milites* or *veterani*, whether this means that they were common soldiers or were *principales* or *immunes* who did not choose to record this on the inscription. Soldiers and veterans who reached the centurionate, but not the primipilate, are also categorised broadly by unit type: 1) the legions; 2) Rome units – here including the various units based at Rome, as well as the provincial urban cohorts; 3) auxiliaries; 4) those who give no indication of their branch of service. A lone veteran of the praetorian fleet at Misenum is counted amongst the auxiliaries on the grounds that it is a low status branch of the service. The military backgrounds of *primipilares* and those in the *militiae equestres* are not counted towards the totals of soldiers and veterans attested in each unit-type: these are distinct careers that could include stints as commanders in the legions, the auxiliaries and at Rome. It is unfortunately usually unclear at what point in a soldier's or veteran's career

they held their civic positions; they are categorised under their highest rank unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary. This is the case with C. Oppius Bassus – whom we met in the discussion of *caligae* and *caligati* in the addendum to Chapter Two, and will come across again shortly – who was a magistrate and civic patron at Auximum probably after having become centurion but certainly before his promotion into the primipilate. Members of local elite families who held office prior to direct appointment to a centurionate are a particular problem, but known cases are rare.

The data is tabulated both by province and for the empire as a whole, allowing for comparison between empire-wide trends and provincial characteristics. The divisions are largely self-explanatory, although the European provinces have been divided between the non-frontier territories around Italy, generally under Roman occupation for longer (“the western provinces”), and the newer and frontier provinces along the Rhine and Danube. The inscriptions catalogued accord broadly with the epigraphic habit, with few datable to the late Republic and beginning of the Principate, a second century peak, and a third century decline. A summary of the results is provided below, with brief discussion of the most notable features that are specific to each region.

Results

Italy: Summary Tables 1-5.

Italy is by far the best represented region overall, though the figures are very poor for the third century. The composition of veterans in civic roles is dominated by the *primipilares* and others made equestrian through service, who form the largest category in all periods. This is perhaps explained by the tendency from Antoninus Pius to Commodus – a period when general legionary recruitment had otherwise shifted towards the provinces – for *primipilares* to be created from directly-appointed centurions, from the Praetorian Guard, and generally from Italians.⁹⁰ Of those below the primipilate, the overall split between the legions and the units of Rome is roughly 50:50. Although the legions supply a majority of cases in the first-century AD, almost double the Rome units, the second century sees the Rome units, and particularly the praetorian cohorts, dominate the scene, providing around eighty per-cent of all cases. The total number of cases for the third century is too small to say much with conviction.

Well established already in the second century is the shift of *primipilares* away from serving as magistrates, principally towards becoming a civic patron. Civic patronage is the

⁹⁰ Dobson 1974: 428.

preserve almost exclusively of the *primipilares* or other veterans of equestrian status. Magistracies and priesthoods are also largely restricted to this group. These equestrians only rarely state their tenure as civic *decuriones*; those who specify their status as *decuriones* in this dossier are primarily *milites* and centurions, the latter of whom are proportionately well-represented. Dobson argued that centurions “played a smaller role in the municipalities” and suggested that this was the product of the length of their military service in pursuit of the *primipilate*.⁹¹ Certainly, the advanced age of legionary or praetorian centurions at retirement compared with *milites*, of whom legionaries and auxiliaries were discharged after 25 years of service, and praetorians after 16, must go some way to explain this. However, in Italy centurions are found in similar numbers overall to *principales* (and perhaps half that of *gregales*), and given the total numbers of centurionates within the legions and Rome cohorts compared with the far more positions as *principales* (or indeed as simple *milites*) the respective proportions do not reflect poorly upon the centurion. Rather than underplay the role of the centurion we observe that *primipilares*, given the significantly smaller number of such positions than centurionates, are vastly over-represented within this catalogue.

Although no veteran below the centurionate is attested as patron of a town within Italy, a junior veteran was able to become patron of one of the local *collegia*, social organisations associated with a variety of purposes, from burial clubs to business associations.⁹² This rare individual is a certain Titus Salenus Sedatus, subject of an honorific inscription on a statue base from Auximum, who is described as *veteranus Augustorum*⁹³ and was honourably discharged from the fourteenth urban cohort, either in the late second or third century, before becoming a well-to-do man of the town.⁹⁴ Sedatus was of curial status within the town, and had served as *praetor quinquennalis*, the chief-magistracy of the town,⁹⁵ and *quaestor* of Auximum. He was also a patron of one of the most prominent civic *collegia*, the textile-dealing *collegium centonariorum*, and the dedication commemorates his benefaction of eight *nummi* to each decurion and four to each colonist. Sedatus was able to become patron to an important

⁹¹ Dobson 1974: 427.

⁹² A second case with suspiciously similar details is thought to be fake (*CIL* IX 5189).

⁹³ The term *veteranus Augusti* is somewhat obscure, but it has been suggested by Ricci 2009, esp. 24, that it was used by those who had served in the Rome cohorts and wished to emphasise the fact, much like the praetorian *evocati Augusti*. The reference to multiple *Augusti* must date this to the period of joint emperors, from around the mid-second to the mid-third centuries.

⁹⁴ *CIL* IX 5843: *T(ito) Saleno T(iti) f(ilio) Vel(ina) / Sedato veterano / Augg(ustorum) accept(o) (h)onesta / mission(e) ex coho(rte) XIII urba(na) / pr(aetori) q(uin)q(uennali) quaestori rei p(ublicae) Auximat(ium) / patrono colleg(ii) centonarior(um) / Ma(n)sueta lib(erta) patrono optimo / cuius dedicatione decurionibus / sing(ulis) VIII n(ummum) et colonis / sing(ulis) IIII n(ummum) dedit / l(ocus) d(atu)s d(ecreto) d(ecurionum).*

⁹⁵ Auximum seems to have maintained *praetores* as their senior magistrates (Branchesi 2006: 155).

collegium, but not to the city as a whole, in spite of his stint as *praetor quinquennalis*. Sedatus' career cannot be understood in isolation: another figure of similar background to Sedatus, with service in the urban cohorts, was in an earlier period a *praetor* at Auximum and patron of the same *collegium*. But this figure was promoted into the legionary centurionate and went on to become civic patron of the town of Auximum itself:

C. Oppius Bassus was advanced through the ranks of the urban and praetorian cohorts to become a centurion in the fourth legion *Flavia Felix*, and probably following a period serving in this role he was appointed to the chief-magistracy of Auximum as *praetor* and co-opted as a *patronus coloniae*.⁹⁶ All this he had achieved already when in AD 137 he was commemorated by the local *collegium centonariorum* for whom he was patron (*CIL* IX 5839). That Bassus' civic career belongs to the period of his centurionate and not following his *evocatio* from the Praetorian Guard is suggested by the order of his career in a second inscription, erected following his elevation to the primipilate (*CIL* IX 5840): his magistracy and patronage of the town are sandwiched between his new rank of *primus pilus* and two previous centurionates, that in the fourth legion *Flavia Felix* and now also one in the second legion *Traiana Fortis*. In something of a puzzle, the career order here places the centurionate in the second legion between that in the fourth legion and his *evocatio* – but given the detail of his career in the first inscription his centurionate in the second legion *Traiana Fortis* would surely have been listed here if this really was where he held his first centurionate. The second inscription is presented as a dedication by at least some of the centurions of the Second *Traiana Fortis* to Bassus, commemorating a banquet he provided for the inhabitants of Auximum.

Dobson is perhaps right to understand this as a celebration of Bassus' promotion to the primipilate.⁹⁷ But since the legion – and presumably Bassus' fellow centurions – was at this time based in Alexandria,⁹⁸ why did this text appear in Auximum and how did they know that Bassus had granted a public banquet to the town? Perhaps amongst the centurions of the Second *Traiana Fortis* were fellow townsmen of Auximum; or else they had donated some money for Bassus to have the inscription set up: in any case we must consider their motivations. In a sense, the primipilate was a zero-sum game: if Bassus received the post within the legion that year, the others did not. But since the post probably came available each year, this might also serve as motivation for the other centurions: a great social promotion was possible, and one of their

⁹⁶ The texts of the inscriptions from which Bassus' career is known are provided here in Chapter Two at 66 n. 159.

⁹⁷ Dobson 1955: vol. 2, 229-230, no. 331.

⁹⁸ Soldiers from the second legion *Traiana* are attested in Egypt in the epigraphic record, and the legion is cited in the province in the late antique *Notitia Dignitatum*. For a complete accounting of the various units attested in Egypt under the Principate see Alston 1995: 163-191 (Appendix 1).

own had managed it. This inscription blurs the boundaries between military and civic life, and Bassus is presented as an idealised centurion – a military hero of rank who was celebrated within his hometown. In some small way, perhaps, these other centurions were moulding their own self-representation as potential elites through their very association and shared rank with Bassus.

The plot thickens further, since the Oppii were a distinguished family at Auximum, including several senators and local elites in the second century AD: C. Iulius Oppius Clemens was a senatorial *praetor candidatus*;⁹⁹ C. Oppius Sabinus Iulius Nepos Manius Vibius Sollemnis Severus was adlected into the senate and became suffect consul under Hadrian during the 130s;¹⁰⁰ M. Oppius Capito Q. Tamudius served in the *militiae equestres* and was a local magistrate, priest, and patron of several towns;¹⁰¹ C. Oppius Pallans was a local magistrate.¹⁰² How our C. Oppius Bassus fits with these other Oppii is unclear, not least because he began his military career in a very junior position.¹⁰³ In any case, Bassus was evidently the sort of figure marked for future success, and the town was peculiarly prescient in identifying and incorporating within its system of patronage a figure who would go on to reap the rewards of the primipilate, from which the town could then benefit. And perhaps the *collegium centonariorum*, having done well through its connection with one veteran of the urban cohorts, opted for more of the same and co-opted Sedatus as their patron.

The only other centurion below the primipilate known to have become a civic patron of a town in Italy is M. Tillius Rufus, an *evocatus* under Marcus Aurelius and Commodus who then worked his way through the Rome centurionates, during the course of which he was elevated to the equestrian order during the joint reign of Septimius Severus and Caracalla. He became one of the senior centurions at Rome, holding the positions of both *princeps castrorum* and *trecenarius*, before being transferred to a legionary centurionate in the twentieth legion *Valeria Victrix* – presumably with an eye towards the primipilate.¹⁰⁴ His co-option as civic patron rests comfortably upon his newly gained equestrian status, won through military service.

Dalmatia, the Gauls and Spains: Summary Tables 6-9.

⁹⁹ *CIL* IX 5830.

¹⁰⁰ *CIL* IX 5833.

¹⁰¹ *CIL* IX 5831, 1832.

¹⁰² *CIL* IX 5849.

¹⁰³ The unevidenced suggestion in Liu 2009: 346 that Bassus was the brother of the suffect consul is surely nonsense. If any family connection is indicated it is most plausibly with the local magistrate Oppius Pallans.

¹⁰⁴ *CIL* X 5064 (Atina, AD 208).

The western provinces here include those of Gaul, Hispania, and Dalmatia. Dalmatia provides roughly the same number of cases as the other provinces combined, and their grouping here is justified not only for the sake of creating a larger sample, but also on the grounds that all are non-frontier provinces around Italy. The cases from the Gauls involve several *primipilares* of the early first century AD, as well as a praetorian veteran and two second-century veterans of the urban cohort garrisoned at Lugdunum. The equestrians all held priesthoods and magistracies. Legionary centurions are strikingly well-represented in the Iberian Peninsula, notably among veterans from the civil-war period of the late Republic who were then settled in Hispania Baetica: all these earlier colonists became magistrates. The cases from the Iberian Peninsula are generally early, and no later than the second century; only legionaries are known. Dalmatia provides cases over a broad period, from the early Julio-Claudians through to the third century, and possibly late within it. The first century looks similar to the other provinces in this category, consisting primarily of legionary centurions and *primipilares*; however during the second and third centuries the soldiers and veterans, including praetorians, attested as members of local elites are primarily drawn from below the primipilate, and for the most part below even the ordinary centurionate. Veterans from below the centurionate most commonly served as civic decurions, on occasion priests or magistrates. Two veterans are attested as civic patrons, both *primipilares*, one Julio-Claudian and the other from the late third century.

North Africa: Summary Tables 10-14.

The western provinces of Roman North Africa provide few texts for the first century, but in all periods the majority of veterans attested in civic roles are *milites* below the centurionate. Although centurions are also found in the catalogue, including those appointed *ex equite*, there is only a single case of a *primipilaris*. This is P. Aelius Primianus, who was not only a decurion in multiple towns in Mauretania but also styled himself *defensor provinciae suae*, probably an unofficial position and perhaps associated with an irregular cavalry command in Mauretania following his return from Rome to Auzia.¹⁰⁵ The order in which he gives his career is confusing, but he saw service in an *ala* as *decurio*, as *tribunus* of an auxiliary cohort, as a *primus pilus* and *tribunus vigilum*, and also as *praepositus* of a vexillation of Moorish cavalry – perhaps in that order.¹⁰⁶ Mauretania is notable for never being home to a permanent legionary garrison; particularly after the *constitutio Antoniniana*, a cavalry decurionate – of superior status to an auxiliary centurionate – perhaps provided a route for the promotion of promising soldiers from

¹⁰⁵ *CIL* VIII 9045.

¹⁰⁶ So Dobson 1955: vol. 2, 10-11, no. 15, and 1978: 308, no. 216.

the province. There are no praetorians, but three veterans of the urban cohorts are known, two from the cohort stationed at Carthage. The auxiliaries are well-represented, primarily through cavalry decurions (in Africa Proconsularis / Numidia as well as Mauretania), although a cavalry *principalis* and a centurion of an infantry cohort are also attested. Perhaps the most striking feature of the military backgrounds of the veterans, however, is how frequently the branch of service is not provided – there are almost as many in total who do not specify their unit as there are who can explicitly cite service in the legions. In the third century this category of veterans of unknown background forms the overwhelming majority. Compared with the other provinces, this seems a feature peculiar to North Africa.

As for the civic positions held, the proportions seem broadly consistent across the period, with around one quarter holding magistracies. However, around half the positions held in each century were priesthoods, normally that of *flamen perpetuus*. These priesthoods are overwhelmingly held by those below the centurionate, largely for these veterans at the expense of other positions. Centurions and military decurions also held priesthoods, in similar numbers to magistracies, but since they only make up around a quarter of the total veterans catalogued here the overall picture is that priesthoods are primarily the civic duty of choice of *milites*, whereas magistracies are more likely to go to centurions, military decurions and *principales*. There are surprisingly few who refer to civic decurionates from all categories of veteran.

The tendency of veterans of North Africa towards priesthoods, in particular the perpetual flamine, is well known.¹⁰⁷ Mann argued that the municipal flamine was “comparatively unimportant.”¹⁰⁸ However Duncan-Jones identified a high *summa honoraria* for the perpetual flamine,¹⁰⁹ and Bassignano observed the trend for perpetual flamines otherwise to be held following a magistracy, the simple flamine before.¹¹⁰ Perhaps the flamine, as an honour somewhat separate from the regular municipal *cursus*, was an attractive position for those seeking a boost in or validation of their local status, but unwilling to commit to the expectations required of an individual undertaking a full second career in local governance. Through their service in the army, veterans were already associated with the emperor and, by extension, the imperial cult.¹¹¹ Kotula has argued that veterans at pre-municipal Lambaesis propagated the imperial cult there through tenure of the flamine.¹¹² If

¹⁰⁷ E.g. Jacques 1984: 629-630; Dupuis 1991: 347: “apparemment à l’exclusion de toute autre fonction”.

¹⁰⁸ Mann 1983: 169 n. 212.

¹⁰⁹ 1962: 103.

¹¹⁰ 1974: 371.

¹¹¹ E.g. Fishwick 1987: 92-3; MacMullen 1981: 110.

¹¹² Kotula 1968: 86. See also Whittaker 1997: 150-2.

the flaminiate was linked with the imperial cult, then the appointment of veterans into the priesthood might be a popular option not just for the veterans but for the towns themselves. Not to mention that, standing outside the civic cursus as it did, priesthoods allowed towns to recruit veterans into the civic life of the town without admitting them entirely into the elite curial class. However, Africa Proconsularis has both the greatest number of surviving inscriptions involving municipal priests and of surviving inscriptions across all provinces, so this may also be a facet of the local epigraphic habit.¹¹³

The flaminates held by veterans are not always connected with a town as a whole, but sometimes with a *curia*, a sub-division of a town of somewhat uncertain nature. These are particularly associated with the province of Africa Proconsularis,¹¹⁴ and their existence in some urban communities even before they were formally elevated to the status of a *municipium* or *colonia*. The *curia Hadriana felix veteranorum legionis III Augustae* is known at Lambaesis from the mid-second century, although the town was not elevated to the status of a *municipium* until the reign of Septimius Severus, when it became the provincial capital of Numidia, now formally separated from Africa Proconsularis as a province in its own right. Four individuals are attested as *flamines* of a *curia Hadriana felix veteranorum legionis III Augustae* at Lambaesis, the flaminates of two of whom can be dated securely to the middle of the second century AD.¹¹⁵ Whether this *curia* was comprised of or simply associated with veterans is unclear, since only one of its *flamines* explicitly states their status as a veteran (*AE* 1968, 646).¹¹⁶ Perhaps it was implied through the name of the *curia*. The titulature of the *curia Hadriana* otherwise reflects the special connection of Lambaesis with Hadrian, under whose reign the fortress was founded, and who delivered a speech to his troops there in AD 128 – the only such speech to survive from antiquity. On the other hand, other named *curiae* are known from the town,¹¹⁷ and another veteran (*ex signifero*), P. Maccaeus Silvanus commemorated his flaminiate of a *curia Iulia* at Lambaesis, plausibly named after Severus' wife Iulia Domna (*CIL* VIII 2596) and probably therefore associated with the municipalisation of Lambaesis.¹¹⁸ Duncan-Jones has argued that the *curiae* were small and restricted groups below the decurial order in status.¹¹⁹ Perhaps they performed a similar function to the *Augustales* elsewhere,

¹¹³ McIntyre 2016: 70.

¹¹⁴ See the list of known *curiae* given by Kerr 2006: 92, n. 36. In one of the more imaginative takes on the subject, see Kerr, with MacMullen 2000: 36, on the potential importance of local Punic heritage in these civic organisations.

¹¹⁵ *CIL* VIII 18214 (mid-2nd); 18234 (mid-2nd); *AE* 1916: 22; 1968: 646.

¹¹⁶ Speidel 2006.

¹¹⁷ See e.g. *CIL* VIII 3293, which assigns seating at the amphitheatre to members of six surviving named *curiae*.

¹¹⁸ Kotula 1968: 39.

¹¹⁹ Duncan-Jones 1962: 73, n. 81.

especially if the imperial connection is valid. In any case, the municipalisation of Lambaesis has been connected with the virtual absence of veterans in the civic bodies of the town after the mid-second century.¹²⁰ As the capital of its province and home to a significant number of veterans from the legionary garrison – not to mention the effect of the *constitutio Antoniniana* formally breaking down a key legal distinction between the formerly citizen veterans and other inhabitants, many of whom were previously peregrine – the Lambaesis of the third-century must have had a wide pool in which to cast its net for civic figures.

The Rhine and Danube: Summary Tables 15-19.

Very few cases from the Rhine and Danube belong to the period before the second century. The second and third centuries are well-represented, however, largely thanks to the Moesias and to Dacia, the province providing the most cases in the catalogue after Africa Proconsularis / Numidia. The situation in the frontier provinces of the Rhine and Danube looks radically different to that in Italy, with virtually the only overlap that the single case of civic patronage was held by an equestrian veteran: a *primipilaris* who had worked his way through the *frumentarii* and *castra peregrinorum*, before being made patron of several communities in Italy and Dacia and appointed to the prestigious equestrian priesthood of the *Laurentes Lavinates*.¹²¹ This priesthood was generally held not by those from Lavinium but those with careers at Rome, and was associated with the emperor:¹²² an ideal candidate for civic patron. Only two other equestrian veterans are catalogued here, one a *primipilaris* and *princeps* (father of the house) in the senate of the *colonia* of Oescus in Moesia Inferior,¹²³ the other a veteran *ex beneficiario consularis* who became a decurion at the *municipium* of Viminacium, Moesia Superior, before receiving an appointment into the *militiae equestres* as *praefectus cohortis*.¹²⁴ Centurions make up around twenty per-cent of cases, but these are mostly auxiliaries; the majority of veterans in civic roles in these provinces come from below the centurionate, and often don't even name themselves *principales* or *immunes*.

These provinces stand out for the virtual absence of soldiers and veterans of the Rome cohorts. The praetorians supposedly remained largely Italian until Septimius Severus dismissed much of the old guard and recruited new blood from the legions, probably from his loyal

¹²⁰ E.g. Dupuis 1991: 354.

¹²¹ *CIL* XI 5215.

¹²² See Saulnier 1984: 525 and Cooley 2000.

¹²³ *CIL* III 14416.

¹²⁴ *CIL* III 12659.

Pannonian legions.¹²⁵ However, just one praetorian features in this catalogue, C. Iulius Fronto, a soldier under Severus Alexander (r. 222-235) who was *scriniarius* (clerk) to the praetorian prefect and civic decurion at Sarmizegetusa in Dacia.¹²⁶ He is a special case: his father was a legionary veteran *ex beneficiario consularis* and himself a magistrate and decurion at the town, while one of his brothers, a *frumentarius*, was also a decurion there; his other brother was a serving *beneficiarius consularis*. Veterans of auxiliary units make up almost a quarter of known cases, notably from military decurions (and one *principalis*) of cavalry *alae* – far from being confined to the third century, they are found in the pre-municipal *canabae* of the thirteenth legion *Gemina* at Apulum in Dacia (2nd c.), and even earlier in the first century *decurio alae* and civic decurion from Noricum. Less commonly, centurions – and even veterans below the centurionate – of auxiliary cohorts are also found. The sorts of civic role held by soldiers and veterans of the provinces of the Rhine and Danube remain largely static across the Principate, with the majority in all periods (and especially so in the third century) becoming civic decurions. Priesthoods are held only rarely. Magistracies for those below the centurionate or military decurionate are primarily associated with: pre-municipal communities, such as the *canabae* of legionary fortresses, as at Apulum in Dacia and Troesmis in Moesia Inferior; small sub-municipal communities such as *vici* and *pagi*; or the early period of a town's municipal life, as at the Flavian veteran colony of Scupi in Moesia Superior. The few known legionary centurions generally managed to achieve magistracies or priesthoods; the auxiliary centurions and decurions normally served as civic decurions.

Mann observed a particularly strong veteran representation amongst the civic elites of Sarmizegetusa, the primary city of Dacia,¹²⁷ something apparent also within this catalogue, particularly in the third century. However, around one-third of cases belong to the same inscription and the same family, the C. Iulii, above. As for the other veterans in the town, those who describe themselves simply as legionary *veterani* were almost without exception civic decurions alone; the magistracies were largely the province of legionary *principales* and auxiliary decurions and centurions. No legionary centurions are associated with the civic elite of the town – and perhaps none with the local elites of Dacia as a whole (two describe themselves simply as *ex centurione* but these may be auxiliaries: *AE* 1979, 495 and 499). The impact of the *constitutio Antoniniana* – spreading citizenship to civilian peregrines and helping break down the distinctions between legionaries and auxiliaries – might have increased

¹²⁵ Dio 75(74).2; Hdn 2.14.5. On Severus' recruitment of praetorians see Kennedy 1978: 288ff.

¹²⁶ *AE* 1933, 248.

¹²⁷ Mann 1983a: 39.

competition for civic office in the third century. Ordinary *milites* of any branch, as veterans, might have remained competitive compared with many civilians. But legionary centurions, who served for a considerable period beyond the regular *stipendium* of a legionary *milites*, or of a soldier of any rank (including centurions and decurions) in the auxiliaries, perhaps received discharge at a point in their lives when – in spite of their wealth compared with other veterans who served *stipendia* – civic service and the competition for office might seem unnecessary burdensome.

Re-writing soldiers and veterans in the local elites

A survey of all known cases of soldiers and veterans holding official positions in their communities' civic elites reveals that the patterns are highly regionalised. But there is a general preponderance of *primipilares* in the first century AD and in all periods of the Principate within Italy itself; and there is a noticeable increase in the visibility of lower-ranked individuals over the second and third century, driven primarily by their success in the towns of North Africa and in the newer provinces of the Danube. Soldiers and veterans who served in the praetorian and urban cohorts are significantly overrepresented in the first two centuries of the Principate, a phenomenon driven by the situation in Italy, which provides around two-fifths of all cases in the catalogue. There is increasing representation of auxiliaries during the Principate in the provinces of North Africa and the Danube, perhaps associated with the changing composition of the auxiliaries during the second century and the break-down in the distinction between legionaries as citizen units and auxiliaries as peregrines following the *constitutio Antoniniana*, as well as the circumstances of Mauretania.

What follows will expand upon this survey by arguing that a potential sequence of events is discernible as the towns and cities of the empire attempted to understand the relatively recent, related developments of the emergence of a professional standing army and the creation of the Principate, as well as the unique position that soldiers and veterans might now come to occupy. The decision of successive emperors, or of other members of the extended imperial family, to appoint military figures, including *primipilares*, to represent them as *praefecti* in Roman towns when they had been granted honorary magistracies there by the local community, speaks to a growing expectation by the imperial family that military personnel might become involved in local governance; and towns in turn came to rely upon their soldiers, visibly plugged into the wider networks of imperial patronage, to represent them to the emperor. Reason was thus provided for towns to take interest in or even, through remitting the *summa honoraria* typically required for civic positions, invest in the military careers of the soldiers

they produced in the hope of the later rewards of reciprocal patronage. In part as a result of this process, and in part owing to the foundation of new colonies outside Italy under Trajan – at a time when the *primipilares* were still primarily drawn from, and settled in, Italy and the older provinces of western Europe – increasingly junior soldiers were coming to local prominence, enabling a civic environment which fostered deepening associations between the civilian and veteran populations of the towns of the empire. The whole process has consequences for our understanding of the relationship between veterans and the towns and cities which they inhabited as, viewed in this light, a situation emerges in which the emperors exploited their loyal soldiers as tools for maintaining links with local communities; in which the local communities, operating in an environment of fierce inter-city competition for imperial favour, themselves in turn exploited the wealth and ambitions of individuals of veteran status; and in which the army was itself able to exert influence over, and gain soft-power within, the communities in which its veterans settled. According to this model, the soldiers and veterans who gained access to the local elite stood at the intersection of interests between emperor, towns and army. It is this intersection that makes the topic so ripe for re-evaluation. Since the total number of inscriptions in the survey is relatively small, and since most provide simply a career summary, what follows will investigate some of the more unique stories preserved within the epigraphy to complement the broad picture sketched out by the survey above. By balancing the exemplar with the exceptional, a fuller picture is achieved.

Imperial Entanglements: prefects in the towns

Notably absent from most discussions of the relationship between emperor and soldier is an extension of the discourse to local administration. But this very relationship between the emperors and their soldiers must have played a significant role in encouraging local communities to welcome veterans into the local elite. Amongst the individuals selected to represent the emperor or a member of his family, when they were appointed as honorary magistrates in a town, we can identify a substantial number of those who served in the *militiae equestres* and *primipilares*. In spite of the obvious importance of these *praefecti*, as an institution they are the subject of a surprisingly exiguous scholarly discussion, the key focusses of which tend towards the processes of appointment of *praefecti* and the reasons for granting honorary magistracies to the imperial family.¹²⁸ Boatwright summarises the individuals who became civic *praefecti* of members of the imperial family as “persons of local or at best regional

¹²⁸ E.g. Mennella 1988; Boatwright 2000: 57-68, esp. 66-7.

eminence”; but elsewhere goes on to posit “the personalized nature of the phenomenon”, as suggested by instances of the same individual representing different members of the imperial family as a *praefectus* on different occasions, and to note that “in some cases the *praefectus* has clearly attracted imperial attention elsewhere”.¹²⁹ The Flavian municipal charters from Spain even expect the emperor to appoint his own *praefectus*.¹³⁰ If we are to imagine an environment in which personal relationships were able to develop and be maintained over several years between local dignitaries and the imperial family, then we must wonder whether the phenomenon of the civic *praefectus* is underlined by something deeper than simply the elevation of a figure of some local prominence to a magistracy which needed to be filled. Rather, we might posit that this personal connection between emperor, or other dignitary, and the individual selected as *praefectus*, whether it pre-dated the appointment or developed as a result of it, was often one of the defining features of the institution. In this context, it is imperative to explore the pre-appointment backgrounds and experiences of the known civic *praefecti* who represented either the emperor or a member of his family (or, more rarely, his court): the prominently military character of a proportion of these individuals enables us not only to re-evaluate these *praefecti* as an institution, but also to demonstrate the developing presence under the early principate of military personnel within local governance.

An analysis of Mennella’s list of known instances of *praefecti* of this sort in Italy – the region which makes up the majority of cases – indicates that around half of them also saw service in the *militiae equestres* or as *primipilares*.¹³¹ Although in some cases military service post-dated tenure as a *praefectus*, there is nonetheless an observably prominent military character to a significant number of these careers in a way that there is not for the regular senior magistracies of *duumvir* or *quattuorvir*. Since the army was an area of society where the emperor, or members of his family or entourage, might meet and get to know those who served in at least the more senior ranks, and since direct appointments into the centurionate or the *militiae equestres* were associated with the patronage of senators or the emperor, this situation reflects the sorts of local figures with whom the imperial family was most likely to develop associations. For those whose civic prefectship postdates their time in the army, the military

¹²⁹ Boatwright 2000: 66.

¹³⁰ See n. 51 above, and chapter 24 of the *lex Irmitana*.

¹³¹ Mennella 1988: 66-67. Career orders can be tricky, particularly in the early Principate before the normal *cursus* of the *militiae equestres* was fixed. However, those on Mennella’s list with military careers can be divided into: civic *praefecti* after serving in the *militiae equestres*: *CIL* V 7458; VI 29715; IX 4968, 7389; X 5393; XI 969, 6058; XIV 2995; *AE* 1975, 353; civic *praefecti* before serving in the *militiae equestres*: X 6101; XI 3610, 5669, 6955; and *praefecti* who were *primipilares*: *CIL* IX 3044, 4122; XI 6224 and, possibly, 7066. Mennella’s list can be updated with more recent discoveries, but military personnel continue to make up around half of known cases.

provided a context for the cultivation of interpersonal relations with the imperial family. Even if a prior personal relationship cannot be detected between the *praefectus* and the dignitary he is representing, the towns of Roman Italy were perhaps equally cognisant of this phenomenon and therefore recommended the appointment of former military figures; or else the emperor, or other relevant figure, was often prepared to prioritise the selection of military personnel as the sorts of individual thought likely to render good service as *praefecti*. What follows is an examination of the careers of the *praefecti* with backgrounds as *primipilares*, to establish an association between military service and representation of the imperial family in the towns and cities.

Three *primipilares* are known who were appointed as the representatives of the emperor or members of the imperial family in Italian towns as well as one case from Heliopolis in Syria, all of which belong to the Julio-Claudian period.¹³² A *primus pilus* of the twenty-first legion, Sextus Pedius Lusianus Hirrutus,¹³³ was *praefectus* of Germanicus himself, probably at Teate of the Marrucini in central Italy (Samnium).¹³⁴ It is evident that his career is presented in chronological order in the inscription and that having entered the military in an unspecified position he reached the primipilate. Presumably following the departure of the legion from its base in Raetia, where it had been stationed since at least 16 BC, to garrison Germania Inferior in the aftermath of the AD 9 disaster at the Teutoburg Forest, Hirrutus was kept on as an equestrian governor (in this instance termed a *praefectus*)¹³⁵ over the Alpine districts of Raetia, Vindolicia and the Vallis Poenina, with oversight of a native militia (*levis armaturae*). At some point, probably upon retiring from the military, he acted as a civic *praefectus* back in his hometown on behalf of Germanicus, who had been named an honorary *quattuorvir*

¹³² Italy: *CIL* IX 4122, Ager Aequicolanus; IX 3044, Interpromium; XI 6224, Fanum Fortunae; Volaterrae. Syria: *CIL* III 14387g. Another inscription, *CIL* XI 7066, records a civic *praefectus*, Cerialis, who also saw military service, but the stele itself is broken sheer off at the right hand side and Cerialis' rank in the legions is unfortunately lost along with the rest of the stone. It has been reconstructed variously as *tribunus militum*, *vel sim.*, or as *p(rimus) p(ilus)*. The former is preferred tentatively by Demougin 1992: 212-3, no. 244. In any case, Demougin argues that the civic prefectship predated his military service.

¹³³ *CIL* IX 3044 = *ILS* 2689: [S]ex(to) Pedio Sex(ti) filio Ar[n(ensi)] / Lusiano Hirruto / prim(o) pil(o) leg(ionis) XXI pra[ef]ecto] / Raetis Vindolicis valli[s] / [P]oeninae et levis armatur(ae) / IIIIvir(o) i(ure) d(icundo) praefecto Germanic[i] / Caesaris quinquennialici / iuris ex s(enatus) c(onsulto) quinquen(nali) iterum / hic amphitheatrum d(e) s(ua) p(ecunia) fecit / M(arcus) Duilius M(arci) filius Gallus.

¹³⁴ The inscription comes from Interpromium, a small village near Teate. Inhabitants of Teate were ascribed to the *tribus Arnensis*, the probable *tribus* of our Hirrutus. Demougin 1992: 198-9, no. 227, however reads Lusianus' fragmentary *tribus* as *Aniensis*, the tribe of another town in Samnium, Carsioli. Other Sextii Pedii are known from Teate (*CIL* IX 6998 and 6999). Two Sextii Pedii Hirruti of *tribus Arnensis* are also known from Italy: a father and son in the mid-second century of senatorial status, the father a praetor and the son a consul (*CIL* XIV 3994 and 3995, from Nomentum). Demougin assumes they are from Teate. Here *Arnensis* is preferred for Lusianus' *tribus*, and he is understood a native of Teate and its environs.

¹³⁵ An equestrian *procurator Caesaris Augusti* is attested with authority over the region under Augustus (*AE* 1902, 189), and it is possible that the title used varied upon the career of the individual in question (Wolff 1996: 539).

quinquennalis there. Lusianus was subsequently appointed *quattuorvir quinquennalis* in his own right. That Germanicus was already familiar with the man who was to represent him at Teate is probable: Germanicus' honorary magistracy must belong to the period between AD 4, when he was first styled Germanicus Caesar – as he is named in this inscription – and his death in AD 19. The twenty-first legion, in which Hirrutus was a *primus pilus*, came into contact with Germanicus during the Batonian War (Germanicus' involvement dates to AD 7-9) and subsequently during the Germania campaigns of AD 14-16. Hirrutus' period as *praefectus* over the peoples of the Central Alps plausibly followed the departure of the *XXI Rapax* from the area; we might theorise then that Germanicus came into contact with Hirrutus, or was at least aware of him, around the time of the Batonian War. It is possible that Hirrutus himself had a hand in the grant of an honorary magistracy to Germanicus, secure in the knowledge that he himself was a likely candidate to become the *praefectus* that would inevitably need to be appointed – perhaps this is how we should understand Hirrutus' appointment *ex senatus consulto*. But another factor in the appointment of Hirrutus suggests itself – the legion in which he served was the twenty-first legion *Rapax*, not just one of the Rhine legions that mutinied following the death of Augustus in AD 14, but one of the worst offenders. It was ultimately brought back under heel by – or perhaps in spite of – Germanicus, and was heavily involved in the post-mutiny team-building campaign in Germania.¹³⁶ Perhaps this *primipilaris* was playing his part in reconciling the legion and the imperial family. At least Hirrutus, having been left behind in the Alps, was not directly tarnished by the uprising; perhaps he felt so by association.

The clearest evidence for a continued personal association between the dignitary appointed to an honorary magistracy in a town and the individual chosen to represent him there comes from the *ager Aequicolanus*, also in Samnium.¹³⁷ This concerns a *primus pilus*, Sabidius, who was appointed *praefectus quinquennalis* first of one of Augustus' grandchildren and then of Tiberius once he had become emperor.¹³⁸ As is common with inscriptions from the early Principate, the legions in which Sabidius served are distinguished only by number and not by epithet, rendering it somewhat difficult to piece together the pattern of his service – but

¹³⁶ On the mutinies on the Rhine, Tac. *Ann.* 1.31ff. At 1.35 Germanicus publicly declared to the mutineers he would commit suicide in shame; the mutineers simply jeered him on. The fifth and twenty-first legions were the first and worst mutineers (*id.* 1.31, 45). On the post-mutiny campaign, see *id.* 1.49ff, especially 1.51, where Germanicus exhorts the twenty-first to convert their shame into glory (*culpam in decus vertere*).

¹³⁷ *CIL IX 4122*: [Sa]bidius C(ai) filius Pap(iria) prim(us) pil(us) / [(centurio) le]g(ionis) V et leg(ionis) X et leg(ionis) VI ita ut in / [leg(ionem)] X primum pil(um) duceret eodem / [que te]mpore princeps esset leg(ionis) VI praef(ectus) [q]u[inquennalis] / [Ca]esar(is) divi Aug(usti) [fili]i et Ti(beri) Caesar(is) A[ug(usti) i]dem [-] / [-]a don[-]cu[-] / [---]ielia [C]n(aei) filia Pupilla ux[s]or / [C]rispina Neptis

¹³⁸ Boatwright 2000: 66 plausibly suggests that Sabidius represented first Gaius or Lucius Caesar and then the emperor Tiberius, and adduces this story as evidence for the “personalized nature of the phenomenon”.

he seems to have been seconded from a centurionate (as *princeps*, the second most senior centurion) in a sixth legion to (acting?) *primus pilus* of a tenth legion, and then into a fifth legion as *primus pilus*.¹³⁹ The most probable context for his transfer from a sixth legion to a tenth legion in this period is in Spain, where the sixth legion *Victrix* and tenth legion *Gemina* served alongside each other, perhaps even sharing a base, during Augustus' Cantabrian Wars (29-19 BC) and where they remained for some time thereafter; also present in Spain during the Cantabrian War was the fifth legion *Alaudae*, which was subsequently shunted around the north-western provinces (Gallia Belgica and Germania Inferior).¹⁴⁰ Through service in the fifth legion *Alaudae* Sabidius may have come into contact with Drusus, Tiberius' brother, and perhaps also Tiberius himself (and possibly even a young Gaius Caesar, Augustus grandson) during their German campaigns.¹⁴¹ In any case, Sabidius' civic career is surely indicative of an association with the imperial family – and his military background simultaneously not only provides a context in which such a relationship could develop but also reflects the sort of loyal and successful career that might enable an emperor to feel confident that he – or a member of his family – would be well represented within the town that had named him magistrate.

But the significance of the military background of the *primipilares* and equestrian commanders who were appointed as *praefecti* to represent the imperial family in the towns of Italy and the empire goes beyond simply furnishing an opportunity to foster a relationship with the emperor or a member of his family: it also provided the context in which an ambitious commander could demonstrate his virtues. In the early period of Claudius' reign, near the border between Italy and Pannonia, the *primipilaris* L. Rufellius Severus was tasked with responsibility for restoring a road that had been laid out previously by a centurion Atius under the orders of the Pannonian legate, Aulus Plautius.¹⁴² This had been rerouted from its original path, in the direction of the territory of the Rundictes, towards the property of C. Laecanius

¹³⁹ On this reconstruction, see Dobson 1955: vol. 2, 272, no. 390.

¹⁴⁰ Less likely, the sixth legion *Ferrata* and the tenth legion *Fretensis*. These served together in AD 6 when Quirinus the governor of Syria acted to suppress the revolt following the deposition of Herod Archelaus. Although this post-dates the deaths of both Gaius and Lucius Caesar, it is quite possible that the two legions operated together previously. Certainly, the sixth legion *Ferrata* was based in Syria after Actium, but it is unclear when the tenth legion *Fretensis* was transferred from the Balkans to Syria.

¹⁴¹ On Tiberius' campaigns: Vell. Pat. 2.104ff; Suet. *Tib.* 9. On Drusus': Flor. 2.30-1. Velleius Paterculus 2.97 writes that the loss of the fifth legion's eagle in 16 BC prompted Drusus' campaigns (12-9 BC), which, following his death, were continued by Tiberius. The eagle was lost by the governor of Gaul, Marcus Lollius (on whose defeat, see Tac. *Ann.* 1.10; Suet. *Aug.* 23), in an invasion of German tribes, supposedly led by the Sugambri (Dio 54.32). On Drusus' campaigns, see Dio 54.32-3; in the meantime Tiberius was campaigning against the Dalmatians and Pannonians (*id.* 54.34).

¹⁴² The famed commander of Claudius' invasion of Britain, Aulus Plautius, was probably governor of Pannonia around the beginning of Claudius' reign, as suggested by both this inscription and his decision to bring a Pannonian legion, the *IX Hispana*, with him to Britain. On his career, see Birley 2005: 17-31, esp. 22.

Bassus instead, a suffect consul in AD 40.¹⁴³ Levick suggested that Bassus had wished to reconfigure the road to aid his own business, a pottery works, and that this text records Claudius' decision to disallow the change and restore the road to its original path, probably following a complaint from the Rundictes.¹⁴⁴ But what made Severus a suitable candidate for this task; and in what capacity did he carry out his duties? Since the text gives Severus no title under which he might exercise imperial authority other than that of *primipilaris*, it is possible that Severus had been selected for this purpose from the *numerus* of *primipilares* based at Rome while waiting for further appointment.¹⁴⁵

The association between road-building and the army is well attested¹⁴⁶ – and why not use a former centurion to restore a road first built by a centurion? Although we can only speculate whether Severus was well-known to the imperial family previously (he was, for instance, the recipient of military honours from multiple unspecified *Imperatores*), his success in this mission, as commemorated in *CIL* V 698, must have demonstrated to Claudius his competencies not only as military officer but also as a road-builder. Given that costly programmes of road maintenance were counted amongst the hallmarks of a good and benevolent emperor,¹⁴⁷ and that the road-network was one of the most familiar and impressive hallmarks of Roman construction even to an ancient audience,¹⁴⁸ this latter achievement was the sort of activity that might ensure imperial favour. In Severus' case, imperial favour was manifested in his appointment to represent the emperor Claudius as *praefectus quinquennalis* in his hometown¹⁴⁹ of Fanum Fortunae, a harbour town on the Adriatic known from the ancient literature as one of the sites occupied by Julius Caesar after he crossed the Rubicon,¹⁵⁰ and which had received a veteran colony under Augustus.¹⁵¹ We do not know whether Severus was *praefectus* of Claudius before or after the road episode, but the presentation of his career within

¹⁴³ *CIL* V 698: [H]anc viam dērectam / per Atium centurion(em) post / sententiam dictam ab A(ulo) Plautio / legato Ti(beri) Claudi Caesaris Aug(usti) / Germ(anici) et postea translatam a / Rundictibus in fines C(ai) Laecani / Bassi restituit iussu Ti(beri) Claudi / Caesaris Aug(usti) Germ(anici) Imperatoris / L(ucius) Rufellius Severus primipilaris. The inscription comes from Materija in Slovenia, situated several miles south-east of modern Trieste (ancient Tergeste). On this text see Bargnesi 2006.

¹⁴⁴ Levick 2000: 114–115.

¹⁴⁵ Alternatively, he was exercising authority in his capacity as a praetorian military tribune, a position he is known to have obtained from another inscription (*CIL* XI 6224), and which was reserved for *primipilares*. If so it is surprising that this was not recorded in the account of the rerouting of the road in *CIL* V 698.

¹⁴⁶ E.g. *AE* 1961, 304 (Salona, Dalmatia, AD 16–17) for a commemoration of the involvement of legionary vexillations in the building of a road in Dalmatia: *munit per vexillarios leg(ionum) VII et XI item viam Gabinianam ab Salonis Andetrium aperuit et munit per leg(ionem) VII*. On the involvement of military personnel in various construction projects see e.g. Le Bohec 1994: 110–111. Cf. *SHA Prob.* 9.3–4.

¹⁴⁷ Patterson 2003: 93–6. On the Roman road see especially Laurence 1999.

¹⁴⁸ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 3.67.5; Str. *Geog.* 5.3.8; 4.6.6; Ael. Arist. *ad Rom.* 101.

¹⁴⁹ Severus was a member of the Roman *tribus Pollia*, to which the citizens of Fanum Fortunae were ascribed.

¹⁵⁰ Caes. *BC* 1.11.4.

¹⁵¹ *CIL* XI 6232: *col(oniae) Iul(iae) Fanestris*.

the inscription makes the latter option the more tempting.¹⁵² The town came to view Severus as something of a local dignitary: he may also have been a regular *quinquennalis* in his own right prior to becoming a *praefectus quinquennalis*, and is one of few known individuals to have held the senior magistracy at the town. He was a man of considerable means, funding a bath-house for the town,¹⁵³ and was deemed so worthy of remembrance that sometime later an honorary statue to him that had fallen down through age was restored by the urban plebs of the city.¹⁵⁴ This is an individual who must have become something of a personal favourite of the emperor, appointed by Claudius not only to conduct roadworks in northern Italy but also to represent him as *praefectus* at Fanum Fortunae; in turn the town, motivated certainly by his wealth and status, but likely also by his imperial connections, elevated and honoured Severus and continued to do so for some time. Imperial favour and patronage towards senior soldiers paved the way for local communities to follow suit.

The last known *primipilaris* who became a civic *praefectus* of an emperor, L. Gerellanus Fronto, was appointed at Heliopolis in Syria to represent Nero, the last of the Julio-Claudians.¹⁵⁵ There is no obvious context in which Fronto personally came into contact with Nero; however, as *primus pilus* of the tenth legion *Fretensis* he likely served under Corbulo, whose half-sister had been the wife of Caligula (and thus Nero's aunt), against the Parthians. Civic *praefecti* representing members of the imperial family, and the readiness for selecting military men for the role, are features particularly of the early Principate, as towns and emperors sought to establish the parameters of their relationship with each other. The beneficiaries were those military men – equestrians both new and old whose military service associated them with loyalty to the emperor – and the towns which drew on their talents. The stories of Hirrutus, Sabidius and Severus exemplify the intersection between the interests of the imperial family and the towns of Italy under the Principate, and the ambitions of those who saw service as *primipilares*. By failing to take into account the specifically military character of a good proportion of these *praefecti* we ignore the significance that might be attached to the most prestigious soldiers within the towns and cities under the Julio-Claudians.

¹⁵² CIL XI 6224: *L(ucio) Ruf[ellio - f(ilio)] Pol(lia) S(evero) (centurioni) coh(ortis) --- vig(illum)] et stator(um) et coh(ortis) VI [pr(aetoriae)] primi pili II leg(ionis) [---] trib(un)o coh(ortis) VII pr(aetoriae) bis ab [imperator]ribus donato coronis aureis II et coron(is) vallaribus hasta pura quinquenn(al)i [Ti(beri)] Claudi Caesaris Augusti Germanici quinquenn(alis) praefecto plebs urbana vici Herculani quam bassim vetustate collapsam pec(unia) sua restituit.* The text does not preserve the *praenomen* of the emperor for whom Severus was a *praefectus quinquennalis* but, given the Claudian context of V 698, a Tiberius Claudius (i.e. Claudian) seems a more likely bet than a Nero Claudius (i.e. Neronian). The inscription unfortunately does not survive.

¹⁵³ CIL XI 6225. The text itself records the restoration of Severus' bath-house after it had been destroyed by fire.

¹⁵⁴ CIL XI 6224.

¹⁵⁵ CIL III 14387g.

The issue of road maintenance also provides the setting for another case-study pertinent to the interaction between towns, local soldiers and veterans, and the emperor, which takes the story down to the middle of the second century and demonstrates the growing appeal for towns to mobilise their soldiers and veterans into participation in civic life. In AD 141, the *ordo decurionum* of Tuficum in Umbria issued a decree approving the commissioning of a pedestrian statue for the centurion Aetrius Ferox in return for his services to the town.¹⁵⁶ As chance would have it, another surviving inscription from the town is an honorific text dedicated to the same Aetrius Ferox, which commemorates the erection of a statue in his name by decree of the decurions and with the agreement of the plebeian body – it is very likely that this is the very statue decreed by the town’s decurions.¹⁵⁷ The decree makes clear Tuficum’s reason for honouring Ferox: the town councillors wished for imperial permission to levy a tax to fund the paving, or repaving, of a road; the petition was presented to the emperor Antoninus Pius by Aetrius Ferox; the emperor’s generous response was to free the town from the burden of footing the bill from its own public treasury, presumably funding it instead through the central imperial treasury. Ferox was not the only soldier involved in this process; the *primipilaris* C. Caesius Silvester is named as the individual who proposed the decree in Ferox’ honour. Silvester appears in a number of texts and held the position of *curator viarum et pontium Umbriae et Piceni*, to which he was appointed by the emperor Antoninus Pius probably in AD 142.¹⁵⁸ Given the circumstances, the assumption is natural that Silvester’s curatorship was in some way connected with Tuficum’s needs, and it is probable that he was the figure selected by the emperor to oversee the funding and construction of the road which Tuficum had requested.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ CIL XI 5694: *T(ito) Hoenio Severo M(arco) Peducaeo Priscino co(n)s(ulibus) / VI K(alendas) Dec(embres) decr(e)t(um) decur(ionum) / quod C(aius) Caesius Silvester p(rimi)p(ilaris) v(erba) f(ecit) Aet(h)rium / Ferocem centur(ionem) leg(ionis) II Traian(ae) Fortis per incremen(ta) gradus militiae sua tam singulis quam rei p(ublicae) n(ostrae) / quotiens necesse fuit multum praestitisse / proxime quoque petitioni nostrae ab Optimo / Maximoque principe Antonino Aug(usto) Pio / vectigal viae silic(e) stratae ita in(stit)isse ut mature impetraretur et / et impendi(i)s urbicis res p(ublica) beneficio eius / relevaretur ut Optimus Imp(erator) n(oster) ex / corniculario prae(ecti) vig(i)lum primo / ei omnium ordinem Alexandriae / dederit debere nos itaq(ue) ei statuam / pedestrem secus merita eius / decernere q(uid) f(ieri) p(laceat) d(e) e(a) r(e) referente / L(ucio) Vario Firmo IIIIvir(o) censente C(aio) / Cluvio Sabino ita cens(uerunt) / placere universis consensu plebis / Aet(h)rio Feroci [(centurioni) secus merita / eius statuam ubi ipse desiderave(rit) quam primum poni cens(uerunt)*

¹⁵⁷ CIL XI 5693: *Sex(to) Aetrio S[ex(ti) f(ilio)] Ouf(entina) Feroci centurioni leg(ionis) II Traianae Fortis huic primo omnium ex cornicul(ar)io] prae(ecti) [v]igil(um) / Imp(erator) Caesar Antoninus Aug(ustus) Pius p(ater) p(atriciae) ordinem Alexandriae dedit quod per gradus militiae suae tam industriae se administraverit dec(reto) dec(urionum) et consensu plebis ob merita eius hic dedicatione statuae municipibus et incolis utriusque sexus epulum et HS IIII(milia) n(ummum) dedit.*

¹⁵⁸ CIL XI 5696 and 5697.

¹⁵⁹ Pflaum 1960-1961: 20-23, no. 6, who thus sees this as an irregular municipal appointment.

But why should Ferox be the town's voice in the imperial court; why should Silvester propose the decree of thanks for Ferox; and why should Silvester ultimately be granted responsibility for the road programme? The answer lies in their military careers. Dealing with Ferox first, we are provided with a summary review of his military career in *CIL* XI 5693 and 5694, both of which present the same material in similar terms: his earliest known post was amongst the *principales* of the *vigiles*, where he served as *cornicularius* of the prefect; from here he was promoted by the emperor Pius to a centurionate in Alexandria (*ordinem Alexandriae dedit*) – this must be the second legion *Traiana Fortis*, the legion in which Ferox is serving at the time of the decree. Ferox is said to be the first individual to undergo such a promotion from *cornicularius* of the prefect of the *vigiles* to legionary centurionate (5693: *huic primo omnium*; 5694: *primo ei omnium*) – a lauded individual indeed, and we cannot assume that there is anything ordinary about his career. In fact, in the decree commemorating Ferox, that *ut dedit* should be a result clause anticipated by *ita* indicates that his promotion to the centurionate was intrinsically connected to the petition: *ita instituisse ut mature impetraretur et* [sic] *impendi(i)s urbis res p(ublica) beneficio eius relevaretur ut Optimus Imp(erator) n(oster) ex corniculario praef(ecti) vigilum primo ei omnium ordinem Alexandriae dedit* – “he made such a good request that the matter was resolved rapidly, the town was freed from an expense by his service, and our excellent emperor promoted him, before anyone else, from *cornicularius* of the Prefect of the *vigiles* to a centurionate at Alexandria”.¹⁶⁰ Ferox seems to have won his promotion having come to the attention of the emperor in making this very petition; he was commemorated by the town with his new rank. Soldiers and centurions, especially those in the cohorts at Rome, and even more so those who held positions on the staff of the prefects, were in a unique position to develop ties with a current or future emperor. This was recognised by Tuficum, and quite possibly masterminded by Silvester, and Ferox became the ideal bearer of their petition. The town reaped its rewards doubly: not only was the petition successful, but Ferox also, at the dedication of the statue in his honour, funded a public banquet and distributed 4,000 sesterces amongst the inhabitants of the town of both sexes (5693: *municipibus et incolis utriusque sexus epulum et HS IIII(milia) n(ummum) dedit*). Although Tuficum was keen to stress the importance of Ferox' apparent qualities and historic benefactions in his selection to represent the town,¹⁶¹ it is undoubtedly his position within the

¹⁶⁰ The text is difficult, and Ferox has been understood variously as both *cornicularius* (Eck 2000: 213) and centurion (Patterson 2003: 100) at the time of the petition. Although I prefer the former, the important point is that the text links the elevation to the centurionate with the petition and the imperial benefaction to the town.

¹⁶¹ *CIL* XI 5693: *per gradus militiae suae tam industriae se administraverit*, “his self-conduct throughout the stages of his service was of such diligence”; 5694: *per incrementa gradus militiae sua tam singulis quam rei*

military and potential for access to the emperor that made him an ideal representative for his town.

Silvester is known from a number of inscriptions from Tuficum, which together provide a fairly comprehensive outline of his life and career.¹⁶² *CIL* XI 5696 provides the most thorough account, giving his most junior military posting as a soldier in the Praetorian Guard, where he served amongst the *principales* as *beneficiarius* to the praetorian prefect. Following completion of his service he was retained as an *evocatus Augusti* before obtaining a succession of centurionates in five legions, eventually winning the coveted post of *primus pilus* and its attendant rewards. His final role in the military was as *praefectus castrorum*. He was twice decorated for his service in the Dacian Wars, presumably under Trajan. The inscription goes on to list his civic positions in somewhat fragmentary form, but these can be reconstructed with the help of the other surviving texts about him, and it is clear that he held a priesthood as *pontifex* and was civic patron of the town. As a candidate for this latter role he was a man of significant means, single-handedly funding the construction of a temple to Venus (XI 5687) and a building for housing the town's official weights and measures (XI 5695). Another inscription (XI 5698) indicates that an unnamed *curator viarum et pontium Umbriae et Piceni* was a magisterial *quinquennalis* (presumably quattuorviral), and it is likely that this dates to a later stage in Silvester's career. Although it is unclear in what capacity Silvester proposed the decree honouring Ferox to the local *ordo*, he was perhaps already part of the curial class of Tuficum at this stage. In any case, it is probable that Silvester himself, also a former centurion and veteran of the cohorts at Rome, saw the benefit of recruiting Ferox for the mission at hand – although since his at least part of his military career was under Trajan we cannot assume any personal connection with Antoninus Pius, as is alleged for Ferox. Silvester nonetheless reaped the benefits of Ferox' petition, receiving an imperial appointment to the possibly purpose-made post of *curator viarum et pontium Umbriae et Piceni*, in all likelihood deemed an appropriate candidate based upon a combination of his involvement in the decision making process to petition the emperor and his status as a *primipilaris*.

There are a number of idiosyncratic features to this story from Tuficum, including Ferox' allegedly unprecedented promotion and the exceptionality of the post of *curator viarum et pontium Umbriae et Piceni*, not to mention that Tuficum was a fairly small *municipium*.¹⁶³

publicae nostrae quotiens necesse fuit multum praestitisse, "throughout his promotions within the service, whenever needed he was of as much help to individuals as he was to our town."

¹⁶² The texts thought to be associated with Silvester are: *CIL* XI 5674, 5687, 5695, 5696, 5697, 5698, 5699, 5700, 5701, 8051, 8052, 8053, 8054.

¹⁶³ Duncan-Jones 1982: 143.

It might be expected that smaller towns were more likely to be dependent upon the success of its soldiers than larger cities which could cast their nets wider for potential decurions, magistrates and patrons. Nonetheless, we should extend beyond the confines of Tuficum the same principle that, actually, and contrary to the prevailing attitude in much of the modern scholarship, towns might themselves be desirous of soldiers holding positions of prominence within their community owing to their potential access to networks of patronage – and within Italy especially those who had served at Rome in the proximity of the emperor.

Serving Soldiers and Civic Responsibility

A developing awareness within Roman towns of the military-driven networks of patronage, influence and leverage into which soldiers and veterans were plugged in turn encouraged the elevation of increasingly less senior military personnel. An interesting phenomenon is the appearance of junior soldiers in the local *ordo* while they are still serving. At some time probably during the second century, the Lucanian town of Volcei (modern Buccino) appointed one C. Coelius Anicetus to membership of the local *ordo decurionum* – even though he was currently serving in the second Praetorian Cohort, where he was *singularis* to a tribune and hoping for advancement to the post of *beneficiarius*. Anicetus is known from an inscription on a sepulchral altar set up to him by his mother Coelia Prima and possible step-father, Nymphicus, commemorating his untimely death aged only twenty-four.¹⁶⁴ Nymphicus was the *arkarius* (local treasurer) for the town, and perhaps in this role was able to exert influence and secure a social promotion for his partner's son.¹⁶⁵ We cannot rule out that this was a posthumous honour. But it seems impossible to extricate fully this text from a military context. The decurionate had been offered to Anicetus – without the requirement for the usual payment of the *summa honoraria* – “*ob spem processus eius*”: in hope of his promotion.¹⁶⁶ Given that Anicetus is said to be expecting a promotion within the Praetorian Guard (*spe beneficiatus*), it is surely to this that the town referred. We cannot escape the way that Anicetus' military prospects are utilised as the excuse for overlooking his youth and comparatively junior rank. Perhaps the town was now providing a favour to a young soldier of promise, a favour which it looked forward to calling in at a future date. It was unfortunate that Anicetus was to die young.

¹⁶⁴ CIL X 410: *C(aio) Coelio Aniceto mil(iti) coh(ortis) II pr(aetoriae) sing(ulari) trib(uni) spe beneficiatus huic ordo sanctissimus decur(ionum) ob spem processus eius honorem decurionatus gratuitum obtulit qui vixit ann(os) XXIII m(enses) V d(ies) II Coelia Prima mater filio dulcissimo simul Nymphicus Volc(eianorum) ark(arius) et sibi fecerunt.*

¹⁶⁵ Weiss 2004: 203 no. 70, cf. 40.

¹⁶⁶ On *ob spem processus eius*, see Ricci 2010: 92-98.

That a town might be keen to gain credit with serving soldiers in the hopes of their future success is also suggested by the case of Quintus Obstorius Honoratus, a probably second or early third century veteran of the first urban cohort at Carthage, and a decurion, *flamen perpetuus*, and *Ilvir* at Madaurus, a historic Numidian city which received a veteran colony under the Flavians, and which is also known as the birthplace of the writer Apuleius and as a place of study for Augustine.¹⁶⁷ Honoratus was offered a place in the *ordo* here while he was still serving (*militanti*), and it was because of this as well as his subsequent appointment as a *flamen perpetuus* that he funded at his own expense an arch and statue to the tune of 40,000 sesterces, and granted *sportulae* to the decurions, an *epulum* to the *curiae*, and a *gymnasium* (here probably an oil distribution)¹⁶⁸ to the people. The town's previous generosity towards Honoratus was repaid with financial gifts and civic monuments, contributing to the financial and social lives of the populace and to the development of the physical urban space. The reasons for Honoratus' connection with the town are unclear. The predomina *tribus* at Madaurus is the *Quirina*, but Honoratus was enrolled within the *Palatina*. Given the apparently Sabine origins of the *nomen* Obstorius, Redaelli suggested that Honoratus' family was Italian and that wherever he was born he settled in Madaurus following his service.¹⁶⁹ If not previously a local, however, it might be surprising that the town offered him a decurionate during his service. Perhaps this was a way for a small town to attract a potential benefactor. Alternatively, Honoratus was already a resident of Madaurus and the town was seeking to encourage his return there upon discharge to allow themselves to reap from the fruits of his military success. In either event, the town clearly saw the appeal in admitting veterans into the local elite. Perhaps the town's background as a Flavian veteran colony contributed to the elevation of the town's veterans into the local elite in the subsequent decades – a *miles* of the third legion *Augusta*, Lucius Granius Honoratus, made a dedication to the emperor Nerva and to Victoria Augusta at the close of the first century on account of being made a civic decurion (*CIL VIII* 16873). His self-identification as a *miles* and not a *veteranus* might identify him as an early example of a soldier gaining civic responsibilities while still serving.

¹⁶⁷ AE 1919, 44: *Q(uintus) Obstor[i]us Q(uinti) fil(ius) Palatina Honoratus vet(eranus) coh(ortis) I ur[banae] honestae mi]ssi/onis fl(amen) p(er)p(etuus) Ilv[i]r quod ei ordo col(on)iae Madaur(ensium) militanti decurion[atum] ob/tulisset quodq(ue) in eum honorem fl(amonii) p(er)p(etui) contulisset arcum et s[tatuam] inlatis] rei pu/bl(icae) omnibus honorariis summis sua pec(unia) ex HS XL mil(ib)us fecit et ob dedicatio[nem] sportulas decuri]oni/bus et epulum curiis et gymnasium populo dedit. The inscription was found in four parts re-used in a Byzantine fortress.*

¹⁶⁸ Fagan 1999.

¹⁶⁹ Redaelli 2015: 169-170.

The benefactions that an individual would make to the town that appointed him to a position of local prominence enabled a potentially exploitative system that encouraged the local *ordo decurionum* to make offers of office to soldiers even while they were still in active service in the hope that future favours in return might be obtained. With the potential rewards of military service, soldiers and veterans must have seemed an appealing target – especially those based at Rome or in the provincial urban cohorts. And given the heavily stratified ranks of the military where promotions came with increased pay and remuneration, a town that gained credit with soldiers in the earlier stages of their career might find a return with significant interest if the soldier was promoted and ultimately retired to the town. This system further served to encourage soldiers to return to their hometowns, ensuring that the potential financial remuneration a veteran could bring to a town would not be lost to a rival settlement. Under the Principate, soldiers and veterans became a tool that could be utilised in the competition between the towns and cities of the empire. Todisco’s observation that some veterans in Italy held office in communities into which they had moved perhaps has a solution other than their own desire to integrate:¹⁷⁰ they were won over by the town.

Military influence and the “natalis aquilae”

The systematic manipulation of the infrastructures of municipal and colonial life was not, however, a one way street. Soldiers could exert their own agency and promote their own interests, which might include not only promoting their dependents but also increasing the visibility within their hometowns of the military institutions with which they were familiar. Take the case of L. Caecilius Optatus who, following the completion of his military service, returned to his hometown¹⁷¹ of the Augustan *colonia* of Barcino in Hispania Tarraconensis and instituted there an annual festival in commemoration of the anniversary of the foundation of the seventh legion *Gemina Felix*, in which he had served as a centurion.¹⁷² Optatus cites only two centurionates prior to his honourable discharge under the joint emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, in the seventh legion *Gemina Felix* and the fifteenth legion *Apollinaris*, so we cannot say much about his social background. Following his discharge he was adlected by the *ordo* of Barcino into the body of *immunes* (privileged residents with tax-exemption status), honoured with an aedileship, three times a *duumvir*, and a *flamen* (*Romae divorum et Augustorum*).¹⁷³ The inscription through which Optatus is known to us commemorates his

¹⁷⁰ Todisco 1999: 215

¹⁷¹ Optatus’ was a member of the *tribus Papiria*, to which citizens of Barcino were ascribed.

¹⁷² *CIL* II 4514.

¹⁷³ Fishwick 1970: 299-312.

establishment of a local fund to the tune of 7,500 *denarii*, the interest on which was to cover the costs for an annual boxing match to be held on the 10th June, and for a distribution of oil to the public baths on the same day. The catch? That any of his freedmen, and their freedmen, who entered the second tier of the local elite as *seviri Augustales* should be made immune from any of the *munera* that they were otherwise expected to undertake – they would gain the title and prestige of the position without the usual obligations. And if Barcino failed to uphold this condition, then the gift was to be bestowed instead upon the rival neighbouring *colonia* of Tarraco.¹⁷⁴ For Edmondson this indicates resentment between Optatus and his fellow decurions¹⁷⁵ – perhaps Optatus’ military background was to blame. Alternatively, this relates to the potential for rivalries and competition between cities to be exploited by those wishing to secure immunities and other rewards for themselves and their dependents. On this reading, rather than being a victim of intra-city hostility Optatus is instead a competent player in a game driven by inter-city competition. But his real victory is not so much in the concessions granted to his freedmen; rather, it is in the very date selected for the day of festivities. The 10th June is elsewhere known as the *natalis aquilae* (or “birthday”) of the seventh legion *Gemina Felix*, in which Optatus had served.¹⁷⁶ It was an appropriate legion to be commemorated in the province of Tarraconensis: as governor of that province Galba had founded this seventh legion there in 68 when he launched his campaign to overthrow Nero; the legion was subsequently quartered at Legio (modern León) in the north-west of the province; and sub-units are known to have been stationed elsewhere within Tarraconensis, including at the eponymous town of Tarraco which Optatus places in opposition to Barcino in his benefaction.

Although all legions are assumed to have celebrated the anniversaries of their foundation,¹⁷⁷ the only provinces in which the practice of celebrating specifically a *natalis aquilae* is attested are those in the Iberian peninsula. In Germania Superior celebrations of the *honor aquilae* are attested at Mogontiacum (Mainz) under the Severans, and possibly also earlier, which may well be an alternative formula or regional variation for the same

¹⁷⁴ On the infamous rivalry, see Syme 1981. Compare also the notorious feud in Gaul between neighbours Lugdunum and Vienna (Vienne, Isère), at Tac. *Hist.* 1.65.

¹⁷⁵ Edmondson 2006: 277-8.

¹⁷⁶ Optatus’ other unit of service, the fifteenth legion *Apollinaris*, was in this period based to the best of our knowledge at Satala in Cappadocia. Another *Ilvir* at Barcino had served with this legion as an equestrian military tribune (*CIL* II 6150), but there is otherwise no obvious reason for Optatus to have served in it and he was presumably transferred there from his local legion, the seventh legion *Gemina Felix*, which commanded his primary loyalty. For the identification of the date in this text with the *natalis aquilae* of the *VII Gemina Felix*, see Rodà 1974 and 1980, esp. 36-37, followed by Curchin 1990: 185 n. 445.

¹⁷⁷ See especially discussion in Fink, Hoey and Snyder 1940, esp. 115, on the military festivals attested at Dura Europos in Syria.

phenomenon.¹⁷⁸ That we don't have such texts from other well-attested legionary bases such as Lambaesis, home of the third legion *Augusta*, is striking. The celebration of the *natalis aquilae* is attested in various locations in Spain, with each text taking on more or less the same format, containing most or all of the following: a dedication to Jupiter Optimus Maximus on behalf of the sitting emperor(s); an explanation that the dedication is for the "birthday" of the legion; the dedicating unit (either the seventh legion *Gemina Felix* or a vexillation thereof); a statement indicating those who oversaw the festivities, typically an imperial freedman procurator and one or more individuals representing the unit itself (variously a centurion of the legion; a *principalis* of the legion; a centurion and/or decurion of an associated auxiliary unit); the calendar date of the celebration, which for the seventh legion *Gemina Felix* was the *IV Idus Iunias* (i.e. the 10th June); and finally the consular date.¹⁷⁹ The earliest example from the Iberian peninsula dates to the reign of Antoninus Pius (AD 138-161) and the latest to Commodus as sole emperor (AD 180-192); the question is how far this phenomenon is representative of the rest of the empire. By way of comparison, the Mogontiacum texts attesting to the *honor aquilae* generally date to the early third century and all commemorate the twenty-second legion *Primigenia* that was stationed there for much of its history. Since the dedications here are from the legion as a whole rather than vexillations, and belong to the primary legionary base, they instead involve individuals such as the legate and the *primus pilus*.

Striking in the texts from the Iberian peninsula are the involvement of the imperial freedmen procurators, Hermes and Eutyches, who each appear as dedicators on multiple texts, and the celebration even by auxiliary units here of festivities *ob natalem*. The *cohors I Celtiberorum*¹⁸⁰ and the *cohors I Gallica*¹⁸¹ both celebrate such festivals in the same period as the seventh legion *Gemina Felix*. Both auxiliary cohorts had served in vexillations alongside the legion¹⁸² and it is presumably the context of their involvement in the commemoration of the anniversary of the legion that motivated associated auxiliary units to institute their own celebrations. Another freedman procurator was involved in the celebration *ob natalem signorum* by the vexillation of the *cohors I Celtiberorum*. If celebration of the *natalis* of a

¹⁷⁸ CIL XIII 6679, 6690, 6694, 6708, 6752, 6762.

¹⁷⁹ E.g. CIL II 2552: *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) [p]ro salute M(arci) Aureli An[t]onini et L(uci) Aureli Veri [A]ugustor(um) ob natale(m) Aqu[i]lae vexillatio leg(ionis) VII G(eminae) F(elicis) sub cura Licini Patern[i] (centurionis) leg(ionis) eiusd(em) et Hermetis Augustor(um) lib(erti) proc(uratoris) et Lucreti Paterni dec(urionis) coh(ortis) I Celt(iberorum) et Fabi Marcian[i] b(ene)f(iciarii) proc(uratoris) Augustor(um) et Iuli Iuliani sign(iferi) leg(ionis) eiusd(em) IIII Id(us) Iunias Laeliano et Pastore co(n)s(ulibus)*

¹⁸⁰ E.g. CIL II 2553: *ob natalem signorum*; under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus.

¹⁸¹ E.g. AE 1910, 1: *ob natalem aprunculorum* ("the little boars"); under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, and Commodus. Their self-description as boars may be a nod to their Gallic roots. See Haynes 2013: 220.

¹⁸² CIL II 2552 and 2553.

military unit was indeed something encouraged by these procurators then their efforts were successful, for the centurion at Barcino, Optatus, continued to commemorate this event having left the legion. Not only that, he actively encouraged the town to participate in the occasion by celebrating it with a day of oil distributions at the public baths and boxing matches – associating the town with the legion and, by extension, with the emperor himself. Perhaps we should understand the intriguing final clause of the inscription, that if his conditions are not met the benefaction will transfer instead to Tarraco, in this sort of light – that Optatus wished to promulgate the celebration, however subtly, of the *natalis aquilae*.

In this way the relationships between towns and former soldiers were reciprocal – a town might demand and expect benefits from the veterans they honoured; but a veteran might also have his own demands, which could include a permanent celebration of his legion, the legion that garrisoned and occupied the surrounding territory. On the other hand, given the apparent involvement of procurators of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, under whom Optatus was discharged, in encouraging annual celebration of the *natalis Aquilae* of the seventh legion *Gemina Felix*, perhaps Optatus and individuals like him were led, sub-consciously or overtly, to continue such celebrations themselves even after their discharge. Given the explicit association in the inscriptions between the *natalis Aquilae* and the *salus* of the reigning emperor(s), Optatus was in this way not only contributing to his legion's soft-power within civilian communities of citizens, but also implicitly to promulgation of, and civic involvement in, the imperial cult, of which he was a priest.

Local elites and the religion of the armies

The mutual influences that could develop between the military and the civilian communities of Roman towns and their environs along the frontier are made explicit in a mid second century dedicatory inscription from the sanctuary of the divinity Dolichenus¹⁸³ at Porolissum in Dacia, set up jointly for the health of the reigning emperor, Gordian III, and of the auxiliary *cohors III Campestris*.¹⁸⁴ The most northerly of the main urban centres of Roman Dacia, Porolissum grew out of civilian settlements which had developed between two forts within 700 metres of each other, and was granted the status of a *municipium* by Septimius Severus.¹⁸⁵ As a frontier town in a part of the empire under heavy pressure during various points of the second and third

¹⁸³ On the role of the military in the spread of the cult of Dolichenus, see Collar 2011, Speidel 1978.

¹⁸⁴ AE 2001, 1707. This case and others like it are not however counted towards civic priests within the database, on the grounds that these priesthoods are associated not with the regular system of civic priesthoods within towns but with the cult of Dolichenus and with the military.

¹⁸⁵ E.g. AE 1944, 52: *mun/ic(ipii) Sept(imi) Porol(issensium)*.

century, perhaps it behoved the magistrates and councillors of Porolissum to make a dedication for the safety and wellbeing of one of the military units which garrisoned the area. The divinity tasked with the preservation of the emperor and the *cohors III Campestris* was Jupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus; the occasion the funding of a *templum cum tabernis* in the name of the divinity by a local triumvirate. The dedicators, who had funded the temple out of their own pockets, are named as M. Aurelius Italus, a *IIIvir* of Porolissum; M. Antonius Maximus, a veteran and decurion with the *ornamenta* of a *IIIvir*; and Aurelius Flavus, a *decurio vegesi[m]a[(rius)]*.¹⁸⁶ And all three are described as *sacerdotes dei et coh(ortis) s(upra) s(criptae)*: priests at once of the god and the cohort. Further texts involving priests of military units can be identified in Dacia, although the phenomenon is by no means exclusive to the province. Also from Porolissum comes a Severan or post-Severan votive to Jupiter Optimus Maximus from a *flamen quinquennalis* and *sacerdos dei numeri Palmyrenorum Porolissensium*;¹⁸⁷ from the camp at Drobeta comes a third-century votive offering by two *sacerdotes cohortis* to Jupiter Dolichenus for the health of unnamed emperors and the locally based *cohors I sagittariorum*;¹⁸⁸ from Apulum a late second century or Severan votive to Jupiter Dolichenus and the *dea Syria Magna Caelestis* for the wellbeing of the *imperium Romanum* and the local thirteenth legion *Gemina*, by Flavius Barhadadi, a *sacerdos Iovis Dolicheni ad legionem*.¹⁸⁹ Both cases from Porolissum stand out for the involvement of civic figures, both civilian and veteran, who combined their civic responsibilities with priestly oversight of a particular military unit. The wellbeing of the army is made a civic concern; and at the same time civic officials associated with the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus themselves gain an inroad into the lives of the military personnel who garrisoned the surrounding area. The boundary between the spheres of civilian, soldier and veteran dissipates with their mutual dependencies.

Conclusion: soldiers, cities and emperors

The soldier or veteran acts at once as the tool through which positive relationships can be fostered between emperor and town, town and army. In Italy the prominence accorded by the early imperial family to senior-ranking veterans through their appointment as civic *praefecti* perhaps served as a catalyst to encourage more generally the appointment of senior veterans to

¹⁸⁶ I.e. *vicesimarius*, perhaps referring to the responsibility for collecting the five percent tax on legacies, inheritances and manumission (the *vicesima hereditatium*). Such a tax-collector appears in Petron. *Sat.* 65.

¹⁸⁷ *ILD* 680.

¹⁸⁸ *AE* 2004, 1222.

¹⁸⁹ *AE* 1972, 460.

positions of local prominence. The connection implied between emperor and veterans induced towns to utilise their own veterans in appeals to gain imperial benefactions; and subsequently simply to entice the veterans – of increasingly junior status in the second and third centuries – themselves to make financial gifts to the town. Perhaps veterans who entered local government and the municipal elite of towns in their provinces were able to use their prominence to increase the soft-power of the army in their local communities. And so to focus only on the raw percentage of the municipal elite that was comprised of soldiers and veterans, and on the supposed “absence” of soldiers and veterans with full municipal careers, is to omit the substantial impact upon civic life of even this small group of soldiers and former soldiers. As the cases of Tuficum and Barcino attest, the proportion of veterans in the local elite was less significant than the potential influence that just one could exert. Although some veterans were themselves already members of the local elite, by going on to serve in the army alongside, and by sharing rank with, others from families of lower socio-economic status, the barriers that separated local aristocracies might be dismantled through the same mechanism that operated in the socially heterogeneous centurionate. Soldiers from families outside the local elite could through their military success become prominent and visible members of their home communities, and by participating in the activities of the local elite their existing military identity could co-exist alongside a new-found sense of civic self. One second/third century civic decurion at an unnamed town in Italian Campania who was serving as a centurion of the third legion *Augusta* commemorated at Lambaesis, the legion’s base, a deceased *miles* in the same legion and candidate to become a decurion in the same town (*CIL* VIII 2801: *candidato condecurio(ni)*). The towns and cities could socialise and “civicise” the most distinguished members of their serving or time-served citizens, variously rejuvenating their local elite with the incorporation of new blood, securing access to vital networks of patronage, and maintaining healthy relations with the military garrisons in the area. The interests of the emperor and the imperial family were maintained through the propagation of imperial cult and the integration of potentially dangerous veterans into the civil and civic world. In the late Republic, when Catiline launched his abortive revolution of 63 BC his army had included discontented veteran colonists of the dictator Sulla, and itself been assembled and led by the Sullan centurion Gaius Manlius.¹⁹⁰ Under the Principate internal security was seen to depend upon the integration of military personnel back into civil life. The position of soldiers and veterans, then, was one at

¹⁹⁰ Cic. *Cat.* 2.6.14, 2.9.20; Sall. *Bell. Cat.* 24 and *passim*. See especially Santangelo 2007: 183ff.

the centre of the interests of the armies, emperors and cities, a position in which they could be exploited and which they could themselves exploit.

CONCLUSION

The Military and the Public

“One of the greatest strategic threats to defence is the disconnect between the Armed Forces and the public caused by a lack of understanding of the utility of military force in the contemporary strategic environment. The Government cannot hope to bridge this divide without looking to explain what it believes the UK’s position in the world could or should be, and the manner in which that is to be delivered. Without a proactive communications strategy, there is a serious risk of a lack of support for defence amongst the public. [...] We are convinced that there is an important role for this Committee, and Parliament as a whole, to play in articulating the case for defence to the public at large.”

House of Commons Defence Committee, *Towards the next Defence and Security Review: Part One, Seventh Report of Session 2013-14, Volume 1*, page 3.

The publication in January 2014 of a report by the House of Commons Defence Committee identified as a strategic problem the dichotomy between public attitudes towards the Armed Forces and their purpose, fearing “a danger that sympathy for the Armed Forces was undermining public understanding of their utility.”¹ A YouGov survey commissioned by the Forces in Mind Trust on “Public perceptions of veterans and the armed forces” found that, although initial associations made with ex-Forces members tended towards the positive, almost as many people believed that military service damaged its members as developed them, and nearly two-thirds of those surveyed thought that those who served were left in worse mental, physical or emotional health than those who did not.² Of those surveyed, and especially amongst those who had themselves served, more believed that it was harder for ex-Forces members to find civilian employment than their peers who had not served.³ As individuals associated with self-sacrifice, a majority of participants thought veterans should be accorded respect; the extent of the respect, however, might vary according to whether someone had

¹ Review, *op. cit.*, 16.

² Latter et al. 2018, esp. “key takeaways” at 86-94.

³ *Id.* 26. Unsurprisingly, the one category of people who believed it was easier for ex-Forces members to gain subsequent employment than their civilian peers was that which had expressed interest in joining the services.

served in the rank-and-file or as an officer.⁴ Contemporary attitudes towards the military are a strategic concern in that they inform recruitment and advertising practices as well as programmes for readjusting veterans to civilian life. They are also an academic concern, reflected in approaches to military history that emphasise the impact of service upon physical, mental and emotional health,⁵ or the re-integration of soldiers and veterans into civilian life.

One strand of this thesis has been to investigate attitudes towards the individuals who made up the Roman Army, their life chances and the opportunities available to them because of, or in spite of, their service, as well as the strategies used by soldiers and veterans to allow themselves to define their own place and worth within society. A second strand has been to explore the tension experienced by soldiers and veterans between their lives as *milites*, as members of the coercive arm of the Roman state, and their lives as *cives*, as members of the civilian communities of the empire whose interests were maintained by the army. Their identities post-service are defined by their military careers in much the same way as their experience of the military was informed by their pre-service lives. The result of weaving together these two strands has been to understand the interplay between two separate stratified status hierarchies: service within Rome's standing army and standing within wider Roman society. In particular, this thesis has argued that the centurionate was at once a vital thread that helped weave together the social fabric of the empire, as well as a highly contested battleground on the meaning of eliteness within a changing Roman world, fought over by writers and senators, equestrians and military commanders, and even by centurions themselves.

Social hierarchies and the Roman army

Roman soldiers and veterans are made an ideological battleground on the place of the army within civil society by senatorial writers like Dio. Upon discharge from the military, soldiers are expected to transition from their "global" role as tools of state coercion to a local role as farmers, land owners, economic actors, or even local leaders. Examples of veterans from the ordinary centurionate and below continuing to exercise influence beyond the confines of their home regions post-service are rare in all periods. Although the ability for soldiers and veterans to influence affairs in local communities as individuals is broadly tolerated in a way that it is not at the global level, their membership of local senates is sometimes used by ancient writers such as Dio as an ominous analogue, prophetic or reflective, for membership of the senate at

⁴ *Id.* 40.

⁵ E.g. Melchior 2011 on PTSD within the Roman army. See also Shay 1994, the seminal *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* for a survey of war and psychological distress in the *Iliad*.

Rome. This soldier-hysteria, a paranoia of a corrupting military influence infecting spheres outside the army, pervades much of the literature of the late Republic and Principate. The arguments and attitudes that were born in the febrile atmosphere of the late Republic, moulded in an era of warlords and “personal armies”, are re-purposed and re-written for a different age, an age of emperors and standing armies.

Whereas soldiers becoming senators at Rome are largely a dystopian fiction, soldiers becoming equestrians are a reality that, through the potential for significant upwards social mobility, helped make the military, and by extension the empire, work. These are the *primipilares*, the centurions granted the *equus publicus*, even the sons of ordinary soldiers who are proudly styled *equites*. In this context, the social heterogeneity of the centurionate, including those appointed *ex equite*, enabled it to function as much a training environment for social as military life. Contact with equestrians, and engaging in the sorts of cultural activities that were associated with that order, enabled centurions to associate themselves with equestrians and, in so doing, align their interests with a lynchpin of the Roman social order, as well as to develop networks of patronage that could be called upon in later life. The phenomenon of soldiers becoming equestrians was in essence not so much about rewarding those who performed well but about subordinating the most useful to imperial interests, and to that end the admittance of equestrians themselves into the centurionate served a purpose beyond simply providing them an alternative career-path. Although this social heterogeneity on occasion manifested signs of tension as much as unity, equestrians within the military and non-equestrian centurions deployed coping mechanisms to preserve the exclusivity of the status they held outside the military, or to claim a new status for themselves. The result is productive ambiguity: through the use of contested vocabulary or the invocation of the emperor’s name, equestrians in the *militiae* or centurionate, and centurions promoted through the ranks, can both satisfy their ambitions and pretensions.

Soldiers and veterans in local life

Although most soldiers settled into obscurity upon their discharge from the military, some are known to have entered local senates. The traditional argument is that, with the lower ranks disinclined to waste their time and whatever money they had on potentially onerous *munera*, and the centurions committing to often lifelong military careers in pursuit of the primipilate, the impact of veterans upon local senates must have been minimal: simply a way to affirm one’s status or feed an ego. But this not only ignores the impact that the presence of even a few military individuals could have, it denies any value that soldiers might bring to their local

communities other than their money. This is to take the dismissal of the claims of the literary elites, that veterans should be feared simply because they are veterans, too far in the opposite direction: namely that veterans played no real local role because they were veterans. On the contrary, the role they played was vital – perhaps more so than that of many non-veterans in the curial class – precisely because they were veterans. Not just because many towns were settled with veterans as *coloniae*; not just because some of the new towns in the provinces began life as camp *canabae* or similar; not just because, outside Italy prior to the *constitutio Antoniniana*, they were citizens amongst largely peregrine communities; but because of what veterans represented by dint of being veterans: their connection with the emperor, their networks of patronage, and their membership of the coercive arm of the Roman state. Soldiers furthered the interests of the communities to which they belonged, both their towns as *cives* and the army as *milites*, and even encouraged interaction between the two. Soldiers were variously set up, or set themselves up, as a link between emperor, town and army.

However, there was not really such a thing as “the Roman army”, just as there was not such a thing as “the Roman province” or “the Roman town”; rather, there were many towns, many provinces, and even many armies, distinct across time-period and geography. The nature of the relationships between military rank and social status, and in the soldier’s position between emperor, town and army, varies accordingly. The disconnect between military service and civilian life was perhaps greater in Italy than along the frontiers. In the curial class of the towns of Italy veterans are primarily *primipilares* and praetorians, veterans particularly associated with the emperor and less so with combat roles, and known largely from the first two centuries of the Principate; in those of the Danubian frontiers junior veterans, often those associated with combat roles, are best represented and known from the second and third centuries of the Principate. The concerns are different too, with Italian towns making the most of their veterans to link them with the emperor; the Danubian towns using them to fill the gaps in their councils, to subsume within the civic system the diverse backgrounds of those who made up the legions and auxiliaries garrisoned there, and to maintain fruitful connections with these units whose duty was to protect them from external threats. Given the poor epigraphic habit in the third century there is a risk here of arguing from silence, but the situation outlined above raises a significant historical concern. Consider the consequences of an absence of soldiers and veterans in the curial class of Italian towns in the third century, driven by the Severans through recruitment from outside Italy now for the praetorian cohorts as well as the legions. Consider the impact also of a general absence of *primipilares* and other equestrian commanders in civic roles in the third century, a time when they were increasingly used to lead

legions themselves. This thesis has argued that soldiers and veterans – and particularly those from the centurionate and primipilate – served as the link between armies, emperors and cities. It also served to “civicise” the soldiery through aiding their integration into the civilian world. But with the gradual divorcing of the most distinguished *virī militares* from the civil and civic world, this link transformed. MacMullen linked the changes of the third and fourth century to the blurring of boundaries between the military and civilian: “Civilian turned soldier, soldier turned civilian, in a *rapprochement* to a middle ground of waste and confusion.”⁶ But perhaps, at least up to the middle of the third century when the epigraphy relied upon here largely dries up, the problem was also associated with the removal or absence of the most senior and powerful veterans from the civic world: the civic and military were separated where it mattered the most, in a dearth of those whose advanced ranks allowed them to link centre and periphery.

Final remarks

Soldiers and veterans were vital weapons of the emperor not just as combat machines but also as citizens of the empire. People whose violent duty had been to compel and control local populations, often of non-citizens, continue to exert authority and influence over local populations, often of citizens, upon discharge from the military. This Roman army here is not the “total institution” that Pollard identified in Syria and Mesopotamia; but neither are we in Alston’s world of Egypt where veterans and civilians cohabit in the towns with little to distinguish them; nor in the Roman empire of MacMullen where veterans formed something of a local aristocracy in the towns, at least outside the bigger cities and the older provinces; nor in that as summarised by Wesch-Klein, where veterans are simply uninterested in civic life.⁷ Rather, this is a world in which veterans were subordinated to, or encouraged at least to be in tune with, the needs of the empire just as they had been as soldiers. Veterans remained defined by their military service and it was often on these grounds that some found themselves involved in the activities of local aristocracies. Through their urban monuments and epigraphic output veterans of means were always visible as such, and perhaps that was part of the point. In the public mind-set the wellbeing and success of veterans might serve as a powerful tool for recruitment, whether into the ranks (and in Italy especially into the praetorians), the class of centurions or the *militiae equestres*. Although the general integration of veterans into the wider civilian population was itself desirable for civic harmony, equally important was the continued visibility of distinguished veterans to promote recruitment: integration was a two-way street.

⁶ MacMullen 1963: 152.

⁷ Pollard 1996 and 2000; Alston 1995, esp. 117-142; MacMullen 1963, esp. 99-118; Wesch-Klein 2007: 447.

APPENDIX ONE

Catalogue of Inscriptions

For the sake of brevity, in the catalogue that follows the abbreviations *CIL* and *AE* have been excluded, and only one text has been referenced for each individual unless multiple texts are necessary for their full career to be reconstructed. Concordances are therefore not provided.

Italy and Sicily

No.	Reference	Date	Equestrian / <i>Prinipularis</i>	Centurion / Decurion	<i>Principalis</i> / <i>Immunis</i>	<i>Gregalis</i> / Unknown	Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units / provincial urban cohorts	Unknown	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Civic Patron (of the town or equivalent)
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Regio I, Latium et Campania

1	<i>Abella, colonia</i>													
	X 1202	II	*								*			*
2	<i>Aletrium, municipium</i>													
	X 5832	I				*			*		*			
3	<i>Antium, colonia</i>													
	X 6674	I				*			*		*	*		
4	<i>Antium, Canusium(?) , municipium and later colonia (mid 2nd), and Lanuvium, municipium</i>													
	1945, 80; X 6657	II- III	*										*	*
5	<i>Aquinum, colonia</i>													
	X 5583	I	*								*		*	
6	<i>Atina?, municipium</i>													
	X 5064	III		*			*		*					*
7	<i>Cales, municipium</i>													
	X 4641	I	*								*		*	*
8	<i>Capua, colonia</i>													
	X 3903	-I				*(?)	*				*(?)			
<i>Ferentinum, municipium</i>														

9	X 5829	II	*							*		*	*
<i>Ficulea, municipium</i>													
10	1977, 179	I-II				*			*	*			
<i>Formiae, municipium, then colonia (Hadrianic)</i>													
11	1962, 311	II	*							*		*	*
12	1962, 312	II	*										*
<i>Minturnae, colonia</i>													
13	1996, 373	I-II				*			*	*			
<i>Misenum, colona (mid 2nd)</i>													
14	1995, 311	II-III			*			*(fl.)		*	*		
<i>Nola, municipium</i>													
15	X 1262	I	*									*	
<i>Praeneste, colonia</i>													
16	XIV 2989	I	*							*		*	
<i>Puteoli, municipium</i>													
17	X 1593	II-III	*										*
<i>Sora, colonia</i>													
18	X 5713	-I	*							*		*	
<i>Ulubrae, colonia</i>													
19	X 6489	I-II				*			*	*	*		
<i>Venafrum, colonia</i>													
20	X 4862	I	*							*		*	
21	X 4872	I	*							*			
22	X 4868 (= n. 125)	I	*							*		*	

<i>An unknown Campanian town, text from Lambaesis, Africa Proconsularis / Numidia</i>													
23	VIII 2801	II-III		*			*					*	
24	=	II-III				*	*					*	

Regio II, Apulia et Calabria

<i>Nuceria, colonia</i>													
25	1999, 647	I			*		*					*	
<i>Beneventum, colonia</i>													
26	IX 1604	-I		*			*					*	
27	IX 1622	-I				*	*				*		
28	IX 1617	II			*				*			*	
<i>Ligures Baebiani, municipium</i>													
29	IX 1459	III				*	*				*	*	
<i>Tarentum, municipium, then colonia (Neronian)</i>													
30	1969/70, 133	I			*		*				*		
<i>Venusia, colonia</i>													
31	IX 434	II				*			*			*	

Regio III, Bruttium et Lucania

<i>Grumentum, municipium</i>													
32	X 218	I	*								*		
<i>Paestum, municipium</i>													
33	Paestum 76	II-III				*				*	*		

<i>Volcei, municipium</i>														
34	X 410	II			*				*			*		

Regio IV, Samnium

<i>Bovianum Undecimanorum, colonia?</i>														
35	IX 2564	I	*							*				*
<i>Marruvium, municipium</i>														
36	IX 3669	-I-I	*							*				
37	1978, 286	I	*							*				
38	IX 3671	I	*							*				*
39	1975, 295	II	*							*				
<i>Pagus Fificulanus</i>														
40	IX 3573	I-II			*				*			*		
<i>Teate, municipium</i>														
41	IX 3044	I	*							*				

Regio V, Picenum

<i>Alba Fucens, colonia</i>														
42	IX 3922	II			*				*		*			
43	IX 3923	II				*			*		*			
<i>Amiternum, praefectura</i>														
44	XIV 3906	I	*							*				
<i>Ancona, colonia</i>														
45	IX 5898	II	*											*
<i>Auximum, colonia</i>														

46	IX 5839	II	(*)	*						*			*
47	IX 5843	II-III				*			*	*			
<i>Helvia Ricina, municipium, later colonia (late 2nd)</i>													
48	IX 5748	I	*							*			
49	IX 5842	II	*							*			*
<i>Reate, municipium</i>													
50	IX 4686	II	*									*	*
<i>Terventum, municipium</i>													
51	IX 6719	I-II			*			*				*	
<i>Aequiculi, municipium</i>													
52	IX 4122	I	*							*			
53	IX 4120	I-II				*		*		*			

Regio VI, Umbria

<i>Ameria, municipium</i>													
54	XI 4364	II-III				*		*			*		
<i>Carsulae, municipium</i>													
55	XI 4573	I	*							*		*	
<i>Fanum Fortunae, colonia</i>													
56	XI 6224	I	*							*			
<i>Fulginiae, municipium, and Forum Flaminium</i>													
57	XI 5217	II				*		*		*	*		
<i>Fulginiae, Forum Flaminium and Iguvium, municipium</i>													
58	XI 5215 (= n. 182)	III	*										*

<i>Hispellum, colonia</i>													
59	XI 5274	I	*									*	
<i>Matilica, municipium</i>													
60	XI 5646	II	*							*			*
<i>Pisaurum, colonia</i>													
61	XI 6344	I	*							*		*	
<i>Sassina, municipium</i>													
62	XI 6504	I	*							*			
63	XI 6503	II	*									*	*(?)
<i>Tifernum Mataurense, municipium, and Ariminum (Regio VIII, Aemilia), colonia</i>													
64	XI 5992	II		*				*				*	
<i>Tuficum, municipium</i>													
65	XI 5696; 5698(?)	II	*							*		*	*
<i>Urvinum Mataurense, municipium</i>													
66	XI 6056	-I-I		*				*		*			
67	XI 6057	II	*							*			*

Regio VII, Etruria

<i>Arretium, colonia</i>													
68	XI 1836	III	*										*
<i>Luca, colonia</i>													
69	1968, 167	I				*			*		*		
<i>Lucus Feroniae, colonia</i>													
70	1954, 163	-I-I	*							*			
71	1954, 162	I			*				*		*		

	<i>Saturnia, praefectura</i>													
72	XI 7264	III	*											*
	<i>Tuscana, municipium</i>													
73	XI 2956	II-III			*		*				*	*		

Regio VIII, Aemilia

	<i>Ariminum, colonia</i>													
74	XI 395	I	*											*
75	XI 385	I-II	*							*		*	*	*
76	XII 1529 (= n. 124)	I-II				*			*		*		*	
	<i>Bononia, colonia</i>													
77	XI 712	I	*							*				
	<i>Forum Livii, municipium</i>													
78	XI 624	I	*							*				
	<i>Parma, colonia</i>													
79	XI 1058	-I-I				*	*			*				
	<i>Parma, municipium Forodruentinarum, municipium Foronovanorum</i>													
80	XI 1059	II	*											*
	<i>Placentia, municipium</i>													
81	XI 1221	-I-I	*							*				
	<i>Ravenna, municipium</i>													
82	XI 19	II	*									*	*	

Regio IX, Liguria

83	<i>Alba Pompeia, municipium</i>												
	V 7600	I	*							*			
84	<i>Alba Pompeia and Cremona, colonia</i>												
	<i>Lupa</i> 23286 (= n. 113)	I	*							*	*	*	
85	<i>Hasta, colonia</i>												
	1985, 412	I	*							*(?)			

Regio X, Venetia et Histria

86	<i>Altinum, municipium</i>												
	1992, 734	-I-I	*							*			
87	V 2162	I			*		*			*			
88	<i>Aquileia, municipium</i>												
	V 906	I		*			*			*			
89	<i>CIL V</i> 889	I		*				*(?)			*		
90	1934, 232	II	*									*	
91	V 903	II	*							*			
92	<i>Ateste, colonia</i>												
	V 2501	-I				*	*				*		
93	1893, 119	I		*			*				*		
94	<i>Brixia, colonia</i>												
	V 4373	I	*							*		*	
95	V 5006	I-II		*				*			*		
96	<i>Concordia, colonia</i>												
	V 8660	II	*									*	*

97	V 1892	II	*								*	*		
<i>Iulium Carnicum, municipium, then colonia (Claudian)</i>														
98	V 1838	I	*								*			
<i>Tarvisium, municipium</i>														
99	V 2115	I				*	*				*			
<i>Tergeste, colonia</i>														
100	V 534	I-II	*										*	
<i>Verona, municipium, then colonia (Claudian?)</i>														
101	V 3366	-I-I	*								*			
<i>Emona, colonia</i>														
102	III 3846	II		*			*		*			*		

Regio XI, Transpadana

<i>Augusta Taurinorum, colonia</i>														
103	V 7005	I			*		*					*		
104	V 7007	I	*								*		*	*
105	V 7003	I	*											*
<i>Novaria, municipium</i>														
106	V 6513	II	*										*	
<i>Mediolanum, municipium</i>														
107	V 5713	I				*	*					*	*	

The province of Sicily

<i>Thermae Himeratae, colonia</i>														
108	X 7348	-I-I	*								*			

Non-frontier provinces of western Europe: Dalmatia, the Gauls and Spains

No.	Reference	Date	Equestrian / <i>Prinipularis</i>	Centurion / Decurion	<i>Principalis</i> / <i>Immunis</i>	<i>Gregalis</i> / Unknown	Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units / provincial urban cohorts	Unknown	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Civic Patron (of the town or equivalent)
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Dalmatia

	Aequum, conventus civium Romanorum, then colonia (Claudian)													
109	III 2733	I				*	*				*		*	
110	1979, 447	II			*		*					*	*	
111	III 8721	II-III		*						*	*	*		
	Delminium, municipium (Hadrianic)													
112	III 9847	II-III			*		*					*		
	Iader, conventus civium Romanorum, then colonia (Caesarian)													
113	Lupa 23286 (= n. 84)	I	*									*		
114	Lupa 23284	I	*								*			
115	Lupa 23279	II			*				*			*		
	Rider, municipium (Flavian)													
116	III 12815a	II-III				*	*					*		
	Ris(-), colonia													
117	1976, 533	II-III				*				*	*			
	Salona, colonia (pre-Augustan)													

118	III 2028	I	*							*		*	*
119	III 1914	I			*		*				*		
120	III 2066	II-III				*	*			*	*	*	
<i>Salona and Flanona, municipium (Augustan)</i>													
121	III 1940	II		*					*		*		
<i>Scodra, colonia?</i>													
122	2014, 1031	III	*										*

Gallia Narbonensis

<i>Arelate, colonia (Caesarian)</i>													
123	1952, 169	I	*							*		*	
<i>Dea Augusta Vocontiorum, colonia (Augustan), and the pagus Epotius</i>													
124	XII 1529 (= n. 76)	I-II				*			*	*		*	
<i>Forum Iulii, colonia (Octavianic)</i>													
125	X 4868 (= n. 22)	I	*							*			
126	XII 261	I	*							*			
<i>Lugdunum, colonia (Republican)</i>													
127	1976, 443	II				*			*	*	*		
128	XII 1871	II				*			*		*		
<i>Narbo, colonia (Republican)</i>													
129	XII 4371	I	*							*		*	
<i>Ruscino, oppidum with the ius Latii?</i>													
130	1980, 615	I	*									*	

Hispania Baetica

	<i>Astigi, colonia (Augustan)</i>													
131	2001, 1204	-I		*			*				*		*	
132	2015, 580	-I		*			*				*			
	<i>Tucci, colonia (Augustan)</i>													
133	II 1681	-I-I		*			*				*			
	<i>Urso, colonia (Caesarian)</i>													
134	II, 1404	-I		*			*				*			

Hispania Tarraconensis

	<i>Barcino, colonia (Augustan)</i>													
135	II 4514	II		*			*				*		*	
136	II 4463	II	*									*		
	<i>Clunia, municipium, later colonia (by the Hadrianic period)</i>													
137	II 2843	I-II				*	*				*			
	<i>Tarraco, colonia (Caesarian)</i>													
138	1961, 330	I-II	*									*		

The western provinces of North Africa

No.	Reference	Date	Equestrian / <i>Prinipilaris</i>	Centurion / Decurion	<i>Principalis</i> / <i>Immunis</i>	<i>Gregalis</i> / Unknown	Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units / provincial urban cohorts	Unknown	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Civic Patron (of the town or equivalent)
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Africa Proconsularis and Numidia

139	<i>Bisica Lucana, municipium (Hadrianic)</i>													
	VIII 12297	I		*			*						*	*
140	<i>Casae, civitas</i>													
	VIII 4333	II			*		*						*	
141	ILS 2996	III				*				*			*	
142	<i>Civitas Nattabutum</i>													
	VIII 4827	II- III				*				*			*	
143	<i>Cuicul, colonia (Nervan)</i>													
	1915, 69	I-II		*				*					*	
144	ILAlg II 7767	I-II				*				*	*		*	
145	<i>Diana Veteranorum, municipium (mid 2nd)</i>													
	VIII 4594	II				*	*						*	
146	<i>Lambaesis, municipium (Severan)</i>													
	1968, 646	II			*		*						*	
147	VIII 18214	II				*	*						*	

148	VIII 18234	II				*	*						*	
149	1916, 22	II				*	*						*	
150	1914, 40	II-III		*				*				*	*	
151	VIII 4436	II-III			*		*				*		*	
152	VIII 2596	III			*					*			*	
<i>Madaurus, colonia (Flavian)</i>														
153	VIII 16873	I				*	*					*		
154	<i>ILAlg</i> I 2201	II				*				*			*	
155	1919, 44	II-III				*			*		*	*	*	
156	VIII 4679	II-III			*				*			*	*	
<i>Sicca Veneria, colonia (pre Augustan)</i>														
157	VIII 1647	II-III		*			*					*		
<i>Thaena, colonia (mid 2nd)</i>														
158	1949, 38	II		*			*				*			
<i>Thamugadi, colonia (Trajanic)</i>														
159	VIII 2699; 2962	II			*		*					*		
160	1987, 1079	III				*				*			*	
161	2008, 1697	III		*			*					*		
<i>Thelepte, colonia (Trajanic)</i>														
162	2013, 1785	II			*			*			*			
<i>Thuburbo Maius, municipium (Hadrianic), colonia (Commodan)</i>														
163	VIII 853	II		*				*			*		*	

<i>Thuburnica, colonia (Augustan)</i>													
164	VIII 10605	I				*	*				*		
165	1921, 21	I-II				*	*				*		
<i>Thubursicu Numidarum, municipium, colonia (late 3rd)</i>													
166	VIII 4874	II			*			*		*	*		
167	VIII 4882	II-III				*			*			*	
<i>Thullium, civitas</i>													
168	VIII 5209	I				*			*			*	
<i>Tituli, civitas dependent upon Ammaedara (Flavian colonia)</i>													
169	2008, 1684	II-III				*			*			*	
<i>Verecunda, vicus</i>													
170	VIII 4243	II-III				*			*			*	
171	VIII 4196	III				*			*			*	
172	VIII 4197	III				*			*			*	

Mauretania

<i>Auzia, colonia (Severan)</i>													
173	VIII 20751	III				*			*	*		*	*
174	VIII 9052; 20747	III		*				*			*	*	
175	VIII 9045	III	*								*		
<i>Babba</i>													
176	1957, 60	II-III		*				*		*			
<i>Rusguniae, colonia (Augustan), and Tigava, civitas, later municipium</i>													

177	1928, 23	II		*				*				*			
	<i>Thanaramusa, castra community</i>														
178	VIII 9236	II-III		*						*		*			

The frontier provinces of the Rhine and Danube

No.	Reference	Date	Equestrian / <i>Prinipularis</i>	Centurion / Decurion	<i>Principalis</i> / <i>Immunis</i>	<i>Gregalis</i> / Unknown	Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units / provincial urban cohorts	Unknown	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Civic Patron (of the town or equivalent)
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Dacia

<i>Apulum, canabae, later colonia (Commodan)</i>														
179	III 1008	II				*	*				*			
180	III 1093	II				*	*					*		
181	1980, 735	II-III			*		*					*		
182	XI 5215 (= n. 58)	III	*									*		*
<i>Apulum, Napoca and Sarmizegetusa</i>														
183	III 1100	II		*				*				*		
<i>Micia, pagus</i>														
184	III 1375; 1980, 780	III		*				*			*			
<i>Napoca, colonia (Aurelian)</i>														
185	III 865	II		*				*				*		
186	1979, 495	II-III		*						*		*		
187	III 854	III			*		*					*		
188	III 827	III			*		*				*			
<i>Porolissum, municipium (Severan)</i>														
189	2001, 1707	III				*		*(?)			*	*		

190	1979, 499	III		*					*			*	
191	1971, 387	III				*			*		*		
<i>Sarmizegetusa, colonia (Trajanic)</i>													
192	III 1196	II				*	*					*	
193	1999, 1304	II				*	*					*	
194	1977, 687	II				*	*					*	
195	III 1478	II			*		*					*	
196	III 6264	II-III				*	*				*	*	
197	III 12587	II-III		*				*			*		
198	III 1485	II-III			*		*				*	*	
199	1977, 697	III			*			*				*	
200	1933, 248	III			*		*				*	*	
201	=	III			*		*					*	
202	=	III			*				*			*	
203	III 7980	III				*				*		*	
<i>Tibiscum, municipium (Severan?)</i>													
204	III 1556	II-III				*				*		*(?)	

Germania Superior

<i>Mogontiacum, civitas community with conventus civium Romanorum, later municipium (4th c.)</i>													
205	V 5747	I				*	*					*	
206	XIII 6769	III			*		*					*	

Moesia Inferior

Abrittus, community of veterans and cives

207	2010, 1421a	III- IV				*				*	*			
<i>Oescus, colonia (Trajanic)</i>														
208	III 14416	III	*								*(?)	*		
<i>Troesmis, canabae, later municipium (Aurelian / Commodan)</i>														
209	1957, 266	II				*	*				*			
210	III 6166	II				*	*				*			
211	III 6162	II				*	*				*			
212	=	II				*	*				*			
213	1960, 337	II				*	*				*	*		
214	III 7504	II-III			*			*			*		*	
215	III 6188	II-III				*	*					*		
<i>Vicus Verobrittanus</i>														
216	III 12479	II				*	*				*			

Moesia Superior

<i>Ratiaria, colonia (Trajanic)</i>														
217	1938, 95	II				*	*					*		
<i>Scupi, colonia (Flavian)</i>														
218	1910, 173	I-II				*	*					*	*	
219	III 8194	I-II				*	*					*		
220	2010, 1403	I-II				*	*				*	*		
221	IMS 6, 45	I-II			*		*				*	*		
222	IMS 6, 46	I-II			*		*				*			

223	1973, 477	II	*							*			
<i>Singidunum, canabae, municipium (late 2nd), colonia (mid 3rd) and Sirmium (Pannonia Inferior), colonia (Flavian)</i>													
224	1910, 172	II			*		*			*	*		
<i>Viminacium, canabae, municipium (Hadrianic), colonia (mid 3rd)</i>													
225	III 12659	II-III			*		*				*		
226	ZPE 203, 240, 5	II-III				*	*				*		
227	2011, 85	II-III			*		*				*		

Noricum

<i>Celeia, municipium (Claudian)</i>													
228	III 15205,3	I		*				*			*		
229	ILLPRON 1911	II		*			*			*			

Pannonia Inferior

<i>Aquincum, colonia (Severan)</i>													
230	SEP 9, p. 71	III				*	*				*		

Pannonia Superior

<i>Brigetio, canabae, municipium (late 2nd)</i>													
231	RIU 2, 596	II				*	*			*	*		
232	III 4298	II			*		*			*	*		
<i>Mogentiana, municipium (Hadrianic)</i>													
233	RIU 3, 707	II-III		*				*			*		

	<i>Savaria, colonia (Claudian)</i>													
234	III 11223	II				*	*					*		
235	III 4191	II			*		*					*		
236	2014, 1054	III		*				*				*		

Raetia

	<i>Unknown municipium Aelii Anto[-]?</i>													
237	1972, 359	II-III		*				*				*		

APPENDIX TWO

Tables and Charts

The inscriptions within the catalogue have been tabulated to illustrate according to region: overall unit distribution of those holding civic office; the same by century; the distribution of military grades within each civic position; the military grades found in civic positions distributed according to century; and the civic offices that were held by military personnel distributed according to century. However, the unit distribution by century has not been provided for the non-frontier provinces of western Europe (here Dalmatia, the Gauls and Spains) since the sample size is so small. For ease of visualisation and comparison, the charts present the results as percentages rather than as raw numbers; the latter are given in the tables.

Italy and Sicily

Table and Chart 1: Unit distribution

Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units	Unknown
21	3	21	1

Unit distribution

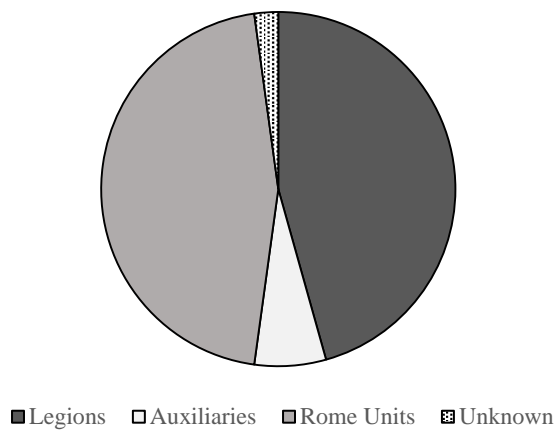


Table and Chart 2: Unit distribution by century

	Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units	Unknown
1st BC	5	0	0	0
1st AD	9	1.5	7.5	0
2nd AD	3.5	1	11.5	0.5
3rd AD	3.5	0.5	2	0.5

Unit distribution by century

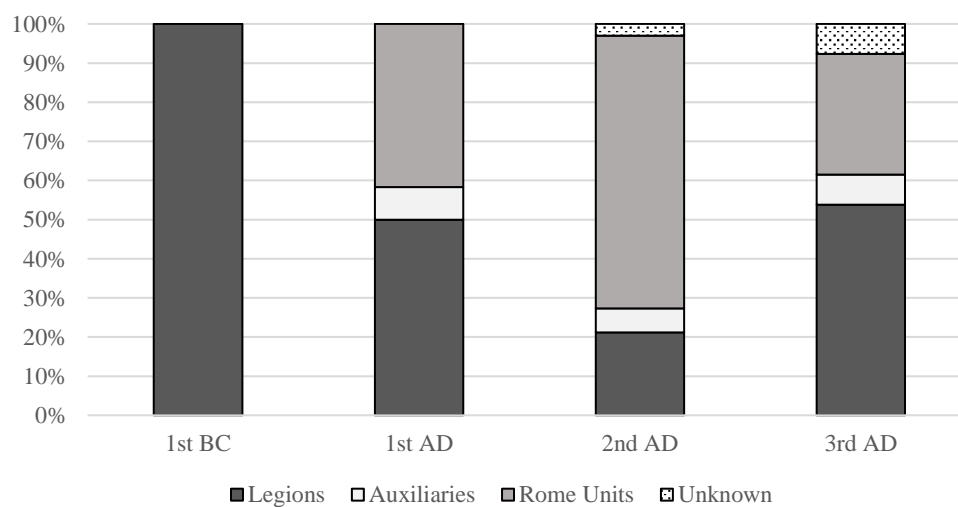


Table and Chart 3: Rank against civic role

	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Town Patron
Equestrian / Primipilaris	44	2	25	26
Centurion / Decurion	3	6	1	2
Principalis / Immunis	6	7	1	0
Gregalis / Unknown	17	9	2	0

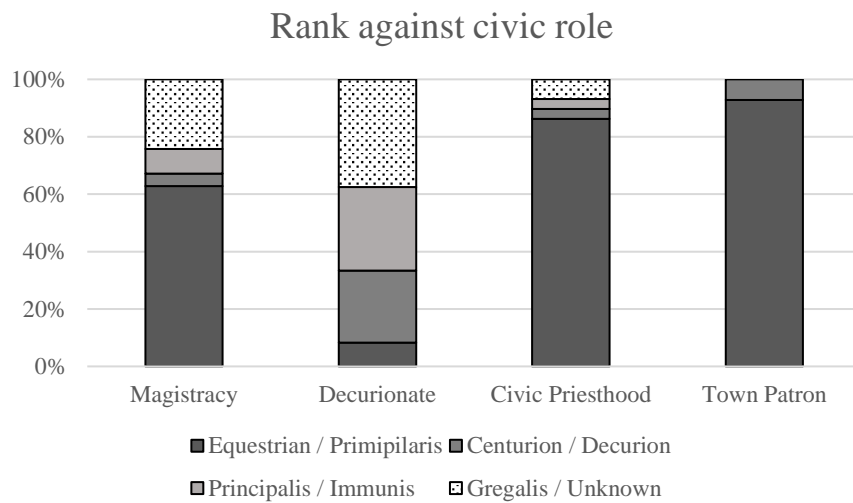


Table and Chart 4: Rank in civic role over time

	Equestrian / Primipilaris	Centurion / Decurion	Principalis / Immunis	Gregalis / Unknown
1st BC	4	1.5	0	3.5
1st AD	34	4	6	8
2nd AD	21	4	5	7.5
3rd AD	4	1.5	1	3

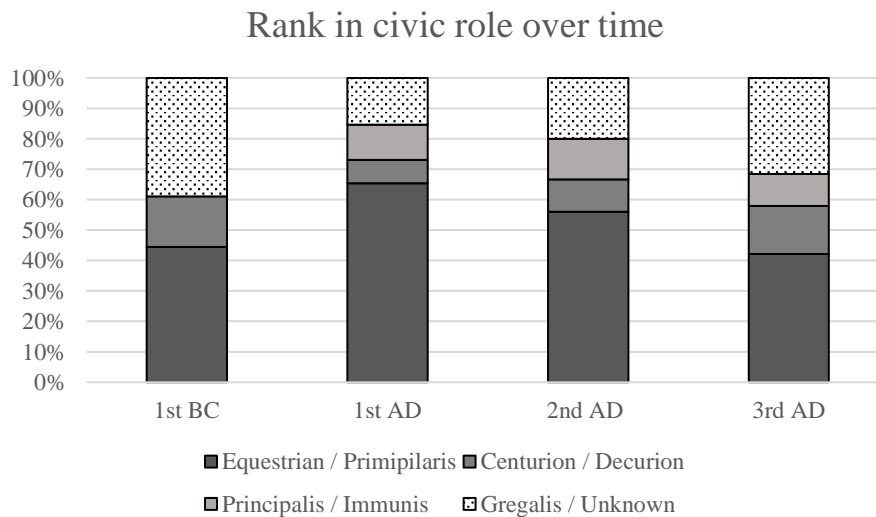
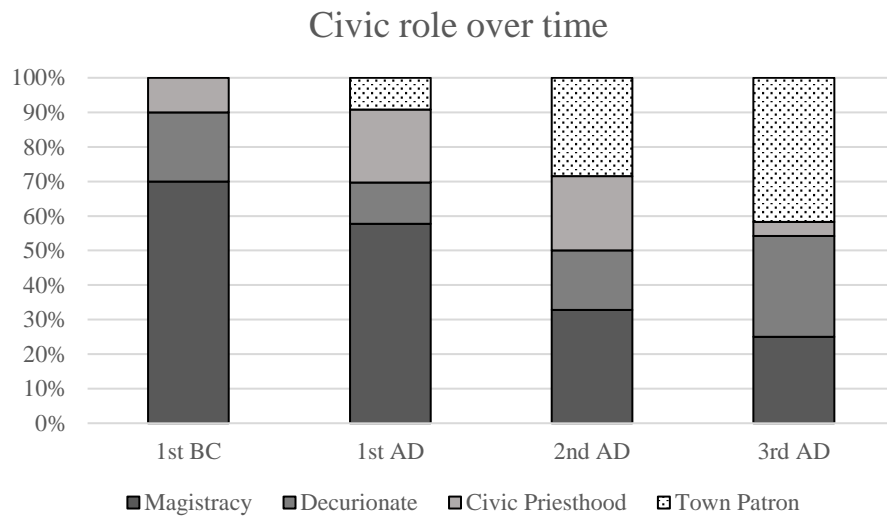


Table and Chart 5: Civic role over time

	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Town Patron
1st BC	7	2	1	0
1st AD	41	8.5	15	6.5
2nd AD	19	10	12.5	16.5
3rd AD	3	3.5	0.5	5



Dalmatia, the Gauls and Spains

Table and Chart 6: Unit distribution

Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units	Unknown
12	0	5	2

Unit distribution

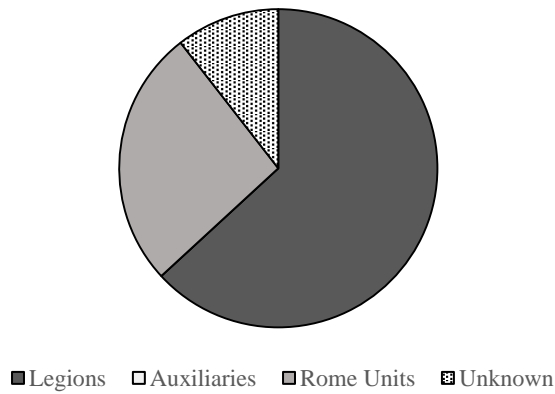


Table and Chart 7: Rank against civic role

	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Town Patron
Equestrian / Primipilaris	6	3	4	2
Centurion / Decurion	6	2	2	0
Principalis / Immunis	0	4	1	0
Gregalis / Unknown	6	4	3	0

Rank against civic role

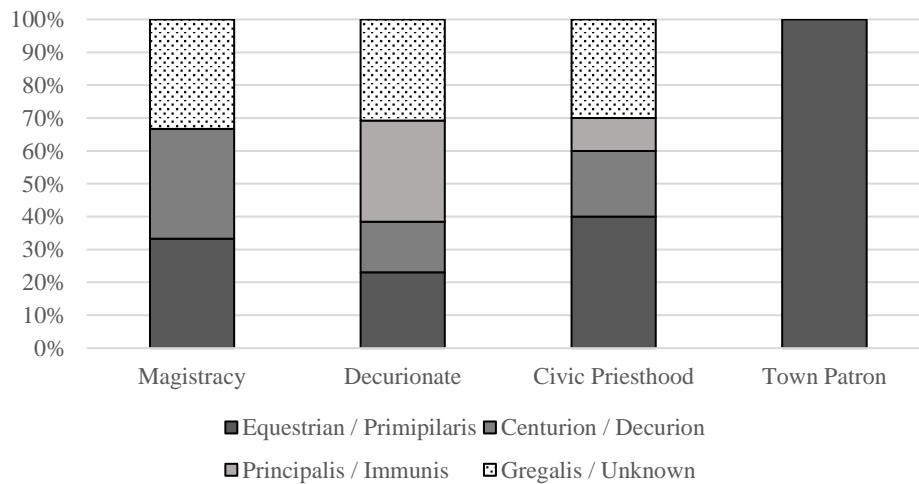


Table and Chart 8: Rank in civic role over time

	Equestrian / Primipilaris	Centurion / Decurion	Principalis / Immunis	Gregalis / Unknown
1st BC	0	3.5	0	0
1st AD	8.5	0.5	1	2
2nd AD	1.5	2.5	2.5	4.5
3rd AD	1	0.5	0.5	1.5

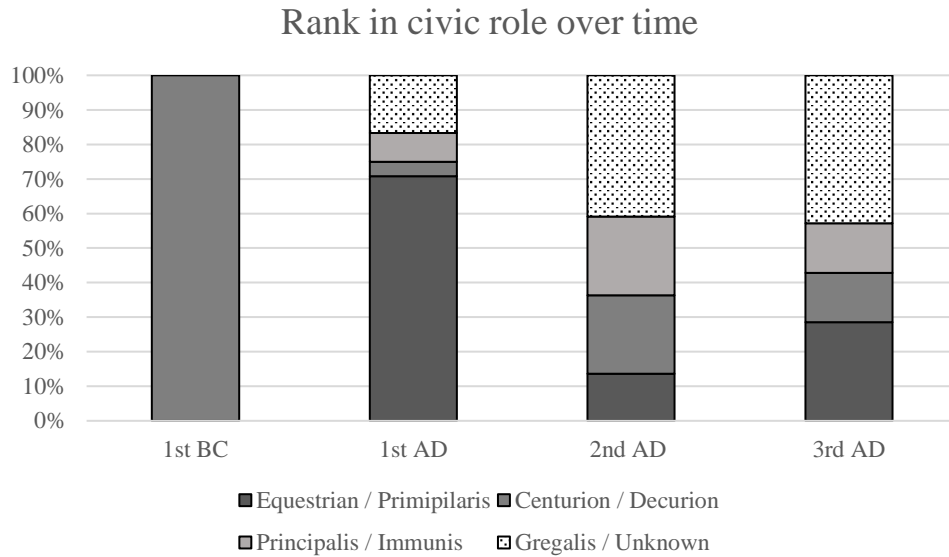
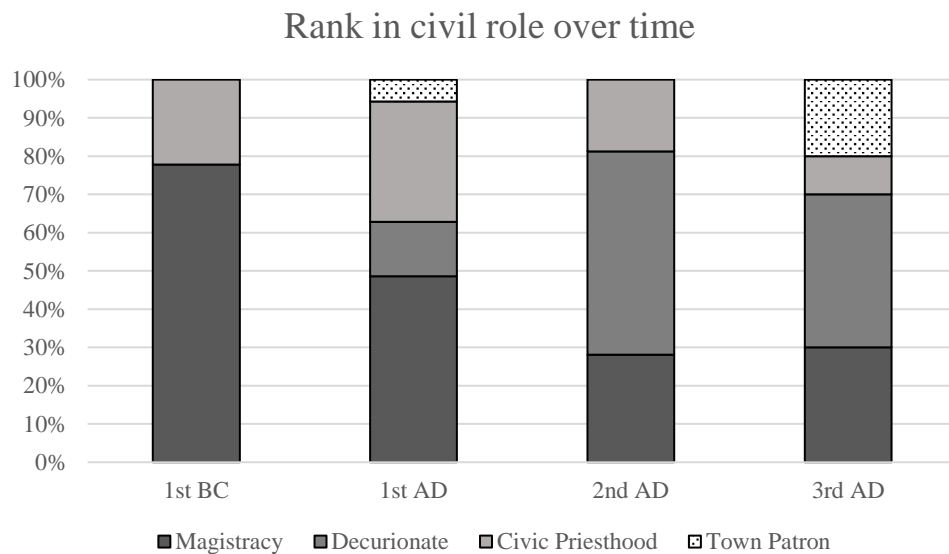


Table and Chart 9: Civic role over time

	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Town Patron
1st BC	3.5	0	1	0
1st AD	8.5	2.5	5.5	1
2nd AD	4.5	8.5	3	0
3rd AD	1.5	2	0.5	1



North Africa

Table and Chart 10: Unit distribution

Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units	Unknown
15	7	3	14

Unit distribution

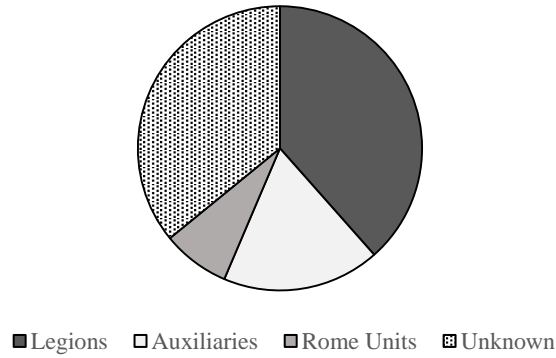


Table and Chart 11: Unit distribution by century

	Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units	Unknown
1st AD	3.5	0.5	0	1.5
2nd AD	9.5	4.5	2	4
3rd AD	2	2	1	8.5

Unit distribution by century

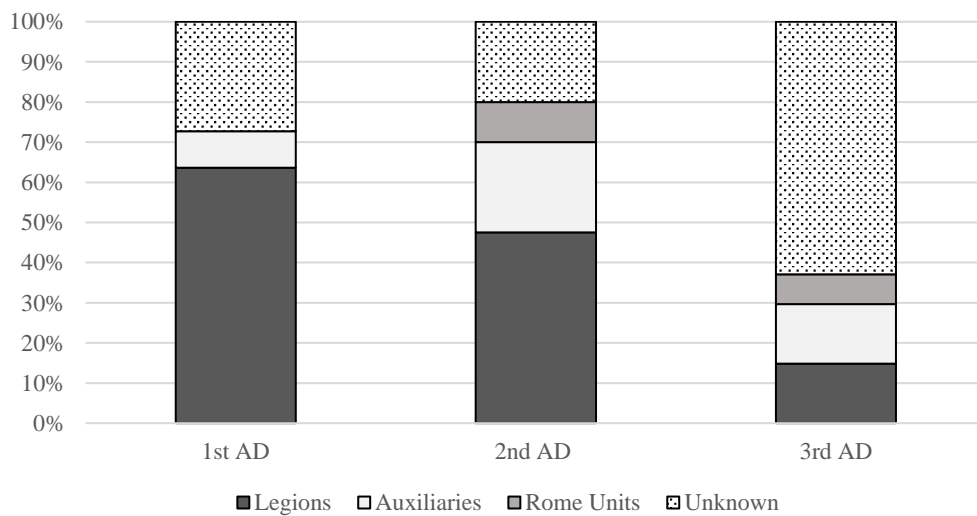


Table and Chart 12: Rank against civic role

	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Town Patron
Equestrian / Primipilaris	0	1	0	0
Centurion / Decurion	5	4	5	1
Principalis / Immunis	3	3	5	0
Gregalis / Unknown	5	2	17	1

Rank against civic role

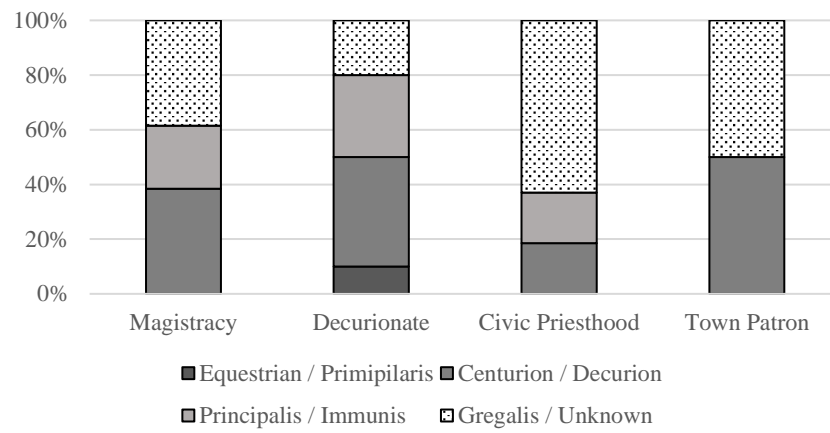


Table and Chart 13: Rank in civic role over time

	Equestrian / Primipilaris	Centurion / Decurion	Principalis / Immunis	Gregalis / Unknown
1st AD	0	1.5	0	4
2nd AD	0	5.5	6	8.5
3rd AD	1	4	2	7.5

Rank in civic role over time

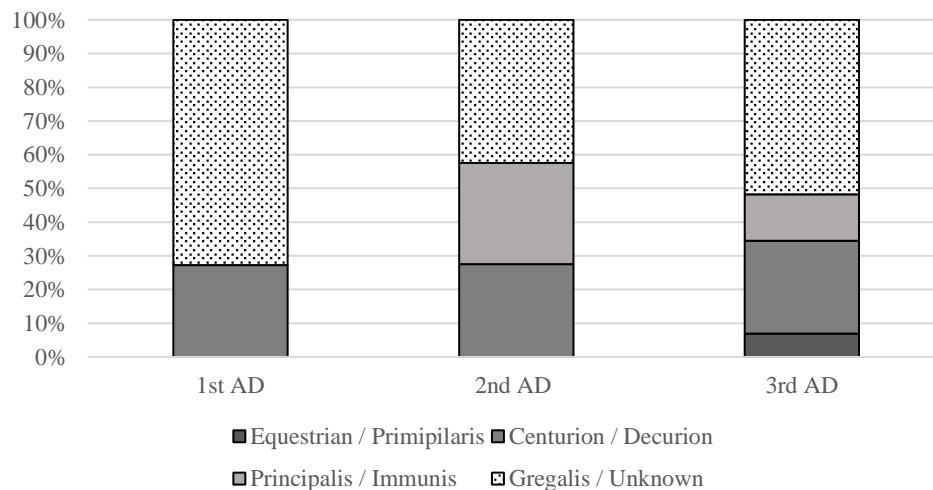
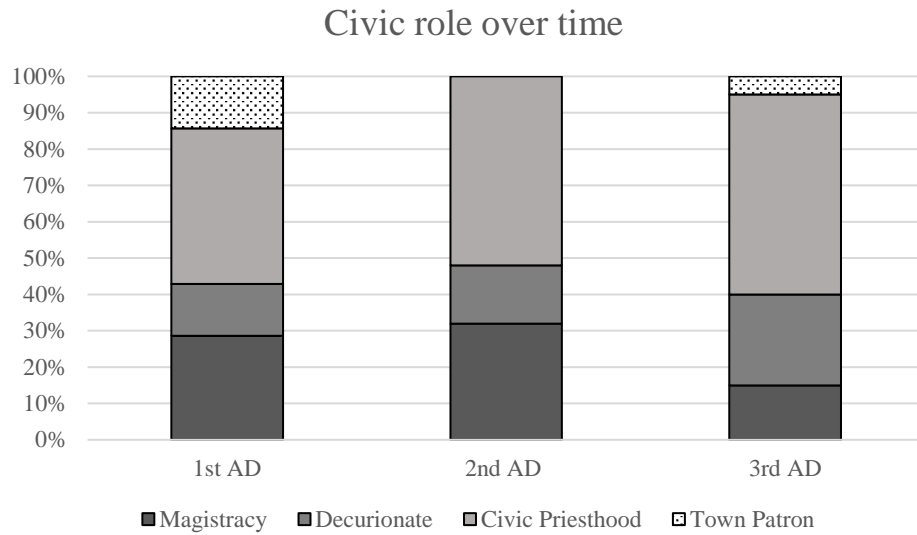


Table and Chart 14: Civic role over time

	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Town Patron
1st AD	2	1	3	1
2nd AD	8	4	13	0
3rd AD	3	5	11	1



Rhine and Danube

Table and Chart 15: Unit distribution

Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units	Unknown
38	11	1	6

Unit distribution

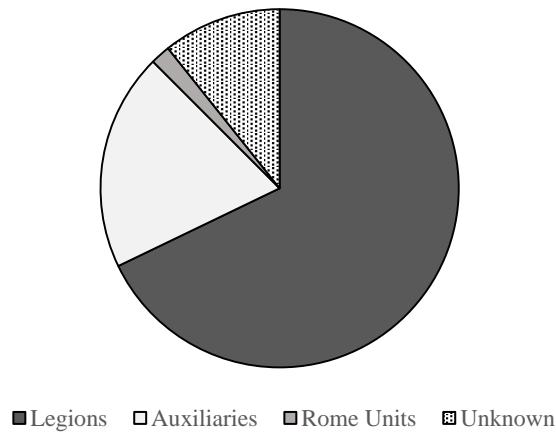


Table and Chart 16: Unit distribution by century

	Legions	Auxiliaries	Rome Units	Unknown
1st AD	3.5	1	0	0
2nd AD	25	4	0	1
3rd AD	9.5	6	1	4.5

Unit distribution by century

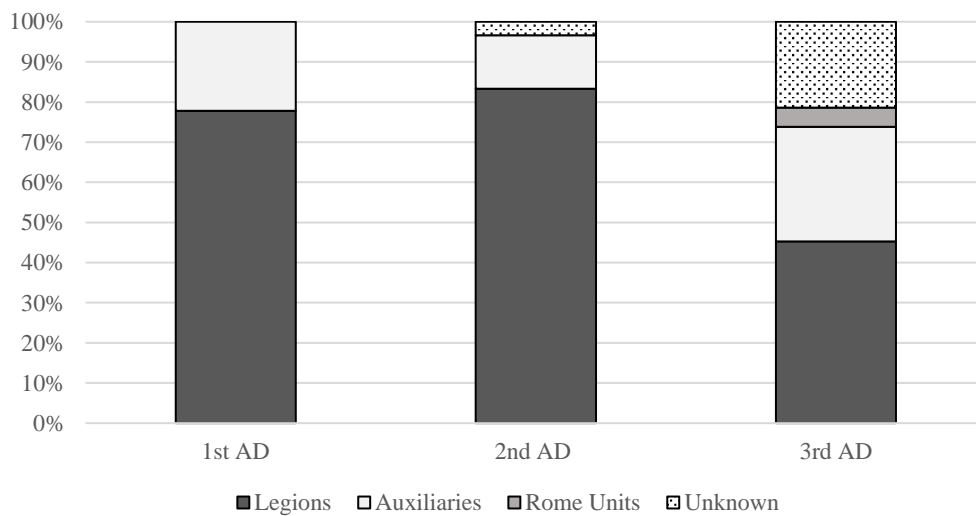


Table and Chart 17: Rank against civic role

	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Town Patron
Equestrian / Primipilaris	2	2	0	1
Centurion / Decurion	3	7	1	0
Principalis / Immunis	8	15	1	0
Gregalis / Unknown	13	19	1	0

Rank against civic role

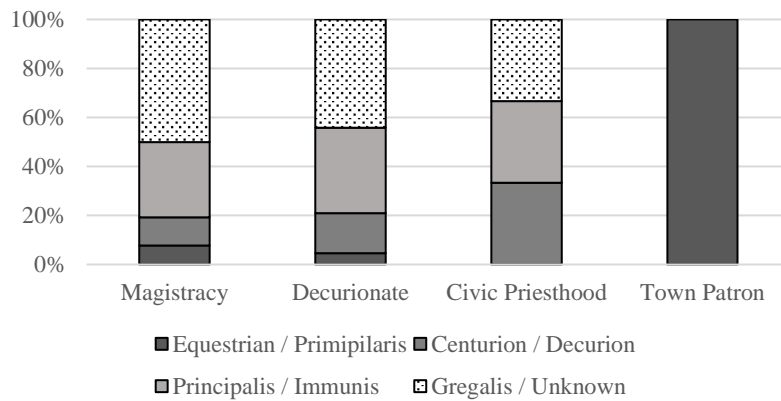


Table and Chart 18: Rank in civic role over time

	Equestrian / Primipilaris	Centurion / Decurion	Principalis / Immunis	Gregalis / Unknown
1st AD	0	1	1	2.5
2nd AD	1	5	7.5	17.5
3rd AD	2	5	9.5	6.5

Rank in civic role over time

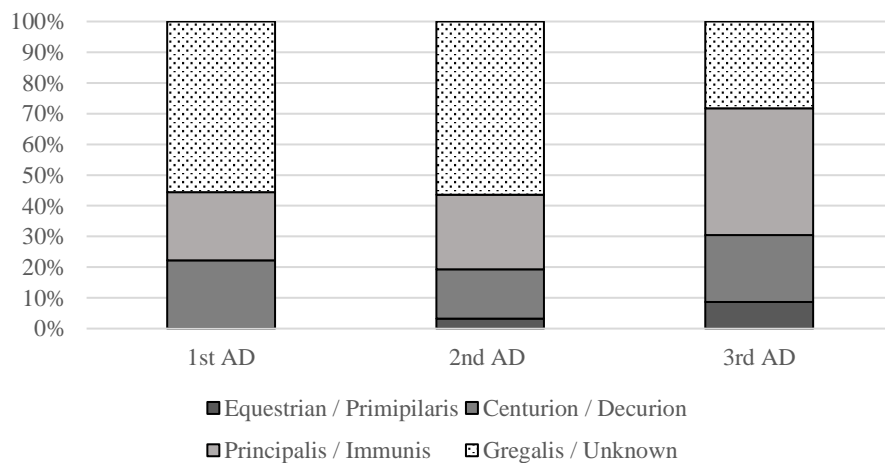
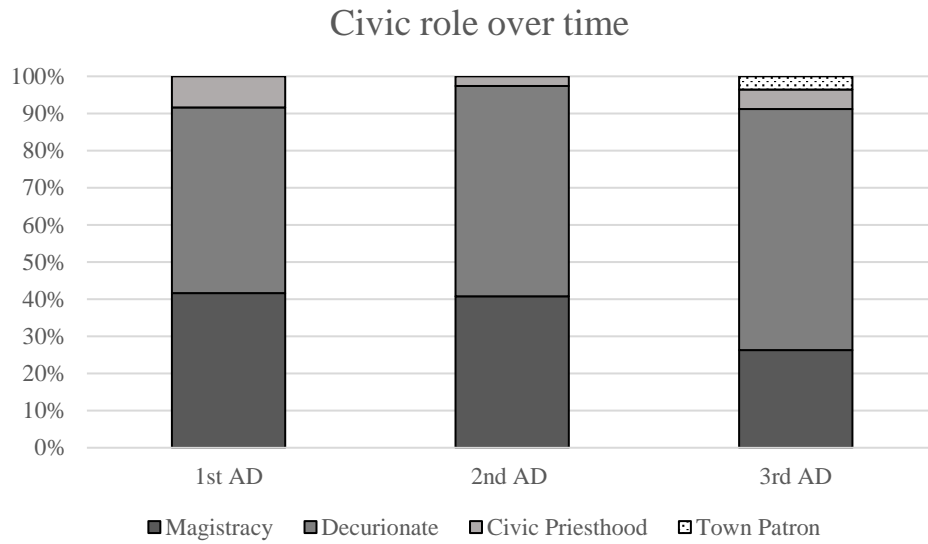


Table and Chart 19: Civic role over time

	Magistracy	Decurionate	Civic Priesthood	Town Patron
1st AD	2.5	3	0.5	0
2nd AD	15.5	21.5	1	0
3rd AD	7.5	18.5	1.5	1



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