INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.
The legionary horsemen: An essay on the *equites legionis* and *equites promoti*

Pavković, Michael Frederick, Ph.D.

University of Hawaii, 1991
THE LEGIONARY HORSEMEN:
AN ESSAY ON THE EQUITES LEGIONIS AND EQUITES PROMOTI

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
HISTORY

DECEMBER 1991

By

Michael F. Pavković

Dissertation Committee:

Michael P. Speidel, Chairman
Jerry H. Bentley
Elton L. Daniel
G. Raymond Nunn
Walter H. Maurer
© Copyright by Michael F. Pavkovič 1991
All Rights Reserved
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation, like most, owes many things to many people. First, I would like to thank my dissertation director, Prof. Michael P. Speidel. Indeed, my inspiration for a work on the units and ranks of the legionary horsemen owes much to two monographs by Prof. Speidel, namely, the study of the emperor's horseguards, his own doctoral dissertation, and the discussion of the provincial guard units of the governors, the singulares consularis. Moreover, Dr. Speidel's insights on Latin epigraphy, papyrology and the bibliography of the Roman army proved invaluable. He was also most generous in sharing numerous works from his own personal library with me; an important consideration here in Hawaii where classical studies were not a priority of the university library. Lastly Dr. Speidel's enthusiasm and gentle prodding were a great encouragement to me as I worked on the legionary horsemen.

I would also like to thank the other members of my dissertation committee, all of whom made a number of valuable comments which improved the quality of the present work. Dr. Elton Daniel and Dr. Jerry Bentley, both of the history department, provided me with many useful suggestions concerning my methodological approach.
Acknowledgements

which prevented some serious lapses in my arguments; their careful readings of this dissertation also saved me from a number of typographical and stylistic errors. Dr. G. Raymond Nunn, also a member of the history department, was a great help with numerous aspects of military history which manifested themselves in the dissertation. Finally, Dr. Walter Maurer, from the department of Indo-Pacific languages, whose knowledge of a wide variety of ancient languages, not the least of which are Greek and Latin, helped me to catch errors in the classical texts and to improve my translations.

I would also like to thank several members of the history department who were indirectly involved in supporting me during my tenure at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. In particular I would like to mention Dr. Ray E. Cubberley, the graduate chairman, who was a font of knowledge when dealing with the administration and who was generous with department financial support. Likewise, the chairmen of the history department who were always forthcoming with departmental funding during my stay, i.e., Dr. Harry Lamley, Dr. D. W. Y. Kwok and Dr. Robert Van Niel, deserve my thanks.

The University of Hawaii's Hamilton Library Interlibrary Loan office helped to procure several works critical to the completion of this study. Two women in
Acknowledgements

particular, Ms. Sally Drake and Ms. Audrey Minei, were most accommodating and helpful.

Last, but certainly not least, I must thank my parents, Joseph M. and Betty A. Pavkovic, without whose help the completion of my degree would not have been possible. Both of my parents supported me selflessly, both in terms of encouragement and financial aid, not only while at the University of Hawaii, but throughout my educational career.
This work is a study of the Roman legionary horsemen of the imperial period, both the equites legionis of the high empire and the equites promoti of the later empire. To date, the legionary cavalry have not been studied thoroughly, apparently on account of a perceived lack of material. New evidence makes such a study possible. A number of problems are addressed including the troopers' commander, organization, career structure, and tactical role.

Common wisdom holds that during the high empire the legionary horsemen were staff cavalry, implying rear echelon duties rather than an active combat role. It is argued here that the legionary cavalry had an active battlefield role, serving as the guard unit of the legionary commander. The careers of legionary troopers, who were at times advanced to command positions in the auxiliary regiments, implies such elite status. Similar promotions are known for other guard units of the Roman army.

This work also deals with questions concerning the organization and commander of the legionary horsemen. This study concludes that the legionary horsemen were not organized into squadrons as were the auxiliary cavalry, but rather were kept on the roles of the
infantry companies. The rank of the commander of the legionary cavalry, which has been much disputed in the past, now appears to have been that of a centurion.

During the third century, units of legionary horsemen were created as independent entities. This is again similar to the creation of other new line units from either guard units or elite mobile formations, strengthening the identification of the legionary troopers as a crack unit of the Roman army.

In addition to the analysis, this study contains a catalogue of pertinent inscriptions papyri and monuments relating to the legionary horsemen. A commentary appears where appropriate.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .................................................. iv  
ABSTRACT ................................................................. vii  
LIST OF PLATES ........................................................... x  
ABBREVIATIONS .......................................................... xi  

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION .............................................. 1  

CHAPTER II. THE EQUITES LEGIONIS ................................... 12  
1. The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen .......................... 12  
2. The Return of the Equites Legionis ............................... 23  
3. Recruitment of the Equites Legionis ............................... 27  
4. Unit Organization .................................................. 36  
5. The Commander of the Equites Legionis ......................... 46  
6. Officers and Other Ranks ......................................... 54  
7. Rank and Pay ...................................................... 64  
8. Promotion and Careers ........................................... 71  
9. Arms and Armor ................................................... 77  
10. Religion ................................................................... 87  
11. The Role of the Equites Legionis ................................ 94  

CHAPTER III. THE EQUITES PROMOTI ................................ 104  
1. The Origins of the Equites Promoti ................................ 104  
2. Numbers and Unit Organization ................................... 110  
3. Officers ............................................................... 117  
4. Arms and Armor .................................................... 124  

CHAPTER IV. DOCUMENTS OF THE EQUITES LEGIONIS ............ 133  

CHAPTER V. DOCUMENTS OF THE EQUITES PROMOTI ............... 216  

CHAPTER VI. CONCLUSIONS ............................................. 226  

PLATES ........................................................................... 230  
GLOSSARY ......................................................................... 235  
BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................................ 237
LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: Tombstone of Caius Marius, Bonn.............. 230
Plate 2: Anepigraphic Relief of a Legionary Horseman, Naples........................................ 231
Plate 3: Tombstone of Caius Iulius, Cormasa........... 232
Plate 4: Wall painting, Luxor.............................. 233
Plate 5: Wall painting, Luxor (detail).................... 234
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Inscriptions given by number only are references to the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AE</td>
<td>L'Année Epigraphique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJP</td>
<td>American Journal of Philology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrian, Ekt.</td>
<td>Arrian, Ektaxis kata Alanon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASP</td>
<td>Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGU</td>
<td>Berliner Greichische Urkunden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJ</td>
<td>Bonner Jahrbücher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesar, BG</td>
<td>Caesar, Bellum Gallicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fink, RMR</td>
<td>R. O. Fink, Roman Military Record on Papyrus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSCP</td>
<td>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGLS</td>
<td>Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGR</td>
<td>Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILS</td>
<td>H. Dessau, Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae (Berlin, 1892-1916)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephus, BJ</td>
<td>Josephus, Bellum Judaicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRS</td>
<td>Journal of Roman Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not. Dig.</td>
<td>Notitia Dignitatum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Charite</td>
<td>Papyrus from the Charite Archive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Grenf. 2</td>
<td>B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, New Classical Fragments and other Greek and Latin Papyri (Oxford, 1897)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PBSR</td>
<td>Papers of the British School at Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft (Stuttgart, 1894- )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIU</td>
<td>Die römischen Inschriften Ungarns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sallust, BI</td>
<td>Sallust, Bellum Iugurthinum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td>Supplementum Epigraphicorum Graecorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacitus, Agr.</td>
<td>Tacitus, Agricola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS</td>
<td>Wiener Studien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZPE</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Of the various branches of the Roman military establishment, the best known both to scholar and layman alike are probably the troops of the legions, the "line infantry" formations of the Roman army. The reason behind this notoriety is the large number of documents concerning the legions preserved from antiquity. These documents range from official troop rosters to private letters to the gravestones of the soldiers which preserve many important details on the career of the deceased and occasionally even depict him in uniform. A vast amount of academic ink has been spilled on a variety of topics concerning the legions such as their officers, organization, recruitment, and the histories of individual legions.

Despite this plethora of information and scholarship on the legions as a whole, there is one particular aspect of the legions which has suffered from a dearth of erudite investigation, viz., the horsemen who were attached to the legions: the equites legionis of the high empire (ca. 14 B.C.-A.D. 260) and the equites promoti of the later empire (ca. A.D. 260-476).  

\[1\]

---

1The standard work to date on the legionary horsemen of the high empire is the brief piece Breeze 1969, 50-55, esp. 53ff. The equites promoti of the later empire are discussed by Grosse 1920, 16ff.
Introduction

The primary reason behind this lack of disquisition is a perceived deficiency of source material. The number of monuments, inscriptions, papyri, and literary references for the legionary horsemen number fewer than two hundred as compared with the thousands of documents for the legions as a whole. As a result, many truisms about the organization, officers, ranks, and role of the legionary horsemen have come into being, based mainly on the observations of some of the early scholars of Roman army studies.

Most of these premises about the legionary horsemen, especially those of the early empire, tend to downplay the role of the legionary horse as battlefield troopers of the Roman army. Alfred von Domaszewski, the great authority on the rank structure of the Roman army, referred to them as Stabskavallerie, staff cavalry, implying their duties were to protect the legionary staff and commander; von Domaszewski seems to have had in mind the nineteenth century phenomenon of infantry and cavalry troops permanently attached to a unit's command structure.\(^2\) Such Stabs-truppen do not seem to have had much of an active battlefield role, rather

---
\(^2\)Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 39 and esp. 46.
Introduction

being rear echelon troops. H. M. D. Parker, who wrote extensively on the Roman legions, went so far as to explain the lack of documentary evidence for the *equites legionis* as a reflection of their lack of importance in the Roman army, rather than their relatively small numbers. This view is still held in recent scholarship on the Roman army where the communications role of the legionary is stressed; one scholar went so far as to say "These men were citizens, but they were by no means citizen cavalry."  

Many of these axioms can now be dispelled based upon new evidence and the reinterpretation of older evidence in light of new discoveries about the legions as a whole or even other units in the Roman army. Indeed, recently in a discussion of work to be done on the Roman army, a call was made for a monograph on the

---

3 For the organization of a late nineteenth century staff and such Stabs-truppen, see Oberst Anton Elder v. Springer, *Handbuch für Officiere des Generalstabes* (Vienna, 1899), 127-142.

4 Parker 1932, 141.

5 See, for example, Breeze 1969, 55.

6 Bishop 1988, 112f.
Introduction

legionary horsemen which would include a discussion of these soldiers and a catalog of documents.\textsuperscript{7}

The preparation of this study, given the general paucity of materials, draws on all possible sources on the legionary horsemen. Each of the types of primary material has its own advantages and particular problems.

The single most important source in the study of the legionary horsemen is epigraphy. This is because the inscriptions concerning the legionary cavalry provide the largest corpus of documents; this is true not only of the \textit{equites legionis}, but of the Roman army in general.

Epigraphy has long been recognized as the most fruitful course of inquiry into Roman army studies. Inscriptions of individual soldiers provide information on ranks, organization, promotions, recruitment and the movement of legions and auxiliary units while unit inscriptions, often altars or building records, are useful in reconstructing the religion of the Roman soldier, unit command structure and the operational history of units. The use of inscriptions by scholars in the study of the Roman army has been likened by a famous epigrapher to the modern use of "intelligence

\textsuperscript{7}Speidel, 1990, 102.
Introduction

information" by military officers since the same types of data are to be gained from both sources.⁸

There are, however, some problems which arise in using inscriptions in the study of the legionary horsemen. One of the most serious is that the inscriptions which have been used in the course of the current study may not reflect all of the documents available. For reasons of economy a stone which belonged to a man who was at one point in his military career an *eques legionis* may not anywhere make mention of that position. Indeed, several of the gravestones cited in this work have been discerned to belong to legionary horsemen by deduction rather than explicit use of the military rank.⁹

There is also the distribution of extant inscriptions both geographically and chronologically. Some provinces of the empire have fairly large numbers

⁸Birley 1988g, 3f., who recognized the importance of the documentary evidence of inscriptions and papyri.

⁹shows a relief of a horseman who is a Roman citizen. 44 gives the term *eques* without a unit, but the man is a Roman citizen. 49 is the second of two stones of the same man who is called an *eques legionis* on the first stone, only a veteran on the second. 47, 53 and 73 all bear reliefs of legionary cavalry troopers, but the inscriptions only give the rank of "soldier," *miles*. 
Introduction

of inscriptions while other regions of known military importance, like Cappadocia, have but one. Likewise, there are numerous inscriptions from the high empire, but the quantity declines dramatically by the end of the third century.

The second set of military documents are the papyri of the Roman army. These papyri tend to fall into three broad categories. First, there were the unit rosters and lists of individual soldiers. Second, are the lists kept by units which record the strength of a particular ala, cohort, or legion at a given point in time such as a commander's daily, monthly or annual report. The third type of papyri are military pay records and statements of available matériel. Finally, there are soldiers' official and personal correspondence and papers.¹⁰

The main problem with papyri is that because of the nature of the medium, it is only preserved in the dry

¹⁰For the classification of papyri, see Fink RMR, 9-17, 179-182, 241f. and 348-51. For the legionary horsemen, the majority of papyri fall into the category of correspondence and papers --five of the seven (92, 93, 118, 119 and 120) Of the remaining two one is an individual record (94) while the other is a monthly summary (91).
Introduction

eastern provinces. Therefore, the distribution of these important records is skewed.

There are also literary sources which are of use for the study of the legionary horsemen. These works can be divided into two basic classes. The first type of literary evidence is that which can be drawn from the contemporary historians of the Roman empire. Unfortunately, explicit references to the *equites legionis* are rather sparse in Roman historical writings. In general, this seems to be because the legionary troopers were simply subsumed within the idea of "the legion" and were only mentioned in exceptional circumstances or for particular emphasis. Therefore, the historians who usually provide a fruitful line of investigation for the Roman army, such as Tacitus, Josephus, Cassius Dio and Ammianus Marcellinus, are too often silent on the cavalry troopers of the legions.

The second type of literary work which was consulted in the preparation of this study is the genre of ancient military manuals, which themselves can be further sub-divided into three categories. The first of those are the tactical writings of the high empire which were modelled on earlier Hellenistic treatises; a good illustration of this type is the *Taktika* of Flavius Arrianus (Arrian). Unfortunately such works are usually
so Hellenistic in flavor or so general as to be of little use for the legionary horsemen.\textsuperscript{11}

Of more use are those manuals which were genuinely Roman. The best surviving example is the late imperial work of Vegetius, the *Epitoma rei militaris*. Vegetius is of far more utility to the study of the legionary horsemen than a Hellenistic styled work because he dealt with the Roman legion specifically, and so the legionary troopers are indeed mentioned. Vegetius, however, has been criticized as a worthwhile source for the Roman army; his *antiqua legio* was considered difficult to date at best or to be an idealized amalgam of various earlier periods at worst.\textsuperscript{12} Thus Vegetius has been used rather cautiously by scholars and sometimes even ignored. Yet in recent years Vegetius has been rehabilitated.

\textsuperscript{11}While it is true that Arrian's *Taktika* does have an excursus on Roman cavalry tactics, it deals with the cavalry of the auxiliary *alae*, who supplied the great majority of Rome's horsemen. The tactics described therein however, were undoubtedly used by the legionary squads as well, even though they are not specifically mentioned. See *infra*, *s.vv.* Arms and Armor and The Role of the *Equites Legionis*.

\textsuperscript{12}For some discussion on Vegetius, see Parker 1932 and Sander 1940.
Introduction

Vegetius' *triarii*, not usually taken seriously, have now been attested epigraphically.\(^{13}\)

Lastly, there are the early Byzantine military treatises, too frequently overlooked by Roman historians. But these works often preserve elements of earlier Roman military practice; certain commands, for example, are in Latin rather than Greek. The best known of the early Byzantine works is the *Strategikon* of Mauricius. Sadly, while the Byzantine works do deal extensively with cavalry organization and tactics, there are no demonstrable references to legionary troops as the Byzantine horsemen were formed into independent units.

In addition to written sources on the *equites legionis*, there are also the pictorial representations of the horsemen. There are two types of monuments, the gravestones of private soldiers and reliefs or paintings on imperial monuments.

The most accurate depictions of the legionary cavalry appear on their funerary monuments. Roman soldiers, like all Romans, wanted to be remembered and thus took great care and expense in the erection of

\(^{13}\)In the text of AE 1981, 777, the rank *optio triarius* appears.
Introduction

their tombstones, which were often raised in sight of their camp.\textsuperscript{14}

While a good stone can represent many items of equipment and dress in detail, there can difficulties. One problem is the weathering of the monument, which can either have eroded details on stone itself or at least eradicated traces of paint which was often used to represent certain parts of the uniform. Moreover, on occasion a relief might be quite small and so only general comments can be made on equipment.\textsuperscript{15}

Imperial representations of soldiers are also usually accurate, but there can be problematic aspects. Imperial monuments, like official art throughout history, tends to show the ideal of military equipment rather than the reality.\textsuperscript{16} This can be especially true if they are to be displayed in the capital.

\textsuperscript{14}A good introduction to Roman military monuments is Anderson 1984; see 25-34 for the question of the stones' accuracy.

\textsuperscript{15}29 below, for example. The size of depictions of military equipment can often influence their utility. Compare the comments of Domaszewski 1972a, 28f. and Durry 1938, 197 on the use of representations of standards, etc. on coins.

\textsuperscript{16}See the problems raised by S. Frere in Lepper and Frere 1988, 266-269.
Introduction

Fortunately, this ideal still reflects an important aspect of the military uniform, such as parade or dress equipment.

The purpose of this study is, for the first time, to examine comprehensively all of the available evidence concerning the legionary cavalry troopers of both high and later empire. What follows is an attempt to create as complete a picture as possible for the equites legionis and equites promoti drawing on a variety of materials.
1. The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

It may be assumed that from earliest times Roman horsemen were present to support the Roman infantry. When Rome was a mere town on the Tiber River, the horsemen were no doubt formed from the bodyguard and retainers of the king and should be considered an aristocratic institution. But it is not until considerably later that we can talk about legionary cavalrymen.

---

1We have very little solid evidence for the Roman army before the Punic Wars. Our main source for Rome's early history, Livy, who wrote under Augustus, is well-known for his rather uncritical historical method and is notorious for his inconsistency and lack of knowledge with respect to Roman institutions and military affairs; for Livy as a military source, see the comments by Rawson 1971. Much of what is said concerning the Roman army during this early period must, therefore, be considered conjectural.

2The first time we hear of legionary horsemen referred to as such, i.e., using the phrase equites legionarii, is in a passage from Livy (35.6.10) concerning the year 193 B.C. They are again so called shortly thereafter in 180 B.C.: Livy 40.40.4. It is permissible, however, to talk of legionary horsemen somewhat earlier, namely, as soon as the aristocratic cavalry attached to the legiones receive a more or less permanent organization.
The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

According to tradition, the reign of Servius Tullius, 580-530 B.C., marked a turning point for both the Roman state and the army. The military reforms ascribed to Servius are generally attributed to the introduction of Greek hoplite tactics at Rome. Yet modern historians have doubted that such a complex military and political structure could have appeared at Rome at such an early date. Instead they surmise that there were a series of reforms which probably began in the middle of the fifth century B.C. and culminated in the middle of the fourth century B.C. with the Servian army as described by Livy (1.43). Slightly later the army was divided into two legiones organized into centuriae.³ During this period each legio was provided with a force of horsemen, apparently 600 strong, organized into small tactical units of ten men, decuriae.⁴

By the last quarter of the fourth century B.C. the Roman army was divided into four legiones organized in manipuli each of which was composed of two of the

³The development of the Roman army from an army based on a Greek style phalanx into one based on the hoplite legio and thence into the Servian army of five classes is discussed by Sumner 1970.

⁴Sumner 1970, 70 and 75.
The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

centuriae used in the earlier hoplite legio. It is with the manipular reform that the final organization of legionary horsemen appears to have been implemented. Since the number of legiones was doubled, the number of cavalry in each legion was halved; the Roman aristocracy, it seems, could still only provide 1200 troopers for the army. This is most likely the period when the turmae, or squadrons, each composed of three decuriae, were introduced; just as the larger manipulus subsumed the smaller centuria so too the larger turma now incorporated the smaller decuria.

The organization of legionary cavalry, to the number of three hundred troopers per legion divided into ten turmae of thirty men each, became the established norm until at least the middle of the second century B.C.

5Although there were 18 centuriae of equites in the centuriate assembly, it seems that only six were liable for military service. See Sumner 1970, 74f.

6This phenomenon of assimilation of smaller units by larger ones is described by Sumner 1970, 68.

7Livy, 21.17.8-9: et duae Romanae legiones cum suo iusto equitatu ... duas legiones Romanas et decem milia sociorum peditum, mille equites socios, sescentos Romanos ... ; cf. Livy 42.35.4: iusto numero ... equitum. Anything over three hundred troopers was considered to be a surplus, as shown by Livy 44.21.8, neque in ea provincia (Macedonia) plus quam duas legiones esse; eas repleri ut sena milia peditum trescentos haberent equites, ceteros pedites equitesque in praesidiis disponi.
The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

Polybius, who wrote ca. 160 B.C., in a digression on the Roman constitution during his narration of the events of the Hannibalic War, discusses the numbers and organization of the Roman legionary horsemen. Polybius likewise reports that the legionary horsemen were divided into ten turmae. He gives additional information concerning the command structure of the turmae. Each turma has three decuriones, one for each subunit of ten men. The first of the three decuriones chosen in the levy served as the commander of the entire turma. If for some reason he was not present, the decurio who was the second of the three chosen assumed command of the unit. In addition to the decurio, each ten man subunit possessed a second officer, the optio (οὗτος), who served as the deputy of the decurio. As such, each decurio personally appointed his own optio.

Although the number of equites attached to a legio was supposed to be three hundred troopers distributed in ten turmae, circumstances were often such that this "book strength" was either reduced or, occasionally,

---

8 Polybius, 6.25.1-2.
increased. The under-strength units of legionary horsemen could be attached to infantry units which were themselves under the established strength. The number of horsemen attached to each legio could vary from as low as one hundred and fifty to as high as four hundred. Units of three hundred are most commonly found attached to a legion followed by those two hundred strong.

How the legionary horsemen were organized when not at normal strength is uncertain. One possibility, at least in the case of two hundred and four hundred troopers, is that the number of decuriae in each turma was either increased or decreased. Thus one might

---

9 Three hundred horsemen is certainly the most common number given. See, for several examples, Livy 7.25.8; 21.17.5; 26.28.7; 29.24.14; 32.28.10; 29.28.10; 40.1.5; 41.9.2; 42.52.8; 43.12.3-10.

10 Livy 40.18.6: et in supplementum decreta tria milia civium Romanorum, ducenti equites.

11 One hundred fifty horsemen: Livy 41.21.3; two hundred: Livy 40.18.6 and 44.21.6; four hundred equites: Livy 23.24.13. The strength of four hundred troopers was recommended by Cato in his de re militari as the new standard, cf. the comments by Rawson, 16.

12 Sumner 1970, 68, believes that in the case of two hundred troopers the number of men in a turma was reduced rather than the number of turmae. This is probably correct, as it would simply require reducing the number of ten man subunits.
speculate that in the case of a legio with only two hundred horsemen, each turma would be composed of only two decuriae while a legio with four hundred troopers would have four decuriae for each of its ten squadrons.

The case of a legio with one hundred fifty equites is not so obvious, as the division of the horsemen into ten turmae does not lend itself very well to the division of the individual squadrons into ten man subunits. Therefore, ranks and files would necessarily be altered. The second possibility is that the number of turmae was reduced to five; the latter seems the more reasonable.

From the middle of the second century B.C. the use of Roman legionary horsemen declined. This was probably due in part to the lack of willingness of the Roman aristocracy to serve in military campaigns. By the middle of the first century B.C. the legionary horsemen had disappeared, and their place had been taken by

13 The turmae no doubt practiced certain equestrian maneuvers much like those described later by Arrian in his techne taktika. This is shown by the preservation of the order duplicate turmas in Livy 40.40.4-5. There is other evidence for the formal tactical training of such aristocratic horsemen: Xenophon (Hipparch. 3.1; 3.10-13) describes several training exercises by the Athenian hippelis. The most famous was probably the anthippasia which was a mock battle. For training of the Athenian horsemen see the recent discussion by Bugh 1988, 58ff.
The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

various foreign auxiliaries, like the ubiquitous Gauls of Caesar's campaigns.14

The last source which might mention these horsemen serving in the field is Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum* when he describes Metellus' *agmen*, or order of march, during a campaign in 107 B.C.15 The rear guard is composed of *equites* under the command of C. Marius, a member of Metellus' staff. These *equites* are distinct from the *equites auxiliarii* who guard the flanks of the column.16

There is an episode from Caesar's Gallic War which clearly illustrates the lack of any integral Roman legionary cavalry in the middle of the first century B.C.17 In 58 B.C. Caesar was faced with an incursion by the Germans under their chieftain Ariovistus. At one point during the campaign, Ariovistus suggested to Caesar that they meet to discuss their differences. Moreover, the German chieftain demanded that both he and Caesar

---

14 See Harmand 1967, 46-51 for the dominance of foreign cavalry during the late Republic.

15 Sallust, *BI* 46.7.

16 For the identification of these *equites* with Roman legionary horsemen, see Koestermann 1971, 191f.

17 Caesar, *BG*, 1.43.
The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

have escorts composed of cavalry alone. Ariovistus hoped that in this way he would put Caesar at a great disadvantage since the Roman commander would be forced to entrust his person to a band of foreigners, i.e., his Gallic cavalry. Caesar was unwilling to place his life in the hands of the Gallic horsemen, but he had no other cavalry at his disposal. Caesar did not want to cancel his meeting with Ariovistus, so, as a temporary expedient, he mounted members of his favorite legion, the 10th, on horses taken from his Gauls. At this sign of favor, the soldiers of the 10th legion joked that Caesar had knighted them, i.e., they were now aristocratic equites. 18 This affair shows that Caesar had no Roman cavalry, at least not in sufficient numbers to form a sizeable battlefield unit, as he was forced to mount an infantry unit in their place.

There is some evidence, however, that the equites Romani retained certain military duties well into the last century of the republic, albeit only at Rome. In 63 B.C. we are told by Suetonius (Iul. 14.2) that there was a manus armata, an armed band, of Roman equites who were placed at the Curia to act as a guard for the place.

---

18 Because of this incident the legion took as one of its epithets equestris, "knightly." See the comments by Keppie 1984, 83f., 204, and 209.
The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

(praesidii causa circumstabat) and that this group intimidated Caesar's friends in the Senate when the horsemen drew their swords (gladii). This function was, no doubt, primarily ceremonial, but it does show that the Roman horsemen were still required to perform limited military functions in the city itself while armed and organized.

We know very little concerning the man or men who commanded the legionary cavalry. The equites legionis seem often to have been organized in battle groups formed from the troopers of several legiones, apparently under the command of a member of the army commander's staff.19 An example of this is the detachment under the orders of C. Marius in Africa; perhaps the commander himself led the legionary horsemen on occasion. It does seem, however, that lower ranking officers commanded the legionary cavalry. A pair of tribunes, for example, is known to have commanded a unit of legionary horsemen jointly.20 Likewise a centurion is said to have introduced the practice of combining light infantry with

_____ 19 Battlegroups: Livy 26.5.8-9; 31.21.13; 40.40.4.

20 Livy 41.4.3: et parte alia T. et C. Aelii tribuni militum tertiae legionis cum equitatu adveniunt.
The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

the horsemen\textsuperscript{21}; he appears to have had some connection with legionary cavalry, perhaps as a training officer, a post which is known for the equites legionis of the empire. Equally, he may have commanded a detachment of horsemen or a subunit of some type. Although this

\textsuperscript{21}Livy 26.4.10: Auctorem peditum equiti inmiscendorum centurionem Q. Naevium ferunt, honorique id ei apud imperatorem fuisse.
The Origins of the Legionary Horsemen

centurion's connection to the legionary cavalry is probable, nothing can be said with certainty.
2. The Return of the *Equites Legionis*

With the accession of Octavian, later to be known as Augustus, as the first Roman emperor, the Roman armies of the civil wars of the late Republic were greatly reduced in size and reorganized.\textsuperscript{22} As part of this reorganization the legions were once again provided with a contingent of horsemen. The legions would retain this cavalry contingent until the period of crisis during the third century when circumstances dictated a change in the role and numbers of the legionary horsemen.\textsuperscript{23} The *equites legionis* of the empire formed a rather different institution from their counterparts during the republic.

The most obvious difference between the republican and imperial legionary horsemen was in the social status of the men recruited. The republican horsemen were drawn from the young aristocrats of the Roman state. Though, as we have seen, these men had become less and less willing to serve as battlefield troopers, so that by the

\textsuperscript{22}For general surveys of the reorganization of the Roman army by Augustus, see Parker 1928, 72-92; Keppie 1984, 132-150.

\textsuperscript{23}It was not always thought that there were *equites legionis* attached to each legion for the whole of the imperial period: Marquardt 1884, 456, n.1; Sander 1940, 385. The publication of new evidence, most notably the inscription of Tiberius Claudius Maximus (77), however, shows the uninterrupted existence of a body of legionary cavalry.
The Return of the *Equites Legionis*

first century B.C. they no longer appear to have served with the *legiones*. The imperial *equites legionis* were recruited from a different source. They were drawn from the rank and file of the *legiones* themselves, i.e., they were recruited from the commoners who formed the infantry of the legions rather than from the aristocratic *equites Romani*.  

The imperial legionary horsemen, however, ranked higher than the common soldiers of the legions, the *munifices*. This is shown by an inscription in which a cavalry trooper notes that he served as a common soldier, a *munifex*, for seven years before he was promoted to the rank of *eques*.  

The *munifices* were those soldiers who were subjected to the *munera*, basic duties, of camp life such as daily maintenance of the camp and construction projects (the portage of wood, hay, water and straw into

---

24 It has been suggested that the young men of the equestrian and senatorial orders served as *equites legionis* as part of their *cursus honorum*. This hypothesis was suggested by Soltau; for a summary and rejection of the argument, justifiably correct, see Stein 1927, 88.

25 The ranking of the *equites legionis* as *immunes* is reinforced by a papyrus, 94: Premerstein 1903, 1-46, esp. 26ff.
The Return of the Equites Legionis

the camp and the quarrying of stone)\textsuperscript{26}. Immediately above the munifices were the immunes, soldiers who were exempted from these arduous duties about the camp (vacatio munерum), yet received the same basic pay as common legionaries. The legionary horsemen, however, do not appear in the list of immunes drawn up by the military jurist Tarruntenus Paternus preserved in the Digest, although the list may not be a complete roll of all the immunes of the legion\textsuperscript{27}. The next higher ranking group in the legions were the junior officers, the principales; while some of the officers, standard bearers, and staff personnel within the body of horsemen ranked as principales proper, the majority of those whose

\textsuperscript{26}Camp duties are described by Vegetius 2.19: \textit{fascicularia tamen, id est lignum foenum aquam stramen, etiam legitimi milites in castra portabant. Munifices enim ab eo appellantur, quod haec munera faciunt.} Similar duties, viz., including the gathering of wood, food stuffs and water are described by Josephus, \textit{BJ} 3.3. A papyrus (P. Mich. 8.465,13ff.) preserves a letter written by a man who styles himself a principalis; in the letter the soldier relates how he merely stands about while other soldiers, doubtless munifices, are forced to cut stones all day.

\textsuperscript{27}Digest 50.6.7. This list dates from the end of the second century A.D. It has been argued that the complex rank distinctions preserved by Paternus are only applicable for the second century onward; previously the term immunis denoted only a function and not an rank grade. See Sander 1954/55, 87-105. Webster 1985, 119, notes that the list is quite incomplete.
The Return of the *Equites Legionis*

rank was simply that of *eques* more likely ranked among the *immunes*.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{28} Thus the ranking of von Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 47. An inscribed silver ring found at Baden may have belonged to the one of the *principales* of the horsemen of *Legio XXI Rapax* -- 16; von Domaszewski noted the silver ring as a distinction of those junior officers, although he calls all the troopers *principales*, see Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 49f. and 53f. Likewise, such a ring could have been awarded as a distinction for valor, a *donum militare*: See Speidel 1987a, 56-58. This seems to be the case with a silver ring showing a fully rounded bust of a bearded "war god" in a Phrygian helmet found at Hüfingen where an *ala quingenaria* was stationed; see Fingerlin 1986, 3-8
3. Recruitment of the *Equites Legionis*

The recruitment patterns of soldiers into the legionary horsemen are little known. The reason in part may be tied to the often blurry distinction between ranks, units, and functions in the Roman army: the term *eques* was used to define the soldier's rank, his unit, and his function within the unit.

We have already seen that the *equites legionis* ranked among the *immunes* of the legion, those soldiers who were exempt from the more strenuous duties about the camp. \(^{29}\) But the *equites legionis* were more than a group of men who shared the same rank, they had their own administrative office, a *tabularium*, which gave them an independent organization. \(^{30}\) The term *eques* could also be used, in the most basic sense of the word, to describe the function of a soldier -- the *equites legionis* were men who supplied the legion with a contingent which could be employed in any mounted function their commander

\(^{29}\) See also *infra*, s.v. Rank and Pay.

\(^{30}\) The *tabularium equitum legionis* is attested for legio *III Augusta* in Numidia: 102; see Speidel 1984d. The cavalry may have been called a *numerus*, the generic and non-technical term for any army unit. One possible expansion for an inscription seems to mention a *numerus equitum legionis secundae Traianae* (39) and it is known from a papyrus that the mounted contingent of a *cohors equitata* could be called a *numerus*; cf. Thomas and Davies 1977, 51 and 53f. and Fink, *RMR* 62.1.
Recruitment of the *Equites Legionis*

desired, including staff duties, a battlefield cavalry role, and serving as a guard for the legionary legate.  

It has generally been assumed that the legionary horsemen were required to serve for a given period of time as infantrymen in the legion. This phenomenon is known for the auxiliary horsemen who served as part of a mixed unit of cavalry and infantry, a *cohors equitata*, and for the cavalry who served with the cohorts of the Praetorian Guard. Both types of unit are roughly analogous to the *equites legionis*. The standard study of the legionary horsemen written to date goes so far as

---

31 See *infra, s.v. The Role of the Equites Legionis*, for the varied duties of the legionary cavalry.

32 Gilliam 1986b, 289-307, in studying the rosters of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* (P. Dura 100=Fink, *RMR* 1 and P. Dura 101= Fink, *RMR* 2), noted the small number of recently recruited horsemen versus the large number of infantrymen. He concluded that the rank of *eques cohortalis* was generally given as a reward to an foot soldier after perhaps ten years of service. Gilliam then looked at the careers of a few legionaries and Praetorians and recognized the same general pattern. See also, Gilliam 1986c, 309-315, where likewise it would seem that no men were recruited for the cavalry component of a part mounted cohort.

For examples of Praetorians who were promoted from the rank of *miles* to *eques*, see 6.2601=ILS 2055; 11.5646=ILS 2081; 11.6350=ILS 9066; 12.2602=ILS 2118. M. Durry 1938, 191, suggested that a Praetorian needed to serve a minimum of five years before promotion the rank of *eques*. Breeze 1974, 256, however, believes this to be an underestimate, arguing instead for a minimum of seven years.
Recruitment of the Equites Legionis
to state that no soldier could enter the legions with the
rank of eques, and that the lowest number of stipendia
known for promotion is seven years.\

While it is true that a legionary soldier was
generally promoted to the rank of horseman after a period
of service, an absolute rule defining a minimum period of
time in rank cannot be proven for the equites legionis.
Rather, it seems that various special circumstances could
play a role in the appointment of a legionary to the
position of eques. The most famous example of a soldier
who quickly reached the rank of horseman is that of
Tiberius Claudius Maximus, the captor of the Dacian king
Decebalus.\(^3\)\(^4\) Claudius Maximus is the only soldier known
to have been recruited as a legionary horseman without
any prior service as an infantryman or without a period
of training as a cavalryman, i.e., holding the post of
discens equitum.\(^3\)\(^5\) Maximus' appointment to the rank of

\(^{33}\)Breeze 1969, 54.

\(^{34}\)\(^7\) The most complete commentary on this
inscription remains the original publication, i.e.,
Speidel 1984d.

\(^{35}\)Speidel 1984d, 174, believed that in such a
detailed career the earlier posts of miles and discens
equitum would not have been omitted from the inscription.
Breeze 1971, however, considered the possibility that the
earlier positions might have been left off the stone,
citing as an example 9.1609, a detailed career where the
Recruitment of the Equites Legionis

horseman could have been due to either of two reasons. The first was his family connections. Claudius Maximus may have come from a family which had a measure of influence with the provincial governor or some other high ranking military official who was able to bring a certain amount of pressure to bear on Maximus' account.\(^{36}\) The first rank given is that of a principalis. While Maximus' enlistment as a horseman cannot be made an absolute certainty it is likely. Speidel calculates that Maximus was born around A.D. 65 and recruited sometime before A.D. 85. Most soldiers seem to have enlisted between age seventeen and nineteen, so A.D. 82-84 are probable. By the conclusion of Domitian's Dacian War in A.D. 89 he had held the posts of eques, quaestor equitum, singularis legati and vexillarius equitum. This hardly leaves sufficient time to have served as a foot soldier. Moreover, since the more lengthy the inscription the greater the expense, a conscious decision was generally made to record all the posts held if a long, detailed career was to be inscribed on stone, whereas a short inscription would only record the highest post attained: witness the many inscriptions of centurions who record the only rank held as that of centurio.

\(^{36}\)An example of such favoritism can be seen in P. Mich. 466, 25ff. where a new recruit approached the governor in order to procure a staff appointment. The governor, who was not able to oblige the recruit, saw to it that the man was placed on the legionary staff with the hope of advancement at some later date. In the instance of an appointment to horseman through connections, the new recruit must have been able to ride upon enlistment, otherwise he would have been appointed to the post of "horsemen in training," discens equitum as is the case of Aurelius Gaius Secundus -- 120. Compare the comments of Tacitus, Agr. 19.2 where Agricola is said not to have been influenced by personal preferences, recommendation or entreaties in the appointment of men to his staff: non studiis privatis nec ex commendatione aut precibus centurionem militesve adscire.
Recruitment of the Equites Legionis

second reason why Maximus might have been chosen as an eques was on account of the function of the legionary horsemen as the guard of the commander of the legion. Perhaps this particular soldier possessed an especially fine body build, or was such a fine horseman, or even both, that the legate personally requested him for service in his guard unit. This sort of phenomenon is known for other guard units in the provincial armies, most notably the singulares consularis, the guards of the provincial governor.

Once recruited for a position in the equites legionis, it is not certain whether the soldier was required to spend a given amount of time in the rank and

37 Maximus was probably a native Macedonian and so came from an area known in antiquity for its horsemen, e.g., the Companions of Philip and Alexander. Their neighbors, the Thracians, were also heavily recruited into Roman cavalry units. The Romans tried to recruit skilled horsemen into their cavalry units wherever possible; for this type of recruiting in the auxiliary forces, see Saddington 1982, 137-68. In the auxiliary forces, some men could also be enlisted as horsemen, no doubt "through some combination of merit and influence:" Gilliam 1986b, 294.

38 See, for example, Speidel 1978, 7f. and 104-112, esp. 110. As the governor chose his guard so too would the legate, even from newly recruited men. This does not seem to have been the case in the capital, however, where a minimum of four years service was required before entrance into the emperor's horseguards; see Speidel 1968, 4.
Recruitment of the *Equites Legionis*

unit. Such a required time in the rank and unit seems to have been the case with the governor's guard of *singulares*.\textsuperscript{39} Normally, troopers appear to have served for a lengthy period of time in the *equites legionis*. A considerable number of soldiers ended their careers with the rank of *eques legionis*.\textsuperscript{40}

We are somewhat better informed about the recruitment of the horsemen into the legions themselves. The geographic pattern of troopers for the legions is, as we might expect, the same as the legions as a whole. G. Forni discerned the diachronistic reduction in the number of Italian legionaries from the reign of Augustus throughout the time of the emperor Hadrian. Forni's study showed that under Augustus, legionaries of Italian origin predominated. By the time of Claudius and Nero, Italians represented about half of the men in the legions. During the Flavian period through the time of Trajan, Italians comprised between one-fifth and a quarter of the men.

\textsuperscript{39}Speidel 1978, 7, noted from the Dura rosters that the *singulares consulares* served for a period of at least three years.

\textsuperscript{40}For example, Etuvius Capreolus (32) served for ten years and M. Licinius Fidelis (100) for six years. Horsemen as *veterani*: 13, 35, 37, 46, 48, 61, 62, 66, 69, 82, 85.
Recruitment of the *Equites Legionis*

enrolled in the legions. From the Hadrianic period onward, few Italians served as legionaries.\(^{41}\)

The geographical recruitment patterns of the legionary horsemen closely follow the scheme set forth by Forni. In the early first century A.D., from Augustus through Caligula, of the eight *equites legionis* whose homes are known, five are from Italy, while the remainder are one each from Spain, Gallia Narbonensis and Africa.\(^{42}\) This breakdown fits well with Forni's idea of a "western" recruiting area.\(^{43}\)

For the later Julio-Claudian period, under Claudius and Nero, our sample is perhaps too small to give a full picture. There are but two horsemen whose home can be identified and they are both Gauls;\(^{44}\) therefore Forni's assertion that one-half of the legionaries during this period were Italians cannot be shown.

From the Flavians through the reign of the emperor Trajan, eight legionary horsemen with known origins can

\(^{41}\)Forni 1953.

\(^{42}\)Italy: 13, 53, 61, 62 and 63; Spain: 35; Gallia Narbonensis: 23; Africa: 98

\(^{43}\)Forni 1953, 99-102.

\(^{44}\)Gallia Narbonensis: 32; Gallia Lugdenensis: 100.
Recruitment of the *Equites Legionis*

be determined. Two of those eight are Italians, three are from Spain, and one each from Gaul, Macedonia and Pisidia. ⁴⁵ Once again, Forni's thesis on the recruitment of the legions in general holds for the *equites legionis*.

Finally, for the period from Hadrian through the end of the 3rd century, there are eighteen legionary cavalrymen whose homes can be discerned; only two of them are from Italy. Thrace supplied four, Germania Superior two, Pannonia Superior two, Syria three, Arabia one and four troopers come *castris*, from the camp, i.e., they were the sons of local soldiers. ⁴⁶ Thus only as small portion of the legionary horsemen, as the legions as a whole, were recruited in Italy, with ever increasing local enlistments.

The age of soldiers upon their recruitment in the legionary horsemen, just as their origins, reflects that of the legions as a whole. The largest number of *equites legionis* joined the army between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one; sixteen of thirty cavalrymen fall in that age

-----

⁴⁵Italy: 5 and 70; Spain: 14 (Baetica), 48 and 70 (Tarraconensis); Gallia (Aquitania): 100; Macedonia: 77; Pisidia: 82.

⁴⁶Italians: 9 and 42; Thracians: 2 and 38 (three *equites*); Germans: 22 (two horsemen); Pannonians: 57 and 78; Syria: 83, 84 and 38; an Arab: 91; *Castris*: 68, 110, 111 and 115.
Recruitment of the *Equites Legionis* group.\textsuperscript{47} The youngest trooper enrolled into the legions as a horseman was fourteen, while the oldest was thirty years of age.\textsuperscript{48} These parameters are generally the same for all legionaries.\textsuperscript{49}

In terms of recruitment, legionary horsemen were normally enrolled into the legions on the principles set down for legionaries rather than horsemen. There were, however, exceptions where the requirements of legionary legate in enlisting men for his guard seem to have taken precedence, such as the case of Tiberius Claudius Maximus, which makes those instances all the more noteworthy.

\textsuperscript{47}Eighteen -- 69; Nineteen -- 5, 37 and 61; Twenty -- 13, 14, 31 (two *equites*), 38, 53; 80 and 118; Twenty-one -- 4, 48, 49 and 89.

\textsuperscript{48}Fourteen -- 6; fifteen -- 18 and 32; sixteen -- 34 and 101; seventeen -- 33, 64 and 78; twenty-two -- 100; twenty-three -- 23; twenty-five -- 45; twenty-eight -- 98; thirty -- 62 and 103.

\textsuperscript{49}Forni 1953, 26f.
4. Unit Organization

One of the more interesting questions concerning the legionary horsemen is how they were organized. There are two interpretations, each of which is supported by a particular type of evidence. The first theory is that the *equites legionis* were attached, at least for administrative purposes, to the *centuriae* of the legion. This argument for the organization of the legionary horsemen is based primarily upon documentary sources, inscriptions and papyri, in which horsemen give their centurial affiliation as part of the description of their unit.

The second interpretation is based on literary evidence, found exclusively in Vegetius, and a single inscription of doubtful reading. This interpretation argues for the division of the *equites legionis* into squadrons, *turmae*, like the legionary horsemen of the middle Republic. The two passages from Vegetius are relatively short and are worth quoting in full.

---

50 A brief survey of the evidence is provided by Breeze 1969, 54f.

51 Some examples of horsemen in centuries: 4, 6, 48, 94, 95, 96, 100, 104; and by implication, 114 and 115. It has been suggested, based on the papyrus 94 published by Premerstein 1903, that there were two legionary horsemen per century.
Moreover, it should be understood that there ought to be ten cohorts in one legion. But the first cohort precedes the others in the number and worthiness of the soldiers, for it gets the choicest men according to birth and education. Indeed, this (cohort) carries the eagle, which is always the principal standard in the Roman army and the ensign of the whole legion. This (cohort) also venerates the images of the emperors, that is, the sacred and present standards. It has one thousand one hundred foot soldiers and one hundred thirty-two armored horsemen and is called a cohors miliaria. This is the head of the legion, from this (cohort), when the battle is joined, the first line of battle is formed. The second cohort has five hundred fifty-five foot soldiers, sixty-six horsemen, and is called a cohors quingenaria (the remainder of the passage relates that the remaining cohorts are organized like the second and provides their battlefield positions). (Vegetius 2.6)

Just as among the infantry, (the unit) is called a century or maniple, so among the horsemen it is said to be a turma, and a turma has thirty-two cavalrmen. The man in charge of this unit is called a decurion. Indeed one hundred ten infantrymen are directed under a vexillum standard by a centurion. Likewise, thirty-two cavalrymen are led under a vexillum standard by a decurion (the section concludes with the qualifications of the centurions and decurions). (Vegetius 2.14)

In addition to the evidence in Vegetius, a silver ring from Baden which was read eq. leg. XXI Sexti t(urmae) was taken to support the existence of turmae for the legionary horsemen. The placement of the symbol for turma after the name of the commander rather than in
Unit Organization

front of it caused scholars to lack conviction in the reading.\textsuperscript{52}

Hope was once expressed that archaeology would aid in the resolution of the debate over the organization of the *equites legionis*; especially promising were the excavations at Inchtuthil, a Flavian legionary camp in Scotland, from 1952-65.\textsuperscript{53} There are two places at Inchtuthil which might have housed the *equites legionis*. The first is a pair of barracks blocks, Barracks A and B, located next to the quarters of the men of the first cohort of the legion. These blocks were originally ascribed to the legionary cavalry, although the objection that they were too small was raised.\textsuperscript{54} The final site report has shown that there was room for twenty *contubernia*, or squads, more than enough for the legionary horsemen who would require but sixteen

\textsuperscript{52}14. For example, Breeze 1969, 54f.

\textsuperscript{53}See Breeze 1969, 55. The final report on the excavations has only recently appeared: Pitts and St. Joseph 1985.

\textsuperscript{54}The excavator, I. A. Richmond, suggested that the occupants were the legionary horsemen in one of his summary site reports (*JRS* 47 (1957), 132). Breeze 1969, 55, based on the size of auxiliary troopers' quarters, argued that there was insufficient space for one hundred and twenty men.
Unit Organization

contubernia.\textsuperscript{55} It has been noted, though, that this pair of barracks is, based on the present state of excavation of legionary fortresses, unique to Inchtuthil. While it is possible that at one fortress the equites legionis had a separate accommodation and at others they were quartered with the men of their parent centuries, it rather suggests that there were other occupants for these barracks.\textsuperscript{56}

The second possibility for the quarters of the legionary cavalry is within the so-called "Officers' Temporary Compound," apparently a residence for some of the officers of the legion, possibly including the legate who was the legionary commander, at least during the period of the camp's construction and, perhaps, somewhat longer.\textsuperscript{57} This residence comprised a pair of barracks to house a guard unit of some type; each barracks block could house the equivalent of an infantry century, approximately eighty men. The identity of this guard is not certain, perhaps it was composed of a pair legionary

\textsuperscript{55}Pitts and St. Joseph 1985, 169.

\textsuperscript{56}Pitts and St. Joseph 1985, 170f., postulate that they housed some of the legionary specialists, probably \textit{fabri}.

\textsuperscript{57}Pitts and St. Joseph 1985, 220ff.
Unit Organization

centuries. Alternatively, there is more than enough space for the equites legionis, who are known to have functioned as the legate's guard unit.\textsuperscript{58} They may have even housed the governor's singulares. Unfortunately, once again, the placement of the legionary cavalry in these barracks is not an absolute certainty.

The likelihood that the legionary cavalry occupied a camp outside the main fortress is reinforced by the case of Lambaesis in Africa. In addition to the main camp, there are two smaller ones. The first, the so-called west camp, was probably built during Hadrian's visit as part of a training exercise.\textsuperscript{59} The second, or east camp, also known as the "camp of 81" from its date of construction, may have been the quarters of the legionary horsemen since the inscription recording their tabularium was found there (102); the interior of the camp possessed

\textsuperscript{58}For the possible identity of the guard, see Pitts and St. Joseph 1985, 222. For the legionary horsemen as the legate's guard, see supra, s.v. Recruitment, and infra, s.v. The Role of the Equites Legionis. Since there is more space than is required for the legionary horsemen alone, the barracks may have accommodated the legate's personal guard as well, the singulares legati legionis; for these men, see Speidel 1984d, 175-179. The existence of legionary singulares for legati legionis has recently been challenged: Rankov 1990.

\textsuperscript{59}Janon 1973, 210f. and Fentress 1979, 94.
Unit Organization

a "basilical" structure. 60 This camp certainly housed another guard unit since an inscription to disciplina militaris dedicated by a unit of equites singulares was discovered there. 61 Perhaps both units of mounted guards were quartered together.

The contradictory descriptions for the organization of the legionary horsemen have led to a division of opinion as to whether the equites were formed into turmae or not. On the one hand, the strength of the documentary evidence for centuries, and a corresponding lack of any definitive mention of legionary turmae or decuriones, has led some to argue that there were no such squadrons or commanders for the equites legionis. 62 This school of thought was bolstered by Vegetius' reputation for unreliability.

This position was recently reinforced with a new reading of the inscription on the silver ring from Baden;

60 See Janon 1973, 201-210, esp. 204-207.

61 Janon 1973, 207. For the identity of these singulares, see Speidel 1978, 121 and Rankov 1990, 168-172.

62 See, e.g., Lesquier 1918, 134f. The question of decurions in the legions, or more properly the lack thereof, is discussed by A. Passerini, Dizionario Epigraphico 4, 610.
Unit Organization

it did not in fact give the squadron of a decurion, but more likely referred to a centurion. To be more precise, the mark which had been taken as the symbol for turma appears to be the centurion's rank sign.\textsuperscript{63}

Moreover, negative evidence is adduced to show that the legionary horsemen were not placed in turmae. In addition to the lack of attestation for decurions and squadrons, no officers are known for any unit less than the equites as a whole.\textsuperscript{64} Perhaps most critical to the question of the organization of the legionary horsemen is the presence of certain principales, especially the standard bearers, the vexillarii. In a dedication of the equites of legio III Augusta from Lambaesis in Africa (109) the officers of the horsemen are enumerated. Two standard bearers are explicitly mentioned. If the squadrons were normal size, thirty or thirty-two men, we would expect at least four standard bearers, one for each squadron (one hundred twenty troopers divided by thirty per squadron yields four squadrons), since such standard

\textsuperscript{63} Speidel 1987a, 56ff. Speidel read eq(uitibus leg(ionis) XXI Sex(ti) I.T) primus pilus/princeps; the rank insignia of the various centurions are discussed in Speidel 1986b. For this officer, see infra, s.v. Commander of the Legionary Horsemen.

\textsuperscript{64} See Breeze 1969, 54f.
Unit Organization

bearers were a necessary component in the transmission of orders. That there are only half the requisite number for full fledged turmae indicates that the legionary cavalry were not formed rigidly into squadrons; they must have possessed similar tactical subunits, though these need not be the exact size of a turma. The legionary units may have been thirty, forty or even sixty men strong.

Yet other scholars have tried to reconcile Vegetius with the documents. No doubt the equites of the Praetorians, who are often a good analogy for the equites legionis, have had some influence. It has been argued, based on the numbers of Praetorian equites appearing on a discharge list, that the Praetorians horse were organized into turmae. These scholars have argued that the squadrons, and increased numbers of the horsemen, no doubt date to some reform in the third century Roman army or that they were divided administratively into

---

65 Durry 1938, 99 calculated that since a laterculus listed some fifteen horsemen for a century, there were ninety for the entire cohort. Durry then assumed that they must be organized into turmae of thirty troopers each. There is, however, no explicit mention of these squadrons.

66 Breeze 1969, 53f., Sander 1940; 385.
Unit Organization

the centuries, but organized tactically into turmae. But neither of these positions is tenable, since if there were turmae, there would need to be decurions. A papyrus from A.D. 320 shows that the officers of these legionary cavalry were not decurions, but rather centurions. This papyrus is most instructive since it dates from the period when the legionary horsemen were greatly increased in numbers to, if Vegetius is to be believed, seven hundred twenty-six men. The legionary horsemen, therefore, numbered more than one hundred and fifty percent of an auxiliary regiment. It is exactly during this period, when the number of legionary cavalrymen was augmented and when they formed independent units, that we should expect the presence of squadrons and decurions. Since we have centurions, there cannot have been turmae. Therefore, we can assume that there were no turmae for the horsemen during the earlier period when there were fewer men attached to the legion.

The legionary horsemen did, as a functional unit, require some organization. They were probably placed in smallish units roughly the size of turmae which

---

67 Parker 1932, 140.

68 123.
maneuvered and fought like the auxiliary squadrons. These ad hoc subunits are known for the detachments and guards of the provincial governors.\textsuperscript{69} This makes sense, as Hadrian's adlocutio shows that the legionary horsemen were trained in cavalry tactics and the contemporary tactics described by Arrian in the techne taktika are based on the ala and their subunits, the turmae. Indeed on one occasion auxiliary and legionary troopers acted in unison.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{69}For the detachments: Saxer 1968, 97ff. The provincial guards: Speidel 1978, 25.

\textsuperscript{70}20.
5. The Commander of the *Equites Legionis*

It was originally thought that the commanding officer of the legionary horsemen was one of the tribunes attached to the legion; von Domaszewski went so far as to identify the commander of the *equites legionis* as one tribune in particular, the *tribunus sexmestris*, an officer on the legate's staff.\(^1\) This identification was based on a single inscription and on a literary passage. The reading of the inscription was doubtful at best as the inscription is fairly worn and is broken at a critical spot; the inscription has subsequently been republished without any reference to a tribune of the legionary horsemen.\(^2\) The literary reference adduced by von Domaszewski (*Statius, Silvae*, 5.1.95) while it mentions the commander of the *equites legionis*, does not mention the rank of this officer. The man in question

\(^{1}\)Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 48f., especially 49.

\(^{2}\) Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 47, read *L. Campilio Paterno equite [ori]undo Aquae Flaviae opt(ioni) trib[uni] militum leg(ionis) VII G(eminiae) p(iae) f(elicis)*. Le Roux 1982, 217, has republished the stone with a photograph (pl. VIIc). Le Roux replaced *oriundo* with *secundo*, a reading which von Domaszewski, *loc. cit.*, believed should be "verhauen," and read *opt(ioni) [eq]uitum in lieu of opt(ioni) trib(uni) militum*. While Le Roux's emendation has not met with universal approval (see the commentary on this inscription in Chapter IV), it does cast a certain degree of doubt on the reading of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* used by von Domaszewski.
The Commander of the *Equites Legionis*

could just as easily have been a centurion as a tribune.\(^73\)

The inconclusive nature of the evidence cited by von Domaszewski has led scholars to search elsewhere for the commanding officer of the legionary cavalry. One candidate who has gained some acceptance is the *optio equitum*, who would then have been analogous to other *optiones* who were in charge of units, e.g., the officer in charge of the medical facilities, the *optio*

---

\(^73\)Birley 1988c believed the passage referred to the appointment of centurions.

While they by no means provide proof that a tribune served as the commander of the *equites legionis*, two inscriptions from Brigetio may point to some connection, perhaps purely honorific, between the *tribunus laticlavius* and the legionary horse. The first (57) is a dedication by an *eques legionis* to the *Campestres*, the goddesses of the cavalry training grounds. The second inscription (3.14355.\(^2\)=RIU 2.381) is a dedication to the same deities by the *tribunus laticlavius* (the one tribune of senatorial rank attached to a legion) of the same legion, *legio I Adiutrix*. While such a common dedication does not imply command of the unit, it may mean that the senatorial tribune, because of his rank, may have had the privilege of watching over the training exercises of the legionary horsemen. Vegetius, 2.12, notes that the tribunes were responsible for watching over the training exercises of their men and that well drilled and neat-looking soldiers were a source of pride for their tribune. Cf. the very tentative identification of this man as the commander of the legionary cavalry by Speidel 1968, 57 n.339.
The Commander of the Equites Legionis

valetudinarii.\textsuperscript{74} This officer, who up until recently was known from only a few inscriptions, is now reasonably well attested.\textsuperscript{75}

Objections can, however, be raised to making the optio equitum the commander of the unit. The first is the comparison with the optio valetudinarii. This latter post, although it did involve supervisory duties at the hospital, was a staff post primarily concerned with paperwork, not direct control over medical matters.\textsuperscript{76} Those optiones who seem to have exercised actual command positions seem to have done so under the supervision of a higher ranking officer, e.g., the optio centuriae.\textsuperscript{77}

A second problem concerns the rank of the optio in relation to the other principales within the unit of legionary horsemen. It has been noted that an optio

\textsuperscript{74}Le Roux 1982, 267, believes that the optio equitum is a parallel for the optio valetudinarii. Parker 1932, 141, based on the optio's position on a scola inscription from Lambaesis (\textit{109}), saw this man as the horsemen's senior officer.

\textsuperscript{75}Early references include 3, 106 (presumed to head the list of the scola dedication) and 108. More recently 2, 76 and 86.

\textsuperscript{76}See Breeze 1976, 127-133, esp. 128.

\textsuperscript{77}See the examples in Breeze 1976.
The Commander of the *Equites Legionis*

generally ranked no higher, and perhaps even lower, than
the standard bearer, or *vexillarius*, of which there were
at least two, and perhaps three, in the legionary
horsemen (109). 78 It is, therefore, rather unlikely that
the *optio*, who at the very best ranked the same as the
standard bearers, was the unit commander.

Lack of a suitable candidate for the commander from
either the tribunes or the *optio equitum* has led one
scholar to argue that the legionary horsemen did not have
any commander at all! 79 The argument is based on an
analogy with the legionary cohorts -- the cohorts had
tactical subunits, the centuries, which had officers, but
the unit as a whole did not have one. Therefore, the
legionary horsemen, with their *turma*-like subunits,
perhaps commanded by the standard bearers or some other
*principalis*, would not require an overall commander
despite their administrative independence. 80

78 Noted by Speidel 1984d, 179.

79 Breeze 1969, 55.

80 Breeze 1971, 130, n.6, e.g., disregards the fact
that the horsemen had their own *tabularium* and *quaestor*
who administered their funds, again citing the example of
the legionary cohorts. Moreover, he discounts the fact
that the legionary cohorts were composed of a number of
permanent tactical units. While it is quite likely that
the legionary horsemen had tactical units similar to
*turmae*, they were not permanent like a legionary century,
The Commander of the Equites Legionis

Another suggestion, which has been put forward more recently, is that the equites legionis were commanded by a centurion, possibly a high-ranking one such as those supernumerary centurions attached to the staff of the provincial governor.\textsuperscript{81} Since the training officers of the legionary horsemen, or at least some of them, ranked as centurions, possibly of high rank, it would be unlikely that the commander would not be of a similar or higher grade.\textsuperscript{82} Such a centurion probably would have borne the title praepositus or curam agens.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{81} Much earlier Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 49, had proposed that a centurio supernumerarius, known from 32 with the additional rank of magister equitum, was probably the commander of the legionary horsemen of the late empire when their numbers were greatly increased. See Speidel 1978, 27f. for such high ranking centurions as unit commanders and that the supernumerary centurions had other functions such as the command of the legionary horsemen.

\textsuperscript{82} Training officers could be either centurions or evocati. At least some of those attached to the legionary horsemen were of the higher rank; see 43 with Fitz 1975, 565-75. That the commander must be of at least equal or higher rank was suggested by Speidel 1984d, 175, n.23.

\textsuperscript{83} See Speidel 1978, 26; cf. Saxer 1968, passim.
The Commander of the *Equites Legionis*

This supposition has recently been augmented by the emendation of the inscription on the silver ring found at Baden. Some aspects of this have been discussed already. As to the rank of the commander, the ring seems to indicate that the commander of the *equites legionis* was a centurion; indeed, if read correctly, he was of very high rank, one of the *primi ordines*, perhaps the senior centurion of the legion, the *primus pilus*.

Since the silver ring from Baden now seems to show that centurions were the commanding officers of the *equites legionis*, light is shed on an interesting and well-known tombstone of a centurion replete with relief and inscription. The stone, from Carnuntum in Pannonia Superior and of mid first century date, records the career of T. Calidius Severus (45):

"Titus Calidius Severus, son of Publius, from the Camilian tribe. A horseman, likewise *optio* (and) *decurio* of *cohors I Alpinorum*, likewise a centurion of *legio XV Apollinaris*. He lived fifty-eight years and served thirty-three. Here he lies. Quintus Calidius placed it for his brother."

In addition, the relief underneath the inscription shows the equipment of the centurion: scale armor (*lorica squamata*), greaves (*ocrea*), the distinctive helmet of a centurion with transverse crest, and the

---

84 Speidel 1987a, 58.
The Commander of the *Equites Legionis*

centurion's vinewood staff (*vitis*). Beneath the weapons are depicted the centurion's groom wearing a chainmail shirt and a horse.

The representation of the horse and the career of Calidius, i.e., his extensive association with the horsemen in the auxiliaries -- he served as both a simple cavalry trooper and a squadron commander (*decurio*), make one suspect that as a legionary centurion he was in some way associated with the legionary horsemen.\(^{85}\)

Unfortunately, the inscription does not mention any such association, either as a commander or a training officer.\(^{86}\)

Since training officers always seem to give their rank, such as *exercitator* or *magister equitum* it does not appear that Calidius served in a training capacity. On the other hand, the one centurion mentioned on the Baden silver ring, while probably the commanding officer of the *equites legionis*, only identifies himself by his centurion's rank. If Calidius was attached to the legionary cavalry, he would have been their commander.

---

\(^{85}\) Cf. the suggestion by H. J. Ubl 1969, 59ff.

\(^{86}\) See *infra, s.v.* Officers and Other Ranks, for legionary centurions as training officers.
The Commander of the *Equites Legionis*

although he might also have served in the capacity of training officer.

Yet there is even more testimony that the commander of the legionary horsemen was a centurion, albeit the evidence is indirect as it comes from the late empire. In a will from the year A. D. 320 a centurion of the *equites promoti* disposes of his goods.\(^{87}\) He has as witnesses seven colleagues, i.e., likewise *equites promoti*, who are also centurions. It is a reasonable assumption that the legionary horsemen were commanded during the high empire by a centurion, and when the numbers of horsemen were dramatically increased during the late 3rd century, more officers were needed, and so other centurions were added. Certainly centurions would not have been made officers in this substantial expansion if the original commander of the legionary horsemen did not hold that rank, i.e., it would be unlikely for centurions to be added to a unit whose commander ranked lower than they did themselves.

\(^{87}\)123.
6. Officers and Other Ranks

In addition to the unit commander, there were several other groups of officers (and "other ranks") which can be identified within the equites legionis. Three distinct groups of officers and other ranks can be identified: 1) training officers, 2) command principales, 3) and principales and other ranks with staff or administrative assignments.

A. Training Officers

The following training officers have been identified amongst the legionary horsemen and represent a wide range of rank:
- exercitator
- magister equitum
- magister kampi
- hastiliarius

The exercitatores were the riding-masters of the equites legionis, two of whom, both from legio II Adiutrix, are known for certain.\(^{88}\) Those of the legionary horsemen seem to have ranked as centurions, although the rank of the exercitatores within the centurionate is still a question open to debate, i.e.,

\(^{88}\)54 and 60; see Speidel 1978, 28f.
Officers and Other Ranks

were they ranked among the *primi ordines* or not.\(^8^9\) Other *exercitatores*, interestingly several of them from units of the imperial guard, ranked merely as *evocati*.\(^9^0\)

The rank of the *magister equitum* rests on more solid ground.\(^9^1\) As has been seen above (p. 46, n.78 and n. 79), this training officer was ranked as a centurion, apparently of high rank. It is probable that the *magister equitum* and the *exercitatores* are one and the same.\(^9^2\) The term *magister* became increasingly popular during the third century as a term, usually for a *principalis*, who was in a supervisory administrative or command position, which replaced or supplemented an older term such as *optio*; moreover, the choice of term could vary from one unit to the next.\(^9^3\) In the case of a centurion, then, it seems that this man, who is from a

---

\(^8^9\) For a discussion of the problem of the rank of the *exercitatores* see the article by Fitz 1975.

\(^9^0\) Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 106f. A more recent discussion is provided by Birley 1988d, 326-330.

\(^9^1\) 34.

\(^9^2\) Compare the comments by Speidel 1978, 28, n.149.

\(^9^3\) Breeze 1976, esp., 132.
different unit than the two exercitatores, holds the same position in a different guise.

The *magister kampi* was an officer of lower rank. The position is uniquely attested on a much discussed third century *schola* inscription from Lambaesis.\(^{94}\) This man certainly cannot have ranked as a centurion, which as we have seen, was the rank of the commander and high-ranking training masters, since on that inscription he is listed below the *optio* and the *vexillarii*. Given what has been said above concerning the use of the term *magister* during the third century, the *magister kampi* should then be an assistant, similar to the *optio centuriae* in infantry units, to some officer, no doubt one of the training officers of a higher grade such as the *exercitator* or *magister equitum*.

The *hastiliarius* was originally thought by von Domaszewski to be an elite horseman attached to the staff of an officer and armed with a spear, the *hasta*; *hastiliarii* who may be from the *equites legionis* are known from Lambaesis.\(^{95}\) But it has been suggested that

\(^{94}\) 109.

\(^{95}\) 109, 3 and 4.
Officer and Other Ranks

these troopers were instructors in spear-throwing.\textsuperscript{96} They were not named after the spear, but rather after a practice weapon, the \textit{hastile}. The rank is known elsewhere only among the \textit{equites singulares Augusti}, the horse-guards of the emperor, although they may have existed in the provincial \textit{singulares} as well. The rank seems to be unique to guard units where a premium was placed on such training.\textsuperscript{97} As the guard unit of the legionary legate, the \textit{equites legionis} thus might be expected to have such instructors.

Recently the role and function of the \textit{hastilarii} has been revised yet once again.\textsuperscript{98} While the \textit{hastile} still refers to a wooden practice weapon, it can now be argued that the shaft was used in a crowd control rather than a practice context. This would help to explain the appearance of \textit{hastilarii} only in guard units -- they helped to control unruly crowds which might beset the emperor or a provincial governor. This interpretation

\textsuperscript{96}Speidel 1968, 43f. They were not involved in the manufacturer of these weapons as Davies 1989a thought; cf. the comments by Speidel 1978, 30f., n.159.

\textsuperscript{97}Speidel 1978, 30f. For \textit{hastilia} being supplied to the guard of the Prefect in Egypt, see Speidel 1985e, 329-332, esp., 331f.

\textsuperscript{98}Speidel, forthcoming.

57
Officers and Other Ranks

does not rule out the existence of hastiliarii among the legionary troopers; a small number of them might be useful in dealing with disorderly soldiers.  

B. Command Principales
The following principales were involved in various functions of command:

optio equitum
vexillarius
tesserarius

The optio equitum is now known through several inscriptions. This officer was once thought to have been the commander of the legionary horsemen, but must now be seen as the assistant to the commander, a centurion. This would make him exactly analogous to the optio in centuria who is well attested for the legionary

99 It might be argued that this interpretation calls in to question the identification of the men on this dedication with equites legionis; it has in fact been suggested that the inscription belongs to the governor's singulares instead. See Speidel 1978, 31. For the reasoning behind attributing this schola list to the legionary horse, see the commentary to the inscription in Chapter III, infra.

100 See note 62 above.
Officers and Other Ranks

infantry, or perhaps even better, to the optio vexillationis.\textsuperscript{101}

The best known command officer of the legionary horsemen is the standard bearer, the vexillarius.\textsuperscript{102} The exact duty of the vexillarii is a matter of conjecture. There were several serving with the legionary horsemen, at least two but perhaps more. The question is whether they carried the flags of the subunits of the horsemen, and if so whether there was but a single standard bearer for each subunit, or if there was but a single standard, vexillum, for the entire unit.

A reasonable assumption is that the standard bearers were attached to the subunits, although it is likely that there was more than one vexillarius for each such squadron. Roman cavalry were trained according to turmae\textsuperscript{103} and even though the equites legionis did not have formal turmae, they certainly had similar units. These units would require standards upon which they would

\textsuperscript{101}For the rank, Speidel 1985, 75-78.

\textsuperscript{102}53, 73, 77, 95, 100 and 109.

\textsuperscript{103}Vegetius 1.27.
form ranks and which would guide their movements. This arrangement would allow for legionary *equites vexillarii* to be detached for service elsewhere, a phenomenon known from Moesia Inferior when one such standard bearer was sent to command another unit.

The final rank in the chain of command was the *tesserarius*, again known only from the scola dedication from Africa (109, line 5). The *tesserarius*, whose name is derived from *tessera*, watchword, was the equivalent of an orderly sergeant in the modern British army and it was he who gave the watchword to the men in his unit.

---

104 For the importance of standards and musical instruments in the tactics of the Roman army, see Domaszewski 1972a, 1-12. While not specifically mentioned, it has been argued that a dedication from Lambaesis (8.2557) by the *schola of cornicines* shows that the legionary horsemen had such musicians: thirty-five names appear, of whom five were assigned to the first cohort (one per double-strength century), twenty-seven were attached to cohorts two through ten (one for each pair of *centuriae*), and the remaining three were for the legionary horsemen. This would make the subunits of the legionary horsemen about forty men, a size attested for the subunits of horsemen in a *vexillatio* at Coptos (3.6627=ILS 2483). See Saxer 1968, 97ff. for discussion. More than a single *vexillarius* could be part of one subunit, cf. RMR 1, cols. 38 and 39, when no less than four standard bearers were part of one *turma*.

105 See the discussion by Speidel 1984h, 185-188.

106 Passing the watchword on to the troops: Vegetius 2.7. G. R. Watson 1969, 79, makes the modern analogy.
C. Staff Principales

Three staff principales are attested for the equites legionis. We might expect more for a unit the size of the legionary horsemen, but several administrative positions, e.g., cornicularius -- head of the unit's record office, would not be required as the equites remained on the rolls of their centuries and so many administrative tasks were performed at that level. The posts are:

quaestor equitum
actuarius
pollio

The quaestor of the legionary horsemen was a financial officer. The fund which he administered was certainly used for the upkeep of the unit's horses and perhaps the tack and other necessary accoutrements.

---

107 This is also the case with the provincial singulares: Speidel 1978, 35f. The horseman of 21 who also lists cornicularius amongst his ranks may have been seconded to serve on the staff of the legate or may have held the post later in his career. It cannot be shown from the text that he was a cornicularius of the equites legionis.

10877 with the commentary, in Speidel 1984d, 175.

109 Speidel, loc. cit. Whether the pay of the troopers themselves was dispersed from the fund cannot be determined.
The actuarius of the legionary horsemen seems to have been concerned with the procurement of supplies for the unit. Actuarii were part of a triad of officers with supply functions known elsewhere, the other two being the optio and the summus curator. The latter official may have existed for the equites legionis but, because of the dearth of sources for the legionary horsemen, no examples survive. Certainly special supply officers would be necessary to see to the needs of the horses.

The pollio is a soldier whose function is not fully understood. Of the various interpretations, the best seems that the pollio is concerned with the arms of the

---

10 See Speidel 1978, 34f. The evidence adduced there makes the suggestion of Le Roux, 267, that the actuarius kept the acta of the unit less likely.

11 The quaestor equitum and the actuarius ultimately must have been responsible to the praefectus legionis (castrorum?) who according to Vegetius (2.9) oversaw the outfitting and feeding of the horses of the legion.

12 An eques pollio: 68. Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 47, did not hazard a guess. Watson 1969, 182, makes the association with the stratores, suggesting horse trainers, while du Cange, cited by Watson, affiliates the pollio with weapons: qui arma polit. Watson's dismissal of du Cange is too hasty, especially considering that he can not adduce any more evidence than the proximity of pollio to strator in Paternus' list of immunes. A recent article by Dietz 1985, 235-252, identifies the polliones with Asinius Pollio and makes them language instructors. This seems the least satisfactory, though most imaginative, identification.
Officers and Other Ranks

legionary horsemen. Thus far, no armorum custos or similar non-commissioned officer for the care of the weapons of the equites legionis is attested. It seems that the horsemen, whose arms would have been quite different from those of their infantry colleagues -- more akin indeed to the equipment of the auxiliary horsemen than to that of the legionsaries -- would have required a weapons' master of their own. 113 Not only would their everyday arms and armor have demanded maintenance and supervision, but the legionary horsemen also possessed an additional panoply, their "sports'" armor, which is not known for infantry soldiers. 114 The different types of equipment used by the legionary cavalrymen make the presence of an non-commissioned officer in charge of such arms and armor reasonably certain, and the pollio seems to be the most likely candidate.

113 For the equipment of the legionary horsemen and its similarity to that of the auxiliary horsemen, see infra s.v. Arms and Armor. The distinction between the arms and armor of the legionary and the auxiliary is well known: Tac. Ann. 12.35; Tac. Hist. 1.38

114 See infra, s.v. Arms and Armor. It has been suggested quite recently that parade armor might not have been restricted to the cavalry of the Roman army and that the legionary examples might belong to the legionary infantry; indeed it might not have been parade armor at all, although no convincing evidence for this theory is given: Coulston 1988, 21 n.108.
7. Rank and Pay

As discussed above, the rank and file of the legionary horsemen were probably reckoned among the *immunes*, those men who enjoyed an exemption from the normal fatigue duties (*vacatio munerum*) in and around the legionary fortress. In addition to these ordinary troopers, there were several non-commissioned officers who because of their administrative or command functions ranked among the *principales* of the legion.

For most of the first century of the principate the pay of a common legionary soldier was set at 225 *denarii*, paid in three *stipendia* of seventy-five *denarii* each. During the reign of the emperor Domitian a fourth *stipendium* was added. This brought the legionary pay to 300 *denarii*. Septimius Severus doubled the base pay

---

115 See *supra*, s.v. The Return of the *Equites Legionis* and Recruitment.

116 See *supra*, s.v. Officers and Other Ranks.

117 For a brief introduction to the pay of the Roman legionary see Watson 1969, 89-92 with literature cited in the notes.

118 Suet. *Domitian* 7.3: *addit et quartum stipendium militi, aureos terni.*
Rank and Pay

to 600 denarii once again paid in three installments.\textsuperscript{119} After the Severan dynasty, the pay scale is difficult to reconstruct on account of the rampant inflation of the third century and the institution of payment and rewards in kind.

As immunes, the majority of the legionary horsemen received the same base pay as their colleagues who bore the rank of simple miles; the vacatio munera did not confer any additional pecuniary benefits. The legionary horsemen, however, no doubt received some additional pay. The reason for this is that the troopers required additional funds for the purchase and upkeep of their mounts as well for the necessary tack and harness. It has been suggested, for example, that when the base legionary pay rate was 300 denarii a legionary horseman drew perhaps 400 denarii.\textsuperscript{120} These extra monies seem to have been administered by the quaestor equitum.\textsuperscript{121} One possible use to which the funds were put would be the replacement of horses for the troopers; horses could be

\textsuperscript{119}Herodian 3.8; see also Watson, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{120}Speidel 1984a, 86f.

\textsuperscript{121}See the discussion supra, \textit{s.v.} Officers and Other Ranks.

65
expensive and the unnecessary loss of an animal in unusual circumstances could be a capital offence.\textsuperscript{122} In addition to the extra monies needed for their mounts, as cavalry troopers the \textit{equites legionis} required still more funds for yet another mount-related expense, a servant (\textit{calo}).\textsuperscript{123} Servants are well attested for other units of the Roman army: the troopers of the cavalry regiments, \textit{equites alares}; the cavalrymen of the auxiliary infantry regiments, \textit{equites cohortales}; and the emperor's horseguards. The best source for the horsemen's servants are the tombstones of cavalrymen from Lower Germany dating to the mid to late first century A.D.; these stones preserve depictions of the trooper in

\textsuperscript{122}During the middle of third century, a cavalry trooper's horse in a \textit{cohors equitata} was 125 \textit{denarii}: See Davies 1989d, 153-173, esp. 164f. The troopers of the \textit{cohortes equitatae}, while not mounted infantry, were a type of second class cavalry who often received inferior equipment, including horses; a first class cavalry horse might well cost more. The best work on the \textit{cohortes equitatae} remains Davies 1989c, 141-151, esp. 148. The death penalty for a cavalry trooper who lost his horse through carelessness is mentioned by Josephus, \textit{BJ} 6.154-155.

\textsuperscript{123}The most recent study of the horsemen's \textit{calones} is Speidel 1989b; Speidel includes a good discussion on the few works which previously dealt with the subject.
battle dress and his calo or a funeral banquet above with the soldiers' horse and servant below.\textsuperscript{124}

The servants probably performed all of the mundane tasks that the trooper required such as cooking, cleaning and camp chores, but they also played a military role.\textsuperscript{125} On the march the servants were organized into units and put to use their animal-handling experience to work with the baggage train. In battle, the calones helped their masters mount up and then formed ranks to act as supply and support troops, hence their depiction with arms and armor.\textsuperscript{126}

Several horsemen's servants are known for equites legionis. The majority are unnamed, simply appearing on the stelae of their master.\textsuperscript{127} One tombstone seems to

\textsuperscript{124}For a discussion of the servant on the tombstone, see Speidel 1989b, 240ff. The types of Roman tombstones from Germany are studied by Gabelmann 1972.

\textsuperscript{125}Speidel 1989b, 242-245.

\textsuperscript{126}Helping their masters mount: Schleiermacher 1984, 28; supply and support troops: Speidel 1989b, loc. cit.

\textsuperscript{127}9, 53, 75 and 81. The groom holding the horse of the centurion Calidius (45), who appears to have had a connection with the legionary horsemen (supra, 47), has been identified as a calo by Ubl 1969, lxii. Speidel 1989b, n.11, 241, rightly noted that since the man wears a soldier's belt and coat, he must be a soldier rather than a servant.
Rank and Pay

have been erected by a legionary horseman for his servant, a certain Romanus.\textsuperscript{128} The erection of stones by cavalry troopers for their servants are known for the emperor's horseguards.\textsuperscript{129}

There were various non-commissioned officers who drew pay above that of the common equites. Some of these men were paid at one and a half times the basic rate; these were the so-called tactical posts which included the higher ranking immunes with staff or command responsibilities such as the tesserarius and perhaps armorum custos, and junior principales such as the lower ranking standard bearers (signiferi, vexillarii), and the optiones. Others more senior principales including the aquiliferi and beneficiarii of high ranking officers received double pay. There was also a third group, to which no legionaries are known to have belonged, which is believed to have been paid at triple the normal rate.\textsuperscript{130}

Under this scheme, all the officers and other ranks of the equites legionis belonged to the second pay grade.

\textsuperscript{128} 26.

\textsuperscript{129} Speidel 1989b, n. 31, 245.

\textsuperscript{130} This four way division of the pay of the Roman legions was proposed by Domaszewski in Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 70ff.
Rank and Pay

with the exception of the centurion in command of the unit and the senior training officer, the exercitator equitum or magister equitum who were paid, of course, as centurions.

Recently, a new scheme for the pay grades of the legions has been proposed by Dr. D. Breeze. Under this system, based on a study of promotions and transfers within the legions and on an analogy with the auxilia, the optiones and standard bearers (signiferi and vexillarii) were ranked among the troops who received double pay (duplicarii). The optio equitum and the vexillarius equitum would have thus received double pay.

This second arrangement of pay scales seems to be less satisfactory. The reason is the publication of the career of Claudius Maximus (77), which sparked the study of Breeze. Claudius Maximus was promoted from vexillarius equitum in legio VII Claudia to a duplicarius in ala II Pannoniorum. Under Breeze's pay scale both positions merit double pay. As an auxiliary duplicarius would receive 100 denarii a year less than one in a legion, Breeze argued that unusual military circumstances and better prospects for promotion justified that there was no pay increase associated with Maximus' transfer.

---

131 Breeze 1971, 130-135.
Rank and Pay

It seems unlikely, however, that a trooper would transfer to another unit and take a 12.5% pay cut for the prospect of promotion. It is therefore better to retain the original pay scales proposed by von Domaszewski in which the *vexillarius equitum* received one and a half times the base pay.
8. Promotion and Careers

An ambitious soldier who had attained the rank of *eques legionis* was not assured a promotion to higher rank within the legion; many troopers ended their military career with the rank of legionary horseman. A soldier who desired to reach the coveted rank of centurion had a greater chance of success if he followed the more traditional route to the centurionate, i.e., through the posts in the century, i.e., as a *tesserarius* or *librarius*, then an *optio in centuria*, then a *signifer* and finally onto the rank of *aquilifer*, *cornicularius*, or *optio spei* before reaching the rank of centurion.

Several legionary horsemen did, however, move up through the ranks of the legions. Two troopers were eventually promoted to the rank of *optio in centuria*. The first, Iulius Donatus, ended his military career sometime in the second century as an *ex optione*. The second trooper, Aurelius Gaius Secundus, who served under

---

132 13, 35, 37, 46, 48, 61, 62, 66, 69, 82, 85.

133 See the discussion by Breeze 1974, 263-278. Breeze notes that the Romans preferred such a combination of administrative and command positions for promotion to the highest ranks of the legions.

134 103.
Promotion and Careers

Diocletian, held the post of optio, apparently in several units.\textsuperscript{135}

Two men are known to have advanced to the legionary centurionate. The first trooper, from the early third century, who began his career in legio II Parthica as an eques legionis; the man ended his career some twenty-two years later with the rank of centurion, presumably in the same legion.\textsuperscript{136} The second soldier, who began as a simple miles, served during the first century. After four years, he was promoted to eques, a rank he held for ten years, after which he was advanced to the rank of centurion which he held for a remarkable twenty-one years! He ended his military service as a praefectus cohortis.\textsuperscript{137}

If the promotions to the higher positions in the legions were not readily forthcoming, transfers into units of the auxiliary forces often provided upward mobility in the career of a legionary horseman. One horseman, M. Licinius Fidelis, of legio III Augusta was transferred to the ala Pannoniorum with the rank of

\textsuperscript{135}120.

\textsuperscript{136}89 with commentary.

\textsuperscript{137}32.
Promotion and Careers

duplicarius, the deputy to the squadron commander, which he held until his death a mere four months later.\textsuperscript{138}

A second soldier, the famous Claudius Maximus was also transferred into an auxiliary cavalry regiment with the rank of duplicarius.\textsuperscript{139} Claudius Maximus, however, was further promoted to the rank of decurion and so commanded a squadron of horsemen. Astonishingly, despite his great feat, he never reached the centurionate.

A significant number of equites legionis were commissioned as decurions in auxiliary regiments. One Spanish decurion from the \textit{ala Patrui}, whose inscription seems to date from the civil wars immediately following the death of Julius Caesar is known to have possessed Roman citizenship.\textsuperscript{140} It has therefore been suggested that this man was a former legionary horseman who had been transferred to the auxiliary cavalry to ensure that they were instilled with Roman discipline.\textsuperscript{141} If this soldier were an eques legionis it would not only be

\textsuperscript{138}101.

\textsuperscript{139}77.

\textsuperscript{140}9.733=ILS 2499.

\textsuperscript{141}Speidel 1984b, 111-113.
Promotion and Careers

interesting for the career structure of the legionary cavalry but would also push back the reform reintroducing the horsemen to the legion to a time before the principate, perhaps as far back as the time of C. Julius Caesar himself.

The most well-known example of this phenomenon is a papyrus from A.D. 243-244 which records the dates of the promotions of a number of auxiliary centurions and decurions. Of the five decurions listed for this one unit, two of them were commissioned directly from the rank of legionary horsemen whereas the remaining three rose through the ranks of an ala to the post of either sesquipllicarius or duplicarius before promotion to decurion.

Epigraphy provides a further example. There is an inscription which lists the members of a detachment and records a certain Pomponius Herculanus who is listed as a decurion and former legionary horseman. Pomponius had received a promotion to an auxiliary unit as a decurion

\[142\] See the discussion in Gilliam 1986a, 191-206.

\[143\]
but at the time of the inscription he had not yet had the opportunity to take up his new post.

One final case needs to be considered. In the papyrus discussed above, an additional legionary horseman received a commission and in this case the unit is known to be the *cohors III Ityraeorum*. Here though, the trooper in question was not appointed as a squadron leader, a decurion, but rather was assigned to the infantry as a centurion.

The relatively large number of men appointed as commissioned officers to the auxiliary regiments is significant for the history of the legionary horsemen in that it may provide some insight into the status of the *equites legionis*. It was common for soldiers from elite units to be sent off to the line units so that the high standards of discipline and training found in the elite units might be transferred to the line units. The most famous examples are the *evocati legionis* who were posted to the legions so that the line units might be trained to the high standards of the units of the imperial guard.\(^{144}\) Likewise, troopers from the emperor's horseguards, the *equites singulares Augusti* were sent to auxiliary units

\(^{144}\)Birley 1988d, 326. See also, Birley 1988b, 189-205.
Promotion and Careers

as decurions. The provincial guard units, the singulares consularis also appear to have served as something of an officers' candidate school.

It now seems likely that the legionary horsemen performed a similar role, providing officers with a high degree of training so as to be able to promote a similar degree of discipline to their new units. Their expert training suggests that the legionary horsemen also excelled as a combat unit and as a guard unit to legionary commander.

\[145\] Speidel 1968, 55f.

\[146\] Speidel 1978, 51f.
9. Arms and Armor

Of the more than one hundred monumenta which record the equites legionis of the high empire, eight are tombstones which preserve a complete depiction of the deceased soldier. Six of the stones date to the first century A.D., the period during which we have the largest number of representations in his "battle dress;" many of these depictions belong to cavalrymen, who were rather more affluent than their colleagues in the infantry. These stones generally represent the legionary horsemen in the same poses and with the same equipment as their counterparts in the auxiliary cavalry units.

The first century auxiliaries are most often depicted in the so-called rider-relief, where the trooper is shown mounted on his horse riding down a defeated barbarian enemy; the soldier is often followed by his servant (calo) who carries additional weapons including arrows. In the rider-relief the horsemen represented himself as the "Hero," after the manner of the Thracian Rider-God, also known as the Danubian rider. on the

---

147 See Bishop 1988, 114, who shows that 55% of the richly decorated Roman tombstones from the Rhenish frontier belong to the horsemen of the auxiliary or legionary cavalry.

148 The Thracian Rider-God and Danubian Rider are discussed by Kazarov 1938, 1-16 and, with particular reference to the tombstones of Roman horsemen,
Arms and Armor

gravestone was that of the trooper when in battle. He is represented with a helmet (at least at times), protective body-armor, usually chain mail (lorica hamata) or, less frequently, scale mail (lorica squamata), a large shield, a spear capable of being thrust or thrown (hasta), and a sword, usually of the long Celtic-type (spatha).

Of the six stones of the legionary horsemen which can be dated to the first century A.D., four represent the deceased in the posture of the Thracian Rider-God. 149 Three of the stones are rather badly weathered and as a result only the most obvious items of equipment are still visible: the shield, the spear, and, in one instance, the helmet. 150 Yet one stone is fairly well-preserved. 151 This monument, from Bonn, represents a certain Caius Marius who served fifteen years in legio I Germanica. Marius is depicted as bare-headed, but wears some type of Schleiermacher 1984, 60-65, esp. 63f.

149 16, 47, 51 and 80.

150 The helmet on the relief of 52 is quite visible and even the type can be determined. See Ubl 1969, 28f., who classifies the helmet as of the Weisenau type, also referred to as Imperial Gallic Type D: cf. Robinson 1975, 53.

151 16.

78
Arms and Armor

armor over his tunic -- the armor is in turn decorated with his military decorations (dona militaria). The type of the armor cannot be determined from the stone, but was probably painted to represent chain mail.\textsuperscript{152} He also carries the characteristic spear and shield so well-known from the reliefs of the auxiliaries.

The two stones not of the Thracian Rider-God genre show the same basic elements of equipment. One gravestone of two brothers, both equites legionis, from the early first century A.D. has a very small battle scene which shows a legionary horseman in combat with a mounted barbarian opponent.\textsuperscript{153} The legionary horseman carries the typical cut-oval shield. The second stone, which is anepigraphic, can be demonstrated to belong to a legionary horseman by the military decorations the man

\textsuperscript{152}Chain mail was difficult to represent by cutting into the stone, so the Romans often applied a coat of gesso or simply painted the armor grey with black "links" to show that a soldier was wearing chain mail. See the discussion by Robinson 1975, 169, and Robinson 1972, 24-35, esp. 26.

\textsuperscript{153}See Ubl 1969, 20.
Arms and Armor

had earned.\textsuperscript{154} The trooper is shown mounted and protected by a chainmail shirt.

There are two grave reliefs of legionary horsemen from the early third century A.D. Unlike the first century examples, these stones portray the troopers standing about in "camp uniform" rather than in full battle equipment. The first of the stones is from Adiaum in Pannonia Superior. It depicts the deceased outfitted merely with a sword mounting a ring-pommel (52).\textsuperscript{155} He wears a long sleeved tunic (\textit{tunica mantica}) with narrow sleeves and a cloak (\textit{sagum}) over his right shoulder fastened with a circular fibula. The tunic is girded by ring-buckle military belt (\textit{cingulum}). A ring is worn on his left hand.

The second stone, from Brigetio, shows the trooper armed with a spear and shield (55); he leads his horse.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{154}The original publication of the stone (34) by Frenz 1985, K119, did not identify the man's rank. The review by Speidel 1990 shows the man to have been an \textit{eques legionis}.

\textsuperscript{155}Non vidi. The description is taken from the excellent work by Ubl 1969, xxxvii. For descriptions of the individual items of dress and equipment, see Ubl 1969, passim.

\textsuperscript{156}Non vidi. The description is again based on that of Ubl 1969, xxvii.
Arms and Armor

The horseman wears a long sleeved tunic, which reached as far as the knee. The tunic is belted, but no buckle is evident. Long pants (braccae) are worn beneath the tunic. A cloak, without a visible fibula, is draped over the right shoulder. In his left hand the soldier carries a large oval shield with a round boss (umbo) and a spear.

This method of representing the soldier in camp uniform became the norm in the third century.\textsuperscript{157} It is therefore not possible to determine if the equipment of the legionary horsemen had changed dramatically from that carried by the auxiliary troopers, but there is no reason to believe that it did.

There is also an imperial, i.e., state constructed monument, which shows legionary horsemen. This is the early first century triumphal arch at Orange in southern France (ancient Arausio). The monument was erected to celebrate the suppression of a Gallic revolt by legio II Augusta.\textsuperscript{158} Since the arch was erected to honor a legion, the horsemen depicted as part of the Roman force have, no

\textsuperscript{157}See Speidel 1984\textsuperscript{j}, 14-16 for art on third century tombstones; cf. the survey of modern and archaeological sources by Coulston 1987, 141-156.

\textsuperscript{158}\textsuperscript{12} as dated by P. M. Duval, in R. Amy et al. 1962.
Arms and Armor

doubt correctly, been taken as equites legionis. The equipment of these legionary horsemen is generally the same as appears on the first century tombstones: chainmail, helmet, shield, spear and sword. But the sword is not the usual Celtic longsword, the spatha, but rather the shorter gladius of the legionary infantry.

There is one horseman on the arch who does not wear chainmail, but rather scale armor. Scale armor was the type of protection often worn by officers; this soldier has been identified as an officer of the legionary horsemen, probably their centurion, who, as we have seen, was the commander of the equites legionis.

Archaeology, that great tool for students of Roman military equipment, is not of much help for the battlefield equipment of the legionary horsemen. Although many pieces of cavalry equipment, especially helmets, have been found, there is no way of telling if a

---

159 G.-Ch. Picard, in Amy et al. 1962, 126f.
160 G.-Ch. Picard, in Amy et al. 1962, 125.
161 For a centurion as commander, see supra, s.v. The Commander of the Equites Legionis.
piece belonged to an auxiliary or a legionary; even the find spot can be deceptive.\footnote{Maxfield 1986, 59-72.}

There is, however, one area in which archaeology has been instructive: the sports armor of the legionary horsemen. The legionary cavalry, like their colleagues in the auxiliaries, took part in special cavalry games, the \textit{hippika gymnasia}, as part of their training. These games are described in detail in the \textit{Taktika} of Flavius Arrianus, the historian of Alexander the Great who was also a Roman commander and provincial governor.\footnote{The best discussion of the \textit{Taktika} is the commentary of Kiechle 1964, 87-129. The cavalry games and the training grounds of the Roman cavalry are described by Davies 1989b, 93-123.}

A large amount of sports armor has been found, some of it from legionary camps, although, as noted above, the find spot cannot be taken as proof positive of the unit of the owner.\footnote{The best collection of sports armor is the catalog by Garbsch 1978.} The most spectacular finds are the sports helmets which were fitted with an ornamental, but protective, mask. Unfortunately none of those found, even in legionary fortresses, can be definitively
Arms and Armor

ascribed to a legionary horsemen, although they must
certainly have had them as part of their panoply.

Several pieces can, by means of their inscription or
design, be shown to be part of the equipment of legionary
horsemen. There are two plaques which were affixed to
the soldier's cuirass. One has the letters GEM which
should be expanded to gemina, "the twin," the title of
the legio X Gemina which was stationed in the general
vicinity of the find spot of the armor.165 A second
plaque has the names of the owners inscribed who identify
themselves by their century, or company; only legionary
horsemen were in companies -- auxiliaries were in
squadrons (turmae).166 Several other plaques have animal
symbols which served as totem emblems of the legions,
often associated with the creation of the unit.167 There
is also an ornate shield boss from Iran which belonged to
a member of the legionary horsemen.168 This can be

165Garbsch 1978, P7. Brief introductions to
legionary titles are found in Parker 1928, 261-271 and
Keppie 1984, 205-212.

166Garbsch 1978, P23.

167Garbsch 1978, 31f.

Arms and Armor

determined from the inscription borne on the boss which mentions the century of the owner.

Finally, there is a literary reference to the equipment of the *equites legionis*. There is an inscription from the *adlocutio*, or address to the soldiers, of the emperor Hadrian to *legio III Augusta* (107) in which the emperor congratulates the legionary horsemen on their fine performance of an *exercitatio*, or military exercise. Not all of the troops reviewed by Hadrian were so well received; an unnamed unit under a prefect called Cornelianus did not please the emperor.¹⁶⁹

The soldiers hurled their spears while wearing armor of some type (*ut loricati iaculationem perageratis* -- "armored you performed the hurling of the spear"). This exercise might be identified with the *iaculatio petrina* of Arrian's *Taktika*.¹⁷⁰ If the identification

¹⁶⁹ Ch=ILS 2487: *contrari discursus non placent mih[i]...* Arrian twice in the *Taktika* noted that soldiers should be praised or chastised according to their performance: 38.4-5 and 43.5.

¹⁷⁰ The άκουτισμος ό πέτρινος of *Taktika* 37.4. So identified by S. Dehner, *Hadriani Reliquiae I* (Diss. Bonn, 1883), 14 (*non vidi*). This identification which is based on the difficulty of the manoeuvre is not certain. Arrian said that the άκουτισμος ό πέτρινος was πάντων χαλεπώτερος, "the most difficult of all" which seems to be echoed in Hadrian's *difficil[ium fecisti]*; see the commentary on the *Taktika* in Kiechle 1964, 96.
with Arrian's *iaculatio petrina* is correct, the term *loricatus* could possibly mean that the troopers wore not only their normal mail shirt, but also the colorful Cimmerian linen armor associated with the *hippika gymnasia*. Certainly such "dress uniforms" would be appropriate for an exercise put on before the emperor himself.
10. Religion

The legionary horsemen, like all Roman soldiers, worshipped a variety of deities. The gods and goddesses of the *equites legionis* ranged from the supreme divinity of the Roman state, Iuppiter Optimus Maximus\(^{171}\) to purely local cults such as the Matronae, "the Mother Goddesses."\(^{172}\) with a number of diverse deities in between the two.\(^{173}\) One of the most common religious dedications is tied to Roman funeral practices, i.e., the dedications to the Dis Manibus, the Gods Below.\(^{174}\)

A number of scholarly studies have been devoted entirely to the religion of the Roman army and so there is no need to deal with the religion of the army as a whole.\(^{175}\) Instead, it seems more useful to look at those

\(^{171}\)28, 29 and 88.

\(^{172}\)21.

\(^{173}\)Gods and goddesses honored by the legionary cavalry: Atargatis (Dea Syria) - 87; Ascallacanus - 74; Bonus Eventus - 22; the Campestres - 56; Diana Regina - 73; Epona Augusta - 59; Fortuna Augusta - 104; Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Helipolitanus - 83; Mars Augustus - 60.

\(^{174}\)2, 8, 19, 38, 43, 52, 55, 57, 67, 75, 78, 80, 99, 105, 112 and 113. The formulae remained in use into the fourth century: 118 and 119.

\(^{175}\)The standard work on the religion of the Roman army must remain Domaszewski 1972b, 83-204. This basic work is brought up to date by Birley 1988e, 397-432. The official religion of the Roman army is discussed by Nock 1952, 187-252.
Religion

deities which had some particular importance to the
legionary horsemen as a whole, viz., the deities of their
training grounds and mounts, the Campestres, Epona, and
Mars Augustus.

The main deities associated with the training
grounds of cavalry units were the Campestres or Matres
Campestres. These divinities were of Celtic origin,
probably introduced into the Roman army by the large
numbers of Gallic horsemen who served in the Roman army
during the late republic and early empire.\textsuperscript{176} It was once
thought that the Campestres were a cult of the auxiliary
horsemen only, with Mars Campester serving as the
tutelary deity of the \textit{campus} of citizen troops.\textsuperscript{177}

There is, however, an inscription from Brigetio,
Pannonia Superior, in which M. Ulpius Rufus, an \textit{eques}
\textit{legionis} of \textit{legio I Adiutrix}, honors the Campestres.
This inscription dispels the contention that the
Campestres were limited to the troopers who served in the
auxiliary regiments.

\begin{flushright}
176 \textsuperscript{176} Domaszewski 1972b, 131. \textsuperscript{177} \textsuperscript{177} Domaszewski 1972b, 131f. \textsuperscript{177}
\end{flushright}
Religion

This dedication to the Campestres raises some interesting questions. First, there is an inscription also from Brigetio which was dedicated to the Campestres by a *tribunus laticlavius* of the same legion. The connection between this tribune and the goddesses of the *campus* has generated at least two divergent interpretations. First, that there was some association between this tribune and the legionary horsemen; the most likely connection is that the tribunes oversaw the horsemen's training exercises.\(^{178}\) A second interpretation is that senatorial and equestrian officers were mounted and that as a senator, the tribune possessed a horse, hence his dedication to divinities associated with horsemen.\(^{179}\) This second explication seems rather weak.

The Campestres are usually venerated by cavalrymen, or men associated in some way with cavalry units,\(^{180}\) not simply men who are mounted on horseback; such a man might better honor Epona, the Celtic horse-goddess.

---

\(^{178}\)See *supra*, *s.v.* The Commander of the *Equites Legionis*, esp. note 61.

\(^{179}\)Birley 1988e, 420.

\(^{180}\)For the Campestres and cavalrymen see Speidel 1968, 55ff. and 73 and Birley 1988f, 433-435.
Religion

Second, there are several inscriptions of legionary centurions or from legionary camps which are dedicated to the Campestres. The two inscriptions from legionary camps are from Aquincum in Pannonia Superior\textsuperscript{181} and from Lambaesis in Numidia.\textsuperscript{182} While the ranks of the dedicators are not preserved, the connection of the Campestres with cavalrymen and their presence at a legionary fortress argues for them being connected with the equites legionis.

There are three inscriptions erected by centurions in honor of the Campestres which may bear on the legionary horsemen. The first was dedicated at Auchendavy on the Antonine Wall by M. Cocceius Firmus, a centurion of legio II Augusta.\textsuperscript{183} The second inscription was found at Rome and was set up by L. Aurelius Quintus of legio VII Gemina.\textsuperscript{184} The third monument is from

\textsuperscript{181}3.3667.
\textsuperscript{182}8.10760.
\textsuperscript{183}RIB 2177. See the discussion in Birley 1953, esp. 98-102.
\textsuperscript{184}ILS 4776=6.768.
Religion

Numidia and belonged to L. Aurelius Maximus, presumed to be a centurion of legio III Augusta. 185

Why did these three men, none of whom are attested in any explicit connection with the cavalry, honor the Campestres? E. Birley has put forth an explanation: all three of these centurions served previously in the emperors' horseguards, the equites singulares Augusti. 186

The argument for Cocceius Firmus is based upon the large number, origins, and names of the deities mentioned, while that for Aurelius Quintus is based upon the find spot in the capital. No solid evidence is adduced for the third man.

One other possibility may, however, be submitted, i.e., that these legionary centurions were former commanders of the legionary cavalry. Although this suggestion has no direct support, it needs to be considered, if only in the case of Aurelius Maximus where neither the combination of deities (as with Cocceius Firmus) nor a find spot (as with Aurelius Quintus) can be

185 ILS 3157=8.2635. Birley 1988f postulated the rank of the man as a centurion in that legion: 435, n. 10.

186 For the case of Cocceius Firmus, see Birley 1953, 98-102 and Birley 1988f, 435; for Aurelius Quintus and Aurelius Maximus, Birley 1988f, 435
Religion

used to argue for previous service in the imperial horseguards.

There is only one dedication to Epona, the protectress of horses and the skills associated with them. Epona, although of Celtic origin, became a common divinity throughout the Roman army in the western provinces.\textsuperscript{187} In other inscriptions, Epona is occasionally found along with the Campestres.\textsuperscript{188}

There is also an inscription of a legionary exercitator, a riding master, which honors Mars Augustus. This deity may be the same as Mars Campester, the god of the exercise field, as the dedication is made by a training officer.\textsuperscript{189} Mars, as a god of war, is a reasonable divinity for those concerned with military training to invoke.

The legionary horsemen also had a religious life as a group, making offerings on behalf the unit as a whole. In A.D. 231 the horsemen of legio XXII Primigenia made a dedication to Bonus Eventus, good fortune.\textsuperscript{190}

\textsuperscript{187}See the discussion by Speidel 1968, 73f.

\textsuperscript{188}E.g., ILS 2417=3.7904, 3.11909.

\textsuperscript{189}Domaszewski 1972b, 116f.

\textsuperscript{190}
Eventus is representative of a host of tutelary deities such as Fortuna, Tutela, and Hercules (Sanctus and Centuriae); these various deities seem to have been united with the Genius of the unit in the role of protector.\textsuperscript{191} The presence of a protective deity and a Genius indicates that the equites legionis saw themselves as a distinct subunit within the legion, like a centuria or a cohors or at least as a collegium or schola of men of like rank.\textsuperscript{192}

\textsuperscript{191}See Speidel 1989a, 359-364.

\textsuperscript{192}For the Genii of the Roman army, see Domaszewski 1972b, 175-190, and, more recently, Speidel 1984f, 353-368.
11. The Role of the Equites Legionis

The importance of the functions and role performed by the legionary horsemen has often been denigrated by scholars. One scholar has made the following comment on the legionary horsemen: "These men were citizens, but they were by no means citizen cavalry." An eminent English historian of the Roman army went so far as to explain the dearth of monumenta for the legionary horsemen as a consequence of the legionary horsemen's unimportance.

The main duty of the legionary horsemen, no doubt because of their relatively small number (120 troopers), has therefore been seen as one of communications, although other functions have been acknowledged. This purpose has been inferred from a dubious passage in Livy, presumably based on the episode in which young Ti. Sempronius Gracchus is sent by L. Scipio to king Philip of Macedon (190 B.C.). This passage is suspect if

---

193 Bishop 1988, 112f.

194 Parker 1932, 141.

195 See, for example, Breeze 1969, 55. Breeze, however, notes that they did form a battlefield unit, sometimes acting in concert with the auxiliary cavalry units. A comment on their numerical insignificance is to be found in Parker 1932, 141.

196 37.7.
The Role of the *Equites Legionis*

for no other reason than that it discusses a republican aristocrat, rather than an imperial *eques legionis*. Moreover, this was a special mission, not a common duty, even for the republican horsemen.

This is not, however, to deny that courier duties were among the tasks assigned to the legionary horsemen, but only to point out that the oft-cited passage in Livy does not constitute proof. There is, however, a papyrus which does seem to show that messenger-duties were assigned to the *equites legionis*.\(^{197}\) In this papyrus an officer discharges, ἀμόλυσεν, a legionary horsemen. The trooper was also a *beneficiarius praefecti*, either of the legionary prefect or of some regional military officer, and was apparently detailed as a messenger.\(^{198}\)

The equipment, training and careers of the legionary horsemen argue that other functions were at least equally important as communications tasks. It seems that the battlefield role of the legionary horsemen must be reevaluated: the *equites legionis* were elite troopers

---

\(^{197\text{96}}\) as edited by Speidel 1986a, 167f. with his commentary on the papyrus.

\(^{198}\) Speidel 1986a, 167f.
The Role of the *Equites Legionis*

who probably formed the guard unit of the legionary legate.\(^{199}\)

There is an excellent example of the legionary horsemen in battle from which we are provided with some evidence of their elite nature.\(^{200}\) In a battle with the Frisians the governor of Lower Germany, L. Apronius, tried to attack the Germans by sending an *ala* to outflank them. When this cavalry regiment ran into difficulties, Apronius sent in the legionary horsemen as a reserve (*subsidium*). The number of legionary horsemen must have been somewhere between 120 and 960 men. If the contingents of all eight of the German legions were present the horsemen would be as strong as two full *alae*. If but one legion's troopers were present, they would be a rather weak unit. In either case, they could not restore the situation. Apronius then sent in three more waves of reinforcements: three auxiliary cohorts, two additional units of auxiliary foot and finally more horsemen from the *alae*. The piecemeal commitment of the

\(^{199}\)The elite status of the legionary horsemen was long ago recognized by Besnier 1899, 236, but this opinion has subsequently been obscured by the legionary cavalry as a corps of messengers. Certainly the legionary troopers could be used in such a capacity, but need not be limited to those duties.

\(^{200}\)20.
The Role of the *Equites Legionis*

reinforcing troops did no good and the situation was only restored by impetuous charge of a legion.

The question here is what do we learn from this passage about the status of legionary horsemen. First, that Tacitus called the legionary horsemen a reserve, *subsidium*, which may imply elite rank. Vegetius (3.6) mentions the importance of reserves (*subsidia*) on the march, apparently composed of *lectissimi equites* (*equites singulares* and, perhaps, *equites legionis*?) supported by light troops and archers. Later (3.17-18) Vegetius talks about the importance of a reserve composed of *superflui* or *supernumerarii*, possibly *singulares*, to stand near the general.\(^{201}\) The best known example of a reserve of elite troops comes from Arrian's campaign against the Alans in A. D. 135 where that governor held near him a sizeable reserve of *singulares* and legionary foot guards.\(^{202}\)

If Roman battlefield reserves were often formed from the best troops available, which was and still is common military practice, Apronius most likely considered his legionary horsemen to be among his most select troops. This would also help to explain why they were committed

\(^{201}\)Cf. Speidel 1978, 48, n.268.

\(^{202}\)Arrian, *Ekt.* 22-23.
The Role of the *Equites Legionis*

so early into the fray; if any unit could restore the situation would it not be the crack soldiers of the reserve? This last point cannot, however, be argued too vigorously. One might also postulate that the early commitment of the legionary horse and the random deployment of units ending with the attack of the *robor* of the Roman army, a legion, makes the legionary cavalry an expendable commodity. This, though, would seem to fly in the face of standard Roman, almost universal, military practice concerning the composition of reserves.

As has been discussed above, the depictions of the arms and armor of the legionary horsemen shows that they were identical with those of the battle cavalry of the imperial army, the cavalrymen of the *alae*. The tombstones of the *equites legionis* also showed the troopers to be victorious in battle over a defeated enemy.\(^{203}\) The equipment and combat scenes on funeral monuments prove that the legionary horsemen had an active role in military operations.

Military regalia represented on the reliefs of the *equites legionis* likewise point to their battlefield duties, especially their military decorations, the *dona*  

\(^{203}\)For the rider-relief, see Schleiermacher 1984, 60-65.
The Role of the *Equites Legionis* militaria. No fewer than eight legionary horsemen were awarded various military decorations.\(^{204}\) One legionary horseman is known to have perished in battle.\(^{205}\)

Realistic training exercises for warfare were a concern for the units of the Roman army: Josephus goes so far as to say their exercises were battle arrays without bloodshed and their battle arrays were exercises with bloodshed.\(^{206}\) This seems to have been the case with the legionary horse just as with other battlefield units of the Roman army.

Hadrian's address to the *equites legionis* of *legio III Augusta* (107) praises one such exercise, possibly the *iaculatio petrina* of Arrian's *Taktika*.\(^ {207}\) The significant role of such training for the legionary horsemen is reinforced by the finds of cavalry 'sports' armor used

---

\(^{204}\) Seven are listed by V. A. Maxfield 1981, 213-217, esp. 216f. The eighth trooper was only recently published by G. Frenz 1985, K119 (36), along with the comments of Speidel 1990.

\(^{205}\) 47.

\(^{206}\) BI 3.76-77.

\(^{207}\) See above 41f.
The Role of the *Equites Legionis*

on the parade ground.\(^{208}\) The military exercises and the _hippika gymnasia_ of the legionary cavalry, with the troopers in their sports armor and, probably, brightly colored tunics, must have presented the same pageantry as the exercises of the auxiliary regiments described by Arrian.\(^{209}\) Indeed, the legionary troopers must have been trained in the same methods of manoeuver and to the same degree of proficiency as on one occasion _equites legionis_ and _equites alares_ fought together.\(^{210}\)

The presence of riding masters and arms instructors further illustrates the high quality of martial training given to the units of legionary horsemen. The legionary horsemen had a number of training officers such as the _exercitator_, _magister equitum_ and _magister kampi_. Some of these men, such as the _exercitator_ and _magister equitum_ were of high rank, probably centurions. Training officers of high rank are attested in both the imperial and provincial guard cavalry units.\(^{211}\)

\(^{208}\) See *supra*, _s.v._ Arms and Armor.

\(^{209}\) _Taktika_ 32.3-44.3.

\(^{210}\) 20.

\(^{211}\) Speidel 1978, 28ff.
The Role of the *Equites Legionis*

The *equites legionis* then seem to rank as a guard unit. This ranking is reinforced by an episode during the civil wars of A. D. 68-69. The legate of *legio I*, Fabius Valens, entered Cologne with his legionary horse as well as a body of auxiliary troopers (15). Certainly the legionary contingent was not included for its size; a single quingenary *ala* was at least four times the size of the legionary troop. The legionaries then must have been chosen for another reason, such as loyalty; they were, in effect, the legate's guard unit.

It has been known for some time that each legate, like many officers in the army, had bodyguards (*singulares*) attached to his staff. These guards, who ranked higher than the *equites legionis*, cannot have been as numerous. The *singulares* should probably be considered as a personal guard as opposed to a guard unit perhaps analogous to the *stratores* (bodyguards) and *singulares consularis* (guard regiment) of a provincial governor.

The ranking of the *equites legionis* among the various guard units of the Roman army would explain their

---

21275 and Speidel 1984d, 175-179.

213Speidel 1978, 132f.
The Role of the *Equites Legionis*

promotions to the various auxiliary regiments as officers.\textsuperscript{214} Members of the guard units were often farmed out to the various units of the line. The purpose of this system of transfers was to provide the regular line troops with the same level of elan and quality of training as in the elite guard units.\textsuperscript{215}

One final consideration concerning the status of the legionary cavalry is as a squadron of guards for the commander. It was common in the Roman military for guard units to either be released for service among the line units or retain their elite ranking and become a mobile reserve for the army. As examples of the former phenomenon, there are the various *alae singularium* and the third century *stablesiani* regiments formed from the provincial and legionary guards respectively.\textsuperscript{216} Similarly, a mobile reserve was formed from the mounted contingents of the guard at Rome.\textsuperscript{217}

\textsuperscript{214}Supra, s.v. Promotion and Careers.

\textsuperscript{215}See Speidel 1978, 51f and Birley 1988d, 326f.

\textsuperscript{216}Alae singularium: Speidel 1978, 54-66; Stablesiani: Speidel 1984g, 391-396.

\textsuperscript{217}Speidel 1987b, 375-379.
The Role of the Equites Legionis

We see the same forces at work on the equites legionis during the third century. The crisis of the third century saw the legionary cavalry force greatly increased in number. As mobile guard units, the legionary horsemen, now styled equites promoti, or at least a portion of them were so called, could be spared for service elsewhere. We therefore have the formation of a number of promoti regiments in the later Roman army.
CHAPTER III: THE EQUITES PROMOTI

1. The Origins of the Equites Promoti

The latter part of the second century A.D. and the majority of the third century A.D. was to be an age of great change for the Roman empire. With the end of the Antonine dynasty in the last quarter of the second century A.D., the Roman empire in general and the Roman army in particular began to experience the first signs of stress from a variety of sources: political failures, economic woes and military disasters. The situation was greatly exacerbated in the second quarter of the third century A.D. after a brief period of resurgence under the Severan dynasty. Indeed, the middle years of the third century were to prove themselves to be an age of both great crisis and, after a number of reforms under several "barracks emperors, of recovery; the third century would culminate with the unquestioned end of the political system known as the principate and the establishment of an autocratic form of government known as the dominate.

One of the responses made by the Roman army to the ever changing military situation of the third century was the well known increase in the number and quality of the Roman cavalry forces, who were called equites, which is
The Origins of the *Equites Promoti*

generally attributed to the emperors Gallienus and Aurelianus.¹ The units which formed this new mobile cavalry force were raised from several sources such as the ethnic *nationes* who had long been raised by the Romans for their special fighting talents² and various guard units of the emperor's household and provincial armies.³

¹Various aspects of the introduction of Gallienus' "Battle Cavalry" are discussed by Grosse 1920, 15-18; Alföldy 1927, 197-212; Hoffmann 1967, 247-57; Speidel 1984c, 117-148.

²The basic discussion remains Speidel 1984c. The Romans respected the raw martial skills which the tribes outside the empire possessed, as the barbarians were inculcated with weapons' handling and equestrian abilities from childhood onward; see Tacitus' comments in *Germ.* 32.

³Most of the guard units appear to have been transformed into elite line units which from the third century onward provided the nucleus of the mobile field armies. For example, the imperial guard provided a number of units to the field army: the mounted *equites praetoriani* and the *equites singulares Augusti* became the *comites dominorum nostrorum* and the *equites promoti dominorum nostrorum* respectively; the *lanciarii* and *protectores* of the guard also took on lives of their own as independent units. The origins of the *comites dominorum nostrorum* and the *equites promoti dominorum nostrorum* are discussed by Hoffmann 1967, 243-246, while the question of the guard as a whole acting as a nucleus for the new field army is taken up by Speidel 1987b, 375-379.

The provincial guards had long since provided new regiments of the line since they were often the only troops in a given province who, since they served at the capital rather than a frontier outpost, could be spared.
The Origins of the Equites Promoti

The creation of a new breed of legionary horsemen, the equites promoti or "promoted horsemen," who were both increased in number and who could be sent off as independent units, should probably be seen in the context of the transformation of guard regiments. As has been argued briefly in the last chapter, since the equites legionis served as the legionary legate's guard unit, and as such were trained to a higher standard than regular soldiers, they were caught up in this third century phenomenon of expanding the numbers and role of elite units.

The equites promoti existed in two distinct contexts, i.e., those who remained true legionary horsemen attached to their parent unit and those who formed into separate independent regiments. These two groups of promoti were once thought not to have existed simultaneously, but that the independent elements were created by Gallienus, returned to their parent legions by

for service abroad. Thus, the governors' auxiliary guards, the singulares, are known to have supplied cadres for no fewer than six line units; see Speidel 1978, 54-66. A third century example of this phenomenon is the creation of a number of cavalry regiments of Stablesiani who can now be shown to have been raised from the governors' legionary guards: Speidel 1984g, 391-396.
The Origins of the *Equites Promoti*

Diocletian and finally detached to form separate regiments during the reign of Constantine.\(^4\)

This thesis has not, however, received universal acceptance. Although the last attested documentary evidence for true legionary horsemen attached to their parent unit dates to the year A.D. 320,\(^5\) this does not preclude their existence down to a much later date. This is especially true given the severe shortage of evidence for the *equites promoti* specifically, and the late Roman army in general.

In fact, there is a piece of evidence which points to legionary cavalry surviving well into the sixth century; an unpublished inscription from Perge in Asia Minor records the composition of a Byzantine infantry "legion" which includes a small number of *veredarii*. This term is usually applied to a light horseman (from *veredus*, a swift hunting horse).\(^6\) If these *veredarii* are

\(^4\)Parker 1932, 144.

\(^5\)Bagnall and Lewis 1979, #188 (123).

\(^6\)Pannonian *veredarii* appear as early as the middle of the second century in Hyginus' *De munitionibus castrorum*, (for this date, which is disputed, see Birley 1988a, 53-57).

One tantalizing suggestion is that these 800 *Pannonii veredarii* are actually the legionary horsemen of the three Pannonian legions in the army described by
The Origins of the Equites Promoti

indeed descendants of the equites legionis, it would push forward the date for the existence of legionary horsemen nearly three centuries.

But even without the Perge inscription there is reason to believe that legionary horsemen continued to serve with their infantry companions. There is an attestation of horsemen still attached to a legion which mentions an aeques ex numero lanciar(i)orum who served in an ischola aequitum. It was once believed that this man was a legionary horseman serving in a legio lanciariorum. More recently it was shown that the trooper was from an ad hoc unit of lanciaii formed from the lanciaii detachments of various Danubian legions.

Hyginus. This would explain why Hyginus does not otherwise mention the equites legionis, which has long perplexed scholars, and would provide a more gradual increase in the number of legionary cavalry: Josephus' 120, followed by Hyginus' 265 or so and culminating with Vegetius' 726. Unfortunately, as there is not direct connection between the terms eques legionis and veredarius this must remain in the realm of conjecture.

7118.

8Mommsen 1889, 230f.

9See Hoffmann 1967, 218-222, esp. 220.
The Origins of the Equites Promoti

In any event, this inscription would then still record special lancea-armed horsemen among the lanciarii.\textsuperscript{10}

It has been suggested that Diocletian never reattached the promoti to their legions, but rather the few instances we have where the promoti give their parent unit occur when the infantry and cavalry serve in the same province. The reason for this is that legionary detachments would often return to the units from which they originated, and so the administrative bonds remained quite strong. The horsemen would thus only be described in terms other than by the designation of their legion when they had left the province in which the infantry were stationed.\textsuperscript{11} The various units of equites promoti who are mentioned in the Notitia Dignitatum then represent detachments of legionary horsemen which have left their parent province and legion and have in effect become independent units requiring a name and designation of their own.

\textsuperscript{10}cf. the position of mounted lanciarius held by Aurelius Gaius Secundus (120).

\textsuperscript{11}Speidel 1984c, 137.
2. Numbers and Unit Organization

Our main source for the numbers and, to some extent, the organization of the legionary horsemen after the third century reforms is the military manual of Vegetius. In a famous passage Vegetius (2.6) describes the organization and strength of the *antiqua legio*, i.e., the legion from the time of Diocletian.

The legion from the time of Diocletian shows a dramatic increase in the number of legionary horsemen. By this time the full strength complement of *equites promoti* was 726 troopers, not the 730 given by Vegetius (unless Vegetius is including some unmentioned group of officers or staff members which is unlikely). This large number, more than six times the number of *equites legionis* of the high empire, shows the new emphasis placed on cavalry forces in general, and the legionary horsemen in particular during the age of imperial crisis and recovery.

As was discussed above, not all of the legionary troopers could be expected to remain with their parent unit; some would be detached for service either within their own province or even in some distant theater of war. The "book strength" of *equites promoti* was often reduced, sometimes substantially, by detaching troops for
service elsewhere as well as by common forms of attrition.

There is a papyrus which illustrates the lower number of legionary horsemen. The document, from early A.D. 300, records the salaries and donatives paid to various corps of troops.\(^{12}\) Included among these units are the *equites promoti* of legio II Traiana.\(^{13}\) In his great work on the later Roman empire A. H. M. Jones calculated from the amount of the donatives that the number of *promoti* was 149 horsemen; more recently A. K. Bowman has revised the number to an even lower strength of approximately 78 troopers.\(^{14}\)

There is no direct evidence for the strength of a regiment of *equites promoti* which had become an independent unit. It is reasonable to assume that they were the same strength as most other *vexillationes*, or regiments of horse. Common wisdom holds that such units were generally five hundred men strong.\(^{15}\) It should be

\(^{12}\) Lines 204ff.

\(^{13}\) Jones 1986, n.31, 1257ff. and Bowman 1978, 31.

\(^{15}\) Grosse 1920, 49ff., esp. 51, based on a comment by Lydus de mag. 1.46.
Numbers and Unit Organization

pointed out, however, that a vexillatio of equites promoti need not have been formed from a single legion;\textsuperscript{16} such a detachment of some five hundred troopers might have totally exhausted the cavalry contingent of an individual legion. Rather, a number of units might have contributed horsemen, often of a given specialization, to form a new cavalry regiment. One such case would be the equites promoti clibanarii who were most likely formed from the clibanarii of several legions within a province as these special horsemen would form only a portion of the troopers in the unit.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{16}Cf. the comments by Grosse 1920, 50., who saw a precise correspondence between the number of vexillationes and legions, not limited, however, to the units styled promoti.

\textsuperscript{17}The practice of forming troops armed in the same fashion into a new ad hoc unit can be traced back to the early Flavian period. There is an inscription (3.13483a=ILS 9168) which records a vexillatio sagit(tariorum) exer(citus) Syriaci. This document is particularly instructive in that it shows that a group of weapons specialists, in this case archers, from the cohors II Italica c. R., which was not apparently sagittaria, where combined with men of a similar ilk for a specific purpose. The same can be said about the creation of units of armored horsemen, who began as specialists within regular units and who were then combined into ad hoc units which took on a life of their own. See the comments for armored cavalry units by Speidel 1984, 151-156, esp. 154f.

112
Numbers and Unit Organization

What we know of the internal organization of the *equites promoti* is likewise based upon Vegetius' description of the Diocletianic legion (2.6). It was once believed that Vegetius later (2.14) described these horsemen as formed in *turmae*. But as has been shown in the last chapter, they are horsemen of the *alae* rather than legionary troopers; moreover, there is plenty of evidence, such as the presence of *centuriones* rather than *decuriones*, to argue that they were not organized in proper *turmae*. Rather they were attached to a century for administrative purposes and were formed into *turma*-like units for their various tactical evolutions.

The *antiqua legio* has a rather different organization for the legionary cavalry. According to 2.6 the horsemen were divided into ten units, each of which formed part of one of the cohorts of the legion. Cohort I, which was to be double strength, possessed a unit of one hundred thirty-two troopers while cohorts II-X were each provided with a troop of sixty-six horsemen.

Vegetius thus implies that by the time of Diocletian, the legionary cavalry were part of the

---

18 For example, Parker 1932, 141f.

19 Chapter 1, s.v. "Unit Organization."
Numbers and Unit Organization

individual cohorts. This connection with the cohorts is made explicitly in a subsequent passage:

Thus the legionary horsemen respect their own cohorts by means of the love of military companionship, although horsemen are naturally accustomed to differ from infantrymen. Therefore through this connection a single union was preserved both of all the cohorts and of the infantry and cavalry within the legions. (2.21)

While the horsemen were attached, this was probably administrative; the cavalry troopers would still have required a separate tactical organization. It is not surprising, therefore, that the number of horsemen attached to the cohorts is equivalent to four turmae for cohort I and two turmae for cohorts II-X; but, as we have already seen for the equites legionis, these need not represent proper turmae, only similar-sized tactical units.20

There is one last bit of information which seems to provide a tantalizing glimpse as to how weapons specialists within a unit were organized. Vegetius (2.6) notes that the one hundred thirty-two cavalrymen attached to cohort I are loricati, armored, while the remaining troopers are simply called equites. At first glance, it might appear that the armor of the entire group was

20 See Parker 1932, 141 and Chapter 1, s.v. Unit Organization.
Numbers and Unit Organization

listed with the first detachment of legionary horsemen, and thus the entire body of *equites promoti* were considered to be armored.

An investigation of Vegetius' use of *loricatus* when describing horsemen, however, shows that the term appears to be a technical one. In the chapters on the disposition of horsemen in battle (3.16) and the use of reserves (3.17), Vegetius couples the *loricati* with *contati*, lancers, and calls them *equites fortiores*, the more courageous horsemen.

It seems unlikely that Vegetius would find the need to specify regular horsemen as armored since all Roman cavalrymen wore some form of metallic body armor.\(^{21}\) The special note of their armor and the use in conjunction with weapons specialists, the lancers, implies that these troopers too were distinctively equipped; i.e., their armor must have been unusually heavy. We would thus have in Vegetius' *loricati* and *contati* units of *catafractarii* (*catafractarii clibanarii*)\(^{22}\) and *contarii* respectively; troopers of both types could be considered *equites*

---

\(^{21}\)See Chapter 1, s.v. Arms and Armor and infra, s.v. Arms and Armor. Contra Eadie 1967.

\(^{22}\)On the distinction, see Speidel 1984, 153f.
Numbers and Unit Organization

fortiores since they were originally elite horsemen within their units.

These two types of horseman, the heavily mailed catafractarius clibanarius and the contarius, are attested for the equites promoti.²³ If, as has been suggested, Vegetius used the term loricatus in a technical way when referring to cavalry, then the loricati attached to the first cohort were the elite troopers of the equites promoti. Thus, the heavily mailed and lance-armed horsemen were formed into special squadrons and troops to spearhead attacks.

²³Catafractarii clibanarii: Not. Dig. Or. 7.31; contarius: 123.
3. Officers

Of the various topics concerning the later Roman legionary horsemen about which there is sufficient information for discussion, the officers and command structure of the equites promoti are the most problematic. One reason is the paucity of evidence for these legionary cavalrymen in general, but specifically with respect to the command structure and officers. In the case of numbers and organization of the promoti, there exists not only the few, albeit important, pieces of documentary evidence, but also the elucidating comments of Vegetius. His epitoma rei militaris is, regrettably, silent on their officers. Likewise the stone reliefs of later legionary horsemen coupled with stray documentary references provide a clearer picture of the arms and armor of the troopers, but, unfortunately, there are no such sources for the officers and ranks of the equites promoti.

The situation is further complicated by the new rank structure of the later imperial army. During the late empire many new ranks were created to fill positions in the recently reorganized army and a number of the older ranks either changed their name or function to accommodate the command structure of both the newly created and reformed units of the field army.
Officers

These problems concerning the officers and their place in the chain of command are not unique to the late Roman legionary horsemen, but rather pertain to the whole of the army. Such a dearth of material and the associated problems are the most likely culprits for the fact that no recent scholar has attempted a comprehensive study of the Rangordnung of the later imperial army.\textsuperscript{24}

The situation is not totally without hope, though, since the limited evidence does provide a few glimpses into the officer corps of the equites promoti. What follows is an attempt to reconstruct their command structure.

A. The Commander of the Equites Promoti

Despite the dearth of references, we are rather fortunate to have some good information about the commander of the late Roman legionary cavalry. Three separate sources record men who can be identified as the commanders of units of promoti.

The first piece of evidence is an inscription from the city of Rome discovered in the early part of this century (AE 1907, 143). The inscription mentions a trebunus [equitum] promotorum who must be the commander

\textsuperscript{24}The most complete study of the officers and ranks of the late period remains that by Grosse 1920, 107-198, now some seventy years old.
Officers

of a unit of promoti. The rank of tribune is a very common one for commanders of all types of units in the later Roman imperial army both those which formed part of the field army as well as the frontier troops. This rank was generally the highest in the late Roman Rangordnung.

There is some doubt, however, as to whether this particular inscription is indeed pertinent to those units of equites promoti which were descended from the legionary horsemen; this particular unit of promoti may be, based upon the find spot of the inscription, the equites promoti dominorum nostrorum who were created not from legionary squadrons, but rather from the equites praetoriani.

From this inscription alone, it can not be argued with absolute certainty that those regiments of promoti raised from legionary troopers were commanded by a tribune rather than some other officer. Yet it does,

---

25 See Grosse 1920, 145-150.

26 See Speidel 1987b, 375. It is certainly these equites promoti dd.nn. whose tribune, Bappo, is mentioned in the context of other guard units including the comites by Ammianus Marcellinus (15.4.10).
Officers

based on the widespread use of this rank as unit commander, seem likely.\textsuperscript{27}

The next rank which can be identified with the command of the \textit{promoti} is that of \textit{praepositus}. Three papyri attest the existence of \textit{praepositi} as unit commanders.\textsuperscript{28} These papyri record \textit{praepositi} as commanders of detachments of the horsemen of \textit{legio II Traiana} at Tentyra and Asphynis.

The \textit{praepositus}, who often served as a unit commander, ranked beneath the tribune; the \textit{praepositi} of the late empire, like the \textit{praepositi} of the high empire, seem to have been men who filled temporary posts or commanded detachments.\textsuperscript{29} If there was in fact a tribune for the legionary \textit{promoti}, he would have been the officer for the entire unit while detachments would have been under \textit{praepositi}, who may well have been centurions.

B. Other Officers

\begin{footnotes}
\item[27]Grosse 1920, 145-150.
\item[28]121, 197 and 205; 122, 1-2; 123, 2
\item[29]For the late Roman \textit{praepositus}, see Grosse 1920, 143ff. The relationship and posts of the \textit{praepositus} are explained in terms of an inscription from Hissarlik by Mommsen 1882, 523-544.
\end{footnotes}
Officers

Under the late empire, the association of centurions with the legionary cavalry continued. There are two papyrological references to centurions associated with the promoti. 30

The first papyrus 31 is a will of a centurion of the legionary horsemen of legio II Traiana in which no fewer than six centurions are attested as witnesses and who can be identified as members of the same equites promoti legionis II Traianae by the use of συγκολλήγως, "colleague," i.e., member of the same unit and with the same rank.

The second papyrus 32 records a certain centurion named Maron to whom the disbursement of donatives was entrusted. He was aided by a regular horsemen, eques, named Ammonius in this task. Interestingly, the same papyrus shows that a group of legionaries drawn from various eastern legions had their payment entrusted to a

30 123.1, 26-32; 121.203, 206.

31 123.

32 121.
Officers

centurion and a signifer. While this is negative evidence, it implies that the legionary promoti did not have a signifer to look after their accounts; it was after all the traditional task of the signiferi to look after the soldiers' deposits.

There is an inscription which also seems to mention a particularly high ranking centurion, a ducenarius. Vegetius (2.8) tells us that the ducenarii were centurions who were in charge of 200 men, i.e., two centuriae, instead of the more usual 100 men (one centuria).

One last rank may be known for the later imperial promoti, the rank of exarchus, a commander of six troopers which seems to exist only for the cavalry. The inscription which records this rank was found at Rome and mentions an exarchus promotus dominicus. The adjective dominicus as well as the find spot argue for the interpretation that this trooper belonged to the equites

---

33 121.195.

34 119.

35 Cf. Grosse 1920, 118f.

36 Grosse 1920, 109f.

122
Officers

promoti dominorum nostrorum. Therefore, we can not be certain if legionary promoti had exarchi, but as with the tribune it seems likely.

Finally, the term promotus may itself denote an actual rank; the term does after all mean "promoted" or "advanced." Evidence of promotus as a rank comes from papyri from Hermopolis in Egypt dating from A.D. 347-348. These papyri preserve two προμψ Psi Μαρκος * σκυταρίων, where promotus clearly indicates the soldiers' rank within their unit.

---

37 P. Charite 6, 3 and 7, 3.
4. Arms and Armor

As has been discussed at the beginning of this chapter, cavalry from the third century onward played an increasingly important role in the defense of the empire. One aspect of these new cavalry units is that they possessed a much greater diversification of arms and armor than had been common previously. Just as with the troopers of the early empire, it appears that the later Roman legionary horsemen were armed and equipped in a manner similar to that of their colleagues in the line cavalry regiments; the equites promoti thus shared in the diversity of arms and equipment.

This variety of arms and armor among the legionary and other troopers of the later imperial should not, however, be seen as a new phenomenon of the third century (just as the creation of line units from guard units was not restricted to the third century exclusively). Rather equipment specialization in the Roman army merely came to fruition after a long period of evolution.

A. Excursus on Weapons Specialization

The Roman army of the imperial period is usually looked upon as a great monolithic structure with respect to arms and armor. This view by scholars begins with the reforms of C. Marius at the end of the first century B.C.

Marius incorporated the capite censi into the army, and the state began supplying weapons to these
Arms and Armor

proletarians who were too poor to provide their own. The variations in equipment, which had been tied to the financial status of the owner, disappeared and by the early empire had become standardized.\textsuperscript{38} The imperial Roman legions are described as uniformly equipped units of heavy infantry armed with the \textit{pilum} or heavy javelin and \textit{gladius} or short sword.\textsuperscript{39}

We see the same view of increasingly standardized weapons for the auxiliaries. The \textit{auxilia} who were originally recruited from allied peoples fighting in their native fashion ceased to exist by the early empire; in their stead are units of auxiliaries uniformly equipped with light spears (\textit{hastae}) and swords supported by a few units of archers. The auxiliary horsemen are organized into regiments mostly armed with the same light spears of the infantry and long Celtic swords (\textit{spathae}) supported by a few units of lancers and mounted archers.\textsuperscript{40}

This view of the Roman army's high degree of standardization for weapons and armor in not restricted

\textsuperscript{38}See, for example, Keppie 1984, 64ff.

\textsuperscript{39}E.g., Webster 1985, 120-130, esp. 127ff.

\textsuperscript{40}For an example, see Cheesman 1914, 124-132.
Arms and Armor

to modern scholars. A similar picture is painted by Tacitus, who although not a strong historian when it comes to military matters, talks of the pilum and gladius of the legionary and the hasta and spatha of the auxiliary. 41

The rigid view of the arma of Roman army is not a totally accurate one. In fact, there are several pieces of evidence which show that the units of the Roman army were more varied than has previously been thought.

One of the best known examples of different weapons used in the same unit is the case of the legionaries in the exercitus Cappadocicus under Flavius Arrianus in A.D. 135. The legions were composed of equal numbers of κοντόφοροι (men armed with the kontos, the pilum and λογχοφοροι (men armed with the lancea, a light throwing spear). 42 Arrian's purpose in the differing arms for his

41 Ann. et si auxiliaribus resisterent, gladiis ac pilis legioniorum, si huc veterent, spathis et hastis auxiliarum sternebantur.

42 On the armament of Arrian's legionaries, especially the classification of the weapon of the κοντόφοροι, see Parker 1928, 251 and Kiechle 1964, 94 who identify the weapon as a pilum. Other scholars have seen other weapons: Bosworth 1977, 234 and 240-243 (pike -- Macedonian sarissa); Wheeler 1979, 311ff. and Wheeler 1977, 297-305 (thrusting spear -- hasta). Arrian's description of the soft iron head of the kontos makes the identification with the pilum the best interpretation, the arguments of Bosworth and Wheeler notwithstanding.
Arms and Armor

legionaries was to provide a portion of them with a long range missile weapon, in this case the lancea of the λογχοφόροι, so that the legions, and their auxiliary support troops, can create a heavy barrage of missiles to stop the dangerous charge of the mailed horsemen of the Alani.\textsuperscript{43}

During the third century the legions may have received even more weapons specialists. Recent excavations at Apamea in Syria have yielded some interesting evidence for the legio II Parthica. Several weapons specialists can now be identified including legionary archers.\textsuperscript{44} There is the continued presence of lanciarii as well as interesting troops known as phalangarii, troops who fought in a phalanx.

Arrian likewise supplies an example of an auxiliary infantry regiment which possessed troops of different types of weapons. The cohors III Augusta Cyrenaica sent a detachment to Arrian's army deployed against the

\textsuperscript{43}Arrian, Ektaxis §§25-26.

\textsuperscript{44}Balty 1988, 91-104, esp. 99-102.
Arms and Armor

Alani. In Arrian's battle line, two separate groups of Cyrenaicans are mentioned although they belong to but a single unit. The first group are 100 "hoplites," probably an allusion to a century, who are positioned to protect some of Arrian's lightly armed allies. The second group are archers who are deployed in the rear of the legionary phalanx (§18). The cohors III Augusta Cyrenaica must have consisted of both archers and the more conventional spear-armed troops (hoplites).

A similar situation is attested as far back as Flavian times. In the civil war of A.D. 68-69 there is an optio of cohors II Italica c. R. who is sent off to serve with a detachment of archers from the units in the Syrian army. This has been taken to mean, rightly, that this unit, which is not sagittaria, contained at least a contingent of archers amongst its other troops.

The same process occurred in the regiments of auxiliary horsemen. An inscription from Gerulata in

---

45 For the identification of the unit, Ritterling 1902, 364. That the cohors sent only a detachment, see Arrian, Ektaxis §3.

46 5.13483a=ILS 9168.

47 Saxer 1967, 19f.
Arms and Armor

Pannonia Inferior now shows that the *ala I Cannanefatium* had a portion of its troopers armed with the lance, i.e., were *contarii*.\(^{48}\) Moreover, papyri from the third century record cataphracts, mailed horsemen, as part of units of regular horsemen.\(^ {49}\)

The diverse weapons of the late Roman legionary horsemen and other troops is not, then, really new. Rather, the variety of differently-armed troops within a unit is simply the culmination of a process of weapons specialization in the Roman army.

B. Arms and Armor of the *Equites Promoti*

For the later legionary horsemen there is but one tombstone, only recently published, the important monument of Aurelius Gaius.\(^ {50}\) The soldier's shield and spear figure prominently in the relief. There is a minor change in the shield, which is now less oval. The spear may be a *lancea*, a throwing spear.

\(^{48}\) *AE* 1966, 292=*AE* 1972, 496 and 497. See also Speidel 1987c, 61-65.

\(^{49}\) See the references cited by Speidel 1987d, 195-198 and Speidel 1984i, 155.

\(^{50}\) See the commentary by Drew-Bear 1981, 93-141.

129
Arms and Armor

Similar equipment is to be seen on a painting from Luxor. While the soldiers are not called legionary horsemen, it seems that they must be, since Luxor was a legionary camp, probably garrisoned by legio II Flavia at the time the painting was completed under Diocletian.\textsuperscript{51} These soldiers, in camp dress, are shown with their spear and shield. The exact type of spear cannot be determined; it is probably the standard type, the hasta, while the round shield shown in the painting is similar to that on the tombstone of Aurelius Gaius (Plate 5). That the troopers depicted at Luxor are legionary horsemen may be reinforced by the presence of a soldier in a red tunic, the second figure from the left, which it seems was worn only by the centurions, whom we have seen to command the legionary cavalry; the remaining soldiers wear white tunics.\textsuperscript{52}

For the late empire, literary and documentary sources are more instructive. We find from Vegetius that the legionary horsemen were armored, i.e., loricati

\textsuperscript{51}The unit which formed the garrison was discerned by Speidel and Pavkovič 1989, 151-154. For the painting, see M. El-Saghir et al. 1986, 27-31 and 124 with Plates 4 and 5.

\textsuperscript{52}The red tunic of centurions: Fuentes 1987, 41-77, esp. 61. See also Plate 4.
(2.14). As we have seen above, these troopers are probably heavily armored horsemen such as *catafractarii* or *clibanarii*. The *Notitia Dignitatum*, a listing of late Roman military commands and units, mentions a unit of legionary cavalrymen who were such heavily-mailed horsemen, *clibanarii* (*Not. Dig. Or. 7.2*); the *clibanarii* were the forerunners of the medieval knight, completely armored from head to toe and riding armored horses. This unit was probably formed by combining the *clibanarii* of several *legiones* into a single regiment.

Finally, a papyrus from Egypt mentions the weapons of an officer of the legionary horsemen, a centurion. The list of equipment includes a shield, a breastplate, two axes, and a *contus* or lance. This implies that at least a portion of these particular *equites promoti* were *contarii* or lancers. Perhaps a particular opponent in the region was lance-armed, and this required the

---

53 s.v. Numbers and Organization.

54 Late Roman mailed horsemen are discussed by Speidel 1984i, 151-156.

55 123.1; 21-22; 27-32.
Arms and Armor

presence of similarly equipped troopers in the Roman unit.⁵⁶

---

⁵⁶Speidel 1987c, 61-65, where contarii, lancers, were included in a non-lancer unit to fight the Sarmatian lancers who formed the unit's main opposition.
CHAPTER IV: DOCUMENTS OF THE EQUITES LEGIONIS

HISPANIA CITERIOR

1. 8.2663 = ILS 2335

Place: León Date: September 26, 216

Imp(eratori) Caesari M(arco) Antonino Pio Felici Aug(usto), Parthic(o) max(imo) German(ico) max(imo) pontif(ici) max(imo), trib(unicia) pot(estate) XVIII, con(sule) IIII, imp(erator) IIII, p(atri) p(atriae), proc(onsule), equites in his act(u)arius leg(ionis) VII Gem(inae) Ant(oniniana) p(iae) fel(icis), devoti numini maiestat(iq)ue eius. (in latere) dedica(verunt) VII k(alendas) Oct(obris)
Cattio Sabino II et Cor(entino) Anullio co(n)s(ulis).

To the Emperor Marcus Antoninus Pius Felix Augustus, great victor over the Parthians, great victor over the Germans, High Priest, holding the tribunicial power for the nineteenth year, consul for the fourth time, hailed imperator for the third time, father of the Fatherland, proconsul. The horsemen of legio VII Gemina Antoniniana pius felix, and within these men the clerk (actuarius), are devoted to his (i.e. the Emperor's) spirit and majesty. (On the side of
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

The stone) They have dedicated it seven days before kalends of October when Cattius Sabinus and Corentinus Anullius were consuls.

Of interest in this inscription is the mention of the clerk or actuarius among the legionary horsemen. This certainly indicates the presence of an administrative office, tabularium, and an independent organization. The actuarius was a supply officer rather than a "historian" who kept the unit's acta. See pp. 61f.


Place: León Date: early 3rd century

D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum). M(arcus Aurel(ius) Victor, [m(iles)] leg(ionis) VII G(emiae) P(iae) F(elicis), natio(ne) [T]rax, anno(rum) XLV, stipendiorum) XX? opt(io) eqq(uitum) L?[... ......]
p. VIII A ?[......].

Sacred to the Gods Below. Marcus Aurelius Victor, soldier of legio VII Gemina Pia Felix, by nationality a Thracian. He lived 45 years and
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

served 20(?) years. Optio equitum L??[... .....] p.
VIII A ?[......].

The post of optio equitum mentioned was never quite
certain as a legionary post. It is now well attested by
several other inscriptions, like that which follows.
Alföldy 1987c, 487, approved of the reading calling it an
important piece of information from an unknown rank.
Victor was a Thracian, who became a widely recruited
group into the legions by the third century.

3. 2.5682=Le Roux 1982, #160, p. 217

Place: León
Date: 2nd century

L(ucio) Campilio Paterno, equiti secundae alae
Flaviae, opt(ioni) [eq]uitu[m leg(ionis) ?...per
Flavium Campilium Nofirum lib(ertum) f(aciundum)
c(uravit).

To Lucius Campilius Paternus, horseman of ala II
Flavia, optio equitum of legio ?, he saw to it that
it should be made through Flavius Campilius Nofirus,
his freedman.

Domaszewski in Domaszewski-Dobson 1967, 47, saw an
op(tio) trib[uni] militum rather than an opt(io)
[eq]uitum. Close examination of Le Roux' plate VIIc seems
135
to support his emendation. An oddity of the inscription is that Paternus seems to have begun his career as an auxiliary and then became a legionary horseman and an officer to boot! Usually, the legionary horseman was sent to the auxiliaries as an officer, not the reverse. See the discussion on pp. 72-76. Perhaps he held a rank above eques in the ala, like sesquiplicarius or duplicarius, but we would expect it to be mentioned: cf. 44 below.

BRITANNIA

4. RIB 254=AE 1951, 129

Place: Lindum

Date: 48-71

Q(uinti) Corneli(i) Q(uinti) f(ili) Cla(udia tribu)
eq(uitis) le(gionis) VIII 7(centuriae) C(assii)
Martia[l]is an(norum) XL stip(endiorum) XIX h(ic)
s(itus) e(st).

Of Quintus Cornelius, son of Quintus, from the Claudian tribe, horseman of legio VIII, from the century of Cassius Martialis. He lived 40 years and served 19. Here he lies.
The importance of this inscription is that it is one of those which points to the administrative organization of the legionary horse, i.e., they were maintained on the rolls of their century.

5. RIB 482
Place: Deva Date: 71-86/7

...Jesis Pudens G(aii) fil(ius) Ser(gia tribu)
(domo) Augusta eques leg(ionis) II Ad(iutricis)
p(iae) f(idelis) annorum XXXII stipendiorum XIII.
h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

...Jesis Pudens, son of Gaius, from the Sergian tribe, with his hometown as Augusta, horseman of legio II Adiutrix pia fidelis. He lived 32 years and served 13. Here he lies.

6. RIB 481
Place: Deva Date: 71-86/7

........jinus eques leg(ionis) II Ad(iutricis)
p(iae) f(idelis) 7(centuriae) Petroni Fidi
stipendiorum <I>XI annorum XXV hic sep[ul(tu)]s
est.

137
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

[...linus horseman of legio II Adiutrix pia fidelis, from the century of Petronius Fidus. He served 11 years and lived 25. Here he is buried.]

This inscription likewise is noteworthy because of the mention of the trooper's century. The early date of this inscription, at most 16 or 17 years after the legion was raised, makes it a possibility that this horseman began his career as a sailor in the Ravenna fleet. If so, horsemanship cannot have been much of a prerequisite for the troopers of legio II Adiutrix.

7. Tacitus, Annales 14.32
Place: near Camulodunum Date: 60

Et victor Britannus Petilio Ceriali, legato legionis nonae, in subsidium adventanti obvius fudit legionem et quod peditum interfecit: Cerialis cum equitibus evasit in castra et munimentis defensus est.

The victorious Briton met Petilius Cerialis, legate of legio IX, advancing in support and routed the legion, and destroyed as much as there were of the infantry. Cerialis escaped with the horsemen to the camp and was defended by the fortifications.
This passage surely indicates the role of the *equites legionis* as the guard of the legionary legate. Even in defeat, the horsemen remained at the side of the commander and helped to defend the camp.

8. RIB 499

Place: Deva  
Date: 2nd century

D(is) M(anibus) G(aius) Iul(ius) Severus eq(ues)  
leg(ionis) XX V(aleriae) V(ictrix) vixit an(nis)  
XXXX [...]

To the Gods Below. Gaius Iulius Severus horseman of legio XX Valeria Victrix. He lived 40 years...

9. RIB 538=Schleiermacher 1984, 71

Place: Deva  
Date: Mid/late 2nd century

Sextus Sexti filius Fab(ia) (tribu) Brix[(ia)...]

SIM.

Sextus, son of Sextus, from the Fabia tribe, from Brixia,...SIM(?)

While the inscription does not give the rank as *eques*, the relief on the stele shows a horseman. That he
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

is a legionary can be inferred from his Italian origin and that he gives his tribal affiliation, a sign of citizenship. Another interesting point is the appeance of a *calo*, or servant on the stone.

10. RIB 522

Place: Deva Date: 2nd/3rd century

[D(is)] M(anibus), Aureli Luci equitis. h(eres)

f(aciendum) c(uravit)

To the Gods Below, (the monument) of Aurelius Lucus, a horseman. His heir saw to the making of it.

It is presumed that Aurelius Lucus is a legionary trooper from the find spot of the inscription at a legionary camp. If he were from a unit other than the legion stationed there, we should expect him to give his unit. The monument bears a relief: a funerary banquet. Aurelius Lucus reclines on a couch, holding a cup in his right hand. He is said by the editors of RIB to be wearing a scale corslet, but it is not clear in the drawing of the relief. In the background a crested helmet and sword are shown, apparently hanging on the wall.
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

11. RIB 356  
Place: Isca  
Date: 3rd century  

*D(is) M(anibus).* *Aurelius Herculanus* *aeques vixit annos XXVIII coniunx faciendum curavit.*

To the Gods Below. *Aurelius Herculanus,* a horseman, lived 28 years. His wife saw to the making of it.

This trooper's gravestone was found at a legionary camp and so should be considered a legionary horseman, see above 10.

**GALLIA NARBONENSIS**

12. Relief on Triumphal Arch  
Place: Arausio  
Date: 27  

This monument shows the suppression of a Gallic revolt by *legio II Augusta.* Several horsemen are shown and as the monument was meant to glorify the legion, these are presumed to be *equites legionis.* A number of common troopers are depicted. They wear a mail shirt and fight with a sword reminiscent of the infantry *gladius* which is worn on the left hip, a common thing in the early first century A.D. An officer of the troopers is also shown;
he is equipped with scale armor and and a crested helmet and may be a centurion.

GERMANIA INFERIOR

13. 13.8276=ILS 2324

Place: Colonia Agrippinensium                          Date: early 1st century

...(Aur?)elius A(uli) f(ilius) [Le]m(onia tribu),
(domo) Bon(onia), eques [fac]tus, anno(rum) XLV,
.. onis, mil(itavit) anno(rum) [X]XV, h(ic) s(itus)
e(st).

Aurelius, the son of Aulus, from the Lemonian tribe, from Bononia. Made a horseman, he lived 45 years, was discharged from Legio I in the vexillum of Gaius Lucretius ... he served in the army 25 years. Here he lies.

The vexillum of Gaius Lucretius does not provide any indication about the organization of the equites legionis; the placement of the phrase after "discharged from the legio I" as well as the soldier's length of service, i.e., five years beyond the norm of twenty years
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

means that this is a *vexillum veteranorum*. These troopers were probably attached to the 1st cohort and would only be used for service at the legionary camp. See Frere 1980 for the attachment of veterans to the first cohort.


Place: Colonia Agrippinensium Date: 70-83

Q(uintus) Licinius Q(uinti) f iliis Sergia (tribu) Rusticus Cord(uba), eq(ues) leg(ionis) XXI Rap(acis) ann(orum) XXXIII, stip(endorum) XIV, hic situs est; h(eredes) ex t(estamento) f(aciundum) c(uraverunt).

Quintus Licinius Rusticus, son of Quintus, of the Sergian tribe, from Corduba. A horseman of Legio XXI Rapax. He lived 34 years and served 14 years. Here he lies. His heirs saw to the making of it from his will.

The date is supplied by the brief stay of the legion in Cologne. This trooper had been recruited in Spain, as his home, Corduba, makes clear.

143
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

15. Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.57

Place: Colonia Agrippinensium  Date: 68

*Is die postero coloniam Agrippinensem cum equitibus legionis auxiliariorumque ingressus imperatorem Vitellium salutavit.*

On the following day, having entered Cologne with the legionary horsemen and the auxiliary cavalry, he saluted Vitellius as emperor.

This Tacitean passage reinforces the function of the *equites legionis* as a guard unit. The only legionary troops who accompany the legate on his important mission are the legionary horse. The legionary horsemen may also have been there to add to the pomp and circumstance of the imperial salutation as their superior training and discipline would have made them one of the more elite units available to the legate.

16. 13.10024, 31

Place: Aquae Helveticae  Date: 43-63

*Eq(uitibus) leg(ionis) XXI Sex(tus) I.T (primus pilus vel princeps).*

144
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

To the horsemen of Legio XXI, Sextus, *primus pilus* (or *princeps*).

This inscription provides the basis for the identification of the commander of the legionary horse as a centurion. The I.T was originally taken to refer to a turma, but has now been read as a centurions rank sign. See p. 42 above. A certain Sextus, a *centurio princeps* or *primus pilus* appears to have given such rings to the legionary cavalry.

17. AE 1976, 515

Place: Oppidum Batavorum
Date: Late 1st century B.C.

*T(itus) Ussi(us) equ(es) l(egionis) I G(ermanica?).*

Titus Ussius, horseman of Legio I Germanica.

If this inscription is read properly, it would be the earliest attestation of the *equites legionis* after their reintroduction. The highly abbreviated nature of the inscription makes the expansion less than certain. Likewise, the name might read Tussius. If he were Tussius (a German?) this would be analagous to the recruitment of Spaniards into the legions because of their well known horsemanship; see Speidel 1984b.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

18. 13.8059=Schleiermacher 1984, 4 (Plate 1)

Place: Bonna Date: early 1st century

C(aius) Marius L(uci) f(ilius) Vol(tinia tribu)
(domo) Luco Augusto eques leg(ionis) I annor(um) XXX
stip(endiorum) XV h(ic) s(itus) e(st). Sex(tus)
Sempronius frater facien(dum) curavit.

Caius Marius, son of Lucius, of the Voltinian tribe, with his home at Lucus Augustus. A horseman of Legio I. He lived 30 years and served 15. Here he lies. Sextus Sempronius, his brother, saw to the making of it.

Although he does not mention it, Marius was decorated with military honors, both torques and phalerae. These decorations appear both on his breast plate as well as in a close up. The stone is typical of those from Lower Germany of the 1st century A. D. which show the triumphant rider.

19. 13.8070

Place: Bonna Date: 3rd century ?

D(is) M(anibus). Liberalinio Vitali eq(uiti)
leg(ionis) I M(inervae), Maturinia Galet(a) coniugi
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

incompara[bili] qui bello desiderat[us est
mo]numentum...

To the Gods Below. To Liberalinius Vitalis,
horseman of Legio I Minerva, an incomparable husband
who died in war, Maturinia Gelata (dedicated) the
monument...

If there was any doubt of the battlefield role of
the legionary horsemen, certainly this inscription should
help to dispell the notion that they were mere staff
troops.

20. Tacitus, Annales 4.73
Place: Frisian frontier Date: 28

Atque interim repertis vadis alam Canninefatem et
quod peditum Germanorum inter nostris merebat
circumgredi terga hostium iubet, qui iam acie
compositi pellunt turmas sociales equitesque
legionum subsidio missos.

And meanwhile, since a ford had been discovered, he
(L. Apronius) ordered the ala Canninefatum and
those of the German foot who served among us to
circle around the rear of the enemy, who now formed
in line of battle drove back the auxiliary squadrons as well as the legionary horsemen sent for the purpose of aiding them.

That the legionary horse and auxiliary regiments served together can provide a bit of evidence that the organization and tactics of the units must have been similar. It seems unlikely that the Romans would have put them together otherwise.

**GERMANYA SUPERIOR**

21. AE 1932, 41

Place: Augusta Treverorum Date: 69/70-93

Matronis M(arcus) Val(eri)us Crescens eques leg(ionis) VI Vic(t)ricis cornicarius P(ublii)
Abulei Luculli......

To the Mothers. Marcus Valerius Crescens, horseman of Legio VI Victrix, cornicarius of Publius Abuleius Lucullus...

For these deities see above p. 87.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

22. 13.6669=ILS 2334

Place: Moguntiacum Date: 231

Bonum eventum ee. qq.(uitum) leg(ionis) XXII
Pr(imigenia) P(iae) F(idelis) Albanius Agricola et
Macrinus Iuli[a]nus q(uon)d(am) cives
Sumel(o)cennensis). [Po]mpeiano et Paelignian(o)
co(n)s(ulibus).

The Good Fortune of the horsemen of Legio XXII
Primigenia Pia Fidelis. Albanus Agricola and
Macrinus Iulianus, formerly citizens of Sumelocenna.
(Erected) when Pompeianus and Paelignianus were
consuls.

Bonum Eventum is a protective deity for the unit of
the legionary horsemen. This deity, like Fortuna, can be
identified with the Genii of Roman army units, especially
of smallish size.

23. 13.6904

Place: Moguntiacum Date: early 1st century

Q(uintus) Cotanius Q(uinti) f(ilius) Volt(inia
tribu) (domo) Tolosa eques leg(ionis) XIII
Quintus Cotanus, son of Quintus, of the Voltinian tribe, from Tolosa. A horseman of Legio XIII Gemina. He lived 35 years and served 12 years. Here he lies.

24. 13.6916
Place: Moguntiacum  Date: 2nd/3rd century?

.............] _F VEL.A domo AG eq(ues) leg(ionis)
XIII Ge(minae) h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

... F. VEL. A. (?) with his home at Ag(?), a horseman of Legio XIII Gemina. Here he lies.

25. 13.6948
Place: Moguntiacum  Date: 2nd/3rd century?

Leg(ionis) XVI eq(ues) [ve]xsillar(ius) an(norum)
[...]

Horseman and standard bearer of Legio XVI, he lived 35 (?) years and served 15...
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

The soldier's age and length of service are minimums, but since the text breaks off before the X in his age and after the V in his term of service, the numbers given in the translation here, based on an recruitment age of 20 years (a common age), are conjectural.

26. 13.6954

Place: Moguntiacum    Date: 2nd century

Romanus T(iti) Avidi Cordi eq(uitis) leg(ionis) XXII
Pri(migeniae) serv(u)s an(norum) XXVII m(at)er ?
eius p(ositum) h(ic) i(ntus) s(itus) e(st). s(it)
t(erra) t(ibi) l(evis).

Romanus, the servant of Titus Avidius Cordus,
horseman of legio XXII Primigenia. He lived twenty-seven years. His mother (?). Here he lies placed within. May the earth be light for you.

This stone is raised by a legionary horseman in honor of his servant which shows the close ties forged between the two men. See Speidel 1989b.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

27. 13.7535a=AE 1901, 77=Speidel, Guards, 131

Place: Kreutznach  Date: mid to late third century

Claudiae Acceptae socr(a)e Iulius Spectatus eq(ues) leg(ionis XXII prot(ector) pr(aes[idis]) et Sollemnia Severa filia [con]diderunt.

To Claudia Accepta, his mother-in-law. Iulius Spectatus horseman of legio XXII, protector of the governor and Sollemnia Severa, her daughter, built it.

Once again the guard function of the legionary horsemen is shown by this inscription. Like the singulares praesidis, the equites legionis could serve as part of the corps of protectores of the governor which must mean that they were of the same high degree of training.

28. 13.7609

Place: Schierstein  Date: February 28, 221

I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo). Vic(torinus?) Seneca eq(ues) leg(ionis) XXII P(rimigeniae) [[Ant(oninianae)]] p(iae) f(idelis) ex voto in suo
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

posuit. Grato et Seleuc<o>o co(n)s(ulibus), pridie kal(endas) Mart(is).

To Jupiter Best and Greatest. Victorinus(?) Seneca, horseman of legio XXII Primigenia Antoniniana pia fidelis placed it on his own behalf on account of his vow. When Gratus and Seleucus were consuls, on the day before the Kalends of March.

The date is supplied by the consular date and the use of the title Antoniniana.

RAETIA

29. 3.5942
Place: Castra Regina Date: July 25, 240

In ho(nore) d(omus) d(ivinae) I(ovi) O(ptimo)
M(aximo) aram alt(ar)e ius(ius) u ips(ius) Aur(elii)
Pervincian(i) eq(uitis) leg(ionis) III Ital(icae)
d(e)d(icavit) VII kal(endas) Aug(ustis) Sabino et Venusto co(n)s(ulibus).

In honor of the imperial house, to Jove the Best and Greatest. When Sabinus and Venustus were consuls, He dedicated an altar seven days before the Kalends
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

of August by order of Aurelius Pervincianus himself, horseman of *legio III Italica*.

30. 3.5947

Place: Castra Regina  
Date: 3rd century

*Claudia* Ursa vixit annos II dies X. Gesatia Lucia vixit annos III. Fecit *Claudius* Donatus eq(ues) *leg(ionis) III Ital(icae) et Pedania Profutura parentes vivi filabus suis. Memoria(m) fecerunt.*

Claudia Ursa lived two years, ten days. Gesatia Lucia lived four years. Claudius Donatus horseman of *legio III Italica* and Pedania Profutura, living parents, made it for their children. They (the parents) made it in their memory.

**Noricum**

31. 3.4858=ILS 2466=Ubl 1969, K14

Place: Magdalensberg  
Date: Early 1st century

*C(aius) Vettius Q(uinti) f(ilius) Pol(lia tribu) eq(ues) leg(ionis) VIII Aug(ustae) ann(orum) XLIX stip(endiorum) XXVIII idem quaestor veteranorum et Q(uintus) Vettius Q(uinti) f(ilius) frater eq(ues)*
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

leg(ionis) VIII Aug(ustae) ann(orum) XL
stip(endiorum) XX h(ic) s(itus) e(st) (sic).
M(arcus) Metilius eq(ues) leg(ionis) VIII Aug(ustae)
et P(ublius) Arrius her(edes) C(ai) Vetti(i)
test(amento) posuerunt.

Caius Vettius, son of Quintus, from the Pollia tribe. Horseman of legio VIII Augusta, he lived 48 years and served for 28. Likewise he was quaestor veteranorum and Quintus Vettius, son of Quintus, his brother, a horseman of legio VIII Augusta, he lived for 40 years and served 20. Here he lies. Marcus Metilius, horseman of legio VIII Augusta and Publius Arrius, heirs of Caius Vettius, placed it in accordance with his will.

These troopers are apparently part of a garrison placed in Noricum drawn from the Pannonian legion VIII Augusta. This garrison was a mixed unit of both foot and horse; the latter may have performed courier and police duties. Compare the garrison at castellum Dimmidi in Africa: 114 and 115.
Quintus Etuvius Capreolus, son of Sextus of the Volatina tribe. From Vienna. He was a soldier of *legio IIII Scythica* for four years, a horsemen for 10, a centurion for 21 years, and a prefect of *cohors II Thracum* in Germany for five years. He lived sixty years. He ordered this to be made in his will. By the judgement of his freedmen and likewise his heirs who living made this for their patron and themselves: Ilus IIIII vir, Erigonus, Secundus, Illyricus, and Heraclea.
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

This man reached the highest post known from the recorded careers of *equites legionis*, that of prefect of a cohort of auxiliaries, but only after 40 years of service!

33. 5.896=ILS 2332

Place: Aquileia  
Date: 3rd century

*Aurelius Iustinus eques a leg(ione) XI Cl(audia)*

*probatus annorum XVII, et militavit munifex annis*

*VI, eques annis IIII militavit in cohorte centuria*

*hastati posterioris ex plurimaticis depend[----]*

*ipsius in titulo (decem milia centum unum).*

*Aurelius Iustinus* horseman from *legio XI Claudia* approved at age 17, he served six years as a common soldier, four years as a horseman. He served in a cohort (?) in the century of the (centurion with the rank of) *hastatus posterior*. From many... of he himself on an inscription (Ten thousand one hundred and one).

This inscription shows that the *equites legionis* ranked as at least *immunes* as Iustinus differentiates the rank of horseman from that of a soldier weighed down with

157
difficult duty and heavy work about the camp. See pp. 24ff.

34. 5.8278=ILS 2333

Place: Aquileia Date: 3rd century

*Iulius centurio supernumerarius leg(ionis) XI
Claudiae stip(endiorum) XXXIII, annor(um) circiter
XXXX[X]; tiro probatus ann(orum) XVI, postea
profeceit discen(n)s equitum ordine factus mag(ister)
equitum, positus hic.

*Iulius centurio supernumerarius* of *legio XI Claudia*,
he served 34 years, he lived around 50 years. At 16
he was approved as a recruit, thereafter he was
advanced to *discens equitum*, made in rank *magister
equitum*. Here he is placed.

This man seems to have spent most of his career
associated with the legionary horseman. After his
initial period as a recruit, he joined the horsemen and
was eventually promoted to training officer. His
position as *supernumerarius*, while not explicit, does not
rule out that he held some position with the horseman as
a centurion. Domaszewski, in Domaszewski-Dobson 1967,
49, believed he was both training officer and commander.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

35. ILS 2321

Place: Cales Date: 1st century

M(arci) Aemili M(arci) f(ili) Pob(lilia tribu)
Soteriae equitis, domo Osca, torquibus, armill(is)
phaleris ab imperatore donatus, militis missici
veterani leg(ionis) VIIIII Hispanie(n)s(is), his ossa
sita sunt.

Of Marcus Aemilius Soteria, son of Marcus of the
Pobilian tribe, a horseman from Osca. Decorated
with torques, armillae and phalerae by the emperor.
A veteran soldier of legio VIIIII Hispania. His
bones are placed here.

The trooper was decorated with a wide variety of
awards by the emperor.

36. Frenz, 119, p.142 (Plate 2)

Place: Neapolis Date: early 1st century

Anepigraphic relief

The relief shows the upper body of a horseman with
chainmail shirt, his mount and a woman. The man can be
identified as an eques legionis from his dona militaria
which are shown in the background. One interesting point
of his equipment is the presence of a baldric over his right shoulder which would leave the sword suspended off of his left hip. One might argue that the man is a centurion -- after all centurions would have the same dona and would also wear the sword on the left hip. But, the Arch at Orange, of similar date, shows legionary horse with their swords suspended on the left. Moreover, if the man were a centurion, we might expect the scale mail shirt which is shown on the Arch at Orange.

37. AE 1946, 212

Place: Tarentum Date: 1st century

*L(ucius) Scultidius Sex(ti) f(ili) Pollia (tribu)*
*Rufus veteranus leg(ionis) VIII Aug(ustae). Eq(ues) mil(itavit) annos XXVI. Vixit an(n)os VL. H(ic) s(itus) e(st). H(eredes) f(aciundum) q(uraverunt).*

Lucius Scultidius Rufus, son of Sextus, from the Pollia tribe. Veteran of legio VIII Augusta. A horseman he served 26 years. He lived 45 years. Here he is placed. His heirs saw to the making of it.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

38. AE 1919, 72

Place: Albanum Date: early 3rd century

\textit{D(is) M(anibus) Aurelius Paiba \textit{(sic)} equiti leg(ionis) II Parth(icae) qui vixit ann(is) XXVIII, mil(itavit) ann(is) VIII. Aurel(ius) Zepy\textit{r et} Aurel(ius) Mestrius heredes et cont(ubernales) be(ne) f(ecerunt) m(erito).}

To the Gods Below. Aurelius Paiba, horseman of \textit{Legio II Parthica} who lived 28 years and he served eight. Aurelius Zepy\textit{r} and Aurelius Mestrius his heirs and fellow soldiers made this for one well deserving.

All of these troopers can be shown from their names to have been Thracians, showing the new recruitment patterns of the third century. Elite units were often recruited from amongst the warlike Thracians. \textit{Legio II Parthica}, as a guard unit of the strategic reserve, drew heavily upon Thracian recruits; see Forni 1953, 97f.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

39. AE 1955, 192
Place: Ostia Date: 2nd/3rd century?
LI praep(osito) d[... numero equitum leg(ionis)
secundae Traianae.

LI praepositus of the numerus of horsemen of legio
II Traiana

40. 11.5746
Place: Sentinum Date: 3rd century
M(arco) Aurelio M(arci) f(ilio) Quarto equiti
leg(ionis) II Part(hiae) Severian(a) duplicario qui
vixit annis LX m(ensibus) IIII dieb(us) XII Appia
Hilara uxor cum Aureliis Marciane, Valeria, Quartino
filiis patri benemerenti.

To Marcus Aurelius Quartus, son of Marcus, horseman
of legio II Parthica Severiana, a duplicarius who
lived 40 years, four months and 12 days. (Made by)
Appia Hilaria, his wife, and the Aurelii Marciana
Valeria, and Quartinus, his children, to their
father well deserving.

162
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

41. 5.1882
Place: Concordia  Date: early 1st century
C(aius) Baebius P(ubli) f(ilius) Cla(udia tribu) leg(ionis) XIII Geminai (sic) eques armillis [d(onatis)].

Caius Baebius, son of Publius, of the Claudia tribe. A horseman of legio XIII Gemina (decorated) with armillae.

42. 5.6879
Place: Alpis Poenina  Date: 2nd century?
[L. L]icinius [S(eve)r)us eques le[g(ionis)] IIII Mac(edonicae) (domo) P<e>oen(ino) v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(eritis).

Lucius Licinius Severus horseman of legio IIII Macedonica from Poenina. He discharged his vow willingly to the ones deserving.

43. 5.944
Place: Aquileia  Date: 2nd century
D(is) M(anibus). Val(erius) Quintus disce(n)s equitum leg(ionis) XI Cl(audiae), cives ...

163
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

To the Gods Below. Valerius Quintus, *discens equitum* of *legio XI Claudia*. A citizen of...

44. 5.2162

*Place:* Altinum  
*Date:* 1st century

\[\text{Cn(aius) Numerius C(ai) f(ilius) Vol(tinia tribu)}\]
\[\text{Fronto veter(anus) eq(uitum) leg(ionis) VIII} \]
\[\text{Aug(ustae) IIIIVir I.D. t(estamento) f(ieri) i(ussit) sibi Cn(aio) Numerio Cn(ai) l(iberto)} \]
\[\text{Felici IIIIVir(o), Crescenti l(iberto), Tuendo l(iberto).} \]

Cnaeus Numerius Fronto, son of Caius, of the Voltinia tribe. Veteran and horseman of *legio VIII Augusta*, *IIIIVir iuro dicendus*. He ordered it to be made for himself and for Cnaius Numerius Felix, freedman of Cnaius and *IIIIVir*, Crescens his freedman, and Tuendus, his freedman.

**PANNONIA SUPERIOR**

45. 3.11213=ILS 2596

*Place:* Carnuntum  
*Date:* pre-63

\[\text{T(itus) Calidius P(ublii) (filius) Cam(ilia tribu)}\]
\[\text{Sever(us) eq(ues) item optio decur(io) coh(ortis) I} \]

164
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

Alpinorum item 7(centurio) leg(ionis) XV
Apollinaris annor(um) LVIII stip(endorum) XXXIII.
Hic situs est. Q(uintus) Calidius fratri posuit.

Titus Calidius Severus, son of Publius, from the Camilian tribe. A horsemen, likewise optio (and) decurio of cohors I Alpini(orum), likewise a centurion of legio XV Apollinaris. He lived 58 years and served 33. Here he lies. Quintus Calidius placed (this monument) for his brother.

46. AE 1929, 221
Place: Carnuntum Date: 1st century

Petilliena Ingenua an(norum) VII. H(ic) s(ita) e(st). C(aius) Petilienus L(uci) f(ili) Lem(onia tribu) vet(ernus) eq(ues) et Cassia Modesta filiae suae p(osuerunt).

Petilliena Ingenua lived seven years. Here she lies. Caius Petilienus, son of Lucius, of the Lemonian tribe, veteran and horseman and Cassia Modesta placed it for their own daughter.
...[mater] miserissima, Sept(imio) Ingenuo eq(uiti) leg(ionis) XIII Gem(inae) qui Partia (sic) decidit in bello, Sept(imio) Iuliano eq(uiti) [l]eg(ionis) XI[III ?]......

...most wretched mother to Septimius Ingenuus, horseman of legio XIII Gemina who was killed in war with Parthia, to Septimius Iulianus horseman of legio XIII?

C(aius) Valerius C(ai) f(iili) Gal(eria tribu) Proculus Caligurri eq(ues) leg(ionis) XI C(laudiae) (piae) f(idelis) V(centuriae) Vindicis, an(norum) XXX stip(endiorum) IX, h(ic) s(itus) e(st), t(estamento) f(ieri) i(ussit). H(eredes) f(aciundum) c(uraverunt).

Caius Valerius Proculus, son of Caius, from the Galeria tribe, a Caligurrus. Horseman of legio XI Claudia pia fidelis in the century of Vindex. He
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

lived 30 years and served nine. Here he lies. He ordered it to be made in his will. His heirs saw to the making of it.

This stone shows a Spanish citizen, from Tarraconensis, recruited as a horseman.

49. 3.4477=Ubl 1969, K15

Place: Carnuntum

Date: 1st half, 1st century

\textit{L(uci)us M(arci)us Sex(ti) f(ilius) S(apt)ia (tribu) m(iles) leg(ionis) XV A(tol)op(linaris) ann(orum) XXXIX stip(endiorum) XVII \ H(ic) s(itus) e(st). Frater p(osuit).}

Lucius Marcius, son of Sextus, from the Scaptian tribe. Soldier of legio XV Apollinaris. He lived 38 years and served 17 years. Here he lies. His brother placed this.

The inscription does not give the rank of horseman. The use of \textit{miles} must stand for \textit{militavit}, as is the case with \textit{milex} in an inscription from Lambaesis (8.2894= ILS 2328). That he is an \textit{eques legionis} can be determined from the \textit{Reiterrelief} on his stele. The soldier's name is a typical one from Aquileia in north Italy and found
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

numerous times in Savaria close to Carnuntum. See Moósy 1974, 121f. and 136 for the name.

50. 3.4172

Place: Savaria  
Date: 3rd century

*Liberalis eq(ues) leg(ionis) XIII G(emiae) v(otum)*  
*s(olvit) l(ibens) m(eritis).*

Liberalis, horseman of *legio XIII Gemina*. He discharged his vow freely to the ones deserving.

51. 3.4173

Place: Savaria  
Date: 212-222

*Liberalis ve[t(erus)] leg(ionis) XIII G(eemiae)  
Ant(oninianae) v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens).*

Liberalis, veteran of *legio XIII Gemina*  
*Antoniniana*. He discharged his vow freely.

It seems that the two preceding stones belong to the same soldier; the dedications appear to have been made at two different times, first when the soldier was on active duty as a horseman and then after his discharge as a veteran.

168
52. 3.15188/3=Ubl 1969, K13
Place: Adiaum          Date: 222-235

D(is) M(anibus)  Aur(elius) Ianuarius equ(es)
I(egionis) I  Ad(iutricis) p(iae) f(idelis)
S(everianae) et Ulp(iae) (I?)Anuariae coniugi
carisime (sic) et Aur(eliae) Ianuariae f(iliae)
p(ientissimae) (quae) vix(it) an(nis) XII et
Aur(elio) Materno f(ilio)...

To the Gods Below. Aurelius Ianuarius horseman of
legio I Adiutrix pia fidelis Severiana for Ulpia
Ianuaria, his dear wife, and Aurelia Ianuaria, his
most dutiful daughter who lived 12 years and
Aurelius Maternus, his son...

53. 3.4061=ILS 2330=Schleiermacher 1984, 107=Ubl 1969, K34
Place: Poetovio          Date: early 1st century

C(aius) Rufius  C(ai) f(ili) Ouf(entina tribu)
(domo) Med(iolanio) mile[s] leg(ionis) XIII
Gem(inae), an(norum) XXXVI stip(endiorum) XVI,
fratre(s) pos(uerunt). H(ic) s(itus) e(st). [Above
the inscription is a horseman, holding a vexillum in
which is read vex(illum) eq(uitum)]
Caius Rufius, son of Caius, of the Oufentinan tribe, from Mediolanum. A soldier of legio XIII Gemina. He lived 36 years and served 16 years. His brothers placed this. Here he lies.

This is the only depiction of a standard bearer of the legionary horsemen. It is also of interest because the soldier is accompanied by his calo.

PANNONIA INFERIOR

54. AE 1965, 223
Place: Intercisa Date: 2nd century

P(ublio) Ael(io) Proculino [v(iro) e(gregio), signif(ero), \(\gamma(centurio)\)] primo in coh(orte)
(milliaria) [Hemes(ensorum), trans]lato in
leg(ionem) II Ad[(iutricem) p(iam) f(idelem),
exer]cit(atori) eq(uitum) leg(ionis)
s(upra)[s(criptae), \(\gamma(centurioni)\) coh(ortis) ...
urb(anae), \(\gamma(centurioni)\) coh(ortis) VII
praet(oriae) p(iae) v(indicis) [Phil(ippianae),
bello] dacico deside[rato ad ca]stell(um) Carporum.
[Milit(avit) ann(is)\] XXVI. P(ublius) Ael(ius)
Procu[lus vet(erus) coh(ortis ei]usdem et
The Documents of the Equites Legionis


Publius Aelius Proculinus, equestrian, standard bearer, centurion first in cohors milliaria Hemesenorum transferred into legio II Adiutrix pia fidelis served as exercitor of the horsemen of the legion written above, centurion of cohors ? urbana, centurion of cohors VII praetoria pia vindex Philippiana, killed in the Dacian war at Castellum Carporum. He served 26 years. Publius Aelius Proculus veteran of the same cohort and Aurelia ... by parents to their dearest son and themselves while living and they placed it for a most unlucky son.

The best commentary on this man and his rank remains that by Fitz 1965. It is noteworthy that as an exercitator Proculinus held the rank of centurion.

55. 3.11036=Ubl 1969, K3

Place: Brigetio Date: middle of the 3rd century

D(is) M(anibus) Val(erius) Ursinus ducenarius qui vixit ann(os) XXV m(enses) III dies V Aurel(ia) Firmilla filia quae vixit ann(os) VIII m(enses) III

171
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

dies V et Fl(avius) Firmus mil(es) leg(ionis) I
Ad(iutricis) qui vixit ann(os) X[X]V m(enses) V dies
VII Aurel(ia) Ursicina fratri et filiae et coniugi
suo bene merentibus sepulcrum faciendu[m c]ura[vit]
vivite felices qui[b]u[s] est fortuna beata.

To the Gods Below. Valerius Ursinus, ducenarius,
who lived 25 years, three months, and five days and
Aurelia Firmilla, his daughter, who lived eight
years, three months and five days and Flavius
Firmus, soldier of legio I Adiutrix, who lived 25
years, five months and eight days. Aurelia Ursicina
had this tomb made for her brother, his daughter,
and her spouse, well-deserving. Do you live happily
for whom there is good fortune!

Even though the soldier calls himself miles he is an
eques from the depiction on the monument which shows a
trooper with spear and shield leading a horse. This man
is a soldier rather than a calo as he is girded with a
military belt.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

56. 3.14355\textsuperscript{22}=RIU 2.380

Place: Brigetio  Date: 2nd century

Campestr(ibus) M(arcus Ulpius Ruf(us) eq(ues)
leg(ionis) I Ad(iutricis) p(iae) f(idelis) v(otum)
s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erentis)

To the Gods of the Training Grounds. Marcus Ulpius Rufus, horseman of legio I Adiutrix pia fidelis. He discharged his vow willingly to the ones deserving.

57. RIU 2.561

Place: Brigetio  Date: 2nd century

D(is) M(anibus). C(ai) Iul(ii) Respe[ctus] domo
Sav(aria) eq(ues) leg(ionis) I Ad(iutricis) p(iae)
f(idelis) stip(endiorum) XX. H(ic) s(itus) e(st).
C(aius) Victo(rinus) Messor h(ere)s.

The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

58. 3.3396

Place: Campona  
Date: 3rd century

*Aur(eliae) Candidae q(uondam) quae vixit annos XXV*  
*Sep(timus) Priscus eques leg(ionis) I Ad(iutricis)*  
*coniugi carissim(a)e f(aciundum) c(uravit).*

To Aurelia Candida who once lived 25 years. 
Septimus Priscus, horseman of *legio I Adiutrix*, saw 
to the making of it for his most dear wife.

59. 3.3420

Place: Aquincum  
Date: 3rd century

*Epon(a)e Aug(ustae) Apulei<i>u(s) Ianuarius eq(ues)*  
*leg(ionis) II Ad(iutricis) p(iae) f(idelis) v(otum)*  
*s(olvit) l(ibens) m(eritae).*

To Epona Augusta. Apuleius Ianuarius horseman of 
*legio II Adiutrix pia fidelis.* He discharged his 
vow willingly to the one deserving.

The form *Epone* argues for the 3rd century date and 
reflect a change in pronunciation. For the deity see p. 92.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

60. 3.3470
Place: Aquincum Date: 2nd century
Marti Aug(usto) Sac(rum). C(aius) Cusp(ius) Secundus exercitator leg(ionis) II Adi(utricis) pro salute militum et sua quod evocatus vovit centurio solvit l(ibenter) m(erenti).

Sacred to Mars Augustus. Caius Cuspius Secundus exercitator of legio II Adiutrix for the safety of the soldiers and himself because as an evocatus he made this vow, as a centurion he discharged it willingly to the one deserving.

Mars Augustus, like the campestres above, was a god of the training field. See above, Chapter I, Religion

DALMATIA

61. 3.9885=ILS 2322
Place: Rozki Slap Date: early 1st century
M(arcus) Fraxsanius Sex(ti) f(ili) Pol(lia tribu) domo Regio Lepido, veteranus leg(ionis) XI eques annorum XLIII, stipendiorum XXV, donatus phaleris torquibus armillis, h(ic) s(itus) e(st) Primu(s) libertus) pro meritis.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

Marcus Fraxsanius, son of Sextus, from the Pollia tribe, from Regium Lepidi. Veteran and horseman of legio XI. He lived 44 years and served 25 years. He was decorated with torques and armillae. Here he lies. Primus his freedman for the ones deserving.

62. 3.1814

Place: Narona Date: early 1st century

Publius Lastus Scaeva, son of Aulus, from Florentia. Horseman and Veteran of legio XI Claudia pia fidelis; he lived 60 years and served 30 years and Lasta Apicula, freedwoman of Publius, Publius Lastus Felix, Publius Lastus Diodorus, his freedmen. They saw to the making of it according to his will.

176
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

63. 3.3162a=Hoffmann 1905, 37

Place: Tilurium  Date: 42-66

M(arco) Antonino Celeri eq(uiti) leg(ionis) VII
C(laudiae) p(iae) f(idelis) Iulia Maxsima heres
fecit sibi et coniugi caro suo st(ippetidorum) XXX
(in) f(ronte) p(edes) XII in ag(ro?) XVII

To Marcus Antonius Celer, horseman of legio VII
Claudia pia fidelis. Iulia Maxsima his heir made it
for herself and for her dear husband of 30 years.
In front, 12 feet, in the field, 17 (feet).

The stone bore a representation which is now
preserved only in a drawing. Unfortunately, few details
of the equipment can be seen except for the cut oval
shield.

64. 3.6416

Place: Macropolis  Date: early 1st century

P(ublius) Fanniu(s) Ani(ense tribu) (domo) Cremon(a)
eq(uies) leg(ionis) XI an(norum) XXIX stip(endorum)
XII. h(ic) s(itus) e(st). F(rater) f(ratri)
pos(uit).

177
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

Publius Fannius, of the Aniensis tribe, from Cremona. Horseman of *legio XI*, he lived 29 years and served 12 years. Here he lies. His brother placed it for his brother.

DACIA

65. AE 1980, 738

Place: Apulum Date: 212-222

M.A.AVS P(ublius) Ael(ius) Secundinus, eq(ues) [l]eg(ionis) XIII G(emiae) An[t]oninian(a)e, ex v(oto) p(osuit) l(ibens).

M.A.AVS (?) Publius Aelius Secundinus, horseman of *legio XIII Gemina Antoniniana* placed it willingly on account of a vow.

66. AE 1983, 800

Place: Apulum Date: 3rd century

Ant(onius) Valens ex eq(uite)

Antoninus Valens, ex horseman.

Antonius Valens is the only man whose rank can be ascertained as former legionary horseman on this
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

inscription which appears to be a discharge list of veterani from legio XIII Gemina; the right side of the stone appears to be missing.

67. 3.1200

Plac: Apulum Date: 222-235

D(is) M(anibus) SL.VIAE...JS Ser(gia tribu) Victor
Iad(ere) equ(es) leg(ionis) XIII G(eminae)
S(everianae). Igen(s) VISIVR

To the Gods Below. SL.VIAE...JS (?) Victor Iadere horseman of legio XIII Gemina Severiana. Ingens VISIVR (?)

MOESIA SUPERIOR

68. 3.14507, b51

Place: Viminacium Date: 195

cohors III of legio VII Claudia p. f.:
P(ublius) Ael(ius) Vitalis eq(ues) pol(lio)
C(astris)

Publius Aelius Vitalis, horseman and pollio. From the camp.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

This rank has not be satisfactorily explained. The polliones probably cared for weapons and armor, in which case such a man for the legionary horsemen might have looked after any equipment peculiar to the cavalry; cf. p. 62f.

69. Mircovič 1988, 87

Place: Viminacium Date: late 1st century

L(ucius) Aemilius L(uci) f(ilius) Fab(ia tribu) Flaus (domo) Bracara eq(ues) leg(ionis) IIII F(laviae) f(elicis) stip(endiorum) XIII vixit ann(is) XXXII.

Lucius Aemilius Flaus, son of Lucius, of the Fabian tribe, from Bracara. A horseman of legio IIII Flavia felix. He served 14 years, he lived 32 years.

70. Mircovič 1988, 88

Place: Viminacium Date: late 1st century

P(ublius) Publicius Fabia (tribu) Constat (sic) Brixii(a) eq(ues) leg(ionis) IIII F(laviae)
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

\( f(\text{elicis}) \ t(\text{estamento}) \ f(\text{ieri}) \ i(\text{ussit}). \ H(\text{ic}) \ s(itus) \ e(st). \)

Publius Publicius Constans of the Fabian tribe, from Brixxia. A horseman of legio III Flavia Felix he ordered it to be made in his will. Here he lies.

MOESIA INFERIOR

71. AE 1982, 847
Place: Tomi Date: 3rd century
[......ex] eq(uite) [vet(eranus) l]eg(ionis) V
[Mac(edonicae), vix]it an(nis) [...] et Mama
[con(iux) ? ei]us, vix(it) [an(nis) ...] et
Fl(avius) [...]f]i(lius?).

ex horseman, veteran of legio V Macedonica, he lived ... years and Mama his wife lived ... and Flavius his son (?)

72. 3.7449
Place: Montana Date: 155
[---T(iti) Flavii] Longini leg(ati) Aug(usti)
pr(o) pr(aetore) vexillat(io) leg(ionis) XI
Cl(audia) sub cura Fl(avius) Maximi (centurionis)
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

*leg(ionis) eiusdem, Severo et Sabiniano co(n)s(ulibus).*

(a list of *principales* and regular *milites* follows one of whom is:)

decurio: Pomponius Herculaneus ex eq(uite)

*leg(ionis) XI Cl(audiae)*

Of Titus Flavius Longinus, legate of Augustus with praetorian power, the detachment of *Legio Claudia XI* under the command of Flavius Maximus, centurion of the same legion, when Severus and Sabinianus were consuls.

Decurio: Pomponius Herculaneus ex horseman of *legio XI Claudia*

Herculaneus has received his promotion but has not yet been posted to his new unit. This is not evidence for *decuriones* among the legionary troopers, rather Herculaneus is being sent off as an officier in an *ala*.

73. AE 1957, 341

Place: Montana Date: 238-244

*Dianae Reginae Aurel(ius) Titus vexill(arius)*

*eq(uitum) leg(ionis) I Ital(icae), Gordianae ag(ens)*
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

reg(ione) Mont(anense) cu[m] suis ex voto
pos(uerunt) v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).

To Diana the Queen. Aurelius Titus standard-bearer
of the legionary horse of legio I Italica Gordiana
serving in the area of Montana. With his own
(household) they placed this on account of a vow.
He discharged his vow willingly to the one
deserving.

74. AE 1976, 611
Place: Trančovica Date: 2nd century

[S]an(c)to deo Ascallacano M(arcus) Iulius Val(ens),
aeq(ues) leg(ionis) I Ital(icae) posuit v(otum)
l(ibens) m(erito).

To the sacred God Ascallacanus, Marcus Iulius
Valens, horseman of legio I Italica, he placed this
willingly according to a vow to the one deserving.

75. Kazarov, 1022=Schleiermacher 1984, 86
Place: Zlokučene Date: 2nd century

Dis Man(ibus) C(aius) Cassius V[...] Vet(eranus)
leg(ionis) I [Ital(icae)]
The Documents of the Equites Legionis


76. 3.6178-80

Place: Troesmis          Date: 2nd/3rd century

(6178, 2.30) Iulius Seve(rus) ex eq(uite) coh II
(6178, 3.17) Val(erius) Rufus ex eq(uite) coh III
(6178, 3.27) Gelli(us) Germ(anus) ex eq(uite)
(6179, 2.4) Cal(purnius) ex eq(uite)
(6179, 2.5) BAL(? ) Farianus ex eq(uite)
(6180, 1.4) [Sa]turnin(us) ex eq(uite) coh III

The inscription records several horsemen who have mustered out of their unit and are now veterans.

MACEDONIA

77. AE 1969/70, 583=Schleiermacher 1984, 98

Place: Philippi           Date: 1st third of 2nd century

Ti(berius) Claudius Maximus, vet(eranus) [s(e)]
v(iv)o f(aciundum) c(uravit). Militavit eque(s) in leg(ione) VII C(laudia) p(ia) f(ideli), factus qu(a)estor equit(um), singularis legati legionis eiusdem, vexillarius equitum, item bello Dacico ob
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

virtute(m) donis donatus ab imp(erator) Domitiano.
Factus dupli(carius) a divo Troiano in ala
secu(n)d(a) Pannoniorum, a quo et fa(c)tus
explorator in bello Daico et ob virtute(m) bis donis
donatus bello Parthico, et ab eode(m) factus decurio
in ala eade(m), quod cepisset Decebalu(m) et caput
eius pertulisset ei Ranisstororo. Missus voluntarius
honesta missione a Terent[io Scau]riano, consulare
[exerci]tus provinciae nov[ae Mesopotamiae

Tiberius Claudius Maximus saw to the making of this
while he himself was living. He served as a
horseman in legio VII Claudia pia fidelis, was made
quaestor equitum, singularis of the commander of the
same legion, standard bearer of the horsemen.
Moreover, in the Dacian war on account of his
courage, he was decorated with awards by the emperor
Domitian. He was made a duplicarius in the ala II
Pannoniorum by the divine Trajan by whom also he was
made a scout in the Dacian War and twice decorated
with awards in the Parthian war. By the same man he
was made a decurio in the same ala because he had
captured Decebalus and brought back his head to
Ranisstororum. He was discharged having served beyond
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

his term with an honorable discharge by Terentius Scaurianus, the commander of the army of the new province of Mesopotamia.

An important inscription which has been fully commented on by Speidel 1984d.

**CAPPADOCIA**

78. French and Summerly 1987, 18, #2

*Place:* Satala  
*Date:* Early 2nd century

\[D(is) M(anibus) Ti(berius) Iuli(us) Ti(berii)\]
\[(filius) Cl(audia) (tribu) Martialis Savaria\]
\[mil(es) leg(ionis) XV Apol(linaris) ann(orum) XXX\]
\[stip(endiorum) XIII Ti(berius) Iulius Buccio optio eq(uitum) fratri posuit.\]

To the Gods Below. Tiberius Iulius Martialis, son of Tiberius, of the Claudian tribe, from Savaria, a soldier of legio XV Apollinaris. He lived 30 years, he served 13 years. Tiberius Iulius Buccio, optio equitum, placed this for his brother.
Let the formation be the width of four heavily-armed infantry. Let the archers, as many as there are, lead these men. Let each unit's own cavalry watch the flanks of the array. After these, let the select cavalry advance and after them the cavalry of the phalanx (legionary cavalry); then the catapults, and then the standard of the 15th Legion; and around it the leader of the legion, Valens, and also his adjutant and the tribunes appointed for this legion, and the centurions placed over the first century.
The position of the legionary cavalry is before the artillery of the legion, but more importantly, they are the only unit to precede the legate which implies their function as a guard. Also, they ride after another important guard unit, the governor's equites singulares. There is an implication that the two guard units formed up together in battle. While they are enumerated separately in the order of march, agmen, there is no mention of the equites legionis in the order of battle, acies. As they marched together, they may have fought together, in which case οἱ δὲ ἑπίλεκτοι ἵππεῖς of § 22 might have included the legionary horsemen. Indeed the term epilectos is not a technical military term, but rather a literary one, which could be used to describe other troops such as vexillarii. See Speidel 1978, 49, for the terminology.

GALATIA

80. 3.269=3.6765=ILS 2327
Place: Ancyra Date: 2nd century

D(is) M(anibus). C(aio) Secundinio Iuliano equiti leg(ionis) XXII Pr(imigeniae) piae f(idelis), ann(orum) XXXV stip(endiorum) XV, C(arius) Seranius
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

*Vegetus secundus heres et collega f(aciundum) c(uravit).*

To the Gods Below. For Caius Secundinus Iulianus horseman of *legio XXII Primigenia pia fidelis*. He lived 35 years, he served 15 years. Caius Seranius Vegetus his second heir and fellow horseman saw to the making of it.

The use of *collega* by Seranius, although it does not give us a rank, shows that like Secundinus, Seranius too was a legionary horseman. See Ritterling, *RF* XII 2 (1925), 1813.

81. Swoboda, Keil and Knoll, 1935, 115

*Place: ? Date: early 3rd century*

Γάιος Κηκίσσω, ἵππεως λεγεώ(νος)

Gaius, son of Kekissos, horseman of the legion.

The relief shows an unarmored horseman with spear by no shield in the manner of the triumphing rider, the lack of armor probably indicating the camp dress of the 3rd century. He is attended by a *calo*. 
C(aius) Iulius C(ai) f(ili) Papiria (tribu) natus
Cormasa missicius lecinis (sic) VII eques
monomentum (sic) fηcit (sic) sibi et Iucundo liberto
suo Γάτος 'Ιούλιος Κορμασιαῖος λεγεὶμος (sic) ἐβδόμης
ιπεῦς (sic) τῷ ἄπελευθέρῳ καὶ ...

Caius Iulius, son of Caius, of the Papirian tribe,
born at Cormasa. Veteran of legio VII, a horseman,
he made this monument for himself and his freedman
Iucundus. (Greek) Caius Iulius, from Cormasa,
horseman of the seventh legion to his freedman
and...

Caius Iulius is a good example of the changing
recruitment patterns of the Roman army during the first
century A.D. when Italians were being replaced by
provincials in the army. Forni, 1953 has shown that by
the Flavian period Italians formed only one-fifth or one-
fourth of the legions. Caius Iulius' use of Greek in his

190
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

home town inscription, so all could understand, shows that he was proud of his military service.

**SYRIA**

83. AE 1964, 55=IGLS 2714

*Place: Baalbek*  *Date: 128-138*

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) H(eliopolitano), pro salute imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) Traiani Hadriani Aug(usti), p(atris) p(atriae)ex testamento L(uci) Antoni Silonis, eq(uitis) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae), Heliopolitani, L(ucius) Varius Q(uinti) f(ilius) Fab(ia tribu) Magnus vet(eranus) pro parte dimidia et L(ucius) Valerius L(uci) f(ilius) Melior pup(illus) (pro)parte quarta; et Vibi C(ai) f(illii) Fab(ia tribu) Rufus et Fuscus pupilli pro parte quarta, hered(es) eius ex arg(ento) p(ondo) octoginta v(otum) s(olverunt).*

To Jupiter Best and Greatest the Heliopolitanian.

For the health of the Emperor Caesar Trajan Hadrian Augustus, father of the fatherland according to the will of Lucius Antonius Silo, horseman of *legio III Augusta*, a Heliopolitanian. L. Varius Magnus, son of Quintus, of the Fabian tribe, for one half part,
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

L. Valerius Melior, son of Lucius, an orphan, for one quarter part, and Vibius Rufus and Vibius Fuscus, of the Fabian tribe, sons of Caius, orphans, for one quarter part. His heirs, they discharged his vow from eight pounds of silver.

This particular manifestation of Jupiter represents a local god who was syncretized with a traditional Roman deity. Like many other local gods, the worship of Heliopolitan Jupiter was spread by legionary centurions who, when they were transferred between units, brought their local gods with them: Birley 1988e. The inscription is also useful as an example of the recruitment of non-Italians into the legions: it records a Syrian horseman who served in the legio III Augusta in Africa.

84. IGLS 2346
Place: Emesa Date: 140

"Ετους αυτ" μη(νδς) Α[υ]δναιου ['Ι]ούλουν
<Μ>αρείου ιπ[π]έα λεγ(εώς) γ' (Γ)αλλ[υ]κ(ής)
'Ιούλιος (sic) Χελων τον ὁδε[λ]φόν
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

In year 451 in the month of Audnaios. (For) Iulius Marinus, horseman of *legio III Gallica* (and) Iulius Chsilon, his brother.

Iulius Marinus is, from his cognomen, an Arab.

85. IGR 3.1110=AE 1902, 59

Place: Apheca Date: 2nd century

\[\text{Οὐαλ(ἐριος) Μάρκος ὀὔετρ[ονδός] ἀπὸ ἰπικ(οῦ)}\]
\[\text{λεγόνως ἄ', οὖ' [ἐτων].}\]

Valerius Marcus veteran from the horse of *legio VI*. He lived 74 years.

The use of 'οιδό here denotes the same sense as ex in military latin. This trooper is therefore a veteran, who, based on his age of 74 years, is likely to have lived a considerable time beyond his enlistment.

86. IGR 3.1141

Place: Eitha Date: 3rd century

\[\text{'Ἰπτέα κύδιστον Διομήδεα δέρκεο, ξεῖνε,}\]
\[\text{τάγμα τε Κυρήνης στρατίτην τε ἁσκόντι' ἐπὶ τιμοῦ,}\]
\[\text{ς θέτο...φρ... ἀρετῆς μυήμην, ἄνεγείρας}\]

193
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

οὕτω καὶ τέκνοις κῦδος τὸ δ' ὀρέμενον ἔσθλον.

See the most glorious horseman Diomedes, stranger.

Made in honor of the soldier of *legio (III) Cyrenaica*, who placed ... in memory of his virtue.

You awaken glory for him and his children?

This inscription is a metrical poem, written in dactylic hexameter, the meter of epics.

87. AE 1930, 17

Place: Syria (?)                     Date: 3rd century

Τῇ κυρίᾳ Ἀταργάτι κατ' ἔπταγην (sic) Ἰουλία,
Λευκερίνης ἱππεὺς λεγεόνος IIIΙ Ἕκυ(τικῆς) Ὄπτάτος,
Πρόκλος, Γάλος, Μάρκος, Κρισπείνος.

To the lady Atargatis by seven (?): Iulia,
Leucerinis, a horseman of *legio IV Scythia*, Optatus,
Proclus, Gaius, Marcus and Crispinus.

This inscription is a dedication to the goddess Atargatis, a name for the Syrian Goddess (*Dea Syria*). For this deity see F. Cumont, s.v. *Dea Syria*, RE IV,
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

1900. Leucernius and his co-dedicators certainly were all local Syrians worshipping a native deity.

88. SEG 34 (1984), 1456
Place: Palmyra Date: 284-305

\[I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo). Votum Amathallat f(ilius) Sabbiti[ ..........] opti(onis) e[q]uitum?] \Delta\nu\ell\]

'Tψιστω [Αμαθα]λλωθ Σεββ[του]υ νος

To Jupiter Best and Greatest. A vow of Amathallat, son of Sabbitus, optio equitum. (Greek) To Zeus the Greatest. Amathallat son of Sabbitus.

There can be little doubt from the name that this optio equitum is a native Palmyrene.

89. AE 1974, 648
Place: Apameia Date: 231-233

\[ .... vix(it) ann(is)] XXXIII, m(ensibus) V, d(iebus) VIII, mil(itavit) eq(ues) ann(is) IIII, protector ann(is) IIII, opt[io] ann(is) XIII \gamma(centurio) ann(o) I, Marcia Vivia Crescentina coniux et heres marito incomparabili fecit.
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

...he lived 43 years, 5 months, 9 days. He served as a horseman 4 years, as a protector 4 years, as an optio 13 years and as a centurion for one year. Marcia Vivia Crescentina, wife and heir, made it for an incomparable husband.

This inscription is one of two examples of an eques whose promotion was to the legionary centurionate rather than to an officer of the auxiliaries. See above p. 72.

**PALESTINA**

90. Josephus, *Bellum Iudaicum*

Place: Galilee  
Date: 66

εὐπετο δ᾽ ὡτῷ τὸ ἱδιὸν τοῦ τάγματος ἱππικῶν. ἱδιὸι γὰρ ἐκάστου τάγματος εἴκοσι πρὸς τοῖς ἐκάτων ἱππεῖς.

The integral cavalry of each legion followed him.  
For each legion has 120 horsemen of its own.

This notice by Josephus is the only piece of evidence for the number of legionary horsemen in the first century, indeed, for the high empire.
ARABIA

91. IGR 3.1257
Place: Namara Date: 2nd/3rd century

Mesamarius, horseman of the Cyrenaican, by race a Nabataean.

This inscription provides an example of how legions turned to local recruitment after being posted to a province for a period of time. Mesamarius, a Nabatean, has been enlisted into the Arabian legio III Cyrenaica: see Speidel 19841, 262.

92. Bennett and Kennedy 1978, 163-164
Place: Petra Date: 1st half of the 2nd century

C(aius) Antonius Valens, eq(ues) leg(ionis) III Cyr(enaicae) [V.] provitiani (?), vixit an(nos) XXIV, mil(itavit) V. h(ic) s(epultus).

Caius Antonius Valens, horseman of legio III Cyrenaica in the centuria of Provitianus (?). He lived 24 years and served five years. He is buried here.
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

93. IGR 3.1311
Place: Melah-es-Sarrar Date: 3rd century

[I]o6ALo~ LEOU~[pO]~ tn(nEu~) &no AE[lEWvO~]

Iulius Severus, horseman from the legion...

AEGTPTUS

94. P.Gen.Lat.1=RMR 58
Place: ? Date: ca. 90

11. 36-36 *Equites ii* ]cina Celsus Crispus

Two horsemen: ]cina Celsus and Crispus

That this papyrus records two horsemen in a century led Premerstein 1903, 27, to conclude that each century had two troopers. Of course the mathematics works out rather well in that 2 equites per century agrees with Josephus number of 120 for the horsemen as a whole (60 centuries x 2 horsemen per century = 120 equites).
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

95. BGU II, 600

Place: Fayum Date: 140

Witnesses: Marcus Turranius Fronto, standard bearer of the century of Rufus; Lucius Petronius Valerianus, standard bearer of the century of Iulius Seranus; Caius Iulius Arrianus, standard bearer of the same century; Lucius Antonius Saturnilus, standard bearer of the horsemen of the century of Victor; Caius Lucius Gemellus, optio of the century of Valerianus; Publius Terrentius ... horseman of the same century; Sextus Arris Pompeianus, horseman of the century of Proclus.

199
Claudius Germanus to the curator praesidi. I dismissed the horseman Iulius of the century of Proclus, beneficiarius of the prefect.

The mention of a century makes it certain the horseman is a legionary from legio II Traiana. Speidel 1986a, 167f., has argued, based on the unit and date, that this Claudius Germanus should be the same man recorded in a papyrus, P. Hibeh 2, 276.


Victorinus. [7-13 praesente et extrica[to] c[o]s factus dec ex eq leg i[i] traiana fortis

Victorinus. (enlisted) when Praesens and Exricatus were consuls. Made decurio from legionary horseman of legio II Traiana fortis.
Origines. (enlisted) when the divine Alexander and Dio were consuls. Made decurio from legionary horseman Aurelius Arpocratio. (enlisted) when Agricola and Clementinus were consuls. Made ordinarius (centurion) from legionary horseman.

This papyrus records the appointment of several legionaries to the rank of either decurio or centurion in the auxiliaries. The order in which the men were listed appears to be their order of appointment rather than enlistment (Birley 1986a, 193).
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

NUMIDIA

98. ILT, 466=Benzina Ben Abdallah, 43
Place: Ammaedara Date: 1st half of the 1st century

Q(uintus) Geminius Q(uinti) f(ilius), Pollia (tribu) (domo) Thunusida, eques (centurio) Catonis vixit an(nis) XXXVI militavit an(nis) IIX. h(ic) s(itus) e(st).

Quintus Geminius, son of Quintus, of the Pollian tribe from Thunusida. Horseman of the century of Cato. He lived 36 years and served 8 years. Here he lies.

99. 8.3260=ILS 2323
Place: Lambaesis Date: 2nd century

D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum). M(arcus) Valerius Fortunatus eq(ues) legionarius, v(ixit) a(nnis) XXVII, Marcia Tertulla soror posuit. H(ic) s(itus) e(st).

Sacred to the Gods Below. Marcus Valerius Fortunatus, legionary horseman. He lived 27 years.
Marcia Tertulla, his sister, placed it. Here he lies.

100. 8.10629=8.16549=ILS 2329=ILA 3117

Place: Theveste  Date: 1st century

M(arcus) [I]ulius M(arci) f(ilius) Qui(rina tribu)
Maternus Aug(usto)n(emeto) mil(es) leg(ionis) III
Aug(ustae) γ(centuria) Cri(s)pini, vix(it) ann(is)
XXVII mil(itavit) ann(is) V. h(ic) s(itus) e(st).
Sex(tus) Valerius Att[i]ci[a]nus vexillarius
eq(uitum) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae).

Marcus Iulius Maternus, son of Marcus, from the
Quirina tribe from Augustonemetum. Soldier of legio
III Augusta in the century of Crispinus. He lived
27 years and served 5 years. Here he lies. Sextus
Valerius Atticianus, standard bearer of the horsemen
of legio III Augusta.

101. AE 1969/70, 661=Benzina Ben Abdallah, 45

Place: Ammaedara  Date: Before 75

M(arcus) Licinius M(arci) f(ilius) Gal(eria tribu),
Lugd(uno) Fidelis, milit(avit) eq(ues) in leg(ionis)
III Aug(usta) ann(is) XVI, fact(us) dupl(icarius) in
Marcus Licinius Fidelis, son of Marcus, from the Galeria tribe, from the town of Lugdunum. He served as a horseman in legio III Augusta 16 years. Made a duplicarius in ala Pannoniorum for 4 months. He lived 32 years. Here he lies. Quintus Iulius Atticus and Titus Minicius (or Vinicius ?) Saecularis, horsemen of legio III Augusta, his heirs, placed it.

This soldier's promotion scheme helps to establish the phenomenon of promoting legionary horsemen to the rank of officer in an auxiliary regiment to ensure that all the units of the Roman army were trained to an equally high standard (see p. 73f and p. 75f.).
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

102. AE 1957, 85

Place: Lambaesis  Date: mid 2nd century

Hadriani Nervae Adnep(os) Sar(matico) Ger(manico) Max(imo) tabularium equitum leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae) dedicavit co(n)s(ulo) desig(nato).

... The administrative office (tabularium) of the legionary horsemen of legio III Augusta dedicated it to (Marcus Aurelius, grandson) of Hadrian, great-grandson of Nerva, Sarmaticus, Germanicus, the Greatest, consul designate.

The presence of such an administrative office is important for the existence of an independent organization for the *equites legionis*. See p. 49 above.

103. 8.2894=ILS 2328

Place: Lambaesis  Date: 3rd century

Iulius Donatus eq(ues) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae) ex optione, vixit an(n)is LV, et milex anoru(m) XXV, e(f)fectum fili(o) coniugi mer(enti).

Iulius Donatus, horseman of legio III Augusta, ex-optio. He lived 55 years and served 25. Made for a son (and) for a deserving wife.
Iulius Donatus gives his rank upon discharge as ex optio without any qualifying adjective or phrase. It may be that he was an optio ad spem in a century or, possibly, he may have been optio equitum since he does mention the rank of horseman. The name is known for other legionary horsemen: two Iulii Donati appear at Castellum Dimmidi (114 below).

104. 8.2593=ILS 2326
Place: Lambaesis Date: 2nd century
Ael(ius) Severus eq(ues) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae)
7(centuria) Iul(i) Candidi, explicitus desiderio
animi sui, aram quam voverat Fortunae Aug(usti)
l(ibens) a(nimo) reddidit eamque dedic(avit).
Aelius Severus horseman of legio III Augusta in the century of Iulius Candidus. Disentangled by the desire of his soul, he, willing in spirit, dedicated this altar he vowed to Fortuna Augusti when he returned.
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

105. 8.2882=ILS 2331

*Place:* Lambaesis  
*Date:* 2nd century

*D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum). Herennius Victorinus*  
*disc(ens) eqq(uitum) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae),*  
*vixit ann(is) XXVII, h(ic) s(itus) e(st).*

Sacred to the Gods Below. Herennius Victorinus learning to be a horseman of *legio III Augusta.* He lived 27 years. Here he lies.

106. ILS 9492=AE 1914, 48=Benzina ben Abdallah, 397

*Place:* Mateur (Madaurus?)  
*Date:* second half, 2nd century

...*militavit annis XXXV C(aius) [T]i[t]urnius Quartio eques legionis III Gallicae, cui imp(eratores) Aug(usti) bello Phartico Seleucia Babyloniam torquem et armillas donaverunt.* Votum suum reddi[t].

...He served 35 years. Caius Titurnius Quartio horseman of *legio III Gallica* to whom the emperors Augusti awarded a torque and armillae in the Parthian war at Seleucia in Babylonia. He discharged his vow.
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

This inscription was dated by Dessau in his commentary to A. D. 198 and the Parthian war of Septimius Severus. Subsequently E. Ritterling, *RE* XII 2 (1925), 1524 and Alfoldy 1987a, 213, have demonstrated that the Parthian campaign referred to in the text is actually that fought by C. Avidius Cassius in A. D. 166. The imperatores Augusti were Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. *Legio III Gallica* was one of the units which formed the backbone of Avidius Cassius' force. C. Titurnius Quartio was decorated for his service.

107. 8.18042=ILS 2487

Place: Lambaesis               Date: 129

*Eq uitibus leg(ionis) [Ex]ercitationes militares quodammodo suas leges [ha]bent, quibus si quit adiciatur aut detrahatur, aut minor [exer]citatio fit aut difficilior. Quantum autem difficultatis [additur, t]antum gratiae demitur. Vos ex difficilibus diffic[i]limum fecisti], ut loricati iaculationem perageretis.............o, quin immo et animum probo.........................

To the legionary horsemen. Military exercises have their own principles, to which if anything is added or removed, the exercise either becomes inferior or
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

more difficult. Moreover, however much of
difficulty is added, so much of the grace is
removed. You performed the most difficult task as
you completed the hurling of javelins while
armored... Indeed, I approve your spirit.

108. 8.2550

Place: Lambaesis  Date: 198

*Dedicante Q(uinto) Anicio Fausto leg(ato)
Augg(ustorum) pro pr(aetore) c(larissimo) v(iro)
co(n)s(ule) desig(nato) eq(uitibus) leg(ionis) III
Aug(ustae) p(iae) v(indicis).*

With Quintus Anicius Faustus legate of the Augusti
pro praetore, most outstanding man and consul
designate dedicating, by the legionary horsemen of
*legio III Augusta pia vindex.*

109. 8.2562

Place: Lambaesis  Date: 222-235

[*F]onteius Fortunatus[...].ius Saturninus
v[ex(illarius)] .]Pinarius Primus vex(illarius)
[.]Flavius Paulinus tess(erarius) A(ulus) Geminius
Extricatus mag(ister) k(ampi) M(arcus) Terentius
Saturninus hast(illarius) Q(uintus) Iulius Barbarus

209
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

*C(aius) Iulius Septimius M(arcus) Iulius Maximus*  
*M(arcus) Iulius Processus C(aius) Valerius Silvanus cur(ator) sc(h)o(iae).* (41 names follow)

*Fonteius Fortunatus [....]ius Staturninus, standard bearer, [.]Pinarius Primus standard bearer  
[.]Flavius Paulinus duty officer, Aulus Geminius Extricatus training officer, Marcus Terentius Saturninus hastilarius, Quintus Iulius Barbarus, Caius Iulius Septimius, Marcus Iulius Maximus, Marcus Iulius Processus, Caius Valerius Silvanus caretaker of the club.*

The exact identification of the *schola* is in some doubt. It might be argued, that the men are the *singulares consularis* from the presence of training officers like the *magister kampi* and *hastiliarii*. This is how Speidel 1978, note 159 p. 30f., and Speidel, forthcoming, see the inscription. Besnier saw it as the *schola equitum legionis* on account of "the place and the circumstances" of the find. As has been argued above, 25, the presence of *hastiliarii*, whether training officers or elite guards, does not eliminate the possibility of the *schola* being that of the legionary horsemen. The find spot, in the *praetorium* of *legio* III 210
The Documents of the Equites Legionis Augusta while not ruling out the governor's guard does seem to agree with Besnier.

110. 8.2565b
Place: Lambaesis Date: 3rd century
(2565b, 6) [Ant]ístiús Victor (domo) kas(tris) eq(ues)

Antistius Victor, from the camp, a horseman

111. 8.2568
Place: Lambaesis Date: 3rd century
(2568, 18) coh VIII Celsius Aprilis (domo) cas(tris) op(tio) eq(uitum).

Cohort VIII: Celsius Aprilis, from the camp, optio equitum

112. 8.3163
Place: Lambaesis Date: 1st quarter of the 3rd century
D(is) M(anibus) C(aius) Iulius Saturninus mil(es) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae) Com(modis honoratus) vixit annis XL. C(aius) Postumius Martialis eq(ues) aeres eius fecit.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

To the Gods Below. Caius Iulius Saturninus, soldier of legio III Augusta, honored with privileges, he lived 40 years. Caius Postumius Martialis, horsemen and his heir made it.

113. 8.3164
Place: Lambaesis Date: 216-222

D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum). C(aius) Iulius Saturninus eq(ues) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae) Antoninianae, v(ixit) a(nnis) XL, Propertia Quinta uxor et heres eius posuit. H(is) s(itus) e(st).

Sacred to the Gods Below. Caius Iulius Saturninus, horseman of legio III Augusta Antoniniana, he lived 40 years. Propertia Quinta his wife and heir placed it. Here he lies.

This man seems to be the same as in the previous inscription, having two heredes, one a collega, the other probably his wife.

114. Picard, #1
Place: Castellum Dimmidi Date: May 3, 226

Coh(ors) X. ...(ius) Fuscus (domo) cas(tris),
(Ca)ecilius Fort(unat)us (domo) cas(tris),
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

(L)ucilius Felix Kar(thagine?), Octavius Aemeritus (domo) cas(tris), ...esius Antoninus (domo) Cil(lione), Aelius Fortunatus (domo) Cil(lione), Iulius Liberalis (domo) Cil(lione), Flavius Ianuarius (domo) Cil(lione), item eq(uites): Iulius Donatus, Aemelius Lucian(us), Iulius Saturn(inus), Iulius Fundan(us), Iulius Donatus, Flavius (Lu)sitan(us), Q(uintus) Clodius Vitalis, Geminius Aurelius, Munatius Concord(us).

Coh(ors) X. ...(ius) Fuscus from the camp; (Ca)ecilius Fortunatus from the camp; Lucilius Felix from Carthage; Octavius Aemeritus from the camp; ...esius Antoninus from Cillio; Aelius Fortunatus from Cillio, Iulius Liberalis from Cillio, Flavius Ianuarius from Cillio. Likewise the horsemen: Iulius Donatus; Aemelius Lucianus; Iulius Saturninus; Iulius Fundanus; Iulius Donatus; Flavius Lusitanus; Quintus Clodius Vitalis; Geminius; Aurelius; Munatius Concordus.

This inscription, the right side of an altar, provides useful information of the structure of legionary detachments. Speidel 1984k has demonstrated that as this list mentions the soldiers' cohort but not their
The Documents of the *Equites Legionis*

centuries, the cohort was the basic administrative unit upon which the *vexillatio*, detachment, was formed. Their number and the unit from which they are drawn is also instructive. There are ten horsemen all of whom are drawn from one cohort; if, as has been suggested by Premerstein 1903, 27, there were two horsemen per century, ten troopers would represent the majority of cohort X's mounted men. The soldiers of another cohort (cohort IX ?) are listed on the left side of the altar. This cohort, which supplied some 16 foot soldiers, did not contribute any *equites* to the detachment. From this we can infer that the cavalry troopers, like the infantrymen, formed their detachments based on their cohort rather than simply centuries. Picard 1944, 91, believed that it would be folly to send out only ten *equites* to serve as a combat unit and so the duties of the legionary horsemen at Castellum Dimmidi must have been limited to police and courier duties; thus, when detached on outpost duty, their role was similar to the mounted troops attached to an auxiliary cohort, the *equites cohortales*: see Davies 1989c, 147ff. No officer is mentioned among the ten horsemen. This led Picard 1944, 91, to suggest that they were led by a *strator*, a legionary groom; one such soldier is attested in a command position by Picard 1944, #3.
The Documents of the Equites Legionis

115. Picard, #20

Place: Castellum Dimmidi Date: 226

item (eq)ui(tes): Flavius cas(tris), Q(uintus )
Calpurnius, Iulius, T(itus) Flavius, C...L.S,
M(arcus) Aurel(ius), T(itus) Flaviu(s), M(arcus)
Au(relius)

Likewise the horsemen: Flavius, from the camp;
Quintus Calpurnius; Iulius; Titus Flavius; C...L.S;
Marcus Aurelius; Titus Flavius; Marcus Aurelius
CHAPTER V: THE DOCUMENTS OF THE EQUITES PROMOTI

ITALY

116. AE 1907, 143

Place: Rome Date: late 4th century

...dp...nonas, die mercuris qui vix(it) annus (sic) XXXVII me(n)ses... di..s V trebunus equitum promotorum.

Placed ... nones... on Wednesday, who lived 37 years, ? months, 5 days, tribune of the equites promoti.

This is the only epigraphic attestation of a man of command rank for the equites promoti other than praepositus which is a title rather than a rank. The question, because of the find spot, is whether the man commanded the equites promoti dominorum nostrorum. See above p. 118f.

117. AE 1946, 127

Place: Rome Date: late 3rd century

Val(eri)us Proclianus protector qui vixit an(n)is XLIII et Val(eri)us Nepotianus exarcus promotus
The Documents of the Equites Promoti

domnicus qui vixit annis XXX fratres. Valeria Palladia coniugi carissimo bene merenti et cognato suo domum eterna dolens fabricavit.

Valerius Proclianus protector who lived 44 years and Valerius Nepotianus, exarcus promotus domnicus who lived 30 years, brothers. Valeria Palladia grieving for a most dear, well deserving husband and his relative, made it as their eternal home.

The man gives his rank as exarcus promotus domnicus. The adjective domnicus must certainly refer to his unit as the equites promoti dominorum nostrorum.

118. 6.32965=ILS 2791
Place: Rome Date: late 3rd/early 4th century

Dis manibus sacrum. Val(erio) Maxentio aeq(uiti) ex numero Lanc(i)arium vixit an(nis) XXVI, mil(itavit) an(nis) VI iscola aequitum b(ene) m(erenti) f(aciundum).

Sacred to the Gods below. For Valerius Maxentius, a horseman from the unit of Lanciarii. He lived 36
The Documents of the *Equites Promoti*

years and served six years in the *schola* of horsemen. It was made for one well deserving.

This man is a mounted *lanciarius* in a legion which shows legionary cavalrymen were still attached to the infantry. The inscription is contemporaneous with 120 and in the text we also have a mounted *lanciarius*.

**MOESIA SUPERIOR**

119. AE 1903, 291

Place: Viminacium

Date: 1st third of 4th century

*D(is) i(nferis) m(anibus). Valerius Iovinus* [s ex]
ducenar[io equitum] promotorum q(ui) vixit
[annos...]aginta d(u)os patr[ono impro]miscuae fide
Ne[stori] sui temp(oris) moribus bene cognito,
iusto of(f)icios operoso Vibia Sicca et Valeria
Marcella et Flavia Iovina [ob ab]stem[i]e
nob[iliter]que facta memoria fec(erunt).

To the gods below. Valerius Iovinus, *ex ducenarius* of the *equites promoti*, who lived ...?—two years.

For patron of pure faith, a Nestor of his own time, known well for his mores, just, hard-working with
The Documents of the *Equites Promoti*

respect to his duties, Vibia Sicca and Valeria Marcella and Flavia Iovina made this in his memory on account of selflessly and nobly done deeds.

This man appears to be a high ranking centurion. The date is supplied by the fact that he has one daughter with a pre-Constantinian name, Valeria and a second daughter with a post-Constantinian name, Flavia.

**ASIA**

120. AE 1981, 777

Place: Cotiaeum Date: post 299-305


Aurelius Caius Secundus served in *legio I Italica Moesiatrica*, transferred to *legio VIII Augusta Germanica*, in the provinces of Scythia and Pannonia
The Documents of the Equites Promoti

in legio I Iovia Scythia as tiro, he served as discens equitum, then mounted lanciarius...

Of interest is the soldier's recruitment; he went directly from tiro, recruit, right into the ranks of the horsemen after a period in training as discens equitum. He was then attached to a legion as an eques lanciarius which shows weapons specialization. The stone also preserves the equipment of the deceased which included a round shield and a spear, perhaps a lancea. Noteworthy is the presence of two servants: for these see Speidel 1989b.

AEGYPTUS

121. P. Beatty Panopolis 2.

Place: Panopolis Date: 300

φρ[οντίσατε] ἡξοδιάσαι ἐπ' αὐτῷ τῆς ὑρας σὲ ἀν
δέξῃ τὰ παρ᾽ ἐμοὶ θράμματα κατὰ κᾶλεσαι τοῦ
κυρίου μου Δόμνου τοῦ διαστυμοτάτου καθολικοῦ
λευτέρω πραισοσίων ἱππέων προμώτων λεγένος Β'
Τραϊσοῦς δια[κειμέν]ον ἐν Τευτύρα...(lines 197-200)
...δίδ κόρωνος (δικατοντάρχου) καὶ Ἀμμανίου ἱππέως
ἀπιστικῶν ...(line 202)

220
See that you pay out, at the very hour you receive this, according to the command of my lord Domnus, the most noble Catholicus, to Leontius, praepositus of the equites promoti of legio II Traiana garrisoned at Tentyra...(lines 197-200)... through the centurion Maron and the cavalryman Ammonius, the agents...(line 202)... to the equites promoti of legio II Traiana under the praepositus Leontius stationed in Tentyra... (lines 204-205)

This unit is apparently a detachment on outpost duty at Tentyra. It is interesting that it is a centurion who doles out the pay, aided, it would seem, by a common trooper.

122. P. Grenfell 2.74
Place: Tentyra (?) Date: 302
Αὐρέλιος Ἰππεύς εἰς Ἀρχιμάρτιον τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἐπιτάγει τοῖς ἐν Τέντυρα ὑπὸ Μακρόβιου τοῖς ἐν Τέντυρα ὑπὸ Μακρόβιου [πρ]απόσιτου.
The Documents of the Equites Promoti

Aurelius Hero Castor, soldier (and) eques of the promoti from legio II Traiana stationed at Tentyra under the praepositus Macrobius.

This papyrus, along with 118 and 120, shows how the equites promoti were garrisoned throughout the Thebaid. They may have been used from police duties like the cohortes equitatae of the high empire.

123. P. Columbia 7.188

Place: Karanis  Date: 320

Ωδαλέριος ἀειών ἐκατόνταρχος οὐδελατίων ἵππῳ προμάκτων λεγεών[ος] Β' Τραϊάνης τῶν ὑπὸ Δηκέντιου πρατηπόσιτον διακειμένων ἐν κάμη Ἄ[σ]φυνει τοῦ Λατοπολείτου νομοῦ...(lines 2-3)

ἵππῳ[±45] γα μοσχίου πυ.[..]ν α-ώπλον, α-κοῦτας,
[α]-ἀλαβαυτικοῦ, α-θυρακίου, α-πελύκιου, α-ἰμάτιου,
α-ἀλλ(ο) πελύκιου... (lines 16-17)

Οδαλέριος...(ἐκατόνταρχος) χ(ος) σὺνκολλήγας (line 26)

Οδαλέριος Ἀπίζ (ἐκατόνταρχος) χ(ος) [ς]υνκ(ολι)λήγας<ς> (line 27)

Οδαλέριος Ἰσίδ[ωρος (ἐκατόνταρχος) χ(ος) σὺνκολλήγας (line 28)

222
Valerius Aion, centurio of vexillatio of the equites promoti of legio II Traiana stationed under the praepositus Decentius in the village of Asphynis of the Latopolite nome... (lines 2-3)
Horse...calf, shield, lance, alabandicum, cuirass, axe, cloak, another axe... (lines 16-17)
Valerius .... centurion and colleague, Valerius Apis centurion and colleague, Valerius Isidorus centurion and colleague, Valerius Sarapion centurion and colleague, Valerius Hierax centurion and colleague, Valerius Palemon centurion and colleague (lines 26-30)

The number of centurions is a particularly interesting aspect of this papyrus. No fewer than seven are attested, the deceased and six of his "colleagues." This provides some hint as to the commanders and the numbers of equites promoti. See above p. 118-123. The
list of equipment also provides useful information. The kontos, taken by the original editors as "a pole" must surely be a lance, contus, in the context. The presence of a thorax, likely a mail shirt, shows that legionary horse, like most troopers, still had armor even if not shown on those monuments which depict camp dress. The alabandicum was thought likewise to be some sort of weapon: Bagnall and Lewis 1979, 218; it may also be some piece of armor.

124. MS Gardiner Wilkinson, No. 22, p. 51 and 62
Plates 4 and 5
Place: Luxor Date: 301-302
Anepigraphic

These paintings are from the sacellum at the camps at Luxor. The scenes apparently depict an imperial adventus: M. Reddé in El-Saghir et al. 1986, 27-31. As the camps housed a pair of legions, now believed to be legio I Maximiana and legio II Flavia Constantia: see Speidel and Pavkovič 1989. There are several horsemen shown, all in camp dress. One is in a red tunic (Plate 4) while the others have white with decorative bands and patches: see MacMullen 1990, 95-102 for the decoration and symbolism of late Roman uniforms. This may be
instructive as it has been argued that centurions wore red tunics; only legionary horsemen were led by centurions. See above p. 121ff.
CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has attempted to answer the need for a study of the equites legionis and equites promoti, the horsemen attached to the Roman legion, and for a collection of the evidence concerning them. In the preparation of this work, several problems concerning these legionary horsemen became evident.

The difficulties center around four main topics: the organization of the legionary cavalry, the commander of the equites legionis, the recruitment of legionary troopers and the role of these horsemen.

The organization of the equites legionis has, as discussed earlier, long been a point of contention among scholars. The main question was as to whether the legionary horsemen were organized into turmae as were the auxiliary troopers and which certain passages from Vegetius suggested or did they form part of the centuria as the epigraphic evidence implied.

The answer is that the legionary horsemen were attached to their centuriae for administrative purposes, but formed turma-like units on the battlefield. The evidence of Vegetius so often adduced cannot be shown actually to refer to the legionary horsemen; in fact, it is more likely to have referred to the auxiliary troopers as a point of comparison.

226
Conclusions

Moreover, the lower officers usually associated with the cavalry squadrons, decurions, cannot be shown to have existed for the legionary horsemen.

The second problem concerning the legionary horsemen is closely tied to the first, i.e., if the *equites legionis* were not organized in squadrons and did not have decurions, who was their commanding officer? The evidence for a connection with tribunes seems to imply that, if these officers were involved with the horsemen of the high empire, it was in a training capacity. Likewise, the *optio* who has been proffered as the commander seems an unlikely candidate since at least some of the training officers of the horsemen ranked as centurions. The answer, then, seems to be that the commander of *equites legionis* was a centurion of fairly high rank. This interpretation is bolstered by the new reading of the inscription on the silver ring from Baden.

An interesting question which was raised in the course of this study was the recruitment of the *equites legionis*. This centers around the reasons as to why a man would be selected as a legionary horseman. The answer seems to be that these troopers were enrolled as legionaries first and horsemen second. We do not, for example, see large numbers of men enlisted in those
Conclusions

provinces renowned for horsemen. Rather we see normal legionary recruitment patterns. Those horsemen, whose enlistment is unusual, can be attributed to the legate's preference in selecting his guard, as is the case with Ti. Claudius Maximus.

The question of the legionary legate's guard brings us to the problem of the role of the legionary horsemen. Scholars have long argued that a unit of one hundred twenty horsemen can hardly have served as more than a unit of staff troops whose primary function was to provide a corps of messengers. This study, however, has argued that the role of the equites legionis was more important to the legate than a rear area unit performing minor protective and communications duties. Instead the evidence points to the legionary troopers as forming an elite guard unit for the legionary commander. The promotions of legionary horsemen to command positions in the auxiliary regiments, the presence of training officers (and perhaps special guardsmen -- hastiliarii) and the formation of battle cavalry in the third century all point to their elite status.

The position of the legionary horsemen in the history of the Roman army, which has until now has been seen as somewhat secondary, can now be re-evaluated. The legionary horsemen and their successors the equites...
Conclusions

promoti may now take their proper place with the equites singulares Augusti, the singulares praesidis and the stablesiani as the crack units of the Roman army.
Plate 1

Tombstone of Caius Marius, Bonn

230
Plate 2

Anepigraphic Relief of a Legionary Horseman, Naples
Plate 3

Tombstone of Caius Iulius, Cormasa

232
Plate 4
Wall Painting, Luxor
Plate 5
Wall Painting, Luxor (detail)
## GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ala</td>
<td>A cavalry regiment composed of a number of turmae.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calo</td>
<td>A soldier's servant, usually a slave, found most often among horsemen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centuria</td>
<td>Basic administrative and combat unit of the legions and auxiliary cohorts, equal to a modern infantry company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centurio</td>
<td>Commander of centuria. The centurio's contemporary counterpart is probably a captain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohors</td>
<td>A group of six centuriae which maneuvered together on the battle field. Equivalent to a modern battalion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornicularius</td>
<td>Chief clerk or adjutant to an officer, usually of fairly high rank, such as a centurio, tribune or legate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decurio</td>
<td>Commander of a turma, or cavalry squadron.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eques</td>
<td>Horseman. Best seen as both a rank and function in the Roman army.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunis</td>
<td>Common soldier &quot;immune&quot; from fatigue duties about camp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legate</td>
<td>A high ranking officer. The two main types are the legati Augusti pro praetore, provincial governors, and the legati legionis, commanders of individual legions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorica</td>
<td>A set of armor. There were several types of loricae which could be classified according to the material and method of manufacture: lorica hamata -- chainmail, lorica segmentata -- bands of iron around the abdomen and over the shoulders and lorica sqaumata -- scales, often bronze, sewn to a leather backing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Glossary

Munifex  Common soldier burdened with fatigue
duties about camp.

Optio  A junior officer, usually in charge
of some non-combat organization or an
assistant to a higher ranking
officer such as a centurio.

Principalis  Lower ranking officers of the Roman
army with both command and staff
duties.

Stipendium  A year of military service with pay.

Singularis  A "selected soldier" who serves as a
guardsman. The two types were the
 singulares praesidis, the infantry
and cavalry guards of the governors
and the equites singulares Augusti,
the emperors crack horseguards.

Tribunes  Staff officers, analogous to modern
majors in the U. S. armed forces (not
colonels as often translated since
colonels hold command posts while
majors, like tribunes, usually do
not).

Turma  A cavalry squadron of thirty to
thirty-two troopers. Led by a
decurio.

Vexillarius  Standard bearer who carried the
 vexillum, a cloth flag used by
horsemen and infantry detachments.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Fitz 1983: Fitz, J. Honorific Titles of Roman Military Units in the 3rd Century (Bonn, 1983).


Bibliography


241
Bibliography


Kazarov 1938: Kazarov, G. I. Die Denkmäler der thrakischen Reitergottes in Bulgarien (Budapest, 1938).


Lesquier 1918: Lesquier, M. J. L'armée romaine d'Egypte d'Auguste à Diocletian (Cairo, 1918).


Marquardt 1884: Marquardt, J. Römische Staatsverwaltung Vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1884).


Bibliography

Mommsen 1889: Mommsen, T. "Das römische Militärwesen seit Diocletian," Hermes 24 (1889), 230f. (=Gesammelte Schriften VI, 239f.).


243
Bibliography


Bibliography


Speidel 1984g: Speidel, M. P. "Stablesiani. The Raising of New Cavalry Units during the Crisis of the Roman Empire," Roman Army Studies (Amsterdam 1984=Mavors I), 391-396.


Stein 1927: Stein, A. Der römische Ritterstand (Munich, 1927).


Bibliography
