

# ~FAR FROM THE DRAGGING PLOUGH~

VETERANS IN TRADE AND BUSINESS DURING  
THE ROMAN PRINCIPATE



by

**Joseph Adam Hall**

School of Classics

University of Wales, Trinity Saint David

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## ~SUMMARY~

In the study of the Roman world, few demographics receive scant attention from modern scholarship than those time-served veterans who eschewed an agricultural life in favour of setting up in business for themselves. This study, then, is an examination of this class of men and the evidence we have for them. Modern scholarship's apathy in this field of study is no doubt an effect of the lack of anything more than sparse one-dimensional references to veterans in the ancient literary sources, an aspect this paper will also examine. The study likewise challenges the idea that all soldiers inevitably retired to farmland by highlighting the *topoi* surrounding both rural life and the soldiery, as well as providing a more practical analysis of the options open to the veteran upon discharge. By taking evidence directly from inscriptions, this study throws light on those veterans who set up as manufacturers and traders of various commodities, and discusses the reasons why they are so elusive within the epigraphic record itself. Summaries of the key themes of the study, along with potential avenues of further research, are offered in the conclusion.

Total number of words ~ **20,930**

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© *Unattributed*

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## ~LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS~

- AE: *L'Année Épigraphique*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. 1966.
- AIJ: *Antike Inschriften aus Jugoslawien*. V. Hoffiller - B. Saria, 1: Noricum und Pannonia superior, Zagreb 1938 (ND Amsterdam 1970).
- BGU: *Berliner Griechische Urkunden (Ägyptische urkunden aus den Kgl. Museen zu Berlin)*.
- ChLA: *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores* (1954- ).
- CIL: *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (1863- ).
- Daris: *Documenti per la storia dell' esercito*. S. Daris (ed.).
- ILAlg.: *Inscriptions Latines de l'Algérie*. S. Gsell (1864 - 1932)
- ILS: *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, H. Dessau (1892 - 1916).
- IMS: *Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure*, Belgrad (1976- ).
- P.Mich.: *Michigan Papyri*. (1931 - ).
- P.Stras.: *Griechische Papyrus der Kaiserlichen Umiversitäts – und Landesbibliothek zu Strassburg*. (1912 - ).
- RIB: *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, Collingwood & Wright (1965 - ).
- RMR: *Roman Military Records on Papyrus*. R. Fink, Cleveland (1971).
- SB: *Sammelbuch Grieschisen Urkunden aus Ägypten*. (1915 - ).
- SHA: *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*.
- Tab. Vindol. II: *Vindolanda: the Latin writing-tablets*. A. K. Bowman & J. D. Thomas. London: Britannia Monograph 4. (1983).
- TitAq: *Tituli Aquincenses: Tituli sepulcrales et alii Budapestini reperti*. P. Kovács, Á. Szabó, B. Fehér. (2010).

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## ~INTRODUCTION~

‘How those veterans who did not opt for the farming life spent their later years is largely a mystery.’<sup>1</sup> Thus Professor Lawrence Keppie neatly encapsulates modern scholarly consensus regarding the Roman veteran and his life after discharge. No single study has sought to highlight the role of those veterans who chose to shun agriculture altogether in favour of business and trade. Here then, is a class of individuals both willing and able to carve out lucrative post-service careers marginalised by modern historical enquiry. The vast majority of work which has been done regarding veterans is often only tangentially related, and speculative in nature, to the question of what happened to those veterans with a more entrepreneurial approach to life after service. This unwillingness to see the soldiery as desirous of anything other than a quaintly bucolic retirement upon discharge is, I believe, the result of uncritical readings of idealistic and *topos* laden ancient sources, and denies the genuine entrepreneurial skills which many veterans in reality possessed. Following the battle of Actium in 31 BC, Octavian became the last man standing after the wars for control of the Roman world. These wars had seen an almost unprecedented number of Romans conscripted, re-called, or volunteer for service in the legions, and as a result by their end Octavian had over sixty legions under his command; over a quarter of a million men. The initial settlement of those no longer required, over half of this force, and the formalisation of set periods of service in the new professional army finally forced the Roman state to acknowledge that these and future veterans would require not only an incentive to serve for so long, but a promise of being provided for in their retirement. Between Octavian’s accession to sole rule in the last third of the first century BC and the shift from Principate to Dominate in the late third century AD, a

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<sup>1</sup> Keppie 2000: 312.

conservative estimate would place the number of discharged veteran legionaries at just over three quarters of a million men in a little over 300 years.<sup>2</sup> Yet in spite of these numbers little attention has been given to the study of the veteran beyond the dual foci of recruitment and settlement. Modern literature which touches upon the veteran is reviewed in chapter two, as will become apparent, however, a gap exists in scholarship regarding exactly what these veterans did after discharge. Their fate is often simply assumed to be one of retirement to agricultural smallholdings and subsistence until death.

In spite of the lack of interest on the part of ancient authors, and the reticence of modern scholars, to examine the life of the veteran, I believe that something can be said about this class of individuals by examining the epigraphic record. This study is divided into three parts. Part one begins with an assessment of modern literature, which highlights the disparate works which deal, often only tangentially or in passing, with the subject of the veteran's life beyond service. Such a review will summarise modern scholarship, highlighting the gap within the framework of veteran studies in which the value of this study may be better understood. After this comes a consideration of the veterans within the Roman world, their legal position and social status. Beginning with the army reforms of Octavian/Augustus and encompassing the subsequent events which impacted upon the veteran, such as changes to the length of military service, pay, and rights upon discharge. This chapter will also include a discussion on veteran settlement. In providing a brief overview of this kind the discussions found in subsequent chapters will be better understood and contextualised. The last chapter of part one examines the ancient literary sources' often skewed perception of the Roman veteran as desirous only of a quaintly bucolic retirement on the land, and looks at the validity of modern assumptions based on uncritical readings of the same.

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<sup>2</sup> For discussion of discharge numbers see chapter 8.

Part two deals first with the constraints of epigraphic evidence - by far the most useful type of evidence for the study of Roman veterans - before setting out and discussing the evidence for veterans in trade. The discussion here takes in the veterans' location, attested profession, and perceived wealth.

Part three assesses why we have so little evidence for veteran in business, and why we should reasonably expect far more veterans that are currently attested to have done so. Discussions here include the factors which modify epigraphic behaviour and the recording of certain professions, the skills and finances of veterans, and what demography can tell us of the scale of veterans in business. This final section also highlights the selective nature of epigraphy by showing the disparity between the evidence we have and the evidence we should expect had even a small percentage of veteran entered upon mercantile ventures and attested so epigraphically. A conclusion ends the study, and brings together the themes of the work, summarising the main points and highlighting areas for further research.

In the context of this study the phrase 'economic skills' refers to trades and crafts, as well as the experience of the dynamics of supply and demand, and the contacts acquired which would prove useful for those within the economic sphere. The term 'economy' itself carries enormous baggage in the study of ancient history;<sup>3</sup> however, this study is concerned primarily with the evidence, both direct and circumstantial, for veterans entering into business. The Roman economy (or economies) therefore shall be passed over in favour of detailing the evidence for one particular demographic of participants; the Roman veterans.

Before beginning, a clarification of the both study's focus and scope is warranted. The term 'veteran' as used throughout this work denotes a soldier fully discharged from the legions. The term 'veteran' is also used in both in ancient and modern literature to denote

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of this see Morley 2004: 33-50.

those soldiers serving their final years in the legions within a special unit, or *vexillum*, comprising soldiers nearing the end of their military career and relieved of menial duties.<sup>4</sup> This study is of the former. I have also chosen to focus exclusively upon veteran of the legions and not the auxilia. Whilst auxiliary soldiers and veterans were similar to legionaries in many respects, they were also different in key aspects such as their social and legal status, perception of trade and business, and their degree of integration with Roman culture. With regard to scope, I have decided to focus upon the Principate from the time of Actium in 31 BC to the Dominate of AD 284 for various reasons, chief amongst these being the broadly homogenous opportunities and status accorded to the Roman soldiery over these 300 plus years. The variables which come into play during this time, such as the extensions of military service, increase in pay, and the edict of Caracalla in AD 212, all affect the economic potential of the soldiery upon discharge, but these events still occurred within an imperial framework which held the legionary veteran as a man of status amongst the social milieu of his chosen area of settlement. With Diocletian's division of the Roman world into tetrarchies in the late third century AD the number of troops expanded massively as the four rulers all sought to establish armies of their own.<sup>5</sup> Coupled with this, the huge influx of non-Roman 'barbarians' into Rome's armies at this time further altered the status of the soldiery from what it had been under the Principate.<sup>6</sup> The subsequent evolution of the military into distinct frontier troops (*limitanei*) and reserve field armies (*comitatenses*) under Constantine at the beginning of the fourth century AD was the culmination of these various changes which saw the composition of the army, the status of its soldiers, and the world in which they lived a very different place to that which had predominated during the three centuries previous.

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<sup>4</sup> For a study of this class of soldier see Keppie 2000: 239-47.

<sup>5</sup> Lactant. *De. mort. pers.* 7.2

<sup>6</sup> Jones 1964; Elton 1996a; Nicasie 1998; Halsall 2007.

# I

## ~Chapter 1~

### LITERATURE REVIEW

As an unexamined field of study, there is no chronologically themed debate regarding the non-agricultural alternatives for veterans upon which to draw for an overview of literature. No incremental evolution into a nuanced and multi-faceted topic such as those dealing with the army's effect on the economy, or even on veteran settlement, exists here. As such any review of the literature must instead aggregate any mention, often only given in passing, from numerous scholarly monographs and articles regarding the post-service lives of those veterans who shunned farming. Discussions around topics such as the veteran's economic and status and potential must therefore also be reviewed in order to provide a sturdier framework for my own work. Works reviewed here will therefore be cited as and when their relation to the theme under consideration becomes relevant. Given the relative lack of debate regarding my thesis as a whole, a literature review set out in this way will result in a more coherent marshalling of the secondary evidence than would reviewing it chronologically.

No scholar has directly tackled the question of what veterans could hope to turn their hands to after discharge beyond owning and farming their allotted or self-bought land.<sup>7</sup> Any brief mention of an alternative is often just that. Amongst the first to mention specific veterans not engaged in agriculture was Ramsay MacMullen in his 1963 monograph *Soldier and Civilian in the Late Roman Empire*. MacMullen cited three veterans turned traders, although his brief discussion of veterans in business stated that their

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<sup>7</sup> Wierschowski 1982, a short article on soldiers and veterans in trade and transport became known to me too late to access.

infrequency was a result of small discharge bonuses, the safety of investing in land, and their own ‘farming backgrounds’.<sup>8</sup> MacMullen did acknowledge, however, that veterans received certain tax exemptions and start-up gratuities if engaging in trade, although a ‘contemptible pittance’ in comparison to what those taking up agriculture received.<sup>9</sup> In 1983 Lawrence Keppie’s monograph entitled *Colonisation and Veteran Settlement: 47 – 14 BC*, along with his 1984 article which covered the Principate, occasionally mentioned the post-service careers of veterans; if only as supplementary detail to the main focus. Veterans were shown to be holders of sometimes highly elevated public office in colonies, although generally immediately after their foundation when their sheer numbers skewed the voting body.<sup>10</sup> Whilst acknowledging that veterans would not always have been at home on the farm and may well seek alternative employment, Keppie nevertheless concluded that: ‘we hear very little of other full-time occupations’.<sup>11</sup> His follow-up work examining the Principate again cited veterans in public office, but made no mention at all of veterans’ actual careers after service.<sup>12</sup> Later works by Keppie focussed on similar ground, although none touched on the evidence for veterans living and working beyond the agricultural sphere. Brief allusions were made, however, within discussions on subjects such as colonisation, discharge, and settlement. For example, Keppie stated that veterans may have chosen to remain near their areas of service after discharge due to their having, amongst other incentives, ‘business interests’ there,<sup>13</sup> although he also assumed that even after the state’s preference for providing cash grants

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<sup>8</sup> MacMullen 1963: 110-11, Cf. MacMullen 1960: 25-6.

<sup>9</sup> MacMullen 1963: 110ff, n.45.

<sup>10</sup> Keppie 1983: 105-6; 108.

<sup>11</sup> Keppie 1983: 126.

<sup>12</sup> Keppie 1984.

<sup>13</sup> Keppie 2000: 61, 310.

to land allotment many veterans, ‘perhaps more than we think’, still invested in land.<sup>14</sup> J. C. Mann, in his work *Legionary Recruitment and Veteran Settlement during the Principate*, asserted that the soldiery of the late republic had: ‘little opportunity for learning any trade or skill during service’,<sup>15</sup> and that: ‘many men must have had to leave the army with few or no resources with which to start again in civilian life’.<sup>16</sup> In spite of its focus, no such summary, nor even discussion, is present regarding the veterans of the Principate apart from an endnote expressing that later some veterans may have settled in the Italian town of Aquileia due to the commercial prospects it offered.<sup>17</sup> Elisabeth Fentress claimed that veterans overwhelmingly spent their savings and discharge bonuses on acquiring and developing land, with the idea that any might invest in ‘a small business or shop’ dealt with merely by the statement of its potential occurrence.<sup>18</sup> The possibility that veterans could obtain positions on town councils is discussed, although only to conclude that the average veteran would be lucky to reach even lowly positions given the asset requirements of such posts.<sup>19</sup> The idea that veterans could be allotted larger portions of land than they could individually farm is also floated, with either slaves or locals supplementing labour.<sup>20</sup> Presumably this would aid in both freeing up the veteran to engage in other interests as well as giving him an income which could generate the capital to pursue them, although this remains an implicit assumption which Fentress herself does not discuss further. In opposition to Fentress’ oft-stressed assertion that the bulk of veterans retired to their farms is Brent Shaw’s 1983 publication.<sup>21</sup> Shaw asks the key, unknowable question of how

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<sup>14</sup> Keppie 2000: 312.

<sup>15</sup> Mann 1983: 2.

<sup>16</sup> Mann 1983: 2.

<sup>17</sup> Mann 1983: 175, n. 426.

<sup>18</sup> Fentress 1979: 177.

<sup>19</sup> Fentress 1979: 153.

<sup>20</sup> Fentress 1979: 178.

<sup>21</sup> Shaw 1983: 133-59.

many veterans: ‘having received their *honesta missio*, would turn to farming in their old age?’<sup>22</sup> Speaking of their long-service in the ranks, Shaw seems unconvinced that these men would engage: ‘at the end of such a life-long experience, in the degradation and poor rewards of manual labour on the soil’.<sup>23</sup> As primarily a critique of Fentress’ monograph, however, the limited scope of Shaw’s article prohibited any further discussion on what other occupations the veteran could enter into. Peter Brennan also questioned the veteran’s suitability to rural life, although for different reasons, stating that they simply offered ‘too much of the *vis*, too little of the *bona pacis*’, and perhaps more tellingly, that their knowledge of gaining wealth was limited to its acquisition by force.<sup>24</sup> Richard Alston’s work on soldiers and society in Roman Egypt made no mention of exactly what activities the average veteran could hope to pursue beyond agriculture upon discharge,<sup>25</sup> and in a similar study Nigel Pollard’s monograph on Roman Syria and Mesopotamia stuck with the general consensus regarding veterans overwhelmingly becoming landowners upon retirement; mentioning only in passing the possibility that perhaps ‘not all veterans became farmers’.<sup>26</sup> Elisabetta Todisco followed the scholarly line of offering up a sentence or two regarding veterans outside of agriculture, although she also cited six potential instances of veterans in business and commerce; a valuable addition to the literature.<sup>27</sup> Another study more optimistic in its portrayal of the veteran and his potential was Koenraad Verboven’s *Good for Business*; beginning his digression on the subject by stating that many veterans ‘undoubtedly invested their savings and discharge bonuses in a

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<sup>22</sup> Shaw 1983: 140.

<sup>23</sup> Shaw 1983: 140.

<sup>24</sup> Brennan 1990: 501, 500.

<sup>25</sup> Alston 1995, although hardly an omission in this instance, given Alston’s tight focus on the detailed evidence available regarding Egyptian-origin veterans and their inherited land.

<sup>26</sup> Pollard 2000: 249.

<sup>27</sup> Todisco 1999: 219.

private workshop'.<sup>28</sup> Other works dealing primarily with the world of the Roman soldier typically also touch upon the lot of veterans, although their conclusions on what the veteran could look forward to after retirement - if indeed this subject is examined at all - mention only farming.<sup>29</sup> None attempt to answer why the evidence is so sparse for veterans in trade in spite of their economic potential.

If generally short shrift has been given to exactly what veterans did beyond agriculture, the study of their economic potential has at least received more interest. The economic status of the veteran is discussed in secondary literature, although scholars vary markedly on exactly what this status could be. Giovanni Forni doubted whether the average discharge bonus sufficed to ensure 'una certa agiatezza' for the remainder of the veteran's life,<sup>30</sup> and evidence of veterans possessing even a modest amount of wealth was attributed to the inheritance or successful acquisition and development of land.<sup>31</sup> Similarly pessimistic of the veteran's prospects is G. R. Watson. Watson doubted the economic potential of the veteran, pointing out that there would certainly have been a 'considerable difference between the standard of living possible during service on a soldier's pay and that on a veteran's income during retirement'.<sup>32</sup> Drawing upon then-contemporary studies of Roman demography, he concluded that they painted a 'gloomy picture of ex-servicemen living at some sub-standard level midway between that of free citizens and slaves, in a twilight zone of second class citizenry'.<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth Fentress asserted that, at least in Numidia, veterans would generally have shared equal economic status with the

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<sup>28</sup> Verboven 2007a: 311.

<sup>29</sup> For example Birley 1983: 67, Goldsworthy 2003: 114-117, Southern 2007: 166, Keaveney 2007: 62. Cf. Whitehorne 1990: 544.

<sup>30</sup> Forni 1953: 37.

<sup>31</sup> Forni 1953: 125-6.

<sup>32</sup> Watson 1969: 152.

<sup>33</sup> Watson 1969: 152.

peasantry,<sup>34</sup> and when settled in *coloniae* would become mere ‘peasant producers’.<sup>35</sup> Yann Le Bohec’s work on the Roman army dealt in part with the soldier as an agent of the economy,<sup>36</sup> surmising that a salaried class with supplementary incomes and experience of both civil engineering and craft industry could have had positive effects on their local economies,<sup>37</sup> but he failed to take the next logical step into exploring the evidence for this class beyond service.<sup>38</sup> Similar in outlook was Brian Campbell, who acknowledged that whilst some veterans may have boasted economic potential, they were generally ‘solid and unadventurous’.<sup>39</sup> Richard Alston described the wealth of the veteran as being ‘on a village scale’, and upon retirement he would be forced ‘to integrate with the economically and numerically dominant elements of the population’.<sup>40</sup> Even when settled in villages where their money could stretch further Alston saw the veterans as failing to dominate either politically or economically, and indeed he states that ‘veterans did not form a separate economic class nor were they involved in economic activities different from those of the non-veteran population’.<sup>41</sup>

As the more recent scholarly work acknowledges, the possibility that veterans may have had more to offer than farm labour has also impacted on the perception of their economic status.<sup>42</sup> Gabriele Wesch-Klein recognised veterans as potentially good

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<sup>34</sup> Fentress 1983: 168.

<sup>35</sup> Fentress 1979: 132; an assertion which Shaw 1983 strongly questions.

<sup>36</sup> First published in 1989 as *L’armée Romaine sous le Haut-Empire*, translated into English as *The Imperial Roman Army* in 1994.

<sup>37</sup> Le Bohec 1994: 207-20.

<sup>38</sup> Le Bohec 1994: 223-5.

<sup>39</sup> Campbell 1994: 222.

<sup>40</sup> Alston 1995: 116.

<sup>41</sup> Alston 1995: 140.

<sup>42</sup> For example Todisco 1999: 219 on *CIL* 13, 6677=*ILS* 2472: ‘...a *Mogontiacum* sono attestati un commerciante di spade... che raggiunse senza dubbio una fortunata posizione economica, a giudicare dalle 8000 sesterzi spesi per la realizzazione del suo monument funerario’

businessmen, noted their strong economic position, and discussed what they did with those benefits they were in receipt of upon discharge.<sup>43</sup> She also states that veterans ‘had a good basis for a profession, if they had learned a skill in the army that they could continue to use in civilian life’,<sup>44</sup> and in addition that they had ‘greater wealth at their disposal than the majority of the local population in many places’.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, Koenraad Verboven posits the idea of a ‘business class’ in the north-western provinces, propagated by the demands of the large military presence and populated by those able to cater for this demand.<sup>46</sup> Verboven was more positive in seeing veterans as potential kingpins of local business due to their start-up capital, military contacts, and attractiveness as ‘interesting links’ for civilian businessmen to cultivate due to their wealth and unique positions.<sup>47</sup> However, as with Wesch-Klein’s study, and indeed every other work cited which discusses veterans, Verboven fails to fully examine them in their own right as potential players in the world beyond agriculture.

As exemplified above, modern scholarly consensus sees veterans as, for the most part, economically negligible when it came to the larger picture. But what of their skills accumulated during service, skills which could be put to use upon discharge? Unfortunately few scholars have studied the link between the skills acquired during service and their possible deployment beyond it. MacMullen discussed *fabricae* - or large military smithies – and their utilising of soldiers and craftsmen to produce items needed for a functioning legion. These deliberations implicitly suggested the possibility that soldiers could learn economically profitable skills during service, but this remained an

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<sup>43</sup> Wesch-Klein 2007: 445-6.

<sup>44</sup> Wesch-Klein 2007: 445.

<sup>45</sup> Wesch-Klein 2007: 447.

<sup>46</sup> Verboven 2007a.

<sup>47</sup> Verboven 2007a: 304, 311.

unexplored topic. Fentress overwhelmingly saw veterans as farmers, and this notion perhaps partly derived from her incorrect insistence that the army ‘produced nothing for itself’; thus preventing the soldiers from acquiring skills exploitable economically after discharge.<sup>48</sup> Primarily, however, the vast majority of works dealing with the day-to-day lives of the soldiery and the skills they could pick up along the way are divorced from the study of veterans. As is evident, then, in spite of a small section of academia which views veterans as a potential economic force, the majority still perceive them as little more than farmers, and whilst numerous works tackle the intricacies of recruitment, discharge, and settlement, very few touch upon post-service careers; fewer still on careers beyond agriculture. This is highlighted by the fact that the veteran appears in neither general nor specific works on the Roman economy itself; a fact indicative of modern scholarship’s perception of the veteran as a spent force both physically and economically.<sup>49</sup> To conclude, an accurate summary of scholarly consensus regarding the veteran’s alternatives to agriculture would be that, although agriculture is perhaps correctly seen as the primary vocation of the veteran, it is, in effect, treated as the sole vocation.

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<sup>48</sup> Fentress 1979: 124, 1983: 164.

<sup>49</sup> See Burn 1953.

## ~Chapter 2~

### VETERANS AND THE ROMAN STATE

#### 2.1: Official policy regarding veterans

The earliest example of the Roman state recognising the need to provide for its newly discharged veterans is the allotment in 201 BC of land in southern Italy to around 40,000 of Scipio's time-served legionaries of the Hannibalic war.<sup>50</sup> At the time, the decision to settle veterans through state intervention was a reaction to the entirely new problem of providing for a mass of recently disbanded soldiers who had served for many years abroad. However, the precedent it set was to be later followed on numerous occasions throughout the mid to late first century BC, starting with Marius' settlement of his property-less and long-serving volunteer army, and later including the soldiers of Sulla, Caesar, and the triumvirs.<sup>51</sup> After the final victory in the civil wars at Actium in 31 BC, Suetonius states that Augustus set about formalising the army:

(Augustus) restricted all the soldiery everywhere to a fixed scale of pay and allowances, designating the duration of their service and the rewards on its completion according to each man's rank, in order to keep them from being tempted to revolution after their discharge either by age or poverty.<sup>52</sup>

By 25 BC the number of legions had been stabilised at twenty-eight, totalling just over 150,000 men; those veterans demobilised in the six years since Actium being established

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<sup>50</sup> For the Senate's appointing of commissioners to allocate land in Samnium and Apulia to veterans see Livy. *Epit.* 31.4, 1-5., for possible numbers regarding soldiers who qualified for this allocation see P. Brunt 1971: 70.

<sup>51</sup> W. Broadhead 2007: 159.

<sup>52</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 49.

in *coloniae* paid for by Augustus himself from the captured Egyptian treasury.<sup>53</sup> Veterans settled in these colonies also enjoyed exemption from taxes such as the *tributum soli* (land tax) and *tributum capitis* (poll tax), as well as exemption from particular obligations and immunity from certain punishments. This is not to say, however, that local governments did not attempt to flout such rules for their own gain, such as by forcibly electing well connected veterans onto their town councils.<sup>54</sup> In 13 BC legal rights to a discharge award were formalised, and the length of service set at sixteen years with a further four in a *vexillum veteranorum*.<sup>55</sup> Also at this time, whether due to the scarcity of available land, the high level of planning and administration they required, or what Dio believed to be the immense resentment and social dislocation they caused, cash-grants largely replaced land allotments.<sup>56</sup> Veterans under successive emperors could still find themselves being given land over cash on occasion however, or could be settled piecemeal on stretches of land set aside for cultivation commonly known as *viridane* settlement.<sup>57</sup> By AD 5 the cash grant upon discharge was set at 3,000 *denarii* per legionary, and in AD 6 the *aerarium militare* was established by Augustus.<sup>58</sup> The *aerarium militare* was a fund from which discharge pay would be withdrawn, with Augustus himself financing the first injection of cash in the form of 170 million sesterces.<sup>59</sup> Thereafter, the fund was to be replenished by the

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<sup>53</sup> Aug. *Res Gest.* 15.

<sup>54</sup> See the AD 172 papyrus: Daris, *documenti* 105.

<sup>55</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.35.

<sup>56</sup> Dio. Cass. 54.25 1-4. See Watson 1987: 91 for the view that the Roman state attempted to sever the link with the civil wars by abandoning the practice of settlement in *coloniae* due to its connection to post civil war practices.

<sup>57</sup> As evidenced by the Pannonian legionaries' complaints during the rebellion of AD 14 regarding the quality of the land set aside for their settlement, Tac. *Ann.* 1.17. For a thorough overview and detailed analysis of veteran settlement see Keppie 1983, 1984.

<sup>58</sup> For a discussion of the importance of emperors controlling military pay and benefits see Campbell 1984: 158-161.

<sup>59</sup> Aug. *Res Gest.* 17. For a detailed analysis of the *aerarium militare* see Corbier 1977.

introduction of a five percent tax on inheritances and a one percent sales tax on auctions.<sup>60</sup>

Throughout the first century AD length of service was extended to 25 years, and veterans were discharged variably with either cash grants, vitantae land allotments, or even occasionally in *coloniae*. After the reign of Hadrian (AD 117-138) settlement in *coloniae* was completely abandoned and a cash grant became the state's preferred means of rewarding its time-served soldiers. During the first century AD, and perhaps beyond, the majority of the soldiery received cash instead of land.<sup>61</sup> One reason why land settlement may have been undesirable to the state was the constant outflow of veteran settlers from their allotted locations back to the more familiar regions of their military service. Indeed, Tacitus mentions that veterans settled in the thinly populated Italian towns of Tarentum and Antium did exactly this.<sup>62</sup> Under Hadrian the legions were also authorised to recruit men locally, which may further have added to the logic of the cash grant as veterans returned home and reintegrated into familial life after service instead of setting up new family units in their previously faraway regions of service.<sup>63</sup> In those latter years when the cash grant held imperial preference, the practice of settlement in *coloniae* was still occasionally resurrected, often as a means of imposing a presence in new territory or on sites which had been recently vacated by the army.<sup>64</sup> Wherever they settled, and whether in receipt of a land allotment or a grant of cash, the veteran also had a reserve of funds available to him due to the state's requirement that over his period of service he deposit

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<sup>60</sup> For a more thorough examination of the auction tax introduced by Augustus see García Morcillo 2008.

<sup>61</sup> Keppie 1984: 107.

<sup>62</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 14.27.

<sup>63</sup> Renz 1972: 170. Cf Forni 1953: 238 '... e parecchie riserve avanziamo sulla validità del criterio di indurre l'origine dei veterani, particolarmente di quelli dedotti in colonie, dalla coincidenza della tribù in cui essi risultano iscritti, con la tribù del luogo di ritrovamento delle relative iscrizioni.'

<sup>64</sup> Mann 1983: 61; Southern 2007: 164.

part of his pay with the unit headquarters to be returned upon discharge. Such interventions by the state, coupled with the policies set out above for providing for the retired soldiery, evidence a very real desire to keep the army running smoothly by providing incentives for service and ensuring that upon discharge the veteran had a good chance of carving out a successful ‘second life’ outside of the legions. These provisions can hardly be seen as purely altruistic however, and there was always a sense of compromise between what the state wanted to give and what they needed to give in order to ensure that the legions remained loyal and free from the desire to mutiny.

## 2.2: The Legal Position of the Veteran

The importance of the army in maintaining the emperors’ power ensured preferential treatment when it came to legal matters. Complaints and requests by the soldiery were far more likely to be heard and acted upon by the emperor than similar grievances put forward by mere civilians.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, civilians attempting to defend themselves or their property from the impunities of the soldiery had very little recourse to justice. The collective might of the soldier’s unit would often array against the claimant in the form of physical abuse and intimidation, and even if a case were heard against the soldier it would be within the military camp with a centurion acting as judge.<sup>66</sup>

The soldiery could not own land except inherited land, and was also exempt from *patria potestas* which stated that no man could own property if his father were still alive;<sup>67</sup> his property - known as *castrense peculiam* – included anything given to him by his parents

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<sup>65</sup> Juv. *Sat.* 16 40-50, Campbell 1984: 208-9, 254-63, Phang 2008: 114. This is not to say that local governments did not attempt to flout such rules for their own gain, such as by forcibly electing well connected veterans onto their town councils, for which see the AD 172 papyrus: Daris, *documenti* 105.

<sup>66</sup> Petron. *Sat.* 82, Apul. *Met.* 9.39, Juv. 16.

<sup>67</sup> Ulp. 20.10.

or relatives upon his joining the military as well as anything gained during service which he would not otherwise have gained had he not been a soldier.<sup>68</sup> Sometime during his reign Hadrian extended *castrense peculium* to veterans. J. B. Campbell sees this as ‘a desire to create a good impression of the emperor’s benevolence and concern for his troops right through their lives’,<sup>69</sup> which is essentially a symbolic gesture given that even the youngest of time-served veterans would overwhelmingly be fatherless. It is likely however that such an emperor as Hadrian, with his affinity for the military and concern for the troops, recognised that those soldiers receiving *missio causaria* – early discharge due to injury or illness – required clarification of their legal status and official recognition of their continued legal autonomy. Hadrian also admitted the soldiery to the class of *honestiores*, nominally placing their status alongside that of the more privileged members of society such as senators, equestrians, and the various ranks of civil servants.

Further legal privileges also applied due to *rei publicae causa absens*, - absence in the service of the state – whereby soldiers could claim restitution if unable to maintain property, defend legal interests, or in any other way attend to business which if neglected had legal ramifications.<sup>70</sup> In contrast to civilian claimants veterans had only one year in which to claim restitution, that year however, was calculated from their date of discharge, which, given the requirements of service, could be anything up to twenty-five years after the incident itself.<sup>71</sup> The state further set the soldier apart from his civilian contemporaries by granting him the ability to produce his own legally valid will - the *testamentum militare*. A more limited version of this concession was applied by its initiator Julius Caesar, it found favour again under the Flavians, was applied without limits to all soldiers by Nerva, and

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<sup>68</sup> *Cod. Just.* 12.36.1, *Dig.* 49.17.11, 17.4, 17.6, 17.16, Campbell 1984: 229-36.

<sup>69</sup> Campbell 1984: 236. For the intricacies of what could be included in the *castrense peculium* see Campbell 1984: 273ff.

<sup>70</sup> Ulp. 6.38.1.

<sup>71</sup> *Cod. Just.* 2.52.1-4.

was formally set-down by Trajan who ensured the mandate was published empire-wide.<sup>72</sup> Veterans had up to one year from discharge to write a new will more in line with the laws governing civilian wills. If the veteran died within that year and had no new will, the previous military one would remain valid; even if it now technically contravened the rule of law as it applied to civilians owing to the veteran's former elevated legal position.<sup>73</sup> From the beginning of the principate until the end of the second century AD soldiers could not legally marry, after which time Septimius Severus granted them the right. Nevertheless soldiers before this could enter into unions with women which had all of the social legitimacy of marriage even if legally speaking it was invalid.<sup>74</sup> As well soldiers could cohabit with women and raise children without incurring penalty; a key point for Scheidel when he speaks of the inaccuracy of the widely-used term 'marriage ban' and proposes instead the more fitting 'non-recognition' of soldiers' marriages.<sup>75</sup> Children born of such unions were classed as illegitimate, with no right of intestate succession to their father before Hadrian's rescript, a privilege not extended to the illegitimate children of civilians.<sup>76</sup> The life of the soldier was not one of complete legal exemptions however, as engaging in trade whilst in service was forbidden until the Severan period and, though thereafter legal, still discouraged until long afterwards.<sup>77</sup>

By exempting soldiers from certain aspects of the common law the Roman state singled out soldiers and veterans as socially superior to the masses who had to abide by it. We cannot be certain to what extent such preferential treatment by the authorities applied to veterans, although Hadrian's extension of *castrense peculium* to veterans hints at a

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<sup>72</sup> Campbell 1984: 210-11.

<sup>73</sup> For a further discussion on this see Campbell 1984: 215.

<sup>74</sup> Phang 2001: 202, Alston 1995: 58-9.

<sup>75</sup> Scheidel 2007a: 418.

<sup>76</sup> *BGU* 140, Phang 2001: 203.

<sup>77</sup> *Dig.* 14.6.1, *Veg. Mil.* 2.9 see also MacMullen 1963: 109.

continuity of legal privileges, and indeed Augustus himself had personally defended one veteran in the law courts.<sup>78</sup> It would also seem safe to assume that the often close social and geographical ties between serving soldiers and veterans would ensure their continued favour; not to mention the formidable potential of such a group if alienated en-mass. As is evident then, the status conferred upon soldiers and veterans was far higher than that of the average citizen, and as such soldiers overwhelmingly state their military service epigraphically. Trade, on the other hand, was seen as a comparatively lowly occupation, and when it came to attesting post-service professions, veterans often struggled reconcile the disparity.

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<sup>78</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 56.4.

## ~Chapter 3~

### THE VETERAN FARMER: MYTH OR REALITY?

In the absence of hard evidence many modern scholars have fallen back on the ancient literary sources in order to gain an insight on Roman veterans, the uncritical reading of which has greatly contributed to modern scholarship's perception of them as bucolic retirees tiling their land until death.<sup>79</sup> With this in mind, this chapter will examine the ancient literature regarding veterans written by the elite of the Roman world, literature which itself invariably portrays the veteran as a simple farmer. The key question is whether there existed a disconnect between the wealthy idealistic elite who held such views and the men who had to face the realities of subsistence farming. Was such a life a rural idyll for the veteran, or only for those not living hand-to-mouth out in the fields; could it be that our modern perception of veterans after discharge has been shaped more by the idealism and nostalgia of those living far above the average man in the field?

The simplest answer as to why it is that veterans are poorly attested in literary sources is that literary sources very seldom mention the lives of anybody below society's elite. A more nuanced, though equally accurate, answer is that the writers of these sources perceived both soldiers and veterans in particular ways, and often projected onto them their own images and ideals. Much ancient writing portrays veterans as farmers and landowners, acquiring, often illegally, farms adjacent to their own to boost their holdings. Sallust states that in Etruria Sulla's veteran colonists were roused to sedition by agents of Cataline during his conspiracy as their 'lust for luxury' had seen them squander their previous rewards of service.<sup>80</sup> Vergil too paints a one-dimensional picture of the veteran

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<sup>79</sup> See works discussed in chapter 2.

<sup>80</sup> Sall. *Cat.* 28. 4.

soldier in his first Eclogue; regarding the forcible incorporation of his farmland into territory set aside for veteran settlement he has his protagonist cry: ‘To think of some godless soldier owning my well-farmed fallow, a foreigner reaping these crops!’.<sup>81</sup> Such descriptions could occasionally be more positive, although no less simplistic in their portrayal of the veteran as a humble tiller of the land. Of Caesar’s veterans, the Trajanic-era land surveyor and writer Hyginus Gromaticus recounted:

‘It happened that many legionaries luckily survived the wars and from their first rank in military service passed to a hard-working life of peace and quiet in cultivating the fields’.<sup>82</sup>

Idealised as it is, Gromaticus similarly makes no mention of those veteran soldiers who broke away from this soldier-turned-farmer stereotype. Tacitus, in a speech invented for a centurion attempting to dissuade the soldiery from rebellion during the Pannonian revolt of AD 14 has the man ask his comrades whether upon discharge the ringleaders would: ‘provide pay for the soldiers and land for the veterans?’;<sup>83</sup> as though land were the only real option upon discharge. Here we see Tacitus’ projection of his own ideals, as indeed the economic pursuits open to a man of *dignitas* like himself were exclusively based around land.<sup>84</sup>

Both before and during the Principate a yearning for the nostalgic yet nebulous golden age of a Roman arcadia can be sensed. Writers from poets to historians all pined for a previous era, a rural paradise where Cincinnatus returned to his plough, and the Roman

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<sup>81</sup> Verg. *Ecl.* 1. 70-72: ‘*impius haec tam culta novalia miles habebit, barbarus has segetes*’.

<sup>82</sup> *Multis legionibus contigit bella feliciter transigere et ad laboriosam agri culturae requiem primo tirocinii gradu pervenire: nam cum signis et aquila et primis ordinibus ac tribunis deducebantur, modus agri pro portione officii dabatur.* For the text and translation see Thulin 1913.

<sup>83</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.28.

<sup>84</sup> Alföldy 1985: 5-6. The younger Pliny could also boast in the fact that his assissts were all tied up in land: Plin. *Ep.* 3.19.8.

people, unsullied by contact with ‘effeminate Greece’ or the wealth of empire worked hard on their humble farmsteads. These same writers themselves sought a continuation of these ideals, and achieved something perceived to be similar in their own landowning ventures. The Augustan poet Horace wrote of the moral benefits that the country life’s disconnect with urban concerns brought about: ‘Happy is he who far from business dealing (like uncorrupted folk of yore) and free from interest owing, works with his oxen his family land’.<sup>85</sup> Horace himself owned a small farm in the Sabine Hills, needless to say however, the long days and backbreaking work of subsistence farming was a far cry from his own ‘idyll made real’ experience of agriculture. The first century AD poet Martial was, however, more aware of the difference between these two types of farming when he stated that a happy life consisted of: ‘wealth not gained by labour, but inherited; lands that make no ill return... (and) little need of business.’<sup>86</sup> To his absent friend Faustinus at the onset of spring Martial writes:

The country smiles; the earth resumes its verdure, the trees their foliage... Of what bright days at Ravenna does Rome deprive you... How often do I imagine I hear you, when thoroughly wearied, saying to the Founder of Rome: “Keep what is yours, and restore me what is mine”.<sup>87</sup>

This perception of rural paradise was also strongly linked to the humble citizen-soldier of the republic, indeed, as James, B. Rives describes, to the Romans: ‘one of the most lauded stereotypes was that of the warrior-farmer, who used the same discipline and determination to tame both his enemy and his land.’<sup>88</sup> This stereotype of the soldier

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<sup>85</sup> Hor. *Epod.* 2.1-4: ‘*Beatus ille qui procul negotiis, ut prisca gens mortalium, paterna rura bubus exercet suis, solutus omni faenore.*’

<sup>86</sup> Mart. *Epi.* 10. 47.

<sup>87</sup> Mart. *Epi.* 10. 51. See also *Epi.* 10. 96.

<sup>88</sup> Rives 2012: 51.

turned farmer was to change very little during the Principate, where the now professional soldiery was still expected, at least in some circles, to be desirous of a farm to live out the remainder of his life in idyllic agricultural pursuits upon discharge. Vegetius, consulting sources from various authors and times, reiterated the long held belief that best soldiers were recruited from the countryside, and as well as the practical aspects of such recruitment this also may be part of the stereotype in seeing all soldiers as uniquely bound up with agricultural lifeways.<sup>89</sup> An interesting aside to this perception is that the Roman elite's usual view of agriculture as a gentlemanly pursuit and business as the concern of the underclasses is somewhat skewed in the case of veterans. Perhaps the warrior-farmer ideal was too ingrained for them to perceive any real disingenuousness when assuming that ex-soldiers could be farmers without being gentlemen, similarly however they were never mentioned as businessmen deserving of contempt either. The veteran, it would seem, filled a niche in the minds of the elite created by the collision of two distinct stereotypes, the warrior-farmer and the *humiliores* who, in their eyes, had made the transition to *honestiores* in name only.

As we have seen, then, both ancient and modern writers perceive post-service life for the average veteran as comprising of little else than farming. Undoubtedly many veterans did retire to their allotted farms, but these allotments could often be on marginal land with unproductive soil, or even in dangerous frontier locations. Tacitus highlighted this predicament in stating that after the many and varied risks undertaken by the soldiery whilst in service 'anyone surviving such dangers with his life would still be dragged off to far-flung and hostile countries to be given swampy marshes or uncultivated mountains called land'.<sup>90</sup> Such concerns, however, applied only to those who were actually granted

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<sup>89</sup> Veg. *Mil.* 1.3.

<sup>90</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.17.3: '*ac si quis tot casus vita superaverit, trahi adhuc diversas in terras ubi per nomen agrorum uligines paludum vel inculta montium accipiant*'.

discharge; in AD 14 the legions in Pannonia revolted citing, amongst other things, denial of long overdue discharge with some men supposedly having served thirty or forty years.<sup>91</sup> Another downside for the veteran settled on farmland chosen by the state, and especially in a colony, was that the state often chose the location of such settlements based on political rather than agricultural concerns. Rather than a retirement in the safety of either Italy or the more pacified provinces, veterans would instead often find themselves in less of a retirement village than a ‘bulwark of empire’,<sup>92</sup> acting as agents for the integration of formerly autonomous peoples whilst doubling as defenders of the Roman order if all broke down.<sup>93</sup> The results of imposing such policies onto newly conquered peoples were variable at best, with settled veterans being a focal point for native anger such as during the Boudican revolt, where their unjust actions, lawless behaviour, and the ejection of locals from their land at Camulodunum ensured the rebels’ hatred.<sup>94</sup> Settlement in such *coloniae* evidently proved to be less than ideal for many soldiers, and with the added misfortune of a potentially unproductive viridane settlement, it is little wonder that veterans settled in these circumstances would often slip away back to the provinces in which they had served.<sup>95</sup> One papyrus preserved from the nome of Arsinoite in Egypt provides a glimpse of later life for one veteran who settled on land.<sup>96</sup> Ammonianus settled in Egypt during the second century AD, where at some point in later life his son wrote to him regarding their shared leasing land to a tenant. In the letter Lucretius asks his father to come and visit him in the nearby town, where Lucretius’ brother and sister also helped to run the venture, in order to ensure through their

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<sup>91</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.17.2-3.

<sup>92</sup> Cic. *Leg. Agr.* 2.73.

<sup>93</sup> Brennan 1990: 491-2.

<sup>94</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 14.31.

<sup>95</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 14.27.2.

<sup>96</sup> *SB* XX 14070.

combined presence they appear ‘plus persuasifs aux yeux de leur débiteur’ and thus manage to collect the rent owed to them without incident.<sup>97</sup> However, the fact that brothers and sisters are used in such a matter instead of the more typical agent, along with the very modest rent they hoped to soon collect, evidences that this particular family were hardly well-to-do in spite of the land given to their father upon his discharge.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, Paul Schubert argues that veterans settling on land in Egypt were gradually driven out by an urban elite both willing and able to buy up land to increase their own portfolios.<sup>99</sup> It is reasonable to suggest therefore, that this may have been an empire-wide concern for those veterans lucky enough to have settled on halfway decent land; that the money of local elites could force them out the first time events conspired to leave them, even if temporarily, short on finances.

### 3.1 The desirability or otherwise of agriculture

The unanswerable question regarding veterans and their hopes for life upon retirement is whether we can reasonably deduce that the *topos* of the warrior turned farmer accurately represented what veterans themselves wanted after discharge. Certainly a proportion of recruits would not have come from agricultural backgrounds, and over their many years in service would not have experienced the practicalities of farming life at all. Indeed, few works mention the exact backgrounds from which recruits were inducted into the army, perhaps because the evidence to place recruits any more specifically than a region, with no indication as to whether he was from the urban or rural part, is simply lacking.<sup>100</sup> What we do know however is that a significant proportion of recruits came from the settlements surrounding military camps. An inscription related to the discharge of soldiers

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<sup>97</sup> Fischer 2006: 206.

<sup>98</sup> Fischer 2006: 203.

<sup>99</sup> Schubert 2007 cited in Thomas 2010: 228.

<sup>100</sup> Le Bohec 1995: 82-5.

from Alexandria, dated to AD 194, shows twenty-four of the forty-one legible names stating *castris*, or in camp, as their origin. Tacitus also stated that it was mainly ‘those people without property or home who take up military service’,<sup>101</sup> and MacMullen that the army ‘contained a disproportionate number of men who had failed in that other (civilian) life or wanted deliberately to turn their backs on it’.<sup>102</sup> Whether they had indeed ‘failed’ in civilian life or not, we can see that a proportion of recruits came from urban centres and had little to no experience of farms or farming, making the idea that they would all simply set up in agriculture regardless upon discharge untenable. From the viewpoint of the veteran, the previous two decades had been lived without recourse to farming, instead either fighting, constructing provincial infrastructure, or playing his part in the vast supply chain which kept the army fed and equipped. The pastoral idyll may well have been a truism, but only in very particular circumstances; those who wrote of such things were a world away from the veteran and his plot, lacking as he did the former’s vast estates full of equipment and the slaves to work it for him. After a lifetime of physical work in the legions, the final five years of which spent away from menial duties in more prestigious veteran units, the change from soldier to farmer may have been viewed as more of a demotion than a retirement. Indeed, as Brent Shaw points out, farming would surely be alien to men who had spent the previous twenty-five years cocooned away from agriculture within one of the largest institutional apparatuses of the ancient world.<sup>103</sup> Those who chose to cultivate farmland anyway would surely have known that such a life of backbreaking physical work could not be sustained for long, and those with the capital to invest in slaves to do the work for them would still have been at the mercy of the first bad harvest, or loss through injury or illness of their workforce. Indeed, Appian states

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<sup>101</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 4.4.2.

<sup>102</sup> MacMullen 1984: 441.

<sup>103</sup> Shaw 1983: 140.

that those soldiers who initially declined to join Octavian only too soon remembered the toil of farm-life, and hurriedly returned to his banner.<sup>104</sup> Essentially, without the huge resources in finance, equipment, and manpower which were the preserve of the social elite, what the average veteran brought to the table in terms of modest capital would have been offset by his lack of experience and physical condition. It has also been argued that the reason for the re-introduction of the cash grant by Hadrian was that as the value of land increased during the first and second centuries AD, it was more beneficial to pay out in cash instead of land which had risen in value to a point beyond that which the average veteran could expect upon discharge.<sup>105</sup> If this is an accurate deduction, then the average veteran may have stood little chance in purchasing a decent plot of land regardless of whether he desired to or not.

In addition, the numerous skills acquired and practiced, along with the knowledge and contacts gained during service enabled any veteran so inclined to continue using such skills beyond service and into civilian life. Why then should we expect that every veteran would be interested in agriculture after discharge? Evidence of aspects such as centuriation and land allotments can only tell us that the state wished to integrate veterans within the existing societies and not have a 'rootless' mass of men who identified themselves as separate from the civilian population and who may turn to brigandage.<sup>106</sup> One final point to make here is that, in spite of both ancient and modern perception placing the veteran squarely within his farmstead, the empirical evidence for masses of veterans choosing to settle down to a life of agriculture is sparse at best, and in assuming

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<sup>104</sup> App. *B Civ.* 3.42.

<sup>105</sup> Passerini 1939: 124; Forni 1953: 37. For a thorough analysis of what can be deduced about land prices from the ancient evidence, see Duncan-Jones 1982.

<sup>106</sup> Brennan 1990: 497, Dio Cass. 52.27, 1-5.

otherwise modern scholars are perhaps guilty of giving too much credence to the *topos* so pervasive in the literary sources.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Shaw 1983: 140.

## II

### ~Chapter 4~

#### EPIGRAPHY AS EVIDENCE

As we have now contextualised the study of veterans during the Principate, examined his legal and social status, and highlighted the distortions inherent within the primary literary sources regarding what veterans did after discharge, Part Two of this study will now examine what the evidence itself tells us of veterans going into business and trade. The most useful source of evidence for such an examination is epigraphy, and as such this section will begin by noting some of the problems in using such a source before moving on to discussing the evidence itself.

#### 4.1 Reading Epigraphy<sup>108</sup>

Around two-thirds of the surviving epigraphic evidence comprises of funerary epitaphs which record, even if very briefly, the lives of the silent majority in the Roman world.<sup>109</sup> Given the quantities in which epigraphic evidence survives, useful studies can be made both through examining them statistically and, where the content of particular stones deviate from the norm in terms of the amount of information presented, individually.<sup>110</sup> As with most epigraphic evidence, the desired message had to contend with the limitations of physical space on the stone itself. Due to this, and the expense of the process, formulaic standardisations were used to drastically shorten the amount of inscription required whilst keeping the original message clear; one example being the inscription below:

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<sup>108</sup> See Appendix 1 for epigraphic conventions used throughout this study.

<sup>109</sup> Bodel 2001: 30.

<sup>110</sup> See Hope 1997: 116.

Transcription	Expansion
D M CAECILIVUSAVIT US·EMER·AUG OPTIO LEGXX VVSTP·XV·VIX· AN·XXX IIII· H F C	D(is) M(anibus) Caecilius Auit us Emer(ita) Aug(usta) optio leg(ionis) XX V(aleriae) V(ictricis) st(i)pe(ndiorum) XV vix(it) an(nos) XXX IIII h(eres) f(aciendum) c(uravit)

### Translation

To the shades of the departed, Caecilius Avitus, from Emerita Augusta, *Optio* of *Legio* II *Valeria Victrix*, of 15 years' service, lived 34 years. His heirs set (this monument) up.

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### After AD 90

Deva, Britannia

RIB 492

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Such extrapolations as these provide fairly certain and trustworthy expansions, and thus translations, of the epitaph due to the highly formulaic nature of military tombstones. The gravestones of soldiers and veterans usually follow a predictable sequence: name, father's name and tribe, place of origin, military rank, name of military unit served in, and the number of years served.<sup>111</sup> Potential additions to this list include the soldier's age at death, any decorations awarded, who commissioned the epitaph itself, and for veterans an occasional reference to their discharge. Veterans also commissioned dedicatory inscriptions in fulfilment of vows. In spite of the potential for veterans to record such information the reality is that the vast majority, perhaps due to cost issues, merely recorded their veteran status or years of service.

Knowledge of the most common information imparted on military inscriptions provides epigraphers with the ability to translate with near certainty data presented in such condensed format. However, not all inscriptions have survived in a good enough condition for the modern observer to easily expand upon the abbreviated text. When inscriptions are expanded instead into square brackets the text should be read as only a

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<sup>111</sup> Keppie 1991: 81.

possible expansion due to those letters being lost through intentional damage or weathering; rounded brackets representing letters omitted by the stonemason for reasons of economy.<sup>112</sup> In spite of the often obvious nature of the lost letters, especially when present in such formulaic contexts as military epitaphs, caution is still necessary when dealing with ‘history from square brackets’; as Ernst Badian stated:

(T)here is a peculiar brand of historical fiction created by those... who build far-ranging historical theories on words or phrases which their epigraphist predecessors have inserted - meaning no harm, and often *exempli gratia* - between square brackets in a fragmentary text.<sup>113</sup>

Thankfully epigraphy concerned with the Roman military is of such a formulaic character that the potential pitfalls that are present in ‘history from square brackets’ are often avoided; a luxury signally lacking in the study of more complex inscriptions where such conjecture can become embedded as fact. Not all epitaphs are straightforward, however, such as those where localised damage or seemingly garbled lines reduce the coherence of the message. For example, below we see the transcription and expansion of one particularly poorly preserved inscription.<sup>114</sup>

Transcription	Expansion
]L D[	[Aure]l(ius)(?) D[---]
]LE[	[vet(eranus)](?) Le[g(ionis)](?)
]VM[	[---]VM[---]
] VIVO [	[sibi] vivo [---]
]ESPEL[	[---]ESPEL[---]
]ATEM[	[---]ATEM[---]
] ANNIS [	[vix(it)] annis [---]
] M	[b(ene)] m(erenti)
<b>Date unknown</b>	
Moesia Superior	IMS-01 081

<sup>112</sup> Keppie 1991: 140.

<sup>113</sup> Badian 1989: 59.

<sup>114</sup> An epitaph is the most likely interpretation of the inscription given the mention of an age in ‘*annis*’ and the implication of an erector in ‘*vivo*’.

This epitaph shows numerous blank spaces where words would otherwise be (denoted by square brackets), little formulaic evidence to expand upon, and words present which were legible but unintelligible to the epigrapher recording the epitaph.<sup>115</sup> Regardless of this, the epigrapher attempted an expansion. Despite the small amount of evidence present the initial letter 'P' is expanded to the name 'Aurelius' and the 'le' expanded to '*Legionis*'. Surprisingly the following 'V M' is not expanded into its probable *V Macedonica*, a legion known to have been based in Moesia from the beginning to the mid second century AD. Age is mentioned, though a number is not preserved. In spite of this the epigrapher still ascribes the unproven status of veteran to the individual. Finally, the typical phrase '*bene merenti*' is assumed as ending the epitaph on the basis of the remaining 'm'. Such an example as this shows the dangers of reading information in square brackets as fact, for both the individual's name and status as a veteran are assertions open to interpretation, and should even perhaps be discounted completely owing to the lack of evidence to support them.<sup>116</sup>

#### 4.2 Dating Military Epigraphy

In dating inscriptions the only way to arrive at an accurate and reliable date is if the text itself mentions a known person or event which is externally verifiable using evidence independent of the inscription. However, the formulaic nature of information inscribed usually omits any mention of external events or people apart from in exceptional circumstances.<sup>117</sup> Dating can, however, also be done by examining the linguistic formulas. In epitaphs the phrase *Dis Manibus* (in full or abbreviated) is found very rarely in the

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<sup>115</sup> N.B. Capitals, except when in names, denote letters which appear on the stone though are not understood by the epigrapher. Square brackets represent words too damaged to confidently restore, with each middle dot within the brackets denoting one letter of the missing word.

<sup>116</sup> See Speidel 1992a for more examples of misreading military inscriptions from square brackets.

<sup>117</sup> For example *CIL* 13, 8648: epitaph of Caelius Rufus, killed in the Varian disaster.

republican era, and remains little used in the first century AD before becoming a popular and pervasive expression during the second, third, and fourth centuries.<sup>118</sup> The inclusion of a voting tribe is typically indicative of a first century AD date, and a place of origin can often help to date the inscription to before the Hadrianic era.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, date ranges can be gleaned from military inscriptions which use specific terminology. The legion to which an individual soldier or veteran served may also include its honorific title; many of which were conferred around specific dates. This information is often used in order to determine a rough date by ruling that any mention of, for example, *Legio XVI Gallica*, would be from between 49 BC when it was founded by Julius Caesar and AD 70 when Vespasian reformed and renamed the legion *Flavia Firma*. The findspot of a particular epitaph can also help in dating the inscription by comparing it with the location of the individual's attested legion. For example, the epitaph of the soldier Aurelius Buris states his affiliation with *Legio XI Claudia*, which gained this honorific in AD 42, it also uses the expression *Dis Manibus* which indicates a later date again. It is the findspot of Uluborlu in Turkey however which narrows this date significantly, as *Legio XI Claudia* was stationed exclusively in the west until its brief transfer to Palestine to help with the Second Jewish Revolt of AD 134-5. The most obvious explanation here is that Buris died sometime in the early to middle AD 130's whilst the Legion was being transferred from its base in Moesia to Palestine, as Uluborlu lies on a main road in what was Galatia; a province directly between the legion's two postings. In dating military tombstones it is almost impossible to arrive at a date from one of the above factors alone, and even when all factors combine to arrive at similar dates these can still only be general, although educated, estimates.

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<sup>118</sup> Gordon 1983: 40.

<sup>119</sup> Scott Anderson 1984: 36.

## ~Chapter 5~

### VETERANS AS TRADERS: AN EPIGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Of those veterans who both undertook post-service careers in trade and attested so in epigraphy little is known. There are, however, a small number of surviving inscriptions attesting such men. These will now be examined beginning with Caius Gentilius Victor; veteran turned sword-dealer:

Transcription	Expansion
PRO SALVTE IMP·M·AV· REL·[[COMMUDI]]ANTONINI PII FELICIS FORTVNAE REDVCI LEG·XXII·PR·P·F·C·GENTIL IUS VICTOR VET·LEG XXII·PR·P·FMHM·NEGOT IATOR GLADIARIVIS· TESTAMENTO SVO FIERI IVSSIT AD HS N·VIII MIL	Pro salute Imp(eratoris) M(arci) Au rel(i) [[Commodi]] Antonini pii Felicis fortunae reduci leg(ionis) XXII Pr(imigeniae) P(iae) F(idelis) C(aius) Gentilius Victor vet(eranus) leg(ionis) XXII Pr(imigeniae) P(iae) F(idelis) m(issus) h(onesta) m(issione) negotiator gladiarius testamento suo fieri iussit ad HS n(ummum) VIII mil(ia)

#### Translation

Dedicated to the welfare of Emperor Marcus Aurelius ~~Commodus~~ Antoninus, pious and fortunate, and the successful return of *Legio XXII Primigenia Pia Fidelis*. Caius Gentilius Victor, honourably discharged veteran of *Legio XXII Primigenia Pia Fidelis*, sword dealer, in his will ordered (this monument) to be set up at (a cost of) 8,000 sesterctii.

**AD 180 – 192**

Mogontiacum, Germania superior

*App.2 – Image 1*

*CIL 13. 6677*

Victor's inscription is dateable to the reign of Commodus, with the emperor's name later excised from the stone due to his *damnatio memoriae*. It is possible that Victor himself was still alive in AD 192 when Commodus was assassinated, and arranged for his votive monument to be altered in accordance with the change in the political tide. The word *negotiator* attested on the inscription is a common term when examining evidence of economic activity, although its definition is far from rigid. In the broadest sense a

*negotiator* can be involved in any aspect of trade and business,<sup>120</sup> although it is unclear to what scale of business the term *negotiator* could apply, and indeed whether it could be used to denote both those holding large state contracts as well as those involved in small private enterprises. The term *mercator* could be used similarly to *negotiator* to denote traders or businessmen,<sup>121</sup> the *mercatores*, however, appear to be interested almost exclusively in trading and selling as opposed to producing goods.<sup>122</sup> In any case, what is seemingly apparent is the *negotiatores* connotation with the actual manufacture of commodities. Victor's inscription states that 8,000 sesterces was spent on its erection; no small sum. From this we can surmise that Victor's business was a relative success. This is hardly surprising given both his military connections and his location in Mogontiacum, home of his former legion and central within a Rhine frontier boasting eight legions in total. Indeed Victor's strong connection with his erstwhile comrades in the legion is evidenced by the nature of the inscription itself, being as it is a offering meant to ensure the legion's (or a vexillation thereof) successful return from some temporary commitment otherwise unattested. The monument is of a relatively high standard, if generally unremarkable. One interesting note is that the depth of the stone appears greater than most inscriptions of a similar kind, and although it can only remain conjecture, it is possible that a second stone sat atop the first; perhaps inscribed with an image of Victor to complement the text below.

Another veteran turned *negotiator* was the ceramicist Vitalinius Felix, based in Lugdunum around the end of the second and beginning of the third century AD:

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<sup>120</sup> For a fuller exploration of the distinctions between the various terms see Verboven 2007b: 94-6.

<sup>121</sup> For a historiographical examination of the interchangeable use in modern scholarship of the terms *mercator* and *negotiator* see García Brossa 1999: 175-76.

<sup>122</sup> García Brossa 1999: 182.

Transcription	Expansion
D M	D(is) M(anibus)
ET MEMORIAE AETERN[AE]	et memoriae aetern[ae]
VITALINI FELICIS VET LEG [I]	Vitalini Felicis vet(erani) leg(ionis) [I]
M HOMINI SAPIENTISSIM[O]	M(inerviae) homini sapientissim[o]
ET FIDELISSIMO NEGOTIA[TO]	et fidelissimo negotia[to]
RI LUGDUNENSI ARTIS CR[E]	ri Lug(u)dunensi artis cr[e]
TARIAE QVI VIXIT ANNIS [L]	tariae qui vixit annis [L]
VIII M V D X NATUS EST D[IE]	VIII m(ensibus) V d(iebus) X natus est d[ie]
MARTIS DIE MARTIS PROB[A]	Martis die Martis prob[a]
TVS DIE MARTIS MISSIONE[M]	tus die Martis missione[m]
PERCEPIT DIE MARTIS DEF[U]	percepit die Martis def[u]
NCTUS EST FACIENDVM C[UR]	nctus est faciendum c[ur(averunt)]
VITALIN FELICISSIMVS FI[LI]	Vitalin(ius) Felicissimus fi[li]
US ET IVLIA NICE CONI	us et Iulia Nice coni
VNX ET SVB ASCIA DEDI	unx et sub ascia dedi
CAVERVNT	caverunt

### Translation

To the shades of the departed and the eternal memory of Vitalanius Felix, veteran of *Legio I Minervia*, a most wise and trustworthy trader of ceramics, from Lugdunensis. He lived 59 years, 5 months, and 10 days, was born on a Tuesday, the day of Mars, passed probation (into the army) on a Tuesday, became a veteran on a Tuesday, and died on a Tuesday. Vitalanius Felicissimus, his son, and Iulia Nice, his wife, had this monument set up and dedicated it whilst under construction.

**AD 198 – 211**

Lugdunum – Gallia Lugdunensis

*App.2* – Image 2

*CIL* 13, 1906

The square brackets on the transcription show letters lost through damage or weathering, although fortunately in this instance they can be restored with certainty. MacMullen dates this inscription to the third-century AD, but perhaps we can be more exact on this point.<sup>123</sup> Given that many soldiers, especially in the north-west provinces, returned to their places of service after discharge it is likely that Felix served in *Legio I Minervia* during its posting at Lugdunum between AD 198-211. After Lugdunum the legion was sent to Bonna in Germania inferior. For Felix to be commemorated in Lugdunum he must have died during the legion's thirteen-year stay, although whether he was also discharged during this time or simply followed the legion there from a previous posting is unknown. Either way, a date of roughly AD 198-211 can be confidently posited. It is possible that

<sup>123</sup> MacMullen 1963: 110.

Felix' wealth was not as great as C. Gentilius Victor's as no freedmen or slaves are attested, although his monument is roughly comparable to Victor's in both size and the quality of inscribed lettering.

Quintis Atilius Primus, veteran, interpreter, and former centurion, is also attested as a *negotiator*.

Transcription	Expansion
Q ATILIVS SP F VOT PRI MVS INTERREX LEG XV IDEM7 NEGOTIATOR AN LXXX H S E Q ATILIVS COGTA TVS ATILIA Q L FAV STA PRIVATVS ET MARTIALIS HERED L P	Q(uintus) Atilius Sp(uri) f(ilius) Vot(uria) Pri mus inter(p)rex leg(ionis) XV idem (centurio) negotiator an(norum) LXXX h(ic) s(itus) e(st) Q(uintus) Atilius Cog(i)ta tus Atilia Q(uinti) l(iberta) Fau sta Privatus et Martialis hered(es) l(ibentes) p(osuerunt)

#### Translation

Quintus Atilius Primus, son of Spurius, of the Voturian voting tribe, interpreter and centurion of *Legio XV*, trader, lived 80 years, he lies here. Quintus Atilius Cogitatus, freedwoman Atilia Quinta Fausta, Privatus and Martialis, his heirs, willingly set this up.

1<sup>st</sup> century AD

nr. Aquincum – Pannonia inferior

*App.2* - Image 3

*AE* 1978 00635 = *AE* 1988, 0938

Primus is described as an interpreter (*interpretex*) and his inscription was discovered around thirty-five miles north-east of Aquincum in the territory of the Quadi. We can perhaps identify Primus' legion as the XV *Apollinaris*, which served in the Pannonian War of AD 6-9 and was thereafter stationed in Pannonia; first at Emona, then after AD 14 at Carnuntum. His status as veteran can be deduced simply from his age. As an interpreter we can plausibly assert that Primus spent a reasonable period of time in Pannonia during service where he picked up the local Quadic language. Itself a client kingdom, the territory of the Quadi saw much Roman trade.<sup>124</sup> Indeed, Tiberius installed Vannius as

<sup>124</sup> See Kraskovská 1978; 1981, and Krekovič 1981.

king of the Quadi around AD 20, and Rome's freedom to trade in the area was continued by his sons after Vannius' death around AD 50.<sup>125</sup> Given this, Primus' activities beyond the frontier become more understandable, particularly given his post-service profession of *negotiator* and his language skills.<sup>126</sup> As a former centurion he also would have had a wealth of capital with which to set-up and maintain any business venture. Finally, whilst the inscription makes no mention of exactly what Primus traded in, his location in Pannonia would have been ideal to take advantage of goods coming south on the amber-route, and with knowledge of the local language men such a Primus could place themselves as intermediaries within this trade. Indeed, depending upon the reading of the inscription Primus may well have also served as a trade advisor during his military career.<sup>127</sup> Whatever the details, Q. Atilius Primus evidently flourished, leaving as heirs at least one freedwoman and two slaves upon his death.

In spite of its pervasiveness, epigraphy detailing the lives of the non-elite is very rarely augmented with evidence from other sources. One instance in which it can be seen, however, is in the case of the veteran Caius Longinus Speratus:

Transcription	Expansion
IN·H·D·D·APO[LLI]N·E·SIRONAE AEDEM·CVM·SIGNIS·C·LONGINVS SPERATVS·VET·LEG·XXII·PR· P·F·E·IVNIA·DEVA CONIUNX·E·LONG GIN·PACATVS·MARTINVLA·HILA RITAS·SPERATIANVS·FILI·IN SUO·POSVERVNT·V·S·L·L·M MUCIANO·ET·FABIANO·COS	In h(onorem) d(omus) d(ivinae) Apo[lli]n(i) e(t) Sironae aedem cum signis C(aius) Longinius Speratus vet(eranus) leg(ionis) XXII Pr(imigeniae) P(iae) F(idelis) et Iunia Deva coniunx et Lon gin(us) Pacatus Martinula Hila ritas Speratianus fili(i) in suo posuerunt v(otum) s(olverunt) l(ibentes) l(aeti) m(erito) Muciano et Fabiano co(n)s(ulibus)

<sup>125</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 2.63.6; 12.30.2.

<sup>126</sup> Norman Austin (in Austin & Rankov 1995: 28) has suggested that a slight alteration of the text to *centurio negotiatum* could transform Primus' role into a centurion of traders, implying instead a much more supervisory role dealing with local markets. However, the presence of the word *negotiator* fully formed upon the inscription (and in the nominative case) strongly argues against such an alteration.

<sup>127</sup> Todd 1992: 89.

### Translation

In honour of the divine imperial family, Apollo and Sirona. A temple with statues Gaius Longinus Speratus, veteran of *Legio XXII Primigenia Pia Fidelis*, Junia Deva his wife, their children Longinus, Pacatus, Martinula, Hilaritas, and Speratianus, set-up on their own property. They have fulfilled their vow willingly and deservingly (during the consulship of Mucianus and Fabianus.

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**AD 102**

nr.Vicus Alisinensium – Germania superior

*App.2 – Image 4*

*CIL 13, 06458 = AE 1994, 01305*

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Speratus' inscription makes no mention of his profession, although he does present the reader with details of his veteran status. Due to archaeological evidence, however, we can see that he also ran a workshop producing bricks. Stamped with Speratus' initials GLSP – following the typical pattern of first and second initial followed by the first two letters of the cognomen – they have been found both at the site of the inscription and beyond.<sup>128</sup>

Speratus was evidently a wealthy man, having built and dedicated a temple and statues honouring the imperial cult, Apollo, and Sirona. At the time of the inscription's dedication *Legio XXII Primigenia Pia Fidelis* had been at Mogontiacum for about a decade, with the town itself just to the north-west of Speratus' workshop. The fact that Speratus produced and sold construction materials in an area dominated by military installations, one of which he had long-standing and close connections to, perhaps explains how he became wealthy enough to both erect and dedicate not just a votive inscription, but also the temple within which that inscription was placed.

Like Speratus, in the case of the veteran Caius Julius Aprilis there is also no direct attestation of a vocation after discharge, and our evidence for seeing him a *negotiator* comes from the physical context of the inscription itself:

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<sup>128</sup> Paret 1926: 67ff, Bogaers 1977: 276, Kuhnen 1994: 1ff.

Transcription:	Expansion:
[I]N H D D D[E]AE [NE]HALENNIAE C IUL [A]PRILIS VETERAN[U]S EX B F COS PRO SE ET SUI V S L M MAXIMO ET AELIA[N]O COS	[I]n h(onorem) d(omus) d(ivinae) d[e]ae [Ne]halenniae C(aius) Iul(ius) [A]prilis veteran[u]s ex b(ene)f(iciario) co(n)s(ularis) pro se et sui[s] v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito) Maximo et Aelia[n]o co(n)s(ulibus)

**Translation:**

In honour of the divine imperial family and the goddess Nehalennia, Gaius Julius Aprilis, veteran, former clerk of the governor, for myself and my mine (family), fulfilled his vow willingly and deservingly (during the) consulship of Maximus and Aelianus.

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**AD 223**

Ganventa – Germania inferior

*App.* 2 – Image 5

*AE* 1975, 00652

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This votive inscription survives in fragmentary form, with the two sections together showing the inscription itself along with the lower part of an image. The image comprises the bottom half of the seated goddess Nehalennia flanked by a dog and a basket of fruit. In addition to the customary inclusion of the imperial family, the inscription was dedicated to Nehalennia, a Germanic goddess worshipped in the area from which ships voyaged across the North Sea; the findspot of Aprilis' own offering.<sup>129</sup> Nehalennia was a goddess of sailors and is often depicted on inscriptions alongside the prow of a ship.<sup>130</sup> Given the fragmentary nature of this inscription it is entirely possible that the prow symbol was located on the upper part of the inscription now lost. The attestation of the goddess of sailors, along with the inscription's location at the jumping-off point for voyages across the channel strongly hints at the possibility that Aprilis was involved in a nautical enterprise. In addition, the findspot of the inscription also furnished many other similar dedications to Nehalennia, with many inscribers also attesting their vocations as

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<sup>129</sup> Davidson 1998: 112.

<sup>130</sup> Davidson 1998: 112.

*negotiatores* who traded in all manner of goods from salt to ceramics.<sup>131</sup> These factors have led many scholars to conclude that Aprilis was engaged in business and in particular the trading of goods across the sea to Britannia.<sup>132</sup> The fact that Aprilis had also served as clerk of the governor whilst in military service could have provided him with insider knowledge regarding trade within the province, and this role may also have benefitted Aprilis in allowing him to polish his administrative abilities before setting up in business for himself.<sup>133</sup> Aprilis' wealth must also have been not inconsiderable judging by the quality of the inscribed lettering on his inscription, the addition of an image including decorative columns, and the fact that as the area had no natural stone quarries he would also have had to import the raw materials.

Evidence of veterans within commerce is also discernible from those inscriptions which attest membership with *collegia*. In her study on the guild of textile dealers in the Roman west, Jinyu Liu noted six veterans who were epigraphically attested as members of the textile dealers' *collegium*, and who also attested membership with the *collegium* of craftsmen.<sup>134</sup> The tombstone of one such individual is entirely representative of the six:<sup>135</sup>

Transcription:	Expansion:
D M C ATILIO FL SIR MI VITALI VET LEG II AD ANN LX H S E COLL FABR ET CENT P	D(is) M(anibus) C(aio) Atilio Fl(avia) Sir mi(o) Vitali vet(erano) leg(ionis) II Ad(iutricis) ann(or)um LX h(ic) s(itus) e(st) coll(egium) fabr(um) et cent(onariorum) p(osuit)

<sup>131</sup>AE 1973, 00365 ‘...*negotiatores allecar...*’; CIL 13, 08793 = AE 1973, 00370 ‘...*negotiator cretariu[s] Britannicianu[s]...*’; AE 1973, 00375 ‘...*negotiator allecarius...*’; AE 1973, 00378 ‘...*negotiator salaries...*’; AE 1975, 651 ‘...*negotiat(or) Britann(icianus)...*’; AE 1983, 00722 ‘...*negotiator Britannicianus...*’.

<sup>132</sup> See esp. Stuart and Bogaers 2001: A5, and Verboven 2007a: 312.

<sup>133</sup> A ‘Caius Aprilis’ is also known from CIL 13, 8204 as an associate of the governor in *colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium* - Germania inferior.

<sup>134</sup> Liu 2009: 45, 154-5. The *Collegia Centonariorum* and *Collegia Fabrum* respectively.

<sup>135</sup> Those six being: CIL 03, 03554 = *TitAq*-02, 00646; CIL 03, 03569 = CIL 03, 10519 = *TitAq*-02, 00984; AE 1939, 00008; *TitAq*-02, 00532; *TitAq*-02, 00584; *TitAq*-02, 00668.

**Translation:**

To the shades of the departed, Caius Atilius Flavius Sirmius Vitalis, veteran of *Legio II Aduitrix*, lived sixty years, lies here. The *collegia* of textile dealers and craftsmen set this up.

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**Second century AD**  
Aquincum – Pannonia inferior

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*App. 2* – Image 6  
*Tit.Aq-02, 00532*

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The six in inscriptions are all from Pannonia inferior, with all but one from Aquincum. Perhaps unsurprisingly all cite *Legio II Aduitrix* as their former legion; itself stationed at Aquincum. Liu posited that the veterans would most likely have had business interests centred on the supplying of textiles and other worked items to Pannonia's significant military garrisons.<sup>136</sup> It is likely, then, that those veterans inclined towards commercial activity would have joined such business-oriented *collegia*, which themselves may have functioned as sources of capital and where, as Liu states, 'presumably members had priority in borrowing money... more cheaply than on the open market'.<sup>137</sup> In any case, if veterans did join *collegia* after discharge it is possible that such membership was seen as more socially prestigious than engaging in a profession as an individual, and thus perhaps those veterans in *collegia* such as the textile-dealers and craftsmen were more likely to attest such membership epigraphically in place of their individual roles as *negotiatores*. A further search for veterans in *collegia* associated with trade and manufacture has drawn a blank, and so perhaps here we are merely witnessing the fickle nature of epigraphic survival and discovery. A full-scale exploration of veterans in *collegia* would doubtless complement inquiry into veterans in business, but is well beyond the scope of the current study.

Veterans setting up in business would also undoubtedly have had the opportunity to involve friends, family, and former comrades in their business ventures. In supplying his former unit a veteran could gradually widen his business interests to the supply of other

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<sup>136</sup> Liu 2009: 155, 154.

<sup>137</sup> Liu 2008: 245. See also *P.Stras.* IV 287 for a *collegium* lending to a member interest free.

units, simultaneously earning enough to employ fellow veterans in assisting to run the expanding venture. Veterans could also involve themselves in ongoing ventures, as one Vicrius Tetricus may have done:

Transcription:	Expansion:
D M	D(is) M(anibus)
ET MEMORIAE	et memoriae
AETERNAE VIC	aeternae Vic
TORIO REGVLO	torio Regulo
CIVI NEMETI ET	civi Nemeti et
NEG DVRO PVRPV	neg(otiatori) Duro(cortoro) purpu
RARIO VICRIVS	rario Vicrius
TETRICVS VET LEG XX[]	Tetricus vet(eranus) leg(ionis) XX[II]
PR P F FRATRI CARISS	Pr(imigeniae) p(iae) f(idelis) fratri cariss(imo)
P C S DED	p(onendum) c(uravit) s(ub ascia) ded(icavit)

#### Translation:

To the shades of the departed and the eternal memory of Victorius Regulus, citizen of Nemetodorum and trader of purple dye in Durocortorum. His most beloved brother Vicrius Tetricus, veteran of *Legio XXII Primigenia Pia Fidelis*, ordered (this monument) to be set-up and dedicated it whilst under construction.

AD 201 – 250

Lugdunum – Gallia Lugdunensis

No image available

AE 1982, 0709

Given that Tetricus' brother Victorius had died, and that Tetricus himself was the one who commemorated him, it is entirely possible that Tetricus also took up the reigns of his brother's business trading in purple dye.

Inscriptional evidence does occasionally reference more ambiguous attestations to veterans and vocations, for example the unnamed veteran of *Legio XXII Primigenia*, attested as veteran and shipbuilder,<sup>138</sup> Sextus Baebius the naval veteran and tailor,<sup>139</sup> Flavius Callidimus the veteran and bowyer,<sup>140</sup> and M. Ulpus Avitus the centurion and

<sup>138</sup> CIL 13, 11861 ‘...veterano... naupego...?’

<sup>139</sup> CIL 5, 774 ‘...vet(eranus) ex classe vestiarius...?’

<sup>140</sup> CIL 5, 08742 ‘...veteranus, militavit in fabrica sagittaria...?’

fabricator of breastplates.<sup>141</sup> These individuals do not explicitly state that they are traders, and unlike those veterans discussed above we have no further evidence with which to ascertain whether they were veterans engaged in trade or merely attesting specific roles undertaken whilst in service. Equally ambiguous are those epitaphs which attest the status of veteran but also provide an inscribed image of distinctly non-military tools of trade – trades of which the epitaphs themselves make no mention – such as Lucius Artorius and his inscribed butcher’s knife.<sup>142</sup> These men could have been ship-builders, tailors, bowyers, and butchers whilst serving in the legions, although the average legionary would naturally see his position as socially superior to that of a craftsman, thus leaving out any mention of this in inscriptions. More likely is that these men undertook such professions upon discharge, perhaps as civilian continuations of their military roles, although the evidence does not allow a definitive answer to the question either way.

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<sup>141</sup> CIL 13, 02828 ‘...*opifices loricator(i)*...’.

<sup>142</sup> CIL 11, 348. Todisco 1999: 219. See also *AE* 1964 136.

# III

## ~CHAPTER 6~

### THE MODIFIERS OF EPIGRAPHIC BEHAVIOUR

Although the previous chapter presented numerous instances of Roman veterans in commercial business ventures, it also naturally elicits the question of why there were so few? In answer to this, part three will examine factors such as the epigraphic habit and the presentation of status in order to provide a more nuanced view regarding the apparent dearth of inscriptions attesting veterans in business. It will then discuss economic potential of veteran and postulate possible numbers taking up trade in order to see whether we should reasonably expect more to have done so than are currently attested in epigraphy.

#### 6.1 The epigraphic habit of veterans

A detailed analysis of the 'Roman epigraphic habit', as though one universally applicable habit could cover such a temporally and geographically large span, is beyond the scope of this study. As such, only a very brief summary will be given here. A general consensus which broadly defines the Roman epigraphic habit is posited by Greg Woolf, who states that at the end of the last century BC an 'epigraphic boom' occurred both in Italy and in the provinces; east and west alike.<sup>143</sup> Broadly, the use of epigraphy rose year on year from Augustus' reign through the second century AD.<sup>144</sup> A unifying explanation of

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<sup>143</sup> Woolf 1996: 22.

<sup>144</sup> Woolf 1996: 22, for a more detailed analysis see Mócsy 1966, MacMullen 1982; 1986, Meyer 1990, Cherry 1995, Woolf 1996, 1998, Forbis 1996, Hope 1997.

the shifting epigraphic habit over time is, however, perhaps too much to hope for, or even too nebulous to achieve. More likely, as John Bodel asserts:

(A) variety of mundane and interconnected forces – economic, demographic, and social, as well as psychological and, perhaps, political – gradually shaped the prevailing cultural practice in different localities, with the result that a microcosmically variegated galaxy of epigraphic behaviours appear to us deceptively regular and uniform when viewed from a distance.<sup>145</sup>

Similar problems arise when attempting to study the epigraphy of veterans, with the possibility of discerning patterns from which to extrapolate information almost nil due to the general paucity of details available. The vast majority of veteran tombstones attest only either veteran status or years of service, with details of life after discharge omitted. Those rare inscriptions generous in detail provide neither an accurate representation nor an adequate sample-size with which to discern general information regarding veterans as a distinct group. Indeed, all Latin inscriptions discovered so far may well be representative of all Latin epigraphy, but even had we every stone ever inscribed at our disposal they would still represent only the classes for whom epigraphic demonstrations of power, status, piety, and wealth were important and financially achievable. Epigraphy was still the preserve of those rich enough to commission it, and the messages inscribed, especially on epitaphs, may still contain selective inclusions and omissions. As Richard Alston notes, alongside the vagaries which influence an inscription's production and survival:

... archaeologists tend to concentrate on sites where there are large remains, such as cities or military installations, areas where the epigraphic habit may well have been particularly strong, our evidence may considerably underrepresent those veterans who settled in the countryside or in villages.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Bodel 2001: 7.

<sup>146</sup> Alston 1995: 40. Cf. Fentress 1983: 168.

In addition Andr as M ocsy has noted that, epigraphically, inscriptions of veterans vary in inverse proportion to their distance from the workshops of military stone-masons.<sup>147</sup> Overall, we can observe at the most basic level that inscriptions are evident most predominant in urban and military settings; places where it has been argued that social rank held the most importance, and thus its public assertion via inscription is to be most expected.<sup>148</sup> In contrast to this however is the evidence of price-outlay on tombs and funerals. In both Italy and North Africa, two areas where relatively large sample-sizes are found, we see no real correlation between the soldiers' rank and their expenditure on funerary commemoration.<sup>149</sup> Given these limitations it is unsurprising that so few inscriptions attest such a comparatively minor demographic as the veteran in business.

## 6.2 Displaying and concealing status

For Moses Finley the status of a Roman determined his mentality, and therefore his economic behaviour.<sup>150</sup> Similarly, a Roman's status also governed what he attested epigraphically. If the epigraphic record was as sparse regarding veterans in other spheres of life as it is about veterans in business we may well conclude that veterans simply couldn't afford, or saw no benefit in, the erection of monuments. However, veterans are represented elsewhere in epigraphy, and of the those inscriptions which provide more details than veteran status and years of service most attest high-status positions held in civilian life. One example amongst many is the veteran Caius Herennius Festus:

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<sup>147</sup> M ocsy 1970: 166.

<sup>148</sup> Woolf 1996: 36-7.

<sup>149</sup> Duncan-Jones 1982: 79, 129-30.

<sup>150</sup> Finley 1973: 68.

Transcription	Expansion
C HERENNIVS M F QVIR FESTVS VETERANVS LEG X·FRETENSIS HO NESTA MISSIO NE·DISMISSVS PRAEFECTVS TIRO NVM IN MAV RETANIA PRAEFE TVS IVVENTVTIS IIVIRVM BIS VIXIT ANNIS LXXV H S E	C(aius) Herennius M(arci) f(ilius) Quir(ina) Festus veteranus leg(ionis) X Fretensis ho nesta ission ne dimissus praefectus tiro num in Mau retania praefeI tus iuventutis Iivirum(!) bis vixit annis LXXV h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

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### Translation

Caius Herrenius Festus, son of Marcus, of the Quirinian voting tribe, honourably discharged veteran of *Legio X Fretensis* (in which he was) prefect in charge of recruits, in Mauretania (he was) prefect in charge of youth and joint-chief magistrate (*duumvir*) on two occasions. He lived seventy-five years.

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<b>Principate-era</b> <sup>151</sup> Thuburnica, Africa proconsularis	No image <i>AE 1921, 00021</i>
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As Festus was in charge of recruits whilst serving in the military, his civilian role as prefect of the youth would have been a natural position to take upon discharge. The *praefectus iuventutis* was prefect in charge of the youth *collegia*, which, broadly speaking, both educated and guided upper-class youngsters from around the age of fifteen to twenty.<sup>152</sup> Festus is also attested as having held the position of head of his community (*duumvir*) twice; the highest civic rank available in towns such as Thuburnica. Festus was hardly unique in being a veteran in public office, with numerous inscriptions attesting veterans in a variety of high positions within towns and colonies throughout the empire.<sup>153</sup> Towns in Italy were a different prospect however, with veterans of the Praetorian Guard generally being the

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<sup>151</sup> Dating this inscription is problematic, although Augustus' rehabilitation of the *collegia iuvenum* at least hints at a date somewhere in the Principate.

<sup>152</sup> For an overview of the scholarly debate surrounding the role of the *collegia iuvenum* see Eyben 1993: 110ff.

<sup>153</sup> For a sample of legionary veterans below the rank of centurion holding high ranking civil positions see: *CIL* 03, 01485; *ILAlg*-02-03, 07767; *AE* 1938, 00095; *CIL* 11, 02956.

only ex-military incumbents.<sup>154</sup> Presumably this was due to the price of meeting the initial property criteria, which Pliny the Younger stated was 100,000 sesterces for the relatively minor Italian town of Comum.<sup>155</sup> Numerous veterans also attest to holding positions within the religious sphere, with many becoming priests of the imperial cult, or *flamen Augusti*.<sup>156</sup> In spite of the vagaries of the epigraphic habit numerous veterans' inscriptions attest their participation in the public and religious lives of their towns and colonies; indeed, more so by far than attest veterans in business.

In chapter 2 was highlighted the comparatively high social status of the soldier and veteran when set against that of ordinary civilians, and above we have seen the high frequency of veterans who achieved important stations in civil and religious administration and chose to commemorate the attainment of such stations epigraphically. Any assumption which sees the disparity between veterans in trade and those in public office as evidence for their unwillingness to engage in business is, however, misguided. In each town, city, or colony an autonomous body comprising council members and magistrates – the *ordo decurionum* – was responsible for the day-to-day running of local government.<sup>157</sup> Election to the *decurionate* required the individual to satisfy certain property qualifications, and although these criteria differed between communities, the price to achieve eligibility for the position may still have been considerable. The important point to note, however, is that the *decuriones* received no salary for their position, and were expected to make regular contributions in cash for public festivals, games, and sundry services; receiving in return

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<sup>154</sup> Examples include: *CIL* 10, 06489 = *D* 06275 (Ulubrae); *CIL* 09, 03922 = *AE* 2006, +00383 (Alba Fucens); *CIL* 09, 04754 (Perugino); *CIL* 10, 05832 = *D* 06266 (Ferentium).

<sup>155</sup> Plin. *Ep.* 1.19. This could well have been the general requirement for all Italian towns, see Duncan-Jones 1982: 243 for discussion.

<sup>156</sup> For a sample of legionary veterans below the rank of centurion holding high ranking religious positions see: *CIL* 08, 04196 = *CIL* 08, 18491; *CIL* 08, 04594 = *CIL* 08, 18649; *CIL* 08, 04882 = *ILAlg*-01, 01336.

<sup>157</sup> Alföldy 1985: 127.

privileges, titles, and the chance of an upgrade to the equestrian order.<sup>158</sup> Given this we must assume that veterans in public office had both the capital to qualify as *decuriones* and a high enough income to keep their families financially secure as well as to pay for the numerous expenses required of the holder. The average legionary veteran in public office must, therefore, have had concurrent financial interests which provided enough profit to absorb such outlays, either in well-run and profitable land or in business ventures. Thus we can see that those veterans epigraphically attesting their positions in town councils did do so not because they were their sole occupations upon discharge, but because status-wise they were superior to the roles they performed outside of public office; roles which, although perhaps less glamorous, nevertheless allowed them the financial platform to seek such high office to begin with. A minority of exceptions do of course exist, such as the *decurion* and wine-merchant Caius Apronius Raptor, although these only show that *decuriones* did in fact engage in business, and Raptor's decision to include his role as *negotiator* is an acknowledgement entirely atypical of members of the *ordo decurionum*.<sup>159</sup>

The consideration of status when examining veteran epigraphy also leads on to another factor which may influence the attestation or otherwise of any business interests, namely the social status of traders themselves. In his *De Officiis* Cicero voiced an idea which held over well into the Principate: essentially that trading for financial gain was for the mean and dishonourable, and hardly appropriate for those with social standing.<sup>160</sup> Indeed, Tacitus wrote of a scion of the formerly noble Gracchi family scratching out a living in '*sordidas merces*', with the adjective denoting the sheer baseness of trading as a profession.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Alföldy 1985: 129-30, Mousourakis 2007: 93.

<sup>159</sup> Epigraphy attesting C. Apronius Raptor includes: *CIL* 13, 01911(a votive offering), and *CIL* 13, 11179 = *AE* 1904, 00176 (his tombstone).

<sup>160</sup> Cic. *Off.* 1.151, although he exempts trade on a large scale. For a discussion of scale and status regarding trade see Wiseman 1971: 79.

<sup>161</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 4.13.2.

Similarly the Greek sophist Philostratus, active during the Principate, attempted to justify a friend's involvement in trading by recounting his unique circumstances, thus deliberately setting him apart the supposedly lowly and profit-driven masses engaged therein.<sup>162</sup> Modern scholarship also acknowledges the perceived status of Roman-era traders as: '(the) archetypal outsiders looked upon with distrust by urban communities across the empire.'<sup>163</sup> The correlation between the social elite and agriculture will be discussed in Chapter 9, although it is interesting to note here that in his *Satyrical* Petronius has the ambitious freedman Trimalchio make his fortune through trade before giving it up to invest in land, all in an attempt to join the prestigious upper classes and leave his former identities, both slave and trader, behind.<sup>164</sup> In spite of this, traders are nevertheless attested epigraphically, lending weight to the idea that such a profession was only seen as unworthy by those who deemed their own status above that of the masses. Given the position of the veteran, who as *honestiores* enjoyed a relatively higher status than most, it should perhaps be unsurprising to find so little mention of trade within their own inscriptions. Essentially, in such a fiercely hierarchical and status-oriented society, occupation was central in assigning the individual to a social category.<sup>165</sup> In practice such awareness of status would undoubtedly have impacted upon what occupations were attested epigraphically, with most veterans turned traders attesting only veteran status, and any veteran traders also elected into public office only attesting two of those three in inscriptions. In support of this view, we see very few inscriptions attesting professions such as *faenerator* (money-lender), or *venalicius/mango* (slave-dealer) and of those which do,

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<sup>162</sup> Philostr. *Vit. Soph.* 2.21.

<sup>163</sup> Verboven 2007c: 861. See also D'Arms 1981: 1ff.

<sup>164</sup> Petron. *Sat.* 76.

<sup>165</sup> Verboven 2007a: 295.

none are veterans.<sup>166</sup> Those which attest the term *faenerator* are usually freedmen,<sup>167</sup> and perhaps the lower social status of many freedmen made such a reviled profession socially acceptable. That is not to say veterans did not engage in such activities, as epigraphically the term *negotiator* could easily have been used to hide from posterity these deeply unpopular professions.<sup>168</sup>

Before leaving this discussion, there are two final possibilities to note regarding the question of why we see so few veterans epigraphically attested in business. Firstly, the military's tendency to retain soldiers with economically valuable skills as *evocati*; soldiers such as Aelius Verecundinus the intelligence officer and chief clerk with *Legio IIII Scythica*, and the centurion M. Apicius Tiro, who held vast experience of the military's administrative workings.<sup>169</sup> When faced with losing such knowledgeable and experienced men to discharge it is unsurprising that the military would attempt to retain their services.<sup>170</sup> Men with such skills would, however, have been ideally placed to engage in business, being both highly literate and intelligent, with numerous contacts cultivated in their previous high-ranking military roles. Secondly and finally, it may be that the scale of veterans' involvement in trade may also have influenced their self-perception. For example, if a veteran joined an existing merchant venture he may have perceived himself to be merely earning an income from an occupation, whereas if he started up his own business venture he would likely see himself as a *de facto* businessman; a distinction with implications for how he portrayed himself epigraphically.

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<sup>166</sup> For the terms used of slave traders, and their pejorative overtones, see Bosworth 2002: 350-2, and Harris 1980: 129.

<sup>167</sup> For example *CIL* 3, 06998 and *CIL* 11, 08686.

<sup>168</sup> As argued by Verboven 2007a 99-100.

<sup>169</sup> Verecundinus: *AE* 1993, 01577 = *AE* 1996, 01540 = *AE* 2008, +01523 = *AE* 2008, +01526; Tiro: *CIL* 11, 00019.

<sup>170</sup> Birley 1981: 28-9.

## ~Chapter 7~

### THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE VETERAN

Whilst the previous chapters have examined the evidence for veterans in trade and business, as well as some of the factors which affect the recording of such information epigraphically, this chapter aims to further highlight why we should in fact expect to see more veterans in mercantile professions than we currently do. The economic potential of the veteran was based on those skills acquired whilst in service coupled with their capital upon discharge, and so it is to these factors which we will now turn.

#### 7.1: Skills and Experience

The army prepared its soldiers not only for military purposes, but out of necessity it was also obliged to train them in a wide range of other vocations. For the legions to operate effectively in enemy territory they had to be self-sufficient, but also during peacetime running costs could be substantially reduced by enabling the soldiers themselves to build, create, or repair anything that was required. The legion was thus the focus of many specialists, or *immunes*, and had factories in-camp which produced bricks and tiles, as well as repairing weapons and equipment.<sup>171</sup> The second century AD jurist of military law, Tarrutienus Paternus, listed amongst the *immunes* of a legion soldiers who could double as:

Surveyors, hospital personnel, medical orderlies, book tenders, ditch diggers, veterinarians, architects, helmsmen, shipwrights, artillerymen, glass-makers, arrow smiths, copper smiths, helmet-maker, cartwrights, roofers, sword-makers, pipe fabricators, trumpet-makers, horn makers, bow-makers,

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<sup>171</sup> Keppie 1991: 88.

plumbers, metalworkers, masons, those who make lime, those who cut wood,... those who burn charcoal... Butchers, hunters... workshop orderlies, attendants to the sick, teachers, grain store monitors, clerks involved with the recording of money and property, grooms, horse-trainers, armourers, heralds, and trumpeters.<sup>172</sup>

One dedicatory inscription from Rome contains a military discharge list which names numerous veterans along with their previous jobs within the army. Though first and foremost soldiers, these secondary positions included many armourers (including the chief armourer), a clerk, a physician, and an architect.<sup>173</sup> A surviving duty roster also documents the activities of a century of *Legio III Cyrenaica* for the first ten days of October in the late first century AD. For the thirty-six legionaries attested, daily activities included duty in the camp's market, maintenance of the local baths, tending cattle, and repairing the century's kit, as well as detachment to local harbours, markets, and granaries.<sup>174</sup> Similarly, the early second century AD Stobi papyrus, discovered in Macedonia, states that some soldiers' duties even took them beyond the province in which they were stationed on errands such as obtaining cloth, grain, and even supervising mines.<sup>175</sup>

In the late first century AD the historian Josephus highlighted the proficiency of the legions in construction, stating of their building a camp: 'it is as if a town has appeared on

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<sup>172</sup> Dig. 50. 6. 7. '*mensores, optio valetudinarii, medici, capsarii, et artifices et qui fossam faciunt, veterinarii, architectus, gubernatores, naupegi, ballistrarii, specularii, fabri, sagittarii, aerarii, bucularum structores, carpentarii, scandularii, gladiatores, aquilices, tubarii, cornuarii, arcuarii, plumbarii, ferrarii, lapidarii, et hi qui calcem cocunt, et qui silvam infidunt, qui carbonem caedunt ac torrent... venatores, victimarii, et optio fabricae, et qui aegris praesto sunt, librarii quoque qui docere possint, et horreorum librarii, et librarii depositorum, et librarii caducorum, et adiutores corniculariorum, et stratores, et polliones, et custodes armorum, et praeco, et bucinator*'.

<sup>173</sup> CIL 5, 31145 '*(b)ast(iliarius)... tab(lifer)... op(tio) v(aletudinarii)... arc(hitectus)... arm(or)um custos*'.

<sup>174</sup> See RMR 9 for transcription and commentary. For a full translation see A. K. Goldsworthy 2003: 91.

<sup>175</sup> See RMR 63 for transcription and commentary. A full translation of the papyrus can be found in Elton 1996b: 115-6.

the spur of the moment, with a market place (and) a quarter for workmen',<sup>176</sup> and concluding that: 'the army contains a large number of workmen and also tools for building.'<sup>177</sup> The legions' ability in construction is also attested in the *Historia Augusta*, where the third century AD emperor Probus set the soldiery to work on numerous public projects in Egypt:

On the Nile, moreover, he did so much that his sole efforts added greatly to the tithes of grain. He constructed bridges and temples, porticos and basilicas, all by the labour of the soldiers, he opened up many river-mouths, and drained many marshes, and put in their place grain-fields and farms.<sup>178</sup>

One milestone documents the construction of a road over 350 miles long from the River Po to the River Danube; created entirely by the soldiery.<sup>179</sup> The practicalities of making such highways often required extreme and ingenious feats of engineering, as the inscription from the stonemasons of *Legio III Flavia Felix* and *Legio XII Claudia Pia Fidelis* attests.<sup>180</sup> Another inscription, found north of Antioch and dated to AD 75, celebrates the creation of a river canal three miles long, plus numerous bridges, which took the combined effort of detachments from four legions and twenty auxiliary cohorts.<sup>181</sup> Particular soldiers could also be assigned to certain duties due to the specific skills they had acquired during service. For example, near Coptos in Roman Egypt during the late first or early second century AD a work party consisting of legionaries and auxiliaries was

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<sup>176</sup> Jos. *Bell. Jud.* 3. 83.

<sup>177</sup> Jos. *Bell. Jud.* 3.77-8.

<sup>178</sup> SHA, *Prob.* 9.3-4

<sup>179</sup> *CIL* 5, 8003.

<sup>180</sup> *AE* 1973, 473 'Herculi sacrum lapidari(i) qui exierunt ancones faciendos legionis III Fl(aviae) et legionis VII Claudiae vo(tum) so(lverunt).'

<sup>181</sup> Van Berchem 1983 (*Museum Helveticum*) cited in Campbell 1994: 124.

formed to construct water tanks in the desert;<sup>182</sup> the legionaries provided acting as supervisors skilled in construction. In a similar role as overseer was a certain Gaius Terentius Longinus, the *optio* in charge of a section of military construction workers at Misenum.<sup>183</sup>

As well as these skilled labourers, the legions were also home to the more technically qualified engineers. Nonius Datus, a surveyor in *Legio III Augusta*, was seconded from his military duties in Numidia to advise on a tunnel through a mountain being planned in nearby Mauretania. By the time the tunnel was started, Datus had been discharged from the army after his term of service had expired. However, the procurator of Mauretania was still able to request, and receive, his services even after this discharge,<sup>184</sup> highlighting the importance of such men to their local economies. Datus however, although best attested of the legionary surveyors epigraphically, is far from unique, as fellow surveyors L. Herrenius Fuscus and Blesius Taurinus,<sup>185</sup> and architects like Quintus Cissonius, Q. Samacius Serenus, M. Cornelius Festus, and Q. Valerius Seius show.<sup>186</sup> That such men were present within the legions is also exemplified by Pliny during his governorship of Bithynia in the early second century AD. In order to assess ongoing construction developments in his province Pliny repeatedly requested to be sent an architect or surveyor from Rome,<sup>187</sup> to which Trajan continually replied that perfectly suitable men were available if he were to look hard enough.<sup>188</sup> Eventually Trajan recommended Pliny

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<sup>182</sup> *ILS* 2483: Coptos.

<sup>183</sup> *CIL* 10, 3479 ‘...*optio factionis artificum*...’.

<sup>184</sup> *CIL* 8, 8728.

<sup>185</sup> Fuscus - *CIL* 9, 01612 ‘...*me(n)soris aedificior(um)*...’; Taurinus - Blume *et al* 1848 & 1852 cited in Campbell 1994: 126.

<sup>186</sup> Cissonius *CIL* 10, 01757; Serenus *AE* 1936 12; Festus *CIL* 8, 2850; Seius *AE* 1929 213; See also *CIL* 6, 2725; *CIL* 11, 00020; and *CIL* 13, 08082.

<sup>187</sup> Plin. *Epist.* X 17b, 37.

<sup>188</sup> Plin. *Epist* X 18, 40.

request one from the governor of Moesia Inferior;<sup>189</sup> it being no coincidence that Moesia was the closest province to Pliny's own with a legionary garrison from which to transfer a suitable candidate.<sup>190</sup>

As well as construction and engineering, the soldiery were also adept at various crafts. Within legionary forts the *fabricae*, would have provided the space for those skilled in metalwork to administer on the spot repairs and maintenance to all arms, armour, and tools requiring it. Although state workshops by and large would have provided most items of military equipment, it was doubtless not beyond the capabilities of certain skilled legionaries to fabricate such items themselves when necessary;<sup>191</sup> legionaries such as *Legio XV Apollinaris*' former weapon-smith M. Aurelius Apollonius.<sup>192</sup> During over two decades of service, it is hard to imagine that most legionaries did not pick up a skill of some sort which would see them re-classed as *immunes*. It is possible, and even probable, that unskilled soldiers would work under the supervision of the *immunes* in order to increase productivity, for example in their legionary *fabricae*.<sup>193</sup> Such a method could easily see those unskilled men with the right aptitude gradually becoming more knowledgeable and experienced under the tutelage of an *immune* to eventually become *immunes* themselves. A papyrus from Egypt during the second or early third century AD also evidences soldiers in a legionary *fabrica* working on swords, shields, and bows, as well as on *ballistae*.<sup>194</sup> Similarly, a tablet found at Vindolanda highlights the scale and variety of work present in the legionary *fabrica*, where 343 men are attested as working on such diverse assignments as lead-dressing, shoemaking, and the maintenance of a bath-house.

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<sup>189</sup> Plin. *Epist.* X 61.

<sup>190</sup> Evans 1994: 146.

<sup>191</sup> Breeze 2002: 32, and although regarding primarily the later Empire MacMullen 1963: 24 highlights the legions' high level of self-sufficiency when it came to equipment.

<sup>192</sup> *CIL* 3, 00006; see also *CIL* 3, 1652 for a silversmith.

<sup>193</sup> Bishop 1985: 10.

<sup>194</sup> *CbLA* X 409.

The text thereafter becomes too fragmented to view clearly, although plasterers are also mentioned, along with men dealing in some capacity with wagons, clay, and kilns.<sup>195</sup> To better appreciate the skills required of those working in the many *fabricae*, Mike Bishop has set out the basic process by which a typical item, the *lorica segmentata*, was created:

One or more smiths to prepare the iron plates from ingots...  
 One or more copper-smiths to prepare copper-alloy sheet  
 and rivets from ingots.... Leatherworker(s) to produce (tan,  
 cut, stitch) strapping for the armour... men to cut out sheet  
 copper-alloy components, assemble and rivet them together  
 where necessary... An expert to perform or supervise  
 assembly and to check standard of work...<sup>196</sup>

Archaeology attests to *fabricae* being present in the majority of legionary forts, with the raw materials of metal, bone, and leather present along with various tools and the by-products of production such as iron and copper slag.<sup>197</sup> The fortress at Eburacum in Britain, home to *Legio VI Victrix*, has provided much evidences of tile and glass production dating to the early third century AD.<sup>198</sup> Interestingly, the particular type of glass found around Coppergate, the area just outside of the fortress, is unusual in that it was not ‘worked’ by melting shards of existing glass together but ‘created’ from its component parts of sand and alkali; a rare skill in the western empire.<sup>199</sup> It has been posited from contemporary Ebor-ware pottery, identical to North African forms which arrive around this time, that a contingent of legionaries from North Africa were transferred to the legion in Eburacum, bringing with them both their native specialised cooking pots as well as knowledge of glass making.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> *Tab. Vindol.* II 155.

<sup>196</sup> Bishop 1985: 10-11.

<sup>197</sup> Maxfield 1986: 70; Bishop 1985: 5, 7.

<sup>198</sup> Monaghan 1997: 1065; Cool *et al* 1999: 156.

<sup>199</sup> Cool *et al* 1999: 157-8.

<sup>200</sup> Cool *et al* 1999: 158.

As evidenced from the papyri and tablets cited above, the legions also kept extensive records of everything from individual duties to supply requirements. As such, the legions would utilise those soldiers with more than rudimentary knowledge of literacy as clerks.<sup>201</sup> Such a quantity of paperwork needed to effectively run a legion also ensured that the soldiery must have needed to be at least semi-literate, so that orders and letters could be read out to those who could not read by those who could.<sup>202</sup> Knowledge of both reading and writing would also have increased dramatically the higher one climbed the chain of command, with anyone aiming to progress required to participate in the culture of literacy.<sup>203</sup> Indeed, before the average legionary could expect to make centurion he would have first had to have held the position of *signifer*, a role signally unsuited to the illiterate due to the volume of paperwork it entailed.<sup>204</sup> Of the centurions themselves the poet Martial could write that: ‘my book is browsed below the martial standards by the centurion frigid in the Getic frost’.<sup>205</sup> Another interesting aspect of service for those better educated men was the potential for promotion, presumably of those deemed suitable to it at least, to something akin to a modern ‘intelligence’ post. From the first century AD onwards, a unit of *frumentarii* consisting of men seconded from the legions was based in Rome and acted as both couriers between the emperor and his provincial governors, and spies collecting information for the emperor himself.<sup>206</sup> After the late

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<sup>201</sup> P. Mich. 466; CIL 6, 2544; ILS 2658; ILS 2666; ILS 2389.

<sup>202</sup> Harris 1989: 254.

<sup>203</sup> Phang 2007: 300.

<sup>204</sup> Breeze 1971: 132.

<sup>205</sup> Mart. *Epig.* XI.3.

<sup>206</sup> Austin & Rankov 1995: 136; For example, C. Annius Valentinus, CIL 6, 03341 ‘...*vet(erano) ex num(ero) frum(entariorum)*’. See also ILS 9473; ILS 9476; and SHA *Hadrian* 11.4-6. For a fuller exploration of the role of the *frumentarii* see Sheldon 2005: 250-60.

second century AD, specialist units of *exploratores* can also be observed, along with *beneficarii consularis*; military scouts and provincial intelligence staff respectively.<sup>207</sup>

As we can see then, the army had the potential to confer a vast amount of knowledge and skills upon its soldiery, as well as to provide experience of diverse activities themselves ideal in preparing the soldier for economic independence. Within civil contexts huge expenditure went into constructing public amenities, providing thousands of jobs for skilled labourers and craftsmen.<sup>208</sup> The average veteran with the right experience could easily have found himself in a position of some importance on the numerous building-sites across the empire, whether undertaking skilled labour or as the supervisor of others. Similarly, upon discharge those soldiers experienced in the manufacture of commodities such as pottery and metal wares could continue to apply these skills and set up as suppliers to both civilian and military markets. Serving soldiers well understood the workings of their local economies; specifically the commodities required by the legions, and the channels through which to obtain them. One large-scale army supplier wrote in passing that a soldier had been in touch wanting hides to be set aside for his future purchase, and how a certain Frontinus, possibly a fellow soldier, was now selling leatherwear originally bought from the supplier at a much higher price than he'd paid for it.<sup>209</sup> With all the skills learned from a lifetime in service, as well as the savings accrued over this time, some soldiers evidently couldn't wait for discharge to become involved in businesses of their own. Regarding soldiers transferred from Syria to Corbulo's command against the Parthians in AD 58, Tacitus complained that they were

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<sup>207</sup> Austin & Rankov 1995: 27-8.

<sup>208</sup> Manning 1987: 586.

<sup>209</sup> *Tab. Vindol.* II 343.

militarily inept, being as they were merely ‘sleek money-making traders’ rather than effective soldiers after spending their entire service in cities and towns.<sup>210</sup>

Finally, it is worth noting that not all activities undertaken by the soldiery were for the benefit of the army. Some legionaries had their own homes outside camp walls, where partners, official or not, and possibly a few slaves lived. These familial attachments have been described as financially dependent upon the income provided by their husbands or fathers in service,<sup>211</sup> and to a large extent this holds true. However, dependents such as these could also support the soldier’s extra-military economic interests. Although the evidence is too sparse to say one way or another, it is likely that these dependents would have been used to aid in such economic ventures given that other duties would periodically have prevented the soldier from running them himself. In any case, a lifetime in service would have seen the veteran emerge into civilian life with a potential plethora of economically marketable skills, and the military contacts to either set up in the supply of former comrades or join existing ventures already doing just that.

## 7.2: Veterans’ Capital

The salary of the common legionary rose over time, with those in service between Augustus and Domitian receiving 225 denarii per annum: between Domitian and Septimius Severus 300; Septimius Severus and Caracalla 450; and Caracalla and Diocletian 675.<sup>212</sup> Interestingly, Suetonius states that Domitian was forced to issue an edict barring soldiers from depositing more than 250 of their yearly 300 gold pieces at the unit headquarters.<sup>213</sup> The practice of depositing such a high percentage of the soldier’s salary

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<sup>210</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 13.35. The legions in question being *Legio III Gallica* and *Legio XI Ferrata*.

<sup>211</sup> James 2001: 80.

<sup>212</sup> Bohec 1994: 212.

<sup>213</sup> Seut. *Dom.* 7. .

was to ensure a decent sum of cash awaited them upon discharge, and although the effects of such high-level saving benefitted the individual soldier in the long-run, the amount of money taken out of circulation by this may well have been the driving factor of Domitian's edict. If we take this number as accurate, then we can see that soldiers deposited roughly eighty-three percent of their salaries, although the fact that the edict was necessary argues for a higher level of deposition previously, and thus it is reasonable to assume that the soldiery continued to deposit the highest amount permitted after the edict was passed. However, such a high deposition of savings is somewhat at odds with the evidence; Tacitus has the mutiny of AD 14 break out in part due to the unprofitable nature of military service, alleging the mutiny's ringleader as complaining that the soldier's: 'body and spirit were valued at two-and-a-half sesterces a day, and out of this they also had to pay for their clothing, weapons, and tents, as well as bribe brutal centurions to avoid extra duties'.<sup>214</sup> Pay records preserved on papyri also attest to the potential lack of profit in soldiering, with the cavalryman G. Valerius Germanus losing 222 drachmas of his first tri-annual *stipendium* of 247.5 to expenses such as clothing, rations, and horse fodder; his second *stipendium* fared better, but still lost 106 drachmas to expenses.<sup>215</sup> To offset this a host of pay-scales were applied to those below the centurionate, with those undertaking special duties within the century itself such as the *tessarius*, *optio*, and *signifer* receiving pay-and-a-half, and those working from headquarters such as the *aquilifer*, *imaginifer*, and *beneficiaries* all receiving double pay.<sup>216</sup> These expenses may, however, have also been balanced out by occasional additions such as donatives, inheritances, and booty earned whilst on campaign, not to mention incomes from any economic side-line ventures. If the soldier was a member of one of the many *collegia*

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<sup>214</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.17.

<sup>215</sup> RMR 68.

<sup>216</sup> Speidel 1992b: 100; Campbell 1994: 28.

present within the military he would also have received a cash sum upon discharge from this source; perhaps as much as one year's pay, although he would previously have had to pay an initial amount to join.<sup>217</sup> Discharged legionaries after Augustus would also receive a *praemia militae*, or discharge bonus, which to begin with was 3,000 denarii, upped to 5,000 in AD 215 by Caracalla.<sup>218</sup> This bonus, plus savings, means that veterans discharged during the early to mid first century AD could have received anywhere between five and ten thousand denarii. This range, though seemingly broad, accounts for expenses as well as any additional income. The financial package that could be expected upon discharge would also be much greater the higher the rank held during service; this at a time when uncultivated land in Italy could cost around 250 denarii per *ingerum*, a productive vineyard 1,666,<sup>219</sup> a young and fit slave around five to six hundred,<sup>220</sup> and a slave skilled in vine-dressing around two thousand.<sup>221</sup> Unfortunately no evidence has survived regarding outlays required to set up in business, although even if veterans could not initially afford to start from scratch doubtless their capital could be invested in existing ventures or pooled with fellow veterans. We can assume, however, that the average veteran would hardly be in a bad position financially, and indeed some veterans evidence substantial sums of capital: the beautifully ornate tomb of the first century AD veteran Lucius Poblicius is testament to his prosperity; standing an imposing forty-eight feet tall.<sup>222</sup> Similarly wealthy was P. Turranius Firminus, former horn player of *Legio II Aduitrix*, who

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<sup>217</sup> Renz 1972: 171.

<sup>218</sup> For the discharge payment of 3,000 denarii after Augustus see Dio Cass. 55.23.1, for the raise to 5,000 denarii after Caracalla see Dio Cass. 77.24.1.

<sup>219</sup> For calculations see Duncan-Jones 1982: 210. Evidence collated from Columella, *Rust.* 3.3.8, and Pliny, *NH* 14.48 respectively.

<sup>220</sup> Tomlin 2003: 48.

<sup>221</sup> Columella. *Rust.* 3.3.8.

<sup>222</sup> *AE* 1979 412.

at his own expense entirely restored the sentry box housing the legion's standard,<sup>223</sup> and G. Valerius Longus who could purchase of a Cappadocian horse for 2,700 denarii; the equivalent of around twelve years military pay.<sup>224</sup>

As we can see then, for a veteran with both ability and an eye for business the funds needed to embark upon a successful and lasting commercial enterprise could certainly be available upon his leaving the army. The size of such enterprises would undoubtedly have had the potential to grow over time, although equally they also had the potential fail and go under. So much would have depended upon the veterans' abilities and experience, as well as the economic micro-climate of the locality in which they settled

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<sup>223</sup> *CIL* 3, 3526.

<sup>224</sup> *CbLA* XXV 782.

## ~Chapter 8~

### A DEMOGRAPHIC VIEW OF VETERANS IN TRADE

In order to gain a possible estimate of the numbers who took up business over agriculture when their term of service came to an end, we must first ascertain how many veterans were discharged overall every year. Walter Scheidel, using evidence from epigraphic military rosters, has calculated this number at between 3,000 and 3,600 per annum.<sup>225</sup> J. C. Mann gives a sparser estimate than Scheidel of between 2,500-3,000 per annum.<sup>226</sup> This lower estimate is perhaps to be taken as more probable given that Scheidel does not account for certain key factors highlighted by Brent Shaw, such as the fact that many legions operated below full-strength, not all men lived to retirement age, many centurions stayed on past their nominal term of service, and in pre-modern armies debilitating disease accounted for 10-15% attrition.<sup>227</sup> For the sake of this discussion then, an estimate of 2,500 veterans retiring each year will be preferred.<sup>228</sup>

#### 8.1: Estimating Veterans in Business

Given this figure the next task is to estimate how many of these men, on an annual basis, took the decision to use their discharge bonus and savings and invest, not in land, but in a commercial business venture. To place a definitive number on an estimate such

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<sup>225</sup> Scheidel 2006: 432, estimates 120 men discharged per annum, so 3,000 when 25 legions were active, and 3,600 when the legion count rose to 30.

<sup>226</sup> Mann 1983: 59, equating to c.100 per legion.

<sup>227</sup> Shaw 1983: 139-40.

<sup>228</sup> Or 5,000 every two years, in accordance with the evidence that the legions discharged their veterans only every other year.

as this is all but impossible; the primary evidence simply does not exist. However, a reasonable approximation can be gained from the more circumstantial evidence available.

A high percentage of veterans may in reality have ended their military careers as *immunes*, for after over two decades of service it is highly probable that a vast majority, if not all, would have accrued the talents needed to be placed in this category.<sup>229</sup> The key question here is how profitable in civilian life could those skills which they had obtained really be. Doubtless many would already have been well represented in the civilian population, especially in such fields as construction,<sup>230</sup> and such barriers undoubtedly stymied many potential businessmen. Given these obstacles, it is not inconceivable that the percentage of veterans who did possess genuinely marketable assets, such as metalworkers, potters, and tailors, and were willing to put them into practice as *negotiators* would be relatively low when seen as a proportion of the whole contingent discharged. Again, placing a definitive number on this is impossible, although as we have seen, the small amount of epigraphic evidence for veterans turned businessmen is hardly indicative that they didn't. Walter Scheidel states that there is 'no good reason to believe that more than one person in eight would have been permanently or predominantly engaged in non-agrarian labor'.<sup>231</sup> The number of veterans turning to business or agriculture may also be affected by their pre-service situations, with those from the country far more likely to return to farmland than those urbanites unfamiliar with rural life. Scheidel continues by stating that:

(W)hilst allowing for exceptions in particularly developed or privileged regions such as classical Attica or Roman Italy, we must assume that the proportion of non-farmers in the total

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<sup>229</sup> As argued by Wesch-Klein 2007: 192.

<sup>230</sup> MacMullen 1959: 211; See also Garnsey 1980.

<sup>231</sup> Scheidel 2007b: 80.

population fell short of the 20 percent estimated for sixteenth-century England.<sup>232</sup>

According to Scheidel, then, no more than around twelve to twenty percent<sup>233</sup> of the Roman population engaged in non-agrarian labour, notwithstanding those in the more extensively developed urban areas. Assigning an accurate number to what proportion of this can be seen as traders in business is, of course, impossible. Given the paucity of epigraphic evidence for veterans in trade we might indeed assume that only a very small percentage actually became traders after discharge, but the factors which govern epigraphic behaviour and the attestation of occupational status – as discussed in chapter 6 – argue against a simplistic viewing of the surviving evidence as being representative. Indeed, when taking the previous estimate of c.2,500 veterans discharged from the legions each year, the 315 years covered by his study would see a total of c.787,500 veterans, with those ten individuals discussed in chapter 5 either attesting to have become traders or assigned that status on the basis of other evidence representing 0.001% of this cohort. With the above considerations in mind, then, one may hypothetically hazard a conservative estimate, at around ten percent of the c.2,500 soldiers discharged each year entering into some sort of mercantile profession; roughly in-line with Scheidel's 'one in eight.'<sup>234</sup> From this we reach a number of around 250 veterans going into business per annum, or 78,750 over our 315 year time-frame. If we perceive this figure as too generous it is interesting to note that, even if it is slashed by 50%, we should expect to see just short of 40,000 veterans turn to trade during the entire Principate. It is in no way my intention to suggest these figures are in any way accurate, only to highlight that, even when for the sake of argument we assume such a small number as 5% engaged in trade,

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<sup>232</sup> Scheidel 2007b: 80-1.

<sup>233</sup> Twelve percent represents Scheidel's 'one in eight' (see n.230).

<sup>234</sup> n.189.

the evidence from demography still points to a much higher proportion of veterans in trade than are currently attested through epigraphy.

## 8.2: Life Expectancy

The question of life expectancy also plays a part in how long veterans could actively pursue their professions - whatever they may be - after discharge, but given their geographical and temporal spread, as well as their varying backgrounds and experiences in service, assigning an average age to the Roman veteran based on life-tables serves no practical purpose.<sup>235</sup> However, the evidence from epigraphy itself regarding the various life-spans of veterans does prove illuminating. Taking a random sample of one hundred veterans' inscriptions which attest both veteran status and an age at death, we can see that far from the low estimates assumed by many, the average age of death was just under sixty-five. Indeed, forty percent reached the age of seventy, and a not inconsiderable sixteen percent reached eighty years of age.<sup>236</sup> Given this, we can assume that most soldiers who survived until discharge could, if they had joined up at an early enough age, reasonably expect a decent amount of life ahead of them; life which, however, would still require sustaining through income.

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<sup>235</sup> Scheidel 2001: 26.

<sup>236</sup> Appendix 3.

## ~CONCLUSION~

The paucity of epigraphic evidence for veterans in trade has undoubtedly been the reason for the topic's neglect by scholars. Added to this is the notion that veterans would naturally settle down into agricultural pursuits upon discharge. This study has, I hope, highlighted that far more veterans could have entered into mercantile ventures upon discharge than is currently allowed for. The vagaries of the epigraphic habit have been shown to affect the number of veterans in the epigraphic record, as well the disparity in status between soldiers and traders has been highlighted as a key barrier to veterans attesting such professions as *negotiator* in inscriptions. When taking into account the numbers of veterans discharged over the entirety of the Principate, we have also seen that had even a small number engaged in trade there would have been far more of these men active within the Roman world than many modern scholars currently assume. A key conclusion reached has been that, spite of their sparse appearances in the epigraphic record, it is in fact highly probable that far more veterans were involved in trade than has been previously realised, and that those few veterans who chose to acknowledge their roles as *negotiatores* epigraphically are merely the visible – although epigraphically anomalous – representatives of a much larger demographic. In addition to this has been highlighted the myriad skills and experience gained through military service, from the smithing of swords, armour, and tools to the crafting of bricks, ceramics, and glass. All of these skills would have ensured many veterans of post-service professions as craftsmen selling their wares, either as lone traders, or as part of existing ventures, were they so inclined. Administrative positions also abounded within the legions, and would have provided many veterans with the knowledge of administering any subsequent business interests. The reserves of capital available to veteran could also be substantial, and

depending up their military rank, more than enough to pursue any post-service venture they pleased. Finally we have also seen how shaky is the assumption that veterans would desire land settlements upon discharge, and that those setting up in farming were far from safe in their investments; being at the mercy of a host of factors including bad harvests, the illness of his workforce, and the greed of wealthy neighbours.

In spite of these conclusions, it should not be assumed that entrepreneurial veterans made a significant economic impact on the macro level; their small numbers alone prohibit such an interpretation.<sup>237</sup> Rather, given the probable scale of veterans heading into business, it is the micro level in which we should reasonably expect veterans to have had the most influence. Such a vast range of knowledge and expertise within the soldiery can reasonably be said to have contributed far more in quality than quantity to the local areas in which they decided to settle, and the constant influx of such skills would undoubtedly have stimulated, complemented, and strengthened local economies in many significant areas.

With regard to further research in the field of veteran in trade, barring the appearance of new inscriptions options are constrained by the paucity of evidence for anything beyond what has already been investigated. However, those veterans settling on farmland should not be discounted as mere subsistence farmers in spite of their vocation.<sup>238</sup> Indeed epigraphy even shows that veteran landowners were important sources of supply of agricultural produce for locally stationed military forces, although individual plots farmed by veterans are almost impossible to pin down archaeologically.<sup>239</sup> Veterans undertaking careers beyond the scope of both farming and business have also been neglected by

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<sup>237</sup> See Pollard 2000: 250.

<sup>238</sup> *A la* Paterson 1998: 158

<sup>239</sup> Whittaker 2004: 15.

modern enquiry, and would benefit from renewed focus.<sup>240</sup> Similarly, more in-depth research may be conducted on exactly what the soldiery did whilst on service beyond physical training, weapons drills, and the occasional battle or skirmish. Whichever direction future research takes, it can at least now begin with one basic premise: that the countless veterans of the Roman Principate had far more economic potential owing to their skills and experience than may have been previously assumed.

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<sup>240</sup> Ortisi 2007: 352, who highlights veterans acting as bodyguards in Pompeii.

## ~Appendix 1~

### Selected epigraphic conventions

()	Letters omitted by the stonecutter, but added by the modern epigraphist to complete a known abbreviation.
[abc]	Letters lost on the stone but which can be restored with certainty.
[...]	Letters lost on the stone which cannot be restored. Each dot represents one missing letter.
[----]	Letters lost on the stone which cannot be restored. Number of missing letters unknown.
]	Blank of unknown length at the beginning.
[	Blank of unknown length at the end.
[[ ]]	Erasure.
7	Sign used on military inscriptions denoting the rank of centurion.

Source: After Keppie 1991: 40.

~Appendix 2~

Image 1: Dedicatory inscription of C. Gentilius Victor (*CIL* 13, 6677)

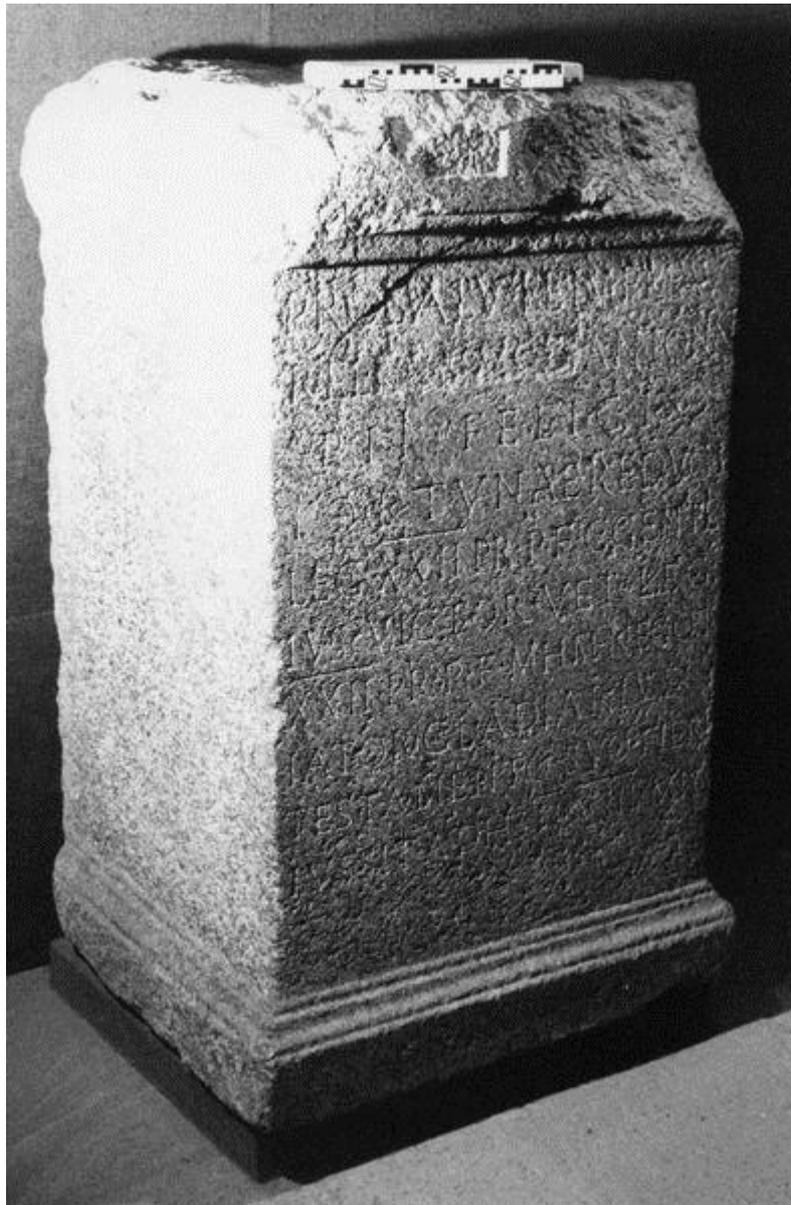


Image retrievable online at [Epigraphik-Datenbank Claus](#) / Slaby

© Projekt Trier

Image 2: Funerary inscription of Vitalianus Felix (*CIL* 13, 1906)

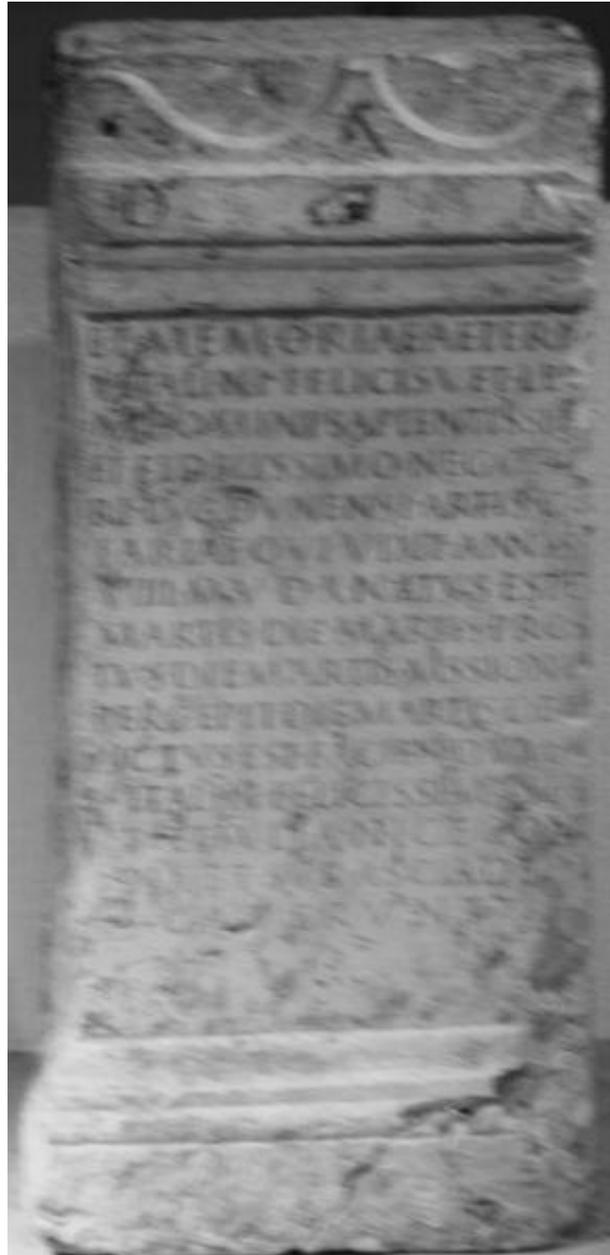


Image retrievable online at Epigraphik-Datenbank Claus / Slaby

© Unattributed

Image 3: Funerary inscription of Q. Atilius Primus (*AE* 1978, 00635 = *AE* 1988, 00938)



Image retrievable online at Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss / Slaby

© Museum für das Donaugebiet Komárno

Photo credit: Ortolf Harl

Image 4: Dedicatory inscription of C. Longinus Speratus (*CIL* 13, 06458 = *AE* 1994, 01305)



Image retrievable online at Epigraphik-Datenbank Claus / Slaby

© Württembergisches Landesmuseum Stuttgart

Photo credit: Ortolf Harl

Image 5: Dedicatory inscription of C. Julius Aprilis (*AE* 1975, 00652)

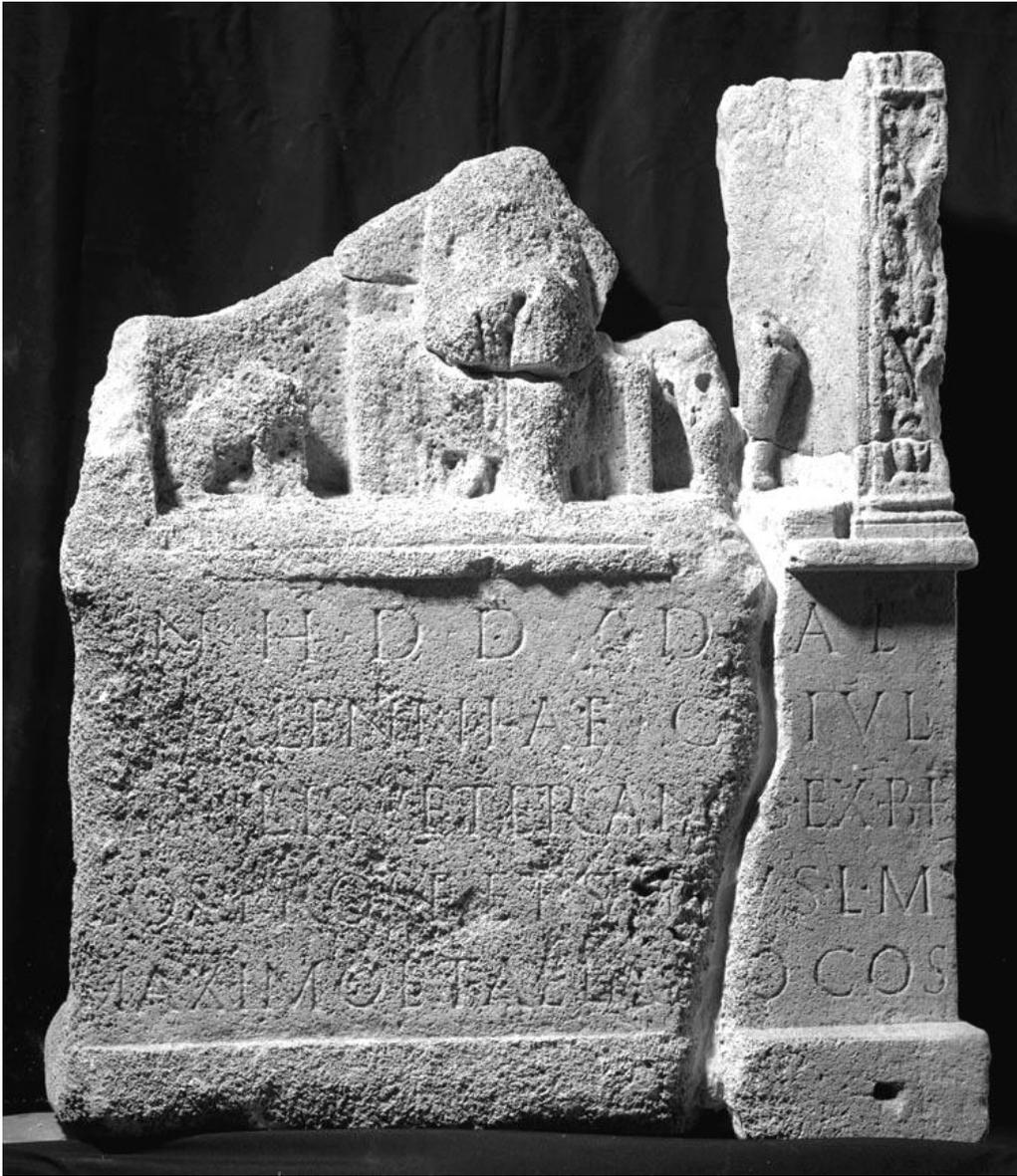


Image retrievable online at:

<http://www.geheugenvannederland.nl/?/en/items/RMO01xxCOLONxx006889>

© Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden

2.6: Funerary inscription C. Atilius Flavius Sirmius Vitalis (*TitAg-02, 00532*)



Image retrievable online at [Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss / Slaby](#)

© Aquincumi Múzeum Budapest

Photo taken by Ortolf Harl

## ~Appendix 3~

### Age and publication data for sample of 100 veterans

<u>Age</u>	<u>Inscription source</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Inscription source</u>
75	Publication: AE 1909, 00065 = AE 1912, 00252	46	Publication: BCTH-1900-CLI
70	Publication: AE 1910, 00146 = RIU-05, 01187 = RHP 00339	65	Publication: BCTH-1910-124
73	Publication: AE 1911, 00091	60	Publication: BCTH-1910-124
63	Publication: AE 1914, 00135	70	Publication: BCTH-1916-210
55	Publication: AE 1914, 00241 = AE 1982, 00979 = RHP 0006	80	Publication: BCTH-1934/35-222
80	Publication: AE 1916, 00101	88	Publication: BCTH-1934/35-95
70	Publication: AE 1919, 00078	75	Publication: BCTH-1936/37-35
50	Publication: AE 1929, 00049	62	Publication: BCTH-1936/37-38
60	Publication: AE 1936, 00033	60	Publication: BCTH-1936/37-43
75	Publication: AE 1936, 00034	65	Publication: BCTH-1946/49-123
87	Publication: AE 1938, 00044 = AE 1969/70, 00711	86	Publication: CIL 02, 00489 = ERAEmerita 00133
60	Publication: AE 1938, 00094	61	Publication: CIL 02, 00490 = ERAEmerita 00128
75	Publication: AE 1938, 00095	69	Publication: CIL 02, 00491
52	Publication: AE 1938, 00099	69	Publication: CIL 02, 00901 (p 828)
62	Publication: AE 1942/43, 00094b	57	Publication: CIL 02, 02640
55	Publication: AE 1946, 00200	60	Publication: CIL 02-05, 00598 = CIL 02, 05374
55	Publication: AE 1951, 00144	60	Publication: CIL 03, *00088 = IDR-03-03, 00420
90	Publication: AE 1951, 00222	50	Publication: CIL 03, 00811
80	Publication: AE 1951, 00226	53	Publication: CIL 03, 00848
70	Publication: AE 1960, 00333 = AE 1977, 00763	53	Publication: CIL 03, 00907 = CIL 03, 07693
60	Publication: AE 1966, 00016	70	Publication: CIL 03, 00969b (p 1015)
100	Publication: AE 1967, 00605 = AE 1985, 00885	60	Publication: CIL 03, 00971 = AE 1944, 00044
80	Publication: AE 1968, 00437	50	Publication: CIL 03, 01179 (p 1015) = IDR-03-05-02, 00472
80	Publication: AE 1969/70, 00163	75	Publication: CIL 03, 01196 = AE 2004, +01210
90	Publication: AE 1969/70, 00713	50	Publication: CIL 03, 01319 = IDR-03-03, 00360
80	Publication: AE 1972, 00740	60	Publication: CIL 03, 01320 = IDR-03-03, 00369
70	Publication: AE 1975, 00948 = AE 1976, 00749	50	Publication: CIL 03, 01382 = IDR-03-03, 00179
44	Publication: AE 1976, 00600	75	Publication: CIL 03, 01478 (p 1407)
85	Publication: AE 1976, 00714 = AE 1978, 00894	46	Publication: CIL 03, 01556 = CIL 03, 08004
60	Publication: AE 1978, 00729	55	Publication: CIL 03, 01584 (p 1420) = IDR-02, 00039
49	Publication: AE 1979, 00149	60	Publication: CIL 03, 01592a (p 1018) = CIL 03, 08034
78	Publication: AE 1979, 00150	45	Publication: CIL 03, 01607
70	Publication: AE 1979, 00455	65	Publication: CIL 03, 01651 (p 1021) = IMS-02, 00132
60	Publication: AE 1980, 00485	60	Publication: CIL 03, 01682 = IMS-04, 00037
70	Publication: AE 1980, 00659	45	Publication: CIL 03, 03314 = RIU-04, 01004
85	Publication: AE 1980, 00752 = IDR-03-05-02, 00550	70	Publication: CIL 03, 03324
45	Publication: AE 1980, 00909	50	Publication: CIL 03, 04278 = RHP 00113 = Schober 00192
58	Publication: AE 1980, 00910	50	Publication: CIL 03, 04312 (p 1757)
48	Publication: AE 1984, 00071	80	Publication: CIL 03, 04322 = CIL 03, 11027
70	Publication: AE 1993, 01300 = AE 1995, +01267	65	Publication: CIL 03, 04379
63	Publication: AE 1995, 00623	70	Publication: CIL 03, 04550 = CIL 03, 11298
50	Publication: AE 1997, 00182	70	Publication: CIL 03, 04574 (p 2196, 2283)
70	Publication: AE 1997, 01593	75	Publication: CIL 03, 05889 (p 1050) = IBR 00234
45	Publication: AE 2000, 00242	60	Publication: CIL 03, 05907 (p 2328,201) = CIL 03, 11908
48	Publication: AE 2002, 01269	104	Publication: CIL 03, 06131 (p 2316,45)
55	Publication: AE 2005, 01303	60	Publication: CIL 03, 06144 (p 1338)
75	Publication: AE 2008, 01684	50	Publication: CIL 03, 06267 = AE 2004, +01208
65	Publication: AHRoma-08, 00001 = AE 1967, 00033	60	Publication: CIL 03, 06453 = CIL 03, 10286 = RIU-04, 00989
50	Publication: AIJ 00375 = D 09085 = Schober 00085	60	Publication: CIL 03, 07421 (p 2316,45) = ADBulgar 00394
75	Publication: AIJ 00383	58	Publication: CIL 03, 07694 = AE 1965, +00034

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