



Welcome again to the Batavian pages.

This issue I would like to start with the question, "Who do you think you are?" All auxiliaries have names given to us by the unit, but did you know the background of the names used? I will try to shed some light on this question in this issue by listing names of the auxilia and giving as much background as I can on the soldier, his rank, unit and garrison. You will also see that very few of our 'Batavians' are actually natives of the Batavian homelands. Indeed, even our Decanus is a foreigner! Only two of us were definitely soldiers of the first cohort. I have not included defectors such as Taurinus, Iustus and Censor, as their names are taken from soldiers of the XIIIth legion. I have however included the names of our archer brethren from the east. The archers, Abdas and Afrinus are taken from the mounted archers of the Ala I Hamiorum. (Do mounted archers have 'bow' legs?)

ANNIUS "AFRINUS" ABDATIS

Afrinus' gravestone was found in Mauretania Tingitana at Tocolsida. A soldier earning pay-and-a-half, he was in the mounted archer unit Ala Hamiorum. He lived 45 years.

IAM-02, 00816 = AE 1957, 00062

Annius Afrinus / Abdatis (sesquiplicarius) al(a)e Ha(miorum) / ann(orum) XLV hic (situs) est / Iulia Cessia uxor / viro suo benemerito / et Niger Monimus / veteranus s(uis) imp(ensis) / f(aciendum) c(uraverunt) s(it) t(ibi) t(erra) l(evis)

VALERIUS "ABDAS"

My evil twin brother, Abdas: An Imaginifer of the Ala Hamiorum, who served for 17 years, and lived for 35 years. His gravestone from the second century was also found in Mauretania Tingitana (Ksar el Kebir). A Chalcidian by all accounts, originating in the Greek city of Chalcis, in Euboea.

AE 1906, 00119 = AE 1964, 00045 = AE 1991, 01745

Valerius Ab(das) imaginif(er) / alae Hamioru(m) / Chalcidenus an(norum) XXXV / stip(endiorum) XVII h(ic) s(itus) / est Valeri Sabi(nus) et Marini / fratres p(onendum) c(uraverunt)

AURELIUS "CROTUS" (The 'German')

Two inscriptions for Crotus come to us from the garrison of the Coh I Batavorum at Carrawburgh/Brocolitia Hadrians Wall. Both are votive altars dedicated to Coventina. Unfortunately, there is no definite evidence that he was actually a Batavian.

Cohors I Batavorum was possibly in action under the command of Agricola at Mons Graupius, and were also involved in building part of the Vallum of Hadrians Wall near Castlesteads. This unit was either used in the Antonine occupation of Scotland or as reserve in Wales or Southern England. Probably disbanded after the revolt in 69, and later reformed, they were stationed in Carrawburgh (Brocolitia) from before 222 CE until the time of the Notitia Dignitatum.

RIB 01525.

Di(a)e(!) Cove(n)tin(a)e A(urelius) / Crotus / German(us)

RIB 01532

Deae Co(ve(n)tin(a)e) Cr(otus) v(o)t(um) l(i)b(e)n(s) s(o)lvi pro m(ea) sa(lute)

DASANTI "SCENOBARBUS"

Our Scenobarbi was a cavalryman of the Ala (I) Batavorum. His tombstone was found in Dacia (Alba Iulia, modern Apulum) He lived for 31 years.

The stations given for Ala Batavorum Miliaria Civium Romanorum Pia Fidelis are; 62-63AD based at Xanten (Germ Inferior). Then after the Batavian revolt, Noricum or Raetia, then they were stationed in Pannonia after 85AD. The unit was made milliary after 98AD. It then served in the Dacian Wars, and was garrisoned in Romania (Noslac, Razboeni-Cetate). They were possibly transferred temporarily to Pannonia for the Marcomannic Wars. Their third century garrison is unknown, possibly Syria Palaestina.

CIL 03, 07800 = IDR-03-05-02, 00522

Dasa(n)ti [S]ceno(barbi) eq(uiti) alae / Ba(t)avorum / ex n(umero) sing(ularium) st(ip)endiorum] / V [a]n(norum) XXXI Bers(ius) / [I]ngenu(us) de[c(urio)] / ex n(umero) eodem (h)er(r)es posuit

TIBERIUS IULIUS ABDES "PANTERA" SIDONIA

This tombstone was found in Germania superior: Bingerbruck / Bingium. Pantera was a common foot soldier in the first cohort of archers. He lived 62 years, and served a remarkable 40 years. A hardened veteran! No mention of the Hamians however. Raised in Syria, this unit was based in Dacia from the mid second to mid third century, garrisoning the Danubian limes at Drobeta and Tibiscum in Romania.

CIL 13, 07514 = D 02571

Tib(erius) Iul(ius) Abdes Pantera / Sidonia ann(orum) LXII / stip(en)diorum) XXXX miles ex(s) / coh(orte) I sagittariorum / h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

IOMATIO "VELSONIS"

Found in Noricum (Virunum, modern Arndorf) this tombstone tells us that Velsonis was actually a soldier of the fourth cohort of Tungrians. He served 33 years. The cohort was initially based in Raetia. Five diplomas have been found just north of Munich. All mention the fact that the cohort was Miliaria. During the reign of Hadrian it was transferred to Mauritania Tingitata.

AE 1982, 00755 = ILLPRON 00784

Iomatio / Velsonis filio) / mil(it) c(o)hor(tis) IIII Tun(grorum) / stip(endiorum) XXXIII Firminae / filiae) a(n)norum) III f(ili) / fac(iendum) cur(averunt)

"FLAVIUS" CERIALIS.

The Prefect of the ninth cohort of Batavians based at Vindolanda (Modern Chesterholm) between 92 and 105, was a man named Flavius Cerialis. His Latin name denotes the fact that he was a Roman citizen. The name Flavius strongly implies that his citizenship was acquired no earlier than AD70, and the cognomen 'Cerialis' might suggest some connection with Petilius Cerialis, who was instrumental in the suppression of the Batavian revolt of AD 69-70. Numerous tablets unearthed at the site are addressed to, and written by Flavius Cerialis.

Interestingly, a great deal of the names of the Batavian soldiers mentioned in the Vindolanda tablets are Greek. This is also true of the Batavian 'Corporis Custodes' the personal guard of the emperor, from tombstones found in Rome.

The VIIIth cohort was stationed at Vindolanda in the late 80s to early 90s AD as a quingenarii unit and between 95-105 as a

miliaria unit. It then departed in 105 to fight in the Dacian Wars. At Buridava in Romania, tiles have been found with the inscription 'CIXB' dated to this time. It was then transferred to Weisenberg in the second century, then Stolniceni in the 3rd century. (-260) Cohors VIII Batavorum (pedites) are also mentioned under the command of the 'Dux Raetiae' (Notitia Dignitatum circa AD400) Circa 475AD Garrisoned at Castra Batavorum or 'Batavis' (Modern Passau, Germany) on the Danubian Limes. In the last years of the Western Empire, not long before the western Emperor Romulus Augustulus (475-6AD) was deposed, we have the last record of the VIIIth cohort as Limitanei or frontier troops on the Danube.

According to the writings of Eugippius, in a biography written around 482AD, the cohort sent some men back to Italy from Passau to draw back pay for the unit. No more was heard of them until their bodies came floating down the river. The unit then disappeared. After this date, we have no more evidence of Batavian cohorts serving in the Roman army. (Last one out, shut the gate!)

There is an inscription (CIL 03, 11918) stating that this unit or at least part of it were seconded for intelligence service and had the designation 'exploratorum'

LOVESSIO "MAXIMIO"

Our Illustrious leader!

Found in Mauretania Caesariensis (Cherchell / Caesarea). So whilst the rest of us were slogging it out in a damp, cold northern Europe, our Maximio was lording it up, getting a tan in Algeria! So it appears that the foot soldier, Maximio possibly had never even met a Batavian! His diploma, presented to him by the Consul of the fourth cohort of Sugambrians lets us know that Maximio was a Sugambrian and son of Bracaricus.

CIL 16, 00056 = CIL 03, p 1973 = CIL 08, 20978 = D 02003

Imp(erator) Caesar divi Nervae f(ilius) Nerva Trajan(us) / Aug(ustus) Germanic(us) Dacic(us) pontif(ex) maximus / tribunicia potestat(e) XI imp(erator) VI co(n)s(ul) V p(ater) p(atriciae) / equitibus et peditibus qui militaverunt in / alis tribus et cohortibus decem quae appellantur I Nerviana Aug(usta) F(idelis) (miliaria) et II Thracum / Aug(usta) P(ia) F(idelis) et Parthorum et I Aug(usta) Nerviana Ve/lox et I Corsorum c(ivium) R(omanorum) et I Pannoniorum / et I Nurritanorum et I Flavia Musula/miorum et I Flavia Hispanorum et II Brittonum et II Breucorum et III Gallorum et III Sugambrorum et sunt in Mauretania Caesarensi sub T(ito) Caesernio Macedone quinis et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emer[is]tis dimissis honesta missio/ne item classicis quorum nomina sub[scripta] sunt ipsi liberis posteris/que eorum civitatem dedit et conub[is]um cum uxori[bus] quas tunc habuissent // cum est civ[is]us [i]is data aut siqui / caelibes essent cum iis quas postea / duxissent dumtaxat singuli singulas / a(n)te d(i)em VIII K(alendas) Dec(embres) / C(a)io Iulio Longino C(a)io Valerio Paullino co(n)s(ulibus) / cohort(is) IIII Sugambrorum cui prae(e)st / Ti(berius) Claudiu[s] T(i)berii f(ilius) Qui(rina) Magnus / ex pedit[is]te / Lovessio Maximi f(ilio) Bracar(i) / descriptum et recognitum ex tabula aeneae quae fixa est Romae // Imp(erator) Caesar divi Nervae f(ilius) Nerva Traianus / August(us) Germanicus Dacicus pontifex maximus tribunicia potestat(e) XI imp(erator) VI co(n)s(ul) V [p(ater)] p(atriciae) / equitibus et peditibus qui militaverunt / in alis tribus et cohortibus decem quae appellantur I Nerviana Augusta Fidelis (miliaria) / et II Thracum Augusta P(ia) F(idelis) et Parthorum et / I Augusta Nerviana Velox et I Corsorum c(ivium) R(omanorum) / et I Pannoniorum et I Nurritanorum et / I Flavia Musula/miorum et I Flavia Hispanorum et II Brittonum et II Breucorum / et II Gallorum et IIII Sugambrorum et sunt in Mauretania Caesarensi sub T(ito) Caesar[n]io Macedone quinis et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emeritis dimissis honesta missione item classicis quorum nomina sub[scripta] sunt ipsi liberis posteris/que eorum civitatem dedit et conubium cum / uxori[bus] quas tunc habuissent cum est / civitas iis data aut siqui caelibes esse[nt] cum iis quas postea duxissent dumtaxat singuli singulas / a(n)te d(i)em VIII K(alendas) Dec(embres) / C(a)io Iulio Longino C(a)io Valerio Paullino co(n)s(ulibus) / cohort(is) IIII Sugambrorum cui prae(e)st / Ti(berius) Claudiu[s] T(i)berii f(ilius) Qui(rina) Magnus / ex pedit[is]te / Lovessio Maximi f(ilio) Bracar(i) / descriptum et recognitum ex tabula aeneae quae fixa est Romae in muro post / templum divi Aug(usti) ad Minervam // Q(uinti) Aemili Soterici / C(ai) Iuli Eutuchi(!) / T(iti) Villi Heraclidae / A(uli) Larci Phronimi / C(ai) Pomptin[i] Hylli / P(ubli) Anni Trophimi / C(ai) Norbani Primi

MARCUS ULPUS "PERONIS"

Found in Raetia at the military base of Castra Regina (modern Regensburg) this diploma details the foot soldier of the 'one thousand-strong loyal and faithful first cohort of Batavians, citizens of Rome'. (The unit was granted block citizenship, probably in action in the Dacian wars). The cohort was stationed in Pannonia between Romita and Brusturi, later Solva, and took part in the Dacian campaign. They were then transferred back to Solva and later Porolissensis. After Dacia was given up in the third century, it was probably at Salonika in Macedonia.

Peronis' diploma was presented by the consul of the Batavian cohort Titus Sempronius Rufus. It was quite usual at the time, when granted citizenship, that the soldier adopted the prenomens of the emperor at the time, in Peronis' case it was Marcus Ulpus, after the emperor Trajan. It lists his father as one 'Frontoni' also a Batavian. Oh Magusanus, no! Could Fronto be my father? I feel a bit like Luke Skywalker when he found out that Darth Vader was his real dad!!

RMD-02, 00086 = RMD-03, p 243 = AE 1988, 00906

[Imp(erator) Caesar divi] Nervae f(ilius) Nerva Traianus / [Aug(ustus) Germ(anicus) Dacicus] // meryll d(ex) maxim(us) tribunic(ia) potes[tate] XVIII i[mp(erator) VI co(n)s(ul) VI p(ater) p(atriciae) / [equitibus et peditibus qui militaverunt in alis / [3 et cohortibus] duabus quae appell[antur] / [3 I Thracum] vet[er]ana et I Aravacorum) / [3] I Bospor[anorum] et] I Batavor(um) / [miliaria c(ivium) R(omanorum) P(ia) F(idelis) et V] Callaeorum) Lu[censium] quae / [sunt in Pan]nonia superior[e] sub L(ucio) Mini[cio] Natale qu[un]inis et vicenis pluribusve / [stipendiis em]eritis dimissis honesta / [missione] quorum nomina sub[scripta] / [sunt ipsi] li[beris] posterisque eorum c[iv]itatem dedit et conubium cum uxori[bus] // [quas tunc] habuissent cum est civitas / [iis data aut] si qui caelibes essent cum iis / [quas postea] duxissent dumtaxat singuli / [singulas] a(n)te d(i)em XVII K(alendas) Ian(uarias) / [Cn(aeo) Cornelio] Urbico / [T(ito) Sempronio] Rufo co(n)s(ulibus) / [coh(ortis) I Batavor(um)] (miliaria) c(ivium) R(omanorum) P(ia) F(idelis) cui prae[est] / [Tullius] Secundus / [ex p]edit[is]te / [M(arco) Ulpio Peronis] f(ilio) Frontoni[s] Batav(o) / [et Mattuae] Silvani fil(iae) uxori eius Batav(ae) / [et Vagatrae] fil(iae) eius et Sureiae fil(iae) eius / [et Satae] fil(iae) eius / [descriptum et] recognitum ex tabula aenea / [quae fixa est] Romae // quinis et vicenis p[er]uribusve meryll[is] meryll[is] dimissis honesta missione / [quorum] nomina sub[scripta] sunt ipsi li[beris] posterisque eorum civitatem dedit et conubium [cu]m uxori[bus] quas tunc / habuissent cum [est] civitas iis data aut / si qui caelibes [esse]nt cum iis quas postea / duxissent dumtaxat singuli singulas / a(n)te d(i)em XVII [K(alendas)] Ian(uarias) / Cn(aeo) Cornelio [Ur]bico / T(ito) Sempronio [Rufo] co(n)s(ulibus) / coh(ortis) I Batavor(um) miliaria) c(ivium) R(omanorum) P(ia) F(idelis) cui prae[est] / Tullius Secundus / ex pedit[is]te / [M(arco) Ulpio Peronis] f(ilio) Frontoni[s] Batav(o) / et Mattuae Silvani fil(iae) uxori eius Batav(ae) / et Vagatrae fil(iae) eius et Sureiae fil(iae) eius / et Satae fil(iae) eius / descriptum et recognitum ex tabula aenea / quae fixa est Romae // [Ti(berius) Iulius] Urbani / [L(ucius) Pullus] Verecundi / [P(ublius) Atinius] Amerimmi / [C(ai) Vettienus] Hermetis / [P(ublius) Atinius] Trophimi / [Q(uintus) Apidius] Thalli / [C(ai) Iulius] Parati

I hope that this article has given some insight into the background of some of your personas, and apologies if I am teaching Grandmother to suck Ova!

On another subject, the 'Batavian' mask from the Blaccus collection is currently on display at the British Museum.



"Sum figuli lusus russi persona Batavi. Quae tu derides, haec timet ora puer."

"I am a potter's jest, the mask of a red faced Batavian. Though you make fun of it, a boy fears this face."

Martialis epigrammaton XIV CLXXVI

Peronis