

Ceteri officiales (mvnerarii) in castris

Other functional soldiers in the camp.

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Decanvs

Profile description

Decanvs, commander of a squad ([contvbernivm](#)), is usually an experienced soldier who plays a special role in the training and upbringing of those under his care, the so-called contvbernales. He is responsible for their discipline, the atmosphere of service and work, the level of culture, social conduct, military order and training.

Decanvs is obliged to observe military discipline and has specific authority over the soldiers from his tent, especially in taking disciplinary action and distinguishing the soldiers subordinate to him.

As the senior-ranking soldier in the absence of another **decanvs**:

- he is authorised to order a soldier to stop violating military discipline;
- he is obliged to inform that soldier's superior of this fact.

Required skills:

1. Leading and commanding the squad, including assigning tasks, defining objectives, and holding subordinate soldiers accountable and assessing them.
2. Knowledge of the equipment and weapons used by the squad.
3. Use of individual equipment and weapons.
4. Operation of shared equipment used by the entire squad.
5. Application of training forms and methods enabling the assigned objective to be achieved.

Tasks and duties in the camp

Warning !!! In the camp, the structural division of the organisation that is Leg XXI Rapax is quite different from outside gatherings.

At the event, the [Centvrio](#) appoints legionaries who will serve as **Decanvi**. Ideally, those concerned should be informed of this before the event, both of their own appointment and of the preliminary list of soldiers who will be assigned to their tent.

Such knowledge is very useful, as it allows the **Decanvs** to prepare much better for his role.

Decanvs, as a functional soldier, has a number of duties connected with caring for his contvbernales, that is the members of the [contvbernivm](#) who live with him in one tent. He is responsible for training, maintaining military equipment and gear in working order, shaping proper

interpersonal relations, and ensuring that safety rules are observed during the execution of tasks.

Below is the main scope of tasks assigned to the **Decanvs** under camp conditions.

Legionary equipment

One of the basic duties of the **Decanvs** is to ensure that those under his care are properly equipped both for the combat part and for everyday functioning in the camp.

1. He determines as early as possible, if possible even before the event, what **equipment shortages** his men will have, and makes every effort to have them filled.
2. He ensures that shortages are filled both in the combat part, meaning weapons, and in the civilian part, for example eating vessels, a sleeping blanket and other necessary items of equipment.
3. He checks **necessarily on the soldier's body** the quality and fit of the equipment, in particular:
 - whether armour has a complete set of straps;
 - whether the helmet sits properly on the head and will not move during marching or running;
 - whether the metal parts of the weapons are kept properly clean;
 - whether individual pieces of equipment are suitable for safe and dignified use.

Legionary training

Decanvs is also responsible for assessing the level of training of those under his care and for filling identified gaps as quickly as possible.

1. He determines what training deficiencies his men have, both with regard to:
 - the basics of drill;
 - knowledge of the general choreography of displays;
 - skill in handling weapons.
2. From the beginning of the gathering, he works intensively to bring his soldiers up to standard as quickly as possible in the areas where deficiencies have been identified.
3. Depending on the situation:
 - basic gaps in knowledge and skills among those under his care may be corrected by him independently;
 - more advanced deficiencies, such as training in military group formations, he urgently reports to the appropriate **principales** in the camp, for example the **Magister Campi** or **Optio**, as a need for urgent training of specific soldiers.

Latin

An important element of service in the camp is also **basic knowledge of Latin**, especially within the scope used during drill, reporting and the daily functioning of the unit.

1. **Decanvs** checks knowledge of the basics of Latin in the following areas:

- cardinal numerals;
 - **marching and camp commands**;
 - names of individual equipment and camp elements;
 - phrases needed for giving reports.
2. If deficiencies are found, he seeks to remedy them himself or reports the need for additional training to the appropriate functionary, for example the **magister latinae**.

General conduct of the legionary

Decanvs is responsible not only for the military preparation of his men, but also for their proper conduct, order and compliance with the rules binding throughout the entire camp.

1. He teaches and supervises:
- that soldiers keep order in the tent, especially the proper arrangement of sleeping places;
 - that they maintain order in front of the tent, especially with regard to putting away shields and pila;
 - that those under his care inform him **of every departure from the camp** and of the probable time of return;
 - that non-historical items are mostly kept outside the camp, for example in cars;
 - that nicotine products are used only outside the camp and only in places designated for this purpose;
 - that they do not consume alcoholic beverages with an alcohol content above 0% during the time of day forbidden by the camp commander;
 - that they do not use modern devices in the camp, such as flashlights or mobile phones, at any time of day;
 - that they behave with dignity and in accordance with the rules of social conduct binding in Leg XXI Rapax.

Warning !!! Decanvs should respond immediately to all signs of neglecting order, violating discipline, and behaviour that lowers the historical standard of the camp.

Additional duties

In addition to duties directly connected with the equipment, training and conduct of his men, Decanvs must constantly oversee the organisation of work of the entire **contvbernivm**.

Decanvs especially keeps in mind at all times that he must:

1. always know where his soldiers are.
2. at all assemblies, place himself at the front, but arrive last himself, helping and mobilising his contvbernales to report as quickly as possible as an entire group.
3. mobilise his soldiers to active work and learning.
4. motivate his soldiers so that they perform all duties exemplarily, for the glory of the contvbernivm and the whole of Leg XXI Rapax.

5. fairly assign night and day guard duties, if such a task has been assigned to the contvbernivm.
6. instruct legionaries leaving the camp when they must return at the latest, and then monitor this and react early enough in the event of possible delays.

Reporting

To carry out all tasks assigned to him, the **Decanvs** has at his disposal a number of other functionaries in the camp, whose assistance he should use. Proper reporting and cooperation with the functional staff are an important element of his service.

1. In the day-to-day functioning of his contvbernivm, he cooperates with other functionaries, in particular:
 - with the **Medicvs**, in matters concerning the health of members of the contvbernivm;
 - with the **Magister Campi**, in matters concerning the need for additional training of soldiers, especially in a larger group;
 - with the **Centvrio**, in matters concerning the organisation of service and the programme for the next day.
2. He continuously passes information to his superiors about the condition of his contvbernivm, observed problems, equipment shortages, training deficiencies and organisational matters requiring a higher-level decision.
3. **Decanvs** takes part in staff councils and briefings in the morning and/or evening, which customarily take place in the tent of the **centvrio**.

Warning !!! Decanvs should not leave matters concerning his contvbernivm unreported to his superiors if their nature exceeds his own competence or ability to act.

For discussion and development

1. Complete detailed guidelines concerning reporting, especially the scope of reports submitted to the Medicvs, Magister Campi and Centvrio.
2. Prepare a model scheme of Decanvs responsibility for the contvbernivm throughout the entire event.

External links

1. -- none --

Capsarivs

Profile description

Capsarii – orderlies and medical assistants, responsible for providing first aid to wounded soldiers on the battlefield and in military camps. The name derives from **capsa** – a container or bag in which they carried bandages, instruments, and medical supplies.

The duties of **capsarii** included dressing wounds, transporting the wounded, and assisting military physicians (**medici**) during procedures and treatment. They operated both during combat and in legionary infirmaries (**valetudinaria**), forming an important element of the Roman medical care system.

Capsarii were usually soldiers with basic medical training. Their presence in the legions attests to the high level of organisation of the Roman army and to its developed approach to the treatment of wounded soldiers.

Tasks and duties

Reporting

For discussion and development

External links

Magister Latinae

Profile description

Magister Latinae is a soldier responsible for training legionaries in the Latin language.

(historical information on pay, clothing, etc.)

!!! ARTICLE REQUIRES COMPLETION !!! It has not yet reached its basic version.

Tasks and duties in the camp

Magister Latinae “smuggles” the Latin language into the camp life of the legion in various ways, so that the soldiers learn the necessary words and phrases not only during formal Latin lessons, but also through a range of games and activities.

Training boards

In the [popina](#) there are wooden boards with basic Latin words, arranged thematically (food, etc.). In their free time, soldiers can use them to learn the necessary vocabulary and improve their knowledge. They form the basis for questioning before every meal (more on this below).

Information signs in the camp

Signs are distributed throughout the camp, describing the tents (praetorium, popina, lupanarium...) as well as marking the tents belonging to each centurion (con Vagini, con Holli...). This makes it easier to move around the castrum and helps people find the appropriate tent as quickly as possible.

In addition, the main camp artery (via praetoria) is marked, as are the entrances to the castrum from outside, so that passing civilians remain alert and know what lies ahead of them.

Games and activities

Latin lessons

Magister Latinae, together with the [Centurio](#), conducts camp Latin lessons. During them, the soldiers learn the basics of the language as well as vocabulary used on a daily basis in the camp. The basics of declension and the fundamentals of verb conjugation are explained. The lyrics of marching songs are studied together, so that the soldiers know what they are singing and how they should sing it.

Testing knowledge

Magister Latinae questions every legionary on their knowledge of Latin before each meal. Depending on the level of knowledge, these may be questions about basic words (water, sword, cup...) or more complex expressions or sentences. If the person questioned gives an incorrect answer or gives no answer at all, he returns to the end of the queue to take the test again. The time spent waiting in the queue is suggested for revising knowledge from the boards ;)

Reporting

Magister Latinae submits a report ...

For discussion and development

1. Whether Magister Latinae submits reports to the praetorium; if so, what he should report
2. What games and activities can be introduced in order to improve the soldiers' knowledge of Latin more effectively (I suggest the song "head, shoulders, knees and toes" in Latin — Venator)
3. As with Custos Castrorum, this is a function created for the needs of the group, so it is not possible to describe its historical importance, equipment, pay, etc.

External links

Specvlatores

Profile description

Specvlatores are a reconnaissance sub-unit operating within military units, assigned special tasks ranging broadly from scouting to ensuring the army's success even before battle. They carried out their missions in small detachments in order to conduct intelligence-gathering effectively. Their ranks could even include local warriors and guides serving in the auxiliary forces of the Roman armies. Their main task was to gather information for the legions concerning the activity of the enemy army and terrain conditions. They were a unit of the Roman army whose task was to collect as much information as possible about the enemy, his forces, and his actions through covert operations.

!!! ARTICLE REQUIRES EDITING AND COMPLETION !!!

Tasks and duties

Specvlatores are the equivalent of modern “commandos” assigned to special tasks. They have a broad range of duties, including carrying out:

- reconnaissance missions, including mounted long-range reconnaissance, and scouting along the Legion's marching route and in its area of operation, reporting all suspicions and irregularities, such as detected traps, terrain and natural hazards, and obstacles affecting the march of the units.
- sweeps of the surrounding area in order to detect enemy forces, gather necessary information about their location, activity, numbers, and their weak and strong points.
- marching far ahead of the head of the legion, securing the route and removing terrain obstacles in order to facilitate the passage of the troops
- sabotage of enemy machines, camp fortifications, or other strategic objects
- selecting a favourable site for the construction of a camp, which must provide:
 - a source of water
 - natural defence in the form of, for example, an elevated position, a rocky slope... etc.
- interrogations and torture of prisoners / deserters in order to extract the required information
- spreading rumours within the enemy faction and disseminating propaganda.

Construction of the camp

Specvlatores mark out the site on which the camp will be raised before the Legions arrive. After selecting the terrain for the castrvm, they immediately establish the layout of the tents and the course of the fortifications in cooperation with the [Cvstos Castrorum](#) and the [Centurio](#). They then proceed, together with the soldiers, to supervise the course of the works.

Creating plans for battles and demonstrations

Before each battle, the **Specvlatores** inform others about and outline a situational plan of the place where the clash is to take place. They provide information primarily on:

- the shape of the terrain and ways of using it to the advantage of the Legions
- the numbers, mentality, habits, types, and morale of the enemy troops
- possible locations of ambushes and hidden enemy positions

Daily duties

The head of intelligence manages the unit subordinate to him and organises at least one intelligence operation per day — and, in exceptionally threatened regions where the Legion is stationed, as many as two per day — as well as additional missions assigned by the command, in the number and scope determined by the [Centurio](#) or [Optio](#).

In consultation with the [Tesserarius](#), and based on his knowledge and reports concerning threats in the area, he outlines a draft plan for the defence of the camp in emergencies requiring armed intervention. They designate assembly points, defensive positions to which individual Contubernia will be sent, and special tasks such as the protection of the civilian population working within its area.

Staff meetings

The head of the intelligence network submits a situational report to the officers in the Praetorium on the state of security of the army and the threats present in the area. He informs them of all changes, suspicious activities in the vicinity, and the proposed safe marching route.

External links

Optio Lvdorvm

Profile description

Optio lvdorvm is responsible for the technical side of conducting the Legionary Games, as well as for the overall preparation of all elements required for them.

Tasks and duties

In the week before the Games

Optio lvdorvm, together with a selected technical team, prepares the technical items required for carrying out the individual competitions, placing them in one location so that they will later be easily accessible. He teaches the team what the individual competitions involve, and ensures that they know what must be prepared for each of them and what follows after what, in order to prepare efficiently.

He assigns each technical assistant to one of the teams for which that person will be responsible. The technical assistants must remind their teams when the Games take place, what they need to bring with them, and, between competitions, ensure that the teams prepare quickly and efficiently for the next one.

Immediately before the Games

On the day of the Games, **Optio lvdorvm**, together with the technical team, carries and prepares the items required for conducting the competitions near the arena, sorting them appropriately so that they can be exchanged quickly and efficiently. He reminds everyone that each team must be complete and that they must remember to appear on time.

During the Games

His duties during the Games themselves include ensuring that the competitions are prepared efficiently. He supervises the technical assistants, who continually remind the teams what the next competition is and what they must have ready. The most important aspect is time: there must be no overly long break or standstill between contests. In addition, he totals the points after each competition for submission to the judge, checks whether the competitors are breaking the rules, and in such cases disqualifies the attempt.

After the Games

After the contests of that day have ended, **Optio Ivdorvm**, together with the team, cleans the arena and carries the equipment back to the appropriate place in the camp. It is important to count everything to ensure that nothing has been lost or damaged along the way and that everything has been put in order. In the event of any element breaking down, he ensures that the necessary repairs are carried out as quickly as possible.

Technical team

Eight technical assistants are required

- 4 team technical assistants — each assigned to a specific team; they help prepare the arena for the competition and ensure that the teams know what the given competition involves and that they are prepared in advance (selection of competitors, appropriate clothing or lack thereof...)
- 4 audience technical assistants — each assigned to the audience; they help encourage the individual teams during the competitions, distribute coloured banners and standards, and ensure that all of them are returned at the end

Teams and competitors

For the Games, teams are designated and assigned one of the colours (Avrati, Prasini, Rossati, Venetii). Each team must have five competitors plus a standard-bearer with the team standard. The competitors must arrive in full equipment; at least one must have a helmet, sword, belt, and shield. If a team from the audience takes part, both the standard and the equipment must be prepared by the technical assistants, above all by the team member responsible for them.

Items required for the competitions

Brought by us — balls, 4 pairs of skis, 3 long and thick ropes, puppets, a straw dummy, blindfolds, sticks, a Centvrio dummy, 16 small rope circles.

To be prepared on site — cylindrical logs in sufficient quantity to form a route several metres long, a “bridge”

Description of the competitions

Skis

Five competitors stand on the skis prepared at the start line; the standard-bearer with the standard stands behind them. The competitors’ task is to reach the straw dummy, go around it, and return to the start line. The end occurs when the full length of the team’s skis crosses the start line. During the race, interfering with other teams, pushing, and similar actions are permitted.

Required items: four pairs of skis, rope to mark the start-finish line, straw dummy to go around

Centvrio throw

In turn, four competitors from each team line up at the start line. Gripping each of the dummy's limbs, they throw it as far as possible without crossing the start line. After the distance is measured (counted by the dummy's phallus), the technical assistants indicate to the standard-bearer of the given team that he should use the standard to mark the throw distance on the side line. Once all teams have thrown for the first time, they have an opportunity to improve their result with a second throw. The technique of the second throw is unrestricted; a comic approach by the teams during the second attempt is a welcome addition.

Required items: Centvrio dummy, rope to mark the throwing line, and rope to mark the throwing distance

Blind man

One competitor from each team is blindfolded, while the rest of the team, without crossing the start line, shout instructions telling him how to reach his equipment (helmet, shield, belt, and sword) and then the Centvrio. The competitors must remain blindfolded at all times, must put on the listed pieces of equipment, and the game ends only after they have embraced the Centvrio walking or standing in the arena.

Required items: rope to mark the start line and, in the case of an audience team, equipment for that team

Cavalry / horses

Four competitors from each team strip down as much as possible (no shoes and no sharp or hard elements). Paired in twos, one competitor climbs onto the back of another, and at the signal they move against the opposing team. The competitors must knock both riders of the opposing team down (the rider may not touch the ground). The team with the last rider still on his horse wins. After the first two fights, there is a match for third place (the losing teams from the previous two fights), followed by a match for first place (the winning teams from the first two fights).

Required items: none

Pontes longi

In the arena, we arrange a route several metres long from logs. The teams run along it one after another, avoiding the technical assistants, who try to knock them off the route using puppets and balls. A competitor who touches the ground before the finish line is disqualified. After the first round, the teams have a second attempt; a comic approach is suggested for the second try.

Required items: logs, rope to mark the start, rope to mark the finish, rope to mark the area for the interfering technical assistants, balls and puppets for the interferers.

Spinner

At the start line, the competitors place their forehead against a stick held in their hands, so that its other end touches the ground. At the signal, one competitor from each team makes ten rotations around his own axis, picks up a rope circle from the ground, and runs towards the straw dummy. He places the circle over it and returns to the start line. When he crosses the line, the next competitor from the team starts and does the same. The end occurs when the last competitor from the team crosses the line.

Required items: rope to mark the start, straw dummy, 16 rope circles to throw onto the straw dummy, 4 sticks

For discussion and development

External links

Scriba

Profile description

Scribae – scribes and clerical officials working in the **praetorium**, that is, the headquarters of the legion commander. They belonged to the administrative personnel responsible for maintaining military and official documentation.

Their duties included drafting orders, reports, pay lists, soldier records, and staff correspondence. Scribes played an important role in the functioning of Roman military administration, which was based on an extensive system of written orders and reports.

Scribae were usually educated soldiers or freedmen with the ability to read and write in Latin. Although they did not perform combat functions, they constituted an important element of the legion's organisational support and command apparatus.

Tasks and duties

The duty of the **scriba** is to write down on papyrus all necessary materials, such as, for example, the list of soldiers.

For discussion and development

External links