Tesserarivs

Profile description

Tesserarivs is one of the most important functional positions in the Centvria. He is responsible not only for the security of the military camp, but also for personal property, assets, and the people staying there by day and by night.

Tasks and duties

Contrary to appearances, this function is not limited merely to assigning night guards. Below is the full scope of tasks that this functional soldier must undertake :

Excvbia Nocta - Night Guard

Tesserarivs designates two contvbernivm tents (in special cases fewer or more) that will perform night guard duty. Taking their course into account, it is recommended that these tents should have at least four men. He passes this information to the appropriate **decanvi** in the middle of the day, giving them the password for that day - tessera. A soldier serving in the camp as a Latin teacher - **magister latinae** - may be helpful in preparing the password.

Guard's attire

At the evening assembly, the **Tesserarivs** informs the soldiers about the required minimum equipment that must be carried during guard duty. Customarily, this is full equipment (including helmet and armour), although night guards are exempt from carrying pilvm and scvtvm, though these must be within the guard's "reach" in the event of an unexpected attack on the camp (see below).

Duties of the guard

Tesserarivs reminds the guards each time of the duties incumbent upon them and personally supervises their performance.

The guard :

1. Walks around the camp more often than he sits in one place, patrolling the area.
2. On the order of the command, patrols the designated area near the castrvm.
3. Ensures the safety of the people and equipment located in the camp.
4. Guards the entrance to the camp and does not admit outsiders who do not know the password. In the event of special guests appearing, he asks the **Tesserarivs** or other

higher-ranking officers to make a decision on the matter.
5. In the event of detecting a sudden or approaching external threat to the camp, he immediately informs the **Tesserarivs** or another higher-ranking officer.
6. Supervises lighting in the camp - fires, oil lamps and tallow lamps.

Additional duties :

1. The guard of the first shift must ensure that lighting in the camp is prepared sufficiently in advance (about 2 hours before the night guard begins) and that the camp lighting is maintained at full strength.
2. The guards of the second and third shifts maintain the amount of camp lighting at their own discretion, so that the most important points of the camp remain visible.
3. The guard of the last shift must ensure that the camp is cleaned, especially around the kitchen. He must also chop wood and light the fire in the kitchen. At the end of his service, he wakes the **Centvrio** or another officer according to earlier instructions from the **Tesserarivs**.

> Warning !!! The guard is under a categorical **prohibition on consuming alcoholic beverages** both during his service and before his service on the designated day

Division of guard shifts :

1. Within each selected contvbernivm assigned to night service, the highest-ranking soldier, that is the **decanvs**, distributes the individual guard shifts at his own discretion, assigning **one soldier to each guard shift** from his own tent.
2. The guards are divided into 4 shifts. They begin at about 23:00 and end at about 7:00. However, time during guard duty is measured "by eye" until water clocks are brought from Rome, which will make this procedure easier for us.
3. In particular :
   o Excvbia Prima - from 23:00 to 1:00
   o Excvbia Secvnda - from 1:00 to 3:00
   o Excvbia Tertia - from 3:00 to 5:00
   o Excvbia Qvarta - from 5:00 to 7:00

> Warning !!! 15 minutes before the end of a guard shift, the replacements must be woken so that they have time to put on armour and prepare for their duties. **No pairing of guards other than that designated by the Tesserarivs is permitted.**

Excvbia Qvotidiana - Day Guard

1. **Tesserarivs** is also responsible for protecting the camp from dawn until dusk.

- The camp remains closed at all times except for designated short periods during the day when it is open to visitors.
- To maintain this state of affairs, the **Tesserarivs** assigns guards at his own discretion.

2. Guards are particularly important when the unit leaves the camp for a longer period of time, for example for : battle, a march, drill displays, etc.
   - **Tesserarivs** ensures that the soldiers and/or civilians left in the camp are able to provide proper protection and discusses with them the places where they are to remain during the absence of the main vexilatio.
3. It is important that the **Tesserarivs** make good reconnaissance in the camp ahead of time, so that he does not have to look for suitable people at the last minute, nor appoint people who have other important duties that could conflict with the above. Full cooperation with the staff officers in this area is recommended.

Defence of the camp against threat

The legion's camp must be protected by the army 24 hours a day. For this reason as well, the role of the **Tesserarivs** is invaluable. He identifies possible threats (also using information obtained by the **specvlatores**) and carefully prepares, in consultation with the **Optio** or the **Centvrio**, a plan for defending the camp against an unexpected attack, which is highly probable especially at night.

For this purpose :

1. He discusses the action plan with the guards. Whom are they to call ? When are they to raise the whole camp ? Which places are they to defend and not abandon at any cost ? etc.
2. At the evening roll call, he announces the initial defence plan for the camp, according to which, in the middle of the night, each soldier will know where he is to run first after leaving the tent and wait for orders.
3. During an immediate threat, he is the first to run to the designated place in the middle of the camp. He gathers the soldiers and sends them to various defensive sections of the camp until command is handed over to higher-ranking officers, for example the **optio** or **centvrio** .

> Warning !!! It is important that everyone understand the seriousness of the situation and report as quickly as possible, with full commitment, to the designated sections, holding at least a sword (gladivs) and a shield (scvtvm) in their hands.

> Warning !!! In the event of a sudden attack, if equipment is not at hand, instead of wasting time looking for weapons, a soldier grabs anything that can be used for fighting, whether: a shovel, dolabra, stick, or even a helmet/pot/pan for beating the aggressor!

Assigning kitchen duties - cvlina

Tesserarivs, having full knowledge of which soldiers have day or night guard duties, also assigns individual soldiers to all-day kitchen duty (if possible, preferably an entire contvbernivm or contvbernia)

1. For this purpose, he works directly with the **Medicvs**, who knows the condition of sick legionaries who, as unable to participate in training / displays / marches / battles, will be assigned permanently to the kitchen, perhaps even for the entire duration of the camp.
2. He informs the **Frvmentarivs** of his decision, responding to the quantitative needs reported by the aforementioned.
3. In exceptional situations, for example: a large evening feast in the camp, he may assign additional soldiers only for that occasion (or even an entirely new shift for that evening to serve during the feast).

Reporting

1. **Tesserarivs** meets with the staff officers at least twice a day (first and foremost with the **Centvrio**) in order to present a report on the duties assigned to him and to consult the following matters :
   - what day and night guards will be assigned ? According to what principle will night guards be assigned on that day (for example as punishment or as a reward).
   - the list of guards should be available on a separate wax tablet (tabvla cerata) and left in the headquarters.
   - what tessera has been designated ? The **Centvrio** should receive a copy of the tessera on a scrap of papyrus.
   - what is the plan for the night defence of the camp ?
   - how have the assigned soldiers fulfilled their tasks so far ?
   - when will an unannounced inspection of the night guards be carried out ? At least once per event.
   - is cooperation with the **Frvmentarivs** proceeding without disruption ?
2. **Tesserarivs** takes part in staff councils and briefings in the morning and/or evening, which customarily take place in the tent of the **Centvrio**.

> Warning !!! Tesserarivs may not leave the camp without first making sure that all duties assigned to him have been delegated to the appropriate soldiers and that centvrio has full knowledge of this matter.

For discussion and development

Prepare graphic guidelines concerning the defence of the camp during night attacks

External links

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