

A LATIN EPITAPH OF A ROMAN LEGIONARY FROM CORINTH

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(Plate I)

A Roman funerary monument was found in 1970 in the area of ancient Corinth, in a part of the village called Kranion (Κράνιον), where no other finds have yet been made. Eventually it was acquired by the Corinth Museum, where it now stands in the portico of the courtyard.*

It is a well-preserved stele (height, 2·17 m; width, 0·64 m; thickness, 0·45 m) of white marble, only slightly damaged along the upper part of the right edge, very likely already broken away in antiquity, as it shows an ancient repair (Pl. I.1). A deeply carved and well executed relief of a Roman soldier represented in undress (wearing overcoat, *tunica*, *cingulum*; with a sword, a dagger, *vitis* (?) and writing-tablet case) is displayed in an architectural frame; two capped pillars support a gable with a rounded acroterion at the top. Of its two bottom acroteria, the left one is missing. The gable is decorated with a shield in shallow relief.

The Latin inscription consists of three lines engraved across the whole width of the lower, and larger, face of the monument's entablature. It is broken off on its right side, where consequently the last letters of lines one and three are incomplete, while the last letter of line two is entirely missing (height, 0·09 m; width, 0·63 m; height of letters, 0·028–0·025 m in the first two lines and 0·018 m in the third line). The letters are rather shallowly cut and the words are separated by commas (Pl. I.3). The inscription reads:

C(aius) Valerius C(ai) f(ilius) Quir(ina) Valens Cam(unnus)|mil(es) leg(ionis) VIII Aug(ustae)
(centuria) Senuci(onis), vix(it) a[n(nos)]|xxxv, mil(itavit) an(nos) XIII. Her(es) ex testamento.

The name of the deceased is not very informative and offers no precise indication of date. After the imperial *gentilicia*, 'Valerius' is one of the most widely spread names among the new citizens of the Roman empire,¹ while 'Valens' is one of the most common of the so-called 'body and mind' *cognomina*,² being found fairly frequently among soldiers in the Roman legions, among whom it is first attested in the second half of the first century A.D.;³ subsequently, in the second century, it became popular in the Danubian provinces, especially in Dalmatia.⁴

The *M* of *CAM* at the end of line one is incomplete but nevertheless assured, since the top of the second diagonal *hasta* is still visible on the stone. These three letters denote, in abbreviated form, Valens' *domus*, and their identification leaves little doubt. Of the Roman cities and other fully enfranchised municipalities listed by Kubitscheck, only one both begins with the letters in question and is enlisted in the relevant tribe, Quirina; namely the Camunni (in the modern area of Valcamonica), an Alpine tribe from the tenth Italian region, *Histria et Venetia*.⁵ The restoration here of *Cam(unnus)*, therefore, seems assured, and is strengthened by the analogy of another tombstone, found in Carnuntum (Deutsch Altenburg) in Pannonia Superior,⁶ which reads: 'Sex. Apronius Sex. f. Quir(ina) Valens, Camun(nus), mil. leg.|XIII G(eminae) M(artiae) V(ictricis), ann. xxxv, stip. XI h.s.e.| t.f.i.h.f.c.' It is dated by Forni to the Flavian period.⁷

* The exact circumstances of its discovery are already obscure. It had been taken to Kalambaki with a view to being shipped abroad illegally before being recovered and brought to the Museum. It has not yet been given an inventory number. I would like to thank the Ephor of Antiquities for the Argolid, Mrs. E. Protonotariou-Deilaki, who kindly gave me permission to publish the inscription, and Mr. A. Spawforth for improving my English. Mr. Ch. Pitteros intends to study the relief from the artistic point of view.

¹ cf. among others A. Mócsy, *Die Bevölkerung von Pannonien bis zu den Markomannenkriegen* (1959), 147 f., especially 160; idem, 'Pannonici nelle flotte di Ravenna e di Miseno', *Atti del convegno internaz. studi antichità di Classe, Ravenna 1968*, 308 f.

² I. Kajanto, *The Latin Cognomina* (Soc. Sc. Fenn., *Comm. hum. Litt.* 36. 2) (1965), 66.

³ L. R. Dean, *A Study of the Cognomina of Soldiers*

in the Roman Legions (1916), 54, but some new evidence has surely appeared since.

⁴ Kajanto, *op. cit.*, (n. 2), 18.

⁵ W. Kubitscheck, *Imperium Romanum tributim discriptum* (1889), indexes and 108. Camulodunum in Britain is excluded on account of its different *tribus*: *ibid.*, 222: Pol(lia); but compare also *CIL* III. 11233 (not listed by Kubitscheck) which probably gives its pseudotribe Cla(udia).

⁶ A. Betz, 'Die römischen Militärinschriften in Oesterreich', *JÖAI* 29 (1935), Bb. 305, n. 189 = *RLÖ* 18 (1937), 40, no. 6 = E. Vorbeck, *Militärinschriften aus Carnuntum* (1954), no. 84 = G. Forni, 'Bresciani nelle legioni romane', *Atti del convegno intern. per il XIX centenario della dedicazione del 'capitolium' e per il 150° anniversario della sua scoperta, Brescia 1973*, 232, n. 24—from now on Forni, 'Bresciani'.

⁷ He dates it according to his assumption that Camunni became an independent community only in the Flavian period.



(1)



(2)



(3)

(1) KRANION, CORINTH: TOMBSTONE OF C. VALERIUS VALENS. *Photograph by courtesy of the Archaeological Museum, Corinth.* (2) PEIRAEUS: TOMBSTONE OF Q. CALPURNIUS EUTYCHUS. *Photograph by courtesy of the Epigraphical Museum, Athens.* (3) SQUEEZE OF LETTERING ON THE TOMBSTONE OF C. VALERIUS VALENS. *Photograph by S. Habič. Copyright reserved.*

The Camunni were subdued in 16 B.C. by P. Silius Nerva⁸ and thus figure among the conquered tribes on the Tropaeum Alpium. Immediately afterwards they were attributed to the nearby *colonia* of Brixia (Brescia), thereby gaining the *ius Latii*;⁹ at least as early as the time of Tiberius, however, they are described in an inscription as a *civitas*, that is, a partly autonomous community.¹⁰ But subsequently, perhaps under the Flavian emperors, as is generally believed, although quite possibly as early as Claudius,¹¹ the Camunni founded a self-governing *res publica*, which was completely independent from the previous administrative centre of Brixia, as is shown clearly by its enrolment in the tribe Quirina (different from Brixia's Fabia) and by the existence of its own *duumviri i.d.* and other officials.¹²

Of the total of thirty-two legionaries already known to have come from Brixia and the adjacent territory, all show predominantly good Italian names,¹³ while their onomastic formulae reproduce the correct sequence with the same accuracy as that of Valens. Valerii are already known in this area.¹⁴ The legions in which these soldiers served were, for the most part, stationed in the European provinces, and two of Valens' compatriots are known to have served in the same legion as himself, VIII Augusta.¹⁵ All these facts add strength to the proposed interpretation of his *domus*.

Valens is depicted on the relief with a sword (*gladius*) on his right side, a dagger on his left, holding a stick (*vitis*?) in his right, and a writing-tablet case(?) in his left hand.¹⁶ These would suggest a higher military grade, very probably a post of junior officer rank, than that of a *miles e centuria Senuci(onis)*, as he is in fact described. Military titles below the centurionate are often not specified on first-century monuments.¹⁷ On the other hand, the mention of the century and the fact that he wears a *gladius* on his right and dagger on his left side exclude, despite the *vitis*-like stick, the possibility of his having been a centurion. It is interesting that there is a relatively larger number of inscriptions depicting soldiers holding a similar stick in the right hand in the two provinces of Achaia and Macedonia—five from a number of sites in Macedonia, five from Achaia (Athens and Piraeus) out of a total of *c.* 100 military inscriptions¹⁸—than in any other provinces. The function or significance of this stick, which in its upper end, the handle, differs slightly from the usual form of the *vitis*, is as yet unexplained.¹⁹ Especially notable is the tombstone of Q. Calpurnius Eutyclus from Piraeus who is carrying, in addition to a stick in his right hand, a similar writing-tablet case in his left²⁰ (Pl. I.2). Although the coincidence is striking, one

⁸ Dio 54. 20. 1.

⁹ Pliny, *NH* 3. 133-4.

¹⁰ *CIL* v. 4954: 'Druso [Caesari] / Ti. Aug. f. [divi Aug. n.] / divi Iuli pr[on] pontif. / sodali Augu[st]i. cos. II. tr.] / pot. II., XV vir [sacr. fac.] / civit. C[amunni] --', from Valcamonica; U. Laffi, *Adtributio e contributio. Problemi del sistema politico-amministrativo dello stato romano* (1966), 21-6. Besides Brixia, Bergomum has also been suggested as the centre of their *adtributio*, but with less probability, *ibid.* 23. It is not within the scope of this paper, however, to discuss the problem of the relationship between *civitas* and *adtributio*, so closely connected with the organization of the Alpine tribes as a whole.

¹¹ Laffi, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 25-6; Forni, 'Bresciani', 235. Laffi cites the relevant previous literature: the date of the death of Pliny the Elder who mentions them as having *ius Latii* is thought to be decisive in dating this administrative change—and also the fact that Quirina is a Flavian tribe. One must, however, note that it is Claudian as well, cf. Kubitscheck, *op. cit.*, (n. 5), 109. Claudius is also known to have dealt with analogous problems concerning some other tribes in the Alps. For the most recent summary of these problems see P. Tozzi, *Storia padana antica. Il territorio fra Adda e Mincio* (1972), 108-9.

¹² *CIL* v. 4957 = *ILS* 6713, and others listed in Laffi, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 25, n. 26. The text reads: 'C. Pladicus C. f. / Quir. Casdianus / II vir i. d. / Camunnis, / aedil., quaest., / praef. i. d. Brix., / [i]udex ex V. dec., equo p., / a re p. Camun- nor., / cui in hoc / pecuniam legavit, / t. p. i.' Cf. S. Demougin, *Ancient Society* 6 (1975), 165, n. 30.

¹³ Forni, 'Bresciani', 236 f. For an attempt to distinguish between *cives optimo iure* and *iure Latii*, see G. Alföldy, 'Notes sur la relation entre le droit de cité et la nomenclature dans l'Empire romain', *Latomus* 25 (1966), 37.

¹⁴ *CIL* v. 4377; XIII. 7578; 5241; v. 9164, corresponding to the numbers given by Forni, 'Bresciani', no. 9, 10, 13 and 18.

¹⁵ Forni, 'Bresciani', n. 28 (*CIL* v. 4894) and 32 (*AE* 1904, 187 = P. P. Chistè, *Epigrafi trentine dell'età romana* (1971), no. 148).

¹⁶ cf. *RIB* 492: an *optio* from Chester is holding the same writing-tablet case; but an even better parallel is provided by the relief of a soldier found in London, G. Home, *Roman London* (1948), 198 (for this reference I am indebted to H. R. Robinson, through the kind intervention of Dr. B. Dobson).

¹⁷ For the omission of the grade on an inscription where it is otherwise quite clear, see D. J. Breeze, 'A Note on the use of the Titles *Optio* and *Magister* below the Centurionate during the Principate', *Britannia* 7 (1976), 130.

¹⁸ This percentage may very possibly be much higher, as many inscriptions are not accompanied by the relief, or else the latter exists but is not published, just mentioned.

¹⁹ H. Ubl in his unpublished Vienna doctoral thesis, p. 429 f., who kindly gave me the reference.

²⁰ *CIL* III. 7287 (= 555) = *IG* II/III² 11492: 'Q. Calpurnio Eutycho/Philetus p(u)bl(ici) xx lib. vi(li)cus fecit / K. Καλπουρνι(ω) Εὐτύχ(ω) Φιλητος / εικοστής ἐλευθερίας (ο)ικονόμος / ἐποίησεν / γνη(σι)ω στρατι(ώ)τη.

must bear in mind that the above mentioned ten monuments are all dated to the second and third century A.D., whereas the Corinthian tombstone should be placed as early as the first century. It is difficult to say whether sticks of this type should be regarded as a sign of distinction or a sort of weapon. They may well be some kind of a provincial variant from the norm, as is perhaps suggested by the frequency with which they are found on military inscriptions in these two provinces; in this case their true significance may never be completely understood. Perhaps it could be somehow connected with those soldiers who served in the *provinciae inermes*.

The cognomen 'Senucius' or 'Senucus' has not been attested hitherto, nor has 'Senucio'; while only two doubtful instances of 'Senecius' are known.²¹ 'Senecio' is a well known Latin name, however, and it is interesting to note the existence of C. Magius C.f. Pub. Senecio, a centurion of the same legion, whose cognomen is clearly similar.²² Although Senicio is the only assured variant of the latter name,²³ the possibility remains that the Corinthian letter-cutter made an error, and that the two centurions are the same man; this possibility is further strengthened by the occurrence of the genitive 'Seneci' on another funerary inscription from Rome, which is probably an abbreviation of 'Senecionis'.²⁴ There still remains, however, the difference in vowels—*u* in our text instead of the correct *e*—which cannot be accounted for, since I can cite as parallels for such a misuse occurrences only in verbal forms.²⁵

The artistic evidence and letter-forms,²⁶ combined with what has already been said about the monument, suggest a date for the inscription in the second half of the first, or the very beginning of the second, century A.D. The onomastic formula (*tria nomina*, filiation, *tribus* and *domus*), which is characteristic both of the first and second centuries, agrees well with these chronological limits.²⁷ A soldier's place of origin began to be omitted from inscriptions from the end of the first century A.D. onwards, because after that time legionary recruitment became increasingly localized, and Italian recruits were especially rare compared to the number of provincials.²⁸ The *tribus*, too, was left out more frequently in the course of the second century. The epithet of the legion, *Augusta*, is not a chronological indicator.²⁹

The inscription immediately raises a question that cannot be answered with certainty, namely, the reasons for this soldier's presence at Corinth. A short survey of the legion's movements³⁰ shows that, at least as early as A.D. 14, it formed the garrison of Pannonia, stationed in its *hiberna* at Poetovio. From A.D. 45, just after the separation of Macedonia and Achaia from Moesia, it was part of the Moesian army, remaining until 69 at Oescus, in what later became Moesia Inferior. Detachments from it were involved in the war against Mithridates in the Bosporus (A.D. 45–9) and in Thrace, where the political situation was especially critical; as a result of constant internal unrest the latter area was organized as a province in 46, and legions from neighbouring Moesia played an important role in bringing about this change. The Thracian kingdom was in a somewhat analogous position to that of Achaia, in as much as it too depended in all military matters largely on the same imperial province. Having successfully fought for Vespasian the legion was transferred to the Rhine, where for centuries Argentorate was its permanent base.

Two other military inscriptions have so far been found in the area of Corinth. One concerns a veteran who had probably settled down in his birthplace,³¹ the other an *optio* of

²¹ Kajanto, op. cit., (n. 2), 301; *CIL* III. 4988, 5469; and there is an instance where it occurs as nomen gentile, in *CIL* VI. 32520 a, l. 61: 'Senecius Apronianus'.

²² *CIL* VI. 2815: 'Iovi O.M. / C.Magius C.f. / Pub.Senecio / (centurio) leg. VIII Aug. / v.l.s.' The date of the inscription might well be the same.

²³ Kajanto, loc. cit., (n. 2).

²⁴ *CIL* VI. 26197 = *ILS* 7854: 'Libertor. / et famil. / Seneci. Surae / in fr. p. xxxv / in ag. p. xxxv'. Such is Dessau's explanation.

²⁵ In indexes to *ILS* vol. III. p. 835.

²⁶ See Pl. I.3. In Corinth itself similar letters do not occur elsewhere.

²⁷ J. Scharf, *Studien zur Bevölkerungsgeschichte der*

Rheinlande (Neue deutsche Forschungen, Abt. Alte Gesch., 185) (1938), 17.

²⁸ G. Forni, *Il reclutamento delle legioni da Augusto a Diocleziano* (1953), 65. f.: from the Flavian emperors onwards the percentage of Italians to provincials is 1 to 4, or 5. Italian recruits were mostly from northern Italy.

²⁹ E. Ritterling, 'Legio' in *RE* XII. 2 (1925), 1663.

³⁰ All the evidence about the legion is assembled by Ritterling, op. cit., 1645 f.

³¹ S. Haritonidis, *Arch. Ephem.* (1952), 205 = *AE* 1957, 22. His Corinthian tribe supports this assumption.

IV Flavia, Aurelius Nestor, who is assumed to have been on the governor's staff.³² Was C. Valerius Valens perhaps on some similar duty? Although any attempt to explain his presence in Corinth must be to a certain extent hypothetical, some suggestions have more weight than others. Both Achaia and Macedonia, *provinciae inermes*, possessed no legionary troops of their own within their territory, and depended on the army stationed in the nearby Moesia whenever the need arose. Thus the soldiers who served in the proconsul's office were all presumably detached from the Moesian legions, as, doubtless, was Aurelius Nestor, whose legion was stationed in Moesia Superior from Domitian's time onwards.

As to the position of C. Valerius Valens, it is almost certain that he was a junior officer, perhaps an *optio* or *cornicularius*; so he may well have been employed in the governor's office. There is hardly anything more that can be added within the limits of plausibility.³³ The identification with an *optio* is suggested by the presence of the *optio* Aurelius Nestor, detached, like Valens himself, from one of the Moesian legions. On the other hand he would be expected in such a case to have the staff characteristic of the *optiones*,³⁴ which is a much longer one, equal to or even exceeding a man's height, as it is depicted, for example, on an inscription from Chester of Caecilius Avitus, *optio leg. XX V(aleriae) V(ictricis)*.³⁵ Incidentally he, too, carries a writing-tablet case in his left hand. Had the significance of the writing-tablet case been satisfactorily explained,³⁶ it would contribute much to the present problem, especially as it seems very likely that the combination of the two, namely the *vitis*-like stick and the writing-tablet case—which also appears on the already-mentioned gravestone from Piraeus—denotes a certain military grade; at present it is not yet possible to decide which one.

It may be suggested, therefore, that C. Valerius Valens was sent to Corinth on an unspecified duty at some time when his legion, VIII Augusta, was still stationed in Moesia; he must, then, have been detached after about A.D. 45 but before 70, the date of his legion's transfer to Germany. If this is the case, and since his possession of full citizenship would have been a prerequisite of his enrolment,³⁷ we gain support for the view that full civic rights were bestowed on the Camunni as early as the Julio-Claudian period.

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³² West, *Corinth* VIII. II. 10 (= *AE* 1923, 9). For a commentary cf. R. K. Sherck, 'Roman imperial troops in Macedonia and Achaia', *AJPh* 78 (1957), 62.

³³ Prof. M. Speidel suggests that in the non-military provinces an *optio praetorii* might have been at the head of the proconsular *officium* instead of a centurion; alternatively, Dr. D. J. Breeze suggests that Valens might have been an *optio ad spem ordinis*, or just-promoted centurion. If so, he was perhaps entitled to carry a *vitis*, otherwise usually reserved for centurions. One should not forget, however, that the upper end of the stick differs slightly from the usual form of the *vitis* and agrees in shape with the *vitis*-like stick often found on Achaean and Mace-

donian military tombstones, as was stated above. This is the main reason why both possibilities remain very uncertain.

For the discussion of the whole problem I would like to record my thanks to both Professor Speidel and Dr. Breeze, and also to Dr. H. Ubl.

³⁴ Ubl, op. cit., (n. 19), 434.

³⁵ *RIB* 492; see n. 16.

³⁶ cf. for example D. Gáspár, 'Spätromische Kästchenbeschläge in Pannonien', *Acta Univ. de Attila József nominatae, Acta antiqua et archaeologica* xv. 1 (1971), 12. I owe the reference to Dr. Ubl.

³⁷ If his ancestors had gained the citizenship at any earlier date *per aedilitatis gradum* (cf. *Ins. It.* x. 4, 31) at Brixia, his *tribus* should have been Fabia.