



AD SIGNUM!

THE NEWSLETTER OF LEGIO IX HISPANA

Volume III—Nr. 2, December. 2022

Speaks He... the Prefect

by **Gaius Vorenius**
Prefect Legio IX

Trying to keep members engaged is a daunting task. COVID took its toll on ALL reenactment groups, ours being no exception. This has brought about a certain malaise among many groups. Historical reenacting isn't the same online as in person. What we do between events says much about our status as reenactors. Historical reenacting is more than just events, which represents the effort we make in between those events.



Originally, our concept was not only to do public events, but support our efforts through "immersion events" that presented an opportunity to improve our impressions by learning drills, tactical movement, combat, and "yes" camp techniques. Wearing and using our equipment presented us with a chance to learn more about what it was like to BE a Roman legionnaire. For instance, why is the length of a Furca pole important? We learned that a 6 ft-long Furca presented problems when marching up a steep hill, because it dug into the dirt; therefore, furca poles should be no more than 5 ft.

The objective of wearing equipment is equally important. Wearing and movement

in armor creates a familiarity that real legionnaires would have had because of wearing it every day. In other words, our goal is to appear comfortable wearing our armor. This "experimental





archaeology" raises what we do from a "costume party" to a compelling effort to realistically portray the Roman soldier.

While our intention of "immersion events" has not been fully realized, I am proud of how the members of our unit have displayed our best intentions to present a respectable representation of the Roman military. However, I still believe that we would benefit from an immersion event twice a year. We learned a great deal from our early immersion events and something I think we need to continue. It would mean giving up a weekend, but a small inconvenience compared to the knowledge we could gain.

The immersion events also present an opportunity for potential new recruits to experience what we do and better understand it and, hopefully, embrace it.

Some of the problems we've encountered is that as our unit membership has grown, we have members in different parts of the country, this presents difficulty in trying to find a location and, also some of our members are involved in other time periods. Still, I feel "immersion events" should be done.

Merry Christmas to all and to all a great New Year!

Ad Victorium,

GAIUS UORENUS

Prefect

COHORS III

CENTURIA CASSIUS MARTIALIS

Roman Holidays in this Month:

The Romans celebrated many different holidays, just like we do. The festivals of ancient Rome included many customs which have been carried over into later holidays. The main significance of ancient Rome in relation to modern holidays is that many of these customs still continue today. These were on the old Roman calendar.

- **Saturnalia**, The most important festival of the year was held in honour of Saturn, the god of agriculture. Saturnalia is an ancient Roman festival and holiday in honor of the god Saturn, held on 17 December of the Julian calendar and later expanded with festivities through to 23 December. The holiday was celebrated with a sacrifice at the Temple of Saturn, in the Roman Forum. (see article later in this issue).
- **Consualia** 15 Dec This ancient religious festival featured races on foot and on muleback, and was also held on 21 Aug. Consualia was a Roman festival that takes place twice a year: on August 21 and December 15. On this day, the Romans worshipped Consus, the god who looked after the grain stored in the granaries, or Neptunus Equestris. According to Plutarch, Neptunus Equestris and Consus were different names for the same god.

Ramblings from Atop the Soapbox...

by D.M VARIANVS

Signifer Legio IX

Wow, 2 months in a row... :-o *Is he drinking too much watered wine?*

I like to do these newsletters... and, if I start now, before the Christmas rush at work, who knows... maybe it will get out in time for you. I know Prefect Gaivs Vorenvs will be happy.

What can we do in the new year? Certainly an event at Fort Loudon would be nice. For anything like this to succeed, we need Celts. And we need to nurture the birth of such a unit. I don't care what anyone says, Marcvs is right in that you cannot keep members around for "stand and preen" events. Sure, it can be fun, but only once in awhile. Young guys especially want and need action. I am open to suggestions as to how to help the Celts get started. I know that we have some good info on RomanTimes.Org on how to build a Celt impression:

<<https://www.romantimes.org/index.php?page=Enemies-of-Rome>>

Spread the word. **They don't have to be perfect to start.** This kind of thinking has killed many attempts to start an impression before. You do not have to have custom, hand-woven wool for your clothing. Simple garb, even plaid pajama pants would work – most of them are light-weight material.

Good Lords, you must sit up before you can stand and you must stand before you can walk. Obviously, no modern footwear, eyewear, or other weird crap (oddly-coloured hair comes to mind). In the SCA, they use fake leather and duct

tape and such. We need to get them onboard to try and do it right.

I know that some of us have talked to Celt/SCA types in the past – many of them seem to be of the leftist persuasion. I don't really care, as long as we can keep political discussions from happening.

Events

Sure would be nice to do more than a couple of public events. Even if I can't breathe (stay tuned for info on that)... We had talked about renting Fort Loudon. Be nice to find Celts...

Ad terminus, est victoriam!

J. M. VARIANUS

Signifer, Legio IX

PS: Citizens, please don't get all puffy and hyperventilate if something DOESN'T happen like we post here, it'll not be the end of the world, but we're sure gonna try to get these things done!!!





Legio IX Commandments

- I. Thou shall not engage in actions that harm or embarrass the unit, bring shame to the unit, or let the unit down.
- II. Thou shall respect the rules and wishes of the planners and organizers of all events in which you participate as a member of Legio IX.
- III. Thou shall not appear in modern garb, or visible modern items, at a Legio IX event, encampment, or presentation after the official start time of said event.
- IV. Thou shall learn all other Legio IX members' ROMAN names and use them.
- V. Thou shall not publicly degrade other units or their members in a public setting or forum.
- VI. As a member of Legio IX, you shall always help other Roman reenactors in need if you are able to do so.

At events where you are representing Legio IX to the public, you shall use the utmost discretion when discussing anything modern in front of the public. For example, when asked about where to buy, or how to make, our kit, you can respond on the modern topic, but lengthy discussions on what sort of modern undergarments you are disguising under your tunic shall be forbidden.



SATURNALIA

Saturnalia is an ancient Roman festival and holiday in honor of the god Saturn, held on 17 December of the Julian calendar and later expanded with festivities through to 23 December. The holiday was celebrated with a sacrifice at the Temple of Saturn, in the Roman Forum and a public banquet. This was followed by private gift-giving, continual partying, and a carnival atmosphere that overturned Roman social norms. Public gambling was permitted, and masters provided table service for their slaves as it was seen as a time of liberty for all Romans – both slaves and freedmen alike. A common custom was the election of a “King of the Saturnalia”, who would give orders to people, which were to be followed and preside over the merrymaking. The gifts exchanged were usually gag gifts or small figurines made of wax or pottery known as sigillaria. The poet Catullus called it “the best of days”.

Best Known

Although probably the best-known Roman holiday, Saturnalia as a whole is not described from beginning to end in any single ancient source. Modern understanding of the festival is pieced together from several accounts dealing with various aspects. The Saturnalia was the dramatic setting of the multi-volume work of that name by Macrobius, a Latin writer from late antiquity who is the major source for information about the holiday. Macrobius describes the reign of Justinus’ “King Saturn” as “a time of great happiness, both on account of the universal plenty that prevailed and because as yet there was no division into bond and free – as one may gather from the complete license enjoyed by slaves at the Saturnalia.” In Lucian’s



Saturnalia it is Chronos himself who proclaims a “festive season, when ‘tis lawful to be drunken, and slaves have license to revile their lords”.

In one of the interpretations in Macrobius’s work, Saturnalia is a festival of light leading to the winter solstice, with the abundant presence of candles symbolizing the quest for knowledge and truth. The renewal of light and the coming of the new year was celebrated in the later Roman Empire at the Dies Natalis Solis Invicti, the “Birthday of the Unconquerable Sun”, on 25 December.

Cultural Appropriation

The popularity of Saturnalia continued into the 3rd and 4th centuries CE, and as the Roman Empire came under Christian influence, many of its pagan customs were modified and recast as important parts of the seasonal celebrations of the winter solstice (Christmas) and the New Year.

Historical context

Saturnalia underwent a major reform in 217 BCE, after the Battle of Lake Trasimene, when the Romans suffered one of their most crushing defeats by Carthage during the Second Punic War. Until that time, they had celebrated the



holiday according to Roman custom (more Romano). It was after a consultation of the Sibylline books that they adopted "Greek rite", introducing sacrifices carried out in the Greek manner, the public banquet, and the continual shouts of "io Saturnalia" that became characteristic of the celebration. Cato the Elder (234-149 BCE) remembered a time before the so-called "Greek" elements had been added to the Roman Saturnalia.

It was not unusual for the Romans to offer cult (cultus) to the deities of other nations in the hope of redirecting their favour (see evocatio), and the Second Punic War in particular created pressures on Roman society that led to

a number of religious innovations and reforms. Robert Palmer has argued that the introduction of new rites at this time was in part an effort to appease Ba'al Hammon, the Carthaginian god who was regarded as the counterpart of the Roman Saturn and Greek Cronus. The table service that masters offered their slaves thus would have extended to Carthaginian or African war captives.

Public religious observance

The statue of Saturn at his main temple normally had its feet bound in wool, which was removed for the holiday as an act of liberation. The official rituals were carried out according to



How members of Legio IX Hispana and RomanTimes.Org like to celebrate Saturnalia.



"Greek rite" (*ritus graecus*). The sacrifice was officiated by a priest, whose head was uncovered; in Roman rite, priests sacrificed *capite velato*, with head covered by a special fold of the toga. This procedure is usually explained by Saturn's assimilation with his Greek counterpart Cronus, since the Romans often adopted and reinterpreted Greek myths, iconography, and even religious practices for their own deities, but the uncovering of the priest's head may also be one of the Saturnalian reversals, the opposite of what was normal.

Following the sacrifice the Roman Senate arranged a *lectisternium*, a ritual of Greek origin that typically involved placing a deity's image on a sumptuous couch, as if he were present and actively participating in the festivities. A public banquet followed (*convivium publicum*).

The day was supposed to be a holiday

from all forms of work. Schools were closed, and exercise regimens were suspended. Courts were not in session, so no justice was administered, and no declaration of war could be made. After the public rituals, observances continued at home. On 18 and 19 December, which were also holidays from public business, families conducted domestic rituals. They bathed early, and those with means sacrificed a suckling pig, a traditional offering to an earth deity.

Private festivities

Role reversal

Saturnalia was characterized by role reversals and behavioral license. Slaves were treated to a banquet of the kind usually enjoyed by their masters. Ancient sources differ on the circumstances: some suggest that master and slave dined together, while others indicate that the slaves feasted first, or that the masters actually served the

food. The practice might have varied over time.

Saturnalian license also permitted slaves to disrespect their masters without the threat of a punishment. It was a time for free speech: the Augustan poet Horace calls it "December liberty". In two satires set during the Saturnalia, Horace has a slave offer sharp criticism to his master. Everyone knew, however, that the leveling of the social hierarchy was temporary and had limits; no social





norms were ultimately threatened, because the holiday would end.

The toga, the characteristic garment of the male Roman citizen, was set aside in favor of the Greek synthesis, colourful "dinner clothes" otherwise considered in poor taste for daytime wear. Romans of citizen status normally went about bare-headed, but for the Saturnalia donned the pilleus, the conical felt cap that was the usual mark of a freedman. Slaves, who ordinarily were not entitled to wear the pilleus, wore it as well, so that everyone was "pilleated" without distinction.

The participation of freeborn Roman women is implied by sources that name gifts for women, but their presence at banquets may have depended on the custom of their time; from the late Republic onward, women mingled socially with men more freely than they had in earlier times. Female entertainers were certainly present at some otherwise all-male gatherings. Role playing was implicit in the Saturnalia's status reversals, and there are hints of mask-wearing or "guising". No theatrical events are mentioned in connection with the festivities, but the classicist Erich Segal saw Roman comedy, with its cast of impudent, free-wheeling slaves and libertine seniors, as imbued with the Saturnalian spirit.

Gambling

Gambling and dice-playing, normally prohibited or at least frowned upon, were permitted for all, even slaves. Coins and nuts were the stakes. On the Calendar of Philocalus, the Saturnalia is represented by a man wearing a fur-trimmed coat next to a table with dice, and a caption reading: "Now you have license, slave, to game with your master." Rampant overeating and drunkenness became the rule, and a sober person the exception.

Seneca looked forward to the holiday, if somewhat tentatively, in a letter to a friend:

"It is now the month of December, when the greatest part of the city is in a bustle. Loose reins are given to public dissipation; everywhere you may hear the sound of great preparations, as if there were some real difference between the days devoted to Saturn and those for transacting business. ... Were you here, I would willingly confer with you as to the plan of our conduct; whether we should eve in our usual way, or, to avoid singularity, both take a better supper and throw off the toga."

Some Romans found it all a bit much. Pliny describes a secluded suite of rooms in his Laurentine villa, which he used as a retreat:

"...especially during the Saturnalia when the rest of the house is noisy with the licence of the holiday and festive cries. This way I don't hamper the games of my people and they don't hinder my work or studies."

Gift-giving

The Sigillaria on 19 December was a day of gift-giving. Because gifts of value would mark social status contrary to the spirit of the season, these were often the pottery or wax figurines called sigillaria made specially for the day, candles, or "gag gifts", of which Augustus was particularly fond. Children received toys as gifts. In his many poems about the Saturnalia, Martial names both expensive and quite cheap gifts, including writing tablets, dice, knucklebones, moneyboxes, combs, toothpicks, a hat, a hunting knife, an axe, various lamps, balls, perfumes, pipes, a pig, a sausage, a parrot, tables, cups, spoons, items of clothing, statues, masks, books, and pets. Gifts might be as costly as a slave or exotic animal, but Martial suggests that token gifts of low intrinsic value inversely measure the high quality of a friendship. Patrons or "bosses" might



pass along a gratuity (*sigillarium*) to their poorer clients or dependents to help them buy gifts. Some emperors were noted for their devoted observance of the *Sigillaria*.

In a practice that might be compared to modern greeting cards, verses sometimes accompanied the gifts. Martial has a collection of poems written as if to be attached to gifts. Catullus received a book of bad poems by "the worst poet of all time" as a joke from a friend.

Gift-giving was not confined to the day of the *Sigillaria*. In some households, guests and family members received gifts after the feast in which slaves had shared.

King of the Saturnalia

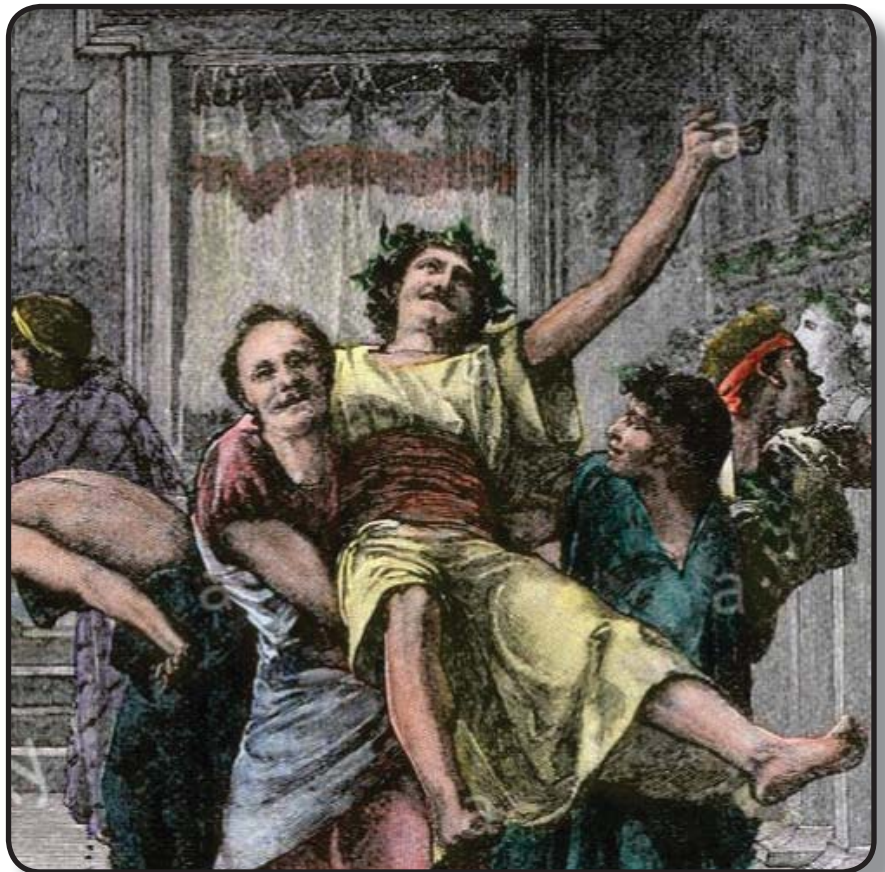
Imperial sources refer to a *Saturnalicus princeps* ("Ruler of the Saturnalia"), who ruled as master of ceremonies for the proceedings. He was appointed by lot, and has been compared to the medieval Lord of Misrule at the Feast of Fools. His capricious commands, such as "Sing naked!" or "Throw him into cold water!", had to be obeyed by the other guests at the convivium: he creates and (mis)rules a chaotic and absurd world. The future emperor Nero is recorded as playing the role in his youth.

Since this figure does not appear in accounts from the Republican period, the *princeps* of the Saturnalia may have developed as a satiric response to the new era of rule by a *princeps*, the title assumed by the first emperor Augustus to avoid the hated connotations of the word "king" (*rex*). Art and literature under Augustus celebrated his reign as a new Golden Age, but the Saturnalia makes a mockery of a world in

which law is determined by one man and the traditional social and political networks are reduced to the power of the emperor over his subjects. In a poem about a lavish Saturnalia under Domitian, Statius makes it clear that the emperor, like Jupiter, still reigns during the temporary return of Saturn.

Io Saturnalia

The phrase *io Saturnalia* was the characteristic shout or salutation of the festival, originally commencing after the public banquet on the single day of 17 December. The interjection *io* (Greek *ἰώ*, *ĩō*) is pronounced either with two syllables (a short *i* and a long *o*) or as a single syllable (with the *i* becoming the Latin consonantal *j* and pronounced *yō*). It was a strongly emotive ritual exclamation or invocation, used for instance in announcing triumph or celebrating Bacchus, but also to punctuate a joke.





SLAVERY IN ANCIENT ROME

by Gaius Vorenvs

Author's note: This article is not a justification of the abhorrent practice of slavery, but to offer a view of it as practiced in ancient times.

Slavery was practiced by most, if not all ancient cultures. Egyptians, Babylonians, Celtic and Gallic tribes, Greeks, Persians, and the Romans. Ancient cultures had two alternatives; 1) defeat the enemy completely, putting the inhabitants to the sword or 2) take advantage of the resource and use their labor to help the victor.

Different than we know it

Slavery practiced in ancient times was different in some ways to that practiced by Britain and early America; it was far more brutal. This does not lessen its abhorrence, but the context of the times in which it was used may help understand its practice. No matter when practiced slavery encouraged the view of the slaves not as human beings but a resource.

Slavery was a more complex practice than we might think. The ancient civilizations were limited by the lack of technology; therefore, manpower was the solution. While ships used sails upon the sea, warships required more power for ramming speed and maneuverability which men with oars could provide. As a resource they could be chained to the ship and the oars and became an expendable item because they had an



adequate supply for replacement. The bigger the ship; the more oars and men were needed. The men on the oars were a part of the "engine" of the ship and their loss was noted as a loss of the ship, not the loss of lives. Many of those assigned to the ships had been rebels, former combatants, or political prisoners, so the loss of their lives didn't matter. It solved to problems by ridding the culture of undesirable elements while allowing the benefit of them as a resource. This was a widespread practice among the ancient navies.

Alternatively, slavery on the land also had its brutal side. Those that continued to rebel or committed violent crimes would be sent to the mines or quarries and worked to death. An efficient way of stifling unrest, while receiving help from the labor the slaves could provide.

The exception is the education and skill level of the individual. Those that could offer carpenter, sculpting, or crafting skills were used to help build temples, buildings, or make things (again this is before industrialization.)

The Romans admired the Greeks and considered them highly

cultured. Greek slaves were highly valued to be used as teachers, medics, and personal attendants (body slaves), etc. The lives of these slaves were far better than their less fortunate counterparts sweating in the bottom of the hold of a ship or in the dusty depths of the mines. Over time many of these skilled slaves earned their freedom.





Those that had physical abilities were trained as gladiators. Far from the movie versions, these highly trained and highly skilled "athletes" performed in the arenas akin to modern day wrestling. Though the possibility of death, by accident or design, was always present. Some enjoyed the adoration modern day audiences give to popular sports heroes.

The purpose of this article is to give you a glimpse into the practice of slavery in the Roman Empire. In the context of the ancient world, a compromise seems to have developed between the conquering of another people and the choice of enslaving them or killing them. While it seems brutal to our modern day sensibility, it gave a way for some to survive.



CINGULUM FOR REENACTORS

by D. M. Varianvs

Parts of this article come from the Legio IX Handbook.

The terms "*cingulum*" and the "*balteus*" are often confused and/or used inter-changeably... For us, we will use the term "*cingulum*" for the soldier's military belt and the term "*balteus*" for things such as a sword baldric. The *cingulum* is the traditional Roman soldier's military belt, whilst the *balteus* is an ordinary or common belt. The term "*balteus*" can also refer to the baldric-style belt used to carry a *gladius*, *pugio*, *loculus*, etc. When you think of the Roman soldier, one of the things you think of, is the dangling straps (called *baltea*) hanging at the front of his belt.

The Mark of a Soldier

The *cingulum* is a mark of a soldier – not only that, it's really a status symbol of being a soldier. Worn at all times, even off duty, **only soldiers** were allowed, by law, to wear this unique belt. It may have had some defensive capabilities; it may represent rank or awards... it is more likely way for the soldier to show his status... we just don't know. The archaeological evidence suggests that most of these belts were plain and sparsely adorned, some however, were intricately elaborate. One theory is that since Roman soldiers did not have a lot of things to spend their pay on (wine and women), they spent it on making their gear fancier – as a status thing. Is this the way it was? Who knows, it's an informed guess – but modern soldiers sure do this kind of thing – think about it...

Simple Cingulum

For our purposes as common soldiers, a simple *cingulum* is quite acceptable – preferred really. Of course, reenactors

tend to want to look "salty"; like a veteran and to do so right out of the gate. Real soldiers do this too, as witnessed by things like WW2 AfrikaKorps soldiers bleaching their hats to look worn. The thing is, reenactors also tend to buy and wear what they see *other* reenactors wearing and that isn't always right. In the case of the *cingulum*, most of the belts you see for sale now are mass manufactured in the sub-continent and those companies have this need to cast everything, thus making the belts heavy – like a diver's weight belt. *Ugh.* (Right Alex?!).

Cast or stamped

Most of the mid-1st century belts had **stamped** plates, not cast. Today, that can cost some \$\$ to get right, but there are ways to do it. Also, the soldier's belts would not all be the same – they were individualized. Many, nay **MOST**, of the belts that we see on reenactors and for sale, look like they were purchased at a Tijuana flea-market... Original belts were actually well-made and were acquired almost as a status symbol.





Shown here is one of the better reproduction belts made by Deepeeka. It is called their "Tekije belt with tassets" — "Tassets" being the result of some poor translation (collectors and reenactors would most likely call it an 'apron'). Deepeeka also makes and sells the belt without the baltea (apron). <<<<

Fancy belts

If you just HAVE to buy a fancy belt, Kult of Athena has a couple of decent repros, the **Reingonehim Cingulum** like

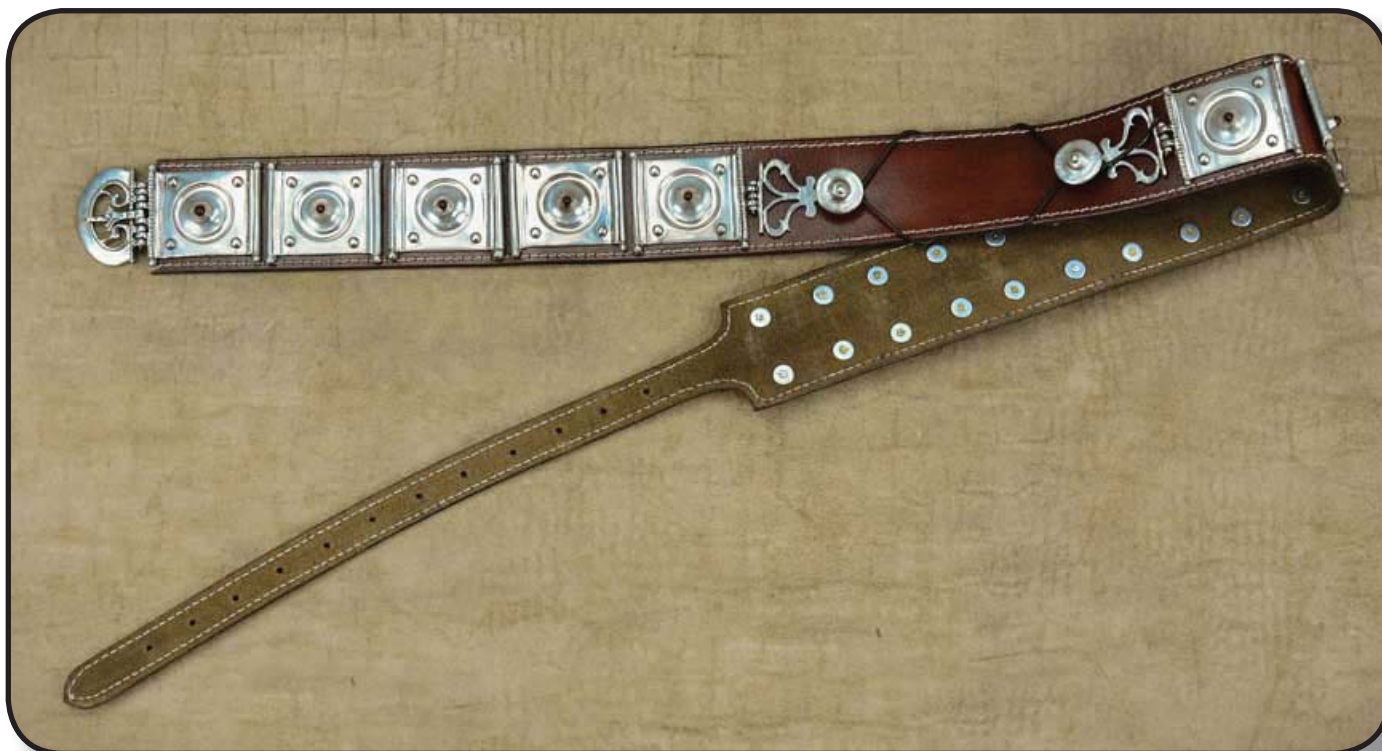
Marcvs wears and the **Roman Tekije Cingulum with Tassets**. ("Tassets"... don't be using that term or **you will be** getting your feet caned).



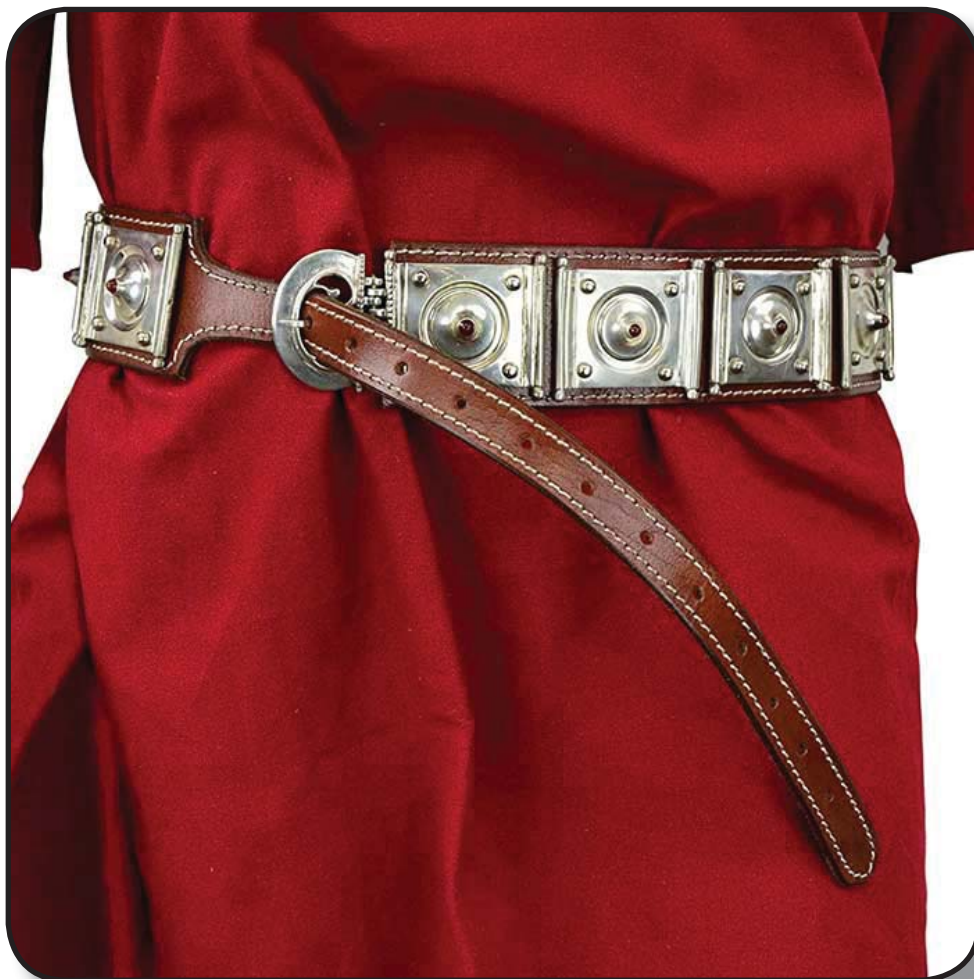
Shown above is a detail of the buckle and "lamna" plates of the "Tekije belt" — this being the model without the baltea.



Shown above is a detail shot of the buckle, "lamna" plates and the baltea of the "Tekije belt".



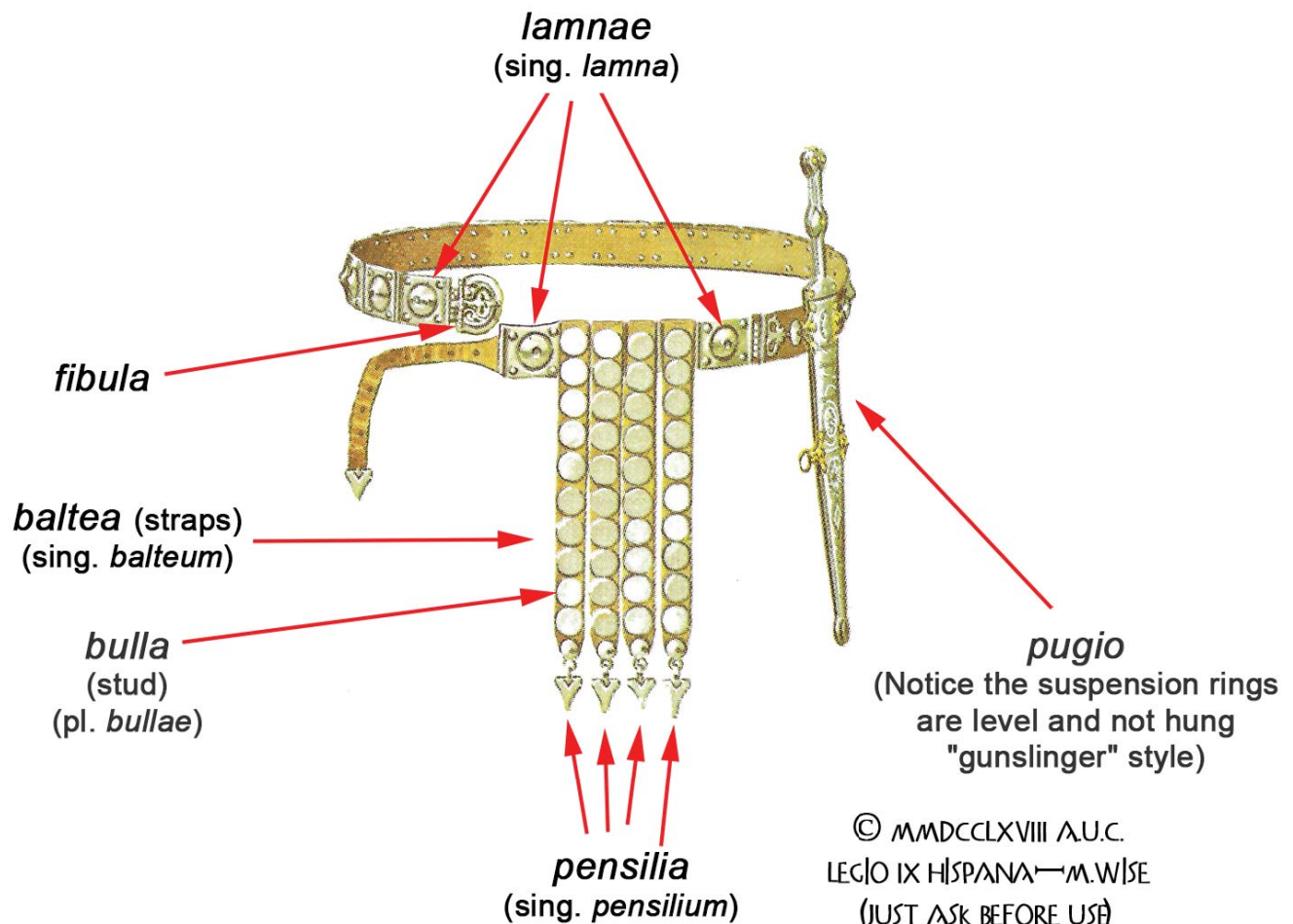
Shown above, is Deepeeka's "Reingonehim Cingulum" — notice that it has a more "fine" look than most of the repros. you see.



Here to the left, is a good detail shot showing the buckle and plates of the Deepeeka "Reingonehim Cingulum". Yes, there is a glass "jewel" in the center of the "lamina" plates.



CINGULUM NOMENCLATURE



Better

Better would be to make a simple leather belt, as issued, and take your time to make one that suits you. **Clang Armory** <www.clangarmory.com/roman%20pics/balteus%2001.html> makes **really nice** stamped plates and parts. He also makes the "barbell" fittings that go on either end of each belt plate.

For **really NICE** and beautiful belt stuff, head over to **Legio III Scythica's** website and look. You will see how the belts should be. <<https://legio-iii-scythica.com/index.php/en/roman-historical-restorations.html>>. As with all things, **you get what you pay for**. Nice and accurate costs. Only you can decide. Saying all this, again, I

suggest that you build your kit slowly and with care. Just ask us — we can give you some good input on this.

A tradition

A tradition in Legio IX Hispana, has been for the new miles to first make a simple cingulum. It's quick, inexpensive and really, it's better to have a simple cingulum when you first join, than none at all or a diver's belt. A simple cingulum has a basic "D" buckle and no ornamental plates or if it has plates, they are simple flat bronze or brass sheet, with 4-6 baltea.

As you acquire other gear and kit, you are encouraged to acquire a more ornamented cingulum... when that is

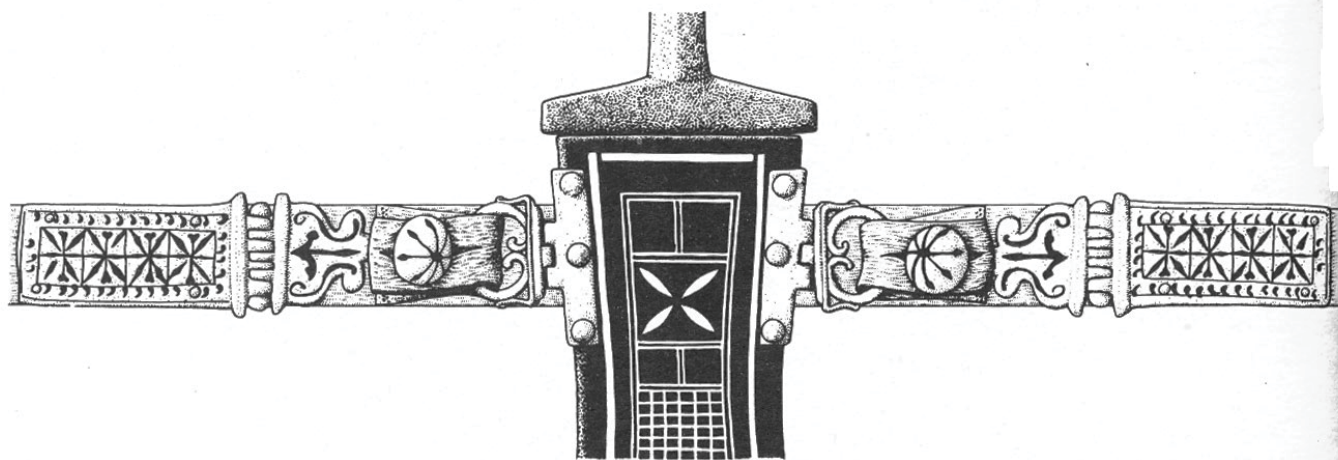


FIG. 2. Reconstruction of the likely means of attaching the dagger scabbard to the belt. It is based on the evidence of the surviving metal fittings, and of the tombstones of Annaius from Bingerbrück (pl. xivb) and of an unknown soldier from Mainz (pl. xva). It is assumed that the leather belt was continuous and was fastened solely by a buckle at the front; the leather strips, attaching the frogs to the hinged tags, are conjectural but would allow the scabbard to be removed neatly from the belt

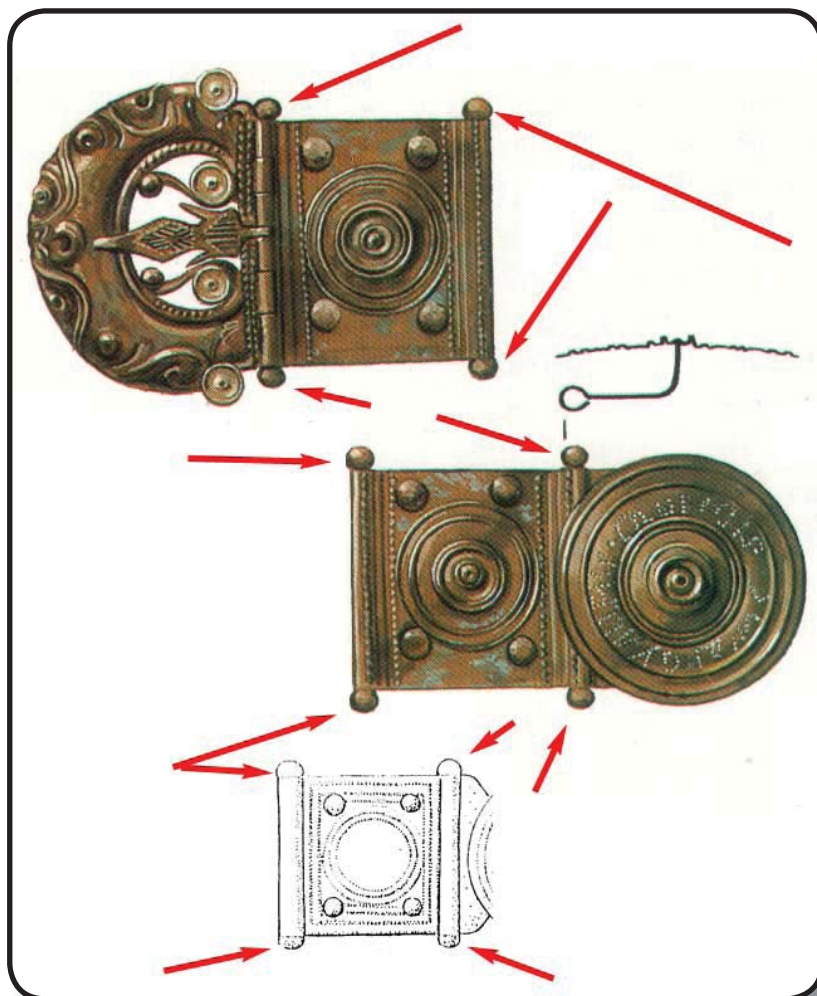
A detail from a book showing how the pugio should be attached. Notice the straps are horizontal, not dropping the pugio down like you're a gunfighter at the OK Corral. Little things like this help.

complete, if you wish, you can then donate your simple cingulum into the unit's loaner kit or pass it along to a new recruit you are sponsoring.

"Gunslinger-Style" Belt

Sculptural evidence suggests the existence of double length cingulum – essentially a thinner belt (with cast belt plates) long enough to go about the soldier's waist twice, or perhaps there were two of these thinner cingulum – we don't really know. These type belts were used more in the "Augustan" period... Don't make this your primary belt – wear only for an early impression...

A piece of art showing the "barbell" fittings that many repros miss.





A complicated subject

Hopefully, this is all not too confusing. Sadly, this subject can get complicated and it is easy to just go off the rails. I will post some art of relic original belt plates at the end of this article. By no means are they the final word on this. When looking at LegioIII's site, you will see photos of the real deal and very skillfully-made repros that will give you an idea what the cingulum should look like.

Some new words – well, for modern folks

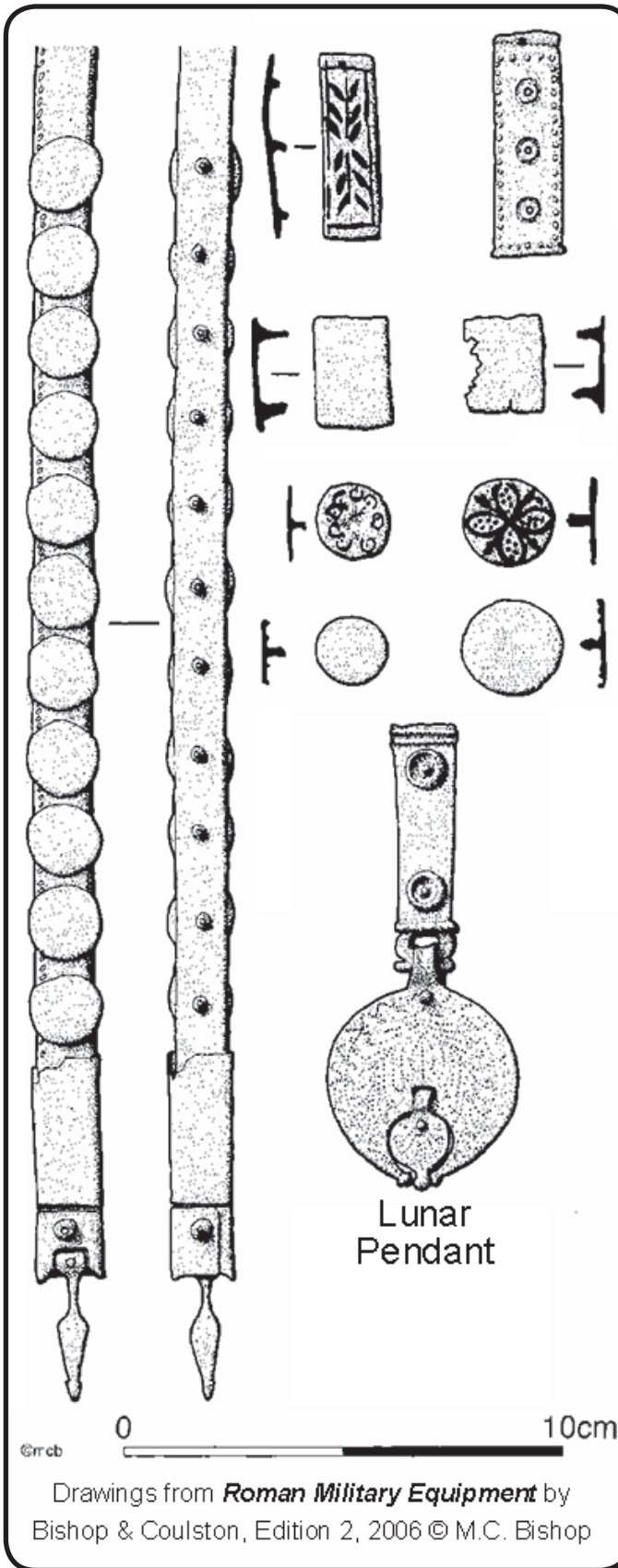
Drawing of baltea, bull and a Lunar pensilum

For a long time, we in the modern world and especially, Roman reenactors didn't know the correct term for the belt parts – thus using made up terms like "danglium" or "jinglium" but now, through the work of numerous collectors and reenactors, we have the actual terms.

The ACTUAL Roman military word for the hanging straps is baltea. A strap, including an apron strap, in Latin is: balteum (pl. baltea). This is the diminutive form of balteus, thus, a "little belt".

<<<< A reference drawing of baltea, bulla and a Lunar pendant (penisilium) from Drawings from Roman Military Equipment by Bishop & Coulston, Edition 2, 2006 © M.C. Bishop

The studs on the baltea are called *bulla* like the Roman child's pendant. There was a huge amount of differing bulla produced. I have seen a large photo of an assortment, but cannot find them right now. I can tell you that Clang Armory makes a large assortment of copies of the real thing. Go on over and check his products out. Then, you can really envision how they were.



Drawings from *Roman Military Equipment* by Bishop & Coulston, Edition 2, 2006 © M.C. Bishop



Pendant

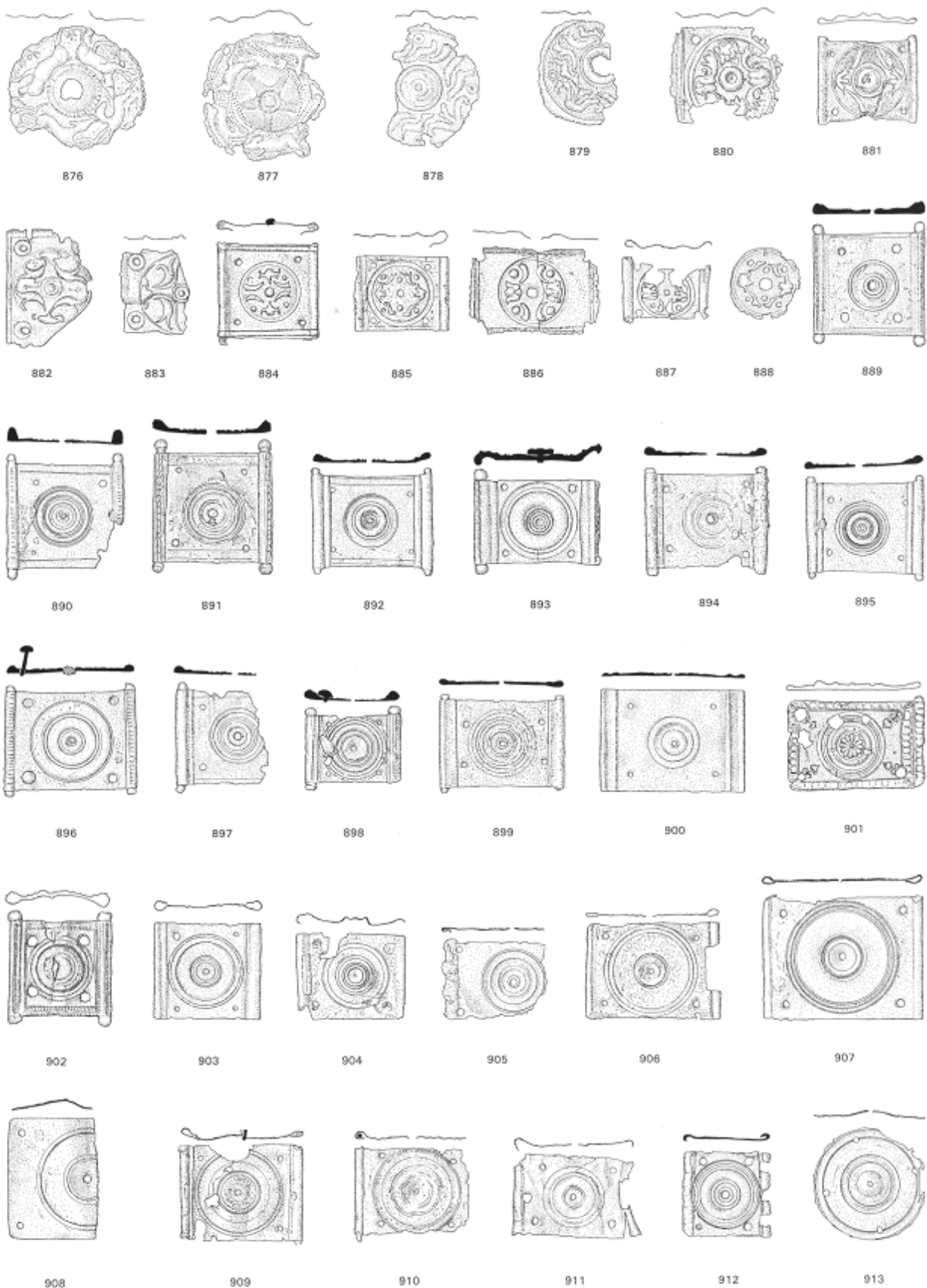
The pendant at the very end of the "apron" strap: pensilium (pl. pensilia). Pensilium is a substantiative neuter adjective, meaning "a pendent thing." No, it doesn't mean what you think – although there have been found pensilium in the shape of that. The Romans were into that. Don't judge the past by your modern puritanical notions.

It is attested as piece of military gear in Granius Licianus 26.1.1, describing a type of cavalry harness pendant used by equestrian nobles.

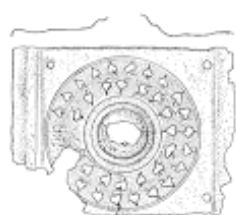
If you are talking about the plates on the terminal of each apron strap that hold the pensilia, it is: lamna (pl. lamnae) for "plates" or balteum lamna for "strap plate" – better is balteum lamnis (pl. balteum lamnis) for "strap plates."



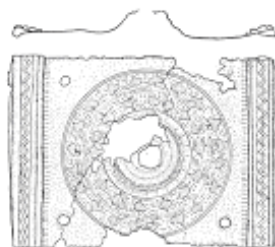
The stela of Largennius. Some people think this shows the apron/baltea separately from the belt, however.... You can see the *Fascia Ventralis* (sash) behind the belt and that square thing sticking out the top is a wax tablet.



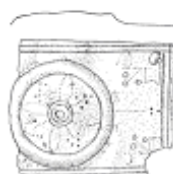
Verteidigungswaffen, Gürtelbleche. Bronze, 901.902 Blei. M. 1:2.



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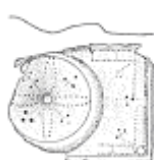
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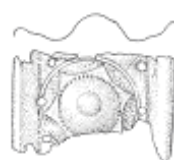
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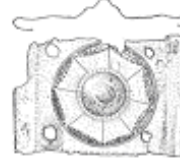
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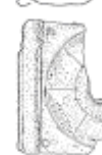
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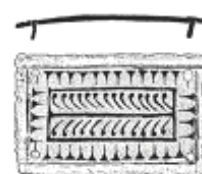
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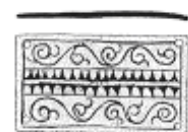
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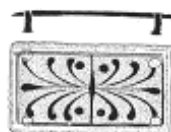
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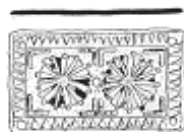
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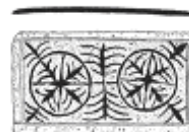
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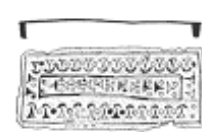
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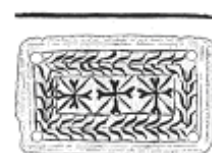
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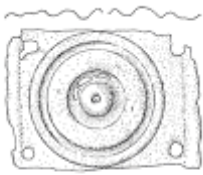


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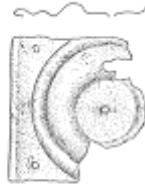


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Verteidigungswaffen, Gürtelbleche. Bronze, z.T. mit Niello. M. 1:2.



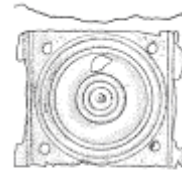
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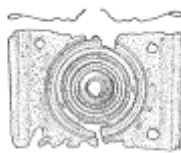
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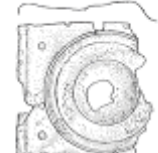
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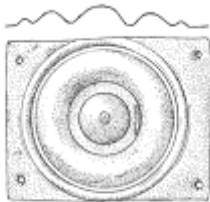
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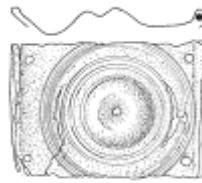
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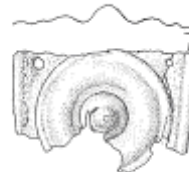
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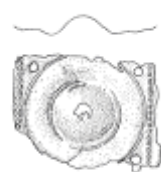
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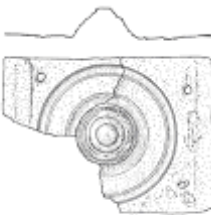
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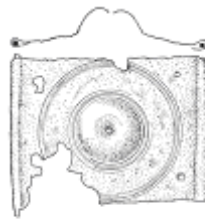
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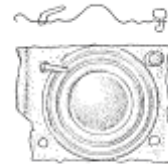
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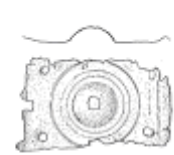
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Verteidigungswaffen, Gürtelbeche. Bronze. M. 1:2.



SUDIS OR VALI

(palisade stakes)

The *sudis* (pl. *sudes*) is a Latin word meaning stake. It was the name given to stakes carried by Roman legionaries for employment as a field fortification, sometimes also called *vallus*. It is frequently, but incorrectly, called a *pilum murale* meaning "wall spear."

The stakes were carried by Roman legionaries, typically two were carried by each soldier.

Each stake was made of hardwood, usually oak, about 150–180 cm (4.9–5.9 ft) long and about 50–100 mm (2.0–3.9 in) wide at the thickest point. Square in section, the shape tapers to a point at both ends. The central part is narrowed in a way that strongly suggests the function of a handle, although this



may not be its actual purpose. Examples that have been found are rough hewn.

It seems clear that the stakes were used to form a temporary defense. However, the exact manner in which stakes were used is the subject of debate among experts.

It is possible that the stakes were incorporated into the ramparts of a Roman marching camp (*castra*). Projecting from the ramparts at an angle, they would present a barrier to an attacker attempting to climb up. Alternatively, they could have been placed vertically at the top of the rampart as a fence. Experiments with reconstructions have been disappointing in that such barriers are not strong, as the symmetry of the stakes makes them easy to pull out of the ground.

It has been proposed that the stakes were lashed in pairs at intervals along a log or beam to form a *Cheval de frise*. This could be used, for example, as a moveable barrier to bar a gateway. Alternatively, three stakes might be roped together into a defense resembling



the "Czech hedgehog" – a sort of giant caltrop. Defenses of this type, employed en masse, can be pushed aside only with difficulty and cannot be collapsed. The advantage of such suggested modes of use is that they are consistent with the symmetry of the stakes and account for the hand grip at the centre which is required to bind the stakes together.

In the Battle of Mons Algidus (458 BC), Cincinnatus ordered his men to provide twelve val-li each, and used them to build a fortification around the Aequi, who were, at the same time surrounding another Roman army.

As you can see from these photos, we have a bit of work to do...





Guidelines for Submission of Material to Ad Signum

We encourage, in fact, absolutely need, contributions of material to this publication if it is to continue. This includes, but is not limited to, articles, letters, fiction writing, practical tips, reports on events, historical research, original or duplicated art work and photographs. Just about anything to do with the Roman Army, The Roman Empire, and its enemies and Allies and/or the Ancient World can be used (try to go light on Greek stuff).

The editing, design, layout and pre-press production of **Ad Signum** is done by Decimvs and now sometimes, Josephus. We have been using desktop publishing software since the olden days (right after Caesar died), in this case both PC and Mac platforms Adobe InDesign and Photoshop, MS Word is used for much of the editing and Adobe Illustrator and CorelDraw are the primary applications used to produce this publication. This allows for a lot of different options in submitting material.

The following is a list of our submission guidelines and policies. These will give you an idea of how to best prepare stuff before you send it, and what will happen to it after we get it.

Written Material

General: It is the policy of **Ad Signum** to proofread all articles or letters and edit them for length, accuracy, grammar, spelling, punctuation, clarity and taste where necessary. We appreciate receiving material that is as finished as possible, however, do not worry about getting everything perfect—just get it done, and we will take care of the polishing! If you are concerned that our editing might affect something important or sensitive, we will be glad

to e-mail you a proof galley of your article if requested.

Electronic Format

The following are the preferred media and software for the transferal of articles written with word processing, in order of preference:

1. In M.S. Word: **doc** or **docx** format
2. In any other software
3. An e-mail with formatting.
4. Text files written in notepad or wordpad or whatever app you use on your phone.
5. In any other software that we can import or access.

Articles may be E-mailed to us, through one of our emails listed.

Paper Format

The following is the preferred format for articles submitted on paper (in order of preference):

1. Typed, double-spaced using upper and lower case style (not all capital letters)
2. Neatly hand printed.
3. Cuneform writing on clay tablets.
4. Written in legible handwriting

Artwork

Photocopies of line drawings will work fine. Pen and ink (with black ink) drawings work best; pencil sketches don't reproduce as well. Artwork will be returned on request.

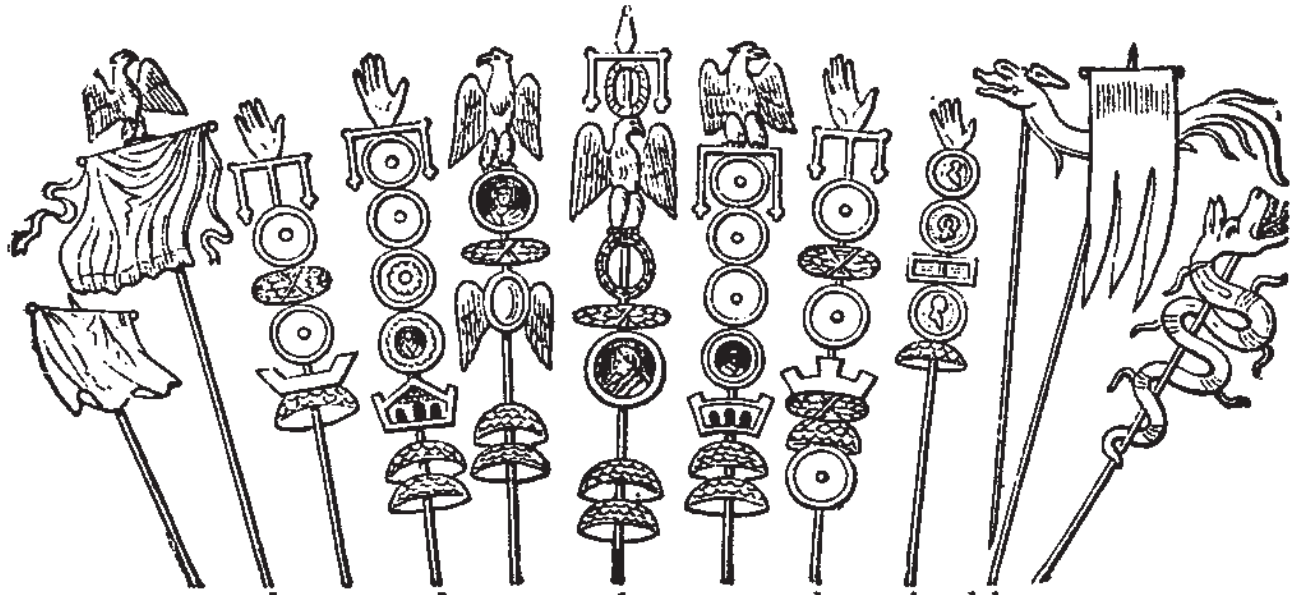
Photographs

Preferably something scanned and/or from a digital camera (or where you stole it on the 'Net). We prefer NOT to get photos that we have to scan, but will do it **if** we have to, but you'll likely be cleaning the latrines or peeling fava beans next week.



Upcoming Events

- April xx-xx. 2023: **Private Event:** Ft. Loudon Pa
- September 2-3, 2023: **Virginia Scottish Games:** Great Meadow, The Plains, Va
- *More to come...*



Unit Contacts

- Prefect (Calmer of things, wise elder statesman, spirit of the unit):
Rob Zienta C:410.599.4229 <rzienta30@gmail.com>
- Centurio/Optio (Tactics and Quartermaster/Authenticity Officer):
Mark Graef: 571.279.8688 <m_equit_lentulus@yahoo. com>
- Signifer (Administrator, recruiting, etc.): **Marsh Wise:**
775.223.1967 <varianus@reenactor.net>

The Fine Print...

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The Legio IX website is: <https://www.legioix.org/>