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## A Hitherto Unrecognised Cornovian on a Roman Military Diploma (*RMD* I, 35)\*

By DAN DANA

### ABSTRACT

*A military diploma of 2 July A.D. 133 (RMD I, 35), first discovered in 1960 but published several times since, has provoked a debate concerning the origin of the discharged soldier, with commentators proposing either Corinium in Britain or the Carnacates in Lower Pannonia. The new reading presented here suggests that the soldier was actually Cornovian, allowing a reassessment of the recruitment of Brittones in the Roman auxilia.*

**Keywords:** Britain; Cornovians; Dacia; onomastics; recruitment; Roman military diplomas

A Roman military diploma of 2 July A.D. 133, discovered in August 1960 in the *praetentura* of the auxiliary fort at Gherla (Cluj dept., Romania), concerns soldiers discharged from the army of Dacia Porolissensis;<sup>35</sup> only Tabella I was found, almost complete and in a good state of conservation, including the wires (FIG. 4).

\*The following abbreviations are used:

- AE* *L'Année Epigraphique* (1888–)
- CIL* *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (1863–)
- IDR* *Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae* (1975–)
- ISM* *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris Graecae et Latinae* (1980–)
- HD* Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg
- ND* *Notitia Dignitatum* (ed. O. Seeck, Berlin, 1876)
- OPEL* B. Lőrincz and F. Redő (eds), *Onomasticon Provinciarum Europae Latinarum I–IV* (1994–2005)
- RIB* I R.G. Collingwood and R.P. Wright (eds), *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain I, Inscriptions on Stone* (1965)
- RZGM* B. Pferdehirt, *Römische Militärdiplome und Entlassungsurkunden in der Sammlung des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums I–II* (2004)
- RMD* M.M. Roxan (then P. Holder), *Roman Military Diplomas* (1978–)

<sup>35</sup> Daicovicu and Protase 1964 (photo fig. 1a, drawing fig. 1b) (cf. *AE* 1967, 390); Daicovicu and Protase 1961 (photo pl. III) (= *AE* 1962, 255); Daicovicu and Protase 1965a (photos and drawing pl. XXXI) (cf. *AE* 1965, 220);

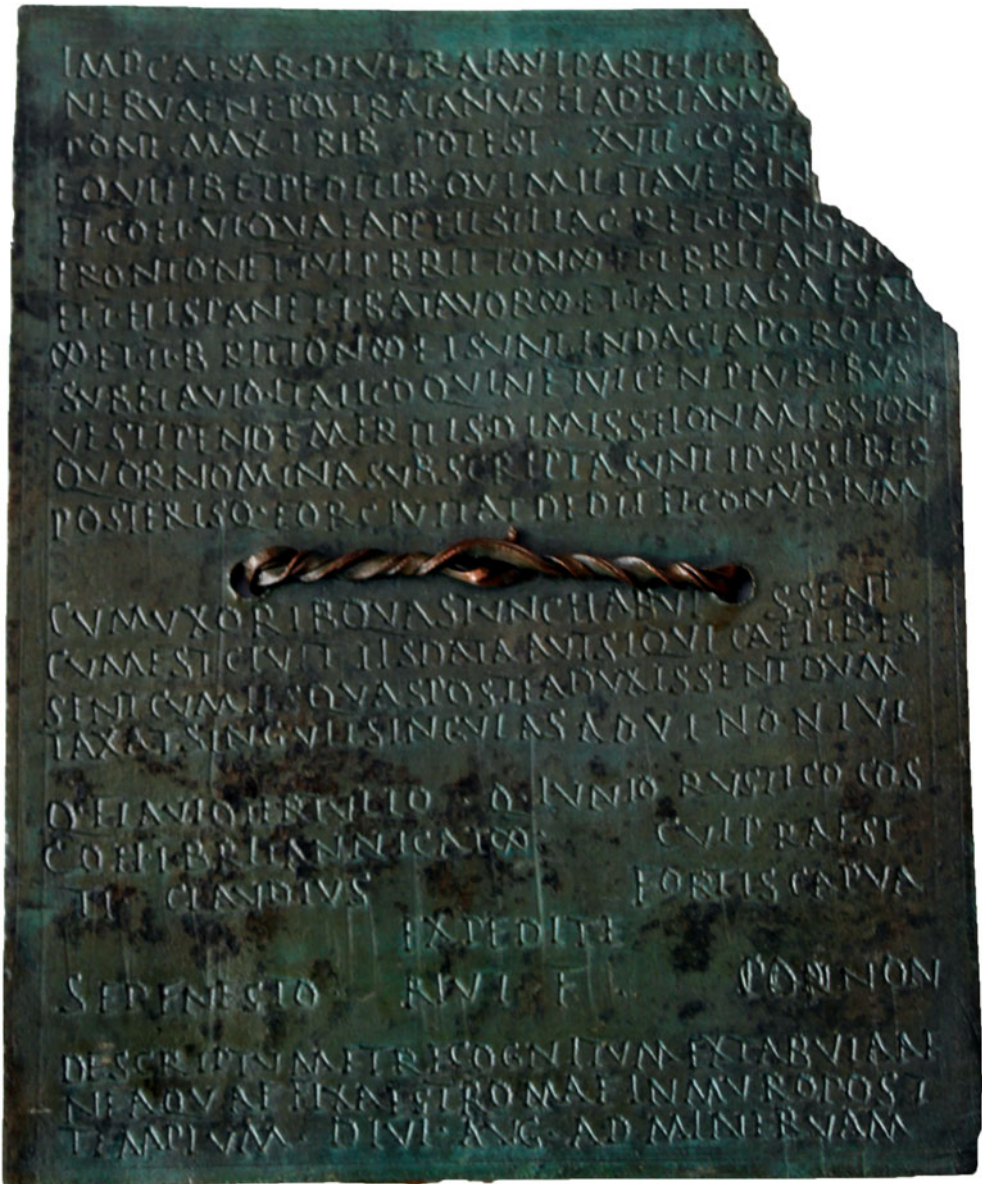


FIG. 4. Military diploma from Gherla, Tabella I outer. (Reproduced courtesy of MNIR, Bucharest, inv. no. 37850)

The recipient of the diploma served in the *coh. I Britannica milliaria*. Its first editors chose to give his *origo* in the following manner: *Sepenesto • Rivi • f(ilio) • Cor(i?)non*.<sup>36</sup> They noticed that the scribe first engraved PANNON, before substituting the first three letters with COR (FIG. 5), in order to give, according to them, an ethnic COR(I)NON. Their hesitation between CORNON and CORINON opened up the possibility of a place-name in Britannia, in this case *Corinium Dobunorum* (Cirencester). Accordingly, they considered that the two names (*Sepenestus* and *Rivus/Rivius*), which are otherwise unattested, were of Celtic derivation. Disagreeing with this view, the editors of the *Journal of Roman Studies* inserted a redactional note,<sup>37</sup> proposing instead to connect the correction with the *Cornacates* (and their capital *Cornacum*), a tribe in Lower Pannonia. In support they quoted a diploma of 13 February, pre-dating A.D. 54, from Illyricum, which was granted *equiti Dasenti Dasmeni f(ilio), Cornac(ati)*;<sup>38</sup> they therefore argued that the two names on the Gherla diploma were of Illyrian origin.<sup>39</sup> This was the beginning of a long-running controversy, with successive editors and commentators choosing between one of two positions — either CORNON or CORN(AC) or similar; most, however, have held to the Pannonian hypothesis. I.I. Russu, for instance, accepted: ‘*Pannon. (Cornon?)*’.<sup>40</sup> In his commentary, however, he seems to agree with a Pannonian origin and that the father’s name is either Illyrian or Celtic; if so, *Sepenestus* would have originated in Lower Pannonia, where his unit was garrisoned, before moving to Upper Moesia, then on to Dacia.<sup>41</sup> M.R. Roxan likewise accepted: ‘*Cornon. (?)* aut *Pannon. (?)*’.<sup>42</sup> She further quotes a letter of J.C. Mann, who preferred to accept CORNAC or the like.<sup>43</sup>

The same Pannonian origin (*Cornacates*) was vigorously defended by András Mócsy<sup>44</sup> and was also accepted by Anthony Birley, Constantin C. Petolescu<sup>45</sup> and, more recently, by Diana Grbić.<sup>46</sup> In his classic paper about the ‘soldiers’ homes’, M.P. Speidel gives the home of *Sepenestus* as ‘Pannon.’, and states: ‘One wonders why the Pannonian of diploma [RMD I] 35, having served in Dacia, tried to change his home from PANNON to CORNAC. Would it have made a difference if he had returned home?’, suggesting perhaps that the amendment was not an official attempt, but an unofficial, incomplete one; irrespective of this, the same Pannonian origin is privileged.<sup>47</sup> While the debate might thus seem closed, my intention here is to re-examine both the reading and the understanding of this diploma.

Daicovicu 1969, 110–11, Kat. C6 (photo pl. 25); IDR I, 11 (photo and drawing p. 104, fig. 32ab); RMD I, 35; Bordenache *et al.* 1970, 133–4, no. C3; Russu 1973, 11–13; Protase *et al.* 2008, 43–4/207, no. 2 (drawing pl. II); Grbić 2014, 233–4 (no. 131: [[Pannon.]] <<Cornac(ati)>>) and 336; HD 016873 (CORNON).

<sup>36</sup> Daicovicu and Protase 1961.

<sup>37</sup> ‘Editorial Note’ appended to Daicovicu and Protase 1961, 70 (and detailed photo, fig. 2).

<sup>38</sup> CIL XVI, 2.

<sup>39</sup> Since that time, we know of three other diplomas for the *Cornacates*: A.D. 99, unknown province (unpublished: *Cornac(ati)*); 27 September A.D. 154, Lower Pannonia (RMD III, 169: *Cornac(ati)*); 27 December A.D. 158, Lower Pannonia (unpublished, info. P. Holder: *Cornac(ati)*).

<sup>40</sup> IDR I, 11.

<sup>41</sup> On another occasion, he considers the two names as Celtic (Russu 1977, 359).

<sup>42</sup> RMD I, 35.

<sup>43</sup> See also Holder 1980, 303; Spaul 2000, 194.

<sup>44</sup> Mócsy 1964a (cf. *AE* 1965, 28); 1964b; 1965; 1986, 449; readings accepted in *OPEL* IV, 30 and 68. According to Mócsy, the scribe firstly engraved CORNA..., then PANNON; he thinks, as J.C. Mann, that the origin of the soldiers in service outside Pannonia was a generic one (*Pannonius*), and not that of their tribe (a view which is refuted by the evidence of military diplomas), and that the names were rather Illyrian. This hypothesis provoked both the reaction of Daicovicu and Protase (1965b), defending the initial reading, and the response by Mócsy (1965) in the same Hungarian periodical. Once again, Mócsy maintained a correction of CORN into PANNON (cf. *AE* 1965, 28), which is impossible if one looks at the detailed photos; see also Balla and Tóth 1968, 71, no. 7.

<sup>45</sup> Birley 1980, 103. Petolescu 2002, 87, even supposed that an heir of the veteran (in service and released at Cășeu) served in the unit garrisoned at Gherla (*ala II Pannoniorum*), where he lost the diploma; this looks rather unlikely. Another diploma was discovered at Gherla, for a horseman of the *ala Brittonum c.R.* (of 10 August A.D. 123, RMD I, 21), belonging to a different unit than the one supposed to have occupied the fort by itself; the recipient was from Lower Pannonia (*Sirmium*), as was his wife, though from another community (*Eravisca*).

<sup>46</sup> Grbić 2014.

<sup>47</sup> Speidel 1986, 468 and for the quotation 474, note 20.



FIG. 5. Detailed photos and drawing. (After Daicoviciu and Protase 1965a, pl. XXXI)

Previous restorations can be dismissed, however, by a close examination of the correction made by the scribe, corroborated by other features. My starting point is the 1965 publication by the two Romanian editors — without accepting their reading of CORINON — which contained both photos taken through a microscope and a drawing presenting the layout of the two engravings (FIG. 5).<sup>48</sup> During the first engraving, the height of the letters was 3 mm; but during the secondary engraving, made by the same person, the height of the letters was increased to 4.25 mm, so as to cover the previous letters. A correction CORNA or the like is rejected by this detail, as is CORINON.<sup>49</sup> My contention is that the result intended by the scribe was actually CORNOV. But how could such an error have occurred? There are two possibilities:

- (1) Because the outer face would have been the most correct version of the text, as it remained visible (the inner faces being sealed), we might expect the process of producing such a text to involve an ink exemplar, then an engraved text and eventually changes to engraved texts at the checking stage.<sup>50</sup> In the case of our diploma we may suppose that, once discovered, the incorrect letters which were the most obvious were corrected: P>C, A>O, N>R; the following N and O were

<sup>48</sup> Daicoviciu and Protase 1965a.

<sup>49</sup> For an *origo* linked to *Corinium*, one should however expect the abbreviation CORIN (not CORNON/CORINON).

<sup>50</sup> I am grateful to Paul Holder for this suggestion. He further adds that it is possible that the mistake was only discovered when the tablets were being wired together to seal the inner faces; so, it seems that PANNON would

correct; the final N was not amended, be it because there was no time or, more likely, because it looked sufficiently like a V. Despite an inspection of the diploma in the Bucharest Museum, no trace of any ink is now recognisable, most probably because it has been conserved and covered with some form of bright lacquer wax.

- (2) The scribe simply made a mistake: in using a list of soldiers to be discharged, with their ranks and ethnics, he firstly engraved PANNON, because the preceding or subsequent soldier on the list was Pannonian; but he immediately corrected himself. He proceeded by recutting the letters, thus engraving COR over the first three letters, with the result CORNON; inspection of the diploma and the high-quality photos shows, however, that the scribe also partially obliterated the first vertical stroke of the letter N (FIG. 6), with the result that this stroke appears less distinctly engraved than the other two, while the two remaining strokes are entirely similar to a V, as in other words on the same tabella.<sup>51</sup> The letter O has a sort of apex in the first engraved word, as elsewhere on the diploma (an observation made by the Romanian editors). Therefore, it is appropriate to understand the correction in this manner: PANNON → CORNOV (better than CORNO<V>).



FIG. 6. Detail of the onomastic formula, with the correction of the *origo*. (Reproduced courtesy of MNIR, Bucharest, inv. no. 37850)

This kind of error is not unusual. For example, on a diploma of 11 August A.D. 106, found at *Porolissum* (Dacia),<sup>52</sup> the scribe, who had to write NOVANTICONI • RATIS on the outer face of Tabella I, actually engraved NOVANTICO • RATIS, before adding the NI above the last letter (O) (FIG. 7); the inner face of Tabella II was not corrected, however. Likewise, on a diploma of 1 March A.D. 152, for a praetorian from *Philippi*,<sup>53</sup> the inattentive scribe who had written PHILIPP on the outer face of Tabella I (though it looks as if it was added or was a correction, as it is squashed), actually engraved MARCIA (for *Marcia(nopolis)*) on the inner face of Tabella II; realising his mistake, he scored the MARCIA out, added PHILIPP in ink above and, for better comprehension, engraved PHIL after the scoring.<sup>54</sup>

initially have been written in ink, otherwise it would not have been engraved into the metal — just like on the praetorian diploma of A.D. 152 (RGZM 33), where the initial corrections were done in ink.

<sup>51</sup> Paul Holder reminded me of the case of *RMD* III, 157 (A.D. 131) for Mauretania Tingitana, where, on the inner face, the name of the governor is clearly GANIO MAXIMO at the start of the line (the end of the previous line being lost); this has led to the suggestion of a new governor, named [Lon?]ganius Maximus. However, in A.D. 129 or 130 GAVIVS MAXIMVS was already attested as governor in the province, obviously the same man as on the diploma (see Labory 1996). Also, there are similar examples of personal names in different versions (as preserved) such as GRATVS/GRAPVS/ORATVS for the same procurator of Dacia Porolissensis (diplomas of A.D. 123).

<sup>52</sup> *CIL* XVI, 160.

<sup>53</sup> *RGZM* 33, photos pls 60–1.

<sup>54</sup> See Dana 2010, 53, no. 28.



FIG. 7. Military diploma from *Porolissum*, Tabella I outer (*CIL XVI*, 160). (Reproduced courtesy of MNIR, Bucharest, inv. no. 69902; photo: George Nica)

If this argument is accepted, the definitive reading for *RMD I*, 35 should be:

*coh(ortis) I Britannicae (milliariae), cui praest*  
*Ti(berius) Claudius Fortis, Capua,*  
*ex pedite*  
*Sepenesto Rivi f(ilio), Cornov(io) [ethnic corrected from*  
*[[Pan]]no[[n]](io)].*

The discharged infantryman was probably recruited in A.D. 107/8 or shortly before,<sup>55</sup> to fill gaps in a cohort which had participated in the harsh war against the Dacians. He is, however, the second soldier known to have been recruited among the *Cornovii*, for a decade ago, a fragmentary military diploma for a soldier from this tribe was published, though unfortunately both the province and the unit remain unknown, as does the precise date (c. A.D. 126/40):<sup>56</sup>

*[alae/coh(ortis) ---, c]ui pra[est]*  
*[- --- ---]aris, Pri+ [---]<sup>57</sup>,*  
*[ex ---]*  
*[--- --- f(ilio)], Cornov(io),*  
*[et --- f(ilio)/fil(iae)] eius.*

This veteran from the *Cornovii* most likely remained in a Danubian province, where his diploma was found by modern treasure-hunters. The tribe is well known in Britain, with its capital at *Viroconium* (Wroxeter)<sup>58</sup> being mentioned both by Ptolemy and in the *Ravenna Cosmography*.<sup>59</sup> A dedication to Hadrian found at *Viroconium*, dated A.D. 130, was issued by the *civitas Cornov[iorum]*.<sup>60</sup> Elsewhere in the province, at Ilkley, we know of the epitaph of *Ved[-]ic[-] ---]riconis filia, c(ivis) Cornovia*.<sup>61</sup> Finally, at an unknown date, a *coh. I Cornoviorum* was raised, this being the only ‘ethnic’ unit from Britannia to serve in the same province, even if in a different region, Northumberland; a *tribunus* of the same cohort is also attested at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the fourth century.<sup>62</sup>

This new reading of the diploma from Gherla allows us to enrich our understanding of the recruitment of *Brittones* in the Roman army.<sup>63</sup> Many units of *Brittones* were raised and sent to the Danubian region, more specifically Pannonia; at the time of the Dacian Wars, they were moved to Upper Moesia and, after A.D. 106, many remained in the new province of Dacia.<sup>64</sup> The evidence of the military diplomas, known either for some

<sup>55</sup> After service of 25 or more years: *quin(is) et vicen(is) pluribusve stipend(iis) emeritis dimiss(is) hon(esta) mission(e)*.

<sup>56</sup> Eck and Pangerl 2007, 232–4 (= *AE* 2007, 1772) = Eck and Pangerl 2008, 27–30, no. 5.

<sup>57</sup> It is possible to read PRIM[, PRIA[ or PRIT[.

<sup>58</sup> *Barrington Atlas* 2002, map 8; Webster 1975; Gaffney and White 2007.

<sup>59</sup> Ptolemy, *Geographia* 2.3.19 (Κορνουάσιοι ... Ουροκόκοντιον) and 2.3.11–12; *Ravenna Cosmography* 106.40 (*Utriconion Cornoviorum*).

<sup>60</sup> *RIB I*, 288.

<sup>61</sup> *RIB I*, 639.

<sup>62</sup> *ND* 40.34. See Jarrett 1994, 58, no. 22.

<sup>63</sup> Haynes 2013, 126–8 (about the recruitment of *Brittones*); Ivleva 2014, 2016a and 2016b.

<sup>64</sup> See now Matei-Popescu and Țentea 2006; Matei-Popescu 2015. Artefacts of British origin have been found in Roman Dacia, undoubtedly linked to the presence of auxiliary soldiers from Britannia: a horse bit (Cluj Museum), a hinged I-shaped brooch (fortress of Cășeu, garrison of *coh. I Britannica mill. c. R. eq.*), and Dragonisque brooches

time or published in recent decades, enables us to catch a clearer image of the presence of British recruits in these units, before or contemporary with the setting up of local and regional recruitment. Here is the history of two of these units, the first one being that in which our *Cornovius* served.

### ***Coh. I Britannica milliaria civium Romanorum equitata***

This cohort is attested in A.D. 85 in Pannonia;<sup>65</sup> at the time of the Dacian Wars, it was withdrawn by Trajan in order to participate in the north Danubian expeditions, together with many units from Upper Moesia (constitution in A.D. 103/5). After the conquest, it remained in Dacia, where it is attested in A.D. 109;<sup>66</sup> thereafter it was in Upper Dacia in A.D. 119<sup>67</sup> and, at least from A.D. 123, in Dacia Porolissensis,<sup>68</sup> at the fort at Cășeu.<sup>69</sup>

It is interesting to note another recruit from Britannia, during the presence of this cohort in Pannonia and Upper Moesia. The diploma of 12 January A.D. 105 for *Lucco Trenni f(ilius), Dobunn(us)*<sup>70</sup> was found at *Brigetio* in the province of Upper Pannonia, where his unit was previously stationed and where he found a companion, *Tutula Breuci filia, Azala*, with whom he had three children. He chose, therefore, to return to the region where his wife was born, in the province he knew well. However, he was from the tribe of the *Dobunni*, whose capital was *Corinium*<sup>71</sup> (Cirencester).<sup>72</sup>

### ***Coh. I Brittonum milliaria Vlpia torquata pia fidelis civium Romanorum***

Garrisoned in Pannonia and thereafter in Upper Moesia, this part-mounted cohort (*equitata*) was also transferred to Dacia (later Porolissensis).<sup>73</sup> In order to reward the soldiers of this cohort for their bravery during the war against Decebalus, a special constitution of 11 August A.D. 106 granted them Roman citizenship *ante emerita stipendia*,<sup>74</sup> with its official name becoming *coh. I Brittonum milliaria Vlpia torquata pia fidelis civium Romanorum*. The unit is further attested on diplomas in Dacia,<sup>75</sup> then in Upper Dacia in A.D. 119,<sup>76</sup> and thereafter in Dacia Porolissensis. At least three recruits from Britannia are known in this cohort on diplomas:<sup>77</sup>

on a diploma found at *Porolissum*, dated 11 August A.D. 106 (but issued in A.D. 110 as he was still in service): *M. Vlpus Adcrobovati f. Novantico, Ratis* (= *Ratae Coritanorum/Leicester*);<sup>78</sup>

in the forts of Bumbesti-Jiu (garrison of *coh. I Aurelia Brittonum mill.*) and *Porolissum* (where *coh. I Brittonum mill. Vlpia torq. p. f. c. R.* was stationed); see Rustoiu 2005.

<sup>65</sup> *CIL* XVI, 31.

<sup>66</sup> *RMD* III, 148.

<sup>67</sup> *RMD* V, 351.

<sup>68</sup> *RMD* I, 21 and 22.

<sup>69</sup> Petolescu 2002, 86–7. The evidence of Spaul 1994, 67–73 and 2000, 189–204, for units recruited from Britain is now outdated. For changes in the auxiliary deployment under Trajan and Hadrian, see Holder 2003 and 2006.

<sup>70</sup> *CIL* XVI, 49.

<sup>71</sup> Precisely the ethnic supposed by C. Daicoviciu and D. Protase for the soldier whose diploma was found at Gherla.

<sup>72</sup> cf. Ptolemy, *Geographia* 2.3.25.

<sup>73</sup> Petolescu 2002, 87–8.

<sup>74</sup> Two copies are known: *CIL* XVI, 160; *RMD* V, 343.

<sup>75</sup> *RMD* III, 148; *CIL* XVI, 163.

<sup>76</sup> *RMD* V, 351.

<sup>77</sup> And presumably two others in an epitaph from *Acumincum* (Pannonia, *CIL* III, 3256), set up for *Virssuccius [---]si, eq(ues) imag(inifer) coh(ortis) I Brit(tonum)*, by his heirs *Bodiccius imag(inifer)* and *Albanus*. A diploma of 26 October A.D. 161 (*RMD* III, 177, found at Gilău, Cluj dept.) was granted *[M(arci)? Vlpio?] Vlp(i) filio N[---, ---]*, serving in the same unit. For another auxiliary unit, a fragmentary diploma of c. A.D. 138/42 (*IDR* I, 23 = *RMD* I, 40 + *RMD* V, App. Ia), found at *Porolissum*, was granted *[--- ---] + IMEN[--- filio), ---]*, from the *coh. II Augusta Nerviana Pacensis Brittonum mill.*; the onomastics of his wife, *Senecia Rellectei ffil(ia), ---]*, suggest an origin from a western province.

<sup>78</sup> *CIL* XVI, 160.

on a diploma also found at *Porolissum*, dated 2 July A.D. 110: *M. Vlpus Sacci f. Longinus, Belgus* (*civitas Belgarum*, whose capital was at *Venta Belgarum/Winchester*); it also records that he had a son,<sup>79</sup> on a diploma found at Domaşnea, Caraş-Severin dept., in Upper Dacia, dated 27 September A.D. 154: *Ivonercus Molaci f., Britt(o)*.<sup>80</sup>

TABLE 1. MILITARY DIPLOMAS KNOWN FOR RECRUITS FROM BRITANNIA

Reference	Name	Origo	Unit	Date of recruitment	Date of release	Province(s)	Findspot
CIL XVI, 49	<i>Lucco Trenni f.</i>	DOBVNN	<i>coh. I Britannica</i> ∞ <i>c. R.</i>	79/80	105	PANN. → MOES. SVP.	<i>Brigetio</i> (PANN. SVP.)
CIL XVI, 160	<i>M. Vlpus Adcobrovati f. Novantico</i>	RATIS	<i>coh. I Brittonum</i> ∞ <i>Vlpia torq.</i> <i>p. f. c. R.</i>	84/5	110	PANN. → MOES. SVP. → DAC.	<i>Porolissum</i> (DAC. POR.)
CIL XVI, 163	<i>M. Vlpus Sacci f. Longinus</i>	BELGO	<i>coh. I Brittonum</i> ∞ <i>Vlpia torq.</i> <i>c. R.</i>	84/5	110	PANN. → MOES. SVP. → DAC.	<i>Porolissum</i> (DAC. POR.)
RGZM 20	<i>Bollico Icci f. Iccus</i>	BRITT	<i>ala I Claudia Gallorum Capitoniana</i>	96/7	122	MOES. INF. → DAC. INF.	–
RMD I, 35	<i>Sepenestus Rivi f.</i>	CORNOV	<i>coh. I Britannica</i> ∞	107/8	133	DAC. POR.	Gherla (DAC. POR.)
AÉ 2007, 1772	–	CORNOV	–	–	126/40	–	–
CIL XVI, 110 + RMD I, 47 + RMD II, 101	<i>Ivonercus Molaci f.</i>	BRITT	<i>coh. I Vlpia Brittonum</i> ∞	129	154	DAC. POR.	Domaşnea (DAC. SVP.)
CIL XVI, 130	<i>[--- Satu]rminus</i>	GLEVI	<i>coh. I fida Vardullorum</i> ∞	134/5	160 (?)	BRIT.	<i>Camulodunum</i> (BRIT.)

Table 1 catalogues the eight military diplomas known for recruits from Britannia (for a distribution map, see FIG. 8). Recent studies have shown that most of the auxiliary units which remained in the new province of Dacia were detached from the army of Upper Moesia, supplemented at the time of the Dacian Wars by the addition of some units from Pannonia, including *ala I Britannica/Brittonum c. R.*, which was moved to Dacia Porolissensis.<sup>81</sup> Many of the soldiers recruited from Britain chose at the end of their military service to stay in the provinces where their units were garrisoned, sometimes because of their families.

<sup>79</sup> CIL XVI, 163.

<sup>80</sup> CIL XVI, 110 + RMD I, 47 + RMD II, 101.

<sup>81</sup> Matei-Popescu 2015.



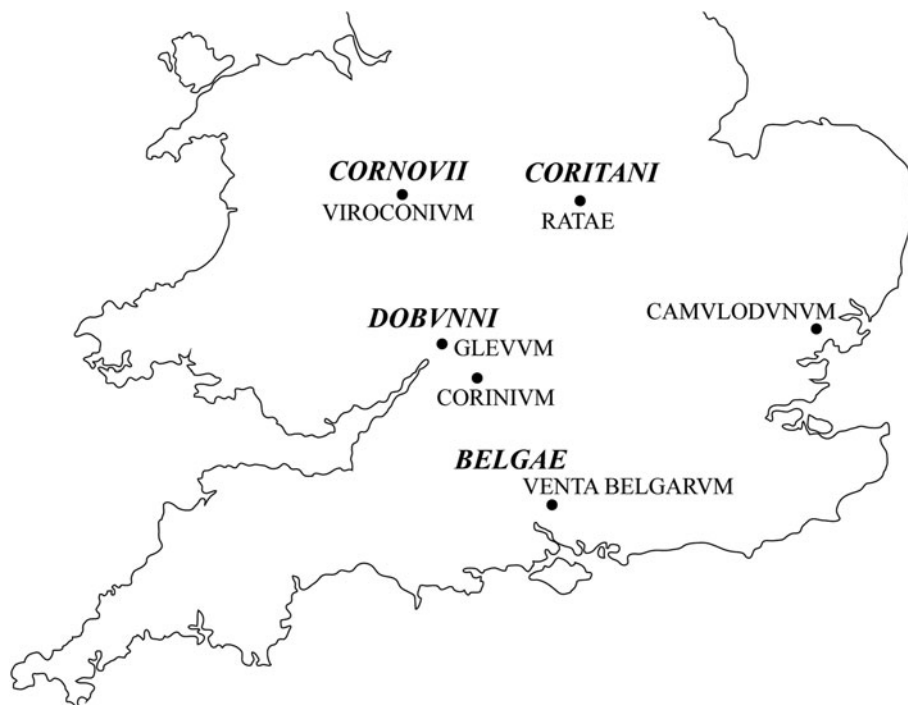


FIG. 8. Map with the origins of soldiers recruited from Britannia (as recorded on military diplomas).

But recruits from Britannia also served in other non-ethnic units. As proof, we might cite the bearer of a generic ethnic *Britto* on a diploma of 17 July A.D. 122, which was granted to *Bollico Ieci f. Iccus, Britt(o)*, from *ala I Claudia Gallorum Capitoniana* (Lower Dacia, findspot unknown); it also records that he had four children.<sup>82</sup> We might also add the only diploma known for a soldier serving in Britannia, in his own province, and already a Roman citizen: [- --- *SatuJrnius*, from *Glevum* (Gloucester), from *coh. I fida Vardullorum milliaria* (probably from the year A.D. 160);<sup>83</sup> the diploma was found in Britain, near *Camulodunum*.

The Cornovian origin presented here is also supported to some extent by the onomastics of our discharged soldier. While the two names in question, *Sepenestus* and *Rivus/Rivius*,<sup>84</sup> are only recorded this once, it would seem unlikely that they are of Illyrian origin (as the derivation of the *Cornacates* undoubtedly was)<sup>85</sup> as parallels are entirely lacking. Admittedly, neither name is attested as such in the Celtic domain, but arguably we may invoke the extreme rarity of Celtic names in the epigraphy of Britain,<sup>86</sup> by contrast with

<sup>82</sup> *RGZM* 20. In the catalogue *ISM* IV, 8 of *Tropaeum Traiani* (Lower Moesia), with the names and origins of the auxiliary soldiers killed during a war against the Dacians, we may find an anonymous *Brit(to)* among many soldiers originating from the western provinces.

<sup>83</sup> *CIL* XVI, 130. For the date, see P. Holder in *RMD* V, p. 704 (39\*130).

<sup>84</sup> Fortuitous coincidence with the Latin word *rivus* ('brook') and the corresponding Latin cognomen (Kajanto 1965, 339; if Latin indeed: graffito from *Adria, RIVT*).

<sup>85</sup> On diplomas (years A.D. 54 and 99, see note 39): *Dasas, Dases, Dasmenus, Iora, Prosostus, Turuna*.

<sup>86</sup> See now Kakoschke 2011; and the online database of Celtic personal names of Roman Britain (*CPNRB*) (<http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/personalnames/>).

the continental evidence, which is plentiful. Moreover, the three onomastic elements are attested in the Celtic sphere.<sup>87</sup> Nothing, therefore, refutes a Celtic attribution for these names, the first at least being a compound one, whereas compound names are scarce in Illyrian onomastics.<sup>88</sup>

Seopenestus Rivi f., a Cornovian, was therefore part of a contingent raised in Britain and sent mostly in 'ethnic' units of *Brittones* in order to make up the considerable losses after the Dacian Wars. His case enriches our understanding where every new piece of evidence can help to reconstruct some of the complexity of the Roman army, in a period where several models of recruitment co-existed.

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<sup>87</sup> cf. Holder 1904, 738 (\**ne-sdo-s* and \**ne-sto-s*), 1196–7 (*Riv-*) and 1504 (*Sep-* and \**sep-*); not included in Delamarre 2007. See also the women's names *Sepena* (CIL V, 2103, *Acelum*, Regio X) and *Seposa* (Aquitaine, CIL XIII, 11138).

<sup>88</sup> So Russu 1977, 359; Paki 1998, 134–5, no. 1; of doubtful Celticity for Falileyev 2007, 117–18 and 128.

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## Roman Field-System Earthworks in the Birklands and Belhaugh Hays, Nottinghamshire

By STEVE MALONE

### ABSTRACT

*Processing and analysis of LiDAR data in Nottinghamshire has identified the survival of earthwork field-systems beneath woodland in some of the oldest established parts of Sherwood Forest. The morphology and alignment of these field-systems strongly suggest that they represent a survival of the late Iron Age and Roman brickwork-plan field-systems of North Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire with considerable potential to elucidate the history of abandonment of these fields and the establishment of Sherwood Forest.*

**Keywords:** Sherwood Forest; LiDAR; brickwork-plan fields; Roman field-system; earthworks; Nottinghamshire

The brickwork field-systems of North Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire were first recognised from the air by Riley<sup>89</sup> and have since been subject to ongoing research through survey and excavation which has contributed to our current understanding of their character and date.<sup>90</sup> They comprise a coherent landscape of co-axial fields arranged in parallel blocks divided by trackways and interspersed with small enclosure groups. They were certainly in use throughout the first few centuries A.D. but their precise history remains obscure; origins in the later Iron Age have been suggested but conclusive evidence of their inception (and demise) remains elusive. They form one of a number of such large-scale field-systems of the late Iron Age and Roman periods recognised across Britain.<sup>91</sup>

The most coherent blocks of this landscape appear to be confined to the Sherwood Sandstone of North Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire (FIG. 9), although the distribution may be more apparent than real; adjacent coal measures and mudstones are not so conducive to cropmark formation. In the medieval period this part of North Nottinghamshire became Sherwood Forest and (if never in fact entirely wooded) is still well wooded today. The frequent observation of cropmarks in gaps between woodland strongly suggests that the field-systems formerly extended beneath areas now wooded and leads to the suspicion (or hope) that earthwork remains might be preserved, particularly within areas of longer-established Ancient Woodland. However, the factors which lead to potential survival also militate against discovery, with potentially quite subtle surface traces difficult to see within woodland with varying ground cover, lack of extensive views and absence of aerial survey.

<sup>89</sup> Riley 1980.

<sup>90</sup> e.g. aerial photographic mapping: Deegan 1996; 1999; fieldwalking: Garton 2007; 2008; excavation: Garton 1987; Davies 2000; Jones 2007.

<sup>91</sup> Taylor 2007, 55–72; Rippon *et al.* 2015.