

VARIOUS

The Lives of Soldiers and Sailors

Sources: Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* VII.vi.1; Livy 42.34; *Select Papyri I* (1932) #111, 112 (II. A.D.).

Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* VII.vi.1

For during the Second Punic War [218-201 BCE] the Roman youth of military age having been drained by several unfavorable battles, the Senate, on the motion of the consul Tiberius Gracchus (consul in 215 and 213), decreed that slaves should be bought up out of public moneys for use in repulsing the enemy. After a plebiscite [(a vote of the Consilium Plebis] was passed on this matter by the people through the intervention of the Tribunes of the Plebs, a commission of three men was chosen to purchase 24,000 slaves, and having administered an oath to them that they would give zealous and courageous service and that they would bear arms as long as the Carthaginians were in Italy, they sent them to the camp. From Apulia and the Paediculi were also bought 270 slaves for replacements in the cavalry... The City, which up to this time had disdained to have as soldiers even free men without property added to its army as almost its chief support persons taken from slave lodgings and slaves gathered from shepherd huts.'

Livy 42.34

Citizens of Rome. I am Spurius Ligustinus, of the Tribe Crustumina, and I come of Sabine stock. My father left me half an acre of land and the little hut in which I was born and brought up. I am still living there today [171 BCE]. As soon as I came of age, my father gave me his brother's daughter to wife, who brought nothing with her save her free birth and her chastity, together with a fertility which would be enough even for a wealthy home. We have six sons, and two daughters (both already married). Four of my sons have taken the toga of manhood; two are still under age. I joined the army in the consulship of Publius Sulpicius and Gaius Aurelius (Cotta) [200 BCE], and I served two years in the ranks in the army which was taken across to Macedonia, in the campaign against King Philip [V, of Macedonia who died in 179]. In the third year Titus Quinctius Flaminius promoted me, for my bravery, to be centurion of the 10th maniple of hastati.

After the defeat of King Philip and the Macedonians, when we had been brought back to Italy and demobilized, I immediately left for Spain as a volunteer with the consul Marcus Porcius [CATO, consul in 195 BCE]. Of all the living generals, none has been a keener observer and judge of bravery than he, as is well known to those who through long military service have had experience of him and other commanders. This general judged me worthy to be appointed centurion of the 1st century of hastati. I enlisted for the third time, again as a volunteer, in the army sent against the

Aetolians and King Antiochus. Manius Acilius [Glabrio, consul of 191] appointed me centurion of the first century of the principes. When King Antiochus had been driven out [Battle of Thermopylae] and the Aetolians had been crushed, we were brought back to Italy. And twice after that I took part in campaigns in which the legions served for a year. Thereafter I saw two campaigns in Spain, one with Quintus Fulvius Flaccus as Praetor [182, continued in office in 181 and 180], the other with Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus [father of the Gracchus brothers] in command [180].

I was brought back home by Flaccus with the others whom he brought back with him from the province for his Triumph, on account of their bravery. And I returned to Spain because I was asked to do so by Tiberius Gracchus. Four times in the course of a few years I held the rank of Chief Centurion. Thirty four times I was rewarded for bravery by the generals. I have been given six civic crowns. I have completed 22 years of service in the army, and I am now over 50 years old. But even if I had not completed my service, and if my age did not give me exemption, it would still be right for me to be discharged, Publius Licinius, since I could give your four soldiers as my substitutes...' There was an official vote of thanks, and the Military Tribunes, on account of his bravery appointed him First Centurion of the First Legion. The other centurions withdrew their appeal and obediently responded to the call for conscription.

Letter of a Recruit: Apollinarius

Apollinarius to Taesis, his mother and lady, many greetings!

Before all I pray for your health. I myself am well, and make supplication for you before the gods of this place. I wish you to know, mother, that I arrived in Rome in good health on the 20th of the month Pachon, and was posted to Misenum, though I have not yet learned the name of my company (*kenturian*); for I had not gone to Misenum at the time of writing this letter. I beg you then, mother, look after yourself and do not worry about me; for I have come to a fine place. Please write me a letter about your welfare and that of my brothers and of all your folk. And whenever I find a messenger I will write to you; never will I be slow to write. Many salutations to my brothers and Apollinarius and his children, and Karalas and his children. I salute Ptolemaeus and Ptolemais and her children and Heraclous and her children. I salute all who love you, each by name. I pray for your health.

[Address:] Deliver at Karanis to Taesis, from her son Apollinarius of Misenum.

Letter of a Recruit: Apion

Apion to Epimachus, his father and lord, very many greetings.

Before all else I pray for your health and that you may always be well and prosperous, together with my sister and her daughter and my brother. I thank the Lord Serapis that when I was in danger at sea he straightway saved me. On arriving at Misenum, I received from Caesar three gold pieces for traveling expenses. And it is well with me.

Now I ask you, my lord and father, write me a letter, telling me first of your welfare, secondly of my brother's and sister's, and enabling me thirdly to make obeisance before your handwriting, because you educated me well and I hope thereby to have quick advancement, if the gods so will.

Give many salutations to Capiton and my brother and sister and Serenilla and my firends. I have sent you by Euctemon a portrait [eikonin]of myself. My name is Antonius Maximus, my company [kenturi(a)] is the Athenonica. I pray for your health.

[Postscript:] Serenus, son of Agathodaemon, salutes you, and..., and Turbo son of Gallonius, and....

[Addressed:] To Philadelphia, to Epimachus from Apion his son.

[Additional address:] Deliver at the camp of the first cohort of the Apameni to Julianus, vice-secretary [*antiliblario*] this letter from Apion to be forwarded to his father Epimachus.

Petition to the Emperor Philip Against Corruption (246 CE)

Most reverend and serene of all emperors, although in your most felicitous times all other persons enjoy an untroubled and calm existence, since all wickedness and oppression have ceased, we, alone experiencing a fortune most alien to these most fortunate times, present this supplication to you.

We are unreasonably oppressed and we suffer extortion by those persons whose duty it is to maintain the public welfare. For although we live remotely and are without military protection, we suffer afflictions alien to your most felicitous times. Generals and soldiers and lordlings of prominent offices in the city and your Caesarians, coming to us, traversing the Appian district, leaving the highway, taking us from our tasks, requisitioning our plowing oxen, make exactions that are by no means their due. And it happens thus that we are wronged by extortions. Our possessions are spent on them, and our fields are stripped and laid waste....