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"Systems of Reward in  
Relation to Military Diplomas

the fact that they were awarded not by the general in command but by the man's comrades puts them into the category of unofficial presents not official *dona militaria*. The one clear association that we do have between a citizenship grant and the award of *dona* dates many years earlier, to the last century of the Republic and the block grant made in 89 BC to the men of the *turma Salluitana*<sup>38</sup>. There is no imperial parallel.

Thus we return to the basic point that, as a general rule, formal military decorations were not awarded to individual auxiliaries. Instead the units in which they served received block awards, battle-honours commemorated in the epithets *torquata* and *armillata*. It is a distinction which appears to have been first awarded by Vespasian, its introduction coinciding, in all probability, with the complete phasing out of individual awards to non-citizens. Six *alae* and six cohorts are known to have been distinguished in this way, half of them on two occasions, one on three or four. We thus have evidence for the use of this award just twenty or twenty-one times<sup>39</sup>. It is a much rarer distinction than the major battle-honour borne by something like a sixth of all auxiliary units, that of *civium Romanorum*.

The use of Roman citizenship as an individual or collective reward for those who fought for, or in other ways collaborated with Rome is well attested in Republic and Empire, in peace and in war. Its not infrequent use as a reward for valour in battle within the period of the Empire, has its republican precedents, notably in the case of the award referred to above, which was made in 89 BC to cavalrymen serving during the Social War in the *turma Salluitana*: the award was made to the men in camp at Asculum, *virtutis caussa*<sup>40</sup>. Within the Principate the practice of making block awards of citizenship to auxiliary units is first attested with any frequency in the Flavian period and its introduction has been attributed to Vespasian<sup>41</sup>. There is, however, reason to believe that the practice goes back somewhat further, and significantly, and not coincidentally, to the principate of Claudius<sup>42</sup>. These block awards are clearly and uncontroversially, battle-honours. Their

<sup>38</sup> See below.

<sup>39</sup> V. A. Maxfield, *The Military Decorations* (cf. n. 34), 220-226.

<sup>40</sup> ILS 8888 = ILLRP 515.

<sup>41</sup> P. Holder, *The Roman Army in Britain*, London 1983, 22.

<sup>42</sup> V. A. Maxfield, *The Military Decorations* (cf. n. 34), 231-232, following B. Dobson and J. C. Mann, *Britannia* 4, 1973, 198 and fn. 34.

practical effect as far as the soldiers serving at the time of the award in the units so honoured were concerned, appears to have been to give citizenship, then and there, to all members of the unit (or possibly, more narrowly, just to those soldiers who had taken part in the encounter in which the honour was won). It is a grant of this sort which is commemorated by the special diploma of AD 110, recording a grant made in 106 at the end of the second Dacian war, awarded to one M. Ulpius Novantico, a *pedes* serving in the *cohors I Brittonum milliaria Ulpia torquata pia fidelis civium Romanorum*. The citation for the award which was made at Darnithitis (in Dacia) is specific: *pie et fideliter expeditione Dacica functis ante emerita stipendia civitatem Romanam dedit*<sup>43</sup>. Two points need emphasis. The award, which was purely one of Roman citizenship, was made to a serving soldier *ante emerita stipendia*, and it was made at a time not far separated from the deed it rewards – in its timing it parallels the practice in relation to *dona militaria* where two major contexts emerge for the award of decorations: very soon after a battle or at the triumph<sup>44</sup>. Quite why Novantico's proof of citizenship was four years in coming we cannot know: it may be, for example, that the soldier had no need to acquire the certificate until he left the army, left it perhaps before his twenty-five years were up, without *honesta missio* and therefore without the "normal" diploma. A comrade of Novantico, one M. Ulpius Longinus, did complete his statutory term of service and in July 110 received a diploma of a standard type, recording grants of citizenship and *conubium*<sup>45</sup>. His names, however, betray the fact that he was already a citizen, his citizenship granted four years previously at Darnithitis in 106, *ob virtutem* and *ante emerita stipendia*. An analogous case to that of Longinus is M. Ulpius Fronto, discharged in AD 113 from the *cohors I Batavorum milliaria civium Romanorum*<sup>46</sup>. This is the first and only inscription to record this unit as *c. R.* There can be little doubt that this unit distinguished itself and Fronto received his citizenship in Trajan's Danubian campaigns, at latest therefore in AD 106. Similarly [M. U]lpius Landionis f., a soldier recorded on a fragmentary diploma from Românași, which dates, on the evidence of its witness list, to the

<sup>43</sup> CIL XVI 160.

<sup>44</sup> V. A. Maxfield, *The Military Decorations* (cf. n. 34); 132–134.

<sup>45</sup> CIL XVI 163.

<sup>46</sup> RMD II 86.

early years of Hadrian's reign<sup>47</sup>. P. Holder has suggested that this man was the recipient of a *virum* grant of citizenship<sup>48</sup>, but if M. M. Roxan is correct in identifying the *cohors I Hispanorum* at Românași as the *cohors I Flavia Ulpia Hispanorum equitata civium Romanorum*<sup>49</sup>, a unit which distinguished itself under Trajan, this fourth M. Ulpius's citizenship award falls into place as the product of a block award *ob virtutem*. Three out of the four M. Ulpii completed their term of service, receiving their *honesta missio* a varying number of years after the conclusion of the Dacian Wars. Longinus's discharge and diploma fall some four years after his distinguished service, Fronto's seven years later, that of Landio's son something between twelve and sixteen years later. The significance of these time lapses for the understanding of the nature of diploma grants is discussed below. The grants of Roman citizenship to these men of I Brittonum, I Batavorum and I Hispanorum were clearly made *ante emerita stipendia*, quite closely associated in time with the deeds they commemorate. So too was the award made in AD 71 to one group of men who served in a fleet. The men were given the standard grants of citizenship and *conubium*, but they received it *ante emerita stipendia quod se in expeditione belli fortiter industrieque gesserant*<sup>50</sup>. The special diploma which attests this grant is of particular interest because it records, on the one document, two different categories of recipient: firstly time-expired soldiers, *qui sena et [vice]na stipendia aut plura meruissent*; secondly the serving soldiers who had not completed their twenty-six years, whose award is explicitly linked, as indicated, to their wartime service. If the grants of *civitas* and *conubium* attested in the normal diplomas were associated with war-time service, what need to make it explicit in this case?

The distinction stressed here between grants on completion of term and those made *ante emerita stipendia* is significant, for it raises a crucial issue in relation to the interpretation of standard diplomas as recording *ob virtutem* awards. The special block awards of citizenship to units presumably gave citizenship to participating peregrine soldiers regardless of age and length of service; this was only just, for it

<sup>47</sup> RMD I 20, c. AD 118/122.

<sup>48</sup> P. Holder, *The Auxilia from Augustus to Trajan*, Oxford 1980, 30 no. 11.

<sup>49</sup> M. M. Roxan, in: *Epigr. Stud.* 9, Bonn 1972, 247–250.

<sup>50</sup> CIL XVI 17. The identification of the fleet in question is disputed, but since it is not critical in the present context the issue is not discussed here.







