

Mann, John Cecil. "The Development of Auxiliary and Fleet Diplomas." *Britain and the Roman Empire*. Brookfield, Vt.: Variorum, 1996.

J. C. Mann

---

Britain and the Roman Empire

---



VARIORUM  
1996

## IV

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AUXILIARY AND  
FLEET DIPLOMAS

Géza Alföldy has made an important contribution to the study of military diplomas, one which provides the basis for further development<sup>1</sup>. In examining auxiliary diplomas he divides those issued down to about A. D. 110 into three types:

Type I, issued to serving soldiers only;

Type II, issued to both serving soldiers and veterans;

Type III, issued to veterans.

By a study of other epigraphic evidence he shows how the actual length of auxiliary service was gradually shortened so that by the early second century men no longer served for much more than 25 years. Thus from that time diplomas of Types I and II were no longer required, later auxiliary diplomas all belonging to Type III.

By considering the diplomas issued to men of the Italian and provincial fleets, it is possible to elaborate a classification which covers both auxiliary and fleet diplomas, and places the 'legionary' diplomas of A. D. 68 and 70 in context<sup>2</sup>.

Diplomas issued to auxiliaries under Claudius and Nero specify the length of service, make no reference whatsoever to *honesta missio*, and employ the present tense, *militant*. The only surviving fleet diploma of the same period (CIL XVI 1; A. D. 52) makes no reference to length of service, specifically indicates that the recipients had already received *honesta missio*, and appropriately employs the perfect tense *militaverunt*. The difference between the two formulae presumably reflects differences in the conditions of service between auxiliaries and *classarii*. It was apparently felt that men serving in the fleets should wait until their service had come to an end before giving them diplomas. But we have no evidence that many men in the fleets served for the long periods that auxiliaries did in the Julio-Claudian period<sup>3</sup>. They may not have had to serve for much more than the

<sup>1</sup> *Historia* 17, 1968, 215–227.

<sup>2</sup> All other diplomas fall into one of two types: a) those issued to men from the Praetorian and Urban cohorts, b) those which record special grants, for which see *Hermes* 82, 1954, 501–506, adding *AE* 1958, 30 (= *Athenaeum* 36, 1958, 3–29), and *AE* 1967, 395 (= *Acta Musei Napocensis* 2, 1965, 135–139), which confirm the view that *CIL* XVI 68 recorded a special grant. *CIL* XVI 25 is now probably to be dated to A. D. 72, cf. H. Lieb, in: *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms* (Beihefte der Bonner Jahrb. Bd. 19 [Köln–Graz 1967]) 95 note 19.

A further document of a special character is the tablet, in size and shape very like a praetorian diploma, issued in A. D. 108 (*Helinium* 4, 1964, 52–55). This document, unlike diplomas, can be properly termed a 'tabula honestae missionis' (for which see also *Hermes* 81, 1953, 496–500).

<sup>3</sup> Alföldy, loc. cit. 222.

*Epigraphische Studien* 9 (1972). By courtesy of Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn.

26 years which is soon defined as the normal minimum service for *classarii*. But just as it is probable that no 'standard' period of service was defined for auxiliaries before the time of Claudius, so it may be that the standard period for *classarii* was only defined at the beginning of the Flavian period. In that case the difference between auxiliary and fleet diplomas in the reigns of Claudius and Nero may lie in the fact that it had been decreed that auxiliaries should be eligible to receive citizenship and other privileges at the end of the standard period of service, whether or not they could then be discharged, but since no standard period had been decreed for *classarii*, their diplomas were issued at the only appropriate time – after they had been discharged.

Whatever may have been the reasons for these differences, inspection of the so-called 'legionary' diplomas of A. D. 68 and A. D. 70 soon reveals that they in no way resemble auxiliary diplomas of the reigns of Claudius and Nero, but they do very closely resemble the fleet diploma of A. D. 52. They use the perfect *militaverunt* and make specific reference to *honesta missio*, reinforced by the definition of the recipients, *veteranis*. The men who were discharged in 68 and 70 had of course served in the Italian fleets before joining the formations which became I *adiutrix* and II *adiutrix*<sup>4</sup>. It was therefore appropriate that they should receive fleet diplomas, modified to suit the particular circumstances in which they were being discharged<sup>5</sup>. The men who were discharged in A. D. 70 are described as having served for only 20 or more years, *vicena stipendia aut plura*. Evidently this was a special reward for men who had served the Flavian cause well in A. D. 69. But the normal period of service for men in the fleets was now apparently fixed at 26 years, for their diplomas, beginning with those of A. D. 71 (CIL XVI 12–16), now specify the length of service. The 'legionary' and fleet diplomas of A. D. 68, 70 and 71 are thus tabulated in Table II simply as modifications of the earliest form (A) of Alföldy's Type III.

Early in the Flavian period the clear distinction between auxiliary and fleet diplomas disappears. Some *classarii* could now receive diplomas before discharge (CIL XVI 32, A. D. 86: *classicis qui militant*), some auxiliaries received diplomas only after discharge (CIL XVI 28, A. D. 83: *iis qui militaverunt equites et pedites . . . . dimissis honesta missione*). Furthermore, not only do the lists of men due to receive diplomas now include both serving men and veterans, so that a new type of diploma has to be devised (Type II), but auxiliary and fleet diplomas now closely resemble each other in their wording, and before long grants to men from a provincial fleet begin to be included with grants to auxiliaries from the same province in the same constitution. The earliest known is of A. D. 99 (CIL XVI 45). From this time onwards indeed, auxiliaries and provincial *classarii* receive diplomas issued on a provincial basis: they might more accurately then be termed 'provincial' diplomas. In contrast only the units stationed in Italy continue to receive diplomas confined to one unit, or one category of units (special grants apart).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Nesselhauf, CIL XVI 7 and 10.

<sup>5</sup> The formula *et sunt deducti Paestum* (or *in Pannoniam*) of CIL XVI 12–16 implies a grant of *honesta missio* also, and is in effect simply a more elaborate and specific form of *et sunt dimissi honesta missione*.

The development of the three types may be briefly considered. The details of changes in wording are displayed in Table II, the dates and classification of individual diplomas in Table I.

### Type I

The standard auxiliary formula of the pre-Flavian period for grants where all the recipients were still serving continues to at least A. D. 105 (CIL XVI 51)<sup>6</sup>, that is for as long as auxiliary service could last for a substantial period beyond 25 years. In Type I diplomas the individual recipient is always given the serving form of rank (e. g., *equiti*, not *ex equite*). Diplomas of Type I are not known for *classarii* in the Flavian period or under Trajan. Partly this was no doubt because men did not have to be kept on much after the standard 26 years service, and so the lists of names sent up on each occasion included at least some veterans, or consisted entirely of veterans. For this reason diplomas of Types II (CIL XVI 32 and 37) and III (CIL XVI 24) were issued instead. In any case, after about A. D. 92 (the date of CIL XVI 37, issued for the Moesian fleet) only the two Italian fleets continued to receive separate diplomas. The small number of men from the provincial fleets was catered for in ordinary 'provincial' diplomas, although it happens that so far no individual *classarius* is known to us as the recipient of such a diploma.

There is one unexplained use of the Type I formula for men from a fleet. This is CIL XVI 72, issued to men of the Ravenna fleet in A. D. 127. The Type I formula was thus revived over 20 years after the last known use of that formula for provincial diplomas. There is a further anomaly in that the form of rank is that appropriate to a veteran (all that actually survives is *ex* [. . .]). Nothing in the formula suggests that this was a special grant. One possibility is that diplomas of Type I were still being issued for serving men for some time after A. D. 105, and that it is mere chance that none has survived. This would make it easier to see the choice of formula for CIL XVI 72 as simply a mistake. But the large number of diplomas of Type I known for the period down to A. D. 105 makes it difficult to accept the argument that many can have been issued after A. D. 105.

### Type III

Type IIIA, as modified during and after the Civil Wars for specific purposes, provided the model for Type IIIB, of which only one specimen is known (CIL XVI 24; A. D. 79). The simplified wording *dimissis honesta missione* replaces *et sunt dimissi honesta missione*, and the change was permanent. But the placing of *emeritis* at the beginning of the phrase *emeritis stipendiis senis et vicenis pluribusve* does not occur again in Type III, and only finds an echo in the near-contemporary CIL XVI 26 of A. D. 80 (Type IIA). The form *veteranis qui militaverunt* is not used later. Auxiliary diplomas from the early 80s take the

<sup>6</sup> AE 1962, 253 (= Journ. Rom. Stud. 50, 1960, 238 no. 14 and fig. 35) is probably of the same form and date as CIL XVI 51.

Table I. Chronological table of diplomas to A. D. 117, with Alföldy-Mann classification of auxiliary and fleet diplomas.

1. The Type letter (A, B, etc.) applies to all diplomas listed below that against which it appears, until it is replaced by a new letter. Thus, for example, CIL XVI 42-46 are all of Type IID.
2. Fleet diplomas are indicated by the name of the fleet, or by the word Fleet. The word class. indicates an auxiliary diploma which includes grants also to men of a provincial fleet.
3. Diplomas appearing in *Année Epigraphique* are listed by year and number only. This has been done merely for convenience;

an AE reference takes up little room in the tables. In one case, AE gives no text at all. This is AE 1962, 264a. For the text it is necessary to consult the original publication, *Klio* 37, 1959, 210-216. The text of AE 1962, 253 gives the rank of the recipient as *gregalis*. This should read *gregali*.

4. Entries in brackets, e.g. (XVI 5 64) indicate diplomas whose text is restored.

Auxiliary diplomas Type I (serving recipients)	Fleet diplomas Type III (veteran recipients)	Other diplomas: Praetorian P Special grants S Fragments F
(XVI 2 < 54) XVI 3 54 XVI 4 60 (XVI 5 64) XVI 6 54/68	A XVI 1 52  XVI 7 } 68, XVI 8 } modified XVI 9 } for I Adj.  XVI 11 modified for II Adj. XVI 12 } 71, Feb. XVI 13 } Misenum XVI 14 } 71, Apr. XVI 15 } Ravenna XVI 16 } & Misenum	XVI 10 70 S     XVI 17 71 S (possibly Type III formula also) XVI 25 72 S XVI 18 71/4 P XVI 19 c 64/74 F

Auxiliary and fleet diplomas

Type I (serving recipients)	Type II (both serving and veteran recipients)	Type III (veteran recipients)
XVI 20 74 Ep. Stud. } 75 5, 177 ff.		

## The Development of Auxiliary and Fleet Diplomas

239

Auxiliary and fleet diplomas			Other diplomas:	
Type I (serving recipients)	Type II (both serving and veteran recipients)	Type III (veteran recipients)	Praetorian	P
			Special grants	S
			Fragments	F
XVI 22 78			XVI 21	76 P
XVI 23 78				
XVI 158 80		B XVI 24 79 Fleet		
	A XVI 26 80		XVI 27	79/81 F
XVI 29 83		C XVI 28 82 or 83		
XVI 30 84		XVI 31 85		
XVI 33 86	B XVI 32 86 Fleet			
	XVI 159 88			
XVI 35 88	XVI 34 88			
	XVI 36 90			
	C 1961, 319 91			
	1962, 264 a 91			
	E XVI 37 92 Fleet			
	C XVI 38 94			
	XVI 39 94			
	XVI 40 96			
	D XVI 42 98		XVI 41	97 F
	XVI 43 98			
	XVI 44 99			
	XVI 45 99 class.			
	XVI 46 100			
XVI 48 103	E XVI 47 102			
			XVI 49	105 F
XVI 51 105	XVI 50 105 class.		1962, 253	105 F
		D Syria 1967, } 105 class.		
		339-362 }		
		(C XVI 52 106)		
	D XVI 54 103/106		XVI 53	< 107 F
		D XVI 55 107		
		XVI 56 107 class.		

Auxiliary and fleet diplomas			Other diplomas:	
Type I (serving recipients)	Type II (both serving and veteran recipients)	Type III (veteran recipients)	Praetorian	P
			Special grants	S
			Fragments	F
	E XVI 164 110	XVI 161 109 XVI 162 109 XVI 57 110 C XVI 163 110		
		D XVI 58 < 114 XVI 59 114 (class?)	XVI 160 110	S
		XVI 61 114 XVI 64 116 XVI 62 117 XVI 63 117 XVI 165 114/117	XVI 60 114	S



Table III. Auxiliary diplomas, A. D. 74-110.

1. The totals of recipients attested, A. D. 106-110, includes the serving recipient of CIL XVI 160.
2. CIL XVI 38 (A. D. 94) and 40 (A. D. 96) were each issued to men of two units only (in Dalmatia and Sardinia respectively). The formula of both reads *item dimisso (not dimissis) honesta missione*. In each case the list apparently included only one veteran, against presumably at least two serving men.
3. In CIL XVI 42 (A. D. 98) the recipient appears as *dimisso honesta missione ex pedite*. This may mean that the list of men of the unit concerned, *cohors I Aug. Ituraeorum*, included only one veteran, but this cannot be taken as certain. Similarly with CIL XVI 164 of A. D. 110.

1. Relative numbers of known diplomas of Type I (issued to serving men only) and Type III (issued to veterans only):

A. D.		Type I	Type III
74-80		5	0
81-90		4	2
91-100		0	0
101-105		2	1
		11	3
106-110		0	7

2. Relative numbers of known recipients of Type II diplomas:

A. D.		Serving	Veteran
74-80		0	1
81-90		2	0
91-100		7	1
101-105		2	0
		11	2
106-110		0	1

3. Recipients of diplomas of uncertain types:

A. D.	100-105	2	0
-------	---------	---	---

Totals of recipients attested:

A. D.		Serving	Veteran
74-105		24	5
106-110		1	8

Table II. Alföldy-Mann classif

Type I	
Equitibus et peditibus qui militant in alis (x) et coh. (y) . . . . .	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{et} \\ \text{or} \\ \text{quae} \end{array} \right\} \text{ sunt in (a)}$
Iis qui militant in classe . . . . .	quae est sub (a) . . . . .
Type II	
A Iis qui militaverunt equites et pedites in alis (4) et coh. (13) . . . . .	et sunt in (a) sub (b)
. . . item Iis qui militant in alis (2 of the 4) et coh. (1 of the 13) . . . . .	et sunt sub eodem . . . . .
B Equitibus et peditibus qui militant in alis (5) et coh. (2) . . . . .	quae sunt in (a) sub (b)
Classicis qui militant . . . . .	in (a) sub (b) et (c)
Peditibus et equitibus qui militant in coh. (x) . . . . .	et sunt in (a) sub (b)
Equitibus qui militant in alis (x) et peditibus et equitibus qui in coh. (y) . . . . .	quae sunt in (a) sub (b)
C Equitibus qui militant in alis (x) et peditibus et equitibus qui in coh. (y) . . . . .	quae sunt in (a) sub (b)
Equitibus et peditibus qui militant in alis (x) et coh. (y) . . . . .	et sunt in (a) sub (b)
D Equitibus et peditibus qui militant in alis (x) et coh. (y) (et classici 45) . . . . .	et sunt in (a) sub (b)
E Iis qui militant in classe . . . . .	quae est sub (a) . . . . .
Equitibus et peditibus qui militant in alis (x) et coh. (y) . . . . .	et sunt in (a) sub (b)
Type III	
A Triararchis et remigibus qui militaverunt in classe . . . . .	quae est (a) sub (b)
Veteranis qui militaverunt in legione I Adiutrice . . . . .	
Veteranis qui militaverunt in leg. II Adiutrice pia fidele . . . . .	
Veteranis qui militaverunt in classe . . . . .	sub (a) . . . . .
B Veteranis qui militaverunt in classe . . . . .	quae est in (a) . . . . .
C Iis qui militaverunt equites et pedites in alis (x) et coh. (y) . . . . .	et sunt in (a) sub (b)
D Equitibus et peditibus qui militaverunt in alis (x) et coh. (y) (et classicorum Syria 1967) . . . . .	et sunt in (a) sub (b)
Iis qui militaverunt in classe . . . . .	quae est sub (a) . . . . .

ary and fleet diplomas.

	Form of rank of recipient		
	Serving e. g. pediti	Veteran e. g. ex pediti	Form not preserved
ina et vicena $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{stipendia 33} \\ \text{stipendia aut plura} \\ \text{plurave stipendia 48. 51} \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{meruerunt} \\ \text{meruerant 48. 51} \end{array} \right\}$	2. 3. 4. 5. 20. Ep. Stud. 5, 177 22. 23. 158. 29. 30. 33. 35. 48. 51		
ia et vicena stipendia meruerunt		72 (!)	
et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emeritis, dimissis honesta missione . . . . is quinis et vicenis stipendiis		26	
imissis honesta missione ex iisdem alis et coh. (5) . . . . ina et vicena plurave stipendia meruerunt	159		
imissis honesta missione ex eadem classe, senis et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emeritis			32
imissis honesta missione ex iisdem cohortibus, quinis et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emeritis			34
imissis honesta missione, quinis et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emeritis	36		
ina et vicena plurave stipendia meruerunt, item dimissis honesta missione, emeritis stipendiis	1961, 319; 1962, 264 a		
ina et vicena $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{stipendia aut plura} \\ \text{plurave stipendia 40} \end{array} \right\} \text{meruerunt, item dimissis honesta missione, emeritis stipendiis}$	38. 39		40
imissis honesta missione, qui quina et vicena plurave stipendia meruerunt	44. 45. 46	42	43. 54
ia vicena plurave stipendia meruerunt, item dimissis honesta missione ina et vicena plurave stipendia meruerunt et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emeritis 164	47. 50	164	37
. . . . . et sunt dimissi honesta missione . . . . . honestam missionem et civitatem dedit ena stipendia aut plura meruerunt et sunt dimissi honesta missione	1 (!)	(not given: 7. 8. 9) (not given: 11)	
ia et vicena stipendia aut plura $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{meruerunt} \\ \text{meruerant 15} \end{array} \right\} \text{et sunt deducti} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Paestum 12. 13. 15. 16} \\ \text{in Pannoniam 14} \end{array} \right\}$	12. 14. 15 (! ! !)	(none given: 13. 16)	
s stipendiis senis et vicenis pluribusve, dimissis honesta missione		24	
et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emeritis, dimissis honesta missione		28. 31. 52. 163	
et vicenis pluribusve stipendiis emeritis, dimissis honesta missione		Syria 1967, 339. 55.	58. 59
iginti stipendiis emeritis, dimissis honesta missione		56. 161. 162. 57. 61 etc. 66. 74 etc.	