

Auxiliary soldiers

'Auxilia' means help in Latin and the auxiliary soldiers assisted the legionary soldiers by providing extra manpower and in particular specialised fighting techniques.

Originally, they were non-Roman citizens but received their citizenship after being a soldier for 25 years. This continued until the early third century when the emperor made everyone living inside the Empire (apart from slaves) a citizen.

How were auxiliary units organised?

There were three types of auxiliary units: the ala (all cavalry), the cohors equitata (mixed cavalry and infantry) and cohors peditata (all infantry).

At Segedunum, the auxiliary unit was formed of a mixed cavalry (horsemen) and infantry (foot soldiers) unit. This unit originally had around 480 infantry soldiers and 120 cavalry soldiers.

The infantry soldiers were divided into 6 centuries. Each century contained approximately 80 men which were commanded by a centurion.

The cavalry soldiers were divided into four turmae. Each turma had approximately 30 men which were commanded by a decurion.

The overall leader of the auxiliary unit (600 men) was the commanding officer (praefectus).

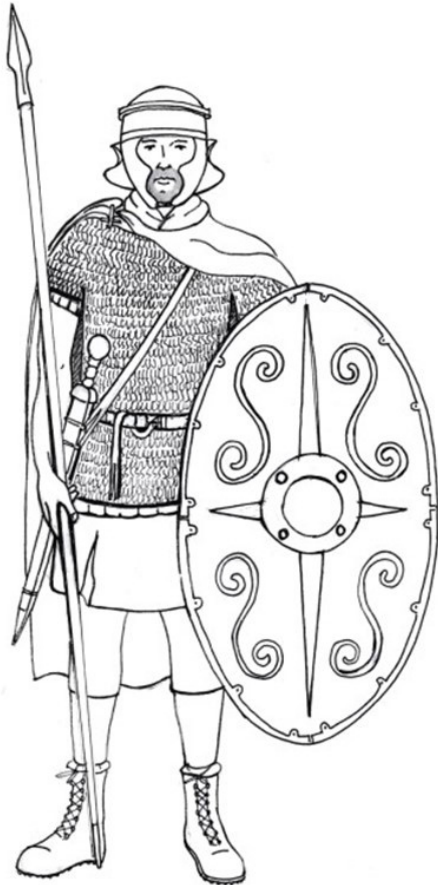


Illustration of infantry soldier



Illustration of cavalry soldier