

## A unique standard holder with an inscription from Trier \*

by

ROBERT NOUWEN

Several years ago, a standard holder dedicated to the *signiferi* was found in the Moselle under the so-called Römerbrücke at Trier. The precise archaeological context is not known. In this short paper, we will deal with the standard holder and its inscription, the *signum*, the *Rangordnung* of the *signiferi* and finally the *signiferi* in the context of the military situation of the *civitas Treverorum*. This study does not offer any new solutions concerning the existing problems in relation with the *signiferi* of the Roman army. It simply gathers together the existing evidence in order to place into context this new and exceptional find<sup>1</sup>.

### 1. The standard holder and its inscription

The standard holder is made of solid bronze. It has a triangular body and measures 31,5 cm, 39 cm at full length to 7/10 cm in breadth. The holder has a light curve. At the bottom, from the point of view of the inscription, it ends in two perforated tongues. At the top there is a cross-shaped gap. Here the owner has obviously tried to strengthen the holder with two little plates soldered with lead. The outside is polished very well. The inner side is rough, with traces of corrosion. The object is in good condition. There is only slight damage. An inscription was engraved in the standard holder. The text runs as follows:

*signiferis / L(ucius) SURIUS / Quintus*

The names L(ucius) and SURIUS are separated by a *hedera distinguens*<sup>2</sup>.

Because of the lack of a precise archaeological context, it seems difficult to propose a date for this remarkable object. However the inscription offers some indications. The shape of the characters seems to indicate a date during the Flavian and especially the Antonine period. The *hederae distinguentes* are of frequent occurrence from the Augustan era on. The early examples occur mostly in the Gaulish Provinces. A. Hommel prefers to date the *hederae distinguentes* generally from Hadrian's reign on<sup>3</sup>. So a date in the 2nd century is not improbable.

\* Durch freundliche Vermittlung von Dr. R. Nouwen wurde das Objekt inzwischen für das Rheinische Landesmuseum Trier erworben (EV 2000,23).

<sup>1</sup> The standard holder was the last subject I discussed with Prof. Dr. H. Devijver. This short paper is dedicated to his memory. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. H. Thoen (Gent), Prof. Dr. H. Heinen (Trier), Prof. Dr. W. Binsfeld (Trier) and Dr. T. Wilmott (Portsmouth) for the many useful remarks.

<sup>2</sup> Concerning *hederae distinguentes*, see H. HOMMEL, 1970a, 300 sqq. and 1970b, 287.

<sup>3</sup> R. CAGNAT, 1964, 28; I. CALABI LIMENTANI, 1968, 149; H. HOMMEL, 1970a, 301-302.

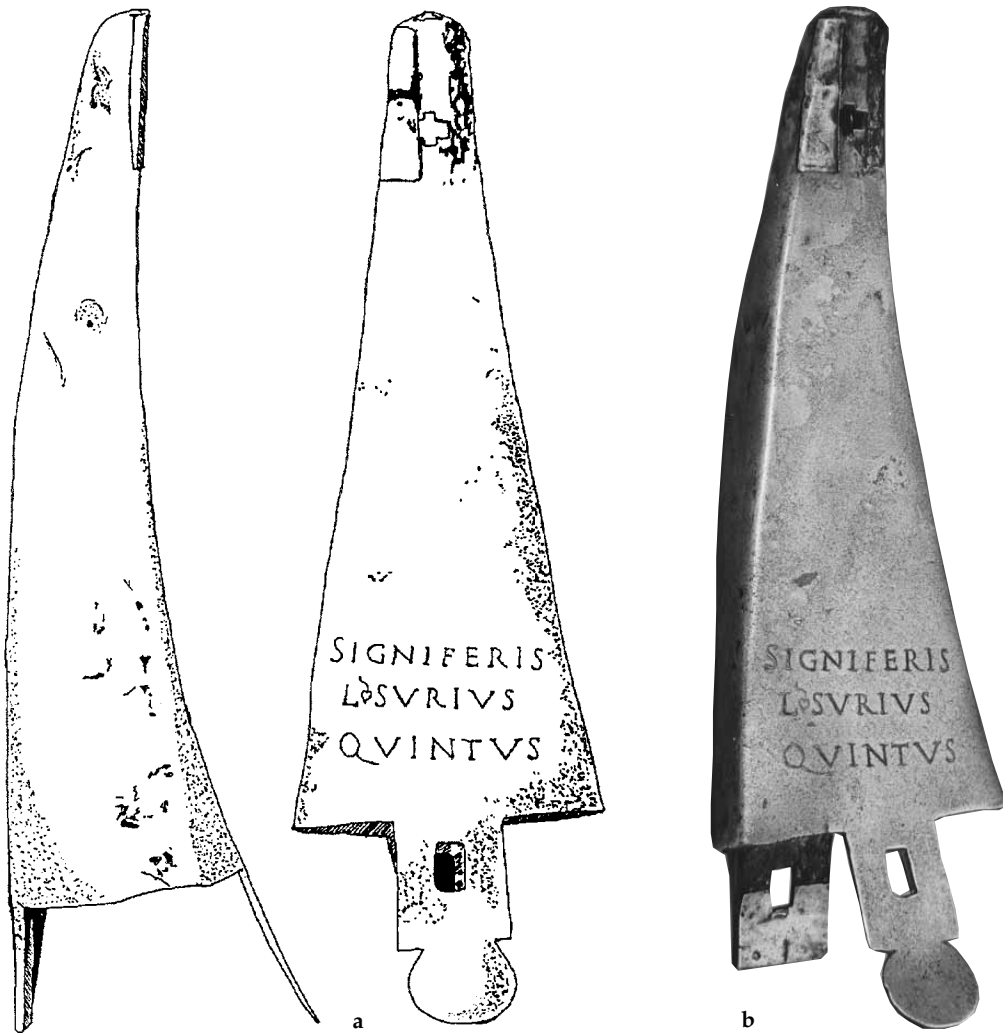


Abb. 1 Standard holder, bronze. M. 1:3.

As the inscription mentions, the standard holder is dedicated to the *signiferi*. This does not imply that L. Surlus Quintus himself was a *signifer*. He bears the *tria nomina*, and can therefore probably be identified as a Roman citizen. If not, the *tria nomina* express at least his adherence to Roman culture<sup>4</sup>. The *praenomen* L(ucius)<sup>5</sup> is, like the *cognomen* Quintus<sup>6</sup>, a name of Roman mediterranean origin. The *nomen gentilicium* Surlus has possibly a Celtic origin. This however is not certain; Weisgerber prefers an Illyrian origin<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> P. RUGGERI, 1994, 194.

<sup>5</sup> J. KAJANTO, 1965, 172.

<sup>6</sup> J. KAJANTO, 1965, 20 v.2; 30; 39; 41; 73; 74; 75; 77; 174 (293); H. SOLIN - O. SALOMIES, 1988, 389.

<sup>7</sup> A. HOLDER, 1962, 1677; W. SCHULTZE, 1966, 235; L. WEISGERBER, 1968, 98; 140; 158; 201; 213; 245; 251; A. MOCZY, 1983, 278; H. SOLIN - O. SALOMIES, 1988, 179. See also *CIL*, V 1392, 3804, VI 27028, 27029, IX 3814, *RIB*, 1175.

The discovery of such an object is surprising. We have no knowledge of other examples<sup>8</sup>. At present, a standard holder is known only from the *aquilifer*-stele of T. Flavius Surillio<sup>9</sup>. Tombstones depicting cavalymen in action or soldiers standing in full figure together with their weapons, are common in the Roman Empire. Funeral stelae of soldiers in arms and armour flourished greatly. So they are a first class source for the study of the Roman army. The funeral monument of Surillio was found in 1964 during excavations in the Beyazit and acquired by the Istanbul Archaeological Museums. In a rectangular field, a relief shows the deceased in full frontal view. In the inscription he is identified as an *aquilifer* of the *legio II Adiutrix pia fidelis*<sup>10</sup>. He holds the *aquila* with the left hand. The *aquila* is fastened to a strap coming down from the soldier's left shoulder. At the end of the shaft of the eagle-standard one can see a ram's head. This head could be fastened to the standard and hooked into the strap. But it might also be a metal cup fastened to the strap in order to receive the shaft. The standard holder allows the *aquilifer* to hold his eagle with just one hand. Without a holder, it would not have been an easy task to carry the standard. According to M.P. Speidel, it seems to be excluded that the strap is a misrepresented sword. The eagle-standard is clearly held up by the standard holder. The stele can be dated to the third century by the costume of the soldier.

Most of the standard- or eagle-bearers hold the standard with the right hand. A good example offers the tombstone of Oclatius, *signifer* of the *ala Afrorum*, found at Neuss<sup>11</sup>. The deceased is depicted in full frontal view and holds the *signum* on his right side. On the tombstone of the *signifer* Flavinus of the *ala Gallorum Petriana*, found at Corbridge, the deceased is depicted in action<sup>12</sup>. He holds the standard in the right hand. There is no standard holder to be seen. It might be an artistic convention to depict standard-bearers holding the standard in that way. Sometimes however, the standard-bearer holds the standard with the left hand. Examples can be found on the tombstones of S. Valerius Genialis from Cirencester and of the *signifer* Q. Carminius Ingenuus from Worms<sup>13</sup>. M. Junkelmann<sup>14</sup> remarks that S. Valerius Genialis does not seem to hold the *signum* with the hand. He has the impression that it is attached to the arm or the shield. Or can we suppose here the presence of a standard holder?

<sup>8</sup> There is no mentioning of such an object in H.R. ROBINSON, 1975; A. HYLAND, 1990; M. JUNKELMANN, 1991; K.R. DIXON & P. SOUTHERN, 1992; M.C. BISHOP & J.C. COULSTON, 1993; M. JUNKELMANN, 1996.

<sup>9</sup> See M.P. SPEIDEL, 1976, 139-140. The stele was published by N. FIRATLI, 1966, 186 sqq.: *D(is) m(anibus) / T(ito) Fl(avio) Surillioni aquilifero / leg(ionis) II Adi(utricis) p(iae) f(idelis) militavit / annos XVIII vixit annos XXXX / posuit Aur(elius) Zanax aquilifer leg(ionis) eiusdem colle/g(a)e bene merenti*. Date: Beyazit, 3th c.

<sup>10</sup> Concerning the *legio II Adiutrix*, see E. RITTERLING, 1924, 1437 sqq; M.P. SPEIDEL, 1976, 132; P.A. HOLDER, 1982, 104.

<sup>11</sup> A. OXE, 1925, 120-122. Further H. LEHNER, 1923, 143; AE, 1924, 21; H. FINKE, 1927, 304; E. ESPERANDIEU, IX, 1907, nr. 6575; K. KRAFT, 1951, 115; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, nr. 20; P.A. HOLDER, 1980, nr. 103; J.M. LASSERE, 1988, 185. *Oclatio Carvi filio) / signif(ero) alae Afror(um) / Tungro frater h(eres) f(aciendum) c(uravit)*. Date: Neuss, 80-100.

<sup>12</sup> G. WEBSTER, 1969, 148; M. JUNKELMANN, 1991, 138.

<sup>13</sup> G. WEBSTER, 1969, 148; M. JUNKELMANN, 1991, 138.

<sup>14</sup> M. JUNKELMANN, 1991, 137. See also RIB, 109 = CIL, VII, 68: *Sextus Vale(r)ius Genialis / eq(ue)us alae Trhaec(um) / civis Frisiaus tur(ma) / Genialis an(norum) XXXX st(ipendiorum) XX / h(ic) s(itus) e(st) (h) e(res) f(aciendum) c(uravit)*. The deceased is depicted riding to the right with his lance above a fallen enemy. With the left hand he holds a standard. Probably the standard is attached to the arm or the shield. Date: Cirencester, end of the 1st or beginning of the 2nd c. CIL, XVI, 48 shows that the unit was in Britain in AD 103.

Suetonius describes how the praetorian cohorts at high speed loaded, against all decency, the *signa* on carts<sup>15</sup>. So the invention must have been very welcome.

On many reliefs the standards are depicted with a long shaft and points to stick them into the ground. A good example is the tombstone of Q. Luccius Faustus, *signifer* of the *legio XIV Gemina Martia Victrix*, stationed at Mainz under the Flavians. It shows the soldier with the *signum* to his right, a spear shaft with six bossed disks. It ends in a metal point<sup>16</sup>. Another good example is the tombstone of Cn. Musius, *aquilifer* of the *legio XIV Gemina*<sup>17</sup>. Sometimes, they also had handles to pull them out again. Such a handle is clearly depicted on the stelae of Cn. Mussius and the *signifer* Pintaius found at Bonn<sup>18</sup>. With that pointed shaft, it seems to us dangerous for the horse and the horseman to ride without protection. And this protection is offered by a bronze standard holder like the one that is found at Trier.

Speidel<sup>19</sup> supposed that the absence of such standard holders on funerary monuments might be due to its late invention and the dearth of realistic representations of standard-bearers on reliefs. As we have seen, the shape of the characters of the inscription and the *hedera distinguens* are in contradiction with a date later than the second century.

## 2. The *signum*<sup>20</sup>

There are several standards attested for the Roman army: the *aquila legionis*, the *signum*, the *imago* and the *vexillum*. The representations of these emblems vary greatly<sup>21</sup>. Each legion had an eagle, kept by the *aquilifer*<sup>22</sup>. This standard had a strong symbolical value and was the expression of the solidarity of the unit. When the legion had to deliver a detachment, then this *vexillatio* obtained a *vexillum*, a flag, usually a square cloth which was hung from a transverse bar<sup>23</sup>. This was carried by a *vexillarius*<sup>24</sup>. The use of the *vexillum* as a military standard is attested from the last years of the Republic on. We may note here that the *vexillarius* is attested in both cavalry and infantry units of

<sup>15</sup> Cfr. Suetonius, *Caligula*, 43: *Iter ... confecitque modo tam festinanter et rapide ut praetorianae cohortes contra morem signa iumentis imponere et ita subsequi cogentur*.

<sup>16</sup> CIL, XIII, 6898; ESPERANDIEU, VII, 5792; W. SELZER, 1988, 38; Y. LE BOHEC, 1994, fig. V,8: *Q(uintus) Luccius / Q(uinti) f(ilius) Pollia (tribu) / Faustus Pole/ntia mil(es) leg(ionis) / XIII Gem(inae) Mar(tiae) / Vic(tricis) an(norum) XXXV / stip(endiorum) XVII h(ic) s(itus) e(st) / heredes f(aciendum) c(uraverunt)*. The deceased is only identified as *miles*. He is depicted in full frontal view and holds the *signum* with the right hand. Date: Mainz - Zahlbach, 2nd h.1st c.

<sup>17</sup> W. SELZER, 1988, 30: *Cn(aeus) Musius T(iti) f(ilius) / Gal(eria tribu) Veleias an(norum) / XXXII stip(endiorum) XV / aquilifer) leg(ionis) XIII Gem(inae) / M(arcus) Musius c(enturio) frater posuit*. The deceased is depicted in full frontal view. He holds the *aquila* with the right hand. Date: Mainz - Zahlbach, 1st h.1st c.

<sup>18</sup> A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1885, 72-73.

<sup>19</sup> M.P. SPEIDEL, 1976, 140.

<sup>20</sup> The most comprehensive study about the *signum* until now is written by A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1885 and also W. KUBISCHEK, 1923. Therefore we only will give some short information.

<sup>21</sup> See A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1885, 28 sqq.; G. WEBSTER, 1969, 148.

<sup>22</sup> A. NEUMANN, 1979, 478.

<sup>23</sup> D.J. BREEZE, 1989, 136; M. JUNKELMANN, 1991, 136 sqq. Well known is the Goleniscev-*vexillum*, part of the collection of the State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow. See M. ROSTOVTZEFF, 1942, 92; G. WEBSTER, 1986, 105 sqq.

<sup>24</sup> M. ROSTOVTZEFF, 1942, 92 sqq.; A. NEUMANN, 1958 & 1958bis.

the Roman Army. Each manipule of a legion, composed of two *centuriae*, had a *signum* kept by a *signifer*. *Signiferi* are also attested in the inscriptions of cavalry troops, the *alae* and the *equites singulares imperatoris*. Each *turma* of the *ala* had a *signum*<sup>25</sup> and this was probably also the case for the *equites singulares*<sup>26</sup>. We may suppose that also the *cohortes auxiliae* had *signa*.

According to tradition, it was Romulus who introduced the *signum*. During combat the *signa* were the points of reference around which the fighting soldiers organised themselves. The soldiers had to keep their eyes on the standards. They were also an indispensable expedient for the commander to give the right orders during the battle<sup>27</sup>. It is not without reason that the Latin language defines troop movements by using expressions as *signa tollere*, *signa movere*, *signa ferre*, and so on<sup>28</sup>. All these expressions have in common that the troop movements are indicated by the *signa*. They form part of the military language and are in fact the commands for the *signiferi*<sup>29</sup>. The use of the *signum* is attested by Caesar, Livius and Tacitus who all emphasise the importance of the *signum* during the battle. As an example, we would like to cite a passage from Caesar's *De bello Gallico* here: „If Caesar wished to finish off the business and to make away with a brood of malefactors, he must needs send several bands in different directions and move his troops at wide intervals; if he wished to keep the companies with the standards, as the established rule and custom of the Roman army required, the locality itself gave protection to the natives“<sup>30</sup>.

It is clear that the *signa* only could play their role when they were visible for all the soldiers, i.e. at the front of the battle. And it is only in the worst circumstances, when the cohesion of the units was destroyed, that the *signa* were assembled on one place and surrounded by the soldiers without paying attention to their tactical organisation. With this in mind, it is obvious that the standard-bearers in all circumstances played an important role in the organisation of the unit.

### 3. „Rangordnung“ of the *signiferi*

The ranks of the standard-bearers, who occupy a position of peculiar importance in the military system, present a complicated and often confused pattern. Within the legion one can distinguish the *aquilifer*, the *imaginifer* and the *signifer*. The *signifer* who was the highest in rank was called *princeps signifer*<sup>31</sup>. This tactical under-officer

<sup>25</sup> CIL, VIII, 20994; RIB, 1172; ILS, 1077: *Dis manibus Flavinus / eq(ues) alae Petr(ianae) signifer / tur(ma) Candidi an(norum) XXV / stip(endiorum) VII h(ic) s(itus est)*. The deceased is depicted riding to the right. He holds the *signum* with the right hand. Date: Corbridge, 1st c. M. JUNKELMANN, 1991, 137

<sup>26</sup> CIL, VI, 225.

<sup>27</sup> A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1885, 2 sqq.; M. JUNKELMANN, 1991, 137; Y. LE BOHEC, 1994, 49.

<sup>28</sup> See A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1885, 5 with literary references.

<sup>29</sup> Livius, V, 55, 1: *centurio in comitio exclamavit "signifer, statue signum, hic manebimus optime"*. en VI, 8, 1: *Dato deinde signo ex equo desilit et proximum signiferum manu arreptum secum in hostem rapit 'infer miles', clamitans 'signum'*. A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1885, 6.

<sup>30</sup> See Caesar, B.G., 34, 4-6: *"Si negotium confici stirpemque hominum sceleratorum interfici vellet, dimittendae plures manus diducendique erant milites; si continere ad signa manipulos vellet, ut instituta ratio et consuetudo exercitus Romani postulabat, locus ipse erat praesidio barbaris"*., transl. H.J. EDWARDS, 1970. Comp. also Livius 23, 35, 6; 30, 35, 6 and Tacitus, *Ann.*, 2, 45.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. CIL, XIII, 4333: *militia(m) leg(ionariam) princ(eps) sig(nifer) explevit*.

is not attested among the *equites legionis*<sup>32</sup>. The *signifer* of the legion belongs obviously to the *principales*. The ranks immediately below were the *tesserarius* and the *optio*. These ranks belong to the tactical staff of the troop. They are extant in all the infantry troops, the *cohortes auxiliae*, and their mutual relationship was always the same<sup>33</sup>. The next step in the career was the rank of the *aquilifer* for which the legionary *signifer* seemed a good preparation as is attested by several inscriptions<sup>34</sup>.

Within the *alae* we can distinguish four different standards. Their bearers are apparently ranked as *principales*: the *signifer alae*, the *imaginifer*, the *signifer turmae* and finally the *vexillarius*<sup>35</sup>. However, it is not sure that the order of this career structure was as simple and straightforward as it would appear<sup>36</sup>. According to Cheesman and Lehner it is the *vexillarius* who carries the regimental standard of the unit whereas the *signifer* bears the flag of the *turma*<sup>37</sup>. This is against the view of von Domaszewski<sup>38</sup>.

For the *equites singulares imperatoris*, the situation was different. The standard of the unit was carried by a *tablifer* or a *vexillarius*. He belongs to the *principales* and has the same rank as the *aquilifer legionis*. The *signifer* belongs to the *immunes*<sup>39</sup>. In the praetorian guard the *vexillarius* replaces the *signifer*<sup>40</sup>. And in the *vigiles*, the fire brigade in Rome, the *vexillarius* is the infantry equivalent of the *signifer*<sup>41</sup>.

Finally, it is not clear if they always belonged to the *principales* (the non-commissioned officers who are able to command small detachments) or to the *immunes* (soldiers who were granted freedom from certain duties). Often the rank of the *signifer* or the *aquilifer* was the last step in the career of the soldier. Inscriptions on tombstones mention in this case *vet(eranus) ex sig(nifero)*<sup>42</sup>. Determining the 'Rangordnung' of the *signifer*, it is important to notice here that *signifer* is the most common of all military *termini technici*. This means that in theory *signifer* can be mistaken for a *vexillarius* or even an *aquilifer*<sup>43</sup>. The *signiferi* led the way on the march and in the combat and were responsible for the money deposit. According to Neuffer<sup>44</sup> the inscriptions seem to indicate that a *miles* or an *eques* could function as a *signifer* without holding the rank. In the inscriptions the bearer of the *signum* is not always identified as *signifer*. Tiberius Iulius Pancuius, who was depicted as a *signifer* was in fact identified as a

<sup>32</sup> M.P. SPEIDEL, 1994, 37.

<sup>33</sup> E.g. *CIL*, IX, 5839 = *ILS*, 2084. G.L. CHEESMAN, 1914, 42-43; W. KUBITSCHKEK, 1923, 2345; A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1967, 2, 43, 61-62. Concerning the *cohortes auxiliae*, e.g. *CIL*, XIII, 8098. See A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1967, 58-59

<sup>34</sup> *CIL*, V, 3375 and V, 5832

<sup>35</sup> A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1885, 56; IDEM, 1967, 54-56; G. WEBSTER, 1986, 106.

<sup>36</sup> Comp. D.J. BREEZE, 1974, 278-286.

<sup>37</sup> G.L. CHEESMAN, 1914, 40, n.1; H. LEHNER, 1908, 281 sqq; B. DOBSON, in: A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1967, 61-62.

<sup>38</sup> A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1967, 61-62.

<sup>39</sup> G.L. CHEESMAN, 1914, 41-42; A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1967, 50-52.

<sup>40</sup> *CIL*, VI, 32709a = 37191 = *ILS*, 9190. D.J. BREEZE, 1989, 137.

<sup>41</sup> *CIL*, IX, 1438 = *ILS*, 2166. A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1967, 10-11, 15; D.J. BREEZE, 1989, 137.

<sup>42</sup> See e.g. *CIL*, XIII, 6769. Compare also with P. RUGGERI, 1994, 193: *M(arcus) Iunius Ger/manus sig(nifer) / c(o) ho(rtis) Lig(urum) vix(it) / a(nnis) L stipendior(um) XIIX h(ic) s(itus) e(st)*: Date: Coros (Sardegna), 2nd h.2nd c.

<sup>43</sup> W. KUBITSCHKEK, 1923, 2349 and 2358 concerning *CIL*, XIII, 8049.

<sup>44</sup> NEUFFER, 1951, 194.

*miles* of the *cohors Lusitanorum*<sup>45</sup>. This is also the case for Q. Luccius Faustus, *miles* of the *legio XIV Gemina*<sup>46</sup>.

The *signiferi* were instructed in their duties by the *discentes*. In their civilian activities they were helped by *adiutores signorum*<sup>47</sup>.

#### 4. The *signiferi* of Trier

The *civitas Treverorum* offers many testimonies of military activity. During the reign of Augustus, a Roman cavalry unit, the *ala Hispanorum*, was stationed at Trier and moved to the Rhine frontier during the reorganisation of Tiberius<sup>48</sup>. The presumed auxiliary fort of Trier has to be seen in relation with this unit<sup>49</sup>. Other soldiers served in the Tiberian - Claudian era in the *ala Petriana* (Strasbourg)<sup>50</sup>, the *ala Agrippiana* (Worms)<sup>51</sup> and the *ala Pansiana* (Oescus)<sup>52</sup>. It is generally assumed that in the *civitas Treverorum*, i.e. the hinterland of the *limes*, troops were no longer stationed from 17 AD on. An exception can be made for the *ala Treverorum*<sup>53</sup>, probably raised during the reign of Tiberius (14-37 AD) on the ground of a *foedus*. The unit was an *ala equitum, quae conscripta e Treveris militia disciplinaque nostra habebatur*<sup>54</sup>. The *ala* was the only ethnic unit of the *Treveri* in the pre-Flavian period. The unit stood under the command of *praefecti* of their own aristocracy as Iulius Tutor and Iulius Classicus<sup>55</sup>. Iulius Tiberi(a)nus<sup>56</sup> and Secundius (?) Priscus<sup>57</sup> are mentioned in the inscriptions. During the Gaulish revolt of 21 the majority of its soldiers remained loyal to Rome. At the latest under Caligula or Claudius, the *ala* was transferred to the Lower-Rhine front. At least two military tombstones from the 1st half of the 1st century are known from Trier. The first belongs to the *eques* Urbanus which can probably be dated to

<sup>45</sup> NEUFFER, 1951, 192: *Tiber(ius) Iulius / Pancuius / miles coh(ortis) / Lusitanorum / an(norum) LV stip(endiorum) XXVIII / hic s(it)us est*. The deceased is identified as *miles*. He is depicted in frontal view. He holds the *signum* with his right hand on the left side of his body. Date: Neuss, 1st h. 1st c.

<sup>46</sup> W. KUBITSCHKEK, 1923, 2358; W. SELZER, 1988, 38. Comp. also *CIL*, XIII, 8094.

<sup>47</sup> W. KUBITSCHKEK, 1923, 2355; A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1967, 45; Y. LE BOHEC, 1994, 49.

<sup>48</sup> J.B. KEUNE, 1935, 76-79; J. KRIER, 1981, 181-184; H. HEINEN, 1985, 58-59. *T(itus) Lucretius A[—] f(ilius) (Tribus?) / exs Hispania [Citeriore Clu] / niensis eque[ala Hispan] / orum stipe[ndiorum] / XV h(ic) s(itus) [est—]*. Date: before 17 A.D.

<sup>49</sup> K.-J. GILLES, 199, 214; J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 71 & 87.

<sup>50</sup> *CIL*, XIII, 11605; A. RIESE, 1914, nr. 1488; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 25: *Marti / Loucet(io) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(aetus) l(ibens) m(erito) / Fittio Cond/olli f(ilius) eq(ues) al(a) Petri(ana) Treve(r)*, date: 1st. h. 1st. c. Comp. J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 80-81. Concerning the unit, see e.g. C. CICHORIUS, 1893, 1244; E. STEIN, 1932, 146-147; E. BIRLEY, 1978, 268; J. SPAUL, 1994, 180-182.

<sup>51</sup> *CIL*, XIII, 6235; A. RIESE, 1914, nr. 1431; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 29: *Partus Mutii f(ilius) / eques ala Agrippi/ana natione Trever / annoru(m) XXXV stip(endiorum) / [X]III h(ic) sit(us) est / fratres posuerunt*. Date: 20-30 A.D. Comp. J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 80-81. Concerning the unit, see e.g. C. CICHORIUS, 1893, 1229; E. STEIN, 1932, 121 sqq.; E. BIRLEY, 1978, 265; J. SPAUL, 1994, 24-26.

<sup>52</sup> *AE*, 1960, 127; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 59: *Ti(berius) Iulius Icci(i) / f(ilius) Acutus dub/licariu[s] al[ia] / Pansia[n(a)] dom(o) / Trever [v]ixit / an(nis) LX mer(uit) ann(is) / XXXVI / h(ic) s(itus) e(st) / heres f(aciendum) c(uravit)*. Comp. J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 80-81. Concerning the unit, see e.g. W. WAGNER, 1963, 317 sqq.; E. BIRLEY, 1978, 268. According to J. SPAUL, 1994, 250 the unit is suspect.

<sup>53</sup> C. CICHORIUS, 1894, 1267; E. STEIN, 1932, 155 ff.; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, 37-38; J. KRIER, 1981, 181-184; J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 87.

<sup>54</sup> *TAC.*, *Ann.*, III, 42.

<sup>55</sup> *TAC. Hist.*, IV, 55 sqq. J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 83 sqq.

<sup>56</sup> *AE*, 1968, 321; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, nr. 69; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 33. Comp. J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 83-84.

<sup>57</sup> See Trier, 1984, nr. 101; J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 83, fig. 64.

the reign of Claudius<sup>58</sup>. The second fragment belongs to a tombstone of a *signifer*, probably also to be dated in the reign of Claudius. The inscription is not conserved<sup>59</sup>. The unit of these two soldiers is not known, but it could be the *ala Treverorum*. A lost inscription, which can not be dated, mentions also a *signifer* of an unknown unit<sup>60</sup>. On account of the date of our standard holder, there is no direct relation between those tombstones and our object.

Because of the participation of the *ala Treverorum* in the Batavian revolt, the unit was disbanded. From 70 AD on there was no longer an *ala Treverorum*. Nevertheless, the recruitment of soldiers occurred frequently in the *civitas Treverorum*<sup>61</sup>, but now for other auxiliary units stationed along the Rhine and Danube front. One can suppose that the *civitas Treverorum* had to supply a fixed number of soldiers at certain moments, but this is not sure. Anyway, the *Treveri* entered the service mostly as *equites*. They served in the *ala Moesica* (Wiesbaden)<sup>62</sup>, the *ala Vocontiorum* (Xanten)<sup>63</sup>, the *ala Auriana* and the *ala Asturum II* (Budapest)<sup>64</sup>, the *ala Indiana* (Köln)<sup>65</sup> and the *ala Cannenefatium* (Oroszvár)<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> TRIER, 1984, 237-238 (nr. 90); J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 71 & 73. *Urbanus Ambat[i] f(i)lius)/annorum XXX/ stipendiorum VII/[eques alae —]*.

<sup>59</sup> TRIER, 1984, 238 (nr. 91); J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 71 & 73.

<sup>60</sup> CIL, XIII, 3685. J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 72 & 102, n. 134.

<sup>61</sup> See J. KRIER, 1981, 181-183; 188-190; 204

<sup>62</sup> CIL, XVI, 23 (= XIII, 11967); ILS, 9052; A. RIESE, 1914, nr. 47; AE, 1906; 99; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, nr. 1; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 35: —*Vespasianus—civitatem dedit et conubium—a(nte) d(iem) XVII K(alendas) Maias D(ecimo) Novio Prisco L(ucio) Ceionio Commodo co(n)s(ulibus) alae Moesicae cui pra(e)st T(itus) Staberius T(iti) f(i)lius) Qui(rina) Secundus gregali Tertio Marci f(i)lio) Trevir(o)—*. Date: April 15, 78 A.D. J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 80. Concerning the unit, see C. CICHORIUS, 1894, 1252; E. STEIN, 1932, 143-144; W. WAGNER, 1938, 55-56; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, 23-25; J. SPAUL, 1994, 163-164.

<sup>63</sup> CIL, XIII, 8655; A. RIESE, 1914, nr. 1517; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, nr. 78; J. KRIER, 1981, 39: *Silvano Loupi f(i)lio) Trever(o) / eq(uiti) ala Vocont(iorum) XXX / stip(endiorum) XII et vivis Primae / sorori eius hered(i) f(aciendum) c(uravit) / vos rogitat quaeso soror unica / fratris amantis ni dissigilletis / nive violetis opus*. Date: short before 78 A.D. Comp. J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993, 80. See also CIL, VII, 288; RIB, 606; A. RIESE, 1914, nr. 2445; AE, 1969/1970, 292; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 46: *Dis Mani/bus / L(ucius) Iul(ius) Apol(linaris) / Trever an(norum) / XXX eq(ues) al/ae Au[g(u)stae] / h(ic) [s(itus) e(st) / h(eres) f(aciendum) c(uravit)]*. Date: reign of Traian. It concerns here the *ala Augusta Vocontiorum Civium Romanorum*, see J. KRIER, 1981, 124. Concerning the unit see e.g. C. CICHORIUS, 1894, 1269-1270; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, 40-42; J. SPAUL, 1994, 238-239.

<sup>64</sup> CIL, III, 14349; A. RIESE, 1914, nr. 2444; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 54: *Reginus Troucet/issae f(i)lius) domo Tr(ever) anno(rum) XXX se/squiplic(arius) alae Aur(ianae) I / stipendio(rum) V h(ic) s(itus) e(st) / Receptus sesquip(licarius) / alae Asturu(m) II fra(ter) ide(m) heres / pos(u)it*. Date: reign of Vespasianus. Concerning the *ala I Auriana*, see C. CICHORIUS, 1894, 1248; E. STEIN, 1932, 123-124; J. SPAUL, 1994, 58-60. Concerning the *ala II Asturum*, see C. CICHORIUS, 1894, 1231; J. SPAUL, 1994, 42-44.

<sup>65</sup> CIL, XIII, 8519; A. RIESE, 1914, nr. 1465; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, NR. 31; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 37: *Albanio Vitali / eq(uiti) alae Indianae / tur(ma) Barbi(i) civi / Trevero an(norum) XXX stip(endiorum) X / h(eres) ex t(estamento) <f> (aciendum) c(uravit)*. Date: between 92/93 and 100 A.D. Concerning the unit, see e.g. C. CICHORIUS, 1894, 1243 sqq; E. STEIN, 1932, 141 sqq.; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, 19-21; E. BIRLEY, 1978, 267; J. SPAUL, 1994, 152-153.

<sup>66</sup> CIL, III, 4391; A. RIESE, 1914, nr. 1437; J. KRIER, 1981, nr. 51: *D(is) M(anibus) / Flavius / Attius cives / Trever eq(ues) / al(ae) I Cann(enefatium) stip(endiorum) / VII h(ic) s(itus) e(st) / h(eres) f(aciendum) c(uravit)*. Date: ca. 10 A.D. Concerning the *ala I Cannenefatium*, see C. CICHORIUS, 1894, 1236; E. STEIN, 1932, 125-126; W. WAGNER, 1938, 24-25; G. ALFÖLDY, 1968, 14; J. SPAUL, 77-79.



## 5. Interpretations

What conclusions can be drawn? The *signum* was used in the maniples of the legions and in the auxiliary cavalry troops. Several auxiliary units are attested in connection with the Treveri. The exceptional find at Trier of a standard holder dedicated to the *signiferi* has a clear military context. There was a tradition of military recruitment for cavalry troops. So it is not surprising that evidence of *signiferi* are found at Trier. The inscription itself however does not imply that Lucius Surlus Quintus was a *signifer alae*. The importance of the object lies in the fact that for the first time, a real standard holder has come to light.

Involuntary, this discovery makes us think of the helmets with inscriptions, often from the 1st century AD, found in rivers, e.g. in the Rhine by Rijswijk<sup>67</sup> and in the former Rhine bed by Xanten<sup>68</sup>. The Rhine, the Meuse and the Moselle have produced an enormous amount of *militaria* as helmets, swords, shield-bosses and metal fittings of horse harnesses. The quantities of these river finds, which are quite astonishing, and their significance were seldom a matter for discussion<sup>69</sup>. Many of the objects were relatively intact when entering the water. Mostly such river finds are interpreted as lost by chance or in relation to a military context, especially in the limes area. In many cases indeed these *militaria* were found in the vicinity of Roman military camps, e.g. Xanten and Nijmegen. But often, there is no link at all with any Roman military site. In the frontier zone along the Rhine, large quantities of Roman military finds are known from ritual contexts. In this context we also have to pay attention to their possible significance in native civilian sphere. Important territories in this matter are the *civitates* of the Batavi, the Cugerni and the Treveri. In the *civitas Treverorum*, weapons were deposited in several rural sanctuaries dedicated to native Mars deities. It seems possible that many of the helmets, and also the other weapons, were intentionally deposited in the rivers as votive gifts. This practice seems to have been popular in the Rhine army and might be considered in relation to the *honesta missio* of native auxiliary soldiers.

Concerning our standard holder, the character of the find spot is important. Since 1959 many finds came to light under the Römerbrücke<sup>70</sup>. Several of these objects have a religious character. The most important are a bronze statue of Attis (2nd century), a silver figurine of Harpocrates (3rd century) and a bronze prow of a ship with an inscription (2nd h. of the 2nd century). The inscription runs as follows: *NUM. AUG. ET. GEN. PRORETAR / LIBONI. METTUS ET CRACVNA. FR. DD.* This made H. Cüppers conclude that probably a small temple was built in the immediate proximity of the bridge<sup>71</sup>. The dedication of our standard holder to the *signiferi* seems to indicate a relation with the former objects. A more definite interpretation seems impossible to us at the moment.

<sup>67</sup> See W.A. VAN ES, 1984, 255-291. Comp. W.J.H. WILLEMS, 1991, 9-18; H.-J. SCHALLES & Charlotte SCHREITER (ed.), 1993, 43 sqq.

<sup>68</sup> H.-J. SCHALLES & CH. SCHREITER, (ed.), 1993; H.-J. SCHALLES, 1995, 223-227.

<sup>69</sup> About this issue, see esp. N. ROYMANS, 1996, 28 sqq.

<sup>70</sup> See H. CÜPPERS, 1990, 613-614.

<sup>71</sup> See H. CÜPPERS, 1983, 114.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- G. ALFÖLDY, 1968: Die Hilfstruppen in der römischen Provinz Germania inferior, ES, 6, Düsseldorf.
- M.C. BISHOP & J.C. COULSTON, 1993: The Roman Military Equipment from the Punic Wars to the Fall of Rome.
- E. BIRLEY, 1978: Alae Named after their Commanders, in: *Anc. Soc.* 9, 257-273.
- D.J. BREEZE, The Organisation of the Career Structure of the Immunes and Principales of the Roman Army, in: *BJ*, 174, 278-286.
- D.J. BREEZE, 1989: The Flag of the Legion II Augusta on the Bridgeness Distance Slab, in: *Proc.Soc. Antiq.Scot.*, 119, 133-142.
- R. CAGNAT, 1964 (=1914), *Cours d'épigraphie latine*, Paris.
- Ida CALABI LIMENTANI, 1968: *Epigrafia Latina*, Roma, Mailand-Varese.
- C. CICHORIUS, 1894: Ala, in: *RE*, I, kol. 1223-1270.
- H. CÜPPERS, 1983: in: *Die Römer an Mosel und Saar. Zeugnisse der Römerzeit in Lothringen, in Luxemburg, im Raum Trier und im Saarland, Mainz*, 114.
- H. CÜPPERS (ed.), 1990: *Die Römer in Rheinland-Pfalz*, Stuttgart.
- K.R. DIXON & P. SOUTHERN, 1992: *The Roman Cavalry*, London-New York.
- H.J. EDWARDS, 1970: *Caesar, The Gallic War* (Loeb Classical Library, 72).
- N. FIRATLI, 1966: Annexe au livre sur les stèles de Byzance gréco-romaine. *Ann. Arch. Mus. of Istanbul*, 13-14.
- K.-J. GILLES, 1992: Neue Funde und Beobachtungen zu den Anfängen Triers, in: *TZ*, 55, 193-232.
- H. HEINEN, 1985: Trier und das Trevererland in römischer Zeit (2000 Jahre Trier B.1), Trier.
- A. HOLDER, 1896: *Alt-Celtischer Sprachschatz*, Bd.-I-III, Leipzig.
- P.A. HOLDER, 1982: *The Roman Army in Britain*, London.
- H. HOMMEL, 1970a: Das Datum der Munatier-Grabstätte in Portus Traiani und die Hederae Distinguentes, in: *ZPE*, 5, 293-303, esp. 300 sqq.
- H. HOMMEL, 1970b: Nachtrag zu: H. Hommel, Das Datum der Munatier-Grabstätte, in: *ZPE*, 6, 287.
- A. HYLAND, 1990: *Equus. The Horse in the Roman World*, New Haven-London.
- M. JUNKELMANN, 1991: *Die Reiter Roms, II, Der militärische Einsatz*, Mainz.
- M. JUNKELMANN, 1996: *Reiter wie Statuen aus Erz*, Mainz.
- J. KAJANTO, 1965: *The Latin Cognomina*, Helsinki.
- J. KEUNE, 1935: Spanische Reiter in Trier, in: *TZ*, 10, 76-79.
- J. KRIER, 1981: Die Treverer ausserhalb ihrer Civitas. Mobilität und Aufstieg, *TZ.Beih.*, 5, Trier.
- J. KRIER & F. REINERT, 1993: Das Reitergrab von Hellingen. Die Treverer und das römische Militär in der frühen Kaiserzeit, Mainz.
- W. KUBITSCHKE, 1923: Signifer, in: *RE*, II,4, 2348-2358.
- J.M. LASSERE, 1988: Les Afri et l'armée romaine, in: *L'Africa romana. Atti del V convegno di studio Sassari, 11-13 dicembre 1987*, 177-188.
- Y. LE BOHEC, 1994: *The Imperial Roman Army*, London.
- H. LEHNER, 1923: in: *BJ*, 128, 143.
- A. MOCSY, 1983: *Nomenclator provinciarum Europae Latinarum et Galliae Cisalpiniae cum indice inverso* (Dissertationes Pannonicae, III.1) with R. FELDMANN, E. MARTON, M. SZILAGYI, Budapest.
- NEUFFER, 1951: in: *BJ*, 151, 192-194.
- A. NEUMANN, 1958: Vexillarius, in: *RE*, II, 16, 2439-2442
- A. NEUMANN, 1958bis: Vexillum, in: *RE*, II, 16, 2446-2454
- A. NEUMANN, 1979: Aquila, in: *Der Kleine Pauly*, 1, 478.
- A. OXE, 1925: Der Grabstein eines Signifer der Ala Afrorum, in: *Germania* 9, 120-122.
- A. RIESE, 1914: *Das Rheinische Germanien in den antiken Inschriften*, Leipzig – Berlin.
- E. RITTERLING, 1924: Legio, in: *RE*, XII, 1211-1829.
- H.R. ROBINSON, 1975: *The Armour of Imperial Rome*.

- M. ROSTOVTZEFF, 1942: Vexillum and Victory, in: JRS, 32, 92-106.
- N. ROYMANS, 1996: The Sword or the Plough. Regional Dynamics in the Romanisation of belgic Gaul and the Rhineland area, in: From the Sword to the Plough. Three Studies on the Earliest Romanisation of Northern Gaul, ed. by N. ROYMANS, Amsterdam Archaeological Studies, 1, Amsterdam.
- P. RUGGERI, 1994: Un signifer della cohors Ligurum in Sardegna, in: ZPE, 101, 193-195
- H.-J. SCHALLES & Charlotte SCHREITER (ed.), 1993: Geschichte aus dem Kies. Neue Funde aus dem Alten Rhein bei Xanten (Xantener Berichte, 3), Köln - Bonn.
- H.-J. SCHALLES, 1995: Römische Funde aus dem Kies von Xanten-Wardt, in: Ein Land macht Geschichte. Archäologie in Nordrhein-Westfalen, 223-227.
- W. SCHULTZE, 1966 (=1904): Zur Geschichte lateinischer Eigennamen, Berlin-Zürich-Dublin.
- W. SELZER, 1988: Römische Steindenkmäler. Mainz in Römischer Zeit. Katalog zur Sammlung in der Steinhalle, unter Mitarbeit von K.-V. DECKER & A. DO PACO, Mainz.
- H. SOLIN - O. SALOMIES, 1988: Repertorium nominum gentilium et cognominum Latinorum, Hildesheim-Zürich-New York.
- J. SPAUL, 1994: Ala5. The Auxiliary Cavalry Units of the Pre-Diocletianic Imperial Roman Army. A Revision and Updating of the Article written by Conrad Cichorius and Originally Published in Part I of Band 1 of Realencyclopädie der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, 1893, Andover.
- M.P. SPEIDEL, 1976: Eagle-Bearer and Trumpeter. The Eagle-Standard and Trumpets of the Roman Legions Illustrated by Three Tombstones Recently Found at Byzantium, in: BJ, 176, 123-163.
- M.P. SPEIDEL, 1994: Legionary Horsemen on Campaigns, in: Saalburg Jahrbuch, 47, 1994, 39-39.
- E. STEIN, 1932: Die Kaiserlichen Beamten und Truppenkörper im römischen Deutschland unter dem Prinzipat, Wien.
- Trier, 1984: Trier. Augustusstadt der Treverer. Ausstellungskatalog.
- W.A. VAN ES, 1984: Romeinse helmen uit de Rijn bij Rijswijk, in: Liber amicorum aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. M.W. Heslinger, Amsterdam, 255-291.
- A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1885: Die Fahnen im römischen Heere. Abhandl. Arch.-Epigr. Sem. Universität Wien, 5, Reprinted in: Aufsätze zur Römischen Heeresgeschichte, 1972, 1 sqq.
- A. VON DOMASZEWSKI, 1967: Die Rangordnung des römischen Heeres. 2. durchgesehene Auflage. Einführung, Berichtigungen und Nachträge von B. DOBSON, Beih.BJ, 14.
- W. WAGNER, 1938: Die Dislokation der römischen Auxiliarformationen in den Provinzen Noricum, Pannonien, Moesien und Dakien von Augustus bis Gallienus, Berlin.
- W. WAGNER, 1963: Zur ala Pansiana, eine epigraphische Nachlese, in: Germania, 41, 317 sqq.
- G. WEBSTER, 1969: The Roman Imperial Army of the First and the second Century A.D., London.
- G. WEBSTER, 1986: Standards and Standardbearers in the Alae, in BJ, 186, 105-115.
- L. WEISGERBER, 1968: Die Namen der Ubier, Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen der Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 34, Köln - Opladen.
- W.J.H. WILLEMS, 1991: Een Romeins viziermasker van het Kops Plateau te Nijmegen, in: Jaarboek Numaga, 38, 9-18.
- W. ZWIKKER, 1937: Bemerkungen zu den römischen Heeresfahnen in der älteren Kaiserzeit, in: 27.BRGK, 7 sqq.

### Abbildungsnachweis

- Abb. 1 a Zeichnung (R. Nouwen)  
 b RLM Trier, Foto RE 2000,28/5 (Th. Zühmer).

Anschrift des Verfassers: *Leopoldwal 38, B-3700 Tongeren*