

The fate of the Ninth

The curious disappearance of Legio VIII Hispana



© Andrew Brozyna, ajbdesign.com

IN 1954, ROSEMARY SUTCLIFF PUBLISHED A NOVEL ABOUT ROMAN BRITAIN. IT CAUGHT THE IMAGINATION OF AN ENTIRE GENERATION OF READERS WITH ITS TALE OF THE NINTH LEGION, DESTROYED IN THE MISTS OF SCOTLAND. A BBC DRAMATISATION CAPTIVATED A FRESH GENERATION IN 1977. AND NOW A NEW MOTION PICTURE IS SET TO REVIVE INTEREST IN THE FATE OF THE LOST LEGION. BUT WAS IT REALLY DESTROYED IN BRITAIN DURING THE REIGN OF HADRIAN? OR HAVE WE FALLEN FOR A MYTH THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN LAID TO REST FIFTY YEARS AGO?

By Duncan B Campbell

On the morning of 7 October 1854, *The York Herald and General Advertiser* carried a short report, tucked away in the bottom corner of an inside page. Under the headline “Antiquarian Discovery in York”, it announced that workmen digging a drain in the English town had unearthed a massive inscribed slab. Measuring approximately a metre square, the slab was the mid-section of a monumental Roman inscription, both ends of which had broken off. Enough

survived, however, for scholars of the day to reconstruct the original text:

“The Emperor Caesar Nerva Trajan Augustus, son of the deified Nerva, Conqueror of Germany, Conqueror of Dacia, Chief Priest, in his twelfth year of tribunician power [AD 108], acclaimed imperator six times, ... through the agency of the Ninth Hispana Legion.”

Roman Inscriptions of Britain § 665

The last testimony of the presence of the Ninth Legion in Britain. Dated to AD 108, it testifies to a building project undertaken by the legion.

It was clearly a military building inscription, dating from the time when Roman builders were gradually refurbishing the early turf-and-timber forts and fortresses in Britain, and reconstructing their defences in stone. The find-spot was close to the original location of the south-east gate into the legionary fortress of Eburacum. So the inscription probably celebrated the construction of the gateway, built by the emperor *per legionem VIII Hispanam* (“through the agency of the Ninth Hispana Legion”).

A very interesting stone

The newspaper’s correspondent, commenting on “the very interesting Roman stone”, wrote that “it is a valuable discovery, inasmuch as it fixes a precise period when the ninth

legion was in York". With hindsight, his assessment of the stone's importance was a huge understatement.

Only a year earlier, the great German scholar Theodor Mommsen had begun his *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (CIL) project to catalogue the surviving inscriptions from the Roman world. He planned to publish a transcript of each one, and collect them together in giant folio-sized volumes devoted to the various geographical regions of the empire. The job of collecting the Roman inscriptions of Britain fell to his colleague Emil Hübner, and the York inscription duly appeared as item 241 in CIL volume VII (*Inscriptiones Britanniae Latinae*, Berlin 1873).

In Mommsen's day, one of the classic texts on Roman Britain was *Britannia Romana: The Roman Antiquities of Britain*, written by the Northumberland antiquarian John Horsley, and published in 1732. Horsley would have welcomed the York inscription with open arms. He lamented the fact that, between the departure of Agricola and the arrival of Hadrian, the history of Britain was hidden in shadows: "the more so, because we cannot borrow any light or assistance from any Roman inscriptions in Britain, there being none now extant, which we can be certain are so ancient as this".

The legions of Britain

Nevertheless, by diligent study, Horsley had identified the various legions of the Roman army in Britain. He knew that, of the four original legions which garrisoned the province under Claudius and Nero, *legio XIV Gemina* had departed in AD 70. He also knew that *legiones II Augusta* and *XX Valeria Victrix* had remained for the duration of the Roman occupation. That left only *legio IX Hispana*.

However, as a native of Hadrian's Wall country, Horsley could not ignore the abundant evidence of the presence of *legio VI Victrix*. And as a diligent scholar, he was well aware that an inscribed statue base, sketched in around 1420 prior to its disappearance from Trajan's forum at Rome, carried important information about this legion's movements. (Broken into two parts, it was published as CIL VI 1497 + 1549, and reprinted in Hermann

Dessau's *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* as ILS 1094 + 1100.)

The missing inscription detailed the career of Marcus Pontius Laelianus, who rose to the consulship in AD 144, when he would have been aged in his early forties. Several years earlier, he had served as tribune of the Sixth Victrix Legion, *cum qua ex Germania in Britanniam transivit* ("with which he crossed over from Germany to Britain"). This event should have occurred in the early AD 120s, for legionary tribunes were usually nineteen or twenty years of age. It seems more than coincidental that a new governor, Aulus Platorius Nepos, had arrived in Britain from Lower Germany during the summer of AD 122, so he perhaps brought Pontius Laelianus and the Sixth Legion with him.

As for the Ninth Legion, Horsley could find no trace of it. Last mentioned in AD 82 by the historian Tacitus (in *Agricola* 26.1), its ultimate fate perplexed the Northumberland antiquarian: "it might possibly be broke", he wrote (meaning that the legion could have been destroyed), "or incorporated with the *legio sexta victrix*" (a rather desperate solution based on the misreading of a tile-stamp in which "this ninth legion is called *legio nona victrix*, tho' the title of *victrix* belonged not to the ninth, but to the sixth").

Unfortunately, there was no record of a legion having been "broke", as happened, for example, in AD 161, when the Parthians, "completely surrounding an entire Roman legion stationed under Severianus at Elegeia, a place in Armenia, shot it down and annihilated it with its officers" (Dio, *Roman History* 71.2.1).

Horsley did not consider the obvious solution, that the Ninth Legion had been withdrawn from Britain and transferred elsewhere.

The legion disappears

In the meantime, others were taking a keen interest in the fledgling science of prosopography, the study of persons and their careers from the evidence of inscriptions. (This is a subject that has played a key role in the debate over the Ninth Legion, as we shall see.) In the 1830s, the Italian count Bartolomeo Borghesi, an accomplished antiquarian,

had lighted upon an inscription from Minturno (Italy) on the Appian Way. It detailed the career of Lucius Barbuleius Ligarianus (CIL X 6006 = ILS 1066).

Ligarianus began his military career as *tribunus laticlavus legionis IX Hispanae* ("senatorial tribune of the Ninth Hispana Legion"). Many prospective senators served for a year or two as *tribunus laticlavus*. Some even served in more than one legion, biding their time until they qualified, at the age of 24, to enter the Senate as a *quaestor*. As he was consul in AD 135, when we can assume that he was aged around 40 (although men as young as 32 could hold the consulship), Ligarianus probably served with the Ninth Hispana towards the end of Trajan's reign, perhaps around AD 115.

Like Horsley, Borghesi was puzzled by the fate of the Ninth Legion. He was aware of the fact that, shortly before AD 165, when a list of existing legions was drawn up at Rome (CIL VI 3492 = ILS 2288), the Ninth Legion was not amongst them. He proposed that the Ninth Legion had been overwhelmed in a rebellion and had been replaced by the Sixth, a solution that seemed perfectly acceptable to his nineteenth century contemporaries. Mommsen, for example, was happy to lend his considerable authority to the theory:

"Under Hadrian, there was a terrible catastrophe here, apparently an attack on the fortress at Eburacum and the annihilation of the legion stationed there, the very same Ninth that had fought so unluckily in the Boudican revolt."

T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte Book 8* (1885)

The discovery of the York inscription enabled Mommsen to narrow the chronology somewhat, because it proved that the Ninth Legion was actively rebuilding the fortress during Trajan's reign. Thus, he announced that the disaster had occurred "undoubtedly soon after AD 108", adding that "this was probably not caused by an enemy invasion, but rather by a revolt of the northern allied peoples, particularly the Brigantes".

A British war?

In Mommsen's opinion, two passages from ancient literature pointed to this conclusion. Firstly, Hadrian's biographer enumerated the troubles that greeted the emperor on his accession in AD 117:

"The nations that Trajan had subjugated were defecting, the Moors were attacking, the Sarmatians were making war, the Britons could not be kept under Roman control."

Augustan History, Life of Hadrian 5.2

Secondly, the author Marcus Cornelius Fronto wrote a letter to the emperor Marcus Aurelius, his former pupil, on the occasion of that emperor's Parthian War in AD 162.

"Under the rule of your grandfather Hadrian, what a number of soldiers were slain by the Jews, what a number by the Britons."

Fronto, On the Parthian War 2

Hadrian's Jewish war was a major event, proved by archaeology and coin studies. The supposed British war, on the other hand, is more ephemeral. The Berlin professor Wilhelm Weber summed up the situation in 1907, in a short work entitled *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Hadrianus* ("Studies in the History of the Emperor Hadrian"). He wrote that "the timing is uncertain, and the views of scholars fluctuate regarding the date of the uprising." However, in the end, he decided upon a revolt which had been crushed by AD 119. But what had caused him to overturn the verdict of Mommsen and the date of AD 108?

Unlike the Jewish war, which can be pinned down to the period AD 132-136, there is only circumstantial evidence for a British war. Some of Hadrian's coins carry the figure of Britannia (the divine personification of the Roman province) on the reverse, and these have been taken to imply warfare in Britain; specifically warfare during the years AD 117-119. But their evidence is problematic.

Major changes in Hadrian's coinage

occurred only in AD 119 and 128, but coin expert Harold Mattingly believed that he could differentiate certain coins within this period on stylistic grounds. The coins which display the figure of Britannia he assigned *early* in Hadrian's reign, confidently explaining that these coins "celebrate the restoration of peace in the North after the revolt under Trajan, in which the ninth legion was destroyed".

This was, of course, Mommsen's scenario of destruction soon after AD 108. But it is easy to see that, if Mattingly was wrong in his stylistic analysis, the coins could then fall some years later (though still pre-AD 128), and might celebrate a different event in Britain. For example, the emperor's own visit (normally dated to AD 122, but perhaps later) might have merited an announcement on the coinage, as his other provincial visits certainly did. Yet, to this day, many scholars still assume that Hadrian's coinage proves that a war was won in Britain in AD 119.

Massive reinforcements

And so, when Emil Ritterling published his magisterial survey of the Roman legions in 1925 (in volume 12 of *Paulys Realencyclopädie*), it was generally accepted that the Ninth Legion had met a violent end by the early years of Hadrian's reign. Ritterling summarised the debate like this:

"The transfer of VI Victrix to Britain had been caused by a dangerous uprising; it is now clear that the fighting was in AD 119, but the outbreak could already have occurred in the previous year. The revolt was significant in that, not only was an entire legion transferred to the island for the duration, but vexillations of 1,000 men each were drawn from the two Upper German legions and the Spanish legion. ... Whether VIII Hispana had already met its end, or only several years later, around AD 125, remains unknown."

E. Ritterling, "Legio (Hadrian)", RE 12 (1925)

As Ritterling astutely realised, there was no guarantee that the transfer of

the Sixth Victrix Legion was occasioned by the destruction of the Ninth Hispana Legion. This had simply been an assumption first proposed by Borghesi and followed by Mommsen. But if the Ninth Legion was still in the province, fully operational, then clearly Hadrian had intended temporarily to increase the provincial army to four legions.

Indeed, other troops were arriving, too. Weber had drawn attention to the career inscription of Titus Pontius Sabinus, with its mention of an *expeditio Britannica* ("British campaign") under Hadrian (CIL X 5829 = ILS 2726). Weber presumed that this had occurred in AD 119, and Ritterling followed him.

However, it should be clear by now that there was never any direct linkage between the disappearance of the Ninth Legion and Hadrian's "British campaign". Nor, indeed, was there any compelling evidence to date the campaign to AD 119. This particular link was based on Mattingly's subjective assessment of the coins. So the arrival of these massive reinforcements could equally have been linked with Hadrian's decision to build his Wall in the years following AD 122.

Ritterling had largely followed Weber for events during the reign of Hadrian. Weber's opinion was given a further boost, barely a decade later, when it appeared in English in the influential *Cambridge Ancient History*.

"Next came the crushing of the Britons, who had destroyed the Legion IX Hispana in the camp of Eburacum, and the expeditio Britannica, which ended in 119 with the pacification of the country, and was followed, on his visit in 122, by the construction of Hadrian's Wall."

W. Weber, Cambridge Ancient History 11 (1936)

It is plain that Hadrian's "British war" was, by now, controversial enough to form the subject of its own *Ancient Warfare* debate. So let us leave it to one side and return to Ritterling, who is always the firm foundation for any Roman legionary debate.

Legionary tribunes

Ritterling harboured doubts about

an early destruction of the Ninth Legion. His reasoning was based on prosopography. He saw that the careers of certain officers seemed to have peaked too late for their service in the Ninth Legion to be restricted to the Trajanic period. The legion had surely survived into the early years of Hadrian's reign at least.

One of these officers, already noticed by Borghesi but forgotten again, was Lucius Aemilius Karus (a variant spelling of Carus). This former tribune of the Ninth Legion was governing the praetorian province of Arabia in AD 142, the task of a man in his mid- to late-thirties (*CIL VI 1333 = ILS 1077*; a recently discovered diploma confirms the date of his Arabian governorship).

Governors of Arabia normally proceeded to the consulship within a few years. So the classicist Sir Ronald Syme proposed that Karus was the "Lucius Aemilius" who was on record as consul in AD 144. Coincidentally, this was the same year as Pontius Laelianus, whom we met previously. Ritterling suggested a date "only after AD 120" for Karus' service in the Ninth Legion, for it ought to have been at roughly the same time as Laelianus' service in the Sixth Legion.

Another senatorial tribune also gave Ritterling pause for thought. This was Lucius Novius Crispinus Martialis Saturninus, who became consul in AD 150 after vacating his post as *legatus Augusti pro praetore provinciae Africae* ("the emperor's legate with the powers of a propraetor in the province of Africa", the official designation of the commander of the Third Augusta, in charge of the *de facto* province of Numidia where the legion had its fortress).

As he was probably born in around AD 105, he was thus a little younger than Aemilius Karus and Pontius Laelianus. Ritterling realised that Crispinus' service in the Ninth Legion "could not reasonably have fallen before AD 123". Destruction in a British war of AD 119 was out of the question.

Ritterling's only mistake lay in not stressing this logical conclusion. Instead, he simply advised that "we should reckon on the possibility that a second British revolt broke out towards the middle or in the second half of the

AD 120s, to which the legion fell victim." Unfortunately, the Oxford don H.M.D. Parker, who drew freely upon Ritterling for his book about *The Roman Legions* (1928), seems not to have appreciated this. He wrote, with misplaced confidence: "the Roman legions were unable at first to cope successfully with the [British] revolt, and *IX Hispana* was destroyed not later than AD 122."

An ignominious defeat?

So this is how things stood. A British war was universally believed to have occurred in AD 119, despite both the absence of direct evidence and the fragility of the circumstantial evidence. And the Ninth Legion was universally believed to have been destroyed in that war, despite Ritterling's warning.

Two British scholars now took centre stage in the debate. First, the archaeologist Eric Birley voiced concerns in one of his annual contributions to the *Durham University Journal*. In his 1948 paper on "The End of the Ninth Legion", he took note of Ritterling's warning and proposed two possible scenarios.

Either the Ninth Legion had been transferred from Britain under Trajan in connection with the Parthian war, which certainly saw other legionary transfers. (In this case, the Sixth Legion arrived several years later to bring the garrison back up to three legions.) Or else the Sixth Legion was brought over to Britain, not to replace the Ninth Legion, but to supplement the garrison during the building of Hadrian's Wall. (In this case, the Ninth Legion might have been transferred from Britain at a later date, perhaps in connection with Hadrian's Jewish War, which certainly saw other legionary transfers.)

But Birley's wise suggestions were ignored by Ian Richmond (later to become Professor Sir Ian Richmond). It was he who spun the familiar tale in its fullest version and thus created the myth:

"[Trouble in Britain] is to be connected with the issue of victory coins in AD 119 and the fact that by AD 122 the Ninth Legion was replaced at York by the Sixth and disappeared from the army list thereafter. That the legion was

cashiered, there is no doubt, and it seems evident that this fate, at the hands of the disciplinarian Hadrian, followed an ignominious defeat. But the unit was not annihilated. Some of its officers at least survived and nothing whatever is reported of the circumstances or place of the trouble."

I.A. Richmond, Roman Britain (1955)

The extent to which theory had become fact in his account is astonishing. And thus, the carefully weighed caution of Ritterling and the perceptive theories of Birley were swept aside by the pre-eminent Roman military scholar of the day.

The Eagle of the Ninth

When the children's author Rosemary Sutcliff sat down to write her novel about *The Eagle of the Ninth*, she would not have read Richmond's fantastical theory. The source for her background research was probably the *Cambridge Ancient History*. In any case, her writing owed more to the influence of her favourite author, Rudyard Kipling, and his late Roman centurions in *Puck of Pook's Hill*. (Her mention of the province of Valentia, an anachronism in her Hadrianic setting, definitely came from Kipling.) She explained the starting point for her novel in a foreword:

"Sometime about the year AD 117, the Ninth Legion, which was stationed at Eburacum where York now stands, marched north to deal with a rising among the Caledonian tribes, and was never heard of again. ... no one knows what happened to the Ninth Legion after it marched into the northern mists."

R. Sutcliff, The Eagle of the Ninth (1954)

Only a few years later, the Dutch archaeologist Jules Bogaers discovered clues in his native Netherlands that would open up a new line of enquiry. For in 1959, while excavating the legionary fortress on the Hunerberg at Nijmegen (Netherlands), archaeologists unearthed a roofing tile which bore the ownership stamp of the Ninth Legion.

This was not an isolated find. Earlier excavations at the legionary pottery and tile-works, located at De Holdeurn less than 5 km from the fortress, had turned up the stamped rim of a *mortarium*, one of the army's thick ceramic bowls used for grinding food. It was usual for official products to be stamped by the unit responsible for their manufacture. This one was stamped *LGVIIIHIS*, clearly an abbreviation for *l(e)g(io) VIII His(pana)*.

Up until then, tile-stamps from the Nijmegen area belonged overwhelmingly to the Tenth Gemina Legion, which had rebuilt the fortress in stone towards the end of the first century AD. But the requirements of Trajan's Dacian Wars soon caused the Tenth Legion to vacate the Hunerberg fortress. (The legion is mentioned as still operating in Lower Germany in ca. AD 101/102, but tile-stamps at Sucidava prove its involvement in the occupation of Dacia.) Its eventual destination was the new fortress at Aquincum (Budapest, Hungary), before finally settling further up-river at Vindobona (Vienna, Austria).

The next most common tile-stamp from Nijmegen reads *VEX BRIT*, the abbreviation for a *vex(illatio) Brit(annica)* ("detachment from Britain"). Most scholars now follow Bogaers in assuming that, during the early years of the second century, the vacant Hunerberg fortress was occupied by mixed troops detached from the garrison of Britain.

However, Bogaers realised that such a vexillation would be unlikely to have stamped their products with the name of the Ninth Legion. His solution was to suggest that the Ninth Legion took up residence in the Hunerberg fortress after the vexillation had returned to Britain, and continued the production of ceramics at the Holdeurn tilerly. Unfortunately, no firm date could be applied to these events, except that they were broadly "early second century".

Further evidence supported the case that the Ninth Legion was quartered

in Lower Germany. An altar to Apollo, discovered near the Roman spa of *Aquae Granni* (Aachen, Germany), was set up by Lucius Licinius Macer, *primus pilus* ("chief centurion") of the Ninth Legion, who had been promoted to the highly prestigious position of *praefectus castrorum* ("prefect of the camp", AE 1968, 323). Eric Birley believed that "the *praefectus castrorum* could not have been serving with a mere vexillation", but in theory he could have been commanding one. Of course, only the presence of the *aquilifer* would be a cast-iron guarantee that the entire legion was there, but it would have been odd for the *primus pilus* to receive a promotion while absent in charge of a vexillation.

The travels of the Ninth

At around the same time, the Romano-British pottery expert Brian Hartley was questioning whether the Ninth Legion might have occupied a base in the Carlisle area of Britain in the early years of Hadrian's reign. In his opinion, the ceramic record indicated that the York fortress was under reduced occupancy in the early second century, whereas stamped tiles of the Ninth Legion were being produced at Scalesceugh, around

5 km south of Carlisle.

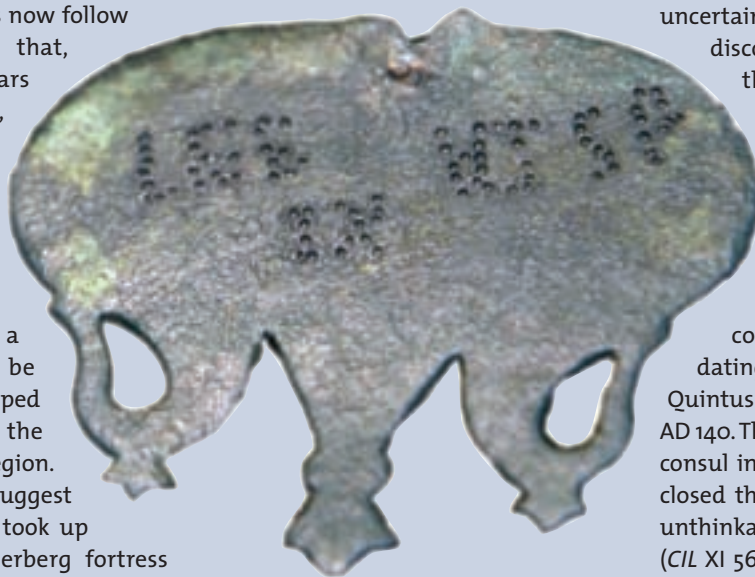
Intriguingly, stamped tiles of the Ninth legion discovered in York were invariably marked *LEG IX HISP*, whereas those from Carlisle and Scalesceugh (and indeed from Nijmegen) were marked *LEG VIII HISP*. It seemed possible to Bogaers that the legion had brought its distinctive Scalesceugh tile-stamps over to the Holdeurn tilerly near Nijmegen, to continue production there.

Besides the tile-stamp and the *mortarium* fragment, an inscribed pendant from a horse harness also advertised the presence of the Ninth Legion. Intriguingly, the pendant was found some 10 km west of the Nijmegen camp, near the site of a Roman villa; its inscription, *LEG IX HISP*, suggests that its owner had learned the 'York' version of the legion's name, rather than the 'Carlisle/Nijmegen' version.

In the meantime, other officers had appeared, whose careers supported the continued existence of the Ninth Legion. Lucius Aninius Sextius Florentinus was known to have moved from the post of *legatus legionis VIII Hispanae* ("legate of the Ninth Hispana legion") to the proconsulship of Gallia Narbonensis, and finally to the governorship of Arabia, but the dating had always been uncertain. Then, in the 1960s, a newly discovered papyrus finally showed that his governorship fell around the year AD 127. Such a man ought to have held his legionary command no more than five years earlier.

And the German classicist Werner Eck lent his considerable authority to the dating of another legionary tribune, Quintus Numisius Iunior, to around AD 140. The discovery that this man was consul in February AD 161 should have closed the issue, once and for all. It is unthinkable that his glowing career (*CIL XI 5670*) could have begun as long ago as AD 119, for this would mean that he only achieved the consulship at the age of sixty!

And so, a new chapter in the Ninth Legion's history was taking shape during the 1970s. It seemed that, if the legion was already forming a stop-gap in Lower Germany, it might be called



Pendant from a horse harness found at Ewijk, about 10 km west of the legionary castra at Nijmegen. The punctured inscription reads *LEG IX HISP*. Now in the Valkhof Museum, Nijmegen.

© Jona Lendering, Livius.org

upon to fulfil other duties further along the frontier. Trajan's Parthian War had caused some dislocation of units, and Hadrian's Jewish War would do the same. So it is interesting to note that a previous soldier of the Ninth Legion, Aelius Asclepiades, hailed from the east, in present-day Turkey (*CIL* X 1769). Other explanations are possible, but both Bogaers and Birley thought it significant that the man bore Hadrian's family name, Aelius, which he might have taken on enlistment to the legion in his native Cilicia.

Of course, all of these tiny clues served to refute Richmond's fantastical theory (and Rosemary Sutcliff's novel) by prolonging the life of the legion beyond AD 119. In his book on *The Roman Soldier* (1969), the classicist G.R. Watson felt confident enough to write of "the loss of IX Hispana ... probably during the Jewish War of AD 132-5 ... or even in Armenia in 161." Of Hadrian's shadowy British war, there was no mention.

Fresh doubts

Nevertheless, archaeology is an inexact science. Most theories can be objected to, at some level. Many survive such scrutiny, but some theories are less robust than others. For example, the destruction of the Ninth Legion in a British war at the beginning of Hadrian's reign is a very weak theory. There is no direct evidence for any of the required elements. And yet, the idea has exerted such a hold on the popular imagination that it is difficult to dispel the myth.

The logical alternative, that the legion continued to exist at least until AD 140, in order to accommodate the tribunate of Numisius Iunior, has even been questioned. Professor Lawrence Keppie has suggested that the consul of AD 161 was actually the son of the tribune of the Ninth Legion. He has also doubted that Aelius Asclepiades was recruited to the legion while in his native Cilicia, preferring to see him transferred from the Italian fleet at Misenum.

Clearly this is a debate which is destined to rumble on. Whether the Ninth Legion met its end in Hadrian's Jewish War, or with the ill-fated Severianus at Elegeia in 161, or somewhere entirely different, we can

© Jona Lendering, Livius.org



The splendid tomb of Lucius Aninius Sextius Florentinus in Petra (Jordan) underlines the fact that legionary commanders were high-status individuals. The inscription (not visible) testifies to Florentinus' career spanning the breadth of the Roman empire.

only hope that further epigraphic discoveries will bring clarity. ■

Duncan B. Campbell is a regular contributor.

Further Reading

J.K. Haalebos, "Römische Truppen in Nijmegen", in: Y. Le Bohec & C. Wolff (eds.), *Les légions de Rome sous le Haut Empire*. Lyon, 2000. Haalebos has references to the earlier works of Birley, Bogaers, Eck, and Keppie.