



The Roman Military

Punic Wars



Roman Expansion

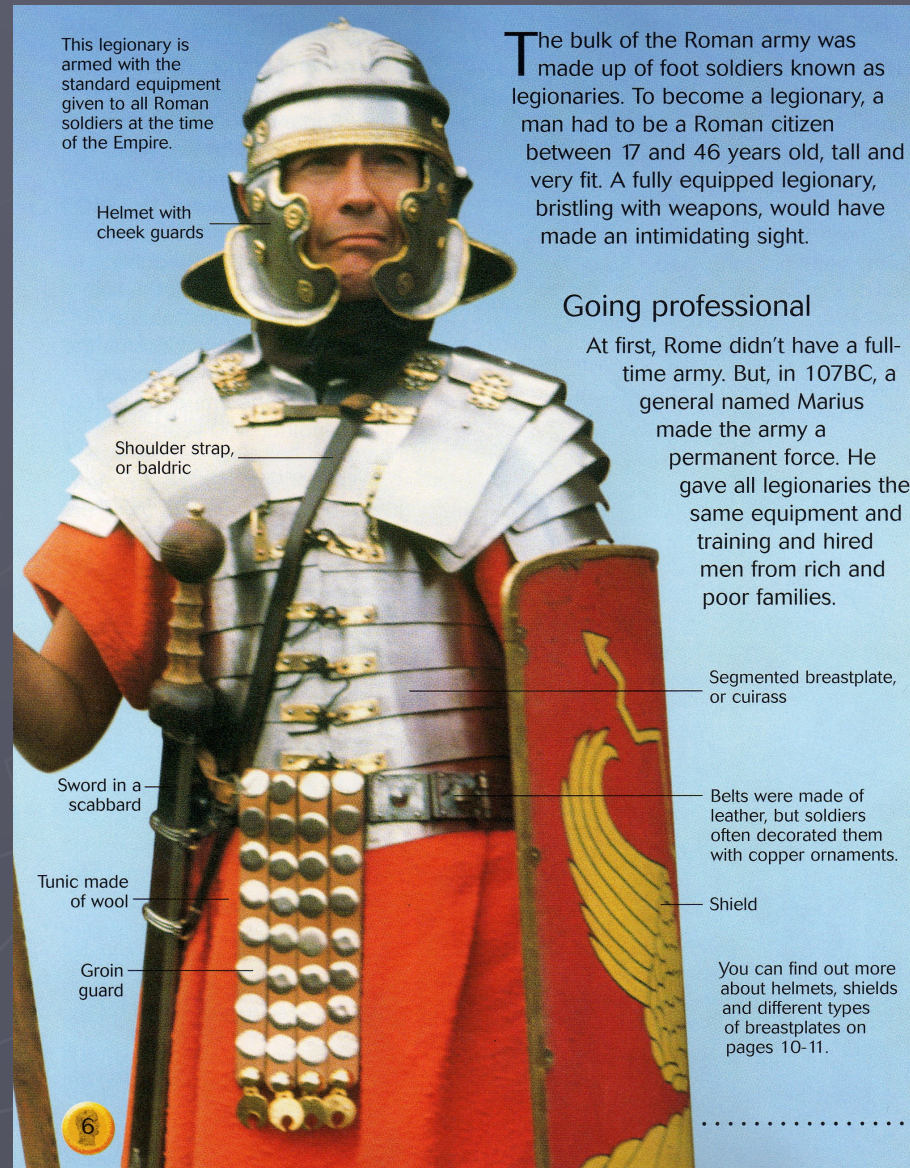
- ▶ Almost 200 years of constant war
- ▶ 390 BCE Gauls, warlike people from the north (modern day France) burned most of Rome down
- ▶ Had to rebuild the city and strengthen army
- ▶ As territory  Army 
- ▶ 264 BCE conquered all of Italy

The Roman Legionary

- ▶ Excellent foot soldiers
 - ▶ Roman citizen 17-46 yrs.
 - ▶ Tall and very fit
- Earlier= no fulltime army
- ▶ Only landowners could be in army

Marius changed in 107 BCE

- ▶ Army was fulltime
- ▶ Hired rich and poor
- ▶ Given equipment and trained
- ▶ Duty to fight



Legionary Gear

COMMANDING CREST
Centurions and other officers wore crests on their helmets, so that their men could see them and follow them in battle.



Crest shown in position but not attached

HEAD PROTECTOR

This helmet was cleverly designed to protect the head, face, and neck without blocking vision or hearing. It was often decorated with enameled studs.

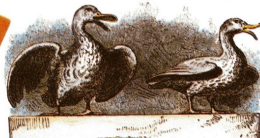


METAL JACKET

The famous armor of metal strips held together by leather straps on the inside was invented in the 1st century A.D. It was very flexible but heavy, and soldiers had to help each other put it on and lace it up.

The legionary

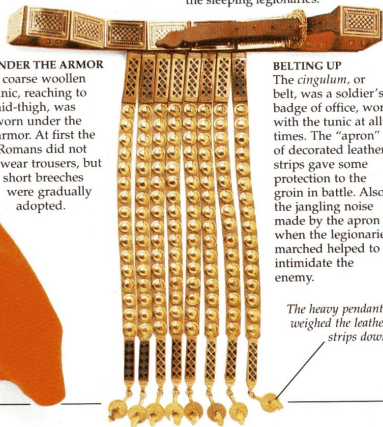
ROME OWED her great empire to her legions, perhaps the most successful armies in history. Each legion consisted of about 5,000 foot soldiers (infantry), all Roman citizens (p. 16) who joined up voluntarily for 20 to 25 years. Legionaries were rigorously trained, brutally disciplined, and well armed. They were the heart of the army and bore the brunt of battle. Their lives were hard, but they were tough. They could be mutinous – emperors made sure they treated legionaries well. In the 2nd century A.D. there were 150,000 legionaries, and even more non-citizen, auxiliary troops to aid them (p. 12). Modern replicas of legionary equipment are shown on these pages.



Rome's Capitoline Hill survived capture by the Gauls in 390 B.C. because the holy geese who lived there raised the alarm and woke up the sleeping legionaries.

UNDER THE ARMOR

A coarse woollen tunic, reaching to mid-thigh, was worn under the armor. At first the Romans did not wear trousers, but short breeches were gradually adopted.



BELTING UP

The *cingulum*, or belt, was a soldier's badge of office, worn with the tunic at all times. The "apron" of decorated leather strips gave some protection to the groin in battle. Also, the jangling noise made by the apron when the legionaries marched helped to intimidate the enemy.

The heavy pendants weighed the leather strips down

Specially designed point of javelin would bend when pulled out of an enemy's shield



PIERCING POINTS

The thrusting spear of earlier times (left) was replaced by the fearsome heavy javelin, or *pilum* (right), which had a narrow point to pierce both shields and armor. A shower of these flying through the air would break the enemy's charge.

MARIUS'S MULE

A fully loaded legionary on the march carried more than armor, weapons, and a shield. Each man had a heavy pack held over the shoulder, which included a tool kit and a dish and pan. This burden weighed 90 lb (40 kg) or more, and often had to be carried up to 20 miles (30 km) in a day! Legionaries were called Marius's mules after the general who started the practice.

The dagger had a double-edged blade

The sword's grip was often of wood, although bone and ivory were also used

Turf cutter for building turf ramparts

BOOTS MADE FOR WALKING

Military sandals (*caligae*) were as important as armor, because the legions won wars by fast marches as much as by battle. These boots were strong and well ventilated, with patterns of iron hobnails specially designed to take weight and withstand miles of marching.

SWORD AND DAGGER

A *pugio*, or dagger, was worn on the left, and a *gladius*, or short sword, on the right. Both were Spanish types, copied by the Romans. The sword was a terrible stabbing weapon, short enough to wield easily in the crush of battle. It was horribly effective against the mostly unarmored Gauls.

Divisions

- ▶ Soldiers grouped into units known as legions
- ▶ Approx. 5,000 men
- ▶ Contubernia- 8 men who shared a tent and ate together (10 of these groups in a century)
- ▶ Century= 80 men
- ▶ Cohort- 6 units of centuries
- ▶ Legion- 10 cohorts
1st 800 others 480 each

THE ROMAN ARMY

The main reason that the Romans were able to conquer such a large empire was their well-disciplined and highly trained army. The army was an attractive career for poor men. There was the chance of being killed but the wages were good and, if they survived, retired soldiers enjoyed many privileges. The main strength of the army was the legions of infantrymen recruited only from Roman citizens. There were also support troops called auxiliaries.

BRIDGE OF BOATS
Roman armies could cross wide rivers by anchoring boats to the river bed and laying a road across their decks.

WATCHTOWER
Watchtowers lined the empire's borders. Guards used beacon fires to raise the alarm.

LEGIONARIES
Legionaries on the march carried heavy packs, often covering over 18 miles a day.

CENTURION
A centurion commanded a unit of 80 men called a century. His helmet had a tall crest.

STANDARD BEARER
When attacking, soldiers followed a standard with an emblem on it called a standard. They rallied around it in an emergency.

AUXILIARIES
Auxiliaries served as border guards or as specialist soldiers, such as archers and cavalrymen.

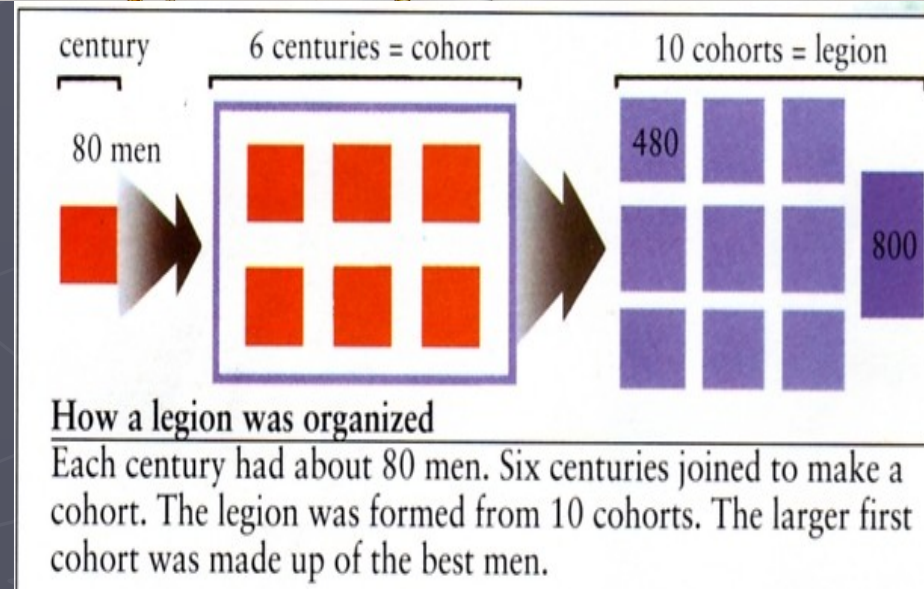
LOOK OUT FOR THESE
SWORD AND SHIELD
The legionary's main weapon was the gladius, a short stabbing sword. It was typically used in close combat and inflicted terrible wounds.

MATTOCK
Each night when on the march, soldiers used tools like these to build an earth rampart around the camp.

HELMET
The helmet was designed to protect the head, neck, and cheeks without blocking hearing and vision.

DISCHARGING DIPLOMA
Legionaries were given land when they retired, while auxiliaries gained Roman citizenship. Both were given bronze diplomas.

SILVER IN RINGS
Roman soldiers minted and traded. Sometimes they killed unpopular generals. Even emperors would win popularity by giving each soldier a gift of money called a donative.



Organizing the army

The Roman army was a massive military force. It was also the most disciplined and well-organized army of ancient times. The army was divided into large fighting units called legions. The size of the army varied over the years, but at its peak, under Augustus, there were 28 legions (about 140,000 men).

The soldiers

The Roman army employed many different types of soldiers at various levels of importance, or rank. The main soldiers are shown on this page.



A general commanded several legions.

A legate was in charge of a legion.



Six tribunes helped each legate to run the legion.



The camp prefect was in charge of building and training.



The *primus pilus* was the most senior centurion in a legion.



A centurion led a century (see opposite).



A legionary was a citizen foot soldier.

An archer fought with bows and arrows. Archers came from the Middle East, and dressed differently from the Romans.



A cavalry soldier fought on horseback.



A non-citizen fighter was called an auxiliary.



Organization and Formation

Three kinds of soldiers

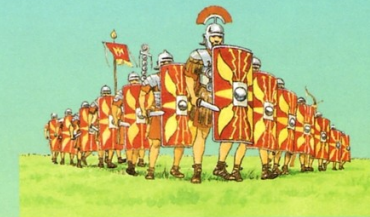
- ▶ Hastati or principes- younger, light arms
- ▶ Triarii- older, heavily armed
- ▶ Velites- poor citizens weapons but no armor
- ▶ Cavalry- scouts and messengers
- ▶ Wedge, Orb, Pila wall, Testudo

Battle formations

The Romans had different formations for particular situations. These included the "orb" to defend themselves, and the "wedge" to attack. The most famous Roman battle formation was the "tortoise" or *testudo* – the Roman equivalent of a tank.



The soldiers formed the "orb" when they were surrounded by the enemy. Legionaries formed the outer circle, while archers and officers stood inside.



The "wedge" was a v-shaped formation, with one man at the front tip. It was used to break up and push back the opponent's front line.



Legionaries preparing to throw their *pila*

If legionaries were ambushed by enemy cavalry, they made their shields and *pila* into a spiked wall to stop the horses in their tracks. The men at the back threw their *pila* at the enemy.

The overlapped shields of the *testudo* made a missile-proof shell as legionaries advanced on enemy ground.



Fact: According to some stories, in Roman training camps they tested the strength of the *testudo* by driving a cart over the top of it.

Formations

Wedge- "V" shape one man at front tip. Used to break up and push back opponents front line, flanks can open and spread out

Orb- used when surrounded. Legionaries on outside, archers on inside.

Pila Wall- Spiked wall to stop horse cavalry or charges, the back men threw their pila

Testudo- (tortoise) overlapping shields over heads, move in for siege

Other tasks for soldiers

- ▶ Checking and storing of supplies
- ▶ Preparation of food- cooks and bakers
- ▶ Army doctors - tended to wounded
- ▶ Search parties scouted the enemy
- ▶ Road building Bridge building
- ▶ Constructing walls and fortresses
- ▶ Guarding prisoners in stockades
- ▶ Attack enemies and defend the Empire

Military Strategies

Attack

- ▶ Catapults for heavy rocks and flaming arrows
- ▶ Battering rams beat down enemy walls
- ▶ Siege towers with drawbridges helped soldiers climb walls
- ▶ Soldiers arranged shield into a “tortoise” to help them march uninjured to the enemy

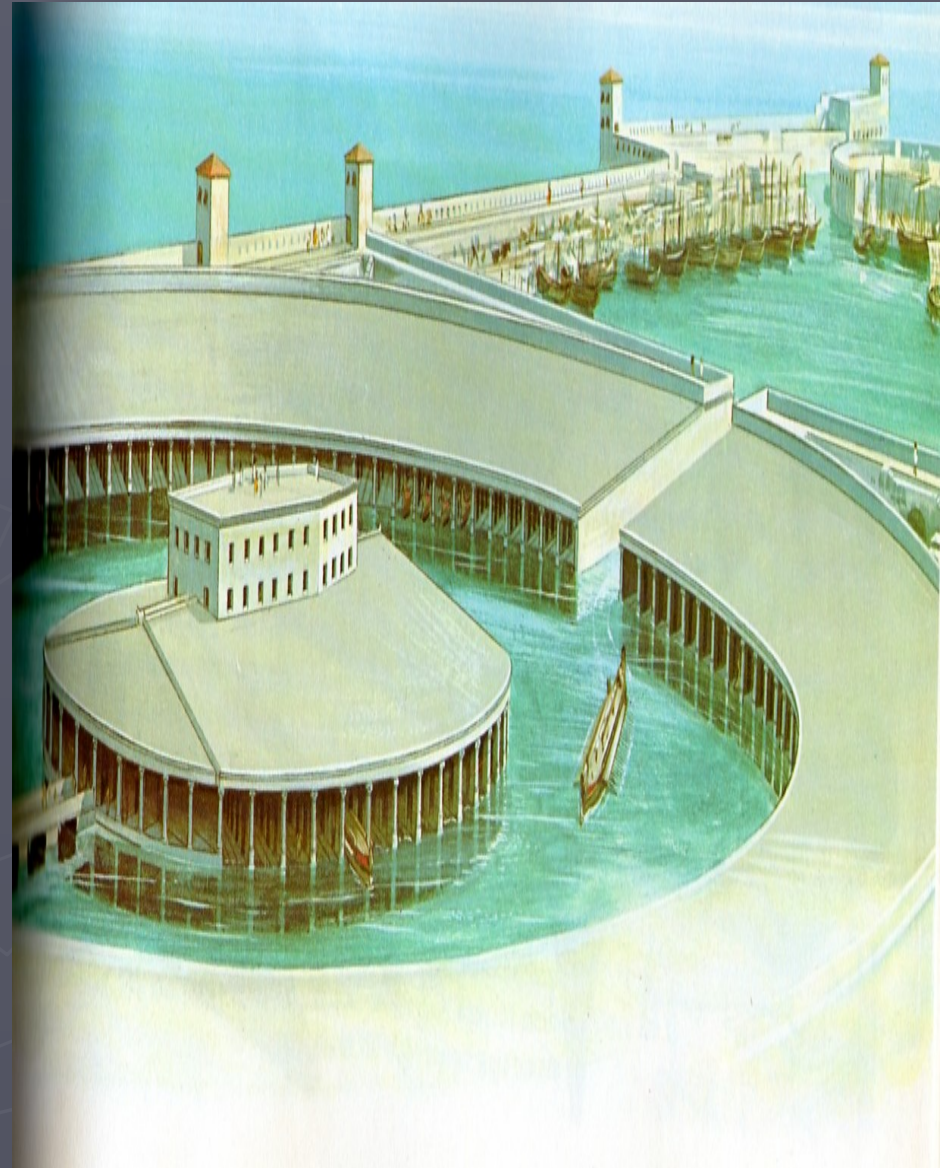
Defense

- ▶ Built permanent stone forts on frontiers
- ▶ Built walls at the borders of the Empire
- ▶ Ships patrolled the seas to prevent piracy and transport troops



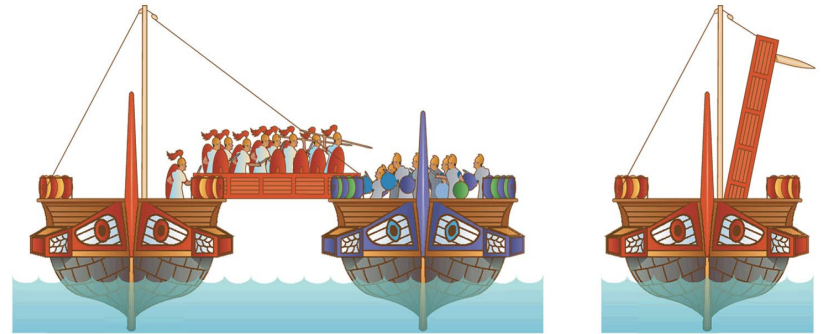
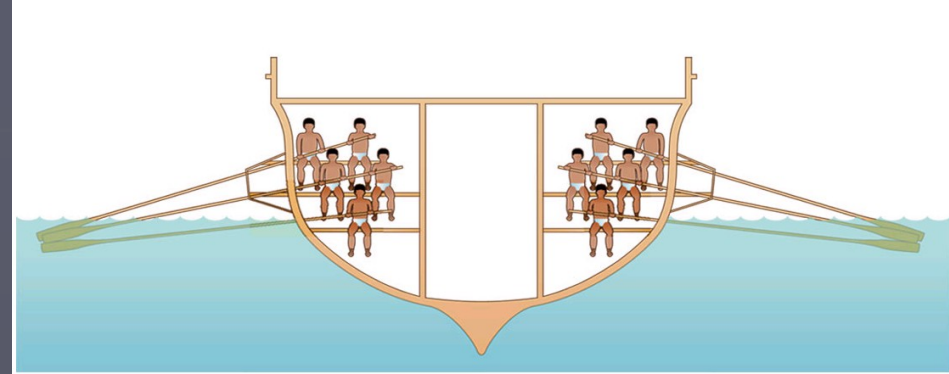
Carthage is a threat

- ▶ Originally a Phoenician colony “Punic settlement”
- ▶ Ruled North Africa, Spain, Sicily, Sardinia
- ▶ Controlled the Mediterranean
- ▶ Rome thought them to be a threat and conflicts arose about trade routes
- ▶ They had a strong navy



Rome capitalizes on its strength

- ▶ Romans found a Carthaginian ship and copied
- ▶ Quinquereme- five rows of rowers
- ▶ Romans had to make it more like a land battle
- ▶ Invented a spiked gangplank called a corvus "crow or raven"
- ▶ Enabled footsoldiers to board ship



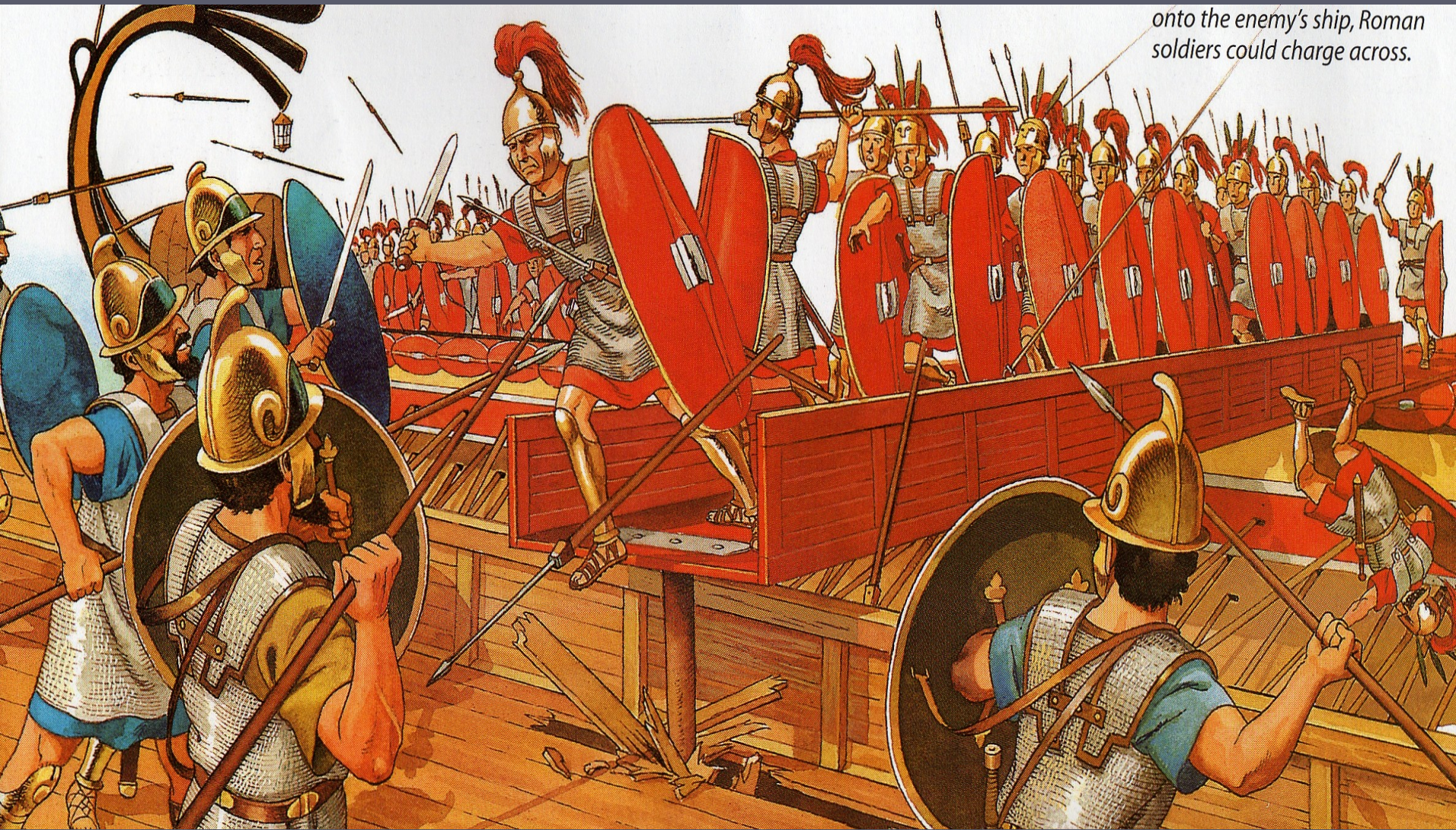


ASSIGNMENT
DISCOVERY

discovery
EDUCATION

First Punic War 264-241 BCE

- ▶ Fought mostly at sea
- ▶ Romans were excellent foot soldiers, not navy
- ▶ Needed to figure out how to fight the Carthaginians at sea
- ▶ 23 years of fighting
- ▶ Rome defeats Carthage
- ▶ Peace treaty
- ▶ Carthage lost Sicily and Sardinia and had to pay enormous amounts "losers" tax



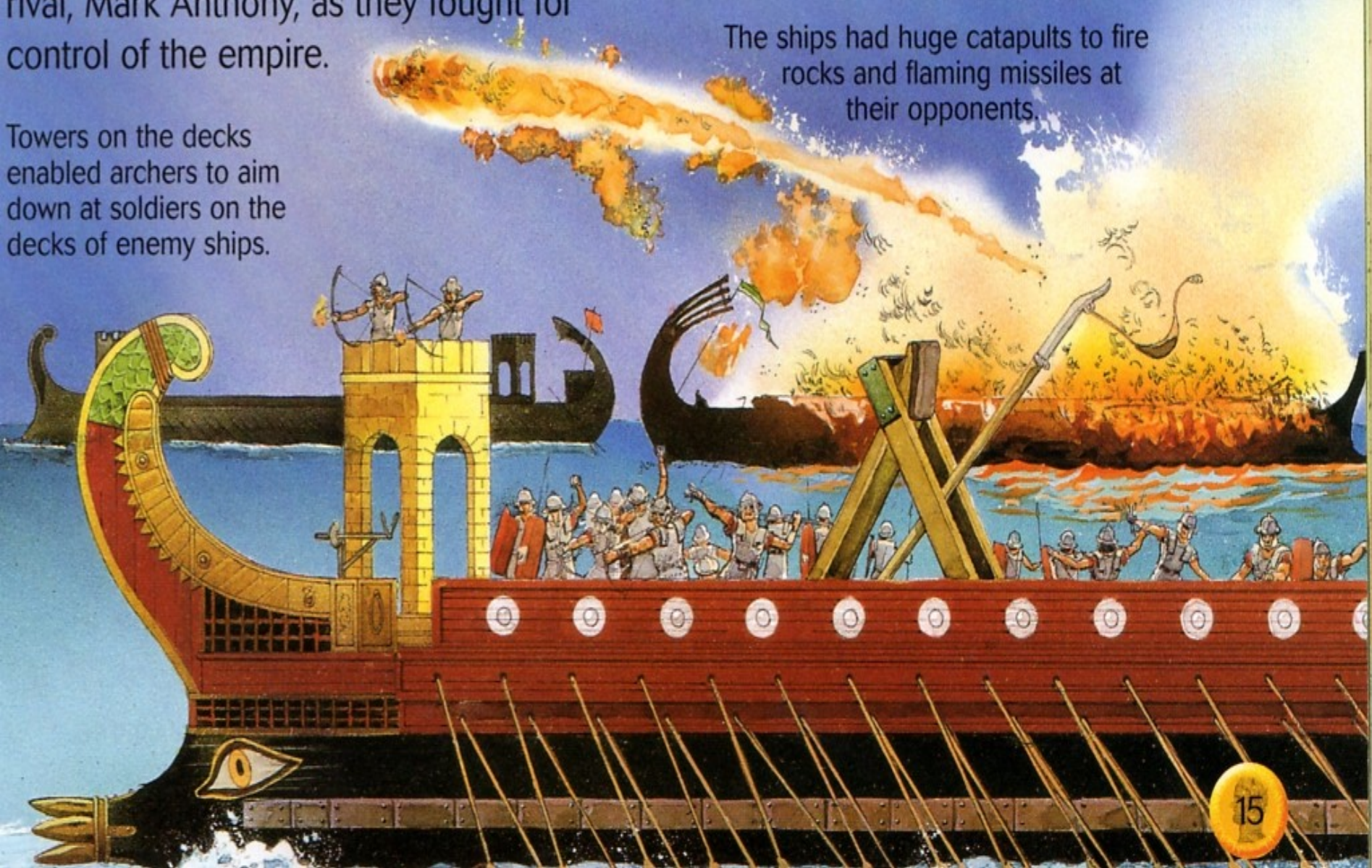
onto the enemy's ship, Roman soldiers could charge across.

The "corvus"

... rival, Mark Anthony, as they fought for control of the empire.

Towers on the decks enabled archers to aim down at soldiers on the decks of enemy ships.

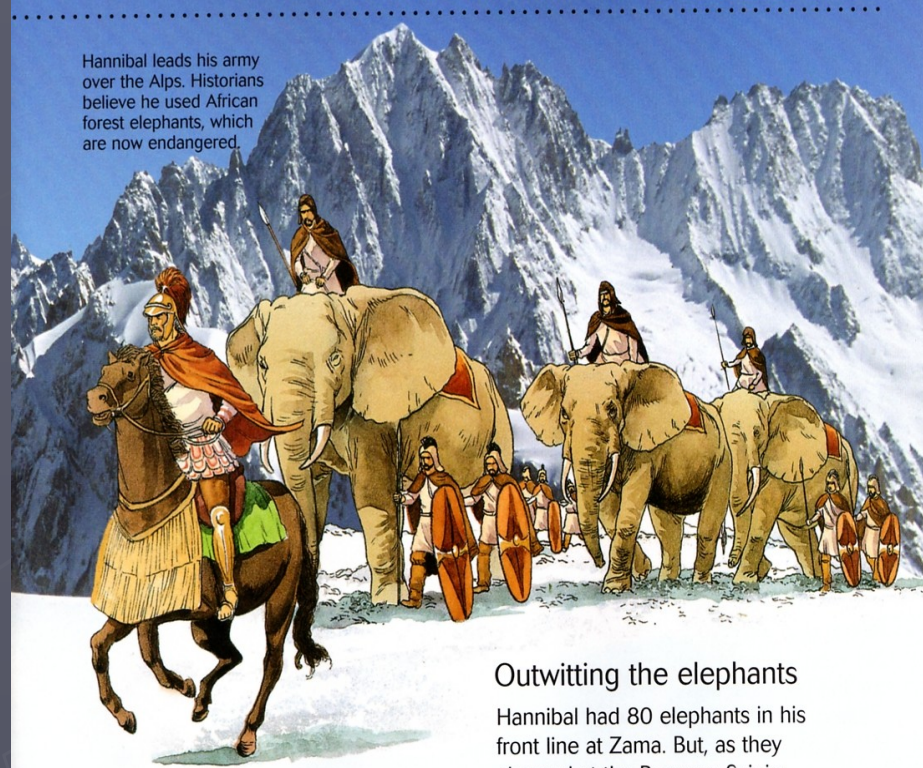
The ships had huge catapults to fire rocks and flaming missiles at their opponents.



Second Punic War 218- 202 BCE

- ▶ Hannibal led a surprise attack on Rome from the north
- ▶ 5 month journey across France through the Alps
- ▶ War elephants
- ▶ Led Romans through narrow pass = ambush
- ▶ Center cavalry pretended to retreat
- ▶ Romans pushed through
- ▶ Surrounded

Hannibal leads his army over the Alps. Historians believe he used African forest elephants, which are now endangered.



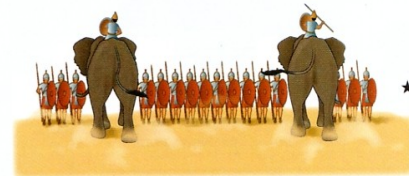
Hannibal and Scipio

The Romans heard of Hannibal's plans and sent their army to northern Italy to confront him. They thought Hannibal's ragged army would be no match for the legions. But Hannibal's superior tactics won him battle after battle. He wreaked havoc, occupying much of Italy for 16 years. Unable to defeat him in Italy, a Roman general named Scipio attacked Carthage. Hannibal went back to defend it, but was finally defeated at Zama.

Outwitting the elephants

Hannibal had 80 elephants in his front line at Zama. But, as they charged at the Romans, Scipio ordered his army to step aside. The elephants charged straight through the gaps, leaving the legions free to deal with the Carthaginians.

Once the elephants started their charge, it was difficult to make them stop and turn around.



- ▶ Hannibal's troops were worn out
- ▶ Scipio invaded North Africa
- ▶ Defeated Hannibal
- ▶ Carthage had to give up Spain

Third Punic War 146-143 BCE

- ▶ Rome burns Carthage to the ground

Name and number

When a group of soldiers went ahead of their legion, they carried a banner called a *vexillum*. This showed the legion's emblem, its name and number. The emblem was usually a sign of the zodiac.

Each century also had its own standard, called a *signum*. This was a long pole decorated with medals and the unit's emblems. In the battlefield, soldiers could easily spot their *signum* and follow it.



Vexillum

Standard bearers wore animal skins on their helmets to make them look ferocious.

Signum

This extraordinary trumpet called a *cornu* would have sounded loudly over the legionaries' heads to convey orders to them.