

LISTS & MORE LISTS: Evidence from Vindolanda

Strength report of the First Cohort of Tungrians

'18 May, **net** number of the First Cohort of Tungrians, of which the commander is Iulius Verecundus the prefect, **752**, including **6** centurions.

Of whom are absent:

Guards of the governor at the **46**
office of Ferox

At Coria including **2** centurions **337**

At London including a centurion **6**

[?] including 1 centurion **9**

[?] including 1 centurion **11**

at ? **?1**

total absentees **456**
including **5** centurions

remainder present **296**
including **1** centurion

from these:

sick **15**

wounded **6**

suffering from inflammation of
the eyes **10**

total of these **31**

remainder, fit for active service **265**
including **1** centurion

Account of wheat

Account of wheat measured out from that which I myself have put into the barrel: to myself for bread...

to Macrinus, modii 7

to Felicius Victor on the order of Spectatus provided as a loan, modii 26

in three sacks, to father, modii 19

to Macrinus, modii 13

to the **oxherds** at the wood, modii 8

likewise to Amabilis at the **shrine**, modii 3

...September..., to Crescens on the order of Firmus, modii 3

26 September

to Lu... the beneficiarius, modii 6

to Felicius Victor, modii 15

for twisted loaves, to you, modii 2

to Crecens, modii 9

to the legionary soldiers on the order of Firmus, modii 11+

to Candidius, modii...

to you in a sack from Briga,...

to Lucco, in charge of the pigs...

to Primus, slave of Lucius...

to Lucco for his own use...

in the century of Voturius

to father, in charge of the oxen

likewise to myself, for bread, modii...

total of wheat, modii 320

(Translation of lists taken from *Life and Letters on the Roman Frontier*, A.K. Bowman.
Published by British Museum Press)

These lists come from the writing tablets found at Vindolana, many of which are from army records and accounts and contain details of running costs or lists of supplies from the military stores. They give direct insight into the cohort based at Vindolanda during the 1st century AD.

[?] indicates parts of the text that are missing.

List 1 – this deals with army personnel and is the only one of its kind in Britain. It gives detail of the formation of the cohort and the whereabouts of its members. All the numbers have been included so that the figures add up. It is possible that Ferox was commander of the Ninth Legion at York (Eburacum). Coria seems to be the name given to Corbridge at this time.

List 2 – is an account of the issue of wheat, often used as an alternative form of payment for goods and services as well as an integral part of soldier pay. The *beneficiarius* was an officer attached to the Commanding Officer for special duties.

IDEAS FOR USING THE TEXTS

List 1

- Find out the meanings of the words in bold.
- Who was the commanding officer when this list was written?
- Check the figures on the list. Do they add up?
- Discuss the whereabouts of various members of the Cohort. What were they doing? The absences highlight the use of Vindolanda as a base and show some of the places soldiers may have been stationed.
- Look at the 'sick list'. Discuss whether or not this list was made at a time of war or peace. Justify the decision made. In fact the few casualties suggest that this list was compiled at a time of peace.
- Work out the route taken by the centurion sent to London using Roman roads. What would his journey be like? What might he be doing in London? Describe this either as a diary entry or in a letter to a fellow officer at Vindolanda.

List 2

Answer these questions from the text:

- How many different people are given wheat?

- What sort of jobs did the people in the list do?
- How many types of animal are mentioned in the text?
- Why is wheat given to Amabilis at the shrine?
- Highlight examples where wheat is being given in payment