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Author's note

In this text geographical place-names are given in their ancient form, followed by the modern equivalent in parentheses, where known.

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The Peoples of Protohistoric Spain

'By the name of Iberia, the ancient Greeks designated all the country that extends beyond the River Rhône and the isthmus which comprises the Gaulish gulf; while we today place the borders in the Pyrenees, and say that the names "Iberia" and "Hispania" are synonymous. According to others, "Iberia" does not apply to any region beyond the vicinity of the River Iberus, whose inhabitants were called Igletes. Asclepiades of Mirlea said that this was a small region. The Romans used the terms "Iberia" and "Hispania" indifferently, for the whole country, calling its internal divisions "Ulterior" and "Citerior", and being prepared to modify these terms if there arose a need for a new administrative division.' (Strabo, *Geography*, III, 4, 19.)

During the 3rd century BC, on the eve of the Second Punic War[1], we may categorise the Hispanic peoples in three major cultural and ethnic groups, as a result of long-standing mutual interaction and external influence during the First Iron Age. The group living in the north of Spain was formed by peoples having Indo-European roots, and largely 'Celticised'. These peoples, who developed a hill-top culture, are identified in the ancient sources as the Gallaeci, Cantabri and Astures. They appear to have been divided into a multitude of smaller tribal communities, whose territory extended little beyond the fortified hill which they inhabited. They were apparently largely static in their cultural and social evolution, retaining many of the customs of the purer Celtic cultures; this was due to their topographical isolation in mountainous and densely wooded terrain. Their area of distribution lay between the Cantabrian coast and the basin of the River Durius (Duero).

A bronze votary figurine showing a Hispanic warrior in the praying position. Characteristic features of the costume depicted on many of these figurines include short tunics with the waist cinched very tightly by a broad belt: a slim waist was important to the warrior image. (Museo Arqueológico Nacional Madrid)

The central area of Spain, known today as the Meseta or Plateau, comprising the provinces of Salamanca, Caceres, Badajoz and Valladolid and Portugal, was inhabited by peoples who are known today by the conventional name of 'Celt-Iberians', in obvious reference to a fusion of Celtic and Iberian cultures. Their great tribes were the Lusitani, the Vettones, the Vaccei, the Carpetani, the Arevaci and the Pellendones. Each of these tribes had its

[1]See MAA 121, *Armies of the Carthaginian Wars 265–146 BC*

own distinct personality. Under the veneer of Celtic customs they displayed an indigenous identity, due to the higher density of population which existed at the time of the Celtic invasions of the 7th century BC.

The Vaccei, the northernmost group, were distinguishable by a special social structure of collectivist type; this enabled them to exploit successfully the wheat- and grass-growing areas of the western plateau of Spain. In general terms, each tribe was distributed over a whole region in more or less numerous communities, but depending upon a great city which formed its tribal capital, occupying the top of a hill, easily defensible and with good natural water resources nearby. These cities were invariably surrounded by stone walls with strong towers, enclosing large perimeters within which were several smaller fortified precincts and 'killing grounds'. During the wars with Rome there emerged the practice of gathering more or less the whole tribe within the city, together with their livestock and valuables, producing a considerable increase in population. This practice may explain the existence of the great walled perimeters, intended to offer secure refuge to this additional population.

Another important tribe within the Celt-Iberian group were the Arevaci, a pastoral, sheep-herding people. They maintained their nomadic way of life until finally forced to settle down—and not without great difficulty—by the Romans in the 1st century AD. The Belli and Titii were other Celt-Iberian tribes, who occupied the valley of the River Jalon.

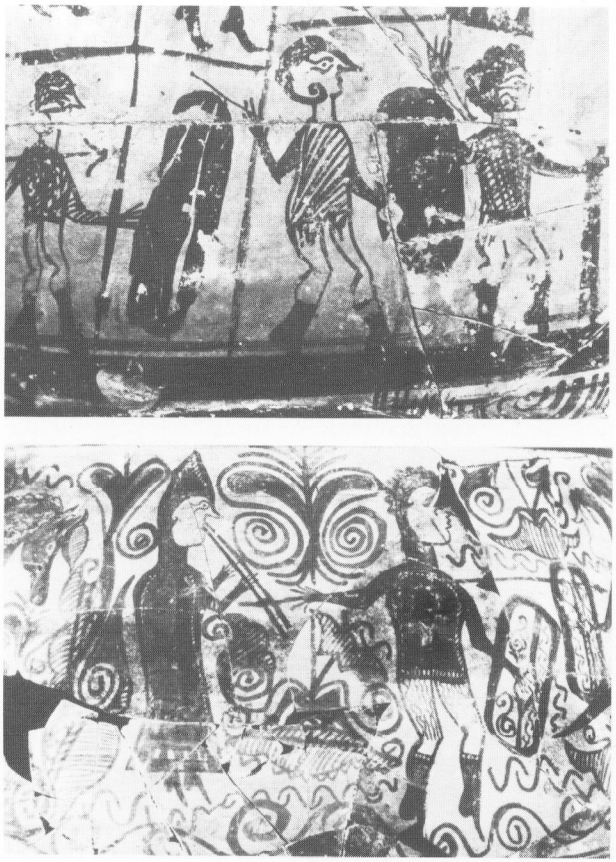
Celt-Iberian social organisation is difficult to discover. Broadly, it seems that ultimate authority was wielded by the council of elders led by the eldest man of the tribe. The council ruled in matters of general practice and law. In time of war, after the necessary deliberations, the command of the fighting men was entrusted to a single military

Found during the summer of 1982, this sculpture shows a young Iberian warrior of the 4th or 3rd century BC in everyday dress rather than war gear. The sculptor has emphasised, for some reason, the manner of holding the forked staff; the hairstyle and earring; and the bridle details—the mount is perhaps only semi-broken, since it appears to have, in addition to the reins, two straps to the breast harness holding the head down. Some symbolic features can also be identified: the horse's front right hoof rests on a severed head, indicating that the rider is a mighty warrior—the Hispanics, like other contemporary cultures, took heads in war. The right rear hoof steps on a bird, indicating the rider's prowess in the hunt. (Luis Canicio; Museo Arqueológico de Jumilla, Murcia)

leader, who was responsible for the conduct of operations and who received full support from the tribe. Usually peaceful, and benign towards strangers, the Celt-Iberians were formidable warriors when menaced or provoked.

The third major grouping, the civilisation of the Iberians, has proved to be one of the most controversial subjects in the study of Spanish protohistory. Some have denied their existence as a true cultural entity; others, with equal vigour, have advanced them as one of the most evolved of the peoples who have formed the mosaic of the Hispanic race.

From the 7th century BC they came under the influences of the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Egyptians, and all the other Mediterranean cultures. The basic nucleus was formed by the population of the territories associated earlier with the mythical kingdom of Tartessos, and comprising modern Andalusia and the Mediterranean coast, extending up to the southern coasts of France. The Andalusian region had an urban tradition stretching back more than a thousand years, and boasted more than 200 towns. Rich in agriculture and cattle, it also had a fishing industry based on the coastal towns, and, inland, mines producing precious metals. This region was blessed with a benign climate, which favoured all kinds of activities. There was a strong monarchical tradition, the cities being ruled by a king (or, in the term used by the Romans, a *regulus*). Society was complex and stratified; there was a blood aristocracy (Hannibal married an Iberian 'princess'); a class whose prominence depended upon wealth; free citizens; slaves; and a working class, both in public and private employment. With the spread of Roman influence the cities of this region quickly became 'Romanised'; important centres emerged, such as Italica near Seville, where two Roman emperors—Trajan and Hadrian—were born. The more important tribes of this part of Spain were the Turdetani, the Edetani, the Ilergetes and the Contestani.



Vase paintings of warriors from Liria, dating from the 2nd and 1st centuries BC. The large Celtic *scutum* shields are clearly shown, long spears are carried, and some kind of helmet and body armour is certainly depicted here. Note that the figures at the right of each picture have headgear with 'toothed' or 'cockscomb' crests. Fringing is seen beneath the edge of the short cuirasses, perhaps from the tunic worn beneath the armour. These men seem to wear calf-length boots. (Museo Arqueológico de Valencia)

Social Organisation and Obligations

Celt-Iberian society was organised in basic units which were termed—we have no alternative but to follow the Roman usage—*gentilitates* and *gens*, roughly equivalent to clans and tribes respectively. The smaller community or *gentilitatus* was united by common blood and a common forefather. Within the group individuals enjoyed status through common rights and duties. There were common religious practices; and the territory they inhabited was considered collective property in which each individual had rights. These basic family groups were linked into a more complex group termed by the Romans *gens*; and numbers of these, in their turn, together formed a federation of people.

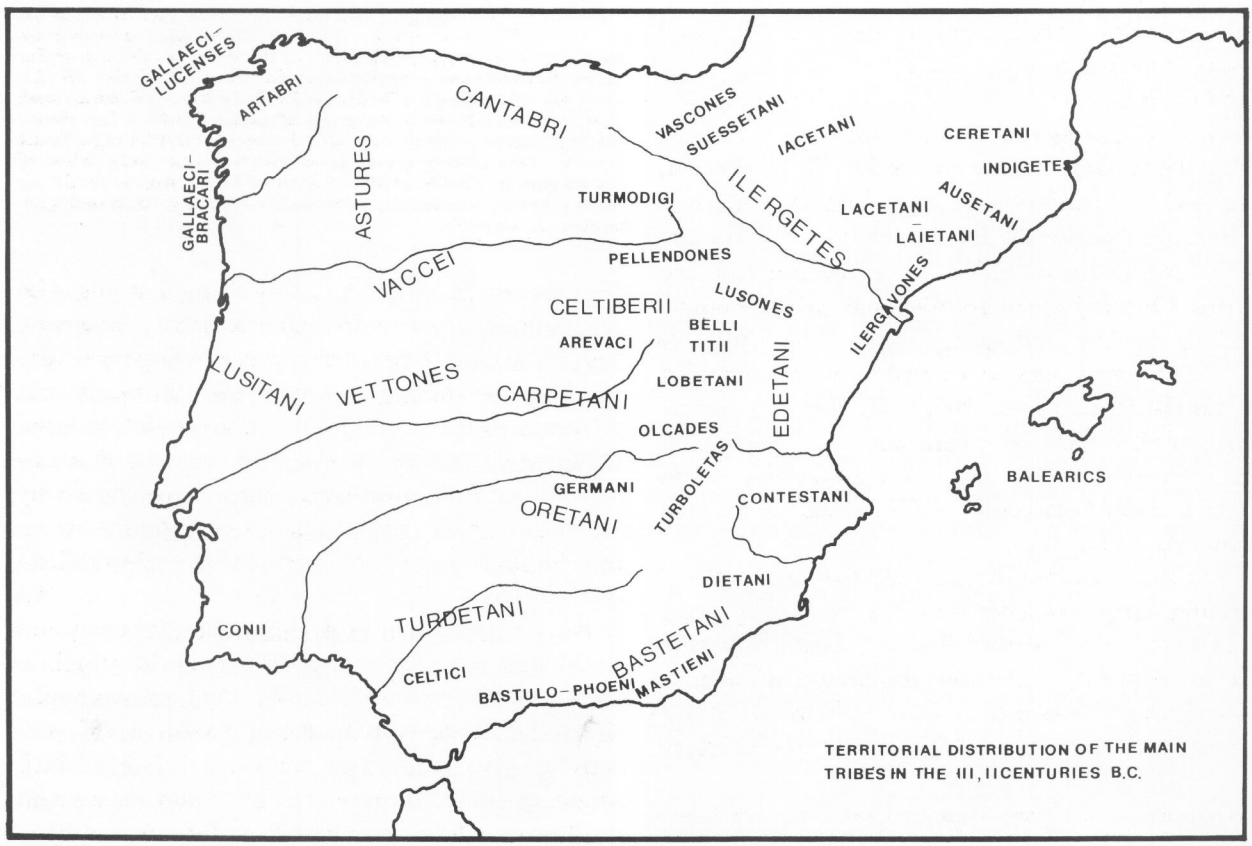
This society expressed itself through a number of 'political institutions'. Among these was a popular assembly of e.g. the adults of a city, which took decisions on matters of collective importance. A more restricted organ was an assembly of clan leaders or city elders, which under some circum-

stances could overrule the decisions of the popular assembly. There are various differing references to these forms of government in the written sources. There also existed a form of personal authority wielded by leaders—termed by the Romans as 'kings' or military leaders—who shared power with the assembly and the councils of elders according to some formula. At the time under consideration 'collective power' among the Celt-Iberians was progressively giving way to more restricted forms of power enjoyed by the aristocracy.

The Graeco-Latin sources mention two notable and highly characteristic relationships to be found among the peoples of ancient Spain: in Latin, *fides* and *hospitium*. *Fides* was a broader concept than its simple Latin equivalent suggests; it had an important influence in public and private life, and was also significant in the military context. Among the Iberians the relationship reached a level which has been called *devotio*: the consecration of a man and his relatives to the service of another individual, in return for certain obligations taken on by that individual. This bond between leader and led was sealed with religious invocations, and was of a solemn nature. In this sense it is valid to speak of the creation of 'private armies' around a chieftain or *regulus*; and we may note that the Romans put the local custom to good use by the formation of loyal personal bodyguards of Iberian warriors.

The *hospitium* was a pact, usually reached between clans or *gentilitates*, under which each member of one clan was considered to enjoy full rights and obligations as a member of the other. During a time of warfare these inter-clan obligations were obviously significant.

Contact with the Romans led to the appearance of new social forms, and speeded up the internal processes of social evolution. One result was an extension of private, as opposed to community property; and thus, to the logical appearance of a disinherited class, which chose brigandage, mercenary service under local magnates, or enlistment with the Roman army as a means of subsistence.



TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE MAIN TRIBES IN THE III, II CENTURIES B.C.

Warfare in Ancient Spain

While it is obviously true that indigence has forced many men—throughout history, and all over the world—to follow the path of the mercenary or the bandit proper, it is no less true that the kind of guerrilla warfare practised by the Hispanic peoples was then considered entirely licit and honourable among some tribes. Diodorus tells us that 'there is a custom characteristic of the Iberians, but particularly of the Lusitans, that when they reach adulthood those men who stand out through their courage and daring provide themselves with weapons, and meet in the mountains. There they form large bands, to ride across Iberia gathering riches through robbery, and they do this with the most complete disdain towards all. For them the harshness of the mountains, and the hard life they lead there, are like their own home; and there they look for refuge, being impregnable to large, heavily equipped armies.' Note that Diodorus speaks here of custom, not of need. These wandering bands rarely attacked members of their own tribes; but, understandably, the Romans were unwilling to grant any colour of honour to their activities, and always referred to them simply as bandits.

There is a ludicrous anecdote which illustrates—albeit by exaggeration—the attitude of these Hispanic warriors to warfare and to life in general. It is said that the Vettones were the first to enlist as mercenaries under the Roman eagles, and to share with legionaries the life of the Roman military camps. One day a group of Vettones, seeing Roman soldiers coming and going about their duties as sentries, became very concerned for them, and tried to take the Romans into their tents: they apparently thought that their new comrades had gone mad from sunstroke, since they could conceive of no other activity between actual fighting, and sitting around at their ease!

Strabo accuses the Iberians of being incapable of forming large confederations, and of dispersing their forces in inter-tribal disputes. This is only true up to a point, since the formation of armies exceeding 100,000 men is recorded[1]. More to the point, there was a general failure to exploit victory after success in battle. An army's cohesion might be maintained for some time after a victory, however; but in the case of defeat the warriors dispersed very quickly, producing among the Romans the sensation of fighting against an intangible enemy. In set-piece battles on open ground the Romans also suffered the unpleasant surprise produced by Hispanic tactics which differed considerably from the hoplitic methods usual in the Republican Roman army.

After a great deal of preparatory chanting and ritual dancing, the Celt-Iberians would attack *en masse* and in apparent disorder. At a pre-arranged signal the attack was halted, and the warriors would retreat, giving an appearance of defeat. This sequence might be repeated over and over again during several days; and each withdrawal obliged

Two bronze votary figurines, showing variations of Hispanic costume. The man on the left is shown with proportions distorted so that the tunic exposes his genitals, doubtless for some ritual reason rather than in literal depiction of the costume. He holds a triangular knife in his right hand; and there appears to be a harness of some kind on his chest, perhaps for the attachment of a breastplate? The right hand figure wears a long garment—a cloak?—and some kind of decoration is visible at the V-neck of his tunic; he holds, or wears slung, a small *caetra* shield. (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid)

[1]Though, like all other figures in ancient texts—and like the quoted strengths of armies in this book—this must be regarded with reserve.

the Romans to mount a pursuit, while maintaining their formations. Finally, after several attacks of this kind, it sometimes happened that the Romans lost their discipline—or their nerve—and broke formation to pursue the retreating warrriors. At this point the Hispanics would quickly regroup, mounting a counterattack and frequently decimating the legionaries in detail—who, being more heavily equipped and armoured, were less agile in individual combat.

This sort of fighting, known among the Romans as *concursare*, has been described by some as a simple absence of tactics. However, in the present author's opinion there had to be some kind of co-ordination to allow these sudden advances and retreats to occur simultaneously in the confusion of battle, without leaving groups of warriors isolated and outnumbered. It is perhaps relevant here to remark on the frequent archaeological finds throughout Celt-Iberia of rounded horns made of ceramic material, which some believe may have been used to transmit signals in battle.

The use of weapons among the Hispanic male population was varied and widespread; these will be discussed in a later chapter, but it should be noted here that abundant archaeological finds have been made in ancient burials, even in those of men who were evidently of humble means. His weapons were a man's most valuable possessions; and on many occasions we read that negotiations with the Romans were abruptly broken off due to Roman attempts to confiscate weapons.

The Hispanics enjoyed gymnastic exercises; and 'gladiatorial' combats ranged from friendly contests to fights to the death to settle serious differences between warriors. They also practised horsemanship, hunting, and ambushes—indeed, any activity which would qualify them as warriors. Unusually, we learn that it was common for warriors to carry a small receptacle containing a quick-acting poison extracted from the roots of the plant *Ranunculus sardonia* which they used to swallow to give themselves a quick death if all hope was lost. This poison also produced a contraction of the lower jaw, giving the victim the appearance of a sinister—literally, 'sardonic'—smile. This was apparently terrifying to the Roman legionaries, who thought that the dead man was defying them from beyond the grave.

Chronology

First period of conquest, 218–154 BC:

218 BC As a strategic movement in the context of the Second Punic War, two Roman legions commanded by Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio reach the harbour of Cesse (Tarraco)—the first Roman units to set foot on Spanish soil, whose task is to interrupt Carthaginian supplies. Battle of Cesse, capital of the Cessetani.

217 BC The Romans winter in Tarraco, transforming it into a permanent base.

215 BC Publius Cornelius Scipio, brother of Gnaeus, arrives at Tarraco with a troop and supply fleet of 20–30 ships. He defeats the Carthaginians south of the R. Iberus, hindering Hasdrubal's march on Italy. Roman conquest of Saguntum.

212 BC The Scipios are defeated after three years of fighting which saw some Roman territorial gains; Publius is beaten and killed near Castulum (Cazlona) by Hasdrubal, Giscona and Magon, helped by the Ilergetes led by Indibil, a Spanish prince. Gnaeus is defeated, takes refuge in a tower near Ilorci (Lorca?), but is killed by the troops of Hasdrubal Barca. Titus Fonteius saves the rest of the army by leading it to Tarraco.

211 BC Rome sends reinforcements to Hispania under C. Claudius Nero. Publius Cornelius Scipio (later, Africanus), son of the late Publius, arrives invested with the Imperium Praeconsulare and accompanied by M. Junius Silanus.

209–208 BC Indibil of the Ilergetes, Mandonio *regulus* of the Ilergavones and Edecon prince of the Edetani are persuaded to support Scipio. Romans capture Carthago Nova (Carthagena) and gain control of

important silver mines; Hasdrubal Barca defeated at Baecula (Bailen) but escapes to Italy.

207 BC Silanus defeats combined Hispano-Carthaginian army led by Magon and Hannon in the Meseta. Scipio's brother Lucius attacks Bastetania and captures Auringis (Jaen), the capital. The Accitani, centred on the capital Acci (Guadix), join the Roman cause.

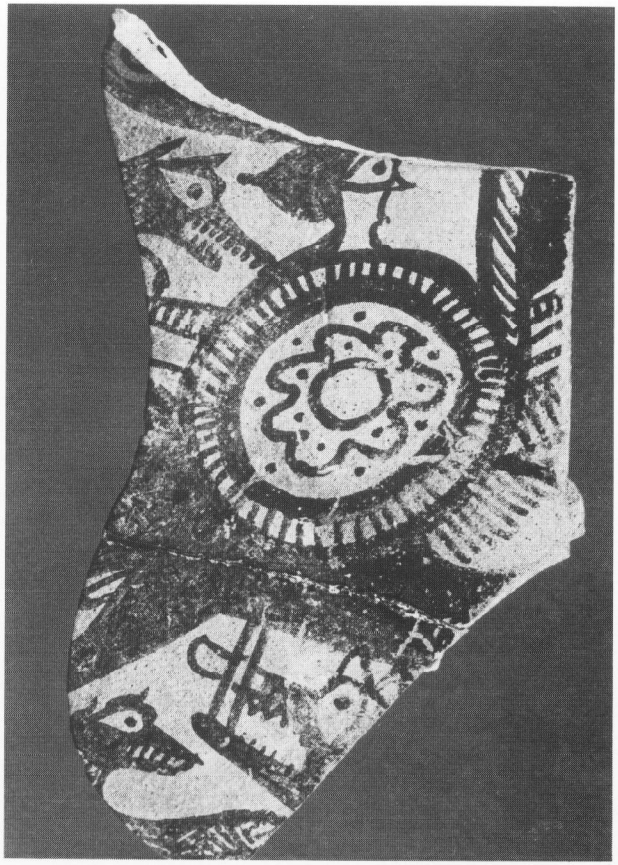
206 BC Decisive victory for Scipio at Ilipa (Alcala del Rio) Silanus puts Castulum under siege; it is surrendered by Cerdubelo, a Turdetan magnate. Scipio destroys Iliturgi (Mengibar) and retires to Carthago Nova while Silanus and Marcius continue to sack the region. The city of Astapa (Estepa?), loyal to the Carthaginians, is besieged by Marcius; after prolonged resistance the inhabitants commit mass suicide. Gades (Cadiz) surrenders to the Romans. End of the Carthaginian presence in Hispania; the Romans remain as the only foreign troops in the Peninsula. Major uprising in Hispania Citerior[1]. Spanish kings, realising that instead of liberation from Carthaginian oppression they have merely gained new masters, begin war against Rome. Indibil and Mandonio invade territories of the Suessetani and Edetani, allies of Rome; but are defeated by Scipio.

205 BC Renewed uprising in Citerior; but Indibil is defeated and killed, Mandonio captured and executed.

199 BC Spanish cities suffer harsh extortion under proconsuls Cn. Cornelius Vlasius and L. Stertinius.

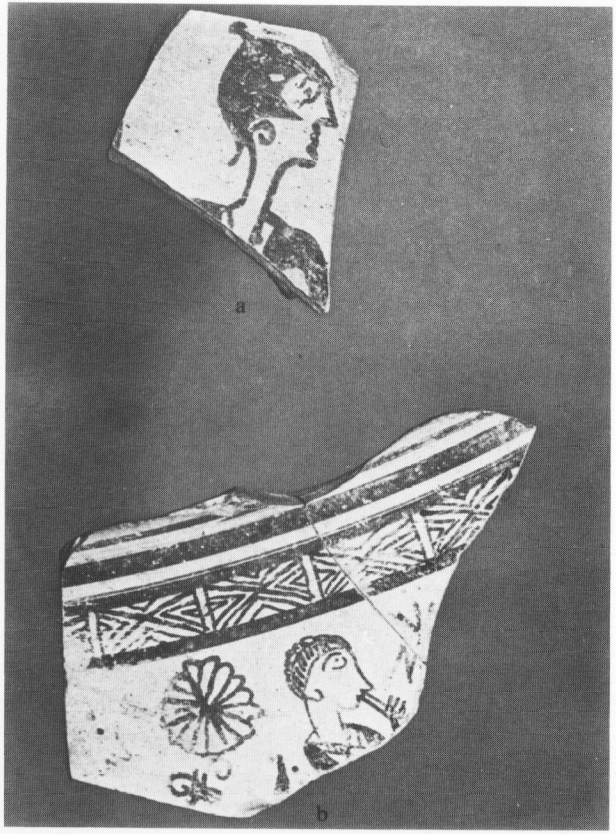
197 BC C. Sempronius Tuditanis and M. Helvius are sent as governors of Hispania with orders to fix borders between 'Ulterior' and 'Citerior' provinces. Renewed revolt: in Ulterior the Turdetani, led by Culcas and Luxinio, with support from the cities of Sexi (Almuñecar) and Malaca (Málaga), defeat and kill C. Sempronius Tuditanis.

195 BC Consul M. Porcius Cato and praetor P. Manlius are sent to Citerior, Ap. Claudius Nero to Ulterior. Capture of Indika, near Emporion (Ampurias). The Ausetani submit to Cato, as do the Bargusi, whose rebellion ends with Cato taking their capital Bergium (Berga). Edetani submit to P. Manlius. Siege of



Even this fragment of painted vase, dating from the 1st century BC, shows an interesting detail. The warrior's head, above the painted shield, is protected by a roughly conical helmet drawn up into a spire in the Celtic manner, and fitted with a chinstrap. The wolf's-head symbols are intriguing: the wolf was associated with death in Hispanic religious ritual, and this warrior seems to be surrounded by them. (Museo Arqueológico de Alicante)

[1]Rome divided the occupied territories in Hispania into 'Hispania Citerior' (Nearer Spain) and 'H. Ulterior' (Further Spain), along a border running across the Peninsula roughly from the north-east to the south-west corners. Normally the Senate commissioned a praetor or governor for each province. Hereafter in this text we refer simple to 'Ulterior' and 'Citerior'.



Two more fragments of painted vases of the 2nd-1st centuries BC showing heads protected by two sorts of helmet: the upper one is roughly conical, with neck, cheek, and perhaps even nasal protection, and a buttoned spire; the lower example shows the simple cap-like shape often found in Iberian vase paintings, with a wavy-edged crest. (Museo Arqueológico de Valencia)

Segontia (Segorbe?); submission of Suessetani.

194 BC Cato attacks the Iacetani, helped by the Suessetani, and takes their capital Iacca (Jaca). The Lusitani attack in Ulterior, but are defeated at Ilipa.

193 BC M. Fulvius Nobilior, governor of Ulterior, defeats near Toletum (Toledo) a confederation of Vaccei, Vettones and other tribes.

192–178 BC General uprisings right across the Peninsula; savage fighting.

171 BC Hispanic ambassadors are received by the Senate in Rome to complain about the greed and injustice of Roman governors.

178–154 BC Relative peace in the Peninsula.

Second period of conquest, 155–19 BC:

155–138 BC Lusitan Wars:

155 BC The praetor Manlius is defeated by the Lusitani.

154 BC The praetor Calpurnius Piso is defeated by the Lusitani.

153–151 BC First Numantine War:

153 BC Lucius Mummius, future destroyer of Corinth, named praetor of Ulterior; defeated by Lusitani at Caisaros. Numantia extends protection to the Segetani. Caros defeats Fulvius Nobilior in Citerior. Ambon and Leukon chosen chiefs of the Arevaci by the tribe assembled in Numantia. Celt-Iberians take Roman supply depot at Ocilis (Medinaceli). Nobilior, again beaten by the Numantines, winters in camp on the Gran Atalaya, suffers heavy losses to weather.

(152–143 BC Relative peace in the Meseta)

151 BC L. Licinius Lucullus (the elder) attacks without warning Cauca (Coca) in Vacceian territory and massacres inhabitants; besieges Intercatia (Villalpando) successfully; but fails before Pallantia (Palencia) and retires to Turdetania—territory of pacified tribes.

151–150 BC S. Sulpicius Galba defeated by Lusitani. Under pretext of land distribution he traps, disarms and massacres or enslaves c.10,000 of them, including women and children.

147 BC The praetor Vetilius defeats c.10,000 Lusitani who are attacking Turdetania, trapping them in a valley. Viriatus, elected supreme leader of these forces, leads successful breakout. Vetilius subsequently defeated and killed.

146 BC Viriatus defeats C. Plaucius in Carpetania, takes Segobriga (Saelices), and defeats Claudius Unimanus, governor of Citerior.

145 BC Viriatus' forces defeat C. Nigidius.

144 BC Viriatus, beaten by Q. Fabius

Maximus, evacuates valley of River Baetis (Guadalquivir), retires to Baicor (Baecula?).

143–133 BC Second Numantine War:

143 BC Victories of Q. Caecilius Metellus in Celt-Iberia; Nertobriga (Ricla?), Centobriga and Contrebia submit.

142 BC Metellus attacks the Vaccei during harvest.

141–140 BC Q. Pompeius fails in attacks on Numantia and Termantia. F. Maximus Servilianus sacks towns in Baetica allied to Viriatus; but is later defeated, and signs a treaty. Viriatus receives title *Amicus Populi Romani*—'Friend of the Roman People'. Pompeius fails again before Numantia.

140–139 BC Pompeius concludes treaty with Numantines, imposing tribute of 39 talents of silver. The Senate breaks the peace with Viriatus, and orders Popilius Laenas to resume hostilities against Numantia. Viriatus takes refuge on Mt. Veneris; negotiations with Q. Servilius Cepio; Viriatus assassinated.

138 BC Popilius Laenas' siege of Numantia fails and he withdraws to Jalon valley.

137 BC Numantines defeat consul G. Hostilius Mancinus, who is forced to grant peace terms under shameful conditions. Under pretext that they had helped the Numantines, M. Aemilius Lepidus besieges Vacceian capital of Pallantia. Consul L. Furius Philus of Citerior informs Numantines that the Senate refuses to ratify the peace signed by Mancinus; and attacks the Vaccei.

143–133 BC Consul Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus[1] leads important Roman reinforcements to Hispania and conducts large scale operations. He attacks the Vaccei to prevent their supporting Numantia; and in October 134 BC begins the siege which finally—in summer 133—brings about the destruction of the city.

132–109 BC Peace in Hispania.

104–103 BC Cimbrians and Teutones invade the Peninsula, but are repulsed by Hispanic armies—to the shame of the praetor Fulvius, who had earlier been defeated by these Celtic invaders.

99 BC New uprising in the Meseta.

Interesting 3rd-century sculpture showing a warrior with a *caetra* slung on a long strap from his shoulders; this strap was apparently wrapped round the forearm in battle. The buckler seems to be shown as made of several layers. The body protection indicated here may be a hardened leather cuirass. Just visible on his right hip (to our left) is the hanging, fringed end of the sash or waistband often depicted; it is thought that different colours may have had some significance in identifying the warrior's status. (Museo Arqueológico de Jaen)

[1]This was the third Publius Cornelius Scipio to fight in Spain; the adoptive grandson of the great Africanus, victor of Ilipa in 206 and over Hannibal at Zama in 202, Scipio Aemilianus was the destroyer of Carthage in 146.

82–72 BC Sertorian Wars, involving Hispanic armies.

61 BC C. Julius Caesar arrives as praetor of Ulterior province.

61–60 BC New campaigns against the Lusitani.

59–57 BC Peace throughout Hispania.

56 BC Revolt of the Vaccei.

49–44 BC War in Spain between Caesar and Pompeius.

39–37 BC Uprising of the Cessetani.

29 BC Campaigns of the legate Estatilius Taurus against the Cantabri, Vaccei and Astures.

28 BC Calvisius Sabinus defeats the Cantabri.

26–25 BC Augustus Caesar takes personal command against the Cantabri; operations against Bergida, Mt. Vindius and Aracillum. Seriously ill, Augustus retires to Tarraco, passing command to C. Antistius Vetus.

25 BC The Astures, advancing from the hills into the Astura River valley, are forced by the legate P. Carisius to fall back on Lancia (Villasabariego), which falls to the Romans. Emerita Augusta (Mérida) is founded as colony of Roman veterans.

24 BC Augustus returns to Rome, naming Lucius Aemilius as his legate. The Cantabri and Astures break out in rebellion again, but are defeated.

22 BC Renewed hostilities in Cantabria; rebels defeated by combined forces of P. Carisius and C. Furnius.

19 BC Cantabrian prisoners of war, sold as slaves, rebel; they kill their owners and return to the Peninsula, lighting the fire of revolt once again. Augustus sends Agrippa to end this war. The Hispanic L. Cornelius Balbus receives triumphal honours for his African victories—the first non-Italic so honoured.

18 BC Two of the legions which took an active part in the Cantabrian wars, Legio V Alaudae and Legio VIIII Hispana, are transferred to Germany and Illyria respectively—a clear indication that Roman pacification was complete at last, after 200 years of bloody fighting.

A sculpture of a Hispanic warrior which has caused many difficulties of interpretation. The large oval *scutum* shield is quite clear, as is the *falcata* sabre; but the deep, crested headgear is a puzzle. Some authorities associate it with written references to helmets made of animal sinew, but this is not understood. (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid)

Impact of the Hispanic Wars on Rome

While Rome's first presence in Spain in 218 BC was a strategic move prompted by her need to interfere with a supply base which was allowing Carthaginian forces to press dangerously on Italy, by the aftermath of the battle of Ilipa in 207 or 206 she was already considering indefinite occupation of the Peninsula. Apart from the favourable climate and fertility, which offered a potentially rich source of

food supplies for Roman metropolitan areas, the Romans were quick to appreciate the Peninsula's resources of precious and strategic metals: gold, silver, copper and iron. Indeed, the Second Punic War was financed with the silver which the Romans extracted from the mines around Cartagena. As a small example of the exploitation of these resources, Livy lists the following figures. During 200 BC Lentulus removed 43,000 pounds (*libra*) of silver and 2,450 of gold; his colleague Acidinus, 1,200 of silver and 30 of gold.

In 198 BC Cornelius Blasius removed 20,000 pounds of silver, 515 of gold, and 34,500 of coined silver; his colleage L. Stertinius, 50,000 of silver. These sums were realised by pillage and tribute during a time of peace, which perhaps explains the uprising of the following year. In 197 the governor of Hispania Ulterior, M. Helvius, collected 14,732 pounds of silver; 17,023 of coined silver; and 27,000 of *argentum oscensis* (a famous Spanish silver *denarius*, mentioned in this year for the first time). The governor of Hispania Citerior, Q. Minucius, collected 34,800 pounds of silver coined to Iberian designs; 25,000 pounds of unworked silver; 123,000 pounds of silver coined to Roman designs, and 540 pounds of *argentum oscensis*; and 1,400 pounds of gold were amassed by the consul M. Porcius Cato in Citerior in 195 BC. In 192 we read that the praetor of Citerior province, F. Nobilior, collected 12,000 pounds of silver, 130 of coined silver, and 127 of gold. In the year 185 Citerior yielded to the praetor L. Manlius 92 golden crowns and 16,300 pounds of silver, and to the quaestor 10,000 pounds of silver and 80 of gold . . . Examples like these are countless.

The attainment of such riches had a cost: it engulfed Rome in a long and cruel war, which was to have profound effects on the Republic. The bloodshed, and the need to maintain permanent armies in Hispania left a permanent mark. During the 20 years of the Second Celt-Iberian War, 153–133 BC, the Roman population would normally have increased by some 3,000 every year, giving an overall increase of some 60,000. In fact it appears that during these 20 years Rome suffered an overall decrease in population of some 65,000. The losses of her Italian allies were even greater than those among Roman citizens; and it has been estimated that the total losses suffered by Romans and Italians, but excluding other allies, amounted to between 150,000 and 200,000 during this phase of the Hispanic wars, figures which coincide with certain indications from Roman written sources.

A 2nd- or 1st-century vase painting from Liria, Valencia, showing a mounted warrior. The headgear resembles a hood; and note the fringes on the trousers or breeches, depicted in a different way from what are apparently fringed tunic hems in other paintings. Note the bell hanging from the horse's throat-lash, and the indication of ornate decoration on its neck and head. (Museo Arqueológico de Valencia)

This great expenditure of manpower at times made it impossible to find the necessary troops to maintain operations. During this period there was a property qualification for enlistment as a legionary, of 4,000 *as*, and this requirement further limited recruitment. Some historians see this as a factor in the proposal of Tiberius Gracchus to reform Roman property law in such a way as to widen the distribution of land holdings, and thus of potential legionaries.

Again, one of the fundamental pillars of the Republican system was the limitation of the period of a senior military command to one year, as a safeguard against military dictatorship. The conditions of the Spanish wars forced the extension of this period, for reasons of efficiency. Public opinion among citizens, and even in the ranks of the army, was by no means solidly behind a war which cost such a price in men and money, as well as introducing these domestic distortions.

The Campaigns of Viriatus

Polybius tells us that in 152 BC, when it became necessary to raise an army against the rebellious Hispanic tribes who had inflicted such losses the previous year, there was a general disinclination to accept the burden of military duty, from legate and tribune down to simple legionary; and that this disillusion—and even open fear—continued until the voluntary involvement of the respected Scipio Aemilianus Africanus at the end of these campaigns. The Greek historian also emphasises the extraordinary nature of the fighting in Spain when seen from the standpoint of the classically trained Mediterranean soldier. He called the Spanish war 'the war of fire', not only for its fierceness but for its unpredictability, its alternating outbreaks and periods of smouldering which were never quite stamped out. The Romans, he says, were worn down by the tireless patience of the Hispanics, who could not be beaten quickly in decisive battles, but who stubbornly resisted all day until nightfall brought a temporary end to the fighting, only to return to the fray on the morrow. Even winter did not interrupt the wars in the Peninsula, he writes.

The nature of these centuries of warfare can perhaps be sketched in by recounting in detail two significant episodes: the rebellion of Viriatus, and the Numantine wars.

Iberian warrior and his horse, from another Liria vase painting. Features include the horse's bridle bell and large frontal ornament, saddle, and clearly depicted sex: the latter detail reminds us that however crude the art of some ancient cultures may seem to us, the artists deliberately depicted many details, and we should be cautious in dismissing out of hand features which we find hard to reconcile with our very imperfect knowledge of the time. The warrior here wears a helmet with a crest, and perhaps a rising plume of feathers. (Museo Arqueológico de Valencia)

The natural obstacles to Rome's conquest and pacification of the Peninsula were aggravated by the ineptitude of many of the military and political leaders entrusted with the task: too often their main aim was the rapid collection of a large personal fortune. The worst rebellions among the tribes were always provoked by the excesses of Roman authorities; and the longest periods of peace coincided with respect shown for the pacts signed between Romans and Hispanics.

In about 151 BC Servius Sulpicius Galba succeeded M. Atilius as praetor or governor of Hispania Ulterior. Newly arrived in Baetica (Andalusia), he ordered his army to march towards Lusitania. After marching 92km in a single journey, his unrested troops were sent straight into action against the Lusitani, who had been causing problems in the region for the past three years. Misled by the tactic of simulated retreat and swift counterattack, some 7,000 out of the force of 15,000 Romans were killed. Galba and the survivors, including his cavalry, took refuge in Carmo (Carmona). At the same time Galba's counterpart in 'Nearer Spain', L. Lucinius Lucullus, was also having difficulty with Lusitan raiders; and he and Galba concerted their operations.

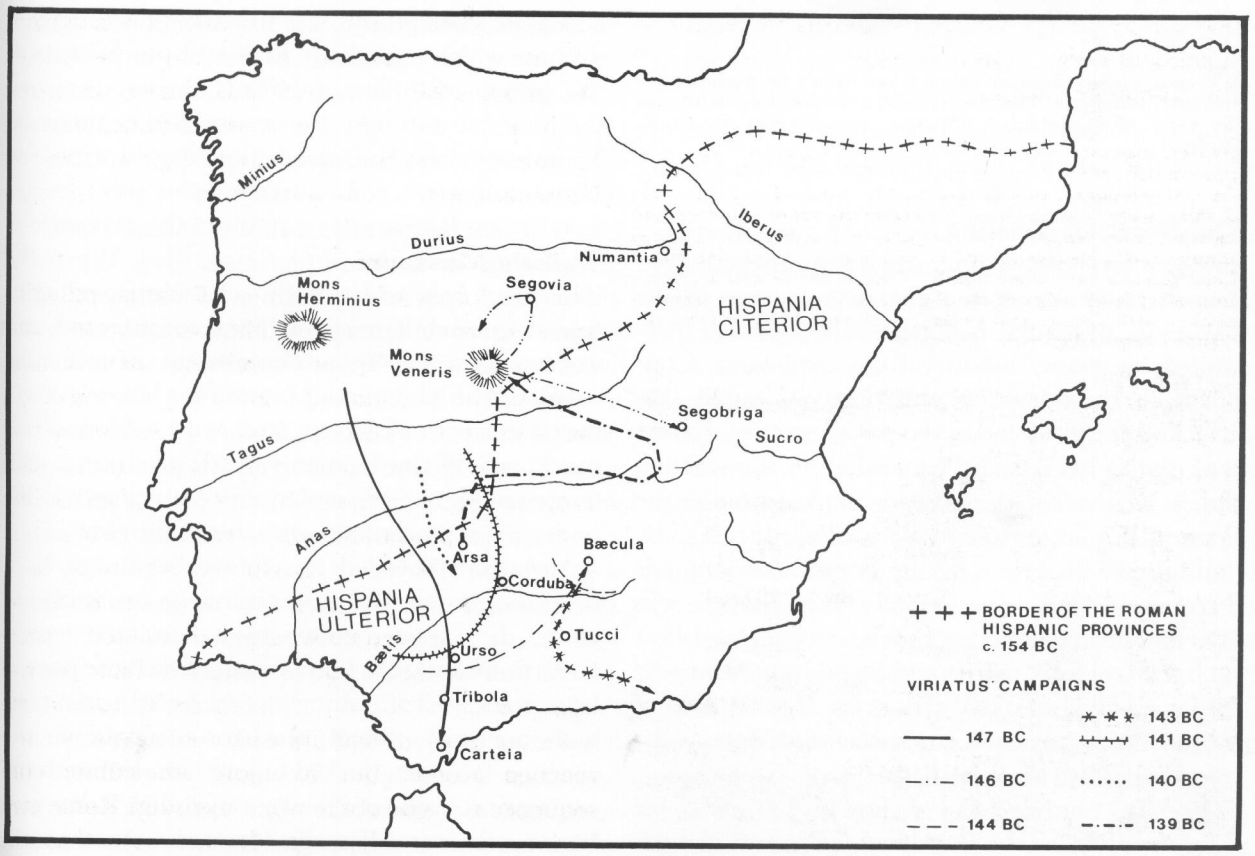
Galba's Massacre

The two forces advanced into Lusitania, pillaging and destroying towns but failing to bring to battle the bulk of the enemy's fighting men. Galba, advised by Lucullus (who also used contemptible methods), then devised a plan for a final solution to the Lusitan problem. Offering to sign a treaty with the Lusitani, he proposed that in return for handing in their weapons they would receive a distribution of farmland. Around 30,000 Lusitani assembled, and were disarmed and separated into three camps. Galba then ordered his troops to massacre the able-bodied men (about 9,000 of them); and sold the rest into slavery. The news of this atrocity caused the governor some difficulties with the Senate when it reached Rome; but its more immediate consequence was one of the worst uprisings Rome ever had to face in Hispania. It was now that the

renowned Lusitan hero Viriatus emerged from the shadows of history.

We know that he was of humble origins, perhaps a shepherd. His Romanised name comes from *viria*, meaning bracelet, recalling the popularity of arm-rings among Celt-Iberians. He was famous for his physical prowess and stamina, his sobriety, and his disregard for personal wealth. Diodorus relates a tale of Viriatus' wedding, to the daughter of a rich landowner whom he regarded with some reserve because of his father-in-law's embracing of Roman ways. Remaining unmoved by the dazzling display of gold, silver and colourful fabrics at his wedding feast, Viriatus refused pressing invitations to take a place of honour. He remained standing, leaning on his spear; and took only a little bread and meat, which he shared with his close companions. When the bride was brought before him, he offered sacrifice in the Iberian manner, set her on the crupper of his horse, and rode away into the hills to his hideout.

We know that Viriatus was a survivor of Galba's massacre, and from that day forward implacable in his hatred if the Romans. In 147 BC an army of some 10,000 Lusitani invaded the pacified area of Turdetania. The legate Caius Vetilius managed to encircle the rebels near Urso (Osuna), trapping them in a water-course. Vetilius offered to accept their surrender on the tactless terms of farmland in return for their weapons. Agreement had almost been concluded when Viriatus, a junior chieftain, reminded his countrymen of the discouraging history of such pacts with the Romans. His eloquence moved the tribesmen to hail him as supreme chief on the spot. He selected 1,000 riders, and led them in a diversionary charge on the Romans while the Lusitan footsoldiers unexpectedly broke formation and dispersed. Vetilius hesitated, giving the Lusitani time to withdraw; and Viriatus' horsemen, being lighter and faster than their enemies, managed to fall back in their turn, carrying out a series of hit-and-run attacks over the next few days to cover the retreat of his infantry. Eventually, under cover of night, he finally disengaged and reached Tibola (Baena), rejoining the bulk of his force.



A bronze votary figurine from a sanctuary in Andalusia—ancient Turdetania. The rider wears a close-fitting helmet of the type often depicted. (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid)

The Death of Vetilius

The praetor, hot to avenge this defeat, then allowed himself to be lured into the narrow pass of the Barbesula (Guadiaro) River valley, which prevented his heavy infantry from deploying. Confident in his numerical superiority, Vetilius was attacked at the far end of the pass, frontally, and on both flanks by Lusitani concealed on the wooded slopes. Neither for the first nor the last time in the Peninsula, a large Roman force allowed itself to be ambushed with serious results. Some 6,000 Romans died, including Vetilius: initially taken alive, he was later cut down, as his captors never imagined that such a fat, elderly man could be an important war leader. (The Hispanic warriors made something of a cult of trim physique, and accentuated the waist by wearing broad, tight belts.)

Vetilius' quaestor took refuge in Carteia (near Gibraltar) with the remaining Roman troops, sending out instead some 5,000 allied Bellian and Titian warriors; these the Lusitani wiped out, as Viriatus was keen to make an example of Hispanics who sided with Rome.

The following year a new praetor, Caius Plaucius, brought to the Peninsula reinforcements of some 10,000 foot and 1,300 horse; more could not be found, since Rome was then heavily committed to the Third Punic War with Carthage. Viriatus, who was harrassing the Carpetan territories, ambushed and wiped out some 4,000 Romans sent against him by Plaucius. Plaucius followed the Lusitani to their refuges around Mt. Veneris, but was again beaten, and was forced to withdraw earlier in the season than usual to winter quarters. This left Viriatus with the initiative; he exploited it in a series of attacks on Roman garrisons in central Hispania which caused much damage, not least to Roman morale.

His next move was towards Segobriga (near Cuenca), in order to promote alliances with the Celt-Iberian kingdoms in that area. Claudius Unimanus—possibly the praetor of Citerior—led a major force out in an attempt to avenge his colleague's defeat; but was beaten in his turn, in a disaster which cost many lives and much booty—the latter, including standards, being displayed publicly all through the mountain country on Viriatus' orders. Unimanus himself paid tribute to Hispanic spirit: '. . . In a narrow pass 300 Lusitani faced 1,000 Romans; as a result of the action 70 of the former and 320 of the latter died. When the victorious Lusitani retired and dispersed confidently, one of them on foot became separated, and was surrounded by a detachment of pursuing cavalry. The lone warrior pierced the horse of one of the riders with his spear, and with a blow of his sword cut off the Roman's head, producing such terror among the others that they prudently retired, under his arrogant and contemptuous gaze . . .'

Viriatus proceeded to capture Segobriga by a ruse, surprising the inhabitants—who had not joined the Lusitan cause—by a simulated retreat and a forced march. This period marked the peak of his success; after smashing several Roman armies he had acquired great prestige throughout the country, and men flocked to join him. But with the war against Carthage finally concluded, Rome was free to concentrate on the Lusitani.

Fabius' Campaigns

In 145 BC the great consul Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus entrusted his brother Q. Fabius Maximus with Ulterior and his friend C. Laelius with Citerior. Africa and Macedonia were still absorbing large Roman forces, and the Senate only provided Scipio with an army of 15,000 legionary recruits, 2,000 horse and ten war elephants: a small field army to safeguard both Hispanic provinces, though sufficient to protect the occupied towns. Fabius concentrated his recruits at Urso (Osuna); he spent a year training his men, ignoring the harrassing attacks of the Lusitani and Viriatus' attempts to provoke him into taking the field. He also made every effort to secure more local co-operation, sailing to Cadiz to take part in solemn religious rituals to this end.

Finally, in 144 BC, Fabius passed on to the offensive after three years during which Lusitan command of the countryside had been almost unchallenged. In the first engagement Viriatus was beaten, with heavy loss, and was forced to winter in Cordoba. This first Roman victory since 153 BC gave the Romans a brief respite, and they recovered some key towns. In 143 Viriatus managed to associate the Arevaci, Belli and Titii with his movement; and thus began the Numantine War, which lasted for ten years.

During 143–142 BC renewed operations against the governor of Citerior, Q. Pompeius, caused further Roman reverses; the recapture of Itucci (Martos) gave the rebels domination of the whole Baetic region. Rome decided to send to Hispania another consul from the prestigious Scipio family: Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus, an adoptive brother of Q. Fabius Maximus, with an army of 18,000 infantry (based on two incomplete legions) and 1,600 horse. His attempt to dislodge Viriatus from Itucci failed; and the Lusitan counterattack led to an indecisive battle between about 6,000 men on each side. Servilianus received from Africa a reinforcement of 300 Numidian horse and ten elephants; he constructed a strong forward base camp, and in a subsequent engagement inflicted a defeat on the Lusitani.

In the course of 140 BC Roman fortunes faltered once more; Viriatus avoided pitched battles and followed his classic hit-and-run tactics with some success. In at least one action they worked to

General view of the famous 'vase of the armoured Warriors' from Liria; note that all these figures wear similar, but not identical armour, and the kind of variations which we would expect in ancient times are clearly indicated. The warrior on the left wears a full corselet of what is clearly intended to be scale armour; if we may interpret the cross-hatched convention as indicating ring mail, which seems logical, then the warrior on the right has a full mail shirt, and the centre figure a mixed corselet with scale on the upper torso and mail on the abdomen. All wear cap-like Iberian helmets, in two cases apparently faced with scale protection, and with wavy-edged crests. All carry the *scutum* and spears. (Museo Arqueológico de Valencia)

perfection; the Romans were provoked into a disorderly pursuit, losing 3,000 men to the lightning enemy counterattack. The subsequent Lusitan attack on the Roman camp caused panic, and legionaries even deserted their defences to seek safety among the tent lines; Servilianus and his tribunes, reimposing discipline with great difficulty, only averted disaster through the heroism of an officer named Fannius (the son-in-law of C. Laelius), and through the coming of nightfall: the Lusitani did not like fighting at night, for religious reasons.

However, the long years of war had caused a steady attrition of Viriatus' strength; and he decided to destroy his camps in central Hispania and to withdraw to the Lusitan heartland to build up reinforcements. Servilianus took advantage of this phase to recapture five towns which had allied with Viriatus—among them Tucci, Astigi and Obulco—and to pacify the Baetic region. The Romans treated their prisoners cruelly, beheading 500 of the 10,000 captured and selling the rest into slavery. They then advanced on Lusitania. On the march they were attacked by some 10,000 men,

apparently led by two Roman deserters, Curius and Apuleius. In a fierce and confused action the former was killed, but the Romans temporarily lost their baggage train.

Servilianus now laid siege to a town called Erisana. Viriatus entered the city by audaciously attacking a force of Roman sappers who were undermining the walls by night; they fled, leaving their tools. Attacking the bulk of the Roman force, from inside the city, Viriatus penned them in a narrow pass; and then, incomprehensibly, offered them peace terms. He demanded only that the borders of Lusitania itself should be respected, and that the tribe be granted the status of *amici populi Romani*—'Friends of the Roman People', or independent allies. Servilianus accepted these terms, which were ratified by the Senate.

That a leader so implacably hostile should have concluded this pact with Rome is surprising; possibly Viriatus was becoming tired after so many years of war. In any event, the pact did not last.

An enlarged detail from the Liria vase, showing the figure apparently wearing a corselet of mixed construction. The motifs on the *scutum* recall the flowing patterns of more northerly Celtic peoples, emphasising that it is dangerous to treat too rigidly the division of Hispanic peoples into cultural areas. The spear may represent a *soliferrum*. (Museo Arqueológico de Valencia)

Viriatus was still considered a dangerous focus of resistance, and Rome subsequently ordered her governors in Hispania to get rid of him by any convenient means: he had humiliated Roman pride, and his domination of the wealthy Baetic area was unacceptable. In 140 BC there arrived in Hispania the consul Q. Servilius Cepio, brother of Servilianus, with instructions to break the peace. While he launched a series of increasingly open provocations against the Lusitani, Popilius Laenas began following the same tactic in Celt-Iberia.

The Death of Viriatus

Cepio recaptured Erisana by a sudden stroke. Surprised, Viriatus was forced to abandon the towns of the Baetic area and to retire into Carpetania. Cepio almost trapped him there, but he managed to escape, though much depleted, and returned to Lusitania. Cepio followed him across the territory of the Vettones, allies of the Lusitani, and for the first time entered the mountainous country of the Gallaeci. He constructed a road from the Anas (Guadiana) River to the Tagus (Tajo), and established a great camp, Castra Servilia, near Caceres. Exploiting a period of relative calm in Celt-Iberia, Popilius Laenas joined Cepio in attacking the Lusitani on two fronts. Cepio's advance failed due largely to a mutiny among his cavalry, provoked by his harshness. Meanwhile the Lusitani, exhausted by war, asked Viriatus to negotiate with P. Laenas, who was Cepio's superior.

The Roman general presented to Viriatus his terms: the surrender of Roman deserters, and the handing in of weapons. The first was agreed, and these unfortunates suffered the amputation of their right hands—a punishment in fact learned from the Hispanics. The second, as always, was resisted; but, pressed by his countrymen, Viriatus sent three comrades—Audax, Ditalco and Minuros—to pursue negotiations with Cepio. During these meetings the Romans bribed the three to murder their leader. Appian recounts that Viriatus, who slept little and always in full armour in case of emergency, was stabbed during the night in his tent; the wound was in his neck, the only unprotected part, and was so small that it went unnoticed for some time—his attendants thought he was asleep. This gave the assassins a chance to slip back to the Roman camp to demand their pay. Cepio let them keep what they

had received in advance; for the rest, he passed their request to Rome. The Senate replied laconically that Rome did not pay traitors. Thus the great leader of the Lusitani perished, by treachery compounded with treachery.

Desolated by his death, Viriatus' countrymen celebrated extraordinary funeral rites for him. A warrior named Tantalus tried to continue the rebellion, attacking Cartagena without success; but without the inspiring genius of Viriatus the Lusitani were soon obliged to lay down their arms. Servilius Cepio in fact treated them with more mercy than had Laenas; farmland was indeed distributed, the better shares going to those who had submitted to Rome earliest. Some groups were deported and established in other regions—Valencia is supposed to have been founded by one such group.

The Numantine Wars

When, in late summer 133 BC, the gates of the smouldering city of Numantia opened and a staggering crowd of human ghosts emerged to surrender to a Roman army, the moment marked the end of a ten-year war which had cost Rome unbearable humiliations.

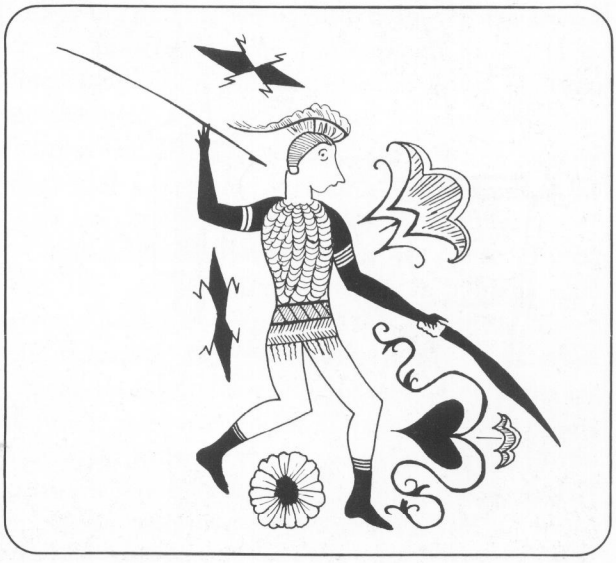
The first contact between Numantia and the Romans is thought to have taken place in 197, when the consul Cato was forced by a dangerous outbreak in central Hispania to make the first incursion into the Plateau—Meseta—region, though with little success. Repulsed before Segontia (Sigüenza), he marched with seven cohorts towards the Ebro River; and established camps on a mountain some 6km from Numantia, called today La Gran Atalaya—'the great watchtower'. The site of the base he set up there was to be used by all his successors in their operations against Numantia. Although the record is uncertain, it is not thought that any other Roman general ventured so deep into Celt-Iberia until 153 BC.

After decades of ignored complaints about the rapacity of Roman authorities in Hispania the main towns of Celt-Iberia, such as Segeda (? near Zaragoza), the capital of the Belli, decided to prepare themselves for war. Led by the chieftain Caros, they began to enlarge and repair the walls of the city; and the inhabitants of neighbouring villages, including those of the nearby Titii, were forced to take shelter in the strengthened fortress. Roman protests, and attempts to recruit auxiliaries for the war against the Lusitani, were rejected. At this time the Lusitani frequently displayed before the Celt-Iberians the weapons, standards and other booty they had captured from the Romans; and mocked them for their passivity.

Rome, foreseeing a hard fight, raised a 30,000-strong consular army instead of the more common praetorian army of around 10,000 to 15,000. Command was entrusted to Q. Fulvius Nobilior, a man of aristocratic lineage whose father had combat experience in Hispania in the 190s, but who proved to have learned little from the example. Nobilior's commission was signed before the actual outbreak of war; and according to the usual practice he should have taken command of his army on 15 March 153 BC, at the start of the official year. This would mean that operations could not get under way until June; and, since the weather turns bad in Celt-Iberia in September, this would leave an unrealistically short campaigning season. It was therefore decided in Rome to change the start of the official year to 1 January: we owe the date of our New Year to the Celt-Iberian war.

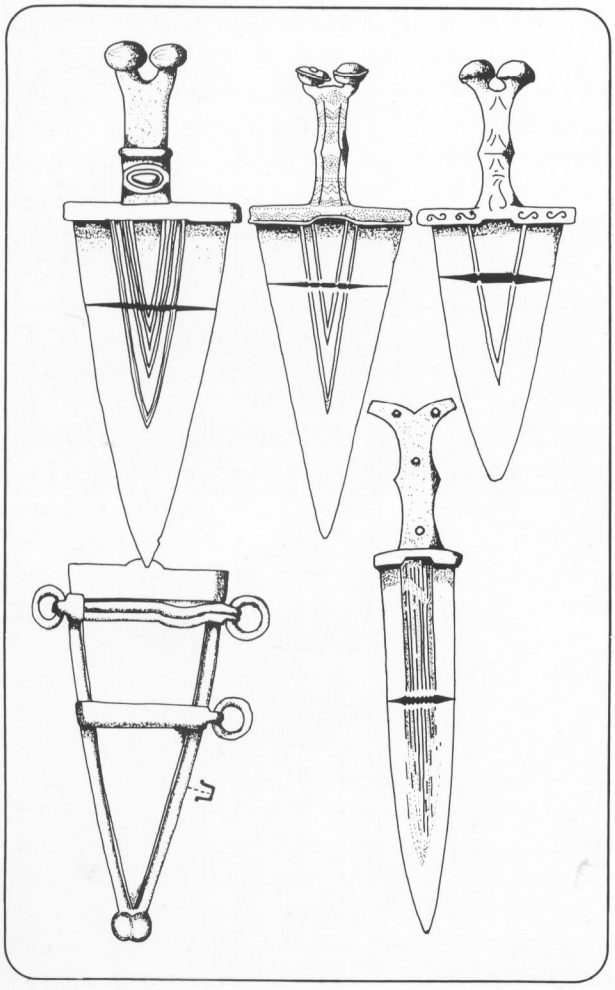
Nobilior arrived at Tarraco in April, and in May

Drawing of another figure from the 2nd/1st century Liria vase, showing, perhaps, an Iberian officer—this is the only figure which wears this type of large-crested helmet. He holds a clearly-depicted *falcata* and a spear, and his corselet is of scale armour. (Author's drawing)



he advanced on Segeda by following the Ebro up to Zaragoza, and then taking the River Jalon valley. He arrived before the city in June with 30,000 men: two Roman citizen legions each of 5,000, 10,000 allied Italians, 2,400 Roman cavalry, and some 7,000 Hispanic auxiliaries recruited around Tarraco. The Belli and Titii could oppose this army with only 8,000 warriors; and the walls of the city were still not complete. It was therefore decided to abandon Segeda and escape to the territories of allied tribes along the Duero River. Numantia, the most influential centre in the region, accepted the fugitives and agreed to take the brunt of the war.

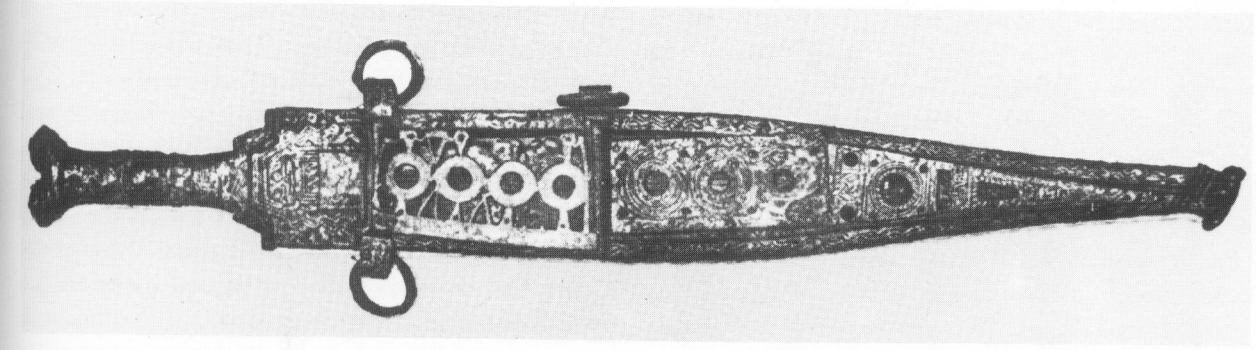
A collection of Hispanic knives of the type known as 'triangulars'. Note the 'atrophied antennae' pommel shape also found on Hispanic straight swords of the period. These weapons remind us that the Romans copied Hispanic daggers as well as swords: the evolution of the classic Roman legionary dagger, which remained in use for centuries, can clearly be seen here. (Author's drawing)



Destroying Segeda, Nobillior continued his march along the Jalon. He organised and garrisoned a supply depot at Ocilis (Medinaceli), on an easily defended hill (though, since it was isolated in the heart of enemy territory, it was not surprisingly lost after the first Roman defeats in this campaign). He drew near to Numantia, where the tribesmen were concentrated. A Numantine embassy interceding for the people of Segeda was rejected, with the demand that all weapons be handed over. This demand was rejected in its turn by the Numantines, who now counted some 25,000 men in their combined army.

Nobilior probably foresaw a classic clash of armies on open ground, but he was disappointed: it is no accident that even today the world 'guerrilla' is written in Spanish the world over. The Roman column began a four-day, 80km march from Ocilis to Numantia across the plateau between the rivers Duero and Jalon. At Ribarroya, 20km from Numantia, they left the Duero and entered the valley of a tributary, the Baldano, in search of a shortcut. In summer this is a completely dry track about 4km long, densely wooded on each side. Here Caros, leading the confederated tribes, had concealed up to 20,000 foot and 5,000 horse; and here Nobilior neglected proper reconnaissance, and led his army into the trap strung out in a long column. In the massive ambush which closed upon them some 10,000 Roman troops fell. The date was 23 August, the day when Rome celebrated the feast of Vulcan. (When news of the disaster reached Rome that date was declared *dies ater*, 'a sinister day', and ever afterwards no Roman general would willingly accept battle on 23 August.) After suffering heavy casualties Nobilior's column hacked its way free and reached open ground. The infantry took up close formation; and the cavalry were able to deploy successfully, killing many Celt-Iberian foot soldiers and their chieftain Caros. It took Nobilior two days to resume his march.

On the Gran Atalaya he ordered the construction of a large camp on the remains of those built by Cato. He received reinforcements of ten elephants and 300 Numidian horse; but by now the garrison of Numantia had also been strengthened, and was once more around 25,000 strong. In September 153 Nobilior attacked the city, relying heavily on the surprise his elephants would



A fine example of the Hispanic straight sword, showing characteristic features: the 'atrophied antennae' pommel, and the three hanging-rings on the scabbard. Both scabbard and hilt are richly inlaid with silver; such expensively decorated examples are relatively common among archeological finds, even in the burials of men of apparently quite humble means.

produce. In an encounter on the grassy slope east of the city he successfully panicked the Numantines by the sudden revelation of this 'secret weapon', and advanced on their heels to the very walls of Numantia. Fortune seemed to be smiling on the Romans, when a freak incident robbed them of victory. A large stone thrown from the walls struck one of the elephants and it ran amock, stampeding the others. As the maddened beasts raged through their ranks the Roman soldiers gave way in confusion; the garrison made a timely sortie, and the day ended with 4,000 Romans and three elephants dead, at a cost of 2,000 Numantine lives.

Nobilior continued to carry out minor operations in the area, but the only result was a steady attrition of his forces. Ocilis fell, and with it went Nobilior's freedom of manoeuvre. With his remaining 5,000 men he decided to winter in the camp on the Gran Atalaya; and over the coming months there his army was further reduced by cold, famine and sickness.

This unfortunate campaign was typical of several other Roman attempts on the Numantine area. In his day Q. Calpurnius Piso had flatly refused to attack the city. In 152, the year after Nobilior's fiasco, there was an unsuccessful attempt under Marcellus; in 151, by Lucullus; in 143, by Metellus and Pompeius; in 138, by Popilius Laenas; in 137 by Mancinus—when a Roman army of some 20,000 was trapped and forced to accept terms by some 4,000 Numantines; and in 136, by Lepidus and Furius Philus.

This series of humiliations finally provoked Rome into sending to Hispania probably her finest living soldier: Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus, grandson of the victor over Hannibal, and himself the destroyer of Carthage in the Third Punic War. The Senate waived the legal ban on any man holding two consulships within ten years, and he was given the 'extraordinary' appointment as consul of Hispania Citerior for 134 BC. He was not, however, given an army of a size commensurate with his rank, and was only allowed to raise volunteers. The Asian kings Antiochus Sidetes and Atalus III of Pergamon both contributed money to the enterprise; and joined, with other friends and clients, a volunteer *cohors amicorum* to accompany him. This unit included in its ranks several men destined to become famous in their own right: among them, Gaius Marius, Jugurtha, Gaius Gracchus, the historian Polybius, the poet Lucilius, Scipio's brother Q. Fabius Maximus, and Q. F. Buteus, who was charged with leading the troops to the Peninsula.

Landing at Tarraco in March 134, Scipio found the 20,000-strong army commanded by G. Hostilius Mancinus in a lamentable condition. Defeats, uncertainties, frequent changes of command, the effects of the previous winter, and now the nearby delights of a wealthy port and city had caused a major breakdown of morale and discipline.

Camp-followers and hangers-on were driven from the camps; luxuries were forbidden, and personal baggage was reduced to a minimum, along with transport facilities. Dress and rations were reduced to austere levels; Scipio set an example by adopting, and ordering for all personnel, the rough wool *sagum* worn by the Hispanic tribesmen in the country where they would be fighting. He instituted an intense training programme of drills, route marches, and practice fortifications and assaults.

On the march the general made a point of bringing up the rear of the column, indicating his suspicion that too many legionaries were ready to drop out at the first opportunity. Each man was ordered to carry a month's wheat ration, and no less than seven rampart stakes. Physical punishment with the officers' vine sticks was reintroduced for all offenders, including Roman citizens. Significantly, much attention was paid to reconnaissance tactics.

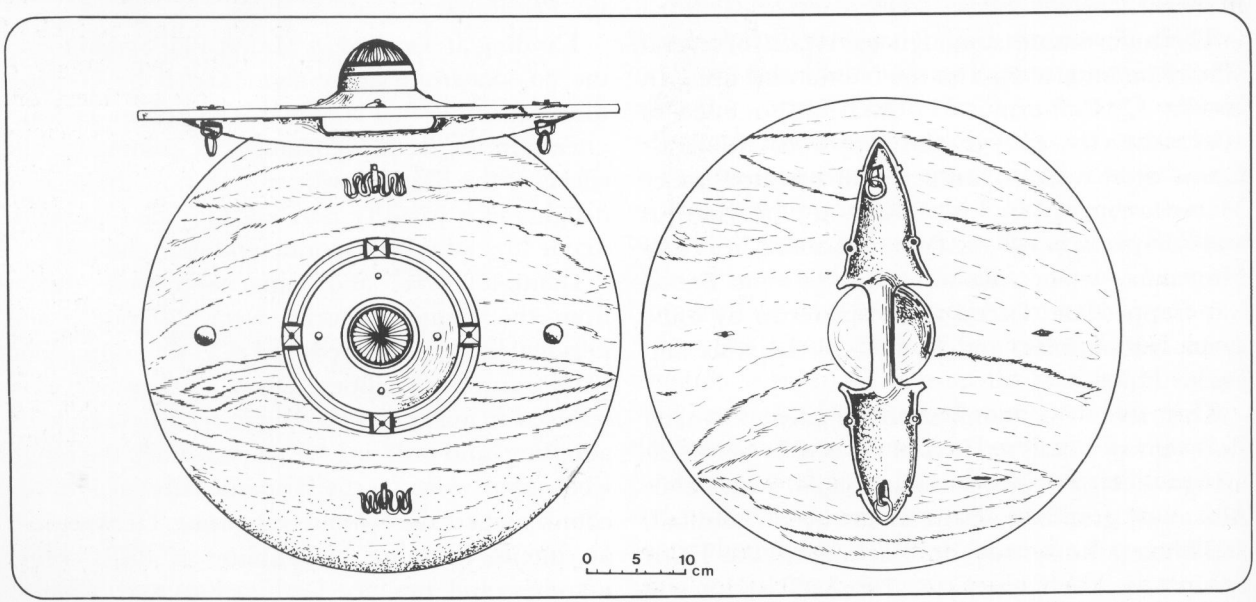
In May of 134 BC Scipio began his march in the direction of Numantia, choosing the longest route (approximately that of the modern Burgos-Logroño road). This route avoided some of the worst 'ambush country'; and also allowed him to harass the territories of the Vaccei, commandeering their crops for his army's use, and discouraging any support they might be contemplating giving the Numantines. The first encounter came at Tierra de Campos, when Vacceian tribesmen attacked Romans who were cutting their wheat; an inexperienced tribune, Rutilius Rufus, led four cavalry squadrons into an ambush when he reacted to this attack. Marching at night to escape the intense heat and thirst of the day, the army pushed on toward Cauca; however, their driven livestock suffered badly. Another ambush in the Guadarrama valley was fought off without serious loss. Finally, Scipio arrived before Numantia in late August or early September. Here he met up with Jugurtha, who supplied several war elephants with 'turret crews' of slingers and archers.

By now his total forces numbered about 60,000 men. He had brought 4,000 with him from Italy, and these he kept under his personal command. The numerous submitted Iberian kingdoms of the Ebro valley, the Belli and the Titii provided some 5,000. Of the main army of 20,000 men, 10,000 were Roman and Italian troops and 10,000 were auxiliaries. Scipio thus had 14,000 completely reliable men; but he had less than perfect confidence in the rest.

The Siege

Numantia was on top of a hill, 1,074m above sea level, known today as Muela de Garray, some 9km north of Soria. The Rivers Duero and Merdancho protect the hill from the south-west and west; and on the northern side a tributary flowing into the Duero creates an area of small lakes. A slope to the north-east is the only practical approach for an attacking army. Across the Duero to the west and south stand hills of about the same elevation as Numantia, offering good observation and blockade positions.

Archaeology suggests that the city would have extended over some 22 hectares (1ha = 2.47 acres), the main axes measuring 720m and 310m. In its 2,000 houses lived nearly 10,000 persons; calculating at one man capable of bearing arms to each



Three-view drawing of a *caetra* buckler; note the very substantial handgrip, which is characteristic of these shields, and the rings for the slinging strap. (Author's drawing)

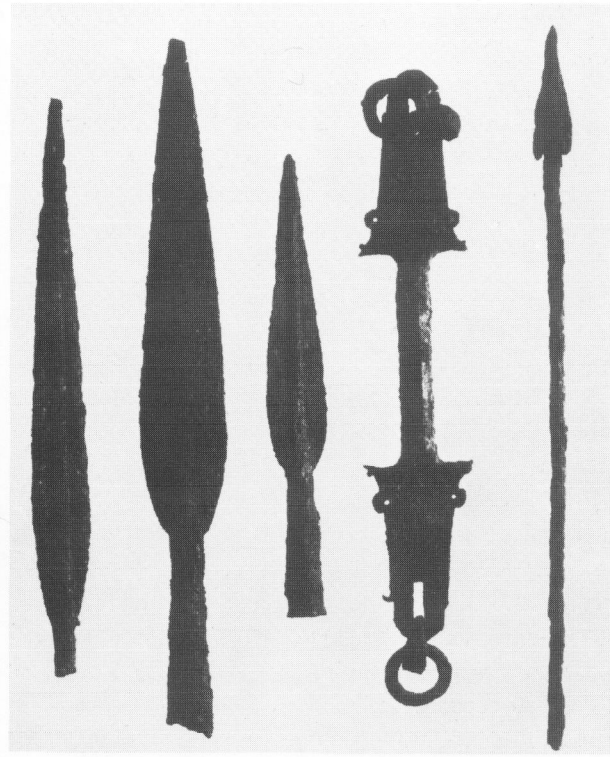
household of four, we arrive at an effective garrison of c.2,500 warriors. To this we may add c.1,000 warriors who probably came in to shelter in the city from the outlying villages, giving c.3,500—or about one-twentieth the Roman strength.

Few remains survive of what were once strong defensive walls surrounding at least three roughly concentric fortified precincts at different levels, walls strengthened by large square towers with a diameter of about 5.7m. When Scipio arrived the walls were partly demolished on the southern and western sides, though here the defenders had thrown up improvised fortifications with stakes, pointed stones and ditches.

It may be thought surprising that Scipio did not launch an immediate assault, in view of his numerical superiority. However, he did not have complete confidence in much of his army; and the respect inspired by the Numantines in previous campaigns was not to be taken lightly. Polybius, who was an eyewitness, writes that Scipio '. . . did not consider it reasonable to engage desperate men, but preferred rather to encircle them and starve them into surrender . . .'

Scipio's first step was to raise an initial pallisade around the vulnerable north-east sector of the city's approaches: the rivers, in autumn flood, made a good enough obstacle on the west and south. The pallisade, reinforced with stones and earth and by a half-metre ditch with pointed stakes at the bottom, took some 16,000 stakes and stretched some 4,000m; in view of the relatively treeless terrain, Scipio's foresight in loading his men with stakes was vindicated. The pallisade was raised in a single day; this rapidity shocked the Numantines, but they quickly recovered and mounted sorties against the Romans. Although Scipio had enough men to mount strong guards over the working gangs, it seems that Numantine attacks caused serious panic on at least one occasion.

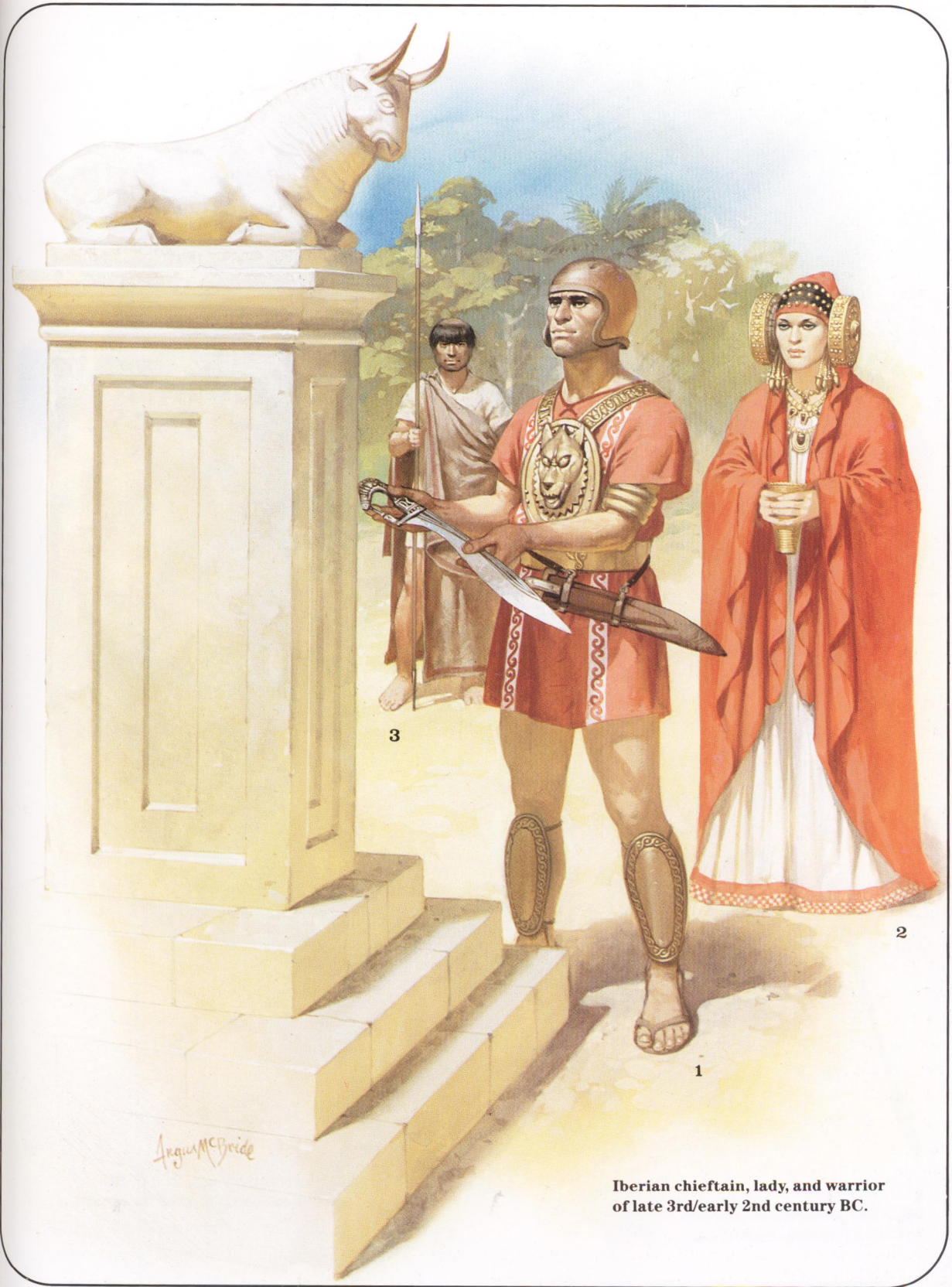
Next, with the provisional pallisade completed, Scipio began the construction—100m behind it—of the true 'wall of circumvallation': one of those awesomely thorough, patient feats of military engineering which explain Rome's mastery of the world. It was a stone wall, 4m thick at the base and 2.4m at the top, 3m high from ground to rampart-walk, defended on the inside by a V-section ditch 3m deep. When complete it is thought to have



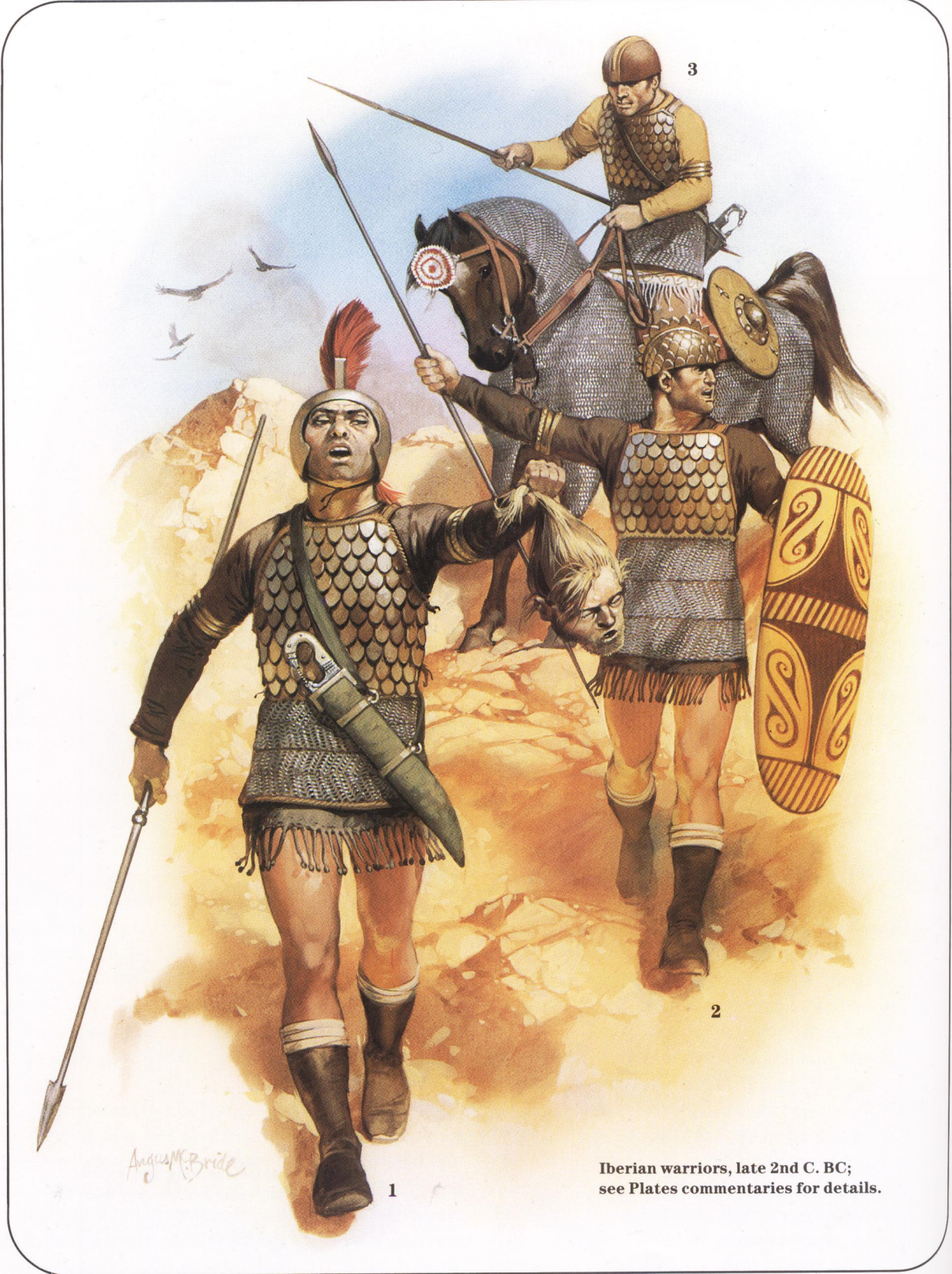
Three excavated iron spearheads of various sizes; the handgrip from a *caetra*; and part of a *soliferrum*, showing its barbed head.

stretched nearly 9km—double the perimeter of Numantia itself. Every 30.85m (the interval called a *plethron*) there was a square, four-storey wooden tower on a base measuring 4m × 5m, the upper floors for sentries and signalling, the lower for war machines. In each of the 300 towers was at least one catapult—more than 400 in all—throwing balls of 1 or 2lbs weight or shooting bolts, over ranges of around 300m[1]: Frederick the Great's artillery did not have much greater range than that of Scipio. These light catapults were supported by 50 heavy *ballistae* or stone-throwers emplaced in the various camps, to bombard the walls and visible concentrations of the defenders. The missiles they threw were normally of about 10lbs weight, judging by those found on the site of the city; but at Caceres balls of stone weighing from 27lbs to 76lbs have been found; and there even existed some weighing three talents or 156lbs—the heaviest 'calibre' known.

[1]As verified by the experimental reconstructions of Gen. Schramm in the years before the outbreak of World War I; see also Paul Holder, *Roman Artillery*, Military Illustrated magazine Nos. 2 and 4, Aug. and Dec. 1986.

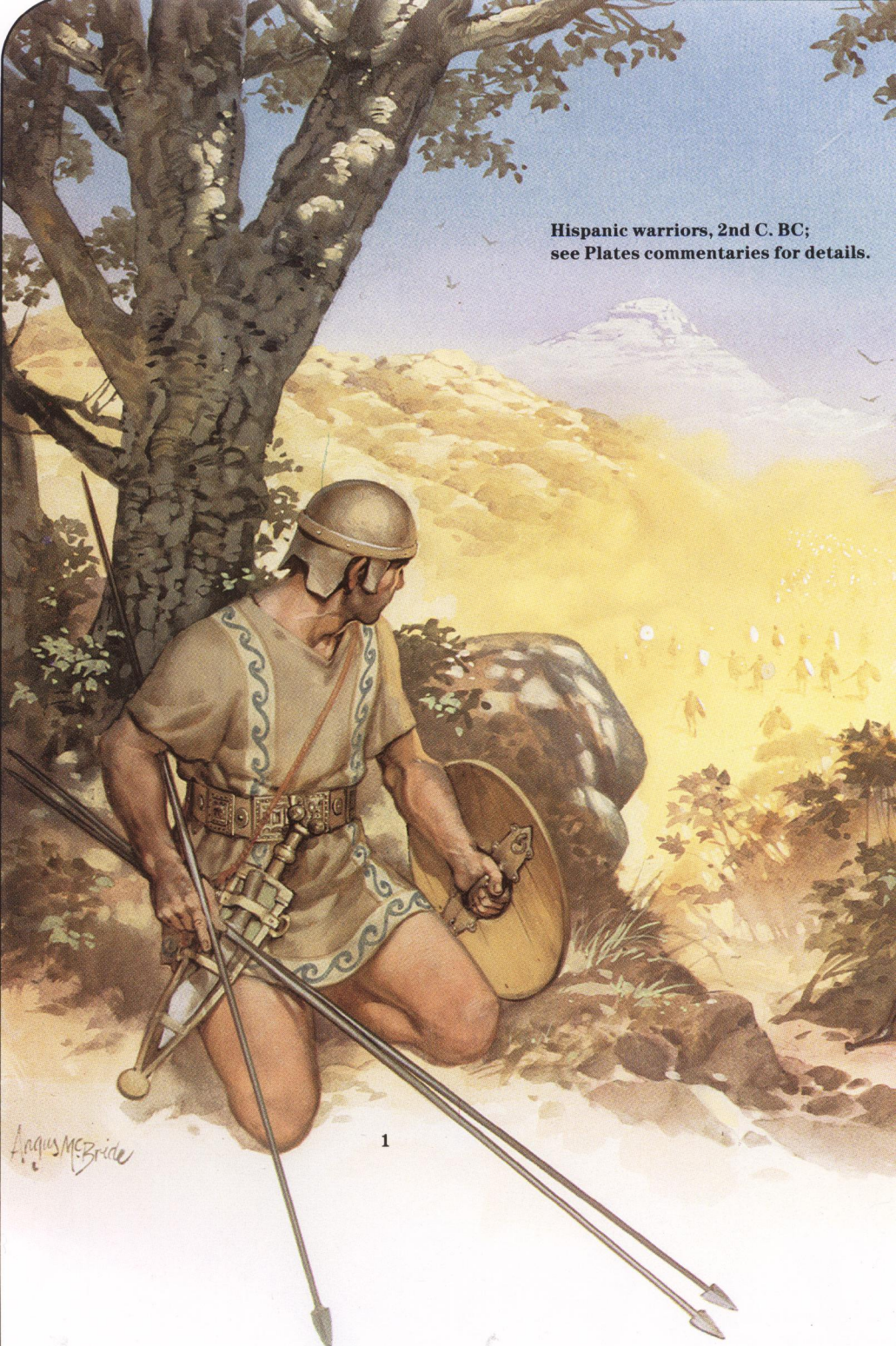


Iberian chieftain, lady, and warrior of late 3rd/early 2nd century BC.

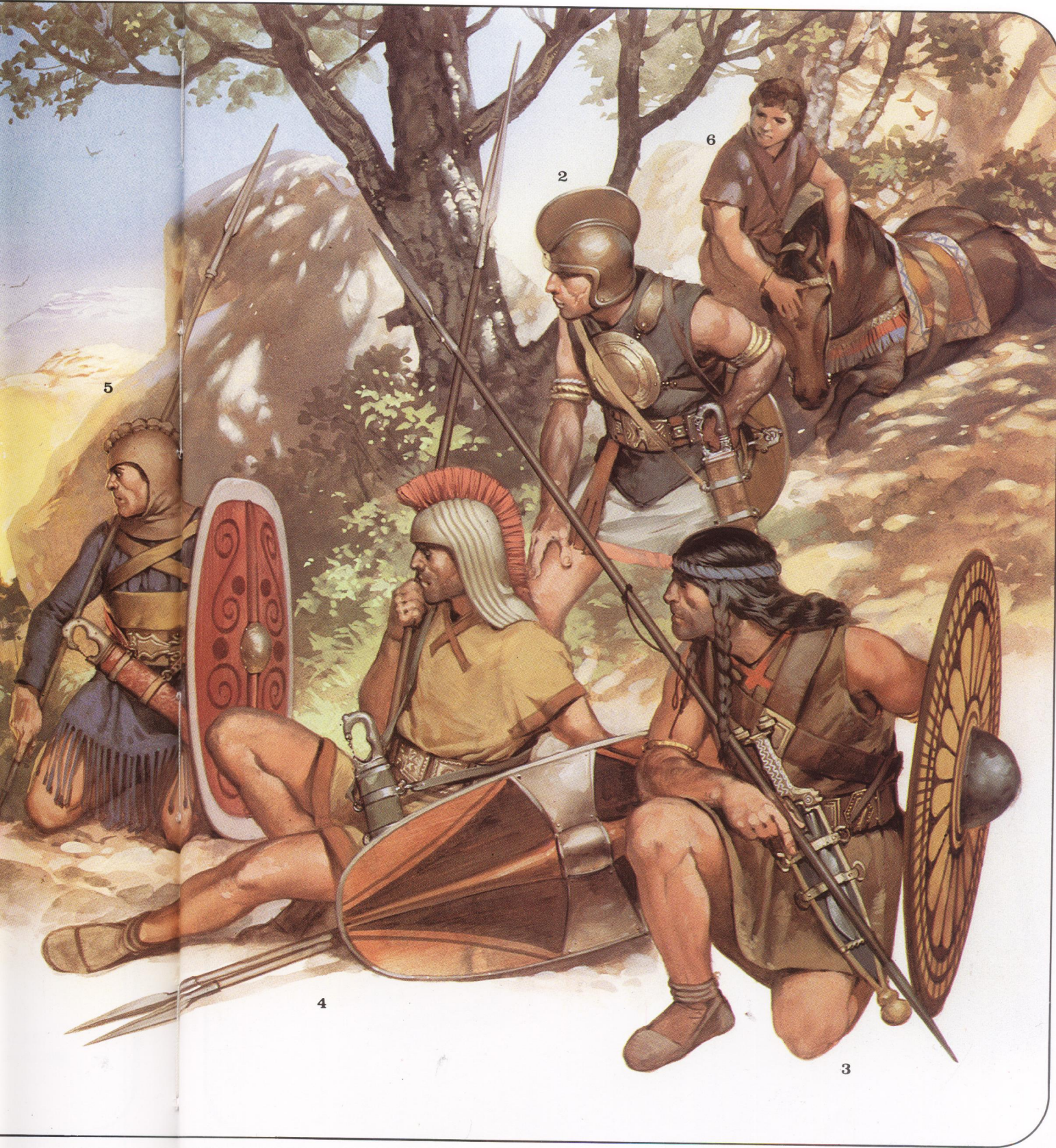


Iberian warriors, late 2nd C. BC; see Plates commentaries for details.

1, 2: Hispanic cavalrymen, 2nd C. BC
3: Roman citizen *equites*, 2nd C. BC



**Hispanic warriors, 2nd C. BC;
see Plates commentaries for details.**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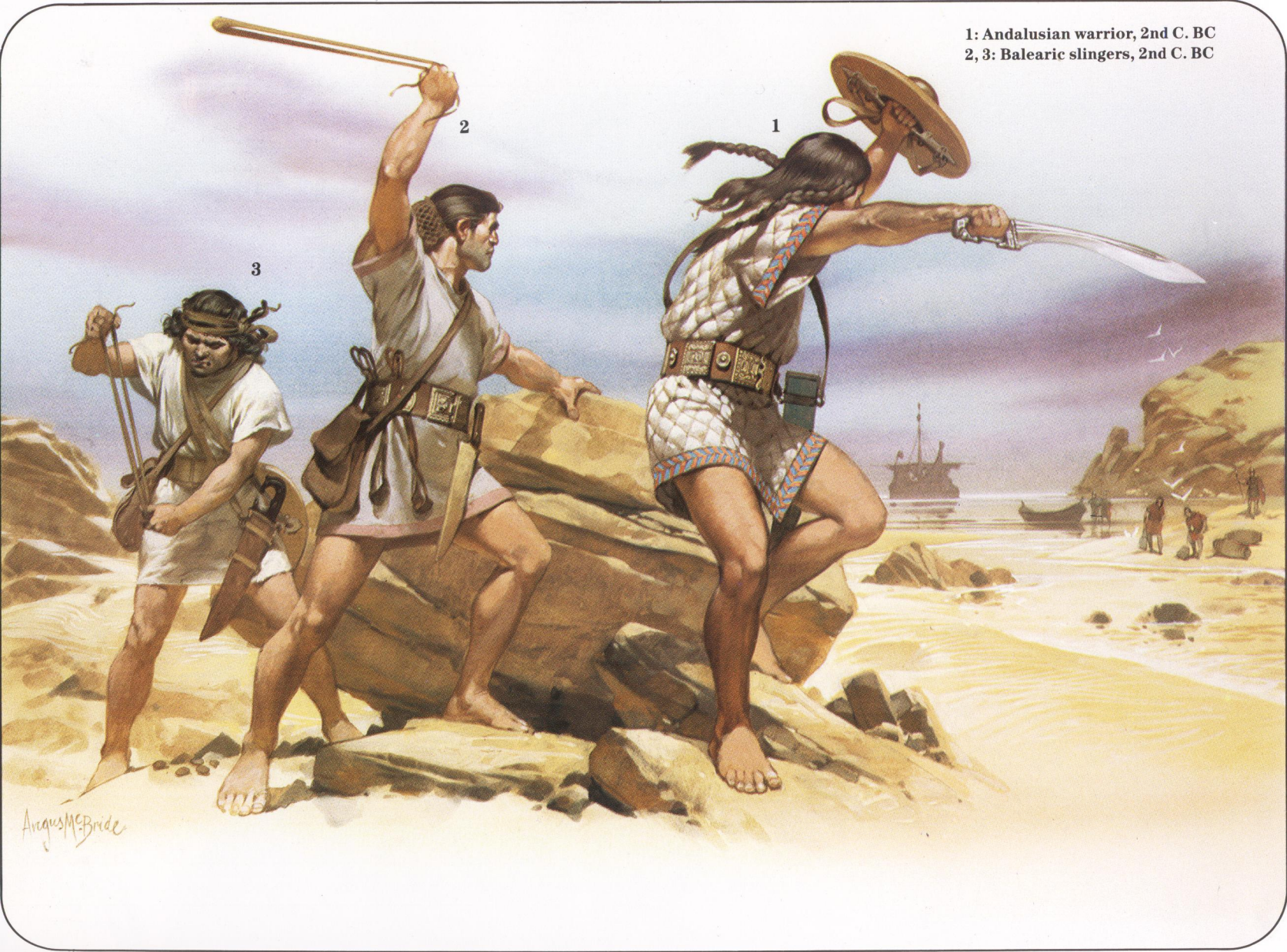
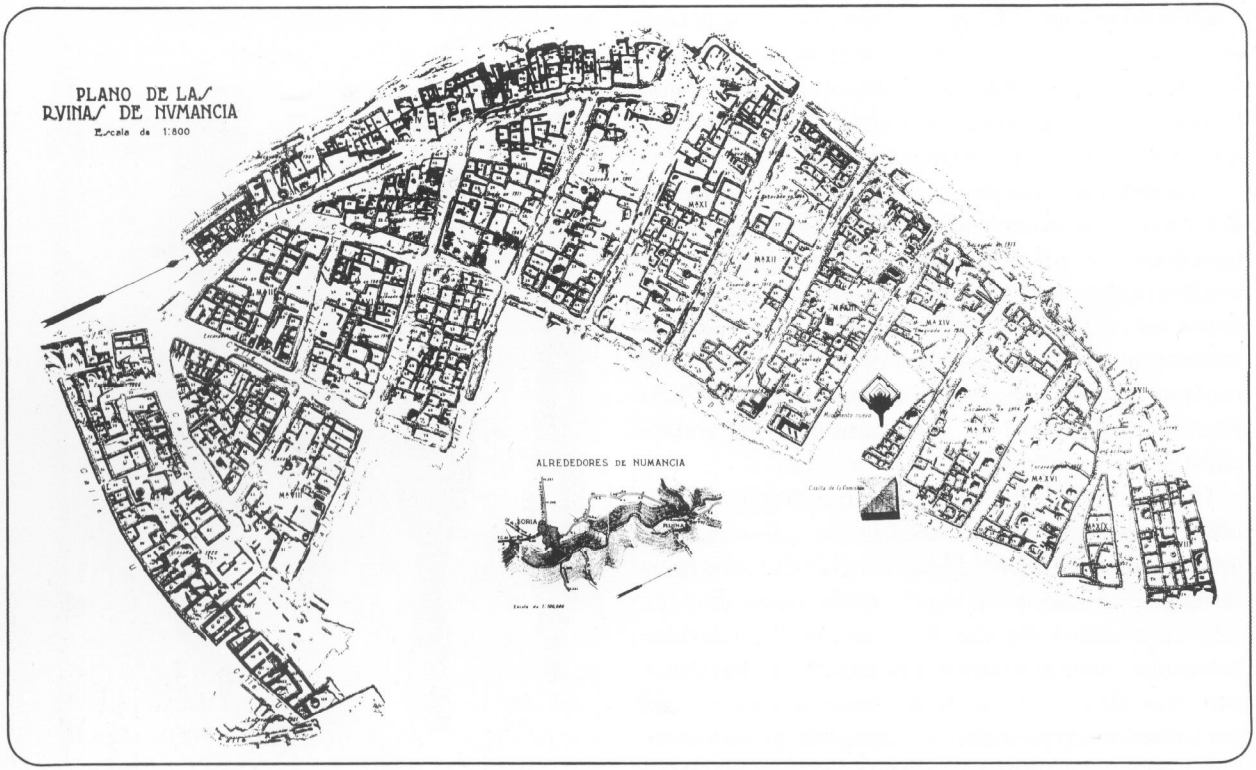

1: Andalusian warrior, 2nd C. BC
2, 3: Balearic slingers, 2nd C. BC
1
2
3
Angus McBride

Celt-Iberian warriors, c.150 BC; see Plates commentaries for details.

Celt-Iberian warriors, c.130 BC;
see Plates commentaries for details.



Plan of the excavated ruins of Numantia.

To support the construction of the wall of circumvallation two camps were built, diametrically opposite one another, and in permanent communication by red flag signals during daylight and by lantern signals at night. The first was that known today as Castillejo, 1km north of Numantia on a hill at whose base runs the River Tera. The visible remains correspond to the last of three camps built there at various dates. Scipio established his headquarters here during the siege, and one of the most important archaeological finds was the floor of his *praetorium*. Its characteristics correspond with those of a Greek-style peristyle house of some luxury. Here lived Scipio, with some 300 other Roman notables; and the camp held 2,500 men (able to be doubled in case of need) as a permanent garrison.

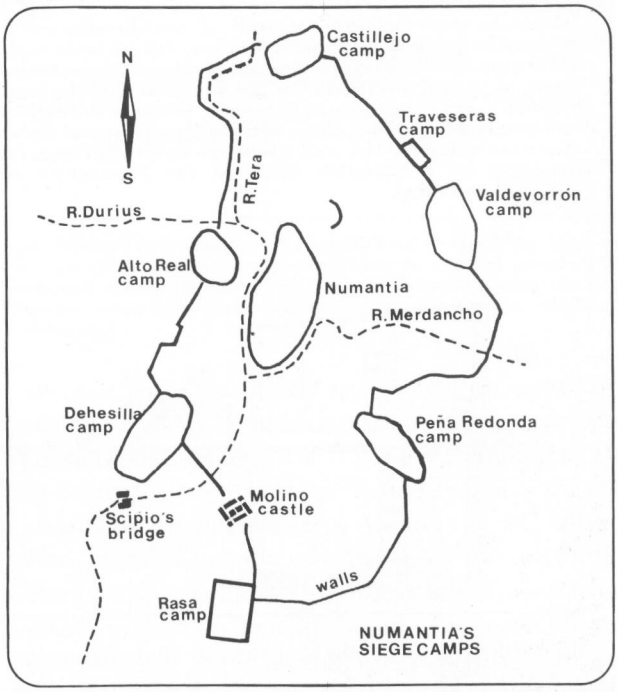
Some 600m to the south-east of the city, on a sharp spur of a hill above the River Merdancho a few yards from its confluence with the Duero, lay the camp of Peñarredonda, well fortified and exploiting the favourable topography. The orderly pattern of streets and buildings suggests a garrison of legionaries, with cavalry lines, tribunes' houses, and batteries of *ballistae*. This camp has been calculated, from its area of about 11ha, as holding some 5,200 men; it was under the direct command of Scipio's brother, Q. Fabius Maximus. Together Castillejo and Peñarredonda (or Peña Redonda) constituted an axis of vigilance and defence, necessary at first to safeguard the work of the men constructing the lines of circumvallation from enemy interference. From these two dominant positions the walls spread out right and left, creeping across the landscape until they linked up in a continuous belt around Numantia.

To the east of Peñarredonda, on a flat-topped hill called Valdevorron, lie the remains of a camp of some 9ha, large enough for 1,000 men, and still showing the base for a battery of four *ballistae*. Further to the north, on flat ground, are the remains of Traveseras camp, 4ha in extent, with praetorian gates and turreted inner defences. At this point the wall swings inwards towards Castillejo. West of that camp it follows a bend of the River Tera, then continues south on its right bank until it crosses the Duero just above its confluence with the Tera. South of the crossing lies Alto Real camp, with surviving signs of parallel walls, and rooms excavated from the rock. South-west of this is a hill

today called Dehesilla, overlooking the Duero, which is topped with robust walls 4m thick. Finally, due south of Numantia, lay the seventh camp of La Rasa, defending the heights between the Duero and Peñarredonda and some 6ha in extent, with a perimeter of 300m and two protected gateways. The Roman lines are intelligently sited on the topographical features, enclosing the city completely at a range mostly between 100m and 300m, well within range of the Roman artillery. Only opposite the north-east sector does the 'no man's land' widen to c.500m, and on this face the lack of natural protection made this wide space advisable for the sake of observation and ample warning of attack. Since the Numantines were not archers, but spearmen and slingers, with a maximum range of 50 and 100m respectively, they were unable to harass the Roman positions without leaving the protection of the walls of the city.

At one point, apparently, a lake about 700m wide interrupted the circumvallation; here the Romans constructed a dam 100m wide, across which the wall was continued. The rivers interrupted the line at four points; at three of them—the Tera, north and south, and the Merdancho—there were bridges, but at the Duero crossing the Romans had great difficulty, as the stream itself was 80m wide, and its sloping banks added another 60m to the valley. The abuttments of the bridge which Scipio tried to construct here can still be seen. According to Appian, these weak points in the circumvallation were exploited by the Celt-Iberians, who brought men and supplies into the city by means of rowing and sailing boats. To prevent this Scipio ordered the construction of booms of wooden beams bristling with iron spikes, with one end moored to the banks and the other floating free; two forts were also built to cover these points, north and south of the city.

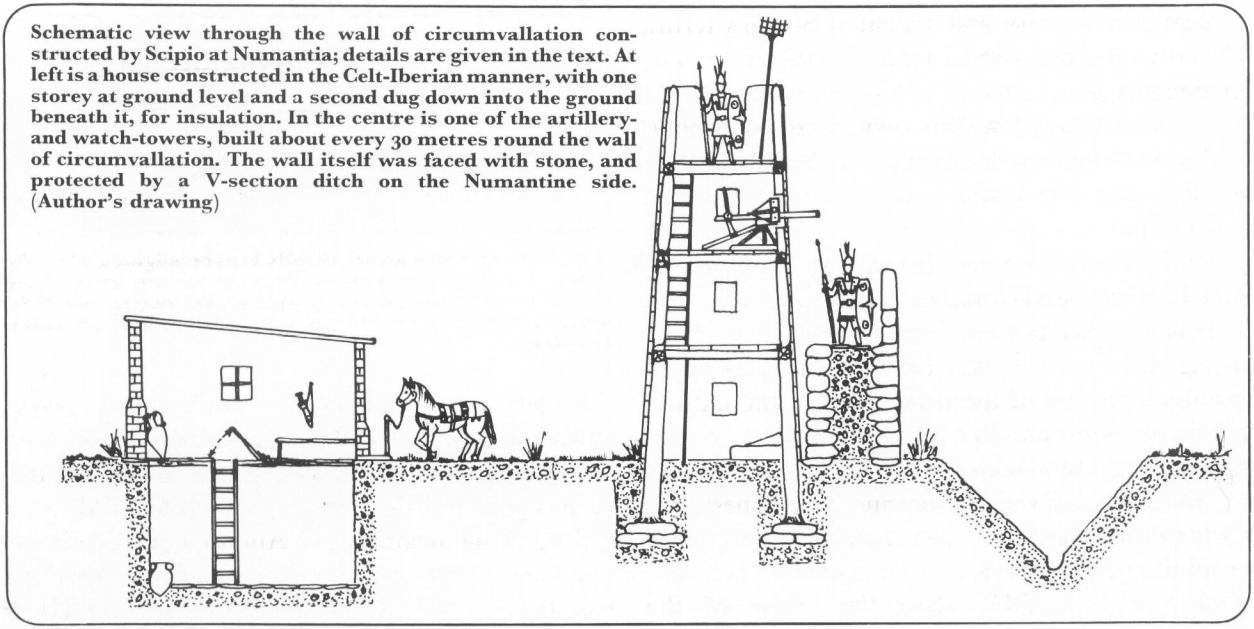
Appian records the distribution of the Roman army throughout this formidable siege system. 30,000 men were quartered in the camps, and the other 30,000 along the walls. As the camps were the supporting or reserve bases, the 14,000 Roman and Italian troops were posted in the main camps and the Iberians, stiffened with a nucleus of Italians, in the secondary camps. Some 20,000 men served on the wall itself, and 10,000 were held some way behind it, divided into units of even strength, ready



Plan of the formidable siege system constructed by the Romans around Numantia in 134 BC, based on seven camps. (Author's drawing)

to support any point on the perimeter in case of danger. These units lived in houses constructed in the local manner. Numantine houses had two floors, one at ground level and one dug down into the ground under its wooden floor, thus enjoying insulation from the extremes of temperature. If we discount from the perimeter the 2,500m covered by the camps themselves, the remainder was held by about four men for every metre; the camp garrisons may be considered as the general reserve and the units outside the wall as the sector reserve.

The line of blockade was an active organism, thanks to the sophisticated communications system employed. In case of daytime attack from the Numantines, a red flag tied to a long spear was raised at the threatened point; at night some kind of lantern or torch signal was displayed. The alarm trumpets were immediately blown, the wall garrison took their battle positions, and the sector and general reserves were alerted. At the same time an officer hastened from the threatened point to the nearest camp or headquarters to report and to receive orders. The red flag signals, apparently used here for the first time, are attributed to the initiative of Polybius himself.



Schematic view through the wall of circumvallation constructed by Scipio at Numantia; details are given in the text. At left is a house constructed in the Celt-Iberian manner, with one storey at ground level and a second dug down into the ground beneath it, for insulation. In the centre is one of the artillery- and watch-towers, built about every 30 metres round the wall of circumvallation. The wall itself was faced with stone, and protected by a V-section ditch on the Numantine side. (Author's drawing)

So confident were the Romans in their defensive system that Titus Livius records that orders were given not to interfere with Numantines spotted searching for firewood and water in the 'no man's land' between the two walls, in order to encourage them to use up these resources as quickly as possible. The work of circumvallation was completed by November 134 BC, and Scipio settled down to starve the Numantines out. He toured the whole perimeter daily, to keep his men alert. The 3,000 or so Numantines did not remain passive, but launched repeated attacks on different sectors of the circumvallation, covering these sorties with diversionary attacks elsewhere; but with their limited numbers, these attempts must have stretched their manpower to the utmost. They also attempted to lure the Romans into open battle; but Scipio, against the urging of his officers, refused to rise to the bait. The only result of these attacks was to wear down the strength of the Numantines.

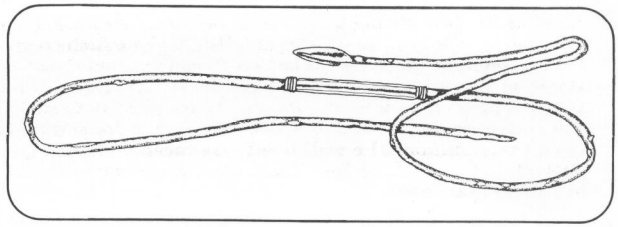
With the situation inside the city deteriorating, as supplies became exhausted and all hope of outside help was abandoned, a noted citizen named Retogenes Caraunios made a last desperate attempt to summon assistance. One dark night, with five friends and five servants, he climbed the Roman wall by means of a rope ladder, killed the sentries, and—with five companions—managed to seize horses and ride for help, the others returning to the city. He rode to a number of Vacceian towns, appealing for help; but, for fear of Roman reprisals, he was refused by all except the citizens of Lutia (Cantalucia). There some 400 young warriors agreed to come to the aid of Numantia. Their decision was taken against the advice of the council of elders, who, to avert Roman reprisals, sent word to Scipio's camp. Receiving the intelligence at 2 p.m., Scipio marched immediately for Lutia at the head of a punitive column of light troops. At dusk the next day the Romans surrounded the town, and demanded the surrender of the volunteers. They had already fled with Retogenes; but when the citizens told him of this, Scipio retorted that if the guilty parties were not given up, he would allow his troops to sack the town. In the face of this threat the Lutians surrendered 400 innocent youths, who suffered the amputation of their right hands. Next morning Scipio was back on the walls before Numantia.

With this collapse of the last desperate effort to bring help to the besieged city, the starving Numantines, in spring 133 BC, sent an embassy of five men, led by one Avaro, to negotiate terms with Scipio. The Roman general, who was well aware of the state of the garrison from questioning prisoners, demanded unconditional surrender and the confiscation of all weapons. As on previous occasions, this last was enough to bring talks to a halt, since the Hispanic warrior regarded the giving up of his weapons as the ultimate shame. When the embassy

returned to the city and repeated Scipio's terms, Celt-Iberian arrogance reached its paroxysm. The messengers were accused of treacherously dealing with the Romans for their own personal benefit, and were butchered on the spot—to be a messenger in the ancient world was not an enviable appointment . . .

Stark starvation now faced the townspeople; bread, meat, and animal forage had all been exhausted, and the survivors were passing from eating the boiled hides of animals to outright cannibalism: first of the dead, then of the ill, and finally of the weak. There are numerous classical accounts of the last days of Numantia. Valerius Maximus says of the Numantine Theogenes: '. . . Only the fierceness of his race could give such vigour of mind. Being superior to all others in honours, dignity and wealth, when the cause of the Numantines was lost, [he] placed firewood everywhere and set fire to his houses, which were the most beautiful in the city. Then he appeared before his fellow citizens, naked sword in hand, and forced them to fight each other in pairs: the vanquished being thrown, after decapitation, into the fires. When all others had submitted to this terrible death-law, he threw himself into the flames . . .' This attitude seems to have been general, as Florus wrote: 'The Numantines, possessed of the most furious rage, determined to take their own lives, destroying themselves, their leaders and their homeland by iron, poison, and the fires that they set everywhere. Only when all human courage was exhausted did [the survivors] decide to surrender.'

Scipio ordered them to deposit their weapons in an agreed place, and for the survivors of the holocaust to congregate at another spot on the following day. When the Numantines asked for one more day, it was granted; and in this interval many more of them, reaching a climax of desperation, committed suicide rather than endure the fall of their city. The next day they surrendered their weapons, and on the third day the last survivors gave themselves up. The Romans watched as they staggered from the gates: filthy, ragged, emaciated, with long, tangled hair and beards and nails like talons, but with a piercing hatred in their eyes. Scipio chose 50 of them to be set on one side for his triumphal procession in Rome; the rest were sold into slavery. Numantia was demolished and, as in the cases of Carthage and Corinth, its reconstruction was forbidden. A cavalry unit was permanently garrisoned in the area to prevent the re-occupation of the ruins. Numantia fell at the end of July or the beginning of August 133 BC, after a nine-month siege; but since no booty was left for the Romans, Scipio had to pay the bonus of seven silver *denarii* to each of his soldiers out of his own pocket. He received his triumph, in 132 BC, and was honoured with the additional title of 'Numantinus'.

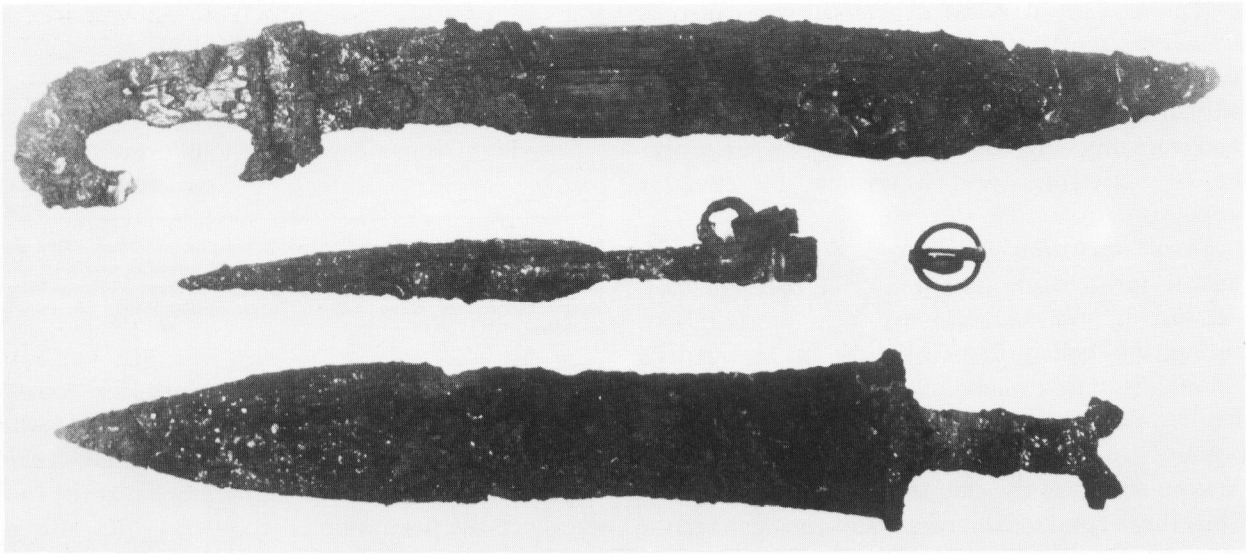


A *soliferrum* as it was found, ritually bent or 'slighted' after the death of its owner—a custom found in several parts of the ancient world. These spears, completely of iron, were 2m long; some examples have silver inlay decoration. (Author's drawing)

The fall of Numantia was not the end of Hispanic resistance; many other cities, for instance Termantia, continued to hold out for many years. It took the presence of an emperor to solve Rome's problems in Hispania once and for all. It was not until after the campaigns of Augustus, in 19 BC, that the last focus of resistance in the Iberian Peninsula was snuffed out.

Armour and Weapons

The body protection used by Hispanic warriors was basically similar to that of other peoples of the ancient world, but evidently showing some local characteristics. The head was protected by a helmet of some kind, varying from a simple leather cap to more elaborate examples, of mixed construction or entirely of metal, with e.g. a triple crest (Strabo) or a zoomorphic decoration of some kind. Unfortunately, this deduction comes to us solely on the authority of ancient chronicles and surviving vase paintings, sculptures and coins: to date, archaeology has provided no single, unmistakable example of such a helmet. Fragments have been tentatively identified, but could also come from bronze or iron pots. One explanation for this lack of



For comparative purposes, a *falcata* sabre, and a straight Hispanic sword with 'atrophied antennae' pommel—the overall length is comparable, and the blade shape of the latter reminds us very clearly of the later Roman adoption of this admired weapon. Between the two swords are a medium-sized spearhead, and the typical and widely used anular bronze *fibula* brooch-pin of ancient Spain. (Necropolis of Valdeganga, Albacete)

primary evidence could be that these helmets were made of perishable materials—believable in the case of the poor warrior, but hard to reconcile with the variety and complexity of the types indicated, however crudely, in the vase paintings.

Ancient historians made a clear distinction between two types of Hispanic infantry: the *scutati* or heavy and the *caetrati* or light, the reference being to two types of shield. The *scutati* carried the classic long *scutum* of Celtic origin, and probably distinguishable from those carried by more northern peoples only in the matter of decoration; the *caetrati* carried the *caetra*, a Latin corruption of a local name for a small, round buckler. The combination of *caetra* buckler and *falcata* sabre was apparently the most favoured battle equipment among Hispanic warriors. The buckler was made of wood, anything from 30cm to 60cm in diameter, with metal fittings and ornaments on the face, and a large metal boss covering a stout iron handgrip on the inside. Characteristically, it was slung on a long carrying strap when out of battle; in combat the strap might be attached firmly to (wound around?) the forearm. Due to its lightness, the user could both parry enemy blows and also wield the buckler as a secondary weapon, punching for the face or chopping at the arms with the edge.

Body armour seems to have been made from various materials, including simple fabric such as linen, thickly woven panels of esparto grass, hardened leather, and metal plate, scale and mail. There is evidence for the use of round breastplates strapped over fabric or leather cuirasses; the metal plates were sometimes plainly finished, sometimes decorated elaborately in relief with zoomorphic or geometric designs (see Plate A). The use of scale corselets is very clearly indicated on vases; and in some cases there seems to be a suggestion of corselets of mixed scale and mail construction, the scale on the upper torso and the more flexible mail covering the abdomen. There is also a strong indication, particularly on the vase from Liria (Valencia) depicting six riders and six infantrymen, that some horses were armoured with extensive areas of mail. This vase shows foot soldiers wearing mixed scale and mail armour, carrying the heavy infantryman's *scutum*, and armed with spears and the ubiquitous *falcata*. There is also evidence for the use by some warriors of metal greaves.

Spears

In ancient times the spears used by Hispanic warriors were described very variously, and by many different terms; this would perhaps indicate that there was a wide variety of differnet models in use. Modern archaeological research has permitted some degree of classification, in two main groups: conventional spears with wooden shafts, iron heads

and pointed ferrules; and an all-iron type, called by the Romans *soliferrum*.

The conventional spears display a range of head sizes. Examples exist with heads more than 60cm long, enough of these having survived for them to be considered as a distinct class—perhaps used by the heavy *scutati*, though this is guesswork. A second class may be identified by heads in the range of around 20 to 30cm; these may have been carried, several at a time, as javelins by the lighter infantry. Several vase paintings clearly show the use of javelin thongs, wound round the shaft to impart a stabilising spin, and additional thrust, when it was thrown. There are references to Celt-Iberian warriors throwing spears with blazing bundles of grass tied to the heads, not at buildings but in order to break up close-order infantry formations. The conventional spear seems to have been used by foot and mounted warriors alike.

The *soliferrum* varied in length, up to a maximum of around 2 metres. It had a small, barbed head; and was probably a very effective weapon, especially at short range, where its great weight concentrated in the small head permitted it to punch through shield and cuirass and into the body of the victim.

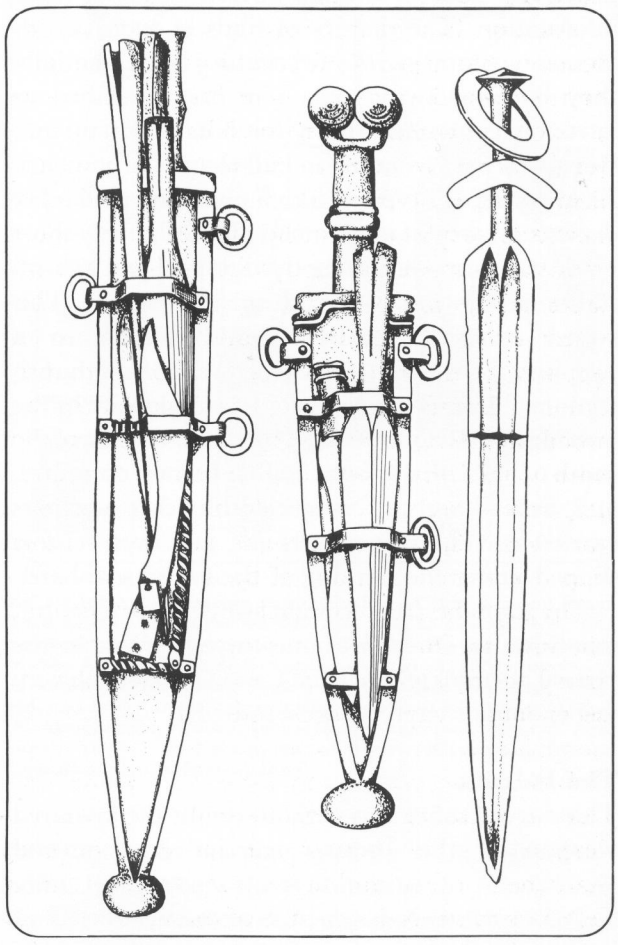
Correlation of some ancient texts with the finding of certain large iron weapon heads, now in the collection of the Archaeological Museum of Zaragoza (Caesar Augusta), allows us to tentatively identify another type of throwing weapon termed a *tragula* or *makhila*. This was a hybrid, something between an axe and a small dart, which was used together with a long leather thong by which it was recovered after a throw. Antique Iberian coins minted for different cities usually bore on the reverse military motifs representing riders armed with different weapons, perhaps suggesting that the warriors of that community were specialists in the use of the weapon represented? Among these weapons is a strange, pointed item which might perhaps represent the mysterious *tragula*; however, the most common weapon shown is a long spear. Axes, though mentioned in some texts, do not appear to have been much favoured in Hispania.

Hispanic Swords

The Romans have passed into history as a pragmatic people who never hesitated to adopt for their own benefit the equipment and practices of the peoples they brought within their empire. The Spanish wars provided a major impetus in the evolution of the Roman army; and contact with the Hispanic warriors forced changes in dress, weapons and tactics. One of the most famous examples was the adoption of the magnificent short sword known thereafter as the *gladius hispaniensis*, the classic legionary sword of the Imperial army.

The swords used by Hispanic warriors fall into two simple classifications: the straight and the curved. The straight type was typical of the Celt-Iberian tribes, and the curved sabre was normally associated with the Iberians; but the picture is

***Left*, a typical 'warrior pack' comprising a straight sword with two spearheads and a curved knifeblade thrust under the scabbard framing. *Centre*, another 'pack', the sword with typical antennae on the hilt, and a spearhead and curved knife carried on the scabbard. *Right*, a straight sword with another type of hilt. All these finds came from the necropolis of Almedinilla, Cordoba; in spite of the fact that Almedinilla is in Iberian territory, these weapons are in fact more typical of the Celt-Iberian tribes of central Spain. (Author's drawing)**



complicated by the fact that examples of both types are found in both cultural regions.

References to the *gladius hispaniensis* in ancient texts are abundant, but confusing. We know that in 225 BC the Romans were using a short sword similar to that used by the Greeks; but, impressed by the superiority of the weapons used by Hispanic mercenaries encountered during the Punic Wars, they decided to adopt them, calling them 'Spanish swords' from this date. Confusingly, both straight and curved types were termed *gladius hispaniensis* at this time; it may be assumed that the Romans adopted both types, but it is obvious from the design which survived into the Imperial era that the straight type found more favour.

It has been possible to identify the prototype of the Celt-Iberian straight sword by making retrospective comparisons between examples excavated at Arcobriga (Monreal de Ariza) which are no later than 300 BC, and 1st century AD finds and sculptural representations of legionary swords. The necropolis finds of Castilla have also added some information. The density of finds of such swords increases in tombs of the 3rd century BC. Essentially they fall into two types. The first, classified as 'atrophied antennae', have iron hilts drawn up into two short 'horns' ending in ball-shaped ornaments. Examples of this type with rich silver and gold inlay decoration are not uncommon. The relatively short blade was sharpened on both edges and had a sharp stabbing point, making it deadly in combat. This sword certainly reached the Peninsula in a primitive form during the Celtic invasions of the 6th century BC, and was later to develop locally in the isolation which followed the Iberian conquest of the south of France in about 500 BC. In vase paintings, and actual finds, it is noticeable that warriors carried knives, extra spearheads, and even scissors slipped under the framing of the sword scabbard.

The second type of straight sword, also in use but much less favoured, was one corresponding to the typical patterns of 'La Tène I and II', of which very few examples have been excavated[1].

The Falcata

This curved sabre was without doubt the favoured weapon of the Iberian warrior over several centuries. Its origin is unknown, but there are two schools of thought: one holds that it was an evolved form of the curved 'Halstatt' knife of central Europe, which had spread to Italy, Greece and Spain, similar types being used by the Etruscans, Greeks and Hispanics. The second theory is that the *falcata* was a direct copy of the Greek *machaera* or *kopis*, brought to Spain by Greek merchants or by the mercenaries recruited by the Greeks around the 6th century BC.

(There is a third theory which holds that this was an indigenous creation; this is not absurd, but the influence of Greek culture throughout the Mediterranean is known to have been so widespread that historians have given little credence to this idea.)

What is known with certainty is that its use and manufacture were perfected in Spain, and the texts are explicit in this respect. The necessary mastery of metalworking did not hold any secrets for the Hispanic craftsmen. In reference to the process of manufacture, Filon writes: '. . . [regarding] the preparation of the above-mentioned iron sheets for the so-called Celtic and Spanish swords: to test if these are good, they take the hilt in the right hand and the point in the left, holding it horizontally above the head, then pull downwards on both ends until they touch the shoulders, then release them quickly. Once the sword is released it straightens again without showing any kind of distortion. This is due to the fact that the iron is extraordinarily pure, and is worked on later with fire, in such a way that it does not contain . . . any defect; neither does the iron get too hard or too soft. After this, they beat it repeatedly when cold, as this gives the iron flexibility. . . . Do not forge it with great hammers, neither beat it with violent blows, because these, if given obliquely, twist and harden the sword throughout its entire thickness in such a way that if we tried to flex it it would not yield, but would break violently due to the compactness of the hardened material. . . . They therefore beat the sheets while cold on both surfaces, hardening each side, while the inner part remains soft from not having received the blows, which reach the depths of the metal only lightly. The sword owes its flexibility to being composed of three layers, two hard and one soft one in the middle.'

We may add some details taken from Diodorus: '. . . The process of manufacture . . . is very special:

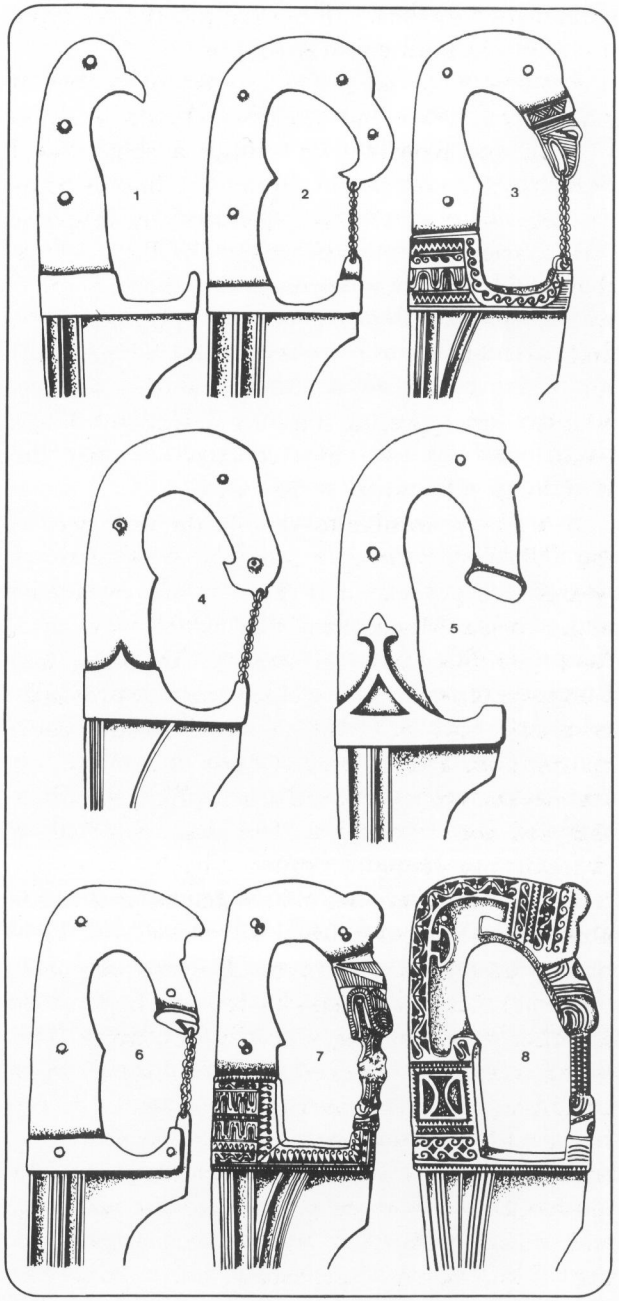
[1]See MAA 158 *Rome's Enemies (2): Gallic and British Celts*

they bury the sheets of iron, leaving them until rust has destroyed the weak part of the metal, leaving only the more solid part of it. With this iron they produce excellent swords and other weapons of war.' Again, a quotation from Suidas: 'The Celt-Iberians surpass all others in [the matter of] the *machaera*, this has a very useful point and [can deliver] a powerful blow with its edge. For this reason the Romans abandoned their old type of sword after the wars against Hannibal and adopted the Iberian weapon. In reality they adopted the shape, but not the quality of the iron, which they never managed to copy exactly . . .'

In order to corroborate the classical texts, tests were carried out to determine the carbon content of fragments of *falcata* blades found in burials. The results confirmed the high degree of perfection achieved in tempering and cementation. The surface contained carbon to a depth of $\frac{1}{8}$in., the quantity decreasing progressively and no carbon traces being evident in the very centre of the blade. The hardening process had changed the martensite into fealite, confirming the procedure of cementation by burying in addition to the habitual tempering procedure of water cooling and later hammering. The proportions of carbon varied on a harmonic scale and from the wider part of the blade, in such a way that only with difficulty could it be improved by the most modern techniques: the scale was 0.4% in the edges, decreasing through 0.3%, 0.22%, 0.09% and 0.02% to zero.

Written testimony to the effectiveness of this blade survives, as in the case of a veteran legionary of the civil wars in Spain who said, on meeting Caesar: '. . . I am not surprised that you do not recognise me. The last time we met I was fit, but in the battle of Munda I lost an eye and all the bones of my body were crushed. Neither would you recognise my helmet if you could see it, for it was struck by a Hispanic *machaera* . . .' (Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, V, 24).

The peculiar shape of the sword, widening towards the point, moved the centre of gravity further forward than in the straight sword; this increased the kinetic efficiency of a blow. Diodorus comments that these swords were of such quality that no helmet, shield or bones could resist their strokes. Only the inside edge of the *falcata* was sharpened—though it has been possible to confirm that some warriors sharpened the back edge at the point. If we accept the evolution of the *falcata* from the Greek *machaera*, we can also make a classification



***Falcata* hilts, illustrating the evolution of this weapon from 'bird's-head' to 'horse's-head' hilt shape, examples of fist protection, and decoration: (1) Tozar, Moclin (Granada), Museo Archeológico de Granada; (2), (3) and (4) Necropolis of Almedinilla (Cordoba), Museo Archeológico Nacional, Madrid, nos. 10471, 10481, 10470; (5) Necropolis of Villaricos; (6) and (8) Almedinilla, Museo Archeológico Nacional, Madrid, nos. 10473, 10475; (7) Necropolis of Illora (Granada), Museo Cerralbo. (Author's drawings)**

of the different types of hilt, which were often richly decorated with silver inlay.

The older examples, dating from around the 5th and 4th centuries BC, seem copied directly from Greek prototypes, and typically have bird's-head hilt shapes. As the use of this sword became more general the hilt shape changed to resemble a horse's head. Finally, the hilt design degenerated into a purely geometrical and functional shape. The hilt was also fitted with protection for the fingers in the form of small chains or prismatic bars. There exist some examples, of great beauty, which break the classification sequence attempted above, such as that found in the necropolis of Almedinilla (Cordoba) shaped like a bat's head.

As mentioned, the older examples found in the burials of Villaricos can be dated, by means of imported Greek vases found with them, to the 5th and 4th centuries BC. In the 1st century BC, when the propraetor P. Carisius ordered the minting at Emerita Augusta (Mérida) of a silver *denarius* to celebrate his victory over the Cantabri in 22 BC, the conventional representation of the weapons of the vanquished still included the *falcata* and the *caetra*: convincing evidence for the long use of these characteristic Hispanic items.

The size of the *falcata* varied around a mean of about 60cm. The most usual way of carrying it was in a scabbard of leather, wood or fabric with iron reinforcement at the edges, throat and chape. Three or four rings attached to the edges allowed the warrior to sling it on a long baldric from right shoulder to left hip, the sword thus hanging almost horizontal, with the cutting edge at the bottom.

A Hispanic coin from the city of Arsaos, showing a mounted warrior holding a strange weapon shaped like a broad barbed arrowhead; this is thought to be the *tragula* or *makhila*, described in the text. (Author's photograph)

Hispanic Cavalry

The horse enjoyed great importance in the social and military activities of the ancient Hispanics. The horse was honoured as a divinity, and sanctuaries were dedicated to it; an important example has been discovered in Mula (Murcia), which proves very clearly the religious significance of the horse. (It has also provided us with a fine collection of sculptures representing horses with all their fittings.) Another source is provided by the large number of vases decorated with scenes of hunting and warfare found in the ancient village of Liria (Valencia). An additional source is the range of bronze votary figurines found in some Andalusian sanctuaries, usually representing mounted warriors in attitudes of prayer.

The Hispanics made widespread use of cavalry in all their campaigns, not only on Spanish soil but also overseas during mercenary service. A good example of their effectiveness is provided by the campaigns of Hannibal, whose army included large contingents of Spanish horsemen. They not only fulfilled the traditional, rather peripheral rôle of light cavalry as a force to distract the enemy, but also proved capable of defeating in battle the best Roman cavalry when led by able commanders. Poseidonios wrote in praise of Hispanic horse, and considered them superior to the Numidians.

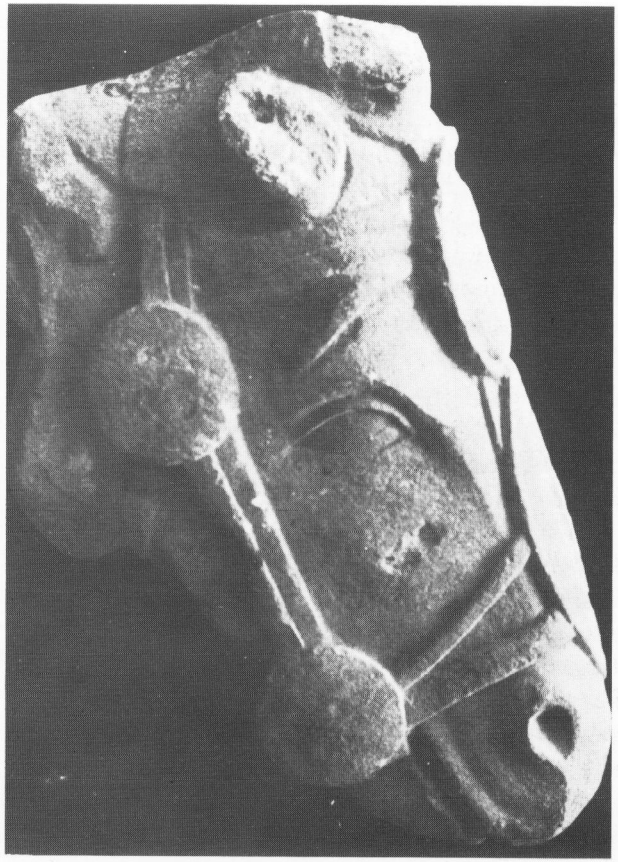
Spain was rich in wild horses, described in many Roman texts as being very fast and of great beauty, while being of moderate size. Strabo and Poseidonios praised their stamina, as they were usually ridden by two men over long distances. The riders used saddle pads of wool, linen or hide secured by a broad leather girth. A recently discovered fragment of painted stucco shows a horseman seated on a mottled feline pelt—presumably that of a lynx, since the leopard was unknown in Spain. Although cloths or pads were the most common, the saddle proper was not unknown in Spain; some vase paintings show them in use, and also spurs, although the stirrup was not used.

During the 4th century BC the Celt-Iberians may

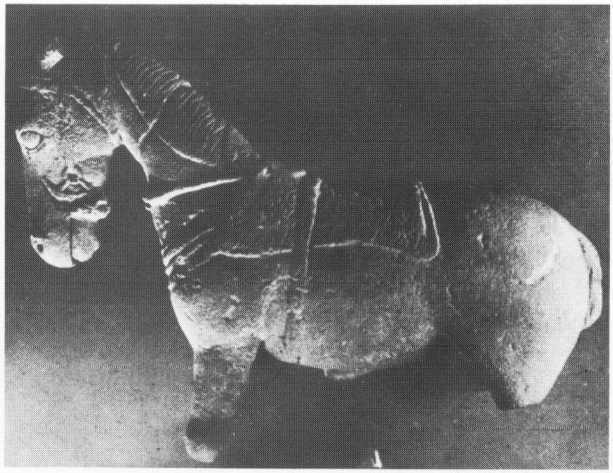
have made an important contribution to the art of warfare by the invention of the horseshoe. Dangerous though it is to make such bold assertions, we can say with confidence that some of the oldest known examples come from central Spanish burials. This invention considerably increased the military potential of cavalry, and influenced the organisation of armies: in Hispanic armies the proportion of horsemen ranged from 20 to 25 per cent of the total force, in the Carthaginian manner, while Roman armies counted no more than around ten to 14 per cent cavalry.

Presumably in a public demonstration of the affection and respect in which they held their horses, Hispanic riders decorated their horse furniture in a liberal, even an exaggerated manner. Among the decorative elements clearly discernible in vase paintings are a small bell hanging from a throat-lash; and a wide variety of prominent frontal

A fine example of a bronze votary figurine from La Bastida de les Alcuses, Valencia. This could depict an Iberian *regulus* or military leader; he holds a *falcata* and, on the far side of the horse, a *caetra*. This shape of helmet, both with and without a crest, seems to have been the most common. The discovery of this piece finally demolished the school of thought which had argued that all Iberian helmets were very simple and uncrested. (Museo Arqueológico de Valencia)



Sculptures depicting horses fully harnessed, datable to the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, from Fuente la Higuera and the sanctuary of El Cigarralejo (Murcia).



ornaments attached to the brow. Many forms, sizes, and (presumably) colours were used, usually based upon a central pivot of metal (iron, bronze, and in the case of noblemen, silver) supporting flower-like crested ornaments of animal hair or coloured vegetable fibre. The neck of the horse was also

bedecked in some cases with what are interpreted today as net-like caparisons of coloured wools. Many anthropologists trace a link from these styles right up to our own day, and the traditional decoration of Andalusian horses for festive occasions with rich straps and pendants.

The Iberians had an advanced knowledge of horsemanship, and trained horses and riders with care. One exercise was to train the horse to kneel and remain still and silent on the appropriate signal, a useful skill in the context of the guerrilla warfare which they often pursued. In battle the Hispanic horsemen sometimes played the rôle of 'dragoons', dismounting to fight on foot alongside their hard-pressed infantry in an emergency. On other occasions they formed a ring with the horses in the centre, presumably to protect these valuable creatures from injury. Their mounts apparently had some kind of picket pin attached to the reins, to allow the rider to tether them in battle. The armament of the cavalry does not appear to have differed significantly from that of the foot soldiers, comprising spears and swords; and the *caetra* was the favoured shield, being hung on the side of the horse when not in use.

A very interesting sculpture, which when found still retained traces of the colours with which it was painted in the 4th or 3rd century BC. It perhaps depicts the richly decorated armour of a warrior of high rank: cf. Plate A. (Museo Archeológico de la Alcudia, Elche)

Balearic Slingers

Among the specialised troops who fought sometimes for, sometimes against the Romans, depending upon the historic circumstances, the slingers of the Balearic isles deserve special mention. These warriors were famous all over the ancient world for their skill in handling their simple but terrible weapons, which were capable of great accuracy, and of crushing metal helmets and cuirasses.

They owed their fame in part to the systematic use made of them by the Carthaginians in all their campaigns, particularly during those against the Greeks in Sicily in the 5th and 4th centuries BC, and those mounted against the Romans by Hannibal in the early 3rd century. At the battle of Zama the slingers, among numerous groups of Hispanic mercenaries, still played an important rôle.

Their skill with the sling was developed from childhood, when they began intensive training at the hands of their fathers. One of the first toys they were given was a sling; it is said that when they began to show familiarity with it, a piece of bread was placed on a stake, and the trainees were not allowed to eat it until they had knocked it to the ground. It is easy to understand the high degree of mastery shown in adulthood by slingers trained by such methods. A little-known detail is that each man used three slings of different lengths and sizes, to throw missiles to short, medium and long range. The sling was carried wound around the brow, as a hair-band. It was made of black rush, animal hair, or animal sinews banded together.

The missiles of small and medium size were made of lead or ceramic material; for the heavier ones, we may presume that any suitable stone picked up on the battlefield would have been used. The lead sling bullets, ellipsoid in shape, were poured in moulds, six or eight together. It is common to find large numbers of these missiles at almost every discovered ancient battlefield, besieged city or other archaeological site in Spain, testimony to the widespread use of the weapon all over the Peninsula and not only in the Balearics.

Common sense suggests that slingers must also have carried a sword and *caetra* for personal protection at hand-to-hand ranges. In the Balearics some examples have been found of an atypical model of sword which may be defined as a

degenerated *falcata*, and which may have been a type used by the slingers.

Considering that the sling was cheap and easy to make and handy to carry, it may have been used as a secondary weapon by spear- and sword-armed warriors. The sling has a long tradition in Spain, and even today it is still in frequent use among the shepherds of Castille and Estremadura, as the author had the opportunity to observe while collecting material for this book. We have confirmation of the effectiveness of the sling from 123 BC, during the conquest of the Balearics by Quinctus Caecilius Metellus. When the Roman fleet was sailing round the islands looking for suitable landing-places, Metellus was obliged to order screens of animal hides to be extended along the sides of the ships to protect the crews from the missiles thrown at them from the shore.

Details of a mounted warrior, and of horse's heads, from 2nd-century vase paintings. The central figure is a horseman from the Liria 'vase of the armoured warriors'; note that the horse is depicted as armoured with, apparently, mail—though the exact arrangement of the leg protection should perhaps not be interpreted too literally? The three heads at left, from various contemporary vases, show bells, frontal ornaments, and neck decorations; at right are three others from the same vase as the central figure, showing different frontal ornaments, but all apparently with mail neck protection. (Author's drawings)

The Plates

A1, 2 & 3: Iberian chieftain, lady, and tribesman; late 3rd/early 2nd century BC

Figure A1 is reconstructed from three sculptural fragments from the same site, and apparently from the same group; like the altar, and the lady, A2, these discoveries were made around ancient Alcudia (Elche), near modern Alicante. The magnificent pectoral or breastplate is a unique find—see photo, p. 42—as all other representations of breast discs have, at most, simple geometrical decorations. In ancient Spanish mythology the wolf stood for death and disaster; perhaps this motif was chosen to inspire fear? Fortunately, the sculptural fragment retained faint traces of the original pattern and colour, allowing this reconstruction of the tunic. The helmet is of the simple 'bascinet' shape seen in so many of the surviving representations; we cannot know for certain whether it was of bronze, or of leather with metal reinforcement at the edges. (Smiths who could produce work of the quality of the breastplate would have had no difficulty producing any helmet they wished, but the lack of archaeological finds is frustrating.) The altar to which this chief offers up his horse-head

A magnificent sculpture of a warrior fully armoured for combat; note the breastplate of disc shape held in place by broad straps, and the shoulders protected by broad pads of some kind. He holds a *caetra* strapped to his left arm, and a *falcata* in his right hand, unfortunately broken here. He is also armed with a large knife; and the waist sash or band can be seen at his right hip. (Museo Arqueológico de Jaen)

falcata, with a silver and niello-decorated hilt, bears a bull in representation of fertility, and resurrection; and three concentrically carved 'doorways' on the vertical surfaces of the plinth, representing the three 'doorways' of life: childhood, manhood and senility.

The lady, A2, is reconstructed from the sculpture known as *La Dama de Elche*, considered a masterpiece of ancient Spanish art. Ploughed to the surface by a farmer in 1897, it was at first thought to be a fake, and the Spanish government allowed the more astute French archaeologist Pierre Paris to buy it for the Louvre; it was returned, with some other Spanish artefacts, in 1940—partly as a result of Hitler's pressure, at a time when Germany wished to woo Gen. Franco. Originally a complete lifesize figure, the Lady of Elche has been sawn through at the torso; the lower half is reconstructed here from other, contemporary sculptures found at El Cerro de los Santos (Albacete). Remaining traces of colour allow us to reconstruct the appearance of the robes with some confidence. The magnificent headdress is thought to be of gold. The Lady of Elche may be admired today in Madrid's National Archaeological Museum.

The tribesman, A3, wears the standard Hispanic costume: a white linen or woollen tunic, and a cloak of rectangular shape folded over in the manner shown and fastened at the shoulder with an anular fibula. Note that the head is tonsured, a known fashion among the ancient Spaniards.

B1, 2 & 3: Iberian warriors, late 2nd century BC
These figures are reconstructed from the evidence provided by the ceramic bowl from Liria (Valencia)—see photos, pp. 17, 18 and 19. The composite cuirasses shown on the painted vase clearly have scale armour torsos; the lower parts could be of iron or bronze ring mail—or, it has been suggested, could even be meant to represent thickly-woven esparto grass matting, which would be difficult to penetrate. Of all the figures, only one is represented with a crested helmet (B1), and is thus probably a chieftain. We show him carrying a

soliferrum: the vase painting also clearly shows spears, *falcatas*, and classic Celtic *scutum* shields, as B2. There are numerous ancient representations of the kind of 'toothed crest' or comb shown on B2's helmet, which seems to be made of or covered with scale protection—the materials must be conjectural. B1's trophy reminds us that, like many other contemporary European cultures, the Hispanics took heads as trophies of war. B3 is a rider whose horse is armoured with some kind of mail protection and decorated with the characteristic frontal ornament (in coloured wools?); the detail of the horse's leg armour must remain problematic—see photo p. 43.

This group certainly represents an élite type of warrior, from the level of armour and equipment, and possibly they are *auxilia* serving with the Roman armies in Spain. It is also possible that they represent men of the Edetani or Contestani tribes, on geographical grounds.

C1 & 2: Hispanic horsemen, 2nd century BC
C3: Roman citizen cavalryman, 2nd century BC

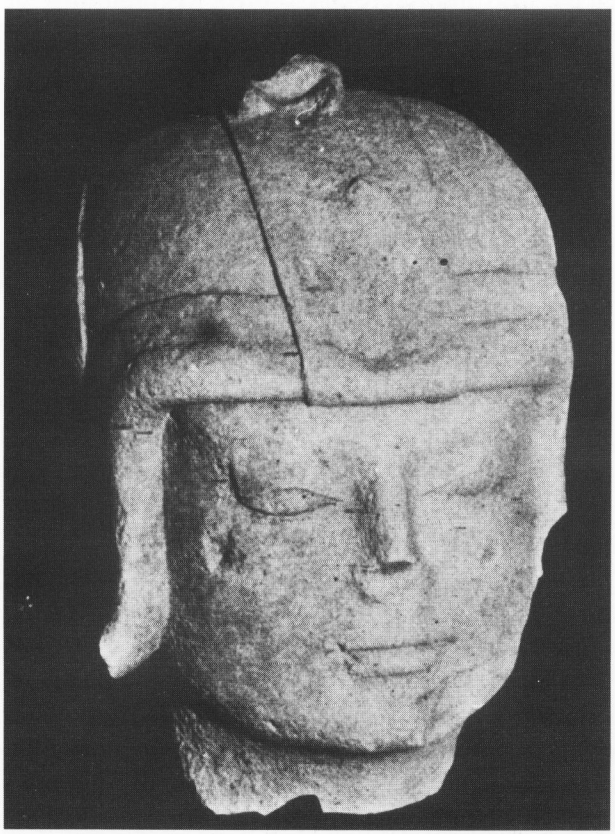
Our references for C1 and C2 are a mixture of vase paintings and sculptures, and particularly the bronze votary figurines found at La Bastida de les Alcuses (Valencia): one of these shows finally beyond doubt that sweeping helmet crests were not unknown among Hispanic warriors—see p. 41. The ancient writer Strabo described Hispanics wearing helmets with three crests, and there are also references to iron helmet-masks rather in the manner of those worn by the Romans for their cavalry sports; but for the moment we have no archaeological evidence. Note the colourful horse-trappings, apparently in coloured wools or similar materials; the bell hung on a throat-lash is a very common ornament in vase-paintings. C1 wears a round breastplate hung on a strap harness with broader shoulder-pieces, and is armed with the classic *falcata* and *caetra*. C2 wears the simplest type of helmet of all, a leather cap with his own long hair pulled through a hole in the crown. They are fighting a Roman citizen cavalryman from one of the armies sent to Spain during the long wars of the 2nd century. He wears a Boeotian helmet, and a heavy mail shirt with a reinforcing cape at the shoulder; his horse furniture is of Celtic type.

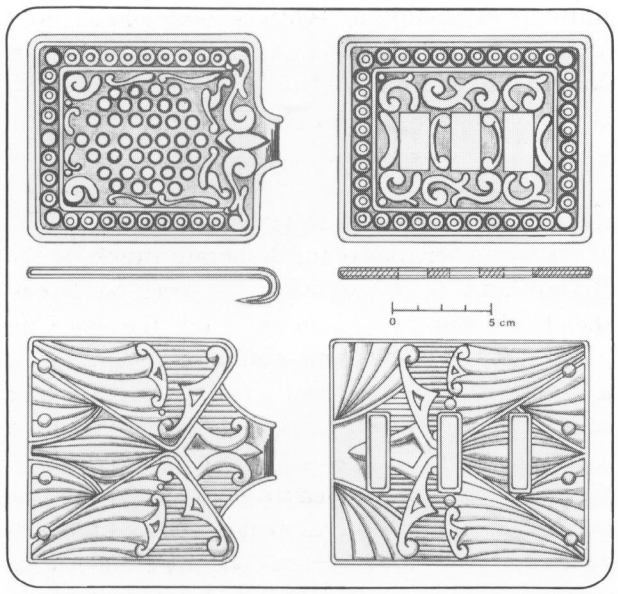
D/E: Hispanic warriors, 2nd century BC

'Somewhere in Hispania Ulterior', a group of warriors from different Hispanic tribes await the right moment to spring an ambush on the Roman column in the valley below . . . Although we have obviously grouped widely differing figures together entirely for our own convenience, it is worth pointing out that large confederations of warriors from several tribes were by no means unknown during the Spanish wars.

D1 is thought to represent a warrior of the Carpetani or Oretani, and is based on a bronze votary figurine. He is armed with several all-iron *soliferrum* javelins; a straight sword with 'atrophied antennae' hilt, and a curved knife stowed on the face of the scabbard; he carries a *caetra*, and wears a characteristic broad, metal-furnished belt. The helmet, as so often, is a problem; it may be of leather with a metal reinforcing band round the brows.

This sculpted warrior's head illustrates the most common form of helmet, a close-fitting 'bascinet' shape with emphasised bands of reinforcement around the edge; there are some examples, like this 3rd-century piece, which seem to indicate crest ornaments in animal shapes—broken here. (Museo Arqueológico de Jaen)





Two examples of two-piece belt buckles, both richly inlaid with silver; the originals are in the Museo Arqueológico de Alicante. (Author's drawing)

This style of tunic decoration seems to have been popular over a long period.

E2, also from a votary bronze, is interesting in that he wears a crested helmet, and what appears to be a hardened leather cuirass under his bronze pectoral disc. Under his broad belt is worn a coloured sash or band whose fringed or slit end hangs down on his right side. The significance of the frequently depicted feature is not clear; it seems more typical of the Baetic tribes, and may have indicated tribe or status by its colour? This man is possibly from the Turdetani or Oretani.

E3 represents a Lusitan warrior. His richly-inlaid straight sword, again with a knife and/or spear-heads stowed under the scabbard frame, is based on one now in the museum of Alcocer do Sal at Belem, Portugal, but similar examples have been found in other parts of the central Peninsula. The round shield, with an iron boss covering the handgrip, is a good deal larger than the *caetra*; its decoration comes from a vase-painting. His spear has a throwing thong looped around the point of balance. The exact significance of the strapping harness round his torso is not known; something like it appears in several votary figurines. Before battle, some long-haired warriors like this man tied their hair behind the neck; others gathered it in a net—cf. Plates F2, H1; still others gathered it in a pad on top of the skull, for extra protection.

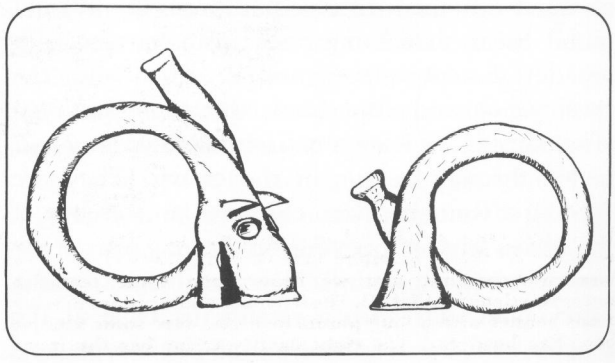
Figure E4 is based on the well-known funerary sculpture from Osuna (Sevilla) showing two warriors fighting; the strange headgear has defied all efforts at interpretation, though very clearly depicted in the sculpture—there have been attempts to associate it with Strabo's description of 'caps of sinew', but this is only guesswork. His other features—the short tunic with coloured edging and a cross-over effect at the neck, his spined Celtic *scutum*, and his horse-headed *falcata*—are all typical.

If E4 is difficult to interpret, D5 is still more so. He is based on a vase-painting of a group of warriors; and apparently wears a caped hood—presumably of leather—with a comb or toothed crest of the same material. Note the very long fringing on his tunic, and the torso strapping, again of unknown purpose. Note also the angled foot or ferrule of his spear, taken from an archaeological find. E6 reminds us that the Hispanics trained their horses to kneel down and remain silent in order not to betray hidden warriors.

F1: Andalusian warrior, 2nd century BC
F2, 3: Balearic slingers, 2nd century BC

F1, based on a bronze votary figurine found in an Andalusian sanctuary, is thought from his hair-style and some other details to show influences from other Mediterranean cultures—perhaps he represents a man who had served as a mercenary for the Greeks? The tunic drawn down to a central point at the front was characteristic of an older style; and note, too, the intriguing quilted finish—for warmth,

Two horns, made of ceramic material and thought to be war-bugles, found at Numantia; while the plain type on the right is the most common sort found, the wolf's-head example is particularly interesting: we should recall that the wolf was the symbol of death. (Author's drawing)



or protection? The tunic neck may have had the same cross-over effect as E4.

F2 and F3 are slingers from the Balearics, as described in the text; they wear simple tunics and minimal equipment. One ties his hair back with one of his three slings (three were normally carried, for different ranges); the other prefers a hair-net. F2 has a long knife, characteristic of finds in the Balearics, which faintly recalls the *falcata* shape. Both figures are based on literary descriptions and archaeological evidence.

G: Celt-Iberian warriors, c. 150 BC

An impression of what Numantine warriors may have looked like at the time of their successful repulse of Nobilior. G1, perhaps fighting as a mercenary or ally a little north of his home range, is based on a sculpture found at Porcuna (Jaen). Note the hanging sash-end or slit band, similar to that worn by E2; the 'bascinet' helmet, this time with a hair crest; the typical breastplate harness, worn here over a heavy garment of leather, or perhaps sheepskin; and the triangular dagger. G2 is blowing a ceramic horn, of which more than 50 examples have been found at Numantia—strongly suggesting some practical function, such as military signalling. Note two characteristic features: the long, heavy cloak of the dark brown wool of local sheep, and the *caetra* hanging low on a long sling. This strap was tied or wound firmly round the forearm before entering battle. G3 wears basically similar kit to G1; but note the checkered tunic hem, and the helmet—from a vase-painting—with a boar's-head crest which appears to be extended into a plume-holder. Note, again, the tonsured man in the background—this style was by now out of date, but probably still seen among older men.

H: Celt-Iberian warriors, c. 130 BC

We imagine here one of the desperate attacks on the Roman walls of circumvallation carried out late in the final siege of Numantia by the starving defenders. H1, who has just thrown a *soliferrum* with a bundle of burning grass attached, has his hair caught up behind the neck in a net. He wears a caped mail shirt—either a Celtic style, from one of the northern tribes, or a captured Roman example: at this date our sculptural evidence shows them to have been very similar. H2 and H3 are our attempts to interpret two very stylised but obviously carefully detailed warrior figures from a painted vase found at Numantia. H2 wears, perhaps over a leather hood giving some protection to the cheeks and neck, a conical helmet of Montefortino type, with a plume. These have been found in some numbers in northern Spain, and a similar one was discovered in the necropolis of Las Pedreras (Huesca). H3 seems to have a 'bascinet' helmet with three (feather?) frontal plumes, and raised rivet or nailhead details. His fringed tunic is decorated with what may tentatively be interpreted as woollen balls or pompons. Both men wear trousers, and bronze greaves. Both have the usual broad, metal-furnished belts, and long La Tène swords.

While not clear in this photograph, the paintings of two warriors on this Numantine vase do yield some clues as to local war-costume, and we draw upon some tentative interpretations for Plate H. The left hand man appears to wear a tall helmet with a long plume or crest, over some kind of hood-like headgear. The right hand warrior has the more common 'bascinet' shape of helmet, perhaps with standing feather plumes; he is armed with a straight sword and a buckler, and behind him are shown two javelins fitted with throwing-thongs. Both men have very slim waists emphasised by broad belts with metal fittings; and both are clearly shown to wear greaves. (Museo Numantino, Soria)