



The Weekly Citizen

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By Senatorial decree
Since 1083

Fleet Sails for Far Avius

Rome: It was an impressive sight, in the docks at Ostia, of the assembled fleet bound for the lost continent Avius. Five mighty quinqueremes each carry 50 settlers, and are rowed by a complement of 150 slaves. Supplies and livestock to ensure the survival of the colony are carried on board for this intensive effort. An undisclosed number of marines, soldiers, cavalry and templars accompany the expedition.

Such is the importance of this to the Empire, that the Emperor himself spoke at the departure of the fleet (see the separate article for details on his speech).

Ever since the return three years ago of a secret scouting expedition, reported the discovery of a vast continent westwards of the Pillars of Atlas, the secrecy surrounding the planned colonisation and future conquest of this continent has been tighter than the legs of the Vestal Virgins. Indeed, the details were only revealed two months ago to the senate in a closed session by the Emperor. The consequential uproar lead to the temporary resignation of several senators over the result of the vote. Readers may recall Senators Julius and Marcus making a joint statement of concern over the financial impact this expedition will have on the continuing war against the vile necromancers of the East.

The Five quinqueremes represent a full 10% of the Imperial navy's

quinquereme fleet, and a combined cost to the treasury of at least 200,000 gp (including slaves and other surplus materials).

The settlers, bear their burden of enormous responsibility to succeed and become profitable with ease. Freeman Caius said "I look forward to using my talents and abilities to bring forth the very best of this new land for the greater glory of Rome".

Supporters point out the recent crushing of Pirates operating in the Aegean Sea, and the consequent surrender of KK (called "Freetown" by the inhabitants) means there is less for the Praetorian fleet to do, and that this timing is quite fortuitous.

A Quinquereme

Note the accompanying picture is not a depiction of the vessels, but is a schematic showing the principle of such a vessel. Five slaves per row, with each row utilizing three oars. The main advantage over a trireme is not added speed, but retained speed with the increase in size and capacity. A typical quinquereme would carry upwards of 100 marines. Although the details of the vessels for this expedition are classified, we can reveal that most quinqueremes measure approximately 130 ft by 20 ft, and can carry 150 tons. Most observers judge the particular vessels are both longer and wider.

Emperor's Speech

It brings me great pleasure to be here today, looking out upon such a group of inspiring and motivated people ready and willing to give their best for the Empire.

The expenses surrounding this expedition have raised some concern. I should take this opportunity to publicly disperse these fears. I succeeded in creating this fleet without increasing taxation.

Secondly, consider the opportunities this continent will bestow upon Rome; new allies may be made, to join us in the fight against the East. New knowledge in the mystical sciences, new markets for Roman goods, and the spread of Roman Peace and Roman Law against the forces of chaos and barbarity.

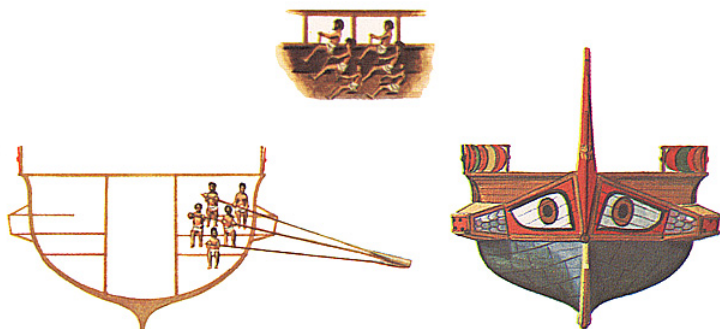
Lastly, an expanding empire is a healthy empire. Once an Empire is satisfied with its boundaries, it starts to stagnate and ultimately, will atrophy.

We must remain active and alert against the evil spies and cohorts of the vile easterners. We have a divine duty to bring peace and justice to all lands within our grasp.

Citizens of Rome! We must undertake tasks that would make ordinary men tremble and faint at the magnitude. Made of sterner stuff, we must extol ourselves to meet the standards of our forebears.

For these reasons, we must take advantage of this opportunity granted to us from the gods. To do otherwise would be to turn our backs on this marvellous gift, and would risk invoking their wrath! Let no one question this course more.

I look forward to hearing of the successes of this fleet and its valiant participants in the months ahead.



Barbarians raid town

Germania Superior: Details are scanty, but it seems rogue elements of the Centauric tribes have audaciously attacked a small town on the Albis river, killing some dozen citizens. Elements of the Xth Gemina Legion have been mobilised and are expected to reach the town in the coming week. Rest assured, the Empire will slaughter those found responsible without mercy, as this is a clear breach of the terms of the Centauric Peace treaty of 1624.

Some militant senators have called for a revival of the war against the free barbarian leaders still known to roam the Scandivanian peninsula. Since ejecting the free Centauric tribes from Germania Magna proper in 1624, the number of raids against Roman townships and forts declined, only to have increased over the last five years.

It is suspected that there are elements of the free tribes that have come under the influence of the Eastern Wastes. A delegation has dispatched to contact the leaders of the free tribes and discuss these matters.

City under Siege

Juresalem: Still no news from the beleaguered city of Ctesiphon, in the Province of Assyria. This is the third week of the siege, and the commander of the IVth Scythica Legion forces refused to comment on the situation, saying "I will not provide my enemies with Intel via the news. If you want information, I suggest you join up."

A contingent of marines recently arrived in the coastal cities of Judea, it is rumoured they are to take over the policing duties of the Xth Fretensis legion, which is hoped to be sent as part of a relieving force.

The Xth Fretensis legion has been heavily involved in quelling uprisings in this riotous province, and has established a reputation for its ability to communicate efficiently the desires and intentions of Rome towards wayward ideas of independence and their commander has been a great facilitator of dialogue with disaffected natives.

Troops from the Imperial province of Syria are already under way from Antiochia and Palmyra.

Daring Escape

Rome: Over the weekend a daring escape was made from the pens of the coliseum in Rome. One of the infamous pirate captains, known only by his barbaric name "Kef" has escaped from the high security pens for condemned prisoners. He was meant to provide entertainment in a fight celebrating the sailing of the fleet. It has yet to be ascertained how he managed to flee, but enquiries are underway.

Kef was the captain of a minor pirate vessel operating in the Sea Aegean, and was recently captured in the operation liberating the island of Thera from piratical influence. He is described as charismatic, dark haired, and of average height and build, with no distinctive scarring. An award of 5,000 gp has been posted for information leading to his capture.

The public is reminded that although these rascals are usually associated with romance and daring, that they are despicable characters that undermine the authority of Rome, and would happily reduce the empire to a state of chaos. It is estimated that the activities of pirates within the Mare Internum cost the treasury a staggering 3 million gp each year.

Relic still Missing

Rome: The dwarven relic stolen from the Imperial Museum last week is still missing. The curator is no longer so convinced of its immediate recovery, yet still refuses to give details about its drawbacks. "We had certain mystical protections preventing the artifact from invoking the worst of its powers upon us, but as time goes by, those wards will diminish in strength and potency, and the effects may be very dire indeed for those sensitive. This item is highly dangerous and should be returned immediately"

The statue was part of the booty obtained during the Battle of the Final Dwarven Army, near their Alpine redoubt.

It has been described as a golden statuette of varying appearance; no two people describe the exact same way, all agree it stands 1 foot. high.

If you have any information regarding the whereabouts of the statuette, please contact your local authorities.

Activists Hung

Lutetia: Three people have been found guilty of association with the Legio Psionica, and hung in a public execution in the Imperial provincial capital Lugdunensis, Lutetia. The criminals were found to be supporting the organisation in its efforts to undermine the Empire and banish the sun. It is the first occasion that such elements have been tried in this province, since the Psionic Insurrection some 100 years ago.

Association with or participation in the Legio Psionica is still regarded as a capital offense given the seriousness of the crimes of this organisation. It was the actions of the Illithids that caused the Great Cataclysm and the chaos that followed. Their human agents, loosely organised in a "Legio Psionica" were guilty of such crimes that the organisation itself was banned from the Empire for all eternity.

As usual in these kinds of cases, the activists refused to give the names of their accomplices and claimed only to be acting on their own.

Indisputable evidence was however provided to the contrary by a respected member of the community, before the Roman Governor. In order to protect the identity of the informant, his name was deleted from the trial records.

In the Senate

Senate: This week, the senate is to debate upon the licensing of the sewer maintenance, and the bill to increase the size of the bread ration for free citizens. There is some ambiguity regarding whether the size of the loaves are to be increased, or the number of loaves to be more. Either way, the bill has consequences for the bakers who may have to acquire more slaves, and increase the size and capacity of their ovens. Provisioning for these increased costs was not contained in the original bill.

In further developments, the licensing for the sewer maintenance contract is to be reviewed. There is concern that some behind the scenes negotiating has been taking place by seedy elements wanting to gain control of the waterways into and out of Rome.