THE RELUCTANT WARLORD
The wars of Marcus Aurelius

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Dear Editor,

I would like to correct an error – unintended I’m sure – in the description of the coin on page 25 of issue VII.4 accompanying the article, ‘A setback for Julius Caesar’. The featured aureus is not of C. Julius Caesar the dictator, but is of the son of M. Agrippa who was adopted – along with his brother Lucius – by Augustus in 17 BC. After the per aes et libram ceremony he was formally accepted into gens Iulia and assumed his new name, which is shown on the coin in abbreviated form as C. CAES\[AR\. That explains the AVGVS\[TVS\ F\[ILIVS\ in exergue on the obverse of the coin.

Caius is depicted on horseback, holding a sword in his right hand and a shield in the left, galloping past an Aquila and two signa. The coin was minted in Lugdunum, either in 5 BC to mark the time he became princeps iuvencuts, or in 1 BC on the occasion of the peace treaty he agreed with Phraates V of Parthia on an island in the Euphrates River while serving as Augustus’ praepositus Orienti. (The numismatic references are RIC I 198; Lyon 68; Calicó 174a; BMCRE 498-9 – BMCRR Gaul 221-2; BN 1457-60). On campaign at Artagira, Armenia, he was wounded. The wound – or subsequent infection – proved fatal. Travelling back to Rome he died, aged just 24, at Lycia in AD 4.

The young man’s death – and that of his brother at Massalia two years before – was a major setback for Augustus who had invested a quarter century in preparing his succession plan. It was the reason for the adoption of Tibei\[us, Germanicus and Postumus Agrippa as his heirs on 27/28 June AD 4.

Best wishes,

Lindsay Powell

PS: The same coin was minted in silver, of which I have two specimens in my collection.

Thank you, Lindsay, for the correction to this editorial mistake. One or two other readers also sent comments regarding this error. Please do not hesitate to send me your comments and corrections via editor@ancient-warfare.com

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A correction for a coin in Ancient Warfare issue VII.4

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Centuria of archers may have been stationed at Vindolanda

Unprecedented quantities of arrowheads and a personal item bearing a Christian symbol, as well as now commonplace wooden writing tablets and leather shoes, are among the choice finds from the latest season of excavations at the Vindolanda Roman fort on Hadrian’s Wall.

The main focus of the 2013-dig was the south-eastern quadrant of the last stone fort to be built, erected in AD 213 by the Cohors IV Gallorum. This fort was inhabited and re-occupied – with occasional breaks – through to the end of the Roman occupation of Britain and beyond. “It offered some of the best opportunities to see the transition of Vindolanda from a Roman military community in the late fourth and early fifth centuries into a British one,” Dr Andrew Birley, director of excavations, told Ancient Warfare.

Digging just to the south of the praetorium (commanding officer’s residence), it became immediately apparent that this sector of the fort was very different to all of the others that have been explored to date. There was little evidence of the so-called ‘chalets’, or independent buildings, which are the norm for fourth-century occupation at military sites along the frontier, such as found at nearby Housesteads fort. Rather, the south-eastern quadrant had been covered with the traditional integrated barracks more normally associated with earlier centuries of occupation. The barracks themselves, although badly damaged by later post-Roman and stone robbing activities, produced a very large quantity of arrowheads from many different contexts – in fact, more than had been recovered from over forty-three years of excavations in all of the other levels of occupation at the site. “This raises the possibility that they could have been occupied by a centuria of Roman archers sent to bolster the Vindolanda garrison from time to time,” said Dr Birley. “Such practices were certainly common in previous centuries of occupation at the site and are attested to in the writing tablets themselves.”

Further excavation produced a small stone altar to the god Apollo dedicated by a man named Aprilis. Close by, a small medallion carved from jet in the shape of a foot was recov-