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STRUCK WITH THE CLUB OF **HERACLES** *The ascendancy of Thebes*

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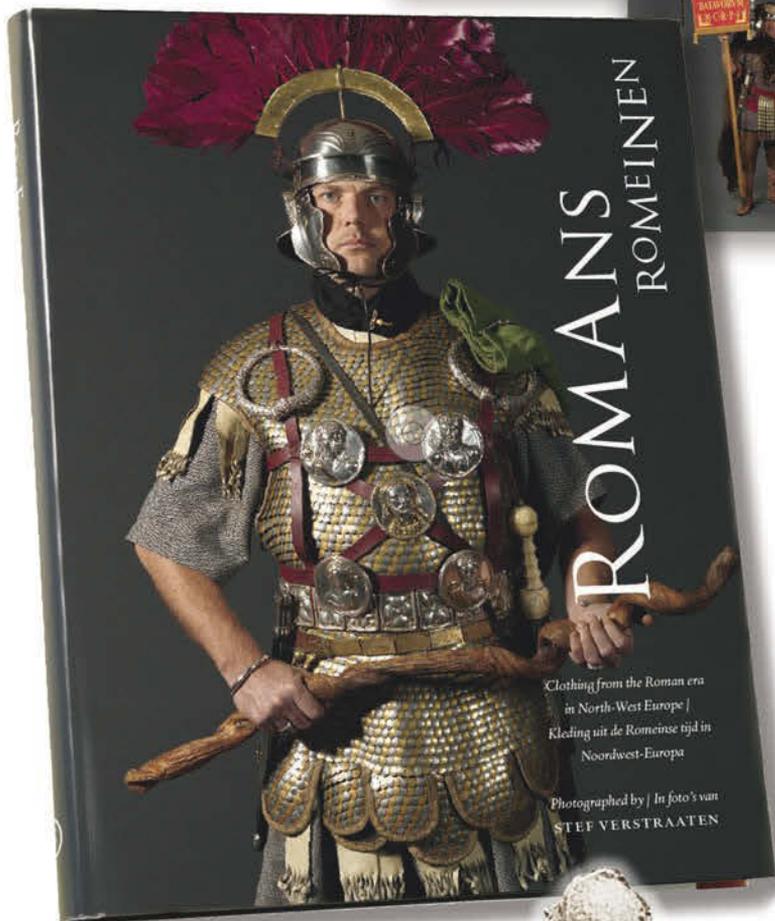
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THEME: THE ASCENDANCY OF THEBES

Thanks to the genius of its military leaders, Thebes was able to dominate Greece for a brief period in the fourth century BC.

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The Theban Hegemony owed its existence largely to the work of one man, Epaminondas.



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The Thebans accomplished the impossible: they defeated Sparta in a pitched battle.



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The Theban army possessed an elite military unit, the *hieros lochos* or Sacred Band.

NEWS & LETTERS

Editorial



When the last issue went to print, we were preparing to launch a Kickstarter campaign for a new magazine devoted more generally to the ancient world called *Ancient History Magazine*. One issue later and I am happy to report that the campaign was successfully funded. This means that *Ancient History Magazine*, edited jointly by Jona Lendering and myself, is a go. The first issue, which has the theme 'Discoveries in the ancient world', is scheduled to hit the presses in September of this year (2015), and should be on its way to Kickstarter supporters and other readers in October.

If you missed out on the Kickstarter or were otherwise unable to pledge, you can still support us by subscribing to the new magazine. (I assume, no doubt correctly, that you already subscribe to *Ancient Warfare*.) As stated in last issue's editorial, *Ancient History Magazine* will be similar to *Ancient Warfare* in style (accessible, richly illustrated articles), but will deal more broadly with socio-political, economic,

and cultural aspects of the ancient world. Taken together, the two magazines will offer a good overview of the ancient world, with *Ancient Warfare* released one month and *Ancient History Magazine* the next.

This particular issue of *Ancient Warfare* is one that I have been looking forward to for some time. It has a very tight focus on the rise (and eventual fall) of Thebes, one of the major cities of Classical Greece. The so-called Theban Hegemony lasted for less than a decade, from 371 to 362 BC, or from the Battle of Leuctra to the second Battle of Mantinea. It offers a good slice of Classical Greek history, with plenty of big names such as Epaminondas and Agesilaus. The issue highlights an important stage in the development of Greek warfare: the Thebans developed a new way of deploying the hoplite phalanx in the field that was to have a profound impact on Philip II of Macedon.

—Josho Brouwers
Editor, *Ancient Warfare*

A warm seat for a soldier on the edge of the Roman Empire

The remarkable find of a wooden seat from a latrine at Vindolanda fort is shedding light on the personal comforts soldiers enjoyed when nature called on the northwestern frontier of the Roman Empire. The seat was preserved in near perfect condition in the anaerobic (oxygen-free) conditions that exist at the military site in northern Britain. It was discovered during the dig of 2014 by Dr Andrew Birley, Director of Excavations, in the pre-Hadrianic period III level occupied by Cohors VIII Batavorum.

'We know a lot about Roman toilets from previous excavations at the site and from the wider Roman world, but never before have we had the pleasure of seeing a surviving and perfectly preserved wooden seat,' Dr Birley told *Ancient Warfare*.

There are many examples of stone and marble seat benches from across the Roman world, but this is believed to be the only surviving wooden seat of the period. 'It would be far more comfortable to sit on in the cool climate of Britannia,' he added.

'The seat is made from a very well-worked piece of wood and looks pretty comfortable,' said Dr Birley. It measures 30cm wide by 31cm long by 3.5cm deep and is carved from an as yet unidentified hard wood, but not oak. A large oval-shaped hole was cut in the centre with a 4cm opening on one side. The seat shows that it had been well used before being decommissioned and discarded amongst the rubbish abandoned in the timber fort at the site before the construction of Hadrian's Wall began in AD 122.