SOLICINIUM

The Iron Pincer

A.D. 368

A confrontation between the discipline of the Late Roman Empire and the ferocity of the Allemanni.



BELLIGERENTS
Roman Empire (Valentinian I) vs. The Allemanni (Rando)

OBJECTIVE
Punitive annihilation following the raid on Mainz.

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The Provocation at Moguntiacus

The campaign began as retribution. While the Roman garrison at Mainz (Moguntiacus) was distracted by a “solemnity of the Christian religion,” the Allemanni chieftain Rando executed a surprise raid.

- The Target: A defenseless city during a holy festival.
- The Cost: Rando carried off a “vast multitude” of captives and booty.
- The Consequence: Emperor Valentinian I mobilized for a campaign of extermination, not negotiation.

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The Order of Battle

Mobilization of the Late Roman Machine



COMMANDER IN CHIEF
Emperor Valentinian I.



WINGS
CAPTAINS OF THE CAMP
Jovinus and Severus



CENTER
SPECIAL OPERATIONS
Count Sebastian
(Italian & Illyrian Legions)



THE HAMMER
THE RESERVE
Gratian (The Emperor's Son)
(Held back from the Vanguard)



RESERVE
VANGUARD FORCE
Count Sebastian
(Leading the Advance)

Valentinian assembled a force designed for a multi-front engagement, calling up elite units from Italy and Illyricum to crush the Allemanni.

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The Topographical Fortress



> The Allemanni, trusting in their knowledge of the country, occupied a "lofty hill" to negate the Roman heavy infantry advantage.

KEY INSIGHT

Enemy Disposition: The barbarians held the summit, prepared to roll missiles down the steep approach, leaving the gentle northern slope as their natural rear guard.

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The Trap is Set

Valentinian realized a frontal assault on the cliffs would drive the enemy down the easy northern slope to safety. He devised a plan to turn their escape route into a **kill zone**.

SEBASTIAN
(THE HAMMER)



TACTICAL SUMMARY

- The Anvil: Attack the precipitous Southern heights to fix enemy attention.
- The Hammer: Dispatch Count Sebastian to secretly occupy the Northern slope and intercept the retreat.

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The Scout's Peril



Before the battle, the 'Fog of War' nearly claimed the Emperor. Attempting to scout the base of the hills personally with a tiny escort, Valentinian stumbled into an Allemanni ambush.

- **The Escape:** Valentinian spurred his horse through the mire to safety.
- **The Cost:** His chamberlain was killed. The Imperial Helmet, adorned with gold and gems, was captured by the enemy.

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The Signal and the Spearheads



The army waited in disciplined silence for the Emperor's banner. When the signal came, the restraint broke into a furious charge, led by two young soldiers who dashed ahead of the lines.

Hero Profile Box

SALVIUS
(Scutarii - Shield Bearers)

LUPICINUS
(Gentiles - Foreign Auxiliaries)

Action: Dragging the line forward into the brambles and rugged places.

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The Ascent



> The fight for the slope was brutal. The Allemanni held the high ground, raining down missiles and 'horrid yells' upon the climbing legions.

Tactical Insight

- **The Environment:** Fighting through thick brush and loose rock.
- **The Counter:** The legions extended their lines, utilizing 'overlapping wings' to outflank the barbarian position even while climbing.
- **The Balance:** Death was 'scattered almost equally' until the summit was breached.

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The summit breached



The rout

- Panic set in among the defenders.
- They exposed their backs to Roman spears.
- They fled North—towards the “gentle slope”—believing it was their safe escape route.

Discipline prevailed. The ardour of the Roman heavy infantry finally broke the barbarian line. The Allemanni, exhausted and outmaneuvered, abandoned the heights.

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The Reckoning



The Trap closes. As the Allemanni poured down the northern slope, they ran directly into the spears of Count Sebastian's fresh legions waiting in ambush.

TOTAL ENCIRCLEMENT.

- **ANNIHILATION:** The barbarian army was almost totally destroyed. Only a few escaped through the darkness.

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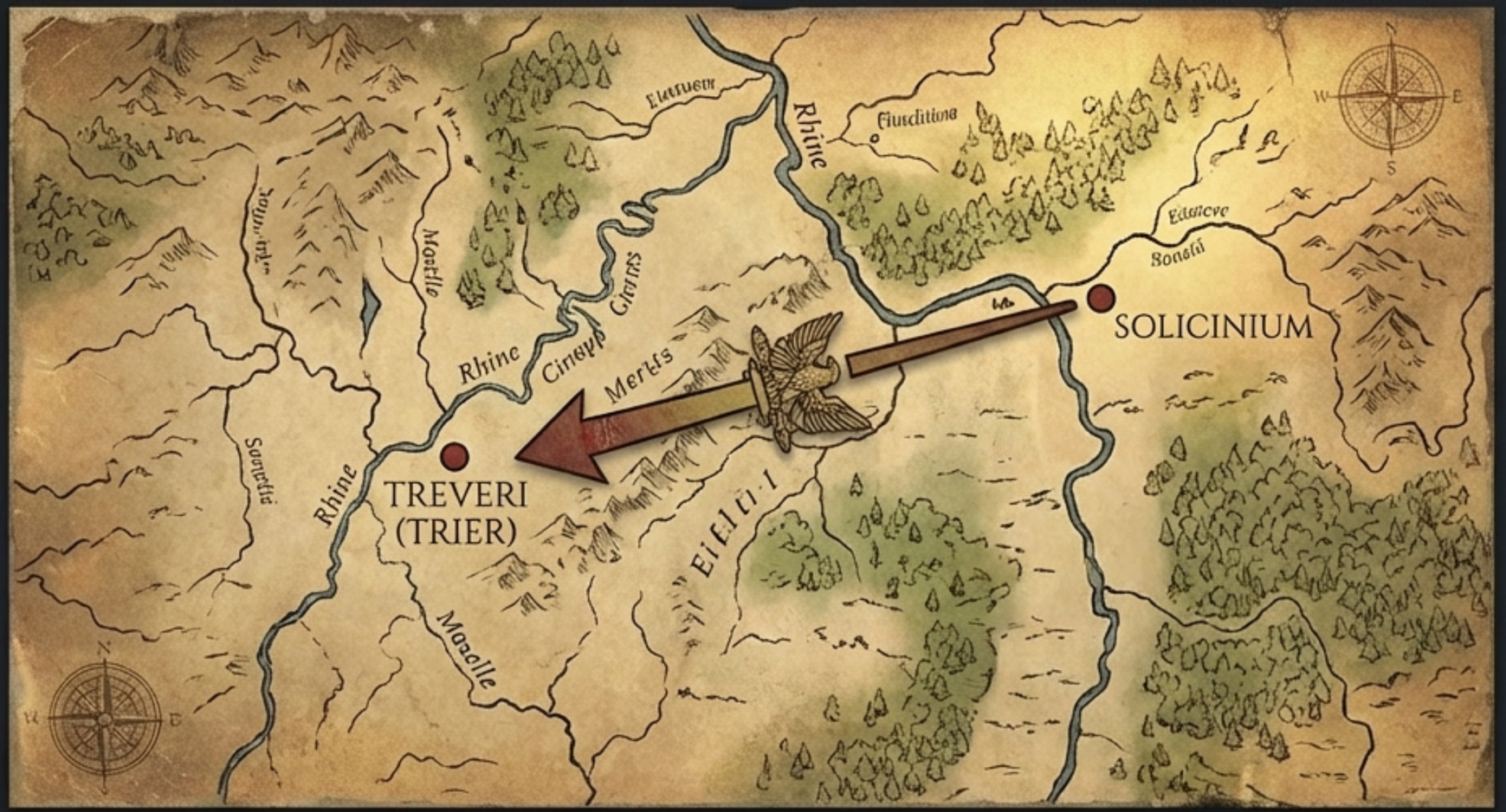
The Cost of Victory



The Allemanni were routed, but the Roman elite paid a heavy price for the difficult ascent. Ammianus specifically eulogizes Natuspardo, comparing his courage to the legendary Roman heroes Sicinius and Sergius.

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Mission Accomplished



CONCLUSION:

Solicinium stands as a testament to the late Roman military's ability to combine complex complex tactical coordination (the pincer) with the raw grit of individual soldiers.

With the Allemanni threat neutralized and the raid on Mainz avenged, the campaign concluded. The army retired to winter quarters at Treves.

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