

The Setup

My newly completed Armenian Army of Tigranes the Lesser took on the Celtic Trinovante tribe. Both armies had faced each other several years earlier but the Armenians at that stage needed to rely on additional allies. Now they were strong enough to face the Trinovantes by themselves.

After a period of heavy rain, there was an area of marsh and of boggy ground on the battlefield. These were surrounded by hills and a crag on the far side. The left near corner was high ground topped by a crag and a road threaded through a dense wood on the slope and then the plain. The other woods were open. The Armenians would deploy on the far side.



The Teams and Their Plans

Tigranes the Lesser, king of Armenia, had gathered a force of nearly 18,000 men. This included some allies.

The Armenian portion consisted of 1,000 cavalry and 4,500 poor quality foot plus 3,000 ex-Pontic trained infantry.

Zanticus of Hiberia and Oroeze of Albania were both willing allies with each providing 1,000 cavalry and 2,000 infantry.

Zarbienus the Unfaithful of Gordyene and Monobazus of Adiabene were less enthusiastic. The Gordyenes added 1,000 cavalry and 1,500 infantry and the Adiabene 1,000 cavalry.

In order to give his own men some chance, Tigranes wanted to get his best fighters – the Hiberians and Albanians – into melee first to take the edge of the enemy morale.

Tigranes' men would hold a line between the hills until the Hiberians and the Albanians had made progress on the right and were threatening the enemy. The Gordyenes would cover the left flank of the Armenian infantry and the Adiabene cavalry would advance on the far left and attack the enemy flank.

Cunobeline, chieftain of the Trinovntes, had mobilised 18,000 men from the tribe, including two sub-clans under their local chiefs.

Cunobeline, with his chariot and cavalry escort, led 9,500 men in the main Clan's warbands. Two of his sons – Togodumnus and Caratacus – each commanded smaller forces – Togodumnus led a mixed force of 3,500 men and Caratacus 2,000 light cavalry and infantry.

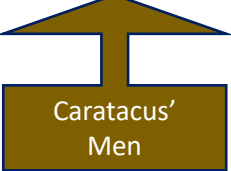
The two sub-clans – Coastal and Canonium – each fielded about 1,500 men.

Cunobeline kept his plan simple in line with the known history of his men of not following orders but charging towards the nearest enemy.

The main Clan warbands would advance in the centre and try to smash through anything in their way. Togodumnus would cover their right flank and the Coastal Clan their left flank, in case the enemy tried to attack through the boggy and marshy ground respectively.

The Canonium Clan would hold the road where it dropped through the dense wood whilst Caratacus would lead his men on a sweep on the right flank and get behind the enemy line and attack.

The Deployments



P1

The infantry lines in the centre for both sides started to advance whilst troops on the flanks moved towards their assigned features.

Albanians: Cavalry rode along the road whilst infantry advanced to the marsh.

Hiberians: Cavalry struggled to make progress down the crag, but infantry advanced.

Armenians: Infantry started to advance.

Gordyenes: Started to advance.

Adiabene: Advanced.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Canonium Clan: Started to descend the crag.

Coastal Clan: Advanced.

Cunobeline: Main warbands started to advance.

Togodumnus: Advanced towards the hills.

Caratacus: Advanced with most of cavalry keeping to the wood.

P2

Various corps from both sides started to gather on the hills around the boggy ground. On the other flank the two opponents faced up to each other. The infantry in the centre kept advancing. Some light skirmishing started.

Albanians: Cavalry deployed to face the enemy and infantry started to cross the marsh.

Hiberians: Cavalry descended the crag and infantry climbed the hill.

Armenians: Infantry continued to advance to form a holding line.

Gordyenes: Held position on the edge of the boggy ground.

Adiabene: Continued to advance.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Canonium Clan: Moved to block the road.

Coastal Clan: Closed up on the flank of the main warbands.

Cunobeline: Main warbands continued to advance.

Togodumnus: Advanced on to the hill overlooking the boggy ground.

Caratacus: Advanced cavalry on to the hill.

P3

Melees broke out on both flanks with the Adiabene and Albanians getting the initial upper hand as their cavalry charged in. Tigranes decided to advance instead of holding a line. Skirmishing increased, especially in the boggy ground.

Albanians: Cavalry charged the blocking enemy and infantry waded through the marsh.

Hiberians: All troops crossed the hill crest.

Armenians: Ordered a general advance for all troops.

Gordyenes: Held cavalry in position but sent infantry and light horse forward.

Adiabene: Charged the enemy cavalry on the hill and were then charged by infantry.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Canonium Clan: Were charged and fought in melee.

Coastal Clan: Advanced on the flank of the main warbands.

Cunobeline: Main warbands continued to advance.

Togodumnus: Held position whilst infantry caught up.

Caratacus: Cavalry were charged and weakened in melee so rallied back and infantry charged up the hill.

P4

The infantry lines in the centre met with a series of charges and brutal melees broke out. On the flanks, the melees had been just as brutal, with high casualties, causing some troops to rally back.

Albanians: Cavalry weakened in melee but kept fighting and one infantry group charged out of the marsh

Hiberians: All troops charged into melee.

Armenians: Some infantry were charged and others charged in to melee.

Gordyenes: Held cavalry in position but infantry advanced and some troops skirmished.

Adiabene: Rallied back out of melee.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Canonium Clan: Rallied back to the slope of the crag.

Coastal Clan: Faced up to and fought with enemy charging out of the marsh.

Cunobeline: Released warbands in a wild advance, with some charging and others being charged.

Togodumnus: Held position whilst warband charged and slingers fired.

Caratacus: Followed up retreating enemy cavalry with missiles.

P5

As the melees continued, the holes in the Armenian line became bigger than those on the Trinovante side. The Armenian left flank started to withdraw whilst the right sought to hold and re-group. Cunobeline's sons continued to push forward.

Albanians: Re-grouped remaining men on the edge of the marsh and wood.

Hiberians: Had lost a lot of troops so fell back to re-group on the hill.

Armenians: Had lost nearly all troops, so re-grouped with remaining men.

Gordyenes: Issued a withdrawal order.

Adiabene: Issued order to withdraw.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Canonium Clan: Held position on the slope of the crag.

Coastal Clan: Moved out of way of threatening enemy cavalry.

Cunobeline: Had lost several warbands but those remaining pushed forward.

Togodumnus: Moved chariots to support infantry who still advanced.

Caratacus: Continued to follow up retreating enemy with missiles.

P6

Whilst the Trinovante morale held, with the main clan troops moving forward and the sub-clans holding, the morale across the Armenian army dropped further with all corps commanders ordering either a withdrawal or a retreat.

Albanians: Issued the order to withdraw.

Hiberians: Ordered a withdrawal.

Armenians: Now ordered a retreat.

Gordyenes: Continued to withdraw.

Adiabene: Continued to withdraw.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Canonium Clan: Held position on the slope of the crag.

Coastal Clan: Held position.

Cunobeline: Remaining men continued to threaten the enemy.

Togodumnus: Chariots and infantry continued to move forward.

Caratacus: Moved forward on to the hill as enemy fell back.

And Finally

And that was it. With all the Armenian Corps moving backwards and with some of the Trinovantes still willing to advance and engage, the Trinovantes were awarded the victory.

Despite it being a loss, the battle was probably Tigranes' best performance to date. The Trinovantes had lost a lot of men and there were several near misses which could have given the Armenians the upper hand and possibly victory. Not sticking to his original plan was probably costly for Tigranes as his men met the opposition at the height of their wild enthusiasm. Had he held till the Hiberians had made an initial dent, his own men might have fared slightly better. The lack of impact by the Albanians on the right was also a problem.

Cunobeline played his luck and had just about enough willing men standing after the brutal melees across the board. Against a more resilient opponent he might have come unstuck. However, the sub-clans on his left did better than anticipated in holding that flank and his sons were fortunate to meet the two unenthusiastic allies on the other flank.

The most valuable Unit? Probably Dumnovellanunos and the Canonium Clan who despite the threat of near extinction hung on in and prevented the Albanian cavalry from bursting through and turning that flank.