

The Setup

Back in 2019, the Persian satraps from Nottooneariarma and Longawayoff narrowly beat the Trinovantes. Since then all the armies had been expanded and as the two sides still seemed reasonably balanced and even, I decided that a re-match was in order.

Unlike the pitch for the 2019 encounter, this one was more like a home game for the Trinovantes. On the right was a large area of heath with some marsh and boggy ground. A row of hills and woods edged this and the plain. On the left was a long and broad ridge of high ground with dense and open woods scattered across it.



The Teams and Their Plans

Cunobeline, king of the Trinovantes had mustered just over 18,000 men from his tribe.

He, with his nobles in chariots, led the warbands of the main clan with his two sons, Togodumnus and Caratacus, each commanding smaller and generally lighter contingents.

Two allied sub-clans – the Coastal and the Canonium – were supporting Cunobeline. Each sub-clan was led by a local chieftain and provided small mixed forces.

Cunobeline had to keep his plan simple for any chance of success. He would advance his warbands to the gap between the woods on the edge of the heath and the ridge and hold there.

Caratacus with the two allied sub-clans would use the woods as cover and move along the ridge and then drop in on the enemy flank. On the left, Togodumnus would clear any enemy from the heath and then turn in across the hill line.

Providing he could hold his own men back until one of the flanks was ready to support, Cunobeline felt he had a chance.

Megabazos of Nottonearmia commanded the Persian force which numbered about 17,500 men in total. Xavier of Longawayoff was his reluctant ally.

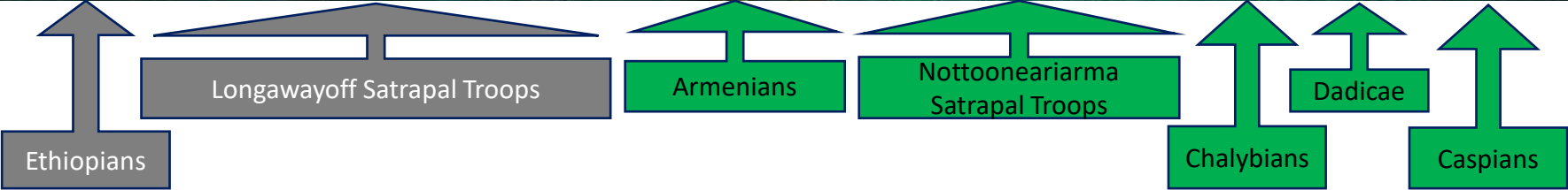
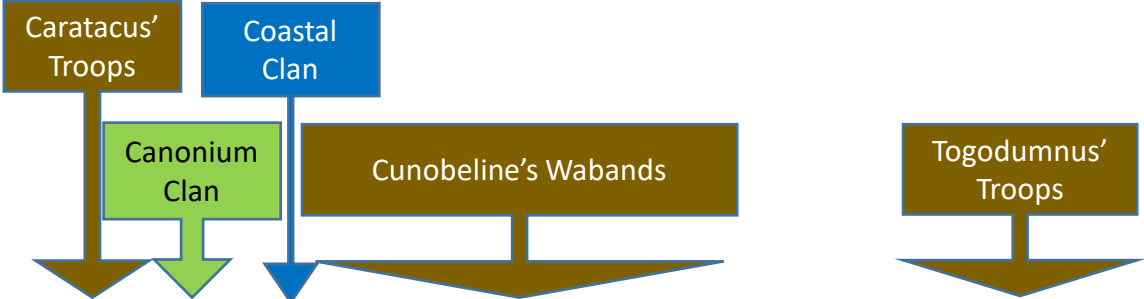
Megabazos had the largest of the Persian forces with 2,500 cavalry and 3,000 infantry in his Satrapal units. He was also supported by a range of subject allies under their own chieftains. The Caspians, Dadicae and Chalybians each supplied about 1,000 infantry whilst the Armenians provided 1,000 cavalry and 2,000 infantry.

Xavier's force included his own satrapal troops of 1,000 cavalry, 2,500 infantry and 1,000 mounted Arabs. His Ethiopian ally brought along 800 foot archers.

With concerns over the commitment and reliability of some of his contingents, Megabazos decided to send all the cavalry forward to weaken the enemy with missiles. All the infantry would form a line in the hope that the better ones might stiffen the morale of the poorer ones. These would then engage as the cavalry fell back to support the Dadicae and Caspians on the right flank and the Ethiopians on the left.

Pre-weakened, the aggression should have been taken out of the enemy giving the Persian infantry a chance to break through.

The Deployments



P1

Both sides started by moving forward although the cavalry advance on the Persian side was not as determined as Megabazos could have wished for. On the ridge, the Trinovantes started to pick their way through the woods.

Caratacus: Troops advanced around and through the wood.

Canonium Clan: Advanced.

Coastal Clan: Advanced into the dense wood.

Cunobeline: Warbands started to advance.

Togodumnus: Troops advanced around the marsh.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Ethiopians: Advanced up the ridge into the wood.

Longawayoff: Started to advance and close up on friends.

Armenians: Moved forward.

Nottooneariarma: Advanced.

Chalybians: Held their position.

Dadicae: Advanced.

Caspians: Advanced.

P2

The Persian cavalry were now able to fire on the advancing warbands which had ignored orders and advanced wildly. On the flanks the Trinovante troops advanced, causing some concern on the Persian left.

Caratacus: Troops continued to move forward.

Canonium Clan: Advanced between the woods.

Coastal Clan: Held their position in the dense wood.

Cunobeline: Warbands went wild and continued advancing

Togodumnus: Ordered a general advance and closed to skirmish with the enemy.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Ethiopians: Stayed in the wood and shot and asked for help.

Longawayoff: Sent Arab cavalry to left but otherwise advanced.

Armenians: Advanced further with horse archers firing.

Nottooneariarma: Continued advance and opened fire.

Chalybians: Advanced.

Dadicae: Moved forward and deployed.

Caspians: Continued to advance.

P3

The Trinovante warbands in the centre continued their wild advance, forcing the Persian cavalry to fall back to their left flank where the Persians were coming under pressure along the ridge. In the heath, troops were exchanging missile fire.

Caratacus:
Advanced on enemy and skirmished.

Canonium Clan: Advanced on to the open ridge.

Coastal Clan:
Moved to the front edge of the dense wood.

Cunobeline:
Warbands continued in a wild advance.

Togodumnus: Chariots were badly weakened and fell back but infantry advanced and shot.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Ethiopians: Were weakened but held position.

Longawayoff: Moved cavalry to support left flank whilst infantry linked up in the centre.

Nottooneariarma: Moved cavalry to the left as infantry lines closed.

Armenians: Cavalry held and shot but infantry advanced.

Chalybians: Advanced.

Dadicae: Moved forward and shot.

Caspians: Returned fire but lost men due to slingshot.

P4

The Persian flanks were caving in and in the middle the Trinovante warbands were breaking through. Megabazos committed his cavalry and remaining infantry to melee in the hope of stopping them.

Caratacus:
Charged enemy infantry and cavalry.

Canonium Clan: Advanced towards the enemy.

Coastal Clan:
Emerged from the wood and annoyed the enemy cavalry.

Cunobeline: Two warbands charged into melee. Chariots and others skirmished.

Togodumnus: Infantry on the hill were badly weakened in melee, but others shot enemy to bits.

Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.



Ethiopians:
Destroyed in melee.

Longawayoff: Pulled isolated cavalry back to link up with infantry.

Armenians:
Cavalry moved to flank whilst infantry advanced.

Nottoonariarma:
Cavalry and remaining infantry charged.

Chalybians:
Advanced.

Caspians: Few remaining men fell back.

Dadicae: Charged and beat the enemy on the hill but were then destroyed by missiles.

P5

Megabazos' attacks failed to cause any major breakthroughs and the Trinovante warbands kept rolling forward. Morale across the Persian commands was starting to fall.

Caratacus: Held men in a threatening position on the enemy flank.

Canonium Clan: Advanced towards the enemy.

Coastal Clan: Chased the enemy cavalry away.

Cunobeline: Had lost one warband and was nearly killed in melee, but troops kept moving forward.

Togodumnus: Was able to keep troops advancing.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Longawayoff: Concerned about overall situation so re-grouped.

Armenians: Ordered a retreat.

Nottooneariarma: With just some cavalry left, ordered a withdrawal.

Chalybians: Charged and destroyed enemy but were then charged in the rear.

Caspians: Ordered a withdrawal.

P6

The Trinovante chieftains were able to keep their men keen and moving forward, whilst the Persian commanders were not and further withdrawals were ordered and the Persians started to edge off the battlefield.

Caratacus: Held men in a threatening position on the enemy flank.

Canonium Clan: Advanced towards the enemy.

Coastal Clan: Advanced towards the enemy.

Cunobeline: Re-ordered warbands but continued to advance.

Togodumnus: Kept troops advancing.



Note: arrows point at first Division in each Corps.

Longawayoff: Ordered a withdrawal.

Armenians: Continued with withdrawal.

Nottooneariarma: Continued to withdraw.

Chalybians: Commander was killed in melee and remaining men started to withdraw.

Caspians: Continued to withdraw.

And Finally

With all the remaining Persian troops edging back and the Trinovantes still confident enough to advance, Cunobeline claimed the victory and revenge.

Despite losing control of his men, Cunobeline had what seemed an easy victory, although it might have been a lot closer. If he and Togodumnus fallen in combat – which they both nearly did – then the Trinovante morale could well have faded, reducing their aggression and giving the Persian infantry a chance. The layered attack on the right flank was quite effective and instigated a level of distraction amongst the Persian commanders.

Megabazos' concept was probably quite good but just badly executed. Potentially, holding the infantry back further and with a different line up may have improved their chances. He would argue that he was let down (again) by his suspect subject allies and his very reluctant fellow satrap.

The most valuable Unit? Not much choice. Despite arguments from Togodumnus and Caratacus, the first of Cunobeline's warbands probably had the key influence. Although weakened by archery, they still wiped out their initial opponents very quickly and then stood up well to a cavalry charge. At the end of the battle they were still positive enough to keep their place in the advancing line.