



The Praetorian Guard: A History of Rome's Elite Special Forces

Sandra Bingham

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No other special force in history has a mystique equal to that of ancient Rome's thoroughbred protection and counter-insurgency squadron—the renowned Praetorian Guard. Originally conceived as a personal army for the emperor, the Guard assumed a much greater role than simple bodyguard, taking over a wide range of powers in the city and operating for more than 300 years. Inseparable from the machinery of the Roman state, the Praetorians had the power to make or break individual emperors.

In *The Praetorian Guard*, Sandra Bingham offers a comprehensive and timely history of this elite military unit, from its foundation by Augustus in 27 BCE to its disbandment by Constantine in 312 CE. Exploring the multifaceted nature of the Guard, she discusses and describes its arms and insignia, size and recruitment tactics, and command structure and individual duties, as well as Guard members' family and religious lives. Bingham provides readers with a unique view of how others in antiquity portrayed these special forces and includes detailed illustrations, maps, and plans to paint a clear picture of this politically mighty military institution.

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