

THE AEDILESHIP AND PRAETORSHIP OF Q. MARCIUS CRISPUS

The vicissitudes of fortune Q. Marcius Crispus experienced in life could hardly have been greater than those he has experienced in the pages of twentieth-century historiographers. In 1930 he was credited with a praetorship, but not with an aedileship; by 1955 he was credited with both aedileship and praetorship; since 1971 he has been credited with an aedileship, but not with a praetorship. The consensus could not be more wrong; his praetorship is attested and his aedileship strictly is not.

Broughton had judged Marcius "Pr. 46" on the ground that he was a proconsul in 45¹⁾. In his study of the elections under Caesar, Sumner emphasized that "there are examples of men holding the rank of proconsul . . . without a prior praetorship"²⁾. Sumner then extended this principle to the present case: "For the listing of Q. Marcius Crispus as even a conjectural praetor of 46 . . . there is really no justification whatever . . . He may never have been praetor at all"³⁾. His restoration to the praetorship does not require counterargument, but can be effected through the quotation of an overlooked ancient source: *et C. Cassius, acceptis a Statio Murco et Crispo Marcio, praetorii viris imperatoribusque, praevalidis in Syria legionibus* (Vell. 2.69.2)⁴⁾. Since this passage describes events of the year 43, and since all sixteen praetors of 44 are known, the latest possible date for the praetorship of Marcius is 45⁵⁾.

1) T. R. S. Broughton, MRR 2.588. His full note sub anno (MRR 2.295–96), where Marcius is entered with a query, reads: "Proconsul in Bithynia in 45 . . . and therefore probably held the praetorship by or before 46, more probably before, since he was a Legate under Piso in Macedonia in 57–54, and was in service under Caesar in Africa in 46 without any mention of his title in our sources." In his first Supplement, New York 1960, 39, Broughton changed the notation to "Pr. by 46", and commented: "His praetorship might be as early as 54. In any case, 46 is almost certainly too late."

2) G. V. Sumner, *The Lex Annalis under Caesar*, Phoenix 25 (1971) 251.

3) Sumner, *op. cit.* 269. Broughton (MRR 3.138) later conceded: "Sumner has shown that there is no need to assume that he had been praetor before becoming proconsul in Bithynia-Pontus by Caesar's appointment in 45."

4) Sumner apparently missed this passage because Broughton (MRR 2.295–96) did not cite it under the year 46 as evidence for the praetorship, but only under the years 44 and 43 (MRR 2.329, 347) as evidence for the proconsulship Marcius held then. The passage is not simply cited but quoted by F. Münzer, Marcius 52, RE 14 (1930) 1556.

5) P. Wehrmann, *Fasti Praetorii ab a. u. DLXXXVIII ad a. u. DCCX*, Berlin 1875, 83, dated the praetorship "paulo ante 711/43"; M. Hölzl, *Fasti Praetorii ab a. u. DCLXXXVII usque ad a. u. DCCX*, Leipzig 1876, 90–92, on the ground that Marcius was legate in Africa in 46 and governor of Bithynia in 44, dated the praetorship precisely to 45; P. Willems, *Le Sénat de la République romaine*, Louvain 1878–85, 1.518: "vers 45"; P. Ribbeck, *Senatores Romani qui fuerint Idibus Martiis anni a. u. c. 710*, Berlin 1899, 18: "circiter 709 [45]." Münzer, *op. cit.* 1555, deemed him praetor in 46 "aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach." Broughton (MRR

A few years before Marcius was wrongly removed from the praetorian fasti by Sumner, he was too hastily inserted in the aedilician fasti by Syme. Noting that Marcius was a legate of L. Piso in Macedonia, Syme pointed to Cicero, Pis. 88 (*quaestor aedilicius reiectis praepositus*) and concluded that Marcius was “aedile ca. 58”⁶). Now Marcius must have served as legate till the end of the governorship in order to be passed over for command by Piso, who was proconsul from 57 to 55. His status as an *aedilicius* depends upon his returning to Rome with Piso, or at approximately the same time as Piso, or later than Piso. The legateship of Marcius is usually dated 57–55⁷), but has been dated 57–56⁸). The legateship is attested in just one passage of Cicero (Pis. 54), and in that passage Piso is reminded that Marcius *adventu isto tuo domi fuisse otiosum*. Whether Marcius returned at the end of 57, at some point in 56, or earlier in 55, we cannot know⁹). Since there is no evidence that he wanted to take charge of the province (and some evidence that he did not), and since he returned to Rome before Piso (perhaps well before), Pis. 88 does not prove or even tend to prove that he was aedile; we cannot maintain that he never held the aedileship, but we can say that Pis. 88 does not render his service in the aedileship certain or even probable. It is theoretically possible that he was an *aedilicius* in 57¹⁰), but it is equally possible that he was a *praetorius* already in 57, like his fellow

2.309, 330) places Marcius in Bithynia and Pontus in 45, and L. Tillius Cimber there in 44. I do not think that we can altogether exclude as possible dates for the praetorship 45 or 46, when Marcius seems to have been a *legatus* under Caesar (MRR 3.138): it is well to remember that M. Antonius in 49 was *tribunus plebis pro praetore* (MRR 3.260), and that the praetor P. Sulpicius Rufus commanded troops in 48 (MRR 2.273).

6) R. Syme, Review of MRR 1–2, CPh 50 (1955) 135. Syme’s successors have not been quite so certain about the aedileship. Sumner, *op. cit.* 269: “probably an aedile by 58”; E. S. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic*, Berkeley 1974, 179 n. 64: “very likely *aedilicius* by the time of his service in Macedon in the mid–50s”; Broughton, MRR 3.138: “probably one of the *aedilicii* among the legati of L. Piso . . . and so was an aedile by or before 58.”

7) So Münzer, *op. cit.* 1555; Syme, *op. cit.* 135; Sumner, *op. cit.* 269; Broughton, MRR 3.138. The original entry in Broughton’s “Index of Careers” reads “Leg., Lieut. 57–54” (MRR 2.588); this must be an erratum, although it is not recorded among the errata in Volume II in Broughton’s last Supplement. Broughton originally did not enter Marcius sub anno among the legates of 55 (MRR 2.219–20).

8) Willems, *op. cit.* 518; Ribbeck, *op. cit.* 18; so also perhaps Broughton, once (see the preceding note).

9) Even if we were told that Marcius left the province just before Piso, the aedileship would have to be queried, since there is no evidence that Marcius was interested in the command. If he left the province shortly before Piso in a fit of pique at being passed over for the command, his failure to greet Piso upon the latter’s return would not be very significant, so Pis. 54 suggests that Marcius was not interested in the command.

10) We might label him “Aed.?? ca. 58”, with the first query added because he left the province before Piso, the second because the only evidence suggests that he did not desire temporary command of the province.

legate, L. Valerius Flaccus (pr. 63)¹¹). The realization that Marcius is probably not one of the *aedilici* to whom allusion is made at Pis. 88 robs us of a terminus post quem for his praetorship, the only well attested office in his *cursus*.

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11) The description of Marcius at the time of his legateship as *in primis belli ac rei militaris peritum* (Pis. 54) would fit well with a previous provincial command, though this could come as easily after his unattested quaestorship as after his praetorship.

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