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Título: Cavalry Of The Roman Republic, The

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Precio: \$622.00

Editorial:

Año: 2011

Tema:

Edición: 1^a

Sinopsis

ISBN: 9780415619394

In this original and revealing work, Jeremiah B. McCall challenges the generally accepted view of the Roman cavalry and explores the fundamental connections between war and society in republican Rome, c.300-100 BC.

McCall describes the citizen cavalry's equipment, tactics, and motivation in battle, and argues for its effectiveness in the field. This success is proof that it cannot finally have been disbanded for purely military reasons; he shows that victories in the law-courts, and lavish displays of wealth, came to supersede cavalry service as a way of building the reputations of the Roman elite.

The clear structure and fresh approach of the book, combining insights from both Roman military and social history, will be useful to readers at all levels of study.