

Battle of Granicus (334BC) | Notes

How to remember what you need to talk about in each battle

<u>B</u> ackground	→	Bring
<u>T</u> errain	→	The
<u>B</u> attle formation	→	Booze
<u>A</u> ccount of the battle/siege	→	Around
<u>A</u> ftermath or consequences	→	Alexander

Background

- Persian army leaders and satraps meet to discuss Alexander's crossing into Asia.
(Spithridates, Arsites, Memnon of Rhodes.)
- Memnon - Scorched earth policy: burning all growing crops, destroy grass and horse feed and destroy towns to prevent Alexander getting army supplies.
- Arsites would not consent and it was not supported by the other commanders.

Terrain

- "Most of the Macedonian officers were alarmed at the depth of the riverbed and of the rough and uneven slopes of the banks on the opposite side." (Arrian)
- "I would shame the Hellespont were I to shy from a mere stream as the Granicus." (Arrian)
- The river was about 1 meter deep with 3-4 meter deep pools.
- The banks were 3-4 meters high giving the *Persians the advantage*.

Battle formation

Persians

- 20,000 Cavalry- horsemen
- 2,000 Mercenary phalanx- paid foot soldiers (they were professionally trained and they could have been fighting against their own people)

Macedonians

- 32,000 infantry- foot soldiers
- 5,100 cavalry- horsemen
- Cavalry companions- higher ranking horsemen, heavily armed
- Double infantry phalanx- rectangular shape of infantry
- Archers- used bows and arrows
- Cavalry lancers- horsemen with lances
- Parmenio was in charge of the left wing.
- Extreme left was Thesalian and allied cavalry. Beside was the double infantry phalanx.
- Alexander was at the right wing in front of the cavalry companions.
- Extreme right was Philotas in charge of the cavalry companions and the Agrianan spearmen. Beside him was Amyntas and the cavalry lancers.

Account

- Alex ordered Amyntas with a force of cavalry and infantry to make the first attack
- Ptolemaeus was also sent with a squadron of cavalry.
- Persians shot down at them from above. Hand to hand battle broke out.
- Macedonians found it difficult to gain secure footing on the muddy banks.
- Alex led a troop keeping them at an angle to the current - difficult to attack.

- Alex attacked the Persian centre.
- Fierce struggle develops, rank after rank of Macedonians cross with ease.
- Turned into a cavalry battle but was more like an infantry battle. Horse vs horse, man vs man.
- Macedonians got the upper hand. (Their experience and cornel wood lances were no match against the Persian's javelins.)
- Alex charged after Darius' son in law and struck him in the face.
- Alex almost killed by Spithridates but was saved by Cleitus who cut off his shoulder.
- The Persian cavalry routed leaving their Greek mercenaries to be slaughtered or enslaved.

Aftermath

- Macedonian casualties = 115 (Arrian)
- 1000 Persian casualties = 2,000 Greek mercenaries sold as slaves and set back to Greece.
(Arrian)

Alex's treatment of the dead and wounded

- 25 bronze statues of companions were erected by his personal sculptor Lysippus.
- Families of the fallen were exempt from paying taxes.
- Soldiers were buried with their arms.
- He visited the wounded one by one and let them exaggerate their stories.

Alexander's character

- Brave- was not afraid to cross the river even though it was extremely difficult.
- Fought bravely in battle and killed mercenaries.
- Pious- sent 300 suits of Persian armour as an offering to the goddess Athena.

- Respectful- made 25 bronze statues of fallen men.
- Exempted families of the fallen from paying tax.
- Visited his wounded soldiers.