

史 记 选

SELECTIONS FROM
RECORDS OF THE HISTORIAN

项羽本纪

项籍者，下相人也，字羽。初起时，年二十四。其季父项梁，梁父即楚将项燕，为秦将王翦所戮者也。项氏世世为楚将，封于项，故姓项氏。项籍少时，学书不成，去学剑，又不成。项梁怒之。籍曰：“书，足以记名姓而已。剑，一人敌，不足学。学万人敌。”于是项梁乃教籍兵法，籍大喜；略知其意，又不肯竟学。项梁尝有栎阳逮，乃请蕲狱掾曹咎书，抵栎阳狱掾司马欣，以故事得已。项梁杀人，与籍避仇于吴中。吴中贤士大夫皆出项梁下。每吴中有大繇役及丧，项梁常为主办，阴以兵法部勒宾客及子弟，以是知其能。秦始皇

Xiang Yu

Xiang Ji, whose other name was Yu, was a man of Xiaxiang. He was twenty-four when he first rose in arms. His uncle Xiang Liang was the son of Xiang Yan, a general of Chu who was killed by the Qin general Wang Jian. For many generations the heads of the clan had been enfeoffed in Xiang as generals of Chu; hence Xiang became their family name.

As a lad Xiang Yu studied to be a scribe. Failing in this, he took up swordsmanship. When he failed in this too, Xiang Liang was angry with him, but he said:

"All scribes do is make lists of names, and swordsmen can only fight a single foe; that is not worth learning. I want to learn how to fight ten thousand foes."

Then, to his great joy, Xiang Liang taught him military strategy. But once he had a general grasp of the subject, Xiang Yu again refused to study to the end.

Xiang Liang was arrested at Yueyang, but procured a letter from Cao Jiu, gaoler of Ji, and presented this to Sima Xin, the gaoler of Yueyang, who thereupon let him go. Later Xiang Liang killed a man and fled from vengeance with Xiang Yu to Wu. As all the local figures lacked his ability, Xiang Liang generally took charge of large labour conscriptions or important funerals. And in secret he trained his followers and young men in the arts of war, to test their abilities.

When the First Emperor of Qin crossed the River Zhe on a visit to Kuaiji, Xiang Liang and Xiang Yu looked on.

皇帝游会稽 渡浙江 梁与籍俱观 籍曰：“彼可取而代也！”梁掩其口 曰：“毋妄言，族矣！”梁以此奇籍。籍长八尺余 力能扛鼎，才气过人，虽吴中子弟皆已惮籍矣。

秦二世元年七月，陈涉等起大泽中。其九月 会稽守通谓梁曰：“江西皆反 此亦天亡秦之时也。吾闻先即制人，后则为人所制。吾欲发兵 使公及桓楚将。”是时桓楚亡在泽中。梁曰：“桓楚亡人 莫知其处 独籍知之耳。”梁乃出 诫籍持剑居外待。梁复入 与守坐 曰：“请召籍 使受命召桓楚。”守曰：“诺。”梁召籍入。须臾 梁眴籍曰：“可行矣！”于是籍遂拔剑斩守头。项梁持守头 佩其印绶。门下大惊 扰乱，籍所击杀数十百人。一府中皆慑伏，莫敢起。梁乃召故所知豪吏，谕以所为起大事。遂举吴中兵。使人收下县，得精兵八千人。梁部署吴中豪杰 为校尉、候、司

"Why not take over from him?" exclaimed Xiang Yu.

"Don't talk so wildly!" said Xiang Liang, stopping his nephew's mouth. "Do you want our clan wiped out?" But this sent Xiang Yu up in his estimation.

Xiang Yu was over six feet tall and so strong that he could carry a bronze cauldron. He was more brilliant and ambitious than others, so that all the young men in the district stood in awe of him.

In the seventh month of the first year of the Second Emperor, Chen She and his men rose in Daze. In the ninth month Yin Tong, governor of Kuaiji, summoned Xiang Liang and said:

"All the lower reaches of the Yangtse have revolted. Heaven is about to destroy the House of Qin. Whoever strikes first, they say, becomes a leader, while those who delay are led. I want to raise troops with you and Huan Chu as my generals."

Huan Chu was then an outlaw in the marshes.

"Huan Chu is an outlaw," replied Xiang Liang, "and no one but Xiang Yu knows where he is." He withdrew and told Xiang Yu to wait outside with his sword. Then he went back, sat down again by the governor and said, "Please summon Xiang Yu to take your orders to Huan Chu."

When the governor agreed, Xiang Liang called Xiang Yu in. After a moment he glanced at him and said, "The time has come!" Then Xiang Yu drew his sword and cut off the governor's head. Xiang Liang picked up the head and hung Yin Tong's seal and insignia on his own belt. The governor's men panicked and were thrown into confusion. Xiang Yu killed several scores of them. The whole office cowered in terror and no one dared stand against him. Then Xiang Liang summoned the chief citizens and some officers whom he knew, gave them his reasons for raising a revolt, and took command of the army of Wu. He sent officers to conscript men from the various districts and gathered a picked force of eight thousand men, appointing the best local men as

马。有一人不得用，自言于梁。梁曰：“前时某丧，使公主某事，不能办。以此不任用公。”众乃皆伏。于是梁为会稽守，籍为裨将，徇下县。

广陵人召平于是为陈王徇广陵，未能下，闻陈王败走，秦兵又且至，乃渡江，矫陈王命，拜梁为楚王上柱国。曰：“江东已定，急引兵西击秦！”项梁乃以八千人渡江而西。闻陈婴已下东阳，使使欲与连和俱西。陈婴者，故东阳令史，居县中，素信谨，称为长者。东阳少年杀其令，相聚数千人，欲置长，无适用，乃请陈婴。婴谢不能，遂强立婴为长，县中从者得二万人。少年欲立婴便为王，异军苍头特起。陈婴母谓婴曰：“自我为汝家妇，未尝闻汝先古之有贵者。今暴得大名，不祥。不如有所属，事成犹得封侯，事败易以亡，非世所

his lieutenants, scouts and sergeants. One man complained that he had received no post, but Xiang Liang retorted:

"When I asked you to see to something at so-and-so's funeral, you let me down. That is why you are being passed over."

All agreed that this was just. Xiang Liang became the governor of Kuaiji with Xiang Yu as his adjutant, and they took over all the districts in that province.

Zhao Ping, a native of Guangling, attacked that city for Chen She but failed to take it. When he heard of Chen She's defeat and flight and of the Qin army's approach, he crossed the Yangtse and, pretending that he was acting on Chen She's orders, conferred on Xiang Liang the title of chief minister of Chu.

"You have conquered the land to the east," he said. "Lose no time now but lead your army west against Qin."

Xiang Liang at the head of his eight thousand men crossed the river and marched west. When he learned that Chen Ying had taken Dongyang, he sent an envoy to propose that they join forces and advance west together. Chen Ying had been secretary to the magistrate of Dongyang and was respected throughout the county for his integrity. After the young men there killed their magistrate, several thousands of men banded together and looked for a leader. Finding no one suitable, they approached Chen Ying. He declined with the excuse that he lacked ability, but they finally prevailed on him to take charge and some twenty thousand men of the county followed him. Then the young men wanted to set him up as their king and form a black-turbaned rebel force of their own.

Chen Ying's mother told him, "Since I married into your family, I have never heard that any of your ancestors ever attained noble rank. It is not safe to win fame overnight; you would do better to serve as a subordinate. Then if all goes well, you will be made a marquis; if things go badly, you can easily escape because you are not known to

指名也。”婴乃不敢为王。谓其军吏曰：“项氏世世将家，有名于楚，今欲举大事，将非其人不可。我倚名族，亡秦必矣。”于是众从其言，以兵属项梁。项梁渡淮，黥布、蒲将军亦以兵属焉。凡六七万人，军下邳。

当是时，秦嘉已立景驹为楚王，军彭城东，欲距项梁。项梁谓军吏曰：“陈王先首事，战不利，未闻所在。今秦嘉倍陈王而立景驹，逆无道。”乃进兵击秦嘉。秦嘉军败走，追之至胡陵。嘉还战，一日，嘉死，军降。景驹走死梁地。项梁已并秦嘉军，军胡陵，将引军而西。章邯军至栗，项梁使别将朱鸡石、余樊君与战，余樊君死，朱鸡石军败，亡走胡陵。项梁乃引兵入薛，诛鸡石。项梁前使项羽别攻襄城，襄城坚守不下。已拔，皆坑之。还报项梁。项梁闻陈王定死，召诸别将会薛计事。此时，沛公亦起沛往焉。

居鄆人范增，年七十，素居家，好奇

all."

So Chen Ying did not venture to become king. "The Xiang family has produced generals for several generations," he told his officers. "They are well known in Chu. If we want to revolt, we must have them on our side. With the help of such a distinguished family, Qin can certainly be destroyed."

They took his advice and put their troops under Xiang Liang's command. After Xiang Liang crossed the River Huai, Ying Bu and General Pu also came over to him with their men. The army, now nearly seventy thousand strong, encamped at Xapi.

Meanwhile Qin Jia had made Jing Ju king of Chu and stationed his troops east of Pengcheng to block Xiang Liang's way.

"Chen She was the first to rise," said Xiang Liang to his officers. "But since his defeat we do not know what has become of him. Now Qin Jia has turned against him and made Jing Ju king. This is vile treachery!"

He led his men against Qin Jia and put him to flight. Xiang Liang pursued him to Huling, where Qin Jia turned to give battle. At the end of the day Qin Jia was dead and his men had surrendered. Jing Ju fled and perished in the land of Liang.

Xiang Liang took over Qin Jia's army and camped at Huling before marching west.

By now the Qin army led by Zhang Han had reached Li. Xiang Liang sent his generals Zhu Jishi and the lord of Yufan against him; but the lord of Yufan was killed and Zhu Jishi's army, routed, retreated to Huling. Xiang Liang led his men to Xue and killed Zhu Jishi. He had sent Xiang Yu to storm, Xiang Yu put all the defenders to the sword before going back to report to Xiang Liang.

When Xiang Liang heard for certain that Chen She was dead, he summoned his generals to Xue for a council. By this time Liu Bang, who had risen in Pei, had joined him.

计。往说项梁曰：“陈胜败固当。夫秦灭六国，楚最无罪。自怀王入秦不反，楚人怜之至今。故楚南公曰：‘楚虽三户，亡秦必楚也’。今陈胜首事，不立楚后而自立，其势不长。今君起江东，楚蜂午之将皆争附君者，以君世世楚将，为能复立楚之后也。”于是项梁然其言，乃求楚怀王孙心民间，为人牧羊，立以为楚怀王，从民所望也。陈婴为楚上柱国，封五县，与怀王都盱台。项梁自号为武信君。

居数月，引兵攻亢父，与齐田荣、司马龙且军救东阿。大破秦军于东阿，田荣即引兵归，逐其王假。假亡走楚。假相田角亡走赵。角弟田间故齐将，居赵不敢归。田荣立田儋子市为齐王。项梁已破东阿下军，遂追秦军。数使使趣齐兵，欲与俱西。田荣曰：“楚杀田假，赵杀田角、田间，乃发兵。”项梁曰：“田假为与国之王，穷

Fan Zeng of Juchao, a man of seventy who held no public office, was a good strategist. Now he went to offer advice to Xiang Liang saying, "Chen She deserved to fall. Of the six kingdoms conquered by Qin, Chu was the most blameless. Ever since King Huai went to Qin and failed to return, the people of Chu have never ceased to mourn him. That is why Nangong of Chu said, 'So long as three households are left in Chu, she will be the land to overthrow Qin.' But when Chen She rebelled, he set himself up as king instead of one of the House of Chu; thus his power was short-lived. Once you took up arms in the east, men of power in Chu raced to put themselves under your command, because you come of a line of generals of Chu and have it in your power to restore the royal house."

These words convinced Xiang Liang, who had a search made for the late King Huai's grandson Xin, who turned out to be herding sheep among the common people, and set him up as King Huai of Chu to satisfy popular feeling. Chen Ying was appointed his chief minister and given five counties as his fief. King Huai's capital was Xuyi. Xiang Liang himself took the title lord of Wuxin.

Some months later he led his army against Kangfu, then joined forces with Tian Rong of Qi and Marshal Sima Longju to relieve Donga, routing the forces of Qin there. Then Tian Rong led his troops back to Qi and drove away King Jia, who fled to Chu. His chief minister Tian Jiao fled to Zhao. Tian Jiao's younger brother Tian Jian, a former general of Qi, remained in Zhao, not daring to return. Then Tian Rong made Fu, son of Tian Dan, king of Qi. After defeating the forces of Qin at Donga, Xiang Liang set out in pursuit of them and sent several envoys to urge the generals of Qi to advance west with him.

Tian Rong's answer was, "We will send troops only if you kill Tian Jia and the king of Zhao kills Tian Jiao and Tian Jian."

"Tian Jia is the king of a friendly state who turned to us in time of need," objected Xiang Liang. "It would not be right to kill him."

来从我 不忍杀之。’赵亦不杀田角、田间以市于齐。齐遂不肯发兵助楚。项梁使沛公及项羽别攻城阳 屠之。西破秦军濮阳东 秦兵收入濮阳。沛公、项羽乃攻定陶。定陶未下 去 西略地至邕丘 大破秦军 斩李由。还攻外黄 外黄未下。

项梁起东阿 西 北至定陶 再破秦军 项羽等又斩李由 益轻秦 有骄色。宋义乃谏项梁曰：“ 战胜而将骄卒惰者败。今卒少惰矣 秦兵日益 臣为君畏之。”项梁弗听。乃使宋义使于齐。道遇齐使者高陵君显 ,曰：“ 公将见武信君乎？”曰：“ 然。”曰：“ 臣论武信君军必败。公徐行即免死 疾行则及祸。”秦果悉起兵益章邯 , 击楚军 大破之定陶 项梁死。沛公、项羽去外黄攻陈留，陈留坚守不能下。沛公、项羽相与谋曰：“ 今项梁军破 士卒恐。”乃与吕臣军俱引兵而东。吕臣军彭城

Neither would the king of Zhao kill the other two men to please Qi. So Qi sent no troops to aid Chu.

Xiang Liang dispatched Liu Bang and Xiang Yu to attack Chengyang. They slaughtered all the defenders and advanced west to defeat the Qin army east of Puyang. When the Qin forces withdrew into Puyang, Liu Bang and Xiang Yu attacked Dingtao but failed to take it. They marched west and occupied all the districts up to Yongqiu, where they inflicted another crushing defeat on the forces of Qin and beheaded Li Yu. They turned back to attack Waihuang, but could not take it.

Meanwhile Xiang Liang had set out from Donga and marched northwest to Dingtao, where once again he defeated the forces of Qin; and now that Xiang Yu and the others had beheaded Li Yu, he began to underestimate Qin and to grow arrogant.

Song Yi warned him, "A general who is arrogant and soldiers who slack off after a victory are sure to be defeated. Now your troops are taking it easy while the Qin army grows stronger every day. I am worried to think what will become of you."

Xiang Liang paid no attention, but sent Song Yi as his envoy to Qi. On the way Song Yi met Qi's envoy, Lord Xian of Gaoling.

"Are you going to see the lord of Wuxin (Xiang Liang)?" he asked him.

The other replied, "I am."

"I can tell you," said Song Yi, "that the lord of Wuxin is sure to be defeated. If you travel slowly, you may escape with your life. If you hurry, you will run into trouble."

All Qin's men were mobilized to reinforce Zhang Han, who attacked and routed the Chu army at Dingtao and killed Xiang Liang.

Liu Bang and Xiang Yu had left Waihuang to attack Chenliu, but the city was stubbornly defended and could not be taken. So they took counsel together. "Now that Xiang Liang's army has been routed, our men are scared," they said. They decided to go east with Lu Chen's

东 项羽军彭城西 沛公军砀。

章邯已破项梁军 则以为楚地兵不足忧 乃渡河击赵 大破之。当此时 赵歇为王 陈余为将 张耳为相 皆走入钜鹿城。章邯令王离、涉间围钜鹿 章邯军其南 筑甬道而输之粟。陈余为将 将卒数万人而军钜鹿之北 此所谓河北之军也。楚兵已破于定陶 怀王恐 从盱台之彭城 并项羽、吕臣军自将之。以吕臣为司徒 以其父吕青为令尹。以沛公为砀郡长 封为武安侯 将砀郡兵。

初，宋义所遇齐使者高陵君显在楚军 见楚王曰：“宋义论武信君之军必败，居数日 军果败。兵未战而先见败征 此可谓知兵矣。”王召宋义与计事 而大说之，因置以为上将军。项羽为鲁公为次将 范增为末将 救赵。诸别将皆属宋义，号为卿子冠军。行至安阳 留四十六日不进。项羽曰：“吾闻秦军围赵王钜鹿 疾引兵渡河 楚击其外 赵应其内 破秦军必矣。”宋义曰：“不然。夫搏牛之虻不可以

troops. Lu Chen encamped east of Pengcheng, Xiang Yu west of Pengcheng and Liu Bang at Dang.

After defeating Xiang Liang, Zhang Han thought he had nothing to fear from the other Chu forces. He crossed the Yellow River to attack Zhao and routed its army completely. Zhao Xie, the king of Zhao, fled with his general Chen Yu and his chief minister Zhang Er to the city of Julu. Zhang Han ordered Wang Li and She Jian to besiege the city, while he stationed his own army to the south and constructed a fortified road to supply them with grain. The Zhao commander Chen Yu camped with several tens of thousands of men north of the city. This force was known as the Army North of the River.

After the defeat of the Chu army at Dingtao, King Huai of Chu took fright and moved from Xuyi to Pengcheng, where he combined the forces of Xiang Yu and Lu Chen under his own command. He appointed Lu Chen his chief commissary and his father Lu Qing prime minister. Liu Bang he made governor of Tang and marquis of Wu'an, in command of the troops of Dang.

Lord Xian of Kaoling, Qi's envoy whom Song Yi had once met and who was in the Chu army, informed King Huai, "Song Yi predicted the lord of Wuxin's defeat, and a few days later his army was indeed routed. Here is a man who understands warfare, who foresees defeat before a battle is fought."

King Huai summoned Song Yi for a talk and was so impressed that he appointed him commander-in-chief to rescue Zhao, and made Xiang Yu the duke of Lu and his second in command with Fan Zeng as third in command. All the other generals took orders from Song Yi, whose title was Lord Chief Marshal. They marched to Anyang and camped there for forty-six days without advancing.

"I hear that Qin is besieging the king of Zhao at Julu," said Xiang Yu. "If we cross the river quickly and attack from outside while the men of Zhao strike from within, we are bound to defeat the Qin ar-

破虬虱 今秦攻赵 战胜则兵罢 我承其
敝；不胜则我引兵鼓行而西，必举秦矣。
故不如先斗秦、赵。夫被坚执锐，义不如
公 坐而运策 公不如义。’因下令军中曰：
“猛如虎 很如羊 贪如狼 强不可使者 皆
斩之！”乃遣其子宋襄相齐 身送之至无
盐 饮酒高会。天寒大雨 士卒冻饥。项
羽曰：“将戮力而攻秦 久留不行。今岁饥
民贫 士卒食芋菽 军无见粮 乃饮酒高
会 不引兵渡河因赵食 与赵并力攻秦 乃
曰‘承其敝’。夫以秦之强 攻新造之赵，
其势必举赵。赵举而秦强 何敝之承 且
国兵新破 王坐不安席 埽境内而专属于
将军 国家安危 在此一举。今不恤士卒
而徇其私 非社稷之臣。”项羽晨朝上将军
宋义，即其帐中斩宋义头。出令军中曰：
“宋义与齐谋反楚 楚王阴令羽诛之。”当
是时 诸将皆慑服 莫敢枝梧。皆曰：“首立

my."

"No," objected Song Yi. "A gadfly which can sting a bull may not be able to kill a flea. Now Qin is attacking Zhao. If her men win they will be exhausted and we can take advantage of their weakness. If they lose we can march west with sounding drums and will certainly defeat them. Better let Qin and Zhao fight it out first. In feats of arms I am no match for you, but in strategy you are no match for me."

Then he issued this order to the troops: "Any man who is fierce as a tiger, stubborn as a sheep, greedy as a wolf, or disobedient to orders, will lose his head."

He appointed his son Song Xiang chief minister to the king of Qi and saw him to Wuyan, where he gave a banquet. The day was raw, a heavy rain was falling, and the men were hungry and cold.

Xiang Yu reflected, "Instead of hitting out hard at Qin, he has made us stay here all this time without moving. The harvest has failed, the people are destitute, and for lack of grain our men are eating taros and beans; yet he holds a great banquet! Instead of leading our troops across the river to get food from Zhao and join forces with Zhao to attack the enemy, he claims he is waiting for Qin to be exhausted. In fact, Qin is so powerful that if she attacks the newly formed state of Zhao, she is bound to defeat it. Once Zhao falls, Qin will grow even stronger. There will be no exhaustion for us to profit by. Besides, our men have recently been defeated, our king sits uneasy on his throne and has put all the resources of the kingdom at the command of Song Yi. Our whole country's future is at stake. Yet instead of caring for his troops, Song Yi attends to private affairs. He is betraying our country."

So one morning when he went to pay his respects to the marshal he entered Song Yi's tent and cut off his head. Coming out he announced to the army, "Song Yi was plotting with Qi against our state. King Huai sent me secret orders to execute him."