



Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

Falkirk Area Guide



Antonine Wall Ditch, Watling Lodge, Falkirk ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall



1.Griffin Figurine found at Rough Castle ©Falkirk Community Trust / 2. Illustration of Gaius Flavius Betto, Commander of Rough Castle Fort/ 3. View of Kinneil Fortlet / 4. Kinneil Guardian Sculpture/ 5. Antonine Wall Ditch at Watling Lodge/ 6. Centurion at Callendar Playpark/ 7. Modern distance stone in Cowgate, Falkirk/ 8. Detail of the Bo'ness Mural by Recoat ©C Tennant/ 9. View of Rough Castle Fort Pictures 2,3,4,5,6,7,9 ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

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Introduction

The Antonine Wall runs through five local authority areas covering the Central Belt of Scotland: Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire, Glasgow City, and East Dunbartonshire Councils.

This document provides a summary of the Antonine Wall in Falkirk including historical information, information about local sites, artefacts that have been found locally, the work of the Rediscovering the Antonine Wall Project in the area, as well as character depictions of real people who lived along the wall in Falkirk during the Roman Occupation of Scotland. Finally, a list of links and a glossary of Roman terms you may find useful are also included.

Historical Background

The Romans first invaded Britain in 55 BC and reached the area we now know as Scotland in the AD70s when governor Gnaeus Julius Agricola launched a land and sea campaign in the north. It took seven years for him to take control of much of Scotland. A key battle was Mons Graupius, in AD 84, when, according to historical writers, the Romans defeated the far bigger combined forces of the Caledonians, led by Calgacus. From the mid AD 80's troops were slowly withdrawn from Scotland as they were needed elsewhere in the empire, and around AD 122 the Emperor Hadrian consolidated the northern frontier with the construction of Hadrian's Wall.

On Hadrian's death, Antoninus Pius became emperor. He ordered his governor, Quintus Lollius Urbicus to re-invade Scotland. Soon after, around AD 142, a new northern frontier was constructed: what we know today as the Antonine Wall. This stretched 37 miles across Scotland from west to east and, unlike the stone-built Hadrian's Wall, was constructed mostly out of layers of turf and reached a height of 3m. It was built by members of the three Roman legions who were stationed in Scotland - the Second, Sixth and Twentieth Legions. To date, archaeologists have uncovered evidence for seventeen forts plus additional 'fortlets' that would have accommodated the 6-7,000 soldiers stationed along the Wall, but it is likely there are some still to be found.

Antoninus Pius died in AD 161 and the Antonine Wall was abandoned around AD 165. The troops retreated south to reoccupy Hadrian's Wall. The Romans finally left Britain in AD 410, when the army was needed elsewhere.

Visit our website (www.antoninewall.org) for further information about the Romans in Scotland and the Antonine Wall as well as maps, activities and downloadable images and educational resources. For more detailed information, we recommend the following books:

- The Antonine Wall, David J Breeze, 2023
- The Antonine Wall: Papers in Honour of Professor Lawrence Keppie, 2020
- The Roman Army, David J. Breeze, 2016
- The Antonine Wall: A handbook to the surviving remains, 2015

Roman sites in Falkirk

Bantaskin

A well-preserved section of Antonine Wall Ditch and Outer Mound is located amidst housing within a circular loop of Anson Avenue at Bantaskin, at the western end of Falkirk. Beech trees highlight the line of the Ditch, which has been reduced on the north bank by terracing to form a modern track.



The line of the Wall and Ditch in Bantaskin in the middle of the picture. ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

History and description

This section of the Antonine Wall has been well-preserved and was recognised by most early antiquarians. Several sections of the Wall were excavated in 1916, followed by some trial-scale trenching in 2005 which focused on the relationship between the Antonine Wall and an early modern earthen bank that had been constructed as part of the designed landscape for the now-demolished Bantaskin House. The Ditch is not currently as deep as it once was, but the south bank has probably survived to its original height, while the north bank has been cut down to form the modern trackway.

Bonnyside East and West Expansions

Just west of Rough Castle fort, along a stretch of well-preserved Antonine Wall Rampart, Ditch, and Outer Mound, are two "expansions" attached to the south face of the Rampart.

A second pair of similar "expansions" is located to the east of Rough Castle fort at Tentfield, and both pairs are best visited in conjunction with a visit to Rough Castle, the best-preserved fort on the entire line of the Wall. The Bonnyside East "expansion" is located about 400m west of the fort, where it is visible as a low mound, while the better preserved Bonnyside West "expansion" is about 400m further west, just inside the private grounds of Bonnyside House.

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History and description

The remarkable preservation of the Antonine frontier around Rough Castle was very evident to the antiquarian writers, who noted the presence of the Bonnyside "expansions", which they described as being very similar in size and shape to the "turrets" known from Hadrian's Wall. The Bonnyside East "expansion" was excavated in 1957.

Description and interpretation

The eighteenth-century antiquarians associated these "expansions" with the turrets on Hadrian's Wall. In the 1930s, these and similar structures at Croy Hill and Tentfield, were interpreted as beacon or signalling platforms. Excavation of Bonnyside East has provided the most detailed description of this class of installations, confirming that the "expansion" consisted of a turf platform on a stone base, square in shape, measuring about 5.2m on all sides. A gravel pit was located under the platform, probably related to the Military Way, which must have been constructed before the "expansion". Traces of burnt material were revealed around the "expansion", lending support to the beacon platform interpretation. They may alternatively, however, have served a turret-like function, facilitating communication from east-to-west.

Bridgeness

The Antonine Wall's eastern end was located at or near Bridgeness on the Firth of Forth. There are no visible remains of the Rampart, Ditch, or a Roman installation here, but a replica of the Bridgeness Distance Slab, originally found nearby, was unveiled in Kinningars Park in September 2012.

History of discovery and excavation

The eastern terminus (ending point) of the Antonine Wall has been disputed ever since the Venerable Bede described the Wall around AD 730. Although various locations have been suggested, including Abercorn, Carriden, and Kinneil, the 1868 discovery of the Bridgeness Distance Stone (RIB 2139) confirmed that the Wall must have reached at least as far as the eastern end of Bo'ness. Throughout the early 1900s, attempts were made to trace the line of the Wall, but its course could only be clearly identified as far east as the Dean Burn. Despite the lack of structural evidence for the line of the Wall, the distance stone confirmed that the Wall had extended further east.

The original Distance Stone, the largest and most elaborate from the Antonine Wall, is now located in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. A Victorian replica of the inscription panel, but not the sculpted scenes, was made and put on display near the original find-spot at the bottom of Harbour Road, but by 2000 this was barely readable.

In September 2012 a new, full-size, sandstone replica including the inscription and sculptured side panels was unveiled further up the road in Kinningars Park.

Excavations in the area have included three trenches near Bridgeness Tower in 1985, in advance of redevelopment, in the hopes of identifying further information about the find-spot of the Bridgeness Distance Stone. A dry-stone wall was located, possibly the one described by those who initially discovered the sculpture, but this was found to be of medieval date. Further excavations to the east of Bridgeness, failed to identify the line of the wall towards Carriden.

Description and interpretation:

The Bridgeness Distance Stone records building work by the Second Legion. Its precise find-spot remains uncertain, and recent excavations have revealed that the likely stone foundation on which it was discovered was of late medieval date. The line of the Antonine Wall's Rampart and/or Ditch have not been located further east than the area of St Mary's Roman Catholic Church on Dean Road, yet the nearest fort lies further east at Carriden.

The Antonine Wall's precise ending point, as a result, is still debatable. Many scholars still prefer the view that the Wall terminated at Bridgeness, while others think that it may have extended all the way to Carriden. Whether the Bridgeness Distance Stone was originally located near the location of the current replica, or was transported there to be reused in a medieval building project, it remains the largest and most elaborate sculptured stone from the Antonine frontier.

Callendar Park Wall Section

Callendar Park, just south-east of Falkirk town centre, features long open stretches of the Antonine Wall Ditch and an excellent museum located within Callendar House, an expansive country house with origins in the fourteenth century.

History and description

The Antonine Wall has survived reasonably well throughout Callendar Park, and the Ditch was recognised by antiquarians in the eighteenth century. Excavations have been carried out in Callendar Park in 1912-13, and 1989-90, the latter revealing the presence of defensive pits on the Antonine Wall berm as well as a timber structure, located to the south of the Wall on the line of the Military Way, that has been identified as the early medieval Thane's Hall of the Thanes of Callendar (Calatria). Excavations near the west end of the Park (on Kemper Avenue) took place in 1952 and 1980, identifying the stone base of the Antonine Wall Rampart, and a building with hypocausts.

Description and interpretation

Excavations and examination on the ground have revealed substantial information regarding the Antonine Wall's linear features throughout Callendar Park. The Ditch has been fully excavated, revealing that it was 8.2m wide and 4.3m deep, but surviving portions visible on the ground today range from 1.8m-3m in depth. The Rampart is of average width, measuring 4.3-4.5m on a stone base, with an earth filling kept in place by clay cheeks. This fits the evidence from elsewhere along the Wall, which suggests that there was a difference in Rampart building material to either side of Watling Lodge, with turf being used to the west and earth and/or clay being used to the east. The reason for this difference may have been a shortage of turf in the Wall's eastern-most sector, different working parties building the eastern portion of the Wall, or the eastern sector being a later addition to the Roman plan.

A number of small defensive pits, following the description of similar features by Julius Caesar, were located on the Berm, between the Antonine Wall Rampart and Ditch. These seem to have been deliberately filled in at some point during the Antonine Wall's functional life, with the pits filled by gravel and layers of turf placed over the Berm. It has been suggested that this change may have been the result of instability caused by the narrowness of the Berm in this area, with the newly laid turf serving to consolidate and strengthen the ground on which the Rampart was laid; similar layers of turf were also previously located on the Berm at Cadder. There is also evidence that parts of the Rampart were rebuilt after the pits were filled in (this must have happened later, as there is no evidence of Rampart material within the filled-in pits). It remains uncertain why this Rampart rebuilding was necessary. The presence of defensive pits is now known at a number of sites along both the Antonine Wall and Hadrian's Wall, and it is likely that they were a regular feature along the entire length of both frontiers.

While structural evidence for a Roman fort or fortlet at Callendar Park has never been found, there is some evidence for Roman activities south of the Antonine Wall Rampart. Excavations at the west end of the Park in 1980 discovered a hearth with pottery and bones, as well as a building with a hypocausted room, probably a bath-house. The Roman fort at Falkirk was discovered in the 1990s, but this is located a considerable distance further west. It is possible that these features relate to the occupation of the Falkirk fort, but the lengthy distance is puzzling.

Carriden Fort

Just east of Bo'ness, partially on the grounds of Carriden House and partially in adjacent farmland, lie the remains of the eastern-most fort associated with the Antonine Wall.

It remains uncertain if the line of the Antonine Wall extended to Carriden or terminated at nearby Bridgeness, but the site is important as the only Antonine Wall site to provide clear evidence for an associated civilian settlement (vicus), and is the only site for which the Roman period name (Velunia or Veluniate) is known. The fort is visible as cropmarks in aerial photos, but very little is visible on the ground.



Carriden. The fort and the end of the Wall are supposed to be in this area. ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

History of discovery and excavation

A fort had been long-suspected at Carriden, but was not confirmed until 1945, when aerial photography identified eastern defensive ditches to the east of Carriden House. Trial excavations were carried out in 1946, confirming the presence of the ditches on the ground, and providing artefacts which suggested occupation only in the Antonine period. In 1956, the chance discovery of an inscribed Roman altar during ploughing in the field to the east of the fort provided evidence for a civilian settlement (vicus), as well as the Roman name for the fort (Velunia or Veluniate).

The discovery of this altar means that Carriden remains the only Antonine Wall fort for which we know the Roman period name.

In 1991, in advance of works to replace overhead power lines, minor excavations were carried out in the field system to the east of the fort, and geophysical survey took place in the same area in 2006-07. Further excavations to the west of the fort in 1994 identified its south-west corner and structures within an annexe attached to the fort's west side. Additional excavations within the annexe and nearby areas have taken place in 2002, 2008, and 2009.

Description and interpretation

Aerial photographs and archaeological excavations confirm that Carriden fort had an internal area of about 1.6ha (4 acres), with an annexe attached to its west side. No ramparts have been uncovered, but the fort featured three ditches on its east and south sides, a single ditch between the fort and annexe, and two ditches on the annexe's south side. It is uncertain how the fort and annexe were defended on the north, as this is marked by the very steep ground of the Carriden Glen and Carriden Burn, heading down toward the Firth of Forth. The 2008 excavations revealed a bath-house, located to the south-west of the fort's annexe. This is unusual, as Antonine Wall bath-houses are predominantly located within the fort or an annexe.

In 1956 an altar dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus by the vikani (that is, the people who lived in the fort's attached civilian settlement) of Veluniate was ploughed up in a field about 140m east of the fort (RIB 3503). This not only provided clear evidence for the presence of a vicus near the fort, but also confirmed the Roman period name of the fort was Velunia or Veluniate, known from the Ravenna Cosmography. This is the only Antonine Wall fort for which the Roman period name is known. From examination of later aerial photography, the altar's general find spot appears to be located within an ordered field or plot system outside the fort on its east side. The aerial images and geophysical survey suggest that the field system exceeds 6 hectares and featured a road junction, with the road projecting from the fort's east gate meeting roads heading north-east and south-west about 100m east of the gate. A number of identifiable rectangular plots (presumably for agricultural purposes) are all located to the east of this junction, with a heavier concentration on the north side. The space between the fort's eastern defences and the road junction appears to be empty and it is likely that this area served as a parade-ground for the soldiers stationed at the fort. The precise location, size, nature, form, and extent of the Carriden vicus remain unclear, but it was probably located within the field system to the east of the fort.

Castle Cary Fort

South-east of the junction between the M80 and B816, in the area of the old Castle Cary schoolhouse, is the site of a Roman fort and annexe on the Antonine Wall.

The fort is bisected by the Edinburgh to Glasgow railway line, which enters the fort at its south-east corner and exits just south of the fort's west gateway. The fort is one of only two along the Antonine Wall to have featured stone ramparts (along with Balmuildy). The portion to the north of the railway can be visited today and visible remains include a low mound and portions of exposed stonework from the fort's east rampart, small portions of the headquarters building, and traces of stonework at the north gate.



Castlecary fort is located in the field between the houses, the train line and the motorway. ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

History and description

The fort at Castlecary remained well-preserved and was noted by antiquarians throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. From at least the fifteenth century, the site was robbed of stones to use in nearby buildings, and was a particularly important stone quarry during the 1769-71 construction of the Forth and Clyde Canal in this area. In this period, a stone bath-house was exposed in the south-east corner of the fort. Around 1809 large portions of the fort's ramparts were blasted with gunpowder for "agricultural improvement." The fort suffered further damage in 1841, when it was cut across by the Edinburgh to Glasgow railway, causing protests from a number of antiquarians. Excavations in 1902 revealed stone ramparts and an unexpected, but as yet unexcavated, annexe to the east of the fort. Regrettably, pressures of time led to incomplete back-filling of trenches which left the archaeological remains exposed and led to their degradation.

Castlecary Fort has been photographed from the air on numerous occasions, and recorded by surveyors on the ground. While no new excavations have been undertaken, geophysical survey was conducted in 1994 and 2006. These revealed double ditches on the fort's south-west corner and east rampart, a single ditch around the annexe on the east side of the fort. and a number of anomalies that may represent a possible civil settlement (vicus) outside the fort's annexe.

Description and interpretation

Castlecary is one of the larger forts along the Antonine Wall, one of only two to feature stone ramparts, and was built before the Antonine Wall reached the site. For these reasons, the fort is widely considered to be one of the "primary" forts on the Antonine Wall, having been planned from the very beginning before later changes saw the addition of new "secondary" forts. The fort had an internal area of 1.4ha (3.5 acres), while the attached annexe measured 1.1ha (2.75 acres). The Antonine Wall Rampart, measuring 4.4m at its base, was built up to and away from the fort's 2.4m-wide stone rampart at its north-east and north-west corners. To the north of the fort, the Antonine Wall Ditch featured a drastic reduction in width: to the east of the north gate, it measured 12m wide, while it was then reduced to only 4.45m wide to the west of the gateway.

Within the fort were a stone-built headquarters building (*principia*), granary, part of what was almost certainly the commanding officer's house (*praetorium*), a bath-house, and a small latrine. A rectangular stone tower was identified at the fort's rounded south-west corner, and similar features may have been located in all four corners, but had been robbed-out prior to the excavations. Large quantities of grain were found in the fort's granary, and small leather shoes were found in a rubbish pit, providing good evidence for the presence of women and children at the fort (as well as at Balmuilty and Bar Hill). Other significant finds include eleven inscriptions, nine of which are on stone altars; together, these indicate the presence of soldiers from two Roman legions and three auxiliary units at Castlecary. An altar to Fortuna (RIB 2146) was recovered from the fort's bath-house in the 1760s, along with a small stone sculpture of the same goddess; this altar was dedicated by detachments from both the Second and Sixth Legions. The Sixth Legion is also commemorated on two other altars: one discovered to the west of the fort records the construction of a temple to Mercury (RIB 2148), while the other is dedicated to the mother goddesses by Gaius Julius Speratus and the Sixth Legion (RIB 2151). The First Cohort of Vardullians, 1000 men from northern Spain, are recorded on an altar to Neptune (RIB 2149); the First Cohort of Tungrians, 1000 men from Belgium, are recorded in a building inscription (RIB 2155); and either the First Cohort of Batavians or Baetasians, both from the Netherlands, are recorded on an altar fragment dedicated to an unknown deity (RIB 2154).

The majority of finds can be closely dated to the Antonine period, but a few fragments of pottery may be of late first-century date. This may suggest the site was previously occupied by a Flavian fort built by Agricola around AD 80 but there is no clear evidence for such a structure.

Dalnair Camp

To the west of Seabegs Wood and just south of the Forth and Clyde Canal and the B816 is the site of a Roman temporary camp at Dalnair farm. The camp is partially visible as cropmarks in aerial photographs, but no traces are visible on the ground.

History of discovery and excavation

The temporary camp at Dalnair farm was first identified from aerial photographs in 1957, but no excavations have taken place.

Description and interpretation

Examination of aerial photographs have revealed only portions of the Dalnair temporary camp, which is located less than 100m south of the line of the Antonine Wall. The camp was probably

oriented on a slight north-west to south-east axis. The northern defences are visible, measuring about 145m, with up to 75m of the eastern and western sides visible before they disappear under Dalnair farm. The northern defences feature a centre entrance gap with a titulus, a staggered section of bank and ditch that offered extra protection to the entryways or gates of Roman camps. The camp's full size is uncertain, but if it was rectangular rather than square, it is likely that the visible northern side was shorter than those on the east and west. No dating evidence has been collected, but the camp's location and orientation toward the Antonine Wall suggests that it was probably a construction camp used to house legionary soldiers as they carried out the work of building the Wall.

Falkirk Fort

Within Falkirk town centre, in an area known as "the Pleasance" immediately south of the Howgate Shopping Centre is the site of a Roman fort on the Antonine Wall. This is one of the most recent fort discoveries. The fort is now built over by houses and a bowling green. There are no traces visible on the ground today.

History of discovery and excavation

A fort had been suspected at Falkirk since the early eighteenth century, though it was assumed to have been built over by the late medieval and modern town. Roman building stones, hearths, and pottery fragments were all dug up south of the town centre in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, supporting the suggestion by some antiquarians that the fort had probably been located in the Pleasance of Falkirk. In the early 1900s, several trenches were excavated and traced the line of the Antonine Wall through Falkirk, including the exposure of a portion of the Rampart's stone base in the Pleasance. Several excavations across the line of the Wall through Falkirk uncovered Roman remains, but the precise location of the fort was not discovered until 1991. Limited excavations were undertaken between 1991-93, and then again between 2000-06.

Description and interpretation

Very little of the fort at Falkirk has been identified, but ditches of the fort or its annexe have been located. The area of the east gate is represented by three ditches with an entrance gap to the east of Pleasance Road and south of Booth Place. A cobbled roadway ran through the entrance gaps, possibly representing the Military Way as it entered the fort. Traces of timber buildings were located to the east, near the corner of Rosehall Terrace and Cow Wynd, probably within an annexe attached to the fort's east side. Small portions of two ditches at the fort's presumed south-west corner were identified between South Pleasance Avenue and Hodge Street. At least six phases of occupation were identified, including a pre-Roman palisade trench, two Roman phases (one probably pre-dating the construction of the Antonine Wall), a blacksmith's workshop from around the tenth century, and later medieval and modern occupation. Excavations between the fort and Callendar Park, just east of Kemper Avenue, in 1980, revealed a stone bath-house. The large distance between the site of the fort and this bath-house remains puzzling, and is the longest known distance between a fort and bath-house anywhere on the line of the Wall.

Inveravon Fort and Temporary Camps

The remains of a Roman fort or its annexe have been identified on the east bank of the River Avon, near the site of Inveravon Tower. No traces of the fort are visible on the ground and its interpretation remains uncertain. Three temporary camps have also been identified to the south of the Antonine Wall in this area, but there are no visible traces on the ground today.

History of discovery and excavation

A fort had long been expected at Inveravon, based on spacing grounds and antiquarian speculation, some of which appears to have been misidentification of the nearby medieval Inveravon Tower as a Roman fort. In 1914, stone features thought to relate to the Antonine Wall were investigated near the River Avon's east and "at the top of a field", however, these stone arrangements did not correspond with the line of the Wall. The Rampart and Ditch were shown to lie on separate lines to either side of the Avon, with the east stretch lying about 140 feet downstream (to the north) of the Wall on the river's west bank. On the River Avon's east bank and south of the Antonine Wall's Rampart, possible stone surfaces and a fragment of a second-century mortarium were uncovered. On this evidence, by the 1930s, this was thought to be the location of a relatively small fort at Inveravon which had been largely obliterated through ploughing and river activity.

Exploratory excavations in 1967, revealed structures of probable Roman date close to the finds previously recovered. These included the foundations of stone walls and cobbled surfaces of two distinct phases of Antonine occupation.

Survival was poor and it proved impossible to identify ramparts or defensive ditches so it was not possible to create a clear plan of the features. These features were later suggested to represent a small fort or fortlet positioned to guard the Avon crossing. Inconclusive evidence for a proper "fort" here also led to the suggestion that a more substantial Inveravon fort remained to be discovered in a separate location on higher ground on the east or west of the River Avon.

Small-scale excavations were carried out in 1983 ahead of the laying of two new gas pipelines across the line of the Wall and the defences of a Roman temporary camp near Inveravon Farm. No evidence for the Rampart's stone base was uncovered, though minor traces of turfwork were identified and the Antonine Wall Ditch was measured at about 7.5m wide. Trenching south of the Wall revealed part of the shallow east ditch of the temporary camp, which measured about 1m wide and 0.55m deep. Excavation inside the camp revealed the remains of one post-hole and a possible portion of another. Additional investigations failed to locate the Military Way.

Following aerial reconnaissance in 1989 and geophysical survey in 1989, some excavations were undertaken in advance of the laying of a pipeline in 1991 in the same area that was investigated in 1914 and 1967. Three phases of Roman period activity were identified, including the Antonine Wall rampart, measuring about 4.4m wide by about 0.7m high; the stone base was intact and bounded by roughly-dressed kerbstones, with a superstructure constructed of an earthen core with clay and/or turf cheeks. The Berm (a platform between the rampart and ditch) was identified and measured at 9.2m wide, sloping gently downward to the Ditch. Possible traces of defensive pits were found on the Berm, joining a growing collection of these features on both the Antonine Wall and Hadrian's Wall. The Ditch measured about 8.2m wide, but only 1.15m of its fills were excavated, revealing disturbed ploughsoil as well as medieval and post-medieval pottery. The Military Way was identified about 13.2m south of the Rampart and appears to have been about 5.2m wide in the first, pre-fort, phase.

Immediately south of the Rampart and abutting its south kerb was a structure of similar construction, with a stone foundation including kerbs and a superstructure of earth with clay cheeks; this was measured to extend about 7.8m south of the Rampart, but only the western portion was visible in the narrow trench, with the remainder extending into unexcavated soil to the east. While the base of this structure, interpreted as an "expansion", abutted the Antonine Wall Rampart's base, they may have been built at the same time.

The purpose of this "expansion", as well as others like it (see Tentfield, Bonnyside, and Croy Hill expansions), is unknown, and it appears to differ from other known examples by being both larger and probably of trapezoidal, rather than square, shape.

Traces of a "small fort", measuring about 34.5m north-to-south were identified as part of phases 2–3; this was defended by a single rampart and no traces of a defensive ditch system (except for the Antonine Wall Ditch to the north) were uncovered in excavation. The Military Way ran through the centre of the fort, and the "expansion" appears to have been enclosed within the fort's ramparts, though plough damage had removed traces of how this had been used or modified after the fort was constructed. A "rough surface" of about 3m wide was laid atop the collapsed material adjacent to the "expansion" and about 2.5m north of the Military Way.

The Military Way itself was slightly truncated by a shallow cut on its north edge, the cut was later filled with a thin layer of occupational debris and stone and earth dumping. While the "expansion" appears to have been left standing and not built over in phase 2, the excavators noted a series of new cobbles extending its kerb further south-east into the edge of the trench. This evidence from Inveravon appears to convincingly indicate the presence of a fort, but it remains unclear if the features uncovered here were located within a fort or, perhaps, a fort annexe. Based on the excavations in the area, and location of the features uncovered, it is likely that a fort here would have been very small and probably placed here primarily for the purposes of guarding the river crossing. Unfortunately, geophysical survey in 2008 did not clarify the situation of the fort.

Kinneil Fortlet

Kinneil is the only visible example of an Antonine Wall fortlet, in a field to the west of Kinneil House.

The fortlet is marked out by original stone kerbing of its ramparts and part of the Antonine Wall's Rampart (which served as the fortlet's north rampart), with stone paving filling out the areas where original stonework has not survived. Timber posts mark out the location of Roman period post-holes, which give an indication of the fortlet's gateways and internal buildings. The Antonine Wall Ditch can be partially (but not easily) traced in the fields between Kinneil House and the fortlet. Exhibits covering Kinneil's history,



Kinneil Fortlet marked on the ground in the park. ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

including Roman artefacts from the fortlet, are located in the Kinneil Museum.

History and description

Kinneil had long been suspected as the site of a Roman fort, though antiquarians were not all in agreement. Confusion may have arisen because of a long-standing medieval village that occupied the fields known as "the Meadows" to the west of Kinneil House, near the site of the ruined medieval church. This village extended over both sides of the Antonine Wall and may have been in existence from the early medieval period, as suggested by the presence of a circular enclosure ditch around the church site and an early medieval cross slab that was reused within the later medieval church building. This village existed until the 1690s, when it was removed to create parkland as part of the Kinneil Estate. Following the hypothesis of antiquarians that Roman forts were placed at approximately 2 Roman mile intervals, Kinneil has been a favoured location for an Antonine Wall fort on spacing grounds. Throughout the early 1900s, the line of the Antonine Wall through Kinneil was traced and, although no physical evidence for a fort was recovered, Kinneil was generally accepted as the location of an undiscovered Roman fort.

The Roman fortlet was first discovered in 1978, following the discovery of Roman pottery during fieldwalking by the Cumbernauld Historical Society. Two sets of excavations were carried out in 1978-79 and then again in 1980-81, revealing the remains of the fortlet and portions of the Antonine Wall Rampart and Ditch; the entire interior of the fortlet was excavated, but the ditches were only explored through several sample trenches. The fortlet was partially preserved and put on public display. Further small-scale trenching was carried out to the south of the fortlet in 2011.

Description and interpretation:

Excavations have revealed that the fortlet measured 18.5m east-to-west by 21.5m north-to-south, with its northern defences provided by the Antonine Wall Rampart and Ditch. The fortlet was built at the same time and as an integrated unit of the Antonine Wall. A single ditch was identified around the fortlet's east, south, and west sides, with no recognisable gap giving access to the fortlet's south entrance, or causeway across the Antonine Wall Ditch to the north. The fortlet's entrances were lined with post-holes that may have supported gateways or towers, and a cobbled road ran through the fortlet from north to south. Two timber buildings were identified, one to either side of the road surface, and these were almost certainly small barracks to house the soldiers stationed there. Also uncovered within the fortlet's interior was part of a possible stairway or ladder leading up to the top of the Antonine Wall Rampart, a possible lean-to structure built up against the south side of the northern Rampart, and a deep circular pit located within the fortlet's north-west corner. The pit was 2m wide and 3m deep, and may have been a possible well or latrine pit; deposited within the pit were a number of leather shoes and almost all of a broken black burnished ware cooking pot. Other finds from the fortlet's interior included butchered cattle bones, part of a decorated bronze harness strap, an axe head, and a range of Roman pottery, all generally datable to the Antonine period. There was some evidence for modification of the fortlet during its period of occupation, including the probable demolition of its north gateway and the installation of a small hearth in the middle of the road near the gate.

Just outside the fortlet, in the corner where its east rampart met the Antonine Wall Rampart, was a small platform of about 2.3m east-to-west by 1.3m north-to-south and 0.2m high, surrounded by a curving ditch of about 8m in length; this ditch was cut short (0.2m) of both the fortlet's east rampart and the Antonine Wall Rampart, confirming that it was secondary to both. A substantial but disturbed hearth was located just east of this ditch, and a dump of boulders close to the fortlet's east rampart provided a small causeway over the ditch and into the area of the platform. Another

causeway was located in the fortlet ditch to the east, made of sandstone slabs; while this could be dated to a period after the Roman occupation, it is interpreted as probably related to the nearby corner platform. Unfortunately, the purpose of this platform remains uncertain.

The 2011 trenches to the south of the Roman fortlet were designed to investigate the road leading from the fortlet's south gate and to, hopefully, trace it to the Military Way. This revealed, however, only late eighteenth-century landscaping. Critically, it confirmed the known road and presumed line of the Roman Military were also eighteenth-century constructions. It is now assumed that the Military Way ran adjacent to the Antonine Wall in this area. Although Kinneil had long been identified as the probable location of an Antonine Wall fort, the discovery of the fortlet has now led many archaeologists to abandon this idea. The argument of spacing, with a fort located at approximately every two Roman miles, however, is very strongly supported by the known fort sites along the length of the Antonine Wall. If this pattern holds true, it is still feasible that an as yet undiscovered Antonine Wall fort may lie somewhere in the vicinity of Kinneil House.

Milnquarter Temporary Camp

To the east of Seabegs Wood, between Reilly Gardens and Milnquarter

Road, is the site of a Roman temporary camp, now bisected by the Stirling-to-Glasgow railway. There are no visible remains on the ground today.

History and description

The Milnquarter camp was first discovered in aerial photographs in 1953, and later confirmed through probing. In 1995, a small excavation was carried out within the camp's interior during the removal of an electricity pylon.

Description and interpretation

Examination of aerial photography, and probing, confirmed that the camp lies about 400m south of the Antonine Wall, and enclosed an area of about 2.3ha (5.6 acres) on a south-east to north-west alignment. A titulus (a staggered section of bank and ditch that offered extra protection to the entryways or gates of Roman camps) is visible in aerial photographs in the centre of the camp's north-west side. Probing undertaken in 1953 identified further tituli on the north-east and south-east sides. The limited excavations within the camp's interior failed to identify any features, and the camp cannot be closely dated. It appears likely, however, that the camp was associated with the Antonine Wall, probably as a construction camp the Wall's construction. If the location of a long-suspected fort at Seabegs proves to be correct, it would be appropriate to consider this camp as the primary base from which the legionary soldiers built either or both the Wall and the fort.

Mumrills Fort

The largest Roman fort on the Antonine Wall was located at the east end of Laurieston on the site of the former Mumrills farm. The fort is partially within a large field and partially under housing. There are no visible traces of the fort on the ground today, but subtle traces can still be seen in aerial photographs.

History of discovery and excavation

It was long expected that a Roman fort was located near Mumrills, but this was not confirmed until 1912, when the son of the tenant located fragments of Roman pottery and glass as well as the foundations of a building. The site was cleared revealing the corner of the fort's headquarters building (principia) and remains of a bath-house. Ploughing in the following year revealed the fort's south-east corner, and archaeological investigations of the site continued.

Large-scale excavations in 1923–28, revealing more complete details of the fort's defences and its interior. Further excavation in 1958–60 continued earlier investigations and investigated crop-marks recently identified to the east of the fort. A number of continued discoveries were made throughout the 1980s–90s during archaeological watching briefs and in chance finds within residents' gardens. Further excavations took place in 1996, small trenching in the early 2000s, and again in 2010. Geophysical survey was conducted in 2007.

Description and interpretation

Excavations revealed that the latest Roman fort at Mumrills had an internal area of 2.6ha (6.5 acres), and that there were actually two separate forts on the site, with the later fort using the earlier fort as an annexe. The later fort is the largest known from the line of the Antonine Wall, and it may have had a special significance. The fort pre-dated the Antonine Wall Rampart, and was constructed of clay ramparts on stone bases. The northern rampart was 4.5m wide, fronted by the 7.2m wide Antonine Wall Ditch, while the remaining ramparts were about 4m wide and further defended by a variable number of ditches on each side. Two ditches are known on the east, one on the south, and four on the west (with only three ditch sections north of the Military Way on the west side). A large annexe was attached to the fort's west side, re-using the space provided by the earlier fort.

Excavations within the fort revealed the remains of a stone headquarters building (principia), two granaries (horrea), a large commanding officer's house (praetorium) with its own suite of baths, a bath-house near the fort's north-east corner, and the post-holes of at least four timber buildings (probably barracks). It has been suggested that the principia was destroyed and reconstructed twice, being reduced in size each time. In its original phase, this building measured about 36m by 30.5m and included a veranda and rear projection, among the largest known principia known in Britain. The aedes, or shrine of the standards, was remarkably small, and there was no underground vault for storage of the regimental treasure-chest; it is thought the principia may have had an upper level, and that this may have served the role ordinarily played by a vault. By its final phase, the principia had been reduced to about 29m square. The extent and features of the commanding officer's house also suggest an unusual importance and the 1923–28 excavators suggested the fort may have been the main command base for the entire frontier. This building measured about 42m by 33m in its later phase, but had originally been a smaller timber-built structure. Some time after the praetorium was expanded and rebuilt in stone, a set of private baths was added to its north side, but the evidence for multiple phasing in these and the apparent disuse of the regimental bath-house in the fort's north-east corner may indicate that the praetorium's bath suite was being used by the common soldiers during the fort's final years of occupation.

Antiquarian excavators believed the early fort, located on the site of the later fort's annexe, was of Flavian date, being constructed during Agricola's campaigns around AD 80. Recent, re-examination of the evidence date the early fort to the early part of the Antonine period. This early Antonine fort is thought to have been constructed in advance of the Wall's Rampart, and then replaced by a new fort centred slightly further east around the time work on the Rampart commenced. This move in

fort location may have been designed to provide better control over both east-west and north-south communications.

In addition to the two Antonine period forts, there is evidence for two or three phases of activity within the later fort, including multiple surface layers and three distinct version of the fort's principia and praetorium. These phases were previously thought to indicate multiple separate occupations of the Antonine Wall, but they are now more commonly viewed as changes during a single continuous occupation.

Two inscribed stones, a tombstone and an altar, found nearby suggest the presence of two different auxiliary units at Mumrills. The altar, dedicated to Hercules Magusanus by Valerius Nigrinus, a duplicarius of the First Tungrian Wing, was discovered in 1841 near the bridge at Brightons, about 1.2km south-east of Mumrills (RIB 2140). The tombstone of Nectovellius, son of Vindex, a Brigantian who had served nine years with the Second Cohort of Thracians, was found near the fort (RIB 2142), indicating that this unit was probably stationed at Mumrills. A third inscription, found in a post-hole of a structure of uncertain function about 146m east of the fort, is on a partial altar to the Mother Goddesses by Cassius, who may have been a signifer, or standard-bearer, of a unit garrisoned at the fort (RIB 2141). Other finds include a carnelian intaglio that features the goddess Nemesis (discovered in a private garden in the area of the fort's annexe), and a fragment of a sandstone statue of Hercules, measuring 0.15m x 0.15m and representing the muscular upper torso and bearded head with a club in the right hand. It was found to the south of Polmont Road about 0.7km west of the fort and suggests a shrine to Hercules may have stood nearby.

Polmont Church Ditch Section

A short length of Antonine Wall Ditch is visible between Polmont Church and the M9 motorway, located in the churchyard.

History and description

The hollow of the Antonine Wall ditch can be seen in the churchyard. Observations made during the extension of the churchyard in 1912-13, along with small-scale excavations to the west, revealed the stone base of the Antonine Wall Rampart.

Polmont Woods Ditch Section

At the north end of Polmont Woods, south of Smiddy Brae and west of the Grangemouth Golf Course is a preserved section of Antonine Wall Ditch and Outer Mound. The line of the Wall is somewhat obscured by trees, but the Ditch is relatively easy to trace as a hollow running on a north-west alignment from east end of the wood toward the Millhall Burn.

History and description

The section of Wall running through Polmont Woods has been well-preserved and was noted by the eighteenth-century antiquarians. In the 1930s, the removal of trees in the area made the features much clearer. The Ditch travels on a subtle curve as it descends the hill westward through the woods toward the Millhall Burn.

Polmonthill Ditch Section and Temporary Camp

On the west bank of the River Avon, adjacent to the ski-slope on the east slope of Polmonthill, is the first clearly visible section of Antonine Wall Ditch and Outer Mound when travelling from the east.

This is located immediately across the river from the site of the Inveravon fort. A Roman temporary camp was also located further west on the grounds of the current golf course.

History and description

The section of surviving Antonine Wall on Polmonthill has been known since the eighteenth century. It stood within farmland until the later twentieth-century development of the nearby golf course and ski-slope. Upgrade work on the ski-slope in 1992, including movement of the main ski-run from its position overlapping the Antonine Wall Rampart to a location further south, prompted trial trenching to determine the extent of archaeological remains here. In these trenches, and in a further watching brief in 1993, it was determined that no archaeological remains were being disturbed by the new work.

The temporary camp on Polmonthill was first identified from aerial photographs in the 1940s, and later clarified by further aerial photos in the 1960s. The camp is now located on the grounds of the Grangemouth Golf Course, to the west of the Millhall Reservoir. Its full dimensions are not known, but it may have enclosed a minimum area of about 3.2ha (7.8 acres), with an additional 0.9ha (2.2 acres) enclosed within an annexe on the south-east side. The camp has not been excavated, and there are no datable finds, but it seems probable that it was used in the construction of the Antonine frontier.

Rough Castle Fort Etc.

Although the fort at Rough Castle is the second smallest on the Wall, it is easily the best-preserved and offers the most spectacular and memorable views of the surviving Roman remains. The visible remains include an excellent example of the Antonine Wall Ditch, the tallest-surviving portion of Rampart, defensive lilia pits to the north of the Wall, an easily identifiable fort and annexe, and defences which include multiple ditches and gateways.

History of discovery and excavation

The excellent preservation of Rough Castle made it very well known to

antiquarians, and its Roman origins were widely acknowledged from the seventeenth century. In 1843, an altar to Victory was found to the south of the fort, and the Glasgow Archaeological Society's Antonine Wall Committee cut several sections across the Antonine Wall Rampart in the early 1890s. The fort was first excavated between 1902-03, revealing some internal buildings, a bath-house within the fort's annexe (attached to the fort's east side), and ten rows of large defensive pits (called lilia, based on Julius Caesar's description of similar pits at Alesia in Gaul) to the north of the Antonine Wall Ditch. While the ramparts and



The defensive ditches around Rough Castle fort. ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

ditches of both the fort and annexe, as well as those of the Antonine Wall in this area, were extremely well-preserved, the structures within the fort's interior had not survived so well. Subsequent excavations were carried out in 1920, 1932-33, and then again in 1957-61 (following the site being placed in guardianship in 1953), clarifying particular points and revealing some new information. Since the 1940s, the fort has been extensively photographed from the air and on the ground, and numerous watching briefs have been conducted in the area throughout the 1990s and 2000s. In 1982, excavations took place in a field system to the south-east of the fort's annexe, revealing enclosures of multiple periods.

Description and interpretation

Although the fort at Rough Castle is the best-preserved on the Antonine Wall, it is also the second smallest known along the line, with an internal area of only 0.4ha (1 acre), and an annexe, that was even larger than the fort, attached to its east side. The fort faces north, with the Antonine Wall Rampart and Ditch serving as its northern defences, but excavation has revealed that the fort was constructed later than the Wall, with its own ramparts abutting the south face of the Antonine Wall Rampart. The stone base of the Rampart has been measured at 4.5m wide, with the Ditch measuring 12m wide. The fort's own ramparts were considerably wider than that of the Antonine Wall: a section cut near the fort's north-west corner revealed excellently preserved turfwork of the fort's rampart, 6.10m wide at the base and 1.37m high above kerb foundations. Within this section, as many as 18 "laminations", or turf layers, were visible. The fort originally featured two ditches around its south and west sides, with a single ditch along the southern half of the east side, between the fort and annexe. Later, a second ditch was added to the south-east, and a very small section of ditch was added a considerable distance west of the fort, north of the road that exited from the fort's west gate. On the fort's east side was the annexe, with a turf rampart, a single ditch on the south, and three ditches on the east, which may have been separated by further portions of turf ramparts. This is very unusual, and may indicate several different phases and formats to the Roman defences.

Within the fort's interior were found the remains of a stone headquarters building (*principia*), granary (*horreum*), and commanding officer's house (*praetorium*). The *principia* was noticeably small and contained four ranges of rooms. In the centre of the southern-most range, almost certainly the shrine of the standards, was a stone-lined strongbox, sunk into the floor. In a pit or possible well within the *principia* three fragments of a building inscription were recovered (RIB 2145) by the Sixth Cohort of Nervians. This proved to be very significant at the time of its discovery in 1903, as this inscription specified that the Romans called this building the *principia*, while scholars across the former Roman empire had been mistakenly referring to headquarters buildings as the *praetorium*. Near the fort's west gate was the remains of what is almost certainly the real *praetorium*, the commanding officer's house, which appears to be modelled on the usual accommodation provided to a Roman legionary centurion. This may indicate that the fort was commanded by a centurion, a suggestion that may be further supported by an inscription on the altar to Victory (RIB 2144) found south of the fort in 1843: the inscription indicates that the altar was dedicated by the Sixth Cohort of Nervians, who were commanded at the time by Flavius Betto, a centurion of the Twentieth Legion. In the fort's north-west corner were two barracks. There were signs of alterations in nearly every building but, despite early suggestions that these represent multiple distinct occupations of the site, these are now interpreted as routine changes during the course of a single occupation period.

A stone bath-house was revealed to the south of the Military Way, as well as a ditched and cobble-surfaced enclosure located just outside the fort's north-east corner. Only the basement foundations and hypocausts of the bath-house remained, with brick-built pillars that were occasionally replaced by stone pillars, probably indicating repairs or alterations. The ditched enclosure in the annexe's north-west corner remains a puzzle: its function and chronological relationship to the Wall and fort remain uncertain, but it has been suggested as a fortlet that was later surrounded by the fort and annexe. Due to the fort's small size, and the fact that its ramparts are known to have been constructed after the Antonine Wall Rampart was built in this area, Rough

Castle is considered to be one of the “secondary” forts on the Wall: probably not part of the original “plan” for the frontier, and only added after a decision was made to add additional forts to an originally-designed series of six.

A wide range of pottery has been found within the fort, including Samian ware, Black Burnished ware, and mortaria, all of which can be comfortably dated to the period around AD 140-60 (though many fragments could also be later). There are some notable late pottery fragments though, dated closer to AD 200, after the suspected Roman abandonment of the Antonine Wall. A significant number of leather fragments were recovered from the Antonine Wall Ditch, including two shoes that are almost complete.

Glass finds included a bangle and several pieces of window glass.

Excavations within the field system to the south-east of the annexe revealed a long history of activity and enclosure in this area, with some features dated as early as the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age, and many more of much more recent date. It is possible that some of the enclosures encountered within this area were developed during the Roman period, and this may be the closest thing we have to evidence of a possible civilian settlement (vicus) at Rough Castle, although it is equally possible that such plots were used by soldiers. There are no clearly dateable structural remains for a vicus here, and this interpretation must remain speculation

Seabegs Wood Fortlet, Section of Wall, and Military Way

Offering good views of the Antonine Wall Ditch and Rampart, Seabegs Wood is the site of a Roman fortlet and the best place to see the visible remains of the Military Way, the Roman road that connected all of the forts along the Antonine Wall. The Military Way is located about 30m south of the Antonine Wall Rampart, and can be traced as a 7m-wide cambered mound.

History of discovery and excavation

The line of the Antonine Wall was well-preserved at Seabegs, and antiquarians noted it was very visible through Seabegs Wood, where the Ditch was deep and full of water. Antiquarians recorded an “exploratory mount” or possible Roman fort further east in the vacant space currently located between Antonine Primary School and two industrial estates; to the north of the Antonine Wall Ditch, which it used as its southern defence.

By the early twentieth century, this “mount” was no longer considered a Roman feature (and was eventually excavated and confirmed as a medieval motte), but due to the long distance between the forts at Rough Castle and Castlecary, and the hypothesis of Roman forts spaced at approximately two Roman mile intervals, antiquarians continued to suggest that a fort had been located somewhere in the vicinity of Seabegs. The “exploratory mount” was excavated in 1933, proving that it was not Roman, but of probable twelfth-century date. In the hopes of finding the expected fort at Seabegs, trenches were dug around Seabegs Place between 1968-73. These failed to identify a fort, but were successful in locating the Antonine Wall Rampart base. In 1977, further excavations near the site of the medieval motte, revealed portions of the Antonine Wall Rampart and Ditch. Geophysical examination and trenching in a 0.94ha field to the south of Seabegs Place in 1989 also failed to identify any traces of a Roman fort.

Several trenches cut across the Rampart in the 1890s revealed its stone base. In 1977, excavations at the west end of Seabegs Wood located a Roman fortlet attached to the south of the Rampart. Later, in 1981, excavations examined a low mound attached to the back of the Rampart, which was considered as a possible

“expansion”. More recently, a number of watching briefs have occurred within the area related to local development, none of which revealed any features of archaeological significance.

Description and interpretation

The Antonine Wall’s Ditch, Outer Mound, and Rampart are visible within Seabegs Wood for about 400m, with the Ditch being the most obvious feature. Here the Ditch is more than 12m wide and reaches a depth of 2m. The Military Way is located about 30m south of the Rampart, where it is 7m wide and is visible as a low cambered mound.

Excavations revealed the fortlet at Seabegs Wood measured 21.8m by 18m, and was defended by a turf rampart set on a stone base, with two defensive ditches on its east and west sides. On the north, the fortlet was defended by the Antonine Wall Rampart and Ditch, and excavations confirmed that the Wall and fortlet were built at the same time. There was no ditch on the fortlet’s south, which may be related to the close proximity of the Military Way. The fortlet featured gateways in both the north and south ramparts but, while a road passed through the north gate, there was no evidence for a causeway across the Antonine Wall Ditch. The interior of the fortlet was not excavated, but there was evidence for two possible occupations, or changes in the use of the fortlet, including the possible blocking of the north gate. Finds from the excavation include numerous fragments of Roman pottery. The nearby possible “expansion”, excavated in 1981, proved to be a layer of collapsed turf from the Antonine Wall, rather than a separate structure.

As with Kinneil, the continued failure to locate structural evidence for a Roman fort at Seabegs is a major point of frustration for Antonine Wall archaeologists. It is possible that no forts were located in these areas, but it must be remembered that Horsley’s hypothesis of Roman forts at every two Roman miles has largely proved to be correct, with an additional seven forts having been located since the 1730s, mostly in the precise locations originally suggested by Horsley.

The evidence of later medieval mottes at Cadder, Kirkintilloch, and Watling Lodge may add further weight to the suggestion of Seabegs as a Roman fort site, as every other known medieval motte was located on or very close to a Roman installation. It is possible that this location was chosen—at least in part— because of the presence of significant Roman remains.

Tamfourhill Temporary Camp

Between Falkirk town centre and the Falkirk Wheel, to the south of Watling Lodge, in an open field between the Union Canal and Tamfourhill Wood, is the site of a Roman temporary camp.

The Roman temporary camp is visible in some aerial photographs, but cannot be seen on the ground today. To the north, along Tamfourhill Road is the best-preserved section of Antonine Wall Ditch and the site of a Roman fortlet on the grounds of Watling Lodge.

History of discovery and excavation

The Roman temporary camp at Tamfourhill was first identified as cropmarks in aerial photographs in 1977. In 2000, the Falkirk Millennium Link Project built a new extension on the Union Canal to join it with the Forth and Clyde Canal at the Falkirk Wheel.

This new extension bypasses the camp on its north side, and archaeological investigations were carried out prior to construction, but no excavations took place within the area of the camp.

Description and interpretation

Examination of aerial photographs and investigation on the ground have revealed the Tamfourhill camp lies about 300m south of the Antonine Wall and about 400m south-west of the fortlet at Watling Lodge.

The camp is oriented on a slight north-east to south-west axis and encloses an area of about 2.7ha (6.7 acres). Tituli (staggered sections of bank and ditch that offered extra protection to the entryways or gates of Roman camps) have been recorded in front of entrance gaps on the camp's north, east, and south sides. The camp appears to face the nearby fortlet, and has been interpreted as a probable construction camp used during the construction of the Antonine frontier.

Tentfield East and West Expansions

In the wooded area to the south of the Falkirk Wheel, between Watling Lodge and Rough Castle, are the remains of two "expansions" attached to the south face of the Antonine Wall Rampart. Called Tentfield East and West, the eastern-most "expansion" is located just north of Bonnyhill Road and opposite the entrance to Rowan Crescent, while Tentfield West lies within the woods between the Falkirk Wheel and Rough Castle fort near an electrical pylon.

The line of the Antonine Wall Rampart, Ditch, and Outer Mound are still visible between the "expansions", but they are obscured by trees. Both "expansions" are slightly visible, but they are difficult to distinguish on the ground. Another pair of "expansions", in a better state of preservation, are located to the west of Rough Castle.

History of discovery and excavation

The Tentfield "expansions" appear to have escaped the notice of most Antiquarians, though one regarded the western example an "exploratory turret" and the eastern one a "Watch-Tower," while another mentions "Gilmor Seat Castellum or Turret" in his plan and table of measurements at the approximate location of Tentfield West. Neither of these features have been excavated, although other examples of "expansions" at Bonnyside East and Croy Hill, were excavated in the 1890s, 1957, and 1967.

Description and interpretation

Both Tentfield expansions have been described as roughly semi-circular in shape. Tentfield East measures about 9.7m by 5.5m and survives to a height of about 1m, while Tentfield West measures about 8m by 7m and survives to a height of about 1.3m. Most other "expansions" along the Wall were also originally described as semi-circular, but excavations revealed them to be square, composed of turf, and built upon a stone base or natural rock. In the 1930s, these "expansions", and others at Croy Hill and Bonnyside, were interpreted as beacon or signalling platforms. Excavation of Bonnyside East has provided the most detailed description of this class of installations. There, traces of burnt material were revealed around the "expansion", lending support to the beacon platform interpretation. They may alternatively, however, have served a turret-like function, facilitating communication from east-to-west.

Watling Lodge and Tamfourhill Section of Ditch and Fortlet

Perhaps the best-preserved section of Antonine Wall Ditch is visible to both the east and west of Watling Lodge along Tamfourhill Road, easily accessible to the south-west of Falkirk town centre and just east of the Falkirk Wheel.

Here, the Ditch has survived to almost its original dimensions, giving the best view of how it may have looked in Roman times. Near this portion of Ditch, on the site of Watling Lodge (now a location of the Barnardo's childrens' charity), was an Antonine Wall fortlet and a medieval motte (called "Maiden Castle"). The motte was destroyed when the arts and crafts villa "Watling Lodge" was built on top of it in the 1890s, while the fortlet lies within the area of Watling Lodge's garden to the south. No visible traces of the motte or fortlet can be seen on the ground. A short distance to the south, in an open field between the Union Canal and Tamfourhill Wood, is the site of a Roman temporary camp, which is visible in some aerial photographs, but which cannot be seen on the ground today.



Antonine Wall ditch as can be seen at Watling lodge, Falkirk. ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

History of discovery and excavation

Antiquarian writers noted the excellent preservation of the Ditch along Tamfourhill Road, along with a distinct gap in the Wall where a Roman road provided access to the north of the frontier, but few clearly describe the Roman fortlet or medieval motte. An "anonymous traveller" writing in 1697, however, recorded the motte as "Maiden Castle", while in 1757 an Antiquarian recorded "the Madun-castle" as "a fort on the wall to guard the gateway" for the Roman road that passed through the Wall here. In the 1720s, it was described as a large "square Watch Tower" some distance to the east of Rough Castle fort, with an area of about 25m on each side. Due to the paced distances

provided, this has been primarily interpreted as referring to the Tentfield East "expansion" that is located a short distance to the west of Watling Lodge. If so, the size of this "expansion", was greatly exaggerated since it measures only 9.7m by 5.5m.

The current "Watling Lodge" arts and crafts villa was constructed upon the Antonine Wall's Outer Mound in 1894, directly on top of the "Maiden Castle" motte, which was completely removed at that time. Preparations and construction on the site, offered the opportunity to record the remains of a Roman "guard-house" that was attached to the south face of the Antonine Wall Rampart. This "guard-house" was thought

to be an isolated and unique feature until its significance as part of a broader scheme of installations was realised with the 1947 discovery of a fortlet at Duntocher and later identification of further fortlets in aerial photographs. The site was later excavated between 1972–74, clarifying details of the fortlet's location and plan.

Throughout the early twentieth century, Antiquarian enquiries through small trenches along the length of the Antonine Wall revealed a recognisable change in the Rampart's building material to either side of Watling Lodge. This has been largely confirmed through later investigations.

Description and interpretation

The Antonine Wall Ditch through Tamfourhill is preserved to almost its original Roman dimensions, measuring about 12m wide and 4.5m deep. Investigations along the line of the Wall have identified a clear change in building materials for the Antonine Wall Rampart, with stacked turves being used to the west of Watling Lodge, but the 15km stretch from Watling Lodge eastward being primarily composed of earth or clay held in place by clay cheeks. Various arguments have been given for this contrast, including a suggested scarcity of turf in the Wall's eastern sector, a change in plan during the construction of the Wall, and the possibility that the Wall originally started at Watling Lodge and was only extended eastward at a later date. This reason for this difference remains an unresolved issue.

Excavations have revealed the fortlet at Watling Lodge measured about 18.5m by 15.5m internally, with turf ramparts set on top of a stone base. The fortlet was built at the same time as the Antonine Wall, and it used the Antonine Wall Rampart and Ditch as its northern defences.

Around the fortlet's east, west, and south sides was a single ditch, measuring about 2.8m wide and 1m deep. There were gateways on the north and south, with a metalled road running through the fortlet, and heading north through a gap in the Antonine Wall Ditch toward the outpost fort at Camelon. The 1970s excavations focused on the lines of the fortlet's defences, and only a very small portion of the trenches extended into the fortlet's interior, just within the south-west corner, where a hearth was located. The only finds were a few pottery fragments of Roman and medieval date. Excavation to the south of the fortlet in advance of development in 1986 revealed traces of a road and a series of post-holes, along with more Roman and medieval pottery. The structures indicated by the post-holes may relate to Roman or medieval activities.

The "Maiden Castle" motte at Watling Lodge was probably constructed in the twelfth century, and was located on top of the Antonine Wall's Outer Mound, apparently using the Ditch as its southern defence. No precise measurements survive, but Antiquarians noted the mound had been reduced in height by about 2m in order to form a level platform for the construction of the Watling Lodge villa. Examination of the area led investigators from the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), now part of Historic Environment Scotland, to suggest that the motte's summit may have measured about 21m by 12m.

Key Artefacts Found in Falkirk

The following is a list of some of the most significant artefacts found in Falkirk. Objects marked with * have a 3D model on the Antonine Vimeo or Sketchfab accounts (see useful links).

The Falkirk Hoard



Falkirk hoard ©National Museums Scotland



Falkirk "tartan" ©National Museums Scotland

Red clay pot

A pot of red clay found containing a hoard of 1,925 Roman silver denari coins, part of a hoard buried c. 230 AD and found on 9 August 1933 in Bell's Meadow, Falkirk, Stirlingshire. It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/pot/134895>

'Tartan'

A woollen cloth fragment with a simple check design, from the mouth of a pot containing a hoard of Roman coins, part of a hoard buried c. 230 AD and found on 9 August 1933 in Bell's Meadow, Falkirk, Stirlingshire. It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. A replica of the tartan was created by the Rediscovering the Antonine Wall Project and was part of their museum exhibition, 'The Antonine Wall: Beyond Boundaries'. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/textile-fragment/134896>

Bridgeness

Bridgeness Distance Stone



Detail of the Bridgeness Slab replica ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

A sandstone distance stone dedicated by the Second Legion, found in Bo'ness (RIB 2139). It is one of the most ornate distance stones found in Scotland. The inscription reads "For the Emperor Caesar Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, father of his country, the Second Legion Augusta built (this work) for a distance of 4,652 paces.". It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. A replica of the stone was installed in Bo'ness in 2012.

<https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/commemorative-stone/141406>

Carriden Fort altar

This is a sandstone altar discovered during ploughing in the field to the east of Carriden fort (RIB 3503). This was an amazing discovery as the altar provided evidence for the civilian settlement, as well as the Roman name for the fort (Velunia or Veluniate). The abbreviated Latin inscription reads: 'To Jupiter Best and Greatest, the villagers settled at Fort Veluniate paid their vow joyful and willing, deservedly; Aelius Mansuetus taking care of the matter.' It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/altar/141428>

Castlecary Fort

Lion head mount *

This copper-alloy lion-headed mount was found by a metal detector 200 meters south of Castlecary Fort, close to the old quarry. It is possibly a furniture mount, but lion-head mounts are often associated with wooden containers for cremated bone, reflecting a wider association of such images with funerary monuments. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection.

<https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/146272/sites-and-monument-record-castleary-lion-headed-mount-smr-2061>

Statuette

A sandstone statuette of Fortuna, the Roman goddess of luck, fate and fortune, found in a niche in the internal bathhouse at Castlecary Fort. The cornucopia, rudder and wheel were her attributes. It is part of the Hunterian Museum Collection in Glasgow. <http://collections.gla.ac.uk/#/details/ecatalogue/107091>

Altars

The following altars were found at Castlecary Fort:

- A sandstone altar to Fortuna dedicated by the second and sixth Legions (RIB 2146). The abbreviated Latin inscription reads: 'To Fortuna detachments of the Second Legion Augusta and Sixth Legion Victrix Pia Fidelis gladly and willingly set this up.' It is part of the Hunterian Museum Collection in Glasgow. <http://collections.gla.ac.uk/#/details/ecatalogue/106741>
- A sandstone altar to Mercury dedicated by the sixth legion, found between the west rampart of Castlecary fort and the red burn (RIB 2148). The abbreviated Latin inscription reads: 'To the god Mercury soldiers of the Sixth Legion Victrix Pia Fidelis, being citizens of Italy and Noricum, set up this shrine and statuette, gladly, willingly, and deservedly fulfilling their vow.' It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/altar/141411>
- A sandstone altar to Neptune dedicated by the 1st Cohort of the Varduli, to the west of Castlecary fort, close to the Red Burn (RIB 2149). The abbreviated Latin inscription reads: 'To the god Neptune the First Loyal Cohort of Vardullians, Roman citizens, part-mounted, a thousand strong, (set this up) under the command of Trebius Verus, the prefect.' It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/altar/141412>

Inveravon Fort

Pivot stone

A fragment of a large sandstone block was found at Inveravon Fort. A small, circular hollow has been worn into one face by its use as a pivot stone. It would have been used for a door or a gate post. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/148857/pivot-stone>

Samian ware

Two joining sherds of samian ware dish stamped "ASIATICI.OF" were found at Inveravon Fort. The stamp is from Asiaticus, a potter based in a workshop in Lezoux, Central Gaul (France) and it is the first of his stamps to be recorded from Scotland. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection.

<https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/31545/samian-stamped>

Kinneil Fortlet

Harness Loop*



©Falkirk Community Trust

A bronze harness loop was found at Kinneil Fortlet. It had two projecting rectangular loops attached to the back, one of which survives. The front is beautifully decorated with a debased S-scroll and two domed mounts, forming a leaf-like pattern. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. A replica sculpture was installed at Kinneil Estate in 2020. <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/harness-loop-kinneil-fortlet-antonine-wall-fdb8c33c3d9647f6b1b032f9cffb8a3a>

Leather shoe*

A shoe was recovered from the lower levels of a large pit at Kinneil fortlet. The leather upper of this shoe was made from fine leather only 1 mm thick, with high-quality cut work decoration. A reconstruction of how it would have looked is available under the 3D Model section. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/38341/shoe>

Mumrills Fort

Bound captive figurine

A copper-alloy anthropomorphic figurine representing a bound Iron-age captive was found at Mumrills Fort. The shackles he is wearing connecting his neck, hands and feet with loops have forced him into a crouched position with legs drawn up and together, elbows on his knees and arms flexed with hands clasped together. The hair is styled in a distinctively 'Celtic' way with the hair brushed back from the forehead. Seventeen bound captive figurines have been found across the empire, with this one being the most northerly example. These figurines most likely depict slaves and were clearly meant to be mounted through the circular perforation through the stomach, though the purpose is uncertain. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/184640/figurine-bound-captive>

Intaglio

A Roman cornelian intaglio with the figure of Nemesis was found at Mumrills Fort. Nemesis was the goddess of retribution. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection.

<https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/30689/intaglio>

Beaker

A complete rough-cast beaker with purplish-brown slip was found at Mumrills fort. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/33110/beaker-rough-cast>

Samian ware

A fragment of samian ware was found at Mumrills fort. On the left, part of a stamp of Cinnamus, a potter known to have produced wares at a workshop in Lezoux, Central Gaul (France) during the 2nd Century is visible. On the right there is a large double-bordered medallion containing a kneeling warrior. The base bears a graffito scratched after firing. It reads: 'MATIIRNII', Matern(a)e, '(property) of Materna'. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection.

<https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/86294/samian-decorated-stamped>



©Falkirk Community Trust

Brooch



©Falkirk Community Trust

An exceptionally well preserved bronze trumpet brooch was found at Mumrills Fort. It is part of the National Museum of Scotland Collection in Edinburgh.

<https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/fibula-brooch-trumpet/140296>

Hipposandal

A very nearly complete wrought iron Roman hipposandal was found at Mumrills Fort. These were used for temporarily shodding a horse and were probably used after an injury. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/47839/hippo-sandal>

Hercules Statue

A statue of Hercules was found in a back garden in the village of Laurieston (near Mumrills) in 1987. Hercules is shown bearded with thick locks of hair and a muscular body holding a club in his right hand. The figure is in relief and must have been attached to a building such as a shrine. It is the work of a competent sculptor in the legions. It may be associated with the altar below, found half a mile away. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/55187/statue-hercules>

Altar

A sandstone altar dedicated to Hercules Magusanus found 1.6km south-east of Mumrills Fort (RIB 2140). The inscription reads: 'Sacred to Hercules Magusanus, Valerius Nigrinus, Duplicarius of the Tungrian cavalry regiment (dedicated this)'. A duplicarius was the most highly paid soldier in the cavalry unit below the officer

class. Hercules was popular with the army, due to his feats of strength. It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/altar/141415>

Bench support

A moulded stone bench support from the bathhouse was found at Mumrills Fort. It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/bench-support/140526>

Denarus

A worn denarius of Antoninus Pius dating to 128 AD found at Mumrills Fort. Obverse carries a bust and is stamped 'Antoninvs Avg Pivs---'; The reverse shows a seated figure facing left and is stamped '--Onnv'. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/50555/coin-denarius>

Gravestone

A sandstone tombstone dedicated to Nectovellius was found at Mumrills Fort (RIB 2142). The abbreviated Latin inscription reads: 'To the spirits of the departed. Nectovellius, son of Vindex, aged 29 of 9 years' service, from the tribe of the Brigantes, served in the Second Cohort of Thracians' Nectovellius is a good example of Roman army recruiting locally, as he is from northern England. It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/tombstone/141395>

Polmont



©Falkirk Community Trust

Griffin figurine

A copper-alloy figurine of a griffin was found at Polmont. The figurine is detailed, with three sets of wing feathers, a ruff of feathers around the neck, and well-defined musculature. The front legs are cast in one but modelled in relief to give the clear view of two legs. No tail is shown. It is not known what it was attached to; but mythological figures served as guardians on a wide range of items and the flat rather than curved base rules out a helmet fitting. It is very classical in form, well-modelled and well-preserved and has been described as one of the finest pieces of small-scale Roman art from the Scottish frontier. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection. <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/163429/figurine-griffin>

Rough Castle

Building inscription

A sandstone building inscription was found in the principia at Rough Castle Fort (RIB 2145). This proved to be very significant at the time of its discovery in 1903, as the inscription specified that the Romans called this building the principia. The abbreviated Latin inscription reads: 'For the Emperor Caesar Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, father of his country, the Sixth Cohort of Nervians built this

Headquarters Building.' It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh.

<https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/slab/134784>

Altar

A sandstone altar to Victory by the Sixth Cohort of Nervians under legionary commander from Legio XX was found at Rough Castle Fort. The abbreviated Latin inscription reads: 'To Victory the Sixth Cohort of Nervians, under the acting command of Flavius Betto, centurion of the Twentieth Legion Valeria Victrix, gladly, willingly, and deservedly fulfilled its vow.' It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh.

<https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/altar/141413>

Samian Ware

Fragments of Samian ware were found at Rough Castle Fort. They are part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/pottery-fragment/134700>

Hoe

Ascia-rastrum hoe of iron was found at Rough Castle Fort. Tools like this give an insight into how the Romans worked the land, as it would be useful for digging and clearing hard and rocky ground. It is part of the National Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/hoe/134792>

Dog tile

Almost square piece of tile, likely part of the hypocaust, the system used to heat Roman buildings. As it was found at Rough Castle Fort, it was likely part of the commanding officer's house. The dog's paw print on the upper face would have been made by a dog walking across the tile while it was still wet. In modern times the tile has been patched with white plaster to hold it together. It is part of the Falkirk Community Trust collection.

<https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/objects/31594/brick-paw-print>



©Falkirk Community Trust

People of the Wall: Falkirk

Illustrations are ©Rediscovering the Antonine Wall

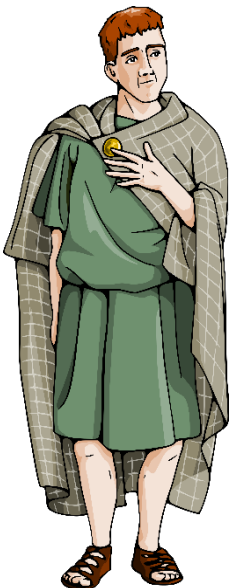


Nectovelius

Nectovelius was 29 years old when he died at Mumrills fort. His tombstone records that he was the son of Vindex, a Brigantian, from modern-day Yorkshire / north-east England. He was an auxiliary soldier in the 2nd cohort of Thracians and had served in the army for 9 years. He was probably recruited when the cohort was based along Hadrian's Wall. Thracia, covering parts of modern-day Bulgaria, Macedonia and Turkey, was known for its cavalry and archers. Part of the 2nd cohort at Mumrills included cavalry.

Gaius Falvius Betto

Gaius Falvius Betto was a centurion of the 20th Legion in temporary command at Rough Castle fort. He was in charge of the 6th Cohort of Nervians, an auxiliary infantry unit. They were originally recruited from modern-day Belgium, known to the Romans as Gallia Belgica. He set up an altar to the goddess Victory, now in the National Museum in Edinburgh.



Aelius Mansuetus

Aelius Mansuetus was a civilian, living in the village outside Carriden fort. He set up an altar to the god Jupiter on behalf of the villagers. The altar records that the Roman name for the fort was Veluniate. It is now in the National Museum in Edinburgh.

Aurelia

The name Aurelia is scratched onto pottery found by archaeologists near the Antonine Wall in Falkirk. No-one knows exactly who she was. Maybe she was related to a soldier based in the fort? Wives and children also lived in the forts and in the villages outside. She is drawn here as the daughter of a soldier, wearing Roman clothes, as one possible interpretation of the story.



Materna

The name 'Materna' was scratched onto the bottom of some pottery dishes, found in excavations at Mumrills fort, Falkirk. She was marking her kitchenware so that no-one stole it. She may have been the wife of a soldier in the fort, or she may have been a civilian living outside the fort with her family. Either way, it's one of the clues to women (and children) living on the Antonine Wall along with soldiers.

Cinnamus

Cinnamus was a potter, based in Lezoux in France, during the second half of the 2nd century AD. He made Samian ware, a special relief-decorated red pottery that was used by wealthy people and by officers on the Antonine Wall. His pots travelled all across the Empire and many are found at sites all along the Antonine Wall, like the one belonging to Materna, found at Mumrills Fort.





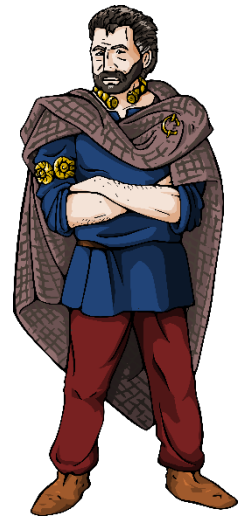
Iron Age Woman

This figure represents the many Iron Age women who lived in villages along the line of the Antonine Wall and the area around it. Many of them lost their homes and lands when they were removed for the building of the Wall. They might have been cut off from their family and friends who ended up on opposite sides of the Wall. Over time, some of the local people began trading or exchanging goods with the Romans. Roman objects such as pottery, jewellery and glass have been found in Iron Age settlements north of the Antonine Wall.

Iron Age Chieftain

This figure represents the Iron Age chieftains who may have originally controlled the lands the Romans took over to build the Antonine Wall. Initially, the Romans pushed them further north, forcing them to create new homes. Over time, the Romans are thought to have paid some

tribal leaders bribes to keep the peace. Pots of Roman coins, often collected over many years, have been recovered from underneath a small number of Iron Age settlements.

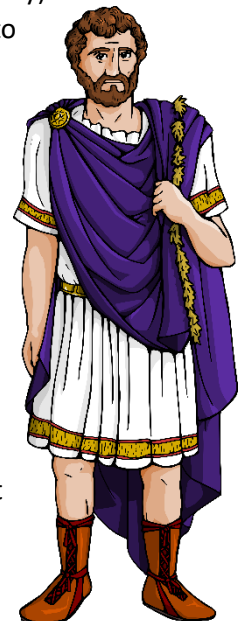


Quintus Lollius Urbicus

Governor of Britain from 139-142AD, Quintus Lollius Urbicus was in charge of building the Antonine Wall for the Emperor. A stone inscription, found at Balmuildy Fort in Glasgow, records his name. It is now on display in the Hunterian Museum. He was born in Tiddis, in modern-day Algeria, but known to the Romans as Numidia. His career took him to (modern-day) Mainz and Vienna, before he reached Britain. After he left the Antonine Wall he went on to become Prefect of Rome and died there in 160AD.

Antoninus Pius

Antoninus Pius was Emperor of Rome from 138-161AD. His predecessor, the Emperor Hadrian adopted him as successor and he was married to Hadrian's niece, Faustina. He ordered the Antonine Wall to be built in order to show his military power and strength. But he never visited it. He reigned for 23 years and managed to control his whole Empire without ever leaving Italy. He was known as one of the 'Five Good Emperors' because he earned the respect of others through governing well and wisely.



Places to Visit in Scotland

Sections of the Antonine Wall, including forts, the ditch, the Military Way as well as traces of the wall itself can be visited today. Information about local Roman sites can be found by using the interactive map here:

<http://www.antoninewall.org/map>

If you are planning a visit, why not download the Antonine Wall interactive app?

<http://www.antoninewall.org/visiting-the-wall/download-the-app>

The following is a list of some of the best and most accessible sites along the Antonine Wall:

- Rough Castle, Bonnybridge – the best-preserved fort in a beautiful setting with panoramic views
- Roman baths, Bearsden – remains of a bathhouse and latrine
- Bar Hill, Twechar – the highest fort on the wall and the setting for the Go Roman game
- Kinneil – the only visible example of an Antonine Wall fortlet
- Callendar Park, Falkirk – long, open stretches of the Antonine Wall ditch
- Watling Lodge, Tamfourhill Road, Falkirk – best-preserved sections of the ditch
- Seabegs Wood, Bonnybridge - well-preserved section of the Military Way, and good views of the ditch and rampart

Other Roman sites to visit across Scotland include:

- Bothwellhaugh - Roman Fort & Bathhouse, Motherwell, was likely linked by road to the Antonine Wall
- Trimontium Roman Fort, Newstead, Scottish Borders
- The Gask Ridge – remains of an early northern frontier in Perthshire
- Forts at Cramond – remains of a supply base
- Lurg Moor, Bishopton – remains of a watchtower and signal base
- Inchtuthill, Caputh – traces of a large military fortress thought never to have been completed or occupied

Museums

The following museums have Roman collections on display:

- The Hunterian Museum, Glasgow
- The National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh
- Trimontium Museum, Melrose
- Callendar House, Falkirk
- Auld Kirk Museum, Kirkintilloch
- Kinneil Museum, Bo'ness
- Cumbernauld Museum, Cumbernauld
- Clydebank Museum, Clydebank

Useful Links

- Antonine Wall Website: <http://www.antoninewall.org/>
- UNESCO Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/430/>
- Historic Environment Scotland: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/world-heritage-sites/antonine-wall/>
- Trove: <https://www.trove.scot/>
- The National Museum of Scotland: <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/search-our-collections/>
- Hunterian Museum: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/hunterian/>
- Falkirk Collections: <https://collections.falkirk.gov.uk/explore>
- Antonine Wall interactive app: <http://www.antoninewall.org/visiting-the-wall/download-the-app>
- Antonine Wall Vimeo account: <https://vimeo.com/user29028896>
- Antonine Wall sketchfab: <https://sketchfab.com/HistoricEnvironmentScotland/collections/antonine-wall-07ab1bb24ffa412596bdc1415b3ef898>

Antonine Wall App

If you are planning a trip to one of the sites along the Antonine Wall, you can download our free Antonine Wall app that includes text, images and videos, 360 degree virtual reconstructions of the sites, and 3D interactive models of artefacts found along the Wall. The app is best used on site, to fully appreciate and understand the augmented reality reconstructions, but can also be used off-site. It is available to download for both Android and iOS.

Roman Glossary

- Ager - The raised mound of a Roman road
- Agricola - Gnaeus Julius Agricola was a Roman general responsible for much of the Roman conquest of Britain.
- Auxiliaries - Elements of the Roman army made up of non-citizens, distinguished from legionaries, who were Roman citizens.
- Ballista - artillery weapon discharging arrows and stone balls
- Barbarian - A person who lived outside the Roman Empire, perceived by Romans as having a violent nature.
- Basilica - town hall
- Berm - in military defences, the level space between two features (e.g. ditch and rampart)
- Britannia - goddess of warfare and water
- Caldarium - Hot room in a bath-suite
- Centuria - unit of 80 legionary soldiers, commanded by a centurion
- Clavicula - in a Roman camp, curved extension of rampart (and ditch) protecting a gateway
- Cohort - Roman army unit, legionary or auxiliary
- Crop-mark- colour-differentiation in standing crops or vegetation (best seen from the air), indicating the presence of buried ancient features
- Denarius - Silver coin, worth 4 sestertii.
- Distance Stone- celebrated the work of the legions who constructed the Antonine Wall. They would have been set into stone frames along the length of the Wall and are likely to have faced South into the Empire.
- Fortuna -Roman goddess of luck and good fortune.
- Forum - Open space in the middle of a town for markets and meeting people (like a market square)
- Frigidarium - Cold room in a bath-suite, normally a cold plunge pool
- Gaul - The Roman name for what is now France, Belgium and Holland.
- Gallia Belgica - modern-day Belgium
- Horreum - Granary.
- Hypocaust - Roman central heating - It works by hot air flowing through gaps between walls and flooring
- Juno - A Roman goddess of women and childbirth. She was the wife of the god Jupiter. Jupiter - The chief Roman god and the god of thunder.
- Laconicum - hot room (dry heat) in a bath-suite
- Legate - A broad term with three common meanings: (a) an individual assigned a particular task; (b) the commander of a legion; (c) the governor of an imperial province.
- Legion - The major operational unit of the Roman army, consisting of between 5,000 and 6,000 men, all Roman citizens, under the command of a legate appointed by the emperor.
- Lilia - three foot deep pit with tapering sides, at the bottom of which a sharpened stake was fixed upright and concealed with brushwood and leaves.
- Marcus - The Rediscovering the Antonine Wall Project Mascot
- Mercury - The messenger of the Roman gods. He was also the god of trade.
- Minerva - Roman goddess of wisdom
- Mortaria - bowls, with rough insides, that Romans used for grinding up foods
- Neptune - Roman god of the sea.
- Numidia - modern-day Algeria

- Pannonia Superior - modern-day eastern Europe
- Praetorium - commanding officer's house
- Prefect - the person placed in charge and so could have a range of applications, both military and administrative. The more significant military ones were (a) the commander of an auxiliary unit or of the fleet and (b) camp prefect, second-in-command to the legionary legate and commander of the troops in the legate's absence
- Principia - headquarters building of a Roman Fort
- Sacellum - shrine in a fort's headquarters building
- Samian - high-quality, red-coated pottery, imported from the continent (mainly from France)
- Silvanus - Roman god of the woods
- Strigil - A metal object used in Baths to scrape sweat, dirt and excess oil off.
- Stylus - A metal pen for scratching words into wax on wooden tablets
- Titulum - short, detached stretch of rampart (and ditch) protecting the gateway of a marching camp
- Thracia - area covering parts of modern-day Bulgaria, Macedonia and Turkey
- Tribune - rank above centurion. There were six appointed to each legion, answering to the legate who was in charge.
- Tribunus Laticlavus - the second-in-command but often ended up in sole charge of a legion.
- Triclinium - dining-room
- Toga - The traditional public dress of Roman men, made of fine white wool.
- Venus - Roman goddess of love and beauty
- Via decumana- road in a fort running from back of principia to back gate
- Via principalis - road in a fort linking the gates on the long sides and passing in front of the principia
- Vicus - Civilian settlement
- Victory - the goddess of victory

Bibliography

This guide was published as part of the Rediscovering the Antonine Wall project (October 2018 – March 2023). The links in the bibliography were correct at the time of publication. Please note: following the launch of trove.scot in February 2025 Canmore was switched off on 24th June 2025.

Bantaskin

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Bonnyside

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/46801/bonnyside-east> ;
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/122823/bonnyside-west>

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[At least one of the Bonnyside expansions—probably Bonnyside West—is discussed on page 58.]

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Callendar Park

CANMORE Records: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/78495/callendar-park-east-lodge-antonine-wall>;
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/84618/falkirk-callendar-park-antonine-wall/>;
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/74716/callendar-park>

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Carriden

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/49589/carriden>

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Castlecary

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Dalnair

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/46806/dalnair>

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Falkirk

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/74326/falkirk-pleasance>

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<http://maps.nls.uk/geo/roy/index.cfm#zoom=14&lat=56.00152&lon=-3.77496&layers=0B000000TTT>

Inveravon

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/47799/antonine-wall-inveravon>;
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/82872/inveravon-antonine-wall>; <https://canmore.org.uk/site/47801/inveravon>

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[Inveravon is discussed on page 60.]

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CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/48135/kinneil>

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Roy, W. (1755) Military Survey of Scotland. [For the area around Kinneil, see: <http://maps.nls.uk/geo/roy/index.cfm#zoom=14&lat=56.00118&lon=-3.7253&layers=0B000000TTT>]

Milnquarter

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Polmont Church

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Polmont Woods

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Polmonthill

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/78522/polmonthill-antonine-wall>;
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/47871/polmonthill>

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Rough Castle

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Roy, W. (1755) *Military Survey of Scotland*. [For the area around Rough Castle, see: <http://maps.nls.uk/geo/roy/index.cfm#zoom=14&lat=56.00497&lon=-3.83942&layers=0B00w0000TTT>]

Seabegs Wood

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/46788/seabegs-wood>

Breeze, D.J. (2009) 'A Selection of Sites on the Antonine Wall', in N. Hodgson (ed.) *Roman Scotland: XXI International Limes (Roman Frontiers Studies)*

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Keppie, L.J.F. and Breeze, D.J. (1981) 'Some Excavations on the Line of the Antonine Wall, 1957-80.' *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 111: 229-47. [Seabegs is discussed on pages 237.]

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Keppie, L.J.F. and Walker, J.J. (1989) 'Some Excavations Along the Line of the Antonine Wall, 1981-85.' *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 119: 143-59. [Seabegs is discussed on page 148.]

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Tamfourhill

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/46750/tamfourhill>

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Jones, R.H. (2011) *Roman Camps in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. [For the Tamfourhill camp, see page 308.]

Keppie, L.J.F. (2001) 'Roman Britain in 2000. 1. Sites Explored, Scotland.' *Britannia*, 32: 319-22. [For the Tamfourhill camp, see pages 319-20.]

Maxwell, G.S. (1989) 'Aerial Reconnaissance on the Antonine Wall,' in D. Kennedy (ed.) *Into the Sun: Essays in Air Photography in Archaeology in Honour of Derrick Riley*. Sheffield: Department of Archaeology and Prehistory, University of Sheffield, pp. 173-88.

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[For the Tamfourhill camp, see page 29.]

Tentfield

CANMORE Record: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/46781/antonine-wall-tentfield-east-and-west>

Gordon, A. (1726) *Itinerarium Septentrionale*. London. <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=40g1AQAAMAAJ>
[The Tentfield expansions are discussed on page 59.]

Macdonald, G. (1934) *The Roman Wall in Scotland*, second edition. Oxford. [The line of the Wall and the Tentfield Expansions are discussed on pages 128, 351-58.]

Robertson, A.S. , revised by Keppie, L. (2001) *The Antonine Wall: A Handbook to the Surviving Remains*. Glasgow. [The line of the Wall and the Tentfield Expansions are discussed on pages 31, 68.]

Roy, W. (1793) *The Military Antiquities of the Romans in Britain*. London. [For remains at Tentfield, see pages 163.]

Steer, K.A. (1959) 'The Nature and Purpose of the Expansions on the Antonine Wall.' *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 90: 161-69.

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Watling Lodge

CANMORE Records: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/122769/falkirk-tamfourhill>;
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/46783/watling-lodge>

Bailey, G.B. (1995) 'The Antonine Frontier in Callander Park, Falkirk: Its Form and Structural Sequence'. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 125: 577-600. [The makeup of the Antonine Wall Rampart around Watling Lodge is discussed on pages 593-95.]

Breeze, D.J. (1975) 'Excavations at the Roman Fortlet on the Antonine Wall at Watling Lodge 1972-4'. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 105: 166-75.

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Gordon, A. (1726) *Itinerarium Septentrionale*. London. <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=40g1AQAAMAAJ>
[The line of the Wall around Tamfourhill, and the 20m square "watch-tower" located in the area are discussed on page 59.]

Horsley, J. (1732) *Britannia Romana*. London. [The line of the Wall around Tamfourhill is discussed on page 172.]

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http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/adsdata/arch-352-1/dissemination/pdf/vol_125/125_601_672.pdf [Tamfourhill and Watling Lodge are discussed on pages 622-29, 663, 666.]

Macdonald, G. (1925) 'Further Discoveries on the Line of the Antonine Wall'. Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 59: 270–95. [For the change in Antonine Wall Rampart materials at Watling Lodge, see page 285.]

Macdonald, G. (1934) The Roman Wall in Scotland, second edition. Oxford. [The line and makeup of the Wall at Tamfourhill is discussed on pages 86-88, 127-28, and the motte and fortlet at Watling Lodge are discussed on pages 344-50.]

Robertson, A.S., revised by Keppie, L. (2001) The Antonine Wall: A Handbook to the Surviving Remains. Glasgow. [The line of the Wall through Tamfourhill and the fortlet at Watling Lodge are discussed on pages 65-68.]

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