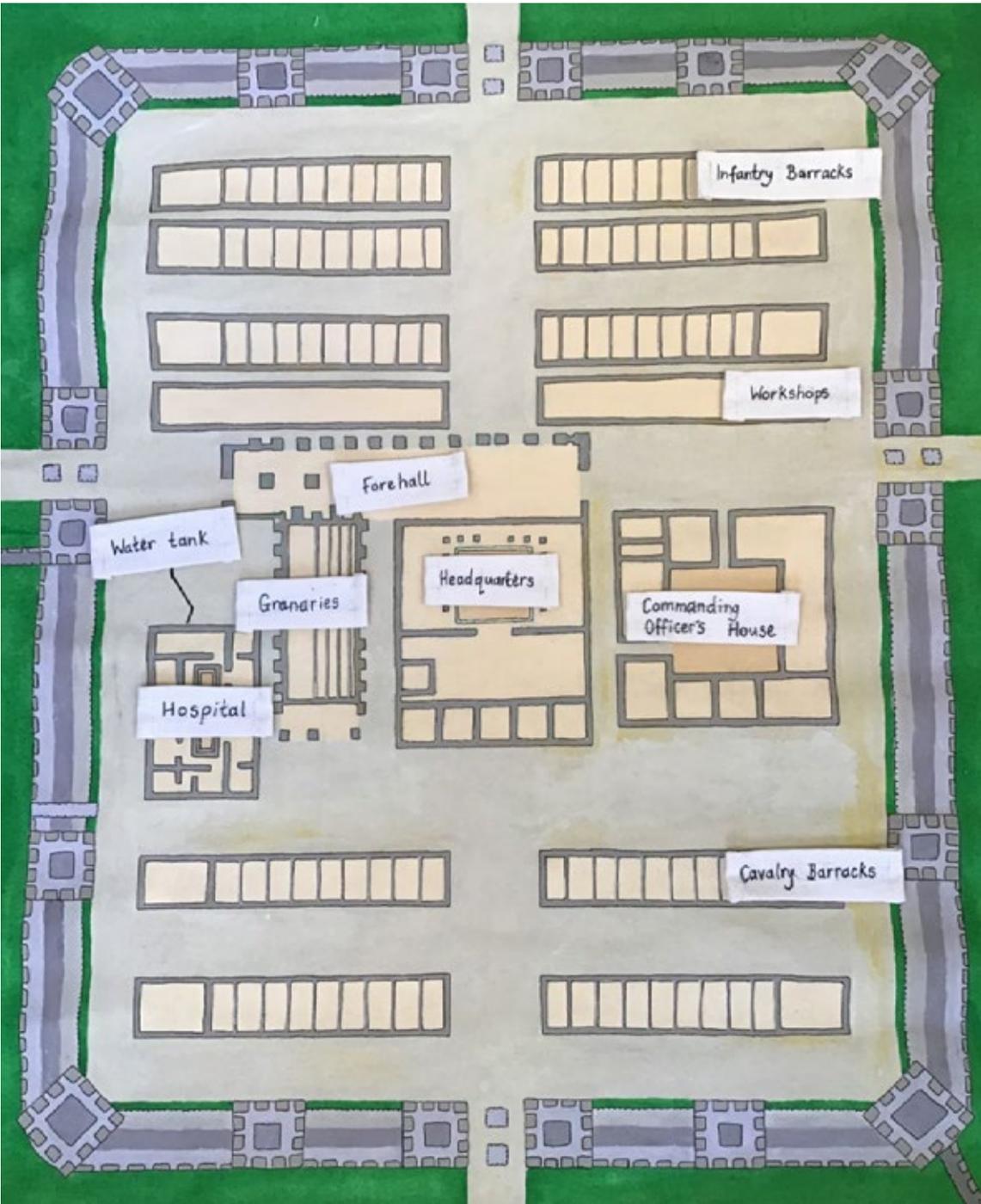


Plan of Segedunum Fort



Segedunum Roman Fort

Segedunum Roman Fort lay at the eastern end of Hadrian's Wall. The fort was occupied for around 300 years. Over this time there were many changes in its plan. Most of the layout that you see here shows the fort plan as it was in about AD 200, when it was garrisoned by a cohort of 480 infantry and 120 cavalry soldiers.

Cobbles mark the lines of the walls. Golden gravel is used to show building interiors. Streets between the buildings are represented by pebbles.





Sentius Tectonicus

Sentius Tectonicus is sculpture of a Roman centurion soldier marking the eastern end of Hadrian's Wall. The sculpture is eight and a half feet (2.8m) high.

The contemporary sculpture by artist John O'Rourke links both the site's Roman heritage and its more recent industrial past.

Sentius was the name of the centurion responsible for supervising the section of Hadrian's Wall near Segedunum. A stone inscribed with his name was found near the fort. Tectonicus refers to the sculpture's design as an architectural man, with the centurion's torso emerging from a Roman four storey building.



Did you know?

The sculpture contains 575 components and more than three tonnes of Corten steel - the same material used to construct the Angel of the North.



Imagine

Imagine Sentius could come to life... How would he move? How would he sound? Would he be friendly or frightening?

The Men Who Built the Wall

This inscription gives the names of Roman soldiers known to have taken part in the building of Hadrian's Wall. The names come from 'centurial stones' which were set up by the work gangs, recording the section of wall they worked on. They name the officer (centurion) in charge of each section. The bottom of the monument is left blank as we hope to discover more names in the future.



Discover

If you look carefully, you will see the name of Sentius, the Centurion responsible for a section of Hadrian's Wall near Segedunum.



The Branch Wall

This section of Hadrian's Wall is part of the 'Branch Wall', the section of Hadrian's Wall that runs from the south-east corner of the fort down to the river, forming the 'Wall's End'.



Imagine

There may have been a large monument or temple marking the end of Hadrian's Wall. What do you think it would have looked like?

How would it feel to arrive here by boat nearly 2,000 years ago?

Bath house reconstruction

This bath house was not built by the Romans. It was built by archaeologists who found out as much as they could about Roman bath houses then built their own. The baths were the main meeting place and social centre near the fort. They provided somewhere to relax and meet with friends. The baths were laid out in a series of cold warm and hot rooms similar to modern Turkish baths. Both men and women could use the baths and regulations were brought in for different bathing hours on several occasions.



Did you know

The original baths were discovered about 100m south of this spot through a community archaeology project called Wallquest in 2014-15. Wallquest volunteers and a team of professional archaeologists have carried out a detailed excavation of around 50% of the building.

! **Imagine**

What would it feel like inside the bath house in Roman times?

This is how the Roman writer Seneca described a bath house:

I live above a bath house. Just imagine every kind of noise, enough to make me hate my powers of hearing! When the sturdy gentleman is exercising with heavy lead weights... I can hear him grunt. When a lazy fellow is content with a cheap rubdown, I hear the slap of hands pummeling his shoulders... Add to this the fellow who loves to hear his own voice in the baths, and those who jump in the pool with a great splash when they hit the water... In addition imagine the hair plucker keeping up a constant chatter...and is never silent except when he is plucking armpits and making the customer yell instead. Now add in the varied cries of the sausage seller and pastry-man, and all the other peddlers of the cook-shops, selling their wares.

South Gate

For much of its life this gateway formed the main exit to the civilian settlement (vicus) outside the fort on the bank of the river. Outside the gate there was a system of defensive ditches.



! Imagine

Imagine you are a soldier approaching the gate. The gates would be guarded night and day. To get past the guards you would need to know the day's password.

Today it's Mercury.

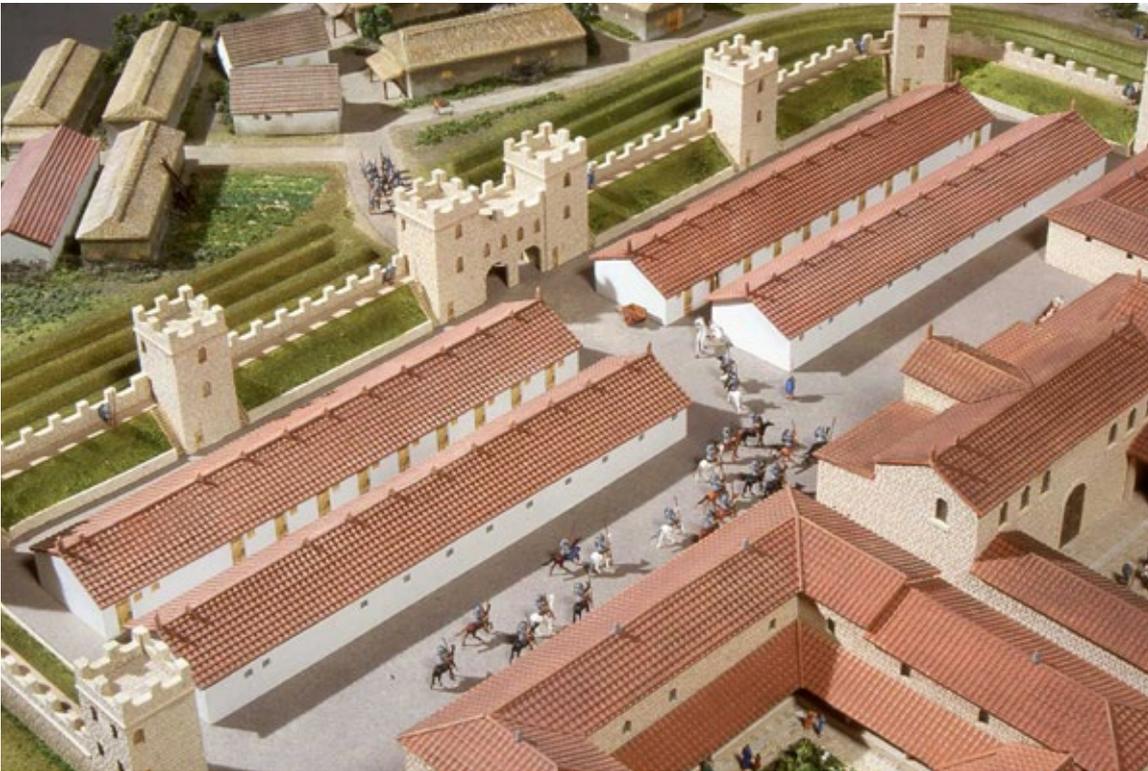
Say the password as you march through the gates.

? Did you know

The opposite North Gate actually lies on the other side of Buddle Street, the road which cuts through the fort. The position of the gate is marked by a gap between the terraced houses.

Cavalry Barrack

These barracks housed the four troops of cavalry at Segedunum. Each space was divided into a front room and back room. Each back room housed three soldiers. The soldiers would sleep, cook and store their equipment and belongings here. Their horses were kept in the front rooms. At one end of the block was a house for the officer in charge of the cavalry troop. He was called the Decurion.



Four long, cavalry barrack buildings can be seen in this model of the fort.



Reconstruction of a cavalry barrack room inside the Roman Gallery.

 **Discover**

The large lozenge shaped pits you can see in the front rooms of the barrack rooms are actually the evidence that told archaeologists these were buildings for cavalry soldiers. Soil samples from the pits were found to have traces of a chemical found in horse urine. We think these were toilets for the horses! The pits would have been covered with wooden floorboards in Roman times.

The pink cement circles in the back rooms show where hearths would have been.



Cavalry horse in the front room and hearth in the back room of the cavalry barrack reconstruction.

! **Imagine**

What would it be like to live here as a soldier? Would you have a lot of room or do you think it would be cramped with three soldiers living in each of the back rooms? How do you think it would be decorated? What sounds would you hear? What would you smell? Where would you go to the toilet?

The Minor West Gate (porta Quintana sinistra)

This was a simple gate with a single entrance and would have had a tower above it: it became the main way into the fort. A small building attached to one side of the gate tower may have functioned as a guard house.

Hospital (Valetudinarium)

In Roman times, the only hospitals which existed were run by the army medical service. The hospital at Segedunum dates from the AD160s. There was a wooden building predating this, but hardly anything remains of that layout. The hospital consisted of a series of small rooms built around a courtyard. Rooms probably included an operating theatre, wards, latrines and stores. You can see the large latrines in the south west corner of the fort. Unlike modern toilet blocks, soldiers would sit side by side when using the latrines!



Illustration of an eye operation inside the Roman Gallery.

! **Imagine**

How do you think it would feel to be a patient in this hospital? Remember there were no antibiotics or very effective anaesthetics in those days! What would you hear? What would you feel? What would you smell?

? **Did you know**

The latrine would have had stone seats over the deep channels which can be seen in the room. Waste falling into these channels was flushed away by water arriving through drains.



Reconstruction of the toilet incorporating the original seat found in the hospital building.

Water Tank

Water storage tanks were common in Roman forts. They were filled with rainwater or sometimes with water from outside springs using aqueducts. The water tank at Segedunum may be unique in having piers within the tank. These piers may have supported a mechanical water-lifting device, such as chain and buckets, a water wheel or Archimedes screw. The Romans were careful to make sure each fort had a good water supply and Segedunum would also have needed water for horses. A drain ran south from this tank to flush the latrines in the hospital.



Forehall

The forehall was a tall building which ran across the front of the headquarters building and the granary. Archaeologists do not know exactly what these buildings were for. It was once thought that they may have been drill halls for soldiers to train in bad weather. However, it is now believed that they may have been used for religious and ceremonial gatherings.

Granaries (Horrea)

This building was used to store supplies for the garrison of Segedunum, especially grain and other perishable foodstuffs. Every fort had a granary or granaries: this is a double granary with two buildings joined together.

One half of this building has a series of parallel wall foundations. These were for rows of walls which supported a raised floor, to keep the grain dry and prevent rodents getting in to eat the food.



Model to show construction of the granary building with raised floors, inside the Roman Gallery.



Remains of the double granary on the fort site.

Imagine

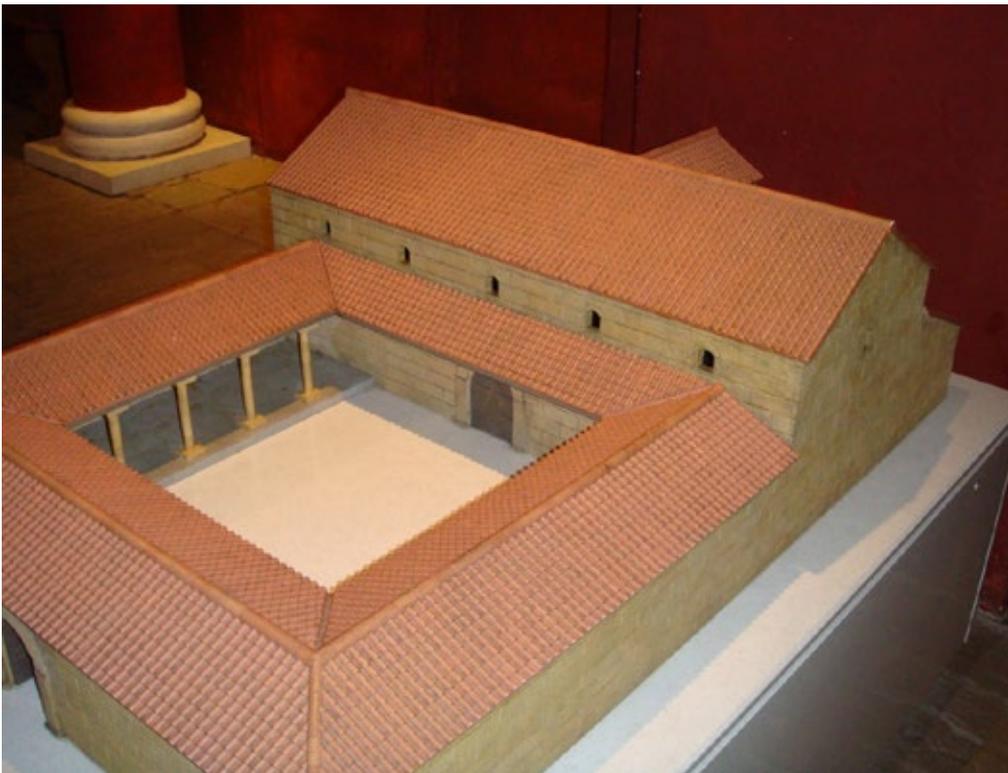
Imagine unloading large amphora jars of olive oil and barrels of beer from carts and taking them into the granary. Imagine lifting the heavy sacks of grain.

Make sure to put the grain in the right half of the granary so it does not go mouldy or get eaten by rodents!

The Headquarters (Principia)

Headquarters buildings were made up of a courtyard, a great hall and a row of five rooms. The outer walls of the building would have been whitewashed and the roof covered with bright red tiles.

Religious ceremonies and sacrifices took place in the open courtyard. The great hall would have been a large church-like structure full of groups of soldiers going about their business. In the centre of the rooms behind the great hall you can see an underground chamber or strong room. This was used for safeguarding sacks of coins used to pay the soldiers. Above the strong room would have been a shrine to the gods, which would also contain the battle standards of the unit in garrison. The pairs of rooms on either side of the central shrine were offices used by pay clerks.



Model of the Headquarters building inside the Roman Gallery.

Discover

In the centre of the rooms behind the great hall you can see an underground chamber or strong room. This was used for safeguarding sacks of coins used to pay the soldiers. Above the strong room would have been a shrine to the gods, which would also contain the battle standards of the unit in garrison. The pairs of rooms on either side of the central shrine were offices used by clerks.



Reconstruction of the Shrine of the Standards.

Imagine

Imagine standing in the headquarters in Roman times. You may hear the Commanding Officer giving orders of the day, standing on a raised platform at the end of the great hall. You may smell the sweet smell of incense burning at altars as offerings to the gods. You would see soldiers on guard duty in front of the Shrine of the Standards. You might see soldiers working in the offices next to the Shrine of the Standards, keeping records on wooden tablets.

Try marching smartly around the headquarters!

The Commanding Officer's House (Praetorium)

This was the largest building in the fort, reflecting the high social status of the unit commander. He was from a wealthy family in the Mediterranean area, sometimes even from Italy itself. His house was exactly like rich Roman houses in Mediterranean cities.

The central courtyard was designed to provide shade from the Mediterranean sun, but is found even here at Wallsend. Around the courtyard were dining rooms, kitchens, living rooms, libraries and studies, bedrooms, stables and baths. The wife and children of the commanding officer would have lived here, as well as an extensive household of slaves.



View of 'C' shaped Commanding Officer's House from the viewing tower.



Left: The walls of the Commanding Officer's House would probably have been decorated with frescos. Right: Reconstruction of the Commanding Officer's house at Arbeia Fort

? Did you know

The Commanding Officer was at least 30 years old. He would be in charge of the unit for about three years. The Commanding Officer's wife and household would have come with him when he was posted to Segedunum. Life would have been quite lonely for the Commanding Officer's wife. She would not mix with the Centurion's wives who were the only other women living in the fort as they did not come from the same type of background. She would have socialised with other Commanding Officer's wives who lived in neighbouring forts.

! Imagine

What would it be like to live here in the Commanding Officer's house? How would it be different to living here as an ordinary soldier?

Hadrian's Wall remains and reconstruction

The stones which you see are the surviving remains of Hadrian's Wall, built in about AD 124. The ditch which ran 6m in front of the wall is no longer visible. The oak posts to the north of the Wall, mark the position of a series of obstacles. These may have been sharpened and perhaps had brambles and hawthorns threaded through, rather like an ancient form of barbed wire.

To the south of the Wall remains is a reconstruction of how we think Hadrian's Wall would have looked in Roman times. We don't know what the top of the wall looked like, but it's generally thought that it would have had a walkway and a parapet wall to protect the soldiers.



Hadrian's Wall remains and reconstruction.



Model of Hadrian's Wall showing the ditch and obstacles.

! **Imagine**

Imagine you are a soldier standing on the top of Hadrian's Wall. Imagine the Wall stretching off into the distance.

What would you see? How do you think the view has changed?

What is here now that would not have been here in Roman times?

Q **Discover**

If you look closely, you will see where the Wall dips down into what was once a stream valley. Here, the Wall looks much wider. This is because this part was rebuilt several times following collapses caused by the unstable slopes of the valley.

Evidence of the collapse can be seen on the north face of the Wall which is tilted at a very strange angle! You can also see a large culvert which would have brought a water supply to the fort and baths.