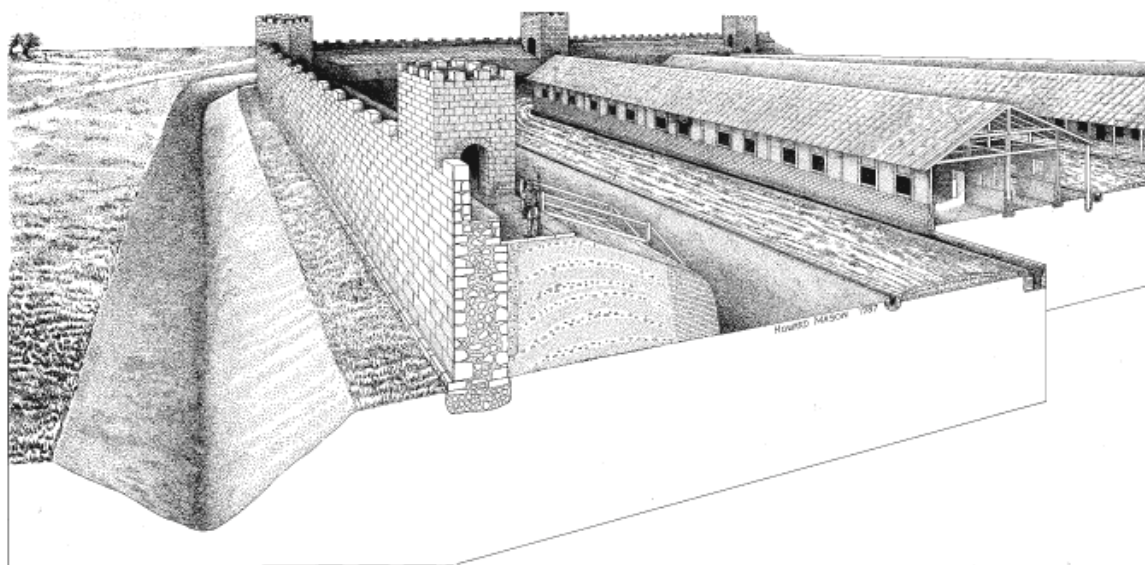


The Roman Legionary Fortress at Caerleon in Gwent: Report on the Excavations of the Southern Defences carried out in 1982

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with contributions by

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Frontispiece. Sites C, E and A from the north-west (Photo: Graham Rickard)

Contents

Contents	i
Figures	i
Tables	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Editorial preface	iv
Introduction	1
The Excavations	
Phase I: Earthen rampart	4
Phase II: Rampart walls and turrets	8
Phase III: Dumping in ground floor of interval turret	18
Phase IV: Rebuilds of rampart walls	22
Phase V: Buildings cut into back of rampart	26
Phase VI: Alterations to the rampart	32
Phase VII: Post Roman features	33
Discussion	
The earthen rampart	34
The rampart wall and turrets	35
The appearance of the fortress	39
Localised rebuilding of the rampart wall	40
Reconstruction of the fortress defences	42
The specialist reports	
Coins by G.C. Boon [†]	47
Samian ware by G.C. Boon [†]	48
Coarse pottery by S. J. Greep	52
Stamped and impressed tile by Howard Mason	71
The Glass by Denise Allen	73
The Metalwork by I.R. Scott	78
Iron-making slags by T.P. Young and G.R. Thomas	84
Objects of bone and antler by S.J. Greep and G.G. Jones	85
Incised carved decorated stone by R.J. Brewer	87
Painted plaster by Howard Mason	89
Animal bone by G.G. Jones	90
Appendix One by P.V. Webster	95
Bibliography	96
<i>Figure list</i>	
Fig. 1: The location of Caerleon	1
Fig. 2: The location of the excavated sites and the south corner rebuilds	3
Fig. 3: Site B. Section SB 1. View through the rampart looking SE	5
Fig. 4: Site B. Section SB 2. View through the rampart looking NW	5
Fig. 5: Site B Section SB 1. Section through the rampart looking south	6
Fig. 6: Site B Section SB 2. Section through the rampart looking north	6
Fig. 7: Site C Section SC 1. Section through the rampart looking south	7
Fig. 8: Site D. Curtain wall section showing cobble foundations.	8
Fig. 9: Site D. The interval tower from the north east	9

Fig. 10:	Site D. Section SD 1. Section across front of interval turret	10
Fig. 11:	Site A. The corner turret from the NE	12
Fig. 12:	Site A. The corner turret pile slot from the NW	12
Fig. 13:	Site A. Transverse section SA 2 across the corner turret	14
Fig. 14:	Site A. West wall of the corner turret showing the slot	15
Fig. 15:	Site A. East face of the west wall of the corner turret	16
Fig. 16:	Site A. North face of the corner turret showing the ‘false jointing’	17
Fig. 17:	Site D Section SD2. Longitudinal section through interval turret	20
Fig. 18:	Site D Section SD3. Interval turret showing Phase III fill	20
Fig. 19:	Site D. Deposits in blocked doorway from SW	21
Fig. 20:	Interface between rampart Rebuild II and Rebuild I	22
Fig. 21:	Site A. Plan of the corner turret	23
Fig. 22:	Site A section SA1. Elevation of inside face of perimeter wall	25
Fig. 23:	Site E. Plan	26
Fig. 24:	Site A. Section SA3. East section	28
Fig. 25:	Site A. Elevation of east face of west wall of corner turret.	29
Fig. 26:	Site B. Rear section showing possible ovens	28
Fig. 27:	Site D. Plan of interval turret and view of cook house	30
Fig. 28:	Site E. View of the circular structure on top of the rampart	28
Fig. 29:	View of the corner tower and curtain wall from the west	42
Fig. 30:	Reconstruction of the Phase I and Phase II ramparts	43
Fig. 31:	Reconstruction of interval turret, rampart and ditch	46
Fig. 32:	Decorated samian ware	48
Fig. 33:	Plain samian ware including stamps and graffito	51
Fig. 34:	Coarse pottery. Phase II and Phase III	54
Fig. 35:	Coarse pottery vessels from Phase III contexts	56
Fig. 36:	BB1 assemblages from the Fortress Baths and the Defences	56
Fig. 37:	Coarse pottery. Phase III	58
Fig. 38:	Coarse pottery. Phase III	60
Fig. 39:	Coarse pottery. Phase III	61
Fig. 40:	Coarse pottery. Phase III	62
Fig. 41:	Coarse pottery: Phase III	64
Fig. 42:	Coarse pottery: Phase IV and Phase V	65
Fig. 43:	Coarse pottery: Phase V and Phase VI	67
Fig. 44:	Coarse pottery: Phase VI	69
Fig. 45:	Coarse pottery: Phase VI	70
Fig. 46:	Tile impressed with footprint	71
Fig. 47:	Glass vessels	74
Fig. 48:	Copper alloy artefacts	79
Fig. 49:	Copper alloy artefacts	80
Fig. 50:	Copper alloy artefacts	82
Fig. 51:	Objects of lead	83
Fig. 52:	Objects of bone and antler	85
Fig. 53:	Incised stone re-used in wall	87

Tables

Table 1:	Animal species present	91
Table 2:	Anatomical analysis of the cattle, sheep and pig bones	92

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Howard Mason
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Editorial Preface

The circumstances of the excavations and the information derived from them are detailed in the following report. As this is being made available some decades after the date of the excavations, it is appropriate here to outline its history and the strategy followed in placing the work in the public domain in 2010.

The site and the specialist reports were written up during the mid 1980s with the intention of publishing in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*. The size of the figures presented here reflects the page size of the journal at that time. Unfortunately by the time the report was finished, the journal was having some production problems and had a long backlog of articles awaiting publication.

In the mid 1990s work on the report was revived by the first author and Cadw funded some additional work. Philip MacDonald was employed to bring all the elements together, and it was possible to revise the pottery report to take into consideration work that had been published in the previous decade. A report was finalised and was published in 1997 in the Cardiff Studies in Archaeology series as Specialist Report number 5. This was effectively a grey literature report with very limited circulation, but was seen as an interim statement making the report available before conventional publication.

Unfortunately at that time the report fell between two stools. Journals were already starting to move away from publication of excavation reports such as this as most were seen as being too long for publication as an article. Equally it was too short to justify publication as a stand-alone monograph. The report languished again, complete but effectively unpublishable.

In late 2009, Cadw contacted the present editor with a view to publishing the report. As the excavations remain the last substantive archaeological investigation of the defences, it was felt they warranted wider exposure especially as conclusions drawn from them had already appeared in print (see for example Zienkiewicz 1999). A condition of the commission was that the work had to be completed in the financial year 2009-2010. It was decided that with minor editorial changes the report could be published via the Archaeological Data Service and a synthetic article drawing on it would be prepared for publication in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*. In what follows the stratigraphic narrative of the excavations remains effectively as it was in 1997. The discussion has been revised to take into consideration work carried out on the defences of other legionary fortresses in Britain which is relevant to Caerleon and which was unavailable to the authors in 1996.

The specialist reports are the element of the report in most need of revision as some of them were written a quarter of a century or more ago. There is now, of course, much more published *comparanda* to draw on, specialist report conventions have changed in many areas, and in some cases much more refined dating of types is now available. Fundamentally, however, all of the specialist reports associated with this excavation are sound pieces of work with the catalogue element providing all the information that other researchers might need to draw on. The approach to these has thus been to include additional notes and references as footnotes in a different typeface where substantial additional work on a type has allowed a better understanding of it. In addition *comparanda* from reports on Caerleon published since these reports were completed have been added. Dr Gwladys Monteil most kindly provided the footnotes for the

samian report. The other notes and references have been produced by the editor with the kind permission of the specialists.

The publication of the report in a digital format has allowed the inclusion of the extensive photographic record. Some of the images have been incorporated into this document and the full archive is indexed in the spreadsheet.

The archive from the excavations will be deposited at the Roman Legionary Museum Caerleon later in 2010. The archive includes specialist reports such as the environmental analyses which are not included here as they were largely negative.

The editorial work on the report was carried out in February and March 2010 and the editor is most grateful to all of the people involved in producing the original report for their generous help in resurrecting this excellent, but long-delayed, report at such short notice. Howard Mason most kindly scanned and amended all the original artwork to make it suitable for inclusion here. I would also like to thank Richard Turner of Cadw for bringing this report to the public domain.

H.E.M. Cool
March 2010