

Castlesteads (Camboglanna)

Castlesteads fort sits on a high bluff overlooking the Cambeck valley. The site was levelled in 1791 when the gardens of Castlesteads House were laid out. Only the southern edge of the fort platform is now visible. The Cam Beck has eroded the north-west front of the fort to within 15 metres of the side gates. The fort is considered to have been a square originally with sides of 122 metres giving an area of 1.5 ha (3.75 acres). It is not impossible, however, that the fort faced south rather than north and thus could have been somewhat larger. Castlesteads is unique among the Wall forts in lying between Wall and Vallum but not being attached to the former.

Cohors IV Gallorum was the garrison for a time (*RIB* 1979-80), probably in the early 2nd century, while the presence of *cohors II Tungrorum milliaria equitata* – or part of it in view the fort's size - is recorded in 241 (*RIB* 1981-3, 1999). Probably owing to an error, Castlesteads does not appear in the list of Wall units in the *Notitia*.

History of exploration

An extramural bath-house was excavated in 1741 (Hutchinson 1794, 115). The only modern excavations took place in the 1930s when the line of the defences on the east, west and south were located along with the double-portalised east and west gates and the south-west angle-tower (Richmond & Hodgson 1934). Geophysical survey in recent years has taken place in the extramural area.

Layout and history

Nothing is known of the plan of the internal buildings. The 1930s excavations encountered the rampart and ditch of an earlier fort beneath the south-east angle apparently laid out on a different alignment. The existence of this fort may have influenced the decision not to attach its successor to the Wall.

Vicus

Official buildings and structures

Survey by the Royal Commission in the 1990s noted the remains of the regimental *balneum* beside the burn 200 m north of the fort (Bidwell ed 1999, 162). The recovery of two altars dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus along with another set up to the emperor and god Vanauns from a spot 300 metres north of the fort may indicate the location of the parade-ground (*RIB* 1979, 1981, 1991).

Civilian buildings

Geophysical survey south of the fort between 1999 and 2001 disclosed the course of the Vallum, along with its causeway, and, beyond, the buildings, roads and property boundaries of a *vicus* (Burnham *et al.* 2001, 330-33). A system of field boundaries – apparently of two phases - lies to the east of the *vicus*.

Religious buildings and structures

The existence of a Mithraeum is attested by three altars (*RIB* 1992-4) while another inscription records the restoration of a temple to the Mother Goddesses of all the Nations, which had 'fallen in through age' (*RIB* 1988). Other deities represented

include the Mother Goddesses beyond the Seas, Mars, Neptune and Belatucadrus (RIB 1989, 1986-7, 1990, 1976-7; latter rediscovered 1973 = Wilson *et al.* 1974, 463)

Bibliography

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