

INDEX → PLACES → LUGUVALIUM

LUGUVALIUM CARVETIORVM

Stanegate Fort and Town

Carlisle, Cumbria

NGRef: NY399561

OSMap: Hadrian s Wall, LR86.

Type: Stanegate Fort, Fort, British Capital

Roads

Stanegate: W (6) to [Aballava](#) (Burgh by Sands, Cumbria)

SSE (6) to [Barrockside](#)

Roman Military Way: W (2.5) to [Grinsdale](#)

Probable Road: NW (14) to [Kirkpatrick](#)

Stanegate: N (0.5) to [Uxelodvnm](#) (Stanwix, Cumbria)

WSW (10) to [Old Carlisle](#) (Old Carlisle, Cumbria)

Iter II: SSE (5) to [Wreay](#) (Cummingsdale, Cumbria)

Stanegate: ENE (8) to [Old Chvrch](#) (Cumbria)

Luguvalium - Town of Luguvalos

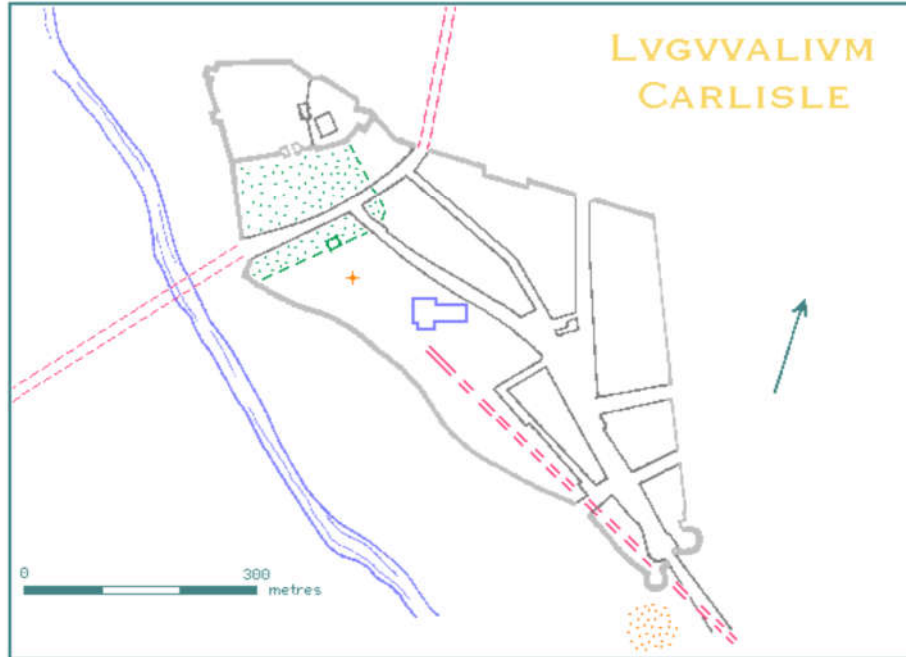
The name of the town appears twice in the late-second century list of imperial road-routes the [Antonine Itinerary](#). The first appearance occurs in *Iter II* the longest of the British *itineraria*, entitled the route from the Entrenchments to the seaport of *Rutupiae*, which details the road stations between [Hadrian s Wall](#) (the entrenchments) to *Portus Rutupiae* (Richborough in Kent). In this particular route the Roman name of Carlisle is recorded as *Luguvallo*, 12 miles from *Castra exploratorum* (Netherby, Cumbria) and 14 miles from *Voreda* (Old Penrith, Cumbria). The town is also the northern *terminus* of the Fifth Itinerary, the route from *Londinium* to *Luguvalium* on the Wall, four-hundred and forty-three thousand paces, this time named *Luguvalio* and listed 22 miles from *Brocavum* (Brougham, Cumbria).

The town also appears in the [Ravenna Cosmography](#) of the seventh century as *Lagubalumi* (R&C#129), between the entries for *Voreda* (Old Penrith, Cumbria) and *Magnis* (Carvoran, Northumberland).

The Roman name for Carlisle then, was *Luguvalio*, which had been changed by 1106 to *Carleol*, from which we derive the modern Carlisle. This is clearly a contraction of the earlier name pre xed by the Welsh word *Caer* or *Cair*, meaning fort, fortress. The word *luguvalio* is unlikely to be Latin, and would appear to be of British origin, possibly the second element is in some sense derived from wall or Valium and relates to the Roman wall.

We do not know exactly who *Luguvalos* was or how the Romano-British town came to be named after him, all we do know is that he was a iron-age noble, probably a high-ranking member of the *Carvetii* tribe who inhabited the countryside hereabouts.

Clickable Map of the *Luguvalium* Environs



Based on the Carlisle/Stanwix map in *The Carvetii* by Higham and Jones (Fig.28 p.58).
For the northern portion of this map [click here](#).

There are twenty-four Latin texts on stone recorded in the RIB for Carlisle, comprising fourteen altars and other votive stones, nine tombstones and other funerary inscriptions and a nial inscribed simply LEG [Belonging to] the legion. (*RIB* 963; nial).

The Builders of the Carlisle Forts

Legio Secundae Augusta - The Second Augustan Legion

CONCORDIAE LEG II AVG ET XX V V

To *Concordia*,¹ the **Second Legion Augusta** and the Twentieth Valiant and Victorious [dedicate this].

(*RIB* 964a; base; *Britannia* xx (1989), p.331, no.4)

Legio Vicesimae Valeria Victrix

The Twentieth Valiant and Victorious Legion

I O M IVNONI REGINAE MINERVAE AVG MARTI PATRI VIC TORIAE CETERIS DIIS DAEABVSQVE OMNIBVS M AVR M F VLP SYRIO
NICOPOLI EX PROV TRHAC TRIB MIL LEG XX V V ANTONINANA

For Jupiter Best and Greatest, Juno *Regina*, Minerva *Augusta*, Mars the Father, Victory, and all the other gods and goddesses, Marcus Aurelius Ulpianus, the son of Marcus, a Syrian from Nicopolis in the province of Thrace,¹ tribune and soldier of the **Twentieth Legion Valeria Victrix, Antonine's Own**.²

(*RIB* 964b; altarstone; dated: 213-222AD; *Britannia* xx (1989), pp.331-3, no.5)

1. Nicopolis: A city of Thrace, built on the banks of the Nestus by Trajan, in memory of a victory which he obtained there over the barbarians (*Lemprière's Classical Dictionary*).

2. The Twentieth Legion took the title *Antoniniana* after the emperor Caracalla (213-217AD) or Elagabalus (218-222AD).

Legio Nonae Hispana - The Ninth Hispanic Legion

[LE]G VIII

[Property of] the Ninth Legion.

(*Burn* 33; Stamped Tile from Carlisle)

The Roman Forts at Carlisle

N.G.Ref	Dimensions	Area
NY 3967 5614	unknown	c. 8 acres (c. 3.2 ha)

The site of the Roman fort at Carlisle lies partly buried beneath the superstructure of Carlisle Castle Keep. The south-eastern corner-angle and substantial attached lengths of the eastern and southern ramparts, fortunately, have survived intact but buried, in the area between the Castle and the A595 Castle Way Road. These accessible defenses have been subjected to rigorous investigation using the most up-to-date methodologies which has enabled modern archaeologists to piece together a detailed picture of the sequence of forts which were built upon the site, all apparently on the same alignment and of similar size. The actual dimensions of the fort cannot be verified without demolishing the Castle, but restrictions in the local topography would seem to indicate the Roman fort platform covered an area of around 8 acres (c. 3.2 ha).

Pre-Flavian Legionary Encampment

It is now known for certain that the Roman site at Carlisle is pre-Agricolan, as dendrochronological dating of timbers used in the southern rampart of the fort proved that they were cut during the Autumn/Winter of AD 72-3. It now appears almost certain that this fort was built and occupied by a vexillation of *Legio IX Hispana* during the closing campaigns of **Quintus Petilius Cerialis** against the Brigantian dissident **Venutius**, to make contact with the sea after an advance from York (Frere *Britannia* p.100). Three large temporary marching camps at **Plumpton Head**, **Crackenthorpe** and **Rey Cross**, have all been attributed to the campaigns of this governor and dated sometime around 72/73AD. In further support of this, tiles and pottery sherds bearing the stamp of the **Ninth Legion** have been discovered at Scalesceugh about 5 miles (8km) south of Carlisle, which makes it very likely that a vexillation from this legion was involved in some way with the Flavian presence at Carlisle. The legion was permanently withdrawn from Britain around 120AD.

The Flavian Fort

Excavations conducted by Miss Dorothy Charlesworth in the 1950s identified the site of a Flavian military enclosure just to the south of the present castle, the medieval structure itself being raised over the north-eastern quadrant of the Roman fortifications. The southern gateway of the fort has been excavated recently by the Carlisle Archaeological Unit, which revealed the timber structure of the gatehouse and its adjoining rampart, the timbers being in a remarkable state of preservation. The fort was defended by a timber rampart and covered about eight acres (3ha). It was obviously located here to guard the strategic crossing over the River Eden. Coinage evidence suggests that the fort underwent some sort of re-occupation c.78-79AD during the Agricolan period, and dendrochronology again suggests that the internal buildings were rebuilt and their timbers replaced during the Autumn/Winter of AD 83-84; this fort was purposefully demolished around 103AD. It had long been thought that the fourth campaign of governor **Gnaeus Julius Agricola** towards the Tay very likely used Carlisle as the rearward base of the Twentieth Legion during their operations in the south-west of Scotland, but it is certain that this fort remained an important rearward base during the subsequent withdrawal from the Highlands in the 90ADs.

The Stanegate Fort

Another timber fort having the same dimensions and general layout was built on the same site sometime around 103-5AD, which retained a garrison until well-into the Hadrianic period. The size of the garrison was only gradually reduced, until the site was finally levelled and abandoned during the Antonine period. A passage from one of the *Vindolanda* writing tablets records that a *centurio regionarius*, a title associated with the Trajanic Stanegate, was stationed at *Luguvalium* in 103AD. Even without archaeological evidence, this epigraphy proves that the **Stanegate** extended at least to Carlisle, which probably represented the western *terminus* of the original Trajanic frontier system.

The Hadrianic Fortifications in the Area

The Carlisle site was obviously eclipsed in importance during the Hadrianic period by the establishment of the large auxiliary cavalry fort at **Stanwix** which was built astride **Hadrian's Wall** only ½-mile to the north-east. To the east of Carlisle for many miles the Wall was built in a narrow gauge (i.e. 76) upon a broad foundation (10 wide), while to the west the narrow wall was continued upon a narrow foundation (around 8 broad).

A Continued Military Presence

An inscription found at Carlisle dated to the reign of Commodus (176-192AD) refers to the rout of a huge multitude of barbarians (*RIB946*), and several dedicatory inscriptions dated to the third century record legionary activity at Carlisle. Another fort, this time of stone, was built on the same site c.200AD by soldiers from the **Twentieth Legion**, which was finally abandoned sometime between 275-325AD. It seems likely then, that the Carlisle fort retained a legionary cohort until the fourth century, possibly in a logistic capacity, the fort becoming more of a quartermasters complex such as at **Corbridge**, which marked the eastern end of the **Stanegate** frontier. There is no entry for *Luguvalium* in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, and interestingly enough, there is no mention of **Corbridge** either.

The Garrison Units of *Luguvalium*

Ala Petriana - The Petrian Wing

...LVCA PRAEF ALAE AVGVSTAE PETRIANAE TORQ M C R D D

[...] Luca, prefect of the **August Petrian Wing**, awarded with torques, one-thousand strong, citizens of Rome, this votive offering was donated.

(*RIB 957*)

Ala Augusta - The Augustan Wing

DEI HERCVLIS ROMANI INVICTI CONDITORIS VIRTVTIBVS PRO SALVTE IPSIVS ET COMMOLITONVM CAESA MANV
BARBARORVM AB ALA AVGVSTA OB VIRTVTIEM APPELLATA P SEXTANIVS ... PRAEF E CIVITAT TRAIANENS VSLM

For the god *Hercules*, the invincible Roman people, founders of virtue, for the well-being of them, set in motion ...

(*RIB 946*; window or niche; dated: 180-192AD?)

The Gods of Roman Carlisle

Votive Stone Dedicated to *Mars Ocelus*

DEO MARTI OCELO ET NVMINI IMP ALEXANDRI AVG ET IVL MAMAEAE MATR CASTR ET SENATVS ET PATR ET TOTI DOMVI
DIVINAE

To the god **Mars Ocelus** and the Divine Spirits of Emperor Alexander Augustus¹ and Julia Mamaea,² Mother of the Camps and of the Senate and of the Fatherland and of the entire Divine House.

(*RIB 949*; dated: 227-235AD)

1. The nature of this god is discussed on the RBO page for **Caerwent** in Monmouthshire, where there are another two stones dedicated to *Mars Ocelus* (*vide RIB 309 & 310*).
2. The emperor Alexander Severus came to power aged just 13½ after his cousin Elagabalus was murdered by praetorians in March 222AD, and was to rule until his own death at the hands of the usurper Maximinus Thrax at Moguntiacum (Mainz, Germany) in March 235.
3. The emperor's mother, Julia Mamaea, shared the rule with her young son but never endeared herself to the general soldiery, despite the senatorial edict which granted her this grandiloquent title sometime in 227. She was hacked to death by the soldiers of Maximinus whilst clutching the lifeless body of her son Alexander in March 235.

More Altarstones of a Martial Nature

DEO MARTI BELATVCADRO MARTI VICTORIAE

To the god **Mars Belatucader**. For **Victorious Mars**.

(RIB 948; altarstone)

(RIB 950)

The most attested deity of Roman Carlisle is the war god *Mars* who has three dedications, all shared with other deities, to *Mars Belatucader* (948, altarstone), *Mars Ocelus* (949) and to *Mars Victorius* (950). There are two dedications to the *Genii* or Guardian Spirits (944, gurine; 945, altarstone) and another two altarstones to unknown deities (947; 954).

Oerings to the *Genii* or Guardian Spirits

GENIO CENTVRIAE > BASSILI CRESCENTIS DONO DONAVIT

For the **Guardian Spirit of the Century**, the centurion Bassilis Crescens donated this votive offering.

(RIB 944; gurine of *Genius*)

GENIO LOCI

For the **Guardian Spirit of this place**.

(RIB 945; altarstone)

Altarstones to Unknown Deities

M BAR REGI IANVARIVS RI... REGIPAV... VSLM

A hired mercenary from the barbaric regions, Januarius Ri[...] a poor area¹ [...] willingly and deservedly fulfilled his vow.

(RIB 947; altarstone)

...V DICAUIT ET ARAM ET AEDICVLAM D D

[...] he has consecrated both the altarstone and the small-temple, (and) dedicated this votive offering.

(RIB 954; altarstone)

1. Never mind this section, the whole text is a bit dodgy!

In addition, single stones have been found dedicated to the companion-god *Cautis* (943; pedestal), the demi-god/hero *Hercules* (946, niche, dated: 180-192AD?), the Mother Goddesses (951, base), the god of commerce *Mercury* (952, relief of Mercury), the *Parcae* or the Fates (953, altarstone), the goddess *Concordia* by two Roman legions (964a, base), and another altarstone dedicated to all of the Gods and Goddesses (964b, dated: 213-222AD).

Votive Oerings to Various Deities

Inscription	Togo-Translation	RIB
DEO CAVTI IVLIVS ARCHIETVS D D	To the god <i>Cautis</i> , Julius Archietus has given this votive offering.	943; pedestal
MATRIB PAR PRO SALVTE SANCTIAE GEMINAE	To the Mother (goddesses) of the Ancestors, for the well-being of the holy twins.	951; base
D M C...I...S...	For the god Mercury [...]	952; relief
PARCIS PRO BO DO NATALIS PATER VSLM	To the Fates , for a promising household, Natalis, a father, willingly and deservedly fulfils his vow.	953; altar

The Civil Settlement

There is no doubt that the civil settlement at Carlisle thrived primarily due to the continued presence of the Roman military, first on the south bank of the Eden and later also to the north where a separate smaller settlement developed in the area between the auxiliary fort at Stanwix and the river. The defences of the Romano-British town enclosed some seventy acres, and it became a flourishing centre for trade, relaxation and retirement. Inscriptions in Greek as well as Latin have been found, indicating that Roman Carlisle was fairly cosmopolitan.

A school of stone-carvers became established at Carlisle, the only school of British masons so far identified. The masons created tombstones from the local sandstone, some of which have been found in the surrounding Romano-British settlements at Old Carlisle and Bowness. The school operated from the Antonine period until well into the third century AD.

The discovery of buildings in the Blackfriars area of Carlisle, confirms the continuation of the civilian settlement into the 5th century; beyond this date things get a bit tenuous until Carlisle and all surrounding land and its inhabitants in a fifteen mile radius was granted to St. Cuthbert in a charter dated to 685AD.

The Citizens of *Luguvalium*

Tombstone of Flavius Antigonus Papias

D M FLA ANTIGONS PAPIAS CIVIS GRECVS VIXIT ANNOS PLVS MINVS LX QVEM AD MODVM ACCOMMODATVM FATIS ANIMAM REVOCAVIT SEPTIMIA DO...

To the spirits of the departed. Flavius Antigonus Papias, a citizen of Greece, sixty years old, more or less, who was finally obliged to return to the Fates his soul. Septimia Do[...] (set this up).

(RIB 955; tombstone)

Tombstone of Aurelia Aureliana

D M AVR AVRELIA VIXIT ANNOS XXXXI VLPIVS APOLINARIS CONIVGI CARISSIME POSVIT

To the shades of the departed Aurelia Aureliana, who lived for forty-one years. Ulpius Apolinaris has placed [this stone] for his most-lovely wife.

(RIB 959; tombstone)



Tombstone of Vacia

More Tombstones from *Luguvalium*

Inscription	Togo-Translation	RIB
DIS VACIA INFANS AN III	To the shades of Vacia, an infant aged three years.	961
D M ...RIVS ...LIS	To the shades of the departed [Ma]rius [Martia]lis. ¹	956
D M ANI LVCILIE IX AN LV	To the shades of the departed Ania Lucilla, who lived for fifty-five years.	958
D M AVR SENECITA V AN ...XX IVL FORTVNATVS	To the spirits of the departed and Aurelia Senecita who lived for [...] years, twenty [..., the wife of] Julius Fortunatus.	960
D M D ...RV... MIL ... STIP	To the shades of the departed Decimus [...] a soldier [...] he served.	962
ANNOS XXXV ERES PROCVRAVIT	Thirty-five years old, his heirs attended to [this memorial].	964

1. The restoration of this name is entirely conjectural.

The Civitas Carvetiorum

The *Civitas Carvetiorum* or the tribal council of the Carvetii is first attested during the rule of emperor Postumus, the **Carvetii** cantonal council almost certainly met at Carlisle. It is thought that the Carvetii were in fact the tribe of **Venutius**, the consort of **Cartimandua** of the Brigantes, if this were true, then it is quite possible that he lived at **Old Carlisle**, which was probably the chief pre-Roman tribal centre.

It is probable that the Romano-British town of *Luguvalium*, given its concentration of retired Roman soldiers attested by inscriptions, was awarded some sort of civil charter.

The Provincial City

Following the defeat of the former British propraetor Albinus by the emperor Caracalla in 197AD, the province of *Britannia* was split into two, *Londinium* remained the provincial capital of *Britannia Superior* while the *inferior* province in the north was governed from *Eboracum* (York). Later, during the reign of Diocletian around 296AD the provinces of Britain were again split into two, the administration of *Britannia Inferior* was divided into a military post of *legatus*, based at York with command of the provinces only legion, and an administrative position of *procurator*, who had only auxiliary forces, and was probably based at Carlisle. The town may also have been the capital town of the later Roman province of *Velantia*.

The Local Roman Road System

An arterial road ran south along the valley of the Petteril between Carlisle and Penrith, now roughly followed by the modern A6. Several signal stations have been identified beside this road, Barrock Side and Barrock Fell in particular.

Another arterial road ran over the mosses to the north of Carlisle to the fort at Netherby and possibly on to Broomholm. Another road branched off this northern road after the Lyne crossing south of Netherby, probably crossing the Esk near Burnfoot and continuing due west to Birrens and onwards into the Dumfries area.

The recently identified Roman road leading east from Kirkbride near the mouth of the Wampool ran towards Burgh-by-Sands and must have terminated at Carlisle. This road is thought to represent a westward extension of the Stanegate frontier during the early second century.

The Harraby Bridge Milestone

A Roman milestone was discovered on the Penrith road at Harraby Bridge, Gallows Hill, a mile south of Carlisle (at N.G. Ref. NY4154). This stone contains three separate Latin inscriptions; the original text IMP... ..S ...C (*RIB* 2290), which can only faintly be read, was erased to make way for a dedication honouring the usurper Carausius (*RIB* 2291).¹ The entire stone was later up-ended, re-positioned and re-inscribed, this time honouring the emperor Constantine (*RIB* 2292)².

Roman Milestone Reused by Carausius and Again for Constantine

IMP C M AVR MAVS CARAVSIO P F INVICTO AVG

For Imperator Caesar Marcus Aurelius Mausaeus Carausius Pius Felix,¹ the Unconquered Augustus.

(*RIB* 2291; dated: 286-293AD)

FL VAL CONSTANTINO NOB CAES

For Flavius Valerius Constantinus,² Noble Caesar.

(*RIB* 2292; dated: 306-307AD)

1. Carausius the Usurper.

2. The future emperor Constantine.

Carausius was the commander of the Roman North Sea Fleet who seized control of Britain in 286AD and proclaimed himself emperor. He also held the Gallic port of *Gesoriacum* (Boulogne) until 293 where he was defeated in battle by Constantius Caesar and fled back to Britain, whereupon he was treacherously slain later that same year by his trusted first-minister and treasurer Allectus. Constantius was appointed *Caesar* in March 293AD and recovered Britain from Allectus in 297 whereupon

he ruled from *Eboracum* (York) as Caesar in the West, until his elevation to *Augustus* in May 305 when his title changed to Emperor in the West. His reign was not to last, however, for he died of illness (probably the Romano-British equivalent of *Dheli-Belly*) at York in July 306.

Constantius son Constantine was appointed *Caesar* sometime during 306AD, and was proclaimed *Augustus* (i.e. Emperor in the West) by the soldiers - presumably the men of *Legio VI Victrix* - after his father's death at York the following year. Constantine quickly returned to the continent to establish his birthright and was converted to Christianity after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge against Maxentius in 312. He went on to defeat his co-emperor Licinius in two decisive victories on the Bosphorus in 324, and, once sole emperor, he forbade all pagan sacrifice, convening the Council of Nicea and declaring Christianity the official religion of the Roman empire the following year. He died of natural causes at Constantinople, his new capital, in May 337, dropping the title *Pontifex Maximus* and receiving Christian baptism shortly before his death.

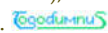
Luguvalium Today

Tullie House Museum, Carlisle

GRATIS     

Though few Roman remains can nowadays be seen *in situ*, many of the archaeological finds recovered from Carlisle and many of the sites along the Wall are on display at the Tullie House Museum in the centre of the Mediaeval walled town, part of Carlisle's Public Library and Art Gallery. Exhibits include displays on the day-to-day life in Roman Britain, including tools, ornaments, footwear, glass and pottery.

Luguvalium Bibliography

See: *Hadrian's Wall Map and Guide* by the Ordnance Survey (Southampton, 1989);
The Carvetii by Nicholas Higham and Barri Jones (Sutton, London, 1985);
Hadrian's Wall in the Days of the Romans by Ronald Embleton and Frank Graham (Newcastle, 1984) pp.311-316;
The Roman Inscriptions of Britain by R.G. Collingwood and R.P. Wright (Oxford 1965);
The Romans in Britain An anthology of Inscriptions by A.R. Burn (Oxford 1932);
All English translations, including any inherent mistakes, are my own. 

Luguvalium Related Lynx

Link to maps of the area from: [StreetMap](#) [Old-Maps](#) [MultiMap](#)



This page was last modified: 27/1/2016