

= Mamucium =

Mamucium , also known as Mancunium , was a fort in the Roman province of Britannia . The remains of the fort , protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument , are in the Castlefield area of Manchester in North West England (grid reference SJ833977) . Founded c . AD 79 , Mamucium was garrisoned by a cohort of auxiliary soldiers and guarded the road running from Chester to York . A vicus , or civilian settlement made up of traders and the families of the soldiers , grew outside the fort and was an area of industrial activity .

The site lay in ruins until the Industrial Revolution when Manchester expanded and the fort was levelled to make way for new developments . It was damaged by the construction of the Rochdale Canal and the Great Northern Railway . The site is now part of the regenerated area of warehousing alongside the Rochdale Canal , part of the Castlefield Urban Heritage Park . Reconstructed remains of the fort 's gatehouse , granaries , and some buildings from the vicus are on display to the public .

= = Location = =

When the Roman fort in Castlefield was built , it was on a naturally defensible sandstone bluff , guarding a nearby crossing over the River Medlock . The fort was near a junction between at least two Roman roads . It guarded the road between the legionary fortresses of Deva Victrix (Chester) and Eboracum (York) running east to west , as well as the road between Manchester and Bremetennacum (Ribchester) to the north . In addition , Mamucium may also have overlooked a lesser road running north west to Coccium (Wigan) . The fort was one of a chain of fortifications along the Eboracum to Deva Victrix road , with Castleshaw Roman fort lying 16 miles (26 km) to the east , and Condate (Northwich) 18 miles (29 km) to the west . Stamps on tegulae indicate that Mamucium had administrative links not only with Castleshaw , but also with Ardotalia , the nearest fort (12 miles) , Slack and Ebchester ; all the forts probably got the tegulae from the same place in Grimescar Wood near Huddersfield .

The area around the fort changed greatly in the centuries that followed ; the remains are now surrounded by mills built during Industrial Revolution and were further damaged by the subsequent urbanisation of Manchester . Castlefield is at the south west corner of Manchester city centre and the Rochdale Canal cuts through the southern corner of the fort . Deansgate , which has developed into a busy thoroughfare , passes close to the east of the fort and follows the general line of Roman road to Ribchester and Castlefield .

= = Name = =

The name Mamucium is generally thought to represent a Latinisation of an original Brittonic name , either from mamm- (" breast " , in reference to a " breast @-@ like hill ") or from mamma (" mother " , in reference to a local river goddess) . Both meanings are preserved in languages derived from Common Brittonic , mam meaning " breast " in Irish and " mother " in Welsh . The neuter suffix -ium is used in Latin placenames , particularly those representing Common Brittonic -ion (a genitive suffix denoting " place or city of ~ ") . The Welsh name for Manchester is Manceinion and presumably derives from the original Brittonic form .

= = History = =

= = = Prehistoric = = =

Although there is no evidence of prehistoric settlement , there is evidence of activity in the area . A Neolithic scraper , two Mesolithic flints and a flint flake have been discovered , as well as a shard of late Bronze Age pottery ; however these were mostly not found in situ . Although the area was in the territory of the Celtic tribe Brigantes until the Romans annexed the area , it may have been under

the control of the Setantii , a sub @-@ tribe of the Brigantes .

= = = Roman = = =

The fort was built around AD 79 ; it was built as part of the fortifications erected under Gn . Julius Agricola during his campaigns against the Brigantes after the treaty with them failed . Excavations have demonstrated that the fort had three main phases of construction : one around AD 79 , the second around 160 AD , and the third around 200 . The first phase of the fort was built from turf and timber . Mamucium was designed to be garrisoned by a cohort , about 500 infantry . They would have been drawn from an auxiliary , the non @-@ citizen soldiers of the Roman army . A civilian settlement (called a vicus) grew around the fort in the late 1st and early 2nd centuries . Around the year 90 , the ramparts surrounding the fort were strengthened . Manchester and the Roman fort at Slack ? which neighboured Castleshaw ? superseded the fort at Castleshaw in the 120s . Mamucium was demolished some time around 140 . Although the vicus grew rapidly in the early 2nd century , it was abandoned some time between 120 and 160 ? broadly coinciding with the demolition of the fort ? before it was re @-@ inhabited when the fort was rebuilt .

There is a possible temple to Mithras associated with the civilian settlement in modern Hulme . An altar dedicated to " Fortune the Preserver " was found , probably dating to the early 3rd century . In 2008 an altar dating from the late 1st century was discovered near the Roman settlement . It was dedicated to two minor Germanic gods and described as being in " fantastic " condition . The County Archaeologist said

" It 's the first Roman stone inscription to be found in Manchester for 150 years and records only the second known Roman from Manchester ... The preservation of the stone is remarkable . On top of the stone is a shallow bowl which was used for offerings of wine or blood or perhaps to burn incense . "

As well as Pagan worship , there is also evidence of early Christian worship . In the 1970s , a fragment of 2nd @-@ century " word square " was discovered with an anagram of PATER NOSTER . There has been discussion by academics whether the " word square " , which is carved on a piece of amphora , is actually a Christian artefact , if so , it is one of the earliest examples of Christianity in Britain .

The second phase was built around the year 160 . Although it was again of turf and timber construction , it was larger than the previous fort , measuring 2 hectares (4 @.@ 9 acres) to accommodate extra granaries (horrea) . Around 200 , the gatehouses of the fort were rebuilt in stone and the walls surrounding the fort were given a stone facing . The concentration of furnaces in sheds in part of the vicus associated with the fort has been described as an " industrial estate " , which would have been the first in Manchester . Mamucium was included in the Antonine Itinerary , a 3rd @-@ century register of roads throughout the Roman Empire . This and inscriptions on and repairs to buildings indicate that Mamucium was still in use in the first half of the 3rd century . The vicus may have been abandoned by the mid @-@ 3rd century ; this is supported by the excavated remains of some buildings that were demolished and the materials robbed for use elsewhere . Evidence from coins indicates that although the civilian settlement associated with the fort had declined by the mid @-@ 3rd century , a small garrison may have remained at Mamucium into the late 3rd century and early 4th century .

= = = Medieval = = =

After the Roman withdrawal from Britain around 410 , the area of Mamucium was used for agricultural purposes . It has sometimes been identified with the Cair Maunguid listed among the 28 cities of Britain by the History of the Britons traditionally attributed to Nennius . After lying derelict for centuries , the ruins were commented on by antiquarians John Leland in the 16th century , William Camden in the late 16th and early 17th centuries , and William Stukeley and the Manchester historian John Whitaker in the 18th century . In the early 18th century , John Horsley said :

It [i.e. , the fort] is about a quarter of a mile out of the town , being south or south @-@ west from it

. The station now goes by the name of Giant 's Castle or Tarquin 's Castle , and the field in which it stands is called Castle Field ... the ramparts are still very conspicuous .

Whitaker described what remained of the fort in 1773 :

The eastern side , like the Western , is hundred and forty [yards] in length , and for eighty yards from the northern termination , the nearly perpendicular rampart carries a crest of more than two [yards] in height . It is then lowered to form the great entrance , the Porta Pretoria of the camp : the earth there running in a ridge , and mounting up to the top of the bank , about ten in breadth . Then , rising gradually as the wall falls away , it carries an height of more than three for as many as the south @-@ eastern angle . And the whole of this wall , bears a broken line of thorns above , shews the mortar peeping here and there under the coat of turf , and near the south @-@ eastern corner has a large buttress of earth continued several yards along it . The southern side , like the Northern , is hundred and seventy five [yards] in length ; and the rampart sinking immediately from its elevation at the eastern end , successively declines , till , about fifty yards off , it is reduced to the inconsiderable height of less than one [yard] . And about seventeen yards further , there appears to have been a second gateway , the ground rising up to the crest of the bank of a four or five at the point ...

On the south side was particularly requisite ... in order to afford a passage to the river ; but about fifty three yards beyond the gates , the ground betwixt both falling away briskly to the west , the rampart , which continues in a right line along the ridge , necessarily rises till it has a sharp slope of twenty yards in length at the southwestern angle . And all this side of the wall , which was from the beginning probably not much higher than it is at present , as it was sufficiently secured by the river and its banks , before it appears crested at first with a hedge of thorns , a young oak rising from the ridge and rearing its head considerably over the rest , and runs afterwards in a smooth line near the level for several yards with the ground about it , and just perceptible to the eye , in a rounded eminence of turf

As to the south @-@ western point of the camp , the ground slopes away on the west towards the south , as well as on the south towards the West . On the third side still runs from it nearly as at first , having an even crest about seven feet in height , an even slope of turf for its whole extent , and the wall in all its original condition below . About a hundred yards beyond the angle was the Porta Decumana of the station , the ground visibly rising up the ascent of the bank in a large shelf of gravel , and running in a slight but perceivable ridge from it . And beyond a level of forty five yards , that still stretches on for the whole length of the side , it was bounded by the western boundary of the British city , the sharp slope of fifty to the morass below it . On the northern and remaining side are several chasms in the original course of the ramparts . And in one of them about a hundred and seventy five yards from its commencement , was another gateway , opening into the station directly from the road to Ribchester . The rest of the wall still rises above five and four feet in height , planted all the way with thorns above , and exhibiting a curious view of the rampart below . Various parts of it have been fleeced of their facing a turf and stone , and now show the inner structure of the whole , presenting to the eye the undressed stone of the quarry , the angular pieces of rock , and the round boulders of the river , all bedded in the mortar , and compacted into one . And the white and brown patches of mortar and stone on a general view of the wall stands strikingly contrasted with the green turf that entirely conceals the level line , and with the green moss that half reveals the projecting points of the rampart . The great foss of the British city , the Romans preserved along their northern side for more than thirty yards along the eastern end of it , and for the whole beyond the Western . And as the present appearances of the ground intimate , they closed the eastern point of it with a high bank , which was raised upon one part of the ditch and sloped away into the other .

Mamucium was levelled as Manchester expanded in the Industrial Revolution . The construction of the Rochdale Canal through the south western corner of the fort in the late 18th and early 19th centuries , and the building of viaducts for the Great Northern Railway over the site in the late 19th century , damaged the remains and even destroyed some of the southern half of the fort . When the railway viaducts were built , Charles Roeder documented the remains that were uncovered in the process , including parts of the vicus .

The first archaeological investigation of Mamucium was in 1906 . Francis Bruton , who would later work on the Roman fort at Castleshaw , excavated the fort 's western defences . A series of small @-@ scale excavations were undertaken intermittently between 1912 and 1967 , generally exploring the northern defences of the fort . In the mid @-@ 20th century , historian A. J. P. Taylor called the surviving stretch of Roman wall " the least interesting Roman remains in Britain " . The first excavation of the vicus was carried out in the 1970s under Professor Barri Jones . In 1982 the fort , along with the rest of the Castlefield area , became the United Kingdom 's first Urban Heritage Park , and partial reconstructions of the forts walls , including the ramparts and gateways , were opened in 1984 . In 2001 ? 05 the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit carried out excavations in the vicus to further investigate the site before the area underwent any more regeneration or reconstruction . The archaeological investigation of Mamucium Roman fort and its associated civilian settlement has , so far , provided approximately 10 @,@ 000 artefacts .

= = Layout = =

The fort measured 160 metres (175 yd) by 130 metres (140 yd) and was surrounded by a double ditch and wooden rampart . Around AD 200 the wooden rampart was replaced by stone ramparts , measuring between 2 @.@ 1 metres (7 ft) and 2 @.@ 7 metres (9 ft) thick . The vicus associated with Mamucium surrounded the site on the west , north , and east sides , with the majority lying to the north . The vicus covered about 26 hectares (64 acres) and the fort about 2 hectares (4 @.@ 9 acres) . Buildings within the vicus would have generally been one storey , timber framed , and of wattle and daub construction . There may have been a cemetery to the south east of the fort .