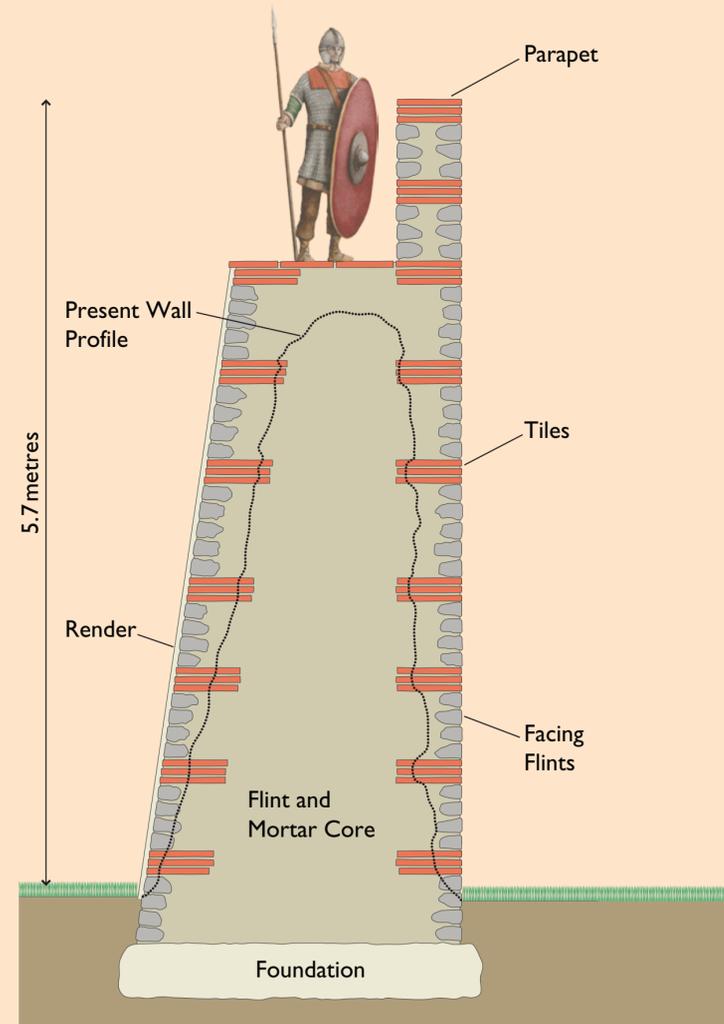


Defending the Wall

Gariannonum was surrounded on all four sides by a massive defensive stone wall, with external towers and small gateways. Three sides survive, standing almost to their original height, while the fourth has fallen into the marshes.



The fort wall was so strongly built that it has survived in good condition for almost 1,700 years.



The fort wall around AD 340. Soldiers on the wall-walk could defend the fort from the parapet, or from the eight 'bastions'. These bastions may have been open, as shown here, but it is also possible they were roofed. Drawing by Drew Smith

The fort wall, surviving up to 4.5m high and varying between 2.2 and 3.3m wide, is made very skilfully. The stone and mortar core was originally faced on both sides with split flints and levelling courses of tile. The sloping inside face was rendered. Soldiers would have walked along the top of the wall, protected by a parapet of stone or wood.

A feature of Burgh, found in other Roman forts of this date, is the drum-shaped 'bastions' projecting outwards. These are towers for soldiers with javelins, bows and perhaps small bolt-throwing artillery engines. In the event of an attack, a hail of darts, arrows and javelins could be directed from each tower, in a series of wide overlapping arcs, discouraging attackers from reaching or climbing the walls.

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