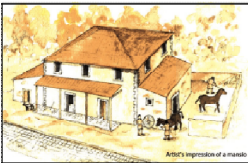
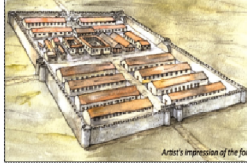


ROMAN PAPCASTLE



DERVENTIO



Eric Apperley

Grampus Heritage and Training Ltd

2016

The reader is advised that there are now no remains visible above ground.

Please respect the fact that all the sites are on private land, not accessible to the public. The river bank public footpath goes near to the sites of the mansio and bathhouse excavations (now backfilled).

ROMAN PAPCASTLE

(Derwentio)

Eric Apperley

Grampus Heritage and Training

2016



Roman Papcastle

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FOREWORD

The perception of the extent and importance of the Roman settlement, Derventio, now the village of Papcastle, has changed considerably in recent years, especially since 2009. It is now considered as comparable with Carlisle and Corbridge as major townships supporting the defence of Hadrian's Wall and its extension down the Solway coast. Perhaps this is not surprising, as it stands at the junction of two important routes, Carlisle to Moresby and Ravenglass, and Maryport to Keswick and Penrith. This booklet tries to outline for the general reader what is known about Derventio, especially the discoveries from 2010-2014.

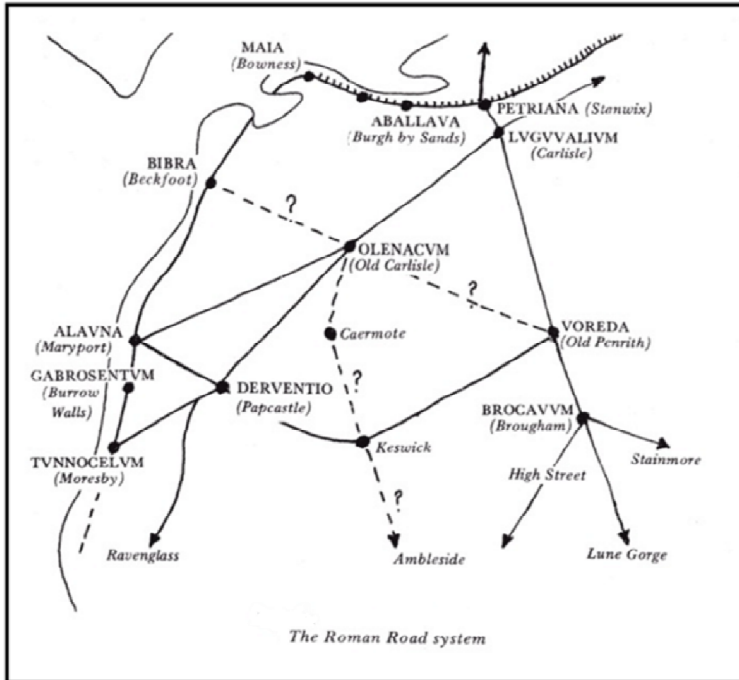
Introduction

Every schoolchild used to know that Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55BC. But both this and his subsequent visit in 54BC only involved the south-east corner of the island. Trade links were developed and treaties established with the local tribal chiefs (kings). It was nearly a century later in AD 43 that the Roman Army, in the time of Emperor Claudius really arrived and meant to stay, with fortifications and towns built on a much wider scale. In AD 60 there was a rebellion in the east, under Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni (what became East Anglia), which led to the sacking and destruction of the Roman towns of Colchester, London and St Albans. The aftermath and recovery from this resulted in the expansion of Roman activity further north to deal with other threatening rebels. In AD 70, Petrius Cerialis was appointed Governor of Britannia with a brief to sort out the rebels in the north. It is likely that the first timber fort at Derventio, (which is the name of Papcastle) dates from this period since Petrius Cerialis was back in Rome by AD 74.

The Romans suffered frequent conflicts with the northern tribes. One early consequence was the construction of the wall from Wallsend to Bowness-on-Solway in the time of Emperor Hadrian and now known by his name. (the wall took from 122 to 128 to build). Continuing archaeological discoveries show that forts and towers but without a wall, carried on down the Cumbrian coast as far as Ravenglass which was a significant port for the Romans. A network of roads for which the Romans were famous was probably in place by AD 90 and so the fort at Papcastle was replaced by one in stone by early 2nd century. This was possibly part of the Hadrianic fortification process. It stood guard at the junction of major roads from Carlisle to Ravenglass and Maryport to Keswick, Ambleside and Penrith.

The fortifications of the wall suffered decline and rebuild on a number of occasions before the Roman administration left in AD 410 and it seems likely that the fortunes of Derventio followed a similar pattern.

After the Romans, little is known but it is probable that time-served soldiers who stayed on and the indigenous locals found a way to survive and function for quite some time.



By the time the Vikings arrived we have their name for the village (if it still existed as such) as the Old Norse '*papi*' for a hermit, suggesting one living in the ruins.

Subsequently it is believed that much of the masonry of the fort was taken to construct Cockermouth Castle (dating from late 12th Century) where some stones with Roman inscriptions can still be seen. Equally well, local farmers must have used stonework as a free source of material for their own purposes.

Early reports of the ruins

Various antiquarians have recorded visible remains; Camden (1586 to 1594) called Papcastle "the carcase of an ancient fort" and in 1610, recorded that the font, now in Bridekirk church, had been discovered here. Gale in 1709, identified the fort as Derventio, correcting earlier misidentifications. Stukeley,

in 1725 gave a very detailed account. The latest description of any value was that of Askew in c.1864 who wrote

"The village of Papcastle occupies the site where once stood the Roman City of Derwentio, for a period of at least two hundred years. Coins, altars, buried grain, and earthen vessels are still frequently found in the gardens and fields. The first turn to the left on leaving Salathiel's birthplace, leads to Sibey Brows, a rich pasture field. Part of this field is fine table-land, the other a steep brow rising from the valley of the Derwent. About 21 feet from the base of the accivity is an inclined way seven yards broad, which seems to have been a much used thoroughfare. In the field adjoining Sibey Brows, at the foot of a straggling wooded bank, a piece of splendid road sweeps down to the river. Between this road and the river are some faint traces of a large building, which may have been the public baths; and in the second field on the Broughton road, on the left, there are still some remains of an amphitheatre. About the middle of the tableland in Sibey Brows, there are still some traces of the western boundary of the military camp of the Romans. On the high ground above the village there was a strong castrum or Roman castle, up to which there are still some faint traces of streets.

The Romans did nothing on a small scale - their walls and edifices nearly always approached the stupendous, so that we have every reason to conclude that Derwentio was no mean city. In excavating for the foundations of Derwent Lodge, the workmen opened out a fine Roman well, and turned up a quantity of burned grain, together with some coins. Sibey Brows is one of the earliest and richest pastures in the neighbourhood. Mr. William Dickinson thus accounts for its fertility in his Agricultural Essay in West Cumberland :- "The soil of Sibey Brows is reputed to be blackened with the carbon of burned grain belonging to the ancient Romans. Tradition says the extensive and well-stocked granaries of these warriors which stood there, were accidentally destroyed by fire; or this district may lie on the remains of an ancient forest destroyed by the same agency." About seven years ago, F. L. B. Dykes, Esq., of Dovenby Hall, assisted by Mr. William Richardson, his land steward, and Mr. John Hodgson, Surveyor, of Bassenthwaite, made a thorough survey of the old Roman road from Papcastle to Maryport; the whole distance being carefully laid down and mapped by Mr. Hodgson, affording the Ordnance Survey much valuable information when they visited the district.

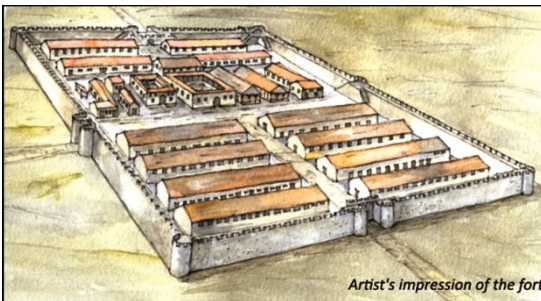
At a distance of about two hundred yards from the [Dovenby] Hall, in the pasture land, is a well-defined track, in a direct line with the old highway between Cockermouth and Maryport. The materials of which the road was made were found to be simply such stones as lay about in the neighbourhood through which it passed,—sandstone, limestone, or cobbles. The interstices between the large stones being carefully filled up with smaller ones, made an even and smooth surface, in some parts, of the route, the road winds round the base or a hill, but invariably comes back to a straight line. The Hall grounds, near the mansion, contain the remains of two or three remarkable tumuli. One in the front parks, in the shape of an ellipse, is in dimensions - the greater diameter, 112 yards; the less, 70 yards. In the "Guards," a field

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close to the village, through which the footpath passes to Little Broughton, another in shape nearly circular, forms part of an orchard. Between these, again, is a small circular one. They are all on the margin of a stream. The custom of the Romans was to bury their dead by the side of their highways; these tumuli may be the remains of some cemetery or place of tombs. A well-defined piece of Roman road, which connected a station at Moresby with Papcastle, may still be seen in the townships of Brigham and Eaglesfield. And in a narrow field across the brook in the township of Eaglesfield, the traces are very distinct up to the verge of a hazel wood, where there is also a fine Roman well. ”

A Roman road, continuing southward from Papcastle, is described in 1815 as taking a straight course from the south of Cockermouth by Street Gate, Lamplugh Cross, Frizington, and Cleator to Egremont. Towards Cockermouth it was six yards wide, and paved with cobbles and stone from the adjacent ground. Near Eaglesfield, it was found in 1794 as a paved way, seven yards wide, a little below the surface, and in 1877, though the road had been plundered of its boulders about 20 years before, the foundation had lately been uncovered near Lamplugh. In Frizington Park the road was found seven yards wide about 18 inches below the surface, and it could be traced near Cleator.

But by the 20th Century, one would not know of the Roman origins of Papcastle except for the residual earthworks at the highest point of the village.



Enterprising tourists looking for the Roman Fort marked on O.S. maps are doomed to disappointment.

Discoveries in the 20th Century

With a more enlightened view about the importance of archaeology developing in the later part of the 19th century,, there have been a number of rescue digs in the village. The first serious look at the fort was by R. G. Collingwood in 1912. The situation was assessed in detail by Eric Birley in 1961, when it became known that the County Council intended to build the 16 units of sheltered housing at Castle Gardens. This led to a rescue dig by Dorothy Charlesworth in 1962. The main outcome was that the site was largely ‘robbed out’ as the archaeologists say, and a probable wash down of soil from the high point will have taken with it many artefacts.

In 1984 when the Burroughs Cottage had to be demolished (where Old Orchard now stands) there was a short rescue dig led by Adrian Olivier of Lancaster University.



1984 Rescue dig at Burroughs Cottage

Substantial foundations (Temple of Apollo?) and a great number of artefacts were found. In subsequent feedback to the village, it was suggested that Derventio might well have been an armoury base, supplying all the military in N.W. Cumbria.

In 1998, Channel 4's 'Time Team' spent their customary three days, starting in the very restricted space of the garden of Derwent Lodge Cottage; the owner had found much material in preparing for an extension.



1998-Time Team dig on Sibby Brows

The team also excavated at Sibby Brows (field opposite The Grove) and saw the evidence confirming earlier references.

The overall verdict emerging was that Derventio must have been a substantial town, perhaps on a par with Corbridge, recognised as a major settlement for Hadrian's Wall.

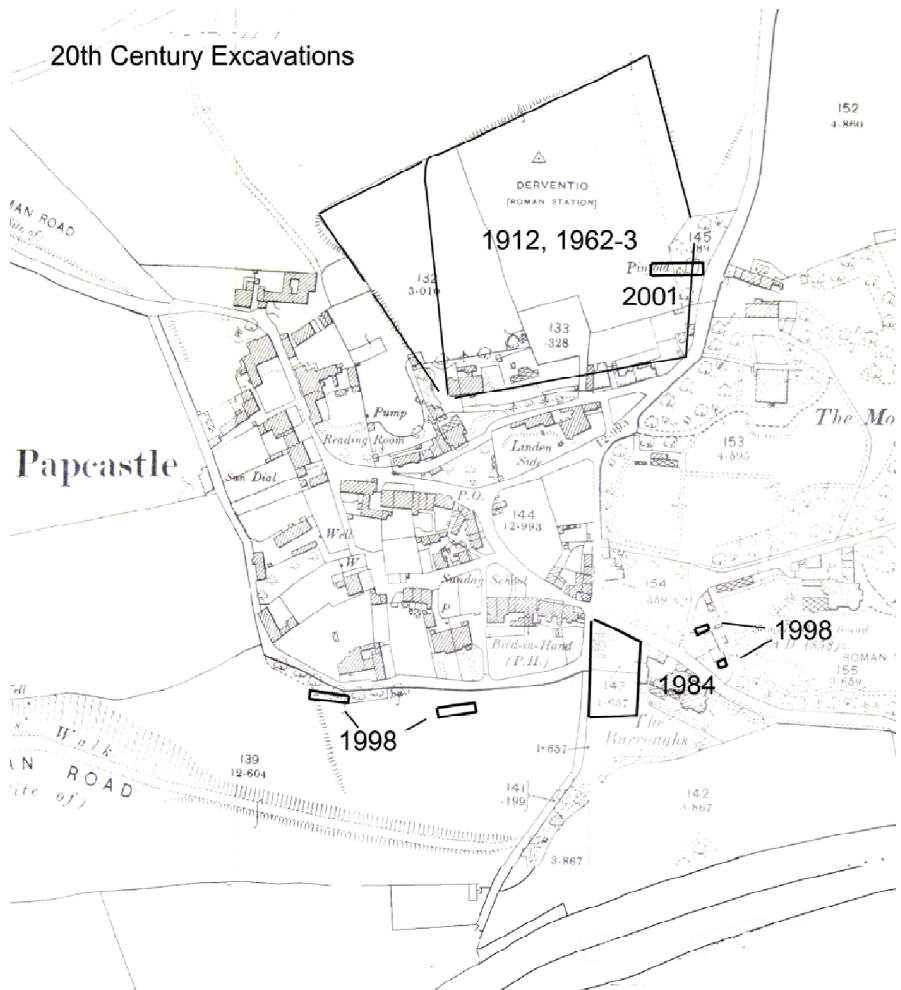
Surprisingly, there does not appear to have been any archaeological work done when The Mount estate was cleared for the development of a 45-house modern

estate – building started in 1965. There were hearsay reports that workers installing services such as gas found many pieces of Roman origin, which were not reported or recorded.

There are several wells in the village, more than likely all serving the vicus. [*In the grounds of Derwent Lodge/Hall, in the garden of Well House, and under the garden wall of No. 6 The Mount*] There must be a great deal more Roman history of the village, sadly buried under the gardens and increasingly under the present-day houses. Opportunities to dig are therefore going to be very limited.

For a very full account of Papcastle in Roman times, up to the discoveries in the 21st Century, as well as the road network, the reader should see Bradbury's "History of Cockermouth".

20th Century Excavations



Discoveries in the 21st Century

In 2001, there was an excavation in three trenches on the site between the Castle Gardens bungalows and Derventio Cottage, before another house was to be built (later named Quintana). There were no significant new discoveries, with the pottery sherds recovered indicating 2nd - 3rd century origin.

Apart from the find of a quernstone in the garden of Braeside in 2005, this is where matters stood on 19th November 2009. And then it all changed. On this day Cockermouth was hit by the worst flood in its history. Being on the confluence of two fast-flowing rivers, flooding is no new experience. But on this occasion, the event made international headlines.

The origin of the flood

The central fells of Cumbria experienced probably their heaviest ever rainfall – Seathwaite recorded 314 mm in 24 hours – 378 mm in 34 hours. This rain was falling on saturated ground after heavy rainfall in the days before (the 6-day figure was in excess of 500mm). All businesses on Main Street and some in Market Place were inundated – some totally devastated. At the peak of the flood during the night the waters reached 8 feet (2.5m) at the New Bookshop.

The flood devastated many fields downstream from Cockermouth. The first of these was Broomlands, behind the Lakes Centre on Low Road.



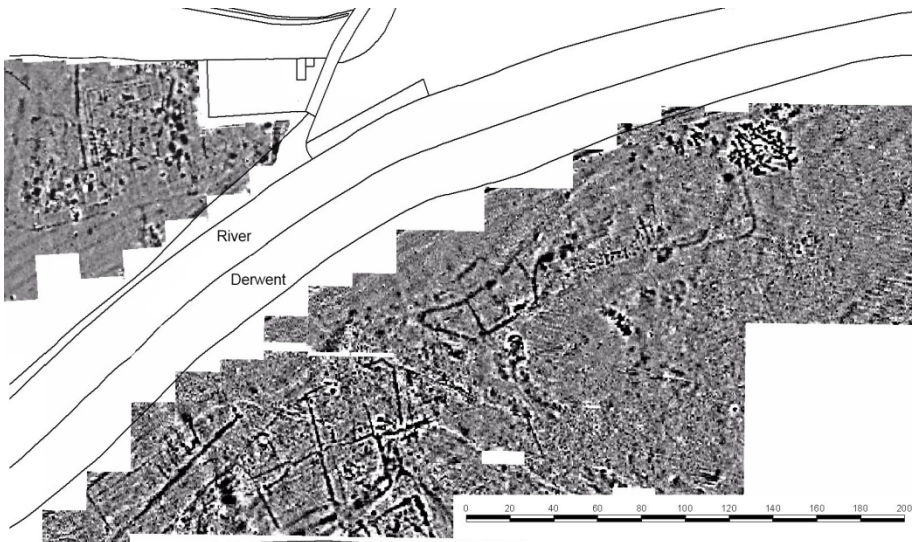
The Broomlands field on the morning of 20th November 2009 (Photo by Greg Greenhalgh)

2010

By spring of 2010, there were reports of pottery and coin finds. With Papcastle across the River, an established Roman site (Derventio), further exploration was clearly desirable.

Grampus Heritage, who were partners in Bassenthwaite Reflections were able to extend their remit to include this patch and in May/June 2010, a geophysics survey was done over much of the field and also over the river below Sibby Brows in Papcastle.

Roman Papcastle



Survey by Grampus Heritage and Training Ltd.

The results suggested a surprising array of features. Consequently North Pennines Archaeology were contracted to conduct an evaluation exploration.

They ran a four-week community 'dig' with many volunteers turning out.

Machine-dug trenches on Sunday 8th August prepared the way for work to commence the following day (in persistent rain and hence much mud). Eight trenches were excavated, covering 550m² of the research area.

A lot of the hard graft by hand, in these evaluation trenches was done by the band of volunteers, working when their other commitments allowed them.

The terrain proved very difficult with much sand and gravel deposit and the archaeology features appearing to be much disturbed. This may be from repeated floods over the centuries, by a change of river course or by the river having more than one channel over time. By the third week, clearer features were emerging. In particular, the wooden planks of a probable mill race and then the massive blocks of the first courses of the mill itself.

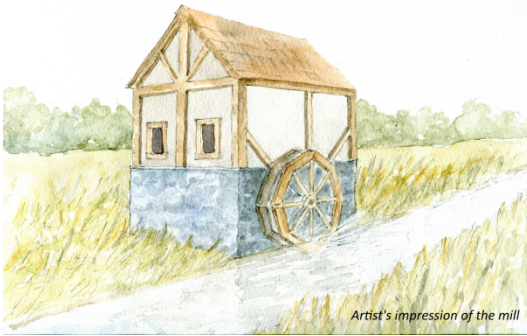


This is only the second found in the north of England, arguably the most spectacular discovery of the evaluation and one of the most complete examples

as yet recorded in Britain. Any evidence of water mills from the Roman period



is scarce; some sites such as Kenchester have produced groups of large mill stones that are likely to have been related to water power but no evidence of the mill itself. Regarding



sites closer to home, neither of the possible mill sites associated with the bridges at Willowford and Chesters on Hadrian's Wall have yielded any firm evidence of mill structures and are based entirely on sluice channels built into the bridge abutments which may relate to flood channels rather than mill streams. This makes the remains of the 3rd century mill at Cockermouth of regional if not national significance.

There were many pottery sherds (fragments), some coins (not a hoard), a partial millstone, a part inscription and the remains of walls as well. The Roman Road was confirmed. Plenty of signs of occupation and industrial activity were found. The 'dig' continued until September 3rd.

In summary, the archaeological evaluation revealed that the site was separated into two distinct areas of activity. The south-western half of the site appeared to have been largely civilian in nature, comprising probable timber structures within small enclosures and evidence of small-scale industrial practices. These were largely in the form of post-holes, gullies and areas of burning.

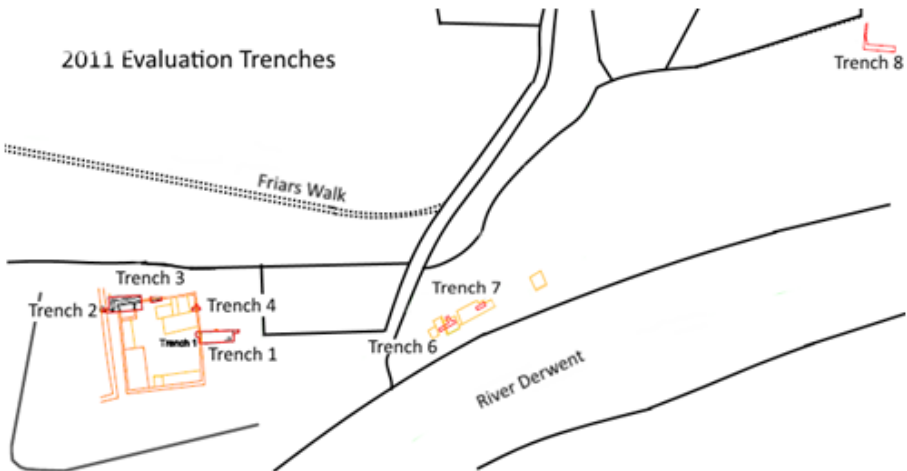
The north-eastern half of the site was distinctly different from the south-western half, retaining no evidence of typical domestic activity. Rather, the northern area comprised two structures which appeared largely municipal in nature, probably with strong connections to the military.

One of the more intriguing features of the site was the large circular feature situated to the south of the mill complex. The large feature measured over 50m in diameter and was comprised of a clay and cobble bank, which produced a small second century pottery assemblage. Although the feature was exceptionally clear on the geophysical results, no evidence was revealed to indicate the purpose of this unusual feature, although suggestions have varied from an amphitheatre to a horse training ground. Even more intriguing was the discovery that the circular feature had been constructed above a large ditch, which had partially silted-up naturally before a secondary fill was deposited which produced a late 1st century pottery assemblage; making this the earliest Romano-British activity recorded during the evaluation. However, the unusual nature of the archaeological remains and the lack of any distinguishing finds or features have raised more questions than answers about this particular area of the site.

The success of this evaluation excavation led to successful Heritage Lottery bids.

2011 EVALUATION TRENCHES

Whilst awaiting the result of the Lottery bid some work was carried out on the north side of the river. Seven evaluation trenches were excavated, to establish the nature and extent of below-ground archaeological remains within the vicinity, the evaluation trenches being located to target both geophysical anomalies and apparently 'sterile' areas. The work revealed that the site was separated into two distinct areas of activity. The western half of the site evaluated retained no evidence of typical domestic activity. Rather, this area comprised one large structures which appeared largely municipal in nature, probably with strong connections to the military. Unlike the ephemeral timber

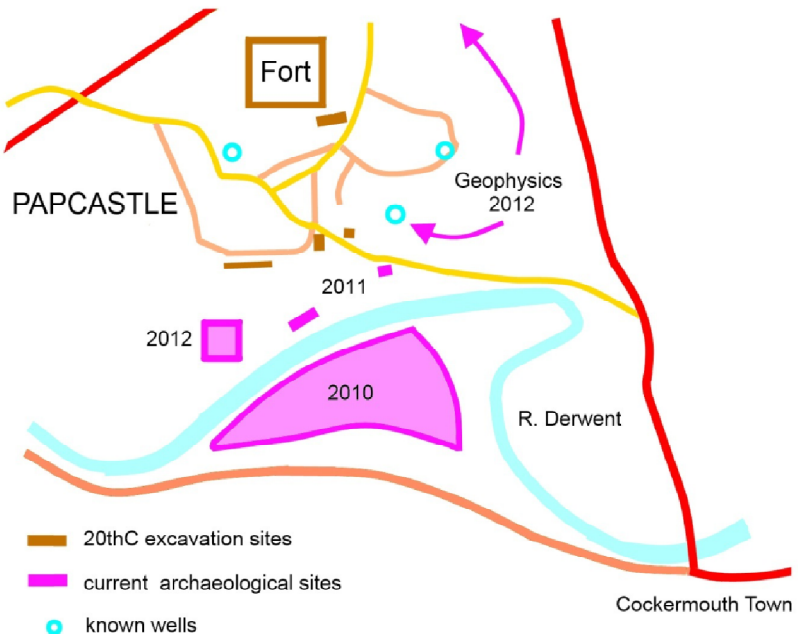


structures observed elsewhere the large rectangular building within retained substantial clay and cobble foundations; a building technique widely recorded on military sites in northern England and had the scale approximately 40m by 50m of a monumental building which could be of national significance given the very early date in its construction.

The eastern side of the evaluation area revealed intensive industrial activity probably associated with metal working. The depth of surviving deposits was also significantly deeper than would normally be expected in a rural vicus type situation (well over 1.5 m deep in places). The exact nature and extent of this industrial activity must remain speculative based upon the limited evidence available at this stage.

It is plain however that in the Romano-British period this was part of a much larger settlement centred around the Roman fort of Derventio, on both sides of the river Derwent in Papcastle. It is without doubt that this phase of evaluation has merely scratched the surface of a major Roman town that contained substantial civic and military buildings and should now be viewed on a par with Carlisle and Corbridge.

2012 MAJOR EXCAVATION



The success of the bid led to the award of a Heritage Lottery Grant for a three-year project to Grampus Heritage and Training Ltd. and the contract for this was made with Wardell Armstrong Archaeology allowing excavations to proceed. The major dig started 28th August 2012 and ran through until October with a large area (50m by 50m) stripped back. Work started with 18 volunteers and immediately found a substantial building with a small bath-house.



The curved wall of the laconicum (warm dry room) was a striking feature.

Then a skeleton was found in one of the hypocaust ducts. A triangular hole in the skull suggested foul play but the local police decided the trail was too cold after nearly 2000 years.

Over 75% of the skeleton was complete but was in very poor condition. It was subsequently analysed and identified as a male, between 24 and 44 years of age, and later by strontium analysis of a tooth, as most likely of local origin. He probably died between 170 and 250 AD (from radio-carbon dating evidence).

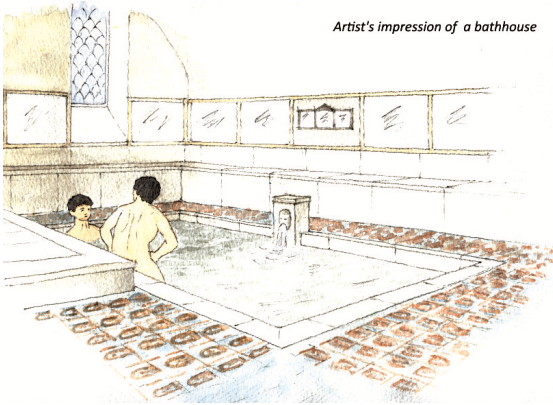
Another exciting find was a long metal object (5ft 7 in or 170cm) identified as a candelabrum. Sent to Leeds Royal Armouries for conservation, it is said to be the best example of its kind in the country.



Later, after finding a large flagged area, which showed nothing on the geophysics survey, a set of three arches, part of the hypocaust were uncovered – part of a second bath house.



Roman Papcastle



Artist's impression of a bathhouse

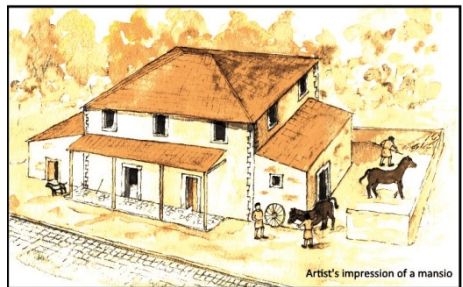
The archaeologists have been puzzled by the lack of an obvious water supply (unless it was a surface one, now gone) and that no latrines have been found.

The excavation was dogged by poor weather, at times so wet that the diggers

probably felt like they were at the Somme (apart from the lack of shells). The dig concluded on 13th October and the site was then backfilled.

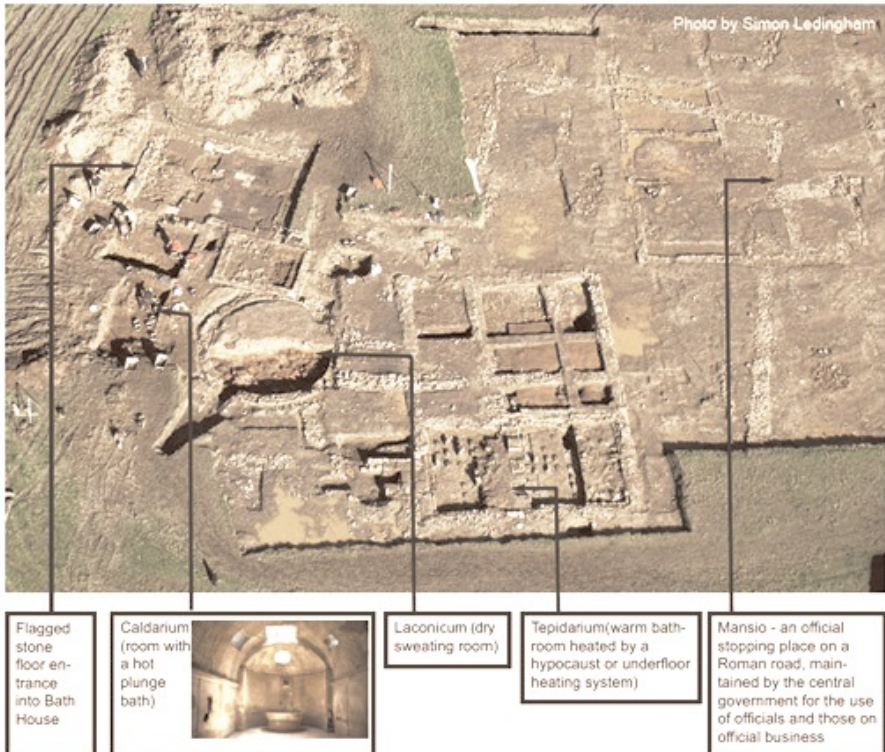
The activity generated much interest from the village and the town with some 30 - 40 volunteers engaged at one time or another and several hundred visitors.

Summary This investigation was undertaken over seven weeks, between the 28th August and the 15th October 2012 and comprised the excavation of a 0.15 hectare area. The excavation revealed significant multi-phase occupation of the site during the Roman period which appears to have extended over some 200 years, from the late 1st century to the 3rd century AD. The earliest phases of the site were comprised of simple levelling deposits, drainage ditches and pits. This was followed by the construction of two substantial buildings, which have been interpreted as a *mansio* and an early bath house, the latter containing a well-preserved under-floor heating system and flue. Following this, there appears to have been a change in emphasis on the site as two further substantial buildings were constructed, one of which was on a different alignment to the preceding structures. However, both of these structures probably served a similar function to the earlier bath house as each



Artist's impression of a mansio

contained its own underfloor heating system and associated flue and probably represents a second bath house on the site, with one of the structures probably containing a caldarium and adjoining tepidarium and the other comprising a circular laconium. Both of these structures were extremely well preserved with some walls surviving to over 1 meter in height, the most spectacular of which was an internal dividing wall containing three complete arches. These structures appear to have been modified shortly after their construction with the addition of two probable changing rooms, one of which retained a substantial sandstone floor surface. The next phase saw a further significant programme of construction work which included a substantial compound and ancillary buildings, as well as the modification of the first bath house. However, there was a decline in building techniques during this phase which possibly signifies the general decline of the site as a whole during this time. The probable early



mansio building had also gone out of use by this phase. The two final phases identified witnessed the further decline of the site, with the construction of crude walls and ephemeral wooden structures, some of which had reused existing buildings whilst other buildings were completely disregarded. Following this third phase of work, it is now clear that the settlement at Papcastle was a significant centre during the late 1st and early 2nd century AD, probably as significant as both Carlisle and Corbridge. However, there does appear to have been general decline following the Hadrianic period and although investigations within various parts of the settlement have revealed evidence for a period of prosperity during the Severan period, it is likely that the settlement continued to decline throughout the 3rd century until the area was largely abandoned during the mid-4th century AD.

Papcastle was a significant centre during the late 1st and early 2nd century AD, probably as significant as both Carlisle and Corbridge. However, there does appear to have been general decline following the Hadrianic period and although investigations within various parts of the settlement have revealed evidence for a period of prosperity during the Severan period, it is likely that the settlement continued to decline throughout the 3rd century until the area was largely abandoned during the mid-4th century AD.

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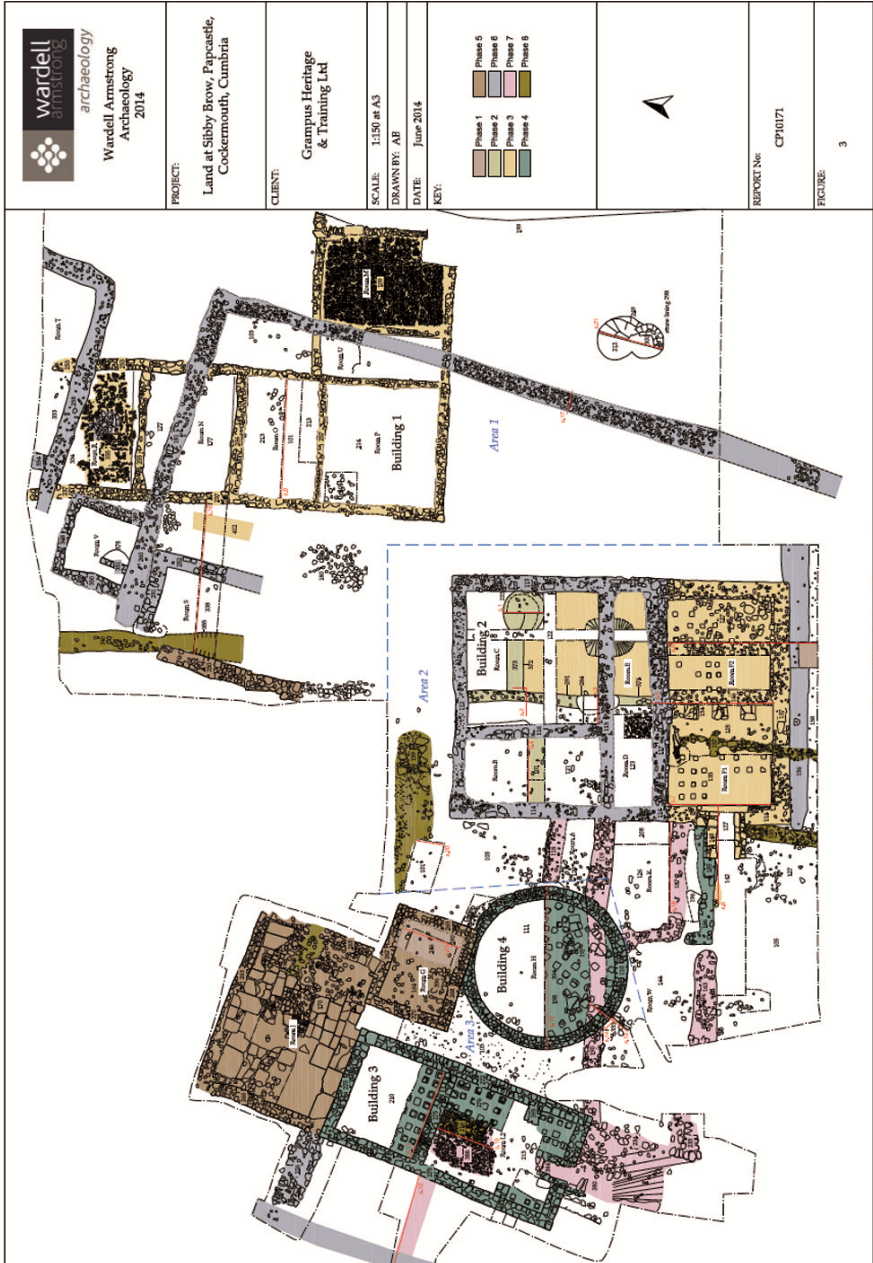


Figure 3: Phased plan of the excavation areas.

2013 Excavation – Eastern Vicus Papcastle

In May after geomagnetic surveys, an evaluation exercise was carried out which revealed the stone foundation of what was hoped would be a house in the *vicus*..



During August, September and October 2013, the usual band of Grampus Heritage, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology and the team of dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers investigated the eastern extent of the Roman settlement.

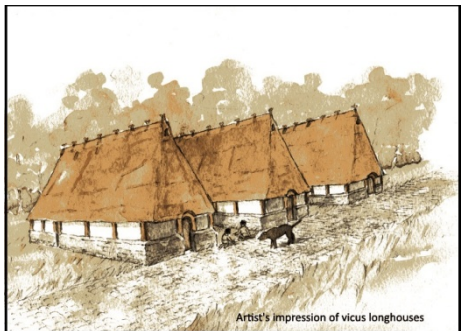
During this 6-week excavation, one of the trenches opened in May was extended to uncover the plan of a Roman strip house and associated structures.

The layout of the building alongside the Roman road has strong similarities

Roman Papcastle



with the town of Cockermouth today which is based on the medieval burgrave plot system. Immediately alongside the road a small building was discovered which can be interpreted as a small shop. A cobbled lane or yard leads from the main road and runs behind the shop and along the front (west side) of a Roman strip house. One room of the house contained a hearth. A well constructed stone drain was found to run down the eastern side of the house. The excavation was not seeking grand structures to compete with the bathouses and mansio of the 2012 dig but hoping to learn more about everyday life in Roman Papcastle -to investigate where a resident of *Derventio* lived, worked and perhaps died. The finds from the excavation have helped to connect with the past and understand life in the *vicus*. These finds include pottery (awaiting post-excavation assessment), glass



beads, gaming counters, a spindle whorl and a fragment of a small clay statue of the goddess Venus.



The Roman road was found to be very well constructed and revetted by substantial kerb stones. A small trench was opened to the west of the excavation area so that a section of the road could be investigated in detail. Here later in the life of the road the roadside ditches had been backfilled and replaced with kerb stones on the road surface. The road here had a substantial southern ditch, which had been partially filled by a cobble foundation for a substantial wall. This may be another roadside building.

The research in 2013 has established the extent of Roman settlement to the east of Papcastle and has demonstrated that the focus of activity at *Derventio* is not centred on the fort, as with other Roman *vici* in the region, but appears to focus on the River Derwent. This suggests a significant river crossing point to link the northern part of the settlement (and fort) with the 'Broomlands' area of activity on the south side of the river (2010 excavations). The possibility that the river may have been used for the transportation of supplies in the Roman period remains unproven, but part of the reason for the importance of the river to the settlement could have been the existence of an inland harbour at the foot of Sibby Brow.

Roman Papcastle



2014 Exploration - West Papcastle Survey



Figure 2: Location of evaluation trenches.

During March and April 2014, the fields to the west of Papcastle on the old Papcastle-Broughton road and down by the river Derwent near the bypass bridge, were surveyed to fill in some gaps from the 2010 geophysics as well as look at new fields to see what, if anything, would show.

For this geophysics sessions, Wardell Armstrong's resistivity equipment, covering areas already done by the magnetometers, then having both the magnetometers and the resistivity gear working the same grid at the same time, gave an opportunity to compare the results to see the differences.

The magnetometry results were usually clearer and sharper, but surprisingly the resistivity results sometimes picked up possible features that the magnetometer results had not shown.

Following the geophysical survey carried out in March – April, an evaluation was done targeting the D shaped enclosure with circle that had been revealed. The site was fairly clean, artefact wise, but we did find some pottery in the termini of the enclosure ditches that marked the entrance. This pottery was dated to the 3rd Century, indicating that this area west of Papcastle was in use then, though the enclosure itself was probably constructed before this date.

The valuation comprised the excavation of three targeted trenches and revealed the south and east ditches of the enclosure, as well as the northern entrance into the enclosure which was formed by two ditch termini. The small circular feature within the enclosure was also investigated during the evaluation

and was found to be comprised of a circular ditch filled with stone, which may have once formed packing for wooden structural supports. No floor surfaces survived within the potential circular structure however, although it is likely to have been utilised as a domestic area. It is probable that other potential structures were located within the enclosure as an additional geophysical survey undertaken during the evaluation revealed a further circular feature of similar dimensions located approximately 10m northwest of the structure under investigation. Although this second circular feature was not investigated, it probably served a similar function as the structure revealed during the evaluation. Dating evidence retrieved from deposits within the enclosure ditches has indicated that the area was in use during the 3rd century AD, although the enclosure itself may have been established prior to this. Furthermore, the dating of the enclosure to the third century has pushed the occupation of Roman Papcastle much further west than previously thought.

2014 Excavation – main project

For this the final stage of the 3-year Heritage Lottery project, the decision was made to return to the Broomlands field. During August, September and October 2014, Grampus Heritage worked once more with Wardell Armstrong Archaeology and the dedicated volunteers on the last open area excavation of the project.

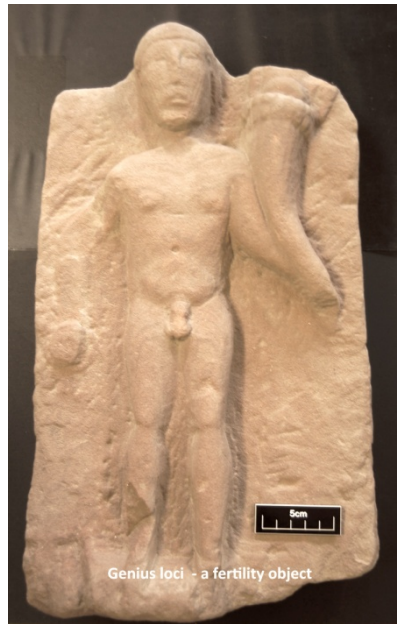
From the previous survey and evaluation work in 2010, it was known that there was a lot of activity in this field, so it was decided to concentrate on two areas, in order to try to understand more about the activity going on across the river from the bathhouses and the forge sites, A) near the old railway line and modern road, and B) on the river bank. The site was opened, as usual, during the last week of August, allowing people who could only join in the remainder of the school holidays to visit the site and have a go. There were many volunteers for this final open area dig, many regular faces, but also lots of new volunteers, contributing to a total of 573 volunteer days.



From the start, the site promised to keep the team guessing but also reveal some amazing artefacts. Finds included coins, brooches, miniature animals such as a deer/stag, a wild boar and some little animal ears, miniature pottery vessels (libation bowls), lots of worked stone which included altar fragments and carvings, such as the Genius Loci with the cornucopia, (a fertility object), two female heads and bits of other statues. A variety of

pottery was found on site including Black Burnished Ware, decorated Samian ware, amphorae and mortaria. The excavation had various levels and in some areas, there had been build up of material before the next occupation phase. These associated finds recovered during the excavation were some of the most spectacular of the entire research project. Of particular significance was the recovery of several inscriptions, which included the first evidence that the First Cohort of Vangiones were garrisoned at Derventio, and a dedication to the goddess Vacuna who was previously unattested in Britain.

The team had some difficulty on this site, as the features were cut into these build up deposits, so there were challenges in identifying edges of ditches, postholes and pits. There were indications of buildings somewhere in the area – roof tiles, worked stone, window glass – but no evidence of foundations. This was different to the past sites, where there were very clear building foundations that allowed the separate phases that had occurred to be identified.



Genius loci - a fertility object

Overall the survival of archaeological features within the investigation areas was

limited, especially when compared to other areas of the Romano-British settlement.

When the education outreach programme started in the final 3 weeks of the excavation, run by the Senhouse Museum, the school children in these areas worked here, and they found lots of interesting pieces of pottery. Several local schools visited to take part in the digging and do some finds washing; as well as digging up some interesting finds. In terms of the number of features represented and the quantity of associated finds, the activity here appears to have spanned the entire 2nd century, although the majority of it appears to date to the first half of this period.

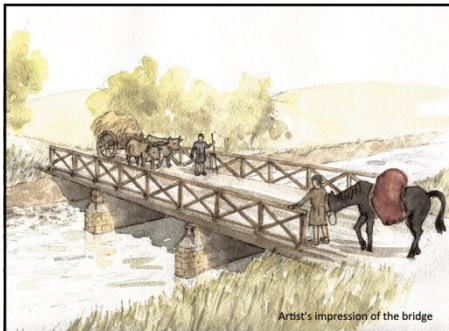
The children were also discovering exciting things during the washing, such as pottery with graffiti scratched on. From the site, the location of the bathhouses and the forge on the other bank of the river were plain to see.



One of the aims of this excavation was to see if any indication of a river crossing could be found that would link the two sides of the settlement. The diggers were brought back in and the results were better than anyone had been expecting. The foundations of a bridge, back-filled with rubble, and further north towards the river, the remains of a pier were discovered. Here too, the remains of a road leading to the bridge, part of the mill race and the old course of the river were found.



The discovery of the bridge was a fantastic addition to the understanding of Roman Papcastle and Cockermouth and a key component in recreating and understanding the historic landscape. Associated with the bridge abutment, two fragments of inscription were found. Also found were two altar fragments, one of which was used as the corner of the bridge foundation, two carved heads



from statues and the base of a third statue in the rubble of the bridge pier. The abundance of worked stone reused as rubble in the bridge construction suggests that this particular bridge may be quite late in the Roman period. Towards the end of the excavation there was significant rainfall which led to the river rising and left the bridge trench

something of a challenge to excavate, needing pumps and sandbags. In the end it was possible to cut samples of the two in-situ timbers forming the base of the pier and backfill the trench immediately in a relatively dry state. Carbon-dating has confirmed the late Roman period, although it is highly likely that this

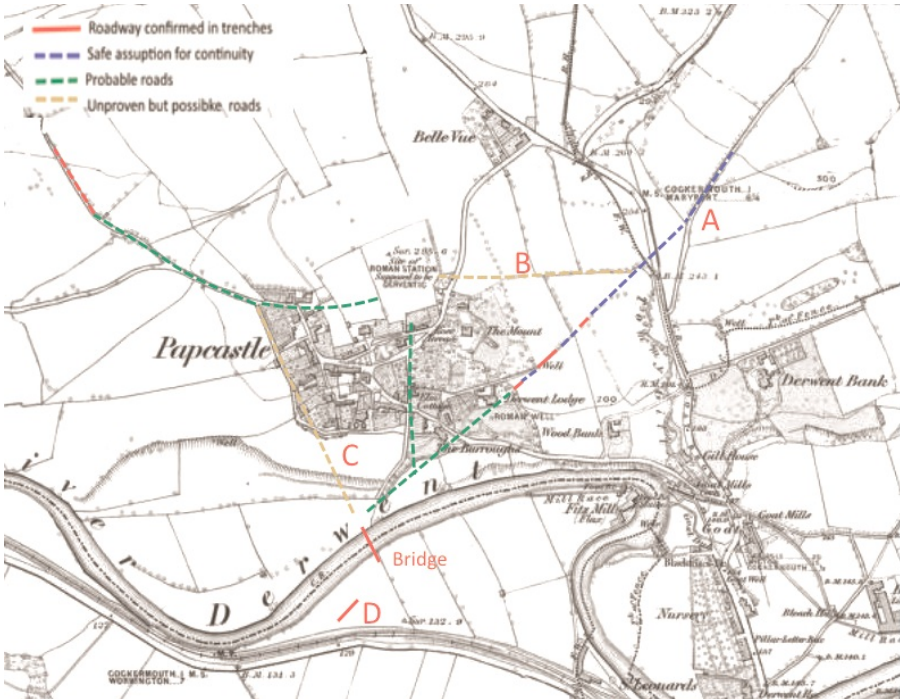
replaced an earlier crossing. The latest identified activity within area A was largely comprised of several linear features and a significant number of post-holes. Dating evidence for this activity was extremely scarce however, and it is possible that not all of the features assigned to this phase were contemporary. Whilst a small assemblage of mid-3rd/4th century pottery could have been associated with this phase, this material was recovered from possible disturbed contexts indicating that it could have been residual. Even so, it appears likely that this phase of activity occurred following the abandonment of the earlier enclosures. Furthermore, it is probable that the potential high status building possibly located close to the area had either been demolished or had fell into a state of ruin by this time. This was largely evidenced by the large number of roof slates, fragments of window glass, broken altars and statues, and fragments of worked stone associated with many of this phase's features and deposits.

Conclusion

It is now clear that the settlement at Papcastle was a significant centre during the late 1st and early 2nd century AD, probably as significant as both Carlisle and Corbridge. However, there does appear to have been a general decline following the Hadrianic period (AD 117-138) and although investigations within various parts of the settlement have revealed evidence for a period of prosperity during the Severan period, (AD 193-235) it is likely that the settlement was in decline during the later 3rd century with evidence of only minimal activity during the late Roman period.

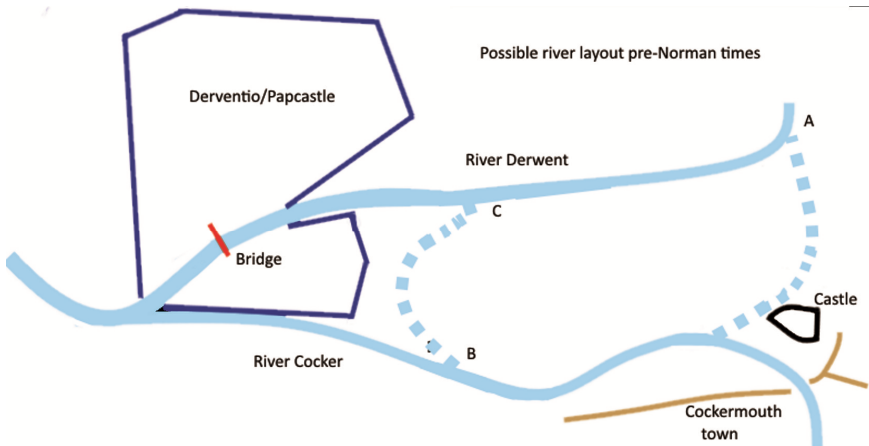
APPENDIX

Some thoughts about Roman roadways around Derventio



- A: is the old road into Cockermouth before the turnpike directed the route to Belle Vue.
- B: could be the line of a spur direct to the East gate: (The roadway behind the Mount sits immediately under the hedge so the same could be true here.)
- C: a possible road line leading directly to the bridge
- D: the road to Moresby and Ravenglass

Some thoughts about the rivers in the past



Bernard Bradbury quotes a tradition that in the time of Edward I (1272-1307) the Derwent was diverted to pass close to the castle to increase its defence. The previous channel [A-C] ran along the foot of Mickle Brow below Woodhall to the mills at the Goat. In 1866, Askew claimed that many traces were still visible, as did Denwood in 1946. It is certainly true that when the factory which is now James Walker's was being constructed in the late 1960's, substantial quantities of river gravel were found there. The question then arises as to whether the very sudden swing to the north, of the River Cocker was already there or whether a further diversion was built so that water supply to the mills at the Goat was available.[B] If this were so, then the natural line of the Cocker would have been continuing along under what became the railway and the main road to Workington.

It is interesting that after the 2009 flood, discussion about flood defences for the Goat included the possible construction of a 'swale' – a diversion channel which would come into use in heavy flooding. The line of this would have been much as suggested was the old river route. In the event, perhaps because of cost issues, an alternative arrangement was found.

Acknowledgements

The contents of this booklet have been drawn from a multitude of sources – in particular

History of Cockermouth, J.B.Bradbury [3rd Ed. 2006] now under auspices of Cockermouth Civic Trust

Papcastle History, E. C. Apperley, 2009 for Papcastle Local History Group

Articles for Cockermouth Post and Papcastle Village Newsletter – The Villager

General feedback on Grampus Heritage website
[www.discoverderventio.co.uk]

Professional archaeological reports

a) 1912, 1962 digs of the fort reported in CWAAS Proceedings

b) 1984 –one page conference report only (more detailed report was never filed)

c) Reports from North Pennines Archaeology and Wardell Armstrong Archaeology after each year of the present digs 2010-2014.

In this process there are many photographs from so many sources that it is not feasible to identify the owners. It is hoped that in the spirit of the volunteer community venture which was the basis for the recent digs, photographers will accept the use of their images in the same way.

Roman Papcastle

Permission for the surveys and the subsequent excavations was kindly granted by farmers and land owners -Mr David Robinson, Mr Robert Jackson, Mr Eldred Curwen, Mrs Janet Johnston, Paul and Zoe Scott and land agents Edwin Thomson. Without their support little could have been achieved.

The artist's impressions have been drawn by Susan Fleming.

The overall venture depended on a massive contribution from volunteers from far and wide, both experienced diggers and novices. The results achieved would not have been possible without them and Grampus Heritage acknowledges their contribution with the utmost gratitude.

Grampus Heritage and Training Ltd is a non-profit making organisation based in the North West of England. Since 1997 it has been involved in the management and promotion of European projects concerned with culture, heritage, archaeology and the environment.

Bassenthwaite Reflections was a Heritage Lottery funded programme of 30 environmental projects designed to protect the landscape of the Bassenthwaite Lake catchment in the Lake District.

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was an established archaeological contracting consultancy based at the heart of the picturesque North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Nenthead, Alston).

Wardell Armstong is a professional, international environmental and engineering consultancy. Its roots are in mining and minerals. Its archaeology section, based in Carlisle has organised and documented the whole of the work 2010-2015.

