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Roman Legionary Fortresses and the Cities of Modern Europe

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England

IN assessing the Roman contribution to western history, it is customary to stress what may be broadly termed the imperial achievement: the acquisition and maintenance of an empire for several centuries and the conversion of conquered peoples from subjects to partners in Roman civilization. One of the strongest agents in this imperial achievement was the army, whose role included much more than its primary function of conquest and defense. The army was a powerful factor in Romanization. Indeed, life in the army was probably the most effective means of spreading the Roman way of life throughout the provinces of the Empire, especially among those classes of the population which supplied most of the recruits. Latin was the language of the army, and the soldiers took it with them wherever they served. Countless thousands of people acquired at least a veneer of *romanitas* through service in or contact with the military. The Roman army also contributed to the urbanization of western Europe in that a number of its camps have lived on through time to become modern cities. Examples of this legacy from England and Europe, not as often observed as they ought to be, are the subject of the present study.

Two preliminary points are to be noted. First, in the early centuries of the Empire there were essentially two kinds of soldiers: legionaries and auxiliaries. The former were recruited from Roman citizens and served for 20 years in the legions of some 5,200 men; the latter were drawn from the non-citizen native peoples, served 25-year enlistments in the infantry cohorts and cavalry "wings" of either 500 or 1,000 men, and received Roman citizenship on discharge. Second, writers in English customarily designate legionary bases as fortresses, and all smaller bases, whether for auxiliary units or detachments of legions, as forts. It is with the fortresses alone that we are here concerned.

The Romans regarded city life as synonymous with civilized life: "urban" was civilized, "rustic" and "rural" and were not. More important, it was Roman policy to use cities as units of government whenever possible, working through them where they already existed and establishing new ones where there were none. Sometimes Rome founded colonies of discharged veterans both to reward the time-served soldiers and to impress the natives with urban life. Such cities were intended to be showplaces of Roman grandeur, deliberately designed to impress all who visited or resided in them. As the second-century A.D. writer Aulus Gellius put it, colonies were "little copies and images" of Rome, reflecting the glory of the capital in the provinces (*Noctes Atticae* 16.13.9.). Colonies were the highest category of city in the Empire, both prestigious and privileged, for they mirrored the magnificence of Rome and generally possessed valuable rights of self-government and tax-exemption as well. They often served as provincial capitals and centers of the imperial cult (worship of the goddess Roma and the deified emperors). As examples we can point to Antioch-by-Pisidia in Asia Minor, Colchester in Britain, Cologne in Germany, Lyon in France, Merida in Spain, and Timgad in Africa.¹ At a lower level, Tacitus describes the policy of Agricola as governor of Britain in 80 A.D. working to persuade

the natives to take up city life. Agricola made good use of the Winter:

For, to accustom to rest and repose through the charms of luxury a population scattered and barbarous and therefore inclined to war, Agricola gave private encouragement and public aid to the building of temples, courts of justice and dwelling-houses, praising the energetic and reproofing the indolent. Thus an honourable rivalry took the place of compulsion. He likewise provided a liberal education for the sons of the chiefs, and showed such a preference for the natural powers of the Britons over the industry of the Gauls that they who lately disdained the tongue of Rome now coveted its eloquence. Hence, too, a liking for our style of dress, and the "toga" became fashionable. Step by step they were led to the things which dispose to vice, the lounge, the bath, the elegant banquet. All this in their ignorance they called civilization, when it was but a part of their servitude.

(Agricola 21; Modern Library trans.)

Army camps stimulated economic growth and quasi-municipal development all along the frontiers, and three types of community emerged. The first, *canabae* ("huts, sheds"), consisted of the collection of buildings — workshops, warehouses, stores, inns, houses, brothels — located adjacent to legionary and auxiliary bases everywhere in the Empire. Their inhabitants served the many needs of the garrisons — fresh foods, leather goods, drinks, women — and the soldiers doubtless welcomed their presence. Equally certainly the *canabae* did something to Romanize many thousands of provincials. The extent to which *canabae* contributed to urban growth is not so clear, for though they tended to be more or less permanent communities (given that army units remained in the same camps for years), they were often rather ramshackle, unplanned affairs, straggling along one or two roads leading to one of the main gates of a base. The *canabae* of a fortress were more likely to exhibit true municipal features than were those of the small auxiliary forts. Further, it is probable that *canabae* were under the jurisdiction of the military, whose officers regarded them as necessary evils and denied them much in the way of development and self-government; *canabae* were on army property (*territorium legionis*) and could be abolished at the command of the military.²

The second type of community originating in proximity to army bases was the *vicus*. Often growing up a mile or more away from the fort and so not on army land, the *vicus* was a true community of its own, legally independent of the military command. Many wealthy merchants took up residence in the *vici*, as did retired soldiers and provincials anxious to get ahead. Veterans, who were fairly well Romanized after their long tours of duty, tended to marry native women and settle down after discharge in the *vici* near the bases where their units had long been stationed. Generous provisions of discharge extended citizenship to the veterans' wives and children and thus promoted extensive Romanization in these towns. As a consequence, some of these places attained considerable size, though there was a wide gra-

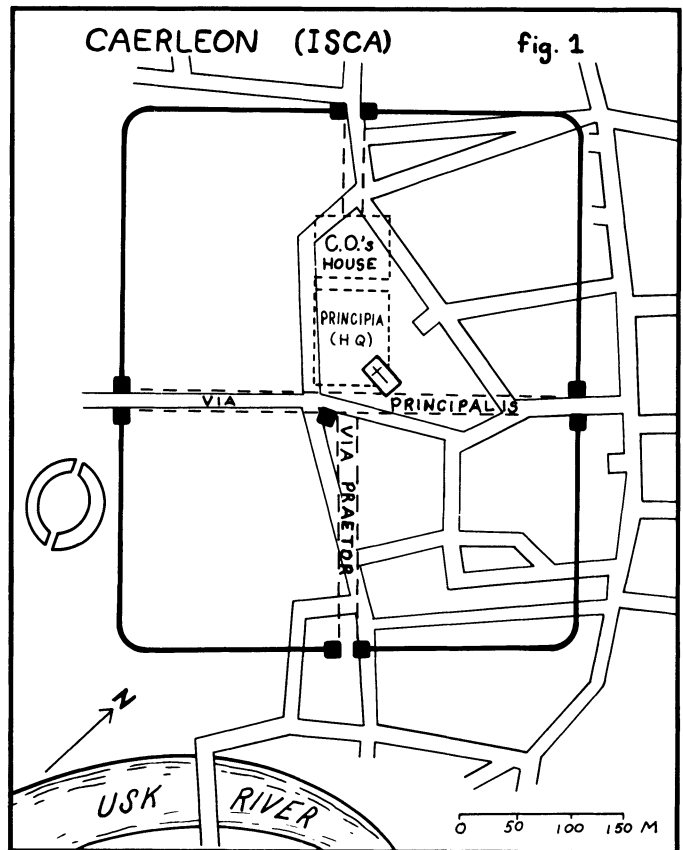
dation in them. At the upper end, some *vici* near fortresses or the more important auxiliary forts became sufficiently Romanized to be recognized as *municipia* or even, by the early third century A.D., promoted to *coloniae*.³ This development was evidently given official encouragement along the Danube and in Dacia, where most cities began as *vici*. York in England appears to be analogous, the *vicus* growing up across the Ouse from the fortress and being granted colonial status ca. 211-217. At the lower end of the spectrum, there was little to distinguish *vicus* from *canabae* at the more remote frontier posts. What, for instance, should we make of Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall? It was a pretty miserable place when compared with the great *vici* of the Danube, but yet its inhabitants as the *vici* *Vindolandesses* had enough sense of community to dedicate an altar to Vulcan.⁴

The third and most important type of community under consideration here is that which originated as or in — not near or beside — a legionary fortress. As always there is variation, and no single statement is valid everywhere. In essence, however, the situation is fairly simple. Sometimes fortresses of the early Empire became cities after the end of the Roman period. In other instances there was an intermediate phase: after some years or decades of occupation a legion abandoned its fortress to move to a position closer to the frontier, and the old base was converted into a civilian *colonia* which in turn endured through the Medieval into modern times. England affords two examples of the former, Chester and York, and two of the latter, Gloucester and Lincoln. In both types, what is of interest is that the modern cities show something of their military beginnings in their streetplans, walls, and gates.

Of course, not all fortresses have become modern cities. A few bases are known to have been occupied only temporarily. Inchtuthil, discussed below, was never finished at all. Usk, on the river of the same name, was abandoned ca. 70 after no more than 15 years of use. Modern research, particularly aerial photography, has turned up a number of seasonal or marching camps. The military history of Exeter is controversial, but a fortress evidently preceded establishment of the native town ca. 80. Wroxeter is similar, as first the XIVth (ca. 57-66) and then the XXth (66-ca. 78, with perhaps a small caretaker garrison for another decade) was in residence before creation of the native town. Colchester began its Roman life as the base of Legion XX in 43. Elements of the camp were transmitted to the *colonia* which was founded within the disused and even dismantled fortress in 49/50, and from the colony they have come down to today.⁵

It may be of some interest to note that London, by far the largest city in Roman Britain as in modern England, was never a legionary fortress at all. A small fort was constructed just outside the northwest corner of the city and in the third century was included in Londinium's wall. Its garrison was the honor guard of the governor and was thus composed primarily of legionaires probably drawn from all of the legions of the province. The modern visitor is hard-put to find any sign of this fort's influence in the growth of the city.⁶

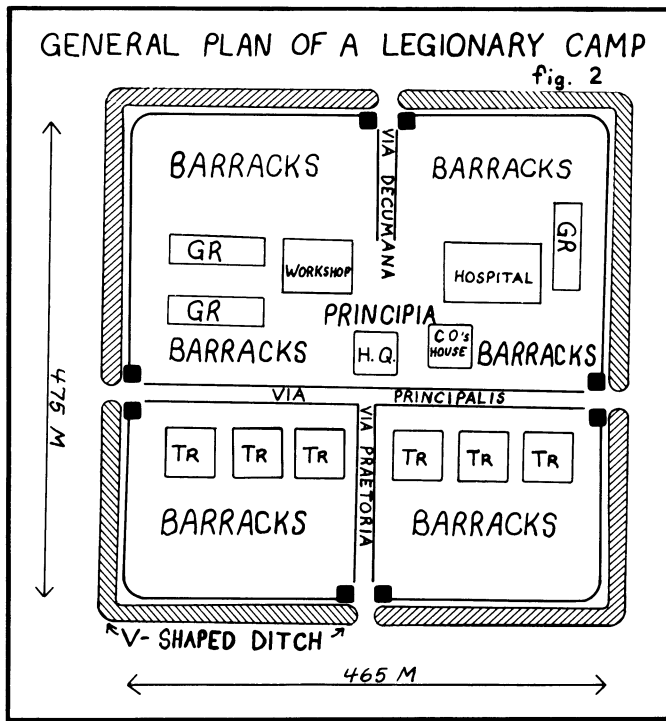
A good illustration of a fortress which is now but a village is Caerleon on the Usk river in south Wales (see Figure 1). Three of the old gates are still pierced by streets, but otherwise there is little sign of indebtedness to the Roman past, though we do meet here a phenomenon encountered frequently elsewhere — a church on the site of the headquarters building. (In part this may be because churches were often built at major intersections, and as will be pointed out shortly the HQ was always at the center of the camp. But since the HQ contained a chapel for the unit's standards, there was holy ground there, suitable, after cleansing and rededication, for a church. Often the very stones of the old HQ were re-used in the Christian building.) Known to the Romans as Isca, the fortress was evidently evacuated late in the third century and demolished in the fourth. The civilian town seems never



to have developed much, as it was overshadowed by the district town at Caerwent some 7 miles away.⁷ Soon Isca was in ruins, but its name lived on in legend: the medieval memories were far more glorious than the Roman realities had ever been. Writing in the 1130s, Geoffrey of Monmouth tells his readers that the City of the Legions was an archepiscopal diocese and that King Arthur held a plenary court there: no wonder, for the place had gilded gables and was the equal of Rome! Some 50 years later Gerald of Wales makes it even more splendid:

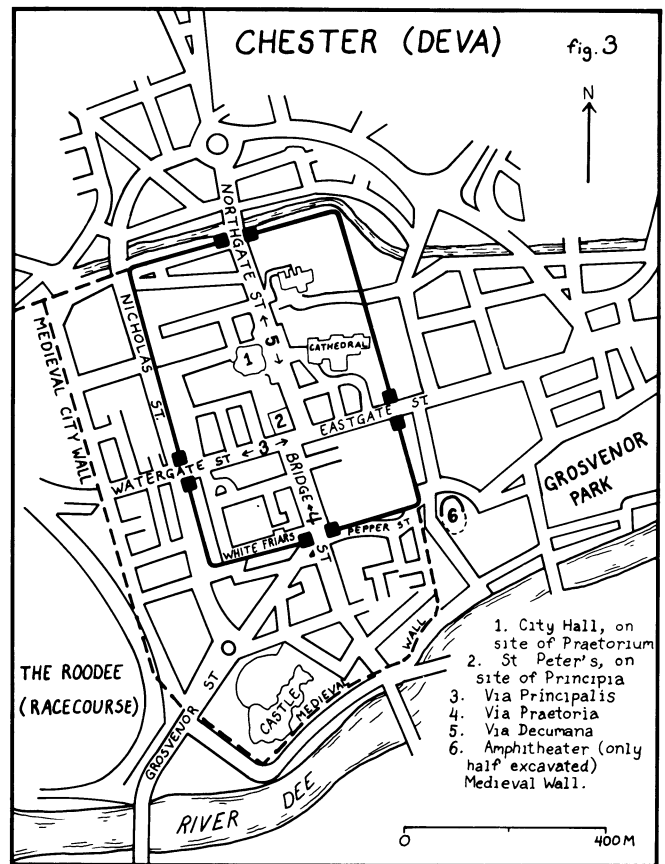
Caerleon means the City of Legions, Caer, in the British language, signifying a city or camp, for there the Roman legions, sent into this island, were accustomed to winter, and from this circumstance it was styled the City of the Legions. This city was of undoubted antiquity, and handsomely built of masonry, with courses of bricks, by the Romans. Many vestiges of its former splendour may yet be seen: immense palaces, formerly ornamented with gilded roofs, in imitation of Roman magnificence, inasmuch as they were first raised by the Roman princes, and embellished with splendid buildings; a tower of prodigious size, remarkable hot baths, relics of temples, and theatres, all enclosed within fine walls, parts of which remain standing. You will find on all sides, both within and without the circuit of walls, subterraneous buildings, aqueducts, underground passages; and what I think most worthy of notice, stoves contrived with wonderful art, to transmit the heat insensibly through narrow tubes passing up the side walls.⁸

THE cities which remain to be dealt with show a closer relationship to their legionary origins. By the mid-first century A.D., the layout of a legionary camp had become more or less standardized (see Figure 2, a simplified version of Inchtuthil constructed on the Tay river above Perth in Scotland and demolished before completion about 88).⁹ The ditch and wall (of stone in permanent camps, otherwise an earthen rampart strengthened and faced with timber) enclosed an area of some 50



acres. A grid of streets divided the fortress into sections, but of these streets only three are important for the present purposes. The main street was the *via praetoria*, which ran from the *porta praetoria* (in theory facing the enemy) to the center of the camp. There it formed a T intersection with the *via principalis* which ran across the short axis of the camp. The *principia*, or headquarters building, stood at this junction; as one faced from it down the *via praetoria*, the *porta principalis dextra* was to one's right and the *p.p. sinistra* to one's left. The other main street of the camp was the *via decumana*, which began at the rear gate or *porta decumana* and headed into the camp on a line with the *via praetoria*. The commanding officer's residence was the *praetorium*, located next to the HQ — either to the side or behind it. Most of the internal space was taken up with the 60 barrack-blocks, one for each of the legion's centuries. Other buildings are the houses of the six tribunes (TR on the plan), granaries (GR), a hospital, and workshop.¹⁰ To find legionary legacies one must look at the original core of what is now often a sprawling urban mass: the approximately 50-acre nucleus of nearly two millennia of life.

Legionary bases contributed to the urbanization of England, for while the fortress at Caerleon did not develop into a city, those at Chester and York did, and those at Gloucester and Lincoln became first colonies and subsequently modern cities. Chester (Deva), as far up the Dee River as seagoing vessels could reach, was built for Legio II Adiutrix in 75-79, but ca. 88 that legion left Britain, and XX Valeria Victrix was transferred in from Inchtuthil in the far north; XX V.V. remained in residence until 383 or 402/3. The history of Chester in the post-Roman centuries is obscure. A battle was fought nearby in 616, suggesting that people still found refuge — if not permanent habitation — in the early seventh century. A Danish army sheltered within the old walls in 893. In 907/8 Ethelred, ealdorman of Mercia, and his wife Ethelfleda, "Lady of the Mercians," repaired the Roman fortifications and incorporated Chester — whose modern name is derived from the Latin *castra*, camp or fort — into the system of "burhs" or strongpoints against the Danes.¹¹ The Saxon burh did much to ensure Roman influence in the growth of Chester (see Figure 3). Since the burh's gates were those of the fortress, the burh's main streets naturally preserved those of Roman times: Bridge Street



is the old *via praetoria*, Northgate Street the *via decumana*, and Eastgate and (part of) Watergate Streets preserve the *via principalis*. Ethelfleda built the church of St. Peter at the junction of the burh's main streets, on the site of the Roman headquarters building. The Norman castle is outside the Roman but inside the 13th century walls, which enclosed additional territory to the west and south while keeping to the Roman line along the east and northeast.¹²

York preserves its Roman origins as clearly as does Chester. H. G. Ramm has painted the following picture of the ties between Roman and modern York:

In one sense Roman York still survives today. The great west-angle bastion of the fortress is a direct physical survival of the Roman fabric of York [no. 8 on the plan, Figure 4], but a more powerful and pervasive influence is that of the town plan. In its major outlines this plan is still the Roman one and it is possible to trace its continuous development from A.D. 71 to the present. Inundations in the fifth and sixth centuries caused major alterations but the most drastic changes are to be associated with tenth-century expansion and the disastrous events of 1069.¹³

And in a similar vein M. Biddle has stressed that York presents the best example of continuity of habitation from Roman times onward in Britain.¹⁴ In other words, York was — and is — Roman long after the end of the Roman Empire.

In A.D. 71 Q. Petilius Cerialis, governor of Britain, moved Legio IX Hispana northward from Lincoln. For its new base he selected a well-drained and easily defensible location on high ground between the Ouse River and its tributary the Fosse. Ships could bring in supplies up the Humber and Ouse, so this fortress, like its contemporaries at Caerleon on the Usk and Chester on the Dee, was reachable by water transport. The first defences, timber-laced earthworks, were rebuilt in stone in 107/8 and soon thereafter Legio VI Victrix replaced IX Hispana; there were extensive repairs about 200 and another rebuilding a century

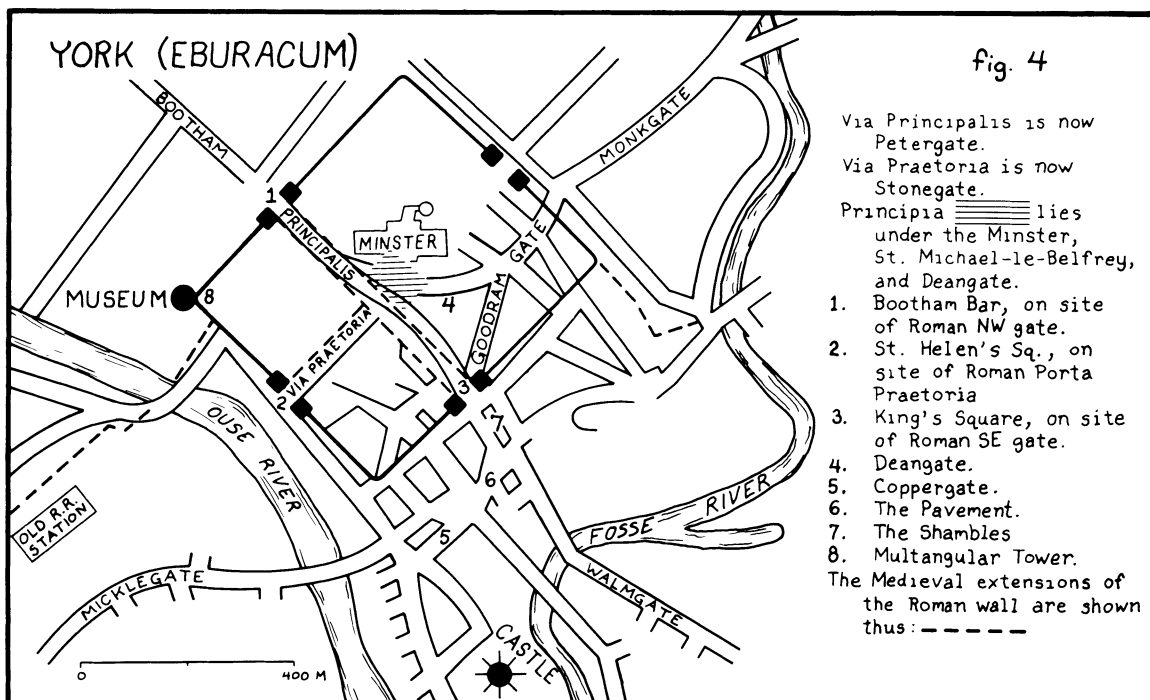
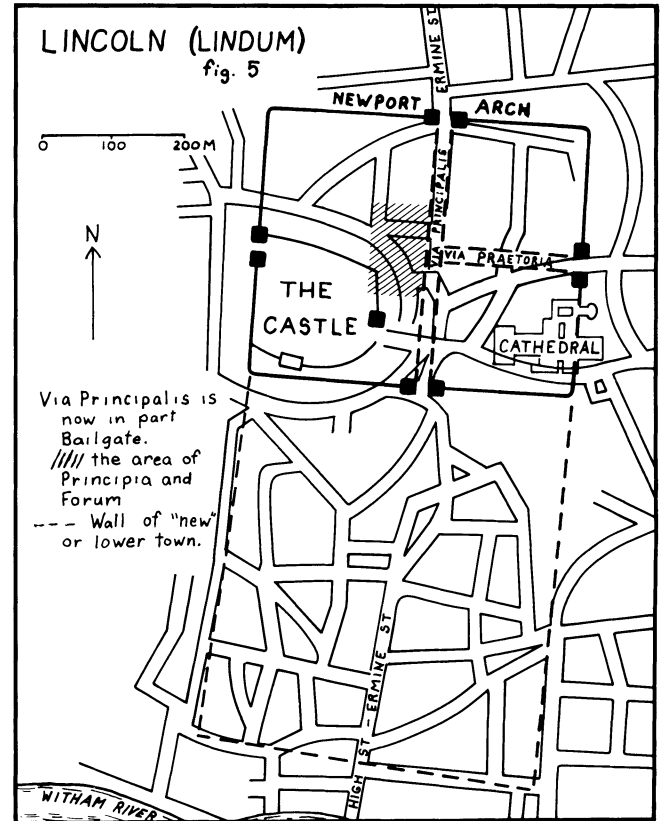
later. But the basic layout of the fortress remained unchanged and established itself so firmly that it has determined much of the basic shape of York through the succeeding centuries. The Roman civil town became a colony under Caracalla (211-217), but declined after the end of Roman rule, a casualty of the general chaos and rampant flooding which swept away the bridge connecting the two sides of the Ouse. By the Saxon and Viking periods there was once again a thriving town on the site of the colony.¹⁵

Figure 4 shows the relationship between fortress and medieval-modern city: note the walls and gates, the familiar T intersection of *viae principalis et praetoria* (now Petergate and Stonegate), and the presence of a church — in this case the Minster — above a part of the fortress headquarters. How these aspects of the Roman legacy were transmitted is worth a brief explanation.

Heavy and repeated flooding in the fifth and sixth centuries probably did more than the end of Roman military and political administration to bring about the decline of ancient Eburacum. Town life seems never to have completely died out, and by the early eighth century the place had become the Saxon port and market of Eoforwik or Eoforwikceaster (“wik”/“vik,” village, plus “ceaster,” camp, from *castra*). The nucleus of the settlement, which spread across the Ouse, was the fortress, approximately in the center of which was a church; York was an archiepiscopal see. Danes occupied Eoforwik from 866/7, changing its name to Jorvik (whence the modern form York) and making it a great trading post. On three sides the Danes mounded earth over the Roman walls and erected a stockade on top, but on the fourth side they extended the fortress’ northeast and southwest walls in the form of a stockade or mound to the Fosse, leaving this end open along the river. This area, as recent excavations in the Coppergate and Pavement have shown, was the core of the thriving Viking city. The Danish royal palace seems to have been in the Roman *porta principalis sinistra*: it appears as *Koningsgartha* in *Egil’s Saga*, as *Kuningsgard* by the 13th century, and is now King’s Square. Prosperity continued under the kings of Wessex, who expelled the Danes in 954. William the Conqueror built a castle at the confluence of the rivers, but he had a difficult time controlling Yorkshire, and York suffered terribly in the fighting of his reign. His harsh measures do not seem to have affected the Roman legacy in York. A new cathedral, built

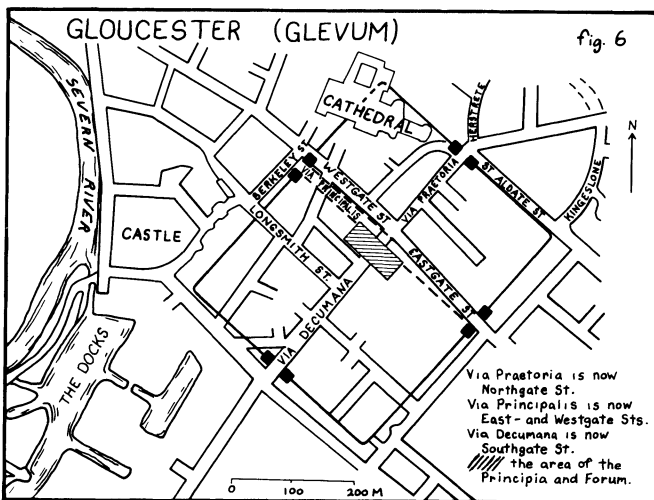
in the late 11th century probably just to the south of the Saxon church (damaged in the rebellion of 1068/9, repaired, destroyed in 1079) was as symbolic of the Norman rule as was the castle. The present Minster, built between the 1220s and later 1400s, stands above its Norman predecessor and over the northwest portion of the *principia* as well.¹⁶

LINCOLN (Figure 5) seems on present evidence to have been built as the fortress of Legio IX Hispana about 61-66, though an auxiliary fort or stores depot down by the river may have preceded the arrival of the legion by some years. The site was the



crest of a steep hill overlooking the Witham River, from whose marshes ("lindos" in Celtic) the Roman name Lindum was derived.¹⁷ The walled area was rather small, about 40 acres, so it seems probable that one or two of the ten cohorts of the legion were on detached duty elsewhere. IX Hispana was transferred to York in 71 and replaced by II Adiutrix for a few years, but from about 75 to the early 90s there was no more than a skeleton garrison in residence; it is improbable that the fortress was totally unoccupied. The general outline of the fortress is known: the location of the walls, gates, course of the *via praetoria* and *via principalis* (the latter more or less represented by the Bailgate), and perhaps a portion of the *principia*.

The colony, which was inserted into the fortress on evacuation by the army shortly before the end of Domitian's reign in 96, is of no particular concern here. It kept and strengthened the legionary walls and gates (one survives as part of the Newport Arch), its main streets followed those of the fortress, and its forum and basilica (civic center and law court) overlay the former HQ building. Lindum Colonia, whence today's name Lincoln, flourished, expanding down the hill and eventually doubling its original area with a second set of walls. Lincoln looks to exhibit continuity of settlement straight through the early middle ages: the Saxon kings of Lindsey may have used the Roman governmental buildings, and there was a "prefect of the city" in 628. The Danes made Lincoln one of their key cities and even laid out their own street grid in part of the lower city. After the Norman Conquest the upper city became the bail of the castle and also contained the cathedral.¹⁹



In its broad outline the history of Gloucester is quite similar to that of Lincoln, particularly in so far as it is relevant here (see Figure 6). In the mid-60s a fortress for (probably) II Augusta was established on rising ground on the left bank of the Severn River at the first good crossing place above the broad estuary but still within reach of seagoing ships. When the legion was pulled out and sent to Caerleon, a colony was founded within the fortress: the barracks were converted into houses, the *principia* became the forum and basilica, and the street grid was retained. The date of the colony is 96-98, as it is styled Nervia (or Nerviana) in honor of the emperor Nerva whose reign falls in those years. The street grid resulted in the major downtown arteries (North-, East-, South-, and Westgate Streets), though most of the Roman secondary streets have been lost; Longsmith Street is one of the few side streets to preserve the Roman lines. Continuous urban life in the post-Roman period is likely, largely because of the religious establishments. Like Chester, Glevum-cestera or Gloucester was a "burh" of Ethelred and Ethelfleda; indeed, they are buried here. The late Saxon palace north of the city at Kingsholm was connected to the main gates by Herstrete ("army street," cor-

rupted to Hare Street) and Kyngeslone or Kyngesweye (now King Street). The Norman castle and monastery of St. Peter, the latter a cathedral from 1541, did not affect the Roman legacy. The walls are mostly of the 13th century and follow their Roman predecessor on three sides: evidently the line of the north and south walls was extended to the riverfront.²⁰ Thus at York, Chester and Gloucester the Norman castle was outside the old Roman walls but within those of the medieval period.

A number of English cities in addition to those discussed above can trace their origins to the centuries of Roman domination and were first laid out by the surveyors attached to the army or staff of the governor. Between the middle of the first century and the early third Rome steadily expanded the civilian portions of the province, removing areas from military control and establishing them as self-governing districts or cantons. A Roman-style town controlled each of these *civitates*. Most of these towns still exist, some as true cities such as Canterbury, Winchester, and Leicester, others as small villages; only one can be said to have failed entirely, for Silchester today is little more than a Roman wall surrounding farm lands set deep in the countryside a few miles south of Reading.²¹ London, Roman in origin but lacking the customary regularity of a Roman town, has always been in a category by itself as the leading city of the land. No cities of England reveal their Roman origins more clearly than those which began as legionary fortresses: Chester, Gloucester, Lincoln, and York.

The Rhine and Danube River Valleys

SEVERAL modern cities on the European continent originated either as Roman legionary fortresses or as the civilian towns (*vici*) which sprang up beside army bases throughout the Empire. This portion of this paper is concerned primarily with the former, and plans of Vienna, Strasbourg, and Cologne show the basic layout of the fortress at the heart of the 20th century city. Those cities which began as legionary *vici* will be viewed in less detail and with the aid of only a single plan, that of Bonn.

For the most part the legionary bases of the lower Danube and Dacia did not evolve into modern cities. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that no fortress downstream from Vienna has left substantial traces in the streetplan of today's city. In some cases the Romans fortified a place of natural strength such as a prominent hilltop which has continued in use as a citadel through the centuries. Continuity of occupation and fortification do not prove substantial indebtedness to the Roman army. For instance, the fortress named Cetate at Alba Iulia (Roman Apulum) in Rumania covered an area of 60-75 acres and was thus considerably larger than the average size of only some 50 acres. This was the home of Legio XIII Gemina from about 105 to the 270s — in other words from the conquest to the abandonment of the province — but the citadel built by Prince Eugene of Savoy in the early 18th century lies above the Roman fortress. The fate of the camp of IV Flavia at Belgrade (Roman Singidunum) is similar, for the fortress is atop the high cliffs at the confluence of the Save and Danube rivers, a site which has appealed to military minds for centuries. The massive Ottoman fortifications of Kalemegdan hide all but a few portions of the Roman base.²² Belgrade, too, fell to Prince Eugene.

Upstream, Budapest is of Roman origin and was once known as Aquincum. Obuda (Old Buda) grew up on the site of the fortress, occupied into the fourth century, from the 1000s on, the inhabitants taking shelter within its walls but not preserving its internal arrangement. Nothing is now visible. In the 13th century the population and the royal government shifted to the more protected Castle Hill about three miles to the south. This became Buda, and Pest emerged on the opposite bank.²³ Moving upstream, one encounters the remains of two great Roman fortresses and their *vici*, now only villages with highways running

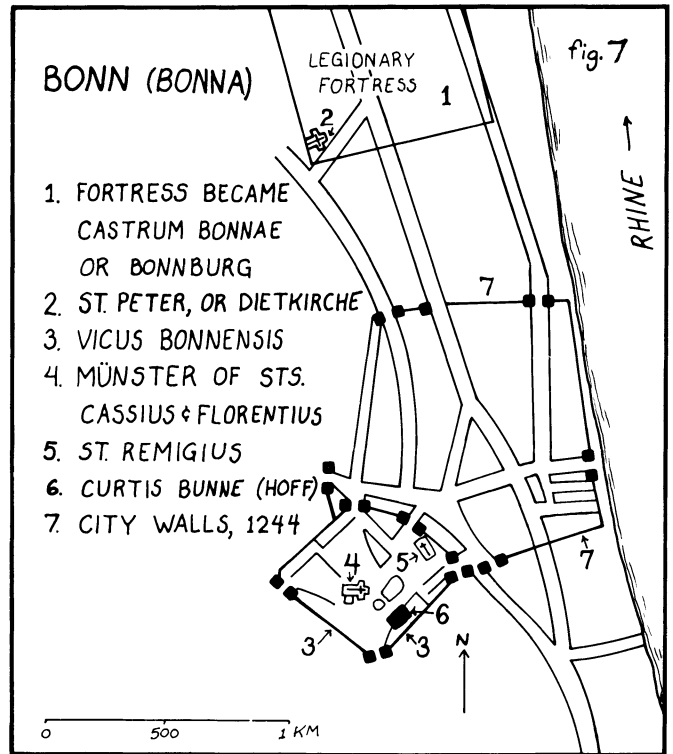
through the ruins: Szöny (Brigetio) in Hungary, and Petronell (Carnuntum), just over the border in Austria. The failure of municipal life in the Middle Ages is striking, for the Romans had officially encouraged urbanization all through this area, and practically every city that arose here in Roman times was associated in one way or another with an army fort.²⁴

Lack of excavation in a few cities of present-day Europe known to occupy the sites of Roman fortresses prevents definite statements as to the extent of direct inheritance from the Roman past. Regensburg in West Germany and León in Spain are good examples. The fortress of III Italica only from 179 — an auxiliary fort was nearby a century earlier — *Castra Regina* became Regensburg, and the 13th century wall followed its Roman predecessor along the earlier wall's eastern and part of its southern course. The line of the Roman western and northern wall is known, as it is preserved in medieval and modern streets. Legion VII Gemina was stationed in the same base from the early 70s for at least the next 300 years and appropriately gave its name to the medieval and modern town: León. The great walls still stand on three of the four sides, so the outline of the fortress is readily apparent. Centuries of post-Roman construction have mostly obscured the fortress' internal layout, though modern plazas and streets preserve the location of the gates.²⁵

From cities which still occupy the physical location of legionary fortresses without preserving much of their internal structure, let us turn to three which started as civilian *vici* in the vicinity of fortresses along the Rhine. Mainz, Roman *Moguntiacum*, opposite the point where the Main flows into the Rhine, was one of the most important garrisons in the West: two legions until 90 A.D., thereafter only one (XXII *Primigenia*). The fortress was on a hill overlooking the riverside town which evolved into the modern city. Nothing of the camp is now visible, and any traces were destroyed when the area was built over in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its sole legacy seems to be the name *Kästrich* (from *castra*, camp) applied to this part of the city. The civilian town beside the river flourished and was the residence of the governor of Upper Germany, but it did not become a *municipium* (chartered town, ranking below a *colonia* in dignity) until very late — first attested in 355 — about the time its walls were built. The Frankish settlement pattern within the walls was different from that of Roman times, and thus nothing of the Roman streetplan survives.²⁶ Modern Mainz is a descendant of the *vicus*, not the *castrum*.

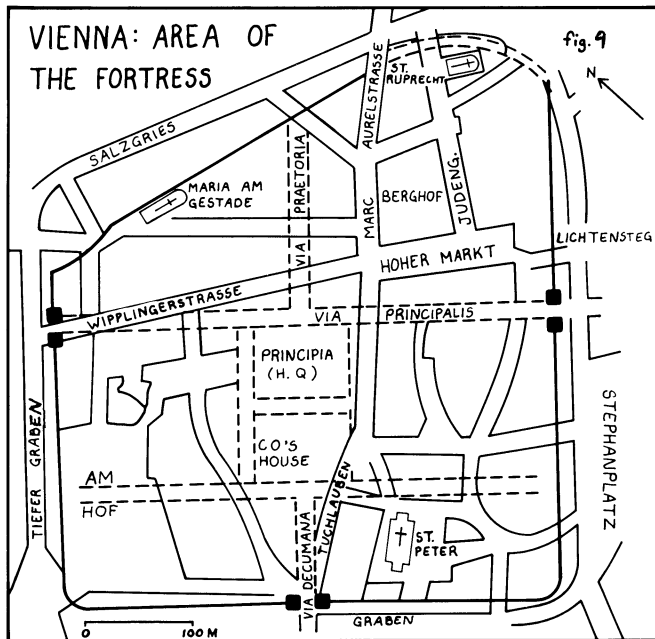
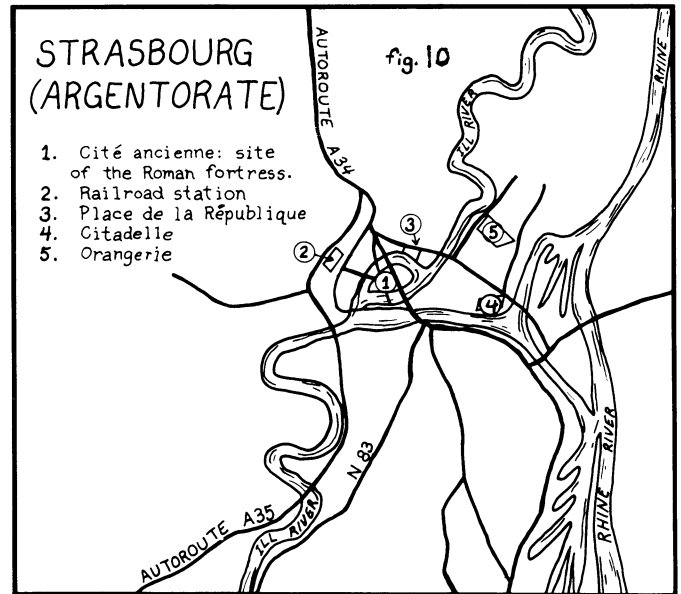
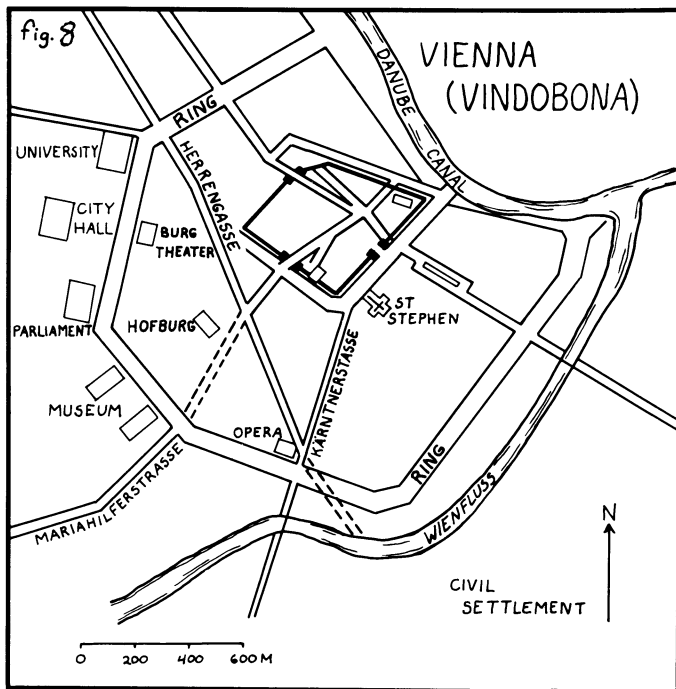
Two other cities of the Rhineland evolved from the *vici* of legionary bases, though their story is rather different from that of Mainz. Whereas the civilian town adjacent to the fortress like Mainz was inhabited without interruption from Roman times on through the Frankish period and so into the Middle Ages, a shift occurred at both Xanten and Bonn. The great fortress of *Vetera* housed two legions from about 12 B.C. to A.D. 70; thereafter just one until its abandonment in the late third century. A civilian town grew up some two miles north of the camp, and in about the year 100 the emperor Trajan reorganized the place as a colony: *Colonia Ulpia Traiana*. It decayed in the late fourth century and then came a shift, for a new town slowly arose around the martyrs' graves in the cemetery along the road south to the fortress. The *memoria* or *martyrium* was called "ad Sanctos" ("to the saints" [graves]). Over time the shrine became first a monastery and then a cathedral, and the name was corrupted into its modern form, Xanten.²⁷

Bonn, the Roman *Bonna*, is similar (see Figure 7). The fortress of Legion I was established here in the 30s A.D., and the *vicus* was probably to the south of it. A network of churches determined the early medieval settlement pattern. One was the Peterskirche or Dietkirche, which was built in the southwest corner of the old fortress. The fortress itself became Frankish royal property, and there was both a mint and a market here; the whole establish-



ment was called *Castrum Bonna* or *Bonnburg*. To the south lay the collegiate church (minster) of Saints Cassius and Florentius, in origin a shrine to the martyrs of that name. A community grew up around this church and the neighboring St. Remigius, and by the late eighth century was known as *urbs Bonna* or *vicus Bonnensis*. Much of this area was owned by the archbishop of Cologne, who had a *curtis* (Hof, or manor) nearby. The Vikings destroyed the town in the later ninth century, but a period of rapid growth began in the eleventh with construction of a new church and palace, and by the time the walls were begun in 1244 Bonn had expanded well beyond its Carolingian beginnings and the *Bonnburg* by the Roman fortress had disappeared.²⁸

THREE of the great cities of western Europe — appropriately one each from Austria, France and West Germany — have preserved not merely portions of the walls and gates of the fortresses from which they were born, but even something of their streetplan. Vienna, the Roman *Vindobona*, is a good example of a city which has preserved elements of its military origins. The area in question lies at the center of the old city, inside the 19th century Ringstrasse and the best-known structures of the imperial Hapsburg age (see Figure 8 for an overview and Figure 9 for the fortress proper). The fortress was built in the early second century on high ground some 12-15 meters above an arm of the Danube (which has since changed course); the terrain helps explain the peculiar line of the camp's north wall. Traces of the harbor have been located below St. Maria am Gestade ("on the bank"). Excavations have revealed the two *portae principales* — and therefore the course of the *via principalis* between them — and the *porta decumana*, all of which influenced the medieval street development.²⁹ In the Late Empire the garrison shrank to about 1,000 men (as did all legions everywhere, though their overall number increased), and civilians moved into the old fortress. The Peterskirche just inside the *porta decumana* may go back to an early church built overtop demolished barracks, as does the Peterskirche at Bonn. Late Roman graves — inside the fortress! — shade off into those of the incoming Lombards and Avars, and the Roman buildings were used as quarries for later structures, so continuity of inhabitation is certain even though



the standards of living dropped catastrophically. The few soldiers and civilians still in residence huddled in the northeast corner of the camp, where there eventually appeared the Berghof, Kien Markt, and church of St. Ruprecht. The shift in habitation caused a reorientation of the Roman streets: the *via principalis* was replaced by Wipplingerstrasse, which ran straight from the old *porta principalis sinistra* to the market; the *via decumana* was superseded by Tuchlauben, even though the Roman rear gate stayed in use; and Salvatorgasse ran from the harbor outside the walls over the disused hospital to the market. Rapid growth came in the later 12th and 13th centuries, after the ducal court moved here in 1155 and built a new palace in the southwest corner of the fortress at Am Hof: the Hohe Markt on the south side of the Berg Hof replaced the Kien Markt to the north as the city's chief market; a new set of walls provided protection for the enlarged population and remained standing

until 1857; and the Hoffburg was begun in 1276. The streets today known as Tiefergraben and Graben follow the course of the ditch outside the west and southeast stretches of the fortress wall respectively.³⁰

The *cité ancienne* of Strasbourg, Roman Argentorate, was once the base of Legio VIII Augusta. As Figure 10 shows, the Roman engineers chose a small island in the River Ill, a tributary of the Rhine into which it flows a short distance to the north, for the fortress. The walls of the early second century were strengthened about 370 by fresh stone facing and a host of semicircular towers. Portions of the wall are preserved in gardens, basements, and as party walls between houses facing opposite directions on parallel streets. Today's Rue du Dome and Rue des Hallebardes follow the lines of the Roman *viae principalis et praetoria*, with the cathedral to the southeast of the intersection (see Figure 11). Next to nothing is known of the internal buildings of this 46.5 acre fortress. The *canabae* lay to the west; their center was near the junction of the Grand'Rue and the Rue de 22 Novembre near St. Pierre le Vieux.³¹

The final example to be discussed in this paper is Cologne. The beginnings here are twofold. On the one hand, the place was founded as the chief town of the Ubii by Agrippa in 38 B.C.; when the altar (*ara*) of Rome and Augustus was established here in 8 B.C. or A.D. 5, the town became known as Ara Ubiorum. The altar and town have not been found. On the other hand, a huge double fortress was close by, perhaps covering 150 acres; it has been tentatively located, since archaeological excavations have uncovered portions of its north wall (just outside the west front of the cathedral), its western ditch, and army kilns apparently near the west wall.³² The legions departed in about 37: I went to Bonn, where it remained for centuries; XX went to Neuss, whence it was sent to Britain in 43 and wound up at Chester by the late 80s.

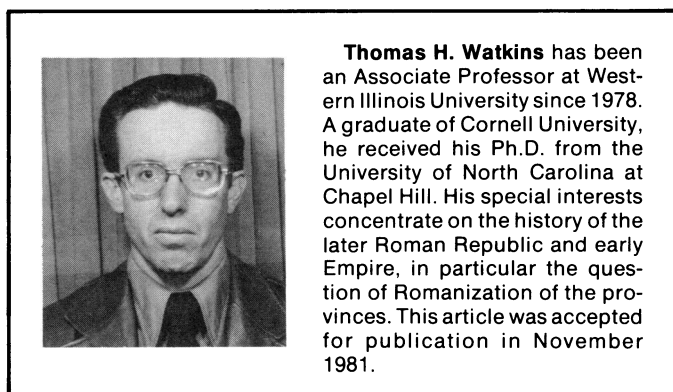
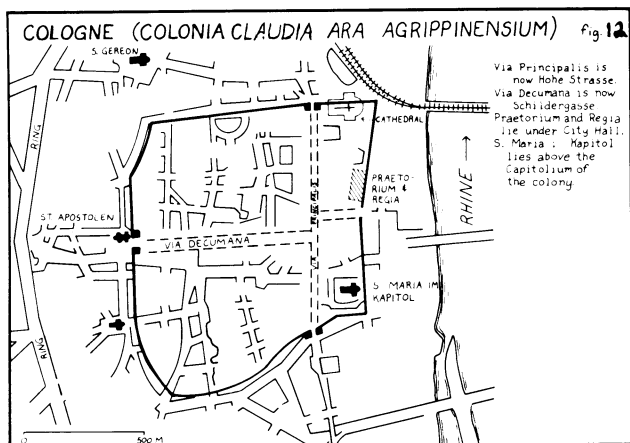
In 50 the emperor Claudius founded a colony for veteran soldiers in the abandoned fortress. Supposedly, his wife (and niece) Agrippina the Younger was the real force behind the colony, desiring to commemorate the town in which she had been born while her father Germanicus was commander on the lower Rhine.³³ At any rate, the city was named for the imperial couple: Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium, whence the modern forms Cologne and Köln. The colony, which became the capital of Lower Germany when the province was created about 90, incorporated several features of the fortress, some of which in turn have come down to the present (see Figure 12). The colony's walls evidently followed the outline of the fortress, provided protection until

superseded by the more extensive fortifications of the late 12th century, and determined the layout of several medieval and modern streets. The legionary *via principalis* became the *cardo maximus* of the colony and the Hohe Strasse of today; the original *via decumana* became the colonial *decumanus maximus* and the modern Schildergasse. The colony's religious center or Capitolium was in the southeast corner of the city; repair of World War II bomb damage resulted in the discovery of the triple sanctuary below S. Maria im Kapitol. The governor's palace (*praetorium*), elevated in dignity to an imperial residence or *regia* ca. 300, lay along the riverfront; its remains were found beneath the new city hall.³⁴

Cologne may be the best example of continuity of inhabitation into the medieval centuries. Churches were built to commemorate the graves of Christian leaders buried in the cemeteries along the main roads leading away from the city: Cologne's prominence as a religious center dates from the 300s. Frankish kings used the Roman seats of authority as palaces and courts, and members of the royal family were buried in the churches that preceded the great cathedral.³⁵ The Roman legacy came to be buried deeply beneath centuries of accumulated construction. Guided by scanty written hints, by occasional finds or visible remains, and given an opportunity to explore and record during the rebuilding since World War II, scholars have been able to demonstrate how much the modern citizens of Cologne owe to the Roman soldiers and colonists of the first century A.D.

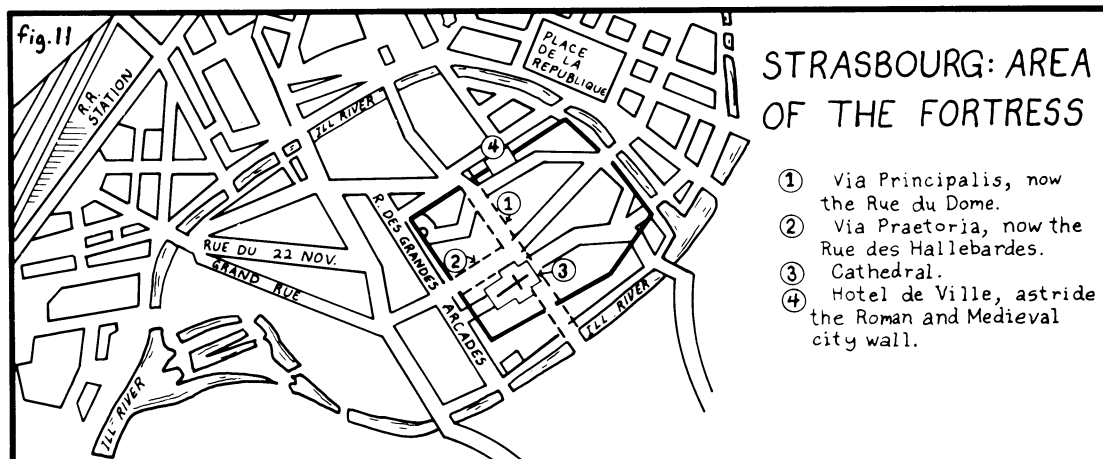
THE preceding is not intended to be a complete study of all sites garrisoned by legions in the Empire. No effort has been made to survey those places which were only used as fortresses for a brief period, for unless occupied for a long time or converted into a colony like Cologne, legionary bases did not serve as the origins of modern cities. Ljubljana, for example, the Roman

Emona, is often held to have been a fortress: the size, walls and elements of the street plan of the colony founded in A.D. 15 look about right, but there is no clear proof of a fortress.³⁶ If a colony was inserted into the disused base, then Emona's history is an early version of the pattern found in Britain at Colchester, Gloucester and Lincoln, and on the Rhine at Cologne. Skopje and Ptuj in Yugoslavia are descended from legionary bases, but the descent is broken, for the ancestral cities were destroyed by earthquake and flooding, respectively.³⁷ Neuss and Nijmegen on the lower Rhine resemble Bonn in that the modern cities are descended from Frankish settlements built over civilian *vici* that had once grown up in the vicinity of fortresses. Legionary influence was slight, however, for Neuss had no legion after about 100 and Nijmegen not after 175.³⁸ In showing something of the Roman contribution to the urbanization of Europe and Britain, the present paper has dealt with but one aspect of our rich inheritance from ancient times. The truth of the old saying that the present is the product of the past can hardly be better demonstrated than by realizing that in walking the streets of cities such as Lincoln, York, Vienna, and Cologne the modern visitor goes where Roman legionaries once stood guard.



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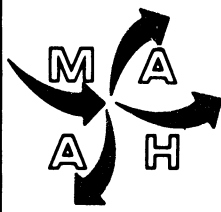
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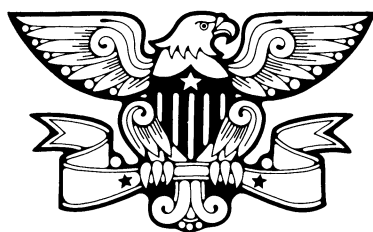
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