

Roman fort

Roman military camps (forts) were always built according to the same principle. When troops were on the move, they lived in marshlands, which could be built and dismantled at any time during a campaign. In occupied territories, permanent camps were erected to secure the borders of the Roman Empire. In the permanent camps, the tents were replaced by buildings made of wood or stone. The encampments were usually rectangular and bordered by a ditch and an outer wall followed by an earthen rampart. This had the advantage that in the event of an attack from outside, Roman soldiers could quickly reach any part of the fortification to defend the camp on all sides. In some cases, the walls were filled with earth on the inside and lined with wooden planks on top. The Schreiber model is based on a small fort, which includes barracks and a supply and service building. Small forts were intended for auxiliary troops.

The large forts along the Limes usually housed auxiliary troops (500 auxiliary soldiers). The camp contained the commander's house, the officers' quarters and the soldiers' barracks. Together with roads and the principia (administrative building) in the middle, they already formed a small town. In the large camps there was a hospital and a prison, as well as warehouses, stables and workshops. For the soldiers were dependent on providing for their own subsistence. Around the camps they built wells, water pipes and roads. Merchants and craftsmen settled near the camps to do business with the Romans. The soldiers were also supplied with food from surrounding estates.

Many historical towns were built around the camps and the surrounding settlements or as Roman town foundations, especially in the Rhineland and southern Germany. This is where the Limes, the Roman-Germanic border, ran. Famous examples are the cities of Xanten, Cologne, Bonn, Koblenz, Worms, Speyer, Trier, Mainz, Heidelberg and Regensburg.