

## Roman wooden watchtower

Under Emperor Trajan, Roman border troops built wooden watchtowers along the Raetian Limes. The present Schreiber arched cardboard model is based on a faithful replica that stands near Michelstadt in the Odenwald and was constructed according to the latest archaeological findings.

There are hardly any sources for information on the construction of Roman watchtowers. Reconstructions of the towers along the Limes are often based on reliefs of the Trajan Column in Rome. Excavations along the course of the Roman Limes revealed that the towers were built on low mounds surrounded by shallow ring ditches. The foundations were made of stones stacked on top of each other in a dry construction method. At the four corners there were recesses for massive corner posts. In slots on each side of the tower, beams were presumably fastened which, when placed one on top of the other, formed a grid to hold the foundation together. Inside, the foundation was filled with clay.

Above the foundation, the Romans built towers in block construction. They built beams or logs horizontally on top of each other. The model for the present one did not have a corridor on the outside of the tower. There were two large windows on each side from which the Roman soldiers monitored the limes.

The Limes, i.e. the border between the Roman Empire and Germania, initially existed only as a militarily monitored post route lined with wooden towers. Later, wooden palisades were erected along the post route. At the end of the 2nd century, the dilapidated wooden towers were replaced by stone towers. Later, the border troops built ramparts and ditches directly behind the palisades. Only a few traces of the wooden buildings remain today.