

What was the Roman name for Slack fort?

1. The leading authority on ancient monuments Historic England (formerly English Heritage) use the name Cambodunum.
2. The first large scale Ordnance Survey map of 1854, covering the Slack area, uses the name Cambodunum to identify the Roman fort.
3. Camboduno is used in the Antonine Itinerary, Iter 11. This was compiled in the early third century and lists forts along the Roman roads of the time in Britain, and the mileage between them.
4. Camulodunum is used in the Ptolemy Geographia which was produced in Alexandria in the previous century and was originally in Greek. It covers the whole Roman Empire at the time, complete with maps and some mileage lists.
5. Confusion arises when tracking the mileage from York on the Antonine Itinerary. Camboduno appears to be in an improbable location, 29 miles from York, and the total mileage between York and Manchester does not add up to the known distance. Clearly the copied mileages cannot be relied on.

In short, we know that there was a Romano/British presence at Slack when both the above itineraries were compiled. The latest one uses Camboduno (or Cambodunum). The consensus among those who have researched this matter in detail seems to be that this was the name used in the 2nd/3rd centuries.

Note

Mistranslations and miscopying of mileages on Roman itineraries and maps are common. The Roman practice of abbreviating words does not help, and the use of Roman numerals such as I V X can easily lead to misreading and faulty copying.