

## Carlisle Castle

Carlisle is the great fortress city at the west end of the Scottish Border. Roman Luguwallium grew up in the shadow of Hadrian's Wall and some vestige of the town remained when William II captured it in 1092. William repopulated Carlisle with Anglo-Norman settlers and founded the great royal castle on a bluff above the River Eden.

Carlisle Castle is an impressive reminder of centuries of strife. It sits grim and squat at the north end of the old walled city, still a medieval stronghold but much patched up after the many batterings it has endured. The layout is roughly triangular, comprising two walled baileys but no motte. The curtain walls are basically Norman. Two flanking towers survive on the west side but the walls are otherwise quite plain. During the Civil War the Scot's tore down the cathedral nave to repair the damage wrought during the siege.

The outer gatehouse facing the city, known as Ireby's Tower, dates from Henry III's reign but is not a great example of military planning. It consists of two square blocks curiously out of alignment with each other, and a small projection between them containing the entrance. Gloomy barracks now occupy the outer bailey - a reminder of the continuous military presence here down to modern times.

In front of the inner gatehouse is one of Henry VIII's additions - a semi-circular gun battery with a covered fighting gallery facing the ditch. During the invasion scare of the 1540s, Henry thickened the inner curtain to support artillery. The wide parapet is partly carried on arcades and there is a ramp for wheeling up cannon. Within the inner bailey rises a great keep, which is virtually a cube. The keep is freestanding though very close to the curtain. As was originally conceived, each of its four stories contains a single large room.