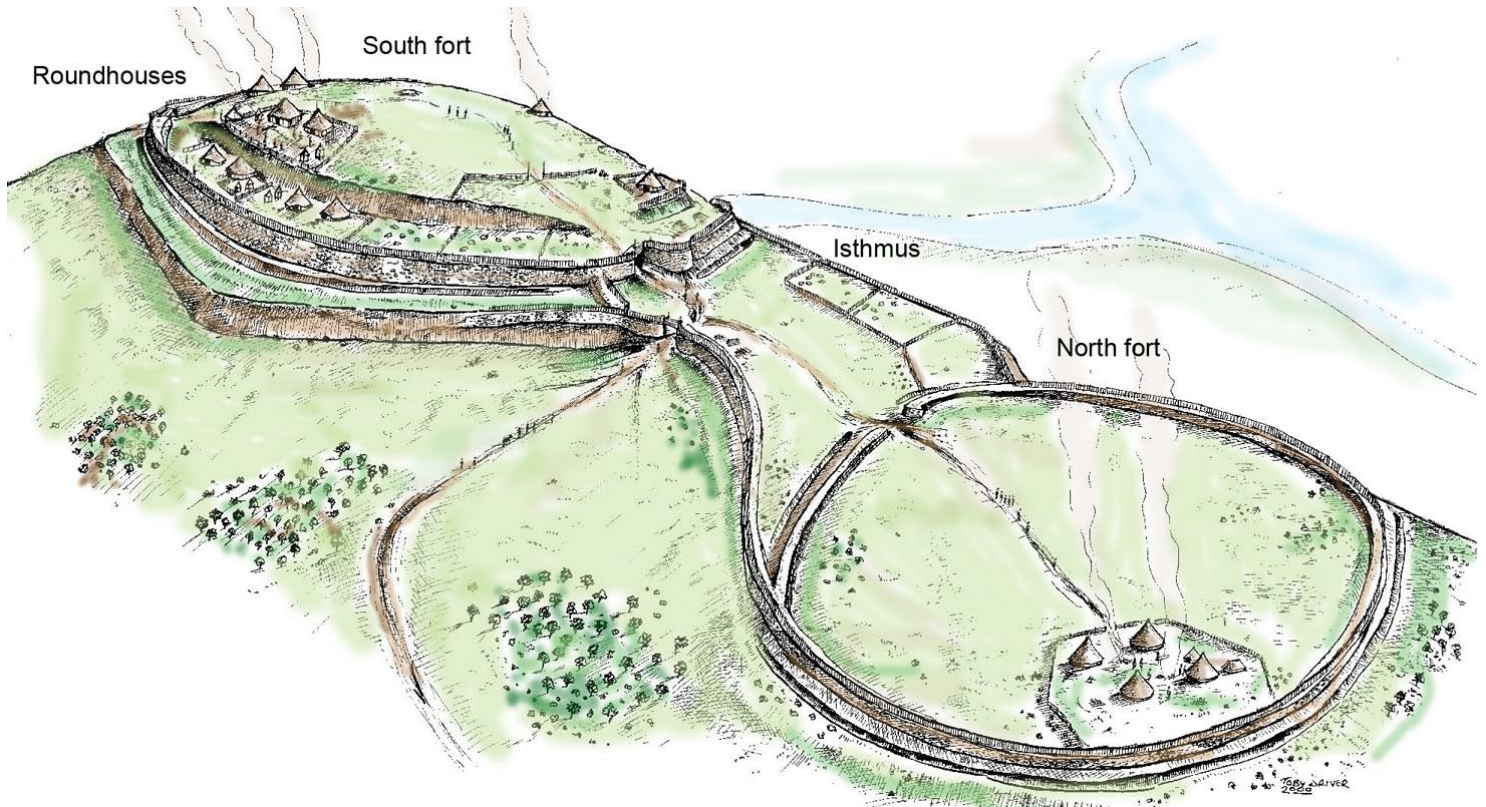


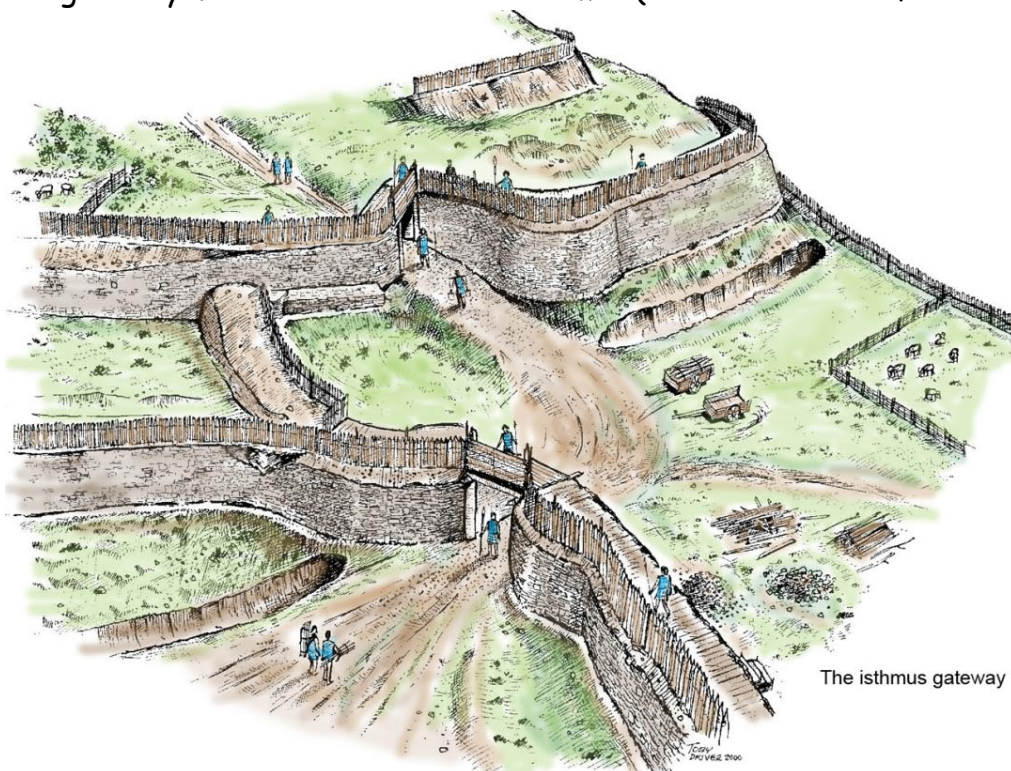
The hillfort on Pen Dinas Aberystwyth

Pen Dinas is the largest hillfort in Ceredigion, and crowns both summits of a coastal hill. It is over 2,000 years old. It was built around 400 BC, by local Iron Age Celts, and occupied until the Romans arrived in Ceredigion about AD 70. It began as a small fort on the north summit.



Reconstruction drawings by Toby Driver. This is how we think Pen Dinas looked 2,000 years ago (c) RCAHMW

The steeper south summit was then defended. This second fort had strong, towering gateways. At a later date the isthmus (or narrow neck of land between the two summits) was



The isthmus gateway

also enclosed with tall ramparts and another strong gateway. Each gateway into the fort had a stone-walled gateway passage, with four huge wooden posts at the corners supporting a crossing bridge. The wooden bridges over the top were floored with clay. From them, guards could patrol and look down on all those approaching.



About 12 Iron Age roundhouses stood in the main south fort. Can you see where they once stood? How big were they? This drawing (left) shows how they may have looked. The Iron Age Celts farmed on the surrounding hillslopes and also fished in the rivers and sea.

Pen Dinas is a quiet place today. Can you imagine all the smoke and noise when it was once a busy village?

Excavations before the Second World War discovered evidence for metal working and weaving inside the fort. Recent finds include several rounded beach pebbles which were probably 'sling shot' used by Iron Age warriors to fight attackers. A Roman coin and a sword of unknown date have also been found on the hill. The **Wellington Monument** is a stone column built on the summit of the



south fort at Pen Dinas as a memorial to the Duke of Wellington. It was erected in 1858. The monument was struck by lightning in 1997 and badly damaged. It has now been repaired.



(Above) Sling shot found at Pen Dinas after a bracken fire. In the right hands these were a deadly weapon and could kill at 100m.

(left) Excavations on the south gate at Pen Dinas in 1933-37. The workmen have dug out the amazing Iron Age stone walls which still survive below the grass.