

## Roman Walk / Chamber Tour Notes

- Museum. Welcome, introduction, Health & Safety. Point out column.
- Brunswick Road, past Boots Mural. Point out depiction of Roman walls. Legion size. 6000 men full strength. 4800 soldiers rest were auxiliaries. In Gloucester the legion was possibly from Thrace – Bulgaria. Cavalry were auxiliaries.
- Julius Caesar invasions 55 and 54 BC
- 43 AD invasion ordered. Four legions: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 20<sup>th</sup> landed in Colchester and came across to Wales. 168 miles.

|              | Unit    | Number Soldiers | Number Auxiliaries | Total |
|--------------|---------|-----------------|--------------------|-------|
| Section      | Section | 8               | 2                  | 10    |
| 10 x Section | Century | 80              | 20                 | 100   |
| 6 x Century  | Cohort  | 480             | 120                | 600   |
| 10 x Cohort  | Legion  | 4800            | 1200               | 6000  |

- By Roman gate – above Chamber. Point out notice. Show pictures of two Roman gates and building of walls. Dark bricks in road show outline of medieval north tower of the gate. South tower visible in chamber. Slot for portcullis.
- Down to Chamber. Why did the Romans come to Gloucester? Show map of Britain. Resources in FOD. Strategic importance of location. First crossing point for River Severn. Access to FOD for coal, timber and iron.
- Local tribe – Dobunni – peaceful. In Wales – Silures – warlike.
- AD 49 Kingsholm fortress established with 20<sup>th</sup> Legion. Moved to city centre AD 61 – 65. Glevum founded.
- First wall was turf and Rampart. Eastgate originally built of wood. The only trace of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman tower is the black panel in the middle of the floor. This marks a wooden post, probably the centre front post of a square 9-post timber tower.
- Roman wall – first two layers. Higher stones are medieval. Oolitic limestone from Cotswolds - Leckhampton.
- Describe Roman Walls and construction. Show images
- AD 67 withdrawal by Nero of 14<sup>th</sup> Legion from Wroxeter (Viroconium) to Rhine frontier caused reshuffling of remaining legions in Britain. 20<sup>th</sup> moved from Glevum to Viroconium, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Augusta) moved up to Glevum from Isca (Exeter)
- Between 73 – 78 the 2<sup>nd</sup> legion moves to Caerleon (possibly 75)

- Glevum became a Colonia in AD97. Emperor Nerva AD 96-98. **COLONIA NERVA GLEVENSIS**
- Colonia : self-governing Roman provincial city, regulated by a council and 4 magistrates
- AD 100 stone wall built extending short distance either side of gate.
- AD 170 Glevum's walls strengthened. New Earth rampart added to original clay one. Large stone interval towers set in rampart added.
- The surviving walls on the east and south-east are of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Roman tower, in closely jointed ashlar masonry.
- AD 270 further reinforcement of walls
- AD 310 Major strengthening of East Gate. Large Bastions added to outside of wall to provide artillery platform. Whole of wall strengthened and rebuilt in places.
- Wall height – up to 5.5m. wall foundation usually 2.5 m thick. This section 4m.
- Show Lewis key.
- South of the gate tower are the remains of the 4<sup>th</sup> century city wall with lowest course being closely jointed ashlar blocks. City wall foundation usually 2.5 m thick but this section 4 metres. Wall height up to 5.5 metres.
- Rubble facing in NE corner is fragment of 11<sup>th</sup> C Norman Gate
- Ground immediately in front of wall, occupied in 1<sup>st</sup> century by ditch, was back-filled in 2<sup>nd</sup> century to form berm. Note water main.
- Limits of 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman ditch marked out in black on floor.
- At base of staircase, piles are visible. These were for wall built in AD 310. Wooden piles for wall with gravel to fill.

## **The Norman Gate**

Roman Eastgate survived until 11<sup>th</sup> century when gate was partially demolished and rebuilt as simple entrance passage with a rear stairway and a room above.

## **Medieval gate**

The remains are of the tower that was built in 13<sup>th</sup> century. Two round towers with room above. Tower wall pierced with 3 openings.

- Original entrance on north, with steps leading down from gateway passage
- On east wall was arrow slit but this was altered in 18<sup>th</sup> c to take stone lavatory seat and wider window
- South opening, leading to berm, was sally-port, intended for sorties against a besieging force.

Building has had various uses through the centuries, including as a women's prison, a dungeon and a bridewell. East gate was defensive but also marked boundary of City and had porter to close gates at night, to collect tolls, etc.

- Rebuilt with tower and room above in 1100. Show picture
- 1250 Eastern defences repaired, and a line of round towers added to outside wall – Bastions. Money raised by levying toll called Murage on produce sold in the town. Eastgate rebuilt with two round towers with room above. Show picture.
- 1265 Baron's War. Gate refortified by Barons.
- 1540 Stone moat built with **Horsepool** for washing horses and carts.
- 1588 Used as prison for women
- 1616 Meeting place for Council
- 1633 Lodgings for porter
- 1643 Siege of Gloucester – East Gate filled with earth
- Late 1600's Charles II had walls knocked down
- 1703 Bridewell and Dungeon / Poor school
- 18<sup>th</sup>c latrine and window
- 1778 Eastgate demolition

## **Wars of the Roses 1455-85**

Gloucester closed gates to Lancastrian army, forcing it to march north to cross the Severn. Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471. Lancastrians were defeated by Yorkists, including Richard, Duke of Gloucester who became Richard III

## **Siege of Gloucester - 1643**

## **Roman Walk**

Follow line of Roman Walls along Kings Walk to NE corner of city. Show map. Reference many finds. Mosaics found at Debenhams. Point out Via Sacra medallions. Follow line to Northgate. Show location of North Gate and stones in shop. Last remnants of gate demolished 1974.

Northgate to the Cross. At Cross show map of Roman Gloucester – Forum, Basilica HSBC point out base stone for pillar. Line of 30' pillars in Westgate Street. Location of baths. Possible location of Temple. Legionary tile and brick works found at site St Oswald's Priory. Brickworks continued production following departure of legion to supply Colonia. Stamped RPG

Down to Nerva. History of statue. Excavations in 1969 - Bronze fragment of mane found – now in Museum. Nerva born in Narnia, small town 50m north of Rome in Umbria. Nerva was unusual choice for emperor. Domitian had died without heir and Senate appointed Nerva. He was over 60 and was a lawyer – not a warrior. Nerva adopted Trajan who succeeded him as emperor. After legion left for Caerleon, the military barracks were rebuilt in stone and Glevum became **Colonia**. Place for retired soldiers. Administrative centre governed by Council and 4 magistrates. Colchester was first Colonia. Lincoln, Gloucester and York.

**COLONIA NERVA GLEVENSIS – GLEVUM.** From late 2<sup>nd</sup> c, thriving town. Imposing civic centre with Forum, large public houses. Show Roman Villa at Berkeley Street. Statue erected 2002. Time capsule – Harry Potter videos; Phil Vickery rugby shirt; M&S underwear.

Return to Museum past Café Rene. Through Greyfriars to Brunswick Road. Point out line of wall and corner to Parliament Street.

AD 410 Legions recalled to defend Rome. AD 577 Battle of Dyrham. Combined forces of Roman Britons from Gloucester, Cirencester and Bath defeated by Saxon army. Possible later date – Battle of Cirencester, AD 628

## **In Museum**

1. Roman Soldiers cabinet. Bronze cheek piece from ceremonial helmet.
2. Roman Gods. Shrines to Mercury and Rosmerta, a British Goddess. Eagle wing found in 2016 probably from statuette of Victoria. Face pots. Coins and hair ornaments.
3. Tombstones. Military ones on RHS. Rufus Sita – found at Wotton Pitch. Lucius Valerius Aurelius and Lucius Octavius Martialis.
4. Tombstone found in Rome. To the shades of Marcus Ulpius Quintus of Nervia Glevi, soldier of the 6<sup>th</sup> Legion.
5. Civilian tombstones on LHS.
6. Through mock up of Roman Gate. Fortress becomes Town cabinet. Cross Hoard. RPG = Res Publicae Glevensium. Fragments of large statue – the horse blanket.
7. Stone walls and sarcophagus.
8. Gloucester Life Cabinet – tile RPG.
9. Town of Industry cabinet – pots.
10. At Home in Roman Gloucester cabinet – Shrine Mosaic. Incense burners.