



THE COLCHESTER CAMILLA PROJECT

The **Colchester Camilla Project** is a new Y-DNA and mtDNA geographical project for everyone with a direct paternal or maternal ancestral line originating in or around the English town of Colchester in the county of Essex and is aiming to show a genetic link with the DNA taken from human remains of people who lived in or around Colchester during the Romano-British period (43AD to 410AD). The only requirement for joining the project is that **participants must have a family connection with the Essex area** on the direct paternal line for the Y-DNA test or on the direct maternal line for the mtDNA test. It is hoped that it will eventually be possible to build up a picture of the genetic composition of the people of the Colchester area and to discover more about their ancestral origins.

Colchester claims to be the oldest recorded town in Britain and where British civilisation began. It is where the Roman invaders came to take the surrender of eleven British tribal chiefs in the year 43AD, making Colchester, for a time, the capital of Britain. Before that time the **Trinovantes**, the richest and most powerful tribe in Britain, lived here. It was here that, it is believed, the Celtic-Belgic people had come and who had taken eventual control of the indigenous British people of this area of Britain. After the death of their leader, Cunobelin, probably the most powerful of all British chieftains, the Romans saw an opportunity to invade. The Trinovantes were subdued and governed by the Romans. Their descendants would undoubtedly have been amongst those thousands of people that modern day archaeologists have discovered buried in huge graveyards mainly to the south of the Roman town (or colonia) of Colchester (or **Camulodunum** in early times).

How will this be reflected by DNA analysis? Did the Romans leave a genetic legacy in Colchester? Were the Romans buried in the same cemeteries as the British people? Hundreds of skeletons have been uncovered and some DNA testing has been done. It is hoped that the project will eventually provide answers to some of these questions.

So, we are seeking people to join this project - people who have a family history that can be traced back 300 or so years to Colchester, where we assume, an ancient DNA (aDNA) link is more likely to be found. Freeman of the town are sought especially. We also seek specialists who are able to carry out mitochondrial DNA Testing of ancient teeth and/or bones. There is no shortage of specimens!

The value of the project will grow over time as more people join and more results are available for comparison.

Please join us on our journey of ancient genetic discovery.

Please learn more at our FTDNA website at <http://www.familytreedna.com/public/colchester-camilla/default.aspx>

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www.camulos.com

February 2011



Camilla is the name given to one of our skeletons, shown above, and to the rear, alongside her presumed husband. In the 1990's, her skull was used to create a model of how she would once have looked. Her name was chosen for its closeness to the ancient British name of Camulodunum.

