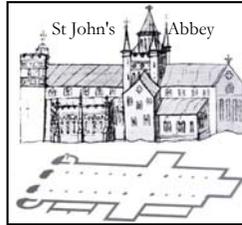


system of earthworks, which spilled out to the south, sufficiently to require the old, straight, Roman High Street to be re-shaped.

8 St Botolph's Priory - With the Normans came Christianity of an all powerful Catholic Rome variety. Completed around 1105, this is the first Augustinian priory that was ever built in England. It holds ascendancy over all others. Made redundant by Henry VIII during reformation and much damaged during the Siege of Colchester, its shell now stands as a much loved monument and an illustration of the re-cycled Roman materials from which it was constructed. Close by stands St Botolph's Church, an early Victorian replacement (in the Norman style) of the earlier church.

9 St John's Abbey - This Benedictine abbey was founded by Eudo in 1096/7, although only the 15th century gateway and much of its perimeter wall still survives.



10 Crouched Friars - We have a priory and an abbey; but we also had two friaries. Archaeological explorations have confirmed the location of Crouched Friars but Greyfriars (near East Gate) has not yet been clearly located. Both have been lost to us.

Our ancient parish churches within the walls (eight in total):

11 Holy Trinity - The tower of this church has been dated to the Saxon period at c 1000. Whether or not it started life as a look-out tower and was converted to a church at a later period is a matter of discussion, although it has been shown to have been added to a much earlier building, now lost. The arrow shaped doorway is typical of the period, as are the windows and has been constructed from re-used Roman materials.

12 St Peter - This church is the only one that appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 and therefore claims ascendancy over all the others. As with the various other churches, its modern day fabric is of a much later period than the original church that must have once stood here.

13 St Mary at the Walls - This ancient church stands next to our Roman wall and is now de-consecrated and used as an arts centre. It is associated with the famous 'Humpty Dumpty' nursery rhyme.

14 St Martin - This became the church associated with the Flemish weavers and sits within the Weaver's Quarter amongst the many ancient timber framed buildings that have survived the centuries. Its graveyard has a 17th century grave with tombstone to one of the last of the baise makers (or bays and says), Jacob Ringer.

15 St Runwald - This church used to stand in the High Street, near to our present day Town Hall. It was demolished in the

1850s, although its graveyard still exists a distance away, behind the Town Hall.

16 St Nicholas - This church once stood in the High Street but was demolished in the 1950s.

17 All Saints - This church became our present day Natural history Museum.

18 St James - To the east, built close to the Roman East Gate, this church is very much in use today as a place of worship (as is St Peter's on North Hill).

Our churches without the walls (four in total):

19 St Giles - This church was provided by the Abbot of St John, so that the people of his parish could worship without having to come in to the abbey grounds. It is now a masonic lodge. Also, **St Botolph** (mentioned earlier), **St Leonard at the Hythe** (Hythe Hill), **St Mary Magdalen** (in Magdalen Street and at one time associated with the medieval leper hospital, all now mostly gone).

Other places shown on our map:

20 St Helena Chapel - This was a chantry chapel, where a priest was paid to say prayers for the deceased, for as long as the money lasted. We know that it was repaired in 1097, that it was dedicated to our patron saint St Helena and that it was built on top of a foundation wall of one of Roman theatres. It is now used for worship by the Greek Orthodox Church.

21 The Moot Hall - This is probably where the ruling Romans had built their main administration building, the site of which later (in medieval times) was the site of a grand timber framed edifice known as the Moot Hall. That building was demolished by the Victorians and our present day Town Hall stands on the spot.

22 Middle Mill - This was just one of several mills, water and wind, that used to exist in medieval times, for various uses and at different times - for the grinding of corn or for the various processes required by our hugely important cloth trade. Only the weir and mill pond still exist today.

Please explore our town and make your own discoveries. The bastions along the south and south-east section of our town wall were put there by Richard II, during the period of the Peasant's Revolt of 1381, led by a Colchester man, John Ball. Take a look at the magnificent 15th century Red Lion Hotel in the High Street, once the private home of the Dukes of Norfolk. Explore our Weaver's Quarter and the many other timber framed buildings that are scattered around our town. There is so much more to discover!



We gratefully acknowledge the permission from the Colchester Archaeological Trust for the use of some of their illustrations.

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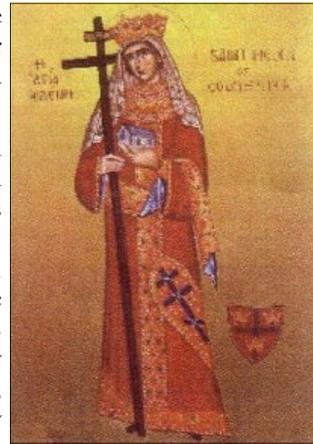
Post Roman Colchester

The Dark Age, the Normans and Medieval Colchester

A City Guide

This leaflet aims to show you a little of how Colchester developed after the Roman occupation of Britain came to an end.

There was much instability within the Roman Empire, in the late 4th century and life in Britain was becoming more and more difficult. Coins were no longer being minted, soldiers were not being paid and the whole system of trade was collapsing. Without money to pay for goods, products such as pottery, were not being produced in any quantity and bartering must have started to take over. By 410AD the



St Helena, patron saint of Colchester

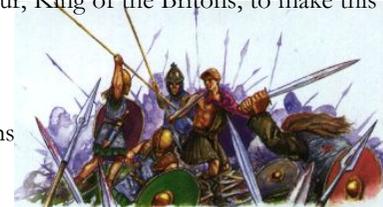
Romans appear to have left Britain completely, leaving the, by now, Romanised British people to fend for themselves. Some Romans must have stayed behind to try and make a go of their life and evidence has shown that Roman villa based farms in the west, continued well into the 5th century.



The indigenous British people had taken on the Roman way of life - but the peace and stability that they had become used to was at an end. The Dark Age had begun; dark because so little is known of this period in our history.

This was the time of Arthur (from the Roman name Artorius). Colchester (then known as Camulodunum), with its easily defended walled colonia and easy trading links, would have made it an obvious choice for Arthur, King of the Britons, to make this his citadel; or, as he knew it, his Camelot.

But whilst other places have made their own fanciful claims for Arthur, we have no such need. To us, it's obvious!



THE DARK AGE. There is some evidence of Saxon period dwellings within the Roman walled town, but the conclusion drawn by historians is that Britain was overrun by marauding tribes from overseas, Saxons, Vikings, Angles, Danes, etc.

But it is here, at this period in our history, that the archaeological trail in Colchester started to dry up. With the absence of money based trade, the colonia became deserted and decay set in. A colonia on the top of a hill is not a good place to live when there is no source of water, land for growing crops or raising livestock.

The 'barbarians', as the Romans called them, came and they went. We know of Saxon attacks and there is some archaeological evidence of Saxon style dwellings within the colonia. Then followed the Danes in the 10th century, who are recorded as having fled the colonia when attacked by King Edward in 917.

THE NORMANS. William the Conqueror (King William 1) defeated King Harold in 1066 at the Battle of Hastings and there began England's Norman period. He gave lands in Colchester to his dapifer (marshal), Eudo de Rie. He then set about the very efficient destruction of Roman Colchester, plundering it for much needed building materials, and for the creation of his new Norman city. This period in our history saw the construction of our castle, monastic buildings, churches and chapels.

MEDIEVAL COLCHESTER. In the goodness of time, the rule of the Normans passed through the Houses of the Plantagenets, of Lancaster, York, Tudor etc; to what we now loosely term 'the medieval period'. So much of medieval Colchester is still to be seen, a product of this period in our fascinating history. Colchester played a big part in the Peasant's Revolt of the 14th century, immigration of the Hugenots (mainly Flemish weavers who established our present day Weaver's Quarter) in the 15th and 16th centuries, through to the English Civil War of the 17th century.

OUR MAP. This shows the layout of the colonia, later to become a city, borough or town (however you wish to describe it), as it would have been in the 12th century. It marks the principle buildings or sites, much of which there is evidence today.

The most obvious heritage feature must surely be the 2800 metre long town wall, built by the Romans in the 1st century AD, but repaired by later peoples, as we still do today. Our map shows the following points of visitor interest:

1 Balkerne Gate - One of the five main gateways into the Roman colonia. This one faced London but seems to have been given up at some point and baulked, stopped-up, filled-in, in antiquity, by whom, and when, we know not. This led to the High Street being cut short and the saviour of this most ancient of edifices.

2 North Gate - Another of the five gateways, the last trace of which disappeared in the mid 19th century.

3 East Gate - As before, this gate is recorded as having fallen down a few years after the Siege of Colchester in 1648, in 1651.

4 South Gate - As with the others, this gate was gone by 1818.

5 Head Gate - So named presumably because it became the main access way to and from London, replacing that of the Balkerne Gate. It was removed in the middle of the 18th century.

6 Rye Gate - As far as we know, this was never a Roman gateway. What we see today is a creation of the Victorian age, giving access to our wonderful, award winning, Castle Park. Since probably the Norman period, when a water mill (known as Middle Mill) was built nearby, this gateway would have given easy access.

7 The Norman Castle - William commanded that castles be built across the length and breadth of his new domain of England. Eudo Dapifer built the largest Norman keep that ever was. It had to be large, as this Norman baron decided that his castle should embrace the podium of the Roman Emperor Claudius' temple that stood here. Eudo was responsible for many other buildings in the borough, of which more follows. His problem was a lack of natural building stone. Colchester had none. What it did have though was a walled citadel, 'built by giants', filled with crumbling and decayed buildings from an ancient time before. And so it was that the Normans very efficiently destroyed Roman Colchester by 'harvesting' the materials used by the Romans - but without touching the all-important walls. His castle keep was surrounded by a bailey

