

archaeological excavations have been carried out here and it is considered to be the most important of Colchester's (and indeed Britain's) Iron Age sites. A Romano-Celtic temple was discovered here, as well as many trackways, ditches, enclosures, etc. What is frustrating is that we do not have evidence of where and how the people lived. There is no clear evidence of 'roundhouses', as might have been expected; their post holes being the usual indicator of their presence. The houses were presumably simple affairs, round, rectangular or square, without substantial foundations. From archaeological evidence, the area of modern day Sheepen was also known to have been where the British people lived, but probably to a lesser degree, and there, mainly connected with industrial type activity. Of course, the people were probably scattered right across the 12 square miles of Camulodunom, according to their land holdings and who could quickly respond to any threat.



Two other Iron Age period places are shown on our map: Abbotstone and Stanway. These are references to archaeological excavation sites that were investigated ahead of gravel quarrying work. They have been swept away now - but not before they revealed some of their secrets. At the Stanway site was found two burials of particular note, known now as the Warrior's Grave and the Doctor's Grave. Both revealed amazing finds relating to very important British people from a period c AD 50,

suggestive of a tolerance and co-existence with their Roman rulers. Remember that the people of that time were mainly British - not Roman. After AD 43 they were ruled by the Romans, but their lives must have been much as before - but more peaceful. Colchester Castle Museum has displays from these sites and for Iron Age Colchester in general, and is a 'must-do' for any visitor who is interested in our early history.

King Cunobelin died c AD 40 and his sons were left to bring order. The opportunity for a Roman invasion had been provided in AD 42 by the flight to Rome of Verica, King of the Atrebates (of the modern day Sussex area). The Atrebates had been steadily encroached upon by the increasingly powerful Cunobelin and his sons. In AD 42 they were overrun by Caratacus and Togodumnus. Verica appealed to Claudius for assistance, giving the



Romans a convenient reason for a full scale Roman invasion. After landing in Kent, the Roman army made their way to the most important settlement at Camulodunom (later to be Romanised as Camulodunum), having dealt with attacks by Caratacus and Togodumnus and others on the way. The Roman army waited for Claudius to join them from Rome, before making the final leg of their journey, leading a victorious army into Camulodunom. It took the Romans until AD 51 to capture the warring Caratacus, who had been tricked by Queen Cartimandua of the Brigantes to the north, taken prisoner and handed over to Scapula, the then governor of Britannia. He and his family were taken to Rome as hostages, he was pardoned and seems to have spent the rest of his life living quite comfortably as a pensioned Roman citizen. Caratacus is quoted by Dio Cassius as having said, upon seeing the splendour of Rome, 'When you have all this why do you envy us our poor hovels?' Caratacus was clearly an outstanding leader with an excellent understanding of warfare and the tactics of his enemies. A true, if almost forgotten, Colchester hero!

Meanwhile, back at home, the Trinovantes must have gradually got used to Roman rule and were probably quite comfortable with the peace that it brought. With the coming of the Roman period, and the later brutal suppression after Boudicca's attack, the tribal system of old disappeared - in the south of Britain at least. Occasional written references have been found to the Trinovantes and the Catuvellauni. The Trinovantes were certainly recorded up to the period of the Boudiccan Revolt, but when Queen Boudicca (or was she Boadicea?) of the Iceni tribe attacked and destroyed the Roman colonia at Camulodunum, they go unrecorded. The coming of the Dark Ages after the end of Roman protection c AD 410, would certainly have put an end to the Trinovantes as a recognisable people.

Guided Tours - Please ask at the Visitor Information Centre, next to the War Memorial, for information about guided tours, tel 01206 282920.

A List of our Illustrations

1. Camulodunom's warriors going into battle, with the defensive dyke system in the background. Painted by Pete Froste.
2. The burial at the Warrior Grave - by Peter Froste.
3. Tribes of Iron Age Britannia.
4. The Sheepen Cauldron c 1250 BC (Castle Museum).
5. Aerial view of the burial site at Stanway c AD 60 - by Peter Froste.
6. Cuno and Finn, from a story by Amanda Findley, artwork by Tegan Jephcott.

We gratefully acknowledge the permissions from the Colchester Archaeological Trust and Peter Froste, for the use of some of their illustrations.

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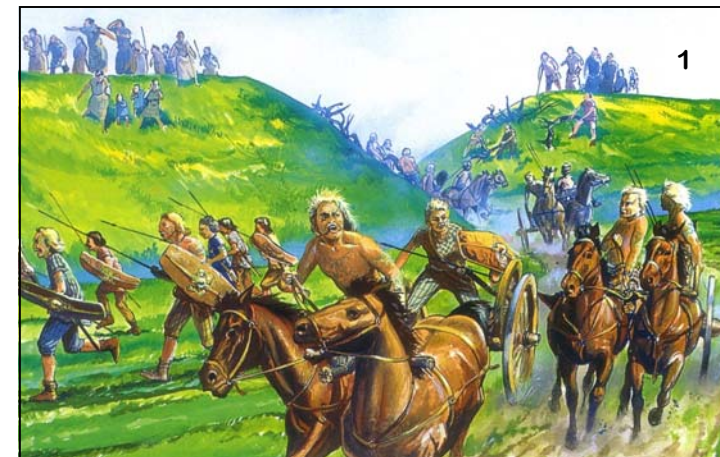
Iron Age Colchester

A City Guide



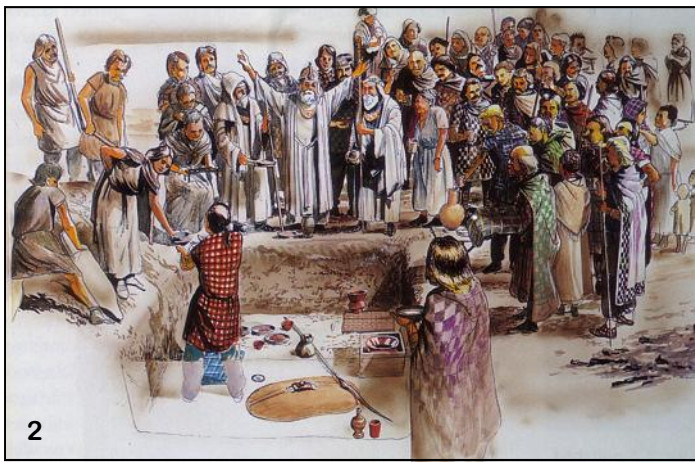
Colchester is best known as Britain's oldest recorded town and as Britain's first city - the place where civilisation in Britain began. Yet none of that would be so had it not been for the fact that the Romans made Camulodunom (the Iron Age name for Colchester) their priority at the start of their invasion - because, it is believed, this was the capital of the most powerful tribe in Britain, the Catuvellauni and the land of their client tribe, the Trinovantes. These two tribes had opposed Julius Caesar a century before and had entered into a treaty with him. By AD 43, the Romans were determined on total control of Britain.

It could be argued that Colchester's dateable history begins with its Iron Age coinage, although archaeological finds point to a much earlier period of human activity. The two illustrations here are taken from a coin of Cunobelin, probably the most famous of Camulodunom's 'sons', the Catuvellaunian king of the Trinovantes. Two images stand out from the coin; that of an ear of wheat or barley (the key to the region's great wealth) and that of a horse (an indication of fighting prowess and power). Cuno is short for Cunobelin and Camu for Camulodunom.



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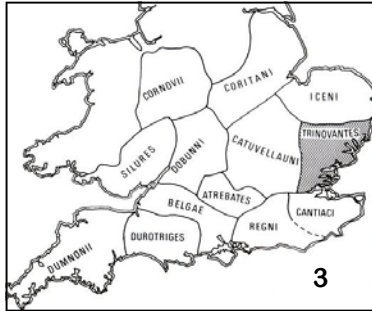
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Various other coin images are also shown in this leaflet.

Whilst Camulodunom was the major settlement in this area and under Catuvellaunian control, it was located in the land of the Trinovantes, whose territory covered most of modern day Essex and some of Suffolk. The Iceni were to the north, the Cantiaci to the south, the Catuvellauni to the west. There appears to have been much inter-tribal warfare. Probably because of this, the people here built an impressive array of defensive dykes and ditches to protect them against attack. Evidence of many of these can still be seen today and are now protected as 'Scheduled Ancient Monuments'. Our map, to the right, shows how these were laid out, suggesting the modern day area known as **Gosbecks** was the centre of a much protected area. The River Colne to the north and the Roman River to the south, closed the square of defence.



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Camulodunom's Iron Age history can certainly be traced to the middle of the first century BC, through coin evidence, at a time when money was beginning to be used for trade. It is likely that people from the European mainland migrated here to avoid the creeping Romanisation of northern Europe. On coming here, these people would have had to assimilate with the indigenous people of Britannia, but would



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have been attracted by trading with their Roman neighbours, just a short way across the sea. They seem to have brought new ideas and customs, which included gold coinage for trade, wheel thrown pottery, different burial rituals, etc.

With the growing use in recent times of metal detectors, new information about Iron Age coinage is constantly coming to light, regularly challenging expert opinion. One early coin discovered here is that of Addedomaros, dating to c 35 BC. He is believed to have been a Catuvellaunian king. He minted gold coins, as well as a range of silver and bronze coinage. A contemporary of his was Tasciovanus, also of the Catevellauni tribe, whose coins were being minted in Verulamium (modern day St Albans) and, for a time, was minting coins from Camulodunom, with the tell-tale letters CAMU, suggesting an alliance or a conquest of some sort. He died around the year AD 7. We are unsure of how the hierarchy fitted together but we know that, in due course, Addedomaros was succeeded by Dubnovellaunus and then Tasciovanus' warrior son Cunobelin became the leader in Camulodunom. Cunobelin's death c AD 40 signalled the end of what we, in Britain, call 'The Iron Age', with 'The Roman Age' starting in AD 43 on the arrival of the Roman invasion of Britannia.

It has been suggested that the **Lexden Tumulus** (as it is known, in Fitzwalter Road) was the burial place of Addedomaros, dated to around the year AD 1, although it is quite possible it was that of Tasciovanus. The grave contents were extensive and clearly belonged to a man of great importance. A much larger tumulus can be seen in Marlowe Way, presumed to be of the Roman period (due to its steep sides and the few items of Roman tile that were found within), although there is no knowledge of who or what it was constructed for.

So, apart from our two tumuli, what else is there to be seen of Colchester's Iron Age period? The most obvious remains are the dykes. Some have been lost forever under new housing developments; but many have survived and



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are protected by law against development work or damage. **Grymes Dyke** is probably the most accessible and can be walked north or south from Dugard Avenue. It is thought that the curved and odd shaped dykes are Iron Age, whilst the straight ones are typically of Roman influence. The **Triple Dyke** is just that, three dykes running parallel and probably from the Roman period. A section of this can be visited along Straight Road, Lexden. The map below shows **Gosbecks**, the land of which was given to the borough by the Barbour family in the 1990s. Extensive

