

## Roman Boy - AD 250

The prehistoric period ended with the arrival of the Roman army, who began their campaigns against the Welsh tribes in 48 AD with an attack on the Deceangli in north-east Wales, five years after they had begun their conquest of Britain.

At that time Wales as we perceive it today did not exist in any meaningful sense. It had at least five tribal groupings: the Deceangli in the north east; the Ordovices in the north west; the Demetae in the south west; the Silures in the south east; and the Cornovii in the central borderlands.

The Romans founded the town of **Caerwent** near **Chepstow**. Twelve miles east of the Roman fort of Caerleon, the Romans established the town of Venta Silurum (Caerwent) as the provincial capital of the Silures. The first town in Wales, it came to have a population of about 3,000. It had a basilica, forum, baths, temples and town houses, some of which had central heating, murals and mosaic floors.

Moridunum (Carmarthen) may also have been a tribal capital - that of the Demetae. The rich Romanised gentry built themselves large villas on the outskirts of towns surrounded by their extensive estates. There was one at Llantwit Major, another at Ely near Cardiff and at least three in the neighbourhood of Caerwent.

Wales was a rich source of mineral wealth, and the Romans used their engineering technology to extract large amounts of gold, copper, and lead from **Dolaucothi in Carmarthenshire**, as well as some other metals such as zinc and silver.

The Romans found it difficult to overcome the tribes of Wales, as resistance was very fierce with the Silures and the Ordovices putting up the most stubborn resistance.

By 78 AD Roman rule was established and it would remain that way until 410 AD when the remaining Roman army was recalled to Rome by the Emperor Honorius who told the people of Britain that they no longer had a connection to Rome and that they should defend themselves.

## Links

### **Caerleon Museum**

[www.caerleon.net](http://www.caerleon.net)

**Caerwent Roman walled town** where you will see good archaeological remains.

<http://resourcesforhistory.com/>

For a list of all of the **Roman sites in Wales** go to

<http://www.britainexpress.com/wales/az/roman/>

### **General**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/romans/>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/guide/ch2\\_wales\\_and\\_the\\_romans.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/guide/ch2_wales_and_the_romans.shtml)

<http://www.brimms.co.uk/romans/tutorial.html>