

# Roman Middlewich Teachers' Pack

## Teaching points for history at Key Stage Two

### Teachers' notes 2

- The Middlewich area was important before Romans came because it was where there was a crossing point on the River Croco. It was also on the track-way to the lowest natural fording place of the River Mersey at Warrington. Crossing points on rivers were of greater importance in the past than they perhaps are today. Middlewich was on the route between many Celtic tribes.
- The Cornovians (and other Celtic tribes) showed a degree of sophistication in terms of their craftsmanship as pre-Roman finds in Middlewich demonstrate.
- The Cornovians were not part of earlier Celtic client states in the South East so when subsidies were withdrawn they were not affected. Thus their experience was different to that of Boudicca and some other Celtic tribes.
- The Cornovians seem to have got on quite well with the Romans and were gradually assimilated through marriage etc.
- The Celtic tribes varied considerably in their attitude to the Roman invaders early on. Much of the early Roman traffic through Middlewich was to quell the warlike *Brigantes* who ruled the area to the north of Middlewich.
- Roman troops were often not Italian.
- Roman occupation was over many hundred years and there were changes within that period. The Romanisation of Middlewich was complete by the 3rd and 4th centuries though remoter farmsteads may have retained their traditional ways.
- The end of Roman Britain was not sudden: it was a slow decline.
- Reconstructive drawings, and similarly the replica items in loans boxes are the result of careful and educated guess-work. What is their value? What are their drawbacks? These are issues that should be discussed with the children. Of course the same is true of historical writing generally. A good historian makes it clear what is hypothesis and what is established fact. The constant striving to get a clear picture of the past is the essence of history.
- Knowing exactly which names the Romans gave to places is quite difficult. The names they gave to Middlewich and Northwich are a case in point and as yet are not completely resolved. *Condate* (meaning "Place at the confluence of two rivers") is often thought to be the name for Roman Northwich and *Salinae* (meaning "Salt springs") the name for Middlewich. The debate continues and is described in detail in *Roman Middlewich* by Tim Strickland (p.8).