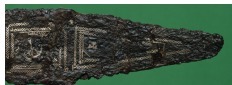
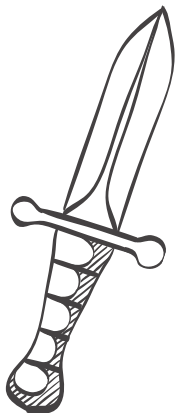


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Pugio

A pugio is a type of dagger. It was worn by a legionary soldier on a belt around his waist. Other weapons a legionary might have include a pilum (javelin) and a gladius (sword). This dagger is in a sheath which has been decorated with silver and niello (a black mixture made with silver, copper and lead). This would have been an expensive item so the soldier who owned it would probably have been quite wealthy.



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Strigil

A strigil is a tool used to scrape dirt and sweat from the body. The Romans did not use soap - that was an Iron Age Celtic invention - but instead rubbed their body with sweet smelling oils.

The strigil was then used to scrape off the oil. This was done in the Roman Baths, in a heated room called a caldarium. The heat would make you sweat and that would make it easier to scrape off the dirt and oils.



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Mosaic

A mosaic is a design or decoration made from small pieces of glass or stone arranged into a pattern.

Some Romans decorated the floors of their homes with mosaics. This one has a labyrinth pattern and was found in Caerleon. It is thought to come from the dining room of the Legate's house.



A Legate is a high-ranking officer in the Roman Army, similar to a General today. He had full power over the Legion. A fine mosaic floor would show how wealthy and important he was.



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Gemstones

Romans liked to wear jewellery and rings were very popular. The gemstones were carved with a drill to make a design. This gemstone is made of cornelian and shows the goddess Diana Venatrix, the goddess of hunting. The owner could ask for any design to be put on the ring when it was bought.

This made the ring unique to that person so it could also be used as a seal. Letters and documents were kept private by being sealed with wax.

The ring was pressed into the wax leaving an impression of the design so that whoever received the letter would know who it came from, and that it had not been altered in any way. This gemstone was found in the Roman Baths.



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Samian Bowl

Ordinary Romans would eat and drink using pottery or wooden plates and cups. The very wealthy might use silver or gold. This bowl is made of a type of pottery called Samian ware. It is a thin terracotta clay bowl and has a lovely raised decorated pattern on it.



This type of pottery was often made in southern France and was traded across north-western Europe. As well as the fortress in Caerleon, there was a busy town with a port next to the River Usk. Ships would dock here and unload goods to be sold in the shops or used in the fortress. Perhaps this bowl was bought by a soldier, shopping in the town on his day off.



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Stone Coffin

Most Romans were cremated when they died, so this stone coffin is quite unusual. It is made from a solid piece of Bath stone and contains the remains of a man who was about 40 when he died. We don't know who he was, but we do know he believed in an afterlife because he was buried with things to take with him, a bowl and a glass bottle. Scientists analysed his teeth and discovered that he grew up in the Newport area, so he was a local man.

To be buried in coffin showed that he was quite rich. He may have been a wealthy merchant who supplied the fortress in Caerleon.

[Read more about the coffin here](#)



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Pipe Burial

Most Romans were cremated when they died and their remains buried in a pot or glass jar. This is a special type of cremation that tells us something about how Romans mourned someone who had died. The cremated body was buried in a lead canister with a pipe that connected it to the surface.

This pipe was used to pour liquid offerings - perhaps wine - down to the dead person. Scientists were able to identify the remains as that of a man of about 35 years old. Perhaps he was a soldier or a man who lived in the town.



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Denarius Coins

Roman soldiers were paid about 300 denarii a year. A denarius is a small silver coin. There were no banks in Roman times, so a soldier would perhaps send his wages home to his family or save the coins in a bag or pot. This coin was found as part of a coin hoard in a pot near Caerwent. Perhaps they were buried by a soldier for safe keeping who never returned.

Or perhaps they were an offering to the gods. One of the coins is shown here. It shows the head of Faustina, a Roman Empress and wife of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. The other side of the coin shows an image of the goddess Venus. [You can read more about the hoard here.](#)



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Mortarium

Roman soldiers had kitchens - culina - in their barracks where they could prepare their food.

This bowl is a mortarium and it was used to grind up herbs and seeds used in cooking. The bottom of the bowl had grit in the clay. The cook would then use a pestle - a stone or wooden tool - to grind the herbs or seeds against the grit. We are lucky that a Roman cook book still survives. It was written by a man called Apicius and it includes lots of recipes. Did you know the Romans ate cakes sweetened with honey. They also had an early version of a burger!



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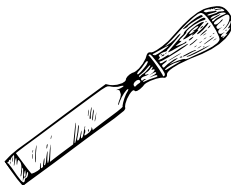


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Gouge

As well as soldiers, a Roman fortress also had other workers such as doctors and blacksmiths.

The blacksmith made and repaired the weapons and armour. He also made the tools the soldiers used, such as hammers, saws, tongs and of course nails. This tool is a gouge, which is a chisel with a curved blade for scooping or cutting holes.



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Take a look at the 360 views of the National Roman Legion Museum and see the museum objects in their display cases.

You can look at our Collections Online website and find out more about the objects.

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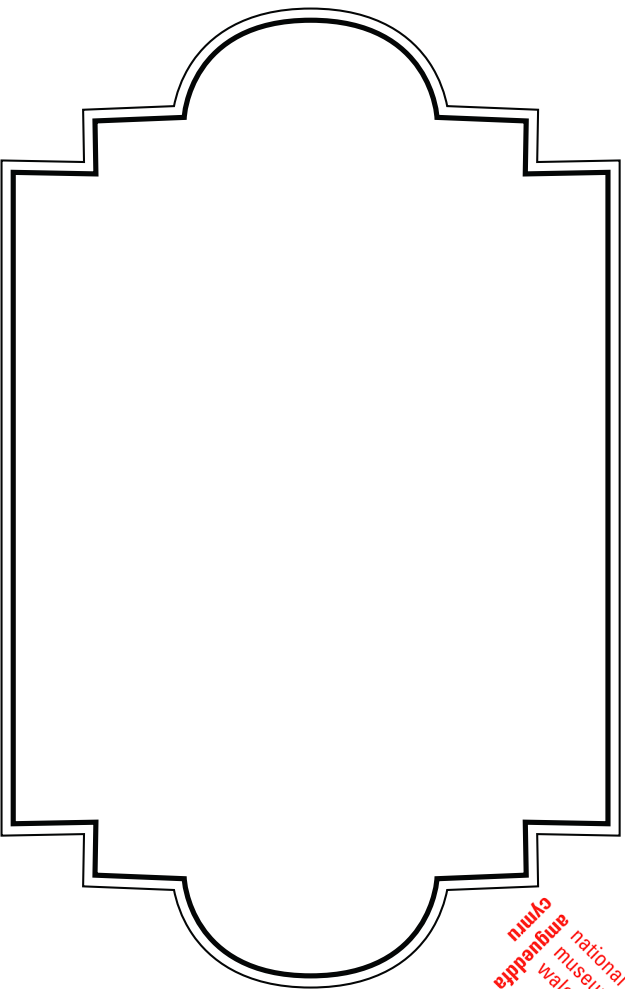
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