

Aquae Sulis and its Baths

1. What modern city is built on the site of the ancient town of Aquae Sulis ?

The modern city of **Bath**.

2. What makes this town so special?

Hot mineral springs which release a quarter of a million gallons of water a day.

3. When did the water which we see coming from the springs fall as rain water?

It fell as rain 10,000 years ago.

4. What did the Romans do when they came upon these hot springs?

They enclosed the springs with a huge bath complex.

5. Was this site used by the Britons before the arrival of the Romans?

Yes. The Britons considered the hot springs sacred to the goddess Sulis

The Sacred Spring

6. What has been found in the springs?

Offerings from worshipers such as coins, jewelry and silver and pewter cups.



The Baths

7. What was the number and nature of the pools of water in this bath ?

There were three pools that flowed directly from the springs which started out hot and became cooler in succeeding pools.

There were also a number of warm and hot pools which were heated from underneath by a hypocaust.

8. Why did people flock to the baths of Aquae Sulis?

The healing powers for people with rheumatism and arthritis made the baths very attractive.

Many people attributed miraculous properties of healing to the baths and came to be cured of any number of maladies.

The Temple

9. Why did the Romans build a temple on the site of the baths and what was it like?

People believed that the curative powers of the hot springs depended as much on the gods as on the curative qualities of the mineral waters.

The Romans built a Roman style temple with a cell (inner shrine), a porch with Corinthian columns and a highly decorated pediment. Inside was a life sized bronze head of Sulis Minerva to whom the temple was dedicated.

The pediment featured a roundel of a Celtic male with a mustache and below this an owl and helmet which symbolized Minerva.



*****This is not all you need to know. Re-read the reading.*****