



The Story of Roman Bath

Patricia Southern

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- The only book on life in Bath during Roman times.
- The perfect introduction to the history of Bath during Roman Times.
- Very well illustrated with over 100 color photographs, drawings and plans.

When the Romans built the bath and temple complex of Bath in the late first century AD, they called the place Aquae Sulis, the waters of Sulis, a British deity who was equated with the Roman goddess Minerva. It was unlike any other town in Roman Britain, it had no specific town status, compared to nearby Cirencester, which was a chartered town set up as a tribal administrative center. All classes of people came to Aquae Sulis, to visit the temple of Sulis-Minerva, the hot springs, and the Great Bath. Soldiers on sick leave came to convalesce; Romans, Britons, women, and slaves recorded their visits on various inscriptions since discovered during archaeological excavations. His widow Calpurnia Trifosa commemorated Gaius Calpurnius Receptus, a priest,; Priscus, a stonemason from Chartres in Gaul, may have repaired some of the buildings; Vettius Romulus and his wife, mourning the loss of their three year old daughter, had perhaps brought her to pray for a cure.

Following the Romans departure, from the fifth and sixth centuries the rise of Christianity ultimately caused the decline of pagan worship, and as the old gods were neglected, so were the buildings of Aquae Sulis, which disappeared under an accumulation of silt and mud. The Baths and the temple of Sulis-Minerva were rediscovered in the eighteenth century and the Victorians rebuilt the Roman Baths that we see today. Patricia Southern's new history charts the rise and fall of Roman Bath and examines the baths as they are today part of a major World Heritage Site.

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