WHAT CAN ROMAN WRITING TABLETS TELL US ABOUT LIFE IN LONDON?

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

A new exhibition about Roman London will open inside a network of underground vaults beneath Smithfield Market. The vaults were rediscovered in 2019 when builders broke through a wall during work on the new London Museum. The exhibition will display objects from the Bloomberg Collection, a group of more than 14,000 artefacts found during excavations in the City of London. These include wax writing tablets, a baby's feeding bottle, a coin from the reign of Emperor Nero and cockroach eggs found inside a Roman bakery oven. Together, the objects offer clues about ordinary people who lived in Londinium during its first decades. London began as a frontier settlement after the Roman invasion of Britain and gradually became a busy town connected to the wider empire. The exhibition is due to open in spring 2027.

WHY IS THIS INTERESTING?

The objects reveal Roman history through everyday life rather than only emperors and battles. A writing tablet can show what people argued about, a feeding bottle can suggest how families cared for babies, and a coin can reveal how quickly London joined the Roman world.

THINK LIKE A HISTORIAN

"Why might everyday objects tell us more than statues of emperors?"

Source: London Museum

https://www.londonmuseum.org.uk/about/press/press-releases/underground-vaults-open-free-exhibition-early-roman-london/