

SAXON GLOUCESTER REVISED DECEMBER 2024

1. WELCOME INTRODUCTION:

Tour will take approx. 80 minutes

The Saxon town of Gloucester **evolved** from the Roman colony of '**Glevum** but by the end of the Roman occupation, 410 AD, the town was already in decline. Soon much of the interior of the town was given over to agricultural use, the Roman street grid disappeared. With the loss of Roman currency, industry collapsed and the importation of high quality goods ceased. ***Society returned to a barter and handicraft economy.*** Most products were made of natural materials such as wood, wool, leather, bone and clay, materials that do not survive well for eager archaeologists to discover a millennium and a half later.

5th and 6th C pottery finds along main roads indicate the town was still **occupied, though sparsely**. It appears, however, that there were some rich people about and that Glevum, the Roman's name for Gloucester, remained the centre of administration for the district.

In the century that followed Roman withdrawal the Romano British were attacked by: **Picts from the Highlands, Scots from Ireland, and Teutonic tribes from the Continent**. These Continental tribes who had been harassing the coast since the late 4th Century were the **Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes**. These tribes came from northern Germany along the Weser and the lower Elbe.

Demonstration of Map

After the legions withdrew **the Romano-British took over power and formed their own kingdoms. Indications are that there must have been strong chieftains in power in this locality because the Severn Valley remained free of Saxon influence for over a century. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle records the beginning of the Saxon era here to 577 AD, when Gloucester, Cirencester and Bath were captured by a West Saxon force at the Battle of Dyrham, and the British chieftains were killed.**

628, another Saxon force from the **midland kingdom of Mercia** came to power at the Battle of Cirencester. Gloucestershire and Worcestershire were ruled by a Saxon sub-kingdom called the **Hwicce**.

We normally say that the Saxon era lasted until the Norman Conquest of 1066, but, of course, the people were still largely **Romano-Britanno-Saxon**. In nearly 500 years of Saxon occupation, we have **excavations** proving the existence of Saxon buildings, **Saxon artefacts**, landscape features, some documentary evidence and a large degree of speculation!

THE CROSS

There has been a Christian cross on this site for over 500 years. Though first **recorded in the 1220s**, it is possible that there was a cross here much earlier and can speculate there was a cross here in Saxon times. **Preaching crosses, boundary markers**, indicators of **Christian cemeteries** and **wayside markers** were more common in other districts, but we do know for certain that there were in the 8th and 9thC at least seven beautifully carved crosses in use in Gloucester and it is not impossible that such a cross marked this spot. **The implication is that there were rich and high-status people living in this area during that time.**

GATES **'The Cross'** is also the junction of our major roads. Look down **Eastgate Street** and you can see the position of the Roman, Saxon, medieval east gate, at Boots' corner. During excavations here, this endearing little (bone?) object was found. It is a late **Saxon gaming piece**, probably a chessman – a pawn, or a bishop?

CHURCHES: **Ten Gloucester churches are mentioned in the Domesday Book.** Many of the churches we call Norman must have been in place before the Conquest. Though they might have had stone foundations, most would have had wooden upper structures and were later rebuilt by the Normans. One such was probably **St Aldate** which is on the East side of Northgate.

Aldate was a British martyr, a bishop who exhorted the people to fight against the West Saxons at the battle of Dyrham. He was killed there. The dedication is ancient, and it is likely that there was a church here in Saxon times.

West of Northgate is St John's Church. The present building is an 18th re-build but on this site there had been an Augustinian Priory founded by King Athelstan in 931. Athelstan was the grandson of Alfred the Great and nephew of Aethelflaed Lady of Mercia. He would have stayed in Gloucester many times

Back to The Cross:

At the junction of our major roads, **there were three churches, probably all of Saxon era**: On the north-east corner was a small chapel called St Martin's. **St Michael's church on the south-east corner. St Michael's tower is 15C, but there was a Saxon church here before the Norman invasion, probably mid-late 11C.** Evidence for this is Saxon remains were discovered when the Victorian church

was demolished in the 1950s. Also, a cellar was found under the tower, and evidence of Saxon debris was found there.

At the south-west corner top of Westgate was a tiny medieval church called All Saints. During excavations in 1893 architectural fragments of the Saxon church were found, and 19 feet down was a carved Saxon bear's head. This is now in the Museum of Gloucester. This one is shown wearing a muzzle, perhaps indicating its use in bear-baiting. It was probably used as the label-stop of a Saxon arch.

SOUTHGATE STREET - *(pictures of house and sheath)*

Where you see the B&M shop, was the famous Bell Hotel. It was dismantled in the 1970s, and excavations found remains of two linked Saxon houses, running parallel to the street. Each was made of wattle and wicker, with lines of posts supporting the walls and roof, resembling a timber hall. Here was found a scramasax sheath, or scabbard for a short knife. (Perhaps also the Viking stirrup?) The sheath leather shows an intricate interlacing design with a snake head.

St Mary de Crypt church, on a prominent site on a major route of the town, probably also had Saxon origins although any remains were removed or obscured by the later building of a Norman church by 1140.

Close by is the street called Marylone. '**Lone**' is a Saxon term for a 'lane'. This is likely to be one of the streets that was laid out in the late 9thC by Aethelflaed, Lady of the Mercians, who ordered the town to be laid out with a regular pattern of streets to make it easier to defend against the Viking raiders.

CROSS KEYS LANE

This has also been called **Scrud Lane, or Scruddelone**. A scrud was a shroud, and is an indication of the presence of cloth makers.

Just around the corner at top of Westgate Street a piece of cloth was found that dates to the 9C. It is a scrap of textile from a woman's dress woven on an upright loom. Although every Saxon household would have had its own loom for domestic use, it is possible that the cloth came from workshops on this street.

Looking down Southgate Street towards the south gate of the Roman, Saxon and medieval town. Attached to the wall by the gate was the chapel of St Kyneburgh, perhaps a legendary Saxon princess, though her origin and identity are obscure. She is said to have run away from an arranged marriage, been killed by the

baker's wife and dropped down a well. The site is approximately marked by the modern sculpture meant to depict an inverted well.

The siting of a church inside the wall was common. You would stop as you left the defended town to pray for a safe journey and again on your return to give thanks for not having been attacked by brigands on the way.

LONGSMITH STREET: Stand with the multi-storey car park to your back. New student flats exist here now but here was the first Norman motte and bailey castle, perhaps as early as 1068-70 AD. Sixteen Saxon dwellings were demolished to make way for the castle. The motte existed in modified form until 1932 when it was dug away.

*(illustration of the Norman castle) and (picture of men digging away the motte)
(picture of the gaming board, smiths' tools, and antler tools)*

Excavations here in **1983 uncovered a gaming board, called a Tabula**. Though the counters are Norman, **the design of the board is Saxon**. Also uncovered were 6C iron objects, mostly smiths' tools, and evidence of Saxon activity: a filled in well, antler tools, and re-use of Roman building stones.

MERCER'S ENTRY UPPER WESTGATE STREET

Walking through the alley, or going around The Cross corner

Excavations under numbers 1,3,5 and 7 Westgate Street in the 1970s uncovered a Saxon dung and rubbish heap which had preserved household objects: clay loom weights, a barrel lid, churn paddle and various pieces of domestic wooden objects, and leather offcuts from shoes. It was here that the scrap of fabric was found.

(pictures of wooden and other Saxon objects from museum))

WESTGATE: FROM THE CROSS: Aethelflaed and Road Alterations:

Look straight down the road, you can see that a church, St Nicholas, appears to block the way. That is because the road is curved, as you will see from this map.

(medieval road system)

The original Roman road that led to the waterfront and bridges across the River Severn lay under the shops on the south side of the present road. At that time, this area was an open space in front of a long complex of buildings, perhaps a temple, and it was lined with a colonnade of pillars.

It was **'Queen' Aethelflaed of Mercia, 'The Lady of the Mercians'**, who altered the road system to use this open space as a new road leading through the disintegrating buildings to the river.

Aethelflaed was the daughter of King Alfred of Wessex. **Born c.869**, she would have been aware of the threat of Danish invasion, for Viking raids were frequent throughout the 9thC. Alfred had established 'burhs', re-fortified towns in Wessex, by strengthening defences, altering roads, and establishing an army.

By the late 9thC Mercia was subordinate to Wessex. When Aethelflaed married the Mercian ruler, Lord Aethelred, about 887, it is likely that she held equal rank with her husband. Aethelflaed may have been inspired to create 'burhs' in Mercia as her father had done in Wessex. One of the ways to do this was to create a system of lanes and alleyways. At the sound of alarm, such as Vikings or Northmen to give them their proper description, being spotted on the river, the townsfolk could rush to the defensive wall, or protect the town centre by occupying the alleyways. There was also a roadway built immediately inside the walls to make movement easier.

Mercer's Entry is one such alley, the only original one remaining here from the Saxon era. One man with a sword could defend his alley to the death.

(show Mercer's Entry, or 'Pinchbelly Alley')

We do not know how these alleys and lanes were spaced, but they were likely to have been at regular intervals. The common units of measurements from Saxon times were used for many centuries and still persist today. The perch (or rod or pole) was 5.5 yards (about 5 metres). Many of the present shopfronts still approximate one perch or two perches in width fronting onto the street. The property at the back would be longer, so a common patch of ground would be 2 perches frontage and 20 perches long, allowing for commercial, industrial or agricultural use.

These alleyways could be as frequent as 4 perches apart 22yards the same length of a cricket pitch. 22yards or just over 20 metres. This length is also called a 'chain', a measurement used for laying out the canal at our docks in the early 19th C.

*(picture of chain, and of 18C Westgate)
(pictures of narrow properties)*

The Mint: In medieval times there was a mint at the top of Westgate street. It may have been established during Alfred's time, about 871, but certainly by the time of Aethelflaed. **We do not know its exact location. It would be an indication of the growing importance and prosperity of the town.** Imagine timber-framed houses, some with cellars and workshops, along the main streets. Imagine craft-workers: weavers, cobblers, potters, glass-workers,

silversmiths, woodturners, coopers and smiths. The town would have had a district market, probably from the 9thC.

BERKELEY STREET

We are now near the line of the original Roman wall that faced the river. **However, this road has Saxon origins, built in the 9th or 10thC.** During excavations here to build the Telephone Exchange in the 1970s, part of a Saxon leather scramasax sheath was found. This is 10-11C, on one of the earliest levels of the street. **A scramasax was a cross between a sword and a knife, possibly made for a Saxon thegn.** (There have also been Saxon iron spear heads found (WHERE?).

(pictures of spear heads and scramasax scabbard)

The original Roman west gate and road to the river was approximately here, near the entrance to The Fountain Inn. This wall seems to have been demolished quite early, perhaps before the end of the Roman era as the city population expanded.

LOWER WESTGATE STREET

Courts and docks:

COLLEGE STREET

The present street would have been outside the Roman west wall. It dates to a later period, perhaps from the early 1100s when the land on the south side of the church was made the lay cemetery for all citizens of the town.

Osric was a prince or chieftain of the Hwicce tribe that occupied most of the present Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. He was a viceroy to the King of Mercia. The plaque was dug up in the cathedral grounds in the late 19C and attached more recently to the west pillar of the late medieval gate.

The Saxon town had a military and strategic importance, as the lowest downriver crossing into Wales. By the 11C it had become the shire town, the administration centre for the group of hundreds comprising the shire. Here would be held the shire court (note the present court and shire buildings) where the sheriff would manage local finance and justice.

Westgate Street was also for many centuries called 'Bridge Street' for it led to the bridges that crossed the river. In Roman, Saxon and early medieval times, the main branch of the River Severn passed more closely to the town, approximately 100m beyond the church of St Nicholas, and the bridge there was called the '**Foreign Bridge**'. The Roman and Saxon dockyard and river-front was just beyond St Nicholas church.

CATHEDRAL GREEN –

a) Foundation:

The religious community that Osric founded was probably situated within the **north-pointing** corner of the Roman town walls. **The church was a ‘double minster’ this means it had a royal foundation, and was meant to house inmates who would perform the prayer cycle throughout the day and night.** It was probably dedicated to St Peter from the beginning.

A double minster also housed both men and women. The women were nuns of royal or noble class. They were used to wealth and probably came with their pets and servants, and lived a life of piety and learning. The men were priests, **living separately but sharing the church.** The priests performed the sacraments, and ministered to the nuns as well as to the local population.

By the early 1000s the establishment was reformed into a **Benedictine monastery**. Successive churches were built nearby. Sadly, nothing from that foundation survives. The later, Norman, church, begun 1089, was built over the north-pointing corner of the Roman wall, which may have long been demolished.

Artefacts:

This was the site of the town cemetery for over 700 years. Some Roman artefacts as well as medieval ones have been found, but nothing of Saxon origin except for one **female burial at the south-west end of the building.**

A few other Saxon graves have been found under the outdoor café area. Roman and Saxon burials were found outside the walls

ST MARY’S GATE AND SQUARE

Lower College Green was originally outside the Roman walls, and the Saxon town had very soon expanded towards the waterfront area. From St Mary’s Gate we enter an area where there were, in medieval times, 52 burgage properties, tenanted by servants of the Abbey of St Peter.

The term ‘de lode’ was not used until the early 16C. It means the crossing of a waterway, perhaps by bridge or ford. The main branch of the River Severn was about 100m west of the church. The waterfront area was prime property from Roman times, for import, export, and transport up- and down-river and across the bridges. There would be light and then heavy industry, hotels, temples and so on. Excavations under St Mary de Lode church uncovered a Roman building of high status, perhaps part of a bath or temple complex, or even a rich merchant’s house.

Built above the Roman building was a 5thC mausoleum, housing three **Christian-type burials**, and then a series of timber buildings which were burnt and rebuilt. By the end of the 8thC there was a recognisable church on the site. The church had its own large burial ground and a wide-spread parish. The priests here were probably working in conjunction with, those at the minster church of St Peter, established by Osric.

We also have a record of various Saxon streets between the church and the riverside, as seen on this [map](#). Some of these still exist in later forms.

ST OSWALD'S PRIORY –

This area had Roman use as a **roof tile factory, and then a cemetery**. By the 800s there was a **Saxon cemetery here; high status crosses were found during excavations in 1980s**. Perhaps they were associated with the cemetery of St Mary de Lode church, or with the Saxon royal hall at Kingsholm which may have dated from this period.

In 877-8 a Danish raiding party under King Guthrum overwintered in Gloucester possibly on this site. Was it they who toppled the crosses? All of the remains found have been broken, and within a century of their erection. The Danes/Northmen were recorded as building 'booths' in the streets. Were they wanting to trade?

(pictures of crosses)

Aethelflaed:

'Queen' Aethelflaed and her husband, Lord Aethelred, appear to have adopted the town for their southern capital. They began to build a church here, probably within a decade of the Danish attack. **It was called the Minster Church of St Peter, or 'the new minster'**, which must have been confusing as there had already been such a church at the present cathedral site for over 200 years, which then had to be called 'the old minster'. The Abbey of St Peter, the Cathedral was ordered to be build by William 1st after he successfully invaded England.

Her project may have been in response to the Danish incursion, as a statement of her intent to protect the town. Aethelflaed also re-fortified the town and imposed a new road system as we have seen earlier in the tour. Also, she fostered Athelstan, her nephew, would go on to be called the first king of all the English.

The church was at first quite modest in size. The priests installed here were **secular**, like the priests at the 'old minster of St Peter', **rather than being an enclosed monastic order**. These priests probably ministered to the general parish population of what is now Kingsholm.

In 909 Aethelflaed "purloined" from Danish-held territory the remains of Saint Oswald, a very important Saxon martyr, a King of Northumberland, and had

them interred in the crypt that she ordered to be built at the eastern end of her New Minster. The church became a pilgrimage site for those wishing to visit the relics, and much wealth accrued. It became known as 'The Golden Minster'. The crypt was probably under the back of the houses to the east.

In 911 Lord Aethelred died. He was buried in this church, perhaps in the crypt near the relics of St Oswald. In 918 Aethelflaed died in Tamworth and her body was brought to Gloucester for burial close to her husband.

Excavations in 1980s uncovered many traces of the early and later churches and priory buildings, **but nothing of the relics of Oswald or the bodies of Aethelflaed and her husband.** All such remains were destroyed at the Reformation, probably during the reign of Edward VI. Only a hollow in the ground, presumably the site of the crypt, remained for several centuries; it was called 'The Hole before the Pelican', into which numerous drunks collapsed.

One large piece of a grave cover of very high quality was however, was uncovered. It is on display in the museum. We can imagine that this is part of the grave of the queen herself. The church was much altered and enlarged over time. **By the mid 12C it had been reformed into an Augustinian priory, which is why we call it St Oswald's Priory today.** The ruins result from the time of the Civil War and 1643 Siege of Gloucester. We are, however, very lucky that ruins still stand today, for they are our only upstanding Saxon feature.

Athelstan was the nephew of Aethelred and Aethelflaed, he was brought up in the court of his aunt and uncle. He became King of the Anglo-Saxons 924-927, and the first King of England 927-939. In 925 he gave a charter of privileges to St Oswald's church. **He died in Gloucester, buried in Malmesbury.**

Aethelflaed was the most powerful female ruler of her age, respected by the people of Mercia. A strong ruler should also have been a warrior, **but there is no record of her going into battle.** She was an **excellent military strategist**, and had the power to retake much of the territory occupied by the Danes and other warlords.

Aethelflaed and Aethelred were technically **caretakers of Mercia** for the greater power of King Alfred of Wessex, and meant to be called **Lord and Lady of the Mercians**. After Aethelred's death, the Lady took control for herself, with the **support of the Witan or Council of Mercian nobles**. She went on to consolidate Mercian territory, withstand the onslaught of the Norse advances, and expand the territory.

She was the first female leader in Britain to be acknowledged as monarch in her own right, and the first to be followed as Queen by her own daughter, Aelfwyn. That reign lasted only a few months, her brother, Edward of Wessex had her deposed and gained control of Mercia.

Upon Edward's death, his son Athelstan took control of both kingdoms, and expanded the territory. He continued to support Gloucester. It was here that he met with the Danish king/commander, Guthrum, for peace negotiations.

(illustration of a Saxon Great Hall or Palace)

13. KINGSHOLM PALACE

The exact site of the Saxon royal palace, isn't known. It was probably about a kilometre to the north-east.

The 'palace' was probably a wooden hall at first, set upon an important Roman burial site, with a chapel attached. Later it would be replaced in stone. The hall may date back to 896 when an important Mercian Council was held in Gloucester. The first reference to it as a palace is from the mid 11C, when Edward the Confessor visited Gloucester nine times to meet with his Great Council. By that time Gloucester was a long-established royal venue. Its final use as a royal palace was during the time of Henry III, in the early 13C.

14. PITT STREET TO HARE LANE –

(see map of streets)

Hare Lane was probably a military road, as 'here' means army or military it was part of the major route to the Worcester and the north. Hare Lane also led to the Saxon Royal Hall, which must have been the most important feature of the north part of the Saxon town.

The town was still of military and strategic importance, controlling an important route into Wales. By the 11C it was a shire town, responsible for civil administration and justice.

ANGLO-SAXON TIMELINE

- 410 departure of Romans; Glevum declines, with collapse of industry, loss of Roman road system; continued sparse occupation; continued administration centre
- 5th C Mary de Lode site of mausoleum on Roman building, church by c800
- 577 Battle of Dyrham, Glaecastre comes under control of West Saxons
- 6th C smith's tools at corner Ladybellegate Street and Commercial Road
- 628 Battle at Cirencester - Mercian control, Hwicce the local tribe
- 679 foundation of double minster by Prince Osric 676-767, Kyneburg as its abess
- 849 birth of Alfred, later king of Wessex
- 869 birth of Aethelflaed
- 780-850 carved crosses at St Oswald, site of Saxon cemetery
- 877-8 Guthrum and the Danish army spend the winter in Gloucester in an enclosure, before moving on to take Chippenham and force Alfred into Athelney marsh
- c887 marriage of Aethelflaed and Aethelred
- 896 Mercian council (Great Witan) held at Glaecastre; in Saxon Royal Hall; hunting vil?; mint founded? (by Alfred?)
- 9th C manure heap artefacts on Westgate Street; timber framed houses with timber sill beams 1-2 storeys, wall posts and wattle panels, and Grubenhause pit huts with earth or wood floor; carved bear at town centre
- c900 Aethelflaed founds St Peter's minster, as a new minster later called St Oswald's; fostership of Athelstan
- 900-14 formation of 'burh' with standing army, new road system, burgage properties?
- 909 seizure of relics of St Oswald from Bardney and translation to Glaecastre
- 911 death of Aethelred and burial at St Oswald's church
- 910ff reconquest of Danelaw
- 918 death of Aethelflaed at Tamworth, and burial at St Oswald's
- 918 short queenship of Aelfwyn, usurpation by Edward of Wessex
- 924-939 kingship of Athelstan, first king of the English
- 931 foundation of priory at St John's site
- 939 death of Athelstan at Glewcaster, burial at Malmesbury
- 946 King Edmund passes through on his way to Pucklechurch where he dies in a minor skirmish with a robber
- 964 King Edgar holds Witan here
- 1016 King Edmund Ironside and Cnut, King of Denmark, meet at Alney Island (near Deerhurst?) to sign a peace treaty ending war between the English and Vikings
- 1016 The Old Minster with its college of priests is reformed into a Benedictine Abbey
- 1042-1063 Edward Confessor holds 9 councils at Kingsholm Palace.
- 1058 Bishop Aeldred builds new abbey church
- 1051 and 1063 mustering of troops against Welsh kings, gory moments at Saxon Palace
- 11th C Shire town; control of bridges; mint, palace, courts; trade and manufacturing returns; timber, cellared houses along the two main streets; latrines in back gardens; burgess tenure and ten churches by Domesday Book; slavery for ¼ population; hierarchy of king, thegns, workers, slaves.
- 1068 Building of the first Norman castle, 16 Saxon houses demolished
- 1072 Abbot Serlo appointed

1085/6 William holds council and orders Doomsday book during Christmas parliament, from Kingsholm Palace?

1088 Death of William the Conqueror and uprising which burns Aeldred's church

Phil's lecture 14 Feb 2018 to guides

Kingsholm Palace with its early medieval church of St Nicholas, location uncertain. A cellar of a house in Kingsholm Square has a piece of Norman stonework from the chapel presumably. It is high status carving. This summer kids will do some resistivity surveying to find anything possible on the possible site. Timbers were found in a previous dig. It would have been an open hall. It was probably established by 900ish, an important site for 9-10C nobles. Probably evolved from a Roman estate. There were burials and the early Roman fort in the vicinity which led to Anglo-Saxons establishing their palace or great hall on the site.

Saxons' most important possession was the hunting dog.

In the Domesday Book ten churches were mentioned for Gloucester, but not named. They probably included St Kyneburg, St Michael, All Saints, St Aldate, St John's, St Nicholas (at the palace), St Mary de Lode, and St Oswald's. Possibly St Mary de Crypt and St Martin.

Saxons did live inside the old Roman walled town.

Aethelflaed planned burhs and was involved in planning battles against her enemies, but probably did not take part in the battle.

A burh has an army. She created an array of fortified towns with standing armies, ready to defend against attack. Evidence is that when Danes attacked up the river, the men of Gloucester and Heriford were able to repel them.

Opposite the library on Brunswick road was a Roman cemetery with about 200 bodies. But some are Saxon. (Body found in a well?)* They re-used Roman facilities, also at St Oswald's site.

Chess piece found in East Gate excavation 1970s and now known to be Saxon.

Houses: One type was partly sunk into the ground, with timber frame, wattle, and thatch roof, called a Grubenhau. Two of these were found on the telephone site on Berkeley Street. This is typical Saxon design.

Saxon sheaths were riveted together instead of sewn as in medieval times. Another was found on Berkeley St, longer and also of high quality.

A Danish army under King Guthrum came to Gloucester in 877 and spent the winter in an enclosure. Where was the camp? Thought to be St Oswald area where there were Christian crosses? Could be in centre of town? Said to have built 'booths'. Did they leave the Viking type stirrup found at Bell Hotel? Westgate Street. Area of 1, 3, 5, 7 was excavated in 1970s rebuilding. A long narrow medieval well was found under a floor. There was Saxon wickerwork and a wall with posts, indicating Saxon houses in the ground. Under them was the Roman level, and waterlogging preserved wooden objects.

Under No 7 was a cellar where was found a Saxon carved stone of a door or archway, but of high quality, possibly from a church like All Saints. (Bear?)***

All Saints did have Saxon origin objects.

Mercer's Entry (or Pinchbelly Alley from 18'C) is the only remaining visible alley from the 10C re-planning of the street system of Aethelflaed. The others have been absorbed into side buildings as long passageways to stairways or back rooms.

King's Board of Richard II time – what was its function? Was it a coin exchange? Or toll collection from travellers? Probably on the site of the A-S mint from the time of Alfred. Probably this was a piece of royal land in the middle of the town. It was removed 1750 to Marylebone park near the castle, then made into a summerhouse, then a folly and moved to park on London Road.

The mint was a rectangular area with a narrow lane beside it. Coins were made in public so population could have confidence. The silver penny was made of 1/240 pound of silver. Minting would have been done sporadically. There were 16 mints in Britain in the 9-10C.

The silver penny of Alfred was a unique coin minted in Gloucester now in British museum. The mint lasted until Henry III.

At St Mary de Lode excavations uncovered a continuous occupation from late 5C Roman, a burial chapel pre-Saxon period. Timber from Saxon early chapel in the hole under the nave.

St Oswald has the only standing A-S monument in the city, using Roman stone of high status, perhaps from a temple. St O was small, a scaled down continental design, perhaps because there was not much money in c900. It was used by Saxon nobles. There was a small western bell turret and a bell was cast below it in the nave floor. The bell rung for services, our earliest indication of bell-making in Gloucester. Crypt at east end for a mausoleum like at Repton. Aethelflaed was buried 'in the east porticus' not the transept. It was a Christian site before the church, as cross shafts were found in the boundary wall and in the foundations. One has the image of a hunting dog, another a salamander. Very high quality.

Translated remains of Oswald or Aethelflaed? Query?***

St Mary de Crypt does it have Saxon origins? Remains of a Norman door on the sidewalk side now covered. St Michael has a cellar under the tower entrance. It was the first city church to have a cemetery, bought the land on the south side. 1300.