

CREMONA IN THE ROMAN AGE

The latin colony of Cremona was founded in the year 218 b.C., together with the “twin-town” *Placentia*, in a bend of the Po river in a territory on the border of those inhabited by the *Insubri* Celts and the *Cenomani*.

In the year 190 b.C., because of the losses during the Gaulish war, it was sent a second wave of settlers.

In the year 148 it was built by the consul Spurio Postumio Albino, the Postumia Road which, along its track from Genoa to Aquileia, crossed the town and its territory.

In the 2nd century b. C., the town reached a quite high economical and cultural level which led it in the year 89 b. C., with the *Lex Iulia*, to be transformed in a *municipium*, a condition which connected it even more to Rome’s politics.

In the civil war which followed Julius Caesar’s murder in the year 44 b. C., the fact that Cremona supported Marcus Antonius and not Caesar Octavian resulted in the confiscation and re-distribution of the lands to the veterans of the future emperor; nevertheless, at the end of the 1st century b. C. the town reached a high level of economic prosperity reflected also in the buildings’ renovation and in the construction of several luxury *domus*.

This flourishing situation was suddenly interrupted by the internal wars which followed Nero’s death: as it is said by Tacitus, in October 69 AD, the Vespasian’s troops set on fire the entire town which was considered guilty because it supported *Vitellius* (who was defeated).

The reconstruction started immediately afterwards, as it wanted Vespasian and it is testified by the discovery of new refined houses and imported luxury objects. Moreover, till the 5th century, the harbor was cited in several written sources as an important dock. The town’s strategic importance is confirmed by the presence of an imperial factory of shields (*fabrica scutaria*) and by the deployment of a special corps of *Sarmatae*.

Cremona was then destroyed again by *Agilulfus* in August 603 and it slowly started to recover only from the 10th century.