

# ANCIENT SIEGE WEAPONS

*Almost as soon as mankind started to gather together in the settlements that facilitated civilisation (a word derived from civitas meaning city), he started to.*

Richard Rowe 4. They were standard kit after that, growing in size and becoming lighter and more powerful as metal replaced wood construction. They more often used a sling shot to carry their deadly payload than a cup. Ammianus Marcellinus, himself a soldier, described the onager in action. The ladders were either easily disposed of by the defenders or used against the assailants by having them tarred, boiled, set ablaze, pelted by arrows, bolts and rocks. Scared by the strange shape of the warships, the motion of the oars, and the unfamiliar machines, the natives halted and then retreated a little. The lower levels of towers often housed battering rams to slam into the walls. It was used, just before the start of the empire, by Julius Caesar during his conquest of Gaul and on both of his expeditions to Britain. They were higher than the walls and all the other fortifications of a besieged place, and divided into stories pierced with windows; in and upon them were stationed archers and slingers, and in the lower story was a battering-ram. Made in ancient Greek city states, this siege weapon used rocks or timber for its projectiles that were either thrown or set on fire to cause further injuries and destruction. The Romans 'inherited' the torsion powered ballistae which had by now spread to several cities around the Mediterranean, all of which became Roman spoils of war in time, including one from Pergamum, which was depicted among a pile of 'trophy' weapons in relief on a balustrade. The Battle of Minas Tirith is reasonably good example of a classic siege, one featuring many of the medieval siege weapons and tactics you'll find in notable sieges throughout history. The Sabuca resembled a wooden see saw with heavy ladders inside that allowed marines to be safe from the opposing ships or to scale walls with ease. A further refinement was a hooked chain at the tip which would remain in any hole crated and pull out further stones. Ballista lived on in the eastern Roman military after the fall of the Western Empire. There were also cases of defenders releasing bees and bears into the tunnels to wreck whatever havoc they could. According to Vegetius, river stones were best, since they are round, smooth, and dense. If the city was defended by ditches, then these would have to be filled before the towers could proceed. This also was a Greek invention; and the one used by Demetrius at the siege of Rhodes, B. A wall damaged by siege miners. He fought against the Germanic Alamanni and the Iranian Sassanids in his 4th-century military career. The first two rulers to make use of siege engines to a large extent were Philip II of Macedonia and Alexander the Great. Listen Now 4. Ancient Rome Almost as soon as mankind started to gather together in the settlements that facilitated civilisation a word derived from civitas meaning city, he started to build defensive walls around them. Soldiers working at the ramps were protected by shelters called vineae, that were arranged to form a long corridor. This included the hugely advantageous military advances the Greeks had made most notably by Dionysus of Syracuse, as well as all the scientific, mathematical, political and artistic developments. Hatra in Mesopotamia was a rare case as it was besieged by Trajan CE and Septimius Severus CE but both times the siege was abandoned due to the strength of the city and the vast resources required to break it. Thrown over the walls to land behind and to strike the populace inside with various diseases, the horror to see your dead army and citizens landing before you and signaling your demise must have truly been a mixture of repulsion, remorse, depression and what not else. Another indirect means was the practice of mining, whereby tunnels were dug under the walls to weaken the foundations and destroy them. The ram was very simple and very effective. It was a simple machine. After a relief on Septimius Severus' triumphal arc in Rome.