

Roman History

The greatest empire the earth has ever known is more than just a collection of facts and figures. It represents both the glorious achievement and at times contemptible behavior of mankind.

In the matter of just a few centuries, Rome grew from a very small village in central Italy to the absolute dominant power of the entire peninsula.

In a few more centuries, the Roman Empire's might reached as far north as Britain, east to Persia and in the south it encompassed the whole of Northern Africa.

Rome's extraordinary achievements and the unparalleled string of influential people shaped the whole of Europe and even the rest of the world.

One super powered nation, encompassing thousands of cultures kept order, stability and civilization in an ancient world fraught with turmoil. The fall of Rome, and the centuries of Dark Ages that followed illustrates the awesome responsibility, reach and impact of the Empire.

Even today, Roman law and foundation of government forms the basis of several modern democracies. Her monuments still stand millennia later, aweing and inspiring us. Her language, while for all intensive purposes lies dormant and unspoken, forms the basis or penetrates the deepest fibers of many modern tongues.

Her final faith, Christianity, was spread like wild-fire through the highly connected system of roads and intermingled cultures of the western world. What else has Rome given us?

In this "**History of Rome**" series, we will explore the development of the Roman Empire and the events that built it. From the foundations as a Republic through the Fall of the West, from the great conquerors to the conquered.

Piece by historical piece, we'll delve into the events and people that shaped not just an era, but the history of an entire planet.

Founding of Rome

Much of what we know today about the historical foundations of Rome comes to us from ancient writers such as Livy and Herodotus, along with the findings of archeology. The early history of Rome, so deeply rooted in legend and mythology, is a mix of fact, fiction, educated guesses and established notions on the conditions of the ancient Mediterranean world.

The earliest evidence of human habitation in the Latium region which included the city of Rome, dates from the Bronze Age (c.1500 BC), but the earliest established, and permanent, settlements began to form in the 8th century BC. At that time archeology indicates two closely related peoples in the area, the Latins and Sabines. These agrarian Italic peoples were tribal in origin, with a social hierarchy that dominated Rome's early form of government and throughout its claim to power in the region.

The date of the founding as a village or series of tribal territories is uncertain, but the traditional and legendary founding of the city dates to 753 BC. Although this date is heavily laden in myth, it is at least roughly supported through archeological evidence. It was in the 8th century BC that two existing settlements, one on the Palatine Hill, the other on the Quirinal, combined to form a single village, corresponding to the same dates as the legend.

According to legend, Romans trace their origins to Aeneas, a Trojan who escaped the sack of Troy by fleeing to Italy. The son Aeneas, Iulius (commonly Julius) founded the city of Alba Longa establishing a monarchy. Two descendents of the Alba Longa Kings, the twin brothers Romulus and Remus, would go on to become the founders of Rome. Eventually the two brothers quarreled resulting in the murder of Remus, leaving Romulus as the first King of Rome. The traditional date of Romulus' sole reign and the subsequent founding of the city, April 21, 753 BC, is still celebrated with festivals and parades today.

Continuing development of the city was largely influenced by Rome's northern neighbors, the Etruscans. The Etruscans, threatened by the growing power and influence of the Latin city to their south, would soon supplant Romulus, and subsequent Latin Kings, with Kings of their own.

Kings of Rome

The Kingdom period of Roman history is as much a part of myth and legend as the founding of the city. Stories passed down generation to generation would eventually find their way into the Historical records of such writers as Livy and Plutarch. There is evidence which supports the period of Kings, but exact rulers, dates, events and accomplishments will likely forever be unknown. The growth of the city and development of its culture during this period, however, is widely accepted.

Romulus ruled as the first King of Rome from 753 - 715 BC. According to Livy, he populated Rome with fugitives from other countries and gave them wives abducted from the Sabine tribe. He was said to have vanished in a thunderstorm and was later worshiped as the god Quirinus. He was known as a warrior King who developed Rome's first army while expanding Rome's territory. He is also credited with establishment of the patrician, or tribal elder, citizen class and the basis of the Roman Senate.

The second King, Numa Pompilius, was a Sabine and ruled from 715-673 BC. He is credited with the foundation of most of the Roman religious rites and offices such as pontifices, flamens (sacred priests), vestal virgins, the building of the temple of Janus and the reorganization of the calendar into days. Livy suggests that his reign was one of peace and religious reflection for the city. "Once Rome's Neighbors had considered her not so much as a city as an armed camp in their midst threatening the general peace; now they came up to revere her so profoundly as a community dedicated wholly to worship, that the mere thought of offering her violence seemed like sacrilege." (Livy, History I, xxi)

672 - 641 BC. Tullius Hostilius succeeded Pompilius as the third King from 672 - 641 BC. He was the complete opposite of his predecessor as evidenced in Livy's words "In his view, Rome had been allowed to lapse into senility, and his one object was to find cause for renewed military adventure." (Livy, History I, xviii) His reign was one of conquest and expansion which included the eventual destruction of the rival city of Alba Longa. According to lore, Hostilius warlike behavior and complete neglect of the Roman gods, led to a plague on the city. In asking for help from an angered Jupiter, Hostilius was struck down by a bolt of lightning.

The reign of Hostilius, and the resulting plague, prompted the Senate to choose Ancus Marcius as its fourth King. The grandson of Numa Pompilius, Marcius reigned from 640 - 616 BC. He is credited with the formation of the plebeian citizen class and the founding of the port city of Ostia. The first bridge across the Tiber, the Pons Sublicius, was also said to have been built by Marcius. He combined this administrative capability with military achievement as well, conquering and absorbing several other Latin tribes. Marcius, like his grandfather, was said to have died a natural death.

Tarquinius Priscus, (Tarquinius I) the first Etruscan monarch, succeeded Marcius as the fifth King ruling from 616 - 579 BC. He was said to have been made guardian of Marcius' children, sent

them away after his death, and convinced the Romans to elect him as King. His reign is credited with the foundation of the Roman games (Ludi Romani), the Circus Maximus and the construction of the great sewers (cloacae). These operations were funded through the conquest of several more neighboring Latin and Sabine tribes. Much of Rome's military symbolism (the eagle, etc.) and civil offices is believed to have been developed during this period. He is also credited with bringing the Etruscan military triumph tradition to Rome, and being the first to celebrate one in the city. His death was said to have been at the hands of the sons of Marcius.

Servius Tullius followed Tarquinius and ruled as the sixth King from 578 to 534 BC. He is renowned for implementing a new constitution further developing the citizen classes. The Servian Walls (city walls of Rome) are attributed to him, but modern archeology indicates that the existing walls were built in the 4th Century BC. He is also credited with the construction of the Temple of Diana on the Aventinus hill. He was assassinated by his daughter Tullia and her husband Tarquin.

The seventh and final King of Rome, _____, (Tarquin the Proud) ruled from 534-510 BC. Under his rule, the Etruscans were at the height of their power, and the authority of the monarchy was absolute. He repealed several earlier constitutional reforms and used violence and murder to hold his power. His tyrannical rule was despised by the Romans and the final straw was the rape of Lucretia, a patrician Roman, at the hands of Tarquinius' son Sextius. The Tarquins and the monarchy were cast out of Rome in 510 BC in a revolt led by Lucius Junius Brutus and Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus.

The Senate voted to never again allow the rule of a King and formed a Republic government in 509 BC. Lucius Junius Brutus and Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus went on to become the first Consuls of this new government. Free from the rule of Kings, the Romans developed a strict social status hierarchy that would set in motion the conquest of the Western World.

Birth of the Roman Republic

The rape of Lucretia, according to Livy, was the fundamental "last straw" in the overthrow of the Etruscan King _____. The transition from the Etruscan monarchy to republic (510-509 BC) was not, however, a simple institutional change. In place of the King, the newly founded Republic relied upon its Senate, or patrician class families, to oversee the government and the election of various officials, including 2 shared power Consuls. This transformation from monarchy to representative style government, headed by the elite social class, would prove to have troubles of its own.

After the overthrow of the Tarquin dynasty, led by Junius Brutus, the ancient Romans avoided a true monarchical government for the remainder of their storied history (Even the later imperial government maintained forms of the republican system. While in practice it could be a system of absolute power for the Emperor, it was theoretically still checked by the Senate and other representative ideals.) This same Junius Brutus was later claimed as an ancestor by the Republican loyalist Marcus Brutus who was among the conspirators in the assassination of Julius Caesar, and shows the deeply rooted Roman aversion to Kings. It was the era of the Republic in which the great expansion of Roman civilization, power and structure set the path for European dominance. In these formative and expansive years, Rome was ruled by its Senate and its people's assemblies. The offices of power were divided among various elected officials to avoid the conglomeration of power and the re-institution of the monarchy.

These magistracies were in essence, a division of previous monarchical powers. The Romans instituted a constitution which would dictate the traditions and institutions of government for the Roman people. This constitution, however, was not a formal or even written document, but rather a series of unwritten traditions and laws. Deeply rooted in pre-Republican tradition, it essentially

maintained all the same monarchical powers and divided them amongst a series of people, rather than in one supreme ruler.

Patricians and Plebeians

Discontent and political upheaval lay ahead for the fledgling Republic, since the new constitution was flawed and exclusive in nature for the general population (plebeians). Rome was surrounded by powerful external enemies, including its former Etruscan rulers, and Patrician (the hereditary aristocratic families) in-fighting with each other and the plebeian (common people) class was an immediate source of difficulty. The Romans developed a complex client system, where aristocratic families pledged allegiance and voting support to other powerful families. In exchange for political appointments and advocating of various agendas, some power groups were able to subvert the state and the will of the masses for personal gain.

The words Patrician and Plebeian have taken on different connotations of wealthy and poor in modern English, but no such distinction existed in Roman times. The two classes were simply ancestral or inherited. A citizen's class was fixed by birth rather than by wealth. Patricians monopolized all of the political offices and probably most of the wealth in the early Republic, but there were many wealthy plebeians, and conversely many patrician families had little claim to wealth or prestige other than their family heritage. The relationship between the plebeians and the patricians sometimes came under intense strain, as a result of this exclusion from political influence. In response, the plebeians on several occasions, abandoned the city leaving the patricians without a working class to support their political whims.

Struggle of the Orders

Roman imperium, or the power of law and command, was fully concentrated in the patrician class. The consuls were elected from among the patricians, as were the quaestors, praetors and censors. The ensuing class conflicts from the domination of political power by one class over another, in a virtual transfer of power from King to Senate, was called "the struggle of the orders". In effect, it was simply the recurring pattern of the patrician class attempting to hold onto power, while the plebeians worked to rise to social and political equality. The patricians, while mostly secure in their wealth and noble foundation, were also unable to exist without the plebeians. The Plebeian class not only produced the grain and supplied the labor that maintained the Roman economy; they also formed the recruiting basis as soldiers for the Legions.

In 494 BC, only 15 years after the founding of the Republic, a secession of plebeians to the Sacred Mount outside Rome, ushered in a fundamental change to the Republican government. The Plebes formed a tribal assembly, and their own alternative government, until the patricians agreed to the establishment of an office that would have sacrosanctity (*sacrosanctitas*). This was the right to be legally protected from any physical harm, and the right of help (*ius auxiliandi*), meaning the legal ability to rescue any plebeian from the hands of a patrician magistrate. These magistrate positions were labelled as Tribunes or *tribuni plebes*. Later, the tribunes acquired a far more formidable, and often manipulated power, the right of intercession (*ius intercessio*). This was the right to veto any act or proposal of any magistrate, including another tribune, for the good of the people. The tribune also had the power to exercise capital punishment against any person who interfered in the performance of his duties. The tribune's power to act was enforced by a pledge of the plebeians to kill any person who harmed a tribune during his term of office.

In 451 BC, another Plebeian secession led to the appointment of the decemvirate, or a commission of ten men. This eventually resulted in the adoption of the bronze engraved *Lex Hortensia*, and raised the number of Plebeian Tribunes to 10. In 445 BC, the Canuleian law legalized marriages between patricians and members of the plebs. Along with later inter-class adoptions, plebeians were allowed additional class mobility and eventual inclusion into previous Patrician only magistracies. In 367 the plebeians gained the right to be elected consul, and in 366

the first was elected. Thereafter, the Licinian-Sextian laws demanded that at least one consul be a plebeian. After the completion of the term of consular office, the plebeian consul became a member of the Senate resulting in the disintegration of the patrician hold on the Senate. Furthermore, in 300 BC, plebeians were allowed to serve at all levels of the priesthood, thus making them religiously equal to the patricians. Finally, the greatest achievement of power for the people, in 287 BC, the decisions and legislation of the plebeian assembly, Concilium Plebis or "Council of the Plebeians", became not only binding on the plebeians, but on the entire Roman citizenry.

All power was not shifted away from the patricians, however. While still maintaining significant power through clients and the prestige of their heritage, they were also able to turn the tables. Using the plebeian adoption methodology for upward mobility, some patricians used it to adopt into the plebeian class and become available to serve as plebeian only Tribunes. While a rare occurrence, such mobility made the entire political spectrum open to the ruling classes.

This political upheaval brought about a new aristocracy, composed of patrician and wealthy plebeian families, and admission to the Senate became almost the hereditary privilege of these families. The Senate, which in original function maintained no law making, and little administrative power, became a powerful governing force. They oversaw matters of war and peace, foreign alliances, the founding of colonies, and the handling of the state finances. The rise of this new nobilitas ended the conflict between the upper echelons of the two orders, but the position of the poorer plebeian families was not improved. In fact, a class designation of equestrian (knight), originally composed of patrician senatorial families, developed into one including plebes that signified a particular level of wealth, and further separated the plebeian elite from the common people. The decided contrast between the conditions of the rich and the poor led to struggles in the later Republic between the aristocratic party and the popular party. These struggles developed into one of several major factors in the eventual collapse of the Republican system.

Conquest of Italy

The Consolidation of Latium

With the expulsion of the Etruscan Kings and the establishment of the Republican system firmly rooted, Rome soon turned its attention to regional dominance and expansion. Rome inherited leadership from the Etruscans and was already the dominant player in the Latium region by 509 BC. A treaty with Carthage at this time essentially recognized Roman authority and influence over the other Latin states. These city states had formed an alliance called the Latin League, intended to provide enough mutual strength and unity of interests to treat with Rome as equals. There is some conflicting evidence on Roman inclusion within this league, but there is no doubt that within these formative stages, they were mostly at odds.

From the early Sixth Century BC on, the Latin League was a cooperation of states sharing common interests such as religious worship and defense of the region from invasion. Latium was fertile, wealthy, had access to the sea and was therefore an inviting target to enemies such as the Etruscans, Volscians, and the Aequians. The cities of the Latin league shared commercial treaties and provided rights of commerce, inter-marriage and settlement to its citizens. It was these rights that formed the basis of the Latin rights that were to play such an important role in later Roman politics and treaties.

When Etruscan rule over Rome, and the other states in Latium, was broken, the League vied with each other for dominance. The balance of power shifted often between Rome and other influential cities like Alba Longa and Lavinium. By 496 BC these power gambits turned to war when Lavinium broke its alliance with Rome in an attempt to assume power. Members of the League united with Lavinium and Tusculum and moved against Rome. At the battle of Lake Regillus, Rome claimed victory over the combined might of her neighbors. Whether this victory was outright, or for all

intensive purposes, a stalemate, its significance was that it proved Rome's ability to stand against the combined might of her neighbors.

Within a few years (493 BC) the war drew to a close, with the Latin League claiming independence from Rome. The foedus Cassianum (treaty of Cassius), ensured this independence but placed Rome virtually on equal status with all the members of the Latin League combined. Alliances continued to form and shift over the next century but external pressures, mainly from the Umbrians (Volsci and Aequi) and Sabines forced Rome's immediate neighbors into closer ties. These alliances essentially eliminated this sense of independence and would eventually lead to the absorption of cities and people into the Roman sphere of influence.

The 5th century BC was a time of nearly constant expansion among the Oscan-Umbrian hill peoples. One of these tribes, the Hernicii, was highly adapted to Latin culture and customs. With the pressure from the Aequi and Volsci, the Hernici joined the mutual protection treaty between the Romans and Latins in 486 BC. The armies defending Latium consisted of Romans, Latins and Hernici. As time passed and the alliance grew more essential to survival, the Hernici were soon absorbed into the Latin culture and, as a result, little is known of them. Through the middle of the century virtually every year was wrought with conflicts.

To the east of Latium, the Latin towns Tibur and Praeneste were threatened by the Aequi. The Aequi were responsible for numerous raids and attacks including purportedly reaching the gates of Rome on several occasions. Details of this time period are sketchy at best, and we rely on the not so reliable reports of the ancients (ie Livy). These towns disappear from recorded history about this time and it can be assumed that the invasions were responsible. In 458, a Roman army was supposedly eliminated at the Agidus pass, which leads into Latium east of Tusculum. In response, L. Quinctius Cincinnatus was appointed dictator and is said to have won a decisive victory over the Aequi. The Aequi, however, were not so easily defeated and were back waging war within a couple of years.

At this time, the Volsci were in control of much of southern Latium (Cora, Velitrae, Satricum, Antium), and pressured the Latins from there. Under the leadership of the legendary Roman renegade Coriolanus, they, much like the Aequi were said to have reached Rome itself. The decisive battle between the Latins and these Umbrian invaders appears to have been fought in 431 BC. The Romans, under the command of A. Postumius Tubertus, again met the Aequi at the Algidus pass, but were this time victorious. With this victory the Romans opened an aggressive offensive which the Umbrian tribe were unable to withstand forever. By the 390s the Romans and Latins had regained control of the plains and relegated the Aequi and Volsci to the western highlands. The Volsci were finally defeated with the capture of the port of Antium in 377 BC. The Aequi seem to be eliminated from history as a separate entity within this same time frame.

To the northeast of Rome, the territory between the Tiber and Anio was constantly pressured by the Sabines. Historical accounts of the Roman relationship with these people are mixed. A Sabine invasion is said to have seized Rome in 460 BC, but after a major victory for Rome in 449 the Sabines fall from the annals of history for nearly 2 centuries. They, like other neighbors were eventually absorbed into Roman culture and became a part of the growing city. As an example, one such Sabine zealously allied with Rome. In contrast to their invading cousins, and during open conflict, they sought and gained permission to move their entire populace onto Roman territory and become Romans. Among these immigrants were the Attus Clausus, later the Roman Gens Claudian, which evolved into one of Rome's elite and highly influential families.

As stated previously, with the victory over the Umbrians, the military policy of Rome became more aggressive in the 60 years between 449 and 390 BC. The Etruscans, especially the city of Veii, remained a constant source of strife. By 396 BC, in large part thanks to Gallic invasions, the Etruscans were weak and the door to their conquest was opened. But the Gauls were on the move from the north and disastrous conflict would be in store. Further Roman expansion to the south

was to be met by the Samnites in a series of several wars. In the 300 years since her founding Rome had yet to firmly secure its own region of Latium and still faced considerable challenges ahead.

Veii and the Etruscans

Despite removing the yoke of Etruscan rule in the late 6th century, the Etruscans would remain a viable threat to the fledgling Roman Republic for another 3 centuries. The Etruscan city-state of Veii was situated only 12 miles to the north of Rome, and being equally matched in strength, was the main source of concern. Between Rome and Veii, ran the important transportation and commerce artery, the Tiber River. Control of it was vital to both cities and conflict was inevitable.

The city controlling access to the Tiber also controlled access to Western Italy, Latium, Samnium, Etruria, and partly northern Campania. Ostia, settled on the mouth of the Tiber and the Mare Tyrrhenum was also a vital source of salt, and access to its mines were of utmost importance to both cities. Such vital economic repercussions in a considerably small area led to unlimited conflicts over time. As such, in the early 5th century (483 - 79 BC), a powerful Roman familia, the Fabians, had settled into Etruscan territory near the town of Fidenae. The potential damage to the Etruscan economy, and raids on both sides soon escalated led to war. While the history of the events that followed is based on legend (and suspiciously similar to the Peloponnesian battle of Thermopylae), it was said that the Veientanes destroyed 300 Fabii at Cremora, leaving all but one dead.

Within a year of the victory at Cremora, the Etruscan navy, in conflict with Greece, was destroyed by Hieron of Syracuse, off of Cumae. The result was a military disaster for the Etruscans that they never really seemed to recover from. The various city states of the Etruscan league, including Veii, devolved more and more into separate unrelated entities, thereby losing the strength of mutual protection. Veii, despite its recent upper hand at Cremora, was forced to make a treaty with Rome.

Within this time frame a more consequential series of events were taking place, however. Celtic Gauls had been migrating into northern Italy from the 6th century BC and establishing themselves at or near Etruscan territory. Raids and warfare with these people would have a debilitating effect on the Etruscans and play directly into the growing strength of Rome. The Gauls so weakened the Etruscans that the Romans, between 406 and 396 BC, went on the offensive.

It's about this period in history that Livy tells us of the legendary Roman hero M. Furius Camillus. Under his command Fidenae was retaken from Veii, and then the city of Veii itself came under siege. According to the legend, the Siege of Veii lasted 10 years, but its description is so closely paralleled to the Homeric Siege of Troy, that we must take into account the propaganda used by ancient sources to inflate the glory of Rome. The actual siege probably lasted considerably less time, though the introduction of a paid professional legion during this course of events indicates that it was a protracted campaign. The siege was finally broken, in 396 BC, when the Romans supposedly drained Alban Lake. This not only would divert water supplies from the city but allowed access for Roman soldiers to sneak under the walls through empty stream beds. In the end, whatever the truth behind the legend may be, Camillus was credited with saving Rome and bestowed with the unending admiration of the Romans throughout its history.

Gaining Veii, the Romans, in stark contrast to their general conquest policies of incorporation, destroyed much of the city and drove out many of the Etruscan residents. The territory was allotted to Roman citizens, and four new tribes were created: the Stellatine, Tromentina, Sabatina and Aniensis. Veii's capture resulted in a considerable increase in Roman territory and strength. As a result, the Roman state, which had already been a match for the Latin league in its entirety, now was greatly predominant in resources and manpower over her divided neighbors.

Slowly, over the course of the next century, the Etruscan cities would be added to the Roman fold one by one. In various forms over this time, they would side with various opponents of the Romans in desperate attempts to break their hold on power in central Italy. The obscurity of the Etruscan people, however, in the perspective of regional power, was inevitable by this point. Their lack of unity and cooperation, despite joining various enemies of Rome in the waning years of Italian independence, led directly to their own demise. By 273 BC, Etruria and the Etruscans would be completely within the domain of Rome.

Galic Sack of Rome

In the 5th and early 4th centuries BC, migratory Germanic tribes pressured Gallic Celts living in the Danube regions to push South in search of new territory. They were likely familiar with the Po River Valley, in north central Italy, from trade arrangements with Etruscans who were there. The Gauls crossed the Alps en masse capturing and settling Etruscan territory by force. The Gallic tribes were united only by blood and origin and each maintained their own kings or warlords. Some of these tribes settled into cattle and cereal farming along with peaceful cohabitation, but others maintained aggressive policies towards their new neighbors.

One such tribe, the Senones, was under the command of a Brennus, who led his Celts to the Etruscan city of Clusium about 100 miles north of Rome. It is important to note that much of the ancient source material, such as Livy, Polybius and Diodorus Siculus, is steeped in legend or, especially on the part of Livy, biased though nationalism. Whether Clusium was the target, or it simply stood in the path on the way to the more powerful city of Rome, is unclear. It is clear, however, that the Celts did approach and lay siege to Clusium and that the Etruscans there likely set aside any differences and called to Rome for help.

In response, according to the ancients, the Romans sent a delegation of 3 envoys to treat with Brennus. Siculus claims that the 3 were really spies sent to assess the strength of the Celts, but it is apparent that whatever the reason for the meeting, it escalated into violence. After exchanged insults, the Roman envoys were involved in a skirmish with the Gauls, in which one Celtic chief was killed. The commissioners returned to Rome without relief for Clusium and with an angry Gallic army behind them. Brennus sent his own representatives to Rome to demand the 3 men be turned over to him, but was predictably refused. Later that year, the angered Gauls left Clusium behind and headed for Rome to seek revenge.

The advancing Gauls invaded Roman territory and threatened the security of Rome herself. Eleven miles to the north of Rome, an outnumbered Roman army mustered under the command of A. Quintus Sulpicius, met them in July, 387 BC (the traditional date is recorded as 390 BC but the is erroneous), and suffered a crushing defeat on the banks of the River Allia. As all appeared lost, some Roman defenders retreated to the Capitoline Hill to endure a siege, while civilians fled through the city gates to the city of Veii and the surrounding countryside. The Gauls poured into Rome slaughtering civilians while looting and burning everything in their path. At some point they apparently attempted an uphill attack on the heavily fortified capital, but were repulsed and never able to dislodge the occupants.

For seven months the Gauls remained and wreaked havoc around Rome. Several assaults on the Capitol all failed, and one such night attempt was even said to have been thwarted through the timely intervention of the sacred Geese of the Temple of Juno. In any event, by this point, the Roman garrison must've been getting dangerously low on supplies. The Romans engaged with Brennus for terms that would ensure that the Celts depart and Brennus apparently agreed to leave Rome for the price of 1,000 lbs. of gold. There are theories that the Celts were paying heavy tolls from disease, or that their own settlements to the north were under attack by other Italian tribes. Whatever the reason, Brennus accepted the terms and agreed to leave. The following passage

from Livy, regarding these terms, leaves us with one of the most famous lines accredited to a barbarian chief in dealings with Rome.

"Quintus Sulpicius conferred with the Gallic chieftain Brennus and together they agreed upon the price, one thousand pounds' weight of gold. Insult was added to what was already sufficiently disgraceful, for the weights which the Gauls brought for weighing the metal were heavier than standard, and when the Roman commander objected the insolent barbarian flung his sword into the scale, saying 'Vae Victis-- 'Woe to the vanquished!'"

With the departure of Brennus and his Gauls, many Romans wanted to abandon their city and move to the nearby city of Veii, but reverence for the gods and the divine will of Roma alleviated this concern. The Romans obviously decided to stay, and quickly rebuilt the city. One major improvement was the completion of the Servian Wall, supposedly built by the Etruscan King Servius Tullus. As a further result of the Gallic invasion, the Romans adopted new military weaponry, abandoning the Greek Phalanx style spears in favor of the gladius and modified armor. Through the resulting civil strife, the legion was reorganized, placing the youngest and strongest soldiers in the front lines, as opposed to the previous formation of order according to wealth.

The Gallic invasion left Rome weakened and also encouraged several previously subdued Italian tribes to rebel. The Etruscans, Volsci, Hernici, and Aequi were all among these numbers. One by one, over the course of the next 50 years, these tribes were defeated and brought back under Roman dominion. Meanwhile, the Celts would continue to harass the region until 345 BC, when they entered into a formal treaty with Rome. Like most others, this treaty would be short lived and the Romans and Celts would maintain an adversarial relationship for the next several centuries. The Celts would remain a threat in Italy until the final defeat of Hannibal in the 2nd Punic War. The sack of Rome would be long remembered by Romans, and would finally be avenged 3 1/2 centuries later with Caesar's conquest of Gaul.

The Samnite Wars

Rome, having survived the invasions of the Celtic Gauls in the early 4th century BC, set its sights on further expansion in the middle part of the century. They re-conquered those Latin and Etruscan towns that had left the fold during the Gallic occupation, and in absorbing others, reconsolidated their position as the dominant force in Latium and Central Italy. With their home turf secured (or so it seemed) the Romans looked south towards Campania.

At this time, the Samnites had moved into the fertile lands of Campania, from the south-central Apennines. They already controlled the towns of Capua and Cumae to the south of Rome, and held sway to the east, as well. Rome, to protect its flanks while still in the midst of re-taking Latium and Etruria, wisely entered into an alliance with the Samnites in 354 BC. Conflict with Samnium over Campanian dominance was inevitable, however, and would soon turn into a series of wars lasting from 343 - 290 BC.

The First Samnite War

In the 340's BC, while Philip II of Macedonia (father of Alexander the Great) was occupied with the Persians to the east, war in Italy broke out on the plains of Campania, near the Greek colony of Neapolis (Naples). Philip and the Macedonian armies were occupied with Persians to the east and various other regional conflicts, while Lucanian and Bruttian tribes were harassing the Greek colonies farther to the east on the Adriatic coast. These colonies called to Epirus for help, while Neapolis, in a more isolated position, had no choice but to call on Rome for assistance.

The most powerful group of the highland Sabellian people, the Samnites, in the middle of the fourth century, were invading into Campania and taking territory easily. The warlike Samnites far outmatched their civilized neighbors and found the fertile lands a much better place for herding than the rough hills of the Appenines. According to unreliable accounts, Roman envoys, at the behest of Neapolis, went to the Samnites to discuss mutual terms of peace in the region. Their intervention was supposedly rudely rebuffed, and war would be the result.

The resulting First Samnite War, was a brief but consequential affair. While historical accounts, including one by Livy, are rife with un-trustworthy depictions, it is safe to assume that the war was marked by Roman victories in the field. Despite the successes, trouble again with her Latin neighbors would force Rome to make peace with 2 years of the onset of war.

Angry over conscription into a Roman war outside of their own territory, the Latins revolted once again. Increasingly dependent on Rome, the Latin League saw the Samnite pre-occupation as a perfect opportunity to withdraw from Rome's dominance. In response, the Romans had no choice, but to break off their southern conquests and deal with their neighbors once again.

Despite its brevity, and lack of true historical references, the First Samnite War was a resounding success for Rome. It resulted in the major acquisition of the rich lands of Campania with its capital of Capua. The Campanians, civilized and peaceful were probably no match for the aggressive Samnites and an alliance with the powerful young Roman Republic seems a natural occurrence. It illustrates the model of Roman diplomacy in which an alliance results in the absorption of the ally into Rome's dominion. Whether through political and diplomatic necessity or through military intimidation there is no dispute that Campania became firmly attached to Rome at the end of the First Samnite War. The addition of Campania not only added considerable wealth and territory to the growing power of Rome, but boosted her already sufficient manpower recruiting base for future legionary campaigns.

Second Samnite War

the Romans expanded into the territory of the Aurunci and Sidicini to the south of the Volsci. They also attempted to reassert control of Campania by moving south across the Liris River. In 328 the Romans, clearly looking for another fight with Samnium, established a colony at Fregellae on the Liris in and another at Cales, earlier in 334 BC.

The Samnites, of course, found this to be an unacceptable intrusion by Rome, but were too pre-occupied to respond immediately. They were involved in a conflict with the Greek colony of Tarentum and its ally, King Alexander of Epirus. At the end of this war, in 331 BC, the Samnites were free to deal with the reality of Roman expansion. The Romans had claimed that the Samnites were encouraging the people of Neapolis to expand into the territories of Campania and necessitated the creation of colonies in disputed areas. The Samnites, in response, sent troops to garrison Neapolis (modern Naples), and the elite class called to Rome for help. In 327 BC, a Roman army arrived and threw out the Samnite garrison, setting off the Second Samnite War.

By the beginning of this renewed war, the Samnites controlled approximately twice as much territory, though mostly mountainous and not as fertile, as the Romans. Initially, the war went clearly in the favor of Rome, even prompting Samnium to sue for peace in 321 BC. The Romans over-confidant, offered terms that were so lopsided that the Samnites rejected them, and the war continued. While seemingly in dire straits, the Samnites would learn to use their mountainous terrain to their advantage, and turn the tides.

Later in 321 BC, the two Consuls for that year advanced a Roman army deeper into Samnite territory. The territorial advantaged Samnites, at what would become the Battle of the Claudine Forks, soon trapped the Romans in a mountain pass. Finding themselves completely surrounded

and faced with certain annihilation, the Romans capitulated and were forced to march out under a "yoke of spears". The Romans were forced to give up their spears and march under them, a sign of the ultimate battlefield humiliation. Some sources suggest that Six hundred equites had to be handed over as hostages and the Romans had to pledge a five-year treaty while also giving up her colonies at Fregellae and Caes. Later Roman historians, however, tried to claim that these terms were rejected, but its quite clear that operations against Samnium did cease until about 316 BC.

In this 5-year respite, the Romans took the opportunity to strengthen their military position. In 318 they absorbed two more regional tribes, the Oufentina at the south of Volsci territory, and the Falerna to the north of Capua. They also surrounded the Samnites with Roman allies by attacking and overtaking the Apulia and Lucania to the east and south of Samnium. Several more tribes were forced to take allied status with Rome, further increasing the pressure on the Samnites.

When military operations resumed in 316, however, Rome still found itself on the losing side of the conflict. They were defeated in several successive engagements including a crushing defeat at Lautulae in 315. Within a year, Campania was on the verge of rejecting Rome and joining the Samnites, so the Romans were forced to sue for peace again with some of the Samnite factions. The Samnites, however, kept the pressure on by encouraging the Etruscans of Etruria to join them. By 311, at the end of a forty-year treaty, the Etruscans joined the conflict, but just at the time the tide was beginning to turn.

Initially the Romans were continuously defeated by both of their enemies, but between 311 and 304, they won a series of victories against both the Etruscans and the Samnites. In 308 BC the Etruscans were forced to capitulate on severe terms and in 304 BC the Samnites followed suit. While not conquered, the Samnites were severely weakened, and Rome, despite the struggle, came to take considerable territory where many new colonies were established.

In addition to the gain of territory, some ancient sources suggest that the Romans adopted the Manipular military formation of the Samnites as a result of their early successes. It was far more flexible than the hoplite system of the Greeks and Etruscans that Rome had been using, and allowed great maneuverability on all sorts of terrain and conditions. The system was in use throughout the Republic and later evolved into the cohort formation that would later conquer Europe.

The Second Samnite War is a perfect example of Rome's long-range campaign tactics and how planning for the long term would nearly always pay off. As a result of this strategy, the construction of the Via Appia (by Censor Appius Claudius) was begun in 312 and the Via Valeria in 306 BC. The Via Appia, covered the 132 miles between Rome and Capua in Campania, and provided a fast moving highway for the early legions to advance against the Samnites. The first of many remarkable Roman engineering achievements, literally paved the way for the conquest of Southern Italy.

This final decade of the fourth century was the culmination of resistance to Roman domination by several neighbors. The Aequi and Hernici both revolted and joined the Samnites. Several other previously unmolested tribes, the Marsi, Marrucini, Paeligni, Frentani and Vestini, also joined Samnium against Rome. Their efforts were too late to stop the spread of Roman expansion and in 305 BC a Roman victory led the Paeligni and Hernici to surrender. In 304 the Aequi were defeated in the same year the Samnites sued for peace, and all the other tribes of Central Italy would make alliances with Rome within another 2 years. The Samnites were still a thorn in Rome's side, however, and conflict would be renewed within the decade.

Third Samnite War

At the close of the 4th century 298 BC, after only 6 years of peace, the Romans again found themselves at odds with the Samnites. Old wounds were slow to heal and the Samnites decided that intervention was still necessary to stop the Roman spread of power. The Third Samnite War became the last desperate attempt of the Samnites to remain independent and were able to convince Rome's old enemies to join against them once again. The Etruscans, the Umbrians, the Gauls, and other regional tribes joined in arms with Samnium to check Rome's ever increasing regional authority.

The war began again near Neapolis where possession of the plains of Campania had been a constant source of conflict. The threat to Rome was very real, facing newly coordinated enemies from all sides, the Samnites to the south and east, and the Etruscans and Gauls to the north. Until now, Rome had mostly been able to stand against single enemies at a time, but unification of these old foes made the challenge more difficult. This coalition of states not only created challenges, but proved the desperation of these tribes to reverse Roman expansion.

Early in the conflict, Rome shattered a Samnite army in the south, allowing attention to be focused on the Etruscans and Gauls in the north. The pivotal battle for Italy took place in 295 at Sentinum in Umbria, where, according to various sources, more combatants were engaged in a single encounter than at any time previous in Italy. Chariot driving Celtic Gauls forced the Romans back initially, but Roman discipline soon commanded the field, crushing the coalition against them. The Samnites, despite their less than favorable results, held out for 5 more years, finally capitulating in 290 BC.

Rome granted Samnium a favorable treaty forcing them into alliance and ending their unified resistance for the remainder of Rome's history. The Campanian cities both Italian and Greek, Capua and almost all others, were now the undisputed allies of Rome, with varying degrees of independence. The Sabines ceded territory as well, and several Roman colonies (13 known in total) were settled in Campania as well as on the eastern outskirts of Samnium.

The years surrounding the Samnite Wars were not only one of military prowess for Rome, but of great public works, as well. In 329 BC, the Circus Maximus got one of many face-lifts throughout its history, gaining permanent horse-stalls and starting gates. The first Roman road, the Via Appia was constructed from Rome to Capua in 312 BC and the first aqueduct, the Aqua Appia was also established at the same time. These magnificent structures not only were of great benefit to Rome and her people, but proved the flourishing disposition of the state even during time of war and expansion. At the end of the Samnite Wars, Rome held perhaps as many as 150,000 people making it one of the largest cities in the Mediterranean region. As many as 1,000,000 people claimed citizenship to Rome, and vastly larger numbers were obligated through Latin rights and allied status.

With the defeat of Samnium, the last major Italian threat, Rome was the master of nearly the entire Italian peninsula, save for the Gauls occupying the Po valley in the north and the Greek holdout cities like Tarentum in the far south. This growing power soon gained the attention of regional powers in Greece and later, the masters of the Mediterranean, the Carthaginians

Latin Revolt and the end of the Latin League

Since the Gallic sack of Rome in the early 4th century BC, Rome became increasingly dominant within Latium and among her Latin neighbors. With the end of the First Samnite War, the Romans had taken control of Campania and the people gladly entered into an alliance with Rome.

The Latins, having fully aided Rome in the war, expected equal treatment in regard to the spoils and therefore continued to harass the Samnites despite overtures towards peace, by Rome. The

Latins and the Campanians, both feared Rome's rising power and that allied relationships were really relationships of domination.

While the Latins continued action against the Samnites, they asked Rome to intervene on their behalf and stop the fighting. The Latin League would view this as a continued effort to dominate and an already shaky relationship would only worsen. The Latins demanded equal status among all the league members, and a share of the governing of Rome which was expectedly rejected. Campania and Capua joined with the Latins in an open revolt which came to be called the Latin War, while Rome's recent and future enemies, the Samnites, sided with Rome.

In 340 BC, the Latin War opened with an overwhelming victory for Rome. Under the command of consul T. Manlius, Roman Legions, along with Samnite support, crushed the Latins and Campanians at the battle of Trifanum. The Campanians immediately capitulated and fell back into Roman control while two years of bitter fighting would be needed to stamp out Latin resistance. In 338 BC, Rome dismantled the Latin League and came to terms with her neighbors, offering considerable rights, while increasing her own authority.

With Roman victory, some of the Latin city-states were fully incorporated within the Republic, while others were given rights to lesser Roman citizenship. *Commercium*, the right to conduct business with Rome, and *Connubium*, or the right to inter-marry between tribes, were two of these rights granted but were limited to interaction with Rome and not between each other. The making of alliances was reserved only for Rome, and the city-states lost any sort of autonomy in this respect. The right of *civitas sine suffragio*, citizenship without the right to vote in the popular assemblies, would become the standard Romanization policy that would build the Empire.

The Latin rights, or *ius Latii*, were a stepping stone for newly absorbed communities to feel a part of Rome, while being required to show their acceptance of Roman rule before gaining full citizenship. These rights were granted in regard to Rome, but the right of commerce was limited to Rome, and denied with the other former league members. In most cases, while each city state was granted various additional benefits or denied rights, depending on the circumstances, the Latin cities no longer had to pay taxes, but instead were required furnish man-power to the Legions. Most cities were allowed to keep their governing system under the control of the same elite classes, only under the supervision of Rome.

The general effect of the Latin War was to strengthen Rome's grip upon Latium and to provide more lands upon which to settle. Rome now truly dominated all the Latins, and rather than acting as the most powerful member of an alliance, it became a centralized government. The next couple of centuries would continue to see revolts by Italian communities either over class or various social issues, but with the elimination of the Latin League, Rome truly became the master of Central Italy.

Pyrrhic War

With the conclusion of the Samnite Wars, Rome had consolidated its position as master of central Italy. With its rising power in the Mediterranean, conflict with the Greek city-states (*Magna Graecia*) of southern Italy was inevitable. The Lucanians and Bruttians, in the early 3rd Century BC, continued attacks on these Greek colonies and they, in 283 BC, appealed to the Roman regional power for help. The most influential city of *Magna Graecia* at the time was Tarentum.

Its position in south eastern Italy made it an important hub for Mediterranean Sea trade and also isolated it from Roman naval activity on the *Tryrrhenum Sea*, between Rome and the islands of Corsica and Sardinia. Due to its position, and relationship with Greece, Tarentum possessed the most powerful navy of any Italian city at the time and a standing treaty with Rome had been in

place since 302 BC. This treaty denied access to Roman fleets into the bay of Tarentum (In Italy's heel) assuring the autonomy of the Greek navy.

Heeding the call for aid from regional city-states such as Locri, Rhegim, Croton and Thurii against the Lucanians, Rome sent troops by way of sea to garrison the town of Thurii in 282 BC. Despite the call for aid, Tarentum considered this a breach of the treaty and a hostile act of aggression. Tarentum's immediate reaction was to sink the Roman fleet and expel the garrison from Thurii. In response, the Roman Senate sent an embassy to Tarentum under L. Postumius Megellus to demand amends. During the exchange the Romans seem to have been insulted (a recurring theme in the histories of Livy and Polybius to justify Roman aggression) and Rome declared war. Tarentum, unable to defuse the situation mustered their own army and began creating trouble among the Greek cities and other Roman interests. Fearing Roman retaliation, Tarentum soon turned to King Pyrrhus of Epirus for assistance.

Pyrrhus, a distant relative of Alexander the Great, envisioned himself as another Alexander. Having recently confirmed his authority through war in Epirus, he anxiously looked to Italy for expansion and glory. The fertile soil of Sicily (according to Plutarch), rather than Italy, was probably the real objective but the excuse to do battle with the fledgling power of Rome was too good to pass up. The post Alexander Macedonian kingdoms maintained the most modern and well equipped armies of the time and the Epirotes were far more advanced than their Roman counterparts. Using his own forces and those pledged from other regional Greek Kings, on the understanding that they would be used abroad, Pyrrhus took up the challenge from Tarentum and sailed across the Adriatic.

In 280 BC, the Epirotes landed in Italy with 25,000 men, including 3,000 cavalry and 2,000 archers. Also, shocking to the Romans, Pyrrhus brought 20 war trained elephants along, the first time that the Italian people had seen them. Knowing the devastation they had caused among the Persians under Alexander, Pyrrhus thought that the Italian invasion was the perfect opportunity to emulate that success. The Romans, however, had no intention of giving up their regional authority and prepared to fight. They may have been encouraged by surrounding Greek cities, who expressed no interest in Pyrrhus' interference, but regardless, the war was on.

The first engagement of the war took place at the small coastal town of Heraclea. The Romans, under Publius Laverius Laevinius, with 50,000 men, had driven into Lucanian territory to prevent them from joining Pyrrhus. When the battle was joined the match was fairly evenly fought. The Epirotes would eventually use their elephants to drive through the Roman lines, creating panic and driving cavalry back upon its own troops. The Pyrrhic forces advanced and the Roman army may have been destroyed, save for the timely intervention of a wounded elephant that caused panic among the others. The elephants turned on Pyrrhus' own troops and he was forced to call off the pursuit of the Romans to preserve his own army. In the end, ancient writers suggest that the Romans lost between 7,000 and 15,000 but that the Epirotes lost between 4,000 and 13,000 men accordingly. Though the Romans technically lost the battle at Heraclea, Pyrrhus' losses were substantial. An invading army could not endure such terrible losses while outnumbered and he would have to retire for the season to wait for reinforcements. This condition of victory, with terrible casualties, would become a recurring theme throughout the campaign.

Pyrrhus had hoped that his invasion would lead to rebellion from Rome's traditional enemies, such as the Latins. He was counting on the support of these people in his efforts. However, by this time, the old rebellious attitudes had mostly subsided, and only some Samnites and the Lucanians joined with Pyrrhus. This is important that it shows the stabilization that was growing in accordance with Rome's power. These old allies/enemies were now firmly entrenched as members of the Republic and the changing tides of conflicts no longer had such an overwhelming effect as they had in the past. Additionally, treatment of his allies among the Greek cities in southern Italy would also turn their attitudes against him.

The next year, 279 BC, saw the second major conflict at the battle of Ausculum. A massive engagement (in terms of ancient armies) was fought over two days among the woods and hills of Apulia. The Romans led by Publius Dentius Mus, used terrain to their advantage to reduce the effect of the Epirote cavalry and elephants. The first day would end in a virtual draw. As at Heraclea, the second day's fighting was again a stalemate situation until the elephants could be brought to the front. The Roman's attempted using ox-drawn war wagons to subvert the elephants, but supporting infantry soon overwhelmed the defense and the Romans had to withdraw. At the end of the battle, estimates of 6,000 Roman and 3,500 Epirote casualties left Pyrrhus in command of the field, but again at great cost. It is the result of Ausculum where the term "Pyrrhic Victory" is attributed. According to Plutarch, when congratulated on his victory, Pyrrhus replied "that one other such (victory) would utterly undo him."

Pyrrhus acknowledging his costly 'victories' offered peace terms to Rome, but was refused as long as he remained in Italy. Appius Claudius a former consul and commissioner of the Appian Way, encouraged the Senate to refuse the simple terms of independence for Tarentum and the southern Greek cities. Instead, Rome negotiated an alliance with Carthage, who had reason to be concerned over Pyrrhic activities in Sicily. Pyrrhus, originally hoping to turn Rome and Carthage against one another, found himself the target of both state's animosity. Under pressure from a Carthaginian fleet and with no hope of converting Roman Italian allies, he left for Sicily to protect his interests there.

In 278 BC he sailed to Sicily to defend the Greek cities on the island. The Carthaginians, however, were already on the move and were besieging Syracuse, his logistical base, as Pyrrhus arrived. The powerful Carthaginian fleet was scouring the sea to find him, but he managed to evade capture and eventually defeat the Carthaginian army. Pyrrhus captured the cities of Panormus and Eryx but Carthage refused his offer of peace in fear that they would lose Sardinia. Meanwhile, on the Italian mainland, Rome was pressing hard against Tarentum and the situation was going badly for the Greeks. Pyrrhus had sustained heavy losses in Sicilia, as well, and he feared entrapment by two hostile forces on Sicily. In a final desperate gesture he would return to Italy for one more campaign.

He returned to Italy in 275 BC and faced the Romans at the town of Malventum in southern Italy. This time there was not even a 'Pyrrhic Victory' and the Epirotes, defeated, retreated to Tarentum. The Romans had learned to deal with war elephants by attacking their sides with spears, a tactic that not only stopped Pyrrhus, but would eventually play a key role against Carthage. Several years after the battle, the Romans renamed Malventum to Beneventum (Good Omen) in recognition of their victory, and before long the Appian Way would connect the town to Rome. Pyrrhus left Italy shortly after and returned to Epirus. By the end of his campaigns, he returned without the bulk of his army or gains in Italy and having lost his holdings in Sicily. Again according to Plutarch, his parting words upon returning home "What a battlefield I am leaving for Carthage and Rome", was a premonition that would end up shaking the power structure of the Mediterranean, and the western world.

With Pyrrhus gone, Tarentum, and any other remaining Greek cities, accepted Rome's usual lenient offer of peace to a defeated foe. The city was allowed self-rule under a Roman garrison and appropriate Latin laws, while the other city-states and remaining Italian tribes surrendered in kind. By 272 BC, Rome was now the confirmed master of the Italian peninsula, despite some thoughts among the Greeks that they may have been allies rather than subjects.

With this consolidation, the Conquest of Italy was complete, save for the Gauls in the far north. The Macedonian ruler of Egypt, Ptolemy II, confirmed Rome's power by opening a permanent embassy between the two nations. Roman colonies were founded all over Italy strengthening and affirming Rome's rule. In the end, the victory in the Pyrrhic war not only gained Rome all of Italy, but showed that the Roman ability to adapt and change was mightier than any force in the region. The Greek Phalanx and its static formation would lose its dominance and be replaced by the

adaptable, and mighty legions of Rome. With Pyrrhus out of the way, and the clash between Carthage and Rome looming, the Romans knew that their greatest strength was perseverance. No matter the cost or effort, and despite defeats and setbacks, they wouldn't stop expanding for over half a millennium.

As for Pyrrhus, he returned to Epirus with his head held high. If nothing else he was a grand adventurer, and considered later, by Hannibal, to be among the greatest generals in history. Despite the near total destruction of his army at the hands of Rome and Carthage, he enlisted Gallic allies to invade Macedonia. Plundering as he went, he set his eyes on Sparta and then Argos, as well. Plutarch tell us that while fighting in the streets of Argos, in 272 BC (the same year as the final defeat of Tarentum) an old woman threw a tile down from her roof, and it happened to hit Pyrrhus on the neck. Stunned, Pyrrhus fell off his horse, and an Argosian soldier cut off his head.

The Punic Wars and Expansion

In the 3rd and 2nd Centuries BC, Rome, after consolidating its hold on the Italian peninsula would soon come up against the power of the Mediterranean, Carthage. Carthage was Phoenician city founded in 814 BC, and the term Punic relates to the Latin and Greek words for Phoenician. From the founding of the Republic, the powerful Carthaginians had long supported Rome in its bid to secure its own independence and strength in Italy. As late as 279 BC, the two states were allied against Pyrrhus of Epirus in order to contain his expansionist goals, but as Rome's strength grew as a result, so did the rivalry and animosity between the two.

Carthage was, in this time period, by far the greatest sea power on the Mediterranean. Naval authority and vast merchant routes brought wealth and power to the North African city. By the time Rome gained control of all of Italy, Carthage held sway over North Africa from Libya to Gibraltar, much of southern Spain and the islands of Corsica, Sardinia and part of Sicily. Contact prior to Roman control of Italy was limited, but with Rome now within striking distance of Sicily, conflict was inevitable. When the Sicilian city of Messana revolted against Carthaginian rule in 264 BC, the Romans, once again, jumped at the opportunity to expand under the guise of aiding another city.

This initial Roman invasion of Sicily touched off a series of three wars that would last over 100 years. Some of the greatest battles and commanders in world history were on center stage in the conflicts. Men such as Hannibal and Scipio Africanus were immortalized through the legendary achievement and by the end, the ingenuity and technology brought on by warfare advanced Rome to incredible power. Carthage would end up a blip on the radar of history, while Rome became the power of the western world through its victories.

Conflict with Carthage, however, was not the only source of strife for the growing Roman Republic. In some cases, Rome's expansion beyond Carthaginian territory grew as a direct correlation to the Punic Wars. Illyricum, on the Adriatic, Macedonia and Greece would all become the target of Roman domination and political whims. The years 264 to 146 BC, would transform Rome from a young Republic to a powerful Empire.

First Punic War

By the mid 3rd century BC, the Roman Republic had secured its position on the Italian peninsula with victories over the Etruscans, the Latin League, the Samnites, and Pyrrhus. Victory, though valiantly contested by all foes, bred confidence with the Romans and while conflict with regional

powers like Carthage was daunting, Rome was up for the challenge. Carthage, meanwhile, a former Phoenician colony and now an independent Mediterranean power, was already established as a naval superpower and commercial trade giant.

Background for the first conflict between Rome and Carthage would begin in Sicily, and the island would remain the main battleground and objective throughout the long war. At the time Sicily was divided between three ruling parties. Carthage had a firm grip on the western part of the island including the important cities of Agrigentum, Panormus and Lilybaeum. The King of Syracuse held sway in the southeast controlling that city and several neighboring towns. The northeast was the source of contention between these various rivaling groups. Italian mercenaries from Campania, who had previously been in the service of Syracuse, had seized the town of Messana, thereby gaining control of the northeast.

In 288 BC these mercenaries, who called themselves Mamertines (sons of Mars), while returning home from service with Syracuse, took Messana through treachery. In so doing, they generally murdered a good deal of the native population and took the women as their own wives and used the city as a base to raid the surrounding countryside. By 265 BC, when Heiro II came to power in Syracuse, the situation had become worse and he immediately focused on his troublesome northern neighbors. Heiro laid siege to the Mamertines and Messana in an attempt to stop the raiding, but also to win back the city for Syracuse. At some point the siege was so successful that the Mamertines had no choice but to call for help, and did so, first to Carthage and later to Rome. Rome at first was unwilling to aid the troublesome mercenaries who had treacherously stolen Messana from Syracuse, in consideration of its friendly relations with Syracuse. The recent war with Pyrrus under similar circumstances probably added to their reluctance to get involved. Carthage, however, as one of the occupying forces on Sicily, felt more obliged and had ulterior motives to get involved. Carthage sent troops to the area, and Rome, now fearing Carthaginian dominance of Sicily, quickly changed their minds and entered into an alliance with the Mamertines. In 264 BC, Roman legions crossed out of Italy for the first time, landed in Sicily, and opened the first Punic War.

The Roman force, expeditionary at this point, was dispatched under Appius Claudius Caudex and they moved immediately upon Messana. There is some evidence that the crossing was contested by Carthage, but invariably, the Roman delay had allowed the Carthaginians to get there first. The Mamertines, eager for help against Syracuse from anyone, allowed the Carthaginians to garrison the city, but soon regretted the decision. The Romans, upon arriving at Messana offered to parlay with the Carthaginian commander. Hanno in agreeing to negotiate with the Romans, was promptly seized by Claudius, and in order to win his freedom, agreed to abandon Messana. He would eventually give his life as penalty for this failure, but the Carthaginians were not so willing to accept defeat. They immediately broke their ties with the Mamertines and turned to Syracuse for allied operations. Heiro, still eager to return Messana to his domain and agreed to help send the Romans home. A Syracusean navy along with a Carthaginian army promptly besieged the town. Both would be repulsed by Claudius, and Messana belonged firmly to Rome.

From the opening conflict in Messana, the situation soon escalated. Rome sent two Consular armies to Sicily under M. Valerius and M. Otacilius Crassus, with the intention of gaining control of the entire island. Roman success was abundant early on in this stage. Several Carthaginian towns fell to Roman dominance and attention was focused on Syracuse. Valerius led a large contingent against Heiro, fearful of Roman strength, immediately entered into negotiations. In switching sides from Carthage to Rome, he offered uncontested control of Messana to Rome and paid tribute of one hundred talents for 15 years in order to secure his Kingship of Syracuse and remain 'independent'. With Heiro's defection from Carthage, several other smaller Greek cities in Sicily also switched to Roman allegiance and Valerius, in light of his successful negotiations received the cognomen "Messalla" from the Senate.

With the eastern part of Sicily mainly under Roman control, they pushed west into the strongholds of Carthaginian territory. In 262 BC, the now Roman Consuls Lucius Postumius Megellus and Quintus Mamilius Vitulus met a Carthaginian relief force at the important town of Agrigentum. The Romans were victorious, while details are sketchy, and forced the enemy within the city walls. After seven months, a siege that stretched into 261 BC, the Romans sacked the city, selling the residents as slaves. Focus was shifted to Greek cities that had been allied with Carthage and the same treatment was given to the defeated in each location. The departure for Rome, from simply absorbing conquered cultures, to sacking and enslavement only inspired anger and hatred among the Sicilian residents. Carthage with its powerful fleet was still the dominating power of the sea and would soon be back under Hamilcar Barca. Rome knew the only way the war would end in their favor was to try to match Carthage at sea.

The Carthaginian fleet quickly recovered lost Sicilian coastal cities and ravaged the Italian coast line. Their dominance made it difficult to even reinforce the Sicilian garrisons. Contrary to some popular notions, the Romans had even at this time a small navy. The ships however, were only smaller triremes that were no match for the larger and more experienced crews of the Carthaginian quinquiremes. Rome had no choice but to surrender or match the enemy's vessels. According to Polybius, an opportunity presented itself in the form of a beached quinquireme on the Italian coast that the Romans could copy to build a new fleet. The Senate ordered the construction of a hundred vessels like it in sixty days and soon the Romans were ready to try their hands at the sea.

In early engagements, the Romans found that their seamanship would never be up to the task and the only way to gain victory would be to use their traditional strength of land power to their advantage. The *corvus* or "crow" was developed from a similar device used by Syracuse. This device functioned as a 35 foot long swiveling bridge that could be attached to enemy vessels. Rather than attempting to ram, sink or outmaneuver the superior Carthaginian navy, the Romans could board the vessels and use their land warfare assets. The two fleets met in the first such battle under these conditions in 260 BC. Carthaginian forces were plundering the Sicilian coast and the new Roman fleet, under the Consul Duilius, met them near Mylae. 143 Roman ships defeated 130 Carthaginian ones, capturing 31 and sinking 14, and opened a new phase in Roman power. Duilius was awarded a triumph and a column (*Columna Rostrata*), adorned with the prows of captured vessels, was erected in the Forum in his honor.

The next several years, 259 to 256 BC, saw several Roman victories at sea and the invasions of Corsica and Sardinia. In 259 BC, the first of many Scipios (Lucius Cornelius Scipio) to lead an army in the Punic Wars invaded Corsica and quickly captured the town of Alalia. Attempts to do the same in Sardinia failed and complete subjugation of Corsica would take another century, but result was the loss of Carthaginian control of both islands. 258 BC saw a victory at sea by C. Sulpicius off Sulci and in Sicily, Atilius Regulus attacked the city of Panormus and captured Mytistratus. The following year Regulus followed up his successes in Sicily with naval victories off of Tyndaris and the coast of Malta. In 256 BC the Roman fleet continued its successes, under L. Manlius Vulso and Atilius Regulus, in naval action off the coast of Sicily. Despite their victories, stalemate reigned in western Sicily and Rome felt the only way to achieve victory was to invade North Africa itself. In preparing to sail, the two fleets met at the Battle of Ecnomus off of Southern Sicily. Rome again won a decisive victory and the path was clear all the way to Carthage.

Led by Manlius Vulso and Atilius Regulus the Romans landed at Aspis in 256 BC and established a fortified camp at Clypea. At Adys, early in the campaign, Rome won a major engagement, but was unable to finish the Carthaginians before the onset of winter and the end of the campaigning season. The rising cost of the war and depleted treasury of the Republic forced on consul, Vulso to return to Italy with part of the army to ease the financial burden, leaving Regulus with between 15,000 and 20,000 men. In the spring of 255 the campaign was renewed with the Romans moving to Tunes, just a day's march from Carthage. Local populations were incited to revolt by the invaders and Carthage sued for terms. Regulus, however, offered unacceptable terms (seemingly

at the time) and Carthaginian citizen levies having proved ineffective looked to mercenaries to expel the invaders. They looked to the legendary Spartans, under Xanthippus and he would prove to be an effective hire. The Spartans along with Carthaginian elephants met the Romans with equal force at the Battle of Bagradas and utterly destroyed the army of Regulus. Of the 20,000 or so Romans, only 2,000 to 3,000 escaped to Aspis and the rest, along with Regulus were killed or captured.

A naval relief force sent to retrieve the survivors, under M. Aemilius Paullus and Fulvius Nobilior reached Africa after defeating the full Carthaginian fleet off Cape Hermaeum in a large scale naval effort. With control of the African coast secured, they were able to withdraw all the remaining troops at Aspis. However, in what Polybius called the greatest naval disaster known, the same fleet was caught in a storm off of Camarina in southern Sicily. Nearly 70 % of the 264 ship fleet and approximately 100,000 rowers, marines and the rescued legionaries were lost when the ships were dashed against the rocks in coastal waters. The Romans, however, despite the incredible loss to available manpower, showed their resiliency, rebuilt the fleet and retrained crews.

The invasion of Africa turned out to be a major failure for Rome, but its undertaking proved Roman entrance into the field of major players in the ancient world. Despite the disaster, Carthage could never really regain the advantage, but the war languished on in Sicily. In 254 BC, the Romans captured the fortress town of Panormus and pressed on with its naval operations. A raid along the African coast was interrupted by another storm in 253 BC, the resulted in the loss of another Roman fleet at Cape Palinurus. The Senate and the Roman allies, nearly bankrupt and depleted of manpower changed their tactics in the short term to one of strictly land warfare. Gallic invasions in northern Italy and the Numidians in Africa declaring war on Carthage certainly must've contributed to this. By 252 BC this change brought about more success in Sicily with the capture of Lipara and Thermae, the defeat of a Carthaginian relief effort at Panormus, and the onset of a lengthy siege of Lilybaeum. In 252 or 250 BC, the Romans regained confidence and decided to venture back to the sea.

Despite Carthaginian efforts to sue for peace, Rome rebuilt its fleet once more to protect its siege of Lilybaeum from an approaching Carthaginian fleet. Under Publius Claudius Pulcher, the Roman fleet of 123 ships was sent to engage the Carthaginian Adherbal lying near Drepanum. Pulcher, completely inexperienced, was trounced by Adherbal losing over ninety ships to less than 10 by Carthage. Another Roman fleet, including the few survivors from Drepanum, under L. Junius Pullus was shipwrecked shortly after near Camarina. The crews mostly survived, however, and they marched on Mt. Eryx to take a strategic position there. Back in Rome, the naval situation looked so bleak (3 fleets destroyed in 3 consecutive campaigns), that the Senate elected Aulus Atilius Caiatinus as dictator. The chance to accept Carthaginian negotiations thereby end the war had passed, and the stalemate fighting in Sicily would resume once again.

247 BC saw the entry of Hamilcar Barca into the war. The father of future Roman nemesis Hannibal arrived in Sicily and defeated all Roman attacks over a period of 4 years. While unable to spread Carthaginian influence, or bring the fight to the Italian mainland, he seemingly ended Rome's ability to dominate the war on the ground. As the cause seemed near to being lost, or gains untenable, the ever present Roman resiliency continued to flourish and prosper. With a loss of one sixth of their population and the liquidation of a vast treasury, they still persisted in the attempt to conquer Sicily. Wealthy citizens again advanced their own money to build a new fleet two hundred new ships were built and placed under the consul

In 241 BC, Catulus met the Carthaginian fleet in a decisive victory at the Aegates Islands, off the western extremity of Sicily. The Carthaginian ships were laden with grain and supplies for Hamilcar's army holed up on Mt. Eryx, and the 170 ship fleet lost its maneuverability edge. In the resulting battle, it was recorded that fifty of the Carthaginian galleys were sunk outright and seventy captured. The remaining vessels were only saved by a fortuitous change in wind direction

allowing them to escape back to Africa. The Romans took nearly 100,000 prisoners and Hamilcar with no way to be re-supplied, and after 23 years of war, was forced to sue for peace.

Results of the First Punic War

While the Roman "victory" was achieved at a terrible cost, they did receive complete control of Sicily through Carthaginian withdrawal, and the assurance that Syracuse would be unmolested in the future. Carthage was forced to pay 3,200 gold talents in total over a period of 10 years while also paying heavy ransoms for its prisoners. As a direct result of this compensation, Carthage found itself unable to pay her mercenary army leading directly to a devastating revolt. Sicily was organized into Rome's first province soon after the end of the war, and a veritable gold mine in grain wealth was secured.

Casualties for both sides must have been devastating. Polybius suggested that the war was the most destructive in the history of warfare. Rome lost at least 50,000 actual citizens, with Latin rights, allied and auxilia numbers higher exponentially. In the end, Rome lost over 600 ships while Carthage at least 500. Rome never having been a sea power only used the navy as needed in warfare and not as a permanent institution, so its vessel losses were less significant. Carthage, however, by virtue of losing its sea advantage had to find other means to regain its strength and position.

In another direct result of the war, Rome was able to secure both Sardinia and Corsica as a second Roman province. While Carthage, under the leadership of Hamilcar, was busy fighting off its own 'mercenary war', Rome was able to snatch Sardinia away and secure its position on Corsica by 238 BC. Carthage protested, but in its current state, could do nothing more than that, and in fact, was forced to pay more tribute. An additional 1200 talents were sent to Rome while it also took control of the 3 major western Mediterranean Islands. Carthage would be forced to seek ways to expand and pay Rome through other means than the navy, and led to the eventual colonization of Hispania. Lingering animosity wouldn't take long to resurface, and the emergence of the Barca (Hamilcar, Hasdrubal and Hannibal) family in Carthage would have a lasting and horrific impact on the new masters of the Mediterranean.

The Romans were able to shift attention to the North and the troublesome Gauls and Illyrians while Carthage dealt with its own internal affairs. They learned some important lessons in this war including the use of the sea in strategic warfare. While never becoming great sailors themselves, they used technology, the corvus, to their advantage and included more sea adept Greek officers and crews whenever possible. More importantly, Rome learned how to conduct war on a massive scale and to survive the turmoil it could cause. The Senate became masters of financing these expansionist activities, while the areas of legion recruiting, logistics, political espionage and fleet building all were part of the invaluable knowledge and experience gained. This already lengthy and costly war, while greatly beneficial to Rome was only the beginning of a longer and bloodier conflict by far, and both sides knew it.

First Illyrian War

As Rome and Carthage occupied each other in Sicily, Africa and throughout the Mediterranean, Rome's northern neighbors began to gather strength and cause problems of their own. In Illyria, King Agron, between the years 233 and 231 BC, had gathered a formidable fleet and started to sanction naval operations against various Greek city states. In 231, Illyrian success was so great against the Aetolians, Polybius tells us, that he "made so merry that he caught a cough and died."

Agron was succeeded by his wife, Queen Teuta. The taste of success left by her husband encouraged her to sanction increased piracy in the Adriatic and Ionian seas. Towns up and down the Epirus and Achaean coasts were plundered, harassed and virtually under siege by sea. Rome,

having gained regional authority with its earlier victories over Pyrrhus and Carthage and having built a powerful fleet as a result, was pleaded to by Greek merchants to quell the pirates. By 230 BC, even Italian and Roman trade routes were beginning to suffer and Rome had no choice but to intervene.

The Senate, again according to Polybius, sent Gaius and Lucius Coruncanius, to treat with Queen Teuta. She, as many of the early Roman conquest stories go, met the Roman envoys with indignation. The queen would only guarantee that her official forces would refrain from attacking Roman interests, but that she was not responsible for the actions of pirates. After a heated exchange, the Romans left to return without a satisfactory agreement, but Teuta still angry over the argument with the Romans, had one of the envoys killed en route.

Once again, Rome used a real or perhaps fabricated injustice as cause for war and expansion. With Macedonia, Illyricum's main regional ally, occupied in its own expansionist endeavors, and Carthage in the midst of quelling its own mercenary revolt, the timing was right to move north. In 229 BC, Consul Gnaeus Fulvius sailed for Illyria with a fleet of 200 quinqueremes, while his Co-Consul Aulus Postumius took legions by land. Fulvius initially attempted to relieve a siege of Corcyra by the Illyrians under the command of Demetrius of Pharos, but he was too late to prevent its success. However, recognizing the authority of the Roman military, Demetrius quickly handed the island over to Roman protection.

The fleet joined the Legions at Apollonia and moved north into Illyrian territory. It cleared pirate vessels as it went, while the pressure of the army forced Teuta and Demetrius to abandon the sieges of Dyrrhachium and Issa. Both cities fell under the 'protection' of Rome as well as several smaller towns along the coast. Teuta meanwhile, had little choice but to give up her aggressive tactics and withdraw to her winter quarters.

In the spring of 228 BC, Illyricum sued for peace and received harsh terms. Teuta was forced to cede portions of her kingdom along the coast (120 miles) to Roman control, along with an unspecified tribute. Of more important concern to the issue of piracy, Illyrian fleets were no longer allowed to sail south of Lissus with more than two ships. Demetrius also accepted Roman terms and established Pharos as a client kingdom forming a natural buffer with Macedonia.

The result of the Illyrian War, while minor in comparison to other conflicts, had a direct impact on future relations with Macedonia and Carthage. Removing the Illyrian piracy threat from the Adriatic greatly improved Roman relations with the Greeks of Corcyra, Epidamnus and Appollonia as well as the whole state of Achaëa. Macedonia, previously the superior power of the Greek world, was angered by Roman interference in what it considered to be its own affair. That anger would boil over into the second Punic War and develop into an alliance with Carthage adding to Rome's concerns over the next century.

Second Illyrian War

After his defeat a decade earlier in 229 BC, Demetrius of Pharos waited for an opportunity to return Illyrian piracy to the Adriatic. By 219 BC, Roman conflict with the Celts of Cisalpine Gaul, and the beginning of the 2nd Punic War against Hannibal and Carthage, encouraged Demetrius to do just that. He constructed a fleet of 90 vessels and sailed south of Lissus, violating his earlier treaty and setting off war with Rome.

The Illyrian fleet first harassed Pylos, and though initially unsuccessful, he eventually took 50 enemy ships. With this addition, he moved quickly to the Cyclades, plundering as he went.

Despite Roman occupation in other theatres, they responded hastily by sending Lucius Aemilius and a fleet across the Adriatic. With little difficulty, the still powerful Roman navy captured Dimale,

an Illyrian stronghold, and continued towards Demetrius' home base of Pharos. With diversionary tactics in the harbor, Aemilius lured the Illyrians out of their encampment while landing the main force behind Pharos. A short battle was decided in favor of the Romans, but Demetrius escaped to his allies in Macedonia.

While Rome managed to clear the Adriatic of Illyrian pirates once more, and strengthen its hold on the coastal region of Illyricum, little else could be accomplished. With Hannibal and Carthage looming as a spectre, the conquest of Illyria would not be completed until 168 BC. Even still, it would take another 40 years to organize as a province and another century again (9AD) before the whole of the Illyrian and Dalmatian tribes were under Roman control.

Conquest of Cisalpine Gaul

As Rome became master of the Italian peninsula and foreign wars began to become prevalent in Roman expansion strategy, the Senate became aware that these positions abroad could not remain tenable with northern Italy left unsecured. Pushing Rome's northernmost border to the natural boundary formed by the Alps was a practical and largely supported measure.

In 232 the Tribune Gaius Flaminius proposed and passed an agrarian law, ceding land to Legionary veterans and poorer classes of citizens. This land, won from the Gauls at the battle of Lake Vadimianus in 283 BC, represented the territory known as Gallia Cisalpina, or Gaul this side (Roman) of the Alps. Over the next half century Roman colonists poured into previously occupied Celtic territory planting new colonies throughout. The extension of the Flaminian Way angered the resident Gauls as this new northern road opened all of northern Italy to Rome resulting in an even heavier increase in Roman colonization. A majority of local tribes, (mainly the Insubres) as well as the Gaesatae from Gallia Transalpina (Gaul across the Alps), were eventually pushed to the point of open military resistance.

In Rome and throughout Italy, remembering the sacking of Rome in the last major Gallic invasion (390? BC), the people were understandably frightened. Fortunately for them, some local tribes who had maintained better relations with Rome since that event; played the intelligence role and kept the Senate informed of Celtic activity. For nearly 10 years, military action was reserved in the Alps region, on a mostly minor scale. By 225 BC, however, the Gauls had sufficiently mustered enough force to invade Roman territory and threaten the city of Rome once more. As many as 70,000 tribal warriors pushed through Etruria ravaging the country as it had done a century and a half before. The Romans though, having become hardened from its recent large scale wars with Carthage and Illyria, were ready.

Using superior legionary and tactical strategies the Romans surrounded the Gallic invaders near Telamon in 222 BC. Under the command of Consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus, two Roman armies crushed the invasion and put an end to the threat, for the time being. Plutarch, in his "Lives", tells us that Marcellus himself won the day by becoming the third and final Roman commander in history to slay a foreign king in single combat, Britomartus of the Gaesatae. "The first was Romulus, after having slain Acron, king of the Caeninenses: the second, Cornelius Cossus, who slew Tolumnius the Etruscan: after them Marcellus, having killed Britomartus king of the Gauls; after Marcellus, no man."

After the defeat at Telamon, the Gauls were driven back to the Valley of the Po and to the Alps. Within a short time the war ended with Rome victorious having new lands secured and ready for occupation. Three military colonies were established to hold the Gauls at bay; Placentia and Cremona in Insubrian territory and Mutina in that of the Boii. The Via Flaminia was extended from Spolegium to Ariminum a vital part of Roman expansion. As an added benefit to Roman expansion, the loyalty of Italian farmers who settled these new lands increased immeasurably and Roman authority in Italy was further secured.

Hannibal and the Second Punic War would again place this authority in jeopardy, however. As Hannibal crossed the Alps on his way to Italy, his success stirred the Gauls once more and many joined him against Rome. Cisalpine Gaul wouldn't be fully pacified until Hannibal's defeat; and the rest of Gallia Transalpina until the arrival of Caesar in the mid 1st century BC.

Second Punic War

Following its defeat in the First Punic War, the Carthaginian Empire looked to rebuild its power base by controlling Spain. Hamilcar Barca, the premier Phoenician general, humiliated and angered over Rome's peace terms, and the seizure of Sardinia during Carthage's own mercenary war, looked to Spain as an overland launching point for future action against Rome. Before long, Hamilcar would pass his hatred and obsession with Rome onto his son Hannibal, who would prove to be one of the greatest generals in history. By 220 BC, while the Romans were occupied in Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum, Hannibal, and his brother Hasdrubal established control of the Hispania peninsula as far north as the Ebro (Iberus) River.

Earlier, while Hamilcar was still establishing control of Spain, Rome was concerned over Carthaginian resurgence. In the 220's BC, they established a treaty with Carthage limiting expansion to anything south of the Ebro. Saguntum, a small town in that territory, had entered into an alliance with Rome, giving the Romans a small stronghold in the heart of Carthaginian lands.

Hannibal rose to power in 221 BC after the assassination of his father, Hamilcar. Instilled from birth with his father's hatred of Rome and raised to be a leader of men, Hannibal became the greatest threat to Rome in its history. With his assumption of command, he immediately set out to subdue rebellious tribes in his rear with his eventual goal to invade Italy. Over the next year, Hannibal would be satisfied with the situation in Spain and looked to Saguntum to goad the Romans into war and justify his planned invasion. By 220 BC, Hannibal laid siege and opened the door to one of the ancient world's great wars.

After an eight month siege, Saguntum was captured. Having collected the spoils, Hannibal wintered in Carthago Nova while planning for his over Alps invasion of Italy in the Spring. Since Rome's victory in the first Punic War, the vaunted Carthaginian fleet was no match for Rome, and Hannibal knew that the Romans would only be vulnerable from an overland attack. He hoped that by marching through southern Gaul and northern Italy, recent conflicts between the Romans and local tribes would boost his ranks with fresh angry recruits. Roman diplomatic attempts over the winter to seek justice from Carthage over Hannibal's siege met with failure. In negotiations with the Carthaginian capital the Roman envoy Fabius made a last ditch effort to avert war. According to Livy, pulling the folds of his toga into his hands Fabius said, "we bring you peace and war. Take which you will." Scarcely had he spoken when the answer no less proudly rang out: "Whichever you please, we do not care." Fabius let the gathered folds fall, and cried: "We give you war."

Outbreak of Second Punic War

The outbreak of the Second Punic War began when Hannibal moved north across Ebro to begin his historic march over the Alps. Before leaving Spain, however, Hannibal was well aware that Roman forces intended for him would try to meet him there. He secured Spain with an army of about 16,000 men under the command of Hasdrubal and took 80,000 infantry, 12,000 Numidian and Iberian cavalry and a number of elephants with him on his march.

Early in the spring of 218 BC, Hannibal set out from Carthago Nova, for the Ebro River. He was confident in Hasdrubal's ability in Spain as his brother had campaigned with his father Hamilcar against the Iberian Celts since he was just a boy. Unfortunately for Hasdrubal, Hannibal took all the senior command and elite troops with him on his march, which would play a role late in the

war. Hasdrubal's duty was to maintain Carthaginian dominion over Spain and to defend the primary interests (especially mines and resources) from Roman countering forces. With success in those primary goals, he was to raise an additional army and follow Hannibal to Italy.

After crossing the Ebro in April or May of 218 BC, Hannibal had little choice to conquer local tribes as he moved. Leaving a violent population in his rear could've been disastrous, and despite the time delay and cost in casualties of operations against the Celts, he rapidly subdued the area. Except for the Greek coastal cities, which leaned towards Rome in diplomatic alliances, all of Spain was secure. The general Hanno was left with 10,000 infantry and 1,000 cavalry to keep the area between the Ebro and the Pyrenees under control.

With his rear secured, Hannibal continued north. Allowing some native Spanish troops to return to their homes (and possible transfer to Hasdrubal's army) and deductions for Hanno's occupation force, he continued on with 50,000 men, 9,000 cavalry and his elephants. Later in the same year, 218 BC, Hannibal marched through the Pyrenees and into Gaul, never to return to Spain.

Once in Gaul, Hannibal was met with only slight resistance from native Celts there. Along the march from the Pyrenees to the Rhodenus (Rhone) Hannibal's original planning started to bear fruit. The Gallic Celts were no friends of the Romans and many joined with him while en route. According to Polybius, they crossed the Rhone at a distance of a 4 days march from the sea, using boats made by local Celts for the infantry and cavalry and large, flat earth covered wooden skiffs for the elephants.

During the crossing of the Rhone, Hannibal and his army finally started to meet some resistance. Gauls appeared on the opposite bank to disrupt the crossing, but Hannibal was ready. A force under Hanno was sent further upstream to cross and attack the Gauls in the rear. The successful maneuver ended the threat, and peaceful crossing resumed. With the hostile Celts disposed, only friendly tribes remained on either side of the Alps and Rome's only chance to stop Hannibal was to meet him at the Rhone.

Two Roman armies had been raised for the purposes of dealing with Carthage. The first, commanded by Publius Cornelius Scipio the Elder, was set to depart for Spain. The second, under the command of T. Sempronius, was originally intended to be an invasion force in Africa. Hannibal's approach, among other factors, inspired a revolt among the Boii and Insubrian tribes in Cisalpine Gaul, and Roman plans were forced to change. Scipio's army was circumvented from going to Spain and sent with Lucius Manlius to defend the Po Valley from the Gauls. Sempronius' forces were already in Sicily preparing for the African invasion, and Scipio had to wait in Rome for another army to be raised before he could meet Hannibal marching east.

It wasn't long before another army was ready for Scipio. He and his brother Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio sailed to Massilia, in southeastern Gaul, with the intention of meeting Hannibal before he could reach the safety of the Alps. Hannibal, however, had outmaneuvered the Romans and was already moving northward along the Rhone, with the intention of moving around the Romans and then south through the mountains. The Romans knew they had no choice of stopping Hannibal's march and had to react. The army of Sempronius was brought up to the Po, and his invasion of Africa was scrapped. Scipio the Elder, returned to Italy to await the Carthaginians, while the bulk of his army went west with Gnaeus Scipio into Spain.

Upon his escape from the Roman roadblock, Hannibal moved into Transalpine Gaul territory occupied by the Boii. Knowing the local Celts relationship with Rome, Hannibal took full advantage. The Celts were eager to help Hannibal cross the Alps, and their aid, knowing the safe passages, likely was a major factor in his successful march through them. Prior to going through the mountains, however, Hannibal's army was under supplies and exhausted after marching 750 miles from Carthago Nova to Transalpine Gaul. A civil war being fought between two brothers of the same undetermined tribe in a very fertile region in the mountain foothills also worked in

Hannibal's favor. In exchange for helping secure his position, the tribal chief fed the Carthaginians and provided enough supplies to see them through the rest of the journey. By October of 218 BC, Hannibal and his menacing force were ready to cross the Alps into Italy.

Invasion of Italy

While Hannibal's march through Gaul was relatively uncontested, the survival of his army through the Alps, let alone his subsequent victories was a marvelous achievement. Malnourished, weather-beaten and exhausted, the Carthaginian force was met with resistance by many of the local Gallic tribes. The Allobroges offered the first challenge by attacking the rear of his column. Other Celts harassed Hannibal's baggage trains, rolling large boulders from the heights onto the Carthaginian columns, causing panic and death among the victims. Fierce resistance throughout the march debilitated Hannibal's army. The cold altitudes of the Alps certainly were no benefit to some under-dressed tribal warriors in his forces.

Cold and hungry, Hannibal and his army stormed a Gallic town on the 3rd day of the mountain hike. The resulting plunder offered some relief in the form of food and supplies, but constant pressure from the Celts, landslides, continuing bad weather and poor supply made the success of the operation all the more memorable. By the 15th day, Hannibal stepped down into the foothills of northern Italy. With only 20,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry and only a few remaining elephants, his army was decimated by the journey. Fortunately for Hannibal, the Celts on the Italian side of the Alps were far friendlier and Gallic recruits pushed the Carthaginians back up to between 30,000 and 40,000 men.

Meanwhile, the Romans were waiting in Cisalpine Gaul under Scipio the Elder. With a small force already positioned to keep the Gauls in check, Scipio moved to intercept Hannibal. At the Battle of Ticinus, in late 218 BC, the 2 forces were first engaged in a small confrontation. Light troops sent by Scipio to scout the enemy were met by Numidian cavalry and soundly defeated. As only a prelude of things to come, the most significant result was the wounding of Scipio and the opening of additional Gallic recruitment to Hannibal. The Romans were forced to withdraw to Placentia, under Manlius, to plan for another attack.

With the minor victory at Ticinus, but more importantly the withdrawal of the Romans, Gallic and Ligurian recruits were now eager to join against Rome. Hannibal's army, significantly supplemented, was now ready to push full force into Italy. At the Trebbia River, the Romans combined the forces of Scipio's remaining legions with those of Ti. Sempronius Longus. In December of 218 BC, with Scipio out of commission from his wounds, the eager Sempronius threw caution to the wind and advanced against Hannibal.

The Battle of the Trebbia River was the first significant engagement of the war and the first real test for Hannibal and his army. He brilliantly anticipated Sempronius' impetuosity and set up an ambush. Before the impending fight, Hannibal sent a force of 2,000, 1,000 each of infantry and cavalry, under the command of his brother Mago to conceal themselves in the riverbeds. When dawn broke, Numidian cavalry harassed the Roman camp, angering Sempronius and stirring him to action. The main Roman army approached the Trebbia, pushing the Numidians back across, completely unaware of the trap set for them.

Hannibal waited with his army arranged as a screen with 10,000 cavalry and elephants, flanking the infantry of 30,000. Sempronius faced him with upwards of 40,000 men. Roman light infantry (velites) met the enemy first and were badly beaten, though they would be largely responsible for eliminating the remainder of Hannibal's few elephants. Numidian cavalry crushed the Roman cavalry on the flanks and things were bad for Sempronius from the start. When the main armies met, the situation stabilized slightly for Rome, but the flanking pressure from the superior Numidian cavalry soon began to turn the tide. At the critical juncture, Mago's ambush was sprung,

and the Romans were finished. Demoralized by the bitter cold of December in northern Italy, the Romans were routed, cut down as they fled. In the end, nearly half of Sempronius' force was lost, about 15 to 20,000 men. The remainder of the Roman army managed to escape to Placentia.

Hannibal's losses were far less. His elephants were gone, but of his regular army only the newly recruited Gauls suffered at all. At Trebbia, Hannibal proved his superior leadership in understanding the psychology of his opponent, his tactical strategy and in propaganda warfare. With his victory, Hannibal released the bulk of any prisoners captured with the intention of securing favor among Rome's allies throughout Italy. While theoretically an excellent concept, it was this sort of continuing hope for open rebellion that played a major factor in his eventual undoing.

War in Italy

After Hannibal's victory at Trebbia and in the following spring's campaign season, the Romans appointed a new command for the Consul Flaminius. Flaminius was brash and eager to meet the Carthaginian force and exact revenge for previous Roman losses. Hannibal, always the tactician, was well aware of the Roman commander's strategy and laid in wait. Initially out-maneuvering his Roman adversaries, Hannibal looked for another spot to unleash a trap. He found a perfect one at Lake Trasimene in April of 217 BC.

Hannibal set up an ambush that would force the Romans into open terrain, sandwiched between the northern shore of the lake and the opposite hilly ground. A Carthaginian decoy baited the Romans into following it into the trap, while the bulk of the main army occupied the high ground surrounding the northern lake shores. The night before the battle commenced, Hannibal ordered his men to light camp fires on the hills of Tuoro, at a considerable distance, to give the impression that his army was much farther away. Flaminius fell for the ploy and walked through a long, foggy and narrow valley directly into the open land designed for the Carthaginian trap.

Early in the morning, Hannibal ordered a full assault on Flaminius, and the result was a complete massacre. Cavalry and infantry poured down from the hills into the unsuspecting Roman lines and caught them completely outside of their normal formations. Forced to fight in the open without the tightly formed legionary tactics, the Romans were driven against the lake and completely surrounded. In the end, the Roman army of 25,000 lost as many as 15,000 including Flaminius himself. 4,000 cavalry reinforcements, sent late under Gaius Centenius, were also intercepted and finished off in the complete Carthaginian rout. The ancients claimed that the blood was so thick in the Lake, that the name of a small stream feeding it was renamed Sanguineto, the Blood River.

When the news reached Rome, depression and fear reigned supreme. Hannibal had inflicted the worse loss in Roman history on Flaminius and their manpower resources were quickly being depleted. Hannibal's strategy of encouraging revolt among the Roman allies could have been devastating if Rome couldn't field any more legions. To counteract Hannibal's methods, the Romans elected Fabius Maximus as dictator. In times of dire need, dictatorial power allowed a single man to develop strategies, make appointments and prepare the armies without the usual political wrangling. Maximus, too, proved a brilliant choice, as his strategy of survival vs. direct combat would prove its worth, despite the unpopularity.

After Trasimene, Maximus felt that the Romans had little chance against Hannibal in open warfare. His tactics of delay and harassment did just enough to keep the Roman allies of central Italy from switching sides to Hannibal. While Hannibal plundered and looted as he marched around the plains, he was unable to convince people to rise with him. His generals, and his army, boosted by victory and with dreams of the ultimate prize, encouraged a direct siege on Rome itself to end the war. Hannibal, however, was well aware that despite his superior skill on the battlefield, he lacked the numbers to successfully engage in a long term siege. Siege

equipment was in short supply as well, and he looked for better options for his force. Instead of moving directly on an open path to Rome, Hannibal turned south towards what he hoped would be better success among the people to join his cause.

Fabius Maximus, meanwhile, despite his efforts and success in keeping the economic and political stability of Rome at the status quo, was losing popularity among the Senate and the people. Romans wanted military success on the battlefield, not in a war of attrition. Maximus' efforts to dwindle Hannibal's army, well aware of his problems in getting reinforcements, and wait for the right moment to strike were unappreciated by a nervous and anxious population. The "Delayer" as Maximus was known, became a hated target and his dictatorship didn't last long.

Hannibal crossed the Apennines and spent the summer of 217 scouring southern Italy. He invaded Picenum, Apulia and Campania, where his tactics of divide and conquer were beginning to bear more fruit. Success in the south initiated a change within Rome. The people removed Fabius Maximus from his dictatorship and returned to the Consular elections. Gaius Terentius Varro and Lucius Aemilius Paullus were elected in his place and it was their mission to remove Hannibal for good. While the Carthaginians wintered in Gerontium, between 217 and 216 BC, the two new consuls raised a substantial army to deal with Hannibal once and for all.

In the Spring of 216 BC, Hannibal broke his winter camp and seized the large army supply depot at Cannae on the Aufidus River in Apulia. While the ancient sources vary, Varro and Paulus led upwards of 70 to 80,000 men after Hannibal. Despite previous devastating losses, Roman tradition held that force could only be countered by force, and the large rebuilt Roman army would meet Hannibal at Cannae in August, 216 BC.

Battle of Cannae

The newly elected Roman Consuls, Gaius Terentius Varro and Lucius Aemilius Paullus, who had both run on a platform of taking the war to Hannibal, were anxious to begin their tenure with military achievement. Counter to the delaying tactics of the Dictator Fabius Maximus, Varro and Paulus immediately formed a large force to deal with the Carthaginians ravaging southern Italy. While ancient sources offer conflicting reports, it can be safe to assume that between the two, Consuls, they levied a force of nearly 80,000 men.

Hannibal meanwhile, still attempting to subvert Roman authority in the allied areas of Italy, was waiting for the Roman with approximately 40,000 men; Gauls, Carthaginians and Numidian cavalry. Despite the popular conception that the elephants played a major role in the campaign, by this time, all of his elephants had died. Hannibal, despite his numerical inferiority had such an overwhelming strategic edge, that he was eager to meet the new Roman challenge. Theoretically, the Roman tactic of crushing Hannibal between two large armies should have spelled his doom, but Hannibal's brilliance allowed him to turn the tables once the engagement got under way.

On August 2, 216 BC, in the Apulian plain, near Cannae and near the mouth of the Aufidus River, the 2 great armies came face to face. The Consul Varro was in command on the first day for the Romans, as the consuls alternated commands as they marched. Paullus, it has been suggested, was opposed to the engagement as it was taking shape, but regardless still brought his force to bear. The two armies positioned their lines and soon advanced against one another.

The cavalry was to meet first on the flanks. Hasdrubal, commanding the Numidians, quickly overpowered the inferior Romans on the right flank and routed them. Pushing them into the river and scattering any opposing infantry in his path, Hasdrubal dominated the right flank and was quickly able to get in the rear of the enemy lines. While the much superior Numidians dealt quickly with their Roman counterparts, such was not the case with the infantry.

As Hasdrubal was routing the Roman horse, the mass of infantry on both sides advanced towards each other in the middle of the field. The Iberian and Gallic Celts on the Carthaginian side, while fierce, were no match for Roman armament and close-quartered combat. Initially, the vast numerical advantage of the Legions pushed deep into the middle of the Carthaginians. While the Celts were pushed back, they didn't break, however. They held as firm as they could, while Hasdrubal's cavalry pushed around to the rear of the enemy and the Carthaginian infantry held firm on the immediate flanks. The Romans soon found that their success in the middle was pushing them into a potential disaster. As they victoriously fought farther into the center of Hannibal's lines, they were actually walking themselves right into being completely encircled.

Just as the Romans were on the brink of crushing the enemy center, the Carthaginian flanks were brought to bear and the pressure pinned in the Roman advance. Hasdrubal's cavalry completed the circle by forcing the rear of the Roman line to turn back and form a square. All around, the massive bulk of the Roman army was forced into confined space. Hannibal brought his archers and slingers to bear and the result in the confines was devastating. Unable to continue the original break through against the Celts in the center of Hannibal's lines, the Romans were easy prey for the Carthaginians. Hannibal, with complete fury, encouraged his own men, under fear of the lash, if they weren't zealous enough in the slaughter.

In the midst of the battle the Consul, Paullus, was wounded (either early or late depending on Livy or Polybius as the source). He valiantly attempted to maintain the Roman ranks, though vainly. While the commander of the day, Varro, fled the battle, Paullus stayed the course trying to save his army. In the end, it was a terrible slaughter and Paullus would be dead with the bulk of his men. Romans trying to escape were hamstrung as they ran, so the Carthaginians could concentrate on those who were still fighting, but allow time to return and kill the crippled later. In a fast and furious display of death, Hannibal ordered his men to stand down only a few short hours after they originally encircled the enemy.

On a small strip of land where the Romans were bottled up, estimates as high as 60,000 corpses were piled one on top of another. Another 3,000 Romans were captured and more staggered into villages surrounding the battlefield. Hannibal, however, still trying to win the hearts of the Italian Roman allies, once again released the prisoners, much to the dismay of his commanders. In salute to the fallen Paullus, Hannibal also honored him with ceremonial rituals in recognition of his valiant actions.

In the end, perhaps only as many as 15,000 Romans managed to escape with Varro. These survivors were later reconstituted as two units and assigned to Sicily for the remainder of the war as punishment for their loss. Along with Paullus, both of the Quaestors were killed, as well as 29 out of 48 military tribunes and an additional 80 other senators (at a time when the Roman Senate was no more than 300 men). The rings signifying membership in the Senate and from those of Equestrian (Knight class or the elite class after Patrician) status were collected from the dead in baskets and later thrown onto the floor of the Carthaginian Senate in disrespect. In contrast, Hannibal's losses numbered only between 6,000 and 7,000 men, of whom, these were mostly his Celtic recruits. Once again Hannibal proved brilliant in battlefield strategy, using the enemy's tactics against itself and routing an army twice the size of his own. In less than a year since the disaster at Trasimenus, the Roman's greatest loss was in history put the state into a panic. There was nothing keeping Hannibal from sacking Rome itself at this point, other than Hannibal. His generals again urged him to not waste any more effort and go for the final kill, but Hannibal was reluctant. Still believing he couldn't take Rome itself, he preferred his strategy of pursuing revolt among the Roman allies.

Despite this tremendous loss, the following defection of many allied cities, and the declaration of war by Philip of Macedon that was soon to come, the Romans showed a resiliency that defined them as people. According to Livy, "No other nation in the world could have suffered so tremendous a series of disasters and not been overwhelmed." The truth of that nature was self

evident. While some in the Senate, such as Lucius Caecilius Metellus were ready to abandon the Republic as a lost cause, others like Scipio propped up the flagging Roman spirit with encouragement and undying oaths of loyalty to Rome.

Shortly after Cannae, the Romans rallied back, declaring full mobilization. Another dictator, M. Junius Pera, was elected to stabilize the Republic. New legions were raised with conscripts from previous untouched citizen classes. As the land owning population was heavily diminished by losses to Hannibal, the Romans took advantage of the masses. Those in debt were released from their obligations, non-land owners were recruited and even slaves were freed to join the legions. In so doing, the Romans also refused to pay ransoms to Hannibal for any captured legionaries who still remained. Hannibal, it was suggested, lost his spirit, understanding that Rome would rather sacrifice its own than surrender anything to him. While fortune would still be with Hannibal for some time, the war of attrition would only benefit Rome.

After the Battle of Cannae

Unflinching from his objectives, Hannibal, in the years 216 and 215 BC maintained his course of avoiding the siege of Rome. The primary theatre during this period of the war took place mainly in Campania. Whether he considered the march itself too exhausting, allowing the Romans time to organize a defense, lack of supplies, or simple shock over his complete victory at Cannae. Hannibal refused to move on Rome.

Of supplies, Hannibal only received support directly from Carthage once, in 215 BC. Opposition to his war from the Carthaginian Senate, mainly from Hanno, along with Roman superiority at sea, prevented Hannibal from ever securing the resources needed to complete his conquests. The victory at Cannae, however, began to take a toll on the Italian allies of Rome. The Samnites, an old foe of Rome, some Apulian towns and many in the south switched sides to Hannibal. Only the Greek influenced cities along the coasts seemed to hold their loyalty firmly with Rome. Late in 216 BC, Hannibal moved on Neapolis but his attempts to take the city were repulsed. With winter approaching, the Carthaginians instead moved to the north and the town of Capua. Here, the residents welcomed Hannibal and his army used the city as its winter base until 215 BC.

At this time, Rome had placed Marcus Claudius Marcellus in command of its southern army and he waited for Hannibal at the town of Nola. During the winter months, Hannibal made his move. Up to this point, Hannibal was able to use his superior tactical leadership to his advantage, but for the first time he faced an able Roman commander. Marcellus lured the Carthaginian army into believing he was occupied suppressing a revolt and Hannibal engaged the Romans in a full assault. Severely outnumbered, Marcellus' trick worked and with an inferior force, was able to fight Hannibal to a terribly bloody draw. Hannibal disengaged, neither victorious nor defeated, but for the first time, a Roman army proved that Hannibal was not unbeatable. Despite Marcellus good showing, Carthage was able to capture Acerrae, Casilinum and Arpi furthering his influence in central Italy.

After repulsing Hannibal at Nola, the Romans didn't have the power to take the offensive. An attempt to bottle the Carthaginians up at Apulia, under Fabius, resulted in the escape of Hannibal's army using oxen with burning sticks tied to their horns. Sent at night, the oxen confused Fabius into believing an attack was imminent and Hannibal was able to avoid a potential disaster. Hannibal needed reinforcements badly and the Romans, well aware of this issue took up the original plan used by Fabius. They were to defend the loyal allied towns, recapture those towns that were within access and keep Hannibal on the move without engaging him directly.

215 BC proved to be a fateful year for Rome. In Sicily, Heiro II of Syracuse a longtime Roman ally, died and his pro-Carthaginian son Hieronymos succeeded him. To the north, in Cisalpine Gaul, a Roman force was crushed by the Celts. In Macedonia, Philip V moved against Illyricum and Roman interests in Greece in open alliance with Hannibal. In Italy, Carthage finally sent at least a

small force of reinforcements that joined Hannibal at Lucri. To counter these setbacks, Marcellus was sent to Sicily, an alliance with the Aetolian league of Greece was established to counter Philip, and Fabius maintained the status quo with his avoidance tactics in Italy.

While Marcellus moved to Sicily in 214 BC, the Carthaginian senate chose to make another grab for that island which was once theirs, rather than reinforce Hannibal. Still desperately short of an army large enough to do more than capture small towns and wreak havoc on the countryside, Hannibal was forced to move south. Casilinum and Arpi were recaptured by Rome, but Hannibal looked to Tarentum as a long sought after port to receive reinforcements and supplies. Meanwhile, Hannibal's brother Hanno was kept busy suppressing a revolt against Carthage near Bruttium.

In 212 BC, through an act of treachery by local Tarentine nobles, Hannibal was able to capture Tarentum bloodlessly. Roman citizens were butchered while Tarentine locals were untouched, and Hannibal finally had his port. His brother Hanno, however, was defeated at Beneventum further depleting the overall Carthaginian force. Despite the success of Hannibal at Tarentum and the resistance of a Roman at Herdonea, the tide was slowly beginning to turn in Rome's favor. By the following year, Samnium and Apulia would both be back under Roman control and the path was open for the Romans to besiege Capua, Hannibal's former winter base.

In 211 BC, Hannibal desperately tried to relieve Capua by feigning an attack on Rome itself. Completely unmolested during the war Rome was prepared, however, and Hannibal could do little more than camp outside the Colline gates. He was hoping that his feint on Rome would force the siege of Capua to be lifted, and draw the army out into the open where Hannibal could work his strategic magic. The defenses of Rome were too great and the besiegers knew it, so they maintained their position. Hannibal was forced to march back south empty-handed and shortly after Capua fell to the Romans. In the aftermath, a great number of the Capuan citizenry was sold into slavery for punishment and the land of the town was auctioned off to Roman citizens.

Meanwhile in Sicily, the King of Syracuse, Heironomos was murdered by Roman operatives for fear of his allegiance to Carthage. The effort backfired, however, and a civil war ensued with pro-Carthaginian forces eventually taking control of the city. Marcellus was sent to Sicily to restore Roman order with several legions, while the Carthaginians tried to re-establish themselves with an army of their own. The Carthaginian senate sanctioned an army of 25,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry and 12 elephants that landed in Sicily in support of Syracuse, but they were to prove to be no match for Marcellus. By 210 BC, Syracuse would fall through siege back into Roman control and any remnants of Carthaginian resistance were gone. Marcellus was able to cross back into Italy and put more pressure on Hannibal.

End of the War in Italy

While Marcellus was leading the Romans to success in Sicily, Hannibal still ravaged the southern Italian countryside. In 210 BC, Hannibal led another victory over the Romans at Herdonea, where the Romans supposedly lost another 16,000 men. Immediately thereafter, Marcellus crossed from Sicily and met Hannibal at the Battle of Numistro. Like before, when these two men met at Nola, a long bloody fight ensued that ended in a tactical draw. Hannibal withdrew and Marcellus followed. While technically a draw, the Romans could afford such engagements. Hannibal, despite his heavily favored ratio of victories in the overall campaign, was becoming more and more desperate for reinforcements after every engagement; victory or defeat.

209 BC was a year clearly marked to change the tides in Rome's favor. As Marcellus cautiously pursued Hannibal's army that was constantly on the move, the Romans recaptured the port base of Tarentum. Though the Carthaginian sphere of influence was shrinking fast, Hannibal wasn't ready to concede just yet. The following year, 208 BC, Hannibal continued to hold off the Romans. At Asculum he defeated a vastly superior Roman numerical advantage and shortly thereafter won

a greater victory in a minor skirmish at Venusia. At Venusia, Marcellus was killed in battle and the "Sword of Rome," the only Roman general to give Hannibal a challenge, would no longer be an obstacle. The death of Marcellus though, provided little real improvement to Hannibal's fortunes. His army was dreadfully undermanned with poor moral and he had no choice but to call for more forces from Hispania.

In Hispania, his brother Hasdrubal still commanded the defense of Carthaginian interests. The war in Spain never went as well for Carthage as it did in Italy. With the assumption of overall command of all Roman forces there by Scipio the Younger (later Africanus) in 210 BC, Hasdrubal was constantly on the run. As the new Carthaginian Empire in Hispania seemed to be a lost cause, Hasdrubal marched his army along a similar route as Hannibal's march through the Alps some 10 years earlier. Arriving in northern Italy in the Spring of 208 BC, Hasdrubal immediately set out to join with Hannibal in the south and bolster his brother's flagging army. As Hasdrubal marched along the Adriatic, Hannibal was held in check in the south for fear of losing the loyalty of local allies and conquests he had gained in the region. Isolated along the eastern Italian coast, the Romans jumped at the chance to crush Hasdrubal before he could reinforce Hannibal.

Two Roman armies, under the commands of the Consuls Gaius Claudius Nero and M. Livius Salinator, met Hasdrubal near the Metaurus River in 207 BC. The 30,000 Carthaginians were outmatched from the start by the 35,000 - 40,000 Romans lined up against them. While the battle hung in the balance for some time, the superior numbers of Nero allowed him to eventually outflank and envelop Hasdrubal. By the end of the day, 20,000 of the Carthaginian force, including a great many Gauls were killed. Hasdrubal himself was also killed in battle, and his head was soon to be thrown into Hannibal's camp to demoralize him. As the remaining Gauls fled the battle, the Romans allowed them to leave, to spread the word of the great Roman victory and the re-establishment of dominance in Italy. The Battle of Metaurus was the most pivotal battle of the entire war. Had Hasdrubal been victorious, a large enough force coming from north and south would have been able to move against the capital. The Roman victory assured that Hannibal would never be reinforced by a substantial force. Despite all his victories, Rome could persevere.

Two years later while Scipio pressed on, the last bastion of Carthaginian presence was removed from Hispania. Another brother of Hannibal, Mago, sailed with his remaining army from the siege of Carthago Nova, by way of the Balearic Islands, to Liguria in northern Italy. Attempting to re-inspire the Gauls who were devastated after Metaurus, Mago stayed in Celtic territories to recruit anew. Soon after his arrival, however, the Romans met him and crushed his army, along with any Carthaginian hope of ultimate victory. In the battle, Mago was wounded and another brother of Hannibal, Hanno, was killed. Mago took what little army he had left and joined Hannibal in Bruttium.

With the defeat of Hasdrubal and Mago, Rome was free to conduct operations against Carthage in retaliation for its invasion of Italy. While Hannibal managed to stave off his own defeat while being bottled up in Bruttium for 4 more years, Scipio was able to plan the invasion of Africa. Leaving a substantial force to bring Spain under Roman control, Scipio, recently elected Consul, moved to Sicily and organized the forces left there from earlier campaigns. By 204 BC, Scipio crossed the Mediterranean and invaded Africa. Roman success within a year forced Hannibal and Mago to be recalled for the defense of Carthage, though Mago would die en route. In 203 BC Hannibal sailed his remaining army of some 15,000 men back home and the war in Italy was over. The fate of Carthage rested in Hannibal's defense against Scipio Africanus.

War in Spain (218-214 BC)

While Hannibal was making his march across the Alps, the Romans took the fight and retaliation for Saguntum, directly to the Carthaginians in Spain. An invasion by a Roman Consular army under Publius Cornelius Scipio was launched in 218 BC, but a revolt among the Celts in Cisalpine

Gaul forced a change in the plans. P. Cornelius Scipio returned to Italy to deal with the revolt and the impending arrival of Hannibal, while his brother Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio, took the invasionary army on to Hispania. Gnaeus had under his command an initial force numbering 22,000 infantry, 2,200 cavalry and a strong fleet of 60 quinqueremes.

Gnaeus Scipio landed at Emporiae in NE Hispania, in October 218 BC and immediately advanced south, taking control of territory as far as Tarraco. Uncontested by Carthaginian resistance as he marched, he set to work subjugating local Iberian Celts. Hannibal's brother, Hanno, left in command in Northern Spain, decided to meet Scipio despite commanding a far inferior force. Outnumbered by as many as 2 to 1, Hanno's army was crushed near the town of Cissa, and Hanno himself was captured. As a result and from the very outset of the Roman invasion, Rome was able to secure a port as a supply base and also immediately nullify Spain as a source of supply and reinforcement for Hannibal in Italy.

In 217 BC, Hasdrubal, now in command of the Carthaginian forces, recruited heavily among the local Iberians. His fleet was brought to a strength of about 40 ships under Himilco. He advanced on Scipio's position on the Ebro River with his combined ground and naval forces, but his fleet was caught completely by surprise by a recently reinforced contingent of Roman ships. With the victory on the Ebro, the domination of the Roman navy was never again challenged throughout the length of the entire war. Shipping lanes and Carthaginian ports were blockaded and controlled which would eventually have a significant impact on Hannibal's campaign in Italy.

After the victory at the Ebro, the Roman senate sent Publius Scipio back to Spain with reinforcements of 8,000 men. Gnaeus raided the Balearic Islands to put down a revolt of the local Iberians and Publius took control of the overall navy. In the year 216 BC, both Roman and Carthaginian commands were occupied consolidating control over their own territories rather than fighting one another. The Romans grappled with King Indibilis and his Balearic Iberians, and Hasdrubal with the Tartesii tribe. Because of the Tartesii, Hasdrubal, despite recent reinforcements of 4,000 infantry and 500 cavalry from Africa, had to postpone any plans to check the Roman advance until the following year.

With the opening of the campaign season in 215 BC, Hasdrubal Barca led his army of 30,000 north to meet the Romans. The Scipios meanwhile, with a comparable force moved south to block Hasdrubal at the Ebro. At the small town of Dertosa, the armies met in very similar conditions to those that unfolded for Hannibal at Cannae. Hasdrubal's plan all along was to mimic Hannibal's strategy and hold the Roman infantry in the center while his cavalry enveloped the flanks. Unlike Hannibal's army, Hasdrubal lacked the disciplined cavalry of his brother and the result was a far different outcome. Quickly after the battle opened, the Scipios recognized the strategy and effectively countered it. In the end, Hasdrubal's army was routed and its effects were felt throughout the course of the entire war.

The defeat at Dertosa was monumental for the Carthaginians. Many local Iberian tribes shifted their allegiance to Rome, and control of the vast mineral wealth of Spain was slowly crumbling. The Romans seized several cities south of the Ebro and took control of territory belonging to the Carthaginian allied tribes, the Intibili and the Illiturgi. The arrival of Mago with 12,000 infantry, 1,500 cavalry and 20 elephants helped to avert complete disaster for Carthage, but its effect on Hannibal in Italy was profound. Mago had been enroute to join Hannibal and the diversion helped stem the Roman advance in Hispania but reduced the overall effectiveness of the Italian campaign.

War in Spain (214-211 BC)

By 214 Mago and Hasdrubal had levied new forces and decided to strike first. Advancing into the territory of some of Rome's new Spanish allies near Acra Leuce they defeated the local tribal

forces. Publius Scipio moved quickly to counter the new offensive but was ambushed by the Punic cavalry, losing 2,000 men. He withdrew northward to rendezvous with Gnaeus Scipio's army, just as a third Carthaginian force commanded by Hasdrubal Gisgo, arrived from Africa. These five armies (3 Carthaginian, 2 Roman) engaged in a series of actions around the cities of the Ilturgi and Intibili in east-central Hispania with the Carthaginians pressing the action. In the end of the campaign season, the Romans maintained control of the newly won territory, but Gnaeus had been seriously injured in combat.

The next three years saw the jockeying of position for both sides. The three Carthaginian armies were content to harass the Romans while maintaining control of their power base in the south of Spain. The Romans, without reinforcements of their own since their arrival several years earlier, were also limited in choices. Because of the limited manpower resources, advancement required leaving too many troops in the rear to maintain supply and communication lines, making any gains untenable. The Carthaginians faced difficulties of their own in the form of revolts in Africa. King Syphax of the Numidians rose against Carthage, an uprising eagerly incited by the Romans, troubling the Carthaginian's cause in Spain even further. As a result Spanish forces were sent to Africa to help quell the rebellion, but rather than putting it to an end, Syphax was able to withdraw via Gibraltar and add his vaunted Numidian cavalry to the Roman cause. Through the whole affair, the Scipios took advantage of the situation and recaptured the site that started the entire war, Saguntum. They also made inroads with the Celtiberians and were able to recruit an additional army of 20,000 tribesmen.

The beginning of 211 BC proved to be a much better year for the Barca clan. At the time, between the 3 armies, estimates of 35,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry and 30 elephants have been given for the total Carthaginian force. Conversely, the Romans had nearly 50,000 mixed legionary and Celtic infantry with an additional 5,000 cavalry. The Roman plan for the season was simple, engage and defeat the Carthaginian ground forces. The problem however, was that the Carthaginians were so evenly divided between 3 separate armies, that Roman advances against one force would leave their territory vulnerable to an unoccupied Carthaginian army.

As a result the Scipios divided their armies to attempt to meet the multiple Carthaginian forces. Gnaeus went after Hasdrubal with an army twice his size, while Publius moved against Mago. Hasdrubal, though heavily outnumbered, managed to hold off the Roman advance. Learning that the bulk of his opposition was made up of the Celtic warriors, Hasdrubal arranged to pay off the Celts and send them home leaving Gnaeus with only a small contingent of actual legionaries. Left completely vulnerable, Gnaeus Scipio had little recourse but to slowly withdraw while holding off Hasdrubal's attacks.

Publius Scipio, advancing on Mago near Castulo, had his own problems. Mago, was reinforced by Gisgo and additional Numidian cavalry under Masinissa. Approaching the enemy, Publius found himself walking into a hornet's nest, being stung on all sides. Trying to maneuver out of his difficulties, he soon discovered that an additional force under Indibilis of the Balearic Islands was approaching his flank. Surrounded and now outnumbered, Publius Cornelius Scipio was killed and his army of 23,000 men were destroyed at the Battle of Castulo (211 BC).

With one Roman army destroyed the separate Carthaginian forces now converged with Hasdrubal on Gnaeus. Unaware of his brother's fate, Gnaeus would surely try to withdraw when he found out, so the Carthaginians moved fast to prevent any escape. As the enemy approached in formation, Scipio realized that he faced the entire army of the Carthaginians in Hispania and attempted a quick withdrawal from open battle. He occupied high ground on a hill near Ilorca and immediately began fortifying, preparing for a siege. His efforts were in vain, however, as the Punic armies stormed the hastily constructed defenses and destroyed the army of the Romans. Within 30 days of his brother's death at Castulo, Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio met the same fate at the Battle of Ilorca.

The stunning victories caught both the victors and the defeated off-guard. The Carthaginians, now in total command of Hispania, were seemingly ill prepared for total victory and failed to capitalize on the opportunity. Reinforcements could've been sent to Hannibal in Italy, or against gains in the north of Spain, but instead their interest in victory seemed to wane. Instead the Carthaginians spent the following months again consolidating their positions and reaffirming control of the south. In Rome, the defeats were obviously shocking but were greeted with a resolute response. The Senate immediately dispatched C. Claudius Nero to shore up the remaining garrisons in Spain. Victories over Syracuse in Sicily and at Capua in Italy allowed the Romans to send some reinforcements and plan for the next year's campaign. At the end of 211 BC, the positions of both sides were exactly the same as when the war had started in 218. The Romans, thanks to Marcus Septimus who saved the remnants of the defeated Roman armies by withdrawing north after the battles Castulo and Ilorca, and his replacement Nero, managed to hold onto territory north of the Ebro while the Carthaginians had regained complete authority over everything south.

War in Spain (210-207 BC)

After the Roman defeats at Castulo and Ilorca, the situation in Spain was desperate. The Senate appointed C. Claudius Nero to command there, but his presence was to prove only a temporary affair. In 210 BC the desperation was apparent in the granting of imperium to the young Publius Cornelius Scipio. At only 25 years of age, the legal age for a praetorship, Scipio, likely in sympathy over the death of his father and uncle, was unanimously elected the overall command of the campaign in Spain. He left Rome with an army of 10,000 infantry and 1,000 cavalry and like his uncle before him, landed at Emporiae. Consolidating with the remaining forces still left in Spain, he began his campaign with 28,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry, and would receive no reinforcements from Italy for the remainder of the war.

From his base in Tarraco, Scipio immediately set about boosting the morale of his troops and securing alliances with local Celtiberian tribes. Also scouting the enemy during the winter before his first campaign, he discovered that the Carthaginian forces were not only still divided in three forces, but that in-fighting between them seemed to show a lack of cooperation. Hasdrubal, Mago and Hasdrubal Gisgo each had as many troops as Scipio's single army, but it became apparent that 3 separate campaigns of conquest could be planned. The Carthaginian base of Carthago Nova soon developed as Scipio's first target, with a garrison of 1,000 men he surmised that its defeat would not only be easy, but would be a major blow to the enemy in the heart of its territory.

In early 209 BC, Scipio set out with 25,000 men and 30 ships under the command of Gaius Laelius. Arriving at Carthago Nova in complete surprise, he fortified his own position to protect himself from Carthaginian reinforcements and prepared for the assault on the city. After two attempts to take the city by direct attack, Scipio employed a strategy of assaulting the small garrison from several sides. Completely outnumbered and unable to face the Romans from so many points, a marine force was able to storm the gates and gain entry to the city. At first, the Romans massacred the inhabitants in order to flush out any remaining resistance but when the Carthaginian commander (another Mago) surrendered, Scipio ordered the end of the slaughter.

The capture of Carthago Nova not only drove a wedge into the heart of Carthaginian Spain, it gave the Romans much needed military stores and supplies, access to local silver mines, an excellent harbor and a perfectly positioned base for further operations in southern Spain. Scipio's treatment of the locals once the battle was over was exemplary. Carthaginian citizens were set free and they were allowed to keep their property. Artisans were promised freedom if they continued to work in Roman service. He also recruited heavily among the locals as naval rowers and additional auxiliary forces, not only supplementing his own forces, but giving the impression that the people were allies to Rome rather than enemies.

After Carthago Nova was secure, Scipio moved his main force to Tarraco where he spent the remainder of the year training and drilling his men. Under Scipio, the Romans abandoned their

traditional Italian gladius for one used by Celtiberians. The Spanish short sword (Gladius Hispaniensis) was better suited for close quartered legionary tactics and it would soon become the primary sword of the entire Roman army.

The Carthaginians meanwhile, seriously devoid of any naval capacity were unable to retaliate at Carthago Nova. In the aftermath of its loss to Rome, they had little choice but to keep focused on quelling local tribes before they defected to the enemy. In effect, Rome had accomplished in Hispania what Hannibal had attempted to do in Italy, turning the inhabitants against the traditional power. Hasdrubal had begun recruiting an army to reinforce Hannibal in Italy, but Scipio and his extensive network of scouts were well aware of these plans. In the campaign year of 208 BC, Scipio marched south to Baecula to meet the unsuspecting Hasdrubal.

Near the Baetis River, the battle of Baecula faced 40,000 to 50,000 Romans against as many as 30,000 Carthaginian forces. Hasdrubal immediately withdrew to his camp and prepared for the defense when the Romans approached. While the enemy formed in a defensive posture, Scipio was able to outflank the enemy and quickly took command of the field. Hasdrubal wisely realized he was outmatched and retreated to safety in the Carthaginian dominated interior of Hispania. While the Carthaginians lost as much as half or 2/3rds of its army, Hasdrubal was able to save enough of it to continue with his planned reinforcement of Hannibal. Scipio, though later widely criticized, knew that pursuit into the interior of Spain would have been folly and let Hasdrubal go, choosing instead to focus on the remaining Carthaginian forces and strongholds.

After Baecula, Hasdrubal moved to reinforce Hannibal in Italy with his remaining army and Scipio moved against the armies of Mago and Hasdrubal Gisgo. Reinforced by the local Spanish tribes who hailed him as a King (though he refused this), Scipio was in excellent position to deal a deathblow to Carthage. One of his generals, Silanus, was sent with 10,000 infantry and 500 cavalry on a forced march to attack Mago in his training camp. Recently reinforced by Hanno from Africa, the Carthaginians outnumbered the Roman force, but Silanus' attack was a complete surprise. Mago and Hanno were utterly defeated and any recent Carthaginian levies were scattered beyond hope of recovery. Hanno was captured while Mago salvaged what little was left of his army and retreated to Gades joining Hasdrubal Gisgo, who had wisely moved out of reach of Scipio when news of the battle had reached him.

Meanwhile, an army under the command of Marcius harassed and assaulted pro-Carthaginian Iberian tribes in an attempt to eliminate what remained of their recruiting base. Both he and Scipio spent the remainder of the year spreading Roman control while preparing for the final campaign to eliminate the Carthaginian presence in Hispania. News of Hasdrubal's complete defeat in upper Italy after escaping Scipio arrived at this time and Carthage was clearly on the defensive in all theatres for this first time in the war. While the year 207 BC was drawing to a close, both sides prepared for what would prove to be the final battle between the two forces in Hispania.

War in Spain (206-205 BC)

The Carthaginians spent the winter of 207 and 206 BC once again recruiting amongst the locals for a final effort against Scipio. In the spring of 206 BC Mago and Hasdrubal Gisgo marched from Gades with between 50,000 and 70,000 infantry, 4,000 to 5,000 cavalry and 32 war elephants. Scipio also prepared for the final campaign in securing new recruits among local Roman allies. Weakened by the need to garrison so many new conquests, the Romans were left with only a small contingent of actual legionaries among 45,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry. Despite this, Scipio was ready to put an end to the war in Spain and he marched to Illipa to meet the advancing Carthaginian army.

Because of Scipio's brilliant tactical ability his inferiority in numbers (and an army made up of mostly non Romans) didn't make a difference. Preparing for a single and final deciding battle

Scipio positioned his forces to prevent a Carthaginian retreat to their base at Gades. Much like the tactics of Hannibal in Italy, Scipio set up a cavalry ambush and lured Mago to attack. Mago moved against Scipio believing he was in the superior position and the trap was unleashed. The Carthaginians were initially driven back but managed to recover and extend the battle over a course of a few days. As it continued both lines were arranged in similar patterns on the field, with the main infantry of both armies occupying the center, flanked by local tribesmen. On the final day, Scipio rearranged his formation with the tribesmen in the middle flanked by regular legionaries.

Scipio launched his attack at first light, and caught by surprise the Carthaginians were overwhelmed. During the protracted battle the Carthaginians, who had gone without breakfast were certainly hungry and exhausted throughout the day, succumbed to the Roman onslaught. A heavy rain late in the day delayed the inevitable, but because Scipio had earlier cut off the retreat route to Gades, the entire force of Mago and Hasdrubal Gisgo was soon enveloped and destroyed. The battle was a great victory for Rome, and Scipio in particular, was assured greatness in history as one of the ancient world's greatest generals.

Fighting illness, Scipio continued the campaign against the remnants of Carthaginian resistance. Moving against Gades, Scipio's illness worsened and at some point many believed he had died. His troops had long been operating unpaid and the recent plunder from various expeditions roused them into a mutinous state. Believing Scipio was too ill, or perhaps even dead, to make good on payments, they revolted on the Sucro River in 206 BC. The mutiny was quickly quelled as Scipio recovered, payments were arranged and the ringleaders executed, and operations soon continued as normal.

By the end of the year, 206 BC, Gades was also captured and several Spanish tribes also fell under the Roman sword. Advance political arrangements were made with several African tribes to aid in the eventual invasion of Africa. By 205 BC, Mago, knowing the cause in Spain was lost, sailed from Liguria to Italy in an attempt to join with Hannibal but was subsequently defeated in Cisalpine Gaul much like Hasdrubal before him. All evidence of Carthaginian resistance was gone, and the Romans stood as the new masters of Spain. Scipio left the Roman garrison and returned to Rome to be elected Consul. From there, he continued on to Sicily to prepare for the invasion of Carthage itself on the African mainland. He proved his worth to Rome and fought a brilliant campaign in Spain. The only blemishes on his record, for which he would be furiously punished politically by Cato the Elder years later, were his failure to stop Hasdrubal from escaping to Italy, and the short-lived and uneventful mutiny in 206 BC. However, even though the final conquest of Hispania would take another 2 centuries, the campaigns of Scipio in the far west of Europe helped establish Rome as the ultimate power of the Mediterranean.

Invasion of Africa

Publius Cornelius Scipio debarked for Sicily in 205 BC with an army of volunteers, to meet up with forces (the survivors from Cannae) assigned to him there. As a furious debate raged in the Senate as to the next course of action, no new levies were authorized for the invasion of Africa, but Scipio was allowed to prepare his campaign. Allied arrangements were made with various African tribes, Libyans, Moors and the Numidian Prince Massinissa to assist in the coming invasion.

In 204 BC Scipio crossed the sea and landed in North Africa with a veteran army of as many as 35,000 men. While Scipio had retained the services of Masinissa, another Numidian, King Syphax, maintained his loyalty to Carthage. Both sides of the Numidian forces had already been at war, and while being used to the advantage of both Rome and Carthage, both also sought favor by the two warring parties. Masinissa had been on the losing end of most engagements with Syphax, but he still was able to provide Scipio with 6,000 infantry and 4,000 of the vaunted Numidian cavalry.

At the start of the campaign, Scipio moved on Utica and laid siege. Met by a joint army of Carthaginians and Numidians, led by Syphax and Hasdrubal Gisgo, he was pinned along the shore of the African coast for a time and forced to lift the siege. For the winter of 204 to 203 BC, both armies waited in their own camps until the following spring. At the start of the 203 BC season, Scipio launched a surprise attack, burning the camps of the enemy and creating mass panic. In the end, 40,000 enemy troops were dead with an additional 5,000 prisoners taken, but both Syphax and Hasdrubal escaped. With the quick victory, Scipio resumed his siege of Utica, while the Carthaginians immediately began recruiting another army.

Soon after, another Carthaginian force of about 30,000 men began to muster at the Great Plains of the Bagradas River. Scipio moved away from his siege of Utica and swept down in force on the green army. The Romans smashed the defenders, this time in a double flanking maneuver, but Hasdrubal and Syphax were able to escape once again.

Late in the year 203 BC, Syphax was still operating with a small force near Cirta. Scipio dispatched Laelius and Masinissa, the allied Numidian king with a partial force to end the threat once and for all, while he maintained the siege of Utica. Near the Ampsaga River, Syphax fought his last battle as his outmatched force was badly beaten. Masinissa captured Syphax and took him to Cirta, whereby the city surrendered without resistance.

With this defeat and the fall of Utica, Carthage had little choice but to sue for peace and accept Scipio's harsh terms. Carthage, however, had recalled Hannibal from Italy and seemed to accept the terms only to give Hannibal enough time to return. As Hannibal was making the dangerous voyage back to Africa (trying to avoid the powerful Roman fleets) with his veteran army, a Roman supply fleet ran aground near Carthage and it was seized and plundered by the locals. Envoys sent to Carthage to complain about this violation of the newly ratified peace treaty were promptly attacked, and Scipio had no choice but to renew his offensive. He laid waste to the interior towns of Carthaginian territory and met with Masinissa and his Numidian cavalry near the Bagradas River. By this time, in 202 BC, Hannibal had also returned and recruited a new army of 25,000 men to supplement his 12,000 veterans. Marching towards Scipio, the two armies met near Zama on the plains of the Bagradas River.

Battle of Zama

In 202 BC, Hannibal learned that Publius Cornelius Scipio was devastating the area around Zama and left his base in Hadrumetum to confront him. Carthage was heavily dependent on the fertile grain production of the area and had no choice but meet the threat, despite Hannibal's recently recruited and poorly trained army. Scipio also was well aware of Hannibal's great ability in a defensive position, especially around Carthage. He hoped that his activities in the important area near Zama would draw Hannibal away from his defensive works at Hadrumetum and Carthage. It also provided an opportunity to link up with Masinissa's cavalry operating in the same area.

Hannibal, by this time had managed to gather as many as 40,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry to confront the smaller force of Scipio with 30,000 infantry and 6,000 cavalry. Though at the time the march began, Masinissa had not yet reached Scipio and Carthaginian spies were allowed into the Roman camp so they would see the lack of cavalry on hand. Encouraged, Hannibal hurried to Scipio's camp intending to use his own cavalry to overwhelm the Romans, unaware that Masinissa and his vaunted Numidians would soon arrive.

As the two armies were drawn up in their lines, Hannibal requested a meeting directly with Scipio. With the two armies drawn up in battle formation, Hannibal met Scipio in an indecisive parley. Hannibal felt that, though Rome had the advantage in the war, his superior strength on the field could save Carthage from any further destruction. He offered Spain, Sicily and Sardinia to Rome along with the guarantee that Carthage would never again attack, but Scipio refused. Knowing that

Masinissa would arrive shortly, the scale would tip back towards the Romans in terms of battlefield strength, and Hannibal didn't offer anything that the Romans hadn't already won. After the time gained through the parlay, Masinissa arrived and avoided an attempt by Hannibal to prevent the merger.

Scipio chose the site of his own camp for the battle, situated on a natural spring. Hannibal meanwhile was deep within African territory without an easily accessible source of water for his army. The flat plain was to be the future site of the Roman colony of Zama, and the battle was named for this colony 150 years after it happened.

Hannibal's plan was a basic recreation of his tactics at Cannae. While a sound plan he failed to take several things into account. His cavalry was inferior to that of the Romans, his army consisted of a great many inexperienced recruits, and now he faced a general as capable as himself in Scipio, rather than the inept leadership shown by the Romans in Italy. Hannibal placed all of his elephants in the front of his army, with mixed infantry behind and cavalry on the flanks. He hoped the elephants would route the central lines of the Romans while his cavalry could envelope it from the flanks.

The battle opened with the elephants charging the Roman lines. While a frightening sight to the Romans, Scipio's plan worked and the elephants went neatly into the open lanes. Scipio's men shouted and banged their swords on their shields, archers attacked the riders, and the spearman attacked the sides of the elephants. The great beasts quickly panicked and turned on their own lines to escape the carnage. They moved directly against Hannibal's own cavalry essentially wiping out one entire flank. Now without his elephants and an already inferior cavalry only weaker by this disaster, Hannibal was in deep trouble before the infantry even met.

Scipio then turned the tables and used much the same tactics at Zama as Hannibal had at Cannae. His cavalry pushed Hannibal's aside with ease, driving them off, and the infantry met in the center. At first, the Roman front line was beaten badly in the center, but Scipio left more men in reserve, forcing Hannibal to leave some men uncommitted. Before long, the regular legionaries began to push back the front of Hannibal's force, but their own reserve line wouldn't let the retreating Carthaginian's through the lines to safety. While Hannibal's front lines were destroyed, his own vaunted veterans stood in the Roman's path. Both armies extended their lines as long as possible to prevent being flanked, and Scipio failed to encircle Hannibal. Both lines fought fiercely with neither infantry gaining an advantage and it looked as if Scipio's plan to emulate Cannae might fail. At the critical juncture, however, the Roman and Numidian cavalry broke off its pursuit of the fleeing Carthaginian cavalry and returned to attack Hannibal's flanks. Despite the brilliance of his veterans, the Carthaginians had no chance while being crushed on all sides. The Carthaginians soon broke and the battle, and the Second Punic War, would soon be over.

16 years after his invasion of Italy, the army of Hannibal was destroyed and Carthage was defeated. As many as 20,000 men of his army were killed with an equal number taken as prisoners to be sold at slave auction. The Romans meanwhile, lost as few as 500 dead and 4,000 wounded. Scipio, having defeated the master of all strategists of the time, now stood as the world's greatest general. As a reward for his success, Publius Cornelius Scipio was awarded the cognomen Africanus. Hannibal, however, managed to escape the slaughter and returned to Hadrumetum with a small escort. He advised Carthage to accept the best terms they could and that further war against Rome, at this time, was futile.

Results of the Second Punic War

Spain was forever lost to Carthage and passed into the control of Rome for the next 7 centuries, though not without troubles of its own. Carthage was reduced to the status of a client state and lost all power of enacting its own treaties and diplomacy. It was forced to pay a tribute of 10,000

talents, all warships, save 10 were turned over to Rome along with any remaining war elephants. Carthage was also forbidden to raise an army without the permission of Rome. Grain and reparations for lost supplies also had to be provided to Rome as well as having the responsibility of collecting runaway slaves and returning them.

Masinissa, meanwhile, as a reward for his service to Rome, was crowned King of greater Numidia, and allowed nearly free reign in his territory. He, of course, took full advantage of Carthaginian weakness and captured much territory from the city in the aftermath of its defeat (probably encouraged from Rome.)

Hannibal remained a constant source of fear for Rome. Despite the treaty enacted in 201 BC, Hannibal was allowed to remain free in Carthage. By 196 BC he was made a Shophet, or chief magistrate of the Carthaginian Senate. In a short time he reformed many corrupt policies within the government of Carthage and tried to strengthen its internal political system. In-fighting, however, forced Hannibal to flee to the east where he later joined up with Antiochus III of Syria to fight the Romans once more.

Scipio Africanus was at first proclaimed as a great hero, which he was. Rome had lost over 300,000 men over the course of the war, farms and other establishments in Italy were devastated. Without the leadership of Scipio in Spain, Rome may very well not have had the resources to continue the fight, or Hannibal would've been reinforced making Carthaginian victory far more likely. Scipio would later serve in the east during the Macedonian Wars and against Antiochus, but would be victimized later in life by the brilliant politics of Cato the Censor.

With its victory over Carthage, and over the Macedonians in a series of wars, Rome became the master of not only all of Italy, but Africa, Spain and Greece as well. The defeat of Carthage transformed the Roman Republic from a growing regional power into the super-powered Empire of the Mediterranean.

First Macedonian War

As Hannibal ravaged Italy in the Second Punic War, Philip the V of Macedonia sought to take advantage of Rome's problems and extend his domain within his region of influence. After Hannibal destroyed the Romans at Cannae in 216 BC, the opportunity was perfect for an alliance between Philip and Hannibal. Heavily influenced by Demetrius of Illyria, who had been expelled by the Romans just a few years earlier, Philip looked to both the north and south to expand his Kingdom.

In 214 BC, Philip moved a small fleet to Illyria to begin feeling out his chances there. The Romans, with little resource to spare for another major campaign sent praetor M. Valerius Laevinus with a fleet of 50 ships to watch over Philip from Apulia on the Adriatic. As Philip campaigned in Illyria, Laevinus crossed over to protect Roman interests, and Philip was forced to burn his small fleet to prevent its capture.

Philip however, was not to be so easily defeated. Well aware of Hannibal's victories in Italy, he knew that Laevinus could only defend by sea, and the land route to Illyria was wide open. Marching north, the Macedonians captured several cities, while all Laevinus could do was prevent any attempted reinforcement of Hannibal's Carthaginian army and harass coastal bases supply routes. The Roman Senate had no choice but to seek land allies within reach of Philip to counteract Macedonia. In 211 BC, the Romans approached the Aetolian League of West Central Greece old enemies of Philip, to form an alliance. A deal was struck easily, granting the Aetolians any land they could capture simply in exchange for keeping Philip occupied.

Initially, the Aetolians were successful, at least enough in the Roman view to accomplish its objective of keeping a buffer between Philip and Italy. In 209 BC, the small alliance was joined by Attalus of Pergamum on the Asia Minor coast, but nothing of any major consequence came of this arrangement again other than helping to keep Philip at bay. By this time, P. Sulpicius Galba had taken command of the Adriatic fleet and his primary goal was to maintain the status quo while Rome dealt with Carthage.

An uneventful campaign year later, Attalus withdrew back to Pergamum with little gain or loss in the affair. By 208 BC, free on his eastern flank Philip invaded the Aetolians without their ally and little available assistance from Rome forcing Aetolia to sue for peace. Despite Galba's objections, the Aetolians were outmatched, and by 206 BC were ready to accept Macedonian terms. Philip continued to have his way on the eastern shore of the Adriatic for another couple of years, as the Romans waited out Hannibal back in Italy.

By 205 BC, Scipio's invasion of Africa forced the withdrawal of Hannibal back to Carthage and Rome was able to finally deal with Philip. Tired of the long and terribly costly Second Punic War, however, the Romans did little more than assemble an army. 11,000 legionaries were assembled from Punic War veterans and prepared to meet the Macedonians, but by this time, both sides were ready for peace. Philip was happy with his gains and was willing to negotiate peace if the terms were favorable thereby avoiding direct confrontation with Rome's veterans.

Near the end of 205 BC, Scipio Africanus treated a peace arrangement with Philip that allowed him to keep most everything he had gained. The interior regions of Illyria, previously only a nominal interest of Rome was ceded willingly to Macedonia and access to the Adriatic was also granted. Greek cities on the western coast of the Achaean peninsula however, had to remain free of Macedonian authority and with this Philip willingly agreed.

With little cost or effort in the so-called war, the Romans gave up very little of their own properties or territories and achieved their goal of keeping Philip from helping Hannibal. Because of its treaty arrangement working to the benefit of the Greek city-states, Roman influence in the cultural center of the world deepened and became more profound. The close relations between Rome and Greece, along with continued resentment between Rome and Macedonia would lead to a series of several wars between the two nations.

Second Macedonian War

Since the treaty between Rome and Macedonia in 205 BC, the two nations maintained an uneasy and hostile peace. Rome was still occupied with Carthage, ending the war with the victory over Hannibal at Zama in 202 BC, and the continued hostile actions of Philip V of Macedon had to be temporarily overlooked. During the interim period between the First and Second Macedonian Wars, Philip took full advantage of Rome's apparent indifference.

By 203 BC Philip, having won some lands in Illyria during the first war, pressed his advantage in the region by gaining more territory in the Roman protectorate. Roman objections eventually changed Philip's tact, but only moved him closer towards new conflict with Rome. He stretched his influence into the Greek cities to his south rather than Illyria in the north, which were formerly considered under the protection of Rome. In 202 BC, Philip and Antiochus III of Syria entered into a secret deal to expand their own territories. The goal was to divide up the possessions of the Egyptian monarchy, which was embroiled in civil strife and under the rule of the child king, Ptolemy V. Antiochus moved against southern Syria and other parts of the current Middle East, while Philip turned away from Roman aggression to his west. His target was Thracia and control of the important shipping lanes from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

By 201 BC, Philip was fully at war with the powerful fleet of the island nation Rhodes, and with Attalus King of Pergamum in Asia Minor. Losses in battle to these nations inspired the Greeks who had fallen under Macedonia's control to rise up and appeal to Rome for help. A diplomatic mission from Pergamum, Rhodes and Athens, arrived in Rome in the same year all with the same goal of securing Roman intervention. While initially rejected by the Senate, it soon became clear that Philip had to be dealt with, either in Macedonian territory at that point, or later after potentially building enough strength to invade Italy. Ambassadors were sent to Philip demanding his withdrawal from the territories of Rome's allies, which were flatly rejected.

By 200 BC, Philip sent one army to invade Attica, a territory belonging to Athens while he commanded a force against coastal towns in Thracia. Further rejection of Roman demands to cease and desist, prompted the declaration of War. Rome's stated reasons were to secure the independence of the Greek cities, but certainly also with the subversive goal to expand Roman influence in the east. In the same year, the Roman Consul Galba took command of 2 legions, and the war was on.

Late in 200 BC, Galba raided Macedonian border towns and moved to Illyria to undue some of Philip's gains there. A fleet was sent around the Greek coast to help them fend off Macedonian sieges, and the Aetolians were convinced to once again join the Romans against Philip. Otherwise, the early campaign was rather uneventful with neither side gaining much of an advantage. Galba and his successor, P. Villius Tappula, essentially spent 2 years in a virtual stalemate.

T. Quinctius Flaminius ascended to command the Romans in 198 BC, and immediately set about taking the war to Philip. In negotiating with the Macedonian King, Flaminius championed the freedom of the Greek cities and demanded Macedonian withdrawal from all of Greece. Obviously refused, Flaminius did win the desired outcome, the entry of the Greek Achaean League into the war as allies of Rome. Flaminius then engaged Philip at the river Aous, and won a minor engagement which opened up an invasion route to Thessaly. With the avenue now open, the Romans moved into Macedonian territory and laid siege to several towns until winter forced him to retire at Phocis until the spring.

Again the two parties met for negotiations late in the year 198. Flaminius used political savvy to set himself up for either future campaigning, or to end the war. Had he lost his Consular powers at the end of the year, terms could've been negotiated to end the war, but if he won re-election, he wished to continue the fight. Delaying Philip in the discussions, he had the Macedonians send an envoy to Rome to discuss exact terms of peace. While the envoy was en route, Flaminius learned that he would in fact be keeping his Consular powers for the next season and 'arranged' for the peace negotiations to fail in the Senate due to lack of popular support. Newly inspired by his chance to win the war on the battlefield, rather than in the Senate, Flaminius set about planning for the next campaign.

Opening the spring campaign Flaminius led his two veteran legions along with a strong compliment (8,000) of mostly Aetolian Greeks into Thessaly. Philip responded to the conquest of several of his regional towns by confronting the Romans with about 25,000 men. At Cynoscephalae the two armies met in 197 BC. In the first large scale meeting between the Roman legion and the classical Macedonian phalanx, the legionary flexibility proved superior. Hemmed in by their own rigid tactics, the Macedonians were overwhelmed as Flaminius countered Philip's tactics with various strategic maneuvers. With a crushing defeat, Philip had no choice but to settle on unfavorable terms.

By 196 BC, terms of the treaty were negotiated and Philip had to give up all claims on Greek territory, sending the city-states into the protectorate of Rome. He had to pay 1,000 talents in gold as tribute. He was however left in command of Macedonia. The Romans viewed Antiochus III in Syria (and now expanding in Asia Minor) as a considerable threat, and they viewed Philip as a

capable leader able to provide a buffer. Terms of the treaty also included that all Greek cities in Asia Minor were now under the protection of Rome, clearly aimed at thwarting Syrian expansion into that territory.

Rome, so soon after the end of the Second Punic War and with limited available manpower, wasn't able to continue to garrison the Greek cities but the politically astute Flaminius used this fact of military necessity to Rome's advantage. At the Isthmian games in Greece in the summer of 196 BC, Flaminius announced the 'treaty of freedom'. Greece would be un-garrisoned by either Rome or Macedonia and they would be free to live their lives under their own laws and customs. Winning great admiration from the Greeks that would last for centuries, Flaminius also accomplished another important goal. Unable to garrison the Greeks themselves, Greek admiration and gratitude to Rome for its part in defeating Macedon would secure their friendship and loyalty. Avoiding the quagmire of Greek politics, Rome expanded its influence in the east without the need for permanent legionary garrisons. By 196 BC, the Romans had removed all of their forces from Greece, while essentially gaining an obedient client kingdom and all the corresponding tribute that went along with it.

Syrian War

In the late 3rd century BC, Antiochus III, the Great, of Syria (and descendent of the hereditary rule established after Alexander's conquests) had restored Seleucid control of the former eastern kingdoms of Mesopotamia to Syria. At the end of the Second Macedonian War, the Roman decree by Flaminius announcing the freedom of Greek cities in Asia Minor was a direct challenge to Syrian plans on its western borders. By the time of the declaration, in 196 BC, Antiochus had already gained control of some of these sites, and even had a foothold on the shores of Thracia.

The Romans sent a diplomatic mission to Antiochus about this time with the intention of enforcing their decree and determining the plans of Syria. The Romans demanded that Antiochus restore conquests at the cost of Ptolemy in Egypt, back to Egypt and not to interfere with Greek coastal cities. Antiochus responded by suggesting the Romans had no more right to interfere in his Asian affairs than he had to interfere in Italy. As seemed to be the custom in Roman diplomacy prior to wars of expansion, after a series of negotiations little was resolved. War with Antiochus was inevitable as the Romans looked to their east for further political influence and authority.

Over the next year, the political climate in Greece was unstabilized at best. Flaminius, (the Roman hero of Greek independence from the Macedonian Wars) pressed upon the Greeks to authorize a war against Nabis of Sparta while resulting in an easy victory, increased regional wariness of Rome. As a result the Aetolians especially, a Roman ally against Philip were becoming unsettled with the spread of Roman influence in Greece. Hannibal Barca, in exile from Carthage after his defeat in the Second Punic War, had joined the army of Antiochus as an admiral and was certainly encouraging war against Rome. Antiochus continued to operate in Thrace despite Roman assurances that they would not interfere in Asia provided that the Syrians left the mainland parts of Europe. Eumenes, the King of Pergamum in western Asia Minor and a Roman ally, meanwhile urged the Romans to act against Antiochus.

Obviously deeply involved in Greek affairs by this time, the Romans were drawn into a war with the now troublesome Aetolians. Influencing the Spartans to continue operating against the Achaean League in Greece, the Romans were forced to intervene again. The Aetolians now took action on their own and attempted to capture Sparta, Chalcis and Demetrias. On the first two, Roman intervention stopped them, but at Demetrias, disgruntled Greeks let the Aetolians in. The Romans, so busy trying to keep the peace with several factions, failed to keep any of them happy. The Aetolians then went to Antiochus and inspired him to invade Greece, as they convinced him that the Greeks were ready to be rid of the Roman yoke. It was at this time, that the Romans were

completing their withdrawal of forces back to Italy, and Antiochus crossed into Greece at Demetrias, with a small force of 10,000 men.

While Antiochus may have thought that the Romans might be indifferent to his aggression, the exact opposite was the case. In 192 BC, they crossed from Italy into Epirus with 2 legions to oppose the Syrians. Antiochus also soon found out that Aetolian claims of Greek willingness to join him against Rome were far overstated. Aside from capturing a few towns near Demetrias, no Greeks willingly joined him. Soon after his crossing, the Achaean League declared war on Syria and the stage was set for a showdown between the eastern and western powers.

By 191 BC, the Roman Consul Manius Acilius Glabrio took command of 20,000 Italians along with a great many Greek and Illyrian allies. Soon after his arrival, Antiochus knew he had no chance in Greece, as he was so vastly outnumbered and withdrew to a favorable position. The Romans immediately took advantage of Antiochus' withdrawal and put an end to Aetolian aggression taking control of Thessaly. Antiochus, rather than retreating all the way back to Asia, chose instead to meet the Romans at a place where his numerical inferiority could be countered with the advantage of terrain. Just as the Spartans had blocked the Persian advance at Thermopylae some 300 years before, Antiochus chose the sight to prevent a Roman advance into Asia. Vastly outnumbered, the plan was a complete folly, however, and Glabrio crushed the Seleucid army completely, while Antiochus himself fled to Ephesus in Asia Minor.

With this victory, the Romans now considered Greece and even Asia as part of their sphere of influence. In 190 BC, the brother of Scipio Africanus, Gnaeus, was elected Consul and given Asia Minor as his province. Africanus himself could not be Consul, under Republican law, as it had been less than 10 years since he held last held that position, but Gnaeus' election, with the legendary Africanus as his chief Legate, was proof that the Romans meant business.

The Scipios first arranged for peace with the Aetolians enabling them to carry the war to Antiochus with their rear secured. Without Syrian support, the Aetolians were all too happy to comply at this point and shed persistent Roman scrutiny. The Scipios then marched into Asia through Thracia, and by October, were ready to confront Antiochus. In a precarious situation, the Syrians tried to offer terms of peace, but the Romans demanded the complete withdrawal of all forces from Asia Minor and reparations for all costs of the war to date. Both sides rejected the other's terms and Antiochus assembled a large, but poor quality army to face Scipio.

At Magnesia in Ionia, 30,000 Romans and 70,000 Syrian and mercenary troops met for battle. The Romans quickly routed Antiochus' forces and the Syrians had no choice but to withdraw from any previously won gains in the region. Freshly negotiated terms afterward forced Antiochus to withdraw from Asia all the way to the Taurus Mts., pay 15,000 talents in reparations, hand-over Hannibal to the Romans, and pay restitution to Eumenes of Pergamum.

As a result of Magnesia, Eumenes of Pergamum not only became the most powerful King in Asia, but Rome now spread its influence even deeper into the east maintaining direct control of the Greek cities in the region, whereas the remaining territories were split between Pergamum and the Roman ally of Rhodes.

Third Macedonian War

After the Syrian War against Antiochus III, the Romans were not idle in the east, but the situation in its north and west took priority for some time. In Cisalpine Gaul, rebellious Celts had to be put down once again, and the province was given a major overhaul in terms of roads, colonies and various infrastructure projects. Further west, In Hispania, trouble with the Turdenati and Celtiberians continued almost non-stop since the end of the Second Punic War. The father of the

famous Gracchi brothers, Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, put a short term end to the violence in 179 BC, but more problems were soon to come.

While Spain proved a difficult province to govern, the situation in the east was no better. Relations between Rome and Macedonia never improved since the end of the first two Macedonian Wars, and Philip V passed his dislike of Rome onto his son, Perseus. Perseus took the throne of Macedonia in 179 BC upon the death of his father, and immediately set about undermining regional Roman authority. He arranged a marriage alliance with Antiochus III, an obvious enemy of Rome from the Syrian war, and instituted debt relief in his Kingdom. This policy was upsetting to the Roman Senate and wealthy businessmen who supported the local governments which would end up on the financial losing end of this policy. Militarily, Perseus moved into territories north of Macedon and south into Greece violating terms of earlier treaties confining Macedonia to its traditional frontiers. Finally, he attempted to re-establish relations with the Achaean league and other Greek city-states, threatening Rome's jurisdiction.

By 172 BC, Eumenes, King of Pergamum and a loyal Roman ally, began making accusations against Perseus that he was violating Pergamum's territory. Diplomatic relations went in favor of Perseus for the simple reason that the majority of the Senate was disturbed by the prospect of yet another war. The winds of change wouldn't take long to alter Roman opinion however, as a perceived assassination attempt on Eumenes and continuing trouble in Illyria were both attributed to Perseus. Roman reaction was swift despite their consternation over yet another offensive war. Legions were sent to Epirus to prepare Macedonian invasion routes, and diplomats were sent to various Greek cities to ensure their continuing support and loyalty.

The Consul Q. Marcius Philippus established himself on the Macedonian frontier putting an end to any thoughts of open rebellion among the Boeotian League, a conglomerate of tribes allied to Perseus. By the spring of 171 BC war was declared and the Consul P. Licinius Crassus moved a force to Thessaly where he was defeated in a minor engagement. He blamed the Aetolians, another thorn in the Roman side since the war with Antiochus and arrested several of their leaders. A praetor C. Lucretius Gallus, and later L. Hortensius sacked several enemy and allied Greek towns inciting rage among the Greeks.

The war turned into a political internal struggle for the next several years as accusations, reparations and convictions were laid down upon corrupt Roman officers for their conduct towards allies. The Roman army was an undisciplined mass, growing fat and happy on plundering defenseless Greek towns, and the Consuls of 170 and 169 BC, A. Hostilius Mancinus and Q. Marcius Philippus respectively, did little to actually bring the war to Perseus and seemed rather content to rape the province of whatever wealth they could gather.

168 BC finally proved to be decisive. L. Aemilius Paullus, Consul for the year, arrived and immediately set about training and organizing his army. Paullus managed to force Perseus to battle on June 22, 168 at Pydna. The Macedonians were caught on broken ground, disadvantageous to the immobile phalanx and had little chance of victory. The Romans slaughtered 20,000 of the Macedonian force, taking 6,000 prisoners and 5,000 from nearby forces. Perseus escaped the carnage, but his allies in the region quickly submitted to Rome, and without an army, he had no choice but to surrender.

Perseus was paraded in Paullus' triumph and later banished to the small Italian town of Alba Fucens, where he lived the rest of his days in obscurity and miserable conditions. The Romans however, weren't satisfied with only punishing Perseus. Too many local inhabitants jumped to Macedonia's aid whenever they started trouble and it was time for it to end. Macedonia was broken into 4 Republics, where each was denied the right to conduct commerce with each other. Most local magistrates of any significance were removed from power and shipped off to Rome with Perseus. The Illyrian Kingdom of King Genthius, an ally of Perseus, was also broken up in a similar fashion.

The worst victim of the Roman victory, however, was Epirus. Paullus needed to make an example to the entire region of what would happen in the case of resisting Rome and the aid Epirus provided to Perseus provided a perfect opportunity. A resulting decree from the Senate authorizing the plunder of the coastal region and Paullus took full and brutal advantage. 70 towns in the territory were required to give up all the gold and silver they had in order to stave off Roman retribution. When the treasure was delivered however, Paullus paid no mind to his suggestion that providing the plunder would protect the inhabitants. He ordered an assault on all 70 of these towns crushing the walls and capturing and slaughtering as many people as he could. The result was a massive slaughter in which countless lives were lost and over 150,000 Epirotes were sold into slavery.

Fourth Macedonian War and the Achaean War

Despite Rome's continual military success in Greece, Macedonia and against the Syrians, the political situation in the east remained largely unstable. The lack of a permanent presence of Roman legions allowed a certain level of independent thinking without fear of reprisal, and the appointment of corrupt and greedy praetors to oversee the client states fueled anti-Roman sentiment. Cilician piracy was also a source of concern in the region and the Romans did little to stop it. Pirates supplied slaves and contraband taken from Greek estates to Roman ports fattening the pockets of the Senators and other influential Romans. The lack of support from the legions in this case certainly added to the thoughts of independence.

The resulting situation in the divided Republics of Macedonia allowed for someone to fill the power void without Roman interference. In 149 BC, Andriscus, a pretender to the throne (which was abolished with Perseus) claimed to be a grandson of Philip V and son of Perseus. Without serious resistance from Rome or Macedonian locals, he reunited the four previously separated Republics and raised an army to prepare for the Romans. The first small force sent against him, under the Praetor Publius Luventius Thalna, in 149 BC, was defeated and Andriscus pushed his domain to include all of Thessaly.

The Senate, realizing that it was time to finally put an end to this unstable situation (while at the same time preparing to end any thought of Carthaginian resurgence) authorized a new army commissioned under the Praetor [Quintus Caecilius Metellus](#). Metellus swiftly put down the revolt and crushed any and all Macedonian resistance. By 148 BC, Macedonian independence had come to a complete end. Andriscus was forced out of the region, his army destroyed. The Romans now officially made Macedonia, along with Epirus, its first eastern province, and Metellus was awarded the cognomen or title of Macedonicus for his victories.

While Metellus Macedonicus was busy in Macedonia, however, the Greeks sought to take advantage and led a semi-revolt of their own. Already in dispute with Rome over their annexation of Sparta into the Achaean league, and with pro-independence leaders in place, discord in the region continued. Critolaus, one of these pro independence leaders, was appointed dictator in Corinth and Corinthian forces began incorporating several nearby city-states into its own territory. Envoys dispatched from Rome to bring order to the situation were mistreated and rejected and once again, the Roman army was on the move.

Fresh from his victory in Macedon, Metellus moved south to quell Greek these fresh revolts. At Locris, Critolaus and his army were defeated, but Greek resistance continued. In 146 BC, Macedonicus had been recalled to Italy (to receive his cognomen) and the Roman forces were put under the command of Lucius Mummius (later Archaicus for his deeds in Greece). Mummius led a successful and brutal campaign crushing the Greeks wherever he faced them. The leagues of the Achaeans, Phocians and Boeotians were all shattered and resistance of the Greek people to Roman rule was put to an end. To teach them a lesson, Mummius was ordered to attack Corinth directly as a show of force and to set an example (much like the fate Epirus faced for helping

Perseus of Macedon). Later in that year, Corinth was besieged and eventually burned to the ground, with its captured inhabitants sold off into slavery. Weapons and armor of locals throughout the region were seized and local militia activity was outlawed. While the Romans didn't yet incorporate Achaëa into an official province, the governor of Macedonia was given formal charge of watching over the Greeks from that nearby proximity.

The original nations of the Hellenistic world were now a permanent part of the Roman Empire. The control of the entire Greek peninsula took only about 80 years, stemming from the initial political pressures of the Punic Wars and required relatively minor military intervention. The Romans, as they had done so many times in the past and would continue to do for centuries, allowed their power of influence to keep opposing factions at war with each other until such time as they were all ripe for complete subjugation. Only a few years later, in 133 BC, this influence worked to the Roman advantage again when Attalus III of Pergamum a long time Roman ally throughout these Macedonian, Syrian and Greek wars, ceded his Kingdom in Asia minor to the Roman Senate. This event, which not only granted Rome an extremely wealthy new province, provided the catalyst which would eventually open the entire east to Roman expansion and conquest.

Third Punic War

In the years following the Battle of Zama and the defeat of Hannibal in the Second Punic War, Rome and Carthage maintained an adversarial conqueror and conquered relationship. Rome continued to expand in the east, while dealing with problems in their newly acquired Spanish territories. Rome also continued to support their Numidian ally Masinissa, even discreetly encouraging invasion of Carthaginian lands while Carthage was left to beg for Roman intervention. Immediately after the Second Punic War, Hannibal Barca maintained his power in Carthage and did considerable work to clean up corruption and economic problems within the nation, but his enmity with Rome would eventually force his ouster. By the time the Romans were going to war with Antiochus III of Syria, Hannibal had been forced into exile and joined this new Roman enemy.

Hannibal's departure from Carthage did little to endear them to the untrusting and vengeful Romans. Terms of the treaty with Rome forced Carthage to give up its army, and the resulting financial savings were considerable. The regime that replaced Hannibal attempted to use this new found economic fortune to make for peaceful relations with their old nemesis, but to no avail. Attempts to pay off their annual tribute in one lump sum were denied (to prevent the release of the obligation that Carthage would continue to owe to Rome), and grain shipments meant as gifts to help the Romans in Greece and Macedonia were received and paid for in full by the Senate. The Romans clearly didn't want any relationship that might be seen as requiring reciprocal favors.

Masinissa and his large Numidian army made a regular pattern of incursions against Carthage. Major efforts were launched about every decade since the end of the Second Punic War. The years 193, 182, 172, and 162 BC all played host to Numidian advances. At first, despite Roman bias towards Masinissa, obligations elsewhere led them to be slightly less one sided against Carthage, but by the 170's and 160's BC, this attitude took an abrupt about face. The invasion of 162 BC and resulting requests for help from Carthage were ignored. Masinissa was allowed to keep his gains, and relations soured even further. The next decade, the 150's BC, saw increased Numidian activity and frequent embassies from Carthage to Rome with each request for aid being denied in turn. Yet despite Rome always favoring Masinissa's cause, no effort was made to declare war themselves, leaving the policing of Carthaginian resurgence to their Numidian allies. While Carthage remained a troubling worry for Rome ever since Hannibal, there were enough Senators in Rome who wanted peace, or a real justification for war, before allowing the pro-war Senators to have their way.

Repeated Numidian raids brought the situation to a head in the late 150's BC. By 153 BC, another Carthaginian complaint sent a Roman delegation (essentially a spy mission) to Carthage, headed by Cato the Elder. In investigating the claims of injustice, the Romans inspected all areas of Carthaginian territory. Cato, in particular, was disturbed at the apparent wealth of Carthage and the prosperity of its countryside. Upon returning to Rome, Cato made it his mission to inspire the Romans to war against Carthage once again to prevent a possible rebirth of Carthaginian power.

There is a story of Cato making a speech before the Senate where he dramatized the danger of Carthage to Rome. Shaking the folds of his toga some large African figs fell on the ground as if by accident. As the Senators admired the figs size and natural beauty, Cato went on to explain that the origin of these magnificent specimens was only 3 days away by sail. It is likely that Cato meant to show that the terms of the Roman peace treaty did nothing to hamper the newfound economic prosperity of Carthage. In just a short time, Carthage was building to a position to again be a threat to Rome. Whatever the angle meant by this display, Cato made it his cause to inspire war. From this point on, until war was finally declared, Cato uttered the famous line after every comment in the Forum, "ceterum censeo delendam esse Carthaginem (commonly referred to as Carthago delende est) which translates as "Besides which, my opinion is that Carthage must be destroyed". It has been recorded that he used the line, at times, after every sentence he spoke, regardless of the subject matter of his statements.

Roman lack of response to Carthaginian concerns led to a change in their government. A party in opposition to Roman appeasement had come to power by 151 BC. It was at this time that Masinissa laid siege to a Carthaginian town, and the new government decided its attempts to get Roman intervention had been exhausted. An army of 25,000 raw recruits was raised and it attempted to lift the siege. The Numidians crushed the inexperienced army, but worse yet, a military tribune, Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus (grandson of Scipio Africanus through adoption) was there to witness the battle. Sent from Spain to arrange for the delivery of some war elephants from Masinissa, he just happened to be on hand for the slaughter. A report issued on the affair to Rome was interpreted as a Carthaginian violation of their treaty rather than a description of a great Numidian victory. As a result the Carthaginians were stripped of their ability to defend themselves and were not allowed to raise an army or conduct war without Roman approval and conditions were moving ever closer to a state of war.

New attempts by Carthage to appease the Romans were ignored and the Carthaginian city of Utica offered itself in unconditional surrender to Rome before war even broke out. Hopelessness reigned supreme for the Carthaginians with good reason. By 149 BC, more attempts by African envoys were proved to be futile. Rome had finally declared war and sent two consular armies of 80,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry from Sicily to Utica, only 10 miles from the Carthage itself. Once these armies arrived in Utica, a panicked populace complied with any Roman demand including the surrender of their arms, over 200,000 sets of armor and 2,000 siege weapons. Pushing the limits, the Consuls seemed unable to goad Carthage into war, but one final demand finally inspired the enemy. The Carthaginians were told to abandon the city of Carthage so it could be razed as punishment for disobedience, but the populous was free to leave and settle anywhere within existing Carthaginian territory so long as it was at least 10 miles from the sea. Carthage finally woke up, realizing that war was the only option, and that since failure to resist seemed to lead to destruction anyway, they prepared to meet their invaders.

While Carthage prepared for a siege, the Roman army suffered greatly from disease. Badly hampered by losses, they were unable to attack Carthage before the Carthaginians were ready. Minor attacks on towns outside of the city were conducted, but little was really accomplished. It wasn't until 147 BC that the Senate felt a change was in order. Since the campaigns of Scipio Africanus and his victory over Hannibal at Zama, it was believed that Carthage couldn't be defeated without a Scipio in command, and the man who had first reported the Carthaginian breaking of the treaty was elected Consul. Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus took command and immediately made strides. Forcing the enemy to withdraw within the city of Carthage, he

blockaded the harbor to prevent supply and laid waste to the countryside. By the winter of 147/146 BC, the Romans occupied the outskirts of Carthage and were prepared for a final attack.

The spring of 146 BC opened with an assault on the city. 6 days of brutal street fighting was a testament to both dire Carthaginian resistance and determined Roman resolve. First capturing the walls, then surrounding the citadel, the Romans were free to wreak havoc on the civilian population. Before the final Carthaginian surrender, a city of some 700,000 people was reduced to as few as 50,000 defenders. Upon finally giving up, these remaining forces were rounded up and sold into slavery. In the aftermath, despite Scipio's objections, he was ordered to raze the city. Taking every bit of plunder they could, the Romans destroyed the harbor, demolished all large stone structures and burned the city for 10 days. (Despite popular opinion, the salting of the land afterward to prevent repopulation was a story introduced long after the fact and may not have happened at all.) Carthage and its status as a power of the ancient world was finally destroyed, and even the city itself would not be successfully rebuilt until the reign of Augustus some 150 years later.

Carthaginian territory along the coast and slightly into the interior was organized as the Roman province of Africa. Numidia, under Masinissa, was allowed independence as a client kingdom. Roman hegemony now spread from Africa in the south, Spain to the west and Asia Minor to the east. While Rome was the indisputable master of the western world, her rapid growth, accompanied with opportunity for corruption and economic disparity among the classes would lead to new problems for the empire. Additionally, the massive amount of slave labor imported from Africa, Spain and the east created a new economy dependency on continuing slavery. These conditions would ultimately be major factors in the crumbling of the Roman political system and the terrible strife between the Patricians, Equestrian order and the common Plebes. With the defeat of Carthage Rome inherited an empire but it ultimately set about the fall of its own Republic.

Late Roman Republic

Victory over Carthage and conquests in the east transformed Rome into an Empire. By the latter part of the 2nd Century BC, the rapid expansion, massive influx of slave labor, opportunity for corruption in new provinces and the continuing development of social class disorder also brought about a distinct new era in Roman history.

While there was still considerable opposition to Roman power in the Mediterranean, the Romans suddenly found themselves as the only western super-power and the governing of this power would soon prove difficult by the Senate and the old Republican ways.

Mismanagement of the new Spanish provinces, along with revolts and resistance to Roman authority was one source of constant strife for nearly two centuries. One such event, the Numantine War against the restless Celtiberians, from 143 to 133 BC, gave the Romans access to the interior of Hispania, but also proved that continuing expansion was to be challenged at every step. Complete subjugation of Hispania wouldn't be completed until the reign of Augustus, and only after centuries of bloody fighting. The military atmosphere in Spain during the later years of the Republic would also become a hot point for rebellious leaders (ie Sertorius) who sought to take advantage of ongoing political turmoil in Rome.

The wars with Carthage had produced some 75,000 slaves and a great deal more were imported from eastern conquests (150,000 from Epirus alone). While Romans everywhere initially benefited from this new cheap labor, eventually the common masses found regular work hard to find as they had been effectively replaced by it. As Rome's economy shifted from one of labor by freedmen strictly into that of slavery, a new aristocracy arose. Slave trading was the new profit center for the elite and every excess was taken to get their share. Mistreatment and poor conditions, especially

in Sicily where no other province was so inundated by slaves than the plantations there, led directly to the first of several open revolts against the institution.

The First Slave War, or Servile War, broke out in Sicily in 134 BC. According to the ancient sources, a slave owner by name of Damophilus was particularly abusive to his large slave holdings. A Syrian slave, Eunus, led a revolt which would ravage Sicily for 3 years. Declaring himself Antiochus, he captured the city of Enna, while his activities inspired another revolt under a Cilician by name of Cleon. The numbers of the slave armies grew to a combined strength of 70,000 and they took such towns as Agrigentum, Tauromenium and Catana and slave owners were slaughtered all over the island. The revolt was eventually put down by Flacchus, who crucified no fewer than 20,000 in the end. This war would turn out to be only the beginning of slave insurrection in this time period. While it lasted 3 years, and Sicily would again be home to slave rebellions in later years, it was put down quickly with the intervention of the legions. Later rebellions, such as the one under Spartacus, would strike fear not into just the populace, but into the Roman army itself.

In the east, King Attalus III of Pergamum died in 133 BC, without heirs. Long maintaining friendship status with Rome, the entire nation of Pergamum, including Lydia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, and Pamphylia was willed to Rome upon his death. By 129 BC, the entire region would be annexed as the province of Asia Minor, and without so much as a single battle, Rome gained access to more riches of the east. Pergamum itself would become one of the most prosperous and famous cities in Asia Minor, noted for its architectural monuments, its fine library, and its schools.

This vast wealth imported from Rome's newly won provinces did more than lead to slave revolts. There was a new found political cry among the Italian tribes for equal rights as Latins. The load in military duty was equally shared among the tribes, but equal rights in voting were not. While full citizens no longer had to pay many of the states taxes, the Italians still did, and it was the Patricians who benefited the most through vast acquisition of land and estates. The age old battle between Patrician, Equestrian and Plebeian was soon to be renewed and some of Rome's most famous names would play center stage on world history.

The Gracchi brothers, Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, would use the office of the Tribune and the citizen assemblies to upend the class structure and the inequity between rich, poor, citizen and non. The late 2nd century BC would shape the path of political machinations through to the end of the Republic. The political conniving of the Gracchi and machinations of later ambitious individuals would eventually spell the doom of the Republican system.

The Gracchi Brothers

The social and political landscape of the Roman world was about to undergo an abrupt transformation in the Late Republic. The emergence, and eventual assassination of the Gracchus brothers, Tiberius and Gaius, is often considered the first major step towards the fall of the Roman Republic. While Roman class and social affairs had for centuries consisted of machinations by various individuals to get their way (such as the Plebs withdrawal from Rome in the early Republic), the activities of the Gracchi completely altered the state of Roman politics. The careers of these two men were marked by riots, murder, and ultimately, outright manipulation of the common population to achieve their goals. This political behavior would become increasingly more prominent in the 100 years from their time, through to Caesar and the eventual rise of Augustus.

The tremendous growth of the Empire, through both acquisition of land, slaves, and various citizen classes led to a fundamental divide in the Roman political system. On one side of the divide, the Patrician and wealthy, long-standing Equestrian families developed into a faction known as the Optimates. Essentially the conservative party, these aristocrats were the old and powerful families of Rome. Their goal was the preservation of the Roman state, in its then current form, where these

families reaped the benefits of Roman expansion and maintained controlling power of the system. Roman strength, in their opinions, resided with their ability to lead and the results of that leadership would help all of Rome.

By contrast, a new faction began to gain power as some of the members of these powerful families began to take up the causes of the less fortunate common masses. Manipulating the 'head count' or the 'mob' with popular ideas was a powerful political tool, but none before had used it as effectively as the Gracchi. The Populares party took root in this Late Republican period, and the 'causes of the common man' (or political ambition disguised by such causes) became a constant factor in the political wrangling of the capital.

From 137 to 121 BC, Tiberius, and then Gaius Gracchus, stood at the center of this turmoil. The recent conquests had opened many doors to new found wealth, but the rapid pace of such expansion opened more doors to corruption and mismanagement. The lack of new recruits from among the landowning class was beginning to take its toll. Small farms were slowly driven into extinction as the wealthy bought up land and resources for vast estates. Laws preventing the Legions from taking the landless as recruits were certainly an issue. These displaced Roman's had no farms and no opportunities to regain their status through military service. Governing all the new provinces was a strain at best, without a large recruiting base of small landowners.

Meanwhile, the Optimates' land base continued to grow and the agrarian laws of the time were certainly written in their favor. Slaves imported with the conquests replaced the Italian worker and the small farmer. Thousands of landless and jobless Romans were idle in the city, with little hope for relief. Food supplies dwindled as less farms were worked. Social debt and overwhelming corruption was rampant throughout the entire society. Italian allies were feeling more and more disenfranchised, as they had these same issues without even the right to vote in the citizen assemblies. The stability of Rome was badly fractured, just as it started to grow into an empire.

Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus saw an opportunity not only to achieve their own political power, but to stabilize the inequality through reform and new laws benefiting the common people. Reasonable and noble concepts on the surface, however, were underlying with their own contempt for the Senate and optimate party. What could be seen on one side as an attempt to rectify a dangerous and debilitating social system was viewed on the other as nothing more than a power grab and a flagrant attack on the Republican institutional ideas of the time. One-upmanship was countered with arguments and these countered with physical force. As the results at stake grew, so did the egos of the individual players. The goal of the betterment of society as a whole was lost, and victory became the only objective. As ambition and personal motivation became the predominant theme of the Late Republic, the social fabric that long held Rome together, against all odds, was being torn apart.

Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus

The Gracchi brothers, while championing causes for the common people, were themselves members of the highest Patrician order of Rome. Their father was a consul and their mother was of the distinguished Scipio family. Tiberius started his political career under the wings of C. Scipio Aemilianus but later was to be opposed by the powerful Senatorial elite of which he was originally a member. As a quaestor in Spain, Gracchus got his first bitter taste of the 'Optimates' (the Patrician elite party in Rome). The Roman army had suffered miserably against the Celtic tribes and he proposed a treaty that was written to spare the lives of up to 20,000 Roman soldiers. The treaty was firmly rejected in Rome, because passage would've been akin to admitting defeat. This terribly disappointing incident marked Tiberius' break from the Optimates and the beginning of his opposition to the elite authority as a member of the Populares party.

The Populares party was convinced of the need for reform in many facets of Roman society. Some members, perhaps Tiberius included, simply liked to oppose the established authority, and he may have been used in his early days by the more prominent members. Whether Tiberius himself was sincere in his reforms to benefit the common man is impossible to ascertain, but regardless, he developed into an icon of equality for all people of Rome. Badly tarnished by the rejection of his treaty, Tiberius took up the challenge of reform with a zeal previously unencountered in the Roman forum.

Election as a Tribune of the Plebs in 133 BC was the beginning of his fight for reform. He likely had little intention to cause the sort of upheaval that followed, as economic security and stability was a real concern. The Plebeians had long struggled for social equality and a magisterial office in which to voice their concerns. The introduction of slave labor in mass quantities and loss of plebeian farms from the previous wars left the Italian farmers in dire straits. Patrician and upper Equestrian families acquired vast stretches of new lands in the recent wars, while the Plebeians gained none. In fact many farms were lost simply because men were killed or wounded in the wars and unable to work their lands. According to Roman law, land gained in such a manner was to be shared equally among the masses, and not simply distributed to the Patricians. The inability to compete with the huge slave labor farms of the wealthy certainly played a part in Plebeian dissatisfaction.

As Tribune, Tiberius now had the power and position to begin the process of change. He introduced legislation, a concilium plebes, for a creation of land allotments to the Plebes out of the public lands won in the Punic Wars. In this case the bill may have been in complete good faith and intentions. It stated that those currently living on the land would be restricted to the legal limit of ownership (500 acres plus 250 acres each per son, limited by 2 sons.) and would be compensated by being granted a hereditary rent-free lease. This would restore land ownership to more Plebes and satisfy a variety of social needs. The ranks of land-owning citizens would be increased, making more people eligible for service in the legions, while putting more people to work and balancing the social scale, if even by a small amount.

Gracchus' bill, as sound and perfectly legal as it may have been, was immediately opposed by the Senate. Not only would the bill have a direct effect on the benefits they themselves could receive, but Gracchus flagrantly opposed them by taking the bill directly to the citizen assemblies, rather than to the Senate for discussion and debate first, as was customary. Octavius, the other Tribune for that year, and apparently as a pawn of the Senate, used veto powers to undermine this reform land bill and Tiberius was stymied. In opposition, Tiberius raised the ante by disrupting every form of legislation and governing of any sort throughout his term as Tribune. He used his own veto right to put down every proposed law or bill effectively shutting down the government until his own bill could be dealt with.

At the next citizen assembly, he was sure that he had taught a lesson to the opposition and that his bill would pass without incident. Octavius, however, vetoed the Agrarian bill once again. Attempts to have Octavius physically removed from the Tribunate in order to allow passage of the bill by popular vote all failed, but the assembly voted for the bill anyway despite Octavius' veto. The bill passed into law, as the Senate had little choice, regardless of the illegally ignored veto attempt. Perhaps facing open rebellion from the mob, they allowed its passage but relations with Tiberius were badly strained.

Upon the bill's approval, three men were commissioned to oversee its institution. Tiberius, his brother Gaius Gracchus and Appius Claudius Pulcher, a leading Senator and Tiberius' father-in-law. As many as 75,000 small farms may have been created with the bill and handed to small farmers. There was a noticeable improvement in social conditions, but the plan proved an expensive project to implement. Money allotted to oversee the introduction of the law was running low and Tiberius proposed to take money from the rich and newly acquired land of Pergamum. The Senate once again opposed the concept, but was not willing to risk Tiberius taking the matter

before the Plebes. Reluctantly, this issue was passed, and Gracchus' continued direct challenges to Senatorial authority was backing himself into a corner. He used the people as his mob, threatening the Senate into supporting his bills. All the while, Tiberius was immune from retaliation as long as maintained his position as Tribune (which was considered sacrosanct or rendered him immune from legal prosecution and physical harm).

Hostility between the 2 factions continued and the relationship deteriorated. As the year of his tribune powers neared a close, Gracchus was in real danger of court trial or even assassination if he couldn't get re-elected as Tribune. However, the law stated that no man could stand for election without an interval period without holding office (this essentially was a check and balance preventing the abuse of power if office holders could face immediate prosecution following their terms of duty). Therefore it was illegal for Tiberius to run for election again. Tiberius, with the popularity among the people behind him, ignored Senatorial objections and carried forward with his election campaign anyway.

Once again, the Senate was powerless to stop the rising star of the popular Tiberius Gracchus. Without recourse and entirely enraged by Tiberius' constant mocking of Roman law and tradition, the Senators took up arms against him. Led by Tiberius' own cousin, Scipio Nasica, a group of armed Senators and supporters charged into a 'populares' campaign rally to break it up. In the ordeal Tiberius was clubbed to death (certainly after being marked as a target), thus ending his short but tumultuous political career.

In the aftermath, Scipio Aemilianus (who was much beloved for his service in the final destruction of Carthage) was called in to restore order and the political situation slowly settled down. As it turned out, however, the political fever introduced by Tiberius Gracchus would pale in comparison to that of his younger brother Gaius Gracchus, just a few years later.

Gaius Sempronius Gracchus

After the death of his brother Tiberius, Gaius Gracchus would make an even bigger splash on the Roman political scene. Following a similar path, he served under Scipio Aemilianus, and then was elected Consul, in which he spent two years governing Sardinia. Returning to Rome he was elected to two consecutive terms as Tribune of the Plebes in 123 and 122 BC. In the position of harnessing the power of the Roman masses, Gaius had far wider reaching plans for administrative reforms and social equity issues.

Initially, his measures saw to the exile of the Consul Popilius for his involvement in the death of Tiberius Gracchus. To cement the authority of this action, he initiated a law stating that any magistrate who had been deposed from office by the will of the people would, in the future, be ineligible to ever serve in any capacity at all. Avenging the murder of Tiberius, he then set about a new strategy of popular political legislation. His next proposal was a direct strike against the Gracchi enemies in the Senate. Through another Tribune, Glabrio M' Acilius, the Lex Acilia provided for judges to be chosen from the Equestrian class rather than Patricians. Damaging both the prestige of the Optimate party and its potential for revenue through the court system, and giving more power to the Equestrians, he then looked to implement direct policies aiding the lower classes.

The taxation of Asia Minor, which had recently become a province through the will of King Attalus III of Pergamum, was then completely overhauled to cause further economic damage to the Senate. Equestrians were awarded the right to contract for the collecting of the enormous taxes due from there, rather than Patrician agents. The mob was won over further when he next proposed a state subsidized grain law, which allowed every citizen to buy grain at half the market price, directly from the Roman state. His brother's agrarian law, which was revoked after Tiberius' death, was then re-adopted to allow the Plebes more access, once again, to available public land.

Additional legislation was put forward to protect provincial residents from the greed, corruption and excessive taxation by local governors and other officials. Furthermore, Gaius forced through huge expenditures on public works, such as roads harbors and baths, which once more mainly benefited the equestrian business community. An orator of great magnitude, later admired by one of history's great orator's, Cicero, his laws and proposals were far more successful than those of his brother. While surpassing the success of Tiberius, he redeemed the legacy of the Gracchus name and forever put the family into the annals of history.

By 122 BC, Gaius was firmly entrenched as the champion of the people, but one piece of legislation proved to be his eventual undoing. Complaints from Italian Latin rights citizens that the agrarian laws were helping the lower classes of Rome, while leaving the Italians behind didn't fall on deaf ears. Through his political ally, M.Fulvius Flaccus, who was fresh back from the conquest of Gallia Narbonensis, Gaius next proposed a law to incorporate all the Latin rights citizens into full citizenship. Unfortunately for Gaius and his allies, this move was extremely unpopular with not only the Senate, but the head count of Rome as well. The lower classes of Roman citizenship would be forced to share their land allotments with the Italians, and the Senate saw an opportunity to strike at Gaius. A senate backed Tribune, Livius Drusus, began to propose laws far more liberal and beneficial to the Roman head count, while decisively against the Italian allies. While not a position traditionally backed by the Senate it was at least not as harmful as complete inclusion of the Italian tribes would have been. It had the added benefit of keeping the Roman mob happy, while temporarily replacing the Gracchus status of popular champion with their own man, Drusus. The laws of Drusus, however, were never intended to be permanent, and were only supported by the Senate long enough to do damage to Gracchus. Rapidly losing popularity, Gaius' attempt for a third straight election to Tribune failed in 121 BC.

Realizing the tactics of the Senate too late to counter them, Gracchus, along with Flaccus and thousands of their supporters, led a protest in the streets of Rome. A large angry mob turned out in favor of Gracchus on the Aventine Hill, but unfortunately, the protest escalated into an armed revolt. The Consul Lucius Opimius, an obvious political enemy of the populares party, was all too happy to see this occur. The unlawful carrying of weapons by Gracchus' supporters was all the excuse needed for the Senate to act out. Charging Opimius with the first ever, and soon to be regular occurring, *Senatus Consultum Ultimum* (the ultimate decree of martial law), he set out after the protestors with an armed militia of legionary infantry and auxilia archers. Swooping down on the Aventine, all hope was lost for the Gracchus party. Ordering his own slave to stab him to death, the political career of the famous Gracchi came to a violent end. In the end, thousands of the mob were killed outright, and later, up to 3,000 more Gracchus supporters were rounded up, arrested and strangled.

The legacy of the Gracchi brothers was one of social upheaval and the eventual disintegration of the Roman political and governing system. Their violent deaths were the first of many more political riots and executions to come over the next 100 years. Traditional powers of the Senate and the people were being torn apart, rebuilt and torn apart again. Ambitious politicians now had many new ways to exploit a system teetering on collapse and powerful men and political parties began to develop in extreme polar opposites. The voice of violence, riots and mob tactics was quickly to become the mainstay throughout the perilous era in Roman history. The Senate even, once steadfast in cooperation against the Tribunes of the Plebes, now even began to splinter off against one another. With the fast rise and fall of the Brothers Gracchi, the stage was set for the rise of Marius, Sulla, Pompey and the eventual last dictator, Gaius Julius Caesar.

The War with Jugurtha

After the destruction of Carthage, the most important kingdom in Africa was Numidia. It contained a number of flourishing towns which were centers of a considerable commerce. Masinissa, the loyal Roman ally from the Punic Wars, left this kingdom to his son Micipsa. The latter had two

sons and a nephew, Jugurtha. Jugurtha was a brilliant and ambitious young man, who had served under Scipio in the Spanish Numantine war, and returned to Africa steeped in honors. Gaining a deep knowledge of Roman military tactics and, due to his legionary service, a large number of friendly contacts within Rome and her Senate, Jugurtha was in a prime position to obtain power. He was named joint heir with his cousins to the kingdom of Numidia. Micipsa died soon after and Jugurtha took matters into his own hands, murdering one of his rival cousins, Hiempsal. He then claimed the whole kingdom of Numidia and launched an attack on his other cousin, Adherbal, who immediately appealed to Rome for help.

Commissioners from Rome were sent to investigate, but Jugurtha cleverly used his influence with various Roman families, and large bribes, to secure support for his position. The envoys returned home without accomplishing anything aside from a loose division of Numidia into two kingdoms between Jugurtha and Adherbal. Jugurtha, however, pressed his advantage and moved against Adherbal anyway. A new delegation was sent to stop the attack but Jugurtha ignored it, and besieged Adherbal in his capital, Cirta. Unfortunately for Jugurtha, Adherbal was heavily reliant on Italian residents of the African nation as the main part of his defense and attacks causing harm to Romans and their allies would surely come to be noticed in Rome. Another senatorial commission, headed by M. Aemilius Scaurus, summoned Jugurtha to stop the attack but once again he pressed on. In 112 BC Adherbal was eventually forced to surrender and he was savagely tortured to death. To make matters worse, Jugurtha not only defied Rome with his attack in the first place, but he put the surviving Italian defenders to the sword.

Due to Jugurtha's wide-spread political contacts and bribery, Rome was still slow to react. After much consternation war was finally declared and L. Calpurnius Bestia, along with M. Aemilius Scaurus, led an army into Africa. Peace was quickly reached however, with little damage to Jugurtha, and new allegations of scandal and bribery echoed throughout Rome. One Tribune of the Plebs, Memmius, led the assault on those who may have been pocketing Numidian gold. He passed a law ordering one of the praetors to bring Jugurtha directly to Rome to be interviewed, under a safe-conduct provision. Jugurtha safe in his position certainly in part due to pre-arranged political maneuvering he agreed to be brought before the Senate. When he arrived however, in essence to reveal those whom he had bribed another tribune vetoed the entire arrangement, rendering Jugurtha free to go without the necessity to finger the men in his political pockets. Clearly buoyed by the Roman political stalemate and feeling invulnerable to the corrupt Roman courts, Jugurtha arranged an assassination attempt on another cousin before returning to Africa. However, the assassins were caught and Jugurtha's involvement uncovered, further soiling his reputation, but Jugurtha had long since arrived in his own country.

Rome reacted quickly this time and declared war once again. In 110 BC, Sp. Postumius Albinus led the attack, but was forced to leave his brother Aulus in command, while he attended to personal matters. Aulus, while laying siege to a Numidian town, was completely surprised and surrounded by Jugurthine forces. Apparently targets of more bribery, the Romans were forced to surrender and agreed to leave Numidia within ten days. Back in Rome, the reaction was violent. Cries of scandal, bribery and incompetence were running rampant. Roman armies were losing to a petty client King without even shedding blood, while the commanders were coming home defeated but rich. The common people, still angry with the Senate for its treatment of the Gracchi, were outraged by this complete lack of Senatorial capability. To top matters off, the Germanic Cimbri and Teutones were on the move in Illyria and Southern Gaul running rampant over the Roman Legions in their way.

In 109 BC, the Senate turned to an old line family of much prestige. The nephew of _____, conquerer of Macedonia, was sent to take the war to Jugurtha. Quintus Caecilius Metellus, was a better general and less corruptible Roman than his predecessors, but after 2 years in the field did little but to gain some minor victories. Metellus' chief subordinate, Gaius Marius, a new man from Arpinum, was a brilliant and able young soldier. Frustrated by lack of success under the command of Metellus, Marius decided to run for the consulship himself. A

Plebeian hadn't been elected to the consulship in well over a century, but the people were angry with the Senate and looked to a new man to change the course of events. Running on a platform of opposition to Patrician corruption and failures, and despite many objections from the aristocrats, Marius was elected to the first of seven total consulships, in 107 BC.

With the election of Marius, Metellus was recalled, and given the honor of a triumph by the Senate (a completely political motivated event). Additionally, despite his complete lack of success, he was awarded the agnomen of Numidicus for 'conquering' Numidia. Marius free of the incompetence of his predecessor then set to work reorganizing and training his army. With losses to the Germanic tribes in Gaul and Illyria, Marius was forced to enlist volunteers from among the head count of Rome. He forever altered the political and military landscape, and paved the way for a professional, non land-owning army, in which the urban poor would have opportunities within the army. Additionally men of higher social rank but little wealth took the opportunity to join with Marius as well. One of these men, Lucius Cornelius Sulla, would prove to be Marius' greatest rival in later years, and one of the most famous names of the Late Republic.

In less than 2 years, with near constant victories over a widely spread territory, Marius soon conquered all of the Numidian strongholds. Bocchus, King of Mauretania, and ally of Jugurtha, was growing ever more concerned over the impending approach of Marius and his army. Learning that the Romans were willing to negotiate to end the war, Sulla was sent to treat with the King. A plot was hatched whereby Bocchus would betray his ally, Jugurtha, to the Romans in exchange for peaceful coexistence. Jugurtha was captured and handed over to Sulla, according to plan, who then took his captive to Marius. In 105 BC, the war was over and Marius was honored as victor due to his command, despite claims by Sulla to have been responsible for the capture. This event would mark the beginning of a long-standing rivalry between the two men that would end in violence and murder, many years later. Jugurtha, meanwhile, was sent to Rome to await his death during Marius' triumph. This triumph would be long delayed, however, as the Consul would be forced to save Rome from the serious threat of Germanic Cimbri and Teuton invasion.

Gaius Marius

Gaius Marius was the son of a small plebeian farmer near Arpinum. Contrary to popular belief, the Marius clan was influential locally, and maintained some limited client relationships with those in Rome. Of equestrian, but outside roots, Marius would find his early attempts to climb the Roman social and political ladder difficult at best. Using the Legion as his route to fame, fortune and power, he would become among the most influential men of his day, and the history of Rome. Ancient sources suggest that Marius was pre-destined, through the visions of a seer, to be Consul of Rome 7 times. Not only would this prove true, but he would eventually be hailed as the third founder of Rome, and its savior. Military glory and personal ambition drove Marius straight to the top of the Roman system, but perhaps even more importantly, the man and his legacy would have a profound impact on the life of his nephew, Gaius Julius Caesar.

As a youth Marius may have used his modest family influence to join the legions as a junior officer, or may have risen from the ranks. It is difficult to determine exactly, but it is known that he spent his early career in Hispania under Scipio Aemilianus, grandson of Scipio Africanus. Performing his duties admirably he quickly was promoted. By 123 BC, at the age of 34, the veteran officer was elected as quaestor and his political career was off the ground.

As a novus homo, or new man, Marius found the rise in the Roman cursus honorum a daunting challenge. It is certain that he used his old family client contacts and his military relations as a source of support. Among these contacts were the powerful Metelli family, and their early support was to prove to be a disaster for them. Just a few short years after his service as Quaestor, Marius was elected Tribune of the Plebes in 119 BC. In this position so soon after the political turmoil and

murder of the Gracchi brothers (Gaius murdered 123 BC), Marius chose to follow the popular path to make a name for himself under similar auspices. As Tribune, he would ensure the animosity of the Patrician Senate, and the Metelli, by passing popular laws forbidding the inspection of ballot boxes. In doing so, he directly opposed the powerful elite, who used ballot inspection as a way to intimidate voters in the citizen assembly elections.

Immediately devoid of political support from the social elite, Marius was unsuccessful in several attempts to be elected as an aedile. His persistence, and disregard for his new man status made him several enemies, but he would persevere. In 115 BC, he was elected Praetor, but was bogged down by politically motivated challenges to his election. After a year of service in Rome, Marius was assigned the province of further Spain for his proprietorship. While a seemingly inglorious position, he served well, and his military experience played a significant role. Putting down several small revolts, and amassing a considerable personal fortune in Spanish mineral wealth in the process, Marius returned to Rome as a successful and perhaps more modest new man. Sensing the resistance, he put off any attempts to run for the next stage of Roman offices, the Consulship.

Perhaps his decision not to run for Consul, his amassing of personal wealth or other factors cooled the animosity between him and the Patrician powers. In 110 BC, in taking advantage of the calmer political environment, Marius would make an arrangement that would send shock waves through his own life and Rome itself. The Caesar branch of the Julii family, as impeccably Roman and Patrician as they could come, had completely fallen from political prominence and at this point, didn't have the personal wealth to change matters. Likely heavily influenced by Marius' money, as he was socially considered an uneducated, ill-mannered barbarian, a marriage was arranged between Julia Caesar and Gaius. Marius gained the benefit of entry into social and political circles that he would never have had, and the Julii were immediately re-established as a power player through the financing of political campaigns by Marius. As a result of this marriage and his apparent relaxed political motivations, the breach that existed between Marius and the Metelli was soon also healed. By 109 BC, the consul Quintus Caecilius Metellus Numidicus, would select Marius as a chief subordinate for his campaign against Jugurtha of Numidia.

Rise of Marius

With his new found good fortune, coming in the form of marriage to Julia Caesar, and his apparent reconciliation with the Metelli family, Marius was in a position to make political strides. At this time, the War with Jugurtha had been carrying on for nearly 4 years in Numidia. With no settlement in sight, and charges of corruption and bribery running rampant against the Roman generals in charge of the operation, Quintus Caecilius Metellus was elected Consul in 109 BC. Charged with carrying out the Roman war effort against Jugurtha, Metellus knew Marius was a quality soldier, and appointed him to serve as his chief Legate.

Metellus' first two years in Africa were much the same result as his predecessors. Aside from some minor victories by Marius, the Romans did little to really alter the situation. Marius, sensing the political and popular frustration in Rome, had the perfect opportunity to run for Consul on the basis of being able to finish the war. His time spent as Metellus' subordinate was put to good use by ensuring good terms and popularity among the legionaries. He put the word out to those friends he had in Rome that he alone could win the war, and that the people must elect him. Campaigning essentially through others, and in absentia, Marius went to Metellus to request dismissal from his service so that he could return to Rome for proper campaigning. Marius was abruptly refused and was forced to continue using his client base to run his campaign. Presenting himself as the blunt, honest general with more capability, and without personal motivation, he was presented as the popular alternative to patrician ineptness and corruption. Eventually, with the stalemate in Numidia continuing, the strategy worked, and in 107 BC Gaius Marius was elected Consul for the first time.

Metellus was recalled even though the senate wanted to continue his service in Numidia as Proconsul. Through more political wrangling (some say illegal), Marius managed to be appointed as commander in Africa. Due to a military crisis from Germanic victories in Gaul, Marius was forced to take unprecedented measures and recruit his armies from the Roman landless masses. Even so, within two years, Marius completed what he said he would, conquering Numidia and putting an end to the war. Though, there was military success in the field, it was through the service of a young patrician officer, Lucius Cornelius Sulla that the war finally came to a close. Jugurtha himself was betrayed by his ally Bocchus, the King of Mauretania, into the arms of the Romans. Sulla organized the capture, but Marius, having Imperium as Consul, would receive the credit, while Sulla maintained the war only ended through his achievement. The incident was the beginning of a terrible rivalry between the two men that would have monumental repercussions in later years.

For the time being, however, Marius was at the beginning of his hold on Roman political power. Germanic invasions into northern Italy would propel Marius to new heights and his reform of the armies would have an impact on the Roman social structure, previously unmatched. Even the attempted reforms of the Gracchi brothers would pale in comparison to what Marius did.

Marius Reforms the Legions

With his election as Consul in 107 BC, and his subsequent appointment as commander of the Roman legions in Numidia, Marius faced a difficult challenge. Invasions of Germanic Cimbri and Teuton tribes into southern Gaul had forced large Roman armies to counter them. Thoroughly defeated in every engagement, Rome faced a manpower crisis similar to those faced during Hannibal's offensive in the Second Punic War. Prior to Marius, Rome recruited its main legionary force from the landowning citizen classes, men who could equip themselves and who supposedly had the most to lose in the case of Roman defeat. In previous wars, temporary relief from this traditional rule would be applied, but never on a long term basis. Recruits from the Roman capite cens (head count) and freed slaves (voluntarii), were used primarily in support and militia style functions.

Especially since the end of the Punic Wars and conquests in the east, the small landowning classes had dwindled to dangerous numbers. Wealthy Patrician and Equestrian elite land owners bought up small farms from struggling families and worked them with vast numbers of imported slaves. The jobless and landless mobs in Rome swelled out of control and led directly to the rise of the Gracchi, who championed political reform for the common citizens. By the time Marius came to power, the typical Roman recruiting base was literally non-existent. There simply weren't enough landowners available who weren't already fighting the Germanics or Jugurtha to field a new army.

Marius' idea would turn out to be the single greatest reform the Roman legions would undergo. Probably without realizing the massive implications his reform would have on a social or political basis, he had little choice but to 'break' the law in order to fulfill his political and military ambitions. He offered the disenfranchised masses permanent employment for pay as a professional army, and the opportunity to gain spoils on campaign along with retirement benefits, such as land. With little hope of gaining status in other ways, the masses flocked to join Marius in his new army.

Besides gaining an army, Marius gained something else: the extreme personal loyalty of the Roman head count. The recruiting of the masses would change the entire relationship between citizens, generals, the Senate and Roman institutional ideology. Prior to Marius, the armies may have been loyal to a general, but were fighting in theory for the survival or expansion of the state, including their own lands. After Marius, they fought for their Legate, provided they liked him of course, and for the plunder and glory he could provide. With nowhere to return to in Rome or beyond, these new soldiers became career full-time professional soldiers, serving terms from 20 to

25 years. A whole new class of citizen was developed from this simple change in military philosophy. While providing an immeasurable impact on the common people, this change would also have a profound effect on the entity of Rome itself. The extreme loyalty to generals rather than state would lead to open rebellion, civil war, military political power and eventually the crowning of emperors.

Besides the social impact of Marius' decision, he made several major changes to legion structure and tactical formations. Most importantly, he mostly replaced the maniple structure which consisted of four distinct legionary units (though it did continue as a style of formation at least until the mid 1st century AD). Each used different weapons, served different purposes tactically and were arranged in varying sizes and formations, essentially based on the class of citizen they were recruited from. Each soldier in the pre-Marian system provided his own gear and armor, resulting in wide ranges in quality and completeness. Marius supplied his new army's gear partially through the resources of the state, and through his own vast wealth. In the future, most new recruits would be uniformly equipped through the state treasury, or their recruiting general.

To replace the maniple as a formation, the cohort was adopted (though the formation had been used in moderation at least since the Punic Wars). Each soldier was equipped the same and assigned to one of six identical centuries of 80 men, making up the cohort unit. There were then 10 cohorts of 480 men making up a legion, which standardized the entire system. The legion was made into a single large cohesive unit with interchangeable parts, capable of tactical flexibility not available with the complex structure of the Republican manipular system. The long single lines used prior to Marius were also eliminated in favor of a tiered 3 cohort deep battle line. This allowed rapid and easy support or rotating of fresh troops into combat.

Additionally, officers began to be recruited from within the ranks on a regular basis. While political appointments and promotions based on social or client status would still occur, this now allowed the common soldier a way of advancing based on merit. This improved the strength of the legion as a whole and instilled confidence in the soldiers, knowing their officers were capable leaders, not favored clients of Senators in Rome. Marius, while adopting uniform gear for all, such as the gladius and scutum, also made significant changes to the common legionary spear (the pilum). It was made for the point to break off upon impact, making it ineffective to be thrown back by the enemy.

To eliminate another problem, the way the soldier's kits and baggage were carried was completely adjusted. From this point on, the legionary would carry their entire standard package including weapons, armor, food, tents, supplies and tools. The "Marius' Mules" allowed bulky, slow and cumbersome baggage trains to be shortened, making the infantry faster and more efficient. Finally, the legionary standards of the Eagle, wolf, minotaur, horse and boar were reduced to a single standard. The Eagle, representing Jupiter Optimus Maximus, replaced them all as the single symbol of loyalty, duty and pride among the soldiers.

Cimbri and Teutons

Just as Marius was coming to power as Consul in 107 BC, a major migration by Germanic (perhaps Celtic) Cimbri was causing problems along Rome's northern frontier. Apparently under threat of starvation from poor harvests and from external threats by other tribes, the Cimbri were on the move looking for new, more promising land. By 113 BC, the Germanics made their first appearance in Roman written history. These movements, and associated great losses in the Roman army stood as the main reason for Marius' military reforms, and not some great love for the common man, as the people of the time generally believed.

There is some evidence that the Germanics wanted little to do with the Romans, and that they simply sought safe passage to better lands. Others argue that they were an aggressive army looking for plunder. The Roman generals of the time, ambitious and politically motivated in a time of great change and opportunity for personal glory, may very well have provoked the Cimbri at every step. Regardless, the Cimbri did wander the Danube region for several years, involved in a number of engagements with local Celts. At some point a Roman army was sent to meet them in Noricum, modern Carinthia. Under Gnaeus Paprius Carbo, the Romans were routed and sent scrambling home (112 BC), while the Cimbri continued to move west towards Gaul.

After the defeat of Carbo, the Cimbri crossed the Rhine and threatened territory belonging to the Roman allied Allobroges. Tribal leaders attempted to negotiate land rights for their people, but all such requests were denied. By 109 BC, the Romans sent another force under the Consul Marcus Junius Silanus but again were soundly defeated, losing as many as 30,000 men. The Cimbri, however, not showing any desire to invade or cause trouble, went about their own business, looking for land in Gaul. Again, in 107 BC, another Roman army under the command of Longinus met up with the Cimbri near modern Tolosa. He had under his command, the veterans of Metellus' army from Africa, which along with these earlier losses, forced Marius to recruit from the Roman head count. Longinus was initially successful, but was eventually caught in an ambush. Killed in action, his subordinate, Laenas was forced to surrender his position and return to Rome with fewer than 4,000 survivors.

As if things weren't bad enough, the following two years were more disastrous still. In 106 BC, Quintus Servilius Caepio marched a fresh army towards Tolosa to enact revenge. When he arrived he was sidetracked by the discovery of the infamous 'Gold of Tolosa', a vast treasure. Winning a minor engagement, he let the Germanics move off, while he secured the treasure and prepared it to be returned to Rome. While en route, it 'mysteriously' disappeared, and the Caepio family, while suddenly becoming very wealthy, was the target of suspicion and accusations from that point on.

While he sat idle, the Senate was apparently unsatisfied with Caepio's performance and authorized another army to be raised. This time, a force of over 6 legions was hastily prepared under Mallius Maximus, and he was given imperium over both armies. He marched to join Caepio, but Caepio, feeling that Mallius was inferior in social position, refused to obey or join his command. Bitter in-fighting between the two men, and armies, would prove to be disastrous. In 105 BC, the Cimbri returned and came across the Romans arranged in two separate camps, with two full armies functioning completely independent of one another. At the battle of Aurasio (modern Orange), the Cimbri crushed both Roman armies, killing nearly 80,000 men while sustaining minimal losses of their own.

Despite this monumental victory, and the opening of the doorway to invade Italy, the Cimbri were still only interested in finding new land. They then divided their force, with some remaining in southern Gaul, but with the bulk moving on towards the Pyrenees and Spain. Bitter resistance by Celtiberians in Spain would eventually force the Germanics to return, but for the time being, Rome was granted a brief respite.

It was at this time that the opportunistic Marius returned to Rome to celebrate his triumph over Jugurtha. Rome, feeling the pinch of several successful military disasters, essentially granted complete military authority to Marius. In a breach of the Roman Republican constitution, 104 BC saw his election as Consul for the second time in only a few short years. The law required at least 10 years intervals between elections as Consul, but his election was proof of Marius' ability. A generally unpopular figure among the Senate, he was elected to an unprecedented 5 straight terms as Consul from 104 to 100 BC, in order to deal with the Germanic threat.

In 104 BC, however, the Cimbri had moved on, and Marius spent the time reforming his legions, building roads and generally improving the condition of the provincial public works. Within 2 years,

the Cimbri had joined up with more Germanics, including the Teutons, Helvetii and Ambrones. Failing to win new land in Spain from the Celts, they returned to what they thought would be easier prey, the Romans. In 102 BC, the Cimbri moved around the Alps to the eastern side of Italy preparing to invade. The Teutones moved to the west and followed the Alps south along the coast into Italy. Marius caught the Teutones and Ambrones at the battle of Aquae Sextiae late in the year 102 BC. This time, under competent Roman command, the Germanics were annihilated, and the Romans could focus on their other enemy, the Cimbri.

By early 101 BC, the Cimbri moved down from the Alps and started to press into eastern Italy. An army, technically under the command of Q. Lutatius Catulus, but practically led by Marius' subordinate Sulla, met the Cimbri at Vercellae. Again, the Germanic invaders were crushed with losses approaching 100,000. 2 great Germanic tribes were nearly routed completely from historical existence, and the 3 Roman commanders bickered over who could claim the victory. In the end, Marius shared a joint triumph with Catulus, but it was Marius who was heaped with the credit by the Roman people, and he was named the 'savior of Rome'. Perhaps, even more significant than the victory, was the political and personal impact. While Marius, without an enemy to fight, would soon prove his inability as a politician, the personal rivalry between Marius and Sulla grew ever more fractured.

Political Turmoil

Marius returned from his Germanic campaign in triumph once again. First hailed as the 3rd founder of Rome (Romulus was first of course, followed by Marcus Furius Camillus of the 'conquest of Veii' fame), and savior of the city, his success would be short lived. Elected to his 5th straight, and 6th overall Consulship in 100 BC, he was proven to be out of his element without a war to fight. With the Republic secure from outside threats such as Jugurtha and the Germanics, Marius' policies were no longer to be tolerated. Directly on the battlefield after the defeat of the Cimbri, Marius had already pushed the envelope too far in the eyes of the Roman senate.

To appease his army, and of course to secure political support through their loyalty, Marius made unauthorized grants of citizenship to the Italian allied soldiers fighting for him. He then further pushed the Senate by demanding colonization and settlement rights for his large body of veterans. This strategy, under normal circumstances, would've been shot down immediately, but in this age of political turmoil, anything was possible. Using a popular and outspoken Tribune, Saturninus, Marius pushed through these proposals and others like it through the use of the citizen assemblies, mob tactics and open street violence. Saturninus used Marius to climb the political ladder, while Marius used Saturninus to push through his popular agenda, ripping apart the status quo and tearing down the traditions of Roman politics.

Marius lost what little credibility he had as a politician, and his strong-arm tactics eventually led to the exile of his old enemy Metellus. With the situation spiraling out of control already, Saturninus continued to push the limits of Tribunal power. In 99 BC, Saturninus organized the assassination of a political rival and mob violence grew to an unprecedented level. With Saturninus effectively taking control of the streets, the Senate had little choice but to turn to the one man who could stop it, the one man who gave Saturninus the power in the first place. A *senatus consultum ultimum*, the highest authority provided for in the Roman constitution beyond the dictatorship, was issued by the Senate giving Marius the authority to stop Saturninus. Marius then ordered his troops into the city to quell the violence and take control from his former political ally. Saturninus and his supporters sought refuge in the Senate House, but despite efforts to have him arrested peacefully, angry political opponents took matters into their own hands. Climbing onto the roof of the Senate house, they pelted Saturninus and his mob with roof tiles, killing the majority of them. The crisis was over, but at the cost of Marius' reputation and the effectiveness of Republican law.

Except for the settlement of Marius' veterans, the Senate then declared the laws of Saturninus illegal and removed them from practice. While it's probable that they would've liked to void the veteran settlement laws as well, Marius' veterans proved an intimidating force of their own that would not go unnoticed by rising men such as Sulla. Even Marius' nephew, Julius Caesar, born only the previous year in 100 BC, would be highly influenced by Marius' use of the army to achieve political ends. Caesar, however, not only had the popular will of the people on his side, but the finest line of patrician roots as well. For Marius, however, his political career was coming to a temporary end. The Senate recalled Metellus, despite objections by Marius, and he knew life in Rome was getting to be too dangerous for him to stay.

At the close of his consulship, when a former magistrate could become legally liable for actions taken during his term, Marius went into a form of self-imposed exile. Satisfying the anger of the Senate, he took a voluntary leave and went east. But while his reputation as a politician in Rome was crumbling, Marius the general was a different matter. While traveling he met with Rome's future enemy Mithridates VI. Simply through a single conversation and his military reputation, he apparently convinced Mithradates that any plans for actions against Roman territory would be a disaster for him. His reputation as a force of power increased substantially, even while the Senate reviled him. While Marius drifted into political obscurity however, it was not to be the last of him. Rebellion among the Italians would force Marius to return within a decade, just as one major opponent, Sulla, was growing in power.

The Social War

With the death of Saturninus and self-exile by Marius in 99 BC, a period of relative calm slipped into Roman politics. The calm wouldn't last long, however, and a new Tribune in a mold similar to the Gracchi brothers, came to the forefront. Marcus Livius Drusus was actually the son of a political opponent of the Gracchi, but he took up the cause of the Italian people with a new zeal. Drusus, among several reforms, attempted to distribute land and citizenship for the Latin rights Italian allies. His objective was actually the preservation and strengthening of the Senate, but in practice it didn't appear as intended. He hoped that by including the Italian allies as voting citizens, he would bring in a new voting force loyal to the traditional Senatorial authority and not to the demagogue tribunes who used popular ideas to incite the Roman mobs. Unfortunately for him, and as a result of their own short-sightedness the Senate saw things in a completely different light.

As Tribune in 91 BC, Drusus reformed the corrupt court system by promoting 300 of the top Equites into the roles of the Senate, thereby doubling the number of Senators. This altered the financial stake of potential jury members and helped to balance the system. New land and grain laws were introduced to win over the rural and urban plebes respectively. And finally, he introduced the citizenship law that would end in his demise, and open revolt. After much political wrangling, as was common in the late Republic, Drusus' laws were eventually dismissed, but he persisted in trying to push them through. His actions and proposals, which were holding the angry Italian allies in check as they hoped for a political resolution to their complaints, led directly to his murder late in his term. Stabbed in the thigh by an unknown assailant, and certainly an affiliation of the elite, the death of Drusus fueled the flames of revolt.

Led chiefly by the Marsi and the Samnites, several Italian tribes, who for 2 decades had been trying to gain citizenship through the political system, decided enough was enough. A new state, in the image of Rome, was set up with its capital in Corfinium. A Senate complete with Consuls and Praetors was organized mimicking Rome, only without Rome as a part. Back in Rome itself, armies were organized to oppose this new breakaway Republic and by 90 BC, the war was on.

Things went badly for the Romans initially. In the north, Marius had returned to help his Consular relative, P. Rutilius Lupus, whom he held the overall command. One mistake after another led to

defeat in several battles until Lupus was finally killed in action. Never one to miss an opportunity, Marius took full command of the northern campaign and the impact was immediate. Within a few short months, the northern Italians were on the defensive and the focus of the war shifted to the south. The southern Italians captured and sacked several towns before the Romans could intervene. First led by Lucius Julius Caesar, several defeats eventually gave way to a victory that saw Caesar hailed as an imperator in the field. But the situation was far from over, and things were still in doubt when Lucius returned to Rome for the elections of 89 BC.

In order to bring the revolt to a close, Caesar instituted the Lex Julia. It was a law that granted full citizenship to any Italian ally who did not revolt, and to any Italians that were currently in a state of revolt who would immediately lay down their arms. Its passage essentially granted the Italians the victory they initially set out to get, but many refused to lie down their arms. The following year resulted in more political wrangling than anything, but nevertheless, the war continued. By this time, Sulla had returned from a praetorship in Cilicia and was granted command in the south. As an obvious slight against Marius, another political opponent, Caepio, was placed in command of the north, but he was soon killed in battle. At first accusations were thrown at Marius' son for murdering Caepio during the battle which ended Caepio's life, but it was more a sign of the politics of the time and charges were eventually dropped.

Gnaeus Pompeius (father of Pompey the Great) took over command of the north and laid a punishing siege on the Italians at Asculum. After a protracted hold out, Pompeius captured the town and the defenders were brutally dispatched. Sulla meanwhile methodically defeated the opposition in the south and he returned, at the end of the year, to stand for the Consulship. Sulla would win the office for 88 BC and Gaius Marius, aged and perhaps in the early stages of mental illness, reacted horribly. The Social War came to an end with the Italians essentially gaining everything they wanted, even though they had been defeated in the field. Various mopping up activities would take place, but new developments in the east would create an entirely new scenario. Mithridates of Pontus saw the Roman internal struggle as an opportunity for his own expansion and he began to press against Roman territory. The conflict over who should command would send the rivalry between Marius and Sulla to new heights, which would eventually result in bloody proscriptions and violence against both sides.

The Fall of Marius

At the end of the Social War Sulla was elected Consul for 88 BC just as war with Mithradates was breaking out. Mithradates took control of Asia Minor, slaughtering Roman citizens by the thousands. Sulla, in his senior Consular position was appointed to command the campaign, but the aged Gaius Marius desperately sought the command for himself. Opposed by the Senate, Marius was unsuccessful through traditional methods, and Sulla assembled his legions and began the march to the east.

No sooner was Sulla out of Rome, however, than Marius, at the age of 70 and probably mentally unbalanced, reverted to his old political tactics of circumventing the system through the Plebeian Tribunes. Sulpicius Rufus, acting on Marius' behalf, proposed that Marius be given command through the citizen assemblies. Extremely popular with the common citizens, Marius was successful and the command was officially and legally transferred. Sulla though, was not a man to be so easily dismissed.

Hearing the news of Marius' appointment and his dismissal, Sulla reversed course and headed back to Rome with his 6 legions. This marked the first time that a Roman commander marched upon Rome with a full army, with malicious intent and against legally appointed government authority. Sulla took Rome with a vengeance, killing Rufus and other Marian supporters. Marius managed to escape through the Italian countryside, but Sulla's men caught up with him near

Minturnae in Latium. The ancients suggest that despite Sulla's proclamation for Marius to die, Marius was still larger than life among the army and non-Roman citizens. A Gallic trooper who was supposed to behead Marius was unable to do so when faced by the old legend. The infamous quote, "I cannot kill Gaius Marius" was supposed to have been recorded when the trooper looked into Marius' eyes, and the local residents refused to do him harm. Sending him off to safety by ship, Marius fled to Africa. The political ramifications of helping Marius vs. allowing him to pass were different matters however, and rather than oppose the authorities in Rome he was refused entry to a colony near Carthage. Settling on the island of Cercina with his son, Marius simply bided his time.

Back in Rome, Sulla got his political agenda in order and then set out to deal with Mithradates as originally intended. Lucius Cornelius Cinna then took center stage in Roman politics, causing a fervor with his new Italian enfranchisement proposals. Attempting to organize the new countryside citizens into the city existing assemblies, Cinna was removed from his office and exiled from Rome. Much like Sulla, Cinna was not to be denied. Turning to the one man who could help implement his agenda Cinna organized a revolt with Marius and recruited heavily from among the Italians and marched on Rome himself. Marius landed in Italy shortly after with a force of cavalry and supplemented them with locals on his way to join Cinna. On the way, the Roman port of Ostia was sacked to finance the operations and 87 BC turned into a siege of Rome itself.

Thousands were killed by Cinna in his purge and his killing only stopped when the Senate surrendered and opened the gates to the city. Marius however, made no arrangements to enter peacefully and took his vengeance on the inside. 5 days of murder and mayhem ruled supreme in which Marius killed anyone with the slightest opposition to him or support of Sulla. Severed heads of his enemies were placed on spears all around the Forum as a show of Marian strength. But in Marius unstable mental condition and advanced age, neutral bystander and foe were often confused. Massacred enemies were equally mixed with the innocent, forever staining the streets and Marius' reputation. Clearly in command through brute force, Marius and Cinna next forced through their own elections as joint Consuls of 86 BC. Before additional plans could be put into action, however, the brief reign of terror ended just 17 days into Marius 7th consulship, when he died of a 'fever'.

Once again, violence and bloodshed was proving to be the order of the day in Roman politics. The mass murders conducted by Marius and Cinna would be nothing compared to those of Sulla when he would return some years later. Marius was both a great general and sometimes adequate, if not good politician. He was credited with saving Rome by defeating the Germanics, and created an atmosphere of enfranchisement with the Italians that was a necessity for Roman growth. The reform of the legions was of the greatest benefit to the army and Roman power, but perhaps above all else, he was a deep influence on the life of his nephew Gaius Julius Caesar.

Without Marius, and the lessons taught by using the Tribunes and the people as a source of power, Caesar may never have come to power. The parallels in their careers are striking despite the differences in them personally. Marius was a new man and an outsider, while Caesar was as patrician as a Roman could be, but both saw the advantage in power derived from the support of the people and through military success. While Marius and his successor, Sulla, used proscription and murder to settle scores and establish power, Caesar learned that such actions did nothing but destroy healthy Roman politics.

With the death of Marius, however, there was still a long time for the 14 year old Caesar to come into his own. This was still the time of Cinna and Sulla. Events in the 80's BC and beyond would continue to rip apart the fabric of the Republican system. A series of demagogues now ruled Rome and the fate of the Republic rested with these men.

The life of Sulla is one of stark contrast and yet striking similarities to those of Marius, and later, Caesar. Thanks to Sulla's own personal memoirs, which have been lost to history, though preserved through the works of others, such as Plutarch and perhaps Appian, we actually know a great deal about him and the time period. Sulla was cunning and ruthless when necessary, but a brilliant politician and formidable commander as well. While he didn't necessarily begin the "Fall of the Republic", the activities of Sulla were definitely a major contribution.

Sulla was a member of a down and out branch of the patrician Cornelii family. Born into near poverty, compared to other patricians, he spent his youth without hope of restoring the family name. Ancient sources suggest that two timely family inheritances were the catalyst that allowed Sulla to move into politics. With enough financial security to run for public office, and the fortunate (for him) situations with the Germanic Cimbri and the War with Jugurtha, Sulla was granted an opportunity to alter his course in life. Just as Gaius Marius was coming into power of his own, Sulla broke into Roman politics and was elected Quaestor. His next fortunate break was to serve under Marius in Africa.

During the War with Jugurtha, Sulla gained valuable command skills despite relatively minor military action. The war under Marius was definitely working in the favor of Rome, but bottling up the elusive Numidian and destroying his army was a near impossible task. In a brilliant act of diplomacy, Sulla went with authority of Marius to King Bocchus of Mauretania. Bocchus, an ally of Jugurtha, was tiring of the war and was concerned that Rome would eventually win out. Trying to avoid the potential punishment, Sulla was able to convince Bocchus to betray Jugurtha and capture him during a private meeting. The plan worked as suggested, and Sulla soon had custody of the Numidian King, effectively ending the war. While Marius, who was in command, claimed the bulk of the credit, Sulla would, for many years, claim the victory belonged to him. Whatever else had occurred between the men while on campaign, this incident certainly formed the foundation of a bitter rivalry.

Upon their return to Rome, the next threat facing Rome was migrating Germanic Cimbri and Teutones. Marius took command of one force to stop the Teutones, while Sulla joined Marius' rival Catulus in a force to stop the Cimbri. All accounts suggest that Sulla was not only invaluable to Catulus, but that he very well may have saved the Legions and turned the tide in Rome's favor. At the battle of Vercellae in 101 BC, Catulus, with Sulla, defeated the Cimbri and the threat from the Germanics was over. Marius and Catulus, as co-consuls, were honored with a joint triumph, while Sulla's bitterness grew. Returning to Rome from the campaign, Sulla was next elected as Praetor urbanus. While allegations of massive bribery followed him, it didn't stop his political advancement. After his service to Rome, he was appointed as a Propraetor governor of the eastern province of Cilicia.

Sulla Marches on Rome

While Sulla was governing Cilicia, he played a pivotal role in expressing Rome's power to its eastern provinces and rival kingdoms. Much as Marius had done earlier with Mithridates, Sulla's intimidating presence left a lasting impression. Even the powerful Parthian empire sent ambassadors to meet with him. Sulla certainly made a lasting impression in this first major official contact between Rome and Parthia. Sulla's governorship would be largely uneventful, however, and he returned to Rome just as the political rivalry between Marius and the Senatorial Optimates was heating up.

By 89 BC, the social and political climate with Rome and Italia were at a fever pitch. The Italian allies of Rome, after years of lawful attempts to gain full citizenship, had finally had enough. The murder of their advocate, Drusus, in the Roman Senate, set off an armed conflict which would become known as the Social War. Also known as the Marsic War, as the Marsii tribe led the revolt,

many Italian tribes revolted against Roman power in an attempt to either gain citizenship, or set up an exclusive state of their own. In a war that would last 3 years, mainly because of political fighting over which factions should have command, Sulla would surpass Marius and become the most prominent general of the time. By the end of the war, Sulla for all practical purposes, was in overall command of the campaign; and his reward for victory was his election as Consul for 88 BC.

In the heart of the Social War, Mithridates VI of Pontus began stirring up trouble in the east. Looking to expand his own fledgling empire, he was directly responsible for the assassination of political rivals and invasions into neighboring Kingdoms. While Rome protested his actions, there was little that could be done while occupied with the Italians. Mithridates would eventually take control of Asia Minor, Greece, Thrace and part of Macedon while the Romans were forced to wait out their own troubles. At the close of the Social War, however, the situation came to a head when Mithridates ordered the execution of up to 80,000 Roman citizens in Asia Minor, and as many as 150,000 Latin rights allies. Sulla as Consul, was appointed to take command of the effort against Mithridates, but Marius and his followers had other plans.

Sulla prepared his legions and began the march from Italy to the east. No sooner was he gone, however, than the aging Marius convinced his tribune ally Sulpicius Rufus to put the matter of the Mithridatic command to a vote with the citizen assemblies. Still extremely popular with the commoners, Marius' desire to have the command for himself was ratified in the assemblies. Sulla was never a man to give up without a fight, though, and the ambition of both men would lead to yet more civil strife. Sulla refused to accept the political coercion of Marius and consulted with his generals on the feasibility of marching on Rome. While most of his officers resigned, rather than be a part of it, Sulla was undeterred. For the first time in history, a Roman general was about to march on Rome with legions in order to gain political power.

Sulla then broke camp and entered Rome shortly after, in 88 BC. Taking full control, he portrayed himself as the victim of Marius' intrigue against his rightful command and gave Rome a first glimpse of the future dictatorship of Sulla. He declared Marius and his followers as outlaws and enemies of the Roman state, though Marius escaped to Africa. The powers of the Tribunes were reduced and the Senate's strengthened in order to protect Roman law from the whims of the common classes. Many political rivals were hunted down and killed, but there was little time for Sulla to consolidate his power, as Mithridates waited. A new consul, L. Cornelius Cinna, was left to govern Rome, and Sulla marched back east.

No sooner had Sulla left, however, than Cinna, through political intrigue of his own, fell into disfavor with the Senate. Banished from Rome, Cinna's only choice to regain his power was to ally with Marius. With Sulla beyond reach, Marius and Cinna returned to Rome with troops of their own. Returning Sulla's favor, Cinna and Marius took control violently and the bloodbath of Roman politicians grew. Nothing before like it had ever occurred in Rome, and murder was becoming a telling pattern in Roman politics. Marius and Cinna forced through their elections as Consuls for 86 BC, but Marius, in his seventh Consulship, died just 17 days into it. Cinna was left to rule Rome ruthlessly, and would continue to rule, in the absence of Sulla, for the next three years.

Sulla, meanwhile, had to allow matters to unfold beyond his control. His primary duty was the defeat of Mithridates and the re-establishment of Roman power in the east. For now, Cinna and the Marian political faction would have to wait, but revenge would prove far deadlier than anything that had come before it.

Mithridatic War (88 - 85 BC)

Mithridates VI of Pontus came to power in the Hellenized region of Asia Minor circa 121 and 120 BC. Murdering his brother, mother and other potential rivals he established himself as sole ruler,

with intentions of expansion at the expense of Rome. By the 90's BC, Mithridates took firm control of several neighboring regions to the north and continued efforts would push him into direct conflict with Rome. The first matter of dispute was with the Roman ally of Bithynia over territory in Phrygia. Next he attempted to take control of Cappadocia where Sulla had recently placed the Roman client king, Ariobarzanes on the throne.

A lack of Roman interference on these minor issues probably played a part in pushing Mithridates agenda farther. By 91 BC, Mithridates supported the overthrow of the Bithynian King Nicomedes and then influenced local forces to overthrow Ariobarzanes in Cappadocia. Just at the beginning of the Social War in Italy, the Roman Senate responded with a delegation led by M. Aquillius. Charged with diplomatically resolving the various regional disputes, Aquillius managed to convince Mithridates for the time being, to restore his neighbors to their previous situations. Conveniently finding that he wasn't directly involved, Rome left Mithridates with the tag of 'friend of the Roman people.' Whatever additional discourse was taking place is unclear however. In the heat of the social war Rome was unable to interfere directly with military force, and it seems that Aquillius convinced Nicomedes to wage war on Pontus. While it was likely a combination of personal greed and some concept of assessing Mithridates strength, both Aquillius and Nicomedes were soon surprised to learn that this strength was formidable indeed.

Mithridates' original attempt to negotiate with diplomacy ended in rebuttal by Aquillius and he had little choice but to respond. In 90 BC, Mithridates invaded Cappadocia and the minor regional dispute was quickly turning into a full scale war. With little military strength to work with, three small and separate forces were utterly destroyed by Mithridates. All resistance to the Pontic army collapsed and it swept into Asia Minor and neighboring territories. In a very short time, Mithridates expelled what small Roman forces were available, taking control of Asia Minor, Bithynia, Cappadocia, the Bosphorus and the Black Sea. Much like Hannibal's attempts earlier in Italy, Mithridates encouraged the locals to join with him but with far greater success. Aquillius himself was captured in Mitylene while fleeing to Rhodes. As punishment for Roman excess (and a recurring event in ancient written history which is probably simply intended to symbolize and emphasise greed), he was supposedly executed by pouring molten gold down his throat.

At this point, despite not actually facing any real Roman legions, Mithridates felt confident in his ability to beat Rome. 88 BC was a major offensive which saw the invasions of Rhodes and Greece. While attacks on Rhodes were unsuccessful, Mithridates' general, Archelaus had more success in his attack on the Greek mainland. First securing Athens, much of southern Greece was brought under Pontic control within a short time, with the local populations initially happy to be outside of Roman influence. In Central Greece, Mithridates met some resistance from Q. Braetius Sura whose legion guarded Macedonia from the Illyrian tribes stopping an invasion of the central regions leading to an encounter with Archelaus in a battle at Chaeronea. A moderate victory sent Archelaus back to Athens for the winter, but reinforcements strengthened his position and prevented follow-up by Sura.

Meanwhile, Mithridates laid out a plan to ensure the loyalty of his newly won regional allies. He issued a proclamation ordering the massacre of all resident Romans in Asia Minor and surroundings. All in all, up to 80,000 Roman citizens were slaughtered. While certainly drawing Rome's wrath, Mithridates forced the loyalty of these new conquests by ensuring they wouldn't be eager to face Roman vengeance.

By 87 BC, Sulla, having been appointed to Consular command of the expedition, only to have it taken away by Marius, and then reaffirmed by marching on Rome, was ready to face Mithridates. While Sulla was gathering strength on his move, the Macedonian governor Sentius recalled Sura to grant Sulla full control of the campaign. Conveniently, Mithridates launched an attack on Macedonia that was repulsed due to Sura's timely recall. With 5 legions and whatever local forces he could muster, Sulla was now in complete command and able to fully concentrate on re-establishing control of the region from the Mithridatic forces.

Sulla's Offensive

Sulla's initial goal was the immediate conquest of Mithridates' strongholds in Greece. Athens and its main port, the Piraeus, were the obvious targets and Sulla ordered a direct assault. Defended by Archelaus, the plan was nearly a disaster as the walled port was in excellent defensive position with access to reinforcement by sea. Sulla was forced to withdraw in order to secure local funding and prepare proper siege equipment. The entire campaign year of 87 BC was spent in siege of both Athens and Piraeus with little success. By the winter, Sulla abandoned his plan on the Piraeus while keeping the siege of Athens intact. A chief legate, Lucullus was sent abroad to Egypt and Syria in order to arrange for a fleet, with the hopes that naval operations could stave off re-supply and reinforcement.

By Spring of 86 BC, however, the tide turned for Sulla, despite the absence of Lucullus and his fleet. Athens finally surrendered and the town was sacked. The assault on the Piraeus was continued but Archelaus sensed the situation to be untenable and finally decided to withdraw. The Piraeus was burned upon its capture, but without a fleet to block access to the sea, Archelaus' army was able to get away unharmed. He continued on to Macedonia, where a new Mithridatic army had recently invaded and taken control from the Romans. Archelaus joined with and assumed command of this newer force nearly tripling the size of Sulla's manpower. With renewed confidence Archelaus moved south once again into Greece to face Sulla.

The two armies would meet at the town of Chaeronea in Boeotia. Marching south from Thessaly, Archelaus an able commander, positioned himself on high ground and in a position to cut off Sulla's route of supply and escape. Sulla was forced to give battle in a greatly outnumbered situation. Under a full assault, Sulla's veterans managed to hold under the pressure. Sulla proved his military brilliance by personally ordering the movement of troops to key positions throughout the battle. Shoring up weakening lines and exploiting advantages left by the enemy, the Romans managed to persevere. Eventually, Archelaus' own flank broke and what seemed to initially be an excellent opportunity for him, turned into a full scale rout of his army. He managed to escape with about 10,000 men, but his losses were far greater. Hailed as imperator by his men (a requirement for a triumph) Sulla was left at least temporarily in complete control of Greece.

With his rival, Cinna, taking control of Rome and all the ensuing political upheaval, an additional Roman army under Flaccus was sent to occupy Mithridates in Asia. Since Sulla had been earlier declared a public enemy to Rome due to his actions in marching on the city before his eastern campaign, Sulla was concerned over this new army's real destination. As it marched through Macedonia to meet with with an apparant objective to counter Mithridates, Sulla moved north to keep an eye on it. Archelaus, meanwhile, was given time to gather strength and recruit a new army on the island of Euboea. Flaccus apparently had no intention of interfering with Sulla, but in the interim Archelaus crossed back into Boeotia, forcing Sulla moved to move south. Meeting at the town of Orchomenos Sulla's forces began to dig in defensively, but with little time to spare before Archelaus' arrival, they were unable to complete their preparations. In another hard fought battle, the Romans again defeated Archelaus. This time though, the encounter was a complete victory and Greece was completely at the whim of Sulla. Mithridates had already lost 2 large forces in Greece, faced impending invasion by Flaccus and was now also in the precarious position of putting down unrest in his recently conquered Asia. Despite their actions against the Roman citizenry there, the local towns were seemingly beginning to realize that they had made a huge mistake and hoped that rebellion against Mithridates would win them leniency for their actions in the earlier mass killing of Roman citizens and allies.

Roman Victory

In 86 BC, after Sulla's victory in Orchomenos, he initially spent some time re-establishing Roman authority. His legate soon arrived with the fleet he was sent to gather, and Sulla was ready to recapture lost Greek islands before crossing into Asia Minor. The second Roman army under the command of Flaccus meanwhile moved through Macedonia and into Asia Minor. After the capture of Philippi, remaining Mithridatic forces crossed the Hellsport away from the Romans. The Romans, under Flaccus' subordinate C. Flavius Fimbria, were encouraged to loot and create general havoc as it went, creating problems between Flaccus and Fimbria. Flaccus was a fairly strict disciplinarian and the behavior of his lieutenant led to discord between the two.

At some point as this army crossed the Hellsport while giving chase to Mithridates' forces, Fimbria seems to have started a rebellion against Flaccus. While seemingly minor enough to not cause immediate repercussions in the field, Fimbria was relieved of his duty and ordered back to Rome. The return trip included a stop at the port city of Byzantium, however, and here Fimbria took command of the garrison, rather than continue home. Flaccus, hearing of this, marched his army to Byzantium to put a stop to the rebellion, but walked right into his own undoing. The army preferred Fimbria (not surprising considering his leniency in regard to plunder) and a general revolt ensued. Flaccus attempted to flee, but was captured shortly after and the rightful Consular commander was executed. With Flaccus out of the way, Fimbria took complete command.

The following year (85 BC) Fimbria took the fight to Mithridates while Sulla continued to operate on the Greek Islands of the Aegaeum. Fimbria quickly won a decisive victory over remaining Mithridatic forces and moved on the capital of Pergamum. With all vestige of hope crumbling for Mithridates, he fled Pergamum to the coastal city of Pitane. Fimbria was in hot pursuit, laying siege to the town, but knowing he couldn't prevent Mithridates' escape by sea. Fimbria called upon Sulla's legate, Lucullus to bring his fleet around to block Mithridates in, but it seems that Sulla had other plans.

Sulla apparently had been in private negotiation with Mithridates to end the war. He wanted to develop easy terms and get the ordeal over as quickly as possible. The quicker it was dealt with, the faster he would be able to settle political matters in Rome. With this in mind, Lucullus and his navy refused to help Fimbria, and Mithridates 'escaped' to Lesbos. Later at Dardanus, Sulla and Mithridates met personally to negotiate terms. With Fimbria re-establishing Roman hegemony over the cities of Asia Minor, Mithridates position was completely untenable. Yet Sulla, with his eyes on Rome, offered uncharacteristically mild terms. Mithridates was forced to give up all his conquests (which Sulla and Fimbria had already managed to take back by force), surrender any Roman prisoners, provide a 70 ship fleet to Sulla along with supplies, and pay a tribute of 2,000 to 3,000 gold talents. In exchange, Mithridates was able to keep his original kingdom and territory and regain his title of "friend of the Roman people."

For all intensive purposes, Sulla's settlement made it seem as if the war had never happened. He used his victory to gain supplies and money to seemingly finance his coming expedition back to Rome, while Mithridates suffered little for his actions. It's still difficult to determine Sulla's exact mindset however. There is evidence that he was still in some sort of loose contact with the Senate despite his declaration as an enemy of the Roman state. Magistrates, especially ones favorable to Sulla, were still being elected in Rome and sent east to govern without interference. Despite Sulla's later claims, Rome under Cinna was relatively calm and the full Senate seemed to participate in legislation and debate. Perhaps as long as Sulla had his legions, the Senate would not act, but it didn't really do anything to counter Sulla's command even from an insubstantial legal standpoint.

But things in the east weren't yet settled. Fimbria was enjoying free reign in the province of Asia and led a cruel oppression of both those who were involved against Romans, and those who were now in support of Sulla. Unable to leave a potentially dangerous army in his rear, Sulla crossed into Asia. He pursued Fimbria to his camp at Thyatira where Fimbria was confident in his ability to repulse an attack. Fimbria, however, soon found that his men wanted nothing to do with opposing

Sulla and many deserted or refused to fight in the coming battle. Sensing all was lost, Fimbria surrendered by taking his own life, while his army went over to Sulla.

To ensure the loyalty of both Fimbria's troops and his own veterans, who weren't happy about the easy treatment of their enemy, Mithridates, Sulla now started to penalize the province of Asia. His veterans were scattered throughout the province and allowed to extort the wealth of local communities. Large fines were placed on the province for lost taxes during their rebellion and the cost of the war. With his army gaining their unorthodox method of 'plunder', it wouldn't be long before Sulla would make his next move.

As the year 84 BC rolled in, Cinna, still Consul in Rome, was faced with minor disturbances among Illyrian tribes. Perhaps in an attempt to gain experience for an army to act as a counter to Sulla's forces, or to show Sulla that the Senate also had some strength of its own, Cinna raised an army to deal with this Illyrian problem. Conveniently the source of the disturbance was located directly between Sulla and another march on Rome. Cinna pushed his men hard to move to position in Illyria and forced marches through snow covered mountains did little to endear Cinna to his army. A short time after departing Rome, Cinna was stoned to death by his own men and history was about to take another fateful step. Hearing of Cinna's death, and the ensuing power gap in Rome, Sulla gathered his forces and prepared for a second march on the capital.

Sulla's Civil War

As Cinna's death reverberated throughout the Roman world, Sulla realized his opportunity to take full advantage. In 83 BC Sulla prepared his 5 legions and left the 2 originally under Fimbria to maintain peace in Asia Minor. In the spring of that year, Sulla crossed the Adriatic with a large fleet from Patrae, near Corinth, to Brundisium and Tarentum in the heel of Italy. Landing uncontested, he was given ample opportunity to prepare for the coming war.

In Rome, the newly elected Consuls, L. Cornelius Scipio Asiagenus and C. Norbanus levied and prepared armies of their own to stop Sulla and protect the Republican government. Norbanus marched first with the intention of blocking a Sullan advance at Canusium. Seriously defeated Norbanus was forced to retreat to Capua where there was no respite. Sulla followed his defeated adversary and won another victory in a very short time. Meanwhile Asiagenus was also on the march south with an army of his own. Asiagenus or his army, however, seemed to have little motivation to fight. At the town of Teanum Sidicinum, Sulla and Asiagenus met face to face to negotiate and Asiagenus surrendered without a fight. The army sent to stop Sulla wavered in the face of battle against experienced veterans, and certainly along with the prodding of Sulla's operatives, gave up the cause, going over to Sulla's side as a result. Left without an army, Asiagenus had little choice but to cooperate and later writings of Cicero suggest that the two men actually discussed many matters regarding Roman government and the Constitution.

Sulla let Asiagenus leave the camp, firmly believing him to be a supporter. He was possibly expected to deliver terms to the Senate but immediately rescinded any thought of supporting Sulla upon being set free. Sulla later made it publicly known that not only would Asiagenus suffer for opposing him, but that any man who continued to oppose him after this betrayal would suffer bitter consequences. With Sulla's three quick victories, though, the situation began to rapidly turn in his favor. Many of those in a position of power, who had not yet taken a clear side, now chose to support Sulla. The first of these was Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius who governed Africa. The old enemy of Marius, and assuredly of Cinna as well, led an open revolt against the Marian forces in Africa. Additional help came from Picenum and Spain. Two of the three future Triumvirs joined Sulla's cause in his bid to take control. Marcus Licinius Crassus marched with an army from Spain, and would later play a pivotal role at the Colline Gates. The young son of Pompeius Strabo (the butcher of Asculum during the Social War), raised an army of his own from among his father's

veterans and threw his lot in with Sulla. At the tender age of 23, and never having held a Senatorial office, Pompey forced himself into the political scene with an army at his back.

Regardless, the war would continue on with Asiagenus raising another army in defense. This time he moved after Pompey, but once again, his army abandoned him and went over to the enemy. As a result, desperation followed in Rome as the year 83 came to a close. The Senate re-elected Cinna's old co-Consul, Papirius Carbo, to his third term, and Gaius Marius the Younger, the 26 year old son of the great general, to his first. Hoping to inspire Marian supporters throughout the Roman world, recruiting began in earnest among the Italian tribes who had always been loyal to Marius. In additional counter measures from an intimidation perspective more blood shed against possible Sullan supporters took place. The urban praetor L. Junius Brutus Damasippus led a slaughter of those Senators who seemed to lean towards the invading forces, yet one more incident of murder in a growing spiral of violence as a political tool in the late Republic.

As the campaign year of 82 BC opened, Carbo took his forces to the north to oppose Pompey while Marius moved against Sulla in the south. Attempts to defeat Pompey failed and Metellus with his African forces along with Pompey secured northern Italy for Sulla. In the South, Marius gathered a large host of Samnites who assuredly would lose influence with the anti-popular Sulla in charge of Rome. Marius met Sulla at Sacriportus and the two forces engaged in a long and desperate battle. In the end, many of Marius' men switched sides over to Sulla and he had no choice but to retreat to Praeneste. Sulla followed the son of his arch-rival and laid siege to the town, leaving a subordinate in command. Sulla himself moved north to push Carbo, who had withdrawn to Etruria to stand between Rome and the forces of Pompey and Metellus.

Indecisive battles were fought between Carbo and Sulla's forces but Carbo knew that his cause was lost. News arrived of a defeat by Norbanus in Gaul, and that he also switched sides to Sulla. Carbo, caught between three enemy armies and with no hope of relief, fled to Africa. It was not yet the end of the resistance however, those remaining Marian forces gathered together and attempted several times to relieve Marius at Praeneste. A Samnite force under Pontius Telesinus joined in the relief effort but the combined armies were still unable to break Sulla. Rather than continue trying to rescue Marius, Telesinus moved north towards Rome. Sulla raced after, not wanting to give up an opportunity to win the war and claim the ultimate prize right outside the gates.

On November 1 of 82 BC, the two forces met at the battle of the Colline Gate, just outside of Rome. The battle was a huge and desperate final struggle with both sides certainly believing their own victory would save Rome. Sulla was pushed hard on his left flank with the situation so dangerous that he and his men were pushed right up against the city walls. Crassus' forces, fighting on Sulla's right however, managed to turn the opposition's flank and drive them back. The Samnites and the Marian forces were folded up and broke. In the end, over 50,000 Romans lost their lives and Sulla stood alone as the master of Rome with the following sunrise.

In a meeting the following day, and while the execution of several thousand prisoners was taking place, Sulla addressed the Senate in the temple of Bellona. Here he began to lay out the law that would eventually re-shape Roman government, at least for a time, and show the Senate what Sulla's vengeance would mean. Just as the proscription of his political enemies was about to begin, however, there were still matters to deal with outside of Rome. The siege of Marius in Praeneste continued, and Sulla needed to put an end to it to take final control.

The man recently responsible for the death of his supporters, Damasippus, was beheaded for a special purpose. In order to show Marius that Sulla now had Rome and was the victor, he had the head thrown into Praeneste as proof. It wasn't long before Marius realized that all was lost and ordered a slave to take his life. All was still not over for Sulla, however. He unleashed the young Pompey (whom later was possibly dubbed Magnus "the Great", somewhat sarcastically by Sulla), on the countryside and any remaining opposition. By 81 BC, Pompey captured and executed

Carbo and the son-in-law of Cinna, Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus. He then brought Africa under the control of Sulla and the resistance was over. Sulla was now the undisputed ruler of Rome.

Sulla the Dictator

Sulla took control of Rome in late 82 and early 81 BC after victories in the civil war of his own making, and those of his chief legate Pompeius Magnus. With the army at his back, the Senate was forced to ignore the constitution and proclaim Sulla as Dictator of Rome for an indefinite period of time. The dictatorship, under constitutional law, was an office designed for extreme emergencies (generally military) with the intention of a 6 month term. Sulla not only butchered the constitution through various reforms he would make, but also focused his power on the leading members of the Roman ruling classes.

The new dictator introduced a judicial process called the proscription. Essentially this new concept was an open publication listing names of people he deemed to be undesirable. A reign of terror ensued with rewards offered for the death or capture of any name on the list. At first the proscriptions (including confiscation of property and not always involving physical harm) were mainly focused on Sulla's direct enemies and supporters, but eventually the death toll would reach epidemic proportions. In the first series alone, as many as 40 senators and 1,600 members of the equestrian class were murdered. Before long, in order to exact extreme control the list grew exponentially. There was simply no place to hide or run. People taking refuge in the temples were murdered; others were lynched by the Roman mob. An intricate network of spies kept Sulla informed and at his whim, tracked down anyone who might be considered an enemy of the state.

One member of the proscription lists who managed to survive was Gaius Julius Caesar. The husband of Cinna's (Sulla's rival) daughter and the nephew of Gaius Marius, he was most assuredly a top candidate for death. He managed to escape Rome prior to capture, but a delegation of Caesar's supporters made an influence on Sulla. He allowed Caesar to live in exchange for divorcing his wife, but Caesar defiantly refused. Lucky to find himself alive at all, Sulla only confiscated his wife's dowry. Sulla apparently was reluctant to let the ambitious young man live, commenting that he saw "many Mariuses" in his nature. For reasons not completely clear, Sulla did let Caesar live though and his prediction was later proven quite true.

In the midst of instituting his own form of the constitution, Sulla's power grab did little to curb corruption. The payment of large bounties to bringing in 'disloyal' Romans, and confiscation of properties certainly enriched the treasury, but it also lined the pockets of many Sullan supporters. Among these were Marcus Crassus, who it was alleged, helped build his vast fortune through the proscriptions. Others, like the young orator Marcus Tullius Cicero made names for themselves in Sulla's courts. The cases were fast and furious, and Cicero began to groom himself as the world's foremost lawyer and politician during Sulla's dictatorship.

Taking control through murder and confiscation, Sulla next focused on the laws of the state. He began his reform of the constitution in order to bring power back the Senate and away from the Tribunes. Oddly enough, after killing so many members of the senate, he became its champion. The powers of the tribunes, including veto rights, were virtually abolished. New legislation could not even be introduced without the approval of the Senate. The roles of the Senate were doubled to 600, placing powerful equestrians in the empty seats. This was more important than it may seem at first glance. As senators were limited to restrictive business opportunities, equestrians filled the gap by running powerful business empires. By moving these equestrians into the Senate, and forcing similar restrictions on them, these leaders no longer found it practical to support the popular politics of the day (and largely in contrast to the conservative Senate group) that made their businesses more lucrative.

New entries into the Senate after Sulla's reforms were also required to serve in the traditional magistrate position of quaestor before admittance into the Senate. Forcing senators to have some experience along the political path (or *cursus honorum*) to begin their careers also helped quell incredible and sudden rises to power by young ambitious populares. Additionally, he quelled this danger by introducing a law requiring at least a two year gap between holding an office and being elected for the next higher one. Also from this point on, office holders would be required to hold successive offices in the *Cursus Honorum* before being elected to the next higher one. Tribunes were further penalized to prevent Patricians from switching parties so to speak. As such, a law was passed that prevented any office holder of the Tribune of the Plebes from ever holding a higher political office in the mainstream Senatorial path (such as Consul).

The courts were also reformed, each court being assigned one of seven different types of cases. The seven types of cases were: murder and poisoning, forgery, electoral bribery, peculation (theft), assault, extortion and treason. The senate was also required to sit all cases and the equestrian class was excluded from judging cases, clearly putting the control of the courts back into the hands of the traditional familial oligarchy that was the Senate.

Sulla didn't quite abide by his own constitutional law (waiting ten years between major magistracies) when in 80 BC he forced through his own election as Consul (first was in 78 BC) and continued his policies of reform (including the settling of his veterans on confiscated lands). By the next year though, Sulla had either tired of the political life, or felt that he accomplished all that he could. In 79 BC he retired to a country villa with the intention of writing his memoirs. Before he left Rome however, Sulla confirmed long standing rumors about his own sexual behavior to a shocked audience. He announced that Metrobius, a famous actor, had been his lifetime lover. As he left Rome, he was accompanied by a large contingent of actors, dancers and prostitutes in a final act of disdain. His memoirs, which he would finish over the next year, while they have not survived, did prove a valuable resource to later Roman writers (Plutarch and Appian in particular). Sulla died shortly after, in 78 BC, opening the Roman political system to a new and even more dangerous wave of power grabs.

Decline of the Republic

After the death of Sulla in 78 BC, additional and expected power grabs were the result. Unpopular while he was still alive, Sulla's reforms went under immediate attack without fear of reprisal. Political turmoil was once again the call of the day and various personalities emerged from the restraints of Sulla's power. Among these leading men were his former supporters such as M. Aemilius Lepidus, Q. Lutatius Catulus and Marcus Licinius Crassus. Other men who opposed Sulla, such as Sertorius in Spain figured prominently as well. Two men however, rose above them all. Marcus Tullius Cicero rose to prominence by becoming arguably the most gifted orator and lawyer (along with respectable political skills) in the history of the world, while another, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, stood above them all as the leading military personality before Caesar.

Q. Lutatius Catulus and M. Aemilius Lepidus were elected Consuls for 78 BC and both men were staunch Sulla supporters. At first it seemed that they would maintain the status quo regarding the constitutional reforms. This was not to be the case, however, at least as it pertained to Lepidus. Almost immediately after Sulla's death, Lepidus strongly opposed the reforms and began working to overturn them, and the two Consuls maintained an unhealthy animosity towards each other. He quickly supported the reinstatement of Tribunal powers as well as several other anti-Sullan moves. Among his proposals was a new grain law benefiting the populous, the restoration of exiles and confiscated properties, cancellation of land grants to Sulla's supporters and various acts introduced by Sulla during the civil war. All of these concepts, while popular with the masses, were opposed by Catulus and the hard line optimates.

Within a year, the matter devolved into civil war once again. Lepidus, who had been given Cisalpine Gaul as his pro-Consular province had a strong and loyal clientele base there already. He used his popular agenda to ignite a revolt in Etruria (a heavily victimized area of Sulla's land grants) and gathered many of Sulla's enemies to his cause. At Faesulae in 78 BC, Lepidus' supporters attacked a colony of Sullan settlers and the Senate was forced to act. The *senatus consultum ultimum* was passed once again, charging Catulus with suppressing Lepidus.

As Lepidus began to gather strength in Etruria for an impending march on Rome, Catulus commissioned Pompey with attacking Lepidus' power base in Gaul. Pompey moved north to face Lepidus' legate Brutus, and the issue was quickly resolved. Brutus was likely betrayed by his own army and given over to Pompey without a fight. Pompey, as he often did while serving Sulla, had Brutus killed for his involvement. When news reached Lepidus, he knew his cause, or perhaps his support was lost, and he gave up plans for marching on Rome. He fled to Sardinia with his forces, where he died shortly after of natural causes. This was not the end of the affair, however. While the situation in Italy was under control, M. Perperna Veiento, a Lepidus' supporter, took what remained of the forces in Sardinia to Spain. There he joined with the rebellion of Sertorius, who had been there in opposition to Sulla for several years already.

Sertorius and Spain (Hispania)

From the time of Sulla's victory in the civil war through to his death, one member of the Marian faction managed to hold on and resist. A member of Cinna's opposition government in the late 80's BC, Quintus Sertorius served as a praetor in 83 BC and was active with Scipio Asiagenus and Norbanus against Sulla in the civil war. Prior to Sulla's victory however, Sertorius was fortunate enough to be appointed as governor of Hispania in late 83 BC. He was able to leave Rome, and avoid Sulla's proscriptions, taking his post by 82 BC.

Sertorius used his distance from Rome, as well as the turmoil that plagued the political system, to begin the concept of an alternative Republic. An obvious opponent to Sulla's plans, the dictator wasted little time in going after him. An army was sent in 81 BC to depose the governor of Hispania, and he prepared to meet it with his mostly Spanish natives. A legate set to meet the Sullan army in the Pyrenees was murdered, however, and Sulla's men took control of Hispania. Sertorius, outnumbered and outclassed, fled to Mauretania in North West Africa to avoid proscription.

His self imposed exile wouldn't last long however. Within the next year, 80 BC, the large and formidable Lusitani tribe had had enough of rule by Sulla's legates. They prompted Sertorius to return to Spain, with the promise of support against his enemies in Rome. He immediately won two victories over the Roman forces, and set himself up in a position of relative security. At some point after his return, along with a great number of Romans who had been victims of Sulla's confiscations or proscription lists, he proceeded to set up Spain as a mirror of Rome. Arranging his own Senate of 300 men, along with all the appropriate elections of quaestors and praetors, Spain quickly turned into a welcome destination for opponents of the Sullan regime.

With a limited number of actual Roman legionaries, Sertorius turned to his Hispania allies for defense of the new Republic. Large numbers of recruits were gathered and trained in the Roman style. These recruits pledged loyalty directly to Sertorius, rather than the government, as this was the custom in the native tribes. Sons of tribal leaders were brought to the capital to serve both as hostages against revolts, but also to receive formal Roman educations. He adopted a white fawn, keeping it with him as a pet, as the natives believed this to be a token of favor from the gods. He played brilliantly upon the Celt and Iberian cultures in order to ingratiate himself with them. Ultimately, the success of this fledgling 'Spanish' state depended entirely on the success and

charisma of Sertorius, but it started with much promise. If nothing else, despite his opposition to the Sullan government in Rome, his measures in Hispania went a long way towards romanizing the native tribes.

By 80 BC, the Senate was forced to take action. Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius, another Sullan general, was commissioned to end the rebellion in Hispania. 79 BC, however, didn't go Metellus' way at all. Sertorius was a brilliant commander and knew how to use his Spanish troops effectively against Roman tactics. Despite their Roman training, his tribal forces were used in a guerrilla fashion, disrupting and irritating the enemy where possible, and avoiding major confrontation on open land except where unavoidable. Using these tactics, Sertorius inflicted 3 major defeats on Metellus in the year 79 BC alone.

Back in Rome, news of the defeats was compounded with more internal problems. Pompey had refused to disband his army after his victory over Lepidus, and matters were looking more and more like a repeat of previous holds on power through military force. Pompey, however, wasn't interested in power within the city. He wanted the command in Spain and used the threat of his veteran legions to get it. Despite the fact that it was technically illegal for Pompey to hold a command in the first place, pro consul L. Marcius Philippus finally proposed for Pompey to have the command. In a time of massive ignoring or blatant disregard for the constitution, it was no surprise that in order to avoid a military confrontation; the command was given to Pompey. Before Pompey's arrival however, Sertorius was reinforced by the remains of Lepidus army, under Perperna, in Sardinia. His additions made Sertorius even more of a formidable foe.

Pompey in Spain (Hispania)

Pompey joined Metellus in Hispania in 76 BC. While arriving with many expectations, Pompey would prove himself to be more effective than Metellus was. Perhaps it was Sertorius, and not Pompey who was really the pre-eminent commander of the day. From the moment Pompey crossed the Pyrenees, he was harassed and outmaneuvered by Sertorius at every attempt. The year 76 BC was a disaster for the joint commanders and they were forced to withdraw.

The next two campaign seasons resulted in more of the same for Rome's supposed greatest commander, Pompey. Both he and Metellus were repulsed in open attacks, sieges failed, and harassed at every turn by Sertorius' Spaniards. Sertorius' fame and glory grew, and with it his ego. This alone seemed to be the only thing able to stop him, as Pompey proved inept in the overall campaign.

By 73 BC, in the face of Sertorius' mounting successes and growing ego, the wheels started to fall off. Sertorius treated with Cilician Pirates, rebellious slaves in Sicily and even one of Rome's great enemies, Mithridates. Sertorius' chief legate Perperna, along with other supporters were growing concerned over the direction of the Spanish Republic. Jealousy certainly played a major role, but fear of Sertorius' changing behaviour must have had an impact. By this time, he had developed an almost tyrannical control and his supporters were certainly threatened by this power. A conspiracy was developed, led by Perperna, and Sertorius was assassinated at a feast. Perperna assumed command of the formidable forces, but without Sertorius' charisma the rebellion began to unravel. Pompey finally delivered as a promised and put an end to the war. Perperna's army was lured into a trap and decisively defeated.

Despite never beating Sertorius, Pompey would eventually earn a triumph for the victory. It may not have been deserved for his performance in combat, but he proved himself a formidable administrator. Perperna was captured, and initially offered Pompey volumes of information that would implicate leading people in Rome sympathetic towards or directly involved with Sertorius. Pompey, not only didn't look at the documents, but wisely had them destroyed to prevent further

danger of rebellion. Perperna and those senior members of his staff were also executed to prevent any further damage.

In 71 BC, Pompey earned his reputation as a genius in provincial governing. He effectively cleaned up any loose pockets of resistance, and promoted fair and generous terms to native tribes through Spain and southern Gaul. With matters mostly secure in Hispania, Pompey returned to Rome the victor, just as Spartacus, the Thracian gladiator, was running rampant through Italy.

Marcus Licinius Crassus

Marcus Licinius Crassus (115 - 53 BC) was the son of a Censor and of a prestigious Plebeian family. While of the highest order of equestrian social standing, the Crassus family was of modest wealth, comparable to others of the same order. The family sided with the Optimates, and Sulla, in opposition to Marius and Cinna. This political turn of events was not only a dangerous set of circumstances for Crassus, but also his opportunity for fame and fortune.

While in his late 20's, in 87 BC, Marius and Cinna took control of Rome while Sulla was fighting the Mithridatic War. In the bloodbath that followed, the Crassus family was at the top of the list of targets. His father and one of his brothers were both killed, while he managed to escape with a small party to Spain. His father had served as Praetor and established a small client base there. One such client, Vibius Pacacius hid Crassus in a cave on his property for as long as eight months. Provided with food and daily needs through Pacacius' slaves, Crassus was able to wait out the Consulships of Cinna.

When Cinna died in 83 BC, and Sulla prepared to march on Rome, for the second time, Crassus eagerly prepared to join him. He personally raised a small force of 2,500 men and marched to Italy to join Sulla. At the Battle of the Colline Gate, Crassus was pivotal in turning the tide for Sulla, but favoritism showed towards Pompey began a life long rivalry between the two men. While Crassus built a solid reputation as a soldier, Pompey was dubbed with the title Magnus (the Great) and was a personal favorite of Sulla.

After Sulla took power in Rome his supporters fed on the opportunities provided by his policy of proscription and confiscation. None of these men took more advantage than Crassus. He bought up land and properties of the condemned at cheap prices and made a fortune in mining and slave trading. He maintained his own private force of slaves which he used as a fire-fighting brigade. However, his real intention was not providing a public service, but bargaining people into selling property cheaply. His troop would arrive at the scene of a burning building, and Crassus would bargain with the owner to buy the property. The longer the owner resisted, the longer Crassus would lower the price and let the property burn on. At times when an owner refused to sell, his slaves would let the property burn completely to the ground. While Crassus would eventually make himself the richest man in Rome through these less than the ethical methods, Pompey established himself as Rome's premier general.

Unable to match Pompey in sheer military capability, Crassus instead focused on pure politics. He followed the *cursus honorum* to the letter of the law and built a strong client base through good random acts of kindness. From influencing the courts to providing personal loans or support for political campaigns, Crassus built a powerful following. By the time Pompey was deeply embroiled with the formidable Sertorius in Spain, Crassus had himself elected as Praetor. Social conditions were deteriorating again with the slave population and Crassus was at the right place at the right time. As the Third Servile War, or Spartacus Slave Rebellion, broke out, Crassus was in prime position to increase his power base.

Spartacus

By the 1st century BC, the gladiatorial games were becoming more and more common as a form of entertainment (and mob distraction). As the political system of the Republic unraveled in the late to mid 1st century, hosting gladiator games was a near essential way for politicians to gain enough popularity for election. With the mass influx of slaves from provincial conquests, the numbers of these combatants soared. It was typical for large schools to house many gladiators either in training or for permanent residence. One such school in Capua became the scene of one of the most potent slave revolts in history.

Spartacus was one of the residents of Capua in 73 BC. He was originally speculated by the historian Appian to be a free born Thracian who had served as a Roman auxiliary. There are some who suggest he even may have been a citizen legionary but this seems unlikely. It may be that he was sold into slavery as punishment for desertion from his unit. Another possibility was that he was a native Thracian fighting against the Roman invaders and made a slave after having been defeated in battle. Regardless, according to Plutarch, he was purchased by a Lentulus Batiatus, the owner of a gladiatorial school. As a soldier, Spartacus would've possessed several traits making him desirable for gladiatorial combat.

Despite the popular conceptions of Spartacus as some sort of anti slavery hero, the reasons for the revolt of 73 BC are unclear. All that is known is that he, a Gallic and Germanic slave, Crixus and Oenomaus, led a revolt of the entire school. 74 gladiators seized kitchen knives and tools and broke free, killing the guards to win their freedom and gathering weapons and armor from the school stores. They set out immediately looting whatever they could from the local countryside and their reputation spread quickly. Farm and heavy labor slaves from all over the region abandoned their own masters and joined the rebel band. Within a short time, Spartacus' army of slaves seized Mt. Vesuvius and their numbers swelled into the tens of thousands.

The rebels plundered the surrounding areas and the spoils were equally divided among the participants. Encouraged by this early success, more slaves, freedmen and the disenfranchised joined the ranks. Rome responded slowly and inadequately, by sending a small and lightly trained force to deal with the gladiator problem. Two praetors, Varinius Glaber and Publius Valerius hastily recruited small units from local conscripts and didn't bother with proper training or equipment. To the Romans, Spartacus and his rebels were nothing more than an armed mob that could be easily put down by any show of force. No real concern was taken over their presence on Vesuvius.

When Glaber and Valerius approached, Spartacus duped the Romans and showed excellent military strategy. The Romans thought the rebels were trapped and were willing to hold them there without forcing the issue. Spartacus and his men scaled down the opposite side of the mountain, swept around and crushed the Roman Praetorian forces with ease. With the victory, hope for freedom and desire for plunder spread all over Italy. People by the thousands flocked once more to Spartacus. By the time of their next encounter with Roman troops, he had over 70,000 under his command.

Spartacus apparently wanted to lead his men across the Alps and out of Italy to avoid future confrontation. His subordinate, Crixus, encouraged by their victories, wished to stay and continue raiding, and the forces split into separate commands. Spartacus would spend the winter in Thurii, preparing weapons and armor, and gathering supplies for the coming Roman advances. The Senate wisely realized that this rebellion was not just a mere collection of fugitive slaves, but a fairly cohesive unit, inspired by freedom and the chance for plunder. In the coming year of 72 BC, the senate recognized Spartacus' rebellion as the 'Third Servile War' and prepared Consular armies to end it.

Third Servile War

At the start of 72 BC, the formidable slave army of Spartacus split into two forces. His part began the long march north to cross the Alps into freedom. Crixus, the commander of the second part of the army, stupidly failed to realize that the small victories they enjoyed were against under prepared and disinterested opponents. He stayed in southern Italy looting and pillaging to their hearts' content. After Spartacus and Crixus defeated the hastily recruited praetorian forces in 73 BC, however, the Senate reacted with a bit more enthusiasm.

Two Consular armies and perhaps additional lesser forces were dispatched to deal with what was becoming a real threat. One force, under either the Consul Gellius or Q. Arrius the newly appointed governor of Sicily en route to his province, met up with Crixus at Mt. Garganus. With 3,000 Germanics split from the main force of Spartacus, Crixus and his small army were rounded up and utterly destroyed.

Spartacus meanwhile was moving north, apparently with the intention of crossing the Alps into non-Roman territory. One Consul, Gneaus Cornelius Lentulus barred the gladiator's path while Gellius pursued. Hoping to crush Spartacus between them, the plan seemed to be working. Spartacus had little choice but to continue marching right into Lentulus, and did so with spectacular results. First Spartacus defeated Lentulus, then turned and did the same to Gellius in turn. Continuing to march north, the slave army then met with the Proconsular governor of Cisalpine Gaul, Cassius Longinus. Once again Spartacus and his misfit army turned out the victor. In retaliation for the death of Crixus, and perhaps for his own tenure as a Roman slave, Spartacus had 300 pairs of Roman prisoners fight as gladiators to the death. Clearly Spartacus, as has been popularly depicted, had no concern over the state of slavery or the gladiator games in the Roman world. He simply wished freedom for himself and any who joined him, not the complete social reform of the Roman system.

The very successes of their army against Roman legions may have been their undoing. Spartacus wished to continue north to relative freedom from Roman interference, but victories, with the confidence and plunder they provided, had a powerful effect. Many of the Germanics and Gauls wished to stay in Italy and reap the rewards of their success. Rather than escape himself with a smaller army, Spartacus, either with visions of grandeur himself, or feeding off the power of a large force, next turned south. Some have suggested Rome itself was the target, but a rendezvous with Cilician pirates seems a more likely course. If they would not cross the Alps, his army may have been willing to cross to Sicily or even Africa as an alternative.

Nevertheless, Spartacus and his army that had swelled to 120,000 men did move south. In the mountains near Thurii, they set up camp and gained much supply from local trade and plunder from raids. Equipping themselves into an appropriate military force, the slave army had grown from a minor nuisance to a formidable and legitimate power. The Senate, now facing this power, as it easily won victory after victory, looked to an experienced commander to deal with the threat. The current Consular commanders were withdrawn and the Proprætor Marcus Licinius Crassus was appointed to the special command. Crassus took command with 6 new legions and the four remaining veteran legions, making it quite apparent that Spartacus was considered a serious threat.

Defeat of Spartacus

With M. Licinius Crassus in command, the tide was about to turn in the Romans favor. Initially, an over eager subordinate of Crassus led an attack on Spartacus that failed miserably. In this defeat several Romans fled the battle in the face of the gladiator army. In order to put an end to the terrible performance of the legions against Spartacus, Crassus ordered the seldom used penalty

of decimation as punishment. In decimation, one of every ten men is beaten to death by their own fellow legionaries. While ancient reports are conflicting, at least one full cohort was subjected to decimation, or possibly his entire force. Whether those put to death numbered around 50 men or 4,000 is in dispute, but there was no question among legionaries that Crassus was not a man to accept defeat with grace.

Crassus then moved his entire body against a detached segment of Spartacus' forces. With a full compliment of legionaries, Crassus wiped out 10,000 of the rebel slaves and moved against the main enemy body. Spartacus fled to Rhegium, across the straits from Sicily, with the hope of securing passage to the island, but was never able to secure passage with Cilician pirates. Crassus pursued and built an extensive length of earthworks across the entire toe of Italy, trying to hem Spartacus in. At first Crassus was successful in trapping the slave army in, but the Senate viewed this as a demoralizing siege against an inferior foe. The great general Pompey was just returning from Spain, and they offered him an additional command to put an end to Spartacus once and for all.

Crassus was eager to achieve the victory himself and avoid sharing anything with his successful rival. He stepped up the pressure on Spartacus until he finally had little choice but to attempt a breakout. Unable to secure the passage to Sicily that he coveted, a breakout against the siege was ordered. While they did manage to escape, Spartacus lost a tenth of his army, or nearly 12,000 men. Free from Crassus' siege, Spartacus moved towards Brundisium, in the heel of Italy, where he still hoped to secure escape by sea.

The Romans were closing in, however, and an escape to Brundisium would never happen. Marcus Licinius Lucullus, fresh from a victory over Mithridates in the east, landed there with a full compliment of legionaries. Spartacus had little choice but to face his pursuers. Facing a full Roman army in open battle, especially one under adequate command, was something Spartacus tried to avoid, but in 71 BC, the slave army and the Romans met near Brundisium. In the battle the inspired Romans dominated the slaves, and they were cut down in huge numbers. By the end, Spartacus himself was wounded and likely killed (his body was never found). Crassus swept survivors and stragglers out of the surrounding countryside by the thousands, and prepared a horrific, if not intimidating punishment. Up to 6,000 rebellious slaves were spaced out along the Appian Way, from Rome to Capua. Here they were crucified and left to rot as a reminder to all future potentials rebellions.

Pompey meanwhile had moved into Italy with his legions from Hispania. He swept out any remaining resistance and claimed final victory in the war. Pompey enjoyed a triumph for his 'victory' in Hispania, while Crassus was given the lesser honor of an ovation for his victory over mere slaves. The incident was an additional thorn in the side of a growing rivalry between Crassus and Pompey. As the rivals stood on Rome's door step with full armies, both were elected Consul for 70 BC, despite Pompey's youth and lack of previous offices. Despite their rivalry, both men seemingly worked well enough together to repeal many of Sulla's unpopular laws. Pompey would soon be commissioned for further exploits in the east while Crassus would remain in Rome to continue amassing his fortune and influencing the politics of the 60's BC.

Trouble in the East

After Crassus' victory over Spartacus and Pompey's triumphant return from Spain, both men were elected Consul for 70 BC. While both men had little affinity for the other, they made a public reconciliation to ease fears of further civil wars. In office, they often opposed each other on legislation efforts, but the relationship was at least maintained civilly. Both had various agendas for their Consular terms; Pompey strived for the settlement of his veterans in particular, but neither accomplished much of great importance. Though various unpopular laws of Sulla were reversed,

including the restoration of the Tribunal veto, true political power for them wouldn't come until a decade later.

For the time being, however, events were unfolding in the east that would soon require the attention of Pompey. In the late 70's BC, war with Mithridates erupted once again, and would last several years. The region of Cyrenaica, under client status, required organization as a province, and the activities of Cilician pirates throughout the Mediterranean was a growing problem that needed attention.

In 96 BC the king of Cyrene, Apion, willed his kingdom to Rome. Lacking enough proper magistrates, however, the Senate allowed a self rule among the various city states including Cyrene rather than establishing an official province. By 74 BC though, the various Greek cities of the area were under heavy pressure from Libyan natives and the situation was dire. Despite Sulla's creation of additional magistrates, there was still a lack of potential officials to take control and a low ranking Quaestor had to be sent. Despite this, the territory was secured and administered into an official province with little difficulty.

Cilician pirates, on the other hand, had been a long and continuing nuisance for Rome. In 102 BC, Marcus Antonius (grandfather of Marc Antony) was sent to deal with the pirates off the coast of Asia Minor. 25 years later, the efforts of Antonius had little effect. Servilius Vatia operated against the pirate between 78 and 75 BC, but despite his victories, and triumphant reward of the title Isauricus, little was really done to end the pirate threat. By 74 BC, the son of the first Antonius (father of Marc Antony) was granted the appointment of Imperium Infinitum throughout the Mediterranean. With this new command, he was granted authority of operation throughout the entire sea, regardless of provincial authorities. He did much to reduce the pirate threat, but by the time of Pompey, they were still raiding the Italian coast. Quintus Caecilius Metellus was sent to Crete to put an end to Roman resistance there, and managed to do so with the authority of Pompey. By 66 BC, Crete was delivered as a Roman province and Metellus was granted the title of Creticus. Pompey would then go a long way to eradicate piracy during his eastern campaigns.

In 74 BC, King Nicomedes of Bithynia died and willed his kingdom to Rome. Mithridates, however, desired the territory for his own expansionist ideas, and Roman acceptance of the will would clearly lead to war. In 73 BC, M. Aurelius Cotta was appointed to establish Bithynia as a province and L. Licinius Lucullus was given Cilicia as an additional counter measure to Mithridates. Soon after Cotta's arrival, and the official designation of Roman authority, Mithridates invaded Bithynia. With Cotta under siege, Lucullus marched north to help, and it wasn't long before Mithridates was forced to withdraw. Cotta then besieged towns loyal to Mithridates and eventually returned to Rome after a successful outcome in 71 BC.

Lucullus had success as well, destroying a Mithridatic army near Cabira. Mithridates retreated to Armenia, where his son-in-law Tigranes ruled. After forcing Roman authority on remaining resistance to his rear including Pontus, Lucullus was ready to pursue Mithridates by 70 BC. At first things went well for the Romans, but over the next three years, the tide of the war went back and forth. Lucullus was unable to complete his conquests in Armenia and Mithridates took back Pontus in the interim. By 67 BC, Lucullus army was in a state of mutiny and his chances for glory had come to an end with little to show for it. A law passed by the Tribune A. Gabinius effectively stripped Lucullus of his command and gave it to one of the current consuls, M. Acilius Glabrio.

Pompey the Great (106 - 47 BC)

As discussed in previous chapters Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great) was born in 106 BC in the northern Italian town of Picenum. Though not a native Roman family, the Pompeys were moderately successful at making inroads into Senate seats. His father, Pompey Strabo, was

elected consul in 89 BC, and was an accomplished general who served Rome in the Marsic Social War, as well as the civil wars of Marius and Sulla. By the age of 17, Pompey was an active participant in his father's campaigns and was busily building a foundation for his own military career.

Pompey rose to prominence serving Sulla in the first major Roman civil war, defeating the forces of Marius in Africa. For this he earned, or was mocked with, the title Magnus (the Great). Involved only a short time in Roman civil affairs, Pompey quickly learned the political power of an army behind him. After Sulla, and despite having no experience as a Roman magistrate, he coerced a command in Spain against the rebel Sertorius, simply through the fear of his legions. While the war was not exactly a clear cut victory for Pompey, the opposing army was only defeated after Sertorius was murdered, Pompey returned to Rome in triumph.

Upon returning from Spain, Pompey helped mop up the war with the Gladiator general Spartacus, claiming much of the credit in the process. He and M. Licinius Crassus, who conducted the bulk of the operation against Spartacus, built a dangerous rivalry in the process. In order to avoid more potential civil disorder, as both men maintained considerable armies, both were elected as Consul for the year 70 BC. In their joint consulship, the two worked together repealing the bulk of Sulla's constitutional reforms, but otherwise had little use for one another.

Regardless, Pompey enjoyed considerable favoritism among the masses, as well as the army. Despite fears of a new Sullan military dictatorship, as the Senatorial class deeply distrusted Pompey, he received numerous special powers in his career. Perhaps to appease a man who was in a position to possibly march on Rome, or to truly honor a capable general with the best chance of Roman victory, the Senate reluctantly tolerated Pompey. Both during and after Pompey's consulship, problems in the east were persistent. Piracy and Rome's old enemy, Mithridates, continued to stir up trouble, and the command of L. Licinius Lucullus against him garnered little success. By 67 BC, the Senate, and the people had had enough, and new initiatives were launched. First, the tribune A. Gabinius passed a law transferring command of the Mithridatic campaign to the current Consul Glabrio. Pompey was also granted unparalleled authority in defeating the Cilician pirates who ravaged shipping throughout the Mediterranean. Pompey's command would go so well, in fact, that by the time Glabrio took his post against Mithridates, another tribune, C. Manilius was proposing more changes.

In 66 BC, despite fierce Senatorial Optimate opposition, the Lex Manilia was passed granting Pompey unlimited power in the eastern territories. Ironically enough, it was the oration of the life long Republican defender Marcus Tullius Cicero, which pushed the proposal into law.

Pompey and the Cilician Pirates

Before the appointment of Pompey to the command against the Cilicians, wheat and other import prices were skyrocketing. Fears over captured or waylaid shipments were legitimate concerns. Upon passage of the law granting Pompey extraordinary powers, the prices immediately stabilized. The people of Rome had great faith in their favorite general to end the foreign threat.

Pompey arrived in his territorial command late in 67 BC with a large contingent of ships. His fleet was so large he was able to split the command between 13 naval legates responsible for various sections of the Mediterranean. 60 ships remained under his direct command, which he used as a mobile task force to flush out pirate activity and drive them into the territorial fleets of his commanders. Within 3 months, pirate activity on the western Mediterranean was virtually wiped out, and limited to the far east.

With the sea secured Pompey turned inland towards Cilicia. Quickly and with little resistance, the pirate bases and defenses were eliminated. Those former pirates who remained were moved further inland and offered life as farmers to give them an alternative opportunity away from piracy. Within three months, Pompey had delivered on his promises and secured Roman waters from piracy threats. In fact, the biggest threats on the Mediterranean after Pompey, were rival Roman forces in the civil wars that would follow.

While Pompey's victory was glorious at the time, the work of his predecessors must be acknowledged. Publius Servilius Vatia, who commanded a similar operation from 78 to 75 BC, did much to limit piracy to particular areas. The inland pirate retreats were threatened by the activities of Lucullus in the Mithridatic War. By the time Pompey arrived, the stage was set for an easy victory, yet, he was the one to accomplish it.

Pompey was now free to broaden his operations, with the piracy issue settled so quickly. The Tribune C. Manilius next proposed that Pompey take over the entire eastern campaign. Before the current commander, Glabrio could even get started, Pompey was granted Imperium to command the entire east, and took over. In 66 BC, the final show down with Mithridates was to begin.

Third Mithridatic War

The third Roman war against Mithridates VI, King of Pontus, was really a continuation of the second. Lucullus, the Roman legate in charge of carrying out the war effort, was semi-successful, but ultimately unable to win a final victory. By 67 BC, he had been replaced by the Consul Glabrio, through the efforts of the tribune Gabinius.

Glabrio however, would never take part in this command other than to prepare the legions for his replacement, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus. After Pompey's successful campaign against the Cilician pirates, the Tribune C. Manilius proposed and passed an all encompassing law granting Pompey ultimate authority, and command, in the east.

In 66 BC, Pompey moved to Asia Minor and took control. Though Glabrio and Lucullus were still there, it was Pompey who had ultimate authority. With 8 mostly veteran legions, Pompey marched north east from Asia into Bithynia and farther east into Pontus. Mithridates had vast wealth from his own campaigns at his disposal, but many years of continuous war had taken its toll. Recruitment of local troops was limited, and mercenaries simply weren't available in the numbers he needed. By the time Pompey arrived in Pontus, Mithridates was outnumbered against the Romans for likely the first time. He made a desperate attempt to stop Pompey's advance in what would turn out to be his last battle of importance.

Near the town of Dastira, the two armies met in a fateful battle where Pompey's legions crushed Mithridates. He was forced to abandon his kingdom and Pompey would later establish the city of Nicopolis (Victory City) on the site in commemoration. With a small remaining force, Mithridates, the greatest enemy of Rome since Hannibal, fled east to Armenia. King Tigranes, his son-in law and ally, realized that Mithridates had fought his last fight against Rome, and turned him away. He next fled north to Colchis, then Crimea, where he would spend the next few years trying to assert his influence. Unable to ever really regain his former strength, and losing authority to one of many sons, he eventually took his own life in 62 BC.

Instead of pursuing Mithridates directly, Pompey next took on the challenge of bringing the entire eastern world into the Roman fold. He moved on to Armenia where he met with Tigranes. The King of Armenia immediately bowed to Roman power and surrendered his crown to Pompey, but he was restored to the throne and established as a client state. Tigranes and the Armenians would prove a vital ally in checking power of the neighboring Parthians. Pushing farther east and

north, into the Caucasus mountains and beyond to the Caspian Sea, Pompey established friendly relations with the natives there. Though the intention was not conquest, this campaign was another vital step in securing allies against the Parthians. The natives of the Caucasus region would never display any serious enmity towards Rome and often were supportive during various eastern campaigns.

Pompey in the East

Pompey returned from his forays into the far east by 64 BC. Back in Pontus, he began the process of organizing the newly won territories into provinces. Cilicia had already officially been made a province after his campaign against the pirates in 66 BC, and Pompey would continue his remarkable skills as an administrator in the additional conquered lands. Bithynia and Pontus was established as another formal province in 64 BC and Pompey masterfully used existing Greek authorities to bring the people peacefully under control.

Satisfied with the results in Pontus, Pompey moved south to Syria in late 64 BC. Syria was still technically a part of the old Seleucid Dynasty, descendants of the old Roman enemy Antiochus III. However, for the previous 60 years, the throne of the Seleucids was in utter chaos. Rivals all over the territory controlled various cities and chaos reigned supreme. The vast wealth of the region was a tempting target for the Parthians and neighboring Arabians, and Pompey wanted to stabilize it for Roman benefit. Syria was simply annexed as a Roman province with little regard for the opposing factions within. They were removed from power and Roman authority took control, as opposed to creating a client kingdom that would be unreliable at best. In so doing, Pompey not only added Syria, but created a buffer zone between potential eastern enemies, and other newly won territories in the area that now encompasses modern Turkey.

After settling affairs in Syria, the people of Judaea called upon Pompey for assistance in their own internal conflicts. The Jews had enjoyed nearly 2 centuries of independence from the Seleucids, but a power struggle that was leading to civil war threatened their stability. Two brothers, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, both vied for the Jewish throne and Pompey offered to play the mediator. Hyrcanus eventually received Pompey's endorsement, and Aristobulus apparently conceded, but his followers did not. While Pompey was conducting a minor campaign against the Nabataeans, the followers of Aristobulus seized the principal city of Jerusalem and refused to recognize Hyrcanus' authority. The Romans reacted swiftly and laid siege to the city. Within 3 months, Pompey took Jerusalem and put Hyrcanus on the Judaeian throne. While still independent, Hyrcanus now owed his crown to the Romans, and was established as a tribute paying client kingdom, much like Armenia.

This was not the end of Pompey's negotiations, however. Not long after establishing Tigranes as a client in Armenia, the Armenia sought to take advantage of his Roman support. In 64 BC Armenia invaded Parthian interests in Mesopotamia that could have had dire consequences in the region. Pompey could've supported the invasion and taken direct involvement against Parthia, but several exhaustive years on the move must have played a part. Instead, he negotiated peace between Armenia and Parthia, giving back most of Tigranes gains, but establishing peace in the region for at least another decade.

Pompey would return to Rome and celebrate his third and most glorious triumph in late 62 BC. The wealth brought with him was nearly incalculable with estimates ranging from 20,000 to 40,000 gold talents. The annual income to Rome nearly doubled as a result of both the war spoils and tribute from client states. Back in Rome though, there was much concern over Pompey's return, despite his great success. Pompey had nearly 45,000 men under his command and an incredible amount of wealth. The Senate feared another Sullan march and forced dictatorship. But Pompey was not the man to pose that sort of threat, he was happy to return with all the power and

grandeur of a conquering general. He assumed that his great success would ensure settlements for his men, and a position of prominence in the Senate. He found instead, upon returning home, that Rome had changed as much as the east had. New names had risen in his absence such as the young Gaius Julius Caesar, and Marcus Tullius Cicero, who would lay claim to the savior of Rome in Pompey's absence.

Marcus Tullius Cicero

Marcus Tullius Cicero was born in 106 BC, hailing from a local equestrian family in Arpinum. Both Cicero and Pompey, who became associates at a very young age, struggled to detach themselves from the Marian clan that held the foremost political position in the region. While both followed the footsteps of Marius to become *novus homo* (new men) in the Roman Senate, they did so in completely different fashions. Pompey, of course, chose the military route, paying little regard to the traditional steps of the political ladder (*cursus honorum*). Cicero, on the other hand, was the idyllic Republican politician. From the moment he arrived in Rome, his career was spent adhering to the courts of law and to strict principals of traditional Senatorial advancement.

As a boy, Cicero visited Rome and received the finest literary education that money could buy. In this time, he met and became the best of friends with another equestrian youth by name of Atticus. It is Atticus who was the recipient of numerous letters from Cicero, in which many have survived as an indispensable window into the final days of the Republic and Roman politics.

In the Social War of the 80's BC, the young Cicero was beginning to follow his career path. He served under Pompey's father, Pompeius Strabo, along with Pompey and his future enemy Catilina. Cicero quickly learned though that he wasn't suited to military affairs and chose instead to pursue his career as a lawyer, orator and politician. Despite convenient and likely beneficial connections to Marius and his supporters during the civil wars, Cicero avoided using these contacts to his advantage. He clearly sided against the populares party and stuck to an early path of conservative policy. However, conservative principals didn't necessarily push him to the extremes of the Sullan camp either. During the dictatorship of Sulla, Cicero first began to gain notoriety as an attorney and orator opposing Sulla's proscriptions. In 80 BC, in the midst of Sulla's supreme authority, Cicero defended one Sextus Roscius against proscription. Making his case tactfully and in such a manner as not to offend the dictator, Cicero made a lasting impression on Roman audiences.

By the 70's BC, Cicero returned to his educational pursuits. He studied rhetoric abroad in the east, of which he would eventually come to be considered as the penultimate master. Using his oration as a base, Cicero clawed and scratched his way to prominence as a new man in Roman society. Little opportunity was available for a man with so few family connections in the ancient world, while trying to break into the elite Senatorial circles. While some gained prominence through military achievement, Cicero traveled the road of lesser glory and forced his way through the sheer force of will and conviction. At a still considerably young age, he had grown into one of the most formidable defense attorneys in the Republic, and used the prestige and notoriety from this to continually gain position.

In 75 BC, Cicero ran for his first important office, the Quaestorship. Successfully winning election he was later assigned to Sicily to oversee the grain supply. The appointment provided a unique opportunity with potentially spectacular results. The previous governor, C. Verres, was detested by the local Sicilians and they asked Cicero to prosecute him on their behalf. Verres was heavily involved in various extortion schemes to rob Sicily while lining his own pockets at the expense of others. While gubernatorial excesses in their provinces were typical in the late Republic, Verres took matters to nearly indefensible extremes (included the illegal execution of a Roman citizen without trial). Even normally conservative Senators were outraged at the apparent crimes

committed. Cicero, while normally avoiding the potential enmity that a prosecution could create, agreed to take the case. In the prosecution speech Cicero so blistered and attacked Verres that the defendant went into self-exposed exile before the trial was even over.

After his term as quaestor Cicero continued his conventional rise through the Senate. While Pompey was in the east gaining new Roman territories, in which Cicero played a major role in advocating the legality of the command, he worked diligently to make inroads with Roman aristocracy. Despite his court successes, Cicero was still viewed as somewhat of an outsider and his advocating the disliked and distrusted Pompey didn't help. Even so, he had little trouble gaining election to each political office, successfully winning the Praetorship in 67 BC. Perhaps a bit of luck, or simply being the right man at the right time played a role, but regardless, Cicero was steadily rising.

Becoming Consul was the next and highest step available, and within 2 more years Cicero would achieve it. However, the political system of the late Republic may have been continuing to erode Cicero would find himself as a center target of a conspiracy against the Senate. His old acquaintance during the Social War, L. Sergius Catilina had already been embroiled in various scandals and his attempt at open rebellion was to become one of the most dangerous in the Republic's history. Whatever was necessary to gain power, Catilina was prepared to try. During the Catilinian Conspiracy, he and Cicero would come head to head in a battle for the Republic.

Cataline

Cicero's nemesis and a key political figure in the 60's BC was L. Sergius Catilina. Like Crassus, Cataline profited enormously from the proscriptions of Sulla's dictatorship, but Cataline was notorious for his brutality and unlawful methods. While a definite villain of the Late Republican period, he was also the victim of Cicero's eloquent attacks, which certainly did little to commend him either with his ancient peers or in modern review.

In 67 to 66 BC he served as the Propraetor governor of Africa and may have used his position to extort large sums of personal wealth. Upon his return to Rome, he sought the Consulship but accusations of provincial mismanagement and a general distrust barred his ability to run. In the year 65 BC, Cataline's efforts for the Consulship were blocked by impending trials for extortion, but massive bribery would eventually see his acquittal of the charges.

64 BC saw the election of Cicero as Consul. While Cicero, as a new man, wasn't overly popular with the Senatorial elite, he was a far better conservative alternative than the long line of corrupt individuals that sought the highest office. The choices for election in that year were Cicero, the despised Cataline, and his similar contemporary C. Antonius. To prevent a joint consulship with Cataline and Antonius, the Senate pushed Cicero forward along with Antonius to prevent the worst of three bad choices (in their opinion) from taking power.

During the Consulship of Cicero, he faced one early challenge of note. The agrarian bill of the tribune P. Servilius Rullus was intended to elect ten land commissioners with imperium. These commissioners would oversee all concerns with selling public land and distributions to veterans, with sweeping power. Cicero vehemently opposed the concept in light of the massive corruption of the time. Such positions would've undoubtedly been major sources of extortion and greed. The proposal was defeated in the plebeian assemblies, thanks in large part to Cicero's usual eloquent speeches. In a testament to his oratory skill and prestige, this was the first land reform bill that was ever defeated in a vote of the citizen assemblies.

For the year 62 BC, Cataline was again running for Consul and bribery was the operating standard of the day. Despite massive bribes, Cataline lost one again, however and certainly began to look

at other measures to gain power. Shortly after the elections, a bundle of sealed envelopes were delivered anonymously to Crassus addressed to several Senators. In opening the one addressed to him, Crassus found that the letters were warnings, telling certain individuals that an impending massacre of many Senators was about to take place. Crassus took the letters to Cicero and it was discovered that they all said the same thing. Cicero then addressed the Senate with the plot and he was authorized with a *tumultus*, or a military emergency, to find the writer and uncover the plot. While Cicero tried to place the blame on Cataline, the author was never found, and it was suggested that the entire concept may have been hatched by Cicero himself as an excuse to prosecute troublemakers.

Catiline Conspiracy

Regardless of the truth regarding Cataline's involvement in various plots, social conditions outside of Rome were again building a foundation for civil war. The great indebtedness of the Italians and other provincials was creating a situation ripe with potential disaster. In Etruria, a former Sullan centurion by name of C. Manlius was stirring up trouble by gathering weapons and recruits for a potential revolt. Cicero once again blamed Cataline, though there was no real evidence of his involvement. Cicero managed to convince the Senate of the danger and a *senatus consultum ultimum* was passed granting him extreme authority to deal with the threat.

Cataline, meanwhile, in order to thwart Cicero's attacks against him, organized a meeting of his supporters. In this meeting, while little real evidence existed, Cicero claimed that a plot to assassinate him was developed, as well as setting in motion the overthrow of the Senate. In a debate before the Senate, both men blistered each other in partially surviving speeches, but eventually Cataline volunteered to go into exile. While en route to his supposed destination of Massilia, however, Cataline instead joined with C. Manlius and his armed mob in Etruria.

While that move was suspicious enough regarding Cataline's various involvement in plots, another move by his supporters in Rome was even more damning. Representatives of the Gallic Allobroges tribe were in Rome discussing conditions relating to their own debt issues. The Roman conspirators sought to have the Gauls join in their rebellion, but the Gauls wanted little to do with it and word reached Cicero of the conspirator's proposition. P. Cornelius Lentulus Sura was forced to admit to his own participation in the plot and a great debate over the punishment ensued. Gaius Julius Caesar, the praetor elect at the time, argued against death which was the prominent choice of the Senators. He suggested that the plot of Sura was different than the reason Cicero was granted a *Senatus Consultum Ultimum*, and that the death penalty shouldn't apply. He, however, was overruled by the veracity of M. Porcius Cato, and several conspirators were sentenced to strangulation.

In Etruria, the short lived revolt never really got off the ground. With little assistance from neighboring Italians, or the Allobroges, the plot was doomed to failure. In 62 BC, a force under M. Petreius destroyed the armed mob of Cataline and Manlius, killing Cataline in the process, and the conspiracy was over.

Cicero was hailed as the 'father of his country' for saving Rome from another rebellion. Later, however, the death sentences of various Senators would eventually be a source of much resentment. It's important to note, that Cicero's action may have been far more motivated out of fear of Pompey, than the actual conspiracy. Just as Pompey was getting set to return from his eastern conquests, with veteran legions in tow, conditions in Rome were similar to that of the Marian and Sullan civil war. In order to stabilize the situation, and not give an excuse for Pompey to march on the city, Cicero likely pushed his agenda of dealing with the potential plots as quickly and severely as possible. He would eventually pay a price of his own for it, however. Within a few years, Cicero himself would be exiled, with his actions during the conspiracy playing a prominent

part. But far greater things were in store for the master orator, as he would play a major role in the coming Fall of the Republic.

Fall of the Roman Republic

In this chapter, the lives and impact of Caesar, Octavian, Antonius (Antony) and even Cleopatra, along with the continuing stories of men like Pompey, Crassus and Cicero will be examined. The Fall of the Republic was more than a single man or event. It was a culmination of several individual actions or achievements, coupled with social conditions that weighed heavily on Roman society. Additionally, massive and rapid expansion from Rome's foundation as a fledgling city 700 years earlier until the mid 1st century BC, created monumental holes in the political and governing ability of the Senate. Periods of stability were mixed in with those of near collapse while powerful generals or inciters of the Roman mob jockeyed for position.

Beginning with the Punic Wars and Roman conquest outside of Italy, followed by massive importation of slaves, the face of Roman life was changing far more rapidly than the governing body could deal with. Political infighting was and always would be a common trait in any system, but even the greatest of Romans like Scipio Africanus, fell victim to the whims of politicians. The social instability that resulted from inequities in the class system gave way to rise of demagogues like the brothers Gracchi. The use of the citizen assemblies for popular agendas tore at the very fabric of Senatorial power.

Men like Marius and Sulla, with their own personal agendas and rivalries wreaked havoc in an already weakened structure. Partisan politics of the conservative Optimate Senators trying to keep power with the elite class, while the tactics of the Populares, who looked to the lower classes for support, divided the people and classes into what seemed like warring factions. For nearly 100 years, the climate was unpredictable at best, and brutally bloody at worst.

By the time of the rise of Gaius Julius Caesar, the stage was set for a single man to assume power and stabilize the Empire. Caesar was neither the only man responsible for the fall, nor the one man who could stop it, but his role in the final demise is undeniable. He neither started the fall nor finished it, but continued a cycle of events that made its collapse irreversible. Contemporaries of the brilliant general and politician hold as much blame as the great man himself, however. How different events may have been without the plays for power and a bit of humility among the Senate.

Regardless, despite Caesar's short reign and policies of reform and stability, the strength of his character and personality held the Republic together only as long as he lived. His assassination and the continuing Civil Wars that resulted, would be required to bring necessary power to a single ruler of a single great nation: The Roman Empire. The eventual rise and adoption of Caesar's heir, Octavian, to the exalted post of Augustus spelled the real end of the Republic. He, unlike his predecessors, rose at a time when the will for the Republican system had nearly died. While tradition and some semblance of power would remain, the foundation of government under a single figure was a requirement to continue the advancement of the Empire. It was Augustus who proved to be the one man great and powerful enough to control the Senate, the mob and the Legions. Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus Augustus rose above all the great Romans before him to outlast political opponents, reform a corrupt government and stabilize a system in disarray. The Fall of the Republic was inevitable, but fortunately for Rome, the right man at the right time was there to step in as the first Roman Emperor.

Gaius Julius Caesar (100 - 44 BC)

Gaius Julius Caesar was born most likely on July (originally Quinctilis, but renamed by Caesar in his own calendar reform) 13, 100 BC. Caesar was a member of the deeply patrician Julii family with roots dating to the foundation of the city itself. He later claimed to be a direct descendent of Aeneas, son of Venus, and therefore related to the gods themselves.

Still, at his start, the Caesar family was an impoverished line of the noble original clans. No Caesars in recent generations had held the seat of Consul but while still highly respected, they held little political clout. His father, Gaius Julius as well, had served in a respectable capacity within the Senate, but had little notoriety aside from his son's legacy. His mother, Aurelia, of the Aurelii Cotta line, seems to have been both a remarkable woman and a major impact on the life of her son.

Caesar was raised in the common quarters of Rome, or the Subura among the lower citizen classes. His home was what functioned as an apartment building in the modern world, or what was known as an insula. Even for a patrician family in poor financial straits, this was a definite handicap for future political ambition. However, the young Caesar certainly learned a great deal from his experiences as a child, as he early on realized the power in championing the common man. It wouldn't take a genius to understand that several politicians in this era made a name for themselves using this method, and Caesar certainly caught on to this easily. He had, though, the added advantage of his patrician heritage along with a sort of political genius that would push him to the very limit of Roman power.

Two major events impacted the life of the young Caesar. The later and seemingly less momentous event of the two was the death of his father at the age of 15 in 85 BC. So few of the details of Gaius Julius Caesar the elder's life are known, that it's difficult to determine the impact this may have had. While he certainly played a role in the life of his young son, he was often away on military and Senatorial obligations, as was often the case with Patrician families. His father had reached the office of Praetor prior to his death, the office just below Consul, and at least helped set the stage for the Caesar line to return to the highest order.

The more significant event in the life of Caesar was a marriage arrangement that would have enormous impact on Roman culture as a whole. The marriage of his aunt Julia to the novus homo (new man) Gaius Marius had repercussions that affected the entire ancient world. Through this marriage in 110 BC and 10 years prior to the birth of his famous nephew, Marius gained the political and familial connection necessary to advance his own career up the *cursus honorum*. While it may have been frowned upon by the elite of the day, first off in giving the uncouth Marius such assistance, it was a completely understandable move by the Caesars. Marius was certainly one of the richest men in Rome of the time and while he gained political clout, the Caesar family gained the wealth required to finance election campaigns for Caesar's father and uncles. As previously suggested his father attained the rank of Praetor and his uncle, Lucius Julius Caesar rose to a prominent Consulship during the Social War of 90 to 87 BC.

Marius' impact on the future dictator must have been immense. Their careers follow notable similarities that certainly show a profound influence by the uncle on the nephew. More importantly, however, Caesar had the great fortune of his patrician background which gave huge advantages over Marius. He also was able to play witness to both the successes and failures and adjust his own plans for the future accordingly. Marius was the pre-eminent Roman just prior to Caesar's birth, serving 6 Consulships, winning the war against Jugurtha, reforming the legions and the social order, and saving Rome from the Germanic Cimbri and Teutone threat. By the time Caesar was a young man, however, Marius had fallen deeply out of favor, though he was still a player of some note. As Caesar began his own career, he would be thrust into the coming conflicts between Marius and his rival Lucius Cornelius Sulla. The advancement of Caesar in light of the turmoil of the day is notable enough, the fact that he even survived may be even more remarkable.

Julius Caesar (His early years)

As Julius Caesar aged into his early teenage years, the political climate of Rome was in turmoil. By 88 BC, the rivalry between Gaius Marius and Lucius Cornelius Sulla was heating into open civil war. Attempts by Marius supporters to overturn Sulla's command against Mithridates VI of Pontus, prompted Sulla's subsequent march on Rome. Sulla took control of the city by force, and many of Marius' supporters were put to the sword. Caesar, despite his relation to Marius, was still a boy and for the time being, was excused from any potential danger.

Soon after, Sulla marched east to fight the first Mithridatic War. With his legions away from the capital, Marius, and a deposed Consul, Lucius Cornelius Cinna, gathered strength and made their own march on Rome. By 86 BC, both men were elected Consul, and in retribution, a bloodbath against Sulla's supporters took place. These events, along with the history of Rome in Caesar's near past must've been key factors on the young man's development. From the time of his birth through his early formative years, all Rome seemed to know was political uncertainty, violence, and the uncertainty of what was to come. From the social disorder brought on by the Gracchi 30 years before his birth to the deep involvement of his own family in various situations, Caesar's view on Roman politics would surely be a major impact later. In light of the status quo of continuous factional fighting, as opposed to the potential stability and control of a single powerful ruler, these events in Caesar's life were a powerful force.

Marius died shortly after election to his record Consulship. While the relationship between the young Caesar and Marius on a personal level is largely unknown, there is little question of his relationship to his aunt Julia, Marius' wife. As evidenced by a later funeral oration of her, she was an influential force to him, and it stands to reason that the uncle was as well. Regardless, he certainly fell under the indirect influence of the surviving Consul Cinna. He ruled Rome after the death of Marius, and in the absence of Sulla, with an iron-handed will for the next few years. During this time, Caesar was appointed to the office of Flamen Dialis, or head priest of Jupiter, by Cinna. This priesthood was filled with many strict rules based on the lore and rituals of the ancient religion. The flamen dialis could never touch metal, see a corpse, ride a horse, and was restricted in many foods, among many other things. It seems likely that, possibly due to his youth, he was never actually confirmed in this role, in light of his future career as both a politician and a soldier. Whatever the reason, it's evident that he held the position only a short time, and the ancient sources make little mention of his dismissal as a priest.

Shortly after his appointment as flamen, Caesar's association with the populares political party was cemented further by marriage. In 84 BC, he was married to Cinna's daughter Cornelia, which would have lasting ramifications. Just a year later, as Cinna prepared to meet Sulla's victorious legions as they returned to Rome, his own troops mutinied and Cinna was killed. Sulla marched into Italy and within a year defeated nearly all opposition. In 81 BC, after the battle of the Colline Gate, Sulla was the undisputed victor, and soon assumed the title of dictator. Sulla's victory was to be another profound event in the life of Caesar. Not only was he a member of the opposition party, by virtue of his family and marriage, but Sulla's behavior also helped shaped Caesar's later leniency toward opposition.

With Sulla in charge of Rome, a political and brutally bloody purge of his enemies commenced. In a term labeled as proscription, in which enemies were publicly listed for execution and/or confiscation of properties, Sulla began the systematic reversal of all opposition to his pro Senatorial elite, or optimate, agenda. Caesar certainly was named on the proscription lists, and at the age of 19, he left his young wife and family to avoid the death penalty. Disguised and assumedly with the help of substantial bribes, he escaped Rome and went into hiding in the Italian countryside.

Caesar's family, and likely with great influence from his mother Aurelia, along with the College of Vestal Virgins, as he was still technically the flamen dialis, worked hard on reversing Sulla's proscription. Eventually Sulla rescinded the sentence of death for Caesar, and he was free to return to Rome. Sulla instead demanded that Caesar divorce the daughter of his former rival Cinna, but Caesar refused. Amidst the pressure from Caesar's family Sulla still pardoned him, confiscating Cornelia's dowry instead. In a prophetic moment, Sulla was said to comment on the dangers of letting Caesar live. According to Suetonius, the dictator in relenting on Caesar's proscription said, "Take him then, my masters, since you must have it so; but know this, that he whose life you so much desire will one day be the overthrow of the part of nobles, whose cause you have sustained with me; for in this one Caesar, you will find many a Marius."

Caesar in Asia

After Sulla pardoned Caesar, he still thought it a wise idea to avoid potentially falling back into disfavor. Caesar, at 20 years old, left Rome for Asia in 80 BC. He next joined the staff of the Asian governor, Praetor Marcus Minucius Thermus, and got an advance start on his military and political career. While in service to Thermus, he was sent on a diplomatic mission to King Nicomedes IV of Bithynia with the purpose of raising a fleet. Caesar seems to have stayed so long in Bithynia that rumors began to circulate about what he was doing. By the time he did return to Thermus, with the fleet he was sent to muster, it was widely believed that Caesar was having an affair with Nicomedes. His fast return to Bithynia, to settle some affairs for the King, added to the gossip. The incident, while there is no evidence other than speculation, was a great source of joy to Caesar's enemies later. They delighted in referring to him as the Queen of Bithynia. As he struggled for the rest of his life to quell the rumor, he turned into a notorious seducer of Roman women. Possibly, a designed effort in part to refute the charges, Caesar would later have affairs with countless Roman noblewomen. Wives and family of Senators were his favorite targets, and though he was never quite able to live down the Nicomedes rumor, he assuredly had an overwhelming reputation as a ladies man.

On another personal issue, it's important to note Caesar's apparent epilepsy. While his case must certainly have been mild, as it would've been difficult to achieve all that he did while undergoing chronic seizures, there is little question that he had some sort of affliction causing occasional loss of bodily control or mental lapses. In the ancient world, without medicines or treatments of any sort, a debilitating condition such as that, in severe form, would certainly have precluded Caesar from many of his accomplishments. There was a definite stigma attached to the disease, where people believed it was a direct affliction of the gods, and the moon in particular. To overcome social stigmas if it was common knowledge, would've been difficult at best, but still the brilliant politician may have used it to his advantage. While there is no direct evidence to suggest this, it shouldn't be put past the mind of Caesar to use epilepsy as proof of his direct relation to Venus. In so doing, he could use an apparent weakness to spread his fame and dignitas by proving his divine favor on earth.

After the incident with Nicomedes, Caesar returned to Asia, and was involved in several military operations. In 80 BC while still serving under Thermus, he played a pivotal role in the siege of Miletus. During the course of the battle Caesar showed such personal bravery in saving the lives of legionaries, that he was later awarded the corona civica (oak crown). The award was of the highest honor, and when worn in the presence of the Senate, they were forced to stand and applaud his presence. Caesar wore the crown whenever it was opportune as he certainly delighted in 'rubbing it in' to his enemies.

Caesar next served under Servilius Isauricus in Cilicia but only for a short time. Hearing of Sulla's death in the same year, it was finally safe to return to Rome. For the next few years, he worked diligently at his oration skills by serving as a trial attorney, in which he excelled. In just his early twenties, he was gaining a powerful reputation for a populares champion taking on several elite

aristocrats. Of the most notable, in 77 BC, Caesar brilliantly prosecuted the ex Consul Gnaeus Cornelius Dolabella for extortion from various Greek cities during a term as governor. Though the end result was a victory for Dolabella, his reputation was terribly damaged. The great orator Cicero even commented, "does anyone have the ability to speak better than Caesar." Another high profile, though ultimately unsuccessful prosecution of Gaius Antonius Hybrida followed. Only the bribery of the Tribune of the Plebes bought Hybrida an acquittal, but Caesar's star was rising fast. With such a promising career well under way, Caesar next sought to continue his education in rhetoric and oration, key skills for any Roman politician.

An education begun under the same teacher as Cicero, Marcus Antonius Gniphio, needed further refinement. In 75 BC, Caesar left Rome to study in Rhodes under the great teacher Apollonius Molon. While en route, however, he was waylaid by Cilician pirates and taken hostage. A Roman patrician was a good prize to catch and the pirates demanded for 20 talents (nearly 5,000 gold coins) for his release. Caesar, showing his arrogance, mocked the pirates by insisting that a rising patrician such as himself was worth no less than 50 talents (12,000 gold coins). In all he was held for 38 days and used the time to write speeches and practice his rhetoric on his captors. Though apparently treated quite well, Caesar vowed, and told them often, that when he was released he would come back to capture and crucify the lot of them. After his release, he did just that, mustering his own small fleet to accomplish the task. Good to his word, the pirates were hunted down and crucified. Though as a sign of his apparent aversion to cruelty, it's been suggested that the men were killed quickly to prevent the horrible death of crucifixion.

Prior to his return to Rome, Caesar served again in military service to Rome. As Mithridates of Pontus invaded Roman Asia, Caesar jumped at the chance for further military glory. He took it upon himself to raise a small army of provincials and gathered enough strength to defend several small towns. Though technically illegal to lead a military operation without Senatorial commission, both cases were likely ignored because of the service he provided to the state. Caesar then returned to Rhodes very briefly until the death of his cousin Gaius Aurelius Cotta. Caesar was appointed to replace Cotta as a Pontif (priest), and by 73 BC, he was well educated in the political as well as military arts. Now 27 years old, he began the voyage back to Rome to begin his climb up the Roman political ladder.

Caesar in Politics

Caesar returned to Rome in 73 BC as a member of the college of Pontiffs and immediately began working on his political career. He lived well beyond his means, and started down a course of extravagance, both for political gain and personal pleasure. From expensive slaves to collectible arts, Caesar spared no expense in creating an image of an elite member of Roman society. Within a year he was elected as a military tribune. Though his service in the east likely already pre-empted the need to prove himself in a military capacity, it was nevertheless an important step in validating military capability. It's possible, though the history of Caesar's career at this point is limited, that he may have begun his acquaintance with Marcus Licinius Crassus at this point. There is a high probability that he served under Rome's richest man during his command against Spartacus and the slave rebellion.

Whether he served directly under Crassus, or developed a friendship through other associations, the friendship would be pivotal to Caesar's career. Because of Crassus' immense wealth, Caesar was able to finance the extravagant lifestyle and political necessities required to advance the *cursus honorum*. His next step was that of Quaestor which he was elected to in 69 BC. In this term he was assigned to the governor of Further Spain, Antistius Vetus but tragedy, or an opportunity struck before he could depart Rome. His aunt Julia, wife of Marius, died about this same time and Caesar took the opportunity to break Roman tradition.

Women generally were not granted large public funerals, but in the case of some influential individuals, tradition was broken. In the extravagant public funeral (laudation) that followed, Caesar pushed the extremes of the Optimate Senators limits. He not only praised his aunt in a stirring public speech, but for this first time since Sulla, he displayed the popular images of Gaius Marius. Praising the deeds of Marius, and publicly proclaiming his descent from the fourth King of Rome, Ancus Marcius, and the goddess Venus, he certainly developed considerable enmity among the conservative Senators. Still though, the crowd was clearly in Caesar's favor as they supported him enthusiastically, even drowning out attempts by the Senate to stop the young Quaestor. Caesar clearly defined himself as a populares, setting the stage for many political battles to come.

Shortly after the grand event of his aunt's funeral, more personal tragedy struck. This time his young wife Cornelia died, the mother of his single infant daughter, Julia. To give a laudation for such a young woman was practically unspeakable, but once again Caesar rose to the challenge presented by conservative opposition. In another stirring public ceremony, Caesar honored Cornelia's father, Cinna, another hated enemy of the optimates. The young man was not only building a considerable reputation for anti-establishment government, but was winning the hearts of the people through his emotional and powerful public displays.

Soon after the funerals, Caesar finally left to join Vetius in Spain. As an administrative and financial officer, the trip was largely uneventful, but it was here that he had the famous encounter with a statue of Alexander the Great. Perhaps because of his weakened emotional state coupled with a growing and now obvious personal ambition, he had a definitive and prophetic reaction to the site of the statue. At the temple of Hercules in Gades, it was said that he either broke down and cried or at the very least was deeply saddened in reaction to it. When asked why he would have such a reaction, his simple response was: "Do you think I have not just cause to weep, when I consider that Alexander at my age had conquered so many nations, and I have all this time done nothing that is memorable."

At any rate, Caesar was soon allowed to return to Rome, released early from his duties. While returning, he began to nurture his relationship with the common man even further. Identifying with the people of Cisalpine Gaul, who had felt oppressed since the time of Sulla, Caesar may have encouraged a revolt. It's difficult to determine what, if any role Caesar may have actually played, but it's sufficient to note that while he was accused of treason, he was not convicted. Other than building more enmity between himself and the Optimate Senators, the incident did little damage to his political career. Functioning in a populares capacity anyway, it likely had great benefit for him among the common people. Regardless, Caesar was quickly becoming a prime candidate for aggression from the Senate, and his role here may have played a part in later accusations during the Catalinarian Conspiracy.

Despite any personal grief over the loss of his wife, of who all accounts suggest he loved dearly; Caesar was set to remarry in 67 BC for political gain. This time, however, he chose an odd alliance. The granddaughter of Sulla, and daughter of Quintus Pompey, Pompeia was to be his next wife. Clearly aligned with the Senatorial optimates, perhaps Caesar was trying to deflect criticism from his treason trial. Regardless, his other actions had little to do with conservative policy and he continued his course of support for a populares policy. Now as a member of the Senate, thanks to his election earlier as Quaestor, Caesar supported the Lex Gabinia which was designed to grant Pompey the Great unlimited powers in dealing with Cilician Pirates. Later, and once again the face of bitter Optimate resistance, Caesar supported the Lex Manilia which eventually granted Pompey the unique and comprehensive command of the entire east against Mithridates. Obviously building a relationship with Rome's great general would play into his hands later, but the rivalry between Pompey and Caesar's benefactor Crassus, seemed to have little effect on Caesar. Despite this rivalry, Crassus continued to support Caesar's enormous debts over the course of the next few years.

Between the support of the two laws regarding Pompey's command, Caesar served as the curator of the Appian Way. The maintenance of this road, which stretched from Rome to Cumae and beyond to the heel of Italy's boot, was an important and high profile position. While it was enormously expensive on a personal basis, it gave a great deal of prestige to a young Senator, and Crassus' support certainly made it an achievable task for Caesar.

In 65 BC, Caesar, along with a young rival and member of the optimate faction by name of Bibulus, was elected as curule aedile. This magistrate position was the next step in the Roman *cursus honorum* and was a grand opportunity for the master of the public spectacle. The curule aediles were responsible for such public duties as the care of temples, maintenance of public buildings and perhaps most importantly, the staging of public games on state holidays. Caesar indebted himself to the point of near financial ruin during this time, but enhanced his image irreversibly with the common people. His games were spectacular affairs, and building projects during his term were ambitious. In one spectacle to honor his father, Caesar displayed 320 pairs of gladiators clad in silver armor which was an enormous expense. His co-aedile Bibulus was so unspectacular in comparison that he later commented in frustration that the entire year's aedile ship was credited to Caesar alone, instead of both.

Caesar pushed his agenda farther by erecting statues of Marius for public display. The senate, of course, was outraged, but Caesar's popularity made him nearly untouchable. They could, however, attempt to block his political path through other means. Caesar may have been nominated to take charge of quelling a disturbance in Egypt but was unable to win enough support to take the position. Even with this minor victory, the optimates wouldn't be satisfied though, as Caesar's brashness was a direct insult. His Senate enemies would look for any opportunity to stop his progress while Caesar, though, had plans of his own.

Advancement and Conspiracy

Caesar's debts were so enormous by 63 BC that he was in danger of prosecution by his debtors. In order to stave off potential disaster, Caesar made a bold political move, deciding to run for the position of Pontifex Maximus. The head priest of Rome was in a position of considerable power, with opportunity for income, and therefore some limited protection from his debts. The Pontifex was elected to a lifetime term and while technically not a political office, still provided considerable advantages in dealing with the Senate and legislation. On the morning of the election, Caesar reportedly told his mother Aurelia, "today you will see me either high priest or an exile", indicating the importance of the election to him. Through additional bribery, Caesar was successful, gaining more votes than all of his opponents combined.

Later in the same year of 63 BC he also ran for, and won, the office of urban Praetor. Before he could even take office, however, the Catiline Conspiracy erupted putting Caesar in direct conflict with the optimates once again. Lucius Sergius Catilina, a consul candidate for 63 and 62 BC, was accused of hatching a plot to overthrow the Republic through armed rebellion. Whether Calilina ever did anything of such extreme measures up to this point, or was simply pushed into it through threats of prosecution and execution is disputed. At any rate, however, the resulting ordeal was both a defining moment in the career of Cicero and yet one more indication of the Republic's impending collapse. In the elections held in late 63 BC, Catiline was defeated for the consular position and soon afterwards, anonymous letters showed up at the house of Crassus. The letters informed various Senators to leave the city to avoid the coming massacre against certain other government leaders. Crassus, despite likely connections which would later be deemed the conspirators, took the letters to the Consul Cicero, who took the conspiracy concept to the Senate.

Many in the Senate disbelieved the plot, some even thinking that Cicero made the whole thing up for his own political gain. Cicero's oratory eloquence convinced the Senate, however, that extreme steps were necessary to combat the plot. While the plot against the Senators may have been fictitious, protests outside the city were growing due to the failure of small farms in Etruria. In a recurring theme throughout Roman history, they couldn't compete with huge slave operated estates owned by aristocrats. Former Sullan army members were gathering arms and preparing for open rebellion that was reported to begin on October 27 of 63 BC. A *Senatus Consultum Ultimum* was passed granting Cicero the authority to deal with the conspirators, and Catiline, among others, became the prime target. Catiline decided to flee Rome, but not before being implicated in another plot to assassinate Cicero. This plot failed of course, but Catiline escaped to join the rebellion in Etruria.

In Rome however, other conspirators attempting to get the support of the Gallic Allobroges were caught in the act. Several people were arrested and the Senate met to decide their fate. Cicero argued for the death penalty without trial and had most of the Senate convinced, but Caesar, as the Praetor elect was allowed to speak and had the Senate nearly convinced that trials, and or lighter sentences were in order. Marcus Porcius Cato, the ultra conservative leader of the *optimates* party, then swung the decision back in favor of the death penalty. The budding rivalry between Caesar and Cato was turning into outright enmity and Cicero would forever hold a grudge against Caesar for his opposition. The *optimates* attempted to implicate Caesar in the whole affair, because he had many connections with the growing rebellion in Etruria and because of his outspoken opposition to the death penalty. Caesar's close ties to Crassus, as he was the one to present the letters of conspiracy to Cicero in the first place, seem to have exonerated Caesar from any potential penalties. Catiline, now with the rebel forces in Etruria, was soon defeated and killed, and the entire conspiracy was over.

In the following year, Caesar began to serve his term as urban praetor. Now in another elite position of Roman government, he once again pushed his *populares* policies. He first asked for an account of the cost in restoring the capital in which he was opposed by the *optimates*. Unsuccessful in that attempt, the next order of business was strengthening his standing with Pompey, who was set to return to Rome from his eastern campaigns. Pompey's return was a significant concern of the *optimates*, as they feared a Sullan type march to Rome and dictatorship. They needed to present the city, and the surrounding countryside, as a stable environment not in need of Pompey to 'restore order'. Pompey's ally, Caecilius Metellus Nepos, however, took the matter to the Senate demanding that Pompey be allowed to land in Italy and do just that. Caesar supported Nepos and Pompey, but the motion was defeated once again by Cato. Nepos fled Rome to join Pompey, while Caesar was eventually removed from the Praetorship. He was restored however, when a mob in support of Caesar threatened violence in his support, and Caesar quelled it before anything happened.

Clodius Scandal

Toward the end of Caesar's term as urban praetor, Pompey returned from the east and dispelled any fears about his intentions. He disbanded his legions and returned to Rome to celebrate his most glorious triumph yet. Pompey, of course, wanted land bills issued to take care of his retired veterans, but he was opposed by the *optimates*. Little did Cato and his supporters realize that their opposition to Pompey pushed him closer to Caesar. He certainly did his part to patch up any lasting rivalry between Crassus and Pompey and was building a foundation for his own political future.

Before that relationship could blossom however, the Caesar household was rocked with one of the greatest social scandals in the history of Rome. The annual celebration of the *Bona Dea* (Goddess of fertility, healing, virginity and women) was held at Caesar's home. As the Pontifex Maximus, his wife was responsible for arranging this sacred and important celebration. It was a women only

event in which the vestal virgins played an important role. Publius Clodius Pulcher, a patrician politician with sometimes wild behavior, attended the event dressed as a woman, apparently in order to associate with Caesar's wife, Pompeia, or one of the Vestal Virgins. Clodius seems to have been spotted by Caesar's mother Aurelia, and he fled the scene. He was later brought to trial, likely on charges of bribery, by Cicero. Caesar's enemies were certainly happily surprised at potential turn of the tables episode, especially considering Caesar's association with several Senatorial wives. Caesar however maintained perfect calm, and while proclaiming Pompeia's innocence, he simply divorced her, with the famous quote "Because I maintain that the members of my family should be free from suspicion, as well as from accusation," as his reason.

Later at the trial of Clodius, Caesar gave no ammunition to the prosecution, and Clodius got off by bribing the jury. Later, Clodius adopted into a plebeian family in order to secure the position of Tribune of the Plebs. Despite the scandal, Clodius would later become an important ally of Caesar, until his erratic behavior would eventually end it.

The length of the scandal delayed elections and provincial appointments for the next year, and Caesar was in serious jeopardy of prosecution for his debts. Crassus came to the rescue again, paying off a quarter of his 20 million denarii balance. Eventually, by 61 BC, Caesar was finally assigned to serve as the Proconsular governor of further Spain, the province he served in as a quaestor. With this appointment, his creditors backed off, allowing that this position could be quite profitable. Leaving Rome even before he was officially to take over, Caesar was not taking chances.

Caesar and his staff rode hard, reaching the Rhone in only 8 days, showing a glimpse into the future ability of Caesar to move his armies at remarkable speeds. On the way, several members of his entourage commented on the barbaric and wretched (in their opinion) life in the local villages. Caesar, again showing his ambition replied, "For my part, I'd rather be the first man among these fellows than the second man in Rome." During his time as the governor of further Spain, Caesar strengthened his relationship with these Gallic peoples which would be an important factor in his later plans.

Arriving in Spain, Caesar developed a remarkable reputation as a military commander. Between 61 and 60 BC, he won considerable victories over the local Spanish Calaici and Lusitani tribes. He advanced as far as the Atlantic Ocean and subdued tribes in the northwest part of the country that had never before bowed to the Romans. In his conquests, he secured enough spoils of war to pay off all of his debts, while giving his men a considerable share and leaving some for the Roman treasury. The haul must've been enormous indeed. During one of his victories, his men hailed him as "Imperator" in the field, which was a vital consideration in being eligible for a triumph back in Rome. Caesar was now faced with a terrible dilemma, though. He wanted to run for Consul for 59 BC and would have to be present within the city of Rome to do so, but he also wanted to receive the honor of a triumph. The optimates surely would use this against him, forcing him to wait outside the city, as was the custom, until they confirmed his triumph. The delay would force Caesar to miss his chance to run for Consul and he made a fateful decision. In the summer of 60 BC, Caesar entered Rome to run for the highest political office in the Roman Republic.

First Triumvirate

In 60 BC, Caesar's decision to forego a chance at a triumph for his achievements in Spain put him in a position to run for Consul. He faced considerable opposition from the optimate Senators, or as Cicero dubbed them, the boni (good men). Even though Caesar had overwhelming popularity within the citizen assemblies, he had to manipulate formidable alliances within the Senate itself in order to secure his election. Already maintaining a solid friendship with the fabulously wealthy

Crassus, he approached Crassus' rival Pompey with the concept of an *amicitia* (coalition). Pompey had already been considerably frustrated by the inability to get land reform for his eastern veterans and Caesar brilliantly patched up any differences between the two powerful leaders. Crassus, on the other hand, had significant assets tied up in eastern interests and was a great ally of the business leading Equestrian families. He needed a politician, Caesar, to support items of interest to this faction and willingly joined the coalition.

The first triumvirate however is a bit misleading in name. Not only was it never called that by the contemporary Romans, but it was a far more inclusive *factio* (faction) than the term triumvirate implies. Many leading men were involved, such as Lucius Lucceius and Lucius Calpurnius Piso, whose daughter Calpurnia Caesar later married. The great orator Cicero, due to his association with Pompey and relative influence, was likely asked to participate in forming this 'majority' style government but if so, he clearly chose to separate himself and refused to participate. Without Cicero, the alliance was formed in late 60 BC, and remarkably remained a secret for some time. Caesar won the election easily enough, but the *boni* managed to get Caesar's former co-aedile Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus elected as the junior Consul. The clear intention was to thwart any attempts at legislation by the radical Caesar. Bibulus was only the office holding face of the *optimates*, however, as it was Marcus Porcius Cato who truly led the '*boni*'.

Of interesting note regarding the election is Caesar's age. The constitution, under normal circumstances, required a Consular candidate to be 42 years of age. Caesar, however, according to common beliefs, being born in 100 BC, was only 40 years old. This has led to much speculation that he was actually born in 102 BC to make him the right age for the office. The fact that the '*boni*' and their ultra conservative policies make little argument against the legality of Caesar running for Consul, lends credence to the argument that Caesar was actually born 2 years earlier. In fact, each office Caesar held was exactly 2 years prior to being legally eligible. However, circumstances throughout this imperial period of the Republic often negated such rules. Pompey served as consul in his 20's without even having been a Senator first. Both Plutarch and Suetonius, ancient Rome's great biographers, both say that Caesar died during his 56th year. He would have turned 56 in July of 44 BC making it seem quite clear that Caesar was indeed born in 100 BC. Some theories have suggested that his age may have been overlooked because Caesar won the *corona civica* in his youth while on campaign in the east. Regardless, no special legislation or extenuating circumstances seemed to block Caesar's legal position to run for Consul.

Once in office in 59 BC, Caesar's first order of business was to pass a law that required the public release of all debates and procedures of the Senate. This was the beginning of Caesar's propaganda machine that would eventually culminate in his own written records of the Gallic Wars and the Civil Wars. Next on the agenda was the appeasement of Pompey. Caesar developed a land bill that was so carefully written that it hardly could have been opposed by the *boni*. He personally read each section of the law before the Senate offering open debate and promising to delete any segment that the Senate disliked. The volatile political hot point of lands in Campania would not be offered to Pompey's veterans or the Roman poor, but rather unused land in other parts of Italy would be restored and offered instead. Doing so would not only alleviate the problem of the unemployed mob in Rome but would satisfy Pompey and his legions. Caesar was even sure that he could in no way gain from the bill, as was common with agrarian bills in the past. Still Cato and his *boni* faction opposed the concept simply because it was Caesar's idea. Caesar rebuked the Senate and took it directly to the people.

While speaking before the citizen assemblies, Caesar asked his co-consul Bibulus his feelings on the bill, as it was important to have the support of both standing consuls. His reply was simply to say that the bill would not be passed even if everyone else wanted it. At this point the so-called first triumvirate was made publicly known with both Pompey and Crassus voicing public approval of the measure in turn. The *boni*, likely in a mild panic from this now public alliance, did everything they could to stop the legislation. Bibulus tried to stop it by declaring bad omens and public holidays, both key events that would delay voting. Caesar, however, as *Pontifex Maximus*, and

with public support could counter any charge of bad omens and took the vote to the Temple of Castor. Here, Cato and his boni made a last stand. Bibulus tried to veto the entire process inciting the crowd. A basket of dung was thrown on his head and the optimate Senators were driven away. The law carried with overwhelming public support and Bibulus retired to his home in disgrace. Bibulus spent the remainder of his Consular year trying to use religious omens to declare Caesar's laws as null and void, in an attempt to bog down the political system. Instead, however, he simply gave Caesar complete autonomy to pass almost any proposal he wanted to. After Bibulus' withdrawal, the year of the Consulship of Caesar and Bibulus was often referred to jokingly thereafter as the year of "Julius and Caesar".

The next order of business was securing Crassus' support. Caesar brought tax proposals that would benefit Crassus' equestrian business interests before the people's assembly and passed them through without opposition. Additional eastern settlements were passed to confirm Pompey's deeds while on campaign there. Additional laws aimed at blocking corruption were passed, making sure that provincial governors were more accountable for their actions while serving abroad. While the 'first triumvirate' was technically completely legal, as were taking bills before the people's assembly rather than the Senate, the actions of Caesar during this year would lead directly to attempts at prosecution later. Circumventing the religious omens as well as other legal manipulation would eventually lead directly to a choice between surrender for punishment or civil war.

Already secure with Crassus, by marrying the daughter of his client Piso, Caesar next strengthened his alliance with Pompey. Pompey was married to Caesar's daughter Julia, in what seemed to be a completely happy arrangement, by all accounts. Next, Caesar secured his own future with the support of the Tribune Publius Vatinius. The 'Lex Vatinia' gave Caesar the Proconsulship of Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum, granting him the opportunity to match political victories with military glory. This five year term, unprecedented for an area that was relatively secure, was an obvious sign of Caesar's ambition for external conquests, and would also lead to calls for prosecution. Despite all of Rome's conquests, the system required valid reasons and the support of the Senate to enable military action. Caesar's future campaigns would all be conducted at his own discretion. In an additional stroke of luck, Quintus Caecilius Metellus Celer died, the current governor of Gallia Narbonensis, and this province was assigned to Caesar as well.

As 59 BC came to a close, Caesar had the support of the people, along with the two most powerful men in Rome (aside from himself), and the opportunity for infinite glory in Gaul. At the age of 40, while already holding the highest office in Rome and defeating his enemies at every turn, the true greatness of his career was yet to come. Marching quickly to the relative safety of his provinces, to invoke his 5 year imperium and avoid prosecution, Caesar was about to alter the geographic landscape of the ancient world.

Gallic Wars

Julius Caesar took official command of his provinces of Illyricum, Cisalpine Gaul and Transalpine Gaul in 59 BC. His original desire was likely to pursue glory against the further reaches of Illyricum and Dacia, but events in his new provinces soon changed the plan. In Gallia Narbonensis, the stretch of southern France connecting Spain to Italy, the Gallic people had largely been assimilated into Roman culture over the course of the last century.

Beyond this territory to the north was a vast land comprising modern France, called Gallia Comata (long-haired Gaul), where loose confederations of Celtic tribes maintained varying relationships with Rome. These Celtic tribes, while primitive compared to the standards of Rome, traded abundantly between themselves and the Roman frontiers. For the most part, a general peace

reigned between the tribes and Rome for the better part of the last century, but external pressures from Germanic tribes started unsettling the relative calm.

The Romans, however, had a long memory and fear of Gallic invasions that led to the sacking of Rome in the early 4th century BC was ever present. Additional tribal migrations of the Germanic Cimbri and Teutons in the late 2nd century, though defeated by Caesar's uncle Gaius Marius, merely confirmed these fears. If the Romans had legitimate fear over potential problems with the Gauls, then they were terrified of the wild, uncivilized Germanics. The Celts too, according to Caesar, were apparently despised by the Germanics for their more refined (weak) culture, and also had reason for concern. While Caesar was Proconsul of Spain between 61 and 60 BC, there was already considerable unrest on the Gallic frontier. The Germanic leader Ariovistus had invaded Gaul and raided the border regions, but Caesar quelled the situation at that point by arranging an alliance with the Germans.

Early in his Gallic governorship, Caesar still misread the situation and had 3 of his 4 legions stationed in Illyricum, but he would soon come to the realization that the real danger and opportunity was in Gaul. Understanding the emotional link that the Roman people had with the people of this region, Caesar began to alter his objectives. He was also likely quite aware of the great trade routes that the Rhodanus (Rhône), Rhenus (Rhine) and Sequanus (Saône) rivers provided. These rivers very well could've provided the most important exterior trade routes in the Roman world. Vast raw materials could be shipped in from the North and North West, while a booming market in Roman luxury items was beginning to go the other way. Gaul too, was a veritable gold mine in potential plunder. Caesar, though at times showing a moderate respect for Roman law, would need a viable excuse to advance north and avoid legal issues in Rome. Within a short time of his arrival, an excellent opportunity for military glory and to further strengthen his bond with the Roman people would present itself.

Helvetii

A Celtic tribe living in modern day Switzerland, the Helvetii, were at the time under pressure themselves from various Germanic tribes in the area. Under their chieftan Orgetorix, they had planned a move from the Alps region to the west of modern France, or Aquitania. In order to make such a move, however, the Helvetians would have to march not only through Roman controlled territory, but that of the Roman allied Aedui tribe as well. Other Gallic Celts and people within the province of Gallia Narbonensis feared that the Helvetii wouldn't just move through as they proposed, but would plunder everything in their path as they went. Without question, Caesar opposed the idea and hastily recruited two more fresh legions in preparation.

Before the Helvetii marched however, Orgetorix died, but the planning for the move continued. Several other local tribes joined the Helvetii in lesser numbers making the entire force among the largest and most powerful in all of Gaul. In total, according to Caesar, nearly 370,000 tribesmen were gathered, of which about 260,000 were women, children and other non-combatants. Before leaving, the Helvetii burned their villages and destroyed what foodstuff and other commodities could not be taken along. The intention was to make certain that they continued to their destination against all odds.

After setting off, and disregarding Caesar's objection, the two forces inevitably met. After several skirmishes, Caesar, occupied the high ground with his six legions, and lured the enemy into a poorly matched battle. Somewhere near the Aedui capital of Bibracte, Caesar crushed the Helvetii, slaughtering the enemy wholesale with little regard for combat status. According to Caesar himself, of the 370,000 enemy present, only 130,000 survived the battle. In the next few days following the battle while chasing down the fleeing enemy, it seems that at least another 20,000 were killed. While the numbers may very well have been exaggerated, there is no doubt of the

slaughter. In all, nearly 260,000 people including a great many women and children were reportedly killed. While today this may seem an atrocity, to the Roman people these Helvetii, seemingly mistaken for Germanics, were considered the barbaric enemy deserving of no better fate.

Caesar's great victory left him with other problems however. First he forced the Helvetii back to their home land to prevent more Germanic incursions into what had become open land. Next he allowed the somewhat friendly or at least pacified Boii tribe to settle into a buffer zone with the Aedui and the Helvetii. The weakened state of these southern Gallic tribes, though, thanks to Caesar's conquest, left parts of Gaul open to Germanic incursions. A federation of tribal leaders came to Caesar to ask assistance against their old nemesis Ariovistus and his Suebi tribesmen. Certainly not noting the irony of his actions against the Helvetii, Caesar's own words describe the despair of one particular tribe, the Sequani, who faced the raids and occupation of Ariovistus. Seeing the obvious potential for further glory, under the pretense of responding to calls for help, he then took the opportunity to protect his Gallic 'friends'.

Ariovistus and the Suebi

As Ariovistus made incursions against the Roman allied Gallic Celts, Caesar sought initially to resolve the matter diplomatically, at least according to his writings. Ariovistus, the Suebi chief, had already conquered much of eastern Gallic territory only a few years prior, but Caesar was able to reverse the situation through diplomacy. Ariovistus was named a friend and ally of the Roman people, but this relationship proved to be short lived. Caesar's initial attempts in 58 BC to negotiate with the Germanic were defiantly rebuffed. Ariovistus it seems, viewed this part of Gaul as his territory, and Caesar's presence was considered a violation of their treaty. Caesar quickly recruited additional forces and prepared for the impending conflict. Additional missions sent to end the stand off diplomatically were failures.

Caesar estimates that over 120,000 Germanic warriors had crossed the Rhine into Gaul at this point, occupying the land of the Sequani and harassing the Aedui, as well as other tribes. Caesar received word that additional warriors were crossing the Rhine to siege the Sequani town of Vesontio, so he made haste to garrison the town. By the time the enemy arrived, the Romans were safely entrenched and Ariovistus decided to open negotiations. Caesar and the Germanic chief met face to face to discuss the situation, but little was accomplished. Ariovistus argued that he had as much right as the Romans to conquer and control in order to prevent additional warfare. Caesar while acknowledging this very simple and parallel Roman principal suggested that Ariovistus' rights were null and void due to his failure to help against the Helvetii. It was quite clear that neither side was going to back down from the other and war was a foregone conclusion. Caesar, however, encountered new problems. His legions, now in such proximity to the wild Germans were suffering from terrible moral. Any battle to come would surely result in panic from his men in the face of the enemy's ferocity. Caesar delivered a rousing speech specifically praising his famous 10th legion and suggesting that if the others were too frightened, he would go into battle with only this one. Being called out by the beloved commander, as he would do often to quell trouble in the future, settled the men and they were thereafter eager to join the coming fight.

Somewhere near modern Besancon, with all diplomacy exhausted, the Romans and the Germanics finally met in battle, sometime in September of 58 BC. Impatient at delaying tactics employed by Ariovistus, Caesar launched a full assault on the enemy camp. He himself accompanied his right wing which seemingly would need the most support. The battle that followed was an epic struggle between two well matched armies. Caesar wrote that his men fought valiantly sweeping the Suevi on the left flank, "There were found very many of our soldiers who leaped upon the phalanx, and with their hands tore away the shields, and wounded the enemy from above. Although the army of the enemy was routed on the left wing and put to flight,

they pressed heavily on our men from the right wing, by the great number of their troops." Seeing the trouble on the right, Caesar's young lieutenant Publius Licinius Crassus, son of the triumvir, led a cavalry charge that turned the tide in Roman favor. The Suevi were routed on the field, with estimates as high as 25,000 being killed. The survivors rushed back to the Rhine to cross back home including Ariovistus who escaped in a small boat.

The surviving Suebi then had to deal with another Germanic tribe, the Ubii, who harassed and attacked them as they returned home. The Suebi survived to fight another day however, and Caesar would be forced to face them again just a few years later. Unfortunately, though, never mentions the fate of Ariovistus, but having concluded two very important wars in one campaign season, Caesar put his army into winter quarters among the Sequani. He appointed Labienus in command, and set out in person for Cisalpine Gaul to attend to political business.

The Belgae

In the spring of 57 BC, Caesar was in Cisalpine Gaul attending to the administrative of his governorship. Despite, according to Caesar, cries of great thanks from various Gallic tribes for deliverance from the Suebi, discontent was growing. Word came to Caesar that a confederation of northern Gallic tribes was building to confront Roman presence in Gaul. It's important to note though, that Caesar by this time, had probably realized the only way to maintain the territories in eastern and southern Gaul, was to conquer the whole of the province. It's convenient for Caesar that these northern Belgic tribes would muster against the Romans for no reason, unless of course, they had reason to believe the Romans weren't done with expansion. Whatever the truth, Caesar hurried back to his legions, raising 2 new legions (the 13th and 14th) in the meantime, bringing his total to 8.

As Caesar arrived, likely in July 57 BC, the rumors of Belgae opposition proved true. Caesar moved quickly, surprising the Remi before they could join the opposition, and made fast allies of them. The Belgae, in reprisal against this began to attack the town of the Remi. At the Remi town of Bibrax, Caesar moved en masse to protect it from Belgae aggression. In an example of Caesar's brilliant ability to out march any known army, he surprised the enemy. With 8 legions the Romans crushed the attack in a hard fought affair. The victory was two fold for Caesar. It not only was a victory in the field, but a political and propaganda win as well. By defending his 'allies' from external aggression, he could now easily secure the necessary legalities to continue aggression against the Belgae. Though it would be another difficult campaign, this was exactly the sort of fortune that Caesar wanted.

After securing the town of Noviodunum and territory of the Suessiones, Caesar learned that the fearsome Nervii, with the Atrebatas, Veromandui and Aduatuci, were forming against him on the opposite side of the Sambre River. The main part of the Roman army were in the midst of making camp along the river, while the two newest legions were bringing up the rear with the slow moving baggage train. Caesar sent out his cavalry to scout the situation, apparently unaware of the massing enemy preparing for ambush in the surrounding forests. The gathering Belgae, seeing Titus Labienus leading the Roman cavalry away, launched a complete surprise attack, storming the shallow river and pouncing on the unsuspecting Romans. The fighting was immediately desperate and the legions were hard pressed to maintain their ground. The Nervii and their allied tribes nearly surrounded the Romans, threatening the camp and the utter destruction of Caesar's army. Caesar's timely intervention, however, personally standing and fighting with his men, helped Roman discipline maintain itself.

In a nearly disastrous battle that could've changed the history of Europe, 3 things in particular kept the Romans from absolute defeat. Caesar's own personal intervention was important in stabilizing the men, the 2 legions with the baggage train arrived just in time to reinforce crumbling Roman lines, and the return of the Roman cavalry. Titus Labienus had taken the enemy camp in the midst

of the fighting and was positioned at a vantage point where he could see the entire battle unfolding. He ordered Caesar's favorite 10th legion, no longer in danger itself, into a critical part of the enemy lines, relieving their distressed comrades. Soon after, the enemy lines broke and the Belgae warriors were in mass flight.

According to Caesar, though the numbers are assuredly in doubt, the Nervii surrendered and informed him that of 60,000 original warriors, only 500 remained. With the promise of no more aggression, he allowed them and other tribal combatants to return to their lands as subjects of Roman power.

The Aduatuci however, arriving late to the battle, fled intact to their lands and Caesar pursued. Arriving at the Aduatuci fort, where the tribe had walled it self in, Caesar showed a strategic brilliance in siege warfare that would be highlighted at Alesia 3 years later. The Romans laid siege building a 15 mile wall 12 feet high around the fort and constructed siege weapons with which to ram the Aduatuci walls. Prior to complete destruction, Caesar offered peace and freedom to maintain their lands if only they would submit and give up their arms. Initially the tribe agreed, casting their weapons out of the fort and opening the gates to the legions. Caesar then suggests that after confirming the surrender, he ordered his men out of the fort for the night, to prevent unnecessary looting or injury to the Aduatuci. During the night however, thinking that the Romans would lower their guard in light of the surrender, the Aduatuci stormed the Roman lines hoping to catch them by surprise. The attempt failed and nearly 4,000 men were killed with the rest retreating to the fort. In the first of many perceived brutalities Caesar would be merciless with the Belgae who betrayed him. The next day the Romans stormed the fort capturing it quickly. He then claimed that 53,000 people were captured and sold into slavery, virtually wiping out the Aduatuci.

At this point, Publius Licinius Crassus returned, who had been sent against the Veneti, the Unelli, the Osismii, the Curiosolitae, the Sesuvii, the Aulerici, and the Rhedones of Brittany and Normandy. He informed Caesar that this northwestern section of Gaul was completely under Roman dominion. Though this assessment was not quite true, it served Caesar's purpose for the time being. He next negotiated cooperation with various bordering Germanic tribes to ensure the stability of his gains. Word was sent back to Rome, and despite opposition to his politics, Cicero himself pushed through an unusual *Supplicatio*, or public offering of thanks, for Caesar. A typical *Supplicatio* lasted only 5 days, and Pompey received 10 days for his conquest of the east. Caesar however received 15 days, marking a very strange concession to the man who was so reviled by the Senatorial conservatives. After putting most of his army into winter quarters, Caesar then moved to his third province of Illyricum to attend to matters there, while his lieutenant Galba, secured passes through the Alps by defeating resistant Seduni tribes.

Conquest of Gaul

As the campaign year of 56 BC opened, Caesar found that Gaul still wasn't quite ready for Roman occupation. In his own words: "he reflected that almost all the Gauls were fond of revolution, and easily and quickly excited to war; that all men likewise, by nature, love liberty and hate the condition of slavery, he thought he ought to divide and more widely distribute his army, before more states should join the confederation." Labienus was sent with the bulk of the cavalry among the Treveri which was near the Rhine. He was charged with keeping peace among the Belgae and preventing Germanic crossings into Gallic territory.

P. Crassus was sent to Aquitania with 12 legionary cohorts to subdue the tribes there. With the help of Gallic auxilia, as in all cases, Crassus quickly brought Roman control to the westernmost portion of Gaul. Though with some difficulty, Crassus won two decisive battles over the Sotiates followed by the Cantabri. When word passed through the region of the Roman victories, it encouraged the rest of the region to surrender peacefully. In short order, the Tarbelli, Bigerriones,

Preciani, Vocasates, Tarusates, Elurates, Garites, Ausci, Garumni, Sibuzates and Cocosates surrendered to Roman domination.

In the north, Caesar ordered Q. Titurius Sabinus with 3 legions to quell any potential opposition among the Unelli, Curiosolitae, and the Lexovii. Sabinus made short work of any resistance and brought his territory under Caesar's sway. Decimus Brutus, the young future assassin of Caesar, was sent to build a fleet amongst the Veneti. This move, while certainly designed to establish authority over the whole of Gaul, was a certain precursor to the invasion of Britain. The Veneti controlled the waterways with a formidable fleet of their own and were augmented by British Celts. At first the Gallic vessels outmatched the Romans, and Brutus could do little to hamper Veneti operations. Roman ingenuity took over, however, and they began using hooks launched by archers to grapple the Veneti ships to their own. Before long, the Veneti were completely defeated, and like many tribes before them, sold into slavery.

With the defeat of the Gallic resistance, Caesar next began to focus his attention across the channel. Still, the conquest was not quite as complete as it seemed. First Caesar would have to deal with more Germanic incursions before he could cross to Britain. And despite his confidence, the Gallic tribes were not nearly as subdued as he thought. For now, though, Caesar returned to Cisalpine Gaul to attend to political matters in Rome.

Political Opposition

While Caesar was just getting underway in his Gallic campaigns, the situation in Rome was initially in his favor. In 58 BC, Publius Clodius Pulcher, the wild patrician who scandalized Caesar's home just a few years before, now served his term as Tribune of the Plebs. In complete support of Caesar, he enacted new laws granting himself and the populares more power. In his greatest coup, he forced the exile of his enemy Cicero, who had prosecuted Clodius earlier for his scandalous behavior. Clodius used Cicero's role in the 'murder' without trial of Senators during the Cataline Conspiracy for his own political gain. He also managed to remove Cato from the front of center of Caesarian opposition by sending him off to annex Cyprus. A rivalry with Pompey was also developing and he intimidated the great man into inactivity through veiled assassination threats.

Clodius' support of Caesar's position wouldn't last long, however. Clodius was drunk with power and had little agenda to support other than advancing his own power. By 57 BC, the efforts of Clodius, and a continuing rivalry brought Pompey and Crassus back to a shaky mutual dislike. Clodius was instrumental in being a disturbance in the settlement of Pompey's eastern conquests, and his appointment of Cato to Cyprus caused unrest in Egypt. The Egyptian King, Ptolemy the XII fled Egypt and came to Rome seeking Pompey's intervention, but Crassus opposed helping Pompey settle the matter. Additionally, grain shortages for the last 3 harvest seasons were exceptionally poor. As a result the Roman mob was becoming volatile and Clodius wasted no time in using this to his advantage. He supported armed street gangs to support his cause, while Pompey used the tribune for 57 BC, Titius Annius Milo, to hire gangs of his own as a counter measure.

Pompey and the current Consul Cornelius Lentulus Spinther wanted Cicero to return from exile immediately to help stabilize the situation. Though initially defeated, Cicero was finally allowed to return by early summer of 57 BC. It seems that Caesar, now having fallen out with Clodius, made no opposition to this and possibly could have supported it. Cicero's actions upon his return, in general support of the Triumvirate, and voting Caesar a 15 day period of thanks for his defeat of the Belgae, seemed to indicate Cicero's gratefulness for the recall. In one show of support and in order to correct the grain problem Cicero had Pompey appointed to a 5 year term as Cura Annonae (manager of the grain supply).

Meanwhile, the gangs of Clodius and Milo were running out of control. Politically both men tried to prosecute one another for various transgressions involving the use of violence. At one trial of Milo, both Crassus and Pompey were present to speak in support of Milo and Clodius knew the case was lost. However, he used the opportunity to further divide Crassus and Pompey, attacking and heckling Pompey while openly praising Crassus, despite his support for Milo. Things began to deteriorate further for Caesar when it seemed that his former supporters were joining against him. Clodius and Cicero soon joined with the Optimates of Bibulus and Cato in blaming all the problems in Rome on Caesar's Consulship of 59 BC. His measures while in office were mercilessly attacked, and his command in Gaul was seriously threatened.

By 56 BC, as Caesar was pushing Roman control throughout the entire Gallic province, the political situation in Rome was dangerously falling apart. In the midst of planning his next steps in Gaul, Britain and Germania, Caesar returned to Cisalpine Gaul and knew he had to reaffirm support within the Senate. Pompey was in northern Italy attending to his duties with the grain commission, and Crassus went to Ravenna to meet with Caesar. He instead, called them both to Luca for a conference, and the three triumvirs were joined by up to 200 Senators. Though support in Rome was unraveling, this meeting showed the scope and size of the 'triumvirate' as being a much larger coalition than just 3 men. However, Caesar needed Crassus and Pompey to get along in order to hold the whole thing together. Caesar had to have his command extended in order to ensure safety from recall and prosecution.

An agreement was reached in which Caesar would have his extension while granting Pompey and Crassus a balance of power opportunity. Pompey and Crassus were to be elected as joint Consuls for 55 BC, with Pompey receiving Spain as his province and Crassus to get Syria. Pompey, jealous and likely concerned over Caesar's growing army, wanted the security of a provincial command with legions, and Crassus wanted the opportunity for military glory and plunder to the east in Parthia. With the matter resolved, Crassus and Pompey returned to Rome to stand for the elections of 55 BC. Despite bitter resistance from the optimates, including a delay in the election, the two were eventually confirmed as Consuls. Caesar took no chances however, and sent his Legate, Publius Crassus, back to Rome with 1,000 men to 'keep order'. The presence of these men, along with the popularity of Crassus and Pompey went a long way to stabilize the situation. The gang wars of Clodius and Milo relaxed for a time, and Cicero relaxed his outspoken opposition. However, almost as soon as Crassus left to govern his province in late 55 BC, Pompey's inability as a politician began to show. With Pompey handling the situation alone, things soon began to unravel and he would be forced ever closer to the optimates in order to maintain order.

Crossing the Rhine

In 55 BC Caesar was busy preparing for his invasion of Britain. Whether his reasoning was retribution against those tribes that supported the Veneti and other opposing Gallic tribes as he himself claimed, the search to secure more metal sources such as tin and iron, or simply increasing his fame by being the first to cross, Caesar was prepared to make the crossing when events along the Rhine intervened. Even while Caesar was in Luca meeting with Pompey and Crassus, word began to arrive of Germanic crossings of the Rhine. The Usipetes and Tenchteri tribes, both in a state of perpetual war with the powerful Suevi, began looking for safer land across the river.

Since the winter of 56/55 BC, the Germanics had displaced the Menapii tribe of Gauls, and Caesar was concerned that the incursions would lead to renewal of war in the region. According to him, he set out for the Rhine 'earlier than he was accustomed to do' with his legions, likely in the early spring of 55 BC. News arrived of further Germanic advances into the territory of the Eburones and

the Condrusi, and Caesar was resolved for a fight. Caesar marched quickly and when he was within a few days march, the Germanics sent ambassadors to discuss the situation.

The general tone of the discussion was one of conciliation. The Germans claimed to only want peace and their own land away from the Suevi. Caesar refused their request to stay in Gaul but said he could arrange for settlement in the lands of the Ubii, who would be grateful for assistance against their mutual enemies, the Suevi. The invaders asked for 3 days to deliberate with their tribesmen, but Caesar refused, believing that they were only delaying long enough for their own cavalry to return from raids against the Ambivariti tribe. Caesar continued to march and when he arrived within 12 miles of the enemy camp, another embassy arrived to beg for more time. This time Caesar partially relented, ordering his cavalry which was scouting ahead of the main body, to resist committing aggression against the Germans.

Caesar's cavalry which numbered 5,000 soon found itself under attack, however. Apparently hoping to lure the Romans into complacency through negotiation, a much smaller force of Germanic cavalry launched a surprise attack on the Romans. With 800 men, the Germans caused considerable mayhem, killing 74 Romans before driving them all the way back to Caesar's main lines. While Caesar was preparing to launch a counter attack, he had an incredible stroke of luck. A large Germanic contingent of tribal elders and leading men arrived to beg forgiveness for the treachery and to set matter right. Caesar, however, would have nothing to do with it and ordered the Germans seized and held. A full scale assault was then launched on the German camp and according to Caesar, 430,000 leaderless German men, women and children were assembled. The Romans butchered indiscriminately, sending the mass of people fleeing to the Rhine, where many more succumbed to the river. In the end, there is no account of how many were killed, but Caesar also claims to have not lost a single man. Of those that survived, many stayed with the Romans in service rather than face the angry Gauls or the Suevi in their depleted state.

With the situation secure on the Gallic side of the river, Caesar decided it was time to settle the matter with the aggressive Germans, lest they invade again. The Ubii alone, still seeking help against the Suevi, welcomed Roman intervention. It was decided, in order to impress the Germans and the Roman people that bridging the Rhine would have the most significant effect. By June of 56 BC, Caesar became the first Roman to cross the Rhine into Germanic territory. In so doing, a monstrous wooden bridge was built in only 10 days, stretching over 300 feet across the great river. This alone assuredly, impressed the Germans and Gauls, who had little comparative capability in bridge building. Within a short time of his crossing, nearly all tribes within the region sent hostages along with messages of peace. Only the Sigambri resisted, fleeing their towns rather than submit to Caesar. The Romans made an example of them by burning their stores and their villages before receiving word that the Suevi were beginning to assemble in opposition. Caesar, rather than risk this glorious achievement in a pitched battle with a fierce foe, decided that discretion was the better part of valor. After spending only 18 days in Germanic territory, the Romans returned across the Rhine, burning their bridge in the process. With that short diversion, Caesar secured peace among the Germanics, as the Suevi remained relatively peaceful for some time after, and secured a crucial alliance with the Ubii. His rear secured, Caesar looked for another glorious Roman 'first' and moved his body north to prepare for the invasion of Britain.

Invasion of Britain 55 BC

The invasion of Britain was likely planned as early as 57 BC, and certainly by 56 BC. Aid by British Celts against Roman efforts in Gaul, gave Caesar the excuse he needed to justify the undertaking, but his motives were certainly far more personal and political. Much like his crossing of the Rhine into Germania, Caesar certainly wanted to be the first Roman to gain the prestige of crossing to Britain, the farthest reach of the known ancient world. The great mineral wealth of Britain, metals

such as silver, iron and tin also were a likely motivation, and in 55 BC, an expedition was finally practical.

In late August of 55 BC, with the VII and X legions approximating 10,000 men, Caesar set sail from Portus Itius (modern Boulogne) reaching the British coast off of Dover overnight. Caesar had already been in lengthy discussion with various merchants and other Celts with knowledge of Britain, and the Britons were well aware of the coming expedition. Additionally, Caesar's ally Commius, chief of the Gallic Atrebates, had already gone to Britain to negotiate peace for the Romans and was taken prisoner by the Britons. Upon the initial arrival, Celtic warriors lined the cliffs of Dover, making a landing impossible, and the fleet was forced farther up the coast. Though followed by the Cantii, who had every intention of blocking the Roman landing, the Romans landed on a pebbly flat shore near Deal.

Caesar's initial planning, and in fact the entire first expedition, seems to have been fraught with uncharacteristic tactical errors. He first chose to land at low tide, forcing his ships to anchor up to 600 feet off shore. His men were then forced to wade that distance under heavy fire from British missiles. The landing was in peril from the beginning, with the men hesitant to rush the shore. Only the intervention of the 10th legion's standard bearer inspired the men. According to Caesar he began to rush the shore calling out, "Leap forth, soldiers, unless you wish to betray your standard to the enemy. I, at any rate, shall have performed my duty to my country and my general."

Initially, the British chariots caused considerable problems for the legionaries, and Caesar was impressed by the Celtic method of warfare. In his commentaries, he wrote, "Their manner of fighting from chariots is as follows : first they drive in all directions and hurl javelins, and so by the mere terror that the teams inspire and by the noise of the wheels they generally throw the ranks of soldiers into confusion. When they have worked their way in between the troops, they leap down from the chariots and fight on foot. Meanwhile their charioteers retire gradually from the battle, and place chariots in such a fashion that, if the warriors are had pressed by the enemy, they have a ready means of retreat to their own side "

The Romans eventually got the upper hand, however, and drove the Britons back. Over the next few days, many tribes began negotiating peace and surrendering to Caesar, but failure to provide hostages as was the custom, kept Caesar suspicious. On the fourth day after his arrival in Britain, his much needed cavalry arrived, but a terrible storm not only forced them back to Gaul. Worse still, the storm and changes in the tides damaged the bulk of Caesar's anchored fleet. The Romans had brought little food supply with them, and now faced the danger of being unable to return to Gaul. With only 2 legions, it seems likely from the ill-prepared nature of the expedition, that it certainly wasn't meant to be a full invasion. Caesar probably expected very little resistance among the locals, and this first trip was very likely only intended as a short show of strength to impress the Britons and arrange for terms. Regardless, the Romans were in serious trouble and had to begin foraging for supplies.

At this point, it became clear to the Celtic chiefs that if they had an opportunity to send the Romans back across the channel. With one legion busily working on salvaging and repairing the fleet, the second was sent out to reap corn in local fields. While foraging, the British ambushed the legion, and their chariots wreaked havoc. The Romans were simply unable to stand and fight in the disciplined style that they were trained for. Caesar claims that his presence kept the battle from a rout, and he was able to withdraw back to the beach and his other legion. A stroke of luck allowed the Romans time to regroup, when 3 days of rain prevented any more attacks. However, it also allowed the Britons time to share the news of its initial victory, thereby recruiting more warriors for the coming battle.

Caesar was in serious jeopardy of losing his first major encounter on foreign soil. Retreat was not an option due to weather, and Caesar's dignity. When the weather broke, a large Celtic army moved towards the Roman camp, and Caesar prepared in the Roman style. This time, though, he

went on the offensive rather than allow his men to be intimidated by the British chariots. The battle turned out to be a rather short affair, ending in victory for the Romans. They pursued the fleeing enemy around the countryside burning and surrounding as they went, eventually forcing the local tribes to sue for peace. In order to save face, Caesar demanded double the number of hostages originally asked for, but promised to leave for Gaul as soon as able. The Britons agreed, though only a few hostages were actually sent, but since the fleet was ready Caesar hastily crossed back across the channel.

This first expedition was certainly no great Roman victory, and can really be considered a defeat at the hands of the British tribes. Though he escaped mostly unharmed, Caesar's pride and dignity were surely damaged. His report back to Rome for this campaign year was impressive. Having crossed the Rhine to Germania and across the sea to Britain, Caesar overcame any fault for being so poorly prepared. Another 20 days of thanksgiving were granted to him for his deeds in 55 BC, but when he returned to Cisalpine Gaul for winter administration, Britain was most definitely still on his mind.

Invasion of Britain 54 BC

At the outset of 54 BC, two things certainly troubled Caesar. Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, a definite political opponent in the camp of the optimates, had been elected Consul, and trouble was brewing in his province of Illyricum. The Pirustae tribe, near modern Albania, was causing trouble forcing Caesar to focus some attention on his neglected province. With the presence of the now awe-inspiring Caesar, the situation was handled quickly by raising an adequate force. The Pirustae provided hostages and settled into peaceful affairs, allowing Caesar to return to Gaul.

While away, he ordered a massive fleet to be built for a larger second crossing to Britain. This time though, Caesar made modifications to the ships, having them built without the deep keels of standard Roman galleys. This would allow a more effective landing for his legions and cavalry. By July of 54 BC, after a short delay caused by the Treviri tribe, Caesar was finally ready to go. With 800 ships, 5 legions and 2,000 cavalry, leaving 3 legions and 2,000 cavalry in Gaul under Labienus, the Roman fleet was the largest naval landing operation in the history of world, and remaining so until the D-Day invasion of Normandy in 1944.

Landing the following morning, the sheer size of the Roman force surely intimidated the Britons. The Romans were allowed to land and make camp freely without opposition, subduing several local tribes in the process. The main British forces retreated inland to avoid Caesar, but he definitely pursued. One legion and 300 cavalry were left at the beach camp, while the bulk of the force marched towards the Britons. Small scale fighting couldn't stop the Roman advance and Caesar captured one hold out near modern Canterbury on the Stour river. Just as Caesar was about to press the issue, however, news arrived of another coastal storm that wrecked the bulk of his anchored fleet. Hurrying back to the camp, he ordered Labienus to build as many ships as he could in Gaul, and ordered his own men to repair the damage.

Successfully salvaging his fleet, Caesar returned to the Stour to find that the Britons had begun to unite under a Cassivellaunus. While marching, the Romans were ambushed but repelled the attack after some serious casualties and a hard fight. Next, the Romans moved to the Thames and were engaged in the largest battle of this expedition. Winning a decisive victory, the resistance of the local tribes in any significant numbers came to an abrupt end. Caesar invested the fortified hold out of Cassivellaunus while his single legion back at the beach camp fended off a joint attack of various tribes. Winning both engagements, the opposition of the local tribes came to an end, and Caesar was able to claim victory.

By September, arrangements for peaceful relations had been made, and the Romans returned to Gaul. Though this second invasion of Britain did little more than secure some hostages, tribute and Roman awareness on Britain, it had the significance of being a dignity saving campaign for Caesar. After virtually retreating from the first expedition a year earlier, this time he left only after securing his dominance. Though that dominance wouldn't last without a Roman presence, Caesar was able to claim victory in a land that some probably didn't even think existed.

Crassus and Parthia

After serving his joint Consulship with Pompey in 55 BC, Crassus was eager to emulate his triumvir partners with military glory. Having last seen success on the battlefield against Spartacus nearly 20 years prior, Crassus took Syria as his province for 54 BC, with the full intention of attacking the Parthian empire. Many within the Senate opposed Crassus' plans as the powerful Parthians had never done anything of great harm to Roman interests. Little could be done to stop a man with the power of Caesar and Pompey behind him, and an undying thirst for glory and wealth.

First arriving in Syria in late 55 BC, Crassus spent the bulk of the next year preparing his legions and squeezing the Asian territories for money. By late 54 BC, he was joined by his son, Publius Crassus and his Gallic cavalry, as he had recently been a Legate in the service of Caesar. With dreams of glory and 7 legions comprising some 30,000 men, along with the 1,000 cavalry of Publius, Crassus crossed the Euphrates River into Mesopotamia in early 53 BC. Initially, the Hellenized populations there quickly offered allegiance to the Romans and Crassus was certainly heartened. They were joined by Artabazes, king of Armenia, who was encouraged by the Roman presence and opportunity to rid himself of Parthian rivals. He encouraged Crassus to march through his own country, which would provide opportunity for supply and terrain suitable to defend against the vaunted Parthian cavalry. Crassus preferred the faster more direct route straight southeast through Mesopotamia and towards the cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. Perhaps sensing disaster, Artabazes took his own 6,000 Armenian cavalry home with him.

Conveniently, in what seemed a stroke of luck to the Romans, a Nabataen chieftan Ariamnes joined Crassus with 6,000 of his own cavalry. Unbeknownst to the Romans, Ariamnes was actually a spy sent by the Parthians in order to lead the Roman army into a trap. He convinced Crassus that the Parthians were on the run in advance of the Roman forces. With this information, Crassus was convinced that he made the right decisions and continued with haste along his straight desert route. Sure that little resistance would be met he was unconcerned with the hazards of desert travel and the vulnerability caused by open terrain. However, the Parthian King Orodes II had already devised a plan to stop the Romans using Ariamnes to mislead Crassus. Part of the Parthian army was sent to Armenia to punish Artabazes for siding with the Romans in the first place, and another force under the great clan leader Surena was sent to pre-occupy Crassus.

At this point Ariamnes convinced Crassus to move away from the Euphrates and deeper into hostile territory. Initially, there seemed little cause for concern, but as the miles of desert wasteland drudged on, moral was certainly at a dangerous low. The Roman officer staff certainly suspected treachery and tried to convince their commander to turn back or at least not to trust Ariamnes. Even a messenger from Artabazes, sent to inform Crassus of the Armenian cavalry's inability to return, suggested that the Romans take a different route.

This only inspired Crassus to anger and he vowed revenge, despite the fact that it was sound and practical advice. As the tension was building between the Roman general staff and moral was terribly low, Ariamnes knew his trap could be sprung. He told Crassus that his cavalry would depart to harass the enemy where it could, but that the Romans should continue on through the heart of the desert terrain at all haste. Crassus seemingly continued to trust the Nabataen

commander, perhaps blinded by greed and told of fabulous riches. He ordered his advance to continue at even greater speed certainly punishing the men in the heat of the desert. By the time they approached the inland town of Carrhae, the Roman legions were exhausted and in complete disorder. Unfortunately for them, the trap sprung by the Parthians was perfectly played. Scouts sent out in advance of the main body returned, informing Crassus that most of their unit had been killed and that the Parthians were massing nearby.

Battle of Carrhae

After receiving word from his scouts about the presence of a Parthian army near Carrhae in 53 BC, Crassus seems to have panicked. His troops were exhausted and poorly prepared for battle after a long and fast march through the Mesopotamian desert. He didn't allow his men to rest or make camp, but instead began to form lines for battle. Advised by his officer staff to stretch out in classic formation with the infantry flanked by cavalry, Crassus instead ordered hollow square formations to allow defense against flanking. He commanded the middle while his son Publius and another officer, Cassius, commanded the wings. They advanced toward the smaller and less impressive Parthian force far too confident.

As they approached with 35,000 men, the Parthian force seemed to be only about 10,000 men, mainly light horse archers. However, as they approached, the Parthian commander Surena ordered cavalry positioned at the rear uncover their concealed armor. The vaunted Parthian cataphracts were small in number, but their heavy armor was definitely an impressive and intimidating sight. As the battle opened a hail of Parthian arrows pinned down the Romans. Crassus ordered his son Publius to attack the archers with his Gallic cavalry and a force of infantry. Initially, Publius drove back the horse archers, but found himself far away from the main Roman body. The Parthians cut off his force, surrounding it with horse archers and the cataphracts. Though the Gauls fought bravely and ferociously, Publius was overwhelmed, and the cataphracts seemed invincible. Trapped away from his father and the army, Publius ordered his own death at the hand of one of his men, and the Roman force was butchered.

Crassus meanwhile got word that his son was in trouble, just as pressure was diverted from his own lines to that of Publius' force. Crassus reformed his lines in the traditional Roman style and ordered a general advance. As this was getting under way however, the Parthians who had defeated the Gallic cavalry rode in front of the Romans with the head of Publius on a spear. The Roman advance was stopped fast by the Parthians, and the already rattled Crassus, seems to have lost the will to fight. His legates, Cassius and Octavius ordered a retreat intended to save the army during the night, desperately leaving the wounded on the field. Remaining cavalry fled the battle immediately, leaving Crassus without scouts. They rode first to Carrhae to inform the garrison of the battle and then hurried on to Zeugma to avoid the disaster that was sure to come.

In the confusion and desperation of the Roman retreat, as many as 4,000 wounded legionaries were put to the sword as the Parthians came in pursuit the following morning. Another 4 cohorts had been separated from the main body and were surrounded and killed, save for 20 men who were allowed to flee for displaying exceptional bravery. Crassus and the remaining Roman army reached the relative safety of Carrhae and probably prepared for a siege. Crassus however, was still obviously unsettled. Once again a Parthian spy duped him, this time into fleeing the safety of the town. The spy led the Romans to inescapable terrain and the Parthian main force approached. They offered a parlay, including an offer of peace if Crassus himself joined the negotiation. At first he refused, but the legionaries, afraid and exhausted, threatened his life if he didn't accept the offer. At the meeting, the Parthians seized and executed Crassus and the Roman party, sending the Romans into further disarray.

In the end, the great bulk of the Roman army was hunted down and killed or captured. Nearly 20,000 were killed and another 10,000 captured. Of the original force, only about 5,000 men under Cassius, and the cavalry that departed early, managed to escape. The Parthians meanwhile, settled the Roman prisoners in an eastern territory called Sogdia. Interestingly, the Han Chinese later captured this area and the Roman transplants were likely among the first westerners to meet the Chinese directly.

The death of Crassus helped signal the end of the triumvirate between he, Caesar and Pompey, but even if he had lived its doubtful that civil war wouldn't have erupted eventually anyway. As the Romans were too pre-occupied with western concerns and the political turmoil that was about to erupt, the situation with Parthia was largely ignored for nearly another 30 years. Parthian king Orodes II ordered the death of Surena shortly thereafter, and the Parthians did little to press their advantage in eastern Roman territories. The lost standards of Crassus' lost legions remained in a Parthian temple Rome's first emperor, Augustus, negotiated their return in 20 BC.

Revolt in Gaul

As Caesar returned from his second expedition to Britain in 54 BC, there was already trouble looming in Gaul and in his personal life. He received word that his daughter Julia, wife of Pompey had died in childbirth. This event was assuredly difficult for Caesar on a personal level, but it carried monumental political ramifications as well. While Julia lived Pompey remained at least partially allied to Caesar, but with her death, he drifted ever closer to Caesar's enemies, the boni. Caesar attempted to confirm the alliance by offering his grandniece Octavia as a new bride to Pompey, while also offering to divorce his own wife and marry Pompey's daughter. Pompey's refusal, though an indication of his own personal grief, was also a clear signal that the triumvirate was slowly breaking apart. With the death of Crassus at Carrhae two years later, the coming civil war seemed inevitable. Shortly after word of Julia's death, Caesar also received the news of the death of his mother Aurelia. With the Gallic revolt on the horizon, and the recent tragic news, 54 BC was shaping into a terrible year for Caesar.

For now though, despite his personal and political losses, Caesar had to deal with revolts in Gaul and renewed trouble with Germanic tribes. Legions were scattered throughout Gaul for the winter camps, to not only quell trouble, but to spread the burden of supply throughout the province. One camp in particular, that of Cotta and Sabinus, was sent to cover the Rhine area in the territory of the Eburones. A surprise ambush dealt Caesar's legions its first major defeat and opened the door for widespread revolution. The battle, conducted by Ambiorix, was a prolonged affair in which the Romans fought valiantly to nearly the last man. 15 cohorts were slaughtered, totaling nearly 7,200 men or just under $\frac{1}{4}$ of Caesar's total force. Only a few scattered remains of the army were able to escape to the camp of Labienus some distance away, and if not for these men, the story of the lost cohorts may have been a complete mystery.

The Gauls and Ambiorix found it easy to recruit after this victory and their army swelled to as many as 60,000 warriors. They next moved on the camp of Quintus Cicero, brother of the great orator, and laid siege. Caesar, with a much smaller force of some 7,000 men was able to defeat the poorly equipped and trained Gallic mob, but found Cicero and his men near utter disaster. Nine in every ten men under Cicero's command had been reported as wounded, and Caesar procured them with great military honors for their service. Caesar and Cicero moved to Samarobriua in December to finally settle in to winter quarters. At the camp of Labienus, he was under constant pressure from Eburones, Nervii and Treveri cavalry. Word of Caesar's victory, and the killing of the Treveri leader Indutiomarus in a Roman raid led by Labienus relieved the pressure, but the situation remained unclear for the entire winter of 54 to 53 BC.

At the offset of 53 BC, Caesar trained two new legions and borrowed a third from Pompey. Clearly Pompey and Caesar hadn't completely fallen out yet, but this could've been done to force Caesar into Pompey's debt. Regardless, Caesar now had 10 full legions under his command and he would begin to put them to use as early as March. Caesar first punished the Nervii for their involvement in the revolt and identified other opposing tribes as the Senones, Carnutes, Treviri, Eburones and Menapii. He secured a headquarters in central Gaul at Lutetia and marched against the Senones, Carnutes and Menapii. Winning victory easily, Caesar reinforced Labienus in facing the Treviri and their Germanic allies whom had been crossing the Rhine. Labienus soundly defeated this opposition, bringing northeastern Gaul under Roman dominion once again, and Caesar was able to focus his attention on the source of many Gallic disruptions, the Rhine.

In the summer of 53 BC, Caesar once again bridged the Rhine to pursue Ambiorix and the Eburones. In a few short weeks, the land of the Eburones was decimated, though Ambiorix escaped Caesar's grasp. Caesar's Germanic allies the Ubii, punish the Suevi on his behalf for aiding the Treviri against Labienus and for just being a general source of trouble. At the end of this short trip, despite some harrowing moments for Quintus Cicero who was once again besieged as his small force guarded the Rhine bridge, the expedition resulted in Caesar's favor.

At the end of the campaign year of 53 BC, general peace seemed to have returned to Gaul, and Caesar was able to revisit Cisalpine Gaul to attend to political and administrative matters. By this time however, word had arrived of Crassus' great defeat to the Parthians at Carrhae, and coupled with the death of Julia, it was obvious that the political situation would begin to unravel. Immeasurable bribery was taking place in Rome along with lawsuits and trials of all sorts. The mob violence between Clodius and Milo continued and elections for 53 had been delayed until summer; just about the time that Caesar made his second crossing of the Rhine.

By early 52 BC, the situation in Rome was no better and in fact had grown much worse. Mob violence prevailed and elections were delayed once again. The violence between Clodius and Milo eventually resulted in the murder of Clodius and the trial of Milo, resulting in his exile. In an emergency, Pompey wanted the dictatorship, but the optimates or 'boni', were still concerned over Pompey's motivation. Instead, he was offered effectively the same position without the title. He was made sole Consul for the year, so was able to rule more effectively than with a potential rival, but still wasn't graced with the power of the Tribunes. Pompey then married into the boni clan marrying Claudia, the daughter of Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio. Metellus was eventually made joint Consul to ease fears over Pompey's power, but by now Pompey was clearly leaning with Caesar's enemies. A law was passed to prevent the great amount of electoral bribery that was running rampant, and in it, magistrates were once again forced to run for office only if they were present in Rome. Pompey had previously told Caesar that an exception would be made for him to protect him from his enemies and allow him to regain imperium through public office at the end of his Gallic term. As the boni were anxiously awaiting his term to run out which would force him to return to Rome without the protection of his legions, this clause was of paramount importance to Caesar. However, the exception was 'accidentally' left out of the final draft and it was becoming painfully clear that the boni intended to cut down Caesar's career at any cost.

Vercingetorix

In the winter of 53 BC, after Caesar had crossed the Alps for Cisalpine Gaul, new discontent was brewing among the tribes of southern central Gaul. With the absence of legions in their territories, and certainly resisting the Roman yoke, the Carnutes rose up and wreaked havoc on a small Roman settlement called Cenabum, near modern Orleans. The small town of Roman traders was slaughtered by the Gauls, and word quickly spread throughout the region of the uprising.

Among those tribes who heard the word, and the call for solidarity against Rome, were the neighboring Arverni. Initially hesitant a young chieftan, Vercingetorix (or in Gallic possibly Fearcuincedorigh, Man who is chief of a hundred heads), came to forefront to rally the Gauls. He was the son of Celtillus, a former chieftan who was executed for attempting to unite the tribe under a single king. His son seemed to be following in the father's footsteps, but times were changing, and desperation was setting in. Vercingetorix was expelled from the capital of the Arverni by his own uncle, who protested against revolt, but the young man was resilient and recruited like minded tribesmen from the countryside. He was able to regain entry to the city, and with his small growing army in tow, was named chief of all the Arverni.

Other neighboring tribes soon joined the growing revolt, especially in the absence of the legions who occupied the northern and eastern portions of Gaul. According to Caesar, the Senones, Parisii, Pictones, Cadurci, Turones, Aulerci, Lemovice and the tribes of Aquitania all joined in the general revolt. The real danger came when this new coalition began making inroads into the Aedui, the most formidable and oldest of the Roman allied tribes. Caesar had to make haste from Cisalpine Gaul and back across the Alps to his army, but the mountains were still buried in snow from the winter. Caesar reports that his men dug 6 feet of snow from their path in order to make the crossing and he was able to do so at an alarming speed. Finally joining his army in the late winter early spring of 52 BC, Caesar had no choice but to consolidate his forces against the formidable revolt. The danger here was that it reduced garrisons, allowing other tribes to rise up, and the terrible situation with trying to feed such a large force. Vercingetorix wisely adopted a plan to slash and burn what food stores would be readily available to Caesar, and the tribes mostly complied. However, one town, Avaricum, with its great food stores, was spared as the owning tribe had already burned 20 of their own towns.

Caesar, joined by Germanic Ubii cavalry and a poorly fed army made haste for Avaricum and delaying tactics by the Gauls were mostly fended off by the Ubii. Caesar arrived at the fortified city in early spring and began displaying his tactical brilliance in siege warfare. Despite incessant rain, two wheeled towers, eighty feet high, with 330 foot ramps were constructed to penetrate the defenses. Despite desperate fighting to prevent the Romans from overtaking the walls, Caesar, after 27 days, entered the town. The population in its entirety was put to the sword. The Romans, frustrated and half-starved spared very few, and of 40,000 reported inhabitants, only 800 supposedly escaped to inform Vercingetorix. Well fed and encouraged by victory, Caesar could now plan on attacking the main body of his Gallic opponent directly. Vercingetorix won more support through the Roman victory, however. Seeing the wisdom of his plan to destroy the food supply more tribes united under the Arverni King. He was slowly becoming, if not a King, then at a minimum, the commander in chief of all the combined Gallic tribes.

Battle of Gergovia

After taking Avaricum and supplying his legions with badly needed sustenance, Caesar began to move against the main body of Gallic resistance. In the early summer Labienus was sent with 4 legions against the Senones and Parisii, and Caesar pursued Vercingetorix with the 6 remaining legions accompanied by Aedui auxilia and Germanic cavalry. Following the Allier River, Vercingetorix marched ahead of the Roman host, destroying bridges as they went to delay the pursuit. Near the hill fort of Gergovia, with favorable ground for a defensive stand, Vercingetorix stopped and prepared to meet Caesar.

After a 5 day march, the Romans engaged the Gallic cavalry just outside Gergovia. Pushing them back, Caesar moved into position against the enemy infantry. In surveying the field it was obvious that Vercingetorix was well positioned on favorable ground, but a hill adjacent to the main fort was only lightly guarded. During the night, the Romans took the lightly held hill with 2 legions and fortified their position. Rather than risk a full frontal assault, Caesar once again relied on his

superior siege tactics. This time he ordered a double trench, 12 feet wide, to be constructed between the newly captured hill and his main camp. Intending to completely encircle Gergovia and starve the Gauls inside, Caesar was interrupted by trouble with his Gallic allies the Aedui.

Through the treachery of a chieftan by name of Litavicus, the Aedui were spurred to join the revolt by being told that Caesar had slaughtered Aedui hostages previously given up to him as a condition of peace. Caesar broke off the attempted siege of Gergovia with 4 legions, leaving 2 to hold the defenses against Vercingetorix. He met the Aedui some 25 miles away, and with the presence of his legions, the Aedui submit once again to Roman authority. Litavicus managed to flee to join Vercingetorix at Gergovia, but the Aedui were again in the Roman fold, albeit temporarily. While in the process of securing Aedui loyalty, however, Caesar received word from Gaius Fabius who was left in command at Gergovia that his two legions were under heavy attack. Fearful that he might lose the legions and his camp, Caesar ordered a hasty march, displaying his famous knack for uncanny speed on campaign. His 4 legions marched backed to Gergovia in just several hours overnight relieving the pressure on Fabius.

Upon returning, the Gauls had put themselves into a better position to resist Caesar's encirclement plan. He knew that the siege would be a failure, and the only way to win the battle would be to get Vercingetorix to come down from the high ground. Caesar ordered 1 legion to move into some woods below the town, seemingly as a decoy. The main Gallic force moved itself out of position from their camp on the high ground, leaving it exposed, and Caesar moved the bulk of his force to take advantage. The remaining defenders were pushed from their positions on favorable ground and Caesar accomplishing his goal, Caesar ordered a general retreat, likely to reform for battle in a better situation. Caesar reports however, that the bulk of his force either ignored or didn't hear the order, and with the defenders cleared, the Romans began to storm the walls of Gergovia. Encouraged by the potential for plunder and glory, the men attacked oblivious to the danger.

The main body of Gauls that had moved to watch the single legion that Caesar ordered into the woods returned to protect Gergovia. Joining the attack, and gaining favorable position once again, they pushed the Romans from the hill and sent them into flight. Caesar's vaunted 10th legion and parts of the 13th were positioned on level ground to intercept the pursuing Gauls and stem off a potential route. Seeing the Romans in a position to their advantage, Vercingetorix called off the pursuit and moved back up the hill. At the end of the battle, Caesar wrote that 46 centurions and 700 legionaries were missing (presumed killed). Angry with his men for disregarding his retreat order, he chastised them for arrogance, but ordered them back into position to offer battle again. The next day, the Roman lines were drawn again, daring Vercingetorix to attack, but despite some cavalry skirmishes the Gauls were not budging. Realizing that Gergovia would just have to end in his first humiliating defeat, Caesar built a bridge across the Allier, and retreated out of reach of the enemy.

Meanwhile, Labienus was busy against the Parisii and Senones. Also finding himself in precarious positions similar to that of Caesar, he was at first hard pressed to offer battle favorable to Roman tactics. Eventually, near Lutetia, the Gauls attacked Labienus but he smashed the Gallic right wing outflanking and chasing them off the field. In the battle, the Gallic commander Camulogenus was killed and the north central part of Gaul was largely subdued. The Romans secured supplies from Agendicum and marched swiftly to rejoin Caesar to consolidate their forces. Caesar hoped that a single large force would be better suited to defeat Vercingetorix and crush the rebellion in a single effort. However, by this time, the Aedui, likely inspired by the Gallic victory at Gergovia, threw their full support in with the revolt offering as many as 15,000 cavalry to Vercingetorix. At an official meeting of Gallic tribes, he was elected as overall commander of all the combined tribes, essentially making him the first king of Gaul.

Having fully united the Roman forces in the whole of Gaul, save for those of Lucius Caesar with 22 newly recruited cohorts assigned to the defense of various perimeter tribes, Caesar next called upon the Germanics for more support. Arriving quickly with a large force of cavalry, Caesar found

their horses in poor shape and replaced them with horses from his own army. Caesar's army however, as it was recently combined and on the march, was heavily laden with its baggage train. Vercingetorix saw this as his best opportunity to attack a vulnerable Roman army on the march and in need to protect its baggage train, rather than in battle formation. Sometime in early September 52 BC, Vercingetorix attacked the Romans with his cavalry near Divio (modern Dijon) from both the front and rear of the Roman column. Caesar countered the Gauls with his Germanic cavalry and shattered them, sending them racing back to their own infantry lines. Caesar moved in hot pursuit, scattering resistance and the Gauls, having lost the bulk of their cavalry retreated. Vercingetorix moved his army into the heart of central Gaul, in Mandubii territory and they regrouped at the well fortified town of Alesia preparing to meet Caesar's coming siege.

Siege of Alesia

After defeating the Gallic forces of Vercingetorix near Divio, Caesar followed his retreating army to the fortified town of Alesia. With an alleged army of some 80,000 men, Vercingetorix and his Gauls were in shock from Caesar's Germanic cavalry allies and were in no condition to meet the 60,000 Romans Legionaries on the battlefield. In the seasonal summer of 52 BC (late September by the calendar of the time), Caesar approached Alesia with the Gauls holed up inside and was well aware of his army's failures at Gergovia just a short time before.

Deciding to wisely forego a direct attack, Caesar knew that to hem the Gauls inside the fort would eventually starve them out, as food was scarce prior to the fall harvest. Caesar, in his commentaries, suggests that the Gauls had only as much as 30 day's food to feed his army, even on limited rations. He ordered the complete circumvallation of the Alesian plateau, which would not only enclose the Gauls, but keep his large army occupied during the siege. Walls, ditches and forts of various sizes stretched the entire circle for a total length of 10 miles. A wide ditch was dug out in front of the works, with a second water filled trench behind it, separating the open 3 mile field between Alesia and the Roman wall. Caesar himself gives a detailed explanation of the construction:

"he dug a trench twenty feet deep, with perpendicular sides, in such a manner that the base of this trench should extend so far as the edges were apart at the top. He raised all his other works at a distance of four hundred feet from that ditch. Having left this interval, he drew two trenches fifteen feet broad, and of the same depth; the innermost of them, being in low and level ground, he filled with water conveyed from the river. Behind these he raised a rampart and wall twelve feet high; to this he added a parapet and battlements, with large stakes cut like stags' horns, projecting from the junction of the parapet and battlements, to prevent the enemy from scaling it, and surrounded the entire work with turrets, which were eighty feet distant from one another."

Though the construction went well, as would be expected with 60,000 laborers, Vercingetorix didn't sit back and watch his army become encircled. Regular raids attempted to interrupt the Romans, but the legions, accompanied by the fearsome Germanic cavalry, outmatched the attackers and sent them scattering back to their own fort. To cut down the number of attacks, and likely escape attempts, Caesar next ordered an elaborate system of traps and additional wall defenses. He continued to explain,

"It was necessary, at one and the same time, to procure timber. Having, therefore, cut down the trunks of trees or very thick branches, and having stripped their tops of the bark, and sharpened them into a point, he drew a continued trench every where five feet deep. These stakes being sunk into this trench, and fastened firmly at the bottom, to prevent the possibility of their being torn up, had their branches only projecting from the ground. There were five rows in connection with, and intersecting each other; and whoever entered within them were likely to impale themselves on very sharp stakes. The soldiers called these "cippi." Before these, which were arranged in oblique

rows in the form of a quincunx, pits three feet deep were dug, which gradually diminished in depth to the bottom. In these pits tapering stakes, of the thickness of a man's thigh; sharpened at the top and hardened in the fire, were sunk in such a manner as to project from the ground not more than four inches; at the same time for the purpose of giving them strength and stability, they were each filled with trampled clay to the height of one foot from the bottom: the rest of the pit was covered over with osiers and twigs, to conceal the deceit. Eight rows of this kind were dug, and were three feet distant from each other. They called this a lily from its resemblance to that flower. Stakes a foot long, with iron hooks attached to them, were entirely sunk in the ground before these, and were planted in every place at small intervals; these they called spurs"

Now as the Romans approached completion of the enclosure which took them only 3 weeks, Vercingetorix ordered some of cavalry to attempt a break out under cover of darkness. With some gaps still in unfinished fortifications, some cavalry is able to escape to nearby tribes and call upon them to help lift the siege. Caesar, however, because of desertions and captured cavalry is well aware of the plan and realizes that his enclosure of Alesia won't help against a relief army. In one of the most brilliant siege tactics in the history of warfare, and a testament to the skill of Roman engineering, Caesar ordered a second wall to be built on the outside of the first. This wall, nearly identical to the first in construction and type, extended as much as 15 miles around the inner wall and left enough of a gap in between to fortify the entire Roman army. Protected from sally attempts by Vercingetorix and the relief army that was sure to come, the Romans waited for the relief force.

The cavalry that escaped did manage to rally support for Vercingetorix, and a massive army, especially by 'barbarian' standards was raised. According to Caesar, nearly 250,000 Gauls came in support of their besieged 'King', but most modern historians estimate this number at a less daunting number of around 100,000. Even so, this force marched from the territory of the Aedui to crush the Romans between two forces larger than that of their target. Inside Alesia, however, conditions were terrible, with an estimated 180,000 people (including non-combatant women and children) running out of food and supplies. The resident tribe, the Mandubii, sent out their women and children as a delay tactic, hoping that Caesar would let them pass to safety, but the Romans let them starve at the inner Roman wall to show the Gauls the error of their ways, and to prevent foul play.

By the time the relief force arrived, Vercingetorix and his army were in dire straights, with many of his men likely on the verge of surrender. The relief force arrived just in time however, heartening the resolve of the besieged and setting the stage for the battle that would make or break Caesar's fortunes in Gaul. In late September, 52 BC, the battle began with a charge from the Gauls on the exterior of the Roman fortifications. A hard fought engagement from noon to sunset ensued, with neither side having a clear advantage. Both Romans and Gauls fought with equal valor and inspired by the fight, Vercingetorix led his men out of Alesia towards the inner Roman wall. Unable to penetrate the defenses, he was not able to lend support to his countrymen, and eventually Caesar's Germanic cavalry turned the Gallic flank and sent them back to their camps.

The next day, the Gauls outside the Roman works prepared ladders, hooks and equipment for scaling the walls. Around midnight, they put their equipment to use, launching an all out night attack. The initial battle went very well for the Gauls, and many Roman defenders were killed. At the hardest fought points in the defenses, Marcus Antonius and Caius Trebonius saved the day for the Romans, by abandoning those posts that were free from attack and moving these reinforcements into the heaviest action. Eventually, Roman artillery prevailed and the outer Gauls were forced to retreat. On the inner wall, meanwhile, Vercingetorix had launched a simultaneous attack, but because of the Roman trenches, which the Gauls had to fill, the attack was delayed too long. As dawn began to break, Vercingetorix was forced to retreat as well, since his compatriots on the outer wall had to retire.

The next day, around October 2, would prove to be the final battle for Alesia. Sometime around mid day, a force of 60,000 Gauls under Vergasillaunus discovered a weakness in the Roman lines. Because of natural obstructions, there were areas in the defense works where walls simply couldn't be built. The Gauls on both the outside and inside launched a simultaneous attack on all quarters of the Roman works. Vergasillaunus pressed hard on the weak part of the wall, while Vercingetorix occupied the Romans all over the inner wall. The Gauls pushed the Romans back all over and the battle was on the brink of disaster for Caesar. Only the vaunted Roman discipline seems to have prevented a complete rout. Caesar himself, rode all over along the Roman lines lending support and encouragement to his men to hold the lines. Reserves were moved wherever the situation seemed the most dire, and the orders were simply to hold their positions. Labienus was sent to relieve 2 legions of defenders against the large outer Gallic army of 60,000, with only 6 cohorts of 3,000 men. Overall, the Romans may have been outnumbered as many as 6 to 1.

Pressure was mounting all over and Caesar was forced to lead an assault on the inner wall attackers, driving them back and temporarily granting a reprieve. Labienus, meanwhile was in terrible trouble and reported that his lines were about to break. Unable to hold the defense, he would have to launch an attack in order to attempt driving the Gauls back, rather than stand back and wait for the slaughter to come. Caesar rode hard to aid Labienus and took a terrible risk in order to inspire his men. With 13 cohorts, Caesar left the relative safety of the walls and rode outside to attack the Gauls from the rear. Inspired by the sight of Caesar fighting on the outside, the Romans under Labienus launched a full with brilliant success. Sandwiched between Caesar's army at the rear and by Labienus in the front, the Gauls began to buckle and soon fell into an all out retreat. The battle that was once very close to the possible end of Caesar, turned into an all out rout and the Gauls outside the Roman walls were slaughtered. Caesar commented that if not for the complete exhaustion of his men, he might've destroyed the entire Gallic army. Even so, by the end of the action, the Germanic cavalry would virtually wipe out the retreating Gauls, leaving only Vercingetorix on the inside.

Forced back into Alesia after the defeat of his relief force, with no hope of additional reinforcements, and only with the starving remnants of his own army, Vercingetorix was forced to surrender. Caesar sat at the head of his lines and waited for the approach of the Gallic chieftans. Vercingetorix and his fellow leaders laid down their arms and surrendered quietly, where he was eventually led away to Rome. There he would sit and rot in a Roman prison for 5 miserable years, awaiting the day when Caesar could have his triumph, to be followed by the ritual execution of the enemy leader. As a reward Caesar's men each received one Gallic slave in addition to monetary spoils of war, but the war wasn't over just yet.

Mopping Up in Gaul

After the battle of Alesia and the subsequent surrender of Vercingetorix, little changed in Gaul for Caesar save for one important circumstance. A great number of tribes remained in revolt, but there was no longer a coalition of tribes working together against the Roman presence. Caesar now had the luxury of dealing with these Gallic tribes on an individual basis. Immediately after Alesia, Caesar marched south into Aedui territory and reaffirmed their allegiance to Rome. The Arverni, Vercingetorix's own tribe, submitted as well and both, despite their leading the revolt and betraying the Roman alliance respectively were treated with honor. As two major tribes within central Gaul, it was to Caesar's benefit to treat them favorably. After taking advantage of the fall harvest, Caesar scattered his legions throughout Gaul in an attempt to minimize the continuing revolt, and the Senate voted another 20 day festival (3rd in total) of thanks in Caesar's honor.

While wintering in Gaul at Bibracte, the revolt started in full effect once again. Caesar marched to the territory of the Bituriges and brought them to submission within 40 days. Caesar returned to Bibracte by February 51 BC and offered his men 200 sesterces per legionary and 2000 per Centurion as a reward for their continuing sacrifice and hardship. Soon after returning however, the beaten Bituriges were under assault from the Carnutes, and Caesar marched back to their

lands again. Decisively routing the Carnutes, the Bellovaci were the next source of trouble. In mid winter, Caesar's allies the Remi were under pressure from these Bellovaci and Caesar marched to the lands of the Seussions to meet them.

With 4 legions, Caesar met the Gallic army but was unable to lure them into an open battle. Small cavalry engagements weren't decisive either way, and the Gauls did a good job of using guerrilla tactics against Roman foragers. Caesar ordered more of his men to join him in what might seem to be the last major enemy of the long war. Fending off ambush attempts and fighting the cold of winter, the Romans never seemed in serious trouble, but weren't able to bring the issue to a close. Finally, sometime in mid February 51 BC, the Romans met the rebellious Gauls in a major battle. The Gauls tried to ambush a foraging column, but were soundly defeated, and by now Caesar had become merciless. Most remaining tribes now sent hostages to Caesar in a show of loyalty, but a few brave tribes remained at odds.

The lands of former enemy Ambiorix, along the Rhine were burnt and pillaged, while Labienus was sent to destroy the Treveri for their involvement in the revolt. Caius Caninius and Caius Fabius were sent to destroy an enemy force near Limonum, killing 12,000 Gauls and capturing a great deal of spoils in the process. The remaining forces retreated to a fort in southwest Gaul called Uxellodunum, and Caesar's legates invested the town in an Alesia like siege. Caesar meanwhile was traveling throughout Gaul with his victorious army as a show of force securing loyalty from the numerous tribes. When word reached him of the situation at Uxellodunum, he marched quickly to make a final example of this last hold out against Roman authority.

The Romans cut off the water supply of the town and let the people die of thirst and starvation. Caesar's great successes left the remaining Gauls believing that their defeat was the will of the gods, and they eventually capitulated. Caesar administered his most ruthless punishment yet, cutting off the hands of all those men who bore arms against Rome. Any remaining resistance within Gaul quickly ended, and Caesar spent the rest of the year 51 BC, assuring the loyalty of the tribes. The legions were once again spread throughout Gaul to prevent further uprisings, but this time all of Gaul was exhausted and had lost the will to fight.

After 8 long years and countless campaigns, the Gallic Wars had finally come to an end. Caesar had proven himself not only as one of the greatest and most brutal conquerors of the ancient world, while also conducting some of the most brilliant siege tactics witnessed by history. He conquered over 350,000 sq. miles of territory, killing over 1 million Gauls and enslaving a likely equal number in the process. Of the original estimated population of 3 to 6 million Gauls, (depending on which numbers are accurate) at best 1/3 of the population was wiped out and at worst only 1/3 remained after the wars of Caesar. He bridged the Rhine not once but twice, and crossed the channel to Britain in an equal manner, becoming the first Roman to accomplish both things. No Roman had ever accomplished so much, and yet been so brutal to an enemy. Vast amounts of wealth and slaves were brought back to Rome, and Gaul remained from that time on a loyal and generally Romanized province of the growing empire.

Crossing the Rubicon

After Caesar spent 51 BC and the better part of 50 BC touring his newly conquered province of Gaul, political chaos was developing back in Rome. The optimates despised Caesar and his conquests and looked for every opportunity to strip him of his command. These conquests not only brought in a great number of slaves, but brought so much monetary wealth into Rome, that the value of gold was actually reduced by as much as 1/4 or even 1/3 of its value before the wars. Though the common people noticed little effect, and loved Caesar, the optimates had a great deal to lose from this devaluation of their wealth. That was only one small piece of the puzzle, however.

Caesar's original Consulship in 59 BC was one in which he not only thwarted optimate interests but pushed forward a populares agenda that made life miserable for the conservative Senate.

They wanted to prosecute Caesar for a variety of reasons, including conducting an illegal war into Germania that the Senate never authorized. In fact, many argued that the protection of Cisalpine Gaul and Narbonensis didn't require the war that Caesar conducted in the larger part of Gaul in the first place. Prosecuting Caesar, whether the goal was death, exile or just a symbolic limitation of his power, would prevent his re-establishment of the populares agenda that he so masterfully instituted previously. The years 50 and 49 BC were pivotal because during this time frame, Caesar's 'imperium' or safety from prosecution was set to expire. Caesar badly desired the ability to run for the Consulship in abstentia, thereby allowing him the safe transfer of protection from his Proconsular Imperium, granted by his command in Gaul, to that of the actual Consulship once again.

By this time, however, Pompey, likely the only man able to smooth things over, had clearly sided with the optimates. His jealousy over Caesar's success and his ultimate goal of acceptance and power within the Senate took him ever further from the alliance with Caesar. The Lex Pompeia De Magistratibus that was passed while Pompey was Consul without colleague forced a candidate to be present in Rome to run for office, and of course, one couldn't legally bring their legions to Rome for protection. Marcus Claudius Marcellus, Consul for 51 BC, tried to have Caesar recalled from his command prior to its actual legal expiration, and in 50 BC, his cousin Gaius Claudius Marcellus attempted to do the same. Caesar's only hope in Rome from a legal standpoint was the intervention of the Tribunes of the Plebes, who managed to veto any attempts to bring Caesar to his knees.

The situation continued in a virtual stalemate, with neither side willing to budge on their legal standpoints. More optimate officials were elected in 50 BC to take office for 49, but Caesar still managed to hold ground. His legate Marcus Antonius was elected as Tribune for the same year, and a former opponent, Gaius Scribonius Curio was also elected but paid handsomely to side with Caesar. 49 BC was shaping up to be yet another stalemate politically for Caesar, but he was quite simply running out of time. Already, in the autumn of 50 BC, in an effort to weaken Caesar, the Senate asked both he and Pompey to give up one legion each (Pompey had his armies in Spain) to secure the east against Parthia. In a wise move, the Senate boldly stripped Caesar of 2 legions though, 1 of his own, and one that Pompey had lent Caesar several years earlier during the Gallic revolt. Caesar was left with 8 legions and the legions that he had given up were never sent to Parthia. They stayed in Italy and were given to Pompey in a shrewd move that strengthened Pompey while weakening Caesar.

By late 50 BC, various attempts were made by the Consul Marcellus to stifle Caesar's tribunes and allow some measures of anti-Caesarean policy to go through. Curio however turned the tables and forced a unique vote to the senate floor. On December 1, 50 BC, Curio proposed a motion that would force both Pompey and Caesar to simultaneously lay down their commands, and the motion was passed 370 votes to 22. Though the Senate vote indicated that civil war was trying to be avoided, the hatred of Caesar simply couldn't be let go. The following day, before the measure could even be brought to Caesar, Consuls Gaius Claudius Marcellus and Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Crus ignored the Senate vote, and the Roman constitution. In a completely illegal act (albeit in an era filled with 'illegal' politics), they ordered Pompey to take up command of the local legions and to raise more in defense of Rome against Caesar. The people of Rome (via the tribunes) were ignored and even the Senate in this case, though it's assured that the optimates played a major part. Cicero however tried to counteract this measure and avert what appeared to be getting closer and closer to war. He met with and attempted to influence Pompey into working for a compromise, but Pompey refused, and meanwhile, Caesar waited in Gaul.

Though Caesar held Rome in a precarious position by the strength of his army, it's really the Senate that pushed him into a no-win situation. Caesar's only options throughout were either to surrender willingly and face certain prosecution along the end of his career or life, or go to war.

Caesar clearly had ambition and faced with personal ruin and disgrace vs. the potential disaster that a civil war could cause the Roman state, Caesar obviously chose his own dignity above that of the eternal city. Despite that, he behaved rather conciliatory throughout, at least in that he didn't personally act out against his enemies, though he did have a voice through the Tribunes. Even faced with essentially being declared war on by the Senate, he attempted to offer a compromise. First he asked to simply be allowed to hold Cisalpine Gaul and 2 legions, or Illyricum and only 1 legion, until such time as he could be elected Consul and enter Rome free from fear of prosecution. The Senate didn't act on this measure at all, though it was probably hotly debated. Without getting a response, Caesar decided to offer the same measure that already passed the Senate just a month earlier. Curio, in late December, offered that Caesar would agree to the original proposal that both he and Pompey lay down their armies simultaneously. This time though, there was great debate and the Senate was divided on the issue. Clearly not enough members of Senate really wanted peace, or were naïve enough to think war wouldn't come, or simply felt that Rome would hold the loyalty of the people and that Pompey could crush Caesar.

On January 1, 49 BC and the days immediately following, the Senate rejected Caesar's final peace proposal and declared him *hostis*, or a public enemy. Caesar would have to give up his command completely or face war. The Tribunes attempted to block the measure through the people once again, but this time the Senate was entrenched. They threw constitutionality to the wind and ignored the Tribunes and used violence to stop their objections. Around the 10th of January 49 BC, word reached Caesar and he marched south with the 13th Legion from Ravenna towards the southern limit of Cisalpine Gaul's border. He likely arrived around January 11, and stopped on the northern bank of the small river border, the Rubicon.

Caesar seemed to contemplate the situation understandably for some time before making his final fateful decision. First testing the loyalty of his men, (he only had the 13th legion with him at this point) he gave a stirring speech pointing out the wrongs done to him (and the tribunes). With the clear support of his men Caesar added, "Even yet we may draw back; but once across that little bridge, and the whole issue is with the sword." He is then reported to have muttered the now infamous phrase, from the work of the poet Menander, "Alea iacta est", quoted as "Let the die be cast" or "Let the dice fly high." The Rubicon was crossed and Caesar officially invaded the legal border from his province into Italy, thus starting the civil war. Quickly taking several northern towns, the news reached Rome by January 17. Pompey, the Republic's hope, was left without his main army which was still in Spain, and his support base was in the eastern provinces/. Despite having 2 legions to Caesar's 1, Caesar's Gallic legions were on the move to join him so Pompey and the rest of Caesar's opposition had little choice but to leave Rome immediately and abandon Italy to Caesar.

Caesar's Civil War

When Caesar crossed the Rubicon the Senate finally realized that they had made a terrible mistake. The mistake wasn't in letting the situation get that far, but in that they believed the Roman and Italian people would rally to defend the Republican system. What they failed to understand was that the people had little trust in the Senate and that Caesar had won them over through his popular agenda while in political office. Caesar's great propaganda campaign, his books "Bellum Gallicum (the Gallic Wars)" endeared the people even more to their almost mythical hero, and the Senate's cause in Italy was lost. Unable to levy armies, or develop a meaningful resistance, the Senate, and Pompey had little choice but to take their business out of Rome and into Greece. It was here, and further east, where Pompey held considerable sway, where the Senate hoped to raise armies and defeat Caesar.

This too, however, worked in Caesar's favor. Without the fear of bloodshed and damage to their homes in Italy, the people had little reason to support the Senate. Caesar marched throughout northern Italy accepting the capitulation of cities and garnering support with little difficulty. Pompey and the Republicans, meanwhile fled to Brundisium in the heel of Italy, where they hoped to

secure the bulk of the transport vessels available in the region. The bulk of Pompey's forces were removed across the Adriatic to Dyrrhachium, along with the bulk of the Senate, but by early March of 49 BC, he still had nearly 2 full legions with him in Brundisium. Caesar approached quickly with 6 legions in an attempt to put an end to the resistance then and there. Attempting to box Pompey in, Caesar tried to negotiate peace, but Pompey delayed just long enough to make good his escape. Despite Caesar's attempts to block the harbor, the Republicans controlled the navy and Pompey escaped with his forces intact.

Caesar now faced an important choice. Without transports, he would have to face a difficult crossing in order to pursue Pompey, and Pompey's large army of 7 legions waited without their commander in Spain. He also needed to go to Rome to settle a situation that was certainly bordering on riotous. Though Caesar so far had shown clemency to his opponents, people in Rome weren't sure if the new conqueror would be like Sulla and Marius. To complicate matters further, Caesar's Legate Titus Labienus, who was left in command of Cisalpine Gaul, decided to switch sides and support Pompey. Caesar decided the best course of action was to settle matters in Rome, then move north to deal with Labienus, and then west to confront Pompey's army in Spain. His legate Curio was sent to Sicily with 3 legions where the ultra-conservative Cato was governor, to not only stamp out resistance, but to secure its valuable grain supplies. Cato fled to Africa, angry at Pompey for abandoning Rome, Italy and Sicily without a fight and certainly because of the hated Caesar's success. Caesar sent another legate, Valerius, with 1 legion to secure Sardinia.

With the immediate neighboring provinces handled, Caesar moved on towards Rome, but first held a meeting with Cicero in Formiae. Caesar attempted to have the great orator join him in Rome to help legitimize his new government. Despite the consternation of Cicero against his 'optimates' friends, he still maintained more common ground with them and refused without certain conditions. Caesar, against Cicero's proposed solutions agreed that it would be best to part ways, but certainly lamented the inability to secure Cicero's support. Continuing towards Rome, Caesar arrived at the end of March, 49 BC, for the first time in 9 years. This visit however was short-lived. Aside from securing the treasury for his own war efforts, an incredible total of 15,000 bars of gold, 30,000 bars of silver and 30 million sesterces which the Republicans had neglected to secure in their haste to leave, Caesar spent less than a week in the eternal city. In early April, Caesar prepared to march for Spain saying, "I go to meet an army without a leader, and I shall return to meet a leader without an army"

Caesar in Spain (Hispania)

Caesar left Rome for Hispania in the spring of 49 BC, to secure the province and to defeat Pompey's 7 legions that were under the command of Marcus Petreius, Lucius Afranius, and Marcus Varro. Marching around the coast of Narbonensis, however, Caesar was stopped at the city of Massilia, where the well fortified town had been bribed into supporting Pompey. Caesar arrived on April 19 with 3 legions and immediately began to besiege the city, but he didn't dare risk being delayed and allow the Spanish legions to either come to the defense or be transferred to Pompey in Greece. He ordered Gaius Fabius to continue on to the Pyrenees to secure the northern passes with 3 other legions and focused on the siege.

The siege itself would turn into a long affair with mixed results. In all, it would end up taking 6 long months before the town would finally capitulate in October. By July though, Caesar couldn't afford to waste more time commanding an idle siege and had to move on to Hispania, where Fabius was under heavy pressure from Petreius and Afranius. Caesar left Decimus Brutus in command of the small naval force at Massilia and Gaius Trebonius was left to conduct the siege.

Caesar arrived in Hispania and took command from a likely very relieved Fabius. Caesar's men had suffered heavy casualties but managed to hold their positions and fend off attacks. No longer

needing to hold the mountain passes, Caesar moved to Ilerda, where he began the systematic outmaneuvering and besieging of the opposition army. Initially, Pompey's lieutenants did a fine job in defense against Caesar's attacks, but as always, the war of attrition, Caesar's exceptional skill and his famous luck began to win out. Many of the more powerful tribes in the region preferred Caesar as well, bringing the Oscenses Calagurritani, Tarraconenses, Jacetani, Ausetani and Illurgavonenses to his side. With the support of the native cavalry, Caesar had the ability to encircle, cut off and outflank the enemy at every turn.

Sporadic and skirmish style fighting ensued, forcing Petreius and Afranius to retreat further into Hispania, while constantly seeking a position to fight on favorable terms. Caesar forced them towards the Ebro River and in late July finally had them starved and scared enough to gain the advantage. Caesar, the master of the siege, hemmed in the enemy with fortifications and forced Afranius and Petreius to seek a meeting. In a public display, in audible range of the men on both sides, Caesar accepted the surrender of Pompey's lieutenants and all the men under their command. 5 legions, which were grateful for not having to fight any meaningful battle against Caesar's troops, were disbanded and allowed to return to their homes and colonies within a few days.

Caesar's attention was next focused on his old friend Marcus Varro, in command of 2 legions in further Hispania. While Varro tried to be loyal to Pompey, as the honorable thing to do, both the locals and his own men preferred Caesar. Without even facing the enemy, 1 of Varro's legions mutinied at Cadiz in Caesar's favor, and any attempt to escape with an intact army was lost. Unable to defend and unable to take the remaining men to Greece, Varro sent word to Caesar in Corduba that he would surrender. In mid August, Varro did just that. In just about 40 days, Caesar had captured and eliminated the threat from Pompey's 'Spanish' legions with barely a fight. He spent some time organizing the administration of 'Spain' and meeting with local officials before heading out, but didn't stay long. His legate Cassius was left in command of Spain with 4 legions and he made haste to Massilia where good news was beginning to arrive. In early October, Caesar arrived at the besieged town to find that it had finally surrendered, though its commander Domitius had escaped. As punishment, he stripped the rights of the residents but spared the town from further destruction, beyond what it had suffered in the 6 month siege.

Back in Rome, the praetor Marcus Lepidus nominated Caesar to be dictator, and his puppet Senate quickly confirmed. Word of this news arrived to Caesar in Massilia, and he left for Rome shortly thereafter. In Rome, his first order of business, as it was getting late in the year, was to oversee the elections for 48 BC. Not surprisingly, he was elected Consul, along with the son of his former commander, Publius Servilius Isauricus. By now, Caesar certainly was aware of the disaster in Africa by his legate Curio. In late summer, Curio invaded Africa with 2 of his 4 legions, against the Republican Cato who was allied with the Numidian King Juba. Curio was terribly outnumbered and fought a hopeless battle in which he was killed on August 24, 49 BC. Certainly this news played a part in Calpurnius Piso, Caesar's father-in-law, along with other remaining Senators to convince Caesar to end the war.

Settling with Pompey now, might still bring a favorable settlement to all factions and prevent further bloodshed, but Isauricus convinced Caesar that there would never be peace until Pompey was beaten in the field. The dictator agreed and spent a few days settling things in Rome, such as granting citizenship to his allies in Cisalpine Gaul and restoring families who had been banished under Sulla, years before. (Caesar not only needed the support of anyone he could get, but desperately needed to rebuild the Senate ranks.) Taking care of these matters, Caesar resigned the dictatorship after only 11 days, gathered his men (12 legions in total) and began the march to Brundisium where he hoped to secure passage to Greece, and the Republican resistance.

Battle of Dyrrhachium

In late 49 BC, Caesar and his 12 legions arrived at Brundisium where he hoped to secure passage to Greece. An old rival, Bibulus, controlled the Ionian Sea with the Republican navy, and Caesar fretted over when and how to make a crossing. By January of 48 BC, Caesar decided there was no time like the present and decided to make a surprise winter crossing, to offset the advantage that the enemy maintained in naval superiority. Unfortunately, he could only secure enough transports for 7 depleted legions, or 15,000 men and about 500 cavalry, and after landing safely at Palaeste, he sent his ships back to Brundisium to transport Marcus Antonius and the remaining 5 legions. With the element of surprise gone after the first successful crossing, Bibulus got word of the return trip and intercepted Caesar's fleet. Blocked off by Bibulus, Antony and Caesar's remaining forces along with the bulk of the supplies were forced to wait near Brundisium.

Now isolated in Greece, Caesar and his much smaller army were in serious jeopardy. Pompey seriously outnumbered him, some 55,000+ to Caesar's 15,000, and Caesar was dreadfully low on supply. Caesar moved north from his landing position, first on Apollonia, then on Pompey's vital supply depot at Dyrrhachium. Pompey, however, was already on the move to the town where he planned to quarter his army for the winter. In the meantime, Caesar made an important diplomatic gesture to prevent war. Still probably fully intent on 'winning' on the battlefield, he could be sure, however, that any proposal for peace would be rejected. By sending Vibullius Rufus to negotiate, Caesar could claim to be the peacemaker and that Pompey and the Republicans were the real cause of the war. Regardless, Caesar moved his army to the south side of the Apsus River, while Pompey positioned his on the north bank. There the two armies waited out the winter months, while Pompey did nothing against his much smaller foe.

Over the course of the winter, Caesar was not idle. He and his men not only were busy foraging for food, but managed to turn the tables on Pompey's fleet. Bibulus and the fleet prevented supplies, and Antony's reinforcements from reaching Caesar, but Caesar's forces prevented the fleet from going into various ports to get re-supplied as well. By mid winter, Bibulus died from sickness and the Pompeian fleet was in as desperate shape as Caesar's army. On the ground, the situation seemed more like a reunion of soldiers than two opposing armies about to do battle. Pompey's men clearly feared Caesar, and despite their numerical superiority there seemed to be little will to fight. Fraternization among the men on both sides might have slowly eroded support for the idle Pompey, if not for the intervention of Caesar's former legate, Labienus. He scolded his own men for their lack of loyalty and proclaimed that the war would only end when Caesar's head was brought to him. Putting a stop to continued meetings between both sides, the timely effort of Labienus may have prevented a complete surrender of the Republican forces to Caesar, obviously forcing the matter to be settled in combat.

By spring of 48 BC, Antony managed to avoid the Republican fleet and finally make his crossing to Greece. Terrible winds pushed Antony and his 4 legions far north of his objective, and he was forced to land near Lissus, putting Pompey between the two much smaller armies of Caesar. Pompey ordered his legate, Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio, to join him from Syria, and Caesar detached two legions under Domitius Calvinus to block this threat. Now Pompey raced to get to Antony while he was isolated, but Caesar didn't delay and followed closely behind. Pompey seems to have panicked at the thought of being caught between both armies, and maneuvered out from between both armies, while Caesar just continued northward to Antony, and the vital supply depot of Dyrrhachium. Pompey realized his mistake and tried to race to the depot, but this time, Caesar's men were faster. The two armies made camp on opposite sides of a small river called the Shimmihl Torrent, with Caesar on the north and Pompey on the south, and Dyrrhachium on Caesar's side of the river.

Understanding that supply and logistics was still the key, Caesar decided to use his great skill at siege warfare to hem Pompey in. Caesar's men built an impressive fortified wall of approximately 17 miles around Pompey's army, pinning it in against the sea. Pompey, rather than attack his still smaller opponent, responded by building a similar defensive work. While Pompey could still be re-supplied by sea, what he failed to realize was that Caesar controlled the flow of fresh water, and

he immediately began to cut it off. Skirmishes were constant, and outside Dyrrhachium Caesar reports that the two sides fought 6 battles in a single day. Pompey simply couldn't break through and desperation was beginning to set in. By mid summer, though, Pompey had a fortunate stroke of luck. Two Gallic auxiliaries were caught stealing the pay from legionaries, but managed to escape to Pompey. With these two men on his side, Pompey was able to discover the weakest point in Caesar's wall. A section to the south of the lines hadn't yet been completed and it was the only viable target for attack.

In early July, Pompey consolidated his army and struck with as many as 6 legions on the vulnerable position. Caesar's ninth legion, terrible overpowered, was forced to flee from the onslaught and Pompey established a new camp on the outside of the wall. Caesar attempted to reinforce the breach with 12 cohorts under Antony, and was initially successful in stemming the retreat. Caesar then drove back the Pompeians towards the sea, re-securing part of his wall in the process. 33 cohorts (3 legions) were sent against Pompey's new camp, but this is where things went terribly wrong. The attackers were outmanned nearly two to one and though initially successful, they simply couldn't sustain the advantage. Caesar's right wing began to buckle as it was flanked and threatened from the rear. As the wing collapsed, Caesar's army panicked and began to rout. Caesar personally tried to stem the retreat, but all was lost, and the only course of action was to attempt to save his army. Caesar really only lost 1,000 men in the battle, which was really a rather small affair considering the size of the armies, but the key was that Pompey could now claim a victory, and did so in earnest.

Pompey next made the most critical mistake of the entire war. Rather than continue to advance on Caesar's shaken lines, he decided to stand pat, seemingly feeling assured that Caesar was beaten and that the war was over. In reality, it very well could've been over if Pompey simply would've attacked Caesar throughout his lines. His army very likely would've fallen into a complete rout and been captured or killed en masse. Instead, Pompey seemed to lack the nerve to finish the job. Caesar himself said, that "Today the victory had been the enemy's had there been any one among them to gain it." Caesar gathered his army and moved away, hoping to lure Pompey away from his own source of supply. He followed initially, but petty squabbling within the Republican camp forced him to break off. Pompey and the Senators were more concerned over dividing up the spoils that were sure to come with victory than actually finishing the job. This respite granted Caesar enough time to invest and capture the town of Gomphi, where his army plundered and were fed. Re-energized, Caesar moved towards Pharsalus, where Pompey eventually moved to meet him.

Battle of Pharsalus

After his defeat at Dyrrhachium in July of 48 BC, Caesar moved swiftly into Thessaly, incorporating the towns of the region under his control. His exhausted and poorly supplied army was able to secure new sources of food and essentially become re-energized for the continuing campaign. After Dyrrhachium, Pompey and the Senators squabbled over the next course of action, and they pressed Pompey hard to finish Caesar as quickly as possible. Pompey preferred a course of action similar to that of Fabius against Hannibal; keep Caesar from becoming secure in a single location, constantly threatening his supply and resisting major battles whenever possible. With their success at Dyrrhachium, however, Pompey's initially fearful legions were now filled with confidence against the vaunted conqueror of Gaul. This exuberance, coupled with Senate pressure, and Pompey's own lack of decisiveness was to prove a fatal mix.

Meanwhile, as the two armies marched and jockeyed for position, Pompey was joined by Metellus Scipio's legions from the east. Domitius Calvinus, who was detached by Caesar earlier in the year to stop Scipio, returned to Caesar as well, putting both armies at full strength. On the plains of Pharsalus, just north of the Enipeus River, the two armies moved into position opposing one

another. Pompey vastly outnumbered Caesar with some 45,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry to Caesar's 22,000 and 1,000 respectively. It's important to note, however, that a considerable part of Pompey's forces were allied auxilia sent from his eastern clients, and not fully trained Roman legions. Pompey arranged his forces and offered battle on a hill called Mount Dogantzes, and Caesar was certainly elated. This is exactly what he needed, the opportunity to face the enemy on open ground in a battle where his men were well supplied and in good order.

After several days skirmishing and jockeying for position, Caesar so effectively taunted Pompey that he eventually forced him into taking up position on level ground. On August 9, 48 BC, the pivotal battle for control of the Roman world was set to begin. Finding his army in the best of circumstance, Caesar inspired his men and prepared his lines: "Our march at present, and set our thoughts on battle, which has been our constant wish; let us then meet the foe with resolute souls. We shall not hereafter easily find such an opportunity." Pompey's army was arranged with his right wing, Cilician legionaries and Spanish auxilia, protected by the river under the command of Cornelius Lentulus. In the center, Syrian and African troops were led by Scipio. On his left is where Pompey hedged all his bets and hoped for victory by sheer force of numbers. The infantry was commanded by Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, and on the flank, Pompey placed his entire cavalry, archers and slingers under Caesar's former legate, Titus Labienus. Outnumbering Caesar's cavalry 7:1, Pompey and his army were confident that they could easily outflank Caesar's right and win the war swiftly with minimal bloodshed.

Caesar, however, saw a grand opportunity to counter Pompey's seemingly all or nothing plan. Marcus Antonius was placed on the left, Calvinus in the center, and Publius Sulla on the right. Caesar's infantry was thinned out to match the length of Pompey's numerically superior lines, decreasing the depth of his lines, but protecting the flanks. Caesar's plan only required his infantry to hold firm, not be the force that broke through. His much smaller cavalry was placed on the right to counter Pompey's cavalry, but the weakness in numbers was a serious threat. Caesar, however, also realized that this would obviously be what seemed to be the vulnerable target and would be irresistible. He then further reduced his main infantry lines, drawing 3,000 of his best men from among the various cohorts. These men he positioned somewhat concealed behind his cavalry and right flank infantry. This unit was to be the key to the battle, if they were able to use the element of surprise to counter Labienus' cavalry, it would be Pompey's wing which would be routed and flanked, not Caesar's.

With both armies set, it was Caesar and not Pompey who ordered the initial advance. Pompey hoped the long charge would tire Caesar's army, but the veterans understood the danger and stopped when they noticed that the enemy wasn't coming out to meet them. The battle slowly developed as an infantry skirmish in the center until Pompey finally unleashed Labienus and the cavalry. Pompey's horsemen hit Caesar's Germanic and Gallic cavalry hard, buckling their resistance. Pompey ordered his archers and slingers to fill in behind the cavalry to push the assault and provide a heavy blanket of covering fire. Just as Caesar's cavalry was beginning to retreat, and Labienus was starting to turn the right flank, Caesar ordered his reserve infantry to launch their surprise assault. Using their pila much like medieval pikes, Caesar's 3,000 infantry attacked the 7,000 Pompeian cavalry with ferocity, targeting the riders exposed faces. The effect was devastating, and Labienus was overwhelmed. The cavalry routed and turned towards its own lines, not only leaving their own vulnerable archer units completely exposed but likely trampling many as they went.

Caesar now wheeled around on Pompey's exposed left flank. Cutting the archers and slingers to pieces, they hit the Pompeian lines hard, crumbling the flank. Pompey, still with a vast numerical superiority seems to have panicked and failed to engage his right wing to stem Caesar's momentum. Instead, he simply quit the battle rather than attempt to rally, or salvage what he could. Pompey retreated and retired to his fortified camp while his army was routed, waiting for the imminent arrival of the victor. Caesar, meanwhile, pressed his advantage. He encouraged the remaining Pompeian legionaries to withdraw without more bloodshed while instilling in his men not

to attack their fellow Romans provided they offered no resistance. Instead he smashed what remained of Pompey's auxiliary allies, leaving a devastating wake as he approached Pompey's camp.

At this point, Pompey seems to have regained his senses, but still he didn't act with the honor of a noble Roman. Rather than fall upon his own sword in the Roman tradition, Pompey fled the camp, leaving his army to the enemy. Caesar entered the camp to find that the command tent had been arranged in such a manner to receive an elegant feast and laurels of victory, clearly indicating the supreme confidence of his opponents. Conveniently taking advantage of this Pompey's gift, Caesar also captured his rival's personal papers and effects. In a shrewd political move, yet unfortunate event for history, Caesar burned Pompey's papers supposedly without reading them, in order to bring closure to the matter and restore a sense of unity in Rome.

As the battle closed, Caesar reviewed the field and was likely shaken by the effects of civil war. He claimed that 15,000 enemy soldiers were killed, including 6,000 Romans, while losing only 200 of his own men, though both numbers are likely either over or under exaggerated. Still, the sight of the field apparently had a profound effect on the new master of the Roman world. In surveying the carnage, Caesar supposedly said, "They would have it so, I, Gaius Caesar, after so much success, would be condemned had I dismissed my army."

The following day, the remaining Pompeian forces surrendered to Caesar, and the major part of the war was essentially over. Though some Senators fled to Africa or other Republican strongholds, many of Caesar's most vocal enemies were killed in the campaign. Pompey himself fled to Egypt, where his own horrible fate awaited him. Respected as the conqueror of the east, Pompey certainly felt comfortable heading into Egypt. While waiting off-shore to receive word from the boy-king, Ptolemy, Pompey was betrayed and assassinated. Stabbed in the back and decapitated, his body was burned on the shore and his head was brought to the king in order to present as a gift to Caesar. On July 24, 48 BC, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus was dead, just short of 58 years old. Despite Pompey's prestige in the east, the legend of Caesar must've been incredible. The man had conquered Gaul, crossed the Rhine, crossed into the farthest reaches of the known world in Britannia, and now utterly destroyed the Great Pompey with a far inferior force. When Caesar arrived in pursuit of Pompey, to certainly, by all accounts, grant him a pardon and welcome him back to Rome, Ptolemy presented Caesar with Pompey's head and his signet ring. Caesar, despite realizing Pompey's death made him the master of Rome, was overcome with grief. Turning away from the slave who presented Pompey's head, Caesar burst into tears at the sight of his rival, former friend, and son-in-law.

Cleopatra

Julius Caesar arrived in pursuit of Pompey at Alexandria, Egypt on October 2, 48 BC. Presented with the head and signet ring of his rival by Theodotus, the advisor of King Ptolemy XIII Theos Philopater, Caesar reportedly wept. This display by the 14 year old King, intended to garner support from the great Roman in the dynastic struggle against his sister Cleopatra VII Thea Philopater, likely was all that was necessary to push Caesar against him. Faced with the cunning political brilliance of the young queen, Ptolemy would soon find himself at odds with the greatest conqueror in the world.

Cleopatra VII was born to King Ptolemy XII Auletes (the flute player) in 69 BC. The third daughter, she would ordinarily have not expected to rise to a prominent role, but intrigue and continuing internal conflict eventually thrust her onto the center stage of world politics. Though the reign of the Ptolemies had continually declined since the founding of the dynasty under Ptolemy I after the death of Alexander the Great, Egypt was still an immensely wealthy and regionally powerful state. The dynastic struggles that persisted over those 3 centuries weakened the state, and the rise of Rome brought the Republican into direct involvement in Egyptian affairs. The conquests of

Pompey in the 60's BC made Rome the de facto ruler of the east but Egypt maintained independence, at least in theory. Difficulties with succession and unstable rule led Rome to direct involvement on several occasions, most notably during the reign of Cleopatra's father, Ptolemy XII.

Ptolemy XII ruled precariously from 80 BC until 51 BC. During those years murder and bribery, in order to keep the throne, marked his rule. Ptolemy borrowed incredible sums of money from Roman money lenders and used it to bribe such prominent politicians as Crassus and Caesar himself. Doing so helped prop up his feeble reign through Roman power, but also soured the people of Egypt against him. A constant rumor that an earlier King, Ptolemy X, willed the rule of Egypt to Rome after his death in 88 BC, helped add to the social dissention that already existed. Ptolemy XII was seen as too weak to stand up to the Romans for true Egyptian independence. As a result of the will, and in the face of Mediterranean piracy, Rome used the excuse to send Marcus Portius Cato to annex the Egyptian territory of Cyprus in 58 BC. Ptolemy protested but did little more, and open revolt against his rule became a widespread disaster shortly thereafter. In 55 BC, he would be restored through the bribery of the first triumvirate and other Roman officials including Aulus Gabinius, governor of Syria. Gabinius invaded for the hefty price of 10,000 silver talents and forced Ptolemy XII back on the throne.

This wasn't the end of his troubles, however. In a later attempt to secure Roman support in other matters, his daughter's Berenice IV and Cleopatra VI seized the throne while their father was away. Upon his return, he had them executed and suddenly the non-descript third daughter, Cleopatra VII, was propped into position as the oldest child and heir to Egypt. When Ptolemy XII died in 51 BC, Cleopatra, at the tender age of 17 fell into joint rule with her younger 13 year old brother Ptolemy XIII. The two were expected to marry, as was the Egyptian (Macedonian royalty) custom, just as it's likely that Cleopatra's mother was her own aunt, Cleopatra V. They inherited a throne in deep financial debt to Rome and if not for her own coming civil war, the Republic may have called Egypt to task immediately.

Fortunately for the young rulers of Egypt, Rome was too pre-occupied to act on the will of Ptolemy XII, which likely granted significant reparations. Cleopatra stepped into the forefront of Egyptian politics, mostly ignoring her young brother. Rule was practiced essentially only in her name and she likely created a significant rift within the Alexandrian elite class. By the time civil war broke out between Caesar and Pompey along with the Republican forces in 49 BC Cleopatra was firmly in control of Egypt. However, Gabinius, the man who had restored her father to the throne just 6 years prior was still settled in or near Egypt with the bulk of his forces, and he was a supporter of Pompey. When Pompey fled Italy from Caesar's advancing armies he naturally looked to his supporters in the east for aid, making Gabinius, and therefore Egypt, a likely target. Pompey requested 50 Egyptian ships and grain supplies for his men from Cleopatra, who had little choice but to comply. When word spread that yet another Egyptian ruler had cowed before Rome, the backlash was terrible. The Egyptian aristocracy and likely the bulk of the population immediately came to support her brother Ptolemy XIII, and Cleopatra was ousted from power. She fled to the east, Arabia and Palestine, where she recruited her own army to wrest control back from her brother. By the time Cleopatra began to march west, however Caesar had won the battle of Pharsalus and the man she supported in the Roman conflict had lost.

As Pompey fled to Egypt, the motivation for Ptolemy XIII to behead him and present it as a gift to Caesar was quite clear. Not only would he provide Caesar with proof of his rival's death, but he thought to ingratiate himself by showing that he never supported Pompey, unlike his sister. When Caesar arrived with just 4,000 men, or just under one full legion, he immediately took over the palace and presumed to secure his authority. Though tensions were strained with the locals, the Egyptian armies of both sides were facing off on the Egyptian Delta, and Alexandria was open to Caesar. Despite tension and resistance from the general Achillas, Caesar managed to secure his position. He had two goals while in Egypt, secure grain and repayment of Egyptian debts, and also to settle the matter of who should rule. Caesar privately requested a meeting with Cleopatra in order to take stock of her before making a decision, but her return to the palace while her brother's

ministers controlled the city (despite Caesar's legion) was perilous at best. The young queen devised a plan to get to Caesar and block any attempts by her brother to secure the throne without her say in the matter.

Cleopatra was rowed in a small rowboat by a single Sicilian, by name of Apollodorus. Upon reaching the palace area, the only way to enter Caesar's presence was to conceal herself in such a manner without arousing suspicion of her brother's men. The story of Cleopatra being rolled in a carpet, while false, is still true in essence. She was slipped into some bed coverings and presented to Caesar as a gift. Though little is known of the actual meeting, it's quite clear that the young queen made an enormous impression on the great Roman. Though her 'beauty' is disputed, (at worst probably plain of appearance) Cleopatra was young and virile. She was elegant and charismatic, but most of all, she had power and money, and Caesar probably supposed she was susceptible to manipulation. Caesar, at 52 years old and 35 years her elder, was easily seduced, or perhaps even seduced her, as Caesar's affairs were legendary anyway. Cleopatra was politically brilliant and secured Caesar's loyalty, certainly not only through sexual pleasure, but through manipulation of her own. She was, and Caesar was well aware, the key to controlling the vast wealth of Egypt. Caesar was, and she was well aware, the key to securing her place as Queen, and perhaps even Pharaoh, and the power of the gods.

The next morning after their initial meeting, Ptolemy was scheduled to meet with Caesar. When he arrived, however, and saw Cleopatra standing with him, things immediately went sour. Ptolemy felt betrayed and attempted to flee the palace, but Caesar's men seized him, effectively placing him under arrest. It was quite apparent that Caesar clearly favored Cleopatra and was perhaps willing to make his decision after just the one meeting. Though the people of Alexandria were furious over Roman presumption, Caesar acted quickly to secure the situation. He read Ptolemy XII's will in public in order to justify his actions, and then granted the island of Cyprus back to Egypt. Placing it under the control of Cleopatra's even younger siblings, Arsinoe IV and Ptolemy XIV won the temporary cessation of violence, but the machinations of Ptolemy's regent, Pothinus were by no means over. Sometime in the confusion over what happened exactly when (Caesar never even mentions the initial meeting with Cleopatra in the "Alexandrian War"), his general Achilles advanced on Alexandria and Caesar's small force, and the Alexandrian war was on.

Alexandrian War

After Caesar met with Cleopatra and detained her brother, the young King Ptolemy XIII, Ptolemy's regent Pothinus colluded with the Egyptian general Achilles to expel Caesar. Achilles and 20,000 men marched on Alexandria where Caesar waited with only 4,000 men. Caesar had little choice but to secure what he could and prepare for a siege. He maintained control of the palace and the nearby harbor, while Achilles took control of the surrounding city. Hard street fighting ensued with neither side being able to gain an advantage.

In late October, mid summer by season, the Egyptians attempted to secure the port and cut off Caesar's supply and potential escape. After bitter fighting, however, Caesar's men won the day, burning the Egyptian ships and securing the harbor. Unfortunately though, the fire spread into the city and damaged the Great Library, taking with it many unrecoverable documents. Nevertheless, Caesar discovered the involvement of Pothinus with the opposition and had him put to death, but Cleopatra's younger sister, Arsinoe IV managed to escape the palace and join the Egyptian army. She, however, had a mind of her own and had little use for her brother's general Achilles. She ordered him executed in turn and turned over command of the Egyptian forces to her servant Ganymedes.

Caesar was still hemmed in and ordered Pompey's former legion, under the command of Calvinus, to join him in Egypt with all haste. Ganymedes cut off the supply of fresh water to the Roman section of the town, and the legionaries were near panic. Caesar calmed them by having them dig fresh water wells, but the situation was still precarious. When Calvinus finally arrived, Caesar assembled his fleet and sailed out to meet the Egyptians. Winning a small engagement between about 30 ships on each side, it led him to attack the island fortress of Pharos. The situation was hotly contested and could've gone either way. At one point when the Romans were forced to retreat from land to their docked ships, Caesar's own galley was sunk and he had to swim 200 paces to another nearby ship to reach safety. Rather than be disheartened, however, the incident seemed to anger the legionaries and they continued fighting with renewed resolve. It was the Egyptians who, despite gaining some momentum, realized that the Romans would not quit, and they temporarily withdrew to re-assess.

In early December, the Egyptians had convinced Caesar that they were tired of fighting and that, Arsinoe and Ganymedes were doing them no good. If Caesar would only release Ptolemy, they would submit to Caesar and live peacefully under Roman 'protection.' Ptolemy too played the part, convincing Caesar that he didn't want to leave his presence at all. With artificial tears, or actually described after the fact as tears of joy by the disgruntled Romans, Ptolemy left Caesar's palace camp and rejoined his own army. However, once there, he entertained no thought of capitulating and resumed the war in earnest.

Meanwhile, Caesar was waiting for more troops to arrive, under Mithridates of Pergamum. He had moved to Cilicia and Syria to recruit fresh armies, which were sorely needed to pressure the Egyptian rear. The situation in Alexandria was a virtual stalemate with neither side able to gain an upper hand. Ptolemy continued to pressure Caesar by threatening his lines of supply, and another naval battle ensued. A Roman navy under the command of Tiberius Nero (father of future emperor Tiberius) sailed out to meet a combined Rhodian and Egyptian fleet. In late January 47 BC, the two fleets met and the Rhodian admiral, Euphranor was killed, securing Caesar's supply for at least the time being.

Early in 47 BC, Mithridates' army was ready and he began the march from Syria towards the Nile. Ptolemy's army marched away from Alexandria to meet the threat, and Caesar soon followed. Near Pelusium, the final battle for control of Egypt took place. Mithridates captured the town and Ptolemy returned the favor by surrounding it and laying siege. In late March of 47 BC, the combined armies of Caesar and Mithridates laid waste to the Egyptians. In the complete rout that ensued, Ptolemy attempted to flee by ship on the Nile, but the mayhem overtook him. His panicked men overloaded the escape vessel, sinking it, and taking the life of King Ptolemy XIII with it. After the battle, Caesar marched back to Alexandria where the city simply surrendered, making him the undisputed master of Egypt.

Caesar secured the reign of Cleopatra by enforcing the will of her father Ptolemy XII, and married her to her younger brother Ptolemy XIV. Even so, by this time, Cleopatra was at least a couple of months pregnant. Arsinoe IV, the only surviving enemy in the Egyptian royal family was banished to be kept for Caesar's later triumph. Over the next several months, Caesar and Cleopatra went on what seemed like a honeymoon vacation along the Nile. Traveling on Cleopatra's barge as far south as his men would let him, they toured the entire country all the way to the border of Ethiopia. The relationship between the two is significant. In order to spend time with her, Caesar blew off his remaining opposition in Africa, under Cato, Labienus and Scipio, and in Spain against the sons of Pompey. It's certain that cementing her, and thereby himself, in a position of power in Egypt would be beneficial to Rome politically and economically, but it certainly seemed to be more than simple political manipulation. Cleopatra was the living goddess of Egypt and Caesar, by now, likely began to see himself as a truly divine Roman god. Though his Roman dignity prevented him ever divorcing his wife Calpurnia, and making any sort of legal arrangement with Cleopatra, this divine connection likely had a profound effect. Though Caesar, by the nature of Roman law, could never

recognize the son of Cleopatra, Caesarion as his own, and even the ancient sources handle it carefully, it makes little sense that the boy belonged to anyone but Caesar.

While Caesar and Cleopatra enjoyed their love affair in earnest, however, Republican forces in Spain and Africa continued to be a threat. Making matters worse, though, Pharnaces II of Pontus, son of the great Roman enemy Mithridates the Great (no relation to Caesar's ally of the same name, though he did serve the great king as a youth), was making incursions against neighboring provinces in the Roman east. Once again Caesar gathered his forces and marched off to face another threat.

Veni Vidi Vici

When Pompey and the Senate fled Rome from Caesar in 49 BC, he did so without an army. As a result, he was forced to draw upon the eastern provinces and allied client states for recruits and supply. With garrisons and massive levies being shipped off to Greece to Pompey's camp, the east was left dangerously vulnerable. Pharnaces II, king of Pontus, and son of the great Roman enemy Mithridates VI, used the Roman civil war to his advantage. He began a systematic process of re-taking those lands which once belonged to his father's kingdom, and Rome or its allies could do little to stop it.

When Caesar defeated Pompey at Pharsalus in 48 BC, he still had no opportunity to deal with the Pharnaces situation. The war in Alexandria delayed any immediate reaction and his subsequent affair occupied his attention for the seasonal winter months of 48 to 47 BC. Caesar's legate, Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus, was installed as governor of Asia in the interim and did all he could to stop the Pontic advances, but had little success. Calvinus gave battle and the Romans acquitted themselves well, but its allies were cut up badly. Caesar's trouble in Egypt prompted him to request aid from King Mithridates of Pergamum, further depleting the potential resistance to Pharnaces forcing Calvinus to make do. In a fortunate turn of events, Pharnaces' appointed governor of Crimea revolted, allowing the Romans to recuperate in Asia Minor for the winter. Meanwhile, Caesar was victorious in Egypt, and the lull back in Asia gave him the opportunity to relax on the Nile with Cleopatra.

By the campaign season of 47 BC, Caesar left Egypt and began an overland march through the far eastern provinces. Heading towards the trouble with Pharnaces, Caesar traveled through Judaea and Syria, accepting apologies and granting pardons to those foreign kings and Roman governors who had supported Pompey. In so doing, he was also able to rebuild his war chest through the various tributes paid to him. Boarding ship in Syria Caesar next sailed to Tarsus in Cilicia where he called a meeting of the regional leaders. Securing loyalty once again and laying out his plan of action, Caesar continued the march north to Pontus. Pharnaces meanwhile, well aware of Caesar's approach and his now notorious clemency, asked Caesar for a pardon of his own. Despite the fact that Pharnaces was the only eastern king who remained neutral in the Roman civil war (as all other in the east had declared for Pompey) Caesar rebutted that only Pharnaces attacked Roman citizens, plundering and killing as he took advantage of the situation.

Still, Caesar offered a peaceful solution, declaring that Pharnaces could be forgiven if he quit Pontus, released Roman prisoners, restored any financial damage done in the process, and of course, pay a hefty tribute. Pharnaces at first agreed, but it was no secret that Caesar had pressing matters both in Rome and against hold out Republican resistance elsewhere. Marcus Antonius, appointed by Caesar as his master of horse (Caesar had been appointed to the dictatorship while in Egypt), was sent back to Rome to oversee administration of the city and was not living up to the task. Pharnaces took advantage and sought to delay Caesar as long as possible, hoping he would decide other matters were more urgent, but Caesar had lost patience.

In May of 47 BC, Pharnaces camped his army on a hill near the town of Zela and Caesar on an opposite hill. The place had historical significance in that Pharnaces' father; Mithridates had defeated a Roman army 20 years earlier. Separated by a valley a few miles apart, the two armies began to position for battle. Caesar, with 4 legions first began to build fortifications, assuming that Pharnaces had no taste for open battle against him, but he soon found this to be wrong. On or about May 30th, Pharnaces moved his lines towards Caesar, attacking with scythed chariots, but the Romans held them back with their pila. The Pontic army engaged full force and hand to hand fighting erupted across the lines. Despite their tenacity and the advantage of the initial advance, Pharnaces' forces were likely exhausted from the up hill fight. Before long, their lines began to break and it was only a matter of time before the entire army was sent into a rout. Pharnaces managed to escape with some cavalry but his entire army was slaughtered or captured in the overwhelming Roman victory. Caesar claimed that the entire affair, including the rounding up of fleeing prisoners took no more than 4 hours.

Caesar, not only erased the blemish of the earlier Roman loss on this very site, he erected a monument to commemorate just that event. He set about reorganizing parts of the eastern provinces and set up Mithridates of Pergamum as King of Pontus in recognition for his loyalty and service in Egypt. Caesar then crossed from Asia to Thracia, and set sail for Italy. In the meantime, in recognition of his overwhelming victory, he sent a simple, but powerful message back to Rome and the Senate: "**VENI VIDI VICI**", I came, I saw, I conquered.

Caesar in Rome

After Caesar's victory at Zela over the Pontic King Pharnaces, Caesar sailed for Italy, arriving in September of 47 BC. With little time left in his dictatorship, first given to him either just before or just after his arrival in Egypt, Caesar had a lot of work to do. Citizens in Rome and Italy were suffering terribly under massive debt and the population was on the brink of violence at any given time. Marc Antony, sent by Caesar as his Master of Horse to govern Rome in his absence, did little to relieve the situation, and conditions were nearly desperate by the time of Caesar's arrival. Despite his earlier popularity with the people, street violence between supporters of Antony and Tribune of the Plebes Publius Dolabella seemed to be a continuation of pre civil war politics. This violence was only subdued by a *Senatus Consultum Ultimum*, allowing Antony to use force in curtailing Dolabella.

On his journey from Tarentum to Rome, Caesar sought to begin the process of relief by taking on massive loans of his own and securing funds from various Italian cities. By the time he arrived in Rome, clearly unhappy with Antony's performance, Caesar had to deal with the debt crisis. Though some pushed for cancellation of all debts, it likely would have been an economic disaster. As one of the largest borrowers of the time, Caesar himself also couldn't afford to appear as only helping himself, and the idea was only partially instituted. As an alternative, properties seized from dead enemies, such as Pompey, could be put up for sale. Though he didn't proscribe or confiscate from living enemies, as had been done in the past by men like Sulla, there were plenty of properties available to help relieve debt. The sale, which also forced even Caesar's supporters to pay full price, was an enormous relief. Even Antony, who clearly fell from Caesar's favor, was forced to pay the full price for Pompey's former estates.

As the year was running out, Caesar also had to secure elections for 46 BC. Winning the consulship for 46 BC, his third, along with Marcus Lepidus, Caesar next sought to make adjustments to the constitution. First many Senators were added to the roles in order to bring the governing body back to functional state, and in light of the growing empire, control of the provinces from Rome had been a recurring problem. Coupled with that issue the office of the consul typically had too much competition, as magisterial offices for each year were limited. To alleviate the problem, Caesar added 2 new praetor positions, making 10 in total. This allowed for 10 pro-

praetor governors with each year, as well as the pro-consuls, making the selection of governors easier and reducing the need for Senators to seek the top position of consul. This strategy worked two-fold; it eliminated some pressures, but Caesar, having nominated his own choices for these positions, also garnered more direct control of the government. Though not quite imperial, a change in control from the Senate to a single man was beginning to take place.

Having taken care of what he could during this limited visit to the capital, Caesar next began to focus on what resistance remained in the Roman world. His next stop would be Africa, where Metellus Scipio, Labienus, Varus and Caesar's sworn enemy Marcus Porcius Cato waited. Before he could set off on yet another campaign, though, Caesar's vaunted and beloved legion, the 10th, mutinied. These were certainly trying times for Caesar's men. They had served in Gaul for nearly 8 hard fought years, faced their fellow Romans in Spain and against Pompey in Greece, and performed their duty admirably in the east. Originally destined to be disbanded and retired on lands in Campania, the men were unhappy with what they found there, and were displeased with their take of the plunder over this long period of war. The last straw seemed to be new orders shipping them off for the campaign in Africa, and things took a violent turn. One of Caesar's new praetors, Gaius Sallustius Crispus (the historian Sallust) was nearly killed in the revolt, but others were, such as Cosconius and Galba.

As the 10th marched on Rome, Caesar took it upon himself to quell the revolt in person. Meeting the men in person, he brought them under his charismatic spell, first apologizing for their trying service, but then chastising them by calling them 'quirites' (citizens) rather than the more respectful 'soldiers'. He offered to settle them on better lands and retire them from service rather than continue to use them, as they were no longer of any use. Catching the men off guard and damaging their pride he was able to stem the violent mood and turn the tables on the 10th. As a result they were practically begging to come back to service. Caesar seems to have understood that the source of the problem rested with a relative few ringleaders rather than the entire legion. Rather than punish the men, Caesar withheld 1/3 of the plunder that was due the various officers and let the rest rejoin him unpunished. With brilliant diplomacy, Caesar not only saved his 10th, but protected Rome and the surrounding countryside from a potentially devastating revolt, simply with a few words.

With the mutiny settled, Caesar focused on the next order of business, Africa. He wanted to start the campaign early (it was now late summer, early fall by season), rather than wait for the next campaign season. His 16 year old grand nephew, Gaius Octavius, had by this time begun to be associated with Caesar. Having fallen out with what most saw as his heir apparent, Marcus Antonius, Caesar aimed to take Octavian under his wing. Unfortunately, the young man was in poor health and wouldn't be able to accompany Caesar to Africa, but nevertheless, the wheels of inevitability seemed to be in motion. In December of 47 BC, Caesar set sail from Italy, stopping first in Sicily, before yet another campaign.

Caesar in Africa

Caesar left Sicily and for the shores of Africa with 7 legions totaling about 30,000 men and 2,600 cavalry in late December 47 BC. Initially landing with only 3,000 and a handful of cavalry, some contemporary writers have suggested that Caesar suffered a number of minor defeats while waiting for the bulk of his forces. Caesar, not surprisingly makes little mention of any trouble. Regardless, by early January 46 BC the rest of the fleet arrived, bringing Caesar to full strength.

Africa was a stronghold of Republican resistance since Caesar's march across the Rubicon a couple of years earlier. Marcus Porcius Cato, Caesar's bitter opponent, had been run out of Sicily and fled to Africa. The rest of the resistance came from Publius Attius Varus who was already installed as the governor of Africa, Titus Labienus Caesar's former legate, and Quintus Metellus

Scipio, who along with Labienus had escaped Pompey's destruction at Pharsalus, and King Juba of Numidia. The Republicans greatly outnumbered Caesar in total, but their commands were split and it seemed no man wanted to yield overall command to a single army.

Over the course of the next three months, both sides played a game of feints, minor skirmishes and the capturing of towns. Caesar's men had difficulty with supply, as seemed to be the usual case, and the Republican's seemed mostly content to disrupt Caesar rather than attack him with full force. While supply was a problem for Caesar, loyalty was the problem for the Republicans. Their men and those of the local auxilia went over to Caesar en masse. Some switched sided because of Caesar's relation to the African conqueror Gaius Marius, but more because of Caesar's legendary ability. His now famous clemency (towards fellow Romans) surely played a part, as well.

After several minor battles, including a naval battle near Adrumetum that sent Varus eventually in flight to Spain, the Republican army combined and lined up for battle near Thapsus. With 8 legions and 60 elephants under Scipio, and approximately 30,000 Numidians under King Juba, the Republicans slightly outnumbered Caesar's 11 total legions. The difference was that Caesar had a mostly veteran army with unquestionable loyalty, while Scipio's men assuredly lacked confidence, which was a common occurrence while facing the great conqueror. Caesar arrived outside Thapsus on April 6, 46 BC to find Scipio lined up in battle formation.

Caesar aligned in a classic Roman formation with 9 legions, leaving 2 in his camp. Supported by cavalry, archers and other auxilia on the wings, Caesar's own soldiers were apparently tired of the delaying game they'd been playing for 3 months. They begged Caesar to give the order for battle, and he certainly obliged. Scipio's was forced into battle simply through geography. Thapsus rests on a strip of land sandwiched between the ocean and a large lake. Caesar blocked off one end of the strip with fortifications to prevent Scipio making any last minute attempts to refuse the battle. When Caesar gave the order to advance his men raced ahead with incredible energy and spirit. Scipio's elephants were turned away by fierce pilum attacks and his cavalry was routed almost from the start. Caesar flanked Scipio and the Republican lines buckled almost before the fighting even started. King Juba, camped away from Scipio's main lines saw the certain defeat and fled with his 30,000 men without even joining the battle.

With a complete rout in progress, many surrendered but 10,000 men in particular had no such luck. They fled to a nearby hill and were pursued by Caesar's now enraged army. Perhaps their show of cowardice, along with the frustration of 4 months of refusal to do battle was too much for Caesar's men to restrain. Despite likely attempts by Caesar to restrain his army, they slaughtered these 10,000 enemy soldiers to a man. Some have suggested that Caesar suffered an epileptic seizure during the battle. By this time he was 54 years old and if he truly had the condition it likely would've been worsening. This might explain why Caesar was unable to stop the slaughter, but in reality its just complete speculation. Caesar had hoped to prevent the escape of his enemies, like what happened after Pharsalus, and he very well could've openly allowed the slaughter. Only history will ever know the truth of the matter.

Despite his efforts, Caesar's enemies did escape, however. Both Labienus and Scipio managed to flee the battle safely. Scipio and whatever survivors he could muster fled to Utica, where Marcus Porcius Cato was in command of the garrison. Caesar followed immediately (certainly a fast recovery from his seizure, if he had one), and captured towns along the way. News of the Republican defeat reached Cato on April 9, 46 BC, and he knew that all was lost. After doing what he could to help people flee the town, he decided there was nothing left for him to do. Likely on April 13, Marcus Porcius Cato retired to his private chambers and fell on his own sword, rather than bow down to Caesar. He was discovered, however, and attempts were made to save his life. In the great martyring of Cato as the bulwark of Roman Republican ideals, it was said that rather than be saved, he ripped out his own organs in order to ensure his death. Caesar, certainly hopeful that he could bring a defeated and pardoned Cato back to Rome was later quoted by

Plutarch as saying "Cato, I must grudge you your death, as you grudged me the honor of saving your life."

Over the next two months, resistance was squashed throughout Africa. Even the Numidian King, Juba committed suicide rather than face defeat. Scipio, despite his escape from Thapsus, was killed in a naval engagement near Hippo Regius. Gaius Sallustius Crispus was left to govern Africa, and by June, Caesar adding the conquest of Africa and Numidia to his list of accomplishments sailed back to Rome.

Caesar the 'Dictator'

Caesar arrived back in Rome in July of 46 BC, this time with the task of settling both the political and social situations. Though many, like Cicero, tried to persuade Caesar to return the Republic to its previous form of government, Caesar had no intention of giving up his hard fought gains. Caesar knew the turmoil that was present in the provinces due to corruption and weak central authority, and also had lived his entire life through the instability of the Roman social system.

The first order of business, before forcing through various reforms was his long awaited triumphs. These were not only important to honor his own deeds, but to give back to the people for their hardship. The Roman triumph also marked a clear closure to certain events throughout Roman history and would allow Caesar to officially settle some of his legionary veterans. The people too were still nervous despite their love of Caesar. Nobody knew if Caesar would act as Sulla and strip the people of any powers they had, or if he would continue down the popular political course he had always adhered to. His triumphs allowed him to bring the people firmly in as his support base.

The 4 triumphs of Julius Caesar marked his victories over Gaul, Egypt, Pontus and Africa, and were the greatest that Rome had ever seen. Spectacularly elaborate, the celebration lasted 10 full days at the end of September. In the great parade that showcased the spoils and enemy captives, Vercingetorix, who waited for an unprecedented 5 years in a Roman prison to await his death led the procession in chains. (The Romans typically sentenced their criminals very quickly and prisons were not used as they are today). At the end of his journey he was ritually strangled, at the Mamertine as was the custom. In the next triumph, Arsinoe, the younger sister of Cleopatra, led the Egyptian parade. Though the Romans were likely shocked to see a young woman in chains as the lead captive, they were just as likely relieved when Caesar had her released rather than strangled. The next triumphal procession over Pharnaces of Pontus featured a great painting of Pharnaces fleeing the might of Caesar, which expectedly delighted the crowd. In the final procession for Caesar's victory in Africa, many Romans were concerned because of the actual war that occurred between Romans. Though Caesar made the triumph relating to victory over Juba of Numidia, this procession certainly helped taint the opinions of some of the Senatorial elite. The young 4 year old son of Juba sat in for the dead king, as the lead captive of his state, and it was suggested that he thoroughly enjoyed himself. He was described as the happiest captive ever, which might be expected of a 4 year old at such a grand parade. The crowd too, was probably greatly relieved when the child was released in the end.

In the final tabulations, it was estimated that the display of spoils in the processions totaled over 300 million sesterce. This grand total was partially doled out to Caesar's veterans and the population of Rome. His surviving veterans received 5,000 denarii (20,000 sesterce) each, the Centurions received 10,000 and his Tribunes 20,000 denarii each. The citizens of Rome received 300 sesterce each, were treated to a lavish dinner on a grand scale and were additionally given a free grain and oil dole amounting to 10 pecks and 10 pounds respectively. The games, held in the Circus Maximus, were spectacular as well. Over 1,000 gladiators fought in combat, countless animals were slaughtered and the Campus Martius was flooded to provide a mock naval battle.

The triumphs of Caesar did much to secure the love of the people, and alleviate their fears, but the Senate would prove to be another story.

Before and after the triumphs, Caesar began to work on the social ills that had plagued Rome since the time of the Gracchi, nearly a century before. He first declared a general pardon for any citizens who had taken up arms against him in the civil war. Though in reality it did little, because there would only be trouble if Caesar pursued his opponents as his predecessors, like Sulla and Marius did; it did alleviate many fears about Caesar's intentions. He performed a census of the city, and was able to reduce the free grain dole of its citizens from 300,000 to 150,000 based on his findings. In order to alleviate any problems this might have caused, Caesar forced large farm owners to hire at least 1/3 of their labor from free citizens rather than slaves, ensuring work for the landless poor. Additionally, new colonies were founded all over the provinces, eventually sending out nearly 80,000 of these same poor to more productive destinations.

In dealing with the social environment of the city, many Greek doctors and teachers were granted full citizenship, likely to encourage education and continued emigration of desired non-Romans. Laws were passed giving guidelines as to financial and social conduct, but these were largely ignored. The private guilds, sort of a pre-cursor to the modern day labor unions, were disbanded as these were the sources for most of the harsh mob violence over the last century. Jury assignments were sent back to the older days of the Republic when only Senators and Equites could serve, clearly showing some favorable positions to the Roman elite.

He next focused on the mismanagement of the provinces. First he limited the terms of provincial governors, 1 year for pro-praetors and 2 for pro-consuls. This hypocritical action would certainly prevent another from amassing the sort of power he had gathered in Gaul. He also appointed governors of known moral scruples, regardless of their abilities in order to ensure the justice of provincial citizens. Tax policies were reformed, removing the hated and corrupt tax-farmers from the system and putting tax collection back in the hands of the provinces themselves. Great building works were commenced and/or finished as well, including a new and grand marble forum bearing his name and a new temple to Venus.

Perhaps the most important reform made by Caesar, at least one that had a far reaching and lasting effect, was the reform of the calendar. On the advice of the Alexandrian scholar Sosigenes, Caesar changed the calendar to add 10 days per year, bringing it in line with the solar cycle, rather than lunar. By adding 67 days to the current year, he brought the calendar to proper alignment with the seasons, and celestial events, such as the winter solstice, would actually occur near the start of winter. Perhaps more importantly, however, Caesar's ego began to come through. He renamed the month of Quintilis to Julius, or July, in honor of himself. This along with new honors that were beginning to be heaped on him began to alienate him from the aristocratic leaders.

One such example was the presence of Cleopatra near Rome. Though not allowed to 'live' within the city limits (no King or Queen were allowed within the city walls, stretching back to the expulsion of the Tarquinian dynasty), she was set up in a villa just outside where she lived in luxury with Caesar's son Caesarion. His preference for a foreign queen versus his own Roman wife certainly did little to endear him to his opposition, and began planting the fearful seeds of Caesar's desire to be King. He was granted the permanent right to sit in a Curule chair for Senate meetings, as was reserved for the acting Consuls, and was given the right to speak first. He was allowed to start every race in the Circus Maximus, and given a statue on the Capitol facing Jupiter. In the east, predominately in Asia Minor, he had already been included (as early as 48 BC) in the local pantheon and set up as a god to be worshipped. He was granted a form of the Censorship that would last for 3 years, rather than the standard 1 ½ years. Of more importance, he accepted the dictatorship, granting him near absolute power in both theory and in practice, for a period of 10 years.

This was to be just the beginning, however. Caesar had more in store for Rome, and planned a grand expedition against Parthia to recover the lost standards of his old friend Crassus. First though, there was trouble to deal with in Spain. Revolt had been brewing since nearly all the way back to Caesar's first campaign to subdue Pompey's legions. Now the sons of Pompey, Gnaeus and Sextus were eagerly drawing up support from the locals and Caesar's governors were incapable of dealing with it. At some point in late 46 BC, Caesar embarked for Spain in what would turn out to be his last military campaign.

Battle of Munda

In Hispania, the sons of Pompey, Gnaeus and Sextus, along with Caesar's former legate Titus Labienus had continued to resist Caesar's dominance of the Roman world. The loyalty of the local tribes was mixed, but the Republican forces had little difficulty in raising new armies. In total, the Pompeian forces had recruited 13 legions along with an additional 6,000 cavalry and other auxilia. Caesar arrived in 'Spain' in late November or early December of 46 BC, with 8 legions and 8,000 cavalry of his own. Caesar's arrival was completely unexpected by the enemy, and the surprise gave him an early advantage.

Over the next 3 months, both sides did what they could to secure various cities and the loyalty of local tribes. Various minor engagements, though brutal and bloody, took place over the winter months with neither side gaining a clear advantage. It was becoming evident that this was the last hope for the Republicans, as both armies willingly executed captives, and Caesar was uncharacteristically harsh. Near the city of Osuna, on the plains of Munda, Caesar's main force and that of Gnaeus Pompey met for an enormous climactic battle.

In March of 45 BC, the two armies faced off with Pompey holding the high ground, and Labienus commanding the cavalry wing. Caesar was forced to march uphill against the strong enemy position, but he was never one to shirk from a chance at open battle. As his army marched to meet Pompey, and the battle was joined, it soon became clear that this would be among the most ferociously fought battles of Caesar's career. Both armies seemed to sense the importance of what would be the final major battle of this long civil war. Neither army was able to gain an advantage and both sides likely shifted from moments of sheer panic to believing victory was imminent. The exhausting battle was taking its toll and both commanders left their strategic overview positions to join their men in the ranks. Caesar himself later told friends that he had fought many times for victory, but Munda was the first time he had fought for his life. Finally after an epic struggle, Caesar's 10th began to make the difference.

Positioned on Caesar's right wing, the 10th started to push back Pompey's wing. Pompey countered by moving forces from his more secure right wing to reinforce the precarious position on his left. Caesar, however, pressed his advantage and sent his cavalry hard against Pompey's now weakened right. Dio Cassius adds that Caesar's ally, King Bogud of Mauretania now came up and threatened Pompey's camp. Labienus, in command of Pompey's cavalry, recognized the threat and broke off from the main battle with his cavalry to secure the camp, but this seemed to have dire consequences. Pompey's men seemed to have viewed this as a general retreat by the one man who knew Caesar so well, and panic was the result. To this point, both sides had likely lost about 1,000 men each, a relatively high figure and indicative of the difficult fighting, but the actions of Labienus sent Pompey's army into all out fight. Caesar's army overwhelmed the retreating enemy and was merciless in its zeal to end the war. Up to 30,000 men were slaughtered in the carnage, including Labienus, but Gnaeus Pompey managed to escape. Still, it would turn out to be the final major battle and victory of Caesar's career, and one that effectively ended land based resistance.

Over the next few months, Caesar mopped up in Hispania and brutally punished the people for their disloyalty. Gnaeus Pompey was later killed and his brother Sextus who garrisoned Corduba managed to flee Spain entirely. He would later become a prominent pirate admiral, disrupting sea trade against both Antony and Octavian during the next civil war, but for now, he was reduced to a lucky survivor. During the mop up campaign, Caesar was joined by his nephew Octavian, and the young man probably secured himself as Caesar's heir during the campaign. He certainly learned a great deal about provincial administration from his now all-powerful uncle. This un-opposed power, however, began to have its effects on Caesar. By the time he returned to Rome in September of 45 BC, the rewards and honors heaped on him were irreversibly alienating him from the Senate and Roman elite. Conspiracy began to take root and the inevitable end was now only a few months away.

Caesar the God

Caesar returned to Italy in September, 45 BC, and among his first tasks was to file his will, naming Octavian as his heir. That out of the way, he returned to Rome approximately October 1. While away, the Senate had already begun heaping honors on Caesar. Whether Caesar started this process through his own supporters, or others did so trying to gain Caesar's favor is unknown, but there the Senate went along with nearly every recommended honor. Even though Caesar didn't proscribe his enemies, and in fact pardoned nearly every one of them, there seemed to be little open resistance to the great conqueror, at least publicly.

Word of Caesar's victory in Spain reached Rome in late April, and games celebrating this event were to be held on April 21. Caesar apparently began to act with little deference towards the Roman state, and his ego began to alienate the Senate. Along with the games, Caesar was honored with the right to wear triumphal clothing, including a purple robe (reminiscent of the Kings) and laurel crown, on all public occasions. A large estate was being built at Rome's expense, and on state property, for Caesar's exclusive use. The title Imperator also became a legal title that he could use before his name for the rest of his life. An ivory statue in the likeness of Caesar was to be carried at all public religious processions. Another statue of Caesar was placed in the temple of Quirinus with the inscription "To the Invincible God." Quirinus, to the Roman people, was the deified likeness of the city's founder and first King, Romulus. This act clearly identified Caesar not only on equal terms with the divine, but with the kings as well. More outrageous, and even more clearly identifying Caesar with the kings, was yet a third statue. This statue was erected on the capitol alongside those of the seven Roman Kings, and with that of Lucius Junius Brutus, the man who led the revolt to expel the Kings in the first place. In yet more scandalous behavior, Caesar had coins minted bearing his likeness. This was the first time in Roman history that a living Roman was featured on a coin, clearly placing him above the Roman state, and tradition.

When Caesar actually returned to Rome in October 45 BC, he further irritated the Senate by giving up his fourth Consulship (which he had held without colleague) and placed Quintus Fabius Maximus and Gaius Trebonius as suffect consuls in his stead. The act of giving up the Consulship was not the issue, but completely disregarding the Republican system of election, and performing these actions at his own whim was. He celebrated a fifth triumph, this time to honor his victory in Spain. Much like his triumph in Africa, even the common people were dismayed, knowing that the victory came directly against fellow Roman opposition. The Senate, however, despite their frustration, did little to stop Caesar's excesses. In fact, they continued to encourage more honors. A temple to Libertas was to be built in his honor, and he was granted the title 'Liberator'. They elected him Consul for the next 10 consecutive years, and allowed to hold any office he wanted, including those generally reserved for Plebeians, like the Tribune. They also seemed willing to grant Caesar the unprecedented right to be the only Roman to have imperium. In this, Caesar alone would be immune from legal prosecution and would technically have the supreme command

of the Legions. There was a seemingly continual flow of honors, and while most sources agree that Caesar likely did little to encourage these, he also accepted them all with little objection.

More honors continued, including the right to appoint half of all magistrates, which were supposed to be elected positions. He also appointed magistrates to all provincial duties, a process previously done by draw of lots or through the approval of the Senate. A tribe of the people's assembly was to be named for him, and his birthday, July 13, was to be recognized as a national holiday. And this after the month of July had already been named in his honor. He began to wear the red shoes previously only worn by the ancient kings and a temple and priesthood was established and dedicated in honor of his family.

Caesar, however, did have a reform agenda and took on various subjects social ills. He passed a law that prohibited citizens between the ages of 20 and 40 from leaving Italy for more than 3 years unless on military assignment. This theoretically would help preserve the continued operation of local farms and businesses and prevent corruption abroad. If a member of the social elite did harm or killed a member of the lower class, then all the wealth of the perpetrator was to be confiscated. Clearly Caesar, despite his now raging ego still had the best interest of the state at heart, even if he believed that he was the only capable of running it. A general cancellation of $\frac{1}{4}$ of all debt also greatly relieved the public and helped to endear him even further to the common population.

Additionally great public works were undertaken. Rome was a city of great urban sprawl and unimpressive brick architecture and it desperately needed a renewal to show it as the capitol of the western world. A new Rostra of marble, along with court houses and marketplaces were being built. A public library under the great scholar Varro was in the works. The Senate house, the Curia Hostilia, which had been recently repaired, was abandoned for a new marble project to be called the Curia Julia. The Pontine Marshes were drained and filled and a canal dug in the Corinthian Isthmus to aid in trade. The city Pomerium (or sacred boundary) was extended allowing for additional growth. Despite these improvements, the enmity between the Senate and Caesar continued to grow. The Senate, however, did little to argue with Caesar in person. Instead they continued to heap honors on him, yet blamed him for his excesses.

King Caesar

At the onset of 44 BC, the honors heaped upon Caesar continued and the subsequent rift between he and the aristocrats deepened. He had been named 'Pater Patriae' or Father of the Country and Dictator Perpetuus or Dictator for Life. This title even began to show up on coinage bearing Caesar's likeness, clearly placing him above all others in Rome. Some among the population even referred to him as 'Rex' for King, but this Caesar refused to accept, at least publicly. At Caesar's new temple of Venus, a Senatorial delegation went to consult with him, and Caesar refused to stand to honor them upon their arrival. Though the event is clouded by several different versions of the story, it's quite clear that the Senators present were deeply insulted. He attempted to rectify the situation later by exposing his neck to his friends and saying he was ready to offer it to anyone who would deliver a stroke of the sword. This seemed to at least cool the situation, but the damage was done. The seeds of conspiracy were beginning to grow.

The fear of Caesar becoming King continued when someone placed a diadem (crown) on the statue of Caesar on the Rostra. The tribunes, Gaius Epidius Marcellus and Lucius Caesetius Flavius removed the diadem, and Caesar's reaction was one of displeasure, though he did nothing about it at the time. It's difficult to determine Caesar's exact position on the matter, but it seems quite likely, that many public events like this may have been staged to gauge the reaction of the people. This too, would begin to build a common perception that Caesar was King even without the title, perhaps making the eventual transition from Republic to monarchy less difficult. Not long after the incident with the diadem, the same two tribunes had citizens arrested after they called out

the title 'Rex' to Caesar as he passed by on the streets of Rome. Now seeing his supporters threatened, Caesar acted harshly. He ordered those arrested to be released, and instead took the tribunes before the Senate and had them stripped of their positions. Caesar had originally used the sanctity of the Tribunes as one reason for the start of the civil war, and now hypocritically revoked their power for his own gain.

At the coming festival of the Lupercalia, the biggest test of the Roman people for their willingness to accept Caesar as King was to take place. On February 15, 44 BC, Caesar sat upon his gilded chair on the Rostra, wearing his purple robe, red shoes and a golden laurel. Armed with the title of Dictator for Life, and with his rather kingly appearance, it seemed the right time to stage a public display. After the race around the pomerium that was a tradition of the festival, Marcus Antonius ran into the forum and was raised to the Rostra by the priests attending the event. Antony produced a diadem and attempted to place it on Caesar's head, saying "the people offer this (the title of King) to you through me." There was, however, little support from the crowd, and Caesar quickly refused being sure that the diadem didn't touch his head. The crowd roared with approval, but Antony, undeterred attempted to place it on Caesar's head again. Still there was no voice of support from the crowd, and Caesar rose from his chair and refused Antony again, saying, "Jupiter alone is King of the Romans." The crowd wildly endorsed Caesar's actions, and it was quite obvious that they weren't yet ready for a king. The event, likely staged may have had two political motivations. First, had the crowd supported Antony, Caesar may very well have accepted, and perhaps the true intention was a simple test of the people. Another theory is that Caesar wanted a massive public event to be able to declare that he didn't want the title, and perhaps mend fences with the Senate. Either way, it was quite clear that the common citizens weren't ready.

All the while Caesar was still planning a campaign into Dacia and then Parthia. The Parthian campaign stood to bring back considerable wealth to Rome, along with the potential return of Crassus' lost standards. Conquest of Parthia would not only further inflate Caesar's legendary status, but may be just the sort of popular agenda that would make the idea of a Roman king acceptable. Caesar planned to leave in April of 44 BC, and the secret opposition that was steadily building had to act fast. Made up mostly of men that Caesar had pardoned already, they knew their only chance to rid Rome of Caesar was to prevent him ever leaving for Parthia.

Ides of March

The conspiracy against Caesar likely festered for a long time, but it only began to take on a legitimate threat in the early part of 44 BC. In a Senate famous for political wrangling and backstabbing, a conspiracy of such grave magnitude could not have been kept secret for long. The urgency of the plot was not only the fact that Caesar was expected to leave Rome for Parthia on March 18, but that Caesar was expected to be named King of all the Roman provinces outside of Italy. The apparent leader of the plot was Gaius Cassius Longinus, the Praetor Peregrinus in 44 BC. He already held a grudge against the dictator for perceived political slights, mainly in not backing him for positions of higher authority. In fact, Caesar seems to have had suspicions of Cassius already, but apparently did nothing to counteract it. Caesar often made comments regarding his own death by suggesting he'd prefer to die one death than die countless times as a coward. On a similar note, Cicero once quoted Caesar as saying, "I have lived long enough both in years and in accomplishment."

Whether or not Caesar had any idea of the conspiracy growing against him is certainly debatable but he was well aware of the ramifications of such an act. Suetonius quoted him as saying "It is more important for Rome than for myself that I should survive. I have long been sated with power and glory; but, should anything happen to me, Rome will enjoy no peace. A new Civil War will break out under far worse conditions than the last." Though this prophetic statement would definitely turn out to be the truth, the conspiracy continued to grow. Some 60 senators (of the 900

member body, most of whom were loyal to Caesar) would align themselves in the favor of the Republican ideal, including Caesar's close friend Decimus Junius Brutus Albinus. One notable omission from the conspiracy was the great orator Cicero. Despite his support of Pompey and the Republican side in the civil war, it was feared that Cicero didn't have the fortitude to carry out the task, or that he wouldn't be able to keep his famous mouth closed.

Cicero, however, was not the key to the plot's success. The key ingredient was the inclusion of Caesar's friend, Marcus Junius Brutus. He had served with Caesar in Gaul before taking sides with Pompey in the civil war, and was later pardoned for his 'transgression'. It was rumored, due to Caesar's well known affair with Brutus' mother Servilia, that Brutus could've been Caesar's son. While this is completely unlikely, there is no question that Caesar maintained a relationship of fondness for Brutus, and had supported him for many offices of importance. Brutus was the key for one simple reason. His supposed ancestor, Lucius Junius Brutus, was the man who took the lead in expelling the Etruscan kings centuries earlier, and was fundamental in establishing the Republic. The conspirators felt that with Brutus in tow, recreating the perception that a Brutus would save Rome from tyranny for a second time, the plot would immediately be legitimized. Cassius and other conspirators relentlessly worked on Brutus, trying to shatter his bond with Caesar and bring him to their side. After playing on his sense of duty and family history, Brutus finally joined the plot as a matter of honor.

With the involvement of Brutus, the conspiracy moved forward. All that was left was to determine the time, place and manner of the deed. Caesar was expected to assemble the Senate for a final time before departing for Parthia on March 18. On the Ides of March, or the 15th, the Senate was expected to approve Caesar's kingship outside of Italy. It had been prophesied by the Sybilline books that only a king could defeat Parthia, and it was widely expected for Caesar to receive this additional honor before his departure. It was decided that the assassination would take place in the Curia of Pompey's theatre, where the Senate would meet with Caesar for the last time. Each member of the plot would be required to stab Caesar with a dagger, thereby not only assuring his death, but unifying the group under a banner of freedom for the entire state.

The waiting game, however, must have been a nerve-wracking affair. Bad omens seemed to threaten the success of the attempt. These omens, likely later added manifestations of the writers for dramatic effect, still illustrate the fragile nature of the plot. One little slip up, with so many people involved, could send the whole thing crashing down. Of the many portends, or warnings to Caesar that are said to have occurred, one stands out above the rest. According to Suetonius and Plutarch, a soothsayer by name of Spurinna was said to have delivered the famous warning to Caesar, "Beware the Ides of March."

Death of Caesar

On the morning of March 15, 44 BC, the Ides of March, Caesar awoke to find his wife Calpurnia in a near panic. According to the ancients, nightmares had plagued her the night before, warning her of impending danger to Caesar. This was to be the last meeting between Caesar and the Senate before he left for Parthia just 3 days later. He certainly wanted to attend the session and take care of finalizing his agenda, but his wife's concern seems to have made an impact. It's also been suggested that Caesar may have been ill at time. Perhaps epilepsy was beginning to take its toll. Regardless, while the Senate and the conspirators anxiously awaited Caesar to arrive at Pompey's theatre, Caesar decided to heed his wife's reservations. He sent word to Antonius (Antony) to dismiss the Senate based on inauspicious religious omens.

Meanwhile, the Senate was gathering at Pompey's theatre, likely to grant Caesar one final and particularly anti-Republican honor: the title of king of all Roman territory outside of Italy. The conspirators plan was rather simple, they snuck in daggers, some in boxes intended for

documents, others just concealed in flowing folds of their togas. When Caesar arrived all involved were expected to approach Caesar and stab him at least once each, thereby unifying the group and spreading the 'guilt' among them all. Gaius Trebonius was to keep Antony occupied in conversation outside the theatre; to prevent him from helping Caesar, but some have speculated that Antony may even have been involved. The motivation definitely could've been there since at this time the contents of Caesar's will were unknown (the naming of Octavian as his heir) and it stood to reason that Antony (as one of Caesar's strongest supporters and right hand men) would be expected to inherit Caesar's vast fortune. However, Antony gained tremendously from following in the footsteps of Caesar, and his relentless support of the dictator makes this scenario unlikely.

Cassius Dio wrote that the conspirators had gladiators waiting nearby to control the violence and confusion that would certainly follow the assassination of Caesar, but this is unconfirmed. Judging things by the events after the murder, it seems that the conspirators had little or no plan to take control. Perhaps the all encompassing fear and anxiety of such a deed prevented clear focus on what would need to be done. Regardless, as time passed in the morning hours, it soon became evident that Caesar might not show at all. When word was delivered that this was indeed the case, the conspirators were likely on the verge of panic. This would simply be the only reasonable time when the plot could take place, and it was imperative that Caesar come to the Senate meeting. Decimus Brutus, Caesar's close friend and likely the least suspected member of the group, was dispatched to Caesar's home to convince him to come. He played on Caesar's dignity, mocking the priestly auspices that supposedly prevented Caesar from coming. He dismissed Calpurnia's dreams as silly, and appealed to Caesar's vanity by suggesting that the Senate was ready to vote him in as King. Certainly Caesar couldn't refuse the title that would assure him a guaranteed victory over the Parthians, as pre ordained by the Sybilline books. By 11 o' clock it seems that Caesar was convinced of the rightness of attending the meeting and set out with Decimus Brutus, despite his wife's pleas.

While the praetors Marcus Junius Brutus and Gaius Cassius Longinus (both important members of the plot) kept the Senate occupied by conducting state business during the morning hours, Caesar made his way towards Pompey's theatre. While he traveled in his litter, two meetings occurred that are likely as much a part of Caesar's legend than they are the truth. The first meeting was with a man, named Artemidorus by Plutarch, who approached Caesar's litter and handed him a scroll revealing the plot. Caesar, however, because of the great crowds that always approached him as he traveled the streets of Rome, was unable to read it. The second incident came with the soothsayer Spurinna who originally warned Caesar to beware the Ides. Upon seeing here, Caesar said "The Ides have come", as if suggesting that there was really nothing to fear. The reply was simple but eerie, "Aye Caesar, but not gone."

Caesar finally approached the Curia of Pompey and made his way inside. The Senators took their seats along with the conspirators, as if nothing was amiss. Trebonius kept Antony outside the meeting as planned, and Caesar took his place upon the gilded chair at the head of the forum. As was customary, Senators approached Caesar to petition him with various things, but this time, he was approached by 60 men bent on his death. With daggers concealed under their togas, they surrounded Caesar and waited for the signal that would send shockwaves rippling throughout the world.

Tillius Cimber was the man expected to deliver it. He petitioned Caesar to pardon his exiled brother, likely knowing full well that Caesar would refuse. When Caesar did so, the conspirators gathered more tightly around him, forcing Caesar to stand. Cimber then grabbed and pulled Caesar's purple robe from his shoulders, the signal to send the conspirators into action. Publius Servilius Casca, who positioned himself behind Caesar, was the first to strike the mark. He stabbed Caesar in the upper shoulder, near the neck, and Plutarch wrote that Caesar said, "Vile Casca" or Casca what is this? Reacting with the tenacity of a grizzled legionary veteran he apparently grabbed Casca's arm, stabbing it with his own writing pen, probably still completely unaware of the scope of the plot. At this point, the ferocity of the attack was revealed in earnest.

The assassins stabbed Caesar relentlessly, each taking a shot at the dictator. The attack was so rapid and vicious that several conspirators wounded each other. Brutus, the great symbol of Republican virtue and freedom for tyranny was wounded in the hand by an errant dagger, as he himself stabbed Caesar in the groin. Though the line made famous by Shakespeare, "Et tu Brute" (translated as "You too Brutus", "You too my son", or "even you Brutus") was supposedly spoken by Caesar as he saw Brutus approach with dagger in hand, this is likely a complete dramatic fabrication. The ancient sources suggest that Caesar said nothing, and this seems most likely, considering the duress he was under. After the initial attack, though many say Caesar fought valiantly in his defense, he likely had little idea where all the shots were coming from.

Despite the overwhelming assault on him, Caesar still had the presence of mind to maintain his dignity for posterity purposed. Resigning himself to the assassination, Caesar pulled the folds of his toga over his head so as to prevent anyone seeing his face at death. In all, Caesar was stabbed 23 times, and inevitably collapsed. At the foot of the blood splattered statue of his old friend, rival and son-in-law, Pompey, Gaius Julius Caesar died at the age of 55, on March 15, 44 BC.

Aftermath

Following the assassination of Caesar, there was immediate panic on the Senate floor. Brutus attempted to address the Senate and give the reasons for the conspiracy, urging his fellow Senators to spread this great deed of liberty as one of honor. Those who weren't involved however would have none of it. They fled the chambers, likely fearing for their own safety. Soon panic struck throughout the area, and the conspirators themselves raced off to the Capitoline Hill where they could safely hole up against the anger of the Roman mob. Cassius Dio paints a different picture, though. In the immediate aftermath of Caesar's death, Brutus came down from the Capitol to address the masses. In so doing, he calmed the population by claiming the deed was only done to preserve liberty and the Republican system. By convincing the crowd that there would be no mass proscriptions, or additional power grabs by the conspirators, Dio explains that the situation was mostly one of relative calm.

The problem for the conspirators turned out not to be the initial shock and anger of the people, but mistakes they made in carrying out their plan. First they made no real contingent plan to firmly take control. This left an immediate power vacuum, creating uncertainty and fear. Secondly, the biggest mistake was in allowing Marcus Antonius (Antony) to live. Immediately after Caesar's murder, Antony fled Pompey's theatre discarding his consular robe, and trying to maintain anonymity for personal protection. Though Antony's first thought was self-preservation, it turned out that harm to him, or anyone other than Caesar, was not in the conspirators plans. With the death of Caesar, Antony now stood as his heir apparent, and he took full advantage of the situation. At first Antony would appear to be conciliatory, and attempt to bring calm to Rome. After the reading of Caesar's will, however, Antony probably knew his only chance to win support from the crowd was to incite them against Caesar's assassins.

In the meantime, immediately after the murder, Caesar's mangled body was taken by slaves to his home. Though the conspirators originally planned to confiscate Caesar's property, the plan was aborted due to the immediate panic that ensued on the Senate floor. As family gathered at the home to mourn and discuss their fate, Caesar's father-in-law, Lucius Calpurnius Piso retrieved the all important will of the dictator from the Vestal Virgins (who stored all the wills in Rome). After reading it, those present were probably shocked by what they heard. Antony, of course was left with a share, as were others in Caesar's political family. The Roman masses too, were to receive a percentage of Caesar's great wealth. The shock likely came when Caesar's primary heir was named. His heir was to be his 18 year old and virtually unknown great nephew, Octavian, who waited in Apollonia to accompany Caesar to Parthia. The grandson of Caesar's sister would be suddenly thrust on the world stage, but first the situation in Rome had to be settled.

In 44 BC, Marcus Aemilius Lepidus was serving as Caesar's master of horse and took control of the streets after the assassination. Perhaps Lepidus, a great supporter of Caesar, sought to garner power for himself, but at any rate, he did maintain order. On March 16, the Senate wisely gathered to settle the affairs of the state before things unravelled too far. In the meeting, Lepidus argued against the assassins, maintaining loyalty to Caesar's memory. Cicero, however, the greatest of orators swayed the Senate to compromise, in order to save the Republic. Eventually the governing body decided on a course of general amnesty for the assassins (or liberators as they and their supporters called themselves). In this compromise, they were forced to uphold all of Caesar's laws and individual honors, including the concession that Caesar's soldiers would receive everything they were promised. This act, took power away from Lepidus, now unable to manipulate the legions into thinking that the Senate would take away their spoils. Antony it would seem, though he was still Consul along with the 'liberator' supporting Publius Cornelius Dolabella, was the biggest loser. Not only had he lost the inheritance of Caesar (though he stole a great part of it before it passed to Octavian), but the assassins had actually set themselves up in positions of power.

The Senate, still understanding that the so-called 'liberators' position with the people was still precarious, decided to grant the major players provincial governorships. This would not only protect them from the Roman mob, by sending them away from the city, but would grant them considerable power and the right to control regional legions. Brutus (the symbolic leader of the conspiracy) was appointed to Crete and Cassius (the driving force behind the plot) was given Africa. Decimus Brutus, the man who finally convinced Caesar to make the final walk to the site of his death, was given Cisalpine Gaul. In a brilliant stroke of political genius, something not generally applied to Antony's career, he completely turned the tables on the liberators. He secured the right to deliver the eulogy at Caesar's funeral, which was due to begin between March 18 and 20. Though Cassius opposed the idea of a grand public funeral, Brutus understood that the people would need some sort of closure, thereby allowing Antony to have his way. What Brutus didn't realize was that Antony would take the opportunity to turn Rome upside down. Over the course of the grand and likely highly emotional funeral, Antony addressed the people, first singing the praises of Caesar as would be expected at such an event. But Antony was here to make a political statement of a powerful order. He had the will of Caesar read, thereby making it public knowledge of the money left to each citizen of Rome. The crowd also learned that Caesar's own vast private garden was to be turned into a sort of public park for the people to enjoy. There are conflicting reports over how Antony then launched an attack against Caesar's assassins, but Dio Cassius sums up the mood of his speech:

"Of what avail, O Caesar, was your humanity, of what avail your inviolability, of what avail the laws? Nay, though you enacted many laws that men might not be killed by their personal foes, yet how mercilessly you yourself were slain by your friends! And now, the victim of assassination, you lie dead in the Forum through which you often led the triumph crowned; wounded to death, you have been cast down upon the rostra from which you often addressed the people. Woe for the blood-bespattered locks of gray, alas for the rent robe, which you assumed, it seems, only that you might be slain in it!"

Plutarch adds that, Antony, upon finishing held up the robe Caesar wore when he was murdered. Showing the stab shredded and bloody garment to the crowd, they were instantly overcome with a need for vengeance. As Caesar's funeral pyre burned away, the mob took up torches from it and went off to burn down the estates of the involved conspirators. Before long, the 'liberators' would be forced to flee the city faced with certain death at the hands of the mob. Antony had delivered a bold two-stroke victory, removing powerful rivals and propping himself up as the new people's champion.

As for the great Caesar, his bones were carried away and laid to rest in the family tomb, and an altar was later erected on the site of the funeral pyre. To the people of Rome, Caesar was a great hero. He brought wealth, power and prestige to the eternal city and they loved him for it. To them,

Caesar truly was a god. At his funeral games held to celebrate the life of Caesar in July of 44 BC, a great comet appeared in the sky lasting for seven days. To the people of the ancient world this was a great sign of Caesar's ascendancy into heaven to take his place among the gods. In January of 42 BC, Gaius Julius Caesar was named Divus Julius (Divine Julius) by the Senate, officially confirming him as a god of the Roman people, and beginning the practice of the imperial cult. Though Caesar's legacy was undeniable, his time had passed, and this was the time for the next generation of Roman political players, Marcus Antonius and Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus.

Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony 83 - 30 BC)

After the death of Caesar, one man in particular stood in the best position to seize control of unstable Rome. Antony proved a vital supporter in Caesar's rise to power and would establish himself as one of the leading men of the later Republic. Antony, however, despite being a brilliant general, lacked the necessary political tools to hold onto his precarious position.

Antony was born in Rome around 83 BC and was of a prominent family of some fame. His grandfather of the same name was a supporter of Sulla and was executed by Marius before Antony's birth; and his father, known for his campaigns against the eastern pirates died when Antony was quite young. Through his mother, Julia Caesaris, Antony was distantly related to Julius Caesar; and this carried considerable weight in his early career. Antony's mother remarried Publius Cornelius Lentulus, yet he was executed by Cicero in 63 BC as a result of the Cataline Conspiracy. This likely would be a key event marking Antony's personal enmity with Cicero in later years.

In his youth, Antony was known to keep dubious company, revelling in numerous affairs and general scandalous behaviour. With his friends, Publius Clodius Pulcher (the later leader of one of many factions within the Roman mob, and others such as Curio, Antony was a general carouser and gambler and was rumored to be indebted to the sum of 250 talents (several million dollars today). Prospects for the young man didn't seem to be outstanding, but his life took a decided turn for the better when he left Rome to study rhetoric in Greece. Though, his political education or abilities would never rival other great contemporaries such as Caesar, Cicero or Octavian, Antony seems to have garnered at least some natural oration ability. While his strength didn't necessarily rest in the political arena, military ability would be his eventual claim to fame.

While in Greece, Antony joined the cavalry under Aulus Gabinius and campaigned in Syria as well as other eastern borders of the empire. During the campaign, he showed a fine aptitude for command, distinguishing himself with both courage and leadership. He eventually ended his tour in Alexandria Egypt, where he helped re-install the exiled King Ptolemy Auletes. Though inconsequential at the time, it's quite possible that Antony first crossed paths with his future lover; the eventual queen of Egypt, 14 year old Cleopatra VII.

In 54 BC, Julius Caesar called on the promising young commander to join his staff in Gaul. Though half-way through the war, Antonius' arrival was welcome indeed. As the hardest fighting was yet to come, Antony would prove a vital component in Caesar's eventual victory. Along with Labienus, Antony would become Caesar's most trusted and able subordinate. Unfortunately, however, Antony's brutish and overbearing personality created problems that would plague Antony throughout his life. Though Caesar supported Antony for Quaestor in 52 BC, and continued to keep him on his staff, there were rifts that certainly must have soured Caesar's opinion.

In 50 BC, as civil war approached, Antony was elected as the fiery tribune that was a faithful and forceful supporter of Caesar's causes. It was his proposal (that both Caesar and Pompey should jointly lay down their commands) that could've prevented the war. Overwhelming senatorial objection to anything that might favor Caesar unravelled Antony's plans in favor of violent mob tactics. These tactics eventually earned Antony's expulsion from the office of tribune and gave

Caesar the excuse he needed to cross the Rubicon. Supposedly defending the sacred rights of the tribune of the people, Caesar marched on Rome in 49 BC, with Antony at his side.

When Caesar marched for Spain, Antony was left in nominal command of Italy, but began to prove his ineffectiveness as a politician. Plutarch paints Antony into a portrait of a tyrant with little care for Roman law or honor. Nevertheless, Antony's military skill kept him close to Caesar at least while Republican resistance was at its height. When Caesar crossed from Italy into Greece to attack the armies of Pompey, it was Antony who forced desperately needed supplies and reinforcements across the Republican controlled Adriatic. At Pharsalus, where Caesar defeated Pompey and essentially won the supreme leadership of Rome, Antony commanded the left wing of Caesar's army.

After Pharsalus, Caesar, now the dictator, continued on to Egypt and Africa, leaving Antony as his Master of Horse in command of Rome. Here it seems Antony's behavior finally alienated himself from Caesar. Antony let the economic and social order within Rome begin to crumble and turned to violence as a solution. Hundreds of citizens were killed in Antony's attempts to maintain order with obvious disapproval from Caesar. By the time Caesar returned victorious from Africa, Antony was replaced by Lepidus, and Antony fell out of Caesar's inner circle for nearly 2 years. Eventually Antony re-established importance within Caesar's faction, however, and played a pivotal role. In 44 BC, Antony joined Caesar as Consul and it was Antony who offered Caesar a diadem (crown) at the Lupercalia festival of that year. He continued to support Caesar's agenda and certainly was instrumental in forcing through many honors for the great conqueror.

After the assassination of Caesar on March 15, 44 BC, Antony was apparently surprised to find that he wasn't a target. Though some speculate that he may have been at least distantly involved in the plot, his behaviour after the murder suggests otherwise. After reconciling, at least in theory, with Caesar's assassins, and perhaps fearing the loss of power, Antony used Caesar's funeral oration as the catalyst that would once more plunge Rome into civil war. At this point, he used brute force and Caesar's massive public popularity to position himself at the top of the Roman political ladder. By late in 44 BC, Antony pushed through several laws, scattering the assassins throughout the provinces, and used his command of Caesar's former legions to maintain control. Antony procured the Gallic provinces for himself, and planned to take his army against Decimus Brutus, one of Caesar's assassins, who was assigned as governor there previously.

Before Antony could begin his quest for ultimate power, however, there was a new man on the scene. Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, Caesar's heir, had begun to challenge the authority of both Antony and the assassins. And sandwiched between them all was the great orator, Marcus Tullius Cicero.

Octavian

Gaius Octavius was born on September 23, 63 BC, and though of distant relation to Caesar, his eventual rise to prominence was unexpected. He was the son of a 'new man' bearing the same name from Velitrae in Latium. His father had reached the rank of praetor before dying when Octavian was a boy of only 4 years old, just as Caesar was launching his war in Gaul. His father was married to Atia, the daughter of a somewhat obscure Senator, M. Atius Balbus and Julia, sister of Julius Caesar, making him the great nephew of the dictator. There were other first nephews, but Caesar didn't seem to hold them in as high regard as the young Octavian, though one, Q. Pedius, did serve Caesar as a legate. Despite his relation to Caesar, there was some questionable lineage throughout his family.

Later opponents, Marc Antony included, attacked his heritage by claiming his ancestors were freedmen and moneychangers, not the sort of lineage that one might expect from a rising star in

Roman politics. Suetonius claims that Octavian carried another surname as a youth, Thurinus. This, Suetonius claims, either represented Octavian's historical familial roots, or the place where his father bested remnants of slave armies while he served as governor of Macedonia. Suetonius even reports that he came into a statue of Octavian as a boy bearing the inscription Thurinus, which he promptly gifted to the Emperor Hadrian, who prized it highly. Whatever the case, some evidence suggests that opponents like Antony may have used this surname against Octavian.

At the age of twelve (51 BC), Octavian's grandmother and sister of Caesar, died, ushering him into his first major public appearance. He delivered her eulogy, and like many other young political hopefuls, this was the first opportunity to make a mark on both the aristocracy and the common masses alike. While young Octavian was certainly noticed by Caesar at some point, evidence of direct involvement is conflicting. Octavian was coming into adulthood just as Caesar was embroiled in Gaul and in the Civil War that followed, and there certainly wouldn't have been much time for camaraderie. With Octavian's age, and reports of sickliness as a child, contact must have been limited. This, however, didn't stop Caesar from having an impact on the young man's career. In 48 BC, Octavius was appointed as a pontiff (priest) at the tender age of 15. It's possible the Caesar planned to take his protégé with him to Africa to face off against the Republicans there, but either sickness, or an over protective mother shot down this idea.

In 46 BC, Octavian took part in Caesar's triumphal parades in Rome, earning himself some military award, despite taking no part in the effort. Clearly this shows that Caesar at least had some design on his great nephew's future. The following year Octavian followed Caesar to Spain, where the dictator conducted the last battle of his career against the sons of Pompey at Munda. Though Octavian himself took little part in the actual military aspect of this campaign, his journey to join Caesar seems a significant development in the relationship. While en route, Octavian was faced with difficulties in avoiding enemy resistance, including a shipwreck which could've been disastrous. When the two finally crossed paths, Caesar was apparently very pleased with his nephew's daring determination and courage. Other than Caesar's short triumphal visit to Rome, this period in Spain was likely the first time the two were truly able to foster a serious relationship. If at any time, this was the chance for Octavian to impress Caesar, and for Caesar to bring the young man under his wing. While there is little historical documentation, Octavian likely learned a great deal about provincial administration, warfare and political manipulation while a part of his uncle's entourage. Nicolaus of Damascus, though his account is unreliable at best, indicates that Octavian was so firmly entrenched with Caesar that he was able to have considerable influence. In one example, Nicolaus states that Octavian begged a pardon for the brother of his great boyhood friend, Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, who had served under Cato in Africa. Despite beginning to retract on the number of pardons issued by this time in the civil war (as many who were pardoned would continue to fight), Caesar relented, and may have helped cement a lifetime friendship with the two future leaders of Rome.

By the end of the campaign in Spain, Octavian was sent to Apollonia in Illyricum to further his studies, along with his friend Agrippa. Here he was to continue his education, while waiting to accompany Caesar on a campaign against the Dacians and the Parthians. Octavian was still a very minor player in the politics of Rome at this point, but his star was certainly on the rise. Caesar, having selected various political offices years in advance (one of many slights against Republican tradition), had slotted his nephew to serve as his right hand man, or master of horse, in the year 43 or 42 BC. At the age of 20 or 21, Octavian was expected to occupy the second most powerful position in the Roman world, but fate, and the Ides of March would have a different plan.

Caesar's Heir

On March 15, 44 BC, the Roman world was shaken to its foundation with the assassination of Julius Caesar. Though the effect would prove to be staggering, (ie the plunge into yet another

devastating civil war), no Roman was as profoundly affected as Gaius Octavius. Nearly 19 years old, Octavian was studying in Apollonia and awaiting the start of Caesar's next campaign against Parthia. Octavian's plan to join this campaign came to a crashing halt with the murder of his great uncle, and two equally possible roads soon opened to the young man.

When word reached Octavian of Caesar's murder, the naming of Octavian as his uncle's heir and posthumous adoption, reaction was mixed among his family and friends. His friends, likely Agrippa included, urged him to go to Macedonia and take refuge with Caesar's former legions there. His mother and step-father, L. Marcius Philippus on the other hand, pressed him to return to Rome as a private citizen and refuse Caesar's inheritance out of fear for his personal safety. Octavian sided in part with his family and decided to return to Rome, but readily accepted the adoption and the portion of Caesar's estate that was willed to him. He took the name Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, as was his right by virtue of adoption, but Octavianus was dropped from conscious thought. It's been used throughout the study of history to define him from his adoptive father, but he identified himself simply as Caesar. In so doing, he immediately entrenched himself as a favorite both with the masses and the all important veteran legionaries.

After making the decision to return to Rome to claim his inheritance, Octavian first crossed the Adriatic and landed in Brundisium, where he decided the safest course of action was an appeal to Caesar's troops. A bold and daring move, and seemingly necessary to ensure his safety, it turned out to be the only way to ensure his legitimacy. As Octavian marched to Rome, and gathered support among Caesar's Italian veterans, the de facto leader in Rome, Marcus Antonius, essentially ignored the youth. Not only did he blatantly disregard Caesar's will, but made no effort to discuss the situation with Octavian or learn of his intentions. When Octavian finally arrived in Rome in late April, 44 BC, Antony still ignored him, and still attempted to block passing on Caesar's inheritance. Octavian, however, garnered support from the masses and conflict seemed inevitable.

Antony was occupied with his own intentions of taking Cisalpine Gaul from then governor Decimus Brutus. Though the use of the Tribunes, Antony forced through legislation that altered his appointed governorship of 43 BC from Macedonia to Cisalpine Gaul. Decimus Brutus, a former supporter of Caesar, yet a key player in the assassination, had the general support of the Senate, and of course, Caesar's assassins. Antony, however, had no intention of waiting for events to unfold and took matters in his own hands. In November of 44 BC, rather than wait for Decimus Brutus' term to expire, Antony moved on Cisalpine Gaul, where he hoped to gather further strength by pushing his control into all of Gaul. In the meantime Octavian, as he was being set aside by the powers that were as a man with a name but no authority, pushed the envelope of daring. He traveled among the veteran colonies of Campania and, risking the enmity of the state, raised a personal army perhaps as strong as 10,000 men. The weight of the Caesar name, as Octavian was still quite unaccomplished on his own merit, proved to be a powerful factor to reckon with.

Antony returned to Rome to deal with this new threat, but 2 of his 5 legions on the way from Macedonia to Gaul deserted him to Octavian's growing army. Rather than risk a war in Italy, Antony rushed back to Cisalpine Gaul with the forces he could muster, where he hoped to seize control from Brutus. At this point, there were three seemingly opposed factions vying for power, the 'Liberators' or Caesar's assassins, Antony and Octavian. The Senate, and Cicero in particular all viewed Antony as the greatest threat to Republican liberty, and he began a campaign of disgracing Antony through the use of his vaunted rhetoric. Viewing Octavian as a tool to be manipulated, the Senate accepted him as a counterforce to Antony's strength and legitimized his command, despite its illegal beginnings. By the close of 44 BC, the various factions continued to shore up their military positions, and war was once again on the horizon.

As Antony marched north to besiege Decimus Brutus in Cisalpine Gaul, Octavian, armed with the support of both Cicero and the Senate, readied his forces to follow. Having garnered the support of Cicero, though it was thought to be for the best interest of the Republic, Octavian actually secured his position as a political player of some importance. Despite attempts by the Senate to try and reconcile all the opposing factions, there was little chance now for resolution by peace. In the east, Caesar's assassins continued to spread their control, and in the west the various factions continued to build support for their own causes.

In April of 43 BC, Octavian marched north to face Antony, and was joined by the current consuls for the year, Pansa and Hirtius. The three men had mutual cause in defeating Antony, but otherwise the two consuls would have little use for Caesar's heir. The three commanders camped their armies separately near Bononia, not far from where Antony had Decimus Brutus besieged at Mutina. Antony broke off the siege with his main army, leaving his brother Lucius in command there. Antony drove down on Pansa first, defeating his Consular army, and inflicting what would become mortal wounds on Pansa himself. Next he sought to defeat Hirtius in turn, but the combined strength of two powerful enemies turned the tide against him. Antony retreated into Transalpine Gaul, where he hoped to build support from the Caesarian forces still in power there, but the armies of his enemies suffered a terrible loss. Not only had Pansa succumbed to his wounds, but Hirtius was killed in the battle as well, leaving the Republic without its Consuls. Decimus Brutus wanted Octavian to join forces with him and pursue Antony, but Octavian refused to join with one of the murderer's of his adoptive father.

While Antony fled and then joined forces with Lepidus, the pro-Caesarian governor of Spain, the Senate's faction attempted to shun Octavian and bestow prestige among Brutus and other allied parties. Among other slights, the Senate ignored land settlement requests for Octavian's veterans and refused to consider his petition to be named suffect Consul (along with Cicero) for the remainder of the year. While Cicero continued to support who he thought was his young protégé, the assassins of Caesar saw the situation much more clearly. While Antony was a threat, to be sure, they feared Octavian, with his massive public popularity, as the continued presence of Caesar's legacy. Denying Octavian at every turn, the young man decided on another bold and daring move. Rather than wait for events to unfold, Octavian marched south, leaving Antony and Lepidus in a stalemate against Decimus Brutus and his allies.

Word had come to Octavian that the Senate and even Cicero, viewed him as a convenient tool to use against Antony. When the need was gone, the Senate would surely dismiss Octavian, but they underestimated both him, and his popularity with the legions. It's suspected that Antony may have even played a part, probably taunting Octavian with the fact that he was just an unwitting pawn in the Senate's power game.

As Octavian marched on Rome, the Senate was unable to put up resistance, with their main armies facing off against Antony and Lepidus in Gaul and the other 'Liberators' in the east. It's also interesting to note that while the assassins such as Brutus and Cassius participated in Caesar's murder as a pretense to preserving the Republican tradition, they seemingly has no qualms about illegally taking control of the eastern provinces to build their own strength. Regardless, the Senate initially accepted Octavian's demands, such as naming him Consul and granting land to his veterans, but when word arrived that legions had arrived from Africa to support the Senate, the offers were rescinded. These legions, however, refused to fight Caesar's heir, and switched their loyalty without a single engagement. As the calendar reached mid summer, Octavian, still only 19 years old, was confirmed as Consul along with his cousin Q. Pedius and set about an extraordinary bit of political legislation. He seized the state treasury, paying off his troops, and finally received the distribution of Caesar's will. More importantly, however, he changed the focus of Senatorial politics by authorizing a special law revoking the amnesty of the 'Liberators'.

In one single day, he tried and convicted Caesar's murderers in absentia, and set stage for the civil war to finally end the collapsing Republic. Octavian rose to power as the first Roman in history

to do so almost completely with the support of the army. Unlike previous political powerhouses, like Marius, Sulla and Caesar, Octavian had little to any real support among the political forces that were. As a young man without an established client base, the maneuverings of men such as Cicero helped set him up on the public stage, but it was the legions, and the use of his adoptive name, Caesar, that secured his position among Rome's elite. By the autumn of 43 BC, Octavian prepared for his next move, to alter the state of the political landscape and reconcile with Antony.

Second Triumvirate

After forcing through his own political agenda in Rome, the situation with Antony was still precarious. Antony had reached Gaul and gathered strength from the legions stationed there. Together with Lepidus in Spain, the two were a formidable force. Octavian, despite having considerable strength himself, would be hard pressed to meet that challenge alone. By passing a law that found all the members of Caesar's assassination plot to be guilty of a capital crime, he certainly couldn't count on any support from that quarter, not that he wanted it. Decimus Brutus, for so long holding the support of the Senate against Antony, now found himself sandwiched between Antony, Lepidus and Octavian, and decided to flee to the safer eastern territories. He was not so lucky, however, and was captured and executed en route, becoming the first of the major players in Caesar's murder to pay for his 'crime'.

Octavian decided that the prudent course of action was to reconcile with Antony and stabilize the Caesarean faction. He marched north and met with Antony and Lepidus on a small river island near Bononia. For two days the three political leaders of the western Roman world hammered out the details of an agreement that would set them up as the official government of Rome. In establishing the *triumviri rei publicae constituendae*, the three men divided the western 'empire' between them. Antony would stay entrenched in Gaul, Lepidus, the leading pro-consular patrician member of Roman government still alive, maintained control of Spain and Narbonensis and Octavian received Africa, Sardinia and Sicily. Octavian's status as the junior member of the group relegated his authority to these more minor territories, by comparison. Not that they weren't important, but Sextus Pompeius, son of Pompey the Great, had already established himself as a pirate captain in the Mediterranean and made control of Octavian's provinces difficult at best. By the time the Second Triumvirate was cemented, Pompey had already taken control of the islands, and was lurking dangerously off the Italian shore.

This Second Triumvirate was different than the First arranged by Caesar, Pompey and Crassus some 16 years earlier. While the first was really a secret pact that forced the 3 men to pledge mutual support, leaving the Republican system largely intact, this new triumvirate was a legal arrangement, written into the constitution by the *Lex Titia* in November, 43 BC. In essence, this new government was a joint dictatorship, where the three members had ultimate authority capable of completely disregarding Republican and Senatorial tradition through the use of military force.

With their agreement firmly in place, the triumvirate first focused on both gathering enough funds to stabilize their authority and eliminate political opposition. This meant the return of Sulla's dreaded political tool, the proscriptions. There is some dispute whether the proscriptions were intended merely as a means for financial gain, or directly intended as a political affirmation, but regardless, the use of proscription produced both results. Being sure not to make the mistake Caesar had made in pardoning his most dangerous threats, the proscriptions of the second triumvirate were as brutal and all encompassing as those of Sulla. In all, some 130 to 300 Senators were proscribed, but most only faced confiscation of property. Worse though, estimates of up to 2,000 equites were said to be on the proscription list. Members of the Triumvirs own families were not exempt either. Lepidus' own brother was proscribed, as well as Antony's cousin and Octavian's distant relative through adoption, Lucius Caesar. Though they survived and their

proscription was a matter of financial necessity, it was clear that the Triumvirs would use any means necessary to advance their agenda.

The most notable victim of the proscriptions was Marcus Tullius Cicero. After having opposed Antony for so long, including vicious attacks through the use of his rhetoric and oration, Antony simply couldn't allow Octavian's mentor to live. Despite Cicero's support of Caesar's heir, Octavian agreed that Cicero had to go. On December 7, 43 BC, Cicero was captured attempting to flee to Greece, and the relative safety of the 'Liberators' provinces. Much like the proscriptions of Marius and Sulla, Cicero's head and hands were cut off and displayed on the Rostra in the forum. Unlike their predecessor's mass displays, however, Cicero was the only victim to be publicly exhibited this time around. To add insult to injury, and as a symbolic gesture against Cicero's vaunted power of speech, Antony's wife, Fulvia pulled out Cicero's tongue and jabbed it repeatedly with a pin.

Though the proscriptions didn't yield as much financial gain as the triumvirs had hoped, they did provide enough of a boon to turn their attention on their mutual enemies in the east. Despite a certain animosity between them, they were secured by the presence of a common foe, and the triumvirate was stable for the time being. The next year, 42 BC, would be focused on eliminating Caesar's assassins and strengthening their own power.

Philippi

In 42 BC, Octavian and Antony combined their forces, 28 legions in total, and sailed across the Adriatic and into Greece. The 'Liberators' Brutus and Cassius had 19 of their own legions, which were heavily supplemented by auxilia provided by eastern client kingdoms. Brutus and Cassius had been plundering and taking control of the east for nearly two full years since the murder of Caesar. Despite having an army made up largely of Caesar's former troops, they used this plunder and distributed it among the men to secure their loyalty.

As Octavian's and Antony's armies arrived and assembled near Dyrrhachium, the site of Caesar's near defeat to Pompey 6 years earlier, Octavian battled with his own poor health. Often described as a sickly youth, he was apparently stricken with a terrible illness just as the fate of the Roman world was about to be decided. Antony, however, likely saw a grand opportunity to win a great victory for his own cause without being forced to share any credit with his young fellow triumvir and rival. As Antony marched his army east towards the Macedonian - Thracian and border and confrontation with the enemy, Octavian had no choice but to follow, despite his illness, or risk being left out of the battle to revenge his adoptive father.

Initially both sides jockeyed for position, and the 'Liberators' hoped to win a battle of attrition by delaying Antony's advance. Antony however, often considered second only to Caesar in military ability during this era, would have none of it and forced the enemy into battle. On October 3, the two armies drew up near the Macedonian town of Philippi. Cassius commanded the left wing of the Republican forces directly across from Antony while Brutus confronted Octavian's army with the right wing. Octavian, however, despite his presence in the area was still terribly ill. He was forced to stay behind the lines in his tent, while his officers conducted the battle on his behalf. As the battle opened, Antony had a clear advantage over Cassius, and overran the Republican left. Brutus, though, had nearly equal success against Octavian and pushed his lines back. Octavian was forced to flee his camp, taking refuge in a nearby marsh.

Cassius' defeat was significant and yet the entire affair could've been stabilized by Brutus's success. Cassius though was certainly unaware of his ally's good fortune and decided to take his own life, rather than submit to Antony. Despite his own loss, Cassius was the stronger military mind of the Republican side and his own death began to sound the end of their ability to resist. Brutus managed to regroup and take command of Cassius' remaining army, but the writing was on

the wall. Antony assuredly reveled in his own victory while Octavian was forced to retreat, but Brutus held his ground and delayed Antony's triumph. On October 23, perhaps losing the confidence of his men, or willing to risk a final last ditch effort at victory, Brutus launched an attack.

At the Battle of 2nd Philippi, Octavian was seemingly recovered from his illness and commanded his own army. He and his men were certainly embarrassed by their defeat just 3 weeks earlier and were prepared to give a better account. This time they proved themselves up to the challenge, and the triumvir's army overran Brutus. Octavian's forces captured Brutus' camp and they were atoned for their previous defeat. The battle spelled the end of the Republican cause, and Brutus committed suicide on the following day. A great number of those involved in the plot against Caesar also lost their lives at Philippi and Octavian was brutal in exacting vengeance. Though some escaped to join with Sextus Pompey in his Sicilian stronghold, the battles of Philippi essentially assured the end of Republican government and paved the way for a final conflict between the victorious triumvirs.

After the battles, Octavian marched his army back to Italy, where he was now faced with the unenviable task of finding a retirement settlement for his veterans. Antony continued east where he began to secure loyalty of client kings and provincial governors alike. He imposed serious penalties on Asia Minor in particular and essentially plundered those provinces for disloyalty, despite already having been looted by Brutus and Cassius. In light of the altered state of the Roman world, the triumvirs realigned their positions. Antony received the entire east as his new territory, yet retained Transalpine Gaul. Octavian now moved into the second position among the three received Spain, Italy, Cisalpine Gaul and the Mediterranean islands. Lepidus, clearly relegated to third on the list, was moved to Africa, where he would essentially linger as a bit player in the remaining days of the Republic.

Perusine War

In early 41 BC, Octavian returned to Italy from Philippi and was hard at work attempting to settle 40,000 veterans. He had a major problem in this task: a promise made that the legionaries would receive rich and fertile land around 18 major cities in Italy. This was an issue because the current inhabitants would have to be displaced, certainly a cause for serious social disorder.

Compounding the problem was dissatisfaction among the troops who always felt that they weren't receiving what was promised. Among those dispossessed of home and property were the poets Virgil and Horace, the latter of whom served Brutus as a Tribune in his army. Those who had land confiscated were not compensated in any way, and anger against Octavian was growing to a cascade.

Lucius Antonius, brother of Mark Antony, sought to take advantage of the situation for his own, and most likely his brother's advantage. Though Antony seemingly had no involvement, he certainly hoped to gain at Octavian's expense. At the height of resentment against Octavian, Lucius and Antony's wife Fulvia, began to champion the cause of those who had been effected by Octavian's plan. Adding to the fuel, they began to spread the idea that Antony's troops were being under compensated in the whole affair in comparison to Octavian's own men. Some of Antony's men arranged a meeting between Octavian and Lucius to settle the affair, but a fight broke out between troops from both sides who went to the site ahead of their leaders.

Lucius gathered the forces loyal to Antony and marched on Rome, and Octavian was forced to withdraw to Etruria where he could prepare his men. Lucius quickly realized that his position was untenable and decided to head north to Cisalpine Gaul, where he could join with and coordinate with his brother's generals there. Octavian, however, wouldn't allow this to happen. He was faced with a serious threat from Sextus Pompey in Sicily, Lucius Antonius right in Italy, Antony's men in Gaul, and perhaps Antony himself from the east. Octavian cut off Lucius' retreat and besieged him

at Perugia, effectively eliminating the threat of coordination with Antony's men in Gaul. After a short siege, Lucius realized that help was not going to come, and rather than starve to death, was forced to surrender.

By February of 40 BC, the so-called Perusine War ended as Lucius gave up the town. Likely fearing reprisal from his fellow triumvirate, Octavian took no action against Lucius, or Antony's wife Fulvia, but exacted revenge on the town itself instead. While Lucius was pardoned, the town magistrates were put to the sword (save for one who had supported the condemnation of Caesar's assassins some years prior), and the town was opened up to his men. At first Antony seemed to have little reaction to these events that took nearly a year to materialize. In the interim, however, Antony's governor in Gaul had died, and Octavian moved in to establish his own control of the province. While Antony, for the most part, ignored the trouble stirred up between his brother and Octavian, he had to respond to the loss of a major territorial stronghold.

By spring of 40 BC, Antony sailed to Brundisium in Italy's heel, but was refused entry by Octavian's garrison commander. Rather than be turned away, Antony besieged the city, and Octavian was forced to move south to meet this new threat. In the meantime, Antony had reconciled with the remaining Republicans under Sextus Pompey, and now it seemed that war was inevitable with a clear advantage going to Antony. Things looked so bleak for Octavian that he divorced his wife Claudia (step-daughter of Antony) and married Pompey's sister-in-law, apparently in an attempt to keep Sextus out of any coming fight between the two triumvirs. At this point, however, as the two armies prepared to meet near Brundisium, Antony found that his men didn't have the stomach to do battle with their comrades, and Caesar's heir. Forced into negotiation, Octavian's future was saved by Antony's own men, and war was diverted, at least temporarily.

As a result of a new agreement between them (the Pact of Brundisium), both men confirmed the situation as the status quo. Octavian was ceded Gaul and Antony was reaffirmed as supreme commander in the entire east. Lepidus, the third member of the so-called triumvirate still languished as a bit player in Africa, and clearly fell behind his rivals for the ultimate power in the Roman world. As luck would have it, Antony's wife Fulvia died shortly after her involvement in the Perusine War, and Antony was free to remarry. Cementing their alliance, Antony married Octavian's sister, Octavia, and the two returned to Rome together and amidst a great deal of relief by the masses. They began to make plans to procure their own global dominance; Antony certainly wanting to return east where he hoped for his own campaign against the Parthians, and Octavian wanted to deal with Sextus Pompey once and for all.

Sextus Pompey

After the pact of Brundisium, Sextus Pompey or Magnus Pius as he called himself, son of Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, maintained a stranglehold in Sicily and on the Roman grain supply. A short lived agreement with Antony to work in cooperation against Octavian fell apart after Brundisium, but the two triumvirs were in no position to challenge Pompey's naval superiority. By 39 BC, Pompey's fleet was near to causing famine in Italy, but rather than risk immediate hostilities, the two Roman power brokers sought to appease their hostile neighbor and cut him in on the action.

At Misenum on the Bay of Naples, the three men met to make arrangements for a peaceful end to Pompey's obstructions. While Pompey certainly thought to be included as a major player in the Roman political system, Antony and Octavian preferred honoring what would amount to honorary accolades. They offered him the Consulship for 38 BC (by this time a mostly ceremonial position), and was allowed to retain control of Sicily and Sardinia as well as the Greek Peloponnesus for a period of 5 years. His troops would receive similar retirement benefits to those of Antony and Octavian's, but most importantly, Pompey's followers, including most of the remaining Republican supporters would be scratched from the list of the proscribed and be allowed to return to Rome.

With the treaty of Misenum set, Antony prepared to move east to begin his Parthian campaign, and Octavian likely sought to focus on domestic issues.

This was not to be the case, however. Within a short time Pompey complained that the Greek Peloponnesus had been essentially raped of their value prior to his arrival, though both Antony and Octavian claimed it was Antony's right to secure tax profits prior to Pompey's takeover. To insult Pompey further, his Sardinian governor defected to Octavian giving him control of that island; and in retaliation, Pompey's fleets began disrupting the grain supplies once again. Within a year of the treaty of Misenum, the peace was being quickly unraveled. Because of that treaty, however, most of Pompey's support within the Senate was gone. Republican holdouts against Octavian and Antony seemingly grew tired of Sicilian exile and with the door to return opened, joined either Antony's or Octavian's camps. Pompey, despite his position as the last bastion of the old Republican defiance, was still considered to be little more than a pirate, and his associations were increasingly anti-Roman.

Meanwhile, Octavian's status continued to rise. Starting just 5 years earlier as a virtually unknown boy simply with the luxury of being named Caesar's heir, he had risen to stand as the joint ruler of the Roman world. Through proscription, political cunning and some military bravado, he had built up a considerable amount of support both with the new and old aristocracy. Upon the return of so many exiled Senators and leading families, Octavian sought to make peace and build alliances. The day after his then current wife, Scribonia (a relation of his new enemy Sextus Pompey), gave birth to his daughter Julia (Julia and not Octavia because Octavian referred to himself as C. Julius Caesar, not Octavian), he divorced her and was impassioned by Livia Drusilla the wife of Tiberius Claudius Nero. On January 17, 38 BC, Octavian and Livia were married in an arrangement that would last an unprecedented 52 years. Though they never had children of their own, Livia's children by Claudius Nero would eventually inherit the imperial throne. Octavian, seemingly emboldened by his new found alliances, and in need to impress the population against Sextus Pompey (Magnus Pius), adopted a new name to counteract Pompey's military success. From at least 38 BC on, Octavian was referred to as Imperator Caesar Divi Filius (or General Caesar, son of a god). In so doing, he further strengthened his bond with Caesar, and pumped up his own military clout, simply through the use of a name.

Despite this posturing, as war opened against Pompey, things did not initially go well. An attempted invasion of Sicily in 38 BC had to be aborted due to poor weather, and Pompey's successful intervention. By the following spring, 37 BC, Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, Consul and lifelong friend of Octavian, had gathered a massive fleet and trained it within an artificially enclosed harbor at Naples. Antony as well contributed 120 ships of his own to help in the cause, in exchange for the transfer of 20,000 troops to be used against Parthia. In setting this arrangement, the two renewed their alliance and made it an official form of government for another 5 years until 33 BC. By July of the following year, 36 BC, Agrippa as admiral, led Octavian's fleet in a three pronged invasion of Sicily. Two fleets sailed from Italy, and the oft-ignored Lepidus finally got back into the act and invaded from Africa.

Though there were several engagements which set back the invasion, Agrippa turned the tide at the battle of Naulochus in September of 36 BC. Using a technique to grapple Pompey's swifter more maneuverable ships, Agrippa turned the tide and utterly defeated Pompey's fleet. Pompey fled to the east and never re-established a position of strength and was eventually destroyed by Antony in 35 BC. Lepidus meanwhile had Pompey's land forces under siege on Sicily. When news of the battle of Naulochus reached Pompey's men, they wished to surrender to Lepidus but Octavian refused it. Lepidus ignored this order, however and accepted the surrender, demanding control of Sicily as a result. Octavian replied with a brilliant stroke of political strategy. Arranging in advance to bribe Lepidus' men to his own side, Octavian entered Lepidus' camp and essentially stripped him of all his political value. Taking Lepidus' nearly 18 legions under his own command, Lepidus was sent into partial exile in a small Italian town, where he lived out his remaining years as a relative non-player. Though he held the position of Pontifex Maximus, which he was given upon

the death of Julius Caesar, he was virtually removed from all aspects of political life. When he eventually died in 12 BC, the title of head priest of the Roman Religion passed to Octavian (by then Augustus) and it forevermore was passed to each emperor in turn. At this point in 36 BC, the Triumvirate was officially over, leaving Octavian as the sole ruler of the west and Antony in the east, and though issues were settled for the time being, the monumental clash was inevitable.

Antony and Cleopatra

After the defeat of the Republicans at Philippi, and Sextus Pompey in Sicily, Octavian set about organizing the west under his control. In the meantime, Marcus Antonius moved east to do the same, and to seek further glory against Parthia. Antony had met with Cleopatra of Egypt as early as 41 BC in Tarsus, and while Octavian struggled with his own problems, including Antony's brother, in Italy, Antony was seemingly satisfied to allow the east to rest in political turmoil. He spent the winter of 41 and 40 BC with Cleopatra in Egypt, where she bore him twin children, and their affair blossomed.

Before the victory at Philippi, however, the Republican general Cassius had sent Q. Labienus, the son of Caesar's Legate Titus Labienus, into Parthia to solicit support for their cause. With the unstable political climate in both the west and east, and Antony mostly idle in Egypt, Orodes the King of Parthia, commissioned a joint command under his son Pacorus and Labienus to invade Roman territory. In early 40 BC, the Parthians took Syria, while Labienus continued south into Judaea and eventually west all the way to Asia Minor. At this point, the situation with Sextus Pompey in Sicily had come to a head, and Antony was forced to act. Ignoring Labienus and the Parthians for the time being, Antony moved west to aid Octavian. While Antony was in the west however, where they would eventually be victorious in 36 BC, he sent a command under P. Ventidius Bassus to deal with Labienus.

Bassus proved an effective commander and dealt with Labienus swiftly and effectively. In three consecutive battles in 39 BC, Bassus defeated this final remnant of Republican resistance in Asia Minor. Over the next two years, Bassus reclaimed lost territory, pushing his way into Syria and forcing the Parthians to withdraw. In 38 BC, Bassus met Pacorus at the Battle of Gindarus in Mesopotamia, ironically on June 9, the anniversary of Crassus' great defeat at Carrhae. This time the Romans won a resounding victory, in which Pacorus was killed, and by the time Antony returned for good in 36 BC, the east was essentially secured. With the death of Pacorus, King Orodes of Parthia abdicated his throne in favor of a second son Phraates, but Phraates had his father murdered to ensure his rule, and Antony felt the time was right for revenge and invasion.

The following campaign year, 37 BC, he initiated a campaign similar to his eastern predecessor, Pompey the Great. The tribes of the Caucasus region were subdued in order to secure peace from the north, and rather than follow Crassus' disastrous course into Mesopotamia, Antony marched east through Armenia. By 36 BC, he had secured the support of Artavastes, King of Armenia and the two continued the campaign into the Parthian territory of Media. Antony's main force moved ahead of the baggage train, which was left in the protection of Artavastes, and while Antony besieged Phraaspes, the Parthian capital of Media, the Parthians wisely turned on Artavastes. The vital supply train was captured, and Artavastes retreated to Armenia, leaving Antony to fend for himself in the rough and hostile Parthian territory. Antony knew his invasion had failed and was forced to withdraw, losing nearly one quarter of his men in the process. Unlike Crassus, however, Antonius maintained his command integrity and extricated the survivors mostly intact, and without major incident.

In the meantime, Octavian was having his own success in a campaign against Illyrian tribes, and his prestige continued to grow. On the political stage, the situation with Cleopatra was beginning to cast Antony as a sell-out against Roman culture, and Octavian would seize at the opportunity to

publicly chastise him. While still married to Octavia, with whom Antony had 2 daughters; Cleopatra bore him another son in 36 BC. The following year, Octavia brought reinforcements from her brother to aid Antony, but he sent her back to Italy in an obvious slight against Octavian, and the shaky peace was beginning to unravel. Antony had seemingly begun to take to eastern culture on a grand scale, adorning himself in Egyptian dress, practicing eastern customs while ignoring those of Rome, and doling out great gifts to Cleopatra. Among these gifts was the division of the eastern empire under Cleopatra's children. Each child, Caesarion the son of Caesar included, was placed as regent of various kingdoms effectively making Cleopatra the Queen mother of several Roman territories. By 34 BC, Antony seized Armenia from his former ally Artavastes and staged a magnificent spectacle in Alexandria to commemorate the event.

In these "Donations of Alexandria" Antony declared Cleopatra as the Queen of Kings, and Caesarion as King of Kings. In so doing, he sought to undermine Octavian's claim as Caesar's heir by recognizing Caesarion as Caesar's legitimate son. This was seemingly the final straw against Octavian, and the propaganda campaign in Rome against Antony's outrages began in earnest. Antony was portrayed as a pawn of Cleopatra, the foreign Queen who, it was said, sought to become Queen of Rome. Antony had declared himself the human incarnation of Dionysus (Bacchus in Roman mythos), and Cleopatra claimed to be Aphrodite (Venus). This had relevance in Egyptian culture as the two Greek gods were often associated with the gods of nobility Osiris and Isis.

While initially, these declarations seem to have little impact on Antony's supporters in the east, they did allow Octavian to vilify him in the west. The gifting of client kingdoms to important foreign magistrates was certainly nothing new in Roman culture, but placing so much territory within the influence of one royal family certainly was cause for consternation. While Octavian was busy solidifying his western popularity through great building and maintenance projects conducted by Agrippa, Antony continued to slip in the views of the traditional Roman. In what may have been the final proof needed, Antony seemingly married Cleopatra, at least by 32 BC, even before officially divorcing (the mistreated virtuous Roman wife) Octavia in the same year. Unlike Caesar before him, who propped Cleopatra up politically, but refused to acknowledge her in any official capacity under Roman law, (as it was illegal for a Roman to marry a foreigner), Antony plunged head first into direct enmity with Octavian. Though Octavian would use political guile to gain support for his cause, the door to the final civil war of the Roman Republic was wide open.

War between Antony and Octavian

As the legal arrangement for the triumvirate between Octavian, Antony and Lepidus (even though he was no longer an official part of the arrangement) expired at the end of 33 BC, 32 BC turned into a year of political posturing and strained anticipation. Without legal triumvir powers, Octavian technically reverted to no more than a leading member of the Senate, and the Consuls for 32 BC, Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus and C. Sosius both Antony supporters, sought to bring Octavian down.

While Octavian was outside of Rome, Sosius launched an attack on Octavian's legal position to the convened Senate. Though the precise nature of the attack is unknown, it's safe to assume that the Antony supporters definitely wished to limit Octavian's power and position. What they surprisingly failed to count on was Octavian's support among the army and his boldness in using it. When he returned to Rome he called the Senate to meet, backed by an armed escort, and proceeded to turn the tables on the sitting consuls. Launching his own attack on Antony, it was clear that the Roman world was once again heading towards civil war. In Rome, despite Octavian's lack of legal right to rule, it was also quite clear that he was in fact, the unchallenged leader of the west. Not even Antony's supporters attempted to dispute him, and many Senators (up to 300) fled to Antony, rather than attempt to put up a false front that all was well.

News soon returned to Rome that Antony intended to set up a separate eastern Senate in Alexandria to govern the eastern part of the empire. He also officially divorced Octavian, denouncing her in favor of the foreign Queen, Cleopatra. Octavian knew that war was coming, but now needed to rally support among the masses. By fortunate circumstances, two important supporters of Antony had defected to Octavian's cause and returned to Rome about this time. L. Munatius Plancus and M. Titius brought word to Octavian that Antony's will, now deposited with the Vestal Virgins, contained incriminating evidence of Antony's anti-Roman, and pro-Cleopatra stand. Both men, it seemed, had been witnesses to the document, and Octavian illegally seized the will from the Vestals. In it, Antony recognized Cleopatra's son Caesarion as Caesar's legal heir, propped up his own eastern appointments by leaving large inheritances to his children by Cleopatra, and finally indicated his desire to be buried with Cleopatra in Alexandria. Though the first two matters wouldn't be considered all that unusual, it was the third that set off a firestorm of anti-Antonian sentiment. Already suspecting him of abandoning Rome for Cleopatra, the people clearly saw his rebuttal of Roman cremation tradition and the favoring of eternal burial with Cleopatra as proof of him falling under the Queen's sway.

Octavian seized the opportunity to gain from the people's sentiment, and encourage the rumors that followed. If the people believed that Antony had every intention of making Cleopatra the Queen of Rome, and by virtue of his new eastern Senate would move the capital to Alexandria, it could do nothing but favor Octavian. He was reserved in his intentions, however, and knew that Antony still had some supporters. Civil War too, simply for the benefit of Octavian would never be popular. He also wished to make it easy for Antony supporters to willingly switch sides without seemingly being disloyal. Rather than announce war with his rival Antony, Octavian declared war on the hated Queen Cleopatra, the perceived cause of all the trouble. As both sides geared up for the conflict that would seem to be the largest and costliest ever for the Roman state, a remarkable show of public support took place. The people of Italy and the western provinces swore on oath of loyalty directly to Octavian, rather than the Roman state. Though this was likely a greatly orchestrated political maneuver by Octavian, a now brilliant politician, it had the desired effect of at least giving him the public support he needed to take the nation to war. While by no means presenting Octavian with any sort of legal power over the Roman world, it did help to clarify for everyone that not only did Octavian maintain power through the legions, but also through the good will of the Roman people.

Actium

The civil war between Antony and Octavian seemed assured of dwarfing even the massive conflict between Caesar and his Republican opponents. Both sides had massive armies at their disposal, and Antony added the support Rome's eastern client kings, including Cleopatra of Egypt. By mid-summer of 31 BC, Octavian's war against his rival, though popularly characterized as being against the Egyptian Queen, had worked itself into little more than a stalemate. Antony had marched his army into Greece where he planned to oppose Octavian's advance, and the two considerable forces began to take up position against one another.

While the armies were of relatively equal strength, Octavian's fleet was vastly superior. Antony's fleet was made up of large vessels, though with inexperienced crews and commanders. On the other hand, Octavian's fleet of smaller, more maneuverable vessels was under the command of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, the proven admiral who excelled in the war against Sextus Pompey. While Octavian crossed the Adriatic to confront Antony near Actium in Epirus, Agrippa menaced Antony's supply lines with the fleet. Octavian wisely refused to give battle with the army, and Antony did likewise at sea. As the summer waned, both armies seemed to settle in for a battle of attrition.

The stalemate was working decidedly in Octavian's favor. The presence of Cleopatra with the Roman army of Antony was making the loyalty of his men a considerable challenge. For Antony's

men, facing the son of Caesar, a god, was bad enough, but facing a Roman army while under the influence of an Egyptian Queen seemed an impossible situation. Defections from all quarters of Antony's support, to Caesar's side, were occurring in massive numbers. Agrippa's blockade against Antony tightened, and disease swept through Antony's camp. Common legionaries, commanders and Senators switched sides as the inevitable victory for Octavian seemed only a matter of time. By the time the calendar approached September of 31 BC, only 3 Consular magistrates remained with Antony.

On September 2, 31 BC Antony desperately attempted a breakout with his fleet to escape the blockade and regroup in Egypt. With his large ships, he sailed out of the gulf of Actium and engaged Agrippa's prepared navy. Though Antony's under matched forces fought valiantly, they were simply unable to counter Agrippa's vast superiority. Under the watchful eye of both armies on land, and as the tide turned against Antony, Cleopatra seized an opportunity to flee the battle with her own ships that were held in reserve. As a gap opened in Agrippa's blockade, she funneled through, and was soon closely followed by Antony's command ships. The commanders of Antony's land forces, which were supposed to follow him to Asia, promptly surrendered without a fight. Octavian stood as the master of the Roman world, east and west and to commemorate his victory, he founded the city of Nicopolis (City of Victory) on the site.

All was not over just yet, however. Trouble with Octavian's veterans forced him to abandon pursuit of his eastern rival, and final victory would be delayed for a year. Octavian also wisely decided to put an end to any chance for Antony to regain strength from eastern kings by marching through the eastern provinces rather than sail directly to Egypt. Meanwhile, Antony attempted to secure an army in Cyrene from L. Pinarius Scarpus, but Scarpus refused and offered loyalty to Octavian. Trapped in Egypt with what remained of his former army, Antony and Cleopatra bided their time awaiting Octavian's arrival. As Octavian marched through Asia, Syria and Judaea establishing his authority, Scarpus sailed to Cyrenaica and moved east towards Egypt to pinch Antony between a two-pronged front.

Death of Antony and Cleopatra

After Antony had attempted to forcibly take command of the army in Cyrene from L. Pinarius Scarpus but was refused, he considered suicide as the honorable Roman thing to do. However, perhaps he thought that final victory could still be secured if the forces in Alexandria could be properly compared. He left Cyrene and sailed back to Egypt where Cleopatra waited, likely now fretting her own political ambitions. There they waited for nearly a year while Octavian and Scarpus closed in around them.

As Octavian approached Antony and Cleopatra's defenses in Alexandria, Antony enjoyed one last victory, albeit a minor one, in his heralded career as a general. His men chased off a small contingent of Octavian's cavalry as they scouted their enemy, but this was a short-lived success. As the opposing armies prepared for what seemed to be the final battle after nearly 20 semi continuous years of Civil War, the engagement turned out to be an anti-climactic affair, much like events at Actium a year earlier. Antony's cavalry and fleet surrendered to Octavian first and were shortly followed by the infantry, once again without major engagement of any sort. As Antony looked on, during this fateful first day of what would become known as the month of August, he was abandoned by his army and his efforts to become sole ruler of the Roman world were lost to the young man who was virtually unknown just a few short years before.

Cleopatra fled into a mausoleum, which she had previously constructed as her likely final resting place, with little hope of escaping the inevitable. Antony, knowing the game was finally over, finally accepted his fate and attempted to fall on his sword as Roman tradition often dictated. According to the ancients, however, he was not entirely successful and with an open wound in his belly, was

taken to join Cleopatra. Here, in events immortalized over a millennium later by Shakespeare, Antony did finally succumb to his wound and supposedly died in his lover's arms, leaving her completely at the mercy of Octavian. Cleopatra did not however immediately join her lover in death and instead entered into last ditch negotiations with Octavian. Over the period of just over a week, she probably realized that her only fate was to march in Octavian's triumphal parade and her children would never be allowed to maintain any sort of hereditary control of Egypt or other eastern Kingdoms. On August 9, 30 BC, Cleopatra ended her own life and left Egypt to the fate of Octavian's will.

Within a month Octavian was named Pharaoh, and Egypt became his personal possession. Though administered in similarity to a province, the personal rule of Egypt and the title of Pharaoh would become a permanent right of ascension of each Roman Emperor. While Octavian was now the clear and unequivocal force in the Roman world, there was still some minor unfinished business to take care of. Though executions of Antony's supporters were limited, likely to bring 20 years of war to a final closure, an unfortunate few still had to pay with their lives. Among those executed was Caesarion, Cleopatra's oldest son by Caesar, as it was a necessity to avoid any potential hereditary claims or conflict of interest. Cleopatra's other children by Antony were too young to be of much concern, would eventually march in Octavian's triumph and were allowed to live. Antony's oldest son by his wife Fulvia was killed, but his younger son by Fulvia was taken in by his step-mother Octavia and he was seemingly favored by Octavian's entire family. Years later, however, he would be executed in 2 BC for his scandalous affair with Julia, the daughter of the man who would then be Augustus.

Backed by the name of Caesar and the loyalty of his adoptive father's troops, Octavian finished what Caesar had started, yet was unable to complete: the final unification of Rome under a single man. At the age of 33, the Republic was finally ready to succumb to imperial authority. Though there was still some work to be done, opposition simply no longer existed in any meaningful form. Years of civil war, and hundreds of years of social strife had broken the will of resistance. Octavian rose above all, not just for being in the right place at the right time, but by expanding upon the strengths, and learning from the weaknesses of his predecessors, along with playing the political game with an unmatched determination.

Augustus 27 BC - AD 14 (born 63 BC - died AD 14)

With the final defeat of Antony, and Octavian's emergence as sole political power of the Roman world, the Roman Republic still teetered on the edge of potential disaster. Despite Octavian's victory, and initial attempts to appear as a great advocate for the return of Republican rule, the Republican system had failed irreparably. To reconstitute the administration of Rome's now vast empire was to re-invite a continuance of the social disorder and civil wars that had plagued it for the last century or more. What would be required was a soft and eventual rise of a single man to lead the nation as a whole. Unlike his predecessor and adoptive father, Julius Caesar, Octavian slowly consolidated his position and accepted honors and power gradually, minimizing fear and resentment among the elite classes. Coupled with the fact that most outright resistance to rule through a select few or a single head of state had been eliminated through war and previous proscriptions, the stage was clearly set for Octavian's final transformation.

Initially, in order to maintain a semblance of legal authority under the Republican constitution, Octavian continued to rule through the domination of the Consulship. From 31 until 23 BC (the eventual date of the final 'Augustan Settlement') Octavian served as Consul. This would prove to be an unsatisfactory solution, however, and steps needed to be taken to procure a more permanent and lasting authority. Though the previous oath of loyalty given to Octavian by citizens in the west now extended throughout the empire, there was still considerable work to be done on a political basis. First, however, there were matters of more pressing importance to be addressed. In his victory over Antony, he had inherited a great number of veterans, which including his own men,

numbered nearly half a million. Not only was their happy settlement, thereby securing their loyalty a priority, but a shakeup of the Roman military system was in order as well.

After annexing Egypt and its vast wealth, the issue of both compensation for veterans and available lands for settlement were no longer the political battlefield they once were. After overwhelming victory celebrations in Rome, including triumphal parades rivaling those of Julius Caesar, as many as 300,000 veterans were removed from active service. With the subjugation of the eastern provinces secured, and veterans settled in excess of those required, Octavian established a permanent military structure that would include 28 regular legions, loyal to the state and not the individual commanders who had recruited them. Though this number would fluctuate some, based on need, throughout the imperial period, it became a permanent part of the established Legionary system.

Along with the military solution, and in the wake of eastern settlements and grand triumphs in Rome, Octavian was offered several honors and political powers in 29 BC. These he prudently refused, perhaps sensing that despite all his accomplishments, the Senate was not yet quite ready to accept a 'Caesarean' style Monarchy like solution. The refusal of such honors helped prop up support for Octavian as a true supporter of the Republic and Roman tradition, while in reality, he was simply playing it safe for the time being. The continual consulship was a truly inefficient solution to the problem of rule, however, and Octavian's occupation of one seat on a permanent basis would reduce the chances for aspiring Senators to climb the political ladder. While Romans cared about tradition, what likely fueled them more were their dignitas, or societal position. Depriving these men of avenues for success, whether they be positions of true power or simply figurative ones, the longer the issue remained unsettled, Octavian risked alienation from the Senate, and perhaps the fate of Caesar.

By 27 BC, the matter was brought to a head through a shrewd and brilliant political show, staged by Octavian himself. In January of that year, he assembled the Senate and shocked his audience (at least those not in on the ultimate plan) by giving up all of his powers and expressing a desire to retire to private life. In this, he tactfully secured support from both the populace, which he had maintained all along, but also from the elite who now believed that Octavian truly respected Republican ideals. Reaction from the Senate (inspired undoubtedly by carefully positioned allies) was one of complete rejection of Octavian's proposal. They demanded that he remain in power as it was necessary to secure peace and prevent another slide into civil war that would surely follow. On January 13, 27 BC, the first of two Constitutional Settlements took place, and control of the 'Republic' was split between Octavian and the Senate. Octavian, on the proposal by L Munatius Plancus, three days later on the 16th was to be granted the title Augustus, or exalted one (a title cleverly thought up by Octavian's camp, indicating religious and political overtones above everyone else, while avoiding any direct relation to words that might indicate Kingship). Caius Julius Caesar Octavianus was now forevermore known as Imperator (loosely meaning commander but eventually coming to mean Emperor in modern languages) Caesar Augustus. Other honors were granted, but most important were political and military settlements granting Augustus control of the legions and provinces where they were stationed. While the Senate still had the authority to govern those provinces without military significance, elect magistrates and administer various traditional powers, Augustus held sway without alienating potential rivals. In Egypt, which was kept as the personal possession of Augustus, and eventually his heirs, no Senator was even allowed to step foot there without direct 'Imperial' approval.

Between this settlement and an additional one 4 years later in 23 BC, Augustus was granted the right to appoint new patricians (something sorely needed after all the civil wars and proscriptions) nominate Senators for magisterial positions (something sparingly used by Augustus, but dominated by later successors) and of course, had complete control of the military. In fact, not only did Legionaries swear an oath of loyalty to Augustus, but Legates were his to appoint with no Senatorial interference and he held the personal right to any and all victories claimed. No longer were individual commanders allowed the right of a triumph without the agreement of the 'Emperor'

as he alone was reserved that honor. Additionally, Augustus established his own body guard along the traditional lines of those established for provincial governors. Abandoning the concept of lictors, which had previously been an indication of Republican authority, nine cohorts, nearly a full legion, of men were recruited and assigned to both Augustus' personal protection and the protection of peace throughout Italy. While troops were not allowed a permanent presence in Italy or Rome (at least under time where the constitution was respected) prior to Augustus he now maintained direct control of this intimidating presence. In the Senatorial provinces as well, though he technically did not have authority, the word of Augustus was enough to inspire magistrates to abide by his wishes, clearly indicating his supreme authority over the entire Roman world.

23 BC also saw the establishment of the title 'Princeps' or first citizen or first among equals (and eventually formed the root of the word Prince). This title, much like that of Augustus, was another way of granting him ultimate authority without calling him Rex or King. This was a hereditary right and by its virtue the early empire became referred to as the Principate (until the time of Diocletian who dropped the title in preference for Dominus). Among many honors, titles and privileges granted, two important titles came later. With the death of Lepidus, the former triumvir, in 13 BC, Augustus was granted the title of Pontifex Maximus, making him head of the state religion. Like so many other honors, this became his and his successor's hereditary right, granting the emperor permanent control of the state religion. Years later, in 2 BC, Augustus would be granted what was possibly the ultimate title (aside from his final deification) Pater Patriae or Father of the Country. Though these 'settlements' which granted Augustus so much power technically allowed for a division of rule between the 'Emperor' and the Senate, the Republic was officially dead, and the Empire, for all its advantages and faults, had officially been born.

Early Empire

Augustus' ascendancy as the first Roman Emperor in 27 BC, followed by confirmation of his powers in 23 and 19 BC, marked a clear, irrevocable, yet necessary change in Roman political philosophy. No longer were the Imperators, or ruler generals of the former Republic, in position to challenge Republican constitutional ideals. With the institution of the emperor into figure-head status, along with literal supreme power of the entire Roman world, the social and political squabbles of the old system gave way to new challenges. The political ills of the Republic were soon to be replaced with royal family intrigue and Praetorian corruption mixed in with the occasional interference of the Senate, which still existed as a governing body, though largely stripped of any real power.

At first, however, Augustus largely avoided these problems through shrewd political manipulation, the overwhelming support of the masses, and complete unadulterated control of the legions. While later successors, especially those within his own Julio-Claudian line, proved themselves incapable or undeserving of their positions, which were granted largely due to family ties, Augustus was the perfect, if not only man capable of settling the civil wars of the former Republic. The Principate (from the imperial title *Principis* for 'first among equals') as the early empire was known, was established simply through the brilliance of Augustus, and of course through the efforts of those who supported him. Without him, including his personality, prestige and dignity, along with the ever popular name of Caesar as validation, the Roman nation and all its provinces may have slid into a continual degeneration of political upheaval and civil war. Because of him, this potential and destructive further slide into historical oblivion was avoided, at least for another 5 centuries.

After years of civil war and general instability the entire Roman way of life was in danger of collapse, both internally and from external enemies. Great empires like Parthia challenged Roman authority in the east, while the many individual tribes of places like Germania and even mostly Romanized Hispania provided considerable reason for concern along the frontiers. A final settlement of resistance to Roman rule, which had so easily propped up in the wake of attention

given to internal conflicts, was necessary on a fairly wide scale. Though later in life, Augustus adopted and encouraged a strict imperial strategy of maintaining the status quo of the borders ('Pax Romana'), war and conquest was a necessary strategy from the onset of his reign. Modern day Germany (Germania) Switzerland (Raetia), Austria (Noricum), and the Balkans, (Pannonia and Moesia) were early sources of expansion, and the east, long ruled at least in part by client kings, was in dire need of additional imperial control. Despite these foreign wars which would commence early in his tenure, and a great bloodless victory over Parthia which saw the return of Crassus' lost standards from the battle of Carrhae some 30 years earlier, Augustus was far more than a warrior prince. During his long, stabilizing and prosperous rule, Rome entered into a new golden age where the arts, architecture and literature flourished.

Under Augustus, Rome went through an enlightened period where literature reigned supreme within the eternal city. Latin's great poets: Virgil, Horace and Ovid published their brilliant works mostly during the Augustan age, while others like the satirist Petronius, Strabo the geographer, Vitruvius and the invaluable ancient historian Livy contributed their own forms of literature. But the written word was not the only great contribution of the Augustan age. Under his friend and confidant Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, Rome received a major face-lift in which it was transformed from a city of brick into a true imperial city of great marble structures, worthy of the title: Capital of the World. Among those projects undertaken were 3 aqueducts supplying fresh water to the growing city: the Julia, Virgo and Alsietina. The original Pantheon, the great temple of the Roman gods, Agrippa's baths, the Saepta Julia and Augustus' Mausoleum were built as well. Improvements to, or complete replacements were constructed for nearly every public building including courthouses, offices and administrative buildings of all kinds. Perhaps even more importantly, Augustus conducted a major census of the city and provinces, which had long been neglected during the civil wars.

Though he faced many challenges, some devastating, like the loss of 3 legions in the Teutoburger Wald of Germania, Augustus ruled Rome in virtual contrast to all administrations both before and after. Stability and general prosperity ruled the day. Even the urban poor in a vast, sprawling city then exceeding 1 million residents, seemed to have little complaint. Octavian's imperial name of Augustus was not only an honorific title, but proved to be the truest definition of the man who bore it: Emperor Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus Augustus was a man without peer in the ancient world.

The Principate

As Augustus established a new governing order he effectively created a position as administrative head of state that had previously been occupied by several men. As princeps or 'first among equals' there was no official title of emperor as we know it today, and this distinction was very important in ancient Rome. Theoretically, the establishment of 'Empire' was only a temporary diversion from true Republican rule. After his death, it might be assumed that the government, and all the positions held by Augustus would revert to the old system. As Princeps, even under the new constitutional system, Augustus had no more right to establish a line of succession than was possible in the Republic. Being the first to hold such a position, however, allowed the new system to develop under a powerful and capable leader. As time passed, the concept of the Republic drifted farther and farther into oblivion. The long rule of Augustus, the elimination of opponents and the fear of a return to civil war and emperor generals seemingly destroyed any concept of a re-established Republic.

Augustus was alone made the head of the state, and there was no established order for succession. Naming a successor was akin to a provincial governor establishing his own hereditary rule. It simply didn't happen. By the time of Augustus' death in 14 AD, however, it was absolutely inconceivable that there wouldn't be a replacement Princeps. Holding Tribunician power of the

veto, administrative authority of the Consulship, religious domination as Pontifex Maximus and supreme command of the armies, the idea of Augustus really being just 'first among equals' was really a farce. While the Senate still officially had the right to name someone to that position, there were none who could possibly argue with the edicts of the divine Emperor himself.

The idea of succession evolved much in the same manner as naming a patriarchal heir in any Roman family. Augustus looked for choices both within and without his own family. The fact that he had no son, much like his own adoptive father Julius Caesar, would prove to be the biggest enduring challenge faced during his rule. While the potential for succession to the highest position in the known world existed, destabilizing domestic turmoil was the order of the day. Though the nature of attempting to curry Augustus' favor brought its own elements of intrigue, his own family's dysfunction played as much a part as the potential to be his heir.

Imperial Dynasty

In keeping with Roman tradition, Augustus utilized the positions of the *cursus honorum* to favor members of his own family. Through adoption and marriage Augustus sought to establish a pool of potential heirs by placing various family members in positions of authority. In doing this, Augustus helped preserve the dynasty just as it was beginning. As it turned out, he clearly identified several choices throughout his reign and his foresight in favoring multiple candidates at once assured that a 'Caesar' would eventually succeed him. The first among these candidates was his nephew Marcellus. The son of his sister Octavia was brought into political life in much the same manner as Augustus himself was by Julius Caesar, participating as a key player in Augustus' triumphs of 29 BC. He was allowed to hold offices far before the required ages, and in 25 BC was married to Augustus' 14-year-old daughter, Julia, to cement the relationship.

In 23 BC, however, Augustus fell terribly ill, and he wisely looked beyond his 19-year-old nephew for stability of the state. His signet ring was passed to his old friend and legionary commander, Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa. Agrippa had already been married to Augustus' niece Marcella and his status as a trusted friend and respected member of Roman society was the logical choice in the case of possible tragedy. As it turned out, Augustus recovered from his illness, but his first dynastic choice, Marcellus, died in the same year (23 BC) from an illness of his own. Agrippa was soon married to the widowed Julia (who turned out later to be a horrible embarrassment to Augustus due to marital infidelity), and he was sent east to act as Augustus' agent. There has been some speculation that Agrippa was sent east due to a falling out between the two, but the evidence suggests that this couldn't be farther from the truth. Along with being granted pro-consular imperium while away, he was also granted tribunician power in 18 BC. Agrippa's marriage with Julia also proved to be of great benefit to the dynastic line, at least temporarily. Agrippa and Julia had 3 sons, Gaius, Lucius and Postumus (so named because he was born after his father's death) and 2 daughters. The first two sons (Augustus' blood grandchildren) were adopted as and were propped up as his heirs.

The situation was ideal for the time being. Augustus' old friend Agrippa would be in position to take over for Augustus, while both men could groom the directly related Gaius and Lucius for continuing the Principate, but fate intervened early with this plan. In 12 BC Agrippa died while on campaign in Pannonia and the order of succession was left in doubt again. At this time while Gaius and Lucius (8 and 5 years old respectively) were still in line for succession, the empire could not be left without a qualified heir to take over immediately. To fill the gap the sons of his wife Livia, Tiberius and Drusus, who had been advanced under Augustus already, now stood as Augustus' oldest and most viable male heirs.

Tiberius was married to Julia (her 3rd stint as wife to Augustus' heir) though the marriage was largely a sham. Tiberius married her out of duty, but in so doing divorced his first wife Agrippina

(daughter of Agrippa) and the matter seemingly created a rift. The marriage with Julia was loveless and childless and Julia's reputation as an adulterer would eventually grow to near epidemic proportions. Initially, however, Tiberius, along with his brother Drusus, was sent to the Alps, Germania and Pannonia to expand Rome's interest there and the situation was relaxed by Tiberius' absence. Unfortunately, in a series of untimely deaths, Drusus Claudius Nero died while on campaign in Germania in 9 BC, and Tiberius was left as the only male heir of age. While Drusus' children with Antonia (daughter of Augustus' sister Octavia and Marcus Antonius) would go on to play important roles farther down the dynastic line, succession matters would continue to be complicated.

By 6 BC, Tiberius was back in Rome, and was granted Tribunician powers much like Agrippa was before him. Also like Agrippa, Tiberius was being sent to the east to act as Augustus direct agent, but matters not completely understood intervened. Rather than continue as Augustus heir, Tiberius retired to self-imposed exile on the island of Rhodes. While the reasons are not entirely known, its speculated that several factors were involved. His marriage to Julia was obviously a source of discontent. Augustus' rather obvious insistence that Gaius and Lucius Caesar would eventually succeed Tiberius (despite Tiberius having his own son by name of Drusus) seemingly played a role. Additionally, all the while Tiberius' mother Livia may have been scheming to advance her own line in Augustus' plans.

Despite Augustus' anger, Tiberius remained out of public life for several years while the favored heirs Gaius and Lucius Caesar were advanced. Before long however, Julia's behavior finally caught up to the emperor. In 2 BC, she was accused of conducting an orgy in the Roman Forum, though to this point he was apparently in the dark about her alleged infidelities. While this case may be a later addition to hype her misdeeds, there was no doubt as to her various affairs. Whether she behaved as such due to selfish pleasurable indulgence or as a means to political intrigue of her own (and her partners), her father had little choice but to make an example of such scandalous behavior. To preserve his own honor, Augustus exiled her to the island of Pantederia and several others were executed for involvement with her. Among these was Jullus, the son of Marcus Antonius, who had been previously spared by the victorious Octavian in the civil wars. Tiberius' behavior in response is confusing. In 2 AD, he returned to Rome as a private citizen leaving the impression that Julia truly was the source of the problem between he and Augustus. After Augustus' death, however, Tiberius allowed his ex-wife to return to the Italian mainland and live in more comfort, though she never would see Rome again. Perhaps political machinations were more at the heart of Tiberius' self-imposed exile in the first place. Regardless, events were about to unfold that would force him back into political life.

In 2 AD, Gaius and Lucius Caesar, then of age for political service, met tragedies of their own that shook the very core of the imperial dynasty. Lucius, at 19 years old, apparently drowned in Massilia while en route to campaign in Hispania, leaving Gaius as Augustus only heir. Gaius, also in 2 AD and at 22 years old, received a wound while campaigning in Armenia that he would eventually succumb to in 4 AD. Tiberius was left with little choice but to return to public life, and was adopted by Augustus. Postumus Agrippa was also adopted at this point, but for reasons that are not entirely clear (perhaps mental instability, or the political scheming of Livia) he faced exile in 6 or 7 AD. Likely to prevent possible issues of succession (as Postumus was Augustus' blood grandchild) he was executed shortly after Augustus death in 14 AD. After the deaths of Gaius and Lucius, and the exile of Postumus, Tiberius was left without a doubt as the only heir of Augustus. From that point on, the powers of Augustus were gradually bestowed upon Tiberius and his official role as heir turned into a near official role as co-emperor. Augustus still had the last word in the succession of the principate, however. Tiberius was forced to adopt his nephew Germanicus (son of Tiberius' deceased brother Drusus and Antonia, Augustus niece through Octavia and Marc Antony) despite having a son of his own. In this way, Augustus assured that his own direct bloodline would eventually rule the Roman world. While Germanicus would prove his own worth and capabilities in years to come, the son who succeeded Tiberius, Gaius (Caligula), would put a permanent stain on the Julio- Claudian dynasty.

Augustus and the Legions

Augustus, like the imperial generals before him, garnered the bulk of his political strength from the Roman armies. Loyalty of the various legions in the Late Republic had always been mainly to their individual generals, as opposed to the Senate, or Rome itself. As Augustus emerged the victor in the final civil war to end the Republic, the situation for him was no different, and the settlement of the military issue was of paramount importance.

Soon after his return from Egypt, and the official ascension as Augustus, the issue was at the top of a long list of reforms. According to his own 'Res Gestae' Augustus quickly dismissed as many as 300,000 troops from active service. In this however, he seemingly didn't show preferential treatment to his own armies, but allowed any who wished to retire the right to do so, while keeping the willing men from both his and Antony's troops as part of a new standing army. The remaining legions, some 150,000 men strong, were organized into 28 total legions and spread throughout the empire. This new professional army would be paid a salary directly by the emperor, ensuring loyalty to Augustus, and after 6 AD, payments were to come from a new public treasury (the *aerarium militare*). Those troops which had been retired from service were given the customary grants of land, but after 14 BC, Augustus instituted a retirement pension for the legions, granting cash payments in lieu of land rewards.

Further organizing the legions as a professional army, the military became an actual career choice for Italian and provincial citizens alike. Terms of service were originally instituted at 16 years to qualify for retirement packages, but this was later extended to 20 years. In so doing, the concept of massive conscripts in times of war, thereby taking citizens from other necessary occupations, was mostly avoided. As an added benefit, this new professional career allowed the common poor new opportunities without being reliant solely on the state welfare system. Though spoils of war could still be shared among the troops, soldiers could now look forward to regular pay without commanders forcing a campaign simply to provide looting opportunities.

At the time of Augustus and through to the mid 1st century AD, it's been estimated that the legions were composed of up to 70% Italian recruits. As time went by and the placement of legions, which were always on the frontiers, was established for long periods, the legions became less reliant on men from the Italian peninsula. Under Claudius and Nero the number of Italian recruits dropped to just fewer than 50%, and that number continued to decline over the next century. By the time of Hadrian, Italians made up only 1% of the total legion compliments. Under Augustus, however, provincial non citizens also had military opportunities in the restructured *auxilia*. Though the *auxilia* was still mostly an 'as needed' operation in the early empire, it's been estimated that *auxilia* soldiers represented at least an equal number of active soldiers to that of the citizen army. The status, however, was ever evolving and it wouldn't be long before they were really a permanent part of the standing army. Auxiliaries could also receive regular pay from the treasury, though at a lesser amount, had similar terms of service and had access to variable retirement benefits. The chief of these benefits could be the rewarding of citizenship, on the non-citizen provincial and his family, making them eligible for all the perks of being a 'Roman'.

To command his legions, Augustus, and each successive emperor, also turned to those closest to them. No longer was command bestowed through the Senatorial hierarchy, but the practice of choosing the best was still sadly ignored. Having close relations to or being an intimate member of the emperors' inner circle usually carried more merit than one's actual battlefield capability. Under Augustus, the bulk of this duty fell to his close friend Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, his stepsons Tiberius and Drusus (along with his son Germanicus), and even later his grandsons Gaius and Lucius Caesar. In the early empire, unrelated but successful men like Marcus Licinius Crassus (grandson of the first triumvir) created problems for Augustus.

Many generals still viewed military service in the old Republican fashion, where success should be met with triumphs and personal rewards. In the case of Crassus, his exceptional success in the Balkans very early in Augustus' tenure highlighted the potential for disaster. Crassus' demand of a triumph as well as the *spolia opima* (or ultimate spoils) could've potentially placed the loyalty of the men serving him in serious doubt. During the principate, the legions were to be loyal to the emperor himself and not the Legates who served him. Augustus did grant the triumph but Crassus was quickly removed from service and essentially disappears from the historical record afterward. Another of Augustus' early governors, C. Cornelius Gallus the prefect of Egypt, lauded himself with rewards. Statues erected with glorifying inscriptions resulting from victories over neighboring tribes and revolting provincials, were a source of both anger and distrust for Augustus. Gallus' behavior led ultimately to his own suicide (by 26 BC), certainly under pressure from Rome.

As the new constitutional arrangements of Augustus began to alter the fabric of Roman government, it was imperative that this Republican military ideology cease to exist. From the incident with Crassus onward, the emperor was solely responsible for the victories of men in the field. If a triumph was due, it was the emperor who received it. Even Agrippa the close confidant of Augustus, perhaps understanding this fundamental change in philosophy more than any other, refused all such personal honors and allowed Augustus to celebrate Agrippa's victories as if they were truly his own. Of course, the emperor, at least in the case of those who were strong enough to pull it off, was exempt from blame in the case of military disaster and these could be blamed entirely on the commanders. Still, the life of a legate could be one of supreme honor, respect and wealth. They simply had to understand the new rules and forego the honors of the Republican era. The emperor further solidified the legions as his own, by ensuring that each legionary swear a personal oath of loyalty directly to him. Essentially the emperor was not only the source of the soldier's pay, but he was truly the commander-in-chief and patron. In the case of Augustus, it didn't hurt that he was considered a living god.

Pax Romana

The Pax Romana, or Roman Peace, is a Latin term referring to the Empire in its glorified prime. From the end of the Republican civil wars, beginning with the accession of Augustus in 27 BC, this era in Roman history lasted until 180 AD and the death of Marcus Aurelius. Though the use of the word 'Peace' may be a bit misleading, this period refers mainly to the great Romanization of the western world. The Roman legal system which forms the basis of many western court systems today brought law and order to the provinces. The Legions patrolled the borders with success, and though there were still many foreign wars, the internal empire was free from major invasion, piracy or social disorder on any grand scale. The empire, wracked with civil war for the last century of the Republic, and for years following the Pax Romana, was largely free of large scale power disputes. Only the year 69 AD, the so-called 'Year of the Four Emperors', following the fall of Nero and the Julio-Claudian line, interrupted nearly 200 years of civil order. Even this was only a minor hiccup in comparison to other eras. The arts and architecture flourished as well, along with commerce and the economy.

For the enemies of Rome, however, the Pax Romana didn't signal peace or tranquility. The legions saw considerable action bringing previously un-pacified territory under control, spreading Roman influence in the Balkans, and attempting expansion in Germania. The last would end up one of the great disasters in Roman military history, however, and would signal a complete shift in foreign policy that would remain largely in effect (excepting the Claudian invasion of Britain) until the time of Trajan (early 2nd century AD).

Under Augustus, it was important for new emperor to establish border security, and find new pursuits for 150,000 active legionaries. Immediately after, and during his reorganization of the legions, Augustus did just that. In the region of the world now known as the Balkans, roughly

corresponding to ancient Dalmatia, Illyricum, Pannonia, Moesia and Thracia, Marcus Licinius Crassus, grandson of the first Triumvir, conducted an extensive campaign from his province of Macedonia. Following the campaigns of Octavian in the previous decade, Crassus, followed up that success by pushing the frontier borders as far north as the Danube, pacifying the local Pannonians and Illyrians. His success, and service to Augustus were short-lived, however, and Crassus was soon removed from his position for demanding triumphal honors (when they rightfully belonged to Augustus under the new imperial era). Within a few years, Celtic invasions in 16 BC roused the Pannonians and military action was required again.

Augustus' stepson Tiberius undertook his first major campaign in 15 BC to bring the region to order. Initially successful, Tiberius was transferred to the region just north of the Alps, along with his brother Drusus, to quell disturbances that may or may not have been connected to the problems in the Balkans. While Tiberius and Drusus were bringing Roman order there, eventually establishing the provinces of Raetia and Noricum, roughly made up of modern Switzerland and Western Austria respectively, the Pannonians were still not settled. In 13 BC, a new revolt broke out and Augustus sent Agrippa to handle the situation. However, Agrippa soon succumbed to illness in the following year, not only shaking up the early establishment of Augustus' dynastic plans, but forcing the return of Tiberius to command. Here Tiberius would remain for the next three years (12 to 9 BC) subduing the region once again. In so doing, he established a new province of Pannonia, and sometime before 6 AD, the province of Moesia. The tactics used by Tiberius to quell the population, selling off young men and children into slavery, though effective would eventually have terrible repercussions; but for the time being order prevailed and Tiberius was moved to Germania.

Despite maintaining nominal control of Hispania for the better part of two centuries, resistance continued, especially in the northeast (where the all important gold mines of Gallica were located). After conducting a census of Gaul, immediately after his victory in the civil war, Augustus moved on to Spain to eliminate this resistance. Though mostly successful in his campaigns, revolts continued to break out over the next twenty years. Though these were relatively minor seemingly last ditch efforts to throw off the Roman yolk, the final subjugation wasn't completed until 13 BC. At this point Hispania was divided into three provinces: Baetica, Lusitania and Terraconensis; and it became a perfect example of the Romanization process.

The East provided problems for the new empire as well. After touring the eastern provinces, previously under the control of Antony, the situation was mostly settled, but there were issues to be dealt with. In Egypt, the personal property of the emperor, Augustus first had trouble with his own Prefect, C. Cornelius Gallus. After subduing a revolt in 30 BC, Gallus disgraced himself by inscribing his own glory on various public works and the Pyramids, forcing Augustus to recall him. Cornelius soon committed suicide and was replaced by M. Aelius Gallus. Aelius launched a poorly fated attack on the neighboring tribes in Arabia, and left Egypt open to Ethiopian raids. Soon replaced, C. Petronius brought order back to Egypt, but was unable to subdue the Ethiopian forces of the Kingdom of Meroe. Ending in a stalemate, Augustus, and successive emperors, left the southern border of Egypt as it was and maintained a fairly strict policy of border protection rather than expansion. Trouble with the ascension of Celtic client kings in the inland (now central Turkey) region of Galatia forced Augustus to annex the entire province in 25 BC. While this occurred without major incident it also brought the eastern Roman borders ever closer to Parthian rivals.

Since the destruction of Marcus Licinius Crassus at Carrhae in 53 BC, Rome and Parthia maintained an uneasy peace. Caesar had planned a major expedition to avenge this defeat, but his assassination put an end to it. Antony launched his own campaigns, without success, while master of the East, and the task was thus left to Augustus. The main points of contention between the two powers were the kingdom of Armenia and its shifting loyalties, the issue of captured Roman standards still in Parthian possession and the presence of the Parthian King's son as a hostage in Rome. In 21 BC, Augustus arranged for the return of Crassus' lost legionary standards in exchange for the King's son. Though the matter would require the presence of both Augustus

(with an army in Syria) and Tiberius moving east from Asia Minor, the exchange was arranged without bloodshed. Despite the lack of true military achievement, Augustus celebrated a triumph and the return of the standards was immortalized on imperial coinage. However, Armenia continued to be an issue and would really remain so late into the Empire. In 2 BC Augustus sent Gaius Caesar, his grandson and eventual heir, to deal with the problem, but he was wounded in a minor battle. While Armenia would not become an official province until Trajan's reign, it did shake up the imperial dynasty. After a long illness resulting from his wound, Gaius died, as did his brother Lucius shortly thereafter, leaving Tiberius as the heir to the throne.

Judaea too was annexed as a province in 6 AD. After the death of King Herod in 4 BC, the kingdom was divided among his sons, but this proved an inadequate form of government to Rome. Replaced by a Praefect, direct Roman rule was anything but representative of the 'Pax Romana'. Throughout its early occupation, Jewish natives resisted fervently. Though during Augustus' reign, this resistance was minimal, over the course of the next century Judaea was anything but peaceful. The religious emergence of the Christian cult would eventually shake the very fabric of the Roman social system, but helped create its own problems with the Jewish hierarchy early in Tiberius' reign. Later, massive revolts evolved into a major war under the Flavian emperors (Vespasian and Titus) before Judaea was finally pacified in the 60's AD.

Back in the west, in Germania, Tiberius' brother Drusus was responsible for campaigns into the Germanic interior, while Tiberius was operating in Pannonia. Drusus successfully pushed the Roman border from the Rhine all the way to the Elbe but his death in 9 BC forced the transfer of Tiberius to take over. Shortly after, however, Tiberius surprisingly retired from public life and the details of the Germanic campaigns conducted by his replacements are almost non-existent. Though some level of military success was certainly achieved in the interim, the written history was likely recorded in such a way as to glorify Tiberius and not those who replaced him. Tiberius returned to command in 4 AD and set about ousting the Marcomanni (one of the major enemies in the Germanic wars of Marcus Aurelius), from territory that would smoothly connect the new provinces of Raetia and Noricum to the previous German conquests.

While on campaign, however, word reached Tiberius of a massive uprising back in Pannonia. Forced to abandon the Germanic campaign, he returned to Pannonia where fighting would continue until 9 AD. Though this would be the last major revolt in the Balkan province, its toll was felt all the way back in Rome. As a result of the numerous foreign wars, Augustus was finding new recruits difficult to find. In a terribly unpopular, yet necessary move, he was forced to start drawing recruits from freedmen and even purposely freed slaves, just for this purpose. If the strain on Roman manpower was beginning to be pushed to the extreme already, events were about to unfold that would force Augustus to call for a complete end to Imperial expansion.

Conquest of Germania

After the fall of the Republic and Octavian's accession as Augustus, the new imperial military policy dictated several expansionist efforts. Of these, the policy in Germania included pushing the frontier borders from the Rhine (Rhenus) to the deep German interior, which may have been desired along the Elbe (Albis) River. Germanic incursions into Gaul, which had been a recurring problem since Caesar's conquest in the 50's BC, gave Augustus a perfect excuse to keep the Legions from idleness. During Caesar's conquest, which included the first Roman crossing of the Rhine, hostility between Romans, Celts and various Germanic tribes hampered his progress. During Octavian's role as a triumvirate responsible for the western provinces, his Legate Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa led a considerable campaign between 39 and 38 BC against the Suebi (also old enemies of Caesar.) The final straw seems to have been a Germanic Sugambri invasion into Belgica (17 - 16 BC) which resulted in the loss, and ultimate disgrace, of one Legionary standard.

In response, Augustus sent his stepson Drusus, while Tiberius was busy in Pannonia, to oversee a reorganization of the Germania provinces (Superior and Interior), which were essentially military frontiers roughly encompassing the Rhine valley. By 12 BC Drusus crossed the river and conducted several punitive campaigns. Between 12 and 9 BC, the Sugambri, Frisians, Chauci, Cherusci and Chatti were all subjugated and Roman legions established several large bases in the deep Germanic Interior. In the summer of 9 BC, Drusus reached the Elbe and after apparently calling off the campaign for the season to return west, he fell of his horse and died. While it's unclear what Drusus' orders or goals really were, whether a punitive campaign or actual lasting conquest, complete with Roman border expansion, Rome had established at least loose control of the Germanic interior.

After the death of Drusus, Tiberius, an able and competent general, took over but only for a short time. While continuing the work of his brother, in 6 AD Tiberius inexplicably decided to retire to private life on the isle of Rhodes. Tiberius' departure created its own problems with Augustus' imperial strategy, but for the time being, all seemed mostly quiet in the newly conquered lands of Germania. There is now doubt, however, despite missing evidence from ancient sources that the conquest of Germania continued in Tiberius' absence. On at least one occasion, an army commanded by Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus is attested to having crossed the Elbe in response to a Germanic uprising. The ancient sources, in apparent attempts to gain favor from Tiberius after his ascension, seemingly discounted the work of his successors in Germania, in order to glorify Tiberius all the more. Regardless, Tiberius finally returned to finish the conquest in 4 AD. At this point, a campaign was planned to finish off the extension of Rome's borders, filling in a previously unscathed stretch of land (Bohemia) occupied by the Marcomanni and their King Marbod. By the winter of 5 and 6 AD a large scale double pronged invasion was planned, with Tiberius planning on a northerly march from the Danube and another force marching east from the Rhine. A massive revolt in Pannonia, however, would put an abrupt halt to the plans, and Tiberius was forced to march south, leaving Publius Quintilius Varus in charge instead.

Arminius and the Battle of Teutoburg Forest

Arminius (b. circa 18 BC, d. circa 21 AD, assumed to be the Latinized form of Hermann) was the chief of the Germanic Cherusci tribe during the later stages of Augustus' reign. Prior to the great revolt which pushed Rome permanently out of the Germanic interior, and after the conquests of Drusus and Tiberius, Arminius served as a Roman auxiliary (c. 1 to 6 AD), apparently with much success. Some have painted a picture of a young Germanic warrior with the ultimate goal of freeing the tribes by learning Roman military ways, but his service and that of his fellow Cherusci warriors, actually exemplifies the completeness in which the Romans had spread their influence throughout Germania (as well as identifying the early stages of the barbarization of the Roman Legions). Though at this stage, Germania Magna was not an official province, and was still unsettled per Roman victory conditions, the slow process of Romanization had begun in earnest. Arminius, it seems, even earned Roman citizenship as well as equestrian status, perhaps in part, as a peace settlement.

During the revolt in Pannonia, which forced Tiberius' withdrawal from Germania, and his replacement by Publius Quintilius Varus, conditions seem to have deteriorated considerably. Varus, it seems, (one must consider the conflicting reports by Dio Cassius, Tacitus, Florus and Paterculus regarding the political climate and the battle itself) was probably given the task of completing the subjugation of Germania and implementing Roman provincial standards by Augustus. Regular taxation, undoubtedly a condition that the Germanics were unaccustomed to, as well as other 'excesses' seem to have turned the tribes against their Roman occupiers.

Arminius returned to the Cherusci as early as 7 AD, and likely began preparing for a massive revolt soon after his arrival. Inter-tribal warfare and lack of unity was something that would plague

the Germanics for centuries, but in this one instance, the tribes were uniquely brought together in their zeal to throw off the Roman yolk. Everything was not completely in unison, however. Arminius' rival, Segestes, actually his own father-in-law, reportedly betrayed the plans of revolt to Varus, but these reports were unheeded. Perhaps writing off the idea as political infighting for personal gain, or trusting Arminius due to his service as a Roman auxilia, and equestrian, Varus ignored the warnings, with predictable results. In 9 AD, the situation had come to a head and reports of a growing uprising in northern Germania (perhaps the Chauci) began to reach Varus. Encouraged by promises of allied assistance from tribal leaders like Arminius, Varus set out northward for the Chauci.

In late summer of 9 AD, Varus marched in loose formation with the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth legions, and did so through what they thought was friendly territory. According to Cassius Dio, " They had with them many wagons and many beasts of burden as in time of peace; moreover, not a few women and children and a large retinue of servants were following them. one reason for their advancing in scattered groups." As the Romans approached a particular hilly and forested area (and likely fortified in advance) known as the Kalkriese, Arminius and fellow allied chieftans 'begged to be excused from further attendance, in order, as they claimed, to assemble their allied forces, after which they would quietly come to his aid.' Unbeknownst to Varus, regional tribes had already put the ambush in motion by killing or capturing legionary detachments that had been working on various projects throughout the region.

Over a period of 4 storm filled and rain drenched days, the Germanics launched a series of blistering attacks on the disorganized and unprepared Roman columns. All three legions and accompanying cavalry were so scattered and beaten in the surprise attacks that communication and cooperation between the two were non-existent. The cavalry attempted a breakout and escape but was cut down before they could. The infantry continued to fight, with little success in hopes of reaching safety. By the 4th day, the cause was lost and Varus committed suicide rather than submit to capture (and the shame). All three legionary standards (eagles) were captured by the Germans and the survivors, of which there were very few, scattered in various directions to safety. Conflicting ancient source material tells differing tales, but some officers joined Varus in suicide while others surrendered. The battle itself was little more than an overwhelming massacre.

In the aftermath, quick reaction from other Roman generals in the region may have prevented a jubilant Germanic invasion across the Rhine. Lucius Nonius Asprenas moved his legions to forts along the River and Tiberius brought his up from the Danube. Despite their quick reaction, there was little to be done immediately. Augustus, 72 years old at the time of the Varus disaster lamented the loss of his 3 legions until the time of his death. According to Suetonius, "He was so greatly affected that for several months in succession he cut neither his beard nor his hair, and sometimes he could dash his head against a door, crying "Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions!" Though punitive campaigns under Germanicus, later conducted during the reign of Tiberius, would eventually return the lost eagles, the Germanic victory forever signaled the end of Roman expansion into Germania. In fact, the 3 legions lost were never replaced, at least not the legionary numbers XVII, XVIII and XVIII. For a considerable period of time, the active legionary roster was cut to 25 rather than 28.

Germanicus' campaigns were more important for the morale of the troops and the people of Rome, than in any true military capacity. Recovering the lost standards, finding the field of bones that littered the site of the ambush, and performing the ritual burials granted a form of closure to the events. However, what was perhaps the most important action, was that Germanicus' effectively played one tribe against another, re-creating the old Germanic status quo of inter-tribal warfare. Despite their unification to resist Roman occupation, the tribes had no real interest in a single king or country concept. While their borders would remain mostly secure from without, thanks to the invasions of Drusus, Tiberius and Germanicus, Germania also presented little threat to Rome until the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161 - 180 AD). In fact, the loss of 3 legions precipitated a complete change in imperial foreign policy. Nearing the end of his long life, Augustus adopted a

policy of border security, rather than expansion, which lasted largely unaltered throughout the remainder of Roman history. Aside from the invasion of Britain under Claudius, and the numerous campaigns of Trajan, the borders of the Empire were largely unchanged from Augustus on.

Arminius, despite his great victory, would eventually succumb during the tribal warfare and political machinations that followed. In 21 AD he was killed by members of his own extended family. The name Arminius, however, or especially Hermann, would go on to become a symbol of German unity in later generations and is still celebrated as a savior of independence. Of additional historic importance, the battle of Teutoburg Forest not kept Germania free of Roman rule, but allowed the course of history as we know it today. Without that battle, Germania may have been Romanized much like Gaul and a great deal of ancient Germanic culture lost with it. Without Teutoburg, perhaps the massive invasions of later tribes never would've happened. The Anglo-Saxons may have spread Latin to Britain rather than the early form of English, or perhaps the migration would never have happened at all, leaving Britain ripe for a Celtic resurgence. The Franks may never have migrated to Gaul, the Huns, Goths and others may have been stopped, or never invaded interior Roman lands in the manner that they eventually did. The contribution of Arminius to Germanic, and western civilization history is truly immeasurable.

Augustus and the Empire

The contribution of Augustus to the consolidation and stabilization of the 'Empire' from a governing and military perspective was immense, but the legacy of the man is perhaps best exemplified in his contribution to public works and infrastructure. While Augustus was a necessity to the success of the new imperial government, veiled as a continuation of Republican ideals, without his other contributions, its continuing success may have been in jeopardy. His reinstatement of conservative policy and wide scale public improvements helped to not only bring Rome out of the ashes of a century of civil war, but established Augustus as the unassailable and unchallenged ruler of the Roman world for nearly half a century.

Legislation was introduced under Augustus that (according to his own words in the *Res Gestae*) "restored many traditions of the ancestors, which were falling into disuse in our age, and I handed on precedents of many things to be imitated in later generations." Among these traditions 'restored' were laws limiting public displays of extravagance. This not only helped secure his own position by limiting the political popularity of potential demagogues, but brought a semblance of refined dignity back to the Senatorial order. Reinforcing this dignity, the qualifications for entry into the upper social orders was also clearly defined. Minimum property and monetary qualifications were re-established along with identifiable symbols of public status. Slave laws were also instituted, for the main purpose of limiting the number of slaves who could be freed. This went hand in hand with limiting the afore-mentioned displays of extravagance and also helped to maintain a social status quo. Marriage laws, established to encourage the growth of the citizen population, brought back a more conservative moral foundation. While his own family, most noticeably the escapades of his daughter Julia, fell short of some of Augustus' conservative policies, his marriage to Livia for over 50 years, ending only with his death, provided a shining example for the Roman people to emulate.

Architecturally, Suetonius quotes Augustus as having said "that he found Rome a city of brick, and left it a city of marble." Whether Augustus ever made such a statement is unknown as Suetonius certainly took liberties with historical accuracy, but the essence is certainly correct. In the *Res Gestae*, the only autobiographical list of imperial accomplishments ever recorded, Augustus laid claim to numerous grandiose public works. He doubled the water flow capacity of the Aqua Marcia, originally built in the mid 2nd century BC, and added 3 new aqueducts, the Julia, Virgo and Alsietina (the first two administered under Marcus Agrippa). The Via Flaminia (the road from

Rome to Ariminum in NE Italy) together with many bridges along the way was also built during Augustus' tenure.

Though the exact date of the original Roman Pantheon is highly debated, there are some claims that the first structure bearing that name was built in the Augustan Age (again under the supervision of Agrippa). Though it would later be destroyed and rebuilt (twice), and not take its current recognizable shape until Hadrian, a temple to all the gods was built in 27 BC. In all, Augustus oversaw the building or reconstruction of 82 temples in Rome alone. Of these, the temple of Divine Julius, the Lupercal (the cave, likely with a monumental entrance, where Romulus and Remus were supposedly suckled by the she-wolf) three Temples dedicated to Jupiter, temples of Apollo, Quirinus, Minerva, Juno, the Lares, Penates, Mars Ultor and Cybele the Great Mother (Magna Mater), stand out in importance.

Other great monuments built included the Curia Julia (Senate House), including the attached Chalcidicum (whose purpose is debated but often identified as a great record office), the portico of the Flaminian Circus (likely built in conjunction with the improvements to the Via Flaminia), the Pulvinar at the Circus Maximus (serving as both a shrine to the gods and private seating for the imperial family and other VIPs) and the theatre at the Temple of Apollo. Other great structures were finished, repaired or rebuilt including the Capitol, the Theatre of Pompey, the Forum Julia and Basilica (started by Caesar). In addition, statues and works of art as well as other imperial building projects (like those of Agrippa in the Campius Martius) were sponsored throughout the empire.

Despite his own laws restricting public displays of extravagance, Augustus lavishly spent in dedications to the gods or for the welfare of the public. He claims to have donated one hundred million sesterces in various dedications, and thirty-five thousand pounds of gold dedicated in his triumph of 29 BC. The effect of great games was also not lost on Rome's first emperor. Much like Caesar before him and those that followed, he used the games in grand style to control the populace. He lays out numerous times in which the games were hosted in his name or in those of family members. Five times he apparently hosted grand combat tournaments involving gladiators from all over the Roman world. In a total of eight events hosted in his name or those of his family, he claims that 10,000 men fought, and in twenty-six separate events, 3,500 African beasts were killed. Perhaps more elaborate than all the others, and as a harbinger of things to come, Augustus hosted a tremendous mock naval battle in the 'Grove of the Caesars' near the Tiber (flooded by his own Aqua Alsietina) in which at least 30 full sized naval vessels (along with many smaller ones) and 3,000 men engaged in combat. Augustus understood the need for control of all aspects of Roman society, the military, the aristocratic Senate and Equestrians, and perhaps most of all, the Roman mob.

In what is often considered the Golden Age of Rome, Augustus not only rebuilt the city and advanced the Pax Romana but this era was one of pre-eminent literary achievement. Some of the greatest and most influential Latin writers in Roman history developed their various styles in this period. Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Propertius and Tibullus excelled in poetry with Vergil creating one of the most revered works of the ancient world in the 'Aeneid'. The work of Livy, 'Ab Urbe Condita' (From the Founding of the City), even if often clouded by myth or propaganda, is invaluable to the study of Rome's early history and was compiled during Augustus long and industrious rule. Even the work on the Etruscans of the future Emperor Claudius (which is unfortunately lost to history) was sponsored under Augustus. In no other time in Rome's long history did so many great contributors of literature live and prosper together in one single era. Under the patronage of Augustus, along with men like Maecenas and Corvinus, Roman literature advanced to a stage to rival with their Greek predecessors.

As time passed and Augustus entered the twilight of his life, he still continued the administration of the empire, advancing its various causes, but his age and likely degenerating health required withdrawal from public perception. After nearly half a century as the sole ruler of Rome (though

still veiled in Republican ideals), one of the greatest men in world history finally passed. On August 19, 14 AD, just a month before his 77th birthday, Augustus died in the town of Nola, while traveling in Campania. After having secured the stability of the Roman world by taking control of the legions and methodically garnering the powers of the Republican magistracies, Augustus left Rome with a renewed sense of identity and power. There are stories, added by later historians, that attempted to implicate his wife Livia in a plot to poison him, but the plot seems ridiculous considering Augustus' already well advanced age. For 52 years the first couple of Rome advanced Augustus' ideology and legacy, with Livia playing her part admirably, though she would certainly play a major role in the politics of future imperial rule. While the rule of the next Emperor was uncertain, Emperor Caesar Augustus, the son of the god Julius Caesar and Father of Country saved Rome from itself and laid the foundation for its further glory. 3 days after his death, Augustus was buried in his own family mausoleum and entered the Roman Imperial Cult as the Divine Augustus.

Tiberius AD 14 - 37 (born 42 BC - died AD 37)

Upon the death of Augustus, Tiberius Claudius Nero stood as the last logical choice in a long and tumultuous line of potential heirs. In 14 AD, at the age of 56, Tiberius ascended to Imperial power as a somewhat uncertain figure. The continuation and success of the newly created Principate rested squarely on the shoulders of a man who seemingly had only a partial interest in his own personal participation. For the first time the transfer of power from the greatness of Augustus was to be tested. The passing of this test would prove to be more a culmination of Augustus' long reign and establishment of precedent than the ability of Tiberius to fill the enormous sandals of his step-father.

While Augustus was the perfect political tactician with powerful personality yet approachable demeanor, Tiberius was a direct contrast. He was a dark figure, keenly intelligent, sometimes terribly cunning and ruthless, yet pre-disposed to a more Republican ideal than any emperor that followed him. Tiberius' failures, however seem to have been his inability to define his own role within the Principate and the roles of those around him, including the Senate. While he professed a desire for the Senate to play a more active role in Imperial government, he did little to illustrate what these roles should be. To an aristocratic body that had been cowed into general subservience through the sheer will and force of Augustus, defining a new role required more definitive action than the simple desire of Tiberius for change.

He was inconsistent in policy and behavior, sometimes dictating his own idea of order from the position of ultimate power, sometimes withdrawing completely in favor of any who might dictate the appearance of command. Mood swings and depression plagued him, perhaps resulting from a life spent as an uncertain member of the 'Julio-Claudian' family. Until his final ascension, and only after the deaths of several favored 'heirs', did Tiberius probably know for sure that the ultimate power would actually belong to him. His own withdrawal from public life in the midst of Augustus' search for permanent familial hierarchy (12 BC - 2 AD), certainly indicates a detachment from desire for ultimate power. His second withdrawal from public life, later in his actual reign, would prove to be the ultimate undoing of his own legacy. His susceptibility to the scheming of those around him, while possibly hoping for someone to emerge to allow his own escape, made Tiberius, and Rome itself, vulnerable to tyranny and uncertainty.

From the very beginning of his reign, Tiberius was shrouded with uncertainty. When the Senate convened to confirm him, the procedure was completely unknown. Augustus had assumed power over a period of years through a systematic assembling of various Republican powers, while Tiberius was to be handed the entire thing, all at once, on a platter. Like Augustus' before him, he seemingly made an attempt to refuse the ultimate power of the state, instead preferring a more limited role. But his desires were apparently unclear, and the Senate too was certainly unsure of what action to take. After some consternation, Tiberius eventually accepted the highest order of

power. Still, Tiberius left evidence of his own desire to be rid of the mantle of authority, being the only emperor to refuse the title 'Pater Patriae' (father of the country).

Tiberius' behavior in governing matters, especially in interaction with the Senate was confusing at best. Despite efforts to get them to return to at least a semblance of Republican rule, his view of them, 'men fit to be slaves' coupled with his own liberal use of the treason laws, certainly left the Senate frightened and confused. This relationship would never improve, and in fact would worsen, thanks to the rise of men like Sejanus. Tiberius' would be blasted by later Roman historians, all of whom would have ties to the Senatorial elite, and therefore, despite a generally solid rule (especially in terms of provincial administration), his legacy was permanently stained. However, Tiberius was faced with more trouble than that caused by political uncertainty between he and the Senate.

Germanicus and the Revolt of the Legions

Almost immediately upon the death of Augustus, and his subsequent deification into the Roman Imperial cult, the legions in Pannonia and Germania began to revolt. The legions that guarded the Rhine and Danube rivers, by the far the largest concentration of military might in the western world, were unhappy with the terms and conditions of their service. In direct relation to the transfer of imperial power, the loyalty of the legions, who swore an oath directly to Augustus not the state or 'office' of Emperor, was severely tested.

In Pannonia, the revolt was really a continuation of the disorder that Tiberius has put down while Augustus was still emperor. When the men demanded more pay, fewer years' service, and other 'retirement benefits', Tiberius' son Drusus wisely managed to delay the mutiny. Convincing them that he didn't have the authority to deal with such matters, an embassy was sent to Rome on their behalf, which quelled open mutiny in the interim. A lunar eclipse (a sign of disfavor from the gods) and terrible stormy weather helped further dampen the troop's zeal. Drusus followed up with extreme authority, hunting down the ring leaders and putting an end to a volatile and potentially very dangerous situation.

In lower Germania, where Tiberius' adoptive son and heir Germanicus was in place, the legions revolted for similar reasons but were also affected by Germanicus' very presence. Extremely popular with the men, perhaps for his direct familial relationship with Augustus, or just because of a lack of affinity with their former commander, Tiberius, some mutineers even suggested that Germanicus replace Tiberius as emperor. Germanicus was in a very delicate situation, trapped between Tiberius and an army disloyal to the empire, but pledging loyalty directly to him. Given the circumstances, it's not surprising that the situation was poorly handled. Germanicus even offered to commit suicide rather than be disloyal to Rome, an offer which was seemingly accepted by the men. It proved his loyalty to Tiberius, but the tactic failed to produce order, and he next forged documents indicating that Tiberius had accepted all their demands. This ultimately backfired, as the truth came out, and did little to help, but actually hindered another potentially disastrous situation. Finally, order came simply by discrediting the soldier's sense of honor and dignity. Germanicus ordered his wife, Agrippina (direct granddaughter of Augustus) and their son Gaius, or Caligula (little boots), who was so named by the troops in love and deference to the miniature legionary costume he wore, to leave the camp fearing for the safety. The men responded with seemingly true remorse and begged for the return of Agrippina and their little mascot. Germanicus refused until they took it upon themselves to restore order. With that ultimatum, a veritable purging of the mutiny leaders occurred and the Germanic legions pledged loyalty to Tiberius.

Germanicus wasn't a fool, however, and was well aware that idleness may have been the true cause of discontent. For the next several years (14 - 16 AD), he led a number of punitive campaigns against the Germanic tribes across the Rhine. While these did eventually restore at

least one lost standard from the Varus disaster of 9 AD, the campaigns were actually far more dangerous to Roman security than those that had occurred before. Sticking to Augustus' policy of border maintenance rather than expansion, Tiberius all but ordered Germanicus return to Rome in the guise of a triumph, celebrated in 17 AD. This was significant in that it not only marked the end of open aggression against the Germanics until the reign of Marcus Aurelius some 150 years later, but it was also the last non emperor general to celebrate a triumph in Roman history.

Having celebrated that triumph, Germanicus now in his early 30's, was clearly defined as Tiberius heir per Augustus's wishes even above Tiberius's own natural son Drusus. In 18 AD, he was sent east with 'Imperium Maius' in much the same manner that Agrippa had been under Augustus. Essentially Germanicus was acting as a second imperial authority in the east. However, difficulty with Cn. Calpurnius Piso, governor of Syria began to unravel the stability of the still young principate. Germanicus fell ill and died just a year later, 19 AD, accusing Piso of poisoning him in the process. Piso was eventually brought to Rome and put on trial for treason, one of the earliest of many such trials during Tiberius' reign, committing suicide when it appeared that he held no hope. Tacitus, writing a remarkable account in his 'Annals' claimed that Tiberius may have had a hand in the affair, citing jealousy and fear over Germanicus' popularity with the people and the legions.

Whatever the truth, Germanicus was dead and Tiberius elevated his natural son, Drusus to the role of heir. However, a split occurred between Germanicus' remaining family, the one branch that held direct connection to Augustus, and this would strain imperial politics for the remainder of Tiberius' rule. This split would also allow the rise of a man who would take this strain to new heights, not just within the imperial family but between all facets of Roman society. This man, L. Aelius Sejanus, the Praetorian Prefect and soon to be emperor in all but official title, would be the first to make the imperial body guard a political force of their own, and pave the way for Praetorian influence for centuries to come.

Sejanus

Lucius Aelius Sejanus was the son of Tiberius' first Praetorian Prefect Strabo. An equestrian by birth, he had connection to the Imperial family almost his entire life, through the service of his father. In 16 AD Strabo was appointed the governorship of Egypt (the highest political position for an Equestrian of the time), and Sejanus moved fluidly into the command of the Praetorian Guard. Likely around 20 years old, (the exact date of his birth is unknown) he was quickly becoming one of Tiberius' closest confidants and trusted advisors. This relationship would immediately put him at odds with other members of the Imperial family, including the emperor's son, Drusus.

Within a couple of years of his sole appointment as Praetorian Prefect, Sejanus solidified his position, and his command, by concentration the previously scattered Guard all within easy reach Rome. The 9,000 men of the Praetorian cohorts were no longer a force charged with keeping the peace around the Italian towns, but were truly the emperor's personal guard. By virtue of the size of this command, the Prefect undoubtedly became a very pronounced figure in the Roman system of government and daily affairs. Tiberius himself dubbed Sejanus as his "partner of my labors", and while this may have been initially true, Sejanus wouldn't take long to advance his own agenda.

Probably very early on, Sejanus developed a rivalry with Tiberius' son Drusus. When Germanicus, heir to Tiberius, died in 19 AD, this rivalry would take a noticeable turn for the worse. Sejanus was likely beginning to view himself as a potential heir, and Drusus was the one man who stood in his way. Over the next few years, Sejanus impressed Tiberius through his many administrative abilities and the young Prefect continued to be endowed with more power. By 23 AD, Drusus died after a short but violent illness and the way was opened for Sejanus to take an even more prominent role. Later accusations of poisoning would develop due to treason trials resulting in and from Sejanus fall. Sejanus and Drusus wife Livilla were accused of adultery and conspiracy in

Drusus death. However, the truth of the matter is completely unknown, and the entire incident is deeply debated by modern scholars.

After the death of Drusus, Agrippina the Elder, wife of Germanicus and granddaughter of Augustus, had already been, but became an even more important political player. Through various political schemes, for Agrippina this included advancing her sons Nero, Drusus and eventually Gaius (Caligula) into positions as Tiberius' heir. At the same time, Sejanus' took more and more of a prominent role in Roman politics. A dangerous enmity developed that would threaten the very life of the Julio-Claudian line. However, at 64 years old, and perhaps always yearning for a life of solitude away from Rome (as evidenced by his withdrawal from public life at the turn of the millennium), Tiberius simply wanted someone to take over for him and act as regent. Agrippina's sons were still too young (ranging in the teens) and Sejanus presented the best chance for Tiberius' 'escape'. According to Tacitus, Tiberius even longed for a return to Republican rule, but this was simply unattainable. Instead, Tiberius retired from public life again and withdrew to the completely isolated island of Capri in 26 AD. Sejanus was left in charge as regent, and he would soon use that new power to advance his own personal agenda and nearly completely destroy the Julio-Claudian line.

After Tiberius' withdrawal, in which he would never return to Rome, Sejanus systematically took control of the government. The family of Agrippina was relentlessly attacked, mainly through her friends and supporters in treason courts. However, she and her sons fell victim as well. Agrippina and her oldest son Nero were arrested perhaps as early as AD 27. In 29 AD they were exiled to the Pontian islands off the coast of Naples and the masses who had always favored Germanicus, protested in the streets. Agrippina's second son, Drusus, was arrested in 30 AD but not exiled. Nero was forced into suicide in 31 AD and within two more years both Agrippina and Drusus had died of starvation. Meanwhile, any in the Senate who mounted opposition to Sejanus in any form, found themselves in terrible danger of the treason courts. Sejanus also controlled access to Tiberius, whose position on Capri made him virtually inaccessible. The Senate had little choice but to bow to the man who controlled 9,000 Praetorians within the very walls of Rome. However, Gaius (Caligula) the eventual heir remained safely in Tiberius' direct care (and protection) on Capri.

Sejanus controlled all matters of Roman administration during this period. From military matters to political appointments he truly wielded the ultimate power. Sejanus' ultimate goal, whether he sought preservation through being the trusted member of the Imperial staff, or truly intended to claim ultimate power for himself, is unfortunately unknown. This issue too has been widely debated both among ancient contemporaries and in modern study. Sejanus did attempt to marry Livilla, the wife of Tiberius' son Drusus, but Tiberius blocked this as a measure of social conformity (Sejanus was still an equestrian and Livilla was a member of a noble family of the highest order). However, by 30 AD, Tiberius seemingly withdrew any public opposition to Sejanus' climb. Sejanus was betrothed to Livilla's daughter, and by 31 AD, he was named joint consul with Tiberius (an honorary compliment indicating that he was the official heir). In that same year, he was granted an additional share of the emperor's proconsular power, yet another step to the ultimate power. However, many argue that Tiberius was just keeping Sejanus in check and as unsuspecting as possible, as he was already suspected of treason.

Likely in 31 AD, Tiberius received a letter, which somehow managed to get through Sejanus' web of spies, from his widowed sister-in-law Antonia. She was completely within Tiberius' trust, perhaps because she had little involvement in political affairs. In her letter, she accused Sejanus of a plot to seize power, and Tiberius, whether he already suspected Sejanus or not, now began to act in a manner which confirms this belief. The emperor began feeling out the Senate and other Equestrians in positions of authority. Mixed messages regarding Sejanus' position were given in private, while in public, he continued to lavishly praise the man he called 'my Sejanus'. Coins were minted in his honor and statues erected, but Caligula meanwhile, began to be propped up in public as well. When Tiberius granted Sejanus proconsular power, Caligula was made Consul giving the

appearance that perhaps he might yet play a part in the game of succession. Meanwhile too, other more mild attempts to keep Sejanus off balance were undertaken. Tiberius also learned, much to his relief, that the Praetorians were still loyal to him and only supported Sejanus because he was Tiberius' regent.

Now satisfied in his own security and that of his remaining family, Tiberius began the process of removing the powerful Sejanus (the man he had granted that power to in the first place). Q. Sutorius Macro was made the new commander of the Praetorian Guard and Tiberius sent him with a letter to be read before the Senate. In this letter, it was expected that Sejanus would be given tribunician power, much like the emperor himself, thereby making him co-emperor and the obvious choice for succession. However, Tiberius had another idea altogether in mind. First Macro made sure of the support of the Praetorians who were present, and in the barracks. While he was doing this, the incredibly long and rambling, yet supportive, letter of Tiberius was read before the Senate, and in the presence of Sejanus. Just as they thought it was going to offer Sejanus the power he craved, the letter changed tone abruptly scathingly denouncing his right hand man and ordering his arrest.

On October 18, 31 AD, Sejanus was arrested and the people of Rome celebrated. However, the men of the Senatorial elite were understandably panicked. Each had given support to Sejanus in some way, how could they not? Tiberius himself granted the man near imperial authority. That very same day, the man who seemed to be the front runner to become the third Roman emperor was executed and the order of things couldn't take such a dramatic swing without terrible repercussions. A veritable witch hunt of Sejanus' supporters was to commence, in which his family was largely executed. Livilla, the former wife of Tiberius' son Drusus, was executed for her role in that affair. His friends were denounced, tried and executed, or forced into suicide or exile. Tiberius attempted to convey that Sejanus was implicated for many reasons including plots against various family members. However, Agrippina and Drusus who still remained alive in imperial custody were allowed to rot away, experiencing unspeakable tortures for another 2 years after Sejanus' fall. Though the ancient sources, notably Tacitus, paint a gruesome picture of the year 33 AD, in which a final purge was to occur, some argue that Tiberius was actually quite just in his approach. However, to the aristocracy which would live on to tell the tale, Tiberius was a fool who allowed all of this to happen in the first place, and history remembers both he and Sejanus as evil men.

Pontius Pilate and Jesus

A major socio-political development during the reign of Tiberius and Sejanus was the Judean governorship of Pontius Pilate, and the emergence of Jesus Christ and the Christian religion that followed. Not only would the story grow into the most overwhelming religious force in the western world, but it also provides an important indication of the independent power of Sejanus and the contrasting imperial policy of Tiberius' tenure.

While evidence of Pilate's youth and career prior to Judaea is limited, the historical record indicates that he was appointed in or around 26 AD. Named Prefect (incorrectly called Procurator by Josephus) to replace Valerius Gratus (who had been Tiberius' first appointment) Pilate was very likely named by Sejanus, and not Tiberius, to govern the Jews. At this point Tiberius had very likely already withdrawn to Capri, leaving Sejanus in virtual charge of the empire. Even had Tiberius directly appointed Pilate, it's quite clear that Sejanus would've had considerable influence over the selection. This could be of significant importance to the history of early Christianity and Jesus, because Sejanus was oft-accused of anti-Semitism in the ancient sources. Of course, those sources, Josephus and Philo of Alexandria, wrote from a Jewish perspective, but they paint a vivid portrait of Sejanus' position towards Jews. Pilate too falls largely under the same accusations, even though there is evidence to the contrary. Coinage issued by Pilate seems to indicate a happy tolerance of both Paganism and Judaism, but the writers tell a different tale.

Sejanus' involvement is important to Pilate's behavior in the discussion of the Jesus mystery because it helps to corroborate at least some parts of the gospels, and other historical evidence. If Sejanus had direct authority over Pilate, which he would've after 26 AD regardless of Tiberius' initial involvement, then his feelings towards the Jews would likely have become part of the imperial policy. Though the Romans were generally smart enough to attempt appeasement, Sejanus was not necessarily a man who worried about appeasing anyone. He was a manipulator whose tactics seem very similar to those of Pilate's in Judaea. According to Philo, Sejanus planned to destroy the Jews completely. It would stand to reason that his governor would follow suit. In part at least, it seemed that he did. Pilate used a methodology of baiting the people to incitement, using their own protests as an excuse to force his will, and likely that of Sejanus.

According to Josephus, Pilate's first major act was that he ordered Roman standards brought within the walls of Jerusalem (a direct violation of the sanctity of the Jewish faith honoring false gods). The Jews reacted expectedly, but on this occasion Pilate only threatened to kill them (assuredly after at least some small punitive actions had been taken), before agreeing to removing the standards. Pilate also used money from the Temple treasury to construct an aqueduct. When the Jews assembled outside his quarters to protest, this time Pilate did not relent. He ordered soldiers to dress like the Jews and mingle among the crowd. When the trap was set Pilate sprung it by signaling his men to draw clubs hidden in their clothes, beating and killing many Jews. Pilate's behavior was largely one of disdain for the people he governed, but events were about to take place which would change that entirely. Under normal circumstances, it seems that Pilate would likely have cared little about instigating violence among the people, and seemed to rather encourage it. Why then would he later give up Jesus in the famed, yet completely unrecorded events (from a Roman perspective) surrounding the trial and crucifixion of Jesus? At a minimum, Pilate's behavior clearly changed after the fall of Sejanus.

In 31 AD, after Tiberius had roused from his deference to Sejanus, and had him executed for treason, the situation all over the empire changed dramatically. Pilate had much to fear from Rome as Tiberius set about eliminating Sejanus' supporters over the next few years. In erasing the attitudes of Sejanus, Tiberius also reversed the general policy of the empire towards the Jews. While under Sejanus the Jews were poorly treated, Tiberius by contrast, and simply to counter Sejanus (as Tiberius was no lover of Judaism himself), ordered that the Jews be tolerated. This imperial policy shift probably caused a great deal of consternation for Pilate. If the gospels are to be believed Pilate was soon faced with a dilemma that would not only challenge his authority, but if not handled correctly, could cost him his life. Despite his own personal feelings towards the Jews, his fear for Roman social status and survival would dictate his behavior. Normally Pilate would've resisted any attempt by the Jewish leadership to influence him, and in fact might have openly opposed their wishes. Had the Jews been incited to violence, this could offer an opportunity to go on the offensive, shrouded in the necessity to maintain order. With Tiberius back in charge, however, Pilate, and everyone else had to tread a very fine line. The Jews, it seems, were also very much aware of this.

Sometime after 32 AD and prior to Tiberius death in 37 AD, Jesus was brought before Pilate for treason against Rome. As the story goes, which is told most importantly in the Gospel of Mark, by Josephus and also by Tacitus, the Jewish leadership wished Jesus killed essentially for being a blasphemer against their faith and against them personally. Jesus and his teachings were subversive to ancient Jewish culture, and they had to have him removed in order to preserve their tradition and authority. However, only Pilate had the authority to address the matter, and Pilate, as has been suggested, was normally in position to oppose Jewish desires at any opportunity. Pilate's attempts to free Jesus, regardless of any numerous false stories regarding divine intervention, likely only stemmed from his desire to boost anyone who opposed the Jewish leadership. Jesus was just such a man to continue stirring the Roman policy of incitement. However, what Pilate was ultimately faced with was the potential for the treason trials of Tiberius back in Rome.

Despite several attempts to resist demands of Jesus death, Caiphas and the Jewish leadership wisely invoke the use of the term 'Amicus Caesaris' against Pilate to get their way. This term 'friend of Caesar' were not just theoretic words of friendship but practically functioned as a title. Losing that title, in Pilate's case by not following Tiberius' new Jew-favorable policies, might not only cause him to lose his job as Prefect, but potentially his social standing, and at worst his life. The Jews with full knowledge of Roman politics, because of Pilate's previous behavior and relation to the known traitor Sejanus, knew exactly how to force their will. Faced with a man accused of being 'King of the Jews', a crime against Tiberius himself, Pilate had no choice but to relent, and crucified Jesus in order to preserve the peace, and his own skin.

Though the facts of the historical Jesus and the life of Pilate are debatable, it is quite clear that had Jesus lived, he would've faced crucifixion after the fall of Sejanus. By late 36 Pilate had been recalled to Rome, though perhaps fortunately for him, Tiberius died while he was en route. By that reasoning the historical Jesus must have been crucified between 32 and 36 AD. Regardless, of the 'truth' of the matter, the story of the Christ spread from this point and throughout the Roman world. Initially under the missions of men such as James and Paul, the fledgling faith spread first among the Jews than into the eastern provinces. Under Peter, Christians began to appear in Rome and within approximately 400 years, the cult that started under mysterious circumstances during the reign of Tiberius, and Sejanus, was the dominate faith of the western world. As for Pilate, after his recall from Rome, virtually no evidence exists of his fate. Stories of his conversion to Christianity, suicide out of guilt or to avoid punishment are completely unverifiable and Pilate disappears from the historical record with the passing of Tiberius.

Tiberius: The Final Years

The fall of Sejanus and the subsequent treason trials marred the end of Tiberius' reign as much as allowing his Praetorian Prefect to take power in the first place. While, on the surface, Tiberius' later reign was described as a bloodbath and a reign of terror by Tacitus, relatively few lost their lives in comparison to the repeated disorders of the late Republic. Still, the Roman aristocracy hated him, perhaps in part due to his lack of decisiveness. Tiberius seemed always to be a Republican at heart and only wanted the Senate, or someone, to prove competent enough to govern. However, his greatest fault may have been that he failed to understand the truth; that the Republic was truly dead, and rule could only be achieved by a single man, or a select chosen few.

By 34 AD the trials of the 'maiestas' (Law of Treason) were over, and Roman aristocracy may have returned to some sense of normalcy. However, normalcy under Tiberius was difficult to define. Since his retirement to Capri in 26 AD, the emperor never returned to Rome and seemingly rarely visited the Italian mainland at all. Hatred for him led to all sorts of accusations of perversion and sexual indulgence. Paranoia, fostered through years of Sejanus' various plots, and bearing witness to a lifetime of political wrangling and family dysfunction, did little to help his legacy, and kept some truths of Tiberius' last 12 years hidden from history. He certainly fell victim to the political propaganda of later historians, who in so doing granted support to the serving Emperor in their own era, but Tiberius was no model citizen. His choice of heir, Gaius (Caligula), (and Tiberius Gemellus, who wouldn't live to see his ascension to fruition) would later cast additional clouds on Tiberius' reign, despite the fact that the son of Germanicus was certainly a popular choice at the time. Caligula himself, though, made little mention of his uncle's activities while he stayed with him on Capri. Though the accuracy of Caligula's perceptions may have been clouded anyway, based on the activities of his own reign, his silence on the matter of debauchery on Capri seems to indicate that Tiberius' may have been unduly blasted by the historical record. Regardless, Tiberius was, by the end of his reign, a generally despised figure in the perception of the elite and the common Roman alike.

Despite his inadequacies in dealings within Rome, Tiberius' saving grace was in his seemingly capable abilities as an administrator. He generally followed the practices set down by Augustus and allowed his predecessors rules to continue and sink in. He wisely chose to adhere to Augustus' policy on non expansion, and except for some light campaigns in Germania (necessary to quell legionary revolt), did little in the way of foreign conquest. He suppressed a relatively minor revolt in Gaul under Julius Sacrovir and another more lasting affair under Tacfarinas in Africa. In Armenia, Tiberius efficiently handled political instability through diplomacy, never requiring the use of force. His provincial governors were mostly capable men who served admirably. With the one exception of Piso in Syria, whose rivalry with Germanicus may have cost the latter his life, provincial government ran smoothly and effectively. In fact, Tiberius was so willing to let effective governors stay in place that he left some in their positions for upwards of an unprecedented 10 and 20 years.

Whether Tiberius is remembered as a depraved pervert who reined using murder and mayhem and allowed the rise of Praetorian influence, or as an effective administrator with Republican leanings, the true result of Tiberius rule was the ironic total destruction of the Republican ideal. While Augustus allowed a facade of Senatorial governing to continue to exist, under Tiberius, that façade failed to continue, certainly in part due to Sejanus' rise. Tiberius also poorly prepared for the continuation of the Principate. His own involvement in the destruction of the imperial family, something Augustus would never allow while he lived, helped bring about a lack of quality in succession. Though the popularity of Caligula was certainly overwhelming at first, Tiberius did little to prepare his successor for the rule of the Roman world.

Rome's second 'Emperor' died at the port town of Misenum on March 16, 37 AD. At the age of 78 and a reign of 23 years Tiberius, despite all his faults, proved a successful continuation of the Augustan Principate. Later writers suggested that Tiberius was smothered at the behest of Caligula (who was never really sure if he was the official heir), but such accusations are to be expected in the political climate of the time. Regardless, Tiberius was 78 years and in poor health at his death. His complete unpopularity is proven by the absence of being voted divine honors by the Senate. Caligula never pushed for it, and his successor Claudius, who did force the deification of Tiberius' mother Livia, certainly wasted no effort on Tiberius's behalf. Tacitus, Dio Cassius and Suetonius certainly painted a bleak picture of Tiberius and his reign. According to Suetonius: "the people were so glad of his death, that at the first news of it some ran about shouting, "Tiberius to the Tiber," (a form of punishment reserved for criminals) while others prayed to Mother Earth and the Manes to allow the dead man no abode except among the damned."

Caligula AD 37 - 41 (born AD 12 - died 41)

Gaius Caesar, son of the popular general and dynastic heir, Germanicus, and great grand-son of Augustus through his mother, was born AD 12 shortly before the death of Augustus. Evidence for the life of the 3rd Roman emperor is sparse, as the work of Tacitus for this period is lost. What does exist, primarily Suetonius, Seneca, Cassius Dio, Josephus and Philo, is completely negative and openly hostile for a variety of reasons. While these accounts are certainly somewhat tainted by the personal and political agendas of the authors, there is a basis for truth in each. The life of Gaius is clouded in 'madness' and 'megalomania', and there is enough evidence to back up claims of adverse behavior whether caused by mental illness, personal ego, or even historical embellishment. Despite his youth, his short reign of less than 4 years, and the slanderous history that followed, certainly indicates a widespread dislike. Had some of the rumors of depravity, indiscretion and megalomania not been true, and thus his assassination purely the result of political maneuvering, than at least some small contrary record might be expected to be found. All ancient sources, however, paint Gaius with a fairly similar brush.

Caligula, as Gaius is commonly known, received the nickname while on campaign with his father in Germania. As a baby and young boy he was often dressed in a mock legionary uniform, including the sandals called caligae, much to the delight of the soldiers. The men soon began to

refer to their new mascot as Caligula, or little sandals. Despite this early pleasantry, however, Caligula lived a harsh youth, where instability within the imperial family caused paranoia and open suspicion. After the death of his father in AD 19, a rift formed between members of the Julio-Claudian house pitting his surviving family members against the reigning emperor Tiberius. His mother and 2 brothers eventually suffered horrible fates under the terror of Sejanus, but Caligula managed to avoid their fates. First placed under the care of his great-grandmother Livia, then grandmother Antonia, Caligula and his sisters survived, likely developing a bond that would later lead to accusations of all sort of incest and perversity. Shortly prior to the fall of Sejanus in 31 AD, and amidst fear for the continuation of the dynastic line, Caligula was brought to live with Tiberius on the island of Capri. Here he remained, holding only an honorary Quaestorship in AD 33, likely learning little to nothing of how to rule an empire, until Tiberius death in AD 37. There has been some speculation that Caligula was involved in the death of Tiberius, having him smothered to allow his own ascension, but the theory seems implausible. Tiberius was 77 years old at the time and likely in poor health anyway, but the story added fuel to the ancient fire regarding Caligula's madness.

'Gaius' was initially welcomed with great joy by both the masses and the Senate. Macro, the Praetorian Prefect, immediately propped Caligula up as the new princeps, and with their support there would be little challenge to his authority. Being the son of the once revered Germanicus also brought the support of the Legions, an all important factor to consider in imperial politics. Despite the fact that Tiberius' will had named him joint heir with his cousin, 18 year old Tiberius Gemellus, the Senate revoked this provision (certainly by Caligula's intervention), paving the way for single rule by Caligula. To be sure to avoid future questions regarding the principate and succession, Tiberius Gemellus 'died' within a few months of Caligula's accession to power.

Initially, the young Emperor's rule was very promising. A speech before the Senate assured them of co-operative governing with the new 'administration'. He took it upon himself to destroy many records from the Tiberius treason trials. In this he not only cleared his mother and other relatives but certainly allowed many of Rome's elite to breathe a huge sigh of relief. The treason trials had come to an end and the dark rule of Tiberius was followed with a new hope. Generous bequests were paid to the people of Rome and especially to the Praetorians. Exiled citizens were recalled and others who had had properties confiscated were reimbursed. He did propose the deification of Tiberius, but this act was widely opposed. Rather than push through the unpopular act, Caligula let it drop, but the laws and deeds of Tiberius were allowed to stand for posterity purposes. He made another wildly popular gesture of piety by sailing to the islands where his mother Agrippina and brother Nero were killed, retrieving their ashes for the mausoleum of Augustus.

His popularity, along with the now defined tradition of Imperial rule, granted him freedom of governing not known by either of his predecessors. While Augustus certainly held ultimate power, his political career was one of cunning and systematic creation of a new system. Tiberius, following in the footsteps of Augustus, enjoyed his own freedom to rule, but had to deal with legionary revolts resulting from successions and was generally despised. Caligula, on the other hand, had the deepest admiration of the Roman world, and faced little political adversity. Perhaps this coddled political part of his life, coupled with a terribly tragic youth filled with murder and family intrigue, would lead the promising young man down a much darker path.

Caligula the Mad

Though the reign of Gaius 'Caligula' Caesar began with much promise, some early actions foretold of more uncommon behavior to come. Soon after his ascension Caligula showed signs of future 'madness' and Suetonius gives evidence even through a certainly embellished story:

'he (Caligula) devised a novel and unheard of kind of pageant; for he bridged the gap between Baiae and the mole at Puteoli, a distance of about thirty-six hundred paces, by bringing together merchant ships from all sides and anchoring them in a double line, after which a mound of earth was heaped upon them and fashioned in the manner of the Appian Way. Over this bridge he rode back and forth for two successive days. attended by the entire praetorian guard and a company of his friends in Gallic chariots.'

According to Suetonius the entire reason for this grand display was that an astrologer once said, "Gaius (Caligula) had no more chance of becoming emperor than of riding about over the gulf of Baiae with horses."

Within 6 months of his rise to the highest power in Rome, Caligula fell very ill. The entire empire fretted over his well being, but the cause for concern was to prove to be misplaced. When Caligula recovered he returned as a changed man. The ancient sources blame the illness, which has been suggested in possible relation to epilepsy (perhaps passed down from Caesar) or even a genetic disorder from intensive familial inbreeding. However, while Caligula certainly could've been 'deranged' it's far more likely that his later behavior was a symptom of his environment than an actual disorder. He was simply the first 'emperor' to understand the absoluteness of his rule and the freedom to do with it as he pleased. A child reared in a world of violence, corruption and intrigue, one could hardly expect much more from the grown man.

Regardless of the reasoning, whether mental instability or true viciousness, after the illness all sources attest to a change in Caligula's behavior. An initial act upon recovery from his illness demanded that any person who had offered their life to the gods in sacrifice if, 'Gaius' would recover, should fulfill that obligation. He killed the former Praetorian Prefect Macro, his father in law and Tiberius Gemellus, his supposed heir. In a strange twist, during his illness, Caligula had named his sister Drusilla as heir, not only indicating the great affection he held for his sisters, but fueling rumors of wild incest. In AD 38 the oath of loyalty to the emperor also required the same oath be said to his sisters.

Tyrannical behavior continued and became increasingly cruel. Comments that he could easily order the death of magistrates, or slit the throats of lovers were common. The treason trials of Tiberius were re-instituted and one never knew what reason Caligula would find to confiscate their properties or lives. Caligula is attested to having said 'Would that the Roman people had but one neck!' Though this reeks of propaganda, it can certainly show an environment of fear that must have existed. Sexual depravity and escapades of all sorts were reportedly taking place. In addition to rumored incestual affairs with his sisters and stealing men's wives for his own pleasure, Caligula had been married 4 times, 3 of which took place during his short reign.

The strange and lewd behavior continued into the form of megalomania. An altar was built to honor himself as a living god. His favorite sister Drusilla, who died suddenly in AD 38, was deified as a member of the slowly growing imperial cult. Statues of the emperor were ordered to be erected all over the empire and in Jewish synagogues, with clear ramifications of civil disorder. It was suggested that he opened a brothel right inside the imperial palace and that his favorite horse was kept in an ivory carved stable within the palace walls as well. Dinner parties were arranged in the horse's honor, and though of doubtful truth, it was even recorded that Caligula considered making it a Consul. Expenditures were out of control, and the entire imperial treasury, carefully built up by Tiberius, was squandered in Caligula's excessiveness. Gem laden ships and monumental villas were built for no other reason than to satisfy the whims of the Emperor. Not only was the aristocracy of Rome at danger by virtue of close association to their 'leading citizen' but his spending threatened the security of the empire itself. To offset it, he introduced new heavy taxation, including taxes on prostitution that simply burdened the population as a whole. In just a few short years, Caligula went from being the people's great savior to another despised despot. What was worse, thanks to his laughable military campaigns to come, he was in danger of losing the loyalty of the legions.

Assassination of an Emperor

Towards the end of Caligula's reign, he seemingly set his sites on military glory. Having never been involved in military achievement of any kind, such a step was another grandiose way to show his godliness to the people of Rome. Following in the steps of his father, Germanicus, Caligula launched a strange campaign into Germania. However, this campaign seems to have been interrupted by a conspiracy against him. Though the entire affair is shrouded in uncertainty, a Legate of the Germania Legions, Cn. Lentulus Gaetulicus and Caligula's brother-in-law, M. Aemilius Lepidus, were executed. His surviving sisters, too, were exiled. As a result, the Germania expedition essentially didn't take place, and it only leaves us a few more claims of excessive behavior from the ancient sources. After nothing came of the Germania affair, Caligula apparently shifted his focus to Britain. Again, the results were nothing but laughable. According to Suetonius, rather than actually cross to Britain to achieve his goals of conquest he simply marched the legions to shore in some sort of show of strength.

"Finally, as if he intended to bring the war to an end, he drew up a line of battle on the shore of the Ocean, arranging his ballistas and other artillery; and when no one knew or could imagine what he was going to do, he suddenly bade them gather shells and fill their helmets and the folds of their gowns, calling them "spoils from the Ocean".

Despite this complete waste of time and resources, Caligula demanded a triumph from the Senate, which of course was awarded. Included in the complete mockery were Gauls dressed as Germans and the spoils taken from the shore. Some suggested it was indicative of Caligula's belief of personal divinity, that he actually defeated Neptune on the shores of the English Channel. According to Dio Cassius he even took the names Germanicus and Britannicus as if he had actually conquered those territories.

After his botched military campaigns, Caligula's megalomania apparently intensified dramatically, as well as his paranoia. Executions and torture were prevalent, and Rome's treasury was dangerously depleted. Despite his annexation of Mauretania as an official province (which is largely ignored in the ancient sources) Caligula's short reign had little benefit to the Roman people. His demand that a statue of his own likeness be erected in the temple of Jerusalem caused terrible riots in Judaea. Only the delaying tactics of the Governor Petronius and Herod Agrippa prevented wide-spread revolt.

Caligula's worsening behavior led to several plots against him, only one of which obviously needed to succeed. The plot that ultimately did succeed was developed, according to all ancient sources, within the Praetorian Guard. However, evidence also suggests that several Senators had knowledge and were involved in its undertaking. Apparently already under suspicion by Caligula, his Praetorian Prefects seemingly had little choice but to authorize the deed themselves or face certain execution. On January 24, AD 41, Cassius Chaerea, a Praetorian officer along with two others, brutally stabbed Caligula in a secluded corridor of the imperial palace. At the age of 28 years, and having ruled for just less than 4 years, Rome faced its first potential crisis of the Principate. The Praetorians continued their growth as a political institution since the days of Sejanus by directly executing or removing an emperor for the first of what would eventually be many times.

Though certainly some of Caligula's guard remained loyal, they were terribly outnumbered. The Praetorians swept the palace and butchered the Empress Caesonia and their baby daughter Drusilla had her head smashed against a wall. As the story goes, Claudius, the stammering old fool and uncle of the emperor, was found cowering behind some curtains. Seen as a choice to be easily controlled, the Praetorians swept him up and positioned him as the only surviving member of the Julio-Claudian line with a legitimate claim to the throne. However, Claudius, by virtue of his

survival through the terrible reign of his nephew and his later exemplary rule, seems more likely to have been a part of the plot seeking power of his own, rather than a frightened 'unlikely' heir, cowering behind some curtains. Regardless Caligula was dead and while the Senate perhaps sought a Republican return, Claudius was taken to the safety of the Praetorian camp. Whatever intentions the Senate may have had, without the loyalty of the legions and the Praetorians, their cause was doomed. They had no choice but to hail Claudius as the next 'Caesar'.

Claudius AD 41 - 54 (born 10 BC - died AD 54)

Tiberius Claudius Nero Germanicus (10 BC - AD 54) became the unlikely 4th emperor of the Julio-Claudian line after the violent murder of his nephew Gaius (Caligula). The reign of Claudius is important for several reasons. He stabilized the political environment by including provincials in the Senate rolls (even though he was vilified for it), and proved an effective re-establishment of the imperial line after the debacle of Caligula. He made several provincial annexations, including the conquest of Britain which brought vital new sources of precious metals under Roman control. Despite these positives, depending on one's perspective, of course, he was the first emperor to rise to his position through assassination and praetorian political intervention. Once the precedent was set, it became a regular occurrence throughout the principate period. Also of important note, Claudius was terribly slandered by the ancient sources, not only for his physical characteristics and mannerisms, but for his political activities. He propped up favorite free or freedmen into important positions of government authority and, at least on occasions, fell under the influence of various people of doubtful political agendas. Perhaps worst of all, Claudius ignored his own son in the imperial hierarchy, favoring the son of his 4th wife and niece, Agrippina. Claudius gave the world Nero, perhaps the worse of the Roman emperors, apparently from his own free choice, rather than continue the Julio-Claudian line with some semblance of stability.

Claudius was born at Lugdunum in Gaul to Antonia (daughter of Mark Antony and niece of Augustus) and Drusus Claudius Nero, the second son of Livia, Augustus' wife. His brother, the great Germanicus, would become one of the most popular figures in early imperial Rome, while Claudius was mired in near anonymity or family scorn, if not for one fateful assassination. Claudius was born with several birth defects, the cause of which are speculated (perhaps the tradition of family epilepsy, or cerebral palsy, etc.), but completely improvable. Despite his obvious family connections, these defects kept him labeled as far inferior, both physically and mentally. Even as a boy, he limped, drooled and stuttered profusely. In the tradition of Augustus, he was also commonly ill in his youth, and while it may be seen as miraculous that he could've survived in the cutthroat imperial world, it may have ensured his survival by virtue of being completely ignored. He was generally perceived as an idiot and was kept on the outskirts of the imperial family. Rather than assume his rights as a man upon the proper age he was kept under continued guardianship, like a young women of the time would have been. The majority of his early life was kept in complete seclusion, and he was not brought into the political fold the way 'normal' boys of the family line had been. Instead, Claudius prepared for the unlikely political power to come by reading and studying himself into perhaps one of the foremost historical scholars of the day. Among his works were 43 books of Roman history, 21 books of Etruscan history, and 8 on Carthage. Unfortunately, all of these along with an additional 8 autobiographical books (which have been recreated in the vastly popular fictional novels 'I, Claudius' and 'Claudius the God' by Robert Graves) are lost to history.

Politically, the only post that Claudius was appointed to before the accession of Caligula was that of a minor priest, or an augur. During the purges of Sejanus, under Tiberius' reign (Claudius' uncle), the Claudian family suffered heavily, with Caligula, his sisters and Claudius emerging as the only survivors of note. While Claudius was likely deeply involved in his own personal studies in the mid 40's of life, Tiberius died and Caligula's accession finally brought the family black sheep into the public spotlight. Caligula made his uncle a suffect consul in 37 AD, but seemed to do so out of a preference for Claudius' presence as a target of jokes and cruelty, rather than value his

political skill or opinion. Regardless, within the fast and furious four years of Caligula's rule, Claudius must have established himself to some end politically, if only to set the stage for an effective reign of his own.

On January 24, AD 41, Caligula was cut down by members of the Praetorian Guard, and in the mayhem that followed Claudius was supposedly discovered hiding behind some curtains within the palace. In this version of the story, the one which Claudius himself seemingly preferred (which painted him as a completely innocent and unassuming victim, rather than a part of any plot), Claudius was carried off to the Praetorian camp to keep him safe, while the matter of true succession was formulated. Though the Senate attempted to gain control for itself, the Praetorians, whose viability depended on an Imperial regime in order to survive as a legitimate entity, remained loyal to the Principate concept. With the Praetorians, and therefore the bulk of the legions firmly behind Claudius, the Senate had no choice but to accept Claudius as the new 'emperor'. The bumbling, stumbling, drooling fool, as he was commonly known, had supposedly stepped out from behind the curtain into the most powerful and politically important position in the western world. However, though evidence is circumstantial at best, there is growing sentiment that Claudius himself may have had more involvement. While this can never be proven, the circumstances of the events just seem a bit too convenient. Regardless, he was shortly 'approved' to his new imperial position, and quickly set about a complete shake up of the status quo, and his own public perception.

Claudian Policy

Among the first acts of Claudius was to stabilize his position and that of the dynasty that had suffered so terribly under Sejanus, Tiberius and Caligula. First he adopted the name of the imperial house, changing from Tiberius Claudius Nero Germanicus simply to Claudius Caesar Augustus. This was more than a case of changing names, however. Claudius did have direct relation to Augustus (through his sister Octavia) and therefore to Julius Caesar (through his sister Julia). By adopting the nomenclature he was more readily identified as a proper heir and legitimate ruler. He also had his grandmother Livia (mother of Tiberius) deified and recalled his two nieces, Julia and Agrippina, the one that he would eventually marry, from exile. Just prior to his rise to the throne, his young wife Messallina bore him a daughter named Octavia and a son who would eventually be called Britannicus.

While Claudius is probably best known for his invasion of Britain, some other events or imperial policies played a significant role in how he was remembered. His relationship with the Senate and the Roman aristocracy was off to a poor start from the beginning, thanks to the interference of the Praetorians. However, the policies of provincial inclusion and Romanization (as vital as they were to the health of the empire) were terribly unpopular in the Senate. Despite the great foresight in bringing Gauls and other provincial Celts into the Roman circle of citizenship and upper society (thereby 'Romanizing' them), the elite scoffed at such ridiculous gestures. This gesture, however, not only brought Celtic aristocracy closer into ties with Roman authority (trickling down to the tribes of Gaul and Hispania), it likely gave great hope to other provincials of someday achieving the benefits of citizenship. It could be argued that this act is among the most important of the early Principate.

Much like his uncle Tiberius, Claudius proved to be a solid provincial administrator despite his troubles with Roman aristocracy. Under his watch several client kingdoms were annexed, thus circumventing the Augustan policy of non expansion, but only doing so with territory already considered Roman. Among these, the official annexation of Mauretania (though the process was begun under Caligula), Noricum, Lycia & Pamphylia, and Thracia was completed. Judaea too came under direct Roman rule with the death of Herod in AD 44. Of course, perhaps the most

important event in the reign of Claudius was the conquest of Britain, but that will be addressed in the following chapter.

Though Claudius has been given credit for partially centralizing Roman government (credit that is largely being proven to be untrue), he certainly did dabble in some very minute details of his administration. He apparently saw the courts, and judging as a vital component of imperial duty. While applause can be given to his devotion and fulfillment of that duty his performance was another matter altogether. He was almost obsessed with spending time in court and ignored various festivals and celebrations of note in order to be present. He was accused of completely ignoring one side of a case, or for being particularly brutal in doling out punishments. Perhaps worst of all, Claudius adopted a policy of hearing many cases privately, with only the input of his own advisors to help sort things out. Therein lied the problem; his advisors were reviled freedmen who, in the view of the Roman social and political elite, had no business achieving such a station of importance.

These freedmen gained great influence over Claudius, along with his wives, but partly because there were few in the Senate who offered loyalty or support to him. While freedmen were a regular part of Imperial and elite households, maintaining positions of some import, no other emperor before or after relied upon them so heavily. This was revolting to the Senate and helps make clear why he was so widely despised. Even though it seems that men like Narcissus, Polybius, and Palla slowly wielded less and less power over time throughout Claudius reign, it's seemingly only because his 4th wife Agrippina filled that role in later years. To the Senate and later generations of Romans, this was merely a continuation of the mockery of Claudius' reign.

Even the ancients, fully understanding that they despised Claudius, still give a complimentary account of his public works achievements. The vital aqueducts, Aqua Claudia and Aqua Anio Novus, were completed during his rule. While both are some of the most spectacular visible ruins today, the Anio Novus was the longest and tallest of its day. In addition to these, Claudius continued his ventures into the public waterways building a new port, aptly named Portus, near Ostia. While the draining of the Fucine Lake turned into an enormous project and ultimately terrible outcome, it was among the most grand of all ancient Roman engineering attempts. Additionally, he introduced three new letters to the Latin alphabet (for the sounds v, ps, y) but these were excluded from use and mostly forgotten shortly after his death.

Among the biggest challenges for Claudius, despite the animosity of contemporaries, was winning over and maintaining the loyalty of the legions. His continuation of Caligula's war in Mauretania and eventual annexation helped establish some military credential, but events would show that Claudius needed far more. In AD 42 the governor of Dalmatia, L. Arruntius Scribonianus, revolted against Claudius with the two legions under his command, at the instigation of some prominent Senators. Though the revolt would only last 4 days before the legions returned their loyalty to the Emperor the case was clear that Claudius had trouble looming on the horizon. After conducting a series of trial resulting in the death of 35 Senators and a couple hundred Equites as a result (certainly further alienating him from the aristocracy) Claudius looked to potential military glory to solve his problems. A campaign was planned for AD 43 that would achieve this goal, bring vast mineral wealth (tin, iron, etc.) within Roman control, and stretch the empire to the very limits of the western world.

Claudian Invasion of Britain

In the near century that followed Caesar's invasions of Britain (55 and 54 BC), the political climate of the Celtic tribes that maintained loyal relationships with Rome slowly deteriorated. While some call Caesars invasions a failure, the fact that they resulted in a century of tribute, profitable trade, and subservient political attitudes from the tribes to Rome must account for something. However, the more removed Caesar was from the memory of the Celtic tribes, the less stable the

relationship between Rome and Britain remained. Rome could ill afford a break in the trading relationship that provided invaluable metals such as silver, tin and iron and immense profits for other 'commercial' industries such as wine making and pottery. An abundance of lead ore had also recently been discovered and it was an important material to Romans in many industries.

An invasion had long been planned, as far back as the botched attempts of Caligula just a few years earlier, to deal with apparent affronts to Roman allied tribes. These proved to be too costly, dangerous or perhaps just truly unnecessary for the time, however, and the British political situation would continue to destabilize (from a Roman perspective). By the time Claudius came to power, not only was King Verica (descendent of Caesar's ally Commius) of the allied Atrebates calling to Rome for help against neighboring tribes, but Claudius was conveniently in need of military glory to secure the loyalty of the legions. Verica's pleas provided a convenient excuse to not only gain this glory, but to distract the Roman Senate from political differences of opinion. Making matters even more persuasive, the Rhine and Danube borders of Germania were largely quiet, and the empire was largely at peace. The invasion could take place without stripping troops from other vital areas.

In AD 43, Aulus Plautius, former governor of Pannonia and a man deemed trustworthy by Claudius, was selected to lead the overall campaign. 4 known legions were gathered, and put through rigorous drilling, in order to weed out those who were unfit. Legio II Augusta, IX Hispana, XIV Gemina and XX Valeria Victrix were all to take part, with II Augusta under the command of the future emperor Vespasian. The legions totaled 20,000 active legionaries, with an additional 20,000 to 30,000 in auxilia forces. The initial channel crossing was set to take place early in the campaign year, but dismay among the troops caused considerable problems. Roman infantry had long been known to have misgivings about naval crossings, but sailing to the mysterious island of Britain, where even the great Caesar had faced considerable problems, was another matter entirely. The situation was eventually resolved through the intervention of Claudius' freedman advisor Narcissus, but the affair was delayed for some time.

Nevertheless, the bulk of the force seems to have landed near Rutupiae, or modern Richborough. Though some evidence exists of additional landing places, there is no question that Richborough developed into the main entry port in provincial Britain with it acting as a sort of ancient version to Ellis Island in New York harbor. Regardless, the initial landings took place, mostly unopposed. Tribal resistance under Caratacus (also Caractacus) king of the Catuvellauni, and his brother Togodumnus, was slow to react and the Romans were able to gather in force. The Britons had little choice but to allow the invaders into their lands, until such time as an appropriate force could be gathered. Tribal divisions and diverse loyalties made resistance a trying affair. While many opposed Roman occupation, leadership squabbles certainly made a unified front difficult to achieve. Other less influential tribes welcomed Roman arrival and supported their cause, if only with the belief that doing so would increase their own power. The socio-political environment of tribal Britain made the Roman strategy easy to understand. Aulus Plautius would make his campaign one of divide and conquer, much like Caesar had done in Gaul a century earlier.

The first major battle of the campaign (and perhaps one of the most important in British history) took place on the shores of the River Medway (though some contend that it may have been the Arun). Caratacus and Togodumnus gathered their considerable forces but were unable to resist the superior tactical and strategic abilities of the Romans. In a terrific battle that reportedly lasted two days, where Germanic Batavi auxilia, who swam the river to surprise the British rear guard, played a vital role, the British forces were eventually outmanned and forced to retreat. Caratacus was forced back to the Thames, and Togodumnus was eventually killed in ensuing actions. Apparently the popularity of Togodumnus was such among the British warriors however; that they had a new resolve to resist the invaders and Plautius was 'forced' to dig in. This provided a convenient excuse for Plautius to send to Rome and ask Claudius to come to Britain in person to conduct the campaign.

Though a couple months had passed while Claudius made his own preparations, Plautius certainly was in a position where he was forced to await the Emperor's arrival, before a final assault could be launched. There may be some truth that the Romans were bogged down and lacked morale, of which Claudius' arrival would certainly help, but the idea that experienced Roman generals needed his military advice in any way is completely ludicrous. Regardless, Claudius eventually arrived, bringing up to 38 war elephants with him, as well as heavy artillery and (some evidence suggests) detachments of the 8th Legion. Claudius took command, and with this superior strength overwhelmed the resistance and Caratacus was forced to flee into modern Wales with his army. In a period of only 16 days, Claudius captured Camulodunum, where the first Roman capital was established, and received the surrender of up to 11 British tribes. The Emperor returned to Rome where he celebrated a grand triumph, received the title Britannicus, and left his generals in Britain to complete the conquest.

Though southern Britain would be largely subjugated relatively quickly, Roman control would spread slowly over the next 20 years. Men such as Vespasian built reputations as excellent generals and spread Roman hegemony in numerous and sometimes difficult campaigns. While Claudius had already celebrated his triumph in Rome, the exhausting work of Romanizing Britain was only just beginning. While it would eventually become an ideal province (especially in the south), a great deal of trouble lay ahead. This trouble would culminate in the revolt of Boudicca in the early 60's AD, and Britain wouldn't fall to complete Roman rule until the arrival of Gnaeus Julius Agricola some 20 years later.

Messalina, Agrippina and the Death of Claudius

By AD 38, and prior to his rise to Emperor, Claudius was married (for the third time) to the 15 year old Valeria Messalina. The young 'empress' was portrayed historically as not much more than a court nymphomaniac who used her sexual prowess to influence the influential. She did, however give Claudius two children: Octavia (AD 39) and Britannicus (AD 41). Though stories of wild parties, intrigue and murder follow Messalina from the ancient sources, some modern scholars have painted her as an astute player in the political world of the time. Either way, she was well known for various sexual escapades, regardless of her own motivation, and other scheming while the stuttering Claudius was either completely unaware of or refused to see it. She used her power to favor friends and punish her enemies (not all that unusual really) and had Claudius banish, and eventually execute his niece Julia (the sister of Caligula who had already been recalled once before) for adultery with L. Annaeus Seneca. Seneca, the author and influential politician was also exiled to Corsica for a time and would later have his revenge by publishing the scathing satirical attack on Claudius: *Apocolocyntosis Divi Claudii* (Pumpkinification of the Divine Claudius).

After 10 years of marriage the plot thickened beyond promiscuity, however. What may have been a plotted coup attempt came to fruition while Claudius was away in Ostia c. AD 48. Messalina declared herself divorced from Claudius and was married in a somewhat private ceremony to a designated Consul for the following year, C. Silius. Although the wedding arrangements had been made privately, the wild party that followed the ceremony helped give away the secret. Certainly Silius would've been aware of the danger in such a move, considering he was marrying the emperor's wife and his own influential (read as dangerous) status as a descendent of an Augustan general. Perhaps the idea was to replace Claudius and act as regents until the youthful Britannicus could come of age. Regardless, whether it was an actual coup attempt or a semi secret love affair, word reached Claudius (largely through his powerful freedmen) and after some consternation Messalina was eventually put to death. A large number of 'conspirators' joined Messalina's fate lending support to the idea that at least Claudius viewed it as a coup attempt whether it was in reality or not.

With the death of Messalina, Claudius' freedmen vied for supreme influence over the emperor by supporting various marriage prospects as replacements. In the end, the freedman Pallas won the competition but also assigned Claudius and the empire to a terrible twist of fate. The candidate who won was his own niece, Agrippina (the Younger), sister of Caligula. Likely having little to do with anything other than political connotations (she was the great granddaughter of Augustus) the marriage between uncle and niece (AD 49) required a change in the law. She had been previously married to Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, a powerful Republican family in its own right, and came to Claudius with a son Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus (Nero). This is significant in that Agrippina was highly motivated regarding the advancement of her son and would exert great influence over Claudius and the government of Rome in order to achieve her ends.

Ahenobarbus was 4 years older than Claudius' natural son Britannicus and Agrippina convinced Claudius that adopting her son was better for the preservation of the principate. Thus, Ahenobarbus became Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus Caesar and would eventually be advanced over Britannicus as Claudius' heir. To further solidify that position, Agrippina had the fiance of Claudius daughter prosecuted in order to make her available to marry Nero. A potential rival marriage candidate for Claudius, Lollia Paulina, was driven to suicide, and Agrippina would exert such authority as to be declared an official living Empress (or Augusta). Only Livia (wife of Augustus) had been so before, and only after her death. According to the ancient sources, between her rise and Claudius' death in 54 AD, Agrippina systematically took control of the Imperial government while Claudius was left to appear as a figurehead in front of his wife's real power. She wore a military cloak at official state functions, greeted foreign embassies in the capacity of full imperial authority, appeared prominently on coinage and had her dictations recorded in official government documentation.

Perhaps most importantly, Agrippina used her influence to surround and protect her position with men loyal to her and her son. Seneca, who despised Claudius but kept it in check, was recalled and installed as Nero's tutor. Back in Rome he used his brilliant political skill to influence the imperial court to Agrippina's wishes. Additionally, her own choice of Sextus Afranius Burrus was appointed as the all important Praetorian Prefect and as a second tutor for Nero, with the obvious ramifications that suggests. Meanwhile the young Nero continued to be advanced as the heir to Claudius while Britannicus languished behind, virtually invisible compared to Nero. He was granted full imperial authority outside the city (where Claudius retained singular control in theory) addressed the Senate, appeared with Claudius at the games (obvious indication of his role as heir) and was inscribed as such on imperial coinage.

By 54 AD, according to the ancients, Agrippina was secured enough in her position, and that of her son, that she no longer needed Claudius to rule the empire. Tacitus suggests that Claudius resisted the final steps to secure Nero as heir, and Agrippina, rather than wait him out, decided to take matters into her own hands. On October 13, AD 54, Claudius died while attending a feast. Though the reports are conflicting all indicate that he was poisoned by tainted mushrooms, even though Claudius had reached the venerable age of 64 (quite advanced for the ancient world, though not uncommon among the aristocracy) and had shown a history of poor health. Regardless, the scheming of Agrippina proved fruitful and the 16 year old Nero was immediately hailed as the new Emperor without any consideration for the much younger Britannicus.

Claudius was quickly deified without resistance, despite his poor relationship with the Senate, though his Imperial cult received little attention under Nero's reign. Claudius' reign is subject to much debate of course. Was he the pitiful, bumbling, murderous and spiteful fool described by the ancients, or the highly intelligent, excellent administrator, yet susceptible dupe to his advisors and wives as portrayed by Robert Graves in his well regarded novels? The truth probably lies somewhere in between. Claudius advanced the Empire through the conquest of Britain and made citizenship more inclusive through provincial enrollment. He built great public works and generally kept the peace, certainly earning at least the respect, if not the admiration of the people. Claudius is either remembered as this quality fourth member of the Julio-Claudian line who stabilized the

principate after the death of Caligula, or the cruel bumbling butcher who also left the world with the incompetent and disastrous Nero as the heir to the throne.

Nero AD 54 - 68 (born AD 37 - died 68)

The last member of the Julio-Claudian line to rule the Roman principate was Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus. He was the great grandson of Augustus through his daughter Julia and great great nephew through Augustus' sister Octavia. The son of Agrippina the younger (sister of Caligula) grew up in exile and poverty in the harsh circumstances of imperial intrigue; and his return to the forefront of the Roman imperial house was unlikely at best. However, the even more likely accession of Claudius allowed the return of exiled members of the Julio-Claudian house, and the eventual marriage between Claudius and Agrippina (uncle and niece) led to the adoption of Nero directly into the imperial line. Nero Claudius Caesar would eventually take precedence over Claudius' own son Britannicus through the scheming of his mother Agrippina, including the eventual marriage to Claudius' daughter Octavia. That scheming would also set the stage for Nero to rise as the next emperor unchallenged, as Agrippina methodically took control of the government and placed key supporters into positions of power.

The death of Claudius has been shrouded under the specter of murder (assumedly at the hands of Agrippina) though Claudius was 64 years old and of historically poor health. Still the systematic seizure of power by Agrippina, through her various political appointments, lends credence to the ancient source stories that Claudius was indeed poisoned. Regardless, in AD 54 Claudius was dead and the 17 year old Nero rose as the next Roman emperor. Under the tutelage of his mother, his tutor Seneca and the Praetorian Prefect Afranius Burrus, the first 5 years of Nero's reign was actually considered exemplary. Trajan later said that first five years of Nero's government were considered the happiest and best of the imperial era. Direct taxation was reduced as well as various restrictive governmental regulations. Capital punishment was outlawed and the games lessened while provincial administration continued to prosper as it had since the reign of Augustus.

Despite this quality start, it wouldn't take long for imperial intrigue to affect the order of things. A power struggle likely developed between Agrippina and Nero's advisors where, as an ambitious woman, she hoped to continue as a partner with Nero in imperial rule, and they resisted. Nero hated his wife Octavia, and began to have an affair with a former slave, Claudia Acte, which was supported by Seneca and Burrus. At this time too, Nero took less interest in the governing of the Empire but seemed more interested in the pursuance of the arts. singing, acting and playing the harp. indulgences that were considered fit for slaves. He also participated in nights of drunken revelry with friends, including random violence on the streets of Rome. Agrippina worried that through Nero's excesses and the growing strength of Seneca and Burrus (who privately supported Nero's antics in order for their own power to grow), that she would lose any grip on control of the Roman government. Not only did she support Octavia over Nero's various objections, but began to show favor to Claudius' son Britannicus as a potential replacement. This backfired however and Britannicus was murdered just shy of his 13th birthday in AD 55, likely though the intervention of Nero and Burrus, and Agrippina's influence would continue to decline.

Moving on from his slave concubine Acte, Nero was introduced to a more permanent relationship through his friend Otho (the future emperor, albeit short-lived). Otho was married to Poppaea Sabina and Nero was seemingly taken with her. Otho allowed a relationship to develop between the two and by AD 58 the affair was firmly in place. Agrippina continued to support Octavia (who as the daughter of Claudius helped establish Nero's legitimacy) and Poppaea assuredly complained over the interference. Nero finally made the decision to be rid of his pestering mother (this time without the support of Seneca and Burrus) and solicited the aid of the Prefect of the Fleet at Misenum, a freedman and former tutor by name of Anicetus. Rather than risk an open murder which would likely cause terrible shockwaves in a government that was slowly beginning to lose its popular appeal, Anicetus came up with an elaborate plan to have Agrippina brought to a

party at Baiae via ship, which the fleet would provide. The ship however was constructed as collapsible so as to sink with the population being none the wiser at this tragic 'accident'. However, the plan failed and Agrippina was able to swim to safety and Nero was forced to adopt more direct methods. An assassin was sent to her villa and clubbed her to death, while a fabricated story of Agrippina's involvement in a plot against Nero would be circulated to justify the murder. In AD 59, one of the most powerful women in the history Roman society was dead, at the hand of her own son, after having been solely responsible for securing the position of ultimate power on his behalf.

Within a short time following the death of Agrippina, Nero's mistress Poppaea began to assert her own manner of control. Nero divorced Octavia, who was banished first to Campania. The public preferred Octavia though and their hatred of Nero and Poppaea would grow. Forced to be rid of Octavia so as not to be a constant threat, she was exiled to the island of Pandataria and beheaded shortly thereafter. By AD 62 Poppaea and Nero were married and political opponents began to disappear, opening the way for more administration officials of dubious quality. Burrus had died in that same year to be replaced by a supporter of Poppaea, Sophonius Tigellinus, and Seneca was forced into retirement under this new regime. Nero continued to riot through the city with his drunken friends, beating strangers and assaulting women. Without Seneca, Burrus and even Agrippina to dictate some form of controlled or effective government, the reign of Nero devolved rapidly. Extravagance and luxurious spending grew and the treasury was in serious jeopardy. Still, however, the worst was yet to come.

Corbulo, Armenia and Parthia

From the very beginning of the reign of Nero (AD 54), and actually stretching from the later reign of Claudius, the political situation in the east was beginning to show signs of impending danger. Vologeses, the King of Parthia, had begun interfering with Roman interests in Armenia, although the region was long contested by both great powers, it still retained some level of independence. In the same year as the death of Claudius, Vologeses installed his own brother, Tiridates as King of Armenia, in favor of the Roman client who already ruled. This violation of law and peace (Rome held the right of determining Armenia's governmental authority since the time of Augustus) would eventually lead to war, but the Romans were ill prepared to conduct a major campaign. Needing an experienced general to make those preparations, Nero (and Seneca who introduced a decidedly more aggressive eastern policy than that of Claudius) turned to Cnaeus Domitius Corbulo, an honored commander from the Germanic borders under the reign of the previous emperor.

Upon Corbulo's arrival his assessments prevented immediate action against Armenia or Parthia, and he set about training and levying new recruits. Over the course of the next few years (including varying degrees of both military and political jockeying) Corbulo laid the groundwork to re-establish Roman authority. By late AD 57 he was finally prepared and an 11th hour negotiation attempt that ended in failure left the door open for hostilities to commence. An initial attack by Tiridates was initially successful but not enough to have any lasting effect and he retreated into the deeper desert of Armenia to avoid direct conflict. Corbulo followed but was unable to bring Tiridates to battle and broke off direct pursuit in order to focus on the Armenian capitals. First Artaxata was captured and sacked and by the end of AD 59 Tigranocerta surrendered to the advancing Romans without a fight. The following year, a Parthian army under Tiridates' command was repulsed leaving Corbulo and the Romans to claim victory in the overall affair. Nero appointed Tigranes (a great-grandson of Herod the Great) as the new pro-Roman King, and Corbulo was appointed governor of Syria as a reward.

All was not over, however. In AD 61, Tigranes continued the fight against Parthian influences, eventually forcing the Romans to return to his aid. Corbulo sent two legions directly into Armenia while three more were amassed on the border with Parthia as a warning. This forced a temporary truce while the Parthia King Vologeses send an embassy to Rome to conclude the matter

completely. However, not unexpectedly, negotiations broke down and by AD 62 the war was back on.

The governor of Cappadocia, Lucius Caesennius Paetus, led the Roman side in Armenia for the next season, while Corbulo decided to cross the Euphrates and take the fight directly to Parthia. Though the plan had merit, neither Vologeses nor Paetus complied. Out of the reach of Corbulo's assistance, Vologeses besieged the poorly prepared Paetus forcing him to surrender. Though Corbulo was marching to his aid, Paetus' treaty forced Roman withdrawal while another round of 'executive' negotiations would take place between Nero and Vologeses. These again broke down and by AD 63 both sides were back at it.

In the new campaign year Corbulo was given supreme authority (*maius imperium*) and prepared an invasion using his four best legions. While the Parthians understood that victory for their side was becoming unreachable Corbulo understood that a Roman victory would be terribly costly. Before his considerable force could be brought to bear the two sides entered a final negotiation where nearly 10 years of stalemate would end at almost exactly the same position as where it started. The Parthians conceded that the Romans had overall authority to name the Armenian King, and Tiridates (the Parthian choice) was forced to lay down his crown. However, in an entirely ceremonial gesture, Tiridates was brought to Rome where Nero would return it himself thereby proving complete Roman authority in the matter.

Despite the fact that very little had occurred in the entire series of campaigns (other than death and bloodshed) without any change in the result, Roman propaganda staged this as a great victory. Nero was in serious political jeopardy by this point (it was AD 66 before Tigranes showed up in Rome) and he needed a great victory to boost his image. A grand celebration took place granting Corbulo full military honors and the doors to the Temple of Janus were shut (symbolically meaning that there was peace throughout the Roman world). However in an ironic twist of fate and as an indication of the mass paranoia that followed Nero late into his reign, Corbulo was forced to commit suicide just a year later, in AD 67. Corbulo's death, along with several other popular generals of the time, would help usher in the massive military revolt that would eventually force Nero's own suicide. Corbulo's family would remain a part of Imperial intrigue of its own merit though. His daughter Domitia Longina would eventually be married to the emperor Domitian and is suspected of likely involvement in his assassination.

Boudicca, Warrior Queen

In the heart of Nero's reign, the pacification and Romanization of Britain was quickly beginning to pay dividends. However, the apparent greed of Nero, as he slipped farther into his own debauchery, would be the catalyst that brought the Roman wheel to a grinding halt. Boudicca (Boadicea Victoria among other various spellings), the source of British resistance, was the wife of the Iceni King Prasutagus who had submitted to Claudius after the invasion of AD 43. Married sometime around AD 48 to 49 she bore two daughters (names unknown) and would remain with her husband until his death by illness in AD 61. His death, accompanied by the attempt to provide security for his family and people, would ultimately bring about the downfall of the Iceni.

Upon his death in AD 61, Prasutagus left one half of his inheritance to his two (now likely early teenaged) daughters with Boudicca acting as regent ruler on their behalf. In order to appease the newly arrived Roman masters of southern Britain, his will arranged for the second half of his estate to be allocated to the Roman emperor Nero. In what seemed to be a reasonable effort to preserve his own familial dynasty while appeasing Rome turned out to be just the sort of written excuse the Romans needed to claim all the Iceni lands and properties for themselves. Nero's financial procurator in Britain, Catus Decianus, was sent to the home of Boudicca to make an assessment

of all properties and inheritances, to make a true Roman determination on what 'legally' should belong to Nero (including the repayment of earlier 'loans').

As it was considered illegal for a client King to not will his entire estate to the Emperor (from a Roman perspective) Decianus and his legionaries were completely within their right to exact payment in full. According to Tacitus: 'His (Prasutagus) dominions were ravaged by the centurions; the slaves pillaged his house, and his effects were seized as lawful plunder. His wife, Boudicca, was disgraced with cruel stripes; her daughters were ravished, and the most illustrious of the Iceni were, by force, deprived of the positions which had been transmitted to them by their ancestors. The whole country was considered as a legacy bequeathed to the plunderers. The relations of the deceased king were reduced to slavery.'

This act of extreme aggression, while certainly appearing to be unwarranted, may have been an indication that all was not completely tranquil within Roman controlled Britain to begin with. Throughout the province, several small rebellions (and/or continued resistance to the spread of Roman power on the outskirts of its controlled territories) were continuing to take place. Suetonius Paulinus, the recently appointed governor of Britain, was already busy on the Island of Mona (Anglesey) suppressing rebels and destroying the Druids. This suppression of druidic Celtic tradition and custom certainly did little to endear the Roman occupiers to their new subjects. While busy there, 300 miles from where the brutalizing of Boudicca and the Iceni was to occur, an Iceni neighbor, the Trinovantes (among others) were involved in a relatively minor rebellion of their own. Coupled with the rage of Boudicca's people, it wouldn't be long before much of southeastern Britain would rise up in revolt. Word reached Paulinus of the impending trouble and he began to march, but the absence of the bulk of Rome's legions allowed the anger and suppression to boil over into all out rage.

The leader of this rage was the woman who faced the Roman whip, suffered the rape of her daughters and the pillaging of her people. According to Dio Cassius, "Buduica, a Briton woman of the royal family and possessed of greater intelligence than often belongs to women. In stature she was very tall, in appearance most terrifying, in the glance of her eye most fierce, and her voice was harsh; a great mass of the tawniest hair fell to her hips; around her neck was a large golden necklace; and she wore a tunic of divers colours over which a thick mantle was fastened with a brooch." Within a short time she was able to gather an army of over 100,000 and in speech worthy of modern Hollywood (and in the stylish tradition of several ancient Roman historians), she inspired this army to wreak havoc on Roman colonists, take Celtic vengeance, and (according to modern sensibilities) fight for the freedom of Britain.

Boudicca's Revolt

After the rape of her daughters, her own lashing and the outright theft of Iceni lands at their Roman masters, Boudicca inspired an army of some 100,000 to break out from their oppressive yolk. Perhaps a more important factor, however, than any leadership qualities of the Iceni Queen, or feelings of vengeance among the Iceni, was the simple fact that the Legions were nowhere near the Iceni lands at the time of the uprising. Though word had reached the Roman governor Suetonius while on campaign at the Island of Mona (Anglesey), his march would take considerable time to counteract Iceni plans. Without local resistance of any note, Boudicca led her formidable army towards a colony of retired Roman officers at Camulodunum (modern Colchester).

Though the presence of settled veterans generally offered great benefit in the way of Romanizing an area, their presence here had the opposite effect. Inspired by vengeance against the soldiers who had wronged them, the Iceni stormed the practically undefended town. Though the Romans managed to hold out for several days, there was little hope for resistance or relief. The Procurator of Londinium dispatched 200 men to come to their aid, but this disproportionate reinforcement

obviously had little effect. In the end, the town was razed and its inhabitants slaughtered allowing Boudicca to continue marching southwest to Londinium itself. As the town was virtually undefended, the Procurator, Decianus, fled with his staff, virtually leaving the Roman province of Britannia without a capital.

At this point, a reduced strength Legio IX Hispana had marched south from Lindum (Lincoln) under Petilius Cerialis but was obviously too late to help at Camulodunum. Likely pushing hard to cut off Boudicca before she reached the Roman administrative capital at Londinium, Cerialis walked into an ambush. IX Hispana, completely overwhelmed and outmanned, was nearly shredded entirely. The infantry was destroyed (likely around 2,000 men), but Cerialis managed to escape with the cavalry. The legion would later be reinforced by men from the Rhine, but for now, one complete legion was out of service, and there was little resistance in the path of Boudicca's march. However, it's possible that the slaughter of the Ninth may have allowed just enough time for Governor Suetonius to gather his forces and offer a unified defense. He arrived at the city before Boudicca, albeit with a drastically smaller force. With about 10,000 men, made up of detachments from Legio XX (later Valeria Victrix), Legio XIV Gemina (later Martia Victrix) and any auxilia he could gather, he approached and considered making a stand at Londinium. However, the city was a poorly fortified center of business and trade, and was ill-suited for making any such stand. Suetonius decided to abandon it taking with him anyone who could fight, while others certainly fled at his departure, leaving many more behind to meet their fate at the hands of the warrior Queen.

When Boudicca arrived, Londinium suffered largely the same result as Camolodunum, and was razed to the ground. The people were slaughtered and subject to all manner of reciprocal atrocity. The fire that took the city was so hot, that the melted remains formed a recognizable layer of red clay 10 inches thick in places, just below the surface of modern roads. Boudicca, still with her thirst for vengeance unquenched, left the burning wreck of Londinium behind and followed Suetonius towards the town of Verulamium (St. Albans). Again, he saw little opportunity to make an adequate defense and left the town to the enemy (perhaps hoping to buy time for more reinforcements, or to let the barbarians exhaust themselves on plunder) This time however, the inhabitants were well aware of her reputation and fled en masse. Still, Boudicca burned it to the ground just the same, and Tacitus estimates that some 70,000 people had been slaughtered in all between the 3 towns.. Though this is certainly exaggerated, Boudicca had already proved devastating to the fledgling province's ability to administer itself and thrive.

Meanwhile Suetonius, described by Tacitus as an officer of distinguished merit, attempted to give his small army a fighting chance. First he called upon Legio II Augusta (stationed at Isca Dumnoniorum, near modern Exeter) to join him in the forested Midlands near Verulamium, but its commander Poenius Postumus failed to show for unknown reasons (he later committed suicide as a result of the shame). Left with just his 10,000 men vs. what Cassius Dio described as a swelling army (unlikely) of some 200,000 under Boudicca; Suetonius positioned his meager force on high ground, with forested protection at his rear and flanks. The final battle vs. the Iceni Queen was about to begin.

Defeat of Boudicca

After leaving the towns of Londinium and Verulamium unchallenged to Boudicca's rebel army, Suetonius prepared his terribly outmanned force in the forest of the midlands. (Ancient sources give estimates as greatly divergent as 200,000 to 10,000, but this is most assuredly wild propaganda on the part of Tacitus and Dio Cassius.) However, the Romans had the advantage of their classic discipline, and tactical use of geography. Boudicca and her army were also slowed down by the 'barbarian' tradition of traveling with entire clans, including women, children and the elderly (possibly partially accounting for the inflated army size, with non-combatants not being

excluded from the 'army'). Much like any other army, they were also weighed by livestock and pack animals, certainly an enormous number of wagons and transport vehicles, all probably filled to the brim with personal belongings and various loot pillaged at the expense of the Roman villagers. As the massive Celtic force approached Suetonius and his legions, it was the Romans who held the advantage. To this point, though the damage the Iceni and their allies had caused was great, Boudicca's army had not faced prepared and disciplined Roman soldiers in any effective number.

Tacitus, in the glorifying style of the ancients, provides an assuredly fictitious account of Boudicca's speech, but one that likely captures the feelings of the moment.

"Boudicca, in a chariot, with her two daughters before her, drove through the ranks. She harangued the different nations in their turn: "This," she said, "is not the first time that the Britons have been led to battle by a woman. But now she did not come to boast the pride of a long line of ancestry, nor even to recover her kingdom and the plundered wealth of her family. She took the field, like the meanest among them, to assert the cause of public liberty, and to seek revenge for her body seamed with ignominious stripes, and her two daughters infamously ravished. From the pride and arrogance of the Romans nothing is sacred; all are subject to violation; the old endure the scourge, and the virgins are deflowered. But the vindictive gods are now at hand. A Roman legion dared to face the warlike Britons: with their lives they paid for their rashness; those who survived the carnage of that day, lie poorly hid behind their entrenchments, meditating nothing but how to save themselves by an ignominious flight. From the din of preparation, and the shouts of the British army, the Romans, even now, shrink back with terror. What will be their case when the assault begins? Look round, and view your numbers. Behold the proud display of warlike spirits, and consider the motives for which we draw the avenging sword. On this spot we must either conquer, or die with glory. There is no alternative. Though a woman, my resolution is fixed: the men, if they please, may survive with infamy, and live in bondage."

To not be undone by his female rival on the approach, Suetonius' speech was equally 'recorded' by Tacitus.

"Suetonius, in a moment of such importance, did not remain silent. He expected every thing from the valour of his men, and yet urged every topic that could inspire and animate them to the attack. "Despise," he said, "the savage uproar, the yells and shouts of undisciplined Barbarians. In that mixed multitude, the women out-number the men. Void of spirit, unprovided with arms, they are not soldiers who come to offer battle; they are bastards, runaways, the refuse of your swords, who have often fled before you, and will again betake themselves to flight when they see the conqueror flaming in the ranks of war. In all engagements it is the valour of a few that turns the fortune of the day. It will be your immortal glory, that with a scanty number you can equal the exploits of a great and powerful army. Keep your ranks; discharge your javelins; rush forward to a close attack; bear down all with your bucklers, and hew a passage with your swords. Pursue the vanquished, and never think of spoil and plunder. Conquer, and victory gives you everything."

Both armies thus inspired for the battle, the Iceni advanced with great ferocity on the tightly formed Romans and pelted them with spears. However, because of the narrowness of the battlefield, being surrounded by forest, the incredible numbers of the Britons were not able to come to bear, and the Romans were able to turn the tables. Tightly formed they maneuvered into a wedge enabling the best possible strategy for the conditions. Hammering the Celts with javelins, Suetonius followed up with waves of brutally effective auxilia and regular infantry charges. By the ancient accounts, the Roman assault was overwhelming, and the Britons were crushed in the onslaught. Perhaps as many as 80,000 of Boudicca's rebels were killed in the immediate aftermath, with the Romans killing women and children indiscriminately. By contrast, Tacitus reports that only 400 Romans were killed, and an equal number wounded, in the battle.

Boudicca may have initially escaped, along with an undetermined number of warriors and civilians, but it wasn't long before the victorious Romans followed up their victory with continued slaughter. Even before the battle, reports indicate that the revolting Iceni had failed to sow their crops for the season, and only their looting would provide sustenance for the winter. Without that loot thousands would perish of starvation. In addition, the Romans hastened this fate by laying waste to Iceni lands in an obvious attempt to set an example. They were further subjected to natural atrocities of all kinds, and sold en masse into slavery.

Suetonius, though criticized in part for not facing Boudicca sooner, returned to Rome to receive victorious honors from Nero. As for Boudicca, rather than face humiliation marching in a Roman triumph, she took her own life via poison. If her daughters survived the initial battle, they too disappear from the historical record at this point. The Iceni queen is often revered today as a great freedom fighter against Roman oppression, but this view must be tempered by the stark contrasts in time periods and motivations. Regardless of the truth for the inspiration behind Boudicca's revolt (the rape of her daughters and her own whipping, or the complete subjugation of her lands), her acts of vengeance are no less brutal Roman tactics. Though she did aggressively punish small contingents of Roman legionaries, the main focus of Iceni aggression was the wholesale slaughter of Roman civilians. In the first major conflict against a sizeable Roman force, the Iceni were effectively eliminated, and with them, so was resistance to Roman rule in all of southern Britain. Though it would still take another generation, and the governorship of Agricola 20 some odd years later to stretch Roman hegemony into modern Wales and to the borders of Caledonia, the death of Boudicca ushered in the Romanization of the province.

Nero and the Christians

During and after the revolt of Boudicca, Nero continued with his own extravagance in Rome and surrounding cities. Eventually performing on stage as both singer and actor, he indulged his artistic personality while earning the scorn and disrespect of elite society. In AD 60 he adopted an Olympic style series of events (performance based) known as the Neronia in which he actually encourage societal elite to participate. His eccentricities, coupled with a growing paranoia (resulting in treason trials, accusations, executions, etc.) continued to push his spiraling popularity to new lows.

In 62, his failed relationship with Octavia finally came to a head. He divorced her on grounds of sterility though the masses supported her violently, and had her exiled to the island of Pandateria where she was quickly killed off to put an end to the protest. Nero immediately married his already pregnant mistress, Poppaea who soon bore him a daughter, and she began to assert even more influence on her malleable husband. With the death of the Praetorian Prefect and replacement by Tigellinus in the same year, Nero's stabilizing advisor Seneca was soon pushed out of the inner circle and Nero's behavior would continue to decline.

By AD 64 a great fire befell Rome and Nero played a prominent role in its controversial beginnings and now infamous results. According to Tacitus:

" . whether accidental or treacherously contrived by the emperor, is uncertain, as authors have given both accounts, worse, however, and more dreadful than any which have ever happened to this city by the violence of fire. It had its beginning in that part of the circus which adjoins the Palatine and Caelian hills, where, amid the shops containing inflammable wares, the conflagration both broke out and instantly became so fierce and so rapid from the wind that it seized in its grasp the entire length of the circus. For here there were no houses fenced in by solid masonry, or temples surrounded by walls, or any other obstacle to interpose delay. The blaze in its fury ran first through the level portions of the city, then rising to the hills, while it again devastated every place below them, it outstripped all preventive measures; so rapid was the mischief and so completely at

its mercy the city, with those narrow winding passages and irregular streets, which characterized old Rome.."

Some suggested, as inferred by Tacitus (but not explicitly accused) that Nero himself started the fire for a variety of reasons. One was to make room for his planned Domus Aurea (Golden Palace) while another was that the extravagant emperor simply wanted a fiery backdrop in which to recite poetry while accompanied by a lyre. While both, considering the greatness of the devastation, are most probably false, at the time Nero was becoming enemy number one. Despite the fact that Nero did much to restore the city and bring in relief and supplies for the people, the residents couldn't help but believe that the entire tragedy occurred at his orders. Nero needed scapegoats, and he found them in the little known but generally reviled and subversive cult of Christians. These early Christians were believed to be practicing human sacrifice and cannibalism (the eucharist), wild orgies and any number of disreputable behaviors. Mostly Jews or Greek speaking foreigners who not only rejected the pagan gods, but the Imperial cult as well, they quickly became an easy and hated target for the crime.

Again, according to Tacitus in a now infamous description of early Christianity:

"Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.

Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle, and was exhibiting a show in the circus, while he mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer or stood aloft on a car. Hence, even for criminals who deserved extreme and exemplary punishment, there arose a feeling of compassion; for it was not, as it seemed, for the public good, but to glut one man's cruelty, that they were being destroyed."

So even in Nero's attempts to pass the blame on a group that was originally despised, he soon found that his excessive punishments earned the Christians some sympathy and Nero's popularity fared no better. By the following year, construction of his ridiculously opulent Golden Palace, reconstruction of the city center far more magnificently than it had been, and the resulting economic crisis did little to help. One particular feature of the domus aurea carries a legacy forward to the modern day. The Colossus Neronis, a giant 120 ft. (37 m) bronze statue of Nero overlooked the city and would eventually lend its name to the Colosseum, which Vespasian would build nearby to try to erase Nero's memory. At any rate, the economic crisis was severe (the weight of gold coins reduced by as much as 4% and the silver content of the denarius was reduced by 10%).

Despite economic conditions, Nero's excesses continued and a trip to Greece to perform in Olympic Games and sing before crowds took precedence to him. Plots and conspiracies grew (especially that of C. Calpurnius Piso), but yet Nero managed to hold out. Treason trials were commonplace, and unrest began to develop among the provinces (and the legions stationed there). Poppaea's death in AD 65, as well as their infant daughter 2 years earlier, left Nero without an heir. Despite another marriage, there would not be another heir and the Julio-Claudian line was beginning to reach the end.

Fall of the Julio-Claudians

Towards the end of Nero's tumultuous reign (AD 65 - 68) things continued to spiral out of control. His excesses in Greece, performing as a singer and as an athlete in the Olympic games, were an embarrassment to Roman sensibilities, but Nero persisted, seemingly oblivious. He was not, however, completely detached from the government of the state, but daily governance was left to his entourage leaving his freedman Helius in charge at Rome. A major revolt in Judaea (AD 66) required imperial intervention in the form of Cestius Gallus, and Nero wisely left the matter (which would last in a semi continuous state well into the reign of Vespasian) to his Legate. But conspiracies along with paranoia ruled the day. The popular general Corbula (of Parthian and Armenian fame) was summoned to Greece and ordered to commit suicide for his alleged involvement in a conspiratorial plot. By AD 67, sentiment in Rome and among the provinces, especially the legions and their now often targeted commanders, was getting dangerously anti-Nero and Helius traveled to Greece to bring Nero home.

Rather than attempt to ease Roman concerns, Nero arrived in Rome at the head of a strange triumphal procession. Rather than enter in a military triumph, which was certainly undeserved, Nero entered in the manner of a champion athlete, fresh from his Olympic successes. His behavior openly mocked Roman tradition and culture, especially amongst the aristocracy. Nero marched into the city ahead of a procession of artists and athletes, including trophies won at the games, rather than traditional compliments of soldiers and military spoils, and ended his procession at the temple of Apollo (the patron of art) rather than that of Jupiter (the traditional last stop in a Roman triumph). The masses witnessing this oddity in full uncensored view probably thought that Nero had gone completely mad, and even the legions, which since the time of Augustus had grown into loyal peace keeping machines, were beginning to waver under Nero's odd leadership.

In Gaul, the governor Julius Vindex began openly soliciting a revolt from amongst his fellow governors, but reaction was mild at best. Hindering his cause was the fact that as governor of Lugdunensis he maintained no authority over any imperial troops. However, he began recruiting for his rebellion and by March of AD 68, Vindex made it official. A month later, the governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, P. Sulpicius Galba joined the revolt, which soon also gained the support of the governor of Lusitania, M. Salvius Otho (ironically Nero's old friend who gave his wife Poppaea to the emperor). Not long after, L. Clodius Macer, the governor of Africa joined the revolt as well. Despite his eccentricities, and the obvious growing danger Nero reacted swiftly to this new challenge, having previously raised a new legion (Legio I Italica) and ordering the formation of another from naval personnel at Misenum (Legio I Adiutrix). Additionally, troops were called in from Britain, Illyria and Germania, where Nero's men did remain loyal.

Before Nero could bring his new forces to bear against this growing rebellion, one of his governors, L. Verginius Rufus of Germania Superior, took matters into his own hands. He marched his regular legions from the Rhine region against Vindex and his fresh Gallic recruits, and crushed him at Vesontio. Vindex survived the battle but committed suicide in disgrace. In one quick thrust, Nero's problems may have faded away, but this was not to be the case. The army had lost confidence in their Emperor and hailed Rufus as imperator in the field, but Rufus refused the honor, likely fearing a large and imminent civil war on the horizon. In northern Italy too, Petronius Turpilianus, the commander of Nero's troops there, was rumored to be wavering between support for Nero and the revolt. With this news Nero was justifiably panicked and decided to escape Rome to Egypt. This decision not only effectively removed Nero as head of the Roman state but caused the Praetorians to lose faith and loyalty as well. Their prefect, Nymphidius Sabinus, persuaded the Praetorians to declare loyalty to Galba in Hispania, and the writing was on the wall for Nero.

As Nero fled the city, taking refuge in a freedman's villa outside Rome, the Senate declared him a public enemy. Rather than risk being humiliated and flogged to death at the hands of the Senate, Nero decided the cause was lost. On June 9, AD 68, at the age of 32 Nero drove a dagger into his throat, aided by Epaphroditus, his private secretary. With the death of Nero, the Julio-Claudian dynasty came to an end after over a century of supreme power (including Caesar). The line quite simply no longer existed as family members had been routinely purged with each new reign. And thus, what began with the great conqueror Julius Caesar, was continued by the ultimate politician in Augustus, slowly came to an end with the eccentric Nero. According to Suetonius, Nero's parting words, as the empire fell into a state of civil war that would eventually become known as the Year of the Four Emperors, were "What a great artist dies in me" (*qualis artifex pereo*).

Year of the Four Emperors

The end of Nero's reign, resulting from his extravagances and paranoid arrests, differed from the violent end of Caligula's reign in that there was no method of succession in place. While Claudius was certainly an unwanted choice by the Senate to replace Caligula, he did fill the role in a seamless transition that actually turned into a moderately successful reign. With Nero's suicide, knowing that the military revolts of his generals and legions were irreversible, the Principate faced its first dangerous challenge of civil war since the great wars that ended the Republic.

In AD 68, the revolt of Gaius Julius Vindex, governor of Gallia Lugdunensis was the final catalyst that brought the Julio-Claudian line to an end. He was joined in theory by the powerful governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, Servius Sulpicius Galba (Galba never actually offered troops or support to Vindex), but their reasons are unknown. It has been speculated that both Vindex and Galba were on a very long list of targets for Nero's executioners but this is currently impossible to prove. Galba too has sometimes been incorrectly credited with attempting to take it upon himself to restore Augustan principal, but this too ignores some very specific and selfish behavior. Essentially speaking Galba, like the others who followed him, would soon show themselves as men of supreme personal ambition.

While Galba prepared to march on Rome, accompanied by Otho the governor of Lusitania, loyal Neronian forces from the Rhine area under Lucius Verginius Rufus crushed the revolt of Vindex. What may have appeared to be a sudden disaster for the revolt of Galba turned into a fortuitous break. Rather than continue in their support of the crumbling Neronian administration, the forces of Rufus attempted to proclaim him as emperor. In Africa too, Clodius Macer with the support of Galba, revolted with his one legion and began the process of recruiting another, while cutting off the grain supply to Rome and inciting the mob (Macer would soon be executed for his efforts by the distrusting Galba). Though Verginius Rufus refused his troops declaration, preferring to let others play the imperial game, it was painfully obvious to Nero that any semblance of support for him had faded. (Verginius Rufus returned to Rome and was transformed into an inspiring, yet minor player in the transition between emperors and remained so even through and beyond the Flavian Dynasty.) The Praetorian Prefect Gaius Nymphidius Sabinus played his own hand, promising his praetorians a large reward for their allegiance to Galba and Nero's fate was sealed. On June 9 AD 68 Nero took his own life, and Galba marched to Rome with the adopted title of 'Caesar', where he was for the most part readily welcomed. (thus began the concept of Caesar as a title in an attempt to legitimize Galba's candidacy, rather than a family name, which would be further defined to mean imperial heir in the near future).

Galba, despite his good fortune made several decidedly devastating mistakes in his early reign. While on the march to Rome he razed and/or plundered towns that refused his initial declarations as the new emperor. Fostering this early atmosphere of distrust and anger did little to endear him to a population which would have readily accepted any strong and charismatic leadership. Immediately upon his arrival in Rome he continued Nero's terror of trying and executing members

of the aristocracy that he thought were conspiring against him. He also alienated the Praetorians and those legions that weren't under his direct command. Rather than pay the rewards originally promised by Sabinus (and understandably necessary under the circumstances) Galba refused to pay (perhaps in an attempt to rebuild the treasury, perhaps on a matter of principle as the details are unknown). Before long, the Rhine legions that had put down the revolt of Vindex refused to declare loyalty to Galba and chose instead their new Commander Vitellius (Jan 1 AD 69).

Along with the news of the Rhine revolt, Galba was the victim of some terrible advice and perhaps of his own convictions as well. Since Galba's march on Rome, Marcus Salvius Otho the governor of Lusitania who had accompanied him, expected to be named heir to the throne as a reward for his part in the revolt's success. Galba, however, likely wishing to prove his own sense of control, decided on Lucius Calpurnius Piso Frugi Licinianus instead. Otho, personally slighted, went directly to the Praetorian Guard, already unhappy with Galba and bribed them to his own cause. By January 15, AD 69 the short six month reign of Galba (he had actually only been in Rome since October) was coming to an end and the Praetorians executed him in the Forum.

The Senate confirmed Otho as Galba's replacement and he immediately took over, having Galba's heir Piso killed as well. Though he was ambitious and perhaps guilty of greed, he did not follow up Galba's execution with a great deal more bloodshed. Unfortunately though, he would have little time to prove himself a capable 'Emperor', as Vitellius, the newly appointed Emperor of the Rhine legions was on the march to Rome. Otho hastily gathered forces, and attempted to negotiate with the marching Vitellius, offering to make Vitellius his son-in-law. There was to be no deal however, and the rebel armies moved into Italy (Vitellius traveled behind the army in Gaul). The two armies met at Bedriacum where both jockeyed for position along the Po River. On April 14 AD 69, Vitellian's legions broke through Otho's center and crushed any resistance. Otho, rather than flee and continue the civil war any longer, took his own life (ending his reign in only 3 months), and the Senate had little choice but to confirm Vitellius as the 3rd emperor already in the short year.

Vitellius was thus given an incredible opportunity to rebuild the dignity of the Imperial office and stabilize the Roman political situation, but instead he did little but dishonor Roman tradition and sensibility. Romans killed in battle were denied proper funeral arrangements, and his legions marched in a state of drunken euphoria, creating certain havoc as they went. Vitellius arrived in Rome and honored himself and his friends with feasts, triumphs and games to ultimate detriment of the treasury. Though he smartly allowed for a gradual transition from General to Emperor, leaving significant power within the Senate, and was ultimately lenient with Otho's supporters, his excesses reeked to similarities to Nero. While contemporary sources are certainly favorable to Vitellius' eventual successor, therefore tainting their reports with propaganda, there is always some element of truth in the ancient reports. Accordingly, Suetonius described several examples of cruelty and depravity, setting the stage for justifying continued civil war. In July of AD 69, yet another revolt would spring up, this time in the east. Titus Flavius Vespasianus, an extremely successful general from the invasion of Britain and the pacification of Judaea, was about to accomplish what Vitellius could not: stabilization of the Roman Empire.

Vespasian AD 69 - 79 (born AD 9 - died 79)

Born in AD 9, near the end of the reign of Augustus, Titus Flavius Vespasianus was raised an equestrian in the turbulent political environment of Tiberius' reign. Perhaps his youthful exposure to the Senatorial purgings of both Sejanus and Tiberius would help make Vespasian into the great stabilizer that he would become. Though much of the details of Vespasian's youth are unknown, it is widely accepted that his path followed the *cursus honorum*, and therefore a direct line into the Senate. By the reign of Caligula Vespasian had been a military tribune, a quaestor, an aedile and a praetor, in which capacity he impressed Caligula by calling for games to honor his 'victories' in Germania. He was married to the rather obscure Flavia Domitilla, but it produced three children, two of whom, Titus and Domitian, would continue their father's dynasty. It was a mistress, however, who seemingly led the way for Vespasian's political growth. Caenis, secretary to Antonia

(Claudius' mother), allowed the future emperor a way into the imperial inner circle, and under the reign of Claudius, his star began to rise dramatically.

When Claudius looked to Britain for imperial expansion, Vespasian, with his imperial ties, became a natural choice as a Legate in the campaign. He was first sent to Argentoratum along the Rhine to take command of Legio II Augusta, which was to be one of 4 legions making the crossing to Britain. When the arrangements were made and the crossing made in AD 43, Vespasian served Aulus Plautius with distinction. According to Suetonius, he fought thirty battles with the enemy, subjugated two powerful tribes, took more than twenty towns, and the island of Vectis (Isle of Wight). His reputation as a master of siege warfare would eventually become a major factor in securing later positions of prominence. For his success in the conquest of Britain, he received the triumphal regalia from Claudius, 2 priesthoods and eventually the honorable position of Consul.

However, Vespasian fades from political and military importance in the 50's AD. The power of Agrippina (Claudius wife and mother of Nero) was growing, and Vespasian's status as a friend to her enemies (Claudius freedman Narcissus) put him in a tenuous position. He would not be kept from prominence with the imperial court for too long though. By AD 63 he was appointed the proconsular governorship of Africa (a province with a legion certainly, indicating imperial trust) where Vespasian won a reputation for meticulous administrative skills, tempered by severity that made him unpopular with the people. Still, upon his return to Rome, the future emperor found himself a highly respected and influential member of the aristocracy. He earned himself entry into Nero's inner circle, accompanying the emperor on his trip to Greece where Nero pursued his own escapades into the performance arts and athletic competition. Despite his rise, Vespasian seemingly offended Nero so greatly apparently by either walking out on or falling asleep at one of the emperors many performances, that Vespasian was forced into a state of hiding.

At this stage though, while Nero was becoming ever more dangerous to his legates and members of the aristocracy, the fates intervened to bring Vespasian back into the political limelight. A revolt in Judaea, where the Jews were particularly troublesome for being able to hole up behind walled cities and resist sieges, led this experienced general in siege warfare to be called back into service. In AD 67, Vespasian went east where he was to take command of 3 legions and reduce Jewish resistance wherever found. Under his leadership the Romans enjoyed much success, though the capital of Jerusalem would continue to hold out. As he prepared for the siege of that all important city events back in Rome and throughout the western provinces would alter the course of the empire, and certainly Vespasian's career. The revolt of Vindex in Gaul, while proving itself a disaster to the man who started it (he was crushed by Rufus), would eventually lead to the fall of the Julio-Claudians and the suicide of Nero. Though Vespasian maintained an eerie silence in the east, even declaring himself loyal to Nero's first replacement, Galba, the unfolding drama would lead to bigger and better things for the 60 year old general.

Flavian Dynasty

As Galba struggled to secure order and support in the west, the governors in the east, including Vespasian, at first offered loyalty to the successive Neronian replacements, but soon began to formulate their own imperial dreams. As Galba fell to Otho, and then Otho to Vitellius, over a period of little more than a year, it became readily apparent that there was a unique opportunity for an enterprising and ambitious politician/general. If someone could succeed where Nero's successors had failed, ultimately shoring up the decadence of the last few decadent years of Nero's reign and a year's worth of debilitating civil war, that individual stood to be readily welcomed by the legions and the masses.

While Vitellius bumbled in Rome, an eastern plot began to take firm hold. Despite having pledged allegiance to Vitellius after his victory over Otho in April of AD 69, the governor of Syria, Gaius

Licinius Mucianus (bitter over his subordinate status during Nero's reign) and Vespasian began formulating their own plans. After a series of meetings between the two, and the inclusion of the Prefect of Egypt Tiberius Julius Alexander, the plans began to shape into a viable alternative to Vitellian rule. Though there may have been a rivalry over who held the prominent position, Vespasian advanced into the lead role for a few reasons. He already had two male heirs, Titus and Domitian, signifying the potential for a lengthy and stable dynastic rule while Mucianus had no sons. Vespasian, a pro-consular Senator, also held a prominent family name (the Flavii Vespasiani were originally of Plebeian stock but had advanced greatly under Claudius and Nero), while Alexander was both an Equestrian and a Jew. With the 2 lesser partners understanding their positions under Vespasian's lead, the trio was ready to make its move. On July 1, AD 69 Alexander ordered his Egyptian legions, III Cyrenaica and XXII Deiotariana to swear loyalty to Vespasian, while the Syrian Legions under Mucianus (VIII Scythica, VI Ferrata, XII Fulminata) did the same shortly after. Vespasian's forces (V Macedonica, X Fretensis and XV Apollinaris) readily supported their commander while the large contingent of legions bordering the Danube fell in line for him as well.

With a considerable army sworn to Vespasian's cause, Mucianus was dispatched to march on Rome with his 20,000 men, while Vespasian moved to Egypt with Alexander to control the vital grain supply. The siege of Jerusalem, and the yet uncompleted subjugation of Judaea, was left in the very capable hands of Vespasian's son Titus, while Domitian, in Rome at 18 years old, likely did what he could to garner support in the capital. Meanwhile, before Mucianus' arrival in the west, the Danubian legions in Pannonia and Illyricum under Antonius Primus and Cornelius Fuscus took matters into their own hands, marching into Italy against Vitellius. With as many as 30,000 men (perhaps half as much as Vitellius commanded) the Danubian legions met Vitellius at Cremona in October of AD 69. Primus and Fuscus won a crushing victory, sending Vitellius' short reign hurtling into history. In December, another Vitellian force sent to waylay Vespasian's legates defected, essentially bringing the Year of the Four Emperors to a close. Vitellius tried to abdicate, understanding that the cause was lost, but enough loyal men remained to thwart any attempt to save his own skin. Vespasian's brother, Titus Flavius Sabinus tried to take control of the city but Vitellius' men killed him and his supporters.

On December 20, the legions of Primus and Fuscus entered Rome, ending the life of Vitellius and taking control for Vespasian until Mucianus arrived shortly after. The combined and turbulent reigns of Otho, Galba and Vitellius lasted a scant 20 months in total. It's little wonder, considering the tired psyche of the masses, that a strong and competent man such as Vespasian was able to establish firm control and the foundation of a dynasty. On December 22, AD 69 Vespasian was afforded full imperial honors, matching those of the predeceasing Julio-Claudians. He would work vigorously in the early days of his takeover to not only legitimize his power, but to re-stabilize the legions, social conditions, the treasury, and the public perception of the Imperial office itself. Vespasian, while establishing a rather short lived 'Flavian Dynasty' that in itself would only last about 30 years, proved to be a vital historical figure, propping up a flailing Roman state at a time of intense need.

Imperial Stability

Immediately upon his senatorial confirmation as 'Emperor' (December of AD 69) Vespasian moved with extreme purpose on several fronts, but perhaps none more so than to legitimize his reign. With nearly 2 years of civil war having come to an end, certainly the people and the legions were tired of it, but proving himself where his several 'Year of the Four Emperor' predecessors had failed, was a necessity. With a strong presence Vespasian could not only restore Roman glory but secure his position from the pitfalls of recent imperial rivals. Though he risked angering supporters and the Senate alike, Vespasian clearly marked his eldest son Titus as heir, making him a partner in administrative affairs and naming him Caesar in AD 71. This designation (marking the first use

of the name Caesar clearly as a title) angered the Senate who certainly wished to avoid the Caligula's and Nero's of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, but they had little choice in the matter. Additionally, Vespasian openly promoted various omens that predicted his rise, assumed the consulship on several occasions. He also tied his own legitimacy to the Julio-Claudians through Claudius, by erecting a temple in his honor on the Caelian Hill.

While Vespasian undertook several building projects, none are as noteworthy as the Flavian Amphitheatre. The Colosseum, so named for the nearby Colossus of Nero, was not only a grand legacy to the culture of Roman 'bread and circuses' but was intended as a showcased gift from the Flavians to the Roman people. As the home of the ultimate Roman spectacle, it would also help divert attention from the debauchery of Nero's reign and the uncertainty of civil war (despite the fact that it wouldn't be completed until the reign of his son Titus). However, the cost for such projects was reported to cost 'forty thousand million sesterces' (40 trillion), which would require a serious adjustment to Roman fiscal policy. Nero's extravagance and civil war had drained the treasury dangerously low and while Vespasian would earn a bit of a reputation as a miser for raising taxes especially in the provinces, and manipulation of various market prices, he did succeed in the terribly difficult task of securing Rome's financial integrity. And despite his concern to prove legitimacy as Emperor, he was no hypocrite. He lived a modest lifestyle, in comparison to his predecessors, and readily reported his own family's humble origins. In keeping with that origin, unlike the Julio-Claudians, he refused the Tribunician power and the title 'Father of the Country' until very late in his reign (perhaps in order to secure that power for Titus).

Perhaps Vespasian's greatest contribution was the reformation of the army. It was not a reformation in the sense of massive change, but in restoring its sense of imperial loyalty. (After Vespasian, the legions would remain relatively loyal to the reigning emperor until the death of Commodus some 120 years later). He did punish Vitellius' men by dismissing many from service, but for the most part left the legions intact from their previous positions. In Britain, more northern territory was brought under Roman rule and there were considerable pacification efforts in the Rhine and Danube regions. He increased the number of legions in the east, in part to help Titus finish the capitulation of Judaea, and to stop 'barbaric' invasions into Cappadocia. In relation to the Jews, Vespasian and Titus were at times brutal, but their victory pacified notable Jewish resistance in that province for generations (until the reign of Hadrian). In fact, the Vespasian coin 'Judaea Capta' commemorating their achievement was a highly token of propaganda for the Flavians and remains a highly prized and collectible coin in the ancient numismatics field.

Culturally the emperor also set about restoring a sense of the Augustan age. The Senate and Equestrian roles were re-ordered allowing worthy men to make political climbs while replacing those who did not have merit. In Hispania, Latin rights (a stepping stone to full citizenship) was granted to communities en masse, greatly enhancing that provinces Romanization. Of incredible, if sometimes overlooked, importance was the reduction of the court backlogs, which had been growing to enormous proportions since the waning days of Nero's reign and were a terrible drain on resources. Latin and Greek rhetoric tutors were offered a state salary for the first time and entertainers too were paid handsomely by Vespasian's court. (Unlike Nero, the emperor appreciated entertainment but did not participate or treat it in a socially non Roman manner). The Theatre of Marcellus was built too, providing a new stage to entertain and to encourage the art and he hosted lavish state dinners, (despite probably having some personal disdain for spending the money) in order to boost the various food related markets.

All in all, both Suetonius and Tacitus, paint a vividly glowing picture of Vespasian. According to Suetonius, Vespasian was a man of great humor despite a constant 'strained' look on his face. Reporting a tale in which Vespasian asked a comedian, who was apparently making jokes on several people, to make a joke on him, Suetonius says the comedian's response was: "I will, when you have finished your bowel movement." Even in his waning days, after 10 years of stable and prosperous rule, the emperor kept his much lauded sense of humor. As he fought of sickness at

the end of his life, he reportedly joked, 'Vae, puto deus fio' ('Woe, I think I'm turning into a god.') The emperor's death came shortly after and again according to Suetonius,

"he (Vespasian) had a slight illness in Campania, and returning at once to the city, he left for Cutilae and the country about Reate, where he spent the summer every year. There, in addition to an increase in his illness, he nevertheless continued to perform his duties as emperor, even receiving embassies as he lay in bed. Taken on a sudden with such an attack of diarrhea that he all but swooned, he said: "An emperor ought to die standing," and while he was struggling to get on his feet, he died in the arms of those who tried to help him, on the ninth day before the Kalends of July (June 23, AD 79) at the age of sixty-nine years, one month, and seven days."

Vespasian is often overlooked for his contributions to the young principate, but his importance cannot be denied. If not for the rather harsh reign of his second son, Domitian, the period between Vespasian and Marcus Aurelius may have been known as that of the '7 Good Emperors' rather than just five. (Vespasian and Titus added to Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius). There is no question that Vespasian, despite his dynastic leanings, provided a model of efficient and effective government for those quality emperors that followed. One can certainly believe that the Roman state was still strong enough in the 1st century AD that it could easily have survived the crippling civil war after Nero, and that any quality leader could've 'righted the ship', but it wasn't any other quality leader who emerged, it was Vespasian. The Roman people too seemed to understand his importance, deifying him soon after death, and interring him in the Mausoleum of Augustus, an honorable shrine reserved for the original imperial family.

Titus AD 79 - 81 (born AD 39 - died 79)

Following up on the success of Vespasian would be no easy task, and while ancient accounts of Titus are somewhat mixed, he for the most part was remembered with the highest praise. Perhaps his short yet continuing stable reign after his father, followed by the terrifying reign of Domitian, left people with a certain feeling of regret and nostalgia for the 'better' son.

Titus Flavius Vespasianus, the same namesake as his father, was born December 30, AD 39 in Rome under relatively modest circumstances. His mother, Domitilla was of moderate station, the daughter of a treasury clerk, while Vespasian's star was soon to be on the rise under the administration of Claudius. While Vespasian became entrenched with Claudius, Titus too helped nurture the relationship. He developed a close friendship with Claudius' son Britannicus that would last until the prince's death/murder in AD 55. The rise of Nero would force the Vespasianus family to distance themselves from the Claudian faction but Britannicus' memory was preserved through Titus years later in statues erected in his honor. Ironic that had Britannicus lived and ascended to the 'throne' rather than Nero, Vespasian and Titus themselves may never have done so. However, they certainly would've continued on a prominent path in the Roman political and social order.

The early stages of the future emperor's career are rather murky, but he did serve in the early 60's AD in both Germania and Britannia (2 provinces in which Vespasian had also served.) Dio Cassius tells us of Titus' valor in saving Vespasian's life while in Britain, but this seems an unlikely bit of propaganda. It does, however, help to illustrate the general level of fondness that both historian and citizenry seemingly held for Titus. By the mid 60's AD, Titus was back in Rome, certainly advancing his career in the typical methods for a young Roman politician. After a brief marriage to Arrecina Tertulla (she died shortly after), Titus married a noblewoman of prestigious lineage, Marcia Furnilla. Once again this marriage would be short-lived (her family's disfavor with Nero forced an early divorce), and Titus would never remarry. In fact, tales of his debauchery would later feed fears of a second Neronian type reign, but whatever his failings in that department, such escapades did not seem to persist once he rose to highest prominence.

AD 66 introduced the stroke of fate that would eventually launch the Flavians to full imperial authority. Despite some personal animosity between Nero and Vespasian, Nero recognized

Vespasian's pure military ability and appointed him to Judaea, where the Jews had been rioting in Cesarea and Jerusalem. Accompanied by Titus (while the younger son Domitian remained in Rome), Vespasian performed as suspected, systematically reducing Jewish resistance. Titus was given command of Legio XV Appolinaris and performed with competence. Josephus, the Jewish historian who provides the greatest account of the wars, would later become a member of Vespasian's court and was decidedly pro-Flavian in his works. His praise of both father and son must be taken with 'a grain of salt' but does not alter the history of events or final results.

Jewish Wars

At the end of the 'Year of the Four Emperors' in which Vespasian ultimately seized final authority, Titus was left with the obligation of completing his father's prior task. Originally authorized by Nero to subdue the Jews several years of internal political strife and civil war limited Vespasian's attention to that cause. With his rise and subsequent cessation of civil hostilities, the Roman armies in the east were free to focus on their goal. Though previously Titus' role in putting down the revolt was mostly non-descript, such as capturing relatively unfortified towns, his obvious position as Vespasian's heir catapulted him into supreme command. Within short order he proved himself to be worthy of the promotion, at least from the Roman perspective. Though his tactics would prove to be brutal, and some of his behavior frighteningly reminiscent of Nero's tumultuous reign, The Jews would quickly find themselves completely overwhelmed and outmatched.

After Vespasian left for Egypt, on his way to claiming the throne in Rome, Titus continued with the task of subduing Jewish resistance. While the countryside was mostly subdued without much difficulty (as most Jewish towns lacked walls and fortifications), Jerusalem was an entirely different matter. Deeply embroiled in political, social and class disorder Jewish zealots associated Roman rule with the elite Jewish aristocracy who failed to understand the concerns of the common people, the city itself was a battleground before Titus even arrived. Josephus, who largely praises his benefactors (Vespasian and Titus) in their conduct of the war, pins the blame of Jerusalem's ultimate capture solely on these zealots for breaking the peace and inviting a harsh response. As Titus arrived, opposed to other regional towns, he found a city strategically positioned upon two hills and surrounded by 3 sets of walls. With four legions he set about laying siege and prepared for a decisive final battle.

While Titus proved himself an able commander, using known siege techniques and strategies and applying them with success, he did little else to merit great praise. Despite the compliments of Josephus, the siege of Jerusalem was largely a learning experience for the future emperor and his energetic leadership was marred only by bouts of inexperience. Even so, in the spring of AD 70, the Romans had breached the city's outer defenses within a span of 4 weeks. All that remained of resistance were those who had holed up within the Temple of Jerusalem, occupying the center of the city. Titus wisely ordered a circumvallation of the Temple to starve out and weaken those who remained. By the end of summer, after a few more grueling months, the Romans managed to breach the Temple's outer wall. In the assaults that followed, all resistance was slaughtered and the Temple itself (the center of the Jewish faith) was burned to the ground. All that remained after Titus' brutal final victory was the single western wall now known as the 'Wailing Wall', which is regarded as the holiest of places and where modern Jews both mourn the loss of the Temple and gather for prayer. As a final insult to those who resisted Roman power, sacrifices to the pagan gods were made in the ruins of the Temple court as proof of Roman religious supremacy.

With the destruction of the Temple and the Jewish war behind him, Titus set about validating and securing his father's newly won throne in the eastern provinces by parading his legions and Jewish captives throughout the region. While doing so, Titus developed a reputation for brutality (throwing prisoners to beasts and forcing them to fight in gladiatorial style) that led to comparisons with Nero. However, Titus' displays proved to be completely tactical in nature and once the point was

made, he seems to have discontinued such practices. Other fears of Titus surfaced when he developed a relationship with the Jewish princess Berenice. The sister (or perhaps daughter) of King Herod Agrippa II was strongly allied to the Roman court and she was deeply knowledgeable in eastern politics. On the surface, she seemed an excellent match for the future emperor, but her status as part of a foreign royal family harkened to the days of Antony and Cleopatra. Despite having come to Rome with Titus in AD 75, the general unpopularity of such a relationship forced Titus to eventually dismiss her when he came to power. The interesting point to be found here is that the Roman people still did not view their own 'emperor' as a King in the way foreign monarchs were. The Princeps, even though it functioned with supreme power, still ruled under the guise of a Republican constitution, complete with such offices as Consul and Tribune. Titus himself held the consulship 8 times, indicating its importance at least from the perspective of public perception.

Upon completion of the Jewish Wars and his eventual return to Rome, Titus was groomed as Vespasian's obvious successor and undertook important administrative tasks. In AD 71 he celebrated a joint triumph with his father in celebration of the Jewish victory. He was made joint Censor (responsible for the Census and maintaining the roles of the Senate and the Equite class), and in AD 72 took over the ultimate position of trust, the Praetorian Prefect. Within this role Titus proved his loyalty beyond a shadow of a doubt (there was suspicion that he might try to hurry along his own accession), and took care of much of his father's 'dirty work'. He knew too that his role as heir was secure with Vespasian once commenting that 'either my son shall be my successor, or no one at all.' In June of AD 79, that prophecy was realized, and upon Vespasian's death, Titus was immediately confirmed as the new emperor.

Vesuvius and the Destruction of Pompeii

While Titus ascended to the Imperial purple without incident, his work was cut out for him to legitimize the Flavian dynasty. Despite Vespasian's 10 year prosperous and stabilizing reign, the Roman Senate still resisted granting him deification. Because he was not a Julio-Claudian, his deification would require the creation of a new cult and temple, measures which were surely unpopular. Titus spent the first months of his reign issuing coinage and other propaganda tying both him and his father to the Julio-Claudians. While it was a lengthy process, the Senate finally relented and Vespasian was deified some 6 months after his death. Titus started the temple in his honor (that would eventually be finished by Domitian) that came to be known as the Temple of Vespasian and Domitian. The new emperor also completed the Colosseum and held festivals of 100 days to celebrate its opening. Other building projects, such as imperial baths, intensive road building and the Arch of Titus (for his victory in Judaea) helped to legitimize his reign.

Perhaps most important thing about the reign of Titus was his handling of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. Though the Jews claimed that the disaster that struck was God's vengeance against Rome, Titus' speedy and exhaustive efforts at relief likely went a long way towards winning him a permanent place in the hearts of the people. In the morning to early afternoon of August 24, 79 AD, just two months after Titus took over from his father, the eruptions of Vesuvius began and would extend for several days. The destruction of such cities as Pompeii and Herculaneum would be complete resulting in as many as 3,000 to 5,000 lost lives (including looters who returned to early). Tens of thousands were left homeless and destitute with little hope of recovery.

, the nephew of (the writer of the Natural Histories) who was killed investigating the disaster, provided his own eye-witness account that survived in two letters to the noted historian Cornelius Tacitus. 18 years old at the time, Pliny the Younger was fortunate not to share his uncle's fate, as he chose to continue working rather than tag along.

"He (Pliny the Elder) was at that time with the fleet under his command at Misenum. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud which appeared

of a very unusual size and shape. He had just taken a turn in the sun and, after bathing himself in cold water, and making a light luncheon, gone back to his books: he immediately arose and went out upon a rising ground from whence he might get a better sight of this very uncommon appearance. A cloud, from which mountain was uncertain, at this distance (but it was found afterwards to come from Mount Vesuvius), was ascending, the appearance of which I cannot give you a more exact description of than by likening it to that of a pine tree, for it shot up to a great height in the form of a very tall trunk, which spread itself out at the top into a sort of branches; occasioned, I imagine, either by a sudden gust of air that impelled it, the force of which decreased as it advanced upwards, or the cloud itself being pressed back again by its own weight, expanded in the manner I have mentioned; it appeared sometimes bright and sometimes dark and spotted, according as it was either more or less impregnated with earth and cinders.

This phenomenon seemed to a man of such learning and research as my uncle extraordinary and worth further looking into. He ordered a light vessel to be got ready, and gave me leave, if I liked, to accompany him. I said I had rather go on with my work; and it so happened, he had himself given me something to write out. As he was coming out of the house, he received a note from Rectina, the wife of Bassus, who was in the utmost alarm at the imminent danger which threatened her; for her villa lying at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, there was no way of escape but by sea; she earnestly entreated him therefore to come to her assistance. He accordingly changed his first intention, and what he had begun from a philosophical, he now carries out in a noble and generous spirit. He ordered the galleys to be put to sea, and went himself on board with an intention of assisting not only Rectina, but the several other towns which lay thickly strewn along that beautiful coast.

Hastening then to the place from whence others fled with the utmost terror, he steered his course direct to the point of danger, and with so much calmness and presence of mind as to be able to make and dictate his observations upon the motion and all the phenomena of that dreadful scene. He was now so close to the mountain that the cinders, which grew thicker and hotter the nearer he approached, fell into the ships, together with pumice- stones, and black pieces of burning rock: they were in danger too not only of being aground by the sudden retreat of the sea, but also from the vast fragments which rolled down from the mountain, and obstructed all the shore. Here he stopped to consider whether he should turn back again; to which the pilot advising him, "Fortune," said he, "favours the brave; steer to where Pomponianus is."

Pomponianus was then at Stabiae, separated by a bay, which the sea, after several insensible windings, forms with the shore. He had already sent his baggage on board; for though he was not at that time in actual danger, yet being within sight of it, and indeed extremely near, if it should in the least increase, he was determined to put to sea as soon as the wind, which was blowing dead in-shore, should go down. It was favourable, however, for carrying my uncle to Pomponianus, whom he found in the greatest consternation: he embraced him tenderly, encouraging and urging him to keep up his spirits, and, the more effectually to soothe his fears by seeming unconcerned himself, ordered a bath to be got ready, and then, after having bathed, sat down to supper with great cheerfulness, or at least (what is just as heroic) with every appearance of it.

Meanwhile broad flames shone out in several places from Mount Vesuvius, which the darkness of the night contributed to render still brighter and clearer. But my uncle, in order to soothe the apprehensions of his friend, assured him it was only the burning of the villages, which the country people had abandoned to the flames: after this he retired to rest, and it is most certain he was so little disquieted as to fall into a sound sleep: for his breathing, which, on account of his corpulence, was rather heavy and sonorous, was heard by the attendants outside. The court which led to his apartment being now almost filled with stones and ashes, if he had continued there any time longer, it would have been impossible for him to have made his way out. So he was awoke and got up, and went to Pomponianus and the rest of his company, who were feeling too anxious to think of going to bed. They consulted together whether it would be most prudent to trust to the houses, which now rocked from side to side with frequent and violent concussions as though

shaken from their very foundations; or fly to the open fields, where the calcined stones and cinders, though light indeed, yet fell in large showers, and threatened destruction. In this choice of dangers they resolved for the fields: a resolution which, while the rest of the company were hurried into by their fears, my uncle embraced upon cool and deliberate consideration. They went out then, having pillows tied upon their heads with napkins; and this was their whole defence against the storm of stones that fell round them.

It was now day everywhere else, but there a deeper darkness prevailed than in the thickest night; which however was in some degree alleviated by torches and other lights of various kinds. They thought proper to go farther down upon the shore to see if they might safely put out to sea, but found the waves still running extremely high, and boisterous. There my uncle, laying himself down upon a sail cloth, which was spread for him, called twice for some cold water, which he drank, when immediately the flames, preceded by a strong whiff of sulphur, dispersed the rest of the party, and obliged him to rise. He raised himself up with the assistance of two of his servants, and instantly fell down dead; suffocated, as I conjecture, by some gross and noxious vapour, having always had a weak throat, which was often inflamed. As soon as it was light again, which was not till the third day after this melancholy accident, his body was found entire, and without any marks of violence upon it, in the dress in which he fell, and looking more like a man asleep than dead."

Second Letter of Pliny

"My uncle having left us, I spent such time as was left on my studies (it was on their account indeed that I had stopped behind), till it was time for my bath. After which I went to supper, and then fell into a short and uneasy sleep. There had been noticed for many days before a trembling of the earth, which did not alarm us much, as this is quite an ordinary occurrence in Campania; but it was so particularly violent that night that it not only shook but actually overturned, as it would seem, everything about us. My mother rushed into my chamber, where she found me rising, in order to awaken her. We sat down in the open court of the house, which occupied a small space between the buildings and the sea.

As I was at that time but eighteen years of age, I know not whether I should call my behaviour, in this dangerous juncture, courage or folly; but I took up Livy, and amused myself with turning over that author, and even making extracts from him, as if I had been perfectly at my leisure. Just then, a friend of my uncle's, who had lately come to him from Spain, joined us, and observing me sitting by my mother with a book in my hand, reproved her for her calmness, and me at the same time for my careless security: nevertheless I went on with my author. Though it was now morning, the light was still exceedingly faint and doubtful; the buildings all around us tottered, and though we stood upon open ground, yet as the place was narrow and confined, there was no remaining without imminent danger: we therefore resolved to quit the town. A panic-stricken crowd followed us, and (as to a mind distracted with terror every suggestion seems more prudent than its own) pressed on us in dense array to drive us forward as we came out.

Being at a convenient distance from the houses, we stood still, in the midst of a most dangerous and dreadful scene. The chariots, which we had ordered to be drawn out, were so agitated backwards and forwards, though upon the most level ground, that we could not keep them steady, even by supporting them with large stones. The sea seemed to roll back upon itself, and to be driven from its banks by the convulsive motion of the earth; it is certain at least the shore was considerably enlarged, and several sea animals were left upon it. On the other side, a black and dreadful cloud, broken with rapid, zigzag flashes, revealed behind it variously shaped masses of flame: these last were like sheet-lightning, but much larger. Upon this our Spanish friend, whom I mentioned above, addressing himself to my mother and me with great energy and urgency: "If your brother," he said, "if your uncle be safe, he certainly wishes you may be so too; but if he perished, it was his desire, no doubt, that you might both survive him: why therefore do you delay

your escape a moment?" We could never think of our own safety, we said, while we were uncertain of his. Upon this our friend left us, and withdrew from the danger with the utmost precipitation.

Soon afterwards, the cloud began to descend, and cover the sea. It had already surrounded and concealed the island of Capreae and the promontory of Misenum. My mother now besought, urged, even commanded me to make my escape at any rate, which, as I was young, I might easily do; as for herself, she said, her age and corpulency rendered all attempts of that sort impossible; however, she would willingly meet death if she could have the satisfaction of seeing that she was not the occasion of mine. But I absolutely refused to leave her, and, taking her by the hand, compelled her to go with me. She complied with great reluctance, and not without many reproaches to herself for retarding my flight.

The ashes now began to fall upon us, though in no great quantity. I looked back; a dense dark mist seemed to be following us, spreading itself over the country like a cloud. "Let us turn out of the high-road," I said, "while we can still see, for fear that, should we fall in the road, we should be pressed to death in the dark, by the crowds that are following us." We had scarcely sat down when night came upon us, not such as we have when the sky is cloudy, or when there is no moon, but that of a room when it is shut up, and all the lights put out. You might hear the shrieks of women, the screams of children, and the shouts of men; some calling for their children, others for their parents, others for their husbands, and seeking to recognise each other by the voices that replied; one lamenting his own fate, another that of his family; some wishing to die, from the very fear of dying; some lifting their hands to the gods; but the greater part convinced that there were now no gods at all, and that the final endless night of which we have heard had come upon the world. Among these there were some who augmented the real terrors by others imaginary or wilfully invented. I remember some who declared that one part of Misenum had fallen, that another was on fire; it was false, but they found people to believe them.

It now grew rather lighter, which we imagined to be rather the forerunner of an approaching burst of flames (as in truth it was) than the return of day: however, the fire fell at a distance from us: then again we were immersed in thick darkness, and a heavy shower of ashes rained upon us, which we were obliged every now and then to stand up to shake off, otherwise we should have been crushed and buried in the heap. I might boast that, during all this scene of horror, not a sigh, or expression of fear, escaped me, had not my support been grounded in that miserable, though mighty, consolation, that all mankind were involved in the same calamity, and that I was perishing with the world itself.

At last this dreadful darkness was dissipated by degrees, like a cloud or smoke; the real day returned, and even the sun shone out, though with a lurid light, like when an eclipse is coming on. Every object that presented itself to our eyes (which were extremely weakened) seemed changed, being covered deep with ashes as if with snow. We returned to Misenum, where we refreshed ourselves as well as we could, and passed an anxious night between hope and fear; though, indeed, with a much larger share of the latter: for the earthquake still continued, while many frenzied persons ran up and down heightening their own and their friends' calamities by terrible predictions. However, my mother and I, notwithstanding the danger we had passed, and that which still threatened us, had no thoughts of leaving the place, till we could receive some news of my uncle."

Titus' Reign

After the disaster with Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples, Titus reacted quickly, visiting the area in person and confiscating properties of heirless victims for distribution to the disenfranchised. Survivors were relocated and a special Senatorial commission was arranged to provide whatever

assistance they could. But, despite Titus' relatively short reign, this was not to be the only disaster he faced. While still in Campania a destructive fire broke out in Rome, devastating the poorer quarters for 3 days. Again Titus responded quickly, dipping deep into the treasury to provide relief and assistance to the victims. Certainly, considering the amount of money that was spent on relief efforts and on public works (such as the Colosseum and the accompanying 100 days of games), Titus very well may have dipped into his personal fortune to ensure a solid financial footing for the empire. Despite these expenditures, Titus (according to Dio Cassius) proved to be fiscally sound, "In money matters, Titus was frugal and made no unnecessary expenditure," and left the treasury in much the same state as he found it, with a healthy surplus.

In addition to these two natural disasters, the empire also faced a devastating plague at about the same time. According to Suetonius, "For curing the plague and diminishing the force of the epidemic there was no aid, human or divine, which he (Titus) did not employ, searching for every kind of sacrifice and all kinds of medicines." While one might think that the superstitious Romans would view the reign of Titus as a cursed abomination facing the punishment of the gods, his swift responses and deliberate actions seem to have endeared him to the people. Perhaps people simply lamented the reign of Domitian and wished for a return of Titus, sparking a nostalgic memory of him, or his reign was just too short to develop any particular negative attributes, but regardless he was remembered with a sincere admiration.

Whatever reasons for Titus' seemingly popular status among the masses (the Colosseum and disaster relief) and the ancient historians (a far better alternative to Domitian), his reign was cut tragically short. While it was the charisma of Vespasian that ended the civil war following Nero's death, it was Titus who continued the policies that strengthened the legions and the provinces, while legitimizing an alternative ruling order in a post Julio-Claudian Roman world. Additionally the reign of Titus, and his untimely early death, followed by the unpopular reign of his brother, led the Emperors that followed into a path of chosen selective and adoptive succession, rather than dynastic rule. The so-called '5 Good Emperors' must certainly be given credit for their own actions, but understanding the contributions of the transitional period of Vespasian and Titus is vital to understanding the development of the following period.

Unfortunately for those who suffered under Domitian, but fortunately for the resulting reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius, the reign of Titus lasted only a short 26 months. During this time he fought varying illnesses, and according to the descriptions of Suetonius, faced several bouts of depression. Considering the pressures of the positions, coupled with the disasters that accompanied it, his health concerns are not surprising. In the end repeated treatments of cold baths (alleviation of fever) indicate the possibility that it was simple influenza or even a brain tumor (which may cause related symptoms) that ended his life prematurely. At the age of 41, on September 13 AD 81, Titus passed (without a child heir) and left the mantle of government to his brother Domitian.

Despite rumors of Domitian's actual involvement in Titus' death (poisoned fish according to Suetonius), logical observation does not support foul play. Although it is quite possible that reports of the brother's dislike of one another is entirely true, Domitian did have his brother promptly deified and finished the yet uncompleted Arch of Titus in his honor.

Domitian AD 81 - 96 (born AD 51 - died 96)

Born in Rome on October 24, AD 51, Titus Flavius Domitianus was the youngest son of Vespasian and Domitilla. He was raised in an era of great family mobility, as Vespasian gained several key appointments under both Claudius and Nero. However, despite these appointments (ie the proconsulship of Africa), Vespasian was under considerable financial hardship (for a man of his position). Though Vespasian was forced into several undesirable financial moves, such as mortgaging his property to his brother, he never lost his seat in the Senate (which required

stringent levels of financial means) and reports of Domitian's youth in poverty are quite exaggerated.

Domitian was left in relative isolation from his primary family. Vespasian and oldest son Titus spent much of Domitian's youth abroad in various services to the empire, while Domitian's mother had died at a relatively young age. Though the details of Domitian's youth are largely unknown, it is definite that his education was on par with other Senatorial elite of the time and that the future emperor excelled in such courses as rhetoric, literature and poetry. He was also praised for his skills in oratory, a skill that would surely aid him in his future political endeavors. It is during this time that Domitian supposedly developed a preference for solitude (largely from Suetonius), but this does not necessarily conform to his later career. While he would certainly show issues in relating to members of the Senate and the imperial court, his difficulties seem more to be matters of tyrannical control than withdrawal.

Regardless, Domitian's life, like those of many Romans, took a tremendous shift with the suicide of Nero in AD 68. As civil war raged, with Galba, Otho, Vitellius and others vying to fill the power vacuum, Vespasian began to conspire while suppressing the revolt in Judaea. When Vespasian eventually declared his intentions to grab power for himself in the summer of AD 69, with the support of Syrian governor Gaius Licinius Mucianus, Domitian remained in Rome, likely in the home of his uncle Titus Flavius Sabinus the city prefect. Despite the odd circumstances Sabinus remained in his position throughout Vitellius' rather short reign in Rome and Domitian seems to have been free of any backlash associated with his father's rebellion. Vitellius understandably though, certainly had more pressing matters to attend to, such as Mucianus marching on Rome with 20,000 men from the east, and an uprising of the Danubian legions in favor of Vespasian.

Much to the disappointment of Mucianus, the revolting German legions under Antonius Primus stole the glory and defeated the Vitellian forces at Cremona, paving the way for Vespasian to claim victory. While this was good news to the Flavian cause, it left Rome in a state of panic and turmoil. As Primus continued to march, Vitellius with only the Praetorians between him and the now victorious Flavians, knew his time as emperor was short. Mucianus offered him a deal, in which Domitian's uncle Sabinus acted as mediator, offering Vitellius safe passage if he would simply abdicate in favor of Vespasian. Vitellius agreed, but the Praetorians and other Vitellian supporters were angry (and assuredly fearful of the coming Danubian forces). Sabinus, as the local face of the impending change, was confronted with the brunt of this anger and was killed in the riots that followed. Domitian meanwhile was certainly also in a precarious situation. The exact details of his escape from the Vitellians is in doubt but both Tacitus and Suetonius have him rescued in some capacity by members of the cult of Isis, where he likely remained in hiding until the arrival of his father's forces.

Shortly thereafter (December of AD 69) Primus arrived and began to turn the tables on the Vitellians with his German Legions. Vitellius was dragged from hiding and butchered while invaders were given a free reign of terror over the city. Fortunately, Mucianus arrived just a few days later and set about restoring order, but it was obviously too late for Sabinus. Domitian however was given a grand opportunity to become a major player on the world's biggest political stage. He presented himself to his father's supporters and was immediately hailed as Caesar. Acting as the front man (Mucianus certainly held equal authority as Vespasian's primary advisor) for the new regime, Domitian ably administered the Flavian administration. Eager to match his brother and father's military glory, Domitian soon marched to Germania to put down a revolt of the Batavian auxilia, but it died out before anything of note could be accomplished. Shortly thereafter, Domitian was married to Domitia Longina, the daughter of the great general Gnaeus Domitius Corbulo, who was forced to commit suicide under Nero. Securing the support of the anti-Neronian camp through his son's marriage (not that he likely needed to, but this arrangement certainly helped to cement any alliance), Vespasian soon returned to Rome, and Domitian was relegated to relative obscurity.

It was suggested that Domitian dedicated himself to further studies in the arts while Titus gained military glory in Judaea before returning to Rome as a primary heir to Vespasian. However, while Domitian clearly took a secondary role to that of Titus, he did serve as Consul 6 times during his father's reign and was not completely removed from imperial politics. After Titus took over from Vespasian in AD 79, there is some speculation that the brothers maintained an unhealthy relationship, but there is really nothing other than rumor and innuendo to support this. Regardless, there is little mention of Domitian's activities in government or elsewhere during the reign of Titus, but he clearly was marked as 'Caesar' or heir (as Titus did not have sons of his own). When Titus died possibly of a brain tumor just two years later (and not without the appropriate level of insinuation that Domitian gave him poison) Domitian eagerly went to the Praetorians and had himself declared the next emperor. Among his first acts was to support his brother's deification and to finish the triumphal arch honoring Titus' victory in Judaea.

Domitian's Administration

Domitian's reign began with certainly as much promise as those of his father and brother before. He proved to be an excellent manager of imperial government and took a hands-on approach to running the system. His Imperial court did consist of important members from the Senatorial body, future emperors Nerva and Trajan included, but relied more so on Equestrians and especially freedmen, virtually replacing all functions of the Senate. This style of rule and his quite public disdain for the Senate as a governing body, along with his rather strict moral ideology would eventually lead to his castration in the historical record by the ancient writers. Additional, mostly unfounded accusations of Christian persecutions, would add to the perception of Domitian as a tyrant, but quite contrary to popular opinion, he was quite capable as leader of the Empire.

Domitian was fortunate enough to follow in the footsteps of his frugal family predecessors. Evidence suggests that Domitian continued along this path maintaining a healthy treasury even in times of war. Initially, he raised the silver content of the Denarius back to its previous level under Augustus (it had been debased due to silver shortages, economic changes, etc.) clearly indicating the financial health of the empire. Just a few years into his reign however, he was forced to lower the silver content once again to meet with new demands. While this may suggest a weakening economy, it also suggests an Emperor who was well tuned in accordance with economic conditions and was proactive in adjusting imperial policy. As part of his financial policy, he heavily taxed the provinces and began a systematic confiscation (essentially to fund the Dacian Wars) that was obviously quite unpopular with the wealthy aristocracy. Another unpopular (though probably quite necessary) was the proposition of a new grain law. This law was designed to alleviate grain shortages and curb excess production of cheap wines. Planting of new vines was to be restricted in Italy, while existing vines in the provinces was to be reduced in half. While this particular law was never truly implemented it had the effect of further alienating the aristocracy.

At about the same time that these financial measures went into effect, Domitian named himself Censor for life, granting him complete authority over moralistic code and law throughout Roman society. While in theory, any Emperor could exhibit control over various societal conditions, Domitian took the position to heart. Styling himself some sort of paragon of virtue (despite his own separation from his wife, and later reconciliation, along with a myriad of rumors alleging sexual affairs), he took it upon himself to impose moralistic law with impunity. While many measures relating to these functions, such as cracking down on provincial corruption, reducing bribery in the courts, reducing public prostitution etc. were beneficial results, the result in the historical record illustrates the Emperor as cruel. In one example, Suetonius points out Domitian's reaction to the infidelity of the Vestal Virgins:

"and the incest of Vestal Virgins, condoned even by his father (Vespasian) and his brother (Titus), he punished severely in diverse ways, at first by capital punishment, and afterwards in the ancient

fashion (buried alive). For while he allowed the sisters Oculata and also Varronilla free choice of the manner of their death (AD 83), and banished their lovers, he later (AD 90) ordered that Cornelia, a chief-vestal who had been acquitted once but after a long interval again arraigned and found guilty, be buried alive; and her lovers were beaten to death with rods."

Despite this, Domitian proved to be far more popular with the general public. Tying his reign to that of the gods Jupiter and Minerva, Domitian celebrated his divine connection by instituting the Capitoline Games (so named for the restored Temple of Jupiter on the Capitol). These games, begun in AD 86 and occurring every 4 years included the typical chariot races, gymnastics, music and literary arts with contestants from all over the empire. Domitian spared no expense in these endeavors providing public entertainment on a grand scale. In addition to his own form of the 'Olympics' in which prizes were presented by the emperor himself, gladiatorial contests included new displays to capture his audiences. Female gladiators, contests between dwarves, nighttime games and food dropped upon the audiences by ropes suspended across the top of the Colosseum were common occurrences.

Beyond this, Domitian was also an ambitious builder. The fire from AD 80 (during the reign of Titus) as well as damage still left over from the great fire of AD 64 (Nero), left Rome with plenty of opportunity for improvement. He added the fourth level to the Colosseum and finished the temple of Vespasian and Titus as well as the Arch of Titus. The Forum Transitorium (including the Temple of Minerva) which was later renamed the Forum Nervae to erase Domitian's memory, numerous arches, the Equus Domitiani statue which was later destroyed, the Odeum for musical performances, a Stadium for his games, the Temple of Fortuna Redux, the Templum Gentis Flaviae, the Domus Augustana and Domus Flavia were all erected under Domitian's reign. Along with the works of his father and brother, Domitian left a distinctly Flavian impression upon the eternal city.

Domitian and the Legions

When Domitian came to power he did so with a great family pedigree of military success. Vespasian had proven himself in Britain, Germania and the east while Titus experienced similar conditions and continued his father's work in Judaea. Much like the reign of Claudius, who needed the conquest of Britain to legitimize himself, Domitian felt the need to prove his own military prowess. While his initial attempts to accomplish that are scoffed at by Suetonius, Tacitus and Dio Cassius (in reference to the later Dacian Wars, Dio indicates that Domitian spent his campaign time indulging in riotous living far from the front) they served the purpose of glorifying his own young reign and uniting the legions behind him.

Domitian's first opportunity to realize military success came as the result of a ruse. Moving to Gaul in AD 82 under the pretense of conducting a census, Domitian instead recruited a new legion, Legio I Minervia, and moved with it and others into the Agri Decumates (the upper Danube and Rhine area) to conduct a campaign against the Chatti. While this initial attack had the intention of completing the conquests begun by his father, Domitian's efforts largely consisted of road building, fortification and the like. Domitian returned to Rome in AD 83 to celebrate a triumph, claiming the title Germanicus in the process. Despite his apparent victory, the Chatti were far from defeated and would continue to resist for another 6 years, lasting into AD 89 when the Romans eventually pushed the Empire's frontiers to the rivers Lahn and Main. While Domitian's triumph was largely an effort to boost the emperor's popularity (accompanied by a 1/3 pay raise for the legions), its effect was not wasted and would serve the emperor well into the future.

Meanwhile in Britain, the efforts of Governor Gnaeus Julius Agricola were not going unnoticed in Rome. Having been appointed to the command of the frontier province under Vespasian (AD 78), his tenure included the subjugation of several resisting tribes in a methodical drive to the north. By

AD 81 Agricola had pushed into Caledonia (modern Scotland) and was allowed to keep his position as Domitian came into power. According to Agricola's son-in-law, the historian Tacitus, Agricola reportedly even considered an invasion of Ireland that he claimed could be accomplished with just one legion. (It's important to note here, that some hostility from Tacitus towards Domitian can be accredited to Domitian's later treatment of Agricola and perhaps did have an impact on Tacitus' overall portrayal of him as the Emperor.)

In AD 83, Agricola won a smashing victory over Caledonian resistance, led by Calgacus, at the battle of Mons Graupius opening the way to Roman dominance of the entire island province. Fortifying his position at such places as Chester and Caerleon, Agricola's fleet explored the Orkney Islands and coastal borders, proving that Rome's northernmost province was indeed an island. The following campaign year would likely bring further incursions into the Caledonian highlands, however, Domitian recalled his successful general in AD 84. Accused of jealousy in the wake of Agricola's success, in light of his own trumped up triumph regarding the Chatti expedition, arguments have been made the Agricola may have completed the conquest of all of Britain. While Agricola was offered triumphal rewards, his relegation into obscurity and lack of further posts fueled speculation that Domitian was either jealous or mistrustful.

As the situation along the Danube with the Dacians began to worsen in the mid 80's, the conquests in Caledonia became an afterthought. Despite the security provided by holding the 'Scottish Lowlands', Domitian began the systematic withdrawal of Agricola's fortifications in AD 86 and 87. The defeat of Cornelius Fuscus and 2 legions to the Dacians precipitated the transfer of troops to the Danube and Caledonia, a territory with minor strategic priority and lacking any financial reward for the Empire, became dispensable. Though Tacitus complained of betrayal and surrender, the deed was done, and no Roman would ever hold as much territory in Caledonia, despite several later efforts, as did Agricola. While Agricola was left to fade into obscurity (his death in AD 93 was rumored to be at Domitian's bequest), Domitian was forced to focus attention on the restless Danube.

Decebalus and the War on the Danube

After the recall of Agricola from Britain, accusations of jealousy plagued Domitian. Coupled with renewed fears of a tyrannical rule (his appointment as perpetual censor granting him complete dominion over the assemblies in AD 85 as an example), Domitian still needed a major military victory and/or a distraction. The Danube provided opportunities for both. Since the civil war of AD 69 that followed Nero's suicide and ended with the accession of Domitian's family the various Danube area tribes, Sarmatians, Marcomanni, Quadi, Dacians, etc., began to take advantage of Rome's pre-occupation. Raids were commonplace into frontier provinces such as Moesia and Roman efforts to stop it had little effect. As early as AD 70, the governor of Moesia, Fonteius Agrippa, was killed fighting these incursions and Vespasian, only recently gaining imperial power, did little but to strengthen various fortifications.

By the late 80's AD, the situation had become considerably more dangerous. The Dacians, a collection of small states and various tribes since the death of King Burebista in 44 BC, would be re-unified under what would become one of Rome's great adversaries, Decebalus (Diurpaneus). Translated from 'Strong as Ten Men' in Latin, the name itself seems to have been an honorary title among the Dacians and was much earned as he proved to be a formidable opponent to Rome for over 20 years. In AD 85, the Dacians led a raid into Roman Moesia, again defeating and killing the governor Oppius Sabinus along with 2 legions. Domitian, along with his Praetorian Prefect Cornelius Fuscus, gathered their forces and traveled to the region to take command in person. The Dacians, despite proposals for peace, were pushed back across the Danube with some difficulty, but without any serious debilitating engagements. Domitian, likely viewing himself as the

hero of the moment left the situation in the hand of Fuscus, while he returned to Rome to celebrate a terribly premature triumph in AD 86.

Later that same year Fuscus took matters into his own hands carrying out a planned punitive campaign across the river. This expedition, made up of as many as 6 legions was set the stage for the emergence of Decebalus. He met Fuscus at Tapae, within the extremely narrow mountain pass called 'Transylvania's Iron Gates' ambushed and repulsed the advance sending the Romans retreating back across the Danube. An entire legion was possibly obliterated as at least one standard was reportedly captured. Fuscus too paid the ultimate price giving his life in the fighting while Decebalus, by virtue of his great victory, went on to be named King of all the Dacians.

Domitian, understanding the severity of the situation returned to take direct command, but did so only within the safety of the Roman provinces. Moesia was reorganized into two separate provinces allowing for the presence of more legions under separate commands and two generals, Cornelius Nigrinus and L. Funisulanus Vettonianus arrived to conduct further military operations. The situation was stabilized and more legions were brought into the region, a major factor in the withdrawal from gains in Caledonia (Scotland) under Agricola, but the matter of the Dacians formidable presence on the border was yet to be settled.

Under Tettius Julianus the Romans regained some level of military dignity. In AD 88 he advanced along the same path as Fuscus and again met the Dacians at Tapae. This time the Romans were successful and drove the Dacians to retreat. However, the advance would be short-lived. Rumbings of revolt among the Rhine legions along with new attacks from Germanic tribes in Pannonia would prevent an all out Roman victory. While plans for further campaigns would continue to be made, Domitian was forced to accept an embarrassing treaty, paying off Decebalus and sending him skilled artisans to help with various infrastructure projects. Though the Romans did annex some land as a condition of the treaty, it was quite clear that Decebalus still held considerable sway, while Domitian faced continuing challenges in other areas.

Rebellion and Pannonia

Shortly after negotiating what would turn out to be a temporary peace arrangement with Decebalus and the Dacians, Domitian's armies in Germania Superior at Mogontiacum (Mainz) rebelled. Under L. Antoninus Saturninus, two legions (XIV Gemina and XXI Rapax) revolted for reasons that are largely obscured and lost to history (thanks to the later destruction of Saturninus personal documents), but the assumption has long stood that it was merely a local military revolt and not a wide spread conspiracy against the emperor. It's quite plausible that the officers involved were rebelling against Domitian's rather strict moral policies which led to speculation that perhaps Saturninus and other officers were homosexuals being victimized by these strict codes (Dio and Pliny). Regardless, the rebelling officers took care to arrange peaceful terms with the neighboring Chatti (among the tribes whom the legions were charged with monitoring, who also took full advantage by destroying several area fortifications) likely to prepare a march.

Whatever goal Saturninus had is completely unknown and there seems to have been little indication of a plan. Neighboring legions, including Domitian's own I Minerva stationed in nearby Bonna remained loyal, and Domitian prepared a Praetorian expedition to meet the threat. Along with future emperor Trajan, who arrived from Hispania with VII Gemina in support of the emperor, Domitian moved against the rebels. Prior to his arrival, however, Aulus Buccus Lappius the governor of Germania Inferior, beat him to the punch and put down the revolt before it seemingly even began. Domitian took care to reduce the amount of coinage that soldiers could deposit within camp treasuries (these funds were apparently used to finance the revolt) and the rebellious legions were transferred east. With the short-lived and localized rebellion quickly behind him,

terms were quickly reached with the Chatti as the emperor's attention was needed back in Pannonia and Dacia.

By the summer of AD 89 Domitian moved back to the Danube to counter the Suebi tribes, Quadi and Marcomanni. These tribes had refused to aid the Romans in their war against the Dacians and Domitian needed to settle the empire's northern border. Two embassies were sent to negotiate peaceful settlements, but neither was successful. Speculation was that the Germanics had already negotiated a deal with the Dacians so it fell upon Domitian to remedy that hasty settlement negotiated in their previous encounters. Dio suggests that Domitian lost at least one encounter with the Marcomanni further weakening his position and giving Decebalus that much more room for negotiation. By the end of AD 89, an agreement was eventually reached, granting client status to the Dacians while leaving Decebalus entirely intact, with the Germanic issue temporarily being settled in the process. While Domitian would return to Rome and celebrate a double triumph (his supposed victory over the Chatti and the Dacians) and be honored with the presentation of his famous equestrian statue, Decebalus would remain a persistent threat to the Roman frontier.

Just 3 years later, in AD 92, Domitian's true lack of success the first time forced a return to the region. The same Marcomanni and Quadi Suebi tribes had joined forces with Sarmatians and had taken to raiding Roman territory. These raids, an indication of an ever worsening border situation, resulted in the destruction of Legio XXI Rapax (which was never reconstituted) and forced a serious response. This 'Second Pannonian War' resulted in yet again another temporary cessation of hostilities. Following Decebalus making good on his treaty, by allowing the Romans to cross Dacia to attack the Sarmatian rear, the Sarmatians withdrew from Roman territory and Domitian returned home after an 8 month campaign. The emperor received an ovation for this 'victory' rather than an additional triumph (clearly indicating his own dissatisfaction with the end result), but the situation was far from settled. Additional forces were continually sent to the Danube region over the next 3 years and there were some indications that Domitian planned yet another expedition. Perhaps had Domitian truly demonstrated the military skill of his father and brother, as was his initial goal after coming to power, he may have helped permanently settle the Danube border. Instead the Dacians were left to be dealt with by Trajan just a few years later, and the Germanics by Marcus Aurelius nearly a full century after Domitian's rather non climactic expeditions.

Reign of Terror

On the surface Domitian's reign consisted of no more 'terrorizing' acts than the emperors that preceded him, but his relationship with the senate and aristocracy helped to foster a tarnished image. Additionally his strict moral policies, including religious censorship in the form of Jewish (which in Domitian's view included Christians) taxation, helped establish an appearance of persecution that some later writers mistakenly focused on. His father, Vespasian, had already established a Jewish tax (*fiscus Iudaicus*) as a form of punishment to the Judaeans for their disloyalty. The proceeds humiliated the Jews by funding the pagan Temple of Jupiter, but the payments did allow them to continue in their own faith without recourse from Rome. Domitian sought to expand the tax to anyone who appeared to live a Jewish lifestyle avoiding the imperial and traditional pagan cults.

This concept included the fledgling Christian community who shared a great deal of traditional customs and ideology with the Jews. Domitian viewed such monotheistic faiths as a form of atheism, since these people denied the true Roman pantheon. While such an attitude later developed claims of a great Christian persecution (beginning largely with Christian writers Eusebius and Tertullian), Domitian's policy remained one of taxing those who refused the Roman pantheon, not singling out religious deviants for execution or other physical punishments. While

Domitian has been described by many as having a streak of cruelty, there is little evidence to suggest this cruelty was applied specifically or any more so to Christians as opposed to just about anyone who might appear a threat to the throne or imperial stability.

One example of a story altered to fit into the persecution ideal was that of Flavius Clemens, his wife Domitilla and Acilius Glabrio. Domitilla was exiled and the two men executed for reasons which aren't entirely clear, but the three were later adopted as early Christian martyrs. A lesser charge of 'atheism' was referenced in the account of Dio Cassius (leading to the assumption of Christian leanings), but Suetonius makes no mention of religious charges at all. Whatever the reasons for their punishment, it should be noted that it certainly wasn't because of Christianity. The early Christians in the late 1st century avoided public life entirely and shunned the lifestyle that an aristocratic Roman family would have had, and Jews of the same era would have had similar dispositions. While the three may have been sympathetic to Jews because of taxes or other various concerns, the true reasons for their punishments are completely unknown to history.

While Christian and Jewish relations would haunt Domitian in the centuries after his death, his main opposition was based mainly in aristocratic Rome. The people, largely immune to the daily treachery of imperial politics, seem to have had little problem with Domitian and likely adored the man who readily held large games and offered public donation. Additionally, while sometimes the term 'Stoic Opposition' is applied to Domitian, this slight rift from the philosophic community was largely a continuation of displeasure based on Vespasian establishing a hereditary monarchy rather than anything specific regarding Domitian. Of course, one must take into consideration the fact that Dio Cassius (one of Rome's great historians) was exiled during Domitian's reign for political discourse and his later historical accounts regarding Domitian's reign can be viewed with a particular bias. Despite this rather obvious problem to what would become his historical record it was the enmity with the aristocrats that would leave Domitian with a horrible legacy. His open contempt of the Senate as a contributing and governing body for the empire was not tempered in any way by conciliatory gestures. Domitian rarely consulted them, as opposed to Vespasian and Titus, who sat before the senate on regular intervals. Also unlike his brother and father, Domitian adopted an autocratic style coupled with what might be regarded as egomaniacal behavior. Having himself referred to as Dominus et Dues (master and god), renaming the month of September to Germanicus to commemorate his supposed military victories, and renaming October to Domitianus was a constant reminder to the rest of Rome that the eternal city was not a veiled Republic but truly was an empire at the whims of a single man.

The most revered of political offices, that of the consulship was long abandoned as truly elected office and Domitian takes blame for having restricted this office to himself and his family members. However, Domitian was actually less strict than his father in appointing Consuls and other office holders, while Vespasian's rule was openly praised. While Domitian personally held the consulship in all but 4 years of his reign, 12 of 16 ordinary consulships between 89 and 96 went to non family members, clearly demonstrating his openness to political reward. Additionally, Domitian was also quite aware of Senatorial and familiar tradition allowing several men of pro-consular families to re-assume that position during his reign. Domitian understood the need to placate the Senate with political appointment but his treatment of them as a governing body seems to have carried more weight.

Domitian also angered the Senate by his self appointment as perpetual censor. With that power he had complete privilege and authority to alter the Senate roles as he saw fit. He used that power to appoint several (up to 24) eastern new-men who as non Italians were clearly not welcome additions by their Senatorial brothers. The equestrian order also received preference from Domitian in various appointments such as provincial governorships. As opposed to major military commands being selected from the Senatorial elite under previous emperors, Domitian chose equestrians for command of the Praetorian Guard and the top status in the Dacian campaign. Aside from these apparent slights the so-called 'Reign of Terror' really came down to a short-lived series of treason trials near the end of his Domitian's reign. As many as 11 former consuls were

executed while many other senators were exiled during this period and Dio suggests far more, though names are not given. These executions, often compared to the reign of Claudius in which at least 35 senators and hundreds of equestrians were executed, hardly seem to be reminiscent of terror in contrast to Claudius' later deification. However, Claudius' deification was a political move intended to tie Nero and even the Flavians closer to the Julio-Claudians where Domitian was politically built up as a 'storm before the calm' to help solidify the good qualities of successors such as Trajan.

Domitian, while assuredly not deserving of praise as a great misunderstood leader by any stretch, has been victimized by the scourge of political jealousy. While he made blunders in military affairs (including possibly the withdrawal of Agricola from Britain) and held poor relations with the rest of aristocracy, the provinces were largely well governed and his reign was bereft of any terrible crisis. Aside from the rather uneventful attempt by Saturninus to rebel, the army remained loyal for all of Domitian's 15 year reign. Even members of the opposition seem to have obtained positions of importance. Tacitus, clearly opposed to the emperor because of the treatment shown to his father-in-law Agricola, was largely prosperous in the time period. Pliny the younger too, another member of the 'opposition', advanced greatly under Domitian. The true nature of Domitian's legacy seems to be related to his contemptuous attitude towards the Senate, and reliance upon freedmen as imperial administrators, apparently more than anything else.

Ironically, it's the very freedmen who served him who would end up putting an end to his life. As Domitian's reign lengthened he did grow increasingly more paranoid. The 'terror' it seems was not necessarily entirely because of his deeds, but because of the threat. The execution of household secretary Epaphroditus seems to have initiated the idea of a plot. The growing unpredictability and paranoia of the empire made everyone within the household seemingly in a position of danger. While the aristocracy seems to have been largely left out of any role in the plot, the calmness of events following Domitian's death would tend to suggest otherwise. On September 18, AD 96 a conspiracy of household freemen and slaves was put into motion and Domitian was brutally stabbed to death. Nobody else in the household was injured or killed and there was no retaliation by praetorians. The Senate, upon 'hearing the news' calmly nominated the aged aristocratic veteran M. Cocceius Nerva to replace him. The importance of this nomination was that Nerva did not have any children and would be incapable of establishing a dynasty of heredity. This gesture helped to placate such powerful generals as Trajan who understood that they might yet have a chance to reign if they only bided their time. In order to settle matters completely, Nerva wisely adopted Trajan as his heir and the precedent was set for the '5 Good or Adoptive' Emperors. The relative ease with which the transition took place leaves the impression that the plot was much larger than being motivated by simple household fear. Dio suggests Nerva was directly involved and that Domitian's wife, Domitia, was as well, but if she was as a matter of personal necessity, she maintained a front of loyalty for all her remaining years. Even 25 years later she still referred to herself as 'Domitian's wife'.

Five Good Emperors

The period of time ranging from Nerva to Marcus Aurelius has been generally referred to as that of the '5 Good Emperors.' While the definition of 'good' is always subjective, there is little argument that this period provided the greatest stretch of uninterrupted power and prosperity for the Roman state. Perhaps more appropriately, these emperors should be known as the 'Adoptive Emperors' because this in itself is an indication of the 'good'. As each was adopted from among the best available candidates, rather than direct hereditary lineage (though there was some relation), it helped insure that Rome was in the most capable hands. Though the Roman people as a group may have noticed little relative difference in the period from Augustus to Domitian, the '5 Good Emperors' offered a century of consistency without the interruptions of Caligula, Nero and Civil War.

Perhaps the eloquent words of Edward Gibbon, the 18th century historian who penned 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire', describe the period best. Despite being limited in comparing the Romans to the human condition only through the 18 century, and lacking the great advancements of the 19th and 20th centuries, Gibbon's words describe 2nd century Rome as perhaps the greatest time of all for humanity.

"In the second century of the Christian Era, the empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilized portion of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valor. The gentle but powerful influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence: the Roman senate appeared to possess the sovereign authority, and devolved on the emperors all the executive powers of government. During a happy period of more than fourscore years, the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines."

"If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws. Such princes deserved the honor of restoring the republic, had the Romans of their days been capable of enjoying a rational freedom."

Following the death of Domitian, an effective but reviled leader among the aristocracy, Rome was fortunate to find a stabilizing force in Nerva. A respected senator, Nerva filled the potential power vacuum, and set the tone for the next century during his short but precedent building reign. The great general Trajan followed Nerva and not only re-established Rome as a conquering force, but established his greatness among scholars as perhaps second only to Augustus. Hadrian and Antoninus Pius were among the best of administrators, and Marcus Aurelius (as well as the sometimes forgotten Lucius Verus) continued that pattern while re-establishing military superiority among the bordering Germanic tribes. The period would come to an end amidst plague and the weariness of war with the death of Aurelius in AD 180. As his son Commodus ascended the throne as sole emperor, thus ending the period of 'adoptive' authority, the stability and cohesiveness of the previous era would begin to unravel.

Nerva AD 96 - 98 (born AD 30 - died 98)

The place of M. Cocceius Nerva in history is largely that of an intermediary, filling the vacuum following the fall of Domitian and setting the stage for a golden era of Roman history as the first of the '5 Good Emperors'. Born between AD 30 and 35 of a richly traditional consular family, little of Nerva's early life is known, but the prestigious family had played key roles in both late Republican and early Imperial politics. A terribly distant, yet distinguished familial connection to the Julio-Claudians (through Tiberius via marriage) helped thrust Nerva into early political prominence. An apparent disdain for outward ambition and a complete lack of military education or experience certainly helped push Nerva into a trusted role as advisor to several imperial courts.

Under the reign of Nero, Nerva (in his early to mid 30's) was seemingly instrumental in foiling the conspiracy of Piso and was handsomely rewarded for it. Despite the assistance to the much maligned Nero, Nerva does not suffer in the historical record for these actions (likely because the major writers of this period lived during the reign of Trajan and Hadrian, Nerva's adopted heirs). Nerva, having had a statue erected in the imperial palace as part of the reward, also did not suffer

with Nero's downfall. Nerva quite possibly may have maintained a healthy friendship with another early Neronian supporter, the future emperor Vespasian. In the turmoil following the 'Year of the Four Emperors' circa AD 68 and 69, Nerva emerged as a leading member of Vespasian's court. As evidenced by his appointment as junior consul to Vespasian in AD 71, the only year in which Vespasian did not hold the ordinary consulship with his son Titus, Nerva was by this point considered an important and influential member of the senatorial elite. Despite any friendship between the two men, the respect for the future emperor was quite apparent by this gesture.

Nerva maintained an advisory position throughout the Flavian reigns of Vespasian, Titus and Domitian. Though evidence is limited, Nerva seemingly played a prominent role in another foiled conspiracy. After the legionary revolt of Saturninus against Domitian, Nerva was elevated to the ordinary consulship once again and received special thanks for his part in revealing the plot (likely because of information provided through a deep intelligence network). The goodwill wouldn't last throughout Domitian's reign, however and Nerva seems to have been in danger of being targeted by the emperor's conspiracy suspicions. By the mid 90's AD, though the reports of the ancients are conflicting (Dio Cassius, Apollonius, Suetonius, Victor and Martial), there seems to have been enough evidence suggesting that Domitian had distanced himself from Nerva, and that only horoscopes predicting Nerva's imminent death prevented Domitian from targeting his advisor. The deaths of other senators and close court advisors during Domitian's 'reign of terror' pushed surviving members of his court into action. By September 18, AD 96 a plot, that was necessarily larger than there is evidence for, came full circle and Domitian was murdered by members of his own household staff.

That very same day, Nerva was elevated to the imperial throne, with speculation that Domitian's own wife and prominent members of the Senate were involved. This speculation included the involvement of Nerva, stemming from the ease of the transition following nearly 30 years of Flavian rule to a sudden and 'unexpected' end without an heir in place. Nerva's position and his quick appointment to replace Domitian certainly must have had some reflection on personal ambition, but not only was he a respected elder statesman of the Senate, but as a member of the Flavian supporters, his selection offered a quick and simple opportunity. As a previous and long standing member of Domitian's supporters, those supporters who remained were appeased by Nerva's selection (as a member of their own faction), and the opposition could rest easy with the understanding that the old and new emperors seemingly had had a falling out anyway. Nerva also agreed upon several measures which would bring back a semblance of Senatorial control to the daily government of the empire. While the 'Republic' had long been dead as a political institution, the new government of Nerva would be more reflective of Augustan principals which left an impression of Senatorial authority.

Perhaps most important consideration, however, in determining Nerva's selection was the age of the new emperor. At least in his mid 60's Nerva was reportedly in poor health and as suggested by Suetonius, only the astrology that predicted Nerva's imminent natural death prevented Domitian from having him executed anyway. This vulnerable status and the fact that Nerva had no direct male heirs with whom to continue another family dynasty, allowed the Senate to use him as an interim emperor, until another suitable candidate could be found. Nerva's complete lack of military experience also prevented a potential for a legionary revolt based on loyalties to slightest generals. Military candidates to the imperial throne such as Trajan understood that Nerva's appointment was a stopgap measure and that the real game was not played by succeeding Domitian but would be won as Nerva's heir.

Adoptive Succession

The death of Domitian, though largely greeted with public indifference, did create problems for Nerva's fledgling administration. The Praetorians were unhappy, their charge being murdered

without their approval, and demanded retaliation. In order to settle the situation, within a year of his accession Nerva was forced to hand over the very men who helped secure his position, the Praetorian prefects. However, while the Praetorians were angry, and the public largely indifferent the Senate openly rejoiced at their newfound return to political relevance. A *damnatio memoriae* was immediately voted upon Domitian, abolishing his various laws, erasing his name from public works and statues, and of course, barring his entry into the Imperial Cult pantheon.

The euphoria of the Senate was bolstered by Nerva's early reaction to their 'requirements.' Foremost among these requirements was an agreement to abstain from executing members of the Senate. Political prisoners were released, exiles recalled and some properties reimbursed. The 'Jewish tax' which was largely responsible for suggestions of religious persecution and allowed for much interpretation by over zealous tax collectors, was rescinded in order to stabilize growing social unrest within certain elements of society. Additionally, Nerva allowed the prosecution of political informants, which at first was readily welcomed as a way to heal the rift between opposing factions. However, the end result was a veritable witch-hunt inspired by rivalry and revenge, eventually requiring Nerva's intervention.

Nerva attempted to pattern his governing style after that of Augustus. He attempted to include just enough Senatorial involvement to provide for a smooth relationship, but like most emperors, trusted his own immediate staff for the bulk of imperial administration. While Domitian maintained the treasury by increasing taxation to offset his spending measures, Nerva sought to bring both to a more modest level. Excessive state religious ceremonies, games and celebrations were curtailed while Nerva even sold off possessions of the imperial palace and from his own personal holdings. In a gesture of social goodwill, he created the 'alimentary institutions', which were essentially child welfare payments directed to the urban poor and collected through interest payments on state loans to landowners. In essence, this social welfare system allowed for growth in landownership while the proceeds were used in an attempt to level the economic classes. These popular measures continued largely through to Marcus Aurelius, with the exception only of Hadrian's reign.

Nerva's public works record was certainly diminished by his short reign, but he did finish a project begun by Domitian which became known as the Forum of Nerva. Road building plans begun under previous administrations were continued and flood damage to the Colosseum was repaired. Though not a building project per se, of particular note to historical reference material Nerva appointed Sextus Julius Frontinus as curator of the water supply. It was his *De Aquis urbis Romae* (Aqueducts of Rome) that provided great insight into the ancient Roman water system. Militarily, the emperor was hampered by a complete lack of formal education or experience, and this showed in the Praetorian's early disapproval. The execution of the Praetorian prefects and Nerva's submissive tone to his bodyguards helped ease tension but military authority was needed to ensure continued order. Minor victories by Trajan in Pannonia may have helped boost a non-existent record, but it was the Nerva's surprising plan of succession that provided true imperial security.

Though the Senate had maintained the belief that the choice of succession would belong to them, Nerva had enough foresight to understand his own precarious position. Trajan was announced publicly as his adopted heir in October AD 97 (in the midst of the Praetorian problem) and with one simple stroke of genius, dangerous levels of political dissention ceased. This decision was probably resented by the Senate, largely because it took away any opportunity for that body as a whole to direct the course of political events, but also because Trajan was a provincial non-Italian from Hispania. There were distant blood-relatives of Tiberius still alive that could have prompted a return to the original Julio-Claudian principate but their political obscurity made them irrelevant. Trajan's long history of loyalty and service to the empire as well as the overwhelming support of the legions made him perhaps the only legitimate choice for a stable continuation of Imperial rule.

Trajan was immediately given full co-tribunician power along with the Consulship for AD 98, effectively setting the table for the abdication of Nerva. Trajan stayed away from Rome for the entire next year, however, settling military affairs in Germania and leaving the ageing Nerva to governing from the center of the empire. Even Nerva's death, which came shortly after in late January AD 98, did not bring the general to Rome. Nerva passed away, likely of natural causes and in his late 60's, after a lifetime of dedicated service to several emperors and the empire. Though a short reign of only 16 months limited the potential of his reign, Nerva's legacy was the brilliance of his plan of succession. Trajan not only came to power with a military pedigree that would be put to full use over the next few decades, but whose overall effective rule has been arguably deemed second only to Augustus as greatest of the Roman Emperors.

Trajan AD 98 - 117 (born AD 53 - died 117)

Born on September 18 in the year AD 52 or 53, in Italica (near modern Seville, Spain) Marcus Ulpius Trajanus was to become the first 'provincial' emperor. This, however, can be a bit misleading. The Ulpian family were descended originally from Umbria in northern Italy and transplanted to Hispania in the 3rd century BC, for reasons largely unknown. If Trajan was a direct descendent of these original Ulpian, then despite some certain mixing with local Iberians over the centuries he was for the most part simply a displaced Italian. However, there have been arguments, largely only theory, that the Trajanus line was actually adopted into the Ulpian, thereby making him truly a provincial. Regardless, in the eyes of Rome, Trajan was considered somewhat of an outsider, but his illustrious military career and skillful governing abilities would leave little doubt as to his authority.

Trajan's father, of the same name as his son, was the first in the family line to obtain a Senate seat and rose as high as the consulship in the chaotic period following Nero's death (around AD 70). Having served under Vespasian in Judaea, the Trajanus family rose rapidly along with Vespasian's ultimate accession to the throne. The elder Trajan eventually served governorships in the provinces of Baetica (southern Hispania), Syria and the prestigious post of Asia Minor. Despite the son's future adoption as Nerva's heir, Trajan did not ignore his familial roots. Trajan's father likely lived long enough to see his son's accession and coinage reflects the deification of the natural father in AD 113.

Trajan followed the path set by his father, attaining rank in the customary 'cursus honorum' fashion, but did so with a definite emphasis on the military. By his middle to late 20's (mid 70's AD) he served as a Legionary Legate under his father in Syria and was elected (appointed) to a Quaestorship shortly thereafter. About this time he was married to Pompeia Plotina (one of the highly influential, if little known women in Roman history) and he continued to enjoy the favor of the Flavian emperors attaining the Praetorship around AD 85. Under Domitian he was appointed as Legate of Legio VII Gemina in Hispania Tarraconensis, which he rallied to the support of the beleaguered emperor during the revolt of Saturninus in AD 89. Though Trajan's march was ultimately unnecessary (the revolt was put down long before his arrival), the action cemented his alliance with Domitian. While it provided increased potential for upward mobility, Trajan's loyalty to the despised Domitian may have been at least a mild source of embarrassment after the emperor's assassination. Regardless, after serving Domitian in his wars along the Danube his advancement continued, reaching the Consulship in AD 91, followed by appointments as governor of Moesia inferior and Germania Superior.

With the death of Domitian and accession of Nerva in AD 96, Trajan's ultimate fate began to unfold. Though Nerva was popular with Roman aristocracy, he was not a favored choice of the Legions or the Praetorians. Trajan, a life long soldier of considerable reputation became the catalyst that would secure Nerva's reign and provide for a smooth transition of power between the Flavians and the so-called '5 Good Emperors'. He maintained an air of familiarity with his men and came to be endeared by them. However, his authority was unquestionable and his familiarity with

provincial administration thanks to his father's and his own long terms of service abroad, provided a firm foundation for imperial governing.

Under political fire from the Praetorian Guard, Nerva nominated Trajan as his heir in the autumn of AD 97 and mutinous machinations were immediately quelled. News of the decision arrived in Germania along with the future emperor Hadrian, whom Trajan was a guardian of, and with it came full imperial and tribunician power essentially making Trajan co-emperor. Rather than make his way immediately to Rome to assume control, however, the new emperor moved north to Germania Inferior where he assured the loyalty of legions guarding the Rhine. Here he stayed for several months, where he dealt with the mutinous Praetorians that he had summoned to him, and settled various provincial and military affairs. In January of AD 98, word arrived that Nerva had died and Trajan was confirmed as the next Roman Emperor but again Trajan remained away from the capitol city. Instead, Trajan remained in Germania and along the Danubian border provinces to undoubtedly make arrangements for his future invasions. Fortifications (limes) were inspected and expanded, loyalty of legions secured, military roads constructed and by AD 99 the time had come to make his grand entrance at Rome.

Trajan eventually arrived in Rome in AD 99 under circumstances that rivaled a triumphal procession. He entered the city on foot and was greeted by massive crowds. The Senate too was pleased with this new choice in spite of his 'provincial' origin and the manner of his selection as heir without their pre-approval. He re-affirmed the vow by Nerva that no Senator would be harmed and applied the Augustan principals of the principate. Trajan was considerate and mindful to Republican tradition making sure that the position of emperor appeared again like that of a first citizen among peers rather than a despot that ruled at his own whims. He ruled with an outward lack of political ambition and it endeared him to both the masses and the aristocracy. Coupled with his abilities as a general and conqueror, he would come to be loved as a model of Roman virtue and dignity.

Dacian Wars

Before Trajan returned to Rome in AD 99 to assume his place as 'emperor', time spent scouting enemy dispositions and investigating the Danube fortifications assuredly inspired him to prepare for an offensive into Dacia. Earlier campaigns against the Dacians as well as against Germanic tribes across the Danube by Domitian had met with some success, but the situation had been largely left unsettled. The Dacian King Decebalus, who had remained in power as a thorn in the proverbial Roman side, had spent the better part of the last decade securing his position and preparing armies in the Roman style. Thanks in large part to engineers provided by Domitian, Decebalus had fortified the approaches into his kingdom and created a formidable obstacle to Roman dominance of the region. As Decebalus raised his status to one that was among the most capable enemies in Roman history, Trajan had little choice but to plan a campaign to eliminate the threat.

Though the new emperor was a soldier at heart, he also understood the necessity of making political arrangements in Rome before entirely focusing his energy elsewhere. The year AD 100 was spent in Rome both honoring Nerva, ultimately with deification, and building a sense of governing authority within the Senate. The imperial court was minimal in comparison to previous 'administrations' and Trajan preferred a low key approach to government. Throughout his reign he would rely upon provincial governors to make decisions on their own merits and defer to the emperor only in matters of extreme importance. Thanks to Pliny the Younger, the provincial governor whose correspondence with Trajan is largely extant, a vivid portrait of Trajan's style can be seen (despite the terrible lack of information from other ancient historians). In effect, his rule was much like that of a general using subordinate officers in a military sense. Like Nerva, Trajan continued the popular measures that punished the delators (informers) for their part in creating

administrative disorder and he reduced the power of the Praetorians and reformed the court system. For his deeds in continuing and perfecting the social welfare system known as the *alimenta*, he earned the name *Optimus*, or best, from the people. In the short time that he stayed in Rome, Trajan prepared the Roman world for 60 years of steady and effective leadership.

All the while he stayed in Rome however the emperor's sights were set across the Danube. The great historian Tacitus, a contemporary of Trajan, had published his work '*Germania*' in this time period (one of the few ancient sources dedicated to the little known Germanics) initiating public propaganda that would support military expeditions to the north. Though Trajan's target never quite fell in line with Tacitus' expectations, there was likely wide public and aristocratic approval, thanks in part to the historians' efforts. Trajan raised two legions prior to launching an attack, II Traiana and XXX Ulpia (so numbered as it was the 30th active legion at the time) and shifted existing legionary placement to support a large scale campaign. By the spring of AD 101 plans were settled and the emperor marched north with an army that would eventually involve as many as 11 legions.

Unfortunately the details of Trajan's campaign are largely lost to history. Dio Cassius' account is partially fragmented and lacking the military attentions of past writers, such as Caesar. The other notable historians of the era, Suetonius, Tacitus, etc. did not focus much attention on the reigns of contemporary emperors but instead wrote largely about events prior to their own lifetimes thereby leaving Trajan ignored by the most common ancient resources. Despite this, we do know that the Dacian War was a combination of difficult fighting mixed with marvels of engineering. The defenses of Decebalus were impressive and Trajan was required to use the vaunted discipline and perseverance of the Roman army to succeed. With the service of the engineer Apollodorus of Damascus, the Romans completed immense road works along the Danube, begun a century earlier under Tiberius, and defeated the difficulty of logistics and hazardous terrain. In a great feat of engineering and architecture, Apollodorus designed a road straight up to and through the Iron Gates of the Danubian gorges by cantilevering it from the sheer rock face. This marvel of technology essentially allowed the legions to walk on top of the river as they made their way into the Carpathian Mountains.

A significant battle was fought at Tapae in AD 101 (the sight of a previous battle under Domitian in AD 89) on the approach to the Dacian capital of Sarmizegethusa. According to Dio Cassius keeping with the tradition of Trajan as a compassionate commander, "(Trajan) engaged the foe, and saw many wounded on his own side and killed many of the enemy. And when the bandages gave out, he is said not to have spared even his own clothing, but to have cut it up into strips. In honor of the soldiers who had died in the battle he ordered an altar to be erected and funeral rites to be performed annually." Soon after the Romans advanced upon the Dacian capital and Decebalus was forced to capitulate. Surprisingly, the powerful leader was left in power as a client king to Rome, but he agreed to raze his fortresses, surrender weapons and prisoners and likely paid a sizeable tribute (though Dio doesn't provide any detail.)

Temporarily victorious and having been rewarded the title *Dacicus*, Trajan returned to Rome to celebrate a triumph. He entertained the people with gladiatorial games and rewarded his officers for their service in the campaign. The celebration was short-lived though as Decebalus may have mistakenly compared the conviction of Trajan to that of Domitian. After his 'defeat' to Domitian (in which the Romans actually paid a tribute to Decebalus in order to keep the peace) he was allowed to rebuild his army and defense systems virtually unopposed. After this more recent defeat however, similar actions that effectively broke the peace arrangements were met with swift and decisive imperial response.

In preparation for another Danube crossing, Trajan again turned to his engineer Apollodorus for project of unprecedented military grandeur. A massive stone bridge spanning over 3,500 feet (1,100 meters) in length and 60 feet (19 meters) in width was built using enormous wooden arches set upon 20 stone and cement pillars. Built over the course of 2 years, this bridge became the

primary source of traffic to and from Dacia. Despite finally being purposely destroyed a century and a half later by Aurelian as the Romans pulled out of Dacia, it was to remain for more than a thousand years the longest bridge that had ever been built. In AD 105 the new campaign was launched, and according to Dio, "Trajan, having crossed the Danube by means of the bridge, conducted the war with safe prudence rather than with haste, and eventually, after a hard struggle, vanquished the Dacians. In the course of the campaign he himself performed many deeds of good generalship and bravery, and his troops ran many risks and displayed great prowess on his behalf." A hard fought war lasting for just over a year ended with the Romans once again descending upon the Dacian capital of Sarmizegethusa. This time however, there was to be no respite for Decebalus. Rather than retain the right to rule as a client King, he was forced to flee. Rather than end up as a trophy in Trajan's second Dacian triumph, Decebalus was eventually forced to take his own life.

Dacia was immediately annexed as an imperial province, and many new colonies were founded laying a foundation for Roman influence that lasts into the present day. In fact, Romania, the modern equivalent to a portion of Dacian territory speaks a language that claims to be the most closely related modern tongue to that of ancient Latin. Additionally, again thanks to Apollodorus, Trajan left two impressive monuments commemorating his victory. The Tropaeum Traiani (restored in the late 20th century after 2 millennia of slow decay) in modern Adamclisi stands atop a hill and its visibility from great distances was a constant reminder of Rome's power. In Rome, Apollodorus built one of the great lasting treasures of imperial architecture. Trajan's Column is a sculpted pillar, standing 100 Roman feet tall, with 23 rings depicting a vast assortment of images relaying the history of the Dacian Wars. While it served as an unparalleled piece of propaganda glorifying the emperor and his achievements, it also stands today as an invaluable primary source of information into the Roman legions and ancient warfare.

When Trajan returned to Rome in AD 106, he did so with a vast treasure. According to Trajan's ancient contemporary Cryton (whose original work was lost but retold through Ioannes Lydus in the 6th Century) 'the sum of five million gold and twice as much silver' was taken. Though this number is difficult to translate into modern equivalents (and must be measured with a sense for ancient exaggerations) one scholar, Jerome Carcopino, roughly translated this immense sum to 180 tons (165,000 kg) of gold and 360 tons (331,000 kg) of silver. With this enormous haul Trajan was able to secure the health of the imperial treasury, finance projects such as the draining of the Pontine Marshes and provide a triumph that was unrivaled in the long history of Rome. 123 straight days of gladiatorial games were held, including fights between as many as 10,000 pairs of gladiators and the death of 11,000 animals. With his popularity among the people and the aristocracy at an unrivaled peak, even embassies from as far away as India came to Rome to pay respects to the man who was commonly becoming regarded as the greatest Emperor since Augustus, if not the greatest of all.

Return of the Principate

The key element of Trajan's administrative reign was the return of favorable relations with the aristocracy. Much like Augustus, Trajan readily delegated governing authority, and unlike previous 'emperors' there was a fundamental shift from the use of the freedman as political advisor and confidant back to the traditional Senate and Equestrian classes. During his near 20 year reign, he held the consulship only 6 times (contrasted by the 34 consulships held by the Flavians in the quarter century that they held power) while returning it to a position of honor in which numerous friends and allies openly served multiple terms.

At the same time such delegation of power was made with the intent of centralizing Roman government rather than allowing the corruption of past semi-independent provincial authority. The position of the *curatores* (a financial officer of the imperial government) was expanded upon to

limit corruption and solidify standard practices of provincial rule. In these representatives Trajan placed the utmost trust as illustrated by the letters of Pliny the younger, who served Trajan in such a capacity in Bithynia et Pontus. In fact, Trajan expected these officers to function in much the same capacity as military subordinates, using their own discretion for most decisions and deferring to emperor only in matters of extreme importance.

Despite his attention to provincial government and the expansion of grand public welfare measures such as the *alimenta*, Trajan was not a reformer. The alimentary system of providing food and general welfare to the citizenry may have been advanced far beyond any previous gestures (so much so that the general complacency of Romans was referred to as '*panem et circenses*' or bread and circuses by the contemporary Satirist *Junonius*), but its expansion was not a concept conceived by Trajan, nor was it simply intended as aid for the poor. Trajan understood the importance of Latin and Italian origins to the overall health of the empire and the *alimenta* largely encouraged the birth rate in Rome and Italy. As a life long man of the military, he also observed what was certainly deemed a dangerous trend towards barbarization of the legions, which could be slowed or reversed through these social programs. His view of Christianity, preserved by Pliny in his numerous letters, shows a general indifference provided they recognize the authority of the Roman gods, despite later accusations of intolerance by the Christian author Tertullian.

In addition to the *alimenta*, Trajan sponsored imperial building projects that touched all corners of the empire. From his military monument and bridge building efforts in Dacia to the famed Trajan's column in Rome, he relied upon his famed architect Apollodorus of Damascus for a wide array of improvements. Included in the more grand of these projects was Trajan's Forum, the largest of any such fora in the city, the Markets of Trajan which were built as the Roman equivalent of a modern shopping mall and the imperial baths which used the foundations of Nero's *Domus Aurea* (Golden House) and were fed by a newly constructed aqueduct (the *Via Traiana*). Shipping throughout the empire was increased through port expansion including that of Ostia (Rome's harbor on the Tiber and the Mediterranean). Road construction was expanded throughout the empire, the most well known being the *Via Traiana*, which provided a better alternative from Rome to Brundisium than the famous *Via Appia* (Appian Way). Along this route, one of southern Italy's most preserved Roman monuments was built; the Arch of Beneventum which was constructed to highlight Trajan's many great achievements.

Trajan's reign too was notable for inclusion of women in imperial public life. Having no children of his own and a considerably small primary family, the influence of his wife and sister is perhaps unrivalled in Roman history. Unlike such previous imperial women as Livia (wife of Augustus), Messalina and Agrippina (wives of Claudius with the latter being the mother of Nero), the women in Trajan's life were considered positive influences and were honored for their service to the empire rather than vilified in the historical record. Pompeia Plotina, Trajan's wife and Marciana, his sister were both honored with the title of *Augusta* in AD 105. Marciana's daughter Matidia went on to be honored in the same way upon her mother's death and she and Pompeia were instrumental in the accession of Hadrian after Trajan's passing. To illustrate the importance in public sentiment Hadrian, in order to cement his connection to Trajan, was married to Sabina (the daughter of Matidia) and remained so despite years of mutual loathing and his own suspected homosexual preferences.

The emperor however, despite his many achievements in Rome as a civilian ruler was a still a general at heart. Expansion in the east, including previously uncontrolled portions of Syria and Arabia Petraea (annexed in AD 105), put Rome into a position which controlled critical strategic trade junctures between east and west. As such, affairs in Armenia, long contested for political influence between Rome and the Parthian Empire came to a head by AD 113. Parthia had placed a candidate upon the throne of Armenia that did not meet with Roman approval and Trajan sought to put an end to Parthian rivalry once and for all.

Parthian War

Dating from the eastern conquests of Licinius Lucullus and Pompey Magnus in the 60's BC and into the imperial period, Roman expansion made conflict with Parthia inevitable. During the reign of Nero (50's - 60's AD), a major campaign to ensure Roman hegemony over Armenia was conducted under Cnaeus Domitius Corbulo. Though the war between Rome and Parthia largely resulted in a stalemate, the matter was settled by allowing Rome the final authority in naming the Armenian King. Despite the settlement the situation remained problematic for the better part of the next half century and during Trajan's reign matters of Armenian succession flared into war again.

By AD 113, the Parthian King Osroes I (in the midst of an internal conflict with rival King Vologases III) had deposed the Armenian King in favor of his own nephew (likely to strengthen his position within the Parthian borders), breaking the already tenuous peace between Rome and Parthia. Trajan's reaction was swift and he moved east from Rome while preparing an invasion force. Failed attempts to broker a peace by the Parthians before any impending Roman invasion led to understandable contemporary speculation that Trajan's true motive was an Alexandrian style campaign of conquest, and political events simply offered a convenient excuse. Regardless of Trajan's personal motivation for going to war he marched into Armenia in AD 114. Initial resistance was weak and ineffective (perhaps an indication of the debilitating internal struggle in Parthia); Armenia's royalty was deposed and its independence stripped with its annexation as a Roman province.

Over the following two years, Trajan moved south from Armenia directly into Parthian territory. Militarily, his campaign was met with great success and resistance in the field was ineffective. With the capture of such cities as Babylon and the Parthian capital of Ctesiphon on the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, Mesopotamia and Assyria (essentially comprising modern Iraq) were annexed as Roman provinces and the emperor received the title Parthicus. Trajan continued his march to the southeast, eventually reaching the Persian Gulf in AD 116. Though Dio Cassius reports that Trajan would have preferred to march in the footsteps of Alexander, his advanced age (approximately 63 years) and slowly failing health forced him to abandon any such thoughts.

Despite the swiftness of the initial victories, the long term prospects for Roman control were completely in doubt. Returning to the west and crossing the Tigris, Trajan stopped to lay siege to the desert town of Hatra. In AD 117, with poor supply and unable to breach the walls, the Romans suffered their first defeat of the campaign with Trajan narrowly avoiding personal injury. To add insult to the defeat, the recently 'conquered' population of Jewish inhabitants began to revolt against newly installed Roman rule. For reasons that aren't entirely clear, though religion certainly played a major part, the revolt spread to Jews living in Egypt, Cyrene and Cyprus.

The massacre of Roman citizens on a massive scale by armed Jewish mobs in Cyprus (recorded as 240,000) and Cyrene as well as the destruction of pagan temples forced brutal retaliation. Massacre was met with massacre as Trajan ordered legionary response to the uprising. Jews were virtually expelled from Cyprus and the population of North Africa (Jewish, Roman and Greek) was decimated. The revolt and its suppression dragged on even into the reign of Hadrian (who would be faced years later with another considerable Jewish uprising in Judaea), but Trajan still yearned for his Alexander style eastern campaign and exacting revenge against the people of Hatra. A planned renewal of the offensive was brought to a halt as the emperor fell ill during the summer of AD 117, and Trajan began the trip back to Rome. Landing in Cilicia after a short journey by sea, the emperor died in Selinus on August 9 most likely of natural causes.

Trajan, having no children of his own, had never settled the matter of succession, but Hadrian (the son of Trajan's cousin) had long held a favored position with the Empress Plotina. Though the official word was that Trajan adopted Hadrian on his death bed, rumor had it that the choice was

made only after the emperor's death. Regardless, it was Hadrian who was left in command in the east after Trajan fell ill and the matter of his succession was uncontested (and abruptly gave up all of the eastern territorial gains). Trajan, who had held the same level of power as such predecessors as Domitian, wielded it with far less strict authority and won the admiration of both the masses and aristocracy. He was quickly deified by the Senate and Trajan's greatness was recognized for centuries to come. Each successive emperor even through to the Christian era of the late 4th century AD, was blessed with the prayer 'felicius Augusto, melior Traiano', or (may he be) 'more fortunate than Augustus and better than Trajan.'

Hadrian AD 117 - 138 (born AD 76 - died 138)

Publius Aelius Hadrianus was born on January 24, AD 76 likely in Rome but possibly in the same place of Trajan's birth, Italica, Hispania Baetica. Regardless, Hadrian certainly spent much of his youth in Rome where his father, P. Aelius Hadrianus Afer, had served various magistracies including the praetorship. His family, though probably considered obscure and provincial by imperial standards (it had moved from Picenum in Italia to Hispania shortly after the Second Punic War some three centuries prior), was to gain rapid advancement along with the rise of Trajan in political and military significance. Trajan was the cousin to Hadrian's father and with the father's death in about AD 86 Trajan became joint guardian of the young future emperor along with P. Acilius Attianus. As he and his wife Pompeia Plotina had no children of their own, they certainly helped fill a role as surrogate parents, though there was no official adoption.

Hadrian was in Rome as a teenager and with the backing of Trajan, one of Domitian's key legionary commanders, he followed a rapid and customary rise through the *cursus honorum*. By the age of 20 Hadrian was serving his first of three consecutive military tribunates, perhaps indicating Trajan's desire for his surrogate son to follow his military footsteps. With the assassination of Domitian in AD 96, the accession of Nerva and the adoption of Trajan as his heir (because of his position of importance as a leading general able to quell any threat of a legionary mutiny against the new emperor) Hadrian quickly found himself thrust into the heart of imperial politics. It was Hadrian, while serving his second military tribunate in Moesia, who personally carried the congratulations and loyalty of the Danubian legions to Trajan. Having arrived and affirmed his place of importance in Trajan's court, Hadrian was kept on hand, appointed to a third tribunate of one of Trajan's own legions, Legio XXII Primigenia in Germania Superior.

Within a year of Trajan's adoption as heir to the Roman 'throne', Nerva died (AD 98) and Hadrian's influence in imperial affairs continued to rise along with the new emperor. By AD 100, Pompeia Plotina who remained an influential and driving force in Hadrian's career arranged a marriage with Trajan's grand niece Vibia Sabina. Though Hadrian would remain married until his wife's death in AD 136 or 37 the marriage was one of complete unhappiness. Despite the unpleasant nature of his marital relationship, Hadrian remained close to Pompeia and also to his mother-in-law Matidia (Trajan's niece). Though their favor, and certainly his own merits, Hadrian continued to advanced during Trajan's principate.

He accompanied the emperor as a quaestor on his first campaign in Dacia, commanded a Legion (I Minervia) during the second war (AD 105-6) and held several posts of military importance throughout Trajan's reign. Shortly after Dacia, he was sent to govern Pannonia where a stern hand was needed to discipline Roman troops and to fend off incursions by Sarmatian neighbors. As a reward for exemplary services, Hadrian was awarded his first consulship in AD 108 and continued to serve various official roles over the course of the next several years. According to the questionable ancient source, the *Historia Augusta*, a steady flow of honors continued to be awarded to Hadrian until his ultimate adoption as Trajan's heir. When Trajan began his campaign against the Parthians (circa AD 114), Hadrian was eventually appointed to a key eastern command. With Hadrian serving as governor of Syria in AD 117 Trajan's failing health forced him to abandon the war, leaving Hadrian in command of the east. While en route to Rome, Trajan's health worsened and he died on August 8 at Selinus in Cilicia.

The circumstances surrounding Hadrian's adoption and ultimate accession have long been clouded in mystery. Though there were clear indications as to Hadrian's favored status as a member of the emperor's inner circle, Trajan never made a public endorsement of him, or any other potential candidate as heir. The highly dubious account recorded in the *Historia Augusta* even suggests that Trajan purposely did not leave an heir in order to follow the example set by Alexander the Great, leaving the matter either to be decided by the Senate or his various generals. Dio Cassius reported that Trajan's widow Pompeia actually secured Hadrian's adoption, announcing the adoption posthumously through letters signed in her own hand rather than Trajan's. Regardless of the truth of the matter, the choice proved a wise one in that it certainly helped prevent the potential for civil war. Hadrian was announced as Trajan's heir by Pompeia and by the Praetorian Prefect Attianus (the man appointed as joint guardian of the youthful Hadrian along with Trajan) on August 9, AD 117, though the emperor's death was still kept secret from the public. Two days later, on the 11th, when Trajan's death was finally declared, the Syrian legions hailed Hadrian as the new emperor and the matter was reduced to a mere formality awaiting Senatorial approval.

Hadrian traveled immediately to Selinus where he was present for Trajan's cremation and likely confirmed the loyalty of key members of his predecessor's entourage. Rather than immediately travel to Rome, however, Hadrian returned to Syria where he seems to have spent the better part of the next year preparing his administration and settling eastern affairs. Despite the support of his legions and the bulk of the imperial court, there were several potential rivals. Four respected proconsular lieutenants of Trajan were executed shortly after Hadrian's accession, forever marring his relationship with the Senate. Lucius Quietus a Mauretanian general who was largely in charge of suppressing the Jewish revolts that followed the Parthian invasions, Cornelius Palma, another Legate and former governor of Syria, Avidius Nigrinus, governor of Dacia and Publilius Celsus were killed for 'plotting against Hadrian'. Despite the fact that it was the Senate who ordered the executions, it was most likely done at the behest of one of Hadrian's agents. That agent perhaps was Attianus, still serving as praetorian prefect for his former ward. Hadrian, probably to avoid both political and public backlash, forever denied any involvement in the affair whatsoever and proclaimed his innocence publicly, even joining the sentiments of his predecessors Nerva and Trajan who swore to never harm a member of the Senate. However, the continued favor shown to Attianus and lack of any retaliatory response would seem to indicate that despite his 'innocence' he found the executions perfectly acceptable. Had Hadrian simply accepted responsibility, acknowledging personal enmity and jealousy over his succession as reasons for the executions, his strained relationship with the Senate may have been avoided.

Despite the perilous start to his reign, the new emperor, Imperator Caesar Traianus Hadrianus Augustus, would prove to be an effective yet completely different sort of leader. Not only would he immediately give up some of Trajan's territorial gains (another unpopular move with the above mentioned rivals) in order to bring the empire's borders more in line with the Augustan policy of using natural defenses, he would soon embark on an ambitious journey throughout the empire to inspect military dispositions, quell revolts and catalogue the affairs of Rome's provinces.

Hadrian's Travels

Hadrian arrived in Rome in the summer of AD 118, nearly a year after his actual succession to Trajan. His predecessor's eastern conquests had facilitated a massive Jewish revolt which required an in kind legionary response. While these revolts were largely quelled while Trajan was still alive, Hadrian was forced to finish the work. As one part of his ultimate resolution of the matter, Hadrian understood the difficulty in controlling the east beyond the Euphrates River and gave up Trajan's recent conquests. While unpopular, especially to the legions that had brought these territories under Roman control with their blood, the desire to mark natural defensible borders necessitated the policy. In Dacia, however, whether he felt a need to deflect a growing

sense of legionary resentment at his eastern withdrawal policy, desired continued economic control of Dacia's important mineral wealth (gold mines) or a combination of both, Hadrian confirmed and upheld Trajan's annexation of the territory.

Hadrian's eventual arrival in Rome was greeted with Senatorial hostility, thanks largely to the executions of four proconsular magistrates. As such, Hadrian focused on measures to increase his popularity with the masses. Numerous honors were voted upon Trajan (though more from the Senate than directly from Hadrian), massive debt was cancelled in an enormously popular public burning of the records, the port at Ostia was expanded to secure additional grain supplies and the *alimenta* (essentially providing government support to local communities) begun by Nerva and expanded by Trajan was continued. Building and restoration of public works throughout the empire was conducted on an unprecedented scale and Hadrian was an enormous patron of the arts and literature. Perhaps the most important achievement of Hadrian's reign was the reformation of the legal system. Conducted by Salvius Julianus (grandfather to future emperor Didius Julianus), these reforms included regular review of magisterial decrees and edicts ensuring that such measures provided desired and positive effects.

Despite his efforts, some reforms and projects (such as tearing down a theatre built by Trajan on the Campus Martius) were terribly unpopular. His poor relationship and lack of popularity with the senate, coupled with a strong desire to review the Empire's defenses, inspired him to leave the hostile city and explore the provinces first hand. In AD 121, Hadrian left Rome on an extended tour beginning to the north in Gaul. From there he continued to Germania where the legions were drilled and trained in such a manner as to increase discipline that had grown lax. For centuries Roman armies had been raised only for temporary purposes involving conquest or defense from invaders. It was only during the imperial period that the legions became permanent standing forces that maintained static garrisons. As such, complacency from inactivity was a genuine concern. In addition to personally drilling the men (and performing such training right along with them), defense works were inspected, men of quality promoted and arrangements for military supply and logistics were settled.

From Germania, Hadrian continued north to Britannia where the matter of a defined controllable border was an ultimate concern. Unlike other frontier provinces such as Germania, which used the Danube and Rhine Rivers as natural borders, Britain had no such clearly marked and defensible position. Despite previous efforts to bring the far north under Roman control (under Agricola during the reign of Domitian) the logistical problems of asserting dominance over the scattered highland tribes made such efforts impractical. As northern Britain lacked a naturally defensible position, Hadrian ordered the situation remedied by the building of a massive wall to separate Rome from barbarian. Hadrian's Wall was built by legionaries (contrary to popular opinion, Roman armies rather than slaves had always been responsible for building not only defense works, but roads and sometimes aqueducts) in a massive effort that spanned eight years (AD 122 - 130).

The wall, stretching for 80 miles between modern Carlisle in the west and Newcastle in the east, was between 8 and 10 ft. thick and as high as 15 feet tall. Mile castles were built at 1 mile intervals (hence the name) and were garrisoned by *auxilia* (numbering approximately 9,000 men at any given time). Though the wall itself was a formidable defensive structure, its ultimate purpose was not truly to serve as a barrier, but as a deterrent to tribal aggression and perhaps more importantly, to act as a funnel forcing trade and civilian traffic through well regulated defensible positions.

From Britain, Hadrian continued south to Hispania and then to Mauretania in Northern Africa, where a revolt of the Moors was suppressed. From the African coastal city of Cyrene Hadrian continued east (which he preferred due its Hellenistic nature) visiting Crete, Syria, Pontus, Bithynia, Asia Minor and circling back through Thracia, Moesia, Dacia, Pannonia, Greece, Athens and Sicily before finally returning to Rome in AD 125. Spending just a few years in Italy, Hadrian was once again consumed by the 'wanderlust' and returned to Athens by AD 129. Hadrian held a

fascination for Greek philosophy and culture and as such would visit Athens at least 3 times during his reign. The city too would benefit greatly from the emperor's patronage in the form of numerous building projects and improvements. The 'Greekling' as Hadrian came to be known, next journeyed from Athens back to Asia, then to Pamphylia, Phrygia, Cilicia, Syria, Cappadocia, Pontus, Antioch and Judaea by AD 130.

Hadrian's journey would continue to Egypt, again to Syria, Asia and Athens and eventually back to Rome in AD 132 but it was in Judaea that Hadrian's ambitious plans took a turn for the worse. In most of his provincial visits he was greeted enthusiastically thanks in part to gifts he offered to the populace, coupled with various public works projects. In the home of the Jews, however, there was a natural enmity carried over from the revolts during Trajan's reign and Hadrian paid little heed to the volatility of the region. First, he planned to rebuild Jerusalem (largely razed by Titus in AD 70) in the manner of a Roman city, complete with a temple to Jupiter where the Great Temple of Jerusalem once stood. While this affront to the religious sensibilities of the Jews passed without major incident, it planted the seeds of discontent. Two years later Hadrian, whose Hellenistic sensibilities found several strange Jewish customs to be repulsive, passed a law forbidding the Jewish practice of circumcision. As unrest began to stir, the collapse of the tomb of Solomon in Jerusalem due to Roman construction activity, was the final catalyst to set off wide spread revolt.

The revolt, led by Simon ben Kosiba (or Bar Kochba for 'son of star' indicating that ben Kosiba was considered a messiah), proved to be yet another difficult challenge for the Romans in Judaea. Lasting for 3 years (forcing Hadrian to return and remain in the east from AD 134 - 136), thanks in large part to the Jew's wise policy of avoiding direct large scale engagements with Roman legions, the destruction of the province and loss of life was devastating. According to Cassius Dio, nearly 1,000 Jewish villages and just fewer than 600,000 people were killed in various engagements. The Romans losses too were considerable. Having used at least 3 full legions, numerous auxilia and detachments from several other nearby legions it is assumed (because it disappears from historical records after this point) that at least one legion, XXII Deiotariana, was completely destroyed in the uprising and never reconstituted. When the Romans were eventually victorious in AD 136, Hadrian's punishment was severe. Dead Jews were left unburied and to rot in the streets for years and many others were sold as slaves. Jewish temples were replaced by Pagan equivalents, Rabbis were imprisoned and executed, it was forbidden to teach Mosaic Law or to own religious scrolls and the people were forbidden even from entering Jerusalem. To drive the point home, the city was even renamed to Aelia Capitolina and Judaea itself to Palaestinae. Following the brutal suppressions of both Trajan and Hadrian, the Jews had finally settled under Roman control and would never again rise up against them.

Hadrian and the Arts

In addition to Hadrian's great provincial travels, and corresponding centralization of imperial government, Hadrian was an unrivaled patron of the arts and literature. Despite his extensive military background, certainly stemming from his relationship as a ward of Trajan, Hadrian was a student of Greek philosophy, culture and the arts. In addition to his studies abroad, he was a writer (his autobiography is unfortunately lost) a poet and an architect of some note. Though criticism garnered from Trajan's famed architect Apollodorus regarding Hadrian's architectural style seemingly resulted in the master engineer's banishment and eventual execution. Hadrian's jealousy and ego in matters of the arts, accompanied by a fractured relationship with the Senate, certainly earned the emperor a legacy of disfavor among the societal elite.

Despite the criticism of Apollodorus and others, Hadrian's interests in architecture left Rome with some of its finest monuments including the completion of Trajan's forum. One masterpiece in particular, the Pantheon (AD 125) originally commissioned by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa and destroyed by fire circa AD 80, was rebuilt according to Hadrian's specifications. Despite its conversion from Pagan temple to Christian church, it survives architecturally to this day largely as

it was built 2 millenia ago and still serves as an operating church. The great dome, the centerpiece of the monument remained the largest in the world until the 20th century and is remarkable for the central circular opening (or oculus) which was representative of the sun and provides the interior's only light.

A new bridge, the Pons Aelius, led to Hadrian's grand mausoleum which was larger than that of even Augustus but was left uncompleted at the time of the emperor's death. Hadrian's wanderlust also inspired temples and construction projects throughout the empire. Athens in particular, the city of which he was most fond, was left with a great temple to Zeus (larger even than the Pantheon in Rome) that marked a boundary for a new city center. His wanderings also inspired Hadrian to recreate various buildings and structures from the provinces he visited. At perhaps his most elaborate and innovative series of architectural constructions, the Villa of Hadrian in modern Tivoli, approximately 100 buildings of various design and cultural influence were symbolic of the empire's far reaching power and Hadrian's love of architecture.

Hadrian was considered an expert in such fields as arithmetic, geometry, painting, music, poetry and literature. While his prowess in these fields may have been challenged by other contemporary 'experts' Hadrian's position of power and overbearing ego subjected these contemporaries to countless criticisms and abuses. Despite his great love and patronage of the arts much, his relationships with leading scholars of the day, like that with Apollodorus the architect, were precarious at best. Suetonius, the author of 'The Twelve Caesar's' was a leading secretary to Hadrian and was afforded access to imperial documents long since lost, before eventually being dismissed for indiscreet behavior with the empress (whom Hadrian had a cold and distant relationship with, perhaps affording reason why Suetonius was not executed). Teachers of the day were subjected to all manners of ridicule and humiliation, despite greater training or knowledge in many cases, yet he constantly sought them out for discussion, debate and exchanges in poetry and philosophy. According to Aelius Spartianus and the debatable testament presented in the 'Historia Augusta' (which unfortunately is one of the few surviving written accounts of Hadrian) the emperor "bestowed both honors and riches upon all who professed these arts, though he always tormented them with his questions." In some cases, these various teachers and practitioners would be rewarded just prior to being dismissed from service.

Despite Hadrian's confusing behavior, he counted among his personal friends many members of the 'scholarly elite' including the philosophers Epictetus and Heliodorus and was an acquaintance of such authors as the previously mentioned Suetonius and Plutarch (famed for his 'Parallel Lives'). Perhaps the greatest example of these rather strange friendships, and the tolerance shown by Hadrian's so-called friends (as well as being indicative of the ambiguous nature of politics and survival during the Principate in general), again comes from Aelius Spartianus and his account of the philosopher Favorinus:

"And once Favorinus, when he had yielded to Hadrian's criticism of a word which he had used, raised a merry laugh among his friends. For when they reproached him for having done wrong in yielding to Hadrian in the matter of a word used by reputable authors, he replied: "You are urging a wrong course, my friends, when you do not suffer me to regard as the most learned of men the one who has thirty legions."

Antinous and Succession

Many of the details regarding Hadrian's personal life are largely speculative, but one relationship in particular has long been the subject of extraordinary attention. Despite the emperor's close relations to his mother-in-law Matidia (Trajan's niece), his marital arrangement with Matidia's daughter Vibia Sabina is characterized as distant at best. According to the Historia Augusta Hadrian was well known for various sexual escapades including with married women, which probably did little to endear him to his wife. More scandalous however is the insinuation that the emperor preferred adult men over women (which perhaps oddly enough according to modern

sensibilities, was considered less appropriate than maintaining sexual relations with 'boys'). However, there was one young member of Hadrian's imperial court that received particular attention from the emperor and from historians.

Antinous, a handsome Bithynian born about AD 110 (about 34 years Hadrian's junior), had met the emperor at some point in his early to mid teens and certainly joined him on various expeditions throughout the imperial provinces. While traveling the Nile circa AD 130 Antinous died under what appears to have been mysterious circumstances. While Cassius Dio reported that accidental drowning was the cause of death, the *Historia Augusta* more dramatically suggested that the young man sacrificed himself willingly because various omens implied that his own shortened life would prolong that of Hadrian's. Regardless of the circumstances, Hadrian's reaction was one of overwhelming grief. While there is the possibility that Antinous was simply a favored protege (this is admittedly unlikely) the extravagant honors heaped upon the dead young man were enormous. Cities in his name were founded, statues were erected all over the empire, and Antinous was worshipped in association with the gods Osiris, Bacchus and others, essentially making him a member of the Roman imperial cult.

Whatever the true circumstances regarding Antinous, when Hadrian eventually returned to Rome for the final time from his wide ranging tour of the Empire (including the debilitating Jewish wars) he was faced with the difficult task of finding an heir. Hadrian was about 60 years old by this time (AD 136) and was facing deteriorating health. Without legitimate children of his own (and by this time his wife had died) adoption was the only choice and Hadrian wanted the succession to be public knowledge rather than a repeat of the mysterious circumstances surrounding his own adoption by Trajan. His first choice, L. Ceionius Commodus, was a young man (though in poor health himself) of considerable political connection but one who lacked military experience or redeeming qualities of any great substance. Perhaps fortunately from a perspective of prosperity, Commodus died before Hadrian (AD 138) did and the search for an heir continued.

Hadrian's next choice, T. Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Arrius Antoninus, who would become known simply as Antoninus, was a man only 10 years Hadrian's junior. Antoninus was not only of a distinguished consular family but had achieved the consulship himself en route to obtaining a position among the aristocratic elite as the governor of Asia Minor. His adoption would prove to be another positive step in the course of the "adoptive emperors" era. Hadrian took the adoption a step further, however, naming Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus (Lucius Verus) and Marcus Annius Verus (Marcus Aurelius) as joint heirs to Antoninus. Perhaps he feared the conspiracy that could grow in the absence of imperial stability or perhaps he was simply trying to ensure the quality administration of the empire, but whatever his reasoning these actions saw to that continued stability for the next 40 - 50 years (arguably ending with the death of Marcus Aurelius in AD 180 or even through the reign of Commodus in AD 193).

With the matter of succession settled in such a way as to continue the era of the "5 Good Emperors" Hadrian died at the age of 62, after a lengthy reign of 21 years, on July 10, 138 AD at his villa in Baiae. With his death, opponents within the Senate saw the opportunity to finally have revenge for various slights and transgressions against them over the course of Hadrian's reign. Attempts to condemn Hadrian's memory (as had been done to Domitian) were foiled by Antoninus as he played the part of honorable adopted son. His diligence in reversing the sentiment against Hadrian and having his adoptive father deified certainly played a role in earning him the name "Pius".

Antoninus Pius AD 138 - 161 (born AD 86 - died 161)

The rise of T. Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Arrius Antoninus, simply known as Antoninus Pius, could be considered an unlikely yet fortunate turn of events. His reign, though far from one of perpetual peace as has often been described, was one of political stability, economic prosperity and consistent military strength. Antoninus was born in September, AD 86 in the city of Lanuvium very

near Rome. Despite his family heritage originating from Narbonensis (the southern coast of Gaul), his grandfather (Titus Aurelius Fulvus) had risen to the consulship twice and his father (Aurelius Fulvus) had served once in the same capacity. To further cement the prestige and aristocratic lineage of his family the future emperor's maternal grandfather Arrius Antoninus had also served two consulships. When his father died at a young age Antoninus was left in the care of his grandfathers and his mother, Arria Fadilla remarried yet another man of consular rank, Julius Lupus.

Unfortunately, like his predecessors Trajan and Hadrian, there are few surviving written accounts for the life of Antoninus. For example, Cassius Dio's work is terribly fragmented, essentially leaving us with roughly 6 short paragraphs of unrelated (though still valuable) material. The main source for Antoninus, the *Historia Augusta* credited to Julius Capitolinus, provides much more detail but has long been debated by scholars for its accuracy. As such, little is known of the life of Antoninus prior to his accession. He was married to Annia Galeria Faustina, with whom he had four children (2 sons and 2 daughters). Though three of the children did not figure in imperial affairs, one daughter, Faustina the Younger was later to marry Antoninus' nephew and adopted heir Marcus Aurelius. Antoninus seemingly rose in a typical fashion for a young man with his familial legacy, serving as quaestor and praetor before reaching the consulship under Hadrian around AD 120.

Antoninus' rise under Hadrian continued with an appointment as one of four consular administrators of Italy, which included the territory encompassing Hadrian's own estates. By the early 130's AD, Antoninus' Senatorial career reached its pinnacle, when he was appointed governor of the prestigious province of Asia Minor. While the relationship between Hadrian and Antoninus is largely unknown, the course of the relationship took a decided and unexpected turn with the death of Hadrian's heir Lucius Ceionius Commodus in AD 138. Antoninus' position as a distinguished and respected proconsular Senator made him an attractive alternative, an alternative that would prove invaluable to uninterrupted succession and Hadrian's legacy (including his deification). Hadrian named Antoninus as his second choice for adopted heir with the condition that he in turn adopt his own nephew Marcus Aelius Aurelius Verus (later Marcus Aurelius) and the son of Hadrian's first named heir Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus (later Lucius Verus). Antoninus was given time to consider the proposition (reflective of both his and Hadrian's effectiveness as leaders), before finally agreeing to the terms. Hadrian's new heir was effectively given joint imperial power, proconsular imperium and tribunician authority, allowing him to learn "on the job" before Hadrian passed away in July of the same year (AD 138).

Antoninus succeeded Hadrian at the age of 51 years old, likely not having been expected to reign for long (hence partly explaining the desire for him to succeed Hadrian with pre-determined heirs in place). Unlike Hadrian, who succeeded Trajan under a cloud of uncertain legality regarding his adoption and with some political opposition, Antoninus' position had been sufficiently secured through the public adoption process. Despite his complete absence of military experience (at least as far as the historical record provides) Antoninus would rule the empire for 23 prosperous and largely peaceful years (coupled with the reigns of M. Aurelius and his son/successor Commodus the peaceful uninterrupted succession would total some 55 years). Unlike his predecessors, Trajan who campaigned for extended periods in Dacia, Armenia and Parthia, and Hadrian who toured the provinces of the entire empire, Antoninus governed the empire almost exclusively from the city of Rome and the surrounding regional territory of central Italy. A career politician and aristocrat, Antoninus seemed to be "at home" within reach of Senatorial peers and launched a reign consisting of conservative fiscal policy, diplomatic appeasement rather than aggression and continued social welfare programs.

The 4th Good Emperor

With the passing of Hadrian, Antoninus (whatever the true nature of the relationship between Hadrian and Antoninus may have been) immediately played the part of loyal adopted son. Antoninus accompanied the body of the largely despised former emperor (at least in the view of the aristocracy) from Baiae to Rome and saw to its placement within Hadrian's new tomb in the Gardens of Domitian. His subsequent fight to have Hadrian deified and honored among the gods of the Roman Imperial Cult (as well as, and perhaps more importantly, pardoning Hadrian's opponents who may have been slotted for execution), earned him the cognomen of 'Pius'. Numerous other honors were quickly voted for the new emperor including 'pater patriae' (father of the country) which had been initially refused. Antoninus' wife Faustina was honored with the title Augusta (not an honor considered the norm for imperial wives) and was deified by her husband when she died 3 years later.

Antoninus' reign was one of conservative fiscal and building policies unlike both of his predecessors (Trajan and Hadrian). While Trajan and Hadrian built such great monuments as Trajan's Column, the Markets, the Pantheon, etc., Antoninus focused primarily on finishing the works of Hadrian (his Mausoleum for example) and making repairs to previously established public works. The Colosseum, the Graecostadium, the ports at Caeita and Tarracina, the bath at Ostia and an aqueduct at Antium, among roads and temples were all works that saw restoration under Antoninus. Economically, he showed reluctance for lavish expenditures which freed the treasury for the essentials of running the state and distributions to the people without a need for increased revenues. As such he was able to return all the monies raised for his accession to the people of Italy and half of all that was contributed by the provinces. While Italy saw a renewed focus as the center of the empire (as Antoninus served his entire reign within Rome and nearby) in contrast to the campaigning of Trajan and the wanderlust of Hadrian, the provinces prospered as well. Antoninus was strict with his provincial governors and tax collectors tolerating only reasonable fixed collections from these provinces, and was open to hearing complaints against his procurators for excessiveness.

Antoninus seems to have held solid popularity with all three important elements of Roman politics: the aristocracy (Senate and Equestrian classes), the populace and the legions. In the case of the Senate, he helped reverse the adversarial relationship set by Hadrian by including its members more freely in matters of advisement and routine government. More importantly however, prosecution and execution of Senators virtually ceased during his reign. In cases of provincial extortion, though he was quick to prosecute and sentence the guilty, rather than confiscate their estates for his own use as in the past, he allocated these estates to the heirs of the guilty, provided that reimbursement was made to the provinces. Only two men were noted for capital imperial punishment for treason under Antoninus. One of these two men, Atilius Titianus was condemned though the entire affair was conducted by the Senate rather than as a dictate directly from Antoninus. A second man, Priscianus apparently took his own life rather than face potential trial for aspirations to the throne, technically absolving Antoninus from the responsibility of execution. In both of these cases too, unlike many incidents of potential treason during the principate, the emperor did not allow any additional investigation of the matter beyond the men in question. In essence the cases closed with the deaths of the directly guilty, freeing their families and friends from possible implication.

In the case of the people, Antoninus won popularity through both traditional methods and his own generosity. Along with the afore-mentioned policies regarding collection of taxes and tributes, and despite the conservative fiscal style regarding the treasury, the emperor was open with his own private accounts. A famine induced shortage of wine, oils and grain was alleviated using purchases from his own private funds and distributed to the people. Laws were passed introducing new public protections for slaves and freedmen as well as giving limited rights to women in cases of arranged marriage. A new *alimenta* (a form of social program) was introduced in honor of his passed wife Faustina (the *Faustinianae*) which provided funds to care for orphaned or destitute girls. Like most previous emperors elaborate games were provided to entertain the masses. Great varieties of animals were displayed in these affairs including elephants, tigers, rhinoceroses,

crocodiles and hippopotami. In addition to the famine which he alleviated through his own donations, Antoninus won great respect and popularity for his reaction to various natural disasters. The collapse of some stands in the Circus Maximus, earthquake damage in Rhodes and Asia, destruction from fire in Rome, Narbo, Antioch and Carthage were all repaired, again through his own private funds.

Though the reign of Antoninus is often considered one of peace and general prosperity, the legions were in fact quite active. While the emperor did not lead campaigns himself or conduct military affairs like Trajan and Hadrian, his legates participated in a number of engagements. In Britain, Lollius Urbicus led a successful campaign north of Hadrian's Wall which re-established the border in Caledonia near the old line established by Agricola in the reign of Domitian. A wall, Antonine's Wall, which was to mark the northern limit of these conquests was not nearly as elaborate as Hadrian's but was an indication that the Romans meant for permanent occupation of the Caledonian lowlands. Though the reasons for this campaign are not clear it is certainly an indication that the Romans were not entirely at peace, nor resigned to the fact that the outer limits of the empire had been reached (as indicated by the reversal of Trajan's conquests under Hadrian). In addition to the campaigns in Britain, the Moors in Africa were forced to peace, various Germanic and Dacian revolts or raids were checked, revolts in Achaëa and Egypt were suppressed and the Jewish uprisings from the time of Trajan and Hadrian were finally ended. Despite the lack of actual military experience of Antoninus, a simple letter written by the emperor and backed by the reputation of the Roman military machine also caused the Parthians to abandon thoughts of a campaign against Armenia. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Antoninus was widely respected both within and without the empire, reporting that "No one has ever had such prestige among foreign nations as he, for he was ever a lover of peace, even to such a degree that he was continually quoting the saying of Scipio in which he declared that he would rather save a single citizen than slay a thousand foes."

At the age of seventy, having reigned for 23 stable and prosperous years, Antoninus Pius died in AD 161. As he was much loved, his death was mourned throughout all fabrics of Roman society. Succession (as planned years before by Hadrian) was peaceful and without incident. Antoninus' adoptive sons Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus took up mantle of authority in an unprecedented sharing of imperial power. The ease of this transition (though relatively short lived due to Verus' untimely death some 8 years later) was a testament to both the foresight of Hadrian and the great administrative skills of Antoninus which made that transition appear so seamless. Antoninus left the Roman treasury with an enormous surplus (in the millions of denarii) and left the bulk of his personal estate to his daughter Faustina the Younger (who had been married to Marcus Aurelius since AD 145). Despite the lack of glorious conquests often associated with periods of greatness, Antoninus' reign should be admired and revered for its noted lack of scandal, corruption and military disaster. Antoninus was remembered by Marcus Aurelius in his work 'Meditations' thusly, "Be in all things Antoninus' disciple. . . . Remember all this, so that when your own last hour comes your conscience may be as clear as his." In light of the reverence paid by contemporaries and those that followed, this period in Roman history while often overlooked in the modern world, could very well be considered as the greatest era of the Roman principate.

Marcus Aurelius AD 161 - 180 (born AD 121 - died 180)

According to the Greek philosopher Plato, "There will be no end to the troubles of states, or indeed of humanity itself, until philosophers become kings in this world, or until those we now call kings and rulers really and truly become philosophers." While Marcus Aurelius could indeed be considered Rome's first "philosopher King" (followed only perhaps by Julian), the irony is that his otherwise often considered exemplary reign also included a nearly constant state of war along the Danubian frontier.

Unfortunately, written ancient material on Marcus Aurelius is scattered among several sources or of dubious quality. Much like the history of his immediate predecessors, the history of Cassius Dio

for this period is very fragmentary. The account in the *Historia Augusta* is extant but long debated for its accuracy and even the origin of its authorship. Later writings of Christian authors Tertullian, Eusebius and Orosius do provide additional and important information (though perhaps biased from a perspective of Christian persecution and martyrdom) along with the correspondence of Marcus' teacher Fronto. Of course, the emperor's own work "*Meditations*" provides intricate detail into the philosophy of the man but is less useful as a history of events.

Marcus Aurelius (originally Marcus Annius Catilius Severus) was born in Rome on April 26, AD 121 into a distinguished and wealthy family originating from Hispania. His great grandfather, Marcus Annius Verus was the first in the family to gain a Senate seat while also reaching the office of praetor. His grandfather was much revered by the Flavians (Vespasian, Titus and Domitian) and had been enrolled as a Patrician in addition to serving a rare three consulships. His father, also Marcus Annius Verus, died young when the future emperor was only about 3 years old leaving the young Marcus to be raised by his esteemed grandfather. His paternal aunt Annia Galeria Faustina (Faustina the Elder) was the wife of Antoninus Pius (and eventually Marcus' mother-in-law as well) and this familial connection certainly played a role in his eventual adoption by Pius. On his mother's side (Domitia Lucilla) Aurelius was related to other men of consular rank such as Catilius Severus (maternal great grandfather and hence his birth name) and Calvisius Tullus (maternal grandfather).

Though the nature of affiliation between the young Marcus and Hadrian is unknown, it is clear that Hadrian took an early interest in the boy's education. The emperor enrolled Marcus as an equestrian as early as his 6th year, made him a Salian priest at the age of eight and saw to his advanced education. Marcus was apparently so devoted to academic pursuits and his demeanor so serious and honest that Hadrian affectionately dubbed him 'Verissimus' meaning most truthful (which was later dropped with his "coming of age" around 15 years old and changed to Verus). His tutors were among the finest of the day and included Euphorion for literature, Geminus for drama, Andron for geometry, Alexander of Cotiaenum for Greek grammar, Trosius Aper, Pollio, and Euty chius Proculus of Sicca in Latin, Aninius Macer, Caninius Celer and Herodes Atticus in Greek oratory and Cornelius Fronto for Latin. Many honors were later bestowed upon these teachers, some with political office and others with wealth depending upon their social station. Perhaps a more important influence on Marcus Aurelius than these essentials of a Roman education, which also included such subjects as rhetoric and law, was the study of stoic philosophy. He became a dedicated student of the arts, learning directly from Apollonius of Chalcedon, and through the writings and lessons of men such as Aelius Aristides and especially Epictetus. His most in depth personal instruction seems to have come from one Junius Rusticus, who remained a trusted confidant of Marcus Aurelius as both teacher and imperial advisor.

Based on his education alone Marcus was clearly marked for imperial service of some sort by Hadrian, and this was reaffirmed when Hadrian named his first heir to the empire in AD 136. Marcus was previously engaged to the daughter (Ceonia Fabia) of this heir, one Lucius Ceionius Commodus, and certainly by no coincidence the young man was firmly entrenched as a member of the extended imperial family. However, the surprise passing of Commodus in January, AD 138 did little to supplant Marcus as an advancing political commodity. Hadrian was forced to find a new heir and turned to T. Aurelius Fulvus Boionius Arrius Antoninus, later simply Antoninus Pius. As a prerequisite to his promotion, he adopted both the 17 year old Marcus and the 8 year old son of the recently passed heir, also named Lucius Ceionius Commodus (later to be known simply as Lucius Verus after his adoption into the family of his co-heir Marcus). It was upon this adoption to Antoninus Pius that Marcus Annius Verus officially took the name Marcus Aurelius as an adopted member of the Antonine family.

During the reign of Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius continued his educational preparation for the imperial throne. While the pursuit of stoicism continued, his duties under the peaceful 23 year reign of Antoninus included regular advancement through the political *cursus honorum*, but was surprisingly devoid of military experience (this particular exclusion could have been a tragic

oversight considering the political power of the army, but the eventual succession went about completely unopposed). To further cement his bond to Antoninus Pius, the engagement to Ceonia Fabia was broken off and Marcus was married to his cousin Faustina the Younger (the emperor's daughter) in AD 145. She eventually bore him 13 children, most of whom died young, including a daughter Lucilla (the future wife of co emperor Lucius Verus, and son Commodus the eventual heir to the throne and the emperor often associated with the beginning of the imperial decline).

Lucius Verus and the Parthians

In AD 161, after a long and largely peaceful reign, Antoninus Pius died, leaving the 40 year old Marcus Aurelius to take his place. The Senate clearly favored the mature Marcus over his 31 year old joint heir Lucius Verus, who had an almost Neronian reputation for personal indulgence (such as cavorting with actors), and attempted to name Marcus as sole emperor to replace Antoninus. Marcus Aurelius however insisted on following the wills of both Hadrian and Antoninus by having his adopted brother Lucius Verus secured as 'co-emperor'. He married his daughter Lucilla to Verus to further cement the relationship in AD 164.

Despite the peaceful and easy transition from Antoninus to Aurelius and Verus, including an all important surplus treasury, the new emperors faced several immediate crises. The flooding of the Tiber River introduced a temporary famine that was overcome through the personal intervention of the emperors. In Britannia war loomed with restless tribes and along the Danube the Chatti crossed into Raetia, perhaps as a forebear of later Germanic incursions to come. These incidents were effectively managed by appointed legates, but in the east, old rivalries with Parthia would require far more attention. Disagreement between the two powers over accession issues in Armenia had been kindling since the later years of Antoninus reign and had in fact been a matter of contention dating back to the reign of Nero over a century earlier.

With the death of Antoninus, Vologaesus III king of Parthia may have viewed the establishment of a Roman diarchy as a sign of weakness. Compounding this issue may have been the fact that neither of the two emperors had acquired any military experience whatsoever. Whatever the case may have been, Vologaesus seized a perceived moment of Roman weakness and installed his own candidate upon the Armenian throne. Rome's response was swift but initially ineffective. A Roman legion under Severianus marched from Cappadocia into Armenia and was routed at Elegeia prompting the Parthians to invade Roman territory. The governor of Syria Attidius Cornelianus suffered defeats as well, pressuring the Romans for definitive personal involvement from the imperial family. Marcus Aurelius dispatched Lucius Verus to Parthia to oversee the war and to give it an air of heightened importance, but Verus was more inclined to enjoy himself on the trip than to prepare for war. As reported in the *Historia Augusta*, "Verus, after he had come to Syria, lingered amid the debaucheries of Antioch and Daphne and busied himself with gladiatorial bouts and hunting." Aurelius was fully aware of his 'brother's' inadequacies and Verus' presence was more a statement indicating the importance of the campaign than an indication of military command.

Fortunately, despite Verus' indulgences, his legates were focused on the task at hand. Statius Priscus, Avidius Cassius and Martius Verus were entrusted with command of the legions while Marcus Aurelius conducted affairs of the state back in Rome. Though the details provided by the ancients are scant, the *Historia Augusta* credits Priscus with an invasion of Armenia that took the capital of Artaxata. Avidius Cassius was credited by Cassius Dio as having led the overall campaign. After withstanding the early attacks of Vologaesus, Cassius advanced deep into Mesopotamia, eventually razing Seleucia and the Parthian palaces in Ctesiphon. Though the involvement of Martius Verus is limited only to the mention of his name by the ancients, it was he who later as governor of Cappadocia interceded on behalf of Marcus Aurelius against the revolt of the afore-mentioned Avidius Cassius. This however was some years off, and for now, the 5 year

campaign (161 – 166 AD) against Parthia proved to be as decisive as any war in recent Roman history. A Roman candidate once again sat the Armenian throne and Parthia had been thoroughly defeated.

Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius were both honored with the titles Armeniacus and Parthicus, as Verus returned to Rome to celebrate a triumph. However, with the return of his army came a terrible plague (presumably smallpox thanks in large part to the descriptions of the ancient physician Galen) which spread throughout the empire. While the plagues devastating effects are debated (as far as total death toll) there is no question that the next few years were predominately focused on efforts to defeat it. Of its potentially 5 million victims over the course of the next 15 years its most notorious victim in the early stages was likely Lucius Verus himself. After both he and Aurelius had personally marched north to investigate Germanic incursions along the Danube, they found the plague was spreading rapidly among the legions. Returning to Italy in AD 169, Verus fell ill and at the age of 38 years the junior emperor died, leaving Rome once again with a single emperor... Marcus Aurelius.

The Germanic Wars

From the outset of his succession of Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius was confronted by restless Germanic (chiefly Marcomanni and Qaudi) tribes north of the Danube. However, pressing matters from Parthia in the east required far more urgent intervention. Initially, the Germanic issues were handled by provincial governors and an uneasy peace was reached but while there is little surviving evidence of the reasons for the Marcomannic unrest (other than rather nondescript suggestions of migratory tribes), the situation steadily destabilized throughout the early reign of Aurelius.

Early in AD 169 outright war with the Marcomanni and Quadi finally broke out. They crossed the Danube en masse overrunning limited defenses between them and the Italian mainland. For the first time since the invasions of the Cimbri and Teutones some two and a half centuries earlier, a Germanic invasion once again threatened the interior of the empire. The joint emperors (Lucius Verus having recently returned from the Parthian campaigns) acted quickly to alleviate the threat and used extreme measures to do so. With the war in the east and the growing plague brought back by victorious legions and the recent famine caused by the flooding of the Tiber, the Romans were in dire need of manpower. Perhaps illustrating how grave the situation was, Marcus Aurelius turned to rather non traditional means of replenishing the military ranks. He recruited and armed 'volunteer' slaves as well as gladiators and Germanic auxilia. (From the term voluntarii which was associated with the recruitment of the Volones in the second Punic War against Hannibal. This term evolved to mean the recruitment of any slaves or non citizens for military service.) Later these emergency recruits were to be supplemented by the formation of Legio I and II Italica.

While the Germanics besieged the important port of Aquileia on the coast of the Adriatic Sea, the freshly assembled Romans led by their joint emperors marched north to meet them. Perhaps an indication that the invasion was in part prompted by a perceived weakness of the Roman military machine, as word spread of the Roman advance the Germanics quickly marched back to the Danube seeking conciliatory terms. Marcus Aurelius intended to continue pressing north of the Alps, but the untimely death of Lucius Verus forced a brief respite to the offensive plans. Marcus returned to Rome to oversee the funeral of his adopted brother and son-in-law but soon returned north to settle matters more permanently. While the bulk of the Germanic campaigns were to be largely successful, the duration of the emperors presence (for the better part of his reign from AD 169 to 180 interrupted only briefly by an eastern revolt) was also an indication of the difficulty in the task.

The objective was a permanent peace along the Danube and perhaps the incorporation of new provinces to administer this peace. The *Historia Augusta* suggests that during the last years of the war Marcus Aurelius “waged war with the Marcomanni, the Hermunduri, the Sarmatians, and the Quadi, and had he lived a year longer he would have made these regions provinces.” As was the norm in Roman campaigns against ‘barbarians’ the strategy of divide and conquer was employed. It is difficult to determine what ultimate effect the campaigns could have had, despite the understanding that the Danube was secured from immediate threat for almost another century. If not for the revolt of one of the victorious legates of the Parthian war, Avidius Cassius, perhaps the Danubian settlement may have been even more effective than it was at first glance.

In the midst of the Marcommanic War circa AD 175, the governor of Syria Avidius Cassius claimed the empire for himself. The circumstances are unusual. Cassius had already been granted extraordinary power, or *imperium*, in the east likely stemming from Marcus Aurelius’ occupation with the Germanic wars. At this time there was a rumor of Marcus Aurelius’ death and Cassius seized an opportunity to wrest control from his certain heir, the 14 year old Commodus. There were also rumors that Cassius had been a lover of the empress Faustina, and that she was instrumental in encouraging Cassius upon the false news of her husband’s death. Whether Cassius made a mistake in his assessment of the news or spread the rumor himself in a bid for power, we will likely never know, but the very much still living emperor responded quickly. He abandoned the Danubian campaigns and began the march east, but news of his impending arrival preceded him. Avidius Cassius and his fellow conspiring officers were killed by men loyal to the true emperor. Marcus Aurelius displayed the sort of stoicism that was his reputation and let the matter die with this act. He spent some time in the east confirming loyalty and settling provincial matters, but the revolt was little more than a distraction from the goal of settling the Germanic affair. However, as the situation unfolded the distraction proved to be enough to prevent the completion of the emperor’s goals.

Marcus Aurelius returned to the Danube after stops in Greece and Rome, where his son Commodus (now 16 years old) was not only confirmed as his father’s heir but was granted joint imperial power. Back along the northern frontier the joint emperors conducted the campaigns in earnest between AD 177 and 180. The Marcomanni, the Hermunduri, the Sarmatians, and the Quadi among several other lesser tribes were defeated in turn. Sarmatian cavalry was incorporated as *auxilia* and sent to Britannia where they would serve the empire well into the 5th century. However, by 180 AD Marcus Aurelius died at the age of 59, perhaps from years of exposure to plague. Before his death he urged his son to continue the war through to its completion (which according to the ancients may not have taken more than another year) but after 11 years of war and a debilitating plague, Commodus instead established a quick peace with Rome’s Germanic adversaries to return to Rome and enjoy the luxuries of imperial office.

The Philosopher Emperor

Despite the turmoil caused by plague and war during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, his was a life strictly guided by philosophy. He has been largely associated with the idea of stoicism (perhaps most simply defined as a dedication to logic), but his own surviving works indicate a general intellectual devotion rather than strict adherence to a single thought process. Regardless, in the words of Edward Gibbon’s “*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,” Marcus Aurelius is accurately described as the “philosophic monarch” and may be the most relevant example of such in human history.

His work ‘*Meditations*’ provides the basis for his label as a philosopher. Though other works, particularly the biography in the *Historia Augusta* by Julius Capitolinus, label him as a philosopher as well; it’s his own words which have given him his lasting reputation. Originally written in Greek, *Meditations* serves many functions: it is a loose historical record of various people who played a

part in Marcus Aurelius' life, a guide to future emperors on how to conduct oneself and serves as a slight autobiographical account. Most importantly though it is a personal journal of the emperor, recorded while on the Danubian campaigns, that clearly portrays him as both a deep thinker and ardent supporter of Roman paganism.

He was dedicated to the imperial cult and largely open to the multiple faiths that by this time were reflective of such a vast and all encompassing empire. However, Christianity was not quite so fortunate. While the record of 'persecution' of Christians during his reign largely stems from two incidents, one in AD 166 and another large scale incident in Lugdunum in AD 177, is not truly reflective of the emperor's rather disinterested attitude toward the fledgling religion, it did have an effect of influencing the historical record. In contrast to reports of persecution, Marcus Aurelius was largely tolerant and did not support any official policy targeting Christians (and had even been called a friend of Christianity by the author Tertullian) but he made no effort to protect Christians from those elements of society which used the oddity of the Christian cult as a scapegoat for various local and regional concerns. There has been arbitrary speculation that had Marcus Aurelius truly been aggressive in his approach to Christianity he may have stemmed the tide of its rapid growth and reenergized the idea of Roman paganism, but such notions are obviously highly speculative and impossible to prove.

Along with his dedication to philosophy, the sciences and related arts, Marcus Aurelius was noted for his attention to imperial administration. His long tenure as Caesar or heir to Antoninus Pius (some 23 years) not only allowed ample opportunity for a fine education but gave first hand perspective on running the empire. While Antoninus contrasted the wanderlust of Hadrian by spending the vast bulk of his own reign in or near Rome, Marcus Aurelius spent great stretches of his outside of Italy (even though much of this was predicated by military circumstance rather than travel). He paid careful attention to promoting able men to magisterial and administrative positions of import and deferred to those best suited to make proper recommendations. Judicial matters brought the personal focus of imperial attention and the emperor was well known for his diligence in affairs of trial and law. Cassius Dio relates that Marcus Aurelius was diligent in the extreme not only in an attempt to insure justice, but because he also believed it right that the emperor should not do anything hurriedly. It is this trait, associated with his stoic nature, that some argue made him incapable of properly dealing with various crises that affected the empire during his reign. In fact, a likely addiction to opium (the emperor freely encourages its use in 'Meditations') and generally poor health may have added to a perception of indecisiveness whether deserved or not.

Regarding monuments and construction of buildings, Marcus Aurelius was rather limited in comparison to his predecessors. If the dual emperors (Aurelius and Lucius Verus) were responsible for many works, there are very few that have been directly accredited and/or survive. At least two triumphal arches which have not survived intact did lend relief images to arch of Constantine and to other modern era displays. The column of Marcus Aurelius was built in similar fashion to that of Trajan's Column and depicts the events of the Marcomannic and Sarmatian Wars although it lacks some of the splendor that makes Trajan's version so famous. Perhaps the most famous surviving monument is that of the equestrian Marcus Aurelius which ironically only survived the middle ages because it was thought to be a representation of the later emperor Constantine, whose tolerance and acceptance of Christianity is well attested.

Contrary to portrayals of Marcus Aurelius in various epic films ("Fall of the Roman Empire" and "Gladiator"), the emperor was quite clear in his selection of heir and there was never any thought of a restored Republic. With his wife Faustina, Marcus had 13 (perhaps 14) children, most of whom apparently did not survive beyond young adulthood. When the youngest son Lucius Aurelius Commodus was only 5 years of age (AD 166), he was clearly designated as Caesar (or heir) on coinage. While this did not prevent the uprising of Avidius Cassius some nine years later in AD 175 upon the reported death of the emperor, it did lead directly to Commodus' further promotion to co-Augustus shortly thereafter. As early as AD 177 (between the age of 16 and 17) Commodus was given co imperial power and accompanied his father on campaign along the

Danube. This is significant in that it marks the first time in nearly a century that the method of adoptive succession was not applied. While Commodus had been clearly hand-selected and assuredly given as much of an education as a young man could be given in the art of rule, for all of his otherwise apparent wisdom, Marcus Aurelius ignored the pattern of success set by his four predecessors (Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian and Antoninus). Rather than selection of an heir from among a pool of qualified candidates, Marcus Aurelius chose to re-establish dynastic rule. While he cannot be blamed entirely for the later faults of his son, the retrospective error made in this decision is largely credited as the beginning of the decline of the Roman Empire. The passing of Marcus Aurelius on March 17, AD 180 clearly marks the end of an era, and is more than likely attributed to years of plague exposure and continued poor health despite other inferences of Commodus' direct involvement. Cassius Dio described the passing of Marcus Aurelius thusly: "For our history now descends from a kingdom of gold to one of iron and rust".

Decline of the Roman Empire

With the death of Marcus Aurelius in AD 180, rule of the empire passed to his 20 year old son Lucius Aurelius Commodus. Much like the reign of Gaius Caesar (Caligula) a century and a half earlier, the accession of Commodus was initially met with general approval. Continuing the parallel, initial acceptance was eventually met with dismay and hostility as the young emperor engaged in various forms of debauchery and ego-maniacal behavior.

The concept of imperial decline beginning with the reign of Commodus is largely adapted from Edward Gibbon's rather arbitrary work, "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" and may have been a bit premature considering that the western empire endured for another three centuries. However, Gibbon's assessment is astute in pointing out several elements that clearly identify a change from previous eras. The accession of Commodus as the son of Marcus Aurelius marked the re-establishment of dynasty that was originally developed under the Julio-Claudians. While the remaining years of the empire, especially the tumultuous 3rd century, would hardly be characterized by uninterrupted dynastic rule (in large part because of assassination and civil war), Commodus' reign marks the end of the adoptive period that provided immeasurable political stability since the death of Domitian. Never again would Rome benefit from rulers who had the foresight to understand the stability provided by selective succession and rather allowed personal and dynastic ambitions to play its role in the empire's eventual collapse. Over the course of the next 50 years following Commodus, the empire would have no less than 26 different rulers and usurpers, in comparison to 18 confirmed Princes over the empire's first 2 centuries.

Despite the role of politics in the ultimate failure of the west, there were many other elements at work. While the influence of the legions and the praetorians continued to effect politics, there were periods of continued military strength, such as the reign of Septimius Severus. However, long periods of civil war took its toll on the population and the legions, and military institutions began to slowly degenerate in much the same manner as political and social institutions. Recruitment eventually shifted to the border provinces, and much later still it developed akin to the hiring of a "barbarian mercenary" force. The legions were eventually altered from an army of conquest and economic plunder to a standing army of border guards. Such conditions have been associated with the reduction in military discipline and training standards. What once accounted for the main source of economic contribution to the overall state was now nothing more than a massive liability. In addition, the mass citizenship incorporation of Caracalla in AD 212 also had the effect of minimizing the incentive for legionary/auxiliary enrollment. Despite this, the collapse of military tradition was still some time off and the later 2nd century AD only began to set the stage for the development of these conditions.

Perhaps the most important factor associating the era of Commodus as the beginning of imperial decline was the status of the Roman economy. The lack of slave imports via military conquest in an agrarian slave labor economy, the absence of military plunder, the limited supply and expense of valuable metal extraction which undermined the monetary system, the cost of grain doles,

public welfare (alimenta) and appeasement of the populace through expensive games (ie bread and circuses), the growing bureaucracy, cost of luxury imports, etc. all played pivotal roles in weakening the economic state. The increase in taxation, which developed into what might be considered a form of legal extortion, to compensate for the high cost of operating the state was not only economically stagnating, but had the effect of limiting voluntary contributions from the aristocracy and otherwise wealthy citizenship.

The effects of two major plagues within a century and the barbarization of the citizenry also had their own roles to play in destabilizing the empire of the late 2nd and 3rd centuries. The Parthian campaigns of Lucius Verus and the Danubian campaigns of Marcus Aurelius also had the effect of massively draining a surplus treasury left over by the frugal Antoninus Pius. Perhaps an energized and more experienced successor to Marcus Aurelius may have understood the potential benefit in seeing the Germanic Wars through to the conclusion envisioned by the emperor. The settlement desired by Marcus Aurelius included imperial incorporation of his conquests in the form of new provinces (Marcomannia and Sarmatia). While the wars did temporarily allow for peace along Rome's northern frontier, completion of the effort may have provided a temporary boost to the struggling economy and opened up new opportunities. Instead of the potential for new opportunity, however the rule of the western world was left to Commodus.

Commodus AD 180 - 192 (born AD 161 - died 192)

The accession of the 19 year old Commodus upon the death of his father Marcus Aurelius on March 17, AD 180 is often considered a catalyst that sparked the initial decline of the Roman Empire. Whether or not the assertion is true and Commodus acted as a catalyst, or if he was simply a piece of an evolving and dynamic Roman puzzle is a matter of perspective and interpretation. It's interesting that the death of Marcus Aurelius is considered the end of the "Pax Romana" (The Roman Peace) but the reign of Commodus was largely as peaceful as that of Antoninus Pius a half century earlier. While he was immensely popular with the common people and legions, his reputation as a contributor to the decline of the empire was largely dependent upon a poor relationship with the Senate. Megalomaniacal behavior, irreverence for the institution of the Senate and a Sulla like affinity for proscription earned the lasting enmity of that social order that produced the historians.

Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus (later Marcus Aurelius Commodus Antoninus upon accession) was born August 31 AD 161 at Lanuvium, a small town in the outskirts of "metropolitan" Rome. He was the second to last of 13 children born to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and Faustina the Younger. Of these children, 7 were boys but only Commodus seems to have survived beyond young adulthood. His father had been emperor for only a few months (March, AD 161) prior to his birth, but Commodus had been marked for succession very early. He was officially named Caesar (or heir) at the age of five and had begun a typical aristocratic education. Such an example of direct hereditary accession had not occurred since the Flavian dynasty (Vespasian, Titus and Domitian) nearly a century prior. While the previous emperors (Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus) had been cultivated through adoptive succession, this can at least be partly attributed to the fact that these men did not have sons of their own. While Marcus Aurelius is criticized for appointing his son as heir in contrast to his predecessors rather than adopting a qualified candidate, it's impossible to determine the course of events had circumstances been different.

The ancients (i.e. Herodian, Cassius Dio and the Historia Augustus) speculate on the manner of Commodus' personality and set him up almost as a pre-destined evil entity. Whether the "evils" of Commodus as reported were due to later events in which he alienated himself from the aristocracy, or were in fact representative of Commodus' nature and upbringing in a condition of supreme authority is clearly open to perspective and interpretation. Whatever the foundations of enmity between Emperor and nobility, be it a clear behavior and personality issues beginning in his youth or rather the nature of his later administration, there remains a consensus of distaste

from the ancients. Dio opens his book 73 on Commodus thusly: "This man was not naturally wicked, but, on the contrary, as guileless as any man that ever lived. His great simplicity, however, together with his cowardice, made him the slave of his companions, and it was through them that he at first, out of ignorance, missed the better life and then was led on into lustful and cruel habits, which soon became second nature. And this, I think, Marcus clearly perceived beforehand. Commodus was nineteen years old when his father died, leaving him many guardians, among whom were numbered the best men of the senate. But their suggestions and counsels Commodus rejected, and after making a truce with the barbarians he rushed to Rome; for he hated all exertion and craved the comfortable life of the city."

While there is speculation that Marcus Aurelius feared for the future of the empire because of the mannerisms of his son, his actions do not necessarily correspond to this notion. At the age of 16 years Commodus was appointed to the high station of co-Augustus, though his father did maintain clear ultimate authority. While this was done in part to illustrate the well defined nature of succession after the ill-fated revolt of Avidius Cassius in Syria, for much of his childhood and early adulthood, Commodus had already accompanied his father while on campaign along the Danube. Without question he was groomed as successor and was even given the military training his father never had and by AD 178 was leading legions in battle against the Quadi and Marcomanni.

When Commodus was only 19 years of age, Marcus Aurelius (just shy of his 59th birthday) died in AD 180 and the control of the empire was left to the a young man with a great deal to prove. Commodus immediately began to treat with the Marcomanni in order to bring the decade's long wars of his father to a close. While this was unpopular in many circles it may not have been as unpopular with the legions and common citizen classes as generally reported. While there may have been a sense of a job left unfinished and his father's wishes to see the border lands transformed into Romanized buffer provinces were left unfulfilled, the war coupled with the Antonine plague had drained the treasury and the manpower pools. Commodus understood that the war had been devastating despite its accomplishments in ensuring peace along the Danube for the better part of the next generation. In addition and perhaps more importantly, as a young man, despite his grooming under his popular father, he also surely understood the need to return to Rome in triumph to secure his possibly tenuous position as successor. Only a few years removed from the revolt of Cassius, for Commodus to have risked alienating his army by ending the war early, the one force capable of securing any bid for succession, seems unfathomable. Rather it's quite likely judging by the initial popularity of the youthful princeps, that the legions were all too happy to have peace with their persistently dangerous Germanic neighbors.

The bitterness expressed by the aristocracy over Commodus' handling of securing that peace seems to be the catalyst that sparked initial dislike. In his haste to return to Rome, Commodus seemingly made several unpopular concessions (release of prisoners, annual levies and grain procurements, etc.) which possibly could've been avoided if there was no need for haste. In order to secure his position, he sacrificed some of the hard fought victories of the past 20 years, and it's difficult to determine this as brash, dismissive exuberance or wise policy. It had been quite established that the ability of the empire to maintain borders outside natural defensible positions such as the Danube was difficult at best (Augustus/Tiberius in Germania and Trajan/Hadrian in the east and Dacia). Commodus may have understood that continuing the war would be costly and eventually futile or he may have truly just wished to return to Rome in glory. Regardless of the truth, he seems to have never been forgiven by the writers of history. In fact, Cassius Dio blames the emperor's haste simply on the notion that "he hated all exertion and craved the comfortable life of the city."

The People's Princeps, Enemy of the Senate

On October 22, AD 180 the young Princeps Commodus returned to Rome in an enormous triumphal procession. Backed by most of the Danubian legions, Commodus' entry into the city not only confirmed his authority but ushered in new hope for an era of peace and prosperity in a city that was weary of war. The victorious legions, having secured peace along the Danube (at least temporarily, and there were still to be various issues of settlement such as the Buri in Dacia), and the youthful, energetic son of the great Marcus Aurelius were symbolic of this new hope.

Commodus' popularity with the masses can be attested through several generous monetary gifts bestowed upon them as well as his well documented involvement with the games. In addition, Commodus was content to allow his Praetorian Prefects (first Perennis and followed by Cleander) to essentially administer the empire while he indulged himself in more entertaining pursuits (until his later reign when the Prefecture seems to have held less sway after previous failings). While such methods of imperial rule may seem to be unpopular on the surface, the average Roman citizen would have little to no knowledge of the inner workings of government and Commodus' general dismissal of such affairs would have little impact on his popularity. In fact, this very delegation of command especially in military affairs may have also aided his popularity with the legions. As the soldiers were well aware whose face was on the coinage, they knew that their ultimate benefactor was Commodus, but they were also aware (likely through their officers) that it was the praetorian prefects who were running military affairs. When things went bad, it was these prefects who took the brunt of criticism. In fact, Perennis eventually met his death as a result of a legionary revolt in Britain and the political ramifications that followed it.

While Commodus maintained popular support at least in his earlier reign, such popularity came at the cost of Senatorial and upper class hostility. Dio Cassius, who became a Senator during the reign of Commodus and claims to have been an eye-witness to some of the emperor's excessiveness, suggests that much of Commodus' costly endeavors were financed through the extra taxation of these classes. Coupled with the proscriptions and property confiscations against these same leading aristocrats, Commodus earned the hatred of his peers, though such later measures were possibly affected by an early conspiracy involving Commodus' own family. The new emperor had only recently arrived in Rome from the Danubian frontier before a plot against his life had been hatched.

In AD 182, an assassination attempt engineered by Commodus' sister Annia Lucilla and a cousin, (former consul) Marcus Ummidius Quadratus may have been the result of a dynastic dispute. Lucilla's husband Tiberius Claudius Pompeianus, a respected general under Marcus Aurelius during the Germanic Wars had possibly been previously considered as a potential heir following the death of Lucius Verus in AD 169. Lucilla, who had been married to Verus was quickly married to Pompeianus after her first husband's death, therefore fueling this speculation (though it is more likely that Aurelius simply saw Pompeianus as a supporter who was to be rewarded for loyalty). In the plot against Commodus Lucilla (who despised the provincial equestrian station of her second husband) probably wished a return to her status as Augusta that she enjoyed while married to Verus and therefore, Pompeianus had been selected as an imperial replacement. It was his own nephew (who was engaged to a daughter of Lucilla and Verus) who drew the dagger to attack the emperor. However, the assassin was overpowered and several conspirators (including members of the Senate) were put to death. Lucilla and Commodus' wife Crispina were exiled to the island of Capri (though Crispina seems to have been exiled for adultery and the timing was just coincidental), but Lucilla was executed a short time thereafter. Pompeianus himself seemed to have been completely unaware and uninvolved in the plot, judging by the fact that Commodus left him unharmed when the great numbers of others who met cruel fates during his reign are considered.

Perhaps this plot, along with rumors that Commodus was the son of a gladiator rather than of Marcus Aurelius, (the *Historia Augusta* is noted for its dubious authenticity, and the rumor may have actually developed much later considering Commodus' escapades in the Arena) may have pushed the young emperor along a road which associated him closely with Hercules. As the

Olympian hero had already been a symbol of the reigns of Commodus' preceding Antonine emperors (among other things Hercules represented a champion of civic duties to the Romans and was an appropriate fit for the civic minded Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius) he was adopted by Commodus as well perhaps to prove his lineage. However, the symbolism under Commodus would be grossly different than it had been previously portrayed.

The Gladiator Emperor

Commodus' association with the god Hercules was never more apparent than with his exploits in the arena. In order to perpetuate his image as a living god to the Roman people, Commodus not only began to attire himself in the same manner as the mythical hero (lions skins and carrying a club), but he used the arena to show his physical prowess, therefore proving his direct association with the god. Commodus became Hercules for all intensive purposes, not only in identification with the great heroic icon, but as the symbolic protector of Rome and the empire. This identification was not just a symptom of his megalomania, but was certainly a key factor resulting in his eventual assassination as Commodus continued to challenge and disrupt Roman institutions and traditions.

Whether Commodus simply delighted in the rush of a cheering crowd, enjoyed the thrill of individual combat, aspired to become Hercules on earth or some combination thereof, we can never be completely sure. Whatever his motivation, it is quite clear that the emperor was a regular participant in the arena against both man and beast. According to the ancient sources at various times Commodus killed one hundred bears, two elephants, five hippopotami and a giraffe among many others. Herodian similarly adds additional kills and differing methods of combat to illustrate the emperor's actual skill with weapons. Commodus also faced real gladiators in combat, challenging men of several styles. In this Herodian wrote, "In his gladiatorial combats, he defeated his opponents with ease, and he did no more than wound them, since they all submitted to him, but only because they knew he was the emperor, not because he was truly a gladiator." Whether Commodus butchered his opponents (as sometimes suggested in the *Historia Augusta* and by Dio), or allowed them to submit with honor (as reported by Herodian) there is little question that he appeared in personal combat on many occasions. The *Historia Augusta* reports that Commodus engaged in gladiatorial bouts seven hundred and thirty-five times, but Dio suggests far more: *"(Commodus) actually cut off the head of the Colossus (Nero's statue outside the Colosseum), and substituted for it a likeness of his own head; then, having given it a club and placed a bronze lion at its feet, so as to cause it to look like Hercules, he inscribed on it... "Champion of secutores; only left-handed fighter to conquer twelve times (as I recall the number) one thousand men."*

Commodus' reign was not simply an adventure in debauchery or personal excess, however. His era may have had the potential to develop into the prosperous age that Commodus so desperately wanted to be associated with. Though there were signs of economic trouble in the form of coin devaluation (reduction in precious metal content), the economy was relatively stable despite the expensive wars of his father's reign and the excessive taxes that Commodus levied against the wealthy classes (perhaps masking potential economic woes). The Germanics along the Danube frontier, thanks in large part to those wars of Marcus Aurelius, were mostly peaceful. The east was stable and quiet and only the isolated province of Britannia had shown serious signs of unrest, which was brutally suppressed by Ulpian Marcellus. Whether it was because Commodus' influential mistress Marcia was a Christian or because he had little interest in suppressing its growth, early Christian historian Eusebius claims that Commodus' reign was one of massive conversions to that rapidly growing religion.

Regardless it was not these matters that his contemporary biographers focused on. Many men of rank and importance lost their lives during this period, a clear shift from the more tolerant reigns of Commodus' immediate predecessors. Though Dio provides more detail than implied, he wrote simply, "I should render my narrative very tedious were I to give a detailed report of all the persons

put to death by Commodus, of all those whom he made away with as the result of false accusations or unjustified suspicions or because of their conspicuous wealth, distinguished family, unusual learning, or some other point of excellence." As opposed to the histories of such emperors as Gaius (Caligula) and Nero, where large portions of biographical information is from second hand accounts, innuendo and perhaps greatly influenced by political factors and propaganda, Dio's biography of Commodus seems to have been written from first hand personal fear.

He also provides this telling story that illustrates the position of the aristocracy. *"He (Commodus) had once got together all the men in the city who had lost their feet as the result of disease or some accident, and then, after fastening about their knees some likenesses of serpents' bodies, and giving them sponges to throw instead of stones, had killed them with blows of a club, pretending that they were giants. This fear was shared by all, by us senators as well as by the rest. And here is another thing that he did to us senators which gave us every reason to look for our death. Having killed an ostrich and cut off his head, he came up to where we were sitting, holding the head in his left hand and in his right hand raising aloft his bloody sword; and though he spoke not a word, yet he wagged his head with a grin, indicating that he would treat us in the same way. And many would indeed have perished by the sword on the spot, for laughing at him (for it was laughter rather than indignation that overcame us), if I had not chewed some laurel leaves, which I got from my garland, myself, and persuaded the others who were sitting near me to do the same, so that in the steady movement of our armies we might conceal the fact that we were laughing."*

This apparent anxiety, coupled with Commodus' growing megalomania slowly brought about the end to his reign. Not only did proscription and taxation of the wealthiest citizens of Rome create distinct animosity, but Commodus' view of himself as Hercules went beyond symbolism and took on the form of complete megalomania. He claimed to be a new founder of the city, renaming Rome in his own honor: Colonia Lucia Annia Commodiana. The months were renamed to match his imperial name and titles. From January through December, the twelve months became Lucius, Aelius, Aurelius, Commodus (the first four from his name), Augustus, Herculeus, Romanus, Exsuperatorius (excellent or above all others), Amazonius (an indication of his physical and combat prowess), Invictus (undefeatable), Felix (fortunate) and Pius. Nothing was beyond the boundaries of refinement and tradition, so long as Commodus' could continue to illustrate his own glory. The grain fleet from Africa was named Alexandria Commodiana Togata and the legions referred to as Commodianae. As if proscription and taxation was not enough the Senate was renamed the Fortunate Senate of Commodus, certainly as a reflection of the great honor it must have been to serve him. Even the people of Rome were not left untouched and were called Commodianus rather than Romanus. In addition to several other such measures, Commodus had his era named as the Golden Age and this, according to Dio, was to be recorded in all official documentation.

Not surprisingly, Commodus was the target of several assassination attempts. However, since he enjoyed the relative popularity of the people and the loyalty of the legions and the praetorians, each was met successive failure. It was not until members of Commodus' own inner circle seemingly began to feel threatened that the emperor was in any serious danger. A final plot seems to have been initiated by the Praetorian Prefect Aemilius Laetus and Eclectus, one of Commodus' servants. Probably in fear for their own lives and concerned over the emperor's growing strange behaviors, they recruited his concubine Marcia and attempted to poison him. Commodus was able to resist this subtle attempt on his life and instead the conspirators recruited an athlete, Narcissus, to take matters literally into his own hands. On December 31 AD 192, Narcissus strangled the 31 year old Commodus in his bath thus bringing an end to the rule of the Antonines and closing a definitive chapter in Roman history. After Commodus' rule of nearly 13 years, along with 125 years of largely stable rule since the death of Nero, and in spite of the efforts of the conspirators to prepare for a stable succession, the Roman world was about to enter a moment of crisis and the potential for civil war. Ironically though, despite the initial damnation of Commodus' memory by the

Senate immediately following his death, Commodus would be deified by eventual successor Septimius Severus in AD 197.

Pertinax AD 193 (born AD 126 - died 193)

Following the assassination of Commodus on December 31, AD 192, Publius Helvius Pertinax, as both a revered elder member of the Senate and a chief lieutenant of the former emperor, was chosen to replace him. The reign of Pertinax is intriguing for its short length and related tragic turn of events which led to the further erosion of the Roman political state. It is also notable for his personal humble origins marking a distinct difference from all of the Princes/Emperors who ruled before him.

Pertinax was born August 1, AD 126 as the son of a freedman, Helvius Successus (according to the *Historia Augusta*, but Dio Cassius simply offers that he was not of noble birth). He worked as a teacher of grammar in his earlier career, but through a fortuitous use of patron/client connections was able to secure a more lucrative career as a legionary officer. The notion that the son of a freedman could rise to the highest authority in the empire is at least one indication of the breakdown of more traditional political customs. However, Roman political tradition always did allow for upward mobility and this may also be just another indication as to the growing power and importance of freedmen as imperial advisors and confidants. It was as a soldier, first under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus that Pertinax began his rise up the political ladder. He served in Syria where his exemplary service in the Parthian war earned him several promotions and regular advancement. From Syria he served as a military tribune in Britannia, earned commands in Moesia and Germania and then ultimately was promoted to Procurator of Dacia. There, he unfortunately earned the mistrust of Marcus Aurelius for alleged conspiracies, but through the intervention of the emperor's son-in-law Claudius Pompeianus, he eventually came back into the emperor's good graces. He served once again with distinction in the Germanic Wars, and was named a suffect consul in AD 175.

Upon the passing of Marcus Aurelius and accession of Commodus, Pertinax earned a reputation as a valuable member of the Senate, but intrigue by the praetorian prefect Perennis forced Pertinax into retirement. After the execution of Perennis for his own conspiracies, Commodus made amends with Pertinax by appointing him as governor of Britannia where the legions had been in a troublesome state of unrest. It was in Britain that Pertinax earned a reputation for heavy handedness, especially in quelling a particularly dangerous mutiny that almost cost the governor his own life. Hostility between Pertinax and the legions of Britannia forced him to resign his post but he rebounded and next served as the prestigious governor of Africa before finally acting as the urban prefect of Rome. It was in this capacity that Pertinax was serving when the final plot to assassinate Commodus was carried out.

Commodus was murdered on December 31, AD 192 and Pertinax (while there is no direct evidence of his involvement) seems to have been the conspirator's candidate for succession from the very start. Praetorian prefect Laetus (one of the two leading conspirators along with imperial assistant Eclectus who both feared for their own lives under the increasingly paranoid Commodus) presented Pertinax to the praetorian guard as Commodus' replacement. Initially the soldiers were reluctant to accept Pertinax, likely in part because of the popularity of Commodus with the men, (the ancient sources, Dio and the HA in particular, remained mum on this however probably due to their own personal dislike of the deceased) and also because the treasury was in such a woeful position that the traditional payment to the men from the new emperor was not considered adequate. Despite this, Pertinax offered enough of a donative (12,000 sesterces per man) to win temporary support, but the money had to be procured by selling off pieces of Commodus' personal properties, and the relationship between the emperor and his guard was off to an unhappy start.

Pertinax has been favorably compared to Nerva, the man who was named emperor following the assassination of Domitian and ushered in the era that came to be known both as that of the '5

Good Emperors' as well as the 'adoptive' period. Like Nerva, he immediately attempted to distance himself from the authoritarian ruling style of his predecessor and even reinstated the title of Princeps Senatus (first man of the senate), in a clear attempt to build political harmony with his peers. While Pertinax did have children he distanced them and his immediate family from imperial politics and avoided associating them with the trappings of authority. However, despite his best efforts to reverse some of the trends of Commodus and to institute various political, military and social reforms, Pertinax' reign would end so abruptly that he would have little time to develop a complete governing strategy, name a stabilizing and popular heir (such as Nerva did with Trajan) or rebuild the treasury that had been so terribly drained by Commodus.

It was the apparent integrity of Pertinax and his attempts to reduce some elements of corruption and conspiratorial intrigue that seemingly led to his own demise. Laetus, the very praetorian prefect who was in part responsible for the slaying of Commodus, turned against the man he chose as a replacement perhaps from a reduction of personal power or opportunities for personal gain. An initial plot to replace Pertinax with the standing consul Falco, while Pertinax was occupied in Ostia with the grain shipment, was defeated. While Falco was allowed to retire into privacy several conspiratorial members of the praetorians were put to death for their involvement (as the HA reports, all condemnations were based on the testimony of a slave). This not only angered the surviving soldiers but created a sense of consternation among the remaining guardsmen as well.

Rather than wait for their own turns to come, 200 to 300 (reported by Dio and the HA respectively) praetorians stormed the imperial palace. Rather than flee, or order his own palace guard to intercept the intruders Pertinax attempted to reason with the soldiers personally, but ultimate reconciliation of the relationship between praetorian and emperor was futile. On March 28, AD 193 Pertinax was struck down and beheaded and his head paraded out of the palace on the end of a spear. After only 87 days, at the age of 67 years, a promising reign and potential new era had come to an end, though history can never be fully sure what, if any, positive effects Pertinax may have actually had. With their personal power restored, the praetorians essentially auctioned off the empire to the highest bidder. City prefect Flavius Sulpicianus (Pertinax' father-in-law) and Didius Julianus (an exile from the reign of Commodus) raised the monetary stakes against one another until ultimately Didius Julianus purchased the throne for 25,000 sesterces per Praetorian. (With 10 double strength praetorian cohorts of approx. 800 men, the total payment may have been as much as 200 million sesterces or 50 million denarii). Didius Julianus' reign would end up being even shorter than that of his predecessor (66 days) and resulted from the civil war that followed Pertinax' assassination. Pertinax would eventually be accorded full imperial honors and deification by the eventual victor in that war, Septimius Severus, and would be remembered largely in a positive manner in posterity.
