

BBC

# HANDS ON HISTORY

THE ROMANS



## Roman invasion: The story so far

Britain is a divided land of warring Celtic tribes and their wealthy warrior kings. In 55BC, after defeating Gaul (modern France), Julius Caesar leads a small army across the Channel to south-east Britain to test his new enemy. He returns a year later with a much larger army. Although he doesn't completely conquer Britain, the invasion leaves a lasting early Roman influence in Britain and signals the end of pre-history.



### AD43

100 years after Julius Caesar leaves Britain, the new Emperor, Claudius, invades with an army that includes elephants! After a battle, probably on the River Medway in Kent, the Romans establish a capital at Colchester. Fighting continues in Lincolnshire, the Midlands, Dorset and Somerset.

### AD73

The Romans return to Wales and it is quickly conquered. The last major rebellion is in AD77 by the Ordovices tribe living in Snowdonia and Anglesey. They are defeated by the Romans who build a network of forts across Wales.

### AD122

The Emperor Hadrian orders the building of a magnificent wall to mark the northern limit of his Empire. It eventually runs for 74 miles between Wallsend on the River Tyne and Bowness-on-Solway in Cumbria. Hadrian's Wall incorporates forts with milecastles (small fortlets) and smaller turrets between them. Other forts extend the Roman defences down the Cumbrian coast to Maryport.



AD1

### AD60

The Romans attempt to complete the conquest of North Wales which they first tried in AD48. Meanwhile, the Iceni tribe of Norfolk rebel under Queen Boudica. The tribe burn the towns of Colchester, London and Verulamium (St Albans) to the ground. The Romans claim that as many as 80,000 people are killed. The rebellion is eventually defeated in a battle in the Midlands.

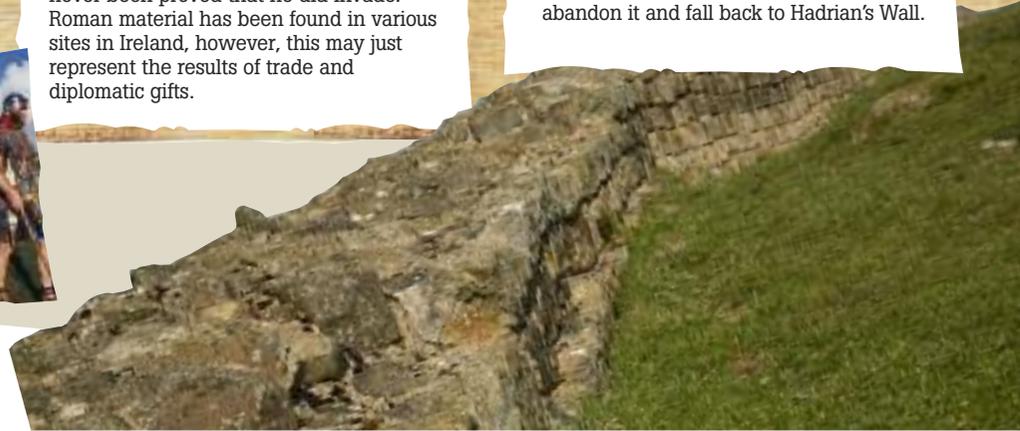
AD100

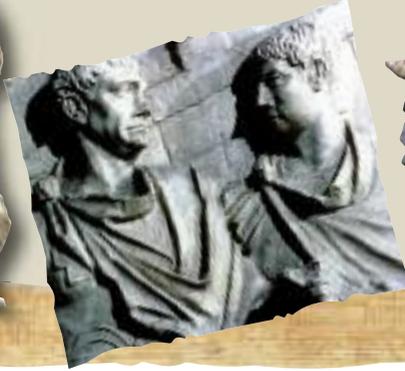
### AD82

The Roman general Agricola considers invading Ireland - he claims that he could conquer the land with a single legion and some auxiliaries, around 6,000 men. It has never been proved that he did invade. Roman material has been found in various sites in Ireland, however, this may just represent the results of trade and diplomatic gifts.

### AD138

Having attempted the conquest of Scotland in the first century AD the Romans advance again and build a wall of turf and forts between the River Forth and the River Clyde. Named the Antonine Wall, it is occupied until around AD160 before the Romans abandon it and fall back to Hadrian's Wall.





## Important Roman locations

- |                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. River Forth       | 7. Anglesey      |
| 2. River Clyde       | 8. Snowdonia     |
| 3. Bowness-on-Solway | 9. St Albans     |
| 4. Maryport          | 10. Colchester   |
| 5. Wallsend          | 11. River Medway |
| 6. York              | 12. London       |



### AD208

The Emperor Septimius Severus, accompanied by his sons Caracalla and Geta, leads campaigns in Scotland that take them north of the River Forth. After Severus's death in York in AD211 the campaigns are abandoned, along with most of the Roman forts in Scotland. Returning to Rome, Caracalla and Geta rule the Empire jointly until the notoriously violent Caracalla orders Geta to be murdered.



### AD410

By the early 5th century the Roman army in Britain has been reduced as troops are sent back to the continent to defend other areas of the Empire against Barbarian invasions. Roman rule ends and Britain is on its own once again.

AD200

AD300

AD400



### AD306

Constantine 'the Great' is declared Emperor in York. Having fought a civil war he believes that his victory had been aided by God and in thanks he becomes a Christian. In AD313 he announces that Christianity will now be tolerated across the Empire for the first time in its history. In AD324 he becomes sole Emperor of the Roman Empire.



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