**Julius Caesar**

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*For the play by William Shakespeare, see* [*Julius Caesar (play)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar_(play))*. For other uses, see* [*Julius Caesar (disambiguation)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar_(disambiguation))*. "Caesar" redirects here. For other uses, see* [*Caesar (disambiguation)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar_(disambiguation))*.*

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| **Gaius Julius Caesar (GAIVS IVLIVS CAESAR)** | |
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| Bust of Caesar in [Naples National Archaeological Museum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naples_National_Archaeological_Museum) | |
| [**Dictator**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_dictator) **of the** [**Roman Republic**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic) | |
| **In office** October 49 BC – 15 March 44 BC | |
| [**Consul**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Roman_consuls) **of the** [**Roman Republic**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic) | |
| **In office** 1 January 44 BC – 15 March 44 BC Serving with [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony) | |
| **Preceded by** | [C. Caninius Rebilus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Caninius_Rebilus) (Suffect) and [Gaius Trebonius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trebonius) (Suffect) |
| **Succeeded by** | [P. Cornelius Dolabella](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P._Cornelius_Dolabella) (Suffect) and [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony) |
| **In office** 1 January 46 BC – September 45 BC Serving with [M. Aemilius Lepidus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Aemilius_Lepidus_(triumvir)) (46 BC) | |
| **Preceded by** | [Q. Fufius Calenus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quintus_Fufius_Calenus) and [Publius Vatinius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Publius_Vatinius) |
| **Succeeded by** | [Q. Fabius Maximus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quintus_Fabius_Maximus) (Suffect) and [Gaius Trebonius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trebonius) (Suffect) |
| **In office** 1 January 48 BC – 1 January 47 BC Serving with [P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Publius_Servilius_Vatia_Isauricus_(consul_48_BC)) | |
| **Preceded by** | [C. Claudius Marcellus Maior](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Claudius_Marcellus_Maior) and [L. Cornelius Lentulus Crus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Cornelius_Lentulus_Crus) |
| **Succeeded by** | [Q. Fufius Calenus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quintus_Fufius_Calenus) and [Publius Vatinius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Publius_Vatinius) |
| **In office** 1 January 59 BC – 1 January 58 BC Serving with [Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Calpurnius_Bibulus) | |
| **Preceded by** | [Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quintus_Caecilius_Metellus_Celer) and [Lucius Afranius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Afranius_(consul)) |
| **Succeeded by** | [L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Calpurnius_Piso_Caesoninus_(consul_58_BC)) and [Aulus Gabinius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aulus_Gabinius) |
| **Personal details** | |
| **Born** | July 100 BC [Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome) |
| **Died** | 15 March 44 BC (aged 55) [Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome) |
| **Resting place** | [Temple of Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_of_Caesar), [Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome) |
| **Spouse(s)** | * [Cornelia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelia_Cinna_Minor) (84–69 BC; her death) * [Pompeia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompeia_(wife_of_Julius_Caesar)) (68–63 BC; divorced) * [Calpurnia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calpurnia_Pisonis) (59–44 BC; his death) |
| **Children** | * [Julia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_(daughter_of_Julius_Caesar)) c.76–54 BC * [Caesarion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarion) (disputed) 47–30 BC * [Augustus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus) (adoptive) 63 BC–19 AD |
| **Religion** | [Roman paganism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_paganism) |

**Gaius Julius Caesar** (Classical Latin: [[ˈɡaː.i.ʊs ˈjuː.li.ʊs ˈkae̯.sar]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA_for_Latin); July 100 – 15 March 44 BC) was a [Roman general](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_general), [statesman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politician), [Consul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_consul), and notable author of [Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) prose. He played a critical role in the events that led to the demise of the [Roman Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic) and the rise of the [Roman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire). In 60 BC, Caesar, [Crassus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Licinius_Crassus), and [Pompey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompey) formed a [political alliance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Triumvirate) that was to dominate [Roman politics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_politics) for several years. Their attempts to amass power through [populist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Populares) tactics were opposed by the [conservative ruling class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optimates) within the [Roman Senate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Senate), among them [Cato the Younger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cato_the_Younger) with the frequent support of [Cicero](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cicero). Caesar's victories in the [Gallic Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallic_Wars), completed by 51 BC, extended Rome's territory to the [English Channel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_Channel) and the [Rhine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhine). Caesar became the first Roman general to cross both when he built a [bridge across the Rhine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s_Rhine_bridges) and conducted the first [invasion of Britain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s_invasions_of_Britain).

These achievements granted him unmatched military power and threatened to eclipse the standing of Pompey, who had realigned himself with the Senate after the [death of Crassus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Carrhae) in 53 BC. With the Gallic Wars concluded, the Senate ordered Caesar to step down from his military command and return to Rome. Caesar refused the order, and instead marked his defiance in 49 BC by crossing the [Rubicon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rubicon) with a [legion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_legion), leaving his province and illegally entering [Roman Italy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Italy) under arms. [Civil war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s_Civil_War) resulted, and Caesar's victory in the war would put him in an unrivaled position of power and influence.

After assuming control of government, Caesar began a program of social and governmental reforms, including the creation of the [Julian calendar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julian_calendar). He centralized the bureaucracy of the Republic and was eventually proclaimed "dictator in perpetuity", giving him additional authority. But the underlying political conflicts had not been resolved, and on the [Ides of March](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ides_of_March) (15 March) 44 BC, Caesar was [assassinated](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassination_of_Julius_Caesar) by a group of rebellious senators led by [Marcus Junius Brutus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Junius_Brutus_the_Younger). A new series of [civil wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_civil_war) broke out, and the [constitutional government of the Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_the_Roman_Republic) was never fully restored. Caesar's adopted heir Octavius, later known as [Augustus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus), rose to sole power after defeating his opponents in the civil war. Octavius set about solidifying his power, and the era of the [Roman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire) began.

Much of Caesar's life is known from his own accounts of his military campaigns, and from other contemporary sources, mainly the letters and speeches of Cicero and the historical writings of [Sallust](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sallust). The later biographies of Caesar by [Suetonius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suetonius) and [Plutarch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plutarch) are also major sources. Caesar is considered by many to be one of the greatest military commanders in [history](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History).

**Early life and career**

Main article: [Early life and career of Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_life_and_career_of_Julius_Caesar)



[Gaius Marius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Marius), Caesar's uncle

Caesar was born into a [patrician](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrician_(ancient_Rome)) family, the [*gens*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gens)[*Julia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_(gens)), which claimed descent from [Iulus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ascanius), son of the legendary [Trojan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Troy) prince [Aeneas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aeneas), supposedly the son of the goddess [Venus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venus_(mythology)). The [*cognomen*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognomen) "Caesar" originated, according to [Pliny the Elder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pliny_the_Elder), with an ancestor who was born by [caesarean section](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarean_section) (from the Latin verb to cut, *caedere*, *caes-*). The [*Historia Augusta*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustan_History) suggests three [alternative explanations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymology_of_the_name_of_Julius_Caesar): that the first Caesar had a thick head of hair (Latin *caesaries*); that he had bright grey eyes (Latin *oculis caesiis*); or that he killed an elephant (*caesai* in Moorish) in battle. Caesar issued coins featuring images of elephants, suggesting that he favored this interpretation of his name.

Despite their ancient pedigree, the Julii Caesares were not especially politically influential, although they had enjoyed some revival of their political fortunes in the early 1st century BC. Caesar's father, also called [Gaius Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Julius_Caesar_(proconsul_of_Asia,_90s_BC)), governed the province of [Asia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia_(Roman_province)), and his sister [Julia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_Caesaris_(wife_of_Marius)), Caesar's aunt, married [Gaius Marius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Marius), one of the most prominent figures in the Republic. His mother, [Aurelia Cotta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aurelia_Cotta), came from an influential family. Little is recorded of Caesar's childhood.

In 85 BC, Caesar's father died suddenly, so at sixteen Caesar was the head of the family. His coming of age coincided with a [civil war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulla%27s_first_civil_war) between his uncle, Gaius Marius, and his rival [Lucius Cornelius Sulla](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Cornelius_Sulla). Both sides, whenever they were in the ascendancy, carried out bloody purges of their political opponents. While Marius and his ally, [Lucius Cornelius Cinna](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Cornelius_Cinna), were in control of the city, Caesar was nominated to be the new [high priest of Jupiter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flamen_Dialis), and married to Cinna's daughter [Cornelia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelia_Cinna_minor). But following Sulla's final victory, Caesar's connections to the old regime made him a target for the new one. He was stripped of his inheritance, his wife's dowry and his priesthood, but he refused to divorce Cornelia and was forced to go into hiding. The threat against him was lifted by the intervention of his mother's family, which included supporters of Sulla, and the [Vestal Virgins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vestal_Virgins). Sulla gave in reluctantly, and is said to have declared that he saw many a Marius in Caesar.

Feeling it much safer to be far away from Sulla should the Dictator change his mind, Caesar quit Rome and joined the army, serving under [Marcus Minucius Thermus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Minucius_Thermus) in Asia and [Servilius Isauricus](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Servilius_Isauricus&action=edit&redlink=1) in Cilicia. He served with distinction, winning the [Civic Crown](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civic_Crown) for his part in the [Siege of Mytilene](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Mytilene). On a mission to [Bithynia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bithynia) to secure the assistance of King [Nicomedes's](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicomedes_IV_of_Bithynia) fleet, he spent so long at his court that rumors of an affair with the king arose, which Caesar would vehemently deny for the rest of his life. Ironically, the loss of his priesthood had allowed him to pursue a military career, as the high priest of Jupiter was not permitted to touch a horse, sleep three nights outside his own bed or one night outside Rome, or look upon an army.

Hearing of Sulla's death in 78 BC, Caesar felt safe enough to return to Rome. Lacking means since his inheritance was confiscated, he acquired a modest house in [Subura](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subura), a lower-class neighborhood of Rome. He turned to legal advocacy, and became known for his exceptional oratory, accompanied by impassioned gestures and a high-pitched voice, and ruthless prosecution of former governors notorious for extortion and corruption.



Dictator [Lucius Cornelius Sulla](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Cornelius_Sulla) stripped Caesar of the priesthood.

On the way across the [Aegean Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aegean_Sea), Caesar was kidnapped by [pirates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Mediterranean_piracy) and held prisoner. He maintained an attitude of superiority throughout his captivity. When the pirates thought to demand a ransom of twenty [talents](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talent_(measurement)) of silver, he insisted they ask for fifty. After the ransom was paid, Caesar raised a fleet, pursued and captured the pirates, and imprisoned them. He had them crucified on his own authority, as he had promised while in captivity—a promise the pirates had taken as a joke. As a sign of leniency, he first had their throats cut. He was soon called back into military action in Asia, raising a band of [auxiliaries](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auxiliaries_(Roman_military)) to repel an incursion from the east.

On his return to Rome, he was elected military [tribune](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribune), a first step in a political career. He was elected [quaestor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quaestor) for 69 BC, and during that year he delivered the [funeral oration for his aunt Julia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laudatio_Iuliae_amitae), and included images of her husband Marius, unseen since the days of Sulla, in the funeral procession. His wife, Cornelia, also died that year. After her funeral, in the spring or early summer of 69 BC, Caesar went to serve his quaestorship in [Spain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispania). While there he is said to have encountered a statue of [Alexander the Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great), and realized with dissatisfaction he was now at an age when Alexander had the world at his feet, while he had achieved comparatively little. On his return in 67 BC, he married [Pompeia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompeia_(wife_of_Julius_Caesar)), a granddaughter of Sulla, whom he later divorced.

In 63 BC, he ran for election to the post of [Pontifex Maximus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontifex_Maximus), chief priest of the Roman state religion. He ran against two powerful senators. There were accusations of bribery by all sides. Caesar won comfortably, despite his opponents' greater experience and standing. When [Cicero](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cicero), who was consul that year, exposed [Catiline](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catiline)'s conspiracy to seize control of the republic, several senators accused Caesar of involvement in the plot.

After serving as [praetor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Praetor) in 62 BC, Caesar was appointed to govern [Hispania Ulterior](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispania_Ulterior) (modern south-eastern Spain) as [proprietor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propraetor), though some sources suggest he held proconsular powers. He was still in considerable debt and needed to satisfy his creditors before he could leave. He turned to [Marcus Licinius Crassus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Licinius_Crassus), one of Rome's richest men. In return for political support in his opposition to the interests of [Pompey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompey), Crassus paid some of Caesar's debts and acted as guarantor for others. Even so, to avoid becoming a private citizen and thus be open to prosecution for his debts, Caesar left for his province before his praetorship had ended. In Spain, he conquered two local tribes and was hailed as [*imperator*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperator) by his troops, reformed the law regarding debts, and completed his governorship in high esteem.

Caesar was acclaimed [*Imperator*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperator) in 60 and 45 BC. In the Roman Republic, this was an honorary title assumed by certain military commanders. After an especially great victory, an army's troops in the field would proclaim their commander *imperator*, an acclamation necessary for a general to apply to the [Senate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Senate) for a [triumph](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_triumph). However, he also wanted to stand for consul, the most senior magistracy in the republic. If he were to celebrate a triumph, he would have to remain a soldier and stay outside the city until the ceremony, but to stand for election he would need to lay down his command and enter Rome as a private citizen. He could not do both in the time available. He asked the senate for permission to stand *in absentia*, but Cato blocked the proposal. Faced with the choice between a triumph and the consulship, Caesar chose the consulship.

**Consulship and military campaigns**

Main articles: [Military campaigns of Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_campaigns_of_Julius_Caesar) and [First Triumvirate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Triumvirate)



A [denarius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denarius) depicting Julius Caesar, dated February-March 44 BC; the goddess [Venus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venus_(mythology)) is shown on the reverse, holding [Victoria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria_(mythology)) and a scepter.

In 60 BC, Caesar sought election as consul for 59 BC, along with two other candidates. The election was sordid – even [Cato](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cato_the_Younger), with his reputation for incorruptibility, is said to have resorted to bribery in favor of one of Caesar's opponents. Caesar won, along with conservative [Marcus Bibulus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Calpurnius_Bibulus).

Caesar was already in [Crassus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Licinius_Crassus)' political debt, but he also made overtures to [Pompey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompey). Pompey and Crassus had been at odds for a decade, so Caesar tried to reconcile them. The three of them had enough money and political influence to control public business. This informal alliance, known as the [First Triumvirate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Triumvirate) ("rule of three men"), was cemented by the marriage of Pompey to Caesar's daughter [Julia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_(daughter_of_Julius_Caesar)). Caesar also married again, this time [Calpurnia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calpurnia_Pisonis), who was the daughter of another powerful senator.

Caesar proposed a law for the redistribution of public lands to the poor, a proposal supported by Pompey, by force of arms if need be, and by Crassus, making the triumvirate public. Pompey filled the city with soldiers, a move which intimidated the triumvirate's opponents. Bibulus attempted to declare the omens unfavorable and thus void the new law, but was driven from the forum by Caesar's armed supporters. His [bodyguards](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lictor) had their [ceremonial axes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fasces) broken, two high magistrates accompanying him were wounded, and he had a bucket of excrement thrown over him. In fear of his life, he retired to his house for the rest of the year, issuing occasional proclamations of bad omens. These attempts to obstruct Caesar's legislation proved ineffective. [Roman satirists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_satirists) ever after referred to the year as "the consulship of Julius and Caesar."

When Caesar was first elected, the aristocracy tried to limit his future power by allotting the woods and pastures of Italy, rather than the [governorship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proconsul) of a province, as his military command duty after his year in office was over. With the help of political allies, Caesar later overturned this, and was instead appointed to govern [Cisalpine Gaul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cisalpine_Gaul) (northern Italy) and [Illyricum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illyricum_(Roman_province)) (southeastern Europe), with [Transalpine Gaul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transalpine_Gaul) (southern France) later added, giving him command of four legions. The term of his governorship, and thus his immunity from prosecution, was set at five years, rather than the usual one. When his consulship ended, Caesar narrowly avoided prosecution for the irregularities of his year in office, and quickly left for his province.

**Conquest of Gaul**

Main article: [Gallic Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallic_Wars)



The extent of the Roman Republic in 40 BC after Caesar's conquests, (Landmass shown in brown color.)

Caesar was still deeply in debt, but there was money to be made as a governor, whether by extortion or by military adventurism. Caesar had four legions under his command, two of his provinces bordered on unconquered territory, and parts of [Gaul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaul) were known to be unstable. Some of Rome's Gallic allies had been defeated by their rivals at the [Battle of Magetobriga](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Magetobriga), with the help of a contingent of [Germanic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germanic_peoples) tribes. The Romans feared these tribes were preparing to migrate south, closer to Italy, and that they had warlike intent. Caesar raised two new legions and defeated these tribes.

In response to Caesar's earlier activities, the tribes in the north-east began to arm themselves. Caesar treated this as an aggressive move and, after an inconclusive engagement against the united tribes, he conquered the tribes piecemeal. Meanwhile, one of his legions began the conquest of the tribes in the far north, directly opposite [Britain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Britain). During the spring of 56 BC, the Triumvirs held a conference, as Rome was in turmoil and Caesar's political alliance was coming undone. The [Lucca Conference](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucca_Conference) renewed the [First Triumvirate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Triumvirate) and extended Caesar's governorship for another five years. The conquest of the north was soon completed, while a few pockets of resistance remained. Caesar now had a secure base from which to launch an invasion of Britain.

In 55 BC, Caesar repelled an incursion into Gaul by two Germanic tribes, and followed it up by building a bridge across the Rhine and making a show of force in Germanic territory, before returning and dismantling the bridge. Late that summer, having subdued two other tribes, he crossed into Britain, claiming that the Britons had aided one of his enemies the previous year, possibly the [Veneti](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veneti_(Gaul)) of [Brittany](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brittany). His intelligence information was poor, and although he gained a beachhead on the coast, he could not advance further, and returned to Gaul for the winter. He returned the following year, better prepared and with a larger force, and achieved more. He advanced inland, and established a few alliances. However, poor harvests led to widespread revolt in Gaul, which forced Caesar to leave Britain for the last time.



[Vercingetorix](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vercingetorix) throws down his arms at the feet of Julius Caesar. Painting by [Lionel Royer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lionel_Royer).

While Caesar was in Britain his daughter Julia, Pompey's wife, had died in childbirth. Caesar tried to re-secure Pompey's support by offering him his great-niece in marriage, but Pompey declined. In 53 BC Crassus was killed leading a failed [invasion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Carrhae) of the east. Rome was on the edge of civil war. Pompey was appointed sole consul as an emergency measure, and married the daughter of a political opponent of Caesar. The Triumvirate was dead.

In 52 BC another, larger revolt erupted in Gaul, led by [Vercingetorix](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vercingetorix). Vercingetorix managed to unite the Gallic tribes and proved an astute commander, defeating Caesar in several engagements, but Caesar's elaborate siege-works at the [Battle of Alesia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Alesia) finally forced his surrender. Despite scattered outbreaks of [warfare](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Roman_battles) the following year, Gaul was effectively conquered. Plutarch claimed that the army had fought against three million men during the [Gallic Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallic_Wars), of whom one million died, and another million were [enslaved](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_slavery). The Romans subjugated 300 tribes and destroyed 800 cities. However, in view of the difficulty in finding accurate counts in the first place, Caesar's propagandistic purposes, and the common exaggeration of numbers in ancient texts, the stated totals of enemy combatants are likely to be too high.

**Civil war**

Main article: [Caesar's Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s_Civil_War)



Cæsar's Soldiers

In 50 BC, the [Senate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_senate), led by [Pompey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompey), ordered Caesar to disband his army and return to Rome because his term as governor had finished. Caesar thought he would be prosecuted if he entered Rome without the immunity enjoyed by a magistrate. Pompey accused Caesar of insubordination and treason. In January 49 BC, Caesar crossed the [Rubicon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rubicon) river (the frontier boundary of Italy) with only [one legion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legio_XIII_Gemina) and ignited [civil war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s_civil_war). Upon [crossing the Rubicon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crossing_the_Rubicon), Caesar, according to [Plutarch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plutarch) and Suetonius, is supposed to have quoted the Athenian playwright [Menander](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menander), in Greek, "[the die is cast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alea_iacta_est)".

[Erasmus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erasmus), however, notes that the more accurate Latin translation of the Greek [imperative mood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperative_mood) would be "alea iacta esto" *let* the die be cast. Pompey and much of the Senate fled to the south, having little confidence in his newly raised troops. Despite greatly outnumbering Caesar, who only had his Thirteenth Legion with him, Pompey did not intend to fight. Caesar pursued Pompey, hoping to capture him before his legions could escape.

Pompey managed to escape before Caesar could capture him. Heading for [Spain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispania), Caesar left Italy under the control of [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony). After an astonishing 27-day route-march, Caesar defeated Pompey's lieutenants, then returned east, to challenge Pompey in Illyria where, in July 48 BC in [Dyrrhachium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Dyrrhachium_(48_BC)), Caesar barely avoided a catastrophic defeat. In an exceedingly short engagement later that year, he decisively defeated Pompey at [Pharsalus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Pharsalus), in Greece.



A bust of [Cleopatra VII](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleopatra_VII)

In Rome, Caesar was appointed [dictator](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_dictator), with [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony) as his [Master of the Horse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Master_of_the_Horse) (second in command); Caesar presided over his own election to a second consulship and then, after eleven days, resigned this dictatorship. Caesar then pursued Pompey to Egypt, arriving soon after the murder of the general. There Caesar was presented with Pompey's severed head and seal-ring, receiving these with tears. He then had Pompey's assassins put to death.

Caesar then became involved with an Egyptian civil war between the child pharaoh and his sister, wife, and co-regent queen, [Cleopatra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleopatra_VII_of_Egypt). Perhaps as a result of the pharaoh's role in Pompey's murder, Caesar sided with Cleopatra. He withstood the [Siege of Alexandria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Alexandria_(47_BC)) and later he defeated the pharaoh's forces at the [Battle of the Nile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Nile_(47_BC)) in 47 BC and installed Cleopatra as ruler. Caesar and Cleopatra celebrated their victory with a triumphal procession on the [Nile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nile_River) in the spring of 47 BC. The royal barge was accompanied by 400 additional ships, and Caesar was introduced to the luxurious lifestyle of the Egyptian pharaohs.

Caesar and Cleopatra never married, as Roman law recognized marriages only between two Roman citizens. Caesar continued his relationship with Cleopatra throughout his last marriage, which lasted fourteen years – in Roman eyes, this did not constitute adultery – and may have fathered a son called [Caesarion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarion). Cleopatra visited Rome on more than one occasion, residing in Caesar's villa just outside Rome across the [Tiber](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiber).

Late in 48 BC, Caesar was again appointed Dictator, with a term of one year. After spending the first months of 47 BC in Egypt, Caesar went to the Middle East, where he annihilated the king of [Pontus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontus); his victory was so swift and complete that he mocked Pompey's previous victories over such poor enemies. On his way to Pontus, Caesar visited from 27 to 29 May 47 BC, (25–27 May) [Tarsus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarsus,_Mersin), where he met enthusiastic support, but where, according to [Cicero](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cicero), [Cassius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Cassius_Longinus) was planning to kill him at this point. Thence, he proceeded to Africa to deal with the remnants of Pompey's senatorial supporters. He quickly gained a significant victory in 46 BC over Cato, who then committed suicide.

After this victory, he was appointed Dictator for ten years. Pompey's sons escaped to Spain; Caesar gave chase and defeated the last remnants of opposition in the [Battle of Munda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Munda) in March 45 BC. During this time, Caesar was elected to his third and fourth terms as consul in 46 BC and 45 BC (this last time without a colleague).

**Dictatorship and assassination**

While he was still campaigning in Spain, the Senate began bestowing honors on Caesar. Caesar had not proscribed his enemies, instead pardoning almost all, and there was no serious public opposition to him. Great games and celebrations were held in April to honor Caesar’s victory at Munda. Plutarch writes that many Romans found the triumph held following Caesar's victory to be in poor taste, as those defeated in the civil war had not been foreigners, but instead fellow Romans. On Caesar's return to Italy in September 45 BC, he filed his will, naming his grandnephew [Gaius Octavius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus) (Octavian) as his principal heir, leaving his vast estate and property including his name. Caesar also wrote that if Octavian died before Caesar did, [Decimus Junius Brutus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decimus_Junius_Brutus_Albinus) would be the next heir in succession. In his will he also left a substantial gift to the citizens of Rome.

During his early career, Caesar had seen how chaotic and dysfunctional the Roman Republic had become. The republican machinery had broken down under the weight of [imperialism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperialism), the central government had become powerless, the provinces had been transformed into independent principalities under the absolute control of their governors, and the army had replaced the constitution as the means of accomplishing political goals. With a weak central government, political corruption had spiraled out of control, and the *status quo* had been maintained by a corrupt aristocracy, which saw no need to change a system that had made its members rich.

Between his crossing of the [Rubicon River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rubicon) in 49 BC, and his [assassination](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ides_of_March) in 44 BC, Caesar established a new constitution, which was intended to accomplish three separate goals. First, he wanted to suppress all armed resistance out in the provinces, and thus bring order back to the empire. Second, he wanted to create a strong central government in Rome. Finally, he wanted to knit together the entire empire into a single cohesive unit.

The first goal was accomplished when Caesar defeated Pompey and his supporters. To accomplish the other two goals, he needed to ensure that his control over the government was undisputed, and so he assumed these powers by increasing his own authority, and by decreasing the authority of Rome's other political institutions. Finally, he enacted a series of reforms that were meant to address several long neglected issues, the most important of which was his reform of the calendar.

**Dictatorship**

When Caesar returned to Rome, the Senate granted him [triumphs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_triumph) for his victories, ostensibly those over Gaul, Egypt, [Pharnaces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharnaces_II_of_Pontus) and [Juba](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juba_I_of_Numidia), rather than over his Roman opponents. Not everything went Caesar's way. When [Arsinoe IV](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arsinoe_IV), Egypt's former queen, was paraded in chains, the spectators admired her dignified bearing and were moved to pity. [Triumphal games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludi) were held, with [beast-hunts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venationes) involving 400 lions, and [gladiator contests](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gladiator). A [naval battle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naumachia) was held on a flooded basin at the [Field of Mars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campus_Martius). At the [Circus Maximus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Circus_Maximus), two armies of war captives, each of 2,000 people, 200 horse and 20 elephants, fought to the death. Again, some bystanders complained, this time at Caesar's wasteful extravagance. A riot broke out, and only stopped when Caesar had two rioters sacrificed by the priests on the Field of Mars.

After the triumph, Caesar set out to pass an ambitious legislative agenda. He ordered a census be taken, which forced a reduction in the grain dole, and that jurors could only come from the Senate or the equestrian ranks. He passed a sumptuary law that restricted the purchase of certain luxuries. After this, he passed a law that rewarded families for having many children, to speed up the repopulation of Italy. Then he outlawed professional guilds, except those of ancient foundation, since many of these were subversive political clubs. He then passed a term limit law applicable to governors. He passed a debt restructuring law, which ultimately eliminated about a fourth of all debts owed.

The [Forum of Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forum_of_Caesar), with its [Temple of Venus Genetrix](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_of_Venus_Genetrix), was then built, among many other public works. Caesar also tightly regulated the purchase of state-subsidized grain and reduced the number of recipients to a fixed number, all of whom were entered into a special register. From 47 to 44 BC he made plans for the distribution of land to about 15,000 of his veterans.

The most important change, however, was his reform of the calendar. The calendar was then regulated by the movement of the moon, and this had left the calendar in a mess. Caesar replaced this calendar with the Egyptian calendar, which was regulated by the sun. He set the length of the year to 365.25 days by adding an [intercalary/leap day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intercalation_(timekeeping)) at the end of February every fourth year.

To bring the calendar into alignment with the seasons, he decreed that three extra months be inserted into 46 BC (the ordinary intercalary month at the end of February, and two extra months after November). Thus, the [Julian calendar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julian_calendar) opened on 1 January 45 BC. This calendar is almost identical to [the current Western calendar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregorian_calendar).

Shortly before his assassination, he passed a few more reforms. He established a police force, appointed officials to carry out his land reforms, and ordered the rebuilding of [Carthage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carthage) and [Corinth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Corinth). He also extended Latin rights throughout the Roman world, and then abolished the tax system and reverted to the earlier version that allowed cities to collect tribute however they wanted, rather than needing Roman intermediaries. His assassination prevented further and larger schemes, which included the construction of an unprecedented temple to Mars, a huge theater, and a library on the scale of the [Library of Alexandria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Library_of_Alexandria).

He also wanted to convert [Ostia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ostia_Antica) to a major port, and cut a canal through the [Isthmus of Corinth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isthmus_of_Corinth). Militarily, he wanted to conquer the [Dacians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dacia) and [Parthians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthia), and avenge the loss at [Carrhae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Carrhae). Thus he instituted a massive mobilization. Shortly before his assassination, the Senate named him censor for life and Father of the Fatherland, and the month of [Quintilis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quintilis) was renamed July in his honor.

He was granted further honors, which were later used to justify his assassination as a would-be divine monarch: coins were issued bearing his image and his statue was placed next to those of the kings. He was granted a golden chair in the Senate, was allowed to wear triumphal dress whenever he chose, and was offered a form of semi-official or popular [cult](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperial_cult_(ancient_Rome)), with [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony) as his high priest.

**Political reforms**

Main article: [Constitutional reforms of Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitutional_reforms_of_Julius_Caesar)

The history of Caesar's political appointments is complex and uncertain. Caesar held both the [dictatorship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Dictator) and the [tribunate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribune), but alternated between the [consulship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Consul) and the [Proconsulship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proconsul). His powers within the state seem to have rested upon these magistracies. He was first appointed dictator in 49 BC possibly to preside over elections, but resigned his dictatorship within eleven days. In 48 BC, he was re-appointed dictator, only this time for an indefinite period, and in 46 BC, he was appointed dictator for ten years.

In February 44 BC, one month before his assassination, he was appointed dictator for life. Under Caesar, a significant amount of authority was vested in his lieutenants, mostly because Caesar was frequently out of Italy. In October 45 BC, Caesar resigned his position as sole consul, and facilitated the election of two successors for the remainder of the year which theoretically restored the ordinary consulship, since the constitution did not recognize a single consul without a colleague.

In 48 BC, Caesar was given permanent tribunician powers, which made his person sacrosanct and allowed him to veto the Senate, although on at least one occasion, tribunes did attempt to obstruct him. The offending tribunes in this case were brought before the Senate and divested of their office. This was not the first time that Caesar had violated a tribune's sacrosanctity. After he had first marched on Rome in 49 BC, he forcibly opened the treasury although a tribune had the seal placed on it. After the impeachment of the two obstructive tribunes, Caesar, perhaps unsurprisingly, faced no further opposition from other members of the Tribunician College.



[Denarius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denarius) (42 BC) issued by **Cassius Longinus** and [Lentulus Spinther](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Publius_Cornelius_Lentulus_Spinther#Death_and_family), depicting the crowned head of [Liberty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libertas) and on the reverse a sacrificial jug and [*lituus*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lituus), from the military mint in [Smyrna](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smyrna).

In 46 BC, Caesar gave himself the title of "Prefect of the Morals", which was an office that was new only in name, as its powers were identical to those of the [censors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_censor). Thus, he could hold censorial powers, while technically not subjecting himself to the same checks that the ordinary censors were subject to, and he used these powers to fill the Senate with his own partisans. He also set the precedent, which his imperial successors followed, of requiring the Senate to bestow various titles and honors upon him. He was, for example, given the title of "Father of the Fatherland" and "[*imperator*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperator)".

Coins bore his likeness, and he was given the right to speak first during senate meetings. Caesar then increased the number of magistrates who were elected each year, which created a large pool of experienced magistrates, and allowed Caesar to reward his supporters.

Caesar even took steps to transform Italy into a province, and to link more tightly the other provinces of the empire into a single cohesive unit. This addressed the underlying problem that had caused the [Social War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_War_(91%E2%80%9388_BC)) decades earlier, where individuals outside Rome and Italy were not considered "Roman", and thus were not given full citizenship rights. This process, of fusing the entire Roman Empire into a single unit, rather than maintaining it as a network of unequal principalities, would ultimately be completed by Caesar's successor, the emperor Augustus.

When Caesar returned to Rome in 47 BC, the ranks of the Senate had been severely depleted, and so he used his censorial powers to appoint many new senators, which eventually raised the Senate's membership to 900. All the appointments were of his own partisans, which robbed the senatorial aristocracy of its prestige, and made the Senate increasingly subservient to him To minimize the risk that another general might attempt to challenge him, Caesar passed a law that subjected governors to term limits.

Near the end of his life, Caesar began to prepare for a war against the [Parthian Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthian_Empire). Since his absence from Rome might limit his ability to install his own consuls, he passed a law which allowed him to appoint all magistrates in 43 BC, and all consuls and tribunes in 42 BC. This, in effect, transformed the magistrates from being representatives of the people to being representatives of the dictator.

**Assassination**

See also: [Assassination of Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassination_of_Julius_Caesar)

On the [Ides of March](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ides_of_March) (15 March; see [Roman calendar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_calendar)) of 44 BC, Caesar was due to appear at a session of the Senate. [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony), having vaguely learned of the plot the night before from a terrified *Liberator* named [Servilius Casca](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servilius_Casca), and fearing the worst, went to head Caesar off. The plotters, however, had anticipated this and, fearing that Antony would come to Caesar's aid, had arranged for [Trebonius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trebonius) to intercept him just as he approached the portico of [Theatre of Pompey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre_of_Pompey), where the session was to be held, and detain him outside. (Plutarch, however, assigns this action to delay Antony to [Brutus Albinus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brutus_Albinus).) When he heard the commotion from the senate chamber, Antony fled.

According to [Plutarch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plutarch), as Caesar arrived at the Senate, [Tillius Cimber](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tillius_Cimber) presented him with a petition to recall his exiled brother. The other conspirators crowded round to offer support. Both Plutarch and Suetonius say that Caesar waved him away, but Cimber grabbed his shoulders and pulled down Caesar's [tunic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tunic). Caesar then cried to Cimber, "Why, this is violence!" ("*Ista quidem vis est!*")



The [senators](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Senate) encircle Caesar. A 19th-century interpretation of the event by [Carl Theodor von Piloty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Theodor_von_Piloty).

At the same time, Casca produced his dagger and made a glancing thrust at the dictator's neck. Caesar turned around quickly and caught Casca by the arm. According to Plutarch, he said in Latin, "Casca, you villain, what are you doing?" Casca, frightened, shouted, "Help, brother!" in [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language) ("ἀδελφέ, βοήθει", "*adelphe, boethei*"). Within moments, the entire group, including Brutus, was striking out at the dictator. Caesar attempted to get away, but, blinded by blood, he tripped and fell; the men continued stabbing him as he lay defenseless on the lower steps of the portico. According to [Eutropius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eutropius_(historian)), around 60 or more men participated in the assassination. He was stabbed 23 times.

According to Suetonius, a physician later established that only one wound, the second one to his chest, had been lethal. The dictator's last words are not known with certainty, and are a contested subject among scholars and historians alike. Suetonius reports that others have said Caesar's last words were the Greek phrase "καὶ σύ, τέκνον;" (transliterated as "*Kai su, teknon?*": "You too, child?" in English). However, for himself, Suetonius says Caesar said nothing.

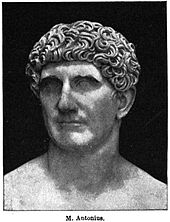
Plutarch also reports that Caesar said nothing, pulling his toga over his head when he saw Brutus among the conspirators. The version best known in the English-speaking world is the [Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_language) phrase "[*Et tu, Brute?*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Et_tu,_Brute%3F)" ("And you, Brutus?", commonly rendered as "You too, Brutus?"); this derives from Shakespeare's [*Julius Caesar*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar_(play)), where it actually forms the first half of a [macaronic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macaronic) line: "*Et tu, Brute?* Then fall, Caesar." It has no basis in historical fact and Shakespeare's use of Latin here is not from any assertion that Caesar would have been using the language, rather than the Greek reported by Suetonius, but because the phrase was already popular when the play was written.

According to Plutarch, after the assassination, Brutus stepped forward as if to say something to his fellow senators; they, however, fled the building. Brutus and his companions then marched to the Capitol while crying out to their beloved city: "People of Rome, we are once again free!" They were met with silence, as the citizens of Rome had locked themselves inside their houses as soon as the rumor of what had taken place had begun to spread. Caesar's dead body lay where it fell on the Senate floor for nearly three hours before other officials arrived to remove it.

Caesar's body was cremated, and on the site of his cremation the [Temple of Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_of_Caesar) was erected a few years later (at the east side of the main square of the [Roman Forum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Forum)). Only its altar now remains. A Lifesize wax statue of Caesar was later erected in the forum displaying the 23 stab wounds. A crowd who had gathered there started a fire, which badly damaged the forum and neighboring buildings. In the ensuing chaos [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony), [Octavian (later Augustus Caesar)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar_Augustus), and others fought a series of five civil wars, which would end in the formation of the Roman Empire.

**Aftermath of the assassination**

The result unforeseen by the assassins was that Caesar's death precipitated the end of the Roman Republic. The Roman [middle and lower classes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plebs), with whom Caesar was immensely popular and had been since before Gaul, became enraged that a small group of aristocrats had killed their champion. Antony, who had been drifting apart from Caesar, capitalized on the grief of the Roman mob and threatened to unleash them on the [Optimates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optimates), perhaps with the intent of taking control of Rome himself. To his surprise and chagrin, Caesar had named his grandnephew Gaius Octavian his sole heir, bequeathing him the immensely potent Caesar name and making him one of the wealthiest citizens in the Republic.



[Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony)

The crowd at the funeral boiled over, throwing dry branches, furniture and even clothing on to Caesar's funeral pyre, causing the flames to spin out of control, seriously damaging the Forum. The mob then attacked the houses of Brutus and Cassius, where they were repelled only with considerable difficulty, ultimately providing the spark for the [Liberators' civil war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberators%27_civil_war), fulfilling at least in part Antony's threat against the aristocrats. Antony did not foresee the ultimate outcome of the next series of civil wars, particularly with regard to Caesar's adopted heir. Octavian, aged only 18 when Caesar died, proved to have considerable political skills, and while Antony dealt with [Decimus Brutus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decimus_Junius_Brutus_Albinus) in the first round of the new civil wars, Octavian consolidated his tenuous position.

To combat Brutus and Cassius, who were massing an enormous army in Greece, Antony needed soldiers, the cash from Caesar's war chests, and the legitimacy that Caesar's name would provide for any action he took against them. With the passage of the *lex Titia* on 27 November 43 BC, the [Second Triumvirate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Triumvirate) was officially formed, composed of Antony, Octavian, and Caesar's loyal cavalry commander [Lepidus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Aemilius_Lepidus_(triumvir)). It formally [deified](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apotheosis) Caesar as Divus Iulius in 42 BC, and Caesar Octavian henceforth became *Divi filius* ("Son of a god").

Because Caesar's clemency had resulted in his murder, the Second Triumvirate reinstated the practice of [proscription](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proscription), abandoned since [Sulla](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulla). It engaged in the legally sanctioned murder of a large number of its opponents to secure funding for its forty-five legions in the second civil war against Brutus and Cassius. Antony and Octavius defeated them at [Philippi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Philippi).



[Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Julius_Caesar_Octavianus), Caesar's adopted heir

Afterward, Mark Antony formed an alliance with Caesar's lover, Cleopatra, intending to use the fabulously wealthy Egypt as a base to dominate Rome. A third civil war broke out between Octavian on one hand and Antony and Cleopatra on the other. This final civil war, culminating in the latter's defeat at [Actium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Actium), resulted in the permanent ascendancy of Octavian, who became the first Roman emperor, under the name Caesar Augustus, a name that raised him to the status of a deity.

Julius Caesar had been preparing to invade [Parthia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthia), the [Caucasus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caucasus) and [Scythia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scythia), and then march back to [Germania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germania) through Eastern Europe. These plans were thwarted by his assassination. His successors did attempt the conquests of Parthia and Germania, but without lasting results.

**Deification**

See also: [Divus Julius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divus_Julius) and [Caesar's Comet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s_Comet)

Julius Caesar was the first historical Roman to be officially deified. He was posthumously granted the title *Divus Iulius* or *Divus Julius* (the divine Julius or the deified Julius) by decree of the Roman Senate on 1 January 42 BC. The [appearance of a comet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesar%27s_Comet) during [games in his honor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludi) was taken as confirmation of his divinity. Though his temple was not dedicated until after his death, he may have received divine honors during his lifetime: and shortly before his assassination, [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony) had been appointed as his [*flamen*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flamen) (priest). Both Octavian and Mark Antony promoted the cult of Divus Iulius. After the death of Antony, [Octavian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octavian), as the adoptive son of Caesar, assumed the title of *Divi Filius* (son of a god).

**Personal life**

**Health and physical appearance**

Based on remarks by Plutarch, Caesar is sometimes thought to have suffered from [epilepsy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epilepsy). Modern scholarship is "sharply divided" on the subject, and some scholars believe that he was plagued by malaria, particularly during the Sullan proscriptions of the 80s. Several specialists in headache medicine believe that instead of epilepsy, a more accurate diagnosis would be migraine headache. Other scholars contend his epileptic seizures were due to a [parasitic infection in the brain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neurocysticercosis) by a tapeworm.

Caesar had four documented episodes of what may have been complex partial seizures. He may additionally have had [absence seizures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Absence_seizure) in his youth. The earliest accounts of these seizures were made by the biographer Suetonius, who was born after Caesar died. The claim of epilepsy is countered among some medical historians by a claim of [hypoglycemia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypoglycemia), which can cause epileptoid seizures.

In 2003, psychiatrist Harbour F. Hodder published what he termed as the "Caesar Complex" theory, arguing that Caesar was a sufferer of [temporal lobe epilepsy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temporal_lobe_epilepsy) and the debilitating symptoms of the condition were a factor in Caesar's conscious decision to forgo personal safety in the days leading up to his assassination.

A line from Shakespeare has sometimes been taken to mean that he was deaf in one ear: *Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf*. No classical source mentions hearing impairment in connection with Caesar. The playwright may have been making metaphorical use of a passage in Plutarch that does not refer to deafness at all, but rather to a gesture Alexander of Macedon customarily made. By covering his ear, Alexander indicated that he had turned his attention from an accusation in order to hear the defense.

The Roman historian [Suetonius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suetonius) describes Caesar as "tall of stature with a fair complexion, shapely limbs, a somewhat full face, and keen black eyes."

**Name and family**

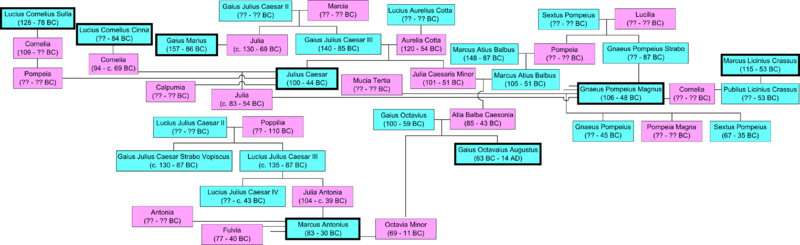
Main articles: [Etymology of the name of Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymology_of_the_name_of_Julius_Caesar) and [Julio-Claudian family tree](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julio-Claudian_family_tree)

Using the [Latin alphabet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_alphabet) of the period, which lacked the letters *J* and *U*, Caesar's name would be rendered *GAIVS IVLIVS CAESAR*; the form *CAIVS* is also attested, using the older Roman representation of *G* by *C*. The standard abbreviation was *C. IVLIVS CÆSAR*, reflecting the older spelling. (The letterform *Æ* is a [ligature](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ligature_(typography)) of the letters *A* and *E*, and is often used in Latin [inscriptions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inscription) to save space.)

In Classical Latin, it was [pronounced](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_spelling_and_pronunciation) [[ˈɡaːjus ˈjuːljus ˈkajsar]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA_for_Latin). In the days of the late Roman Republic, many historical writings were done in Greek, a language most educated Romans studied. Young wealthy Roman boys were often taught by Greek slaves and sometimes sent to [Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens) for advanced training, as was Caesar's principal assassin, [Brutus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Junius_Brutus). In [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek), during Caesar's time, his family name was written *Καίσαρ*, reflecting its contemporary pronunciation. Thus, his name is pronounced in a similar way to the pronunciation of the German [Kaiser](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaiser).

In [Vulgar Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulgar_Latin), the [plosive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stop_consonant) /k/ before [front vowels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Front_vowel) began, due to [palatalization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palatalization), to be pronounced as an [affricate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affricate), hence renderings like [ˈtʃeːsar] in [Italian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_language) and [ˈtseːsar] in [German](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_language) [regional pronunciations of Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_regional_pronunciation), as well as the title of [Tsar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsar). With the evolution of the [Romance languages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romance_languages), the affricate [ts] became a [fricative](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fricative_consonant) [s] (thus, [ˈseːsar]) in many regional pronunciations, including the French one, from which the modern English pronunciation is derived. The original /k/ is preserved in [Norse mythology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norse_mythology), where he is manifested as the legendary king [Kjárr](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kj%C3%A1rr).

Caesar's [cognomen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognomen) itself became a title; it was promulgated by the [Bible](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bible), which contains the famous verse "[Render unto Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Render_unto_Caesar) the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's". The title became [Kaiser](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaiser) in [German](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_language) and [Tsar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsar) or Czar in the [Slavic languages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavic_languages). The last tsar in nominal power was [Simeon II of Bulgaria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simeon_II_of_Bulgaria), whose reign ended in 1946. This means that for two thousand years after Julius Caesar's assassination, there was at least one head of state bearing his name.



Julio-Claudian family tree

Parents

* Father [Gaius Julius Caesar the Elder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Julius_Caesar_the_Elder)
* Mother [Aurelia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aurelia_Cotta) (related to the [Aurelii Cottae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aurelia_(gens)))

Sisters

* [Julia Caesaris "Major"](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_Caesaris_(sister_of_Julius_Caesar)) (the elder)
* [Julia Caesaris "Minor"](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_Caesaris_(sister_of_Julius_Caesar)) (the younger)

Wives

* First marriage to [Cornelia Cinnilla](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelia_Cinna_minor), from 83 BC until her death in 69 or 68 BC
* Second marriage to [Pompeia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompeia_(wife_of_Julius_Caesar)), from 67 BC until he divorced her around 61 BC
* Third marriage to [Calpurnia Pisonis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calpurnia_Pisonis), from 59 BC until Caesar's death

Children



Cleopatra and her son by Julius Caesar, Caesarion at the [Temple of Dendera.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dendera_Temple_complex)

* [Julia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_(daughter_of_Julius_Caesar)), with Cornelia Cinnilla, born in 83 or 82 BC
* [Caesarion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarion), with [Cleopatra VII](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleopatra_VII), born 47 BC, and killed at age 17 by Caesar's adopted son Octavianus.
* *adopted*: Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, his great-nephew by blood, who later became Emperor Augustus.
* [Marcus Junius Brutus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Junius_Brutus_the_Younger): The historian [Plutarch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plutarch) notes that Caesar believed Brutus to have been his illegitimate son, as his mother [Servilia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servilia_Caepionis) had been Caesar's lover during their youth.

Grandchildren

* Grandson from [Julia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_(daughter_of_Julius_Caesar)) and [Pompey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompey), dead at several days, unnamed.

Lovers

* [Cleopatra VII](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleopatra), mother of [Caesarion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarion)
* [Servilia Caepionis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servilia_Caepionis), mother of Brutus
* Eunoë, queen of [Mauretania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauretania) and wife of [Bogudes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bogud)

Notable relatives

* [Gaius Marius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Marius) (married to his Aunt Julia)
* [Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony)
* [Lucius Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Julius_Caesar)
* [Julius Sabinus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Sabinus), a [Gaul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaul) of the [Lingones](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingones) at the time of the [Batavian rebellion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Batavian_rebellion) of AD 69, claimed to be the great-grandson of Caesar on the grounds that his great-grandmother had been Caesar's lover during the [Gallic Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallic_Wars).

**Rumors of homosexual practices**

Roman society viewed the passive role during [sexual activity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexuality_in_ancient_Rome), regardless of gender, to be a sign of submission or inferiority. Indeed, Suetonius says that in Caesar's Gallic triumph, his soldiers sang that, "Caesar may have conquered the Gauls, but Nicomedes conquered Caesar." According to Cicero, [Bibulus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Calpurnius_Bibulus), [Gaius Memmius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaius_Memmius_(poet)), and others (mainly Caesar's enemies), he had an affair with [Nicomedes IV of Bithynia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicomedes_IV_of_Bithynia) early in his career. The tales were repeated, referring to Caesar as the Queen of Bithynia, by some Roman politicians as a way to humiliate him. Caesar himself denied the accusations repeatedly throughout his lifetime, and according to [Cassius Dio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassius_Dio), even under oath on one occasion. This form of slander was popular during this time in the Roman Republic to demean and discredit political opponents. A favorite tactic used by the opposition was to accuse a popular political rival as living a Hellenistic lifestyle based on Greek and Eastern culture, where homosexuality and a lavish lifestyle were more acceptable than in Roman tradition.

[Catullus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catullus) wrote two poems suggesting that Caesar and his engineer [Mamurra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mamurra) were lovers, but later apologized.

[Mark Antony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony) charged that Octavian had earned his adoption by Caesar through sexual favors. Suetonius described Antony's accusation of an affair with Octavian as political [slander](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slander). Octavian eventually became the first Roman Emperor.

**Literary works**

During his lifetime, Caesar was regarded as one of the best orators and prose authors in Latin — even Cicero spoke highly of Caesar's rhetoric and style. Only Caesar's war commentaries have survived. A few sentences from other works are quoted by other authors. Among his lost works are [his funeral oration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laudatio_Iuliae_amitae) for his paternal aunt [Julia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_(aunt_of_Caesar_and_wife_of_Marius)) and his [*Anticato*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anticato), a document written to defame [Cato](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cato_the_Younger) in response to Cicero's published praise. [Poems by Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poems_by_Julius_Caesar) are also mentioned in ancient sources.

**Memoirs**



A 1783 edition of *The Gallic Wars*

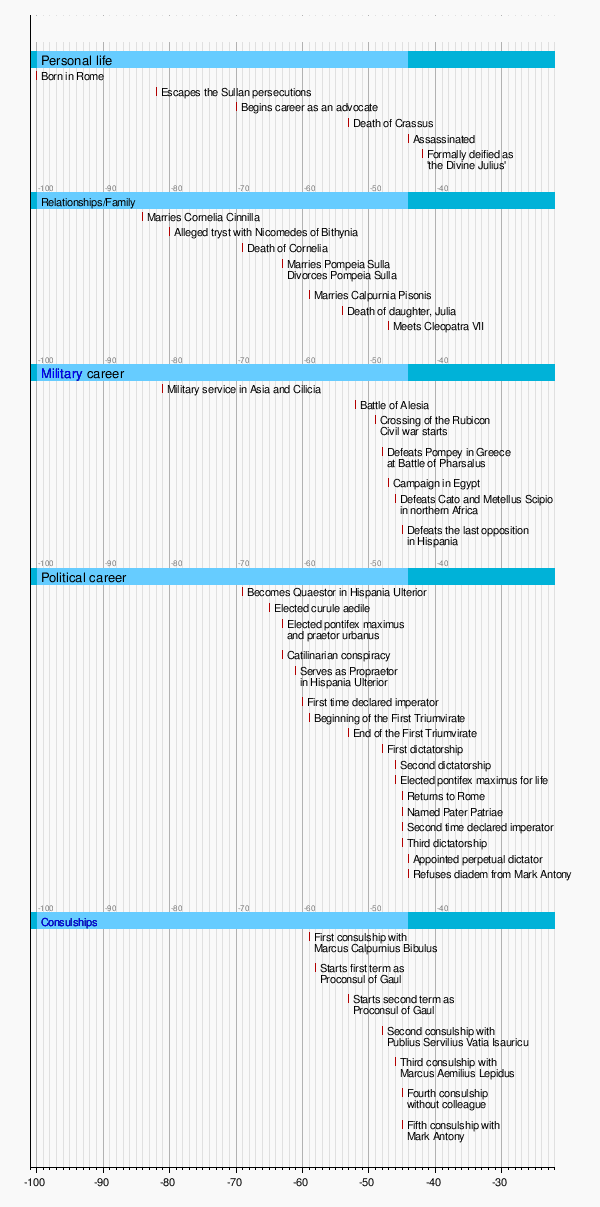
* The [*Commentarii de Bello Gallico*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commentarii_de_Bello_Gallico), usually known in English as *The Gallic Wars,* seven books each covering one year of his campaigns in Gaul and southern Britain in the 50s BC, with the eighth book written by [Aulus Hirtius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aulus_Hirtius) on the last two years.
* The [*Commentarii de Bello Civili*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commentarii_de_Bello_Civili) (*The Civil War*), events of the Civil War from Caesar's perspective, until immediately after Pompey's death in Egypt.

Other works historically have been attributed to Caesar, but their authorship is in doubt:

* [*De Bello Alexandrino*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_Bello_Alexandrino) (*On the Alexandrine War*), campaign in Alexandria;
* [*De Bello Africo*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_Bello_Africo) (*On the African War*), campaigns in North Africa; and
* [*De Bello Hispaniensi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_Bello_Hispaniensi) (*On the Hispanic War*), campaigns in the [Iberian Peninsula](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula).

These narratives were written and published annually during or just after the actual campaigns, as a sort of "dispatches from the front." They were important in shaping Caesar's public image and enhancing his reputation when he was away from Rome for long periods. They may have been presented as public readings. As a model of clear and direct Latin style, *The Gallic Wars* traditionally has been studied by first- or second-year Latin students.

**Chronology of his life**



**Depictions**

Main article: [Cultural depictions of Julius Caesar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_depictions_of_Julius_Caesar)

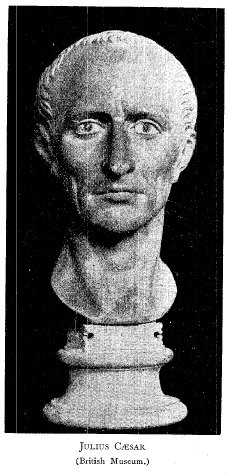
*For the marble bust from Arles discovered in 2007–8 alleged to be Caesar's likeness, see* [*Arles portrait bust*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arles_portrait_bust)*.*



Bust in [Naples National Archaeological Museum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naples_National_Archaeological_Museum), photograph published in 1902



Bust in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples



Bust of Julius Caesar from the [British Museum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Museum)



Modern bronze statue of Julius Caesar, [Rimini](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rimini), Italy

Retrieved from "<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Julius_Caesar&oldid=646520372>"

[Categories](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:Category):

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* [First Triumvirate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:First_Triumvirate)
* [100 BC births](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:100_BC_births)
* [44 BC deaths](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:44_BC_deaths)
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* [Assassinated Roman politicians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Assassinated_Roman_politicians)
* [Characters in Book VI of the Aeneid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Characters_in_Book_VI_of_the_Aeneid)
* [Characters in works by Geoffrey of Monmouth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Characters_in_works_by_Geoffrey_of_Monmouth)
* [Correspondents of Cicero](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Correspondents_of_Cicero)
* [Deaths by stabbing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Deaths_by_stabbing)
* [Deified people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Deified_people)
* [Golden Age Latin writers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Golden_Age_Latin_writers)
* [Iulii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Iulii)
* [Latin-language writers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Latin-language_writers)
* [People from Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:People_from_Rome)
* [Pontifices Maximi of the Roman Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Pontifices_Maximi_of_the_Roman_Republic)
* [Roman governors of Hispania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Roman_governors_of_Hispania)
* [Roman military writers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Roman_military_writers)
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* [Royalty and nobility with disabilities](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Royalty_and_nobility_with_disabilities)

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