



# The Romans in Britain

43 AD to 410 AD




The  Romans came to  Britain nearly 2000 years ago and changed our country. Even today, evidence of the Romans being here, can be seen in the ruins of Roman buildings, forts, roads, and baths can be found all over Britain.

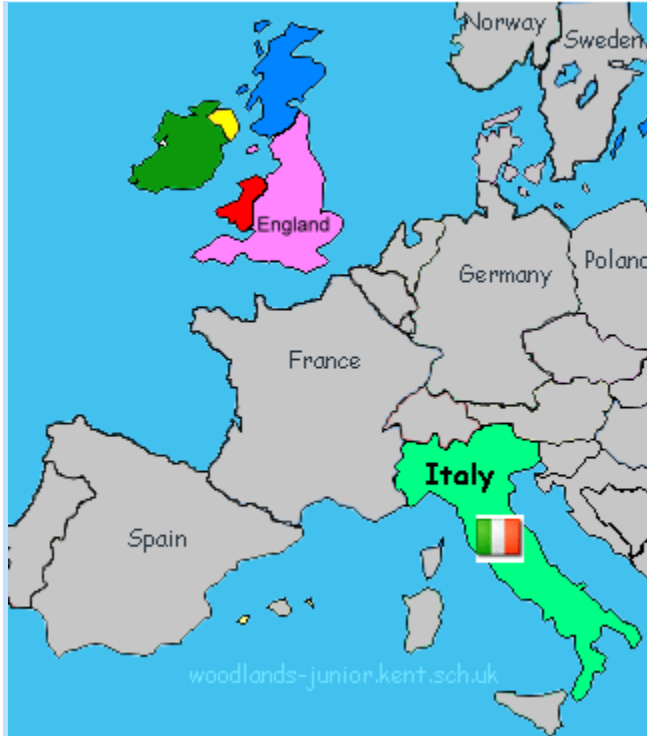
The Romans invaded other countries too. The Roman Empire covered much of Europe, north Africa, and the Middle East.

([see map](#))



## Who were the Romans?

The Romans lived in Rome, a city in the centre of the country of Italy .



One day, some years before Jesus Christ was born, the Romans came to Britain.

**Britain before the Romans** (The Celts)

**Who founded Rome?**

**When did the Romans invade Britain?**

**Why did the Romans invade Britain?**

**How long did the Romans stay in Britain?**

**Why did the Romans leave Britain?**

**What did the Romans call**



## London?

## Why was the Roman Empire important?

## What did the Romans give us?

## Video on the Roman Empire



## Who founded Rome?

According to the Roman legend, **Romulus** was the founder of Rome. Romulus and his twin brother Remus were the sons of the God Mars. When they were very young they were abandoned by the banks of the River Tiber and left to fend for themselves. Luckily for them they were found by a she-wolf who took pity on them fed them with her milk. The boys were later found by a shepherd who raised them. The boys grew up to be very strong and clever and they decided to build a town on the spot where the Shepherd had found them. They named their town Rome.



## When did the Romans invade Britain?

### **First invasion** - Caesar's first raid

In August 55 B.C. (55 years before Jesus was born) the Roman general, **Emperor Julius Caesar** invaded Britain. He took with him two **Roman legions**. After winning several battles against the Celtic tribes (Britons) in south-east England he returned to France.

### **Second invasion** - Caesar's second raid

The following summer (in 54 B.C.) Caesar came to Britain again landing at Walmer near Deal in Kent. This time he brought with him no fewer than five **legions** (30,000 foot soldiers) and 2,000 cavalrymen (horse riders). This time the Romans crossed the River

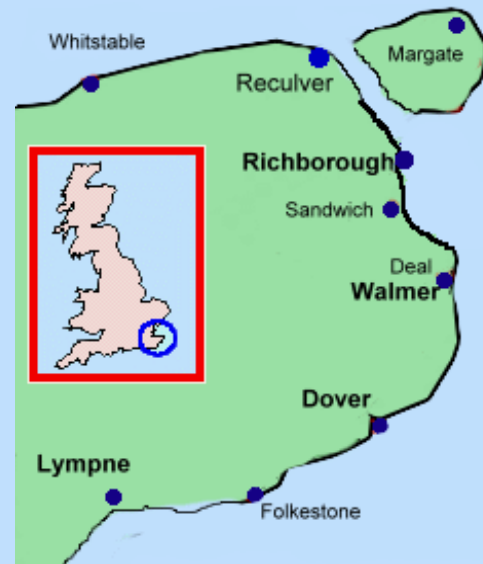
Thames. After more fighting, the British tribes promised to pay tribute to Rome and were then left in peace for nearly a century.



### Third and final invasion

Nearly one hundred years later, in 43 A.D. (43 years after Jesus was born), **Emperor Claudius** organised the final and successful Roman invasion of Britain. General Aulus Plautius led four legions with 25,000 men, plus an equal number of **auxiliary soldiers**. They crossed the Channel in three divisions, landing at Richborough, Dover, and Lympne.

[\(Click here for more information on the map of Kent in Roman times\)](#)



The biggest battle was fought on the banks of the River Medway, close to Rochester. It went on for two days before the Celtic tribes retreated.

Many tribes tried to resist the Romans. It took about four years for

the invaders to finally gain control over southern England, and another 30 years for them to conquer all of the West Country and the mountains and valleys of Wales. The battle for Yorkshire and the remainder of northern England was still underway in AD 70.



The first Roman city was Camulodunum also called Colonia Vitricencis. (We know it by the name of Colchester.) It was the seat of Roman power and governance of Brittania until sacked during the Boudiccan revolt. London was then established as a seat of governance, and only became important after the Camulodunum event.




## Why did the Romans invade Britain?

Why the Romans came to Britain is not quite certain. Two reasons have been suggested:

1. The Romans were cross with  Britain for helping the  **Gauls** (now called the French) fight against the Roman general Julius Caesar.
2. They came to Britain looking for riches - land, slaves, and most of all, iron, lead, zinc, copper, silver and gold.



## How long did the Romans stay in Britain?

The Romans remained in  Britain from 43 AD to 410 AD. That is almost four hundred years (four centuries).




## Why did the Romans leave Britain?

Their homes in Italy were being attacked by fierce tribes and every soldier was needed.



## What did the Romans call London?

The Romans called London '**Londinium**'.

The River Thames was quick way to transport goods between  Britain and the Continent. The Romans saw this and built the town of Londinium around the river's main crossing point.

[Find out more about Roman London](#)



## Why was the Roman Empire important?

The Romans, even today, play an important part in our lives. Many of the things we do or have originated from the Romans.



## The Romans gave us



- **Language**

The language we used today was developed from the Romans. The Romans spoke and wrote in Latin and many of our words are based on Latin words.

- **The Calendar**

Did you know that the calendar we use today is more than 2,000 years old? It was started by Julius Caesar, a Roman ruler. It is based on the movement of the earth around the sun, and so is called the 'solar calendar.' The solar calendar has 365 days a year, and 366 days every leap year, or every fourth year. The names of our months are taken from the names of Roman gods and rulers. The month 'July,' in fact, is named after Julius Caesar himself!

- **Laws and a legal system**

The laws and ways we determine what to do with someone who is accused of breaking a law came originally from the Roman Empire.

- **The Census**

The Roman Empire was huge and included millions of people living over a large area. How did they keep track of all these people? Easy! They counted them! The Roman Empire began the practice of taking a census, or a 'count,' of all the people within its boundaries every so often. Today, many countries like ours take a census every 10 years.

## **The Romans also gave us:**

- straight roads
- central heating
- concrete
- aqueducts (bridges for water)











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Use the links, top left, for more information about the Romans.



Project Britain  
**The Romans**  
by Mandy Barrow

Celts	<b>Romans</b>	Saxons	Vikings	Normans	Tudors	Victorians	WW II
							
500 BC	<b>AD 43</b>	450	793	1066	1485	1837	1939

March 13, 2013

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The  Romans came to  Britain



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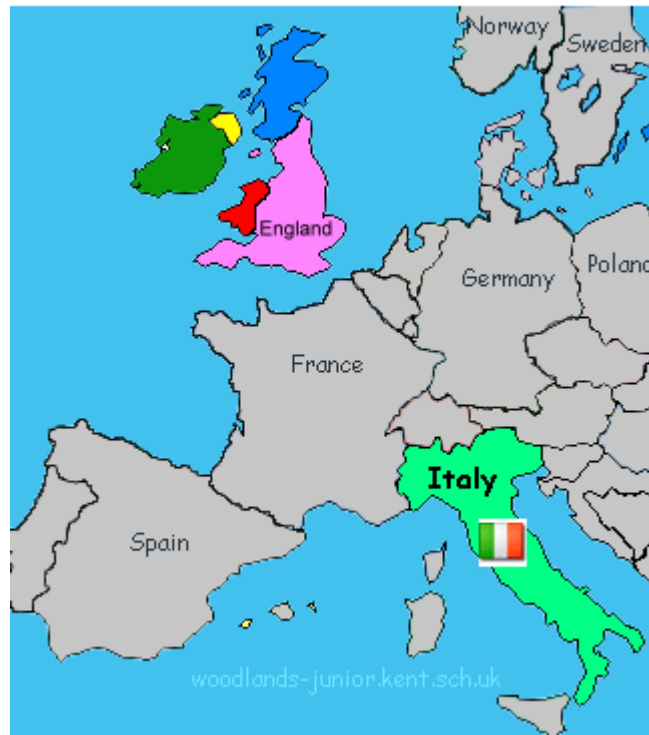
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