

Julius Caesar was a Roman general and dictator who lived from 100 BC to 44 BC. He helped to make Rome a great empire. He was also a talented writer.



EARLY LIFE OF CAESAR

His father, Gaius Caesar died when Caesar was 16. Caesar's mother, Aurelia, influenced her son greatly.

Although Caesar came from a noble upper class family, he supported the normal people.

Caesar studied public speaking on Rhodes, an island in the Mediterranean Sea. On his way there, he was captured by pirates who wanted gold from him. Caesar quickly organized a small navy, captured the pirates and had them killed.

CAESAR ENTERS POLITICS

After Caesar returned from Rhodes, he began his political career. In 69 or 68 BC he became quaestor, a high Roman officer, who controlled finances. Caesar soon moved up the Roman political ladder. He organized great games that made him popular with the public.

In order to make him stronger Caesar made a political agreement with the two most powerful men in Rome, the rich Marcus Licinius Crassus and the popular general Pompey the Great. This partnership became known as the First Triumvirate. In 59 BC Caesar was elected consul, the highest public office in old Rome. As one of two consuls, he ruled the Roman state for one year.



After his year of office Caesar left Rome to govern Gaul, a province that is now France. There he worked and fought together with his soldiers. He fought against and conquered many tribes of Western Europe and became a great soldier.

CAESAR TAKES ROME

Meanwhile, Caesar's old friend Crassus was killed while fighting in Asia. Caesar and his other old friend, Pompey, then became rivals. They fought for power. Pompey wanted Caesar to give up his power but Caesar was unwilling to do that. He marched back from Gaul toward Italy at the head of his army.

The Romans sided with Caesar, so Pompey fled across the sea to Greece. Caesar took over the treasury in Rome and set up a government with himself as dictator. For five years Caesar's soldiers fought against Pompey's supporters.

Caesar followed Pompey to Egypt, but Pompey was murdered before Caesar could catch him. To prove his power, Caesar continued to fight and win battles. After one victory in Asia, he sent back the message, "*Veni, vidi, vici*," which means "I came, I saw, I conquered."

When Caesar returned to Rome he became the permanent head of the government and became even more honored and powerful . Romans created statues of him and compared him to god.

CAESAR'S DEATH

Caesar also had many enemies. Some of them thought that power should not be in the hand of one person.

On March 15 , 44 BC, 60 senators organized the murder of Caesar at a meeting of the Senate. Caesar's friend Brutus was head of the conspiracy. Caesar first fought back but then Brutus killed him with his dagger. .

Rome's greatest statesman and soldier left the world many things. Caesar founded the Julian calendar, which is now used in most parts of the world. The Roman month Quintilis, in which Caesar was born, was renamed July in his honor.



WORDS

- agreement = to have the same opinion as others
- although =while
- battle = a fight between armies
- BC = Before Christ
- capture = to catch a person and keep him as prisoner
- career = a job that you do for your whole life
- conquer = to take control of a country by fighting
- conspiracy = a secret plan by a group of people
- elect = to vote for somebody
- empire = a group of countries that are all controlled by one ruler
- flee- fled = to escape to another country
- finances = everything that has to do with money
- head = leader
- honored =here: liked and admired by many people

- navy = many ships that fight for a country
- permanent head = a person who rules for his whole life
- popular = many people liked him
- prove = show
- public = the normal people
- public speaking = to speak in front of many people
- rival = enemy
- rule =to govern a country
- side with = to help a person or be for him
- supporter = helper
- treasury = all the money that a country gets from the people
- tribe = a group of people who have the same language and traditions
- triumvirate = three very powerful people
- victory = if you win against someone