

Claudius' invasion (Roman Britain AD43-139)



By my work - Based on Frere's Britannia, Jones' & Mattingly's Atlas of Roman Britain, and Tacitus — sources are cited in the image legend. The topographical map is from a sub-region of File:Uk topo en.jpg, with the copyright notice `{{Bild-GFDL-GMT|migration=reticence}}` and original date of 7 July 2006, copy made in 2008, with the annotations removed by myself., CC BY-SA 3.0, commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11357164

After the failed attempts of Julius Caesar to invade Britain in 55BC and 54 BC, Emperor Claudius was determined to invade and, this time, conquer Britain. He wanted to show his rivals in Rome that he was the best leader of Rome, as well as take valuable metals from Britain and capture Britons (Celts) as slaves. He sent 40,000 legionaries (Roman soldiers), led by Aulus Plautius in May AD43 and they landed in Britain in three separate groups.

They were met by the Celts, led by Caratacus, king of the Catuvellauni tribe, who fought fiercely but the Celts were defeated by the Romans. Caratacus fled to Wales where he tried to gather more support for his fight against the Romans. In the autumn of the same year, Emperor Claudius himself arrived from Rome, with more Roman soldiers, as reinforcements. Eleven Celtic kings surrendered to the Romans, agreeing to their rule in return for keeping their own kingdoms. Claudius appointed Aulus Plautius Governor of Britain before he left to return to Rome. For the next four years, the Romans continued to take over the southern parts of Britain and, in AD47 they began to build the city of Londinium, which we now know as London.

By AD51 Caratacus had persuaded other Celtic tribes to join him in fighting against the new Roman rulers. They fought but, again, the Celts were defeated by the mighty Roman army. Although Caratacus managed to escape he was eventually caught and sent to Rome as a prisoner, where he spent the rest of his life.

Peace lasted until the death of Prasutagus, the king of the Iceni tribe in AD60. Prasutagus had had a peace treaty with the Romans and his wife, Boudicca was planning on keeping the peace too but the behaviour of local Romans was so bad that she decided to wage war instead. Her army took back the Roman cities of Colchester, St Albans and London but the Roman forces were too strong and eventually defeated Boudicca's army. Boudicca was so determined to avoid being captured by the Romans that she took poison and killed herself first.



By AD77 the Roman conquest of the whole southern part of Britain was completed and two years later the Romans decided to invade Scotland. However, the Celts in Scotland were not easily defeated and eventually, in AD122 Emperor Hadrian of Rome ordered the building of an enormous wall to keep the rebel Scottish tribes out of Roman Britain. The wall, known as Hadrian's Wall was completed seventeen years later in AD139 and parts of it are still standing today.

Name: Date:.....

Timeline (a)

Complete the timeline by adding the missing event next to each date.

Date	Event
May AD43	
Autumn AD43	
AD43-47	
AD47	
AD51	
AD60-61	
AD75-77	
AD79	
AD122	
AD139	

Name: Date:.....

Timeline (b)

Complete the timeline by cutting and sticking the missing events or dates.

Date	Event
May AD43	
Autumn AD43	
	Roman forces take over the southern parts of Britain.
AD47	
	Caratacus joined with other Celtic tribes to lead a second war against the Romans.
AD60-61	
AD75-77	
	The Romans try to invade and conquer Scotland but are not successful.
AD122	
AD139	

Cut and stick dates and events

Carefully cut out the dates and events and glue onto the timeline.

Boudicca leads a rebellion against the Romans.
Aulus Plautius, along with 40,000 Roman soldiers, land in Britain.
Emperor Hadrian orders the building of a wall.
Hadrian's Wall is completed.
The Roman conquest of the southern parts of Britain is complete.
Emperor Claudius arrives in Britain.
The Romans begin to build the city of Londinium.



AD43-47	AD51	AD79
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Claudius' invasion teaching notes

Introducing the topic

Explain to the children that the following text contains information about the AD43 invasion of Britain by the Romans and the subsequent occupation. Less confident readers may need adult support with the text.

Introducing the activity

Explain to the children that they will be writing a timeline to show their understanding of the chronological events of the Roman occupation, including the Celtic rebellions.

Differentiation

Two versions of the activity are provided to support less confident learners.

Rounding off

Ask children to share their timelines, addressing any misconceptions or gaps in knowledge or understanding.