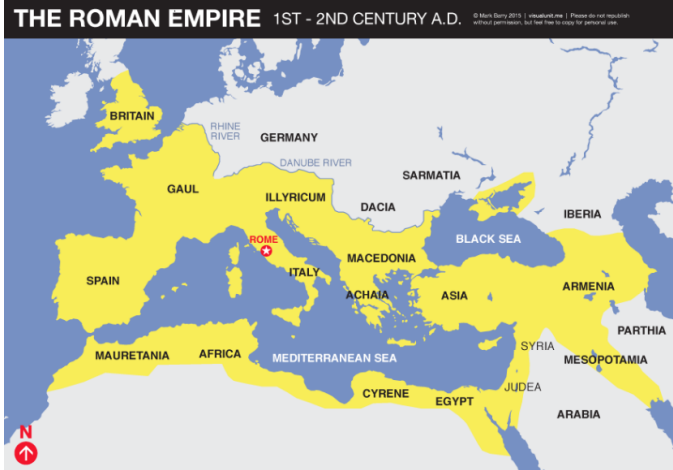# The Romans in Britain

Roman Britain was a province of the Roman Empire from 43 to 409. Before the invasions the tribes of Britain had already established cultural and economic links with continental Europe, but the Roman invaders introduced new developments in agriculture, urbanisation, industry, and architecture. After the initial rebellions of Caratacus and Boudicca, the Romans controlled the lands south of Hadrian's Wall in relative peace & a distinctively RomanoBritish culture developed. From 400 Britain suffered repeated attacks from barbarian invasions and in c. 409 Roman officials departed. Over the next 150 years most of the Roman cities fell into ruins, nevertheless, the legacy of Roman rule was felt for many centuries.

Timeline of Key Events:

August 55 BC: Julius Caesar attempted to invade Britain for the <u>first time</u>. They had an advantage but the weather meant they had to leave.

July-August 54 BC: Julius Caesar attempted to invade Britain for the <u>second time</u>. The Romans this time successfully conquered Britain, but Caesar was forced to leave to deal with problems in France (Gaul).

51BC: Defeat of Caratacus

61BC: Iceni revolt led by Boudicca

122AD: Construction of Hadrian's wall

200AD: Introduction of Christianity

306: Constantine proclaimed emperor in York

406: Suevi, Alans, Vandals and Burgandians attack Gaul and break contact between Rome and Britain: Remaining Roman army in Britain mutinies

408: Devastating attacks by the Picts, Scots and Saxons

409: Britons expel Roman officials and fight for themselves

410: Britain is independent

440-500 Civil war and famine in Britain; Pictish invasions: Many towns and cities are in ruins.

c.480-550: Arrival of Anglo-Saxons

Themes:

- **Roman army** – legions, training, weapons, armour, tactics, discipline
- **Roman worship** – gods, temples, rituals
- **Architecture**, cities, villas, embellishments (jewellery, art etc).
- **Technology** – roads, machines, heating, aqueducts, buildings
- **Entertainment** – Gladiators, chariots, plays
- **Iceni** – Settlements, tribes, religion, weapons, jewellery, buried treasure

Enquiry questions

(1) Social: How did the Roman invasions change the way people lived, traded and socialised?

(2) Cultural: How did the Roman invasions affect the cultural development of Britain?

(3) Political: What were the political issues surrounding the invasion?

(4) Historical: What effects did the Roman invasions have?

(5) Environmental: How did the Roman invasions change the British landscape?

Useful website: http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/romans/roman_remains/