

An illustration featuring several figures in Roman attire. In the center, a man and a woman stand with their backs to the viewer, wearing white tunics and red cloaks, with laurel wreaths on their heads. To the left, a woman in a blue and white robe is partially visible. To the right, a Roman soldier in full armor is partially visible. The background shows a cityscape with blue buildings and a temple with a pediment. A large red banner is held across the middle of the scene.

History

The Celts fight back!



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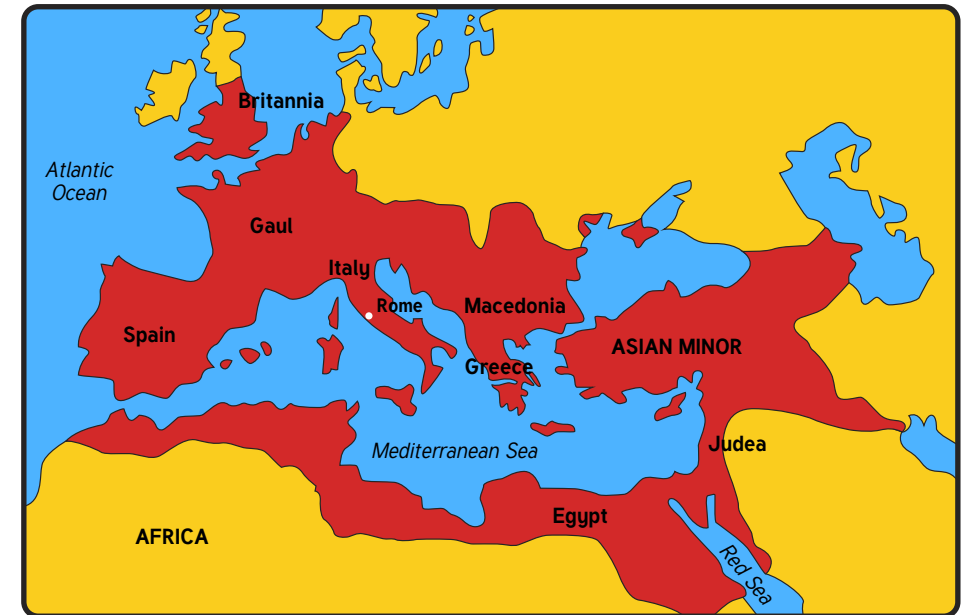
Who were the Romans?

The Romans were a group of people who lived in Rome, a city in Italy. Around 2000 years ago, the Romans invaded Britain mainly because they were greedy and wanted Britain's precious metals. However, for about a century before this, the Roman army had been invading countries all across Europe building a large empire. The red on the map shows the countries that became part of the Roman Empire.



Interesting Fact

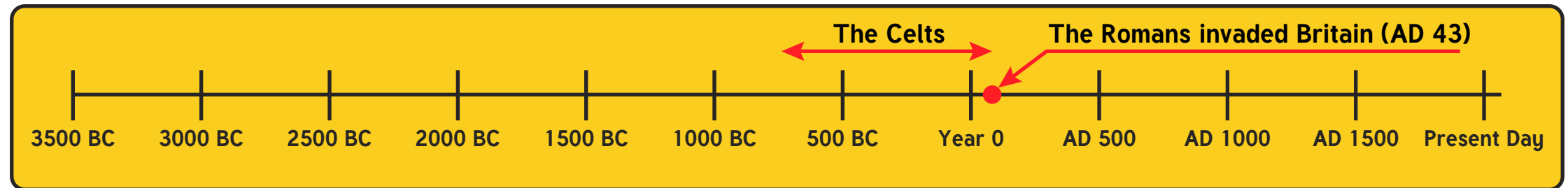
During the times of the Romans, countries were not called by the same names they are now. For example, Britain was known as Britannia.



The Celts

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At the time that the Romans invaded Britain, the Celts lived there. The Celts were the most powerful people in central and northern Europe. There were small Celtic tribes who had set up settlements all over Britain. One of these tribes was called the Iceni tribe. They were ruled by King Prasutagus and Queen Boudica.



King Prasutagus dies.

The Iceni tribe lived in fear of the Romans because they were stronger and more powerful. King Prasutagus wanted to protect his tribe, so he made a deal with the Romans. The deal meant that he could continue to rule the Iceni tribe.

The King died unexpectedly in AD 60. However, he had left a will that stated he wanted half of his kingdom to go to the Roman Emperor and the other half to be given to his wife, Queen Boudica.

However, the Romans refused to follow the King's wishes. They took away land and farms from the Iceni tribe and made them pay high taxes. They refused to let Boudica be the queen, publically flogging her instead.



New Word

flogging – a punishment in which the victim is hit repeatedly with a whip or stick.



What did Boudica do next?

Boudica was angry with the Romans and vowed not to let them take her tribe. The people of the Iceni tribe were angry too. Boudica gathered an army to fight against the Romans. When people from other tribes who were angry at how the Romans were treating them heard about Boudica's rebellion, they joined the army too.

In AD 60, the Roman governor Suetonius Paulinus was called away. Boudica decided this was the perfect time to launch her army. She ordered the army to burn down Roman towns and kill as many Romans as they could. They destroyed the town of Colchester before moving on to London and St. Albans.



What did the Romans do?

It didn't take long for Suetonius Paulinus to hear the news. He rallied together his own Roman army and called for as many soldiers as possible. Boudica had ten times as many soldiers in her army. However, the Romans had fought many battles. They were well trained and very experienced. The Romans won the battle and killed many of the Celtic warriors.



What happened to Boudica?

Boudica was devastated that her army had lost to the Romans. It is believed that she could not face being captured by the Romans so she decided to poison herself instead. She drank a deadly poison drink and died.



Did you know?

There is a bronze statue of Boudica on a chariot with two horses outside the Houses of Parliament in London. It reminds us that she was brave and determined, and refused to be ruled by another country!



Partner Talk Time

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Think about the story of Queen Boudica.

How do you think Queen Boudica felt when her husband died?

How do you think she felt when the Roman's refused to give her what she was owed?

How do you think she felt when she was defeated by the Romans?

Challenge

Can you summarise the story in 6 sentences?



Independent Task

Draw a comic strip to show the story of Queen Boudica.

Use the six summary sentences that you discussed with your partner to help you organise your work.

Key Words

Celts, Iceni tribe, Queen Boudica, King Prasutagus, Romans, Suetonius Paulinus, soldiers, army, defeat, poison

Independent activity

Retell the story of Queen Boudica.

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