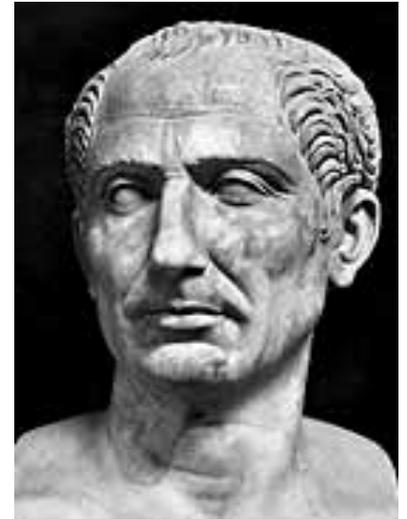


**Roman 3:
Roman Britain**



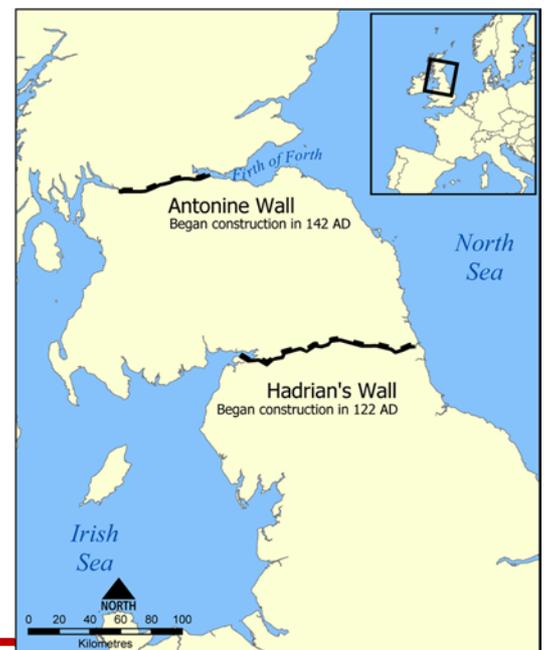
The Invasion of Britain

In 55 BC [Julius Caesar](#) (right) with 20,000 men, failed in a poorly organized invasion of Britain. He returned the following year with a larger army of five legions. Although he defeated several Celtic tribes, reaching the River Thames, he returned to Gaul to suppress an uprising.



In AD 43, the [Emperor Claudius](#) (left) sent four legions under the command of [Aulus Plautius](#) to invade Britain. Control over south-eastern Britain was quickly established. The [Catuvallauni](#) tribe under [Caractacus](#) during AD 51 provided some resistance but a major rebellion led by [Boudicca](#) in AD 60-61 seriously threatened Roman control.

After suppression of Boudicca's revolt, expansion continued west and north. Legion fortresses were established at York, Chester and Caerleon. Conquests in Scotland were given up and Emperor [Hadrian](#) in AD 122 ordered building of a wall to mark out the northern boundary of the empire.



Further attempts to conquer Scotland were made, including construction of a second wall, the [Antonine Wall](#). This was abandoned in around AD 160 and afterwards [Hadrian's Wall](#) remained the frontier. The Romans would remain in Britain until AD 410.



Boudiccan Rebellion

Prasutagus was king of the Iceni at the time of the invasion and was an ally of Rome. Rome controlled its provinces by bribing the local elite. These new trade markets also attracted unscrupulous money lenders who charged ruinous rates for loans. In AD 60 Prasutagus died, he wished to leave half of his kingdom to his wife, **Boudicca**, and the other half to the Emperor, **Nero**. The Romans tried to take the whole kingdom and at the same time call in the loans given to Prasutagus. When the Iceni royal family resisted, Boudicca and her daughters were assaulted. Added to the growing resentment caused by high taxation imposed by Rome, the Iceni together with other tribes rebelled.



Whilst the Roman governor, **Suetonius Paulinus** was leading a campaign in North Wales, Boudicca defeated the Roman IX Legion and destroyed Colchester. This was followed by the destruction of Londinium and Verulamium (St. Albans). Finally, the rebellion was defeated by Paulinus who had marched his army east. Boudicca is believed to have poisoned herself to avoid capture or died of illness.

Nero even considered pulling the Roman army out of Britain and reprisals in Iceni territory were curtailed for fear of further rebellions and damage to the economy.



Trade

Products were imported and exported via ships all across the empire. Major imports into Roman Britain include **Samian** pottery and wine from Gaul, olive oil from Spain, lava quern stones and glass from Rhineland.



Roman Britain had a wide range of exports that were sent out to the empire. Wheat was exported as well as oysters and salt. Metal exports of gold, silver, lead, tin, copper and iron were also exported. Cloth and wool also found their way across the empire and there remained a large market for slaves.

Many of these goods were shipped in **amphora** like the one pictured above. This example is for holding wine and was produced in many regions. Barrels would also be used to transport goods such as salted fish.



Further study

Find out more about Roman Britain...

Hadrian's Wall

World Heritage Site

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/hadrians-wall>



Roman Baths

Explore Aquae Sulis

<https://www.romanbaths.co.uk/>

Camulodunum

Colchester was the first capital of Roman Britain.

<http://www.visitcolchester.com/visitor-info/Roman-Colchester.aspx>



Fishbourne

Roman Palace

<https://sussexpast.co.uk/properties-to-discover/fishbourne-roman-palace>

