

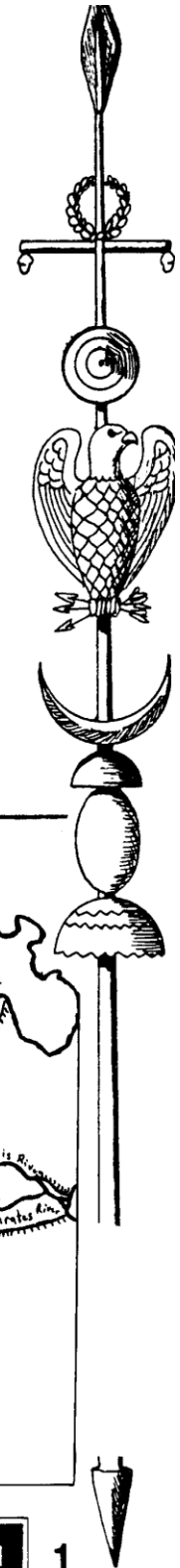
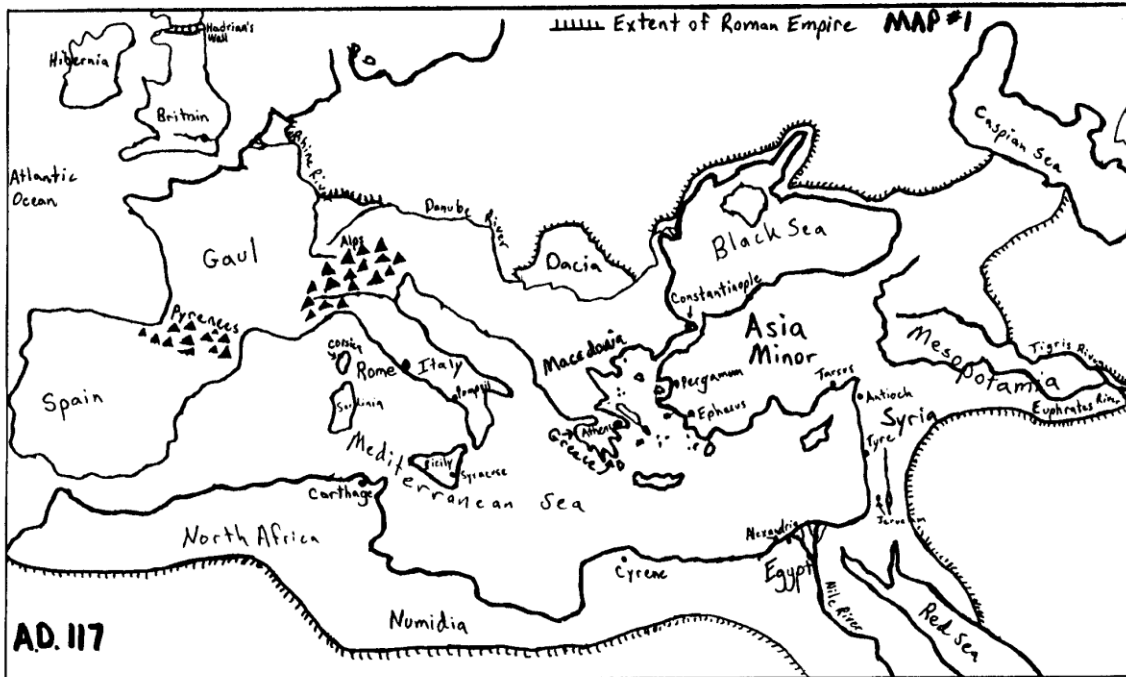


ANCIENT ROME

The Roman Empire, at its peak, controlled most of Europe, the northern coastal region of Africa, and the Middle East. On the map below, it can be seen that the Mediterranean Sea was the center of this huge empire. Between sea routes and the roads the Romans built, for which they are famous, they were able to transport armies quickly to maintain control.

What were the Romans like? How did they build such a powerful empire? These questions will be the subject of this unit. Since the time of the Roman Empire is so interesting in the light of the time of Christ and the Apostles, an attempt will be made to see how it all fits in.

Find a good map of Europe in an encyclopedia and use it as a guide to help you do a good job coloring the map below. Color all the territory of the empire one color. Hibernia was not part of the empire; Spain was, and Britain, too (up to Hadrian's Wall).



The Rise of the Roman Empire I



A New Nation Emerges

Rome began as a small farming village on a hill where the city of Rome is today. Eventually seven villages on seven hills all close together, united into one big town. As the community grew larger, kings ruled over the people. In the year 509 B.C. the Roman people rebelled against the king who had ruled harshly over them. They set up a new government that had no king. Every year they elected two consuls to work together to bring leadership to their community. This type of government is called a republic. During the 400's B.C., Rome formed the Latin League with its neighboring cities for the purpose of having better defense when enemies attacked. Still, at this time Rome had no empire. It was just one single walled city.

In 390 B.C. the Gauls (see map #1) attacked Rome and took



over the city. After the Romans paid them a lot of money, they left. Finally, 50 years later, the other cities of the Latin League turned against Rome. After a two year war, Rome defeated all of them and took control over a large part of the peninsula of present day Italy. (see map #2). Rome continued to push back its enemies. Control was maintained by building frontier forts and excellent roads throughout the conquered territory.

It is important to know that during this time of early growth, there was a vast and powerful empire to the east. Evidently the leaders in the Greek Empire were not very concerned about the growth of Rome. They probably didn't know very much about Rome either. You can see (map #2) that Rome is quite small compared to the kingdom of Greece. Rome is just the boot shaped part of Italy.



2





Expansion Across the Sea

In the western part of the Mediterranean Sea, Rome's only major rival was a colony of Phoenicians that lived in North Africa. Their headquarters was the city of Carthage right across the sea south from Rome. After 23 years of fighting, Rome won the war in 241 B.C., and the island of Sicily became a Roman province (see map). Rome annexed the islands of Corsica and Sardinia three years later. This war with the Carthaginians is known as the First Punic War.

Just over 20 years later in 218 B.C. the Carthaginians invaded Rome. This Second Punic War was a desperate struggle for Rome. The Carthaginians had an excellent general named Hannibal. He had conquered part of Spain and then marched his army over mountains into Rome. He recruited some Gauls to join his army and then met and defeated a Roman army. He defeated another Roman army in central Italy. Even though there were more Romans, the Carthaginians kept winning under Hannibal's leadership. Roman armies avoided meeting him in open battle. A Roman general named Scipio led another Roman army in Spain. They drove out the Carthaginians and then decided to go to North Africa. After controlling Rome for about 13 years, Hannibal was forced to go back to Carthage to fight against the advancing army of Scipio. In spite of Hannibal's great success in Rome, Scipio's army defeated him, and in the end Rome won the war.



WARS WITH THE GREEK EMPIRE



Because the Greek ruler of the Macedonian section of the Greek Empire had helped Hannibal in the Second Punic War, the Romans punished them with two separate invasions and wars during a 20 year period (see the 'M' on map #2). In 192 B.C., the Romans surprisingly sailed to the far eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea and invaded the Syrian section of the Greek Empire. They defeated Antiochus III in the Battle of Magnesia (See the 'S' on Map #2).

Perseus, the Macedonian Greek ruler, tried to rally the Greeks to war against Rome. The Greeks had so much trouble with each other that they didn't work together well and the Romans crushed Perseus and his army in 168 B.C. This was the turning point. Although the Greeks and Macedonians tried to resist Rome, their part of the huge Greek Empire became a province of the new growing Roman Empire (see map #3). Two years later in 146 B.C. the conquest of Greece was complete with the destruction of the Greek city of Corinth.



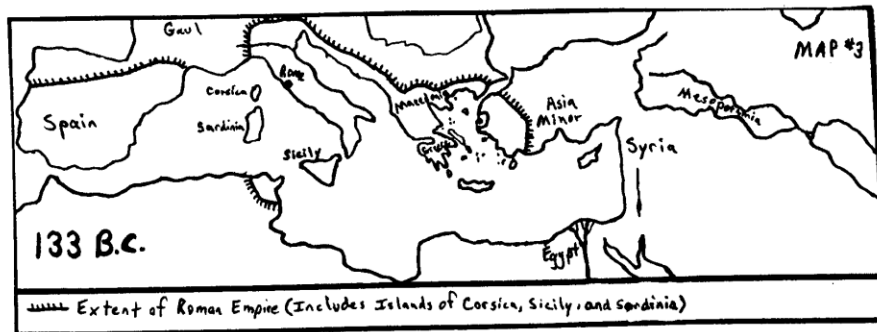


ANOTHER WAR WITH CARTHAGE



50 years had passed since the Second Punic War with Carthage. During that time, Carthage had revived and prospered. While Rome was gaining control of Macedonia, they also declared war on Carthage. Rome kept the city of Carthage under siege for three years. Finally they destroyed Carthage; likely in the same year they destroyed Corinth in Greece. This was the Third Punic War.

Rome has an Empire



Map #3 (above) shows the expansion of Rome by the year 133 B.C. The vast Greek Empire that remained free really worked as separate powers. They had often fought wars against each other and were not prepared to fight against the well organized Roman armies. One section of the Greek Empire, Macedonia, stood alone against Rome. It proved fatal. Would the Egyptian, Syrian, and Persian (Mesopotamia) sections of the empire do any better?

