

Augustus Caesar

61 BC - 14 AD

- grand-nephew of Julius Caesar
- his father married into JC's family, his mother was named Atia (age 5 when father dies)
- given name is Octavius
- when JC's will was read after his assassination, to everyone's surprise... Octavius was named JC's personal heir to his wealth, land and name (he was 17)
- changes name to Octavian
- joins forces w/ Mark Antony, a general, politician, and close personal friend of JC

- Octavian & Mark Antony (allies of Julius Caesar) defeat senators Brutus & Cassius (enemies of JC) in a civil war (the final battle was the Battle of Philippi in Greece in 42 BC, 2 yrs after assassination)
- Oct. and MA try to maintain their alliance, MA even marries Oct.'s sister Octavia
- alliance ultimately fails (they despise each other)
- MA moves to Egypt
 - 1) forges an alliance (and relationship/romance) w/ Cleopatra, queen of Egypt and descendent of Ptolemy

2) cuts the grain shipments to Rome to try and start a fight/war w/ Octavian

- Octavian goes to war against Mark Antony & Cleopatra for ultimate control of Rome, he accused MA of being more Egyptian than Roman

- Octavian is victorious, deciding battle was a naval battle called Battle of Actium in 31 BC

- civil war period since JC crossed Rubicon R. lasts 18 yrs

- plebeians are ready to accept absolute rule because they are sick of the fighting

- Octavian named emperor by the Senate
 - changes name to "Augustus" which means 'majestic'
 - receives title of "princeps" which means 'first citizen'
- he allows all 3 branches of old Republic system to continue
- he rules for 41 years
- his reign begins the Pax Romana or "time of Roman Peace," lasts for 200 years, focus to culture & civic improvements, not as much war
- famous line...
"I found the city of Rome built by bricks... I am leaving a city built of marble."

importance

- A) Pax Romana allows Roman culture to spread & thrive
- B) Roman influence solidifies in the territories, (lasts even after Rome falls)
- C) Augustus loved history, he made sure ancient history was **s**aved rather than destroyed
- D) peaceful times saw the beginnings of aristocratic and societal moral decline, no wars to occupy their time

Julius Caesar

murdered
by

Brutus
&
Cassius
(other senators)

major
supporters

Mark Antony
(supportive
senator)

Octavian
(grand-nephew)

defeat senators
but...
split

Mark Antony
alliance,
love affair
w/
Cleopatra

Octavian

↓
Octavian wins
this civil war

↓
changes name
to Augustus