

POMPEY THE GREAT

Pompey was a Roman general and political leader. He was a member of the first Triumvirate with Julius Caesar and Marcus Crassus, but later became Caesar's enemy.

Pompey was born September 30, 106 B.C. His first important military experiences were in the Social war during which his father Pompeius Strabo, taught Pompey his military skills. Pompey distinguished himself in the civil war between Lucius Sulla and Gaius Marius. Pompey raised his own army in Picenum. He did such a good job raising his army he was made an imperator general. In 83 B.C., he was sent as an imperator general to Sicily and then to Africa. Successes in both places earned Pompey the name Magnus and the honor of a triumph, although he was little over 25 years old and legally unqualified for such a status.

Some years later, the senate used his aid against the remnants of Marius' factor. Then in 77 B.C., Pompey moved against the Marian forces commanded by Quintus Sertorius in Spain. There his operations were not rewarded but Sertorius' death by poison permitted Pompey's return to Italy in time to annihilate the remnants of Spartacus's army fleeing from the defeat at Crassus' hands (71 B.C.). For his victory, Pompey celebrated his second triumph although he still held public office. He got a spot in office by moving into the highest office of all, the consulship with Crassus as his colleague (70 B.C.). Together they overthrew Sulla's constitution by giving the plebeian tribunes their former powers and the knights partial control of the law courts.

In 67 B.C., the tribune Aulus Gabinius, by a bill gave extraordinary military powers to Pompey. His objective was to deal with Piracy throughout the Mediterranean. Pompey needed only three months to finish this task.

This feat led to further honors. In 60 B.C., on the motion of another tribune, Pompey received even greater powers when appointed in Lucullus's place as commander against Mithridates the Great. With little difficulty, the new Roman commander forced the Mithridates from Asia Minor and then spent some years overrunning the North East. The big range of Pompey's Journeys and his hatred towards the natives started future trouble with Parthia. Pompey did, however, increase Rome's dominions, and he also laid a firm foundation for Roman administration in the area. While in Palestine, he learned of Mithridates' suicide and some months later he returned to Italy and a third triumph. His action in disbanding his army relieved his enemies of their anxiety at his return, but it also persuaded the senate to refuse to approve his near Eastern arrangements or authorize bonuses for his veterans. Pompey retaliated by forming with Crassus and Caesar the political bloc known as the First Triumvirate (60 B.C.), and promptly proceeded to ratification of Pompey's veterans. The coalition had agreed to exile Marcus Cicero but it would not be easy. When Caesar went to Gaul, fighting soon arose between Pompey and Crassus, and when Pompey acquiesced in Cicero's recall, a war seemed imminent. Caesar then arranged the

Conference of Luca (56 B.C.) to restore harmony Pompey and Crassus became consuls again (55 B.C.) but with violence. Then they obtained extended commands like Caesar's in Spain and Syria, respectively. But although Caesar remained in Gaul and Crassus departed for Syria, Pompey did not leave Italy. He commanded his forces in Spain by substitute.

Julia's death in 54 (B.C.) and Crassus's in 53 (B.C.) snapped the ties linking Pompey and Caesar and the stage was set for their rivalry. When mob violence prevented consuls being elected in 52 (B.C.) Pompey was appointed consul. He quickly restored order by forcing one of the chief rioters, Titus Milo, into exile for the murder of Publius Clodius, another mob leader. Pompey's third consulship was also productive of legislation that Caesar thought was harmful to him. Caesar then attempted to safeguard his own interests and it got him involve

in a quarrel with the senate. This led him to being pronounced a public enemy (49 B.C.). Pompey was invited to command the senatorial forces in Italy, and when he accepted the mandate the die was cast. Caesar crossed the Rubicon from Cisalpine Gaul, and a new civil war began.

Before Caesar's veteran force, Pompey retired in March, to Macedonia where he made a strong army. Caesar, after crushing Pompey's supporters in Spain, also crossed the Adriatic. Almost at once, Pompey scored a local success at Dyrrhachium on the coast of Albania. However when he allowed his army to engage, Caesar's at Pharsalus in Thessaly, Greece, in August, he suffered a terrible defeat. Pompey then fled to Egypt to seek isolation. The king of Egypt,

however being anxious not to offend Caesar, had Pompey k.B.C.