

MARIUS AND THE ARMY

In 107BC, one of Rome's greatest generals - Gaius Marius - took charge of a war that was raging in North Africa at the time. Marius won the war and became a national hero when he also defeated some tribes from Gaul who were threatening Rome. But he wasn't as skilled at politics as he was at fighting, and he angered many senators by supporting reform.

Marius is famous for reorganizing the army, allowing all citizens to enlist - not just those who owned land. These new soldiers were very poor and they relied on their generals to provide for them when they retired. This accidentally brought about a dramatic change in Roman politics, as some generals began using their own loyal armies to win power for themselves.

Prisoners of war were displayed on a platform, along with their weapons.



White oxen were sacrificed when the procession reached the temple of Jupiter, on the Capitol Hill.

Treasures captured in battle

The procession was led by senators.

MURDER AND MAYHEM

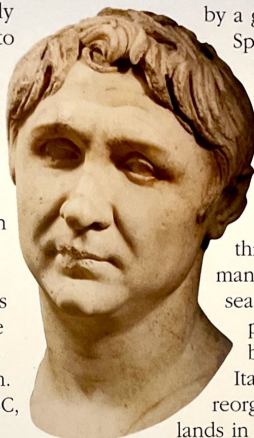
In 88BC, Cornelius Sulla became consul and was asked to lead an army against the King of Pontus (now part of Turkey). Marius thought he should have been chosen instead and he challenged Sulla. Sulla promptly marched his army to Rome, took control of the city and drove Marius out.

Sulla then set off for Pontus. As soon as he had gone, Marius reappeared with an army of his own, took over the city and put Sulla's supporters to death. Marius died in 86BC, but when Sulla returned to Rome he found Marius's men still in charge. He had all of them killed and ruled Rome as a dictator from 82BC to 80BC.

POMPEY THE GREAT

One of the generals who had served under Sulla's command was Gnaeus Pompeius, known as Pompey the Great. Pompey won victories in Spain in 72BC and helped the senator Crassus to crush a slave rebellion led by a gladiator named Spartacus. In 70BC, he and Crassus became consuls.

A sculpture of Pompey the Great



Soon, Pompey was a hero. In just three months, he managed to clear the seas of the fearsome pirates who had been plaguing the Italian coast. He then reorganized Rome's lands in the Middle East and conquered several large areas of new territory. But when he returned to Rome, the Senate refused to support what he had done. Frustrated, Pompey looked around for new allies - one of these was a talented politician named Gaius Julius Caesar.