

RUNNING THE EMPIRE

The Roman empire was so vast, and was home to so many different peoples, that holding it all together from the centre was an enormous task. To make this easier, the Romans organized their territory into lots of different provinces, built a network of roads to link the provinces together, and based lots of soldiers near the empire's borders to keep out invaders.

KEEPING THE PEACE

The rule of the Emperor Augustus was the beginning of a 200-year period without any major wars inside the empire. The Romans kept this peace, known as the *Pax Romana*, with the help of their formidable army. Rebellions were crushed mercilessly and swiftly to serve as an example to others who might be thinking of rebelling. If barbarian tribes began gathering together armies outside the empire, the legions quickly launched an attack to break up the tribes and stop them from uniting against the Romans.

SHOWING RESPECT

Brute force alone wasn't always enough to control such a huge area of land, and the Romans also tried to keep the people they governed happy by treating them with respect. People in different areas were often allowed to continue following their own local customs and worshipping their own gods.



This stone carving shows a sun god from a temple in England. It combines elements of British and Roman gods.

INTERNET LINK

For links to websites where you can find an animated map of the expansion of the Roman Empire and learn about Roman roads, go to www.usborne-quicklinks.com



RUNNING THE PROVINCES

Each province was ruled by a governor, who usually came from Rome. Some governors and regions were more important than others. A few vital provinces were ruled by legates, chosen by the emperor himself, while other significant provinces were run by special governor appointed by the Senate.

Less important provinces were run by procurators, who were usually wealthy bankers or merchants. There were also many civil servants sent from Rome, who worked alongside the governor and helped him with running the provinces.

Early governors weren't paid, and some of them tried to use their important position to get rich by stealing precious works of art and taking bribes. To stop this from happening, the Emperor Augustus brought in a new system - from then on the governors were paid a salary, and officials were regularly sent out from Rome to check up on them.