

Why did the Romans invade Britain?



Britain had lots of goods which the Romans wanted:-

Corn; Wool; Leather; Silver; Gold; Tin; Lead; Slaves.



Corn

As the Roman Empire grew bigger, there were more and more people to feed; more Romans started living in towns, leaving fewer people in the country to grow crops... Rome needed to import more food and Britain was a very fertile land...

Raw Materials: Wool

Britain had a good supply of sheep and wool was needed for making Roman togas.



Raw Materials: Leather

The Roman army used a lot of leather in uniforms and in soldiers' tents. Leather was also used to make buckets.

Valuable Metals: Silver

The Romans made their money out of silver – more coins were needed as the Empire grew. Britain already had silver mines that the Romans knew about. Silver was a luxury item for rich Romans – and there was a big demand for it.



Valuable Metals: Gold

Gold was used for jewellery and was in great demand by the Romans; Gold was very important in trade as a means of exchange and for gold coins; There was a scarcity of gold across the Empire, but Britain had some...



Tin

Britain also had tin mines and tin and pewter were used for cups and plates; Tin could be mixed with other metals to make strong, hard metals.

Lead

Lead was really useful for the Romans and Britain had a good supply of it.

Lead was used to make water pipes and plumbing systems

Lead was also used to make coffins!



Slaves

Romans planned to use captured Britons as slaves.

Roman society ran on the basis of slave labour and there was big demand for slaves right across the empire;

Slaves were used to work in every type of industry, from nurse maids, to field hands, miners and as galley slaves to row Roman ships.

Power

The Romans didn't just want goods from Britain; they also wanted to invade to show how powerful they were. By conquering more and more countries and making their Empire bigger, it made Rome more powerful. The Romans also believed it was their duty to do this and make the world "civilised" like them.

Ambition

Invading other countries and adding to the Empire was a way to become more powerful and popular; the first invasions took place because Julius Caesar was ambitious and wanted power and glory. Claudius had just become Emperor, in the 1st Century BC, and wanted to prove himself as a good leader of Rome, when his invasion took place.



Revenge

The Britons had been helping the Gauls (French) fight against the Romans.

The Romans wanted to punish the Britons for this and make sure that they could no longer do this.