

*'Limits of the Known World': A Study in Power on the Roman Imperial Frontier,
41 CE to 150 CE*

When Augustus expanded the Roman empire from 27 BCE to 14 CE, he had no intention of future emperors following in his footsteps. One author records that Augustus, upon nearing the end of his life, warned future emperors to not extend the empire for fear of collapsing it. Yet, emperors such as Claudius, Vespasian, Marcus Aurelius, and others pushed the frontiers of the Roman empire- those spaces of cultural exchange, military power, and economic development. Maintaining and equipping the frontier was key to imperial success.

During the reign of Claudius, Hadrian, and others, we see how volatile the British frontier was. Since the invasion of Julius Cesar in 55 and 54 BCE, Britain was thought to be a Roman province. But, emperors like Claudius soon realized they could flex their imperial muscles around the likes of the Iceni, the Trinovantes, the Regnenses, and the Druids of southern England. We know about these events through- and this paper will examine- Cassius Dio, Tacitus' *Annals of Imperial Rome*, Suetonius' *The Twelve Caesars*, and the infamous *Historia Augusta*. With those sources and ideas in mind, this project has three distinct objectives: to clearly outline the historiography of the British frontier in imperial times; to make an argument for the "Grant Strategy" theory of imperial politics; and, finally, to argue that Roman Britain was a primarily a place for flexing imperial power. By doing so, we might understand why Britain was sought after by some of the most powerful men in the ancient world.

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