

HANNIBAL INVADES

Illustrated by RON TINER

ROME HAS HAD some awful shocks in its long history. But perhaps the worst was when the Carthaginians invaded in the 200s B.C. *The Roman News* looks back at the key events of those terrifying years.

CARTHAGE HAD long been a powerful city, controlling most of the Mediterranean Sea.

But our nation was rapidly growing stronger, and by the middle of the 260s B.C., we were locked in deadly combat with the Carthaginians.

The war dragged on for 20 years, with neither side able to overpower the other. Then, in 241 B.C., our brave troops won a massive victory.

Furious at this defeat, the Carthaginians swore to crush Rome once and for all. Moving westward around the North African coast, they crossed over to Spain and set up a base called New Carthage.

Here, Spanish troops rushed to join forces with them, tempted by the chance of battle plunder.

The Carthaginians' brilliant young general, Hannibal, quickly raised an army of 40,000 men. And to this he added a terrifying weapon—40 African war elephants trained to charge at the enemy and trample them.

CROSSING THE MOUNTAINS

Hannibal was ready to invade our homeland. His army marched north, gathering even more men on the way. But then Hannibal reached the icy mountains of the Alps.



RISKY ROUTE: Hannibal's army suffered terrible losses on the march through the Alps.

Luckily for Rome, the mountain passes took their toll on the army. By the time Hannibal reached Italy in 218 B.C., a quarter of his troops and many elephants had perished.

Yet despite this, Hannibal won three fierce battles against our army, leaving the countryside littered with Roman dead.

THE ENEMY AT THE DOOR

By 216 B.C., it seemed certain that disaster would hit Rome. The city was helpless—all Hannibal had to do was march into it.

But Hannibal's next move was a mistake. His army was short of men, and instead of attacking our city, he wasted many years wandering through southern Italy in search

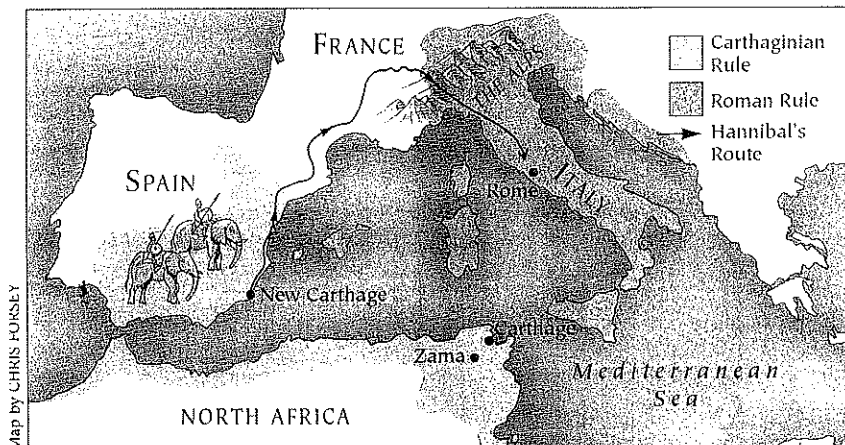
of food and extra troops.

Rome used the time to rebuild its army and, in 204 B.C., our leaders launched a bold plan.

Under General Scipio, an army of elite Roman troops was sent to Africa to mount an attack on the city of Carthage itself.

In desperation, the Carthaginians summoned Hannibal and his army. But at Zama, southwest of Carthage, they were totally defeated. And this once powerful nation fell under Rome's control.

Rome had faced the greatest threat in its entire history—and conquered it!



Map by CHRIS HORSEY

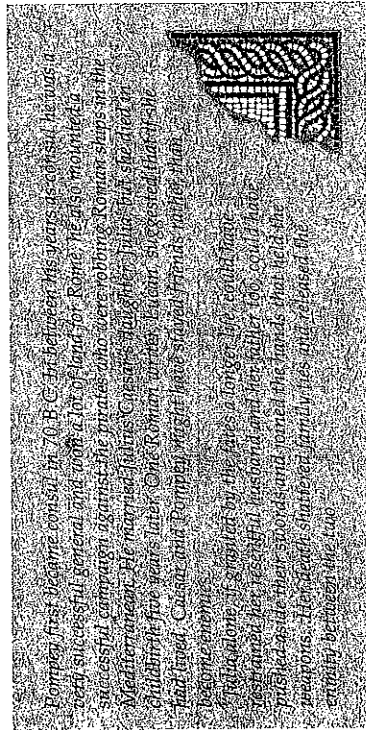
INVASION: Hannibal's route into Italy took him across the treacherous Alps.

The Civil Wars

In the 100 years following Hannibal's defeat, the Romans expanded their empire until it covered much of the land bordering the Mediterranean. The empire was ruled over by governors who grew very rich.

Back in Rome, wealthy soldiers began to spend lots of money bribing people to vote them into power. On the other hand, peasants who had fought in the wars against Carthage returned to find that their farms were ruined. The wealthy people bought up the farms and sent their slaves to work on them, while the homeless peasants drifted into Rome to find work. They became very discontented, and in 133 B.C. a tribune named Tiberius Gracchus suggested that the big farms be broken up and given back to the poor. The landowners and senators did not like this and started riots. Other plans to give out land to the poor were also stopped.

The poor people finally began to vote for consuls who would help them and oppose the powerful men of the senate. Civil war broke out in Rome in 88 B.C., and the senators took away the power of the tribunes.



Pompey first became consul in 70 B.C. In between his years as consul, he was a very successful general and won a lot of land for Rome. He also helped in a successful campaign against the pirates who were robbing Roman ships in the Mediterranean. He married Julius Caesar's daughter Julia. Pompey died in a civil war five years later. One Roman writer, Tacitus, suggests that Pompey and Julius Caesar and Pompey might have stayed friends and not had become enemies.

In a legend, it is said that the gods of Italy were angry with Pompey because he had married his daughter to a man who was not a Roman. The gods punished him by making his wife die in a civil war. Pompey's death started a civil war between the Romans and the Gauls.

Julius Caesar became sole ruler of Rome, and people began to fear his power. He was stabbed to death in 44 B.C. by conspirators.

In 62 B.C. a general named Pompey was made consul and restored the power of the tribunes. Another general at this time was Julius Caesar. In 51 B.C., after a series of successful campaigns there, Caesar was given command of Gaul. For a while these two men, with the help of a third, named Crassus, ruled Rome between them as consuls. They were known as the Triumvirate. Eventually, Crassus was murdered and Caesar decided to take power for himself. Caesar, still in charge of the territory of Gaul, was a very successful general and a great leader. He was popular with the poor, who supported him in politics. Pompey had the support of the senators.

In 49 B.C. Caesar marched with his troops into Rome. Pompey and the senators withdrew to Greece, where they intended to plan a campaign against Caesar. But Caesar caught them, defeated Pompey and chased him to Egypt. Before Caesar could take Pompey prisoner, his one-time friend was murdered by the Egyptians. Caesar stayed in Egypt, settling his affairs, until A.D. 45 when he returned to Rome to take power.

