

## Topic Page: [Agrippa, Marcus Vipsanius](#)

Definition: **Agrippa, Marcus Vipsanius** from *Chambers Biographical Dictionary*

c.63-12BC

Roman general and politician

He played an important role in various of Augustus's military campaigns, including his victory over Sextus, the son of Pompey in 36BC, and over Mark Antony at Actium (31BC). He was responsible for the administration of several parts of the new Roman Empire, including the improvement of the public amenities of Rome. The emperors Caligula and Nero were descendants of his marriage with Augustus's daughter, Julia.

### Summary Article: **Vipsanius Agrippa, Marcus**

From *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*

Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa (64/3–12 BCE) was the principal associate of Octavian/ Augustus. Agrippa's family was undistinguished, and he was usually known just as Marcus Agrippa, omitting the family name. Educated with the future emperor, Agrippa was with him at Apollonia when Julius Caesar was assassinated and remained at his side in the following months. He prosecuted the absent Cassius for Caesar's murder in late 43, held early office (praetor 40, consul 37), and commanded forces for Octavian from the Perusine War onward (41–40). In 39–38, he campaigned successfully in Gaul, crushing rebellion and crossing the Rhine, but declining a triumph. In 37–36, Agrippa played the leading part in Octavian's victory over Sextus Pompeius (see Pompeius Magnus Pius, Sextus), constructing a harbor, training the fleet, and commanding in the decisive naval engagements at Mylae and Naulochus. For these achievements, he was honored with the right to wear a unique naval crown, adorned with ships' prows. In 35–34, he served with Octavian on his Illyrian campaigns. As aedile in 33 (the only ex-consul ever to hold the post; see Aediles), he enhanced the popularity of Octavian's side by lavish welfare spending at Rome, including repair of the drains and aqueducts. In the Actium campaign (31), he again took a decisive role, commanding the advance force, and in the battle itself the fleet's left wing opposite Antony (see Antonius, Marcus (Mark Antony)).

Once in sole power, Octavian carried through a political settlement, taking the name Augustus in 27. Agrippa assisted him in this process, sharing the consulships of 28 and 27 and acting as his colleague in conducting a census and revising the Senate's membership. During Augustus' absence in 27–24, Agrippa remained at Rome, overseeing affairs in the city and constructing public buildings. By 23, Augustus' promotion of his nephew Marcellus is said to have caused tension, resolved by Marcellus' death later in that year. Agrippa now became Augustus' effective partner in rule, marrying his daughter Julia (21) and receiving grants of independent Imperium (23, 18, 13) and tribunician power (18, 13). He was employed on a series of overseas commands: in the eastern provinces in 23–22; in Gaul and Spain in 20–19, completing the conquest of northwest Spain; in the east again in 17–13, when he installed Polemon of Pontus as ruler of the Bosphoran kingdom and treated the Jews benevolently; and in Pannonia in 13–12. He declined triumphs for his successes in Spain and the Bosphorus.

Agrippa deployed his huge fortune, much doubtless acquired through civil war confiscations, to fund benefactions to the people of Rome. From his aedileship onward, he assumed responsibility for the

upkeep of the city aqueducts, and his extensive buildings on the Campus Martius included the Pantheon, the Basilica of Neptune, the completed Saepta Iulia (voting enclosure), and the city's first public baths, supplied by a new aqueduct (the Aqua Virgo).

"Expert in obedience, but to one man alone" (Vell. Pat. 2.79.1), Agrippa through his talents and loyalty made an enormous contribution to Augustus' success in establishing his rule. His death in March, 12 BCE, seriously weakened the regime.

## SEE ALSO:

Baths, bathing; Illyrian wars; Marcellus, Marcus Claudius, nephew of Augustus; Pantheon, Rome; Rome, City of: 3. Augustan; Water supply, Greek and Roman.

## References and Suggested Readings

- Bowman, A. K.; Champlin, E.; Lintott, A., eds. (1996) *Cambridge ancient history: the Augustan empire, 43 BC-AD 69*, vol. 10, 2nd ed. Cambridge.
- Hurlet, F. (1997) *Les Collègues du prince sous Auguste et Tibère: 24-78*. Rome.
- Reinhold, M. (1933) *Marcus Agrippa: a biography*. Geneva.
- Roddaz, J.-M. (1984) *Marcus Agrippa*. Rome.

J. W. Rich

### APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

---

Rich, J. W. (2012). Vipsanius Agrippa, Marcus. In R. S. Bagnall, K. Brodersen, C. B. Champion, A. Erskine, & S. R. Huebner, *The encyclopedia of ancient history*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. Retrieved from [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa\\_marcus\\_c63bce\\_12bce](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa_marcus_c63bce_12bce)

---

 Wiley ©2012

 Wiley ©2012

## APA

Rich, J. W. (2012). Vipsanius Agrippa, Marcus. In R. S. Bagnall, K. Brodersen, C. B. Champion, A. Erskine, & S. R. Huebner, *The encyclopedia of ancient history*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. Retrieved from [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa\\_marcus\\_c63bce\\_12bce](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa_marcus_c63bce_12bce)

## Chicago

Rich, J. W. "Vipsanius Agrippa, Marcus." In *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, by Roger S. Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige B. Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine R. Huebner. Wiley, 2012. [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa\\_marcus\\_c63bce\\_12bce](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa_marcus_c63bce_12bce)

## Harvard

Rich, J.W. (2012). Vipsanius Agrippa, Marcus. In R.S. Bagnall, K. Brodersen, C.B. Champion, A. Erskine & S.R. Huebner, *The encyclopedia of ancient history*. [Online]. Hoboken: Wiley. Available from: [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa\\_marcus\\_c63bce\\_12bce](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa_marcus_c63bce_12bce) [Accessed 16 September 2019].

## MLA

Rich, J. W. "Vipsanius Agrippa, Marcus." *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, Roger S. Bagnall, et al., Wiley, 1st edition, 2012. *Credo Reference*, [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa\\_marcus\\_c63bce\\_12bce](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/agrippa_marcus_c63bce_12bce). Accessed 16 Sep. 2019.