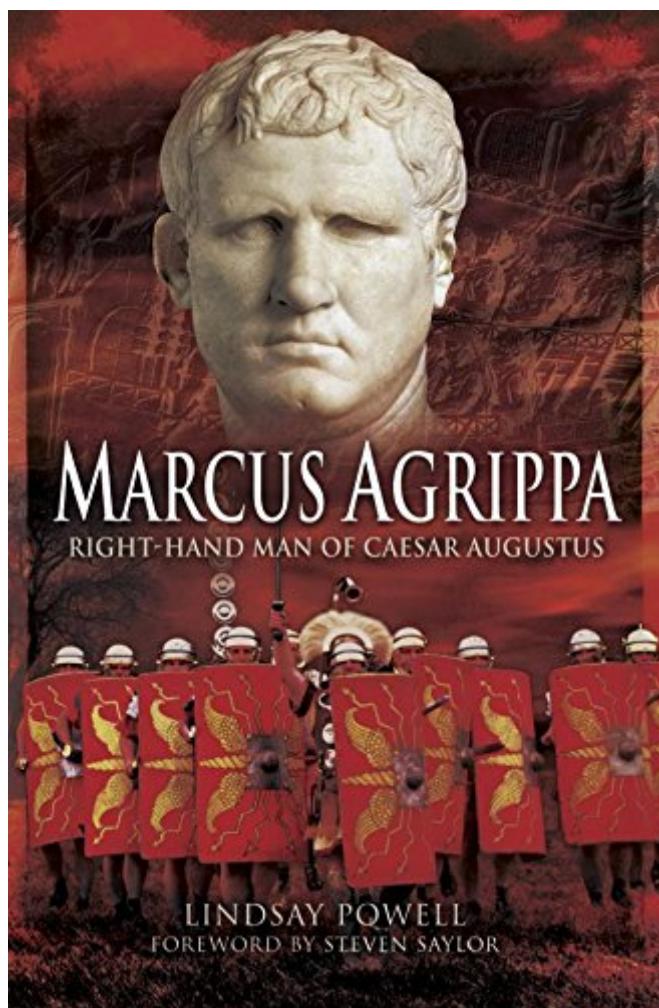


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# Marcus Agrippa: Right-hand Man Of Caesar Augustus



## Synopsis

Marcus Agrippa personified the term 'right-hand man'. As Emperor Augustus' deputy, he waged wars, pacified provinces, beautified Rome, and played a crucial role in laying the foundations of the Pax Romana for the next two hundred years – but he served always in the knowledge he would never rule in his own name. Why he did so, and never grasped power exclusively for himself, has perplexed historians for centuries. In his teens he formed a life-long friendship with Julius Caesar's great nephew, Caius Octavius, which would change world history. Following Caesar's assassination on the Ides of March 44 BC, Agrippa was instrumental in asserting his friend's rights as the dictator's heir. He established a reputation as a bold admiral, defeating Sextus Pompeius at Mylae and Naupactus (36 BC), culminating in the epoch-making Battle of Actium (31 BC), which eliminated Marcus Antonius and Queen Cleopatra as rivals. He proved his genius for military command on land by ending bloody rebellions in the Cimmerian Bosphorus, Gaul, Hispania and Illyricum. In Gaul Agrippa established the vital road network that helped turn Julius Caesar's conquests into viable provinces. As a diplomat, he befriended Herod the Great of Judaea and stabilised the East. As minister of works he overhauled Rome's drains and aqueducts, transformed public bathing in the city, created public parks with great artworks and built the original Pantheon. Agrippa became co-ruler of the Roman Empire with Augustus and married his daughter Julia. His three sons were adopted by his friend as potential heirs to the throne. Agrippa's unexpected death in 12 BC left Augustus bereft, but his bloodline lived on in the imperial family, through Agrippina the Elder to his grandson Caligula and great grandson Nero.

**MARCUS AGRIPPA** is lucidly written by the author of the acclaimed biographies *Eager for Glory* and *Germanicus*. Illustrated with colour plates, figures and high quality maps, Lindsay Powell presents a penetrating new assessment of the life and achievements of the multifaceted man who put service to friend and country before himself. A gripping, thoroughly researched and hugely impressive biography of a key player in the transition from the Roman Republic to Augustus's Empire.

Saul David, University of Buckingham, author of *WAR: From Ancient Egypt to Iraq*. Augustus' ascent and reign are unthinkable without Marcus Agrippa. Surprisingly, there has been no biography of Agrippa in English for some eighty years. Powell's book admirably fills this gap and will be indispensable for anyone with a serious interest in this crucial historical period.

Karl Galinsky, University of Texas at Austin, author of *Augustus: Introduction to the Life of an Emperor*. Marcus Agrippa was one of history's most intriguing right-hand men. Few played a greater role in the emperor Augustus' success. In vigorous prose, and with a fingertip feel for Roman politics and war, Lindsay Powell brings Agrippa to life.

Barry Strauss, Cornell

University, author of Masters of Command: Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar and the Genius of Leadership.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Marcus Agrippa, et cetera, is very interesting and informative book, given the limitations that very little written contemporaneously about Agrippa has survived through until the 21st century. What the book reports is from 3rd and 4th level sources. Yet the book is probably the best that can be read about a man who had such a huge effect on history. The book provides a fascinating, though narrow window into what was happening during late republic and early empire Rome.

This is a worthy effort to document the life of Marcus Agrippa. The author has provided extensive footnoting and has made every attempt to preserve accuracy in reviewing Agrippa's life and amazing accomplishments. Well worth the read for those interested in the life of this most accomplished man.

Agrippa was an important component of the team that promoted Octavian (Caesar Augustus) to

power. There is very little known about this important person, either in history during or after his times. Powell has collected the little that is known and supplied explanations where needed. He does it well, and narrates the story to keep you interested from the beginning to the quasi end. I say quasi because some of the additions to the book at the end are superfluous, but it remains a good, an excellent book. Agrippa was definitely the victor at Actium (Octavian was too sick), and fortune blessed him when Cleopatra took off for Egypt (followed by Anthony). But Agrippa was involved even with the running of Rome, and the Pantheon still remains to this day a monument to the many things he did in Rome. A very good book on an unknown hero'

A fine book. I have read quite a number of books that mention Marcus Agrippa. But references to him tend to be brief and not very illuminating. What I knew? He did great deeds in war and in peace. He was Augustus' right hand man. He had no ambition to supplant Augustus. But precious little beyond these broad statements. This book, although not perfect, is a major step forward for my understanding of Agrippa. There is a lot of speculation. One common gambit: the author notes some event and then mentions that Agrippa might have been there. I have read such phrases in biographies of characters from 800 years ago and back. But so much information is missing that I do not find this overly problematic. The loss of Agrippa's autobiography is a shame (although autobiographies can be unreliable). The book is told chronologically--from Agrippa's childhood to his death. We learn of the development of his friendship with the young Augustus. Their relationship developed in tumultuous times--war, the assassination of Julius Caesar, the Civil War, the uncertain alliances with Antoninus (Mark Antony) and Lepidus, the war with Antoninus and Kleopatra. . . . And so on. Agrippa at Augustus' right hand. During this time, Agrippa showed considerable developing skill in military matters. After Augustus' quelling of Civil War, Agrippa ended up helping to develop Rome further--from public baths to new aqueducts to public buildings (such as the Pantheon) and so on. And apparently done honestly with many improvements coming from his own purse (he had done nicely with the rewards of war). Over time, his scope of activity increased as he maintained Augustus' trust. We also see his family life--three wives, several children (he had bad luck with his children surviving long). We learn of physical ailments that may have precipitated his death. A final chapter tries to make sense of the life of Agrippa. The book is rather short (just over 200 pages long), but there is a lot that we do not yet know about Agrippa's life. I wish that the concluding chapter had helped make greater sense of Agrippa's life and his role in Rome's development, but it is serviceable. A book well worth reading.

I was curious to learn more about Agrippa, Lindsey does a good job of summarizing all the available information and put in context of the times. Unfortunately Agrippa's own biography got lost in time and so one must rely on what has survived from different sources. Loved the summary of the different sources used by Lindsey at the end of the book

Marcus Agrippa Interesting read on the fascinating person in roman history. Before reading I had seen the name mentioned but knew nothing about his accomplishments. After reading this book you will know all about this person and his very successful career in the roman military and in political spectrum as well. Easy to read and understand, a few pictures but overall worth the read on the person. Good book on this man

When you think Roman Empire, names like Caesar, Augustus, Caligula leap to mind. Marcus Agrippa, if he comes up, is seen mostly as friend/aide to Augustus, but this book shows him as much more. Military leader, governor, and incredibly loyal to Augustus. He makes for fascinating reading. Add to that Lindsay Powell's knack for making history not a series of dry facts and dates, and you've got a winner.

Wonderfully written.

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