

Romans. They did not take up the bequest, but they never forgot it. Ptolemy X is rumoured to have melted down the gold coffin of Alexander the Great in order to pay his troops. He died in 88, attempting to take Cyprus from his brother.

Cleopatra Berenice III Thea Philopator (Father-Loving Goddess), Queen of Egypt 81–80

Daughter of Ptolemy IX and Cleopatra IV, wife of Ptolemy X and Ptolemy XI

Berenice III was initially married to her uncle, Ptolemy X. She inherited her father's throne in 81, changed her name to Cleopatra Berenice and, encouraged by Rome, married her illegitimate stepson Ptolemy XI. Cleopatra Berenice III was popular with the people of Alexandria but not with her husband: he had her murdered soon after their marriage.

Ptolemy XI Alexander II, King of Egypt 80

Son of Ptolemy X

Ptolemy XI had the support of the Roman general Sulla but was over-ambitious. He murdered his popular wife, Berenice III, and was in turn killed by the people of Alexandria.

Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos (New Dionysos): 'Auletes' (Flute Player), King of Egypt 80–58, 55–51

Son of Ptolemy IX, Brother of Ptolemy of Cyprus

Following the unexpected death of Berenice III, the elder of the two illegitimate sons of Ptolemy IX took the throne of Egypt as Ptolemy XII.

Ptolemy XII was faced with the unenviable task of preserving a

dying dynasty. The Romans, coveting Egypt's unending fertility, were deciding how best to strip the Ptolemies of their throne. Ptolemy knew that he had to remain on friendly terms with Rome, but this policy turned his people against him. In 58, when the Romans annexed Cyprus, a wave of panic swept Egypt. As the people of Alexandria took to the streets, Ptolemy fled to Rome to appeal for military aid. Berenice IV now ruled Egypt in her father's absence. Ptolemy XII was able to bribe the governor of Syria to support him against his daughter. A Roman army took Alexandria in 55 and Ptolemy XII was restored to his throne. Heavily in debt, he levied stringent taxes, which left his people hungry and desperate. Ptolemy XII died a natural death in 51.

Ptolemy of Cyprus, King of Cyprus 80–58

Son of Ptolemy IX, brother of Ptolemy XII

The younger of the two illegitimate sons of Ptolemy IX took the throne of Cyprus as King Ptolemy. In 58 the Romans annexed Cyprus, driving Ptolemy to commit suicide.

Cleopatra V Tryphaena (Opulent One)

Wife and perhaps sister or half-sister of Ptolemy XII

A woman of obscure origins, Cleopatra V Tryphaena was the mother of Berenice IV, and possibly the mother of Cleopatra VI Tryphaena, Cleopatra VII, Arsinoë IV, Ptolemy XIII and Ptolemy XIV. She may have acted briefly as co-regent alongside Berenice IV.

Berenice IV, Queen of Egypt 58–55

Daughter of Ptolemy XII and Cleopatra V Tryphaena

Berenice married an insignificant cousin, Seleucos, then had him

murdered within a week of their wedding. Her second husband, Archelaos, lasted longer; the couple ruled for two years with the full support of the people of Alexandria. A Roman army took Alexandria in 55. Archelaos was killed and Ptolemy XII, returning home in triumph, had his daughter executed.

Cleopatra VI Tryphaena (Opulent One)

Daughter of Ptolemy XII and (probably) Cleopatra V Tryphaena

The obscure sister of Cleopatra VII who may be identical with Cleopatra Tryphaena V. Cleopatra VI ruled briefly alongside Berenice IV before disappearing from the historical record in 57.

Cleopatra VII Thea Philopator (Father-Loving Goddess), Queen of Egypt 51–30

Daughter of Ptolemy XII and (probably) Cleopatra V Tryphaena, probably wife of Ptolemy XIII and Ptolemy XIV

The subject of this book.

Arsinoë IV, Queen of Egypt 47

Daughter of Ptolemy XII

Proclaimed Queen of Cyprus by Julius Caesar, Arsinoë ruled Alexandria briefly during the civil war. Captured by the Romans, she was displayed in Caesar's Egyptian triumph, then exiled to Ephesus. In 41 she was dragged from the temple and executed on the orders of Mark Antony.

Ptolemy XIII, King of Egypt 51–47

Son of Ptolemy XII, husband of Cleopatra VII

Ptolemy XIII inherited his throne alongside his sister Cleopatra VII. For the first year and a half of their joint reign Cleopatra was the effective monarch, while her brother was pushed into the background. The first decree with Ptolemy's name preceding Cleopatra's was issued on 27 October 50. In the summer of 49 Cleopatra's name disappeared from all official documents as the queen and her supporters fled Egypt. Later that year Ptolemy turned a blind eye to the murder of Pompey. Ptolemy had expected to be granted sole rule of Egypt but Caesar, angered by Pompey's murder, decided that he was to rule alongside his sister Cleopatra VII. Ptolemy XIII drowned in 47, at the end of the Alexandrian Wars.

Ptolemy XIV, King of Egypt 47–44

Son of Ptolemy XII, husband of Cleopatra VII

Proclaimed king of Cyprus by Caesar, Ptolemy became king of Egypt following the death of his elder brother, Ptolemy XIII. He had an undistinguished reign and died soon after the birth of Cleopatra's son, Caesarion.

Ptolemy XV Caesar Theos Philopator Philometor (Father-Loving, Mother-Loving God): 'Caesarion' (Little Caesar), King of Egypt 44–30

Son of Cleopatra VII and (allegedly) Julius Caesar

Following the death of Ptolemy XIV, Caesarion ruled Egypt alongside his mother. Cleopatra VII died on 12 August 30 and Octavian formally annexed Egypt on 31 August 30. This left an eighteen-day period when Caesarion ruled alone. But he had no meaningful support and could have had no thought of taking up his throne. Soon after his mother's suicide, Caesarion was betrayed and executed.