

**ORIGIN**  
**of**  
**"MONTHS OF THE YEAR"**

**Compiled by**  
**Campbell M Gold**

CMG Archives  
<http://www.campbellmgold.com>

(2012)

--()--

**Introduction**

What is the origin of the "Months of the Year?"

**Months of the Year** - we owe the names of the months of the year to Rome:

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>January</b>  | (Lat. <i>Januarius</i> ) is named after Janus, the god of the doorway. January is the month dedicated by the Romans to Janus, who presided over the entrance to the year and, having two faces, could look back to the year past and forward on the current year.   |
| <b>February</b> | The month of purification amongst the ancient Romans (Lat. <i>Februo</i> , I purify by sacrifice).  |
| <b>March</b>    | The month is so called from "Mars", the Roman god of war and patron deity.  |
| <b>April</b>    | The month when trees unfold and the womb of Nature opens with young life. (Lat. <i>aperire</i> , to open).  |
| <b>May</b>      | The Anglo-Saxons called this month <i>thrimilce</i> , because then cows can be milked three times a day; the present name is the Latin <i>Maius</i> from <i>Maia</i> , the goddess of growth and increase, connected with <i>major</i> .  |
| <b>June</b>     | Ovid provides two etymologies for June's name in his poem concerning the months entitled the <i>Fasti</i> . The first is that the month is named after the Roman goddess Juno, wife of Jupiter and equivalent to the Greek goddess Hera; the second is that the name comes from the Latin word <i>juniores</i> , meaning "younger ones," as opposed to <i>maiores</i> ("elders") for which the preceding month, May, also may be named ( <i>Fasti</i> VI.1–88). |
| <b>July</b>     | This month was named by Mark Anthony in honour of Julius Caesar, who was born in it. It was previously called <i>Quintilis</i> , as it was the fifth month of the Roman year; Its Old English name was <i>litha se æfterra</i> (lithe, mild).   |
| <b>August</b>   | This month was once called <i>sextilis</i> , as it was the sixth month from March, with which year used to open, but it was changed to <i>Augustus</i> in complement to Augustus (63 B.C. - A.D. 14), the first Roman Emperor, whose "lucky month" it was. This was the month in which he entered upon his first consulship, celebrated three triumphs, received the oath of allegiance from  |

the legions which occupied the Janiculum, reduced Egypt, and put an end to the civil wars.

- September** The seventh month of the ancient Roman calendar (Lat. *septem* means "seven" and *septimus* means "seventh") when the year began in March.
- October** The eighth month of the ancient Roman calendar (Lat. *octo*, eight) when the year began in March.
- November** The ninth month of the ancient Roman calendar (Lat. *novem*, nine) when the year began in March.
- December** The tenth month of the ancient Roman calendar (Lat. *decī*, ten) when the year began in March.

End

--()--

<http://www.campbellmgold.com>

07092012