

AUGUST



Budgeted at \$2 million but eventually costing \$44 million, the 1963 Elizabeth Taylor sword and sandal epic **Cleopatra** almost bankrupted 20th Century Fox. William Fox had already filmed a more modest account of the

After Julius Caesar's grandnephew **Augustus** defeated Marc Antony and Cleopatra, and became emperor of Rome, the Senate decided that he too



should have a month named after him. William the Conqueror brought the name August to England where it replaced *Weodmonao* – 'the month of weeds'.

Charles Hamilton, better known as **Frank Richards**, born 8 August 1876, was the most prolific author ever, with an

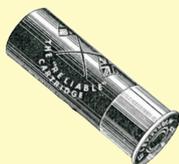


output of over 72 million words. The misdeeds of his most famous creation – **Billy Bunter**, the Fat Owl of Greyfriars School – were a mainstay of the *Gem* and *Magnet* weekly comics for decades.

12 August – the **Glorious Twelfth** – also marks the opening of the grouse shooting season. London's oldest restaurant, **Rules**, founded in 1798 in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, has its own sporting estate in Teesdale which ensures a reliable supply for its double-barrelled diners from the outset of the season.



Phew, what a scorcher. Britain's highest ever temperature of 38.1°C (100.6°F) was recorded in Gravesend, Kent on 10 August 2003.



Napoleon Bonaparte, seen in Gilray's caricature debating foreign policy with British Prime Minister William Pitt, was born **15 August 1769** in Corsica. The defeat of Napoleon's fleet at the **Battle of the Nile**, on 1–2 August 1798 added to the growing fame of Admiral Horatio Nelson. Felicia Hemans' poem *Casabianca*, better known by its first line, **'The boy stood on the burning deck'**, commemorates Giocante Casabianca, aged 13, who stayed at his post and died in the explosion of the French flagship *L'Orient* during the battle.

The **seaside holiday season** reaches its peak in August. Resorts and railway companies have always sought to promote



holiday business, either for day trips or longer stays, while Londoners could travel to Southend by paddle steamer.



A suitably kitsch postage stamp celebrated **Elvis Presley** long after his death, 16 August 1977. A public poll voted overwhelmingly for a youthful image rather than the jump-suited figure of the Las Vegas years.



A series of silk screen portraits by **Andy Warhol**, born 6 August 1928, added another



dimension to the popular legend of **Marilyn Monroe**, who died on 5 August 1962.

A less controversial artist, **Sir John Everett Millais** arrived at the Royal Academy Schools aged 11. By the time of his death on **13 August 1896** Millais was not only President of the Academy but one of the most popular painters of the age. His grandson, William Milbourne James, posed for *A Child's World*, subsequently used to advertise Pears soap. James, who rose to the rank of Admiral, was known as 'Bubbles' throughout his illustrious career in the Royal Navy.

