GALLIC WARS SUMMARY

Caesar's *Gallic Wars* essays chronicle the history of his military engagements during the years 58-51 B.C. in Gaul, Germany, and Britain. And, as an aid to his readers, he provides expository information for those who are unfamiliar with the far-off lands and people encountered during his forays. He opens his book, for example, with a brief description of Gaul, then tells how the Helvetii are first aroused to rebellion by Orgetorix in 61 B.C. and how, after Orgetorix' death, they continue their preparations for war, finally beginning military operations in 58 B.C. Since they plan to march through an area bordering on the Roman Province, Caesar feels that they represent a threat to Roman rule, so he directs his forces against them. And, after defeating the Helvetii, he fights the Germans who have been brought to Gaul by the Sequani tribe. Then, unexplainably, there is a moment of panic within the Roman army, but it manages to regain its courage and crushes the German forces. One of the few to escape, unfortunately, is Ariovistus, a principal German leader.

Book II covers the events of a year later, 57 B.C.; now Caesar battles the Belgae in northern Gaul, and Publius Crassus battles the maritime states on the coast of Gaul. These two operations significantly extend the area of Rome's influence, and the Roman Senate and the populace acknowledge Caesar's achievement by celebrating a thanksgiving of fifteen days.

Book III finds Caesar, during 56 B.C., sending Servius Galba to open a toll-free route through the Alps. But, after this is done, Servius is attacked by the Seduni and Veragri tribes, and after defending himself, finally moves his legion back to safer territory for the rest of the winter. Meanwhile, the Veneti, one of the coastal tribes subdued by Crassus the previous year, begin a rebellion that spreads through the area, so Caesar decides to move against them; his navy wins a major sea battle that ends the rebellion. Other parts of his army, under the direction of Titurius Sabinus and Publius Crassus, defeat the Venelli and their allies under Viridovix, and the tribes of Aquitania. Caesar then subdues the Morini and the Menapii tribes.

Book IV concerns the Usipetes and the Tencteri, two German tribes driven from their homes by the Suebi in 55 B.C. The tribes cross the Rhine in search of new territory, but are defeated finally when Caesar drives them out and moves his own army into Germany for the first time. Then, because some of the Gallic tribes have received military aid from Britain, Caesar decides to make a brief trip across the channel, something no Roman force has done before. He twice defeats the Britons, then returns to Gaul to quell the Morini rebellion and accepts the surrender of the Menapii. Afterward, the Senate decrees a thanksgiving of twenty days; once more, an unprecedented honor.

Book V, chronicling the events of 54 B.C., tells of Caesar's return to Britain with a fleet estimated at 600 ships. He fights his way to the Thames, then moves back to the coast and defeats the British force, commanded by Cassivelaunus. After his return to Gaul, there is a revolt of the Belgae precipitated by Ambiorix and Catuvolcus. Ambiorix successfully tricks and destroys the Roman legion commanded by Sabinus and Cotta. The Nervii attack another Roman camp, but the commander, Cicero, holds them off until Caesar arrives with reinforcements. Labienus defeats a large Gallic force led against him by Indutiomarus, leader of the Treveri.

Book VI, the shortest of the hooks in the *Gallic Wars*, relates Caesar's adventures during 53 B.C. and also concerns itself with giving us an idea of the different cultures of the Germans and the Gauls. As for the battle narrative itself, it concerns an early revolt of several tribes, quelled by Caesar and Labienus. Also, Caesar again crosses the Rhine, but the Suebi retreat into their forests and he decides against pursuing them and returns to Gaul, where he defeats the rebel Eburones forces under Ambiorix.

Finally, Book VII, the longest in Caesar's narrative, describes how, in 52 B.C., Caesar manages to withstand the revolt of fourteen of the Gallic tribes. Many, of course, do not freely join the rebellion, but are drawn in by political intrigues of various kinds; even the usually faithful Aedui turn against Rome. Caesar's forces take a number of enemy strongholds — Vellaunodunum, Cenabum, Noviodunum, and Avaricum — but they are almost defeated at Gergovia. The Gallic revolt spreads and reaches its greatest dimension under the leadership of Vercingetorix, an Arvernian warrior of great power whose father had been chieftain of Gaul. In a major battle at Alesia, the Roman forces defeat Vercingetorix' army and the revolt ends. Rome once more proclaims a thanksgiving of twenty days to honor Caesar for having reconquered Gaul.

BOOK I SUMMARY

Strictly speaking, there exists no Gallic nation. The country referred to as Gaul exists only in terms of a geographic label, for within its boundaries live three separate and warring peoples who differ in languages, customs, and laws. These are the Belgae, the Aquitani, and the Celtae (Gauls). Of these, the bravest are the Belgae, but even their warriors are no match for the courageous Helvetii, a tribe of the Celtae who, like the Belgae, are rugged frontiersmen and hardened by continual war with the Germans. Despite such continual warfare, however, the divergent inhabitants of Gaul usually remain in their respective territories. The Belgae, for example, headquarter in northern Gaul (opposite Britain) to the lower Rhine river; the Aquitani occupy southern Gaul from the Garonne river along the Atlantic coast south to the Spanish Pyrenees; and the Celtae live in the middle section of Gaul extending from the Atlantic Ocean east
to the Rhone river and, in Helvetia, to the Rhine. To the north of the Gauls is the Belgae border, while to the south is the Garonne river with the Aquitani beyond it. The Roman Province is south, following the curve of the Mediterranean and bordering on Aquitania and Celtae territory, including Helvetia.

Orgetorix, a man whose ambition is to be king, is a prominent man of wealth and rank among the Helvetii and, not surprisingly, soon persuaded some that they are superior warriors and must immediately prepare for war to gain more land. Furthermore, he predicts that they can (and should) conquer all Gaul eventually because their narrow country of 240 by 180 miles is restricted by natural barriers — too small for the population's needs. (The time is 61 B.C.: Rome is under the consulship of Marcus Messalla and Marcus Piso.) The Helvetii respond enthusiastically and set up a two-year plan of preparation for war. They buy cattle, expand crop production, and establish peaceful relations with neighboring tribes. Orgetorix persuades powerful chieftains, Casticus of the Sequani tribe, and Dumnorix of the Aedui to follow them. First, he says, they will seize the kingdoms of their respective tribes, then they will join tribal force and master all Gaul.

Informers, however, reveal this intrigue to the Helvetii and they take Orgetorix prisoner and demand that he stand trial in chains according to national custom. If he is officially condemned, he will burn at the stake. Orgetorix then summons his 10,000 slaves, numerous retainers, and debtors for the appointed trial day and, with their protection, he escapes. The magistrates prepare to capture and try him, but Orgetorix dies before he can be recaptured and, although knowledge is scanty, the Helvetii believe that his death was a suicide.

Nevertheless, the Helvetii complete war preparations. They burn their twelve strongholds, and about 400 villages, and march with a three-month supply of food, after burning all the grain they cannot carry with them. They then persuade neighboring tribes — the Rauraci, the Tulingi, and the Latobrigi — to join them.

Of the two adequate marching routes out of Helvetia, the route through the land of the Sequani, between the Rhone river and the Jura mountain range, where carts can travel only in single file along a narrow route passing under steep cliffs, is less desirable; here unfriendly observers in strategic locations can easily ambush. The other route — through Allobroges and Helvetia — is better, for it can be easily taken by fording the Rhone river or crossing by bridge. The Helvetii believe that the Allobroges, recently subjected by Rome, will grant passage or can be compelled to cooperate. Thus they set their date to assemble on the Rhone river bank for March 28,58 B.C.

In Rome, Caesar learns of the Helvetians' marching plans through conquered Allobroges and decides to quickly depart for Further Gaul. When he arrives near Geneva, he requisitions troops from the whole Province and, with no more than one legion, he orders the Geneva bridge destroyed. The Helvetii then send their leaders, Nammeius and Verucloetius, with instructions to state that they wish to march peacefully, with Caesar's permission. Caesar, however, remembers that the Helvetii (in 107 B.C.) killed Consul Lucius Cassius and routed and captured his army. So, to gain time for defense, Caesar tells the leaders to return later, on April 13, for his answer. He then orders his troops to construct, besides a long trench, a wall sixteen feet high extending nineteen miles from the lake of Geneva to the Jura range and, as a final measure of insurance, he stations small garrisons to protect the border separating the Helvetii and the Sequani.

When the Helvetian leaders return, Caesar announces that, according to Roman custom and precedent, he cannot grant permission to march through the Province; such a march, he says, will invite his armed resistance. The Helvetii make several attempts to cross the river by fording and with rafts, but are checked by Caesar's entrenchments and troops. The Helvetii then try the narrow, dangerous mountain route, where carts can travel only in single file along a narrow route passing under steep cliffs, is less desirable; here unfriendly observers in strategic locations can easily ambush. The other route — through Allobroges and Helvetia — is better, for it can be easily taken by fording the Rhone river or crossing by bridge. The Helvetii believe that the Allobroges, recently subjected by Rome, will grant passage or can be compelled to cooperate. Thus they set their date to assemble on the Rhone river bank for March 28,58 B.C.

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When Caesar learns that the Helvetii will march through the lands of the Sequani and Aedui to Santoni territory, he is quick to realize the danger; the Helvetii will be dangerously near the Tolosates in a distant part of the Roman Province, which is unprotected and rich in crops. Caesar thus shifts the command of river fortifications to Lieutenant General Titus Labienus, hurries to Italy, and assembles an army of five legions. Seven days later, he has moved his troops over the Alps to Further Gaul and directs them through Allobroges and across the Rhone into the land of the Segusiavi, the first tribe outside of the Roman Province.

Meanwhile the Helvetii, who have traveled through Sequani territory, mount an attack on the Aedui, whom Dumnorix hopes to rule. The Aedui, along with other friends of Rome, the Aedui-Ambarri and Miobroges, beg Caesar for help before they have "nothing left save bare ground," and Caesar decides to pursue the Helvetii before they waste the entire resources of the Roman allies and invade Santoni land. After his decision is made, scouts report that three-quarters of the Helvetian troops have crossed the Arar (Saone) river and that the remaining quarter is ready to cross, heavily loaded with supplies.

Caesar wastes little time. Immediately he stages a surprise attack, kills many of the enemy and routs the rest. The preceding generation of the Tigurine Canton had captured a Roman army, and slain its leader and the grandfather of Caesar's father-in-law; thus, by this
success, Caesar has avenged personal and national losses, and by accident or fate, the Helvetii, who had greatly damaged Rome, are the first to be punished.

After the action, moving with his celebrated celeritas, Caesar orders construction of a bridge and in a single day gets his army across a river that the Helvetii had taken twenty days to cross on rafts. Alarmed by such speed, the Helvetii send emissaries to discuss peace terms. Divico, former commander of the campaign against Cassius, says that the Helvetii are willing to retreat and live where Caesar specifies, but only if the Romans consent to make peace; otherwise the war will continue. Divico further reminds Caesar of Rome's earlier Helvetian defeats and suggests that Caesar's defeat of the canton was due to luck, not to valor. Before leaving, he boasts that Helvetian ability is based on courage rather than cunning strategy and advises Caesar not to court future military disasters for Rome.

Before stating his terms of peace, Caesar reviews the arguments: the Romans had not deserved the old battle with the Helvetii because the Romans did not understand that they had done anything to merit war. In addition, the Helvetian attack was unwarranted from the Roman view, and the Romans had no precautions against war because they assumed that they were dealing peacefully with the Helvetii. But, even if Caesar were to forget old outrages he cannot ignore recent events, such as the attempts to defy Roman will and march by force through the Province, or the Helvetian mistreatment of the Aedui, the Ambarri, and the Allobroges. Finally, he cannot ignore the Helvetian boasts of victory and their assumption that vile indiscretions will go unpunished.

All factors seem to indicate coming vengeance, but Caesar is reluctant to accelerate fate. It is the god's way, he believes, to grant prosperity to miscreants whom they plan to punish; punishment, it is said, is more severely felt after a period of good fortune. Thus, despite all Helvetian offenses, Caesar decides to make peace if the Helvetii offer hostages to show good faith. He insists, however, that they give satisfaction to the Aedui, their allies, and also to the Allobroges. Divico rejects such terms, saying that a request for hostages violates ancestral practice; it is the Helvetian custom to receive, not to offer, hostages.

The next day the Helvetii move camp, but Caesar is alert and dispatches his entire cavalry of 4,000 to observe the enemy's marching direction. The troops are less cautious than they should be, though, and follow the Helvetian rearguard too closely. Eventually they find themselves in a battle and on unfavorable ground. They of course lose a few men, and Helvetian confidence is strengthened because 500 of their cavalry can now claim a defeat of 4,000 Roman cavalry. Thus they take a bolder stand and attempt, with their rearguard, to provoke future battles. Caesar carefully avoids more incidents, seemingly content to prevent the enemy from further plundering.

The Aeduans, meanwhile, default on their promise to supply grain for the troops and offer such varied excuses as: it is being collected and, later, it is on the way. Caesar has cause to worry because he has freighted grain up the Saone river; but it is of little use because the Helvetian march has left the river route and Caesar feels it necessary to continue tracking them. After a long wait and no grain having arrived, Caesar calls a meeting with the Aeduan chiefs in camp and firmly berates them for failing to support the troops when the enemy was nearby and when grain cannot be purchased or taken from the fields. He complains loudly, reminding them that Rome undertook the war largely in response to their pleas for aid.

Among those assembled are the Aeduans' highest magistrates — Diviciacus and Liscus — known as Vergobret (dispensers of judgment), and, after Caesar finishes, Liscus reveals that certain persons of powerful personal influence with the common folk are preventing grain collection by threats. These subversive leaders, he says, preach that if the Aedui cannot enjoy primacy in Gaul, it is better to submit to the Gauls than to the Romans, who, they believe, will only deprive the Aedui of independence. Those same leaders, says Liscus, are informers and relay Roman camp news to the Helvetii. In self-defense for his silence, Liscus admits that he has held his tongue until now because he has feared reprisal.

Caesar then dismisses the assembly so that he can further question Liscus, for he suspects that the powerful informer is Dumnorix, brother of Diviciacus, the Aeduan leader. His suspicions are confirmed. Reasons for the treason are these: Dumnorix hopes for revolution because his ambition is to become king of the Aedui. Thus he has amassed sufficiently publicized good deeds and has become famous for his generosity and has thereby acquired great influence among the common people. Boldly he has acquired power and managed ample sources for bribery and now, carefully, he has plotted his future by calculatedly suitable marriages. He has, for example, arranged his mother's marriage to an influential Bituriges; his own wife is a Helvetian, and he has married off other family members to citizens of other tribes. Dumnorix has a fierce hatred of Caesar — of all Romans, in fact, because their presence has reduced his power and restored his brother Diviciacus' honor and power among the Aedui. Now, Dumnorix champions Helvetian victory, hoping that through their assistance, he will gain his kingship over the Aedui.

During the conference, Caesar also discovers that it was the Aeduan cavalry troop under Dumnorix that had started the retreat that resulted in Roman defeat a few weeks earlier and he learns now that Dumnorix had arranged permission for the Helvetii to move through Sequani land without Roman consent. There is ample cause to punish Dumnorix. Yet Caesar refrains. Rather than embarrass the loyal support of Diviciacus, Caesar's friend, the general is lenient to the open traitor.
Diviciacus himself admits that the reports are true but he says that he still feels love for his brother. He also believes that he cannot ignore future public opinion because severe punishment by Caesar might imply to the public that Diviciacus agrees and seeks to ruin his brother. It is Diviciacus' loyalty which Caesar honors and he forgives Dumnorix in Diviciacus' presence, telling him that all is known and warning him to cease offensive activity. He is being pardoned only for his brother's sake. Dumnorix is then released but, as if on parole, he is watched.

Later that day, patrols report that the enemy is camping below a cliff eight miles away and Caesar orders a scouting party to the cliff, followed by Titus Labienus in charge of two legions to take the top of the cliff. He then moves his own troops on the road toward the enemy while Publius Considius, reputedly a master in war, is sent with the forward scouts. At daybreak, Labienus has positioned his company on the summit of the cliff. Caesar is one-and-a-half miles from the unsuspecting enemy, but new plans must soon be made. Considius arrives at full gallop to report that the hill is held by the enemy. Caesar withdraws to another hill to form a line of battle and Labienus, who has been told to wait until Caesar's troops near the enemy camp, waits out the day. Then, in late afternoon, another change of tactics is necessitated. Caesar's scouts report that it is the Romans who hold the advantage of the hill; Considius in panic has reported erroneously. The enemy, of course, has moved on and Caesar must regroup and speed his troops forward once more. This he accomplishes and camps that night three miles from the enemy.

Next day, he turns his attention to getting grain for his men. The best source of food, it is decided, is in Bibracte, the largest, best supplied Aeduan town, eighteen miles away. They turn and begin their march, but the enemy, thinking that they are retreating, pursue and begin parrying with the Roman rear guard.

Annoyed, Caesar moves his troops to the nearest hill and orders a cavalry attack. The newly recruited troops he places halfway up the hill and positions himself with the four experienced legions in triple line. The Helvetii follow, bringing their equipment with them and form a line that manages to withstand the Roman cavalry. This accomplished, they move against the Roman line.

Caesar then orders all horses removed that all might share an equal danger and so that no one can flee. He rallies his troops and fighting begins. The Romans on upper ground throw a raining volley of spears, draw swords, and begin their charge.

The enemy is soon hampered because their left hands are useless. Roman spears pierce their overlapping shields and pin them together like a massive chain. Finally they do manage to fling their left arms free of the spear-stitched shields, but now they must fight unprotected. And, soon exhausted, they retreat to a hill about a mile away. As the Romans continue pursuit, two rear-guard enemy tribes, 15,000 Boii and Tulingi, turn to attack the exposed Roman right flank. Soon other retreatig enemy units regroup and begin fighting again. The Romans, against such tactics, are forced to split into two forces, one to continue against the Helvetii, the other to check the Boii-Tulingi flank attack.

At nightfall, after hard battling, the Romans capture the enemy's baggage and camp and, among the prisoners, are Orgetorix' daughter and one of his sons. Nighttime, however, proves to be a friend to the Gauls: some 130,000 enemy escape and after three days arrive at the border of the Lingones. They are not followed, though; the Romans delay pursuit so that they can tend their wounds and bury the dead. Besides, Caesar has already sent an advance message to the Lingones, warning them that to help or feed the Helvetii will merit punishment.

The warning is observed and lack of provisions finally force the Helvetii to send representatives to meet with Caesar to discuss surrender. The Helvetian deputies travel to him with tearful pleas for peace and Caesar orders them to return and wait for an answer. Then, arriving in the camp, Caesar orders arms, hostages, and deserted slaves to be collected. But once again night offers itself to the enemy and 6,000 Helvetii escape to the Rhine river, the German border.

Caesar orders the people to seek out and return the runaways or he will hold them responsible. His threat is heeded and the escapees are returned and treated as enemies; the remaining Helvetii are allowed to surrender. Caesar then tells the Helvetii, Tulingi, and Latobrigi to go home and orders that the Allobroges give the defeated enemy sufficient food, since they have no crops at home; he further orders the vanquished enemy to rebuild the towns and villages they have destroyed. Caesar then receives Helvetian camp records written in Greek, showing the total number of men on the enemy march. He orders that a new census be taken and discovers that 110,000 of the original 368,000 survive.

After the decisions concerning the Helvetii are made, the chief men of many other Gallic states visit Caesar to congratulate him and assure him that Rome has gained satisfaction for past injuries and that all Gaul benefited because the Helvetii had intended to conquer the entire territory. The representatives then ask permission to announce a convention of all Gaul to present certain requests to Caesar. Caesar agrees and the convention date is appointed, but all swear that the proceedings shall be kept secret unless all consent to make them public. Following the convention, the chiefs return to request a private conference that must be of utmost secrecy or great cruelty may befall them. Diviciacus, the Aeduan and Caesar's friend, as spokesman recounts past events. He says that the Gauls are divided into two parties; the Aedui and the Arverni. And, after a power struggle, lasting for many years, the Arverni with the Sequani at last resorted to hiring Germans as supplemental warriors. The first 15,000 Germans, they say, came to like the rich land and the standards
of the Gauls so thoroughly that more Germans soon migrated. At present, they estimate that about 120,000 Germans are in the
country.

The Aedui and supporting tribes have fought the Germans repeatedly with great disaster, including loss of all senate members, all
knights, and all nobility. The victorious Germans have bound the Aedui by oath to give hostages without requesting German hostages
and to refuse to ask Rome for assistance. Furthermore, they are bound to accept eternal rule by the Sequani. Diviciacus, who would
not take the oath and would not submit his children as hostages, fled the state and went to Rome, without success, for help.

The victorious Sequani, meanwhile, have suffered worse than the conquered Aedui. Ariovistus, the German king, has seized the best
third of their lands and now demands another third to provide for 24,000 Harudes who are joining them. He is a ruthless, arrogant
barbarian whose tyrannies cannot be endured. Diviciacus warns that should Ariovistus learn of these secret comments, severe
punishment will befall the Aedui hostages. He entreats Caesar to use his influence or army to prevent more Germans from crossing the
Rhine.

Caesar notices that the Sequani stand silent in the tearful group that begs for assistance and asks why they act this way. But the
Sequani remain silent, Diviciacus explains that their plight is even more serious; they cannot risk comment because Ariovistus lives
within their borders and controls all towns. Caesar then comforts them, saying that it would be a disgrace if Rome did not aid its
distressed friends and, after dissolving the convention, he analyzes the situation. The Aedui, often cited by the Roman Senate as friends,
are German slaves and also have given hostages to the Germans and Sequani. This, he considers a disgrace to himself and the
greatness of Rome. Caesar notes, also, that the Germans are becoming used to crossing the Rhine and that infiltration is dangerous
because Germans in Gaul might be a vast potential enemy of Rome. Their proximity to Roman borders might well result in invasion.
In such case, it would be easy for the enemy to sweep down the length of Italy. Ariovistus, he decides, must be checked at once.

Caesar immediately sends deputies to Ariovistus, requesting him to set a halfway station for a parley regarding mutual problems, but
Ariovistus replies that, since it is Caesar who wants something, Caesar must come to Ariovistus; the latter belives that he would be
foolhardy to travel without his army's protection to the Roman-occupied area of Gaul. Moreover, what business does Caesar have in a
territory that Ariovistus has secured by conquest?

Caesar's second emissaries remind Ariovistus that the Roman Senate earlier had granted him the title of "king" and "friend." Now, his
refusal to meet with them requires an ultimatum: Ariovistus will cease bringing men into Gaul, restore the Aedui hostages, permit the
Sequani their freedom, and refrain from war and from harassing the Aedui. If this can be done, Caesar and Rome will remain his
friends -should he refuse, Caesar will take immediate action. As governor of the Province of Gaul, Caesar says that he is authorized to
protect the Aedui and other friends of Rome.

Ariovistus replies that it is a right of war for victors to rule the vanquished; he insists that the Romans govern their conquered peoples
according to their judgment and without need of third-party interference. He is entitled to the same right. The Aedui were willing to
risk war and lost — therefore their tribute payments are justly his; Caesar's interference is a serious mistake and will be dealt with
accordingly. Ariovistus obviously is not impressed by Caesar's threat; the Germans are undefeated, superbly trained, and have been in
the unsheltered fields for fourteen years.

Caesar receives this message as the Aedui complain that the Harudes, recently brought to Gaul, are warring on their borders. Also, the
Treveri report that a hundred clans of the Suebi tribe encamped across the Rhine are attempting to cross and are led by two brothers,
Nasua and Cimberius. Caesar realizes that the Suebi joined with Ariovistus would make a formidable enemy, so immediately requests
grain and starts the march toward Ariovistus' camp.

After three days of marching, Caesar learns that Ariovistus is about to attack Vesontio, the largest town of the Sequani, well fortified
and rich in troop supplies. And, since it is a natural geographic stronghold and since Ariovistus is three more days of marching ahead,
Caesar orders night and day forced marching to reach Vesontio. There he establishes his garrison without battle.

Roman troops visiting with Gauls and traders hear tales of incredible German skill, valor, and brutality, and panic spreads among the
peoples. There are tears and lamentations and many wills are written and signed. Officers with slight experience begin offering
excuses and beg to leave. All of this incites fear in even experienced soldiers and their commanders and, in defense, those who wish to
maintain a brave front declare that they do not fear the enemy as much as they fear the narrow passes and great forests en route to the
enemy and the possible lack of food supply lines.

Caesar convenes a council to severely reprimand the officers because they presume to question his intentions. He reviews the
background of their situation. He wishes, he says, to try to reason once again with Ariovistus. But should such talks fail, he reminds
his men that Rome has previously defeated the Germans: the Helvetii have defeated the Germans and the Romans have beaten the
Helvetii. Ariovistus conquered Gauls who were exhausted by a long war, and his surprise attack was based on cunning strategy against
inexperienced natives. For those who disguise fear with the excuse that there isn't enough food, Caesar says that he is having the
matter corrected. When he is finished, he announces that the camp will move in the early morning hours and that even if no one else follows that he still intends to march with his faithful Tenth Legion.

The speech has dramatic effect on all ranks. The men of the Tenth Legion ask their tribunes to express to Caesar their appreciation for his trust and praise. Other troops tell their officers to inform Caesar that they support him and do not question his plans. Caesar then assigns the loyal Gaul, Diviciacus, to study the route and he accepts a suggested fifty-mile detour so as to travel through open country. The march begins and, on the seventh day, scouts report that Ariovistus is only twenty-four miles away.

Ariovistus has his own sharp-eyed scouts and when he learns of Caesar's approach, he sends a message, saying that he is ready to meet now that his troops are nearby for protection. Caesar accepts the proposal, as he is hopeful that Ariovistus has reconsidered the benefits of associating with Rome. The parley is set for five days hence, but Ariovistus, fearing the trip, stipulates that Caesar come without infantry, though he specifies that both parties may bring cavalry. Caesar doesn't care to trust his safety to the Gallic cavalry, so he mounts members of the devoted Tenth Legion infantry on Gallic horses.

The two generals meet on a hill surrounded by flat terrain, the horsemen of both leaders stopping two hundred paces behind. Ariovistus demands that they parley on horseback and that each shall bring ten horsemen with him. Caesar agrees. The two then convene their talk and Caesar recalls the benefits which result from Roman association, then restates the terms of his earlier ultimatum.

For his part, Ariovistus, after enumerating his own outstanding qualities, replies that he crossed the Rhine at the Gauls' request. The settlements and hostages were acquired by the Gauls' consent, and the tribute taken was a customary right of a conqueror. He had not warred with the Gauls. All of the Gallic states had joined forces against him and he had defeated them in a single action. If they wished to fight again he would again fight. Now, however, they must be content to pay the customary tribute. If tribute and hostage agreements are altered as a result of Rome, clearly Roman friendship is a hindrance, not a help, to him; the additional German emigrants, he explains, are only for his defensive protection. He has, he insists vehemently, occupied this section of Gaul, and the Romans are at fault, intruders objecting to a judgment other than their own, something they cannot tolerate.

Ariovistus further reminds Caesar that the Aedui have not always helped Caesar. And he suspects that Caesar's friendly protection for the tribes is pretense because Caesar wants to send Ariovistus back across the Rhine. Ariovistus wants undisturbed possession of Gaul and to gain that end he will reward Caesar as well as fight for him. To remain, however, invites war and Caesar's murder, Ariovistus declares, and says that he has been contacted by messengers of Roman nobles and leaders who would regard Caesar's death as a favor.

Caesar rejects Ariovistus' arguments and speaks at length that Rome does not abandon allies. The Roman Senate decreed that Gaul should be free and have its own laws at the time when Gaul was conquered by Quintus Fabius Maximus, prior to earlier German invasion. Rome's governing rights therefore precede German rights in Gaul.

During the parley, Caesar is told that Ariovistus' horsemen are nearing the hill and throwing darts and stones at the Romans. Caesar, therefore, interrupts his talk to return to his soldiers, forbidding them to return the enemy's fire. Caesar does not wish to give the enemy an opportunity of accusing him of breaking the peace pledge. The reports of the German cavalry's behavior and Ariovistus' demands become known in the Roman camp and the troops are naturally eager for battle.

Two days later, Ariovistus asks to resume the interrupted talks with Caesar or one of his staff. Caesar doubts success and Ariovistus' ability to control his cavalry and, not wishing to risk danger to his key men, Caesar dispatches Gaius Valerius Procillus and Marcus Mettius. The German general, however, accuses them of spying and, without discussion, makes them prisoners. He then advances to a new camp about six miles from Caesar's troops and, next day, moves past Caesar and camps two miles beyond to interrupt Caesar's supplies from the Sequanian and Aeduan borders.

Seemingly, this would provoke total war between the two testy men, but only small cavalry skirmishes take place for five days. Caesar, however, keeps all troops in battle line, should Ariovistus mount attack. The Roman general then marches his troops in a triple line six hundred paces beyond Ariovistus' camp. The first two lines are defenders and the third line sets up an auxiliary camp to receive supplies. Ariovistus sends 16,000 troops and cavalry to annoy the entrenching troops and the two defending Roman lines fight while the third line finishes camp. Caesar then stations two legions and his auxiliary troops there and returns to the main camp with four legions.

The next day, Caesar brings troops out of both camps in battle formation, where they await attack until noon. Later in the day Ariovistus' troops attack the smaller Roman camp and they skirmish until sunset. Caesar then questions prisoners and discovers that Ariovistus will not fight a decisive battle before the new moon because the prophetic German matrons have forecast defeat until then. With the new moon, they have said, will come German victory.
The following day, Caesar, with his new knowledge of German superstition, stations small defense garrisons in each camp, then places all allied troops before the smaller camp to demonstrate his strength. He marches a triple line to the German camp, compelling Ariovistus to form battle lines. The Germans group according to their tribes and, to prevent retreat, place a barrier of supply wagons and carts along the rear of their entire battle line; in the carts are placed German women imploring their husbands to save them from Roman slavery.

When the fighting begins, the enemy and the Romans rush each other so quickly that javelins cannot be thrown; sword fighting begins immediately. The Germans quickly adopt their phalanx formation to withstand the assault, but the move is not wise. Many of the Roman troops leap on the Germans, seize their shields and stab them; The German left wing soon collapses, but their right wing, heavy with manpower, has the Roman left wing in difficulty until Publius Crassus of the cavalry sees the trouble and sends in a third Roman troop line for reinforcement.

The Romans triumph and the enemy's army breaks, fleeing nonstop fifteen miles to the Rhine river. A few Germans manage to cross, Ariovistus among them, but the rest are captured and killed. Caesar then frees Gaius Valerius Procillus, the emissary, who was being held in triple chains and, later, Marcus Mettius is also found and brought to Caesar.

The escaping Germans warn the advancing Suebi tribe across the Rhine of their defeat and convince the Suebi to return home. Rhineland tribes, however, thirsty for blood, see the Suebi panic, and chase and kill large numbers of them.

Caesar, having completed two major campaigns in one summer, now moves his troops — earlier than usual — into winter quarters in Sequani land and departs for northern Italy to preside over provincial courts and administer justice. He leaves Titus Labienus in command.

BOOK I ANALYSIS

Caesar first gives facts as an aid to understanding his future battles. His description of the three major Gallic groups, their boundaries and locations and his estimates of bravery are vital information, for he is responsible for protecting the Roman Province from tribal invasions and he must be alert to assist neighboring and friendly tribes who may be threatened.

Caesar has previous knowledge of the Gauls from military history and knows, for example, that the major groups consist of numerous tribes, mostly war-minded and hungry for land. Their tribal leaders' ambitions, he feels, threaten security in the Roman Province.

In wars of conquest, Caesar tells us, the conqueror must be a statesman as well as a soldier if conquered peoples are to accept their new ruler peacefully. It is noteworthy, therefore, that Caesar frequently requests and uses reports concerning enemy customs and beliefs to gain cooperation or to win a battle.

Orgetorix' personal ambition for power has fired a restless and confined tribe to make war. The conspiracies indicate how thoroughly the personal ambitions of the powerful men in various tribes keep such tribes in turmoil. The bitter inter-rivalries have led many tribal leaders to join with German or Roman invaders on occasions and this bitterness ultimately has stunted the growth of a national Gallic unity.

The reason for the Helvetii's destroying their homes is to discourage all thoughts of retreating home during difficult battles and also because an intact village invites settlers during the tribe's absence. Further, their only food supply travels with them; there are no home supply lines. Tribal armies will buy, capture, or plunder for future needs.

When Caesar learns of the proposed Helvetian march, he reacts quickly to it. Such a march will take the Helvetii through conquered Allobroge territory and, because it lies on the northwestern border of the Roman Province, he is deeply concerned. This outpost protects Rome from invaders; here Roman battles with Gauls have been fought intermittently for two centuries. The reaction of Caesar, therefore, is of particular military importance and is a good example of the celeritas which has made him widely famous. Caesar pays careful and constant attention to all details and is swift to calculate, judge, and move to keep the initiative. A student of the Gallic Wars should watch for this quality throughout the books. The sections here particularly demonstrate Caesar's speed in a variety of actions, ranging from the assembling of an army to the staging of a surprise attack.

Caesar's speed also concerns itself at times with massive construction and, concerning that construction, a reader will do well to keep in mind that Caesar comments frequently on many details of construction in all his books. This is because building skill is an important ingredient in his renowned speed and his ability to conquer. Reflect, for instance, on the length and height of the wall that the Roman army builds in less than a month. Caesar's troops have the impressive ability to build roads, warships, transports, bridges,
forts, and siege works of an amazingly durable quality with both speed and accuracy. Note that immediately after the Romans conquer a region they begin road construction, assuring fast communication and movement of troops and supplies. Some authorities have estimated that nearly 14,000 miles of roads were built in Gaul alone and some of these same stone roads and bridges are still in use. Furthermore, many modern European highways are built on old Roman roadways because Roman roads were straight, cutting through hills rather than going around them.

For the most part, the summary sections are self-explanatory, although occasionally one should note the contemporary sound to the politics of Caesar's day. Divico, for instance, arrogantly attempts to bluff Caesar in order to gain more favorable peace terms. He cites the Helvetii's past triumph over Rome and advises Caesar that the Romans were lucky, rather than valiant, in their capture of the isolated Tigerine Canton. Also note Divico's demeaning comment about Roman use of strategy. The tribal concept of valiant fighting was one of strength and bravery in head-on battle formations. Roman strategies were foreign to their tribal standards and they regarded such actions as cowardly devices, unworthy of real warriors.

Besides being a military genius and statesman, Caesar has a sure shrewdness as a psychologist. Consider his statement of various grievances. This method of emphasizing offenses is offered so that the proposed terms might seem tame by comparison and perhaps acceptable because the penalty might have been worse Caesar then requests hostages and ignores the offer to relocate the Helvetians because relocation would simply require constant Roman watchfulness; gaining Helvetian hostages will deplete their field strength and virtually guarantee less of an urge to fight, a realistic form of peace in an era when victory in battle usually was based on superior numbers of men.

Later, during the secret assembly, more psychology and politics are employed. The assembly provides an opportunity for discussion of the immediate problem and Caesar has an opportunity to listen for clues as to the real reasons for the delayed grain shipments. It is often true that what is not said is more telling than what is said, and here Caesar is able to pick up clues to the truth and turn to the real source of trouble, which is, of course, local politics. The general, however, is not interested in playing cops and robbers with assorted local tribes indefinitely and he knows that, in addition to the obvious reasons for peace continual warfare will deplete military strength and divert tribal efforts from needed crop production. Thus the Romans appear to be sophisticated conquerors, preferring to conquer once, and establishing equitable living regulations for the vanquished. Their goal is peace with a minimum of supervision so that their troops are free for other projects.

By pardoning Dumnorix before his brother, Caesar effects six things: (1) both brothers owe gratitude to Caesar; (2) Dumnorix knows his plans are transparent and he must subdue his ambitions if only momentarily and that (3) will simplify the Roman battle problems; (4) Diviciacus knows that Caesar values his judgment and returns his loyalty; (5) Diviciacus is safe from reprisal by Dumnorix, who would be suspect should anything happen; and (6) with local intrigue under temporary control, Caesar can turn his efforts toward conquering the Helvetians.

In Sections 21 and 22 of Book I, Caesar receives valuable information and acts immediately to gain a favorable battle position. This episode might have resulted in a telling victory. Instead, it illustrates how panic and subjective reporting on the part of only one person can turn the fortunes of war, though in this instance the consequences, luckily, were not serious. However, an opportunity was lost for what may well have been a decisive battle or even the end of the campaign. Section 24 is noteworthy because it is here that we learn that Caesar keeps his green recruits in reserve by placing them halfway up the hill while the experienced warriors battle. The hill is a good observation point for the recruits to learn and the location also saves them from needless losses resulting from their inexperience.

Note also that, in Section 28, Caesar explains his reason for ordering the enemy to rebuild destroyed towns and villages. He does not want the empty, abandoned country to tempt the Germans across the Rhine to migrate and thus become neighbors of either the Roman Province or of the Allobroges. Recall, too, that in Section 1, Caesar noted that the Germans engage in continual warfare with the Belgae and Gauls; he therefore wants to be certain that the Germans stay isolated on the other side of the Rhine, deterred by the river boundary so that war in the territory under his control is less of a temptation.

It is well to remember while reading the Commentaries that Caesar is writing them to be read by Roman citizens far removed from the local Gallic problems and, for that reason, they are often full of repetition of what is seemingly the obvious. Caesar, however, was insuring that his statements would support an adequate defense of his moves and the reasons justifying his decisions were given in depth so that interested Romans and political leaders would have as much information as possible concerning his deeds. Remember, too, that it is still common for today's heroes to write their memoirs or commentaries on situations, particularly prior to election time when they are seeking office. Caesar was a highly successful field leader and he had to rely on written reports, first to fulfill his responsibility of reporting to the Roman Senate, and also to keep his own name prominent with the Roman citizens.

The skirmish with Ariovistus in Section 24 has an interesting background: Caesar knows something of Ariovistus from previous experience. During his consulship in 59 B.C., Ariovistus applied for Roman recognition and Caesar had advised the senate to conclude a formal friendship with him, recognizing his conquests in Gaul. At that time Caesar had not been assigned to protect Transalpine Gaul. Some authorities, therefore, believe that Caesar may have thought it wise to keep Ariovistus neutral by extending Roman
friendship, or perhaps that Caesar did not realize how dangerous Ariovistus might be to Gaul. These sections are particularly interesting for their diplomacy. Ariovistus obviously is a successful conqueror, as is Caesar, and is proud of his successes, conscious of his rank, and believes that Caesar owes him the courtesy of coming to him. Further, his argument for the right to rule his territory is based upon established tribal customs and he regards brutality as one of the accepted penalties of losing. He is trying to better the fortunes of his countrymen by expansion of territory and, in accordance with his background and war customs, Caesar is the interloper without authority.

Sections 38 through 41 should be carefully read for examples of Caesar's specific, concise, and vigorous writing style. Here, he turns his attention to human relations and describes vividly and briefly the demoralizing effects of fear. Also one should note his address to his centurions, for there is a glimpse of Caesar the orator; his ability to arouse enthusiasm is quite evident as he rallies courage for action. He uses simple, direct language and rhythmical phrasing and many historians rank him, as an orator, second only to Cicero. Unfortunately, Caesar's orations have perished, but the address here is one of the few remaining and masterful examples of his oratorical skill.

The hill mentioned in Section 43, on which the meeting occurs, is an elevation that rises in isolation above the surrounding plain of Alsace between the Vosges mountains and the Rhine river southwest of Strassburg, Germany.

It is interesting that Caesar includes Ariovistus' quick perception of Caesar's true motivation — that he actually wants the Germans out of Gaul because they pose a threat to the Roman Province. It is to Caesar's credit that he documents both sides of the discussion and includes the historical background. A lesser figure wishing to gain glory by dispatching the Germans across the Rhine might have distorted the German viewpoint and used such an excuse as a cause for battle.

It is noteworthy that Caesar has cause to cease negotiations when the German troops violate the truce but, more important, that he tries another avenue for peace by sending emissaries who are known to Ariovistus and who can speak Gallic as fluently as Ariovistus. With this tactic, he hopes to establish a feeling of confidence and thus reduce the language barrier so that important matters will not suffer in translation. But Caesar is only cautiously generous; he believes that his own presence may tempt the Germans to foul play. It is for this reason that he removes himself from further meetings.

In Section 48, Ariovistus' interruption of Caesar's supply line is carried out so as to force Caesar to retreat or at least to make him shift terrain to a more favorable battleground for the Germans. This maneuver is successful and Ariovistus continues harassing the Romans as they build their auxiliary camp.

When Caesar is at last in a favorable position, note that he invites attack and, upon discovering the German superstition concerning defeat prior to a new moon, he seeks full-scale battle. Here is an example of Caesar's attention to local customs and, in this instance, he takes advantage of the information immediately. Psychologically, the Germans feel defeated before they begin because they are battling contrary to the German matrons' predictions. To avert possible German troop panic, their leaders use the baggage as a barrier to prevent retreat and to raise battle valor. They also rouse emotions by using the women to prevail upon the troops to save them.

Caesar's usual triple-line formation consists of the first line using four cohorts of each legion. The second line, comprising three cohorts, stands about 160 feet behind line one. The third line represents reserve strength and is posted farther back and composed of the remaining three cohorts of the legion.

A cohort numbers about 360 men and there are ten cohorts to a legion; in the Gallic War a legion totaled about 3,600 men. Such information is important if one is to grasp the large scale of these long-ago battles. Other details dealing with the battle itself are equally important. The German phalanx formation, for example, mentioned in Section 52, is a variation of a Macedonian plan and used a closely packed troop pattern, strong in depth. The warriors usually were armed with long pikes or spears so that the enemy had first to penetrate a forest of spear-heads. Both the Germans and the Gauls used men holding shields in front of their bodies so that the shields formed an overlapping, continuous front-line armament.

Caesar, fighting two campaigns in one season, with a total of only 35,000 soldiers subdued two enemy populations totaling several hundred thousand people. Most historians regard the feat as a brilliant triumph of military organization, leadership, and discipline over brute strength and barbaric courage. Little wonder that in its own day it was valued so highly.
Chapter 1

All Gaul is divided into three parts, one of which the Belgae inhabit, the Aquitani another, those who in their own language are called Celts, in our Gauls, the third. All these differ from each other in language, customs and laws. The river Garonne separates the Gauls from the Aquitani; the Marne and the Seine separate them from the Belgae. Of all these, the Belgae are the bravest, because they are furthest from the civilization and refinement of [our] Province, and merchants least frequently resort to them, and import those things which tend to effeminates the mind; and they are the nearest to the Germans, who dwell beyond the Rhine, with whom they are continually waging war; for which reason the Helvetii also surpass the rest of the Gauls in valor, as they contend with the Germans in almost daily battles, when they either repel them from their own territories, or themselves wage war on their frontiers. One part of these, which it has been said that the Gauls occupy, takes its beginning at the river Rhone; it is bounded by the river Garonne, the ocean, and the territories of the Belgae; it borders, too, on the side of the Sequani and the Helvetii, upon the river Rhine, and stretches toward the north. The Belgae rises from the extreme frontier of Gaul, extend to the lower part of the river Rhine; and look toward the north and the rising sun. Aquitania extends from the river Garonne to the Pyrenean mountains and to that part of the ocean which is near Spain: it looks between the setting of the sun, and the north star.

Chapter 2

Among the Helvetii, Orgetorix was by far the most distinguished and wealthy. He, when Marcus Messala and Marcus Piso were consuls, incited by lust of sovereignty, formed a conspiracy among the nobility, and persuaded the people to go forth from their territories with all their possessions, [saying] that it would be very easy, since they excelled all in valor, to acquire the supremacy of the whole of Gaul. To this he the more easily persuaded them, because the Helvetii, are confined on every side by the nature of their situation; on one side by the Rhine, a very broad and deep river, which separates the Helvetian territory from the Germans; on a second side by the Jura, a very high mountain, which is [situated] between the Sequani and the Helvetii; on a third by the Lake of Geneva, and by the river Rhone, which separates our Province from the Helvetii. From these circumstances it resulted, that they could range less widely, and could less easily make war upon their neighbors; for which reason men fond of war [as they were] were affected with great regret. They thought, that considering the extent of their population, and their renown for warfare and bravery, they had but narrow limits, although they extended in length 240, and in breadth 180 [Roman] miles.

Chapter 3

Induced by these considerations, and influenced by the authority of Orgetorix, they determined to provide such things as were necessary for their expedition - to buy up as great a number as possible of beasts of burden and wagons - to make their sowings as large as possible, so that on their march plenty of corn might be in store - and to establish peace and friendship with the neighboring states. They reckoned that a term of two years would be sufficient for them to execute their designs; they fix by decree their departure for the third year. Orgetorix is chosen to complete these arrangements. He took upon himself the office of ambassador to the states: on this journey he persuades Casticus, the son of Catamantaledes (one of the Sequani, whose father had possessed the sovereignty among the people for many years, and had been styled "friend" by the senate of the Roman people), to seize upon the sovereignty in his own state; and he likewise persuades Dumnorix, an Aeduan, the brother of Divitiacus, who at that time possessed the chief authority in the state, and was exceedingly beloved by the people, to attempt the same, and gives him his daughter in marriage. He proves to them that to accomplish their attempts was a thing very easy to be done, because he himself would obtain the government of his own state; that there was no doubt that the Helvetii were the most powerful of the whole of Gaul; he
assures them that he will, with his own forces and his own army, acquire the sovereignty for them. Incited by this speech, they give a pledge and oath to one another, and hope that, when they have seized the sovereignty, they will, by means of the three most powerful and valiant nations, be enabled to obtain possession of the whole of Gaul.

Chapter 4

When this scheme was disclosed to the Helvetii by informers, they, according to their custom, compelled Orgetorix to plead his cause in chains; it was the law that the penalty of being burned by fire should await him if condemned. On the day appointed for the pleading of his cause, Orgetorix drew together from all quarters to the court, all his vassals to the number of ten thousand persons; and led together to the same place all his dependents and debtor-bondsmen, of whom he had a great number; by means of those he rescued himself from [the necessity of] pleading his cause. While the state, incensed at this act, was endeavoring to assert its right by arms, and the magistrates were mustering a large body of men from the country, Orgetorix died; and there is not wanting a suspicion, as the Helvetii think, of his having committed suicide.

Chapter 5

After his death, the Helvetii nevertheless attempt to do that which they had resolved on, namely, to go forth from their territories. When they thought that they were at length prepared for this undertaking, they set fire to all their towns, in number about twelve - to their villages about four hundred - and to the private dwellings that remained; they burn up all the corn, except what they intend to carry with them; that after destroying the hope of a return home, they might be the more ready for undergoing all dangers. They order every one to carry forth from home for himself provisions for three months, ready ground. They persuade the Rauraci, and the Tulingi, and the Latobrigi, their neighbors, to adopt the same plan, and after burning down their towns and villages, to set out with them: and they admit to their party and unite to themselves as confederates the Boii, who had dwelt on the other side of the Rhine, and had crossed over into the Norican territory, and assaulted Noreia.

Chapter 6

There were in all two routes, by which they could go forth from their country one through the Sequani narrow and difficult, between Mount Jura and the river Rhone (by which scarcely one wagon at a time could be led; there was, moreover, a very high mountain overhanging, so that a very few might easily intercept them; the other, through our Province, much easier and freer from obstacles, because the Rhone flows between the boundaries of the Helvetii and those of the Allobroges, who had lately been subdued, and is in some places crossed by a ford. The furthest town of the Allobroges, and the nearest to the territories of the Helvetii, is Geneva. From this town a bridge extends to the Helvetii. They thought that they should either persuade the Allobroges, because they did not seem as yet well-affected toward the Roman people, or compel them by force to allow them to pass through their territories. Having provided every thing for the expedition, they appoint a day, on which they should all meet on the bank of the Rhone. This day was the fifth before the kalends of April [i.e. the 28th of March], in the consulship of Lucius Piso and Aulus Gabinius [B.C. 58.]

Chapter 7

When it was reported to Caesar that they were attempting to make their route through our Province he hastens to set out from the city, and, by as great marches as he can, proceeds to Further Gaul, and arrives at Geneva. He orders the whole Province [to furnish] as great a number of soldiers as possible, as there was in all only one legion in Further Gaul: he orders the bridge at Geneva to be broken down. When the Helvetii are apprized of his arrival they send to him, as embassadors, the most illustrious men of their state (in which embassy Numeius and Verudoctius held the chief place), to say "that it was their intention to march through the Province without doing any harm, because they had" [according to their own representations,] "no other route: that they requested, they might be allowed to do so with his consent." Caesar, inasmuch as he kept in remembrance that Lucius Cassius, the consul, had been slain, and his army routed and made to pass under the yoke by the Helvetii, did not think that [their request] ought to be granted: nor was he of opinion that men of hostile disposition, if an opportunity of marching through the Province were given them, would abstain from outrage and mischief. Yet, in order that a period might intervene, until the soldiers whom he had ordered [to be furnished] should assemble, he replied to the embassadors, that he would take time to deliberate; if they wanted any thing, they might return on the day before the ides of April [on April 12th].
I.--All Gaul is divided into three parts, one of which the Belgae inhabit, the Aquitani another, those who in their own language are called Celts, in ours Gauls, the third. All these differ from each other in language, customs and laws. The river Garonne separates the Gauls from the Aquitani; the Marne and the Seine separate them from the Belgae. Of all these, the Belgae are the bravest, because they are farthest from the civilisation and refinement of [our] Province, and merchants least frequently resort to them and import those things which tend to effeminate the mind; and they are the nearest to the Germans, who dwell beyond the Rhine, with whom they are continually waging war; for which reason the Helvetii also surpass the rest of the Gauls in valour, as they contend with the Germans in almost daily battles, when they either repel them from their own territories, or themselves wage war on their frontiers. One part of these, which it has been said that the Gauls occupy, takes its beginning at the river Rhone: it is bounded by the river Garonne, the ocean, and the territories of the Belgae: it borders, too, on the side of the Sequani and the Helvetii, upon the river Rhine, and stretches towards the north. The Belgae rise from the extreme frontier of Gaul, extend to the lower part of the river Rhine; and look towards the north and the rising sun. Aquitania extends from the river Garonne to the Pyrenean mountains and to that part of the ocean which is near Spain: it looks between the setting of the sun and the north star.

II.--Among the Helvetii, Orgetorix was by far the most distinguished and wealthy. He, when Marcus Messala and Marcus Piso were consuls, incited by lust of sovereignty, formed a conspiracy among the nobility, and persuaded the people to go forth from their territories with all their possessions, [saying] that it would be very easy, since they excelled all in valour, to acquire the supremacy of the whole of Gaul. To this he the more easily persuaded them, because the Helvetii are confined


on every side by the nature of their situation; on one side by the Rhine, a very broad and deep river, which separates the Helvetian territory from the Germans; on a second side by the Jura, a very high mountain which is situated between the Sequani and the Helveti; on a third by the Lake of Geneva, and by the river Rhone, which separates our Province from the Helveti. From these circumstances it resulted that they could range less widely, and could less easily make war upon their neighbours; for which reason men fond of war [as they were] were affected with great regret. They thought, that considering the extent of their population, and their renown for warfare and bravery, they had but narrow limits, although they extended in length 240, and in breadth 180 [Roman] miles.

III.--Induced by these considerations, and influenced by the authority of Orgetorix, they determined to provide such things as were necessary for their expedition--to buy up as great a number as possible of beasts of burden and waggons--to make their sowings as large as possible, so that on their march plenty of corn might be in store--and to establish peace and friendship with the neighbouring states. They reckoned that a term of two years would be sufficient for them to execute their designs; they fix by decree their departure for the third year. Orgetorix is chosen to complete these arrangements. He took upon himself the office of ambassador to the states: on this journey he persuades Caticus, the son of Catamantaledes (one of the Sequani, whose father had possessed the sovereignty among the people for many years, and had been styled "_friend_" by the senate of the Roman people), to seize upon the sovereignty in his own state, which his father had held before him, and he likewise persuade Dumnorix, an Aeduan, the brother of Divitiacus, who at that time possessed the chief authority in the state, and was exceedingly beloved by the people, to attempt the same, and gives him his daughter in marriage. He proves to them that to accomplish their attempts was a thing very easy to be done, because he himself would obtain the government of his own state; that there was no doubt that the Helveti were the most powerful of the whole of Gaul; he

[3] His rebus adducti et auctoritate Orgetorigis permotum constituerunt ea quae ad proficiscendum pertinere comparare, iumentorum et carorum quam maximum numerum coemere, sementes quam maximas facere, ut in itinere copia frumenti suppeteret, cum proximis civitatibus pacem et amicitiam confirmare. Ad eas res conficiendas biennium sibi satis esse duxerunt; in tertium annum profectionem lege confirmant. Ad eas res conficiendas Orgetorix deligitur. Is sibi legationem ad civitates suscipit. In eo itinere persuadet Castico, Catamantaloedis filio, Sequano, quibus pater regnum in Sequanis multos annos obtinuerat et a senatu populi Romani amicus appellatus erat, ut regnum in civitate sua occuparet, quod pater ante habuerit; itemque Dumnorigi Haeduo, fratri Diviciaci, qui eo tempore principatum in civitate obtinebat ac maxime plebi acceptus erat, ut idem conaretur persuadet eique filiam suam in matrimonio dat. Perfacile factu esse illis probat conata perficere, propterqu quod ipse suae civitatis imperium obtenturus esset: non esse dubium quin totius Galliae plurimum Helvetii possent; se suis copiis suoque exercitu illis regna conciliaturum confirmat. Hac oratione adducti inter se fidem et ius iurandum dant et regno occupato per tres potentissimos ac firmissimos populos totius Galliae sese potiri posse sperant.
assures them that he will, with his own forces and
his own army, acquire the sovereignty for them.
Incited by this speech, they give a pledge and oath
to one another, and hope that, when they have
seized the sovereignty, they will, by means of the
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IV.--When this scheme was disclosed to the
Helvetii by informers, they, according to their
custom, compelled Orgetorix to plead his cause in
chains; it was the law that the penalty of being
burned by fire should await him if condemned. On
the day appointed for the pleading of his cause,
Orgetorix drew together from all quarters to the
court all his vassals to the number of ten thousand
persons; and led together to the same place, and
all his dependants and debtor-bondsmen, of
whom he had a great number; by means of these
he rescued himself from [the necessity of]
pleading his cause. While the state, incensed at
this act, was endeavouring to assert its right by
arms, and the magistrates were mustering a large
body of men from the country, Orgetorix died; and
there is not wanting a suspicion, as the Helvetii
think, of his having committed suicide.

V.--After his death, the Helvetii nevertheless
attempt to do that which they had resolved on,
namely, to go forth from their territories. When
they thought that they were at length prepared for
this undertaking, they set fire to all their towns, in
number about twelve--to their villages about four
hundred--and to the private dwellings that
remained; they burn up all the corn, except what
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confederates the Boii, who had dwelt on the other
side of the Rhine, and had crossed over into the
Norican territory, and assaulted Noreia.

Moribus suis Orgetorix ad iudicium omnem
suam familiam, ad hominum milia decem, undique
coegit, et omnes clientes obaeratosque suos,
quorum magnum numerum habebat, eodem
conduxit; per eos ne causam diceret se eripuit.
Cum civitas ob eam rem incitata armis ius suum
exequi conaretur multitudinemque hominum ex
agris magistratus cogerent, Orgetorix mortuus est;
neque abest suspicio, ut Helvetii arbitrantur, quin
ipse sibi mortem consciverit.

[5] Post eius mortem nihilo minus Helvetii id quod
constituerant facere conantur, ut e finibus suis
exeant. Ubi iam se ad eam rem paratos esse
arbitrati sunt, oppida sua omnia, numero ad
duodecim, vicos ad quadringentos, reliqua privata
aedificia incendunt; frumentum omne, praeter
quod secum portaturi erant, comburunt, ut
domum reditionis spe sublata paratiores ad omnia
pericula subeunda essent; trium mensum molita
bibaria sibi quemque domo efferre iubent.
Persuadent Rauracis et Tulingis et Latobrigis
finitimis, uti eodem usi consilio oppidis suis
vicisque exustis una cum iis proficiscantur,
Boiosque, qui trans Rhenum incoluerant et in
agrum Noricum transierant Noreiamque
oppugnabant, receptos ad se socios sibi adsciscunt.
VI.--There were in all two routes by which they could go forth from their country—one through the Sequani, narrow and difficult, between Mount Jura and the river Rhone (by which scarcely one waggon at a time could be led; there was, moreover, a very high mountain overhanging, so that a very few might easily intercept them); the other, through our Province, much easier and freer from obstacles, because the Rhone flows between the boundaries of the Helvetii and those of the Allobroges, who had lately been subdued, and is in some places crossed by a ford. The furthest town of the Allobroges, and the nearest to the territories of the Helvetii, is Geneva. From this town a bridge extends to the Helvetii. They thought that they should either persuade the Allobroges, because they did not seem as yet well-affected towards the Roman people, or compel them by force to allow them to pass through their territories. Having provided everything for the expedition, they appoint a day on which they should all meet on the bank of the Rhone. This day was the fifth before the kalends of April [i.e. the 28th of March], in the consulship of Lucius Piso and Aulus Gabinius [B.C. 58].


VII.--When it was reported to Caesar that they were attempting to make their route through our Province, he hastens to set out from the city, and, by as great marches as he can, proceeds to Further Gaul, and arrives at Geneva. He orders the whole Province [to furnish] as great a number of soldiers as possible, as there was in all only one legion in Further Gaul: he orders the bridge at Geneva to be broken down. When the Helvetii are apprised of his arrival, they send to him, as ambassadors, the most illustrious men of their state (in which embassy Numius and Verudoctius held the chief place), to say "that it was their intention to march through the Province without doing any harm, because they had" [according to their own representations] "no other route:—that they requested they might be allowed to do so with his consent." Caesar, inasmuch as he kept in remembrance that Lucius Cassius, the consul, had been slain, and his army routed and made to pass under the yoke by the

[7] Caesari cum id nuntiatum esset, eos per provinciam nostram iter facere conari, maturat ab urbe proficiisci et quam maximis potest itineribus in Galliam ulteriorem contendit et ad Genavam pervenit. Provinciae toti quam maximum potest militum numerum imperat (erat omnino in Gallia ulteriore legio una), pontem, qui erat ad Genavam, iubet rescindiri. Ubib de eius adventu Helvetii certiores facti sunt, legatos ab eum mittunt nobilissimos civitatis, cuius legationis Nammeius et Verucoetius principem locum obtinebant, qui dicerent sibi esse in animo sine ullo maleficio iter per provinciam facere, propterea quod aliiud iter haberent nullum: rogare ut eius voluntate id sibi facere liceat. Caesar, quod memoria tenebat L. Cassium consulem occasum exercitumque eius ab Helvetiis pulsum et sub iugum missum, concedendum non putabat; neque homines inimico animo, data facultate per provinciam itineris faciundi, temperatuos ab injuria et maleficio existimabat. Tamen, ut spatium
Helvetii, did not think that [their request] ought to be granted; nor was he of opinion that men of hostile disposition, if an opportunity of marching through the Province were given them, would abstain from outrage and mischief. Yet, in order that a period might intervene, until the soldiers whom he had ordered [to be furnished] should assemble, he replied to the ambassadors, that he would take time to deliberate; if they wanted anything, they might return on the day before the ides of April [on April 12th].

intercedere posset dum milites quos imperaverat convenirent, legatis respondit diem se ad deliberandum sumpturum: si quid vellent, ad Id. April. revertentur.
While spending the winter in Hither Gaul, Caesar hears rumors from various sources, supported by dispatches from Labienus, that the Belgae are conspiring against Rome and giving hostages to one another. They have, he knows, various reasons for conspiring: fear that Rome, having the Celtic part of Gaul under control, might now attack them; agitation by Gauls who have opposed German occupation and who are now opposed to Roman occupation; and the additional worry that certain chiefs who desire to be kings, but who were unable to do so as long as the Roman troops were there to maintain order, might now begin waging their wars.

Caesar thus recruits two new legions in Hither Gaul and, early in the summer, has Quintus Pedius lead them to Further Gaul. Then, when enough crops have ripened, he follows with the rest of the army. For spies, he employs neighbors of the Belgae — the Senones and other Gauls — to keep him informed and he is told that an army is indeed being assembled. He decides to move quickly and, after securing his grain supply, he departs and in two weeks reaches the borders of the Belgae.

This is, of course, much earlier than anyone expects and the Remi, the Belgic tribe nearest Gaul, send Icicius and Andecomborius as deputies to Caesar. They plead for the protection of Rome and insist that they have not joined a pact with the conspirators. They offer to help Rome in any way they can and report that all the other Belgae are under arms and, moreover, that the Germans across the Rhine are joining the others. In fact, the Belgae have been so enthusiastic for war that the Remi have not been able to dissuade the Suessiones from joining the warmongers, even though the Suessiones and the Remi are related.

Caesar asks specifically who is under arms and the strengths of the enemy units. He is told that most of the Belgae are of German origin and, because of the fertile land, they have come to revere it as their own. In the previous generation, the only state that stopped invasion by the Teutoni and Cimбри were the Belgae, and they therefore consider themselves of great military importance. The Remi also tell Caesar the leaders of the various enemy groups and the numbers of troops under their command. The most powerful tribe, they say, is the Bellovaci, who have promised 60,000 men to the total war effort. In charge of the campaign is Galba, who promises 50,000 troops. Other tribes involved are the Nervii, Atrebates, Ambiani, Menapii, Morini, Caleti, Veliocasses, Viromandui, Aduatuci, Condresi, Eburones, Caeroesi, and the Paemani; these have promised a total of 186,000 troops.

Caesar is encouraging to the Remi. He has the chiefs' children brought to him as hostages, then asks Diviciacus to move Aeduan troops into the borders of the Bellovaci and begin destroying their lands in order to keep the enemy from converging simultaneously. Caesar, however, learns that the Belgae are already approaching, so decides to move his army across the Axona river and pitches camp with his back to the river. He then leaves six cohorts on the other side, under the command of Titurius Sabinus, and orders them to build a camp with a rampart twelve feet high and a ditch eighteen feet wide.

The Belgae's first move is an attack on Bibrax, eight miles from Caesar's position. The strategy used is an attack upon all sides with "a rain of stones" to drive defenders from the walls. Then with shields over their heads the attackers undercut the wall. The town manages to withstand the attack, but Icicius of the Remi tells Caesar that they will not be able to hold much longer if they are not reinforced.

Quickly Caesar sends archers and slingers, and the Remi rejoice. They feel that they can not only hold their city, but that they can now take the offensive. The enemy too realizes that the town cannot be so easily taken, and so resorts to terror. They burn everything they can — buildings and farmlands — and move toward Caesar's headquarters. Then, when at last their own camp is completed, it is awesome and measures eight miles across its front. Caesar is well aware of the enemy's strength and avoids a major engagement; instead, he orders his cavalry to engage in minor skirmishes so that he can observe, firsthand, the enemy's skill without real risk to the greater part of his army. Then, after deciding that his men are not at all inferior, he selects a place for the battle. He locates on a hill with a broad front gently sloping down; sharp drop-offs are on all sides, and he chooses this particular location because the enemy will be forced to approach from only one direction — the front.

On the sides of the hill, he orders that long protective trenches be dug at right angles to his line, and at the end of the trenches he orders that forts be built for his artillery. Then, with this arrangement, the outnumbered Romans can neither be surrounded nor approached by all the enemy at one time.

Preparations completed, Caesar retains the most recently enrolled legions as a reserve for the camp; the other six he moves into battle position.

Cautiously, the enemy waits to see if Caesar's troops will cross the marsh separating the two armies, but the general waits, hoping to strike the enemy as they cross over for battle.

A cavalry battle erupts first and Caesar's men gain the advantage. Caesar then moves back into his camp. The enemy wildly attempts to cross the river behind the camp, intending to take the fort under Quintus Titurius and then destroy the bridge, or, if they cannot manage that, to destroy the Remi farmlands from which Caesar's troops are getting food.
Titurius, however, reports this movement and Caesar leads all the cavalry and the slingers and archers across the bridge. The enemy is slowed crossing the river and a great number of them are killed; the few who do get across are surrounded by cavalry and also are killed. Then the enemy realizes that Caesar will not fight on unfavorable ground. They also realize that they are running out of food, so they decide to disperse and return home. Victory seems impossible now; they plan to await a Roman attack elsewhere, then come to the defense of whoever needs it. In disorder they straggle home during the night. When Caesar hears of their plans, he suspects an ambush and does not pursue the men. He waits until daybreak, then learns that they actually were leaving and sends his cavalry out to harass their rear.

In charge of the cavalry are Quintus Pedius and Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta; following them with three legions is Titus Labienus. Flight is less easy than the enemy imagined and, confused by the noises from their rear, they flee chaotically.

Next day, before the enemy can recover and regroup from the rout, Caesar moves into the borders of the Suessiones and presses on to Noviodunum, which he tries to take by direct assault. The plan fails, however, for the town's trench and walls are surprisingly strong. Caesar is forced to pull back. He then calls for his siege apparatus and when the Suessiones see the massive size of the general's equipment, they ask for immediate surrender terms.

Caesar takes the leading men of the state and two sons of Galba as hostages, accepts the surrender, then moves his army to Bellovaci territory. There, old men approach his army five miles from Bratuspantium and ask for peace. A little closer, women and children approach with the same request. Diviciacus suggests that the Bellovaci have been friends of the Aedui and have only been incited to war by their chiefs, who have fled to Britain. Thus, he asks as a favor for both the Bellovaci and the Aedui that Caesar pardon them and accept their peace request. This, he says, will also enhance the prestige of the Aedui.

Because of his respect for Diviciacus and the Aedui, Caesar agrees, but demands 600 hostages. These are delivered and the town's weapons surrendered. Caesar then moves on to the borders of the Ambiani, who surrender immediately. Next he presses toward the Nervii, a tribe that avoids all luxury, and especially wine drinking, in order to maintain courage and power. These people, Caesar is sure, will ask no favors.

After marching for three days, Caesar hears from prisoners that the river Sabis (Sambre) is only ten miles away and that the Nervii have positioned themselves on the other side. With them are the Atrebates and the Viromandui; also, they await the Aduatuci, already en route.

Caesar considers, then sends scouts and centurions to find a place for his camp. Meanwhile, some of the Belgae and Gauls, who had earlier surrendered, escape to the Nervii and report that Caesar's baggage travels between legions. The Nervii, therefore, they argue, can attack the first legion when it arrives, and, because there is so large a distance between it and the next legion, they will have an opportunity to plunder Caesar's necessities. The plan is accepted.

Caesar's officers select a campsite on a hill near the Sambre river. In the nearby woods the enemy waits in hiding. Caesar approves of the site and sends the cavalry ahead, then follows with the rest of the troops. He does not, however, send them in the order which the deserting Belgae had reported to the Nervii. When approaching the enemy, Caesar leads with six legions, then the baggage, followed by the two most recently enrolled legions. The cavalry cross the river, with the slingers and archers, and meet the enemy's horsemen. The enemy, however, rush in and out of the woods and Caesar's horsemen dare not pursue them. The six legions arrive and camp-making begins. Then, the enemy spots the baggage train, speeds from the woods, and mounts a massive attack on the cavalry, who are overwhelmed by the rush. The Nervii continue their attack, aiming themselves across the river and straight uphill toward Caesar's camp.

There, the attack is so sudden that Caesar cannot exercise control in his usual orderly fashion. Luckily the troops, however, are so experienced that disaster is averted. Caesar has made sure that the field commanders remain in the area and these men are ready and do not have to wait for commands from their general before acting.

Caesar's men are quick to realize that their military maneuvers are governed by the nature of the ground rather than by tactical logic. The legions then spread out but their front view is blocked by thick fences put up by the enemy, making it difficult to know where reinforcements are needed and impossible for one man to coordinate all the units.

The Ninth and Tenth Legions, fighting on the left, drive the Atrebates into the river, inflict heavy casualties, then pursue them to the other side before the enemy turns and the two legions are routed themselves. The Eleventh and Eighth Legions, also separated from the main body of troops, push the Viromandui as far as the river bank. The Twelfth and Seventh Legions battle near each other, but the front and left side of the camp are left open and the Nervii, commanded by Boduognatus, press forward, hoping to reach higher ground and cut off the two legions from the rest of the Roman forces.
The cavalry and light infantry, who had retreated earlier, again encounter the enemy and attempt to flee in another direction. The enemy manages to reach the camp, but at that moment the baggage train approaches and the men accompanying it see the chaos in the camp and are terror-stricken. The Treveri, usually brave Gallic horsemen, run, reporting that the Romans have been overcome and that the enemy has taken complete possession of the Roman baggage train.

Caesar leaves the Tenth Legion and starts for the right side, where he sees that his men are under greatest pressure. There, the men of the Twelfth Legion are jammed so closely together that defense is almost impossible; besides, they can barely fight. Most of the centurions in the legion have been killed and the men are already bred. Caesar takes a shield from one of the soldiers and immediately moves to the front, encouraging the men and calling them by name. He shouts for them to spread out and his maneuver is effective. The men rejoice at seeing him in their midst and their courage is rejuvenated.

Caesar then notices that the Seventh Legion is falling, so instructs the tribunes to bring the two legions together, then wheel to advance against the enemy. This lets the men turn without having to worry about their backs being exposed.

The soldiers in the two legions that have followed the baggage at last rush into the battle and Titus Labienus directs the Tenth Legion with startling effectiveness.

The reinforcements change the defensive perspective. The battling troops are given additional spirit for the fight and many of those who fled now return to grapple with the enemy, though many are without arms. The cavalry then returns, also shamefacedly. The enemy, meanwhile, continues to display great courage and, as its front ranks fall, men from the back come forward to take their comrades' places. Soon great piles of corpses clutter the battlefield.

The Nervii are almost destroyed by the battle. The older men and women and children, who have been hidden in creeks and marshes, send deputies to Caesar to ask for surrender terms. Of 600 senators, their people now have but three and, of 6,000 men who were able to bear arms, there are but 500 left. Caesar's terms, as usual, are lenient; those who remain may keep their territory and towns and, further, he instructs their neighbors that the Nervii are to be left in peace.

The Aduatuci, who were speeding to assist the Nervii, hear of the defeat and return home, then gather all their supplies into a strong fortress with three sides of steep rocky slopes; the front has an advantageous sloping approach only 200 feet wide. The fortress seems impregnable. It is surrounded by a high wall, armed with sharp spikes and heavy stones.

As Caesar's army approaches, they are met by Aduatuci warriors and battle through several small encounters. Meanwhile, Caesar sets up a rampart 15,000 feet around, protected by many forts and erects his siege apparatus. The Aduatuci laugh at the foolishness of Caesar's troops, who suppose that they can reach the enemy walls from so great a distance. But their laughter soon fades when they see the total apparatus moving. As it approaches their walls they become so alarmed that they ask for immediate peace terms. It is believed that the Romans must have divine aid to get such speed from such massive devices. The only request made by the Aduatuci is that Caesar permit them to keep their arms, for they fear their neighbors and are afraid that those states whom they once taunted will now find them undefended and will destroy them.

Caesar agrees to spare the Aduatuci, not because they deserve it, however, but because this is the way he always treats those he defeats, provided, of course, that they surrender before his battering ram reaches their wall. But he demands that they surrender their weapons. He will, he promises, demand that their neighbors refrain from committing any outrages against them. The deputies check with their tribesmen, and it is agreed that they will do as Caesar asks and a massive heap of weapons is tossed over the town walls but, treacherously, the Aduatuci retain a third of their arms. Then they open the gates and enjoy a day of peace.

In the evening, Caesar orders his troops out of town and has the gates closed so there will be no trouble with the soldiers. But the townspeople, believing that they have the advantage of surprise, take the hidden weapons, sneak into the night, and attack Caesar's forces. Cleverly, Caesar had previously ordered a battle plan for just such an event. Flares are set off and Caesar's troops converge on the point of attack. Some 4,000 of the enemy are killed and the rest are chased back into the town. Next day, the gates are broken open and the town's property and 53,000 of its citizens are sold.

Publius Crassus, who had been sent with a legion to fight the Yeneti, Venelli, Osismi, Curiosolitae, Esubii, Aulerci, and Redones, reports that he has successfully brought them under Rome's authority and, at last, Gaul seems at peace. Even the tribes across the Rhine promise hostages and say that they will obey Caesar's commands.

As Caesar departs for Italy and Illyricum, he tells the representatives of these states to return to him next summer, and he stations his legions in winter quarters. Later, when reports of the great conquests are received in Rome, a thanksgiving of fifteen days is proclaimed, the first time so great an honor has been awarded.
Throughout the *Gallic Wars*, there are reports of many exchanges of hostages under a variety of circumstances. One should remember that at this time there was no equivalent of a United Nations organization to appeal to if one wished to sue for damages over a broken agreement; nor was there any way to insure political security. In addition, the victors of those days had always to worry that the enemy might be surrendering only to gain a bit of time and restore its strength before resuming fighting. Also, if tribes formed an alliance to fight a common foe, there was suspicion among them, and thus as a kind of cover-all insurance measure, hostage exchange was agreed upon. A conqueror took hostages to insure that the defeated would keep the peace and, likewise, conspirators exchanged hostages to make sure that their comrades would keep promises. When this book opens, note that Caesar is prompted into action on hearing that the Belgae are exchanging hostages. He knows that they would not be doing such if they were not considering military moves.

The reasons for a Belgo conspiracy might well make a catalog of all the reasons given for anti-Roman activity throughout the book: fear of Roman rule, political ambition among a few scheming individuals, and a love for conspiracy.

The action in this book is of a different kind from that which is found in the first book. Caesar no longer defends the Roman Province; now, he is extending its boundaries, moving north of the Gallic Province into a territory roughly bounded by the Seine on the south, the Rhine to the north, the Moselle to the east, and the English Channel to the west.

Caesar's sending Diviciacus to the land of the Bellovaci is one of the most important strategic maneuvers of the campaign, for Diviciacus' movements are directly responsible for the disbanding of the enemy army, which in turn permits Caesar to fight the enemy one segment at a time. Caesar's first position is one that cannot be attacked from all sides for it backs on a river; his next camp is on a bill with protected sides — attack must come from the front. And, even though the enemy forces outnumber his, the limitation of the fighting area does much to equalize matters.

A reader might also note that in battle Caesar often lets the enemy position itself so that it is forced to move very sluggishly. Then he sends his distance fighters — archers and slingers — to pick them off much like prey in a shooting match. Often, too, Caesar gauges the hours of the day, and simple passage of time may well save his maneuvers.

The concession of Caesar to Diviciacus is made in order to augment Diviciacus' prestige. It is believed that, no doubt, he would have been kind to the Bellovaci, but his letting his actions appear to be prompted by Diviciacus' request has the effect of placing the Bellovaci and Aedui further in his debt. Diviciacus is more likely to retain faithful because of the favor, and the Bellovaci are more likely to remain loyal because they would, by rebelling again, betray not only Caesar but Diviciacus.

Because the tribes Caesar wars with are often engaging in warfare to stake out new dwelling lands, they frequently travel with their women and children. The Romans, on the other hand, are only interested in protecting and extending the empire; thus they move with only a fighting force. Another difference between the foes is this: the greedy enemies of Caesar are not interested in having states subservient to them as much as they want the land the other tribes inhabit.

The report which the deserters give the Nervii — that Caesar travels with his baggage separating the legions — would mean that the enemy could attack one legion at a time and the others would be so far behind that the enemy could plunder the baggage train and escape before help could arrive. Remember, these men are marching two or three abreast and, since there are several thousand men in each legion, they take up quite a stretch of roadway. Caesar, however, is not so foolish. The enemy is in front, so he puts his experienced legions before the baggage, then has the two inexperienced legions bring up the rear.

One repeated source of difficulty is the battle's tendency to overextend itself. A unit often will stray too far away from the main body of the army and will be attacked and defeated by a larger number of enemy soldiers. This is exactly what happens to the Ninth and Tenth Legions in Section 23 of this book. Conversely, one of the Gauls' greatest faults in battle is their tendency to make quick conclusions on insufficient evidence. They run wild on mere rumor and are hasty to change their minds. Notice that the Treveri flee and report that Caesar has been defeated, even though the battle is far from finished. Clear reasoning is needed — such clear thinking as that used by Caesar and Labienus Caesar, for instance, sees that some of his men are so close together that they can neither attack nor defend themselves, so he brings two legions together and maneuvers them in such a way that they are changed from a group of losing soldiers into successful attackers. Labienus looks over the battlefield, also analyzes the situation and sends the Tenth Legion to the most effective position.

A public thanksgiving, mentioned in the book's closing paragraph, was a great honor accorded by the Romans for a major military victory or political feat. A few days was a considerable expression of the state's appreciation, so the fifteen days given in honor of Caesar and the twenty days accorded him later are tremendous gestures.
BOOK 3 SUMMARY

Before leaving for Italy, Caesar sends Servius Galba with the Twelfth Legion and some cavalry to the districts of the Nantuates, the Veragri, and the Seduni. Galba is to open a travel route through the Alps for Roman traders, who now have to pay heavy tolls. Caesar also gives him permission to winter in the area if necessary.

After several successful engagements, the Romans open the route, and Galba stations two cohorts among the Nantuates, then moves the rest of his troops to a hamlet of the Veragri; Octodurus is chosen, a location surrounded by high mountains and having only a bit of level ground. Furthermore, the town is divided by a river; Galba is pleased by this arrangement and assigns the Gauls to one side and establishes his camp on the other.

Several days later, Galba's scouts inform him that the Gauls have slipped out of their hamlet during the night and are now on the heights surrounding his camp. Because of the location, the Seduni and the Veragri feel that now they can easily eradicate the Roman units. They fear that the Romans intend to take over all the Alpine territory rather than just claim a trade route, and they also deeply resent the Romans' having taken much grain and many hostages. There is, therefore, much to be gained if the Gauls are victorious.

As for the Romans, Galba's entrenchment is not finished nor do his troops have sufficient supplies to hold out for long, so when he learns of the Gallic treachery, he calls a council. Several of the officers suggest that they abandon their baggage and try to escape. The majority, though, want to wait for further moves by the Gauls. Their wish is soon granted. The enemy charges, hurling stones and javelins and at first the Romans are able to hold back the onslaught, but they begin to tire and their losses mount. The enemy soldiers, meanwhile, exchange fresh men for those who are weary and continue to remain on the offensive. The battle continues for six hours and Roman strength and weapons continue to dwindle. Enemy soldiers appear at the mouth of the trench and defeat seems at hand; indeed, it most certainly would have but for the intervention of Publius Sextius Baculus, senior centurion, and Gains Valusenus, military tribune, who plead with Galba that their only hope lies in one final and sudden charge. Galba agrees and calls the officers together, telling them to have all troops pause in their fighting, then gather their weapons, refresh themselves, and, on signal, burst forth.

The plan is stupendously successful. The enemy is taken by surprise and caught off-balance. The Romans surround them and slaughter a third of the 30,000 attackers; the rest flee to the hills. Galba wisely decides not to press his luck by pursuing them; his men are short of supplies. But he destroys the hamlet and returns to the province. His unit then winters in the territory of the Allobroges.

With the Belgae and the Seduni conquered and the Germans driven out, Caesar assumes Gaul is relatively at peace, but before he can get to Illyricum war once again kindles in Gaul. Publius Crassus has been wintering in the country of the Andes with the Seventh Legion and has sent some of his officers to neighboring states to get grain. Titus Terrasidius to the Esubii, Marcus Trebius Gallus to the Curiosolites, and Quintus Velanius and Titus Silins to the Veneti.

The Veneti are a powerful seafaring nation, so powerful in fact that they control most of the navigation on the open sea beyond their coasts and immediately they imprison Silus and Velanius; they are quick to see that these men are ripe for hostages. The neighboring Gauls, impetuous as always, follow their example and hold Trebius and Terrasidius. They also swear by oath that they will cooperate with the Veneti in a common battle against Rome. Soon, other states join and the coast is united. Then, a deputation is sent to Crassus with an offer to trade the hostages for his officers.

Caesar is informed of these blackmail measures and orders that warships be built, that seamen be drafted from the province, and he sets off to join the army. The Veneti learn that the general is coming and, afraid, realize the extent of their offense — they have imprisoned important Roman officials. Thus they prepare for war, hopeful of victory only because they know the lay of the land and only because they think that there are but few harbors which the Romans will be able to use. They fortify their towns and assemble a fleet in Venetia, where they know Caesar intends to begin his campaign. As allies, they rely on the Osismi, the Lexovii, the Namnetes, the Ambiliati, the Morini, the Diablintes, and the Menapii; and, as added insurance, they send to Britain for more aid.

The campaign promises to be a very difficult one, but Caesar has several good reasons for pursuing it: it is outrageous that Roman officials have been taken prisoner and these nations have renewed the war after having made peace terms, and, worst of all, if the rebels aren't put down, then other Gallic tribes might also be stimulated to rebel. War is unavoidable. Caesar divides his army and spreads it to keep the remainder of the territory in check. He sends Titus Labienus forward with the cavalry to keep the Remi and the Belgae loyal and to hold back any Germans who might have been summoned by the Belgae. Publius Crassus is sent to Aquitania with twelve cohorts and cavalry, and Quintus Titurius Sabinus is dispatched with three legions to control the Venelli, the Curiosolites, and the Lexovii. Decimus Brutus the younger Caesar puts in charge of the fleet and he tells him to start for the country of the Veneti. Caesar, himself, departs with the land forces.

The Venetian strongholds are set on tongues of land which are unapproachable from land when the tide is in and unapproachable from the sea when the tide is out. This paralyzes the fighting, for whenever Caesar manages to erect devices to destroy the towns, the enemy
counters by sailing away with all their supplies from the seaward side and going to another stronghold. The Romans then are forced to attempt attacks on the new fortress. These operations continue throughout the summer and, to add to the Romans' troubles, they find themselves impeded by bad weather and the lack of decent harbors. The Gallic ships are, of course, better suited for maneuvering in these waters. They are built higher and have flat bottoms so that they can be moved into the shallow ebb tides that can easily wreck the larger Roman ships; in addition, they are sturdy enough to withstand sea wind, waves, and storms and, though the Roman ships are faster, the Gallic ships are built so well that the Romans can neither ram them nor grapple them successfully.

After taking several of the towns, Caesar decides that the island battling is largely fruitless and getting him nowhere; each time the enemy is charged, it simply moves down the coast. He waits for his entire fleet to arrive before further moves are tried. When it does arrive it is sighted by the enemy, who approach with a force totaling 220 ships.

Brutus, in charge of the Roman fleet, is alarmed. The enemy has many more ships than he, and he knows that he cannot ram them, nor can he have his men hurl missiles at them because their decks are much higher than his. The enemy, on the other hand, can do a great deal of harm to his ships; they can maneuver closely and throw their weapons downward. The Romans, however, do have one device which they can use to advantage: sharp hooks on long poles, used to snag the lines supporting the Venetian rigging. When these lines are caught, the Romans row quickly ahead, the lines snap, and the sails and tackle fall upon the decks, immobilizing the enemy ships. The battle promises to be decisive and Caesar and his army station themselves on the hills to observe.

The Romans' sole asset proves wholly successful; when they destroy a ship's rigging, they surround it with two or three of their smaller vessels and send out boarding parties. The enemy is dismayed and realizes, finally, that it will be destroyed one ship at a time; hence, they decide to retreat, but the wind suddenly disappears and, from then on, the battle goes to the Romans: the trapped ships are all easily destroyed. Once again, Rome is victorious.

Now, because all the enemy's fighting men and ships have been assembled for this battle, the war against the Veneti and the coastal tribes is ended and the survivors come forward to surrender to Caesar; but, so that no other tribes will think of imprisoning Roman representatives in the future, the general is much more severe in his punishment than he usually is. Now he executes the captive senators and sells the men as slaves.

Meanwhile, Sabinus reaches the Venellian border. The chief of the tribe, Viridovix, has raised an army in readiness and has been joined by the Aulerci, Eburovices, and the Lexovii, as well as many desperadoes interested in the possibility of plunder; these men lie in wait two miles from Sabinus' camp. Sabinus continues to refuse to meet in combat the fighting groups Viridovix sends out each day, but his efforts at peace fail miserably. He soon finds himself held in contempt by the enemy and, in his own camp, he is the object of ridicule. Both sides think him a coward. Unfortunately, his troops do not realize that he is being only tactical: he doesn't wish to grapple with so large an enemy when he is not on favorable ground and without good opportunity. His plans are sparing many lives.
and the enemy attempts a sortie, but the Roman troops prove so efficient that all tactics against them are unsuccessful. Finally, the Sotiates must ask Crassus to accept their surrender.

As often happens, treachery is yet afoot. While the surrender is being agreed upon and the Romans' attention is occupied, Adiatunnus, the enemy commander, attacks from another section of town with a group of 600 men, hoping for one last try at triumph. The defeat of this last show of rebellion is quick and Adiatunnus is soon on his knees, begging for surrender terms.

Crassus then leaves for the Vocates and Tarusates, and when these tribes hear how quickly Crassus has conquered Adiatunnus, they assemble a great number of troops and place them under their most experienced leaders; These leaders are somewhat different from those just encountered: they work in the Roman style, preparing entrenched camps and planning ways of cutting off Crassus' supplies. Crassus, though, knows that he is already outnumbered and that if he waits, the enemy will receive more troops. Even now, the enemy army can split and harass him and still maintain a large enough garrison to protect its camp. With the advice of his council, he decides to fight without delay. He brings out his troops at dawn, ready for the fight. But the enemy refuses to meet for battle. Roman-like, they want to wait until the Romans have run out of supplies and have to attempt an escape. Then, they think, they can easily harass the smaller force. Crassus understands this and permits his enthusiastic troops to attack. The Romans advance to the trenches and walls of the enemy camp and begin fighting, but Crassus keeps auxiliary troops, in whom he has little confidence, in service positions. The armies exchange missiles, then Crassus' cavalry reports that the enemy's rear has not been well fortified and is invitingly exposed. Crassus welcomes the news, and the cavalry and the Roman reserve units secretly make for the rear. In they charge, vigorously routing the enemy.

When the Romans in the front hear battle noises from behind, they are spurred with even greater vigor and the enemy is finally forced to retreat. It is chased by the Roman cavalry and three-quarters of the 50,000 enemy soldiers are killed.

Most of Aquitania hears of the victory and decides that surrender is necessary. But some distant tribes, knowing that winter is coming and that the Romans will not battle much longer, do not send hostages or agree to any surrender terms.

For the present, most of Gaul is peaceful, excepting the Morini and the Menapii, who have not come to terms. Caesar decides to have a last try before winter against these wily rebels, and so goes after them. The campaign, however, is not as quickly completed as he hoped. The enemy fights in forests and marshes and appears en masse only when the Romans are spread over a wide area. There are many skirmishes, and losses mount on both sides. In desperation, Caesar finally sets his troops to cutting down the forest in which the enemy hides itself. There they capture the enemy's cattle and some military equipment, but not the enemy itself; it moves deeper into the dark forest. Then cold winter weather descends upon the battle scene and Caesar is forced to withdraw. The decision is difficult, but the general, before leaving, accomplishes a last tactic: his troops destroy all crops and buildings in the enemy territory.

BOOK 3 ANALYSIS

One of the sources of the Roman interest in Gaul was the lucrative trade carried on by the Romans, hence the importance of Galba's mission to open a route through the Alps. The Roman traders were losing a large part of their profits to the people who charged fees for passage over the Great St. Bernard Pass. Thus the Roman intervention.

When the Seduni and the Veragri attack Galba, note that he is in the worst of all possible situations — bad ground, limited supplies, and an unfinished camp he has nothing on which to rely except his own merit as a general and the device of surprise.

The Veneti, mentioned later in the book, are located on the southern coast of Brittany. They face an open sea and have developed a considerably different fleet than the Romans, who are used to mild Mediterranean waters. In fact, the Roman military forces are not naval at all; they are largely land fighters.

The offense of the coastal tribes is twofold: not only do they attempt to override Roman authority, but they take as prisoners ranking Roman officials on a diplomatic mission and, since the power of Rome often rested in a few men, this is a most serious act that must be punished.

Note that Caesar does not commit all his forces to a single campaign, even though it promises to be a difficult one. He knows there is always a chance that the rest of Gaul will take advantage of his being occupied elsewhere, so he sends a large part of his army to maintain order while he is away fighting.
There are two types of Roman ships mentioned in the sea battles against the Veneti and in the two British expeditions. The larger ships are primarily cargo carriers, with a deep draft below the waterline so that they are unable to advance closely toward shore. The men-of-war are small fighting ships, much more maneuverable.

Caesar never ignores the benefits of luck and he frequently mentions his indebtedness to it. But he knows that luck is often most useful to those who are ready for it. Thus ships of his which have their sail-cutting devices are only completely successful when the wind drops and prevents the escape of the Venetian navy. Tactics and luck win this battle.

Concerning the Venelli and their allies, note that they outnumber Sabinus' forces and that he makes use of Caesar's gambit of appearing afraid so that the enemy becomes overconfident and careless. The enemy is both physically and psychologically injured by his charge. In addition, his military position on the hill contributes much to his success because the enemy is weakened by the long charge upward to reach the Roman lines.

The vassals mentioned in Adiatunnus' forces are a particularly effective fighting device. We see many times a tendency of troops to break and run when they find themselves in trouble, thus the vassals' promise to share their partners' fate makes running no solution to any difficulties, for even if one member of a pair should get away, he must die if his partner is not so lucky and, rather than risk that, they stay in battle and fight to the death.

**BOOK 4 SUMMARY**

For many years, the Tencteri and the Usipetes, two German tribes, have been harassed by their warring neighbors, the Suebi. Homes have been burned, crops destroyed, and tribesmen and their families barbarously slaughtered. No defense seems possible. In desperation, in the winter of 55 B.C., they migrate across the Rhine searching for new land; hopefully, the Suebi will forget them and they can forget the Suebi.

The Suebi, however, are not merely barbaric plunderers; their social code is rigidly stoic and their vast numbers are tightly organized. The separate clans, for example, supply a thousand soldiers a year for the army and the other men remain at home working the land. The following year, the farmers and soldiers exchange places; in this way, there is never any shortage of either farmers or soldiers. Moreover, their land is not privately owned. All families farm collectively, subsisting mainly on communal milk and cattle, and on wild game. They are a strong and large people; they wear little clothing, bathe in rivers, and are therefore early accustomed to the outdoor rigors of winter wars. In addition, their cavalry does not use saddles. Even wine drinking is forbidden among the men because of their belief that it makes a man effeminate and weakens his capacity for endurance.

The Suebi like to keep the land beyond their borders uninhabited. On one side, there are no neighbors for 600 miles. On the other side are the quiet Ubii tribes. Earlier, the Suebi had tried to drive the Ubii away and failed, but managed at least to reduce the Ubii's importance and make them sufficiently respectful of the Suebian might.

When the German tribes reach the Rhine they greedily rejoice at the sight of fresh territory beyond and gird themselves for war against the Menapii natives. The Menapii at first prevent the Germans from crossing the Rhine, but the invaders only pretend to leave the area, and when the Menapii relax their guard, return suddenly, attack by surprise, and massacre the Menapii. They then claim all lands and properties of their victims.

Caesar, meanwhile, is disturbed by reports of this invasion. He knows that the Gauls are fickle and troublesome; he especially fears that they will begin making alliances with the Germans. Thus he sets out earlier in the year than usual and when he reaches his troops he finds that his assumption is correct: some of the Gauls have indeed made coalitions with the Germans. Caesar therefore confers with the Gallic chiefs and decides to make immediate war on the Germans. With his cavalry and their supplies, he begins the march. When he nears the enemy, however, he receives a message stating that the Germans have made no advances against the Romans and that they will not refuse to fight if they are attacked. They wish, they say, to be at peace with the Romans.

Caesar replies that there can be no basis for peace if they remain in Gaul; it is impossible, he says, to honor men who are unable to defend their own lands and thus seize the lands of other men. For them there is no territory in Gaul, and he suggests instead that they settle in the territory of the Ubii.

The German envoys ask for time to consider the offer and promise to report back in three days and plead further with Caesar not to move his army in the meantime. Caesar refuses for already he knows that they have dispatched a troop of cavalry across the Meuse to get booty and corn; he is sure the Germans are stalling until their cavalry returns from across the Meuse river.
Morini who did not send deputies. Publius Sulpicius Rufus is left with a garrison to hold the port. Put in charge of Quintus Titurius Sabinus and Lucius Aurunculeins Cotta. They are among his officers. Eighteen ships have been delayed by wind and Caesar reserves those for the cavalry. The remainder of the request and orders them to submit a large number of hostages. When eighty transports arrive, they promise to be peaceful and faithful. Caesar realizes the danger of having an enemy at his rear and knows while the ships are being outfitted, Caesar receives representatives from the Morini, who apologize for their former hostilities. Although there is little of the summer left, Caesar now decides to start for Britain. Because the Britons have given much assistance to the Gauls in recent campaigns, he hopes to curb further cooperation. And, even if there is little time for expediency, and having spent eighteen days in Germany, he returns to Gaul, destroying the bridge after his troops are across.

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Caesar sends Gains Volusenus in advance of the army to find out as much as he can about Britain. Then Caesar moves his troops to the territory of the Morini, closest to Britain, and sends for ships from the neighboring areas and from the fleet used in last year's battle against the Veneti. The Britons hear of Caesar's activity from traders, and send deputies from several of their states, perhaps he can at least station his army on their side of the Rhine in order to taunt the Suebi; Roman military prestige is especially high after the defeat of Ariovistus and, of course, after their most recent conquest. The Ubii promise many boats for his crossing. Caesar, however, thinks it unsafe and undignified to cross in boats, so he decides to build a bridge even though the construction will be difficult. The bridge is made in such a way that the rapid current makes it even stronger and poles are fixed so that the enemy cannot destroy the bridge by floating heavy logs against it from upstream.

After cutting down the grain and burning the Sugambri villages, Caesar moves into the territory of the Ubii and promises to help them if they are bothered by the Suebi. The Ubii tell him that the Suebi have moved all their people from the towns and that they have hidden the women and children in the woods. The men, they suspect, have gathered to await the Romans. Caesar reflects on the danger, but feels that he has already accomplished what he has set out to do: he has made the Germans fear and respect the Romans; he has taken vengeance on the Sugambri; and he has freed the Ubii from their blockade. Thus, having satisfied both honor and expediency, and having spent eighteen days in Germany, he returns to Gaul, destroying the bridge after his troops are across.
Caesar reaches Dover during mid-morning. The cliffs are lined with the armed forces of the Britons, and the Romans decide to wait five hours until the rest of the fleet can assemble. Caesar, after calling a meeting of the commanders, tells them what he wants done, and what Volusenus, observes what he can from the ship because he knows that it is unsafe to disembark among strange tribes. In five days, he returns to Caesar with his report.

The enemy leaders send cavalry and chariots to the shore to try to prevent the Roman disembarkation. But getting ashore proves even more difficult than imagined. The large Roman ships cannot approach the graduated shelf of the shore and the soldiers are ignorant of the depths of the water. They must jump into the waves burdened with all their armor, then fight an enemy who is situated on dry land and who knows the area well. The Romans are confused and frightened and, as might be expected, do not fight with their usual effectiveness. The troops delay until the standard bearer of the Tenth Legion jumps into the water and encourages the others to follow. Embarrassed by his bravery, they quickly join him.

The fighting is fierce and the enemy, fighting on familiar ground, waits until a party of Romans gets off a ship, then attacks in a cluster. Others throw missiles at the Romans. Caesar sends in his small reserve boats to support the infantry and, as soon as the Romans reach dry land, the tide of the battle shifts and the enemy is put to flight. Had the cavalry arrived, the battle would have been a rapid and complete success.

The enemy asks for peace terms and send for Commius, who had been thrown into chains on his arrival. Caesar agrees to pardon the Britons, even though they have violated peace terms, but insists on having hostages. Some are given immediately, others are promised. The common people then return to their fields and the chiefs assemble to formally deliver their states to Caesar.

Four days later, the cavalry arrives, but they find that landing is impossible because the gentle wind which carried them across the channel has suddenly turned into a wild storm. They therefore must return to the continent. That night, high tides and floods wreck many ships and the Romans grow concerned about their having insufficient means to return to Gaul; they have not planned to spend the winter in Britain and have not brought much grain with them. The Britons, seeing that Caesar is without cavalry, ships, and grain, realize that if they can now defeat him that the Romans will never again dare to cross the channel. Secretly they assemble their armies.

Caesar hears nothing of such plans but notices that the balance of the promised hostages has not arrived and suspects that the Britons are readying a surprise attack. He orders his men to gird themselves and sends out troops to get grain. Others he sets to work repairing the damaged ships.

Outposts, meanwhile, report to Caesar that they have seen a vast dust cloud where the troops have gone to harvest food. Caesar rightly suspects that the cloud is proof that the natives are skirmishing with his men and orders his troops to assemble and follow.

He finds the Seventh Legion under heavy attack. The enemy calculated Caesar's moves and planned an ambush to kill off the soldiers scattered in the fields without weapons. Their plan was cleverly executed in this way: first they attacked from all directions, then moved in among troops of cavalry and dismounted while the charioteers moved back from the immediate combat area and waited to assist troops which found themselves in difficulty. The plan combined the advantages of the foot soldier with the mobility of the cavalry, and the Britons' horses were particularly well trained for this work.

Caesar arrives and manages to save most of his men, but is not prepared to pursue so returns with his troops to camp. Bad weather prevents a renewal of fighting for the next few days, and the natives, now on the offensive, send messages to other tribes reporting the Roman difficulties. This, they say, is their chance to get booty and free themselves from Roman authority.

Caesar realizes, upon the war's renewal, that the Britons can easily retreat; the Roman cavalry is still in Gaul. But he decides to use the thirty horsemen who have accompanied Commius to pursue the Britons if they flee after a defeat. The battle conforms to his plans and the Romans follow the retreating troops, killing many and setting fire to all buildings they find.

The enemy, once again, sends deputies asking for peace terms. Caesar doubles the requested number of hostages and asks that they be brought to the continent; he hopes to leave Britain before the winter storms begin. Shortly thereafter, a spell of fair weather promises to last and the general moves his ships across the channel.

The Morini, who were at peace with the Romans when the British expedition began, surround the first 300 troops off the ships. The Romans try to defend themselves, but soon 6,000 more Morini join the fight. Caesar sends for assistance from his cavalry but his soldiers are under heavy attack for four hours before the cavalry arrives. The enemy is then easily crushed and those that run are hunted down and killed.

Caesar sets up winter quarters in the Belgic territory and waits for the British hostages. Only two of the states send the promised men, but Rome is well pleased and the senate declares twenty days of public thanksgiving in honor of Caesar's achievements.
BOOK 4 ANALYSIS

Too often we tend to forget that most of the tribes which Caesar battles are not nearly as civilized as the Romans. Consider, for instance, the Suebi. They are well-trained for war, but are a migrant tribe, settling nowhere for long, living out-of-doors in all extremes of weather and willing to build only temporary shelters. These men, though more rugged than other tribes, are basically no different from the Tencteri and the Usipetes, who make war for the most basic reason of all: conquest of other peoples' lands. In this case, the German tribes have been driven from their homes and justifiably feel wronged, but primitively and selfishly, feel that there is nothing wrong in their inflicting the same fate upon the Menapii.

Concerning the "treachery" of the enemy cavalry and Caesar's "truth" in reporting it, the story that a force of 800 cavalry would attack a force of 5,000 Romans sounds unlikely. And would all the German chiefs appear in the Roman camp if they had deliberately planned that attack? Caesar seems to think so, or perhaps only hopes we will think so. The Germans, because they are leaderless, are easily defeated, but we should observe that Caesar's conduct is not quite free from qualification.

There are two reasons for Caesar's being reluctant to cross the Rhine by boat. He knows how easily a fragmented army can be destroyed and he does not want to have his men split into three parts — some on one bank, some on the other, and some in boats — with no way of joining quickly in case of danger. Also, he finds crossing in small boats esthetically displeasing because it is disorderly by its very nature. Therefore he builds a bridge.

The principal event in this book is Caesar's excursion to Britain. Heretofore no Roman force has done this. Note especially that before embarking, Caesar accepts the surrender of the Morini, but seems suspicious of the ease of their surrender. Because of this it is not totally surprising that these tribes mount an attack when Caesar returns.

The Romans' difficulty in landing on the British coast is a condition that Caesar has usually avoided when he has fought on land — that is, a disorganized arrival. It takes some time for the various units to position themselves on an effective fighting front. The saving element for Caesar's disorganized troops proves to be their individual bravery, especially the gallant action of the standard-bearer whose leap shames his fellows into following him.

As usual Caesar pardons his enemies even though they have already demonstrated that they cannot be trusted. And, as usual, a few days later the enemy, this time the Britons, proves treacherous. Caesar, however, is rarely angered by this kind of revolt. The attacks are punished, but it seems that the enemy is entitled to take his chances at rebellion if the Romans appear to be weaker than usual. Note also that Caesar is clever enough to realize danger in the hostages' failing to report. But, other than doubling the number of hostages, he does not demand any greater penalties when he defeats the Britons again.

In contrast to Caesar's military brilliance, the Morini attack lacks foresight. The entire force engages the isolated group of Romans who land first, and as the Roman cavalry arrives the battle quickly ends and Caesar is able to send Labienus to take charge of the disorder.

The twenty-day thanksgiving proclaimed by Rome honors Caesar for having established a significant Roman foothold in Britain. And, if we consider how fragile were the ships of those times and how inadequate the knowledge of foreign lands, Caesar's bravery is even more impressive today.
Chapter 24

But the barbarians, upon perceiving the design of the Romans, sent forward their cavalry and charioteers, a class of warriors of whom it is their practice to make great use in their battles, and following with the rest of their forces, endeavored to prevent our men landing. In this was the greatest difficulty, for the following reasons, namely, because our ships, on account of their great size, could be stationed only in deep water; and our soldiers, in places unknown to them, with their hands embarrassed, oppressed with a large and heavy weight of armor, had at the same time to leap from the ships, stand amid the waves, and encounter the enemy; whereas they, either on dry ground, or advancing a little way into the water, free in all their limbs in places thoroughly known to them, could confidently throw their weapons and spur on their horses, which were accustomed to this kind of service. Dismayed by these circumstances and altogether untrained in this mode of battle, our men did not all exert the same vigor and eagerness which they had been wont to exert in engagements on dry ground.

Chapter 25

When Caesar observed this, he ordered the ships of war, the appearance of which was somewhat strange to the barbarians and the motion more ready for service, to be withdrawn a little from the transport vessels, and to be propelled by their oars, and be stationed toward the open flank of the enemy, and the enemy to be beaten off and driven away, with slings, arrows, and engines: which plan was of great service to our men; for the barbarians being startled by the form of our ships and the motions of our oars and the nature of our engines, which was strange to them, stopped, and shortly after retreated a little. And while our men were hesitating [whether they should advance to the shore], chiefly on account of the depth of the sea, he who carried the eagle of the tenth legion, after supplicating the gods that the matter might turn out favorably to the legion, exclaimed, "Leap, fellow soldiers, unless you wish to betray your eagle to the enemy. I, for my part, will perform my duty to the commonwealth and my general." When he had said this with a loud voice, he leaped from the ship and proceeded to bear the eagle toward the enemy. Then our men, exhorting one another that so great a disgrace should not be incurred, all leaped from the ship. When those in the nearest vessels saw them, they speedily followed and approached the enemy.

Chapter 26

The battle was maintained vigorously on both sides. Our men, however, as they could neither keep their ranks, nor get firm footing, nor follow their standards, and as one from one ship and another from another assembled around whatever standards they met, were thrown into great confusion. But the enemy, who were acquainted with all the shallows, when from the shore they saw any coming from a ship one by one, spurred on their horses, and attacked them while embarrassed; many surrounded a few, others threw their weapons upon our collected forces on their exposed flank. When Caesar observed this, he ordered the boats of the ships of war and the spy sloops to be filled with soldiers, and sent them up to the succor of those whom he had observed in distress. Our men, as soon as they made good their footing on dry ground, and all their comrades had joined them, made an attack upon the enemy, and put them to flight, but could not pursue them very far, because the horse had not been able to maintain their course at sea and reach the island. This alone was wanting to Caesar's accustomed success.
Chapter 27

The enemy being thus vanquished in battle, as soon as they recovered after their flight, instantly sent embassadors to Caesar to negotiate about peace. They promised to give hostages and perform what he should command. Together with these embassadors came Commius the Altrebatian, who, as I have above said, had been sent by Caesar into Britain. Him they had seized upon when leaving his ship, although in the character of embassador he bore the general's commission to them, and thrown into chains: then after the battle was fought, they sent him back, and in suing for peace cast the blame of that act upon the common people, and entreated that it might be pardoned on account of their indiscretion. Caesar, complaining, that after they had sued for peace, and had voluntarily sent embassadors into the continent for that purpose, they had made war without a reason, said that he would pardon their indiscretion, and imposed hostages, a part of whom they gave immediately; the rest they said they would give in a few days, since they were sent from remote places. In the mean time they ordered their people to return to the country parts, and the chiefs assembled from all quarter, and proceeded to surrender themselves and their states to Caesar.

Chapter 28

A peace being established by these proceedings four days after we had come into Britain, the eighteen ships, to which reference has been made above, and which conveyed the cavalry, set sail from the upper port with a gentle gale, when, however, they were approaching Britain and were seen from the camp, so great a storm suddenly arose that none of them could maintain their course at sea; and some were taken back to the same port from which they had started; - others, to their great danger, were driven to the lower part of the island, nearer to the west; which, however, after having cast anchor, as they were getting filled with water, put out to sea through necessity in a stormy night, and made for the continent.

Chapter 29

It happened that night to be full moon, which usually occasions very high tides in that ocean; and that circumstance was unknown to our men. Thus, at the same time, the tide began to fill the ships of war which Caesar had provided to convey over his army, and which he had drawn up on the strand; and the storm began to dash the ships of burden which were riding at anchor against each other; nor was any means afforded our men of either managing them or of rendering any service. A great many ships having been wrecked, inasmuch as the rest, having lost their cables, anchors, and other tackling, were unfit for sailing, a great confusion, as would necessarily happen, arose throughout the army; for there were no other ships in which they could be conveyed back, and all things which are of service in repairing vessels were wanting, and, corn for the winter had not been provided in those places, because it was understood by all that they would certainly winter in Gaul.

Chapter 30

On discovering these things the chiefs of Britain, who had come up after the battle was fought to perform those conditions which Caesar had imposed, held a conference, when they perceived that cavalry, and ships, and corn were wanting to the Romans, and discovered the small number of our soldiers from the small extent of the camp (which, too, was on this account more limited than ordinary, because Caesar had conveyed over his legions without baggage), and thought that the best plan was to renew the war, and cut off our men from corn and provisions and protract the affair till winter; because they felt confident, that, if they were vanquished or cut off from a return, no one would afterward pass over into Britain for the purpose of making war. Therefore, again entering into a conspiracy, they began to depart from the camp by degrees and secretly bring up their people from the country parts.

Chapter 31

But Caesar, although he had not as yet discovered their measures, yet, both from what had occurred to his ships, and from the circumstance that they had neglected to give the promised hostages, suspected that the thing would come to pass which really did happen. He therefore provided remedies against all contingencies: for he daily conveyed corn from the country parts into the camp, used the timber and brass of such ships as were most seriously damaged for repairing the rest, and ordered whatever things besides were necessary for this object to be brought to him from the continent. And thus, since that business was executed by the soldiers with the greatest energy, he effected that, after the loss of twelve ships, a voyage could be made well enough in the rest.

Chapter 32

While these things are being transacted, one legion had been sent to forage, according to custom, and no suspicion of war had arisen as yet, and some of the people remained in the country parts, others went backward and forward to the camp, they who were on duty at the gates of the camp reported to Caesar that a greater dust than was usual was seen in that direction in which the legion had marched. Caesar, suspecting that which was [really the case], - that some new enterprise was undertaken by the barbarians, ordered the two cohorts which were on duty, to march into that quarter with him, and two other cohorts to relieve them on duty; the rest to be armed and follow him immediately. When he had advanced some little way from the camp, he saw that his men were overpowered by the
enemy and scarcely able to stand their ground, and that, the legion being crowded together, weapons were being cast on them from all sides. For as all the corn was reaped in every part with the exception of one, the enemy, suspecting that our men would repair to that, had concealed themselves in the woods during the night. Then attacking them suddenly, scattered as they were, and when they had laid aside their arms, and were engaged in reaping, they killed a small number, threw the rest into confusion, and surrounded them with their cavalry and chariots.

Chapter 33

Their mode of fighting with their chariots is this: firstly, they drive about in all directions and throw their weapons and generally break the ranks of the enemy with the very dread of their horses and the noise of their wheels; and when they have worked themselves in between the troops of horse, leap from their chariots and engage on foot. The charioteers in the mean time withdraw some little distance from the battle, and so place themselves with the chariots that, if their masters are overpowered by the number of the enemy, they may have a ready retreat to their own troops. Thus they display in battle the speed of horse, [together with] the firmness of infantry; and by daily practice and exercise attain to such expertness that they are accustomed, even on a declining and steep place, to check their horses at full speed, and manage and turn them in an instant and run along the pole, and stand on the yoke, and thence betake themselves with the greatest celerity to their chariots again.

Chapter 34

Under these circumstances, our men being dismayed by the novelty of this mode of battle, Caesar most seasonably brought assistance; for upon his arrival the enemy paused, and our men recovered from their fear; upon which thinking the time unfavorable for provoking the enemy and coming to an action, he kept himself in his own quarter, and, a short time having intervened, drew back the legions into the camp. While these things are going on, and all our men engaged, the rest of the Britons, who were in the fields, departed. Storms then set in for several successive days, which both confined our men to the camp and hindered the enemy from attacking us. In the mean time the barbarians dispatched messengers to all parts, and reported to their people the small number of our soldiers, and how good an opportunity was given for obtaining spoil and for liberating themselves forever, if they should only drive the Romans from their camp. Having by these means speedily got together a large force of infantry and of cavalry they came up to the camp. Having by these means speedily got together a large force of infantry and of cavalry they came up to the camp.

Chapter 35

Although Caesar anticipated that the same thing which had happened on former occasions would then occur - that, if the enemy were routed, they would escape from danger by their speed; still, having got about thirty horse, which Commius the Atrebatian, of whom mention has been made, had brought over with him [from Gaul], he drew up the legions in order of battle before the camp. When the action commenced, the enemy were unable to sustain the attack of our men long, and turned their backs; our men pursued them as far as their speed and strength permitted, and slew a great number of them; then, having destroyed and burned every thing far and wide, they retreated to their camp.

Chapter 36

The same day, embassadors sent by the enemy came to Caesar to negotiate a peace. Caesar doubled the number of hostages which he had before demanded; and ordered that they should be brought over to the continent, because, since the time of the equinox was near, he did not consider that, with his ships out of repair, the voyage ought to be deferred till winter. Having met with favorable weather, he set sail a little after midnight, and all his fleet arrived safe at the continent, except two of the ships of burden which could not make the same port which the other ships did, and were carried a little lower down.

De Bello Gallico Book IV Chapters 24-35

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<td>[24] At barbari, consilio Romanorum cognito praemisso equitatu et essedariis, quo plerumque genere in proelis uti conserunt, religuis copiis subsecuti nostros navibus egredi prohibebant. Erat ob has causas summa difficul\tas, quod naves propter magnitudinem nisi in alto constitui non poterant, militibus autem, ignotis locis, impeditis</td>
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<td>sent forward their cavalry and charioteers, a class of warriors of</td>
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<td>whom it is their practice to make great use in their battles, and</td>
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<td>following with the rest of their forces, endeavoured to prevent our</td>
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landing. In this was the greatest difficulty, for the following reasons, namely, because our ships, on account of their great size, could be stationed only in deep water; and our soldiers, in places unknown to them, with their hands embarrassed, oppressed with a large and heavy weight of armour, had at the same time to leap from the ships, stand amidst the waves, and encounter the enemy; whereas they, either on dry ground, or advancing a little way into the water, free in all their limbs, in places thoroughly known to them, could confidently throw their weapons and spur on their horses, which were accustomed to this kind of service. Dismayed by these circumstances and altogether untrained in this mode of battle, our men did not all exert the same vigour and eagerness which they had been wont to exert in engagements on dry ground.

XXV.--When Caesar observed this, he ordered the ships of war, the appearance of which was somewhat strange to the barbarians and the motion more ready for service, to be withdrawn a little from the transport vessels, and to be propelled by their oars, and be stationed towards the open flank of the enemy, and the enemy to be beaten off and driven away with slings, arrows, and engines: which plan was of great service to our men; for the barbarians being startled by the form of our ships and the motions of our oars and the nature of our engines, which was strange to them, stopped, and shortly after retreated a little. And while our men were hesitating [whether they should advance to the shore], chiefly on account of the depth of the sea, he who carried the eagle of the tenth legion, after supplicating the gods that the matter might turn out favourably to the legion, exclaimed, "Leap, fellow soldiers, unless you wish to betray your eagle to the enemy. I, for my part, will perform my duty to the commonwealth and my general." When he had said this with a loud voice, he leaped from the ship and proceeded to bear the eagle toward the enemy. Then our men, exhorting one another that so great a disgrace should not be incurred, all leaped from the ship. When those in the nearest vessels saw them, they speedily
followed and approached the enemy.

XXVI.--The battle was maintained vigorously on both sides. Our men, however, as they could neither keep their ranks, nor get firm footing, nor follow their standards, and as one from one ship and another from another assembled around whatever standards they met, were thrown into great confusion. But the enemy, who were acquainted with all the shallows, when from the shore they saw any coming from a ship one by one, spurred on their horses, and attacked them while embarrassed; many surrounded a few, others threw their weapons upon our collected forces on their exposed flank. When Caesar observed this, he ordered the boats of the ships of war and the spy sloops to be filled with soldiers, and sent them up to the succour of those whom he had observed in distress. Our men, as soon as they made good their footing on dry ground, and all their comrades had joined them, made an attack upon the enemy, and put them to flight, but could not pursue them very far, because the horse had not been able to maintain their course at sea and reach the island. This alone was wanting to Caesar's accustomed success.

XXVII.--The enemy being thus vanquished in battle, as soon as they recovered after their flight, instantly sent ambassadors to Caesar to negotiate about peace. They promised to give hostages and perform what he should command. Together with these ambassadors came Commius the Atrebatian, who, as I have above said, had been sent by Caesar into Britain. Him they had seized upon when leaving his ship, although in the character of ambassador he bore the general's commission to them, and thrown into chains: then after the battle was fought, they sent him back, and in suing for peace cast the blame of that act upon the common people, and entreated that it might be pardoned on account of their indiscretion. Caesar, complaining that after they had sued for peace, and had voluntarily sent ambassadors into the continent for that purpose, they had made war without a reason, said that he would

[26] Pugnatum est ab utrisque acriter. Nostri tamen, quod neque ordines servare neque firmiter insistere neque signa subsequi poterant atque alia ex navi quibuscumque signis occurrerat se adgregabant, magnopere perturbabantur; hostes vero, notis omni bus vadili, ubi ex litore aligium singulares ex navi egredientes conspexerunt, incitatis equis impeditos adoriebantur, plures paucos circumsistebant, alii ab late re aperto in universos tela coiebant. Quod cum animadvertisset Caesar, scaphas longarum navium, item speculatoria navigia militibus compleri iussit, et quos laborantes conspexerat, his subsidia submittebat. Nostri, simul in arido constiterunt, suis omnibus consecutis, in hostes impetum fecerunt atque eos in fugam dederunt; neque longius prosequi potuerunt, quod equites cursum tenere atque insulam capere non potuerant. Hoc unum ad pristinam fortunam Caesari defuit.

[27] Hostes proelio superati, simul atque se ex fuga receperunt, statim ad Caesarem legatos de pace miserunt; obsides sese daturos quaeque imperasset facturos polliciti sunt. Una cum his legatis Commius Atrebas venit, quem supra demonstraveram a Caesare in Britanniam praemissum. Hunc illi e navie essentem, cum ad eos oratoris modo Caesaris mandata deferret, comprehenderant atque in vincula coniicerant; tum proelio facto remiserunt et in petenda pace eius rei culpam in multitudinem contulerunt et propter imprudentiam ut ignosceretur petiverunt. Caesar questus quod, cum ultra in continentem legatis missis pacem ab se petissent, bellum sine causa intulisset, ignoscere se imprudentiae dixit obsidesque imperavit; quorum illi partem statim dederunt, partem ex longinquioribus locis arcessitam paucis diebus sese daturos dixerunt. Interea suos in agros remigrare iussuerunt, principesque undique convenire et se civitatesque suas Caesari commendare coeperunt.
pardon their indiscretion, and imposed hostages, a part of whom they gave immediately; the rest they said they would give in a few days, since they were sent for from remote places. In the meantime they ordered their people to return to the country parts, and the chiefs assembled from all quarters, and proceeded to surrender themselves and their states to Caesar.

XXVIII.—A peace being established by these proceedings four days after we had come into Britain, the eighteen ships, to which reference has been made above, and which conveyed the cavalry, set sail from the upper port with a gentle gale; when, however, they were approaching Britain and were seen from the camp, so great a storm suddenly arose that none of them could maintain their course at sea; and some were taken back to the same port from which they had started;—others, to their great danger, were driven to the lower part of the island, nearer to the west; which, however, after having cast anchor, as they were getting filled with water, put out to sea through necessity in a stormy night, and made for the continent.

XXIX.—It happened that night to be full moon, which usually occasions very high tides in that ocean; and that circumstance was unknown to our men. Thus, at the same time, the tide began to fill the ships of war which Caesar had provided to convey over his army, and which he had drawn up on the strand; and the storm began to dash the ships of burden which were riding at anchor against each other; nor was any means afforded our men of either managing them or of rendering any service. A great many ships having been wrecked, inasmuch as the rest, having lost their cables, anchors, and other tackling, were unfit for sailing, a great confusion, as would necessarily happen, arose throughout the army; for there were no other ships in which they could be conveyed back, and all things which are of service in repairing vessels were wanting, and corn for the winter had not been provided in those places, because it was understood by all that they would

[28] His rebus pace confirmata, post diem quartum quam est in Britanniam ventum naves XVIII, de quibus supra demonstratum est, quae equites sustulerant, ex superiore portu leni vento solverunt. Quae cum adpropinquarent Britanniae et ex castris viderentur, tanta tempestas subito coorta est ut nulla earum cursum tenere posset, sed aliae eodem unde erant profectae referrentur, aliae ad inferiorem partem insulae, quae est propius solis occasum, magno suo cum periculo deicerentur; quae tamen ancoris iactis cum fluctibus complerentur, necessario adversa nocte in al tum provectae continentem petierunt.

[29] Eadem nocte accidit ut esset luna plena, qui dies a maritimos aestus maximos in Oceano efficere consuevit, nostrisque id erat incognitum. Ita uno tempore et longas naves, [quibus Caesar exercitum transportandum curaverat,] quas Caesar in aridum subduxerat, aestus complebat, et onerarias, quae ad ancoras erant deligatae, tem pestas adflictabat, neque ulla nostris facultas aut administrandi aut auxiliandi dabatur. Compluribus navibus fractis, reliquae cum essent funibus, ancoris reliquisque armamentis amissis ad navigandum inutiles, magna, id quod necesse erat accidere, totius exercitus perturbatio facta est. Neque enim naves erant aliae quibus reportari possent, et omnia de rerant quae ad reficiendas naves erant usui, et, quod omnibus constabat hiemari in Gallia oportere, frumentum in his locis in hiemem provisum non erat.
On discovering these things the chiefs of Britain, who had come up after the battle was fought to perform those conditions which Caesar had imposed, held a conference, when they perceived that cavalry, and ships, and corn were wanting to the Romans, and discovered the small number of our soldiers from the small extent of the camp (which, too, was on this account more limited than ordinary because Caesar had conveyed over his legions without baggage), and thought that the best plan was to renew the war, and cut off our men from corn and provisions and protract the affair till winter; because they felt confident that, if they were vanquished or cut off from a return, no one would afterwards pass over into Britain for the purpose of making war. Therefore, again entering into a conspiracy, they began to depart from the camp by degrees and secretly bring up their people from the country parts.

But Caesar, although he had not as yet discovered their measures, yet, both from what had occurred to his ships, and from the circumstance that they had neglected to give the promised hostages, suspected that the thing would come to pass which really did happen. He therefore provided remedies against all contingencies; for he daily conveyed corn from the country parts into the camp, used the timber and brass of such ships as were most seriously damaged for repairing the rest, and ordered whatever things besides were necessary for this object to be brought to him from the continent. And thus, since that business was executed by the soldiers with the greatest energy, he effected that, after the loss of twelve ships, a voyage could be made well enough in the rest.

While these things are being transacted, one legion had been sent to forage, according to custom, and no suspicion of war had arisen as yet, and some of the people remained in the country parts, others went backwards and forwards to the camp, they who were on duty at the gates of the camp reported to Caesar that a voyage could be made that well enough in the rest. Then Caesar had conveyed over his legions without account more limited than ordinary because Caesar had imposed, held a conference, when they perceived that cavalry, and ships, and corn were wanting to the Romans, and discovered the small number of our soldiers from the small extent of the camp (which, too, was on this account more limited than ordinary because Caesar had conveyed over his legions without baggage), and thought that the best plan was to renew the war, and cut off our men from corn and provisions and protract the affair till winter; because they felt confident that, if they were vanquished or cut off from a return, no one would afterwards pass over into Britain for the purpose of making war. Therefore, again entering into a conspiracy, they began to depart from the camp by degrees and secretly bring up their people from the country parts.

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greater dust than was usual was seen in that direction in which the legion had marched. Caesar, suspecting that which was [really the case], that some new enterprise was undertaken by the barbarians, ordered the two cohorts which were on duty to march into that quarter with him, and two other cohorts to relieve them on duty; the rest to be armed and follow him immediately. When he had advanced some little way from the camp, he saw that his men were overpowered by the enemy and scarcely able to stand their ground, and that, the legion being crowded together, weapons were being cast on them from all sides. For as all the corn was reaped in every part with the exception of one, the enemy, suspecting that our men would repair to that, had concealed themselves in the woods during the night. Then attacking them suddenly, scattered as they were, and when they had laid aside their arms, and were engaged in reaping, they killed a small number, threw the rest into confusion, and surrounded them with their cavalry and chariots.

XXXIII.--Their mode of fighting with their chariots is this: firstly, they drive about in all directions and throw their weapons and generally break the ranks of the enemy with the very dread of their horses and the noise of their wheels; and when they have worked themselves in between the troops of horse, leap from their chariots and engage on foot. The charioteers in the meantime withdraw some little distance from the battle, and so place themselves with the chariots that, if their masters are overpowered by the number of the enemy, they may have a ready retreat to their own troops. Thus they display in battle the speed of horse, [together with] the firmness of infantry; and by daily practice and exercise attain to such expertness that they are accustomed, even on a declining and steep place, to check their horses at full speed, and manage and turn them in an instant and run along the pole, and stand on the yoke, and thence betake themselves with the greatest celerity to their chariots again.

[33] Genus hoc est ex essedis pugnae. Primo per omnes partes perequunt et tela coiciunt atque ipso terrore equorum et strepitu rotarum ordinis plerumque perturbant, et cum se inter equitum turmas insinuaverunt, ex essedis desiliunt et pedibus proeliantur. Aurigae interim paulatim ex proelio excedunt atque ita currus coniocant ut, si illi a multitudine hostium premantur, expeditum ad quos receptum habeant. Ita mobilitatem equitum, stabilitatem peditum in proeliis praestant, ac tantum usu cotidiano et exercitazione efficiunt uti in declivi ac praecipiti loco incitatos equos sustinere et brevi moderari ac flectere et per temonem percurrere et in iugo insistere et se inde in currus citissime recipere consuerint.
XXXIV.-Under these circumstances, our men being dismayed by the novelty of this mode of battle, Caesar most seasonably brought assistance; for upon his arrival the enemy paused, and our men recovered from their fear; upon which, thinking the time unfavourable for provoking the enemy and coming to an action, he kept himself in his own quarter, and, a short time having intervened, drew back the legions into the camp. While these things were going on, and all our men engaged, the rest of the Britons, who were in the fields, departed. Storms then set in for several successive days, which both confined our men to camp and hindered the enemy from attacking us. In the meantime the barbarians despatched messengers to all parts and reported to their people the small number of our soldiers, and how good an opportunity was given for obtaining spoil and for liberating themselves for ever, if they should only drive the Romans from their camp. Having by these means speedily got together a large force of infantry and of cavalry, they came up to the camp.

XXXV.--Although Caesar anticipated that the same thing which had happened on former occasions would then occur—that, if the enemy were routed, they would escape from danger by their speed; still, having got about thirty horse, which Commius the Atrebatian, of whom mention has been made, had brought over with him [from Gaul], he drew up the legions in order of battle before the camp. When the action commenced, the enemy were unable to sustain the attack of our men long, and turned their backs; our men pursued them as far as their speed and strength permitted, and slew a great number of them; then, having destroyed and burnt everything far and wide, they retreated to their camp.

XXXVI.--The same day, ambassadors sent by the enemy came to Caesar to negotiate a peace.

[34] Quibus rebus perturbatis nostris [novitate pugnae] tempore oportunissimo Caesar auxilium tulit: namque eius adventu hostes constiterunt, nostri se ex timore receperunt. Quo facto, ad lacerendum hostem et committendum proelium alienum esse tempus arbitratus suo se loco continuit et brevi tempore intermisso in castra legiones redexit. Dum haec geruntur, nostris omnibus occupatis qui erant in agris reliqui discesserunt. Secutae sunt continuos complures dies tempestates, quae et nostros in castris continerent et hostem a pugna prohiberent. Interim barbari nuntios in omnes partes dimiserunt paucitatemque nostrorum militum suis praedicaverunt et quanta praedae faciendae atque in perpetuum sui liberandi facultas daretur, si Romanos castris expulissent, demonstraverunt. His rebus celeriter magna multitudo peditatus equitatusque coacta ad castra venerunt.

[35] Caesar, etsi idem quod superioribus diebus acciderat fore videbat, ut, si essent hostes pulsi, celeritate periculum effugerent, tamen nactus equites circiter XXX, quos Commius Atrebas, de quo ante dictum est, secum transportaverat, legiones in acie pro castris constituit. Commisso proelio diutius nostrorum militum impetum hostes ferre non potuerunt ac terga verterunt. Quos tanto spatio secuti quantum cursu et viribus efficere potuerunt, complures ex iis occiderunt, deinde omnibus longe lateque aedificiis incensis se in castra receperunt.

[36] Eodem die legati ab hostibus missi ad Caesarem de pace venerunt.
BOOK 5 SUMMARY

Before leaving for Italy, Caesar orders the officers in charge of the legions to spend the winter repairing old ships and building new ones. The new ones, however, he explains, are to be built differently than the others; they will be lower and wider than usual so that cargo and animals can be more easily carried and unloaded. In addition, they will be fitted with oars as well as sails.

Finishing his work in Hither Gaul, Caesar goes to Illyricum, where the Pirustae have been raiding the province, and orders his troops to assemble. The Pirustae hear of his presence and send representatives, who explain that the raids were not the result of public decision. Caesar accepts their explanation, tells them to bring hostages, and appoints arbitrators to arrange for payment of both penalty and damages.

Returning then to Hither Gaul, the general rejoins his army and finds that by extraordinary effort his men have assembled about 600 ships and twenty men-of-war vessels. He instructs them to assemble at the Itian port nearest Britain, about thirty miles away, then takes four legions and 800 horsemen to the Treveri, who had not come to councils or obeyed his commands and who are reportedly stirring unrest among the Germans.

The Treveri possess more cavalry than all the other Gauls and also have a great number of ready infantry troops; unfortunately, they also have rival chieftains — Indutiomarus and Cingetorix.

Cingetorix, seizing an opportunity, comes to Caesar and professes friendship for Rome. But Indutiomarus does not remain idle while his rival attempts to reap Caesar's favors. He begins to assemble an army for war and hides in the forest those people who cannot fight. Still, however, Cingetorix seems likely to be favored by the Romans when several more chiefs of the Treveri ask for Caesar's aid in the name of Cingetorix. Indutiomarus, in panic, sends a message to Caesar saying that he intends to keep order among the groups under him and prevent the common people from succumbing to indirection. He is, he insists, the chief most fully in power and is willing to place himself and his state under Rome's protection.

Caesar cannot believe the man but, because he is anxious to get to Britain, he asks Indutiomars to bring 200 hostages. On their arrival, he asks for the loyalty of Indutiomarus, then takes the precaution of winning the other chiefs of the Treveri over to Cingetorix. Indutiomarus realizes that he has suffered a slight from the empire and his resentment smolders.

At the port Caesar finds all of the expected ships, save the sixty which had been held back by bad weather. Joining him at the port are the Gallic chiefs and 4,000 cavalry. Caesar permits a few of the chiefs to stay in Gaul, but takes the rest with him as hostages.

One of the chiefs, Dumnorix of the Aedui, tries a variety of stories to try and persuade Caesar to leave him behind, but Caesar won't be swayed. Dumnorix then begins to worry the Gallic chiefs by telling them that Caesar intends to murder them when they reach Britain. This is more than even the usually lenient Caesar can tolerate and when, prior to sailing, Dumnorix escapes, Caesar sends his cavalry after the traitor with orders to kill him if necessary. The rebel Dumnorix is quickly tracked down and killed.

Finally departing, after a long period of waiting for fair weather, Caesar leaves Labienus on the continent with three legions and 2,000 horsemen to guard the port and to maintain the grain supply. He embarks with five legions and 2,000 horsemen, satisfied that another victory awaits him. He arrives on a deserted British coast. Probably, he decides, troops have been there, but they have no doubt been frightened by the sight of the massive Roman fleet. Landing is easily accomplished and Caesar leaves ten cohorts and 300 horsemen to guard the fleet. The rest of the army he takes to meet the Britons.

Caesar travels twelve miles before he sees any of the natives, and his first skirmish with them is rather curious. The tribesmen have fortified a forest for war and hide in it, rushing out in small groups to battle. Caesar is puzzled, then orders the Seventh Legion to form a "tortoise" formation and drive the enemy from the woods and into the open. The day grows late and, because they are on unfamiliar territory, Caesar decides against further pursuit, and orders the entrenchment of the camp.

Next morning, Caesar must once again change his tactics. Just as his men have sighted the enemy, Quintus Atrius sends word that a storm has damaged many of the ships, and Caesar commands the troops to defer attack. He returns to inspect the fleet and finds that forty ships have been totally destroyed; the others, he believes, can be repaired. He selects men in the legions who can do the repair work and sends to the continent for more, then writes Labienus to build as many ships as possible.

Caesar returns to his army, still in the field, and finds that the Britons have assembled troops from over a broad area and have placed themselves under the command of Cassivellaunus. Where these troops come from and who they are Caesar explains next: inland Britain is inhabited by native tribes, and the coast is inhabited by tribes who have come from Belgium. The coastal farms are like those of the Gauls and they keep many cattle. They use gold and bronze coined pieces, and iron tallies. Tin is produced in the midland,
Caesar's details here make vividly clear to his readers the individual characteristics of his new enemy; he never fights a vague, unknown warring force. Next, the general describes the island's shape and the location of some islands in the channel and notes that the nights here seem shorter than on the continent. It is also here that he records one of the most amazing peculiarities of the natives of Britain: the tribesmen, he marvels, dye themselves a blue color, shave all their body save their head and upper lip, and have wives in common.

Returning to the narrative, Caesar relates the circumstances of a surprise attack. When the Romans are building camp and are off-guard, he writes, the enemy dashes from the woods and attacks the outposts. Caesar sends two experienced cohorts to support his troops, but the enemy breaks through and escapes. A tribune, Quintus Laberius Durus, is killed in the fighting.

The Romans arm themselves for fighting in close formation, but this proves ineffective against the British style of fighting. The Briton's method of using chariots — retreating, then fighting on foot — puts the Roman cavalry at a disadvantage. The enemy also refuses to fight closely, spreads out, and has small parties relieve one another as they grow tired.

Next day, small parties begin attack on the Roman horsemen. Later, Gaius Trebonius, with three legions and the cavalry seeking forage, is attacked by the enemy. The Romans charge and the cavalry joins in. Many Britons are killed simply because there is no time for them to get out of their chariots. After this defeat, many of the tribes quit the defense of Britain and the enemy strength is greatly diminished.

Caesar moves to the territorial borders of Cassivellaunus at the river Thames because that river can be crossed on foot at one place only, and it is there that the enemy forces assemble. On the bank, Caesar finds, are many sharp stakes; others, he knows, are hidden in the water. He sends the cavalry in first and orders the legions to follow; the Roman advance proves to be so swift that the enemy scatters in terror.

Cassivellaunus' next move is to disband his army. He keeps only 4,000 charioteers and follows the Romans, harassing their foraging parties. Caesar, meanwhile, destroys as many fields and buildings as he can as he marches through the area.

The Trinobantes, the strongest state in the area, ask Caesar for protection and also plead with him to send them Mandubracius as ruler. The man they plead for had come to Caesar on the mainland and asked for protection after Cassivellaunus killed his father. Caesar has the Trinobantes send him hostages and grain and he grants their request.

Other tribes surrender to Caesar and inform him that Cassivellaunus is hidden not far away with many men and cattle. Caesar moves for the stronghold, a thick woodland with natural barriers in addition to those built by the enemy, and attacks from two sides. The enemy soldiers retreat and Caesar captures many cattle and also manages to kill many of the enemy.

Cassivellaunus next calls in forces from the other districts of Kent and attacks Caesar's naval camp, but is quickly put down by the Romans. He has now suffered many defeats, has had his lands destroyed and is currently having trouble with subjects beginning to revolt; therefore, he asks for peace. Caesar, anxious to return to the continent, asks for hostages and sets the yearly tribute that the tribes of Britain must pay Rome. He further orders Cassivellaunus to leave the tribe of Mandubracius in peace, then moves with his army and the hostages back to the sea. Because there are so many prisoners and soldiers, however, Caesar must make two trips. The first load leaves, but there is bad weather on the return trip to Britain and very few of the ships, including the new ones built by Labienus, make the rendezvous. After waiting, Caesar decides to make do with what he has on hand, crams the troops into the remaining ships, and manages to get safely across.

Back in Gaul a council is held at Samarobriva (Amiens). There, droughts have diminished the grain supply and Caesar is forced to distribute his legions over several states. Gaius Fabius takes a legion to the Morini, Quintus Cicero takes one to the Nervii, Lucius Roscius takes one to the Esubii, and Titus Labienus takes another to the Remi. Three more, under Marcus Crassus, Lucius Munatius Plancus and Gaius Trebonius are sent among the Belgae. One other, with five cohorts, is sent to the Eburones, a tribe ruled by Ambiorix and Catuvolcus; this legion is commanded by Quintus Titurius Sabinus and Lucius Aurunculeins Cotta. All the legions are within 100 miles of one another. Caesar, meantime, waits in Gaul until he is sure the legions are safely entrenched.

The ruler of the Carnutes had been Tascgetius, a descendant of former kings and a man who helped Rome in the past; Caesar had declared him ruler, but after a two-year reign, he was killed by enemies within the state. Caesar learns of the assassination and fears revolt, so he orders Lucius Plancus to move his legion from the land of the Belgae to the land of the Carnutes for the winter. He asks specifically that the killers of the king be sent to him.
Two weeks later, disorder breaks out. Ambiorix and Catuvolcus, induced by Indutiomarus of the Treveri, attack a detachment of Romans who are gathering wood, then attack the main camp and are effective until the Roman cavalry arrives. The enemy forces then pull back and ask for one of the Romans to parley and settle the dispute.

Ambiorix tells the Roman representatives that he is much indebted to Caesar and does not wish to make war but that he has been forced to do so by the people of his state. His state wars, he says, because of Gallic pressure. He also says that the Gauls have agreed to simultaneously attack all Romans so that the legions will be unable to aid one another. He explains that he cannot refuse to follow his fellow Gauls, but now feels that he has fulfilled his responsibility to them. He then warns the Romans that many Germans have been hired and will arrive in Gaul in two days, but swears that he will give the Romans safe passage through his borders; thus is he able to fulfill both his obligations: he satisfies the Gauls by ridding them of the Romans and he satisfies the Romans by informing them of his and others' military plans.

Cotta and Sabinus are alarmed at the report brought to them. They are sure that the unimportant Eburones would not dare make war alone, but Cotta and several tribunes and centurions are also sure that they should not leave without an order from Caesar. But they know they can withstand the enemy from their entrenchment; this they have already demonstrated, and they have enough food and can send for aid, so their courage is bolstered. Still, however, they resent having their actions made defensive by the enemy.

Sabinus differs; he fears waiting because he thinks that soon too many enemy troops for them to handle will arrive, particularly when the German reinforcements gather. Since the other legions will be attacked, he says, they will not be able to offer aid. He is convinced that the enemy would not dare act as it does if Caesar had not gone to Italy. The Gauls and Germans, he feels, have various reasons for wanting to get even with Rome and if the Gauls and Germans are jointly armed, their best chance for victory is a quick move to the next legion. If he and his men, therefore, stay where they are, they might find themselves without food.

Cotta and the others oppose Sabinus, and Sabinus seemingly consents to their pressuring arguments, but tells them that if they are wrong that the troops will need an explanation. He will not be responsible. The council demands that the generals settle on one plan; danger, they insist, lies in disagreement and eventually it is Cotta who yields.

Sabinus' plan to march is accepted and it is announced that the troops will march at dawn. They move, then, feeling sure that Ambiorix has advised them as a friend, not as an enemy.

The enemy hears the sounds of preparations and sets up an ambush two miles away. When the long, cumbersome Roman column moves into a deep ravine, they are attacked from both sides and the rear-totally trapped. Sabinus, of course, has not expected this move and is quite unprepared and ineffective in the chaotic scene. Cotta, on the other hand, has been suspicious and so remains calm. The column proves too long to manage effectively, so he orders the troops to abandon the equipment and form a square. At this, the Romans are disheartened; they detest having to assume a defensive position. The enemy soldiers, naturally enough, are encouraged and, hoping mightily for booty, keep their position and fight with new courage. But they are caught by surprise when a Roman cohort charges and kills many of their soldiers. Ambiorix quickly tells his troops to keep at a safe distance in case of another Roman charge.

When the Romans change tactics and leave the square, the enemy pulls back quickly and attacks the exposed units with missiles. And when the Romans return, the enemy attacks on two sides. It is a disheartening situation, but the Romans stand firm, though many continue to be wounded.

The battle lasts from dawn until evening and when the causalities are counted, it is discovered that among them is Titus Balventius, chief centurion of his legion. Both his thighs are pierced. Quintus Lucanius, also a chief centurion, has been butchered while trying to save his son. Even Cotta, himself has been smashed in the face by a missile.

Sharp-eyed Sabinus sees Ambiorix and sends out his interpreter, Gnaeus Pompeins, to ask for mercy. Ambiorix says that Sabinus can parley with him and that he would like to keep the Romans alive. Further, he assures Sabinus that no harm will come to him and Sabinus, in turn, asks Cotta if he will agree to stop fighting and parley. Cotta, however, refuses. Sabinus then orders the tribunes and senior centurions to follow him. When they near Ambiorix, they are told to put down their arms and while Ambiorix discusses peace with Sabinus, they are all surrounded and killed. The enemy then charges and kills many of the Romans. Cotta is killed, along with most of his troops. The remainder limp back inside the camp, and Lucius Petrosidius, the standard bearer, manages to throw his flag inside the camp before he is killed. The survivors kill each other during the night to avoid being brutally murdered by the enemy. A few manage to get away from the battle and reach the camp of Titus Labienus and tell him all that has happened.

Ambiorix is elated with his victory and sets out with his cavalry to arouse the Aduatuci and Nervii. He tells them that finally they have a chance to rid themselves of the Romans. Already, he boasts, he has killed two legion commanders and has destroyed a large part of the Roman army. He tells the Nervii that it will be easy to attack the legion wintering with Cicero. The Nervii agree and send messages to the tribes under them asking for troops. Then, without warning, they attack Cicero's camp. Cicero is astonished; he has not even heard of the defeat of Sabinus' legion. He sends messengers to Caesar, but none manages to get through enemy lines.
Ignorant of the real seriousness of his plight, he defends his position as best he can, first repairing weak spots in the walls and setting up 120 defense towers during the night. Next morning his troops face large enemy forces and in the days following they continue the resistance. Finally, some of the Nervii who are growing weary of battle suggest a parley with Cicero and, when agreed to, tell Cicero the same story which Ambiorix has told Sabinus — that all Gaul is under arms and that the Germans are joining them. They explain that what they want is Cicero's departure; they cannot abide Roman troops in the area during the winter. Cicero declares firmly that Romans do not accept terms from an armed enemy. He suggests that the envoys put down their weapons; then, perhaps, they might get what they desire but first Caesar must be consulted.

Their parley unsuccessful, the Nervii surround the Roman camp with a rampart nine feet high and a trench fifteen feet wide, a technique they have learned from the Romans. And, in spite of their having no tools, they manage to dig, with their swords, an entrenchment fifteen miles in circumference.

A strong wind whips at the Romans on the seventh day and the enemy takes advantage of it, hurling hot clay pellets and burning darts. The Gallic-type huts inside are straw-roofed and quickly catch fire. The enemy then move in as if victory were already in their hands; the Romans, however, keep their heads, ignore the flames and continue fighting. The enemy soldiers brazenly advance until they meet the Roman rampart and there many are killed — mainly because so many of their own troops are behind them that they cannot withdraw. Centurions of the third cohort dare the enemy to enter camp, but the enemy is wary and answers with such a mass of missiles that the centurions are forced to fall back. Finally the tower catches fire.

Two of the centurions, Titus Pullo and Lucius Vorenus, are confirmed rivals and have long competed with each other during the fight. Pullo dashes outside and Vorenus, not wanting to be outdone, joins him. Pullo is then surrounded and Vorenus is forced to come to his aid. Then, fate turns: the enemy attacks Vorenus, and Pullo, whom they think is dead, has his chance to aid Vorenus. Together they kill several enemy soldiers, then hurry back inside their lines.

Each day fewer defenders are left. More messages, meanwhile, continue to be sent to Caesar, but the bearers continue to be captured, tortured, and killed within sight of the camp. At this point, a Nervian soldier persuades a slave, by promising him his freedom, to try and reach Caesar. In disguise this slave, it is hoped, will be able to pass as one of the Gauls and carry a message to Caesar concealed in a spear shaft. The mission is successful; Caesar does receive the message late in the day and in turn sends a quick message to Crassus, twenty-five miles away, instructing him to start at midnight and join Caesar's troops. He also instructs Gaius Fabius to bring his legion into the borders of the Atrebates and commands Labienus to bring his troops to the Nervii if it can so be arranged.

The rest of the army is too far away to help in time, so Caesar decides to use 400 horsemen from the nearest cantonments. That day he is able to move twenty miles and at sundown further plans are made: Crassus is left with a legion to take care of Samarobriva, the baggage, hostages, documents, and winter food supply. Caesar then learns that Labienus thinks it too dangerous to leave his cantonments with the horsemen and footmen of the Treveni stationed within three miles from his camp. Caesar, of course, is disappointed to have only two legions instead of three, but he cautions Labienus to remain in position and, with great speed, he and his forces move into the territory of the Nervii. There, Caesar learns firsthand of the crisis at Cicero's camp.

One of the Gallic troopers immediately leaves with a message to Cicero. The message, written in Greek, says that Caesar is on the way and to continue the resistance. The Gaul, as he has been told, ties his message to a spear and throws it into Cicero's camp. Unfortunately, however, the spear pierces one of the towers and is not discovered until three days later. There is joy, though, as Cicero reads the message and he rouses his troops to new courage. Soon they see smoke from burning villages and fields and know that the general is coming. Caesar will save them from slaughter.

The Gauls, about 60,000 strong, turn to meet the Romans, and Cicero dispatches a lightning swift lad to Caesar, warning him that the enemy has turned in a great tide and is rushing toward him. Next morning Caesar sees the enemy for himself and, thankful that Cicero is no longer critically threatened, plans his new moves. First he slows his march and entrenches a camp. He makes it as small as possible, hoping that the enemy will be so rash that their moves will be careless and prove fatal for them.

The cavalry of both sides skirmish a bit, but finally the Romans, according to plan, retreat into camp, where they pretend to be confused and afraid. Caesar's maneuver succeeds: seeing no Romans on the rampart, the enemy advance and fire missiles, then announce that anyone who comes over to their side before the final hour may do so without danger, but that after that time, there will be no mercy.

Caesar strikes, ordering his men to charge out from all gates, cavalry first. Totally surprised, the enemy turns and tries to run but are killed. Those who do escape are not pursued; because they go into the marshes and woods, Caesar thinks it foolish to follow, and moves out his forces to join Cicero. He is impressed by the towers and fortifications the enemy has erected but is shocked and saddened to find that nine-tenths of Cicero's troops are wounded. He gives high praise to the legion and especially to Cicero for his bravery; next day, he tells them of all that has happened, including the fate of Sabinus and Cotta, but the courage of their legions, he says, has made up for Sabinus' foolishness.
The Remi are quick to inform Labienus of Caesar's victory even though he is sixty miles away, and the Romans are elated at the news. When Indutiomarus, however, learns of the general's feat, he abandons his plan of attack and moves his forces.

Caesar sends Fabius and his legion back to their cantonment and decides to spend the winter in Gaul.

After hearing of Sabinus' defeat, almost all of the Gallic states begin to plan for war and, throughout the winter, Caesar receives reports of the brewing rebellion. Lucius Roscius, for example, in command of the Thirteenth Legion, tells him that a large force of Gauls from the Amoric states intend to attack him, but finally give up the idea when they hear of Caesar's most recent victory.

Caesar then calls together the various chiefs and frightens some of them by revealing his knowledge of their plans. Others he woos as friends. In this way he keeps some of Gaul in peace.

There continue to be civil wars, however. The Senones try to murder the king whom Caesar has appointed, but luckily the king hears of their plans and manages to escape. The Senones make excuses to Caesar for their actions but fail to obey his order to send their senate as hostages. Thus, except for the Aedui and Remi, Caesar remains suspicious of almost all the Gallic states.

The Treveri and Indutiomarus try to bargain with the Germans to cross the Rhine and fight with them against Caesar, but the Germans refuse, saying they have twice been defeated by Roman armies. Indutiomarus, however, continues to augment his forces, getting various exiles and condemned persons in Gaul to join him. Slowly, he grows stronger and soon various states are asking to join with him. He then proclaims an armed convention, marking the beginning of war. He proclaims Cingetorix, his son-in-law who had refused to desert Caesar, an enemy and confiscates his goods. He says he has been summoned by various Gallic states and that they will march through the land of the Remi, destroying as they go, and that they will attack Labienus' camp.

Labienus' camp is well-fortified and he feels no danger, but when he learns from Cingetorix of Indutiomarus' speech at the convention, he sends messengers to neighboring states with orders to supply him cavalry. Each day Indutiomarus and his horsemen move closer to the Roman camp, sometimes to talk, always to hurl missiles, but Labienus keeps his troops inside so that the enemy will think they are afraid. Then, one night Labienus brings the cavalry he had summoned inside, but has the camp guarded so there will be no way for Indutiomarus to discover his reserve. Next day Indutiomarus, as usual, advances to the camp and his horsemen shower the settlement with missiles, shouting to the Romans, but, oddly, get no answer. That evening, the Gauls begin to depart in no particular order, and, at a signal, Labienus dispatches his cavalry out the two gates with orders, that, when the enemy panics and runs, they should first make for Indutiomarus and kill him. Quickly, then, the enemy leader is killed and beheaded and the cavalry pursues and kills as many soldiers as possible. The Eburones and the Nervii, hearing of this defeat, turn and head for home. Once more, Gaul is peaceful.

**BOOK 5 ANALYSIS**

Remembering his ships' difficulties during the campaigns against the Veneti and the landing in Britain, Caesar decides to make his new ships of shallower draft than the older ones so that they can maneuver closer to shore. In addition, he provides that they be propelled both by oars and sails.

Before leaving, loose ends must be tied: Caesar must pacify the Treveri by settling their political difficulties and, too, he must make sure that Indutiomarus, who is hostile to Rome, has insufficient strength to rebel during the troops' absence. As a final safety measure he disposes of the troublesome Dumnrix.

While reading the Commentaries, it is well to note the vast numbers involved. Notice, for example, the great size of Caesar's fleet. Also note the multitude of soldiers involved in the battle between the Britons and Trebonius' foraging crew. The conflict is more than a skirmish; it is of major proportions, for Trebonius has three legions, plus his cavalry with him — in all 15,000 to 17,000 men.

The reason for the destruction of Sabinus and Cotta's legions is this: the two men do not follow the long-established procedures for saving besieged legions; both are responsible for the disaster. Cotta is against Sabinus' plan, but he does not contest it sufficiently and Sabinus foolishly leads the troops out of their camp, careless about the formation of the march. He seems finally to do everything possible to make the enemy's ambush a success. The Romans are in trouble immediately and Sabinus panics. Cotta, it is true, tries to save the fate of his legion — he at least seems to consider consequences — but, unfortunately, he cannot control the critical turn of events. Sadly, Sabinus proves to be even more of a fool: after having Ambiorix demonstrate that he is a liar, he is still willing to entrust his life to the enemy by going with little protection to a conference in the middle of the enemy camp. He, of course, is murdered.
The contrast between the brave but cautious Cotta and the foolhardy Sabinus is intentional: one acts like a fool, the other like a soldier. But this seems a parallel for another kind of contrast in the book — the contrast between Sabinus and Cicero. Cicero is confronted by the same story Ambiorix presented Sabinus, but he refuses to talk to an enemy under arms. He has more reason than to consider talking as Sabinus did; he is in a situation of disadvantage but sticks to an intelligent plan and refuses to leave his camp. He replies that logically they should take their request to Caesar; that answer naturally reveals the enemy's treachery.

The short anecdotes concerning the competitive bravery of Pullo and Vorenus and the gallant gesture by Petrosidius are the sort of thing Caesar inserts from time to time to remind us that, though leaders make the plans, it is the officers and men of the line who actually fight the battles and whose individual bravery often makes the difference between failure and success.

There is an abundance of clever strategy in the Commentaries, but in this book is Caesar's most famed maneuver. outnumbered almost nine to one, with the enemy having 60,000 troops to his 7,000, Caesar feigns fright as his foes press close to his camp. He then sends his cavalry and foot soldiers out in a sudden charge. When the enemy disperses, he joins Cicero.

The defeat destroys Indutiomarus' plans but Caesar wants to make sure that the enemy does not reorganize. It is Labienus who finishes Indutiomars' defeat. Indutiomarus, it is true, after the battle with Caesar, assembles another army and attempts to take Labienus' camp, but Labienus uses Caesar's gambit of appearing afraid and, in addition, assembles a cavalry force so that his surprise is of double strength. The Gauls straggle away, careless and overconfident, and the Roman charge catches them off guard.

The Gallic Wars

By Julius Caesar

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By Julius Caesar

Translated by W. A. McDevitte and W. S. Bohn

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Chapter 24

The ships having been drawn up and a general assembly of the Gauls held at Samarobriva, because the corn that year had not prospered in Gaul by reason of the droughts, he was compelled to station his army in its winter-quarters differently from the former years, and to distribute the legions among several states: one of them he gave to C. Fabius, his lieutenant, to be marched into the territories of the Morini; a second to Q. Cicero, into those of the Nervii; a third to L. Roscius, into those of the Essui; a fourth he ordered to winter with T. Labienus among the Remi in the confines of the Treviri; he stationed three in Belgium; over these he appointed M. Crassus, his questor, and L. Munatius Plancus and C. Trebonius, his lieutenants. One legion which he had raised last on the other side of the Po, and five cohorts, he sent among the Eburones, the greatest portion of whom lie between the Meuse and the Rhine, [and] who were under the government of Ambiorix and Cativolcus. He ordered Q. Titurius Sabinus and L. Aurunculeius Cotta, his lieutenants, to take command of these soldiers. The legions being distributed in this manner, he thought he could most easily remedy the scarcity of corn and yet the winter-quarters of all these legions (except that which he had given to L. Roscius, to be led into the most peaceful and tranquil neighborhood) were comprehended within [about] 100 miles. He himself in the mean while, until he had stationed the legions and knew that the several winter-quarters were fortified, determined to stay in Gaul.
Chapter 25

There was among the Carnutes a man named Tasgetius, born of very high rank, whose ancestors had held the sovereignty in his state. To him Caesar had restored the position of his ancestors, in consideration of his prowess and attachment toward him, because in all his wars he had availed himself of his valuable services. His personal enemies had killed him when in the third year of his reign, many even of his own state being openly promoters [of that act] This event is related to Caesar. He fearing, because several were involved in the act, that the state might revolt at their instigation, orders Lucius Plancus, with a legion, to proceed quickly from Belgium to the Carnutes, and winter there, and arrest and send to him the persons by whose instrumentality he should discover that Tasgetius was slain. In the mean time, he was apprised by all the lieutenants and questors to whom he had assigned the legions, that they had arrived in winter-quarters, and that the place for the quarters was fortified.

Chapter 26

About fifteen days after they had come into winter-quarters, the beginning of a sudden insurrection and revolt arose from Ambiorix and Cativolcus, who, though they had met with Sabinus and Cotta at the borders of their kingdom, and had conveyed corn into our winter-quarters, induced by the messages of Indutiomarus, one of the Treviri, excited their people, and after having suddenly assailed the soldiers engaged in procuring wood, came with a large body to attack the camp. When our men had speedily taken up arms and had ascended the rampart, and sending out some Spanish horse on one side, had proved conquerors in a cavalry action, the enemy, despairing of success, drew off their troops from the assault. Then they shouted, according to their custom, that some of our men should go forward to a conference, [alleging] that they had some things which they desired to say respecting the common interest, by which they trusted their disputes could be removed.

Chapter 27

C. Arpineius, a Roman knight, the intimate friend of Q. Titurius, and with him, Q. Junius, a certain person from Spain, who already on previous occasions, had been accustomed to go to Ambiorix, at Caesar's mission, is sent to them for the purpose of a conference: before them Ambiorix spoke to this effect: "That he confessed, that for Caesar's kindness toward him, he was very much indebted to him, inasmuch as by his aid he had been freed from a tribute which he had been accustomed to pay to the Aduatuci, his neighbors; and because his own son and the son of his brother had been sent back to him, whom, when sent in the number of hostages, the Aduatuci had detained among them in slavery and in chains; and that he had not done that which he had done in regard to the attacking of the camp, either by his own judgment or desire, but by the compulsion of his state; and that his government was of that nature, that the people had as much authority over him as he over the people. To the state moreover the occasion of the war was this - that it could not withstand the sudden combination of the Gauls; that he could easily prove this from his own weakness, since he was not so little versed in affairs as to presume that with his forces he could conquer the Roman people; but that it was the common resolution of Gaul; that that day was appointed for the storming of all Caesar's winter-quarters, in order that no legion should be able to come to the relief of another legion, that Gauls could not easily deny Gauls, especially when a measure seemed entered into for recovering their common freedom. Since he had performed his duty to them on the score of patriotism [he said], he has now regard to gratitude for the kindness of Caesar; that he warned, that he prayed Titurius by the claims of hospitality, to consult for his and his soldiers' safety; that a large force of the Germans had been hired and had passed the Rhine; that it would arrive in two days: that it was for them to consider whether they thought fit, before the nearest people perceived it, to lead off their soldiers when drawn out of winter-quarters, either to Cicero or to Labienus; one of whom was about fifty miles distant from them, the other rather more; that this he promised and confirmed by oath, that he would give them a safe passage through his territories; and when he did that, he was both consulting for his own state, because it would be relieved from the winter-quarters, and also making a requital to Caesar for his obligations."

Chapter 28

Arpineius and Junius relate to the lieutenants what they had heard. They, greatly alarmed by the unexpected affair, though those things were spoken by an enemy, still thought they were not to be disregarded; and they were especially influenced by this consideration, that it was scarcely credible that the obscure and humble state of the Eburones had dared to make war upon the Roman people of their own accord. Accordingly, they refer the matter to a council, and a great controversy arises among them. L. Aurunculeius, and several tribunes of the soldiers and the centurions of the first rank, were of opinion "that nothing should be done hastily, and that they should not depart from the camp without Caesar's orders;" they declared, "that any forces of the Germans, however great, might be encountered by fortified winter-quarters; that this fact was a proof [of it]; that they had sustained the first assault of the Germans most valiantly, inflicting many wounds upon them; that they were not distressed for corn; that in the mean time relief would come both from the nearest winter-quarters and from Caesar; lastly, they put the query, "what could be more undetermined, more undignified, than to adopt measures respecting the most important affairs on the authority of an enemy?"

Chapter 29

In opposition to those things, Titurius exclaimed, "That they would do this too late, when greater forces of the enemy, after a junction with the Germans, should have assembled; or when some disaster had been received in the neighboring winter-quarters; that the
opportunity for deliberating was short; that he believed that Caesar had set forth into Italy, as the Carnutes would not otherwise have taken the measure of slaying Tasgetius, nor would the Eburones, if he had been present, have come to the camp with so great defiance of us; that he did not regard the enemy, but the fact, as the authority; that the Rhine was near; that the death of Ariovistus and our previous victories were subjects of great indignation to the Germans; that Gaul was inflamed, that after having received so many defeats she was reduced under the sway of the Roman people, her pristine glory in military matters being extinguished." Lastly, "who would persuade himself of this, that Ambiorix had resorted to a design of that nature without sure grounds? That his own opinion was safe on either side; if there be nothing very formidable, they would go without danger to the nearest legion; if all Gaul conspired with the Germans, their only safety lay in dispatch. What issue would the advice of Cotta and of those who differed from him, have? from which, if immediate danger was not to be dreaded, yet certainly famine, by a protracted siege, was."

Chapter 30

This discussion having been held on the two sides, when opposition was offered strenuously by Cotta and the principal officers, "Prevail," said Sabinus, "if so you wish it;" and he said it with a louder voice, that a great portion of the soldiers might hear him; "nor am I the person among you," he said, "who is most powerfully alarmed by the danger of death; these will be aware of it, and then, if any thing disastrous shall have occurred, they will demand a reckoning at your hands; these, who, if it were permitted by you, united three days hence with the nearest winter-quarters, may encounter the common condition of war with the rest, and not, as if forced away and separated far from the rest, perish either by the sword or by famine."

Chapter 31

They rise from the council, detain both, and entreat, that "they do not bring the matter into the greatest jeopardy by their dissension and obstinacy; the affair was an easy one, if only they all thought and approved of the same thing, whether they remain or depart; on the other hand, they saw no security in dissension." The matter is prolonged by debate till midnight. At last Cotta, being overruled, yields his assent; the opinion of Sabinus prevails. It is proclaimed that they will march at day-break; the remainder of the night is spent without sleep, since every soldier was inspecting his property, [to see] what he could carry with him, and what, out of the appurtenances of the winter-quarters, he would be compelled to leave; every reason is suggested to show why they could not stay without danger, and how that danger would be increased by the fatigue of the soldiers and their want of sleep. At break of day they quit the camp, in a very extended line and with a very large amount of baggage, in such a manner as men who were convinced that the advice was given by Ambiorix, not as an enemy, but as most friendly [toward them].

Chapter 32

But the enemy, after they had made the discovery of their intended departure by the noise during the night and their not retiring to rest, having placed an ambuscade in two divisions in the woods, in a suitable and concealed place, two miles from the camp, waited for the arrival of the Romans: and when the greater part of the line of march had descended into a considerable valley, they suddenly presented themselves on either side of that valley, and began both to harass the rear and hinder the van from ascending, and to give battle in a place exceedingly disadvantageous to our men.

Chapter 33

Then at length Titurius, as one who had provided nothing beforehand, was confused, ran to and fro, and set about arranging his troops; these very things, however, he did timidly and in such a manner that all resources seemed to fail him: which generally happens to those who are compelled to take council in the action itself. But Cotta, who had reflected that these things might occur on the march, and on that account had not been an adviser of the departure, was wanting to the common safety in no respect; both in addressing and encouraging the soldiers, he performed the duties of a general, and in the battle those of a soldier. And since they [Titurius and Cotta] could less easily perform every thing by themselves, and provide what was to be done in each place, by reason of the length of the line of march, they ordered [the officers] to give the command that they should leave the baggage and form themselves into an orb, which measure, though in a contingency of that nature it was not to be condemned, still turned out unfortunately; for it both diminished the hope of our soldiers and rendered the enemy more eager for the fight, because it appeared that this was not done without the greatest fear and despair. Besides that happened, which would necessarily be the case, that the soldiers for the most part quitted their ensigns and hurried to seek and carry off from the baggage whatever each thought valuable, and all parts were filled with uproar and lamentation.

Chapter 34

But judgment was not wanting to the barbarians; for their leaders ordered [the officers] to proclaim through the ranks "that no man should quit his place; that the booty was theirs, and for them was reserved whatever the Romans should leave; therefore let them consider that all things depended on their victory. Our men were equal to them in fighting, both in courage and in number, and though they were deserted by their leader and by fortune, yet they still placed all hope of safety in their valor, and as often as any cohort sallied forth on that side, a great number of the enemy usually fell. Ambiorix, when he observed this, orders the command to be issued that they throw their weapons from a distance and do not approach too near, and in whatever direction the Romans should make an
attack, there give way (from the lightness of their appointments and from their daily practice no damage could be done them); [but] pursue them when betaking themselves to their standards again.

Chapter 35

Which command having been most carefully obeyed, when any cohort had quitted the circle and made a charge, the enemy fled very precipitately. In the mean time, that part of the Roman army, of necessity, was left unprotected, and the weapons received on their open flank. Again, when they had begun to return to that place from which they had advanced, they were surrounded both by those who had retreated and by those who stood next them; but if, on the other hand, they wish to keep their place, neither was an opportunity left for valor, nor could they, being crowded together, escape the weapons cast by so large a body of men. Yet, though assailed by so many disadvantages, [and] having received many wounds, they withstood the enemy, and, a great portion of the day being spent, though they fought from day-break till the eighth hour, they did nothing which was unworthy of them. At length, each thigh of T. Balventius, who the year before had been chief centurion, a brave man and one of great authority, is pierced with a javelin; Q. Lucanius, of the same rank, fighting most valiantly, is slain while he assists his son when surrounded by the enemy; L. Cotta, the lieutenant, when encouraging all the cohorts and companies, is wounded full in the mouth by a sling.

Chapter 36

Much troubled by these events, Q. Titurius, when he had perceived Ambiorix in the distance encouraging his men, sends to him his interpreter, Cn. Pompey, to beg that he would spare him and his soldiers. He, when addressed, replied, "If he wishes to confer with him, it was permitted; that he hoped what pertained to the safety of the soldiers could be obtained from the people; that to him however certainly no injury would be done, and that he pledged his faith to that effect." He consults with Cotta, who had been wounded, whether it would appear right to retire from battle, and confer with Ambiorix; [saying] that he hoped to be able to succeed respecting his own and the soldiers' safety. Cotta says he will not go to an armed enemy, and in that perseveres.

Chapter 37

Sabinus orders those tribunes of the soldiers whom he had at the time around him, and the centurions of the first ranks, to follow him, and when he had approached near to Ambiorix, being ordered to throw down his arms, he obeys the order and commands his men to do the same. In the mean time, while they treat upon the terms, and a longer debate than necessary is designedly entered into by Ambiorix, being surrounded by degrees, he is slain. Then they, according to their custom, shout out "Victory," and raise their war-cry, and, making an attack on our men, break their ranks. There L. Cotta, while fighting, is slain, together with the greater part of the soldiers; the rest betake themselves to the camp, from which they had marched forth, and one of them, L. Petrosidius, the standard bearer, when he was overpowered by the great number of the enemy, threw the eagle within the intrenchments and is himself slain while fighting with the greatest courage before the camp. They with difficulty sustain the attack till night; despairing of safety, they all to a man destroy themselves in the night. A few escaping from the battle, made their way to Labienus at winter-quarters, after wandering at random through the woods, and inform him of these events.

Chapter 38

Elated by this victory, Ambiorix marches immediately with his cavalry to the Aduatuci, who bordered on his kingdom; he halts neither day nor night, and orders the infantry to follow him closely. Having related the exploit and roused the Aduatuci, the next day he arrived among the Nervii, and entreats "that they should not throw away the opportunity of liberating themselves forever and of punishing the Romans for those wrongs which they had received from them;" [he tells them] "that two lieutenants have been slain, and that a large portion of the army has perished; that it was not a matter of difficulty for the legion which was wintering with Cicero to be cut off, when suddenly assaulted; he declares himself ready to cooperate in that design. He easily gains over the Nervii by this speech.

Chapter 39

Accordingly, messengers having been forthwith dispatched to the Centrones, the Grudii, the Levaci, the Pleumoxii, and the Geiduni, all of whom are under their government, they assemble as large bodies as they can, and rush unexpectedly to the winter-quarters of Cicero, the report of the death of Titurius not having as yet been conveyed to him. That also occurred to him, which was the consequence of a necessary work - that some soldiers who had gone off into the woods for the purpose of procuring timber and therewith constructing fortifications, were intercepted by the sudden arrival of [the enemy's] horse. These having been entrapped, the Eburones, the Nervii, and the Aduatuci and all their allies and dependents, begin to attack the legion: our men quickly run together to arms and mount the rampart; they sustained the attack that day with great difficulty, since the enemy placed all their hope in dispatch, and felt assured that, if they obtained this victory, they would be conquerors forever.

Chapter 40

Letters are immediately sent to Caesar by Cicero, great rewards being offered [to the messengers] if they carried them through. All
these passes having been beset, those who were sent are killed. During the night as many as 120 towers are raised with incredible dispatch out of the timber which they had collected for the purpose of fortification: the things which seemed necessary to the work are completed. The following day the enemy, having collected far greater forces, attack the camp [and] fill up the ditch. Resistance is made by our men in the same manner as the day before; this same thing is done afterward during the remaining days. The work is carried on incessantly in the night: not even to the sick, or wounded, is opportunity given for rest: whatever things are required for resisting the assault of the next day are provided during the night: many stakes burned at the end, and a large number of mural pikes are procured: towers are built up, battlements and parapets are formed of interwoven hurdles. Cicero himself, though he was in very weak health, did not leave himself the night-time for repose, so that he was forced to spare himself by the spontaneous movement and entreaties of the soldiers.

Chapter 41

Then these leaders and chiefs of the Nervii, who had any intimacy and grounds of friendship with Cicero, say they desire to confer with him. When permission was granted, they recount the same things which Ambiorix had related to Titurius, namely, "that all Gaul was in arms, that the Germans had passed the Rhine, that the winter-quarters of Caesar and of the others were attacked." They report in addition also, about the death of Sabinus. They point to Ambiorix for the purpose of obtaining credence; "they are mistaken," say they, "if they hoped for any relief from those who distrust their own affairs; that they bear such feelings toward Cicero and the Roman people that they deny them nothing but winter-quarters, and are unwilling that the practice should become constant; that through their [the Nervii]'s] means it is possible for them [the Romans] to depart from their winter-quarters safely and to proceed without fear into whatever parts they desire." To these Cicero made only one reply: "that it is not the custom of the Roman people to accept any condition from an armed enemy: if they are willing to lay down their arms, they may employ him as their advocate and send embassadors to Caesar: that he believed, from his [Caesar's] justice, they would obtain the things which they might request."

Chapter 42

Disappointed in this hope, the Nervii surround the winter-quarters with a rampart eleven feet high, and a ditch thirteen feet in depth. These military works they had learned from our men in the intercourse of former years, and, having taken some of our army prisoners, were instructed by them: but, as they had no supply of iron tools which are requisite for this service, they were forced to cut the turf with their swords, and to empty out the earth with their hands and cloaks, from which circumstance, the vast number of the men could be inferred: for in less than three hours they completed a fortification of ten miles in circumference; and during the rest of the days they began to prepare and construct towers of the height of the ramparts, and grappling irons, and mantelets, which the same prisoners had taught them.

Chapter 43

On the seventh day of the attack, a very high wind having sprung up, they began to discharge by their slings hot balls made of burned or hardened clay, and heated javelins, upon the huts, which, after the Gallic custom, were thatched with straw. These quickly took fire, and by the violence of the wind, scattered their flames in every part of the camp. The enemy following up their success with a very loud shout, as if victory were already obtained and secured, began to advance their towers and mantelets, and climb the rampart with ladders. But so great was the courage of our soldiers, and such their presence of mind, that though they were scorched on all sides, and harassed by a vast number of weapons, and were aware that their baggage and their possessions were burning, not only did no one quit the rampart for the purpose of withdrawing from the scene, but scarcely did any one even then look behind; and they all fought most vigorously and most valiantly. This day was by far the most calamitous to our men; it had this result, however, that on that day the largest number of the enemy was wounded and slain, since they had crowded beneath the very rampart, and the hindmost did not afford the foremost a retreat. The flame having abated a little, and a tower having been brought up in a particular place and touching the rampart, the centurions of the third cohort retired from the place in which they were standing, and drew off all their men: they began to call on the enemy by gestures and by words, to enter if they wished; but none of them dared to advance. Then stones having been cast from every quarter, the enemy were dislodged, and their tower set on fire.

Chapter 44

In that legion there were two very brave men, centurions, who were now approaching the first ranks, T. Pulphio, and L. Varenus. These used to have continual disputes between them which of them should be preferred, and every year used to contend for promotion with the utmost animosity. When the fight was going on most vigorously before the fortifications, Pulphio, one of them, says, "Why do you hesitate, Varenus? or what [better] opportunity of signalizing your valor do you seek? This very day shall decide our disputes." When he had uttered these words, he proceeds beyond the fortifications, and rushes on that part of the enemy which appeared the thickest. Nor does Varenus remain within the rampart, but respecting the high opinion of all, follows close after. Then, when an inconsiderable space intervened, Pulphio throws his javelin at the enemy, and pierces one of the multitude who was running up, and while the latter was wounded and slain, the enemy cover him with their shields, and all throw their weapons at the other and afford him no opportunity of retreating. The shield of Pulphio is pierced and a javelin is fastened in his belt. This circumstance turns aside his scabbard and obstructs his right hand when attempting to draw his sword: the enemy crowd around him when [thus] embarrassed. His rival runs up to him and succors him in this emergency. Immediately the whole host turn from Pulphio to him, supposing the other to be
pierced through by the javelin. Varenus rushes on briskly with his sword and carries on the combat hand to hand, and having slain one man, for a short time drove back the rest: while he urges on too eagerly, slipping into a hollow, he fell. To him, in his turn, when surrounded, Pulfio brings relief; and both having slain a great number, retreat into the fortifications amid the highest applause. Fortune so dealt with both in this rivalry and conflict, that the one competitor was a succor and a safeguard to the other, nor could it be determined which of the two appeared worthy of being preferred to the other.

Chapter 45

In proportion as the attack became daily more formidable and violent, and particularly, because, as a great number of the soldiers were exhausted with wounds, the matter had come to a small number of defenders, more frequent letters and messages were sent to Caesar; a part of which messengers were taken and tortured to death in the sight of our soldiers. There was within our camp a certain Nervian, by name Vertico, born in a distinguished position, who in the beginning of the blockade had deserted to Cicero, and had exhibited his fidelity to him. He persuades his slave, by the hope of freedom, and by great rewards, to convey a letter to Caesar. This he carries out bound about his javelin; and mixing among the Gauls without any suspicion by being a Gaul, he reaches Caesar. From him they received information of the imminent danger of Cicero and the legion.

Chapter 46

Caesar having received the letter about the eleventh hour of the day, immediately sends a messenger to the Bellovaci, to M. Crassus, questor there, whose winter-quarters were twenty-five miles distant from him. He orders the legion to set forward in the middle of the night, and come to him with dispatch. Crassus sets out with the messenger. He sends another to C. Fabius, the lieutenant, ordering him to lead forth his legion into the territories of the Atrebates, to which he knew his march must be made. He writes to Labienus to come with his legion to the frontiers of the Nervii, if he could do so to the advantage of the commonwealth: he does not consider that the remaining portion of the army, because it was somewhat further distant, should be waited for; but assembles about 400 horse from the nearest winter-quarters.

Chapter 47

Having been apprised of the arrival of Crassus by the scouts at about the third hour, he advances twenty miles that day. He appoints Crassus over Samarobriva and assigns him a legion, because he was leaving there the baggage of the army, the hostages of the states, the public documents, and all the corn, which he had conveyed thither for passing the winter. Fabius, without delaying a moment, meets him on the march with his legion, as he had been commanded. Labienus, having learned the death of Sabinus and the destruction of the cohorts, as all the forces of the Treviri had come against him, beginning to fear lest, if he made a departure from his winter-quarters, resembling a flight, he should not be able to support the attack of the enemy, particularly since he knew them to be elated by their recent victory, sends back a letter to Caesar, informing him with what great hazard he would lead out his legion from winter-quarters: he relates at large the affairs which had taken place among the Eburones; he informs him that all the infantry and cavalry of the Treviri had encamped at a distance of only three miles from his own camp.

Chapter 48

Caesar, approving of his motives, although he was disappointed in his expectation of three legions, and reduced to two, yet placed his only hopes of the common safety in dispatch. He goes into the territories of the Nervii by long marches. There he learns from some prisoners what things are going on in the camp of Cicero, and in how great jeopardy the affair is. Then with great rewards he induces a certain man of the Gallic horse to convey a letter to Cicero. This he sends written in Greek characters, lest the letter being intercepted, our measures should be discovered by the enemy. He directs him, if he should be unable to enter, to throw his spear with the letter fastened to the thong, inside the fortifications of the camp. He writes in the letter, that he having set out with his legions, will quickly be there: he entreats him to maintain his ancient valor. The Gaul apprehending danger, throws his spear as he has been directed. Is by chance stuck in a tower, and, not being observed by our men for two days, was seen by a certain soldier on the third day: when taken down, it was carried to Cicero. He, after perusing it, reads it out in an assembly of the soldiers, and fills all with the greatest joy. Then the smoke of the fires was seen in the distance, a circumstance which banished all doubt of the arrival of the legions.
XXIV.--The ships having been drawn up and a general assembly of the Gauls held at Samarobriva, because the corn that year had not prospered in Gaul by reason of the droughts, he was compelled to station his army in its winter-quarters, differently from the former years, and to distribute the legions among several states: one of them he gave to C. Fabius, his lieutenant, to be marched into the territories of the Morini; a second to Q. Cicero, into those of the Nervii; a third to L. Roscius, into those of the Essui; a fourth he ordered to winter with T. Labienus among the Remi in the confines of the Treviri; he stationed three in Belgium; over these he appointed M. Crassus, his questor, and L. Munatius Plancus and C. Trebonius, his lieutenants. One legion which he had raised last on the other side of the Po, and five cohorts, he sent amongst the Eburones, the greatest portion of whom lie between the Meuse and the Rhine, [and] who were under the government of Ambiorix and Catuvolcus. He ordered Q. Titurius Sabinus and L. Aurunculeius Cotta, his lieutenants, to take the command of these soldiers. The legions being distributed in this manner, he thought he could most easily remedy the scarcity of corn; and yet the winter-quarters of all these legions (except that which he had given to L. Roscius to be led into the most peaceful and tranquil neighbourhood) were comprehended within [about] 100 miles. He himself in the meanwhile, until he had stationed the legions and knew that the several winter-quarters were fortified, determined to stay in Gaul.

XXV.--There was among the Carnutes a man named Tasgetius, born of very high rank, whose ancestors had held the sovereignty in his state. To him Caesar had restored the position of his ancestors, in consideration of his prowess and attachment towards him, because in all his wars he had availed himself of his valuable services. His personal enemies had killed him when in the third year of his reign, many even of his own


state being openly promoters [of that act]. This event is related to Caesar. He fearing, because several were involved in the act, that the state might revolt at their instigation, orders Lucius Plancus, with a legion, to proceed quickly from Belgium to the Carnutes, and winter there, and arrest and send to him the persons by whose instrumentality he should discover that Tasgetius was slain. In the meantime, he was apprised by all the lieutenants and questors to whom he had assigned the legions, that they had arrived in winter-quarters, and that the place for the quarters was fortified.

XXVI.--About fifteen days after they had come into winter-quarters, the beginning of a sudden insurrection and revolt arose from Ambiorix and Cativolcus, who, though they had met with Sabinus and Cotta at the borders of their kingdom, and had conveyed corn into our winter-quarters, induced by the messages of Indutiomarus, one of the Treveri, excited their people, and after having suddenly assailed the soldiers, engaged in procuring wood, came with a large body to attack the camp. When our men had speedily taken up arms and had ascended the rampart, and sending out some Spanish horse on one side, had proved conquerors in a cavalry action, the enemy, despairing of success, drew off their troops from the assault. Then they shouted, according to their custom, that some of our men should go forward to a conference, [alleging] that they had some things which they desired to say respecting the common interest, by which they trusted their disputes could be removed.

XXVII.--C. Arpineius, a Roman knight, the intimate friend of Q. Titurius, and with him Q. Junius, a certain person from Spain, who already on previous occasions had been accustomed to go to Ambiorix, at Caesar's mission, is sent to them for the purpose of a conference: before them Ambiorix spoke to this effect: 'That he confessed that for Caesar's kindness towards him he was very much indebted to him, inasmuch as by his aid he had been freed from a tribute which he had been accustomed to pay to

[26] Diebus circiter XV, quibus in hiberna ventum est, initium repentina tumultus ac defectionis ortum est ab Ambiorige et Catuvolco; qui, cum ad fines regni sui Sabino Cottaque praesto fuissent frumentumque in hiberna comportavissent, Indutiomari Treveri nutius impulsu suas concitatuvissent subitoque oppressis lignatoribus magna manu ad castra oppugnatum venerunt. Cum celeriter nostri arma cepissent vallumque adscendissent atque una ex parte Hispanis equitibus emisis equestri proelio superiores fuissent, desperata re hostes suos ab oppugnatione reduxerunt. Tum suo more conclamaverunt, uti aliqui ex nostris ad colloquium prodiret: habere sese, quae de re communi dicere vellent, quibus rebus controversias minui posse sperarent.

[27] Mittitur ad eos colloquendi causa Gaius Arpineius, eques Romanus, familiaris Quinti Tituri, et Quintus Junius ex Hispania quidam, qui iam ante missu Caesaris ad Ambiorigem ventitare consuerat; apud quos Ambiorix ad hunc modum locutus est: Sese pro Caesaris in se beneficiis pluriem ei confiteri debere, quod eius opera stipendio liberatus esset, quod Aduatucis, finitimis suis, pendere consuesset, quodque ei et filius et fratris filius ab Caesare remissi essent, quos Aduatucis obsidum numero missos apud in servitute et catenis tenuissent; neque id, quod fecerit de oppugnatione castrorum, aut iudicio aut voluntate sua
the Aduatuci, his neighbours; and because his own son and the son of his brother had been sent back to him, whom, when sent in the number of hostages, the Aduatuci had detained among them in slavery and in chains; and that he had not done that which he had done in regard to the attacking of the camp, either by his own judgment or desire, but by the compulsion of his state; and that his government was of that nature, that the people had as much of authority over him as he over the people. To the state moreover the occasion of the war was this --that it could not withstand the sudden combination of the Gauls; that he could easily prove this from his own weakness, since he was not so little versed in affairs as to presume that with his forces he could conquer the Roman people; but that it was the common resolution of Gaul; that that day was appointed for the storming of all Caesar's winter-quarters, in order that no legion should be able to come to the relief of another legion, that Gauls could not easily deny Gauls, especially when a measure seemed entered into for recovering their common freedom. Since he had performed his duty to them on the score of patriotism [he said], he has now regard to gratitude for the kindness of Caesar; that he warned, that he prayed Titurius by the claims of hospitality, to consult for his and his soldiers' safety; that a large force of the Germans had been hired and had passed the Rhine; that it would arrive in two days; that it was for them to consider whether they thought fit, before the nearest people perceived it, to lead off their soldiers when drawn out of winter-quarters, either to Cicero or to Labienus; one of whom was about fifty miles distant from them, the other rather more; that this he promised and confirmed by oath, that he would give them a safe passage through his territories; and when he did that, he was both consulting for his own state, because it would be relieved from the winter-quarters, and also making a requital to Caesar for his obligations."

XXVIII.--Arpineius and Junius relate to the lieutenants what they had heard. They, greatly alarmed by the unexpected affair, though those things were spoken by an enemy, still thought

[28] Arpineius et Iunius, quae audierunt, ad legatos deferunt. Illi repentina re perturbati, etsi ab hoste ea dicebantur, tamen non neglegenda existimabant maximeque hac re permovebantur, quod civitatem
they were not to be disregarded; and they were especially influenced by this consideration, that it was scarcely credible that the obscure and humble state of the Eburones had dared to make war upon the Roman people of their own accord. Accordingly, they refer the matter to a council, and a, great controversy arises among them. L. Aurunculeius, and several tribunes of the soldiers and the centurions of the first rank, were of opinion "that nothing should be done hastily, and that they should not depart from the camp without Caesar's orders"; they declared, "that any forces of the Germans, however great, might be encountered by fortified winter-quarters; that this fact was a proof [of it]; that they had sustained the first assault of the Germans most valiantly, inflicting many wounds upon them; that they were not distressed for corn; that in the meantime relief would come both from the nearest winter-quarters and from Caesar"; lastly, they put the query, "what could be more undetermined, more undignified, than to adopt measures respecting the most important affairs on the authority of an enemy?"

XXIX.—In opposition to those things Titurius exclaimed, "That they would do this too late, when greater forces of the enemy, after a junction with the Germans, should have assembled; or when some disaster had been received in the neighbouring winter-quarters; that the opportunity for deliberating was short; that he believed that Caesar had set forth into Italy, as the Carnutes would not otherwise have taken the measure of slaying Tasgetius, nor would the Eburones, if he had been present, have come to the camp with so great defiance of us; that he did not regard the enemy, but the fact, as the authority; that the Rhine was near; that the death of Ariovistus and our previous victories were subjects of great indignation to the Germans; that Gaul was inflamed, that after having received so many defeats she was reduced under the sway of the Roman people, her pristine glory in military matters being extinguished." Lastly, "who would persuade himself of this, that Ambiorix had resorted to a design of that nature without sure grounds? That his own opinion was safe on either side; if Ignobilem atque humilem Eburonum sua sponte populo Romano bellum facere ausam vix erat credendum. Itaque ad consilium rem deferunt magnaque inter eos existit controversia. Lucius Aurunculeius compluresque tribuni militum et primorum ordinum centuriones nihil temere agendum neque ex hibernis iniussu Caesaris discedendum existimabant: quantasvis [magnas] copias etiam Germanorum sustineri posse munitis hibernis docebant: rem esse testimonio, quod primum hostium impetum multis ultero vulneribus illatis fortissime sustinerint: re frumentaria non premi; interea et ex proximis hibernis et a Caesar conventa subsidia: postremo quid esse levius aut turpius, quam auctore hoste de summis rebus capere consilium?

there be nothing very formidable, they would go
without danger to the nearest legion; if all Gaul
conspired with the Germans, their only safety
lay in despatch. What issue would the advice of
Cotta and of those who differed from him, have?
from which, if immediate danger was not to be
dreaded, yet certainly famine, by a protracted
siege, was."

XXX.--This discussion having been held on the
two sides, when opposition was offered
strenuously by Cotta and the principal officers,
"Prevail," said Sabinus, "if so you wish it"; and he
said it with a louder voice, that a great portion
of the soldiers might hear him; "nor am I the
person among you," he said, "who is most
powerfully alarmed by the danger of death;
these will be aware of it, and then, if any thing
disastrous shall have occurred, they will demand
a reckoning at your hands; these, who, if it were
permitted by you, united three days hence with
the nearest winter-quarters, may encounter the
common condition of war with the rest, and not,
as if forced away and separated far from the rest,
perish either by the sword or by famine."

XXXI.--They rise from the council, detain both,
and entreat, that "they do not bring the matter
into the greatest jeopardy by their dissension
and obstinacy; the affair was an easy one, if only
they all thought and approved of the same thing,
whether they remain or depart; on the other
hand, they saw no security in dissension." The
matter is prolonged by debate till midnight. At
last Cotta, being overruled, yields his assent; the
opinion of Sabinus prevails. It is proclaimed that
they will march at day-break; the remainder of
the night is spent without sleep, since every
soldier was inspecting his property, [to see]
what he could carry with him, and what, out of
the appurtenances of the winter-quarters, he
would be compelled to leave; every reason is
suggested to show why they could not stay
without danger, and how that danger would be
increased by the fatigue of the soldiers and their
want of sleep. At break of day they quit the
camp, in a very extended line and with a very
large amount of baggage, in such a manner as

[30] Hac in utramque partem disputatione
habita, cum a Cotta primisque ordinibus
acriter resisteretur, "Vincite," inquit, "si
ita vultis," Sabinus, et id clariore voce,
ut magna pars militum exaudiret; "neque is
sum," inquit, "qui gravissime ex vobis
mortis periculo terrear: hi sapient; si
gravius quid acciderit, abs te rationem
reposcent, qui, si per te liceat, perendino
die cum proximis hibernis coniuncti communem
cum reliquis bellis casum sustineant, non
reiecti et relegati longe ab ceteris aut
ferro aut fame intereant."

[31] Consurgitur ex consilio; comprehendet
utrumque et orant, ne sua dissensione et
pertinacia rem in summum periculum deducat:
facilem esse rem, seu maneant, seu
profiscantur, si modo unum omnes sentiant
ac probent; contra in dissensione nullam se
salutem perspicere. Res disputatione ad
medium noctem perducitur. Tandem dat Cotta
permutos manus: superat sententia Sabini.
Pronuntiatur prima luce ituros. Consumitur
vigilii religia pars noctis, cum sua
quisque miles circumspiceret, quid secum
portare posset, quid ex instrumento
hibernorum relinquere cogeretur. Omnia
excogitatur, quae nec sine periculo
maneat, et languere militum et vigiliiis
periculum augeat. Prima luce sic ex
castris profisciscuntur, ut quibus esset
persuasum non ab hoste, sed ab homine
amicissimo Ambiorige consilium datum,
longissimo agmine maximisique impedimentis.
men who were convinced that the advice was given by Ambiorix, not as an enemy, but as most friendly [towards them].

XXXII.--But the enemy, after they had made the discovery of their intended departure by the noise during the night and their not retiring to rest, having placed an ambuscade in two divisions in the woods, in a suitable and concealed place, two miles from the camp, waited for the arrival of the Romans; and when the greater part of the line of march had descended into a considerable valley, they suddenly presented themselves on either side of that valley, and began both to harass the rear and hinder the van from ascending, and to give battle in a place exceedingly disadvantageous to our men.

XXXIII.--Then at length Titurius, as one who had provided nothing beforehand, was confused, ran to and fro, and set about arranging his troops; these very things, however, he did timidly and in such a manner that all resources seemed to fail him: which generally happens to those who are compelled to take council in the action itself. But Cotta, who had reflected that these things might occur on the march, and on that account had not been an adviser of the departure, was wanting to the common safety in no respect; both in addressing and encouraging the soldiers, he performed the duties of a general, and in the battle those of a soldier. And since they [Titurius and Cotta] could less easily perform everything by themselves, and provide what was to be done in each place, by reason of the length of the line of march, they ordered [the officers] to give the command that they should leave the baggage and form themselves into an orb, which measure, though in a contingency of that nature it was not to be condemned, still turned out unfortunately; for it both diminished the hope of our soldiers and rendered the enemy more eager for the fight, because it appeared that this was not done without the greatest fear and despair. Besides that happened, which would necessarily be the case, that the soldiers for the most part quitted their ensigns and hurried to

[32] At hostes, posteaquam ex nocturno fremitu vigiliisque de profectione eorum sensorunt, collocatis insidiis bipertito in silvis opportuno atque occulto loco a milibus passuum circiter duobus Romanorum adventum exspectabant, et cum se maior pars agminis in magnam convallem demisisset, ex utraque parte eius vallis subito se ostenderunt novissimosque premere et primos prohibere ascensu atque iniquissimo nostris loco proelium committere coeperunt.

[33] Tum demum Titurius, qui nihil ante providisset, trepidare et concursare cohortesque disponere, haec tamen ipsa timide atque ut eum omnia deficere viderentur; quod plurimum eis accidere consuevit, qui in ipso negotio consilium capere coguntur. At Cotta, qui cogitasset haec posse in itinere accidere atque ob eam causam profectionis auctor non fuisse, nulla in re communi saluti deeerat et in appellandis cohortandisque militibus imperatoris et in pugna militis officia praestabat. Cum propter longitudinem agminis minus facile omnia per se obire et, quid quoque loco faciendum esset, providere possent, iussurent pronuntiare, ut impedimenta reliquerent atque in orbem consisterent. Quod consilium etsi in eiusmodi casu reprehendendum non est, tamen incommode accidit: nam et nostris militibus spem minuit et hostes ad pugnam alacriores effecit, quod non sine summo timore et desperatione id factum videbatur. Praeterea accidit, quo fieri necesse erat, ut vulgo milites ab signis discederent, quae quisque eorum carissima haberet, ab impedimentis petere atque arripere properaret, clamore et fletu omnia complementur.
seek and carry off from the baggage whatever each thought valuable, and all parts were filled with uproar and lamentation.

XXXIV.--But judgment was not wanting to the barbarians; for their leaders ordered [the officers] to proclaim through the ranks "that no man should quit his place; that the booty was theirs, and for them was reserved whatever the Romans should leave; therefore let them consider that all things depended on their victory." Our men were equal to them in fighting, both in courage and in number, and though they were deserted by their leader and by fortune, yet they still placed all hope of safety in their valour, and as often as any cohort sallied forth on that side, a great number of the enemy usually fell. Ambiorix, when he observed this, orders the command to be issued that they throw their weapons from a distance and do not approach too near, and in whatever direction the Romans should make an attack, there give way (from the lightness of their appointments and from their daily practice no damage could be done them); [but] pursue them when betaking themselves to their standards again.

XXXV.--Which command having been most carefully obeyed, when any cohort had quitted the circle and made a charge, the enemy fled very precipitately. In the meantime, that part of the Roman army, of necessity, was left unprotected, and the weapons received on their open flank. Again, when they had begun to return to that place from which they had advanced, they were surrounded both by those who had retreated and by those who stood next them; but if, on the other hand, they wished to keep their place, neither was an opportunity left for valour, nor could they, being crowded together, escape the weapons cast by so large a body of men. Yet, though assailed by so many disadvantages, [and] having received many wounds, they withstood the enemy, and, a great portion of the day being spent, though they fought from day-break till the eighth hour, they did nothing which was unworthy of them. At length, each thigh of T. Balventius, who the year...
before had been chief centurion, a brave man and one of great authority, is pierced with a javelin; Q. Lucanius, of the same rank, fighting most valiantly, is slain while he assists his son when surrounded by the enemy; L. Cotta, the lieutenant, when encouraging all the cohorts and companies, is wounded full in the mouth by a sling.

XXXVI.--Much troubled by these events, Q. Titurius, when he had perceived Ambiorix in the distance encouraging his men, sends to him his interpreter, Cn. Pompey, to beg that he would spare him and his soldiers. He, when addressed, replied, "If he wished to confer with him, it was permitted; that he hoped what pertained to the safety of the soldiers could be obtained from the people; that to him however certainly no injury would be done, and that he pledged his faith to that effect." He consults with Cotta, who had been wounded, whether it would appear right to retire from battle, and confer with Ambiorix; [saying] that he hoped to be able to succeed respecting his own and the soldiers' safety. Cotta says he will not go to an armed enemy, and in that perseveres.

XXXVII.--Sabinus orders those tribunes of the soldiers whom he had at the time around him, and the centurions of the first ranks, to follow him, and when he had approached near to Ambiorix, being ordered to throw down his arms, he obeys the order and commands his men to do the same. In the meantime, while they treat upon the terms, and a longer debate than necessary is designedly entered into by Ambiorix, being surrounded by degrees, he is slain. Then they according to their custom shout out "Victory," and raise their war-cry, and, making an attack on our men, break their ranks. There L. Cotta, while fighting, is slain, together with the greater part of the soldiers; the rest betake themselves to the camp from which they had marched forth, and one of them, L. Petrosidius, the standard bearer, when he was overwhelmed by the great number of the enemy, threw the eagle within the entrenchments and is himself slain while fighting with the greatest

[36] His rebus permutus Quintus Titurius, cum procul Ambiorigem suos cohortantem conspexisset, interpretum suum Gnaeum Pompeum ad eum mittit rogatum ut sibi militibusque parcat. Ille appellatus respondit: si velit secum colloqui, licere; sperare a multitudine impetrari posse, quod ad militum salutem pertineat; ipsi vero nihil nocitum iri, inque eam rem se suam fidem interponere. Ille cum Cotta saucium communicat, sì videatur, pugna ut excedant et cum Ambiorige una colloquantur: sperare ab eo de sua ac militum salute impetrari posse. Cotta se ad armatum hostem iturum negat atque in eo perseverat.

[37] Sabinus quos in praesentia tribunos militum circum se habebat et primorum ordinem centuriones se sequi iubet et, cum propius Ambiorigem accessisset, iussus arma abicere imperatum facit suisque ut idem faciant imperat. Interim, dum de conditionibus inter se agent longiorque consulto ab Ambiorige instituitur sermo, paulatim circumventus interficitur. Tum vero suo more victoriam conclamant atque ululatum tollunt impetuque in nostros facto ordinem perturbant. Ibi Lucius Cotta pugnans interficitur cum maxima parte militum. Reliqui se in castra recipiunt unde erant egressi. Ex quibus Lucius Petrosidius aquilifer, cum magna multitudine hostium premeretur, aquilam intra vallum proiecit; ipse pro castris fortissime pugnans occiditur. Illi aegre ad noctem oppugnationem sustinent; noctu ad unum omnes desperata salute se ipsi interficiunt. Pauci ex proelio lapsi incerti itineribus per silvas ad Titum Labienum legatum in hiberna perveniunt atque eum de rebus gestis certiorem faciunt.
courage before the camp. They with difficulty sustain the attack till night; despairing of safety, they all to a man destroy themselves in the night. A few escaping from the battle, make their way to Labienus at winter-quarters, after wandering at random through the woods, and inform him of these events.

XXXVIII.--Elated by this victory, Ambiorix marches immediately with his cavalry to the Aduatuci, who bordered on his kingdom; he halts neither day nor night, and orders the infantry to follow him closely. Having related the exploit and roused the Aduatuci, the next day he arrived among the Nervii, and entreats "that they should not throw away the opportunity of liberating themselves for ever and of punishing the Romans for those wrongs which they had received from them"; [he tells them] "that two lieutenants have been slain, and that a large portion of the army has perished; that it was not a matter of difficulty for the legion which was wintering with Cicero to be cut off, when suddenly assaulted; he declares himself ready to co-operate in that design." He easily gains over the Nervii by this speech.

[38] Hac victoria sublatus Ambiorix statim cum equitatu in Aduatucos, qui erant eius regno finitimi, proficiscitur; neque noctem neque diem intermittit peditatumque subsequi iubet. Re demonstrata Aduatucisque concitatis postero die in Nervios pervenit hortaturque, ne sui in perpetuum liberandi atque uliscundi Romanos pro eis quas acceperint iniuris occasionem dimittant: interfectos esse legatos duos magnamque partem exercitus interisse demonstrat; nihil esse negoti subito oppressam legionem quae cum Cicerone hiemet interfici; se ad eam rem profitetur adiutorem. Facile hac oratione Nerviis persuadet.

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XXXVIII.--Elated by this victory, Ambiorix marches immediately with his cavalry to the Aduatuci, who bordered on his kingdom; he halts neither day nor night, and orders the infantry to follow him closely. Having related the exploit and roused the Aduatuci, the next day he arrived among the Nervii, and entreats "that they should not throw away the opportunity of liberating themselves for ever and of punishing the Romans for those wrongs which they had received from them"; [he tells them] "that two lieutenants have been slain, and that a large portion of the army has perished; that it was not a matter of difficulty for the legion which was wintering with Cicero to be cut off, when suddenly assaulted; he declares
himself ready to co-operate in that design." He easily gains over the Nervii by this speech.

XXXIX.--Accordingly, messengers having been forthwith despatched to the Centrones, the Grudii, the Levaci, the Pleumoxii, and the Geiduni, all of whom are under their government, they assemble as large bodies as they can, and rush unexpectedly to the winter-quarters of Cicero, the report of the death of Titurius not having as yet been conveyed to him. That also occurred to him which was the consequence of a necessary work,—that some soldiers who had gone off into the woods for the purpose of procuring timber and therewith constructing fortifications, were intercepted by the sudden arrival of [the enemy’s] horse. These having been entrapped, the Eburones, the Nervii, and the Aduatuci and all their allies and dependants, begin to attack the legion: our men quickly run together to arms and mount the rampart: they sustained the attack that day with great difficulty, since the enemy placed all their hope in despatch, and felt assured that, if they obtained this victory, they would be conquerors for ever.

XL.--Letters are immediately sent to Caesar by Cicero, great rewards being offered [to the messengers] if they carried them through. All the passes having been beset, those who were sent are intercepted. During the night as many as 120 towers are raised with incredible despatch out of the timber which they had collected for the purpose of fortification: the things which seemed necessary to the work are completed. The following day the enemy, having collected far greater forces, attack the camp [and] fill up the ditch. Resistance is made by our men in the same manner as the day before: this same thing is done afterwards during the remaining days. The work is carried on incessantly in the night: not even to the sick, or wounded, is opportunity given for rest: whatever things are required for resisting the assault of the next day are provided during the night: many stakes burnt at the end, and a large number of mural pikes are procured: towers are built up, battlements and parapets are formed of interwoven hurdles. Cicero himself,

[39] Itaque confestim dimissis nuntiis ad Ceutrones, Grudios, Levacos, Pleumoxios, Geidumnos, qui omnes sub eorum imperio sunt, quam maximas manus possunt cogunt et de improviso ad Ciceronis hiberna advolant nondum ad eum fama de Tituri morte perlata. Huic quoque accidit, quod fuit necessae, ut nonnulli milites, qui ligationis munitionisque causa in silvas discessisset, repentino equitum adventu inteciperentur. Nostri celeriter ad arma concurrunt, vallum conscendunt. Aegre is dies sustentatur, quod omnem spem hostes in celeritate ponebant atque hanc adepti victoriam in perpetuum se fore victores confidebant.

[40] Mittuntur ad Caesarem confestim ab Cicerone litterae magnis propositis praemis, si pertulissent: obsessis omnibus viis missi intercipiuntur. Noctu ex materia, quam munitionis causa comportaverant, turres admodum CXX excitantur incredibilis celeritate; quae deesse operi videbantur, periciuntur. Hostes postero die multo maioribus coactis copiis castra oppugnant, fossam compleunt. Eadem ratione, qua pridie, ab nostris resistitur. Hoc idem reliquis deinceps fit diebus. Nulla pars nocturni temporis ad laborem intermititur; non aegris, non vulneratis faculas quietis datur. Quaeque ad proximi diei oppugnationem opus sunt noctu comparantur; multae praestae sudes, magnus muralium pilorum numeros instituitur; turres contabulantur, pinnae loricaeque ex cratibus attexuntur. Ipse Cicero, cum tenuissima valetudine esset, ne nocturnum quidem sibi tempus ad quietem relinquebat, ut ultro militum concursu ac vocibus sibi parcer e cogueret.
though he was in very weak health, did not leave himself the night-time for repose, so that he was forced to spare himself by the spontaneous movement and entreaties of the soldiers.

XLI.--Then these leaders and chiefs of the Nervii, who had any intimacy and grounds of friendship with Cicero, say they desire to confer with him. When permission was granted, they recount the same things which Ambiorix had related to Titurius, namely, "that all Gaul was in arms, that the Germans had passed the Rhine, that the winter-quarters of Caesar and of the others were attacked." They report in addition also, about the death of Sabinus. They point to Ambiorix for the purpose of obtaining credence; "they are mistaken," say they, "if they hoped for any relief from those who distrust their own affairs; that they bear such feelings towards Cicero and the Roman people that they deny them nothing but winter-quarters and are unwilling that this practice should become constant; that through their [the Nervii's] means it is possible for them [the Romans] to depart from their winter-quarters safely and to proceed without fear into whatever parts they desire." To these Cicero made only one reply: "that it is not the custom of the Roman people to accept any condition from an armed enemy: if they are willing to lay down their arms, they may employ him as their advocate and send ambassadors to Caesar: that he believed, from his [Caesar's] justice, they would obtain the things which they might request."

XLII.--Disappointed in this hope, the Nervii surround the winter-quarters with a rampart eleven feet high, and a ditch thirteen feet in depth. These military works they had learnt from our men in the intercourse of former years, and, having taken some of our army prisoners, were instructed by them: but, as they had no supply of iron tools which are requisite for this service, they were forced to cut the turf with their swords, and to empty out the earth with their hands and cloaks, from which circumstance the vast number of the men could be inferred; for in less than three hours they completed a

[41] Tunc duces principesque Nerviorum qui aliquem sermonis aditum causasque amicitiae cum Cicerone habebant colloqui sese velle dicunt. Facta potestate eadem quae Ambiorix cum Titurio egerat commemorant: omnen esse in armis Galliam; Germanos Rhenum transisse; Caesaris reliquorumque hiberna oppugnari. Addunt etiam de Sabini morte: Ambiorigem ostentant fidei faciendae causa. Errare eos dicunt, si quidquam ab his praevidi sperant, qui suis rebus diffident; sese tamen hoc esse in Ciceronem populumque Romanum animo, ut nihil nisi hiberna recusent atque hanc inveterascere consuetudinem nolint: licere illis incolubrum per se ex hibernis discedere et quasquumque in partis velint sine metu proficiisc. Cicero ad haec unum modo respondit: non esse consuetudinem populi Romani accipere ab hoste armato condicionem: si ab armis discedere velint, se adiutore utantur legatosque ad Caesarem mittant; sperare pro eius iustitia, quae petierint, impetraturos.

[42] Ab hac spe repuls Nervii vallo pedum IX et fossa pedum XV hiberna cingunt. Haec et superiorum annorum consuetudine ab nobis cognoverant et, quos clam de exercitu habebant captivos, ab eis docebantur; sed nulla ferramentorum copia quae esset ad hunc usum idonea, gladii caespites circumcidere, manibus sagulisque terram exhaurire nitebantur. Qua quidem ex re hominum multitudo cognoscipotuit: nam minus horis tribus milium pedum XV in circitu munitionem perfecerunt reliquisque diebus turres ad altitudinem valli, falces testudinesque, quas idem captivi docuerant, parare
fortification of ten miles in circumference; and during the rest of the days they began to prepare and construct towers of the height of the ramparts, and grappling irons, and mantlets, which the same prisoners had taught them.

XLIII.--On the seventh day of the attack, a very high wind having sprung up, they began to discharge by their slings hot balls made of burnt or hardened clay, and heated javelins, upon the huts, which, after the Gallic custom, were thatched with straw. These quickly took fire, and by the violence of the wind, scattered their flames in every part of the camp. The enemy following up their success with a very loud shout, as if victory were already obtained and secured, began to advance their towers and mantlets, and climb the rampart with ladders. But so great was the courage of our soldiers, and such their presence of mind, that though they were scorched on all sides, and harassed by a vast number of weapons, and were aware that their baggage and their possessions were burning, not only did no one quit the rampart for the purpose of withdrawing from the scene, but scarcely did any one even then look behind; and they all fought most vigorously and most valiantly. This day was by far the most calamitous to our men; it had this result, however, that on that day the largest number of the enemy was wounded and slain, since they had crowded beneath the very rampart, and the hindmost did not afford the foremost a retreat. The flame having abated a little, and a tower having been brought up in a particular place and touching the rampart, the centurions of the third cohort retired from the place in which they were standing, and drew off all their men: they began to call on the enemy by gestures and by words, to enter if they wished; but none of them dared to advance. Then stones having been cast from every quarter, the enemy were dislodged, and their tower set on fire.

XLIV.--In that legion there were two very brave men, centurions, who were now approaching the first ranks, T. Pulbio, and L. Varenus. These used to have continual disputes between them which of them should be preferred, and every year used

[43] Septimo oppugnationis die maximo coorto vento ferventes fusili ex argilla glandes fundis et fervefacta iacula in casas, quae more Gallico stramentis erant tectae, iacere coeperunt. Hae celeriter ignem comprehenderunt et venti magnitudine in omnem locum castrorum distulerunt. Hostes maximo clamore sici parte iam atque explorata victoria turres testudinesque agere et scalis vallum ascendere coeperunt. At tanta militum virtus atque ea praesentia animi fuit, ut, cum undique flamma torrenterunt maximaque telorum multitudine premerentur suo omnia impedimenta atque omnes fortunas conflagrare intellegarent, non modo demigrandi causa de vallo decederet nemo, sed paene ne respiceret quidem quisquam, ac tum omnes acerrime fortissimeque pugnarent. Hic dies nostris longe gravissimus fuit; sed tamen hunc habuit eventum, ut eo die maximus numerus hostium hostium vulneraretur atque interferetur, ut se sub ipso vallo constipaverant recessumque primis ultimi non dabant. Paulum quidem intermissa flamma et quodam loco turri adacta et contingente vallum tertiae cohortis centuriones ex eo, quo stabant, loco recesserunt suosque omnes removerunt, nutu vocibusque hostes, si introire vellent, vocare coeperunt; quorum progredi ausus est nemo. Tum ex omni parte lapidibus coniectis deturbati, turrisque succensa est.

[44] Erant in ea legione fortissimi viri, centuriones, qui primis ordinibus appropinquarent, Titus Pulio et Lucius Vorenus. Hi perpetuas inter se controversias habebant, quinam anteferretur, omnibusque annis de locis summis simultatibus
to contend for promotion with the utmost animosity. When the fight was going on most vigorously before the fortifications, Pulfio, one of them, says, "Why do you hesitate, Varenus? or what [better] opportunity of signalising your valour do you seek? This very day shall decide our disputes." When he had uttered these words, he proceeds beyond the fortifications, and rushes on that part of the enemy which appeared the thickest. Nor does Varenus remain within the rampart, but respecting the high opinion of all, follows close after. Then, when an inconsiderable space intervened, Pulfio throws his javelin at the enemy, and pierces one of the multitude who was running up, and while the latter was wounded and slain, the enemy cover him with their shields, and all throw their weapons at the other and afford him no opportunity of retreating. The shield of Pulfio is pierced and a javelin is fastened in his belt. This circumstance turns aside his scabbard and obstructs his right hand when attempting to draw his sword: the enemy crowd around him when [thus] embarrassed. His rival runs up to him and succours him in this emergency. Immediately the whole host turn from Pulfio to him, supposing the other to be pierced through by the javelin. Varenus rushes on briskly with his sword and carries on the combat hand to hand, and having slain one man, for a short time drove back the rest: while he urges on too eagerly, slipping into a hollow, he fell. To him, in his turn, when surrounded, Pulfio brings relief; and both having slain a great number, retreat into the fortifications amidst the highest applause. Fortune so dealt with both in this rivalry and conflict, that the one competitor was a succour and a safeguard to the other, nor could it be determined which of the two appeared worthy of being preferred to the other.

[45] Quanto erat in dies gravior atque asperior oppugnatio, et maxime quod magna parte militum confecta vulneribus res ad paucitatem defensorum pervenerat, tanto crebriores litterae nuntiique ad Caesarem mittebantur; quorum pars deprehensa in conspectu nostrorum militum cum cruciati necabatur. Erat unus intus Nervius nomine Vertico, loco natus honesto, qui a prima obsidione ad Ciceronem perfugerat suamque ei fidem
Vertico, born in a distinguished position, who in the beginning of the blockade had deserted to Cicero, and had exhibited his fidelity to him. He persuades his slave, by the hope of freedom, and by great rewards, to convey a letter to Caesar. This he carries out bound about his javelin, and mixing among the Gauls without any suspicion by being a Gaul, he reaches Caesar. From him they received information of the imminent danger of Cicero and the legion.

XLVI.--Caesar having received the letter about the eleventh hour of the day, immediately sends a messenger to the Bellovaci, to M. Crassus, questor there, whose winter-quarters were twenty-five miles distant from him. He orders the legion to set forward in the middle of the night and come to him with despatch. Crassus sets out with the messenger. He sends another to C. Fabius, the lieutenant, ordering him to lead forth his legion into the territories of the Atrebates, to which he knew his march must be made. He writes to Labienus to come with his legion to the frontiers of the Nervii, if he could do so to the advantage of the commonwealth: he does not consider that the remaining portion of the army, because it was somewhat farther distant, should be waited for; but assembles about 400 horse from the nearest winter-quarters.

XLVII.--Having been apprised of the arrival of Crassus by the scouts at about the third hour, he advances twenty miles that day. He appoints Crassus over Samoibriva and assigns him a legion, because he was leaving there the baggage of the army, the hostages of the states, the public documents, and all the corn, which he had conveyed thither for passing the winter. Fabius, without delaying a moment, meets him on the march with his legion, as he had been commanded. Labienus, having learnt the death of Sabinus and the destruction of the cohorts, as all the forces of the Treviri had come against him, beginning to fear lest, if he made a departure from his winter-quarters, resembling a flight, he should not be able to support the attack of the enemy, particularly since he knew them to be elated by their recent victory, sends back a letter praestiterat. 

[46] Caesar acceptis litteris hora circiter XI diei statim nuntium in Bellovacos ad M. Crassum quaestorem mittit, cuius hiberna aberat ab eo milia passuum XX; iubet media nocte legione profici celeriterque ad se venire. Exit cum nuntio Crassus. Alterum ad Gaium Fabium legatum mittit, ut in Atrebatium fines legiornem adducat, qua sibi iter faciendum sciebat. Scribit Labieno, si rei publicae commodo facere posset, cum legione ad fines Nerviorum veniat. Reliquam partem exercitus, quod paulo aberat longius, non putat exspectandam; equites circiter quadringentos ex proximis hibernis colligit.

[47] Hora circiter tertia ab antecursoribus de Crassi adventu certior factus eo die milia passuum XX procedit. Crassum Samoibrivae praeficit legionemque attribuit, quod ibi impedimenta exercitus, obsides civitatis, litteras publicas frumentumque omne quod eo tolerandae hiemis causa devexerat reliquebat. Fabius, ut imperatum erat, non ita multum moratus in itinere cum legione occurrit. Labienus interitu Sabini et caede cohortium cognita, cum omnes ad eum Treverorum copiae venissent, veritus, si ex hibernis fugae similem profectionem fecisset, ut hostium impetum sustinere posset, praesertim quos recenti victoria efferri sciret, litteras Caesari remittit, quanto cum periculo legiornem ex hibernis educturus esset; rem gestam in Eburonibus perscribit; docet omnes equitatus peditatusque copias Treverorum tria milia passuum longe ab suis castris consedisse.
to Caesar, informing him with what great hazard he would lead out his legion from winter-quarters; he relates at large the affair which had taken place among the Eburones; he informs him that all the infantry and cavalry of the Treviri had encamped at a distance of only three miles from his own camp.

XLVIII.--Caesar, approving of his motives, although he was disappointed in his expectation of three legions, and reduced to two, yet placed his only hopes of the common safety in despatch. He goes into the territories of the Nervii by long marches. There he learns from some prisoners what things are going on in the camp of Cicero, and in how great jeopardy the affair is. Then with great rewards he induces a certain man of the Gallic horse to convey a letter to Cicero. This he sends written in Greek characters, lest the letter being intercepted, our measures should be discovered by the enemy. He directs him, if he should be unable to enter, to throw his spear with the letter fastened to the thong inside the fortifications of the camp. He writes in the letter, that he having set out with his legions, will quickly be there: he entreats him to maintain his ancient valour. The Gaul apprehending danger, throws his spear as he had been directed. It by chance stuck in a tower, and, not being observed by our men for two days, was seen by a certain soldier on the third day: when taken down, it was carried to Cicero. He, after perusing it, reads it out in an assembly of the soldiers, and fills all with the greatest joy. Then the smoke of the fires was seen in the distance, a circumstance which banished all doubt of the arrival of the legions.


BOOK 6 SUMMARY

Caesar expects more uprisings in Gaul, so begins securing more troops. These extra soldiers not only will strengthen his units, but also will warn Gaul that Rome easily makes up its losses and is never permanently disabled by the loss of a legion in battle. In all, three new legions are formed, double the number of cohorts lost with Sabinus, and Caesar is proud of the resourceful Roman system.

Meanwhile, after Indutiumarus' death, the Treveri continue their attempts to persuade the Germans to join them. Those living nearby refuse, but a few tribes living farther off agree after they are promised money and a pact Caesar learns of this arrangement and suspects that the Nervii, Aduatuci, Menapii, and the Germans on the Gallic side of the Rhine are preparing for war. And when the Senones, conspirators with the Carnutes and other tribes, do not respond to Caesar's rally, he feels that once more he must start his campaign earlier in the year.
Before the end of winter he attacks the Nervii and captures many people and livestock. He gives his troops the booty, has them destroy the fields, then compels the Nervii to surrender and give him hostages. He then moves the legions back to winter quarters for a period of peace. Later, to his proclamation of a spring convention, all tribes come but the Senones, Carnutes, and Treveri — all three of whom he is sure are plotting a rebellion. Strategically, he moves the convention to Lutetia, a town of the Parisii, and under forced march moves his legions toward the Senones.

Acco, leader of the plot, tries to get the Senones assembled for an adequate defense against the Romans, but they move much too quickly. The Senones plead to Caesar through the Aedui and the Carnutes plead through the Remi; both ask for clemency and Caesar demands 100 hostages of each, then closes the convention and begins assembling cavalry. Now he is free to focus his attention on Ambiorix and the Treveri. Wisely, he orders Cavarinus and the Senonian cavalry to come with him so that they will not be able to plot revolt while he is away.

Caesar knows that Ambiorix will not engage in a major battle, so he turns instead to the Menapii, the only tribe in Gaul that hasn't sent deputies, a tribe that has ties with Ambiorix and arrangements with the Germans. The next move is accomplished quickly; Caesar sends the baggage to Labienus, who is with the Treveri, then takes five legions to attack the Menapii. The Menapii, uncoordinated, cannot assemble an army and flee into the wilderness. The Roman force then splits into three sections — Caesar, Gaius Fabius, and Marcus Crassus being the commanders. They burn buildings, capture cattle and people, and force the Menapii to surrender and submit hostages. Before leaving Caesar warns them that he will treat them as enemies if they should aid Ambiorix, then instructs Commius of the Atrebates to guard them. That done, he sets out for the Treveri.

The Treveri, however, have begun to march against Labienus and the legion with which he is wintering and, when they are about fifteen miles away, they discover the two legions Caesar has sent with the baggage. Cautious, they decide to wait for additional German troops. But Labienus discovers the enemy's proximity and sets out to confront them. He takes twenty-five cohorts and some cavalry, and leaves five cohorts with the equipment He first camps across a river from the enemy, but neither is willing to cross and attack, particularly the Treveri who are awaiting reinforcements, so Labienus announces that he is going to move away next day rather than risk an encounter with the expected Germans. This is a psychological maneuver; he knows quite well that some soldiers can be expected to desert to the Treveri camp and tell them of his decision.

That night, he has his soldiers make more noise than usual when they strike camp so that, in the spirit of his plan, the enemy will think that the Romans are leaving in a hurry. And, as the Romans move from their entrenchments, the Treveri attack, just as Labienus had hoped they would. He allows them to advance until they are in a defenseless position, then has his troops suddenly wheel and face the enemy. The Treveri are taken completely by surprise and the Roman cavalry completes the success of the rout. The Treveri make peace with Rome; the Germans hear of the rout and go home, relatives of Indutiomarus who had started the revolt leave, and so command of the state goes to Cingetorix — a man who had remained faithful to Rome.

Caesar now decides to cross the Rhine, for he wants to stop German troops from crossing the river and he also wants to take definite steps concerning Ambiorix. He builds a new bridge and, leaving a guard unit on the Treveri side, takes the army across to the land of the Ubii, who have kept their faith and are not involved in the rebellions against Rome. The Ubii inform him that the Suebi are assembling forces and urging the tribes under them to send troops and horses. They also inform Caesar that the Suebi have pulled back into an immense forest, Bacenis, where they await the Romans.

At this point, Caesar pauses in his narrative to explain that Gaul is divided into parties; homes, districts, and cantons follow this pattern and the leaders of individual units are the men who are believed to have the best judgment. This procedure is used for ritual protection, all the people supporting members of their party when there is danger.

When Caesar came to Gaul the leaders of the two national parties were the Aedui and the Sequani. Since the Sequani were the weaker of the two parties, they allied advantageously with Ariovistus and his Germans. The Aeduan nobility were slaughtered and the Sequani rose to power. Diviciacus left for Rome to bring help, but got none. Then, when Caesar came, matters changed: the Aeduan hostages were returned, their old powers were restored and they were awarded some new ones as reward for alignment with the Romans. The power of the Sequani was no more; their former authority now rested with the Remi, also friends of Caesar. Those tribes that for political reasons could not ally with the Aedui had allied themselves with the Remi; thus the Aedui became the most powerful state and the Remi, the second most powerful. Of the three classes of people in Gaul, there are two having authority: the Druids and the knights. The commoners have no authority and few rights.

The Druids concern themselves with all forms of worship and rites; and with settling disputes, judging crimes, and assigning penalties. Those people who refuse to accept their decisions are banned and given no legal protection. One Druid is chief among them and once a year they all meet in the land of the Carnutes, the center of Gaul, and all Gallic disputes are treated. This manner of rule originated in Britain and those wishing to study its history go to Britain. Druids neither battle nor pay taxes. Although their lot sounds easy, some students spend twenty years in training, memorizing their lore in order to strengthen their powers of memory and to keep their
knowledge secret from the general population. Perhaps their most important doctrine concerns the soul passing into another body when the body dies. For this reason they are not afraid of dying.

The principal job of the knights is defense and offense. According to their status, they have numbers of men under them and the size of these subordinate groups measures their power. They practice sacrifices of all kinds, often human, in order to rid themselves of disease and protect themselves in battle. They prefer to sacrifice criminals in these rituals, but if there are none available, they use innocent men. The most important of their gods is Mercury, and after him Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva, each having a different function as they do in Rome, and after battle, sacrifices of living and non-living things taken in battle are offered to Mars. Anyone hiding or stealing these sacrificial objects is punished by torture. The Gauls believe that they are descended from Dis (the Roman god of the dark underworld) and therefore count time by nights rather than by days. Also, they do not permit sons to be near the father in his role of warrior until the sons have reached military age. It is definitely a man's system: men have absolute power over wives and children and when there is any suspicion concerning a man's death, the wives may be tortured and killed.

A funeral, among these people, is particularly spectacular. A great fire is built and everything for which the deceased cared, even animals, is thrown into it. Until a generation ago, Caesar says, they also burned slaves and dependents.

The Germans, unlike the people of Gaul, have no Druids nor any sacrifices. They accept only gods which they can see: the sun, the moon, and fire. In a similar vein, their secular concepts are also largely physical. Their lives center upon hunting, warfare, and nomadic wandering, and each year the people move elsewhere in order to avoid getting too rooted into the territorial grounds. As for their social codes, in wartime the officers have life and death powers over the people, and in peacetime the local leaders handle all disputes. Refusal to accept appointed leaders amounts to treason.

Returning to his battle narrative, Caesar reports that when the Suebi disappear into the forest, he decides not to pursue but that to delay the enemy's reinforcing themselves, he leaves twelve cohorts under command of Gains Volcatius Tullus on the Ubii side of the bridge. Then, when the crops begin to ripen, he arms and marches against Ambiorix.

He moves his army through the extensive Ardennes forest, then sends Lucius Minucius Basilus forward with the cavalry and cautions them to make no fires — the enemy must not suspect that Caesar's army is approaching.

Basilus moves quickly, catches many men in the fields, and by a stroke of luck comes upon Ambiorix and a small force. Ambiorix by good fortune escapes while his troops hold off the Romans. Then, either because he doesn't have time to assemble his troops or because he fears the main body of the Roman army is closer than it really is, Ambiorix tells his followers to take care of themselves for the present. They agree and go into hiding, but Catuvolcus, a leader of the Eburones, hangs himself.

The Segni and the Condusi, who live between the Eburones and the Treveri, plead to Caesar that they had no part in this war and are not his enemies. His answer recognizes their innocence, but he demands that they send him any Eburones who take refuge in the territory. That done, he says, he will do them no harm. Caesar then divides his army in three parts and leaves the equipment at Aduatuca, a fort in the territory of the Eburones where Titurius and Aurunculeins had been the previous winter. As guard, he leaves the Fourteenth Legion, one of the most recently enrolled units, under Quintus Tullius Cicero's command. He also leaves Cicero 200 cavalry and decides to send Titus Labienus and Gains Trebonius off on missions. The remaining three legions he takes in pursuit of Ambiorix, promising the garrison that he will return in seven days, when they will need more food. He urges Labienus and Trebonius to return at the same time if they can manage to do so.

The enemy seems to be concentrated in no particular area, but is spread throughout the countryside in small groups, and because Caesar's troops cannot leave safely in small groups themselves, the legions are kept together to avoid ambush.

Because of this situation, Caesar informs neighboring states that they may join in plunder of the Eburones; he would rather these plunderers risk their lives in the woods than risk his own troops; then, too, if a great number come, they will make it easier for him to destroy the Eburones' properties. Naturally many do come.

Across the Rhine, the Germans hear that pillage is going on unhindered, so 2,000 Sugambri horsemen cross the Rhine on rafts 30 miles below Caesar's bridge and capture many prisoners and their cattle. Their greed grows, though, and when Caesar has gone off elsewhere, one of their prisoners tells them that the Romans have left a small garrison at Aduatuca, where all the stores of the Roman army are concentrated. The Germans cannot believe such good news; they hide their newly won booty and start for Aduatuca.

Cicero, meanwhile, follows Caesar's orders during his week of absence and permits no one to leave the camp. But when, on the seventh day, he is no longer sure that Caesar will return, and under pressure from his men, he releases five cohorts to gather grain. In addition, he gives passes to 300 men from other legions to go out as a single group; the decision could not have been more wrong. The Germans arrive, burst forth from the protecting woods toward the rear gate. The Romans are caught like sheep during their sleep. They are barely able to withstand the first attack. The Germans, on the other hand, are quick to realize the advantage they have and
immediately circle the camp, seeking another point of attack. Inside, the Romans cannot decide where to assemble. One says that already they are defeated, another says that the Germans have defeated Caesar and the main army, and all recall fearfully that this is the very spot where Cotta and Sabinus fell. Outside, the Germans hear the uproar and are convinced that no garrison force waits inside.

Publius Sextius Baculus, who had been sick and without food for five days, comes out of his tent and perceives the danger. He arms himself and fights in the gateway alongside the centurions of the cohort on duty. After being severely wounded, he faints and is dragged to safety. The other soldiers prove surprisingly strong and manage to hold the enemy off as each man moves to his assigned defense position in the entrenchments.

Out in the field, the food gatherers hear the battle noises and send the cavalry forward to investigate, but the unskilled and inexperienced soldiers are confused by the unexpected situation. Perhaps all would have been lost had it not been for the near miracle of Gains Trebonius arriving, breaking through the enemy, and safely reaching camp. When this is accomplished, the Germans decide not to storm the Roman camp and return across the Rhine with only the plunder they had earlier hidden.

The frightened Romans can scarcely believe Gains Volusenus when he tells them that Caesar is nearby and that the army is quite safe. Only Caesar 5 arrival finally quiets them.

Caesar's one complaint is that the men were sent out when they should have been kept inside to guard the equipment. He says that the mischance should not have been allowed to happen, that luck helped the enemy and the Romans. Ironically, the Germans had crossed the Rhine to take advantage of Ambiorix' difficulties and almost helped his cause.

Shortly thereafter Caesar moves out and lays waste to the towns and fields, but the Romans fail to find the wily Gaul, Ambiorix. He continues to elude Caesar's eager troops. Caesar brings the army to Durocortorum, in the territory of the Remi, calls a convention of the Gauls, and has an inquiry into the conspiracy of the Senones and Carnutes. Acco, the rebellious leader, is flogged to death. This accomplished, Caesar assigns the legions to their winter quarters. The general then departs for Italy.

**BOOK 6 ANALYSIS**

Caesar's reason for warring early in the year is twofold: first, an early winter victory would provide a major psychological boost for his troops and also inflict a weighty psychological blow on the enemy forces; second, the Nervii form the western edge of the area under rebellion and, after their conquest, it will be difficult for the others to create alliances because the faithful Remi are stationed between the Senones and the northern tribes. Caesar therefore calls a convention of the tribal leaders so that he can get an estimate of the extent of the rebellion. Then he moves against the Senones, hoping to isolate the Carnutes, who are farther south.

With the surrender of the Senones and the Carnutes the south is under control, and Caesar moves with more confidence against Ambiorix. Ambiorix, however, is not willing to fight yet and Caesar uses the time to rid himself of another enemy force, the Menapii. Thus he has very quickly secured much of the area surrounding the Treveri's territory, in fact all except the parts on the German side to the north and west. It is for this reason that Caesar moves west from the Menapii; this will sever the last connecting territories.

In this book, besides observing Caesar's guile, it is well to note Labienus, who demonstrates initiative and intelligence as he handles difficult positions; moving out, for example, with twenty-five cohorts and some cavalry, then maneuvering and tricking the Treveri into a corner reflects real cunning and results in a victory for the Roman forces.

The Suebi tribe, mentioned in this book, has troubled Rome previously. Their warfare in Germany, for instance, sent the Tencteri and Usipetes into Gaul. Caesar, therefore, is anxious to engage them in battle and especially anxious to face Ambiorix.

A large part of this book is taken up by description of customs and territories and, although this material is interesting we wonder how true some parts of it are. If the Gauls really believed, for instance, that the soul passes from body to body (transmigration of souls), why are they so quick to break and run when they are in danger? It is possible that Caesar includes the material concerning the Gauls so that the chapters on the customs of the Germans will impress us even more and we will realize that the Germans are indeed fierce warriors. Perhaps, however, he merely feels the need of giving additional information about his trip to Germany; since the Suebi have departed, he has little except these facts to report concerning that portion of his trip.

Caesar's real interest seems focused toward one goal: the defeat and death of Ambiorix. But while he is looking for him, the general is disobeyed. Cicero, remember, creates chaos. His reason is not that of an ambitious subordinate, however. Cicero merely loses faith in Caesar's promise and, particularly, he is worried that his general will not return in time to secure vital food and grain. Cicero's lack of
faith seems tragic, however, as the Germans chance on the Roman camp when its soldiers are most widely dispersed. But such extreme circumstances often call forth the most noble in man, and perhaps one of the most important acts saving the Romans was the brave example of the weak and ailing Baculus.

Caesar, of course, is justifiably angry. The entire encounter would not have taken place had it not been for lack of faith. The general is also aware that all of his army's equipment was in jeopardy, not merely Cicero's command.

We might also note that very little happens in this year. The early battles are over quickly, then Caesar goes after the Suebi and does not meet them, looks for Ambiorix, and fails also to encounter him. The primary action is the defense of the Roman camp, a skirmish that should never have occurred had Caesar's orders been followed.

The Gallic Wars
By Julius Caesar
Commentary: Many comments have been posted about The Gallic Wars.
Download: A text-only version is available for download.

Chapter 13

Throughout all Gaul there are two orders of those men who are of any rank and dignity: for the commonality is held almost in the condition of slaves, and dares to undertake nothing of itself, and is admitted to no deliberation. The greater part, when they are pressed either by debt, or the large amount of their tributes, or the oppression of the more powerful, give themselves up in vassalage to the nobles, who possess over them the same rights without exception as masters over their slaves. But of these two orders, one is that of the Druids, the other that of the knights. The former are engaged in things sacred, conduct the public and the private sacrifices, and interpret all matters of religion. To these a large number of the young men resort for the purpose of instruction, and they [the Druids] are in great honor among them. For they determine respecting almost all controversies, public and private; and if any crime has been perpetrated, if murder has been committed, if there be any dispute about an inheritance, if any about boundaries, these same persons decide it; they decree rewards and punishments; if any one, either in a private or public capacity, has not submitted to their decision, they interdict him from the sacrifices. This among them is the most heavy punishment. Those who have been thus interdicted are esteemed in the number of the impious and the criminal: all shun them, and avoid their society and conversation, lest they receive some evil from their contact; nor is justice administered to them when seeking it, nor is any dignity bestowed on them. Over all these Druids one presides, who possesses supreme authority among them. Upon his death, if any individual among the rest is pre-eminent in dignity, he succeeds; but, if there are many equal, the election is made by the suffrages of the Druids; sometimes they even contend for the presidency with arms. These assemble at a fixed period of the year in a consecrated place in the territories of the Carnutes, which is reckoned the central region of the whole of Gaul. Hither all, who have disputes, assemble from every part, and submit to their decrees and determinations. This institution is supposed to have been devised in Britain, and to have been brought over from it into Gaul; and now those who desire to gain a more accurate knowledge of that system generally proceed thither for the purpose of studying it.

Chapter 14

The Druids do not go to war, nor pay tribute together with the rest; they have an exemption from military service and a dispensation in all matters. Induced by such great advantages, many embrace this profession of their own accord, and [many] are sent to it by their parents and relations. They are said there to learn by heart a great number of verses; accordingly some remain in the course of training twenty years. Nor do they regard it lawful to commit these to writing, though in almost all other matters, in their public and private
transactions, they use Greek characters. That practice they seem to me to have adopted for two reasons; because they neither desire their doctrines to be divulged among the mass of the people, nor those who learn, to devote themselves the less to the efforts of memory, relying on writing; since it generally occurs to most men, that, in their dependence on writing, they relax their diligence in learning thoroughly, and their employment of the memory. They wish to inculcate this as one of their leading tenets, that souls do not become extinct, but pass after death from one body to another, and they think that men by this tenet are in a great degree excited to valor, the fear of death being disregarded. They likewise discuss and impart to the youth many things respecting the stars and their motion, respecting the extent of the world and of our earth, respecting the nature of things, respecting the power and the majesty of the immortal gods.

Chapter 15

The other order is that of the knights. These, when there is occasion and any war occurs (which before Caesar's arrival was for the most part wont to happen every year, as either they on their part were inflicting injuries or repelling those which others inflicted on them), are all engaged in war. And those of them most distinguished by birth and resources, have the greatest number of vassals and dependents about them. They acknowledge this sort of influence and power only.

Chapter 16

The nation of all the Gauls is extremely devoted to superstitious rites; and on that account they who are troubled with unusually severe diseases, and they who are engaged in battles and dangers, either sacrifice men as victims, or vow that they will sacrifice them, and employ the Druids as the performers of those sacrifices; because they think that unless the life of a man be offered for the life of a man, the mind of the immortal gods can not be rendered propitious, and they have sacrifices of that kind ordained for national purposes. Others have figures of vast size, the limbs of which formed of osiers they fill with living men, which being set on fire, the men perish enveloped in the flames. They consider that the oblation of such as have been taken in theft, or in robbery, or any other offense, is more acceptable to the immortal gods; but when a supply of that class is wanting, they have recourse to the oblation of even the innocent.

Chapter 17

They worship as their divinity, Mercury in particular, and have many images of him, and regard him as the inventor of all arts, they consider him the guide of their journeys and marches, and believe him to have great influence over the acquisition of gain and mercantile transactions. Next to him they worship Apollo, and Mars, and Jupiter, and Minerva; respecting these deities they have for the most part the same belief as other nations: that Apollo averts diseases, that Minerva imparts the invention of manufactures, that Jupiter possesses the sovereignty of the heavenly powers; that Mars presides over wars. To him, when they have determined to engage in battle, they commonly vow those things which they shall take in war. When they have conquered, they sacrifice whatever captured animals may have survived the conflict, and collect the other things into one place. In many states you may see piles of these things heaped up in their consecrated spots; nor does it often happen that any one, disregarding the sanctity of the case, dares either to secrete in his house things captured, or take away those deposited; and the most severe punishment, with torture, has been established for such a deed.

Chapter 18

All the Gauls assert that they are descended from the god Dis, and say that this tradition has been handed down by the Druids. For that reason they compute the divisions of every season, not by the number of days, but of nights; they keep birthdays and the beginnings of months and years in such an order that the day follows the night. Among the other usages of their life, they differ in this from almost all other nations, that they do not permit their children to approach them openly until they are grown up so as to be able to bear the service of war; and they regard it as indecorous for a son of boyish age to stand in public in the presence of his father.

Chapter 19

Whatever sums of money the husbands have received in the name of dowry from their wives, making an estimate of it, they add the same amount out of their own estates. An account is kept of all this money conjointly, and the profits are laid by: whichever of them shall have survived [the other], to that one the portion of both reverts together with the profits of the previous time. Husbands have power of life and death over their wives as well as over their children: and when the father of a family, born in a more than commonly distinguished rank, has died, his relations assemble, and, if the circumstances of his death are suspicious, hold an investigation upon the wives in the manner adopted toward slaves; and, if proof be obtained, put them to severe torture, and kill them. Their funerals, considering the state of civilization among the Gauls, are magnificent and costly; and they cast into the fire all things, including living creatures, which they suppose to have been dear to them when alive; and, a little before this period, slaves and dependents, who were ascertained to have been beloved by them, were, after the regular funeral rites were completed, burnt together with them.
Chapter 20

Those states which are considered to conduct their commonwealth more judiciously, have it ordained by their laws, that, if any person shall have heard by rumor and report from his neighbors any thing concerning the commonwealth, he shall convey it to the magistrate, and not impart it to any other; because it has been discovered that inconsiderate and inexperienced men were often alarmed by false reports, and driven to some rash act, or else took hasty measures in affairs of the highest importance. The magistrates conceal those things which require to be kept unknown; and they disclose to the people whatever they determine to be expedient. It is not lawful to speak of the commonwealth, except in council.

De Bello Gallico Book VI Chapters 13-20

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<tr>
<th>English</th>
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<tr>
<td>XIII.--Throughout all Gaul there are two orders of those men who are</td>
<td>[13] In omni Gallia eorum hominum, qui aliqo sunt numero atque honor,</td>
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<td>of any rank and dignity: for the commonality is held almost in the</td>
<td>genera sunt duo. Nam plebes paene servorum habetur loco, quae nihil</td>
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<td>condition of slaves, and dares to undertake nothing of itself and</td>
<td>audet per se, nullo adhibetur consilio. Plerique, cum aut aere</td>
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<td>is admitted to no deliberation. The greater part, when they are</td>
<td>alieno aut magnitudine tributorum aut inuria potentiorem premuntur, sese</td>
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<td>pressed either by debt, or the large amount of their tributes, or the</td>
<td>in servitutem dicant nobilibus: in hos eadem omnia sunt iura, quae</td>
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<td>oppression of the more powerful, give themselves up in vassalage to</td>
<td>dominis in servos. Sed de his duobus generibus alterum est druidum,</td>
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<td>the nobles, who possess over them the same rights without exception</td>
<td>alterum equitum. Illi rebus divinis intersunt, sacrificia publica ac</td>
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<td>as masters over their slaves. But of these two orders, one is that</td>
<td>privata procurant, religiones interpretantur: ad hos magnus adulescentium</td>
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<td>of the Druids, the other that of the knights. The former are engaged</td>
<td>numerus disciplinae causa concurririt, magnoque hi sunt apud eos</td>
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<td>in things sacred, conduct the public and the private sacrifices, and</td>
<td>honore. Nam fere de omnibus controversiis publicis privatisque</td>
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<td>interpret all matters of religion. To these a large number of the</td>
<td>constitunt, et, si quod est admissum facinus, si caedes facta, si de</td>
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<td>young men resort for the purpose of instruction, and they [the Druids]</td>
<td>hereditate, de finibus controversia est, idem decernunt, praemia</td>
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<td>are in great honour among them. For they determine respecting almost</td>
<td>poenasque constituunt; si qui aut privatus aut populus eorum decreto</td>
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<td>all controversies, public and private; and if any crime has been</td>
<td>non stetit, sacrificiiis interdicit. Haec poena apud eos est gravissima.</td>
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<td>perpetrated, if murder has been committed, if there be any dispute</td>
<td>Quibus ita est interdictum, hi numero impiorum ac sceleratorum habentur,</td>
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<td>about an inheritance, if any about boundaries, these same persons</td>
<td>his omnes decedunt, aditum sermonsque defugiunt, ne quid ex contagione</td>
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<td>decide it; they decree rewards and punishments if any one, either in</td>
<td>incommodo accipiant, neque his petentibus ius redditur neque honos ullus</td>
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<td>a private or public capacity, has not submitted to their decision,</td>
<td>communicatur. His autem omnibus druidibus praest unus, qui summam inter</td>
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<td>they interdict him from the sacrifices. This among them is the most</td>
<td>eos habet auctoritatem. Hoc mortuo aut si qui ex religuis excellit</td>
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<td>heavy punishment. Those who have been thus interdicted are esteemed</td>
<td>dignitate succedit, aut, si sunt plures pares, suffragio druidum,</td>
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<td>in the number of the impious and the criminal: all shun them, and</td>
<td>nonnunquam etiam armis de principatu contendunt. Hi certo anni tempore</td>
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<td>avoid their society and conversation, lest they receive some evil</td>
<td>in finibus Carnutum, quae regio totius Galliae media habetur, consistunt</td>
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<td>from their contact; nor is justice administered to them when seeking</td>
<td>in loco consecratu. Huc omnes undique, qui controversias habent,</td>
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<td>it, nor is any dignity bestowed on them. Over all these Druids one</td>
<td>conveniunt eorumque decretis iudiciisque parent. Disciplina in</td>
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<td>presides, who possesses supreme authority among them. Upon his death,</td>
<td>Britannia reperta atque inde in Galliam translatae esse existimatur, et</td>
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<td>if any individual</td>
<td>nunc, qui diligentius eam rem cognoscere volunt, plerumque illo</td>
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XIV.--The Druids do not go to war, nor pay tribute together with the rest; they have an exemption from military service and a dispensation in all matters. Induced by such great advantages, many embrace this profession of their own accord, and [many] are sent to it by their parents and relations. They are said there to learn by heart a great number of verses; accordingly some remain in the course of training twenty years. Nor do they regard it lawful to commit these to writing, though in almost all other matters, in their public and private transactions, they use Greek characters. That practice they seem to me to have adopted for two reasons; because they neither desire their doctrines to be divulged among the mass of the people, nor those who learn, to devote themselves the less to the efforts of memory, relying on writing; since it generally occurs to most men, that, in their dependence on writing, they relax their diligence in learning thoroughly, and their employment of the memory. They wish to inculcate this as one of their leading tenets, that souls do not become extinct, but pass after death from one body to another, and they think that men by this tenet are in a great degree excited to valour, the fear of death being disregarded. They likewise discuss and impart to the youth many things respecting the stars and their motion, respecting the extent of the world and of our earth, respecting the nature of things, respecting the power and the majesty of the immortal gods.

[14] Druides a bello abesse consuerunt neque tributa una cum reliquis pendunt; militiae vacationem omniumque rerum habent immunitatem. Tantis excitati praemiis et sua sponte multi in disciplinam conveniunt et a parentibus propinquisque mittuntur. Magnum ibi numerum versuum ediscere dicuntur. Itaque annos nonnulli vicenos in disciplina permanent. Neque fas esse existimant ea litteris mandare, cum in reliquis fere rebus, publicis privatisque rationibus Graecis litteris utantur. Id mihi duabus de causis instituisse videntur, quod neque in vulgum disciplinam efferri velint neque eos, qui discunt, litteris confisos minus memoriae studere: quod fere plerisque accidit, ut praesidio litterarum diligentiam in perdiscendo ac memoriam remittant. In primis hoc volunt persuadere, non interire animas, sed ab aliis post mortem transire ad alios, atque hoc maxime ad virtutem excitari putant metu mortis neglecto. Multa praeterea de sideribus et atque eorum motu, de mundi ac terrarum magnitudine, de rerum natura, de deorum immortalium vi ac potestate disputation et iuventuti tradunt.
XV.--The other order is that of the knights. These, when there is occasion and any war occurs (which before Caesar’s arrival was for the most part wont to happen every year, as either they on their part were inflicting injuries or repelling those which others inflicted on them), are all engaged in war. And those of them most distinguished by birth and resources, have the greatest number of vassals and dependants about them. They acknowledge this sort of influence and power only.

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[16] Natio est omnis Gallorum admodum dedita religionibus, atque ob eam causam, qui sunt affecti gravioribus morbis quique in proeliiis periculisque versantur, aut pro victimis homines immolant aut se immolaturos vovent administrisque ad ea sacrificia druidibus utuntur, quod, pro vita hominis nisi hominis vita reddatur, non posse deorum immortalium numen placari arbritrantur, publiceque eiusdem generis habent instituta sacrificia. Alii immani magnitudine simulacra habent, quorum contexta viminibus membra vivis hominibus complent; quibus succensis circumventi flamma examinantur homines. Supplicia eorum qui in furto aut in latrocinio aut aliqua noxia sint comprehensi gratiora dis immortalibus esse arbritrantur; sed, cum eius generis copia defecit, etiam ad innocentium supplicia descendunt.

vow those things they shall take in war. When they have conquered, they sacrifice whatever captured animals may have survived the conflict, and collect the other things into one place. In many states you may see piles of these things heaped up in their consecrated spots; nor does it often happen that any one, disregarding the sanctity of the case, dares either to secrete in his house things captured, or take away those deposited; and the most severe punishment, with torture, has been established for such a deed.

XVIII.--All the Gauls assert that they are descended from the god Dis, and say that this tradition has been handed down by the Druids. For that reason they compute the divisions of every season, not by the number of days, but of nights; they keep birthdays and the beginnings of months and years in such an order that the day follows the night. Among the other usages of their life, they differ in this from almost all other nations, that they do not permit their children to approach them openly until they are grown up so as to be able to bear the service of war; and they regard it as indecorous for a son of boyish age to stand in public in the presence of his father.

XIX.--Whatever sums of money the husbands have received in the name of dowry from their wives, making an estimate of it, they add the same amount out of their own estates. An account is kept of all this money conjointly, and the profits are laid by: whichever of them shall have survived [the other], to that one the portion of both reverts, together with the profits of the previous time. Husbands have power of life and death over their wives as well as over their children: and when the father of a family, born in a more than commonly distinguished rank, has died, his relations assemble, and, if the circumstances of his death are suspicious, hold an investigation upon the wives in the manner adopted towards slaves; and if proof be obtained, put them to severe torture, and kill them. Their funerals, considering the state of civilization among the Gauls, are magnificent and costly; and they cast into the fire all things, including living creatures, which they suppose to have been dear to them.

[18] Galli se omnes ab Dite patre prognatos praedicant iudicem et propter eum ab druidibus proditum dicunt. Ob eam causam spatia omnis temporis non numero dierum sed noctium finiunt; dies natales et mensum et annorum initia sicut observant ut noctem dies subseguatur. In reliquis vitae institutis hoc fere ab reliquis differunt, quod suos liberos, nisi cum adoleverunt, ut munus militiae sustinere possint, palam ad se adire non patiuntur filiumque puerili aetate in publico in conspectu patris adsistere turpe ducunt.

[19] Viri, quantas pecunias ab uxoribus dotis nomine acceperunt, tantas ex suis bonis aestimatione facta cum dotibus communicat. Huius omnis pecuniae coniunctim ratio habetur fructusque servatur: uter eorum vita superarit, ad eum pars utriusque cum fructibus superiorum temporum pervenit. Viri in uxores, sicuti in liberos, vitae necisque habent potestatem; et cum paterfamiliae illustri loco natus descessit, eius propinqui conveniunt et, de morte si res in suspicione venit, de uxoribus in servilem modum quaestionem habent et, si compertum est, igni atque omnibus tormentis excruciatas interficiunt. Funera sunt pro cultu Gallorum magnifica et sumptuosa; omniaque quae vivis cordi fuisset arbitrantur in ignem inferunt, etiam animalia, ac paulo supra hanc memoriam servi et clientes, quos ab eis dilectos esse constabat, iustis funeribus confectis una cremabantur.
when alive; and, a little before this period, slaves and dependants, who were ascertained to have been beloved by them, were, after the regular funeral rites were completed, burnt together with them.

XX.--Those states which are considered to conduct their commonwealth more judiciously, have it ordained by their laws, that, if any person shall have heard by rumour and report from his neighbours anything concerning the commonwealth, he shall convey it to the magistrate and not impart it to any other; because it has been discovered that inconsiderate and inexperienced men were often alarmed by false reports and driven to rash acts, or else took hasty measures in affairs of the highest importance. The magistrates conceal those things which require to be kept unknown; and they disclose to the people whatever they determine to be expedient. It is not lawful to speak of the commonwealth, except in council.

BOOK 7 SUMMARY

Arriving in Italy, Caesar learns that the senate has decreed that all young men of military age should be drafted, so he decides to enroll soldiers in Cisalpine Gaul. The natives of Transalpine Gaul, meanwhile, hear of his decision and spread rumors that the general is detained in Rome and cannot join his army. Their hope is to stimulate to rebellion those Gauls who object to Roman rule. The rumors do just that.

The various chiefs meet and their first task is to make sure Caesar is kept from joining his army, which seems easy enough with the legions in winter quarters and the knowledge that they will not leave without their commander-in-chief. There is risk in the plan, but all chiefs present agree that it is better to die in battle than fail to try to regain their previous power and liberty. Agreements are made accordingly: the Carnutes offer to begin the warfare, and since the tribes all want to keep their plans secret, they realize that they cannot take the risk of exchanging hostages, so all take an oath of honor not to betray one another. A date is set for the beginning of their campaign and the meeting is adjourned.

On the agreed date, the Carnutes, led by Cotuatus and Conconnetodumnus, strike. They attack Cenabum, kill the Romans there and plunder the Roman property stored in the town. News of the slaughter travels quickly — as quickly as the rebels. The Gauls pass news of the war from field to field and by evening the story of the attack reaches Arverni, about 160 miles away. There, reaction is immediate. Vercingetorix, son of the former Gallic chieftain, arouses his men to assemble and is soon joined by many other adventurers and soldiers. His uncle, Gobannitio, and the other chiefs try to stop him, but unable to dissuade him, they finally drive him from town.

Vercingetorix, however, gathers more recruits, and in turn drives the officials out of the state. At once he is called "King" by his supporters and soon manages alliance with other tribes, all of which agree that he is best suited to be their chief. Then, to insure more than verbal agreement from them, Vercingetorix orders that hostages, soldiers, and weapons be delivered to him; his command is most strict and non-compliers are mutilated or killed. Thus he soon raises a large army and sends Lucterius with a part of his army to the land of the Ruteni; the others he takes to battle against the Bituriges. The Bituriges fearfully ask the Aedui for help and the Aedui, on the advice of the Romans, send infantry and cavalry. These troops go only as far as the Loire river, stay a few days, then come home.
and report to the Romans that they fear the Bituriges too greatly to attempt war. There is, of course, no way of knowing whether they said this because it was true or because of treachery.

Caesar hears of the attacks and, because the difficulties in Rome are solved, he heads for Transalpine Gaul. But he is faced with a dilemma: if he sends for his legions, they might be attacked without their general and, if he goes to them, he might be betrayed by the tribes to whom he entrusts his personal safety.

Lucterius, meanwhile, unites the Ruteni with the Arverni, then brings the Nitiobriges and the Gabali into the alliance. Caesar places troops among the Ruteni in the province and among others who border on enemy territory and orders many of the new troops he brings with him from Rome to gather in the territory of the Helvii, bordering on the Arverni. Lucterius is thus stopped and Caesar moves into the land of the Helvii, but is confronted by a mountain range, the Cevennes, separating the Arverni from the Helvii. At this time of year the range is covered by deep banks of snow, but Caesar decides to move ahead and by a massive effort, his troops clear a way through six feet of snow and reach the Arverni, who are caught completely by surprise. Naturally they had thought the snow was impenetrable. They send for Vercingetorix to save them now that the war has gone against them, and he turns from his battle with the Bituriges and speeds toward the Arverni.

Caesar has anticipated just such a move. He pauses for two days, then leaves his army and pretends to be out seeing to further inductions. While he is gone, he leaves young Brutus in charge with orders to let the cavalry operate as far and wide as possible and says that he will return in three days. Then, by forced marches, Caesar gets to Vienne and with the cavalry he had sent there, he continues marching day and night straight through the lands of the Aedui into the Lingones, where two legions are in their winter quarters. Any plots the Aedui might have had are aborted by the rapidity with which he joins his legions. He groups his legions together before the Arverni learn of his plans, but Vercingetorix' messengers bring news to their general and he moves his army back to the Bituriges, deciding to attack Gorgobina, a city of the Boii.

Vercingetorix' retreat troubles Caesar. If he keeps his legions in one place, defections mount and soon all Gaul will revolt as it becomes apparent that Rome is powerless to stop the rebellions. And, if Caesar moves his legions out too early, there will be difficulty maintaining the grain supply. Of the two, then, Caesar decides that the lack of food is preferable to the disgrace of not being able to protect his allies, so he tells the Aedui to transport the supplies for his army, then informs the Boii that he is on the march.

Next day he reaches Vellaunodunum, which he decides to capture so there will be no enemy at his rear and so the food supplies can move safely after him. Caesar then moves to the town of Cenabum, whose inhabitants have heard of the siege of Vellaunodunum and have prepared their garrison. Caesar, however, arrives there in two days, before their preparations are complete, but he arrives too late in the day to begin battle, so he camps for the night and posts two legions under arms in case the people try to escape by crossing the Loire. As he suspected, just before midnight, the men of the town begin to slip away. As soon as Caesar is informed, he has the town's gates burned and sends in the waiting legions. The town is quickly taken; few of the enemy manage to escape, and Caesar orders his men to plunder and burn the town, then moves his army across the river to the borders of the Bituriges.

Hearing that Caesar is cutting a bloody path toward him, Vercingetorix leaves the attack against the Boii and turns to meet the Romans. But Caesar plans one more conquest before dealing with Vercingetorix. He assaults the city of Noviodunum and has little trouble claiming another victory. But, while the residents are fulfilling Caesar's demands on them, the vanguard of Vercingetorix' army is sighted. No longer are the residents of Noviodunum as fearful of the Romans; they take up arms again and try to close their gates; manning their walls at the same time, they hope to reclaim their city from the Roman invaders.

Caesar's troops withdraw safely from the city, and plot moves against the mightier foe rapidly approaching. Caesar's first maneuver is to send his cavalry to meet that of the enemy. They encounter some difficulty, however, and Caesar is forced to send 400 German horsemen as support. The Gauls then break rank and retreat with heavy losses.

Inside the gates of Noviodunum, the people panic. Seeing that mighty Caesar is victorious, they seize those whom they think roused them to battle and bring them to Caesar, pleading for his acceptance of their surrender. Caesar obliges, then moves on toward Avaricum, the largest and best fortified of the Bituriges' towns. Here, he feels, the states of the Bituriges will come again under his control if he can capture Avaricum.

After losing three cities, Vercingetorix calls a convention of his followers and tells them their tactics must be changed; they must prevent the Romans from getting forage, a fairly easy task at this time of year when there is virtually no forage in the fields; everything has been cut and placed within the homesteads. And, since the Gauls have many horsemen, they can easily outnumber and surround Roman foraging parties. The plan is accepted and, for the common good, private property rights vanish — all towns and homes in the foraging area are to be burned. The Gauls hope to survive only because they have the cooperation of the local tribes. They hope desperately that the Romans will not be able to stay in the area if there is a great scarcity of food or perhaps even better, that the Romans will go far afield and be easy to pick off. As a final measure, any town not secure enough to defend itself is to be burnt. The plan is harsh, but the alternative in defeat is harsher: Families will be made slaves and soldiers will be slaughtered.
As the towns are destroyed, there is much mourning, but the pain of loss is compensated for by the hope of recovering their losses by overcoming the Romans. During the burning, there is debate concerning the burning of Avaricum — the finest city in all Gaul — and although Vercingetorix strongly believes that it too should be destroyed, he finally yields to the arguments defending the city’s survival.

The day for war nears and Vercingetorix camps some sixteen miles from Avaricum so that his scouts can keep him informed. Caesar’s foraging parties are kept under surveillance and whenever any are widely scattered, Vercingetorix orders them attacked. Caesar, meanwhile, prepares to attack the town with a ramp and towers. But because the Boii have little grain and the Aedui are of little help in providing grain, Caesar’s troops must endure several days without grain; on other days they have only cattle captured in distant villages, but in spite of this, morale remains high. Caesar offers to give up the siege if the men are too troubled by the lack of food, but the Romans refuse, preferring temporary hunger to dishonor. Too, they are especially anxious to avenge those Romans who were killed at Cenahum.

Caesar learns that Vercingetorix has moved nearer Avaricum because he is out of forage and that he plans an ambush for the next day. Moving quickly by night, the Roman general reaches the enemy’s camp by morning, but he is unable to take it by surprise. They too have an able intelligence staff and have learned of Caesar’s approach and have hidden the wagons and baggage in nearby dense woods. Now, grouped together on high ground, they wait.

Caesar’s defense is immediate. He orders the packs piled and the men to ready their weapons. Wary of sudden attack, though, Caesar explains to his men that the enemy has an advantage of position and, rather than appear rash, he moves the troops back to camp and prepares for the siege of the town.

Vercingetorix’ followers are less trusting and accuse their leader of treachery; he moved their camps near the Romans, then went off with the cavalry and left the camp without a commander. The Romans seized this opportunity and moved closer to the city. Vercingetorix replies that it was they who had insisted on moving the camp, and that they had no need of horses on marshy ground. Furthermore, he had not left them a commander because he did not want to risk someone else’s enthusiasm launching them all into an impromptu battle with the Romans. If the Romans moved by chance, he says, then the Gauls may thank fortune, and if they moved because of an informer, the Gauls should thank the informer—now they know how few in number the Romans are and that they are reluctant to fight Vercingetorix. If they wish, he continues, they can take back the title of king they have given him, but he asks them to consider whether or not they have profited from his leadership.

Vercingetorix then brings forward Roman prisoners whom he has tortured and who, he believes, will support his theories. These men, however, have been instructed by Caesar to say that the Roman army is weakened by hunger and that Caesar has decided to withdraw if he is not successful in three days. Vercingetorix boasts that he and he alone is responsible for this; how, then, dare his men accuse him of treachery? Trust is reestablished and his men praise him for such loyalty and intelligence. Their next move is to send 10,000 men into the town. If victory is to be theirs, Avaricum must be held.

By various contrivances, meanwhile, the Gauls in town attempt to undo the siege apparatus assembled by Caesar’s troops. They try to undermine the ramp and set it afire, and attempt to kill the soldiers doing the building. They also build up the scaffolding on their walls to keep it on a level with the Roman turrets.

Gallic walls, it is now explained, are made in overlapping units, filled with rubble on the inside and covered by large stones on the outside. This is particularly ingenious because, once overlapped, the whole wall is reinforced and cannot be battered or pulled down. In addition, the stones protect it from fire. But, in spite of the Gallic counter-measures, the Romans manage within 25 days to build a ramp 330 feet wide and 80 feet high.

Late one night the Romans see smoke coming from the ramp and realize that the enemy has set it afire from a tunnel. They rush to save the structure, but are confronted by the enemy rushing from two gates at once; at the same time men on the wall begin to hurl pitch and burning wood onto the ramp. There is much confusion, but as always Caesar has two legions in the bivouac ready for such emergencies and he also has the construction relief crews, if need arises. Fighting continues throughout the night. The enemy fights with new hope because they see burning the Roman turrets that once gave cover to the working parties. But one link in their defense fails: one of the grease and pitch throwers loses his position on the wall and the Romans are quick to overpower the opening. Fires are finally put out and fighting stops. The Gauls try to escape during the night and reach Vercingetorix’ camp but are once again unsuccessful, for the men of the town are given away by the screams and moans of their wives, begging them not to leave.

Caesar, meanwhile, is sure of success; in only a short time the town will be his. And, next day, as a heavy rain drenches his legions, he observes that the guard on the wall is less than usual. The time is right for his plan: he orders the men at work to slacken their speed. In the meantime, he instructs the men behind the mantlets to prepare themselves. Then Caesar offers prizes to those who mount the wall first and, that done, gives the signal, and the troops charge the wall. The Gauls are panic-stricken. They form in wedges in the town’s open places, ready to fight when the Romans come down the walls, but the Romans fail to descend. They stay atop the wall and
call for more Romans to join them. The townspeople then fear they will have absolutely no way of escape if they wait any longer, so they throw away their weapons and run to the far side of the town. Some are killed there as they crush through the narrow gates and others are killed by the cavalry waiting outside for them. A few, probably 800, manage to get to Vercingetorix, but the Romans troops kill the rest.

Vercingetorix has the escapees assigned to their separate tribal camps along his lines. He fears their coming into the main camp and starting a mutiny. He relates in a conference that the Romans have conquered by strategy, and by skill in laying siege, not by courage and, furthermore, no defense of the town was ever agreed to by him; thus the disaster is only due to the ignorance of the Bituriges. He will, he says, make up for the loss by bringing to their side the rest of Gaul; the combination will be unbeatable!

As promised, Vercingetorix attempts to get the other Gauls to join the war. He orders each state to supply certain numbers of soldiers and requests that all archers be brought to him. His forces grow rapidly. Teutomatus, king of the Nitiobriges, whose father Ollovico had been a friend of Rome, joins Vercingetorix and brings with him a large cavalry force, some his own people and others hired from Aquitania.

Caesar, meantime, spends a few days in Avaricum, letting his army feast on the supplies they find there, but before he can formulate battle plans, the Aedui come for help concerning a matter of internal politics. For a year, two men — Convictolitavis and Cotus — have both claimed legal right as chief magistrate, and the state is divided, each man having his following. Only Caesar can settle the dispute.

Caesar is hesitant to leave the war, but knows that if the Aeduan dispute is not settled, the losing party will probably join Vercingetorix. Thus he travels to the Aedui, hears the conflicting claims and makes his decision: Cotus must give up his claim; Convictolitavis is the legally elected magistrate. He then urges the Aedui to forget all disputes and concentrate on the war. He reminds them that there will be reward once it is over. He also tells them to send him all their horsemen plus 10,000 infantry troops, which he needs to guard his grain supply. That done, he sends Labienus with four legions against the Senones and the Parisii; the other six he takes to Gergovia in the country of the Arverni.

Vercingetorix is notified of Caesar's plans and destroys all bridges along the river Allier, which forms the line of Caesar's march. The enemy general, puffed with pride, marches down the other side. The two armies thus move in parallel columns down opposite sides of the river.

The enemy intends to keep the Romans from building bridges to span the river, but Caesar sees the danger in their strategy. He stops to consider and camps in a thick wood. Next day he keeps two legions hidden and has the rest of his men march out, spacing the intervals so they will appear to the enemy to be the same number of troops as the day before. Luckily, their camp is near one of the bridges that Vercingetorix has destroyed and when the legions have departed and Vercingetorix' troops have followed on the other side, Caesar orders the bridge rebuilt. The job is enthusiastically completed and two legions cross the river. They next find a safe camp and send for the remainder of the army.

Caesar reaches Gergovia in five days. The town is on a great height and is difficult to approach, so he knows he cannot take it by storm. On the other hand, he does not want to attempt a blockade until he secures his own grain supply. Vercingetorix, meanwhile, situates his army along a ridge near the town. Each morning, he meets with the various chiefs in council, then exercises the troops.

Convictolitavis is seemingly ungrateful for Caesar's decision. He allows himself to be bribed by the Arverni and shares the bribe with Litavicus and his brothers, telling them that the Aedui are the only force preventing the victory of Gaul; if the Aedui join the rebels, the Romans will be beaten. His decision seems traitorous, for after Roman defeat, an even brighter future is promised for the Aeduan king. The brothers agree to join the plot and they set to work to plan Caesar's defeat.

Litavicus, they decide, will make the initial move. He takes many troops with him, and when they are about 30 miles from Gergovia he stops them and tells them that many Aeduans have been put to death by the Romans and that, to gain revenge and safety, they must join the Arverni at Gergovia. They then send messages to the various chiefs among the Aedui and try to rouse them with the same lies.

Two young men are with the train — Eporedorix, who has been born to rank and influence, and Viridomarus, who has been raised to his high position on Diviciacus' recommendation. In the dispute over the magistracy they were on opposing sides. Now, however, Eporedorix reports Litavicus' plans to Caesar and begs that he not allow the plots of these young traitors to destroy the friendship between Rome and the Aeduans. Caesar is greatly disturbed, for he has always favored the Aedui and he immediately marches four legions out of camp. He leaves Gains Fabius in charge of the two legions left to garrison the camp, and orders the arrest of Litavicus' brothers, but they have fled. He pushes his troops until they see the column of Aedui, then sends the cavalry ahead to stop them and orders that there be no killing. He has Eporedorix and Viridomarus move up with the horsemen so that their people will see that they have not been murdered. The troops see the two men and realize that Litavicus has lied. The wily leader and his dependents escape, however, before they can be dealt with. The others beg for mercy. Caesar informs the Aeduan state that he might easily have put the
column to death, but that he chose to show mercy. Then he allows his army a night rest of three hours before moving back to Gergovia.

Halfway there, messengers from Fabius report that the camp has been attacked by a full force of invaders and that many of the defenders have been wounded. Fabius expects another attack on the following day. With great effort, Caesar's troops arrive in camp before sunrise.

The Aeduans who have not heard that Litaviccus was a traitor act on his first advice and, according to the initial plans, plunder and kill many Roman citizens in their midst and enslave many others.

Convictolitavis encourages this, assuming that once started they will continue in their crimes. They pledge safe passage to Marcus Aristius, saying that he may leave the town of Cabillonum, and that the traders who had settled there must also go, but as soon as they start out, the Aedui attack and take all equipment and baggage, then blockade them for a day and a night. After many have been killed on both sides, the Aedui bring up reinforcements.

While the battle rages, a messenger arrives and reports to the Aedui that their army is in Caesar's power. They immediately flee to Aristius, claiming that the state had nothing to do with all that has happened, and they order an inquiry. They also confiscate the property of Litaviccus and his brothers and send deputies to Caesar to clear themselves. But, because they have committed great crimes, they are afraid that they will be severely dealt with. Thus they secretly consider war and send deputies to other states. Caesar hears of these moves, but tells their deputies that he will not have his goodwill toward the Aedui swayed by the ignorance of the common people, for he fears a greater rebellion in Gaul and wants to pull back from Gergovia and concentrate his forces again; most of all, he does not want his departure to look like a retreat.

Caesar then notices that the hill opposite his forces is undefended and learns from enemy deserters that Vercingetorix has pulled the defenders off that area in order to fortify another hill, the loss of which would cut off his troops from escape and forage. So, just after midnight, Caesar sends his cavalry there with instructions to be extra noisy in their movements. At daybreak he has the muleteers disguise themselves as cavalry and ride around the hills. This is, of course, seen from the town and the muleteers are mistaken for the real cavalry. Caesar then sends one legion in the same direction, stops it part way, and hides it in the woods. The Gauls become suspicious and bring all their force to the area to defend it. Caesar's bait is effective. He sees now that the enemy's camp is empty, so moves his men from the larger to the smaller camp and tells the commanders to keep the troops under control because everything depends on speed and surprise. When he gives the signal to move, he also sends the Aedui under his command up another side of the hill.

Halfway up the hill is a stone wall built by the Gauls and behind it their camps are grouped closely together. At the signal, the Roman troops quickly cross the wall and take three camps. The capture is so fast that Teutomatus, king of the Nitiobriges, barely escapes.

Satisfied with his strategy, Caesar orders that the retreat be sounded. The Tenth Legion, which he had accompanied on the charge, stops as instructed, but the others do not hear the trumpet and they continue charging. Their commanders attempt to restrain them, but the troops are excited at the prospect of an easy victory. They charge the town's wall. Women climb atop the wall and with bared breasts plead for mercy, for they have heard that the women and children at Avaricum were killed. Lucius Fabius, a centurion in the Eighth Legion, has sworn to be first to climb the wall and is assisted up by three of his men.

The Gauls, who have been decoyed to the other side of town, hear the shouting and return to the side where the Romans are attacking. The Romans are tired by their long charge and, unfortunately, are also outnumbered. Caesar sees that his men are fighting with the odds against them and sends a message to Titus Sextius, who has been left to guard the smaller camp. He is to bring his troops to the foot of the hill and stop the enemy if they pursue the Roman troops.

The battle continues at close quarters, the enemy depending on position and numbers, the Romans on their bravery. The Aedui which Caesar had sent out earlier appears on the Romans' right flank and the Romans mistake them for enemy troops. Lucius Fabius and his three men are killed and thrown from the wall. Marcus Petronius, a centurion in the same legion, tries to cut down a gate but is overwhelmed. He tells his men to leave, that he cannot save himself, but perhaps he can save them.

The Romans are indeed in trouble, but the Tenth Legion prevents the Gauls from pursuing the harried soldiers and, when they reach level ground, they turn and face the enemy. Vercingetorix decides that it is time to lead his men back inside the fortifications and the day ends. Caesar, surveying the remains of the battle, finds that almost 700 Romans are missing. Next day the Roman general calls a parade and reprimands the troops for failing to obey orders; he describes the disadvantages of being positioned on unfavorable ground and, although he admires their courage, he stresses that bravery does not substitute for discipline and self-restraint. After the upbraiding, he reminds them that they should never consider the enemy braver than they simply because the enemy has won a skirmish on unfavorable ground.
There are a few more skirmishes during the next few days, but no major battles because Vercingetorix cannot be lured to level ground. Caesar feels the skirmishes have reestablished his troops' confidence and so moves camp to the territory of the Aedui. The enemy does not pursue, and in three days the Roman army reaches the river Allier, rebuilds the bridge and crosses over. There Caesar is greeted by the Aeduians Viridomarus and Eporedorix. They report that Litaviccus has gone with his cavalry to incite the Aedui and say that they must go and try to get ahead of him so that they can maintain the loyalty of the Aeduan people. Caesar feels that their departure will do more harm than good but does not want to seem distrustful, so gives them permission to go, reminding them of all he has done for the Aedui, and that he freed them from oppression and humiliation.

Noviodunum is an Aeduan town, well situated on the banks of the Loire. In it, Caesar has placed all the Gallic hostages, his grain, his money, most of his army's equipment, and many horses that have been purchased in Spain and Italy. When Eporedorix and Viridomarus arrive, they find ruins. Litaviccus has been received by the Aedui at Bibracte, has been joined by Convictolitavis, and has sent representatives to make a treaty with Vercingetorix. The two young men have killed the Roman troops and traders at Noviodunum, divided the money and horses, and sent the hostages to Bibracte; then the town was burned so that it would be of no use to the Romans.

Knowing that he must fight a major battle before the enemy can assemble larger forces, Caesar moves quickly. He cannot change his original plan for it would be difficult to get through the mountains, but he is anxious about Labienus and his legions. By long marches he gets to the Loire and finds a place shallow enough for the troops to wade across, then with the cavalry helping break the force of the river, the entire army gets safely across. The enemy is surprised at Caesar's determined efforts and are totally confused. Caesar then finds sufficient supplies for his troops and decides first to march toward the Senones.

Labienus, meanwhile, leaves the new recruits at Agedincum to guard the equipment and moves his four legions to Lutetia (Paris), but is pitted against Camulogenus, an old but superior soldier. The latter decides to take advantage of a marsh flowing into the Seine to keep the Romans from crossing the river. Labienus, because he cannot build a road through the marsh, moves his army back to Metiosedum, where he seizes fifty boats, ties them together to form a bridge and moves his troops so quickly across that Metiosedum is taken without a fight. Then he repairs the bridge the enemy has earlier cut down and marches to Lutetia. The enemy hears of his approach, burns the town and all bridges approaching it, and moves to a position across the Seine from Labienus.

Rumors of Caesar's difficulties spread and Labienus decides his problem is more than merely winning this battle. He must also get his army safely to Agedincum. But his current task is made doubly difficult because he is pressed on one side by the brave Bellovaci and on the other by Camulogenus’ army. Between his legion and their equipment is the Seine. In desperation, he assigns each of the fifty boats to a Roman knight and orders that at night they move in silence four miles downstream and wait for him there. He then leaves the five cohorts he thinks are least reliable as camp guard and has the other five cohorts in his legion move upstream at midnight. They are to take the baggage with them and make much noise. He sends the small boats upstream and instructs them to make much noise also. Later, he marches downstream with his other three legions and goes to meet the boats. There, they overcome the enemy scouts and cross the river safely. Just before dawn, however, the enemy gets reports of the Roman movements and decides that the legions are probably crossing in three places. Camulogenus therefore splits his army into three parts; a guard is left opposite the Roman camp, a small group goes upstream as far as the smaller boats; the rest go against Labienus.

Labienus bravely encourages his soldiers, then joins in the combat himself. The company manages to rout the enemy unit facing it, but on the other side of the line of battle, the Twelfth Legion faces a particularly brave enemy that refuses to retreat even though many are killed and wounded. Camulogenus, the leader of the enemy force, commands the group. As quickly as possible the tribunes of the Seventh Legion bring their troops around to Camulogenus' rear, but even so he refuses to back up. He fights until all his men, including himself, are annihilated. Labienus then returns to Agendincum, picks up the baggage, and proudly marches to meet Caesar.

The Aeduan revolt spreads. Hostages that were taken from the Romans are used as leverage to get other states to join the conspiracy; many hostages even are executed to increase the pressure on reluctant states. The Aedui ask Vercingetorix to join them to make plans for the war, but insist that they must have supreme command. All the Gallic leaders then convene at Bibracte to discuss the dispute and the body votes that Vercingetorix continue as leader.

The Remi and Lingones do not attend this meeting for they are still friends of Rome. Nor do the Treveri attend, for they are too far distant, and are at war with the Germans. The Aedui are distressed at being forced to follow Vercingetorix, but are bound to their allies; thus Eporedorix and Viridomarus unwillingly obey the chosen leader.

Vercingetorix first orders hostages from the other states and requires 15,000 horsemen to assemble. He commands the Gauls to destroy all their property so that the Romans will find no forage. He further asks the Aedui and the Segusiavi to supply 10,000 infantry and 800 cavalry. These he sets under the command of Eporedorix' brother, and sends them to fight the Allobroges. Other groups are sent against other tribes.
Twenty-two cohorts drafted from the province are set to oppose the enemy. The Helvii attempt to fight the enemy but are finally conquered and their chief, Gaius Valerius Donnotaurus is killed. The remaining Helvii then take refuge in their towns. Caesar knows that the enemy has superior cavalry and that he cannot get help from the province or Italy, so he sends for cavalry and infantry from the German tribes with whom he has made peace. He finds the German horses, unfortunately, not good enough for his purposes, so takes the horses away from the Romans and gives them to the German horsemen.

Vercingetorix assembles many of his troops about ten miles from the Romans, then tells his commanders that the Romans are fleeing, but that they will return and says that they must attack them en route and shame them by taking their equipment. His men are enthusiastic and swear an oath that they will not return home until they pass twice through Caesar’s column.

In a cavalry battle the next day, the united Romans and the German cavalry manage to kill great numbers and put to flight many more. Sizable units captured include Coton and other generals, including Cavarillus and Eporedorix. Distressed that his cavalry has been destroyed, Vercingetorix begins to move the rest of his army toward Alesia, a town of the Mandubii. Caesar secures his baggage on a hill, then leaves two legions to guard it while he takes the rest of the army in pursuit. His soldiers kill 3,000 of the enemy’s rear guard; the next day Caesar sets up camp near Alesia, knowing that the enemy has been terrified by the loss of such great numbers of men.

The stronghold of Alesia is atop a hill, well protected by natural obstacles, with a plain in front of the town and steep hills on all other sides. On the east the Gauls set up their line. While construction of siege works is underway, a cavalry battle disrupts the peace and the Romans begin to falter. Caesar sends in the Germans to join his troops, but not before setting legions in front of his camp to prevent a sudden attack. The enemy are quickly put to flight and the Germans pursue them all the way to their wall. There, like sheep herded into a fold, the enemy is trapped. They cannot manage entry through their small gate openings and many are killed by the German swordsmen.

Vercingetorix is forced then to send all his horsemen away before the Romans have blocked escape routes and he asks the men to go and recruit all new troops possible; he reminds them of the services he has rendered them and says that if they fail 80,000 troops will die. He has food for only a little over thirty days. He moves his forces inside the city to await the new troops from Gaul.

Caesar has reports of the enemy’s plans and sets his men to work building trenches, ramps, battlements, and other siege works. Because a large part of his force is occupied getting food and timber, he reinforces his defense lines with sharpened stakes; anyone charging them will be instantly impaled.

This completed, Caesar builds another set of entrenchments at his rear so that he cannot be surrounded. He then orders his troops to call in a thirty-day supply of grain and forage.

The Gauls decide against gathering together all men available, for that would strain the food supply and also create a force difficult to discipline. Still, their number is vast — almost 300,000 troops are requisitioned. The Bellovaci, who intend to fight the Romans themselves, do not make up their quota of 10,000 but because of their regard for Commius they do send 2,000. When 8,000 cavalry and 250,000 infantry are collected, the army is organized and officers appointed. In charge are Commius, Viridomarus, Eporedorix, and Vercassivellaunus. Among their first decisions is this: they decide that those too sick, young, or old to fight should leave the town and that the Mandubii, who own the town, also should leave, along with the other noncombatants. These people go to the Roman lines and beg to be taken in as slaves, but Caesar refuses to admit them.

Commius and the others reach Alesia and set up their position a mile from the Roman camp. They spread their horsemen and footmen over the plain before the town. Caesar, meanwhile, sets up defensive units on both sides of his entrenchment and sends the cavalry out to fight. The Gauls have archers mixed with their cavalry and these, for a time, check the Romans. The Gauls are overjoyed for it seems that their cavalry is sure to win. The men on both sides fight even more bravely than usual because they know they are being watched by both sides, and the fight lasts from noon to sunset before the Germans mass and charge so violently that the enemy must retreat. Then, when their cavalry has fled, the archers are surrounded and killed.

The following night the Gauls attack the Roman camp and when the troops in town hear the shouting, Vercingetorix leads them out to join in the fighting. The Romans, however, are prepared and take their assigned posts, fire their missiles, and hold off the Gauls. Because of the darkness, it is hard to tell how much damage is being done, but many men are injured and killed. Marcus Antonius and Caius Trebonius, in charge of the defense of the sections under attack, take soldiers from areas not being attacked and have them move behind the defenders to help wherever possible.

The Gauls, thirsting for victory, sweep closer to the Roman lines and, in the darkness, fall into the traps Caesar had prepared; others are injured by pikes thrown from the walls. They do not get through the trench and, at daybreak, decide to pull back. On the other side, Vercingetorix’ troops from the town fill the Roman trenches in order to cross over, but this task takes too long and by the time they are ready, they find that their allies on the far side of the Roman camp have already retreated; thus, they too must withdraw.
After these two defeats, the Gauls reconsider their plans. One end of the Roman camp, they discover, leads to a hill so great that the Romans were unable to include it within their entrenchment. The area seems vital so the Gauls send 60,000 of their bravest soldiers there in secret. Vercassiveilanus, commander of the forces, hides the men behind the hill just before dawn and at noon he moves against the Roman camp. At the same time the Gallic cavalry attacks the Roman lines farther down the plain.

Vercingetorix, in the city, sees the Romans under full attack, so moves out with all the machinery his men need to cross the Roman trenches. Suddenly the Romans find themselves fighting on all fronts; they must spread out more than is militarily desirable. Caesar finds a place for his command post and sends support to the units in most difficulty, feeling that if they manage to hold off this attack, they will be victors.

Caesar believes that the most difficult fighting is probably centered on a hill, which permits the enemy to charge down a slope with a great number of troops, so he sends Labienus there with six cohorts. Then he goes forward to encourage his troops.

The Gauls on the city side of the Roman lines empty the Roman turrets by firing missiles, then fill in the trenches and tear down the breastworks by pulling them over with large hooks, but all is not theirs yet Caesar sends young Brutus with troops, and Gaius Fabius with even more, then goes himself with still more until the enemy is beaten back. He then moves to aid Labienus, who has pulled back four cohorts and sent the horsemen around the wall to attack the rear of the enemy units who harass the hill side of the Roman entrenchment.

Both sides see that Caesar is coming to Labienus' aid and that he is wearing a flashing scarlet cape; the general has entered the thick of battle. Then, suddenly, the enemy is aware that the Roman cavalry has come up behind them, so they try to run, but the cavalry kills great numbers. The townspeople, seeing the slaughter, pull their troops back and had Caesar's soldiers not been so exhausted by the day's battle, they might have destroyed the entire enemy army at that point.

That night the cavalry goes after the retreating Gauls, catches the rear guard and kills or captures many. The rest of the enemy forces disperse to their respective states.

Vercingetorix calls a council and says he will do whatever they think best: they may kill him to please the Romans or they may surrender and present him to the enemy alive. Caesar's decision is this: he orders all weapons surrendered and tells the Gauls to bring their chiefs out. He takes all of the enemy prisoner, including Vercingetorix. The Arverni and the Aedui are not held, for he still hopes eventually to gain their loyalty.

He then goes to the Aedui and accepts their submission to Rome. The Arverni send representatives and agree to do the same. Many hostages are then taken and the legions are sent into winter quarters. Once more, when the dispatches of Caesar's mighty victories reach Rome, the senate proclaims a public thanksgiving of twenty days.

BOOK 7 ANALYSIS

This is the longest book in the Gallic Wars and it describes the great revolt of most of the Gallic tribes. Tribes which Caesar has fought earlier, and many with whom he has been at peace, combine and try their luck against the mighty Roman general. It is here that we are able to see how delicate is the balance of political control in Gaul and how great is the responsibility of the governor responsible for peace. In other books, the rebellions are generally restricted to a single area at a time, but here the revolt is general, including even the usually reliable Aedui.

The revolt begins when the Gauls hear of the political turmoil in Rome. They obviously think that Caesar will be unable to leave Rome to return to the army and that the army will be ineffectual without him. Thus they want to ready their forces in secret and so do not exchange hostages, which would reveal that coalition was being accomplished. Instead a solemn oath is taken.

We can be fairly sure that many of the Gallic leaders involved are interested in personal power rather than political freedom for their people. This seems to be the case with Vercingetorix, and it certainly will be the case later with the Aeduans. Thus one of the most difficult problems facing Caesar is the ease with which one ambitious or dissatisfied local politician can incite an otherwise peaceful state to rebellion. In Vercingetorix' case, the chiefs of the tribe are opposed to his plans, but he manages to organize his own army, dispose of the chiefs, and revolt against Rome.

It should be noted, however, that not all the tribes revolt freely. Some of the tribes that join the rebellion do not even wish to be included in the fracas, but are forced into it by circumstances. The Bituriges, for example, would have remained on Caesar's side had not the Adenans failed to help them.
It is little wonder that Caesar is accorded heroic stature, especially after one considers the deeds recorded in this book. Clearing a roadway through six feet of snow in the Cevennes mountains is a massive feat when one considers that it had to be done by manual labor. And by doing what the enemy had considered impossible, Caesar strikes fear into the enemy. He quickly gets his army together and, though matters are still dangerous, he is able to move with striking effect. He takes Cenabum by being ready for anything. His men are waiting; when the men of the town sneak out, the Romans are able to flood inside. All of Caesar's skills — being prepared, moving quickly, and taking advantage — are more important in this book than anywhere else; this widespread Gallic rebellion is his greatest challenge.

The portrait of Vercingetorix is far from that of a villain; he is a professional and recognizes the danger in letting Avaricum stand. And Caesar quite deliberately presents him in this way because if Vercingetorix is shown to be a superior leader; then Caesar's success against him is even more impressive.

The break in the narrative seems necessary and not simply a whim of the writer: Caesar must stop the war to settle the childish dispute among the Aedui. The law is clear and there is no justification for Cotus' attempt to have the office. The diversion, besides providing relief from the battle scenes, also prepares us for the jealousy within the tribe and figures in the betrayal later. The Aedui, as we see when Caesar visits them, are easily confused and led astray, and we are prepared for their irrational attacks on the Romans.

Convictolitavis is bribed, but there is the implication that he is largely influenced by a desire for greater power, for even though he is in office because of Roman authority, he says he would prefer that Rome had to come to the Aedui for assistance rather than vice versa. He is easily swayed and so is his partner Litavicus; both of them are ready to believe any rumor. When Eporedorix reports the events to Caesar, the general realizes that it is not necessary to fight the Aedui. Instead, he simply had Eporedorix and Viridomarus ride out with the troops and let themselves be seen by the Gauls, who immediately return to the Roman side at the sight of the two men.

One of the appealing elements in the Gallic Wars is inclusion of the many Roman tactical errors. When Caesar's troops, for instance, capture a strategic hill of the Gauls, they ruin success by being too enthusiastic and charging against orders. They are so confused, in fact, that after they find themselves in trouble, they are unable to recognize the friendly Aeduan forces that come to help them. Note, too, that later when Caesar chastises them, he makes sure that he also spends much time encouraging them; he knows that a group of soldiers who are beaten, and then told by their leader that it was because of their own foolishness, is not a group that will be an effective fighting force. Thus, after his lecture, he compliments them equally on their bravery and lets them fight a few minor battles to regain their confidence.

Caesar suspects that Eporedorix and Viridomarus will betray him, but he does not want to seem distrustful because he cannot be sure. He merely points out, before letting them ride away, all that he has done for them and their people. He seems, at times, to be almost unduly humane. This quality is also observed when he gives the German horsemen the mounts his men have been using; he wants the Germans to have the best horses available. The Romans are not cavalrymen and the Gauls still with Caesar are no good at cavalry fighting, thus this thoughtfulness is rewarded later when the cavalry is responsible for the breakdown of the enemy forces at Alesia.

The battle at Alesia is perhaps the most involved of all battles described in the Gallic Wars. Caesar's assault position is inside a double ring of fortifications. One side faces the town, the other protects the Roman rear. He is between two enemy forces and knows that his role can shift from attacker to defender if things do not go well, so he must be especially crafty and thus, to make sure an enemy attack cannot reach his lines too quickly, he takes the added precaution of planting traps outside his trench.

This is one of the rare occasions in which one of Caesar's own camps has a deficiency in its construction. The hillside, at the end the enemy attacks, is open because Caesar would have had to enclose the entire hill to complete his entrenchments. This could have been done, but another problem would have presented itself: he would have had to station troops on the other side of the hill to protect that part of the entrenchment, thinning both the ranks facing the city, and those facing the enemy force. As it turns out, the weakness is to his advantage, for the enemy commits itself to attack, and Labienus is able to send the cavalry around behind the enemy force and is successful in disrupting it.

Caesar is most deserving of the twenty-day thanksgiving proclaimed by the senate.
**Gallic War Timeline**

60BC Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus form first triumvirate.

58BC Caesar obtains Cisalpine gaul and Illyricum as his province. Later Transalpine Gaul is added. He is set as proconsul for a period of 5 years.

**March, 58BC** The Helvettii, a Gallic tribe, decides to migrate south, joined by the Raurici, Tulingi, Latovici and the Boii. After pillaging lands of the Sequani and Aedui (tribes friendly to Rome) and attempting to enter Roman territory. Caesar begins his war. Once the Helvettii were dealt with Caeser went on to defeat Ariovistus and his germans which had crossed into Gaul.

57BC Caesar camnpiagns agains the Belgae. Battle of the Sambre- after initial confusion, Caesar's legions go on to defeat the Belgic forces.

56BC Campains against the Venetti, a sea-faring tribe from the northwest.

55BC The German tribes, Usipetes and Tencteri, cross the Rhine and invade Gaul. The Romans beat them back, follow into Germania, lay aste to several towns and return to Gaul. Caesar crosses the Channel and invades southern Britainia with two legions, the X and VII. Having insuficient amn-power, Caeser returns to Gaul.

54BC Caesar returns to Briatania a second time, this time with five legions. He gives up on the venture and returns to fight the rebellion of the Eburones lead by Ambiorix.

53BC Caesar crosses into Germany a second time. Continued fighting with the Eburones. Romans are victorious, but Ambiorix escapes. The Sugambri, a german tribe, invades the land of the Eburones, hoping to claim booty from the already defeated Gauls. When they encountered stiff resistance from the Romans they retreated across the Rhine.

52BC The Great Revolt- Vercingentorix, leader of the Arverni, takes control of the entire rebellion. After their success at Gergovia, they were penned in by the Romans at the town of Alesia. Despite having to fight the Gauls inside the town while being attacked from Gallic relief forces from behind, the Romans prevail through the use of an extensive wall and siege works.

51BC The Carnutes and Belovaci revolt. The Romans lay siege to and capture Uxellodunum. Back in Rome, tensions rise between Caesar and Pompey. The Senate requires Caeser to give up his two of his legions, the I and the XV (the XV was renamed as the III) These legions were supposed to be used for fighting the Parthians, however Pompey just kept them for the impending battle against Caesar.

**GALLIC WARS CHARACTER LIST**

(Roman numerals after names of characters indicate books in which they appear or are mentioned.)

**Acco (VI, VII)** Leader of Senones; plots against Rome.

**Adiatunnus (III)** Commander of Sotiates.

**Ambiorix (V, VI)** Ruler, with Catuvolcus, of the Eburones; deceives and destroys Roman legion commanded by Cotta and Sabinus.

**Andecomborius (II)** Remi emissary to Caesar.

**Antonius, Marcus (VII)** Legatus.

**Ariovistus (I, IV, V, VI)** German king.

**Atrius, Quintus (V)** In command of fleet guard during second expedition to Britain.

**Baculus, Publius Sextius (II, III, VI)** Chief Centurion; hero at Aduatuca, with Galba in the Alps.

**Balventius, Titus (V)** Chief centurion, killed in Ambiorix' trap.
Boduognatus (II) Commander of Nervii in 57 B.C.

Brutus, Decimus (III, VII) Commander of Caesar's fleet in campaign against Veneti.

Caesar, Lucius (VII) Legatus.

Camulogenus (VII) Commander of enemy force at Lutetia.

Cassivellaunus (V) Commander of British force defeated by Caesar's second expedition.

Catuvolcus (V, VI) Leader of Eburones with Ambiorix; commits suicide.

Cavarinus (V, VI) Appointed king of Senones by Caesar; escapes assassination attempt.

Cicero, Quintus Tullius (V, VI, VII) Roman officer who is probably a legatus, although he is never cited by rank by Caesar.

Cimberius (I) Shares command of Suebi with his brother Nasua.

Cingetorix (V) King of one of the districts of Kent.

Cingetorix (V, VI) Disputes for chieftaincy of Treveri with his father-in-law, Indutiomarus, later is made chief by Caesar.

Commius (IV, V, VI, VII) Made king of Atrebates by Caesar; taken prisoner by Britons when Caesar sends him as emissary.

Conconnetodumnus (VII) Shares leadership of Carnutes with Cotuatus during the great rebellion.

Considius, Publius (I) Misinterprets battle situation and causes Caesar to miss an easy victory over the Helvetii.

Convictolitavis (VII) Chief magistrate of Aedui after Caesar arbitrates dispute between him and Cotus.

Cotta, Lucius Aurunculeius (II, IV, V, VI) Legatus, shares command of legion led into Ambiorix' trap by the blunders of Sabinus; killed by the Eburones.

Cotuatus (VII) Leader of Carnutes; with Conconnetodumnus he begins the fighting in the great rebellion of the Gauls.

Cotus (VII) The opponent of Convictolitavis for the Aeduan magistracy in 52 B.C.

Crassus, Marcus Licinius (V, VI) Caesar's quaestor.

Crassus, Publius Licinius (I, II, III) Younger brother of Marcus Crassus; frequently commands legion but not cited as legatus.

Critognatus (VII) An Arvernian; suggests cannibalism as solution to impending food shortage at Alesia.

Diviciacus (I, II, VI, VII) A pro-Roman Aeduan leader, brother of Dumnorix.

Diviciacus (II) King of the Suessiones.

Divico (I) Helvetic leader defeated by Caesar in 58 B.C.

Donnotaurus, Gaius Valerius (VII) Chief of the Helvii; killed by rebels.

Dumnorix (II, V) An Aeduan; plots with Orgetorix and the Helvetii; killed resisting Caesar's troops.

Eporedorix (VII) Aeduan noble who with Viridomarus betrays Caesar.

Eporedorix (VII) Another leading Aeduan having the same name; taken prisoner by Caesar.
Fabius, Gaius (V, VI, VII) Legatus.

Fabius, Lucius (VII) Centurion killed after climbing the wall at Gergovia.

Galba (II) King of the Suessiones.

Galba, Servius (III) In charge of Caesar's troops who open route through the Alps.

Gallus, Marcus Trebius (III) Tribune taken prisoner by coastal Gauls.

Iccius (II) Remi emissary to Caesar.

Indutiomarus (V, VI) A member of the Treveri who foments rebellion.

Labienus, Titus Atius (I-VII) Caesar's legatus pro praetore, the most important of the legati; his intelligence and ability win numerous major battles for the Romans.

Liscus (I) Chief magistrate of the Aedui in 58 B.C.

Litaviccus (VII) Partner of Convictolitavis; subverts Aeduan force by telling lies about Roman murders.

Lucanius (V) Chief centurion killed in Ambiorix' trap.

Lucterius (VII) Cadurci leader who organizes for Vercingetorix.

Mandubracius (V) Appointed ruler of Trinobantes in Britain by Caesar.

Mettius, Marcus (I) With Procillus is sent by Caesar as representative to Ariovistus; taken prisoner.

Nasua (I) Shares kingship of Suebi with Cimberius, his brother.

Orgetorix (I) Helvetian who foments war to take over Gaul; dies before his plans are carried out.

Pedius, Quintus (II) Legatus; nephew of Caesar.

Petrosidius, Lucius (V) Brave standard bearer in legion of Cotta and Sabinus.

Plancus, Lucius Munatius (V) Legatus.

Procillus, Gaius Valerius (I) With Mettius is sent by Caesar as representative to Ariovistus; taken prisoner.

Pullo, Titus (V) Competes with Lucius Vorenus for honor; a centurion.

Rebilus, Gaius Caninius (VII) Legatus.

Reginus, Gaius Antistius (VI, VII) Legatus.

Roscius, Lucius (V) Legion commander.

Rufus Publius Sulpicius (IV, VII) Legatus.

Sabinus, Quintus Titurius (II, III, IV, V, VI) Legatus; believes lies of Ambiorix and leads legion under his and Cotta's command into trap; continues to believe Ambiorix and is murdered.

Sextius, Titus (VI, VII) Legatus.
Silanus, Marcus Brutus (VI) Legatus.

Silius, Titus (III) Tribune taken prisoner by coastal Gauls.

Tasgetius (V) Hereditary prince, made ruler of Carnutes by Caesar; assassinated.

Terrasidius (III) Tribune taken prisoner by coastal Gauls.

Teutomatus (VII) King of Nitiobriges, joins Vercingetorix.

Trebonius, Gaius (VI) Roman knight.

Trebonius, Gaius (V, VI, VII) Legatus of the same name.

Velanius, Quintus (III) Tribune taken prisoner by coastal Gauls.

Vercassivellaunus (VII) Arvernian, cousin of Vercingetorix; one of the leaders in the great rebellions.

Vercingetorix (VII) Arvernian leader; commander of the Gauls and leader of their rebellion against Caesar.

Vertico (V) Nervian of rank; his slave brings Cicero's message to Caesar.

Viridomarus (VII) On Diviciacus' recommendation to Caesar, he is raised to a position of rank; with Eporedorix he betrays the Romans.

Viridovix (III) Chief of Venelli.

Volusenus (IV) Tribune who scouts the coast of Britain.

Vorenus, Lucius (V) Centurion who competes with Titus Pullo for honors.

**THE ROMAN ARMY**

The Roman army was under command of an imperator, here Caesar. The second highest officer was the quaestor, who served as chief-of-staff and quartermaster general; this position in the Gallic War is filled by Marcus Licinius Crassus. The next rank of officers were the legati, men of senatorial rank who were often used as legion commanders by Caesar. Caesar was entitled to ten legati even when he had fewer legions in action. In the period covered by the Gallic Wars, we read about fourteen men named as legati: Marcus Antonius, Lucius Caesar, Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta, Gaius Fabius, Titus Labienus, Quintus Pedius, Lucius Munatius Plancus, Gaius Caninus Rebilus, Gaius Antistius Reginus, Publius Sulpicius Rufus, Quintus Titurius Sabinus, Titus Sextius, Marcus Silanus, and Gaius Trebonius. In addition, there were several officers placed in command of a legion or several legions, men who were not cited by rank but seem to have been fulfilling the role of legatus. A few of these are Cicero, Publius Crassus, and Servius Galba.

Earlier the Roman legion was composed of 6,000 men, but by Caesar's time it seems to have become considerably smaller. The maximum in the Gallic Wars seems to be about 5,000. Sometimes the legions are even smaller — at one point we read that two legions and their accompanying cavalry total only 7,000 men.

In command of each legion, usually, was a legatus. The legion was composed of ten cohorts, each commanded by tribuni militum, military tribunes. Each cohort was composed of six units of 100 men each, each of which was commanded by one of the ordines, centurions. Accompanying each legion, of course, were forces of cavalry and auxiliary foot soldiers. These units were recruited in the field and were commanded by officers titled praefecti.
Julius Caesar, born in 100 B.C. and assassinated March 15, 44 B.C., held almost every position of importance in the Roman government during his lifetime. Among his positions, for example, were: Quaestor in Spain, where he settled both his own and Spain's financial problems (68 B.C.), Aedile (65 B.C.), Pontifex Maximus (63 B.C.), Praetor (62 B.C.), Governor of Further Spain (61 B.C.), member of the Triumvirate with Crassus and Pompey (60 B.C.), Consul and Governor of Cisapline Gaul, Province, and Illyricum (59 B.C.), Dictator (for eleven days, 49 B.C.), Consul, Dictator, and Imperator for life, Consul for the next ten years, then Dictator and Praefectus Morum for life (45 B.C.).

After the formation of the Triumvirate, Caesar spent seven years, from 58 to 51 B.C. fighting in Gaul, Germany, and Britain. During that time, however, the Triumvirate disintegrated. Pompey had married Caesar's daughter, Julia, and after her death (53 B.C.), Caesar's relationship with Pompey was weakened considerably. Also, Crassus was killed while fighting the Parthians (53 B.C.), and there remained only the violent rivalry between Caesar and Pompey. Pompey was leader of the senatorial party, but Caesar was immensely popular with the populace. And, to complicate the feud further, the Senate was afraid of Caesar; it so feared Caesar, in fact, that it tried to persuade him to disband his army. Caesar agreed to do so, but only if Pompey would also give up his. The Senate then responded with an order (illegal) that Caesar must disband his army. But the wily general defied the order and marched across the Rubicon (49 B.C.), and began a civil war that ended when he defeated Pompey on the plains of Parsalus (48 B.C.). After that battle, Caesar warred in Egypt, consorted with Cleopatra, and finally returned to Rome as dictator.

Concerning his Commentaries, in all probability Caesar wrote the accounts on the Gallic War in 52 and 51 B.C., meaning of course that they were published at a particularly opportune time. After Crassus' death (53 B.C.), Caesar was enmeshed in the political struggles that ended in his absolute power, and the image of him revealed by the Commentaries — soldier, statesman, ruler — surely did much to insure the popularity he needed to win. But, though this text may have been prepared for popular consumption, it is still a historical document of major importance, for it was based on Caesar's own notes and battle reports and, in addition, it has been studied for centuries by students of literature and students of war. Both groups have profited by that study.

The secrets of Caesar's great success — speed, supply lines, shrewd military tactics as opposed to brute strength and slaughter — are obvious to anyone who reads the Commentaries. And at the core of his success, probably, is celeritas. Caesar always traveled with amazing rapidity and his store of time saved frequently saved the battle. However, there is another kind of speed that is equally important: often he would make his decisions, act quickly, and gain the advantage of any opportunity that presented itself. An army does not accelerate by simply having its soldiers in good physical condition — there are other matters just as important. One of the themes regularly repeated in the Gallic Wars is the precaution Caesar took to maintain his food supply (and the precautions he took to restrict the enemy's), for he knew that unless supply lines were maintained, his soldiers' bravery and skill would mean nothing.

Caesar's brilliance as a tactician also made a large contribution to his military successes. Notice while reading the Gallic Wars that he usually keeps units in reserve to assist Romans in difficulty or to take advantage of an unexpected opportunity. When he is faced by larger forces, common in most of the major battles, he deliberately maneuvers his troops into a dominating field so that the enemy's larger numbers are less efficient. Also, he often moves his army so that he has to fight only one group of the enemy forces at a time; besides this shrewd maneuvering, Caesar never attacks foolishly and always protects his rear.

**GALLIC WARS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Describe the general structure of the Roman army. What were the names of the different officer ranks?

2. Why did the Romans recruit part of their forces in the field? What kinds of troops were most likely to be brought from Rome? What kinds were recruited in the field?

3. What were the political positions held by Caesar during his career?

4. Why was Caesar so successful as a soldier?

5. What is celeritas? How does it figure in Caesar's successes?

6. Compare the physical conditions affecting the kind of soldier produced by the tribes in Germany and Gaul. Which were better fighters? Why?

7. Why did the Sequani bring the Germans into Gaul? How valid is the argument presented by Ariovistus?
8. Discuss the importance of technology in Caesar's method of warfare.

9. What are most important parts of pre-battle activity for Caesar's troops? Discuss the importance of acquiring grain supply and sending out scouting parties. Show how inadequate attention to food supply can defeat an army. How important is the selection of a campsite?

10. Why does the Senate think Caesar's expedition to Britain is important enough to warrant a twenty-day thanksgiving?

11. Discuss the reasons why Ambiorix is successful in his defeat of the legion commanded by Cotta and Sabinus.


13. Why do the Aedui turn against Caesar in Book VII? What earlier events suggested that this might happen?

14. What are the various motives prompting revolt?

15. The Helvetians never actually attack Caesar in Book I. Why is he justified in moving against them?

16. How many times does Caesar show special favor to Diviciacus? Why does he do this? What are the results of the favors?

17. Give examples of Caesar's ability to take advantage of a sudden change in the situation facing him.

18. Discuss the use of hostages.

19. Discuss the importance of surprise as one of Caesar's basic weapons.

20. Several times Caesar wins battles because deserters to the enemy or prisoners taken by the enemy give mistaken or false information. Discuss how Caesar takes advantage of these situations.

21. The greatest asset of Caesar's army is its tight discipline. Usually a soldier does as he is told. Discuss how breaches of discipline cause near-disasters for Caesar's troops and discuss how the lack of discipline among the enemy permits Caesar's smaller units to win important battles.

22. Why is Caesar unsuccessful in his attempts to take the Veneti by land?

23. Why does Caesar send Galba to open a free road through the Alps?

24. Describe the kind of attack fortification Caesar's troops build when they begin the siege of a town.

25. Why does Caesar go to Britain twice? What are the differences in the two campaigns? How does Caesar's second campaign indicate he has learned much from the first one?

26. Why will Caesar not cross the Rhine by boat?

27. All the Roman commanders except Sabinus refuse to discuss terms with an enemy under arms. Why?

28. Caesar says several times that the Gauls are influenced by unfounded rumor. Give examples and discuss.

29. Who are the Druids? What is the nature of their authority?

30. What starts the general revolt of the Gauls in Book VII?

31. Evaluate the military skill of Vercingetorix.

32. Who are Viridomarus and Eporedorix? Why do they act as they do?

33. Labienus uses decoys to trick Camulogenus at Lutetia. Describe this action.
34. What tribes are involved in the great revolt? How many of them have revolted previously? Are there any differences in their motives for rebelling?

35. What are the steps Caesar takes to draw his army together in the beginning of Book VII?