

# **Julius Caesar's War Commentaries**

Book 7

# Table of Contents

<u>Julius Caesar's War Commentaries</u> .....	1
<u>Book 7</u> .....	1

# Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

## Book 7

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Book 7 – (52 B.C.)

[7.1]Gaul being tranquil, Caesar, as he had determined, sets out for Italy to hold the provincial assizes. There he receives intelligence of the death of Clodius; and, being informed of the decree of the senate, [to the effect] that all the youth of Italy should take the military oath, he determined to hold a levy throughout the entire province. Report of these events is rapidly borne into Transalpine Gaul. The Gauls themselves add to the report, and invent what the case seemed to require, [namely] that Caesar was detained by commotions in the city, and could not, amid so violent dissensions, come to his army. Animated by this opportunity, they who already, previously to this occurrence, were indignant that they were reduced beneath the dominion of Rome, begin to organize their plans for war more openly and daringly. The leading men of Gaul, having convened councils among themselves in the woods, and retired places, complain of the death of Acco: they point out that this fate may fall in turn on themselves: they bewail the unhappy fate of Gaul; and by every sort of promises and rewards, they earnestly solicit some to begin the war, and assert the freedom of Gaul at the hazard of their lives. They say that special care should be paid to this, that Caesar should be cut off from his army before their secret plans should be divulged. That this was easy, because neither would the legions, in the absence of their general, dare to leave their winter quarters, nor could the general reach his army without a guard: finally, that it was better to be slain in battle, than not to recover their ancient glory in war, and that freedom which they had received from their forefathers.

[7.2]While these things are in agitation, the Carnutes declare "that they would decline no danger for the sake of the general safety, and promise" that they would be the first of all to begin the war; and since they can not at present take precautions, by giving and receiving hostages, that the affair shall not be divulged, they require that a solemn assurance be given them by oath and plighted honor, their military standards being brought together (in which manner their most sacred obligations are made binding), that they should not be deserted by the rest of the Gauls on commencing the war.

[7.3]When the appointed day came, the Carnutes, under the command of Cotuatus and Conetodunus, desperate men, meet together at Genabum, and slay the Roman citizens who had settled there for the purpose of trading (among the rest, Caius Fusius Cita, a distinguished Roman knight, who by Caesar's orders had presided over the provision department), and plunder their property. The report is quickly spread among all the states of Gaul; for, whenever a more important and remarkable event takes place, they transmit the intelligence through their lands and districts by a shout; the others take it up in succession, and pass it to their neighbors, as happened on this occasion; for the things which were done at Genabum at sunrise, were heard in the territories of the Arverni before the end of the first watch, which is an extent of more than a hundred and sixty miles.

[7.4]There in like manner, Vercingetorix the son of Celtillus the Arvernian, a young man of the highest power (whose father had held the supremacy of entire Gaul, and had been put to death by his fellow-citizens, for this reason, because he aimed at sovereign power), summoned tobsp; [7.4]There in like manner, Vercingetorix the son of Celtillus the Arvernian, a young man of the highest power (whose father had held the supremacy of entire

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

Gaul, and had been put to death by his fellow-citizens, for this reason, because he aimed at sovereign power), summoned together his dependents, and easily excited them. On his design being made known, they rush to arms: he is expelled from the town of Gergovia, by his uncle Gobanitio and the rest of the nobles, who were of opinion, that such an enterprise ought not to be hazarded: he did not however desist, but held in the country a levy of the needy and desperate. Having collected such a body of troops, he brings over to his sentiments such of his fellow-citizens as he has access to: he exhorts them to take up arms in behalf of the general freedom, and having assembled great forces he drives from the state his opponents, by whom he had been expelled a short time previously. He is saluted king by his partisans; he sends ambassadors in every direction, he conjures them to adhere firmly to their promise. He quickly attaches to his interests the Senones, Parisii, Pictones, Cadurci, Turones, Auleri, Lemovice, and all the others who border on the ocean; the supreme command is conferred on him by unanimous consent. On obtaining this authority, he demands hostages from all these states, he orders a fixed number of soldiers to be sent to him immediately; he determines what quantity of arms each state shall prepare at home, and before what time; he pays particular attention to the cavalry. To the utmost vigilance he adds the utmost rigor of authority; and by the severity of his punishments brings over the wavering: for on the commission of a greater crime he puts the perpetrators to death by fire and every sort of tortures; for a slighter cause, he sends home the offenders with their ears cut off, or one of their eyes put out, that they may be an example to the rest, and frighten others by the severity of their punishment.

[7.5]Having quickly collected an army by their punishments, he sends Lucterius, one of the Cadurci, a man the utmost daring, with part of his forces, into the territory of the Ruteni; and marches in person into the country of the Bituriges. On his arrival, the Bituriges send ambassadors to the Aedui, under whose protection they were, to solicit aid in order that they might more easily resist the forces of the enemy. The Aedui, by the advice of the lieutenants whom Caesar had left with the army, send supplies of horse and foot to succor the Bituriges. When they came to the river Loire, which separates the Bituriges from the Aedui, they delayed a few days there, and, not daring to pass the river, return home, and send back word to the lieutenants that they had returned through fear of the treachery of the Bituriges, who, they ascertained, had formed this design, that if the Aedui should cross the river, the Bituriges on the one side, and the Arverni on the other, should surround them. Whether they did this for the reason which they alleged to the lieutenants, or influenced by treachery, we think that we ought not to state as certain, because we have no proof. On their departure, the Bituriges immediately unite themselves to the Arverni.

[7.6]These affairs being announced to Caesar in Italy, at the time when he understood that matters in the city had been reduced to a more tranquil state by the energy of Cneius Pompey, he set out for Transalpine Gaul. After he had arrived there, he was greatly at a loss to know by what means he could reach his army. For if he should summon the legions into the province, he was aware that on their march they would have to fight in his absence; he foresaw too that if he himself should endeavor to reach the army, he would act injudiciously, in trusting his safety even to those who seemed to be tranquilized.

[7.7]In the mean time Lucterius the Cadurcan, having been sent into the country of the Ruteni, gains over that state to the Arverni. Having advanced into the country of the Nitiobriges, and Gabali, he receives hostages from both nations, and, assembling a numerous force, marches to make a descent on the province in the direction of Narbo. Caesar, when this circumstance was announced to him, thought that the march to Narbo ought to take the precedence of all his other plans. When he arrived there, he encourages the timid and stations garrisons among the Ruteni, in the province of the Volcae Arecomici, and the country around Narbo which was in the vicinity of the enemy; he orders a portion of the forces from the province, and the recruits which he had brought from Italy, to rendezvous among the Helvii who border on the territories of the Arverni.

[7.8]These matters being arranged, and Lucterius now checked and forced to retreat, because he thought it dangerous to enter the line of Roman garrisons, Caesar marches into the country of the Helvii; although mount Cevennes, which separates the Arverni from the Helvii, blocked up the way with very deep snow, as it was the severest season of the year; yet having cleared away the snow to the depth of six feet, and having opened the roads, he reaches the territories of the Arverni, with infinite labor to his soldiers. This people being surprised, because they considered themselves defended by the Cevennes as by a wall, and the paths at this season of the year had never before been passable even to individuals, he orders the cavalry to extend themselves as far as they could, and strike as great a panic as possible into the enemy. These proceedings are speedily announced to Vercingetorix by rumor and his messengers. Around him all the Arverni crowd in alarm, and solemnly entreat

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

him to protect their property, and not to suffer them to be plundered by the enemy, especially as he saw that all the war was transferred into their country. Being prevailed upon by their entreaties he moves his camp from the country of the Bituriges in the direction of the Arverni.

[7.9]Caesar, having delayed two days in that place, because he had anticipated that, in the natural course of events, such would be the conduct of Vercingetorix, leaves the army under pretense of raising recruits and cavalry: he places Brutus, a young man, in command of these forces; he gives him instructions that the cavalry should range as extensively as possible in all directions; that he would exert himself not to be absent from the camp longer than three days. Having arranged these matters, he marches to Vienna by as long journeys as he can, when his own soldiers did not expect him. Finding there a fresh body of cavalry, which he had sent on to that place several days before, marching incessantly night and day, he advanced rapidly through the territory of the Aedui into that of the Lingones, in which two legions were wintering, that, if any plan affecting his own safety should have been organized by the Aedui, he might defeat it by the rapidity of his movements. When he arrived there, he sends information to the rest of the legions, and gathers all his army into one place before intelligence of his arrival could be announced to the Arverni. Vercingetorix, on hearing this circumstance, leads back his army into the country of the Bituriges; and after marching from it to Gergovia, a town of the Boii, whom Caesar had settled there after defeating them in the Helvetian war, and had rendered tributary to the Aedui, he determined to attack it.

[7.10]This action caused great perplexity to Caesar in the selection of his plans; [he feared] lest, if he should confine his legions in one place for the remaining portion of the winter, all Gaul should revolt when the tributaries of the Aedui were subdued, because it would appear that there was in him no protection for his friends; but if he should draw them too soon out of their winter quarters, he might be distressed by the want of provisions, in consequence of the difficulty of conveyance. It seemed better, however, to endure every hardship than to alienate the affections of all his allies, by submitting to such an insult. Having, therefore, impressed on the Aedui the necessity of supplying him with provisions, he sends forward messengers to the Boii to inform them of his arrival, and encourage them to remain firm in their allegiance, and resist the attack of the enemy with great resolution. Having left two legions and the luggage of the entire army at Agendicum, he marches to the Boii.

[7.11]On the second day, when he came to Vellaunodunum, a town of the Senones, he determined to attack it, in order that he might not leave an enemy in his rear, and might the more easily procure supplies of provisions, and draw a line of circumvallation around it in two days: on the third day, ambassadors being sent from the town to treat of a capitulation, he orders their arms to be brought together, their cattle to be brought forth, and six hundred hostages to be given. He leaves Caius Trebonius his lieutenant, to complete these arrangements; he himself sets out with the intention of marching as soon as possible, to Genabum, a town of the Carnutes, who having then for the first time received information of the siege of Vellaunodunum, as they thought that it would be protracted to a longer time, were preparing a garrison to send to Genabum for the defense of that town. Caesar arrived here in two days; after pitching his camp before the town, being prevented by the time of the day, he defers the attack to the next day, and orders his soldiers to prepare whatever was necessary for that enterprise; and as a bridge over the Loire connected the town of Genabum with the opposite bank, fearing lest the inhabitants should escape by night from the town, he orders two legions to keep watch under arms. The people of Genabum came forth silently from the city before midnight, and began to cross the river. When this circumstance was announced by scouts, Caesar, having set fire to the gates, sends in the legions which he had ordered to be ready, and obtains possession of the town so completely, that very few of the whole number of the enemy escaped being taken alive, because the narrowness of the bridge and the roads prevented the multitude from escaping. He pillages and burns the town, gives the booty to the soldiers, then leads his army over the Loire, and marches into the territories of the Bituriges.

[7.12]Vercingetorix, when he ascertained the arrival of Caesar, desisted from the siege [of Gergovia], and marched to meet Caesar. The latter had commenced to besiege Noviodunum; and when ambassadors came from this town to beg that he would pardon them and spare their lives, in order that he might execute the rest of his designs with the rapidity by which he had accomplished most of them, he orders their arms to be collected, their horses to be brought forth, and hostages to be given. A part of the hostages being now delivered up, when the rest of the terms were being performed, a few centurions and soldiers being sent into the town to collect the arms and horses, the enemy's cavalry which had outstripped the main body of Vercingetorix's army, was seen at a distance;

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

as soon as the townsmen beheld them, and entertained hopes of assistance, raising a shout, they began to take up arms, shut the gates, and line the walls. When the centurions in the town understood from the signal—making of the Gauls that they were forming some new design, they drew their swords and seized the gates, and recovered all their men safe.

[7.13]Caesar orders the horse to be drawn out of the camp, and commences a cavalry action. His men being now distressed, Caesar sends to their aid about four hundred German horse, which he had determined, at the beginning, to keep with himself. The Gauls could not withstand their attack, but were put to flight, and retreated to their main body, after losing a great number of men. When they were routed, the townsmen, again intimidated, arrested those persons by whose exertions they thought that the mob had been roused, and brought them to Caesar, and surrendered themselves to him. When these affairs were accomplished, Caesar marched to the Avaricum, which was the largest and best fortified town in the territories of the Bituriges, and situated in a most fertile tract of country; because he confidently expected that on taking that town, he would reduce beneath his dominion the state of the Bituriges.

[7.14]Vercingetorix, after sustaining such a series of losses at Vellaunodunum, Genabum, and Noviodunum, summons his men to a council. He impresses on them "that the war must be prosecuted on a very different system from that which had been previously adopted; but they should by all means aim at this object, that the Romans should be prevented from foraging and procuring provisions; that this was easy, because they themselves were well supplied with cavalry, and were likewise assisted by the season of the year; that forage could not be cut; that the enemy must necessarily disperse, and look for it in the houses, that all these might be daily destroyed by the horse. Besides that the interests of private property must be neglected for the sake of the general safety; that the villages and houses ought to be fired, over such an extent of country in every direction from Boia, as the Romans appeared capable of scouring in their search for forage. That an abundance of these necessaries could be supplied to them, because they would be assisted by the resources of those in whose territories the war would be waged: that the Romans either would not bear the privation, or else would advance to any distance from the camp with considerable danger; and that it made no difference whether they slew them or stripped them of their baggage, since, if it was lost, they could not carry on the war. Besides that, the towns ought to be burned which were not secured against every danger by their fortifications or natural advantages; that there should not be places of retreat for their own countrymen for declining military service, nor be exposed to the Romans as inducements to carry off abundance of provisions and plunder. If these sacrifices should appear heavy or galling, that they ought to consider it much more distressing that their wives and children should be dragged off to slavery, and themselves slain; the evils which must necessarily befall the conquered.

[7.15]This opinion having been approved of by unanimous consent, more than twenty towns of the Bituriges are burned in one day. Conflagrations are beheld in every quarter; and although all bore this with great regret, yet they laid before themselves this consolation, that, as the victory was certain, they could quickly recover their losses. There is a debate concerning Avaricum in the general council, whether they should decide, that it should be burned or defended. The Bituriges threw themselves at the feet of all the Gauls, and entreat that they should not be compelled to set fire with their own hands to the fairest city of almost the whole of Gaul, which was both a protection and ornament to the state; they say that "they could easily defend it, owing to the nature of the ground, for, being inclosed almost on every side by a river and a marsh, it had only one entrance, and that very narrow." Permission being granted to them at their earnest request, Vercingetorix at first dissuades them from it, but afterward concedes the point, owing to their entreaties and the compassion of the soldiers. A proper garrison is selected for the town.

[7.16]Vercingetorix follows closely upon Caesar by shorter marches, and selects for his camp a place defended by woods and marshes, at the distance of fifteen miles from Avaricum. There he received intelligence by trusty scouts, every hour in the day, of what was going on at Avaricum, and ordered whatever he wished to be done; he closely watched all our expeditions for corn and forage, and whenever they were compelled to go to a greater distance, he attacked them when dispersed, and inflicted severe loss upon them; although the evil was remedied by our men, as far as precautions could be taken, by going forth at irregular times' and by different ways.

[7.17]Caesar pitching his camp at that side of the town which was not defended by the river and marsh, and had a very narrow approach, as we have mentioned, began to raise the vineae and erect two towers: for the nature

of the place prevented him from drawing a line of circumvallation. He never ceased to importune the Boii and Aedui for supplies of corn; of whom the one [the Aedui], because they were acting with no zeal, did not aid him much; the others [the Boii], as their resources were not great, quickly consumed what they had. Although the army was distressed by the greatest want of corn, through the poverty of the Boii, the apathy of the Aedui, and the burning of the houses, to such a degree, that for several days the soldiers were without corn, and satisfied their extreme hunger with cattle driven from the remote villages; yet no language was heard from them unworthy of the majesty of the Roman people and their former victories. Moreover, when Caesar addressed the legions, one by one, when at work, and said that he would raise the siege, if they felt the scarcity too severely, they unanimously begged him "not to do so; that they had served for several years under his command in such a manner that they never submitted to insult, and never abandoned an enterprise without accomplishing it; that they should consider it a disgrace if they abandoned the siege after commencing it; that it was better to endure every hardship than to not avenge the names of the Roman citizens who perished at Genabum by the perfidy of the Gauls." They intrusted the same declarations to the centurions and military tribunes, that through them they might be communicated to Caesar.

[7.18]When the towers had now approached the walls, Caesar ascertained from the captives that Vercingetorix after destroying the forage, had pitched his camp nearer Avaricum, and that he himself with the cavalry and light-armed infantry, who generally fought among the horse, had gone to lay an ambuscade in that quarter, to which he thought that our troops would come the next day to forage. On learning these facts, he set out from the camp secretly at midnight, and reached the camp of the enemy early in the morning. They having quickly learned the arrival of Caesar by scouts, hid their cars and baggage in the thickest parts of the woods, and drew up all their forces in a lofty and open space: which circumstance being announced, Caesar immediately ordered the baggage to be piled, and the arms to be got ready.

[7.19]There was a hill of a gentle ascent from the bottom; a dangerous and impassable marsh, not more than fifty feet broad, begirt it on almost every side. The Gauls, having broken down the bridges, posted themselves on this hill, in confidence of their position, and being drawn up in tribes according to their respective states, held all the fords and passages of that marsh with trusty guards, thus determined that if the Romans should attempt to force the marsh, they would overpower them from the higher ground while sticking in it, so that whoever saw the nearness of the position, would imagine that the two armies were prepared to fight on almost equal terms; but whoever should view accurately the disadvantage of position, would discover that they were showing off an empty affectation of courage. Caesar clearly points out to his soldiers, who were indignant that the enemy could bear the sight of them at the distance of so short a space, and were earnestly demanding the signal for action, "with how great loss and the death of how many gallant men the victory would necessarily be purchased: and when he saw them so determined to decline no danger for his renown, that he ought to be considered guilty of the utmost injustice if he did not hold their life dearer than his personal safety." Having thus consoled his soldiers, he leads them back on the same day to the camp, and determined to prepare the other things which were necessary for the siege of the town.

[7.20]Vercingetorix, when he had returned to his men, was accused of treason, in that he had moved his camp nearer the Romans, in that he had gone away with all the cavalry, in that he had left so great forces without a commander, in that, on his departure, the Romans had come at such a favorable season, and with such dispatch; that all these circumstances could not have happened accidentally or without design; that he preferred holding the sovereignty of Gaul by the grant of Caesar to acquiring it by their favor. Being accused in such a manner, he made the following reply to these charges: – "That his moving his camp had been caused by want of forage, and had been done even by their advice; that his approaching near the Romans had been a measure dictated by the favorable nature of the ground, which would defend him by its natural strength; that the service of the cavalry could not have been requisite in marshy ground, and was useful in that place to which they had gone; that he, on his departure, had given the supreme command to no one intentionally, lest he should be induced by the eagerness of the multitude to hazard an engagement, to which he perceived that all were inclined, owing to their want of energy, because they were unable to endure fatigue any longer. That, if the Romans in the mean time came up by chance, they [the Gauls] should feel grateful to fortune; if invited by the information of some one they should feel grateful to him, because they were enabled to see distinctly from the higher ground the smallness of the number of their enemy, and despise the courage of those who, not daring to fight, retreated disgracefully into their camp.

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

That he desired no power from Caesar by treachery, since he could have it by victory, which was now assured to himself and to all the Gauls; nay, that he would even give them back the command, if they thought that they conferred honor on him, rather than received safety from him. That you may be assured," said he, "that I speak these words with truth; – listen to these Roman soldiers!" He produces some camp-followers whom he had surprised on a foraging expedition some days before, and had tortured by famine and confinement. They being previously instructed in what answers they should make when examined, say, "That they were legionary soldiers, that, urged by famine and want, they had recently gone forth from the camp, [to see] if they could find any corn or cattle in the fields; that the whole army was distressed by a similar scarcity, nor had any one now sufficient strength, nor could bear the labor of the work; and therefore that the general was determined, if he made no progress in the siege, to draw off his army in three days." "These benefits," says Vercingetorix, "you receive from me, whom you accuse of treason – me, by whose exertions you see so powerful and victorious an army almost destroyed by famine, without shedding one drop of your blood; and I have taken precautions that no state shall admit within its territories this army in its ignominious flight from this place."

[7.21]The whole multitude raise a shout and clash their arms, according to their custom, as they usually do in the case of him of whose speech they approve; [they exclaim] that Vercingetorix was a consummate general, and that they had no doubt of his honor; that the war could not be conducted with greater prudence. They determine that ten thousand men should be picked out of the entire army and sent into the town, and decide that the general safety should not be intrusted to the Bituriges alone, because they were aware that the glory of the victory must rest with the Bituriges, if they made good the defense of the town.

[7.22]To the extraordinary valor of our soldiers, devices of every sort were opposed by the Gauls; since they are a nation of consummate ingenuity, and most skillful in imitating and making those things which are imparted by any one; for they turned aside the hooks with nooses, and when they had caught hold of them firmly, drew them on by means of engines, and undermined the mound the more skillfully on this account, because there are in their territories extensive iron mines, and consequently every description of mining operations is known and practiced by them. They had furnished, more over, the whole wall on every side with turrets, and had covered them with skins. Besides, in their frequent sallies by day and night, they attempted either to set fire to the mound, or attack our soldiers when engaged in the works; and, moreover, by splicing the upright timbers of their own towers, they equaled the height of ours, as fast as the mound had daily raised them, and countermined our mines, and impeded the working of them by stakes bent and sharpened at the ends, and boiling pitch and stones of very great weight, and prevented them from approaching the walls.

[7.23]But this is usually the form of all the Gallic walls. Straight beams, connected lengthwise and two feet distant from each other at equal intervals, are placed together on the ground; these are mortised on the inside, and covered with plenty of earth. But the intervals which we have mentioned, are closed up in front by large stones. These being thus laid and cemented together, another row is added above, in such a manner, that the same interval may be observed, and that the beams may not touch one another, but equal spaces intervening, each row of beams is kept firmly in its place by a row of stones. In this manner the whole wall is consolidated, until the regular height of the wall be completed. This work, with respect to appearance and variety, is not unsightly, owing to the alternate rows of beams and stones, which preserve their order in right lines; and, besides, it possesses great advantages as regards utility and the defense of cities; for the stone protects it from fire, and the wood from the battering ram, since it [the wood] being mortised in the inside with rows of beams, generally forty feet each in length, can neither be broken through nor torn asunder.

[7.24]The siege having been impeded by so many disadvantages, the soldiers, although they were retarded during the whole time by the mud, cold, and constant showers, yet by their incessant labor overcame all these obstacles, and in twenty-five days raised a mound three hundred and thirty feet broad and eighty feet high. When it almost touched the enemy's walls, and Caesar, according to his usual custom, kept watch at the work, and encouraged the soldiers not to discontinue the work for a moment: a little before the third watch they discovered that the mound was sinking, since the enemy had set it on fire by a mine; and at the same time a shout was raised along the entire wall, and a sally was made from two gates on each side of the turrets. Some at a distance were casting torches and dry wood from the wall on the mound, others were pouring on it pitch, and other materials, by which the flame might be excited, so that a plan could hardly be formed, as to where they should first run to the defense, or to what part aid should be brought. However, as two legions always kept guard before the camp by



## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

Caesar's orders, and several of them were at stated times at the work, measures were promptly taken, that some should oppose the sallying party, others draw back the towers and make a cut in the rampart; and moreover, that the whole army should hasten from the camp to extinguish the flames.

[7.25]When the battle was going on in every direction, the rest of the night being now spent, and fresh hopes of victory always arose before the enemy: the more so on this account because they saw the coverings of our towers burnt away, and perceived, that we, being exposed, could not easily go to give assistance, and they themselves were always relieving the weary with fresh men, and considered that all the safety of Gaul rested on this crisis; there happened in my own view a circumstance which, having appeared to be worthy of record, we thought it ought not to be omitted. A certain Gaul before the gate of the town, who was casting into the fire opposite the turret balls of tallow and fire which were passed along to him, was pierced with a dart on the right side and fell dead. One of those next him stepped over him as he lay, and discharged the same office: when the second man was slain in the same manner by a wound from a cross-bow, a third succeeded him, and a fourth succeeded the third: nor was this post left vacant by the besieged, until, the fire of the mound having been extinguished, and the enemy repulsed in every direction, an end was put to the fighting.

[7.26]The Gauls having tried every expedient, as nothing had succeeded, adopted the design of fleeing from the town the next day, by the advice and order of Vercingetorix. They hoped that, by attempting it at the dead of night, they would effect it without any great loss of men, because the camp of Vercingetorix was not far distant from the town, and the extensive marsh which intervened, was likely to retard the Romans in the pursuit. And they were now preparing to execute this by night, when the matrons suddenly ran out – into the streets, and weeping cast themselves at the feet of their husbands, and requested of them, with every entreaty, that they should not abandon themselves and their common children to the enemy for punishment, because the weakness of their nature and physical powers prevented them from taking to flight. When they saw that they (as fear does not generally admit of mercy in extreme danger) persisted in their resolution, they began to shout aloud, and give intelligence of their flight to the Romans. The Gauls being intimidated by fear of this, lest the passes should be pre-occupied by the Roman cavalry, desisted from their design.

[7.27]The next day Caesar, the tower being advanced, and the works which he had determined to raise being arranged, a violent storm arising, thought this no bad time for executing his designs, because he observed the guards arranged on the walls a little too negligently, and therefore ordered his own men to engage in their work more remissly, and pointed out what he wished to be done. He drew up his soldiers in a secret position within the vineae, and exhorts them to reap, at least, the harvest of victory proportionate to their exertions. He proposed a reward for those who should first scale the walls, and gave the signal to the soldiers. They suddenly flew out from all quarters and quickly filled the walls.

[7.28]The enemy being alarmed by the suddenness of the attack, were dislodged from the wall and towers, and drew up, in form of a wedge, in the market place and the open streets, with this intention that, if an attack should be made on any side, they should fight with their line drawn up to receive it. When they saw no one descending to the level ground, and the enemy extending themselves along the entire wall in every direction, fearing lest every hope of flight should be cut off, they cast away their arms, and sought, without stopping, the most remote parts of the town. A part was then slain by the infantry when they were crowding upon one another in the narrow passage of the gates; and a part having got without the gates, were cut to pieces by the cavalry: nor was there one who was anxious for the plunder. Thus, being excited by the massacre at Genabum and the fatigue of the siege, they spared neither those worn out with years, women, or children. Finally, out of all that number, which amounted to about forty thousand, scarcely eight hundred, who fled from the town when they heard the first alarm, reached Vercingetorix in safety: and he, the night being now far spent, received them in silence after their flight (fearing that any sedition should arise in the camp from their entrance in a body and the compassion of the soldiers), so that, having arranged his friends and the chiefs of the states at a distance on the road, he took precautions that they should be separated and conducted to their fellow countrymen, to whatever part of the camp had been assigned to each state from the beginning.

[7.29]Vercingetorix having convened an assembly on the following day, consoled and encouraged his soldiers in the following words: "That they should not be too much depressed in spirit, nor alarmed at their loss; that the Romans did not conquer by valor nor in the field, but by a kind of art and skill in assault, with which they themselves were unacquainted; that whoever expected every event in the war to be favorable, erred; that it never

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

was his opinion that Avaricum should be defended, of the truth of which statement he had themselves as witnesses, but that it was owing to the imprudence of the Bituriges, and the too ready compliance of the rest, that this loss was sustained; that, however, he would soon compensate it by superior advantages; for that he would, by his exertions, bring over those states which severed themselves from the rest of the Gauls, and would create a general unanimity throughout the whole of Gaul, the union of which not even the whole earth could withstand, and that he had it already almost effected; that in the mean time it was reasonable that he should prevail on them, for the sake of the general safety, to begin to fortify their camp, in order that they might the more easily sustain the sudden attacks of the enemy."

[7.30]This speech was not disagreeable to the Gauls, principally, because he himself was not disheartened by receiving so severe a loss, and had not concealed himself, nor shunned the eyes of the people: and he was believed to possess greater foresight and sounder judgment than the rest, because, when the affair was undecided, he had at first been of opinion that Avaricum should be burnt, and afterward that it should be abandoned. Accordingly, as ill success weakens the authority of other generals, so, on the contrary, his dignity increased daily, although a loss was sustained: at the same time they began to entertain hopes, on his assertion, of uniting the rest of the states to themselves, and on this occasion, for the first time, the Gauls began to fortify their camps, and were so alarmed that although they were men unaccustomed to toil, yet they were of opinion that they ought to endure and suffer every thing which should be imposed upon them.

[7.31]Nor did Vercingetorix use less efforts than he had promised, to gain over the other states, and [in consequence] endeavored to entice their leaders by gifts and promises. For this object he selected fitting emissaries, by whose subtle pleading or private friendship, each of the nobles could be most easily influenced. He takes care that those who fled to him on the storming of Avaricum should be provided with arms and clothes. At the same time that his diminished forces should be recruited, he levies a fixed quota of soldiers from each state, and defines the number and day before which he should wish them brought to the camp, and orders all the archers, of whom there was a very great number in Gaul, to be collected and sent to him. By these means, the troops which were lost at Avaricum are speedily replaced. In the mean time, Teutomarus, the son of Ollovicon, the king of the Nitiobriges, whose father had received the appellation of friend from our senate, came to him with a great number of his own horse and those whom he had hired from Aquitania.

[7.32]Caesar, after delaying several days at Avaricum, and, finding there the greatest plenty of corn and other provisions, refreshed his army after their fatigue and privation. The winter being almost ended, when he was invited by the favorable season of the year to prosecute the war and march against the enemy, [and try] whether he could draw them from the marshes and woods, or else press them by a blockade; some noblemen of the Aedui came to him as ambassadors to entreat "that in an extreme emergency he should succor their state; that their affairs were in the utmost danger, because, whereas single magistrates had been usually appointed in ancient times and held the power of king for a single year, two persons now exercised this office, and each asserted that he was appointed according to their laws. That one of them was Convictolitanis, a powerful and illustrious youth; the other Cotus, sprung from a most ancient family, and personally a man of very great influence and extensive connections. His brother Valetiacus had borne the same office during the last year: that the whole state was up in arms; the senate divided, the people divided; that each of them had his own adherents; and that, if the animosity would be fomented any longer, the result would be that one part of the state would come to a collision with the other; that it rested with his activity and influence to prevent it."

[7.33]Although Caesar considered it ruinous to leave the war and the enemy, yet, being well aware what great evils generally arise from internal dissensions, lest a state so powerful and so closely connected with the Roman people, which he himself had always fostered and honored in every respect, should have recourse to violence and arms, and that the party which had less confidence in its own power should summon aid from Vercingetorix, he determined to anticipate this movement; and because, by the laws of the Aedui, it was not permitted those who held the supreme authority to leave the country, he determined to go in person to the Aedui, lest he should appear to infringe upon their government and laws, and summoned all the senate, and those between whom the dispute was, to meet him at Decetia. When almost all the state had assembled there, and he was informed that one brother had been declared magistrate by the other, when only a few persons were privately summoned for the purpose, at a different time and place from what he ought, whereas the laws not only forbade two belonging to one family to be elected magistrates while each was alive, but even deterred them from being in the senate, he compelled Cotus

to resign his office; he ordered Convictolitanis, who had been elected by the priests, according to the usage of the state, in the presence of the magistrates, to hold the supreme authority.

[7.34]Having pronounced this decree between [the contending parties], he exhorted the Aedui to bury in oblivion their disputes and dissensions, and, laying aside all these things, devote themselves to the war, and expect from him, on the conquest of Gaul, those rewards which they should have earned, and send speedily to him all their cavalry and ten thousand infantry, which he might place in different garrisons to protect his convoys of provisions, and then divided his army into two parts: he gave Labienus four legions to lead into the country of the Senones and Parisii; and led in person six into the country of the Arverni, in the direction of the town of Gergovia, along the banks of the Allier. He gave part of the cavalry to Labienus and kept part to himself. Vercingetorix, on learning this circumstance, broke down all the bridges over the river and began to march on the other bank of the Allier.

[7.35]When each army was in sight of the other, and was pitching their camp almost opposite that of the enemy, scouts being distributed in every quarter, lest the Romans should build a bridge and bring over their troops; it was to Caesar a matter attended with great difficulties, lest he should be hindered from passing the river during the greater part of the summer, as the Allier can not generally be forded before the autumn. Therefore, that this might not happen, having pitched his camp in a woody place opposite to one of those bridges which Vercingetorix had taken care should be broken down, the next day he stopped behind with two legions in a secret place; he sent on the rest of the forces as usual, with all the baggage, after having selected some cohorts, that the number of the legions might appear to be complete. Having ordered these to advance as far as they could, when now, from the time of day, he conjectured they had come to an encampment, he began to rebuild the bridge on the same piles, the lower part of which remained entire. Having quickly finished the work and led his legions across, he selected a fit place for a camp, and recalled the rest of his troops. Vercingetorix, on ascertaining this fact, went before him by forced marches, in order that he might not be compelled to come to an action against his will.

[7.36]Caesar, in five days' march, went from that place to Gergovia, and after engaging in a slight cavalry skirmish that day, on viewing the situation of the city, which, being built on a very high mountain, was very difficult of access, he despaired of taking it by storm, and determined to take no measures with regard to besieging it before he should secure a supply of provisions. But Vercingetorix, having pitched his camp on the mountain near the town, placed the forces of each state separately and at small intervals around himself, and having occupied all the hills of that range as far as they commanded a view [of the Roman encampment], he presented a formidable appearance; he ordered the rulers of the states, whom he had selected as his council of war, to come to him daily at the dawn, whether any measure seemed to require deliberation or execution. Nor did he allow almost any day to pass without testing in a cavalry action, the archers being intermixed, what spirit and valor there was in each of his own men. There was a hill opposite the town, at the very foot of that mountain, strongly fortified and precipitous on every side (which if our men could gain, they seemed likely to exclude the enemy from a great share of their supply of water, and from free foraging; but this place was occupied by them with a weak garrison): however, Caesar set out from the camp in the silence of night, and dislodging the garrison before succor could come from the town, he got possession of the place and posted two legions there, and drew from the greater camp to the less a double trench twelve feet broad, so that the soldiers could even singly pass secure from any sudden attack of the enemy.

[7.37]While these affairs were going on at Gergovia, Convictolitanis, the Aeduan, to whom we have observed the magistracy was adjudged by Caesar, being bribed by the Arverni, holds a conference with certain young men, the chief of whom were Litavicus and his brothers, who were born of a most noble family. He shares the bribe with them, and exhorts them to "remember that they were free and born for empire; that the state of the Aedui was the only one which retarded the most certain victory of the Gauls; that the rest were held in check by its authority; and, if it was brought over, the Romans would not have room to stand on in Gaul; that he had received some kindness from Caesar, only so far, however, as gaining a most just cause by his decision; but that he assigned more weight to the general freedom; for, why should the Aedui go to Caesar to decide concerning their rights and laws, rather than the Romans come to the Aedui?" The young men being easily won over by the speech of the magistrate and the bribe, when they declared that they would even be leaders in the plot, a plan for accomplishing it was considered, because they were confident their state could not be induced to undertake the war on slight grounds. It was resolved that Litavicus should have the command of the ten thousand, which were being sent to

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

Caesar for the war, and should have charge of them on their march, and that his brothers should go before him to Caesar. They arrange the other measures, and the manner in which they should have them done.

[7.38]Litavicus, having received the command of the army, suddenly convened the soldiers, when he was about thirty miles distant from Gergovia, and, weeping, said, "Soldiers, whither are we going? All our knights and all our nobles have perished. Eporedirix and Viridomarus, the principal men of the state, being accused of treason, have been slain by the Romans without any permission to plead their cause. Learn this intelligence from those who have escaped from the massacre; for I, since my brothers and all my relations have been slain, am prevented by grief from declaring what has taken place. Persons are brought forward whom he had instructed in what he would have them say, and make the same statements to the soldiery as Litavicus had made: that all the knights of the Aedui were slain because they were said to have held conferences with the Arverni; that they had concealed themselves among the multitude of soldiers, and had escaped from the midst of the slaughter. The Aedui shout aloud and conjure Litavicus to provide for their safety. As if, said he, it were a matter of deliberation, and not of necessity, for us to go to Gergovia and unite ourselves to the Arverni. Or have we any reasons to doubt that the Romans, after perpetrating the atrocious crime, are now hastening to slay us? Therefore, if there be any spirit in us, let us avenge the death of those who have perished in a most unworthy manner, and let us slay these robbers." He points to the Roman citizens, who had accompanied them, in reliance on his protection. He immediately seizes a great quantity of corn and provisions, cruelly tortures them, and then puts them to death, sends messengers throughout the entire state of the Aedui, and rouses them completely by the same falsehood concerning the slaughter of their knights and nobles; he earnestly advises them to avenge, in the same manner as he did, the wrongs, which they had received.

[7.39]Eporedirix, the Aeduan, a young man born in the highest rank and possessing very great influence at home, and, along with Viridomarus, of equal age and influence, but of inferior birth, whom Caesar had raised from a humble position to the highest rank, on being recommended to him by Divitiacus, had come in the number of horse, being summoned by Caesar by name. These had a dispute with each other for precedence, and in the struggle between the magistrates they had contended with their utmost efforts, the one for Convictolitanis, the other for Cotus. Of these Eporedirix, on learning the design of Litavicus, lays the matter before Caesar almost at midnight; he entreats that Caesar should not suffer their state to swerve from the alliance with the Roman people, owing to the depraved counsels of a few young men which he foresaw would be the consequence if so many thousand men should unite themselves to the enemy, as their relations could not neglect their safety, nor the state regard it as a matter of slight importance.

[7.40]Caesar felt great anxiety on this intelligence, because he had always especially indulged the state of the Aedui, and, without any hesitation, draws out from the camp four light-armed legions and all the cavalry: nor had he time, at such a crisis, to contract the camp, because the affair seemed to depend upon dispatch. He leaves Caius Fabius, his lieutenant, with two legions to guard the camp. When he ordered the brothers of Litavicus to be arrested, he discovers that they had fled a short time before to the camp of the enemy. He encouraged his soldiers "not to be disheartened by the labor of the journey on such a necessary occasion," and, after advancing twenty-five miles, all being most eager, he came in sight of the army of the Aedui, and, by sending on his cavalry, retards and impedes their march; he then issues strict orders to all his soldiers to kill no one. He commands Eporedirix and Viridomarus, who they thought were killed, to move among the cavalry and address their friends. When they were recognized and the treachery of Litavicus discovered, the Aedui began to extend their hands to intimate submission, and, laying down their arms, to deprecate death. Litavicus, with his clansmen, who after the custom of the Gauls consider it a crime to desert their patrons, even in extreme misfortune, flees forth to Gergovia.

[7.41]Caesar, after sending messengers to the state of the Aedui, to inform them that they whom he could have put to death by the right of war were spared through his kindness, and after giving three hours of the night to his army for his repose, directed his march to Gergovia. Almost in the middle of the journey, a party of horse that were sent by Fabius stated in how great danger matters were, they inform him that the camp was attacked by a very powerful army, while fresh men were frequently relieving the wearied, and exhausting our soldiers by the incessant toil, since on account of the size of the camp, they had constantly to remain on the rampart; that many had been wounded by the immense number of arrows and all kinds of missiles; that the engines were of great service in withstanding them; that Fabius, at their departure, leaving only two gates open, was blocking up the

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

rest, and was adding breast-works to the ramparts, and was preparing himself for a similar casualty on the following day. Caesar, after receiving this information, reached the camp before sunrise owing to the very great zeal of his soldiers.

[7.42]While these things are going on at Gergovia, the Aedui, on receiving the first announcements from Litavicus, leave themselves no time to ascertain the truth of those statements. Some are stimulated by avarice, others by revenge and credulity, which is an innate propensity in that race of men to such a degree that they consider a slight rumor as an ascertained fact. They plunder the property of the Roman citizens, and either massacre them or drag them away to slavery. Convictiolitanis increases the evil state of affairs, and goads on the people to fury, that by the commission of some outrage they may be ashamed to return to propriety. They entice from the town of Cabillonus, by a promise of safety, Marcus Aristius, a military tribune, who was on his march to his legion; they compel those who had settled there for the purpose of trading to do the same. By constantly attacking them on their march they strip them of all their baggage; they besiege day and night those that resisted; when many were slain on both sides, they excite a great number to arms.

[7.43]In the mean time, when intelligence was brought that all their soldiers were in Caesar's power, they run in a body to Aristius; they assure him that nothing had been done by public authority; they order an inquiry to be made about the plundered property; they confiscate the property of Litavicus and his brothers; they send ambassadors to Caesar for the purpose of clearing themselves. They do all this with a view to recover their soldiers; but being contaminated by guilt, and charmed by the gains arising from the plundered property, as that act was shared in by many, and being tempted by the fear of punishment, they began to form plans of war and stir up the other states by embassies. Although Caesar was aware of this proceeding, yet he addresses the ambassadors with as much mildness as he can: "That he did not think worse of the state on account of the ignorance and fickleness of the mob, nor would diminish his regard for the Aedui." He himself, fearing a greater commotion in Gaul, in order to prevent his being surrounded by all the states, began to form plans as to the manner in which he should return from Gergovia and again concentrate his forces, lest a departure arising from the fear of a revolt should seem like a flight.

[7.44]While he was considering these things an opportunity of acting successfully seemed to offer. For, when he had come into the smaller camp for the purpose of securing the works, he noticed that the hill in the possession of the enemy was stripped of men, although, on the former days, it could scarcely be seen on account of the numbers on it. Being astonished, he inquires the reason of it from the deserters, a great number of whom flocked to him daily. They all concurred in asserting, what Caesar himself had already ascertained by his scouts, that the back of that hill was almost level; but likewise woody and narrow, by which there was a pass to the other side of the town; that they had serious apprehensions for this place, and had no other idea, on the occupation of one hill by the Romans, than that, if they should lose the other, they would be almost surrounded, and cut off from all egress and foraging; that they were all summoned by Vercingetorix to fortify this place.

[7.45]Caesar, on being informed of this circumstance, sends several troops of horse to the place immediately after midnight; he orders them to range in every quarter with more tumult than usual. At dawn he orders a large quantity of baggage to be drawn out of the camp, and the muleteers with helmets, in the appearance and guise of horsemen, to ride round the hills. To these he adds a few cavalry, with instructions to range more widely to make a show. He orders them all to seek the same quarter by a long circuit; these proceedings were seen at a distance from the town, as Gergovia commanded a view of the camp, nor could the Gauls ascertain at so great a distance, what certainty there was in the maneuver. He sends one legion to the same hill, and after it had marched a little, stations it in the lower ground, and congeals it in the woods. The suspicion of the Gauls are increased, and all their forces are marched to that place to defend it. Caesar, having perceived the camp of the enemy deserted, covers the military insignia of his men, conceals the standards, and transfers his soldiers in small bodies from the greater to the less camp, and points out to the lieutenants whom he had placed in command over the respective legions, what he should wish to be done; he particularly advises them to restrain their men from advancing too far, through their desire of fighting, or their hope of plunder, he sets before them what disadvantages the unfavorable nature of the ground carries with it; that they could be assisted by dispatch alone: that success depended on a surprise, and not on a battle. After stating these particulars, he gives the signal for action, and detaches the Aedui at the same time by another ascent on the right.

[7.46]The town wall was 1200 paces distant from the plain and foot of the ascent, in a straight line, if no gap

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

intervened; whatever circuit was added to this ascent, to make the hill easy, increased the length of the route. But almost in the middle of the hill, the Gauls had previously built a wall six feet high, made of large stones, and extending in length as far as the nature of the ground permitted, as a barrier to retard the advance of our men; and leaving all the lower space empty, they had filled the upper part of the hill, as far as the wall of the town, with their camps very close to one another. The soldiers, on the signal being given, quickly advance to this fortification, and passing over it, make themselves masters of the separate camps. And so great was their activity in taking the camps, that Teutomarus, the king of the Nitiobriges, being suddenly surprised in his tent, as he had gone to rest at noon, with difficulty escaped from the hands of the plunderers, with the upper part of his person naked, and his horse wounded.

[7.47]Caesar, having accomplished the object which he had in view, ordered the signal to be sounded for a retreat; and the soldiers of the tenth legion, by which he was then accompanied, halted. But the soldiers of the other legions, not hearing the sound of the trumpet, because there was a very large valley between them, were however kept back by the tribunes of the soldiers and the lieutenants, according to Caesar's orders; but being animated by the prospect of speedy victory, and the flight of the enemy, and the favorable battles of former periods, they thought nothing so difficult that their bravery could not accomplish it; nor did they put an end to the pursuit, until they drew nigh to the wall of the town and the gates. But then, when a shout arose in every quarter of the city, those who were at a distance being alarmed by the sudden tumult, fled hastily from the town, since they thought that the enemy were within the gates. The matrons begin to cast their clothes and silver over the wall, and bending over as far as the lower part of the bosom, with outstretched hands beseech the Romans to spare them, and not to sacrifice to their resentment even women and children, as they had done at Avaricum. Some of them let themselves down from the walls by their hands, and surrendered to our soldiers. Lucius Fabius a centurion of the eighth legion, who, it was ascertained, had said that day among his fellow soldiers that he was excited by the plunder of Avaricum, and would not allow any one to mount the wall before him, finding three men of his own company, and being raised up by them, scaled the wall. He himself, in turn, taking hold of them one by one drew them up to the wall.

[7.48]In the mean time those who had gone to the other part of the town to defend it, as we have mentioned above, at first, aroused by hearing the shouts, and, afterward, by frequent accounts, that the town was in possession of the Romans, sent forward their cavalry, and hastened in larger numbers to that quarter. As each first came he stood beneath the wall, and increased the number of his countrymen engaged in action. When a great multitude of them had assembled, the matrons, who a little before were stretching their hands from the walls to the Romans, began to beseech their countrymen, and after the Gallic fashion to show their disheveled hair, and bring their children into public view. Neither in position nor in numbers was the contest an equal one to the Romans; at the same time, being exhausted by running and the long continuation of the fight, they could not easily withstand fresh and vigorous troops.

[7.49]Caesar, when he perceived that his soldiers were fighting on unfavorable ground, and that the enemy's forces were increasing, being alarmed for the safety of his troops, sent orders to Titus Sextius, one of his lieutenants, whom he had left to guard the smaller camp, to lead out his cohorts quickly from the camp, and post them at the foot of the hill, on the right wing of the enemy; that if he should see our men driven from the ground, he should deter the enemy from following too closely. He himself, advancing with the legion a little from that place where he had taken his post, awaited the issue of the battle.

[7.50]While the fight was going on most vigorously, hand to hand, and the enemy depended on their position and numbers, our men on their bravery, the Aedui suddenly appeared on our exposed flank, as Caesar had sent them by another ascent on the right, for the sake of creating a diversion. These, from the similarity of their arms, greatly terrified our men; and although they were discovered to have their right shoulders bare, which was usually the sign of those reduced to peace, yet the soldiers suspected that this very thing was done by the enemy to deceive them. At the same time Lucius Fabius the centurion, and those who had scaled the wall with him, being surrounded and slain, were cast from the wall. Marcus Petreius, a centurion of the same legion, after attempting to hew down the gates, was overpowered by numbers, and, despairing of his safety, having already received many wounds, said to the soldiers of his own company who followed him: "Since I can not save you as well as myself, I shall at least provide for your safety, since I, allured by the love of glory, led you into this danger, do you save yourselves when an opportunity is given." At the same time he rushed into the midst of the enemy, and slaying

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

two of them, drove back the rest a little from the gate. When his men attempted to aid him, "In vain," he says, "you endeavor to procure me safety, since blood and strength are now failing me, therefore leave this, while you have the opportunity, and retreat to the legion." Thus he fell fighting a few moments after, and saved his men by his own death.

[7.51]Our soldiers, being hard pressed on every side, were dislodged from their position, with the loss of forty–six centurions; but the tenth legion, which had been posted in reserve on ground a little more level, checked the Gauls in their eager pursuit. It was supported by the cohorts of the thirteenth legion, which, being led from the smaller camp, had, under the command of Titus Sextius, occupied the higher ground. The legions, as soon as they reached the plain, halted and faced the enemy. Vercingetorix led back his men from the part of the hill within the fortifications. On that day little less than seven hundred of the soldiers were missing.

[7.52]On the next day, Caesar, having called a meeting, censured the rashness and avarice of his soldiers, "In that they had judged for themselves how far they ought to proceed, or what they ought to do, and could not be kept back by the tribunes of the soldiers and the lieutenants;" and stated, "what the disadvantage of the ground could effect, what opinion he himself had entertained at Avaricum, when having surprised the enemy without either general or cavalry, he had given up a certain victory, lest even a trifling loss should occur in the contest owing to the disadvantage of position. That as much as he admired the greatness of their courage, since neither the fortifications of the camp, nor the height of the mountain, nor the wall of the town could retard them; in the same degree he censured their licentiousness and arrogance, because they thought that they knew more than their general concerning victory, and the issue of actions: and that he required in his soldiers forbearance and self–command, not less than valor and magnanimity."

[7.53]Having held this assembly, and having encouraged the soldiers at the conclusion of his speech, "That they should not be dispirited on this account, nor attribute to the valor of the enemy, what the disadvantage of position had caused;" entertaining the same views of his departure that he had previously had, he led forth the legions from the camp, and drew up his army in order of battle in a suitable place. When Vercingetorix, nevertheless, would not descend to the level ground, a slight cavalry action, and that a successful one, having taken place, he led back his army into the camp. When he had done this, the next day, thinking that he had done enough to lower the pride of the Gauls, and to encourage the minds of his soldiers, he moved his camp in the direction of the Aedui. The enemy not even then pursuing us, on the third day he repaired the bridge over the river Allier, and led over his whole army.

[7.54]Having then held an interview with Viridomarus and Eporedirix the Aeduans, he learns that Litavicus had set out with all the cavalry to raise the Aedui; that it was necessary that they too should go before him to confirm the state in their allegiance. Although he now saw distinctly the treachery of the Aedui in many things, and was of opinion that the revolt of the entire state would be hastened by their departure; yet he thought that they should not be detained, lest he should appear either to offer an insult, or betray some suspicion of fear. He briefly states to them when departing his services toward the Aedui: in what a state and how humbled he had found them, driven into their towns, deprived of their lands, stripped of all their forces, a tribute imposed on them, and hostages wrested from them with the utmost insult; and to what condition and to what greatness he had raised them, [so much so] that they had not only recovered their former position, but seemed to surpass the dignity and influence of all the previous eras of their history. After giving these admonitions he dismissed them.

[7.55]Noviodunum was a town of the Aedui, advantageously situated on the banks of the Loire. Caesar had conveyed hither all the hostages of Gaul, the corn, public money, a great part of his own baggage and that of his army; he had sent hither a great number of horses, which he had purchased in Italy and Spain on account of this war. When Eporedirix and Viridomarus came to this place, and received information of the disposition of the state, that Litavicus had been admitted by the Aedui into Bibracte, which is a town of the greatest importance among them, that Convictolitanis the chief magistrate and a great part of the senate had gone to meet him, that ambassadors had been publicly sent to Vercingetorix to negotiate a peace and alliance; they thought that so great an opportunity ought not to be neglected. Therefore, having put to the sword the garrison of Noviodunum, and those who had assembled there for the purpose of trading or were on their march, they divided the money and horses among themselves; they took care that the hostages of the [different] states should be brought to Bibracte, to the chief magistrate; they burned the town to prevent its being of any service to the Romans, as they were of opinion that they could not hold it; they carried away in their vessels whatever corn they could in the hurry, they

destroyed the remainder, by [throwing it] into the river or setting it on fire, they themselves began to collect forces from the neighboring country, to place guards and garrisons in different positions along the banks of the Loire, and to display the cavalry on all sides to strike terror into the Romans, [to try] if they could cut them off from a supply of provisions. In which expectation they were much aided, from the circumstance that the Loire had swollen to such a degree from the melting of the snows, that it did not seem capable of being forded at all.

[7.56]Caesar on being informed of these movements was of opinion that he ought to make haste, even if he should run some risk in completing the bridges, in order that he might engage before greater forces of the enemy should be collected in that place. For no one even then considered it an absolutely necessary act, that changing his design he should direct his march into the Province, both because the infamy and disgrace of the thing, and the intervening mount Cevennes, and the difficulty of the roads prevented him; and especially because he had serious apprehensions for the safety of Labienus whom he had detached, and those legions whom he had sent with him. Therefore, having made very long marches by day and night, he came to the river Loire, contrary to the expectation of all; and having by means of the cavalry, found out a ford, suitable enough considering the emergency, of such depth that their arms and shoulders could be above water for supporting their accoutrements, he dispersed his cavalry in such a manner as to break the force of the current, and having confounded the enemy at the first sight, led his army across the river in safety; and finding corn and cattle in the fields, after refreshing his army with them, he determined to march into the country of the Senones.

[7.57]While these things are being done by Caesar, Labienus, leaving at Agendicum the recruits who had lately arrived from Italy, to guard the baggage, marches with four legions to Lutetia (which is a town of the Parisii, situated on an island on the river Seine), whose arrival being discovered by the enemy, numerous forces arrived from the neighboring states. The supreme command is intrusted to Camalugenus one of the Aulerici, who, although almost worn out with age, was called to that honor on account of his extraordinary knowledge of military tactics. He, when he observed that there was a large marsh which communicated with the Seine, and rendered all that country impassable, encamped there, and determined to prevent our troops from passing it.

[7.58]Labienus at first attempted to raise Vineae, fill up the marsh with hurdles and clay, and secure a road. After he perceived that this was too difficult to accomplish, he issued in silence from his camp at the third watch, and reached Melodunum by the same route by which he came. This is a town of the Senones, situated on an island in the Seine, as we have just before observed of Lutetia. Having seized upon about fifty ships and quickly joined them together, and having placed soldiers in them, he intimidated by his unexpected arrival the inhabitants, of whom a great number had been called out to the war, and obtains possession of the town without a contest. Having repaired the bridge, which the enemy had broken down during the preceding days, he led over his army, and began to march along the banks of the river to Lutetia. The enemy, on learning the circumstance from those who had escaped from Melodunum, set fire to Lutetia, and order the bridges of that town to be broken down: they themselves set out from the marsh, and take their position on the banks of the Seine, over against Lutetia and opposite the camp of Labienus.

[7.59]Caesar was now reported to have departed from Gergovia; intelligence was likewise brought to them concerning the revolt of the Aedui, and a successful rising in Gaul; and that Caesar, having been prevented from prosecuting his journey and crossing the Loire, and having been compelled by the want of corn, had marched hastily to the province. But the Bellovaci, who had been previously disaffected of themselves, on learning the revolt of the Aedui, began to assemble forces and openly to prepare for war. Then Labienus, as the change in affairs was so great, thought that he must adopt a very different system from what he had previously intended, and he did not now think of making any new acquisitions, or of provoking the enemy to an action; but that he might bring back his army safe to Agendicum. For, on one side, the Bellovaci, a state which held the highest reputation for prowess in Gaul, were pressing on him; and Camulogenus, with a disciplined and well-equipped army, held the other side; moreover, a very great river separated and cut off the legions from the garrison and baggage. He saw that, in consequence of such great difficulties being thrown in his way, he must seek aid from his own energy of disposition.

[7.60]Having, therefore, called a council of war a little before evening, he exhorted his soldiers to execute with diligence and energy such commands as he should give; he assigns the ships which he had brought from Melodunum to Roman knights, one to each, and orders them to fall down the river silently for four miles, at the end of the fourth watch, and there wait for him. He leaves the five cohorts, which he considered to be the most



## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

steady in action, to guard the camp; he orders the five remaining cohorts of the same legion to proceed a little after midnight up the river with all their baggage, in a great tumult. He collects also some small boats; and sends them in the same direction, with orders to make a loud noise in rowing. He himself, a little after, marched out in silence, and, at the head of three legions, seeks that place to which he had ordered the ships to be brought.

[7.61]When he had arrived there, the enemy's scouts, as they were stationed along every part of the river, not expecting an attack, because a great storm had suddenly arisen, were surprised by our soldiers: the infantry and cavalry are quickly transported, under the superintendence of the Roman knights, whom he had appointed to that office. Almost at the same time, a little before daylight, intelligence was given to the enemy that there was an unusual tumult in the camp of the Romans, and that a strong force was marching up the river, and that the sound of oars was distinctly heard in the same quarter, and that soldiers were being conveyed across in ships a little below. On hearing these things, because they were of opinion that the legions were passing in three different places, and that the entire army, being terrified by the revolt of the Aedui, were preparing for flight, they divided their forces also into three divisions. For leaving a guard opposite to the camp and sending a small body in the direction of Metiosedum, with orders to advance as far as the ships would proceed, they led the rest of their troops against Labienus.

[7.62]By day-break all our soldiers were brought across, and the army of the enemy was in sight. Labienus, having encouraged his soldiers "to retain the memory of their ancient valor, and so many most successful actions, and imagine Caesar himself, under whose command they had so often routed the enemy, to be present," gives the signal for action. At the first onset the enemy are beaten and put to flight in the right wing, where the seventh legion stood: on the left wing, which position the twelfth legion held, although the first ranks fell transfixed by the javelins of the Romans, yet the rest resisted most bravely; nor did any one of them show the slightest intention of flying. Camulogenus, the general of the enemy, was present and encouraged his troops. But when the issue of the victory was still uncertain, and the circumstances which were taking place on the left wing were announced to the tribunes of the seventh legion, they faced about their legion to the enemy's rear and attacked it: not even then did any one retreat, but all were surrounded and slain. Camulogenus met the same fate. But those who were left as a guard opposite the camp of Labienus, when they heard that the battle was commenced, marched to aid their countrymen and take possession of a hill, but were unable to withstand the attack of the victorious soldiers. In this manner, mixed with their own fugitives, such as the woods and mountains did not shelter were cut to pieces by our cavalry. When this battle was finished, Labienus returns to Agendicum, where the baggage of the whole army had been left: from it he marched with all his forces to Caesar.

[7.63]The revolt of the Aedui being known, the war grows more dangerous. Embassies are sent by them in all directions: as far as they can prevail by influence, authority, or money, they strive to excite the state [to revolt]. Having got possession of the hostages whom Caesar had deposited with them, they terrify the hesitating by putting them to death. The Aedui request Vercingetorix to come to them and communicate his plans of conducting the war. On obtaining this request they insist that the chief command should be assigned to them; and when the affair became a disputed question, a council of all Gaul is summoned to Bibracte. They came together in great numbers and from every quarter to the same place. The decision is left to the votes of the mass; all to a man approve of Vercingetorix as their general. The Remi, Lingones, and Treviri were absent from this meeting; the two former because they attached themselves to the alliance of Rome; the Treviri because they were very remote and were hard pressed by the Germans; which was also the reason of their being absent during the whole war, and their sending auxiliaries to neither party. The Aedui are highly indignant at being deprived of the chief command; they lament the change of fortune, and miss Caesar's indulgence toward them; however, after engaging in the war, they do not dare to pursue their own measures apart from the rest. Eporedirix and Viridomarus, youths of the greatest promise, submit reluctantly to Vercingetorix.

[7.64]The latter demands hostages from the remaining states; nay, more, appointed a day for this proceeding; he orders all the cavalry, fifteen thousand in number, to quickly assemble here; he says that he will be content with the infantry which he had before, and would not tempt fortune nor come to a regular engagement; but since he had abundance of cavalry, it would be very easy for him to prevent the Romans from obtaining forage or corn, provided that they themselves should resolutely destroy their corn and set fire to their houses; by which sacrifice of private property they would evidently obtain perpetual dominion and freedom. After arranging these matters, he levies ten thousand infantry on the Aedui and Segusiani, who border on our province: to these he adds eight

hundred horse. He sets over them the brother of Eporedirix, and orders him to wage war against the Allobroges. On the other side he sends the Gabali and the nearest cantons of the Arverni against the Helvii; he likewise sends the Ruteni and Cadurci to lay waste the territories of the Volcae Arecomici. Besides, by secret messages and embassies, he tampers with the Allobroges, whose minds, he hopes, had not yet settled down after the excitement of the late war. To their nobles he promises money, and to their state the dominion of the whole province.

[7.65]The only guards provided against all these contingencies were twenty–two cohorts, which were collected from the entire province by Lucius Caesar, the lieutenant, and opposed to the enemy in every quarter. The Helvii, voluntarily engaging in battle with their neighbors, are defeated, and Caius Valerius Donotaurus, the son of Caburus, the principal man of the state, and several others, being slain, they are forced to retire within their towns and fortifications. The Allobroges, placing guards along the course of the Rhine, defend their frontiers with great vigilance and energy. Caesar, as he perceived that the enemy were superior in cavalry, and he himself could receive no aid from the Province or Italy, while all communication was cut off, sends across the Rhine into Germany to those states which he had subdued in the preceding campaigns, and summons from them cavalry and the light–armed infantry, who were accustomed to engage among them. On their arrival, as they were mounted on unserviceable horses, he takes horses from the military tribunes and the rest, nay, even from the Roman knights and veterans, and distributes them among the Germans.

[7.66]In the mean time, whilst these things are going on, the forces of the enemy from the Arverni, and the cavalry which had been demanded from all Gaul, meet together. A great number of these having been collected, when Caesar was marching into the country of the Sequani, through the confines of the Lingones, in order that he might the more easily render aid to the province, Vercingetorix encamped in three camps, about ten miles from the Romans: and having summoned the commanders of the cavalry to a council, he shows that the time of victory was come; that the Romans were fleeing into the Province and leaving Gaul; that this was sufficient for obtaining immediate freedom; but was of little moment in acquiring peace and tranquillity for the future; for the Romans would return after assembling greater forces and would not put an end to the war. Therefore they should attack them on their march, when encumbered. If the infantry should [be obliged to] relieve their cavalry, and be retarded by doing so, the march could not be accomplished: if, abandoning their baggage they should provide for their safety (a result which, he trusted, was more like to ensue), they would lose both property and character. For as to the enemy's horse, they ought not to entertain a doubt that none of them would dare to advance beyond the main body. In order that they [the Gauls] may do so with greater spirit, he would marshal all their forces before the camp, and intimidate the enemy. The cavalry unanimously shout out, "That they ought to bind themselves by a most sacred oath, that he should not be received under a roof, nor have access to his children, parents, or wife, who shall not twice have ridden through the enemy's army."

[7.67]This proposal receiving general approbation, and all being forced to take the oath, on the next day the cavalry were divided into three parts, and two of these divisions made a demonstration on our two flanks; while one in front began to obstruct our march. On this circumstance being announced, Caesar orders his cavalry also to form three divisions and charge the enemy. Then the action commences simultaneously in every part: the main body halts; the baggage is received within the ranks of the legions. If our men seemed to be distressed, or hard pressed in any quarter, Caesar usually ordered the troops to advance, and the army to wheel round in that quarter; which conduct retarded the enemy in the pursuit, and encouraged our men by the hope of support. At length the Germans, on the right wing, having gained the top of the hill, dislodge the enemy from their position and pursue them even as far as the river at which Vercingetorix with the infantry was stationed, and slay several of them. The rest, on observing this action, fearing lest they should be surrounded, betake themselves to flight. A slaughter ensues in every direction, and three of the noblest of the Aedui are taken and brought to Caesar: Cotus, the commander of the cavalry, who had been engaged in the contest with Convictolitanis the last election, Cavarillus, who had held the command of the infantry after the revolt of Litavicus, and Eporedirix, under whose command the Aedui had engaged in war against the Sequani, before the arrival of Caesar.

[7.68]All his cavalry being routed, Vercingetorix led back his troops in the same order as he had arranged them before the camp, and immediately began to march to Alesia, which is a town of the Mandubii, and ordered the baggage to be speedily brought forth from the camp, and follow him closely. Caesar, having conveyed his baggage to the nearest hill, and having left two legions to guard it, pursued as far as the time of day would permit, and after slaying about three thousand of the rear of the enemy, encamped at Alesia on the next day. On

reconnoitering the situation of the city, finding that the enemy were panic-stricken, because the cavalry in which they placed their chief reliance, were beaten, he encouraged his men to endure the toil, and began to draw a line of circumvallation round Alesia.

[7.69]The town itself was situated on the top of a hill, in a very lofty position, so that it did not appear likely to be taken, except by a regular siege. Two rivers, on two different sides, washed the foot of the hill. Before the town lay a plain of about three miles in length; on every other side hills at a moderate distance, and of an equal degree of height, surrounded the town. The army of the Gauls had filled all the space under the wall, comprising a part of the hill which looked to the rising sun, and had drawn in front a trench and a stone wall six feet high. The circuit of that fortification, which was commenced by the Romans, comprised eleven miles. The camp was pitched in a strong position, and twenty-three redoubts were raised in it, in which sentinels were placed by day, lest any sally should be made suddenly; and by night the same were occupied by watches and strong guards.

[7.70]The work having been begun, a cavalry action ensues in that plain, which we have already described as broken by hills, and extending three miles in length. The contest is maintained on both sides with the utmost vigor; Caesar sends the Germans to aid our troops when distressed, and draws up the legions in front of the camp, lest any sally should be suddenly made by the enemy's infantry. The courage of our men is increased by the additional support of the legions; the enemy being put to flight, hinder one another by their numbers, and as only the narrower gates were left open, are crowded together in them; then the Germans pursue them with vigor even to the fortifications. A great slaughter ensues; some leave their horses, and endeavor to cross the ditch and climb the wall. Caesar orders the legions which he had drawn up in front of the rampart to advance a little. The Gauls, who were within the fortifications, were no less panic-stricken, thinking that the enemy were coming that moment against them, and unanimously shout "to arms;" some in their alarm rush into the town; Vercingetorix orders the gates to be shut, lest the camp should be left undefended. The Germans retreat, after slaying many and taking several horses.

[7.71]Vercingetorix adopts the design of sending away all his cavalry by night, before the fortifications should be completed by the Romans. He charges them when departing "that each of them should go to his respective state, and press for the war all who were old enough to bear arms; he states his own merits, and conjures them to consider his safety, and not surrender him who had deserved so well of the general freedom, to the enemy for torture; he points out to them that, if they should be remiss, eighty thousand chosen men would perish with him; that upon making a calculation, he had barely corn for thirty days, but could hold out a little longer by economy." After giving these instructions he silently dismisses the cavalry in the second watch, [on that side] where our works were not completed; he orders all the corn to be brought to himself; he ordains capital punishment to such as should not obey; he distributes among them, man by man, the cattle, great quantities of which had been driven there by the Mandubii; he began to measure out the corn sparingly, and by little and little; he receives into the town all the forces which he had posted in front of it. In this manner he prepares to await the succors from Gaul, and carry on the war.

[7.72]Caesar, on learning these proceedings from the deserters and captives, adopted the following system of fortification; he dug a trench twenty feet deep, with perpendicular sides, in such a manner that the base of this trench should extend so far as the edges were apart at the top. He raised all his other works at a distance of four hundred feet from that ditch; [he did] that with this intention, lest (since he necessarily embraced so extensive an area, and the whole works could not be easily surrounded by a line of soldiers) a large number of the enemy should suddenly, or by night, sally against the fortifications; or lest they should by day cast weapons against our men while occupied with the works. Having left this interval, he drew two trenches fifteen feet broad, and of the same depth; the innermost of them, being in low and level ground, he filled with water conveyed from the river. Behind these he raised a rampart and wall twelve feet high; to this he added a parapet and battlements, with large stakes cut like stags' horns, projecting from the junction of the parapet and battlements, to prevent the enemy from scaling it, and surrounded the entire work with turrets, which were eighty feet distant from one another.

[7.73]It was necessary, at one and the same time, to procure timber [for the rampart], lay in supplies of corn, and raise also extensive fortifications, and the available troops were in consequence of this reduced in number, since they used to advance to some distance from the camp, and sometimes the Gauls endeavored to attack our works, and to make a sally from the town by several gates and in great force. Caesar thought that further additions should be made to these works, in order that the fortifications might be defensible by a small number of soldiers.

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

Having, therefore, cut down the trunks of trees or very thick branches, and having stripped their tops of the bark, and sharpened them into a point, he drew a continued trench every where five feet deep. These stakes being sunk into this trench, and fastened firmly at the bottom, to prevent the possibility of their being torn up, had their branches only projecting from the ground. There were five rows in connection with, and intersecting each other; and whoever entered within them were likely to impale themselves on very sharp stakes. The soldiers called these "cippi." Before these, which were arranged in oblique rows in the form of a quincunx, pits three feet deep were dug, which gradually diminished in depth to the bottom. In these pits tapering stakes, of the thickness of a man's thigh; sharpened at the top and hardened in the fire, were sunk in such a manner as to project from the ground not more than four inches; at the same time for the purpose of giving them strength and stability, they were each filled with trampled clay to the height of one foot from the bottom: the rest of the pit was covered over with osiers and twigs, to conceal the deceit. Eight rows of this kind were dug, and were three feet distant from each other. They called this a lily from its resemblance to that flower. Stakes a foot long, with iron hooks attached to them, were entirely sunk in the ground before these, and were planted in every place at small intervals; these they called spurs.

[7.74]After completing these works, saving selected as level ground as he could, considering the nature of the country, and having inclosed an area of fourteen miles, he constructed, against an external enemy, fortifications of the same kind in every respect, and separate from these, so that the guards of the fortifications could not be surrounded even by immense numbers, if such a circumstance should take place owing to the departure of the enemy's cavalry; and in order that the Roman soldiers might not be compelled to go out of the camp with great risk, he orders all to provide forage and corn for thirty days.

[7.75]While those things are carried on at Alesia, the Gauls, having convened a council of their chief nobility, determine that all who could bear arms should not be called out, which was the opinion of Vercingetorix, but that a fixed number should be levied from each state; lest, when so great a multitude assembled together, they could neither govern nor distinguish their men, nor have the means of supplying them with corn. They demand thirty-five thousand men from the Aedui and their dependents, the Segusiani, Ambivareti, and Aulerici Brannovices; an equal number from the Arverni in conjunction with the Eleuteti Cadurci, Gabali, and Velauni, who were accustomed to be under the command of the Arverni; twelve thousand each from the Senones, Sequani, Bituriges, Sentones, Ruteni, and Carnutes; ten thousand from the Bellovaci; the same number from the Lemovici; eight thousand each from the Pictones, and Turoni, and Parisii, and Helvii; five thousand each from the Suessiones, Ambiani, Mediomatrici, Petrocorii, Nervii, Morini, and Nitiobriges; the same number from the Aulerici Cenomani; four thousand from the Atrebates; three thousand each from the Bellocassi, Lexovii, and Aulerici Eburovices; thirty thousand from the Rauraci, and Boii; six thousand from all the states together, which border on the Atlantic, and which in their dialect are called Armoricae (in which number are comprehended the Curisolites, Rhedones, Ambibari, Caltes, Osismii, Lemovices, Veneti, and Unelli). Of these the Bellovaci did not contribute their number, as they said that they would wage war against the Romans on their own account, and at their own discretion, and would not obey the order of any one: however, at the request of Commius, they sent two thousand, in consideration of a tie of hospitality which subsisted between him and them.

[7.76]Caesar had, as we have previously narrated, availed himself of the faithful and valuable services of this Commius, in Britain, in former years: in consideration of which merits he had exempted from taxes his [Commius's] state, and had conferred on Commius himself the country of the Morini. Yet such was the unanimity of the Gauls in asserting their freedom, and recovering their ancient renown in war, that they were influenced neither by favors, nor by the recollection of private friendship; and all earnestly directed their energies and resources to that war, and collected eight thousand cavalry, and about two hundred and forty thousand infantry. These were reviewed in the country of the Aedui, and a calculation was made of their numbers: commanders were appointed: the supreme command is intrusted to Commius the Atrebatian, Viridomarus and Eporidirix the Aeduans, and Vergasillaunus the Arvernan, the cousin-german of Vercingetorix. To them are assigned men selected from each state, by whose advice the war should be conducted. All march to Alesia, sanguine and full of confidence: nor was there a single individual who imagined that the Romans could withstand the sight of such an immense host: especially in an action carried on both in front and rear, when [on the inside] the besieged would sally from the town and attack the enemy, and on the outside so great forces of cavalry and infantry would be seen.

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

[7.77]But those who were blockaded at Alesia, the day being past, on which they had expected auxiliaries from their countrymen, and all their corn being consumed ignorant of what was going on among the Aedui, convened an assembly and deliberated on the exigency of their situation. After various opinions had been expressed among them, some of which proposed a surrender, others a sally, while their strength would support it, the speech of Critognatus ought not to be omitted for its singular and detestable cruelty. He sprung from the noblest family among the Arverni, and possessing great influence, says, "I shall pay no attention to the opinion of those who call a most disgraceful surrender by the name of a capitulation; nor do I think that they ought to be considered as citizens, or summoned to the council. My business is with those who approve of a sally: in whose advice the memory of our ancient prowess seems to dwell in the opinion of you all. To be unable to bear privation for a short time is disgraceful cowardice, not true valor. Those who voluntarily offer themselves to death are more easily found than those who would calmly endure distress. And I would approve of this opinion (for honor is a powerful motive with me), could I foresee no other loss, save that of life; but let us, in adopting our design, look back on all Gaul, which we have stirred up to our aid. What courage do you think would our relatives and friends have, if eighty thousand men were butchered in one spot, supposing that they should be forced to come to an action almost over our corpses? Do not utterly deprive them of your aid, for they have spurned all thoughts of personal danger on account of your safety; nor by your folly, rashness, and cowardice, crush all Gaul and doom it to an eternal slavery. Do you doubt their fidelity and firmness because they have not come at the appointed day? What then? Do you suppose that the Romans are employed every day in the outer fortifications for mere amusement? If you can not be assured by their dispatches, since every avenue is blocked up, take the Romans as evidence that their approach is drawing near; since they, intimidated by alarm at this, labor night and day at their works. What, therefore, is my design? To do as our ancestors did in the war against the Cimbri and Teutones, which was by no means equally momentous, when driven into their towns, and oppressed by similar privations, supported life by the corpses of those who appeared useless for war on account of their age, and did not surrender to the enemy: and even if we had not a precedent for such cruel conduct, still I should consider it most glorious that one should be established, and delivered to posterity. For in what was that war like this? The Cimbri, after laying Gaul waste, and inflicting great calamities, at length departed from our country, and sought other lands; they left us our rights, laws, lands, and liberty. But what other motive or wish have the Romans, than, induced by envy, to settle in the lands and states of those whom they have learned by fame to be noble and powerful in war, and impose on them perpetual slavery? For they never have carried on wars on any other terms. But if you know not these things which are going on in distant countries, look to the neighboring Gaul, which being reduced to the form of a province, stripped of its rights and laws, and subjected to Roman despotism, is oppressed by perpetual slavery."

[7.78]When different opinions were expressed, they determined that those who, owing to age or ill health, were unserviceable for war, should depart from the town, and that themselves should try every expedient before they had recourse to the advice of Critognatus: however, that they would rather adopt that design, if circumstances should compel them and their allies should delay, than accept any terms of a surrender or peace. The Mandubii, who had admitted them into the town, are compelled to go forth with their wives and children. When these came to the Roman fortifications, weeping, they begged of the soldiers by every entreaty to receive them as slaves and relieve them with food. But Caesar, placing guards on the rampart, forbade them to be admitted.

[7.79]In the mean time, Commius and the rest of the leaders, to whom the supreme command had been intrusted, came with all their forces to Alesia, and having occupied the entire hill, encamped not more than a mile from our fortifications. The following day, having led forth their cavalry from the camp, they fill all that plain, which, we have related, extended three miles in length, and drew out their infantry a little from that place, and post them on the higher ground. The town Alesia commanded a view of the whole plain. The besieged run together when these auxiliaries were seen; mutual congratulations ensue, and the minds of all are elated with joy. Accordingly, drawing out their troops, they encamp before the town, and cover the nearest trench with hurdles and fill it up with earth, and make ready for a sally and every casualty.

[7.80]Caesar, having stationed his army on both sides of the fortifications, in order that, if occasion should arise, each should hold and know his own post, orders the cavalry to issue forth from the camp and commence action. There was a commanding view from the entire camp, which occupied a ridge of hills; and the minds of all the soldiers anxiously awaited the issue of the battle. The Gauls had scattered archers and light-armed infantry

here and there, among their cavalry, to give relief to their retreating troops, and sustain the impetuosity of our cavalry. Several of our soldiers were unexpectedly wounded by these, and left the battle. When the Gauls were confident that their countrymen were the conquerors in the action, and beheld our men hard pressed by numbers, both those who were hemmed in by the line of circumvallation and those who had come to aid them, supported the spirits of their men by shouts and yells from every quarter. As the action was carried on in sight of all, neither a brave nor cowardly act could be concealed; both the desire of praise and the fear of ignominy, urged on each party to valor. After fighting from noon almost to sunset, without victory inclining in favor of either, the Germans, on one side, made a charge against the enemy in a compact body, and drove them back; and, when they were put to flight, the archers were surrounded and cut to pieces. In other parts, likewise, our men pursued to the camp the retreating enemy, and did not give them an opportunity of rallying. But those who had come forth from Alesia returned into the town dejected and almost despairing of success.

[7.81]The Gauls, after the interval of a day and after making, during that time, an immense number of hurdles, scaling-ladders, and iron hooks, silently went forth from the camp at midnight and approached the fortifications in the plain. Raising a shout suddenly, that by this intimation those who were besieged in the town might learn their arrival, they began to cast down hurdles and dislodge our men from the rampart by slings, arrows, and stones, and executed the other movements which are requisite in storming. At the same time, Vercingetorix, having heard the shout, gives the signal to his troops by a trumpet, and leads them forth from the town. Our troops, as each man's post had been assigned him some days before, man the fortifications; they intimidate the Gauls by slings, large stones, stakes which they had placed along the works, and bullets. All view being prevented by the darkness, many wounds are received on both sides; several missiles, are thrown from the engines. But Marcus Antonius, and Caius Trebonius, the lieutenants, to whom the defense of these parts had been allotted, draughted troops from the redoubts which were more remote, and sent them to aid our troops, in whatever direction they understood that they were hard pressed.

[7.82]While the Gauls were at a distance from the fortification, they did more execution, owing to the immense number of their weapons: after they came nearer, they either unawares empaled themselves on the spurs, or were pierced by the mural darts from the ramparts and towers, and thus perished. After receiving many wounds on all sides, and having forced no part of the works, when day drew nigh, fearing lest they should be surrounded by a sally made from the higher camp on the exposed flank, they retreated to their countrymen. But those within, while they bring forward those things which had been prepared by Vercingetorix for a sally, fill up the nearest trenches; having delayed a long time in executing these movements, they learned the retreat of their countrymen before they drew nigh to the fortifications. Thus they returned to the town without accomplishing their object.

[7.83]The Gauls, having been twice repulsed with great loss, consult what they should do; they avail themselves of the information of those who were well acquainted with the country; from them they ascertain the position and fortification of the upper camp. There was, on the north side, a hill, which our men could not include in their works, on account of the extent of the circuit, and had necessarily made their camp in ground almost disadvantageous, and pretty steep. Caius Antistius Reginus, and Caius Caninius Rebilus, two of the lieutenants, with two legions, were in possession of this camp. The leaders of the enemy, having reconnoitered the country by their scouts, select from the entire army sixty thousand men, belonging to those states, which bear the highest character for courage; they privately arrange among themselves what they wished to be done, and in what manner; they decide that the attack should take place when it should seem to be noon. They appoint over their forces Vergasillaunus, the Arvernian, one of the four generals, and a near relative of Vercingetorix. He, having issued from the camp at the first watch, and having almost completed his march a little before the dawn, hid himself behind the mountain, and ordered his soldiers to refresh themselves after their labor during the night. When noon now seemed to draw nigh, he marched hastily against that camp which we have mentioned before; and, at the same time, the cavalry began to approach the fortifications in the plain, and the rest of the forces to make a demonstration in front of the camp.

[7.84]Vercingetorix, having beheld his countrymen from the citadel of Alesia, issues forth from the town; he brings forth from the camp long hooks, movable pent-houses, mural hooks, and other things, which he had prepared for the purpose of making a sally. They engage on all sides at once and every expedient is adopted. They flocked to whatever part of the works seemed weakest. The army of the Romans is distributed along their extensive lines, and with difficulty meets the enemy in every quarter. The shouts which were raised by the

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

combatants in their rear, had a great tendency to intimidate our men, because they perceived that their danger rested on the valor of others: for generally all evils which are distant most powerfully alarm men's minds.

[7.85]Caesar, having selected a commanding situation, sees distinctly whatever is going on in every quarter, and sends assistance to his troops when hard pressed. The idea uppermost in the minds of both parties is, that the present is the time in which they would have the fairest opportunity of making a struggle; the Gauls despairing of all safety, unless they should succeed in forcing the lines: the Romans expecting an end to all their labors if they should gain the day. The principal struggle is at the upper lines, to which as we have said Vergasillaunus was sent. The least elevation of ground, added to a declivity, exercises a momentous influence. Some are casting missiles, others, forming a testudo, advance to the attack; fresh men by turns relieve the wearied. The earth, heaped up by all against the fortifications, gives the means of ascent to the Gauls, and covers those works which the Romans had concealed in the ground. Our men have no longer arms or strength.

[7.86]Caesar, on observing these movements, sends Labienus with six cohorts to relieve his distressed soldiers: he orders him, if he should be unable to withstand them, to draw off the cohorts and make a sally; but not to do this except through necessity. He himself goes to the rest, and exhorts them not to succumb to the toil; he shows them that the fruits of all former engagements depend on that day and hour. The Gauls within, despairing of forcing the fortifications in the plains on account of the greatness of the works, attempt the places precipitous in ascent: hither they bring the engines which they had prepared; by the immense number of their missiles they dislodge the defenders from the turrets: they fill the ditches with clay and hurdles, then clear the way; they tear down the rampart and breast-work with hooks.

[7.87]Caesar sends at first young Brutus, with six cohorts, and afterward Caius Fabius, his lieutenant, with seven others: finally, as they fought more obstinately, he leads up fresh men to the assistance of his soldiers. After renewing the action, and repulsing the enemy, he marches in the direction in which he had sent Labienus, drafts four cohorts from the nearest redoubt, and orders part of the cavalry to follow him, and part to make the circuit of the external fortifications and attack the enemy in the rear. Labienus, when neither the ramparts or ditches could check the onset of the enemy, informs Caesar by messengers of what he intended to do. Caesar hastens to share in the action.

[7.88]His arrival being known from the color of his robe, and the troops of cavalry, and the cohorts which he had ordered to follow him being seen, as these low and sloping grounds were plainly visible from the eminences, the enemy join battle. A shout being raised by both sides, it was succeeded by a general shout along the ramparts and whole line of fortifications. Our troops, laying aside their javelins, carry on the engagement with their swords. The cavalry is suddenly seen in the rear of the Gauls; the other cohorts advance rapidly; the enemy turn their backs; the cavalry intercept them in their flight, and a great slaughter ensues. Sedulius the general and chief of the Lemovices is slain; Vergasillaunus the Arvernian, is taken alive in the flight, seventy-four military standards are brought to Caesar, and few out of so great a number return safe to their camp. The besieged, beholding from the town the slaughter and flight of their countrymen, despairing of safety, lead back their troops from the fortifications. A flight of the Gauls from their camp immediately ensues on hearing of this disaster, and had not the soldiers been wearied by sending frequent reinforcements, and the labor of the entire day, all the enemy's forces could have been destroyed. Immediately after midnight, the cavalry are sent out and overtake the rear, a great number are taken or cut to pieces, the rest by flight escape in different directions to their respective states. Vercingetorix, having convened a council the following day, declares, "That he had undertaken that war, not on account of his own exigences, but on account of the general freedom; and since he must yield to fortune, he offered himself to them for either purpose, whether they should wish to atone to the Romans by his death, or surrender him alive. Embassadors are sent to Caesar on this subject. He orders their arms to be surrendered, and their chieftains delivered up. He seated himself at the head of the lines in front of the camp, the Gallic chieftains are brought before him. They surrender Vercingetorix, and lay down their arms. Reserving the Aedui and Arverni, [to try] if he could gain over, through their influence, their respective states, he distributes one of the remaining captives to each soldier, throughout the entire army, as plunder.

[7.90]After making these arrangements, he marches into the [country of the] Aedui, and recovers that state. To this place embassadors are sent by the Arveni, who promise that they will execute his commands. He demands a great number of hostages. He sends the legions to winter-quarters; he restores about twenty thousand captives to the Aedui and Arverni; he orders Titus Labienus to march into the [country of the] Sequani with two legions and

## Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

the cavalry, and to him he attaches Marcus Sempronius Rutilus; he places Caius Fabius, and Lucius Minucius Basilus, with two legions in the country of the Remi, lest they should sustain any loss from the Bellovaci in their neighborhood. He sends Caius Antistius Reginus into the [country of the] Ambivareti, Titus Sextius into the territories of the Bituriges, and Caius Caninius Rebilus into those of the Ruteni, with one legion each. He stations Quintus Tullius Cicero, and Publius Sulpicius among the Aedui at Cabillo and Matisco on the Saone, to procure supplies of corn. He himself determines to winter at Bibracte. A supplication of twenty-days is decreed by the senate at Rome, on learning these successes from Caesar's dispatches.

End of Book 7