

Caesar's First Invasion of Britannia August 55 BC

“Jump down comrades, unless you want to surrender our eagle to the enemy; I, at any rate, mean to do my duty to my country and my general.”

The Eagle standard-bearer of Caesar's favorite Xth Legion shouting aloud to his fellows before he jumped into the water from a Roman ship aground on the shore of Britannia near modern-day Dover, England –55 BC

Historical Background: (the selection below is from Chapters 24, 25, and 26 of Book IV of Caesar's Gallic War commentaries):

“The natives, on realizing his (Caesar's) intention, had sent forward their cavalry and a number of chariots that they are accustomed to use in warfare; the rest of their troops followed close behind and were ready to oppose our landing. The Romans were faced with grave difficulties. The size of the ships made it impossible to run them aground except in fairly deep water; and the soldiers unfamiliar with the ground, with their hands full, and weighed down by the heavy burden of their arms, had at the same time to jump down from the ships, get a footing in the waves, and fight the enemy, who, standing on dry land or advancing only a short way into the water, fought with all their limbs unencumbered and on perfectly familiar ground, boldly hurling javelins and galloping their horses, which were trained to this kind of work. The perils frightened our soldiers, who were quite unaccustomed to battles of this kind, with the result that they did not show the same alacrity and enthusiasm as they usually did in battles on dry land.”

“Seeing this, Caesar ordered the warships-which were swifter and easier to handle than the transports, and likely to impress the natives more by their unfamiliar appearance-to be removed a short distance from the others and then to be rowed hard and run ashore on the enemy's right flank, from which position slings, bow, and artillery could be used by the men on deck to drive them back. This maneuver was highly successful. Sacred by the strange shape of the warships, the motion of the oars, and the unfamiliar machines, the natives halted and then retreated a little. But as the Romans still hesitated, chiefly on account of the depth of the water, the man who carried the eagle of the 10th Legion, after praying to the gods that his action might bring good luck to the legion, cried in a loud voice: “Jump down comrades, unless you want to surrender our eagle to the enemy; I, at any rate mean to do my duty to my country and my general.” With these words he leapt out of the ship and advanced toward the enemy with the eagle in his hands. At this the soldiers, exhorting each other not to submit to such a disgrace, jumped with one accord from the ship, and the men from the next ships, when they saw them, followed them and advanced against the enemy”

“Both sides fought hard. But the Romans could not keep their ranks or get a firm foothold or follow the proper standards, and the men from different ships fell in under the first standard they came across, great confusion resulted. The enemy knew all the shallows, and when they saw from the beach small parties of soldiers disembarking one by one, they galloped up and attacked them at a disadvantage, surrounding them with superior numbers, while others would throw javelins at the right flank of the whole group. Caesar

therefore ordered the warships' boats and the scouting vessels to be loaded with troops, so that he could send help to any point where he saw men in difficulties. As soon as the soldiers had got a footing on the beach and had waited for all their comrades to join them, they charged the enemy and put them to flight, but could not pursue very far, because the cavalry had not been able to hold their course and make the island. This was the one thing that prevented Caesar from achieving his usual success."

***Terrain Setup:**

X14 Coastline Hex Tiles: (see special terrain rules): D1, D2, D3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, D8, D9, D10, E11, E12, E13

X7 Hill Hex Tiles: H1, H4, H5, G3, G10, G12, I12

X1 Broken Ground: H8 (see special terrain rules):

X5 Cliff Hexside sets—(use Rampart Tiles & see special terrain rules): **H2** faces G2/G3, **H3** faces G3/G4 **H7** faces G7/G8 **G9** faces F8/F9 **H10** faces G10/G11

*See Special Terrain Rules for this scenario

Initial Army Setup

Briton Tribal Set-up:

X8 Warrior: F2, F5, G7, F7, F9, F11, H6, G4

X1 Light Infantry: G8

X2 Chariots (see special rules): H4, G10

X1 Light Cavalry: I6

X1 Leader; H5 (Briton Paramount Chief)

Roman Setup:

X4 Elite Heavy Infantry: (5 Blocks Legionary Infantry, see Special Rules): E5, E6, D6,
x1 starts off-map initially

X4 Heavy Infantry: (4 Blocks Legionary Infantry, see Special Rules): D4, D8, C9,
x1 starts off-map initially

X1 Light Archer: D7

X2 War Machine (or WM see Special Rules for War Machines aboard ships--) D5, C8

X1 Leader: D5 (Caesar)

War Council:

Briton Tribal

Leader: Briton Paramount Chief

5 Cards

Move First

Roman Army

Leader: Caesar

4 Cards (low card for count due to difficult nature of an opposed amphibious operation)

Victory:

Briton Player wins if he scores 4 Banners (Caesar counts as 2 Banners if eliminated)

Roman Player wins if he scores 6 Banners

Special Rules:

The “Marian” Command Card Deck

Historical Note: *Combat in the 1st Century BC along the Roman frontier was somewhat different than the wars between civilized states in the 3rd Century BC. There was less room for combined arms tactics and maneuver, and battles probably tended to be more of the nature of hand to hand full bore slugfests with the stakes being nothing less than the survival of the tribe or Legion.*

This particular scenario utilizes a different Command Card Deck than the original C & C Ancients Deck. Eight (8) Cards are removed from the original deck leaving 52 Cards for scenario play. This new deck is called the “Marian Deck” and it is named after Caesar’s uncle Gaius Marius who reorganized the Roman Legions in roughly 105-103BC (several years before Caesar was born) to meet the challenges of the Germanic Tribal invasions that threatened the Roman Republic of the time.

The following eight cards are removed before play and put aside to create the Marian Deck:

X4 “Order Light troops”, x1 “I Am Spartacus”, x2 “Move-Fire-Move”, x1 “Mounted Charge”---note that one Mounted Charge” card is still retained in the deck.

Leader Command, Caesar, & Rally Special Rules:

Caesar can cancel **both** a retreat **and** a sword hit if present with the unit receiving such hits.

Units on both sides involved in close combat with the support of a Leader may only count one helmet hit amongst those rolled to inflict a hit on an opposing unit, unless Caesar is the supporting leader---than up to two helmet hits may be counted

Caesar when moving & ordered by himself without an attached unit normally may move up to four hexes instead of the regular three hexes for Leaders in the rulebook.

Roman and Briton units and the Rally Card: No Briton unit can be rallied to beyond four blocks or its strength at the start of the game whichever is less. No Roman unit can be rallied to beyond five blocks or its strength at the start of the game whichever is less. If a Player rolls “swords” when attempting to rally he may freely chose which unit adjacent to a Leader gets a block back.

Line Command Cards in the Scenario: The Line Command Cards may activate a block of up to any four foot units ONLY. (There were no real standard battle-lines in this fight)

Scenario Terrain Special Rules:

Coastline Hex Tiles: Only Roman units/leaders can exist or enter into coastline hexes. Briton units/leaders may missile fire or close-combat/battle-back into such hexes, but can never enter coastline hexes. Units close-combating or battling back into or out of such hexes do so with a “normal” maximum of only three dice (although this could be increased depending on the command card played). Roman units that begin their move in a coastline hex may only enter non-coastline hexes when they move. Roman units on any land hex may never enter a coastline hex through normal movement, although they could

retreat or evade into such hexes. Ordered Roman non-War Machine (WM) units/leaders located in a Sea Hex (see below) adjacent to a vacant Coastline Hex may enter an adjacent Coastline by expending all of their movement to do so.

Sea Hex Tiles: Only Roman units/leaders can exist or enter into sea hexes. Sea hexes are defined as all hexes beyond the coastline through to the Roman side of the map. Roman Heavy Infantry units located in a sea hex may only be ordered to enter an adjacent Coastline hex, they cannot move or into other sea hexes. Roman units may never retreat/evade into sea hexes. Ordered Roman Light Archers and War Machine(WM) units may freely move through sea hexes at the move rate of 2 hexes—these are assumed to be aboard ship. Roman Light Archers, Leaders and WM units located in sea hexes may never be attacked by Briton missile fire. Caesar, the sole Roman Leader when moving alone, may freely move through sea hexes/coastline hexes as if they were clear land hexes and may evade into such hexes.

Cliff Hexsides: Units/Leaders may never move/evade/retreat through cliff hexsides. Units located on a cliff hex tile may missile fire, but can never be targeted by enemy missile fire through cliff hexsides save by war engines. Cliff hexsides also block the line of sight for missile fire through/over such hexes. “Chariot skirmish” may not be conducted through Cliff hexsides.

Broken Ground: Cavalry and Chariot units may not close-combat or move/evade/retreat into broken ground hexes in this scenario. They can battle-back, “Chariot skirmish”, and missile fire into broken terrain.

Outflanking---*This is an easy way of introducing facing and flanks to the game with little fuss—it can be retrofitted to other scenarios where appropriate:*

A unit is said to be “Outflanked” if it is surrounded **in all** six adjacent hexes by either enemy units, or hexes adjacent to an enemy unit. The presence of friendly units or impassable terrain does not negate an “Outflanked” situation **in any way**. Units on the board edges (and not surrounded by six adjacent hexes) **cannot** be “Outflanked”.
Effects of being Outflanked: “Outflanked” units when battling back roll only half the normal number of dice they would be normally entitled to rounded up—to a maximum of only two dice—“Outflanked” units when battling back **never** hit on helmet rolls even if supported by a leader. A unit’s “Outflanked” situation is judged at the instant it battles back.

Briton Special Rules & Units:

Chariots: The Chariots of the Britons have a move allowance of 3, but when attacking in close-combat they only throw 3 dice as the normal maximum (rather than the rulebook 4 dice). Ordered Briton Chariots also have the option to “skirmish” at any adjacent enemy in lieu of a normal close-combat attack. If the “skirmish” option is declared by the Briton player simply throw one dice to determine the effect on the target—hit is on color or flag only—and such results are implemented exactly as in missile combat. If a skirmishing chariot rolls swords immediately re-roll the dice until some other result occurs. The Briton Chariots cannot be adversely affected in chariot skirmish combat.

Briton Light Cavalry: Briton Light Cavalry hit on swords in both battle-back and close-combat. When retreating they only retreat two hexes per Flag result taken.

Roman Special Rules, Abilities & Units:

Note that the usual Pilum and other Legionary rules are not utilized. The Romans had no time or opportunity to throw pilum and their troops formed up under whatever standard was nearby.

Roman War Machines (WM): WMs may only operate in sea hexes (the WMs are assumed to be fixed at the prows of Roman warships). They are considered to be a heavy class infantry unit with a move allowance of two hexes at sea. If they move, however, the WMs cannot fire. WM range is four hexes, and WM fire may be directed through Roman units, but not through Briton units. WMs may not target the British Leader if he is alone in a hex. Treat WMs for all other purposes (save fire at cliffs) as a normal missile unit.

Roman Light Archers: Roman Light Archers are assumed to be aboard ship at the start of the game and can transverse sea hexes at the rate of two hexes per turn—they may also come ashore just like Roman Heavy Infantry. Once ashore on a coastline hex they may never return to a sea hex for the remainder of the scenario, At sea they operate just as if they were on land for missile fire purposes. Roman Light Archers may never missile fire from a coastline hex (wet bows & bad footing).

Roman Off-map units: x1 Roman Heavy Infantry & x1 Elite (5 block) Roman Heavy Infantry start off-map initially. These two units may enter the game starting the second Roman Player-turn or later by playing section cards only. The off-map units may enter the map in any vacant sea hex adjacent to a coastline hex in lieu of the Roman Player issuing an order to a unit in that section (where the off-map unit entered) via a section card. The entry consumes the unit's entire move for that Roman Player-turn

Caesar Rethinks the Landing-the redraw option: Up to twice per game, starting Roman Player-turn 2 or later, the Roman Player may, instead of taking his player-turn, decide to discard exactly three cards from his hand and pick up three new cards from the draw deck. This option may not be exercised on consecutive Roman Player-turns. The redraw option may not be utilized if Caesar has been eliminated.