

The gallic wars essay



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The Gallic wars are a collection of essays written by Julius Ceasar as a chronicle of his military engagements with Britain, Gaul and Germany between 58-51B. C. The book offers expository facts for readers who are not acquainted with the Gallic lands and societies encountered during his expeditions. The book begins with a short account of Gaul and how the Helvetii are initially provoked to rebel by Orgetorix in 61 B. C. After the demise of Orgetorix' the Helvetii go ahead with their arrangements for battle. Since the Helvetii plan to trudge through a region adjoining the Roman Empire, Ceasar feels that they epitomize a hazard to Roman rule, so he leads his forces against them. After conquering the Helvetii, Ceasar battles with the Germans who have been brought by the Sequani tribe to Gaul.

Book two begins while Ceasar was spending the winter in Hither, Gaul. Reports reach Ceasar that the Belgae were potting a confederacy against Roman rule. Rumors of the Belgae exchanging hostages with neighboring communities as insurance stir Ceasar into action. These reports are substantiated by letters from Labienus. The reasons for the Belgae revolt include; fear that after the Gaul people were defeated Ceasar would turn his efforts against them, agitation by Gauls, natural instability and fickleness of disposition, and greed by chiefs. In response, Ceasar recruits two novel legions early in the summer and, in Hither Gaul. The legions are led by Quintus Pedius lead into Gaul territory. After the harvest, Ceasar tails with the rest of the battalion. Upon Ceasar's advent in Belgae, the Remi beseech for protection and pledge their loyalty to Ceasar in order to avert war. The following chapters are about the battle between Ceasar and the Belgic

communities. There is war with the Atrebates, Nervii, Menapii, Ambiani, Morini, Vellocasses, Caleti, Condrusi, Viromandui, Aduatuci, Caeroesi, Eburones, and the Paemani. Ceasar's army is experienced and has better supplies than the other tribes. Ceasar's army is divided into powerful legions that are led by capable commanders. The battle against the Aduatuci is waged through several small encounters.

The Aduatuci survey the consequences of the war against Ceasar and the Nervii and decide to hide in a fortress. The fortress is built on a rocky hill with a pathway that is only two hundred feet wide. The fortress is well protected and initially seems impregnable. As Ceasar's army approaches, the Aduatuci are afraid, and they make a peace deal with Ceasar. They promise to surrender all their weapons in return for his mercy and protection. The Aduatuci, however, go behind Ceasar's back and hide some weapons which they use to attack Ceasar's army at night. Ceasar, being the shrewd leader that he is, had foreseen such an attack and is well prepared. His army retaliates quickly and destroys the Aduatuci soldiers. The following day, Ceasar's army attacks the fort and captures the citizens. In total, more than fifty three thousand citizens are taken as slaves or sold.

Book three commences as Ceasar send Servius Galba with the Twelfth Legion to open a travel route through the Alps for Roman traders, who now have to pay heavy tolls. After several successful engagements, the Galba and the roman soldiers open the route. The Gauls start their usual cat and mouse games, and they plan to attack Galba's remaining legion. Battle soon ensues between the Gauls and the romans. Galba's legion is small in comparison to the enemy troops. Galba's army fights fiercely and manages

to ward off the attackers. The Veneti, a powerful seafaring nation that controls most of navigation on the open sea beyond their coasts, decide to imprison Silus and Velanius, Roman commanders. The Gauls follow their example and hold Trebius and Terrasidius. The Gauls also pledge to collaborate with the Veneti in a collective combat against Rome. Soon, other states join, and the coast is united. Ceasar learns of these acts of treachery and begin to prepare for war. He orders for warships to be built, seamen to be drafted from the provinces, and then sets off to join the army. Ceasar has two reasons for waging war against the venetians; firstly, to avenge the kidnap of his commanders, and consolidate his power and prove to the rebels that they were still under Roman rule.