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The Topography of Cæsar's Last Campaign against the Bellovaci

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (Mar., 1922), pp. 195-206

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1781759>

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Siberia and consists mostly of logs of coniferous trees. There were also a lot of floats from fishing and submarine nets, wreckage from ships, and I was told by a prospector that he had found bamboos and blocks of rubber and pitch.

Round the coast there were a few wrecks and also the skeletons of whales. In Walrus Gat the beach was covered with the skeletons of whales. I think that these whales had been brought there by human agency, and that it was here that the Dutch whalers must have set up their stations. If any one wishes to visit Jan Mayen to study the old whale fisheries I should advise them to make this spot their base, as I am sure that a careful study of this bay would reveal some interesting relics of the ancient Dutch whalers. Another place of antiquarian interest is the north end of the North Lagoon. Mr. Wordie has also said that there are no reindeer on the island because the vegetation is too scanty. There is, however, another cause which is more probable; this is that there are very few reindeer on the east coast of Greenland, and what there are have plenty of food and would not be forced to cross the ice so far as Jan Mayen nearly 200 miles distant in search of new pastures. There were a good many sea-birds but very few little birds. There were a few snowy buntings and wheatears, and I found a redwing on the sand.

The PRESIDENT: I am sure we should like to endorse His Excellency the Norwegian Minister's expression of thanks to the lecturer. He has taken us into a far-distant island, and we shall hope that as a result of this year's expedition the wireless station will be established and will bring to the Norwegian sailors and seafaring people all the benefits which are expected from it. It must be of enormous advantage to them that they should have, right out in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, a station from which the accounts of the weather and storms that take place there will furnish them with ample warning so that they may be able to make their arrangements accordingly. We should also, I think, give a special vote of thanks to Mr. Chaworth-Musters, because I understand he was the originator of the idea of the expedition. We may hope that his botanical collections will prove of great value and benefit to those interested in natural history.

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF CÆSAR'S LAST CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE BELLOVACI

Henry O. Forbes, LL.D.

HAVING had recently to verify a reference in Dr. T. Rice Holmes's erudite and very scholarly volume on 'Cæsar's Conquest of Gaul,' (2nd ed.) my attention was arrested by that author's discussion on the last Bellovacan campaign, as narrated by Hirtius, because of my intimate acquaintance with the locality now widely accepted as its scene. Napoleon and De Souley have identified the sites of the opposing camps to be in the Compiègne forest: the Belgic camp on Mount St. Marc; the Roman on Mount St. Pierre. Mr. Holmes gives his assent to this determination "as the most probable of any that has been named." "It corresponds," he says, "in every particular with Hirtius's description."

During successive vacations I enjoyed many pleasant days, com-

panied by the Commentaries, in investigating the topography of the struggles of the Belgic Confederation in the Aisne valley, especially that assigned to Cæsar's last Bellovacan campaign, within sight, as it was, of my headquarters in the hamlet of Rethondes.

After careful study of Dr. Holmes's pages and of my own notes I am compelled to retain the opinion I arrived at on the spot, that Hirtius's description of the theatre of Cæsar's operations does not agree with the topographical details of the supposed locality, either on the map or on the ground. I feel driven therefore to conclude that either the Eighth Commentary (chaps. vi. to xxiii.) is defective in details, or that the locale of this campaign has not yet been accurately determined.

The disputed ambit of the drama lies within a belt of country not exceeding 4 miles in width by 10 in length north-westerly from the reputed Belgic camp on Mt. St. Marc, in the corner of the Compiègne forest formed by the confluence of the Oise and Aisne, chiefly in territory belonging to the ancient Suessiones, whose capital stood near the present Soissons.

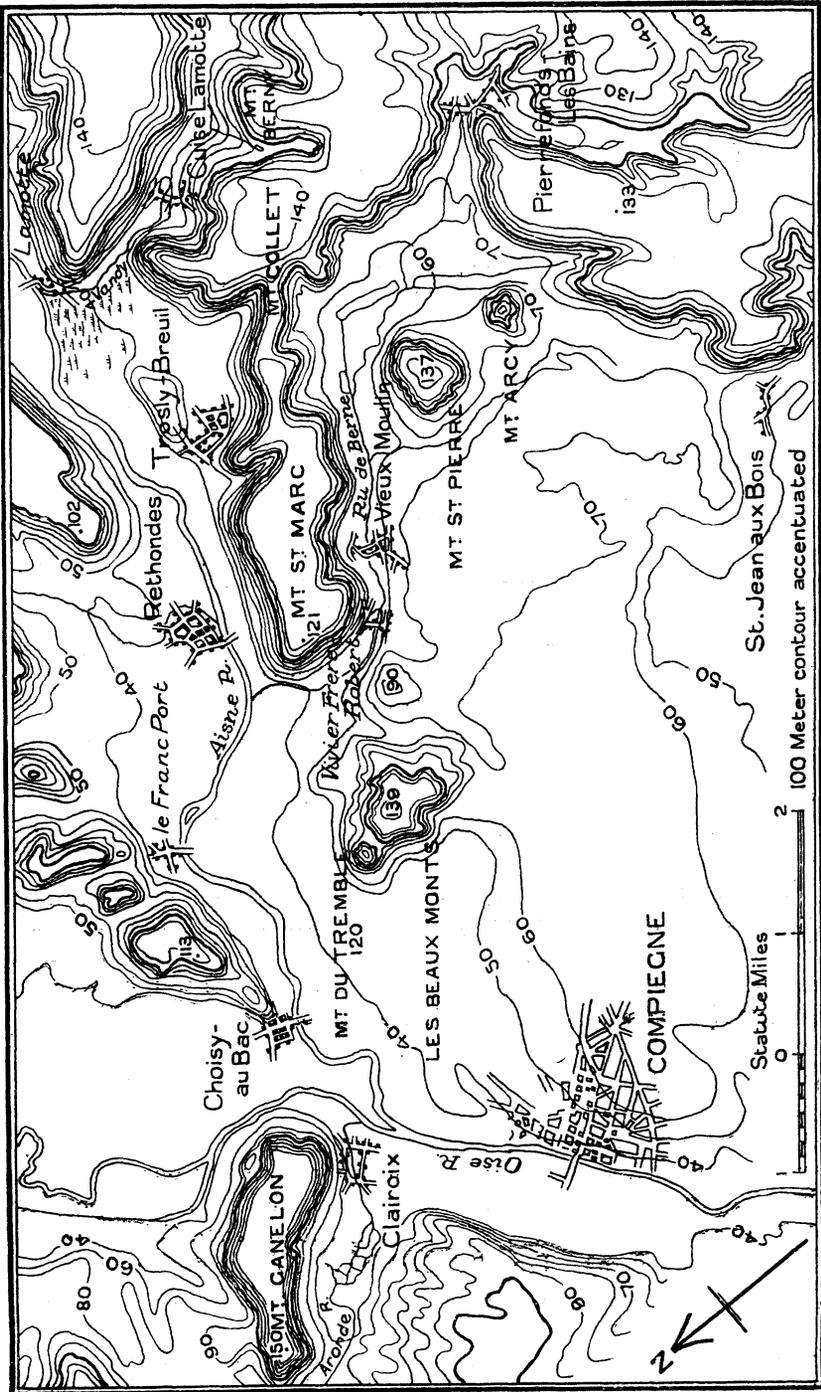
Hirtius's narrative of this campaign opens with Cæsar's being called away, while wintering in Bibracte—whose ruins now lie under the sod on the summit of Mt. Beuvray (Saône-et-Loire)—on December 30 B.C. 53 to quell a revolt among the Bituriges surrounding Guienne. The moment this rising was crushed he hastened back to and reached the Æduan capital on February 8 B.C. 52. Sixteen days later an outbreak, this time of the Carnutes (inhabiting the region about Chartres), summoned him hurriedly to Genebum, now Orleans (Loiret) 130–140 miles to the north-west. While there message after message reached him (probably about mid-March) from the Remi—the people of Rheims, there as now—who enjoyed the title of “the Friends of the Roman People,” that the Bellovaci (*qui belli gloriâ Gallos omnes Belgasque præstabant*) had in association with their allies, mustered in great force (*omni multitudine*) with the object of raiding the territory of the Suessiones, who were clients and immediate neighbours of the Remi. Cæsar promptly decided that it was not only urgently necessary to prevent this outbreak from again spreading into a conflagration, but essential also “to teach these tribes that there was no situation which the Roman arm was unable to reach” on behalf of its friends.

Cæsar's preliminary act was to order his lieutenant, C. Fabius, to march from Rheims (where he was stationed) with two legions into the threatened territory of the Suessiones. As soon as he was himself equipped he set out against the Bellovaci and established his first camp (so far as we learn) within their confines—which extended eastward from Beauvais to the Oise—but neither of its site nor of the time or direction taken to reach it has any record survived. On his arrival Cæsar sent out in all directions scouting squadrons whose captives supplied him with the following important information accepted as accurate by Hirtius: that

the mass of the population had migrated elsewhere except—a few who, under pretence of engaging in agricultural work, had been sent back (*remissi*) to act as spies (*speculandi causa*); that all the Bellovaci fit to fight were (in confederacy with the five tribes bordering their north-west) encamped, under Correus and Commios, in one spot, a high wooded place (*locum excelsum in sylva*) surrounded by a marsh; that all their impedimenta had been sent into the farthest recesses of the woods; that a few days previously Commios had set out to hire cavalry from the Germans, whose territory lay close at hand (*quorum vicinitas propinqua esset*), and (finally) that the confederates had resolved among themselves that, should the Roman army exceed three legions, they would not attack in the open, but would remain in their elevated camp and harass their enemy by ambuscades.

In these paragraphs we face the first of the many very difficult questions which the narrative raises in the solution of the problem discussed in this paper. Hirtius's defective account gives no indication where the Belgic camp was fixed, except "on a high wooded place." Dr. Holmes, however, remarking on the word *remissi*, considers that the natural conclusion to be drawn . . . is that "it [the Belgic camp] was not within the country of the Bellovaci." May the word not suggest the opposite inference that it was situated within the boundaries of their own or some friendly people, and that the Barbarian farm-hands, on hearing of the approach of the Roman army, fled to some safe retreat among their own folk—whither their impedimenta had been already conveyed—whence some of them had been sent back to serve as spies? It seems improbable that the mass of a population would migrate into the territory of other and hostile tribes.

The identification of the "high wooded place"—the Bellovacan camp—is accepted by the authorities with whom Dr. Holmes agrees as Mt. St. Marc, the north-west promontory of a tableland in the Compiègne forest, and within the territory of the Suessiones, against whom the Bellovacan raid was directed. On reference to the accompanying map, the portion of this tableland known as Mt. St. Marc will be seen to stretch $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-easterly, with a height of 121 metres, or about 66 metres above the general forest-level, which slopes gently up from 40 metres on the flats of the Oise and Aisne to 60 or 70 as it approaches the bases of the line of "monts" fringing the forest between the Aisne at La Motte on the east and the Oise at St. Saveur on the south-west. This narrow tableland, varying in width but rarely exceeding one mile at its broadest, continues more or less evenly, nearly in the same bearing, for another $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles along what is successively known as Mt. Collet, Bois de Cuise, and Mt. Berny. From St. Marc to Mt. Collet there is a descent of 10 metres to a narrow neck (in places only $\frac{1}{4}$ mile wide) 1100 yards long, when a rise of 20 metres without special abruptness again takes place—an elevation which is maintained for the rest of its distance that concerns this discussion, except that on the plateau of Mt. Collet a rounded eminence



Supposed Theatre of Caesar's Campaign against the Bellocaci

($\frac{1}{4}$ mile in diameter) exceeds that level by 10 metres. Meandering close along the western flanks of this St. Marc-Berny tableland trickles the Rû de Berne. The character of the stream to the south of Mt. Collet has little or no bearing on the problem under debate except, it may be observed, that beyond that point occur the more extensive "étangs" one passes on the way to Pierrefonds. To the north of Mt. Collet, the Rû de Berne, in its course to the Aisne, widens in three places into a very narrow pool each less than $\frac{1}{5}$ mile long. The vale bed is grass-clad, and its western margin falls away to the Oise, 6-8 miles distant, which would prevent the ground becoming to any extent water-logged. The rivulet runs between the 60-metre contours which at their widest—just south of Mt. Collet—are barely $\frac{1}{2}$ mile apart. It is evident, therefore, that Mt. St. Marc is not, nor could be, *surrounded* by a marsh, nor is it "protected" by any such wet land of consequence except the swamp between the Vandy and the Aisne on its north-eastern corner near Trosly-Breuil, which is larger and more impedimentous certainly than any tract along the Rû de Berne. It should be specially noted that the swamp *surrounding* the "high place" proved no impediment to the Belgic army and its heavy baggage train (hereafter to be mentioned) crossing over it to reach their elevated camp. To-day, whatever may have been the case in B.C. 52, the ground along both banks of the Rû de Berne is solid enough to carry the railroad past Vivier-Frère-Robert and Vieux Moulin (where the stream has a rocky bottom) to Pierrefonds, and also a carriage road, a branch of which climbs to the St. Marc plateau. The sloping sides of the St. Marc-Berny tableland vary little in gradient, and they cannot be considered "hard to ascend." From Rethondes I have walked up leisurely by the north-west face of St. Marc, across the supposed site of the Belgic camp to its south-easterly edge and back to the village in 45 minutes. One trustworthy guide gives 12 to 15 minutes as the time required to tramp from Vieux Moulin, on the Rû de Berne, to the platform of St. Marc, which commands a fine view up the river Aisne towards Soissons, and north-westward down the valley to Mt. Ganelon. The Bellovaci to reach St. Marc must have marched, apparently unmolested, from their own territory through the forests of their hostile neighbours, constructing ways and bridges or pontoons where required, and finally engineered a road for their waggon-train up an acclivity of 81 metres. One feels at a loss to conjecture by what route Commios could pass with safety from St. Marc to the Rhine through the intervening country of the Suessiones and the Remi, both necessarily hostile to him; or how St. Marc can be at all legitimately described as *propinqua* to the German lands.

The commentary goes on to inform us that the season was still early and fodder and corn scarce when Cæsar, now fully acquainted with the large force arrayed against him, set out from his camp in Bellovacan territory towards the high wooded Belgic rendezvous, with the order of his legions so disposed as to give the appearance of there being only three

(the number the enemy were willing to encounter), with the object of drawing the Gallic army out to fight in the open. Cæsar's unexpected approach to the Belgic headquarters so surprised Correus, that he determined to adhere to the confederate resolve to remain within his safe camp, with his troops drawn up in front of it. Cæsar, on his side, surprised by the enemy's numbers, decided, notwithstanding his anxiety to force an engagement, to construct a camp, for which he selected a site opposite to the enemy's with a valley deeper than wide between their position and his own. This camp he strongly fortified by engineering artifices and powerful artillery, in a specially ostentatious manner, with the object, in part, of inducing the Bellovaci to believe he was "rattled" by their numbers, and so tempt them out, and in part of rendering his camp defensible by a very small force should his foragers require to go far afield.

On studying this further record we find ourselves left in the dark as to the road Cæsar took from his former camp, what rivers, if any, he crossed or bridged—data all ignored by the elusive historian of the campaign. The site of his new camp has however been accepted by Dr. Holmes as Mt. St. Pierre, an isolated pyramidal hill, due south and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile distant from the nearest part of St. Marc, and about 16 metres higher. It rises steeply on all sides from the forest floor, to a small platform, about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in its widest part, resting on a base of 30 metres above the river flats of the Aisne and Oise. On its southern side this base, at 600 yards still further south, encircles Mt. Arcy, an isolated monticule whose plateau, 17 metres lower than its neighbour's, is less than 300 yards in greatest width. This St. Pierre-Arcy mass is almost surrounded by two small western tributary rills of the Rû de Berne, while the main stream on its way northward separates also Mt. St. Marc from another (but nameless) elevation, which I shall speak of as Hill 90 (50 metres above the river plain), whose eastern foot approaches within some 500 yards of the western flanks of St. Marc, so as to form a narrow gorge in which nestles the hamlet of Vivier-Frère-Robert. While the description "opposite to" the "elevated place" is a somewhat indefinite one of St. Pierre in its relation to St. Marc, the formation of the Berne valley is certainly discordant with Hirtius's description, for only in the short tract between St. Marc and Hill 90 can the Rû de Berne be said to run in a valley deeper than wide—"a deep and narrow valley" of Holmes—which does not in fact intervene between St. Pierre and St. Marc. Hirtius's text, however, nowhere authorizes the assumption that Cæsar's camp was placed on a hill at all. His ramparts indeed would be superfluous (if one who possesses no military knowledge may venture to make such an assertion) on St. Pierre, whose slopes rendered it protected as sufficiently as, or better than, St. Marc. It is no less evident that engines mounted on St. Pierre would remain ineffective until the Bellovaci, after descending to the Rû de Berne and crossing the morass and the intervening forest-floor in full

view of the Roman sentinels, ventured to approach the base of St. Pierre, when they would at once have afforded Cæsar his sought-for opportunity of attacking them in the open. Indeed, the St. Pierre-Arcy system might—by so numerous an army of the bravest of the Belgians if determined—have been entirely surrounded at a distance beyond engineering, say 1200 feet, and the Roman camp starved out. More fatal to the identification of St. Pierre as the site of Cæsar's camp is the fact that its plateau (only some 700 yards by 500 in extent) seems to me—subject to correction—inadequate to accommodate the Roman army numbering, on its arrival, four legions with their baggage train, besides numerous German auxiliaries and a “vast number of Remi, Lingones, and other tribes” (of whom he had embodied a large number), probably some 30,000 men in all. It was on this terrain that the rear-guard action was so splendidly fought in the Great War by the 4th (Guards) Brigade, in their retreat from Choisy-au-bac and Rethondes along the Oise towards the Marne in September 1914, when their numbers were reduced to three gunners, who heroically continued coolly firing till, at the last moment providentially reinforced by the [?] 9th Lancers, they destroyed their opponents with the capture of a score of their guns.

Returning to Hirtius's narrative, we learn that skirmishes took place at frequent intervals between small parties who *rushed out* from the opposing camps and played battledore and shuttlecock across the marsh, with alternating success. Cæsar's daily foragers also, “as must necessarily occur” (so Hirtius expresses it) when collecting supplies in an intricate country, out of far-scattered houses (*raris disjectisque ædificiis*), were frequently surrounded, with heavy loss in men and baggage-animals, to the great elation of the Bellovaci, who were additionally inspired by the safe return, at this juncture, to their camp of Commios with his 500 German hirelings. Cæsar having by then decided that his enemy's “marsh-surrounded elevated place” could neither be directly assaulted without dangerous risk (*sine dimicatione perniciosâ*), nor closely blockaded (*munitionibus claudî*) by the force at his disposal, wrote off to Trebonius to join him at his utmost speed with the three legions he indicated. Till their arrival Cæsar's Remian and Lingonian horse were detailed to guard the foragers, for whom, notwithstanding these precautions, the Bellovaci continued successfully to lay snares in wooded spots (*in sylvestribus locis*), in one of which it was the ill luck of the Remi to suffer very severe loss, including their chief Vertiscus. Contests also at the ford and pass of the marsh still occurred daily in full view of both camps. In one of these encounters Cæsar's auxiliaries determinedly crossed the marsh, killed the few who resisted them, and so hotly pursued the remaining crowd (*reliquam multitudinem*) in reserve, dislodging them time after time from the higher grounds (*locis superioribus*) that they fled without drawing breath till they got back into their own camp, and some in their terror ran even beyond it. This defeat so filled Correus's army with foreboding,

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to be greatly intensified, a few days later, by the news of Trebonius and his legions being not far off, that, with minds still heavy with the remembrance of the recent disaster at Alesia (Alise-Sainte-Reine on Mont Auxois), they resolved to escape, and began as soon as darkness fell to send away in advance their enormous waggon train (*magna multitudo carrorum*) with the baggage, all their unarmed men, the aged and the invalids. Daybreak, however, having exposed their operations, they attempted to prevent the Romans pursuing the train till it was well under way, by drawing up their troops in front of their camp. On observing Correus's alertness, however, Cæsar deemed it unwise, with so steep a hill facing him, to attempt its attack.

It is equally obvious from the map as to any observer on the spot, that if the true positions of the belligerents were on St. Marc and St. Pierre, the expression *procurrentibus* (rushing out) used in the above continuation of the narrative, suggests a very different situation from that of camps perched on steep eminences 2 miles apart. And if they were, as presumed, situated within Suessionian territory, which was friendly to the Romans, one would have expected the well-disposed owners of the scattered farms to have brought in supplies for their benefactors, or at least to have spied out for them the dangerous wooded places, and certainly the last to fall into these snares ought to have been the Remi—of whom the Roman foragers contained a large number—who as friends and bordering tribes of the Suessiones would be familiar with the country. The fact also of the safe return of Commios from the Rhine with his 500 hired cavalry, besides supporting the indictment I have brought against the high wooded place as St. Marc, throws the upholders of this identification on the horns of a dilemma. To have reached this camp Commios must either have conducted his cavalry round through friendly country to the north, thence eastward across the intervening forest and obstructive rivers of hostile Suessionian territory, marching them brazenly under the never unobservant eyes of Cæsar, whose position, by hypothesis, gave him full command of the approaches of St. Marc; or his squadrons must have crossed right through Remian and Suessionian country (tribes both long bound by ties of friendship to the Romans) entirely without opposition, or any warning conveyed by spies or sentinels. The statement that Cæsar contemplated the investment of the Belgic camp still further compels the conclusion, after an inspection of the map, that Cæsar's eyes were set on some other elevated place than St. Marc, and one, besides, at a distance from it; for instead of sending in great haste more than 100 miles for Trebonius's legions, he had, as will be remembered, two of Fabius's within very easy call, somewhere between himself and Rheims, probably at Soissons, the Suessionian capital. Strangely enough nowhere, except in the early passage referred to, is this officer or his legions mentioned again throughout the campaign. In addition to these considerations, neither on the map nor on the actual ground can

any spot, in full view of the two presumed camps, be recognized answering to "the ford and pass of the marsh."

The account of the successful raid by Cæsar's auxiliaries (described in one of the above paragraphs), in which the Belgic "elevated place" (the dreaded marsh and the acclivity notwithstanding) was apparently almost, if not entirely, reached, and its army mortally scared, although it does not invalidate the contention I am supporting, yet it leaves us hopelessly perplexed; for this handful of troops evidently accomplished with little opposition what Cæsar, after mature consideration, had decided to be too "pernicious" an adventure to attempt; and, what is more unaccountable, he did not, on observing their success, strongly reinforce them at once so that the position might have (as may be gathered from the narrative) been fully captured. When the theatre of these operations has finally been identified, Hirtius's story—defective even as it is—may present a different aspect. The fact that Commios could conduct his levies safely to his camp without Cæsar's apparent knowledge or interception, while accurate information of Trebonius's approach—as to whose line of march Hirtius is silent—was conveyed to the Bellovaci, further strengthens my previous contention that the latter were encamped in a friendly country, additionally confirmed by the presence in their camp of the crowd of men unfit to fight and of non-combatants who were sent away with the baggage train. No troops that Correus could draw up *on St. Marc* (if that hill be the "elevated place"), to cover the departure of his baggage train, could possibly prevent its *pursuit* by the Romans, who were, by supposition, in occupation of the forest-floor, 66 metres immediately below his camp, and in command of the only road by which his carts could escape towards Mt. Ganelon, *i.e.* down its north or north-west slope facing the Aisne, and thence down the valley. This exit from St. Marc could, I venture to suggest, have been blocked by a troop passing between Hill 90 and the *massif* (if it may be so described) of the Beaux Monts and Mont du Tremble (the most prominent of the heights within the Compiègne forest), by an existing gap $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile wide, very little, if at all, above the forest-level at the base of St. Pierre; or the Belgic train might have been cut off by marching even to the west of this block by an attack on its flank opposite Choisy-au-bac. The narrative fails to mention the destruction of the train or of its subsequent fate; but it is evident it was allowed to escape unmolested, a different fortune, one may predict, than would have befallen it had Cæsar really occupied St. Pierre.

Cæsar realizing, so the Commentary continues, that his camp was cut off from Correus's by a marsh difficult to cross, but that the hill (*jugum*) on its far side, stretching almost to the Belgic position, was separated from it only by a mediocre valley, he bridged the marsh and leading over it troops of all arms quickly mounted its plateau, and advanced his artillery so close to the edge of the hill that missiles could be discharged into the midst of the enemy. As the Bellovaci, refusing to be drawn,

pertinaciously remained on their own ground, Cæsar, under a guard of twenty cohorts, had a third camp constructed and fortified with his troops drawn up ready for eventualities. The Bellovaci, interpreting these manœuvres as preliminary to their pursuit (*insequendum*), in their terror determined to hasten after their waggons, and so at dark (*extremoque tempore diei*), after raising a dense smoke-screen, they took to flight (*vehementissime cursu*). Suspecting their intentions Cæsar advanced his cavalry (over the mediocre valley evidently) to the edge of the smoke-screen, which however their horses refused to face, while he followed, in person, cautiously in case of a snare. During the night the Belgic host escaped unpursued and unharmed (*sine ullo detrimento*) to a very strong place 10 miles distant, from which many traps were placed by Correus for the Roman foragers, wherein they suffered severely. One especially elaborate ambush, Cæsar learned from a prisoner, was planned at a flat place a mile square, rich in grass and corn likely to tempt the Roman victuallers, for whom 7000 of the bravest Bellovaci under Correus himself were to lie in wait. This field was encompassed by extremely dense forest and a river most difficult to cross (*flumine impeditissime*) some 8 miles from the "very strong place."

In studying the further progress of the campaign in the above paragraphs, one's surprise grows at the constant anxiety—if St. Marc were the elevated place—which the marsh caused, since it seemed to form no real obstruction, for, even according to Hirtius's confused and indefinite narrative, it had been crossed, as we have seen, many times by large bodies of horse and foot from both camps. A very crucial difficulty, however, exists in the position of the *jugum* stretching within arrow-flight of the Belgic troops. Dr. Holmes seems to agree to the identification of this hill with Mt. Collet. It is impossible not to be struck by the apparent ease with which Cæsar at last crossed the dreaded marsh (probably by a corduroy road) and ascended the *jugum* (which, if Mt. Collet, is as high and has as steep flanks as St. Marc) after he had considered both obstacles practically insuperable. Mt. Collet the map shows to be only a continuation of an undulating tableland, as already described, nowhere interrupted by any feature a geographer would describe as a valley "mediocre" or other. St. Marc and Mt. Collet, differing in height by less than 10 metres, are united by a narrow neck 1100 yards long and only 10 metres below their level. The extreme edge of this hill (*ultimum jugum*) from which darts could be showered on the Gallic troops is, if on Mt. Collet, more than 2 miles from the centre of St. Marc's plateau, and therefore of Correus' camp, while the range of the Roman *tormenta* rarely exceeded 1200 feet. Cæsar's fears of a trap on the "elevated place" raises further doubt as to its being St. Marc, since no ambush could be set, within so limited an area too, more numerous or dangerous than the entire Belgic army, which Cæsar had realized was then "on the wing," while his own veterans (perhaps

then augmented by Trebonius's legions) were alert and ready for anything. Some reason, which the geography of the Compiègne forest does not suggest, must exist why Cæsar, "who was adventurous as a knight-errant," allowed first the Belgic waggon-train and then the entire army to escape absolutely unmolested. The information we possess affords no authority for assuming that the direction taken by Correus from his deserted camp was "up (*lapsu calami* by Holmes on page 830 for *down*) the Aisne," or that the "very strong place" must be identified with Mt. Ganelon, for *loco munitissimo* does not necessarily indicate an eminence. This isolated table-topped hill rises just within the Bellovacan territory to about 110 metres above the Oise at its confluence with the Aisne, and the centre of its plateau is distant from St. Marc's, as the crow flies, about $5\frac{1}{8}$ English, or between 5 and 6 Roman, miles, a wide discrepancy from Hirtius's 10 miles, even if his measurements followed the river. Between these places lay, for a large army, two extremely difficult physical obstructions—the crossing of the deep and unfordable rivers Aisne and Oise, or (according to the bank followed) of the Oise and then the Arvonde marshes at the base of Mt. Ganelon, and the ascent of the steep flanks of that hill, a trek—passed over in Hirtius's narrative in silence—which ought to have become a rout if it had taken place in the Aisne valley. Some unrecorded reason must surely also exist for Cæsar's continuing to remain in the vicinity of the deserted camp of the Bellovaci after their flight, and the repeated disasters to his foragers, not to be explained by the geography of the Compiègne forest. The luxuriant cornfield—indicating a cultivated district, and the likelihood of espionage—selected for Correus's ambush (planned evidently for days previously since it was known to the Belgic prisoner) was 8 miles from the strong place; but nothing is related to be a guide to its identity beyond the unhelpful indications of "the very dense forest" and "a river most difficult to cross." From the former Belgic camp on St. Marc, as presumed, the field may have been any distance between 2 to 18 Roman miles, which in case of the former would be less than 2 English miles off and easily visible, but for tree-obstruction, from its plateau. A cornfield too so luxuriant, if within such immediate reach, must certainly have long before been pillaged by one or other army, both of which had been foraging far and wide for weeks previously. Since "in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird," it seems incredible, if the belligerents were not *playing* at soldiering, that Correus could hope to march 7000 men, cavalry and infantry, secretly over the great physical obstacles between Mt. Ganelon and the field, and spring a surprise upon Cæsar's foragers in the near vicinity of their camp; or that he would conduct under the nose of the Roman general a fraction of an army which incontinently fled *en masse* a few days before from fear of the Roman legions, where the ambuscaders could be cut off, in case of reverse, from any help by their fellows. I am constrained to conclude that the beguiling cornfield could not have been situated, the authorities

already quoted notwithstanding, in the Aisne valley, at least below the entrance of the Rû de Berne. Eight miles *up* the Aisne from the plateau edge of Mt. Ganelon, even following the river windings, would take Correus' force far eastward of Mt. St. Marc and absolutely within sight and hearing of Cæsar's legions.

According to the narrative, Cæsar, to counter this plot, pretending ignorance of the ambush, despatched in advance to the cornfield only a somewhat augmented foragers' guard, which he was personally to follow after at his utmost speed at the head of more legions than usual. These advance troops fought the ambuscaders fiercely, but they had to give way for a time; and though the light infantry joined in, the issue of the contest was for a long time doubtful. Meantime Cæsar, while marching along at top speed, kept sending ahead messenger after messenger to the battle-field to announce that the legions were hurrying to the aid of the guard, ready for action. These messages inspirited the fighters to exert their utmost to finish the fight before the legions should arrive and claim a share in their victory. When Cæsar did reach the scene, the Bellovaci had been entirely defeated with the loss of the greater part of their number, including Correus their general. In expectation that the enemy would, after such a defeat, vacate their camp, Cæsar determined to march his force thither—some 8 miles distant—even across a deep river which he discovered (*videbat*) blocking his way; but the Bellovaci, then finally crushed, submitted and sent hostages who met Cæsar before he reached the "very strong place."

Cæsar's reputed camp was then, by hypothesis, on the St. Marc plateau or its neighbourhood, and within 3000 yards of the meadow where the *long* and desperate conflict was being waged, a distance no greater than an ordinary pedestrian could accomplish in less than half an hour. The fact that Cæsar, at his top speed, failed to cover this short distance and reach the field before the finish of the battle, and that he was sending out relays of messengers during his flying march over the intervening 3000 yards, is sufficient evidence that the distance from his camp to the scene of the struggle must have been far in excess of 2 Roman miles, and if so it is conclusive that the scene of the battle could not have been in the lower Aisne valley, and if not in the Aisne valley neither were Mts. St. Marc and St. Pierre the sites of the respective Belgic and Roman camps. Had this battle been fought really in the Aisne valley Cæsar, with a camp on St. Pierre, did not, it is perfectly obvious, require to "discover" the river flowing between the field and the "very strong place"; it must have been hourly in evidence during his occupation of Mt. St. Pierre.

I am finally compelled to conclude that, through the indefiniteness and lack of details in Hirtius's narrative—more than one instance of which has been noted above—or his lack of personal knowledge of the locality, the problem which has occupied us is, as M. Desjardins believes, insoluble with our present knowledge.