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ON CÆSAR'S LANDING-PLACE IN BRITAIN.

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NOTWITHSTANDING all that has been written with a view to determine the place of Cæsar's landing in Britain, the question is still open to further inquiry. The subject may be thought trite, but it must always possess a degree of interest for the people of Kent; and as the views here propounded differ from those of preceding writers, it is hoped that this additional treatise will be found excusable.

As the purpose of the following observations is to endeavour to ascertain the course of Cæsar's operations on the coast of Britain, it is unnecessary to refer to the transactions in which he was engaged preparatory to leaving Gaul, as they are not connected with the occurrences to be here investigated.¹

Before attempting to trace Cæsar's movements, it is requisite to call attention to the part of the coast on which he can be supposed to have landed, viz. between Beachy Head and Dover; beyond Dover it is needless to look, for although, until recently, the general assumption has been that he debarked at Deal, it seems now to be clearly ascertained that at the time of his arrival, the current of the tide must have carried him from Dover in the opposite direction.—In the absence of any positive

¹ For information on these and various other circumstances relating to Cæsar's operations, not here alluded to, the reader is referred to a most valuable paper by the Astronomer Royal, in the 'Archæologia,' vol. xxiv., in which also full particulars of the tides, etc., will be found.

evidence of change, it would be natural to suppose that during the nineteen centuries which have passed since Cæsar's time, the action of the sea must have caused alterations in the coast, by wearing away the cliffs and headlands, and increasing the deposits on the low parts of the shore ; but in this respect we are not entirely dependent on conjecture, as various changes are distinctly recorded, though history does not reach, by some centuries, to the age of Cæsar. The cliffs at Dover, and from thence to within a few miles of Folkestone, are of chalk, and therefore liable to be easily acted upon by the sea, and the state of the works next the edge of the cliff at Dover Castle shows that this hill formerly extended beyond its present limits. In the hollow occupied by the town of Dover, the land has undoubtedly advanced, and it was still advancing, by an accumulation of shingle, until the harbour of refuge, now in progress, was begun. At the end of the chalk next Folkestone is Eastwear Bay, where the cliffs become much lower, and the soil changes to a mixture of stone and clay ; here the land periodically yields to the action of the sea. Immediately adjacent to this bay is the town of Folkestone, of which a considerable portion has been washed away. At Hythe the shore has advanced to some extent, and from hence the low tract of Romney Marsh, formed entirely by a deposit from the sea, reaches (under different names) to Rye, and to the hills below Pett, near Winchelsea ; within this district important changes have arisen, but the history of them unfortunately is not perfectly clear ; it seems certain, however, that in the time of the Romans, an estuary ran from Hythe towards Appledore, close under the high ground on which the church of Limpne stands, which possibly was an outlet of the river Rother, formerly called the Limene ; here the Portus Lemanis was situated, and considerable remains of Roman buildings are still to be seen on the

slope of the hill under Lîmpne church. A second estuary extended across the marsh, from Romney to Appledore, apparently the main outlet of the Rother; and a third appears to have passed southward from Appledore, under the high land at Playden, and to have reached the sea at Rye, or between that town and Winchelsea. In this marshy tract very material changes have been effected by storms, but these three estuaries seem all to have existed at the same period. The two first mentioned have long been entirely choked, and the soil drained and made valuable land; the third is now represented by the sluggish stream of the Rother, which falls into the sea at Rye. New Romney owes its foundation to the sea having left the old town. At Dungeness the land continues to increase, from the accumulation of beach, to the extent of some feet annually. The original town of Winchelsea stood on a low island, or peninsula (for the accounts are not perfectly clear on this point), towards the S.E. from the present town, about where the Pier-Head is marked on the map, or somewhat further seaward; this was in great part destroyed by a violent storm in 1287, immediately after which the new town was founded, and the ancient site was speedily washed away. Both before and after the destruction of the first town, the harbour of Winchelsea was one of the principal ports, if not the chief port, of assembly for the Royal Navy; it must therefore, throughout this period, have been both safe and commodious, and the position of the castle (formerly called Camber Castle, or the Castle at the Camber¹) seems to prove that until a comparatively late date the sea penetrated far within the present line of coast, and the whole breadth of ground between the Pier-Head and the castle, and for some distance further inland, towards Rye, is composed of beach so recently accumulated as to be, for the most part, still

¹ Camber, a harbour.

bare of vegetation. At Hastings, the high ground has certainly receded, as, before the Castle Hill was cut back to make room for Pelham Crescent, part of the wall of the castle projected beyond the face of the cliff, and a large mass which had fallen off lay below at the foot of the hill; but the cliffs between Winchelsea and Pevensey are of too compact a structure to be easily acted upon by the sea, and they are probably now but little reduced from the appearance they presented at the time of Cæsar's invasion. Beyond Hastings, towards Beachy Head, I am unable to point out any particular alterations; there is some evidence of changes, in mediæval times, near Pevensey, either on the shore or about the mouths of the streams, but I have no precise knowledge of the history of this locality. Throughout the line of coast here referred to, from Dover to Beachy Head, the beach is now drifted by the tide along the shore with considerable force, and is accumulating in various places, but this kind of deposit seems to be of comparatively recent origin, for the older parts of the low lands consist (so far as my knowledge of them extends) of mud and sand; this shows that the current is now stronger, at least along the low parts of the shore, than it formerly was,—a change probably caused by the wearing away of the cliffs and headlands.

We may now give attention to Cæsar's operations. His first expedition appears to have been in some degree experimental, as it was undertaken late in the season, with a small force of two legions, unprovided with the usual quantity of baggage; and as the transporting of this body of troops seems to have required all the ships then at his command, he cannot be supposed to have contemplated at that time effecting a permanent conquest; and he says that if he could proceed so far only as to ascertain the character of the island and its inhabitants, the gaining of this information would be

highly useful. From the Gauls nothing was to be learnt of the country or people of Britain, for even the traders, to whom he made especial application, could tell neither the size of the island, nor by what tribes it was occupied, nor the customs of the inhabitants, or their usages in warfare, nor what ports were fit to receive a fleet.¹ In this state of ignorance, Cæsar thought it prudent, before embarking on his enterprise, to send an officer, C. Volusenus, in a galley to collect what information he could, with directions to return quickly, which he did, after an absence of five days, without having ventured to land on the British coast.² Hereupon Cæsar completed his preparations, and sailing from Gaul with a favourable wind, about midnight, he reached the coast of Britain with the first of his ships at ten o'clock the following morning; here he saw the hills on all sides covered with enemies, and finding the place he had approached to be altogether unsuited for a hostile landing, he remained at anchor until the rest of his fleet were assembled, and then, having in the meanwhile called his officers together and given his orders, at three in the afternoon, with wind and tide in his favour, sailed a distance of eight (or seven) miles to a flat open part of the shore, where, after a fierce contest, he succeeded in effecting a landing.³ This is a general outline of Cæsar's narrative, but

¹ "Si tempus anni ad bellum gerendum deficeret, tamen magno sibi usui fore arbitrabatur, si modo insulam adisset, genus hominum perspexisset, loca, portus, aditus cognovisset; quæ omnia fere Gallis erant incognita. . . . Evocatis ad se undique mercatoribus, neque quanta esset insulæ magnitudo, neque quæ aut quantæ nationes incolerent, neque quem usum belli haberent, aut quibus institutis uterentur, neque qui essent ad majorum navium multitudinem idonei portus, reperire poterat."—*De Bell. Gall.*, lib. iv. c. 18.

² "Volusenus, perspectis regionibus, quantum ei facultatis dari potuit, qui navi egredi ac se barbaris committere non auderet, quinto die ad Cæsarem revertitur; quæque ibi perspexisset renuntiat."—*Ibid.*, lib. iv. c. 19.

³ "Nactus idoneam ad navigandum tempestatem, tertia fere vigilia solvit. . . . Ipse hora diei circiter quarta cum primis navibus Britanniam adtigit, atque ibi in omnibus collibus expositas hostium copias armatas conspexit. Cujus loci hæc erat natura: adeo montibus angustis mare conti-

it is necessary for our present inquiry to make a close examination of each step in his progress.

The first thing to be noticed is, that Cæsar twice mentions his desire to learn what ports on the coast of Britain were capable of receiving his fleet; it may therefore be concluded that his wish was to land in, or close to, a haven where his ships might be made secure. The way in which he speaks of the place where he first arrived is also remarkable, and to this I wish to call particular attention, because I venture to think that Cæsar's words have been misunderstood. The general assumption has been that they are not to be interpreted with perfect strictness; it may however be presumed that he was well able to give an accurate account of whatever he intended to describe, and it is difficult to believe that he can have described a peculiar conformation of the coast which he did not find: in this respect, therefore, I must avow myself to be, though a Briton, Cæsar's advocate, and contend for a literal interpretation of his words. His description is very concise, but it has every appearance of exactness, and is perfectly clear: "Cujus loci hæc erat natura: adeo montibus angustis mare continebatur, uti ex locis superioribus in littus telum adjici posset." The introductory words give emphasis to what follows, and the whole passage seems to imply, that he was struck, if not surprised, by the peculiarities of the place. His subsequent proceedings appear to show that he was embarrassed by the obstacles

nebatur, uti ex locis superioribus in littus telum adjici posset. Hunc ad egrediendum nequaquam idoneum arbitratus locum, dum reliquæ naves eo convenirent, ad horam nonam in anchoris expectavit. Interim legatis tribunisque militum convocatis, et quæ ex Voluseno cognovisset, et quæ fieri vellet, ostendit, monuitque, (ut rei militaris ratio, maxime ut maritimæ res postularent, ut quæ celerem atque instabilem motum haberent,) ad nutum et ad tempus omnes res ab iis administrarentur. His dimissis, et ventum et æstum uno tempore nactus secundum, dato signo et sublatiis anchoris, circiter millia passuum viij (al. vij) ab eo loco progressus, aperto ac plano littore naves constituit."—*De Bell. Gall.*, lib. iv. c. 21.

unexpectedly encountered. The delay of five hours of inactivity might be accounted for by a reluctance to begin any hostile movement before his whole force had arrived, but the calling together of his officers during this interval, and explaining to them the intelligence Volusenus had collected, pointing out what he was intending to do, and exhorting them to act with promptness and discretion, indicates a change in his plan of operations, for the carrying out of which fresh orders were necessary; and as the fleet did not quit its anchorage till within about four hours of sunset,¹ with a new landing place to be found, a landing to be forced, and the army to be secured for the night, Cæsar had good reason for urging his officers to exert themselves. A course of seven or eight miles along the coast, in the direction of the tide, brought the fleet to a flat open part of the shore, where a landing was gained with great difficulty.²

It is now necessary to revert to the coast of Britain, and endeavour to discover the locality of the transactions just referred to. At Dover, there may have been an inlet at the date of Cæsar's arrival, sufficient to be called a haven, but it must have been small, and the adjacent ground does not agree with Cæsar's description.³ A distance of seven or eight miles, in the direction of the tide from Dover, reaches to Folkestone, or a little further, where an invading force would have found very serious, though probably not insuperable difficul-

¹ According to Halley's computation, Cæsar arrived on the coast of Britain at the end of August.

² The effect of the fleet remaining so long stationary, must have been to draw the Britons towards the neighbouring coast; and it is possible Cæsar may have prolonged his stay to the utmost, in the hope of enticing them away from the parts to which he was about to direct his course.

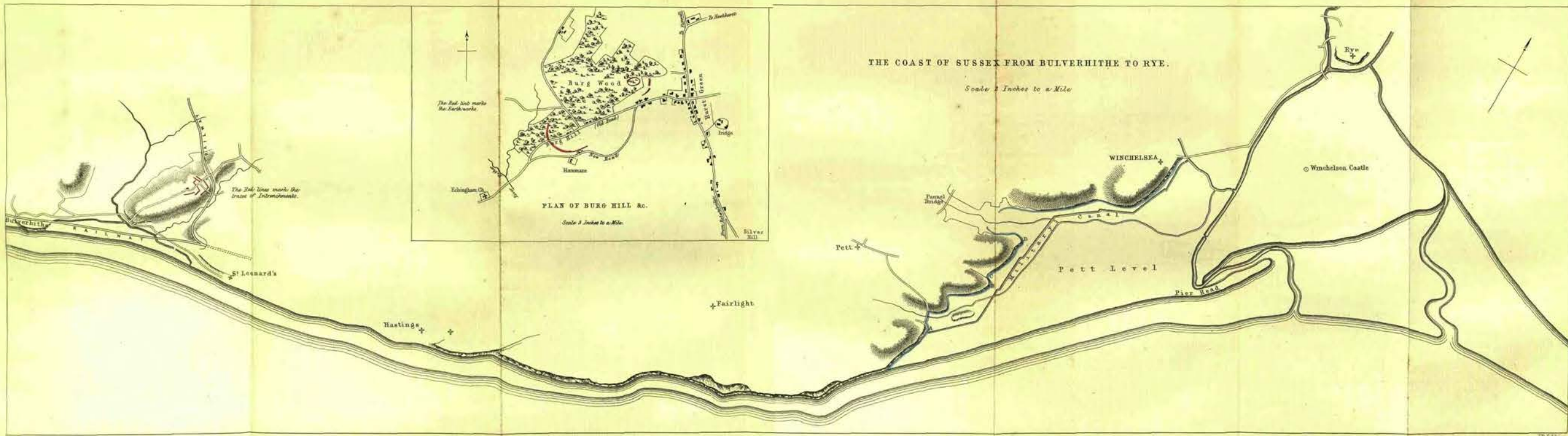
³ The site of Dover Castle has much the appearance of having been a British fortress; if it really was so, and Cæsar had attempted to land immediately below, he could hardly have failed to mention its existence.

ties. At Hythe,¹ or rather at Limpne, a reasonably good harbour probably existed, but the ground abutting upon it does not in any degree possess, or appear to have possessed, the requisite peculiarities, and a movement from hence would have brought the Roman fleet to the shore of Romney Marsh, where it is impossible to suppose that Cæsar would have disembarked; neither is it credible that he could, in the first instance, have steered to Romney, or any other spot within the limits of the marsh. At Pevensey, there may have been a harbour, but it is difficult to imagine that any of the surrounding ground can ever have suited with Cæsar's description, and a distance of seven or eight miles from hence would reach the cliffs towards Beachy Head. Neither of these localities therefore entirely fulfils the conditions requisite to establish the probability of its having been the place of Cæsar's arrival; but there is one other spot to examine, viz. Winchelsea; here, as already noticed, there was a spacious harbour at the earliest date which is recorded, and I think there is the strongest ground for assuming it to have existed at the time of the Roman invasion; there is also very great probability of the deposit on which the old town of Winchelsea stood having been formed at that time, but of this no proof is to be found. I have not met with any evidence of the position of the harbour, but it can hardly have been anywhere else than between the site of the old town and the hills towards Pett. The whole of what is now Pett level, as far inland as to the cliff on which modern Winchelsea stands, has unquestionably been occupied by the sea, and I have not any doubt that at the date of Cæsar's

¹ There once was a small harbour at Hythe, apparently a narrow creek formed by a bar of sand or mud, a short distance off the firm shore; it seems to have been in great part choked by an accumulation of the same kind of deposit, and subsequently to have been obliterated by the drift of beach; or perhaps the bar was washed away before the beach began to collect.

invasion, and for centuries later, the greater part, if not the whole, of this tract was under water, with the shore on the western side following the blue line on the accompanying map. The high ground next Pett slopes rapidly down to this line of shore, and ends in a succession of small bays and promontories; at no part, however, of the whole distance from Winchelsea to the point marked A, excepting in the valley from Pannel Bridge, and a length of perhaps two hundred yards at the back of the bay C, does the declivity reach the water-level, as the skirt of the hills is worn away so as to form a step or low cliff, perhaps forty feet high, or rather more, at the end of the promontories, but in general of much less elevation.¹ The peculiarities of this spot are very remarkable, and as they bear strongly on our present inquiry, it is necessary to describe them with some minuteness. Beginning at the end of the military canal, marked A, where the cliffs which face the sea under Fairlight end rather suddenly, and calculating distances along the bank of the canal, there is, first, an opening, forming a bay, about 450 yards wide; then follows a cliff, something more than 450 yards long, part of which may be as much as forty or fifty feet high, but the greater portion is much less,—this, when viewed from the south-east, has the appearance of a promontory, but the ground at the back slopes very rapidly down to the level of the water, and it is actually an island; after this comes another opening or bay, about 600 yards, or rather more, in width (still measuring on the bank of the canal), to the point of the promontory B; to which succeeds a third bay and an oblique line of coast, reaching about 700 yards further, to the point D. Now, if we look back to the time when Pett level was covered by the sea, all the characteristics of this locality appear consistent with Cæsar's narrative;—every proba-

¹ The cliff under the town of Winchelsea is higher.



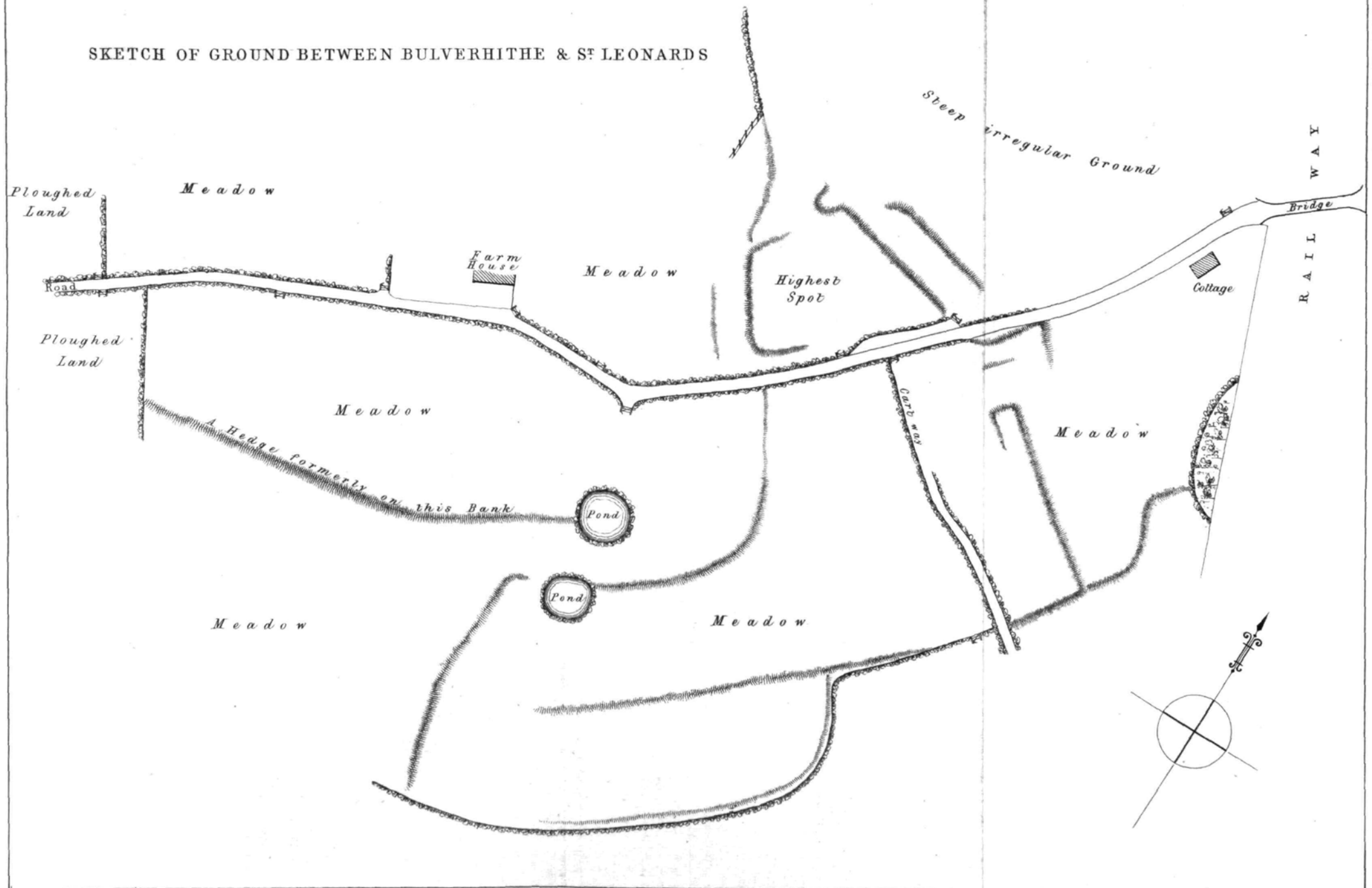
bility is in favour of the existence of a harbour; and in the irregularities of the shore are seen the *angusti montes* which turned away the Roman forces; not high cliffs conspicuous from a distance, but low mounts, slight eminences, high enough to stop the advance of invaders, and low enough to allow the Britons collected on them to throw their missiles with effect; and between these the water was so held in, that had Cæsar attempted to force a landing, his troops would inevitably have been broken into separate detachments, and, in the then high state of the tide, some of his ships might have floated under the cliffs, within reach of his enemies: so that the spot not only agrees most exactly with Cæsar's description, but also thoroughly justifies the opinion he gives, "Hunc ad egrediendum nequaquam idoneum arbitratus locum." It may perhaps be urged that Volusenus would have discovered such peculiarities as these, and have warned Cæsar against attempting a descent on this part of the coast; but he is not likely to have ventured with his single ship into an unknown harbour in a hostile country, and, judging from the imperfect idea which I myself gained on seeing the place from the Pier-Head, a distant view would not have enabled him to detect the true character of the ground.

Following the coast in the direction of the tide, from Winchelsea towards Beachy Head, the first opening in the high cliffs in any degree practicable for Cæsar's purpose is between St. Leonard's and Bulverhithe, exactly at the right distance from Pett level to agree with his history.¹ Here two small valleys unite on the shore, having between them a peninsular hill connected at the

¹ Dion Cassius says Cæsar sailed round a promontory, and this the line of coast would form to any one proceeding from Pett level to Bulverhithe. As Cæsar does not describe the character of the coast, Dion Cassius must have derived his information from some other source, and he may therefore be regarded as an independent authority.

back by a narrow isthmus with the high ground of the inland country. The width of the interval existing at the time of the Roman invasion between Bulverhithe and the end of the cliffs at St. Leonard's is doubtful, and it must have varied according to the depth of the curve which the shore may have followed along the skirt of the hills next St. Leonard's; it is also uncertain whether at that time the water reached the peninsular hill just mentioned; it is clear, however, that the end of this hill has formerly been washed by the sea, and if it was so at the period referred to, the gap in the cliffs must have been divided into two spaces, one (next Bulverhithe) about five furlongs wide at high tide, and the other of uncertain width,—perhaps a mile, perhaps half a mile. But the breadth of these openings at high tide is of little importance to our investigation, as Cæsar reached the place of his debarkation about, or a little before, the time of low tide, when, if this part of the coast was then like what it now is, there must have been a firm open shore of unbounded length, and nearly a furlong in width, between the cliffs and the edge of the water, affording ample space for a hostile landing, while the narrowness of the intervals through which the Britons could descend to the shore would have been favourable to Cæsar's small army. No peculiarities in any degree at variance with Cæsar's narrative appear to be discoverable in this locality, nor any cogent reason to exist why his first landing in Britain may not have been effected at this spot: the "*apertum ac planum littus*" is not to be understood as a low *line of coast*, but merely a *flat shore* exposed to the sea, in contradistinction from a haven, in which he had designed to land. No occurrences are recorded after the Roman forces were established on land that will help our present inquiry, but it may be noticed that Cæsar describes his galleys to have been drawn ashore, and the transports to have

SKETCH OF GROUND BETWEEN BULVERHITHE & ST LEONARDS



remained at anchor in the open sea, implying that no creek or haven was available for their security; and in this respect the spot under consideration suits with the narrative.

The year following the events which, thus far, we have been examining, Cæsar embarked much earlier in the season, on his second expedition, with a force of five legions, and on reaching the coast of Britain, about mid-day, found no enemy in sight; he therefore landed without opposition, and having selected a spot for his camp, marched in search of the British army, leaving his ships at anchor.¹ On this occasion he steered from Gaul to the part of the island which he had ascertained in the preceding year to be best fitted for a landing; he does not say distinctly that he reached, or intended to reach, the very spot where he arrived in his first expedition, but his words may well be interpreted to signify that he did so, and as Dion Cassius asserts plainly that the second landing was at the same place as the first, there is no good reason to doubt that such was the fact. Cæsar again speaks of the open shore, and describes it to have been soft, a characteristic sufficiently accordant with the ground between St. Leonard's and Bulverhithe.² In

¹ "*Æstus commutationem secutus, remis contendit, ut eam partem insulæ caperet, qua optimum esse egressum superiore æstate cognoverat. . . . Accessum est ad Britanniam omnibus navibus meridiano fere tempore; neque in eo loco hostis est visus.*"—*De Bell. Gall.*, lib. v. c. 7.

² "*Eo minus veritus navibus, quod in littore molli atque aperto deligatas ad anchoram relinquebat.*"—*Ibid.*, lib. v. c. 8. It may reasonably be inferred from the word *molli*, that Cæsar did not find the deposit of beach which now exists on this part of the coast, and both an examination of the shore and history tend alike to show that it is a very recent accumulation; that which lies on the shore, as well as that which covers the surface of the ground for a short distance inland, appears to have been thrown up in very modern times. The soil of the valleys is clay, lying over sea-sand, in, or immediately under which many trees are found, some of considerable size, at depths varying from a few feet to fourteen feet below the surface. I have not been able to learn that any traces of early occupation have been met with in these valleys. In Cæsar's time the soft shore may here have extended further towards the sea than it does at present.

both expeditions the Roman fleet suffered very severely from storms on the coast of Britain, but after the second of these misfortunes the ships were, with much labour, drawn on shore, and protected by fortifications united with the camp,—an additional proof that there was no harbour to receive them.

The peninsular hill before spoken of, the form of which may be seen on the map, deserves particular notice: its length is rather over three-quarters of a mile, and the breadth at the widest part nearly half a mile; the isthmus at the north-east end, which joined it to the neighbouring hills, is cut through by a railway, and its precise width cannot now be ascertained, but it probably did not much exceed a hundred yards; the valleys on both sides contain streams, and, when undrained, must have given considerable protection to the flanks, so that the entire hill, in its original state, possessed very much the character of a natural fortress, and was peculiarly suited for military occupation. Here, it may be supposed, Cæsar would have found a favourable site for his camp, with one end touching the high ground inland, and the other reaching to the shore, in immediate connection with the shipping.¹ Very little of the entrenchments thrown up by the Romans can now be supposed to remain; the Britons would have destroyed whatever they thought formidable, and in later ages the tides and floods in the valleys, and the plough on the hills, will have obliterated the traces which the Britons left. The greater part of the ground here referred to is ploughed land, on which I can find no indications of entrenchments; but at the north-east end of the hill are several meadows, and in these there are various irregularities and banks which deserve to be very carefully examined by those who are skilled in such investigations. It does

¹ The military advantages of this hill may have influenced Cæsar in determining the course of his second expedition.

not seem easy to account for them, except by supposing that they are the remains of military works; but I leave it to others, better acquainted with such subjects than myself, to determine their origin and object; and in the hope of assisting further research, I have added a rough sketch of the ground.¹

How far the foregoing ideas are consistent with Cæsar's narrative, and the faint aids which are discoverable to guide us in tracing the course of his proceedings, it is for my readers to decide, but to myself they appear to lead to this conclusion,—that on his first expedition Cæsar brought his fleet to the foot of the hills descending to what is now Pett level, with the intention of landing there, but finding himself unexpectedly baulked by the peculiarities of the place, and compelled to alter his plan of operations, he resolved to make a dash at some other part of the coast, and while waiting for his ships to assemble, he called his officers together, explained what he intended to do, and admonished them to be prepared to act with energy, and then (at three o'clock in the afternoon, about four hours before sunset) moved off towards Beachy Head, and turned his attack to the very first opening in the cliffs, in any degree practicable, which he came to; and, that on his second expedition Cæsar landed at the same place, and established his camp on the hill referred to between Bulverhithe and St. Leonard's.

¹ The best time to examine this ground is during a bright day in winter, when the sun is low enough to show clearly the irregularities of the surface. A good view of some of the lines of embankment is obtained from the rise in the road, a little beyond (towards the north-east) the bridge over the railway. The accompanying plan is not to be regarded as anything more than a very rough sketch: an approximate scale may be applied to it, of about nine-eighths of an inch to a hundred yards.

A few observations may be added relative to Cæsar's movements after his landing. I agree in opinion with the Astronomer Royal, that the battle fought immediately after Cæsar's second arrival was on the banks of the river Rother, and in all probability at Robertsbridge, for although the road across the valley at Bodiam most likely existed at the time, and would undoubtedly have been guarded by the Britons, Cæsar must be supposed to have made his attack at the narrowest part of the valley, which is at Robertsbridge.¹ Mr. Airy also expresses his conviction, in reference to the stronghold which Cæsar captured directly after this battle, that a large wood, called the Burg Wood, adjoining the hamlet of Hurst Green, once contained a British fortress. Upwards of twenty years ago I learned that indications of something of this kind existed; and they are to be found in the highest part of the wood, near the eastern extremity, as marked in the accompanying map; the principal object is a somewhat irregular oval excavation, rather more than a hundred yards long from east to west, and perhaps eighty yards wide from north to south; eastward of this, about a hundred yards outside the wood, is a hollow in the ground, very much like the commencement of a trench, and curved as if intended to surround the oval excavation, but the traces are not clear except at the eastern part. These works are too incomplete to be satisfactorily interpreted, except by those who are well accustomed to the investigation of ancient entrenchments, and I do not venture to express any opinion concerning them. The site is such as the Britons usually chose for their fortresses, but if this is a remnant of one of their settlements, it appears never to have been

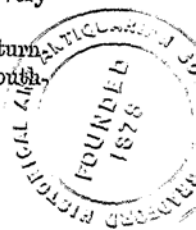
¹ Cæsar marched twelve miles from his camp to the place of the battle; this is exactly the distance from the valley at Robertsbridge to the hill referred to between Bulverhithe and St. Leonard's; from Bodiam Bridge the distance would be about two miles further.

perfected.¹ There is another indication to be noticed in this locality. On the rise of the hill, to the south of the old road ascending from Echingham Church, there is a step in the ground winding round in a curve towards the new road by Haremare; this is marked partly by a hedge and partly by a narrow belt of wood between the fields. As the natural effect of long-continued cultivation on sloping ground is to produce steps of this kind next the fences, there would be nothing noticeable in this circumstance, were it not that a continuation of the irregularity is to be traced in the wood on the opposite side of the old road.

Of the direction of Cæsar's advance into the country we have no evidence. The road through Lamberhurst and Tunbridge may be considered to be of British origin; but the Britons never would have allowed him to pass the Medway without a sharp contest,—more especially as they had a camp overhanging the line of his approach within about a mile of the latter place,²—and if an important battle had been fought there, Cæsar could hardly have failed to make some allusion to the peculiarities of the ground. If he had accurate information of

¹ No tradition or name seems to be attached to this spot; a cottager to whom I applied knew the circular excavation merely as a deserted *sand hole*, but it was originally assuredly not a sand pit; and when seen from the south-west, with the wood cleared away, it certainly looks like the beginning of a fortress. The soil of this neighbourhood is too tenacious of wet to admit of the formation of dry moats, except in situations where the ends of the trenches can run out on the side of a hill; the ground in the Burg Wood has a steep descent towards the north from the chief excavation, and in this respect is well suited for a British camp. Cæsar describes the entrances of the place which he stormed to have been defended with felled trees; and his troops applied the *testudo* and also raised an *agger* in the attack. An assault on this spot must have been made from the south or east, and there is a mound projecting into the south side of the oval excavation, which an ardent imagination may claim to be the very work of Cæsar's soldiers.

² There are remains of a British camp at Castle Hill, close to the turnpike road opposite Summer Hill Park, rather more than a mile south-south-east of the town of Tunbridge.



the character of the country, he would probably have avoided Tunbridge, and have moved in the direction of Wadhurst and Frant; supposing this to have been his line of march, his second camp may have been near Broadwater Down, between Tunbridge Wells and Groombridge.

