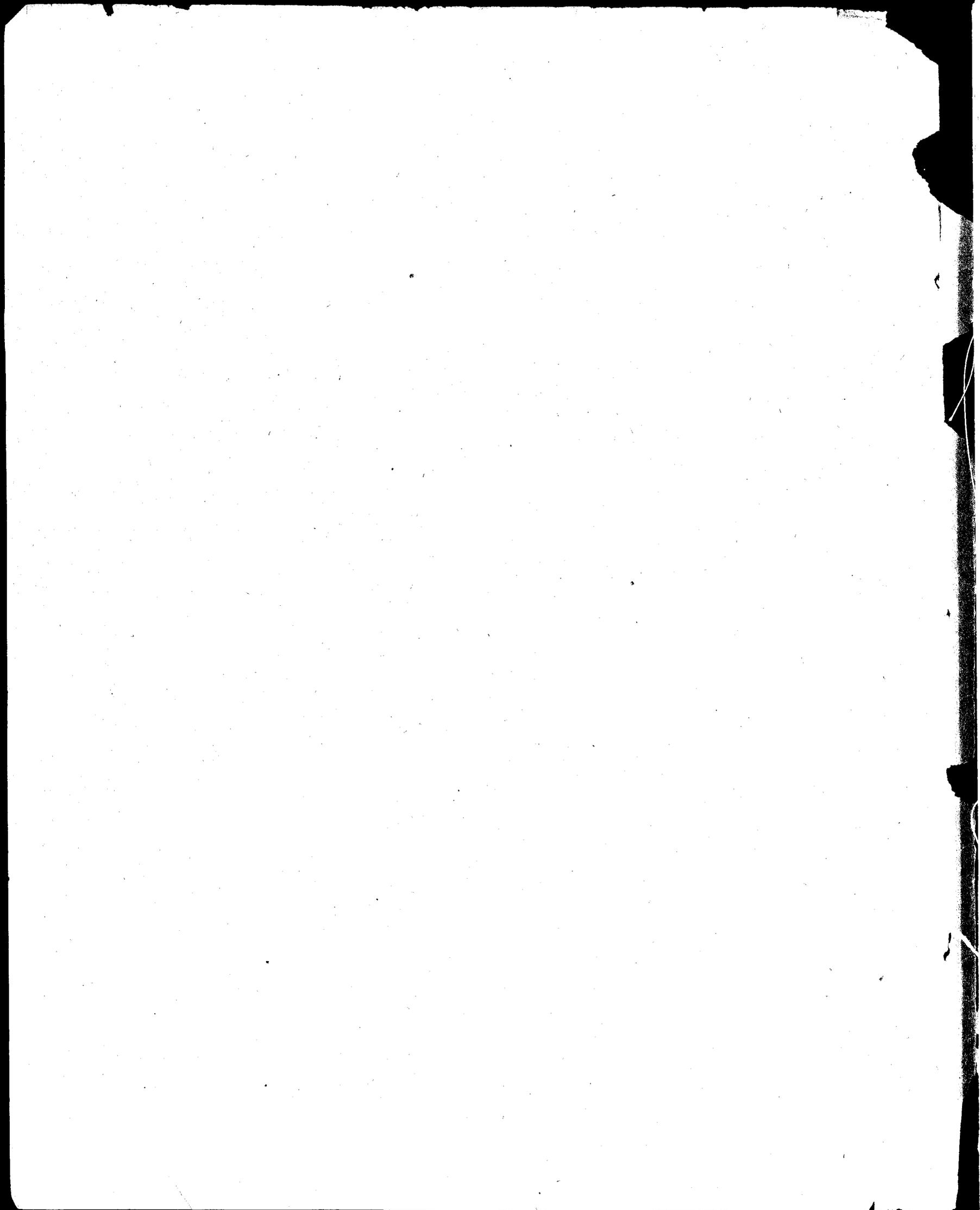
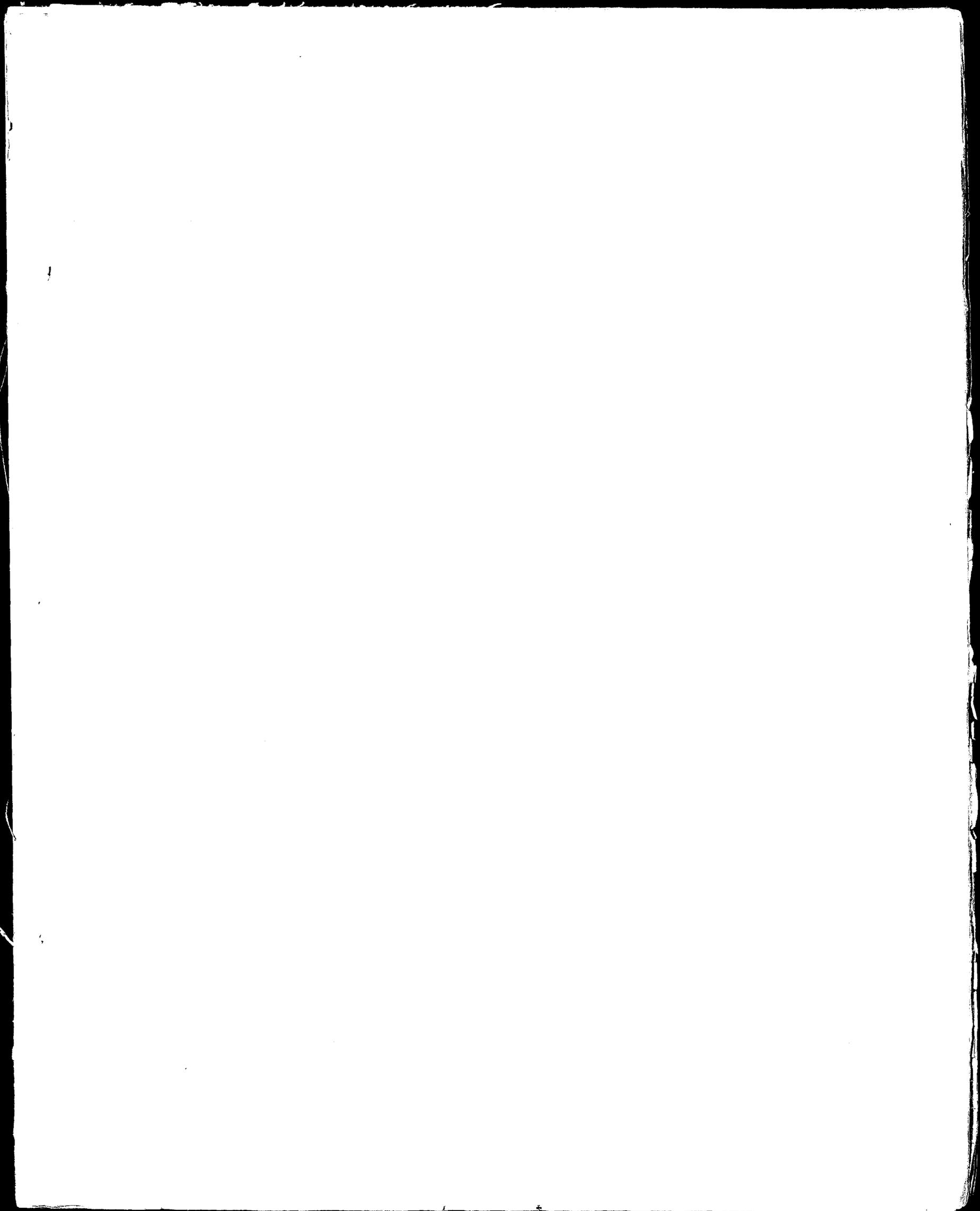
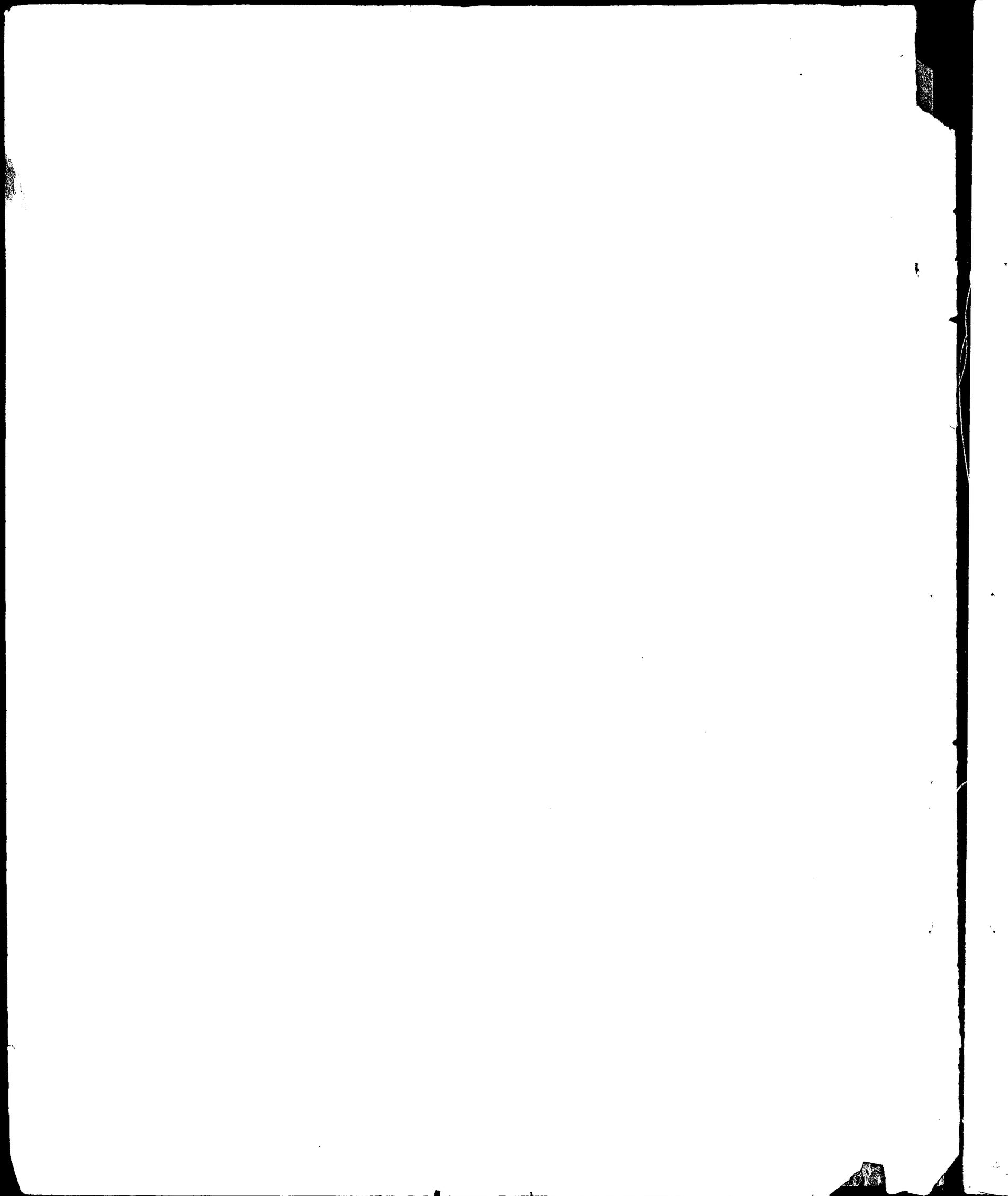


G. B. Aoy







ON THE PLACE OF
CÆSAR'S DEPARTURE FROM GAUL

FOR THE INVASION OF BRITAIN,

AND THE

PLACE OF HIS LANDING IN BRITAIN;

WITH

AN APPENDIX ON THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

BY

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ON THE PLACE
OF
JULIUS CÆSAR'S DEPARTURE FROM GAUL,^a &c.

THE route taken by Julius Cæsar in his Invasion of Britain has been discussed so often by learned men, that I can hardly venture to offer to the Society of Antiquaries a new investigation, leading to a conclusion, I believe, differing from all preceding ones, without a preliminary explanation of the reason which leads me to think that a new investigation is admissible. The reason then is simply this: that, in every one of the discussions which I have seen, the investigator has been contented with fixing upon some one indication contained in Cæsar's Account, and shewing that that one indication conforms to his theory, without any regard to the others. A more striking instance of this fault cannot be found than in D'Anville's essay. D'Anville takes a supposed expression of Cæsar's that his length of passage was 30 miles; he finds that the distance from Wissant to the Dover cliffs, increased by Cæsar's 8 miles' run along the coast, agrees with this pretty well; and for this reason and no other he adopts Wissant as the place of departure. But, in a record so uncertain as that of mere numerals, he never inquires whether other manuscripts give a different number of miles; he never critically examines whether the distance (whatever it may be) applies to Cæsar's passage at all; he never attempts to ascertain whether Wissant could possibly be suited to Cæsar's armament; he never even discusses Cæsar's movements before departing and after returning, or offers the slightest proof that Cæsar had ever been near Wissant. Yet on all these points the indications given by Cæsar are numerous, and are as explicit as they very well can be in reference to a country in which scarcely a single name was preserved by any following historian. Rennell, adopting

^a In an anonymous communication to the Athenæum, dated 1851, March 29, I gave the heads of some of the arguments of the following Essay. I have since examined the subject more deeply, and now offer my reasons in a more complete form, with far greater confidence in the accuracy of the result.

D'Anville's starting-place, Wissant, without question, has attempted to fix Cæsar's place of landing in the neighbourhood of Deal by a solitary reason exactly similar to D'Anville's. Halley, professing himself totally uncertain as to Cæsar's starting-point, has reasoned with great acuteness on the phenomena of the tides as described by Cæsar, and has compared them with his own apparently erroneous information; he concludes from these that Deal may probably have been the landing-place, but has not adverted to any other evidence. Yet there are numerous indications given by Cæsar in reference to his internal progress in the country which ought to have been considered, at least so far as to shew that they are not inconsistent with the theory adopted. I might apply nearly similar remarks to the reasonings of other writers.

I trust that the Essay which I now offer to the Antiquarian Society will at least be free from the fault which I have pointed out. I have brought together every passage which I can find in Cæsar bearing upon the place of his departure, his navigation, the place of his arrival, and his march after arrival. I attach no importance to the accounts of writers posterior to Cæsar, for it does not appear that they ever visited the coasts of Gaul, still less the coasts of Britain; and their statements, if in opposition to a clear inference from Cæsar's, must be rejected. So far, however, as I am acquainted with them, they do not in any instance contradict the inference from Cæsar's narration.

SECTION I.—*On the locality of the Portus Itius, the place of Cæsar's Departure from Gaul.*

1. Before entering into a special investigation of this locality, it is necessary *in limine* to refute one notion which, I think, has misled many writers. It is, I believe, received without doubt that the Promontorium Itium or Iccium is the Cape Grisnez. It has been assumed, therefore, that the Portus Itius must be in the immediate vicinity of Cape Grisnez, and that it could not at any rate be further from it than Boulogne or Calais. This assumption I conceive to be entirely unwarranted. The only justifiable assumption is, that the Portus Itius was the nearest port to the Promontorium Itium, which, at the time of the Romans giving this name to it, was used by them as an important station,—not that it was the nearest port which at any subsequent time was used by the Romans or any other people. In our colony of South Africa we have a modern case exactly in point. The city called Cape Town is the first that was founded by Europeans near the Cape of Good Hope, and therefore the name of "Cape Town" was with propriety given to it, although its distance from the Cape is forty-five miles. Since that time

other towns have been established much nearer to the Cape, and in particular the very important station Simon's Town; yet the name "Cape Town" still adheres to the first-established city: and if any future historian should, from considerations of distance only, attach the name "Cape Town" to Simon's Town, he would fall into error. And thus, in settling the locality of Cæsar's port, so far as we are guided by the connexion of names, we are only required to assume for the *Portus Itius* a locality nearer to the *Promontorium Itium* than any other important station then in the possession of the Romans.

2. Cæsar's first expedition for the invasion of Britain proceeded from an unnamed port; the second departed from the *Portus Itius*, "quo ex portu commodissimum in Britanniam transjectum esse cognoverat," "from which port he had discovered the passage into Britain to be the most convenient," or "very convenient." It has been understood by all commentators that this discovery was made by the experience of the preceding year, or that Cæsar sailed from the same port in the two expeditions, and this opinion appears to me correct. I shall therefore in future combine indiscriminately the remarks applying to the places of departure in the first and second Expeditions.

3. A limitation to the locality of the port of the first departure will be obtained from a consideration of Cæsar's military movements before and after the British expeditions. It will contribute to clearness to examine the advances made by Cæsar in several successive campaigns:

U.C. 695 (consulship of Piso and Gabinius). Cæsar drove back the Helvetians into Switzerland; drove Ariovistus and the Germans into Germany; and obtained possession of the valley of the Doubs and part of Alsace.

U.C. 696 (consulship of Lentulus Spinther and Metellus Nepos). Cæsar marched against the Belgic confederation, passed the Aisne, took Noyon and Beauvais, and approached the Ambiani, "in fines Ambianorum pervenit;" then marched eastward, fought the Nervii on the Sambre, and took the city of the Aduatici (which appears to be the citadel of Namur). His lieutenants received the submission of the Veneti (the people of southern Bretagne). The country into which Cæsar had carried his arms may be defined by a straight line drawn from Nantes to Namur; but he had not permanent possession of the whole district; his winter quarters were entirely in the Touraine or its neighbourhood. In the winter, being alarmed by a confederation of the Veneti, he built ships on the Loire.

U.C. 697 (consulship of Marcellinus and Philippus). Cæsar conquered the Veneti at sea; his lieutenant conquered Normandy. The Morini and Metapii were still in arms. Cæsar marched at the end of the summer to attack them in a forest, but

after an unsuccessful expedition returned to winter quarters in Normandy. The indication of place is so obscure that it is impossible to fix the locality of this forest, but it seems not improbably to have been between St. Quentin and Arras; possibly, however, it was the western extremity of the forest of Ardennes. It seems quite clear, however, that, up to the end of this year, neither Cæsar nor his lieutenants had approached the frontiers of the Morini.

U.C. 698 (consulship of Pompey and Crassus). The geography of Cæsar's movements in this year is by far the most perplexing of all, and can only be interpreted, I think, by supposing that the Meuse and the Moselle were called by the same name with different prefixes, and that the omission of these prefixes has led Cæsar to apply to one river what ought to be applied to the other. He speaks of the Mosa as rising in the Vogesus; if this, however, is the same as the Vosges, the river must be the Moselle. He describes clearly enough the way in which the Mosa (or Meuse) receives a branch of the Rhine called the Walis, and thus forms the Insula Batavorum; and in another book he speaks of the Scheldt as flowing into the Mosa (or Meuse); yet in the account of this campaign he describes important transactions at the confluence of the Mosa and the Rhine (which confluence, by his previous description, does not exist), and he makes no allusion to the seacoast or the Insula Batavorum (which he must have done if the confluence had referred to the Walis). It appears beyond doubt that the Mosa here is the Moselle. Cæsar's first bridge over the Rhine (constructed in this year) was in the neighbourhood of this confluence; and the second bridge (constructed U.C. 700), which was "paulum supra eum locum quo antea exercitum transduxerat," was certainly in the country of the Treviri, or at the mouth of the valley of the Moselle. The marauding party who crossed the Mosa, and who escaped across the Rhine into the country of the Sicambri, must apparently have crossed the Moselle. The only important inference for the subject before us is, that the locality of Cæsar's battle with the Usipetes and Tenchtheri, and the place of his bridge over the Rhine, were a little below Coblenz: and that this point and Namur were the points of his nearest approach (up to this time) to the North Sea. This is supported by the circumstance, of which Cæsar complained long afterwards, that the Menapii were the only people of Gaul who had never sent ambassadors to treat of peace.

From these considerations it appears perfectly certain that Cæsar's port of embarkation for Britain could not be near Dunkirk or any other port of Flanders.

4. Cæsar's march to the port may now be considered. "C. Volusenum præmittit. Ipse, cum omnibus copiis, in Morinos proficiscitur, quod inde erat brevissimus in Britanniam transjectus. Huc naves undique ex finitimis regionibus, et quam supe-

riore astate ad Veneticum bellum fecerat classem, jubet convenire.—Dum in his locis Cæsar navium parandarum causâ moratur, ex magnâ parte Morinorum ad eum legati venerunt. Eos in fidem recepit.” First, it appears from this account that the easiest way of sending a single officer to the coast of Britain was not to send him through the country of the Morini (as being yet an independent and hostile country). Secondly, the word “proficiscor” in Cæsar is, in general, used absolutely; but, when used with a preposition denoting specific direction, it appears to relate to the beginning of a journey, admitting of the application of qualifying expressions to the course of the journey, as “in Senones proficiscitur, magnisque itineribus eo pervenit.” Sometimes it is widely separated from the notice of arrival, as “Genabum Carnutum proficiscitur, qui, tum primum allato nuncio de oppugnatione Vellaunoduni, quum longius eam rem ductum iri existimarent, præsidium Genabi tuendi causâ quod eo mitterent, comparabant. Huc biduo pervenit.” Thus I render the expression “in Morinos proficiscitur,” “sets out for the country of the Morini;” implying without doubt that he arrived near it or close to it, but not necessarily implying that he entered it. Thirdly, the visit of the ambassadors, without any mention of hostile occupation, seems to imply that neither Cæsar nor any part of his army was in the country of the Morini at the time of preparing the naval expedition, and appears to render it most extremely improbable that he had passed *through* their country. It is to be remarked that no event whatever is mentioned as occurring in that country, except an attack on some shipwrecked soldiers, to which I shall hereafter allude.

The number of Cæsar’s army on the Moselle is not given; but as there were 5,000 cavalry, and as he afterwards embarked for Britain with two legions, or about 8,000 men (on the common estimation of the strength of Cæsar’s legions), the army which marched from the Rhine was large. Such an army, in general, can only march along valleys. I conceive, therefore, that Cæsar ascended the Moselle (the course taken by the Prussian invaders in 1792, and by one of the invading armies in 1814), that he probably passed through Verdun, Rheims, Soissons, and Noyon, and that he then descended the Somme. Even if Boulogne or Calais had been his destination, he must first have descended the Somme; a more northerly line would have carried him through a forest country (probably the scene of his last year’s repulse), in which he would have been in danger of starvation and of hostile attack. Volusenus not improbably embarked at Dieppe, or some of the small ports of Eastern Normandy.

5. For judging of the capabilities of the port, and its local relations, we have the following guides: The port was to be the rendezvous for a great number of ships,

the principal part of which came from the west. In the first expedition there were only 80 merchant-ships, with a number (not mentioned) of long ships: in the second there were about 600 ships adapted to beach-landing (built expressly for this expedition), 28 long ships, and numerous merchant-ships (so that, on approaching the British shore, more than 800 ships were in sight at once). The conveniences of the port were such that the whole of this navy of nearly a thousand ships, carrying five legions, or 21,000 foot and 2,000 cavalry, besides camp-followers and sailors (the whole probably amounting to 40,000 souls), after being closely detained in the port by north-west winds ("dies circiter 25 in eo loco commoratus, quod Corus ventus navigationem impediabat"), was floated off at a single tide. In the neighbourhood of the port there were cantoned, for a long time, eight legions, or more than 30,000 infantry, 4,000 Roman cavalry, and 4,000 Gallic cavalry.

It is absolutely inconceivable that Cæsar would have adopted, as rendezvous for such an armament, an unsheltered beach. No place ever was selected so utterly unsuited to the wants of the expedition as Wissant, the point which D'Anville has fixed upon. The bay of Wissant is a mere sandy beach, nearly four miles long, and almost straight (the radius of its curvature is about $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles). The headlands at its extremities, Grisnez and Blancnez, project very little beyond the line of beach. Under no mutations conceivable within historic times, can Wissant have ever been proper for a place of assembly of ships. To have passed such harbours as the estuary of the Somme, that of the Authie, that of the Canche, and Boulogne, in order to meet at Wissant, would have been scarcely short of insanity.

I conceive that the harbours of Boulogne and Calais are by very much too small for Cæsar's purpose. I do not imagine that 5,000 soldiers could have been shipped off from either, at a single tide.

Probably the estuary of the Authie or that of the Canche might have sufficed; but neither of these is comparable to that of the Somme. This noble gulf, 10 miles deep, and nearly 3 miles wide at its mouth, not the less adapted to Cæsar's flat-built ships because (like every other harbour on this coast) it is dry at low-water, better protected by projecting headlands at its mouth than either of the other estuaries, appears to be exactly what Cæsar must have desired. Its capability for Cæsar's purposes is proved by the more modern experience of William of Normandy, who at one tide floated out of it 1,400 ships carrying 60,000 men (sailors, &c. being probably included in this estimate). After the Seine, it is the first estuary which would be reached by Cæsar's ships coming from Bretagne. Behind it is the populous and fertile valley of the Somme: a local circumstance which must have been extremely valuable. It is true, that Bonaparte, availing himself of the perfect

organisation of a mighty empire, maintained a larger force for some time on the barren grounds above Boulogne; but Cæsar was surrounded by very unwilling allies, unconnected among themselves, and little controlled by the presence of Roman troops; and the proximity of a rich valley must have been very advantageous to him.

The next local circumstance is that suggested by the mention of "18 onerariæ naves, quæ ex eo loco millibus passuum 8 vento tenebantur, quo minus in eundem portum pervenire possent:" and afterwards "naves 18 de quibus supra demonstratum est, ex superiori portu solverunt." It is to be remarked that the "onerariæ naves" were principally ships of the country, and may have come either from the north or from the west.

From the centre of the mouth of the Somme to that of the Authie is pretty exactly 8 miles; from that of the Authie to that of the Canche is about 11 miles; and indeed no other interval of ports corresponds to Cæsar's distance. The word "superior" has, I believe, always been understood to mean "more northerly." I understand it so myself: and therefore, if the estuary of the Somme is the Portus Itius, the estuary of the Authie is the "Portus superior."

The next circumstance is that on Cæsar's return from the first expedition, "onerariæ duæ eosdem portus, quos reliquæ, capere non potuerunt, sed paullo infra delatæ sunt," and here their crews were attacked by the Morini. If, as is above mentioned, "superior" means northerly, and if we infer from this that "infra" means southerly, then it would follow from this account that a point south of the Portus Itius was in the country of the Morini; whereas I have above given reasons (and shall shortly give another distinct reason) for believing that the Portus Itius itself was south of the frontier of the Morini. How are these statements to be reconciled? I believe that the explanation rests in the use of the word "infra," in combination with "delatæ." The word "delatæ" is repeatedly used by Cæsar for "drifted," and "infra delatæ" is "drifted down," the word "down" apparently relating not to any geographical direction, but to the direction of the wind. We speak of a ship keeping "*up* to the wind" when her head is sensibly turned towards the wind, and "*falling* from the wind" when her head is sensibly turned from the wind; and, with the same fundamental idea, "infra delatæ" seems to mean simply "drifting before the wind." The prevalent wind in September being S.W. it is likely enough that these heavy sailers might drift towards the Morini.

The next descriptive sentence is—"Portum Itium, quo ex portu commodissimum in Britanniam transjectum esse cognoverat, circiter millia passuum 30 a continenti." This sentence has very commonly been interpreted to mean that the Portus Itius

was 30 miles from Britain; and D'Anville's selection of the bay of Wissant is founded entirely on this interpretation. I conceive that the sentence has been mistranslated. The Portus Itius and the continent are placed *in contradistinction*. The *convenient passage* was from the Portus Itius, the *distance of 30 miles* was from the continent. If Cæsar had meant that the length of the passage from the Portus Itius was 30 miles, he would have omitted the words "a continenti." The form of the sentence is inelegant: it suggests the idea that probably the original termination was at "cognoverat," and that the words from "circiter" to "continenti" were subsequently interlined. It is said that the best manuscripts give the distance as 40 miles; it is, I conceive, a matter of no importance in fixing the place of the Portus Itius, but, as conveying what I understand to be Cæsar's meaning, the number 30 is preferable to 40.

6. Lastly, I have to consider Cæsar's movements after the return from the second expedition. The very next sentence is "concilioque Gallorum Samarobrivæ peracto . . . ex quibus [legionibus] unam in Morinos ducendam C. Fabio legato dedit." It is well known that the suffix *brivæ* is the same as *bruck* or *bridge*, and Samarobrivæ therefore means the bridge of the Samara or Somme; and indeed it is universally received as denoting the city of Amiens. Thus the very first thing which Cæsar does after returning to the Portus Itius is to call a council at Amiens, and the next thing is to send one of his legions into the country of the Morini. It is scarcely possible to have a clearer incidental proof of two things; first, that the Portus Itius had some very close connexion with the Somme; secondly, that it was exterior to the country of the Morini.

On the whole, I think myself justified in expressing my conviction that each of these very different trains of reasoning leads to the same conclusion, that the Portus Itius was the estuary of the Somme.

SECTION II.--*On Cæsar's Navigation to Britain, and on the place of his Landing in Britain.*

In this section alone of the investigation have I derived any real assistance from the suggestions of previous inquirers. It is to Dr. Halley that I owe the explanation of the connexion between the high tide which injured Cæsar's ships, and the tidal current which aided him in landing. Dr. Halley, however, appears to have been misled in the application of his reasoning by erroneous local information.

7. I must premise that the time of high water along the coast from the Somme to Boulogne is on the day of full moon about 11^h 20^m (a few minutes earlier at the Somme, and a few minutes later at Boulogne). As the accurate knowledge of

the time of turning of the tidal currents is of the utmost importance in this inquiry, and as I was aware that my friend, Captain F. W. Beechey, R.N. had (under the direction of the Board of Admiralty) surveyed the British Channel with special attention to those currents, I requested him to acquaint me as precisely as possible with the times of turn of the stream on those parts of the coast which may be suggested for Cæsar's landing-place. The following is Captain Beechey's answer; and the lovers of antiquarian research, I am sure, will join with me in recognising the debt which we owe to Captain Beechey for his explicit information on the most critical point of this inquiry:—"At full and change of the moon the stream makes to the westward off Dover, at $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile distance from the shore, about 3^h 10^m, and there does not appear to be much difference in this part of the Channel between the turn of the stream in shore and in the centre. Close in shore off Hastings the stream turns to the west at 11^h; but the turn becomes later as the distance off shore increases, and at 5 miles' distance the stream turns to the west at 1^h. Winds greatly affect the time of turn of the stream. The stream runs to the west about $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours, after which there is slack water for about a quarter of an hour."

I must also premise that I do not see any reason for thinking that the line of coast has very sensibly changed, or that the tidal phenomena have sensibly altered, since the time of Cæsar. The beach of Pevensey, judging from the position of the Martello towers, which have been erected nearly half a century, has altered very little. The point of Dungeness advances about seven feet in a year. The chalk cliffs of Beachy Head and Dover lose annually (I believe) a much smaller quantity. The utmost allowance for these will alter but little the general line of coast. The northern part of the Goodwin Sand appears to have been (in the Saxon times) an embanked island, but its effect on the tides would be nearly the same in that state as in its present condition. The Wansum (the channel between the Isle of Thanet and the mainland) was probably open; but the circumstance of its having silted itself up proves that the tidal stream through it must have been insignificant; and, generally, the course of the tides from Beachy Head to Dover will depend on the great tides of the Atlantic and the North Sea, and will not be sensibly affected by any petty changes at the east end of Kent.

8. In speaking of the second expedition, Cæsar says, "Contendit, ut eam partem insulæ caperet, quâ optimum esse egressum superiore æstate cognoverat." I understand from this that Cæsar landed at precisely the same point in the two expeditions; and shall apply to one point indiscriminately the remarks suggested by the occurrences in both expeditions.

9. In the first expedition, "post diem iv. quam est in Britanniam ventum"

câdem nocte accidit ut esset luna plena, quæ dies maritimos æstus maximos in Oceano efficere consuevit." That is, on the fourth day after landing there was a full moon with a spring tide. In this account there are two sources of uncertainty. First, that which is described in the Roman reckoning as the fourth day, may be (in our reckoning) the third day. Second, the spring tide is a day and a half later than the full moon: if Cæsar had good almanacks in his army, the day in question was undoubtedly the day of full moon: if not, as it is impossible to judge precisely of the day of full moon, either from the appearance of the moon's diameter, (which is altered but $\frac{1}{100}$ part in one day, before or after), or from the time of moon-rising (which is affected by the moon's latitude to the extent of one day of moon's age), it is more likely that the day in question was the day of spring tides. The day of Cæsar's first landing therefore may be the second, third, or fourth day before full moon: I will consider it as the third. On this day the tidal phenomena will occur about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours earlier than the times mentioned in Article 7.

10. At embarking for the first expedition, "*nactus idoneam ad navigandum tempestatem, tertiâ ferè vigiliâ solvit,*" which I translate "he set sail a little before midnight." It was high water in every harbour of the coast on that evening at about 9 o'clock; and at midnight the water began to leave the banks dry. It appears therefore that Cæsar's fleet dropped down with the ebb tide to the outside of the banks, probably anchoring as fast as they took their stations; and that the position to which the verb "*solvit*" applies, is from the outside of the banks.

11. The account of the voyage is simply "*horâ circiter diei iv. cum primis navibus Britanniam attigit,*" that is, the best sailors of the fleet reached Britain about 10^h. in the morning, or after a voyage of more than ten hours. The distance from the mouth of the Somme to Hastings is about 52 nautical miles, and that to Dover about 55; the distance of intermediate points ranging between these (except Dungeness, which is sensibly nearer). These are such distances as may fairly be traversed in ten hours with an "*idonea tempestas.*" The distance from Calais to Dover, 22 miles, is too small.

12. The description of the place at which Cæsar first attempted a landing is, "*cujus loci hæc erat natura: adeo montibus angustis mare continebatur, ut ex locis superioribus in littus telum adjici posset.*" The word "*angustis*" evidently has the meaning of "confining," or "closely pressing." The word "*continebatur*" might seem at first view to mean "was included between," but further consideration will shew that this interpretation is inadmissible. First, if this had been Cæsar's meaning, he would have said "*ex utrâque parte,*" or something equivalent. Second, neither Cæsar, nor Volusenus, by whose information the fleet was piloted,

nor any other officer, would think for a moment of pushing his boats into a creek where the defenders could attack them on both sides; the proper mode of attempting a landing being always to bring a long line of boats abreast to an open beach, and throw the whole body of troops on shore at once, in one connected line. "Continebatur" then appears to be simply "was bounded." A consideration also of what an experienced officer would be likely to attempt will perhaps limit our ideas of the height of these cliffs. When Volusenus surveyed the English coast he could not fail to see that the cliffs of Dover are very high and mural, without a break of any kind for several miles; and he would not think of recommending a debarcation under them. The same difficulty would apply to the cliffs between Folkestone and Hythe. But in passing such a coast as that of Hastings, St. Leonard's, and Bexhill, he would see that there are low cliffs much broken; and, without closely surveying them (Volusenus did not land), he might suppose a debarcation there to be easy. The Hastings cliffs therefore, in my judgment, appear to suit Cæsar's account better than those of Dover or Hythe. There are no other ranges of cliffs in the coast which we have to examine in this investigation.

13. Finding this a dangerous place for attempting a landing in the face of a resolute enemy, and thinking it best to wait for the rest of the fleet, "ad horam ix. in anchoris expectavit et ventum et æstum uno tempore nactus secundum circiter millia passuum 8 ab eo loco progressus, aperto ac plano litore naves constituit." That is, at 3^h. in the afternoon the tide was favourable for carrying him to an open flat beach about eight miles distant. This is one of the most critical passages in the whole account.

From Captain Beechey's statement given in Article 7, with the correction of times given in Article 9, it appears that on the day of Cæsar's landing the tide off Dover turned to the west about 1^h. in the afternoon, and at 3^h. it would be running with a strong stream to the west. For Cæsar then to have first attempted Dover and then to have landed at Walmer or Deal (as many writers have supposed) appears *absolutely impossible*. A run of eight miles with the tide would have carried him somewhat beyond Folkestone, where the difficulties would have been nearly as great as at Dover, and where there is no such thing as a "planum et apertum littus."

If we suppose Cæsar to have first attempted the neighbourhood of Folkestone, the tide, which had turned to the west about noon, would have carried him to the flat beach of Romney Marsh. (That part of Romney Marsh which is nearest to Hythe is a mass of dry shingle, which evidently has drifted from the debris of the chalk cliffs, and therefore has always been in contact with the chalk coast, without any intervening creek or sound.) This beach is very favourable for landing. But, if we suppose this to have been Cæsar's place of landing, we encounter the following

difficulty :—that Cæsar on his voyage from the Somme had passed the good landing-place to make the first attempt at the bad one, a blunder which we cannot with any reason attribute to him.

But if we suppose Cæsar to have first attempted the neighbourhood of St. Leonard's, the tide, which a few miles from shore had turned to the west at 11^{h.}, was at 3^{h.} running in full stream to the west. Cæsar apparently waited for a favourable wind (the word "nactus" implies that it was a change from an unfavourable wind or calm), which was highly desirable for the steerage of his ships. The run of eight miles would then bring him to the beach of Pevensey, answering perfectly to his description, probably the most favourable place for landing on the whole coast of Britain, and famous in later times as the landing-place of William the Conqueror.

At the time of Cæsar's landing it was low water. As there is usually on these coasts a flat shoaly bottom extending some distance beyond the steep shingle beach, the difficulty found in bringing Cæsar's larger ships near the land is readily explained.

14. In the circumstances of the second sea-passage there is not much to guide our judgment. Cæsar set sail at sunset (about 7^{h.}) with a light S.S.W. wind (the "Africus," or the wind blowing from the Roman province of Africa to Rome). The wind fell, and he drifted with the tide, and at morning found that Britain was left on the larboard side. Supposing, as before, that he set sail from the banks at three hours after high water, it was high water at 4^{h.}, or about five hours later than at full moon; and the tide would set to the east between midnight and 1^{h.} in the morning. The only way in which this appears to affect the present inquiry is, that if he had drifted in this manner when attempting Deal, he must have been cast upon the Goodwin Sands; and with so numerous a fleet it would have been impossible to avoid extensive loss by shipwreck. It does not appear, however, that a single ship was in danger. If, however, he was then attempting Pevensey, he might have drifted very far without incurring the least danger.

The general conclusion from the reasonings of this Section is, that it is impossible to admit Dover, Deal, or Walmer, as Cæsar's landing-places; that, although there is not the same impossibility of admitting Folkestone and Romney Marsh, there are strong improbabilities; but that every possibility and probability are in favour of St. Leonard's and Pevensey.

SECTION III.—*On Cæsar's Transactions in the Interior of Britain, to the time of storming the British fortress.*

15. The character of the country into which Cæsar entered may be inferred from the following incidental remarks.

In the first expedition,

“*Frumento nostros prohibere.*”

“*Frumentum ex agris in castra quotidie conferebat.*”

“*Noctu in silvis delituerant.*”

“These remarks apply to the country within a few miles of the landing place. They show that there were forests and corn-fields near.

If Cæsar had landed near Deal, he would have had for some miles all round his camp bare chalk-downs, on which in those days there probably was neither a tree nor a ploughed field.

In the neighbourhood of Pevensey the soil is heavy, very much covered with woods, but where cleared usually arable.

In the neighbourhood of Hythe there is arable ground, and there are also woods, but less numerous than about Pevensey.

In the second expedition there are very frequent allusions to the forests in which the Britons placed themselves in ambush, or to which they escaped. These notices, however, relate to a country more than 12 miles from the landing-place; and at a distance of 15 or 16 miles from either Pevensey, Hythe, or Deal, it is possible to find large woods.

16. Cæsar's movement into the interior, after the second landing, is thus described: “*Cæsar . . . ubi ex captivis cognovit quo in loco hostium copiarum con-sedissent . . . ipse noctu progressus millia passuum circiter 12 hostium copias conspicatus est: illi equitatu atque essedis ad flumen progressi ex loco superiore nostros prohibere et prælium committere cœperunt; repulsi ab equitatu se in silvas abdiderunt.*” On the face of this account it is obvious that the place of engagement was on a river at the distance of 12 miles from Cæsar's head quarters; but there are other conditions tacitly implied in the account. The place had been selected by the Britons as a defensive post at least two days previously, and may therefore be presumed to have had the qualifications proper for a defensive post, namely, that it could not be turned, and that enemies could attack it in front only at disadvantage. It was a field post; there was no town near, though there was a fortress within a small distance. Cæsar's approach was made by a night march; and a night march can only be made, especially in a woodland and arable country (such as we have in Article 15 found this to be), upon good roads. And to this I have to subjoin the following remark. The roads in a woodland and clay-ground country are almost invariable. Before the existence of our Turnpike Acts, it was impossible, by merely turning to the right or left, to make a new track across a clay-field which in winter is nearly impassable, or to pass through an ancient wood.

Even since our Turnpike Acts came into energetic operation, the principal measures undertaken (at least in the south-east of Sussex) were for hardening the roads, building bridges, &c., till within the last fifteen years, when the great line of south road was cut from Hawkhurst, and other new roads were made east of Battle and in the neighbourhood of Hastings. But there is no difficulty in distinguishing the old roads: they have most certainly been the same during many centuries: and I have no doubt that they are in the very same tracks as in the time of Julius Cæsar.

After what has been already shown it seems almost unnecessary to remark on the unfitness of Deal for the place of Cæsar's camp. Still, however, if we apply the test of this criterion it will be found that Deal does not answer to it. A distance of 12 miles reaches the marshes of the Stour; and, if the Britons had been posted there, Cæsar would have crossed at the sound ground of Canterbury or above it, and would have attacked their flank; this could not therefore be their post. Moreover, there can scarcely be a doubt that Canterbury existed then as an important town; of this there is no mention in Cæsar.

If the camp had been near Hythe, a march of 12 miles would have brought Cæsar upon the upper part of the Stour, near Wye; but the march would have been by indirect small roads, and the river is small, and presents no particular feature of defensibility.

But if we suppose Cæsar's camp to have been at the eastern end of Pevensey Level, and his head-quarters at Herstmonceux or Hooe, and if we measure a distance of 12 miles along the old great road by Ninfield, Catsfield Green, Tillis Coppices, the north-west end of Battle, Whatlington, and John's Cross, it terminates exactly at Robertsbridge, one of the most remarkable military positions in the east of Sussex. To enable the reader to understand its importance, I must request attention to the small map accompanying this paper, in which I have inserted the Andred Forest (Andredes-leah), principally from Mr. Guest's map attached to his paper "On the Early English Settlements in South Britain," communicated to the Archæological Institute at Salisbury, in 1849. On the western side of the road was a forest, of very great extent, practically impenetrable to an army. Even at the present time this country is almost covered with large woods. Robertsbridge itself is the place of confluence of two streams of the Rother, one coming from the N.N.W. and the other from the S.S.W. (the latter being close on Cæsar's left flank), both running in marshy valleys. The low meadows in this clay country are wet and soft, and may, by the slightest inundation, be converted into marsh impassable to men or horses. They are now embanked and well drained, and are in the summer pretty firm, but in the winter they are too soft to bear cattle: they are usually overflowed by the ordinary rain-floods

every year. In the time of Cæsar they were undoubtedly lower and wetter than they are now. To the east of Robertsbridge the river runs to the sea in a single stream among broad soft marshes; but at Robertsbridge itself the sound grounds on the north side and on the south side approach nearer than any where else. Cæsar therefore in approaching this point had on his left, first forest, then marsh backed by forest; on his right he had a partially wooded country terminated by the impassable marshes of the Rother. The only place at which it was practicable to advance was the crossing of the valley at Robertsbridge, and this really was to Cæsar the gate of Britain. It is needless to point out how important it was for the Britons to defend this crossing, or what facilities were given by the slopes of the northern bank.

It is known that, in the flight of the Saxons from the battle of Hastings, the fugitives made a stand, and repelled the pursuing Normans with slaughter. It seems not unlikely that this may have occurred at Robertsbridge.

17. After the battle the Britons "*repulsi ab equitatu, se in silvas abdiderunt, locum nacti egregie et naturâ et opere munitum: quem domestici belli, ut videbatur, caussâ jam ante præparaverant: nam crebris arboribus succisis omnes introitus erant præclusi: ipsi ex silvis rari propugnabant, notrosque intra munitiones ingredi prohibebant: at milites legionis VII., testudine factâ, et aggere ad munitiones adjecto, locum ceperunt.*" The first statement, of the nature of the artificial defences of this place, seems to imply that they consisted entirely of felled trees: the second, of the mode in which the Romans attacked them, would lead us to think that they were walls or earth-works of some importance, of which some trace would undoubtedly remain to the present time.

I have not been able to find in the neighbourhood of Robertsbridge any distinct traces of artificial works. However, at two and a half miles from Robertsbridge, on the western side of the road by which the Britons must have retreated, is a wood called "*Burg Wood,*" which (judging from its name) I cannot doubt to have been the site of a fortress. Its western boundary, which breaks down to the N.N.W. marshy valley mentioned above, is strong. But I could not learn that there is within the wood any trace of a ditch or rampart. Still nearer to Robertsbridge, on the east side of the road, is a commanding point called "*Silver Hill,*" but the want of water would probably make it unfit for a military post.

18. I shall refer now only to two arguments derived from incidental expressions, which, perhaps, may appear to some readers little worthy of attention, but which I am unwilling to suppress, because it was from accidentally seeing these phrases, and feeling strongly their inapplicability to a landing near Deal, that I was first led to investigate the whole subject. They relate to the position of Cæsar's landing-place

in regard to the Thames. The command of all the British forces was intrusted to Cassivelaunus, "cujus fines à maritimis civitatibus flumen dividit quod appellatur Tamesis, à mari circiter millia passuum LXXX." I understand the "maritime states" to be the states in which Cæsar had landed. The whole expression appears little applicable to a place at the east end of Kent, though it applies perfectly to the south of Sussex, between which and St. Alban's the river Thames lies like a bar, nearly at the distance given by Cæsar (if, as is probable, the measurement is made to a point west of London). And "Cæsar ad flumen Tamesin . . . exercitum duxit." Now, if he had marched from Deal, his course would have been all the way parallel to the Thames, and the expression "ad Tamesin" could scarcely have been used; whereas it is perfectly proper in advancing from Pevensey.

After consideration of all these reasons, I must express my undoubting opinion that Cæsar in both his expeditions to Britain landed at Pevensey.

APPENDIX.

On the Battle of Hastings.

THE examination of localities in Sussex necessary for the understanding of Cæsar's supposed advance into Britain, has made me in some measure acquainted with those local circumstances which determined the policy of the battle of Hastings. Upon this celebrated conflict I think I may be able to throw some light. It has commonly been thought that Harold was rash in marching to meet William with an army much inferior in numbers to William's. I think it will appear that the advance was politic; that it placed William in great difficulty; that Harold had more than an even chance of success; and that, with ordinary prudence on the part of the Saxons, the Norman army would probably have been destroyed on the low grounds below Battle.

The reader on examining the map will see that, at a short distance to the east of Battle, the valley of the Winchilsea river (which rises near to Battle) becomes flat and marshy. It would probably be judged at all times impassable to a body of troops; but, if there were any doubt on this point, the labour of a hundred peasants for a few hours, in damming up the stream at different points, would make it an insurmountable barrier.

Remarking, then, that the great impervious forest extended westward beyond Chichester, and that the country included between the forest and the coast, begin-

ning from Beachy Head, was almost entirely chalk-downs, it will be seen that William was in the following difficulties.

If he remained near Pevensey, he would not only lose the reputation so important to his success, but his army would soon be starved.

If he attempted to march to the west, he would pass through a country in which no food could be obtained, and in which he would be exposed to perpetual guerilla attacks from ambush in the forest.

If he attempted to cross the Winchilsea river, and after it the Rother, his army would have been disorganized by the difficulties of the marshes, and he would have suffered severely from the attacks of even the most insignificant bodies of enemies.

The only course left for him was to march through the passes of Battle (between the forest and the marshes of the Winchilsea river) and of Robertsbridge, and then the whole of Kent would be open to him. His objects, as we know, were, first Dover, and secondly London; but he could not reach either of them except by traversing those two passes.

The activity of Harold in seizing the pass at Battle reduced him to his last resource, namely, to force the pass, at whatever disadvantage his attack should be made. Had he attempted to cross the Winchilsea river while Harold held Battle, his rearguard would have been destroyed almost without loss to the Saxons, and his advanced guard would have been in a difficult country, with the risk of being in a day or two surrounded by superior forces.

The policy of the Saxons, then, at Battle, was markedly defensive; all that was required of them was to hold their ground one day, or perhaps two days. And this evidently was Harold's view. The position which he took up (on the line of hills slightly in advance of the Winchilsea river, which line extends to the south-east as far as Fairlight Down, and completely commands the plain of Hastings and Pevensey) appears a very strong one. On his right he was defended by the great forest. On his left he was protected by large woods, which even now cover the ground on that side nearly to the stream. The only way in which an enemy could attack him was by ascending the slopes in his front; and here he had thrown up strong entrenchments of earthworks and palisades.

In a position like this, before the invention of cannon and mortars, a resolute army might well resist assailants outnumbering them in the proportion of four to one. It may even be asserted that they had more than a fair probability of success. But the condition essential to their success was, that they should simply hold their ground, availing themselves to the utmost of the advantages of their position, and that they should on no provocation quit their defences.

And it was thus, as long as order prevailed, that the defence was maintained by the Saxons. During the combat which raged through the greater part of the day, it does not appear that a single point was gained by the Normans; and it was only when the Saxons were tempted to descend towards the plain that they were overwhelmed by the chivalry of the Normans, and the battle was decided. Had the intrenchments of Battle been held with the same enduring coolness as the lines of Torres Vedras or the slopes of Waterloo, the Normans would have fallen back, dispirited and starved; in a day or two they would perhaps have been attacked by superior forces; and in all probability the glory of the Norman name would have perished on the plains of Hastings.

G. B. AIRY.

Royal Observatory, Greenwich,

Nov. 12, 1851.

ADDITION.

AFTER the communication of this paper to the Society of Antiquaries, I was favoured by WILLIAM DURRANT COOPER, Esq. F.S.A. with notes on the state of the south-eastern district of Sussex, the substance of which I am kindly permitted to publish. I take the liberty of adding some very short comments, explaining my views of the connexion of Mr. Cooper's remarks with the supposed movements of Julius Cæsar.

In reference to the roads and the military posts Mr. Cooper makes the following remarks:—

“The only route to the Thames in the eastern division of Sussex was by way of Robertsbridge, Hurst Green, and Tunbridge. So it continued to be in the days of John, Henry III. and Edward I. (See Blaauw's article on the Royal Journeys, Suss. Arch. Coll. vol. iii. p. 132.) The line from Pevensey to Robertsbridge is still denoted by the Roman name of *Street*, viz. Gardner's Street, and Boreham Street to Ninfield and Battle, close by which is the village which terminated the great wood, and still retains its half British and half Saxon name of Pen-hurst, “head of the wood.” Near Robertsbridge there exists one of the Saxon and most probably British fortifications which ran in a line from Tunbridge to the coast—Burghill, now corrupted into *Bugshill* [on the south-west side of the N.N.W. confluent of the Rother]. About two miles northward is another spot yet called Burghill, above

Hare-mare, between Etchingam and Hurst Green, immediately south of the Burg-wood of the Ordnance map [on the north-east side of the same confluent]; and so they run towards Tunbridge. Silver Hill was east of the general line, yet the advantage of its position as a military station (despite the want of water) was so great that during the last war barracks were there kept up. The only point, however, which I wish to enforce by reference to these is, that, down to the latest time, the importance of protecting this line of road by the presence of troops was acknowledged."

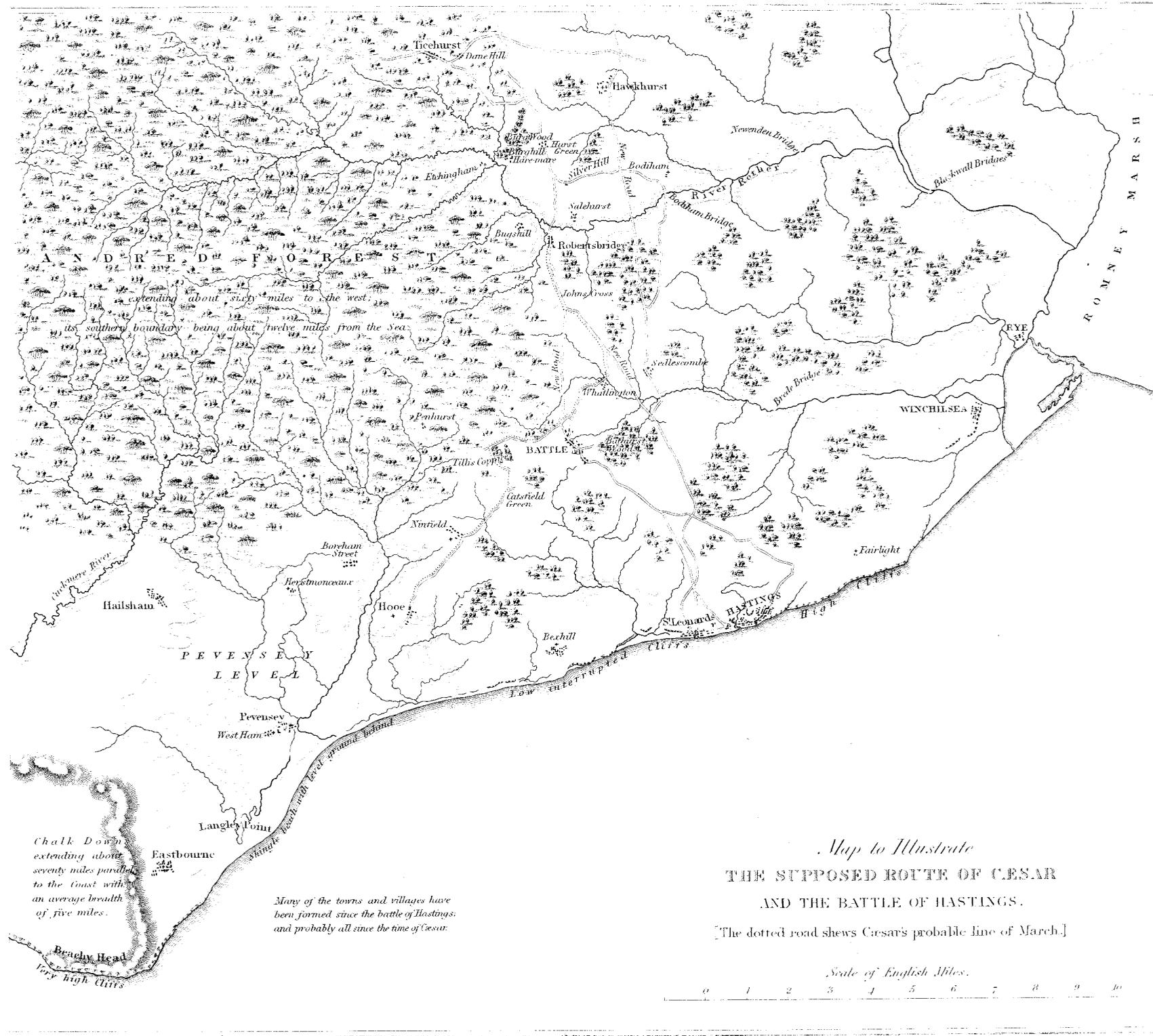
I can scarcely doubt that the Burghill of Burg-wood is the fortress which Cæsar stormed. Mr. Cooper remarks, "The plain there would well suit Cæsar's description, and the fact of another Bugshill or Burghill being found further south becomes valuable only as demonstrating that this was the line of the Saxon, and hence in all probability of the British, line of fortifications." Cæsar's account implies that no marshes were passed between the place of the battle and the fort, and that the wall (which was attacked by raising a bank of earth and forming the *testudo*) was approached on that side from level ground. These circumstances are inconsistent with the position of the Bugshill south-west of the Rother, but agree perfectly with that of the Burghill of Burg-wood.

In reference to the change of the line of coast in Pevensey Bay, Mr. Cooper remarks:—

"At Pevensey there has been a more important change in the sea-shore, since the days of the Romans, than is supposed in the Essay. The castle of Pevensey was, so late as the time of Edward I. close upon the shore. Since that time the sea has receded at least a mile. The strongest evidence of the former proximity of the sea is in the forms of the different sides of the castle itself. The provisions for defence on the sea side differing so largely from those on the other three sides, and the existence of the Water-gate as the only exit on the sea side, seem to me to show that it was on the margin of an estuary. Of the large changes which have taken place in this district within the time of written evidence, the following will give proof. Firstly, the increase of land had not been completed to its present extent down to the fourteenth century. In the Customial of Pevensey of an earlier date than that century (Suss. Arch. Coll. vol. iv. p. 213) the mode of death for a felon who was of the franchise was, that he should be taken to the town-bridge at high water and drowned in the harbour. In 1317 Edward II. granted to one Sassy, by the annual service of presenting a pair of gilt spurs, the liberty to inclose certain lands within the marsh of Pevensey 'then overflowed and in the tenure of no man' (Lowes's Pevensey.) And by the chartulary of Lewes Priory (Suss. Arch. Coll. vol.

ii. p. 15) it appears that, in the thirteenth century, Richard, who was portarius (q. port-reeve?) of Pevensy, granted to the priory a free passage for the 'water of the sea' through his marsh to their mill at Langney. In the second place, there is evidence that land which had been reclaimed has been there submerged. In 1478 the Godfrey chantry at Winchilsea was endowed with a messuage called Hauseham and 180 acres of land in Westham; on the dissolution of the chantry that land was granted to the Sackvilles (Hist. of Winchilsea, pp. 131, 132), and a large portion has since been lost (Burrell MSS. 5697.) The termination of the names 'ey,' *i. e.* 'ig,' Sax. 'an island,' seems also to mark the character of the district. You will find Hidney, Mankseye, Chilly, Horsey, Northey, Langney, &c. all close."

It will be remarked that I have drawn no inference from the supposed invariability of the coast, except that the tidal currents of the English Channel have not been sensibly altered; and this inference is in no degree disturbed by the supposition that the line of coast near Pevensy Castle has advanced by one mile. Still I cannot imagine that the land has been so much increased. The village of West Ham and the Castle of Pevensy are on the sound ground, which has not been formed by the sea; and the accretion of low land in front of Pevensy Castle has therefore been going on from pre-historic times, and a large portion of it must have been deposited before the time of Julius Cæsar. The extracts cited by Mr. Cooper show clearly that the course of the waters near the Castle has been sensibly different from what it is now; but they appear to me to refer rather to the streams running through the marshes than to the sea.



extending about such miles to the west,
 its southern boundary being about twelve miles from the Sea.

Chalk Downs
 extending about
 seventy miles parallel
 to the Coast with
 an average breadth
 of five miles.

Many of the towns and villages have
 been formed since the battle of Hastings;
 and probably all since the time of Caesar.

Map to Illustrate
THE SUPPOSED ROUTE OF CESAR
AND THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

[The dotted road shews Cesar's probable line of March.]

Scale of English Miles.



