

Latin Text, DĒ BELLŌ GALLICŌ 5.48.15–20, p. 151

- 15 *Haec cāsū ad turrim adhaesit neque ab nostrīs bīduō animadversa tertiō diē ā quōdam milite cōspicitur, dēmta ad Cicerōnem dēfertur. Ille perlēctam in conventū militum recitat maximāque omnēs laetitiā adfcit. Tum fūmī incendiōrum procul vidēbantur; quae rēs omnem dubitātiōnem*
- 20 *adventūs legiōnum expulit.*

Literal Translation Molinarius

This [spear] by chance stuck to a tower, nor for two days having been noticed by our [men], on the third day by a certain soldier it is noticed, [and] having been taken down, it is conveyed to Cicero. That [man Cicero] reads out in the assembly of soldiers [the letter] having been thoroughly read [i.e., Cicero recites the letter *after* he has read and studied it thoroughly], and this infects all [men] with the greatest joy. Then the smoke clouds of fires from afar were being spotted; which thing drove away all doubt of the arrival of the legions.

Literal Translation McDevitte

It by chance stuck in a tower, and, not being observed by our men for two days, was seen by a certain soldier on the third day: when taken down, it was carried to Cicero. He, after perusing it, reads it out in an assembly of the soldiers, and fills all with the greatest joy. Then the smoke of the fires was seen in the distance, a circumstance which banished all doubt of the arrival of the legions.

Discussion Questions

1. The best laid plans often fail or suffer delays. Why did Caesar's message not get through quickly.
2. Do you think Caesar felt the messenger had a legitimate reason for hurling the spear or does Caesar not provide enough information to make a judgment? Please justify your answer.
3. Based on Caesar's response to this crisis, please assess Caesar's qualities as a leader. How do his subordinates compare? Titurius Sabinus, Aurunculeius Cotta, Labienus, and Cicero? How is each like or unlike Caesar?