

Latin Text, DĒ BELLŌ GALLICŌ 4.34.11–16, p. 75

Interim barbari nūntiōs in omnēs partēs dīmīsērunt
 paucitātemque nostrōrum militum suis praedicāvērunt et
 quanta praedae faciendae atque in perpetuum sui liberandī
 facultās darētur, si Rōmānōs castris expulissent,
 15 dēmōnstrāvērunt. Hīs rēbus celeriter magnā multitudine
 peditātūs equitātūsque coāctā ad castra vēnērunt.

Literal Translation Molinari

Meanwhile the barbarians sent messengers into all areas, and proclaimed to their [people] the small number of our soldiers and they explained what a great opportunity was granted of making [i.e., earning] plunder and of liberating themselves for all time, if they drove the Romans from [their] camp. By means of these things [arguments] a great number of infantry and cavalry having been quickly collected, they came to [our] camp.

Literal Translation McDevitte

In the meantime the barbarians dispatched messengers to all parts, and reported to their people the small number of our soldiers, and how good an opportunity was given for obtaining spoil and for liberating themselves forever, if they should only drive the Romans from their camp. Having by these means speedily got together a large force of infantry and of cavalry they came up to the camp.

Discussion Questions

1. How might Caesar have known what the messengers were proclaiming?
2. Do the Britons make a sound argument? What flaws might Caesar's readers have seen in British reasoning?
3. The Britons talk of liberating themselves. Do you think that Romans could empathize with them, that is, understand why natives who wanted to remain independent of Roman influence felt the way that they did? Do you think that Romans had any sympathy for their arguments? Why or why not?