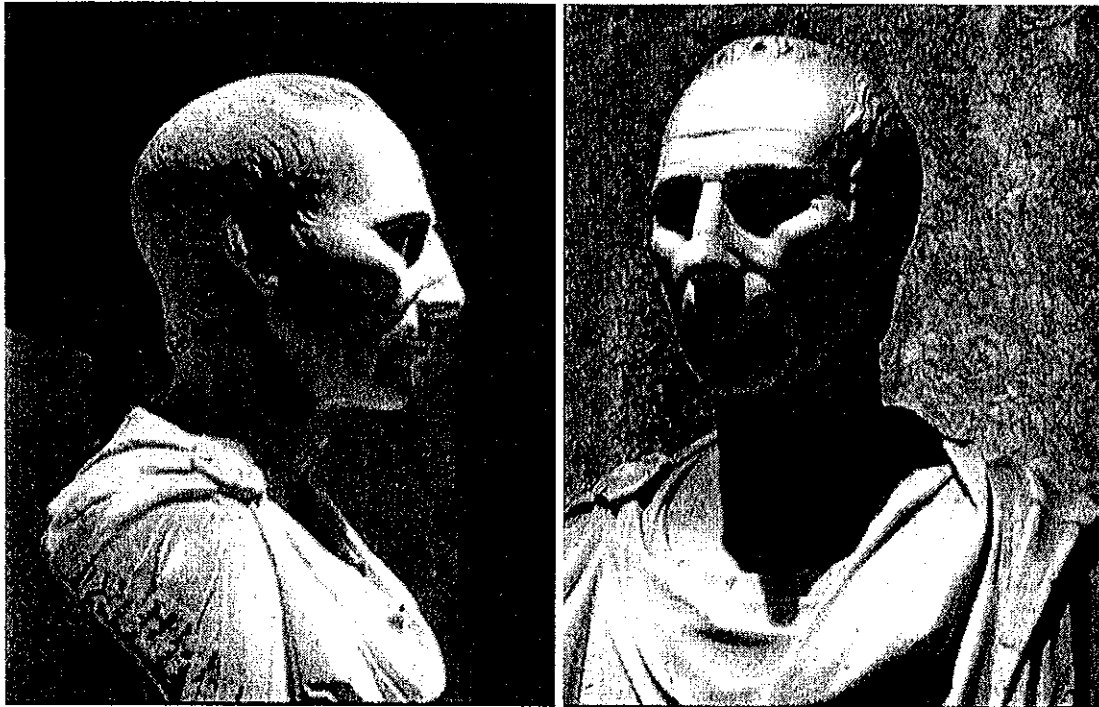


JULIUS CAESAR: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



102/100 BCE: Gaius Julius Caesar was born (by Caesarean section according to an unlikely legend) of Aurelia and Gaius Julius Caesar, a praetor. His family had noble, patrician roots, although they were neither rich nor influential in this period. His aunt Julia was the wife of Gaius Marius, leader of the Popular faction.

c. 85 BCE: His father died, and a few years later he was betrothed and possibly married to a wealthy young woman, Cossutia. This betrothal/marriage was soon broken off, and at age 18 he married Cornelia, the daughter of a prominent member of the Popular faction; she later bore him his only legitimate child, a daughter, Julia. When the Optimite dictator, Sulla, was in power, he ordered Caesar to divorce her; when Caesar refused, Sulla proscribed him (listed him among those to be executed), and Caesar went into hiding. Caesar's influential friends and relatives eventually got him a pardon.

c. 79 BCE: Caesar, on the staff of a military legate, was awarded the civic crown (oak leaves) for saving the life of a citizen in battle. His general sent him on an embassy to Nicomedes, the king of Bithynia, to obtain a fleet of ships; Caesar was successful, but subsequently he became the butt of gossip that he had persuaded the king (a homosexual) only by agreeing to sleep with him. When Sulla died in 78, Caesar returned to Rome and began a career as a orator/lawyer (throughout his life he was known as an eloquent speaker) and a life as an elegant man-about-town.

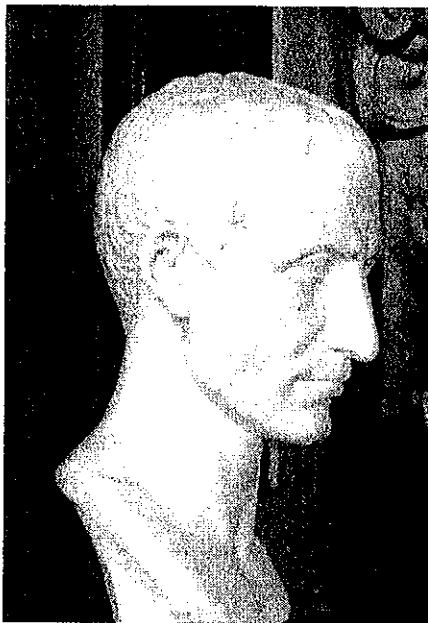
75 BCE: While sailing to Greece for further study, Caesar was kidnaped by Cilician pirates and held for ransom. When informed that they intended to ask for 20 talents, he is supposed to have insisted that he was worth at least 50. He maintained a friendly, joking

relationship with the pirates while the money was being raised, but warned them that he would track them down and have them crucified after he was released. He did just that, with the help of volunteers, as a warning to other pirates, but he first cut their throats to lessen their suffering because they had treated him well.

72 BCE: Caesar was elected military tribune. (Note that Pompey and Crassus were the consuls for 70 BCE.)

69 BCE: He spoke at the funerals of both his aunt, Julia, and his wife, Cornelia. On both occasions, he emphasized his connections with Marius and the ancient nobility of his family, descended from the first kings on his mother's side and from the gods on his father's (revealing a notable talent for self-dramatization and a conception that there was something exceptional about him).

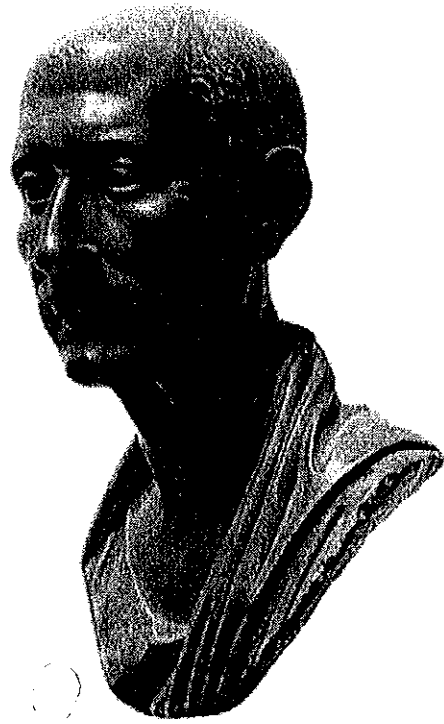
68/67 BCE: Caesar was elected quaestor and obtained a seat in the Senate; he married Pompeia, a granddaughter of Sulla. Caesar supported Gnaeus Pompey and helped him get an extraordinary generalship against the Mediterranean pirates, later extended to command of the war against King Mithridates in Asia Minor.



65 BCE: He was elected curule aedile and spent lavishly on games to win popular favor; large loans from Crassus made these expenditures possible. There were rumors that Caesar was having an affair with Gnaeus Pompey's wife, Mucia, as well as with the wives of other prominent men.

63 BCE: Caesar spent heavily in a successful effort to get elected *pontifex maximus* (chief priest); in 62 he was elected praetor. He divorced Pompeia because of her involvement in a scandal with another man, although the man had been acquitted in the law courts; Caesar is reported to have said, "The wife of Caesar must be above suspicion," suggesting that he was so exceptional that anyone associated with him had to be free of any hint of scandal. In 61 he was sent to the province of Further Spain as propraetor.

60 BCE: He returned from Spain and joined with Pompey and Crassus in a loose coalition called by modern historians "The First Triumvirate" and by his enemies at the time "the three-headed monster." In 62, Pompey had returned victorious from Asia, but had been unable to get the Senate to ratify his arrangements and to grant land to his veteran soldiers because he had disbanded his army on his return and Crassus was blocking his efforts. Caesar persuaded the two men to work together and promised to support their interests if they helped him get elected to the consulship.



59 BCE: Caesar was elected consul against heavy Optimate opposition led by Marcus Porcius Cato, a shrewd and extremely conservative politician. Caesar married his only daughter, Julia, to Pompey to consolidate their alliance; he himself married Calpurnia, the daughter of a leading member of the Popular faction. Caesar pushed Pompey's measures through, helped Crassus' proposals, and got for himself a five-year term as proconsul of Gaul after his consulship was over. However, he used some strong-arm methods in the Assembly and completely cowed his Optimate colleague in the consulship, Bibulus, so that jokers referred to the year as "the consulship of Julius and Caesar" (instead of "the consulship of Caesar and Bibulus"). Caesar was safe from prosecution for such actions as long as he held office, but once he became a private citizen again he could be prosecuted by his enemies in the Senate.

58 BCE: Caesar left Rome for Gaul; he would not return for 9 years, in the course of which he would conquer most of what is now central Europe, opening up these lands to Mediterranean civilization—a decisive act in world history. However, much of the conquest was an act of aggression prompted by personal ambition (not unlike the conquests of Alexander the Great). (See the on-line article from *Athena Review* 1.4 on "[Caesar's Campaigns in Gaul](#)," which includes a detailed map.) Fighting in the summers, he would return to Cisalpine Gaul (northern Italy) in the winters and manipulate Roman politics through his supporters.

56 BCE: Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus met in Caesar's province to renew their coalition, since Pompey had been increasingly moving toward the Optimate faction. Pompey and Crassus were to be consuls again, and Caesar's command in Gaul was extended until 49 BCE.

54 BCE: Caesar led a three-month expedition to Britain (the was the first Roman crossing of the English Channel), but he did not establish a permanent base there. (See the on-line article from *Athena Review* 1.1 on "[The Landings of Caesar in Britain, 55 and 54 BC](#)," which includes maps.) Meanwhile, Caesar's coalition with Pompey was increasingly strained, especially after Julia died in childbirth in 54. In the following year, Crassus received command of the armies of the East but was defeated and killed by the Parthians.

52 BCE: Rioting in Rome led to Pompey's extra-legal election as "consul without a colleague." Without Julia and Crassus, there was little to bond Caesar and Pompey together, and Pompey moved to the Optimate faction, since he had always been eager for the favor of the aristocrats.

51 BCE: The conquest of Gaul effectively completed, Caesar set up an efficient provincial administration to govern the vast territories; he published his history *The Gallic Wars*. The Optimates in Rome attempted to cut short Caesar's term as governor of Gaul and made it clear that he would be immediately prosecuted if he returned to Rome

as a private citizen (Caesar wanted to run for the consulship *in absentia* so that he could not be prosecuted). Pompey and Caesar were maneuvered into a public split; neither could yield to the other without a loss of honor, dignity, and power.

49 BCE: Caesar tried to maintain his position legally, but when he was pushed to the limit he led his armies across the Rubicon River (the border of his province), which was automatic civil war. Pompey's legions were in Spain, so he and the Senate retreated to Brundisium and from there sailed to the East. Caesar quickly advanced to Rome, set up a rump Senate and had himself declared dictator. Throughout his campaign, Caesar practiced—and widely publicized—his policy of **clemency** (he would put no one to death and confiscate no property). In a bold, unexpected move, Caesar led his legions to Spain, to prevent Pompey's forces from joining him in the East; he allegedly declared, "I am off to meet an army without a leader; when I return, I shall meet a leader without an army." After a remarkably short campaign, he returned to Rome and was elected consul, thus (relatively) legalizing his position.

48 BCE: Pompey and the Optimate faction had established a strong position in Greece by this time, and Caesar, in Brundisium, did not have sufficient ships to transport all his legions. He crossed with only about 20,000 men, leaving his chief legate, Mark Antony, in Brundisium to try to bring across the rest of the soldiers. After some rather desperate situations for Caesar, the rest of his forces finally landed, though they were greatly outnumbered by Pompey's men. In the final battle, on the plains of Pharsalus, it is estimated that Pompey had 46,000 men to Caesar's 21,000. By brilliant generalship, Caesar was victorious, though the toll was great on both sides; Caesar pardoned all Roman citizens who were captured, including Brutus, but Pompey escaped, fleeing to Egypt.

October 2, 48 BCE: Caesar, with no more than 4,000 legionaries, landed in Alexandria; he was presented, to his professed horror, with the head of Pompey, who had been betrayed by the Egyptians. Caesar demanded that the Egyptians pay him the 40 million sesterces he was owed because of his military support some years earlier for the previous ruler, Ptolemy XII ("The Flute Player"), who had put down a revolt against his rule with Caesar's help. After Ptolemy XII's death, the throne had passed to his oldest children, Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIII, as joint heirs. When Caesar landed, the eunuch Pothinus and the Egyptian general Achilles, acting on behalf of Ptolemy XIII (at this time about 12 years old), had recently driven Cleopatra (at this time about 20-21 years old) out of Alexandria. Cleopatra had herself smuggled into the palace in Alexandria wrapped in a rug (purportedly a gift for Caesar) and enlisted his help in her struggle to control the Egyptian throne. Like all the Ptolemies, Cleopatra was of Macedonian Greek descent; she was highly intelligent and well-educated. Caesar saw her as a useful ally as well as a captivating female, and he supported her right to the throne. Through the treachery of Pothinus and the hostility of the Egyptian people to the Romans, Achilles and an army of 20,000 besieged the palace. Caesar managed to hold the palace itself and the harbor; he had Pothinus executed as a traitor but allowed the young Ptolemy to join the army of Achilles. When he ordered the Egyptian fleet burnt, the great Library of Alexandria was accidentally consumed in the flames.



drawing of Caesar
with general's cloak;
see also [this statue](#)

February, 47 BCE: After some months under siege, Caesar tried unsuccessfully to capture Pharos, a great lighthouse on an island in the harbor; at one point when cut off from his men he had to jump in the water and swim to safety. Plutarch says that he swam with one hand, using the other to hold some important papers above the water; Suetonius adds that he also towed his purple general's cloak by holding it in his teeth so that it would not be captured by the Egyptians.

March, 47 BCE: Caesar had sent for reinforcements, two Roman legions and the army of an ally, King Mithridates; when they arrived outside Alexandria he marched out to join them and on March 26 defeated the Egyptian army (Ptolemy XIII died in this battle). Although he had been trapped in the palace for nearly six months and had been unable to exert a major influence on the conduct of the civil war, which was going rather badly without him, Caesar nevertheless remained in Egypt until June, even cruising on the Nile with Cleopatra to the southern boundary of her kingdom.

June 23, 47 BCE: Caesar left Alexandria, having established Cleopatra as a client ruler in alliance with Rome; he left three legions under the command of Rufio, as legate, in support of her rule. Either immediately before or soon after he left Egypt, Cleopatra bore a son, whom she named Caesarion, claiming that he was the son of Caesar.

August, 47 BCE: After leaving Alexandria, Caesar swept through Asia Minor to settle the disturbances there. On August 1, he met and immediately overcame Pharnaces, a rebellious king; he later publicized the rapidity of this victory with the slogan *veni, vidi, vici* ("I came, I saw, I overcame").

October, 47 BCE: Caesar arrived back in Rome and settled the problems caused by the mismanagement of Antony. When he attempted to sail for Africa to face the Optimates (who had regrouped under Cato and allied with King Juba of Numidia), his legions mutinied and refused to sail. In a brilliant speech, Caesar brought them around totally, and after some difficult battles decisively defeated the Optimates at Thapsus, after which Cato committed suicide rather than be pardoned by Caesar.

July 25, 46 BCE: The victorious and now unchallenged Caesar arrived back in Rome and celebrated four splendid triumphs (over the Gauls, Egyptians, Pharnaces, and Juba); he sent for Cleopatra and the year-old Caesarion and established them in a luxurious villa across the Tiber from Rome. In a letter at this time he listed his political aims as “tranquility for Italy, peace for the provinces, and security for the Empire.” His program for accomplishing these goals—both what he actually achieved and



coin issued by Caesar depicting military trophy

what he planned but did not have time to complete—was sound and farsighted (e.g., resolution of the worst of the debt crisis, resettlement of veterans abroad without dispossessing others, reform of the Roman calendar, regulation of the grain dole, strengthening of the middle class, enlargement of the Senate to 900), but his methods alienated many of the nobles. Holding the position of *dictator*, Caesar governed autocratically, more in the manner of a general than a politician. Although he nominally used the political structure, he often simply announced his decisions to the Senate and had them entered on the record as senatorial decrees without debate or vote.

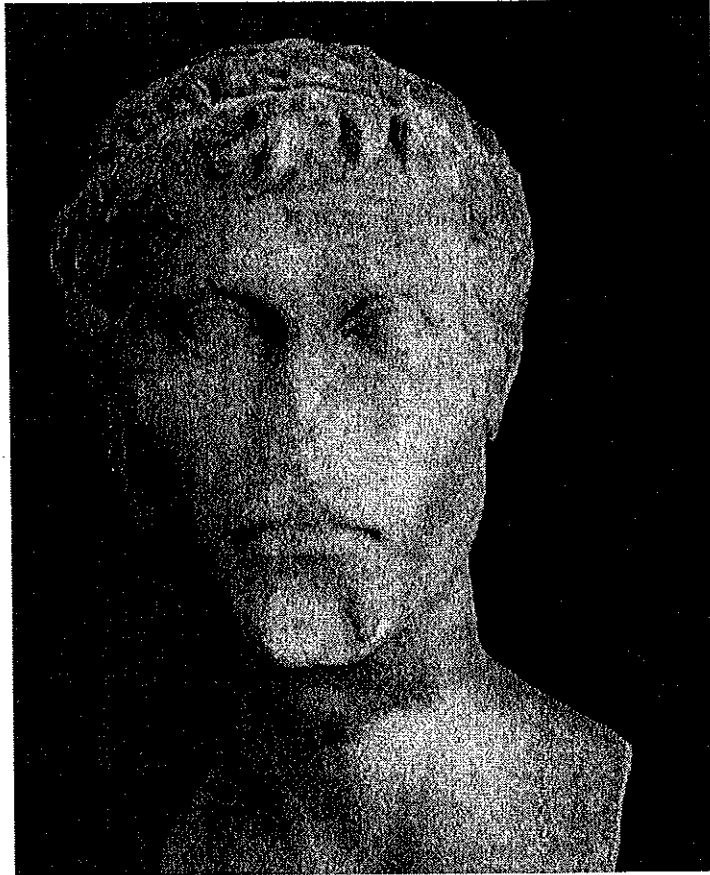
April, 45 BCE: The two sons of Pompey, Gnaeus and Sextus, led a revolt in Spain; since Caesar's legates were unable to quell the revolt, Caesar had to go himself, winning a decisive but difficult victory at Munda. Gnaeus Pompey was killed in the battle, but Sextus escaped to become, later, the leader of the Mediterranean pirates.

October, 45 BCE: Caesar, back in Rome, celebrated a triumph over Gnaeus Pompey, arousing discontent because triumphs were reserved for **foreign** enemies. By this time Caesar was virtually appointing all major magistrates; for example, when the consul for 45 died on the morning of his last day of office, Caesar appointed a new consul to serve out the term—from 1:00 p.m. to sundown! Caesar was also borrowing some of the customs of the ruler cults of the eastern Hellenistic monarchies; for example, he issued coins with his likeness (note how the portrait on this coin, celebrating his fourth dictatorship, emphasizes his age) and allowed his statues, especially in the provinces, to be adorned like the statues of the gods. Furthermore, the Senate was constantly voting him new honors—the right to wear the laurel wreath and purple and gold toga and sit in a gilded chair at all public functions, inscriptions such as “to the unconquerable god,” etc.

When two tribunes, Gaius Marullus and Lucius Flavius, opposed these measures, Caesar had them removed from office and from the Senate.

February, 44 BCE: Caesar was named *dictator perpetuus*. On February 15, at the feast of Lupercalia, Caesar wore his purple garb for the first time in public. At the public festival, Antony offered him a diadem (symbol of the Hellenistic monarchs), but Caesar refused it, saying Jupiter alone is king of the Romans (possibly because he saw the people did not want him to accept the diadem, or possibly because he wanted to end once and for all the speculation that he was trying to become a king). Caesar was preparing to lead a military campaign against the Parthians, who had treacherously killed Crassus and taken the legionary eagles; he was due to leave on March 18. Although Caesar was apparently warned of some personal danger, he nevertheless refused a bodyguard.

March 15, 44 BCE: Caesar attended the last meeting of the Senate before his departure, held at its temporary quarters in the portico of the theater built by Pompey the Great (the Curia, located in the Forum and the regular meeting house of the Senate, had been badly burned and was being rebuilt). The sixty conspirators, led by Marcus Junius Brutus, Gaius Cassius Longinus, Decimus Brutus Albinus, and Gaius Trebonius, came to the meeting with daggers concealed in their togas and struck Caesar at least 23 times as he stood at the base of Pompey's statue. Legend has it that Caesar said in Greek to Brutus, "You, too, my child?" After his death, all the senators fled, and three slaves carried his body home to Calpurnia several hours later. For several days there was a political vacuum, for the conspirators apparently had no long-range plan and, in a major blunder, did not immediately kill Mark Antony (apparently by the decision of Brutus). The conspirators had only a band of gladiators to back them up, while Antony had a whole legion, the keys to Caesar's money boxes, and Caesar's will. Click [here](#) for some assessments of Caesar by modern historians.



first century BCE portrait bust with features resembling Caesar's,
found in Ancient Thera

Sources

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Book I
The outbreak of civil war.
Caesar invades Italy, Sardinia, Sicily.
Massilia refuses to admit Caesar.
The campaign of Ilerda and defeat of Afranius
and Petreius.

I.1 - 6 Events in Rome, early January 49 BCE. Flight of the tribunes to Caesar.

I.1 Begins in January 49 BCE [seemingly missing a substantial block of beginning text]. **Gaius Julius Caesar (Caesar or JC)** is in Cisalpine Gaul and he has written a letter which has been delivered to the new consul Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Crus (**Lentulus**), an enemy of GJC, for the opening session of the senate Jan. 1. Lentulus spoke out in favor of Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (**Pompey**), as did Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio (**Scipio**) [Pompey's father-in-law]. The tribunes Marcus Antonius (**Antonius**) and Quintus Cassius Longinus (**Cassius**), supporters of Caesar, attempted to defend the letter, as had other supporters of Caesar, and the tribunes vetoed a motion against Caesar...

I.4 Caesar outlines the motives of his enemies, including M. Porcius Cato (**Cato**).

I.5 -6 The pro-Caesar tribunes have to flee for their safety to join Caesar [in Ravenna in Cisalpine Gaul]. Decisions about Caesar's tenure in command are made January 7... Pompey works to line up allies including King Juba [of Numidia]. The other consul in 49 BCE is Gaius Claudius Marcellus (**Marcellus**) [who is less opposed to Caesar]. Caesar says "the laws of god and man were overturned."

I.7 - 12 Caesar invades Italy while continuing to negotiate for a settlement.

He sets out for Ariminum in NE Italy just south of the Rubicon [i.e., no longer in Cisalpine Gaul], where he meets with tribunes Antonius and Cassius. [According to Plutarch, he says "The die is cast".] While Caesar pays lip service to his civic duty, he also states "his [Caesar's] standing [acc. 'dignitatem' fr. dignitas] had always been his first consideration, more important than his life". His enemies were out to destroy him. He makes proposals to equitably reduce Pompey's and his armies... Gaius Scribonius Curio (**Curio**), Caesar's ally, takes the town of Iguvium. Caesar refers to himself as Imperator [a title of honor originally meaning victorious commander but eventually coming to mean general and then emperor].

I.14 - 23 Caesar advances south and besieges and captures Corfinium.

His advance is opposed by Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus (**Domitius**). After defeating him, Caesar sends away unharmed the captured opposing leaders and senators etc. and requires Domitius' soldiers to take an oath of loyalty to him. [This is one of many examples Caesar cites wherein he shows great leniency to his defeated foes.]

I.24 - 29 Pompey's forces escape from Caesar at Brundisium and cross the Adriatic to Epirus.

Caesar attempt to block the eastern port of Brundisium [on the heel of Italy]. Pompey refuses to meet with Caesar. He assembles many ships and successfully sails across the Adriatic to Epirus (March 17, 49 BCE). Caesar abandons the effort to pursue Pompey.

I.30 - 33 The capture of Sardinia and Sicily. Caesar in Rome.

Caesar sends Quintus Valerius to capture Sardinia, and Curio to Sicily, while he himself goes to Rome, where he meets with the Senate. There he defends his actions and speaks bitterly of what his enemies have done, suggests he may run the state by himself. He is obstructed by Lucius Metellus and other Pompey adherents, and decides to travel on to Further Gaul ("ulteriorem Galliam").

I.34 - 36 The siege of Massilia [Marseilles] commences.

Domitius has become proconsul of Gaul and has been sent to gain control of Massilia. The Massiliots close their gates to Caesar. Roused by their hostile actions, Caesar commences a siege against Massilia. He also places Decimus Junius Brutus Albinus (Decimus Brutus) in charge of his ship fleet there.

I.37 - 42 Caesar establishes his position in Hispania Citerior (Nearer Spain) at Ilerda [on the river Sicors or Segre]

Caesar sends Gaius Fabius (Fabius) on to Spain as his deputy. Pompey has sent Lucius Afranius (**Afranius**) and Marcus Petreius (**Petreius**) as his deputies (legati) to Nearer Spain (Hispania Citerior) and they decide to join forces at Ilerda. Marcus Terentius Varro (**Varro**) was sent to Hispania Ulterior as legatus. Afranius begins attacks on Fabius's forces. Caesar arrives at Ilerda on c. June 23, 49. Afranius declines Caesar's invitation to engage in combat immediately.

I.43 -47 The battle near Ilerda

Ilerda is on the Segres river, north of the confluence with the Cinca river (the Ebro river enters a little further south). Battle begins, and is inconclusive.

I 48 - 55 Caesar in trouble after severe flooding and restricted food supply

Unusually heavy rains follow, and Caesar is cut off from resupply convoys coming from the east and across the Segre River. In contrast, Afranius is well supplied and resupplied. Caesar's men make ships like those they found in

Britain and successfully cross the river upstream, recovering the supplies brought by the convoy.

I 56 - 60 The first sea battle off the coast of Massilia (June 49)

Caesar's ships are less skillfully built than those of the Massiliots and outnumbered, and the sea battle there (late June) is inconclusive. Meanwhile things are looking up for Caesar in Ilerda.

I 61 - 72 The Pompeian army withdraws towards the Ebro River (to the south, toward Celtiberia) but is cut off

I.73 - 77 Fraternization between the armies ensues, and it appears that a surrender is imminent, but these efforts are stopped by Afranius and Petreius

I.78 -87 Surrender of the Pompeian army led by Afranius and Petreius

There are continues desertions to Caesar's side, fighting resumes, slow progress. Caesar maintains maximum mobility by not permitting his men to erect tents. Finally on August 2, Caesar has cut off the enemy from water, fuel, and food, and they surrender. Again, Caesar demonstrates great leniency to the soldiers and to their leaders.

Book II

Siege and surrender of Massilia.

Defeat of Varro.

Curio's disaster in Africa.

II.1- 2 Trebonius conducts siege operations against Massilia

Gaius Trebonius (**Trebonius**, Caesar's legatus) conducts the siege of Massilia using a variety of siege machines including towers, a siege-ramp, and a "tortoise"

II.3 - 7 The second sea-battle off Massilia

Caesar tells of Curio's carelessness in now adequately guarding the Sicilian Straits, thus allowing Lucius Nasidius to bring more ships to the aid of Domitius at Massilia. He battles with Decimus Brutus, but withdraws from the sea fighting defeated and sails for Spain.

II.8 - 16 Further siege works, leading to first surrender and renewed resistance of the Massiliots

The Massiliots valiantly defend against the siege machines and works. They send down burning pitch and pine-shavings and the Caesarians undermine the foundations of their city walls, etc. At one point they seem to surrender and declare a truce, but at night they cunningly destroy the siege works in a gross violation of the treaty. They are near surrender

II.17 - 21 Varro surrenders to Caesar in Hispania Ulterior (Further Spain)

II.22 Final surrender to Caesar of Massilia, with Caesar showing his usual leniency

II.23 - 44 Expedition of Curio to Africa, and his defeat near Utica by King Juba

Curio sets out in August 49 to sail for Africa, taking fewer legions than he has been given, out of over-confidence and the low esteem he holds for the governor of Africa, Publius Attius Varus (**Varus**). He is opposed near Anquillaria by young Lucius Caesar (a Pompeian) but the Caesarians successfully land and form a camp near Utica at the River Bagradas. Varus' troops are encamped next to Utica. In a note of Caesarian irony, Curio is hailed as imperator (victorious general) for his minimal heroic deeds (rebus gestis). Curio learns that King Juba of Numidia [west of Africa] is sending large reinforcements to Varus. Curio calls a war council and exhorts his men to fight nobly. In a first battle, Varus's troops are routed, and he is wounded. Curio sets siege to Utica. Curio however becomes misled as to whether Juba is coming with his reinforcements. In a series of mistakes by Curio from over-confidence and poor judgment, Saburra (Juba's military commander) entraps Curio and his army is slaughtered. Only a few are able to escape on their ships, and King Juba takes several senator captives back to Numidia for display and execution.

Book III

Caesar crosses to Epirus to face Pompey.

Troubles in Italy.

**Caesar receives reinforcements, checks
Scipio.**

**He blockades Pompey outside Dyrrachium but
is defeated.**

The campaign of Pharsalus.

Naval operations.

Flight and death of Pompey.

Start of the Alexandrian War.

III.1- 5 Caesar in Italy. Summary of forces available to Caesar and to Pompey.

Caesar is dictator in Rome, and in the consular election he is elected consul along with Publius Servilius Isauricus. But he stays in Rome only 11 days, then heads to Brundisium. He is trying to gather up a fleet, but there are insufficient ships available to take his entire army across the Adriatic in one trip. He summarizes Pompey's forces and supplies gathered in Epirus. Pompey holds important coastal towns including Dyrrachium, Apollonia, etc.

III.6 - 13 Caesar crosses the Adriatic, takes Oricum and Apollonia

On January 4, 48, Caesar crosses the Adriatic and lands the next day in Epirus at the Ceraunian range [modern Albania] at Palaeste. Caesar's troops attack Oricum. Caesar sends his ships back to Brundisium to bring the rest of his army--and Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus (**Bibulus**) attacks the ships, burning many and killing many of the men. One of Pompey's commanders, Marcus Octavius, reaches Salonae, but the locals resist the Pompeians. Caesar desires to send peace overtures to Pompey via Lucius Vibullius Rufus... Vibullius goes to Pompey (who is inland, in Candavia) and informs him of Caesar's presence in Epirus, and Pompey marches toward the coast. Caesar takes Oricum and Apollonia. Pompey takes Dyrrachium. Caesar makes his winter camp near Apollonia, just south of the river Apsus from Pompey's camp (which is just across it to the north).

III.14 - 19 Caesar suffers naval blockade; abortive negotiations for peace

Caesar's ships are blockaded and prevented from reaching Epirus with supplies and reinforcements. He successfully conveys the message to Quintus Fufius Calenus (Calenus) not to attempt to bring the ships over. Caesar notes "thus the preservation of the army hung on a matter of minutes and a remarkable chance". Caesar blocks the Pompeian commanders Lucius Scribonius Libo (Libo) and Bibulus from landing on the Epirus coast, and Libo resorts to a ruse, pretending to want to negotiate for peace. Bibulus falls ill and dies. Pompey refuses to talk peace.

III.20 - 22 Insurrection of Marcus Caelius Rufus and Milo in Italy

III.23 - 24 Antonius breaks Libo's blockade of Brundisium

It has been many months of waiting and still the ships and legions have not come to Caesar. Libo blockades the Caesarian ships at Brundisium, but Marcus Antonius and Calenus successfully break the blockade and sail for Epirus.

III.25 - 30 Reinforcements reach Caesar by sea

Coponius attempts to attack them, but they sail past Dyrrachium and land to the north at Nymphaeum. Antonius disembarks his troops at the nearby town of Lissus, and sends a message to Caesar. Caesar marches north and joins Antonius.

III.31 - 33 Scipio's behavior as proconsul in Syria

Scipio turns his back on the Parthian enemy at his borders and decides against plundering the temple at Ephesus in order to come to the aid of his son-in-law Pompey.

III.34 - 38 Caesar's generals check Scipio in Macedonia and Thessaly

Caesar sends Lucius Cassius Longinus (brother to Gaius, the later tyrannicide) to Thessaly and Gaius Calvisius Sabinus to Aetolia and Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus to Macedonia...

III.39 - 46 Caesar cuts Pompey off from Dyrrachium and starts to invest his army

... Caesar heads for Asparagium and offers battle to Pompey, which is declined. JC reaches Dyrrachium, and begins to wall in Pompey. Clashes.

III.47 - 55 The nature of warfare at Dyrrachium. Temporary stalemate.

Pompey is well-supplied initially while Caesar is low on food, but eventually Pompey is also in need of supplies. Publius Sulla attacks Dyrrachium, but breaks off the attack prematurely.

III.56 Fufius Calenus' activities in central Greece

Calenus takes Delphi etc.

III.57 - 58 Further abortive peace negotiations. Pompey's cavalry starve.

Caesar sends a message of peace to Scipio but this fails. Pompey's horses are starving.

III.59 - 72 Pompey breaks out and defeats Caesar

There are key deserters from Caesar, two Allobroges, and they carry key tactical information to Pompey. Pompey succeeds in breaking out of the siege by boat, attack the Caesarians from two sides, rout Caesar's men. Antonius checks the attack temporarily, but Caesar's cavalry is routed, and he is nearly defeated (July 7). Caesar says that he was saved from total destruction only by Pompey "did not dare for some time to approach the fortifications and that his cavalry were slowed down in their pursuit by the narrow gaps [in the fortifications]..." Pompey is hailed as imperator and his overconfident men begin to plan how they will divide up the spoils of victory. Caesar notes "... they failed to remind themselves of the everyday accidents of war, how factors which are frequently trifling--mistaken suspicion, or sudden alarm, or religious scruple--have caused great disasters..."

III.73 - 83 Caesar withdraws to Thessaly and encamps near Pharsalus. Pompey's army comes up with him.

Caesar marches through Thessaly to rest and resupply his troops. He exhorts them to redeem themselves. Rumors of his defeat spread, and the local peoples are more resistant to him. Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus meets up with him at Aeginium. With his forces now united, he attacks the Thessalian town of Gomphi, which resists, and he allows his men to plunder ruthlessly. The similar town Metropolis accedes to his demands and is spared, as they note the cruel example set by Gomphi. Pompey's men continue to overconfidently plan for their winnings.

III.84 - 99 Caesar secures victory at Pharsalus

August 9, 48. Caesar has 1000 cavalry versus Pompey's 7000. The battle lines are drawn near Pharsalus and the Enipeus River (in Thessaly). Caesar exhorts his troops. The trumpet calls them to battle. The heroic pronouncement of Crastinus. Pompey makes the mistake of repressing his troops' normal excitement for battle. Caesar's brilliant strategy causes Pompey's larger cavalry to be routed. Pompey flees to his camp, Caesar attacks his fortifications. Caesar takes his camp, notes the luxury there. Pompey flees to Larisa. Domitius is killed in the hills.

III.100-101 Naval operation in Sicily and South Italy

III.102 - 104 Flight and death of Pompey

Pompey finds he does not have support in Mytilene, Cilicia, and Antioch etc., and flees to Egypt. He is given refuge by Ptolemy XIII in deference to the ties of friendship and hospitality Pompey enjoyed with his father Ptolemy XII. But the king's regents make a secret plan--they send Achilles and Septimius, who kill Pompey, along with Lucius Lentulus.

III.105 - 112 Caesar pursues Pompey to Egypt and becomes involved in the dynastic war between Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIII

Miracles occur when Caesar achieves his victory over Pompey. Caesar heads on to Alexandria, where he involves himself in the struggle for power between the boy Ptolemy XIII and his sister Cleopatra. Achilles comes with his forces to attack Caesar. Caesar takes Ptolemy XIII in his power. He takes over the Pharos (island adjoining Alexandria with a great tower lighthouse), and continues the fight against Achilles. [Caesar abruptly ceases his commentary at this point].