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Doubt over date for Brit invasion

From BBC News 01.07.08 © BBC MMVIII

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/sci/tech/7483566.stm>

Julius Caesar's invasion of Britain in 55BC could not have occurred on the dates stated in most history books, a team of astronomers have claimed.

The traditional view is that Caesar landed in Britain on 26-27 August, but researchers from Texas State University say this cannot be right.

Dr Donald Olson, an expert on tides, says that the English Channel was flowing the wrong way on this date.

They instead favour an **invasion** of the south coast at Deal on August 22-23.

The claims appear in the latest issue of Sky & Telescope magazine.

Caesar came to Britain with 100 warships and two legions **comprising** 10,000 men. But as he **approached** Dover's white cliffs, spear-wielding Celtic warriors lined up along the ridge, prompting the Roman leader to look for a better landing spot.

He ordered his fleet to move along the coast, and after travelling about seven miles they came to "an open and flat shore".

What has been **a matter of some debate** is whether Caesar sailed left or right and when exactly his armada landed.

Astronomical solution

Caesar mentioned strong tides, a full Moon and an ocean current. The astronomers Edmund Halley and George Airy **previously** used this information to try to solve the problem. But they disagreed with each other's conclusions.

Dr Olson identified August 2007 as a **rare** opportunity to investigate the question of when Caesar landed.



Caesar came with two legions, comprising about 10,000 men

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During this month, complex tidal factors involving the Moon and Sun would unfold in a **near-perfect** replay of those in August of 55 BC. So the researchers **conducted** an expedition to the south coast of England in order to **investigate their idea**.

On the day which corresponded closely to the traditional date for the invasion, Dr Olson carried out a basic experiment - dropping an apple into the sea off Deal pier at roughly the time of afternoon when Caesar described the fleet moving.

The apple floated south-west towards Dover, suggesting that the Roman fleet could not have travelled up to Deal from Dover on that day.



Caesar came with two legions, comprising about 10,000 men

"The English Channel was flowing the wrong way said Dr Olson.

Caesar's account led the researchers to **focus on** a possible invasion date a few days earlier.

On the day corresponding to the revised date of 22-23 August, the team chartered a sightseeing boat and took GPS readings to determine how the boat was drifting.

They found the boat was floating north-east towards Deal.

The Texas teams revised date gives Caesar the ocean current he needed to manoeuvre right, proceed seven miles, and land with a falling tide near present-day Deal.

This is the beach preferred by most historians but rejected by tide experts in the past. A modified reading of Caesar's reference to the "night of a full Moon" also **leads to** the August 22-23 date, Dr Olson claimed.

"The scientists were right about the tidal streams and so were the historians about the landing site," he explained.

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A.

Read the article two or three times.

You can use a pen to underline or a highlighter pen.

Now write the main points contained in the article.

There does not have to be six main points – there could be more or less.

Point 1

Point 2

Point 3

Point 4

Point 5

Point 6

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B.

Answer the following questions.

1. Why did Dr. Olson believe that Caesar could not have landed at Deal on 26/27 August?

- a. He was repelled by Celtic warriors.
- b. The tides were too strong
- c. The English Channel was flowing the wrong way
- d. The beach was too steep.

2. Which statement is incorrect?

- a. Halle and Airy agreed on the date and site of the landing
- b. In the past tide experts dismissed Deal as a landing beach on 26/27
- c. Historians have traditionally suggested 26/27 August as the dates of the invasion
- d. The analysis of the tidal streams now suggest the 22/23 August as a landing date

3. What is the correct spelling of **innvasion** ?

- a. invassion
- b. invasion
- c. innvassion
- d. invason

4. What is the correct spelling of **aproached**?

- a. aproched
- b. approched
- c. approched
- d. approached

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5. "The English Channel was flowing the wrong way said Dr Olson. is punctuated wrongly. How should it be punctuated?

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. "The English Channel was flowing the wrong way said Dr Olson". | b. "The English Channel was flowing the wrong way, said Dr Olson. |
| c. "The English Channel was flowing the wrong way," said Dr Olson. | d. "The English Channel was flowing the wrong way said, Dr Olson". |

6. The phrase **The Texas teams revised date** is punctuated wrongly. How should it be punctuated?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. The Texas' teams revised date | b. The texas team's revised date |
| c. The Texas team's revised date | d. The Texas teams' revised date |

7. What word could best replace **rare** without changing the meaning?

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| a. strange | b. singular |
| c. great | d. exciting |

8. What word could best replace **conducted** without changing the meaning?

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| a. undertook | b. planned |
| c. travelled | d. exhibited |

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C. Read the article. What do you understand by the following words or phrases shown in **bold / brown** in the text?

comprising

a matter of some debate

near-perfect

investigate their idea

focus on

leads to

D. Can you unscramble these anagrams?

They are all verbs found in the text

1. ideals 2. ragesdied 3. decimal

4. rodered 5. anddle 6. fedalot

7. endtimeon 8. tellraved 9. pleadixen

10. refrepred

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Answers

A.

- Point 1 It is traditionally believed that Caesar landed on 26/27 August
- Point 2 Some now believe it was 22/23 August
- Point 3 Agreed that Caesar approached Dover, was repelled and then changed course but did he turn left or right
- Point 4 Halle and Airy could not agree
- Point 5 Astronomical solution and experiment with eggs
- Point 6 Concluded that place right, tide right, but date wrong – now 22/23 August

B.

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. c | 5. c |
| 2. a | 6. c |
| 3. b | 7. b |
| 4. d | 8. a |

C.

comprising

consisting of, containing, involving

a matter of some debate

a subject of disagreement, discussion or argument

near-perfect

almost ideal, faultless, right

investigate their idea

test their theory

focus on

concentrate on

leads to

suggests, hints at, implies

D.

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. sailed | 2. disagreed | 3. claimed |
| 4. ordered | 5. landed | 6. floated |
| 7. mentioned | 8. travelled | 9. explained |
| 10. preferred | | |