

Who was Boudicca?

Boudicca was the wife of Prasutagus, the ruler of a Celtic tribe called the Iceni. The Iceni lived in a region of Britain that is now called East Anglia.

Prasutagus and the Roman Agreement

When Romans settled in the South of England in 43 AD they made an agreement with Prasutagus so that he would be able to continue as the ruler of the Iceni. When Prasutagus died, the Romans turned on the Iceni. They stole from the Iceni tribesmen, made people slaves and they had Boudicca and her daughters whipped.

What did Boudicca look like?

According to Dio, a Roman writer, she was tall and had red hair hanging below her waist.

She had a harsh voice and piercing glare, and habitually wore a large golden necklace (perhaps a torc), a many-coloured tunic, and a thick cloak fastened by a brooch.



Famous Speech

"I am fighting as someone like you who has lost their freedom. I am fighting for my bruised body. The gods will grant us the revenge we deserve. Think of how many of us are fighting, and why. Then you will win this battle or die. That is what I, a woman, plan to do. Let the men live as slaves if they want. I won't!"

The Rebellion

In about 60AD, the Roman Governor was sent to North Wales to lead an army. While he was away Boudicca led an attack against the tribe's Roman rulers with several other tribes. Her army were called the Britons.

They managed to destroy Camulodunum (Colchester), the capital of Roman Britain, and defeated the Roman IX legion.

Attack on Londinium

Hearing the news of Boudicca's revolt, the Roman Governor rushed back from Wales. He tried to evacuate Londinium (London) as he guessed this would be the next target for the Britons.

Boudicca and her army destroyed Londinium and Verulamium (St Albans). Over 70,000 people were killed in the attacks by the Britons.



Defeat

The Roman army regrouped in the Midlands and finally defeated the Britons in the battle of Watling Street. No one knows what really happened to Boudicca. Some say she killed herself when she knew the Romans had defeated her, others say she fell ill and died.

Name: Date:

Read the information sheet and answer these questions in full sentences.

1. Which tribe was Boudicca in?
2. Where did she live?
3. What was the deal that Prasutagus made?
4. In her speech, what does Boudicca say the men can do if they want?
5. When did Boudicca attack Camulodunum?
6. Where else did Boudicca and her army destroy?
7. What kind of a person do you think Boudicca was? What clues can you get from the text?
8. Historians don't know how Boudicca died, there is no evidence that gives us a definite answer. What kind of evidence would historians be looking for?
9. Many people died in the battles Boudicca fought.
Do you think she was right to do what she did?
10. If the Romans hadn't hurt Boudicca and her daughters, and had stuck to the agreement with Prasutagus, do you think Boudicca would have been happy living alongside the Romans? Why?

