Boudica

Have you heard of Boudica? She was queen of the Iceni, a tribe of people who lived in eastern England, in Britain, almost 2,000 years ago.

Boudica was tall, with very long red hair, and wore a gold necklace and a beautiful brooch. She was very intelligent, and had probably been to 'warrior school' so she knew how to fight.

By AD 43, the Romans had conquered southern England. At first, they allowed Boudica and her husband to continue to rule. But when Boudica's husband died, the Romans took all his land and property. They decided to rule the Iceni and they treated them very badly. So, in AD 60 or 61, Boudica and the Iceni rebelled against the Romans, together with other tribes who were also treated badly by the Romans.

Boudica and her large army defeated one Roman army and destroyed the capital of Roman Britain, Colchester. In Colchester she destroyed the temple built for Emperor Claudius. They also destroyed two more cities. Many people died.
'Now I am fighting for my freedom. We must win this battle or die. Let the men live as slaves if they want. I will not!'

Finally, Boudica and her army were defeated. The surviving Iceni people ran away, or were turned into slaves. Boudica probably killed herself with poison – her body has never been found.

The rebellion was so shocking to Emperor Nero, the ruler of the Roman Empire, that he wanted to withdraw from Britain!

In the end, the Romans occupied Britain for over 350 years more. But they also treated the British people more fairly and introduced lower taxes.

Boudica has been an inspiration to other female leaders such as Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria. Her rebellion was one of the most significant against the Roman Empire. Now, Boudica is remembered as one of Britain's greatest heroines.

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