

# Boudicca

## Who Was Boudicca and What Was She Like?



Boudicca was a British queen. She fought against the Romans as they invaded Britain. **Scholars** agree that she was born into a noble family with royal blood.

Boudicca is believed to have been very tall and to have had long, **auburn** hair. Stories tell that she was frightening to be around because she had a fierce look in her eye and a harsh, stern voice. Although it is not known for certain, she is believed to have worn a thick, colourful cloak and a large, golden necklace.

## When Did She Live?

Boudicca is thought to have lived between AD 30 and AD 60.

## What Is Boudicca Famous For?

Boudicca's husband was Prasutagus. Prasutagus was the king and leader of the Iceni people. After the death of her husband, the Roman army broke a promise that they had made to Prasutagus so Boudicca led the Iceni people in a battle against them.

## What Exactly Was Her Name?

Most of the things that we know about Boudicca today come from the works of Tacitus. Tacitus had been taught how to read and write so he wrote about the history of the Roman empire in an ancient language called Latin.

Many people were interested in what Tacitus had written and wanted a copy to read for themselves. However, copying books in ancient times was not easy. To copy a book, someone who knew how to read and write would need to copy the book word by word onto new paper. It is thought that somebody who copied Tacitus's work in 1624 might have accidentally misspelt Boudicca as Boadicea. Her name has even been spelt as Buduica, Voadiciea and Bunduca throughout the ages!

## Did you know...?

Boudicca and Prasutagus had two daughters but nobody knows their names.



Nobody alive today knows exactly how Boudicca's name would have been pronounced. Even if Boudicca herself could tell us, she would likely not have known how to write it down. However, most people now agree that the correct spelling is Boudicca and that her name would probably have been pronounced as Boo-dih-cah.

### What Happened to Boudicca?

Nobody knows exactly what happened to Boudicca. While some scholars believe that Boudicca poisoned herself to avoid being captured by the Romans, others believe that she simply became ill during battle.

#### Did you know...?

The name Boudicca is thought to come from the Celtic word 'boudā' which means 'victory'.

#### Glossary

**auburn:** A reddish-brown colour.

**scholars:** People who are highly educated or experts in a topic.



# Questions

1. ...to have had long, auburn hair.

Which of these is closest in meaning to **auburn**? Tick one.

- brownish-black
- reddish-brown
- blondish-brown
- blackish-grey

2. ...she is believed to have worn a thick, colourful cloak...

Which word in this sentence shows that nobody knows this fact for certain? Tick one.

- believed
- have
- worn
- cloak

3. Why do some scholars believe that Boudicca poisoned herself? Tick one.

- There was evidence of it left behind.
- They believe that she did not want to be captured.
- Somebody who was there saw her do it.
- She did not want to live without her husband.

4. Why does nobody know the names of Boudicca's daughters? Tick **two**.

- There is no written evidence.
- They were purposefully kept secret.
- They changed their names many times.
- Nobody who met them is still alive.

5. List **two** incorrect spellings of Boudicca's name which have been used historically.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Find and copy the Celtic word which the name Boudica is thought to come from.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Summarise why Boudicca began to fight against the Romans.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Why can it not be known for certain what happened to Boudicca?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_