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My biography will discuss the role of Boudicca in the Roman pacification of Britain in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and her lasting legacy as a folk hero in modern times.

Boudicca, known as Boadicea to early Britons and Boudicea or Boudica to 1<sup>st</sup>-century Romans, was the queen of the Iceni tribe in eastern Britain. When her husband, Prasutagus died, his will instructed that his kingdom be split evenly between the emperor and his two preteen or early teenage daughters. Even though the Iceni had welcomed Emperor Claudius as the conqueror of Britain in 43 and unfortunately for Boudicca and her daughters, Prasutagus' will was considered invalid; as a Celt in occupied Britain and despite his status as a Roman ally, he was not a Roman citizen and therefore his will had no legal standing. According to Roman law, his entire estate became the property of the Roman emperor, who at that time was Nero.

At the time of Prasutagus' death in 58, Britain was between governors. The last governor, Quintus Veranius, died unexpectedly and the regional procurator, Decianus Catus, ruled in the emperor's name until the new governor, General Gaius Suetonius Paulinus, got his appointment and made the long trip from Rome to Londonium. Catus saw to it that Prasutagus' entire fortune was confiscated. When Boudicca resisted, Catus' men beat her viciously, raped her daughters, enslaved all Prasutagus' living family members (killing any who resisted) and burned his property to the ground.

Incensed, Boudicca swore vengeance upon the Romans who humiliated her and violated her daughters. She then led the Iceni and members of the neighboring Trinovantes tribe in a massive uprising that, according to varying accounts, involved between 120,000 and 230,000 angry Britons. The rebels burned Roman towns, farms, temples and military camps, slaughtering over 70,000 Romans and Roman sympathizers before a force of just over 10,000 Roman legionaries led by Paulinus wiped them out at the lopsided Battle of Watling Street.

Boudicca's revolt led to a swift change in Roman policy towards Britain, the shift being from an attitude of coexistence to one of suppression. While mentioned only briefly in Roman accounts written by Tacitus and Cassius Dio, Boudicca became a British folk hero during the Victorian era and remains so into modern times, with an epic film produced by Mel Gibson of *Braveheart* fame due out in 2010.