

## Boadicea - A Brave Queen



Long ago, there lived a beautiful and brave queen named **Boadicea**.

Her husband, the king, was dead, but she had two daughters whom she loved very much.

Boadicea was queen of a part of Britain. There were no large towns in her land, but there were forests of fine trees, and fields of corn, and wide stretches of grass-land where many cattle and sheep roamed and fed.

Her people were called Iceni. They were tall and strong, with blue eyes and yellow hair. The men were brave fighters and good hunters. They hunted the bears and wolves which lived in the forests, and they fought the foes of their beautiful queen.

They made spears to fight with, and strange carts called war-chariots to fight in. These chariots were drawn by swift horses, and, upon the wheels, long sharp knives were fixed. The Iceni drove the chariots very fast among their foes, and the knives cut down and killed many of them.

The Romans from over the sea were the most dangerous enemies of Boadicea and her people.

In those days the Romans were the best fighters, and the strongest and wisest people in the world. They came in ships to Britain. They had been told that it was a good country, and they hoped to take it for themselves. Some of them came to Boadicea's land, and took a part of it and of her riches. And when she tried to stop them from doing this, they seized her and the two princesses and beat them cruelly.

This wicked act made the Iceni very angry. From all parts of the land, fierce fighting-men came marching in haste to avenge themselves on their enemies, bringing with them their spears and their war-chariots. When all were gathered together, they fell upon the Romans.

There were so many of them, and they were so fierce, that the Romans could not stand against them. Thousands were killed, and the rest ran away to their ships.

But there were many more Romans in other parts of Britain, and when these heard how their friends had been beaten, they came marching in haste to punish the Iceni.

The Iceni did their best to get ready to defend themselves, but many of their brave men had been slain and others were wounded and weary, so they could not hope again to win a victory over their strong foes.

Before the battle, Queen Boadicea, with her fair hair waving in the wind, stood before her soldiers and spoke to them. She told them of the wrong which the Romans had done, and begged them to fight bravely for their country. Then she got into her chariot, and with her daughters lying at her feet, drove to and fro, so that all might see them.

And the soldiers shouted, and promised to fight to the end for their brave queen.

They did fight long and bravely, until most of them were killed, but their foes were too strong for them. When Queen Boadicea saw that her brave soldiers were beaten, she drank some poison which killed her. She thought it better to die than to be again taken prisoner by the cruel Romans.