

# Was Boudica defeated in the Walthamstow High Street?

By Alan Miles ([email](#)) – August 2013

Some Essex historians past and present believed, or believe with good reason that the rebellious Iceni and Trinovantes and other tribes were beaten in Essex near Loughton by the Roman army. Led by Commander Suetonius Paulinus, and who raced back from Wales to intercept the rebels. In his interception he managed to scrape together, from the scantily guarded Essex, 10,000 legionnaires and auxiliaries. At that time the main force of the Legions were battling on Mona (now Anglesey) wiping out the Druids. Tacitus, who reported this battle, says that his report was taken from other reports and accounts of the battle, and that the rebel army was over 280,000 strong. All this is found in Tacitus work "Annals of Rome".

However, many historians believe that this number is fully implausible; their belief was based from the fact that, the entire population of Britain was just over that figure. According to Tacitus, Suetonius Paulinus "**chose a narrow defile with trees to the rear**". The defile is believed to be an earthwork and some claim, that Ambresbury Banks in Loughton was the site of the battle. Tacitus in his book writes of an "**open plain**", which does resemble the Epping Uplands. Of Boudica's defeat Tacitus did not say where it actually happened.

The Greek Historian Dio Cassio wrote that Boudica mounted a tribunal made in the fashion of a Roman earthwork. This certainly matches Ambresbury Banks which very much resembled a Roman earthwork, but was built by the Trinovantes. In their book, "London's Metropolitan Essex", Andrew Summers and John Debenham wrote of Boudica "**as a celebrated Celtic Queen and Mother who is destined to remain a historical mystery**". Unless Metropolitan Essex gives up some secrets hidden beneath Stratford or Walthamstow that will reveal all.

There is another account about the Boudican Rebellion, which occurred in the reign of Emperor Vespasian, but not as Tacitus says the reign of Nero. The story says that Boudica was whipped at Colchester for being insolent and she returned with vengeance and attacked Maldon. On her route also, she wiped out the 10<sup>th</sup> legion and not the 9<sup>th</sup> as Tacitus says and thereafter she was defeated at a point somewhere which still remains unknown to us. So historians beware of historians.