



CSCP Support Materials for Eduqas GCSE Latin Component 3A Latin Literature (Narratives)



Tacitus: Boudica For examination in 2022 and 2023 Section E

Section E

Boudica's forces take London and Verulamium

Notes and Discussion

Suetonius rushed back from Mona to **Londinium** (London) along Watling Street, a distance of around 250 miles. He brought the XIV legion, detachments from the XX legion, and auxiliary infantry and cavalry, leaving the garrison forces to guard Mona. This is the earliest mention in a text of London, as at this time it was only around 10 years old as a town and just beginning to establish itself as a centre for trade. Its inhabitants were a mixture of Romans and Britons, although no distinction was drawn by Boudica. Londinium, however, did not have any defensive walls at this time. Rather than engage Boudica's forces, Suetonius began to withdraw back along Watling Street.

The city suffered a similar fate to Camulodunum. It was razed to the ground and the inhabitants butchered.

The Britons then headed to **Verulamium** (modern St Albans) which had the status of a Roman *municipium*: a civilian settlement which had once been a tribal centre (for the Catuvellauni). A similar fate befell its inhabitants.

Excavations support the destruction of both of these settlements, with substantial evidence of burning especially evident in a layer of scorched material and burned finds. Both settlements, however, were swiftly rebuilt and seem to have been flourishing again within only a few years.

Questions

1. Why does Tacitus think that the Britons targeted these settlements? Do you agree?
2. To what extent do you think that Suetonius' actions can be justified?