

Pax Romana

For Peggy Fulton

She was a strong
 raw boned woman
tall large
with chestnut red hair
snapping at her waist.

He was dark
 and small
the authoritarian male
 muscles of his mind
as elastic as a steel box.

One of the Imperial
 Wops,
the Yanks of their day,
cruising Celtic Britain
for submission and gain
For both
It was hate
at first sight.

Seutonius Paulinus
a Roman lout
with imperial clout
a multi-national militarist.
He was bad enough
but not as bad
as the Procurator,
the pimp of the Empire
who stole the cash
flogged the Queen
raped her daughters
while Rome complained
of ingratitude
the dumb, sullen refusal
of the oppressed
to concede
the expertise
of Empire.

Patrician Tacitus,
the pious historian
of the status quo
explained
the resentment felt
at reverses suffered
at the hands of a woman.

The Procurator
was a crook and a coward
the latter far more venial
 in Roman eyes
Seutonius
a thug in the Imperial style
with that stainless efficiency
which in Rome passed for nobility.

She was the Queen
 of the Iceni.
A barbarous lot
and they proved it
at the sack of
 Colchester
 Verulamium
 Londinium
Roman women skewered
 on stakes
for the goddess's sake
Andastra — Victory.

Too bad!
But when your pubescent daughters
are raped
and you yourself flogged
even Rome might expect
the Druid blood
to spill over
somewhat impetuously.

The angry mother became
 a general
On three miraculous occasions
she crushed the brute
computers of mechanized
Rome.

Until
after the final battle
the Queen died
the machines won
and the Pax Romana
settled like a Mafia pall
on the women of Celtic Britain.

Marya Fiamengo