

**THE PLACE OF THE  
WELSH IN THE  
HISTORY OF BRITAIN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649014880

The Place of the Welsh in the History of Britain by Boyd Dawkins

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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*William* BY  
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*Reprinted from The Manchester Examiner.*

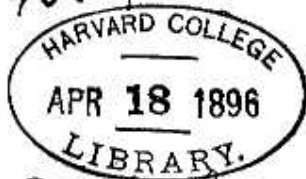
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LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.  
MANCHESTER: JOHN HEYWOOD.

1889.

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# THE PLACE OF THE WELSH IN THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN.

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## I.

### ANCESTRY OF THE SMALL DARK WELSH.

#### *1.—Introductory.*

THE questions, "who are the Welsh and what is their place in the history of Britain?" are of great interest in themselves, and demand more than a passing notice at a time when it is attempted to raise an antagonism between the races inhabiting the British Islands, and when it is

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The principal authorities used in the following articles are Beddoe's *Races of Britain*, Dawkins' *Early Man in Britain*, Skene's *The Four Ancient Books of Wales*, Rhys' *Celtic Britain*, Green's *The History of the English People*, Giraldus Cambrensis *Itinerarium Cambriae*, and *de Rebus a se Gestis*, edit. Brewer (Rolls), and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Rolls).



urged that there is some essential difference between them which renders it necessary for them to live further apart from each other than they have done for many centuries. It is assumed that there is something in the nature of those populations which are called Celtic that prevents them from living under the same system of laws as those enjoyed by the populations termed English; and this assumption is founded on the idea that there is but little in common between the Celt on the one hand and the English on the other. As a matter of fact, they are both mixed races, divided from one another mainly by their speech, and composed of the same ethnological elements, with some predominating in one place and some in another. The main difference between them merely consists in the varying proportion in which these elements are mingled in different places. I propose to deal with these questions, so far as they relate to the Welsh, from the point of view offered by the most recent researches into their

history, and those contributions which have been made to our knowledge of the people by the sciences of ethnology and archæology. It will be seen that the Welsh have played no ignoble part in the history of these islands, and that some of them are descended from those who in remote ages introduced the first rudiments of civilisation, not merely into these islands, but into the whole of Europe, from the Rhine to the Straits of Gibraltar and from the Alps to the shores of the Atlantic.

*2.—The Small Dark Welsh.*

The Welsh, as their name implies, are simply the inhabitants of Britain, strangers to the English invaders. It would be absurd to expect that the rude warriors who pushed the inhabitants of Roman Britain before them to the west into Wales, Cumbria, and West Wales (Devon and Cornwall) would have drawn any subtle ethnological distinctions. To the destroyers of

the Roman Empire, their foes in Britain were Brit-Welsh, and in Gaul Gall-Welsh, under which heads were included without any distinction the races which they conquered. It is clear, however, from the pages of Cæsar and Tacitus that at the time of the Roman conquest there were at least two distinct peoples in Britain—the tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed Celt, identical with the Gallic tribes, and the dark-complexioned, wavy-haired South Welshmen (Silures), who are compared by Tacitus to the Iberi of Spain. This comparison is now amply justified by a visit to most Welsh towns on a market day—say Denbigh or St. Asaph—where the small dark Welshman is to be seen identical in everything but dress and speech with the small dark Basque of the Western Pyrenees, both French and Spanish. We need not, however, go so far as the Pyrenees to find people identical with the small dark Welsh. The small dark Irish of the south-west of Ireland, the small dark Highlander of Scotland, and the dark inhabitants of Devon