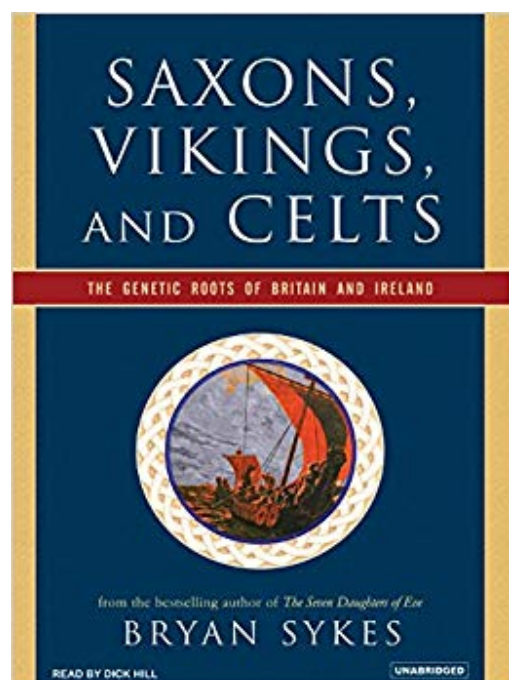


Saxons, Vikings, and Celts: The Genetic Roots of Britain and Ireland *by* Dick Hill, Bryan Sykes



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WASPs finally get their due in this stimulating history by one of the world's leading geneticists. Saxons, Vikings, and Celts is the most illuminating book yet to be written about the genetic history of Britain and Ireland. Through a systematic, ten-year DNA survey of more than 10,000 volunteers, Bryan Sykes has traced the true genetic makeup of British Islanders and their descendants. This historical travelogue and genetic tour of the fabled isles, which includes accounts of the Roman invasions and Norman conquests, takes readers from the Pontnewydd cave in North Wales, where a 300,000-year-old tooth was discovered, to the resting place of "The Red Lady" of Paviland, whose anatomically modern body was dyed with ochre by her grieving relatives nearly 29,000 years ago. A perfect work for anyone interested in the genealogy of England, Scotland, or Ireland, Saxons, Vikings, and Celts features a chapter specifically addressing the genetic makeup of those people in the United States who have descended from the British Isles.



Reviews of the **Saxons, Vikings, and Celts: The Genetic Roots of Britain and Ireland** by Dick Hill, Bryan Sykes

Celen

I bought this book to answer the question: Who are the Celts? And it does. I had seen a documentary supposing to be a history of the Celtic culture and proposing that the tribes arose from Gaul and migrated via the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. Most of that is disproved by the genetic research--while the cultural practices and art did migrate, the genetic story is different and even more compelling. When I had my DNA analyzed, I was first English, then Irish, then Scandinavian, and then Iberian Peninsula. I had no trouble believing the first three (those Vikings!) but was puzzled about the Iberian Peninsula. This book explained all those strains and even the original mother of my mitochondrial DNA who lived many centuries ago in Italy! The author mixes early history of the British Isles, myth and legend, and science, Fascinating reading from the findings to the research methods. Just the book I was looking for! I will read all this author's books.

Goldcrusher

As a genealogist with deep roots in the British Isles, this book was fascinating reading. Bryan writes very well; doesn't overwhelm the reader with technical information but covers the pertinent points very well. Until I read *The Seven Daughters of Eve* and this book, DNA was a mysterious subject. The information gleaned from his amazing work has helped me better understand the DNA test results for myself, my husband and other family members. Surprisingly, I learned so much about the many invasions and constant fighting within the Isles; more so that from most history texts I studied in school. Highly recommend if you are interested in human migration and DNA from the beginning of time.

Faegal

While I did enjoy this book the first half was a history of the British Isles as best is known. Interesting, but not what I was expecting. The second half discussed major population movements, then briefly, the results of the genetic findings in various regions. I found the outcomes very interesting, as was the contrast to the written history. However, as I'm not very familiar with the counties and borders of the Isles, it could, at times be very hard to follow.

I will also admit that I found Prof. Sykes first books, "*Seven Daughters of Eve*" and "*Adam's Curse*" to be more interesting and enlightening, although that's probably because of the generality required by their broad topics. I would recommend this book (and his other two), but remember that this isn't a science book. It just uses good science to solve a historical question.

Asyasya

An engaging and readable study of the history of the peoples of Britain and Ireland as discovered through DNA analysis. Age old myths are exposed, others confirmed. The author weaves genetic technical background with enlightening historical segments to build a forensic case for determining the roots of the British and Irish people. One comes away with a better understanding of the part that DNA analysis can provide when combined with documentary evidence to reveal our ancestral heritage.

Kelezel

I had a genetics course in the biology department of a small liberal arts college so I knew basic concepts and vocabulary. But I still went to dictionary and Wikipedia a lot. I've also researched, only in records in Genealogy.Com. But I still did a lot of re-reading and still have a pretty murky understanding genetics and my ancestry. I think, ethnically, that I'm Scots Irish, but still not sure using a DNA test would help a lot. To tell me I'm 90% European or even Iberian peninsula wouldn't tell me much. Recommend this book for a serious student, although the writing style is pretty easy to read.

Oparae

First of all, a much easier read than some other books on the same subject. Very focused on the science and practice of understanding the genetic heritage. No potshots at competing theories or endless rationalizations of hypotheses and conclusions. The technical and statistical discussions are easy to follow, although they take a little bit of work at first. A very readable book that allows one to view other writings with a certain critical eye.

Ghordana

Like the Seven Daughters of Eve, this is a book I could not put down and still refer to often. We come on a journey so unique that gives us a clear view of our clan mothers as they move out of Africa and how our mutations in our genes can give us a picture of how we might have found ourselves in the British Isles and the northern most areas of Scandanavia. Reading this reminds me of the diversity that was already well along.

Sykes provided some good history, but his conclusion re the genetic make up of the British Isles took only one paragraph at the end of the book. Too much padding to make the book look more substantial. Book would have made a nice short article.

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