

ANCIENT AND MODERN BRITONS

VOLUME I



DAVID MAC RITCHIE

INTRODUCTION
WILLIAM PRESTON

Ancient And Modern Britons

David MacRitchie



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obtaining them He is introduced by several modern writers though he was really of the antique world Not only because of his way of living but literally so on account of his great age For although he lived on almost to the close of last century his birth is placed as far back as the year 1671 This fact therefore gives him a great value for if like other true gypsies he clung tenaciously to all the customs of his forefathers as far as the times would let him then in Billy Marshall we have a representative of the Galloway Pict of the seventeenth century Without attempting anything that can be dignified by the name of research let us see what some of these modern writers say of him Of these none has a better right to the first word than Scott and this is what he tells us of the Galloway chief Meg Merrilies is in Galloway considered as having had her origin in the traditions concerning the celebrated Flora Marsh 11 one of the royal consorts of Willie Marshal more commonly called the Cain Tinker of Barullion King of the Gipsies of the Western Lowlands In his Additional Note to Guy Mannering That potentate was himself deserving of notice from the following peculiarities He was born in the parish of Kirkmichael about the year 1671 and as he died at Kirkcudbright 23rd November 1792 he must then have been in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age It cannot be said that this unusually long lease of existence was noted by any peculiar excellence of conduct or

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[Ancient and Modern Britons, Vol. 1](#) David Macritchie,2025-06-24 David MacRitchie s *Ancient and Modern Britons* is a provocative and unconventional examination of British ethnology that challenges long held assumptions about the origins of the British people First published in the late 19th century the work contends that the early inhabitants of the British Isles prior to the arrival of Celts and Romans were dark skinned aboriginal peoples whose influence endured far longer than mainstream history had acknowledged Drawing on folklore place names historical documents and comparative anthropology MacRitchie argues that traces of these ancient peoples persisted in both cultural traditions and physical traits among modern populations Though controversial in its time and criticized for its speculative leaps the book played a significant role in stimulating debate over race migration and national identity during a formative period of British historiography MacRitchie s ideas intersect with broader currents in Victorian racial theory mythic nationalism and imperial anthropology making this a key text for understanding how narratives of origin were constructed and contested in the 19th century While modern readers must approach it critically the book remains an important historical artifact in the study of British identity and early anthropological discourse *Ancient and Modern Britons, Vol. 2* David Macritchie,2025-06-24 In this continuation of his controversial thesis David MacRitchie deepens his exploration of Britain s pre Celtic and non Aryan heritage advancing the idea that much of the island s early population descended from a forgotten aboriginal race Volume II extends the analysis begun in the first volume by examining historical traditions medieval chronicles and the persistent legends of little dark people cave dwellers and fairy folk in Scottish and Irish folklore MacRitchie connects these traditions to a historical substrate of racial mixing challenging the dominant Victorian narratives of unbroken Aryan supremacy He also draws parallels with

similar patterns in other European cultures suggesting a pan European undercurrent of early non white populations erased or assimilated by successive waves of invaders The volume is filled with curious correlations speculative linguistics and ethno historical conjecture all bound together by MacRitchie s conviction that history must incorporate folklore as a vital source Though modern anthropology has largely discredited his racial models this book retains significance for its influence on later esoteric writers nationalist theorists and folklorists It is an essential read for anyone studying the intersections of myth history and identity in the formation of modern Britain

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