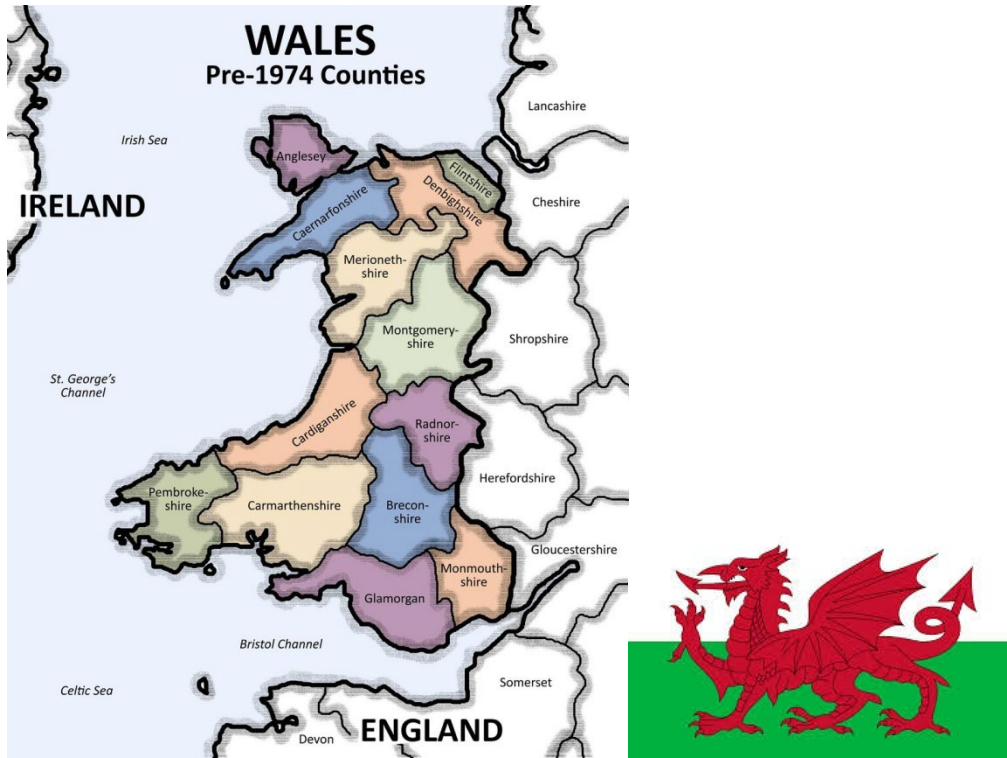


Wales-Welsh Family History

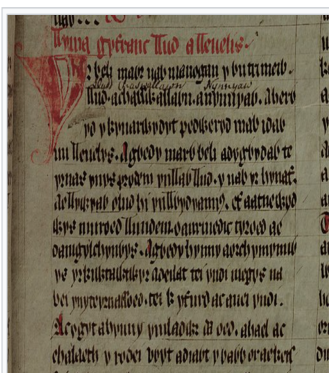
By Donna Potter Phillips, EWGS, June 2026



Welsh fables, or stories, are legendary. For example, this from Wikipedia:

Lludd and Llefelys [\[edit\]](#)

Main article: [Lludd and Llefelys](#)



The opening lines of Lludd and Llefelys (Bodleian Library's manuscript)

Another mythological story included in the *Mabinogion* is the tale of [Lludd and Llefelys](#). Lludd is king of Britain, and his brother, Llefelys, is king of [France](#). Lludd's kingdom is beset by three menaces: the [Coraniaid](#), a demonic people who can hear everything; a terrible scream that is heard every May Eve that terrifies the people; and the continual disappearance of the provisions of the king's court. Lludd asks Llefelys for help, speaking to him through a brass tube so the Coraniaid can't hear. Llefelys creates a potion of crushed insects in water, which destroys the Coraniaid when sprinkled on them. The scream, he discovers, comes from two [dragons](#) fighting. He gets the dragons drunk on [mead](#) and buries them in Dinas Emrys in what is now North Wales. He then overcomes the wizard who is stealing all of Lludd's provisions and makes him serve Lludd.

Hanes Taliesin [\[edit\]](#)

Wales is one of the four constituent countries of the United Kingdom together with England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Wales is slightly smaller than the state of New Jersey. New Jersey has 21 counties; Wales has 13 counties.

Who are the Welsh? As a country, Wales began with Henry VIII's Act of Union in 1536. Before then, Wales had been a loose collection of independent kingdoms. What's the origin of the name Wales? It is a variation on a word used by the conquering Anglo Saxons in the long ago time to mean foreigners or outsiders. Cymru is the Welsh name for the country and means friends or companions.

What's with the Red Dragon flag? This dates back to the Roman period when the dragon was used by the Roman military at the time. After the Romans left, the Red Dragon remained as a key emblem of Wales and still is to this day.

By the 19th and early 20th century, the Welsh folks were suffering from poverty, limited opportunity and the desire to search elsewhere for a better life. Religion was a motivation for leaving in prior to 1700. The Welsh were among the first to settle in America in the late 17th century and links between Wales and the U.S. remain strong today. It is estimated that about 60,000 Welsh immigrated to America in the 1850-1870 period. These immigrants were farmers and coal miners and were welcomed as workers in the coal fields of the East.

How to guess if you have Welsh ancestry? Check the surnames on your tree!

This table, created in 1986, shows the top 100 Welsh surnames:

Jones	Lewis	Price
Williams	Morgan	Rees
Davies	Griffiths	Phillips
Evans	Edwards	Jenkins
Thomas	Owen	Harris
Roberts	James	Lloyd
Hughes	Morris	Richards

Powell	Andrews	Giles
Parry	Davis	Protheroe
John	Meredith	Phelps
Watkins	Lawrence	Gwynne
Howells	Nicholls	Roderick
Pritchard	Daniels	Bellis
Rogers	Nicholas	Meyrick
Matthews	Preece	Mansel
Rowlands	Prosser	Rice
Humphreys	Edmunds	Trehaerne
Pugh	Wynne	Michael
Ellis	Gough/Goff	
Bowen	Herbert	Eynion
Hopkins	David	Elias
Martin	Beynon	Havard
Bennett	Arnold	Pullin
Evan	Charles	Paul
Pearse	Gittins	Abraham
Adams	Griffin	Cadwalider
Walters	Rosser	Leyshon
Llewellyn	Mathias	Jarrett
George	Probert	Picton
Simons	Anthony	Gething
Vaughan	Gwilliam	Gronow
Reynolds	Richett/ard	Onions