

CLASSICAL ROME IN THE 'UNITED KINGDOM', 1880 TO 1930

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This paper aims to explore the reception of the legacy of classical Rome in England, Wales and Scotland during the late Victorian period and the early twentieth century. In particular, it will focus on some of the different ways in which the Roman past of the British Isles was called upon by historians, ancient historians, artists and novelists. One aim is to ask whether there was a fairly unified narrative for understanding the Roman past across the British Isles and the extent to which different individuals looked at these materials with varying purposes in mind. One question is ask whether difference in nationality/location (English, Scottish, Welsh) may have influenced the ways that Roman sites and objects were interpreted. There is no simple answer to this question but it is suggested that broad ideas of Origin (Celtic, Saxon, Norman) impacted upon the way that the Roman past was interpreted. Across the north and west of the British Isles, uncovering the remains of previous Roman colonizers sometimes appears to have been one means of linking Welsh and Scottish identity into a broad British imperial mission.'