

Beal (e, l, s) The Ancient Name

B E A L (e, l, s)
THE ANCIENT NAME

ENOUGH OF ITS HISTORY TO
ACCOUNT FOR ITS ORIGIN

—By—

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E-book version – January 2006

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Appreciation

THE DELVER into the past will at times encounter difficulties which seem insurmountable, and this I found to be only too true in my efforts to trace the name of Beal (e,l,s) to its origin. However the kindly aid and assistance extended to me by Mrs. Harriet Taylor, who has charge of the genealogical section of the Newberry Library in Chicago, enabled me to overcome the obstacles that I encountered and to proceed with a minimum of delay to the solution of my problem. In fact the uniform courtesy and assistance of everyone connected with the library made what might otherwise have been a most difficult task a pleasure. Mrs. Taylor's many helpful suggestions undoubtedly lessened my labor very materially.

The library of the Union League Club of Chicago was another rich field in my search. Many pleasant hours have I spent poring over its almost priceless volumes of pre-biblical lore and mythology in surroundings most conducive to research, study and reflection. Mrs. B. Frank, the courteous and efficient librarian, aided me in selecting those books which would be most likely to yield up information of the character I was seeking.

The University Club Library, also of Chicago, gave me much information from its very fine collection of histories and records of religion and religions.

While much of the material amassed in my search came from independent sources, a great deal was derived from these three libraries. To each of them, and to Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Frank, I want to express my most sincere appreciation.

FRANK LEE BEALS

Chicago, Illinois,
November 1st, 1929.

For the preparation of this booklet it has been necessary to bring together information gathered from many sources. Research along any one line would not have produced the proofs necessary to show the origin of the name Beal.

The name Beal is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, in existence, going back as it does to the beginning of all things, and being connected with the creation of man himself. As a surname it dates back to about the 11th century when surnames first began to be employed.

In its present form it first came to light some 1200 years before Christ, although it had undoubtedly been in use for many centuries before that.

The real origin and significance of the name Beal has puzzled antiquarians, and most writers have been content to guess at its origin. The name has many local meanings in Great Britain and these local meanings are significant in connecting the name with its original.

The question has been asked, "What's in a name?" Puteanus answered the query long before it was asked when he said, "Sine nomine, homo non est." There are countless hosts of nameless ones who have had their brief moment of life and who are gone without trace. It is as though they had never been.

It is not strange that the name Beal has many terminations, nor that there are several different ways of spelling it, for, in the early development of spelling each individual was his own authority. Nor is it surprising, considering the sources from which names were derived that families having the same name are wholly unrelated.

However in the case of Beal, which I consider the basic name from which all of those having the same root, regardless of the branch, took their origin, the spelling has remained constant. That Beal is a Celtic name most authorities agree and I shall show that this is true.

While this booklet is brief enough the material which has gone into it has taken years to assemble and a casual

reading cannot possibly give an idea of the time and labor involved in bringing it together. Only one who has searched hundreds of volumes of all kinds, and in different places, for facts, many of them obscure, can appreciate the laboriousness of the task. Of all the books consulted only one out of ten produced material of value. Although much genealogical research was involved in the early stages of my quest it yielded little of value since information about people or families prior to the 12th century is obscure, But this booklet does not in any way treat of genealogy, except of a few mythological characters, it deals wholly with the origin of the name Beal.

Beal is best known as a place name having many and varied meanings, the meaning varying with the locality. Just why it is a place name has not before been revealed, but the reason will be unfolded herein.

In a search of British records an old Norman name, Bealum, is encountered and this name is connected with a location. Among old British surnames is found Beal, indigenous to Yorkshire; Beale, to Durham; Beales, to Suffolk; and Bealey, to Derbyshire. More ancient still are the names Beald, Bealde, Bealdfrith, Bealdhere, Bealdgaer, Bealdheath, Bealdherd, and Bealdhelm. These were all surnames.

It is recorded that a nobly born Saxon girl named Bealdhild was sold as a slave in France and that she later became the queen of Clovis 2nd.

The last king of Kent was named Bealdred.

Bealdwine 5th, Count of Flanders, Godson of King Edward 3rd, was the father of Queen Matilda.

As early as the 14th century local meanings of the name Beal were to be found, viz., "of Beal" or "Beal-on-the-Hill." This latter meaning has been handed down to the present day, but where it had its origin has never before been explained. I propose to show just how this meaning was attached to the name, and why.

A study of Irish place names throws further light on the subject, more than does the study of any of the other place names. This is natural since it is most likely that the name was used in Ireland before it was used in Britain.

The meanings attributed to the name Beal as an Irish Place Name follow:

Beal, “a mouth or entrance to a ford,” “opening of a glen or valley,” or “a pass of some kind.”

For example: Bealnashure (ford mouth of the stream), a village situated at an ancient ford; Beal-y-phurt, mouth of the port; Bealevayr (y), entrance of the road; Beal-Fayn-y-Geay, wide entrance of the wind; Beal-e-coan, mouth of the valley.

The place names of the Isle of Man are the same.

In the Place Names of Dacies is found Bealleac Bridge, river mouth of the Flagstone. Bealacclare, a bridge; Bealanabrack, the ford mouth of the trouts.

There is a Bealadangan in Galway and a Bealnamulla in Athlone.

In Scotland there is Bealach Colluscord, pass of the hill, and Beallid at the mouth of Glen-banchr.

In the place names of England and Wales, Beal of Northumberland is given as “by the hill,” or near the (Roman) Wall.” Bealings is quoted as a patronymic, “place of the sons of Bella.” Bealach Buidhe, yellow pass; Bealach Dearg, red pass; Bealachodhar, reddish yellow pass.

The river Beal joins the Roch at Rochdale. Beal Moor is identified with the old river name.

Dr. Eilert Ekwall says that Beal is a Celtic name, but that the etymology is doubtful. It will be shown that the etymology is not doubtful.

In a Glossary of Cornish Names mention is made of Beal’s Hill.

Dr. James M’Cann gives Beales as a war name, meaning bold.

Some writers have suggested that the name Beal 'may' have originated with that of the Scandinavian giant Beli. This has been a mere suggestion and nowhere has an effort been made to trace a connection. In the first place Beli is not connected with the name of a place while Beal is distinctly a place name. There is no similarity in the spelling of the two names.

In order to show that there is no connection between the two names it is necessary to trace the mythology concerning Beli. He was the brother of Gerda who had a son by Frey. Beli attacked Frey who slew him. They were all giants. The giants were the first creatures to come to life among the icebergs. They were the opponents and rivals of the gods. However Beli was descended from the god Kari. In the early Irish myths he is called the god of Death, is the son of Manogan and Mathonwy, a mother goddess. In the mythology of early Britain Beli ruled the island. He ruled Britain when it was invaded by Maxen Wledig, Roman Emperor, and was overthrown.

Only by an enormous stretch of imagination can Beal be linked with Beli.

Since Beal is admittedly a Celtic name it is essential that the history of the Celtic race be studied and that their customs and practices be analyzed. The Celts came up out of the valley of the Danube about 1200 B. C. and established dwellings about the lakes in Switzerland. There are two towns still in existence in Switzerland which bear names of peculiar significance, Baal and Biel. The Celts were the earliest Aryan settlers in Europe. They were gradually driven westward until they spread over Britain, Ireland, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Northern Italy and Spain, reaching the height of their development during the first and second centuries.

The Druids were their priests who taught the existence of one god, "Beal". Celtic antiquarians claim that Beal means "the source of all beings," or "the life of everything." It is generally admitted that the Celtic god Beal

has affinity with the Phoenician god Baal. In each case the supreme deity was identified with the sun, and fire was regarded as the symbol of divinity. The remnants of one of the Druidical places of worship still stands at Stonehenge, Salisbury Plain, England. It consists of a circle of large stones and this was their sacred place. Generally these sacred circles were situated 'near some stream' or 'on a hill'. This may account for the river name Beal. The Druids had also their 'high places,' hence "Beal-on-the-Hill." The records of the second invasion of Britain by the Romans under Caesar contain accounts of the religious practices of the Druids.

Benjamin Thorpe says of the sacred fires of the Druids, "This custom of kindling sacred fires on certain days prevails throughout the whole of Europe (1851), and was known to antiquity, particularly in Italy. The Kelts kindled such fires, on the first of May, to the god Beal, (thence even now called Bealtine)."

The spelling of the modern name Beal is identical with that of the god of the Druids. The local meanings attributed to the place name Beal tie up definitely with the Druidical practices in the worship of their god. The place name Beal (e,l,s) undoubtedly originated with the god of the Druids, Beal.

This however does not explain how Beal became a place name nor does it show the origin of the name, hence it is necessary to go further back into antiquity. It now seems better to go back to the beginning and trace the name forward to its more modern connection.

The name originated with Belus, a god, third descendant of Io, son of Libya. He has affinity with Bali of Hindu mythology and with Baal, the principal male deity of the Phoenician and Canaanitish nations. Nebuchadnezzar built a temple to Belus and it was inside this temple that the tower of Babel stood. The Assyrians erected the first statue to him and worshipped him as a god, calling him Baal. The word 'baal' signifies lord and

master of the universe. There is a temple to Baal at Tanis. This Syro-Phoenician deity is the Baal of the Hebrew Scriptures. He has affinity with the Egyptian god Set and with the Assyrian god Bel.

The Babylonians believed that before the creation seven spirits rebelled in heaven and that later a part of the heavenly choir followed them. They were all cast out of heaven and man was created.

They believed that in the beginning all was chaos and darkness and that monsters of every kind moved through it, and that a woman named Omorca ruled over them all. Belus appeared and cleft the woman in twain. From one-half of her body he made the heavens and from the other half the earth. In order that the earth might be inhabited Belus ordered another god to cut off his (Belus') head and to mix his blood with earth. When this was done man appeared.

Stephen of Byzantium, in quoting Philo the Phoenician, states that Babylon was founded by Belus two thousand years before the reign of Semiramis which was about two thousand two hundred years before Christ. According to Megasthenes, Belus laid the foundation of Babylon when the waters of the flood had subsided.

Belus became the Baal, or ruler, of Babylon, and, according to the historians of Armenia, was deified and worshipped by the name of Baal. Belus had a daughter who was queen of Carthage.

Baal worship then began in Babylonia and it came in contact with the monotheism of our own civilization. In Assyrian mythology Bel (affinity with Baal) is accredited with the creation which is identical with that attributed to Belus.

While Baal was the principal god of the Phoenicians it was the Carthaginians who spread his worship. Their heroes bore his name, as Hannibal, which was written in the Punic inscriptions Hannibaal, signifying "by the grace of Baal"; and Hasdrubal, Azrubaal, meaning "help of

Baal.” The Canaanites and Moabites carried the worship of Baal to the Israelites.

Baal was worshipped in different forms or in different relations. There were Baal-berith, the Covenant Baal or lord; Baal-zebub, the fly lord or Baal; Baal Peor, the Baal of Mount Peor, or *Baal of the opening*.

These definitions are particularly significant when considered in connection with the meanings of the place names of Britain and Ireland.

The Beltane fires of Scotland are a survival of Baal worship although the form came to them through Beal, the god of the Druids.

The Scripture (*Leviticus 26:30*) mentions “Chamanim,” (meaning “sun-images” or “sun gods” in Hebrew) the temples consecrated to the worship of Baal and in which a perpetual fire was kept burning. It signifies “places enclosed with walls.” Baal Shamen is the god who dwells in heaven and is analogous to the Greek Zeus.

Baal worship extended to a point where they (baals) were as numerous as the objects or places which they inhabited. There were baals of springs, trees, animals, mountains, streams, and fords as well as celestial baals. The belief was strong among the Semitic races and other primitive peoples that every natural object that could do something should be revered as divine. Baal cults sprang up among the Greeks and Romans, in Syria and Arabia, as well as in Canaan and Phoenicia. When the Hebrews dispossessed the Canaanites they took over parts of their worship, and, in order to reconcile this with fidelity to their own deity, Jehovah himself was called Baal and his name was associated with the cults at the altars and sanctuaries, generally called “high places.” This should be considered in connection with the Druidical “high places” and “Beal-on-the-Hill.” The names of places were taken from Baal, and Beal is a place name. Beal is defined as having been “derived from the name of a place.” The name Beal is Celtic. The Celtic religion had its origin in Baal worship which originated with Belus.

The name Beal, Baal, Belus must be between 6200 and 6500 years old, or to state it in another way it must have been in existence for *195* generations, more or less. Undoubtedly it originated with Belus and was handed down through time in the religious practices of many peoples.

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E-book Editor's Notes (1/16/2006):

Corrected spellings:

In the original text of this book, there were a number of words that were incorrectly spelled. This may simply be due to inadequate methods to check spelling in 1929. Or possibly, some of these words had these alternate spellings in use during that time period. It was thought that you might wish to be aware of these substitutions, when considering this text as a whole. Therefore, after researching the words, the current accurate (North American) spellings have been substituted within the text as listed below. Besides these spelling changes, the rest of the text is in its original form.

Spelling in Original 1929 Text	Corrected 2006 Spelling
Baalberith	Baal-berith
Bable	Babel
Carthagenians	Carthaginians
Indiginous	Indigenous
Jehova	Jehovah
Omorka	Omorca
Phoenecian	Phoenician
Semetic	Semitic

If you have spotted any additional spelling errors, please visit our website and send us a message concerning what you have noticed.

<http://www.bealgenealogy.com>